

Soulpepper

Witch

WRITTEN BY **Jen Silverman**
DIRECTED BY **Courtney Ch'ng Lancaster**





In the year 1621 on the outskirts of London in the Parish of Edmonton, a woman named Elizabeth Sawyer was brought to trial under the Witchcraft Act of King James I. She was accused of holding visitations with Satan in the form of a dog, and casting spells leading to the death of her neighbour. Sawyer is recorded as being an impoverished mother who was physically disabled with a stoop and a single functioning eye. During her trial villagers and her own husband spoke against her; even so the jury was undecided and so a group of women were called to search her body for the mark of the devil. The women found a small teat-like growth on her lower body, and so Sawyer was convicted. Her trial was a sensation and great crowds came to witness her hanging at London's infamous Tyburn Gallows in April of that year.

By December of 1621, playwrights Dekker, Ford and Rowley had mounted a play about the event, *The Witch of Edmonton*. To do so, they appended the details of Sawyer's trial to separate storylines about Frank Thorney, an ambitious young farmer attempting to protect his inheritance through marriage despite already being married to a lower-class maid, and a about Cuddy Banks, a naive Morris dancer who delights in meeting the devil dog but proves too innocent to corrupt. The playwrights were wise to capitalize on Sawyer's tale: plays that vilified covens and witches were popular owing to a fascination with the supernatural held by many including the King. However *The Witch of Edmonton* is subversive; it takes a surprisingly sympathetic view of Elizabeth Sawyer by portraying her as cruelly tormented and ostracized by the villagers at the outset. It is the cruelty she experiences that entices the devil to offer the powers of witchcraft and grant her the opportunity for vengeance, an offer she gladly accepts. The play questions whether it is the forces of social exclusion that drive individuals to reprehensible acts.

Jen Silverman describes adaptation as “choosing a different shaped window to look at what’s happening right now.” With *Witch*, Silverman mines a Jacobean tragicomedy to comment on our present and doesn’t shy away from depicting the absurd banality and despair that pervades our era of late-stage capitalism. However, *Witch* also brings forth a shocking amount of love from a play about devilish acts. It is love infused with grief, love misdirected, repressed, twisted and denied but also love as the conduit for a radical act of hope.

Courtney Ch'ng Lancaster
Director, *Witch*
Co-Producer, The Witch Collective

CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

Cast

Tantoo Cardinal Elizabeth Sawyer	Thomas Mitchell Barnet Cuddy Banks	Nicholas Eddie Scratch
Shawn Ahmed Frank Thorney	Oliver Dennis Sir Arthur Banks, Fight Captain	Heeyun Park 박희윤 Winnifred

Creative Team

Jen Silverman Playwright	Jareth Li* Lighting Designer	Laura Baxter Stage Manager
Courtney Ch'ng Lancaster Director	Olivia Wheeler* Sound Designer & Composer	Troy Taylor Assistant Stage Manager
Nick Blais* Set Designer	Anita Nittoly Fight & Intimacy Director	Alexander McGarry Sheridan Stage Management Placement Student
Ting-Huan 挺歡 Christine Urquhart* Costume Designer	Monica Dottor Choreographer	Shawn Ahmed, Courtney Ch'ng Lancaster The Witch Collective Co-Producers
	Charlotte Dennis Shadow Director	

Production Team

Andy DeVries Head Carpenter	Hilda Chu, Arielle White Scenic Artists	Erin Halls 1st Hand
Bill Stahl 1st Carpenter	Ellie Koffman Head of Wardrobe	Irene Ly Dresser
Paul Boddum Head Scenic Artist	Claudia Matas Assistant Head of Wardrobe	David Mallette Lighting Operator
Lisa Nighswander Head of Props	Malcolm LeBlanc Cutter	Jason Shindle Audio Operator
Greg Chambers 1st Builder/Buyer	Jacqueline Robertson-Cull Head of Wigs	Tom Everett Deck Hand

“WITCH” is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

WITCH is produced with support by The Witch Collective

“WITCH” was commissioned by Writers Theatre through the Literary Development Initiative, with the generous support of David and Mary Winton Green, and the World Premiere was presented at Writers Theatre in Glencoe, IL; Michael Halberstam, Artistic Director, Kathryn M. Lipuma, Executive Director.

Front Cover: Pictured—Tantoo Cardinal, Set Design by Nick Blais, Costume Design by Ting-Huan 挺歡 Christine Urquhart, Lighting Design by Jareth Li, Photo by Dahlia Katz



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**Indicated designers on this production are represented by the Associated Designers of Canada, Local ADC659.

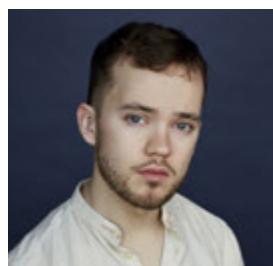
Running time: 95 mins.
No intermission



TANTOO CARDINAL has worked on over 130 projects over a 50-year career. Awards include: Earle Grey Award, the Order of Canada, CBC Hall of Fame, Governor General's Lifetime Achievement Award, a star on Canada's Walk of Fame, Honorary Doctorates from 5 Universities. Select Credits Film: Kaillers of the Flower Moon, Legends of the Fall, Dances with Wolves, Black Robe, Falls Around Her, Wind River, The Grizzlies, Where The Rivers Flow North, Maina, Chasing Shakespeare, Eden. TV: Stumptown, 3 Pines, Marvel's Echo, Avatar: Last of the Air Benders, SEE, Westworld, Longmire, Mohawk Girls, Frontier, Blackstone, Lonesome Dove, Nobody's Girls, Godless, Penny Dreadful. Theatre: "Gertrude - "Hamlet," Regan -"King Lear", Pelajia - "The Rez Sisters", "The Inheritance"



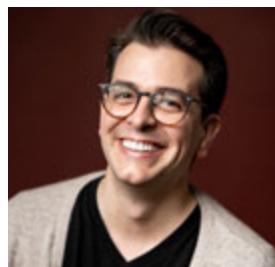
SHAWN AHMED SOULPEPPER 2025: Witch OTHER: In 2020, David Alan Anderson introduced me to this play. What followed has been a five-year labour of love to bring it to life. Not possible without the constant encouragement from my wonderful wife, Rong Fu, and my friend and collaborator, Courtney Ch'ng Lancaster, whose brilliance and commitment carried us over every developmental hurdle. Grateful to Erika Morey, an early partner and producer on this journey and, of course, Jen Silverman for writing this dark and witty play. Next up, Shawn will be starring in season 4 of the hit Paramount+ series Skymed.



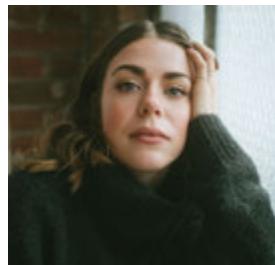
THOMAS MITCHELL BARNET is an actor and musician from Edmonton, Alberta. Theatre credits include Scorpius in Harry Potter and the Cursed Child (Mirvish); Treasure Island, Romeo and Juliet, Shakespeare in Love (Stratford). TV credits include Sam Lesser in Locke and Key (Netflix), Devil in Disguise (Peacock), Murdoch Mysteries (CBC). Outside of theatre, Thomas is a musician and performs and self produces music under the name Haystacks. He also hosts house concert, which you are all invited to. Thomas is a graduate of the Soulpepper Academy. This is for Mom, Dad, Frankie, Halley, Jacob, Emma, Henry, Linnet, and the babies on the way :).



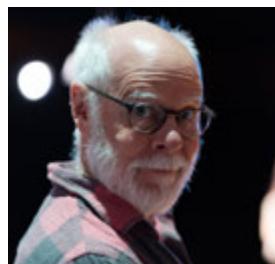
LAURA BAXTER was born in Grimsby, and raised in Kingston, ON. For Soulpepper: Pipeline, 27 Club, Dirt, Jitters Other Theatre: Sweat, Love and Information, Venus in Fur, 9 seasons at Dream in High Park (Canadian Stage); Indecent, Oslo, My Name is Asher Lev, My Night With Reg, You Will Remember Me, God of Carnage (Studio 180); Black Boys, Arigato Tokyo, Obaaberima, The Maids (Buddies in Bad Times Theatre); Actually (Obsidian/ Harold Green); The Story, Tails From the City (Common Boots Theatre); Trout Stanley, Little Pretty and the Exceptional (Factory Theatre); 11:11, Elle (Theatre Passe Muraille); Soliciting Temptation (Tarragon Theatre) Thank you to my amazing wife Shawn, and daughter Amari for your unwavering love and support.



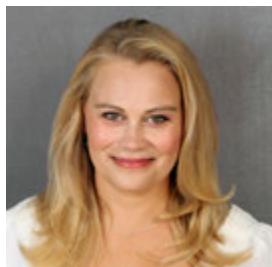
NICK BLAIS designs across Canada in all manner of discipline and venue: creating thematic, impactful designs, and transforming unconventional spaces into immersive, dramatic environments. As Head of Design for Outside the March, Nick has been working to expand the reach and importance of design in storytelling and placemaking. Nblaisdesign.com For Soulpepper: Witch, Medusa and Death of Walt Disney(OtM), Table for Two(Obsidian), Wildwoman. Recent credits Include: Rainbow on Mars (Outside the March), Seven Methods of Killing Kylie Jenner (Obsidian Theatre), Drawer Boy (Thousand Islands); Erased (Open Heart), Fulfillment Centre (Coal Mine), Things I Know to be True (Mirvish).



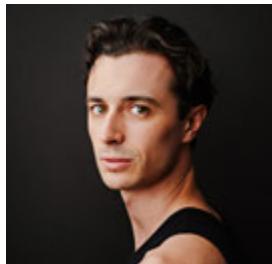
CHARLOTTE DENNIS Charlotte Dennis is an actor, creator and on deep dark nights, a mover of furniture in an apartment that is too small for the amount of stuff it has collected. For Soulpepper: Witch, Soulpepper Academy 2023, A Christmas Carol. Other Theatre: Job (Coal Mine Theatre, Dora Nomination); Steel Magnolias (Capitol Theatre); Spycraft (A Yarn or Two Collective); What Rough Beast (Centaur Theatre); Martyr (ARC); Boston Marriage (Headstrong Collective); Dimples (Smock Alley Theatre, Dublin) Film/TV include: Murdoch Mysteries (S17); Forever Young; Alex & Isla (MayDay Pictures). Charlotte is a founding associate of The Vault Creation Lab in Toronto and a graduate of the acting program at The National Theatre School of Canada



OLIVER DENNIS Oliver was born in Montreal and raised in Southern Illinois. Soulpepper 2025: Witch, Happy Days. For Soulpepper: close to 100 productions with Soulpepper. He has had the opportunity to play Shakespeare and Moliere and Chekhov, Miller and Williams and Albee. Beckett, Ionesco, Orton. Simon. Sarah Ruhl and Suzan-Lori Parks and Tracey Letts. David French and Morris Panych/Brenda Robins and Mike Ross/Sarah Wilson and Lee MacDougall and Vern Thiessen and Michael Shamata and Kevin Loring and Erin Shields. Shaffer, Story, Stoppard, Frayn and Aykourn. To name some. Other recent productions include Fagin in Oliver! (Yes Theatre, Sudbury), People, Places and Things (Coalmine), Waitress (Capitol Theatre, Port Hope)15 Dogs (Sadie Bronfman, Montreal) Bremen Town by Gregory Prest (Tarragon Theatre), The Wonderful by Luke Reese(Caravan Farm Theatre).



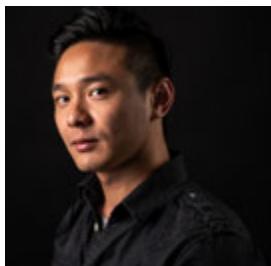
MONICA DOTTOR is an 12X DORA MAVOR MOORE* nominated Actor/ Director/Choreographer/Writer/Designer. and a 4X recipient. Monica completed her MFA in Theatre Performance/Creation/Direction THEATRE: JANICE ALMIGHTY (CompanyBlonde) A Blow in the Face, The Penelopiad* (Nightwood), BEARS* (Punctuate) THE OTHER (Company Blonde), In the Fire, TWEET TWEET,* Flora & Fauna, CIRCUS SESSIONS (Femmes Du Feu), ROSE*, Idomeneus, Eurydice, MARAT/ SADE* (Soulpepper) The Overcoat, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Middle Place (Canadian Stage Company), SCRATCH, Featuring Loretta,Chekhov's Shorts.SHREK (YPT), METIS NUTRACKER (Company Blonde/Punctuate), TV/FILM: Interview With the Vampire SkyMed, 8 Bit Christmas, Orphan Black, Everything is Going to Be Great, LUNE, Picture Day, Star Falls, Murdoch Mysteries, Rookie Blue, Saving Hope. UPCOMING: WITCH (Soulpepper), CICADAS (NAC/Tarragon), SCHOOLHOUSE (4th Line Theatre) www.monicadottor.com



NICHOLAS EDDIE is a performer and theatre creator based in Toronto. Productions that Nicholas has been involved in have been nominated for a total of 25 Dora Awards and in December Nicholas was named one of Glenn Sumi's top 10 theatre artists of 2025. On screen, Nicholas can be seen as Krel in the new season of *Twisted Metal* (Peacock). Nicholas is thrilled to make his debut at Soulpepper in the extraordinary role of Scratch. Select theatre credits include: Peter (Bug, Elkabong and King Black Box), Worker (Last Landscape, Bad New Days); Man (ONE NIGHT ONLY, duhdumduhdum productions); Helena (A Midsummer Night's Dream, Theatre Rusticle); Puppeteer (Wozzeck, Canadian Opera Company); Clown (Italian Mime Suicide, Bad New Days). instagram: nicholas_eddie



COURTNEY CH'NG LANCASTER grew up in Antigonish, NS. Soulpepper 2025-26: The Welkin, Witch (director). For Soulpepper: Innocence Lost, Idomeneus, Alligator Pie, The Dining Room, Incident at Vichy, Blood Wedding, Spoon River, Of Human Bondage, Eurydice, Barber of Seville, Marat/Sade, Idiot's Delight, The Crucible, Death of a Salesman, Royal Comedians, Dirt. Other: Directing credits at Shaw, Crows, The Howland Company, Tarragon, York University, Sheridan. Acting credits at Shaw, Canadian Stage, Tarragon, Native Earth, Blue Bridge, Citadel, and beyond. Courtney is an assistant professor at York University, and a founding member of The Howland Company. Upcoming: Take Rimbaud with Buddies in Bad Times/The Howland Company.



JARETH LI Born in Singapore, Jareth is a stage designer now based in Toronto, by way of Calgary. He has a love for new work that examines identity politics, culture, and heritage. Recent design credits include: *Prince Caspian*, *The Orphan of Chao* (Shaw Festival); *Every Little Nookie, Sense and Sensibility* (Stratford Festival); *Disney's Frozen, Matilda, Kim's Convenience, Controlled Damage* (Grand Theatre); *Vinyl Cafe The Musical, A Midsummer Night's Dream A 70's Musical, Jersey Boys, Ring of Fire* (Citadel Theatre); *Top Dog / Underdog* (Canadian Stage); *The Last Timbit* (Gut Creative); *Peter's Final Flight* (Ross Petty Productions); *Vierge, Prairie Nurse* (Factory Theatre). In addition to his artistic practice a stagecraft instructor at York University. He believes strongly in mentorship and creating opportunity for upcoming generations of designers. Online @ Jareth.Li



ALEXANDER MCGARRY Alex is a student in his third year of Sheridan's Technical Production program, and he is beyond excited for the chance to work on WITCH! Select previous theatre credits include: *Into The Woods* (Sheridan), *Potato Potato* (Theatre Passe Muraille), *All That She Wrote* (Theatre Passe Muraille), *Writer's Showcase 2025* (Sheridan, Factory), and *Big Fish* (Sheridan). Much love to the whole WITCH team for welcoming them on this journey!



ANITA NITTO was born in exotic Windsor, ON. SOULPEPPER 2025: The Comeuppance, The Welkin, Kim's Convenience. FOR SOULPEPPER: WildWoman, Three Sisters, Virgin Trial. OTHER THEATRE: Stratford Festival 2024/25 seasons; Wights, The Bidding War, Bad Roads, Prodigal (Crow's); The Green Line, Roberto Zucco, Angels in America (Buddies); Slave Play, Fat Ham, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, Fairview, Hamlet, Fall on Your Knees (CanStage); Goodnight Desdemona, Midsummer Night's Dream (Perchance); Groundhog Day (YES); CRAZE (Tarragon); The Retreat (Imago); Truth (YPT); JCS (Here For Now); Hamlet (The Rose); Sexual Misconduct of the Middle Classes (TIP); The Last Wife, The 39 Steps, Successions (Centaur Theatre). FILM & TV: Law & Order Toronto, SEE, Star Trek: Discovery, Star Trek: Starfleet Academy, The Handmaid's Tale, The Boys, What We Do in the Shadows, Star Wars: Outlaws.

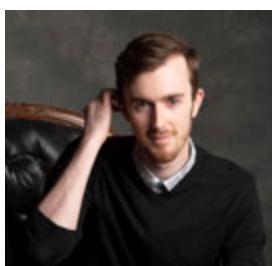


HEEYUN PARK 박희윤 was raised in Edmonton and born in South Korea. SOULPEPPER 2025: WITCH. OTHER THEATRE: Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812 (Mirvish; Crow's and Musical Stage Company), Into the Woods (Koerner Hall), MONEY (WYRD Prod.), I Was Unbecoming Then (NextStage), La Bête (Talk is Free Theatre).



JEN SILVERMAN is a playwright, novelist and screenwriter. Plays include: The Roommate (Broadway: The Booth Theatre; Regionally: Williamstown Theatre Festival, Actor's Theatre of Louisville Humana Festival, Steppenwolf, South Coast Repertory Theatre, etc.); Highway Patrol (The Goodman); Spain (Second Stage Theater); Collective Rage: A Play in 5 Betties (Woolly Mammoth, MCC, Southwark Playhouse London); The Moors (Yale Repertory Theatre, The Playwrights Realm) and Witch (Writer's Theatre, The Geffen, The Huntington). Books include: the debut novel *We Play Ourselves*, story collection *The Island Dwellers* and novel *There's Going to be Trouble* from Random House. Silverman also wrote the bestselling narrative podcast *The Miranda Obsession* for Audible, starring Rachel Brosnahan.

Silverman is a three-time MacDowell Fellow, a member of New Dramatists and a Scholar of Note at the American Library in Paris. They write for TV and film, including *Tales of the City* (Netflix) and *Tokyo Vice* (Max). Their OSCAR® qualifying short film *Troy* screened at 70 festivals internationally, including the 2023 Sundance Film Festival, and is featured online in *The New Yorker's Screening Room*. Honors include fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Guggenheim. More info at www.jensilverman.com.



TROY TAYLOR was born and raised in Keswick, ON. FOR SOULPEPPER: What the Constitution Means to Me (2024), It's a Wonderful Life (2016). OTHER THEATRE: Troy works as a Stage Manager in Toronto for dance, theatre, and live events. He's worked for the National Ballet of Canada, Volleyball World, Yonge Street Theatricals, Soulpepper Theatre, Fall for Dance North, Canadian Stage, Ross Petty Productions, The Shaw Festival, Dance Ontario, Nightwood Theatre, Tarragon Theatre, Mirvish, Human Body Expression, and The Stratford Festival. When not at work, he likes to spend his time at the park with his dog Jupiter, and partner Craig.



TING-HUAN 挺歡 CHRISTINE URQUHART Ting is a Taiwanese British Designer and collaborator whose work questions narrative structures and viewpoints through a visually driven interrogation, the body as politics and getting audiences out of black box mentality to be witnesses to a different kind of event. Her training is in Product Design and Fine Art sculpture and painting. You will have recently seen my work as Set and Costume Designer for 'Blues for and Alabama Sky' (Shaw), 'Wicked Nix' (YPT) and 'Craze' (Tarragon.). Current projects include Costume Design for 'The Hobbit' (Stratford) and Set Design for 'You, Always' (Canadian Stage.) www.urquhartdesign.com @ tinghuanchristineurquhart



OLIVIA WHEELER is a mixed-race Chinese Canadian sound designer and composer. SOULPEPPER 2025: The Comeuppance, Witch. FOR SOULPEPPER: Alligator Pie, De Profundis: Oscar Wilde (2024), The Walk-Up (Academy 2023), Associate Sound Designer for Bad Parent (2022). OTHER THEATRE: Forgiveness, Cymbeline (Stratford), The Secret to Good Tea (Grand/NAC), Romeo and Juliet, Playing Shylock (Canadian Stage), Octet, The Bidding War (Crow's), Here Lies Henry, Armadillos (Factory Theatre), Mad Madge (Nightwood), The Fixing Girl (Young People's Theatre), Infinite Life (Coal Mine), Between a Wok and a Hot Pot (Cahoots), ECHO (Next Stage). Thank you to Maria Jimenez (Thee Soreheads) and Heeyun Park for your vocals off and onstage. www.oliviagwheeler.com.



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for their continued support!

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