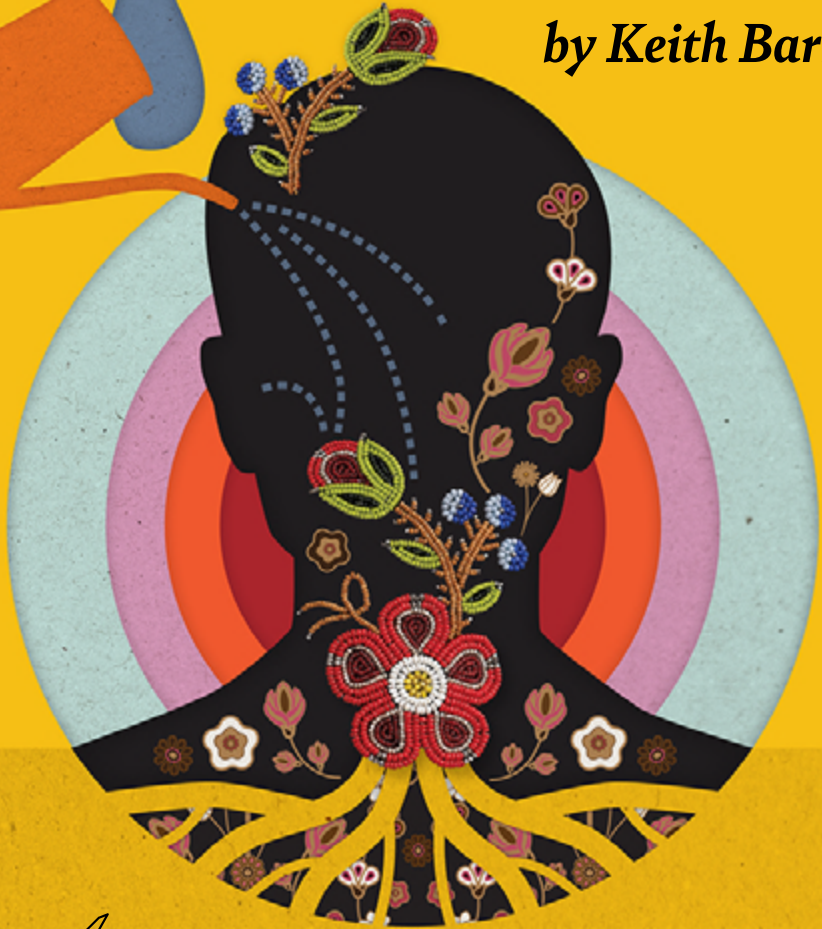


A PTE PRODUCTION

# RAISED by WOMEN

*by Keith Barker*



PRAIRIE  
THEATRE  
EXCHANGE

**APRIL 1-13 / 2025**

A funny and heartwarming love letter  
to the women who raised him.

MEDIA SPONSOR **The Free Press**

Original Beading by Métis Artist Lor Brand

**PTE.MB.CA**

# welcome TO THE SHOW

Just before writing this, I watched a rehearsal hall run-through of Keith Barker's *Raised by Women*. PTE's rehearsal hall is an ordinary space: a big open room, a few tables and chairs, coffee station, a bulletin board. During a rehearsal, there are no theatre lights, music, sound effects, or setting. It's just an actor, telling a story.

Some plays need the "extras" to make an impact. Others can blossom with an actor alone in the act of storytelling. Which is why in a rehearsal hall run-through of *Raised by Women*, I still had the "full-meal deal" of great theatre. I laughed out loud and shed a few tears as Keith spun his beautiful stories of the women who raised him, and the man who didn't. Even before adding the stunning metaphor of Daina Leitold's set, or the atmospheric contributions of lighting, projections and sound by jaymez and MJ Dandeneau, Keith and director Matthew Paris-Irvine have created a heartwarming, funny, and thoughtful piece of theatre that I know you will love.

Speaking of spaces at PTE - our facility is bustling! In addition to our programming, we play host to many other companies and events — this spring we welcome hundreds of artists rehearsing shows for Theatre Projects Manitoba, Rainbow Stage, Dry Cold, Sick & Twisted, Winnipeg Jewish Theatre, Shakespeare in the Ruins, Winnipeg International Burlesque Festival, and the Winnipeg Fringe Festival. It is inspiring to share our space with so many great artists.

The redevelopment of the Portage Place mall has commenced, and we are pleased to assure you that this space will remain our home throughout, with no relocation necessary. We're so excited to present great stories in our beautiful theatre here in our downtown home.

And our 2025-2026 season (my first as Artistic Director) was recently announced and is now on sale! I so hope that you will join us for a season of: **Stories. Shared. Together.** We look forward to welcoming you again.

Enjoy the show!



**Ann Hodges**  
Artistic Director



We create and gather on Treaty 1 Territory, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabeg (Ojibway), Ininewuk (Swampy Cree), Anishinewuk (Ojibwe), Dakota Oyate, and Dene peoples, and the homeland of the Red River Metis. As we gather to tell stories today, we so appreciate the original storytellers and stewards of this land.

PRAIRIE THEATRE EXCHANGE IS PROUD TO PRESENT

# Raised by Women

## Written & Performed by Keith Barker

A PTE PRODUCTION:

WORLD PREMIERE

MATTHEW PARIS-IRVINE	<i>Director</i>
THOMAS MORGAN JONES	<i>Dramaturg</i>
DAINA LEITOLD	<i>Set Designer</i>
BRENDA MCLEAN	<i>Costume Designer</i>
JAYMEZ*	<i>Lighting Designer</i>
MJ DANDENEAU	<i>Composer &amp; Sound Designer</i>
KATIE HOPPA	<i>Stage Manager</i>

**RUN TIME:** 70 minutes, no intermission

A TalkBack with Keith will follow every performance.  
We invite you to stay for the Q & A.

\* Indicated designers on this production are represented by the  
Associated Designers of Canada, IATSE Local ADC659.

Prairie Theatre Exchange is a not-for-profit theatre and an active member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT), and engages, under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement, professional artists who are members of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association.

# DIRECTOR'S NOTES

***“I keep learning the lessons I need to learn until I learn them.”***

**- Keith Barker in *Raised by Women***

While preparing to direct Keith Barker's world premiere of *Raised by Women*, I found myself coming back again and again to this nugget of wisdom.

It's simple.

It's honest.

It teaches us without judgement or vindication.

And, like all wisdom, it is imperfect.

That's the charm.

Keith's story about the women who raised him and the man who didn't is filled to the brim with these teachings. Knowledge from women who led their life from a place of grace, compassion, patience, joy, and understanding. Lessons learned, and mistakes made, while navigating the expectations of masculinity – and the naivete of being the 'nice guy'. Through humor, honesty, and his mother's grace, Keith shows us how to better hold the ones we love. How to forgive the ones that hurt us. That growth is anything but linear, and that being a good person is anything but absolute.

When I watch this play, I think about my mother, the strongest person I know. When you watch this play, I imagine you'll think about the strongest person YOU know. While Keith tells his story we'll be reminded together of stories just like his, of the long road towards becoming the best versions of ourselves, and of the mistakes we made because we are human. I hope we talk about it after. I hope we call that special person and tell them we love them. I hope we have the strength to forgive someone who needs it. I hope we remember the lessons, and that we keep learning them, until we learn them.

**- Matthew Paris-Irvine, Director**



## MEET the PLAYWRIGHT

A year ago, my mom visited me in Stratford, Ontario. Over dinner she went quiet. “What’s up, Mom?” She gave me a thoughtful look, “I don’t know how you found theatre. Never in a million years could I have imagined this for you.”

Me neither. When I finished high school, university just wasn’t for me, and when my friends went off to chase their futures, I ended up in Thunder Bay without a plan. I wanted to be an actor, but I didn’t know what that meant. I had no clear path, no role models to follow, and no guidance to rely on. When I moved to Toronto, all I had was a belief that I would find my way.

Tonight is another miracle in a long line of miracles that have come to define what 16-year-old Keith could not have imagined for his future.

In a time when I worry about our collective future, this play reminds me that we can’t predict what is to come. The only way to face uncertainty is by responding with what matters most to us. For me, art and storytelling are at the heart of who we are. What a gift it is to be here to share this with you. Thank you for coming.

There are a million and a hundred and five people who helped to make this play a reality. Humbly, I stand on their shoulders tonight. Maarsi, Meegwetch, Merci, Thank-you.

*Keith Barker is an award-winning Métis playwright, actor, and director originally from Northwestern Ontario. Keith is Director of the Foerster Bernstein New Play Development Program at the Stratford Festival, and the former Artistic Director at Native Earth Performing Arts in Toronto. Keith’s other plays, The Hours That Remain, and This Is How We Got Here are both published through Playwright’s Canada Press.*



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# MEET the ARTISTS



**Matthew Paris-Irvine** (he/they)

**Director**

Matthew is a director, actor and playwright proudly from Winnipeg's North End. They are a 2023 alumni of the Stratford Festival's Michael Langham Directors Workshop and a graduate of the University of Winnipeg. Selected Credits include: Director: *Hockey Mom*, *Hockey Dad* (Upcoming, Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre Regional Tour), *Tales of Hoffman* (Manitoba Underground Opera), *Macbeth* (Stratford Workshop), *Bastard.* (OFUR), *The Show* (Royal MTC, Tiny Plays, Big Ideas), Assistant Director: *A Wrinkle in Time* (Stratford Festival), *Feast* (Prairie Theatre Exchange), *Waitress*, *The Three Musketeers* (Royal MTC). Matthew would love to thank his Mother, his Grandmother, his Nana, and his partner Melissa.



**Thomas Morgan Jones** (he/him)

**Dramaturg**

Thomas' work as a dramaturg, playwright, director, movement coach and teacher has been seen nationally and internationally. Passionately committed to playwrights and new plays, he has been working as a dramaturg for twenty-five years. As an artistic director, he programmed over 40 new works, including new plays by Ian Ross, Yvette Nolan, Hannah Moscovitch, Tara Beagan, Natalie Sappier, Ryan Griffiths, Shawn Wright, Donna-Michelle St. Bernard and many others. A former artistic director of Theatre New Brunswick and Prairie Theatre Exchange, Thomas is currently the Executive Artistic Director of The National Theatre School of Canada English Section in Tiohtià:ke/Montreal.



**Daina Leitold** (she/her)

**Set Designer**

Favourite set design credits: *Mix Tapes From My Mom* (Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre); *Glad To Be Here* and *Edward II* (Theatre by the River); *The Dark Lady\** (Shakespeare in the Ruins & Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan); *Hamlet* and *Timon of Athens* (Shakespeare in the Ruins); *Fame* (Winnipeg Studio Theatre); *Plé* (Manitoba Theatre for Young People); *Red Earth\*\** (One Trunk Theatre & Theatre Projects Manitoba); *The Cherry Orchard* (Theatre by the River & Echo Theatre).

\*SATAward Nomination for Production Excellence

\*\*Evie Award for Outstanding Production Design



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# MEET the ARTISTS



**Brenda McLean** (*she/her*)

**Costume Designer**

Brenda is a theatre designer, creator, and director working on Treaty 1 Territory in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She has been thinking about, training in, and making theatre for 30 years. Recent credits include set designing on *Owl Calling* with Roots Sky Productions; costuming designing *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Iago Speaks* with Shakespeare in the Ruins; and doing the set and costume designing for *Romeo and Juliet* with Thunder Bay's Magnus Theatre. This summer, she was an event producer on *Bike and Circuses* with Green Kids Inc., where she helped to bring active environmentalism and theatre together in Whittier Park.



**jaymez** (*he/him*)

**Lighting Designer**

With a diverse background in visual art, dance, theatre, opera, and music, jaymez brings a unique and multifaceted approach to design, refined over nearly two decades of professional practice. He has worked as a production designer, crafting dozens of lighting, video, and sound designs for a wide array of directors, choreographers, artists, and musicians. His artwork and designs have garnered international recognition across multiple continents and two Winnipeg Theatre Awards. Currently based in Winnipeg, he actively serves on the board of directors and is a proud member of IATSE Local ADC659. Website: [ifitmoves.net](http://ifitmoves.net)



**MJ Dandeneau** (*she/her*)

**Composer & Sound Designer**

**Prairie Theatre Exchange:** *Katharsis*, *The War Being Waged*, *Space Girl*, *Ponderosa Pine*, *A Killing at La Cucina*. **Elsewhere:** *Charlie Brown's Double Bill*, *Torn Through Time*, *Tiny Treasure*, *Frozen River* (MTYP); *Bittergirl: The Musical*, *Yaga* (RMTC); *La Liste*, *On Maronne*, *Ô Canada, tè qui?*, *Un Peu Partout*, *Rise*, *Red River* (Théâtre Cercle Molière); *Women of the Fur Trade* (National Arts Centre); *Songide'ewin* (Sarasvati); *The Diviners* (Stratford Festival). **AWARDS:** Kevin Walters Legacy Award, Indigenous Full Circle Award and The Rise Award. **ET CETERA:** MJ is a Métis/Anishinaabe woman from the Red River Nation Treaty 1. Over the past 20 years, her tours, studio and composition work have literally taken her all over the globe. Her mother's side comes from the Métis Red River Valley and her father's side comes from the Métis Nation/Anishinaabeg people of Penetanguishene, Treaty 61. Miigwech giga-waabamin poor ma faamiii.

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## DOODLES

*by Keith Barker*

# MEET the ARTISTS



**Katie Hoppa** (she/her)

Stage Manager

Raised and trained on Treaty 1 territory, Katie is a queer, neurodivergent stage manager based in Winnipeg. Select recent credits include: *Waitress*, *The Mountaintop* (RMTC); *The Waltz*, *The Year of Magical Thinking* (PTE); *Afterlight* (Rainbow Stage, Walk&Talk, The Keep); *Mary Poppins*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The*

*Wizard of Oz* (Rainbow Stage); *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Iago Speaks*, *Twelfth Night* (Shakespeare in the Ruins); *A Charlie Brown Double Bill* (Manitoba Theatre for Young People); *Bad Parent* (PTE, vAct, SoulPepper). Love to Kristjan, Rupert, and Juniper for all their support this season.

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by Marcia Johnson

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### **BIG STUFF**

Written & Created by

Matt Baram & Naomi Snieckus

Co-Created and Directed by Kat Sandler

**January 20 – February 1, 2026**

*A Baram and Snieckus Production*

### **THE UNDENIABLE ACCUSATIONS OF RED CADMIUM LIGHT**

by Drew Hayden Taylor

**February 24 – March 8, 2026**

### **TINY BEAUTIFUL THINGS**

Based on the book by Cheryl Strayed,

Adapted for the stage by Nia Vardalos

Co-Conceived by Marshall Heyman,

Thomas Kail, and Nia Vardalos

**April 7 – 19, 2026**

*A co-production with Capitol Theatre Port Hope*

### **PLUS HOLIDAY FUN:**

### **OUTSIDE JOKE'S HOLIDAY MUSICAL EXTRAVAGANZA**

**December 9 – 21, 2025**

*An Outside Joke production*

### **MUNSCH UPON A TIME**

Adapted by Debbie Patterson

Based on the books by Robert Munsch

**December 19, 2025 – January 3, 2026**