

Outside the March Announces Monumental 25-26 Season

Canada's leading immersive theatre company catapulted into a new era through state-of-the-art capital equipment, major partnerships and a new leadership structure



TORONTO, ON – Outside the March (OtM) unveils its 16th season today with its most expansive slate of programming to date, powered by state-of-the-art equipment acquired through its Outfit the March capital project. It features partnerships with Coal Mine Theatre, Rock Bottom Movement, Souleppper, Native Earth Performing Arts, SummerWorks, The Canadian Green Alliance, B Street Collaborative and Harbourfront Centre. Together with the announcement of a new leadership model and staffing expansion, the season marks a major growth milestone for Outside the March in its mission to make theatre an unforgettable experience.

Anchoring it all is the news that the company's **Outfit the March capital project has now raised over \$1.2 million of a total \$1.7 million.** Today OtM is **launching a grassroots campaign that will let fans and supporters “[grab a seat](#)”** by putting their name on one of OtM's new portable, durable, ultra-comfy branded chairs that put audiences right in the middle of the immersive action. This season that includes:

Todd Houseman's *The Children of the Bear*, a D&D-meets-Indigi-fantasy workshop presentation at Native Earth's Weesageechak Festival - [jump there](#)

A sprawling co-production of Clare Barron's hit *Dance Nation* with Coal Mine Theatre and Rock Bottom Movement taking over the entire Coal Mine building - [jump there](#)

The world premiere of **Erin Shields' *Medusa* at Soulepper**, with OtM's Outfit the March audio gear **putting audiences inside the legendary character's infamous head** - [jump there](#)

The launch of **"The Expansion Pack,"** a tricked-out community performance stream **with the SummerWorks Performance Festival and The Canadian Green Alliance** - [jump there](#)

An ambitious **new immersive commission from B Street Collaborative** in partnership with **Harbourfront Centre** - [jump there](#).

To steward the company's growth, OtM's **Board of Directors is pleased to welcome Managing Director Laura McCallum and Artistic Producer Lucy Coren, who join founding Artistic Director Mitchell Cushman as the organization's [new three-person executive team](#)** alongside a slew of staffing updates and additions.

"This season zeros in on the true spirit of Outside the March: collaborative, site-engaged, community-oriented, thrilling," say **Coren, Cushman and McCallum**. "And it is with those same values in mind that we are also excited to work together as OtM's new tri-leadership team. We believe that the most meaningful art, the most inspiring work, and the deepest impact comes from thriving in partnership. We can't wait to immerse ourselves in this work together, and to catalyze a new era of unforgettable experiences all over Toronto."

Outfit the March "Grab a Seat" Campaign

Immersive theatre no longer needs to be synonymous with back pain.

OtM is launching a grassroots campaign to support our major capital equipment project. It's a classic theatre chair donation campaign—with a twist. **For \$500, donor name plates will travel on OtM's brand new chairs and get a front-row seat to Outside the March's award-winning programming, wherever it goes.** And these aren't ordinary seats. They're state-of-the-art "prime comfort" Spec Seats—the same ones found courtside at NBA games—ensuring that site-specific theatre has the glamour and comfort of Toronto's finest entertainment.

The project's total fundraising is **now more than two-thirds of the way to its goal** thanks to support from **The Hilary and Galen Weston Foundation, The Department of Canadian Heritage's Canada Cultural Spaces Fund, The Stanley Shalom Zielony Foundation, The Canada Council for the Arts and The Metcalf Foundation.**

Photo by Dahlia Katz.



[Outfit the March](#) is a game-changing investment in OtM and Toronto's community of immersive artists. Comfy chairs are just the start: the infrastructure includes cutting-edge lighting, sound and video gear; green power equipment capable of running an entire production off-grid; a custom modular riser system; fully-equipped toolkit; and accessibility and front-of-house equipment.

"This season is proof: Outfit the March is already allowing us to throw our support for artists into overdrive," **says campaign lead and OtM Associate Artistic Director Sébastien Heins**. "Our productions are now capable of being even more imaginative and rigorous. And we're giving artists and partners across our community the tools they need to better deliver on their creative visions at an otherwise challenging time for the arts."

Watch the campaign video here: youtu.be/BBHyCJ76hXQ

All chair donations receive a charitable tax receipt. Donate here: outfitthemarch.ca

The Children of the Bear

By Todd Houseman

A workshop presentation at **Native Earth Performing Arts' Weesageechak Begins to Dance 38**

Developed with the support of **NAC Indigenous Theatre**

November 2025

Todd Houseman's **Dungeons & Dragons meets Indigi-fantasy play will receive a public workshop presentation** at Native Earth's [annual development festival of Indigenous work](#) in November 2025. The play follows a young mixed Cree family as they attempt to rise above the colonial structures that surround them; either by escaping more deeply into the game of fantasy or becoming the Crees their ancestors want them to be. In this workshop, **the family Dungeon Master, Todd, invites audiences to choose their own adventure across a vast game world represented in miniature through a scale 3D model of a D&D-inspired roleplaying campaign.**

The Children of the Bear has been in development since 2020 through Outside the March's **TD Forward March Program**. The sharing is co-directed by **Erin Goodpipe** and OtM Artistic Director **Mitchell Cushman**. It is assistant directed by OtM Metcalf Performing Arts Intern **Keavy Lynch**, with Production Design by **Tyson Houseman**. It stars creator **Todd Houseman**, Native Earth Artistic Director **Joelle Peters**, **Jeremy Proulx**, **Zara Jestadt**, **Dillan Chiblow**, **Kole Durnford** and **Vance Banzo**.

November 21 at 7:30PM

November 23 at 2PM

Aki Studio Theatre - 585 Dundas St. E

[TICKETS](#)

Dance Nation

By **Clare Barron**

An **Outside the March** and **Coal Mine Theatre** Experience

In Association with **Rock Bottom Movement**

April 2026

We're teaming up with [Coal Mine Theatre](#) for the professional Toronto premiere of **Clare Barron's** Pulitzer-nominated script. The production is directed by recent Dora Award-winning director **Diana Bentley** with OtM's new Artistic Producer **Lucy Coren** as Associate Director. *Dance Nation* will **take over Coal Mine's entire venue using Outfit the March equipment**—from the main theatre downstairs to [The Vault](#) upstairs and everywhere in between—in an immersive take on this hilarious, sharp play that's become something of a cult favourite.

The production features movement direction by **Alyssa Martin** of **Rock Bottom Movement**, one of the city's most exciting avant-garde contemporary dance companies, as well as set and lighting design by OtM's **Nick Blais**, sound design by **Miquelon Rodriguez** and costume design by **Kathleen Black**. The cast announced to date includes OtM founding artists **Katherine Cullen** and **Amy Keating** and former OtM Artistic Accomplice **Annie Luján**.

"If you were ever a 13-year-old girl, Clare Barron's daring, raw *Dance Nation* will probably hit you hard [...] It's a brave, visceral, excitingly off-kilter barbaric yawp of a play. And it gets at something excruciatingly tender: the burden of modesty on young American women." – **New York Magazine**

April 12 - May 3, 2026

Coal Mine Theatre, 2076 Danforth Ave.

[MORE INFO, FULL CREDITING AND TICKETS](#)

Medusa

By **Erin Shields**

A **Soulpepper** production in collaboration with **Outside the March**

June 2026

We're supporting the world premiere of prolific playwright **Erin Shields'** newest play, teaming up with **Soulpepper** once again after audience favourites *A Public Reading of an Unproduced Screenplay About the Death of Walt Disney* (2024) and *The Ex-Boyfriend Yard Sale* (2022). This fearless re-imagining of the Medusa myth is directed by **Mitchell Cushman** and stars longtime OtM and Soulpepper collaborator **Oyin Oladejo** in the title role.

From ancient myth to a modern-day “rage room,” **Medusa is a raw dive into female fury**, with the titular character haunted by the voices of the snakes in her head. **Thanks to our Outfit the March equipment, the production will feature a unique immersive sound experience** devised in collaboration with Sound Designer **Heidi Chan** (*Rainbow on Mars, Death of Walt Disney*), through which the voices of Medusa's inner-monologuing-snakes will be intimately broadcast to everyone in the audience through headsets.

Medusa's powerhouse team also includes OtM stalwarts **Nick Blais** (Lighting Design) and **Anahita Dehbonehie** (Set Design), as well as Dramaturg **Joanna Falck** and Costume Designer **Ming Wong**.

June 16 - July 19, 2026

Baillie Theatre, 50 Tank House Lane

[MORE INFO, FULL CREDITING AND TICKETS](#)

The OtM Expansion Pack

*A free gear lending program in partnership with **SummerWorks** and **The Canadian Green Alliance** running alongside our long-running **Artistic Accomplice** apprenticeship.*

August 2026

This year, we're launching The OtM Expansion Pack, **offering our Outfit the March equipment for free—along with full-time, fully-funded technical personnel—to a site-engaged production at 2026's SummerWorks Performance Festival.**

The project is supported by **The Canadian Green Alliance**, a not-for-profit dedicated to greening the performing arts, and funded through a **Sector Innovation grant from The Canada Council for the Arts**. The Expansion Pack will alleviate thousands of dollars from the selected production's budget, cut down on costly and wasteful one-off purchases and rentals, and allow artists to take their production design and audience experience to the next level. **A call for submissions will be released in November 2025.**

“SummerWorks is thrilled to continue our support for creative development in site-engaged contexts through this incredible and visionary OtM initiative,” says **SummerWorks Artistic Director Michael Caldwell**. “Costs are rising and spaces are eroding—so The Expansion Pack is a timely and necessary program, offering much-needed production resources and technical know-how to our diverse communities of performance practice. We're very excited to connect with a multitude of artists and designers within this upcoming Call for Submissions, and to uncover more about our amazing creative community(ies)!”

Simultaneously, **we're growing our Artistic Accomplice apprenticeship**. The program offers tailored mentorship and first-hand experience on a professional production—often the

apprentices' first. It's graduated over 60 artists over 12 years, including notable alumni **Bilal Baig, Shakura Dickson** and **Amaka Umeh**. Thanks to a **Grow Grant from The Ontario Trillium Foundation**, the program is set to expand in the next few years. This season, in concert with the OtM Expansion Pack, **the apprenticeship will have a technical focus for early career professionals** working at the intersection of technical direction, production management, design and creation.

Together these programs **are throwing open OtM's toolshed**, building critical capacity for site-engaged performance in our community.

A new commission from B Street Collaborative in partnership with Harbourfront Centre

By Outside the March

In development

In addition to an exciting lineup of current programming, the company is also announcing today **a commission from [B Street Collaborative](#) in partnership with [Harbourfront Centre](#) to create a major new immersive production over the next three years**. The as-yet-untitled project will be **the spiritual successor to *The Ministry of Mundane Mysteries***, OtM's wildly successful phone-based pandemic production, **and *The Tape Escape***, 2019's escape room-fueled immersive takeover of the former Queen Video Bathurst location. Like those past productions, it will be **created by OtM core team and associate artists alongside dynamic collaborations with guest artists**.

"The majority of OtM's flagship productions are playwright-driven new works or immersive takes on existing scripts," says **core project artist and OtM Creative Director Griffin McInnes**. "But *Mundane Mysteries* and *Tape Escape* represent another approach: form-busting, collectively-created projects devised and driven by the company itself. They're two of the projects we talk about (and hear about from our audiences!) the most because they represent what OtM is best at: **deeply collaborative, highly imaginative works with the audience's experience as their beating heart**. We're honoured by the support of B Street Collaborative and Harbourfront Centre. Their investment is allowing us to prioritize making art that's truest to our values."

Founded by arts supporter **Heather Jessiman** with artist **Dylan Trowbridge** as Creative Director, **B Street** has quickly established itself as a major hub for Toronto's independent performing arts community through its spaces, artist development and incubation of new works. **Harbourfront Centre** is one of Toronto's premiere centres for arts, culture, learning and recreation, with millions of visitors each year.

“Outside the March brilliantly and continually reimagines how audiences and artists interact—creating experiences that are visceral, playful and profound,” say **B Street Collaborative’s Jessiman and Trowbridge**. “We are thrilled to partner with a company that is so deeply aligned with our belief in collaboration, innovation and the transformative power of art. This commission embodies exactly the kind of artist-driven, audience-centred creation that B Street Collaborative exists to support.”

Leadership and Staff Announcement

As OtM rounds the corner on a new era of Outfit the March-supported programming, it’s being powered by **a growing staff and a new tri-leadership structure**. Founding **Artistic Director Mitchell Cushman** is joined by **Managing Director Laura McCallum**, responsible for the company’s operations, HR and finance; and by **Artistic Producer Lucy Coren**, responsible for producing the company’s flagship projects and expanding the company’s artistic reach. Together they’ll oversee OtM’s strategic and creative direction, its people, and its growth.

“Outside the March takes a tailor-made approach to producing its unique productions,” says **OtM Board Chair Madeleine Cohen**. “The Board considered how this ‘no-size-fits-all’ ethos could be further applied to its leadership and operations and is delighted to introduce a new tri-leadership model. We believe this structure and more specifically, Mitchell, Laura, and Lucy, best complement the company as a whole and position it for sustainability through its second decade and beyond. We are very excited about the work ahead for our new leadership team and believe all three leaders embody the spirit of OtM: innovative, curious, and dynamic.”

Both Coren and McCallum are experienced arts professionals with strong connections to the company. **McCallum has served as OtM’s General Manager since 2020** and has been central to transforming OtM’s operations, financial management, and HR and governance structures.

Coren has served as a producer and artist on several OtM projects. She was selected from a highly competitive national search by a committee struck by OtM’s Board of Directors that included members of OtM’s Board and Artistic Council. **Coren is an experienced producer who has worked across the UK for organizations such as Theatre Royal Plymouth and Tramshed Arts**. Since returning to Canada she has held positions at **The National Arts Centre, Factory Theatre and Native Earth Performing Arts**, and is a seasoned artist with a community-engaged practice.

The new leadership team is joined by some exciting new hires alongside new roles for existing staff members. Over the past six months, **Creative Producer Griffin McInnes has been serving as Interim Executive Co-Lead alongside Cushman**, stewarding the company’s programming while envisioning its strategic and creative direction and new operational structure. **McInnes now moves into the new position of Creative Director**, where he will shepherd the growth of

OtM's interactive storytelling and digital media portfolio alongside his continued roles as a core artist at the company and its senior manager of public fundraising and communications.

Several core staff members' roles are also evolving to meet the needs of the company's growing activities:

Associate Artistic Director Sébastien Heins' artistic role now encompasses management of the company's grassroots donorship, including coordinating Outfit the March's chair campaign as well as OtM's Creative Trust circle of donors.

Tori Morrison continues in a now-expanded role as Director of Production, serving as production manager on all OtM projects and as a lead facilitator of the Artistic Accomplish program.

Head of Design Nick Blais has taken on responsibilities as capital campaign equipment and acquisitions director. He will also continue to be a designer on the company's projects.

Simultaneously, the company announces **two new staff hires: Justin Miller as Producer and John Wamsley as Communications Manager**. Miller is **formerly the Artistic Producer at Tarragon Theatre and is an accomplished creator and producer**, often known as his drag alter-ego: award-winning tragicomedienne **Pearle Harbour**. He's serving as a producer of OtM's projects and the coordinator of The Expansion Pack and Artistic Accomplish programs.

Wamsley joins OtM after serving as Marketing Associate on 2025's *Performance Review* and 2024's *Death of Walt Disney*. He's worked as a Social Media Producer and Community Manager for TIFF, Pride Toronto and Paprika Festival, and is also an experienced performer who has appeared on stage at The Stratford Festival, Capitol Theatre and Canadian Stage.

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