

canadianstage

“I THINK WE MIGHT BE KNEE DEEP IN WOMAN SHIT.”

– Susanna Fournier

ALWAYS STILL THE DAWN

Written by **Susanna Fournier**

Directed by **Liza Balkan, Severn Thompson**

A Canadian Stage Production - Commissioned by Canadian Stage

April 7-26, 2020 -- Berkeley Street Theatre

“There are ambitious independent theatre-makers and then there is
Susanna Fournier.” – *Toronto Star*



Following the success of her critically acclaimed trilogy, *The Empire*, award-winning playwright, Susanna Fournier, presents a double bill of new work with ***Always Still the Dawn***. A timely exploration of femininity, power and family from one of the most original young voices to emerge in Canadian theatre, ***Always Still the Dawn*** is on stage at the Berkeley Street Theatre, April 7-26, 2020.

FOR CANADIAN STAGE: BRENDAN HEALY, Artistic Director MONICA ESTEVES, Executive Director

ALEXANDRA BAILLIE Board Chair

canadianstage

Bristling with anger, humour and intelligence, four actresses -- Stratford Festival veteran Sarah Dodd, Sochi Fried, Krystina Bojanowski and Dora Award-winning actor, director, writer and educator Fiona Sauder -- bring eight women to life in two rebellious works that examine family, connection, addiction, ambition, heartbreak and obligation.

In the sardonic *All the Ways You Scare Me*, directed by Severn Thompson, recovering-anorexic and wannabe-Jungian-psychoanalyst Sophie comes face-to-face with Diane, her revered academic mother, via an intense Skype call. It's followed by awkward cocktails with her struggling-artist sister, Sylvia, and their father's latest girlfriend, Jessica. Funny, enigmatic and thought-provoking, *All the Ways You Scare Me* takes us on an unexpected journey through the complications of modern life interwoven with mythical forces that lie beneath the surface. First written six years ago, its urgency has only increased in a #metoo world.

In the wildly experimental *Ghosts of My House*, directed by Liza Balkan, a mother and three sisters (one already dearly departed) grapple with what it means to be a mother and a sister while struggling to keep the family together amidst the looming threat of a disturbed teenage brother. After this transfixing meditation on mental illness, femininity, and violence, you will never listen to the Matthew Good Band the same way ever again.

"I think of the double bill as a prism -- exploring the fraught complexity of family dynamics, grief, compulsion, rage, and longing within women dancing on the edge of collapse -- or revolution," says Susanna Fournier. "Each play is a beam of light hitting this prism from different angles. What emerges is a more complex dance of light than either play could produce on its own. *Ghosts of My House* inherits the world *All The Ways You Scare Me* shatters apart. In its entirety, ***Always Still the Dawn*** reveals what lies beneath the surface of eight women's lives, inviting the audience to shine their own experiences through its prism."

"Susanna Fournier is one our country's most exciting and adventurous writers. We are proud to have commissioned and to be premiering this bold and ambitious double-bill," says Canadian Stage Artistic Director Brendan Healy."

Always Still The Dawn is on stage at the Berkeley Street Theatre Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 8 PM, Fridays at 7 PM and Saturdays and Sundays at 2 PM. Tickets can be purchased at canadianstage.com or by calling the box office at 416-368-3110 or in person at the Berkeley Street box office located at 26 Berkeley Street.

ABOUT SUSANNA FOURNIER

Susanna Fournier is an award-winning Canadian theatre-maker, actor and educator. Her main crush is constructing new texts for live performance and visioning interdisciplinary productions. Her work is rowdy, joyous, and sometimes "impossible". In 2018/19, her company, PARADIGM productions, launched her critically acclaimed trilogy, *The Empire*. A graduate of The National Theatre School of Canada and Generator's Artist Producer Training Program, Susanna was the first North American

FOR CANADIAN STAGE: BRENDAN HEALY, Artistic Director MONICA ESTEVES, Executive Director

ALEXANDRA BAILLIE Board Chair

canadianstage

playwright to show work at *Welt Bühne*, an international festival hosted by Residenztheatre in Munich where her text, *antigone lives**, premiered in June 2018. For Susanna, writing explores the space between who we are and who we want to become – the story we know and the one our spirit wants to tell. She's currently working on her first book of poetry.

www.susannfournier.com www.empiretrilogy.com

ABOUT CANADIAN STAGE

Canadian Stage's mission is to be the leading contemporary performing arts organization in the country. A collision of disciplines and cultures, Canadian Stage reflects the dynamism and complexity of Canada and is a vital artistic force locally, nationally, and internationally. In its over thirty-year history, Canadian Stage has employed thousands of artists and developed and produced hundreds of new productions. Many of the plays developed by Canadian Stage have been awarded and nominated for Canada's most prestigious literary and performing arts honours, including Governor General's, Chalmers and Dora Mavor Moore Awards. Throughout the theatre season, nearly 100,000 patrons attend performances and workshops in our three Toronto venues. Throughout our history, Canadian Stage has provided outstanding education and outreach programs cultivating a diverse audience demographic.

**To receive further information, please contact
CATHY PAINE at 416-367-8243 ext. 250 or cpaine@canadianstage.com**