

UBC OPERA



NINO ROTA

THE FLORENTINE STRAW HAT

UBCOPERA 2023 EVENTS



OTTO NICOLAI

THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

MARCH 24, 25, 2023 — 7:30 P.M.

MARCH 26, APRIL 1, 2023 — 2:00 P.M.



OPERA TEA

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ARTWORK BY HANNA BARCZYK

UBCOPERA

presents

The Florentine Straw Hat

(Il Capello di Paglia di Firenze)

Farsa Musicale in Four Acts

Sung in Italian with English surtitles

Music by **Nino Rota** | Libretto by **Nino Rota** and **Ernesta Rota Rinaldi**

February 2, 3, 4 — 7:30 p.m. | February 5 — 2:00 p.m.

Performed at the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts

Conductor – **Jonathan Girard**

Director – **Nancy Hermiston**

Lighting Design – **Jeremy Baxter**

Costume Design – **Parvin Mirhady**

Set & Projection Design – **Alessia Carpoca**

UBC Opera Ensemble

with members of the **UBC Symphony Orchestra**

There will be a 20-minute intermission after Act 2

This production is made possible by the
David Spencer Endowment Encouragement Fund

*We acknowledge that the University of British Columbia is situated
on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam
(xʷməθkʷəʔəm) people.*



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
School of Music

UBCOPERA



UBC THEATRE & FILM



A Message from the Director



"I'd do everything I could to give everyone a moment of happiness. That's what's at the heart of my music." (Nino Rota)

Welcome to the performance of this relatively unknown operatic treasure, Nino Rota's *The Florentine Straw Hat*. My thanks to Maestro David Agler, former Artistic Director of the Wexford Festival Opera, for suggesting this wonderful opera as a vehicle to showcase our very talented UBC Opera Ensemble and UBC Symphony

Orchestra. Nino Rota is not a household name in the world of classical music but in film he was one of the most sought-after composers of his day. Between the 1930s until his death in 1979 he composed music for 150 films. These were some of the greatest films of the century made by such famous directors as Federico Fellini, Renato Castellani and Francis Ford Coppola, amongst many others. They were such films as *The Godfather*, *La Dolce Vita*, *Il Gattopardo (The Leopard)*, *Waterloo*, *War and Peace*, *La Strada* and many others. For his score to Coppola's *The Godfather Part II* (1974), he received an Academy Award for the Best Original Score. Fellini said of Rota, "The most precious collaborator I have ever had, I say it straight away and don't even have to hesitate, was Nino Rota – between us, immediately, a complete, total, harmony... He had a geometric imagination, a musical approach worthy of celestial spheres..." This strong relationship continued until Fellini's death. His widow asked that Rota's *Improvviso dell'Angelo* be played at Fellini's funeral in Rome.

Luchino Visconti, Franco Zeffirelli and Eduardo De Filippo sought him out to compose music for their theatre productions. He composed 10 operas, 5 ballets, and many orchestral, choral and chamber works. For almost

30 years he was a professor and Director of the *Lice Musicale* in Bari, Italy. One of his most famous students is conductor Riccardo Muti. As a young man, Rota had been mentored and taught by Arturo Toscanini, Fritz Reiner, Rosario Scalero, Igor Stravinsky, Ildebrando Pizzetti and Alfredo Casella, to name a few. His opera *The Florentine Straw Hat* is based on a vaudeville of Eugène Labiche's play of the same title set in Paris in 1850. In 1928 René Clair produced a film based on the same play, but named it *The Italian Straw Hat*. The film was applauded as being one of the funniest films ever made. Even today, that opinion still exists. Excerpts of the film will be used in our production.

Rota had written the opera in 1944–45 and had created the libretto himself, with some assistance from his mother, Ernesta Rota. He put it aside and were it not for the General Manager of Palermo's Opera, Simone Cuccia, who had remembered hearing the material from the opera in 1945, it might never have been produced. Cuccia produced it in Palermo on April 21, 1955 and it was an immediate success.

Grounded in the rich heritage of Italian opera, one can hear in Rota's score the influences of Rossini, Donizetti, Verdi and Puccini – but also the styles from the music of his countless films as well as the musical influences from his time spent in France and America. Reviewer Ian Lace describes the score as "high-spirited, playful, irreverent and satirical." I hope that Nino Rota's wish will be fulfilled in this production. I am certain that he will give everyone "a moment of happiness" with his wonderful opera. Enjoy!

Nancy Hermiston, O.C.

The Cast*

Role	February 2 & 4	February 3 & 5
<i>Fadinard</i>	Ian McCloy	Gabriel Chona Rueda
<i>Nonancourt</i>	Philip Wing	Jason Somerville
<i>Beaupertuis</i>	Liam Robertson	Yuhui Wang
<i>Vézinet</i>	Kiho Sohn	Wanshuai Yu
<i>Emilio</i>	Pablo Romero Moreira	Denis Petrov
<i>Felice</i>	Kevin Liu	Zhilun Liu
<i>Achille di Rosalba</i>	Jing Jiang	Xiang Li
<i>Una guardia</i>	Jonathon Chan	Kevin Liu
<i>Un carporale delle guardie</i>	Denis Petrov	Brian Archdekin
<i>Minardi</i>	Jonathon Chan	Jonathon Chan
<i>Elena</i>	Mariana Iguavita	Hannah Ernst
<i>Anaide</i>	Mara Ayque	Christina Demeo
<i>La modista</i>	Erika Pryer	Melanie Hiepler
<i>La baronessa di Champigny</i>	Alyssa Nicole Samson	Kathleen Isaza

Modiste: Adriana Zaharijevic, Alexandra Baird, Claire Bidulka, Haley Power, Kendra Baldwin, Olivia Rapos, Rebekah Leon, Trinity Collie

Soldiers: Brian Archdekin, Denis Petrov, Jing Jiang, Jonathan Chan, Kevin Liu, Pablo Romero Moreira, Neil Hong, Xiang Li, Zhilun Liu

Soprano: Carly King, Claire Bidulka, Elissa Matthew, Emma Jang, Emily Brinco, Erika Pryer, Haley Power, Kenda McDermott, Kendra Baldwin, Melanie Hiepler, Olivia Rapos, Rachel Buttress, Trinity Collie, Caroline Voltchok

Mezzo: Adriana Zaharijevic, Alessandra Ianni, Alexandra Baird, Alyssa Nicole Samson, Holly Duerichen, Kathleen Isaza, Katie Fraser, Rebekah Leon, Sarah Anderson-Caulfield, Saba Taghiakbari

Tenor: Jing Jiang, Jonathon Chan, Kevin Liu, Kiho Sohn, Millen Sandhu, Wanshuai Yu, Xiang Li, Zhilun Liu

Baritone/Bass: Brian Archdekin, Denis Petrov, Jason Somerville, Matthew Gorlitz, Neil Hong, Owen Glor, Pablo Romero Moreira, Philip Wing

*All cast is subject to change

Synopsis

ACT ONE

It is Fadinard's wedding day in Paris. As he hurries home in his carriage to make sure that all the preparations are being carried out smoothly for his marriage to Elena, his whip gets entangled in a tree. While he is disentangling it, his horse fills in the time with a little snack - a lady's straw hat. Unfortunately, the lady who owns the straw hat is behind the tree, and even more unfortunately for the smooth-running of Fadinard's wedding day, she is a married lady called Anaide who is with her lover Emilio. The lover threatens Fadinard, who makes a quick getaway with his horse. He arrives at his apartment to find his future wife's uncle Vézinet, who has come to deliver his wedding gift. Fadinard begins to recount his adventure but the elderly gentleman, being quite hard of hearing, does not follow the story. Uncle Vézinet finally leaves to have a little snack before joining the rest of the wedding party. Anaide and Emilio arrive at Fadinard's house, Anaide is anxious and upset because the straw hat was bought for her in Florence by her jealous husband who will ask very awkward questions if she goes home without it. Fadinard sends his servant out to buy a replacement hat and Anaide and Emilio are forced to hide as the wedding party arrives: the bride-to-be, Elena, her grotesquely-comic father Nonancourt, and guests who create confusion wherever they go. Just as the wedding party leaves, Fadinard's servant arrives and announces that he has been unsuccessful in his efforts to find another hat, and as Emilio threatens Fadinard with a duel if he does not replace it, Fadinard decides that he himself must go out to obtain one despite the fact that his wedding is in less than an hour.

ACT TWO

Taking advantage of a traffic jam on his way to the milliner's, Fadinard quickly runs into the marriage bureau, then to a church and finally marries his beloved Elena. He then leaves the wedding party and carrying the remains of the straw hat, goes into a milliner's shop where he learns that the last Italian straw hat has been sold to the Baronessa di Champigny. He rushes to her villa to find the hat. His wedding guests, piling into the four carriages, again follow him, thinking that they are finally going to a restaurant to eat! Fadinard, not aware of these cumbersome guests following him, has only one thought - he must get this hat!

Upon arriving at the Baronessa's mansion, Fadinard enters and is mistaken for Minardi, the famous violinist who is to give a recital and be the Baronessa's guest of honour at a dinner. Fadinard is anxious to remain in the house and obtain the straw hat, so he does not correct the mistaken identity. When he becomes insistent about the hat, the Baronessa says that she gave the hat as a gift to one of her friends, the wife of Beaupertuis. When the impatient wedding party pours into the mansion, thinking it is a restaurant, eating the food, enjoying the champagne and generally causing trouble and confusion, Fadinard decides to make a quick getaway in pursuit of the Baronessa's hat.

ACT THREE

The act opens with a very jealous and discouraged Beaupertuis soaking his poor tired feet in a basin of water. He has waited the whole day for his wife, who has left to do some shopping and visit a cousin. His jealous nature has caused him to be very suspicious of this visit and he imagines his wife is betraying him. He ends up with a terrible headache. Fadinard arrives to find Madame Beaupertuis. He lets himself into the house and finds Monsieur Beaupertuis, who mistakes him for a robber. Upon enquiring after Beaupertuis' wife, her husband tells Fadinard she is not at home. Beaupertuis complains about his wife's lateness. Fadinard tells him his story and his quest for a hat that he believes to be in the possession of Beaupertuis' wife. He begins to search the house for the straw hat. Beaupertuis, at first frightened by the young man, decides he will get his pistol and stop this intruder. Fadinard wrestles with him and takes the pistol from him. He then sits him down to explain the whole story of the hat and shows him what is left of it. Beaupertuis immediately recognizes the hat as his wife's and decides he will dress and go to find her. Meanwhile, Fadinard's father-in-law has followed him to the house.

Nonancourt arrives, thinking that he is in his son-in-law's apartment. He enters the room where Beaupertuis has been. Finding what he believes to be Fadinard's shoes, he tries them on and rejoices in finding that they fit perfectly. He can finally get rid of these very uncomfortable wedding shoes. Beaupertuis re-enters the room, puts the shoes on and is amazed to see how swollen his feet must be since the shoes no longer fit. The ladies of the wedding party arrive with Elena, looking for the bridegroom. Elena, discouraged by the strange behaviour of her new husband, begs her father to let her return home with him. Nonancourt, Elena, Fadinard and Beaupertuis all meet up eventually in the bedroom of the house, to their great surprise and confusion. Fadinard has discovered that Beaupertuis' wife is actually Anaide and Beaupertuis, realizing that his wayward wife is waiting with her lover in Fadinard's house, is so enraged that he grabs a pistol and runs off to look for her. Fadinard runs after him, and the whole bridal party, as usual, follows.

ACT FOUR

Everything is upset and it appears that the consummation of the marriage of Fadinard and Elena will have to be called off. The wedding party has gotten lost in Paris and arrested; Beaupertuis still wants to kill his wife; Nonancourt wants to cancel the marriage and take Elena home. But a replacement straw hat is discovered - actually the hat that the bride's uncle, Vézinet, had brought as a wedding gift at the beginning of these events - and it is given to Anaide in time to convince her husband that since she has the hat she must be innocent. Fadinard is able to get free of the wedding party and other hindrances, and after the wedding day from hell caused by a horse, a hat, a lady and her lover, he can finally begin to enjoy his married life with Elena.

Nancy Hermiston, O.C., Director



Canadian-born lyric coloratura soprano Nancy Hermiston has performed throughout Europe and North America. Parallel to her extensive singing career, Ms. Hermiston worked as a voice teacher, stage director, and Co-coordinator with the University of Toronto's Opera and Performance Divisions. In 1995, she joined the University of British Columbia's School of Music as the Head of the Voice and Opera Divisions, where she established the UBC Opera Ensemble.

Professor Hermiston is also a favourite guest for master classes throughout Canada, the United States, China, and Germany. Her UBC Opera Ensemble tours regularly to the Czech Republic, Germany, Ontario, and throughout British Columbia. The Opera Ensemble gave their first performances in Beijing and Chengdu in May of 2009 and Shanghai in 2010 and 2011. Ms. Hermiston appeared as Stage Director with the Regina Opera for *The Barber of Seville* and *La Cenerentola* and with the Vancouver Opera twice for *Die Fledermaus*. *La Traviata*, *La Bohème* and in 2016, directed their production of Verdi's *Rigoletto*, starring UBC Alumna and her former student, Simone Osborne.

In 2004, Professor Hermiston was named the UBC University Marshal, and in 2008, UBC awarded her the Dorothy Somerset Award for Performance and Development in the Visual and Performing Arts. She was also honoured with a Killam Teaching prize in 2010. In October 2011, she received an Opera Canada Rubie Award for her contributions to opera in Canada. Ms. Hermiston was made an Officer of the Order of Canada in December 2013. In 2017, she was awarded the Canadian Music Centre's BC Award of Excellence, and in November 2017, Alumni UBC recognized Professor Hermiston with the Honorary Alumnus Award. In 2018, she received the Faculty of Arts 2017/18 Dean of Arts Award for her outstanding contributions to UBC's creative research, teaching, and service to the scholarly and broader community. In 2018 Ms. Hermiston was inducted into the BC Entertainment Hall of Fame.

Jonathan Girard, Conductor



Conductor Jonathan Girard always knew that music would be his life. Growing up in a musical home just outside Boston, one of Jonathan's first memories is being held in his grandfather's lap as he improvised tune after tune at the piano. He vividly remembers his first trip to hear the Boston Symphony and a performance of Debussy's *L'après-midi d'un faune*.

"The colours were incredible," he recalls, "I knew then that I wanted to surround myself with the sound of an orchestra."

He began his musical training on the piano and took up viola, saxophone, clarinet and organ. He was always focused on conducting and earned his Doctorate from Eastman.

Jonathan sees the orchestra as a community of collaborators – a place where each musician can contribute their individual artistry to a unified whole. Whether he's leading a symphony in South America, an opera in Europe or working with students as Director of Orchestras at the University of British Columbia School of Music, he focuses on collective breathing, phrasing and nuance while inspiring musicians to sing through their instruments.

Jonathan was recently appointed as Principal Guest Conductor of the Athens Philharmonic. He has led orchestras throughout North America, South America, and Europe, including the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, the North Czech Philharmonic Orchestra and the Holland Symphony Orchestra. He has also held positions with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Portland Opera Repertory Theatre, the Ohio Light Opera, the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra Orchestral Institute and the Marrowstone Music Festival. He currently serves as the conductor of the Vancouver Youth Symphony Senior Orchestra.

He is an enthusiastic promoter of new and little-known repertoire, particularly works by female-identifying composers. He is involved in many interdisciplinary projects with virtual reality media labs and the visual arts. He engages with scholars exploring astronomy and earth, ocean and atmospheric sciences. Recently, he premiered a Noh opera by Farshid Samandari that integrated Japanese and Western classical music instruments and styles. Jonathan has also offered Canadian and North American orchestral premieres of works by John Luther Adams, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Emmerich Kálmán, Oscar Navarro, Arvo Pärt, Francis Poulenc, Kaija Saariaho and Ana Sokolović.

Jonathan is fuelled by an endless curiosity and a thirst for exploration. He has an abiding desire to find beauty and to make it part of his life, a longing to share music with the world.

So it's not surprising that off the podium, he loves to fly airplanes.

"I love the freedom of being in the skies and seeing the world from a unique perspective," he says. "I love that, like conducting, flying combines science and artistry and requires multiple skills. I especially relish being able to explore places I've never been before."

UBC Opera Ensemble

The University of British Columbia Opera Ensemble was founded by Canadian lyric coloratura, Nancy Hermiston, in 1995. Beginning with a core of seven performers, Ms. Hermiston has built the program to a 90-member company. The Ensemble performs three main productions at UBC every season, several Opera Tea Concerts, and a series of *Singer Behind the Song* events featuring international stars who work with Ensemble students. As well, the Ensemble has several engagements with local community partners such as the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Vancouver Opera, and Bard on the Beach. In addition, the Ensemble travels each year to the Czech Republic to gain valuable European performance experience. Frequently they appear in concert with the Plzen Opera Orchestra, and they are regular guests at the Nürnberg Opera House for their Musikalischen Damen Teas (founded by Prof Hermiston in 1985). They have also given several concerts in Beijing, Shanghai, and Chengdu, China. The Ensemble has also toured throughout B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ontario.

The Ensemble's mission is to provide an outstanding performance and academic education for young, gifted opera singers, preparing them for international careers. Past main-stage productions have included *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Die Gärtnerin aus Liebe*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Suor Angelica*, *La Bohème*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *The Bartered Bride*, *Manon*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Florence: the Lady with the Lamp*, *Dreamhealer*, *Falstaff*, *Don Giovanni*, *Cendrillon*, *Albert Herring*, the Western Canadian Premiere of Harry Somer's *Louis Riel*, *The Crucible*, *Die Lustige Witwe (The Merry Widow)*, *Rusalka*, *Così fan tutte*, *Dialogues des Carmélites*, *Carmen*, *The Tales of Hoffmann*, *The Florentine Straw Hat*, *La Traviata*, *A Night in Venice (Eine Nacht in Venedig)*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Consul*, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, *La Cenerentola*, *Il Tabarro* and *Gianni Schicchi*, *Silent Night*, *Pasazerka*, and *Il Viaggio a Reims*, *Mansfield Park*, *The Gondoliers*, *Rusalka*, and *Hansel and Gretel*.

UBC Symphony Orchestra

The UBC Symphony Orchestra (UBCSO) is one of the leading post-secondary orchestras in Canada. It provides musicians in training with the opportunity to learn, rehearse, and perform a diverse classical repertoire and gain professional-level experience while earning course credit toward undergraduate and graduate degrees.

The UBCSO has made four commercial recordings in the last ten years, two of which have been Juno-nominated. With an annual choral-orchestral concert, student concerto competition, composer readings, and numerous special interdisciplinary projects, the UBCSO is a vibrant community of dedicated musicians. Aspiring conductors can apply to the Master of Music in Conducting, an intensive training program in choral, orchestral, or wind conducting that features private study and significant podium time. Our graduates have secured positions in orchestras worldwide.

VIOLIN 1

Jeremy Ho (*concertmaster*)

Annis Lee

Yiyi Hsu^N / Clara Sui^R

Shijin Kim^N / Yoanita Maria Kartadihardja^R

Nadya Nuyen^N / Takahiro Mori^R

Catie Akune^N / Rachel Baek^R

Robin Ilmari Neuvonen^N / Gavin Topnik^R

Anali Delshadi^N / Amber Chen^R

VIOLIN 2

Phoebe Chung*

Andy Kim

Justine Lin^N / Hailey Phillips^R

Wilson Li^N / Amy Zhang^R

Jocelyn Chui^N / Emily Tang^R

Risako Tonegawa^N / Yantong Chen^R

J. M. Campbell^N / Sammy Herzog^R

Shea Zawadiuk^N / Serene Zhang^R

VIOLA

Ludmilla Kraneck*

Hyeonbeen Ha

Jayden Rogers^N / Sofia Zavydovska^R

Stephanie Lu^N / Luci Barz^R

VIOLONCELLO

Aireleen Zhu*

Nathan Kwok

Lyla Kyu Ri Lee^N / Yiyang Xue^R

Nila Golmaghani Azar^N / Costa Yannakoulis^R

Kai Segal^N / Richard Ziyang Cheng^R

Jennifer Lim^N / Megan Cheng^R

BASS

Lukas Schmidt*

Jennifer Chu

Marlena Loewen^N / Elias Veloso^R

Noah Ferrera-Palchinski^N / Thomas DeVan^R

FLUTE

Siliang Wang*

Joyce Wong, Piccolo

OBOE

Moirá Rader Rice*

Sayako Leznoff

CLARINET

Kira María Pérez López*

Simon Proulx

BASSOON

Eric Li*

Rio Lagos Davison

HORN

Madeleine Davis*

Lawrence De Guzman

TRUMPET

Nikolaj Hansen*

Graeme Lister

TROMBONE

Balakshan Sidhu*

Dana Sullivan

TUBA

Anna Bosgra*

TIMPANI

Heejung Jung*

PERCUSSION

Matthew Verma

Cheng Xin Ip, celeste

HARP

Madison Dartana*

* = principle

^N = performing on February 2 & 4

^R = performing on February 3 & 5

Special Thanks

David Spencer Endowment Fund

The Wall Family

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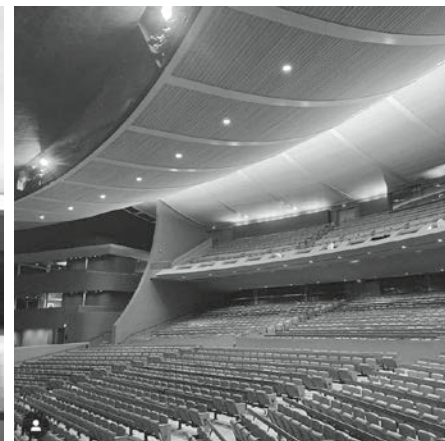
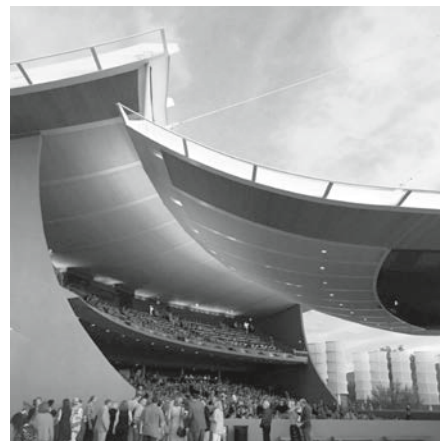
Lynn Burton

UBC Theatre Props

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL

Lis Dawson at 604-922-8008 / Genny MacLean (Great Expeditions)
at 604-738-5535

Production Team

DIRECTOR

Nancy Hermiston

CONDUCTOR

Jonathan Girard

LIGHTING DESIGN

Jeremy Baxter

SET & PROJECTION DESIGN

Alessia Carpoca

PROJECTION OPERATOR

Jacob Wan

COSTUME DESIGN/ HEAD OF COSTUMES

Parvin Mirhady

UBC THEATRE PROPS

Lynn Burton

OPERA COACHES

Andrea Grant

Wenwen Du

Derek Stanyer

GRADUATE ASSISTANT CONDUCTORS

Armand Birk

Cheng Xin Ip

STAGE MANAGER

Magdalena How

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

Katie Fraser

Carly King

ORCHESTRA STAGE MANAGERS

Yiyi Hsu

Alexander Beggs

HAIRDRESSING & WIGS

Elke Englicht

MAKEUP

Leila Kirves

PROPS

Liam Robertson

Carly King

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Brittany St. Clair Gamble

ASSISTANT STUDENT COSTUME TECHNICIAN

Hannah Ernst

Sarah Anderson-Caulfield

PROGRAMME

Katie Fraser

Mariana Iguavita

PROGRAMME PRINTING

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MARKETING COORDINATION AND GRAPHIC DESIGN

Miles Linklater

EVENTS MANAGER

Francesca Corrado

ASSISTANT STAGE AND EVENTS MANAGER

Mara Ayque

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Katie Fraser

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SURTITLES OPERATOR

Mariana Iguavita

SURTITLES

Mariana Iguavita

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Maddie Davis

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Omanie Elias

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Keith Smith

STUDENT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Liam Robertson

ASSISTANT TECHNICAL DIRECTORS

Carly King

Kevin Liu

Gabriel Chona Rueda

Collide Entertainment

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Mike Southworth

CAMERA OPERATORS

Scot Proudfoot

Brandon Fletcher

Chan Centre

Production Crew

ASSISTANT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR AND HEAD LIGHTING TECHNICIAN

Andrew Riter

HEAD AUDIO RECORDING TECHNICIAN

James Perrella

PRODUCTION MANAGER

David Humphrey

*The Chan Centre for the
Performing Arts Ticketing,
Front Of House, and
Production staff are members
of CUPE 2950.*

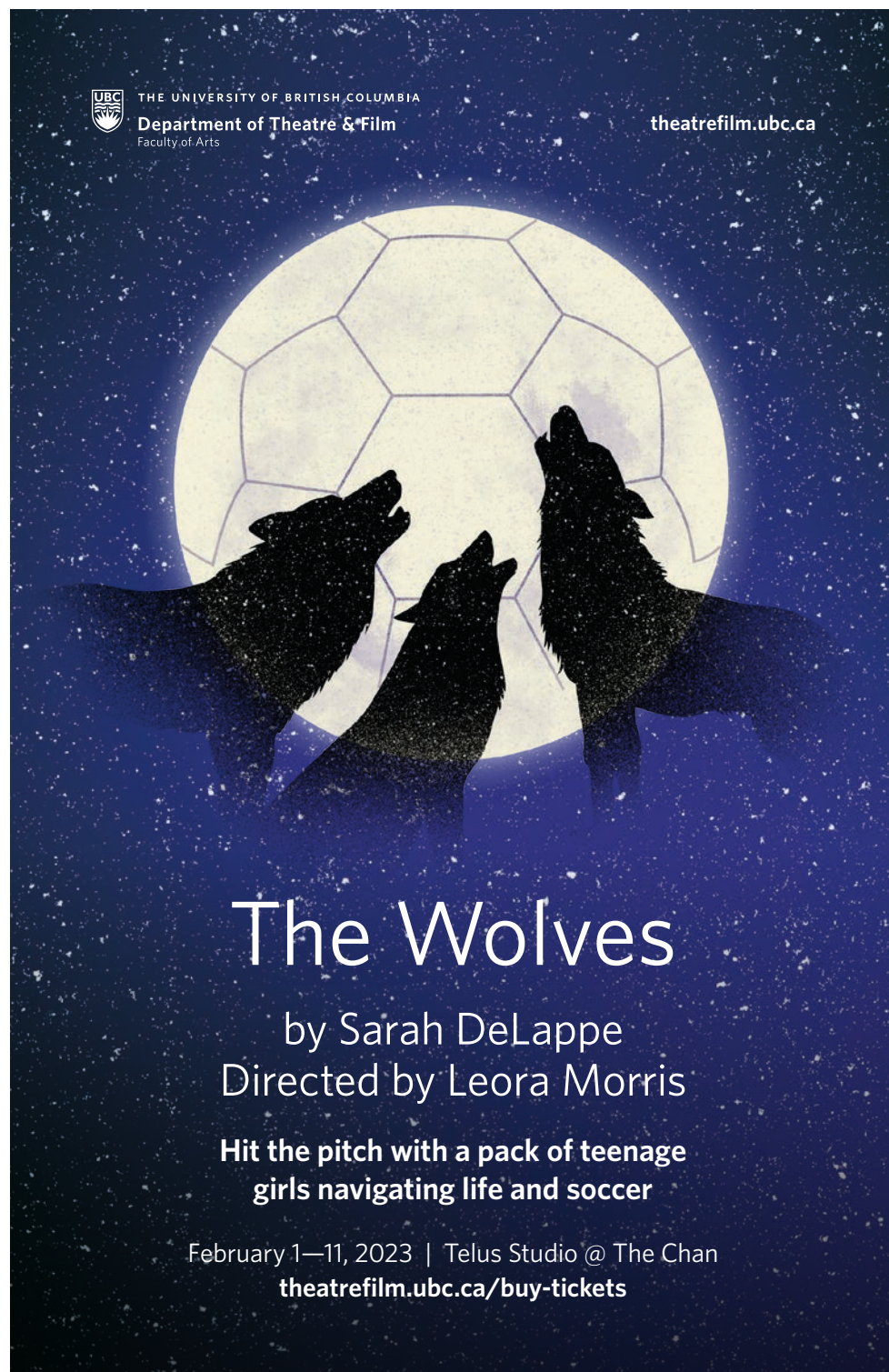


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Department of Theatre & Film

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