**Sense and Sensibility**

By Kate Hamill

Based on the novel by Jane Austen

March 2–April 2, 2023

Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage

Running time: approx. 2h 35m (including one intermission)

**Starring:**

**Abraham Asto** colonel brandon/thomas/mrs. ferrars/gossip

**Sarah Cantuba** margaret dashwood/lucy steele/charlotte palmer/gossip

**Jay Clift** john willoughby/gossip/john dashwood

**Janet Gigliotti** mrs. dashwood/anne steele/gossip

**Nyiri Karakas** elinor

**Nora McLellan** mrs. jennings/gossip

**Andrew McNee** sir john middleton/doctor/servant/gossip

**Kamyar Pazandeh** edward ferrars/robert ferrars/servant/gossip

**Emma Slipp** fanny dashwood/lady middleton/gossip

**Amanda Sum** marianne

**Creative team:**

**Rachel Peake** director

**Tara Cheyenne Friedenberg** choreographer

**Shizuka Kai** setdesigner

**Jaqueline Firkins** costumedesigner

**Itai Erdal** lightingdesigner

**Anton Lipovetsky** sounddesigner

**Mike Kovac** fight director

**Laura Ross** assistant director

**Brian Ball** assistant to the set designer

**Jessica Oostergo** assistant to the set designer

**Caryn Fehr** stage manager

**Ronaye Haynes**assistant stage manager

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Arts Club Theatre Company acknowledges that this production takes place on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Coast Salish Peoples, in particular the xʷməθkʷəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and sə’ lilwətaɁɬ̓ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. We are honoured to live, work, and create on this land together.

WELCOME MESSAGE

Welcome to our production of Sense and Sensibility, adapted for the stage from Jane Austen’s novel by Kate Hamill, at the Arts Club’s flagship theatre, the Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage. We are thrilled you could join us, and we know you are in for a treat.

Jane Austen’s book, the genesis of this play, was first a story in her head; one that she transcribed from her thoughts in book form, and one that Kate Hamill has now adapted for the stage. Here, at the Arts Club, we believe in the power of storytelling. So much so that our vision statement is that we see a community that, through storytelling, is inspired to reflect on who we are and who we can be. And we support this vision statement through our Silver Commissions new play development program, our Emerging Playwrights’ Unit, and a variety of programs for youth to learn about playwriting. In fact, our oldest storytelling program is called just that: LEAP–Learning Early About Playwriting.

LEAP has been running at the Arts Club since 2006. It is a free and interactive program for youth, ages 16 to 25, who are interested in playwriting and want to learn more. It is a full-scholarship program, and it is 100% funded by donors and sponsors. There is no cost to students.

Since 2007, Shawn Macdonald has been the lead instructor for the program, and he has mentored nearly 200 students in the creation of their plays. That’s 15 years of inspiring students to find their voice, and to learn how to tell their story through theatre. An accomplished playwright and actor himself (you may remember him as our original talking clock, Cogsworth, in Disney’s Beauty and the Beast), Shawn’s nurture of the participants of LEAP has been exemplary and his strong guidance of this program has seen it develop from strength to strength.

After this season, Shawn is moving on from our LEAP program. We want to say, bravo, Shawn! Your passion for this art form, and your ability to harness that passion in your Arts Club students, leaves a legacy of stories that will linger forever. Thank you from all of us at the Arts Club.

You can come along and see for yourself the great work that Shawn and the LEAP students have created at this year’s LEAP Festival, running from May 12 to 14 at our Newmont Stage at the BMO Theatre Centre. If you would like to donate to support free programs like this one in our local community, just call our box office at 604.687.1644 or donate online at artsclub.com.

**ashlie corcoran** artistic director

**peter cathie white** executive director

DIRECTORS NOTE

Sense and Sensibility. Reason and Passion. Jane Austen’s exploration of these core elements of our humanity is a huge part of what continues to draw us to this work, and what drives so many writers to want to explore it through adaptation.

If I were a writer, I would want to be Kate Hamill. I first discovered her work in 2016 and instantly fell in love. Her ability to mix cinematically short scenes (which appeal to our contemporary attention spans) inside highly playful theatrical devices is thrilling. Her style truly captures Jane Austen and taps into something innate in all of us. The first time I saw one of her productions I felt the whole audience join together as if we were playing a game with the actors, implicating us in a delicious way. Her vision allows us to time travel to a world of strict social etiquette, but not to be burdened by it. Instead, to revel in the anachronisms.

In this version of the story, our playwright gives gossip a human form. We experience the Gossips as a sort of comic Greek chorus who give us, the audience, an entry point into the play. They are a personification of the rules and boundaries that Marianne and Elinor live within. Which are oppressive. But also, in this telling, have a twinkle of mischief.

Along with the rigid structure of Georgian society came an obsession with marriage. As a 21st-century feminist, I recoil from the idea that all of our problems can be solved through marriage. At the same time, when I engage with these stories, I can feel myself reaching through time to my sisters. Women of this class had little hope of employment. Their training was in needlepoint, sketching, amateur musicianship. Very little of value when it comes to earning one’s living. Their future, their happiness, their security, their safety relied on the right marriage. Marrying a cruel man could lead to a life of misery. Marrying frivolously could lead to poverty and ruin. Failing to marry often meant becoming a burden. And yet, in the pursuit of marriage (as in most things), women had no direct means to go after what they wanted. My heart aches for them when I think of those stakes, inside a game that I’m sure at times felt almost impossible to win.

This is a story full of heart, full of joy. At the same time, it makes us look at ourselves and think a little about where sense is best put to work, and where we can allow our sensibility to run free. Perhaps we are best served by our Elinor, but we should hope to always preserve a place for Marianne.

In the words of our playwright: "Have fun—Jane Austen would approve."

**rachel peake**

ARTISTIC TEAM

**ABRAHAM ASTO** colonel brandon/thomas/mrs. ferrars/gossip

For the Arts Club: A Thousand Splendid Suns

Other: Breaking away from conventional performer profiles here— what a breath of fresh air to come back to live theatre; to feel the pulsation of the life force of the piece with the breath of the audience infusing each moment; to break away from containment and to play wildly and free for multiple evenings. What a blessing; what joy after these years of ellipses. And thank you—you who I do this for; may joy continue to flow plentifully through our lives. Recent BC film and TV credits include Reacher (Amazon); Grease: Rise of the Pink Ladies (Paramount); Love, Classified (Hallmark); and Polarized. Recent BC theatre credits include A Miracle on 34th Street (Chemainus Theatre Festival) and A Thousand Splendid Suns (Arts Club).

**BRIAN BALL** assistant to the set designer

For the Arts Club: Hand to God (Set Designer, 2017)

Other Theatre: recent credits: Lost (Set and Costume Designer, Capilano University Theatre); We Will Rock You (Costume Designer, Theatre under the Stars); Mad Forest (Set Designer, Douglas College Theatre); Becoming Dr. Ruth (Set Designer, Theatre Northwest); Urinetown the Musical (Set Designer, Capilano University Theatre); The Mountaintop (Set Designer, Pacific Theatre Vancouver); Thursday Night Bridge Club (Set Designer, United Players Vancouver

**SARAH CANTUBA** margaret dashwood/lucy steele/charlotte palmer/gossip

For the Arts Club: The Sound of Music (debut, 2022)

Other Theatre: Sense & Sensibility (Capilano University Theatre); 42nd Street (Theatre under the Stars); SEETHERED (rEvolver Festival)

Film & TV: Two Sentence Horror Stories, Charmed (CW); Schmigadoon (Apple TV); The Magical Christmas Village (Hallmark)

Other: Graduate of Capilano University’s Musical Theatre program. Lead vocalist with Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines. Sarah would like to send thanks to the creative team, an incredible cast & crew, her friends and family for their endless love and support. @sarahcantuba\_

**JAY CLIFT** john willoughby/gossip/john dashwood

For the Arts Club: Debut

Other Theatre: selected credits: A Tiny Christmas Carol (Chemainus Theatre Festival); Pride and Prejudice (Persephone Theatre); Long Division (Pi Theatre); Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf (Citadel Theatre); Our Town (Caravan Farm Theatre); Shop Talk (Theatre SKAM)

Film & TV: Riverdale, Superwoman, Fringe, Batwoman, The 100, Legends of Tomorrow

Other: Jay is an award-winning actor and designer; graduate of Studio 58; Jay stars in the Queer Art-House Horror film The Latent Image in theaters, Blu-Ray and VOD later this year.

**ITAI ERDAL** lighting designer

For the Arts Club: Billy Bishop Goes to War (debut, 2010); recent favourites: The Sound of Music, Da Kink in My Hair, Buffoon, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time

Other Theatre: Mother Courage, Titus Andronicus, Elektra, The Breathing Hole, The Komagata Maru Incident, Best Brothers, Hirsch, The Thrill, Taking Shakespeare (Stratford Festival); Orfeo ed Eurydice (Vancouver Opera); Copenhagen (NAC)

Other: Awards: Six Jessie awards, a Dora award, a Dublin Fringe Design award, a Critics’ Choice Spotlight award, a Jack King Award, a Winnipeg Theatre award, a Guthrie award, shortlisted to the Siminovitch prize.

**CARYN FEHR** stage manager

For the Arts Club: Ain’t Misbehavin’ (debut, 1986); most recently: Mom’s the Word: Talking Turkey, Smoky Mountain Christmas Carol, Buffoon, The Shoplifters, A Thousand Splendid Suns, The Great Leap, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the NightTime, Once, Forget About Tomorrow

Other Theatre: recent credits: Yellow Fever (Firehall Arts Centre); Sexual Misconduct of the Middle Classes, Same Old, Same Old (Belfry Theatre, Victoria).

Other: Caryn has toured with productions throughout Canada and to Ireland and has worked locally with many Vancouver companies, including the Vancouver Playhouse, Touchstone Theatre, the Firehall Arts Centre, and Carousel Theatre. She is a recipient of the Mary Phillips Prize for Behind-the-Scenes Achievement

**JAQUELINE FIRKINS** costume designer

For the Arts Club: Onegin

Other Theatre: Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Court Theatre, Portland Center Stage, Long Wharf Theatre, Hartford Stage Company, Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Dallas Theatre Center, Getty Museum

Other: Jacqueline’s published novels include a YA adaptation of Jane Austen's Mansfield Park entitled Hearts, Strings, and Other Breakable Things

**TARA CHEYENNE FRIEDENBERG** choreographer

For the Arts Club: Cipher

Other Theatre: most recently: Midsummer Night's Dream (Bard on the Beach); In My Day (Zee Zee Theatre/The Cultch); Men Express Their Feelings (Zee Zee Theatre); The Boy in the Moon (Neworld Theatre); Straight White Men (Itsazoo Theatre/Gateway Theatre); Berlin: The Last Cabaret (City Opera Vancouver/PuSh Festival)

Other: Solo shows to her credit include bANGER, Goggles, Porno Death Cult, I can’t remember the word for I can’t remember, Body Parts (Vancouver premiere, The Cultch, May 2–6, 2023). taracheyenne.com

**JANET GIGLIOTTI** mrs. dashwood/anne steele/gossip

For the Arts Club: Fun Home, Godspell, A Christmas Story, Les Misérables (debut)

Other Theatre: Talking Sex on Sunday (Firehall); 42nd Street (Theatre under the Stars); End of the Rainbow (ACE); Life After (Toronto Fringe); Buddy Holly Story (Chemainus Theatre Festival); Elf (Persephone); Mamma Mia! (Mirvish); most recently Janet has been working on writing and performing in 3 am in the Persian Room, a new play about the outrageous Kay Thompson.

Other: Janet is delighted and extremely grateful to be working with this wonderful group on this fabulous show. janetgigliotti.com.

**RONAYE HAYNES**  assistant stage manager

For the Arts Club: Miss Saigon (debut); recent favourites: Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly, Bed & Breakfast, Once, Disney’s Beauty and the Beast, It’s Snowing on Saltspring, Boeing, Boeing, 2 Pianos, 4 Hands, Forget About Tomorrow, Million Dollar Quartet, Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story

Other Theatre: Classic Country Roads, The Magician’s Nephew, I & You (Chemainus Theatre Festival); Elephant & Piggie’s “We are in a Play” (Carousel Theatre for Young People); The Secret Garden, Art, Brighton Beach Memoirs (Gateway Theatre)

Other: Ronaye thanks you…yes YOU...for coming back to theatre and supporting us! We are thrilled to share this show with you!

**SHIZUKA KAI** set designer

For the Arts Club: Topdog/Underdog, Sweat, Dolly Parton’s Smoky Mountain Christmas Carol

Other Theatre: Ladies and Gentlemen, Boys and Girls (Carousel Theatre for Young People); Clean / Espejos (Neworld Theatre); Le merveilleux voyage d'Inès de l'Ouest (Théâtre la Seizième); Something Rotten! (Theatre under the Stars)

Film & TV: as Puppeteer: FortisBC Energy Is Awesome eps. 1–7 (Media Button); Lost Ollie (Netflix); SuperChefs (pilot)

Other: Five-time Jessie award winner with multiple nominations; graduate of Studio 58. Recipient of the Earl Klein Memorial Scholarship / Bill Millerd Artist Fund / Steven B Jung Award. Past Interim CoArtistic & Managing Director of Carousel Theatre for Young People (2020–21).

**NYIRI KARAKAS** elinor

For the Arts Club: Debut

Other Theatre: Children of Fire (Nightwood Theatre/ Aluna); The House of Bernarda Alba (Modern Times Stage Company/Aluna); A Midsummer Night's Dream (Shakespeare Bash'd); As You Like It (Bard in the Park); Top Girls (Alumnae Theatre); The Penelopiad (Hart House Theatre)

Film & TV: Tiny Pretty Things (Netflix)

Other: Nyiri is a Canadian-Armenian actor from Vancouver. She previously completed her studies in political science, holding an M.A. in International Public Policy. Following a 360-degree career change, she pursued an M.A. in Acting at East 15 Acting School in London, UK, where she was also part of a residency at Shakespeare’s Globe. She would like to thank her family and all her mentors and teachers (& directors) who have supported her and opened her path. Nyiri can next be seen in Gaslight at the Chemainus Theatre Festival.

**MIKE KOVAC** fight director

For the Arts Club: The Thing About Men (debut, 2009); as Fight Director: Disney’s Beauty and the Beast, Mustard, Misery, Noises Off, Forgiveness, The Cull

Other Theatre: Children of God, Les Filles du Roi (Urban Ink); Sweeney Todd, Cabaret (Snapshots Collective); She Kills Monsters, The Crucible (UBC)

Film & TV: Batwoman, Tin Star, The 100, Supernatural, Kung Fu, Fake Blood

Other: Recipient of the Paddy Crean Award and J.P. Fournier Award – Fight Directors Canada

**ANTON LIPOVETSKY** sound designer

For Arts Club: Noises Off, It’s a Wonderful Christmasish Holiday Miracle, One Man, Two Guvnors, The Unplugging

Other Theatre: as Sound Designer: Like It or Not (Green Thumb); as Composer/ Lyricist: Crescendo Series, 2020-2023 (Musical Stage Company); Blackout (Musical Stage/Canadian Stage/NAMT); Elbow Room (Zee Zee); Best Laid Plans (Touchstone/Patrick Street); upcoming musicals: Cowboy Tempest Cabaret (Musical Stage); Way Out There (YES Theatre)

Other: Shortlisted three times for Playwright's Guild of Canada Musical Award; graduate of Studio 58 and the Stratford Birmingham Conservatory. Special thanks: ElizabethInstagram/ Tiktok: @antronsongs

**NORA MCLELLAN** mrs. jennings/gossip

For the Arts Club: Vanities, Starting Here, Starting Now, The Club, Miracle Mother, August:Osage County, The Matchmaker, Noises Off

Other Theatre: Julius Caesar, A Doll’s House, Lovers Winners, Charley’s Aunt, A Little Night Music, Noises Off, The Heidi Chronicles, The Drowsy Chaperone (Vancouver Playhouse); Much Ado About Nothing (Shakespeare in High Park); over 25 seasons with Shaw and Stratford Festivals

Film & TV: Sister Rose on CBC’s Son of a Critch, Orphan Black, Killjoys, Cardinal, Saving Hope, Strays, Hudson & Rex

Other: Three-time Jessie award recipient for Road (Actors Resource Group), Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf? (Vancouver Playhouse), and The Matchmaker (Arts Club); Toronto Theatre Critics award: John (Company Theatre ); two Dora awards: Music for Contortionist and John. In memory of Christopher Newton, Andrew Rhodes, Wendy Noel, and Maureen MacDonald.

**ANDREW MCNEE** sir john middleton/doctor/servant/gossip

For the Arts Club: To Kill a Mockingbird (debut, 2002); recent favourites: Buffoon, Mustard, Noises Off, One Man, Two Guvnors, Boeing, Boeing, Onegin

Other Theatre: worked often with many companies including Bard on the Beach, The Belfry, Electric Company, Theatre Replacement, Theatre Calgary, NeWorld, Solo Collective, Theatre Melee

Film & TV: I've been that guy that gets murdered in the first half of lots of shows, and your kids may recognize my voice as some robot or pony or alien from a cartoon.

Other: A dozen-ish Jessie award nominations, three-time winner. Graduate of Studio 58. Love and gratitude to my wife Karen, and my fantastic rascally kids Finn and Tom.

**JESSICA OOSTERGO** assistant to the set designer

For the Arts Club: Kim’s Convenience, It's a Wonderful Christmasish Holiday Miracle, Angels in America, Intimate Apparel

Other Theatre: An Undeveloped Sound (Electric Company); A Chorus Line (Studio 58), Anne of Green Gables (Gateway); Almost a Full Moon (Citadel); Benevolence (Ruby Slippers); Derwent is Different (Green Thumb); To Perfection (Shameless Hussy); Morag, You’re a Long Time Died (Touchstone/The Frank); Bunny (The Search Party); Clean (Neworld)

Film & TV: Cutter/Prep Costumer/ Builder, The Magicians (SYFY/NBC); music videos: “Black Licorice” (Peach Pit), “Vessel” (Royal), “I Knew You When” (Marianas Trench)

Other: Three-time Jessie award winner for Significant Artistic Achievement, with a total of seven nominations. A member of ADC 659 and graduate of Studio 58 and Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

**KAMYAR PAZANDEH** edward ferrars/robert ferrars/servant/gossip

For the Arts Club: The Men in White (debut, 2017); Disney’s Beauty and the Beast, The Piano Teacher, Jitters

Other Theatre: Shakespeare in Love, The Taming of the Shrew, Pericles, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, The Merchant of Venice, Othello (Bard on the Beach); Something Rotten! (Theatre under the Stars); Cabaret (Raincity); The Three Little Pigs (Carousel Theatre for Young People); Forever Plaid (Mayfield)

Film & TV: Virgin River, Arrow, Debris, Motherland, Charmed

Other: Jessie award nominee and twotime Ovation! award winner; graduate of Studio 58.

**RACHEL PEAKE** director

For the Arts Club: Associate Artistic Director; Associate Director, Made In Italy; Revival Director, The Glass Menagerie

Other Theatre: Something Rotten! (Theatre under the Stars); 9 to 5, The Garneau Block (Citadel Theatre); Nos repaires (La Seizième); Christmas Carol (Gateway); The Contest of the Winds (Caravan); Angels in America: Part One (Studio 58); Green Lake, After Jerusalem (Solo Collective); Trout Stanley (Persephone); Miss Caledonia (WCT); Opera: The Pearl Fishers, La voix humaine, La Cenerentola, The Marriage of Figaro, Stickboy (VOA)

Other: Ovation! award winner (2023), three-time Jessie award winner. Studied at U. of A. and Studio 58; interned at the Shaw and Stratford Festival and at the Komische Oper, Berlin. rachelpeake.com

**LAURA ROSS** assistant director

Arts Club: Debut

Other Theatre: performing favourites: Dixie Swim Club (Peninsula Productions); Anything Goes (RCMT); The Drowsy Chaperone (Prairie Skies); Crazy for You (Gateway Theatre); Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat (Chemainus Theatre Festival); Hello, Dolly! (Vancouver Playhouse); choreography favourites: M is for Music (Vancouver Symphony); A Christmas Carol (Pacific Theatre); The Euphio Question (Little Mountain Lion)

Other: Laura is delighted to be a part of the Sense and Sensibility team and expanding her skill set under mentors like Rachel Peake. Special thanks to the CGDC for introducing us and to my partner Michael for being my rock… as always.

**EMMA SLIPP** fanny dashwood/lady middleton/gossip

For the Arts Club: Redbone Coonhound, Noises Off, Farewell My Lovely

Other Theatre: selected career highlights: Bunny, The Father (The Search Party); Boeing, Boeing (Persephone); As You Like It, Macbeth (Bard on the Beach); Outside Mullingar, Silent Sky, Singin’ in the Rain (Chemainus Theatre Festival); Elbow Room Cafe (Zeezee); The Rivals (Blackbird); Moss Park (Green Thumb/ GCTC); The Violet Hour (Belfry)

Other: Emma is a graduate of Studio 58 and Jessie award winner. Coming up you can see her in Stupid F\*Ing Bird at the Cultch.

**AMANDA SUM** marianne

Arts Club: Debut

Other Theatre: four seasons of the East Van Panto (Theatre Replacement); Do You Want What I Have Got? A Craigslist Cantata (The Cultch); Chicken Girl (rice&beans); New Societies (re:current theatre); The Wolves (With a Spoon/ Rumble/Pacific)

Other: music: Debut indie/alt pop album New Age Attitudes released last fall. Juno nominated, SXSW nominated, Vimeo Staff Pick, and AAIFF Excellence in Music Video Award for Different Than Before (directed by Mayumi Yoshida). Film choreography: Wide Stance Dance (commissioned by F-O-R-M), Groupthink and Different Than Before (independently released music videos). Theatre Replacement COLLIDER Artist in Residence, premiering live performance piece, New Age Attitudes: Live in Concert, at The Cultch in May. Graduate of SFU in Theatre Performance. www.amandasum.com / @amanduhsum

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**Our board and staff lists are available upon request.**

**Contact info@artsclub.com**

The Arts Club Theatre Company is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT), The Greater Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance, and the BC Alliance for Arts and Culture, and operates under the jurisdiction of Canadian Actors’ Equity Association.

Pre-Production personnel and stage crew are members of Local 118 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, and guest services staff are members of Unifor 3000.

The Arts Club Theatre Company, one of the largest not-for-profit theatre companies in the country, is the principal gathering place for the theatrical arts in British Columbia. The organization is dedicated to the advancement of local artists telling stories from around the globe and, in particular, those of our region. From this, we believe that culture expands, an understanding of differences is nurtured, and art bursts forth. The Arts Club was founded in 1964 and is currently led by Artistic Director Ashlie Corcoran and Executive Director Peter Cathie White.

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