

Greystone Gossip

February 2018
Volume 1, Issue 1

Welcome to the inaugural edition of *Greystone Gossip*, the newsletter for Greystone Theatre at the University of Saskatchewan.

We started off the season with a production of Morris Panych's absurd dark comedy, *Girl in the Goldfish Bowl*, directed by Natasha Martina. The small cast of six was anchored by Sam Fairweather who played Iris, the titular 10-year old girl whose life seems to be coming apart at the seams.

Stephanie McKay from *The StarPhoenix* wrote in her review of the show: "Panych's script is exceedingly funny, but also challenging. Its dialogue is dense, particularly for its loquacious main character, and demands that its cast master comic timing in order for the jokes to land. Characters are constantly interrupting one another in a conversational way. The young actors handle this challenge extremely well and, as a result, have the audience in regular stitches.

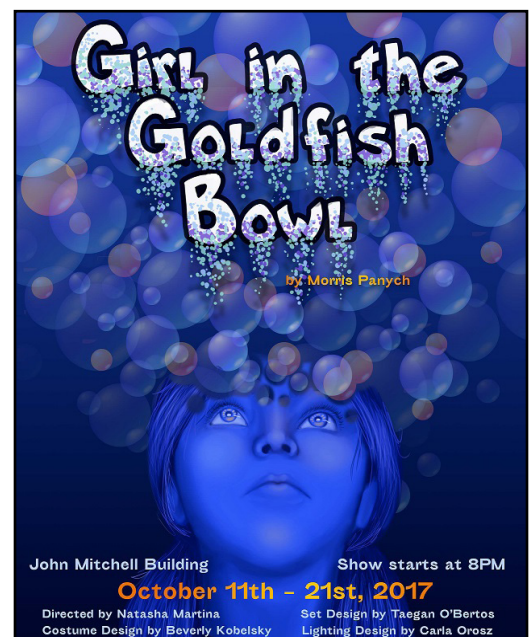
Fairweather commands the script, talking a mile a minute and fully inhabiting the mind and body of a 10-year-old. Her physicality is suitably bouncy and uninhibited, no surprise given director Natasha

Martina's expertise in movement. She's immensely charming in the role with her wide-eyed curiosity and complete lack of filter."

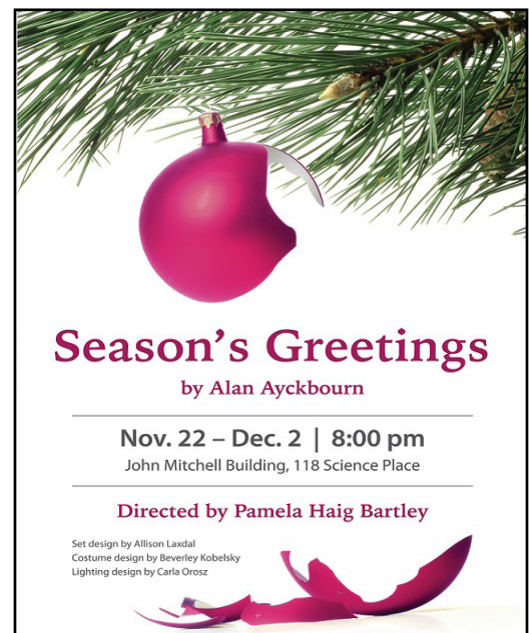
Our next show was the crowd-pleasing holiday farce *Season's Greetings* by Alan Ayckbourn, directed by Pamela Haig Bartley. This fast-paced comic exploration of the darkly comedic nature of middle-class, suburban life proved to be a welcome challenge for cast and crew alike.

As noted by Blake Graham in his review of the show for *The Sheaf*, the University of Saskatchewan newspaper, "The entire cast works well together and they convincingly capture the dry humour and tone of British comedy — an accomplishment that a less competent company would struggle with.... Despite the dryness of British comedy, the insults that the characters constantly hurl at each other feel all too familiar for those of us who have experienced this type of family dysfunction....

Overall, Greystone Theatre's *Season's Greetings* is an enjoyable play to watch. It has clear direction, competent actors, and evidently, a hard-working crew. I look forward to seeing what they will do with their forthcoming productions."



Poster designed by Taegan O'Bertos



Poster designed by Allison Laxdal

Girl in the Goldfish Bowl



Iris (Sam Fairweather) with her fishbowl



Sylvia (Kaelee Dyck) and Owen (Mackenzie Dawson)



Rose (Julia Opdahl) casts a disapproving look



The bizarre visitor, Mr. Lawrence (Michael Martin)



Girl in the Goldfish Bowl Cast (L to R): Mackenzie Dawson as Owen, Kaelee Dyck as Sylvia, Sam Fairweather as Iris, Paige Francoeur as Iris (Understudy), Michael Martin as Mr. Lawrence, Julia Opdahl as Rose

SEASON'S GREETINGS



Belinda (Kaelee Dyck) decorating the tree



Bernard (Kyler Bueckert) and his infamous puppet show



Clive (Max Perez) as Santa with Neville (James Mayo)



Phyllis (Sam Fairweather) deep in thought



Season's Greetings Cast: Top Row (L to R): Max Perez as Clive, Emily Rempel as Rachel, Bottom Row (L to R): Matthew Wiwichar as Eddie, Pieterrella Kielstra as Pattie, Kyler Bueckert as Bernard, Sam Fairweather as Phyllis, Kaelee Dyck as Belinda, James Mayo as Neville, Seated: Michael Martin as Harvey

All photos pgs 1-3 credit: Dave Stobbe

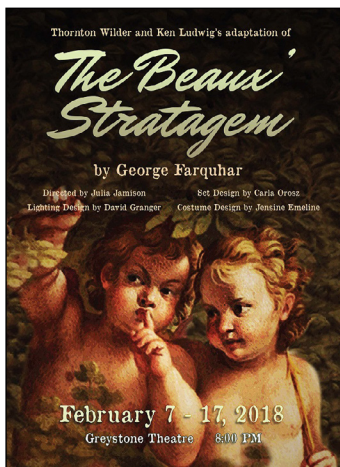
We have two upcoming shows to watch for:

Feb 7 - 17 |
8:00pm

The Beaux' Stratagem

By George Farquhar,
adapted by Thornton
Wilder & Ken Ludwig

Directed by Julia
Jamison



Poster designed by Brooklynn Bitner

Two fortune-hunting rogues meet their match as they encounter the vibrant characters of 18th-century rural England. Posing as master and servant, they engage in one rollicking scheme after another.

March 21 - 31 | 8:00pm

Spirit Wrestler By Greg Nelson

Directed by Carol Greyeyes

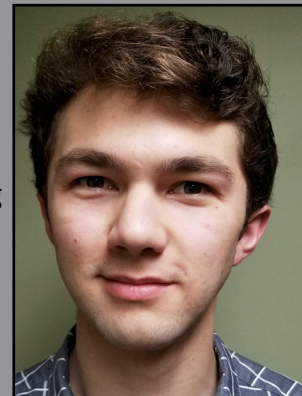
Nikolai, a young Russian Doukhor, must choose between obedience to his religious leader and truth in his heart. The compelling story of the Doukhobors' flight from Russia in search of religious freedom and a new life in Saskatchewan.

To order tickets, call (306) 966-5188 or order online at:
artsandscience.usask.ca/drama

Tickets go on sale two weeks before each show. No assigned seating. Wheelchair accessible (please call in advance). No shows on Sundays.

Interview with Mackenzie Dawson

Mackenzie Dawson is a 4th year BFA Acting student who is the assistant director for *The Beaux' Stratagem*. He played the role of Owen in the Greystone production of *Girl in the Goldfish Bowl*. He is also President of the Drama Students Association.



Tell me a little bit about *The Beaux' Stratagem*.

The Beaux' Stratagem is a Restoration comedy full of love, wit, and charm. Two rogues come into the country seeking wealthy money to marry, but they find love instead. What a dilemma! Everything about this play is fun and full of life, even the bad guys! *Beaux'* is the ray of sunshine we all need in the middle of winter.

What has it been like so far as an assistant director?

My job as assistant director is to act as a second set of eyes for the director, Julia Jamison, and to provide insight on matters such as blocking and the work of the cast. The most gratifying aspect of this role has been working one-on-one with actors, and then seeing their work bloom on a larger scale in rehearsals. It is exciting to see actors grow!

What was your most memorable experience with Greystone Theatre?

When we were performing *Girl in the Goldfish Bowl*, I had to flip a spatula at the end of the show, and catch it. It seemed easy enough in rehearsal, but throughout the first four performances, I couldn't catch that spatula to save my life. On the fifth night, I finally caught it, and I never looked back. Don't get cocky, kids.

CONGRATULATIONS

to Natasha Martina and the cast of *Displaced*, which headed to the Singapore Fringe Festival. It was listed as one of the Fringe Highlights, playing from January 26-28.

Displaced was created by Natasha Martina in collaboration with Sue Mythen. It premiered at the St-Ambroise Montreal Fringe Festival in 2015, where it received nominations for "Best English Production" and "Best English Text". It also played at the 2015 PotashCorp Saskatoon Fringe Festival, where it received 5 stars from *The StarPhoenix*.

Displaced tells the stories of three female immigrants coming to Canada during vastly different points in history: Mary is fleeing from Ireland during the famine of 1847, Sofia is escaping from war-torn Germany in 1947 and Dara is deserting Afghanistan due to the Taliban rule in 2007. Though their situations are varied, their struggles to assimilate to a new country and its cultural customs have parallels, which are highlighted through movement, original music and text.



Photo credit: S.E. Grummett



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Around the Department

Past Events:



A group of performing artists led by Charlie Peters (BFA '13) and Curtis Peeteetuce joined academics from History, English and Drama to explore the intersections of language, story and culture in Sophocles' *Antigone* and traditional Cree Stories. Co-presented with Classical, Medieval, and Renaissance Studies, the Museum of Antiquities, and ICCC, it was hosted in John Mitchell Building on Monday September 18.



Award-winning actor, Adam Beech, gave the Gail Appel Lecture on Monday October 2. His presentation, "Rewriting the Hollywood Indian" took place in Convocation Hall. He also gave a private master class for Drama students earlier that afternoon in the John Mitchell building.



Professor Emeritus of French, David Edney, gave a lecture on Jean Giraudoux's Paris entitled "A Glimpse of Paris: Then and Now". This talk was co-presented with the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies. It was hosted in the John Mitchell building on Thursday October 9.



The North Studio of the John Mitchell building hosted two recent Shakesperian productions. The first was *Macbeth*, presented by the 3rd year Drama students. It ran from December 8-10, 2017. The second was *Henry IV, Parts 1 & 2*, presented by YXE Shakespeare Lab and directed by Interdisciplinary Studies MA student, Skye Brandon (BFA '00). It ran from January 3-20, 2018.

Student & Alumni Accomplishments:

Thanks to generous funding from the foundation of Heather Ryan and David Dubé, the Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan Festival has hired four emerging artists in partnership with the University of Saskatchewan.

Three are current students: Mackenzie Dawson, who will be playing Slender in *Merry Wives of Windsor* and Puppeteer in *Titus A.*, Morgan Murphy, who will be Apprentice Stage Manager and Rory Jewiss, who will be Assistant Head of Wardrobe. The fourth is an alumna, S. E. Grummett (BFA '16), who will be Assistant Director of *Titus A.* Additionally, Interdisciplinary Studies MA student, Skye Brandon, will be playing the title role in *Hamlet*. Other alumni active as cast and crew in the 2018 company include Joshua Beaudry, Daniel Ford Beavis, Jenna Berenbaum, Jacqueline Block, Kristi Friday, Crispi Lord, Carla Orosz, and Elizabeth Nepjuk.

Three of our alumni were honored at the 2017 Saskatoon and Area Theatre Awards at a gala at Persephone Theatre. Anna Mazurik (BFA '16) won the Outstanding Emerging Artist award, Kristi Friday (BFA '00) won a best actor award for her work in *The Pink Unicorn*, and Robert Grier (BFA '17) won the Outstanding Musical Direction award for his work on *Twelfth Night* at the Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan festival.

Upcoming Event:

Yvette Nolan will be hosting a public lecture entitled "The Secret of Joy: Re-Claiming Rita Joe" on Wednesday March 7 at 12pm in the North Studio of the John Mitchell building.



In 1969, the National Arts Centre opened in Ottawa with a production of *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*. Commissioned to celebrate Canada's centennial, written by George Ryga, a Canadian of Ukrainian descent, Rita Joe was an indictment of the relationship between First Nations and Canadians after 100 years. Forty years later Algonquin theatre practitioner Yvette Nolan directed an anniversary production for the National Arts Centre, English Theatre. The experience of mounting an Indigenous production offers illumination about the process of "Indigenizing the Institution".



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