

WILDFIRE



TEXT
DAVID PAQUET

TRANSLATOR
LEANNA BRODIE

GRAPHIC:
THAÏLA KHAM PO

TALISMAN
THEATRE

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ARTISTIC NOTE : *Wildfire* is Talisman's 17th production. I fell in love with all aspects of the original French production. *Le brasier* was like an alchemical potion: an exotic blend of brilliant script, talent, artistry, and technology. The proportions were just right and the performance took on a life of its own. It was a perfect production, a rare elixir.

I am so happy that Talisman can give this production a new life and share it with a new audience. I am blessed to have found a team willing to replicate that concoction. And I am thrilled to embark on this English version with Jon Lachlan Stewart, an award-winning director, actor, and producer.

David Paquet is a Canadian playwright, who won the 2010 Governor General's Award for French-language drama, and the 2010 Prix Michel-Tremblay, for his play *Porc-épic*. His recent play *Le poids des fourmis* just won the 2022 Governor General's Award!

Founded in 2005, Talisman Theatre's mission is to produce English-language premieres of contemporary Quebec plays. We regularly commission translations, developing them through workshops and readings, to create an unadulterated experience of contemporary Quebec. This, our primary goal, makes us unique, and gives each production its distinctive appeal.

We are grateful to Canada Council for the Arts, Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, Conseil des arts de Montréal, Playwrights' Workshop Montréal, the Eric T. Webster Foundation, and all of our individual donors for their continued support.

We would like to acknowledge that we are on unceded Indigenous lands. The Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of the lands and waters on which we gather today.

—Lyne Paquette, Artistic Director of Talisman Theatre

AUTHORS' NOTE : *Wildfire* is my first foray into Montreal's English-language theatre scene. Considering this play intertwines notions of otherness and home, it seems like the perfect fit. Moreover, it is an honour to be at Bishop's University and to know that all of this is inspired by Philippe Cyr's dazzling French creation of the play. Endless thanks to Leanna Brodie's award-winning translation, Talisman Theatre's production, Wildside's invitation and Playwrights Canada Press' publication for helping *Wildfire* make its way to you. Above all, thank you, neighbours, for being there. It's nice to finally meet you.

—David Paquet, Author of *Wildfire*

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE When Lyne Paquette and David Paquet approached me about translating his play *Le brasier* for Talisman Theatre, I was delighted. I have known of Talisman for years as Quebec's premiere company dedicated to works in translation, but—as a translator formerly based in Toronto and now in Vancouver—I've never had the chance to work with them. A production by Talisman would be a chance for my work to be heard in Montréal for the first time (outside the context of TYA).

I've been aware of David since *Porc-épic*, which had a very successful Vancouver production... and of course, our mutual friends and colleagues include Rébecca Déraspe, Catherine Léger, and Olivier Sylvestre, all of whom I have translated more than once. In fact, David himself has commented that he feels a certain aesthetic kinship with these artists... and that the fact that I have had fruitful collaborations with them led him to seek me out for *Le brasier*.

As for me, I am excited about working with David on this play. It does remind me of the work of his contemporaries, and shares with them a kind of fierceness, sharp humour, and linguistic rigour... And there's the absurdity balanced with fiendishly tight construction of the best Chris Durang. But his voice is his own, unmistakable... and in this play in particular, it has the potential to connect quite powerfully to an English-speaking audience. I can't wait to share it with theatres I am working with, such as Ruby Slippers, the Arts Club, and the Tarragon... as well as my contacts in New York and Seattle. And Talisman, as always, is an excellent springboard for that kind of national visibility.

—Leanna Brodie, Translator of *Wildfire*

DIRECTOR'S NOTE David Paquet is one of the country's top playwrights, and yet, in the English community in Montréal and Canada, we don't often hear about his work. My passion with taking on this project is to be able to make this unique and visceral piece of theatre available to those anglophones in Montréal who may not go out to see his plays, due to the language barrier.

David has an intelligent, singular and enjoyable language, putting forward the poetry in the everyday, the lyricism in the small stories. With humour and impertinence, he leads his audience into crazy worlds of exploding imagination. The precise and rigorous construction of his texts makes them particularly effective.

I have had artistic discussions with original director Philippe Cyr, glimpsing at the original vision and I have to say in this sense there is a strong exchange happening between the French team that created *Le brasier*, and the English team that created *Wildfire*.

—Jon Lachlan Stewart, Director of *Wildfire*

Thank you for joining us! Enjoy the show!

Reviews

Instagram : "*Wildfire* was sublime! Such an incredible and inspiring piece. The text is layered, complex, innovative and human and the performances are so unique, rich, full and stunning. Go and see this show! I had an incredible time at @la_chapelle_sc with @talismantheatremontreal.--erinjlindsay, Jan 16, 23:52.

montreal rampage : "The performances by the actors is, as one might expect from these local favourites, outstanding. [...] *Wildfire* is devilish and delightful. Both pathos and humour come through in absurd situations and smart dialogue. Everything is on point. The result is satisfying and the production is a great success."--Rachel Levine, 2023-01-17.

Sur les pas du spectateur : "'Consumed' (!) and very satisfied by *Wildfire*. [...] The text is rich, the exchanges lively and, even if it is in English, I am very, very attentive, and often laugh too!"--Robert St-Amour, 2023-01-17.

atavu.ca : "This story, seeks something hidden in the abyss of the unconscious. In our roots... Who are we? [...] The play is brilliantly interpreted by Julie Tamiko Manning, Kathleen Stavert and Davide Chiazzese. Hats off to the artists!"--Jérôme Bouclet, 2023-01-18.

forgetthebox.net : *Wildfire* : "A Perfect Tension ... Lots of folks aim for this vibe, but this strikes the chord. ... I don't often go to plays, but when I do, I want them to be this good."--Dawn McSweeney, 2023-01-19.

westmountmag.ca : "I would go to see anything one of these actors is in, and here are all three in one play! Besides, where else can you see a play that includes a 'murderous pet tarantula'?"--Byron Toben, 2023-01-19.

CJAD iHeartRADIO : "*Wildfire* is a biting, witty surreal romp, with a spare but gorgeous staging, and delicious acting."--Sarah Deshaies, 2023-01-20.

theatrefunhouse : "The *Wildfire* of the title becomes volcanic in Stavert's devastating delivery of this climactic tale of lust and horror... Well worth catching."--Jim Burke, 2023-01-23.

mcgilltribune.com : "*Wildfire* is a blazing success... sardonic humour and twisting, cyclical storyline will offer audience members on both sides of the aisle plenty to talk about."--Dana Prather, 2023-01-24.

About the Playwright DAVID PAQUET



David graduated from the National Theatre School of Canada's playwriting program in 2006. He has received numerous awards (Governor General's Award, Michel-Tremblay Award, Sony-Labou-Tansi Award, CTDA Playwright Award, Association Québécoise des Critiques de Théâtre Award, Jessie Award) and his work has been presented in more than a dozen countries in Europe and North America. His play *Le poids des fourmis* just won the 2022 Governor General's Award.

About the Translator LEANNA BRODIE



Leanna is an award-winning actor, playwright, and translator whose passions include lifting up the stories and voices of women as well as championing a new generation of French-Canadian playwrights by transmitting their extraordinary theatrical visions into the English language. She won Vancouver's 2019 Jessie Award for Best New Play for her translation of David Paquet's *The Shoe*. She also won the Safewords National New Play Prize in 2018 for her translation of Olivier Sylvestre's *The Paradise Arms*.

About the Director JON LACHLAN STEWART



Jon is a bilingual theatre artist and artistic director of Surreal SoReal Theatre in Montréal, who specializes in physical theatre and movement, new creations, and puppetry. Some directing and creation credits include *Macbeth Muet*, *The Little Prince: Reimagined* (Crows' Theatre puppet production) and the upcoming *Cycle* (adaptation of an Israeli graphic novel). Recent Surreal SoReal productions include *Jonathan: a Seagull Parable* featuring actors and dancers living with physical disability, and *The King Stinks*, a grotesque political satire with puppets. Jon is also a full time actor and performer, and has worked in many productions around Canada. In upcoming years, Jon will be producing Erin Shields' *Beautiful Man (Beau Gars)* at Théâtre d'Aujourd'hui and developing a new puppetry piece in residence called *The Impossible Light*.

About the original Director PHILIPPE CYR



Philippe Cyr is a graduate of the École supérieure de théâtre de l'UQAM where he also completed his master's degree. He co-founded, l'Homme allumette in 2006, a theatre company dedicated to contemporary creation, and presented an adaptation of Jean-Paul Daoust's poetic text *Les cendres bleues* and Sarah Berthiaume's *Selfie* during a creative residency at the Centre du Théâtre d'Aujourd'hui. Philippe is now the general and artistic director of l'Homme allumette. He also created *Le brasier (Wildfire)* by David Paquet at the Centre du

Théâtre d'Aujourd'hui, a show that was remounted three times and toured the stages of the Maison de la culture de Montréal and elsewhere in Quebec.

He co-directed the *iShow* (AQCT Award 2013 - best Montreal production) which is touring in Canada and France. He directed *J'aime Hydro* by Christine Beaulieu (AQCT Award 2017 - best Montreal production) which was presented at the FTA, Théâtre La Licorne, Usine C, Théâtre La Bordée, Théâtre Maisonneuve, and is on tour throughout Quebec and France. Philippe is the director of Ariane Moffatt's *INCARNAT* and co-director of the film of the same name. Also in 2021, he directed the play *CORPS TITAN* by author Audrey Talbot, presented at Théâtre d'Aujourd'hui. He regularly contributes to academic life at UQAM and the National Theatre School of Canada. In August 2021, he became Artistic Director and co-Executive Director of Prospero Theatre.

TALISMAN THEATRE

A Talisman Theatre production of

WILDFIRE

#wildfire_play

Written by
DAVID PAQUET

Translated by
LEANNA BRODIE

Directed by
JON LACHLAN STEWART

Performed by
MARIA INGER

Performed by
KATHLEEN STAVERT

Performed by
DAVIDE CHIAZZESE

Set and Costume Design
ODILE GAMACHE

Lighting
CEDRIC DELORME-BOUCHARD

Sound Design
MYKALLE BIELINSKI

Stage Manager
ELYSE QUESNEL

Technical Director
VLADIMIR CARA

Costume assistant
LEONIE BLANCHET

Publicist
CHRISTOPHER CHABAN

Social Media
SOPHIE KASTNER

Based on the original French production by l'Homme allumette, directed by Philippe Cyr, and re-purposing the original stage design.

The Talisman-commissioned translation of *Wildfire* was developed in collaboration with Playwrights' Workshop Montréal.

TALISMAN THEATRE engages professional artists, who are members of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association under the terms of the INDIE 2.2 policy.

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THE CAST

MARIAH INGER (Claudie, Carole)



Mariah has been an actress for over 30 years, working in all mediums, from Film/TV, Video Games to Theatre. She has had the chance to work with some of the best in business, both in front and behind the camera. After 12 years of coaching actors both established and emerging, helping them achieve their career goals-She focused on advancing her own career goals, which include Script Consulting on new works, Directing, Producing, Mentoring, and creating new content.

Another focus is helping to move forward diversity and inclusion in the industry as a whole- She has been named both ACTRA Montreal and National's Chair of DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging), where she hopes to help the mandate of Diversity.

KATHLEEN STAVERT (Claudine, Caroline)



Kathleen holds an M.A. in Classical Acting from The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London, UK as well as B.F.A. Specialization in Theatre Performance from Concordia University. Selected theatre credits include Imago Theatre's production of *Other People's Children* (Hanna Moscovitch) at the Centaur Theatre; the Austrian tour of Molière's *L'École Des Femmes* (Vienna's English Theatre); and the role of Imogen in *Cymbeline* (Les Foules, UK). You may have seen her as a recurring character in the acclaimed TV show *Le Temps Des Framboises*. She's also appeared in films in *Alert*, *STAT*, *Fatal Vows* and *Blind Trust*. In London she won the UK Monologue Slam L.A. edition for her performance in a self-penned monologue entitled *The Fernsdale Wyoming Spelling Bee Competition*.

Wildfire will be Kathleen's third show with Talisman Theatre, she played the role of Julie in *Me & You* (2016), and Rose in *Clean Slate* (2019).

DAVIDE CHIAZZESE (Claudette, Clément)



After graduating from the Professional Theatre Program at John Abbott College, where he was awarded both the Karla Napier Scholarship and the Pamela Montgomery Award, Davide became an Artistic Associate of Teesri Duniya Theatre. During his time there, he performed in main stage productions, staged readings and began his training as a director by completing a comprehensive directing mentorship in collaboration with

The Other Theatre's Stacey Christodoulou. Davide was also invited to Black Theatre Workshop's Artist Mentorship Program in its inaugural year, as part of the directing program. Davide has also appeared in a number of commercials, television series and films such as *The Lottery*, *Helix*, *Being Human* and *X-Men: Apocalypse*.

PRODUCTION TEAM

Set and Costume Designer ODILE GAMACHE



Odile has been working on Montreal stages as a set and costume designer since 2013. Upon leaving the National Theater School of Canada, she allied herself with the director Félix-Antoine Boutin and together they founded the company of performing arts *Creation dans la chambre*. Focusing their research on the sacred, the private and the political in unusual settings, this year they are completing their eighth collaboration on the production *Les larmes amères* by Petra Von Kant, recently presented at the Prospero Theater. In addition to her company's activities, she designed the scenography for around forty dance and theater shows, including four under the direction of Philippe Cyr, with whom she has had a close collaboration since 2016, notably on *Le brasier* (2016-2019), *Prouesses et épouvantables digestions du redouté Pantagruel* (2018), *Ce qu'on attend de moi* (2017-2019) and, not forgetting, the documentary piece by Christine Beaulieu, *J'aime Hydro* (2016-2019) which still runs today through Quebec since its creation.

Lighting Designer CÉDRIC DELORME-BOUCHARD



Lighting designer, set designer, and director, Cédric Delorme-Bouchard has created more than 150 designs for theater, dance and opera. His designs have been shown in more than fifteen countries including North America, South America, Europe and Asia. On the Montreal scene, he frequently collaborates with renowned directors. As a stage director and artistic director of *Chambre Noire*, he directed the staging and design of *Lamelles* (Usine C, 2018 and Théâtre du Trillium, Ottawa, 2019), *Dispositif* (Tangente, 2019) and the opera *Le vaisseau-cœur* (Bourgie Hall of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 2019). He is currently artist in residence at Usine C. In addition to his practice as a designer, Cédric has been a coach, internship supervisor and lecturer for various educational institutions including the National Theater School of Canada, UQAM, Concordia University, Show Business School as well as Cégep de Brébeuf and Cégep de Lanaudière.

Sound Designer MYKALLE BIELINSKI



Mykalle practices singing, theatrical interpretation, musical composition and poetic and scenic writing. Her works are sensory concerts between music, orality, spirituality and relational art and where the voice embodies a research on being and the sacred. In 2015, she created *Gloria* (Operaestate, La Chapelle Scènes contemporaines, Mois Multi, CAM en tour, PushOFF, Re: flux, OFFTA), a 360° multimedia solo sung in 6 languages, then *Mythe* in 2019 (Espace libre, Mois Multi, OFFTA) where a choir of women celebrates impermanence to reconcile us with our finitude. A graduate of UQAM in theatrical performance and intern at Eugenio Barba's Odin Teatret, she also collaborates as a musician, actress or sound designer with, among others, Mélanie Demers, Édith Patenaude, Véronique and Gabrielle Côté, Frédéric Blanchette, Jocelyn Pelletier, Philippe Cyr, hybris projects and many others.

Stage Manager ELYSE QUESNEL



Elyse (She/Her) is a Montreal based stage manager and assistant stage manager. Recent stage management credits include: *Three Women of Swatow* (Centaur Theatre), *Diggers* (Black Theatre Workshop), *Cymbeline* (Repercussion Theatre), *Meet Me* (LATP/Teesri Duniya Theatre), *Extra/Beautiful / U*, *Omi Mouna* (Infini theatre), *The Sound Inside*, *Between Riverside and Crazy*, *Category E*, *Orphans* (Coal Mine Theatre), *Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It* and *The Taming of the Shrew* (SLSF). Recent assistant stage management credits include: *Thy Woman's Weeds*, *At the Beginning of Time*, (Centaur Theatre), *April Fools*, *Indecent* (Segal Centre) and *The Snow Queen* (Theatre New Brunswick). She has been nominated for Outstanding Contribution to Theatre from the Montreal English Theatre Awards committee for her work on *Thy Woman's Weeds* as part of the stage management team. She has also been awarded Shaw Festival Rookie of the Year Award (Cricket Team -2015), Pamela Montgomery Award (John Abbott College - 2013).

PREVIOUS TALISMAN THEATRE PRODUCTIONS include: Daniel Danis' *That Woman* and Michel Marc Bouchard's *Down Dangerous Passes Road*, both translated by Linda Gaboriau; Marilyn Perreault's *Rock, Paper, Jackknife...* and Sarah Berthiaume's *The Flood Thereafter*, both translated by Nadine Desrochers; Pierre Michel Tremblay's *Coma Unplugged* translated by Micheline Chevrier; Suzie Bastien's *The Medea Effect* translated by Nadine Desrochers;; Olivier Kemeid's *The Aeneid* translated by Judith Miller; Fabien Cloutier's *Billy (The Days of Howling)* and *Province* by Mathieu Gosselin in co-production with The Other Theatre both translated by Nadine Desrochers; *Me and You* by Talia Hallmona and Pascal Brullemans translated by Alison Bowie; *Yukonstyle* by Sarah Berthiaume and translated by Nadine Desrochers; *Vic and Flo saw a Bear* by Denis Cote and adapted/translated by Michael MacKenzie; *Clean Slate* by Catherine Chabot et al and translated by Jennie Herbin; *Habibi's Angels* by Hoda Adra and Kalale Dalton-Lutale; *Antioch* by Sarah Berthiaume and translated by Iris Cronin; and last season's *Night from the 4th to 5th* by Rachel Graton and translated by Katherine Turnbull.

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SPECIAL THANKS TO TALISMAN THEATRE'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS :

Christine Lord (President), Maria Eliades (VP), Shayne Lovesin (Secretary), Julie Gaboriault (Treasurer), Paul Chambers, Catherine Doyle, Gérald Gauthier, and Michael MacKenzie.

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