



## LAUGHING AT OURSELVES SURVIVING THE HUMAN RACE

*Thornton Wilder's whimsical but profound play presents the best and worst of us.*

2013/2014 Season

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### The Skin of Our Teeth

**November 7 – 23, 2013**

By Thornton Wilder

Directed by Linda Hardy

Movement Coach Jacques Lemay

Set Designer Jonathan Maxwell

Costumes Designers Chelsea Graham  
& Shayna Ward

Lighting Designer Poe Limkul

Sound Designer Brian Linds

Stage Manager Claire Friedrich

*A hilarious and raucous tour through the ages – from glaciers to floods to war – with the average middle-class family and their pet dinosaurs. How will the human race ever survive?*

**1943 Pulitzer Prize**

Presented by



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### Picnic

**February 13 – 22, 2014**

By William Inge

Directed by Peter McGuire

*Unfulfilled dreams and repressed desires come to a head when a charismatic young drifter arrives in town and changes the lives of two sisters.*

**1953 Pulitzer Prize**

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### Unity (1918)

**March 13 – 22, 2014**

Written & Directed by Kevin Kerr  
(Assoc. Professor, Writing Dept.)

*As WWI ends and a mysterious flu pandemic nears, the inhabitants of a small Saskatchewan town deal with the trials of life and death.*

**2002 Governor General's Award**

#### Phoenix Theatre Media Contact:

Adrienne Holierhoek, Marketing & Communications  
Department of Theatre

email: [aholierh@uvic.ca](mailto:aholierh@uvic.ca) | 250-721-7992

[www.phoenixtheatres.ca](http://www.phoenixtheatres.ca) | Box Office: 250-721-8000

If you saw a play that addressed climate change, rising oceans, freak storms, economic depressions and the casualties of war... well, you'd be forgiven for thinking it was written recently. But even though Thornton Wilder's comedic satire ***The Skin of Our Teeth*** is over seventy years old, the play's sharp wit, unconventional storytelling, and astute commentary on human nature explain why this profound 1943 Pulitzer Prize-winning play still resonates with contemporary audiences.

Presented at the University of Victoria's Phoenix Theatre from November 7-23, 2013, ***The Skin of Our Teeth*** introduces us to the middle-class lives of a New Jersey family. George and Maggie Antrobus live with their two children Henry and Gladys, and their pet... dinosaurs? George is much lauded for his work developing the alphabet, multiplication tables, and he just discovered... the wheel? If you're not sure what's happening, then welcome to Wilder's wildly revolutionary romp across many millennia, from the ice age to the great flood, through depressions and wars – and back again.

*"The Americans had just come through the Depression 'by the skin of their teeth' and were in the early throes of WWII when Wilder wrote this play," says director Linda Hardy. "They needed a reminder that humanity had faced far worse and somehow pulled through. They also needed inspiration. So, while he acknowledged that we are all flawed, he stuck to the premise that we nonetheless have it in us to make a better world."*

For many years, Hardy, a voice and acting professor in the Department of Theatre, has been dreaming of directing this play with her students. *"The longer I've had to wait, the more relevant it seems to have become, and the reasons for doing it here at the Phoenix are even more important within the context of awakening young minds to the human condition."*

The 24 student actors playing 63 characters live in Wilder's topsy-turvy world where the weather, and thus the on-stage scenery, is always changing. Set designer and fourth year student Jonathan Maxwell hails from Finland and has taken up the challenge of representing the huge glacier that flows across the stage – not to mention the torrential floods, war-torn homesteads and a cosy New Jersey home. Costume designers Chelsea Graham and Shayna Ward capture the feeling of the 1940s through the family's clothing. Movement coach Jacques Lemay has been invaluable to the diverse movement required and assistant director Chari Arespachochaga for her coaching of the puppeteers, who bring a woolly mammoth and two baby triceratops to life. Lighting design graduate Poe Limkul (MFA'10) draws us into the news of the day with her lighting and video projection, and noted local sound designer Brian Linds enhances our audio experience.

Author and playwright Thornton Wilder also won a Pulitzer Prize for the American classic play, *Our Town*. He was inspired to write *The Skin of Our Teeth* in 1942 after seeing Bertolt Brecht's play *Mother Courage* at its first production in Switzerland in 1941. One can only imagine his journey through war-torn Europe, only to return home to the United States to see them enter World War II by the end of the same year. As well as the similar themes of humanity and war, Wilder also incorporates Brecht's idea of the theatrical "fourth wall" by blending the theatre-attendees experience with that of the production, taking the play-within-a-play concept to a whole new level.

Join us Friday, November 8 at 7pm for a FREE preshow lecture with director Linda Hardy who will talk about the many themes in this provocative play. *The Skin of Our Teeth* performances are as follows:

**Public Preview Performances 8pm:** November 5 & 6

**Evening Performances 8pm:** November 7 (Opening), 8 (Lecture), 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23

**Matinee Performances 2pm:** Saturday, November 23

**Single Tickets:** \$14 Student /\$20 Senior/\$22 Adult/\$24 Weekends @ 8pm (Previews \$7.00, available after 5pm)

**Season Subscription:** \$36 for 3 plays. Details and order forms at [www.phoenixtheatres.ca](http://www.phoenixtheatres.ca)

**Phoenix Box Office Opens:** October 29 in person or by calling: **(250) 721-8000**.