

CHRISTINE LESIAK

christine.lesiak@gmail.com

I am an Edmonton/Treaty 6 Lands-based theatre artist, teacher, mentor, and founder of Small Matters Productions (2007, www.smallmatters.ca), and Director of Play the Fool Festival (www.playthefool.ca). I specialize in performer-created and clown theatre, interactive performance comedy, site-specific and immersive performance, and experience design. I am an innovative collaborator, passionate about work that touches the heart, the mind and tickles the funny bone.

EDUCATION

- 2022* Experience Design Certificate Program - Odyssey Works, Baltimore, New York & remote
- 2016 Master of Fine Arts in Drama, Theatre Practice – University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Supervised by Profs. Michael Kennard and Dr. Piet Defraeye
- 1993 Bachelor of Science, Physics (First class honours) – University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada

PERFORMER CREATED WORKS FOR STAGE - SMALL MATTERS PRODUCTIONS

Original Full-Length and Touring Shows:

- 2023* ***The Space Between Stars*** (*in development*): Writer/lead performer. Dir Tracy Carroll. Premiering in March 2023, SkirtsAFire Festival, Edmonton.
- 2023* ***The Spinsters*** (*in development*): co-writer/performer with Tara Travis. Dir Suzie Martin.
- 2018-22* ***For Science!*** Writer/Lead performer. Dir. Deanna Fleysler. Beakerhead Festival 2019, Calgary; Edmonton International Fringe Festival 2018/19/22; Winnipeg Fringe 2019.
- 2017 ***Over Her Dead Body***: Concept/writer/performer. Dir. Suzie Martin. Duo performance (with Jan Henderson). Fringe Theatre Adventures Presentation Series at the Backstage Theatre, Edmonton. teatro dell'eco, Cochrane AB.
- 2016 ***The Object of Constellations***: Concept/writer/performer. Dir. Suzie Martin. Solo performance and installation performance. University of Alberta Observatory.
- 2013-15 ***Ask Aggie***: Writer/performer. Dir. Jan Henderson. Solo performance. Toured: Ottawa, Winnipeg, Edmonton Fringes, and private functions
- 2012-13 ***Fools for Love***: Co-creator/performer. Dir. Jan Henderson. Duo performance. Created with Adam Keefe, Anna Bado & Jan Henderson. Toured: Toronto Festival of Clowns, New York Clown Theatre Festival, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Victoria & Vancouver Fringes, Lunchbox Theatre, and Chautauqua Summer Festival in Swift Current.
- 2010-13 ***Sofa So Good***: Co-creator/performer. Dir. Jan Henderson. Duo performance. Created with Adam Keefe & Jan Henderson. Toured: Chautauqua Summer Festival, Matchbox Theatre Red Deer, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Saskatoon Fringes, and Punctuate! Theatre.
- 2008-09 ***Why Do Fools Fall in Love?***: Co-creator/performer. Dir. Anna Bado. Duo performance. Created with Adam Keefe & Anna Bado: Edmonton Fringe 2008, Matchbox Theatre 2009.

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Original Short Works (selected):

- 2016-2022 **For Science! Shorts:** Co-creator/performer. Various events, Edmonton, Calgary, Montreal.
- 2013 & 2016 **The Heavy Sleeper:** Co-creator/performer. Duo physical comedy short. Created with Jan Henderson & Adam Keefe, Expanse Movement Festival & Toronto Festival of Clowns 2013, Edmonton Clown Festival 2016
- 2015 **900 Seconds:** Creator/solo performer. Small Matters Productions. At Blackbox Music studios, Edmonton Found Festival. Dir. Beth Dart
- 2014 **Wrap Race:** Creator/performer. Solo physical comedy short, What's Cooking?, Edmonton
- 2013 **Diamonds:** Creator/performer. Solo physical comedy short, Fool's Gold Cabaret. Edmonton
- 2013-14 **Cupcake:** Creator/performer. Solo physical comedy short, Luna Dance Fusion Glitterball, Edmonton, Toronto Festival of Clowns.
- 2013 **Twistered:** Creator/performer. Installation, NextFest, Luna Dance Glitterball, Edmonton
- 2011 **Floral Dilemma:** Creator/performer. Solo clown short, Fool's Gold Cabaret, Toronto Festival of Clowns
- 2011 **The MAX-Ident:** Creator/performer. Solo clown short, Expanse Movement Festival. Edmonton
- 2009-13 **Dear Ron:** Creator/performer. Solo clown short. Nextfest 2009, Edmonton, Toronto Festival of Clowns 2010, Vancouver In Jest Festival 2013

STAGE EXPERIENCE - SELECTED OTHER

- 2009-22 **Dead Centre of Town:** Annually each October. Performer & collaborator, Catch the Keys Productions. Dir. Beth Dart. Fort Edmonton Park
- 2015-17 **Fortuitous Endings:** Ensemble performer, Toy Guns Dance Theatre. Dir. Jake Hastey. Canoe Theatre Festival (2015), Toy Guns Dance Theatre Season (2017), Edmonton
- 2017 **The Water Project:** Ensemble member. Dir. Michael Kennard. U of Alberta, Edmonton
- 2016 **The Runcible Riddle:** Performer/collaborator, Catch the Keys Productions. Dir. Beth Dart. Citadel Theatre, Edmonton
- 2015 **Elenor's Swimsuit:** Ensemble performer/creator with Swallow-A-Bicycle Theatre, One Yellow Rabbit 10-minute play festival. Calgary
- 2014-16 **Red Wine, French Toast and the Best Sex You've Ever Had:** Ensemble performer, Toy Guns Dance Theatre Dir. Jake Hastey. Calgary & Edmonton Fringes
- 2014-16 **Bright Lights/Cold Water:** Ensemble performer, Toy Guns Dance Theatre, Dir. Jake Hastey. Edmonton 2014-16, Guelph Ontario Dance Festival 2015
- 2014-15 **Propylene Glycol, Maltodextrin, Retinol Palmitate and Other Words I Don't Understand Like Love:** Featured performer, Toy Guns Dance Theatre, Dir. Jake Hastey, Alberta tour.
- 2014 **The Spider or the Fly?:** Lead, Defiance Theatre. Dir. Louise Casemore. St Albert.
- 2010 **Tight Rope:** Lead, University of Alberta New Works Festival. Dir. Scott Garland
- 2008 **The Sound System:** Ensemble, The System Theatre. Dir. Stefan Debroski. Edmonton & Calgary
- 2006-07 **TheatreSports:** Ensemble member, Rapid Fire Theatre. Edmonton

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DIRECTING & DRAMATURGY

- 2023* **Allergic to Water.** (in development) Director/dramaturg. Playwright/performer: Jacqueline Russell.
- 2022 **The Bean Collector.** Director/dramaturg. Playwright/performer: Kerri Strobl. As a part of the City of Edmonton/Edmonton Arts Council Yorath House artist residency series.
- 2021/22 **Jesus Teaches Us Things.** Director/dramaturg. Playwright/performer: Rebecca Merkley. Presented by Play the Fool Festival 2021, Edmonton, Edmonton Fringe Festival 2022.
- 2017-22 **The Rookie Cabaret.** Author: ensemble. Presented by Play the Fool Festival, Edmonton
- 2021 **DODONA.** Director/dramaturg/site-specific. Playwright: Vern Theissen, The Oracle Assembly
- 2021 **Bedeutung Krankenwagen.** Consulting dramaturg. Playwright/performer: Jake Tkaczyk. Presented by Play the Fool Festival, Edmonton
- 2021 **Inga and the Date.** Director/dramaturg. Playwright/performer: Kiana Woo. Presented by Play the Fool Festival, Edmonton
- 2021 **Good Morning Darkness.** Consulting Director/dramaturg. Playwright/performer: Adam Keefe. Presented by Play the Fool Festival, Edmonton
- 2019 **EUSHA.** Director/dramaturg. Playwright: Eliza Benzer. 2019 International Fringe tour
- 2018 **One Clown's Trash.** Co-creator/director. Author: Lisa Dawn Daniels. Edmonton Fringe Festival 2018
- 2016 **A Boy and His Goodbye.** Author: Jordan Sabo. For Edmonton Clown Festival
- 2011-13 **Fool's Gold Cabaret.** 4 events. Author: Various artists. Presented by Small Matters Productions, Edmonton

SHORT FILM, AUDIO & ONLINE EXPERIENCES

- 2022* **The Lost Sock Rescue Society:** Online & in person experience. Creator/performer. www.sockrescue.ca
- 2022 **The Ride/Le Manège:** Short film. Puppeteer (lead). Shadow puppetry, Flying Canoe Volant Festival, Dir. Eileen Sproule, Edmonton
- 2022 **Play the Fool Original Films:** Story consultant.
- 2021 **For Science! On Sabbatical:** Actor. Live action. Small Matters Productions/Upstander Productions. commissioned by The Winnipeg Fringe
- 2021 **O No Nose:** Short film. Lead actor. Live action, Upstander films
- 2021 **The Wish/Le Voeu:** Short film. Puppeteer (lead). Shadow puppetry, Flying Canoe Volant Festival, Dir. Eileen Sproule, Edmonton
- 2020 **BUTT KAPINSKI Film Noir for One.** Online interactive experience. Director and dramaturg. Playwright: Deanna Fleyscher
- 2020 **The Curio Shoppe.** Online interactive experience. Story collaborator and structure consultant. Catch the Keys Productions.
- 2020 **Pitch Please!:** Comedy audio play. Co-writer/performer. Dir: Suzie Martin, Citadel Theatre
- 2016 **Cuts in a Paper Sky:** Short film. Astronomer (lead), Upstander Productions. Edmonton
- 2014 **R<3SIE:** Short film. Rosie (lead), P Schmunk Prod. Edmonton

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TEACHING & MENTORSHIP

- 2017-present Mentor and facilitator: Rookie Cabaret artists, Play the Fool Festival, Edmonton
2021 Instructor: Audience Connection, Rapid Fire Theatre, Edmonton
2020 Mentor and consultant: *The Teleton-a-thon*, Calgary Clown Society, online show
2019 Ensemble collaborator: *Collectively Speaking*, Fringe Theatre Presentation Series.
2018-20 Facilitator: The Small Matters Physical Comedy Lab, Edmonton (monthly)
2018-20 Instructor: Don't Act, REACT: Physical Comedy Workshops, private practice.
2013-20 Instructor: Various school/ensemble/community workshops: Intro to Clown
2011-20 Mentor: Artists performing in *Fool's Gold Cabaret* & other cabaret events
2017 Mentor: Theatre-for-one artists, Found Festival, Edmonton
2016-17 Instructor: Clown and Presence, Toy Guns Dance Theatre programs, Edmonton
2015-16 Instructor: Drama 149 - Introduction to Dramatic Process, University of Alberta
2015 Instructor: Drama 453 - Physical Comedy, University of Alberta, Michael Kennard
2014-18 Assistant instructor: Extreme Joey & Auguste Clown Workshop, Jan Henderson
2012-14 Assistant instructor: Introduction to Clown Workshop, Jan Henderson
2011-15 Assistant instructor: Drama 507: Clown Performance, Jan Henderson
2011-12 Instructor: Creative Process for Designers, Edmonton Digital Arts College

INVITED PRESENTATIONS AND PANELS

- 2019 Panelist, Play the Fool Festival. *Is the King in the Room?*, Edmonton, AB
2018 Moderator, Play the Fool Festival. *Audience Interaction in an Age of Enthusiastic Consent*,
2018 Panelist, Festival des Clowns de Montréal. *Women in Clowning*, Montréal, QC
2017 Moderator, Play the Fool Festival. *Cultural Diversity in Clowning Practice*, Edmonton
2017 Panelist, Guelph Lectures - On Being Canadian, *On clown and reconciliation*. Guelph, ON
2016 Panelist, Edmonton Clown Festival. *What is clown?*. Edmonton.
2015 Presenter, *Creating Ephemeral Intimacy: Adapting to Audience in Theatre-for-one*,
Festival of Original Theatre, University of Toronto. Toronto.
2014 Panelist, In-Jest Festival. *Role of clown in community building*. Vancouver.

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 2021 Reimagining Anti-Oppressive Theatre Education – Theatre Alberta
2021 Anti-Fat Bias in Creative Process – Citadel Theatre Exchange Series, Edmonton
2020 Odyssey Works Empathy and Experience Design, remote, Abraham Burickson, USA
2020 Anti-Racist Training Foundational Course - Nicole Brewer, USA
2020 Honouring Your Footsteps: Creating Personal Land Acknowledgements – Theatre Alberta
2020 Citadel Theatre Industry Series – various lecturers including; Erin Shields, Hannah
Moskovitch, Daniel McIvor, Michel Healey, Jillian, Keiley, and Lorenzo Savolini
2020 Indigenous Canada – University of Alberta
2020 Clown Theory – London School of Clown - remote, Jon Davison Phd., UK
2019 Third Rail Projects Immersive Theater Intensive, Edmonton, Alberta
2018 Suzuki Method with Ellen Lauren – Banff Centre for the Arts, Banff, Alberta

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2018	Intimacy for the Stage with Siobhan Richardson – Chinook Festival, Edmonton
2017	Collaborative Curiosity, Complicite – Banff Centre for the Arts, Banff, Alberta
2017	Physical Comedy & Slapstick, Hilary Chapman – New York (USA), Quebec City, PQ
2015	Social Acupuncture, Darren O'Donnell – Mammalian Diving Reflex
2014-16	Ballet training, Jake Hastey - Toy Guns Dance Theatre, Edmonton
2014-15	Voice Pedagogy, Betty Moulton - University of Alberta, Edmonton
2014 & 2019	Clown Performance, Deanna Fleyscher - Butt Kapinski (LA), Edmonton
2009 & 2013	Clown Performance, Michael Kennard - Mump & Smoot, Edmonton
2013	Devising Physical Theatre Intensive, Adam Lazarus, Toronto
2012	Clown Performance Intensive, Aitor Basauri - Spymonkey (UK), New York
2012	Immersive Theatre Intensive, Punchdrunk Theatre (UK) - Theatre Alberta, Edmonton
2012	Character Physical Theatre Intensive, Adam Lazarus, Toronto
2012	Writing Sketch Comedy Through Improv, Kevin McDonald – The Kids in the Hall
2010-16	Apprentice to Jan Henderson in Clown Performance
2010	Advanced Clown Performance, Jan Henderson- U of Alberta Drama 507, Edmonton
2009	Bouffon, Eric Davis - Red Bastard, Edmonton
2009	Banff Centre Puppet Theatre Intensive, Peter Balkwill - Old Trout Puppet Workshop
2008-12	Singing & Voice, David Wilson – Private instruction, Edmonton
2007	Clown & Mask Intensive, Jan Henderson - U of Alberta Drama 407, Edmonton
2007	Keith Johnstone Intensive, Keith Johnstone, Edmonton
2005-08	Rapid Fire Theatre workshops, Jacob Banigan, Patti Stiles, Kevin Gillese

SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS AND AWARDS

2022	Yorath house artist in residence, City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Arts Council
2020-22	Canada Council for the Arts Grants, various.
2018	Official Holdover Selection, Edmonton International Fringe Festival: <i>For Science!</i>
2018	Alberta Playwright's Network Competition Novitiate Prize: <i>The Space Between Stars.</i>
2012-17	Alberta Foundation for the Arts grants awarded in 2012 (Sept/Mar), 2014, 2017, 2020
2011-20	Edmonton Arts Council grants awarded: 2011-15, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022
2015	Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship (SSHRC)
2015	Arts Graduate Scholarship, Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education
2015	Margaret Brine Master's Scholarship, Canadian Federation of University Women
2015	Walter H. Johns Graduate Fellowship, University of Alberta
2012-13	<i>Fools for Love</i> awards: Best in Fest Winnipeg Fringe 2013, Official Holdover Edmonton International Fringe Festival 2012, Pick of the Fringe Victoria 2013, Jenny Award (audience pick) 2012

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

2007-present	Artistic Director, Small Matters Productions, Edmonton
2016-present	Festival Director, Play the Fool Theatre Festival, Edmonton
2014-present	Artistic Associate, Toy Guns Dance Theatre, Edmonton
	Member of Theatre Alberta and Alberta Playwrights Network