


Western Gold Theatre and Famous Artists Ltd. Present
FEBRUARY 8 - 11, 2024



Being Piaf

BY ELEANORA OWEN
DIRECTED BY TIM BYRON OWEN





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LISTEN
AND
WORK
FOR YOU.**



923 Denman Street



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FROM THE DIRECTOR

From the time she was born, legendary French icon Edith Piaf defied all odds in the face of adversity until she was overcome with the pain of grief and addiction. Piaf miraculously conquered blindness as a child, survived her upbringing in her grandmother's brothel, endured life on the street as a busker, assisted the French resistance during the Nazi occupation of France, and survived multiple car accidents, heartbreak, and the tragic loss of loved ones, friends, and family. Though she eventually succumbed to her addiction to various medications, which she used to ease her pain, it was a life of song that sustained her until she could sing no more.

~ Tim Byron Owen

For Edith...

"risk"
to dance the light fantastic
on the precipice of death
to taunt untold disaster
until that final breath
to mock my own finality
and rage against mortality
to live!

Special thanks to Georganne Aldrich Heller, Los Angeles (Group Rep Theatre) /
New York (The Triad Theatre), producer of *Being Piaf*.

FROM WESTERN GOLD'S ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

I love collaboration! It's all about sharing resources and ideas and bringing stories to the stage that we might not otherwise have been able to do. I am thrilled that Western Gold Theatre is working in partnership with Famous Artists Ltd. to bring the voice and life of the "Little Sparrow" to PAL's diamond of a theatre in the sky. When I was a kid, I was fascinated with Edith Piaf. My father played her records for hours; our house was filled with her voice. I pored over book after book about her. Her story deeply moved me. How marvelous that Eleanora Owen and Tim Byron Owen are here to share their talents with us and bring Edith's story to the PAL stage. This is the joy of collaboration. This is the magic of theatre. Thank you all, for being here!

~ Tanja Dixon-Warren

We gratefully acknowledge that we are on the traditional and unceded territories of the xʷməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) First Nations. We deeply thank them for so generously allowing us to live, work, and play on their beautiful lands.

Being Piaf

WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY ELEANORA OWEN

DIRECTED BY TIM BYRON OWEN

The performance runs 90 minutes | No intermission

PRODUCTION TEAM

Matthew Bissett	Lighting Designer
Glenn MacDonald	Production Manager
Fraser Read	Stage Manager
Andrej Stanojlovic	Lighting Technician
Susan Currie	Box Office Manager

FAMOUS ARTISTS PRODUCTION STAFF

Bill Allman	Producer
Sharon Percival	Producer
Joy Metcalf	Publicity Consultant
Cat Rose	Social Media Marketing

WESTERN GOLD PRODUCTION STAFF

Artistic Director	Tanja Dixon-Warren
General & Production Manager	Glenn MacDonald
Literary Manager	Seamus Fera
Casting Director	Stephanie Hargreaves
Publicist	Gwen Kallio
Creative Marketing Manager	Kate Lancaster

WESTERN GOLD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Donnie MacDonald
Vice President	Bonnie MacKenzie
Treasurer	Louise DeVita
Secretary	Diana Sandberg
Directors	Kathryn Aberle, Alen Dominguez Keith Martin Gordey, Anna Hagan

PAL STUDIO THEATRE STAFF

Theatre Manager	Matthew Bissett
Executive Director	Lynn Ross

BIOGRAPHIES (LISTED IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)



BILL ALLMAN - PRODUCER As a “recovering lawyer,” Bill has been active in the entertainment business for over 30 years as a concert promoter, theatre producer, one-time venue manager (the Vogue), president of Vancouver’s Theatre Under the Stars, and now president of the British Columbia Entertainment Hall of Fame. He owns and runs Famous Artists Ltd., a Vancouver-based production company that has brought, among others, The Glenn Miller Orchestra, The Nylons, and Will Millar (of the Irish Rovers) to stages in Western Canada. The company also presented multiple touring productions (including Jeff Hyslop and Ruth Nichol in *Love Letters*) and the Christmas musical, *Mrs. Claus’ Kitchen*, as well as the Western Canadian premiere of *Bad Jews*, the David Sedaris comedy, *The SantaLand Diaries*, and two successful runs of *The Woman in Black* with Bernard Cuffling through CLASSical ACT Collective. Additionally, Bill has created and executive-produced two specialty cable television series (seen in Canada, Australia, and the US). As a writer, Bill has written or co-authored eight feature screenplays, as well as two series pilots, two musicals, and now a book—the satirical paperback *Tales From the Turkey Table*. He co-authored the 2019 hit *Alice: A Murder Mystery* for the Vancouver Police Museum and has produced four years of best-selling Christmas features for audiences at Vancouver’s heritage Roedde House. Executive producer and co-producer of no less than four different albums of music recordings, including one of Christmas carols, he is no longer willing to move your piano.



MATTHEW BISSETT – LIGHTING DESIGNER holds a BFA from the University of Victoria and trained as a director at Pacific Opera and the Stratford Festival. Nominated for several CTC, Ovation, and Jessie Awards, he’s pleased to be back at PAL where he already works, so he’s not really back here, just more continuing to be here.



GLENN MACDONALD – PRODUCTION MANAGER Glenn trained in all aspects of the theatre at the Manitoba Theatre Centre in Winnipeg and has worked as an actor, stage manager, production manager, and designer for theatres across Canada and in the US. He is the recipient of the 2016 Jesse Richardson Award for Outstanding Set Design. Glenn sits on the Board of Trustees of PAL Vancouver and has been the General Manager of Western Gold Theatre since 2012. Recent credits include set design for *The Woman in Black* at Jericho Arts Centre and Presentation House Theatre, *The Ballad of George Boivin* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* for Western Gold Theatre, stage and set design for the Billy Bishop Legion Theatre for *Tom Crean*, *Antarctic Explorer*, and set and projection designs for *The Trials and Tribulations of Whiskey Dick* at Jericho Arts Centre. Glenn also works in television and film in set decoration and has over 100 projects to his credit.



ELEANORA OWEN (née Avakian) – EDITH PIAF Eleanora has been acting and singing on stage from the age of four. Annie, her French grandmother, exposed Eleanora to the life and music of Edith Piaf at a very young age. Since French was her first language, it was only a matter of time before Eleanora stepped into the role of one of her idols. After attending the prestigious Hollywood High Performing Arts and receiving her BFA from UCLA (Theatre, Film & Television Dept.), Eleanora chose to put her career on hold, assuming the role of full-time caregiver for her ailing grandmother for many years. After her grandmother’s passing in 2011, Eleanora became a member of the internationally acclaimed acting company The Sarah Fulton Group, where she quickly rose in the ranks to production manager and restarted her acting career, as well as leading the writing program within the company. Shortly thereafter, she made her feature film debut in *Old Man’s Gold*. In 2014, The Sarah Fulton Group produced the first 25 short one-acts written by Eleanora, followed by a production of her second compilation of short one-acts in 2016. Inspired by her 2019 concert at The Mayflower Club and her husband, award-winning director Tim Byron Owen, she created *Being Piaf*. Eleanora is honored to present *Being Piaf* to each and every one of you.



TIM BYRON OWEN - DIRECTOR Tim is an award-winning actor, writer, director of theatre, film, and television. He is a founding member of The Celtic Arts Center/An Claidheamh Soluis, having served as President of the Board, and The Sarah Fulton Group, serving as Artistic Director. Theatre director credits include: 10 productions of *A Night In November* by Marie Jones - The Celtic Arts Center - 2002/2004, The Falcon Theatre - 2002, The Tricycle Theatre, London - 2002/2003, The Edinburgh Fringe Festival - 2002, The Gaiety Theatre, Dublin - 2003, Liberty Hall Theatre, Dublin - 2004, Irish Arts Center, NY, The Off-Broadway Theatre, Boston - 2006. || Three productions of *Fighting Words* by Sunil Kuruvilla - The Celtic Arts Center - 2004/2006, The Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff - 2006. || Two productions of *Falling Upwards* by Ray Bradbury - Theatre West -2007, El Portal Theatre - 2009. || *Love Me Deadly* by Matthew Sklar - The Celtic Arts Center - 2007. || *The Walworth Farce* by Enda Walsh – Theatre Banshee - 2011. || *Jimmy & Sam* by Pat Harrington & Howard Storm - Theatre 40 - 2011. || *Remembrance* by Graham Reid - Theatre 40 - 2013. || *Caged* by Dermot Davis - Theatre Banshee - 2015. || *Being Piaf* by Eleanora Owen - The Group Rep Theatre, LA / The Triad Theatre, NY - 2023 || *Fear Of Heights* by Kevin Flynn -The Odyssey Theatre – 2023.



SHARON PERCIVAL - PRODUCER Sharon was an actress/singer for many years before becoming a mom and choosing a less nomadic lifestyle to raise her daughter. A graduate of The American Academy of Dramatic Arts, Los Angeles, Sharon has performed in such plays as *The Women*, *Days of Wine and Roses*, and *The Crucible*, to name but a few, and with the Soho Group in London England where she played Macduff in an androgynous production of *Macbeth*. Sharon has appeared in many MOW's, TV shows, and movies over the years. Now that her daughter is grown, she intends to pursue the world of entertainment once again. This is Sharon's first role as a producer, and she is excited to be part of this amazing production with such wonderful talent.



FRASER READ – STAGE MANAGER Fraser is a Vancouver-based, queer artist living and working on the traditional territories of the Squamish, Musqueam, and Tsleil-Waututh nations. This is their fifth production with Western Gold. Their experience in the performing arts started in kindergarten and they have been involved with programs such as Bard on the Beach, Theatre Under the Stars, and The Cultch. Fraser has additional experience with competitive improv, musical theatre, film, and playwriting. Fraser hopes to continue studying the arts and is so grateful for the opportunity to expand their knowledge working in live theatre as a stage manager.



ANDREJ STANOJLOVIC – LIGHTING TECHNICIAN Andrej is an emerging artist and designer currently residing in Vancouver, originally from Belgrade, Serbia. Since moving to Canada at the age of 13, Andrej found love and passion for theatre and acting. His ongoing journey as an artist started when he discovered a theatre production program in high school. He studied acting for three semesters at Studio 58 where he learned crucial production skills. In the future, he aspires to become a lighting and sound designer. Andrej has previously worked with Western Gold Theatre on their stage reading of Norm Foster's *Opening Night* and Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Ernest* as a lighting board operator and set-up crew. He was Assistant Production Manager for Western Gold's recent hit, Lucas Hnath's *A Doll's House Part 2* and is always looking for new ways to challenge himself.

ABOUT WESTERN GOLD THEATRE

Western Gold Theatre was founded in 1994 by Joy Coghill O.C. in response to the dearth of roles for veteran professional artists in the Vancouver area. It is one of only two professional theatre companies in Canada solely devoted to providing work for senior (55+) artists. We are committed to centering the voices and supporting the stories of seniors and Elders across cultures and communities. We also take great pride in the opportunities we offer to emerging theatre artists.

We have commissioned, developed, and staged eight new Canadian plays as well as produced a further 12 mainstage presentations from major playwrights. In 2012, we launched the highly popular ON OUR FEET (OOF!) series: fully staged readings with all the hallmarks of a full production.

In 2020, in response to COVID-19, we initiated VIRTUAL GOLD: online theatrical offerings, creative workshops, and cultural conversations. In 2021 we began a Creative Accessibility Program specifically designed for senior artists, and, in 2023, we launched our inaugural HAVE A SENIOR MOMENT FESTIVAL, a curated, multi-discipline series celebrating the performing arts for old folx and/or by old folx!

Western Gold has been helmed for the majority of its time by a number of Canada's leading theatre artists including Founder Joy Coghill, Artistic Directors Pamela Hawthorne, Colleen Winton, Anna Hagan, and General Manager Glenn MacDonald—trail blazers all. Tanja Dixon-Warren was appointed Artistic Director in 2019.



CLASSical ACT Collective & Famous Artists Ltd. Presented

THE WOMAN IN BLACK

February 2023 - Jericho Arts Centre
October 2023 - Presentation House

WHERE WILL SHE APPEAR NEXT?
.... Metro Theatre, October 2024!

The Woman in Black and Aidan Wright (Photo: Jeffrey Gibbs)

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

Thank you to our donors, sponsors, community partners, volunteers, PAL Vancouver residents, and you, the audience. Without your support there would be no theatre!

LEGACY DONORS

Johanna Hickey, J. M. Hurst

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William B. Davis; Mark, David, and Geoffrey Lecovin

STARRING ROLE! (\$1,000 – \$1,999)

Keith Martin Gordey and Tory Ross, Johanna Hickey, Bonnie MacKenzie, Salim Rahemtulla, Leonard Schein, France Trépanier

GO AHEAD – HAVE A SENIOR MOMENT! (\$500 – \$999)

Myra Andrews, Elizabeth Ball, Sam Biggs, Tanja Dixon-Warren and Michael Fera, Deanne Henry, J. M. Hurst, Dawn Johnston, Donnie MacDonald, Anne Mathisen, Elizabeth Snow, Vicki Webster, Wensley Architecture

ENJOYING BOLD AGE! (\$200 – \$499)

Kathryn Aberle, Anonymous, Loretta Bogert-O'Brien, Doug Cameron, Rena Cohen, Virginia Cooke, Lesley Dawson-Burns, Louise DeVita, Alen Dominguez, Anna Hagan and Terence Kelly, Rob Haynes, Terri Johnson, Linda Johnston, John H. Kennedy, Gerry Kowalenko, Phyllis Lavelle (to support an artist in need), Glenn MacDonald, Bill Millerd, Marjorie Munkley, Vicki Patenaud (in memory of Janet Sala), Patricia Phillips, Hesein Rahemtulla, Shehin Rahemtulla, Zahida Rahemtulla, Nora D. Randall, Pat Regan, Pat Ritchie, Gene Rumley, Diana Sandberg, Kathie Schwaia, Marsha Sibthorpe, Christian Theriault, Magda Theriault, Katey Wright, Hang Yuan, Audrey Zaharichuk

YOUNG AT HEART! (\$100 – \$199)

Victor Martinez Aja, Herbert Auerbach, Neil David Boucher, Dave Campbell, Valentina Cesaratto, Arthur Close, Louis Chirillo, Catherine Condon, Harry Cussen, Patricia Curtis, Kate Dahlstrom, Lesley Dawson-Burns, Dhirendra, Heloise Dixon-Warren, Adrianna Bakos Donaldson, Elizabeth Dropko, Ian Farthing, Sarah Flemming, Michele Fontana, Jan Gilchrist, Jane Heyman, Arlene Howard, Joan Kirkwood, Kelly Marshall, Diana Mitchell, Robin Montcalm, Francesca Moore, Madeleine Nelson, Jayeson Nichols, Monica Morten, Malcolm Page, Tim Pelton, George Plawski, Anita Romaniuk, Jordan Samek, Kathryn Shaw, Shamim Shivji, Cecil Sigal, Elizabeth Snow, Sally Stubbs, Tim and Hilary Temple, Malcolm Toms, Karen Vail, Shemin Virjee, Helen Volkow, Laura White, Janet Wynne-Edwards

ON THE BOARDS! (\$50 – \$99)

Adrianna Bakos-Donaldson, Jo Scott Baxendale, Scott Bellis, Mary Black, Kathryn Bracht and Cavan Cunningham, Brenda Brandle and Alan York, Katherine Burega, Anne Carew, Vickie Carter, Noeleen Cassidy, Irene Caudwell, Valentina Cesaratto, David Diamond,

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APPRENTICE! (UP TO \$50)

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THREE BIG CHEERS FOR WGT'S AMAZING VOLUNTEERS!

HIP HIP HOORAY!
HIP HIP HOORAY!!
HIP HIP HOORAY!

We thank you from the
bottom of our hearts



GET INVOLVED WITH WESTERN GOLD!

There are lots of ways to get involved with Western Gold Theatre, and we'd love to have you on board!

- **VOLUNTEER!**

Help with fundraising events, serve on our board and committees, work at our concession, or be our frontline usher/box office attendant, or help out building or painting sets;

- **SPREAD THE WORD!**

If you liked the show, please tell your friends, family, colleagues, etc;

- **BECOME A MEMBER!**

Be the first to know about upcoming events and auditions, and enjoy special members-only events;

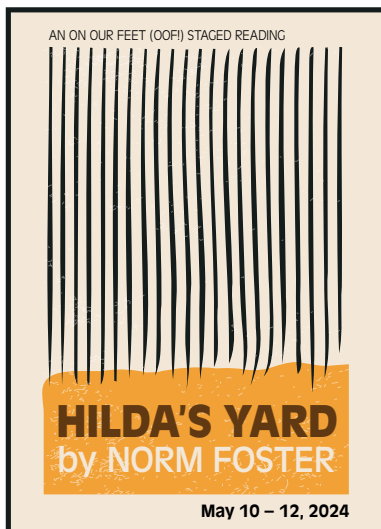
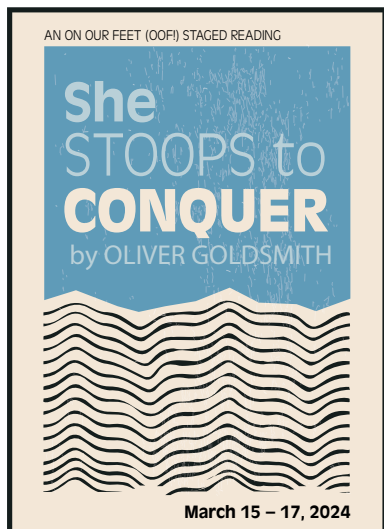
- **DONATE!**

All gifts of \$20 or more will be acknowledged with a tax-deductible receipt. Donate online at **westerngoldtheatre.org**.



WESTERN GOLD'S 2024 SEASON

Welcome to our 2024 season. It's all about connection! Looking backwards in order to look forward; celebrating classic tales, embracing new stories, and leaning into the "rabbit hole." It's about the threads of laughter, whimsy, experience, and the conundrum that comes with living life. *Connect and celebrate with us!*



Programming subject to change

2024 SEASON TICKETS NOW ON SALE!
Get yours via our website at westerngoldtheatre.org



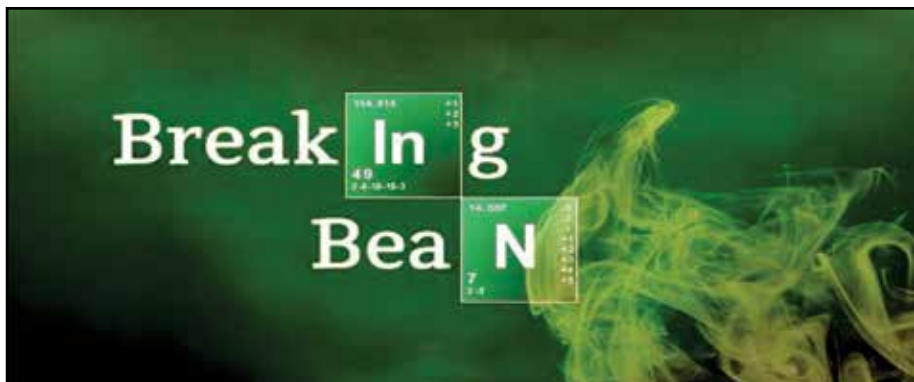
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