

# MICROPHONE CONTROLLER

A man with a beard and short hair is captured in a dynamic pose, looking upwards and to the right. He is wearing a bright red jacket with gold buttons, which is open, revealing a white mesh tank top underneath. His right arm is raised and bent, with his hand near his head. The background is a blurred indoor space with warm lighting.

JAN 28–31 / 2026

THE CITADEL:  
ROSS CENTRE FOR DANCE

CHOREOGRAPHER  
LUKAS MALKOWSKI

CITADEL  
LIVE 25  
26

# MICROPHONE CONTROLLER

January 28-31, 2026 | 8pm | The Citadel: Ross Centre for Dance

**Choreographer + Performer:** Lukas Malkowski

**Dramaturg:** Antonia Gersch

**Lighting Design:** Chris Malkowski

**Sound Design + Musical Coaching:** Roland Meyer de Voltaire, Stephen Joffe

**Costume Design:** Moussi Bang

**Projection + Caption Design:** Laura Warren, Julia Cremers

**Videography:** Drew Berry

**ASL Coaching:** Dawn Jani Birley, Gaitrie Persaud-Killings

**Technical Director + Stage Manager:** Emerson Kafarowski

**Outside Eyes:** Rita Mazza, Woosang Jeon,  
Rocio Parraga, Annalise Van Even,  
Breeanne Saxton

**French Caption Translation:** Florence Cardinal

Microphone Controller is a mythic music icon. Blending Sign Language with dance, he is adored by Deaf and hearing fans all over the world. His songs about Voice and Listening are seen and felt by all. Homaging the likes of historic rock icons, his concerts transcend the sonic to envelope audiences in vibrating, visual spectacles. Now, as he prepares for what might be his biggest show yet, Microphone Controller's unresolved past is about to collide with his present.

Created by a team of CODA, Deaf, hearing, and hard of hearing artists, *Microphone Controller* explores accessibility and identity; blending spectacle with nostalgia. Woven from history and fiction, lived experience and dreamed fantasy, this work considers what it means to be part of Deaf and hearing worlds.

*"—a multilayered experiment that subverts stereotypes around Deafness, voice and pop culture. The piece treats participation as a sensory event and challenges the audience to question their own hearing."*

*— Jette Büchsenschütz, Berlin*

This performance is made possible (in part) by the Government of Canada.

Funded by the Government of Canada  
Financé par le gouvernement du Canada

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Approximate running time is 55 minutes, no intermission.

This performance contains haze, loud music/sounds, flashing lights, heavy bass.

# From the Artist

CODA: Child of Deaf Adult. My mom is hearing and my dad is Deaf — Capital 'D' Deaf means Deafhood: an identity, a culture with values and languages. 'D' emphasizes Deaf gain and what is gained by Deafness, not hearing loss. As a CODA, I am a hearing person with Deaf gain.

I'm still figuring out what that means.

I've never encountered CODA performance art, and I certainly didn't know I was making it at first. I love music, dance and Sign, and I wanted to create something that embraced those parts of myself, while including both Deaf and hearing audiences.

This idea began in 2022, as a research project in Berlin. I wanted to figure out my voice. My Signed voice. My sung voice. My choreographic voice. With my friend and dramaturg, Antonia Gersch, we studied the personas of iconic rock and pop performers. At the same time, I invested in deepening my understanding of American Sign Language.

Eventually, I realized I wasn't choreographing a dance, I was creating a character. A rock star who could Sign, sing and dance. A CODA rock star who performed concerts for Deaf and hearing audiences.

And so, Microphone Controller was born.

Each one of you might recognize different things in this work: ASL Signs, references, rock songs, icons, or quotes.

I hope you are curious about what you don't understand.

I hope you feel compelled to learn to Sign, and that you learn from Deaf people.

Thank you to my parents and siblings for shaping me and my voice from the very beginning, and especially to my older brother Chris for understanding me and this work more than anyone. Thank you to the entire team of collaborators in both Toronto and Berlin for your designs, coaching, questions, tools, and perspectives that have shaped this work into what it is today. Thank you to my wife, Natasha Poon Woo, for your unwavering belief in me and love. Thank you to Laurence Lemieux and the entire team at The Citadel for your support and presentation of this work.

Last but not least, thank you for being here. You could have been anywhere in the world right now, but you're here. And for that, I am grateful.

—Lukas Malkowski

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*This production was made possible through dance: made in canada / fait au canada, The National Ballet of Canada's Open Space Programme, Tanzhaus Zurich, b12 festival, ada-studio, dock11 Berlin, and SummerWorks Performance Festival, with financial support from Senatsverwaltung für Kultur und Europa, Dachverband Tanz Deutschland, and Canada Council for the Arts.*

*Special thank you to Naishi Wang, Anisa Tejpar, Emmett Bradshaw, Kelly Read and The Creative School at Toronto Metropolitan University, Pegasus Studios, Jane Davis-Munro and Lara Munro, and of course: Gary Malkowski.*





# Lukas Malkowski

Choreographer + Performer

Lukas Malkowski (he/they) is a CODA (Child of Deaf Adult), performance maker and Aquarius working in Canada and Europe. Embodying physics, voice, and Sign, he has choreographed theatrical and site-specific dance works, installations, ambient sets, music videos, and films. Notable collaborations include Sam Slater (*Joker: Original Motion Picture Soundtrack*), LBT, DJ Luke Slater, *John Wick: Chapter 4*, *Babylon Berlin*, Jessie Murph's *SEX HYSTERIA THE END*, Jasmine Ellis Dance Projects, Jacob Jonas The

Company, CTM Festival (Berlin), FestivalTransAmérique (Montreal), and the Schrittmacher Festival (The Netherlands), Lukas' solo choreography has been supported and presented by dance: made in canada, SummerWorks, and The Citadel: Ross Centre for Dance in Toronto, as well as by b12 festival and ada Studio's "networks" series in Berlin. Lukas has taught and choreographed for Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) — Performance Dance, Dance Arts Institute, and Rosedale Heights School of the Arts (RHSA) in Toronto; and Staatsteater Kassel, Staatsballett Berlin, Maraméo, Dock 11, Tanecno Festival, and Tanzfabrik in Germany. His teaching practice, Flomentum, is driven by visual, tactile embodiments of flight momentum.

Throughout his career, Lukas has danced works by choreographers such as James Kudelka, Kate Hilliard, Heidi Strauss, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and Maxine Doyle. He has performed in theatres, arts centres and festivals across the globe including Théâtre Maisonneuve (Danse Danse Montréal), La Chappelle, and Usine C in Montreal; Meridian Hall, The Art Gallery of Ontario (Fall for Dance North Festival) and The Elgin Theatre in Toronto; HAU2, Komische Open, and Dock 11 in Berlin; Marin Scorescu National Theatre (International Shakespeare Festival), in Romania; and Maison Arts Créteil and Théâtre Sénart in France.

His artistic recognitions include a Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding Performance (2024), the dance: made in canada Audience Choice Award (2023), Recherchestipendium Darstellende Kunst (2022), Tanzpraxis Emerging Artist scholarship (2022/23), and the Hnatyshyn Developing Artist Grant (2016).

Currently, Lukas is performing in touring productions by and with Guillaume Côté, Robert Lepage, and Jefta van Dinther, in addition to creating and performing his own choreographies. He is a proud graduate of the dance programs at RHSA and TMU (BFA '16).



Photo: Katja Strempel

## **Antonia Gersch | Dramaturg**

Antonia Gersch (she/her) is dance researcher and dance dramaturge living and working in Berlin. Until the end of the artistic directorship in 2018, she worked as a press officer in Dieter Jaenicke's artistic team in Hellerau. Since 2018, she has been responsible for the advisory program at Tanzbüro Berlin, among other things. In 2021 she was part of the archival research team at the Tanzarchiv Berlin. She was selected for the "MEETING POINT DRAMATURGY" program for dance dramaturges in 2022. In her academic and dramaturgical work, she is interested in linking socio-political issues, artistic and theoretical discourses in dialogue with the body - understood both as an imagined social structure and the performing body.



Photo: David Cooper

## **Chris Malkowski | Lighting Design**

Chris Malkowski is a professional lighting designer based in Toronto, Canada and has designed lights for over 100 productions in dance, drama, opera, musical theatre, art installations and live events. His work has been staged at many theatres in Canada including the Stratford Festival, Shaw Festival, Vancouver Opera, Soulpepper Theatre, and Canadian Stage. His work has also taken him globally gracing international festival stages in Europe (Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Poland) and North Africa (Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco).



Photo: Sam Hurley

## **Stephen Joffe** | Sound Design + Musical Coaching

Stephen Joffe is a performer and creator based in Toronto, as well as a graduate of The National Theatre School of Canada. He has been published as a playwright, songwriter and poet. As an actor he has appeared in such series as *Fargo*, *Slasher*, and *Alias Grace*. He also the lead singer of acclaimed touring band Birds of Bellwoods, and has composed music for productions with companies including TMU, Vazari Arts, Citadel + Compagnie, and more, as well as film productions including *The Anniversary* and *White Night*. He was nominated for two Dora Awards for Outstanding Original Sound Composition (Dance) in 2025 for his works *everything i wanted to tell you* and *NGOMA (don't worry about it)*.



Photo: Mari Vass

## **Roland Meyer de Voltaire** | Sound Design + Musical Coaching

Roland Meyer de Voltaire (he/him) had a short hype at the beginning of his career with his indie band Voltaire, established himself after its end as a film music composer, and moved to Berlin to realise his idea of pop music with his project SCHWARZ. Whether with just guitar or with electronic rhythms, his voice is always at the centre, sometimes as gentle as a feather, sometimes as cutting as a blade. The documentary series *Wie ein Fremder* about him, which appeared on Netflix and 3sat, brought SCHWARZ's music to a wider audience in recent years. He is also a film music composer and music producer and experienced in the field of vocal coaching.



Photo: Sara Herrlander

## **Moussi Bang | Costume Design**

Moussi Bang is a costume and fashion designer who discovered her passion in Berlin's creative art and club scene in 2015. She specializes in bold, eccentric, one-of-a-kind pieces that allow individuals and performers to express powerful identities. Through her brand, Moussi Bang creates visually striking costumes that celebrate self-expression, especially within queer and BIPOC communities whose visibility and empowerment she deeply value. Each piece is crafted with care, exploring unique textures, patterns and vibrant colors to spark imagination and confidence. Moussi believes fashion is a transformative tool that highlights individuality and celebrates diversity.

## **Laura Warren | Projection + Caption Design**

Laura Warren is an award-winning designer for theatre, dance, live music, and opera. Predominantly working in video/projection design, her work has been seen across Canada as well as Northern Ireland and France. Credits include CHILD-ish (Tarragon); Shedding a Skin (Nightwood); Qalb: A Journey of the Ego (IS1); Aportia Chryptych (COC); seven methods of killing kylie jenner (Obsidian); Shaniqua in Abstraction (Crow's/paul watson productions); Zahhak (CCSD/Tirgan); The Queen in Me (COC, Nightwood, Amplified Opera, Theatre Gargantua); Is God Is (Canadian Stage); No Save Points (Outside the March); The Black Drum (DCC/Soulpepper).

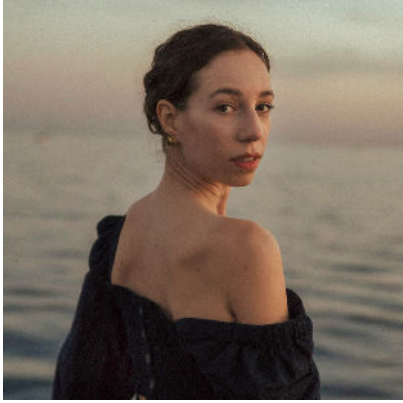


Photo: Justin Lee

## **Drew Berry | Videography**

Drew Berry (she/her) is a multidisciplinary artist and educator based in Toronto with expertise in dance, photography, videography, and classical piano. She is most notably known as a performer with Rock Bottom Movement. Drew has a profound passion for dance photography and videography, offering a unique perspective as a dance artist. Drew's fascination lies in documenting artistic processes and on-stage moments. She is a graduate from Quinte Ballet School of Canada's post-graduate program and holds a BFA (Honours) from the Performance Dance program at Toronto Metropolitan University.



Photo: Mona Kumžaitė

## **Dawn Jani Birley | ASL Coaching**

Dawn Jani Birley, recipient of the King Charles III Coronation Medal (2025) for her pioneering Deaf-led work with 1s1 Theatre, is an award-winning actor, movement artist, and translator. Her acting versatility has earned her international acclaim. Fluent in five sign languages and with an uncanny ability for languages and storytelling, she founded 1s1 Theatre in Toronto to advance Deaf-led narratives and create new theatrical languages at the intersection of Deaf and hearing worlds. Born in Saskatchewan to a third-generation Deaf family, she proudly identifies as culturally and linguistically Deaf.



## **Gaitrie Persaud-Killings | ASL Coaching**

Gaitrie Persaud-Killings (she/her) is a Queer Tkaronto-Indo Caribbean raised, is a theatre maker who develops performances using an eclectic mix of visual and physical theatre styles. Acting is her passion that she lives for. She had been involved in a big play *The Two Natashas: Our life in Guyana* with her co-actor and collaborator Natasha Bacchus. She is also an ASL Music performer, ASL coach and Deaf interpreter of theatre. She is the founder and Artistic Director of Phoenix The Fire which is a theatre community hub for IBPOC Deaf artists.



Photo: Benjamin Lappalaonen

## **Emerson Kafarowski |**

### **Technical Director + Stage Manager**

Emerson Kafarowski (she/they) is a Lighting Designer and multidisciplinary artist based in Tkaronto, Canada. A graduate of the Toronto Metropolitan University Performance Production + Design program, they are dedicated to life-long learning and gravitate towards projects that uplift unique voices and stories in our communities. In addition to lighting design, Emerson also works as a touring Technical Director, and has presented productions across Canada, the U.S.A, and Europe. She has the pleasure of working with many inspiring artists and companies, including Bouchardanse, Citadel + Compagnie, Dance Arts Institute, Lighthouse Festival Theatre, MOCA Toronto, Souleppper Theatre Company, Stratford Festival, and Toronto Dance Theatre.

## **Rita Mazza | Outside Eye**

Rita Mazza is a Deaf freelance artist, visual sign performer, dancer and choreographer. She works in theater plays as an actress occasionally. She speaks Italian Sign Language fluently as well as German, French and International Sign. Since 2010 Rita Mazza has lived in Berlin and is currently working as an artistic director and performer on visual sign performances in Berlin. She has a longstanding collaboration with Making A Difference.

Citadel + Compagnie is an artistic and community entity with a dual purpose. It is at once both place and people.

The Citadel: Ross Centre for Dance is a remarkable building nestled in the Regent Park neighbourhood of Toronto. Since 2012, The Citadel has established itself as an open and welcoming space for artists to rehearse, create and perform, and where the community can learn, communicate, and share.

The Citadel plays host to a range of presentation platforms and residency programs for some of Canada's most interesting choreographers and dance companies. It is also the home of the Citadel Dance Program, providing free dance education to local children and youth, and neighbour Toronto Council Fire's Indigenous dance program, First Fire.

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Compagnie de la Citadelle is the professional dance company within Citadel + Compagnie. Founded in 2000, the Compagnie is known for its creative processes and intimate performances of classic works and new creations. Through remount initiatives, the Compagnie also dedicates itself to the preservation of important Canadian dance work, making available iconic repertoire to a new generation of dance artists.

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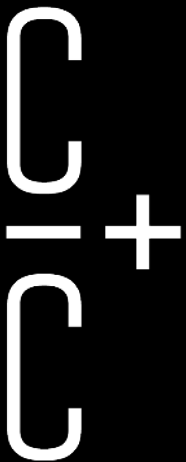
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It has been updated as of January 22, 2026. We apologize in advance for any omissions.



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Alongside this acknowledgement, we encourage you to get to know our neighbours and learn more about how you can support the important work they do in our community.



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