



FEBRUARY

BASED ON THE BOOK BY LISA MOORE
COMPOSED BY LAURA KAMINSKY
LIBRETTO BY KAMINSKY & MOORE



15



Message from The Lieutenant Governor



As Patron of Opera on the Avalon (OOTA), I welcome you to the World Premiere of *February* – a powerful operatic performance portraying a tragic event in the history of our province.

OOTA, Atlantic Canada's only professional opera company, is an integral contributor to our artistic community. The company's commitment to championing diversity and innovation, while developing new repertoire which honours our history, has made a mark on the international stage.

Now celebrating its 15th season, OOTA has once again collaborated with both established and emerging artists to create engaging performances that push the boundaries of opera and musical theatre. In keeping with their vision of creating a community where all feel welcome and empowered to participate, the redesigned Young Artist Program continues to invent enriching experiences that foster public engagement and inclusivity.

His Honour and I are delighted to extend our congratulations to the exceptional performers, and those behind the scenes, who work together to bring important stories like this one to life.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Judy M. Foote".

Judy M. Foote, P.C., O.N.L.
Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador



MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

It is often through music, art and the written word that we, as people, navigate unbearable tragedy.

Here in Newfoundland and Labrador we have become masters of these crafts.

The sinking of the Ocean Ranger in 1982 left an indelible mark on Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, reminding us of the fragility of our existence when we are challenged by nature's power.

In her award-winning novel, **February**, Lisa Moore captured the essence of the tremendous grief felt by the families of the 84 men who perished that day, and the rippling effects of their tragic loss on an entire generation.

On behalf of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, I extend my congratulations to Lisa Moore, Laura Kaminsky and Opera on the Avalon, as they bring this remarkable and thought-provoking story to a new audience.

We are fortunate to have such incredible talent in our artistic community, and I know that you will be both moved and inspired by this performance.

Please enjoy the show.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Furey". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Honourable Dr. Andrew Furey
Premier

A Message from the Mayor

On behalf of Council, it is my pleasure to extend well wishes for a successful fifteenth year for Opera on the Avalon.

The City of St. John's is a proud supporter of the arts and of this unique organization. Opera on the Avalon translates our history and culture into arts, entertainment, and education with seamless ease and grace—there is no doubt that they will uphold and exceed this reputation in their rendition of Lisa Moore's novel, *February*. I know that this performance will be a heartfelt tribute to the heartbreak experienced by family, friends, and Newfoundlanders and Labradorians the world over from the 84 irreplaceable souls that we had lost in the sinking of the Ocean Ranger on February 14, 1982.

I would like to express my appreciation for the hard work and dedication of all staff members involved in facilitating what is sure to be an outstanding and powerful performance, and I thank you for the significant contributions that you make to the unmatched culture of our City.

Best wishes –



Danny Breen,
Mayor





A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

Welcome to Opera on the Avalon's 15th festival season. Whether you are an artist, a sponsor, or an audience member, your support has helped us get through many challenges over the past two years. We are thrilled to have you back in person with us.

Opera on the Avalon is a professional operatic company that focuses on joining together emerging and established musicians in a collaborative environment. Our festival provides an opportunity for local young artists to perform beside internationally distinguished musicians and professionals, while also welcoming accomplished performers from across the world to experience the culture of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The goal of Opera on the Avalon is to provide an exceptional operatic experience for both talented young musicians and established artists while enriching our community with their outstanding performances.

Opera on the Avalon is committed to creating a strong legacy of opera performance in the City of St. John's and the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The future of Opera on the Avalon is dependent on community support. We rely on your donations, the sponsorships of private companies and public agencies, the dedication of our volunteers and billet hosts, and our loyal concert-goers to make this company a success. We invite you to share with us the joy and beauty of opera music. Thank you for helping complete the musical heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Kevin Woodbury

*Kevin Woodbury
Board of Directors Chair*



A MESSAGE

FROM OUR GENERAL & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

I am thrilled to welcome you to the World Premiere of *February*. Sincere thanks to the incredible community of talented artists, generous donors, and committed audiences and volunteers who have stuck beside us despite the hardship of the last few years and without whom this production would not have been possible.

At the core of our vision and purpose lies an unwavering commitment to artistic excellence. Opera on the Avalon is not only a stage for showcasing performances by established, emerging, and underrepresented artists; it is a vibrant tapestry of diversity, inclusivity, and community. Through the transformative power of art, we aim to forge connections that transcend boundaries and unite people from all walks of life.

Tonight, we embark on a poignant journey as we present *February*, a deeply moving portrayal of the tragic sinking of the Ocean Ranger off the coast of Newfoundland. This powerful production serves as a tribute to the lives lost and stands as a testament to the indomitable spirit of the East Coast. It is a story that encapsulates our shared history and transforms it into art—a narrative that resonates not only within our local community but also with audiences around the globe.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our esteemed Board Chair, Kevin Woodbury, and all the dedicated members of our board for their unwavering support and guidance. Additionally, I must express my profound appreciation to our Resident Conductor, Judith Yan, whose visionary leadership has been instrumental in inspiring our community of artists, volunteers, team members, and supporters to fulfill our mandate of turning history into art. Together, we have forged a path forward, championing our mission and ensuring that Opera on the Avalon continues to be a beacon of pride for Atlantic Canada. I look forward to continuing to work together with all of our partners and stakeholders to nurture and develop the Opera on the Avalon community, and to make Atlantic Canada's only opera company one to be proud of all over the world.

As we gather here tonight, let us take a moment to remember those lost with the sinking of the Ocean Ranger. May *February* ignite our hearts, stir our emotions, and remind us of the profound impact that art can have in healing and uniting communities.

With Sincere Thanks

Cheryl Hickman

Cheryl Hickman
General & Artistic Director



Opera on the Avalon is the voice of opera on the East Coast. From our innovative productions to our partnerships within our communities, we are bringing our audiences experiences that are unique, meaningful and accessible to all.

operaontheavalon.com

OUR TEAM

Cheryl Hickman	GENERAL & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Judith Yan	RESIDENT CONDUCTOR & MUSIC DIRECTOR
Amanda Klein	GENERAL MANAGER
Kate Stenson	DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS & PRODUCTION MANAGER
Sarah Antle	DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
Walter Noseworthy	SPECIAL EVENTS AND PROGRAM COORDINATOR
James Newhook	VIDEOGRAPHER & DIGITAL SPECIALIST
Keith Roberts	RESIDENT COSTUME DESIGNER

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FEBRUARY

Photo by: Dave Howells

Based on the acclaimed novel by Lisa Moore, *February* is a powerful portrayal of family members whose lives were irrevocably altered when the Ocean Ranger, a drilling rig, sank off the coast of Newfoundland. Shifting between the past and present, we follow the fictional Helen O'Mara and her son John: Helen navigates widowhood's grief and motherhood struggles and eventually finds love again. John, immersed in a career in the oil industry that killed his father, struggles with ambivalence about becoming a father himself.

On the evening of February 14th, 1982, a violent storm raged through Newfoundland's Grand Banks. At 1:30 local time, Ocean Ranger transmitted its last message: "There will be no further radio communications from Ocean Ranger. We are going to lifeboat stations." Ninety minutes later, Ocean Ranger sank. There were no survivors; all 84 lives on board were lost. While the storm was a clear cause for the disaster, investigations proved a more complex explanation: a lack of crew training and safety protocols and management more concerned with cash flow than the well-being of the workers and the vessel. While focusing on Helen and John, *February* delves into the shared, enduring grief of a community struck by tragedy and the continuing impact of the oil industry as we grapple with climate change.

Dedicated to the 84 men who perished on the Ocean Ranger, and to their families and loved ones.

ABOUT THE CREATORS



Laura Kaminsky
Composer



Lisa Moore
Author

Laura Kaminsky | Composer & Co-Librettist

Possessing “an ear for the new and interesting” (The New York Times), Laura Kaminsky frequently addresses social and political issues in her work with a distinct musical language that is “full of fire as well as ice, contrasting dissonance and violence with tonal beauty and meditative reflection.” (American Record Guide). *As One* (co-librettists Mark Campbell and Kimberly Reed) is the most produced contemporary opera since its 2014 premiere, with 60+ productions to date internationally. In addition to *February*, other operas include *Some Light Emerges* and *Today It Rains* (Campbell and Reed), *Hometown to the World* (Reed), and *Finding Wright* (Andrea Fellows Fineberg). With librettist David Cote she is creating *Lucidity* for a consortium led by New York's On-Site Opera, and, with poet Elaine Sexton, a chamber opera in poems, *The Post Office*, for Queen City Opera. Awarded the Polish Gold Cross of Merit (Złoty Krzyż Zasługi RP) by the President of Poland for exemplary public service/humanitarian work, Kaminsky has been recognized by the NEA, Koussevitzky Music Foundation, Opera America, Chamber Music America, and USArtists International, among others.

Lisa Moore | Author & Co-Librettist

Lisa Moore is regarded as one of Canada's most influential contemporary writers. Her work is emotional, poignant, and offers an authentic perspective of Newfoundland and its people. She is a short-storyist, novelist, playwright, visual artist, and Associate Professor at Memorial University. She has won the Commonwealth Fiction Prize, CBC's Canada Reads, and the Writers' Trust Engel Findley Award and received nominations for the Man Booker Prize, Scotiabank Giller Prize, and Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize. Her third novel, *Caught*, was adapted into a CBC television series. Moore often sets her stories in Newfoundland, where she was born, raised, and lives with her family.

Katherine Pracht, Mezzo-Soprano *as HELEN*



Mezzo-soprano Katherine Pracht is delighted to return to Opera on the Avalon to create the role of Helen in Kaminsky's and Moore's *February*. An ardent contemporary opera performer, Pracht has sung in more than 10 new-opera workshops, and was in world premieres in the roles of Horatio in Joseph Summer's *Hamlet* in Ruse, Bulgaria; Ariel in Summer's *The Tempest* in Boston; Julia in Kirke Mechem's *The Rivals* in Milwaukee; Baroness Nica (cover) in Daniel Schnyder's Charlie Parker's *YARDBIRD* in Philadelphia. In concert, Pracht premiered John Tavener's *Tu ne sais pas*, an orchestral concert piece for mezzo, with conductor Ignat Solzhenitsyn and the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia; and at Carnegie Hall, Pracht debuted Karl Jenkins' oratorio *Sing! The Music Was Given*, and sang the US premiere of Richard Wernick's "...and a Time for Peace" with Leon Botstein conducting the American Symphony Orchestra.

Favorite recent roles include Madeline Mitchell in *Three Decembers* at Opera on the Avalon, Mary Johnson in *Fellow Travelers* in Virginia, the title role in *Elizabeth Cree* in Oakland and Chicago, Miss Jessel in *The Turn of the Screw* in Miami; Lady Wang in *Dream of the Red Chamber* on tour in China; Charlotte Malcolm (cover) in *A Little Night Music* at Arizona Opera; Cornelia in *Giulio Cesare* at West Edge Opera; and Ottavia *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* in Milwaukee. Pracht looks forward to making her role debut as Mrs. Murrant in Kurt Weill's *Street Scene* next summer. In addition to singing, Pracht is completing her dissertation toward a DMA in Contemporary Music at Bowling Green State University, where she has recently joined the faculty as a tenure-track Assistant Professor of Voice.

Leroy Davis, Baritone *as JOHN*



As a member of the Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Center Ensemble at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, baritone Leroy Davis sang or covered roles in *Macbeth*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Florencia en el Amazonas*, *Tosca*, and *Fire Shut Up In My Bones*. His first appearance with Opera on the Avalon was as Charlie in *Three Decembers*. In 2023, Leroy performed the role of Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* with Cedar Rapids Opera, sang *The Pirate King* with Nashville Opera, and returned to Florentine Opera for his first Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Leroy proudly joins the world premiere cast of Laura Kaminsky and Lisa Moore's new opera, *FEBRUARY*, commissioned by Opera on the Avalon. 2024 performances include the role of Benny Paret in *Champion* with the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Leroy also stands by for the title role of Young Emile Griffith in that same production. He also returns to Florentine Opera for *Bronzeville Bohème* as Marcello.

Leroy's 2020 engagements included his Lincoln Center debut in the world premiere of Ricky Ian Gordon and Bartlett Sher's *Intimate Apparel*, a concert with the New York Festival of Song, and the world premiere of *Completing the Picture* by Michael Ching with Opera Company of Middlebury.

In 2019, he appeared with Boston Opera Collaborative as Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, the Forrester in *Cunning Little Vixen*, and Joe St. George in *Dolores Claiborne*. He also debuted at the Phoenicia Festival as Belcore in *L'elisir d'amore* and *Odyssey Opera* as Ernesto Malcom in *Maria, Regina d'Inghilterra*.

Matthew Dalen*, Tenor *as CAL*



Hailed for his "top notes exploding like fireworks, sparkling and incandescent," tenor Matthew Dalen is an in-demand artist. During his flourishing career, Dalen has collaborated with the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis (Gerdine Young Artist), the Niagara Symphony Orchestra, and the Grand Philharmonic Choir (Kitchener, Ontario), as well as multiple other companies across North America and Europe. Recent and upcoming engagements include Handel's *Messiah* with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Puccini's *La Bohème* with Opéra du Royaume (Rodolfo), Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy* with Orchestre classique de Montréal, and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with Niagara Symphony. Matthew also returned to Opéra de Montréal for *Die Zauberflöte* (May 2022) and for the premiere of *La beauté du monde*, creating the role of Hermann Göring (November 2022). Dalen is a graduate of the Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program at Vancouver Opera, the Atelier Lyrique of Opéra de Montréal, and was a laureate of Jeunes Ambassadeurs Lyriques.

Michael Kelly, Baritone

as BARRY

Baritone and Librettist Michael Kelly has been praised as “expressive and dynamic” and “vocally splendid,” having recently performed with the Santa Fe Opera, Carnegie Hall, with New York City Opera, the New World Symphony, Seattle Symphony, and the Cincinnati May Festival. He also performed Bernstein’s Mass with the Mostly Mozart Festival under the baton of Louis Langrée and gave the world premiere of a new chamber work by David Del Tredici at NYC’s Symphony Space. In recent seasons he has been heard in Schubert’s Die Schöne Müllerin with celebrated guitarist David Leisner, The role of Hannah Before in Laura Kaminsky’s As One, the role of Figaro in The Barber of Seville, Papageno in Mozart’s Magic Flute, Brahms’ Ein Deutsches Requiem, and the title role in the NY premier of Carlyle Floyd’s newest opera Prince of Players. As a librettist, Michael’s poetry has been set by composers John Glover and Ben Moore, and he has upcoming projects that include creating adaptations and original libretti for Laura Kaminsky and Kamala Sankaram.



Pascale Spinney*, Mezzo-Soprano

as JANE

Mezzo-soprano Pascale Spinney made several important debuts in the 2022-23 season. She stood by for the roles of Sally and Heather/Nelly in Kevin Put’s The Hours with the Philadelphia Orchestra; filmed O God That I Were a Man from Joseph Summers’ opera, Much Ado About Nothing; sang the title role in Carmen with the Glacier Symphony as well as Dorabella in Opera Through the Looking Glass: Così! Men are like that with White Snake Productions. In 2024 Pascale performs the role of Ebba in La Reine-Garçon at L’Opera de Montreal.

Her 2022 engagement as Flora in La Traviata with Opéra de Montréal was canceled due to Covid. Pascale made her debut with the York Symphony as an alto soloist in Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 and Choral Fantasy and covered the role of Sally Bowles in Cabaret with the Atlanta Opera. In 2021 she made a role and company debut with Tulsa Opera as La Ciesca in Gianni Schicchi, and performed My Letter to the World with Philadelphia’s Lyric Fest..



Michael Colman, Lyric Bass

as PRIEST/COACH/RED

Lyric bass Michael Colman, praised by Opera News for “fielding a fine, dark bass-baritone”, recently returned to Chautauqua Opera as Judge Turpin (and Sweeney cover) in Sweeney Todd and made a house debut as Sparafucile in Rigoletto with Vashon Opera before returning to sing the title role in their production of Le nozze di Figaro. Upcoming house debuts include Vodnik in Rusalka with Opera Ithaca, Étienne Grandet in Naughty Marietta with Winter Opera St. Louis, and Schaunard in La bohème with Fort Worth Opera. Other roles include The Commentator in Derrick Wang’s Scalia/Ginsburg with Opera Carolina, Opera Grand Rapids, and Chautauqua Opera, Basilio in Il barbiere di Siviglia with Chautauqua and Virginia Operas, Guglielmo in Così fan tutte with Opera Grand Rapids, Dottore Grenvil in La traviata with Lyric Opera of Kansas City, and The Sergeant of Police in The Pirates of Penzance with Dayton Opera.



Lara Ciekiewicz*, Soprano

as BARTENDER

Hailed for her “tour-de-force performance” (Winnipeg Free Press) in the title role of Manitoba Opera’s Susannah, soprano Lara Ciekiewicz has established herself as a dynamic, intelligent, and moving singing-actress. Her facility for fully transforming into a character, regardless of genre, has earned her the reputation of being an artistic chameleon.

Lara’s 22-23 season included Countess in The Marriage of Figaro with Fargo Moorhead Opera, featured soloist in Manitoba Opera’s 50th Anniversary Gala Concert, and with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra in Brahms’ Requiem and Dvořák’s Te Deum. The 23-24 season sees Lara return to Manitoba Opera as Micaëla in Carmen and debut as Mother Abbess in The Sound of Music with the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre and Edmonton’s Citadel Theatre.

Other recent appearances include Loretta (Gianni Schicchi) and Suor Genovieffa (Suor Angelica) in Pacific Opera Victoria’s Il trittico, and as the Countess in Edmonton Opera’s Le nozze di Figaro.



Lucie St. Martin*, Soprano as ENSEMBLE & BARTENDER COVER

It has been noted that soprano Lucie St-Martin possesses a distinctive stage presence that captivates audiences. After studying at the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal, Lucie completed an artistic residency at the Atelier lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal. She is currently part of Les Jeunes Ambassadeurs lyriques, as well as the Opera on the Avalon's Young artist program.

She stands out for the realism and depth she brings to her interpretations, notably in the roles of L'Enfant (L'Enfant et les sortilèges, Atelier lyrique), Giannetta (L'Elisir d'amore, Opéra de Québec), Armide/narration (L'Enfer des lumières, Orchestre de l'Agora), Passagère (Le Flambeau de la nuit, Opéra de Montréal), Pamina (Die Zauberflöte, CMM) as well as Meg Giry and Christine Daaé (The Phantom of the Opera, EVENKO). She was one of the twelve finalists in the 2023 Lotte Lenya Competition in New York. Born in Gatineau, Québec, Lucie discovered performing arts through musical theater at the Artishow school, with which she evolved for 8 years. This style will always have an influence on her approach to music and the stage.



Luka Kawabata*, Baritone as ENSEMBLE & JOHN COVER

Nikkei-Canadian artist, Luka Kawabata 川端ルカ strives to push the boundaries of representation in opera through new works. As a baritone and producer, he has quickly established himself as a rising artist in Canadian opera. He is passionate about diversifying the definition of performance and highlighting languages that are seldom heard in classical music. His ongoing series "The HAFU ハーフ Project" premiered its third chapter, 希望, in June with Pacific Opera Victoria's Civic Engagement Residency.

Luka is a recent graduate of the Yulanda M Faris Young Artist Program with Vancouver Opera, the Digital Emerging Artist Residency (Manitoba Opera), and the Association for Opera in Canada's RBC Fellowship. Collaborations include Edmonton Opera (La Bohème), Saskatoon Opera (Carmen), and re: Naissance Opera (IndieFest). Most recently, he appeared as Peter Quince in Britten's A Midsummer Night's Dream and is set to make a role debut as Le Dancaïre in Bizet's Carmen in Spring 2024.



Camila Montefusco*, Mezzo-Soprano as ENSEMBLE & JANE COVER

Brazilian-born mezzo-soprano Camila Montefusco is rapidly establishing herself as a captivating artist. Hailed for her "lush steady tone" (Stage Door), Camila joins Opera on the Avalon's Young Artist Program in the 23/24 season and embarks on a winter tour with Prairie Debut. Her love for art song and opera is evident in her diverse repertoire, which includes performances as Goffredo in Handel's Rinaldo, Nada in Ana Sokolovic's Svadba, La Zia Principessa in Puccini's Suor Angelica, and Indiana Elliot in Thompson's The Mother of Us All.

In past seasons, Camila was an emerging artist with Britten Pears Arts, Banff Center, Institute for Young Dramatic Voices, and Toronto Summer Music Festival. As a co-founder of the Obsidiana Duo, Camila champions Ibero-American musical culture, amplifying the voices of historically excluded composers. She takes great pride in fostering a more inclusive and diverse industry through this transformative project.



Mishael Eusebio*, Tenor as ENSEMBLE & CAL COVER

Filipino-Canadian tenor Mishael Eusebio is a dynamic performer who brings unique interpretations into every project. An avid interpreter of new music, he has developed roles for new works with such organizations as Houston Grand Opera Co., L'Opéra de Montréal, Tapestry Opera, Banff Opera Centre, National Sawdust, and the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis where his portrayal of Young Harvey in Harvey Milk Reimagined was featured on the front cover of Opera America Magazine. Eusebio is a winner of the Jeunes Ambassadeurs Lyriques, a semifinalist at the Montréal Symphony Competition, a finalist at the American National Opera Association Competition, a Metropolitan Opera Council District Encouragement Award Recipient, as well as a recipient of the John C. Erskine prize from the Juilliard School. He is a graduate of The Juilliard School, Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, and l'Atelier lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal.





Mado Christie, Pianist
ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR & REPETITUER

Mado Christie is a sought-after collaborative pianist, vocal coach, and chamber musician. They studied under Peter Longworth, Marietta Orlov at the University of Toronto, and Kenneth Merrill at the Manhattan School of Music. Equally engaged across multiple genres, Mado has performed and coached throughout North America in the worlds of art song, chamber music, and opera, garnering praise for their “excellent, very dramatic piano playing” (Joseph So, Ludwig Van Toronto). Mado currently teaches at Memorial University’s School of Music, while also playing with and coaching students at the School. Mado is a founding member of the Harbourlight Quartet, and they frequently collaborate with musicians and organizations around St. John’s, such as Sound Symposium, Opera on the Avalon, and the Tuckamore Festival. Mado is also the current pianist for Spectrum Queer Choir. They will make their Assistant Conductor debut this fall as part of Opera on the Avalon’s production of February.

ENSEMBLE

Sopranos

- Lucie St. Martin*
- Alice MacGregor
Bartender Cover
- Anna James

Altos

- Camila Montefusco*
- Rachael Currie
- Geneviève Cunningham
- Grace Nolan

Tenors

- Mishael Eusebio*
- Cameron Bennett

Baritones

- Luka Kawabata*
- Nicholas Leblanc
- Sasha Steeves
- Lucas White

*“The participation of this Artist (these Artists) is arranged by permission of Canadian Actors’ Equity Association under the provisions of the Dance Opera Theatre Policy (DOT).”

Opera on the Avalon is a member of the Theatre Greenbook. We are proud to present costumes and set pieces made from reused and recycled materials, in line with the principles of sustainability.

To learn more about the Theatre Greenbook visit
www.theatregreenbook.com



Judith Yan | Conductor

Equally adept at conducting symphony, opera, and ballet, Judith Yan's career has taken her internationally, conducting for major companies in Europe, Asia, Australia, and North America. Judith has served as the Artistic Director of Guelph Symphony Orchestra and has conducted over 90 performances at the Four Seasons Centre for the National Ballet of Canada. Yan has conducted with the Hong Kong Ballet, the Korean National Ballet, West Australian Symphony Orchestra, the San Francisco Opera, and the Canadian Opera Company. As the Principal Conductor of Opera on the Avalon since 2010, she has led numerous productions including *Ours*, *Shawnadithit*, *Tosca*, *La Boheme*, *Tosca*, *Suor Angelica*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *La Traviata*, *Albert Herring*, *Dead Man Walking* and *Three Decembers*.

Ruth Lawrence* | Director

Ruth Lawrence is an award-winning actor, director/writer in film and theatre. In 2020, her first narrative feature, *Little Orphans* (Imagine That Productions), a micro-budget, premiered in Galas across Canada and won the Borsos Competition for Best Canadian Feature at Whistler Film Festival. In 2019, she released her first CBC-TV feature documentary, *Circus by Komatik* (Fire Crown Productions). Ruth was one of the writer-directors on the 2018 portmanteau feature, *Hopeless Romantic* (Northeast Productions). She directed The Ennis Sisters' music video, *Shine Your Light*, to mark the 100th Anniversary of the CMHA. Her short films include *Talus & Scree* and *Sweet Pickle*. Ruth co-produced the feature *Hunting Pignut*, winner of two best feature awards, with Pope Productions. She is the Artistic Director for White Rooster Theatre, now in its 22nd season.



Cameron Davis | Projection Designer

Selected credits include projection designer: *Burning Mom* (RMTc); *Bluebeard's Castle* (COC Online); *RUR: A Torrent of Light*, *Shanawdithit* (Tapestry Opera); *Garden of Vanished Pleasures*, *Hell's Fury* (Soundstreams); *Indecent*, *Sweat*, *Oslo* (Studio 180); *Gem of the Ocean*, *Sherlock Holmes* and *the Raven's Curse*, *The Horse and His Boy*, *The Magician's Nephew*, *Dracula* (Shaw Festival); *You Are Mine Own*, *Feng Yi Ting* (Spoleto Festival USA); *Britten's A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Pacific Opera Victoria); *Life, Death, and the Blues*, *CRASH* (Theatre Passe Muraille); *Dance Marathon* (bluemouth inc). Cameron teaches and mentors projection design at the National Theatre School of Canada and Humber College.

Leigh Ann Vardy | Lighting Designer

Leigh Ann is honoured to be part of telling this story. From Corner Brook and living in Halifax, she designs lights for theatres across Canada. Recent credits include: *Come From Away* (Gander Arts and Culture Centres, Rubinoff), *Fall On Your Knees* (Can Stage, NAC, *Vida Brevis*), *Richard II*, *Hamlet 911*, *The Neverending Story* (Stratford Festival), *The Breathing Hole*, *Metamorphosis* (NAC), *Misery*, *The Rocky Horror Show* (Neptune), *Sexual Misconduct of the Middle Classes* (Belfry Theatre), *For A Look or a Touch* (Pacific Opera Victoria), *Tell Tale Harbour* (Charlottetown Festival), *Everybody Just C@lm The F#ck Down*, *Between Breaths*, (Artistic Fraud), *The Third Colour* (Prairie Theatre Exchange), *Secret Life of a Mother* (Theatre Centre, Crows Theatre), and *The God That Comes* (2b). Leigh Ann is a teacher and coach at the National Theatre School of Canada.



Alison Helmer | Set Designer

Alison Helmer is a multidisciplinary artist who has been deeply and continuously influenced by her studies and experience working on the east coast. Born and raised on the prairies, she began her theatre education with the Stagecraft program at Grenfell College before completing the Scenography program at the National Theatre School of Canada. She approaches the world of both set and costume design through a lens of fantasy, history, and the tradition of storytelling. She is excited by Theatre that pushes the boundaries between conventional and experimental, and that seeks to fulfill our human search for truth, escape, and shared connection.



CREATIVE TEAM



Keith Roberts | Costume Designer

Keith Roberts graduated with High Honours from the Technical Production for Theatre and Live Events program specializing in Costume Design and Construction from Sheridan College in Oakville, ON. Directly after graduating, he was hired to be a stitcher at the acclaimed Shaw Festival Theatre where he built costumes for more than 20 shows in his three seasons there. Keith decided to come back to Newfoundland to be an independent Designer and works regularly on many local TV shows such as *Son of a Critch*, *Astrid and Lilly Save the World*, and *Hudson and Rex*. Keith has been with Opera on the Avalon for many years as our Resident Costume Designer and has designed costumes for a number of our productions including *The Rock Performs*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Ours* (2018), and *As One*.

Don Ellis | Sound Designer

Sound design credits include *The Neverending Story* (NAC/Stratford Festival); *Anne and Gilbert, A Christmas Carol* (NAC); *Bakkhai*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *As You Like It* (Stratford Festival); *The Colony of Unrequited Dreams*, *Oil and Water*, *Under Wraps*, *Afterimage*, *Fear of Flight* (Artistic Fraud of Newfoundland); *Ann and Seamus* (Shalloway); *Rick Mercer's Show Me the Button, I'll Push It*. Film/TV: *Boom Operator: Republic of Doyle*, *Random Passage* (CBC); *Love and Savagery* (Morag); *Rare Birds*. Production sound: *Danny* (NFB); *Misery Harbour* (UIP Denmark). Producer/engineer: *Hunter Hunter*, *Spectators* (Amelia Curran); *Dardanelles*, *The Eastern Light* (Dardanelles); *The Once, We Win Some We Lose* (The Once); *All Will Be Well* (Fortunate Ones). Musician: *Boy on Bridge* (Alan Doyle). Awards: JUNO for *Hunter Hunter*; East Coast Music Award for *The Once*, Duane Andrews; MUSIC NL - Industry Professional of the Year.



Roger Maunder | Projection & Stream Videographer

Roger Maunder was born and raised in St. John's, Newfoundland. He has independently produced, written, and directed a number of films and documentaries including the political thriller *Between Two Walls*. He has also directed many music videos for bands/musicians that have become YouTube sensations such as *Shanneyganock's "Home Boys Home"* and *Amelia Curran's mental health awareness video "This Video"*. Maunder's latest documentary, *"The Forgotten Warriors"* will debut next year.

David Howells | Photographer & Underwater Videographer

David Howells is a multi international award winning advertising and portrait photographer based in Newfoundland, Canada. With a history of shooting editorial and portrait work around the world, he is now based in St. John's, Newfoundland.



Kate Stenson | Backstage Manager

Kate Stenson is a multi-disciplinary artist with a Master's degree in material & cultural history. After five years in the Toronto indie theatre world, she was drawn home to the vibrant community in St. John's, where she's had the immense pleasure of working with many of our city's amazing actors, artists, musicians, clowns, and drag royalty.

Amanda Klein | Production Stage Manager

Amanda is a Collaborative Stage Manager, Arts Administrator, and multi-disciplinary artist based in St. John's, NL. She holds a BFA in Technical Theatre from MUN and has worked with theatre companies across the province. Amanda has been working with OOTA in a variety of roles since 2014 and is thrilled to be a part of bringing *February* to the stage. Highlights include; *Tempting Providence* (TNL), *Ours* (OOTA), *What Hangs in the Balance* (PerSIStence Theatre), *Mom's Girls Gone Wild*, and *Heads or Tails* (St. John's Shorts).





ORCHESTRA

JUDITH YAN | Conductor

Heather Kao
Concertmaster / Violin 1

Michelle Cheramy
Flute / Alto Flute

Jo Dashney
Trombone

Nancy Case-Oates
Violin 2

Annie Corrigan
Oboe

Rob Power
Percussion

Chantelle Jubenville
Viola

Christine Carter
Clarinet / Bass Clarinet

Etienne Gendron
Percussion

Carole Bestvater
Traditional Fiddle

Ian Hopkin
Bassoon

Sarah Veber
Harp

Nathan Cook
Cello

Katie Sullivan
Trumpet 1

Stella Hui
Piano 1

Frank Fusari
Bass

Jill Dawe
Trumpet 2

Mado Christie
Assistant Conductor / Repetiteur

TECHNICAL TEAM

- Randy Feener
- Dale Drew
- Tim Best
- Kristian Wheeler.....
- Nick Decker
- Ryan Kennedy
- Rick Hollett
- Adam Foran
- Sheilagh McGrory
- Ally Bowes
- Zack Clarke
- Anne Jewczyk

- TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
- STAGE CREW
- STAGE CREW
- STAGE CREW
- STAGE CREW
- LIGHTING OPERATOR
- SOUND OPERATOR
- PROJECTIONS OPERATOR
- MAKEUP ARTIST
- ASSISTANT MAKEUP ARTIST
- HAIR ARTIST
- SURTITLE OPERATOR

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SPECIAL THANKS

With special thanks to

The Victor & Eileen Young Charitable Foundation, VOCM Cares, The Allard Foundation, The Gill Ratcliffe Foundation, the Avalon Mall, Noreen O'Neil, David Howells, Roger Maunder, Tony Chafe, Lauren Stamp, Christopher Dunn, Cameron Bennett, Julia Brenton, Nadine Hodder, Katie Fortune, the Arts & Culture Centre Staff and Crew, Cody Garlie, Captain Kris Dodge, Angie Clarke, Newfoundland and Labrador Public Libraries, Chris Beresford, Survitec, Bill Holab, Donna Butt, Mallory Clarke, George Masswohl, Colin Furlong, James Hawksley, Andrew Tremblett, Branden Olsen, Grant Tilly, Fisher's Loft, Nicholas LeBlanc, Rachael Currie, Greer Shcatz, Meghan Herder, Jeffrey Taylor. Special thanks to the team at the Marine Institute's Offshore Safety & Survival Centre for their help and support.

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David Butcher- Corner Brook, not recovered
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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge the land on which we gather as the ancestral homelands of the Beothuk [bee-oth-uck], whose culture has now been erased forever. We also acknowledge the island of Ktaqmkuk [uk-dah-hum-gook] (Newfoundland) as the unceded, traditional territory of the Beothuk and the Mi'kmaq [mee-gum-maq]. And we acknowledge Labrador as the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Innu [in-new] of Nitassinan [ne-tass-eh-nen], the Inuit [in-new-eet] of Nunatsiavut [nu-nat-see-ahvut], and the Inuit of NunatuKavut [nu-nah-tuhk-ah-vut]. We recognize all First Peoples who were here before us, those who live with us now, and the seven generations to come. As First Peoples have done since time immemorial, we strive to be responsible stewards of the land and to respect the cultures, ceremonies, and traditions of all who call it home. As we open our hearts and minds to the past, we commit ourselves to work in a spirit of truth and reconciliation to make a better future for all.