




SIR



THANK YOU so much for supporting our 2022 season – our first live, in-person season at the Ruins since 2019.

Being without audiences for so long reminded me of the importance and the fragility of our work. So much of ‘making theatre’ is about gathering and connecting with others; cultivating empathy; and achieving a more common understanding between us. Theatre-making is radical compassion, in action.

2022 was nothing short of epic! We started our season on June 02, with the ground still frozen and temperatures below 0c – was Spring ever going to arrive? Were our audiences going to return? Thankfully, after a slow-burn start, our supporters arrived at the Ruins in great numbers – and temperatures reached +38c by the final week of performances. What a ride, indeed. And it was absolutely inspirational to see so many families with young children attend our shows! We love introducing the joys of Shakespeare to young people.

We are entering a landmark year, our 30th season, feeling immensely grateful, but quite fragile indeed, and still under the cloud of Covid and its devastating effects on our sector. This ‘return to normal’ has been anything but. We are looking to a future that continues to deliver the instability of this pandemic; performances across the country continue to be cancelled or postponed, and theatres are struggling to fill their seats. We do not yet fully understand the long-terms effects of this virus, but it has already fundamentally transformed our theatre practice – and all our lives.

We have dreamt up an engaging and imaginative 30th anniversary season for you, with *three shows* that highlight just how crucial dialogue and common understanding are if we are to build stronger communities.

We’ll open 2023 with *Pandora*, a new work by playwright-in-residence Jessica B. Hill. A solo storytelling piece about the nature of uncertainty and interconnection, *Pandora* is a co-production with Prairie Theatre Exchange, and SIR’s third world-premiere in the last three years.

Once the snow melts, we shall meet again at the Ruins for two plays in repertory. *Twelfth Night*, one of Shakespeare’s most popular comedies, filled with inventive jokes about bereavement, revelry and love; and *The Dark Lady*, in partnership with Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan. *The Dark Lady* is a passionate, humorous, and deeply inventive play that centers on real life poetess Emilia Bassano, the possible “dark lady” mentioned in Shakespeare’s sonnets.

Beyond our three productions, SIR continues to invest in educational and community outreach programs including school shows, curriculum development, mentorship opportunities and our Shakespeare in Stony Mountain program.

We are imagining a 2023 season that is indeed creatively expansive. Your continued investment in SIR is the support we need to imagine a future of thrilling possibilities. Thank you for helping us DARE TO DREAM!

Rodrigo Beilfuss, Artistic Director



This summer I had the once in a lifetime opportunity of traveling to Stratford-Upon-Avon, visiting Shakespeare's childhood home, Anne Hathaway's cottage (pictured here) and attending a performance of *All's Well That Ends Well* by the Royal Shakespeare Company. Each of these moments is indelibly imprinted on my heart, but I think the best moment of all was that after the curtain went down, and the actors were applauded, my Mom (also pictured left) turned to me and said – "your shows are as good as theirs!"

I say this, not to diminish *The Royal Shakespeare Company*, but to reinforce that Winnipeg's theatre community; our actors, directors, and designers are world-class and, though I may be biased, I believe *Shakespeare in the Ruins* produces world-class theatre.

In our 2021 report we outlined our vision to deliver two full productions in the Ruins and to add a week of performances to our season. We also promised substantial investments in accessibility initiatives and new play development. We met our goals and, in some cases, surpassed them, as outlined in this year's report.

One thing we didn't promise in our 2021 report was that audiences would return. Like all theatres producing during an on-going pandemic, we entered our season with trepidation, hoping that people would leave their long slumber and come to a show! Thankfully, Winnipeggers were ready to experience RL (real life) once again and we performed to enthusiastic and ever growing audiences throughout the run.

We also noticed that our audience changed, people seemed ready to try something new, and we had many people attend for the first time. Young families were bringing their children, university students were using the free-bus, new Canadians were attending their first Shakespeare performance. It was an exhilarating reminder of the power of classical theatre to speak across generations and cultures.

Our financial position, though healthy, requires continued and reliable support from funders such as yourself. For the second year running we will end the year with a planned yearly deficit, while maintaining a small accumulated surplus. Our Board made a 2-year commitment to investing in new initiatives and it is now time for those initiatives to stand on their own.

In 2023, we will be seeking public and private investment specifically for commissioning and producing new work, and educational and community initiatives such as our Shakespeare in Stony Mountain program, which is returning after a two-year hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We look to you dear funders to pick up the mantle of Covid-relief funding, so that these important programs aren't lost and continue to generate great things.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "S Malabar".

Sara Malabar, General Manager

BENEDICK I pray thee now tell me, for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

BEATRICE For them all together, which maintained so politic a state of evil that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them. But for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

BENEDICK Suffer love! A good epithet. I do suffer love indeed, for I love thee against my will.

BEATRICE In spite of your heart, I think. Alas, poor heart, if you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours, for I will never love that which my friend hates.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Performed June 2 – July 2 | 2022

Written by William Shakespeare
Directed by Ann Hodges

Much Ado About Nothing is one of Shakespeare's most delightful comedies, featuring two of his best quarreling lovers, Beatrice and Benedick—who passionately quibble their way into falling madly in love in a world of 'fake news', gossip and dangerous lies. In this lively romance, two plots are carefully interwoven to lead to a volcanic fourth act, where the apparent destruction of one marriage (of Claudio and Hero) helps bring about another – that of Benedick and Beatrice. Shakespeare balances the play carefully, peppering high comedy with somber layers of action that ring shockingly fresh today: much of the intrigue in the play is skillfully built on characters overhearing conversations, often laden with misinformation to trick the eavesdropper. In the chaotic age of social media, the themes of this euphoric comedy feel terrifyingly timely.



ABOVE: Cory Wojcik & Sarah Constible – BELOW: Sophie Smith-Dostmohamed & Omar Alex Khan



ABOVE: Ritchie Diggs & Omar Alex Khan – BELOW: Sarah Constible, Hera Nalam & Mallory James



PHOTOS: Leif Norman



**“THIS IS
GREAT FUN!”**



– WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

**“Constible &
Wojcik make
for fine sparring
partners...”**

– WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

**... with barbed
wit... augmented
by earthy
physicality.”**

– WINNIPEG FREE PRESS



THE PLAYER KING

Performed June 10 – July 2 | 2022

Written & Directed by Ron Pederson

Designed by Joseph Abetria

Starring Rodrigo Beilfuss

Original music composed and performed by Cuinn Joseph

In *The Player King*, a travelling Shakespearean actor finds himself facing an opening night audience without his company, setting off an existential crisis of tragic proportions. Can the show go on? Should it? Compelled by the power of storytelling, the actor attempts to deliver a solo version of Hamlet, but something is deeply amiss as fantasy and reality start to blend in this celebration of theatrical obsessions, and the quest for the performance of a lifetime...even to the edge of doom. Performed by SIR's Artistic Director Rodrigo Beilfuss, *The Player King* is a brand-new script written specifically for SIR by comedian-improviser, and co-creator of Mad TV, Ron Pederson.



"I want to be...a player, a part of the theatre. I want to give my life to it! Even for just one night."



"The temporary nature of our art is the aspect most beautiful, and sad. It all fades away..."



"People are never more beautiful than when they talk of what they love."



"Pray you, remember."

**“FANCIFUL &
HUMOROUS!”**

– WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

**“Beilfuss
brings his
characteristic
ebullience.”**

– WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

**“A celebration
of stumbling
through
misery...”**

– WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

**...and finding
joy in the
unlikeliest
of places.”**

– WINNIPEG FREE PRESS



SUMMER 2022 SHOWS

Much Ado About Nothing

The Player King

MORE



THE ORIGINAL
Enemies
to Lovers
ROMCOM

shakespeareintheruins.com

PROMENADE UNDER A GLORIOUS PRAIRIE SKY | TWO PLAYS TO CHOOSE FROM THIS SUMMER

PERFORMED AT Trappist Monastery Provincial Heritage Park AKA "THE RUINS"

TICKETS \$35 | \$15 for Under-30, Underemployed, Fixed Income & Theatre Industry

TICKETS AT boxoffice@sirmb.ca OR 204.891.9160



SEASON SPONSOR



A Hilarious
NEW
Tragedy

shakespeareintheruins.com

PROMENADE UNDER A GLORIOUS PRAIRIE SKY | TWO PLAYS TO CHOOSE FROM THIS SUMMER

PERFORMED AT Trappist Monastery Provincial Heritage Park AKA "THE RUINS"

TICKETS \$20 | \$10 for Under-30, Underemployed, Fixed Income & Theatre Industry

TICKETS AT boxoffice@sirmb.ca OR 204.891.9160



SEASON SPONSOR

NEW PLAY DEVELOPMENT

Stratford's new leading lady and playwright Jessica B. Hill was SIR's Playwright in Residence in 2022.

Through your support of new work, Jessica created two pieces for SIR that both premiere in 2023: *Pandora* (a co-production with Prairie Theatre Exchange), and *The Dark Lady*, a partnership with Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan. The multitalented Jessica will also act in both productions – Winnipeg is in for a treat!

In August 2022, SIR presented a live reading of *The Dark Lady* at Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan. The production will premiere as a part of our 2023 season, at the Ruins, and then transfer to Saskatoon for a limited run.

However, before the snow melts, *Pandora* – a solo play that explores and explodes the myth of Pandora's box, will premiere at PTE in January. (Tickets on sale now.)

Both *Pandora* and *The Dark Lady* excite and challenge our assumptions of 'classical stories', presenting new ideas that help us understand the myths we tell ourselves anew.

As part of her residency, Jessica and SIR's Rodrigo recorded a third episode of our webinar series *Expanding the Canon* in February - in honour of Black History Month. They discussed the transformative works of American journalist, teacher, playwright, and poet Angelina Weld Grimké, and Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis (often known by his surnames Machado de Assis, or simply Machado), a pioneer Brazilian novelist, poet, playwright and short story writer, widely regarded as the greatest writer of Brazilian literature. The webinar is found at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oL_n3iWnzQA&t=46s

Additionally, SIR has invested in commissions from playwrights Jonathan Mourant and Kate Besworth, both artists of great national reputation.

Mourant is adapting *Twelfth Night* as a duet for two versatile actors, while Besworth is exploring *Measure for Measure* as a modern solo piece for a woman, that is being imagined specifically for the landscape and cultural heritage of the Ruins.

Jessica B. Hill as real life poetess Emilia Bassano, in *The Dark Lady*





**Shakespeare's Heroines:
Passion & Compassion
with Seana McKenna
November 15 @ 7pm - Zoom**



**Transforming Shakespeare:
from Original Practices to
Conceptual Directing
with Dr Katrina Dunn
November 27 @ 10:30am
in-person @ McNally Robinson**



COMMUNITY CLASSES

With Our Partners in Culture: McNally Robinson

In November, we offered two classes that enriched our audiences' Shakespearean experience and knowledge through our partners at McNally Robinson Booksellers. They were designed for everyone and anyone with an interest in the Bard:

Shakespeare's Heroines: Passion & Compassion In this online workshop, attended by people throughout the country, Stratford's long-time leading lady Seana McKenna revealed her process of approaching the text and bringing to life some of Shakespeare's most iconic women. Seana provide theoretical and practical insights into language and character, and participants witnessed her directing skills while she coached local actor Christine Leslie through Viola's famous 'ring' monologue from Twelfth Night.

Seana McKenna is a celebrated actor, director and educator, and a long-time leading member of the Stratford Festival company, where she has performed in 29 seasons. Her roles include Lear, Julius Caesar, Viola, Portia, Olivia, Kate, Titania, Gertrude, Paulina, Juliet, Beatrice, Richard III, Mary Tyrone, Medea, Mother Courage, Queen Elizabeth I, Queen Margaret, Phèdre, Constance and many others from the Classical repertoire. In 2019, she was invested into the Order of Canada.

Transforming Shakespeare: From Original Practices to Conceptual Directing: In our first in-person class since early 2020, SIR board member Katrina Dunn went back in time to explore the ever-shifting styles of staging, speaking, and understanding of Shakespeare through the ages. In collaboration with Shakespeare in the Ruins' Artistic Director, Rodrigo Beilfuss, Katrina guided attendees through the historical contexts and the transformative theatrical practices that have shaped our idea of "Shakespearean theatre". Further, attendees explored "original pronunciation", landmark productions, and how we can transform the very meaning of the plays through editing and aesthetic choices.

Katrina Dunn, is an Assistant Professor in the University of Manitoba's Department of English, Theatre, Film and Media, where she teaches acting, directing and theatre studies.



ACCESSIBLE THEATRE

Your financial support helps SIR to reduce barriers to access for People with Disabilities and other under-represented people and communities. Our commitment to Accessibility is demonstrated by our investment in initiatives and ideas that allow more people to access and enjoy our performances than ever before.

For our 2022 season, Shakespeare in the Ruins (SIR) launched a number of accessibility initiatives.

For the first time ever, we were able to offer patrons a free, accessible, bus charter from downtown Winnipeg to the Ruins on pay-what-you-can Tuesdays; ASL interpretation and live audio description of selected performances; relaxed performances and “In the Grove” shows (a pair of stationary matinees staged under the trees for people for whom our promenade experience is a barrier).

Of all of these initiatives, perhaps the most challenging and rewarding was providing ASL interpretation, a service that involved several thousand dollars, 4 interpreters, 2 deaf consultants, 1 week of rehearsal and countless hours of research by the amazing team at *Performing Arts Accessibility Hub* (pictured left). Though it was a challenging project, it was a thrill to make our shows truly accessible to deaf patrons for the first time.

SIR's commitment to accessible live theatre doesn't only include services, but discount tickets for people living on a fixed income and free tickets for support persons. We want to ensure as many people as possible can experience the magic of live theatre, no matter their income level or ability.



Radio Bard Productions

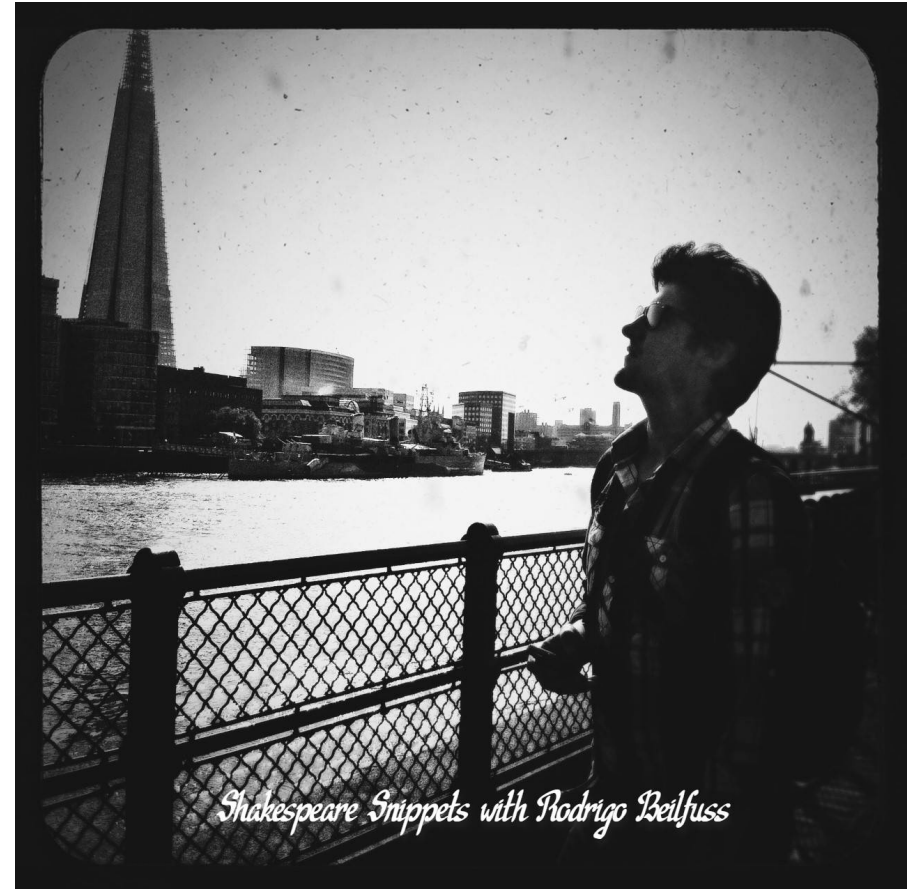


2022 brought the launch of *Radio Bard Productions*, the home of *Shakespeare in the Ruins* audio creations. *Radio Bard* will create and produce a combination of free content for all audiences, and exclusive content for our sponsors, donors and other supporters.

Having secured the funding in 2022, in 2023 we will produce and release *ROOTS*, a ten-episode podcast series dedicated to preserving the history, stories, expertise, and creative personalities of Winnipeg's older performing arts community; and a new audio-drama, written and performed by senior artists.

Other audio projects include *Shakespeare – Scene by Scene*, a podcast series that takes a deep dive into one of the Bard's plays per year, with each episode recapping and discussing that play scene by scene, and *Shakespeare Snippets*, exclusive audio content by Artistic Director, Rodrigo Beilfuss found on our Patreon.

<https://www.patreon.com/SIRINC>





Mission Statement

Shakespeare in the Ruins (SIR) exists to spotlight the enduring power of classical theatre through the contemporary human experience.

Mandate

Shakespeare in the Ruins, Inc. is a theatre company dedicated to:

- The production of plays from the classical canon, with a special focus on Shakespeare
- The creation, development, and presentation of Shakespeare-adjacent new work
- The use of environmental and site-specific staging in the production of plays
- Equitable casting that reflects Manitoba's diverse population
- Creating opportunities for the development and growth of theatre professionals in Manitoba
- Engaging with and enhancing our community.

SIR's treatment and understanding of Shakespeare and the 'Classical canon' is one of expansion and inclusion. We seek to challenge and to redefine assumptions of what constitutes Classical theatre in the 21st century. Moving beyond the western tradition, SIR also aims to put Shakespeare in conversation with plays from the Spanish Golden Age, from Latinx and Queer experiences, and from other underrepresented communities and cultures that have been creating dramatic literature since even before Shakespeare's time.

Our Staff

Artistic Director

Rodrigo Beilfuss

General Manager

Sara Malabar

Assistant General Manager

Seraph-Eden Boroditsky

Marketing Director

Greg Klassen

SITC Program Director

Claire Thérèse Friesen

Bookkeeper

Christine Kennedy

Our Board of Directors

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Jennifer Chan / Treasurer

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Kaitlynn Porath/ Director

Katrina Dunn/ Director

Randal Payne / Director

Michelle Boulet/ Director / Artistic Associate

Toby Hughes / Director / Artistic Associate

Artistic & Technical Associates

Michelle Boulet

Sarah Constible

Tobias Hughes

Arne MacPherson

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