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ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS

TONY AWARD-WINNING COMEDY *ROSENCRANTZ & GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD* TURNS SHAKESPEARE'S CLASSIC TRAGEDY INSIDE OUT

The play that made Tom Stoppard a household name lands on the ATP stage in a new production by Calgary's own Shakespeare Company that daringly casts two women in the title roles.

CALGARY, ALBERTA – Opening Tuesday, October 9 and running until October 21, [Alberta Theatre Projects](#) will present [The Shakespeare Company](#) and [Hit & Myth's](#) imaginative new production of Tom Stoppard's dark, witty comedy [Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead](#). Set against the backdrop of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Stoppard's masterpiece follows the hilarious antics of two minor characters, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, as they question their place in the story of *Hamlet* and their inevitable fate.

Tangled in a zany world where the flip of a coin always comes up heads, Hamlet's good friends Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are summoned to Denmark to comfort their grieving friend. But on their journey they discover that nothing in their world is quite what it appears, making the pair fear that their story may be destined for a tragic ending. What ensues is a slew of priceless misadventures. For this production, the Martha Cohen Theatre has returned to thrust configuration, bringing the action of the play into the theatre for an intimate and exciting audience experience. The production's set and lighting are designed by Betty Mitchell Award-winning designers Scott Reid and David Fraser. Costumes designed by Hanne Loosen are a modernized twist on those of the Elizabethan era.

First staged in 1966, Stoppard's existential tragicomedy returned to London's Old Vic Theatre in 2017 for a 50-year celebratory revival starring film actor Daniel Radcliff (*Harry Potter*). The revival received rave reviews including "astonishingly funny with a glorious range of jokes" (*WhatsOnStage*) and "brilliantly crafted" (*Metro*). Stoppard is also widely known for winning the Academy Award for Best Screen Play for the 1999 film *Shakespeare in Love*.

The play will feature performances by local powerhouse actors Julie Orton as Guildenstern and Myla Southward as Rosencrantz. Orton was last seen at ATP playing Lily Briscoe in ATP's 2017 world premiere of *To the Light* by Evelyne de la Chenelière. Southward made her ATP debut as Katherine Parr in ATP's 2017 production of *The Last Wife* by Kate Hennig. Calgary's master of comedy Christopher Hunt is cast as The Player. With dozens of credits to his name and having recently been awarded the 2018 Harry and Martha Cohen Award for significant and sustained contribution to theatre in Calgary, Hunt was last seen on the Martha Cohen Stage playing multiple roles in ATP's smash hit world premiere *1979* by Michael Healey.

"I have always loved the work of Tom Stoppard, and especially *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*," says Glynis Leyshon, a celebrated Canadian theatre and opera

director and director of *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*. “Stoppard’s masterful use of language has remained timeless. Fans of films like *Fargo* and *The Trip* will relish the black humour of this script.” Leyshon is fresh off her role directing ATP’s ritically acclaimed 2018/19 season opener *The Virgin Trial* by Kate Hennig.

“We’re thrilled to be embarking on a new partnership with ATP. Their history of producing inventive, contemporary theatre makes this partnership a natural fit,” says The Shakespeare Company’s Artistic Producer Haysam Kadri. “Orton and Southward are the perfect compliment to portray Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. They have a chemistry on stage that makes their take on these two characters uniquely hilarious and a joy to watch.” *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead* launches The Shakespeare Company’s all-Hamlet season, *Madness in Great Ones*.

Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead runs from **October 9 to 21** at the [Martha Cohen Theatre](#) at Arts Commons (215 8 Ave. SE). Tickets are available at www.atplive.com or 403-294-7402.

Contains scenes of comic violence and mature subject matter. Suggested for ages 14+.

Cast (Alphabetical)

Mark Bellamy – Polonius/Ensemble
Daniel Fong – Alfred/Ensemble
Natascha Girgis – Gertrude/Ensemble
Braden Griffiths – Horatio/Ensemble
Christopher Hunt – The Player
Robert Klein – Claudius/Ensemble
Julie Orton – Guildenstern
Myla Southward – Rosencrantz
Natasha Strickey – Ophelia/Ensemble
Tenaj Williams – Hamlet

Creative Team

Director – Glynis Leyshon
Set Design – Scott Reid
Costume Design – Hanne Loosen
Lighting Design – David Fraser
Musical Director, Composition and Sound Design – Allison Lynch
Fight Director – Haysam Kadri
Assistant Fight Director – Zakk MacDonald
Stage Manager – Ailsa Birnie
Assistant Stage Manager – Ian Lane
Voice & Text Coach – Jane MacFarlane

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

For media enquiries, please contact:

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High-resolution images and video available for download at www.atplive.com/media

PHOTO & VIDEO CALL for photography, videography and cast interviews on
Wednesday, October 10 from **12:30 PM – 1:30 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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ABOUT THE SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

The Shakespeare Company is Calgary's lean and mean classical theatre company, highlighting the best of the Bard in all his comedy, tragedy, and bawdiness. Since 1995, we have brought the Bard alive for Calgarians through both Shakespeare and Shakespeare inspired plays. We are committed to making Shakespeare accessible through innovative performances and inspired directing. Alongside our mainstage productions, we have two community initiatives: Page to Stage Outreach Program and DiVerseCity.

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