

MEDIA RELEASE: FESTIVAL ANTIGONISH WELCOMES MATT LACAS AS RBC ARTISTIC ASSOCIATE / ARTISTIC DIRECTOR INTERN

Antigonish, NS (November 14, 2022): Festival Antigonish is pleased to welcome Matt Lacas as our 2023 RBC Artistic Associate / Artistic Director Intern.

Matt Lacas is a multi-disciplinary Indo-Canadian artist from Tiohtià:ke (Montreal) living and working in Tkaronto (Toronto). He is a graduate of both Dawson College's Professional Theatre Program in Montreal and Randolph College for The Performing Arts in Toronto. Since graduating, Matt has had the privilege of performing on stages all across Canada, the US, Europe and Asia. Selected Credits: *Brimful of Asha*, *Ben Hur*, *Robin Hood: The Great Escape* (FAST), *Jungle Book* US Tour (Kidoons), *Les Moutons* (Corpus), *Fabulous Lipitones* (Miracle Theatre). Matt is also the founder of We Are Here Productions, a theatre company that aims to turn art into tangible aid for those in need worldwide. We Are Here has worked closely with the Hispanic Federation, Canadian Mental Health Association, Canadian Women's Foundation and WaterAid Canada.

No stranger to the Festival Antigonish community, having spent two summers as a performer here in 2019 and 2021, Matt says, "FAST has always felt like a place where I can truly be myself. A place that I'm not afraid to try and fail. I think it's so incredibly important to have safe and supportive environments, like the one that Andrea and her team at FAST have created, when branching out and learning new skills. I can't wait to get to Antigonish and to learn from such a variety of creative minds."

Matt will reside in Antigonish and work with the Festival Antigonish team from January – August 2023. Funded by the RBC Foundation, the program's objective is to support and promote an artist seeking to bridge the gap from "emerging" to "established", through dedicated funding and professional supports including mentorship, talent development, artistic resources, new audiences, and opportunities to collaborate with other artists. Matt will work closely with Artistic Director Andrea Boyd to support theatre creation in areas of programming, new play development, artistic outreach, and educational programs. He will be an integral member of the team, supporting the company's vision to *Forge creative pathways that strengthen community, inspire compassion, and spark positive change through professional, live performing arts.*

"I am thrilled to welcome Matt to our team" says Andrea Boyd. "Since the first time we worked together in 2019, I have been impressed with Matt's dedication, diligence, creativity, and his ability to connect. Matt is a source of joy and inspiration for everyone around him, and I cannot wait to have him join our team in this new artistic leadership capacity so we can learn and grow together."

More details are available at: www.festivalantigonish.com/rbc

About Festival Antigonish

Located in Mi'kma'ki, Festival Antigonish has established a proud legacy as the largest professional theatre in northeastern Nova Scotia. With a 35-year history; an artistic commitment to innovation and inclusion; and deep community roots as an economic and cultural anchor; we are proud of our successes and we are committed to growth. We strive to create a supportive environment for Nova Scotian artists while producing and presenting a balanced selection of Canadian and international works. Festival

Antigonish has a history of pushing boundaries and defying expectations for what should be possible for a little theatre company in rural Nova Scotia. In recent years, Festival Antigonish has been the first established theatre company in the province to hire a BIPOC female in a leadership role (2016), introduce Relaxed Performances (2017), and produce radio plays as an accessible COVID response (2020). Our move to promenade-style outdoor theatre in 2021 was another first (not for the industry, but for our company and for our region). Our mission is to build community through the creation and presentation of timely, professional theatre that engages, awakens, and resonates with our audiences in Antigonish and the surrounding rural communities.

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