



A Theatre Passe Muraille and Erroneous Theatre Co-Production and World Premiere  
presentation

## NO ONE'S SPECIAL AT THE HOT DOG CART

By Charlie Petch

*"Everything I needed to know about emergency health care, I learned as a teenage hot dog vendor in downtown Toronto"*

On stage in Theatre Passe Muraille's March 13th – 23<sup>rd</sup>

Toronto, Ont. – In March, [Theatre Passe Muraille](#) and **Erroneous Theatre** are thrilled to present the **World Premiere** of their co-production **NO ONE'S SPECIAL AT THE HOT DOG CART**, on stage **March 13<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>** in the Passe Muraille Mainspace. (Media night: March 16<sup>th</sup>)

From award winning playwright, author, and spoken word performer **Charlie Petch** (they/he), in **NO ONE'S SPECIAL AT THE HOT DOG CART**, Petch shares their personal accounts of working at hot dog stands around downtown Toronto in early 90's, where they began to learn de-escalation techniques which they now teach. Through spoken word, musical storytelling and by sharing the de-escalation techniques they have honed over the years, they regale audiences with tales of survival and kindness, as a witness to life on the street.

Petch began writing the play during the pandemic, with the inspirations of 90's Toronto street culture and de-escalation practice in mind – the show's exploration of negative perceptions around homelessness and mental health became increasingly topical and urgent for the artist, and the pandemic wore on, social and economic divides became more glaring, and the city bore witness to violent tent city evacuations.

*"I think there would be much less fear if people knew how to stay safe when interacting with people who are having trouble with their emotions," says **Petch**. "In reality, we also need to learn how to de-escalate ourselves. I am hoping that giving audiences tools and knowledge about emergency response procedures will help them interact with others better, and that will empower them to resist a system that*

*tells us homeless people deserve police abuse, that street culture is heartless and not a community, and that poverty is a crime.”*

A poet, playwright, librettist, musician, lighting designer, and host, Charlie Petch was the 2017 Poet of Honour for the speakNORTH national festival, winner of the Golden Beret lifetime achievement in spoken word with The League of Canadian Poets (2020), and founder of Hot Damn it's a Queer Slam. Petch is a touring performer, as well as a mentor and workshop facilitator. Their debut poetry collection, *Why I Was Late* (Brick Books), won the 2022 ReLit Award and was named “Best of 2021” by *The Walrus*. Their film with Opera QTO, *Medusa's Children*, premiered in 2022. They are the current Writer In Residence for Berton House (2023) and were long-listed for the CBC Poetry Prize in 2021.

Community outreach initiatives offered as an extension of NO ONE IS SPECIAL AT THE HOT DOG CART include a February 7<sup>th</sup> TPM Book Club meeting to discuss Petch's collection *Why I Was Late*.

On Sunday, March 17<sup>th</sup> TPM hosts a workshop in de-escalation techniques facilitated by Petch – additional information about timing and how to register for this event will be shared at [passemuraille.com](http://passemuraille.com) soon.

Performances of NO ONE IS SPECIAL AT THE HOT DOG CART will run Wednesdays to Saturdays at 7:30 PM between March 13<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, and Sunday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM. Mandatory masking performances are scheduled for March 14<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, and ASL interpreted performances are scheduled on March 17<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. All performances at Theatre Passe Muraille offer a relaxed environment. Tickets are Pay-What-You-Can-Afford at three price points, \$12, \$35, and \$65 and are available now online at [passemuraille.ca](http://passemuraille.ca).

Following the World Premiere run at Theatre Passe Muraille, NO ONE'S SPECIAL AT THE HOT DOG CART will tour to Public Energy Performing Arts, Peterborough on April 24, 2024.

**Media contact:**

Suzanne Cheriton, RedEye Media, [suzanne@redeyemedia.ca](mailto:suzanne@redeyemedia.ca), 416-805-6744

**NO ONE'S SPECIAL AT THE HOT DOG CART**

A Theatre Passe Muraille and Erroneous Theatre Co-Production

On stage March 13 – March 23 at the Theatre Passe Muraille Mainspace, 16 Ryerson Avenue

Media night: March 16

Created & performed by Charlie Petch

Directed by Autumn Smith

Dramaturgy by Donna-Michelle St. Bernard

Stage Managed by Flavia Martin

Set Design by Joel Richardson

Lighting Design by Steph Raposo

### **ABOUT THEATRE PASSE MURAILLE**

Established in 1968, Theatre Passe Muraille (meaning “theatre beyond walls”) is one of the first alternative theatre companies in Canada. The company is focused on developing and producing new alternative plays that strive to articulate a distinct Canadian voice that reflects the complexity of our intercultural society. TPM aspires to be a leader locally, nationally, and internationally in establishing, promoting, and embracing collaborative and inclusive theatre practices. We do this so that we can support and ignite the voices of unique artists, communities, and audiences.