



CONFLUENCE - A CREATIVE FELLOWSHIP

OVERVIEW

Catalyst Theatre is pleased to announce the launch of CONFLUENCE - a ten-month creative fellowship for a BIPOC artist/artistic team based in Edmonton or surrounding areas.

The fellowship offers money, space and time as well as the opportunity to be in an ongoing conversation with the creative and administrative team at Catalyst who bring nearly three decades of professional experience in creating, producing and touring original work.

CONFLUENCE is designed to make space for BIPOC artists to develop a specific creative project using the models that work best for them with the wholehearted support of Catalyst's artistic and administrative team.

The fellowship aims to support, inspire and elevate the work of a BIPOC artist while creating an opportunity to evolve their practice, hone their work, augment their creative and administrative skills and expand their professional networks.

Our hope is that, over the coming years, CONFLUENCE will play a role in evolving the landscape of Edmonton's theatre ecology and have a meaningful impact on the creative journeys of future creative leaders who identify as BIPOC.

This creative fellowship will be offered by Catalyst for a minimum of three one-season terms (September through June), with a new artist/artistic team selected in the spring preceding each new term. *Please note: In this, its first year, the fellowship will run from October 2020 through July 2021, as its launch was delayed by the temporary closures caused by COVID-19.*

CONTEXT AND INSPIRATION

Catalyst Theatre is mandated to create original Canadian work that explores new possibilities for the theatrical art form and the process through which it is created. Since 1996, Catalyst has become synonymous with the award-winning work of a group of Edmonton-based artists who create bold new productions in a style completely their own.

Embedded in Catalyst's mandate is also a commitment to share these productions with audiences locally, nationally and internationally and, to this end, the company has mounted many successful tours over the past two and half decades, performing at leading theatres and festivals around the world.

In the spring of 2019, with this mandate in mind, Catalyst began examining all aspects of our organization with a focus on what we could do to ensure that our company was a safe and inclusive

place and more inclusive, and what actions we could take to meaningfully support and elevate the work of under-represented artists.

As part of this process we identified a shared desire to make space for BIPOC artists who have similar dreams of creating their own work in their own way. This led to the creation of CONFLUENCE - a ten-month creative fellowship for a BIPOC artist/artistic team based in Edmonton.

THE SPECIFICS

CONFLUENCE will include the following:

- A fee of \$20,000. Our hope is this fee allows you time to focus on this project, developing your own creative work and/or creative practice over an extended period. For an individual artist this would break down to \$2000/month for the ten-month term but teams can, of course, split it in whatever way works for them. This fee is not meant to cover production costs. Our intention is that it pays the artist/artistic team for their time/labour and enables them to focus on developing their artistic practice. Catalyst is able to offer in-kind production support such as rehearsal space, access to equipment and professional consultation (*Please see below for details*). Catalyst's administrative team is also ready to work with you to leverage this creative fellowship to pursue additional project-specific funding (to hire actors, designers or other creative team members, for example, to purchase or build production elements, or to rent technical equipment that they hope to use in your work).
- A work station in Catalyst's offices that offers a quiet space with internet access, proximity to our staff for questions and conversations, office supplies, and a gathering space for your team that will be available to you day or night, all season long. Use the office to do research for your project, hold meetings, or just have a coffee and a quiet place to think. We want to share our space with you.
- The equivalent of four weeks of rehearsal/workshop space. This time can be used in a single four-week block, or broken up into smaller units (four one-week sessions that are scheduled once every two months, for example). However you choose to use it, Catalyst will provide the space for you to explore and develop your work on your feet. During this time, we can act as your sounding board, your audience, your cheerleaders, or we can simply be on standby to assist you when and if the need arises. This is your time to create, workshop or experiment in a safe environment where you have control and ownership over the work and how it is developed.
- Access to our staff and contractors. This includes designers, choreographers, sound artists, musicians, stage managers and producers to talk about everything from how our artists develop their work, to how we build a production budget, to how we plan a tour. Our team will be available to respond to your questions or engage in the conversations you'd like to have.
- Take-overs of our social media platforms and amplification of you and your work on these platforms throughout the season by our staff. We want our audiences to get to know you and your work.
- The opportunity for a public showing of your work-in-progress.

- Regular check-ins with the creative/administrative team at Catalyst ensuring that your needs are being met, that you have an opportunity to raise any questions/concerns you may have, and that you are having the conversations you want to have to support you in your creative practice.
- The opportunity to make connections and to be introduced to Catalyst's network of theatre practitioners, creators, presenters and funders across the country. If there's a theatre professional you want to talk to, or learn from, we will work with you to try to make that happen.
- Access to all Catalyst activities throughout the term of the fellowship, including rehearsals, creative meetings, staff meetings and production meetings, special events, or any other activity that would be of interest. There is no expectation that you participate in any of these or that you do any work for Catalyst at any time during the term of the fellowship. CONFLUENCE is an invitation to create work your way while also providing an all-access pass to Catalyst's operations and creation model. We invite you to be active participants in our season in order to demystify the professional world and share our knowledge.

We also want to acknowledge that our goal with CONFLUENCE is to engage in a reciprocal relationship. As you develop your work and evolve your creative practice, the Catalyst team will also develop and evolve ours. As we work alongside each other, we expect we will all gain valuable insights, develop new ideas, learn new ways of creating, and integrate new modes communicating. We are excited to embark upon a journey of growth, creation and evolution with you.

THE FRAMEWORK: YOUR WORK, YOUR WAY

We are committed to tailoring the fellowship to your specific needs. Once an artist has been selected, we will hire a facilitator to develop terms of reference that will ensure a safe space for creation and collaboration while ensuring the artist's needs are being met. Catalyst will then work to create an environment that facilitates those terms, doing our best to help you achieve your own self-identified goals. This will be our jumping off place, in terms of our working relationship with you, and how you can begin your project.

Once things have been set up, the artist can work independently, writing, devising, and creating their project, or can request support in any area where they may feel underprepared. We don't want to get in your way, but we also want you to know we will be there to offer support or guidance. We regard CONFLUENCE as a living structure/process that will evolve over time. We are committed to engaging in a mediated conversation to ensure that feedback can be safely provided, that it is heard and that mutually agreeable actions are taken to address concerns as they arise.

JOINING THE CONVERSATION

We Welcome:

- Artists who self-identify as BIPOC. We encourage BIPOC artists who also identify as LGTBQ2S+ or differently-abled to apply.
- Artists with experience in, or who express a strong interest in, developing new work and/or demonstrate a desire to work outside of traditional theatre models.

- Artists from Edmonton or the surrounding area.
- Emerging, mid-career or established artists with a strong interest in creating original work.

What we'd like you to share with us:

- **SECTION ONE: Who you are and what inspires you?** Introduce yourself/your team. Send a resumé if you have them. Tell us about what inspires you. Tell us about your work, the processes you like or don't like, and what excites you about CONFLUENCE. *SECTION ONE can be done in a format of your choosing (i.e. written statements, video and audio recordings will all be accepted). If you communicate primarily in a language other than English we will also accept submissions in other languages (in such a case, Catalyst will pay for your submission to be translated before being reviewed by the committee). Not including your resumé, SECTION ONE should be no longer than three pages for written material or five minutes for recorded material.*
- **SECTION TWO: Examples of Your Work.** Do you have a writing sample, a video of a dance piece, photos of your design work, a recorded piece of music you wrote? We're curious to see any pieces you'd like to share with us. We're not looking for highly produced videos, photos or audio recordings, and quality of video will not be a consideration of the panel. We'd just like to get a sense of your work. If you don't have anything to share at this time, **this section is not a requirement**. Please do not let it stop you from applying if you are interested. *Please keep writing samples to a maximum of three pages, and any video/audio recordings to no more than five minutes.*
- **SECTION THREE: What would you like to create during the CONFLUENCE FELLOWSHIP?** You don't need to come ready with a specific project in mind, but we are interested in hearing you speak to a project that allows for new forms of exploration or something you never thought would be possible to create before. We are curious about what kinds of stories you want to tell, and how you might consider telling them. *SECTION THREE can be done in a format of your choosing (i.e. written statements, video and audio submissions will all be accepted). Please keep writing samples to a maximum of three pages, and any video/audio recordings to no more than five minutes.*
- **SECTION FOUR: What will you need?** Tell us what the ideal framework of your creation time might look like. What kind of supports/resources, outside of the ones outlined in the SPECIFICS section above, do you think you may need? This can be a variety of items, specific individuals or access to information. Examples could include: specific equipment, individuals within a certain community, artists who specialize in a skill set you're interested in learning about, or a way of gaining access to research materials. It's also possible that all you require is private space to create, and that's great too. Our intent is to create a space that's tailored to your needs. *Please keep this section to a maximum of two pages.*
- **SECTION FIVE: References.** Please provide two references from individuals who have a relationship to you and/or your work. These could be mentors, teachers, co-creators, or even audience members. These references do not have to come from within the theatre

community, but can come from within one of your communities, a trusted accomplice, or anyone you believe that can speak about you, your work, your potential, or your experience. *SECTION FIVE can be done in a format of your trusted accomplice's choosing (i.e. written statements, video and audio submissions will all be accepted). Please keep writing samples to a maximum of two pages, and any video/audio recording to no more than two minutes.*

To share your materials, ask questions, or if you would like an example of what a submission in any of the five sections above might look like, please contact Managing Director, Lana Michelle Hughes, at lane@catalysttheatre.ca.

Want to apply but there's something you're unable to provide? Again, please feel free to reach out. We're happy to be in dialogue with you as you prepare your submission.

SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process will be led by a paid committee of BIPOC artists along with the artistic director and managing director of Catalyst Theatre. The committee will review all submitted materials and select an Artist or Collective for the fellowship.

DEADLINE

The deadline for submissions is **Friday, the 31st of July, 2020.**

Submissions should be sent to Lana Michele Hughes at lane@catalysttheatre.ca.

WITH GRATITUDE

Catalyst Theatre respectfully acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Metis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/ Sauteaux/Anishinaabe, Inuit, and many others whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community. We are grateful for the opportunity to live, create, thrive and share stories on this beautiful land.

Catalyst Theatre is also grateful to Hunter Cardinal and Jacquelyn Cardinal of **Naheyawin** for the invaluable consultation they offered as **CONFLUENCE** took shape. Their thoughtful guidance and support in the preparation of this call for submissions was invaluable.

naheyawin.ca

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