



ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS

POWER AND PERSUASION DOMINATE IN *THE LAST WIFE*

A steamy and thought-provoking play about King Henry VIII's marriage to Katherine Parr launches ATP's latest season.

CALGARY, ALBERTA – [Alberta Theatre Projects](#) will kick off its 2017-18 season on Tuesday, September 12th with Broadway star and former Calgarian Kate Hennig's political thriller, [The Last Wife](#). The play, which runs until September 30th, is a sexy and sophisticated modern retelling of King Henry VIII's tumultuous marriage to his last wife, Katherine Parr.

The stylish and suspenseful play transports audiences into the power couple's dangerously high-stakes battle of wills, where Parr's own political aspirations and steamy affair with Thomas Seymour (the brother of her predecessor, Jane Seymour) could prove deadly. Set against a contemporary backdrop with a lavishly designed set by Scott Reid and high-fashion inspired costumes by Heather Moore, Hennig's portrait of Britain's most notorious ruler and the woman who outlived him reframes enduring themes of marriage, sexuality, power and survival.

Enjoying a sold out run at Ontario's Stratford Festival in 2015, the play is the first in Hennig's *Queenmaker Trilogy*, chronicling the Tudor Queens. *The Last Wife's* Alberta premiere also marks Hennig's first collaboration with Alberta Theatre Projects as a playwright. During the company's 1999-2000 season, Hennig, also a talented actress, portrayed Ruth in its production of *Così*, a role for which she won a Betty Mitchell Award.

"*The Last Wife*, with its potent sexual politics, is a story of a woman dealing with a charismatic husband who rules with his volatile emotions. This dynamic makes Hennig's historically-based play absolutely relevant to the world of today's power politics," says director Glynis Leyshon. "But on a more human level it is also a tense and tightly written exploration of a woman's struggle for intellectual independence. Witty and fearless, it is both powerful and hugely engaging to watch."

Victoria-based Leyshon, a celebrated Canadian theatre and opera director, fresh off her role directing Calgary Opera's *South Pacific* is back at ATP at the helm of *The Last Wife* after previously directing the company's productions of *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, and *M. Butterfly* among others.

"With its contemporary take on one of the most well-known eras of history, compelling story and empowering message, *The Last Wife* is a perfect fit for us here at ATP," says Vicki Stroich, Executive Director of Alberta Theatre Projects. "We are thrilled to open our season with such a smart, sensual and deeply relevant play by an artist we greatly admire."

With an impressive list of theatre, film and television credits to her name, *The Last Wife* will feature accomplished Calgary-based actress Myla Southward in her ATP debut as

Katherine Parr. Lorne Cardinal, best known for his highly acclaimed role as Sergeant Davis Quinton in CTV's beloved Canadian television series *Corner Gas*, will also be making his ATP debut as the notoriously bad-tempered King Henry VIII.

The Last Wife runs from **September 12 to 30** at the **Martha Cohen Theatre** at Arts Commons (215 8 Ave. SE). Tickets are available at www.atplive.com or 403-294-7402. The play contains sexuality, partial nudity, violence and coarse language and is suggested for audiences over the age of 16.

Follow the hashtag **#TheLastWife** on Twitter and Instagram for the latest news about this production.

Cast

Myla Southward (Kate)
Lorne Cardinal (Henry)
Emma Houghton (Bess)
Helen Knight (Mary)
Haysam Kadri (Thom)
Lucia-River Chauban (Eddie)

Creative Team

Kate Hennig (Playwright)
Glynis Leyshon (Director)
Laryssa Yanchak (Fight Director)
Jane MacFarlane (Vocal Coach)
Luigi Riscaldino (Language Coach)
Scott Reid (Set Design)
David Fraser (Lighting Design)
Heather Moore (Costume Design)
Chad Blain (Original Music/Sound Design)
Kerry Johnson (Stage Manager)
Catherine Rouleau (Assistant Stage Manager)
Sydney Hunt (D. Michael Dobbin Apprentice)

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Media kit, high-resolution images and video available for download at www.atplive.com/media

MEDIA CALL for photography, videography, sound and interviews on **Tuesday, September 12 at 12:30 PM** at the [Martha Cohen Theatre](#).

ABOUT ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS

Alberta Theatre Projects is a Calgary-based, not-for-profit, professional theatre company that celebrates the art of live theatre. From its home in The Martha Cohen Theatre at

Arts Commons, the company produces world-calibre shows with a focus on idea-driven new works, plays by Canadian playwrights, and contemporary theatre from around the world. It is also a national leader in new play development and dramaturgy.
www.ATPlive.com

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