

President's Report

It is a privilege to look back on another remarkable year at Shuswap Theatre and to reflect on what we have accomplished together as a theatre community. The reports that follow highlight the work of our volunteers who head up committees and positions within the organization. As I look back over the year, I am incredibly proud of what our organization has achieved and grateful to everyone who has contributed to making it possible.

This past season has been one filled with creativity, energy, challenges, and, most importantly, people coming together to create theatre for our community. Our three main productions—*Into the Woods*, *Ripcord*, and *The Book of Will*—each offered audiences something very different and demonstrated the wonderful range of talent within Shuswap Theatre. I am very proud to work with the Artistic Committee who strive to put together a successful season of shows. Thank you to fellow members Julia Body, Amanda Maygard, and Kim MacMillan. Kim recently has stepped down from the committee, but continues to work in many other areas of the theatre.

Into the Woods was an ambitious undertaking and a tremendous success. A musical of this scale requires an enormous commitment from performers, vocalists, directors, designers, technicians, stage crew, volunteers and front-of-house teams. The result was a production that brought energy, imagination and music to our stage and gave our audiences an opportunity to experience a challenging and much-loved musical.

Ripcord followed with a very different theatrical experience. Its combination of comedy, heart, memorable characters and inventive staging resonated strongly with our audiences. It reminded us that theatre can make us laugh while also giving us those quieter moments that stay with us after the show ends.

Our final production, *The Book of Will*, was another significant accomplishment. It was a beautiful celebration of theatre itself—the people who create it, the stories they preserve, and the importance of keeping those stories alive. The production also gave Shuswap Theatre an opportunity to represent our community at the Okanagan Zone Festival, where it received recognition and awards. It demonstrated the quality of work being produced on our stage.

As well as our main stage shows, audiences experienced theatre from many different avenues. Theatre on the Edge (TOTE) followed in June collaborating again with Salmon Arm Arts Centre, and provided a variety of artistic experiences. MYST (Musical Youth Summer Theatre) continued in July with "*Shrek The Musical Jr.*" and many audience members expressed it was one of their favourites. Throughout the season Laughing Gas Improv ran sessions for interested community members twice a month, with a lively show in March. Play reading club continued each last Wednesday of the month and was well attended.

The theatre also continues to participate in community events such as The Trick or Treat Trail, Fall Fair Parade, Christmas Music Shows, Unplug and Play, and Salmon Arm Pride Parade.

This year, record numbers of people came through our doors to see our productions, participate in the clubs and events. Those numbers represent far more than ticket sales. They represent community members who support the arts and theatre and all it does to make our city a more vibrant place to live. As Shuswap Theatre now enters its 50th Season, there have been countless people over the years give their time and talents.

To every volunteer who contributed this year—whether you gave hundreds of hours or helped for a single evening—thank you, your contribution matters. I also want to recognize our directors, technical director, production teams, actors, designers, technicians, front-of-house volunteers, building manager, committees, and board members. Each event represents hundreds of decisions, conversations, rehearsals and hours of work that our audiences never see.

We have an opportunity to continue building a theatre that welcomes new volunteers, encourages new ideas, develops local talent and provides audiences with productions that entertain, challenge and move them.

It takes a community to make theatre—and I am grateful to be part of this one.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Demulder
President, Board of Directors
Shuswap Theatre