A CELEBRATION OF BLACK MUSICAL THEATRE
CURATED BY MARCUS NANCE
LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Welcome to the Stratford Festival. It is a great privilege to gather and share stories on this beautiful territory, which has been the site of human activity — and therefore storytelling — for many thousands of years. We wish to honour the ancestral guardians of this land and its waterways: the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Wendat, and the Attiwonderonk. Today many Indigenous peoples continue to call this land home and act as its stewards, and this responsibility extends to all peoples, to share and care for this land for generations to come.
why we tell the story

Cabaret

CURATED AND DIRECTED BY MARCUS NANCE

THE SINGERS
NEEMA BICKERSTETH
ROBERT MARKUS
MARCUS NANCE
VANESSA SEARS

THE BAND
MUSIC DIRECTOR, KEYBOARD
FRANKLIN BRASZ
ACOUSTIC GUITAR, ELECTRIC GUITAR
KEVIN RAMESSAR
ACOUSTIC BASS, ELECTRIC BASS
JON MAHARAJ
DRUM KIT, ORCHESTRA SUPERVISOR
DALE-ANNE BRENDON

The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.
Two young people are in love. They’re next-door neighbours, but their families don’t get on. So they’re not allowed to meet: all they can do is whisper sweet nothings to each other through a small gap in the garden wall between them. Eventually, they plan to run off together – but on the night of their elopement, a terrible accident of fate impels them both to take their own lives.

Sound familiar? It’s the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, as told by the ancient Roman poet Ovid, one of Shakespeare’s favourite authors. Most of us know it from the comical play-within-the-play in A Midsummer Night’s Dream – but it’s also essentially the same story Shakespeare told in Romeo and Juliet.

It certainly resonates with us today. We know what it’s like to be isolated in our homes, separated from our loved ones, reduced to interacting through online equivalents of a hole in the wall. And we know about other barriers, too: walls of prejudice, mistrust and hatred that can be as fatal as any pandemic.

But there’s more to Ovid’s story. The blood of the lovers, seeping into the ground, is absorbed by the roots of a mulberry bush – and turns its berries from white to a deep and vibrant red. And with that metamorphosis comes the families’ realization of the tragedy their enmity has wrought.

That idea of metamorphosis, of awakening and new growth arising from loss, informs our 2021 season. Our artists, like the rest of us, have been living through a time of seismic shock to their psyches – but it has also been a time of transformative regeneration. It’s as if we’ve been in a cocoon, and now it’s time to emerge in a blaze of new colour, with lively, searching work that deals with profound questions and prompts us to think and see in new ways.

While I do intend to program in future seasons all the plays we’d planned to present in 2020, I also know we can’t just pick up where we left off. The world has changed; we have changed. Something huge has happened to us and within us. How do we express that together?

In one significant sense, 2021 sees us return to our roots. Two open-sided canopies, one erected at the Festival Theatre and the other on the grounds of the new Tom Patterson Theatre, shelter appropriately distanced seats. Sharing the same visually gorgeous design, these structures enable audiences to gather in safety and comfort in the open air.

But more than that, they bring an inherently festive quality to the season. Just like our original tent in 1953, these new canopies signal that a very special event is taking place here in Stratford: a new artistic beginning.

Meanwhile, we have also been able to make provision for limited-capacity indoor performances at the Studio Theatre. As always, your safety, and the safety of our artists and staff, is our very first priority, and all three of our 2021 venues will operate in strict accordance with public-health guidelines.

But far from placing limitations on our creativity, the need to work within the parameters required of us – with shorter performances, smaller casts (no more
than eight actors per show) and physical distancing on stage – has stimulated our artists to new feats of imagination as they devise novel modes of performance. Our 2021 playbill encompasses Shakespeare, music, modern classics and new work, presented in ways you’ve never seen at Stratford before.

And it’s not only the pandemic that has opened us up to new ideas and experiences. The Black Lives Matter protests of last summer brought home to us how far our society still remains from overcoming those other dividing barriers of systemic inequity and oppression. So our playbill celebrates difference as well as universality, widening our definitions both of a classic and of who we are. To learn more about our work on anti-racism please visit our website.

The pandemic has taken a dreadful toll, both in lives and in lingering psychological effects. We at the Festival may be powerless against the former, but we have a crucial role to play in addressing the latter. If theatre has anything to teach us, it is about the resilience of the human spirit.

Our new season was born of our determination to emerge from this crisis more inventive, more inclusive and more creative than ever. I hope it will excite you and engage you, bring renewed joy into your life and inspire you as we dream together of a world without walls.

Antoni Cimolino
Artistic Director
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Our deepest gratitude to all our donors who make gifts and pledges to support the Festival in so many ways.

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STRATFORDFESTIVAL.CA/FORUM
WHY WE TELL THE STORY: CURATOR’S NOTES

LIBERTY IS NOT GRANTED, IT IS SHARED – LIKE GOOD MUSIC.

BY MARCUS NANCE

Our stories were being told long before Black Lives Matter defied being contextualized; long before hiring practices mandated the concepts of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; and long before George Floyd’s shocking murder was captured on social media – a digital age reckoning of undeniable injustice. The difference now, it seems, is that for the first time, many people are finally ready to hear them.

The songs and poems you are about to hear, written by Black artists and allies, all speak to the black experience. Black stories, black history, the experiences of my parents, those of my ancestors and most importantly my own personal experiences have always been a part of my creative instinct. Now that I have an opportunity to tell this chapter, I couldn’t think of doing it without including others.

The threads of these beautiful songs and poems paint a colourful landscape of hope and inspiration and remind us that, in yearning for a better day, our work continues. I hold great admiration for the extraordinary black artists and allies with whom I share the telling of these stories, on this stage.

I hope you are inspired by an unfamiliar poem or that you hear something fresh in a song that you thought you knew. My greatest desire of all is that you will leave this show with an open heart and more of an understanding of what our fight is about. We all want to be included in the good things the world has to offer and that is why we all need to tell the story.

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“Life is why we tell the story. Pain is why we tell the story. Love is why we tell the story. Grief is why we tell the story. Hope is why we tell the story. Faith is why we tell the story. You are why we tell the story ... it will help you feel the anger and the sorrow and forgive...”

Those lyrics, written by Lynn Ahrens for the musical *Once on This Island*, are sung at the conclusion of that Caribbean retelling of Hans Christian Andersen’s “The Little Mermaid.” It opened on Broadway on October 18, 1990. The lyrics are a gift, in that they offer an opportunity for all of us to share in life’s pain, faith, love and hope. The idea of “why we tell the story” is key when you examine the history of musical theatre and discover how under-represented Black artistic contributions have been in the Broadway canon. In this post-George Floyd world, I believe *Why We Tell the Story* demonstrates the importance of stories told from our community and human experience.

Most historians would have you believe that the conception of the American musical occurred in 1866 with *The Black Crook* and *The Black Domino/Between You and Me and the Post*, which was the first “musical comedy.” However, in 1821, six years before the final abolition of slavery, William Henry Brown and James Hewlett had built The African Grove Theatre in New York City, the first resident African-American theatre in the United States. Brown and Hewlett were putting on a mix of musical and dramatic entertainments forty-five years before *The Black Crook*. Ira Aldridge also appeared at the African Grove Theatre, as Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*, before making his first appearance on a London stage as Othello in May of 1825.

In the early 1800s, the area currently known as the Broadway Theater District, which spans from 40th to 54th streets and from Sixth Street to Eighth Avenue on the west side of Manhattan, was a thriving residential community of Blacks and immigrants. Around 1850, white theatre owners seeking lower real estate prices and land on which to build larger auditoriums began a move to midtown. It was on those stages, from 1850 through 1890, that the minstrel show, created by European-American performers, presented Black racial stereotypes in comic portrayals and “coon songs.” This popular Broadway theatrical form was performed in blackface into the 1890s.

The year 1898 brought *A Trip to Coontown* by Bob Cole and the musical comedy *Clorindy: The Origin of the Cakewalk* by Will Marion Cook. These were the first Black productions produced, written, acted and sung by Black Americans. Then on February 18, 1903, Cook teamed up with poet Paul Laurence Dunbar to present *In Dahomey*, the first Black full-length musical, in an indoor venue on the “Great White Way” of Broadway. It was the first show to star George Walker and Bert Williams, but what is more commendable is that it introduced
the discussion of African colonization into the vaudeville theatre, while combining musical, comedy, opera and dance. Its artistic influence on early twentieth-century Black musicals impacted the future of the genre, namely *The Belle of Bridgeport* by Bob Cole and the Johnson brothers, *The Red Moon* (with Joe Jordan), *Bandanna Land* by Cook and Alex Rodgers, and Ted Kocioleck and James Racheff’s *Abyssinia*.

Black musical theatre was also thriving uptown in Harlem. In 1911, *The Darktown Follies* musical featured a circle dance that had its all-Black cast winding around the stage with their hands on the hips of the person in front of them. This dance was purchased by Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr. and used in his Follies. Against all physical and social obstacles, ragtime composer Scott Joplin would stage his post-Reconstruction operetta *Treemonisha* in 1915. By May of 1921, Noble Sissle and Eubie Blake would bring to New York the “game changer” musical revue *Shuffle Along*.

Presented at the 63rd Street Music Hall (most “Broadway” shows for Black audiences were presented at theatres above 50th Street), *Shuffle Along* would not only launch the careers of a sixteen-year-old Josephine Baker and Paul Robeson but would run for 484 performances, which was an impressive run for that time. Its jazzy score would provide Harry S. Truman with his presidential campaign anthem, “I’m Just Wild About Harry,” and it helped pave the way for the desegregation of theatre. Blacks sat in the “white only” orchestra instead of the balcony. The show proved that audiences would pay to see superior talent no matter the colour of their skin. Once *Shuffle Along* left New York, it ran for three years on the road and was the first Black musical to play in many white theatres across the USA.

December 27, 1927, would see the first time Black and white actors appeared on the same stage together, in *Show Boat*. Two Black jazz updates of Gilbert and Sullivan’s operetta *The Mikado* also spun the classical world on its heels: 1937’s *The Swing Mikado* and 1939’s *The Hot Mikado*. However, by 1940, as Broadway entered what is called the “Golden Age” of musicals (1943–1959), ethnic-inspired updates of existing shows or original musicals produced, written and composed by Black artists, and featuring Black artists in their casts (like *Shuffle Along*), seem to disappear from the history of Broadway musical theatre. In their place were musicals that showcased our trauma, faith, love and hope in works that were almost completely produced and created by white writers and composers.

Fourteen of the musical compositions you will hear in *Why We Tell the Story* fit into the scenario of white composers creating musicals featuring Black artists. Of the fourteen, only Oscar Hammerstein II’s *Carmen Jones* was written during the “Golden Age.” Jerome Kern and Hammerstein’s *Show Boat* and George Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess* are pre-Golden Age. *The Wiz*, composed by Quincy Jones, Anthony Jackson and Charlie Smalls, is the only show by Black composers represented in *Why We Tell the Story*, and it is post-
Golden Age. In more than 120 years of musical theatre, says David Armstrong of the University of Washington’s School of Drama, “about thirty-seven musicals have dealt with race as principal subject matter,” and others are Black musicals because of a Black cast.

The first theatrical show I saw as a child was Raisin, the musical version of Lorraine Hansberry’s cultural phenomenon A Raisin in the Sun. It was a turning point for me because it was the first time that I saw people who looked like me on a live stage. The story of the family reflected the journey that my parents had experienced when moving into our home in Northwest Washington, DC. I don’t know why my mother chose this show for me to see. Perhaps it was because we had recently discovered that when I sang, I did not stutter. Or because she knew that race issues were part of its principal subject matter. Either way, the show rocked me in the bosom of the universe. Every time I see a show, I seek a reflection of my life on that stage. It is a rare experience.

What makes Why We Tell the Story so exciting is that it connects audiences with the Black experience and speaks to the truth of our story.

Recently I delved into Michael Kantor and Laurence Maslon’s 506-page book on the American musical. I found only one page dedicated to the musicals of the 1970s. That time period featured many Black shows, and amongst them was Raisin. That Raisin had been nominated for nine Tony Awards and won Best Musical could not be found on that page. There is one sentence about 1978’s Ain’t Misbehavin’ (a selection from which is featured in this show). The only statement about The Wiz (also represented in this show) was that it was on the verge of closing. No mention that it won seven Tony Awards, including Geoffrey Holder being the first Black director to win for Best Director of a Musical, as well as Best Costume Design. No mention that, like Shuffle Along, it was a massive hit that ran for 1,672 performances. No mention that The Wiz was the first musical in fifty-four years entirely created by Black artists and was aimed at Black audiences. Or that The Wiz was the first show to use television commercials and changed the marketing of Broadway going forward! Kantor and Maslon were under-representing our history.

It is my dream that this production will be taken into your heart and will start conversations about the lack of true visible representation in our theatres. That its brave voice and powerful story allow for vulnerability, clarity and forgiveness, because stories told through a lens of “whiteness” itself should not translate as the standard in our society.

**Tomorrow,**
*I’ll be at the table*
*When company comes.*
*Nobody’ll dare*
*Say to me,*
*“Eat in the kitchen,”*
*Then.*

**Besides,**
*They’ll see how beautiful I am*
*And be ashamed—*
*I, too, am America.*

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Dathan B. Williams is Associate Artistic Director of the Harlem Shakespeare Festival. A member of the Stratford Festival company in its fortieth and forty-first seasons, he won the 1992 John Hirsch Award for Most Promising Young Actor.
WHY WE TELL THE STORY

SONGS AND READINGS

I. LIFE

“I, Too”  
By Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

“The Human Heart”  
By Lynn Ahrens (b. 1948) and Stephen Flaherty (b. 1960)  
From Once on This Island

“They Live in You”  
By Mark Mancina (b. 1957), Lebohang “Lebo M” Morake (b. 1964) and Jay Rifkin (b. 1955)  
From The Lion King

“Summertime”  
By George Gershwin (1898–1937) and Ira Gershwin (1896–1983)  
From Porgy and Bess

“The Oldest Profession”  
By Cy Coleman (1929–2004)  
From The Life

“Big Black Man”  
By David Yazbek (b. 1961)  
From The Full Monty

“I Got Love”  
By Gary Geld (b. 1935)  
From Purlie

“The Negro Mother”  
By Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

“Home”  
By Charlie Smallis (1943–1987)  
From The Wiz

“Human Family”  
By Maya Angelou (1928–2014)

“Family”  
By Henry Krieger (b. 1945) and Tom Eyen (1940–1991)  
From Dreamgirls

II. PAIN

“Democracy”  
By Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

“Black and Blue”  
By Fats Waller (1904–1943), Andy Razaf (1895–1973) and Harry Brooks (1895–1970)  
From Ain’t Misbehavin’

“I Got Love”  
By Gary Geld (b. 1935)  
From Purlie

“River in the Rain”  
By Roger Miller (1936–1992)  
From Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

“Ol’ Man River”  
By Jerome Kern (1885–1945) and Oscar Hammerstein II (1895–1960)  
From Show Boat

III. FAMILY

“Mama Will Provide”  
By Lynn Ahrens (b. 1948) and Stephen Flaherty (b. 1960)  
From Once on This Island

“The Oldest Profession”  
By Cy Coleman (1929–2004)  
From The Life

“The Negro Mother”  
By Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

“Home”  
By Charlie Smallis (1943–1987)  
From The Wiz

“Human Family”  
By Maya Angelou (1928–2014)

“Family”  
By Henry Krieger (b. 1945) and Tom Eyen (1940–1991)  
From Dreamgirls

IV. FAITH

“The Negro Speaks of Rivers”  
By Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

“River in the Rain”  
By Roger Miller (1936–1992)  
From Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

“Ol’ Man River”  
By Jerome Kern (1885–1945) and Oscar Hammerstein II (1895–1960)  
From Show Boat

V. LOVE

“Dat’s Love”  
By Georges Bizet (1838–1875) and Oscar Hammerstein II (1895–1960)  
From Carmen Jones

“Elaborate Lives”  
By Elton John (b. 1947)  
From Aida

“Helpless”  
By Lin-Manuel Miranda (b. 1980)  
From Hamilton

“I Got Love”  
By Gary Geld (b. 1935)  
From Purlie
VI. HOPE
“As I Grew Older”  
By Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

“Wheels of a Dream”  
By Lynn Ahrens (b. 1948) and Stephen Flaherty (b. 1960)  
From Ragtime

“Still I Rise”  
By Maya Angelou (1928–2014)

“I’m Here”  
By Brenda Russell (b. 1949), Stephen Bray (b. 1956)  
and Allee Willis (1947–2019)  
From The Color Purple

VII. YOU
“Why We Tell the Story”  
By Lynn Ahrens (b. 1948) and Stephen Flaherty (b. 1960)  
From Once on This Island

“I Dream a World”  
By Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

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THE SINGERS

Neema Bickersteth
Robert Markus
Marcus Nance
Vanessa Sears

THE BAND

Conductor, Keyboard
Franklin Brasz

Acoustic Guitar, Electric Guitar
Kevin Ramessar

Acoustic Bass, Electric Bass
Jon Maharaj

Drum Kit, Orchestra Supervisor
Dale-Anne Brendon

ARTISTIC CREDITS

Curator and Director
Marcus Nance

Music Director
Franklin Brasz

Lighting Designer
Kaileigh Krysztofiak

Sound Designer
Peter McBoyle

Music Arrangements
Franklin Brasz

Music Preparation
Michael McClennan

Assistant Lighting Designer
Christian Horoszczak

Stage Manager
Michael Hart

Production Assistant
Rebecca Beith

Production Stage Manager
Cynthia Toushan

Producer
David Auster

Casting Director
Beth Russell

Creative Planning Director
Jason Miller

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Cabaret Series Development
Franklin Brasz
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Director of Music
Franklin Brasz

Music Administrator
Janice Owens
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NEEMA BICKERSTETH
2021: Singer in Why We Tell the Story. Stratford debut. Canadian soprano Neema Bickersteth is an award-winning singer, actor and maker of multi-disciplinary work. She has performed internationally in Asia, Africa, Europe and North America, including having the great honour of performing for the XIVth Dalai Lama, for Shirin Abadi, and for the Archbishop Desmond Tutu. In recent years, Neema has specialized in contemporary multidisciplinary music projects. neemabee.ca

FRANKLIN BRASZ
2021: Director of Music for the Stratford Festival. Music director of and Keyboard for Why We Tell the Story and Finally There’s Sun. 12th season. Stratford: Billy Elliot, The Music Man, HMS Pinafore, A Little Night Music, Carousel, Man of La Mancha, Pirates of Penzance, Kiss Me, Kate, Funny Thing Happened... (Stratford/Mirvish). In concert: Up Close and Musical (Stratfest@Home), The Fantasticks, Passion, Next to Normal. Elsewhere: Toronto/US tours: Show Boat, Ragtime, The Lion King, Mamma Mia!, Hairspray, Lloyd Webber’s The Wizard of Oz, The Sound of Music, Billy Elliot, Irving Berlin’s White Christmas, The Lord of the Rings, Threepenny Opera (Soulpepper); London Symphonia’s Enchanting Broadway. Recordings: Carousel, Crazy for You (Stratford cast recordings); The Voice Next Door (Marcus Nance). Training: Vocal Coaching and Accompanying, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

JON MAHARAJ
2021: Basses for Why We Tell the Story and Play On! Stratford debut. Jon Maharaj is a JUNO Award-winning bassist who has performed and/or recorded with The Tenors, Emilie-Claire Barlow, Allison Au, Amanda Tosoff and many others. He has toured North America extensively with a variety of artists and has performed overseas, everywhere from Tokyo to Monte Carlo. He is currently playing bass in the Canadian company of the Tony-winning musical Come From Away, a position he has held since January 2018. Jon is also on faculty at Humber College in Toronto, where he has been teaching since 2003.
THE COMPANY

ROBERT MARKUS

2021: Co-curator of Play On! and Singer in Why We Tell the Story. Fourth season. Stratford: Up Close and Musical (Stratfest@Home), The Rocky Horror Show, Tommy, The Music Man, Fiddler on the Roof. Elsewhere: Dear Evan Hansen (Mirvish); Lil’ Red Robin Hood (Ross Petty Productions); Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat (Theatre Aquarius); Jacob Two-Two Meets the Hooded Fang, Seussical, James and the Giant Peach (YPT); Our Town, Sweeney Todd (Shaw Festival); UnCovered: Queen and Bowie (Musical Stage Company); Dream a Little Dream, Shrek (Grand Theatre); Chicago, Twist and Shout (Drayton Entertainment); Next to Normal (Citadel Theatre/ Theatrical Calgary); The Rocky Horror Show: A Christmas Carol (Citadel Theatre); Jesus Christ Superstar, Chicago (Mayfield); Hunchback ( Catalyst). Film/TV: If I Only Had Christmas (Hallmark Channel). Training: BFA, University of Alberta. Online: robertmarkus.com. Instagram: @rjbmarkus. Et cetera: Special thanks to family, friends, TH, and JRS, for their constant support.

MARCUS NANCE

2021: Curator and director of and Singer in Why We Tell the Story, 10th season. Stratford (highlights): Up Close and Musical: Voice of a Preacher’s Son, Billy Elliot the Musical, Little Shop of Horrors, The Music Man, Guys and Dolls, HMS PINAFORE, Carousel, Crazy for You, Jesus Christ Superstar, Moby Dick, To Kill a Mockingbird, My One and Only. Elsewhere: La Bohème, Jesus Christ Superstar (Broadway); Sweeney Todd, Floyd Collins, Pal Joey (Shaw Festival); Wizard of Oz, Beauty and the Beast (Grand Theatre); Jack and the Beanstalk, Little Mermaid, Mikado (Drayton); Evangeline (Charlottetown); Kismet, Of Thee I Sing (Encores! N.Y.C.); Jesus Christ Superstar (La Jolla); Dark Star Requiem (Luminato); Porgy and Bess (Toronto Symphony); Elsewhereless (Tapestry). Film/TV: Murdoch Mysteries, Departure, Mayday, Prodigal Son, The Producers, Beatrice Chancy. Recordings: The Voice Next Door. Awards: Metropolitan Opera winner, Dora nominee. Training: Fresno State University. Online: marcusnance.com.

KEVIN RAMESSAR


VANESSA SEARS

2021: Singer in Why We Tell the Story. Third season. Stratford: Up Close and Musical, Mum in Billy Elliot, Ronnette in Little Shop of Horrors. Elsewhere: Red Queen in Alice in Wonderland (Bad Hats and Soulpepper); Emmie in Caroline, or Change, Edwina in Passing Strange (Musical Stage Company and Obsidian); Mary Poppins in Mary Poppins, Dorothy in The Wizard of Oz (Young People’s Theatre); Flämmchen in Grand Hotel, Polly Plummer in The Magician’s Nephew, Zoe in An Octoroon (Shaw Festival); Nicola in Kinky Boots (Mirvish). Film/TV: Sex/Life, Tallboyz, Too Close for Christmas, Love in the Wilds, Suits. Directing: Talk is Free Theatre, Grand Theatre London, Sheridan College. Awards: Dora Awards: Caroline, or Change, Kinky Boots, The Wizard of Oz. Critic’s Pick: Mary Poppins, Passing Strange. Toronto Theatre Critics Award: Passing Strange. Online: Instagram: @vanessa_sears. Twitter: @nessasears.
ARTISTIC COMPANY

MICHAEL HART

Theatre Credits (selected): Heisenberg, Liv Stein (Canadian Stage); Constellations (Centaur/Canadian Stage); Body Politic (Buddies); The Death of the King (Modern Times); The Winter’s Tale (Groundling); Bombay Black (Factory); Manon, Sandra and the Virgin Mary (Pleasides); Saint Carmen of The Main (NAC/Canadian Stage); Romeo and Juliet (NAC); Mother Courage and Her Children (NAC/MTC); Real Live Girl (MTC); Fully Committed, Silence, Einstein’s Gift (Grand Theatre); Wit (Centaur); Hamlet (Neptune).

CHRISTIAN HOROSZCZAK
2021: Assistant lighting designer of Why We Tell the Story, You Can’t Stop the Beat, Play On!, R + J, Edward Albee’s Three Tall Women and Freedom. Stratford debut. Elsewhere: Lighting design for All the Sex I’ve Ever Had (Mammalian Diving Reflex; Tokyo, Kyoto and Frankfurt), Entrances and Exits (Howland Company), Kiviuq Returns (Oaggiavuut/Banff Centre), Assistant lighting design for Fall for Dance North. Training: National Theatre School, Banff Centre, Queen’s University. Et cetera: Christian is endlessly grateful for the years of generosity and love from family, friends and mentors throughout his life. Much love to Ryan and a special dedication to Tim Fort.

KAILEIGH KRYSZTOFIAK
2021: Lighting designer of Why We Tell the Story, You Can’t Stop the Beat, Play On!, Freedom and Finally There’s Sun. Ninth season. Stratford: Lighting designer, Othello, The Comedy of Errors. Assistant lighting designer, six seasons (2011-2016). Selected credits: A Chorus Line, Tommy, A Word or Two, Jesus Christ Superstar. Studio Theatre technical director, 2013. Elsewhere: Honour Beat (Grand), After the Fire, The Particulars (Punctuate, The Theatre Centre); Kinky Boots, Newsies (Drayton Entertainment); Salt-Water Moon (Mirvish, Factory, Why Not); Wildfire (RARE, Soulpepper); The Emancipation of Ms. Lovely, The Breath in Between (Crow’s); Superior Donuts (Coal Mine); Laurier (Charlottetown Festival, TNB); Beaver (Storefront); Noises Off (Soulpepper); A Line in the Sand, The Crackwalker (Factory Theatre); Hana Hashimoto (Carousel Players). Training: National Theatre School of Canada. Et cetera: Course Lecturer at Ryerson University, Instructor at the NTSC, General Manager of Lights On Stratford, a two-time Dora nominee and a 2020 Pauline McGibbon Award nominee.

PETER McBOYLE
2021: Sound designer of Why We Tell the Story, You Can’t Stop the Beat, Play On!, Freedom and Finally There’s Sun. 26th season. Stratford (selected): Over 60 productions including Billy Elliot, Little Shop of Horrors, The Music Man, The Rocky Horror Show, Guys and Dolls, A Chorus Line, Shakespeare in Love, Crazy for You, A Word or Two. Elsewhere: Peter has worked at most major Canadian theatres and in US cities such as New York, Las Vegas, Boston, Los Angeles, Dallas and Atlanta. Broadway credits: Come Fly Away and Barrymore. Tours include Sister Act, Catch Me If You Can, Come Fly Away, Legally Blonde and West Side Story. Recent projects include Little Canada (Toronto), Immersive Van Gogh (Canada/US), Battle of the Blades (CBC). Training: Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Music (McGill). Awards: Suzi (Atlanta), Come Fly Away; Dora nomination, Caroline, Or Change, Fire. Et cetera: Thanks to Meghan, Ella and Beatrice for their unending support.
BETH RUSSELL
2021: Casting director for the Stratford Festival. 13th season. Broadway and West End: As Senior Vice President, Casting and Creative Development for Livent, Beth was responsible for productions including Parade, Ragtime, Candide, Show Boat and Kiss of the Spider Woman; as well as productions of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Show Boat, Sunset Boulevard, Aspects of Love and The Phantom of the Opera in Canada, the United States, Australia, Singapore and Hong Kong. Elsewhere: Co-Producer of CBC-TV’s Triple Sensation, National Casting Director for CBC Radio Drama and Artistic Associate for Toronto Arts Productions (now Canadian Stage). Also, as an agent, Beth has represented actors, directors, choreographers, writers and composers.

CYNTHIA TOUSHAN
2021: Production stage manager of the Festival Theatre Canopy and Studio Theatre. 25th season. Stratford: Shows include Chicago (interrupted by COVID), Billy Elliot, A Chorus Line, Crazy for You, Fiddler on the Roof, Camelot, Oklahoma!, West Side Story, My Fair Lady, Man of La Mancha, Hello, Dolly!, The King and I and others. Elsewhere: Over 40 years as a stage manager in live entertainment including gala events, music concerts, opening ceremonies and fundraising events including A Christmas Carol for the Stratford Hospice. Over 25 years with the Canadian Opera Company as a stage manager; production stage manager and resident director of Jersey Boys, Toronto; 25 years as a singer/dancer and choreographer in Canadian theatre; associate director/choreographer to her mentor, Alan Lund. Et cetera: Love to Paul, daughters Stephanie and Jennifer, son-in-law Andrew, and her grandchildren, Kennedy, Koston and Connor. I am so grateful to be back at work.

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Overseen by Antoni Cimolino, Artistic Director, and Langham workshop alumnus Esther Jun, Director of the Langham Directors' Workshop, this program seeks the most promising directing talent and provides them with fertile ground to explore, play, and hone their craft. The Workshop endeavours to help cultivate the directors' interests, refine their aesthetics, and enable them to create inspired and boundary-pushing work – not only for the Stratford Festival's stages, but across the globe.
Participants this season: Marie Farsi, Sadie Epstein-Fine, Christine Horne, Sara Jarvie-Clark.
Alumni this season: Jessica Carmichael, Ravi Jain, Esther Jun, Julia Nish-Lapidus, Peter Pasyk, James Wallis.
We extend our thanks to the Department of Canadian Heritage and to the Philip and Berthe Morton Foundation.
The Langham Directors' Workshop is sponsored by

THE BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATORY
Janine Pearson is the Director of the Birmingham Conservatory. In January 2022 she will begin her leadership of the newly reimagined two-year professional training program that nurtures talented young artists for a future career in live theatre. The program includes, among other activities, classes in voice, movement and text with Festival coaches and distinguished guest instructors.

Past Birmingham Conservatory participants include these members of our 2021 company:
Sara Farb 2013
Eva Foote 2019/21
Paul de Jong 2000 (coach)
Andrew Iles 2017/18
Beck Lloyd 2019/21
Kennedy C. MacKinnon 1999 (coach)
Jonathan Mason 2019/21
Lisa Nasson 2019/21
Thomas Olajide 2014 (associate)
André Sills 2005
Shannon Taylor 2014
Sara Topham 2000
Amaka Umeh 2019/21
Micah Woods 2019/21
Mamie Zwettler 2017/18

And contributing to STRATFEST@HOME:
Dan Chameray 2003
Ijeoma Emesowum 2015/16
Jessica B. Hill 2014/15
Chilina Kennedy 2009
André Morin 2014/15
Emilio Vieira 2015/16
Antoine Yared 2012/13

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THE STRATFORD FESTIVAL LABORATORY

Founded by artistic director Antoni Cimolino in 2013, and overseen by Antoni and Ted Witzel, the Laboratory is the Stratford Festival’s research and development wing: a suite of experiments and investigations that drive our artistic and organizational evolution in an era of exciting cultural change.

Advancing inclusive and innovative practice, the Lab:

- **INCUBATES NEW WORKS** for our stages by supporting long-term and unconventional development processes.

- **CONDUCTS EXPERIMENTS** through our resident Lab Ensemble, to build our capacity to support other forms and cultural protocols, and to create new relationships with artists from across Canada and beyond.

- **BUILDS CONNECTIONS** with the national artistic community by hosting and supporting gatherings of makers to share practices, questions, challenges and strategies.

- **FOSTERS ENSEMBLE** by offering full-company sessions to encourage horizontal learning and build a shared spirit among the huge group of artists who come together at the Festival every season.

- **OPENS DIALOGUE**, internally and externally, by creating spaces to reflect on the Festival’s role as a heritage institution and the growth and change necessary to ensure that it remains a vital asset to Canada’s cultural ecology.

Like any successful R&D wing, the Lab will be agile and flexible in its response to the changing landscape. The scope of its activities will expand and shift as we identify new challenges and opportunities to serve our community of artists and audiences, locally, nationally and beyond.

Support for the Laboratory is generously provided by the Dalio Foundation and by an anonymous donor.

The services of the Metcalf Foundation Dramaturgy Intern were made possible through Theatre Ontario’s Professional Theatre Training Program, funded by the Ontario Arts Council.

Funding for artisan apprenticeships is provided by the William H. Somerville Theatre Artisan Apprenticeship Fund, funded by the J.P. Bickell Foundation and by Robert and Jacqueline Sperandio.

A member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres, the Stratford Festival engages, under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement, professional artists who are members of Canadian Actors’ Equity Association. Stage crew, scenic carpenters, drivers, wigs and makeup attendants, wardrobe attendants, facilities staff and audience development representatives are members of Local 357 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE). Scenic artists are members of IATSE Local 828. The musicians, musical directors, conductors, and orchestra contractors engaged by the Stratford Festival are members of the Toronto Musicians’ Association, Local 149 of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada.

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The Stratford Shakespearean Festival Endowment Foundation Board mourns the loss of Director Robert Badun, a member of the Endowment Foundation Board from 2017, and as its Chair from 2020, until his passing in April of 2021. Rob is remembered by his fellow Directors for his unwavering service and unique combination of expertise, wisdom, leadership and humility.

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