




the
SQUEAKY
WHEEL
CANADA

8 x 30 min sketch comedy
news • satire • irreverent



Be Loud. Be Disabled. Be Squeaky.





The Squeaky Wheel is a Canadian sketch comedy series in a half-hour news format, which pokes fun at the ableist society that people with disabilities face every day.

series overview

The Squeaky Wheel is a comedic television news program that focuses on the experience of having a disability. It challenges common misconceptions, highlights absurdity, criticizes imbalances, and does it all with humor.

Presented by Canada's top disabled writers and performers, TSW's irreverent perspective will leave audiences of all stripes laughing hysterically and feeling pleasurably guilty about it. It's a clever blend of social commentary and provocative humor that you won't find anywhere else.

For hundreds of years disabled people have been forced to navigate a weird society that wasn't built for us; a world filled with complicated healthcare laws and staircases.

Over time, we have evolved to adapt to the absolutely bonkers reality of everyday life by developing superior senses of humor and killer comedic instincts.

Authentically told by us disabled people, The Squeaky Wheel shares small peeks into the ludicrousness of everyday ableism that only we could know about.

So, come on, Canada... Let's get Squeaky!



producer statement

We interrupt your regularly scheduled program for a reality check in the absurdity. It's time for The Squeaky Wheel News.

There seems to be a narrow narrative of disability that revolves around it being a hard and sad existence. Why? Because most of the stories you hear are from outsiders looking in. But if you are privileged enough to be a part of our vast community on the inside looking out, you get to see the hilarity of adapting to the able-bodied world.

A project like The Squeaky Wheel is the perfect hybrid of scripted comedy meets topical news stories. As a producer, it is the perfect combination for my evolution as a producer. Although I found a home in documentary, studio work was the first space

I felt I belonged. It becomes a stage where anything seems possible. With the countdown to action over the headset stopped any questions of physical ability.

My first gig in the industry was as a junior reporter for Global News, chasing the story in 90 seconds to give a glimpse into the community. I love making thought provoking documentaries, but when I flip on the TV, I turn to shows like The Daily Show, John Oliver, and Saturday Night Live to keep me informed on what is happening in the world past the sound bite and sensationalism. But even here, the jokes are too scared to talk about disability, making me wonder if anyone would take the leap – until finding The Squeaky Wheel online, where the more specific the story, the more universal the laugh.



Coming off both AMI's Breaking Character and Story Producing for CBC's Push I learned a few things:

1. We as a community have a lot to say. We are full of contradictions and nuances that comes from bringing more than one lived experience together.
2. There's no better way to talk about the things that make you cringe then to poke holes and have a good laugh. The result is usually others start to listen.
3. I personally wanted to stop talking about how others learn to adapt to make content and start putting it into practice.

Surrounding ourselves with both Disabled cast and crew, allows no topic to be off the table. With a mandate to have disability news jokes for the community by Disabled creators, it's our chance to prove accessible productions can happen, especially if the patients are running the asylum. Besides making people laugh, we are prioritizing accessible processes both on and off screen, to allow best results including:

- Providing the physical supports for cast and crew
- Accessible workspace/workflow
- Adaptive Scheduling
- Incorporating IDV and ASL into the show

~ Michelle Asgarali, Series Producer
The Squeaky Wheel



representation

- **100%** of the TSW creative team – the writers, cast, directors, and producers – are Disabled.
- **100%** of the narrative and authorship was supervised by Disabled people with unencumbered creative approval rights.
- **57** Disabled people in total worked on this series.



*“It’s been incredible to see true representation on screen!
To have a such a full cast representing a spectrum of
disabilities was refreshing and exciting.”*

*“They talked a lot about topics that society normally shy
away from. It felt that the more out of left field the joke was,
the more unexpected, the more it landed.”*

“The show definitely has imagination.”



format

TSW has been developed as a half-hour news format, similar in style as what the six-o'clock news used to look like. Each episode contains 3 acts (2 commercial breaks), opening with the top story, continuing with headlines read by two anchors at a studio news desk, a variety of packaged field reports from the TSW correspondents, and ending with a 60-Minutes-esque commentary that bookends the theme of the top story. However, unlike the actual news, TSW is scripted like a sketch comedy.

TSW is different compared to other Canadian satirical news programs in that it is not performed in front of a studio audience (e.g., *Rick Mercer Report*, *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, *The Beaverton*, etc.). The series emulates the look and feel of a news

program, though doesn't rely on audience reactions to validate the humour, similar to the way the *Onion News Network* was produced.

The cast consists of 2 lead news anchors, an ensemble cast of 5-6 performers who play character roles that suit the scene, including reporter/correspondent, story subjects, interviewees, and passers-by, and 10-12 special guests.



tone

TSW offers a satirical view that focuses on the experience of having a disability. It challenges common misconceptions, highlights absurdity, criticizes imbalances, and does it all with humor.

The tone of the series is similar in style as one would view on a daily news program – delivered straight to camera, and with the utmost journalistic integrity – even though the stories have absolutely no integrity. The Main Story/Top Story segments are delivered with high importance, and Breaking News segments are delivered with subtle urgency, per a typical newscast.

During casting, we run table reads to test the chemistry between potential anchors. While the intention is for a standard, dry and factual

delivery, if it turns out that they play well off each other, we include their banter between headlines, and post-field report reactions to lighten the tone.



themes

Awkward

“Woman in Accessible Bathroom Stall Feeling Guilty After Spotting Wheels Under Door”

Unjust

“New Ontario Health Insurance Application Shreds Itself Upon Completion”

Political

“Inspiring! Senate of Canada Demonstrates Kindness by Inviting this Nice Disabled Boy to Their Cocaine Orgy”

Absurd

“Zombie of Jerry Lewis Still Thinks He’s Hosting Telethon”

Mundane

“Mediocre Disabled Employee Fails to Inspire Coworker”

our values

flexibility

We know the importance of being flexible to make working in the TSW environment as accessible as possible. This means the freedom to work remotely, with adaptable schedules, exposure to a variety of roles, and with access to support however it is needed.

humor

While we love to encourage social commentary and progressive thinking, our primary goal is to make our viewers laugh.

boldness

Joking about sensitive topics can require a delicate balance, and we aim to approach it carefully. While we never wish to offend, we are willing to be edgy and critical when appropriate, and challenge those in power.

diversity

No two people experience disability in the same way, which is why we seek diverse perspectives. This includes perspectives of different disabilities as well as intersectional diversity including race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, and age.



anchors



Gaitrie Persaud as Arianna Salara

Growing up as a Deaf Indo-Guyanese from Toronto, Gaitrie Persaud always had a passion for music and theatre performance. As an artist, she has worked with multiple hearing performers creating accessible performances, recently alongside Rosina Kazi of LAL, Christopher Corsini of MDL CHLD (live showcases) and collaborating with an Australian musician to create accessible videos. She also interpreted for Feist's concert. She is gaining popularity and has been recognized as the top emerging Deaf music interpreter in Canada. Creatively translating lyrics into accessible movement, Gaitrie spoke at Montreal's POP Music Festival alongside panelist/activist Deaf Rapper Matt Maxey of Deafinitely Dope. Gaitrie breathes for theatre. She is currently working on her project "Splitting the lens", and is passionate about theatre techniques to encourage Deaf actors and hearing actors to work together without depending on ASL interpreters.



Graham Kent as Grant Gewürztraminer

Graham Kent is a creator, writer, actor, and (checks vitals) human being from Toronto. A graduate of Humber College's Comedy Writing and Performance program, he has always steered heavily towards comedy, having spent many years performing sketch, improv, and stand-up. However, his work has also expanded to include drama (or, as it's sometimes known, comedy minus time). His creative credits include development and writing for animated children's shows, producing for Bell Media and YouTube, and acting in feature and short films, webseries, TV, and commercials. He has also worked on projects that have aired on FX, Apple TV+, Netflix, and Hulu. Graham was diagnosed with Tourette syndrome at the age of 8, which taught him to understand that we have more in common than in contrast and work better in cooperation than competition – themes that prevail in his work regardless of genre as he explores nuanced approaches to extraordinary stories. In his free time, he enjoys travelling, guitar, and video games.

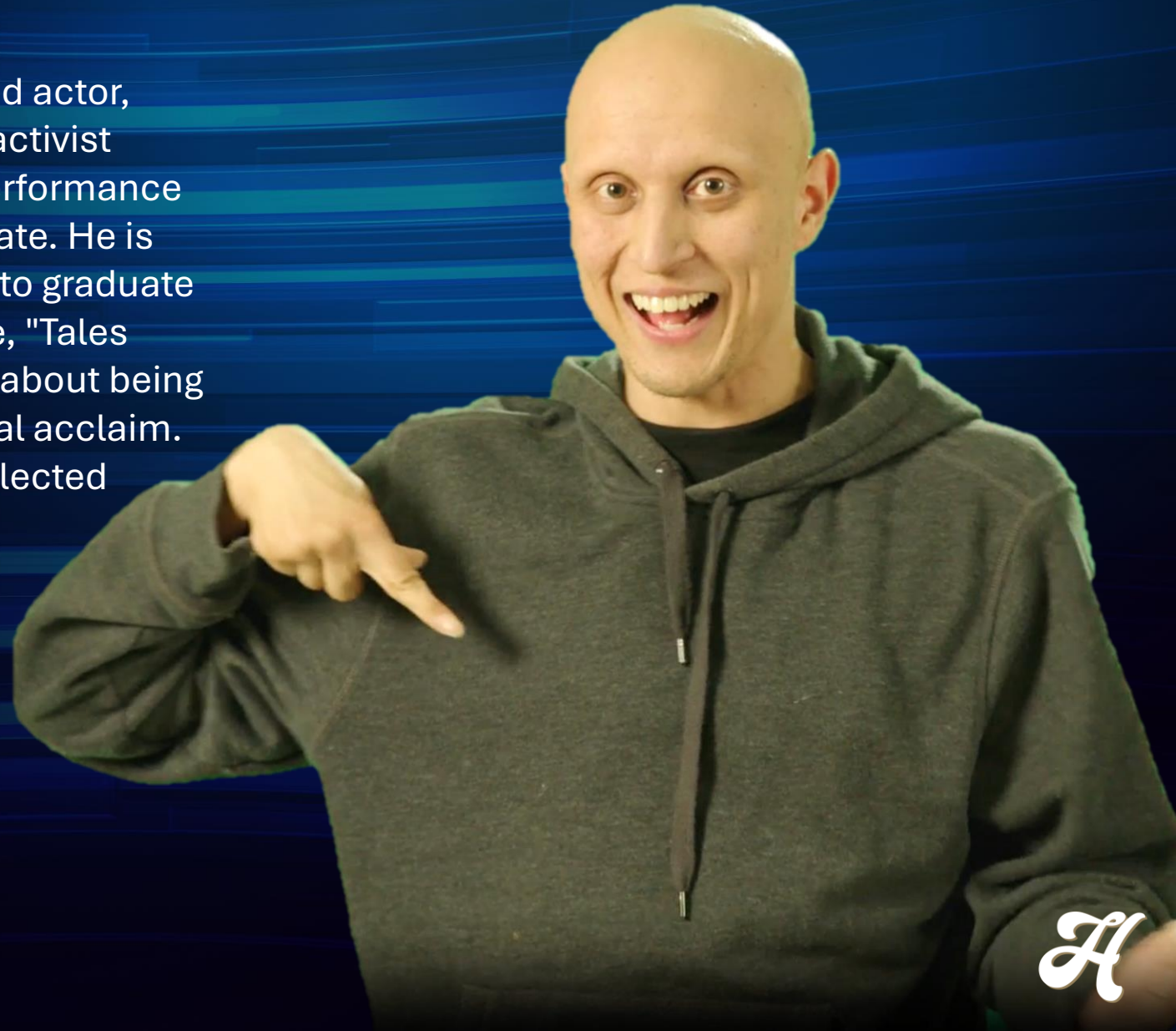


ensemble cast



Sivert Das

Sivert Das is a biracial, visibly and invisibly disabled actor, voiceover artist, writer, musician, comedian, and activist based in Toronto. He is a University of Victoria's performance program and The Second City Conservatory graduate. He is the first and only visibly disabled person of colour to graduate from both these programs. His Intermission article, "Tales From a Disabled Theatre School Grad", an expose about being disabled in higher education, received international acclaim. Selected Film credits: In Camera (Realwheels). Selected Theatre Credits: Winter's Tale, Death: A Love Story (Dandelion Theatre), 7 Stories, Othello (Phoenix Theatre), Queen Margaret (Shakespeare In The Ruff), Two Gentlemen of Verona, Julius Caesar (Greater Victoria Shakespeare Festival) and Passport to Madville (Workman Arts Theatre).





Wesley Magee-Saxton

Wesley Magee-Saxton is a white, queer, disabled, Toronto-born actor, deviser, dancer, martial artist, activist, and storyteller. They hope to use their artistic pursuits to help break down systemic barriers. With a BFA from York University's Acting Conservatory program, Wesley has taken on the roles of a colourful cast of characters including: Julius Sagamore in *The Millionairess*, Edgar in *King Lear*, Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Agamemnon in *Iphigenia 2.0*. Wesley made their first TV debut on *Ponysitters Club* (Netflix, Prime Video) and has been hooked ever since! Dance credits include *Outside Looking In* for JNC Productions. Wesley is also a black belt in Tae Kwon Do with 17 years of training (including combat), as well as training in contact improv, horseback riding, archery, and more. Utilizing the great potential of this profession for societal change, Wesley Magee-Saxton is determined to blaze a trail and create space for stories that need to be heard.



Margaret Rose

Margaret Rose is a self diagnosed autistic woman with a very funky perceptual disability called Irlen Syndrome. She literally sees the world through rose coloured glasses! Margaret has always been drawn to comedy for its ability to enlighten, heal, relax and change, and is a graduate of Second City's Training Program in Toronto, where she performs live regularly as an improviser and sketch comedian. Margaret is an aspiring writer and cat whisperer and when she isn't on set or on stage she is usually at home with her cat, typing away.



Yousef Kadoura

Yousef Kadoura is a Disabled Lebanese-Canadian & American actor, writer, and curator from Dearborn Michigan as well as a graduate of the acting program at the National Theatre School of Canada. He is a producer and host of the Crip Times podcast, a series exploring disability in the arts, and was previously the Curator in Residence at Tangled Art + Disability. He has also curated for the new embassy, a part of the Toronto International Festival of Authors in 2023, and crippling the arts in 2019. His selected acting credits include: Rubble (Aluna Theatre, 2023), Jonathan: la figure du goeland (SurrealSoReal, 2021), Eraser (Riser Project, 2019)



Samantha Wyss

Samantha Wyss is a comedy actor and improviser from Toronto. With 12+ years of improv experience with The Second City and The Assembly, Samantha also lends her comedic chops to the screen. She began by appearing in a few viral sketch videos, for small and big channels including BuzzFeed Canada. In 2019, she performed in the short film Glass Piano which she also wrote and was nominated for best actress at the Yes Let's Make a Movie Film Festival. In 2020 she starred in the improv-heavy web-series Marcia The Self-Help Guru which was funded by the Canada Council for the Arts. Most recently, she's been attached to the IPF-funded web-series Petra P.I. playing an Autistic character which aligns with her goals to play more neurodivergent characters on screen. Additionally, she got to play many awesome disabled characters in the new sketch comedy series The Squeaky Wheel Canada coming out in 2024. When she's not acting or writing, she can be seen making up songs for her cat.



watch the series

[Click here to watch the Trailer](#)

[Click here to watch **The Squeaky Wheel Canada** on AMI-plus](#)



Hitsby Entertainment

BRINGING LIFE TO STORIES

Hitsby is a Toronto-based media company, founded by award winning Series Creator and Executive Producer Andrew Morris. We work with the best people in the biz to produce bold, contemporary, unapologetically premium content.

Our properties are developed by unique, smart, cheeky creatives, for an equally diverse, intelligent, and bold global audience.

It is with intention that we partner with new voices, advocate for inclusivity throughout the development-to-production cycle, and set accessibility as table stakes for our work.

<https://hitsbyentertainment.com>

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the
SQUEAKY
WHEEL
CANADA

completely on-brand!
Thanks for watching!
[ARIANNA]
We'll see you next
squeak.
[IMPROV INTERACTION]

