

# Uncovering

## Intro

Erin: “This is Erin Ball speaking. I am white. I have mid-length red hair and bangs. I am wearing... and I am in my living room.

I would like to acknowledge that I am a colonial settler born here on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Ojibwe. Kathy Brant will share more about this territory, Katarokwi, also known as Kingston. We want to acknowledge that moving forward with justice in mind means learning and remembering the true history of this land, restitution, and creating good connections with Indigenous communities who are here today. End of thought.”

Tracey: ““This is Tracey Guptill speaking. I am a white woman with short, dark brown hair and bangs. I am wearing a scarf and sitting in my living room....

This time last year, with Jane Kirby, we were planning a summer circus show - with all the uncertainty in March, we adapted our plans from movement LABs and aerial rehearsals to the online zoom room. We were lucky to still be able to offer amazing LABs as part of our process, and share them more widely with artists across virtual space. Thanks to Leah Riddell for the ASL for artists LAB, Lavie Williams, for her Anti- Oppression for Performers LAB and Alex Bulmer who shared Blind Imaginings with us and consulted with the artists on their pieces.

As we continued our process over the summer, we met to discuss our hopes, our access needs and the stories that we wanted to uncover. The artists then went to work on their own pieces, overlapping to bring artistic elements to one another’s work while exploring ways to centre access. A big thanks to Josh Lyon for really joining the team during the video-making phase and to Sian Alcorn and Alexa Hickox for their video skills! Also Matt Rogalsky, who not only did a lot of the sound recording but then patiently taught me how to master and edit it. We’re grateful to Jesse Macmillan for running this livestream and to Carmelle, the team’s ASL interpreter, for being such a skilled support throughout this whole process. Thanks to funding from the City of Kingston and the Kingston Arts Council and for support from the OAC through their recommender’s grants, and

finally thanks to the Canada Council for the Arts who made this showing possible through the Digital Originals micro grants.

And today, we share with you the results from this first phase of development! Thanks so much to each of these artists for going through this journey with us. We have learned so much from you. We hope that these stories will continue to develop together. End of thought.”

Erin: “Erin speaking. Please note that this show engages with intense content matter including racism, ableism, sanism, audism, and abuse. Please care for yourselves.

Our video is just over 90 minutes long with no intermission. There will be a brief question and answer period led by Mariah Horner after the video. Please feel free to send us feedback later as well.

There have been a lot of moving parts with this work and we have been collaborating remotely. We have done the best that we can and we also know there are pieces missing. We are confident that many people can have full and powerful experiences of this work as it is and we also know that it will continue to evolve in future phases.

I want to thank and honour all of the people who have done this work and lived these experiences before us and all of the people I have learned from and who have shared with me, including everyone involved in this project. Thank you also to Closed Caption Service for our captions. End of thought.”

Tracey: “Tracey speaking. Kemi King, a part of the artist team and our artistic assistant, has written a spoken word piece in response to the videos created. Please enjoy this intro to the work and folks in the Zoom Room, can you please turn off your cameras now?! Thanks so much. End of thought.”

### **Uncovering - Kemi King, Spoken Word**

“Unidentified illusions

Missed connections

Soul tied up - breathing in confusion.

This-

is not how we were meant to be, something is wrong

something I cannot see.

Was this caused by me?

I hid in the storm before things felt right.

I passed over the war,

I had to subtract the days from night, they are no longer real, not mine.

This is not alright.

Will you hold me in between time?

I miss your hands..

What has happened that we cannot touch,

I want to hear how we have survived.

I want to hear how you and I flow into one another,

I want to hear your story.

to know about those who have come before me,

paved way, i want to know history

- 
- 

I am scared, terrified of change, not ready for the challenge not ready for the stage.

I do not want to perform only as a means to conform I want to defy,

I want to be controversy, challenge - I want to impose on you rebirth.

I am only here to confront systems that make me sad, make me mad, make me angry Black woman because to you my politic is bad.

But I say she's rad - radicle, she's witness, impalpable.

We will be everything before I am nothing.

I continue to hold multitude.

I continue to be storm cloud.

I continue to be uncovered.”

### **Words Before All Else - Kathy Brant**

Tracey: “Kathy Brant, a Mohawk grandmother with salt and pepper hair, light brown skin and glasses. She wears a black and white pattern dress with a red shawl covered in coloured flowers, a medicine wheel pin on the collar and various jewelry including feather earrings. Kathy holds papers in her hands and gazes at them.”

Kathy: “Skennen kowa sewakwekon Wat kwa noon wer ah ton!

Sootha Kathy Brant yooniyuts walk son naw ser ray kaniyen gay ha ga ken teka

I am Grandmother Kathy Brant from Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory and I am Bear Clan

Today I bring you what my people the Haudenosaunee, call the “Words Before All Else” or the Thanksgiving Address.

I start this in my own language because it is my way of notifying the Ancestors that this is taking place and they will join us and help guide us for the time of this event. Not just my Ancestors, but all who are here watching and listening.

It is also my practice to advise that if any of you are carrying burdens I invite you to leave them for the time being. You may choose to pick them back up later but I suggest leaving them for Creator to take care of.

These are the words that we have been instructed to say before any business shall come to pass where two or more have gathered.

They are powerful because they remind us as we give thanks to the People first because we are the most vulnerable. Creation can get along just fine without us, without Creation we would cease to exist and so we stand humble before it. And so I begin.

Today we gather our minds together to offer greetings and thanks for the People. We have been given the duty to live in balance and harmony with each other and all living things and we are grateful that there is still so much love in the world. And now our minds are one.

We gather our minds together and offer our greetings and thanks to all the things on the Earth, all the green and growing things, medicines, foods, plants, trees, shrubs and grasses, also to the waters and the life within the waters and to our relatives the animals. And now our minds are one.

We gather our minds together and offer our greetings and thanks to all the things in the sky, the birds who sing their beautiful songs, the winds that come from the four directions, our elder brother the sun, our grandmother the moon and our grandfathers the thunders, and the stars in the heavens. And now our minds are one.

This is where I ask if there is anything I have forgotten, I ask that you give such greetings and thanks in your own way and now our minds are one.

### **Land acknowledgement**

Today I would like to acknowledge the land we stand on which has been the site of human activity for time immemorial.

It is my understanding that this territory is included in the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, which was an agreement between the Haudenosaunee Six Nations Confederacy and the Confederacy of the Anishinaabe and Allied Nations, to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes to ensure that there will be food and resources for generations yet to come.

I offer these words in the spirit of this gathering, to acknowledge the original caretakers of this land, the Algonquin-Anishinaabe, my people, the Haudenosaunee Six Nations confederacy and many other First Nations who crossed these lands for sustenance, trade and survival.

We also acknowledge and thank our Ancestors for continuing to live in a way that ensures we remember our agreements and responsibilities.

I believe it is important to acknowledge and pay respect to ancestral and traditional territories and local Indigenous communities. By doing so, we honour our Indigenous ancestors and current stewards of the land and speak to our personal, spiritual, political and social relationship with the land and with each other.

To be meaningful and respectful, a territorial acknowledgement needs to be intentional. This is the time to give thanks and consider our individual and

collective role in the stewardship of Mother Earth and in the building of relationships between Indigenous peoples and communities and the rest of the country and Mother earth.

I encourage all of you to consider the land we stand on today and think about how you are in relationship to it.

The Kingston Indigenous communities continues to reflect the area's Algonquin-Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee roots with also a significant Metis and Inuu and Inuit Community and other First peoples from other Nations across Turtle Island today

It is with deep humility that we acknowledge and offer our gratitude for their contributions to this community, having respect for all as we share this space now and walk side by side into the future.

Nywenkow:wa -Thank you

Skenna – Peace

All my Relations”

### **Uncovering - Chihiro Watanabe - Finding Japan at Queen's**

There are more than one hundred thousand Japanese Canadians in Canada. And about 8000 Japanese students are studying in Canada. More and more Japanese people will immigrate to Canada in the future. But there are only two cities that have Japanese districts: Vancouver and Toronto. There are no Japantowns in other cities. Why? After World War II, living in the trauma of their treatment in Canada, many people in the Japanese community didn't want to be visible. The community spread out as much as possible, and there was a lot of shame around being Japanese Canadian, speaking the Japanese language, and doing cultural activities. Why don't we listen to their hidden voice and uncover their stories?

#### Story 1. Howie Hisao Toda

In 1927, Howie Hisao Toda was born in New Westminster, B.C. His Japanese parents ran a successful boarding house. About 22,000 Japanese Canadian people lived in B.C at that time. There were various kinds of

prejudice and discrimination toward Japanese Canadians, such as limited choice of employment and the denial of the right to vote, but his childhood was fairly typical. Well, at least it was not worse than his teenage years.

On December 7th, 1941, when Howie was 14, Pearl Harbor was suddenly and deliberately bombed by Japan. Overnight, the world plunged into world war. Howie's family was labeled enemy aliens by the government and stripped of their rights. Soon after, Canadian Pacific Railways fired all Japanese Canadian people and other industries followed. 1,200 boats were seized. Radios were confiscated because the government was fearful of them being used as a tool to communicate with their enemies. On January 14th, Japanese Canadian males from 18 to 45 years were taken to camps in British Columbia's countryside. Howie's father was forced to work on the Crowsnest Highway. Six weeks later, the remaining 21,000 Japanese Canadians were told to pack a single suitcase. They were taken to camps and towns in the B.C. interior and put to work. Howie's family was moved to an abandoned mining hotel. Their working and living conditions were harsh. The bathing and laundry facilities were limited, food conditions were bad and diarrhea was rampant. With help from Indigenous people, they survived in the wild; indigenous people taught them how to get safe water and eat in the wild. On January 19th, 1945, the Federal government passed a law authorizing the sale of all seized property without the owners' consent. They had left behind luxuries such as beautiful dishes and kimonos when they were taken to camps. When these items were sold, they did not receive the compensation. While living in these camps families had to fend for themselves and find ways to pay for food and basic supplies.

After the war, Japanese Canadians were forced to permanently relocate east of the Rockies or go to Japan. Howie's family decided to relocate to Ontario, where Howie and his parents found work as laborers on a farm near Chatham. Howie worked hard to finish high school and was accepted to Queen's.

## Story 2: Setsuko Thurlow

In 1932, Setsuko Nakamura was born in Hiroshima, Japan. Her father ran a fruit company in California and her family was quite familiar with western

culture, compared to the average family in Japan at that time. Some of her siblings were born in California and enjoyed Western entertainment, such as golfing and skiing. Her childhood memories were filled with happiness.

But she felt fear for an impending world war. And for her too, in 1941, when she was 9 years old, everything around her changed. Food and clothes were rationed. Rice was a luxury item. High heels and skirts were not allowed. Women needed to wear monpe, labor work pants, in case they had to evacuate to an air raid shelter. Nobody could sleep at night. At school, instead of learning in the classroom, everyone had to work. Setsuko was trained to read codes sent from the front line.

On August 6th, 1945, it was a beautiful morning. She woke up and went to school. Her sister and nephew, who came from the suburbs, were going to see a doctor and to visit the beauty salon in Hiroshima. It was supposed to be a typical day. At 8:15, as she gathered in a large room for her training, suddenly, a bluish-white flash lit up the room from the window. She couldn't hear anything. It was a silent moment. And then her body was lifted and collapsed into the walls of the building. When she opened her eyes, it was dark and quiet. She was buried in the rubble. She thought she would die. "God help me," she thought, and then "Mom, I'm scared." Everybody was freaking out, it was chaos. Then, somebody pulled her out from the rubble. What she saw outside that room was worse than a tragedy. People with lost body parts and their skin melted, barely walking and calling for water. The smell of burned bodies. Everything was silent and moved slowly as if she was watching a silent film. 10 days later, her sister and nephew passed away. They suffered from severe burns. They couldn't eat or drink. There was no medication. Her family couldn't do anything for them, only watch as they lay dying. And then World War II ended on August 15th.

In October, school started again. She was happy to meet her friends and study together, however, the fear of after effects began to seize her. People started suffering from diarrhea, bleeding from their gums, losing their hair, and experiencing internal bleeding. If they had any scars, they passed away. Little by little, more and more of her classmates were absent from school. Eventually, the teacher told her that they passed away. Her uncle and aunt passed away like her classmates. Their organs were rotten, melted, and ran through to the bottom of their body. She was scared every morning, fearing that she had internal bleeding and that she would die. She lost 9 family members and 351 classmates.

After several months, people returned to Hiroshima, and it seemed that her life would start again, however, her heart needed much longer to heal. The United States prohibited reports about how cruel the nuclear weapon was. It wasn't until 7 years later that hibakusha survivors finally started talking about their experiences, not only to help heal their emotions but also to warn how dangerous it is.

After studying at Virginia, in 1955, she married her Canadian partner in Washington, D.C. because Canadian law banned international marriage with Asians. After she moved to Toronto, the media asked her opinion about the nuclear war. She said that she didn't feel hostility, as she did when she was in the U.S, but she found that Canadian ignorance was a problem. Canadian media didn't take any responsibility for the bombing, though uranium from the Northwest Territories was used in the atomic bomb. The Prime Minister of those days, Mackenzie King, had cruelly stated that "It is fortunate that the use of the bomb should have been upon the Japanese rather than upon the white races of Europe."

Now, Setsuko Thurlow is 88 years old, and she continues to dedicate much of her life to warning against the use of atomic bombs while advocating for world peace. This year, she issued an appeal to Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to publicly acknowledge Canada's extensive participation in creating the atomic bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

### Story 3: Prince Takamado

Prince Takamado was born in Tokyo in 1954. He was the youngest of five, with two brothers and two sisters. His childhood was filled with music and sports such as ice hockey and skiing. After graduating from Gakushuin University with a law degree, he came to Canada to study in 1978.

He chose Queen's because it was a smaller university and there were few Japanese students. Maybe he was tired of being recognized as a prince. During his time in Kingston, he continued to study law but he also learned about music and psychology. He became a big fan of the National Ballet of Canada. He loved Inuit sculpture. He enjoyed playing tennis with his friends. He enjoyed his time in Kingston. Though he was supposed to be here for only two years, he extended his stay because he loved Canada so much.

After three years at Queen's University, he returned to Japan. But his life was still strongly connected to Canada. In 1983, he became a patron of the Canada-Japan Society, promoting business and cultural links between Canada and Japan. While attending a Canadian Embassy event, he met Hisako Tottori for the first time. A month later, they attended a visiting Canadian Orchestra concert. Shortly after, they were married, and she became Princess Takamado. They visited Canada together six times. In 1992, Queen's University awarded him an honorary degree in recognition of his major contribution to the mutual understanding and appreciation of the cultures of the peoples of Japan and Canada.

In 2002, while playing squash with the Canadian Ambassador at the Canadian embassy, he collapsed from ventricular fibrillation and passed away. He died at the age of 47. It was too early. Half of his life was dedicated to fostering a strong relationship between Canada and Japan. After his death, Princess Takamado took over the position of a patron of the Canada-Japan society and visited Canada again and again. His youngest daughter, former Princess Ayako, studied in British Columbia and became the patron after Princess Takamado resigned. As a commemoration of Prince Takamado, a scholarship program was established at Queen's University. Every year, this scholarship provides a Japanese student with an opportunity to study at Queen's for a year.

#### Story4: Chihiro Watanabe

It's been three years since I came to Kingston. I first came as the Prince Takamado Visiting Student Scholar and studied theatre at Queen's. Because I wanted to continue to study theatre, I transferred to Queen's and am still studying theatre now.

When walking downtown, most people assume that I'm Chinese. I rarely hear people speaking Japanese. Rather, sometimes people talk to me in languages that I don't understand. It seemed comfortable for me at first, because in Japan, I was told that I wasn't Japanese enough so I felt like here I could be anyone. But it was not so. I've found that there's no place to belong here. "Because you are not trying enough," "You'll find somewhere you belong. Join a club." People imply that's all my fault. No matter how I work hard, I'm a foreigner to everyone. I'm just "that Japanese classmate." I've been surrounded by ignorance and hatred, regardless of whether it's visible or not, or whether it's intended or not. I decided I don't care about it anymore

because I will get out of this town, sooner or later. And once I leave here, I won't come back. No need for community.

This summer, I had to change my plan and stay here because of Covid19. It's been over a year since I last left Japan. Somehow, I miss Japan. This summer, I found out about an event on August 6th, in McBurney Park where they held a Hiroshima Commemoration. I went. I didn't see any Japanese people there, but everyone prayed for peace. We wrote a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau in support of Setsuko Thurlow's appeal. I am impressed that people commemorate and take action for Hiroshima from such a distance. And on August 15th, a Japanese war-end anniversary, I made suiton, Japanese flour dumpling soup. I couldn't help it. It was an impulse, a compulsion. Since I was a small child, my mother has made me this every year to think about those who died and survived World War II. And at this moment, I realized that I'm Japanese after all, no matter where I am. If you are invisible to everyone or your voice cannot reach anyone, I want you to know that I want to hear your story."

"A Japanese woman with long, dark hair is seen from the chest up."

### **Uncovering - Lavie Williams - Windmills of Your Mind**

You're probably wondering, where, where I'm from. Why I look like this.

Why I have fluorescent body suits on and have big poofy hair

You're probably wondering why my eyes are black and my lips are silver.

I'll tell you.

Blackness, Black liberation, Black history, Black futures, Black resilience, Black Joy.

Just like looking for a brown body suit in Kingston, is really hard.

However, it wasn't so hard finding a fluorescent suit, fluorescent socks.

That's the story of Blackness, my story of Blackness in Kingston.

Being invisible, while hyper visible. Today in this space, this circle

I hope to tell a story. A story of Blackness, which relates to the history.  
Which relates to the present and it relates to  
our futures.

I want to tell you a secret.

I hear you have a balloon nearby.

Take the balloon and hold it to your chest throughout the duration of the  
performance.

Maybe you'll feel me. Maybe you feel the drums. Possibly your heartbeat  
Melt into that.

For my performance, you will be hearing a poem read by myself, Lavie,  
called Windmills of Your Mind by Alan and Marilyn Bergman.

*"I spin. I hang upside down. I climb. I hang upside down."*

Poem: Round like a circle in a spiral, like a wheel within a wheel  
Never ending or beginning on an ever spinning reel  
Like a snowball down a mountain, or a carnival balloon  
Like a carousel that's turning running rings around the moon  
Like a clock whose hands are sweeping past the minutes of its face  
And the world is like an apple whirling silently in space  
Like the circles that you find in the windmills of your mind  
Like a tunnel that you follow to a tunnel of its own  
Down a hollow to a cavern where the sun has never shone  
Like a door that keeps revolving in a half forgotten dream  
Or the ripples from a pebble someone tosses in a stream  
Like a clock whose hands are sweeping past the minutes of its face  
And the world is like an apple whirling silently in space  
Like the circles that you find in the windmills of your mind  
Keys that jingle in your pocket, words that jangle in your head  
Why did summer go so quickly, was it something that you said?  
Lovers walking along a shore and leave their footprints in the sand  
Is the sound of distant drumming just the fingers of your hand?  
Pictures hanging in a hallway and the fragment of a song  
Half remembered names and faces, but to whom do they belong?  
When you knew that it was over you were suddenly aware

That the autumn leaves were turning to the [texture] of her hair!  
Like a circle in a spiral, like a wheel within a wheel  
Never ending or beginning on an ever spinning reel  
As the images unwind, like the circles that you find  
In the windmills of your mind

“I am still. Flat on the ground. Eyes wide. Mouth open. Eyes closed.”

### **Uncovering - Erin Ball - Mad: Rockwood/Penrose Building**

Tracey: “Liz, a Deaf, white actor with mid-length dirty blonde hair, floats in the lower right section of the screen. She translates spoken words using American Sign Language.

Behind Liz is a black screen with captions of the words being spoken.”

Tracey: “Behind Liz is a photo of a portion of a limestone brick colonial building. There are several long and thin windows with rounded tops and an old-fashioned light fixture.”

Erin: “ This is Erin Ball speaking.

Content warning: Institutional abuse. Ableism. Ableist language. Sanist language.”

I am white. The following is based on my lived experience as a white person benefitting from living in a white supremacist society.

I think it is imperative to note that the violence that Black and Indigenous folx experience relating to the carceral system and the medical-industrial complex is intense and ongoing. Their stories are crucial stories to remember, learn from and for which we should continue to seek justice.

“Rockwood Asylum and Penrose Building.”

“In the late 1800s, under Sir John A MacDonald’s governing, imprisoned people at the Kingston Penitentiary were forced to build the Rockwood Asylum. The Rockwood was built for those perceived to have mental health differences including wandering, showing emotion, performing actions that were deemed illegal and promiscuity.

Tracey:

*(Start very softly)*

“A splice of red aerial fabric hangs from above.”

*(2nd image)*

“Inside A figure moves.” *(Still soft and sexy)*

*(3rd image)*

“Hands press into fabric from within.

Pressing hands continue.

The fabric is suspended above the ground like a closed hammock or a contained prison.

Frantic movement

Feet *breath* press *breath* into *breath* fabric. *Breath*

Grasping. Pushing

Enclosed

Ten pieces of red fabric

Suspended, movement within

Hands pushing

Fleeting glimpses, white skin, hands.”

Erin: “Sir John A MacDonald had decided that prisoners in the Kingston Penitentiary needed to be separated so women were moved to the new location and kept in horse stables for years before the building was even complete.”

“In the horse stables, there was minimal contact with humans. The cells were 9 feet by five feet and food was shoved in through a slit in the door. Ironically, the beds were made of straw.”

Tracey: “Black and white photos of the limestone Rockwood-Penrose building in the background continue to cycle throughout the piece.”

“Red fabric hangs, movement within, on the left side of the screen.

Alexa, a Deaf, white actor with mid-length light brown hair signs the following words.”

*Erin: "Insane."*

*"Criminal."*

*"Mad."*

*"Hysteria."*

*"Lunatic."*

*"Crazy"*

*"Idiot"*

"The people at Rockwood wore canvas clothing with the word LUNATIC printed on it."

"Many so-called treatments were administered to those who were locked up. The "treatments" included sedatives, blood-letting, leeching, enemas, blistering, restraints and shock treatment. Through my research, I found claims that some of the first experimental lobotomy surgeries were performed at the Rockwood as well as testing masturbation preventative devices.

Shock treatment and restraints still occur today. People are forced to undergo horrific and traumatic procedures that wipe out their memories. I know this because it happened to me. I have been locked up many times in mental institutions and so-called correctional facilities. I was locked up on the same property where the Rockwood building is for almost a year.

I have been researching for months and have found newspaper articles detailing experiences of author's family members who were at Rockwood but the first actual patient record that I came across of a person who had been held at the Rockwood was an account of someone who had frozen their feet.

Prone to wandering and wandered off and froze their feet it said.

I also wandered off and froze my feet."

Tracey: "trees and snow momentarily seen in the background. Erin, white, tattoos, mid-length red hair and lower legs that end below the knees. She is on the ground inside a net that hangs from above.

Wearing a beige bodysuit, she looks naked.

She rolls and claws, continuously moving inside the net.”

Erin: “The Rockwood closed its doors in the early 1900s and it reopened with a different name, the Penrose Building and was labeled as a residence for Disabled people. Sir John A MacDonal, though no longer governing, had a Disabled daughter which makes this whole story that much more baffling considering the building was in place because of him.

The first of these institutions in Ontario where people who were identified as Developmentally Disabled were locked up, was called the Orillia Asylum for Idiots.

There was no private space anymore. People usually arrived when they were young and parents were then discouraged from visiting...leaving those who were locked up abandoned.

Much abuse occurred in the Penrose Building: physical, psychological, emotional, and sexual abuse...by both others who were locked up and employees.

Penrose was closed in the year 2000 and the government of Ontario offered money to those who were in the institution though it denies all claims of abuse.”

*Tracey: “Erin to continues to roll, trapped in the net”*

Kathleen: "In the fall of 1976 and winter of 1977, I worked as a medical lab technologist at the Kingston Psychiatric Hospital. Umm, part of my duties were to take blood and that meant sometimes having to go over to the Penrose building where there were people that had been identified as developmentally Disabled and were locked up on the wards. So we would receive a call the day before and we'd make an appointment because someone had to meet us at the door and unlock all of the further doors to let us in. Umm. When I went there this one particular morning the ahh orderlies greeted me with wide grins and I got to the men's floor and umm there were men walking around totally naked and the person who needed their blood taken was totally naked and he was being held down in his bed and umm so I took his blood. And the building also had women. Floors of

women that you hear their screams and we would have to take their blood when they were held down."

Erin: "That was my mom. End of current thought."

Tracey: "Erin stands behind the net, wearing prosthetic lower legs.

Arms up, she grabs the net. Upside down, legs wide. She climbs up the net. Upside down. Hangs. High in the air, she tips sideways. She weaves the net between her legs. It is clunky with her prosthetic legs. Upside down, she hangs by her thighs. She holds the net below and spins. Upright, she unwraps and re-wraps the net. Upside down. Crescent moon shape. She spins. Slowly. Wraps net around legs. Again, it gets caught momentarily on her legs. Net around waist, she slowly rolls down to the ground.

End"

### **Uncovering - Deaf Spirit Theatre - Three Generations**

THERESA

Hello! My name is Theresa Upton. My sign name is . . .

I am a white woman in my fifties. I have shoulder length hair, I wear glasses and a black shirt.

LIZ

My name is Elizabeth Morris. My sign name is . . .

I am white with mid-length dirty blonde hair wearing a dark top.

ALEXA

My name is Alexa. My sign name is . . .

I am a young white woman with mid-length light brown hair and a grey top.

ALEXA

In the United States of America, in the early 1800's, there is an island called Martha's Vineyard.

Back then trains and planes were not used to travel, most would only travel by boat. Not a lot of traveling happened and so that meant that everyone

who lived on the island were all living together on the island. This led to cousins marrying each other and resulted in a high percentage of deafness amongst the population. Everyone on the island spoke sign language, both Deaf and hearing. You were not able to identify whether a person was Deaf or hearing.

There was one family in England with multi-generational deafness. Which meant they had a number of members of the family who were deaf. Initially, when they moved to the US they lived in Massachusetts with some of them eventually moving to Martha's Vineyard. Which caused the number of deaf people on the island to increase even more.

Most people on the island were members of these two dominant families. The sign language used in Martha's Vineyard had an enormous influence on what we know as ASL today.

LIZ

In the 1800's a gentleman named Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet who was training to be a minister,

decided to visit some family in Hartford, Connecticut.

He saw some siblings playing outside in the yard and notice a little girl, Alice Cogswell.

He noticed she was not playing with the other kids and he went to her to chat.

She didn't understand what he was saying, and he realized she was deaf.

He decided he would try to gesture with her and write words out in the sand with a stick

He would point to things and write out the names of those things in the sand so she could learn them. Her father, surgeon Dr. Mason Cogswell, noticed how interested Gallaudet was in teaching his daughter.

The two of them decided it would be a good idea to establish a school for the deaf but did not know enough about Deaf Education.

Gallaudet know of a school in the UK called Braidwood Academy Oral School.

It was decided that Gallaudet would travel to the UK for three years to observe and learn what he needed to set up the US school.

He travelled to the UK but was not impressed with what he saw because of the dominant Oral education and no use of sign language.

At that time, wealthier families would send their deaf children away to oral schools to be educated. But Dr. Mason Cogswell did not want to send his daughter, Alice, away. He wanted her to stay home.

Gallaudet met a man named Abbé Sicard who worked at the school for the Deaf in Paris, France. He also met one of his deaf students, Laurent Clerc. He was a teacher for the deaf and supported the use of sign language in the classroom to teach deaf children.

Abbé Sicard encouraged Gallaudet to go to Paris to observe their approach and to learn how to teach deaf students in sign language. Gallaudet joined them in Paris to observe the National School for the Deaf. He realized though that he could only afford to stay for two months. Learning LSF, langue des signes française, and French education, it would be impossible to learn both languages in that short time and tried to figure out what to do.

He decided to make an agreement with Clerc, who was a good teacher and deaf himself, to accompany him back to America. Clerc would join him to help him establish the school for the deaf in the USA. They agreed and sailed back to America. Gallaudet would teach Clerc English and in return, Clerc would teach Gallaudet LSF.

Once they arrived in America, they raised enough money to establish the school. It was called the Connecticut Asylum for Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons in Hartford, Connecticut.

The school opened in 1817.

Deaf children came from Martha's Vineyard and all over the US. As a result, MVSL was brought to the school as well as other children bringing their own 'home' signs that they grew up using. In addition, the influence of Clerc and his use of LSF. A combination of all these signed languages made what we know today as American Sign Language, ASL.

In 1864, American President, Abraham Lincoln, signed a bill into law allowing the opening of a college for Deaf people to obtain their degree. That led to Edward Miner Gallaudet to establish a national college for the Deaf and Mute.

In 1887, women were allowed to attend the college.

In 1894, the name changed to Gallaudet College.

In 1880, the National Association of the Deaf held a conference to talk about Deaf education and Deaf community needs. Deaf people from all over the US travelled to attend the conference held in Ohio.

Ironically, around the same time in 1880 there was another conference being held focusing on Deaf Education. This conference was being held in Milan, Italy.

The conference was called the Second International Congress on Education of the Deaf.

And oddly, many Deaf teachers did not know about the congress even though they were talking about Deaf Education.

Many educators, non-deaf teachers, supported oral education at that time. There was much debate and discussion about establishing more oral schools, and changing existing schools for the Deaf to oral schools.

Thomas and Edward Gallaudet, father and son, both went to the congress trying to convince everyone otherwise. Advocating for the continued use of sign language in the schools.

Unfortunately, the majority voted in favour to eliminate sign language from the schools.

That caused the widespread of Oralism and had a huge impact globally with negative effects on Deaf Education everywhere for over 100 years because of that conference.

One of the strongest supporters of the Oralist method was A.G. Bell, Alexander Graham Bell.

At the time, he was very well known as the inventor of the telephone. His father strongly supported oralism, as did he. His mother, Eliza, was deaf and used sign language to communicate with Bell.

A.G. Bell also married a deaf woman named Mabel, and they would speak to each other to communicate. A.G. Bell felt that sign language should not be used, and to only communicate orally. He felt that deaf people needed to do this in order to assimilate with society.

He didn't believe deaf people should socialize with other deaf people, and felt it was necessary to force them to live as a hearing person by following the oralist approach. He also didn't support the idea of Deaf Clubs, thinking it would cause deaf people to not socialize within the hearing world. He also didn't support the idea of deaf people marrying each other fearing it would cause higher procreation of more deaf people. Ironically, while he was spreading the word about his theory and beliefs, he went to Martha's Vineyard, through his research he learned that the majority of deaf people are born to hearing parents. It was the opposite of what he was preaching to the public and he kept this information to himself, in order to support his claims that deaf must marry hearing, must be oral, and that deaf people shouldn't socialize with each other.

Because of what happened in Milan and the spread of Oralism being the right way to teach deaf children and not sign language, it has had an enormous impact globally for over 100 years.

As a result, deaf teachers were fired from many schools for the deaf deaf staff were fired, replacing them with hearing teachers and staff to teach deaf children using the oralist approach. If deaf children tried to sign in class, they would be physically punished, abused.

Children lost the use of sign language, lost their first natural language. Many students struggled to keep up learning orally, which led to many of them being language deprived. Language deprivation leads to effects on mental health and other long-term negative effects.

For many years, Gallaudet University always had a male hearing individual as the president of the university. Until 1988 when the university was ready to appoint a new president, they selected a woman to fill the position, and she was hearing. The Deaf community felt it was time, enough is enough. They didn't want a hearing person making decisions on their education. It was time to have a Deaf president.

The community revolted and held protests against the university. The movement was called "Deaf President Now" During those protests, the Black community leant the famous banner from Martin Luther King's, "I have a dream"

Finally, Gallaudet University realized, the community was right and their feeling about have a Deaf president was important. They appointed the first Deaf President at the university, I. King Jordan.

He became our Gallaudet University's first Deaf President in history.

## THERESA

### Deaf History in Schools

The Deaf school in Belleville, called the Ontario School for the Deaf was established in 1870.

They had sign language at the school and had vocational training for students.

For example, at that time a good number of people worked on farms tending to livestock and fields. The boys would learn the skills necessary to work on the farm.

The girls would learn skills like sewing, cooking, and other aspects of running a household.

This was until 1880, when the vote in Milan banned the use of sign language in the schools

This had an effect worldwide and the Belleville school banned the use of sign language in 1923.

From that point, only the oral approach would be used.

Deaf teachers at the school were getting laid off one by one, and only hearing teachers were being hired to teach using the oral method at the school for the Deaf.

Students would learn academic subjects such as history, mathematics, reading etc. with the oral approach. Without the use of sign language, students were becoming more and more delayed in their learning missing a lot of vital information.

In the 1950s, the Rochester method was adopted, which is fingerspelling all the words out while speaking at the same time. This still caused language gaps in the students' learning.

In the 1980s is when I entered the school for the Deaf. At that time, they started using the Total Communication approach in the schools. This is when you talk and sign at the same time which is challenging because of the different structure of the languages.

Many students still struggled although a bit better than previous methods.

It still caused language deprivation for many students. Until the 1990s when the bilingual-bicultural approach was adopted. Which means the language of instruction was sign language.

Students would learn writing skills but still be able to communicate using sign language.

This approach was the most successful. Students were able to learn English and sign.

Teachers started to wonder about deaf student's literacy level being so low compared to other students. They soon realized the teachers signing proficiency was low which impacted the students' learning.

In actuality, the students had the intellectual capacity, but their English proficiency was low.

On average, students would not achieve higher than a grade 4 reading level, to no fault on their part. Since the teachers' signing proficiency was that at a grade 4 level, that impacted the students' learning as well.

## ALEXA

The first school for the deaf in Toronto was established in 1924, called the Clinton Street Public School. Then in 1931, the King Edward Public School established a pre-school. So, there were two deaf programs. Eventually, the programs moved to Sunny View

In 1953, The Sunny View Program grew to six deaf classes.

They would share resources amongst the classes, but there were too many students to support.

As a result, they established the MTSD, Metropolitan Toronto School for the Deaf.

MTSD was paired with Davisville Jr. School.

Half the school was Davisville, hearing students, and the other half, fully Deaf school, was MTSD. The new MTSD building was established in 1962

At the beginning, most of the students were oral, later changing to the Rochester method in the 70s. Eventually changing to the bi-bi approach, allowing signing while learning written English, speech therapy was also included as well.

In the 1980s is when they finally allowed sign language as a language of instruction in the school. In my time at school we were permitted to sign and use it in the classroom.

Before that though, I attended an oral school first.

At this school is was more oral communication with not a lot of signing. The reason I transferred was because other kids were transferring over and I was curious about MTSD. I thought I would check it out and felt it suited me better.

THERESA

I was born Deaf. How did my parents find out?

My parents brought me home from the hospital, they would listen for crying. Babies cry when they are hungry, need a change etc. My crying would be different. I would cry if I was hungry or scared.

But they noticed something was missing. When a loud noise was made, they looked over at me and noticed, that's what was missing. They brought me to the doctor to get checked.

They suspected I was deaf because my reactions were different, and they felt like something was missing.

The doctor assured them that is was common and many babies react that way.

When I was one year old, I wouldn't respond when my parents called me or to anything they were saying. My parents suspected I was deaf because of that.

They brought me to see the family doctor again. At first, they just thought I was being lazy hearing kid.

When I was 2 years old, my parents couldn't stand it anymore. High pitch screaming and crying.

They decided to go to the doctor again and this time I would see the audiologist. They confirmed that I was in fact deaf.

I went through some tests, and there were instructions for the machine with the buttons.

You would have to look at memorize. They assumed I followed her instructions, but I would just memorize what they did so I passed all the tests.

They told my parents I was hearing. My mom still felt that there was something off.

By the time I was three, my parents decided to fly to Toronto from New Brunswick, where I lived. We went to the Children's Hospital; I remember it vividly as if it was a movie.

I went to see the doctor at the children's hospital. I looked at my mom, she was sad. She was holding on to the memories until I have language. I asked if I went on the plane or was, I dreaming. She said we did, and I asked her why?

To go to the hospital to get tested.  
That's when I learned that I was deaf.

I eventually graduated but on my report card, it said I had a grade 4 literacy level.

Out in the real world, I went to the Vocational Rehabilitation Services, VRS.

I was at the Kingston General Hospital. I was chatting with someone I knew and mentioned that I always wanted to become a nurse, but they thought I couldn't. They said I would find it hard because of my literacy level. I had an interpreter there. I know a lot of information, so how is that possible. I decided to explore other job possibilities like working at the post office etc. I didn't have an interpreter; I would have to figure things out on my own. For example, the post office, nursing, different kinds of employment. Nursing had a requirement for grade 11 literacy level. Others were grade 8, 9

So, I read through it and understood, and I went through all of the testing and passed.

Then you had to go in to sit down and chat with someone.

They informed me I wasn't at a grade 4 literacy level; I was actually at 11 or 12.

And not to worry, what's important is that you understand. So, I was permitted to go into nursing school.

I went into nursing school I worked hard.  
The textbooks were expensive! I couldn't afford them!

I would have to borrow the instructor's medical dictionary.  
I worked really hard.

My friend, who I'm still friends with to this day, took notes for me. Remember, back then we didn't have computers readily available to us. I bought carbon paper. They would take notes and would give me a copy of them. We would go over the information until I understood the information.

I would have to memorize the information for the tests, but most of the time I understood.

The teacher accepted that, if we had to write an essay, I hated writing essays, I was allowed to bring in an interpreter so I could sign my answers. That makes sense.

So, I would record my answers on VHS, what we would use in my day. When I would write a test, the teacher would check over my answers and then we would meet in person. I would clarify in ASL any answers that were unclear in writing and would pass the tests. I eventually graduated

It was cool because three teachers came up to me at my graduation, these three knew me when I applied and knew I was Deaf. At the time, they didn't want me to enrol in the program.

They couldn't say it was because I was deaf, but their concern was the communication aspect.

So, what I did was, at the college I would volunteer which helped a lot. I was able to volunteer at hospitals, nursing homes, etc.

One hospital, a nursing home had two people, two nurses, practical nurses there that English was not their first language. They had to learn English. And I saw one of them communicating with a patient. And they were frustrated with the communication. And I went up and I said, are you having communication problem? And they weren't deaf. They were hearing. But that's just an example of applying different skills with communicating with people.

And so, I set up a meeting with the three teachers from that college and with support, and I asked them, "Why did you dismiss me years ago?". And they said, "Well, it's because of the communication problem." And I said, "Well, I volunteered all these different places, and nursing homes and hospitals and figured out a way to communicate with people." And they knew what I was talking about, they knew that I was their student, and I

explained the situation, and how I would go and communicate with the patients.

And I questioned them about what they thought was a communication problem. And so those three instructors were kind of left speechless.

So, I was able to go through the school full time after they accepted me into the program. I worked hard, I wanted to prove to them that I could do it. And I was successful.

On graduation day, when the three of them came up to me. I called the interpreter. And they said, "You know, thank you, you taught me so much. And I've learned so much from you. And it was a pleasure getting to know you. And realizing that there is no difference between deaf and hearing students. And really, there are ways to communicate. And this is from the three of us to you." And I was just completely shocked. And the gift that they gave me was a medical dictionary it was beautiful. They all signed it. And it just meant so much to me with such a beautiful gesture. And I still have it to this day.

ALEXA

Are we the barriers toward deafness? No, it's society. And they think that it's a deaf person. I just want to participate. Like that example that Theresa spoke about, they almost didn't let her into the nursing program. All she wanted to do was learn how to become a nurse, why were they posing barriers for her? And they finally let those barriers down. So really, who really creates the barriers? Is it us? Or is it you? Or is it society? Is it people? Is it the system? unfortunate that there are a lot of barriers, if you don't give me if you allow me to, to experience this give me access by way of interpreters are no takers. If you make those accommodations, that's how you make things accessible.

LIZ

I was born in England. And at that time. Well, when I was an infant my mom took a look at me and she thought, something's off because they would call my name and I would look over, and they thought maybe she's Deaf.

I have an older brother who is hard of hearing, so my parents already had experience with this. They brought me to the doctor's office, and my parents said well I think my daughter is deaf just like her older brother.

They went behind me and clapped their hands and I would look over and the doctor said oh she's fine she's hearing. My parents trusted what the doctor said to them.

We then moved to Japan at that time I was having some stomach problems. So, we went to see the doctor and they asked how much medication have you given her and my parents told you the number. And that was enough for my age. But they did a full check-up and they tested my hearing and they confirm that I was in fact deaf.

My parents were not surprised really because they kind of suspected all this time, but to have that confirmation they still had a little bit of shock.

We moved back to England and then to the States. And at that time my mom was looking for a school for my sister, my older sister who is hearing, and she started chatting with the principal. The principal looked over and asked my mom if I was deaf and my mom said yes, she's deaf. And the principal said well the other school has a deaf program, and it's a mainstream program and maybe I would suggest good for you to go to that school.

So, my mom put me in that school with the deaf program and they didn't realize that the teacher signed would speak and sign at the same time, and it was called SEE, Signed Exact English.

When I arrived home. I would sign and talk at the same time, and I was starting to develop my language my parents went to the teacher.

When my younger brother was born, they found out he was also deaf. He's deaf and has autism. So, he struggled with that SEE method, it was just, it's so hard to coordinate speaking and signing.

In that class I really enjoyed the fairy tale stories. So, there was a story of the three pigs in the Big Bad Wolf. And I would look at it and English would struggle, but as soon as they would see something visual, I would understand the story.

When I was eight or nine, we decided that we move to Canada. And I went to the school for the Deaf and Bellville, now called Sir James Whitney, and I was eight years old. All the staff, the teachers were hearing. But over time, they started hiring more and more Deaf teachers, deaf EAs.

And I thought, they're just like me. It was great to see Deaf role models out in the community and I was able to better and identify myself as a deaf person. And I think that's very important for deaf children to have role models.

They hired an interpreter when I eventually ended up going to mainstream school in the high school. And this first interpreter was not skilled. They weren't qualified to work in that school setting and I had to put up with it for many years and it was an issue. It was a problem I ended up becoming really behind in my studies because I couldn't understand what's happening in the classroom.

Finally, they hired a qualified interpreter in my final 2 years of high school, and this person was a CODA, child of deaf adults, and so they used sign language as a natural language for them. They knew about the deaf community. And I thrived when they were working there. I think it's important for any deaf child going to the school system to have qualified interpreters and the importance of access. Accessibility is important for deaf education and anyone's education.

I decided after high school to go to Gallaudet University. And I had such great memories there. I felt like he was like the Wizard of Oz, just in out there in the world with all the hearing people and people talking.

When I walked into Gallaudet, it was like I followed the yellow brick road and I ended up in this this wonderful land where everyone could communicate in the same language that it was a world that I felt at home, and where I belonged. I studied two majors: Elementary Education and Theater Education, and I graduated with a BA and I felt very honored.

When I left Gallaudet University. It was back to the real world where everyone was hearing and there weren't a lot of Deaf folks. And it was very depressing. Hearing world is not accessible to deaf people. There are some fortunate people who maybe go to the School for the Deaf, or they encounter other deaf people, but it doesn't happen all the time. And it does have a huge impact and had a huge impact on me.

I was involved in theater, and the National Theatre for the Deaf. But here in Canada we don't have any Deaf theater, there used to be one back in the day, but not anymore.

In Kingston, three of us started a theatre group called Deaf Spirit Theatre with a fourth person who is our stage manager. We've been established since 2015, and since then we've added three more people to our group. And so Deaf Spirit Theater is just growing, we need that kind of interaction that Deaf energy to get that.

We also want to become role models. We want to be role models for deaf youth, and to show deaf kids what they can do, and have an inclusive theater available.

For my graduate studies I went to OCAD University. And I focused on inclusive design. I feel that I wanted to help live theatre become more inclusive to deaf and hard of hearing people. My thesis focused on creating accessible theater live accessible theater.

And I graduated in 2017, with my master's degree.

## ALEXA

I was born deaf. And my parents didn't realize it right away when we moved to Montréal for a while just one year. And they noticed that my, I wasn't responding to noises, and they suspected that I was deaf, so they brought me to the doctor and a doctor confirmed I was deaf.

They looked for resources for what to do, how to make things accessible and how to teach their child. So, I learned how to sign, and I also had speech therapy. , it was very laid-back learning speech therapy I didn't really think about language, but when I think that helped open my mind and figure out how to communicate, how to work visually and use that those visual tools.

For me I think that I didn't feel that there any barriers because it was open, people were open to communicate with me and my family was open to communicate with me. And I realized, that I could sign, sure, I knew a little bit of time before I was seven, but I didn't really understand fully that it was another language. I really had the experience of both worlds and MTSD was a great experience and they had his storytelling and theater. There was a lot of ASL in the curriculum at that time. So, we would go to speech therapy, have access in our classroom and there were a lot of resources available to us.

I was still able to do that speech therapy and do the sign language. My parents weren't forced to put me in speech therapy, it was an option, but it was not a requirement. And I would go there once a week I'd miss class and go for speech therapy and then go back to class.

MTSD, compared to the other school, Davis School. We would mix with the hearing students for some classes like gym class. It was kind of like our rehearsal for functioning in the hearing world.

From grade seven and grade eight my teachers wanted us to have better resources better access, I guess. So, they decided to take our class to a different school. So, we had MTSD and we went over to Hudson school. And we were involved in a hearing science class, and history class, I believe, and it was mainstream basically we're integrated with the hearing students and it was really helpful for us to be able to learn how to socialize and communicate.

We also had interpreters there. So basically, we learned how to function in a hearing world and then after that we would go back with just the deaf.

We would actually have our social events together. Another good experience with the school is sporting events. We would go and compete against the Belleville School for the Deaf, EC Drury in Milton. And that was when once were that we played the handball game. And it was great, everyone was deaf there and you could communicate with everyone. We would go to Milton to play hockey and I think we went to Belleville for volleyball at one time. It was a great opportunity to socialize in the deaf community.

I was fortunate that I was able to have my class that I went to school with. I didn't feel lonely like some kids do in mainstream settings; it was just a great experience. We had a big group and when we graduated. The next class was big as well. But the class sizes eventually started getting smaller and smaller every year. And now, the programs moved to Fairwood, and they closed down my school in 2012.

There's a deaf program and a mainstream program there, and there's some classes with Deaf classes with deaf students only, but most of that is mainstream into classes with hearing students. They have interpreters there, and they have full access for the students.

When I went to OCAD University, there were no other deaf students. There could have been at the actual university but not in my class.

When I was studying at RIT it's a deaf University, and they have great events and a lot of deaf students go and it's a great experience and I was able to meet a whole bunch of different people from different states internationally as well. And I learned a lot about culture. So, that was one positive thing about my time at the university.

It helps it I live in a city, I have a lot of friends here, and once I was done my classes and I could go and hang out with my deaf friends, so it wasn't always lonely. Sometimes I do feel lonely, but I do make friends, and I have some really close friends, three close friends who is now becoming one of my roommates.

When I graduated from OCAD I went to York University for my masters, and they had some deaf classes and ASL classes there so there were more deaf students there. I met a few friends and it was, it was cool. And it was different because I stayed most of the home, most of the time I didn't have to go to class for my courses. After one year it wasn't really enough time to really get to know anyone too well. I still had my friends in my community and that's just me.

### **Uncovering - Jane Kirby - Like a storm cloud bringing change**

*Inspired by Joan Kuyek's time in Kingston*

Jane: A white woman hangs by one arm in front of a construction site, She proceeds to perform acrobatic movements on the rope, and handstands around town.

Yessica singing: Like a Stormcloud bringing Change

(rain sticks and thunder drum, leading into drumming begin now)

Jane: Development was foolish  
And you knew that even then  
Power and property were the culprits  
Organizing the strategy tested when  
They sent you to Kingston  
And little did they know  
That this community project  
Would change the whole damn show.

Educated by the shipyard women  
On Lower Union St.  
You believed that together  
The people couldn't be beat.

Fighting for the tenants  
Fighting for the youth  
Fighting for the future  
You fought for the truth.

Yessica singing: Like a storm cloud bringing change  
Like a storm cloud bringing change.  
Like a storm cloud bringing change  
Like a storm cloud bringing change.  
Like a storm cloud bringing change  
Like a storm cloud bringing change.

Like a storm cloud bringing change  
Like a storm cloud bringing change.

They'd seize your stuff  
They'd throw you out  
They'd kick you to the curb  
But you challenged landlords' power  
People's dignity preserved.

Petitions and rent strikes  
A movement you helped birth  
You took a seat at their table  
But what was it all worth?

Rocking city hall  
With your controversial feminist views  
You made this place more liveable  
when you fought to change the rules

Yessica: Yeah yeah yeah yeah... (Yessica skatting, this continues under the next spoken parts of the poem,)

Jane: Anything that's worth anything  
is worth fighting for  
We need to know what it took  
If we want anything more.

Like a storm cloud bringing change  
Let it blow, let it thunder, let it rain.

The woman hangs by one arm, a sunburst behind her.

This piece was inspired by Joan Kuyek, who was an organizer in Kingston in the late 1960s.

Joan was a founding member of ATAK -- Association for Tenants' Action Kingston -- which fought for tenants' rights, rent control and better housing, and which had significant public support.

As part of that work, Joan was elected to city council where she was the only female alderman. She quit after a motion calling for rent control was voted down and, facing protest, council was forcibly adjourned.

Joan's work did contribute to the passing of the Landlord and Tenant Act in Ontario, which secured some basic rights for tenants. Joan is a lifelong organizer who has continued to be involved in many movements, and is well-known as the cofounder of MiningWatch Canada.

Today, Kingston continues to face a housing crisis. In 2018, the vacancy rate was just 0.6%, the lowest in Ontario. In 2020, a tent city in Belle Park was forcibly evicted, leaving many without shelter or community.

This video was shot in locations highlighting some of those responsible for today's housing crisis.

When I spoke to Joan, she told me that we need to understand our histories, and remember that even the smallest victories were fought for by someone.

This video is dedicated to all those fighting for better affordable housing, past, present, and future.

### **Uncovering - Yessica Rivera Belsham - Closing Song**

*“So my name is Yessica Rivera Belsham, I am here standing in front of a traditional drum from Mexico. Uhh, this is called a Tlalpanhuéhuatl.*

*Umm, so, it’s hand carved out of a beautiful pine tree that’s, uh, specifically found in Chihuahua, Mexico.*

*Umm, and it has a beautiful mule skin on it, and a woven, umm, sash of sorts around it as well.*

*And it has, uhh, you know, it’s very tall, up to my hip length.*

*And there’s the thunderbolt lightning carves that are within.*

*Umm, and I’m standing here with ah, with a traditional dress from Oaxaca, Mexico*

*and a beaded necklace that has some medicines inside.*

*And it’s brightly coloured, and I also have a sash that my cousin gifted for me,*

*again from Mexico.*

*Umm, I have semi-dark skin, I have lots of freckles,*

*uhh, I have long-ish, long hair that’s kind of brown.*

*Umm, and I’m happy to be here!*

*[Swooshing Sounds, words spoken in another language]*

*So, my name is Yessica Rivera Belsham, very grateful to be here,*

*umm, and to be a part of this collaborative project.*

*Umm, this piece is in honouring, this is umm, a song that I tend to share when being of*

*the vigil for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit People.*

*And for this song it’s very much in connection to loss of individuals’ loved ones that have*

*passed away, it’s also about the, the grieving process and the loss of different transitions in life.*

*And similarly to these days, as the impact of COVID19 and all the lives that have been lost as well,*

*it’s honouring all of those around the world that have been impacted and lives lost.*

*So this is in connection to all of our ancestors and connection to all people around the world, and honouring all those that have gone before us."*

*In Nahuatl I Say "*

*Tialli pialli cualli tonalli nehua notōcā Yessica nehua notōcā tonal ocelopacihuatl ne nihuala Tenochtitlan Celaya Guanajuato México. Which cant fully be translated to english.. i didnt send translation because it cant fully be accurate in english translation but generally its saying "hello good day my name is Yessica my nahua/spirit name is Ocelopacihuatl (jaguar medicine woman) I am from Tenochtitlan Celaya Guanajuato México"*

*And before and after i sing, I say Tlazocamati (full mind body spirit gratefulness / thank you)*

## **Credits**

Alex Bulmer - Access consultant

Alexandra Hickox - Storyteller and ASL interpretation for Chihiro Watanabe, Erin Ball, Yessica Rivera Belsham, Videography for Deaf Spirit Theatre piece and Video editing

Carmelle Cachero - ASL interpretation during the LABs, translation and captions for Deaf Spirit Theatre's piece

Chihiro Watanabe - Storyteller: videography for her piece

David Parker - Sound technician for Jane Kirby's piece

Elizabeth Morris - Storyteller and ASL interpretation for Erin Ball

Erin Ball - Aerial artist, aerial hoop coach, access director, voice of Elizabeth Morris and co-producer

Gilles Gelinas - Photography for Erin Ball's piece

Jane Kirby - Aerial artist and handbalancer, poem and spoken word, assistant producer

Josh Lyon - Videography, Editing and Captions

Kathleen Ruck - Penrose interview in Erin Ball's piece

Kathy Brant - Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address

Kemi King - Artistic Assistant and voice for Theresa Upton

Lavie Williams - Aerial Hoop artist and spoken poem (lyrics by Alan Bergman and Marilyn Bergman)

Matt Rogalsky - Sound recording

Natasha "Courage" Bacchus - ASL interpretation for Lavie Williams  
Sian Alcorn - Videography for Jane Kirby's piece  
Tracey Guptill - Fabric artist, sound, director of the coLABoratory, voice of  
Alexandra Hikcox, co-producer  
Theresa Upton - Storyteller and ASL interpretation for Jane Kirby and  
Kathy Brant  
Yessica Rivera Belsham (Ollin.ca) - Storyteller: vocals and percussion

Many thanks to all of our sponsors: Kingston Arts Council, the City of  
Kingston, Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, Tangled Arts,  
Nightwood Theatre and Theatre Kingston

With thanks to Joan Kuyek, Syrus Marcus Ware, Jesse MacMillan, Mariah  
Horner, Sue Bazely, Molly Mask, Leah Riddell, Becky Gold, Alan Jeans,  
and all of our LAB participants

A co-production of an Arc Theatre, Kingston Circus Arts and Circus  
Kingston Collective.

Thanks to Deaf Spirit Theatre, Undivided Production, Ollin.ca, Lowlit Aerial  
Arts

This is a learning process and we are doing our best but we may have  
made mistakes. Please let us know if we said anything hurtful.