

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Young People's Theatre
Canadian Premiere of
The Adventures of Pinocchio
Holiday Musical Directed by Award-Winning Actor Sheila McCarthy

November 11, 2019 – January 5, 2020

Toronto, Oct. 24, 2019 - [Young People's Theatre](#) (YPT) is thrilled to announce that this year's holiday musical is the Canadian premiere of [The Adventures of Pinocchio](#)! Multi-award-winning actor **Sheila McCarthy** returns to YPT after more than 35 years to direct this rollicking new musical, which follows the beloved marionette on his mischievous quest to become a real human being. ***The Adventures of Pinocchio*** will be presented on the Mainstage from November 11, 2019 to January 5, 2020.

"It is my absolute thrill to be directing this brand new musical with a dream team and cast at the wonderful Young People's Theatre," said Director Sheila McCarthy. "And, unlike PINOCCHIO, that's no lie!"

One of Canada's most celebrated performers (recipient of multiple Gemini, Genie, ACTRA and Dora Awards), McCarthy can currently be seen on the hit Netflix series *Umbrella Academy* and *Anne with an E*. She was last at YPT for her 1982 Dora Award-winning performance in *Really Rosie*.

The Adventures of Pinocchio is written by Canadians **Brian Hill** (book) and **Neil Bartram** (music and lyrics) and had its world premiere at the Chicago Shakespeare Theater in 2011. The production has been freshly adapted for its Canadian premiere by YPT.

Each production in YPT's 2019.20 Season explores one of the [Seven Ancestral Teachings](#) of the Anishinaabe (Wisdom, Love, Respect, Bravery, Honesty, Humility and Truth), with ***The Adventures of Pinocchio*** focused on Honesty.

"I love how the story brings Pinocchio to the realisation that honesty is a link between action and consequence - and a quality that binds people together," said **Allen MacInnis**, YPT Artistic Director. "Being human is caring about how we affect others."

The Adventures of Pinocchio features **Malindi Ayienga, Noah Beemer, Joel Cumber, Susan Henley, Arinea Hermans, Sierra Holder, Connor Lucas** (as Pinocchio), **Jacob MacInnis, Kelsey Verzotti** and **Shawn Wright**.

Director: **Sheila McCarthy**; Assistant Director: **Karen Gilodo**; Music Director: **David Terriault**;
Musician/Percussion: **Jamie Drake**; Musician/Winds: **Paul Carter**; Choreographer: **Julie Tomaino**;
Assistant Choreographer: **Lyndsey Britten**; Set & Costume Designer: **Joanna Yu**; Lighting Designer:

Louise Guinand; Sound Designer: **Adam Harendorf**; Stage Manager: **Kristin McCollum**; Assistant Stage Manager: **Emily Mewett**; Apprentice Stage Manager: **Katie Fitz-Gerald**.

Performances:

Tuesdays^[NT1] & Thursdays^[NT2] at 10:15AM and 1PM | Wednesdays^[NT3] & Fridays at 10:15AM | Nov. 16, Nov. 17, Nov. 23, Dec. 1, Dec. 8, Dec. 14, Dec. 21, Dec. 22, Dec. 26, Dec. 28, Dec. 30, Dec. 31, Jan. 3 & Jan. 5 at 2:30PM | Nov. 24 & Dec. 15 at 11AM & 2:30PM | Nov. 30, Dec. 7, Dec. 27, Dec. 29, Jan. 2 & Jan. 4 at 1PM & 4PM | Dec. 20 at 7PM

Relaxed Performances: Dec. 13 at 10:15AM and Dec. 14 at 2:30PM

Audio Described Performance: Dec. 15 at 2:30PM^[NT4] (**Touch Tour** at 1PM) and Dec. 17 at 10:15AM

Recommended for ages 5 and up.

Tickets: \$10-\$54 (plus HST & service charges) | **Online:** youngpeoplestheatre.org

Box Office: 416.862.2222 x2

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MEDIA CALL:

Tuesday, Nov. 12 at 12PM

MEDIA OPENING:

Thursday, November 14 at 1PM or 7PM

Previews: Nov. 11 & 12 at 10:15AM and Nov. 13 at 1PM & 7PM

RSVP to Clare Hill: chill@youngpeoplestheatre.org

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Photos: login **yptmedia** | password **yptphotos**

SHEILA MCCARTHY, Director

YPT credits: *Really Rosie* (Dora Mavor Moore Award), *The Prisoner of Zenda* and *Jacob Two-Two Meets the Hooded Fang*.

Stage credits: *Little Shoppe of Horrors* (Dora Award). Directing credits: *Sweet Charity*, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* and *Trapdoor* (Sheridan College); *Brighton Beach Memoirs* (Harold Green Theatre) and *Norm Foster's Lunenburg* (Orangeville).

TV & Film credits: *I've Heard the Mermaids Singing* (Genie Award, Charles Chaplin Award, People's Choice Award - Cannes Film Festival); *Lotus Eaters* (Genie Award); *Sesame Street* (Gemini Award); *Emily of New Moon* (Gemini Award); *Die Hard 2*, *Stepping out with Liza Minnelli*, *Being Julia*, *The Day After Tomorrow*, *Virtual Mom* (writer and producer), *I Was a Teenage Drama Queen*, *Picket Fences*, *Little Mosque on the Prairie*, *Orphan Black*, *Isobel*, and *Martins Hagge* and *Night Shoot* (both opposite Gordon Pinsent); *Russet Season* (director); *Little Black Dress* (directed by daughter and producer Mackenzie Donaldson); *The Cardinals* (2018 ACTRA Award for Best Actress); *Star Trek: Discovery*; *Private Eyes* (opposite William Shatner); *Christmas 9 to 5*, *Christmas Club* (Hallmark); *Burn Down the House*, *Happy Place*, *The Broken Heart Gallery*; *Umbrella Academy* and *Anne with an E* (Netflix).

MALINDI AYIENGA, Blue Fairy

YPT credits: *One Thing Leads to Another*.

When she is not on stage, Malindi works with the charity she founded called "Diva Day", which provides school-aged girls in Kenya access to menstrual hygiene products. ddivaday.org

NOAH BEEMER, Lampwick

Stage credits: *Worry Warts* (Convergence Theatre); *A Time of Future Tales* (Hamilton Fringe); *Heresy* (Paprika Festival); *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (Eclipse Theatre); *In Real Life* by Kevin Wong and Nick Green (Canadian Music Theatre Project); *Kiss Me Kate*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *On the Town* and *Chelsea Sunrise* (Theatre Sheridan).

JOEL CUMBER, The Fox

Stage credits: *Freaky Friday* (Theatre Aquarius); *Urinetown (The Musical) In Concert* (TMC Productions); *Every Silver Lining* (Toronto Fringe); *The Little Mermaid*, *Fiddler on the Roof* (Capitol Theatre Port Hope); and *Rumspingra Break!* (Next Stage Festival - 2018 Broadway World Toronto Award for Breakthrough Performance).

SUSAN HENLEY, The Driver

YPT credits: *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Princess & the Handmaiden*.

Stage credits: *Closer Than Ever* (Dora Award); *A Christmas Carol*, *Spoon River* (Soulpepper); *Hairspray* (Princess of Wales, 1st U.S. national tour); *Into the Woods*, *Blythe Spirit* (Atlantic Theatre Festival); *The House of Martin Guerre* (Canadian Stage); *Jacques Brel* (NAC, Winter Garden); *The Sound of Music*, *Evangeline* (Citadel Theatre); *Joni Mitchell Project* (GCTC); seven seasons with Charlottetown Festival and three seasons with Stratford Festival.

TV & Film credits: *Crawford*, *Saving Hope*, *Channeled Lives*.

ARINEA HERMANS, The Cat

YPT credits: *Seussical* (Dora Award nomination).

Stage credits: *Obeah Opera* (Luminato Festival); *Merrily We Roll Along* (YES Theatre); *Rumsping Break!* (Next Stage); *UnCovered: Dylan & Springsteen* and *UnCovered: Queen & Bowie* (The Musical Stage Co.); *A Little Night Music* (Gateway Theatre); *Three Sisters* (Wolf Manor Collective - Entertainment World Award).

SIERRA HOLDER, Mary

When she is not on stage, the recent Sheridan grad can be found helping run her favourite charitable organization called Diva Day, founded by fellow cast member Malindi Ayienga. ddivaday.org.

CONNOR LUCAS, Pinocchio

Stage credits: *Scotland Sings!* (Victoria Playhouse Petrolia); *The Yellowpoint Christmas Spectacular* (Razzle Dazzle Theatre); *Mamma Mia!* (The Grand Theatre); *A Misfortune, Stories from the Red Dirt Road* and *Anne of Green Gables* (Charlottetown Festival).

JACOB MACINNIS, Puppet Master

YPT credits: *Beauty and the Beast*, *James and the Giant Peach*, *Seussical*, *Jacob Two-Two Meets the Hooded Fang* (YPT).

Stage credits: *Anne of Green Gables*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Kronborg* (Charlottetown Festival); *Shrek the Musical*, *The Addams Family: A New Musical* (Neptune Theatre).

KELSEY VERZOTTI, Annette

YPT credits: *Under the Stairs*.

Stage credits: *Reprint* (Musical Stage Company); *Anne of Green Gables* (Thousand Islands Playhouse); *Mary and Max* (Theatre Calgary); *One Small Step* (Toronto Fringe Festival); *Ai-Yah! Sweet and Sour Secrets* (Lunchbox Theatre); *Pinocchio: A Merry Magical Pantomime* (Torrent Productions); *Life After* (Canadian Stage/Musical Stage Company); *Senza Luce* (Theatre Sheridan).

TV & Film credits: Top 10 Dorothy (CBC's *Over the Rainbow*).

SHAWN WRIGHT, Geppetto

YPT credits: *The Wizard of Oz*.

Stage credits: *London Road*, *The Arsonists* (Canadian Stage); *Caroline or Change* (Musical Stage); *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Coriolanus*, *Moby Dick* (Stratford Festival); *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, *Guys and Dolls* (Shaw Festival); *The Lord of the Rings* (Mirvish); *Mamma Mia!* (original U.S. cast); *Jersey Boys* (original Toronto cast); *Oleanna* (TNB); *Mikado* (Pacific Opera), *Next to Normal* (MTC); *Anne of Green Gables* (Charlottetown Festival); *Oliver!* (NAC).

Playwright: *Ghost Light* (published by Playwrights Canada Press); international LAMBDA award nominee.