

February 2—28
2016

The Valley



BY *Joan
MacLeod*

DIRECTED BY ROY SURETTE

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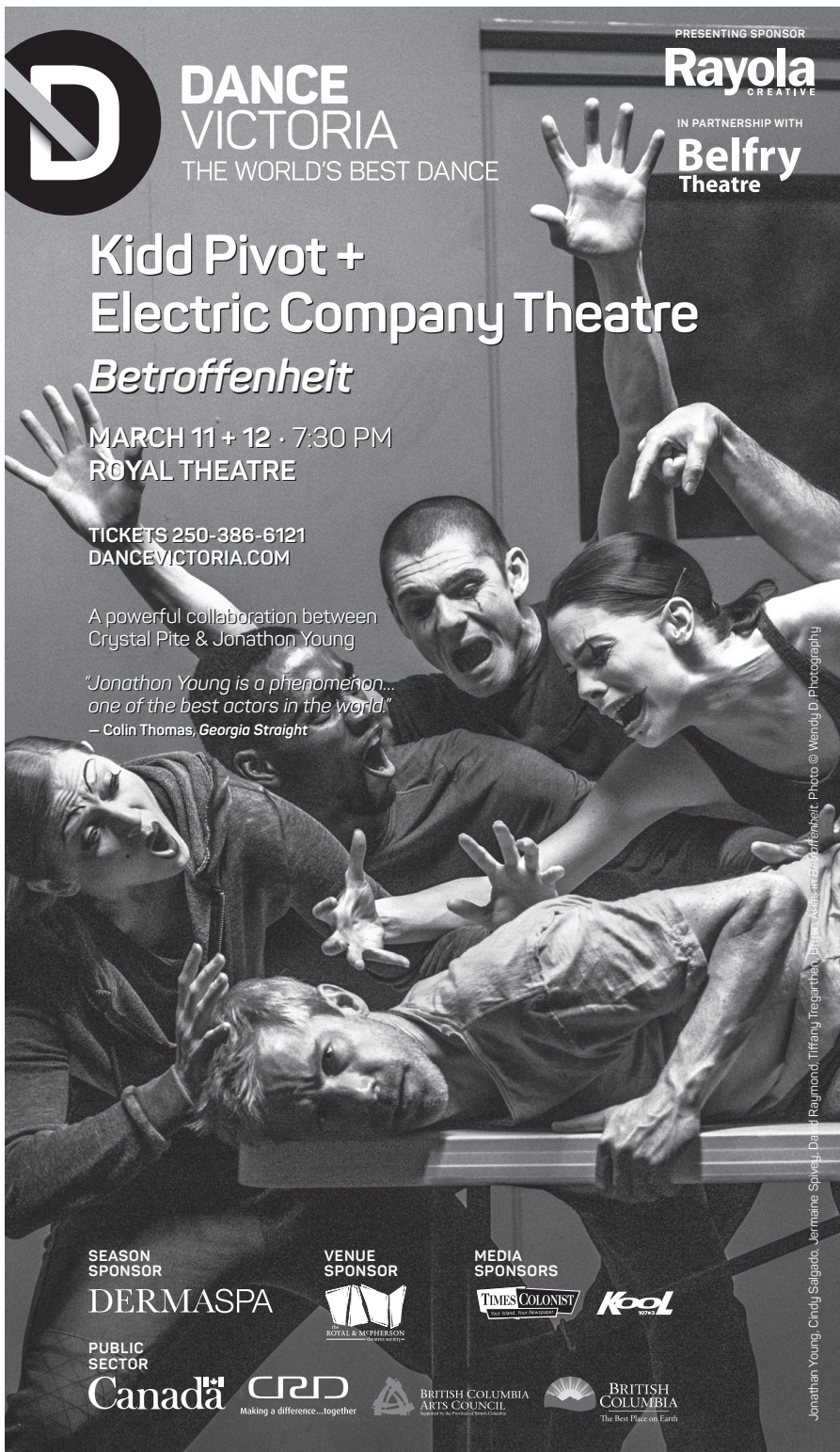
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The Belfry Theatre presents

The Valley

by Joan MacLeod

Cast
(in alphabetical order)

Rebecca Auerbach Janie
Matt Reznik Connor
Luc Roderique Dan
Colleen Wheeler Sharon

Director Roy Surette
Set Designer Pam Johnson
Costume Designer Erin Macklem
Lighting Designer Itai Erdal
Sound Designer Brian Linds
Stage Manager Caryn Fehr
Assistant Stage Manager Jessica McLeod
Fight Director Nicholas Harrison
Fight Captain Luc Roderique
Director Trainee Sarah Jane Pelzer

Please
join us for
an Afterplay
discussion following
this evening's performance.
(see page 11 for details)

The world premiere of *The Valley* was presented as part of the Enbridge playRites Festival of New Canadian Plays 2013, produced by Alberta Theatre Projects.

The Valley is staged by arrangement with Pam Winter, Gary Goddard Agency, Toronto, Canada garygoddardagency.com.

The use of video or audio recording devices is strictly prohibited at all times.

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Please enjoy the performance.

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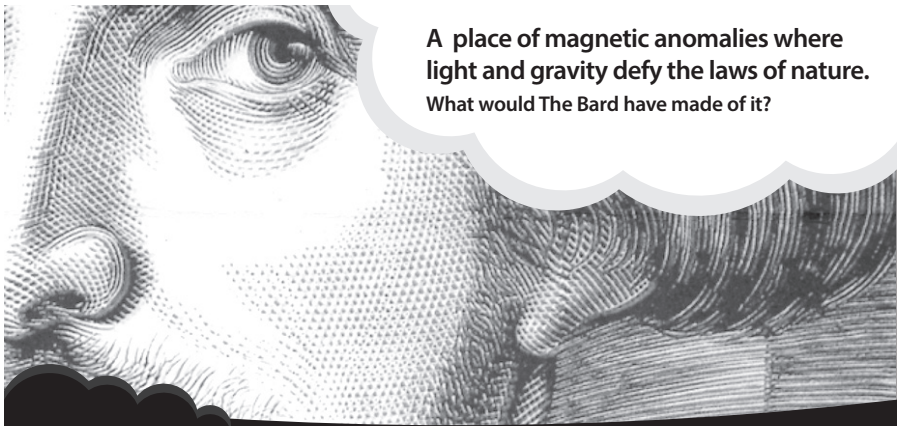
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Audience Information

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Please turn off your cellphones and pagers when you enter the theatre. If you need to be contacted in an emergency, please leave your name and seat number with our House Manager.

Latecomers & Re-admission

The Director of each production designates moments in the show when the seating of latecomers will cause the least amount of distraction for actors and audience members. Should you leave the theatre, our House Manager will not be able to reseat you until one of these breaks.

Babes in Arms

The Belfry is proud to produce adult contemporary theatre. Our productions are not suitable for children 10 and under, including babes in arms.

Recording Devices

No cameras or recording devices are permitted in the theatre.

Audience Advisories and Running Times

We make every effort to advise you of strong language, subject matter or extreme technical effects (strobe lights, fog). Please look for signs at the entrances to the theatre. Advisories and running times are available at the Box Office as of the first preview.

Food & Drinks

Please feel free to take only food and/or drinks you've purchased from the Belfry bar into the theatre. Our goodies are packaged so that they don't make a lot of noise and disturb your fellow audience members.

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Artistic Director's Notes

Dear Belfry Patrons and Friends –

Thank you for helping to make the first half of this season so exciting and successful. Your ongoing support is outstanding and most appreciated. Please accept my wishes for a happy and healthy 2016.

I am very proud to kick off 2016 with Joan MacLeod's beautiful play, which gives voice and puts a human face on mental illness, an issue that has been hidden in the shadows for too long.

It is also my great pleasure to welcome back – in this 40th Anniversary Season – former Belfry Artistic Director Roy Surette. One of the last shows he directed here was Joan MacLeod's *Homechild*, so this production of *The Valley* feels like a very fitting homecoming.

In fact, our entire creative team is filled with long-time Belfry collaborators: Pam Johnson (set design), Erin Macklem (costume design), and Brian Linds (sound design), who was just onstage as Mr. Fezziwig in *A Christmas Carol*. This time last year, our lighting designer, Itai Erdal, was onstage in his one-man play *How to Disappear Completely*, breaking our hearts and giving us a mini lighting seminar; this year, you can see his design work in action.

Welcome back to Colleen Wheeler, last seen here in *My Chernobyl*, and welcome to Belfry newcomers Rebecca Auerbach, Matt Reznick and Luc Rodrigue – a talented cast across the board.

Everything starts with the play, and we are so fortunate to have Joan MacLeod living, writing and teaching in our community. This is a great piece of writing, and a great way to start the New Year!



Ivan & Michael

Photo by Jo-Ann Richards, Works Photography

Notes from the Executive Director

As we begin the second half of our 40th season, it seems a good time to reflect on the past, present and future of the Belfry. A return to our stage of a former Artistic Director, in combination with Victoria's own national treasure of a playwright, is a fitting continuation of our celebration of Victoria's "little alternative theatre that could." The remainder of this celebration season has more exciting programming in store to enjoy and for you as a loyal audience to be proud of supporting.

We also look forward to our Gala celebration in May, featuring special guests from past and present. It promises to be a wonderful romp through our past and an exciting glimpse of our plans for the future – plans that we look forward to sharing with all of you soon!

Thank you all for helping to realize the dreams of the dedicated individuals who, over the past 40 years, have created this remarkable company. As we look to our next 40, we hope to retain your commitment to the continued growth and evolution of the Belfry, in both our programming and our facilities.

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Playwright's Notes



Rebecca Auerbach, Luc Roderique and Joan MacLeod

Rehearsal Photography by Peter Pokorny

and weaker – protection as it relates to being a police officer, sure, but also for me as a mother, a member of society, what it means to protect and feel protected. So that's how this play started but there is always a large gap between what I think I'm going to write and what actually gets written. In the end this play resides on the same turf as most of my work in that it looks at an issue through the lens of family – or in the case of *The Valley*, two families – and trying to figure out what makes these families, and all of us, connected.

I started the slow process of writing this play much like the characters do in the first act of *The Valley* – by tracing back my own interaction with the police over the years: from beach parties when I was seventeen, to having my purse stolen the first hour of my first visit to New York. I became intrigued by how much policing had changed in my lifetime. These days in Vancouver well over half the calls the police go out on are related to issues around mental illness. As I began to write I was interested in examining that in particular and in the concept of protection. a: one that protects, b: supervision or support of one that is smaller

Joan MacLeod

AFTERPLAY Discussions

Extend your enjoyment of the Belfry and this play.

Following all evening performances*, you're invited to join us "stage-side" for a lively discussion with fellow audience members about the play. You are welcome to take part in the conversation or just listen in. Afterplay lasts about 15 minutes.

"Thanks for the Afterplay yesterday. It's a good idea, it deepened my perception of the play."
Patron's comment following *Speed-the-Plow*

We hope you'll join us for this popular activity!

*there are no Afterplay discussions following Opening Night performances and matinees.

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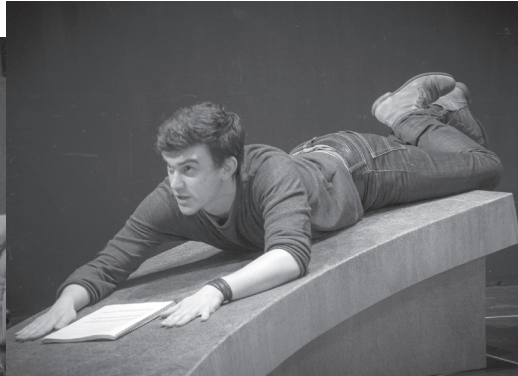


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Acting Company



Rebecca Auerbach



Matt Reznek

Rehearsal Photography by Peter Pokorny

Rebecca Auerbach

Janie

Selected Theatre: *Bedstefader* (Caravan Farm), *Bittergirl* (Charlottetown Festival), *Dear Johnny Deere* (Theatre Calgary: Critter Nomination), *The Wild Party* (Acting Upstage/Obsidian: Dora Nomination), *Little Brother, Little Sister* (Caravan Farm), *Ring of Fire* (The Grand Theatre), *The Peacemaker* (Next Stage), *Dai* (Winnipeg Jewish Theatre), *Your Side, My Side, and the Truth* (Playwright/Summerworks), *The Ballad of Weedy Peetstraw* (Festival Players), *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Theatre Calgary), *East of Berlin* (Alberta Theatre Projects: Betty Nomination), *Rabbit Hole* (Arts Club Theatre: Jessie Nomination), *Escape From Happiness* (Factory Theatre), *The Ballad of Stompin' Tom* (Drayton Entertainment, Charlottetown Festival), *Unity 1918* (Theatre Aquarius), *Hello Dolly!*, *Dead Reckoning* (Vancouver Playhouse), 2 seasons with Bard on the Beach and 6 seasons with the Blyth Festival. Rebecca is a proud graduate of Studio 58, and a recipient of the Jessie Award for Most Promising Newcomer. Upcoming: Rebecca is currently creating a new play with music, in collaboration with Juno award winner J.D. Nichol森, and looks forward to returning to the Blyth Festival this summer.

Matt Reznek

Connor

Matt Reznek is a Vancouver-based actor pleased to be making his debut at the beautiful Belfry Theatre. Selected theatre credits: *The Duchess* (Ruby Slippers Theatre), *This is War* (Rumble Theatre), *Three Tall Women* (Western Gold Theatre), *Rhinoceros* (Theatre at UBC). He has trained at UBC (BFA Acting) and at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (London). When not acting, Matt plays other roles as a photographer and visual artist. He gives his love and thanks to his family and to the patients of the UBC Hospital Psychiatric Unit.

This production is supported by a generous contribution from
Dr. Stephen Tax

Matt Reznek's appearance is supported by a generous contribution from
Stephen & Michelle Brown

Acting Company



Luc Roderique and Rebecca Auerbach



Colleen Wheeler

Rehearsal Photography by Peter Pokorny

Luc Roderique

Dan

Luc is both excited and humbled to be telling such a poignant, Canadian story with such talented artists in his Belfry debut. Luc was born and raised in Ottawa, Ontario, but now calls Vancouver his home. Recent theatre: *In the Heights*, *She Stoops to Conquer* (Arts Club Theatre), *Sleeping Beauty* (Globe Theatre), *Three Sisters* (Only Child), *Measure for Measure*, *Elizabeth Rex*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It* (Bard on the Beach), *Ash Rizin* (Alberta Theatre Projects/Green Thumb Theatre). Film/Television credits include: *Motive*, *The Flash*, *Seventh Son*, *The 100*, *iZombie*, *Godzilla*, *Supernatural*, *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*. Upcoming: *Düst* (Newworld Theatre) at The Cultch, Bagheera/Shere Khan in *The Jungle Book* (Carousel), Othello in *Othello* (Bard on the Beach). Luc is a Jessie Award winner and a graduate of Studio 58.

Colleen Wheeler

Sharon

For the Belfry: *Proof* and *My Chernobyl*. Other Theatre: *King Lear*, *Elizabeth Rex*, *Macbeth*, *Henry V*, *The Taming of the Shrew* (Bard on the Beach), *Since You Left Us* (Presentation House), *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Boeing Boeing*, *The Penelopiad* (Arts Club Theatre), *The Leisure Society*, *Trout Stanley*, *Lifesavers*, *A Beautiful View* (Ruby Slippers Theatre), *Toronto, Mississippi* (Vancouver Playhouse). Upcoming: *Good People* (Arts Club Theatre). Film and Television: *Motive*, *Fringe*, *Bridal Wave*, *The Tall Man*. Other: Six-time Jessie Award Winner. Graduate of the University of Alberta.



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Joan MacLeod



Roy Surette



Pam Johnson

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Joan MacLeod

Playwright

Joan's plays include *Jewel, Toronto, Mississippi, Amigo's Blue Guitar, The Hope Slide, Little Sister, 2000, The Shape of a Girl, Homechild* and *Another Home Invasion*. Her work has been translated into eight languages. She is the recipient of numerous awards including two Chalmers Play Awards, the Governor General's Award and the Siminovitch Prize. She is currently working on a new solo show. Since 2004 she has worked at the University of Victoria in the Department of Writing and this past November she was inducted as a Fellow into the Royal Society of Canada. *The Valley* premiered at Alberta Theatre Projects in 2013. Joan is thrilled to have a play on at the Belfry once again.

Roy Surette

Director

Roy has been Artistic and Executive Director for Centaur Theatre in Montreal since September, 2007. There he has continued to demonstrate his passion for Canadian plays and has embraced Montreal's eclectic Anglo theatre community. Roy was Artistic Director for Touchstone Theatre in Vancouver from 1984 to 1997, then became Artistic Director of the Belfry Theatre, where, during his ten-year tenure he directed over twenty-five plays, including Joan MacLeod's beautiful *Homechild*. A Vancouver native and Studio 58 grad, Roy has directed for many companies across Canada and his work has been seen in Australia, Scotland and Hong Kong. He's SO HAPPY to be back at the beloved Belfry, working with a lot of amazing people.

Pam Johnson

Set Designer

Pam is thrilled to be back at the Belfry to celebrate 40 years of glorious theatre. Pam is proud of the many shows she has designed for the Belfry since 1986: *Proud, Homechild, Mom's the Word: Unhinged, Rough Magic, The Syringa Tree, A Guide to Mourning, The Number 14, Three Tall Women, The Faraway Nearby, Homework and Curtains*. She also directed the show *The Sum of Us*. Pam is a seven-time Jessie Richardson Award winner, a Monday Magazine Award winner, and in 2012 she received a Career Achievement Award from the Jessie's. For the past 27 years Pam has been an instructor at Studio 58, Langara College.

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Erin Macklem



Itai Erdal



Brian Linds

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Erin Macklem

Costume Designer

Erin Macklem is a Métis designer and playwright, and the Artistic Associate & Outreach Coordinator for the Belfry Theatre. She holds a BFA in Theatre from the University of Victoria. Favourite past designs for the Belfry: *The Girl in the Goldfish Bowl*, *Urinetown*, *The Turn of the Screw*, and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. Her designs have been seen across Canada and in New York. She was part of the design team representing Canada in the international competition of scenography – The Prague Quadrennial 2015. *This Little Light*, her musical written with composer Brad L'Écuyer, will debut in 2016.

Itai Erdal

Lighting Designer

Itai is delighted to be back at the Belfry where he designed the lights for *Where The Blood Mixes*, *Billy Bishop Goes To War* and *The Life Inside*. Last season, he performed his one-man show *How to Disappear Completely* (The Chop Theatre) here at the Belfry. HTDC has toured to 19 cities, and continues to tour nationally and internationally. Itai has designed over 200 shows for (almost) every major theatre company in Canada, and in 8 other countries. He is the recipient of a Jack King Award, Dora Mavor Moore Award, Dublin Fringe Design Award, Victoria's Critics' Choice Spotlight Award, Guthrie Award and three Jessie Richardson Awards. Itai is the artistic director of The Elbow Theatre in Vancouver.
www.itaierdal.com,
www.theelbow.ca

Brian Linds

Sound Designer

For the Belfry: *The Best Brothers*, *Goodnight Desdemona*, *Good Morning Juliet*, *God of Carnage*, *The Trespassers*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *The Girl in the Goldfish Bowl*. His short sound plays, *Iso Tank*, *Bar Mitzvah (Taped)* and *Lucid Moment* were presented at the Belfry's SPARK Festival. Other sound designs include: *Sweeney Todd* (Vancouver Opera), *Kosmic Mambo* (Studio 58), *The Skin of Our Teeth*, *Amadeus* (Phoenix), *Since You Left Us* (Presentation House), *Of Mice and Men* (Blue Bridge), *August: Osage County*, *The History Boys* (Arts Club Theatre), *True West* (Playhouse), *No Exit* (Electric Theatre), and *Broken Sex Doll* (Virtual Stage).



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Creative Team



Jessica McLeod

Caryn Fehr

Rehearsal Photography by Peter Pokorny

Caryn Fehr

Stage Manager

Caryn is very happy to be back at the wonderful Belfry Theatre with *The Valley*. Past Belfry productions are *Best Brothers*, *How To Disappear Completely* and *Proud*. Other recent productions include *Peter and The Starcatcher*, *The Waiting Room*, *Les Miserables* and *In The Heights*, all with the Arts Club Theatre Company. She has toured throughout Canada and to Ireland, and has worked with many Vancouver theatre companies, including the Vancouver Playhouse, the New Play Centre, Carousel Theatre, Touchstone Theatre and Axis Theatre. Caryn is proud to have received the Mary Phillips Prize, a Jessie Award for Behind the Scenes Achievement.

Jessica McLeod

Assistant Stage Manager

Jessica is thrilled to be back in Victoria working at the Belfry! Recent credits include *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, *The Rez Sisters* (Belfry Theatre), *Emerging Voices* (Theatre One), *Confessions of a Paperboy*, *Waiting for the Parade*, *Munschercise*, and *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story* (Chemainus Theatre Festival). Jessica is a graduate of the University of Victoria and has worked with theatre companies from BC to Saskatchewan. Born and raised on Vancouver Island, she spends her time outside the theatre cooking, travelling, and making gin in the Cowichan Valley.

**All the best in 2016
to our Belfry Theatre friends.**



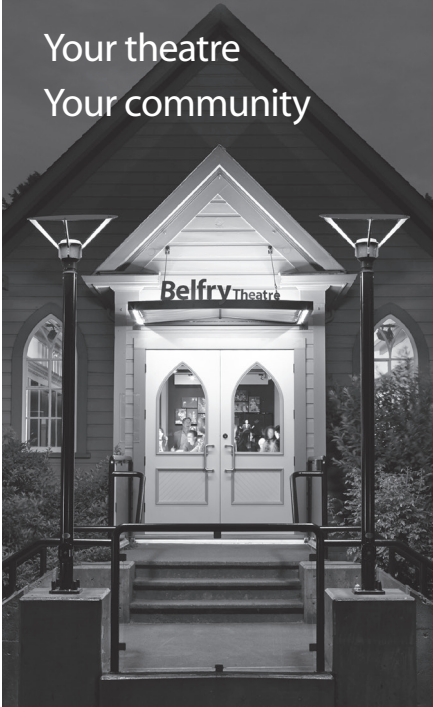
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Creative Team



Nicholas Harrison



Sarah Jane Pelzer

Nicholas Harrison

Fight Director

Nicholas Harrison was trained as an actor in London, England and the London Academy of Performing Arts, has a Masters in Directing from the University of Victoria and a PhD from the University of British Columbia. He has written a book about the origins of stage combat in Canada and continues to choreograph violence for film, television and theatre all over the world. He is currently developing a play about child abuse based on the true story of his time at a private school in British Columbia and how he credits *Star Wars* with saving his life. At present he teaches theatre and film at Capilano University, stages violence for Bard on the Beach and continues to act in film and television.

Sarah Jane Pelzer

Director Trainee

Sarah Jane is a Victoria-based actor and director working in theatre and opera. A veteran of Atomic Vaudeville, she spent 2009-2013 playing Jane Doe in their Dora award winning production *Ride the Cyclone*. As a founding member of Snafu Dance Theatre she has co-devised, sound designed and performed in several physical theatre shows including (most recently) *SomethingVille*: a large-scale puppet show for children. Recently, she completed a season long residency with Pacific Opera Victoria as well as a mentorship with Canadian Opera Director Brent Krysa. Currently she's directing a production of Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* for the Opera Studio at the Victoria Conservatory.

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Memories Made Real

For Mary Desprez, great teamwork has always been the secret of the Belfry's success

by John Threlfall

Ever wonder why the Belfry doesn't have a stage door? Turns out it's not just a design fluke, but actually part of a conscious plan to build community. "I didn't want the artists to arrive and not say hello to the Box Office clerks and Front of House Manager," explains former General Manager Mary Desprez. "These people are part of your team, working on your behalf, so why would you come and go out the back and never see them?"



That kind of inclusive thinking was a large part of Desprez's vision during her 1987 to 2010 tenure. "Every single role is important in theatre," she emphasizes. "It's the most collaborative art form, and it's the collaboration I've always loved so much. In theatre, it's such a joy when you have a team working at that incredible level."

Desprez saw her first Belfry show in 1980 (*On Golden Pond*), then volunteered as a Front of House Manager, worked as Box Office Manager, and was eventually hired as General Manager at a particularly dicey time... at the tender age of 26. "I had no idea how bad the situation was: we had a \$250,000 budget with a \$270,000 deficit. In my youthful exuberance, I just thought, 'We'll roll up our sleeves and get to work.' "

Which, of course, is exactly what happened. In addition to buying the building and undergoing nearly a decade of renovations, Desprez oversaw a budgetary increase from \$250,000 to \$2.5 million, the elimination of the company's deficit, a tripling of the programming and the retirement of the building mortgage. "It would be great if I said we had a plan, but it was always just taking the next logical step...we were constantly building and evolving over time."

Desprez says it's the Belfry's "amazing" staff who deserve more applause than they'll ever get. "The team are truly phenomenal, I can't stress that enough. There have been, and will continue to be, brilliant artists on that stage – but nothing would happen without that team. You can have all kinds of grandiose ideas, but if you don't have a tenacious, remarkable, loyal team, none of it will come to fruition."

Clearly proud of the legacy she helped build, Desprez has a unique view of the Belfry itself. "Working in theatre means building memories – you have them forever, but they're not tangible. So by putting energy into saving that heritage building and creating a beautiful, safe place for the audience and the artists, we made something tangible, something that's more than a memory."

Bravo!

2015-2016 40th Anniversary Season
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