

OVATION

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MANITOBA THEATRE CENTRE

VOL 32 • NO 6
APR/MAY 2025



ELEVATE: MANAAJI 'IDIWIN

by David McLeod

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MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Welcome to the theatre! This is our final show of the season, and I am so grateful to you for being here. We come together to sit in the dark and share stories, to laugh, cry and be inspired. Theatre builds connection, and it has been a powerful season of remarkable plays that hopefully have brought us closer together.

Today we are thrilled to bring you the world premiere of Dave McLeod's *ELEVATE: Manaaji'idiwin*. Developed in the Pimootayowin Creators Circle, led by Governor General Award-winning playwright Ian Ross, Dave's play is a provocative and funny portrait of two men at a crossroads, who find themselves together in a chance meeting in an elevator.

Manaaji'idiwin, is an Anishinaabemowin word that means 'to go easy on someone, in a reciprocal way' commonly referred to as Respect, in the Seven Grandfather Teachings.

As a playwright, Dave calls this a 'reconciliation play' with the elevator used as a metaphor for the space we must navigate together. The most significant tool the playwright utilizes to tell this story is laughter. Laughter is medicine and unites us all. This play asks us to see ourselves, to hold space for each other and to heal together.

I am grateful to Ian Ross, Melissa Langdon and our Director Herbie Barnes who lovingly supported Dave in shepherding this play to the stage, and to all of you for joining us.

Miigwech, Ekosani, Maarsi, Merci and Thank You.

Enjoy the show!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Kelly'.

Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre is proud to call Manitoba home. Royal MTC is located in Winnipeg on Treaty 1, the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Anishininew and Dakota people, and the National Homeland of the Red River Métis. We are thankful for the benefits sharing this land has afforded us, acknowledge the responsibilities of the Treaties, and embrace the opportunity to partner with Indigenous communities in the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

THEATRE ABBREVIATION LEGEND

A.C.T. American Conservatory Theater • San Francisco, CA	Rainbow Rainbow Stage • Winnipeg, MB
Arts Club Arts Club Theatre Company • Vancouver, BC	RNT Royal National Theatre • London, England
ATF Atlantic Theatre Festival • Wolfville, NS	Royal Alex The Royal Alexandra Theatre • Toronto, ON
ATP Alberta Theatre Projects • Calgary, AB	RSC Royal Shakespeare Company • Stratford-upon-Avon, England
BAM Brooklyn Academy of Music • NYC	RWB Royal Winnipeg Ballet • Winnipeg, MB
Bard on the Beach Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival • Vancouver, BC	Sarasvati Sarasvati Productions • Winnipeg, MB
Belfry The Belfry Theatre • Victoria, BC	Segal The Segal Centre for Performing Arts • Montreal, QC
Blyth Blyth Theatre Festival • Blyth, ON	Shaw Shaw Festival • Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON
Broadway Theatre district • New York, NY	SIR Shakespeare in the Ruins • Winnipeg, MB
CBC Canadian Broadcasting Corporation	Soulpepper Soulpepper Theatre Company • Toronto, ON
Centaur Centaur Theatre Company • Montreal, QC	Stratford Stratford Festival • Stratford, ON
Citadel The Citadel Theatre • Edmonton, AB	SummerWorks SummerWorks Theatre Festival • Toronto, ON
COC Canadian Opera Company • Toronto, ON	TA Theatre Aquarius • Hamilton, ON
CS Canadian Stage • Toronto, ON	Tarragon Tarragon Theatre • Toronto, ON
Dora Dora Mavor Moore Award • Toronto, ON	TBTR Theatre by the River • Winnipeg, MB
Drayton Drayton Entertainment • Ontario	TC Theatre Calgary • Calgary, AB
Dry Cold Dry Cold Productions • Winnipeg, MB	TiFT Talk is Free Theatre • Barrie, ON
Factory Factory Theatre • Toronto, ON	TNB Theatre New Brunswick • Fredericton, NB
GCTC The Great Canadian Theatre Company • Ottawa, ON	Toronto Free Toronto Free Theatre • Toronto, ON
Grand The Grand Theatre • London, ON	TPM Theatre Projects Manitoba • Winnipeg, MB
HGJT Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company • Toronto, ON	TSO Toronto Symphony Orchestra
Mirvish Mirvish Productions • Toronto, ON	U of M University of Manitoba
Moving Target Moving Target Theatre Company • Winnipeg, MB	U of T University of Toronto
MTYP Manitoba Theatre for Young People • Winnipeg, MB	U of W University of Winnipeg
NAC National Arts Centre • Ottawa, ON	ViC The Village Conservatory for Music Theatre • Winnipeg, MB
Necessary Angel Necessary Angel Theatre Company • Toronto, ON	VP Vancouver Playhouse Theatre Company • Vancouver, BC
Neptune Neptune Theatre • Halifax, NS	West End Theatre district • London, England
NFB National Film Board of Canada	WCT Western Canada Theatre • Kamloops, BC
NTS National Theatre School of Canada • Montreal, QC	WJT Winnipeg Jewish Theatre
Persephone Persephone Theatre • Saskatoon, SK	WSO Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra
PTAM Popular Theatre Alliance of Manitoba • Winnipeg, MB	WST Winnipeg Studio Theatre
PTE Prairie Theatre Exchange • Winnipeg, MB	YPT Young People's Theatre • Toronto, ON
	zone41 zone41 theatre • Winnipeg, MB

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Savannah Lillies

TELEPHONE: 204 934 0309

EMAIL: slillies@royalmtc.ca

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Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre
174 Market Avenue
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Canada

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Royal MTC 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.

Scenery, Carpentry and Show Running Crew at the John Hirsch Mainstage and the Tom Hendry Warehouse are members of IATSE Local 63.

USHERS • Royal MTC's loyal volunteer ushers are available at every performance to assist patrons.

LATECOMERS • Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of the House Manager.

COURTESY TO OTHERS • Talking, candy wrappers and coughing are distracting to fellow patrons and actors. We ask each patron to please keep noise to a minimum during a performance. Thank you for your cooperation.

SCENTS AND ALLERGIES • A number of Royal MTC patrons have expressed concerns regarding medical reactions caused by scented products, so much so that they can't enjoy the show. Please consider others before using items such as colognes, perfumes and hairspray. Your thoughtfulness is appreciated.

HEARING ENHANCEMENT • FM Listening Devices are available free of charge in the lobby at the John Hirsch Mainstage and Tom Hendry Warehouse. Please see the House Manager for details.

PROHIBITED • The use of cameras and recording devices is strictly prohibited. Mobile devices must be turned off. To be contacted in an emergency, leave your name and seat number with the House Manager.

WARNINGS • On occasion, Royal MTC's productions may contain script-specific smoking of non-tobacco products, special effects and language/content warnings. For more information on specific productions, please visit royalmtc.ca.



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ELEVATE: MANAAJI'IDIWIN

By David McLeod | Directed by Herbie Barnes

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2025

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SEASON

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Life of Pi

Based on the novel by Yann Martel

Adapted by Lolita Chakrabarti

In partnership with Citadel Theatre

OCT 15–NOV 8, 2025

Elf – The Musical

Book by Thomas Meehan and Bob Martin

Music by Matthew Sklar

Lyrics by Chad Beguelin

Based upon the New Line Cinema film

written by David Berenbaum

NOV 25–DEC 20, 2025

Agatha Christie's

Murder on the Orient Express

Adapted for the stage by

Ken Ludwig

In partnership with Citadel Theatre

JAN 14–FEB 7, 2026

Royal MTC presents A Crow's Theatre
Production

Rogers v. Rogers

Adapted for the stage by Michael Healey

Based on the book by Alexandra Posadzki

FEB 18–MAR 14, 2026

The Last Wife

By Kate Hennig

MAR 25–APR 18, 2026

Rubaboo – A Métis Cabaret

By Andrea Menard

APR 29–MAY 23, 2026

TOM HENDRY WAREHOUSE

Royal MTC presents

Wonderful Joe

By Ronnie Burkett

OCT 7–26, 2025

A Number

By Caryl Churchill

NOV 12–29, 2025

Holland

By Trish Cooper

In partnership with Theatre Projects
Manitoba

FEB 4–21, 2026

In the Shadow Beyond the Pines

By Rhonda Apetagon

MAR 11–28, 2026

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Playwright's Notes

BY DAVID MCLEOD

One major element of Indigenous humour is teasing, often adjacent with extreme truth-telling. This action often transcends difficult situations. I hoped to stretch this element of Indigenous philosophy like a thin red thread throughout the play, allowing it to stitch scenes together where laughter connects with pain, loss and, most importantly, self-discovery. The elevator scenario places two individuals within a pressure cooker situation, where two characters ultimately have no choice but to face and witness each other's truth. I hope this translates towards a sacred place sometimes called reconciliation.

Humour was always part of my family growing up; I'd often listen to relatives joke about tough situations often to minimize them. Over the years, I've learned that humour is directly connected to Indigenous resilience.

ELEVATE: Manaaji'idiwin exists because of MTC's Pimootayowin Creators Circle, led by Governor General Award-winning playwright Ian Ross. The program brought several aspiring writers together to try our hand at playwriting. The word "Pimootayowin" means journey in Anishinaabemowin and it certainly was.

I share much gratitude to Ian and the other participants of the program: Katie German, Lynette Bonin, Jim Compton, Rosanna Deerschid, Kathleen MacLean and Tracey Nepinak. I humbly acknowledge that I entered a gifted circle and stepped out of it with something that



resembled a play – it would not exist without them.

ELEVATE's story is rooted in an actual experience I had several years ago. I entered an office tower in Winnipeg to visit a friend. While standing in a full elevator on the ground floor, a security guard rushed in and asked, "Where do you think you're going? Out!" I thought, someone must be in trouble. Then I realized he was addressing me? It was embarrassing, being taken out of the elevator and being escorted to the exit. This simple act is at the very root of the play.

There are so many people to thank who helped develop this play, particularly the wonderful team at Royal MTC (Kelly, Herbie, Melissa, Kevin, Nolan). Special thanks to Niigaan Sinclair, Dené Sinclair, Isaac Murdoch, Dennis Chartrand, Shelley MacDougall and Jeneda Benally. It is truly an honour to have my play produced within this beautiful theatre with its many dedicated individuals.

Lastly, thank you for being here. When I first entered the theatre, it was very surreal. Now it is especially so real.

Chi Miigwetch ●



Anishinaabemowin Glossary

Aaji-a-ga-day: Mud Hen, Bottom Feeding Bird

Aako-Maagos: Stink

Ando-Mawizon: Go Pick

A-Sin-ee-Qass: Little Rock Girl

Gidi-bendaa-gos: You Belong Here

Maji-manidoo: Bad spirit

Ma-Na-Tis: Ugly

Zoogi-de-wit Awiya Mawi: Courageous People Cry

Manaaji'idiwin

“To go easy on one another and all of Creation.” Commonly referred to as Respect.

Manaaji = To go easy on someone

Idi = In a reciprocal way

Win = A way it is done ●

SYNOPSIS - On their way to the 33rd floor of Steadman and Whitaker, Tallahassee and Jonesie are suddenly trapped in an elevator after a malfunction. Delayed for an important meeting about the future of the law firm, the two men, stemming from settler and Indigenous backgrounds, must work together to escape their predicament. Tensions arise as prejudices bubble to the surface, and the shrinking space becomes a pressure cooker as the men struggle to get it back up and running. With conversations around identity, power and community emerging, Tallahassee and Jonesie begin to tread into dangerous territory. Will they be able to put their conflict aside? Like the elevator stuck between floors, their ability to escape is hanging in the balance. ●

PRESENTS

ELEVATE: Manaaji'idiwin

By David McLeod

April 24 – May 17, 2025

PREVIEW April 23

Director / Dramaturg Herbie Barnes
Set Designer William Layton
Costume Designer Amy McPherson
Lighting Designer Scott Henderson**
Sound Designer & Composer Jason Burnstick
Fight Director Rick Skene
Mural Designer Peatr Thomas
Assistant Director Cali Sproule
Assistant Dramaturg Melissa Langdon
Assistant Lighting Designer Monique Gauthier
Stage Manager Ridge Romanishen
Assistant Stage Manager Katie Schmidt†
Apprentice Stage Manager Chance Sabados

THE CAST (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

Jonesie Kevin Klassen
Al Sharon Melissa Langdon
Tallahassee Nolan Moberly

ELEVATE: Manaaji'idiwin is performed without an intermission.

ELEVATE: Manaaji'idiwin was originally developed by the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre through the Pimootayowin Creators Circle.

We acknowledge the following artists who contributed to the development of *ELEVATE: Manaaji'idiwin*:
 Graham Ashmore, Herbie Barnes, Clifford Cardinal, Gabriel Daniels, Rosanna Deerchild, Darrell Dennis,
 James Durham, Katie German, Joy Keeper, Kevin Klassen, Melissa Langdon, Nolan Moberly, Matthew Paris-Irvine,
 Alex Poch Goldin, Joshua Ranville, Ian Ross and Cynthia Wolfe-Nolin.

Special thanks: Royal MTC Board of Trustees for their financial support of the mural design by local Indigenous visual artist Peatr Thomas.

Production photography by Dylan Hewlett.

**Indicated designers on this production are represented by the Associated Designers of Canada, IATSE Local ADC659

*Position funded through the Jean Murray - Moray Sinclair Theatre Apprenticeship Program

†Past Jean Murray - Moray Sinclair apprenticeship or scholarship recipient



Kevin Klassen
Jonesie

ROYAL MTC Recent and selected: *The Sound of Music* (with Citadel), *Network* (with Citadel), *A Doll's House*, *It's a Wonderful Life: The Radio Play*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Shakespeare in Love* (with Citadel), *Sarah Ballenden*, *The Audience* (with Mirvish), *Chimerica* (with CS), *Alice Through the Looking-Glass*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Shunning*, *White Christmas*, *Bleeding Hearts*, *Our Town*, *The Tempest*, *Feelgood* (with GCTC).

OTHER THEATRE Recent and selected: *Mary Poppins* (Rainbow); *The Prom* (Dry Cold); *Othello* (Echo/Beau/Raven); *Mesa* (PTE); *Arcadia* (Citadel); *Antony and Cleopatra* (SIR); *Edward II* (TBTR); *John and Beatrice* (TPM); *Death of a Salesman* (WJT); *Peter Pan* (MTYP).

FILM/TV Recent and selected: *Acting Good*, *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, *Little Bird*, *Burden of Truth*, *The Pinkertons*, *Niagara Motel*.

TRAINING 2015 Citadel/Banff Professional Training Program; University of Winnipeg.

ET CETERA Grateful and honoured to be a part of this show. Love to Charlene and Phoebe.



Melissa Langdon
Al Sharon /
Assistant Dramaturg

ROYAL MTC Actor: *Little Women*, *The Three Musketeers*; Artistic Associate; Assistant Director: *The Mountaintop*, *Trouble in Mind* (with Citadel), *Orlando*; 2020/21 National Mentorship Program; Artistic Coordinator: *Tiny Plays*, *Big Ideas*.

OTHER THEATRE *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, *Hamlet* (SIR); *Voice* (PTE); *Spelling 2-5-5* (MTYP); *School Girls*; *Or The African Mean Girls Play* (Obsidian/Nightwood Theatre); *Blink* (One Trunk/W&T); *Home 2.0*, *The Game*, *New Beginnings* (Sarasvati); *O(phelia)* (ShakespeareFest); *Animosity* (Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival); *Time and the Conways*, *Concord Floral*, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (U of W).

FILM *Macbeth* (SIR/Blackfriar).

TRAINING Bachelor of Arts Honours in Theatre and Film Acting from the University of Winnipeg.

ET CETERA Dora Award: Outstanding Production and Toronto Theatre Critics' Choice Award: Outstanding Production of a Play (*School Girls*), Bethia Henry Memorial Scholarship in Theatre and Drama, Reg Skene Emerging Artist Award. Love you Matt ♥



Nolan Moberly
Tallahassee

ROYAL MTC First appearance.

OTHER THEATRE *Tales of an Urban Indian*, *Madame Minister* (TiFT); *Girl Who Loved Her Horses* (Centre for Indigenous Theatre).

TV *Hitler's Last Stand* (National Geographic); *My Lupine Life* (web series).

TRAINING Centre for Indigenous Theatre; Weengushk Film Institute.



David McLeod

Playwright

David McLeod is a member of Minegoziibe Anishinabe (Pine Creek First Nation, MB) with family roots also in the Métis village Camperville, MB. His early theatre experience was as an actor in Thompson Playhouse productions, Thompson Beer & Skits Nights and as a member of People for People, an Indigenous troupe, all based in Thompson, MB. In the early 2000's upon moving to Winnipeg, he was a regular in Winnipeg's spoken word scene and became a member of the Winnipeg Indigenous Writers Collective, going on to win the Winnipeg Centennial Library's inaugural spoken word competition. He became actively involved in theatre acting, appearing in the late Doug Nepinak's *Incident at Oka, Manitoba* during the Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival as well as a CBC radio adaptation. He acted in *Shakespeare In The Red*, staged at Prairie Theatre Exchange. David performed twice at the CBC Winnipeg Comedy Festival with stand-up written by Darrell Dennis. David's poetry and writing has appeared in anthologies: *Let the Drum Be My Heartbeat*, *Prairie Fire* and *Manitowapow: Aboriginal Writings from the Land of Water*, as well as IWC chapbooks *Urban Cool* and *Bone Memory*. He is truly thankful for the Pimootayowin experience to reconnect to writing with so many talented people and the opportunity to learn and grow as a writer.



Herbie Barnes

Director / Dramaturg

ROYAL MTC First engagement.

OTHER THEATRE Directing: *The Play That Goes Wrong* (Charlottetown Festival); *Something Rotten!*, *Urinetown the Musical* (Sheridan); *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* (YPT); *Tales of an Urban Indian* (Public Theater/Autry Theatre/TiFT); *The Music Man* (TiFT); *Oliver!* (Bluff City Theatre); *Inheritance* (Alley/Touchstone Theatre); *The Rememberer* (MTYP); *Dinky* (Native Earth Performing Arts). Acting: Bilbo Baggins in *The Hobbit* (YPT/Carousel Players/MTYP); Wickersham Brother in *Seussical the Musical* (MTYP); Norval Morrisseau in *Copper Thunderbird* (NAC). Script development and dramaturgy with YPT, Native Earth Performing Arts, Debajehmujig Theatre Group and MTYP.

FILM/TV Directing: *RepREZentin' in Fort Chip*, *The Rez*.

ET CETERA Herbie is an Anishinaabe theatre artist from Aundeck Omni Kaning First Nation on Manitoulin Island and was raised in Toronto. His play *Bent Boy* was workshopped at YPT and shortlisted for the Sharon Enkin Plays for Young People Award in 2020. Herbie is the Artistic Director of Young People's Theatre.

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William Layton
Set Designer

ROYAL MTC First engagement.

OTHER THEATRE *The Play That Goes Wrong* directed by Herbie Barnes, *Jersey Boys* (Charlottetown Festival); *The Great Gatsby*, *The Hobbit*, *Elf: The Musical*, *Shrek The Musical* (Grand – all directed by Susan Ferley); *The Freud Project: Civilization and Its Discontents* (Dora Award); *Mary Poppins* (YPT – Dora nomination for costume design).

FILM/TV *The Next Step* (10 seasons); *Da Kink in My Hair*; *Fall* (nominated for a Canadian Screen Award in production design); *Heaven on Earth* (written and directed by Depha Mehta); *Til Death Do Us Part* (with John Waters).

TRAINING The Art Institute of Chicago; The National Theatre School.

ET CETERA William is pleased to be back on the prairies where he grew up and wishes to thank the backstage artists and craftspeople who have elevated this production.



Amy McPherson
Costume Designer

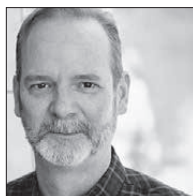
ROYAL MTC *The Comeback*, *The Secret to Good Tea*.

OTHER THEATRE *Blue Beads and Blueberries*, *Frozen River* (MTYP); *Tuesdays with Morrie*, *A Pickle*, *Pals* (WJT); *Owl Calling* (Root Sky Theatre).

FILM *The Nest* (National Film Board of Canada).

TRAINING Fashion Design and Apparel Production (MC College); Indigenous Haute Couture Residency (Banff Centre for Arts).

ET CETERA Always a pleasure to work with Royal MTC! Miigwetch/thank you.



Scott Henderson
Lighting Designer

ROYAL MTC 70 productions since 1995, including *Mix Tapes From My Mom*, *Sexual Misconduct of the Middle Classes*, *The Three Musketeers*, *The Cottage*, *John, Sense and Sensibility*, *A Christmas Carol* (2017, 2005), *Shakespeare in Love* (with Citadel), *Black Coffee*, *The Audience* (with Mirvish), *Billy Elliot the Musical*, *Next to Normal*, *Red* (with Belfry), *Top Girls*.

OTHER THEATRE Scott has designed lighting for opera, dance and theatre companies in Winnipeg and across Canada. Most recently he designed *Elixir of Love* for Manitoba Opera, *Tuesdays with Morrie* for WJT, and *Mabuhay!* and *Mary Poppins* for Rainbow Stage. Scott is also the Lighting Director for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet.

TRAINING Scott is a graduate of Toronto Metropolitan University (Ryerson Theatre School) and is a member of ADC659.

ET CETERA Special thanks to Karen, Sean and Alex for their love and support.



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ELEVATE: MANAAJI'IDIWIN



Jason Burnstick
Sound Designer &
Composer

ROYAL MTC *The Secret to Good Tea.*

ET CETERA 2021 Juno Nominee, 2020 Leo Award Winner for Composer of the Year for Best TV Movie and 1/2 of the multi-award-winning and nominated group Burnstick. Jason's many accolades also include 2015 Indigenous Music Award winner, 2010 APCA's Winner, 2009 Jessie Richardson and Dora Nominee, 2007 Juno Nominee and 2006 CAMA Award Winner. A Cree Musician, Singer-Songwriter/Composer based out of Winnipeg, Manitoba. Jason's musical expression has found its voice in his collection of original vintage 1920's Weissenborn lap slide guitars.



Rick Skene
Fight Director

ROYAL MTC *among men* (with TPM), *The Three Musketeers*, *Venus in Fur*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Richard III*, *Oleanna*, *Macbeth*, *Burn This*, *Good Night Desdemona* (*Good Morning Juliet*), *Noises Off*, *Burn This*, *The Miracle Worker*, *The Lonesome West*, *Shakespeare's Dog*, *The Boys in the Photograph*, *Wait until Dark*, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*.

OTHER THEATRE PTE, MTYP, TPM, MB Opera, Rainbow Stage, RWB and Théâtre Cercle Molière. Rick was co-founder and associate artistic director of TPM.

FILM/TV 35 years of over 200 credits as a stunt coordinator, 2nd unit director, stunt driver and stunt performer.

TEACHING 35 years teaching Acting, Stage Combat, Filmmaking, Mime and Improvisation at the U of W Department of Theatre and Film.

ET CETERA As always, Rick would like to give a big thank you shout out to his wife Jan who, as he is quick to point out, holds his universe together.



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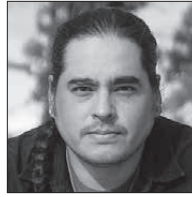
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Peatr Thomas
Mural Designer

Peatr Thomas is a self-taught mural artist of Inineew and Anishinaabe heritage from Pimicikamak. Raised on reserve, he transitioned to city life at 14 in 2001, where he discovered his voice through Winnipeg's street art scene. Over the past decade, Peatr has woven cultural teachings into his work, and facilitated workshops with youth across Turtle Island to create murals and canvas art. peatrthomas.com



Cali Sproule
Assistant Director

ROYAL MTC First engagement.

OTHER THEATRE 40 Below (Winnipeg Fringe); *Saplings* (One Trunk Theatre - Rehearsal Director); *How They'll Tell It* (ViC Staged Reading); *The Little Forest* (Wagonstage Theatre); *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Theatre Calgary Shakespeare on the Go - Assistant Director to Jane MacFarlane); *poor recollections* (Sage Theatre IGNITE! Festival); *Much Ado About Nothing, Here We Go* (University of Calgary).

TRAINING MFA in Directing (University of Manitoba); BA in Theatre & Psychology (University of Manitoba Black Hole Theatre Company); Intimacy Directors and Coordinators (IDC).

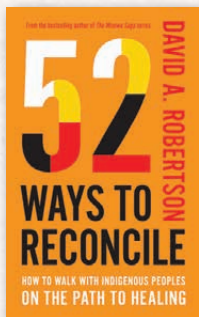
ET CETERA Upcoming: *How They'll Tell It* at the Gargoyle Theatre. :)



**M McNALLY
ROBINSON**

Recommended Reading

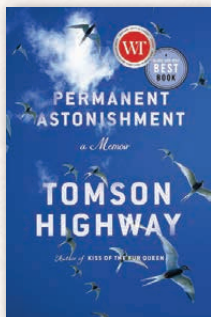
inspired by *ELEVATE: Manaaji'idiwin*



52 Ways to Reconcile

by David A. Robertson

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Permanent Astonishment

by Tomson Highway



Cold

by Drew Hayden Taylor



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WHEN YOU SUPPORT US, YOU SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY

ELEVATE: MANAAJI'IDIWIN



Monique Gauthier

Assistant Lighting Designer

ROYAL MTC 2024/25 National Mentorship Program.

OTHER THEATRE Lighting Designer: *The Mailroom, World's Fair 1876, Breaking Up With Me* (JHG Creative); *The Antipodes* (The 28th Minute). Apprentice Stage Manager: *Blue Beads and Blueberries* (MTYP). Stage Manager: *The Ultimate Actor's Nightmare* (Club Soda Improv). Misc.: *Hamlet: The Modern Player's Guide* (SIR).

TRAINING University of Manitoba Theatre Program; MTYP's Sandbox.

ET CETERA For her work with her independent company, JHG Creative, Moe has twice been awarded the Harry S. Rintoul Award and was named as one of 2023's Most Fascinating Manitobans. She is also the board vice-chair of TPM. Moe will be the lighting designer for The 28th Minute's production of *A Steetcar Named Desire* this summer. She would like to thank her family and friends for their love and support!



Ridge Romanishen

Stage Manager

ROYAL MTC SM: *King James, among men* (with TPM). ASM: *Little Women, The Comeback*. Apprentice SM: *Sexual Misconduct of the Middle Classes, The Three Musketeers, Calpurnia*.

OTHER THEATRE PSM: *Trigger Warning: Cassandra* (Sick + Twisted). SM: *Iago Speaks, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Shakespeare's Will* (SIR); *Narnia* (Bad Hats Theatre/MTYP); *A Pickle* (WJT); *The Velveteen Rabbit* (MTYP); *The Marriage of Figaro* (Manitoba Underground Opera). ASM: *Bed & Breakfast* (Capitol Theatre/PTE); *Mary Poppins* (Rainbow Stage); *Feast* (PTE). Apprentice SM: *Narrow Bridge, The Golem's Mighty Swing* (WJT); *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (Dry Cold).

TRAINING Ridge is a Graduate of the University of Winnipeg's Theatre and Film Program with Honours in Stage Management.

ET CETERA Ridge is thrilled to be back working with Royal MTC this season. He would like to thank all his friends, family and husband for their support and, of course, the fabulous folks at Royal MTC for another amazing opportunity to create live theatre again!



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Katie Schmidt
Assistant Stage
Manager

ROYAL MTC Assistant Stage Manager: *The Lehman Trilogy*, *The Sound of Music*, *Into the Woods*, *The Runner*. Apprentice Stage Manager: *The Cottage*, *A Doll's House*, *Sense and Sensibility*. Apprentice Costumer: Sarah Ballenden.

OTHER THEATRE Stage Manager: *A Year with Frog and Toad*, *Snow White*, *Frozen River*, *Tiny Treasures* (MTYP); *The Magic Flute* (The Little Opera Company); *The Prom* (Dry Cold). Assistant Stage Manager: *Die Fledermaus* (Vancouver Opera); *The Wizard of Oz* (Rainbow); *The Outside Inn*, *Bad Parent*, *VOICE* (PTE). Apprentice Stage Manager: *Ghost Light* (PTE). Costumer: *Mary's Wedding* (TPM). Props and Set Coordinator: *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Player King*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Hamlet*, *Timon of Athens*, *Romeo and Juliet* (SIR).

TRAINING University of Winnipeg Theatre and Film.

ET CETERA Thanks and love to Mom, Dad, Raya and Felix.



Chance Sabados
Apprentice Stage
Manager

ROYAL MTC First engagement.

OTHER THEATRE *The Comedy of Errors*, *Arcadia*, *Conversation at Night With a Despised Character* (U of M).

TRAINING Graduate of the University of Manitoba.

ET CETERA Chance would like to thank his friends and family for their continued support, and he hopes you enjoy the show! ●

ENRICH YOUR EXPERIENCE!

Do you want to delve deeper into the themes of the play? For every show we release an enrichment guide with help from experts and educators. This guide offers background context, resources to explore and discussion questions to keep the conversation going. Read them at royalmtc.ca/enrichmentguides.



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DUNCAN COX AND MELANIE WHYTE IN *MURDER FOR TWO*. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT.



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EXPLORE MORE ELEVATE: Manaaji'idiwin

MORE HUMOROUS TAKES ON RECONCILIATION

***Bury My Heart at Chuck E. Cheese's* by Tiffany Midge.** This collection weaves witty memoirs together with hilarious musings on life, identity, and the current political climate in the United States. Midge, a Hunkpapa Lakota of the Standing Rock Sioux, explores what it means to be an Indigenous person today, using satire, humour and blunt honesty to tell her stories. 818.608 MIDGE 2019

***The Prairie Chicken Dance Tour* by Dawn Dumont.** A witty and comedic story of a group of Indigenous dancers who find themselves together on a 15-day performance tour of Europe and hilarity ensues. Loosely based on a true story of a group of Indigenous dancers from Saskatchewan who toured Europe in the 1970s. FICTION DUMONT

***Indians on Vacation* by Thomas King.** Inspired by a handful of old postcards sent by an uncle nearly a hundred years earlier, Bird and Mimi attempt to trace Mimi's long-lost uncle and the family medicine bundle he took with him to Europe. FICTION KING

MORE INDIGENOUS PLAYWRIGHTS
***Women of the Fur Trade* by Frances Koncan.** Historical satire told from the perspectives of three women: a Métis Taurus, an Ojibwe Sagittarius and a British Virgo to be exact, during the height of the Canadian fur trade in Treaty One territory. *Women of the Fur Trade*

premiered at Royal MTC in February 2020. 819.26 KONCAN 2022

***The Rez Sisters* by Tomson Highway.** Award-winning play which is the portrayal of seven women from a reserve attempting to beat the odds by winning at the biggest bingo in the world. 819.254 HIG

***Sir John A: Acts of a Gentrified Ojibwe Rebellion* by Drew Hayden Taylor.** A satirical play that explores reconciliation and brings to life the patriarchal character of Canada's first Prime Minister whose bones are held for ransom by the star of the play - Anishinaabe man Bobby Rabbit. 819.254 TAYLOR 2018

MORE STORIES ABOUT BEING STUCK IN AN ELEVATOR

***The Escape Room* by Meagan Goldin.** Four high-flyers in the lucrative world of Wall Street finance are ordered to participate in a team-building exercise which requires them to escape from a locked elevator. Things go horribly wrong in this thriller and dark secrets start to emerge. FICTION GOLDIN

***If I Never Met You* by Mhairi McFarlane.** This heartfelt romantic comedy features a chance encounter in a broken-down elevator with the office playboy, offering our heroine a new possibility. He doesn't believe in love but she starts to actually fall for this charming, handsome man despite her best intentions. FICTION ROM MCFARLANE ●

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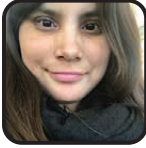
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Pimootayowin Creators Circle

Since 2020, the Pimootayowin Creators Circle, led by Ian Ross, has not only served as a place of learning, but a place of community. This year's cohort, comprised of Andrea Friesen, Dannielle Morrisseau, Donnie Osler, Julia Ross, Kirby Fults and Martha Troian, have been developing their original works while gaining skills in storytelling and playwriting to showcase during Pimootayowin: A Festival of New Work in September 2025.

"Pimootayowin has opened a part of me that I didn't know was there. Telling stories has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. I was a poor student in school and felt that writing was not something I would ever be good at. Being chosen for this experience has changed my view of myself and my ability to create something that, I feel, is valuable. The positive support from other Indigenous writers has changed my view on myself and my abilities to tell stories in written format. MTC and Ian Ross' vision of support and promotion for new Indigenous playwrights is a true step in what the concept of reconciliation means. I am honoured to be part of this. I am grateful." – Kirby Fults

Royal MTC is committed to developing and supporting Indigenous storytellers and we are thrilled to have the privilege of

producing another Pimootayowin world premiere, *In the Shadow Beyond the Pines* by Rhonda Apetagon, as part of our 2025/26 Royal MTC Warehouse Season.

"TD Bank Group is very proud to support the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre's work to amplify the voices of Indigenous artists through the Pimootayowin Creators Circle. At TD, we believe the arts have the power to unite us and create a sense of belonging. Through the TD Ready Commitment, our corporate citizenship platform, we're investing in arts and culture initiatives that reflect the diversity of our communities and bring people together."

– Michael Warren, District Vice President, Manitoba North, TD Bank Group ●

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Enriching Young Lives Through the Power of Theatre

"I have been bringing students for over 20 years now and love to witness how much the students love the performances."

"Everything about the evening was mesmerizing, from the helpful friendly staff and volunteers, to the set and performances. It was a delight!" – High school teachers

Royal MTC welcomed youth from across Manitoba and beyond to experience our 24/25 season, providing subsidized ticket prices with the assistance of Canada Life.

This season we were happy to welcome classrooms back into our theatre to see any performance they wished. **3,805 students** and teachers in high school and university joined us for student-only matinees of *The Play That Goes Wrong*, *Little Women*, *Waitress*, *Indecent*, *Casey and Diana* and *Murder for Two*.

So far this season, **3,634 students** and teachers joined us for other matinees and evening performances at the Mainstage and Warehouse.

"Not only do performances provide entertainment, but they challenge young minds to consider questions outside of the curricular connections of storytelling, expression, and performance itself. In some cases, it plants seeds for a future outside our school walls. That's something very special to witness." – Middle school teacher

Outside of class trips, **2,310 youth** attended evening and weekend performances thanks to discounted tickets for those under age 18.

We're looking forward to hosting your classes in 2025/26! Advance booking will be available on June 5, and we expect shows to sell fast! Teachers can explore all our plays with topics and age recommendations at RoyalMTC.ca/Upcoming and if you'd like more information about tickets for your students, please get in touch with Ksenia at kbroadamian@royalmtc.ca to get on our newsletter list. ●

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Theatre Under 30

Our Theatre Under 30 program offers the chance to book \$20 tickets to any production of our season to young people age 18-29. So far this season we've had **886 members** who have bought **2,313 tickets**. It's easy to sign up at RoyalMTC.ca/Under30 and once you do, a promo code will be sent to you for each production. ●



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creative
young minds

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Extracurricular Youth Programs

PHOTO BY LEIF NORMAN



Backstage Pass Students making faux food.

This season we ran three free programs for youth in grades 10-12.

Student Shadow Days, a new program, welcomed seven students to each experience a solo day behind the scenes at MTC with a tour, conversations with staff, and a visit to rehearsal or observing a show alongside the stage manager.

In Young Expressions, 16 students were invited to opening nights to hear from an artist or reviewer guest, see performances, and express their reactions. At their final session, the group will create a zine together celebrating their experiences and favourite moments over the season.

In Backstage Pass, 16 students experienced six eye-opening workshops led by theatre professionals, then attended matinees. After each show they participated in a Talkback session with actors. Students explored set design, stage combat, acting, marketing, stage

management, props and playwriting. Here are some of their session responses:

"It was fun to see the different aspects and jobs of theatre. The variety of everything is really cool."

"This really put into perspective how much goes into a show that isn't the acting. I've also never been so sure of what I want to do with my life."

"I am going to use this new knowledge in my [school] theatre club."

"I really enjoyed using my skills for something new and different."

"Our instructor was so amazing and provided so much great knowledge. I can't wait to continue to grow."

"I loved the amount of creative freedom we had."

"I really enjoyed being able to see everyone's talent and hard work."

"Any time I come here I always leave with new information."

"Theatre people are so nice!"

"I learned so much about what goes on behind the scenes in theatre. It has been so awesome!"

If you or a young person in your life would like to join a free program next year, check out **RoyalMTC.ca/Youth** – applications are open from May 12 – October 7! ●



For youth aged 16-23 who can't wait until fall for more theatre, Royal MTC partners with the Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival to offer **NextGen Fringers!** Sign up for this free program at **RoyalMTC.ca/NextGen**.



Elevating arts and culture

Air Canada is a proud airline partner of the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre's Black & White Ball. We soar together when we support arts and cultural institutions in the communities we serve.

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Rodrigo Bellfuss in
The Three Musketeers

LET'S GET DRAMATIC

Before you head out for the summer, **become a member of MTC's Drama Club**, our monthly giving program. Whether you're lounging on a deck or digging in your garden, you'll be actively supporting exceptional theatre. You can donate \$5, \$20, \$100 or any amount every month.

Trust us, **it's completely brag-worthy.** "Sandra, I deserve that extra glass of pinot because I'm actively supporting theatre while we're on this patio."

While you're off enjoying the brilliance of Manitoban summers, MTC will be busy at work. Our crews do regular maintenance keeping our spaces updated. Creative teams

are busy hosting workshops, crafting designs, and there are plenty of meetings keeping our season on track.

Monthly donating to MTC is easy. Really! It's a "set it and forget it" way to be generous, like having a subscription to a streaming service (or five...). But instead of a receipt, you get a gratitude email filled with thoughtful and quirky stories about MTC.

You can donate any amount every month. You can stop, pause or change your donation amount at anytime.

Don't hesitate, join Drama Club today and you're sure to have a wonderful summer!

"A fun and very informative email! I love these updates!!!"

— DRAMA CLUB MEMBER



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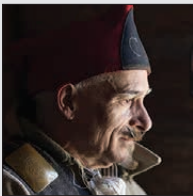
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FINAL BOW

The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre honours the passing of those dear to our theatre – people who've made a lasting contribution to this ephemeral art form.



Louis Gagné – Louis was one of the longest serving staff members at Royal MTC as a casual in 1990 and then moving up to a Layout Carpenter in 2006. Louis had deep connections in our city and anytime we see an iconic moustache, we will think of him. “*Louis always had the joie de vivre, always had a smile, a chuckle, and a twinkle in his eye.*” – Brent Letain



Gary Plouffe – Gary played a key role behind, around and above the scenes at Royal MTC as House Stage Hand. During seven seasons of Mainstage productions, he had his art down to a science as he quickly raised and lowered drops from the fly gallery with finesse. His sense of humor and ability to make any situation fun and enjoyable, will be tremendously missed.

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Royal MTC staff on the set of *Waitress*. PHOTO BY DAVE SWIECICKI



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National Mentorship Program

In the performing arts, networking is a crucial component to propel an artist's career and set them up for future success to work on our stages and at similar theatres across the country. Too often, we see our local talent base seek opportunities for both training and employment in other parts of the country, often resulting in a permanent move out of Manitoba. For IBPOC artists, this exodus is even more prevalent.

Now in its fifth year, the National Mentorship Program has supported the development of local theatre practitioners overcoming the barriers of geographic isolation and continue skill development and training. A quick glance through any Ovation program demonstrates how program alumni are making their mark as actors, directors, stage managers, designers, administrators, and theatre creators.

Performer Rhea Rodych-Rasidescu from the 2023 cohort is a face you may have seen here at Royal MTC. *"My time working with Fiona Sauder (Artistic Director of Bad Hat's Theatre) through Royal MTC's National Mentorship Program laid fundamental values, practices, and connections that are now the pillars of my artistic pursuit. They helped me recognize and hone my artistic 'superpowers'. Some of these superpowers are directly related to performance, and some are connected to other practices such as writing, devising, directing and musicianship. Not only did I get to cultivate transferable skills during my time with Fiona; I also got clarity on my career goals which strengthened my confidence and creative freedom. I had so much personal and professional growth during this mentorship, all of which is directly related to my success on stages all across the country; and of course, here at Royal MTC, where it all began."* ●

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