



Beautiful City Theatre  
Théâtre Belle Cité

Beautiful City Theatre, in collaboration with Virtu'O, presents



**NEXT TO NORMAL**  
**MAY 15 – 23, 2015 AT CENTAUR THEATRE**

For immediate release.

(Montreal – April 17, 2015) – **Beautiful City Theatre**, in collaboration with **Virtu'O**, produces the contemporary rock musical **NEXT TO NORMAL** opening May 15, 2015 at Centaur Theatre (453 rue St. François-Xavier) in Montreal, Quebec. The multiple Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize-winning musical will run for two weekends, from **May 15 – 17**, and **May 21 – 23, 2015**. Evening performances will start at 7:30 PM and matinees on Sunday May 17<sup>th</sup> and Saturday May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 1:30 PM.

Featuring music and lyrics by the established Broadway duo, composer **Tom Kitt** (*If/Then*, *Bring It On*) and lyricist **Brian Yorkey** (*If/Then*, *The Last Ship*), **NEXT TO NORMAL** opened on Broadway in 2009, after debuting off-Broadway at **Second Stage Theatre** in January 2008 and traveling to Washington D.C.'s Arena Stage. What began as **Kitt** and **Yorkey's** ten-minute BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop sketch piece in 1998 was then transformed into the Pulitzer Prize-winning musical after numerous workshops, readings, and continued development. With Producer **David Stone** (*If/Then*, *Wicked*) and Director **Michael Greif** (*If/Then*, *Rent*) on board, then-called "*Feeling Electric*" became what is now **NEXT TO NORMAL** and received the 2009 Tony Award for Best Original Score by **Kitt** and **Yorkey**, Best Leading Actress by **Alice Ripley** (*Sunset Boulevard*, *Side Show*), and Best Orchestrations by **Michael Starobin** and **Tom Kitt**.

**Beautiful City Theatre's** production of **NEXT TO NORMAL** is directed by BCT's Artistic Director **Calli Armstrong**. This is also the first **Beautiful City Theatre** production that will involve collaboration with another Montreal-based performing arts company. Through choreography by **Ghislaine Doté**, artists from local contemporary dance company **Virtu'O** will add a unique element to this production as they embody the emotional complexity of familial relationships and mental illness featured in the show.

**NEXT TO NORMAL** tells the heart-breaking story of a not-so-ordinary suburban family dealing with the effects of mental illness and trying to live a 'normal' life. Diana, a wife and mother diagnosed with bipolar disorder and experiencing delusions, struggles to keep the family together. With a score of more than 30 original songs, **NEXT TO NORMAL** brilliantly portrays a family's coming to terms with its past and present, helping them bravely face their future.

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BCT's production of **NEXT TO NORMAL** aims to explore the complex source material of this musical and address present day concerns including ethics in psychiatry, electroconvulsive therapy, substance abuse, depression, and suicide. **Beautiful City Theatre's** production intends to portray one family's attempts at coping with grief, loss and despair, through the combination of **Kitt** and **Yorkey's** vibrant music and **Virtu'O's** intricate choreography. This intensely emotional, and ultimately hopeful, musical aims to move audiences by shedding light on what it means to live with mental illness.

**NEXT TO NORMAL** stars **Tara Bissett** as Diana, **Simon Fortier** as Dan, **Kevin Raymond** as Gabe, **Tristan Roy** as Dr. Madden/Dr. Fine, as well as BCT alumni **Eleni Metrakos** (*Godspell, Circle Mirror Transformation*) as Natalie and **Adam Daniel Koren** (*The Full Monty, Measure for Measure*) as Henry.

#### **ABOUT BEAUTIFUL CITY THEATRE**

BCT is an independent federally registered not-for-profit group presently residing in Montreal. BCT's goal is to create and celebrate community through the sharing and exploration of theatre processes and the performance of theatre productions. BCT engages with projects, pieces, and events which challenge and enrich its participants' understanding of relationships and humanity, and which build an appreciation for theatre and theatre processes. BCT aims to create a rich and challenging learning environment for artists through the intentional use of relationship and ensemble focused experiential work.

#### **ABOUT VIRTU'O**

Virtu'O is a company dedicated to the expression of human emotions through dance, music and theatre. The main objectives are:

- To create work that is both accessible and challenging.
- To decipher and express emotions.
- To reconnect the audience with these emotions.
- To inspire the audience with the pursuit of artistic excellence.

#### **HISTORY OF NEXT TO NORMAL**

**NEXT TO NORMAL** began in 1998 as a 10-minute workshop sketch **Kitt** and **Yorkey** developed in their first year at a BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop in Manhattan. The piece was presented in an early form at the New York Musical Theatre Festival and was called *Feeling Electric*. After many workshops, the writers eventually expanded the piece to a full-length musical. **NEXT TO NORMAL** debuted off-Broadway at **Second Stage Theatre** in January 2008. After its Off-Broadway run, the show traveled to Washington D.C.'s regional **Arena Stage** later that year. After a successful out-of-town try-out, it then opened on Broadway at the **Booth Theatre** on April 15, 2009. The Broadway production closed on January 16, 2011 after 21 previews and 733 regular performances. In addition to being nominated for eleven 2009 Tony Awards and winning Best Original Score, Best Orchestration and Best Performance by a Leading Actress in a Musical, **NEXT TO NORMAL** also won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2010, becoming the eighth musical in history to receive the honor. The official touring production made its way to Canada in 2011 and **NEXT TO NORMAL** continued to be produced by many regional theatre companies across Canada. In Montreal, a French-language production opened at **Le Theatre du Rideau Vert** in 2012. Translated by Yves Morin, the production was called *Une Vie Presque Normale*.

#### **NEXT TO NORMAL**

**Music by Tom Kitt**

**Book & Lyrics by Brian Yorkey**

May 15 - 23, 2015 at 7.30 PM

May 17 & 23, 2015 at 1.30 PM

#### **VENUE**

Centaur Theatre

453 rue St. François-Xavier, Montreal QC

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## **TICKETS**

\$40 Adults

\$30 QDF & Equity members

\$25 Seniors

\$20 Student

Information about group discounts available by emailing [info@beautifulcitytheatre.com](mailto:info@beautifulcitytheatre.com)

Tickets available for purchase at [www.centaurtheatre.com](http://www.centaurtheatre.com) or by calling (514) 288-3161

## **CAST**

Dan: **Simon Fortier**

Diana: **Tara Bissett**

Dr. Madden/Dr. Fine: **Tristan Roy**

Gabe: **Kevin Raymond**

Henry: **Adam Daniel Koren**

Natalie: **Eleni Metrakos**

## **VIRTU'O DANCERS**

**Marie-Denise Bettez**

**Jenny Brizard**

**Dina Edde**

**Mathilde Gesseume-Rioux**

**Kim Henry**

**Genevieve Lauzon**

**Mohamed N'Diaye**

## **PRODUCTION TEAM**

Producer: **Natalie Gershtein**

Director: **Calli Armstrong**

Choreographer: **Ghislaine Doté**

Vocal Director: **Catherine Marmen**

Music Director: **Carolyn Barr**

Production Manager: **Todd Hirtle**

Technical Director: **Andréann Cossette**

Stage Manager: **Natalie Bartosek**

Assistant Stage Managers: **Jeanne Vachon, Gabrielle Samek**

Set Designer: **Elyse Malo**

Lighting Designer: **Marrissa Lewis**

Costume Designer: **Fiona Ross**

Sound Designer: **Marc-Antoine Legault**

Dramaturg for Virtu'O: **Xavier Malo**

Graphic Designer: **Dale Coulombe**

## **SHOWTIMES**

Thursday May 14 @ 7:30pm (PREVIEW)

Friday May 15 @ 7:30pm

Saturday May 16 @ 7:30pm

Sunday May 17 @ 1:30pm

Thursday May 21 @ 7:30pm

Friday May 22 @ 7:30pm

Saturday May 23 @ 1:30pm

Saturday May 23 @ 7:30pm

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More information at [www.beautifulcitytheatre.com](http://www.beautifulcitytheatre.com)  
Tickets at [www.centaurtheatre.com](http://www.centaurtheatre.com) or 514-288-3161  
\$40 / \$30 QDF & Equity Members / \$25 Seniors / \$20 Students

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