

2023

EXPRESSIONS THEATRE FESTIVAL

EXPRESSIONS FESTIVAL
PRESENTED BY

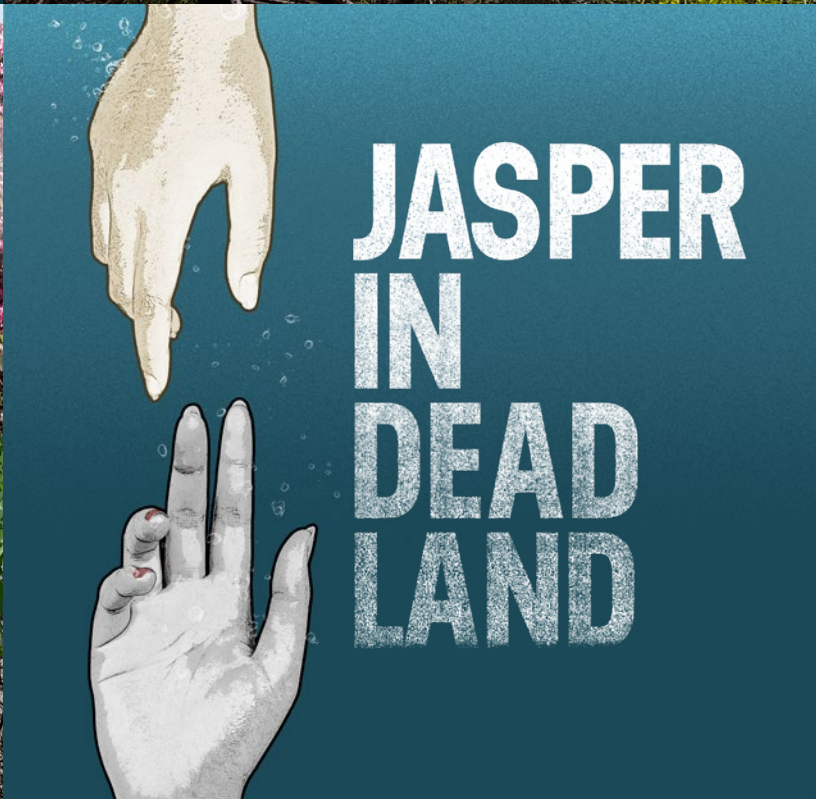
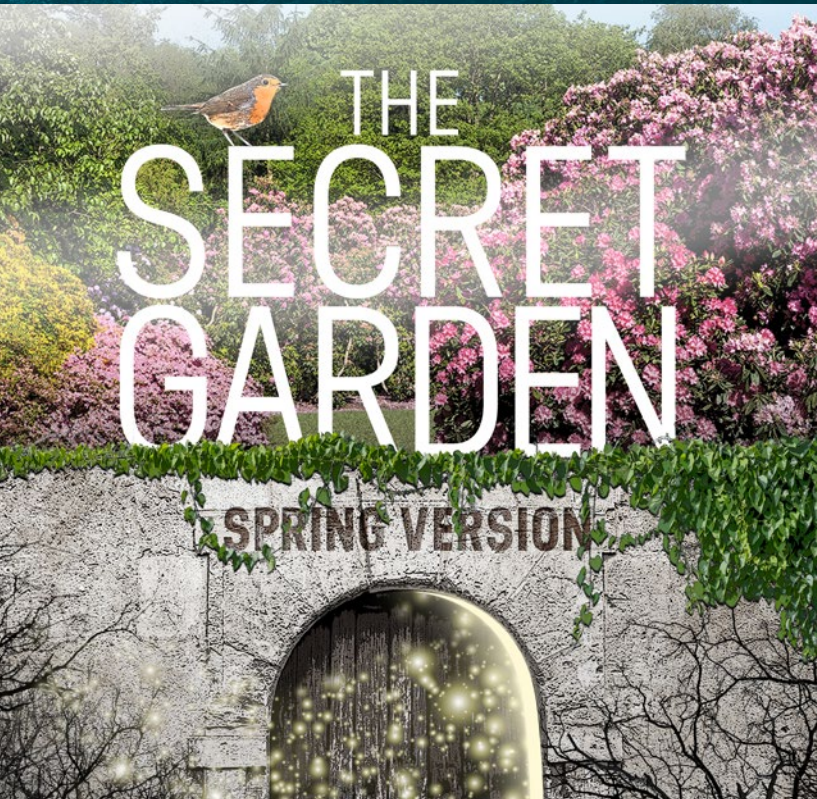


TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Welcome Notes](#)

[The Boxcar Children](#)

[Hummingbird](#)

[Jasper in Deadland](#)

[The Secret Garden: Spring Version](#)



The best way
to support a
community is to
be a part of it.

At the heart of every community, you'll find organizations fueled by committed people who are passionate about building a better future for us all. We are inspired by our friends at **Arts Umbrella** and their continuous efforts toward a better world where all young lives are inspired to pursue a lifelong journey towards self-expression, compassion, and humanity through the arts.

rbc.com/community



A NOTE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, THEATRE, MUSIC & FILM

"Each actor carries with in them, deeply rooted, a desire for transformation." - Michael Chekhov, *On Theatre and The Art of Acting*, 1955

Welcome to Expressions. It's always such a dynamic time, with the school year winding down, exams for students, summer plans under way, and the palpable efforts of young people to be and become something more than either you or they have imagined them to be. We are very grateful to have supported these young actors' growth this year, and we thank you for joining us.

This year's shows all share the ambition present in the hearts of these young performers. The Secret Garden is a transformation of a young girl and her family through grief, bringing joy and new life. Hummingbird explores the effect of a massive project, threatening an entire ecosystem, and the immutable power of one small bird to force a change. The Boxcar Children shares the story of young siblings, orphaned and alone, and how that brings them closer together as a team, respecting and supporting each other,

and becoming more themselves in the process. Jasper in Deadland, with its twists and turns through the underworld, explores the power of love to reach beyond the veil and find... something else.

From our mainstage troupe shows, to our film offerings, to our intensives, each of these presentations reflect the core of what we do every day in the theatre program at Arts Umbrella: offer every young person chance-after-chance to build themselves up. To use the tools of acting to shore up the person they already are. And in doing so, to transform. To evolve.

As the buds and blossoms have turned over to berries and bushels, I thank you for sharing in this festival of transformation with us.

Enjoy the show!

Andy Toth

Interim Artistic Director, Robert M. Ledingham School of Theatre, Music & Film

ABOUT THE PROGRAMS

Arts Umbrella's Intensive and Theatre Troupe Programs are yearlong programs intended for students ready for a larger commitment to the art and craft of theatrical and musical performance. From September to June, students work with industry professionals to develop their on and off-stage skills with an emphasis on teamwork, discipline, process, creative input, and cooperation. From playwriting to stagecraft, voice to movement, musical theatre to acting for stage and screen, each year-long program is one of structure, offering young aspiring artists the space to sharpen their skills in creative expression and individual artistry.

The Robert M. Ledingham School of Theatre, Music & Film presents theatre festivals throughout the year; as well as school tours and cabaret nights to give students in each program the opportunity to share their work. We are proud to say that many of our alumni are in post-secondary theatre programs or have gone on to work as professional actors around the world.



2023/24 SCHOOL YEAR AT ARTS UMBRELLA

Registration opens June 1, 2023

Fall 2023, Winter 2024, and Spring 2024 programs open for registration.

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Credit: Albert Normandin

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TOGETHER WE GROW

Performances like Expressions Festival are not possible without the support of Arts Umbrella donors.

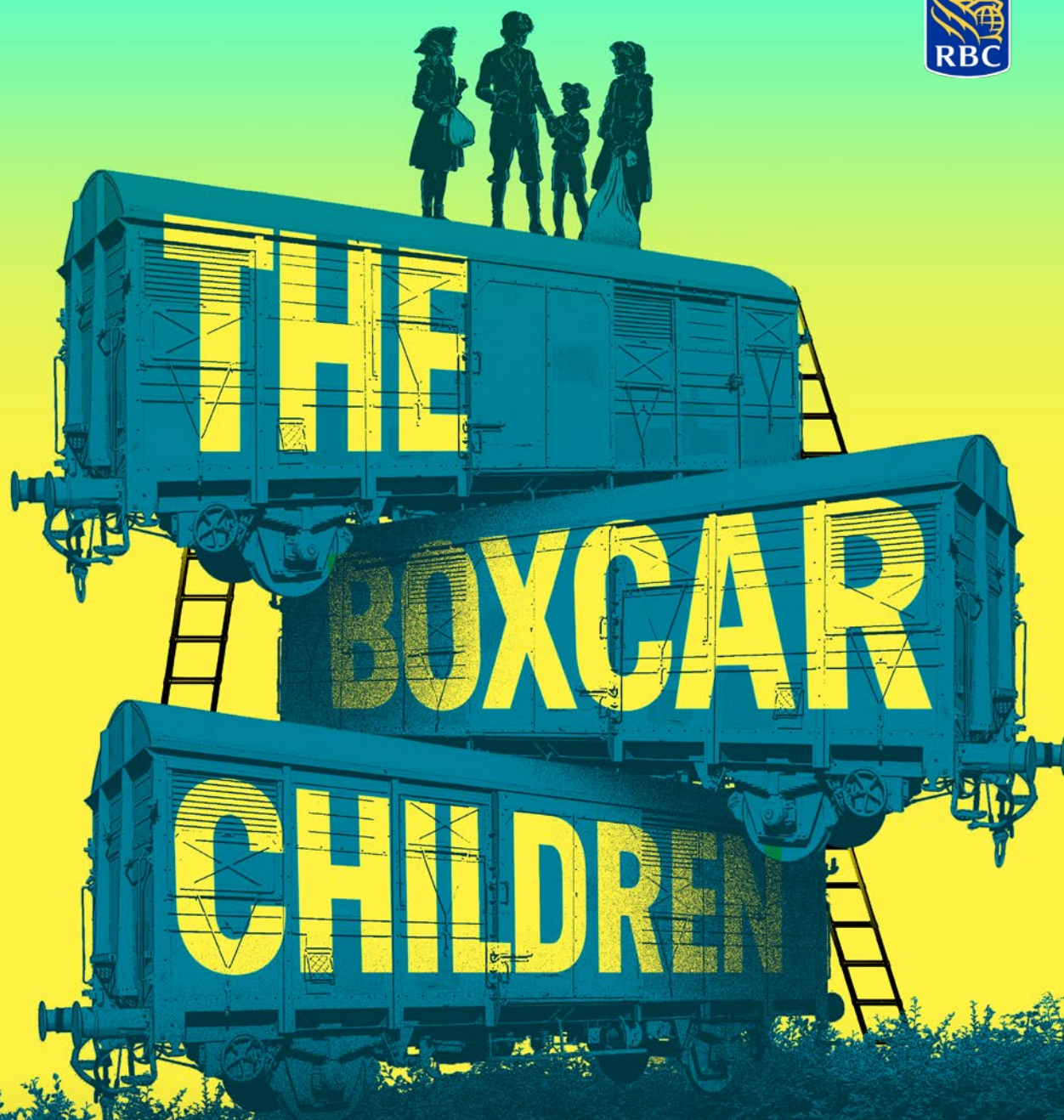
This Spring, consider joining our family of monthly donors who are ensuring that the next generation of artists can flourish.

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ARTS UMBRELLA

ARTS UMBRELLA PRESENTS

EXPRESSIONS FESTIVAL
PRESENTED BY



ADAPTED BY
JON JORY

FROM THE BOOK BY
GERTRUDE CHANDLER WARNER

The Boxcar Children is produced by special arrangement with Stage Partners. (www.yourstagepartners.com)



TICKETS | General \$20
Student \$15
artsumbrella.com/expressions

**JACK AND DARLENE
POOLE THEATRE**
AT ARTS UMBRELLA

May 12 @ 7:30pm May 14 @ 7:30pm
May 13 @ 3pm May 19 @ 7:30pm

Junior Theatre Troupe presents:

THE BOXCAR CHILDREN

Written by Jon Jory

Based on the book by Gertrude Chandler Warner

May 12th, 14th, and 20th at 7:30pm

May 13 at 3pm

This classic story tells the tale of four orphans, Henry, Jess, Violet and Benny as they hide from their "cruel" grandfather and discover their independence while living in an abandoned and overgrown Boxcar. Set in the 1920s, you will see the resilience, intuitiveness and love of these siblings as they navigate learning, work and creating a safe community. With the help of many along the way, will the children create a new home or be caught by their mystery guardian-to-be?

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Unsurprisingly, the thing I love about theatre the most is how theatrical it can be. In a society that is inundated with realistic TV and film media, we are slowly losing the appreciation for a playful and heightened piece of art. When searching for the right play for this amazing group of actors, I knew I wanted to find a script that would challenge their understanding of what performance and theatre can be. I stumbled upon Jon Jory's adaptation of *The Boxcar Children* and discovered a text that would allow for us to find truthful and simple performances while being challenged with a theatrical frame that the students would be unfamiliar with. In the script, it says that there are no props or set pieces, everything is conjured up by the creativity of the Stage Manager and the other characters. A loaf of bread appears out of thin air and an invisible car speeds down the road. To take this a step further, I wanted to pay homage to the amazing art form of live foley – creating sound effects in real time onstage – which is a dying craft. It has been a steep and exciting learning curve for the students to discover how foley supports and strengthens the performances and vice versa. By stripping away the set and pre-recorded sound, it has allowed for the focus to be purely on the storytelling and the students are truly rising to the challenge. We hope you enjoy the show!

Seamus Fera

Director, Junior Theatre Troupe

ARTISTIC TEAM AND CREW

Director	Seamus Fera
Assistant Director	Laura Reynolds
Set & Props Design	Luis Bellassai
Costume Design	Joelle Wyminga
Lighting Design	Brad Trenaman
Sound Design	Shona Struthers
Stage Management	Laura Reynolds
Theatre Manager	Alan Brodie
Lighting Operator	Sarah Fett
Production Management	Andy Toth and Erika Babins

CAST

Stage Manager & others	Alina Penteado
Violet	Audrey Ross
Mr. McAllister & others	Beo Ripley
Dr. McAllister & others	Chloe Ren
JH Cordyce & others	Jesse MacPherson
Henry	Quinlan James Floyd
Jess	Zara Bacic
Benny	Zayne Betel-Jadavji

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Laura Reynolds, Jessi Simmons, Dominc Duff, Devan Francis, Bard on the Beach, Presentation House Theatre, Camila Giron Brown, Erika Babins, Andy Toth, Alex Eaton, Student Services, Paul Larocque and all of the staff, administrative, and artistic teams at Arts Umbrella, all of the parents of the Troupe for their support of our program, and all the students and alumni for continuing to inspire us each year.

The Boxcar Children is produced by special arrangement with Stage Partners. (www.yourstagepartners.com)



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Ages 9-19

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ARTS UMBRELLA PRESENTS

EXPRESSIONS FESTIVAL
PRESENTED BY



HUMMINGBIRD

BY ELAINE ÁVILA

Hummingbird was commissioned by the Robert M. Ledingham School of Theatre, Music and Film at Arts Umbrella and performed by the Arts Umbrella Senior Theatre Troupe as part of the Eco Theatre Project.



TICKETS

General \$20
Student \$15

artsumbrella.com/expressions

**JACK AND DARLENE
POOLE THEATRE
AT ARTS UMBRELLA**

May 13 @ 7:30pm
May 14 @ 3pm

May 18 @ 7:30pm
May 20 @ 7:30pm

Senior Theatre Troupe presents:

HUMMINGBIRD

By Elaine Ávila

May 13th, 18th, and 20th at 7:30pm

May 14th at 3pm

When forced to choose a topic for a mandatory, culminating high school project, Alex sarcastically says “hummingbirds” because one is hovering outside the window. This offhand choice leads to an uncovering of hidden family histories in a mysterious journal from the 1860s, finding an essential role in a community nest finding network, opening up to a vibrant ecosystem, and learning how a hummingbird disrupted a major pipeline project.

DIRECTOR’S NOTES

In the winter of 2022, founding Artistic Director of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People, Leslee Silverman, approached me with a proposal for a theatre class exploring young people’s connection to the environment. What started as an idea for a single class grew into a community program involving over 100 students in the Lower Mainland and the Eco Theatre Project was born.

Hummingbird was inspired by the work done with the Eco Theatre Project students at Burnaby Mountain Secondary and Nootka Elementary. Early in the process, Elaine and I took a long walk through the trails of Burnaby Mountain, stopping at the watch house (Kwekwexnewtxw) built by the Tsleil-Waututh Nation just outside of the Trans Mountain property. We were inspired by the land and natural beauty of the mountain as well as the activism of the community surrounding the pipeline. The students all had differing opinions on everything that was going on in their backyard. Elaine found a story of how a hummingbird nest halted the construction of the pipeline, and, being the wonderful storyteller that she is, created a beautiful play exploring how one seemingly small thing can create the potential for so much more.

We are thrilled to present this original production of *Hummingbird* by Elaine Ávila. I know that this play will have a life beyond this production and all of us are honoured to have been a part of its beginnings.

Paul Moniz de Sá

Director, Senior Theatre Troupe

ARTISTIC TEAM AND CREW

Director	Paul Moniz de Sá
Assistant Director	Francis Dowlatabadi
Set & Props Design	Luis Bellassai
Costume Design	Joelle Wyminga
Lighting Design	Brad Trenaman
Sound Design	Shona Struthers
Stage Manager	Dayna Horn
Theatre Manager	Alan Brodie
Lighting Operator	Sarah Fett
Production Management	Andy Toth and Erika Babins

CAST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Alex	Gemma Martin
Stephano, Ensemble	Aidan Floyd
Video Game Voice, Thomas, Youtuber, Hiker, Ensemble	Whitfield Ransom-McCrum
Ranger, William, Ensemble	Sebastian Rendon
Andrea, Ensemble	Francesca Hayes
Elsie, Ensemble	Katie Evans
Constance, Ensemble	Ana Khan
Susan, Ensemble	Hannah Curror

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Donna Clark, Sara Ross, Dennis Joseph, Susanne Moniz de Sá, Kelsey Lee, Dominic Duff, Leslee Silverman, Roy Surette, Heidi Taylor, Francis Dowlatabadi, Karen Worrod, Tomoyo Yamada, Robin Temple, Drama Students at Burnaby Mountain Secondary School, Kevin Hatch, Nick Marino, Students at Nookta Elementary, Andrea Hébert and the Fund Development Team and supporters of the Eco Theatre Project, Camila Giron Brown, Andy Toth, Erika Babins, Alex Eaton, Devan Francis, Paul Larocque and all of the staff, administrative and artistic teams at Arts Umbrella, all of the parents of the Troupe for their support of our program, and all the students and alumni for continuing to inspire us each year.

Hummingbird was commissioned by the Robert M. Ledingham School of Theatre, Music and Film at Arts Umbrella and performed by the Arts Umbrella Senior Theatre Troupe as part of the Eco Theatre Project.

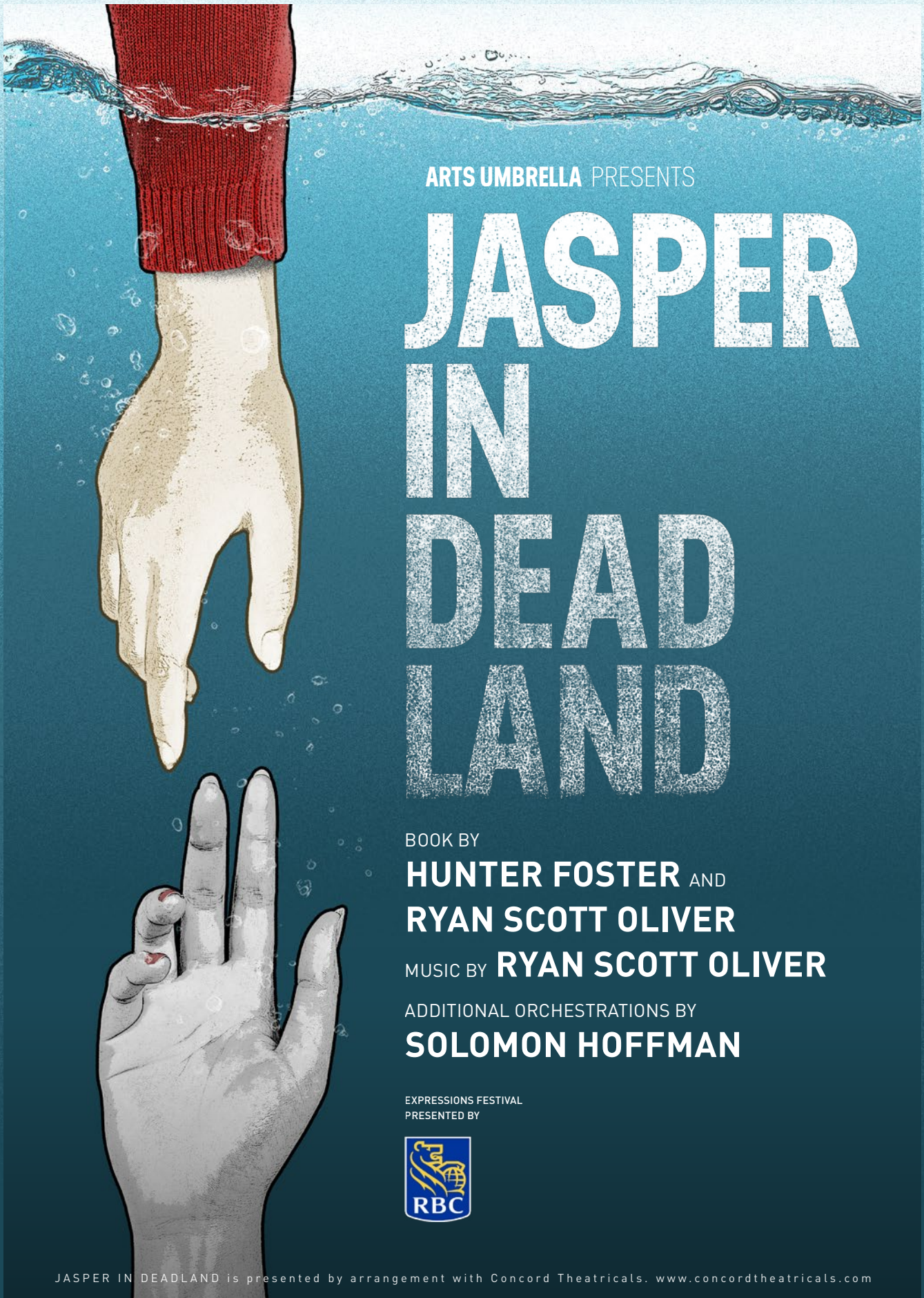


ARTS UMBRELLA

2023/24 TROUPE AUDITIONS

**Film | Musical Theatre | Theatre |
Sketch Comedy & Improv**

Auditions take place June 18 and September 10. Admission takes place on a rolling basis; auditioning early is recommended.



ARTS UMBRELLA PRESENTS

JASPER IN DEAD LAND

BOOK BY

HUNTER FOSTER AND
RYAN SCOTT OLIVER

MUSIC BY **RYAN SCOTT OLIVER**

ADDITIONAL ORCHESTRATIONS BY

SOLOMON HOFFMAN

EXPRESSIONS FESTIVAL
PRESENTED BY



JASPER IN DEADLAND is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals. www.concordtheatricals.com



TICKETS

General \$25
Student \$15

artsumbrella.com/expressions

**JACK AND DARLENE
POOLE THEATRE**
AT ARTS UMBRELLA

May 27 @ 7:30pm	June 3 @ 2pm
May 30 @ 7:30pm	June 7 @ 7:30pm
June 2 @ 7:30pm	June 10 @ 7:30pm

Musical Theatre Troupe presents:

JASPER IN DEADLAND

Book by Hunter Foster and Ryan Scott Oliver

Music and Lyrics by Ryan Scott Oliver

May 27th, 30th, June 2nd, 7th, and 10th at 7:30pm

June 3rd at 2pm

16-year-old Jasper must journey into the Afterlife to rescue her recently deceased best friend, Agnes. But in this version of the hereafter – known as “Deadland,” a hybrid of mythology, religion, and superstition – the dead forget Life... And so, too, will Jasper, if she can’t get past the seven circles of Deadland, fearsome Cerberus, heavenly Beatrix, mysterious Mr. Lethe, and ultimately herself. Can Jasper bring her best friend back, or will they join the dead forever?

Content Warning: swearing, themes of death, mentions of drug use and physical abuse.

DIRECTOR’S NOTES

The script for Jasper in Deadland first crossed my path in 2018 when I was asked to direct the show for Awkward Stage Productions. My first thought? This needs to be done with actual teenagers. My second? This would be exponentially more interesting if Jasper was a girl and it was a story of female friendship and queer love and how those lines can get very blurry. Luckily, the writers agreed with me and you’ll be seeing the story through that lens today.

It has been thrilling to explore this world with a cast of thoughtful and clever teenagers; they have brought so much nuance and depth to the process. Ever wonder about where the citizens of Deadland live or what their economic policies and governing systems are like? We have, and have answers too! But, more than building the world of Deadland together, they have built an ensemble of young artists who truly have each other’s backs onstage and off. It’s been a privilege working with all of them and watching their growth this year.

Most of you watching the show today are either teenagers or remember being one. Adolescence is the time when you grapple with your own identity; the wider world begins to open up for you and you need to figure out whether or not you fit in it. I hope, like Jasper, this journey through Deadland reminds you that everyone is worthy – of love, of acceptance, of second chances – even if it’s easy to forget that sometimes.

Erika Babins

Director, Musical Theatre Troupe

ARTISTIC TEAM AND CREW

Director	Erika Babins
Music Director	Patrick Ray
Costume, Sets, & Prop Design	Monica Emme
Lighting Design	Brad Trenaman
Sound Design	Andy Toth
Stage Management	Julia Lank
Theatre Manager	Alan Brodie
Lighting Operator	Matthew Piton
Sound Operator	Sergei Pearse
Production Management	Andy Toth and Erika Babins

CAST

Persephone & others	Iliana Apostolopoulou
Little Lu & others	Genavie Duval
Dante & others	Jade Dy
Eurydice & others	Rebecca Floresco
Cerberus & others	Reina Grosch
Beatrix & others	Reyna Hansen
Pluto & others	Elizabeth Quin Ilay
Lethe (Cast A) & others	Julia Jandera
Lethe (Cast B) & others	Liesl Jeremiah
Loki & others	Amelia Kondor
Jasper (Cast A)	Amelia Landels
Gretchen (Cast A)	Katherine Mezei
Osiris & others	Oli Neufeld
Hel & others	Nika Quezada
Gretchen (Cast B)	Taea Rattlesnake
Ammut & others	Olivia Tsoi
Jasper (Cast B)	Elli Wessel-Boyd
Sisyphus & others	Jaeger Yee
Virgil & others	Cyrus Yekani
Hathaway & others	Jeen Yoon

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Ballet BC, Pacific Theatre, Merewyn Comeau, Lucia Forward, Courtney Shields, Ryan Nuñez, Max Borowski, Julia MacLean, Rose McNeill, Natalie Backerman, Nathan Cottell, Eden Lyons, Zac Labrie, Camila Giron Brown, Andy Toth, Alex Eaton, Paul Larocque and all of the staff, administrative and artistic teams at Arts Umbrella, all of the parents of the Troupe for their support of our program, and all the students and alumni for continuing to inspire us each year.

JASPER IN DEADLAND premiered at Prospect Theatre Company, New York City (2014). Presented at The 5th Avenue Theatre, May 21, 2015.

David Armstrong Executive Producer and Artistic Director; Bernadine Griffin Managing Director; Bill Berry Producing Artistic Director

JASPER IN DEADLAND was originally commissioned by the Pasadena Musical Theatre Company (2011).

JASPER IN DEADLAND is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals. www.concordtheatricals.com



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ARTS UMBRELLA PRESENTS



THE SECRET GARDEN

SPRING VERSION

BY **MARSHA NORMAN**
AND **LUCY SIMON**

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THE SECRET GARDEN: SPRING VERSION is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals. www.concordtheatricals.com



TICKETS

General \$25
Student \$15

artsumbrella.com/expressions

**JACK AND DARLENE
POOLE THEATRE**
AT ARTS UMBRELLA

June 3 @ 7:30pm

June 6 @ 7:30pm

June 9 @ 7:30pm

June 11 @ 3pm

Musical Theatre Troupe presents:

THE SECRET GARDEN: SPRING VERSION

By Marsha Norman and Lucy Simon

June 3rd, 6th, and 9th at 7pm

June 11th at 2pm

*Orphaned in India, 11-year-old Mary Lennox returns to Yorkshire to live with her embittered, reclusive uncle Archibald and his ailing son Colin. The estate's many wonders include a magic garden which beckons the children and spirits from Mary's past who guide her through her new life, dramatizing *The Secret Garden's* compelling tale of forgiveness and renewal.*

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

This show is very personal for me. It's one of the first shows I studied while in school in New York. *The Secret Garden* came to me at a time when I was away from home, surrounded by concrete and attitude, and unsure what I had left behind. In the midst of the questioning, the frustration, the training and the pressure, I discovered this show that was teeming with life itself. The score was lush, the narrative was transformative. In essence – it was magical.

This show is also not without its problems. The idea that fresh air and gardening can heal a person of mental or physical illness is dicey at best, and ableist at worst. Though there is science that points us to these things having great value for health, particularly recognized out on the West Coast, we are very aware that *The Secret Garden*, and many other stories written with the colonial British voice, have minimized and under-recognized the humanity of people experiencing illness. We have sought to present a more balanced picture here: a group of people experiencing a broad range of illness and grief, all finding new life together, and recognizing you do not have to be able bodied or free of emotional or physical pain to experience some joy. The hope of transformation is almost as good as transformation itself.

We also appreciate the colonial British literature of the time and its tendency to both fetishize and devalue the people on whose land they were occupying. Though this production's script has only scant references to Mary's childhood and other notes on India, we were fortunate to have Sherry Duggal, an artist of the Indian diaspora, share perspectives on Indian culture, magic and spirituality. Though our script recognizes mostly the death of one of the major cholera outbreaks in India, Sherry graciously shared so much more in our workshops with her.

And here we are – still within and recovering from a global pandemic where nearly 80% of the people around us have experienced loss and grief related to COVID-19. My heart has been reaching out for real beauty, and the joy it brings. I am so deeply grateful for every one of the humans you see on stage today who have spent so much time and effort looking for the same beauty, life, and magic to share with you.

We're finding it here. We hope you do too.

Andy Toth

Director, Musical Theatre Troupe



ARTISTIC TEAM AND CREW

Director	Andy Toth
Music Director	Eric Biskupski
Piano Accompaniment	Patrick Ray
Choreographer	Heather Thwaites
Stage Manager	Tessa Gunn
Assistant Director/Running Crew/Assistant Stage Manager	Jamie Dy
Costume Design	Christina Sinosich
Set & Prop Design	Monica Emme
Lighting Design	Brad Trenaman
Sound Design	Andy Toth
Theatre Manager	Alan Brodie
Lighting Operator	Matthew Piton
Sound Operator	Sergei Pearse
Production Management	Andy Toth and Erika Babins

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

The New Westminster Public Library, Damon Calderwood, Daniel Wiebe, Jessie, JC, and the Arts Club Theatre Production Department, Ballet BC, Sherry Duggal, Alan Brodie, Mary and Ben Toth, Devan Francis, Camila Giron Brown, Erika Babins and Alex Eaton, Paul Larocque and all of the staff, administrative and artistic teams at Arts Umbrella, and to all of the parents of the Intensive for their support of our program, and all the students and alumni for continuing to inspire us each year.

The Secret Garden: Spring Versions is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals.

www.concordtheatricals.com

CAST A

Mary Lennox	Lucia Liberato
Colin Craven	Paulina Wozniak
Archibald Craven	Leo Teixeira
Dr Neville Craven	Kasimir MacDougall
Lily Craven	Claire Zhong
Dickon	Olivia Wong
Martha	Sienna Fetigan
Mrs Medlock	Chloe Im
Albert Lennox	Liam Murray
Rose Lennox	December Shields
Mrs Winthrop	Amelie Andrade
Ben Weatherstaff	Angie Silva
Reader/Puppets/Ensemble	Wylie Shufelt
Ensemble	Ellington Campbell
	Chloe Lukac
	Hannah Behnke
	Rachel Jia
	Dalilah Rattlesnake

CAST B

Mary Lennox	Hannah Behnke
Colin Craven	Rachel Jia
Archibald Craven	Angie Silva
Dr Neville Craven	Liam Murray
Lily Craven	December Shields
Dickon	Chloe Lukac
Martha	Ellington Campbell
Mrs Medlock	Amelie Andrade
Albert Lennox	Kasimir MacDougall
Rose Lennox	Claire Zhong
Mrs Winthrop	Chloe Im
Ben Weatherstaff	Leo Teixeira
Reader/Puppets/Ensemble	Dalilah Rattlesnake
Ensemble	Sienna Fetigan
	Olivia Wong
	Lucia Liberato
	Paulina Wozniak
	Wylie Shufelt