

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Delinquent Theatre Explores Life and Love of
Trailblazing Female Composer in Ardent World Premiere**
— *Never the Last* —

***Canadian Sophie-Carmen Eckhardt-Gramatté's Own Violin Compositions
Underscore Passionate, Theatrical Retelling of Her Tumultuous History***

Vancouver, BC — Delinquent Theatre presents the romantic and heart-wrenching world premiere of ***Never the Last***, April 9–20, 2019, as part of the **SeeMore Theatre Series** at **Vancouver Civic Theatre's Annex (823 Seymour Street)**. Inspired by the life story of Sophie-Carmen Eckhardt-Gramatté, an enormously innovative early twentieth century composer, the drama follows her 10-year marriage with the celebrated expressionist painter Walter Gramatté. Set to a live score of Eckhardt-Gramatté's solo violin works, the multimedia presentation blends movement and text to tell a heartbreaking tale of adventure, poverty, and strife.

"As a strongly female-driven theatre company, it is vital for us to honour and share the stories of innovative women artists who blazed the trails before us. Especially those whose art has been forgotten or obscured due to discrimination based on gender and class," says Christine Quintana, Co-Artistic Director with Delinquent Theatre and co-creator of *Never the Last*. "Eckhardt-Gramatté's determination, adversity, and triumph in the face of tragedy is profoundly inspiring to us. In telling her story and lauding her rarely performed — but undeniably brilliant — body of work, we are honoured to share a narrative that pushes against society's limitations for women — especially those in leadership positions — and rejects status quo."

Created by 2017 Siminovitch Protégé Prize-winning playwright and actor Christine Quintana and gifted violinist Molly MacKinnon, *Never the Last* was conceived out of MacKinnon's curiosity with Eckhardt-Gramatté. Born in Moscow in 1899, Eckhardt-Gramatté studied violin, piano, and composition at the Conservatoire de Paris. She embarked on several concert tours in Western Europe where she performed her own compositions. During her research, MacKinnon discovered that many of Eckhardt-Gramatté's innovative and experimental works were nearly lost in her male-dominated field before her immigration to Canada in 1950. MacKinnon approached Quintana with a vision to create *Never the Last* and help bring this gifted female composer's tremendous life and legacy to the forefront.

Directed by Jessie Richardson Theatre Award-winning Laura McLean and choreographed by Kayla Dunbar (*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, Arts Club Theatre Company), *Never the Last* is a nuanced and emotional music / theatre hybrid expressed through Eckhardt-Gramatté's 10 solo violin caprices — poetic expressions of her visceral and dramatic relationship with her husband, expressionist painter Gramatté.

Performed by MacKinnon, Quintana, and Anton Lipovetsky, the love story unfolds in Berlin, 1919, where violin prodigy and composer Sophie-Carmen meets Walter, a German painter and war veteran in poor health. She is passionate, rude, and musically gifted; he is witty, emotional, and compassionate. Yet, their chemistry is undeniable.

Their love affair spans 10 years, four cities, and numerous artistic successes and failures, all underscored by MacKinnon performing Eckhardt-Gramatté's violin compositions. Fusing a classical music performance,

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movement, and text, *Never the Last* is an artistic expression of the enormities of loss and the complexities of love.

Following Gramatté's death in 1929, Eckhardt-Gramatté later remarried art historian Ferdinand Eckhardt and relocated to Vienna where she dedicated herself exclusively to composition. The couple later immigrated to Winnipeg in 1953, where she taught several violin students out of a private studio and continued to compose. The musician's legacy and work — which includes two symphonies, numerous concertos, various chamber works, and instrumental solos for piano and violin — is preserved through the work of the Eckhardt-Gramatté Foundation in Winnipeg. *Never the Last* draws from biographical information, recordings, and documents provided by the Eckhardt-Gramatté Foundation.

The Delinquent Theatre production features a stellar, female-driven creative team, including Jenn Stewart (set design), Jill White (lighting design), Nancy Tam (sound design), Carmen Alatorre (costume design), and Joel Grinke (projection design). Born out of the 2016 Banff Playwrights Lab — a partnership between The Banff Centre and the Canada Council for the Arts — a working production of *Never the Last* was shared at the 2016 rEvolver Theatre Festival, produced by Upintheair Theatre.

About Delinquent Theatre (delinquenttheatre.com)

Delinquent Theatre creates, develops, and produces new Canadian works that challenge the status quo, re-examine traditional hierarchies, and boldly explore experimental approaches to storytelling. Innovators and risk-takers, the company strives to create space for emerging artists and collaborators to imagine new ways of working outside of conventional systems, developing boundary-pushing, award-winning theatre productions in the process. Recent productions include *Our Time* (winner of Outstanding Artistic Creation — Theatre for Young Audiences, and nominated for two others, at the Jessie Richardson Theatre Awards), *Stationary: A Recession-Era Musical* (winner of Outstanding Production — Musical — Small Theatre at the Jessie Richardson Theatre Awards), *The Story of You and Me*, and *FLOP!*

LISTING INFORMATION

Delinquent Theatre Presents *Never the Last* as part of the SeeMore Theatre Series

Dates:

April 9–20, 2019 at 8pm
April 10: Opening Night
April 14: ASL Interpreted Performance
April 13 & 20: Performances at 2pm & 8pm

Ticket Prices:

Regular: \$30
Students/Seniors: \$25
Pay What You Can (April 17): \$10 online / PWYC at the door

Address:

Vancouver Civic Theatre's Annex
823 Seymour Street, Vancouver, BC

Box Office:

tickets.theatrewire.com

Website:

delinquenttheatre.com

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