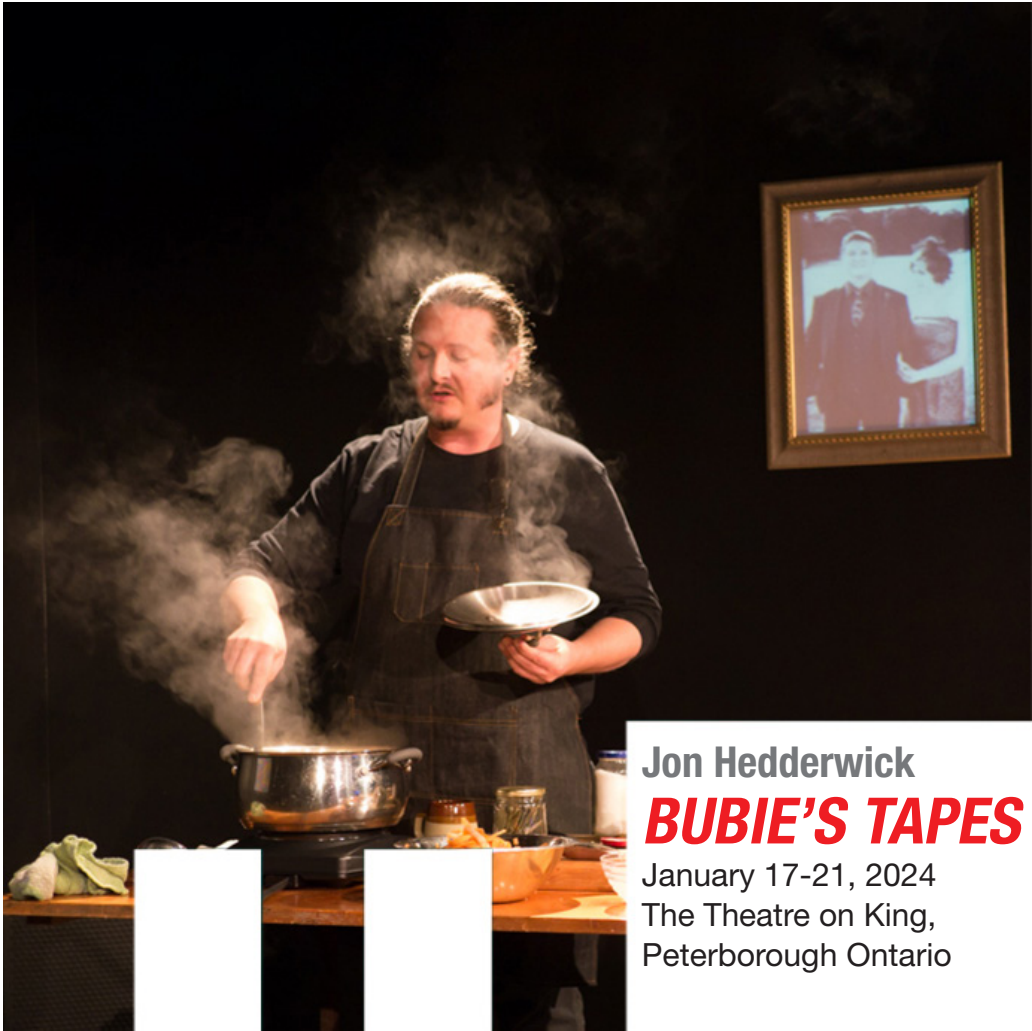


Photo: Andy Carroll



Jon Hedderwick
BUBIE'S TAPES

January 17-21, 2024
The Theatre on King,
Peterborough Ontario

PublicEnergy.ca
PERFORMING ARTS

BUBIE'S TAPES

WORLD PREMIERE

JON HEDDERWICK

While preparing a pot of matzo ball soup for his daughter, Jon Hedderwick recounts personal and family experiences from the Russian Revolution, through the Holocaust and beyond, as told by his Bubie Sarah in cassette tape recordings she left behind. Through these stories, *Bubie's Tapes* reveals much about the history and ongoing impacts of antisemitism in Canada and around the world. The piece also explores the current rise in antisemitism alongside Islamophobia, and the ways that charges of antisemitism have been mobilized to forestall criticism of the State of Israel.

Written and Performed By – Jon Hedderwick

Recorded Audio by – Sarah Mandel

Direction and Dramaturgy – Kate Story

Lighting Design, Technical Direction and Inside/Outside Eye – Ryan Kerr

Stage Management and Projectionist – Nikki Demmery Weatherdon

Projection Design – Jon Hedderwick with help from Eryn Lidster and Shannon McKenzie LeBlanc

Set Design – Jon Hedderwick, Kate Story, Ken Yates and Shannon McKenzie LeBlanc

Puppetry Design – Brad Brackenridge

Audio Editing - Jon Hedderwick

Soup Recipe – Murial Mandel

Research Assistant – Cathy Hedderwick

Active Listening - Morgan Stone

Run Time: 75 minutes, no intermission

Bubie's Tapes is dedicated to the memory of researcher Richard Drozdowski, who supported the development of *Bubie's Tapes*

ARTIST STATEMENT:

When I first began working on the script for *Bubie's Tapes* – as an artist in residence at the Precarious3 Festival, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic – what I wanted to do was share a nearly-lost-to-history story about my family, and the unlikely way in which I became aware of these events. I could not have imagined then that the work would become so tragically timely. As I now prepare to bring it to the stage, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia are on the rise. At the same time, charges of anti-Semitism are being used by some to shut down legitimate criticism of the war crimes committed by the Israeli government in response to the terrorist attack committed by Hamas on October 7th, 2023: this being the latest episode in a 75-year cycle of violence.

As I write this, I'm trying to imagine what I would tell my child about the world in which she lives – just as in *Bubie's Tapes* I imagine what I might tell her about her history, and the millennium of violence and hatred experienced by Jewish people in Europe and beyond. I cannot tell you what it felt like to be a Jewish person having to contemplate, for the first time, the use of the word genocide to describe the actions of a government that claims it is acting in the name of all Jewish people, myself included. For me, being the inheritor of a history steeped in genocide and ethnic cleansing means it is intolerable to see fear and grief weaponized, used to dehumanize, and as a justification for anyone committing the kinds of atrocities that my family survived, no matter the circumstances. It is with this in mind that I continue to call for an immediate ceasefire and an end to the siege of Gaza.

I long for a world in which there is no hatred, and in which there is a just and lasting peace. No play can promise to bring this, though I believe it is the job of the artist to imagine the world better than it is. With *Bubie's Tapes*, this is what I have endeavoured to do.

Jon Hedderwick, writer/performer

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY:

Jon Hedderwick is a spoken word poet, playwright and performance artist of mixed Ashkenazi Jewish and Scottish heritage based in Nogojiwanong/C.K.A. Peterborough, Ontario. Jon is the Artistic Director for the Peterborough Poetry Slam Collective, one half of the spoken word performing duo WordCraft, and a co-creator of the Take-out Poetry Project. He is the author of five chapbooks of poetry, and two one-person plays. He has performed poetry across Canada, and his work has been featured at national and provincial poetry and storytelling festivals and conferences.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

When the lights come up, theatre can feel like magic. It certainly does for me: I have chosen to dedicate years of my life to sitting in the dark while people shape enchantment with only their bodies, voices, bits of clothing, light and shadow.

But it isn't magic, not really. It takes a lot of support and hard work and faith to make a theatre show.

Jon started workshopping this piece in a residency with Trent Radio, inspired by audio tapes left behind by his great grandmother. He unpacked the personal and political history revealed by her stories – the tumultuous, often appalling events of the time – and also his own emotional responses to the material. Then in 2021 Jon and I started working on this piece as part of Precarious3 Festival. Plagued – literally – the festival had to be postponed no less than 3 times; we finally delivered it as an artist-in-residency program. Jon came in with a wonderful scaffold of a semi-improvised script, ideas for a sophisticated set of projections, and a strong vision. And soup!

Public Energy provided more support in 2023, and so we were able to further workshop the piece. As we were beginning to organize ourselves for this phase, an armed conflict erupted between Israel and Hamas-led Palestinian militant groups. The ways in which history impacted Jon's *Bubie Sarah* suddenly came into sharp relief, right here in the present.

We had to allow the show to change. There was no way to proceed with integrity unless we did. Jon's courage, care, and compassion have characterized every moment of the work. None of us are free unless every one of us is free. It has been an honour and a great learning for me to be a part of this process.

Somehow – yes, magically – it doesn't bend under the weight of historical and present atrocities. It's imbued with delight! Every time we've worked on *Bubie's Tapes* I walk out feeling warm, full of love, and full of hope.

Welcome to this show.

Kate Story, dramaturge/director

ARTIST ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to begin by thanking Bill Kimball, Eva Fisher, and the team at Public Energy as well as the team, and the volunteers at the Theatre on King for supporting this work and presenting this show. This work began in 2021 as part of a residency with Fleshy Thud's Precarious 3 Festival and has been nurtured along as part of the Creative Generator Program at Public Energy. It has also received financial support from Theatre Trent.

It wouldn't have been possible to do this work without their support. I also want to express my gratitude to the Electric City Culture Council, who has provided funding as part of the Grants for Individual Artists Program for touring the show in Ontario and beyond throughout 2024. Thank you also to photographer Andy Carroll and filmmaker Michael Morrith for documenting the work.

Thank you to Morgan Stone for active listening and for always showing up for your community. I want to thank Richard Drozdowski, my cousin/Aunty Jan, my Aunty Randi, and Jay Haupt for helping with my research. Thank you to my mom and dad, Cathy and Alan Hedderwick, for their support; and to my mom especially for being the best research assistant I've ever worked with. Thank you to Eryn Lidster, Shannon McKenzie LeBlanc, Damien O'Brien, Elisha Rubacha, Tobias Bernstein, Saleem Ansari, Ziysah von Bieberstein, Zara Fischer-Harrison, Niambi Tree, and Elizabeth Jenkins for providing comments on early drafts, technical advice, insight, and/or emotional support during the creation of this work. I am grateful for the ongoing support of the Peterborough Poetry Slam and the community of organizers, activists and spoken word artists that support its work. I also need to acknowledge the support of my community of Radical Jews, here in Nogojiwanong – Peterborough; being able to celebrate and learn alongside all of you has meant so much to me and my family.

Thank you to Ken Yates for constructing the countertop that was a focal point for so much of the show. Thanks to "The Puppet Master" Brad Brackenridge for helping to design the play's puppet show. Thank you to Nikki Demmery Weatherdon for stage managing, running projections, and for being such a supportive friend. Thank you, Ryan Kerr, for acting as an inside/outside eye, for designing the show's lights, and for managing the show's technical element. Thank you, Kate Story, for having been on this journey with me since 2021. Your friendship, support and mentorship has helped me to grow so much as both an artist and as a person. I am more grateful than I can say for all that you do.

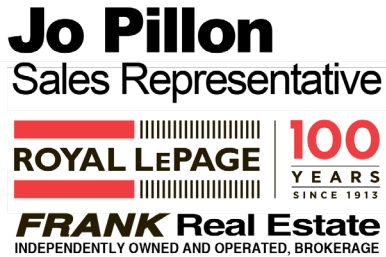
Finally, I want to thank my Bubie, Sarah Mandel, for leaving her life story behind for me to find. I am grateful to have inherited your stories, as well as your wisdom, wit, and chutzpah. Thank you to our dog Angel for listening to me run lines while we walked around (and around, and around) our neighbourhood. I want to thank my incredible daughter Wrenna for inspiring me every day of my life with your curiosity, creativity, and compassion. Thank you to my amazing, talented, beautiful and loving wife, Jennifer Avis, for always believing in me and supporting me. Words fail before the task of expressing how deeply grateful I am for you and every day we spend together.

To everyone who has helped me along with this project, and to everyone who has offered words of encouragement and support, you have done me and my family such a mitsvah. Finally, thank you to everyone who shows up in this community over and over again to say, "not here!"

ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR *BUBIE'S TAPES* PROVIDED BY



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NEXT FROM PUBLIC ENERGY PERFORMING ARTS:



WORKSHOP

PERFORMING ARTS DOCUMENTARY WORKSHOP

Mouvement Perpétuel (Montreal)

Peterborough Public Library, 345 Aylmer St N, Peterborough

January 27, 2024, 10am-4pm

Filmmakers Philip Szporer and Marlene Millar (Mouvement Perpétuel), creators of MABOUNGOU: Being in the World, host this workshop for anyone interested in the intricacies of the creative process. This workshop will illustrate a variety of approaches, cover interview techniques and research strategies, and invite exploration into alternative ways of revealing documentary ideas. Don't miss this chance to share your creativity. Limited spaces available, no experience required, register through ReFrame.

MABOUNGOU: Being in the World will be presented with Public Energy's support at ReFrame's 2024



DANCE

VÁSTÁDUS EANA (THE ANSWER IS LAND)

Elle Sofe Sara (Guovdageaidnu, aka Kautokeino, Norway)

Market Hall Performing Arts Centre, 140 Charlotte Street, Peterborough

March 3, 2024 @ 2:00pm

Seven black-clad women, fists raised, brandish megaphones above their heads, chanting and dancing outside the Market Hall. From there, they lead the audience into the theatre for Vástádus eana: a galvanizing concert of polyphonic chants and movements that celebrates the alliances between all living creatures and the land, between nature and the community. Their powerful voices are rooted in joik, the captivating Sámi music sung while travelling across the land.

ABOUT PUBLIC ENERGY PERFORMING ARTS:

Public Energy Performing Arts is Peterborough's animator of dance, theatre, performance and interdisciplinary work. Since 1994 we have presented a mainstage series of artists drawn from across Canada and beyond, commissioned new work in concert with other Canadian presenters, supported the development of the local dance, theatre and performance community and nurtured audiences that are knowledgeable and passionate about the performing arts.

Public Energy works in Treaty 20 territory situated in the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Nations, collectively known as the Williams Treaties First Nations. We honour that we are in Nogojiwanong, the Anishinaabe word for "place at the end of the rapids", a gathering place where stories have been shared for millennia. We acknowledge the Indigenous people for their stewardship of these lands and we recognize our responsibility to foster respectful relationships with the water, the land, and its people. Public Energy recognizes that treaties did more harm than good, criminalizing cultural practices and displacing Indigenous people from their territories. We commit to doing all we can to repair this legacy by providing a platform for the voices and artistry of Indigenous artists to be heard and respected.



Public Energy

PERFORMING ARTS

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