



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
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University  
of Victoria

## CANADIAN MASTERPIECE SHINES LIGHT ON THE DARKNESS WITHIN

Director uses techniques for devising new plays for acting and design process

2014/2015 Season

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### Lion in the Streets

February 12 – 21, 2015

By Judith Thompson

Director: Conrad Alexandrowicz  
Set Design: Allan Stichbury  
Costume Design: Emma Welsh  
Lighting Design: Bryan Kenney  
Sound Design: Colette Habel  
Stage Manger: Becca Jorgensen

*A lost Portuguese girl observes the troubled lives of her community and finds forgiveness.*

#### Preshow Lecture with the Director

Friday, February 13 @ 7pm

WARNING: Mature subject matter. Disturbing content and strong language. Recommended for ages 17 and over.

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### Amadeus

March 12 – 21, 2015

Written Peter Shaffer

Directed by Chari Arespacochaga

*The acclaimed Tony-winning play and Oscar-winning movie about Mozart, music and jealousy.*

*"Theatre should shake you to the core!"* says director Conrad Alexandrowicz. He prefers theatre to move us emotionally – and also to ask difficult questions. *"Theatre provides a forum of common experience, and really good theatre should challenge audiences at the very foundation of their beliefs."*

The Professor of Physical Theatre at the University of Victoria is working with a cast of eight student actors to tackle celebrated Canadian playwright Judith Thompson's ***Lion in the Streets***. This Chalmers Award-winning play is running from February 12-21, 2015 at UVic's Phoenix Theatre.

Although the scenes in ***Lion in the Streets*** happen in an ethnic urban neighbourhood of Toronto, the play itself brings us to a place somewhere between reality and dreams, memories and fantasies. A lost Portuguese girl wanders, frightened and looking for answers, witnessing a series of dark moments in the intertwined and troubled lives of several strangers in her community. As Isobel watches these strangers try to hold on to their own humanity, she finds understanding, forgiveness and ultimately redemption.

With an extensive history devising new work for the stage, Alexandrowicz wants to take a similar approach to this Canadian masterpiece, which is often produced in a university context. Teaming up with designer Allan Stichbury, the pair decided that rather than designing the world of the play in advance and placing the actors into it, they would collaborate with the acting ensemble to develop the design elements around the actors' movements. The shape and function of chairs and other props are being decided during rehearsals, leading to a final product that is not predetermined. *"This is a process that's often used in devising new theatre works,"* says Stichbury. *"It's important pedagogically for our students to study different approaches to play design and development."* Alexandrowicz also sees how this process helps the actors. *"The exploratory design process will happen congruently with the acting process, and I think it will really help the actors delve deeper into their very challenging characters. It's such a good play for young actors to bite into!"*

Alexandrowicz will also draw strongly on his background of dance and movement and to bring a dreamlike choreography to the transitions between the unflinching honesty of the more realistic scenes. This movement-based, dreamscape approach was met with much enthusiasm by Judith Thompson in a recent series of conversations between the director and the playwright. Alexandrowicz has a BFA in dance from York University and an MFA in directing from the University of Alberta, and is also the founding Artistic Director of Wild Excursions Performance. This spring he devised, created and presented *Mother Tongue* in Vancouver, based on the works of poets Lorna Crozier, UVic Writing professor emeritus, and Erin Moure. For the Phoenix, he has also directed *Good Person of Setzuan* and *La Ronde*.

***Lion in the Streets*** also features costume designs by fourth-year student Emma Welsh that are contemporary with the 1990 time period of when the play was written. As well, it includes lighting and projection design by alumnus Bryan Kenney and sound design by four-year student Colette Habel with stage management by fourth-year student Becca Jorgensen.

Conrad Alexandrowicz will speak about his approach to directing ***Lion in the Streets*** at a free pre-show lecture on **Friday February 13 at 7pm**. Everyone is welcome to the lecture. These lectures are recorded and podcast the following week on [www.phoenixtheatres.ca](http://www.phoenixtheatres.ca). Performances of ***Lion in the Streets*** are on the following dates:

**Public Previews @8pm:** February 10 & 11

**Evenings @8pm:** February 12 (Opening Night), 13 (preshow lecture), 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21

**Matinee Performance @2pm:** Saturday, February 21

**Single Tickets:** \$14 Student/\$20 Senior/\$24 Adult/\$24 Weekends @ 8pm (Previews \$7.00, available after 5pm)

**More information:** [www.phoenixtheatres.ca](http://www.phoenixtheatres.ca)

**Phoenix Box Office Opens:** February 3 in person or by calling: **(250) 721-8000**.

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