

★ LANGHAM COURT THEATRE ★

PRESENTS



Written by
LAUREN GUNDERSON

Directed by
ZELDA DEAN

JAN ★ FEB
25^{to} ★ 11
2023

★ LANGHAM COURT THEATRE PRESENTS ★



MOON OVER BUFFALO

WRITTEN BY **KEN LUDWIG**

May ★ May
10 to **28** 2023

In this madcap 1950s comedy, Charlotte and George Hay are on tour in Buffalo with a repertory consisting of *Cyrano de Bergerac* (the "revised, one nostril version") and Noel Coward's *Private Lives*, when they receive word that they might just have one last shot at stardom: a famous director is coming to town to see their matinee.

TICKETS: Adults \$25 • Seniors \$23 • Students \$18

Call the Box Office at 250.384.2142 or purchase online at langhamtheatre.ca



Ukrainian Newcomers Fundraiser – FEB 17

Langham will be hosting and sponsoring a fundraising event for Ukrainian newcomers moving to Vancouver Island due to the continuing war in Ukraine.

The event will feature a host of talented and accomplished dancers, singers and musicians, including the *Veselka Dancers*, *Kalyna Choir* and *Ballet Victoria*.

Tickets and additional details are available at www.langhamtheatre.ca.

Please come out and show your support!



Written by

LAUREN GUNDERSON

Directed by

ZELDA DEAN

SILENT SKY is presented by special arrangement with the Dramatists Play Service Inc. 440 Park Avenue S, New York, NY 10016 www.dramatists.com

Incidental Music/Sound Design & Original Music by Jenny Giering, Broadway licensing.

CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Kathryn Humphries Henrietta Leavitt

Ellen Law Margaret Leavitt

James Johnson Peter Shaw

Lindsay Anderson Annie Cannon

Jo Barnes Williamina Fleming

SETTINGS

1900 – 1920

Star field

The Harvard Observatory, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Leavitt home, Wisconsin

Ocean liner on the Atlantic

Henrietta's home, Cambridge, Massachusetts

There will be a 20 minute intermission.

Please Note: An Intimacy coaching workshop was presented for the cast and crew of *Silent Sky*.

LCT gratefully acknowledges the lək'wəŋən Peoples, on whose traditional territories we create and perform, and the Songhees and Esquimalt Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. We are committed to listening, learning and collaborating as active participants in truth and reconciliation as we create on this beautiful land.

SYNOPSIS

Written in 2015, *Silent Sky* is based on the true story and science of an early 20th century “computer” at Harvard Observatory, Henrietta Leavitt. She was the first to map distant stars in galaxies beyond our own and set the standard still used today for measuring distances in space while discovering thousands of stars. But this brilliant, headstrong pioneer struggled for recognition in society during a time of immense scientific discoveries, when women’s ideas were dismissed and men claimed credit for them. In this exquisite blend of science, history, family ties, and fragile love, this passionate young woman had to map her own passage through a society determined to keep a woman in her place.

Social progress, like scientific progress, can be hard to see when one is trapped among earthly complications. Henrietta Leavitt and her female peers believed in both, and their dedication changed the way we understand both the heavens and Earth.

A lovingly crafted period piece that imagines Leavitt’s inner world against the backdrop of World War I, Einstein’s discoveries and the suffragette movement, *Silent Sky* is an intellectual epic told on an intimate scale. The writing strikes a balance between the cerebral and poetic that’s ideal for this subject matter.

DIRECTOR’S NOTES

One of the great things about theatre is that we can turn history into a lived experience for an audience. *Silent Sky* reveals the important work of a group of women in the early 20th century. Their work was critical in developing a scientific understanding of the distance between stars and the size of our universe. Yet, for so long their story remained untold. For many years, their contributions were a silent shadow in the background of science, quietly providing a foundation for some of our most important knowledge in the field of astronomy. *Silent Sky* gives them a voice and a story and asks the audience to consider how gender bias through history has shaped the world we know today.

The title character of the play, Henrietta Leavitt, was a woman with a passion for science and for investigating the meaning of our existence.

It is not an accident that this play begins in front of a church; throughout the story, characters wrestle with the nature of God alongside science.

This play intertwines the spiritual and the scientific and shows that they are not mutually exclusive pursuits. In the end, the playwright suggests that God and science have a symbiotic relationship that creates connections between humanity and the vast universe. As we watch Henrietta ask, “who are we” “why are we” and “where are we,” the audience is asked to consider how we

ourselves find a “dedicated desire unmatched by reason.” The play offers that music – art and art making – can be the key to connecting us to the mysteries of the universe and finding our passion.

Henrietta Leavitt saw wonder and possibility in the stars, the world, and in one another. We hope our production inspires you to see this too.



LCT Board President – Wayne Yercha

As President of Langham Court Theatre Society, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to *Silent Sky*, Langham’s first production of 2023. We are truly delighted to have the opportunity to bring this inspiring and deeply moving play to the Langham stage. We wish to thank the incredibly talented and dedicated team who made this production possible, and to offer our special appreciation to renowned astronomers, Dr. Sara Ellison and Dr. James Hesser for their invaluable assistance in helping us *reach for the stars*.



The stellar cast



Annie Cannon and Henrietta Leavitt

Williamina Fleming

THE CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE



HENRIETTA LEAVITT – Kathryn Humphries (she/her)

Formerly employed in international opera houses, this is Kathryn's first non-singing stage role. When not treading the boards, she studies law at UVic. Kathryn is grateful to the cast, crew, team, and the board for their support and for the opportunity to tell this amazing story, and to her parents for feeding her between classes and rehearsals.



MARGARET LEAVITT – Ellen Law (she/her)

After a long hiatus to get her master's degree, Ellen is ecstatic to be back on the Langham stage. Past credits include Monica in *The Age of Arousal* (Theatre Inconnu), Kitty Bennet in *Pride & Prejudice* (LCT), and Christopher Robin in *Winnie the Pooh* (Outpost 31). Ellen would like to thank the cast and crew, whose talents outnumber the galaxies in our universe.



PETER SHAW – James Johnson (he/him)

James has been involved in many productions in Victoria and is excited for you to see *Silent Sky*. He is thankful for the amazing cast and crew that have brought this beautiful story to life. When not acting he enjoys cuddling his two cats and playing chess in the garden. His favourite locations to watch the stars are Portland Island (Perseid Meteor shower!) and on the farm with his wife Becca.



ANNIE CANNON – Lindsay Anderson (she/her)

So, third time's the charm! Lindsay is overjoyed that *Silent Sky* is finally hitting the Langham stage. "What a privilege it's been", she says "to have the essence of Annie Cannon dwell in my subconscious these past few years." Lindsay is truly grateful to all the courageous creative souls behind the scenes who, like Henrietta Leavitt, "insist on the exceptional".



WILLIAMINA FLEMING – Jo Barnes (she/her)

Last seen in Langham Court's *Blithe Spirit*, Jo has enjoyed this special journey to the stars with a talented cast and under the direction of Zelda, an inspiring navigator. Memorable credits: Marilla, *Anne of Green Gables* (VOS), Fraulein Kost, *Cabaret*, (LCT), Mrs. Savage in *The Curious Savage* (SLPCT). Thanks to Mitch, Jo's "north star", for his love & support.

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director	Zelda Dean
Assistant Director	Janine Longy
Producer	Holly McGimpsey
Stage Manager	Jacqollyne Keath
Assistant Stage Manager	Diana Keating
Astronomy Advisors	Dr. Sara Ellison, Dr. James Hesser
Set Design	Don Keith
Lead Carpenter	Mike Kuss
Building Crew	Gordon Alexander, David Burbank, Steve Croucher, Allan Dong, Alexis Kuss, Marilyn Kuss, Mike Kuss, Julius Maskovat, Alf Small
Painters	David Burbank, Allan Dong, Jane Grainger, Mike Kuss, Alf Small, Blair Williamson
Lighting Design/Projections	Jason King
Lighting Crew	Perry Burton, Jason King
Lighting Board Operators	Deb Laverty, Carol-Anne Moore
Sound Engineer	Jason King
Sound Board Operators	David Brillinger, Mike Burke, Andrea Pite
Costume Team:	Wendy Henderson, Daphne Massey, Tammy Regier
Properties/Set Décor	Jean de Cartier
Dance Movement	Sylvia Hosie
Programme Coordinator/Advertising	Holly McGimpsey
Programme Design/Photography	Saltchuck Studios Beverly van Drueten-Blais
Publicity	Kathy Macovichuk
Front of House Manager:	Marilyn Kuss



Just some of the stellar crew

THE PRODUCTION TEAM



DIRECTOR – Zelda Dean (she/her)

Zelda has enjoyed a long, rewarding career as a Director, Producer and Actress. She is the Managing Artistic Director of Bema Productions, which presents 3 shows per season and has donated over \$60,000 to needy charities. Zelda recently developed and completed the pilot tour of the eye-opening Holocaust Education play – *SURVIVORS*, endorsed by the Minister of Education. Zelda is grateful to finally see *Silent Sky* on the Langham Stage.



PRODUCER – Holly McGimpsey (she/her)

While producing *Almost, Maine*, Holly couldn't say no to carry on and produce *Silent Sky* which began in 2019. It's been a labour of love to bring this epic story on it's final journey to the stars and Langham audiences. Since 1962 Holly's worked with many companies and been involved in every aspect of theatre including acting, directing and stage managing. The stars finally aligned!



STAGE MANAGER – Jacqollyne Keath (she/her)

Jacqollyne is thrilled to be back at Langham after a successful run with *Almost, Maine* which closed in December. Following *Silent Sky* she will stage manage for SLPCT's *The Game's A Foot* and then produce SLPCT's *Firehoses and Family*. After that maybe she will be on the other side of the footlights again. Who knows? Only the "stars" know for sure. Enjoy the unfolding of the cosmos!



SET DESIGN – Don Keith (he/him)

Don is a Director, Designer and Teacher. Recent productions include *East of Berlin* for Theatre Inconnu and *Noises Off* for Langham Court Theatre. *Silent Sky* is reborn after a long intermission. The wait has not diminished his enthusiasm for this beautiful, creative, and fulfilling project. Enjoy !



LIGHTING DESIGN & PROJECTIONS

– Jason King (he/him)

Jason is happy the third time is the charm for *Silent Sky* after the last two attempts to stage the show were cancelled. Outside his work at Langham, Jason can be found taking photos and shooting video for Camosun College, heading up gameday video for Peninsula Panthers and Victoria Harbourcats and working as the Stage Manager and projection designer for Ballet Victoria.



Costume Design Team

– Wendy Henderson,
Daphne Massey and
Tammy Regier



PROPS & SET DECOR – Jean de Cartier (she/her)

Jean has been an active member with LCT since 2008. Her first production was *Shadowlands*, directed by the late Sylvia Rhodes, when she assisted with costumes. She did her first set dressing for *Sylvia* directed by Rita Humphreys in 2010. She has since worked on many productions with LCT, SLPCT and Attitude Theatre. Jean is also working on props for *The Game's Afoot* at SLPCT. She was recently made a Life Member of LCT.



PRODUCTION CHAIR – Alan Penty (he/him)

Alan is very pleased to be Acting Production Chair for Langham's re-opening. He is excited that *Silent Sky*, which was a highly anticipated part of the 2019/20 season, is finally gracing Langham's stage. Alan is extremely pleased to help bring this thoughtful and informative play to the stage with the original cast, crew and production team. Please enjoy learning about this little known, but highly influential, female scientist.

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LANGHAM DONORS

Langham Court Theatre Society is grateful for the generous contributions of the people listed below. Their support enables Langham Court Theatre to be a vibrant part of the Victoria Community. Donations listed here have been made since Jan 1, 2022. To add your name to this prestigious list and receive a tax receipt, please contact the box office.

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GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Ken Ludwig's "The Game's Afoot" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.

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Sunday February 19 – 3:00 pm Matinee
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