

theatre:
CALGARY

THEATRE CALGARY PRESENTS
THE PUNCTUATE! THEATRE PRODUCTION OF

FIRST MÉTIS MAN OF ODESA



FIRST MÉTIS MAN OF ODESA

BY MATTHEW MACKENZIE AND MARIYA KHOMUTOVA
FEATURING MATTHEW MACKENZIE AND MARIYA KHOMUTOVA

SEPTEMBER 08 – 27, 2026



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WELCOME

Welcome to Theatre Calgary's 2026-27 season!

There is something especially meaningful about the beginning of a new theatre season. We gather again, in a theatre, where artists and audiences, familiar faces and new ones share stories that ask us to laugh, listen, question, and perhaps see one another differently. This season, the idea connecting our stages is family: the families we inherit, the families we create, and the people we hold onto when the world around us changes.

We can think of no more powerful way to begin that journey than *First Métis Man of Odesa*.

Written, and performed by Matthew MacKenzie and Mariya Khomutova, and directed by Lianna Makuch, *First Métis Man of Odesa* draws from Mariya and Matthew's remarkable real-life journey. Their relationship begins across cultures and thousands of kilometres, unfolding against the upheaval of the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Matthew, a Métis playwright from Alberta, and Mariya, a Ukrainian artist from Odesa, transform their experience into a deeply human story of two people determined to find their way to one another. At its heart, it is a story of love and resilience, distance and belonging, identity and home, and the lengths we travel for family.

The play feels particularly resonant here in Alberta. As a citizen of the Métis Nation of Alberta, Matthew's return with this award-winning work is both a homecoming and a celebration of an important voice from our province. Mariya's story reminds us that what happens thousands of kilometres away is never truly distant; behind every headline are people whose lives, families, and futures are forever changed. And perhaps that is what theatre does best. It takes something enormous (a pandemic, a war, history itself) and allows us to experience it through the lives of people standing only a few feet away.

As we begin this new season, thank you for choosing to be here. Theatre Calgary exists because people continue to believe that gathering together, in the same room, to share a story still matters.

Welcome back. Welcome to the family. And welcome to a new season at Theatre Calgary.

- **STAFFORD ARIMA**
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

- **STEVE SCHROEDER**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

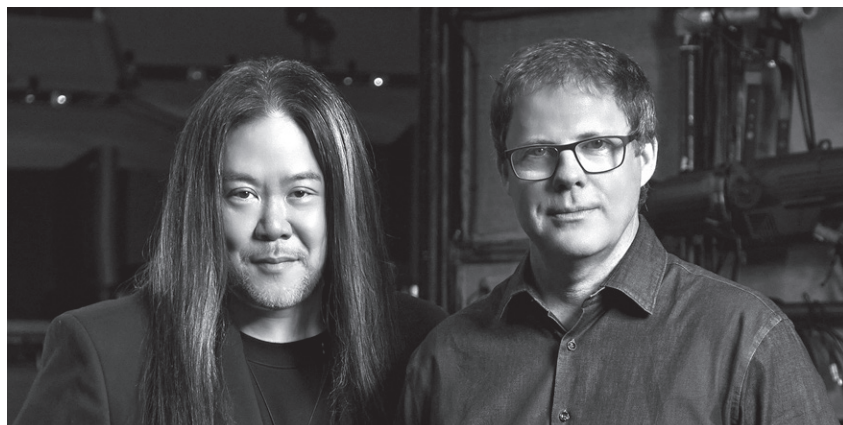


Photo by Trudie Lee



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GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Cameras and audio/visual recording devices are not permitted in the theatre.**
- **Video and audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.**
- We ask that you please refrain from using your cell phone, smart watch, or any other digital device, in any capacity, during the performance.
- Good theatre etiquette benefits everyone. Please do not talk or unwrap candies during the performance, remain in your seat until the curtain call is finished and the house lights have been turned on.
- Babies are not permitted in the theatre.
- We also offer relaxed performances. For more information, visit our website.
- Assisted listening devices for the hard of hearing are available at the coat check.
- For first aid assistance, see the house manager, or nearest usher.

SAFETY AND COMFORT

- At Theatre Calgary, we recognize our responsibility to have practical guidelines in place to ensure our performances are safe and enjoyable for everyone. To learn more about our current Safety and Comfort protocols go to theatrecalgary.com/comfort-and-safety or scan here:



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

This is a love story. And like any grand, sweeping love story, our lovers are faced with grand, sweeping obstacles that challenge their fate. They are faced with modern challenges like Facebook messaging over great distances throughout a pandemic. And like the many great love stories that came before them, Matt and Masha's story is also set against the backdrop of war.

I have been witness to Matt and Masha's love story from the beginning. It is only fitting that these two theatrical romantics would fatefully meet through the theatre. It was at a workshop of my play *Barvinok* in Kyiv that Matt and Masha first met in 2018. Matt was my dramaturg, and Mariya a workshop actor. The rest is history. It was another workshop of a new play of mine titled *Alina* that brought Matt back to Ukraine in 2020 prior to the pandemic. At the time, I had no idea that being their third wheel would grant me a unique perspective as the future director of *First Métis Man of Odesa*. I also had no idea exactly how quickly and significantly our worlds would change in so many ways just a few short years later.

When Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine began on February 24, 2022, it was impossible to turn away. For so many people part of the Ukrainian diaspora, the war was and continues to be omnipresent. Mundane, routine tasks are weighted. News about it is inescapable. The cognitive dissonance of scrolling through Instagram memes followed by images of horrific Russian war crimes is an ongoing reality as the war drags on. To be part of the Ukrainian diaspora is to contend with your head and heart reeling for your loved ones in Ukraine, and striving to not fully dissociate from your safe, physical reality. Now, as the war stretches into its fourth year, urgency has begun to give way to desensitization. Political pundits, hot takes, and ideological debates flatten human lives into abstractions. It feels more important than ever to return to stories that embrace our humanity.

This is also a love story about Ukraine. Just as Matt and Masha's love blossomed on the cobblestone streets of Kyiv, or the ultra-romantic promenades outside the iconic Odesa Opera and Ballet Theatre, there is so much about Ukraine to fall in love with. Like any grand, sweeping love story, this one shows us that not even the greatest obstacles, like the most evil forces of war, can taint true love. Matt and Masha's son, Ivan, is a reminder of this unbreakable spirit. Ivan is a beautiful union of two cultures whose love has created a symbol of the kind of future we are fighting for.

Слава Україні. Все буде Україна.

- LIANNA MAKUCH
DIRECTOR

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the spirit of reconciliation, Theatre Calgary acknowledges that we live, work and create on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, Piikani), the Tsuut'ina, the Îyâxe Nakoda Nations, the Métis Nation of Alberta, Districts 5 & 6, and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta. They were the original occupants of this land and continue to be here to this day. Theatre Calgary is grateful to have the opportunity to present in this territory.

The background of the entire advertisement is a large, dark photograph of a theatre audience seated in a tiered hall, viewed from behind. Overlaid on the upper right portion of this image is a collage of numerous small, square photographs of diverse people, mostly of African descent, smiling and posing. In the top right corner, the word "theatre:" is written in a white, lowercase, serif font, and the word "CALGARY" is written below it in a bold, orange, uppercase, sans-serif font.

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Photo by Michael Grondin

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES

When I first met Matthew in Kyiv in 2018, neither of us imagined that a small documentary theatre workshop would change the course of our lives. He came to Ukraine to conduct interviews with people affected by the war in Eastern Ukraine. I came believing that theatre existed somewhere above politics. To our surprise, we found love.

First Métis Man of Odesa began as an attempt to understand how two people from opposite sides of the world could find each other. It became a story about what happens when history interrupts ordinary life - and about the small, stubborn ways we continue choosing one another anyway.

The events in this play are drawn from our own lives. Many conversations happened exactly as you'll hear them. Others have been reshaped by memory, humour, and the strange logic of storytelling. I don't believe memory is a perfect archive. I believe it is something living. It preserves facts, but also feelings, symbols, contradictions, and the moments that continue to echo long after they've passed.

As a Ukrainian artist, I often ask myself what my responsibility is. After 2022, when Russia launched its full-scale invasion, suddenly making art no longer felt separate from bearing witness. Like so many Ukrainians, I found myself trying to hold two realities at once: building a family while watching my homeland fight for its existence.

Matthew and I decided to write this play to tell our story, showing how events a world away are affecting people's daily lives in Canada today. But we did not wish to appropriate the pain and suffering of Ukrainians living under constant threat—our son Ivan has never fallen asleep to the distant sound of air raid sirens, or been awakened by the boom of ballistic missiles, thank God.

This war is still shaping millions of lives, even when it no longer dominates the headlines. Every time I return to this story, I remember that Ukraine is not only a place of tragedy. It is where I fell in love. It is where I learned my craft. It is where my family, my identity, my humour, and my imagination were formed. I refuse to let my country be thought of only through the images of its destruction.

My work has never been only about documenting war. It's about insisting that Ukrainians are fully human: funny, flawed, romantic, artistic, contradictory, and "very odd", as Matthew likes to point out. This play begins with people falling in love, not with bombs falling. In 2026, that may be one of its most important acts of resistance.

I am especially grateful to share this story in Calgary, on the traditional territories of the peoples of Treaty 7, and in a province where Métis and Ukrainian histories have both become part of the fabric of the Prairies. It reminds me that stories travel, that communities can meet one another with curiosity, and that home is sometimes something we build together.

Thank you for being here, and for choosing to spend this time with us.

- MARIYA KHOMUTOVA
PLAYWRIGHT

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presents

The Punctuate! Theatre production of

FIRST MÉTIS MAN OF ODESA

BY **MATTHEW MACKENZIE** and
MARIYA KHOMUTOVA

Director	LIANNA MAKUCH*
Production Design	DANIELA MASELLIS
Projection Design	AMELIA SCOTT
Composer	DARABA
Sound Design	AARON MACRI
Choreographer	KRISTA LIN
Dramaturg	MATT MCGEACHY
Métis Auntie at Large	KRISTA LEDDY
Beadwork Artists	MARIA NELSON & KRISTA LEDDY

Stage Manager	CHANDLER ONTKEAN*
Production Manager & Technical Director	TRENT CROSBY

Senior Producer	ANDY COHEN
Originating Producer	SHEINY SATANOVE

Theatre Calgary gratefully acknowledges the support provided by the City of Calgary through Calgary Arts Development, the Government of Alberta through the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, the Government of Canada through the Canada Council, Canadian Heritage, and all corporate and private contributors.



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FIRST MÉTIS MAN OF ODESA

CAST

Matt **MATTHEW MACKENZIE**
Masha **MARIYA KHOMUTOVA***

SETTING

That liminal space between coming and going,
true love and heartbreak, war and peace.

First Métis Man of Odesa is performed without an intermission.

CREW

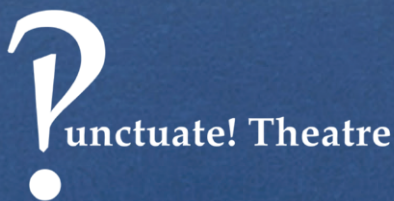
Assistant Head Stage Carpenter	GEOFF BUCHANAN
Assistant Head of Lighting	ANDY FAWCETT
Assistant Head Dresser	SARA YOUNG
Head of Video, Sound Technician	DEREK MILLER
Sound & Video Technician	AARIC INNES

Front cover photo of Matthew MacKenzie and Mariya Khomutova by Emily Cooper.

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

Theatre Calgary is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres and operates within the jurisdiction of the Canadian Theatre Agreement. Theatre Calgary employs technicians under a collective agreement with the I.A.T.S.E. Theatre Calgary is a resident company of Werklund Centre, operating out of Werklund Centre's Max Bell Theatre. The Musicians engaged for our productions are members of the Canadian Federation of Musicians and are performing under the jurisdiction of Local 547.





Punctuate! Theatre is a Dora and Sterling Award-winning theatre company based in Edmonton. Led by Artistic Director Matthew MacKenzie (Métis), our company endeavors to create accessible, relevant and subversive theatre that entertains and provokes thought amongst diverse audiences. Other world premieres include *Strife*, *Talwahiminana*, *Kohkom's Babushka*, *BEARS*, *After The Fire*, *The Particulars*, *Bone Wars*, and *Minosis Gathers Hope*. **punctuatetheatre.com**

THANK YOU

Aaron Harrity ▪ Anna Kuman ▪ désirée leverenz ▪ Erin Voaklander ▪
Edmonton Fringe Theatre Adventures ▪ Gabriel and Olenka Baron ▪
Kiidra Duhault ▪ Megan Dart ▪ Mile Zero Dance Society ▪
Nestor Makuch ▪ Patrick Lundeen ▪
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Shevchenko Foundation ▪ Ukrainian Canadian Veterans Fund ▪
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(Winnipeg) ▪ Talk is Free Theatre (Barrie)
Soulpepper Theatre (Toronto) ▪ National Arts Centre -
English Theatre (Ottawa) ▪ Theatre Calgary (Calgary)



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and to learn more about
Punctuate! Theatre.

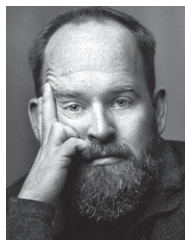
CAST



MARIYA KHOMUTOVA

Masha; Playwright

Theatre Calgary debut. Elsewhere: *The Division* (Crow's Theatre, Toronto); *Madame Minister* (Talk Is Free Theatre, Toronto); *First Métis Man of Odesa* (Punctuate! Theatre with Western Canada Theatre, Kamloops, BC; Theatre Centre & Souleppper Theatre, Toronto, ON; Citadel Theatre, Edmonton, AB; The Cultch, Vancouver, BC; Persephone Theatre, Saskatoon, SK; Royal Manitoba Theatre, Winnipeg, MB; Talk Is Free Theatre, Barrie, ON; National Arts Centre, Ottawa, ON). Film/TV: *Yaga* (dialect coach/coming soon on Crave), *Stars on the Ceiling* (actor/short film, CA), *Two People* (actor/short film, UA), *It Was Showering in Manchester* (actor/short film, UA), *Saga* (actor/TV series, UA), *Clan of the Jewellers* (actor/TV series, UA). With huge love to our son Ivan MacKenzie, and to my family in Canada and Ukraine. Stand with Ukraine! Latest updates: @markhom87



MATTHEW MACKENZIE

Matt; Playwright

Theatre Calgary debut. Elsewhere: *First Métis Man of Odesa* (Punctuate! Theatre with Western Canada Theatre, Kamloops, BC; Theatre Centre & Souleppper Theatre, Toronto, ON; Citadel Theatre, Edmonton, AB; The Cultch, Vancouver, BC; Persephone Theatre, Saskatoon, SK; Royal Manitoba Theatre, Winnipeg, MB; Talk Is Free Theatre, Barrie, ON; National Arts Centre, Ottawa, ON). Matthew is a citizen of the Métis Nation of Alberta and proud father of Ivan (Eevan, Vanya, Vanichka). He is the Artistic Director of Punctuate! Theatre and a founding member of the Pemmican Collective. Matt's plays include *Strife*, *Takwahiminana*, *First Métis Man of Odesa*, *Bears*, *After the Fire*, *The Benefit*, and *The Particulars*, for which he has won numerous awards. Matt would like to give special thanks to the Punctuate! and Theatre Calgary teams for bringing this show to Calgary!



Matthew MacKenzie and Mariya Khomutova. Photo: Alexis McKeown

CREATIVE TEAM



LIANNA MAKUCH

Director

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Elsewhere: As Director - *First Métis Man of Odesa* (Punctuate! Theatre; Dora Award for Outstanding Direction); *A Christmas Carol* (Citadel Theatre); *Kohkom's Babushka* (Pyretic Productions/Punctuate! Theatre, Banff Centre); *Bomb* (Pyretic Productions). As Assistant/ Associate Director - *Sense and Sensibility* (Stratford Festival, Langham Directors' Workshop 2025); *The Division* (Project:

Humanity/Pyretic Productions/Crow's Theatre). As Playwright - *Barvinok*, *Alina*, and *Kohkom's Babushka* (co-writer). Lianna is a Ukrainian Canadian theatre artist. Her work has been recognized by the Dora Awards, Sterling Awards, Shevchenko Foundation's REACH Award, Edmonton Artists' Trust Fund Award, Gina's Prize finalist, and Edify magazine's 2023 Top 40 Under 40. Her theatre and community work has also been recognized in the House of Commons. liannamakuch.com @lililianna



DANIELA MASELLIS

Production Designer

Theatre Calgary debut. Elsewhere: Projects with companies including the National Arts Centre, Stratford Festival, Citadel, The Cultch, Workshop West, Arts Club, Belfry, Punctuate! Theatre, Akpik Theatre, Western Canada Theatre, Alberta Theatre Projects. Daniela is a designer, artist and educator based in amiskwaîwâskahikan, Treaty 6 (Edmonton). She is an Assistant Professor of Theatre Production at MacEwan University. Instagram: @dmaselli_



Matthew MacKenzie and Mariya Khomutova. Photo: Dahlia Katz

CREATIVE TEAM



AMELIA SCOTT Projection Designer

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Elsewhere: *La folie d'Ophélie* (Orchestre Symphonique de Québec); *Rusalka* (Royal Swedish Opera/Nouvel Opéra Fribourg/Irish National Opera); *Frozen* (Citadel Theatre, Grand Theatre); *Kohkom's Babushka* (Punctuate!/Pyretic/Banff Centre); *Alina* (Pyretic); *Takwahiminana* (Punctuate!); *My Name is Lucy Barton* (Canadian Stage); *The Mountaintop* (Citadel Theatre), National tour of *First Métis Man of Odesa* (Punctuate!);

Projet Polytechnique, *The Assembly* (Porte Parole); *The Master Plan*, *Stars: Together* (Crow's Theatre); *Bonne Bonnes* (Nervous Hunter); *Romeo and Juliet* (Vancouver Symphony Orchestra); *Si Jamais Vous Nous Écoutez* (La Messe Basse/Théâtre Denise Pelletier); *Cockroach*, *To The Light* (Alberta Theatre Projects). Film/TV: *Le 11 Septembre et moi* (Télé Québec/Picbois Production), *Star Wars Kid* (NFB), *Pas d'chicane dans ma cabane* (Forum Films/Téléfilm Canada/Axia Films), *J'ai frôlé la mort* (Chez Attraction/Canal D). Amelia is an instructor of Video Design and Technology at The National Theatre School of Canada.



DARABA Composer

Theatre Calgary debut. Elsewhere: National tour of *First Métis Man of Odesa* (Punctuate with NAC, Soulpepper, TIFT, Persephone, RMTC, Citadel, Cultch, Theatre Centre, WCT). Daraba is a creative audiovisual group (based in Kyiv, Ukraine). It was founded in 2020 by composer Andrii Merkhel and designer Yaroslav Zen and also includes composer/sound designers Tetiana Khoroshun and Serhii Vilka. Over the years, the team has

presented a number of projects in collaboration with leading productions, institutions, and theatres in Ukraine and other European countries. Their focus is on performance, creative solutions for films, computer games, installations, and exhibitions.



AARON MACRI Sound Designer

Theatre Calgary debut. Elsewhere (selected): *First Métis Man of Odesa* (Punctuate with NAC, Soulpepper, TIFT, Persephone, RMTC, Citadel, Cultch, Theatre Centre, WCT); *Kohkom's Babushka* (Punctuate/Pyretic/Banff Centre); *Takwahiminana* (Punctuate/Soulpepper). Film/TV: *CAUTION: May Contain Nuts* (5 seasons; APTN), *Tiny Plastic Men* (4 seasons; Super Channel), *Delmer & Marta* (APTN), *Grasslands Project* (National

Film Board of Canada). Aaron is an award-winning Edmonton-based composer and sound designer for theatre, dance, television and film for twenty-five years. His work has been broadcast nationally, internationally, and off-Broadway.



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CREATIVE TEAM



KRISTA LIN

Choreographer

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Elsewhere: As Choreographer - *THE BIRDS* (AMChoreography); *Tuesdays & Sundays* (Toy Guns Dance Theatre); *body || light* (Edmonton Nuit Blanche); *Prairies I* (Expanse Movement Festival). *When I told you everything I lied and drank heavily* (Retake). As Performer - *FacetoFace* (MFMdance); *once and after* (Heidi Strauss); *Cheers and Tears* (Pam Tzeng/Good Women Dance); *The Particulars* (Punctuate! Theatre); *Family*

Dinner and Family Dinner: The Lexicon (Justine Chambers); *BEARS* (Punctuate/Pyretic).

Krista is a movement educator with over 20 years of experience, who has taught across Canada and in Taiwan. Thank you to my kids for their constant inspiration!



MATT MCGEACHY

Dramaturg

(he/him) Theatre Calgary debut. Elsewhere: *Strife* (Punctuate! Theatre/Tarragon); *First Métis Man of Odesa* (Punctuate! Theatre/ongoing tour); *Never Walk Alone* (Buddies in Bad Times/fuGEN); *The Year of the Cello* (Theatre Passe Muraille); *Forget Me Not* (Ronnie Burkett Theatre of Marionettes/Luminato Festival). Matt spent 10 seasons as Company Dramaturg at Factory Theatre and stints at Guthrie Theater, The

Playwrights' Center, and The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Film/TV: *I'm in Love with a Stripper* (J. Phan/PNSNV), *Mani Pedi* (M. Goldman/L. Noordin).

In addition to working as a freelance dramaturg across Canada, Matt is Director of Government Relations at the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.



KRISTA LEDDY

Métis Auntie at Large; Beadwork Artist

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Elsewhere: Cultural Dance Consultant on *Kohkom's Babushka* (Punctuate/Pyretic/Banff Centre for Arts and Culture). Film/TV: *Dr. Savannah: Wild Rose Vet* (Great Pacific Media). Krista is a proud Two Spirit Métis woman whose family comes from the historical Métis communities of St. Albert, Lac St. Anne, and Jasper House.

She currently calls amiskwaciywāskahikan (Edmonton) home.

She is an internationally known multidisciplinary artist who uses teachings and stories from her community to guide the work she creates. Krista has a passion to share what she knows about Métis art and culture with the world around her. As a visual artist, theatre is new to me and it's been a delightful ride! Thank you to the good folks at Punctuate! Theatre for incredible opportunities to create and grow. beadedchickadee.ca; @beadedchickadee on IG, FB, YouTube, & TikTok

CREATIVE TEAM



MARIA NELSON

Beadwork Artist

Theatre Calgary debut. Maria is a Métis-Ukrainian woman from Redwater, Alberta. Beading is a way of building and maintaining the connection between her heritage, her past, and her identity moving forward. Maria began working on reconnecting with her community and heritage around the same time she began beading. Her family connections are primarily from Saskatchewan and Red River, and it was during her great-grandmother's generation that they entered Alberta. Maria is a Lavallee, Piche, Arcand, Poitras, Anderson, and many more. It has been an educating and rewarding experience to be able to rebuild connections to her past and heritage while also being able to build new connections in her present.



CHANDLER ONTKEAN

Stage Manager

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: As ASM - *A Christmas Carol* (2023-26), *The Lehman Trilogy*, *Noises Off*, *Mary and Max* - *A New Musical*. Elsewhere: As SM - *A Killing Snow* (Vertigo Theatre); *Beyond the Sea*, *Home for the Holidays*, *Shark Bite* (Lunchbox Theatre); *Screwball Comedy*, *Elvis Has Left the Building* (Stage West). As ASM - *The Girl on the Train*, *Whispers in the Dark*, *Deathtrap*, *The Lonely Diner*, *Undercover*, *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Jersey Lily* (Vertigo Theatre); *The Birds and the Bees*, *Cowgirl Up* (Alberta Theatre Projects). Also many jobs in the costume department around the city! Film/TV: Costumer for various fun TV productions like: *The Last of Us*, *The Abandons*, *The Order*, and *Heartland*. Thanks always to my friends and family and the farmers of many fine corn kernels that go into making the popcorn that I eat at the movies each week.



TRENT CROSBY

Production Manager; Technical Director

(he/him) Theatre Calgary debut. For Punctuate! Theatre: *Kohkom's Babushka*, *Takwahiminana*, *First Métis Man of Odesa*, *Bears*, *After The Fire*, *The Particulars*, *Minosis Gathers Hope*. Trent is the resident Technical Director of Punctuate! Theatre and Mile Zero Dance. He is a proud member of IATSE 210. Thank you to my wife Erin for being my anchor and all my collaborators for their trust.

CREATIVE TEAM



ANDY COHEN

Senior Producer

For Theatre Calgary: *Oz & Others in Come From Away*. Elsewhere: As Producer - *First Métis Man of Odesa* (Punctuate!/NAC, Soulpepper, TIFT); *Strife* (Punctuate!/Tarragon); *Bright Star* (Mirvish/GTP); *Kohkom's Babushka* (Punctuate!/Pyretic/Banff Centre); *Takwahiminana* (Punctuate!/Soulpepper); *East Van Panto: The Little Mermaid* (Theatre Replacement/The Cultch).

As Actor - *Frozen* (Citadel); *Charlotte* (Theaturtle/National Theatre - Prague); *Hunchback* (Catalyst); *Godspell* (Arts Club); *Fiddler on the Roof* (Persephone); Buddy in *Elf* (Cheminus); *Hair* (Mayfield). Andy worked on mass movement and production teams for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the *Olympic & Paralympic Games* (Vancouver, Rio de Janeiro), *AIMAGames* (Ashgabat), *Invictus Games* (Sydney), *Commonwealth Games* (Gold Coast). He was lead Show Producer for the *COP28 Opening Ceremony* and responsible for the Sitewide Programming at *Expo 2020 Dubai*. As performer, producer, director, music director, and arranger, Andy earned Betty, Ovation & SAT Awards, Dora, Sterling, & Jessie nominations, and a BFA in Acting from UBC. Big thanks to the TC team (you are second to none), and the village of support that makes travelling for work possible.



SHEINY SATANOVE

Originating Producer

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Elsewhere: Sheiny has produced over twenty plays, including several world premiere productions. She is also a freelance producer and coordinator in the film industry, and has worked on several feature films and television shows across the country. Sheiny is a Vancouver-born theatre and film producer who has lived in Treaty 6 amiskwaciwâskahikan for over 10 years.

SPECIAL THANKS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

THE PLAYWRIGHTS WISH TO THANK

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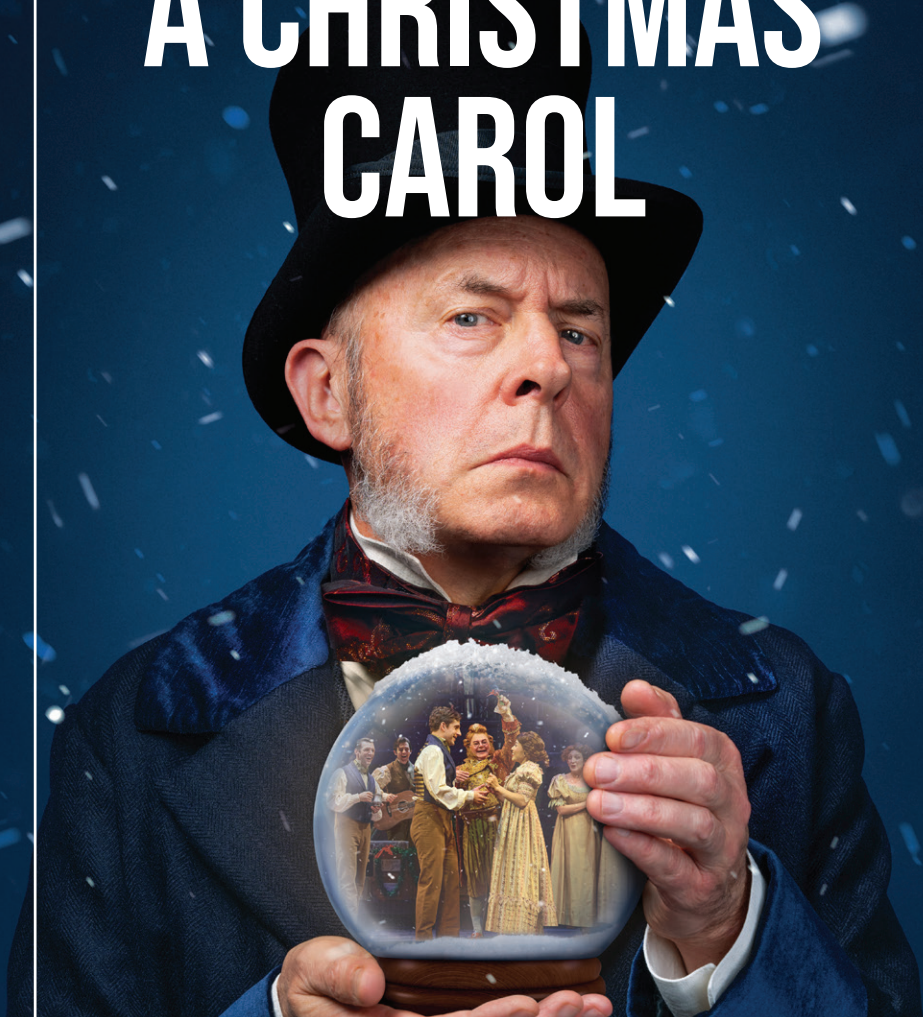
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SYNOPSIS

(May contain spoilers)

This is the true story of Matt, a Métis man from Alberta, and Masha (a nickname for Mariya), a performer living in Kyiv, Ukraine. We follow their relationship as it grows from a chance meeting at a theatre in Kyiv to a long-distance romance and, ultimately, a marriage and family. Matt and Mariya communicate through text messages, traveling back and forth between Canada and Ukraine.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic changes everything—borders close, travel becomes virtually impossible—and the couple is separated just when their relationship is solidifying, and Matt travels to Ukraine to marry Mariya and find a way for her to return to Canada.

It's 2022, and Mariya is now living in Canada. As life begins to settle, Russia launches its full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Mariya watches from afar while her family, friends, and home are in danger.

As a playwright, Matthew wants to create a play about what he and Mariya have experienced, but she questions the ethics of turning these painful events into art.



*Matthew MacKenzie and Mariya Khomutova.
Photo: Alexis McKeown*



Matthew MacKenzie and Mariya Khomutova. Photo: Dahlia Katz

Métis Nation of Alberta

Métis history in Alberta began with the North American fur trade. The Métis developed as a people through the interactions between Europeans and First Nations communities. In 1928, Alberta Métis began organizing to advance self-determination and self-government in the province, leading to the creation of the Métis Nation of Alberta. The Métis are considered an aboriginal group under Canada's Constitution Act, 1982. However, they are separate and distinct from First Nations, though they live in the same regions, have cultural similarities, and have different legal rights. Métis people have played an important role in Alberta's history, society and economy for many centuries. Alberta is home to more than 127,000 Métis people and is the only province in Canada with a recognized Métis land base.

Odesa

Odesa, the third most populous city in Ukraine, is a seaport on the northwestern shore of the Black Sea. During the 19th century, increased trade caused the rapid expansion of the urban centre. Odesa became a cosmopolitan city with theatres, bridges, monuments, religious buildings, schools, and dwellings from palaces to government housing designed by architects and engineers of many nationalities. Prior to the Russian invasion in 2022, Odesa was a principal port for the export of Ukrainian grain through the Black Sea and was a thriving commercial hub. The beach city was also a popular tourist destination for Ukrainians and Eastern Europeans alike. Due to its strategic geographical location, conflict with Russia has been part of the city's history since 1792. In 2023, its historic city centre was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in recognition of its multiculturalism and unparalleled 19th century architecture. This declaration was made in response to the bombing of the city during the Russian invasion which has damaged or destroyed buildings across the city.

The 2022 Russian Invasion of Ukraine

Ukraine is an independent Eastern European country fighting to defend its territory and determine its own future. It shares a long history with Russia, becoming independent in 1991 (with the fall of the Soviet Union), and strengthening its ties with the European Union and NATO since then.

Russian President Vladimir Putin sees this as a threat to Russia's influence and security. In 2014, Russia occupied Crimea, a region of Ukraine, and supported armed groups fighting the Ukrainian government. And on February 24, 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, attacking from several directions. Since then, Ukraine has been fighting back.

Like many wars, this is about land, power, language, national identity, and Ukraine's right to control its future. Millions of Ukrainians have been forced from their homes, and countries including Canada have provided support to Ukraine.



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Norm and Kathy Schachar

Legacy donors have a special place at Theatre Calgary. They are sharing their love of theatre with children for decades to come by creating a stable future for the arts. They are giving local artists of all ages a future where they can thrive right here at home and our community access to compelling stories that delight and inspire.

Including a donation to Theatre Calgary in your will is a very special way to remember the important place theatre has held for you while ensuring future generations can experience the same wonder. For long-time supporters **Norm and Kathy Schachar**, it was an easy choice. They first fell in love with Theatre Calgary from the audience.

Over the years their involvement has deepened as they became donors, fundraisers, and a Board member. Norm holds the record for the longest serving board member with 36 years.

“We continue to give regularly and plan to leave an additional gift in our wills as a legacy of our long and wonderful relationship with Theatre Calgary. We encourage legacy giving as an excellent way to support and sustain live theatre at TC. And encourage anyone who is able and interested to investigate this great opportunity to ensure a long and healthy future for world-class live stage productions in the heart of Calgary.”

- NORM AND KATHY SCHACHAR

Now retired from the Board, Norm and Kathy still have a central place at Theatre Calgary. As legacy donors, they are creating a solid future where their passion for theatre will create opportunities for new generations of artists and enthusiasts.

Every donation is unique and there are many options to make sure your legacy gift is right for you. For more information about how to add a gift to Theatre Calgary to your will visit our website, or contact Anne Long at 587-441-9044.

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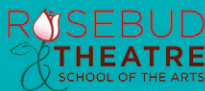


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