WHERE THE SUMMIT MEETS THE STARS



Written & Directed by Frank Henry Kaash Katasse



October 7th-23rd



PERSEVERANCE THEATRE

Alaskan Regional Theatre



PERSEVERANCE THEATRE LAND and STEWARDSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First, we acknowledge that Perseverance Theatre is on the sacred homelands of the Áak'w Kwán on Lingít Aani, also colonially known as Douglas-Juneau. We also acknowledge that Lingít Peoples have been stewards of this land since time immemorial and we are grateful for that stewardship and incredible care.

We recognize the series of unjust actions that attempted to remove the Lingít from their land, which includes forced relocations and the burning of villages. We honor the relationships that exist between Lingít Peoples; their lands, their ancestors, descendants, and future generations. We aspire to work toward healing and liberation, recognizing our paths are intertwined in the complex histories of colonization in Alaska.

We also honor and express deep gratitude to the Dena'ina of southcentral Alaska where we also conduct our work in what is colonially known as, Anchorage, Alaska.

An acknowledgment is only the beginning – we must include an acknowledgment of ongoing colonial violence against Indigenous peoples everywhere. Perseverance is taking on the responsibility to learn about settler colonialism to forward decolonizing and re-indigenizing processes to be in right-relations and alignment with Alaska Native and all Native/Indigenous Ancestors, Elders and Descendants past and present to support and advocate for their sovereignty now and well into our future. We work to encourage our neighbors and friends to join us in the continued re-Indigenization of the field of theatre, as we decolonize, work towards our collective liberation, and become good stewards of our relationships, community, land, air and sea.

We know the brilliance; the vibrant languages, cultures, traditions, ways of life and relationships with all aspects of Alaska Native worlds bring knowledges and understandings we cannot know or access without their consent or partnership. We seek to build a right relationship with the Native peoples of Alaska and all Native/Indigenous because it will make our work better (it already has) and because it is the right thing to do.

We acknowledge that we arrived here by listening to the leaders/peoples/elders and their lessons from the past and these stories carry us as we weave a healthier world for future generations.

We are grateful to the Lingít, Dena'ina and all Alaska Native and Native/Indigenous Peoples for our ever-growing relations and collaborations with their leaders, elders, descendants, and organizations that bless us to continue our work and stewardship of Perseverance on Lingít Aani.

Gunalchéesh, Háw'aa, Nt'oyaxsn, Chin'an!

A NOTE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Perseverance Theatre Welcomes You To Our 44th Season!

We are so excited you are joining us for the world premiere of *Where The Summit Meets The Stars*, written and directed by Frank Henry Kaash Katasse (Tlingit)!

This is an important moment to uplift the opening of this new work of Tlingít playwright, Frank Henry Kaash Katasse on Tlingít Aani of the Áak'w Kwáan. Finally, we are able to premiere this new work and lift up Frank Katasse's Perseverance directorial debut! Again, we illuminate Frank Katasse's brilliance and that of the cast, crew, and the creative and production teams, many of whom are returning to work with Perseverance. Aatlein qunalchéesh~

So...where does the summit meet the stars? At the peak of any of our stunning Tongass National Forest Mountaintops? Where, on a dark starry night, on an Aurorafilled night, we feel we can touch and dance with the celestial fields?

Like no other playwright, Frank Katasse captures and pays tribute to our breathtaking Southeast region and navigates a journey through the peaks and valleys of this intergenerational family. It is a powerful gift that he bestows on us with his storytelling—a story that is filled with his guidance of where the summit meets the stars.

As we continue to navigate epidemics/pandemics, I find we are aware, more than ever, of how fragile life is and the need to create a more humane world. This calls us all to be brave enough to look both inwardly and outwardly to recognize each other as fully human – to persevere to heal ourselves and support others to heal.

This also brings me to a moment of remembrance. At the final workshop reading of this play in December 2019, directed by Allison Holtkamp-Waid, many respected Tlingit Elders, family, friends, and community members attended this gathering that culminated in the workshop. Deeply respected Tlingit Clan Leader, Kingeesti David Katzeek, Frank Katasse's Elder, was present and offered beautiful words and wisdom after experiencing the play reading. We were grateful for his presence then and continue to honor Kingeesti David Katzeek now as an Ancestor. Aatlein gunalchéesh~

Today, more than ever, as our families and communities grow, we are supporting the reclamation of Alaska Native languages, art, culture, traditions, along with the wisdom of Ancestors, Elders, and Descendants to heal historical and contemporary traumas. Where The Summit Meets The Stars encourages us to talk to our family members and inspires our individual and collective courage and strength to heal. As Frank Katasses reminds us, "I gu.aa yáx x'wán."

My deepest Japanese bow to Frank Henry Kaash Katasse, the staff, the entire creative company, and especially you, our audience members. Aatlein gunalchéech for your partnership, perseverance and support of our/your theatre. You are why we are still here.

Leslie Ishii, Artistic Director



PERSEVERANCE THEATRE —— Alaskan Regional Theatre ——

Leslie Ishii • Artistic Director Frank Delaney • Managing Director Joe Bedard • Board President

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KTOO Public Media Presents Perseverance Theatre's Production of

WHERE THE SUMMIT MEETS THE STARS

Written and Directed By

Frank Henry Kaash Katasse

Scenic Designer Akiko Nishijima Rotch*
Lighting Designer Emma Deane*
Projection Designer Ryan Anderson
Costume Designer Tee McInnis
Sound Designer / Composer Ed Littlefield / Shaakindustóow
Formline Artist Chloey Klawk Shaa Cavanaugh
Intimacy Choreographer / Movement Consultant Hali Duran

Stage Manager Makayla Michael

Props Master V. Roldan

Master Electrician Willian Todd Hunt

Poster Design Jessica Faust

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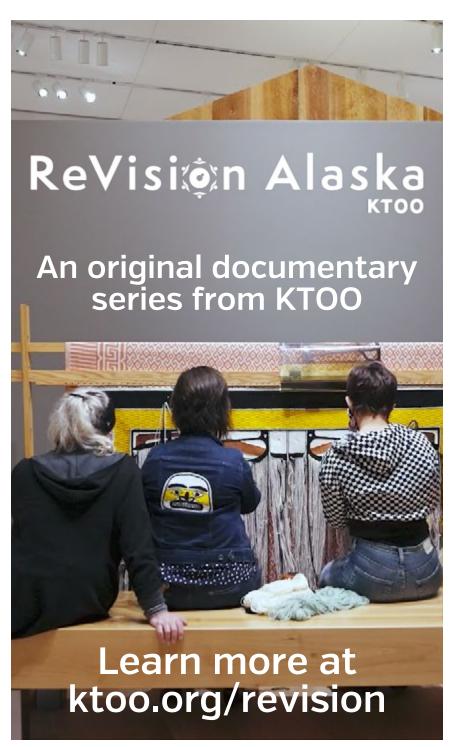






Supported, in part, by a grant from the Alaska State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts

^{*}Member of United Scenic Artist Local USA 829 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees



CAST IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Ed Littlefield / Shaakindustóow	Musician
Jill Kaasteen Meserve	Musician Apprentice
Kenny Ramos	Anthony
Xáalnook Erin Tripp	
Jake Waid	

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION STAFF

Ryan Anderson	Electrics Overhire
Earnest Eckerson	Carpenter
Akiko Nishijima Rotch	
Susan Settje	

SPECIAL THANKS

Clay Good, The Katasse Family, Doug Chilton, Uncle James (our guide) and One People Canoe Society, Abel Ryan, Dr. Worl, Kari Groven and Sealaska Heritage Institute, Mt. Juneau Trading Post and the Tripp Family, President Peterson and Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribe of Alaska, Dean Carin Silkaitis and UAS, X'unei Lance Twitchell, JAMHI, NAMI—



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A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

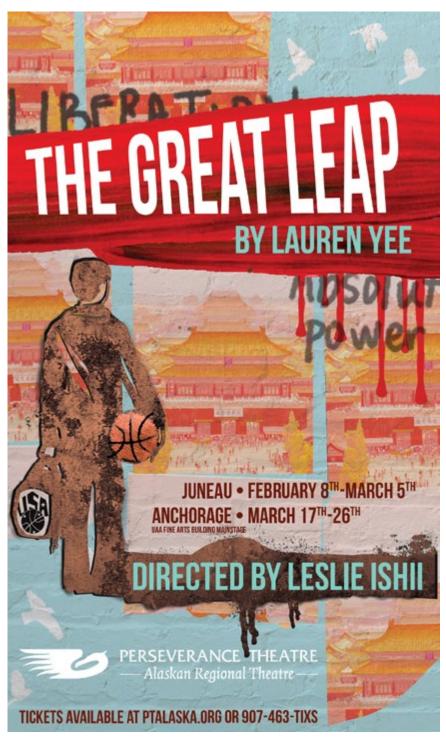
Sh yáa awudinéiyi sháa ka káax'w,

Gunalchéesh haat yeey.aadí! It seems like a lifetime ago that I typed those magic words "END OF PLAY" while I was the Playwright in Residence at La Jolla Playhouse in sunny San Diego in 2017. The entirety of the play written over 6 days and sweaty, sleepless nights. There it went on to have a terrific reading and workshop with Native Voices at the Autry in 2018 with Randy Reinholz and Tom Bryant helping me with Direction and Dramaturgy. By December 2019 we had an amazing reading with Perseverance Theatre and we were trying to figure out the slot Where the Summit Meets the Stars would fit into the next season. Just a few months later we were hit with Covid-19. The production, like the rest of the world, was put on hold. The script laid in limbo for over a year. This gave an opportunity to direct the other play I wrote during my La Jolla residency Spirit of the Valley via Zoom. Then Perseverance Theatre's Artistic Director Leslie Ishii and Associate Producer Joseph Biagini blew wind back into the sails of this play.

Originally my intention of the La Jolla residency was to write a comedy. However, this play haunted me. I couldn't get these characters out of my head. I would wake up at 4am and have a new scene in my head like it was whispered to me in my dreams. The next thing I knew this play was completed and the comedy was still on the title page. Perhaps it was because the heat of California had me homesick for Southeast Alaska, and this play was my love-letter. I have never directed a play on the mainstage of Perseverance Theatre in the 14 years I've been here, so this is a special moment for me. This play is about the place I have lived and loved for the majority of my life. These characters are again a composite of people I have met and stories that have been shared with. These are our voices. This play is home for me. I am so proud to share it with you today. A kaax_ax toowú klig'éi i kaax.

Atlein gunalchéesh for coming and supporting not only myself and Perseverance Theatre, but these amazing indigenous actors and designers as well. They have worked so hard to make this dream a reality. I hope you leave and tell others to come support them as well. Other theatres will take note and your support will make it impossible for theatres across the country to ignore the voices of the people from their land. Stories like this live inside native people across this continent, and the stage gives us a platform to share them to the world. I hope you enjoy this show.

Frank Henry Kaash Katasse



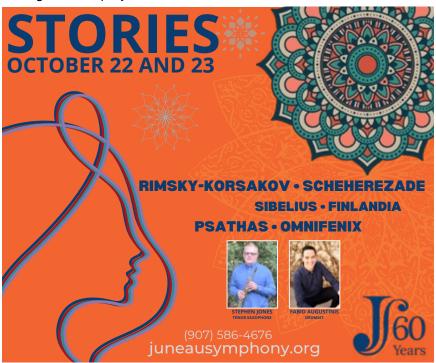
ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Frank Henry Kaash Katasse (Director / Playwright)

Frank Henry Katasse, whose Tlingit name is Kaash, is Alaska Native from the Tsaagweidí Tlingit clan . Frank is an actor, author, director, producer, improviser, author, educator, screenwriter, and playwright. Frank received his Bachelor's Degree in Theatre Arts from the University of Hawaii: Mānoa. Frank is passionate about developing new Alaskan plays for the stage. Frank now lives and works in Douglas, Alaska with his wife, and two children.

A NOTE FROM ABEL RYAN

I was honored and excited to be asked to create a carved piece for this play. Frank Katasse had approached me with an idea for something he wanted to have created for his production and I began sketching ideas and materials for how this was to look. I am carving this paddle/mask from red cedar. It is a beautiful, light, and strong wood that looks amazing when finished. The paddle is just over three feet long with the handle also serving as a mask to be used throughout the play.





PROFILES IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Ryan Anderson (Projections Designer) is an artist specializing in augmented reality and projection living in Anchorage, Alaska. He's served as a technical director for a multitude of Alaska arts organizations, including the Light Brigade & Momentum Dance Co. He's currently trying to steal a shopping mall in downtown Anchorage.

Chloey Klawk Shaa Cavanaugh (Formline Artist) is an LGBTQ+ indigenous artist - Was'ineidi Tax'Hit, Eagle Wolf clan in Kake, Alaska and credits her commitment to community and culture from her grandfather Archie Cavanaugh. Born and raised in Southeast, Chloey believes that the panhandle of Alaska is more than the enchanting beauty it beholds, but a teacher, a way of life, and a distinct part of her Tlingit identity passed down from generation to generation. Chloey graduated with her associate's Degree from Cottey College and her Bachelor's Degree in Strategic Communications: Integrated Marketing from Stephens College. Chloey believes Indigenous voices belong in all spaces and seeks to use her traditional Tlingit values to quide her.

Emma Deane (Lighting Designer) is an Indigenous lighting designer based out of NYC, and a citizen of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation. Credits include *Confederates* (Signature Theatre NYC), *Three Sisters, Much Ado About Nothing* (Two River Theater); *BAKKHAI* (Baltimore Center Stage); *In the Southern Breeze* (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater); *Manahatta* (Yale Repertory Theater); *Tiny Beautiful Things* (TheatreSquared); associate lighting design on *Dreaming Zenzile* (NYTW, St. Louis Rep) and assistant lighting design on Broadway's *Skin of Our Teeth*. Other credits include work with Yale School of Drama, Yale Cabaret, Filament Theatre, Interrobang Theatre Project, The Fisher Center at Bard, Court Theatre, The Goodman, Albany Park Theater Project, Steppenwolf Theater Company, Northlight Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Victory Gardens, and Shakespeare Academy at Stratford. MFA - Yale School of Drama. USA 829.

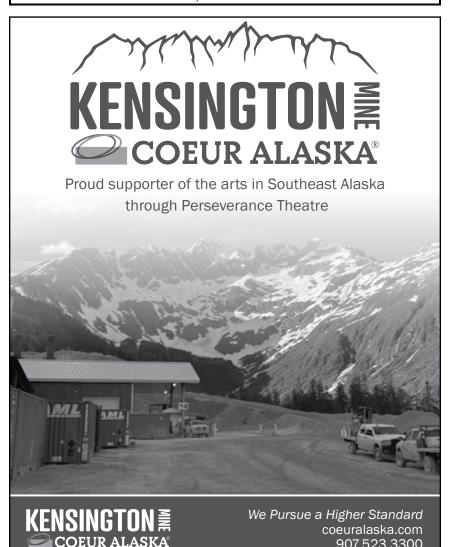




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Hali Duran (Intimacy Choreographer / Movement Consultant) studied at the International Ballet School, Colorado Conservatory of Dance, and the University of Colorado, Boulder. Notable production credits include directing for La Liberazione di Ruggiero dall' isola di Alcina and Juneau's Got Talent, choreography for Fun Home, West Side Story, Next to Normal, Whale Song, Peter and the Starcatcher, and Sweeney Todd, and was a performer in productions of A Wolf Called Romeo, Guys and Dolls, Chicago, and Princes Sophia. She is currently studying at Intimacy Directors and Coordinators and is proud to be a board member of the New JACC Partnership Board.

Ed Littlefield / Shaakindustóow - Lingít (Musician / Composer / Sound Designer) is a freelance percussionist, educator, and composer based out of Seattle, WA. He has played K'alyaan in the world-premiere of *Battles of Fire and Water* by Dave Hunsaker and written and performed an original musical score for *Eurydice* by Sara Ruhl for Perseverance Theater. He has done sound design and composition for the world premieres of *Our Voices Will Be Heard* by Vera Starbard, and was the composer and cultural advisor for *They Don't Talk Back* by Frank Henry Kaash Katasse at Native voices at the Autry, La Jolla Playhouse and Perseverance Theater. He also did sound design for *Off the Rails* by Randy Reinholz at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and *Sovereignty* by Mary Kathryn Nagle at Arena Stage. Most recently he composed the songs for a new play produced by the University of Illinois – Urbana-Champaign called *The Neverland* by Madeline Sayet.

Tee McInnis (Costume Designer)(she/her, they/them) Lingít (Black Indigenous) is an artist from Lingít Aani. Tee started sewing at 8 years old and has used this skill as a costume designer for a variety of events in town. She has designed the emcee costumes for *Wearable Art*, dresses many local performers for concerts, and also shares her talent with the local drag community. When not designing costumes, Tee also enjoys roller skating and performing as a Drag King. Tee would like to thank her ancestors for her gifts and dedicates this work to them.



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Jill Kaasteen Meserve (Musician Apprentice) is Lingít (Tlingit), Chookaneidí (Eagle Brown Bear clan) from Hoonah. Jill is a dedicated learner of the Tlingit language, and is a crafter of many kinds, particularly of beadwork and incorporating traditional methods into contemporary designs. She graduated from the University of Alaska Southeast with a BLA in Alaska Native Languages and Studies where she focused on learning the Tlingit language. Jill is a Lingít Language Instructor for Haa Yoo X'atángi Kúdi the Lingít Language Immersion Nest with Tlingit & Haida. Jill has previously been seen as Shaa in *Spirit of the Valley*, a virtual production written and directed by Frank Henry Kaash Katasse.

Makayla Michael (Stage Manager) is a graduate of Wright State University in Dayton, OH. Since then, she has worked on plays, musicals, and operas across the country. She is excited to return to Perseverance after stage managing *The Brothers Paranormal* last season. Other credits include *The Magic Flute* with Utah Festival, *The Little Mermaid* and *Footloose* with LaComedia, *Application Pending & Home* with CATCO, *Salome* with Dayton Opera, and *Faust* with Opera Omaha. She began her career with internships at the Hangar Theatre in Ithaca, NY and Central City Opera in Colorado. She is very excited to be back in Alaska and working with Perseverance Theatre to bring this show to audiences. Enjoy the show!



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Kenny Ramos (Anthony) is from the Barona Band of Mission Indians/ Kumeyaay Nation and grew up on the Barona Indian Reservation in southern California. He is overjoyed to return to Perseverance, where he previously appeared in the world premiere production of Vera Starbard's Devilfish. Other favorite acting credits: Larissa FastHorse's Urban Rez and Native Nation (Cornerstone); Mary Kathryn Nagle's Return to Niobrara (Omaha Theater Company); Madeline Sayet's The Neverland (Illinois Theater); Dillon Chitto's Bingo Hall (Native Voices). He's also worked at South Dakota Shakespeare Festival, Passage Theater, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Denver Center, Seattle Rep, and The Kennedy Center. Awards: First Peoples Fund's Cultural Capital Fellowship, Theatre Communications Group's Fox Foundation Resident Actor Fellowship. and Yale RITM's Mellon Arts Practitioner Fellowship. Education: BA in American Indian Studies, UCLA. Kenny is a proud ensemble member at Cornerstone Theater Company in Los Angeles and a current Artist-in-Residence at La Jolla Playhouse in San Diego. @krayramos

Akiko Nishijima Rotch (Scenic Designer) is so happy to be back to Perseverance Theatre. This is her first set design project since COVID hit. Since 2020 she has been exploring the TV and film industry as a Scenic Artist working with Hudson Scenic Studios and Scenic Art Studios in New York. TV credits include *FBI*, Kevin Bacon's *City on a Hill, The Last OG*, and her current project, *East New York* (CBS). Akiko is so thrilled to apply her new TV and film scenic skills to this Set. She has taught design and scenic art at Whitman College, and designed and painted several world premieres at Perseverance Theater. Akiko is a native of Tokyo, Japan, and studied design at Parsons, and NYU-Tisch. She has an MFA in set design.

V. Roldan (Props Master) V. is very grateful and honored to work on this show. They have been involved in theatre for as long as they can remember. This is their third show as Props Person. They have worked on and off with Perseverance Theater for the past few years, working backstage for shows on the Mainstage, the Black Box, and with the Young Company and STAR Program.





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Xáalnook Erin Tripp (Rose) is a Lingít Deisheetaan actor born and raised in Juneau. She received a Bachelor of Liberal Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies (primary emphasis in theatre, secondary emphasis in Lingít language) from the University of Alaska Southeast. She has been acting with Perseverance Theatre for over 10 years, and has performed around Alaska, including a touring production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Fairbanks Shakespeare Theatre that was partially translated into Gwich'in. Most recently, Erin performed in *Othello* at South Dakota Shakespeare and in *We the Peoples Before* at The Kennedy Center. She has also provided narration for young adult audiobooks by Alaskan author Bonnie-Sue Hitchcock ('The Smell of Other People's Houses' and 'Everyone Dies Famous in A Small Town'). You can learn more about Erin at www. erintripp.com and on Instagram at @erins library.

Jake Waid (John) (Tlingit & Haida) was last seen at Perseverance Theatre as Paul in *They Don't Talk Back*. Other PT favorites: the title role in Hamlet, Tom in *The Glass Menagerie*, Raven in *Raven Odyssey*, Starbuck/Queequeg in *Moby Dick*, and the title role in *Macbeth*, which, in partnership with The Kennedy Center and Shakespeare Theatre Company, was translated into Tlingit and performed at The Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian in Washington D.C. Most recently: Don Pedro in *Much Ado About Nothing* at Shakespeare and Company, and originated the role of John Ross / Jim Ross in Mary Katherine Nagle's *Sovereignty* at both Arena Stage and Marin Theatre Company. Other theatres: Fairbanks Shakespeare Theatre, History Theatre, Pillsbury House, Working Class Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Native Voices at the Autry, and Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival. Film: *Cortez*, and *Feels Good*. Training: Cornish College and Freehold Theatre Lab/Studio. Instagram: @waidjake.



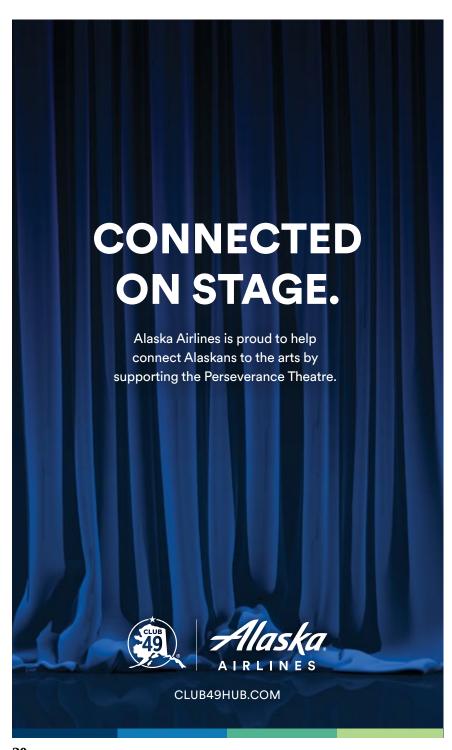
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WHO WE ARE

The mission of Perseverance Theatre is to create professional theatre by and for Alaskans.

Perseverance values community engagement, cross-cultural and cross-racial collaboration, professional rigor, and regional voice. Alaska is full of stories and characters that aren't found anywhere else in the world. Perseverance is committed to creating theatre that represents all that is great about Alaska, and to bringing great live theatre to our Alaskan audiences.

Perseverance Theatre believes theatre-going creates shared experiences for our communities, which foster empathy, build relationships, and cultivate communication skills, and in the process better equip us all to solve problems together and create more vital and just communities.

In 1979, Molly Smith founded Perseverance Theatre, following her dream of starting a professional theatre company in her hometown. Over forty years, Perseverance has grown to serve 20,000 audience members, in both Juneau and in Anchorage, employ over 400 artists, and engage 300 volunteers annually to produce a season of classical, contemporary, and world premiere productions on our stages.

Perseverance believes that professional theatres play a vital role in training and cultivating the next generation of artists and audiences. The theatre's education department produces extensive education and training programs, including Summer Theatre Arts Rendezvous (STAR), mainstage student matinees, and season-long internships.

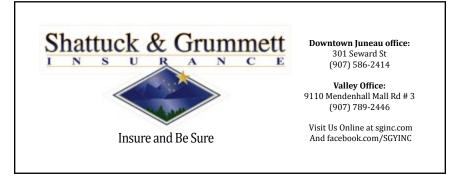
Perseverance has premiered more than 70 new plays by Alaskan and national playwrights. Perseverance has a national profile, known for its commitment to developing artists and engaging programming reflective of the highly diverse communities of Alaska, to deliver the finest professional theatre anywhere to our loyal and local audiences.



LEADERSHIP

Frank Delaney (Managing Director) After completing his MFA in acting Frank worked as a fight choreographer and actor throughout the Midwest. He returned to Alaska to work on *Othello* at Perseverance. Born and bred in Anchorage, Frank is excited to have the opportunity to help lead Perseverance into it's next chapter. He has more than twenty years of experience in the IT world as a manager, technician, and project manager. That work took him to every corner of the state. As an actor and choreographer some of the companies Frank has worked within addition to Perseverance Theatre include Cincinnati Shakespeare Company, Shawnee Summer Theatre, Midnight Summit Ensemble, the Know Theatre, Cyrano's Theatre Company, and Anchorage Opera.

Leslie Ishii (Artistic Director) is a leader in the American Theatre in many capacities. (Stage Director) Perseverance Theatre: Upcoming, The Great Leap, and Voyager One, Devilfish, Silent Sky, We Hold These Truths; East West Players: Takarazuka!!!, Taking Flight: The Katherine Cheung Story, Crimes Of The Heart; Artists At Play: 99 Histories; productions at UC. Irvine, USC, CSLA: Oregon Shakespeare Festival: Founder/Director of API 2x2 Lab New Works Residency, Dramaturgy, FAIR Assistant Director Program Recipient: and where she began, Northwest Asian American Theatre. (Actor) Broadway, other regional theatre—Penumbra Theatre Company, Theater Mu, El Teatro Campesino, American Conservatory Theatre, and South Coast Repertory to name a few. She has also appeared in TV and film. (National Scope) Board President: Consortium of Asian American Theaters and Artists: Co-Founder National BIPOC/ BITOC Coalition/Commons for the sustainability of artists and theatres of color; Board Member/Membership Committee: National New Play Network; Steering Committee: Anchorage Arts Group; Co-Chair of Coalition Building/Website Subcommittees: Professional Non-Profit Theatre Coalition: BIPOC Advisory Circle and co-facilitated the launch of the E/D/I Institute: Theatre Communication Group; Core faculty, artEquity working throughout the US with arts and culture organizations.



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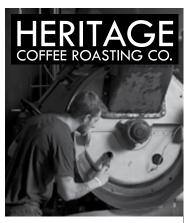
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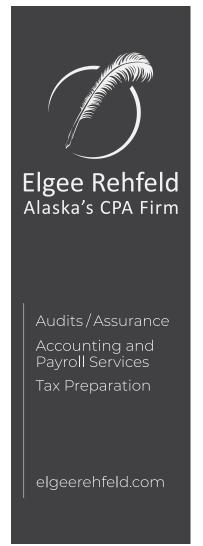
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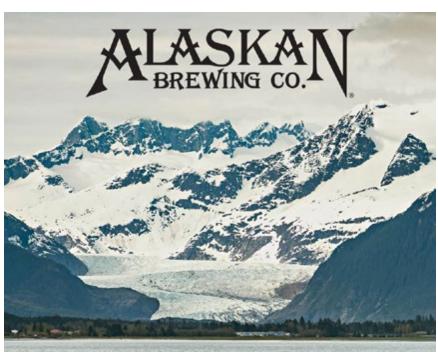
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