

The Leading Player Project

An empowerment-driven training incubator culminating in a showcase and conference to address fatphobia in the arts, from March 13-27, 2023.

Paid opportunity for artists at any stage in their career who self identify with our mission statement

All artists in the intensive will be engaged under CAEA Equity DOT contracts

The "Leading Player Project" will welcome 10 plus-size musical theatre artists (5 GTA locals, 5 from arts communities across Canada) in March 2023, who identify gaps in their post-secondary education which are the result of anti-fat bias in their training. Candidates will attend a two-week intensive program in Toronto, participating in a series of empowerment and artistic development workshops that will prepare them to take on leading roles, instead of the secondary roles (best friend, nurse, aunt etc.) they were trained for at the collegiate level.

The purpose of this incubator is to connect artists who feel marginalized due to their bodies, and help them unlearn their internalized fatphobia through a community of personal and professional support. We aim to help these individuals, who deserve to take up space in the audition room, gain the confidence to submit for traditionally "thin roles", which will ultimately lead to positive representation of fat people on stage for future aspiring artists. In this way, we are contributing to the development and diversification of the Canadian musical theatre industry, making Canada a leader in this type of activism.

Program Overview

- **Audition songbook mentorship:** One-on-one coaching to find roles that are suited to the performers voice instead of just their body type.
- **Monologue mentorship:** One-on-one coaching to develop artists' current monologue selections and find new ones that are better suited to their skills and personality.
- **Dance workshops** (Theatre Jazz, Tap, Jazz, Contemporary): catered to address possible mobility restrictions, while raising the bar of excellence in style, character, energy and technique.
- **Accessibility in Theatre Workshop** To help inform the participants about the intersectionality of fatness and disability.
- **Monologue writing mentorship:** Artists will work with a writer to create a monologue about their experience to be included in the final showcase. By turning their experience into a monologue, we will help these artists process their lived experience and will create monologues specifically tailored for use by other fat artists.
- **Social media coaching and personal branding intensive:** Reimagining each artists' personal brand so that it is reflective of their ambitions and talents, and not restricted

by body type, to set them up for success in our industry that is influenced by the scope of an actor's social media presence.

- **Stage Combat Workshop** - Artists will be educated about stage combat to give them an additional hireable skillset, and learn the techniques in a way that is accessible and accommodates past injuries, to prevent future injuries in the workplace when attempting stage combat.
- **Theatre Business Workshop:** Providing participants with the fundamentals they need to have a successful career as an artist, including an introduction to producing their own works.
- Artists will participate in a **Headshot session** with a photographer and make up artist.
- **Improv workshops**
- **Group discussions:** Discussing industry goals, policy writing and how to move forward as a movement with a focus on community building.
- **Devising the conference:** Deciding how to share learned discoveries with other industry members
- **Prepare Showcase performance:** A public display of the true abilities of the 10 artists, designed to showcase their best work for industry members accompanied by a three piece band.

In addition to educational training, participants will engage in individual therapy sessions from a qualified psychologist who specializes in weight-based pathologies to address disordered eating, body dysmorphia, and comorbidities such as depression and anxiety. The artists will also contribute to discussions about how to move the needle forward on the issue of fatphobia in the arts industry towards greater societal understanding of our cause, and strategizing together on creating policy that specifically addresses size-discrimination in our industry, which will be petitioned to the Canadian Actors Equity Association (CAEA) Canadian Guild of Stage Directors and Choreographers (CGDC) and the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT).

In the second week of the program, the artists will work together to devise a conference geared towards industry professionals (open to the public) to be headlined by an industry showcase that the participants will create. This one day conference will include workshops and panels hosted and curated by the ten performers so they can disseminate the information that they acquired, and the discoveries they made over the previous two weeks. The conference will culminate in a showcase providing a platform for artistic directors and agents to experience the talents of the selected performers. This showcase will act as a re-introduction of these artists to industry gatekeepers, challenging them to rethink their biases, and consider these individuals for roles outside of their traditional casting practices.

Key Dates

- March 12, 2023 - Artist fly in
- March 13-17, 2023 - Workshops Week 1
- March 21-24, 2023 - Workshops Week 2 + Devising the showcase and conference
- March 26, 2023 - Theatre Load in, Tech Rehearsal + Conference setup

- March 27, 2023 - Conference + Industry Showcase
- March 28, 2023 - Artists fly out + theatre strike

Submission Information

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: JANUARY 13, 2023

DIGITAL CALLBACKS: JANUARY 16-20, 2023

Please submit a video (3 minutes maximum) that shows off your range of artistic abilities. This can include a song, monologue, dance or any combination of skill sets.

Applicants will be asked to fill out a questionnaire with their submission which can be completed in a written format or via a video or audio submission (no longer than 2 minutes for a combined length of 5 minutes). We want to get to know you as an artist and a human, applicants are encouraged to answer at least one of the questions via video submission.

EveryBODY on Stage strives to promote the practice of equal engagement opportunities, designed to encourage and increase diversity and eliminate discrimination. If there are any potential accessibility barriers preventing you from submitting, or if you require any assistance or have any questions, please reach out to

everybodyonstage@gmail.com

We would be more than happy to work with you to find a solution that meets your needs. Deadline extensions are available upon request.

This project is open to all artists and we would like to encourage submissions from both union and non-union performers.

[Click Here to Submit](#)