

ANVIL THEATRE PRESENTS
THE SEARCH PARTY'S

DANCE NATION

BY CLARE BARRON

NOVEMBER 13 - 23
2025



New
Westminster



ANVIL THEATRE
NEW WESTMINSTER

Anvil Theatre presents

The Search Party's

DANCE NATION

By Clare Barron

November 13 - 23, 2025

Anvil Theatre

RUNNING TIME

Approximately 1 hour, 35 minutes, with no intermission

CREATIVE TEAM

Mindy Parfitt - Director

Amber Barton - Choreographer

Jessica Oostergo - Costume Designer

Itai Erdal - Lighting Designer

Kate De Lorme - Sound Designer

Stephen Field Elgar - Props Supervisor

Rick Rinder - Stage Manager

Jenny Kim - Assistant Stage Manager

Hina Nishioka - Assistant Lighting Designer

Sophia Saugstad - Assistant Director

Matt Oviatt - Technical Director

Jeremy Vreeken - Set Builder

The set was adapted from the original design by Amir Ofek.

"Dance Nation" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

DANCE NATION received its UK premiere at the Almeida Theatre, London, September 2018.

Playwrights Horizons, Inc., New York City, produced the World Premiere of DANCE NATION in 2018 with support from an award by the National Endowment of the Arts, and a generous gift from Scott M. Delman.

Special thanks to The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Trust for supporting new plays at Playwrights Horizons, and special thanks to the Time Warner Foundation for its leadership support of New Works Lab at Playwrights Horizons.

DANCE NATION was developed at the Perry-Mansfield New Works Festival, June 2015, with the Atlantic Theatre Company, and presented as part of the Contemporary American Voices Festival at Long Wharf Theatre, September 2016.

DANCE NATION was written, in part, in residence at SPACE on Ryder Farm, and received extensive workshop time and space as part of New Dramatists' Jerry A. Tishman Playwrights Creativity Fund.





DIRECTOR'S NOTES



"Youth is not a question of years: one is young or old from birth. Youth means a temperamental predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over the love of ease." — Clarissa Pinkola Estés

The opportunity to revisit a play is rare in the theatre - especially a play with 9 actors. Jessica Schneider and the team at Anvil Theatre & Massey Theatre are exceptional pillars in the community. Jessica's support and encouragement of me as an artist and of the company I lead has been deeply meaningful. This is our second remount at Anvil Theatre - The Search Party's production of Hannah Moscovitch's Bunny was seen here in 2024 - and we're thrilled to be back.

Theatre is a collaborative art form and I am grateful to all the creative team for bringing this piece to life. Amir Ofek and I have collaborated 8 times over the past 10 years. Our collective aesthetic is the cornerstone of The Search Party's productions. He is an inspired designer and I'm lucky to work with him. Amber Barton is a force of creative genius and I am so joyful she is here.

As always - thank you - without whom we are just people dancing alone in a room.

May our appetite for adventure stay forever unsatiated.

Enjoy the Show!
Mindy

CHOREOGRAPHER'S NOTES



I remember reading the first page of the Dance Nation script (didn't even finish reading the entire page) and I texted Mindy, "I'm in!" I instantly recognized the characters; versions of personalities I grew up with in studios as I learned not only how to dance but how to survive an intense competitive environment while navigating the uncertain waters of growing up. I say this with love: I have always felt that dance has a dark side and seeing it so comedically portrayed in such a playful way drew me in immediately. In addition, the opportunity to work with Mindy again was a no brainer. I knew she would approach this production with the sensitivity it deserves. And I figured this was not only a chance to choreograph in a way I don't always get to,

but also a way or me to revisit those memories from my competition days and face the positives and negatives of what that was for me. Thank you to every dance teacher I've ever had the privilege of learning from and all the dancers that I grew up with in studios and summer schools (because I will be thinking about you at some point while working on this production!). I truly hope you will enjoy this upside down world full of glitter and fangs because we sure enjoyed ourselves making it. Enjoy!

Amber

THE COMPANY



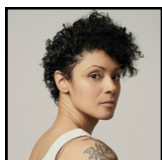
Eileen Barrett - Maeve

Some favourite theatre: *Escaped Alone* (Western Gold), *Les Belles-Soeurs* (Gateway/Ruby Slippers), *It's a Wonderful Life* (Arts Club), *The Duchess* (Ruby Slippers), *My Mother's Story* (Presentation House), *Harvest* (Gateway).

Upcoming: *The Golden Anniversaries* (Arts Club)

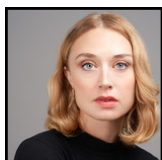
Recent Film/TV: *Family Law*, *Resident Alien*, *Wild Cards*, *Private Princess Christmas*, *Riverdale*, *Elle*, *The Good Doctor*, *The Magicians*.

Eileen loves working as a describer (for blind and partially sighted theatre-goers) with Vocal Eye. She has a Liberal Studies M.A. from SFU, and is a really old Studio 58 graduate. Thanks and love to Robert, Matthew and Garnet



Amber Barton - Choreographer

Amber has spent the majority of her life working in the arts as a professional contemporary dance artist, performing, choreographing, producing and teaching dance for the past 24 years. She received her professional dance training with Goh Ballet Academy, Arts Umbrella, Ballet BC's Mentor Programme and the Banff Centre for the Arts. As a choreographer, her work has been presented in various venues in Vancouver, across Canada, and internationally at the Chapter Arts Centre (Wales), the NW New Works Festival (Seattle), and the BAAD!ASS Women Festival (Bronx, New York). Her work has also extended into theatre choreographing for *Horseshoes and Hand Grenades*, *Mindy Parfitt* and *Search Party Productions*, *Studio 58*, *Alley Theatre* and *Electric Company Theatre*. Amber is also one of the few Canadians to receive a full danceWEB scholarship to study at the *ImPulsTanz* festival in Vienna, Austria and is the inaugural recipient of the *Iris Garland Emerging Choreographer Award*. Thank you to the cast and crew of *Dance Nation*, *Search Party Productions* and the staff at the *Cultch* and the *York Theatre*. I would not be part of this production (or have much experience in the theatre community), if it wasn't for the generosity of *Mindy Parfitt*. I have learned and continue to learn so much from working with you. Thank you for being such an inspiring director and artist. We are all so lucky to be in the room with you.



Tess Degenstein - Sofia

Tess Degenstein is an actor, screenwriter, director and improviser from Saskatchewan, now living in Vancouver. As an actor and improviser, Tess has performed across the country, most recently touring the hit *Spontaneous Theatre* show *Blind Date*. Internationally she has performed and taught in Vienna, Berlin, Athens, London, Oslo, Atlanta, and New York. She has been nominated for multiple ensemble Canadian Comedy Awards and a *Sterling Award* for Best Actor for the world premiere of *Nicole Moehller's An Almost Perfect Thing*. She was awarded a *Jessie Richardson* award for her comedic turn in *Noises Off* at the *Arts Club*. Television credits include featured roles in *New Eden*, *So Help Me Todd*, and *Murdoch Mysteries*, as well as multiple commercials and music videos. This year she is appearing in the indie feature *The Players*, as well as *Osgood Perkins' The Monkey and Keeper*. Tess has written a handful of features, as well as an *IPF* series in development. She has directed two short films, and just completed production on *How Brief*, a short film she wrote and stars in.

Thank you to *Mindy* for her vision and to you, for being here!



Kate De Lorme - Sound Designer

Kate De Lorme is a Sound Artist from the Okanagan - currently living on the traditional territory of the x̱məθḵw̱əy̱əm, Sḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh and salílw̱ətaʔ peoples, aka Vancouver, BC.

Kate's work integrates immersive spatial sound landscapes, technology and sound healing. She graduated from UBC in 2015 with a BFA, majoring in Theatre Design and Production and has a certification in Audio Engineering. Kate has been working in sound design since the age of 16, highly involved and interested in sound's effect on an audience. As a professional sound designer, her work has been primarily in live performance with a large focus on contemporary dance and theatre. Kate's designs are inclusive of high caliber recording and editing, composition, programming, live mixing and interactivity. Kate Co-Founded Lobe Spatial Sound Studio in 2019.

Select design credits include: Epilogos, Telemetry, Feasting on Famine (Radical Systems Art); Graveyards and Gardens (Action at a Distance | Caroline Shaw); Bygones, Major Motion Picture (Out Innerspace Dance Theatre); Sta/g-mos (Kate De Lorme Design).

katedelorme.com



Itai Erdal - Lighting Designer

Itai Erdal is an award-winning lighting designer, writer and performer, and the artistic director of The Elbow Theatre, for whom he co-wrote and performed in Soldiers of Tomorrow, Hyperlink, This Is Not A Conversation and A Very Narrow Bridge. Itai's first solo show: How to Disappear Completely (The Chop) has had 26 remounts and won the best director award at the 2013 Summerworks Festival (James Long). Itai has designed over 350 shows for theatre, dance and opera companies in over 40 cities around the world.

Recent highlights include: Cambodian Rock Band and Primary Trust for Arts Club Theatre and Carmen for Vancouver Opera. He won six Jessie Richardson Awards, Toronto's Dora Mavor Moore Award, a Winnipeg Theatre Award, the Jack King Award, Victoria's Spotlight Choice Award, a Guthrie Award and the Design Award at the Dublin Fringe Festival. He was shortlisted to the Siminovitch Prize in 2018 and 2024.

www.itaierdal.com, www.theelbow.ca



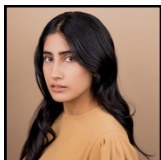
Stephen Field Elgar - Props Supervisor

Stephen Field Elgar (he/him) is a Scenographer, Prop Builder, and Scenic Painter situated on the unceded traditional and stolen territories of the Coast Salish Peoples now known as Vancouver. Since 2020, Stephen has held the position of Head of Properties at Vancouver Opera and is a proud member of IASTE 118. When not working in Theatre, he runs a small furniture refinishing business, you can explore his furniture projects on Instagram @RefreshedFurnitureBC.



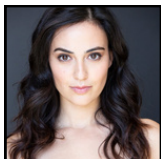
Liza Huget - Ashlee

Liza completed her training at Studio 58, attended the National Voice Intensive and the Banff Centre. She is committed to a life of growth as a performer. Highlights include: Stratford Festival (Wedding Band and Les Belle Soeurs), Bard on the Beach (Harlem Duet), and Realwheels Theatre (In Camera/ No Exit). She is a Leo nominated performer with credits that include recurring roles on The Chicken Sisters, Virgin River, The Mysterious Benedict Society and Motherland: Fort Salem. Liza has toured internationally as a vocalist, is an Expressive Art Therapist and Life coach. She is the Vice President of UBCP/ACTRA.



Rami Kahlon - Connie

Rami Kahlon is an actor and director raised in Surrey, BC. She has performed in MS. HOLMES AND MS. WATSON - APT. 2B (Gateway Theatre), DIL KA (Ruby Slippers Theatre), DOOJA GHAR (South Asian Arts Centre), and THE TROLL GRANDFATHER (Axis Theatre). She recently starred in, directed, and wrote the horror comedy A CHRISTMAS STAR (Rani Pictures) and will be appearing on the hit TV show Allegiance next year. Other stage credits include multiple characters THE DINING ROOM (Rogues West End Theatre), a staged reading of THE BIBLIOMANCER (Ruby Slippers Theatre), and a show that she co-produced: CRIMINAL GENIUS (GO Studios).



Nyiri Karakas - Amina

Nyiri Karakas is a Canadian-Armenian actor from Vancouver. She has a BA in political science from Western and a Masters in International Public Policy from Wilfrid Laurier University. Following a career change, Nyiri pursued a Masters in Acting at East 15 Acting School, in London, UK, where she was part of a residency at Shakespeare's Globe. Nyiri began her dance training on the North Shore at Vanleena Dance Academy while in highschool. She was originally kicked out of ballet class as a toddler for misbehaving. Thanks Mom and Dad for paying for all the classes and the rides, we've come full circle. Theatre credits: Heroes of the Fourth Turning (Mitch & Murray Productions); Medicine (Pi Theatre); Gaslight (Western Canada Theatre/Chemainus Theatre Festival); Sense and Sensibility (Arts Club); Children of Fire (Nightwood Theatre/Aluna Theatre); The House of Bernarda Alba (Modern Times Stage Co./Aluna); A Midsummer Night's Dream (Shakespeare Bash'd); The Penelopiad (Hart House Theatre). Film/TV: Tiny Pretty Things (Netflix).



Jenny Kim - Assistant Stage Manager

This is Jenny's debut production working with The Search Party. She is based in Vancouver and excited to be part of the remount journey of Dance Nation. Jenny is honoured and pleased to be able to work with such talented individuals on this production. Stage Management credits include Mahabharata (Why Not Theatre), The Dark Lady, Complete Work of William Shakespeare (abridged)(revised)[again], Comedy of Errors, Measure for Measure, Henry V (Bard On The Beach), Teenage Dick, No Child, Sweat, Cipher (Arts Club Theatre), The Mountaintop (Pacific Theatre), The Café (Aphotic Theatre/Itsazoo Production), Bad Parent (vAct/PTE/Soulpepper Theatre), China Doll (Gateway Theatre) Other credit includes Pachinko (Apple TV)



Jennifer Lines - Vanessa/The Moms

Jennifer is a Vancouver based actor who has performed locally and internationally for over 25 years with theatre companies such as Bard on the Beach (over 40 productions), the Arts Club, The Belfry, The Vancouver Playhouse, Theatre Calgary, M.T.C., The Caravan Theatre, and Axis Theatre. Jennifer is a two time Jessie Award winner and received her B.F.A. in acting from the University of Victoria. Recent TV/film credits include The Irrational, Yellowjackets, and Resident Alien.

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2025 4PM

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Andrew McNee - Luke

Andrew McNee has been performing professionally for more than two decades across theatre, film, and television. A frequent presence on Vancouver stages, Andrew has worked in theatre across the country and in Europe. Recent stage credits include *The Mousetrap*, *Elf*, and *Noises Off* (Arts Club), *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar*, and *As You Like it* (Bard on the Beach). On screen Andrew has died in the first 5 minutes of many tv shows, and voiced many cartoon robots, aliens and ponies. Andrew is excited to join the cast of *Dance Nation*, and is grateful to share the stage with such a fearless and inspiring ensemble. He dedicates this performance to his family, whose support makes all of it possible. Andrew is a graduate of Studio 58.



Hina Nishioka - Assistant Lighting Designer

Hina is a Japanese Canadian lighting designer based in Metro Vancouver, BC, specialising in stage and live events. Her last production with Mindy Parfitt was *The Sound Inside* (all day breakfast theatre co.) in 2024. In the past few years, she designed theatre productions with companies such as the Bard on the Beach, Belfry Theatre, Touchstone Theatre, Pacific Theatre and individual choreographers. She has also assisted leading designers with companies including Shaw Festival and Vancouver Opera. To find out more about her work, please visit hinalighting.com.



Amir Ofek - Set Designer

Previously with Search Party Productions: *Fairview*, *Stupid F*cking Bird*, *Bunny*, and *The Father*.

For The Vancouver Opera: *Orfeo Ed Euridice* (2021), *La Voix Humaine* (2020).

For Bard on the Beach: *Henry V* (2023), *Midsummer Nights Dream* (2022), *Pericles* (2016).

For The Arts Club Theatre Company: *A Doll's House*, *Miracle on 34th Street*, *Sexy Laundry*, *Red Velvet*, *The Cull*, *Buffoon*, *Me and You*, *Fun Home*, *The Men in White*, *The Valley*, *A Christmas Story*, *One Man Two Guvnors*, *Other Desert Cities*, *Boeing Boeing*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Graduate*, *My Granny the Goldfish*.



Jessica Oostergo - Costume Designer

Jessica is a Set and Costume Designer, born and raised in Vancouver BC, and a new resident of Edmonton. Her design work has been seen on stage and screens across North America.

Jessica worked as the Assistant Head of Wardrobe at Bard on the Beach for seven seasons and has taught Design Foundations and Set Design for Studio 58. She is a three-time Jessie Richardson Award Winner with a total of seven nominations, and a graduate of Studio 58 and Emily Carr University of Art + Design

Select Theatre Credits: *Heist* (Grand/Citadel), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Citadel/Theatre Calgary); *The Sound of Music* (Grand/MTC/Citadel); *Ring of Fire*, *The Legend of Georgia McBride* (Arts Club); *Sunrise Betties* (ITSAZOO); *Bunny*, *Stupid F*cking Bird* (Search Party); *An UnDeveloped Sound* (Electric Company), *Julius Caesar* (Bard on the Beach), *A Chorus Line* (Studio 58).



Mindy Parfitt - Director

Mindy is the founder of The Search Party and has directed all its acclaimed productions. Other selected directing credits include: The Cull, You and Me, The Valley, Armstrong's War (The Arts Club), This Stay in The Room, Palace of the End, 4.48 Psychosis and You are Here (Horseshoes & Hand Grenades) and she co-created am a with Amber Barton. She is a graduate of both Concordia University (BFA) and UBC (MFA). She is fortunate to work on a wide variety of productions. Mindy is an artist-in-residency at Concordia University where she has been working with a group of student directors and actors on a short play festival.



Rick Rinder - Stage Manager

While in high school at Burnaby South (1973-75), Rick would volunteer as a stagehand at the Vagabond Playhouse in New Westminster. After graduation he attended the Banff School of Fine Arts (Theatre Crafts and Design) and began his Stage Management career in 1980 at Theatre Calgary. Since then, he has stage managed over 200 productions, working for all of the major theatre companies across the country. He's got stories! Rick also stage managed 15 summers of Dance at the Banff Arts Festival, toured internationally with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and across Canada with Calgary's Decidedly Jazz Danceworks, and lived 3 months in Havana as a stage management consultant with the Cuban National Ballet.

Rick is happy to temporarily step out of retirement to do Dance Nation with this great collection of old and new friends. Rick lives in Maple Ridge with his much better half, Nadine (Wonder Woman) and with Phoebe (Super Dog).



Sophia Saugstad - Assistant Director

Sophia Saugstad is a performer, theatre creator and emerging director. Her satirical solo show Long Live Lexi Bezos, recently played at The Vancouver Fringe Festival, The Edmonton Fringe Festival, and Fates Festival (Promethean Theatre). Her dance theatre piece Gravity in Your Eyes, in collaboration with her sister Anya Saugstad, premiered at Dancing on the Edge Festival at The Firehall. Directing credits include 30 Neo-Futurist Plays (Co-director, Bramble Theatre Collective), The Importance of Being Earnest (UBC Players Club), Unraveling (OR Festival/Fabulist Theatre), and Venus and Moon (Ignite Festival, Vines Festival). Assistant directing credits include Snow White (Carousel Theatre), Oliver! (Gateway Theatre) and Constellations (Exact Resemblance). Sophia is a Studio 58 grad and holds an Honours Degree in Theatre Studies from UBC. She is the recipient of the John F. Parker award for Demonstrating Exceptional Promise in Theatre Arts, and the Yvonne Firkins award for Directing. Catch her new piece, It's Not the End of the World, at The Vancouver Fringe Festival this Fall!

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FEBRUARY 14
2026 7:30PM

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Amanda Sum - Zuzu

Amanda Sum is a performer and creator who dances between music and theatre. Amanda has collaborated on many interdisciplinary theatre based works, which have brought her to perform and present works at the Smush Gallery (Jersey City) at On The Boards (Seattle), and Summerworks (Toronto). Amanda's recent acting credits include 4 seasons of the East Van Panto (Theatre Replacement), and Sense and Sensibility (The Arts Club). Her latest EP does it make me naive if i've never been part of something where i've meant more to them than they did to me? was released in June 2024. Her music video Different Than Before (2022), garnered a JUNO nomination and won the SXSW Music Video Jury Award (2023). As Theatre Replacement's COLLIDER Artist, Amanda created New Age Attitudes: Live in Concert, which premiered in 2023 and continued touring this year. She is currently working on her next full-length record, and is developing its accompanying experimental theatre show. Amanda holds a BFA from SFU and is Theatre Replacement's current Creative Producer Intern. Antics and updates: @amanduhsum



Todd Thomson - Dance Teacher Pat

Selected theatre credits include, Kilt (Belfry Theatre), The Bond, Macbeth (Pound of Flesh Theatre), Homeward Bound (Gateway Theatre), The Shape of Things (Manitoba Theatre Centre), Espresso (Pacific Theatre), A Doll's House (Chemainus Theatre), My Acid Trip (Solo Collective), THIS (Vancouver Playhouse), The School for Scandal, Gordon, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime, The Wedding Party (Arts Club Theatre), Don't Dress for Dinner (Thousand Islands Playhouse/Gateway Theatre) and Hamlet, As You Like It, Macbeth, The Tempest, King John, Henry V, Twelfth Night, The Merry Wives of Windsor (Bard on the Beach).

ANVIL THEATRE PRESENTS

JUST THE 2 OF US

JOËLLE & BUWA

APRIL 11
2026 7:30PM



ANVIL THEATRE
NEW WESTMINSTER
777 Columbia Street, New Westminster

ABOUT THE SEARCH PARTY

Founded by Mindy Parfitt, The Search Party is committed to bringing emotionally powerful and aesthetically rigorous productions to Vancouver's stages. Drawn to traditional theatre with a modern appeal, the company seeks out original texts that explore the intricacies and contradictions in our human connections and experiences. TSP is inspired by humour, compassion and quality story telling that highlights the power of voice as it expresses the vulnerabilities and strengths of the human spirit.

searchpartyproductions.com



THE
SEARCH
PARTY

THANK YOU'S

Jessica Schneider and everyone at Anvil Theatre and Massey Theatre, The Cultch, UBC Dept. of Theatre and Film, Alberto White, Arts Club Theatre, Ace Martens, Emma Slipp, France Perras, Cameron Mackenzie, David Deveau, Terry Wong, Marcel Stewart, Colleen Wheeler, Alaia Hamer, Peter Jotkus, Vancouver Opera, Eric Chad, David Eaton, Brian Debeck, Nigel Andison, Jennifer Copping, Nicole McLuckie, Jacob Leonard, James Cadigan, Julie McGill, Marcus Youssef, Jenn Griffin, Patti Allan, Caroline Cloutier, Heather Redfern, Paul Mulvihill, Marilyn Allan, Kenneth Scott, Kate Parfitt

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