

VOLCANO (CANADA):

INFINITY

BY HANNAH MOSCOVITCH

WITH ORIGINAL MUSIC BY NJO KONG KIE

"I love you, I—of course I love you: I love you so much, but is that germane...?"



Paul Braunstein, Amy Rutherford and Haley McGee in Infinity – photo by John Lauener

How does a new Theory of Time change everything we know about ourselves? *Infinity* is an elegy to time, and what is transmitted through time. With *Infinity*, a universe of experience is shown through the prism of a family. A brilliant theoretical physicist falls in love with a composer. Over time, they have a child. As time continues to pass, this child lives to see how love can lose its way, and the damage that results. The outcome? Only time will tell...

THE OUTSTANDING NEW PLAY OF 2015

Infinity was commissioned and developed by Volcano. Its world premiere was in 2015, in a co-production with Toronto's Tarragon Theatre. That production won the 2015 Toronto Theatre "Dora" award for Outstanding New Play.

Infinity fuses a love story with theoretical physics, classical music and the idea that what time offers us is more than we realize. *Infinity* has been crafted with close input from world-renowned physicist **Lee Smolin** of Canada's Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics and internationally acclaimed composer **Njo Kong Kie** (former music director of Montreal's

contemporary dance company La La La Human Steps). It is written by **Hannah Moscovitch**, Canada's most celebrated young playwright, and directed by **Ross Manson**, Volcano's award-winning artistic director.

"Ross Manson commissioned me to write about time; we both read Lee Smolin's book Time Reborn and were inspired. We reached out to him and he became the consulting theoretical physicist. One of the great pleasures of working on this project has been working with Lee. It is his physics - his theories - that inspired the physics in Infinity. I write about love a lot, and what the limits of love are, and how love can be dangerous. Infinity is also packed with those themes. Another of the themes is about what philosophies and systems of thought are communicated down the generations. I'm thinking about that a lot because I'm pregnant. "

— Hannah Moscovitch



Haley McGee in *Infinity* – photo by John Lauener

THE STORY:

In the play, there are two timelines. In the present, a girl-in-turmoil named Sarah-Jean Greene is researching her emotional self. She does this methodically: by cross-referencing her love life with her parents' tumultuous relationship. Sarah Jean is a mathematician. She is also, as a friend of hers puts it, "fucked up". She wants to figure out if what her friend says is actually true, and, if so, what to do about it.

In the other timeline, we see Sarah-Jean come into existence, from the first meeting of her parents, through their marriage, to her birth. Her father was a theoretical physicist and her mother a violinist and composer. This timeline includes her father's invention of a new theory on time, and, finally, the tragic deaths of both. Their legacy is what Sarah-Jean contends with. She takes a mathematical approach to all the complex emotions she is presented with - in an attempt to discover what might constitute her future.

THE PRODUCTION / REVIEWS:



Andrea Tyniec in Infinity – photo by John Lauener

2015 Dora Award for Outstanding New Play

“Vividly written and powerfully performed” – The National Post

“A moving new play... beautifully acted” – The Globe and Mail

“For the first time, Moscovitch pulls from her personal experience in developing these characters and the result is visceral... extremely affecting” – The Toronto Star

“The strength of Hannah Moscovitch’s Infinity is its emotional core... the play makes you feel as much as it makes you think... exceptional performances... gorgeous music, superbly played... brilliant.” – NOW Magazine



Haley McGee in Infinity – photo by John Lauener

THE TEAM:

“Moscovitch is a name synonymous with what’s next in Canadian theatre” – The Torontoist



PLAYWRIGHT: HANNAH MOSCOVITCH is considered one of the strongest playwriting voices in Canada. Her work has won multiple awards. She is the first playwright to win the Trillium Book Award in the prize's twenty-seven year history for *This is War*, a play premiered by Tarragon in 2013 which also won the Toronto Critic's Award for Best New Canadian Play and toured to Winnipeg's Prairie Theatre Exchange. Her first full-length play, *East of Berlin*, premiered at Tarragon in 2007. Tarragon also produced a mini-festival of her work in 2013 that included the premieres of *Little One*

and *Other People's Children* as well as a remount of Roseneath Theatre's *In This World*. Moscovitch's other writing for the stage includes *What a Young Wife Ought to Know* (premiered last month by Halifax's Neptune and 2b theatre company), *The Children's Republic* (Great Canadian Theatre Company premiere) and *The Huron Bride* (premiered as part of Theatrefront's *The Mill* play cycle) as well as *The Russian Play* and *Essay*, both of which won awards at SummerWorks Performance Festival. She's been nominated for the Governor General's Award, the Siminovitch Prize and the international Susan Smith Blackburn Prize. Upcoming, she is writing a combination of TV, opera, theatre, and film projects, including commissions with the Stratford and Shaw Festivals. She is a playwright-in-residence at Tarragon Theatre in Toronto.



COMPOSER: NJO KONG KIE was born in Indonesia but grew up in Macau where he received his musical education from the Academia de Música São Pio X. He continued his studies in Portugal and then Canada, where he eventually settled. He now divides his time between Canada and Macau. Pianist and music director of Montreal's contemporary dance company La La La Human Steps since 1996, Kong Kie has given close to 500 performances with the company throughout Canada and abroad. Among his many projects in both countries, Kong Kie writes music for Canadian chamber band Day OFF, and composes for opera. He has created five chamber operas dissecting

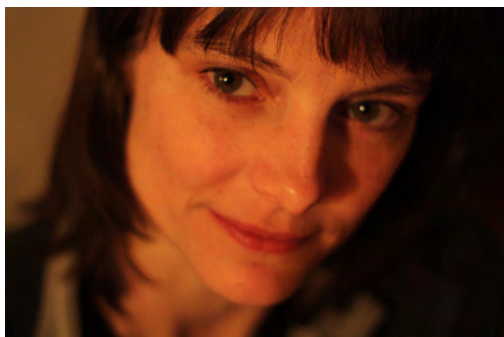
controversial issues ranging from same-sex marriage to human organ trafficking. Bridging the gap between modern opera and theatre, classical and contemporary popular music, these works attempt to introduce contemporary operatic work to a wider audience.

DIRECTOR: ROSS MANSON is an award-winning director, an actor, a translator, and the founding artistic director of Volcano, an internationally acclaimed, concept-driven theatre company based in Toronto. Since 1993, Manson's projects have toured to three continents, and won or been nominated for over fifty local, national and international awards. Projects



include *The Golden Dragon* by Roland Schimmelpfennig (for Tarragon); *A Synonym for Love* (Volcano's site-specific re-imagining of a Handel Opera); *Another Africa* (a three-continent collaboration for Volcano); *Goodness* by Michael Redhill (Volcano, 3 continent tour); *The Four Horsemen Project* (Volcano, European and Canadian tours); *A Beautiful View* by Daniel MacIvor (Munich, Toronto and Southern Ontario tour), and dramaturgy for *White Rabbit Red Rabbit*, a play by Iranian Nassim Soleimanpour, which has played in over 15 languages around the world

since its premiere with Volcano in Edinburgh and Toronto in 2011. Awards include Dora Awards as a director, a playmaker and a producer; the Scotsman Fringe First Award, the Best of Edinburgh award, and the KM Hunter Award (Ontario), among several others. Manson trained initially as a biologist (BSc Mount Allison) and subsequently as a theatre artist (MA London, directing apprenticeship, Germany).



CHOREOGRAPHER: KATE ALTON is an award-winning Canadian dancer and choreographer who has performed on stages around the globe. She is a former member of Toronto Dance Theatre and is Artistic Director of Crooked Figure Dances in Toronto. Kate creates thought provoking, emotionally engaging theatrical dances that are as much explorations of the mind as of the body, working with writers, directors and vocal coaches to develop interdisciplinary performance works that pack an

intellectual and emotional punch. Her work has been presented across Canada and in Europe. Kate is choreographer and co-creator/director, with Ross Manson, of the dance and sound poetry show *The Four Horsemen Project*, which garnered five Dora Mavor Moore awards including Best Direction by Kate and Ross Manson. NOW Magazine named Kate as one of the best Toronto dance artists of the past twenty years.



CONSULTING PHYSICIST: LEE SMOLIN has been a professor at Yale, Syracuse and Penn State Universities and held postdoctoral positions at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton; the Institute for Theoretical Physics, Santa Barbara; and the Enrico Fermi Institute, the University of Chicago. He recently won, with the University of Edinburgh's Marina Cortês, the prestigious Buchalter Cosmology Prize for groundbreaking work on the concepts of causality and time. He is currently on faculty with the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics in Waterloo, Ontario. His books include *The Trouble with Physics*, *Time Reborn* and, co-authored with Roberto Mangabeira Unger, *The Singular Universe and the*

Reality of Time: A Proposal in Natural Philosophy.

The talented creative team also includes set and costume designer **Teresa Przybylski**, and lighting designer **Rebecca Picherack**. The stage manager is **Isabelle Ly**.

PERFORMERS:



A tremendously accomplished group of performers star in this intricate drama: **Paul Braunstein** (Tarragon's *Kilt* - Dora nomination, among many Tarragon shows, Volcano's *Goodness*, VideoCabaret's *Laurier*, and much film and TV, including *Train 48*, and *Fargo*); **Haley McGee** (international award-winning solo show *OH MY IRMA*, Theatre Columbus' *The Story* and *The Public Servant*, Canadian Stage Company's *Helen Lawrence*, among many others); and **Amy Rutherford** (Volcano's *A Beautiful View* and *Goodness* - national tour and New York, Edinburgh, Rwanda; Studio 180's *Our Class*, Necessary Angel's *Divisadero*, Theatre Calgary's *The Great Gatsby*, and many others). The violinist is **Andréa Tyniec** (performed as a soloist with l'Orchestre Métropolitain de Montréal, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw and Calgary Symphony among others, 1st Prize at Italy's Andrea Postacchini International Violin Competition 2008).

VOLCANO (CANADA):



Volcano is a Toronto-based, concept-driven, independent company characterized by formal experimentation, risk-taking and multi-disciplinarity. It has won or been nominated for over fifty awards at the local, national and international level.

Volcano has been called “the best independent theatre company in Toronto” (NOW Magazine), an “explosive company” (The Independent, UK), and “one of those companies that every great theatre city needs - bold, experimental and bubbling with ideas.” (Toronto Star). The company builds shows in collaboration with a broad array of artists, conducts training programs in Toronto, and has toured work to three continents.



Shows include:

- *White Rabbit Red Rabbit* (Premiere Production of a new Iranian play: Edinburgh, Toronto)
- *Century Song* (Ottawa, and upcoming tours of Canada and Europe)
- *A Synonym for Love* (a site-specific opera, Toronto)
- *The Four Horsemen Project* (Toronto, Berlin, Dublin, Ottawa, Vancouver, Victoria)
- *Goodness* (Toronto, Edinburgh, New York, Winnipeg, Victoria, Vancouver, throughout Ontario and across Rwanda)
- *Another Africa* (a 3-continent collaboration, which premiered as *The Africa Trilogy* at the Luminato Festival, and went on to the Canadian Stage Co. in Toronto).
- *Weather* (Toronto, Edinburgh and tour of England)
- *My Pyramids* (Toronto and Edinburgh)
- *Hedda Gabler* (an adaptation of Ibsen's classic, Toronto)
- *A Beautiful View* (Munich, Toronto and tour of Ontario)

For more information, visit www.volcano.ca