



**CYRUS LANE &
KIRSTYN RUSSELLE**

 BLACKBIRD
BY DAVID HARROWER

**OCTOBER 1-18, 2025
2550 DANFORTH AVE.**



Talk Is Free Theatre's offices are located on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit. It has been a site of human activity for at least 15,000 years.

This is Dish With One Spoon Territory. Dish With One Spoon is a treaty between the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas and Haudenosaunee to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

BLACKBIRD

DAVID HARROWER

DIRECTED BY DEAN DEFFETT

RAY
UNA
GIRL

CYRUS LANE
KIRSTYN RUSSELLE
LUCY JANISSE

COSTUME DESIGN
SOUND DESIGN
SET & PROP COORDINATION/
PRODUCTION ASSISTANCE
FIGHT & INTIMACY DIRECTION
PRODUCTION MANAGER
STAGE MANAGER

SEQUOIA ERICKSON
NOLAN MOBERLY

LAUREN CULLY
CHRISTINA FOX
SAM HALE
BEN TUCK

BLACKBIRD was first commissioned and presented by the Edinburgh International Festival at the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, in August 2005 and was subsequently presented at the Albery Theatre in the West End by Michael Edwards and Carole Winter for MJE Productions, opening on February 13, 2006.

BLACKBIRD was originally produced in the United States by the Manhattan Theatre Club, Lynne Meadow, Artistic Director; Barry Grove, Executive Producer, on March 15, 2007.



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Talk Is Free Theatre engages professional artists who are members of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association, under the terms of the Independent Theatre Agreement.

Talk Is Free Theatre is an active member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres.



Talk Is Free Theatre has enjoyed over twenty years of developing and producing theatre in Barrie, Toronto, across Canada and around the world. Our mission, both in our home seasons and through our many touring endeavours, is to produce a range of cutting edge theatre works and to connect them with as wide an array of people as possible—especially with new, non-urban audiences. As for our home operations in Barrie, TIFT is Central Ontario's only professional theatre company with a full, traditional autumn-through-spring season.

Our diversity of repertoire has included over 150 immersive experiences, off-centre musicals, reinterpretations of classics, and new works large and small—from a one-person show on a city bus to a major musical at the Winter Garden Theatre in Toronto—striving every day to put artists first.

TIFT has been included multiple times on the Globe and Mail list of 10 Best theatre projects in Canada and has won several of the country's top theatre honours, the Dora Mavor Moore Awards.

COMPANY



CYRUS LANE

RAY

For TIFT: Doctor Ninković/Pera in *Madame Minister*, Ray in *Blackbird*, Elomire in *La Bête* (Toronto), Judge Turpin in *Sweeney Todd* (Toronto and Buenos Aires–Dora Winner), *Sin and Sorrow Are Common To All*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, and *The Government Inspector*

Elsewhere: Theatre: Albert in *Winter Solstice* (Necessary Angel); Nick and Others in *Come From Away* (You Are Here–Gander); Herman in *Wedding Band* and Conrad in *Much Ado About Nothing* (Stratford Festival); *Grand Ghosts* (Grand Theatre); *On Golden Pond* and *Twelve Angry Men* (Drayton); *Oil* (Actors' Repertory Company); *Four Chords and a Gun* (Toronto and Chicago–Starvox); *The Secret Chord: A Leonard Cohen Experience* (Soulpepper); *Scrooge* in *A Christmas Carol* (Ross Petty Productions). Film/TV: *Accused* (Fox); Roger and Rupert Newsome on *Murdoch Mysteries* (CBC).

Upcoming: Buddy in *Kimberly Akimbo* (Segal/Mirvish).



KIRSTYN RUSSELLE

UNA

For TIFT: *Blackbird*

Elsewhere: Theatre: Annie (Stratford); *The Wizard of Oz: A Holiday Pantomime For All* (Canadian Stage–Dora nom.); Sally Bowles in *Cabaret*, The Witch in *Into the Woods*, Magenta in *The Rocky Horror Show* (Ovation Productions); *Grease* (Winter Garden Theatre). Film/TV: *Ginny & Georgia* (Netflix); *Web of Lies* (Discovery).

Other: Huge thanks to TIFT, Dean and the entire *Blackbird* team for the opportunity to share this story.



LUCY JANISSE

GIRL

For TIFT: *Blackbird*

Elsewhere: Theatre: *Hadestown*, *High School Musical*, *Arts Showcase* (Wexford School for the Arts); Gabriela in *High School Musical* (D. A. Morrison); *Camp Showcase* (The Second City). Film/TV: *The Pond* (Air Canada).

Other: Lucy is currently a student at Wexford School for the Arts in Toronto. She has a passion for singing, guitar, piano and making music with her friends. Lots of love to Mom, Dad and Everett.



AIDAN DESALAZ
IN

COMPANY

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim
Book by George Furth

Directed by Dylan Trowbridge

January 15-February 1, 2026
The Theatre Centre, 1119 Queen Street West, Toronto

COMPANY



DAVID HARROWER

PLAYWRIGHT

David Harrower is a Scottish playwright, based in Glasgow. His first play, *Knives in Hens*, was premiered at Edinburgh's Traverse Theatre in 1995. Subsequent plays include *Kill the Old Torture Their Young*, *Presence*, *Dark Earth*, *Blackbird*, and *365*. Harrower has also written adaptations including *The Chrysalids*, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, *Ivanov*, and *Woyzeck*. Translations include *The Girl on the Sofa*, a translation of the Jon Fosse play as well as Schiller's Romantic tragedy *Mary Stuart*. (Bio courtesy of Bloomsbury)



DEAN DEFFETT

DIRECTOR

For TIFT: Charon/Aeakos in *The Frogs*, *Blackbird* (director)

Elsewhere: Direction: *A Christmas Carol*, *The Lion of Oz*, *Cinder-ELLIE!* (Tweed&Co); *High School Musical* (WPA); *RockConcert* (AIDA). Upcoming: *Hook* (Tweed&Co). Performance: *We Will Rock You*, *The Rocky Horror Show* (Magnus Theatre); *Pure 90s* (Stage West); *The World Goes 'Round* (The Gravenhurst Opera); *Small Wonder* (Canadian Musical Theatre Project); *Summerland*, *The Fence*, *CHOIR!* (Edge of the Sky); *Small Wonder* (Canadian Musical

Theatre Project).

Other: Dean has a Bachelor of Musical Theatre Performance from Sheridan College, and is a proud graduate of Wexford School for the Arts. Thank you to my family and friends for their constant love and support. I dedicate my work on this play to the great Ann Merriam, who taught me how to find the love and heart in every project.



SEQUOIA ERICKSON

COSTUME DESIGNER

For TIFT: *Blackbird*

Elsewhere: Theatre: *The Wizard of Oz*, *CATS*, *Heathers* (St. Clair College); *I, Robot* (Roles 4 Women); *The Rover* (Toronto Metropolitan University). Film/TV: *Sanguine* (Flawed Designs); *Night Terror* (Gentle Productions).

Other: Sequoia is a maker of things and mover of shadows, a graduate of the Performance Production program at TMU and a nominee for this year's Pauline McGibbon Award. Follow her on Instagram @kikithemoa

COMPANY



NOLAN MOBERLY

SOUND DESIGNER

For TIFT: Simon in *Tales of an Urban Indian* (Suriname, Chile, New Zealand, Windsor, Japan), Cock (Assistant Director & Sound Designer), Čeda Urošević in *Madame Minister*

Other: Nolan Moberly is an Afro-Indigenous multi-disciplinary artist, based out of Toronto, Ontario, with focus on acting for the stage and screen. He also engages in writing, directing, and sound design. He has received education and training from Weengushk Film Institute and the Centre for Indigenous Theatre. Nolan values his journey as an artist blending his cultural heritage with his craft, aiming to contribute to a more diverse and inclusive artistic community.



LAUREN CULLY

SET & PROPS COORDINATOR/PRODUCTION ASS'T

For TIFT: *Perfect on Paper*

Elsewhere: Set Design: *Blithe Spirit* (ACT-CO Festival Award Nominee); *The 39 Steps*, *Table Manners* (South Simcoe Theatre). Props: *Little Shop of Horrors*, *The 39 Steps*, *Hello Dolly*, *Table Manners*, *The Secret Garden*, *That December Show!* (South Simcoe Theatre).

Other: Lauren is returning to Theatre after spending the last four years as Creative and Special Events Manager at Santa's Village: Muskoka's Theme Park. As a graduate of Georgian College's Interior Design program, she uses her technical knowledge of space planning and design to create homes for characters and thrive in the impermanence of the stage.



CHRISTINA FOX

FIGHT & INTIMACY DIRECTOR

For TIFT: *Perfect on Paper*, *Blackbird*

Elsewhere: Fight/Intimacy Director: *Enormity*, *Girl*, and *the Earthquake in her lungs* (Nightwood); *Goodmorning Juliet*, *Goodnight Desdemona* (Perchance); *Carmen* (Brott Music Festival); *Cabaret* (Theatre TO); *Oliver!* (Yes Theatre); *Late Company* (Greenlight Arts); *Mad Madge* (Nightwood); *Snow White* (YPT); *Woven Hearts* (McMaster University). Film: *This is Not a Test* (Anova Pictures); *My Bully Mia*

(Ticket Stubbs Productions); *Settle Down* (series-Border2Border Entertainment); *Ladyfingers* (short film); *Lift* (short film); *White Enough* (short film); *Format* (short film).

Other: Christina is a non-binary, queer actor and artist based in Tkaronto. While their first passion is acting, Christina has been delighted to work as an Intimacy Coordinator and Fight Director as well. They are a graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada.

COMPANY



SAM HALE

PRODUCTION MANAGER

For TIFT: *La Bête, The Other Place, The Judas Kiss, Into the Woods, Hedwig and the Angry Inch, For Both Resting and Breeding.*

Elsewhere: *The Welkin, Detroit: Music of the Motor City, Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, Picture This, Parfumerie, Riverboat (Soulpepper); The Goat or, Who is Sylvia?, Casey and Diana, Death and the King's Horseman, All's Well That Ends Well, Little Shop of Horrors (Stratford Festival); Prodigal, Casimir and Caroline, The Wolves, The Home Project, Entrances &*

Exits, Lemons..., 52 Pick Up, The Glass Menagerie (The Howland Company); Liars at a Funeral (Drayton); Job (Coal Mine); Jerusalem, Mr. Burns (Outside the March); Disgraced (Mirvish/Citadel/Hope & Hell); The Bidding War (Crows); Angels in America (That Theatre Company/Buddies); Wildly Romantic, Aunt Agnes for Christmas, Hilda's Yard (Foster Festival); My Fair Lady (Capitol Theatre), Fall For Dance North (TO Live).

Other: Sam has also worked for University of Toronto, TIFF, Hot Docs, dance: made in canada and serves as a stage management mentor at Toronto Metropolitan University.



BEN TUCK

STAGE MANAGER

For TIFT: Debut

Elsewhere: *Hadestown: Teen Edition and The Bluff (Theatre Orangeville); Yesterday Once More and Halfway There (Drayton); Cinderella: The Panto, Memphis to Motown, The Sweet Delilah Swim Club, Jack and the Beanstalk: The Panto, Where You Are and more (Lighthouse Festival)*

Other: All love to my friends, family and most of all, Clare,

for their endless support.

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