



University of
Lethbridge

NEWS RELEASE

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Canadian playwright Chelsea Woolley named winner of ULAA 2024 Young Alumni Award

Giving a voice to at-risk youth through the powerful medium of theatre, accomplished Canadian playwright Chelsea Woolley (BA/BEd '14) has been named the University of Lethbridge Alumni Association's 2024 Young Alumni Award.

"Chelsea Woolley's ascension as one of the strongest writers in Canadian theatre is testament to her skill, talent and unwavering commitment to tell these difficult, powerful stories that speak to a segment of youth that yearns to be heard," says Cyndi Bester (BMus '95, MEd '01), ULAA president. "A Faculty of Education graduate, Woolley is an excellent example of the liberal education philosophy of ULethbridge, utilizing her educational background in a fine arts medium and facilitating programming for young people to become engaged in theatre."



Woolley will be presented with the 2024 Young Alumni Award at the [Let There Be Light Night](#) Alumni Achievement Awards celebration on Friday, Oct. 18, 2024, at 7 p.m. in the Science Commons Atrium. Tickets are currently available [online](#).

Chelsea Woolley (BA/BEd '14)

Chelsea Woolley is an award-winning, emerging Canadian playwright whose voice speaks on behalf of vulnerable young women and marginalized youth who confront family trauma and social inequity.

A two-time winner of the Play Right Prize competition as an undergraduate student at the University of Lethbridge, Woolley also received the Faculty of Education Gold Medal as the most distinguished graduate of her class. Quickly establishing herself as an

exceptional talent in Canadian theatre, Chelsea attended the prestigious National Theatre School of Canada's playwriting program, a first for a ULeithbridge grad, and won the RBC Emerging Playwright Prize in 2019, leading to a residency at Toronto's Tarragon Theatre.

Steadfast in her commitment to community causes, Woolley launched a multidisciplinary performing arts program for at-risk and under-housed youth in downtown Toronto, which allows them to work with professional artists and learn how to create unique musical and theatre pieces. She has also partnered with UNICEF Canada for the development of a new play on the Charter of the Rights of the Child and is currently the Head of Drama with the Canadian Children's Opera Company, directing several youth operas a year.

Attesting to her stature and reputation, Woolley premiered her most recent play, *Paint Me this House of Love*, in 2023 at the Tarragon Theatre, one of Canada's most revered companies for new work, to rave reviews. A sign of continued success, *Paint Me this House of Love* will be receiving its USA premiere next year, while Woolley was also a featured playwright in a showcase at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

Described by critics as frighteningly skilled and a formidable writer, Woolley pushes boundaries through her work and does so with ambition and vision, the hallmarks of a great writer. With a mandate to experiment, inspire and connect with communities that traditional theatre leaves behind, Woolley is committed to a career in connecting others to the excellence of live performing arts through storytelling and experimentation.

Woolley is an emerging storyteller in Canadian theatre, and a powerful inspiration to students and to those who aspire to follow in her path of playwriting. Through her path to a career as a professional artist, Woolley is demonstrating that talent, perseverance and a commitment to community can, and does, lead to artistic fulfillment and professional success.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/canadian-playwright-woolley-named-winner-ula-2024-young-alumni-award>

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Our University's Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.