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Luminato: My One Demand is a movie in a live stream

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Blast Theory film "My One Demand" cast, crew, and director Matt Adams are shown on a location scouting trip. HO

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On the ninth floor of 230 Richmond St., in Blast Theory's temporary make-shift office space, the walls are covered in post-it-note-dotted logistical charts, diagrams, maps, shopping lists and one very long list of potential disasters.

Car accident. Rain. Food poisoning. Drunk people in shot. Cast need toilet. Things fall off rig. Baby cries non-stop.

These are but a few examples of things that might go wrong during a performance of *My One Demand*, the live film being presented by the British media arts company Blast Theory at this month's Luminato festival this week.

Director Matt Adams describes *My One Demand* as a "kind of a hybrid between theatre and cinema." The performance will be filmed and streamed live from the streets of Toronto directly to a movie theatre at the TIFF Lightbox — or to a computer near you, via an online stream.

The theatre/cinema hybrid isn't the only dichotomy that Blast Theory presents with *My One Demand*. The show also straddles the line of fiction and reality. The cast members — all local actors familiar to Toronto theatregoers, including Julian Richings and Maggie Huculak — each play a sort of fictionalized version of themselves, in a script put together by Adams based on extensive interviews with each performer.

"I've never created a show like this before," says Huculak, whose voice will be heard as the narrator of *My One Demand*. "He asked me about my life, which was strange because most of my life I've been working on *other* people's scripts. But he was asking for the script of *my* life."

Adams' questions were searching and profound: Do you believe in change? Do you remember a stranger who has affected you in your life? How did you feel about Toronto when you first landed here?

After subjecting each cast member to an extensive personal interview, Adams began constructing a script, largely verbatim from their responses. "So much of the script has come together in the past 10 days," says Adams. "I think there's an opportunity to create kinds of theatre where there's a real blurriness between fiction and documentary-style approach, or the real world. At one level it's just a camera in the real city, not on a closed set, people are going to be waving in the background, it has all the looseness and chaotic qualities of a city. And on the other hand we're trying to create something that exists in its own world and has a fictional quality that immerses you."

Blast Theory is known for their interactive multimedia performances, many of which are accessible to anyone with a computer or a smartphone. (One of their recent projects was an interactive smartphone app called Karen, which featured an actor playing an intrusive life coach.) And while that accessibility is an important feature of their work, Adams is happy that My One Demand also includes the more traditionally theatrical aspect of a group of strangers gathering in one place to watch the performance. "I think there's just different kinds of communal, and we've tended to make work where [the audience] experiences it as an individual while being aware of a wider group, rather than experiencing it as a group. And that's to be able to try and give people really powerful interactive experiences," he says. "But I think it's really exciting to come together as a group, and that's one of the things I'm most excited about for this project."

Theatre is Adams' "first love," but he recognizes its limitations as a medium in today's tech-heavy world. "There was a time when the most important ideas in society were playing out on stages, and that is not the case anymore, no one should pretend otherwise," he says. "There's a kind of exceptionalism among people working in theatre that they believe it's an inherently a fantastic thing. And of course it is, but it has to stay outward-looking and has to find an audience. So I've always been excited to try and do that."

The film will stream as it is being shot from a single camera following the performers on a route from Toronto General Hospital all the way down to Cherry Beach. "One camera, one shot, no cuts — it's continuous," says Adams. "If the stream goes down, the stream goes down. We're walking an absolute tightrope in that regard."

So that list of worst-case scenarios (poorly charged batteries, malware on the site, arrested for criminal damage to fence) is a safety net of sorts — a list of contingencies. And if something does go wrong? That becomes part of the experience, says Adams.

"It creates a whole bunch of challenges, but also creates a whole set of incredible possibilities. And as an audience you'll feel that sense of a tightrope being walked."