



Witches in the Woods by Amy Neufeld

An Original Theatre for Young Audience Play

MARCH 10, 11, 12, 15, 18 AT 7PM

MARCH 14, 16, 18, 19 AT 2PM

KWLT, 9 Princess St. E, Waterloo, ON

City of Waterloo
Dorothy McCabe, Mayor



WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR



On behalf of Council and the residents of the City of Waterloo, I am delighted to extend a warm welcome to everyone attending the *Witches in the Woods* theatre production at the Kitchener-Waterloo Little Theatre during the Femme Folks Fest.

This production is a great opportunity to showcase our community's creativity while also promoting an inclusionary focus with noted LGBTQ2S+ content that reflects the welcoming nature that makes Waterloo such a great place to live. Through this play, attendees will find a safe and welcoming space for all individuals of all ages.

I want to congratulate all those involved with supporting this production for their hard work in raising money so that each of the artists are paid at nationally recommended industry wages. This is a great step in the development and recognition of local talent and economic growth.

Lastly, I would like to invite everyone to keep participating in locally organized initiatives like the Femme Folks Fest. May this experience be enriching and fun, thank you for supporting the Theatre for Young Audience. To the artists, all I can say is break a leg!

Sincerely,

Mayor Dorothy McCabe
City of Waterloo

100 Regina Street South, Waterloo City Centre, Waterloo, Ontario Canada N2J 4A8 519-747-8700 Fax 519-747-8500



WITCHES IN THE WOODS BY AMY NEUFELD
MARCH 10-19, 2023 AT KWLT

CAST:

YARA: VANESSA SPENCE
SYBIL: JENNIFER CORNISH
NEREZZA: ANNA MASTE
COWELL: KEVIN WHITE
HANSEL: SUNNY TICKNOR-MALTON
GRETEL: JOY GAROFALO
MR. HIDEBOUND: KEZ VICARIO-ROBINSON
SWING: JESSIE BERGERON

CREATIVE TEAM:

PLAYWRIGHT: AMY NEUFELD
DIRECTOR/DRAMATURG: LISA O'CONNELL
CHOREOGRAPHER: TARA BUTLER
SET DESIGN: DREW RIPLEY
LIGHTING DESIGN: SHARON DIGENOVA
STAGE MANAGER: LEELIND KEARY
TECHNICAL CREW: LEAD: LEELIND KEARY,
SHANNON HIPSON, NOAH SNOW, LINDSAY WOELFLE

PRODUCED BY PAT THE DOG THEATRE CREATION
AND LIGHTNING BANJO PRODUCTIONS

The Producers wish to thank the following kind folks for their assistance with our production: Mark Walton, Janet Mielke, Sam, Daisy and Tild Varteniuk, Hannah White, Lindsay Skeen, Carin Lowerison-White, Luke Soltys, Jessie Bergeron and Anne Doelman.

Femme Folks Fest acknowledges that we are located on the Haldimand Tract, land promised to Six Nations, which included six miles on each side of the Grand River. We are on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutral Confederacy), Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples.



CAST



Local actor and producer **Jennifer Cornish** is the recipient of a Region of Waterloo Arts Award in Performing Arts. She is well known for her performance of the Irish play *"Myra's Story"*, for which she was awarded Best Tragedy at the world's largest juried solo show festival, held in NYC. Other favourite roles include: *Bakersfield Mist* (Elmira Theatre Co); *Shirley Valentine* (4th Wall); *The Other Place; An Act Of God* (Downtown Theatre Project); *Kimberly Akimbo; Pearl Gidley* (Lost & Found); and *Dine Her*, a romantic comedy with zombies, performed at the Harmony Lunch Diner in Waterloo.



Vanessa Spence is a classically trained theatre actor, producer, emerging playwright and director, and professional human being. She is the Producer at Obsidian Theatre and Artistic Director of Virtu Arts Theatre which supports Black artists in regions outside of Toronto.

Selected Credits: Playwriting & Directing: *Stretch Marks* (Virtu Arts Theatre), *Post-Democracy* (Auditing Assistant Director); Producing: *Fairview* (Obsidian Theatre, Canadian Stage); *Dixon Road* (Obsidian Theatre, The Musical Stage Company); *Is God Is* (Obsidian Theatre, Necessary Angel Theatre, Canadian Stage); *Cast Iron* (Obsidian Theatre, Factory Theatre). Upcoming: *Of The Sea* (Obsidian Theatre, Tapestry Opera).



Kez is a nonbinary, genderqueer comedian/artistic performer from Kitchener ON. They have performed at the Just For Laughs Festival, Guelph Comedy Festival, SpeakNorth, Together We're Boisterous, Pinch Cabaret, Joke's at Jane's, The Making

Box, and QueerCab, to name a few! In the past they have worked with theatre companies such as Page 1 Productions, Green Light Arts, Lightning Banjo Productions, Dead Name Theatre, and JM Drama. Kez wears their heart not only on their sleeve, but as a 3 piece suit.



This is **Anna Maste's** fifth show with Lightning Banjo, and it's always a blast. Past favorite credits include Cora in *Calendar Girls* (TCP), Charlotte in *Charlotte's Web* (Lightning Banjo), Carrie in *Carousel* (TCP), Squeaky Fromme in *Assassins* (Scarborough Music Theatre), and Charity

in *Sweet Charity* (Music Theatre Etobicoke). Much love to Ed, Pieter and Dani for their enduring support.



Kevin White is an actor and library technician. He has previously appeared on stage with JM Drama, Lightning Banjo Productions, Kitchener-Waterloo Little Theatre, and more.

More recently, he presented a solo performance of a full-text dramatic recitation of Franz Kafka's *In the Penal Colony*. He is also a member of the JM Drama board of directors, and a supporter of Waterloo Region, Yes! in my Backyard (WRYIMBY) and the Unsheltered Campaign through the Civic Hub.



Joy Garofalo is a visual artist and printmaker from Kitchener-Waterloo with a deep and abiding love for theatre. She has worn many hats through the years, from director, to stage manager, to preschool teacher, and most recently, to mother. Lightning

Banjo Productions holds a special place in her heart,

as it has given her the gift of performing for young audiences after many years away from the stage, and her roles in shows such as *Charlotte's Web*, *Peter Rabbit and Friends*, and *Velveteen Rabbit* have been a delight to bring to life.



Sunny Ticknor-Malton is an old hat with a young heart and is thrilled to play a role which lets out the happy hyperactive child that lives inside him. When Sunny is not performing or directing with groups such as TCP New Hamburg, Lost and Found Theatre, KW Little

Theatre, Lightning Banjo Productions, and more, they enjoy adventures with their two dramatic children and one supportive wife, as well as pleasant walks in the woods, since trees are very good listeners. Sweet young Hansel is a pleasure to portray, especially with such a wonderful and talented cast and crew alongside... you might say "they're a sort of magic".

Sarah DaSilva

is a competitive dancer, singer, actor as well as a musician playing violin and piano. She is a triple threat major in Eastwood's IAP program. She has



show! XO



done three seasons at the prestigious Stratford Festival as well as several local theatre productions. She has also played Klara in Ballet Jorgen *The Nutcracker*, a *Canadian Tradition*. Etc: Love to Mom & Dad; Thanks to 10 Talent Management and all my wonderful teachers. Enjoy the

Mackenzie Buchwald

is a dancer from Waterloo, Ontario. She started dancing at 2 years old and is now a Senior competitive dancer at In Motion Dance School. Her training includes ballet, pointe, jazz, tap, lyrical, contemporary, hip hop and acro. Her ballet training includes both

Cecchetti and Royal Academy of Dance syllabi. Most recently she completed her Intermediate exam in both methods. Mackenzie works as a teacher at In Motion and enjoys working with kids.

CREATIVE TEAM



Playwright **Amy Neufeld** is the co-founder and Artistic Director of Lightning Banjo Productions. She has an Honours BA in English Literature from Laurier, and a Theatre Arts Diploma from MacEwan University. Previous writing credits for Lightning Banjo

Productions include *Cinderella*, *CEO*, *Betty and the Beast*, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit and Friends*, and *The Velveteen Rabbit*. Amy was a member of Pat the Dog's Women's Room in 2021, and wrote and performed *Wish Fish* as part of Lumen 2022.



Director **Lisa O'Connell** is the founding Artistic Director of Pat the Dog Theatre Creation, a catalyst for theatre which produces annually the PlaySmelter Northern New Works Festival (Sudbury) and Femme Folks Fest (Waterloo Region). A fierce advocate for regional theatre artists she has

dramaturged and/or directed new works for theatre presented at CanStage, Tarragon, Theatre Aquarius, Grand Theatre, Sudbury Theatre Centre, IMPACT Festival, Summerworks and more.



Choreographer **Tara Butler** is the Artistic Director of Dust and Soul Dance Projects, producing professional and original contemporary dance performances in Waterloo region.

Tara began her career with The National Ballet of Canada and danced for The Alberta Ballet and Ballet Jorgen where she was a celebrated Principal Dancer for 16 years. Her next performance titled “Precarious” is June 16th, and 17th at The Registry.



Set Designer **Drew Ripley** is a Professional Artist, Actor and Professional speaker based in Kitchener Ontario Canada. As an award winning balloon artist, Drew has discovered a medium that can stir the emotions and create the unexpected. His talents have led

him to several major projects in Canada, the USA, Qatar, and even Israel. These one of a kind projects are designed for major events and typically use a minimum of 40,000 balloons.



Stage Manager was born and raised in Kitchener Waterloo and has been involved in theatre and live events for the past 10 years working in Kitchener-Waterloo, the Greater Toronto Area, and in the USA. Leelind attended the Integrated Arts Program at Eastwood

CI then went on to attend Sheridan College for

their Technical Production for the Performing Arts Industry program graduating in April 2020. Leelind is looking forward to working with lots of familiar face and helping bring this new work to life!



Lighting Designer **Sharon DiGenova** is an award-winning Lighting Designer, who began her career in a Broadway touring house. She has toured internationally to over 350 cities (several times over) in more than 30 countries throughout North & South

America, Europe, Australia, Asia and the Far East.



Swing **Jessie Bergeron** is a multidisciplinary theatre artist from Timmins, Ontario currently living in the Ottawa region. After graduating from the University of Ottawa with a BA in Theatre Studies, she trained in acting at George Brown College. She

is a proud mama of two and a teacher-mom to many more. As a mother-artist, a feminist, a queer woman, and a person who lives with mental illness, she works to create space for these communities and explore these lived experiences through her art.

PLAYWRIGHT’S NOTE AMY NEUFELD

Witches in the Woods was born from a desire for more queer representation on stage in shows that people could take their children to.

The story of Hansel and Gretel intrigued me with its dual villains. I wanted to explore the power of naming and gossip in creating heroes, villains, and narrative. I was also interested in the dangers of top-down bureaucracy that ignores human reality in favour of blanket rules. You know, what all good fairy tales are about! ;)

Fortunately, the play also has lots of magic, adventure, and characters learning about the power of love to guide you.

This show wouldn’t exist without the exquisite guidance and care of Lisa O’Connell as dramaturg, director, producer, and mentor. As many thanks to you as there are stars in the sky. We can get Hansel to count them.

DIRECTOR’S NOTE LISA O’CONNELL

Theatre for Young Audience is the most marginalized of our disciplines. It’s the lowest pay grade, and often the least respected. That’s why it’s rare to see professionally created premieres of original new plays meant for young folks and their families to enjoy. We are indebted to the dedication of our playwright Amy Neufeld for the many 5am mornings she undertook to finish this play before she began her “day job”.

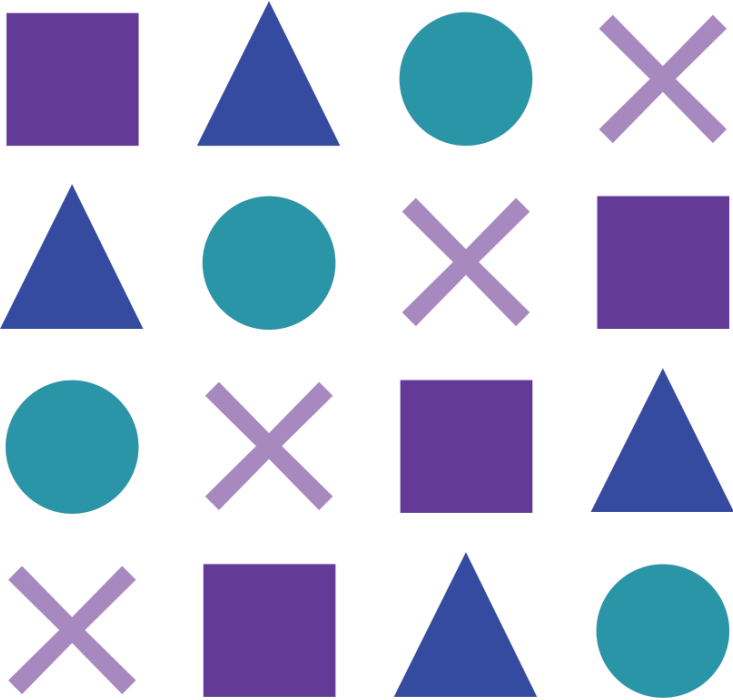
Our story is delightful, fun and bright, but like all good pieces of art, it holds a deep subtext and meaning about our society. We held two books at our table during rehearsal: RICK by Alex Gino and THE OTHER BOY by M.G. Hennessey. Written for people ages 8-12, these books explore what it means to search for your own place in the world and are especially helpful to young LGBTQ2s+ folk. Recently, these two books were the subject of contention in our local public-school libraries. That event made us think about belonging – a term bantered around a fair bit – and what that means. This infused our hearts and minds as we worked through our playwrights’ beautiful text. We believe theatre is the place for us to consider such questions of contention. Together, in community, to watch and hopefully think. Thank you for joining us.



Concessions by:



Rochelle Williams
www.thedessertartist.ca



Femme Folks Fest

March 8 - March 20, 2023

Waterloo Region

femmefolksfest.ca

Presented by Pat the Dog Theatre Creation