

BEST OF 2024

Best theatre of 2024 from Toronto, Stratford and Shaw

J. KELLY NESTRUCK AND AISLING MURPHY

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It's hard to fully take the pulse of Canadian theatre right now. The past year saw eye-popping deficits, controversial cancellations and ill-advised lawsuits – but also extended runs, big swings on new work garnering international attention and a boom in the Toronto commercial sector.

Here are the 10 shows, in chronological order, that most impressed Globe and Mail theatre critics J. Kelly Nestruck and Aisling Murphy in Toronto and at the Stratford and Shaw Festivals in 2024.

Wonderful Joe, Ronnie Burkett presented by TO Live

Ronnie Burkett's solo puppet show about gentrification and aging hit me like a train when I saw it in October. Burkett's puppets have always been breathtaking, but Wonderful Joe was particularly special for its writing, with piercing allusions to the condo-ification of downtown cores across Canada. The story of Joe and his dog, Mister, will haunt me forever, as will the final scene, in which Joe offers parting advice to a young schoolgirl named Getty. If I had to pick only one favourite piece of theatre from this year, Wonderful Joe was it. A.M.

- *Dana H.*, Crow's Theatre presentation of the Goodman Theatre, Center Theatre Group and Vineyard Theatre production
- *The Inheritance*, Canadian Stage
- *Women of the Fur Trade*, Native Earth in association with National Arts Centre Indigenous Theatre & Great Canadian Theatre Company
- *Age Is a Feeling*, A Soho Theatre and Haley McGee production presented by Soupepper in association with Luminato Festival Toronto
- *One Man, Two Guvnors*, Shaw Festival
- *Salesman in China*, Stratford Festival
- *Life of Pi*, Mirvish Productions
- *I Was Unbecoming Then*, Next Stage Theatre Festival
- *Big Stuff*, A Baram and Snieckus production in association with Crow's Theatre