

"Great journalism, and even better theatre."  
- THE MONTREAL GAZETTE



**The Watershed**  
**BY Annabel Soutar**  
**DIRECTED BY Chris Abraham**  
Co-produced by Porte Parole and Crow's Theatre

#### THE PLAY

In July 2015, *The Watershed* will have its World Premiere as part of the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games in Toronto. Set in Canada between 2012 and 2014, it is a documentary play about an artist, a family and a Country struggling between two seemingly irreconcilable goals: steady economic growth and sound environmental stewardship.

#### THE CAST

Bruce Dinsmore, Alex Ivanovici, Tanja Jacobs, Tara Nicodemo, Ngozi Paul, Eric Peterson, Amelia Sargisson, Kristen Thomson

#### THE STORY

*The Watershed* is about a family who encounters firsthand the plight of evidence-based scientists in Canada, our current government's apparent "War On Science", and its startling implications for our national identity and future. The play asks: What kind of Canada will our children inherit, and do we still have a say in the matter?

#### CREATIVE TEAM

Sound Design - Thomas Ryder Payne,  
Lighting Design - Kimberly Purtell,  
Costume and Set Design - Julie Fox, Video design - Denyse Karn

## *The Watershed* unfolds as a theatrical documentary

Largely constructed from original interviews conducted by Canada's foremost documentary theatre writer (Annabel Soutar), the play puts on stage a multiplicity of ideological perspectives and conflicting visions for our country's natural resources. The sum of these voices makes one thing abundantly clear: a contemporary play about water in Canada must also be about oil.

Annabel includes and implicates her own family in the story – a journey populated by encounters with some of the world's great freshwater scientists, some of our country's fiercest environmental activists, and impassioned individuals engaging in our burgeoning oil sector. The playwright also makes every attempt to include the voices of our country's conservative constituents.

## Background and Development

In 2012, Porte Parole (Montreal) and Crow's Theatre (Toronto) premiered *SEEDS*, a gripping docudrama about food sustainability that chronicles the epic showdown between farmer Percy Schmeiser and Monsanto Inc. Critically acclaimed, *SEEDS* toured across Canada for two years, and will tour several cities in the U.S. in 2016-2017.

Based on that success, the Arts and Culture Program of the Toronto 2015 Pan Am/ Parapan Am Games commissioned Crow's Theatre and Porte Parole to create a documentary play about freshwater sustainability.

## First audience reactions

In August 2014, Crow's Theatre and Porte Parole completed three workshop presentations of *The Watershed* for a live audience at the Berkeley Street Theatre in Toronto.

*"That was a very entertaining and stimulating show tonight. It's going to be great. I loved that while it's bold and modern documentary theatre, it's rooted in traditional storytelling."*

– Larry Beckwith, Artistic Director, Toronto Masque Theatre

*"It has the potential to be a wonderful piece – one that works as great theatre and simultaneously as a catalyst for a national debate."*

– Peter Herrndorf, National Arts Centre

*"Really liked the design and video work, especially the use of text to transition between scenes. Really liked where the piece is going – very powerful."*

– Chris Lorway, Director of Programming, Massey Hall & Roy Thomson Hall

*"This is great political theatre, because it never compromises drama for the purpose of hectoring. This is a tribute to the talents of your performers, the ingenuity of the stage design, the nuance despite the agenda of the script, and the superb pacing and direction."*

– David Goldbloom, Senior Medical Advisor, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

## BOOKING

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**PORTE PAROLE**

