

FEBRUARY-MARCH 2020

FEBRUARY 6 – MARCH 15, 2020

# SNOW WHITE

By GREG BANKS

Directed by DESDEMONA CHIANG

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By **GREG BANKS**  
Directed by **DESDEMONA CHIANG**

**THE CREATIVE TEAM**

<b>DESDEMONA CHIANG</b> Director	<b>CHRISTINE TSCHIRGI</b> Costume Designer
<b>KIEFER HARRINGTON</b> Assistant Director	<b>CONNIE YUN</b> Lighting Designer
<b>MICHAEL JOHN EGAN*</b> Stage Manager	<b>ANGIE LOUISE</b> Composer & Music Director
<b>KELLY MCGEE</b> Production Assistant	<b>SHARATH PATEL</b> Sound Designer
<b>ANDREA BRYN BUSH</b> Scenic Designer	

**THE CAST**

**CLAUDINE MBOLIGIKPELANI NAKO\***  
Snow White

**CONNER NEDDERSEN\***  
4

**ANNELIH GH HAMILTON**  
*Understudy: Snow White & 4*

**SNOW WHITE**



*\* Indicates members of the Actors' Equity Association*  
*\* Indicates actors appearing courtesy of Actors' Equity Association*



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## A LETTER FROM KEVIN MALGESINI

**Dear Friends,**

We are so pleased to share with you the third show of SCT's 45th season—*Snow White*. This production epitomizes all that makes theatre exciting—great writing, direction, design, and performances, all serving a timeless story told from a new perspective. We love the opportunity to challenge old assumptions and offer young people a view of the world that amplifies inclusivity.

The creativity and skill of the artists involved is truly spectacular. The script by playwright Greg Banks is brilliantly crafted, clever, and moves at a driving pace. We are thrilled to welcome back Desdemona Chiang who previously directed the powerful production of Naomi Iizuka's *The Journal of Ben Uchida: Citizen 13559* at SCT. Des makes all this work seamlessly with her propensity for humor and play. The virtuoso cast and dynamic design team round out an extraordinary collaboration.

This production also marks the last opening for current Artistic Director Courtney Sale. Courtney leaves SCT at the end of February to assume the Nancy L. Donahue Artistic Director position at Merrimack Repertory Theatre in Lowell, MA. We wish Courtney tremendous success in her next chapter. We are fortunate we will feel her impact next season with three SCT commissions slated for our stages!

Thank you for being with us at SCT and celebrating our 45 years of bringing high quality theatre to young audiences.

**Enjoy the show!**

Kevin Malgesini,  
Managing Director





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A thriving arts and cultural scene, a network of human services providers, and a world class education system are critical to the continued vitality and attractiveness of the Puget Sound region. Through partnerships with organizations such as Seattle Children's Theatre, we aim to create an environment where the arts will thrive for generations to come.

On behalf of Microsoft and our employees in the Puget Sound area, we thank Seattle Children's Theatre for enriching our community.

Enjoy the show!

**Kate Behncken**

*Vice President*

*Microsoft Philanthropies*

## AUDIENCE MEMBER GUIDE

**E**xperiencing the theatre is a group activity shared not only with the actors, but also with the people sitting around you. Your attention and participation help the actors perform better, and allows the rest of the audience to enjoy the show. *We invite you to laugh when it is funny, cry when it is sad, gasp when it is shocking, but refrain from talking during the show, as it disturbs audience members and performers alike.*



Leave cell phones, tablets, hand held games, and other distracting and noise-making electronic devices at home or turn them completely off.



Gum and food must stay in the lobby. Drinks are only allowed if they have a lid.



The lights dimming and going out signal the audience to quiet down and settle in your seats: the play is about to begin.



Don't talk with your neighbors during the play. It distracts people around you and the actors on stage.



Remain in your seat during the play. Please use the restroom before or after the show, as well as during intermission.



During the curtain call remain in your seat and applaud because this is part of the performance too. The actors will come out on stage one more time to say thank you for your participation as an audience member.



## SYNOPSIS [Contains spoilers]

**T**his show is performed by two characters named SW and 4 who often switch characters mid-scene.

SW begins as the Queen, lamenting how she is cold and lonely. 4 enters and the two argue as the show was not supposed to start yet. 4 thinks SW should have waited for the rest of the actors to arrive. SW responds the audience was already in their seats. After brief audience interaction, they decide to begin. The Queen sings about being lonely and wanting a baby. She pricks her finger and wishes for a child with lips as red as blood, hair as black as the bark of trees, and a heart as pure as snow. Then, Snow White is born.

Shortly after Snow White's birth, her mother dies. A year later, her father, the King, marries a very pretty woman whose obsession with beauty makes her proud and arrogant. The new Queen places a magic mirror on her wall, which she often speaks to, saying "Mirror on the wall, who in this land is the fairest of all?" The mirror replies, "You, my Queen, are fairest of all." This pleases the Queen to no extent, so she continues to ask the mirror over and over again for years.

In the meantime, Snow White grows up. The Queen is very strict and will not let Snow White have any friends or go outside. The Queen tells her that it's very dark and dangerous outside the castle. Snow White wanders the halls of the castle, telling jokes to herself, and feeding little animals. She also grows quite beautiful. One morning, when the Queen asks the mirror her question, the mirror replies, "You, my Queen, may have a beauty quite rare, but Snow White is a thousand times more fair." This causes the Queen to fly into a rage, and say many cruel things to Snow White.

The Queen's jealousy grows and grows until she decides she must get rid of Snow White. The Queen summons a Huntsman. She orders him to take Snow White into the forest, kill her, and bring back her liver and lungs. The Huntsman reluctantly agrees and takes Snow White into the forest. The two walk for a long time until the Huntsman finally stops. As Snow White is

looking away, he draws his knife to stab the girl, but she sees him and asks why he has a knife. The Huntsman tells Snow White of his orders, and she asks him not to kill her. The Huntsman changes his mind and implores Snow White to run away and never come back. She runs and The Huntsman kills a wild pig instead. He takes the "proof" back to the Queen who then eats the organs.

As the sun is setting Snow White finds a house, which we learn very quickly is the house where 4 lives—with some other Dwarfs who have no names, they simply go by numbers. Snow White knocks on the door. No one answers. She goes inside, finds a bed, and falls asleep. Later that day, the Dwarfs arrive home to find Snow White sleeping in their bed.

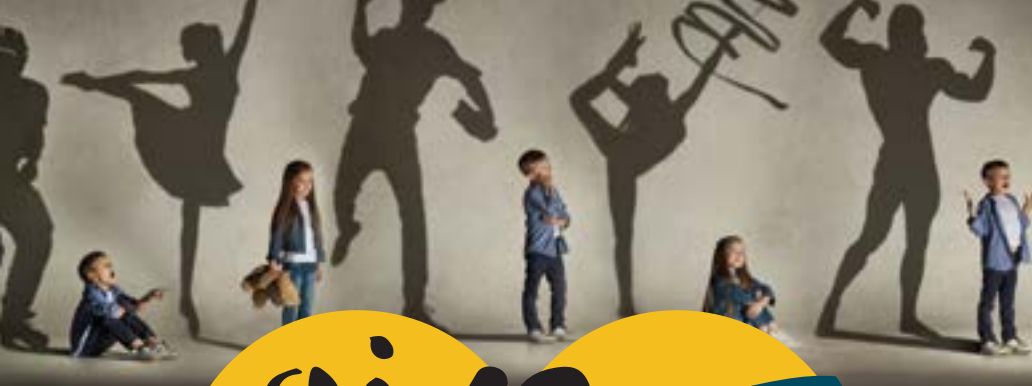
4 and the other Dwarfs (whom 4 also plays) argue about what to do about the sleeping girl. 1 and 2 want to kick her out, 5 and 6 think she should stay, 1 and 5 fight each other, Snow White wakes up.

1 and 2 tell Snow White she has to leave, and she agrees. Then 7, who is the oldest of the men, asks Snow White about her past, and they all learn how she came to be in their house. Most of them are moved by her tale, but 1 and 2 still want her gone. Eventually 7 convinces the Dwarfs to let Snow White stay and they all sing and dance together.

Every day, the Dwarfs leave to dig for coal in the mines. They tell Snow White not to come with them as it is dirty and dark in the mines. They instruct her to not stray too far from the house or open the door to anyone. She stays nearby, playing in the woods.

Back at the castle, the Queen still believes Snow White is dead. One day she questions the magic mirror again. The Mirror replies, "You, my Queen have a beauty most rare, but beyond the woods, where the seven Dwarfs dwell, Snow White is living." This incenses the Queen and she makes a plan to finish her off once and for all. The Queen disguises herself like an old woman to find Snow White.





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## SYNOPSIS CONT'D

The Queen arrives in disguise at the house and persuades Snow White to let her in so Snow White can purchase gifts for her friends. The Queen then uses the laces to tighten Snow White's corset so snugly that it causes her to faint.

The Dwarfs arrive home from work to find Snow White lying on the ground. 1 cuts the laces free causing Snow White to wake up. Snow White tells them about the Old Woman and the Dwarfs realize it must have been the Queen in disguise. They panic for a moment, but 7 reassures them all that if the Queen thinks Snow White is dead, there is nothing to fear. He makes Snow White promise not to open the door to a stranger again.

The Queen returns to the castle and consults the magic mirror once again. And the Mirror replies, "You, my Queen have a beauty most rare, but beyond the woods, where the seven Dwarfs dwell, Snow White is thriving, and this I must tell: She is a thousand times more fair." The Queen erupts, taking an apple, and vows to poison Snow White.

After the Dwarfs leave for work, Snow White hears a woman crying for help. The woman says her carriage has overturned and she is stranded and hurt. She asks for shelter, but Snow White is hesitant. Finally, after hearing the woman wail in the rain, Snow White decides to let her in. As a token of her appreciation, the woman offers Snow White an apple. Snow White takes a bite of apple and collapses.

The Dwarfs arrive home to find the door open and Snow White lying lifeless on the floor. Believing her to be dead, they place her in a glass coffin with a sign on it reading "Snow White. Our Princess."

One day, five years later, a Prince shows up. He is very snooty. He spies Snow White in the glass coffin and is excited to read she is a Princess. The Prince has been traveling for years looking for a Princess to save. He kisses Snow White bringing her back to life. They begin to run off together to get married and

live in a castle when the play stops. We learn that this version is the story the Prince told. Here's what really happened:

The kiss didn't wake Snow White, so the Prince decided to take the glass coffin with him so he may always gaze on her. As the Dwarfs are carrying Snow White's coffin to his carriage, they stumble, which dislodges a chunk of apple from Snow White's throat. She can breathe again and she wakes to meet the Prince. Seeing how arrogant and self-important the Prince is, Snow White rejects his marriage proposal and sends him away.

The Queen returns again to kill Snow White, this time with an axe. Thinking Snow White is all alone, she attacks, but is blind-sided by the men who take turns pouncing on her until she promises to go away and never return. Snow White confronts the Queen about the lies. The trees, she says, are not dangerous, they are beautiful. Taking offense to Snow White's characterization, the Queen raises her axe to cut down a tree when suddenly a host of birds descend upon her. The birds take little pieces of her with them until there is nothing left of the evil Queen.

SW and 4 celebrate their telling of the story. 4 starts to leave so he can tell the others what they've accomplished, but he is stopped by SW. The story, she tells him, hasn't ended. Snow White never returned to the castle. She still lives in the forest with her friends. Through the finishing of the story, we learn that these two are not actors, but the actual Snow White and 4 from the story. They all still live together, dancing and singing, and telling jokes.

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## THE CAST



**CLAUDINE  
MBOLIGKPELANI NAKO\***

**SNOW WHITE** – Claudine is an actor, writer, teaching artist, director, and choreographer in the Seattle area. She was last seen onstage for a limited run as Mother during SCT's production of *Corduroy*. Claudine is a member of ACT Theatre's Core Company. Recent roles include Lucy in Steven Dietz's world premiere adaptation of *Dracula: Mina's Quest* (ACT), and Rosalind in *As You Like It* (Seattle Rep). Nako has received two Gregory Awards for Outstanding Lead for her work in *Little Bee* (Book-It) and *My Heart is the Drum* (Village Theatre). She also works in film & television and can be seen in two Netflix original series: *Everything Sucks!* and *Raising Dion*. Nako is committed to supporting art that centers marginalized voices through dynamic storytelling.



**CONNER NEDDERSEN\***

**4** – Conner is a local Seattle theater artist whose previous SCT credits include *Black Beauty*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *The Journal of Ben Uchida: Citizen 13559*, and *Into the West*. Graduate of Cornish College of the Arts with a BFA in Theater. Local theater credits include: ACT, Intiman Theater, Seattle Opera, Seattle Shakespeare Company, Taproot Theater, Strawberry Theater Workshop, New Century Theater Company, and YACT San Francisco.



**ANNELIH GH HAMILTON**

**UNDERSTUDY: SNOW WHITE & 4** – As an actor who identifies as a womxn of color and Filipinx-American, Annelih believes representation matters and is honored to be part of Seattle Children's Theatre's *Snow White!* She was recently at SCT with *Black Beauty* and *The Lamp is the Moon*. Select Seattle Theatre credits include: *Nordo*, *TWQPF*, and *It's a Wonderful Life* (14/48 Projects); *Salty* (ReAct Theatre); *Everybody* (Strawshop); and *King of the Yees* (ACT Theatre). Annelih has a MFA in Theatre from University of Florida and a BFA in Theatre Performance from Chapman University. Many thanks to the *Snow White* Team. Honored to play in Nako and Neddersen's footsteps! Gratitude and love to Joshua & Walter and Mama & Papa. For Hanneli. #LoveWillRipple



\* Indicates members of the Actors' Equity Association

† Indicates actors appearing courtesy of Actors' Equity Association

## THE CREATIVE TEAM

### DESDEMONA CHIANG

**DIRECTOR** – Dresdemona is a stage director based in Seattle and Ashland, OR. Previously at SCT: *The Journal of Ben Uchida: Citizen 13559*. Regional: credits include: *White Pearl* (Studio Theatre), *Vietgone* (Alley Theatre), *The Great Leap* (Guthrie Theater), *M Butterfly* (South Coast Repertory), *Caught* (Intiman Theatre), *The Winter's Tale* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), *Pride and Prejudice* (Pittsburgh Public Theater), *King of the Yees* (ACT Theatre and Baltimore Center Stage), *As You Like It* (California Shakespeare Theater), *Constellations* (Seattle Repertory Theatre), among others. Awards include: Princess Grace Award, Vilcek Prize for Creative Promise in Theatre, SDC Sir John Gielgud Directing Fellowship, and the Drama League Fall Directing Fellowship. She is the co-founder of Azeotrope and adjunct faculty at Cornish College of the Arts. Desdemona received her MFA of Directing at UW School of Drama. [www.desdemonachiang.com](http://www.desdemonachiang.com)

### KIEFER HARRINGTON

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR** – Kiefer is thrilled to be making his debut at SCT! Kiefer last directed *Hitchhiker* (By The Seat of Our Theatre Company), and will be directing *Dawn of the She Devil of the China Seas* (Annex Theatre) this Spring. After receiving his bachelor's degree in theatre arts management at Ithaca College in Ithaca, NY, Kiefer has had the pleasure of working with several companies in Seattle in various capacities, including Seattle Rep, Pork Filled Productions, Seattle Public Theater, Forward Flux, and Washington Ensemble Theatre.

### MICHAEL JOHN EGAN\*

**STAGE MANAGER** – Credits at SCT include: *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *The Journal of Ben Uchida: Citizen 13559*, *Into the West*, *The Cat in the Hat*, and *James and the Giant Peach*. Credits on Broadway include: *Les Misérables*, *Man of La Mancha*, and *Never Gonna Dance*. National Tour credits include: *Billy Elliot*, *Les Misérables*, *Miss Saigon*, *Cabaret*, and *Mamma Mia!*. Seattle credits include: *Familiar*, *A People's History*, *King Charles III*, *Disgraced*, *Lizard Boy*, *The Piano Lesson*, *Good People* (Seattle Rep); Wagner's *Ring Cycle* (twice!), *Il trovatore*, *Pearl Fishers*, *Parsifal*, *Lohengrin*, and *Iphigenie en Tauride* (Seattle Opera); *Man of La Mancha* and *Singin' In The Rain* (The 5th Avenue Theatre). Credits at Spoleto Festival USA are: *Eugene Onegin*, *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*, *La Cenerentola*, and *Kepler*. A proud English major and member of Actors Equity Association.

### KELLY MCGEE

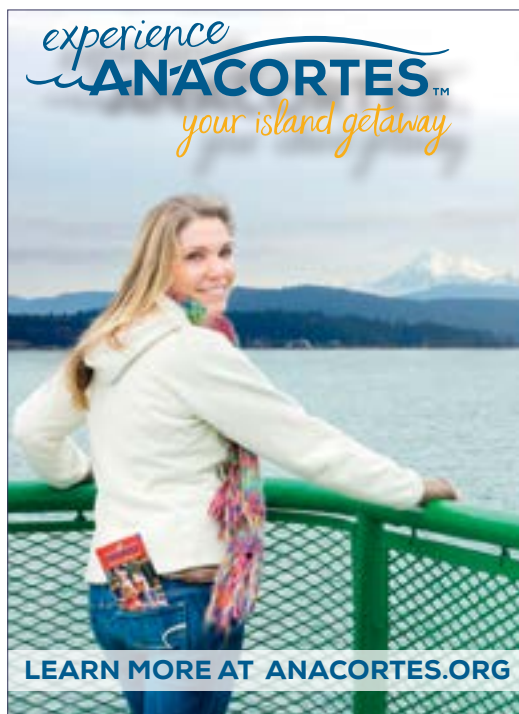
**PRODUCTION ASSISTANT** – Kelly is excited to be back at SCT! Originally from Louisville, Kentucky, she moved to Seattle as an intern for SCT's Summer Season production of *Madagascar Jr.* and has been working as a Stage Manager, PA, and Youth Supervisor ever since. Recent credits include: *A Christmas Carol*, *People of the Book*, *Romeo + Juliet*, *Ride the Cyclone* (ACT Theatre), *Matilda* (Village Theatre), *The Little Mermaid* (Village Theatre KIDSTAGE), *Holiday Inn* (The 5th Avenue Theatre), *The Drag* (Play Your\* Part), and *Pageant* (A Sensible Theatre Company). Love and gratitude to E.

## ANDREA BRYN BUSH

**SCENIC DESIGNER** – Andrea is happy to be returning to Seattle Children's Theatre, having designed *Balloonacy* last season. She is a scenic designer who works with many companies across town including Village Theatre, Intiman Theater, Book-It Repertory Theater, Seattle Shakespeare Company, Seattle Public Theater, Contemporary Classics, Azeotrope, and Cornish College of the Arts. She was formerly an Ensemble member and resident designer at Washington Ensemble Theatre. Andrea is a MFA graduate from UW where she is currently on staff in the Scene Shop. She received the 2010 Gregory Award for outstanding scenic design.

## CHRISTINE TSCHIRGI

**COSTUME DESIGNER** – Christine is thrilled to be back with SCT for *Snow White*. Other credits include: *Journal of Ben Uchida* (SCT) *As You Like it* (OSF) *King of the Yees* (Baltimore Center Stage); *Pride and Prejudice* (Pittsburgh Public Theater); *King of the Yees* (A Contemporary Theater) *Constellations* (Seattle Repertory Theatre); *The Pirates of Penzance, Hello, Dolly!* (The 5th Avenue Theatre); *Richard III, Bring Down the House* (upstart crow collective); *The Merchant of Venice, Measure for Measure* (Seattle Shakespeare Company); *Building the Wall, Sound, 25 Saints, Red Light Winter, Gruesome Playground Injuries* (Azeotrope); *Bright Half Life* (New Century Theatre Company). She holds an MFA in Costume Design from the University of Washington and is a member of USA 829. [www.ctschirgi.com](http://www.ctschirgi.com)





## THE CREATIVE TEAM CONTINUED

### CONNIE YUN

**LIGHTING DESIGNER** – Connie has previously been at SCT for *Black Beauty* and *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*. Most recently, local designs include *Turn of the Screw* for Seattle Opera and *Skylight* for ACT. Other recent designs include *La Traviata* and *Cavalleria Rusticana/Pagliacci* for Madison Opera, *As One* and *La Finta Giardiniera* for Portland Opera, and *The Magic Flute* for Kentucky Opera. She has also previously designed for Seattle Rep, On the Boards, Tacoma Opera, Pacific Musicworks, The Cabiri, Cornish College, Bellevue College, University of Puget Sound, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Arizona Opera, Minnesota Opera, and Canadian Opera Company. Upcoming projects include *Bajazet* and *Three Decembers* for Portland Opera, *Salome* for Hawaii Opera Theatre, *La Boheme* for Seattle Opera, and *Witch* for ACT.

### ANGIE LOUISE

**COMPOSER & MUSIC DIRECTOR** – SCT audiences last saw Angie reprising her role of Hattie the pink poodle in 2017's *Go, Dog. Go!* and taking over as music director/performer in 2019's *Edward Tulane*. A member of Actors' Equity and ASCAP, Angie's been described by City Arts Magazine as "a singer, songwriter, and actress with fearsome chops." She is the longtime songwriter and frontwoman for Weimar-inspired band The Love Markets, whose record releases include *Beauty Factory* and *World Of Your Dreams*. More of Angie's songs appear in award-winning feature films *Gory Gory Hallelujah* and *Ira Finkelstein's Christmas* ("Best in SIFF"); she's also composed for Sandbox Radio and 14/48. Angie is a winner of the Academy of American Poets Prize. She thanks Courtney for inviting her into the world of *Snow White*.

### SHARATH PATEL

**SOUND DESIGNER** – Sharath works nationally and internationally focusing on experimental, commercial, academic, political, and socially conscious theatre. Recent work includes *In the Heights*, *Macbeth* (Portland Center Stage); *Amadeus* (Folger Theatre); *Ibsen in Chicago*, *Tiny Beautiful Things* (Seattle Rep); *Pass Over*, *The Crucible*, *The Royale* (ACT Theatre); *Wolf Pay*, *Skeleton Crew* (Artists Rep); *Nina Simone: Four Women* (Alabama Shakes); *Christmas at Pemberley Pt. 2* (Marin Theater Company); *As You Like It* (California Shakes); *Free Outgoing* (East West Players); *WIG OUT!* (American Rep/CompanyONE). He is a member of United Scenic Artists Local 829, IATSE as well as the Theatrical Sound Designers and Composers Association. Sharath is also an Arts Envoy for the U.S. Department of State and a Resident Artists at Artist Rep. MFA: Yale School of Drama. sharathpatel.com



\* Indicates members of the Actors' Equity Association

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Seattle Children's Theatre is a member of TYA/USA, the national center of the International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People.



SCT is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national service organization for the nonprofit professional theatre.



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The Director is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers society, a national theatrical labor union.



The designers at this theatre are represented by United Scenic Artists (Local USA 829) of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees.



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**Courtney Sale** *Artistic Director*

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**Trick Danneker**  
*Executive Assistant & Casting Associate*

**Linda Hartzell**  
*Artistic Director Emerita*

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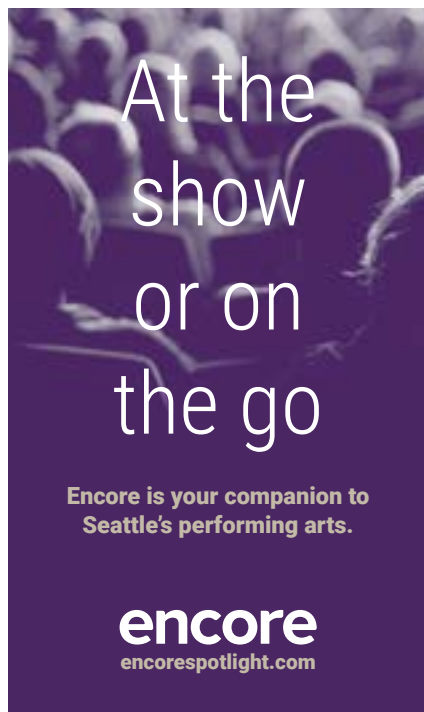
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## SNOW WHITE'S JOKE CORNER

Snow White has the best jokes in this neck of the woods. Tell these jokes to your friends and family for an apple-solutely good time!

---

### **If you're happy and you know it...**

Can you please head to the theatre? Snow White and the other six dwarves are waiting for you.

### **How do you get a horse's attention?**

"HAY!"

### **Why did the teddy not like his trip to the beach?**

Because the heat was unBEARable!

### **Which princess would make the best judge?**

Snow White, because she's the fairest of them all.

### **What is a rabbit's favorite hair style?**

A bun!

### **What did the caterpillar say after he threw his margarine?**

Butter fly!

### **Why does no one believe the giraffe's story?**

Because it was a tall tale!

### **What did the horse say when it fell?**

I've fallen and I can't giddyup!

### **Who was Snow White's least favorite relative?**

Granny Smith!

### **What do you call a small pigeon?**

A smidgeon.



## WHAT'S YOUR FAIRY TALE?

### ***Interstellar Cinderella***

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## THE ORIGINAL SNOW WHITE

**T**he story of *Snow White* takes on many different forms and variations across cultures. You may be familiar with Disney's animated adaptation, but that is by far not the only one. That adaptation is based on the German tale that the Grimm Brothers published in 1812. The story is similar to the Disney adaptation, but has very distinct variations such as none of the dwarves having distinct names, the Queen trying to kill Snow White three times, and the Queen ending up dancing to death while wearing burning iron shoes. Disney obviously opted for a more sanitized version. Other variations of the story include *Bella Venezia* (an Italian story where an innkeeper locks up her daughter for being more beautiful than her), *Myrsina* (a Greek story in which

the sun claims the youngest of three orphan sisters is the most beautiful so the others try to poison her), and *Syair Bidasari* (a Malay poem about a girl whose soul is in a golden fish kept in a pond by her father; the evil queen steals the fish because the girl is too beautiful, causing the girl to fall into a coma). The line connecting all of these stories is the idea that one woman tries to persecute or kill another out of jealousy over beauty. The beautiful girl is made to be the victim of her own beauty without having a voice in the matter. At SCT, we wanted to tell a story where Snow White has a say in her own story. Since this tale has been told in many variations all over the world across time, we think it's the perfect time to reinvent it for our young audiences once again!

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## AN INTERVIEW WITH PLAYWRIGHT GREG BANKS



***Can you talk about your relationship to the story? When did you first hear/read it? What drew you to adapting it?***

Like many people, my first experience of the story was through the Disney film. When I was asked by Children's Theatre Company if I would be interested in writing my own version of the story, I knew that there were lots of things that I might want to change and I was curious to see what they might be. First off, I wondered how the Dwarfs would really react if a strange girl turned up on their doorstep wanting shelter. Once accepted by the Dwarfs how would she spend her days? In the original story, Snow White has to clean and cook for the Dwarfs to earn her keep, that didn't seem like much fun and I don't think I would have stayed, so I needed to figure out what she would do, what she would bring to the Dwarfs that would also be good for her. I wondered what would happen if Snow White didn't want to marry the prince, a person she didn't know and maybe didn't even like. What would it be like for the Huntsman having to take Snow White into the woods and leave her there, what would go through his head?

Why did the Stepmother behave so horribly!  
Lots to explore!

***Can you talk about your connection or relationship to fairy tales?***

I like fairy tales because they don't shy away from the difficult things in life. The themes are often quite dark and disturbing. Somehow, they have become known as children's stories and as a result of that many of the darker themes, such as poverty, greed, and jealousy, amongst others, have been watered down. When I am adapting these stories, I try to find a way to go to their heart, to be faithful to the difficulties they address. I believe young audiences want to understand the world they find themselves in and it is part of my job to help them do that, not to shy away from scary things but to explore them in the safety of a theatre accompanied with plenty of laughs.

***When you sit down to write a play do you know what you are capable of?***

Not really. Every new play is a challenge and I never quite believe I will solve the puzzle. It's only through starting to write that I discover how I want to tell the story and what I want to say with it. The act of writing a line of dialogue will suggest the next line and I move on from there, line by line. I do not really plan. I discover what the characters will say rather than figuring it out in advance.

***What's the most important reminder when writing gets difficult?***

When the writing gets difficult it just means I am not satisfied with what I'm doing. Sometimes it is just difficult and I have to remember that's ok. So I either leave it for a bit, have a bit of toast, gaze out of the window, go for a walk, or just get something

down and not worry if it's not quite right. Having a deadline really helps, then I just have to get it done. It might not be perfect, but there is always a chance to do rewrites.

***Did you write as a child? If so, what did you write about? What captured your attention and spirit?***

I started writing something a bit like poems when I was about twelve. I just wrote words that came into my head, often I didn't understand what they were about, I just enjoyed putting words together and feeling them bounce off each other. I still do that now, making up songs as I go about my day, with lyrics that don't make much sense but are great fun. Luckily no one else has to listen to them, I'm a rotten singer. There is a great freedom in not always having to make sense, in seeing what happens if I just let the words come out.

***What do you hope audiences bring to the play?***

I hope audiences come prepared to use their imagination, to accept and enjoy our telling of the story even if it feels different to what they may have expected.

***What's your biggest dream for the play?***

I don't have a specific dream for the play as I know everyone brings their own experience to a performance. I guess I would feel I had achieved something if people get to laugh, be a little astonished, have their preconceptions challenged, and take something back into their daily lives. If on some level they feel their spirits have been lifted, then the play will have been a success.

*Content from our Active Audience Guide*

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