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STAGE SCENES

By JON KAPLAN and GLENN SUMI

Political movement

The revolution has begun, and it will be starting at 8:08 pm. That's when choreographer **Ilona Dougherty** shows her new piece in the season finale of the monthly 8:08 Series of dance works. Dougherty, one of three choreographers commissioned for the three-night run (the others are **Susan Kendal** and **Lindsay Zier-Vogel**), hails from the Yukon but is now based in Montreal, where her day job as national director of the **Apathy Is Boring Project** ([www. apathyisboring.com](http://www.apathyisboring.com)) helps her engage young people in social action.

Dougherty says she's worked hard to link her love of dance with her community work.

"My art starts with a political idea and ends up being personal," she says. "I'm interested in how we relate to our communities."

For her new work, **Running South, Facing North**, Dougherty took her dancers to the Yukon, where they identified with the land, getting a tactile experience of nature. The 22-minute piece's first half is broad and vast, inspired by the northern space. The second half, created in Montreal, is more constrained.

Dougherty's process included asking her dancers about their backgrounds and how they related to their environments. She's a big fan of site-specific performances; her troupe recently performed a work on the streets of Brazil.

"There are more distractions, but you get all this other meaning," she says about the experience.

Still, even though the new piece is being performed in a traditional theatre, she's looking forward to the hard-core dance lovers who attend 8:08 shows. And she likes performing

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for Toronto crowds, who she says are more interested in the construction of a dance than audiences in Montreal.

"My goal is to make modern dance accessible," she says, "and that's pretty revolutionary."

See Dance Listings, page 88 for details.

High-spirited Harolds

Ellen-Ray Hennessy gave a striking birthday present to the late **Harold Kandel**, jumping out of a big cake dressed as Kandel to celebrate the anarchic spirit of the passionate theatregoer who gave his name to the annual **Harold Awards**. Harold would have been a century old this year, and the 12th awards ceremony became, typically, a party shared by members and friends of the Toronto independent theatre and dance community.

Hosted by **Raoul Bhaneja** and with music by his group **Raoul and the Big Time**, the event last Monday (May 29) at the **Lula Lounge** celebrated over a dozen people who've contributed to the vibrant arts life of T.O.

One of last year's Haroldees, **Kirsten Johnson**, showed part of a video in progress, in which recipients shared their reminiscences of Kandel, who was never worried about offering his opinions about a show during the performance.

In true Harold spirit, Hennessy heckled during the evening, which also included a tribute to the late **Paul Bettis**.

Harolded this year were producers **Larissa Mair** and **Claire Sakaki**, stage manager **Arwen MacDonell**, theatre artist **Moynan King**, designers **Trevor Schwellnus**, **Shawn Kerwin** and **David Rayfield**, storyteller/musician/artist **Amina Alfred**, dance curator **Mimi Beck** and playwright **Paul Ledoux**.

Also honoured were theatre couple **Anne Anglin** and **Paul Thompson**, theatre troupe **Canadia dell'Arte** (**Peter Reitzel**, **Julie Reitzel**, **Michael Chipman** and **Dennis Frey**) and **TheatreBooks** founders **Leonard McHardy** and **John Harvey**.

Director **Brendan Healy** received this year's **Ken McDougall Award**, which includes a \$1,000 cash prize.

Essential Ambrose

Who knew that food could have such dramatic flair?

Shadowland Theatre's latest, **The Essence Of Ambrose Ichor**, only ran two performances last weekend, but it sated its audience's taste in both a culinary and theatrical fashion.

Moving from one site to another on the Toronto Islands, viewers were treated to a history of the fictitious chef's life as well as a sampling of his food, courtesy of chefs **Luisa Milan** and **Lynne Stirling**.

The evening was a hit, beginning with a Parisian scene in which Bacchus and a centaur served some delicious amuses bouches. We later had a waterside fish soup accompanied by

visual echoes of India, followed by a venison stew main course eaten around a campfire.

The drama grew out of the increasingly argumentative groups who celebrated Ichor's name, the fun-loving party animals known as the Enthusiasts of Ambrose Ichor And His Times Society (**Hume Baugh** and **Clea Minaker**) and the more academic, serious Ambrose Ichor Recipe Recovery Service (**Selina Martin** and **Craig Stanghetta**).

The highlight of the evening came when the former, dressed as song-and-dance vegetables, interrupted the solemnity of a ritual salad ceremony presided over by the latter.

If you didn't catch this piece, devised by **Anne Barber** , **Brad Harley** and **Minaker** , you'll have a chance to celebrate the **400th anniversary of Samuel de Champlain** 's feasting club, **The Order Of Good Cheer** , on **Ward's Island** in July.

Off Centre

During its 26-year history, the **Theatre Centre** has had a habit of moving from one venue to another. Unfortunately, the march continues. Forced from its recently fixed-up home at Queen and Dovercourt because of the building's sale, the company hosts a **Separation Anxiety Party** on Monday (June 5). The evening includes a scavenger hunt, short cabaret presentations by alumni and resident artists, a raffle and the announcement of plans for next season.

And it's topped off with tunes spun by **DJs Steve Marsh** and **Justin Roddy** .

See One-Nighters, page 184.

Gender Circus

The **Gender Play project** turns to big-top-style performance with **Euphoria, "the queerest show on earth."** The work of queer, trans and questioning youth, the show explores sexual diversity through theatre, song, poetry and dance. It's the follow-up to last year's successful **Binary City** , hosted by **Central Toronto Youth Services' Pride and Prejudice Program** .

The 10 members of the company have been working collaboratively for eight months with director **Tristan R. Whiston** , choreographer **Kathleen Rea** , coordinator **LeeAndra Miller** and writer **Anna Camilleri** .

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RECENTLY BY JON KAPLAN and GLENN SUMI

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