

WHY NOT THEATRE: PRINCE HAMLET

Saturday, October 01, 2022, at 7:30pm Tryon Festival Theatre

PROGRAM

PRINCE HAMLET

A Why Not Theatre Production Written by William Shakespeare Directed and Adapted by Ravi Jain ASL and Visual Adaptation by Dawn Jani Birley

FEATURING:

Dawn Jani Birley as Horatio
Miriam Fernandes as Rosencrantz/Player King/Gravedigger/Bernardo
Jeff Ho as Ophelia
Eli Pauley as Hamlet
Barbara Gordon as Polonius
Sturla Alvsvaag as Guildenstern/Player Queen/Oseric/Marcellus
Andrew Musselman as Claudius
Dante Jemmott as Laertes/Player
Monice Peter as Gertrude

CREW:

Associate Direction by Miriam Fernandes
Set and Costume Design by Lorenzo Savoini
Lighting Design by André du Toit
Sound Design by Thomas Ryder Payne
Stage Management by Neha Ross
Assistant Stage Management by Kim Moreira
Production Management by André du Toit
Technical Direction by Daniel Bennett
Tour Produced by Rebecca Desmarais

ASL–English Interpretation with Gloria Brifoglio, Carla Dupras, Kelly Ferguson, Sheila Johnston, Kate Lewis, Peggy Zehr

The performance will last approximately two hours and 50 minutes and includes a 20-minute intermission.

This tour is made possible with the generous support of the Canada Council for the Arts, Arts Abroad, and The Lindy Green Family Foundation. ASL–English interpretation funded by the Government of Finland.

THANK YOU FOR SPONSORING THIS PERFORMANCE

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PROGRAM NOTES

PRINCE HAMLET

Ravi Jain's remixed, reimagined, and bilingual *Prince Hamlet* features a cross-cultural, genderbent cast, breathing new life into the 400-year-old play by challenging traditional ideas of who gets to tell this story. Struggling with the death of his father and the hasty remarriage of his mother to his uncle—brother to the King and also his murderer—Hamlet undertakes the harrowing task of avenging his father's untimely death. Combining English and American Sign Language, this groundbreaking production creates a fully integrated retelling for both hearing and Deaf audiences.

ABOUT WHY NOT THEATRE

"Good" isn't good enough. At Why Not Theatre, we're out for better. We shake up the status quo to make the world we want to see. A world where everyone can achieve their full potential. We question everything. Rethink how stories are told. And who gets to tell them.

We MAKE great work that takes chances, and tours the world. We SHARE everything we have, because more artists mean more stories. We PROVOKE change because art should be for everyone.

We push boundaries, build community, and find new ways. We represent Toronto, at home and on the world stage. Founded in 2007, we are led by Miriam Fernandes, Ravi Jain, and Kelly Read.

FIND WHY NOT ONLINE:

http://www.whynot.theatre/ http://www.whynot.theatre/prince-hamlet @whynottheatreTO #princehamlet

PROFILES

RAVI JAIN—DIRECTOR

Toronto-based stage director Ravi Jain is a multiaward-winning artist known for making politically bold and accessible theatrical experiences in both small indie productions and large theatres. As the founding artistic director of Why Not Theatre, Ravi has established himself as an artistic leader. for his inventive productions, international producing/collaborations, and innovative producing models. Ravi was twice shortlisted for the 2016 and 2019 Siminovitch Prize, and won the 2012 Pauline McGibbon Award for Emerging Director and the 2016 Canada Council John Hirsch Prize for direction. He is a graduate of the two-year program at École Jacques Lecog and was selected to be on the roster of clowns for Cirque du Soleil. He was the inaugural associate artistic director at The Theatre Centre and for a short time was an associate artistic director at Soulpepper Theatre company.

STURLA ALVSVAAG—GUILDENSTERN/PLAYER QUEEN/OSERIC/MARCELLUS

Sturla Alvsvaag is an actor and theatre-maker from Bergen, Norway. A graduate of École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq in Paris, Sturla has created and performed with companies from across Australia, France, Norway, and Canada. Select works include: Traversèe de la Riviére (Collectif 2222, France), Il Turco In Italia (Bergen National Opera, directed by Mark Lamos) and Wendy and Peter Pan (The National Theatre of Norway), Telavåg (West Coast regional Theatre), and What You Won't Do for Love (Why Not Theatre). Sturla is also the co-artistic director of YVA Theatre Company with whom he has acted, co-created, and produced The Nose

(commissioned by the MiniMidiMaxi Festival) and *The First Time I Saw the Sea* (Frontlosjefestivalen). In Canada, Sturla is working with Why Not Theater and 1S1 Collective on a new adaptation of *Lady Macbeth*, and will be performing in Why Not Theater's *Prince Hamlet* in fall 2022.

DAWN JANI BIRLEY—HORATIO

Dawn Jani Birley was born in Saskatchewan to a third-generation Deaf family and identifies herself as culturally and linguistically Deaf. She was the Toronto Theatre Critics award winner for Best Actress in a Play 2017 for her role as Horatio in Prince Hamlet, the Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf Person of the Year 2017, and and the Swedish Riksteatern's Artist of the Year 2015. Birley is a versatile actor with an uncanny ability for storytelling. With a master of arts in physical theatre with merit from St. Mary's University in London, it is her life mission to show that Deaf and hearing can work together on the front line in bringing positive change in today's world. Aside from acting, Dawn Jani is often summoned to give workshops/training, motivational speeches, and appearances. https://dawnjanibirley.com/; https://whynot.theatre/work/1s1/

MIRIAM FERNANDES—ROSENCRANTZ/ PLAYER KING/GRAVEDIGGER/BERNARDO

Miriam Fernandes is the co-artistic director of the Toronto-based company Why Not Theatre and has worked as an actor, director, and theatremaker around the world. As a director, her work includes *Metamorphoses* (University of Toronto's Drama Centre), *Hayavadana* (Soulpepper Theatre), *Nesen* (MiniMidiMaxi Festival, Norway), *The First Time I Saw the Sea* (YVA Company,

Norway). As a creator, she is currently co-writing/adapting for the stage the ancient epic Mahabharata (Why Not Theatre/Shaw Festival), is developing a Deaf/hearing production of Lady Macbeth (in partnership with 1S1 Collective), and is a co-writer and performer in What You Won't Do for Love with Drs. David Suzuki and Tara Cullis. Miriam has trained with Anne Bogart's SITI Company, and is a graduate of École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq in Paris. She is the recipient of the JBC Watkins Award and was nominated for the inaugural Johanna Metcalf Performing Arts Prize.

BARBARA GORDON—POLONIUS

Barbara's stage work has ranged from first productions of many Canadian plays across Canada to touring commercial productions (*Uncle Vanya* with Peter O'Toole, *Calendar Girls* for Mirvish, *Sherlock Holmes* with Starvox). She has received two Dora Awards for her theatre work in Toronto. Television work includes continuing roles in series (*Best Laid Plans, Little Mosque on the Prairie, This is Wonderland,* and *The Boys*). Canadian films include *Still Mine, Christmas with Tucker,* and *Dead Ringers* (and many Christmas movies!).

JEFF HO—OPHELIA

Jeff Ho, originally from Hong Kong, is a performer and playwright. Acting credits include I Forgive You (Artistic Fraud); Orestes (Tarragon Theatre); trace (Remount—NAC/Factory Theatre and Factory Theatre/b current); Ophelia in Prince Hamlet (Why Not Theatre national tour: Canadian Stage, PuSh Festival, and National Arts Centre); Box 4901 (Buddies in Bad Times theatre); Camera Obscura (hungry ghosts and the frank theatre/QAF, Jessie Richardson Award for Outstanding Production in a Small Theatre); Hana's Suitcase (Young People's Theatre tour: Toronto, Montreal, and Seattle), Kim's Convenience (CBC); The

Handmaid's Tale (Hulu); and Orphan Black (BBC America). Playwright credits include cockroach and the critically acclaimed Iphigenia and the Furies (On Taurian Land); Antigone (Young People's Theatre), and trace (Factory Theatre/ National Arts Centre/b current). Jeff is grateful to have been honored with a Toronto Theatre Critics Award for Best New Canadian Play (Iphigenia and the Furies); the Jon Kaplan Legacy Fund Award for a Young Canadian Playwright, and the Bulmash Siegel Playwriting Award (Tarragon Theatre); and four Dora Award nominations. He is a graduate of the National Theatre School.

DANTE JEMMOTT—LAERTES/PLAYER

Dante Jemmott is a Toronto-based actor. He played Romeo in the Stratford Festival and Why Not Theatre production of R+J, and he was Bertram in Shakespeare's All's Well that Ends Well at the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. Dante plays Walter in the web series Coming Distractions and appears in CBC Gem's mini-series Revenge of the Black Best Friend. He received his training at York University in the Acting Conservatory. There, he appeared in the production of William Shakespeare's Coriolanus, Charles Mee's Iphigenia 2.0, Suzan-Lori Parks' 365 Days/365 Plays and Amy Rutherford's Mortified. Dante was the voice of W.L. Hutton at the Into The Light exhibition at the Guelph Civic Museum.

ANDREW MUSSELMAN—CLAUDIUS

Andrew Musselman is an award-winning actor and writer. On the writing front, Andrew's original television series *Sing Out* is currently in development at AMC Studios. As an actor, he has received a Beinecke Fellowship from Yale School of Drama and been nominated for Toronto's Dora Award for his solo performance in *Catalpa*. Andrew was in the original casts of the Rolin Jones/Billie Joe Armstrong musical *These Paper Bullets* (Yale Rep, Atlantic Theatre Company)

and the Nicolas Billon plays Butcher (Theatre Centre, Mirvish Productions) and Greenland (TPM Backspace). His extensive television credits include The Lost Symbol (CBS/Peacock), Utopia Falls (Hulu), Cardinal (CTV/Bell Media), Orphan Black (Space/BBC America), and Murdoch Mysteries (CBC). He was the on-set acting coach for the Disney/Family Channel show Backstage, and the dialect coach for CBC's Baronness Von Sketch Show.

ELI PAULEY—HAMLET

Originally from rural Illinois, Eli is a New York City-based actor who is thrilled to be making her debut with Why Not. Recent credits include adult Allison Bechdel in Fun Home, Louis N. Clark in Noah Diaz's Rock Egg Spoon, Celia in Em Weinstein's/Shakespeare's as u like it, OKAY (Ugly Rhino); Downsizing Camus (The Apothetae); Tribes (Barrington Stage); and Dracula (Williamstown Theatre Festival). She has also worked wth Two Rivers Theater, The Public Theater, Playwright's Realm, and the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, TBTB, Play On Shakespeare, and Wildwind Performance Lab. Education: MFA, Yale School of Drama; BFA, Rutgers/Mason Gross. In addition to acting, Eli directs and teaches. www.elipauley.com

MONICE PETER—GERTRUDE

Monice is an actress, having performed most notably at The Stratford Festival and The Shaw Festival. Monice has also performed at The Grand Theatre in *The Penelopiad* by Margaret Atwood, directed by Megan Follows, and with Nightwood Theatre in *Every Day She Rose* by Andrea Scott and Nick Green, co-directed by Andrea Donaldson and Sedina Fiati. Monice is fortunate to be a playwright-in-residence with Urban Ink Theatre Society working on her full-length play *Burnt Cork*. Currently, Monice is studying sustainable business leadership at BCIT.

DANIEL BENNETT—TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Daniel Bennett is the technical director for Canadian Stage and the head of festival production and operations for the SummerWorks Performance Festival. He has also worked as a technical director at the Grand Theatre in addition to being a freelance production manager with Eclipse Theatre Company, Public Recordings/ EW&FCO at the Festival Transamériques, Ame Henderson Projects, SummerWorks Performance Festival, and Director's Lab North. Previous lighting design credits include the Grand Theatre's productions of Cabaret and Beethoven Lives Upstairs, and festival designer for the Paprika Festival. Past sound design credits include the Grand Theatre's Juno's Reward and Beethoven Lives Upstairs, and Griffin McInnes' Specimen. Daniel is a graduate of the production design and technical arts program at the National Theatre School and holds a bachelor of science degree in neuroscience and psychology from the University of Toronto.

REBECCA DESMARAIS—TOUR PRODUCER

Rebecca has produced over 50 tours across five continents of award-winning shows, most notably 2b theatre company's *Old Stock: A Refugee Love Story*, which received six Drama Desk nominations from its Off-Broadway run in New York City. Rebecca is the director of touring for 2b theatre, the executive producer for Fascinator Management, and an on-set certified teacher for film and television. Rebecca is from rural northeastern Ontario in the Robinson-Huron Treaty on the traditional lands of the Cree, Ojibway, and Algonquin Peoples.

ANDRÉ DU TOIT—PRODUCTION MANAGER/ LIGHTING DESIGNER

André du Toit is a lighting designer for live performance based in Toronto, although his designs have been seen across Canada and beyond. He has received three Dora Mavor Moore Awards for outstanding lighting design as well as both a Toronto Theatre Critics Award and a My Theatre Award for best design. His recent designs include What You Won't Do For Love (Why Not Theatre); R+J (Stratford Festival of Canada), Getting Married, The Orchard (Shaw Festival); and The Queen in Me (Canadian Opera Company/Nightwood Theatre/Theatre Gargantua).

KIM MOREIRA—ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Kim is excited to be back in the theatre and is thrilled to be a part of this production.

A graduate of Sheridan College's technical production program, Kim has turned her passion for theatre into a career. Prince Hamlet is her first touring experience. Selected credits include: A Streetcar Named Desire (Soulpepper), How to Fail as a Popstar (Canadian Stage), Don't Dress for Dinner (Upper Canada Playhouse), Mashup Pon Di Road (Paul Watson Productions), and Toronto's Luminato Festival.

NEHA ROSS—STAGE MANAGER

Currently based out of Tkaronto, Neha's love for theatre has taken her across Canada and India with new works. Selected credits include: stage manager—Prince Hamlet, Iceland (Why Not Theatre); Kamloopa, Bad Parent, Animal Farm, 27 Club (Soulpepper Theatre); Mixtape (Crow's Theatre); We Are Proud to Present ... (Theatre Centre); Other Side of the Game (Cahoots Theatre and Obsidian Theatre): One Thing Leads to Another (Young Peoples Theatre); People Power (Carlos Bulosan). Assistant stage manager—R+J (Stratford Festival); Kim's Convenience (Soulpepper Theatre); and The Birds and the Bees, The Wilberforce Hotel, and Mary's Wedding (Blyth Festival). Training: technical production, theatre at Sheridan College.

THOMAS RYDER PAYNE—SOUND DESIGNER

Thomas Ryder Payne is a composer and sound designer for theatre, dance, and film. Selected past theatre work includes designs for Stratford, Shaw, Mirvish, Soulpepper, CanStage, Tarragon, Factory, TPM, YPT, Crows, Modern Times, Aluna, BIBT, Nightwood, Toronto Dance Theatre, NAC, Theatre Calgary, GCTC, RMTC, and many others. Thomas has received four Dora awards and 25 nominations.

LORENZO SAVOINI—SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER

Lorenzo Savoini is an award-winning set, costume, lighting, and video designer for theatre, ballet, and opera. He has designed over forty productions for Soulpepper Theatre Company, numerous productions for the Stratford Festival of Canada, and more for regional theatres. He recently completed the set and lighting design for the premiere of Of Mice and Men for the Joffrey Ballet in Chicago and set design for Pipeline (Soulpepper Theatre) and Orphans for the Czar (Crow's Theatre). He won four Dora Awards for outstanding set and outstanding lighting design for Of Human Bondage (Soulpepper), outstanding scenic/projection design for Rose (Soulpepper), and outstanding lighting design for Julius Caesar (Crows Theatre/Groundling). His design for Soulpepper's Of Human Bondage was selected to represent Canada at the 2015 Prague Quadrennial, the world's largest theatre design expo. Lorenzo has an MFA from the University of British Columbia, a BA from the University of Guelph, and is a graduate of the inaugural Soulpepper Academy. He developed the curriculum for Soulpepper Academy's design stream and the masterclass "design as a tool for storytelling through devised creation."

Land Acknowledgement

The University of Illinois System carries out its mission in its namesake state, which includes the traditional territory of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Menominee, Ho-Chunk, and Chickasaw Nations. These lands continue to carry the stories of these Nations and their struggles for survival and identity.

As a land-grant institution, the University of Illinois has a particular responsibility to acknowledge the peoples of these lands, as well as the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution for the past 150 years. We are also obligated to reflect on and actively address these histories and the role that this university has played in shaping them. This acknowledgement and the centering of Native peoples is a start as we move forward for the next 150 years.

Krannert Center affirms the commitment by the university to move beyond these statements, toward building deeper relationships and taking actions that uphold and preserve Indigenous rights and cultural equity.

As we gather to experience this performance, we have an opportunity to reflect on the ways that systems of oppression have shaped our society. We can work together to create systems that support human dignity, establish equity, strengthen cross-cultural relationships, and draw upon the creative capacity of all people that make up this community, state, nation, and world.

9



Connecting People, Creating Happiness

Krannert Center is committed to providing programs that inspire, engage, challenge, and revitalize. The support of our donors and friends enables the Center to bring in diverse international artists and launch transformative initiatives that foster inclusivity and bring about dynamic change.

Every contribution counts. Together, we can effect powerful change that will impact generations to come.

Please consider making a gift to Krannert Center today. Together, we can strengthen the lasting impact of the Center's work, while ensuring that students and the greater community have access to enriching performances and cultural experiences.

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Ushers will be happy to provide you cough drops courtesy of St. Joseph Apothecary, or disposable foam earplugs if the place starts rockin'.

If you or a companion needs medical assistance, contact an usher or other staff member.

Please take a moment before the performance to note the theatre exits nearest to you. If it becomes necessary to evacuate the theatre, please remain calm, follow the instructions of the house staff, and exit in an orderly fashion to the appropriate safe meeting location, which will be announced to you.

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

The use of cell phones, cameras, and recording devices during performances is prohibited unless otherwise announced from the stage.

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