



Essential Collective Theatre

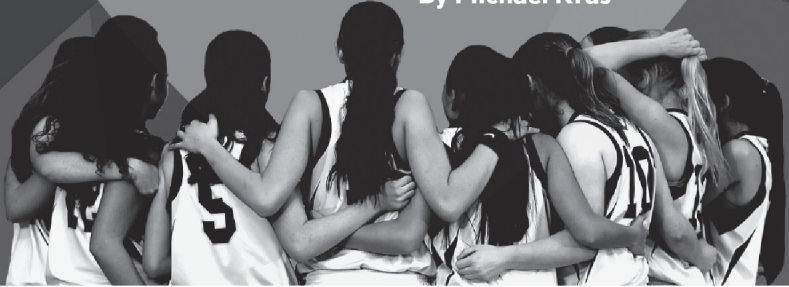
THEATRE AQUARIUS

RON ULRICH Artistic Director

TA2 STUDIO THEATRE SERIES

THE TEAM

By Michael Kras



Essential Collective Theatre

THE TEAM

By Michael Kras

Lennon Bradford (Bobbie)

Emily Lukasik (Miranda)

Kaitlin Race (Alicia)

Laura Welch (Jenna)

Kaylyn Valdez-Scott (Jess)

Directed by Colin Bruce Anthes

Assisted by Michelle Mohammed

Dramaturgy - Luke Brown

Production Manager - Rebecca Walsh

Stage Manager - Jessica Campbell Maracle

Set & Lighting Design - James McCoy

Sound Design - Ethan Rising

Costume Design - Jo Pacinda

Graphic Design - Lila Bata-Walsh

Running time is approximately 80 minutes with no intermission

**ECT engages artists under the Canadian Actors' Equity Association under the terms of the Independent Theatre Agreement*

SPECIAL THANKS

The Ontario Arts Council, The City of St. Catharines Cultural Investment Program (SCCIP), Our Board of Directors: Cindy Goldrick, Tina Yeung Moore, Sharlene Styles, and Chris Barr, Kate Leathers and Carousel Players, Suitcase in Point Theatre Company, The Shaw Festival, Audrey Pilling, Silver Spire United Church, Staff of the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, Staff of Theatre Aquarius, Sol Walsh-Giroux, Lila Bata-Walsh, Jane D'Orsay, Juan-Carlos Velis & Natalie Ackers, Enzo Divoito, Jim Fannon, Karrie Porter, Alex Sobschak, Warehouse Niagara, Pride Niagara, Canadian Mental Health Association, Beechwood Donuts, The Marilyn I Walker School of Performing Arts, Brock University, St. Catharines Downtown Association.

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES

In a lot of ways, *The Team* was a weird play for me to write. I'm not female-identifying, so I don't come from that experience. I don't play or watch basketball, or any sports for that matter. So why the heck did this play about teenage women and high school basketball beg to be brought from my brain to the page? Three reasons come to mind:

Theatrically, the framework of this play felt like a powerful way to explore topics that matter to me: the pressures of expectation in a competitive realm, the fearful transition from youth to adulthood, the mental health struggles of young people, and what it means to be growing up at this cultural moment in time in our changing world.

Artistically, I like a good challenge: finding my writerly way into the lives of five endlessly complicated, vulnerable, fallible, and powerful young women (while constantly stepping back and asking myself "Am I doing this respectfully? Is any of this male gaze-y or misinformed?") was one of the most humbling learning experiences of my life.

And personally: I just want to see more complex and meaningful roles for young people, especially young women, in Canadian theatre. I want more contemporary stories that respect the struggles and lives of people my age in this country.

I'm tremendously proud of *The Team*, and grateful for every person who had a hand in bringing it to this point in time. It couldn't mean more to me. Go Warriors! (Sorry, I had to.)

PLAYWRIGHT'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Team was originally developed at Theatre Aquarius under the dramaturgy of Luke Brown, with the support of the Ontario Arts Council and the Theatre Aquarius Playwrights Unit. It was presented as a workshop with safeword.theatre as a finalist

for the Safe Words New Canadian Play Award, and at Queen's University as winner of the 2017 Herman Voaden National Playwriting Prize. Additional thanks to Jessica Anderson, Ryan Sero, Stephen Near, Kevin Somers, Peter Gruner, Brandon Crone, Andrew Lamb, Nicolas Billon, Hannah Moscovitch, Erin Shields, Marianne Castro, Julianne Dransfield, Kaitlin Race, Katelin Richards, Cass Van Wyck, Rebecca Benson, Amanda Lin, Mahalia Golnosh Tahririha, Ciana Henderson, Maryse Fernandes, Emma Hickey, Kaleigh Gorka, Stephanie Hope Lawlor, Vicktoria Adam, and Caroline Toal.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Perhaps we can all connect to the feeling or memory of being young and uncertain about our future. Right now, however, those futures—socially, economically, environmentally—are more uncertain for emerging adults than perhaps any time since the Second World War. This is all the more true for our historically marginalized communities, who are so often scapegoats in times when inclusion and understanding are most needed. Hamilton's swiftly emerging playwright, Michael Kras, delves into these necessary topics with tremendous empathy, humour, poetry, and an optimism devoid of naiveté. The script has rightly garnered much attention—including winning the prestigious Herman Voaden Prize—and we at the Essential Collective Theatre are privileged to present its world premiere production.

The Team is the kind of piece that hits close to home for so many involved with it. We have been deeply fortunate to gather a profoundly compassionate, intelligent group of emerging creators—including an entirely female and non-binary cast—all of whom have offered important perspectives which inform the performance you will see today. Along with our assistant director Michelle and stage manager Jessica, the openness and insight this ensemble has brought to the table has been constantly inspiring. This really is their team.

2018/2019 has been a "youthquake" year for the Essential Collective Theatre, ushering in a diverse range of new-generation artists. Between *Senior Stories: Once in a Blue Moon*, *Blood Lightning*, and *The Team*, all our playwrights and performers have been in their twenties or early thirties, along with most of our designers. Introducing such a dynamic next wave of artists has been both thrilling and reassuring, as we look towards the future of our artistic community. Remember their names.

CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

Colin Bruce Anthes (Director/Artistic Director ECT) is a St. Catharines actor, writer, director, producer, and educator. He has a diploma in Theatre Performance from Humber College,

a combined honours degree in Dramatic Art/Psychology with a minor in Philosophy, and a master's in Philosophy from Brock University. Colin serves as Artistic Director of the ensemble creation company Twitches & Itches Theatre, and the contemporary Canadian play company the Essential Collective Theatre. He has played lead roles with over a dozen theatre and film companies, directed around twenty theatre projects, and has guided the creation of numerous original works. Colin teaches performance, creation, and directing between Brock University and Centennial College. He has received the Humber Theatre Award, Theatre Ontario's International Training Scholarship, three St. Catharines Arts Award nominations (including one win with Twitches & Itches Theatre), The View Hamilton's Best of Stage 2018 (with Twitches & Itches Theatre), and was recently inducted into Stamford Collegiate Arts Wall of Fame.

Michelle Mohammed (Assistant Director) is a recent graduate of Brock University's Dramatic Arts program with a minor in English Language and Literature. After graduating in April of 2018, she spent the rest of the year at the Shaw Festival where she apprentice assistant directed Peter Hinton in his production of *Oh What a Lovely War*. She then worked as a performer in two sets of workshops with Ravi Jain in his development of the 2020 production *The Mahabharata*. She spent the beginning of 2019 taking a play writing course with Hannah Rittner and shadowing Ravi Jain in rehearsals of Why Not Theatre's remount of *Prince Hamlet* at the Canadian Stage. She feels incredibly lucky to be working with the team of *The Team*. Select credits: Directing (Theatre): Assistant Director *Top Girls* (Brock University) Performing (TV/Film): *Combat Hospital* (ABC/Global), *An En Vogue Christmas* (Lifetime), *Curry and Scruples* (York University), *Handmaid's Tale* (Crave TV/MGM Television) Performing (Theatre): *Mahabharata Workshops* (Shaw Festival/Why Not Theatre), *Pantalone's Palace* (Brock University), *Radium Girls* (Brock University)

Lennon Bradford (Bobbie) is a queer theatre artist from Brampton, Ontario. In 2017 they graduated from Brock University with a BA Honours in Dramatic Arts. In their graduating year Lennon performed in the DART 4F56 class' production of Jennifer Haley's *Neighbourhood 3: Requisition of Doom* as Madison/Kaitlyn. This production was preceded by their role as Flay in 2016 fall main stage *Gormenghast*. Off stage, Lennon has worn the hats of assistant stage manager (Yellow Door Theatre Project), stage management intern (Shaw Festival), and props/wardrobe assistant (Foster Festival/Brock University). Lennon is passionate about new

Canadian theatre and is thrilled to be working with Essential Collective Theatre on *The Team*.

Emily Lukasik (Miranda) is so excited to make her hometown debut with this incredible Team. Select credits: Mindy in *Hook Up* (Tapestry Opera/Theatre Passe Muraille); Chava in *Fiddler on the Roo* (Persephone Theatre); Belle in *A Christmas Carol*, *Nightingale* in *Wilde Tales*, *Saint Joan*, *Sweeney Todd* (The Shaw Festival); Jo March in *Little Women* (Theatre New Brunswick); Réza in *Once* (Mirvish Productions - Dora Award for Outstanding Ensemble); Nora in *A Doll's House* (Theatre Sheridan); world premieres of *St Anne's Reel* and *Kitchen Radio* (Blyth Festival). Up next: *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *Victory* (Shaw Festival). Online: emilylukasik.com

Kaitlin Race (Alicia) is super stoked to be a part of ECT's world premiere of *The Team*. Kaitlin is a company member with Twitches & Itches theatre, most recently taking on the role of Grace in their original piece *September Songs*, and Ino in their adaptation of *The Bacchae*. While working in New York City she played Hermione in *The Winter's Tale* (For Love and Duty Players'). Throughout her training she was in mainstage productions of *Lion in the Streets*, *King John*, and *Dinner with Friends*. Kaitlin is a graduate of The American Musical and Dramatic Academy, and received her BA Honours in Performance at Brock University.

Laura Welch (Jenna) is a Hamilton based actor and graduate of George Brown Theatre School. She has recently been seen in *Holiday Radio Plays* as Dancer Jr. and Lily (Rook's Theatre), *A Modicum of Freedom* as Dahlia (Make Art Theatre), *The Big Show Variety Hour!* as Laura (Flat Earth Global), *Romeo and Juliet: An Escapist Comedy* as Juliet (Make Art Theatre), *Julius Caesar* as Portia (Make Art Theatre) and *Thumbelina* as The Faerie Queene (Enchantment Theatre). She was the Hamilton Monologue Slam Champion in 2017. She is very grateful to be a part of *The Team*. Laura would like to thank her family, friends, teachers, fellow members of the Actor's Forge, and her love for all the support.

Kaylyn Valdez Scott (Jess) is an actor originally from Toronto, currently working with the thriving theatre community in St. Catharines. A recent graduate of Brock University Dramatic Arts program, Kaylyn has had the privilege of growing with local St. Catharines theatre companies such as Twitches & Itches Theatre and Essential Collective Theatre. Selected credits include *Gormenghast*

(Brock University), *Pantalone's Palace* (Brock University), *Once in a Blue Moon* (Essential Collective Theatre), *September Songs* (Twitches & Itches Theatre), and *Macbeth* (Tottering Biped Theatre). Kaylyn is thrilled to be a part of this cast and bring this world premier of *The Team* to St. Catharines and Hamilton.

James McCoy (Set and Lighting Design) is an emerging theatre artist in the Hamilton/Niagara area. A graduate of Brock University and the National Theatre School, James specializes in all areas of theatrical design. Recent credits include Lighting for *Robin Hood* (Yellow Door Theatre), Set, Lighting and Projections for *King Ubu* (Brock University), and Set for *Who Killed Snow White?* (4th Line Theatre). For Essential Collective Theatre: Lighting & Projection Design for *The Welland Canal Play*, *Our Lady of Delicias* and *Blood Lightning*.

Jo Pacinda (Wardrobe Design) is delighted to return with Essential Collective Theatre as the Costume Designer. Jo currently works at the Shaw Festival Theatre as the Wardrobe Assistant. Credits with ECT include: Costume Design 'Our Lady of Delicias' and 'Senior Stories 2018', Wardrobe assistant 'The Drawer Boy', 'Fighting Days', 'Poor', 'Falling: A Wake'. Additional credits include: Costume Design 'King Ubu' Brock University; Head of Wardrobe 'Whole World' Carousel Players; Costume Design 'September Songs' - Twitches and Itches Theatre; Costume Design 'Robin Hood', Wardrobe Assistant 'The Wind and The Willows', 'The Little Prince' - Yellow Door Theatre Projects; Wardrobe Coordinator 2016 season for the Foster Festival. EDUCATION: B.A in Dramatic Arts with a Concentration in Production and Design from The Marilyn I Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts at Brock University. www.jopacinda.com

Ethan Rising (Sound Design) is a creative audio technician and sound designer from Niagara Falls. He has been involved with theatre sound production for 7 years. He has designed the sound for ECT's productions of *The Valley*, *Falling: A Wake*, *Poor*, *The Fighting Days*, *The Drawer Boy*, *The Welland Canal Play* and *Our Lady of Delicias*. His work has included touring with musicals across the country and holding the position as head audio technician for the Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre at the Shaw festival. Ethan is the head of sound at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre and is also an accomplished recording engineer and producer based in Niagara Falls.

Jessica Campbell-Maracle (Stage Manager) is a theatre artist from Toronto who is proud of her Mohawk (Tyendinaga - Wolf Clan) and Scottish descent. She graduated from Humber College's Theatre Production Program in 2017. Since then she has worked on many projects including: *Reckoning* (ARTICLE 11), *The Red Moon* (Centre for Indigenous Theatre), *Indigenous Day Live 2018* (APTN), *Izzie M: The Alchemy of Enfreakment* (Chocolate Woman Collective), *Blood Lightning* (Essential Collective Theatre & Creative Mafia Arts), and *Weesageechak 31* (Native Earth Performing Arts).

Rebecca Walsh (Production Manager/General Manager ECT) has been working in non-profit professional theatre administration and production in Niagara for decades, much of this time at the Shaw Festival. Since moving from NOTL to St. Catharines, she's immersed herself fully in the downtown theatre and art scene working wearing many hats for Carousel Players, Niagara Artists Centre, Strutt, Niagara Grape & Wine Festival, Lyndesfarne Theatre Projects and Buskerfest. Her work with award-winning Suitcase in Point Theatre Company includes four years of Hub Management for In the Soil Arts Festival. As General Manager of ECT she is deeply committed to the growth and success of both the company and the many artists it supports and mentors. She firmly believes that every community should have a high calibre professional theatre company and that Niagara has an exceptional one in ECT built by exceptional artists with exceptional spirit. The cast and crew of *The Team* exemplify this spirit and she is very proud to know them.

ABOUT ESSENTIAL COLLECTIVE THEATRE

ECT is a not-for-profit registered charity located in the heart of downtown St. Catharines that exists to produce professional, contemporary Canadian theatre with a focus on new plays and Niagara work.

Colin Bruce Anthes - Artistic Director
Rebecca Walsh - General Manager
Stephanie Jones - Founder, Artistic Director Emerita
Jason Cadieux - Founder, Artistic Producer Emeritus
Monica Dufault - Artistic Director Emerita

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