

THE BANFF CENTRE

Paul D. Fleck
President
The Banff Centre

Neil Armstrong, C.M.
Vice President, Education
The Banff Centre
Director, The Banff Centre for the Arts

presents

BOILER ROOM SUITE

Composer: Quentin Doolittle

Librettist: Rex Deverell

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financial assistance of:**

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Joyce and Quentin Doolittle · Sheila Richardson Lee
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The Saskatchewan Arts Board

Welcome

Welcome to this performance of *Boiler Room Suite*. It's a very special occasion for us because it's the culmination of two years' work since John Metcalf, the artistic director of our Music Theatre program, approached Quenten Doolittle to write an opera for the program. That invitation led to another – this time Quenten's to Rex Deverell – to write a libretto based on his award-winning play, *Boiler Room Suite*.

In the fall of 1987, Keith Turnbull, associate artistic director of our program, directed an unstaged music-stand reading of a portion of the opera with the Music Theatre Ensemble, and the following spring he directed a staged and designed workshop with the participants of our Music Theatre Workshop. The reading and the workshop were valuable not only in the process of developing the work, but also as a means of advancing the training and development of the performing artists involved.

And now, in the fall of 1989, we are presenting a full production, with performers and musicians who have worked and developed at The Banff Centre, first in Banff, and then in Cardiff, London, Birmingham, and Wells-next-the-Sea.

To all those who are cited in the program for their invaluable help in making all of this possible, many thanks. And to the audiences who will share it with us, we hope that you will find the experience a rich and stimulating one.

Paul D. Fleck
President
The Banff Centre

PROGRAM NOTES

As with all my theatrical works, style is conditioned by the needs of the material. The grimy world of the two winos, Aggie and Sprugg, is 'transcended' by a kind of mocking romanticism – illusions are still possible. Aggie's temporary home in the boiler room of a railway hotel is full of found materials which are paralleled by 'found' musical inserts: tangos, fox trots, hymns, salon music, etc. The hotel caretaker, Pete, improvises a work song, and a full choir and organ support Sprugg's religious pretensions.

The musical materials in *Boiler Room Suite* are a synthesis of operatic traditions for contemporary audiences. - **Quenten Doolittle**

Several years ago I lived with a group of alcoholics in a half-way house. I was a twirpy, optimistic, young theological student, and the others were life-weathered folk desperate either to get away from the booze or get back to it. They told me stories. I remember one about a derelict who was living in the forgotten cellar of a dilapidated hotel. Another story involved an attempted seduction by a creature with sores on her legs. If I remember rightly, the sight of the sores stopped the seduction.

My friends that year were individuals with highly different backgrounds and personalities. There was an educated, elegant, articulate gentleman, well informed about wine, women, and religion. There was an ancient Irish ruddy who was losing control of both bladder and brain. There was a great kindly hulk of a man who got a job in a mailroom and we almost thought he was going to make it. He didn't, but I'll never forget the joy of the moment. There was a tall thin man who always seemed on the verge of tears. He talked to me for long hours about his wife and how romantic things had been before. When I met her she proved to be a harsh, brittle woman. At any rate, my experiences that year are the genesis of the piece.

Boiler Room Suite isn't all fantasy. Every night across the country in the lounges of rundown hotels, one may listen to the fractured conversations, the tempests, and the calms, and the heroic struggles for joy that represent the human condition. This is the subject matter of my libretto.

The play is a series of dances, sometimes literally so. Fantasy is one of the partners in the dance and reality is another. They seem to wear different masks each time they whirl into view. But what is important in this play is that we must never, never lose sight of the characters, Aggie, Sprugg, and Pete. No matter how things change, swirl and transform, these people are still themselves – sometimes controlling, sometimes swept or shaken, defeated and yet, strangely, triumphant. - **Rex Deverell**

BANFF MUSIC THEATRE
presents

BOILER ROOM SUITE

Composer: Quentin Doolittle · **Librettist:** Rex Deverell

Conductor: Peter Stanger · **Director:** Keith Turnbull
Designer: Gavin Semple · **Stage Manager:** Cynthia Burtinshaw

CAST

Sprugg: Chris Enns
Aggie: Fides Krucker
Pete: Kevin Power

MUSICIANS

Violin, Susan Cottrell · *Piano,* Susan Gould
Flute, Susan Hoepfner · *Bassoon,* Margaret Hooper
Clarinet, Francois Houle · *Double Bass,* Raymond Radkowski
Percussion, John Thompson

Act I

A while ago. The basement of an abandoned
hotel in Saskatchewan.

-55 minutes-

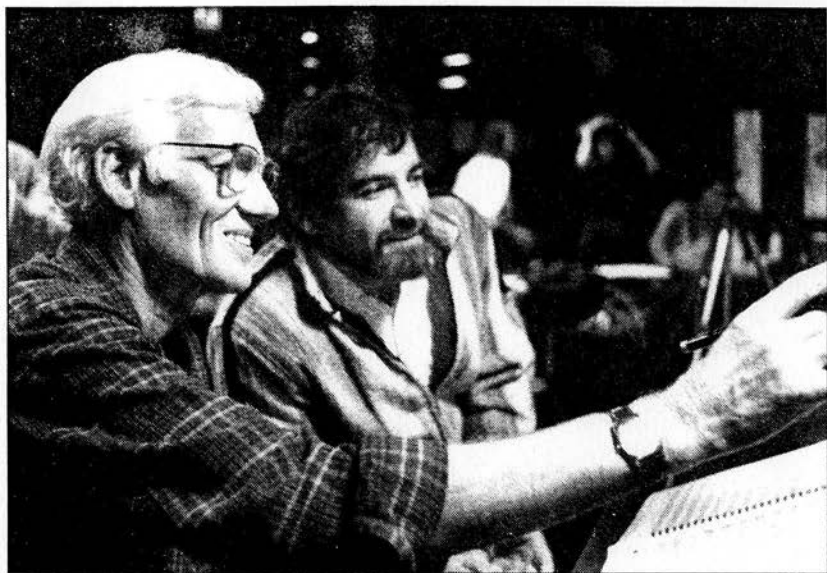
Intermission

Act II

Later

-35 minutes-

BIOGRAPHIES



Composer Quenten Doolittle and librettist Rex Deverell.

QUENTEN DOOLITTLE (COMPOSER)

Born in Elmira, New York, Quenten is professor emeritus of music at the University of Calgary, where he taught for 28 years. He became a Canadian citizen in 1969, and holds degrees from Ithaca College, Indiana University, and the Eastman School of Music. He began composing during an active career as soloist and conductor, and principal violist for the Calgary Philharmonic. He has completed over 40 works, including three operas, many other theatrical collaborations ranging from music theatre to music and sound scores for plays and films, plus several works for orchestra, chamber pieces, songs, and solo works. Quenten's work has been produced at Toronto Free Theatre, University Theatre in Calgary, Composer's Theatre in New York, The Stratford Festival, Pumphouse Theatre in Calgary, Young People's Theatre, The Banff Centre, Comus Music Theatre, at numerous local recitals, and national and international music festivals.

REX DEVERELL (LIBRETTIST)

Born in Toronto in 1941, Rex grew up in Orillia, Ontario. He earned a bachelor of arts degree from McMaster University, where he also studied theology. Graduate studies in theatre and theology followed at Union Theological Seminary in New York. He has been the resident playwright at Regina's Globe Theatre since 1975, and is widely respected for being one of Canada's leading playwrights. His writing includes a number of works for young audiences, documentary dramas, highly

personal plays, and political satires. A founding member of the Playwrights' Union of Canada, he has received numerous awards and honours for his writing, including the Canadian Authors Association Award in 1978 for the widely produced *Boiler Room Suite*. With over 40 produced plays to his credit, his work has been seen in theatres across Canada, including the Saskatchewan Centre for the Arts, McMaster University, Studio Lab Theatre, Citadel Theatre, Theatre Calgary, Carousel Theatre, Great Canadian Theatre Company, Theatre Sudbury, Theatre London, Prairie Theatre Exchange, and Terra Nova Theatre. An anthology of some of his work, including *Boiler Room Suite*, will soon be published by New West Press. Currently, Rex is working on the libretto for an operatic adaptation of Zola's *The Earth*, with British composer Stephen McNeff.



Cast: Fides Krucker, Kevin Power and Christopher Enns.

PETER STANGER (MUSIC DIRECTOR/CONDUCTOR)

Formerly staff conductor and chorus director for the Scottish Opera, Peter has conducted for both opera and orchestral concerts throughout Great Britain. He is an accomplished coach/repertoire, and has recorded/performed for the BBC. Peter recently conducted Bernstein's *Candide* for the Old Vic, London, which received the Sir Laurence Olivier award for the best musical in Britain (1988). Additional credits include much of the Puccini repertoire, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and *Billy Budd* (Britten). Peter is an outdoor enthusiast who has just completed an extensive trip to Alaska and the Yukon.

SUSAN COTTRELL (VIOLIN)

Susan Cottrell commenced violin studies at the age of nine. At sixteen, she was the first Albertan to win the Kiwanis National Competition. She spent two summers in Aspen, Colorado studying with Dorothy DeLay, two summers as concert-master of the National Youth Orchestra, and was concert-master of the Canadian Chamber Orchestra in Banff. Miss Cottrell has been featured numerous times on CBC radio and CTV, and has appeared as soloist with the Calgary Philharmonic, Vancouver Academy Strings, the Canadian Chamber Orchestra, the Edmonton Symphony, the McGill Symphony, and the Quebec Symphony Orchestra.

SUSAN GOULD (COACH/PIANIST)

Susan Gould received her bachelor of piano performance degree with distinction at the University of Victoria in 1984, studying with Dr. Robin Wood. That same year she was the winner of the Austrian Mozart Competition at the Kiwanis Music Festival, and in 1985, a semifinalist in the Chinook National Piano Competition. At this point she became the pianist for Music Mosaic – a piano trio with a theatrical approach. Susan also freelances as a teacher, accompanist/coach, composer, and jazz pianist. Her love for mountaineering and the outdoors has brought her to Banff where she is enjoying her third season with the Music Theatre program.

SUSAN HOEPPNER (FLUTE)

Susan Hoepfner is a soloist of international repute and a graduate of the Juilliard School. She has performed with major orchestras around the world, including the Buenos Aires Symphony, Lisbon Radio Orchestra, Toronto Symphony, Metropolitan Orchestra de Montreal, Calgary Philharmonic, and numerous others. She has invitations to perform solo and chamber recitals throughout North and South America, Great Britain and Europe, and she is frequently broadcast on radio and TV across Canada and the U.S.

MARGARET HOOPER (BASSOON)

Margaret Hooper attended the University of Toronto where she majored in performance and studied with David H. Carroll. Post-graduate studies followed in Boston with Sherman Walt, and at The Banff Centre. She has played in the Victoria Symphony Orchestra, the Victoria International Festival Orchestra, and

several other Canadian orchestras. Margaret has toured with Spectrum Winds and the Norquay Trio, and has recorded for CBC radio and TV. She is presently teaching at Algoma Conservatory of Music, and has performed with several northern Ontario orchestras.

FRANCOIS HOULE (CLARINET)

Francois Houle studied at McGill University (B. Mus) and Yale University (M.M.). He spent two years as a participant in the Advanced Studies in Music program at The Banff Centre. Francois has performed in Canada, the United States, and Europe. He is completing a research project on historical musical instruments with the assistance of Alan Hacker and the Quebec Minister of Research and Technology.

RAYMOND RADKOWSKI (DOUBLE BASS)

Born in Toronto, Raymond received his master's degree from Indiana University in Bloomington, where he was also an associate instructor in music theory. Further study included participation in both summer and winter programs at The Banff Centre. While he was a member of the Thunder Bay Symphony, he taught piano and harmony at Lakehead University. He has performed a wide range of music throughout Canada, the U.S., England, Holland, and Spain.

JOHN THOMPSON (PERCUSSION)

John Thompson received a Canada Council project grant for participation in The Banff Centre winter cycle program in 1986/87. He was also a participant in the winter of 1989 at The Banff Centre. Presently, John is a freelance percussionist based in Calgary, playing with the Calgary Philharmonic, New Works Calgary, and for ballet, opera, and music theatre productions at The Banff Centre. Since finishing at the University of Toronto in 1986, he has recorded and performed live in solo performances, contemporary chamber music, orchestral work, and blues and country music.



*Orchestra: (back row) Susan Gould (piano), Ray Radkowski (double bass)
Francois Houle (clarinet) · (middle row) Margaret Hooper (bassoon)
Peter Stanger (conductor), Susan Hoepfner (flute)
(front) Susan Cottrell (violin), John Thompson (percussion).*

CHRIS ENNS (SPRUGG)

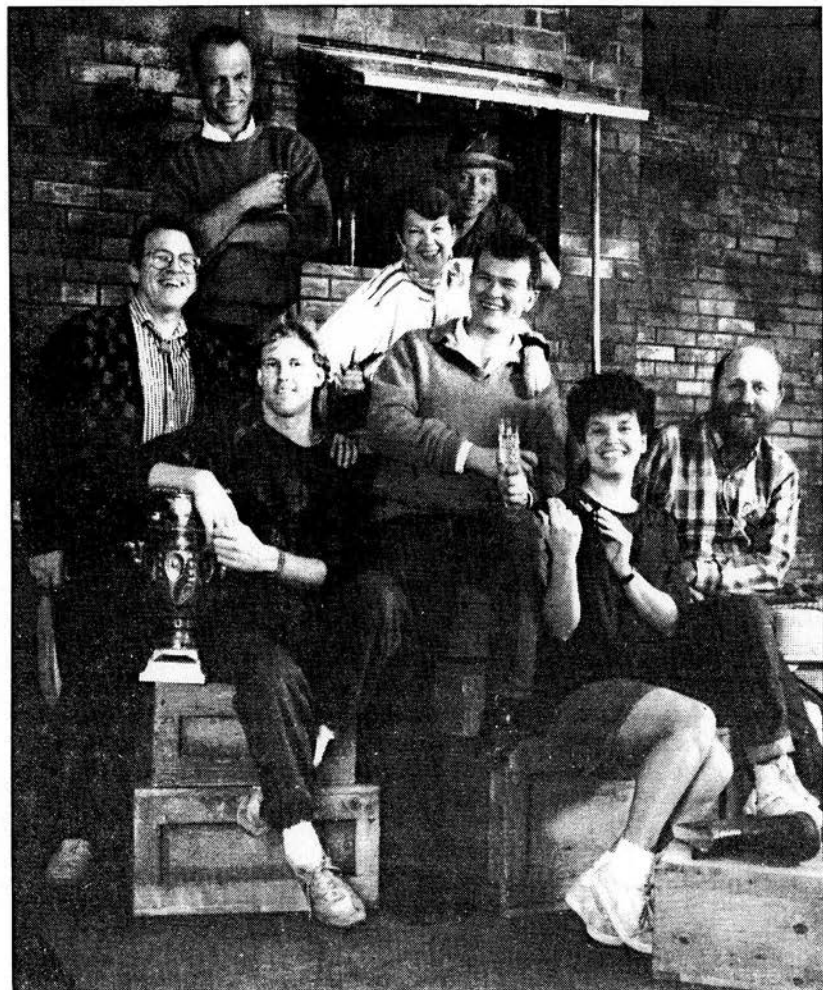
Christopher Enns, a native of Winnipeg, Manitoba, has a varied performance background, including opera, musical theatre, oratorio, and 20th century works. He has been associated with The Banff Centre for four years. This past year he has delighted audiences with his portrayal of "Figaro" in *The Barber of Seville*, "Escamillo" in *Carmen*, and "Marcello" in *La Bohème*.

FIDES KRUCKER (AGGIE)

Mezzo-soprano Fides Krucker trained with the Music Theatre Studio Ensemble at The Banff Centre. In 1986, she joined the Paul Drescher Ensemble to create and perform a two-person opera *Slow Fire*, which premiered at the American Music Theatre Festival and toured through the United States. In the summer of 1988, Fides sang Berio's *Folk Songs* for the Israeli Broadcasting Authority. She has sung this cycle extensively - with the Ensemble Intercontemporain in Paris, the Opera de Lyon, and the Maggio Musicale in both East Berlin and Italy. She has just returned from Israel where she performed and directed *Pierrot Lunaire*, which she has also sung in Wales, and premiered a new work by Israeli composer Kopytman. Fides has studied throat singing in Iqaluit, Northwest Territories, in order to incorporate this technique into the central role of an Inuk woman in John Metcalf's new opera *Tornrak*. Upcoming engagements include a concert of Berio and Weill for the Edmonton Symphony and work with the Vancouver dance theatre company Jumpstart! on their new opera *Da Fort*.

KEVIN POWER (PETE)

Kevin, a native of Halifax, Nova Scotia, completed a bachelor of music degree in theory/composition at the University of Saskatchewan in 1985. Since then, he has sung with l'Ensemble Vocale Tudor de Montreal, the chorus of l'Opera de Montreal, and l'Orchestre Symphonie de Montreal. Kevin first came to Banff in 1987 as a participant in the Music Theatre Workshop program, where he performed the role of Pete in a workshop performance of *Boiler Room Suite*.



Richard Green (assistant manager), Gavin Semple (designer), Tom Heemskerk (electrics), Selena James (vocal coach), Grant Bardsley (sound), Keith Turnbull (director), Michelle Milenkovic (assistant director), George Ross (manager).

KEITH TURNBULL (DIRECTOR)

Associate artistic director of music theatre at The Banff Centre, Keith began his association with the theatre as a producer, designer, and director. He was also artistic director of the Manitoba Theatre Centre and opened their new theatre. Then he became artistic director of Second Stage, Neptune Theatre, and was resident director for a summer season. After directing James Reaney's acclaimed *Donnelly Trilogy* at Tarragon Theatre, Keith founded the NDWT Co., and directed, adapted, wrote, produced, and designed a variety of productions, many of which

toured nationally. Keith has directed at the National Arts Centre, Toronto Arts Productions, Tarragon Theatre, Young People's Theatre, Alberta Theatre Projects, Theatre Calgary, Neptune Theatre, and MTC, among others. He recently directed *Rigoletto* for Vancouver Opera, and will be directing Mauricio Kagel's *La Trahison Orale*, and Harry Somer's new opera *SerINETTE* in the coming year.

GAVIN SEMPLE (DESIGNER)

Gavin is an associate professor at the University of Calgary, teaching production and design. Previously resident designer at Theatre Calgary, production manager at Northcott Theatre in Exeter, England, and technical director at Queens University, his design credits include the Manitoba Theatre Centre, Toronto Free Theatre, Theatre Aquarius, and The Banff Centre.

GRANT BARDSLEY (SOUND)

Currently head of sound at The Banff Centre, Grant has worked in the entertainment industry for the past 18 years. After initial training and work in film sound at the National Film Board of Canada, he went on to work for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the Stratford Festival, and as a media consultant in the far north of Canada. Grant has also worked and toured extensively with folk, jazz, rock, and classical ensembles throughout North America.

CYNTHIA BURTINSHAW (STAGE MANAGER)

Cynthia is on the stage management staff of the Vancouver Opera Association in Vancouver, Canada, for her second year. She freelances as a production manager and stage manager with different festivals and theatre companies in Western Canada, and hopes to branch out into bilingual stage management, and to continue touring outside of Canada.

TOM HEEMSKERK (ELECTRICS & SPECIAL EFFECTS)

Tom began working in theatre at the concert auditorium of the University of Victoria, British Columbia, while studying the bass trombone. After completing his musical studies, Tom promptly began working for several of the theatre companies and venues throughout the Victoria area, eventually becoming the head electrician and crew chief for the Bastion Theatre Company and Pacific Opera. Tom has worked at The Banff Centre since May of 1989, and sometimes climbs rocks when not climbing ladders.

SELENA JAMES (VOCAL COACH)

Selena began her musical training as a pianist, obtaining her L.R.S.M. degree from London and the A.T.C.M. degree from Toronto. In her late teens she changed her instrument major to voice. She received a B.A. and M.A. in voice from the Manhattan School of Music in New York. Her performing career has been varied: from operatic lead roles such as Violetta in *La Traviata*, which toured with the National Opera, United States, and Leonora in *Il Trovatore* at the St. Gallen Theatre

in Switzerland, to Sarah in *Guys and Dolls* in summer stock. She also has had extensive appearances in concert, radio, and television. She left her position as voice teacher and head of the opera department with the Victoria Conservatory of Music to join the Music Theatre staff in the spring of 1986.

GEORGE MCFAUL (MOVEMENT COACH)

Originally from Saskatchewan, Canada, George has been a practitioner and teacher of contact improvisation for the past five years. Currently based in Calgary, Alberta, he is a freelance performer and teacher of contact improvisation and movement for theatre at the University of Calgary. George has a one-year-old daughter, Molly, who is in the process of reorganizing his life and teaching him what movement is all about.

MICHELLE MILENKOVIC (ASSISTANT DIRECTOR)

Michelle received her undergraduate degree in vocal performance from the University of Saskatchewan. Since then, she has been performing both theatre and opera in Saskatchewan, as well as working with the Music Theatre program in Banff. This production is Michelle's initiation into directing.

GEORGE ROSS (TOUR MANAGER)

George's performing career began at the age of six as a singer/pianist/child actor. His boy-soprano days culminated in a tour of Europe as the only male in an all-female choir, and it is said that he left as a boy-soprano and returned as a tenor. High school operettas took up most of his teenage years, followed by musical and dramatic studies at the University of British Columbia. After graduating with a master's degree in opera production, George then freelanced as an opera stage director/stage manager, spending the summers in Banff as a stage director/co-ordinator/stage manager. George became manager of theatre arts, The Banff Centre, in 1978.

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to the Calgary Opera Chorus, chorus master James Beer, and organist Brent Waddell. Also to the participants of The Banff Centre Music Theatre Workshop for the recorded vocal sections.

Boiler Room Suite was first workshopped at The Banff Centre in the fall of 1987, and received its first workshop presentation in March of 1988 with the following company:

Director, Keith Turnbull; *Designer*, Jennifer Pulliam-Green;
Music Director, David Boothroyd; *Sprugg*, David Bruns;
Aggie, Michelle Milenkovic; *Pete*, Kevin Power.

CANADIAN REFERENCES

Alkies: Slang for alcoholics.

Dimes: Coins worth ten pennies; a penny is one cent.

Grain Elevators: An architectural symbol of the Canadian prairies. These large wooden structures are designed to clean, weigh, and store grain before transporting in trucks and railway cars. Grain elevators are built alongside railroad tracks.

Moose Jaw: A city in southern Saskatchewan (pop: 35,000), named for a nearby creek that the Indians thought resembled the outline of a moose's jaw. During the first part of the century the Canadian Pacific Railroad Company established a major train depot there.

Railroad Barons: Entrepreneurs who made their fortunes taking advantage of the railroad boom at the turn of the century. They were not known for their business ethics or social consciences.

Railway Hotels: The transcontinental railroad was built to ensure British Columbia's entry into the Canadian Confederation in 1871. The Canadian Pacific Railroad Company (CPR) was awarded land along the route and erected grandiose 'German Baronial' hotels (like the Chateau Lake Louise and the Banff Springs Hotel) to encourage train travel. By 1900 this hotel system expanded into cities across the country. *Boiler Room Suite* takes place in such a hotel in Regina, Saskatchewan, but it is empty and awaiting new owners. It is winter, and the boiler is just hot enough to prevent the pipes from freezing.

South Saskatchewan River: This river joins the North Saskatchewan River to form the Saskatchewan River which flows into Hudson Bay. The Indians called this river "Kisiskatchewanipi" or "swift flowing river".

"white horses running up railroad tracks": Refers to the painting *Horse and Train* (1954) by Canadian Alex Colville. The depiction of a horse running up railroad tracks towards an oncoming train creates a surrealistic image. In actuality, there is only one horse in the painting, and it is black.

BOILER ROOM SUITE PRODUCTION

Assistant Director: Michelle Milenkovic
Design Assistant: Richard Green
Tour Manager: George Ross
Vocal Coach: Selena James
Movement Coach: George McFaul
Coach/Repetiteur: Susan Gould
Sound: Grant Bardsley
Electrics & Special Effects: Tom Heemskerck
Set Carpentry: Gerald Gerlinsky
Jo Honeyman & Hans Kuper
Scenic Painting: Linda Rodrigues
Props: Werner Karsten
Publicity Photos: Monte Greenshields
& Ric Kokotovich (*cover*)

BANFF CENTRE THEATRE COMPLEX

General Manager: William Pappas
Production Manager: Ihor Sychylo
Technical Director: John Avery
Production Stage Manager: Tomas Montvila
Admin. Assistant/Production: Kathleen Specht
Admin. Secretary: Lorena McCallum

BANFF CENTRE MUSIC THEATRE

Artistic Director/Composer-in-Residence: John Metcalf
Associate Artistic Director: Keith Turnbull
Manager, Theatre Arts: George Ross
Assistant Manager, Theatre Arts: Richard Green
Program Coordinator: Janet Anderson
Administrative Secretary: Marguerite Holmes