

Bios - Next to Normal

PRODUCTION TEAM

Natalie Gershtein (*Artistic Producer*) currently lives in New York where she has worked with Cherry Lane Theatre, Lincoln Center Festival; The Public Theater on the Under the Radar Festival; Ars Nova Theater; Joey Parnes Productions on *Here Lies Love*; 101 Productions on the Broadway openings of *The Elephant Man*, and *An American in Paris*; Snug Harbor Productions during the Off-Broadway opening of Eve Ensler's *Emotional Creature* (Signature Theatre); and Bucks County Playhouse as the Company Manager for the 75th anniversary season. She is currently the Associate Director at Young Playwrights Inc., founded by Stephen Sondheim. Education: MFA in Theatre Management & Producing, Columbia University.

Calli Armstrong (*Director*) is the co-founder and artistic director of Beautiful City Theatre. A director, actor, and drama therapist, Calli has worked with a number of theatre groups and not-for-profit organizations using theatre to build community (e.g. Centre for the Arts and Human Development, Montreal Playback Theatre, Third Space Playback). In addition to working with Beautiful City Theatre, Calli is presently an adjunct professor completing a postdoctoral fellowship in Concordia University's Creative Arts Therapies department.

Todd Hirtle (*Production Manager*) has worked in all aspects of theatre from production, sound and lights, to director or cast member. He graduated from McGill engineering with a minor in arts and worked in aerospace before becoming a high school math and science teacher, where he helps in nearly every theatrical production. Graced with a persistent good humor and patience, Todd finds a way to transmit all his energy into the projects he undertakes. He is committed to the mandates and values that are at the heart of BCT.

Ghislaine Doté (*Choreographer*) Originally from the Central African Republic, Ghislaine grew up in Ivory Coast where she trained in Dance, Choral singing and Northern Shaolin Kung Fu. In Montreal, she completed a BA in Contemporary dance and went on to found her company, Virtu'O, while performing for different companies. Her performance credits include Van Grimde, Flak, Sinha Danse, Cirque du Soleil, So You Think You Can Dance Canada. In 2008, Ghislaine was cast in *Starmania* and fell in love with Musical theater. She has since been involved in the Musical theater scene both as a performer and choreographer: *On Second Avenue*, *The Virgin Courtisan*, *Godspell*, *Forever Broadway*.

Catherine Marmen (*Vocal Director*) started studying classical singing at 14, later enrolling in Quebec High School's Musical Theatre program, and Cégep Sainte-Foy, in classical music, where she was also trained in vocal jazz. Having obtained a B.A. in Social Sciences, she gained valuable knowledge and experience as a social counsellor, working mainly in mental health and teaching choir and dance to intellectually challenged adults. She co-directed *The Little Mermaid Jr.* at Vimont Musique School, where she also gave private lessons. Catherine has performed in over a dozen musicals in English, French and Yiddish and has nourished a profound love and understanding of the musical theatre craft.

Elyse Malo (*Set Designer*) is a graduate from John Abbott College's Professional Theatre Design program, where she is currently working as wardrobe technician and costume teacher. After graduating, her work was brought over to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival for Jac'n'Burgh's production of *Under Milk Wood* (set & costume). This is her second time working with BCT, having done *The Full Monty* (set). Other works include Persephone Productions' *The Walnut Tree* and *Strawberries in January* (costume), the TV series *Sex and Ethnicity* (prod. design) and Cote-St-Luc Dramatic Society's *Catch Me If You Can* and *Haven't Got a Clue* (costume).

Fiona Ross (*Costume Designer*) is a recent graduate of McGill University where she minored in theatre with a focus on costumes and production. Previous credits include Stage Manager and designer for *Richard III* (CMTC), Designer for *The Anger in Ernest and Ernestine* (CMTC), Artistic Director for *The Drowsy Chaperone* (AUTS), Costumes for *West Side Story* (AUTS), and a myriad of production roles for McGill English Department productions.

Marc-Antoine Legault (*Sound Designer*) is a Montreal artist currently studying Electroacoustics at Concordia University. A graduate from John Abbott College, he has had the opportunity to work with several Montreal theatre companies. Marc-Antoine is very excited to be on the *Next to Normal* production team and hopes everyone enjoys this excellent show. He would like to thank the other production team members for giving him this awesome opportunity as well as being so supportive and easy-going during the process.

Natalie Bartosek (*Stage Manager*), has been an extra in 8 different films from 2006-2013, most recently 2013's *White House Down* with Channing Tatum, Jamie Foxx & Maggie Gyllenhaal. She has recently decided to try her hand at theatre production, as Spotlight Operator for Persephone Production's *Spring Awakening* in 2013, Spotlight Operator for *the Lyric Theatre Singers* annual production in 2014, Assistant Stage Manager for Beautiful City Theatre's *The Full Monty* in 2014, and most recently as Stage Manager for BCT's *Circle Mirror Transformation* which played in Montreal and New York City this past winter.

Jeanne Vachon (*Assistant Stage Manager*) is a Canadian-born university graduate. She worked hard at school to receive a BFA in Film Studies at Concordia University. In 2013, she was lucky to be a part of an exchange to San Francisco. While on the exchange, she, along with her classmates built the sets for *The Chorus Line*. From creating films for school assignments to building sets for school productions to being assistant stage manager to an upcoming Beautiful City Theatre production, her artistic experiences are broadening.

Andréann Cossette (*Technical Director*) is a creative technician with a strong affinity for the performing arts. She is currently working towards her B.F.A in Intermedia at Concordia University in Montreal. Prior to that, she has been studying Theatre Production at Collège Lionel-Groulx. In 2013, she worked as a coordinator and assistant technical director with Studio 303 on the Edgy Women Festival, and since then has continued in partnership as an in-house technician and technical director for independent productions.

Xavier Malo (*Dramaturge for Virtu'O*) est interprète et créateur inter-disciplinaire. Si ses disciplines de prédilection sont le théâtre et la danse, il postule pour la possibilité d'harmoniser toutes les discipline autour du sens narratif et socio-culturel d'une oeuvre. Il a travaillé à titre d'interprète au théâtre pour des compagnies telles que DynamO théâtre, Omnibus, Système kangourou, I.N.K. théâtre; en danse, pour Roger Sinha, Les imprudances, Sursaut et d'autres. Outre son travail au sein de Virtu'O, on pourra voir sous peu sa création "Moppe", un solo de danse et théâtre qui dresse le portrait de l'échec de l'ambition.

CAST

Adam Daniel Koren (*Henry*) Currently a Concordia University Theatre student, specializing in Theatre performance. As an actor some of his favorite stage credits include, *Lies my Father told Me*, *A Doll house* (Segal Centre); *The Full Monty* (Beautiful City Theatre); *The Wedding Singer* (Hillel). Adam has been involved in theatre since he could talk, or more actually sing. In addition to acting, Adam writes, and directs both theatre and film.

Kevin Raymond-Jean (*Gabe*) is a bilingual Montreal actor/singer/dubber (voiceover actor). After training classically for six years in music and opera, his training extended to acting using the Stella Adler method, studying at the Conservatory of Montreal for acting and vocal training. Film credits include: *Stonewall*, *La Mise a l'Aveugle*, *X-Men Days of Future Past*, *Sweet Sixteen* (short), *Pygmalion* (short). TV Credits: *19-2* (English), *30 Vies*. Voiceover credits: *10 Lives*, *Captain Philips*, *Gangster Squad*, *Family Guy*, *Oprah Winfrey Special series*, *PD Campus*, *Combat Hospital*. Theatre Credits: *Oliver Twist*, *Hair*.

Simon Fortier (*Dan*) is a seasoned performer with ten years vocal training (Marcin Brzezinski), nine years piano, five years choir membership or direction (*Lyric Theater Singers*, *Polyphonie*). His professional roles include Gabriel Gascon (lead), *Près de toi* (Ignace Lai); he reached final auditions for *Le Petit Prince* (Cocciante/Anaïs), *Dracula* (Pelletier/Tabra). Past roles include *Zéro Janvier* (*Starmania*); Gringoire, Frolo (*Notre - Dame - de - Paris*); Jesus (*Jesus Christ Superstar*). He performed in *Steppin' Out!* (*L.T.S.*), sang alongside legends Gilles Vigneault and Michel Rivard, and before the Longueuil Symphony. He has participated in several contests and masterclasses (Robert Marien, Bruno Pelletier, Linda Mailhot). Simon co-founded the barbershop quartet *Four of a Kind*.

Tristan Roy (*Dr. Fine/Dr. Madden*) graduated from John Abbott's Theatre program in 2010. The next year, he travelled to Scotland to perform for the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Recent shows include: Coracole Production's *Phantom of the Opera/Love Never Dies* (Raoul), CETM's concert version of the South Park Movie (Chef and Newscaster), Kaleidoscope Theatre Montreal's *The Tempest* (Alonso), Persephone Production's *Oroonoko* (Hawkins), Seeing Voices Montreal's *Deaf Snow White* (Voice of Prince Philip-Xander) and as a personal creation piece; *Le Premier Printemps* (Storyteller).

DANCERS

Dina Edde (*Dancer*) has worked with Giulia Tripoli, Samuel Chouinard, Mel Charlot, and Scott Fordhman; to name a few. Her credits include dancing for Wiser008, and for Dodgers Broadway NYC. She is currently a dancer for the Tripoli Studios agency. She trained mainly in hip hop and street jazz in many cities and studios including Broadway Dance center, NYC, where she was mentored by Neil Schwartz. This is her first experience dancing with incomparable Virtu'O dance company and BCT creative team and talent.

Geneviève Lauzon (*Dancer*). Performer, choreographer, teacher, lecturer, versatile artist, Geneviève is active in the world of contemporary dance, musicals and choral singing. After obtaining her degree in contemporary dance at UQAM, she worked for several young choreographers (Lynsey Billing, Jade Marquis). Geneviève choreographed and danced in several musicals including *Footloose* (2007), *West Side Story* (2008) and *The Rocky Horror Show* (2011 and 2012). In 2013, she joined *Sursaut Dance Company* that led her to perform throughout Quebec, the United States, China and Mexico. She is currently working with choreographer Philippe Dandonneau on the creation of two new pieces.

Jenny Brizard (*Dancer*) choisit d'intégrer une formation en théâtre, danse et chant à l'école Randolph Academy for the Performing Arts a Toronto. Elle poursuit son parcours en intégrant la compagnie de Ghislaine Doté en 2005. Artiste multidisciplinaire, on a pu l'a remarque dans la comédie musical : "Guys and Dolls" produit au Centre Segal, la série TV, populaire, "Trauma", les galas Juste pour Rire, et plusieurs projets avec Cirque du Soleil pour nommer que ceux-la . Jenny continue à se perfectionner en théâtre et se prépare pour un nouveau projet avec le Cirque du Soleil.

Kim Henry (*Dancer*). After graduating from l'École de danse contemporaine de Montréal, where she received 2 Excellence grants and the Hnatyshyn Foundation Grant, Kim Henry performed in more than 30 dance and physical theatre projects as a freelance artist. She collaborated with Montréal Danse, Mélanie Demers (Fly), Lucie Grégoire, Isabelle Boulanger, Festival Montréal Complètement Cirque, Dynamo Théâtre, Théâtre de la Dame de Coeur and Cirque du Soleil's Red Carpet. She recently traveled to Australia, Mongolia, Morocco, Iceland, Bolivia and Mexico for *Little Circle*, a dance film project created with the photographer Eric Paré. *Next to Normal* is her first collaboration with Virtu'O danse.

Mathilde Gesseume-Rioux (*Dancer*). Écoles : École Nationale de Ballet du Canada, École supérieure de ballet contemporain de Montréal, L'École de danse contemporaine de Montréal. Expériences acquises pendant la formation: *The Perfect Human no2* (Chanti Wadge), *Trois Peaux* (Jean-Sébastien Lourdais), *Il y avait ce fou...* (Julien Desplantez), *Ressac* (Harold Réhaume), *Rêverie de furies* (Susanna Hood). Expériences professionnelles: *Alarms Songs – Film* (Dominique Sirois), *Spirale – Recherche et création* (Esther Carré), *Cabaret ADAM* (en tant que co-chorégraphe et interprète), *L'Oncle Célestin* (Étienne Cousineau), *Mouvement 100/sans manifestes* (Helen Simard).

Mohamed N'Diaye (*Dancer*) is distinguished by his dual training in music and dance. Born from artist parents, he was bathed in a rich cultural scene at a very young age. He began drumming at 5 years old in Conakry (Guinea) with Mr. Aboubacar Camara Fatouabou. From the age of 12 years old, he received a dual training of dance under the direction of Mr. Bangaly Bangoura, dancer from Guinea Ballets Africains, with whom he became an assistant trainer. Arriving in Quebec in 1998, Mohamed received training from his father, Mr. Oumar N'Diaye, in the language of stage performance as a dancer. Since 2004, he explored other styles in dancing, including contemporary with Serge Takri, Ghislaine Doté (Virtu'O Danse), and Aboubacar Mané.

BAND

Austin Lamarche (*Drums/Percussion*) is currently completing her Masters of Music Performance in Percussion at McGill under the direction of Aiyun Huang and Fabrice Marandola. She received her Bachelor of Music from the Crane School of Music in Potsdam, NY. She is a founding member of the percussion trio *Dressage*, with upcoming performances in Hong Kong and China. Past musical theatre experiences include playing drums/percussion for the McGill Arts Undergraduate Theatre Society: *Chicago*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, and the SUNY Potsdam Musical Theatre Organization: *Guys and Dolls*, *Company*, *A Chorus Line*, *Hair*, *Rent*, *Into the Woods*.

Francois Leclerc (*Cello*) started learning the cello at the age of 8. He obtained a Diploma of College Studies (DCS) in classical music at Cégep Saint-Laurent, where he also had his first experience in non-classical music. He is currently studying for a Bachelor's degree in classical music performance with Yegor Dyachkov at the Music Faculty of Université de Montréal. In March 2015, as a member of the Montreal Philharmonic Musician's Orchestra, Francois Leclerc played *West Side Story*, by Leonard Bernstein.

Kevin Bourne (*Guitar*) is currently studying jazz guitar at McGill, having previously graduated from the Professional Music and Song Techniques program at Vanier College. Previous credits as a guitarist include Côte St-Luc Dramatic Society's *Catch Me if You Can*, and several WISTA productions such as *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, *Legally Blonde*, and *Thoroughly Modern Millie*.