

**Toronto Dance Theatre announces a dynamic 2024/25 season,
which takes the company's programming outside the walls of the Winchester, exploring site
specificity, durational performance, and interconnectivity**

**With a focus on partnership, TDT presents new projects with Nuit Blanche, Toronto Biennial
of Art, and The Bentway in the coming season**

At the Winchester Street Theatre

***The Magic of Assembly* by Andrew Tay, Ashley 'Colours' Perez and LAL returns
The Pool by Aisha Sasha John**

Partnered presentations

***Coalescing Towards* by Michele Rizzo (Milan), Presented by Nuit Blanche Toronto in
partnership with TDT**

Ness Lee X TDT, Presented by the Toronto Biennial of Art

To-be-announced commission in partnership with The Bentway

View the season video [HERE](#)

Toronto, August 28, 2024 – Toronto Dance Theatre (TDT) is thrilled to unveil a wide-ranging and kinetic programming line-up for 2024/25 that sees the company expand beyond the walls of the historic 80 Winchester Street Theatre, with a season that explores site specific work, durational performance, and interconnectivity.

Building upon the successes of the last two seasons, the TDT 2024/25 season brings back an audience favourite, introduces new work and new company members, and includes major partnerships with Nuit Blanche, the Toronto Biennial, and The Bentway, as well as resumption of touring.

"This season at TDT, you'll notice the overarching themes of site, duration and interconnectivity running through all of the programming," says Artistic Director Andrew Tay. "Multiple projects will interact with unique locations and environments outside of our theatre, and remounts of two recent productions will be performed outside the city for the first time since I arrived as Artistic Director. Choreographers this

season are also asking audiences to sit with specific ideas of time, manifested in part, through durational performances that break away from traditional concert dance formats.

“Finally, all of the works for 24/25 are interested in the idea of collectivity and the collective body, and how to connect to each other through performance. This is reflected in the many artistic collaborations and partnerships in the community we have cultivated which I see as an important statement on how to support each other during these challenging times where the cultural landscape is in a process of great change - demonstrating that by working together we can realize artistic ideas in ways not possible if we were to do things individually.”

The season unfolds in early October with a major presentation in partnership with Nuit Blanche Toronto, **Coalescing Towards** from Italian choreographer **Michele Rizzo**. An international partnership, **Coalescing Towards** is a 12-hour durational performance set within a unique industrial space near Toronto's waterfront. Revealing the concealed, yet dynamic space surrounding emotions like ecstasy, euphoria and anticipation, **Coalescing Towards** evolves through repeated sets of simple pedestrian movements, enacted in unison by groups of performers as they navigate their environment. A gradually intensifying dance performance investigating the concepts of repetition and unison, exploring the capacity for movement to forge togetherness, this one time only performance featuring 15 dancers runs from October 5 at dusk to October 6 at dawn.

A Milan-based choreographer whose work explores processes of transformation and transcendence, Michele Rizzo's piece **HIGHER** has toured internationally since 2015 and the extended version **HIGHER xtn** was recently acquired to the Stedelijk Museum's collection in Amsterdam. Since 2020 Rizzo has collaborated with fashion brands such as MARNI, Off-White, Magliano and Moschino.

The Mainstage season gets underway in November with a remount of the audience hit **The Magic of Assembly** by **Ashley 'Colours' Perez** with **Andrew Tay** and **LAL**. Following five Dora nominations, including best Outstanding Production in 2023, TDT remounts **The Magic of Assembly** with four performances in Toronto before embarking to Montreal for the international dance platform **CINARS**. A choreographic dialogue between Street Dance and Punking/Whacking artist Ashley 'Colours' Perez and TDT Artistic Director Andrew Tay, **The Magic of Assembly** blends elements of Punking/Whacking and unapologetically queer performance and is set to an evocative electronic score by Polaris Prize-nominated duo LAL (Nicholas Murray and Rosina Kazi), who perform live alongside eight members of the TDT ensemble.

Later in November, TDT resumes collaboration with visual artist **Ness Lee** for a new performance work featuring the company ensemble, presented as part of the **Toronto Biennial of Art** program **Your Timing is Perfect: Moments and Movements of Inquiry** curated by Jenn Goodwin.

This durational event will be performed on November 23rd, November 27th, and December 1st, 2024, at 32 Lisgar Street.

Following an initial collaboration during the **Performance Clash** in 2020, TDT and Ness Lee have come together to imagine a performance that will gently move through the Biennial exhibition space, with seven performers interacting with Lee's distinctive sculptures and objects. Finding moments of intimacy between their bodies and the plush characters Ness creates, the dancers will animate the gallery through a tender parade, embodying the breath of space as a momentary feeling of one another.

A Toronto based artist whose work draws upon the personal history and narratives of their diasporic

cultural upbringing and the relationship to the body as a carrier of felt language and lived emotions, Ness Lee has been shown in institutions such as the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, the Gardiner Museum, the Art Gallery of Hamilton, as well as galleries in New York, Los Angeles, India, Mexico, Tokyo, and Taiwan.

Back at the Winchester in the new year, TDT presents a new performance project led by Affiliate Artist **Aisha Sasha John** featuring the company ensemble, *The Pool*. Across three distinct suites, *The Pool* celebrates the patterns that emerge in a group body as its individual members perform varying qualities and degrees of agency. The first suite is inspired by the movement patterns of groups of animals – pods, herds, schools, shoals. The second suite dances relationality, investigating the border between listening and expressing, hearing and heeding. In the third and final suite, percussion, juxtaposition and reflection create a foundation for the most beautiful breathing.

In June 2025, TDT, in partnership with **The Bentway**, will premiere a site-specific dance piece that engages with The Bentway's unique location under the Gardiner. This major work is created by a leading international choreographer whose work is understood as a format of speculative fiction that can propose complex and manifold understandings of body, gender, species, ethnicity, knowledge and history. The project will culminate with public performances. More details and artistic team to be announced soon.

Also in June, TDT is thrilled to bring an expanded version of **Fran Chudnoff's FACE RIDER**, which first premiered at TDT in the 2023/24 season, to the MAI (Montréal, arts interculturels). Created by Chudnoff in collaboration with multi-media artist Driftnote and fashion designer Angela Cabrera, *FACE RIDER* builds on the iconography of the hermit, the hog, and the himbo. The performance is a queer indie sleaze swamp dump celebrating gender deviance, glittery resurrection, and the chaotic joy of togetherness. It played to sold out houses and rave reviews at TDT's Winter Double Bill in February 2024.

Residencies and Support Programs for Artists in the Community

Beyond performances with the company ensemble, TDT continues its commitment to supporting artists in their practice and career development with programs that provide space at the Winchester Street Theatre to a diverse spectrum of artists and perspectives, for creating work.

In the fall and spring, TDT again offers artists the opportunity to showcase 10 minutes of new material with the works-in-progress series, **EYES ON BEGINNINGS**. Audiences can play a role in the development process while discovering nascent creative propositions and artists benefit from facilitated audience feedback sessions.

The **PILOT EPISODES** residency program returns for a fifth iteration, in which six choreographers or creators will have their first experience collaborating with TDT company dancers during an immersive, one-week residency in the spring. TDT also brings back their popular **PLUG-N-PLAY RESIDENCIES**, which consist of week-long, half-day residencies in the studio free-of-charge. The call for artists will be launched in September, inviting choreographers and creators in body-centered practices to apply for free studio time. This program provides artists with an opportunity to deepen their ideas and experiment with collaborators in TDT's studios.

New this year, TDT is happy to announce a new partnership with CanAsian Dance. **EntryWaves** is a pilot project offering free rehearsal space through six residencies in the Fall season - open to any artist who identifies as being from the Asian Diaspora.

TDT also welcomes two project specific residencies this season, **From The Back**, a tri-city kiki ball initiative that connects vogue and ballroom scenes across Canada, facilitated by Danah Rosales, and **Niswa**, a new full-length choreographic creation by Meryem Alaoui, of Jasad Dance Projects, featuring female performers from the Middle East and North Africa.

Tickets will become available for programming as relevant, in the weeks to come. Ensuring that cost is not a barrier, TDT remains committed to offering sliding scale pricing and pay-what-you-can for boundary-pushing contemporary dance, live performance and like-minded activities.

For more information, visit www.tdt.org (<http://www.tdt.org/>) or call 416-967-1365, x123.

Social handles

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TORONTO DANCE THEATRE 2024/25 SEASON

Coalescing Towards

Presented by Nuit Blanche Toronto in partnership with TDT

A site specific durational work, free to the public during the City of Toronto's 2024 Nuit Blanche Exhibition

Choreographed by Michele Rizzo (Milan)

October 5-6, 2024 from 7:00 PM to 7:00 AM

Free Public Presentation

Location: TBD

Our first international partnership of the season, *Coalescing Towards* is a 12-hour durational performance set within a unique industrial space near Toronto's waterfront. Choreographed by Italian Choreographer Michele Rizzo, this one time only performance featuring 15 dancers runs from October 5th at dusk to October 6th at dawn.

Coalescing Towards reveals the concealed, yet dynamic space surrounding emotions like ecstasy, euphoria and anticipation. The performance evolves through repeated sets of simple pedestrian movements, enacted in unison by groups of performers as they navigate their environment. A gradually intensifying dance performance investigating the concepts of repetition and unison, exploring the capacity for movement to forge togetherness.

Milan-based choreographer and visual artist Michele Rizzo's work explores processes of transformation and transcendence. His work *HIGHER* has toured internationally since 2015 and the extended version *HIGHER xtn* was recently acquired to the Stedelijk Museum's collection in Amsterdam. Since 2020 Rizzo has collaborated with fashion brands such as MARNI, Off-White, Magliano and Moschino.

"Watching Rizzo's dancers explore their bodies, both individually and as a group, seemed like the most natural, and human, thing in the world." - ArtReview

The Magic of Assembly

A Toronto Dance Theatre mainstage presentation

Created by Ashley 'Colours' Perez, Andrew Tay, LAL

November 7-9, 2024 at the Winchester Street Theatre, Toronto

November 15, 2024 as part of CINARS Official Programming at Les Grands Ballets Canadiens - Studio-Théâtre, Montreal

Following five Dora nominations, including best Outstanding Production in 2023, TDT remounts *The Magic of Assembly* with four performances in Toronto before embarking to Montreal for the international dance platform *CINARS*.

The Magic of Assembly is a choreographic dialogue between Street Dance and Pinking/Whacking artist Ashley 'Colours' Perez and TDT Artistic Director Andrew Tay. Blending elements of Pinking/Whacking and unapologetically queer performance, the work is set to an evocative electronic score by Polaris Prize-nominated duo LAL (Nicholas Murray and Rosina Kazi), who perform live alongside eight members of the TDT ensemble.

"Here, Toronto Dance Theatre continues to provide audiences and artists alike with a sense of belonging through inclusive yet profound dance performance." - Intermission Magazine

Ness Lee X TDT

Presented by the Toronto Biennial of Art

A new performance work in collaboration with visual artist Ness Lee as part of the Toronto Biennial of Art

November 23, 27 and December 1, 2024

Free Public Presentation

Location: 32 Lisgar Street, Toronto

TDT collaborates with well known Toronto visual artist Ness Lee on a new performance work featuring the company ensemble. This free durational event will be performed on November 23rd, November 27th and December 1st, 2024 at 32 Lisgar Street.

After their initial collaboration during the *Performance Clash* in 2020, TDT and Ness Lee come together to imagine a performance that will gently move through the Biennial exhibition space, with seven performers interacting with Lee's distinctive sculptures and objects. Finding moments of intimacy

between their bodies and the plush characters Ness creates, the dancers will animate the gallery through a tender parade, embodying the breath of space as a momentary feeling of one another.

Ness Lee draws upon the personal history and narratives of their diasporic cultural upbringing and the relationship to the body as a carrier of felt language and lived emotions. With these embodied experiences, Lee creates tender and surreal works that take shape in various mediums, spaces and realms of expression as an effort in seeking comfort, forgiveness and a desire for an end to a perpetual state. Their work has been featured in galleries and institutions in Canada as well as internationally in New York, Los Angeles, India, Mexico, Tokyo and Taiwan.

The Pool

A new performance project featuring the company ensemble

Created by Aisha Sasha John

February 19-22, 2025 Daytime presentations open to the public

March 5-8, 2025 Evening presentations open to the public

Pay-What-You-Can

Location: Winchester Street Theatre, 80 Winchester Street Toronto

The Pool considers the group body as the unit of expression across three distinct suites. The first suite is inspired by the movement patterns of groups of animals – pods, herds, schools, shoals. The second suite dances relationality, investigating the border between listening and expressing, hearing and heeding. In the third and final suite, percussion, juxtaposition and reflection create a foundation for the most beautiful breathing.

Aisha Sasha John is interested in choreographing performances that occasion real love. Her duet created with Devon Snell *DIANA ROSS DREAM* (Danse-cité) premiered in fall 2022 and has been programmed at Left of Main (Vancouver) and SPARK series (Studio 303 Montreal). Her first solo work *the aisha of oz* was presented at the Whitney Museum in 2017. A celebrated poet, John is the author of the 2018 Griffin Poetry Prize nominated collection, *I have to live* and is currently at work on her fourth collection, *total*.

FACE RIDER @ MAI (Montréal, arts interculturels)

June 18-21, 2025

Location: 3680, rue Jeanne-Mance, Montréal (Québec)

Created by Fran Chudnoff in collaboration with multi-media artist Driftnote and fashion designer Angela Cabrera, *FACE RIDER* builds on the iconography of the hermit, the hog, and the himbo. The performance is a queer indie sleaze swamp dump celebrating gender deviance, glittery resurrection, and the chaotic joy of togetherness. It reimagines the unsettling nature of aspirational imagery through the gloomy melodies of midwest emo, confessional lyrics, and the aesthetics of the unresolvable mundane.

“It’s shocking and original in its aesthetics, it’s layered and intentional in its cultural references, and it’s entertaining as hell.” - Intermission Magazine

A major international dance commission

Presented by The Bentway in partnership with TDT
June 2025
Public performances
Location: 250 Fort York Blvd, Toronto

TDT, in partnership with The Bentway, will premiere a site-specific dance piece that engages with The Bentway's unique location under the Gardiner Express. This major work is created by a leading international choreographer whose work is understood as a format of speculative fiction that can propose complex and manyfold understandings of body, gender, species, ethnicity, knowledge and history. The project will culminate with 4 public performances in June. More details and artistic team to be announced soon.

Residencies and Programs for Artists in the Community

EntryWaves

Fall 2024

TDT is happy to announce a new partnership with CanAsian Dance. *EntryWaves* is a pilot project offering free rehearsal space through 6 residencies in the Fall season - open to any artist who identifies as being from the Asian Diaspora.

TDT and CanAsian are dedicated to bringing together dance and community through creative and easy-to-participate-in programs that hold value in supporting critical artistic conversations and exploratory stages of new works. This is a first of many partnerships to come as we build our relationship and strengthen solidarity in order to offer more creative exchanges, knowledge-sharing representation and connection for the Asian Diaspora dance community and the greater community at large.

Eyes on Beginnings

Fall 2024 & Spring 2025

Inviting audiences to contribute inspiration and perspective to developing creative ideas with the Work-In-Progress Series, *Eyes on Beginnings*. This series engages audience members through dialogue with artists as the creative process unfolds. This season, six Toronto artists will showcase 10 minutes of new material, followed by a facilitated feedback session.

Eyes on Beginnings offers a unique opportunity to discover fresh choreographic propositions, a valuable chance for artists to receive feedback regarding their artistic ideas.

Dance and movement-based artists are encouraged to participate and apply during the call to artists coming up fall 2024.

From The Back

Facilitated by Danah Rosales
Fall 2024

From The Back, a tri-city kiki ball initiative connects the vogue and ballroom scene across Canada. Based in Toronto, Solar Morningstar and Ava Telfar, both walking female-figure performers, are co-collaborators

in this creative process. This creation comes directly from the lens and experience of a drags performer and a femme queen who are deepening the conversations around themes of transformation, transition, feminine fun, community leadership, dramatics and soft & c*nt in the underground world of ballroom culture.

Facilitated by Danah Rosales, in partnership with Tangente (Montreal), The Dance Centre (Vancouver) and the CanDance Network.

Niswa

Jasad Dance Projects
Spring 2025

TDT hosts this research and technical residency at the Winchester Street Theatre led by Meryem Alaoui, Co-Artistic Director of Jasad Dance Projects.

NISWA, meaning women in Arabic, is a new full-length choreographic creation by Meryem Alaoui, featuring female performers from the Middle East and North Africa. This group work emerged in response to orientalist interpretations of Alaoui's previous solo, which explored the body's relation to objecthood and ancestral wisdom. *NISWA* challenges stereotypes and defies the eroticized, commodified depictions of Arab and North African women as entertainers or victims. The performers are trained in contemporary dance, traditional Arab dances, Egyptian belly dance, North African dance forms, and somatic movement.

Pilot Episodes

Spring 2025

This season's 5th edition of *Pilot Episodes* is a dynamic residency series offering six emerging creators their first opportunity in setting work on a group (TDT's company ensemble). These immersive, week-long residencies are designed for artistic experimentation and risk-taking, free from the pressure of producing a finished work.

Pilot Episodes provide a unique and enriching environment where artists can push the boundaries of their choreographic concepts and techniques. This format encourages innovation and supports creators in developing bold, new ideas in a supportive and collaborative studio setting.

The public is invited to witness artistic evolution and growth with open rehearsals on Friday afternoons.

Plug-N-Play Residencies

Spring 2025

Plug-N-Play offers week-long, half-day residencies dedicated to supporting research and creation dance projects. The call for artists will be launched in September, inviting choreographers and creators in body-centered practices to apply for free studio time. This program provides artists with an opportunity to deepen their ideas and experiment with collaborators in TDT's studios.