

*theatre:*  
**CALGARY**

Stafford Arima, Artistic Director

**JANUARY 23 - FEBRUARY 11, 2024**

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# WELCOME



**O**n behalf of my colleagues at Theatre Calgary, welcome to the second part of the 2023-24 season and this performance of *Meteor Shower*, written by Steve Martin. This is the Calgary premiere of Martin's play that was last seen on Broadway in 2018.

This season has been programmed with the funny bone in mind, so I thought, why not open 2024 with a rip-roaring comedy written by one of the greatest comedians of the 20th century. When I think of the remaining shows for our season, the phrase "expect the unexpected" comes to mind. In the case of *Meteor*

*Shower*, Martin writes in a nonlinear structure and focuses the story on the vulnerability and challenges of a modern marriage. But true to Steve Martin's absurdist roots he uses temporal shifts to replay a scene (that the audience has just witnessed) revealing alternative outcomes to the evening's confrontations.

Following *Meteor Shower* is a musical where William Shakespeare and The Beatles share the stage in a brand-new adaptation of *As You Like It*. Talk about expecting the unexpected! And then the ravishing new play, *Selma Burke*, by Calgary writers Maria Crooks and Caroline Russell-King. This play sheds light on the artist Ms. Selma Burke and her connection with Henri Matisse, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and the American dime. In closing, we premiere a brand-new musical version of the hit movie *Beaches*, featuring talent from Calgary and Broadway, where humour and heart make for an unexpected musical filled with laughter and tears.

I'm so looking forward to these next theatrical adventures that you will witness.

Happy New Year!

**- STAFFORD ARIMA**  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, THEATRE CALGARY

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## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the spirit of reconciliation, Theatre Calgary acknowledges that we live, work and create on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, Piikani), the Tsuut'ina, the Îyâxe Nakoda Nations, the Métis Nation of Alberta, Districts 5 & 6, and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta. They were the original occupants of this land and continue to be here to this day. Theatre Calgary is grateful to have the opportunity to present in this territory.

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- Cameras and audio/visual recording devices are not permitted in the theatre.
- Video and audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.
- We ask that you please refrain from using your cell phone, smart watch, or any other digital device, in any capacity, during the performance.
- Good theatre etiquette benefits everyone. Please do not talk or unwrap candies during the performance, remain in your seat until the curtain call is finished and the house lights have been turned on.
- Babies are not permitted in the theatre.
- We also offer relaxed performances. For more information, visit our website.
- Assisted listening devices for the hard of hearing are available at the coat check.
- For first aid assistance, see the house manager, or nearest usher.

## SAFETY AND COMFORT

- At Theatre Calgary, we recognize our responsibility to have practical guidelines in place to ensure our performances are safe and enjoyable for everyone. To learn more about our current Safety and Comfort protocols go to [theatrecalgary.com/comfort-and-safety](http://theatrecalgary.com/comfort-and-safety) or scan here:



# DIRECTOR'S NOTES



One winter, while enjoying a dinner I had lovingly prepared, my long-term boyfriend announced that he'd heard the news that some friends of ours were getting a divorce. This was a couple whose marriage he and I were positive would never and could never end. Shocked by the idea of X and Y's breakup, I sat stunned, trying to piece together how such a thing was possible. To all outside appearances, they had been happy, content, and affectionate. Had I been blind to the tell-tale signs that everything was not as it seemed? As I sat staring at my meal, my boyfriend chirped,

"Don't worry, it will never happen to us," which, in horror movie vernacular, is the same as saying, "What could possibly go wrong?" just before the sound of a chainsaw. All I could think was: *If they, who seemed so perfect, who never fought, or complained or even rolled their eyes at each other couldn't make it, how could we?*

I watched as my boyfriend finished his meal, left his plate on the table for me to clear, and retired to the living room to watch hockey, a sport I could not stand even the sound of. (Don't hate me, hockey lovers). I tried to push thoughts of our inevitable breakup from my mind, but somehow, the seed had been planted. If only he had acknowledged we weren't perfect we might have survived because, as Norm and Corky discover, "United We Stand. Divided We Fall" Eventually, as Steve Martin so astutely points out, that "meteor shower" is coming for us all, so it's best to acknowledge its existence and stand prepared.

As a final note, this is not a deep play. In *Meteor Shower*, Steve Martin returns to his roots by writing a comedy about that oldest of institutions: marriage.

- **LEZLIE WADE**  
DIRECTOR

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Theatre Calgary gratefully acknowledges the support provided by the City of Calgary through Calgary Arts Development, the Government of Alberta through the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, the Government of Canada through the Canada Council, Canadian Heritage, and all corporate and private contributors.



# A KIND OF WILD COMEDY

Writer Steve Martin talks about comedy, California, and creating *Meteor Shower*

Interview by Danielle Mages Amato



Photo by Danny Clinch

## **How would you describe *Meteor Shower*?**

I'm calling it a kind of wild comedy. If I think of antecedents in my life, I go back to Joe Orton's plays, where the relationships are real and strong, and there's an element of surrealism, as well as an element of intellect and comedy. In terms of my own plays, I think this is the first full-blown comedy that I've written. Certainly it's my first contemporary comedy for the stage.

## **What's the life story of this play?**

I actually started it about 20 years ago, and I've been working on it for those 20 years. I would occasionally have a reading, and then I would put it away and think about it and work on it some more. So when Barry Edelstein (of The Old Globe Theatre in San Diego) asked me last year if there was anything else I'd been working on, I showed it to him, and he said, "I like this. Let's do it." Of course, when you're looking at a play that's been worked on over 20 years, the question is, do you update it? Because the original draft had things like fax machines in it. And I actually decided not to do that and instead make it a period piece set in 1993. Partly because I realized that if I set it in 2016, in six more years it would still be a period play. And partly because at that time, in the early 1990s, there was a real emphasis on the psychology of relationships. There still is, but that was a very specific type. It was very much about how to communicate with your spouse: how to express displeasure, how to express compliments, how to express your needs. And leaving it in that period actually helped focus the play and the dialogue, more than just trying to set it in some vague "any date."

***What made you choose Southern California—and Ojai in particular—as the setting for this play?***

There is something very California about this play, but I didn't even realize that until Barry highlighted it. And then I realized that I have written about California over the years: in *L.A. Story*, *Shopgirl*—even *The Pleasure of My Company* is about California. Ojai is kind of the country version of Santa Barbara. I've spent a lot of time in Santa Barbara—it's very beautiful, and in general, it's very wealthy, conservative, and almost prim, even visually. I didn't want to set this piece in L.A, because it's too busy, and I needed a place that was out in the country where you could watch a meteor shower, so I immediately thought of Santa Barbara, and of Ojai.

***You mentioned the surreal elements in Meteor Shower. That's definitely something you've included in your other work, and I'm wondering what draws you to playing with realism in that way.***

Well, the surreal element can lead you to surprises—to things that surprise the audience. I don't like to rely on it, because it's cheating. But I like it when it's valid, when it belongs in what you're trying to express. It turned out that the nature of this play was very symbolic. There are a lot of symbolic things happening. But symbolic things always need to begin as real—real characters, real people, saying real things—and then you can say, oh, that's also a symbolic representation of something else.

***Would you say that Meteor Shower is centrally concerned with marriage, both how it works and how it disintegrates?***

Undeniably it's about marriage, but I think of it in a larger sense as being about relationships and about the self. It's very much about the self. There's this E.E. Cummings quote I just love, where he says, "So many selves." And he's really talking about how many characters we are, each one of us. I think that when you're younger, in your teens or 20s, you're actually choosing the kind of person you want to be. But another kind of person—the one that maybe your real self wants to become—is still in there. I think that's very much what this play is about.

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**CALGARY**

Stafford Arima, Artistic Director

Max Bell Theatre at Arts Commons  
January 23 - February 11, 2024



*presents*

# METEOR SHOWER

BY **STEVE MARTIN**

Director	<b>LEZLIE WADE</b>
Set Design	<b>DOUGLAS PARASCHUK*</b>
Costume Design	<b>JESSICA POIRIER-CHANG</b>
Lighting & Projection Design	<b>BETH KATES*</b>
Sound Design & Composition	<b>ANDREW BLIZZARD</b>
Intimacy Director	<b>ANASTASIA ST. AMAND</b>
Voice & Dialect Coach	<b>JANE MACFARLANE</b>
Stage Manager	<b>LISA RUSSELL</b>
Assistant Stage Manager	<b>NAOMI ESAU</b>
Apprentice Stage Manager	<b>CHARLOTTE BRAID</b>

## TC MENTORS PROGRAM

Lighting & Projection	<b>MADELINE BLONDAL</b>
Voice & Dialect	<b>JESSICA ECKSTADT</b>
Directing	<b>EMILY MARISABEL</b>

\*Indicated designers on this production are represented by the  
Associated Designers of Canada, IATSE Local ADC659.

The World Premiere Production of Meteor Shower was produced by The Old Globe - Barry Edelstein,  
Artistic Director Michael G. Murphy, Managing Director; and Long Wharf Theatre - Gordon Edelstein,  
Artistic Director Joshua Borenstein, Managing Director

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**David Austin**

DIRECTED BY **Lonny Price**

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# METEOR SHOWER

## CAST (in alphabetical order)

Gerald **BRADEN GRIFFITHS**  
Corky **HELEN KNIGHT**  
Norm **NATHAN SCHMIDT**  
Laura **BAHAREH YARAGHI**

Understudies **JOE PERRY, AMY SAWKA**

## SETTING

A modern house in Ojai, California. Early evening, August 1993.

*Meteor Shower* is performed without an intermission.

## CREW

Head of Sound **BRONWYN BOWLBY**  
Head of Lighting **CATHARINE CRUMB**  
Head Stage Carpenter **BEN MOORE**  
Head Dresser **RACHEL MICHELLE SHERIDAN**  
Head of Video **DANIEL PLUMTREE**  
Assistant Head of Sound **MICHAEL GESY**

"Meteor Shower" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals  
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Original Broadway Production Produced by Joey Parnes, Sue Wagner, John Johnson,  
James L. Nederlander, The John Gore Organization, Scott Rudin, Eli Bush, FG Productions,  
Jamie deRoy, Sally Horchow, Sharon Karmazin, Barbara manocherian, JABS Theatricals,  
Ergo Entertainment, Seth A. Goldstein, Elm City Productions, Diana DiMenna,  
Jay Alix & Una Jackman, Jennifer Manocherian, Cricket Jiraneck,  
Catherine Adler & Marc David Levine,  
The Shubert Organization

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# CAST



## BRADEN GRIFFITHS

### Gerald

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: *Noises Off*, *A Christmas Carol* (2012 - 2018). Elsewhere: Born and raised in Calgary, Braden has spent the last 20 years as an actor, playwright, puppeteer, and arts educator. He has performed in (just shy of) 100 professional productions (most of them right here in Alberta); *Cipher*, written with Ellen Close, was produced at both Vertigo Theatre and the Arts Club (Vancouver), and their play, *My Family and Other*

*Endangered Species* is published through Playwrights Canada Press; his puppetry work has been seen live in Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, and the United States, but can also be streamed (via Apple+) on two seasons of The Jim Henson Company's, *Fraggle Rock: Back to the Rock*. He's been nominated for a bunch of (and won a few) awards, some for acting, some for playwriting, none for puppetry, but his parents, partner (Camille), and niece (Findley) are (likely) proud, nonetheless.



## HELEN KNIGHT

### Corky

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Elsewhere: Helen is a two-time Betty Mitchell Award winner for *The Last Wife*, and *The Virgin Trial* (Alberta Theatre Projects), and was most recently seen in *Sleuth* (Vertigo Theatre). Other select credits include *Murder in the Studio* (Vertigo Theatre), *The Wedding Party* (Alberta Theatre Projects), *The Virgin Trial* (Soulpepper Theatre), *Last Christmas*, *A Good Marriage* (Lunchbox Theatre), *Tomorrow's Child* (Ghost River Theatre). Helen

has also toured her own works - *FUGLY*; *The Art of Kneading* - around Calgary, Edmonton, and Toronto. It should be said that I love this play and its dark and bizarre humour, and I'm so thankful to Lezlie and the team for letting me come and play with you all. And to O, thank you for your ongoing support - you're okay, I guess.



## NATHAN SCHMIDT

### Norm

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: *King Lear*. Elsewhere: *Twelfth Night*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *As You Like It* for The Shakespeare Company; *The Huron Bride*, *Sherlock Holmes and the American Problem*, Vertigo Theatre; *STRUCK*, Ghost River Theatre; *The Quarrel*, *My Name is Asher Lev*, Pacific Theatre; *The Sound of Music*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *A Midsummer Nights Dream*, Chemainus Theatre Festival; *The Trip to Bountiful*, *Doubt*,

*Freud's Last Session*, *Underneath the Lintel*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, *Jake and the Kid*, *Damien*, *Oliver*, *The Good Doctor*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Talley's Folly*, *May and Joe*, *The Kite*, Rosebud Theatre. Nathan is so pleased to be back a Theatre Calgary! He has trained with Shakespeare & Company in Lenox, Massachusetts and at Rosebud School of the Arts where he is currently the Head of the Acting programme.

# CAST



## **BAHAREH YARAGHI**

### **Laura**

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: *The Kite Runner* (Citadel Theatre co-pro). Elsewhere: *The Apple Cart*, *The Clearing* (Shaw Festival), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *An Ideal Husband*, *Julius Caesar*, *The Aeneid* (Stratford Festival); *The Hooves Belonged to the Deer* (Tarragon Theatre/Buddies in Bad Times); *A Doll's House, Part 2* (Mirvish/Royal MTC); *Cost of Living* (Arts Club/Citadel); *Shakespeare in Love* (Citadel/Royal MTC); *Salt-Water Moon* (Why Not/Factory Theatre); *Death of the King*, *Blood Wedding*, *Hallaj* (Modern Times); *Le Placard*, *Les Zinspirés 2.0* (Théâtre Français de Toronto); *Unholy*, *HER2* (Nightwood); *Kiss* (Canadian Stage/Theatre Smash/ARC); *Oil*, *Pomona*, *Moment*, *Bea* (ARC); *Minotaur* (YPT). Film/TV: *Good Sam* (CBS); *What We Do in the Shadows* (FX); *Kim's Convenience* (CBC); *Dear David* (Buzzfeed); *Inedia* (Good Question Media/Experimental Forest Films); *Covert Affairs* (USA Network/GED Productions). Awards: six-time Dora Award nominee (Individual and Ensemble), two-time Sterling Award nominee (Individual and Ensemble).



## **JOE PERRY**

### **Understudy**

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: *A Christmas Carol* (2015-16, 2023). Elsewhere (selected): *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*, *The Extractionist* (Vertigo Theatre); *Premium Content* (Major Matt Mason); *Chariots Of Fire* (Grand Theatre); *Gordon* (Theatre Network); *This Is War* (Punctuate); *The Circle* (ATP). Selected Film/TV: *Range Roads* (North Country Cinema); *The Expanse* (Amazon Prime); *Black Summer* (Netflix). Joe is a Calgary based artist and creator working across Canada in theatre, film, and television. He graduated from Mount Royal University's Performance Program and received his BFA in acting from the University of Alberta.



## **AMY SAWKA**

### **Understudy**

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Amy is a theatre practitioner who creates, collaborates, writes, and performs in and around town. As a performer she has been lucky enough to work with Alberta Theatre Projects, Lunchbox Theatre, The Citadel Theatre, Evergreen Theatre, Dancing Monkey Laboratories, The Shakespeare Company, Sage's IGNITE festival, Goodger-Pink Productions, Swallow-A-Bicycle, Third Street Theatre, and Reckless Daughter Creative. Amy is also a graduate of York University's Devised Theatre program, a Registered Massage Therapist, instructor of youth drama classes, and photographer of clouds. She would like to thank the many incredible humans that helped make this possible.

# CREATIVE TEAM



## LEZLIE WADE

### Director

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Elsewhere: Directing credits include two seasons at the Shaw Festival and eight seasons at the Stratford Festival, where she directed *H.M.S Pinafore*, *An Ideal Husband*, and most recently, *Spamalot*. She was also associate director on *Henry V* and assistant director on *Jesus Christ Superstar* at Stratford, La Jolla Playhouse and on Broadway. Her movie musical, *Red Letter Day*, won a New York International film award and was selected by several international film festivals. As a writer her musicals include *Sticky Fingers*, *Dead Reckoning*, *Nobody's Children*, and *The Gifted Prince*, optioned by Somerled Arts and currently in development in NYC. *The Gifted Prince* was short-listed for the Tom Hendry Award for best new musical in Canada. Lezlie's song, *Portrait of Me*, was one 10 songs chosen for the Stiles and Drewe Best New Song competition in London, UK. She is currently in development for a musical adaptation of *Macbeth* entitled, *Weird*. [Lezliewade.com](http://Lezliewade.com)



## DOUGLAS PARASCHUK

### Set Design

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: *Camelot*, *Evita* (2003), *The Mountaintop*. Elsewhere: Design coordinator for the Stratford Shakespeare Festival of Canada for 22 seasons with over 30 production design credits. Designer for Steven Fry's *Mythos* for the Shaw Festival as well as the English National Tour. Director of Design for the Calgary Stampede Grandstand Show 2014-23. Director of Design and Associate Director for the UAE 50th Jubilee Celebrations. Director of Design for the opening and closing ceremonies for the Arab Games in Doha, Qatar. Director of Design for David Atkins Enterprises. Director of Design for the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics opening, medals, and closing ceremonies. Director of Design for the opening and closing ceremonies for the Asian Games Doha, Qatar. Director of Design for the opening and closing ceremonies for the 2012 Men's World Handball championships. Over 35 years of experience designing for television, theatre, film, international events, and touring productions around the world.



## JESSICA POIRIER-CHANG

### Costume Design

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Jessica is a designer from Montreal where she graduated in Set and Costume Design from the National Theatre School in 2006. Recent credits include costume designs for *Foxfinder* (Imago Theatre, 2022) for which she was nominated for Outstanding Costume Design at the METAs; *Les Géants* (Cirque Éloize, 2022); and the opera *Incoronazione di Poppea* (Atelier Lyrique, 2023). Her upcoming projects include costume designs for *Chimerica* at Théâtre Duceppe, and for *RBO* with Cirque du Soleil. Jessica is absolutely thrilled to be working with Lezlie again! [jessicapchang.com](http://jessicapchang.com)

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# CREATIVE TEAM



## BETH KATES

### Lighting & Projection Design

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: *The Mousetrap*, *Little Women*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Shakespeare by the Bow), *Ragtime: A Concert Performance*, *Steel Magnolias*. Beth is an award-winning theatre maker, lighting, set, projection, and mixed-reality designer. Her work has been seen on stages around the world for over 30 years, most recently at the Blyth Festival with James Reaney's rarely performed *Donnelly*

*Trilogy* (adapted & directed by Gil Garratt). A leader in new forms of performance with technology, she is a Digital Dramaturg, leads experimental VR Performance creation workshops, and co-created and directed *Bury The Wren*, a Virtual Reality/Live performance with Neil Christensen. Beth's favourite production is her son, Aaron, who is often in the theatre and VR with her! [www.playgroundstudios.ca](http://www.playgroundstudios.ca)



## ANDREW BLIZZARD

### Sound Design & Composition

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: *Iceland*, *Blow Wind High Water*, *Hamlet* (Shakespeare by the Bow). Selected credits include: Sound Design and Original Composition for *Clue*, *Murder on the Orient Express*, *Dracula: The Bloody Truth*, *Sherlock Holmes and the American Problem*, *Nine Dragons*, *The Haunting*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *Travels with my Aunt*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *The Woman in Black*, *Noirville* (Vertigo Mystery Theatre); *Macbeth* (The Shakespeare Company/Hit & Myth/

Vertigo); *In On It*, *The Surrogate* (Lunchbox); *The After*, *aWay* (ANCHOR|RED Theatre); *Shakespeare's Dog* (Alberta Theatre Projects); *Lieutenant of Inishmore* (Ground Zero Theatre/Hit & Myth); *Blood: A Scientific Romance* (Sage Theatre); *Le Gros Spectacle* (The Wind-up Dames/ATP playRites 2006); *PARANOIA* (The Wind-up Dames/Ground Zero Theatre). He has received three Betty Mitchell Awards and was a nominee for an AMPIA Award for the short film *The Money Tree*. Andrew wishes to thank his darling wife Brieanna and his most amazing designs ever, Sebastian and Rowan. For my sweet Ruby, and enduring Beans.



## ANASTASIA ST. AMAND

### Intimacy Director

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: *Jimmy Buffett's Escape to Margaritaville*. Anastasia is a queer, certified intimacy director and coordinator. She is a founding member of Principal Intimacy Professionals (PIPs) and an instructor for PIP's SAG-AFTRA accredited intimacy training program. Select credits include: *The Immaculate Perfection* (Body Cube Arts/ High Performance Rodeo), *Stage Kiss* (Pine Tree Players), *Bombay Black* (Alberta

Theatre Projects), *Frankenstein* (Jupiter Theatre), *Hurry Hard* (Western Canada Theatre), *Brontë* (Studio Theatre UofA), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Measure For Measure* (Free Will Shakespeare), *Genesis: The Mary Shelley Play* (Edinburgh Fringe). Special thanks to her PIPs Pals and loved ones for their ongoing support.

# CREATIVE TEAM



## **JANE MACFARLANE** **Voice & Dialect Coach**

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: Assistant Director - *A Christmas Carol* (2023), Resident Voice Coach - More than 65 productions since 2000 including: *The Mousetrap*, *Jimmy Buffett's Escape to Margaritaville*, *Forgiveness*, *Little Women*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Million Dollar Quartet*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Admissions*, *The Louder We Get*, *Noises Off*, *Billy Elliot the Musical*, 12 seasons of *Shakespeare by the Bow* and 15 years of *A Christmas Carol*

(including playing Mrs. Cratchit from 2001-02). Additionally, Jane adapted and directed the 2022 Shakespeare on the Go production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. She has also worked for ATP, Vertigo Theatre, and The Shakespeare Company. Jane also coaches Voice and Presence through her business Voice Activated. She has taught Voice for the Actor and Acting at such institutions as York University, Harvard University, Southern Methodist University, MRU, UofA, and is currently on faculty in the Drama Division in the School of Creative & Performing Arts at UCalgary.



## **LISA RUSSELL** **Stage Manager**

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: *Doubt*, *A Parable* (Assistant Stage Manager). Elsewhere: Lisa Russell has worked in dance, theatre and musical theatre in theatres across Canada and is happy to be back at Theatre Calgary. Selected credits include: *Trouble in Mind* (MTC/Citadel Theatre); *Six* and *Hadestown* (Citadel Theatre); *Flight*, *Fidelio* (Pacific Opera Victoria); *The Unnatural* and *Accidental Women* (National Arts Centre); *The New Canadian*

*Curling Club*, *Glory* (Alberta Theatre Projects); *Die Fledermaus*, *Madame Butterfly* (Calgary Opera); *Elf*, *The Cure for Death for Lightning*, *Liberation Days* and *Les Misérables* (Western Canada Theatre); *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Drowning Girls* (Globe Theatre); *Grace & Glorie*, *Over the River and Through the Woods* (Chemainus Theatre Festival); *The December Man*, *Steel Kiss* (Green Thumb Theatre). Lisa was the production stage manager for the Summer Arts Festival at the Banff Centre for four years and spent seven seasons at the Stratford Festival. Lisa is a Sessional Instructor at the University of Calgary and MacEwan University.

# CREATIVE TEAM



## NAOMI ESAU

### Assistant Stage Manager

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare on the Go), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Apprentice Stage Manager). Elsewhere: *The F Word*, *Men Express Their Feelings* (Downstage); *Magic Lies: An Evening with W.O. Mitchell*, *A Christmas Story*, *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Carol*, *The Christians*, *An Inspector Calls*. (Rosebud Theatre); *Makambe Speaks* (Ghost River Theatre); *Gaslight* (ASM-Vertigo Theatre); *Heaven* (APSM-Lunchbox Theatre); *Much Ado About Nothing* (CYPT); *[titleofshow]* (Birnton Theatricals). She is also an actor, musician, seamstress, part-time princess and baker of many cupcakes. Naomi is delighted to be back at Theatre Calgary this season!



## CHARLOTTE BRAID

### Apprentice Stage Manager

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Charlotte is an emerging Stage Manager in Alberta and is thrilled to be a part of this team. She is a graduate of the University of Alberta's BFA Stage Management program, and she would like to thank her family and friends for their continued love and support! Recent credits include: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night* (Freewill Shakespeare); *Trouble In Mind* (Citadel Theatre); *Honk! The Musical*, *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Storybook Theatre); *Home for the Holidays* (Lunchbox Theatre); *New Mythic Works* (Thousand Faces Festival); *Rochdale*, *She Kills Monsters*, *Love Labour's Lost* (U of A Studio Theatre). Enjoy the show!



## MADELINE BLONDAL

### TC Mentors Program\* - Lighting & Projection

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Madeline is an emerging set and lighting designer from Calgary, working across Alberta. Recent design credits include: *The Dark Lady* (Lunchbox Theatre); *Cottagers and Indians* (Lunchbox Theatre); *After Faust* (RISER and Invisible Practice); *Smoke* (Tiny Bear Jaws); *Ministry of Mundane Mysteries: Sound Off* (Outside the March); *Caribbean Muskrat* (Teatro La Quindicina), *Hireath* (Bright Young Things), *En Attendant...Godot* (L'UniThéâtre); *Enchanted Antlers '21, '22 and '23'* (Theatre Prospero). She was a part of the Lunchbox's 2022-23 Associate Artist Company, which reintroduced her to the Calgary arts scene after studying and working in Edmonton. Madeline holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Alberta in Drama (Theatre Design). Big thanks to Theatre Calgary and Beth for this opportunity.

# Dreams of being on stage?



The young company cast of *A Christmas Carol* (2023). Photo: Trudie Lee.

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# CREATIVE TEAM



## JESSICA ECKSTADT

### TC Mentors Program\* - Voice & Dialect

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: *A Christmas Carol* (2023), *Ragtime: A Concert Performance*. Jessica discovered her love for the performing arts at a young age. She believes sharing her passion through acting or teaching is one of the best experiences in life. When Jessica is not performing, she is very proud to be an award-winning choreographer for the Youth Singers of Calgary, as well as teaching students from across the city to hone and

discover their passion for the performing arts through various classes and private lessons. She is a Betty Mitchell Award nominated performer and has had the pleasure of performing across Canada, the United States, Europe, and South America. She holds a performance diploma from Mount Royal University (Calgary, AB) and BFA from Concordia University (Montreal, QC). Jessica is very thankful for the entire team at Theatre Calgary as well as her loved ones and supporters.



## EMILY MARISABEL

### TC Mentors Program\* - Directing

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Emily is a professional Alberta-based theatre artist whose work is governed by the ethics of love - the belief that everyone is connected, that other people's well-being enhances your own, and that every person is innately deserving of being treated with care, commitment, knowledge, respect, and trust. Emily has directed for theatres across Canada, produced several theatre productions for multiple Alberta-based theatre companies and is also the founder and artistic director of

Light in the Dark Theatre, a company dedicated to telling stories of hope and healing. In 2018, Emily was awarded the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta Emerging Artist Award for her work with Light in the Dark Theatre and her practice of utilizing live theatre to inspire hope, incite positive change and build community. When Emily is not working in theatre, you will find her working as a professional fine art and event photographer.

\* TC Mentors participants are generously supported by the RBC Emerging Artist Program.

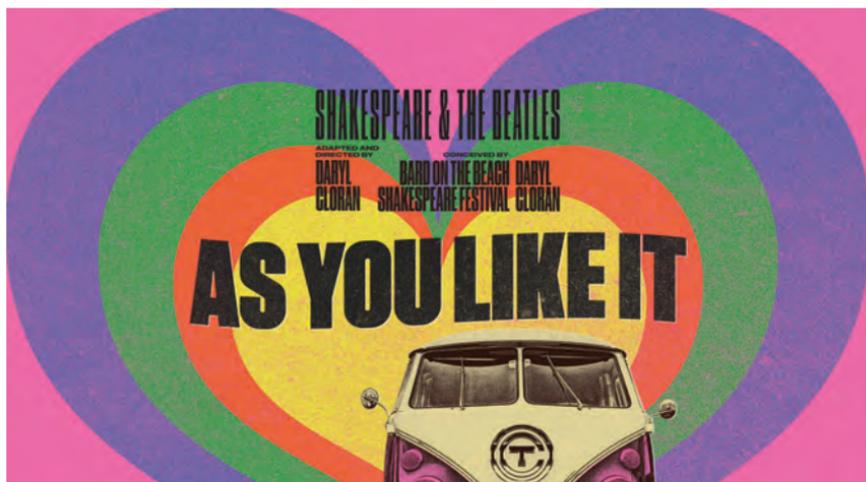
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## SPECIAL THANKS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

*Ben Chaisson*

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*Spanish consultant - Gabriela Salguero-Palacino*



## A Q&A WITH DARYL CLORAN, DIRECTOR OF *AS YOU LIKE IT*

*Coming to Theatre Calgary  
February 27 to March 24, 2024*



### **The Bard Meets The Beatles in a Mashed-Up Musical**

It's the 1960s, and things are getting groovy in the Forest of Arden. Shakespeare's classic comedy of love and mistaken identity is given new life in this high-spirited adaptation featuring the music of The Beatles. When Rosalind is banished from court, she disguises herself as a man and escapes to the forest. There, she meets the similarly-banished Orlando, who happens to be in love with her, but cannot see through her disguise. From there, things get increasingly tangled as the play explores love and gender roles, infused with the music of the "Fab Four."

### **What led to the pairing of Shakespeare with The Beatles?**

Christopher Gaze [Artistic Director of Bard on The Beach in Vancouver] asked me: if, hypothetically, we could get the rights to the Beatles music, what would I do with it? I was always a big fan of the Beatles, considering the Beatles in relationship to *As You Like It*, I realized so much of their music feels like it was written for that play. It was such a perfect fit.

The journey of the characters in *As You Like It* really mirrors the evolution of The Beatles' songwriting. The beginning of *As You Like It* is about these young, naive lovers. And so all of the early Beatles stuff, like "I Wanna Hold Your Hand," fits in that so nicely. But then when Shakespeare's characters head out into the forest, it becomes a much deeper play that asks much deeper questions, so the later Beatles writing starts to really apply.

## ***What was it like to weave The Beatles' Music into Shakespeare's script?***

First, I knew I had to cut about half of Shakespeare's text. I wanted these songs to do more than pause the story for a second to sing your favourite Beatles song. They had to help move the story forward and they had to take the place of some monologues. So much of the process involved finding places where the emotional content of each song serves a purpose. I was asking myself, how do we replace what was in the text and help move the emotional journey forward?

## ***Has this play changed how you see either Shakespeare or The Beatles?***

Yes it has. While we're singing Beatles songs, we are placing them in the mouth of a particular character. So that totally sort of how we approach a song, or what lens we're looking at it through. A good example is "Helter Skelter," which is a pretty dark Beatles song. We use it late in the play as quite a comic number: Touchstone uses it to scare off William, peacocking as he shouts across the stage.

I have learned not to be precious about Shakespeare. I really enjoy ripping the guts out of it. I think this adaptation of *As You Like It* can really introduce audiences to Shakespeare. We build a lot on the humour and characters that Shakespeare wrote.

For example, he wrote a wrestling match into this play. One of the oddest things about *As You Like It* is that it has a wrestling match in the middle of it. We were able to build this full wrestling pre show that sets the tone for the night. The audience walks in and like, there's wrestling happening already, and they're like, what's happening, what's happening?

**Tickets to *As You Like It* are now available at [theatrecalgary.com](http://theatrecalgary.com)**

*This production is made possible by the generous support of The Al Osten & Buddy Victor Legacy Fund.*



*The cast of As You Like It. Photo Tim Matheson*

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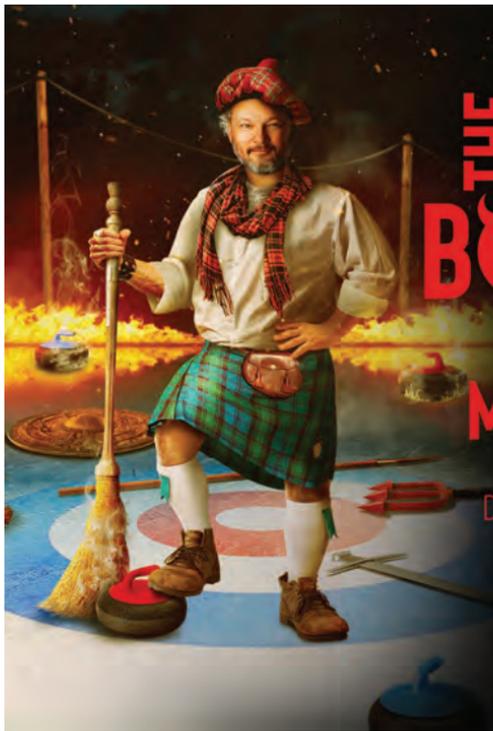
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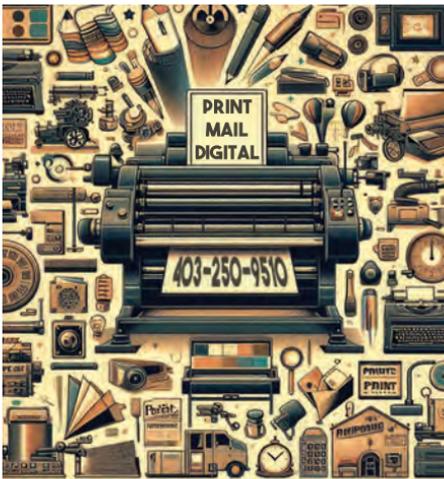
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Emily Howard, Kathleen Faith Ballangan in  
*The Importance of Being Earnest*.  
Photo by Trudie Lee.