

WOOD BUFFALO

WRITTEN BY LEN FALKENSTEIN

Fredericton Open Space Theatre

November 8-12

Touring New Brunswick

November 14-19



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SPECIAL THANKS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK, ST. THOMAS UNIVERSITY, AND THE FREDERICTON PLAYHOUSE FOR TECHNICAL SUPPORT. THANKS ALSO TO TRIUS TRUCK RENTALS FOR SUPPORTING OUR TOUR.

THE TAKING OF PHOTOGRAPHS OR VIDEO IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED DURING THE PERFORMANCE.

PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONES AND DATA DEVICES.

Not only are they distracting, they can interfere with the theatre's wireless equipment during the performance.

Content Warning: Wood Buffalo features coarse language that may be considered offensive.

Thank you for your cooperation.

THEATRE NEW BRUNSWICK IS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN THEATRES (PACT)

We engage, under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement, professional artists who are members of the Canadian Actor's Equity Association.

THEATRE NEW BRUNSWICK

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New Brunswick E3B 5Y5

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- @ theatreNB

RUNNING TIME: 2.5 HOURS. THERE WILL BE A 15 MINUTE INTERMISSION.

WOOD BUFFALO

BY

LEN FALKENSTEIN

DIRECTED BY

ROB KEMPSON

CAST

Moneesha "Misha" Bakshi, Bridget Bezanson,
Matthew Lumley, Kathleen MacLean, Jake Martin

CREATIVE TEAM

Set Designer: Andrea Evans

Costume Designer: Sherry Kinnear

Projection Designer: Christian Ludwig Hanson

Sound Designer: Stewart Legere

Light Designer: Chris Saad

Stage Manager: Stephanie MacDonald

Production Assistant: Finn Boehm

Board Operator: Kenzie Hinchey

Wardrobe Assistant: Cat Candow

Wardrobe Volunteer: Emilie Belzile

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I'm delighted to welcome you all back to a new season of theatre from Theatre New Brunswick. And I am very excited to see our season begin with a world premiere from our friend and fellow theatre maker, Len Falkenstein.

Len wears a lot of hats in our province's theatre community. He is the head of drama at the University of New Brunswick and the artistic director of both Bard in the Barracks and the NotaBle Acts Theatre Festival. He is also a prolific playwright and an outspoken environmental activist. Wood Buffalo is not the first play to merge his love of theatre with environmental themes, but it is his latest. We are so proud to have the opportunity to share it with all of you tonight.

With the season now in full swing, I would be remiss if I didn't take a moment to remind you of a few other important events we have coming up this season. This year's holiday production, *All I Want For Christmas*, will be on stage at the Fredericton Playhouse December 8 and 9. It's a very funny show written by a very funny Canadian woman and will be our first holiday comedy in decades.

Rolling into the new year, we will tour the province with our first fully bilingual production, celebrate the 50th anniversary of the TNB Young Company, and will enjoy seeing several plays be brought to life by the many students of the TNB Theatre School. Lots to do and see!

Lastly, I want to encourage you all to participate in the many fundraising activities we have planned for the season. You can buy 50/50 tickets in the lobby, make a donation online to support the TNB Young Company's upcoming tour, or plan to join us for the annual fundraising brunch coming up at the Delta Hotel on February 11.

This season is ripe with opportunities for engagement and support. But for now, at this moment, please sit back, relax, and enjoy *Wood Buffalo*.

Thanks for being here.



DEBORAH BURNS
CHAIR,
THEATRE NEW BRUNSWICK

UP NEXT:

ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS

WRITTEN BY REBECCA NORTAN

DECEMBER 8 | 7:30 P.M.
DECEMBER 9 | 2 P.M.
DECEMBER 9 | 7:30 P.M.

AT THE FREDERICTON PLAYHOUSE



MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hello, and welcome to a very special theatre performance, the world premiere of Wood Buffalo by Len Falkenstein.

Tonight's performance is the culmination of more than five years of writing, readings, workshops, rehearsals, and yes, more writing. With this play, Len has taken two of his biggest passions – theatre and the environment – and combined them into one fantastical, whimsical, magical story. He started working on the script back in 2018 and has watched it develop through a series of workshops, the most recent being here with us during our 2021 Fall Festival of New Plays. That was my introduction to Wood Buffalo, and also the moment I knew we had to produce this play.

Welcoming Len to our stage is a monumental event for all of us. Having the opportunity to share a story so rich in important themes involving the environment, the climate crisis, and the endless challenges and hard decisions we all must face together through a play written by one of our own right here in New Brunswick, I don't think there could be a better way to kick off our new season.

As you will see tonight, Len's work is clever, entertaining, and thought provoking. It's everything a good story should be. I couldn't be more proud of the entire team involved in bringing this show to life. The care they have shown this script, the details they have uncovered, and the individual creativity each of them bring to the story's telling night after night have been a real inspiration to all of us.

I hope you leave the theatre tonight feeling as entertained and inspired as I have watching this show come to life.

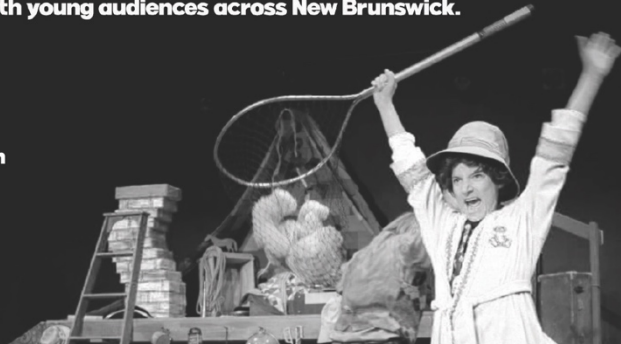


NATASHA MACLELLAN
ARTISTIC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
THEATRE NEW BRUNSWICK

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TNB YOUNG COMPANY

To celebrate 50 years of the TNB Young Company, we are asking our friends, supporters, and anyone who has enjoyed a Young Company performance to make a contribution and help ensure a bright future for our work sharing the magic of theatre with young audiences across New Brunswick.

Visit
tnb.nb.ca
to make a donation
today!



TNB COMPANY 2023/24

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NATASHA MACLELLAN

Artistic Executive Director

JOANNA BRYSON

General Manager

MATT CARTER

Director of Development
and Communications

SHARISSE LEBRUN

Theatre School Director

ARTISTIC ASSOCIATES

THE DETAILS DESIGN

ANDRÉ REINDERS PHOTOGRAPHY

PRODUCTION

ANDREA EVANS

Production Manager

TRENT LOGAN

Technical Director

JAMIE ATKINSON

Head of Carpentry

SHERRY KINNEAR

Head of Wardrobe

NAOMI MCGOWAN

Administrative Assistant

FINN BOEHM

Production Assistant

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Bruce Hatfield

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Ellen Messenger

A Winter Brunch

tnb theatre
NEW BRUNSWICK

*Mark your calendars for the 2024
TNB Winter Brunch Fundraiser at the
Delta Fredericton, February 11, 2024.*

Learn more at tnb.nb.ca

FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

Fort McMurray looms large in the collective consciousness of all Canadians. Whether or not we have ever been to or worked there, or know someone else who has (and probably a surprisingly large percentage of us fall into one of those categories), our lives have all been affected either directly or indirectly by Fort McMurray. All of us have benefited from the outsized impact the Alberta oil sands has had on our economy. Fort McMurray has for decades figured prominently in our national debates over politics, pipelines, and, as the climate crisis has become ever more dire, the environment. Fort McMurray and its history also provide a telling exemplar of our country's historical relationship to our land and natural resources, and to the peoples who lived here before colonization.

Like all the characters in *Wood Buffalo*, we have each, actively or passively, formed and continue to negotiate our individual relationship to Fort McMurray and all that it represents. In them, we might see our own dilemmas and choices writ large. Whatever place we occupy on the political spectrum, most of us probably have an opinion (and perhaps a strong one) about Fort McMurray. This play began out of a desire to test and question my own preconceptions about the place. Over the last five tumultuous years (for Fort McMurray, Canada, and the world) that I've spent working on the play, some of my previous opinions have been reinforced, while others have evolved and changed. If I've succeeded with the play, I'm hoping you might have something of the same experience watching it, and that it might also inspire some thought about the crisis we find ourselves in. With any luck, you'll have an entertaining night out, too.

I'm extremely grateful to Artistic Director Natasha MacLellan and the entire team at Theatre New Brunswick for giving me this opportunity, and for their support throughout the process. Huge thanks to director Rob Kempson and the amazing performers who have brought the play to life. My thanks also to all those who participated in previous workshops of the script, and to playwright colleagues who have offered thoughts on the script along the way: Michael Healey, Colleen Murphy, Anna Chatterton, and Meg Braem. I am also grateful to the Playwrights Atlantic Resource Centre for development support received through its Home Delivery program. Lastly but very importantly, I am forever indebted to the many McMurrayites from all walks of life that I spoke to for sharing their thoughts, secrets, and stories about *Wood Buffalo* with me.

Len Falkenstein



LEN FALKENSTEIN
PLAYWRIGHT



ROB KEMPSON
DIRECTOR

Rob Kempson is a director, playwright, and educator who has more than 15 years of experience in the non-profit professional arts sector. He is currently the Artistic Director of the Capitol Theatre in Port Hope, ON and the Co-Artistic Producer of ARC. In addition to his artistic work, he has served in various leadership positions, including as Associate Artistic Director at the Thousand Islands Playhouse (Gananoque, ON) and as Associate Artistic Producer at Theatre Passe Muraille (Toronto, ON). He was also the founding Artistic Director of Timeshare Performance, a multi-award-winning Toronto-based collective, and has worked across the province as a freelance director and playwright.

After acting as the Artist-in-Residence for the 2019 NotaBle Acts Festival, Rob is honoured to return to Fredericton this fall to work on this groundbreaking new play by Len Falkenstein.



MONEESHA "MISHA" BAKSHI
ACTOR

Moneesha "Misha" Bakshi (She/They) is a multi-media actor based in K'jpuktuk (Halifax). Misha is an alumnus of the Acting Program at the Fountain School of Performing Arts. A proudly bisexual and non-binary artist of color, they strive to create art that uplifts the voices of marginalized people while working her way towards becoming a C-list celebrity. When not acting, Misha is a model, cosplayer, gamer, and an avid reader of cheesy romance novels. You can follow Misha for anime memes and silly art thoughts @mishasvoices on Instagram and Twitter. Selected Theatre: Mary Stuart (FSPA), ClusterF**k (Eclectic Full Contact Theatre), Hamlet (Shakespeare By the Sea), Newcomers (Halifax Theatre for Young People).

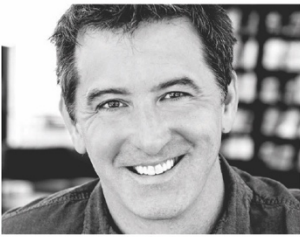
Selected Musical Theatre: Rain on the Parade (Villains Theatre, '23), Cinderella (Shakespeare by the Sea, '22), Midsummer Night's Dream (SBTS '21).

Selected TV/Film: HOP (MAX), The Real Pigs of Norfolk County (Eastlink).



BRIDGET BEZANSON
ACTOR

An actor and musician based in Dieppe, New Brunswick, Bridget has worked in regional theatre in Atlantic Canada and Ontario. Recent credits include Come From Away - Gander (ACCNL/Rubinoff), Resident Aliens (Theatre NB). Also: Neptune Theatre, Two Planks and a Passion, Festival Antigonish, Onelight Theatre, Stirling Festival, Smile Theatre, Shadowpath Theatre, the Ontario Shebang Project, and the Newmarket National Play Festival. Other credits include voice work for CBC animation and CBC Radio. A versatile vocalist, she is formally trained in classical and jazz styles, and holds 2 Silver Medals from the Royal Conservatory of Music. Bridget is a published songwriter, a member of SOCAN, and a recipient of a New Talent Grant from FACTOR (Foundation to Assist Canadian Talent on Record). In 2022, she completed a certificate in arts and culture management at the University of New Brunswick.



MATTHEW LUMLEY
ACTOR

Matthew Lumley is a Kijipuktuk/Halifax-based performer, delighted to be working at Theatre New Brunswick for the first time. Recent theatre work includes Schoolhouse, Macbeth, Elapultiëk, Frankenstein, In This Light, Animal Farm, North Mountain Vanya (Two Planks), The Realistic Jones, Heaven Above/Heaven Below (KAZAN Theatre), Hamlet (Below the Salt), The Little Years (Matchstick Theatre), This Is Nowhere (Zuppa Theatre). TV/film work includes Sugar Highs (Emotion Pictures) Look At Me (Afro Viking Pictures) Hopeless Romantic (Northeast Films); Polaroid (Dimension Films), Weirdos (Shadow Shows), Mr. D (CBC). Dance work includes Archive of Loneliness (Sara Coffin), Note the Weather (Mairéad Filgate), petites danses (Mocean Dance), Partnering Apart (Kinetic Studio). Matthew wrote and performed in First Weekend and Surf Gods (airing on CBC); he co-wrote and performed in The Perfection of Man (Misery Loves Theatre Company/Eastern Front Theatre). Matthew studied at the Neighborhood Playhouse (NYC) and York University (Toronto).



KATHLEEN MACLEAN
ACTOR

Kathleen is a 2Spirit Michif-Settler, born and raised on Treaty 6 Territory & the Homeland of the Metis Nation (Saskatoon). Kathleen attended the National Theatre School of Canada for Acting, and since then has had the honour to tell predominantly Indigenous stories. Kinanâskomitin to my family and to all the Indigenous and queer storytellers who came before me. I stand on their shoulders.

Select credits include: Marie-Angelique in Women of the Fur Trade. Susan Blackbird in 1939. Emily Dictionary in The Rez Sisters. (Stratford Festival); Gwynn Starr in The Secret to Good Tea (Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre); Vanessa Brokenhorn in The Herd. Charlotte Corday in The Revolutionists (Persephone Theatre); Okânawâpacikêw in nîkwatin sîpiy [Frozen River] (Manitoba Theatre for Young People); Head Full of Lice in The Third Colour (Prairie Theatre Exchange).

You can find Kathleen on Instagram @katmaclean



JAKE MARTIN
ACTOR

Jake Martin is an actor, writer and comedian from Clifton Royal, NB. He is excited to be back onstage with TNB after previously performing in It's a Wonderful Life (2012) and The Net - A Tragedy of the Sea. He is a graduate of St. Thomas University, where he is currently doing a residency at the Black Box Theatre. He is a Second City Conservatory alum, the former Artistic Director of the Next Folding Theatre company and a former member of Canadian Comedy award-winning troupe, The Sketchersons. Previously, he performed two summers as Hamlet with Bard in the Barracks and countless other shows around New Brunswick.

His short play Someone Gets Shot was selected for the Samuel French Off Off Broadway Festival and nominated for the Carol Tambor Best of Edinburgh Fringe Award. Earlier this year he performed at the Toronto SketchFest with his solo sketch comedy show Snakes Are Cool and he can currently be seen performing improv in Fredericton with Dead Serious Comedy. Having previously toured across Canada with Len's previous shows, Utopia and Lac/Athabasca, he is beyond excited for the opportunity to be a part of Wood Buffalo!



ANDREA EVANS
SET DESIGN

Andrea Evans proudly holds a BFA with Honours from York University where she studied Theatre Production and Design. With nearly 20 years' experience, she has worked as a set designer, scenic painter, and props builder for numerous theatres throughout Ontario and the Atlantic provinces. Andrea has worked for theatre companies such as the National Ballet of Canada, Saint John Theatre Company, the Chester Playhouse, Tarragon Theatre, and many others. For two seasons, Andrea worked as an assistant designer at the Stratford Festival. She has also been a guest artist / instructor at numerous high schools teaching stagecraft and design. Andrea has been nominated two times for Toronto's Dora Awards and the proud recipient of a Dora Award for Outstanding Set Design. This is Andrea's third season at TNB.



SHERRY KINNEAR
COSTUME DESIGNER

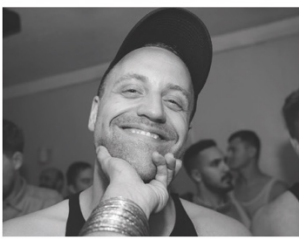
Sherry is TNB's Head of Wardrobe and the costume designer for Wood Buffalo. Sherry most recently designed costumes for Bluebirds, The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberly, several productions by the TNB Theatre School, and has designed many other TNB productions over the past several years.



CHRISTIAN LUDWIG HANSEN
PROJECTION DESIGNER

Christian (He/Him) is a Video and Projection Designer as well Performer with special focus in Collaboration, Puppetry, and Stage Combat. He is from Northern Friesland by the German-Danish border and now lives in Kijipuktuk/Halifax.

Select Design Credits: The Movements (Zuppa), Bluebirds (TNB), The Glass Menagerie (ARC), The Proletariat (HAT), #IAmTheCheese (HTYP & EFT), Fat Juliet (EFT & SBTS). Acting Credits: Midsummer Nights Dream (SBTS), Settle Elsewhere (Theatre du Poulet).



STEWART LEGERE
SOUND DESIGNER

Stewart Legere is a multidisciplinary artist situated between Kijipuktuk/Halifax and Tkaronto/Toronto. He is the Co-Artistic Director of Live Art company The Accidental Mechanics Group and Associate Artistic Director of ZUPPA. His performances have been presented at theatres and festivals across Canada and internationally. He is a vocalist with orchestral pop outfit The Heavy Blinkers, and a solo singer/songwriter ("Quiet the Station" - 2017, "To the Bone" - 2020). He composes music and sound for theatre and film. An avid and passionate collaborator, his work is fascinated with vulnerability, intimacy, the destruction of persona and the celebration of performance. He is currently an artist-in-residence at The Theatre Centre in Toronto.



CHRIS SAAD
LIGHTING DESIGNER

Chris is happy to be working for Theatre New Brunswick. Chris is the resident lighting designer and technical director for Black Box Productions at Saint Thomas University in Fredericton. He has many lighting design credits for Theatre New Brunswick's main stage as well as providing technical support and design for TNB's theatre school. Break A Leg Everyone!



STEPHANIE MACDONALD
STAGE MANAGER

Stephanie is a multiple award-winning actor who makes her home in Halifax Nova Scotia, and is branching out to Stage Management. Previous Stage Management credits include the world premiere of The Outside Inn (Festival Antigonish), Resident Aliens (Theatre New Brunswick), Rain On the Parade (Villians Theatre), and Bryden MacDonald's Whale Riding Weather at The Halifax Fringe Festival.



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