

The Cultch

Ronnie Burkett
(Toronto)



WONDERFUL JOE



**"A DARK
AND MOVING
PUPPET
EXTRAVAGANZA"**
THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Adult audiences only: ages 16+

**HISTORIC
THEATRE**

**CREATED & PERFORMED BY
RONNIE BURKETT**

**FEB 04–
FEB 23, 2025**

PHOTO // IAN JACKSON



THREE
VENUES.
AFFORDABLE
RATES.



RENT THE CULTCH.

The Cultch

thecultch.com/rentals
rentals@thecultch.com

WONDERFUL JOE

Ronnie Burkett (Toronto)

FEB 04–23, 2025

HISTORIC THEATRE

Approx. 90 minutes, no intermission

Mature Themes

Adult audiences only: Ages 16+

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Created and Performed by
Ronnie Burkett

Music Composition and Lyrics
John Alcorn

Lighting Design
Kevin Humphrey

Stage Manager / Technical Director
Crystal Salverda

Production Manager / Artistic Associate
Terri Gillis

Associate Producer
John Lambert

Wonderful Joe was co-commissioned by Stanford Live (Stanford CA, USA), UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance or CAP UCLA (Los Angeles CA, USA) and TO Live (Toronto ON, Canada), with developmental support from Theatre Network (Edmonton AB, Canada) in association with Ronnie Burkett Theatre of Marionettes.

Ronnie Burkett received development support for *Wonderful Joe* from the Canada Council for the Arts Explore and Create Program.

Ronnie Burkett Theatre of Marionettes is exclusively represented by John Lambert & Assoc., Montreal, Canada (johnlambert.ca)

Marionette and Costume Design
Ronnie Burkett

Costumes
Kim Crossley

Puppet Studio
Alexander Mantia, Aidan Sparks, Angela Talbot, Dina Meschkuleit, with Martin Herbert, Andy Hayward, Shanna Miller, Justin Mezzapelli & Brigitte Sampogna

Shoes
Camellia Koo

Marionette Controls
Greg Ballora (after Luman Coad)

Marionette Stringing
Marcus Jamin

Majordomo
Robbie Buttinski

Scenic Construction
Shop Dogs, Montreal

Scenic Painting
Daniel Barkley

Model and Drafting
Aidan Sparks

MUSIC

Music Production, Arrangements,
Vocals, Keyboards, and Digital
Programming
John Alcorn

Featured Vocals
Coco Love Alcorn
Mixing and Mastering
Jeff Wolpert, Desert Fish Studios

The Cultch stage crew, box office, and front of house staff are members of
Local 118 of IATSEE



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Cultch acknowledges that it is on unceded territories of the
xʷməθkʷəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔt
(Tsleil-Waututh) nations.

Welcome everyone!

We are very excited to have you here to witness this beautiful story from a one-of-a-kind artist. We had the pleasure of seeing the premiere of Ronnie's *Wonderful Joe* last year and we couldn't wait to share it with you.

For years, Ronnie Burkett has been making The Cultch his home away from home in Vancouver. We have treasured this special relationship with one of Canada's most esteemed artists and you have told us you feel the same way.

Ronnie figures prominently in some of your favourite Cultch memories and The Cultch has been a part of some of Ronnie's milestones—from sold-out runs, to world premieres. This year we were honoured to join with many friends and family to celebrate Ronnie's contributions when he received the Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Artistic Achievement.

You are about to go on an adventure with an incredible cast of characters. Ronnie's heroes are looking for hope, meaning and adventure in their lives. May we all find support and joy in our community.

Thank you for being here!

XO,

Heather Redfern,
Executive Director

Nicole McLuckie
Associate Executive Director



Photo // Nicole McLuckie, Ronnie Burkett, John Alcorn, & Heather Redfern

BIOGRAPHIES



RONNIE BURKETT CREATOR AND PERFORMER

Ronnie Burkett has been captivated by puppetry since the age of seven, when he opened the World Book Encyclopedia to “Puppets”. He began touring his puppet shows around Alberta at the age of fourteen and has been on the road ever since.

Recognized as one of Canada’s foremost theatre artists, Ronnie Burkett has been credited with creating some of the world’s most elaborate and provocative puppetry. Ronnie Burkett Theatre of Marionettes was formed in 1986 and has stimulated an unprecedented adult audience for puppet theatre, continuously playing to great critical and public acclaim on Canada’s major stages, and as a guest company on numerous international tours abroad.

Ronnie has received numerous awards in the Canadian theatre as a playwright, actor and designer for his work with Theatre of Marionettes, including the 2009 Siminovitch Prize in Theatre, The Herbert Whittaker Drama Bench Award for Outstanding Contribution to Canadian Theatre, and international recognition including a Village Voice OBIE Award in New York for Off-Broadway Theatre, The GLAAD Award for Outstanding Theater, Broadway/Off-Broadway, and four Citations of Excellence in the Art of Puppetry from the American Center of the Union Internationale de la Marionnette. In 2019, he was appointed as an Officer of The Order of Canada. In June 2024, Ronnie received the Lifetime Artistic Achievement Award from the Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards.

Ronnie’s highly acclaimed and wildly popular improvised marionette vaudeville cabaret The Daisy Theatre has played a decade of sold-out touring seasons including Los Angeles to New York, Vancouver, Toronto, Sydney and Auckland, and follows the international successes *Penny Plain*, *Billy Twinkle*, *10 Days on Earth*, *Provenance* and the “Memory Dress Trilogy” of *Tinka’s New Dress*, *Street of Blood* and *Happy. Little Dickens* (The Daisy Theatre version of *A Christmas Carol*), premiered in 2017. In June 2019, Ronnie Burkett Theatre of Marionettes premiered a new audience-interactive production, *Forget Me Not*. In 2022, *The Loony Bin* premiered, Ronnie’s first solo salon hand-puppet show since he was a teenager. In 2023, The Daisy Theatre cast took on Shakespeare in *Little Willy* for a seven-city tour. In 2024, *Wonderful Joe* had its world premiere at Theatre Network in Edmonton followed by engagements in California at Stanford University and UCLA. In the 2024–25 season, the production tours to Toronto, Calgary AB, Banff AB, Vancouver BC and to the Lincoln Center in New York City.



JOHN ALCORN

MUSIC ARRANGEMENTS AND PRODUCTION

John Alcorn is one of Canada's premiere jazz vocalists, delivering his distinctive renditions of jazz standards on the most prestigious bandstands and concert stages across Canada. His list of citations and acknowledgements in music and theatre include both Jazz Report (Male Vocalist of the Year) and Dora (Outstanding Music) awards. As composer, lyricist, musical director, arranger and producer, he has collaborated with numerous significant Canadian theatre artists, including Daniel MacIvor, Deanne Taylor, Sky Gilbert, Theresa Tova, and Tomson Highway, and eight collaborations with Theatre of Marionettes.



CRYSTAL SALVERDA

STAGE MANAGER

With over 30 years in the entertainment industry, Crystal has been blessed to work both across the country and internationally stage managing some wonderful productions. She has had the pleasure of working with Ronnie for the past 11 years. She has also worked with companies such as Blyth Festival, Kidoons Network, Calgary Stampede, Necessary Angel, Soulepper Theatre, Canadian Stage, Harold Green Jewish Theatre, just to name a few. Other work experience includes Operations for Field of Dreams and Little League Classic (BaAM Productions), Sales Manager (Westsun), Concert Stage Manager (Marquis Entertainment).



Photo // Ian Jackson

“LET’S UNPACK THAT”

**Conversations about contemporary Indigenous art, culture, and more;
hosted by Cameron Peal**

Free, Open to all

Held at The Cultch’s Founder’s Lounge, 1895 Venables St

Contact outreach@thecultch.com for more details

TRADITION AND INNOVATION—PART 1

HELD ON NOV 28

We discussed the impact, influence, and importance of tradition in relation to Indigenous arts and culture. We examined how Indigenous traditional knowledge, protocol, and history inform our present moment.

LANGUAGE RECLAMATION

FEB 20, 5:30 PM

How does language influence and inform our approaches to culture and art?
What challenges are currently faced on this front?

TRADITION AND INNOVATION—PART 2

APR 10, 5:30 PM

What visions for the future do Indigenous artists and cultural workers have?
What is needed to better help cultivate visions of future culture? How can we
set the stage for future voices to flourish in their work to advance the culture?



Photo // Raven Mother by Michael Siobodan

As Vancouver's most diverse and innovative arts and cultural hub, The Cultch has created meaningful, impactful connections across communities for over 50 years.

As a presenting theatre, we curate unique, intimate, and diverse performances from Vancouver, Canada, and across the globe—offering dynamic contemporary programming in theatre, dance, music, circus, and visual arts.

We host vibrant gatherings and lively conversations around the issues, topics, and ideas that are presented in our shows.

We remove barriers to access by providing ASL Interpretation performances and free tickets to those for whom cost is prohibitive.

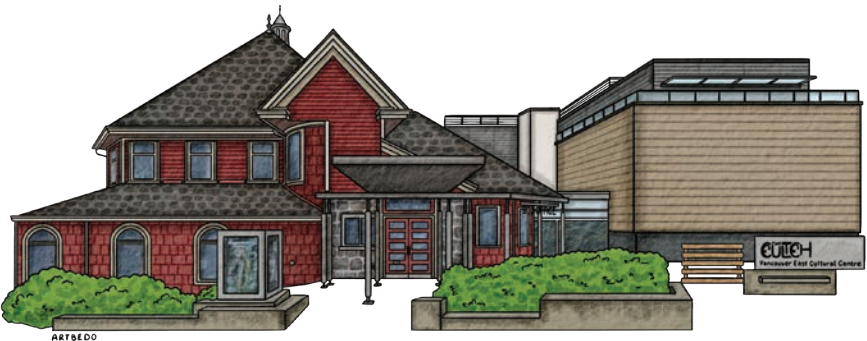
We are connectors, facilitators, culture changers, and we are committed to providing the highest level of service and care we can offer.

We activate this work in our three theatres—the Historic, the Vancity Culture Lab, and the York—a gallery, and various multi-use spaces in the heart of East Vancouver, as well as our Cultch Online digital presentations that reach international audiences.

We welcome everyone who loves live performance into our spaces and invite them to make The Cultch their home.

CONNECT WITH US:

@thecultch    



THE CULTCH STAFF

Heather Redfern
Executive Director

Nicole McLuckie
Associate Executive Director

Valentina Acevedo Montilla
Youth Program Manager

Yuri Arajs
Gallery Curator

Kelly Barker
Producer

Trevor Battye
Sales Associate

Kris Boyd
Technology Director

Anita Cheung
Bookkeeper

Jenny Kong
Bookkeeper

Alex Doble
Box Office Assistant

Len Gardiner
Caretaker

Zuzia Juszkiewicz
Graphic & Web Designer

Ngairé Leach
Graphic & Web Designer

Jon Li
Operations Assistant

Pippa Mackie
Partnerships Manager (on leave)

Ivy Padmos
Partnerships Manager (interim)

Andrew McCaw
Production Manager

Connal McNamara
Marketing Manager

Lisa Mennell
Communications & Outreach Manager

Neal Miskin
Head Audio

Cynthia Ndabazimvye
Development Coordinator

Kaden O'Reilly
Technical Director

Cameron Peal
Indigenous Outreach Coordinator

Paul Phalen
Hospitality & Business Dev. Manager

Siobhan Powell
Rentals Manager (interim)

Lucy Rosenstiel
Rentals Manager (on leave)

Max Sample
Venue Technician

Cara Siu
Ticket Services Manager

Ry Strachan
Audience Services Manager

Kathy Vito
Patron Development Manager

Madelaine Walker
Assistant Production Manager

Jude Weismiller
Assistant Technical Director

Carlie Yeung
Venue Technician

THE CULTCH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Stephanie Hollingshead
Chair

Caterina Sanders
Vice Chair

Sophia Curalli
Treasurer

Jane E. Brindley
Secretary

Frank Costanzo
Past Chair

Giselle Blackman
Director

Mary Cleaver
Director

Arlene H Henry
Director

Doris Kraske
Director

Gavin Marshall
Director

Elia Robles
Director

Donors from Jan 01, 2024–Jan 07, 2025

*indicates monthly donor

For a full list of our amazing donor community visit thecultch.com/our-donors

DIRECTOR'S CIRCLE (\$500+)

Alex Kochenko & David McCann*
Allyson Haug
Andrew & Sangeeta Wylie
Angus Lithgow
Anndraya Luui
Anonymous x 8
Arlene H Henry
Barry Mckinnon
Bill Millerd
Borja Brown*
Carol Newell
Carol Newson
Catherine Aikenhead
Chris Wootten
Christine Moffat
Cindy Reid & Rory Gylander*
Corey Payette & Marshall McMahan
D. Wendy Lee
D.M. Carr Inc
Darby Honeyman & Dave Hess
David Vogt & Tracy Proke
Dianne Bell
Doris Kraske
Douglas McArthur
Dr. Joy Masuhara
Elizabeth Ayers
Elsie & Audrey Jang Fund
Eric Watt
Farren Gillaspie
Frank Costanzo*
Geoff Meggs
Giselle Blackman
Glenn & Loretta Barr
Glenn Tarigan
Graeme Robertson
Heather Redfern*
Hotze Rullmann
James Sibley
Jamie Evrard
Jane Baker*
Jane Brindley & Ross Paul
Jane Reid
Jane Westheuser
Janice Chutter
Jenn McGinn
Jenny Dyck
John Hooge
John H Kennedy*
John Potts
Julia Quon
Kathleen Oliver*
Kathy Vito & Trevor Battye*
Ken Gracie & Philip Waddell
Kimberly Senklip Harvey
Laura Moore
Laurel March
Leanne Averbach
Levi Stoelting
Louise Schwarz & Mauro Vescera*
Lydia Lovison & Thomas Woods*
Lynda Stokes*
Lynn & Ash Katey*
Maison Cote Vancouver Seasonings
Marianne
Mark Gatha & Kemo Schedlosky
Mark Sim
Martin & Phoebe Elfert*
Mary Rawson
Maya & Frank Weiler
Michael Jonker
Michael McLellan
Michelle Williams
Noha Sedky
Paul Darrin Plater
Paul Williamson
Penelope Tham
Rich Baerg*
Richard & Christine Barker*
Robelyn Martin
Robert Bartholomew
Robert Buccì
Roger & Leah Holland*
Rosalyn Manthorpe
Scott Fraser
Sheila Adams
Stephanie Hollingshead
Susan & Bruce Stout
Susan Christie
Susan Mendelson
Tammea Arthur
Todd Mundle
Stephen Heatley & James Irvine
Victoria Henderson*

DONOR COMMUNITY

MONTHLY DONORS (\$499 and below)

Alexa Deans
Aliyah Amarshi
Andrew Hastie
Ann Hughes
Ardis Nelson
Bonnie Sun, in memory of Norman Armour
Borja Brown
Brenda Benham
Brian Postalain
Catherine Howell
Cathryn Duerksen
Ellie O'Day
Jane Heyman & Lionel Johnston
Jenna Newman
John S. Wilson
Karin Hartner
Kathleen Roczkowskyj

Keltie Forsyth
Lisa Mennell
Meaghan Fraser
Megan Ashbury
Melody Mason
Pamela Mantaring
Patricia Curtis
Peter Dickinson
Sandra Ferens
Selma Savage
Sharon Bailin
Shaun Jackman
Sonia Fraser
Steven Coventry
Susan Millar
Tanya Boteju
Theresa & Gordon Mackie

IN HONOUR & MEMORY OF:

In honour of Graeme Bird
In memory of Elsie and George Kowalenko
Jane Westheuser, in honour of Lynda Stokes
John Ingram, in memory of Doreen Ingram
Kurtis Reeves, in memory of Kevin Cleveland Knight
Marlene, in memory of Jim
Scarlett and Luke, in honour of tradition and the East Van Pantos
Susan Power, in honour of Nancy Power

Did we miss you or not recognize you as you wish? Please let us know by contacting Ivy Padmos, Partnerships Manager, at ivy@thecultch.com

THE CULTCH

Gala

YOU'RE INVITED

Tickets on sale now

1895 VENABLES ST.
MARCH 01, 5:30 PM

DRESS CODE: ELEGANT GARDEN
PARTY ATTIRE

thecultch.com

SCAN FOR TICKETS:



SUSTAINING SPONSOR

PROUD SUPPORTER OF INDIGENOUS PROGRAMMING

GOVERNMENT FUNDERS

Canada Council for the Arts
Conseil des arts du Canada



Canadian Heritage
Patrimoine canadien



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ARTS COUNCIL
An agency of the Province of British Columbia



BRITISH COLUMBIA
Supported by the Province of British Columbia



CITY OF VANCOUVER
Cultural Services

LEGACY GIVING

The Estate of Madelene Vale Bird

The Estate of Harry Locke

FOUNDATIONS

Aikenhead Family Community Fund

Benefaction Foundation

Christopher Foundation

Charlotte and Sonya Wall Arts Fund

Don and Susan Smith Fund:
c/o Vancity Community Foundation

Elsie and Audrey Jang Fund,
held at Vancouver Foundation

Footbridge Foundation

George T. Kidd Memorial Fund

Ken Haycock Foundation,
held at Vancouver Foundation

Lightburn Family Fund

Mair Foundation, held at
Vancouver Foundation

McGrane-Pearson
Endowment Fund

Oasis Foundation

Peter and Melody Anderson
Foundation Fund

R&J Stern Family
Foundation

Russell-Mosoff Family Fund

Steven Chambers
Foundation

Tudor Sheil Fund: c/o
Vancity Community Fund
Vancouver Foundation

IN KIND AND MEDIA SPONSORS

BEER PARTNER

COMING SOON TO THE CULTCH

HOW TO DISAPPEAR COMPLETELY, MAR 15–22, 2025

The Chop Theatre (Vancouver)

In collaboration with The Elbow Theatre (Vancouver)

Lighting designer Itai Erdal illuminates his mother's passing in this brave and intimate work of theatre.

Photo // Mery Erdal & Itai Erdal; by The Chop Theatre



Q&A WITH ITAI ERDAL

***How to Disappear Completely* has earned critical acclaim all around the world. How does it feel to be bringing this show back to Vancouver?**

It is a dream come true...I have designed over 30 shows at The Cultch, more than any other venue in the world, and to be telling this very personal story, in the neighbourhood where I've lived for over 18 years is very special.

What should audiences expect?

They can expect some great storytelling, and to be moved...it's a very unique situation (a verbatim theatre piece told by the person who went through the events they are talking about), but also because my mom was a fascinating and captivating person and her personality shines through.

How does your professional experience as a lighting designer frame your story?

This show was the first I wrote, and the first time I ever performed. When we started creating it, we had to develop a theatrical device to explain why I, as a non-actor, am on stage...the show took the form of a lighting demonstration, and then lighting became a metaphor for life. I shared the tricks of my trade with the audience...I wrote an ode to my favourite instrument: the PAR can, to show how it gets warmer as it dims—and it made people cry because they thought about my mother's life fading away. I showed them how to disappear on stage and by doing that I made sure my mother would never disappear because now she lives on in the minds of all the people who see the show.

NOTHING LEFT BEHIND *

* EXCEPT CLEANER FUEL.

At West Coast Reduction, nothing is important to us. Because when there's nothing left – that's when we've done our job. We collect food waste and by-products from food producers, like farms, restaurants and even supermarkets, transforming them into ingredients used in animal feed, renewable energy, and thousands of other products we use every day. Our efforts contribute to a sustainable local food supply, and help us all live in cleaner and healthier communities.



WEST COAST
REDUCTION LTD.

WCRL.COM

The Cultch

Buy a ticket
package &
save up to
\$218!

COMING SOON TO OUR STAGES

SAVAGE SOCIETY

LITTLE RED WARRIOR & HIS LAWYER

YORK
THEATRE

MAR 06–16,
2025



PHOTO // GORDON PATRICK WHITE IN LITTLE RED WARRIOR
AND HIS LAWYER BY TRUDIE LEE

THE CHOP THEATRE &
THE ELBOW THEATRE

HOW TO DISAPPEAR COMPLETELY

HISTORIC
THEATRE

MAR 15–22,
2025



PHOTO // MERY ERDAL & ITAI ERDAL BY THE CHOP THEATRE

URBAN INK

CHILDREN OF GOD

YORK
THEATRE

MAR 21–29,
2025



PHOTO // MICHELLE BARBACH BY MATT BARNES



Scan for
Tickets &
Showtimes

THECULTCH.COM
604 251 1363