

—FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—

ARTS CLUB ANNOUNCES LIVE ONLINE PANELS BASED ON PODCAST FEATURING PROMINENT THEATRE ARTISTS

CARMEN AGUIRRE, MARIE FARSI, AND OMARI NEWTON TO FACILITATE

VANCOUVER, B.C. (May 19, 2021)—The Arts Club Theatre Company today announced a series of [free panel discussions in June](#) that will feature a variety of prominent Vancouver theatre artists.

Titled **In Conversation: *This Is Something Else***, the series will comprise three live online panels that take a deeper dive into the stories explored by the Arts Club–produced investigative podcast [This Is Something Else: Consciously Eclectic Histories of the Arts Club](#). Created and hosted by **Andrew Kushnir**, the 5-part podcast has garnered national attention and acclaim.

Each In Conversation panel is designed to complement the podcast and invite audiences to reflect on different key themes that have shaped the local theatre ecosystem. **Carmen Aguirre, Marie Farsi, and Omari Newton** are confirmed to facilitate; panelists will be announced shortly.

Tuesday, June 1, 5–6 PM (PDT)

Theatre As an Agent of Social Change

Tuesday, June 15, 5–6 PM (PDT)

Beyond Panels: The Radical BIPOC Creators Changing the Face of Canadian Theatre

Tuesday, June 29, 5–6 PM (PDT)

Theatre Within Walls: The Battle for Venues in Vancouver

[All events are free, and RSVP is required.](#) Panels will be held as Zoom Video Webinars. Closed-captioning will be available.

PANEL DESCRIPTIONS + FACILITATOR BIOS

Theatre As an Agent of Social Change

Facilitator: Carmen Aguirre

Tuesday, June 1, 5–6 PM (PDT)

What patterns of theatre for social change can we find across different generations? What is considered subversive theatre in Vancouver? What have been the triggers for creating theatre for social change throughout the years, and what has been the community's response?

—MORE—



CARMEN AGUIRRE BIO

Carmen Aguirre, Core Artist at Vancouver's Electric Company Theatre and Artistic Associate of New Play Development at the Stratford Festival, is an award-winning theatre artist and author. She has written and co-written over 25 plays, the #1 international bestseller *Something Fierce: Memoirs of a Revolutionary Daughter* (winner of CBC Canada Reads 2012), and its bestselling sequel, *Mexican Hooker #1 and My Other Roles Since the Revolution*. Aguirre is currently writing an adaptation of Euripides' *Medea*; an adaptation of Moliere's *The Learned Ladies*, for Toronto's Factory Theatre; *Fire Never Dies: The Tina Modotti Project*, for Electric Company Theatre; and an adaptation of *The Multi-Headed Hydra*, for the Stratford Festival's seed commission program. Her digital piece *Floating Life*, commissioned by Stratford, can be viewed on its website. Aguirre is a 2020 finalist for the Siminovitch Prize, Canada's most prestigious theatre award. She is a graduate of Studio 58.

Beyond Panels: The Radical BIPOC Creators Changing the Face of Canadian Theatre

Facilitator: Omari Newton

Tuesday, June 15, 5–6 PM (PDT)

What are some of the notable success stories of Vancouver BIPOC theatre artists? What have been some of the unique theatrical languages and practices developed by Vancouver BIPOC theatre makers throughout the years? And what are the current barriers for local BIPOC artists to thrive?

OMARI NEWTON BIO

Omari Newton is an award-winning professional actor, writer, director, and producer. As a writer, his original hip-hop theatre piece *Sal Capone* has received critical acclaim and multiple productions, including a recent presentation at Canada's National Arts Centre. He has been commissioned by Black Theatre Workshop in Montreal to write a companion piece to *Sal Capone* entitled *Black & Blue Matters*. Newton and his wife, fellow professional playwright Amy Lee Lavoie, have received a Silver Commission from the Arts Club to co-write a new play: *Redbone Coonhound*, a bold and innovative satirical comedy that confronts instances of systemic racism in the past, present, and future. Newton's work in Speakeasy Theatre's production of Young Jean Lee's *The Shipment* earned him a 2017–2018 Jessie Richardson Theatre Award for Outstanding Performance by an Actor, as well as a nomination for Best Direction. Notable film and TV credits include Lucas Ingram on Showcase's *Continuum*, Larry Summers on *Blue Mountain State*, and voicing the Black Panther in multiple animated projects for Marvel. Newton has a recurring role as Nate on *Corner Gas* (the animated series) and a recurring role as Corvus on Netflix's hit animated series *The Dragon Prince*. He is also a senior instructor at the Vancouver Film School.

Theatre Within Walls: The Battle for Venues in Vancouver

Facilitator: Marie Farsi

Tuesday, June 29, 5–6 PM (PDT)

Vancouver is a city of constant change and reinvention, and, as one of North America's most expensive cities to live in, space is at a premium. What has this meant for local artists and cultural growth? For an artist or an arts organization, what are the pros and cons of owning/renting a space? How do these choices affect programming and practice?

MARIE FARSI BIO

Marie Farsi is an award-winning theatre maker and director primarily focused on the creation of new work throughout Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal, both in English and French. She has directed for and collaborated with companies across the country such as Théâtre La Seizième, the Stratford Festival, the Arts Club, Newworld, Rumble Theatre, Porte-Parole, and Crow's Theatre. She is also the co-founder and co-Artistic Director of the formal experimental company Babelle Theatre in Vancouver, which is the Company in Residence at the Arts Club this season. Farsi is the recipient of the 2019 Ray Michal Award for Outstanding Body of Work by an Emerging Director, the 2020 Dora Award for Outstanding Direction in the Musical Theatre division, and the 2020 Toronto Theatre Critics' Award for Best Director of a Musical.

ABOUT THE PODCAST

[*This Is Something Else: Consciously Eclectic Histories of the Arts Club*](#), a 5-part limited podcast series exploring more than 50 years of Vancouver's theatre scene, is created and hosted by Andrew Kushnir. Kushnir is the playwright behind the documentary plays *The Middle Place*, *Small Axe*, *Towards Youth: a play on radical hope*, and a collaboration with Vancouver's Khari Wendell McClelland called *Freedom Singer*. His Toronto-based company, Project: Humanity, is a leading developer of Verbatim Theatre and creates award-winning interview-based dramas. *This Is Something Else* is an Arts Club commission and Kushnir's very first podcast. His team of collaborators includes Project Assistant and EDI Consultant **Preeti Dhaliwal** and Sound Designer **Kevin Gault**. The music was composed by **The Golden Age of Wrestling**.

ABOUT THE ARTS CLUB

The Arts Club, one of the largest not-for-profit theatre companies in the country, is the principal gathering place for the theatrical arts in British Columbia. Comprising three unique venues across Vancouver, the Arts Club welcomes more than a quarter million guests annually, tours provincially and nationally, and engages students and artists alike through educational and professional programs.

Above all, the Arts Club is dedicated to the advancement of local artists telling stories from around the globe and, in particular, those of our region. From this, we believe that culture expands, an understanding of differences is nurtured, and art bursts forth. The Arts Club was founded in 1964 and is currently led by Artistic Director Ashlie Corcoran and Executive Director Peter Cathie White.

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