

TAKE FIVE

A Revealing Q & A
with... **Britta Johnson**



Britta Johnson is a composer, lyricist and writer based in Toronto. She has worked with many companies including Canadian Stage, Theatre Passe Muraille, Theatre Sheridan, Ballet Moscow, The Musical Stage Company, Outside the March and the Stratford Festival. She thanks you very much for reading.

1. When did you first think of yourself as an artist?

I wrote a show in high school and Leslie Arden, a Canadian composer and lyricist that I just think the world of, came to see it and took me out for coffee. She said (more gracefully than this) that I was “very talented” and this show is “very bad” and proceeded to talk to me about my music and ideas for a whole afternoon. It was a big deal for me to have her treat me like a peer and speak to me with candour and honesty. It felt somehow like I had arrived somewhere new. But who knows. Some days I think of myself as an artist. Other days, not so much.

2. Who helped you develop your voice as an artist?

SO many people... Leslie Arden, my composition teacher at school Christos Hatzis, my sister Anika (who is also my collaborator), my parents, --- all my friends who talk to me about the world and our lives, everyone who writes music that I listen to or tells me a good story. I don't know. This is an impossible question.

3. What's something that's inspired you this week?

I have been listening to a lot of Prince this week. It doesn't get better than Prince.

4. What's your favourite restaurant in the city to visit?

I love, love, love Flip Toss Thai on Harbord. Cheap, tasty and they know me by name which gives me a real feeling of belonging in this labyrinth we call life.

5. What do you want to see more of on Toronto stages?

Diversity, risk, good music, weird and wonderful things.