

Saturday's free Masterclass takes youth BACKSTAGE IN STRATFORD

PAL CANADA's Next Masterclass for Youth involves designing and generating costumes, headdresses & props ...



Toronto, Ontario Feb 15, 2023 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - “In our next free Masterclass called **BACKSTAGE IN STRATFORD**, young people will be able to engage with some of the great theatre professionals who work backstage in the infamous theatre town of Stratford, Ontario,” says Andre Szilvassy, Chair, PAL Canada, the organization which created the Behind The Scenes Masterclass series for youth, especially Indigenous youth, free of charge for all. “There are still a few spots open for this Saturday,” he adds, but space is limited. All youth (ages 14-30) must SIGN-UP to participate this February 11 at 1 PM ET via Zoom, and for upcoming free Masterclasses.

Through the leadership of highly regarded professionals in the backstage world of theatre, the PAL Canada BACKSTAGE IN STRATFORD Masterclass—presented by PAL Stratford and Off The Wall—will offer candid insight and trade secrets about good jobs in props building, costume design, set design as well as crafting and generating hats & headdresses for a production.

The Theatre Professionals

Jeremy Cox launched his theatre production career at the Stratford Festival as an apprentice in prop building, and recently completed five seasons as head of stage carpentry at the Grand Theatre in London. He’s built shows at TIFF Bell Lightbox including the James Bond exhibit: *Designing 007: 50 Years of Bond Style*, and taught at OCAD University. His teaching has taken him to El Salvador and back to Stratford, where he’s taught Stage Carpentry at Off the Wall for four seasons.

Michelle Jamieson has been a prop builder and scenic artist on hundreds of productions of Shakespeare, Canadian work, musicals, and new plays since 2004, creating props first for the Blyth Festival and now at the Stratford Festival. She studied theatre production at York University. Her passion for masks, props, and puppets fuel her to share the joy of creation with her students. She teaches Prop Making, Mask Making, and Setting the Scene for Off the Wall.

Tamara Marie Kucheran is an award-winning set and costume designer whose many works grace stages across Canada, including the Stratford Festival and The Shaw Festival. She won the prestigious Virginia and Myrtle Cooper Award in Costume Design (2017). She lectures at The National Theatre School of Canada, the University of Winnipeg, and Off the Wall Stratford Artists Alliance. Next, she’s designing sets & costumes for *Escape to Margaritaville* at Theatre Calgary.

Monica Viani is a Stratford-based theatrical millinery artist for the entertainment industry. Since 1995, she has crafted and generated countless hats and headdresses for live theatre, ballet, film, and television production. Notable theatre companies include The Stratford and Shaw Festivals as well as

Disney’s *The Lion King*. She prototyped and led the build for *A Handmaid’s Tale* (Season 1), Netflix’s *Slumberland*, and more. Her endless teaching credits include TMU, Fanshawe College, and Stratford Off the Wall.

“There are many good jobs and creative careers behind the scenes in theatre, so we really wanted young people, especially Indigenous youth, to have direct access to these theatre professionals, and be able to ask them questions freely,” adds Adrian Lucas, Executive Director, of PAL Canada. “We are especially pleased that PAL Stratford and Off the Wall are presenting this Masterclass to share some of their trade secrets with youth, at no cost to the students,” he says.

Each intergenerational Masterclass will have 3-4 senior professionals, sharing trade secrets, and engaging with youth during a Q&A, all free of charge for Canadians 14-30 years old, especially young Indigenous people. PAL Canada’s Behind The Scenes Masterclass series began in 2022 and will

continue in 2023, hosting a virtual forum where seasoned entertainment professionals speak candidly with youth.

Next up will be LOCATIONS! LOCATIONS! LOCATIONS! on February 25 at 1 PM ET. Each Masterclass will be announced individually as the experts are confirmed.

Funding for PAL Canada's Behind The Scenes Masterclass Series is supported by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Project. It is also officially supported by ArtsCan Circle, a reconciliation charity that connects creative artists with Indigenous youth in remote Canadian communities, and Maskwacis Cultural College, a Centre of Excellence in Academics and Cree Indigenous Knowledge.

Founded in 1986, PAL Canada Foundation is the national charitable organization that represents and supports seven individual PAL chapters across the country, including Halifax, Ottawa, Toronto, Stratford, Winnipeg, Calgary, and Vancouver. They all provide services and support for Canada's elder artists; the chapters in Toronto, Stratford, and Vancouver also provide and sustain quality affordable housing for elders and individuals within their professional and performing arts community.

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