



**Belfry
Theatre**

VENUS IN FUR

by **David Ives**

November 11–December 14, 2014



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The Belfry Theatre presents

Venus In Fur

By David Ives

Starring

Vincent Gale Thomas
Celine Stubel Vanda

Director **Michael Shamata**
Set and Costume Designer **Christina Poddubiuk**
Lighting Designer **Ereca Hassell**
Composer and Sound Designer **Tobin Stokes**
Stage Manager **Jennifer Swan**
Apprentice Stage Manager **Sandra Drag**
Assistant Director **Chari Arespacochaga**

Originally produced by Classic Stage Company,
(Brian Kulick, Artistic Director, Jessica R. Jene, Executive Director).

Originally produced on Broadway by the Manhattan Theatre Club (Lynne Meadow, Artistic Director; Barry Grove, Executive Producer) by special arrangement with Jon B. Platt, Scott Landis, and Classic Stage Company, at the Samuel J. Friedman Theatre on October 13, 2011.

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

Venus in Fur is generously sponsored by



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The Belfry Theatre is a registered Canadian charity, 11921 5549 RR0001.

The Belfry Theatre is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres and engages under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement professional artists who are members of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association.

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Please enjoy the performance.

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Design and Production
Victoria Arts Marketing
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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 / 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.

Perfume & Cologne

Please refrain from using perfume and cologne when you come to the theatre. Some of our patrons are highly allergic to scents.

Electronic Cigarettes

Please refrain from using electronic cigarettes in the theatre, to avoid distraction for other patrons and the Artists on stage.

Thank you for your consideration.
Enjoy the performance.

Artistic Director's Notes

Welcome back to the Belfry! I hope you were one of the many thousands of happy patrons who were moved to laughter and tears by our beautiful production of Tomson Highway's *The Rez Sisters*.

We move now from that celebration of powerful female energy to a male-female power struggle. The most produced play in North America last season, and nominated for the 2012 Tony Award for Best Play, *Venus in Fur* stirs up a delicious tension between the sexes.

It is my great pleasure to welcome back to the Belfry two of my very favourite actors: Celine Stubel and Vincent Gale. They played a married couple in Glynis Leyshon's production of *God of Carnage*, and Celine has also been seen here in *And Slowly Beauty*, *A Christmas Carol* and – unforgettably – Glynis's production of *Proud* last season. Vince starred here in *Stones in His Pockets*, *The Cryptogram* and as Henry in Tom Stoppard's brilliant play *The Real Thing*. Working with the two of them on this smart and funny play has been nothing short of a treat.

David Ives has created a hilarious and unpredictable roller coaster ride – I hope you enjoy every twist and turn!

With best wishes –



Michael

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Director's Notes

David Ives' *Venus in Fur* is a deceptive play; it is not what it first appears to be, and that is a conscious part of the playwright's modus operandi.

In 1870, Austrian author Leopold von Sacher-Masoch published a novel entitled *Venus in Furs*. Based largely on Sacher-Masoch's own life, the novel deals with female dominance and sadomasochism (in fact, the term "masochism" comes from Sacher-Masoch's name).

In David Ives' play *Venus in Fur*, the male character, Thomas, has written an adaptation of the Sacher-Masoch novel, and he has just spent eight hours auditioning young actresses for the female lead. David Ives' play *Venus in Fur*, however, is not an adaptation of the Sacher-Masoch novel.

Ives' play is a taut and funny examination of the power imbalance between men and women. Ever since we stopped being a matriarchal society and became a patriarchal society, woman's role has been diminished and there has been a systemic inequality between the sexes. That is what interests David Ives, and that inequality is the engine that drives his play.



Celine Stubel and Vincent Gale in rehearsal.

Michael Shamata

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A Note from the Executive Director

"Writing a play, you start with less, so more is demanded of you. It's as if you have to not only write a symphony, but invent the instruments as well." David Ives

Some of you may or may not agree with Mr. Ives' observation, but the simple fact is that creating any piece of theatre requires a tremendous amount of invention, experimentation and exploration; in other words, time, manpower and expense. The process to create outstanding theatre includes artists and craftspeople who have spent, and continue to spend, years developing their craft. And not just years are spent, but real hard cash as well in training, travel and research in order to be among the select few who can make a living creating and portraying other realities for our entertainment and enlightenment. The production of great theatre also requires hundreds of hours of labour in the design, construction, painting and the final decorations of the environment and clothing created for the artists and for you, our valued audience. Even before all that, plays are created by writers and developed by theatres; a process that can involve hundreds of hours of writing, more hours of play readings and workshops and multiple professionals to assist in the crafting of that final work you privilege all of us in attending.

The Belfry is blessed with strong support from all of our funders and donors, and endeavours always to use the trust demonstrated by those contributions by investing what is required to bring you the very best in contemporary theatre, with the very best artists from Victoria, BC and Canada.

Donations directly support the costs associated with our productions. They help to keep our visiting artists comfortable and a part of our community during the eight or more weeks they are part of the Belfry family. Donations support the design and construction of our sets, costumes, props, lighting and music and sound for each of our productions. Contributions by funders and patrons also support our education programs, the on-going development of new plays, and our community outreach initiatives. So where do your contributions go? It all goes to making the Belfry an outstanding national treasure of a company in one of the prettiest theatres in the country. It goes to improving the cultural life of your city and region. And for all that we remain grateful to each of the many contributors who make all this possible.

Enjoy this remarkable play, designed by exceptional talents, created by extraordinary craftspeople with these outstanding actors, because you have made it possible.

Ivan



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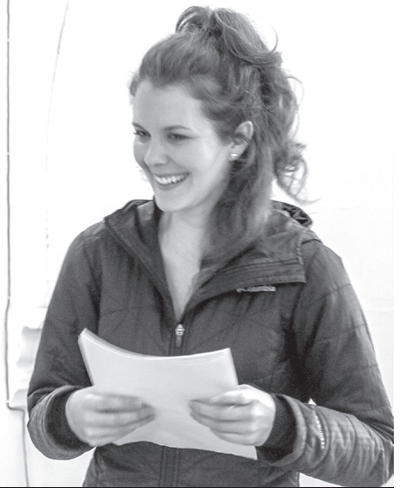
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Acting Company



Vincent Gale



Celine Stubel

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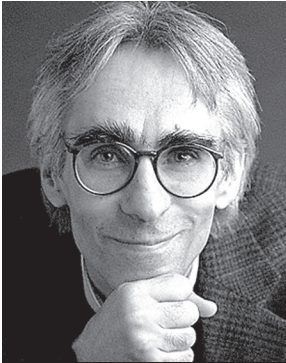
Vincent Gale

Vincent Gale previously appeared at the Belfry in *Let Me Call You Sweetheart*, *God of Carnage*, *Stones in His Pockets*, *The Real Thing* and *The Cryptogram*. Selected theatre credits include *Dangerous Corner*, *True West*, *Vincent in Brixton*, *The Caretaker*, *Proof*, *The Relapse* (Vancouver Playhouse), *Mary Poppins* (Citadel Theatre), *Charley's Aunt*, *Tons of Money* (Theatre Calgary), *A Line in the Sand* (Tarragon Theatre), *The Glass Menagerie* (Gateway Theatre), *Waiting for Godot*, *Dancing at Lughnasa*, *7 Stories*, *Glengarry Glen Ross* (Arts Club Theatre), *John and Beatrice* (Persephone) and *The Real Thing* (Manitoba Theatre Centre). Selected film & television credits include *Bates Motel*, *Motive*, *DaVinci's Inquest*, *Queer as Folk*, *Battlestar Gallactica*, *Monk*, *Supernatural*, *Hector and the Search for Happiness*, *The Final Cut*, *Firewall*, *Bye Bye Blues*, *Fathers and Sons*, and Bruce Sweeney's *Dirty*, *Last Wedding* and *American Venus*. Vince has received four Jessie Richardson Theatre Awards, a Gemini nomination for the mini-series *Major Crime*, an AMPIA for Best Actor, and the Genie in 2002 for his performance in *Last Wedding*.

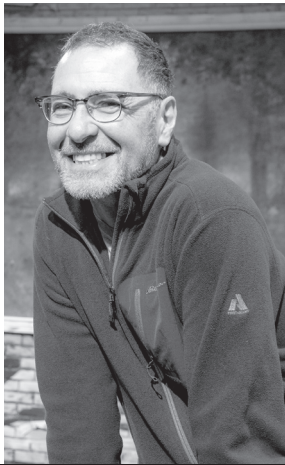
Celine Stubel

Celine Stubel has previously appeared at the Belfry in *Proud*, *A Christmas Carol*, *God of Carnage*, *And Slowly Beauty* (NAC co-pro), *Unless*, *Garage Sale*, and *My Chernobyl*, (Jessie Richardson Award). Selected theatre credits include: *The Great Gatsby* (Theatre Calgary), *Oliver* (NAC), *Fire*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre), *The Graduate*, *The Constant Wife* (Arts Club Theatre), Electric Company's *Studies In Motion* (Citadel and Canadian Stage), *Tyland* (ATP); *Ride The Cyclone*, *Legoland*, *The Qualities of Zero* (Atomic Vaudeville), *Richard II*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, (Bard on The Beach), *Unity (1918)* and *My Three Sisters* (Theatre SKAM). Film and TV: *Motive*, *Girlfriend's Guide to Divorce*, *Arrow*, *Eadweard*. Based in Victoria, Celine makes her living across the country and is always thrilled to return home to the beautiful Belfry.

Creative Team



David Ives



Michael Shamata



Christina Poddubiuk

Rehearsal Photography by Peter Pokorny

David Ives

Playwright

David Ives is perhaps best known for his evening of one-act plays, *All in the Timing* (he has been included in the “Best Short Plays” series seven times), and for his drama *Venus in Fur*, which was nominated for a Tony Award for Best Play. His plays include *New Jerusalem: The Interrogation of Baruch de Spinoza*; *The School for Lies* (adapted from Molière’s *The Misanthrope*); *The Liar* (adapted from Corneille); *Time Flies*; and *Is He Dead?* (adapted from Mark Twain). He has also translated Feydeau’s *A Flea in Her Ear* and Yasmina Reza’s *A Spanish Play*. A former Guggenheim Fellow in playwriting and a graduate of The Yale School of Drama, he lives in New York City.

Michael Shamata

Director

Michael is Artistic Director of the Belfry Theatre, and was previously Artistic Director of both the Grand Theatre in London, Ontario (1995-1999) and Theatre New Brunswick (1989-1995). An award-winning director, his recent credits include *Equivocation*, *Red* and *The Year of Magical Thinking* (Belfry), *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Shakespeare in the Park, Calgary), *Great Expectations* and six years of *A Christmas Carol* (Soulpepper, Toronto). Michael has directed at most of the major theatres across the country, including the Stratford Festival and Canadian Stage. His work has been seen in every province, and has won awards for Outstanding Production in Toronto (*A Little Night Music*), Vancouver (*The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* and *Fiddler on the Roof*), Calgary (*Mary Poppins*) and Ottawa (*And Slowly Beauty and Kilt*).

Christina Poddubiuk

Set and Costume Designer

Returning to the Belfry, having designed last season’s Canadian premiere of *A Tender Thing*, Christina’s recent credits include *Don Quichotte* (Canadian Opera Company). Other Theatres: *Romeo and Juliet* (Denver Centre Theatre Company), *Faith Healer*, *Come Back Little Sheba*, *On the Rocks*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, *Major Barbara*, *The Circle*, *The Heiress*, *Ah Wilderness*, *Widowers’ Houses*, *Picnic*, *Heartbreak House*, *Lady Windermere’s Fan* (Shaw Festival); *Phèdre* (American Conservatory Theater); *All’s Well That Ends Well*, *Hamlet* (Stratford Festival); *You Can’t Take It With You*, *The Fantasticks*, *Travesties*, *Mary Stuart*, *King Lear* (Soulpepper Theatre); *Romeo and Juliet* (National Arts Centre); *Othello*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (Chicago Shakespeare); *Tosca*, *Capriccio* (Pacific Opera Victoria). Upcoming: *Lucia de Lammermoor* (POV), *Pygmalion* (Shaw Festival).



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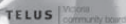
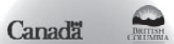
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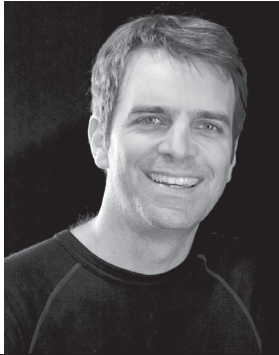
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Creative Team



Ereca Hassell



Tobin Stokes



Chari Arespacochaga

Ereca Hassell

Lighting Designer

Ereca has worked as a lighting designer with theatre companies across Canada. For the Belfry Theatre, Ereca has designed *Let Me Call You Sweetheart*, *Anything that Moves*, *Glorious!*, *Unless, I Love You*, *You're Perfect, Now Change*. Other selected design credits include *The December Man* (Prairie Theatre Exchange/Green Thumb Theatre/Citadel Theatre), *Albertine in Five Times* (Shaw Festival), *Semele* (Pacific Opera Victoria), *Guys & Dolls* (MTC/Citadel Theatre/Theatre Calgary), *Written on Water* (Canadian Stage/NAC), *Quiet in the Land* (Stratford Festival), *Copenhagen* (Theatre Calgary), *His Majesty* (Shaw Festival). Ereca is the recipient of a Dora Mavor Moore Award.

Tobin Stokes

Composer and Sound Designer

Tobin is thrilled to be back at the Belfry, where last season he designed sound and music for *Proud and Equivocation*. Since the late 1980s, Tobin has been at the Belfry as a performer, arranger, Musical Director, composer, and sound designer for countless productions. Musical projects at the Belfry have featured the music of Leonard Cohen, Patsy Cline, and Harry Chapin, and his own opera, *The Vinedressers*. This fall, Tobin is premiering his 3rd symphony with the Victoria Symphony, and scoring a new feature-length documentary about elephants in Thailand, narrated by William Shatner.

Rehearsal Photography by Peter Pokorny

Chari Arespacochaga

Assistant Director

Chari Arespacochaga is a director presently finishing her MFA in Directing at the University of Victoria. Her theatre directing credits include *Honk*, *Footloose The Musical*, *High School Musical*, *Doubt*, *Altar Boyz*, *Spring Awakening The Musical*, *Legally Blonde*, Disney's *Aida*, Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, *Avenue Q* (Manila and Singapore), Disney's *Aladdin*, *The Full Monty*, Disney's *Tarzan* and *Rock Of Ages*. She created the musical staging for *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Manila and Singapore), *Next To Normal*, *A Little Night Music* (Manila and Singapore). She was Associate Director for Broadway Asia's Asian tour of *Cinderella*. Chari has just finished directing observerships with, and participated in developmental play readings for, theater companies in New York. She is one of the directors for the New York based Pop Up Theatrics' *Long Distance Affair*, a series of short plays conceived, designed and staged for a series of Skype performances in Bucharest. She will soon be directing *Amadeus* for the Phoenix Theatre.



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Creative Team



Sandra Drag

Jennifer Swan

Rehearsal Photography by Peter Pokorny

Jennifer Swan

Stage Manager

Born and raised in Victoria, Jen is happy to once again be island based and back at the Belfry. This is her tenth season (over fifteen years) working at the Belfry, and other favourite Canadian theatres include: Theatre SKAM, Electric Company Theatre, Vancouver Playhouse, Canadian Stage, Caravan Farm Theatre, and Theatre Calgary. Coming up, Jen returns to Calgary to stage manage the premiere of *The Last Voyage of Donald Crowhurst* at Alberta Theatre Projects. She also works as Company Manager for Electric Company Theatre in Vancouver.

Sandra Drag

Apprentice Stage Manager

A recent graduate of the University of Victoria's Theatre Production and Management program, Sandra is pleased to be back at the Belfry. Select credits include: *Home Is A Beautiful Word* (Belfry Theatre), *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* (Phoenix Theatre), *Kitt & Jane* (Phoenix Theatre), and *Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog* (Broadway West). Sandra is also the Assistant Festival Director for the Calgary Fringe Festival.

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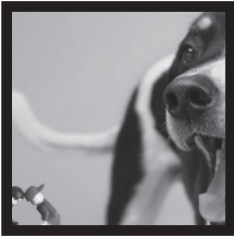
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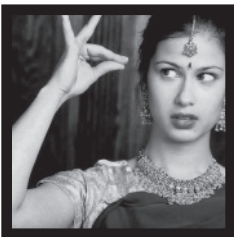
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**BELFRY THEATRE
HOLIDAY APPEAL**

At this special time of the year,
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Belfry Theatre.

Thank you!

**To make a tax-deductible contribution: complete and return
the enclosed card, or call the Box Office at 250-385-6815
or visit belfry.bc.ca/donate**

The Belfry Theatre is a registered charity: registration number #11921 5549 RR0001

Bravo!

2014-2015 Fundraising Campaign
The following individuals have
invested generously to raise funds
in support of ongoing Belfry Theatre
operations:

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Our thanks to the 66 Believers
(\$75 - \$149)
and 87 Friends (up to \$74).

As of October 27, 2014

** New Donor.

* Donor moved up a category since
last show.

+ In support of new play
development initiatives.
++ Through the Victoria
Foundation.

Bravo!

The Belfry Theatre gratefully acknowledges the financial support of The Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Province of British Columbia through the British Columbia Arts Council and the Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch, the Capital Regional District Arts Development Office and the City of Victoria.



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JOE COFFEY & NATHAN BIRCH
December 2 - 20, 2014

Detail: Joe Coffey, M. Stewart, oc, 36x36"



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