**BAD HATS THEATRE’S ALICE IN WONDERLAND**

Bad Hats Theatre’s Alice in Wonderland is written by Lewis Carroll and adapted by Fiona Sauder. This production is directed by Sue Miner, and produced by Soulpepper Theatre and Bad Hats Theatre.

These pre-show notes have been prepared by Eileen Barrett, for VocalEye. We hope you will be able to join us on July 14th, at 6:30pm Pacific Time, for our special viewing party of this delightful show! [Register here](https://bit.ly/VEZoomReg)

This descriptive introduction includes: An Overview with Descriptions of Character, Costumes and Set; Company Credits and Program Notes.

**OVERVIEW**The many characters, scenes and musical numbers, are all portrayed by an energetic and diverse ensemble of 9 talented actor/musicians, which includes 4 people of colour and 5 white people. No members of the cast identify with a disability, and 2 are members of the LGBTQ2S+ community.

Alice in Wonderland takes place in two completely different worlds: one, a present-day elementary school classroom; the other, the fantastical world of “wonder-land”, inhabited by talking animals, plants that sing, people and scenery that quite literally shift around, over and under our main character, Alice, at any given moment.

In the everyday world of the classroom, where our story starts, on the right side of the room is the teachers’ desk, made from 2 small wheeled wooden tables, pushed together. 2 brass rabbit figurines and a potted plant sit on it.

Behind the desk is a chalkboard, the length of a mini-van, with “Trees of the World” and “Due Today – All About You” written on its rectangular surface in chalk, as well as spaces neatly marked out for homework and the day’s lessons.

In front of the teacher’s desk are 7 student desks arranged in 2 rows. The desks are small wooden tables that can be wheeled on and off as needed to create surfaces to sit on, stand on, put things on and to do all kinds of things in wonderland.

An upright wooden piano is on the left side of the room, and along the back wall are a whole host of other musical instruments: cello, guitar, double bass, banjo, flute, clarinet, triangle, tambourine, melodica (a hybrid of a harmonica and a pump organ), and a cajon (a box shaped percussion instrument).

Also along the back wall are seven large wooden framed Plexiglass panels, on wheels. They are the size of a door frame, and can be easily wheeled on and off, to create walls, doors, rooms, train compartments, or even be draped with masses of flowers.

The show begins with **Alice** wandering into the classroom. Alice (played by Tess Benger) is ten years old, dressed in red denim overalls and a white T-shirt, with white canvas running shoes. She is white, has tousled wavy shoulder length blonde hair, held back from her face in a red hairband, wide eyes with expressive eyebrows and a big smile, often with a look of surprise on her face.

She is soon joined by the **Cheshire Cat** (played by Jonathan Tam). He is Asian, slender, lithe and fluid in his movements, dancing lightly on his feet. He often cocks his finely featured, high cheek-boned face to the side in amused observation. He sports a pair of perky orange and white cat ears atop his brown hair. He has on a shiny orange and white button up shirt and brown trousers and lace up shoes. He sports a long fluffy plumed orange and white tail. He is invisible to Alice and her classmates.

Alice’s 10-year old classmates soon arrive. They are:

**The Twins**, Tod spelled with one “d” (played by Fiona Sauder) and Todd spelled with 2 “d’s” (played by Landon Doak), the class clowns, are both white, rubber faced, slender, loose-limbed and constantly moving, who are dressed in colourful T-shirts with rolled up sleeves, blue jeans, running shoes, matching backpacks, and red baseball caps worn backwards.

**Rose** (played by Phoebe Hu) is the kid who wants to be everyone’s friend, kind and generous, and sometimes thinks other people’s ideas are better than hers. She is Asian, has a round face with sweet smile, is short and bouncy and wears her shiny dark hair in 2 cute little bunches. She wears moss green trousers, rolled up at the hem, a cream coloured hoodie, pale pink T shirt, white canvas runners with blue laces.

**Douggie** (played by Richard Lam) is the easy-going, loveable, forgetful, “always has to ask a question twice” kid. He is Asian, tall and all arms and legs. He has short wavy, dark brown hair and big brown twinkly eyes, a wide smile. He wears a puffy green and yellow down vest over a long sleeved blue and white baseball shirt, rumpled brown corduroy trousers and brown hikers’ shoes.

**Maddie** (played by Jacob Macinnis) is a large, soft and round child, expansive in their movements and light on their feet. They are white, with mischievous dark eyes and big expressive features, full of authority and opinions about everybody and everything. They wear a raspberry pink cotton hoodie, over a purple and pink striped t-shirt, pale pink trousers with rolled up hems, mint green and pink runners and a pink headband.

**Ruby** (played by Vanessa Sears) is the eager academic of the class – the student with their hand always waving in the air to answer questions. She is Black, slender and moves daintily, her feet together and back very straight, like a dancer. She has a fine featured face, with big brown eyes, and her masses of long dark brown curls are tied back from her face in a high ponytail. She wears a banana yellow cardigan, over a lemon yellow button up blouse, navy blue pleated skirt, white running shoes with white ankle socks. Everything about her is tidy and smart.

Finally, **Mr. Charles,** the class’ teacher(played byMatt Pilipiak) runs in, late. He is about 40 years old, white, with close cropped, receding gingery brown hair, mustache and beard, brown eyes and wiggly eyebrows and a mouth that can look a bit pinched. His movements are quick and decisive. He wears a brown tweed blazer over a mint green button up shirt and dark green tie, dark brown trousers and shiny brown leather lace up shoes.

In Wonderland, the ensemble of actors (aside from those playing Alice and the Cheshire Cat) become all of the inhabitants and wondrous characters Alice encounters. The actor playing Mr. Charles, the teacher, becomes the always late Rabbit, who, doffs his suit jacket and puts on a pair of fluffy white ears, a fluffy white tail and fluffy white shirt cuffs that double as paws.

The actor playing Ruby becomes the Red Queen, wearing a sparkly ruby red satin dress with a floaty red skirt that billows like a parachute and has a long train that needs to be carried by her attendants.

The Todd twins become Tweedledum and Tweedledee, sporting soft brown leather aviator helmets and brilliantly coloured tie-dyed bomber jackets.

And everyone else likewise joyfully jump into being: Duck, Dodo, Owl, in colourful cardboard wings, Buttercup, Lily, and the other flowers hidden behind a dangling arbour of multi-coloured paper flowers, Unicorn, with a shiny soft rainbow stuffed toy horn on a rainbow headband, sticking from her forehead. Bill, the lizard, is in a spiky, reversed ball cap, with a long spiky tail hanging from it, and wearing a spiky green and brown child’s backpack. Hatter wears an orange and blue bowler hat and flowery blazer, Hare sports a pair of sticky-up brown ears on the very top of her head, wears big round wire-rimmed glasses, and a floppy red black and white chequered silk tie. The Caterpillar has an iridescent scarf draped round their neck, and attached at mid-back, which transforms into a beautiful pair of butterfly wings.

The costume palette for the characters in Wonderland is as bright and colourful as a box of crayons, with pieces that look as though they were pulled from a child’s costume box, like an iridescent scarf for the butterfly, or created on the spot, such as the cardboard bird wings for the Dodo, Duck and Owl.

The cast members also double as onstage musicians.

Landon Doak: Guitar, Melodica, Banjo, Percussion (Cajon)

Phoebe Hu: Flute, Percussion (Triangle)

Richard Lam: Bass, Percussion (Cajon)

Jacob MacInnis: Percussion (Cajon, Triangle)

Matt Pilipiak: Piano, Melodica

Fiona Sauder: Percussion (Cajon, Tambourine, Triangle)

Vanessa Sears: Melodica

Jonathan Tan: Piano, Clarinet

ALICE IN WONDERLAND is approximately 90 minutes long.

**COMPANY CREDITS
Cast**Alice - Tess Benger

Todd, Tweedle Dum, Hatter - Landon Doak

Rose, Duck, Unicorn - Phoebe Hu

Douggie, Dodo, Lily - Richard Lam

Maddie, Owl, Buttercup, Bill, Caterpillar - Jacob Macinnis

Mr. Charles, Rabbit - Matt Pilipiak

Tod, Tweedle Dee, Hare - Fiona Sauder

Ruby, Red Queen - Vanessa Sears

Cheshire Cat - Jonathan Tan

**Creative Team**Sue Miner – Director

Reza Jacobs - Music Director

Cameron Carver – Choreographer

Broadcast Rehearsal AD

Logan Raju Cracknell - Lighting Designer

Fiona Sauder - Adaptor

Landon Doak - Co-Composer

Matt Pilipiak - Dramaturg, Associate Producer

Victor Pokinko - Co-Composer, Line Producer, Executive Producer

Lauren Vandervoort - Associate Producer

Ming Wong - Costume Designer

Joyce Padua - Assistant Costume Designer

Lisa Humber - 1st AD, Stage Manager

Victoria Wang - 2nd AD, Assistant Stage Manager

Phoebe Hu - Dance Captain

**PROGRAM NOTES**

Director’s Note:

On average a child asks 100,000 questions before the age of five. Sometimes repeated (What’s for lunch?) sometimes obvious (Are we there yet?) and the fun ones about the everyday miracles. (What are clouds? Clocks? Ice cubes? Night?) That curiosity is refocused once they start school when rubrics and getting good marks are the goal and is followed by that teenage stage of being too cool to ask questions believing some-how that while they may feel lost they should know everything. All the while the big questions about justice, equality and what it means to be a good human on this planet become more concerning and prescient. By adulthood we feel embarrassed, told that there are “no stupid questions” yet sometimes dangerously lead to believe that our important questions may not have answers or solutions at all because it has “always been that way.” The child that we once were travels within us, has never left us. Curiosity is the key that when mixed with kindness could save the world. May your visit to Wonderland encourage you to love all the little questions and also to courageously ask the big ones.

Enjoy!

Sue Miner, Director

A Note from The Company:

Someone once told us that the best method for holding onto our youth is to stop trying to figure out who we are. Growing up comes with a need to answer questions about ourselves and the world around us that seems to put a halt on dreaming, and this permeates through the rest of our lives. What if we allowed ourselves to live in the unknown a little longer? What if we let ourselves live there as often as possible? This year so much of the fabric of who we are - which was wrapped up in what we do, where we work, and how we live - was turned upside down. This year we had to sit with ourselves and with our questions. It feels like the perfect time to be sharing this story. Gathering together in a theatre to explore this piece felt like a return to childhood. The Wonder-land we’ve created, the mysteries and discoveries within it, is a direct reflection of our experience putting together this piece, and like all of us working on the show, it’s still growing. We hope the palpable joy we felt working in this unique and long awaited moment inspires you to let go of what you know, and to let your wondering take you somewhere you haven’t been before. We can’t wait to see you in person someday soon. Until then, stay curious.

The Bad Hats Team

**LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The artists and staff of Soulpepper, Bad Hats, and the Young Centre for the Performing Arts acknowledge the original caretakers and storytellers of this land – Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Huron-wendat (Wyandot) and Mississaugas of the New Credit territory. We commit to honouring and celebrating their past, present and future.