

UPSTAGE

THE BELFRY THEATRE'S MAGAZINE OF BJCASU ASICH

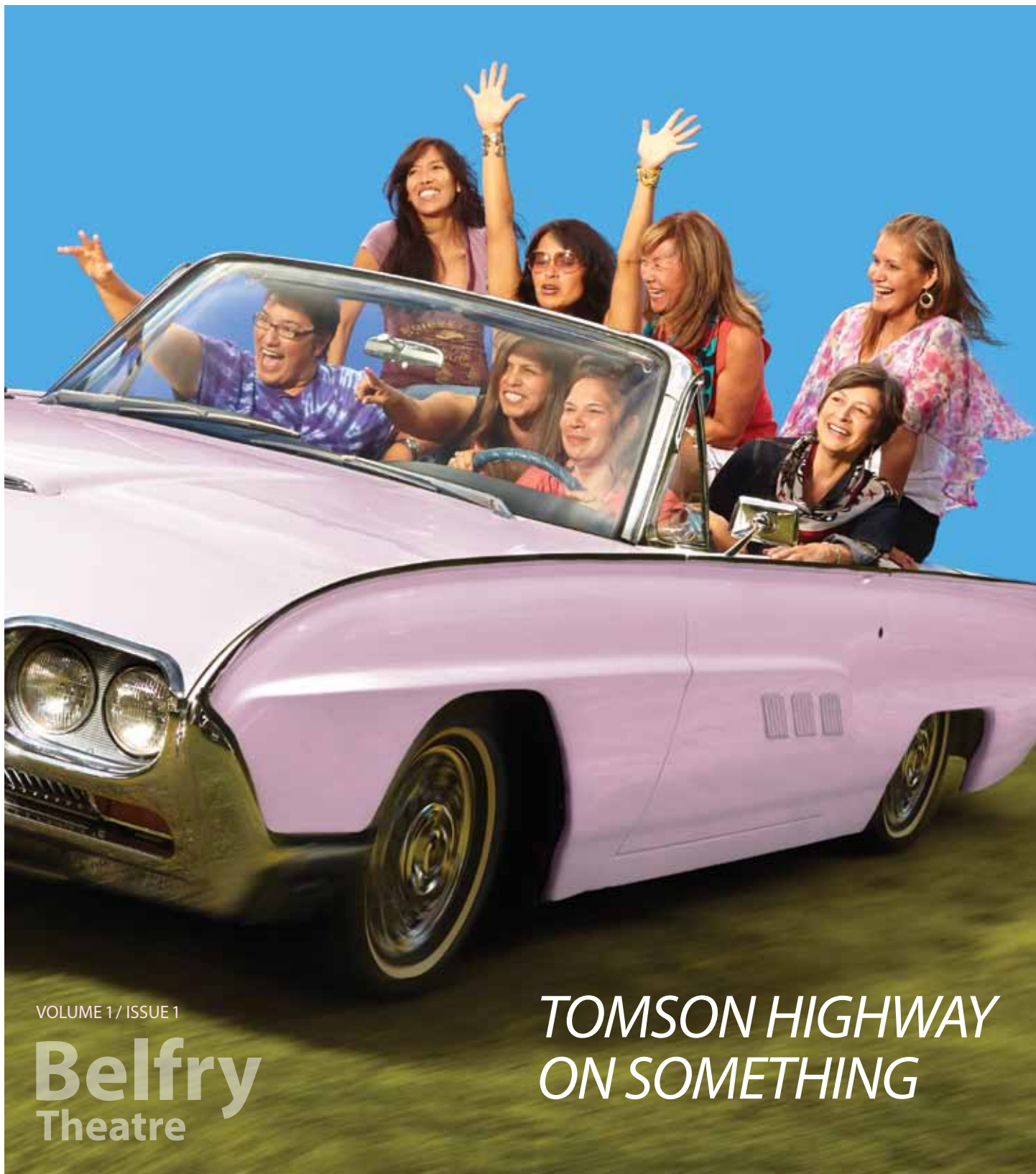
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SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2014

BOOKS / LIFE ON THE REZ

THEATRE / WHY THIS PLAY?

CRUSH / WINOS UNITE!



VOLUME 1 / ISSUE 1

Belfry
Theatre

*TOMSON HIGHWAY
ON SOMETHING*

THE REZ SISTERS

hello

Welcome to the Belfry, our new production of *The Rez Sisters*, and our new magazine, *Upstage*.

Upstage is a theatrical term; meaning to move towards the back of the stage.

Over the years the word has evolved to also mean to divert attention from (someone) towards oneself; outshine. Our hope is that the magazine draws you deeper into each production we do, diverting your attention from the everyday into the <something> world of theatre.

The Rez Sisters will certainly draw you into their world. Tomson Highway has created an incredible world where seven wonderful women can be themselves, warts and all.

Their boisterous lives are played out with tremendous passion – they are, by turns, funny, caring, and catty, but all the while and despite their vast differences, they truly love one another.

We'd love you to join us for this extraordinary journey – one that will bring us all closer together. Thanks for being part of the Belfry.

Tickets are on sale now at 250-385-6815 or at www.belfry.bc.ca

A rich, magical journey of redemption by celebrated First Nations writer, Tomson Highway. Seven women – all related – leave their reservation on a road trip to Toronto and the “Biggest Bingo in the World”, each hoping to win the jackpot and change their lives forever.

synopsis

Inspired by Michel Tremblay's play *Les Belles-soeurs*, Tomson Highway's *The Rez Sisters* introduces us to seven women, all related either by blood or marriage, living on the fictional Wasaychigan Hill Indian Reserve on Manitoulin Island, Ontario. As we get to know each woman's unique personality and perspective on life, we gain insight into their lives on the reservation, their relationships with one another, the personal demons they struggle with, and the humour they use to rise above it all. When they find out about “The Biggest Bingo In The World,” to be held in Toronto, they embark on an eventful and challenging roadtrip, each dreaming of winning the jackpot and what life-changing fortunes it will bring them. Throughout the play, the women are followed and observed by the “trickster,” Nanabush, who we will recognize in several forms throughout the women's journey. Our sisters return to the Reserve with a renewed understanding of themselves, each other and where they live.



B4Play

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13
at 11am**

**Belfry Theatre
Studio A
1291 Gladstone Avenue**

**Join CBC Radio's Gregor
Craigie for a live talk show
featuring actor Actor's Name
and director Peter Hinton
from *The Rez Sisters* and
some very special guests.
Free event.**

WHO WE ARE –

Upstage is the Belfry Theatre's new magazine. Our goal is to give you a leisurely, deeper look into our productions, what goes into each show we do, and the many surprising aspects of the theatre you may not know about. Enjoy and feel free to write us with any story ideas you may have.



our thanks to production sponsors for THE REZ SISTERS –





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PESO SKGYWP

This is the headline for the lead article

by **Tomson Highway**

This is the body copy for the article – we have 500 words. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Suspendisse sagittis metus nisi, eget facilisis urna sollicitudin vel. Proin elementum placerat tincidunt. Morbi ut purus arcu. Aliquam erat volutpat. Phasellus ornare elit quis magna varius euismod. Nulla et elit sem.

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story highlights

The Rez Sisters is the first play in a seven play cycle, all based on the same set of characters, settings and themes.

Tantoo Cardinal's character Pelajia is named after Tomson's mother and the character of Nanabush was first played by his brother René.

Director Peter Hinton and Assistant Director Ryan Cunningham travelled to Manitoulin Island to research *The Rez Sisters*.



why I chose this play

A revival of Tomson Highway's *The Rez Sisters* has been on my wish list for the Belfry Theatre for the past couple of years. Every season I try to include one play from the archives of Canadian work, and *The Rez Sisters* is one of the great classics of Canadian theatre, and Tomson Highway one of our greatest writers.

When choosing plays for this theatre, I look for work that illuminates some aspect of the world around us, or helps us to see some part of our society from a new and different perspective. *The Rez Sisters* fulfills both of these goals, while celebrating life and the human spirit.

Tomson Highway's vibrant play pulses with the vitality and energy of seven remarkable and indomitable women – all of them dreamers, all of them trying to overcome the obstacles that keep them

from their dreams. Their lives may not be easy, but the life force within them is strong. "Not yet" is their battle cry, and we are mesmerized by their resilience and their will to survive.

I must have been waiting for the stars to align before programming this play – because align they most certainly have! The genius of Peter Hinton, the talent of these seven incredible women, the magical Waawaate Fobister, the brilliant Denise Clark, and Assistant Director Ryan Cunningham – the new Artistic Director of Native Earth Performing Arts, the very position that Tomson Highway held when he wrote this play – promise to blow the roof off the Belfry!

And that's a really good reason to choose this play!

Michael Shamata
Artistic Director

(continued from lead article)

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Tomson Highway aenean eget sollicitudin nisi. Ut sagittis egestas facilisi. Nulla facilisi. Pellentesque tristique iaculis sem, a interdum est tincidunt in nunc.

cast & creatives



Reneltha Arluk
Emily
Dictionary



Tiffany Ayalik
Zhaboonigan
Peterson



Tantoo Cardinal
Pelajia
Patchnose



Tasha Faye Evans
Marie Adele
Starblanket



Waawaate Fobister
Nanabush



Cheri Maracle
Veronique
St. Pierre



Tracey Nepinak
Philomena
Moosetail



Lisa C. Ravensbergen
Annie
Cook



Tomson Highway
playwright



Peter Hinton
director



Catherine Hahn
set & costume
designer



Bonnie Beecher
lighting
designer



Troy Slocum
sound designer/
composer



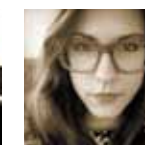
Denise Clarke
choreographer



Ryan Cunningham
assistant
director



Jennifer Swan
stage
manager



Jessica McLeod
assistant
stage manager



BOOKS

belfry librarian

We've unleashed the GVPL Librarians on our season scripts. For *The Rez Sisters* our Librarian has put together a list of books to help you get even more out of our production.

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian
by Sherman Alexie (2007)

Cree Narrative Memory: From treaties to contemporary times
by Neal McLeod (2007)

Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing
by Tomson Highway (1989)

First Nations 101: Tons of Stuff You Need to Know about First Nations People
by Lynda Gray (2011)

First Nations of British Columbia
by Robert J. Muckle (2014)

Just Ask Us
by Sylvia Olsen (2005)

Half-breed
by Maria Campbell (1983)

Indigenous Healing
by Rupert Ross (2014)

Indigenous in the City
edited by Evelyn Peters and Chris Andersen (2014)

Legends of My People, the Great Ojibway
by Norval Morriseau (1965)

Masculinians: Conversations about Indigenous Manhood
by Sam McKegney (2014)

Medicine Walk
by Richard Wagamese (2014)

Modern Canadian Plays
Volumes 1 and 2,
edited by Jerry Wasserman (2012)

Outside Looking In: Viewing First Nations Peoples in Canadian Dramatic Television Series
by Mary Jane Miller (2008)

Raisin Wine
by James Bartleman (2007)

Rez Sisters: A Play in Two Acts
by Tomson Highway (1988)

Songhees
by Songhees First nation (2013)

They Called Me Number One: Secrets and Survival at an Indian Residential School
by Bev Sellars (2013)

Truth and Indignation: Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools
by Ronald Niezen (2013)

We are Born With the Songs Inside Us
by Katherine Gordon (2013)

List Compiled by
Jennifer Rowan, GVPL.

get engaged

AFTERPLAY WEEKS SEPT 23 – 27 / OCT 7 – 11

Following selected performances of *The Rez Sisters*, we'll host Afterplay – a facilitated discussion where patrons can share their thoughts with fellow audience members. It's a chance to "debrief" after the show and hear how other audience members experienced the play.

TALKBACK THURSDAY THURSDAY, SEPT 25

Following the 8 pm performance of *The Rez Sisters*, join the actors from the show and your fellow audience members for a 20-minute Q & A session.

BOOKSMACK!

MONDAY, SEPT 29 at 7:30 pm

Fast, furious and fun, GVPL librarians return to the Belfry for Booksmack. They'll let their hair down, take off their glasses and speed review their favourite books. Highbrow, lowbrow and everything in between, including some great titles inspired by *The Rez Sisters*. Free event.



VOCAL EYE PERFORMANCE

SUNDAY, OCT 5 at 2 pm

Audio describers provide descriptions of the visual elements of the show, allowing people with low vision to enjoy the theatrical experience without missing any of the details. Following the performance there is a touch tour of the set.



GET SOCIAL

Follow us on facebook or twitter to learn more or, during the run of *The Rez Sisters*, you can also follow these artists:

Reneltta Arluk – @AuspiciousR
Tantoo Cardinal – @tantoo
Ryan Cunningham – @NativeEarth
Troy Slocum – @TroySoundsgood

A Benefit for the Belfry Theatre

Join Us!

2014

Crush

A Fine Wine Affair

Sunday, October 26, 5–8pm
Inn at Laurel Point

250-385-6815 or www.belfry.bc.ca/crush

parts & labour

Two years ago, we invested in the creation of a number of “audience engagement” activities. I was inspired in these efforts by programs at various theatres in the United States – primarily the Steppenwolf Theatre Company in Chicago. We emulated, copied, altered and invented to come up with the Belfry Theatre’s own version of events that could open windows for our audiences into the world of the upcoming play on our stage.

This *Upstage* “magazine” that you are currently reading (either in paper form or via internet) is one of the components of this audience engagement program, and I hope the information and articles it contains help to prepare you for the show you will soon be seeing.

Our B4Play event is a “live talk show” that takes place at the Belfry at 11:00 am on the Saturday before each show opens. CBC Radio’s charming Gregor Craigie interviews four guests about the upcoming production. These guests usually include the director of the play, one of the leading actors, and two members of the community who can illuminate some particular aspect of the play. In the course of two years, B4Play has become a Standing Room Only event.



DONOR PROFILE

BELFRY BENEFACTOR
BARBARA GREENIAUS

TO MODERATE
FREE **GIFT PLANNING SEMINAR**
NOVEMBER 19

MEET BARBARA GREENIAUS: She appreciates the high quality of Belfry productions: “As it’s in our own backyard, we sometimes take the Belfry for granted. I love that this professional, world-class theatre company is also such a welcoming place that has always provided its artists with a nurturing environment.”

A theatre-lover since her Montreal high school days, Barbara joined our Board of Directors in 1998, after moving to Victoria from Winnipeg.

When she and her husband did their estate planning, their lawyer suggested making a bequest. “I came back with

a list of organizations that have been very important in shaping who I am. I want to do everything I can to secure the Belfry’s future. It’s about ensuring that long after Bill and I are gone, the Belfry goes on playing a pivotal role in the life of our artistic community.”

If you attended last season’s play about homelessness, *Home Is A Beautiful Word*, you would have been aware of a discussion among audience members that took place in the theatre following each performance. For two weeks of each run of each Belfry production, we host these Afterplay discussions: facilitated conversations between audience members. These are not intended as Q&A sessions, but as opportunities to talk about the play, and your reactions to it, with your fellow patrons.

Afterplay and B4Play events are marked in the calendar in this copy of *Upstage*. Please consider joining us for them, and increase your enjoyment of Belfry productions both before and after you attend!

Michael Shamata, Artistic Director



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I want to do everything I can to secure the Belfry’s future... It’s unimaginable what life would be like without live theatre.

mix and match support to the theatre, depending on your means and stage in life. It’s not about million dollar gifts – it’s about doing what you are comfortable with to support the Belfry.”

Join Barbara for this complimentary **GIFT PLANNING SEMINAR** on **Wednesday November 19, 3 – 5 pm**, sponsored by Neil Chappell and Graham Isenegger, CIBC Wood Gundy. The panel will feature experts in estate planning including lawyer Fiona Hunter. For more information or to register, contact Development Manager Susan Stevenson at 250-385-6835, or register early to avoid disappointment at 250-385-6815.

Susan Stevenson, Development Manager



how to buy tickets

BY TELEPHONE 250-385-6815

Please have your credit card ready, as well as the date and time of the performance you wish to attend.

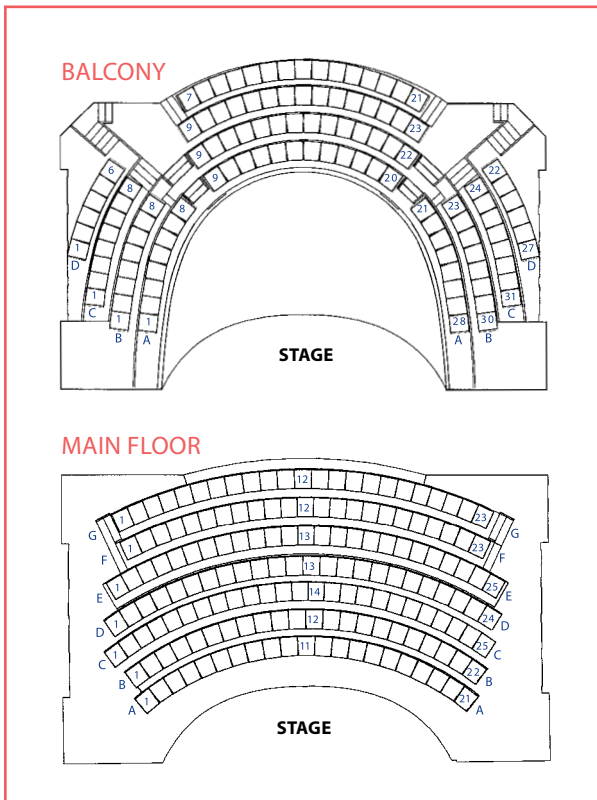
ONLINE

Visit www.belfry.bc.ca/tickets, and buy your tickets online, anytime.

IN PERSON

Drop by our Box Office.

We accept Visa, Mastercard, American Express, debit card, cheques, and, of course, cash.



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						2014
SEPT 7	8	9	10	11	12	13 11am B4Play
14	15	16 8pm Rez P	17 8pm Rez P	18 8pm Rez O	19 8pm Rez	20 4pm Rez 8pm Rez
21 2pm Rez	22	23 8pm Rez A	24 1pm Rez 8pm Rez A	25 8pm Rez T	26 8pm Rez A	27 4pm Rez 8pm Rez A
28 2pm Rez CM	29	30 8pm Rez	OCT 1 1pm Rez 8pm Rez	2 8pm Rez	3 8pm Rez	4 4pm Rez 8pm Rez
5 2pm Rez	6	7 8pm Rez A	8 8pm Rez A	9 1pm Rez SM 8pm Rez A	10 8pm Rez A	11 4pm Rez 8pm Rez A
12 2pm Rez	13	14 8pm Rez	15 8pm Rez	16 8pm Rez	17 8pm Rez	18 4pm Rez 8pm Rez
19 2pm Rez C	20	21 8pm Spring P	22 8pm Spring P	23 8pm Spring O	24 8pm Spring	25 8pm Spring
26 2pm Spring	27	28 8pm Spring	29 8pm Spring	30 8pm Spring	31 8pm Spring	NOV 1 8pm Spring
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						2015
JAN 18	19	20	21	22	23	24 11am B4Play
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FEB 1 2pm B/D	2	3	4 1pm B/D 8pm B/D A	5 8pm B/D T	6 8pm B/D A	7 4pm B/D 8pm B/D A
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22 2pm B/D	23	24 8pm B/D	25 8pm B/D	26 8pm B/D	27 8pm B/D	28 4pm B/D 8pm B/D
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15 2pm Spark	16	17 8pm Spark	18 8pm Spark	19 8pm Spark	20 8pm Spark	21 4pm Spark 8pm Spark
22 2pm Spark	23	24 8pm Spark	25 8pm Spark	26 8pm Spark	27 8pm Spark	28 8pm Spark
APR 5	6	7	8	9	10	11 11am B4Play
12	13	14 8pm Vanya P	15 8pm Vanya P	16 8pm Vanya O	17 8pm Vanya	18 4pm Vanya 8pm Vanya
19 2pm Vanya	20	21 8pm Vanya A	22 1pm Vanya 8pm Vanya A	23 8pm Vanya T	24 8pm Vanya A	25 4pm Vanya 8pm Vanya A
26 2pm Vanya CM	27	28 8pm Vanya	29 1pm Vanya 8pm Vanya	30 8pm Vanya	MAY 1 8pm Vanya	2 4pm Vanya 8pm Vanya
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17 2pm Vanya C						

SPRING AWAKENING

SINGLE TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

SPRING AWAKENING

by **Duncan Sheik & Steven Sater**
OCT 21 – NOV 2, 2014

A fresh breeze of true inspiration...
NEW YORK TIMES

Belfry Theatre

tickets 250-385-6815
www.belfry.bc.ca



VENUS IN FUR

by **David Ives**
NOV 11 – DEC 14, 2014

...sexy, sophisticated and side-splittingly funny...

TORONTO STAR



THE GOD THAT COMES

created by **Hawksley Workman** and **Christian Barry**

live music and performance by **Hawksley Workman**

SPARK Festival MAR 10 – 22, 2015

A tour de force... CALGARY SUN



THE BEST BROTHERS

by **Daniel MacIvor**
JAN 27 – MAR 1, 2015

★★★★ (out of 4)... Comedy at its purest.

TORONTO STAR



FISH EYES, BOYS WITH CARS & LET ME BORROW THAT TOP

created and performed by **Anita Majumdar**
SPARK Festival MAR 10 – 22, 2015

...ease, elegance and intelligence.
DEEPA MEHTA



HOW TO DISAPPEAR COMPLETELY

by **Itai Erdal, James Long, Anita Rochon & Emilia Symington Fedy**
JAN 27 – MAR 1, 2015

...warm, witty and, naturally, beautifully lit. VANCOUVER SUN

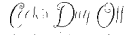


VANYA AND SONIA AND MASHA AND SPIKE

by **Christopher Durang**
APR 14 – MAY 17, 2015

Brainy and witty and clever and cute...
VARIETY

our thanks to season sponsors and government funders –



BELFRY THEATRE
1291 GLADSTONE AVENUE
VICTORIA, BC V8T 1G5

