



Director's Message - Robinson Wilson

Memory is unreliable and often evil, but it comprises a significant part of our identity.

How much of our adult psyche is the result of carrying the terrible

scars of trauma from those formative early years?

Driving through Cathedral Grove, to rehearsal every week, I found myself admiring each tree, each magnificent statesperson of the forest, as it were.

Each tree, with its rings of years, a survivor and witness to the passage of time. And each ring is different, as each year is different; the happiest fat rings denote a healthy year, richly watered, sun-fed.

Other rings are narrow, tight, blackened: evidence of fire, disease, deadly trauma, trauma that changes the entire development of the tree over the decades to come.

From that point, does the tree lean into the weather, hunched, contorted, bucking the elements, yet reaching for sunlight?

Does it shrink and compress into a fusion of stone and wood, grafting itself to the boulders or cliffs, a grim crab of wood hooked to the stones?

Or standing slain by the lightning stroke, the root disease, the tree dead, and only years later, the standing corpse of many decades at last gives over to the inevitability of gravity?

The parallels of trees and people- so many of us are clinging to the rocks, twisting into the sun, or are obviously dead on our feet, thanks to the terrible events that due to no fault of our own, changed us irrevocably into who are today, and with who we often grapple to the death, to prevent from ruling our better selves.

Blackbird is a play that digs deep into the dark earth of human desire, the black waters of delusion. The inevitable collision of Ray and Una, both surfacing at last from their own early graves, may prove too much for some. Theatre is a timeless exercise in the excavation of the human condition, and if you don't always want to get your hands dirty, I don't blame you.

But to those who do, you, the curious and generous audience, and those who have, the courageous and deeply compassionate company at Portal Players Dramatic Society, you have my eternal gratitude.

Thank you, Robinson ;)

Robinson Wilson, Director -

*Directorial work includes Text Adaptation and Fight Direction for **Bard on the Beach**, and **Vancouver Island University**. In 2011, his play **Fractured**, toured BC and Alberta and was featured at the Vancouver Fringe Festival in 2013. In 2017 he premiered his adaptation of Oscar Wilde's **The Picture of Dorian Gray**, and in 2021 his original work **The War of Miranda Bird** was produced by **The Other Guise Theatre Company**.*

Mainstage Theatre BC awards include Acting, Lighting Design, and Fight Choreography.

Recipient of the 2024 Association of BC Drama Educators annual Excellence in Drama Education Award, for his work supporting and mentoring professional drama teachers. He has provided design mentoring for graduate students at the University level since 2016, and served as assistant coach for two National Championship teams in the Canadian Improv Games.

Professional Lighting Design credits include: Vancouver Island University, Touchstone Theatre, and the Harstad Northern Norway Theatre Festival.

Associate Member of Fight Directors Canada, the Society of American Fight Directors, and the Nordic Stage Fight Society in Stockholm and Norway, where he enjoys visiting and teaching.

Very proudly Canadian, and very grateful to Portal Players for welcoming him into their theatre community.

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