

A Raven King

A Wizard

82 children

An orchestra of Orff
instruments, percussion
and piano



THE RAVEN KING

A NEW OPERA
FOR CHILDREN
AND ADULTS

By **Mervyn Burtch** and **Mark Morris**

Director **Lawrie Seligman**

Set & Costume Designer **Julie Renton**

Lighting Designer **David Ingraham**

Conductors **Janice Tole & Karen Kamensek**

August 11, 12, 13, 14, 15

Eric Harvie Theatre

Kids Op



THE BANFF CENTRE
FOR THE ARTS

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**THE
RAVEN
KING** A NEW OPERA
FOR CHILDREN
AND ADULTS

COMPOSER Mervyn Burtch

LIBRETTIST Mark Morris

a co-production between KidsOp and
Theatre Arts, The Banff Centre for the Arts

August 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 1999

CBC  radio *Two*

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The Raven King is being recorded for future broadcast on CBC Radio Two.

Producer Catherine McClelland

Recording Engineers Geoff Rowland & Bob Doble

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Visit the Theatre Arts WWW site for information on all aspects of past and present programs.


www.banffcentre.ab.ca/theatre


KidsOp

Founded in the small city of Wetaskiwin, Alberta, in December 1996, KidsOp is dedicated to creating new operas which elementary school aged children and adults can perform and enjoy. KidsOp encourages communities children, adults, parents, teachers to take part in the presentation of new operas for children and connects the various participating communities through their award-winning web site. In February, 1999, KidsOp won an international Cable and Wireless Childnet award, presented in Sydney, Australia. The awards were given for projects that further the cause of children through the use of the internet. At the end of this year, 1999, more than thirty communities in Alberta, Wales, the Czech Republic and south Africa will have been involved in presenting different productions of *The Raven King*. In the year 2000, KidsOp hopes to find a way to continue the collaborations between professionals, children, teachers and amateurs that was started with the Banff Arts Festival production.

www.kidsop.com

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The Raven King

A CO-PRODUCTION BETWEEN KIDSOP AND
THEATRE ARTS, THE BANFF CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

There will be one 20-minute intermission

Creative Team

COMPOSER Mervyn Burtch

LIBRETTIST Mark Morris

STAGE DIRECTOR Lawrie Seligman

CONDUCTOR Karen Kamensek

CONDUCTOR Janice Tole

SET, PROPERTIES AND COSTUME DESIGNER Julie Renton

LIGHTING DESIGNER David Ingraham

CHOREOGRAPHER Eve Thompson

ELECTRONIC SOUNDS Mark Morris

STAGE MANAGER Roxanne Prokop

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER (THEATRE CRAFT) Timothy Wisener

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER* Sharon Simper

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER* Megan Somerville

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER* Karen Toews

**work study*

REHEARSAL PIANIST/COACH David Hitchcock

BANFF REHEARSAL MUSIC DIRECTOR John Goulart

BANFF REHEARSAL PIANIST Mark LeClair

**PLEASE NOTE: There is a strobe light
used in the performance.**

**The use of cameras or any recording devices during
the performance is strictly prohibited.
Video recorders/camcorders are very distracting to both
the performers and other members of the audience,
and camera flashes going off in a dark auditorium can be
extremely dangerous for the performers on stage.
Besides, copyright considerations make the taking of pictures
or the recording of the performance illegal.**

PERFORMERS

Adult Roles

RAVEN John Mitchinson
WIZARD Peter Murray
PROTEUS Brent Lockhart
PISEA Eve Thompson

Adult Musicians

PIANO FOUR-HANDS The Bergmann Duo:
Elizabeth Laich and Marcel Bergmann
PERCUSSION Rod Thomas Squance

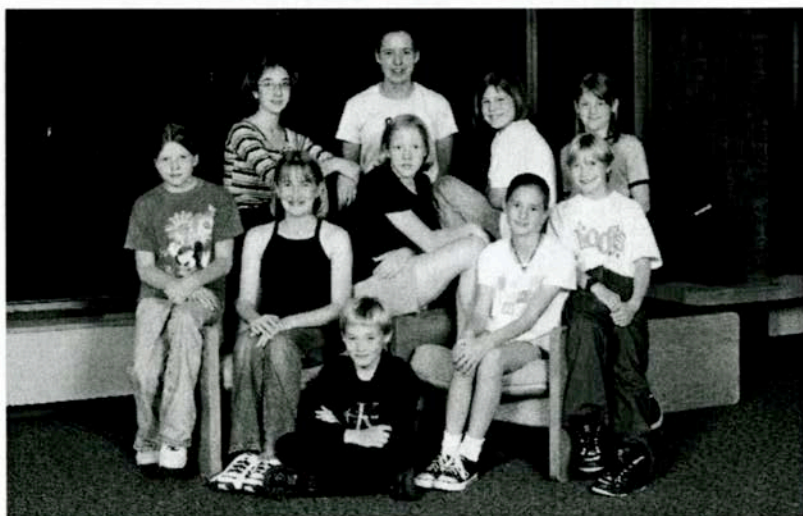
The Children Soloists

MIRELDA Claire Stewart, Leah Pacaoan
LEADER OF THE BIG CATS Claire Stewart, Leah Pacaoan
LEADER OF THE INSECTS Joel Hathaway
LEADER OF THE COYOTES Cody Yarshenko
OWL Ahlia Moussa
SNAKE April Rode
SQUIRREL Chelsey Bennett
DERRICK THE RABBIT KatieLyn Anderson



Wolves/Coyotes

Amber Bellrose Littlechild, Emily Chambers, Ashley Enman, Jeff Iverson, Natalie Jaburek, Pamela Murray, Satchel Reeves, Lauren Shantz*, Ashley Tarnasky, Alison Whenham



Squirrels/Rabbits

Charlotte Andres, Jillian Bauer, Caitlynn Cummings, Cali Hyer, Teesha Klein, Natalie Layton, Randy Spyksma, Kimia Stevens, Nicky Walker, Bill Zewe



* understudy

Birds

Kristina Blackwood, Kendra Cantley*, Autumn Gendron, Carly Hopfauf,
Rachael King, Jocelyn Lee, Sara Skakum, Britt Tomkow, Kim Tost



Big Cats

Rebecca Anderson, Vanessa Butt, Melissa Brysiuk, Amy Chubaty, Courtney Denham*,
Carol-Anne Fraser, Pamela Ganske, Caitlin Macdonald, Therese Nadeau,
Chelsea Neiderlag, Cole Pettifor



* understudy

Insects

Angela Booth, Kelsey Brill Funk, Kaleigh Doherty, Celeste Edwards, Morgan Fernie,
Jasmine Ing, Mallory Kusterski, Robert MacNamara, Macalla Miller Dubé,
Fabienne Moser, Guy Pettigrew, Jasmine Retzer, Hana Lane Thorson,
Rochelle Turner, Lana Vanderlee, Fuyumi Yokura



The Children in the Orchestra

Nicole Andres, Stephanie Cantley, Shannon Christensen, Samantha Cochrane,
Holly Ertmann, Sabine Feldberg, Matthew Hurd, Johanna Larsen, Amie Leddy,
Allie Linaker, Eric Malmas, Steven Shantz, Nathan Sperber,
Crystal (Chrissy) Springstar-Cutknife, Vanessa Tj-Burns



On the Composition of *The Raven King*

BY COMPOSER MERVYN BURTCH

The relationship between a composer and a librettist is a complex and intuitive one: each must know how the other thinks. My first reaction very often, when Mark's words arrive, is to throw up my hands in despair, but, twenty-four hours later, I usually see with blinding clarity what has to be done. Similarly, Mark seems to know how I am going to tackle a problem and how I will use the words.

The collaboration between us stretches back to 1982 with songs, our first opera, choral pieces, and, latterly, a trilogy of children's operas: *Coyote and the Winter that Never Ends*, *Wizard Things*, and now, *The Raven King*.

This is the most ambitious of the three pieces, and differs from the other two in that there are two large adult parts, and the music is through composed, not (as with the earlier pieces) a series of set musical items interspersed with dialogue.

The question of musical idiom is of prime importance in a work which has music for adults and children. While in no way writing down to the children, I have to put their music on a different psychological plane from that of the adults, while still maintaining a continuity of idiom. This is essentially a tonal idiom, but one with a fluid tonality – a tonality which is constantly changing. While the adult music is often more complex harmonically than that of the children, it is not different in kind. In fact, through writing a great deal for children, my idiom has been formed, clarified and carried over into the music for adults.

The scoring for piano duet and percussion provides both a stimulus and a challenge. The combination does not immediately suggest lyrical writing, but the piece is really full of lyrical writing. The stimulus has come from attempting to make the instrumental combination transcend its normal percussive function.

Is this a children's opera? The main protagonists are both adults, but it is the vision of the animals, represented by the children, which is paramount, and I would ask the audience to view the piece with the eyes and ears, with the simplicity and innocence, of the young.

The piece has a serious and important aim while attempting to provide a valid and emotionally satisfying theatrical experience.

I hope it fulfills both these criteria successfully.

Of Kids and Opera

BY LIBRETTIST MARK MORRIS

The production of *The Raven King* you are about to see is really a great experiment – or rather the fulfillment of a belief that all should have the opportunity to experience even so complex an art form as opera, and that everyone, child or adult, experienced or not, has the ability to create an opera performance fulfilling to both themselves and the audience.

This production combines the enthusiasm and skills of children, adults, amateurs and professionals, in a way rarely seen on the opera stage. The children are not from specialist musical backgrounds – they are children that you might meet walking down main street of any small Albertan town. Some of the adult performers and company are amateurs and teachers, without any extensive experience of the stage. Others are professionals in their fields, and our *Raven King*, John Mitchinson, has had an exceptionally distinguished operatic career. Each bring their own skills to the production, be it knowledge of children, specialist theatre skills, or teaching abilities. Each, I hope, will go away with new skills, be it a teacher taking singing and acting skills back to their community, or a professional who has learned ways of working with children of this age, or a child with a love for music, the arts and opera newly awakened.

Mervyn and I, from the outset of KidsOp in December 1996, were determined that the operas we would write would not be written down to children, as so many works for this age group are. Rather, they would be operas that simply took into account the limitations of children's voices (much as one would writing for a mezzo-soprano, for example), and of their abilities. So *The Raven King* is a modern, new opera. Of course the story takes into account children's interests, but I hope also there is a layer of resonances and ideas for adults. Those who know their Shakespeare, for example, will recognize the occasional quote from *The Tempest*, which was at the back of my mind when writing. Those with more arcane knowledge may hear resonances of Gnostic ideas, that Good and Evil are part and parcel of the same continuum.

The music, which I trust is never complex to listen to, is often very complex to perform in order to achieve its special effect. The rhythms, in particular, daunt many a professional glancing at the score. The real delight in preparing for this production has been to see how the children so quickly learn to master the idiom, and how, since they do not know otherwise, they take such complexities into their

stride. It has also been a real pleasure to hear a body of child instrumentalists turn themselves into such a tight band on Orff instruments and percussion.

KidsOp, though, is not just about doing opera with children, it is also about community – lots of communities coming together in a shared experience. First there is our community in Wetaskiwin, where so many different aspects of the city have pitched in to make this production possible. Then there is the wider community around the world, in Wales, The Czech Republic and South Africa, who are doing their own productions of the opera, and connecting with us. There is the community of the KidsOp web site, where we all share some of our achievements and experiences. There is an even larger community gearing up to join us in 2000. And, of course, there is the community of professionals who have helped us in this production.

We could not have done *The Raven King* without them. It would, anyway, have been no fun doing it without them, and surely the ultimate aim of any art is not the final product itself, but the ability of that product to renew in us the zest, the joy, the depth, even the complexity of life around us. It would also have not been possible without The Banff Centre, and especially the Theatre Arts Department, who had the courage to risk embracing this grand and so unlikely experiment, and sharing it with us. It has, I know been an enormously rewarding experience for all who have been involved. I hope it is for you, the audience, too.



KidsOp

Officers

Mervyn Burtch, President
Peter Murray, vice-president
David Hitchcock, treasurer
Janice Tole, musical director
Mark Morris, artistic director

Costume Volunteers

Kim Anderson
Gail Blackwood
Linda Chubaty
Cynthia Feldberg
Ursula Hitchcock
Sharon Hopfauf
Kim Hyer

Karen Iverson
Leah Jaburek
Angie Leddy
Kathy Linaker
Pat Murray
Brenda Niederlag
Helen Pacoan
Tina Rode
Sharada Skakum
Linda Springstar-Cutknife
Marilyn Tomkow
Hilda Zewe

The Chaperones

This production of *The Raven King* would not have been possible without the support of our wonderful group of Chaperones.

On behalf of every one involved with the production we wish to extend a heartfelt thank you to:

Donna Andres
Ramona Chambers
Adrian Chubaty
Linda Chubaty (head of activities)
Corrine Denham
Linda Fraser
Amanda Ganske
Pattie Ganske
Sharon Hopfauf
Luanne Hurd
Kim Hyer
Judi Larsen
Nelda Layton
Angie Leddy
Sandy Littlechild
Brian Malmas
Pat Murray
Lisa Nichols
Brenda Niederlag
Dan Shantz
Joanne Schantz
Peggy Sperber
Nelda Stevens
Pam Stewart (head chaperone)
Marilyn Tomkow
Janine Whenham
Terry Zewe

Internet Streaming Coordinator
Ryan Pearson

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support
of the following companies and individuals who have donated
specifically to this production of *The Raven King*:

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Boston Pizza (Wetaskiwin), Brekke's Mini Storage, Classique Decor,
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Lorac Enterprises, Peter Murray, Parkland Fertilizers,
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Ron's Woodwork, Unland Investments Inc., Wayside Inn,
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Peace Hills Arts Council

KidsOp Kings (\$1000+)

Diversified Transportation, Lions Club of Wetaskiwin,
Moussa Group of Companies, Norwood School,
Rotary Club of Wetaskiwin

We gratefully acknowledge the help of: Wetaskiwin City Council,
Town of Banff Council, Wetaskiwin Regional School Board,
B.P.Plywoods and the Wetaskiwin Good Neighbor Mart.

Biographies

The Children

The children taking part in *The Raven King* come from the Wetaskiwin region, together with fifteen from Banff and Canmore. They are not specialist musical children attending specialist schools; rather they are from non-specialists backgrounds attending public schools in Central Alberta and the Bow Corridor. However, a number of them have taken part in one or both of the previous KidsOperas, *Coyote and the Winter that Never Ends* and *Wizard Things*. The children started rehearsing for this production at the end of January, meeting once a week until June. They came together again for an intensive week's rehearsal at The Banff Centre for the Arts (two weeks for the soloists) and have delighted all those working with them by their spontaneity, dedication and musical enjoyment.

The Bergmann Duo PIANO FOUR-HANDS



Elizabeth Laich and Marcel Bergmann have been performing together as a duo since 1989. They studied with Arie Vardi at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater, Hannover and with Jean-Eudes Vaillancourt at the Université de Montréal. In December 1992, they won first prize at the International Chamber Music Competition in Caltanissetta, Italy. In 1993 they became members of the young artists' roster of Yehudi Menuhin-Live Music Now and were prize winners at the 4th Murray Dranoff International Two Piano Competition. They have performed numerous concerts in the USA, Canada, Italy and Germany and have appeared at the celebrated Gilmore International Keyboard Festival in

Michigan, the International Two Piano Symposium and Schubertiade in Miami, the Tage für neue Musik in Darmstadt and the Braunschweiger Kammermusik Podium. They have also made recordings for the CBC, SWF (Südwestfunk) and NDR (Norddeutscher Rundfunk) and have performed with the Südwestfunk Orchestra (Kaiserslautern) and the Göttinger Symphoniker. In 1997, they recorded their first CD with works of Gershwin, Bernstein, Copland and Milhaud. In the fall of 1998, they participated in a long-term residency at The Banff Centre for the Arts. During that time the duo performed in Western Canada and in the United States, including a performance of Stravinsky's *Les Noces* under the direction of Robert Craft.

Mervyn Burtch COMPOSER



Prolific composer Mervyn Burtch is a Fellow of the Welsh College of Music and Drama (1997), where he is currently a lecturer and organizer of the Special Schools Opera Project which takes operas to schools. He has written 12 short operas for the Welsh College of Music and Drama Schools Opera Project; and six full operas including *Coyote and the Winter that Never Ends* and *Wizard Things* for KidsOp. He has also written various orchestral pieces, concertos, chamber works, piano & choral music, and song cycles. In 1990, he received the prestigious John Edwards Memorial Award for contribution to music in Wales. Mervyn Burtch has

received numerous commissions from such groups as Cardiff Polyphonic Choir and Chamber Orchestra, Welsh Brass Consort, Royal Regiment of Wales, Cardiff Festival of 20th Century Music, International Children's Opera Summer School, Llantilio-Crosseny Festival, Swansea Festival and the Vale of Glamorgan Festival. His works have been recorded by Marco Polo, Herald, and Black Mountain Records, and broadcast in Australia, Canada, the Czech Republic, Eire, England, Hungary, New Zealand, Portugal and Wales.

David Ingraham LIGHTING DESIGNER



David Ingraham has designed lighting for numerous productions for Neptune Theatre in Halifax, Acadia University, and Stephenville Festival in Newfoundland. He also designed for shows touring out of Nova Scotia to the Royal Court Theatre in London, England, as well as to Amsterdam, Utrecht, Wales, New York City and Washington, DC. In addition to designing, while in his home province of Nova Scotia, he played "musical jobs" over six years at Neptune Theatre in stage management, technical direction, and as head electrician. David has also stage managed for Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia, Green Thumb Theatre in Vancouver, and the UNIMA World Puppetry Festival for the Kennedy Centre for Performing

Arts in Washington, DC. David is presently the full time head of electrics for Banff Theatre Arts – previous to this he was head of electrics at Theatre Calgary.

Karen Kamensek CONDUCTOR



Conductor Karen Kamensek made her first professional appearance conducting the New York premiere of Philip Glass's opera *Orpheus*, and since then she has been active as a conductor at international festivals and opera companies. In 1996 she conducted the international debut tour and the recent Nonesuch recording of Glass's *Les Enfants Terribles*, including the world premiere in Zug, Switzerland, the USA premiere at the Spoleto Festival, and the New York premiere at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. In the spring of 1997, Ms. Kamensek conducted a critically acclaimed national tour of the New York City Opera's National Company production of Puccini's *La Boheme*. Most recently, she has

conducted the Louisville Orchestra, has appeared at the Brevard Music Center Festival in North Carolina, led the Musici di Praga for the televised awards ceremony of the first Beirut Film Festival in Lebanon, and made her German professional debut conducting the Bochum Symphoniker.

Brent Lockhart PROTEUS



Brent Lockhart is a teacher in Wetaskiwin, Alberta, who has been involved in KidsOp since its inception. He created the role of Jephtha in the first KidsOpera, *Coyote and the Winter that Never Ends* (1997) and that of the Mayor of Pontaberfanwy in the second, *Wizard Things*. He has travelled extensively, spending a year in Japan learning the language and teaching. He is currently involved in developing schools projects for the web.

John Mitchinson TENOR



Born in Blackrod, Lancashire, England in 1932, John Mitchinson studied at the Royal Manchester College of Music and made his stage debut in 1959 as 'Jupiter' in Handel's *Semele* with Sadler's Wells Opera. He was senior lecturer at the Royal Northern College of Music (1987-92), and has been director of Vocal Studies at the Welsh College of Music and Drama (1992 to the present). Mr. Mitchinson has made many radio, TV, concert and opera appearances worldwide with many of the leading theatre companies and orchestras, and at most of the world's music festivals. Roles include 'Idomeneo', 'Aegisthus', 'Luca' in *From the House of the Dead*, 'Manolios' in *The Greek Passion*, 'Svatopluk Cech' in the first British production of Janacek's *The Excursions of Mr. Broucek*; Wagner's 'Tristan' and 'Peter Grimes' for the Welsh National Opera; and he also created 'the Poet' in Tal's *Masada* (1973, Jerusalem). In 1983 he sang 'Max' with Opera North and 'Gualtiero' in Vivaldi's *Griselda* at Buxton. A very powerful singing actor, he has made numerous recording.

Mark Morris LIBRETTIST



Mark Morris is one of the few writers anywhere who has made writing words for composers central to his art. His fourth opera libretto, *Kafka's Chimp*, with composer John Metcalf, premiered at the Banff Arts Festival (1996), was broadcast on CBC, and had its European premiere in Sweden in March 1999. His second opera, *The Skin Drum*, with composer Julian Grant, was also created at Banff and won the 1988 Opera Association of North America Chamber Opera Competition, and has been seen in Canada, the USA and London, UK. He currently concentrates on the KidsOp project, including the award-winning web site. Dr.

Morris has written widely for magazines and newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic. His first book, the historical survey of Britain in 1086, *Domesday Revisited*, appeared in 1987, and his second book, a large *Guide to 20th Century Composers*, was published by Methuen in 1996 and has just appeared in softcover as *The Pimlico Dictionary of 20th Century Composers*. His extensive radio work includes an Ideas program for CBC, *A Dream about the Opera*, on Auden the librettist, and he has worked widely in theatre and opera, directing and teaching.

Peter Murray THE WIZARD



Peter Murray has had a varied life, with teaching at its centre for over 40 years. As a monk, he taught delinquents and prisoners in the British Isles, moved to Canada in 1974, and is currently vice-principal and teacher at Norwood School, Wetaskiwin. He has long been involved in theatrical activities at the school, and created the role of 'Ma Murray' in the first KidsOpera, *Coyote and the Winter that Never Ends* (1997) and that of 'the Wizard' in the second, *Wizard Things* (1998), a role he is extending in tonight's production.

Roxanne Prokop STAGE MANAGER



Roxanne has stage managed for over 15 years in many forms of theatre including opera, musical theatre and dance – many of which have been at The Banff Centre for the Arts including Festival Dance (1997), and production stage manager of last years Banff Arts Festival (1998). Other stage management credits include: *Les Miserables* for Mirvish Productions, Toronto; *Forever Plaid*, Follows Latimer Productions, Toronto; and *Electra* for The Canadian Opera Company, Toronto. Immediately following *The Raven King* Roxanne is moving to New York City as stage manager for New York City Opera.

Julie Renton SET, PROPERTIES AND COSTUME DESIGNER



Julie studied drama production at The Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne, graduating in 1997. In her final year at college, she designed the set for *Art of Success*. Other university credits include costume designer for the dance piece *Der Schneeman* and production designer for the student film *Give and Take*. In 1998, Julie designed the set and costumes for *Lashings of Whipped Cream* at the Universal Theatre in Melbourne, and she coordinated and built the costumes for the Victorian College of the Arts production of *Pericles*. In the summer of 1998, Julie was the assistant costume designer for the Banff Arts Festival world premiere production of the opera *Zürich 1916*. In Banff since

then, Julie had the opportunity to work as a scenic painting assistant for the re-construction of the set of the 1990 Banff Festival of the Arts production of *The Marriage of Figaro* before beginning her work on *The Raven King*.

Lawrie Seligman STAGE DIRECTOR



Over the past 25 years, Lawrie Seligman has had a very active and varied career as a producer and director in a wide range of theatrical media. He has directed for many professional opera houses and theatres in Canada and in the United States. His assignments have included the Eugene Opera, Opera Lyra, the Edmonton Opera, the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton, Manitoba Theatre Centre, the Provincetown Playhouse on Cape Code, and the Stratford Festival, to name just a few. He has taught acting and directing for various universities and performing arts organizations. For five years, Seligman was producer of Radio Drama for CBC Edmonton, and for three years produced television arts

and drama at CBC Calgary. A native of Toronto, he has an undergraduate degree in Modern Languages and Literatures from the University of Toronto, and a Masters of Science in Film degree from Boston University. He also studied at the University of Strasbourg, France, and studied opera stage directing at the English National Opera in London, England and at the Komische Oper in East Berlin. In 1996, Mr. Seligman went to Kelowna to take up his current position as artistic director and general manager of the Sunshine Theatre Company.

Rod Thomas Squance PERCUSSION



A native of Calgary, Mr. Squance's formal percussion training began at the University of Calgary as a student of Dr. Glenn D. Price. His performance skills rapidly developed, twice winning the U of C Concerto Competition as well as receiving prestigious invitations to perform for the Rozsa Centre opening, the Alberta Music Conference and for the CBC concert series. He has performed with the Calgary Philharmonic and Red Deer Symphony and has held the position of principal percussion with the U of C Wind Ensemble for two seasons. Currently continuing his studies with Dr. Price, Mr. Squance is pursuing a Master's Degree in performance.

Eve Thompson PISEA AND CHOREOGRAPHER



Born and raised in Wetaskiwin, Eve began her performing career as a child and has recently graduated from Grant MacEwan College in dance where she studied with Brian Webb, Heidie Bunting, Marie Forndo, Marie-Josée Chartier and Deborah Morgan. After graduating she toured Canada with her comedy troupe The W.O.M.B.A.T.S. Other performing credits include Edmonton Musical Theatre, Stage Polaris, Siding 16 Productions, Kokoro Dance (Vancouver) and DanceMakers with Marie-Josée Chartier. After *The Raven King*, Eve will present a show in Edmonton of choreography inspired by Alberta.

Janice Tole KIDSOP MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR



Janice Tole, the musical director of KidsOp, originated the idea of creating a new opera for children in Wetaskiwin, Alberta, and has trained the singers and instrumentalists for all three KidsOperas including, *Coyote and the Winter than Never Ends* (1997) and *Wizard Things* (1998), which she conducted. She studied music and piano with Gordon MacPherson and Dr. Lorne Watson at Brandon University. She completed her teacher training at the University of Calgary, specializing in elementary music, and studied the Kodaly method with Lois Choksy, and later the Orff Schulwerk method at the University of Alberta. She moved to Wetaskiwin in 1993 for her first teaching position, and there founded the Wetaskiwin Junior Choir in 1994. The Choir is open to all children between the ages of 5 and 13 in the district, regardless of experience or ability. The Choir has started a program of commissioning new works for children of elementary age, including songs from Andrew Toovey, Mervyn Burtch and Kenneth Nichols.

Sharon Simper ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER*

The Raven King marks Sharon's first experience at The Banff Centre for the Arts. She recently completed a BFA in stage management at the University of Alberta and is also a graduate of the Theatre Production program at Edmonton's Grant MacEwan College. Recent projects have included: *Village of Idiots, As You Like It* and *The Grapes Of Wrath* at the U of A; *Anne of Green Gables* with St. Albert Children's Theatre and *L'Impressario, Gianni Schicchi* and *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* with Opera Nuova. Sharon will be working as an apprentice stage manager at the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton during the 1999/2000 season.

Megan Somerville ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER*

Megan's recent credits include: *The Jones Boy* and *Dr. Faustus Lights the Light* (1999 Toronto Fringe Festival); *Hotel Praha* (Theatre Passe Murielle); *Mayhem!* and *The Naked Muse* (Theatre Columbus); *Second Cosmic Hair Gallery, Cuba, Spring Awakening* and *Bad Faith* (Orange Tree Theatre, London, England); and *After Easter* (Concordia University). Megan has also assisted at Concordia University, Leah Posluns Theatre (Toronto) and Grace Theatre (London, England). Megan will be returning to the Canadian Opera Company in the fall as the stage management production assistant.

Karen Toews ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER*

Karen has worked as company and assistant stage manager in the two previous works by KidsOp. She lives in Wetaskiwin, Alberta with her husband Derryl.

Tim Wisener ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

A native of Calgary, Mr. Wisener returns to Banff for his second summer after graduating from Red Deer College, Technical Theatre Program. His stage management credits include *Into The Woods*, Red Deer College; *Cinderella*, the RDC Conservatory of Ballet; and *Blyska* with Blyska Ukrainian Dance. This summer Mr. Wisener was assistant stage manager for the Chinook Winds Aboriginal Dance program, rehearsal assistant stage manager with the Festival Dance program and assistant stage manager for the Dance Training program. This fall Tim will be stage manager with Toronto's Ballet Jörgen, for their 1999/2000 season.

*work study training program

BANFF **arts** FESTIVAL

All performances grow out of the learning experiences and professional development opportunities for artists enrolled in our programs. Public presentations are a fundamental part of the educational experience of artists in programs at The Banff Centre for the Arts.