

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 13, 2025

**Stories from Canadian Survivors of Climate Disasters Highlight Pressing
Need for Civic Action in Vancouver Premiere of Newworld Theatre's
- *Eyes of the Beast* -**

***The groundbreaking documentary theatre production acts as both an artistic experience
and a catalyst for urgent change, inviting audiences to seek connection and create
community amidst catastrophe***

Vancouver, BC – Newworld Theatre, in partnership with the **Climate Disaster Project**, in association with the **SFU School for the Contemporary Arts**, and supported by **Simon Fraser University**, presents the Vancouver premiere of the timely and deeply human work, ***Eyes of the Beast***, on stage **June 18 to 21, 2025 at 7:30pm** and **June 21 & 22 at 2pm** at the Fei and Milton Wong Experimental Theatre at SFU's Goldcorp Centre for the Arts. Directed by **Chelsea Haberlin** with Associate Direction by **Kelsey Kanatan Wavey**, the 90 minute documentary-style theatre production adapts the award-winning journalism of the **Climate Disaster Project**, bringing to life numerous testimonies from individuals across Canada who have been deeply impacted by climate-related catastrophes.

"Climate change is not a distant threat; it is an immediate reality impacting our communities," says Chelsea Haberlin, Artistic Director, Newworld Theatre. "Through this production, I hope that audiences will more acutely understand how important it is to be prepared and how crucial it is to engage in empathy and radical care right at this vital moment. The real impact of climate disasters can lead us to turn inward in an attempt to protect ourselves. We let our fear isolate us, but this work encourages us to, instead, open our arms to those around us - to look around, get involved, pay attention. Love, help, and engage."

The first hour of *Eyes of the Beast* offers audience members a striking opportunity to see themselves and their community reflected in a way that's rarely offered in traditional theatre by centering the voices and stories of everyday people: a mother and daughter in Lytton, BC, forced to flee from a fire in flip-flops, a fishing guide in the Fraser Valley, trying to rescue whatever animals he could find – including an alligator – from a flooded farmland, and an emergency room worker who describes the experience of working in the hospital during the BC heat dome of 2021 as a 'wartime triage system'.

The real-life testimonials from climate disaster survivors across Western Canada are brought to life on stage by SFU students, who, by offering their own perspectives and voices throughout the creative process, have transformed the stories into something powerfully theatrical and immersive. Through evocative lighting, sound design, and projection, nature also becomes a character of its own. This staging invites audiences to not only listen to the lived impact of climate disasters, but to feel it in an

embodied, sensory way — making climate change feel immediate, tangible, and real.

Following an intermission, Act 2 of each performance is a facilitated conversation that includes an invited elected official. Audiences are encouraged to share their reactions, express fears or hopes, and connect with one another in a supportive, communal environment. These conversations help break the isolation many people feel around climate anxiety, and invite audiences to imagine what real change might look like — not someday, but right now.

“It’s so easy to feel disheartened about the future,” says Sean Holman, creator of the Climate Disaster Project and Professor of Environmental and Climate Journalism at the University of Victoria in Canada. “But this production teaches us that we can survive that future together because even in the darkness of disaster, the constellations of human dignity and decency can burn all the brighter. It is that light that guides us toward a more just and equitable world.”

In a historic moment for both theatre and news reporting, *Eyes of the Beast* was recently named a finalist in the Canadian Association of Journalists’ (CAJ) 2025 awards for environmental and climate change reporting. It’s the first time the CAJ has ever recognized a collaboration between a newsroom and a theatre company.

Eyes of the Beast was Co-Created by **Sebastien Archibald**, **Gavan Cheema**, and **Kelsey Kanatan Wavey**. The Vancouver production is Directed by **Chelsea Haberlin** with Associate Direction by **Kelsey Kanatan Wavey**, and features Projection Design by **Candelario Andrade**, Sound Design by **Mary Jane Coomber**, Assistant Stage Management by **Sunny Lee**, Light Design by **Patrick Maka**, and Set Design by **Keju Jiao**. The SFU students involved in this production are Assistant Director, **Samantha Li**, Actors **Megan Battad**, **Oliver Fusio**, **Lachlan Harris-Fiesel**, **Sara van Gaalen**, **Michael Waddell**, **Ruby Wu**, **Maralee Joyner** (Swing/Understudy), as well as Stage Manager **Maddy Woodley**, Assistant Stage Manager **Jessica Kwon**, Costume Designer **Carissa Toledo**, Light Designer **Mars de Menezes**, and Set Designer **Georgia Turner**. Original concept by **Alen Dominguez** and **Sean Holman**.

For tickets and information, visit: newworldtheatre.com

About Newworld Theatre (newworldtheatre.com)

Newworld Theatre creates, produces, and tours new plays, performance events and digital works. Their motto is ‘plays well with others’. Collaboration and working across perceptions of difference are central to their ethics and the way they work. Their programming responds to the creative interests of Newworld’s core artists and opportunities that emerge in relation to other artists and organizations.

About Climate Disaster Project (climatedisasterproject.com)

Climate Disaster Project is coordinated at the University of Victoria’s Faculty of Fine Arts in its Department of Writing. Established in September 2021 with the generous support of businessman and philanthropist Wayne C. Crookes, their teaching newsroom includes faculty and students at

post-secondary institutions around the world, and works with climate disaster survivors to share and investigate their stories.

LISTING INFORMATION

Newworld Theatre presents *Eyes of the Beast*

Dates: June 18 to 22, 2025

Preview: June 18, 2025 at 7:30pm
June 19 to 21, 2025 at 7:30pm
June 21 & 22 at 2pm

Ticket prices: Indigenous Ticket Price \$5
Downtown Eastside Community Ticket Price \$5
General Ticket Price \$10
Pay it Forward Price \$50

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