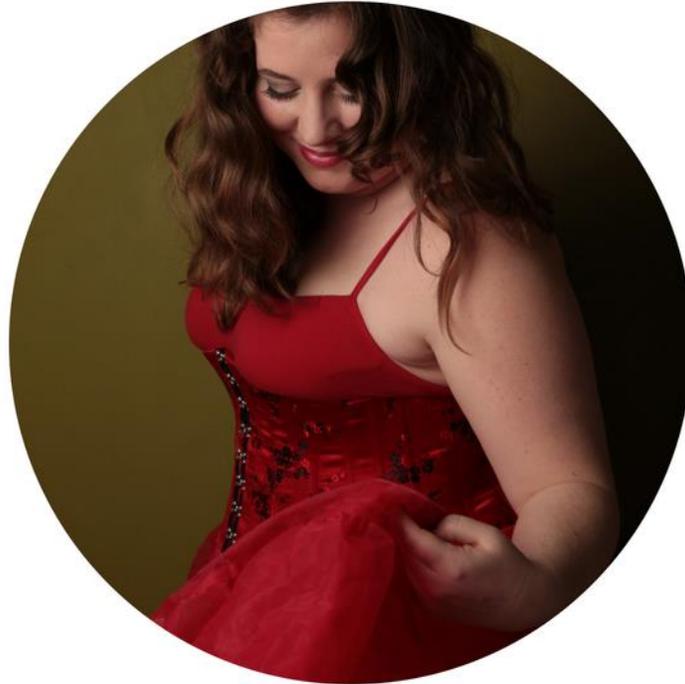


TAKE FIVE

A Revealing Q and A
with...
Nina Kaye



Nina Kaye is an award-winning playwright, a published poet and the artistic director of Unspoken Theatre. Her plays and short works have been produced in New York, Washington and Toronto. Her scripts received first prize in competitions with Sterling Studio Theatre and Hart House Players, and were shortlisted in contests with NuVoices and Panfish Productions. She has worked as a dramaturge on numerous projects. Upcoming, she is producing Kitchen Sink Drama at Toronto Fringe, a site-specific play in a kitchen served with free snacks.

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

Before I had the words for it, I already thought of myself as an artist. Playing dress up and putting on circus parades or fairy tale plays with other kids - writing, directing and performing theatre has always been in my life. My memory of doing this at age 4 is not so different from my memories of last week's rehearsal, 30 years later.

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

My father instilled an entrepreneurial drive that allows me to meet the demands of self-producing with Unspoken Theatre Company. My mother encouraged me to follow passions and to employ empathy to pursue meaningful connections with others. My sister gives me the courage to be diligently self-critical of my own work. Dave reminds me that nothing is accomplished without putting in many hours of effort. Fernando contributes a philosophical influence on my writing. More than anything, artists learn by reading, watching and doing. I read plays from classic to contemporary to give me an idea of what I can do. Watching performances of other artists who write, act, produce, direct, gave me a model to learn from. I learned more from watching Andrew Moodie, Katie Sly, Linda Griffiths, d'bi young, Amanda Parris, Jill Carter, Tara Goldstein, Brent Carver than I ever learned in school. And I do learn from actors, directors, designers when collaborating on new work.

3. What's something that's inspired you recently?

I love to see theatre in Toronto - good and bad are equally inspiring because it is a learning experience. A recent good one was Molly Bloom by Fourth Gorgon Theatre - inventive, well-executed, intelligent, feminist, generous, beautiful - on an absolutely shoestring budget. And a recent bad one... hmm...I won't mention it.

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

Right now I am in love with [CXBO chocolate](#) which we're serving to the audience in Kitchen Sink Drama at Toronto Fringe. It is gourmet, locally made, pure deliciousness. Yum!

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

I want to see micro funding to allow support for developing writing through workshops. And funding for free or discounted rehearsal/performance space. There are a ton of artists putting in hours and money to self-produce with no support. Look at the 700 applications to Toronto Fringe each year! The city would have continuous cultural programming if they opened up a free or subsidized city stage.

Nina Kaye is the Artistic Director of [Unspoken Theatre](#) and playwright of [Kitchen Sink Drama](#) playing at the [Toronto Fringe Festival](#).