



[insert addressee]

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Did you know [fill in blank with what I think will be most interesting angle for each venue]?

That's just one of several angles you could take on a story about an original musical called *How I Became Queen*, which is being world-premiered at Evergreen Cultural Centre in Coquitlam from October 25 to 29 to launch and celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary season.

***How I Became Queen* is a community story: Small Venue, Big Dreams.** It's about a local arts centre celebrating 10 years of survival with a bold venture—the commissioning and mounting of an original musical production for family audiences.

***How I Became Queen* is an entertainment story: Musical Fairy Tale Offers Family Fun.** It's about the debut run of a theatrical event filled with original music, choreography, and humour that audiences of all ages can enjoy.

***How I Became Queen* is an arts story: Three Arts Amigas Team Up.** It's about three boundary-pushing artists—composer AK Coope, choreographer Cori Caulfield, and director Camille Gingras—pooling their talents on a project east of Boundary Road.

***How I Became Queen* is a business story: Regional Arts: Cornerstones of Economic Growth.** It's about the hard economic sense behind growing a Vancouver arts scene into a Lower Mainland arts community as part of local and tourism infrastructures.

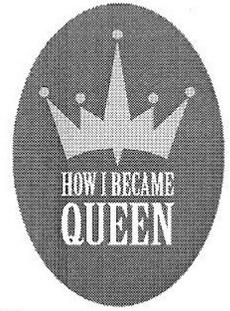
***How I Became Queen* is a people story: Big Talent in a Little 'Burb.** It's about a talented ensemble of performers and backstage artists, assembled from across the Lower Mainland and literally all over the world, who are bringing this production to life.

*How I Became Queen* runs October 25 to 29 at Evergreen Cultural Centre, 1205 Pinetree Way, Coquitlam. Performance schedule is as follows:

- Wednesday October 25 – matinee performance, schools only.
- Thursday October 26 – Opening night gala, black tie, invitation only.
- Friday October 27 – matinee performance, schools only.
- Friday October 27 – evening, public performance.
- Saturday October 28 – evening, public performance.
- Sunday October 29 – matinee, public performance to launch family series.

For more information, please visit [www.howibecamequeen.com](http://www.howibecamequeen.com). For digital photos, to schedule an interview or photo shoot, to attend a rehearsal, or to request an invitation to the Opening Night Gala, please contact me at 604-939-0145 or [touchpoint@telus.net](mailto:touchpoint@telus.net).

Sincerely,  
Lynne Melcombe



# Fact Sheet

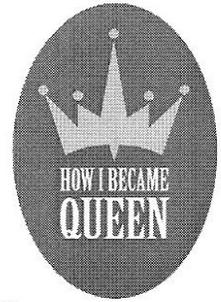
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HOW I BECAME QUEEN

- WHAT** *How I Became Queen*  
A World-class musical created by Vancouver-based A.K. Coope, *How I Became Queen* is a musical fairy tale with a twist of comedy and mystery. Dazzle yourself with live music, dance and drama as we follow through the life of a beautiful and witty Princess through her journey of becoming a Queen.
- WHEN** October 25-29, 2006  
Tickets: \$12 Adults/Seniors/Student  
\$ 9 Child
- WHERE** Evergreen Cultural Centre  
Studio Theatre  
1205 Pinetree Way  
Coquitlam BC
- WEBSITE** [www.howibecamequeen.com](http://www.howibecamequeen.com)  
Visit the Press Room on the website to view interviews with the creative team, media releases and other media information.
- BOX OFFICE** 604.927.6555
- MEDIA CONTACT**
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Jocelyn Calderhead</b><br>Marketing Manager<br>604-927-6566<br><a href="mailto:jocelyn@evergreenculturalcentre.ca">jocelyn@evergreenculturalcentre.ca</a> | <b>Lynne Melcombe</b><br>HIBQ Communications<br>604-939-0145<br><a href="mailto:touchpoint@telus.net">touchpoint@telus.net</a> |
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High-resolution digital images available upon request.

# Synopsis



HOW I BECAME QUEEN

## **How I Became Queen: Synopsis of a Musical of Fairy Tale Proportions**

Once upon a time, a beautiful princess believed that a crown was all she needed to become a queen. In *How I Became Queen*—a musical of fairy-tale proportions—she learns what being noble really means.

Years earlier, after a war that caused the death of her parents, the infant princess had been taken to a kingdom far away to grow up in safety. But the king who raised her kept her true identity hidden from her, and she grew up believing she was a mere commoner, lucky to be taken in by the benevolent royal family.

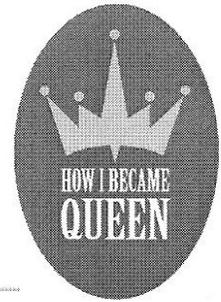
As our story opens, the deceitful king tries to persuade her to marry his buffoon-ish son. The princess doesn't want to, but feels indebted ... until, on the eve of their marriage, she discovers her true identity.

Feeling confused and betrayed, she flees. She encounters many perils, is rescued by a Mysterious Old Woman who speaks in riddles, and finally makes her way back to the land of her birth. But to her surprise, her subjects—whose country has long since fallen to ruin—do not so easily accept her as their queen.

Through trial, error, and sheer persistence, the princess discovers that being a queen means earning her subjects' respect. Along the way (and with much music, dancing, humour, ingenious costumes, and great sets) she wins their love.

\*\*\*\*\*

# The Company



Evergreen Cultural Centre presents

## **How I Became Queen**

Written and Composed by AK Coope

Starring, in alphabetical order

Danie Bobadilla; Guard, Flower, Youth  
Frankie Cena; Prince, Water Carrier  
Brigit Christie; Guard, Flower, Youth  
Darlyne Dolap; Tutor, Captain of the Guards, Letter Writer  
Klaus Dorr; Courtier, Bricklayer  
Jason Etherington; King, Metal Smith  
Aimee Good; Guard, Flower, Washer Woman's Child  
Tiffany Hambrook; Princess  
Marianne LaRochelle; Queen, Washer Woman  
Anna Lattanzi; Courtier, Bricklayer  
Myles McCarthy; Guard, Youth  
Michelle MacTaggart; Old Woman, Lady of the Light  
Robynne Redgrave McPherson; Maid, Farmer  
Kristi Moffatt; Guard, Flower, Washer Woman's Child  
Clare-Anne Queenan; Guard, Flower, Washer Woman's Child  
Alex Shankland; Guard, Flower, Washer Woman's Child  
Emily Wilson; Maid, Farmer  
Jimmy Yi; Ancient Gardener

Artistic Producer: Wilson Durward

Director: Camille Gingras

Musical Director: AK Coope

Choreographer: Cori Caulfield

Choral Director: Henry Waack

Graham Boyle: Percussions

Henry Christian: Trumpet

AK Coope: Clarinet

Chris Light: Bass

Gay Northey: Violin

Sue Round: Cello

Henry Waack: Piano

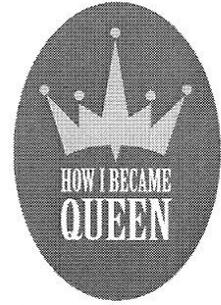
Project and Stage Manager: Cathie Young

Costume Designer: Catherine Seiler

Lighting Designer: Krista Pavane

Technical Operations Manager: Geoff King

HOW I BECAME QUEEN



## The Creative Team

HOW I BECAME QUEEN

### AK Coope – Writer/Composer

Composer, writer and performer, AK Coope began musical studies as a violinist in Vancouver at age 4. She also played piano, double bass, and French horn before discovering the clarinet at age 13. She earned clarinet performance degrees from both UBC and Northwestern University in Chicago.

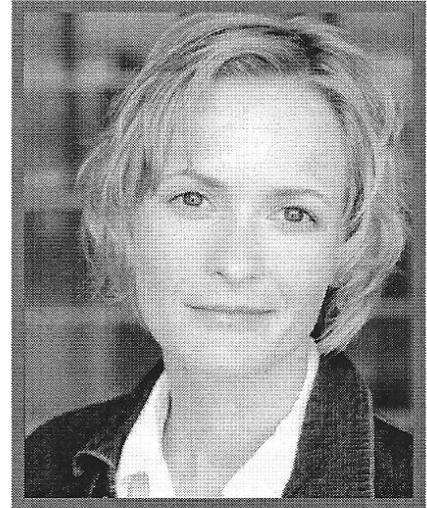
As a clarinetist, Coope is frequently heard with the Vancouver and Victoria Symphonies, the Vancouver Opera Orchestra, Turning Point Ensemble, the Vancouver New Music Ensemble and Victoria's Aventa Ensemble. She has recorded for many artists, including a soon-to-be-released CD with her own contemporary music ensemble, Standing Wave. Recent projects include a five-week musical collaboration with traditional musicians in Bali, Indonesia.

As a composer, Coope has had several collaborations with Lower Mainland dancers and choreographers, with work performed at Vancouver's Dancing on the Edge Festival, the 12 Minutes Max Series and at the Evergreen Cultural Centre.

Coope is also on the faculty of the Vancouver Academy of Music and frequently coaches young musicians in a variety of musical ensembles. She plays many educational concerts each year with her quintet, the Ad Mare Winds.

In *How I Became Queen*, Coope presents the story of a princess who must overcome many, often unexpected difficulties and barriers before she ultimately triumphs and becomes Queen. The story speaks to us all as human beings as we struggle to find our way in the world.

Born and raised in BC, AK Coope lives in Vancouver.





## The Creative Team

### Camille Gingras – Director

Raised in South America and the UK, Camille Gingras studied theatre at the University of Kent and Desmond Jones School of Mime and Physical Theatre. Camille has also earned MA in Playwriting at Birmingham University where she received a distinction for her play *Autobiography of Nowhere*.

As playwright-in-residence at the Thorndike Theatre Camille wrote several community plays such as *Romeo & Juliet: The Club Re-Mix* and *YoHo*, a site specific play set in the town of Leatherhead, England.

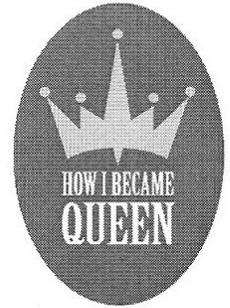
As a theatre artist, Camille has created/directed original works, which have been presented in Bristol, London, Edinbergh as well as in Bremen, Frankfurt and Nuremberg, Germany.

In Canada Camille made her professional debut with Cirque Poule at the Belfry. Vancouver audiences may recall her as the mother-in-law in *The Suicide* (The Cultch, 2004); pedaling on a floating bicycle across Lost Lagoon in *Lagoon of Lost Tales*, which she wrote (Boca Del Lupo, 2003); or hanging her laundry in Stanley Park in *The Last Stand* (Boca Del Lupo, 2002). Camille is currently creating a new work entitled *Tiny Apocalypse*.

Gingras is very excited about *How I Became Queen*, describing her vision for the play as “a story about community given by community players for people in the community.” This may sound serious but, she adds, “at the heart of *How I Became Queen* is fun. It has a wonderful, varied cast of children, teenagers, and adults all coming together to tell a light-hearted story about what it ultimately means to be a community.”

Camille now lives in Vancouver and teaches drama to children at the Evergreen Cultural Centre.

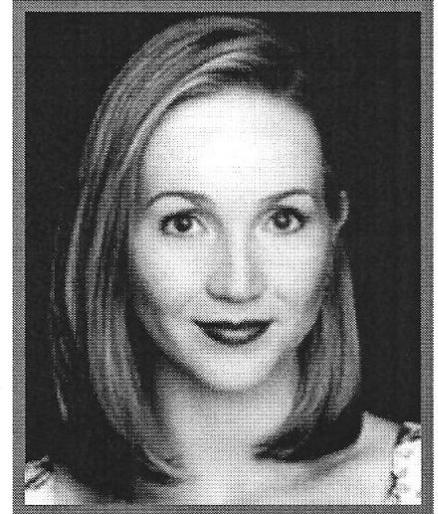




## The Creative Team

### Cori Caulfield – Choreographer

Raised in Port Moody, BC, Cori Caulfield started teaching dance in her parents' basement at age 13 and founded Caulfield School of Dance in 1989. She is the artistic director of Coriograph Theatre and has performed in the work of esteemed Canadian choreographers such as Cornelius Fischer-Credo, Marie Chouinard, Jennifer Mascall, Grant Strate CM, and others. She is the first dancer to work with Crystal Pite's company, Kidd Pivot, and has been touring internationally in Pite's *Uncollected Work* – including a show at the Evergreen Cultural Centre – since April of 2001. With Coriograph Theatre, she has produced three shows for the Evergreen Cultural Centre: *Noel*, *Reverie* and *Sis-turns*.

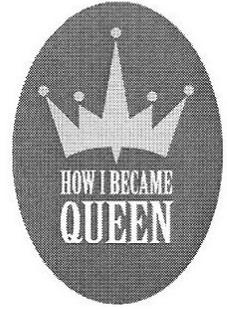


Cori has toured extensively with her own “meticulously crafted solos” (*Globe and Mail*) in Canada and in several cities through China, Singapore, and Malaysia. Her solos have also been presented in New York City; Zagreb, Croatia; Portland, OR and Seattle, WA. She has toured her first full-length solo *molt* (formerly entitled *foXYMORONIC*) in Vancouver and Alberta since its premiere in Vancouver in April 2005.

She is thrilled to be working with this talented cast and artistic team for long-time collaborator and friend AK Coope's beautiful musical, *How I Became Queen*.

[www.coricaulfield.com](http://www.coricaulfield.com)

HOW I BECAME QUEEN



## The Creative Team

### Wilson Durward – Artistic Producer

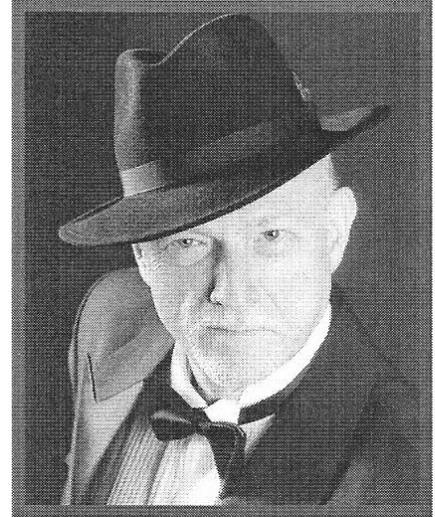
Writer, director and performer, Wilson Durward studied drama at York University in Toronto and voice with the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto and England. Apart from his drama and music education, Wilson also undertook a Science Specialist Certificate from the University of Alberta in Edmonton.

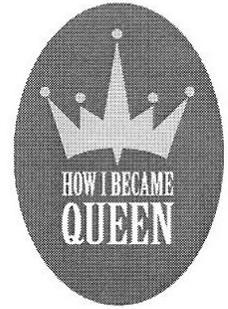
On stage he has played characters as varied as El Gallo in *The Fantasticks*, Prince Richard in *The Lion in Winter*, and Captain Von Trapp in *The Sound of Music*. His other acting credits include Man in *Side By Side By Sondheim*, Carl-Magnus in *A Little Night Music*, Strephon in *Iolanthe*, Dandini in *Sleeping Beauty (Pantomime)*, and Aramis in *The Three Musketeers*, to name a few.

Durward's broadcast roles range from *Good Morning Britain* (BBC radio) and *The Good Old Days* (BBC TV), to *Anne of Green Gables* (CBC TV) and *Night Heat* (CTV), and films including *Mother Courage*, *Perry Mason Returns*, and *I'll Take Manhattan*.

A few of his accomplishments include principal author of *Science Directions 7*, a highly successful science text currently used extensively in several Canadian provinces.

Born in Vancouver, Durward has crossed Canada and the Atlantic many times, and now lives in Burnaby. He has been Performing Arts Manager at the Evergreen Cultural Centre for nine years.





# The Creative Team

HOW I BECAME QUEEN

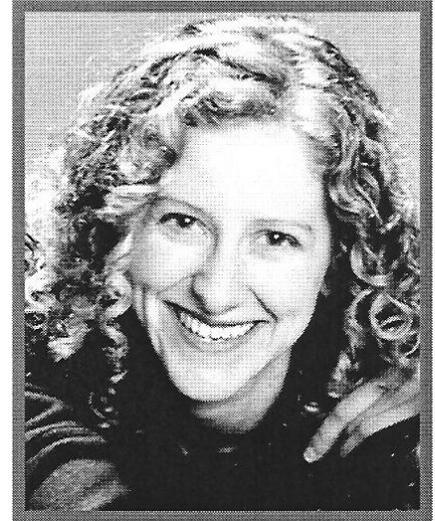
## Catherine Seiler – Costume Designer

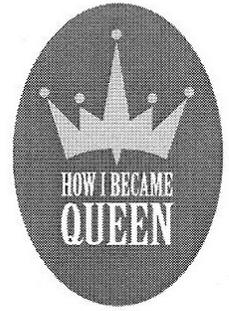
Catherine Seiler, a true Maritimer, was born and raised in Bedford, Nova Scotia. Her six university years in Halifax, at Dalhousie campus, resulted in both a BSc. in Biology and a Diploma in Costume Studies. Choosing which degree to pursue further wasn't difficult once she moved out to BC and noticed a thriving arts community in the Lower Mainland.

Catherine has worked in a variety of costuming roles including designer, cutter, sewer, buyer, and dresser. In 1999 Catherine got her first gig. It started as just a few days with Bard on the Beach Theatre Society to sew on snaps and buttons and now she has moved up the ranks to be one of Bard's costume cutters. This year marks Catherine's eighth consecutive season at Bard on the Beach, with which she won a Jessie Award in 2002 for costume construction.

Her most memorable West Coast design endeavors are *Peter Pan* with Carousel Theatre Company, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream – 1950's style* with Carousel Theatre Company's Summer Program. Catherine has also made costumes for the Arts Club Theatre Company, Playhouse Theatre Company, Studio 58, Arts Umbrella, Ballet BC, Touchstone Theatre, Vancouver Opera, The Roundhouse, and Carousel Theatre.

Catherine now makes her home in Coquitlam, BC with her husband and new baby. This is her first production for the Evergreen Cultural Centre.





## The Creative Team

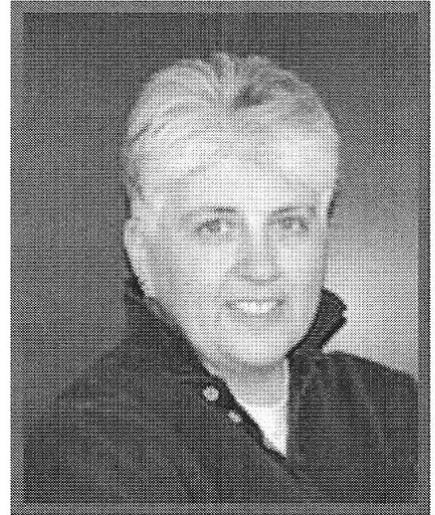
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### Cathy Young – Project and Stage Manager

Cathie Young has been involved in theatre for over 20 years. She studied theatre at The Banff Centre, BSSD in Birmingham, England, and University of Central England, Birmingham, England. She has studied film and writing at Langara College, Vancouver, and writing at Vancouver's New Play Centre.

Employed at TELUS before accepting their buy-out, she supplemented her craving for creativity by occasional Fringe and other independent productions, including work with Acted Image Theatre a deaf/hearing theatre group of storytellers and Uppity Klams. Recently she completed a short film, which she wrote, produced and directed called *Workertown*.

Born in New Westminster, Cathie now lives in Port Coquitlam, BC. She is a member of Stage 43 and will direct Noel Coward's *Blithe Spirit* this season at the Evergreen Cultural Centre.



HOW I BECAME QUEEN



## The Players

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### Tiffany Hambrook – Princess

Tiffany Hambrook fell in love with performing at age five and has since appeared in many concerts, musicals and other productions.

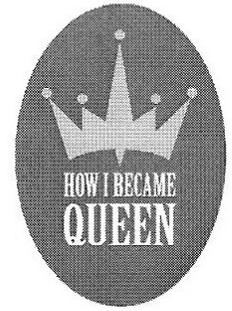
Most recently, Tiffany was featured vocalist at the *Fall to Joy* and *World Kindness* concerts. She toured Canada and New Zealand with *Nearly Neil and the Solitary Band*. *The Shagadelic Swingers*, an Austin Powers Musical, took her from Canada to Maui to Bosnia to entertain Canadian troops.

One of her most fulfilling performances was lead female in *Heat Lightning* for North Shore Drama Festival, which earned her the Best Actress Award. Tiffany has also created her own musical, *Tiffany's Cabaret* – a life story, which she directed and choreographed.

She studied voice with Cecile Laroche and Leora Cashe and various forms of dance from Harbour Dance Centre, Capilano College, and Royal Winnipeg Ballet, along with two-year intensive musical theatre training with Jim Hibbard.

Born in BC, Tiffany now lives in Vancouver's West End.





## The Players

HOW I BECAME QUEEN

### Frankie Cena – Prince

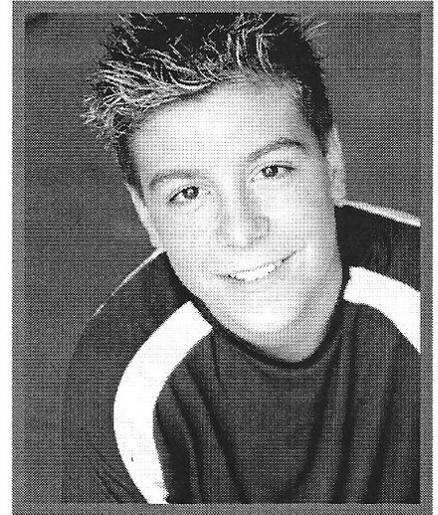
At 14, Frankie is the youngest principal cast member in HIBQ, portraying the role of the buffoonish Prince.

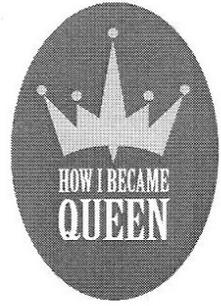
Frankie has been performing since the age of nine and is a member of the BC Boys Touring Choir, which has taken him around the world, including Germany, Austria, Prague, New Mexico, Holland, Arizona, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Montana, Belgium, and China.

Frankie is a trained tenor and has received training in acting for film and television under Carole Tarlington. In March 2007, he will play the lead role in the opera *The King Who Wouldn't Sing*. His other accomplishments have been semi-finalist at PNE Discovery Search 2005, and finalist at Port Moody Idol 2005.

Other than performing in film and television commercials Frankie has made numerous stage appearances as performer and singer at *Mission Raceways Special Guest 2005*, *Cavalcade of Stars Variety Show* at Shadbolt Centre and *National Anthem Singer* at BC Day. Frankie has also played the role of host and entertainer at Pizazz fashion Show and Basketballton for Sierra Leone.

Frankie now lives in Burnaby and attends Burnaby Mountain Secondary.





## The Players

HOW I BECAME QUEEN

### Jason Etherington – King

Canadian-born, British-educated, 33-year-old Jason Etherington has been acting since age 13 in film, radio, television, theatre, and the fashion industry.

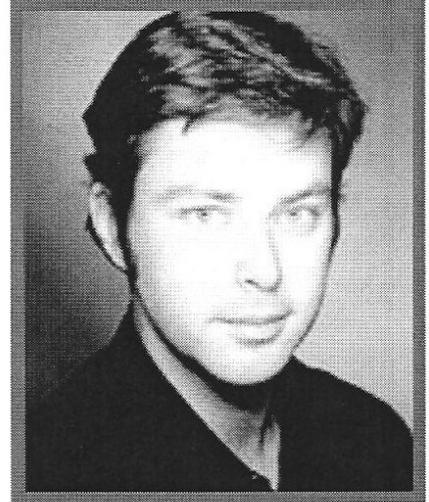
In addition to undergoing extensive work in theatre, Etherington has acted in TV shows and films out of his former base in London and now in Maple Ridge.

Jason's other acting credits include roles in *The Remainder*, *Bride and Prejudice*, *The Nine Circles*, *The Last Fare Home*, *Together*, and *Festen* to name a few.

After many roles, Jason is proudest of his lead role in Edward Bonds' *Early Morning*, which he describes as "an incredibly complex and challenging play," and the Judge in Nikolai Gogols' *Government Inspector*. He is looking forward to a more playful turn as the pompous and deceitful King in *How I Became Queen*.

Jason trained as an actor at the Arts Educational Schools in Chiswick, London and Questors Theatre in West London. He also has a degree in physics from Watt University, Edinburgh and IT Management from Coventry University, UK.

Jason currently lives in Maple Ridge, BC with his wife and two children, and describes Canada as the "best place to live in the world."





## The Players

How I Became Queen

### Marianne LaRochelle – Queen

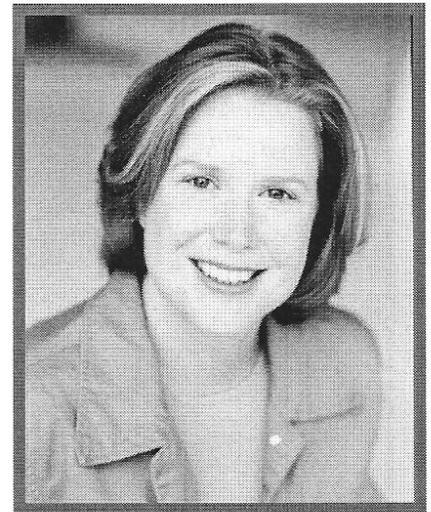
Born in Vancouver, Marianne Larochelle grew up in Coquitlam and graduated from Centennial Secondary School, where she discovered acting.

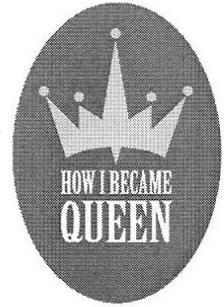
Some of Marianne's favourite roles on stage include Mrs. Montague in *The Haunting of Hill House*, Mrs. Kirby in *You Can't Take It With You* for Raymond Burr Theatre, Judy Kimball in *Send Me No Flowers* for Stage 43, and Kess in *Independence* for Deep Cove Productions. Marianne has also worked in film, television and radio as actor, announcer and host and has voiced commercials.

Marianne received Best Actress Award at Mainstage 2003 for her role as Maureen in Deep Cove's *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*.

Her most recent training includes Creative Character Development through Clown with David MacMurray Smith and acting workshops with Tooba Physical Theatre and Studio 58. Intensive training in Broadcast Communications from BCIT has given her a strong foundation and widened her horizon for acting in film, television, commercials, and other opportunities apart from theatre.

Marianne now lives in Port Moody, BC with her husband and four children. She works full time in the community and is proud to be a part of the highly talented cast of *How I Became Queen*.





## The Players

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### Michelle MacTaggart – The Old Woman

Born in Ontario, Michelle MacTaggart came to Vancouver in 1993 and has been pursuing her performing career in theatre, film, and television since then.

A versatile actor, singer, and dancer, Michelle is excited about her role of a Mysterious Old Woman and The Lady of Light in *How I Became Queen*.

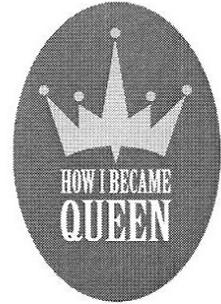
Some of her dancing and singing performances include *Let Me Sing* for Dean Regan, *The Sound of Music* for Footlight Theatre, *World of Entertainment* for White Rock Playhouse, *People Gotta Groove* for Playland/PNE, and a *Variety Show* that has taken her to Japan.

Michelle has also portrayed lead roles in theatre, some of which include Cher in *Lost Vegas Live* for Cardinal Aumentare Production, Helen in *Sweet Charity* for Pipedream Production, Ginger in *Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* for Stage West Calgary and Sheila in *A Chorus Line* for Ophidian Entertainment.

Michelle consistently trains herself in vocals, dance, and acting to give her best on stage. A recent voice-over workshop under the direction of voice actor Cathy Weseluck has inspired Michelle to pursue this area further.

Michelle lives in North Vancouver and pursues her acting career from there.





## The Players

HOW I BECAME QUEEN

### Jimmy Yi - Ancient Gardener

Jimmy Yi has been performing in theatre for nearly 20 years. Born in Seoul, Korea, Jimmy immigrated to the US at the age of five.

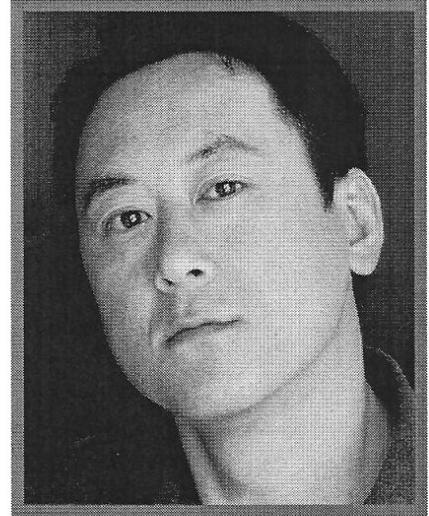
Jimmy grew up in Cleveland, Ohio and got the acting bug when he played Rumpelstiltskin and Santa Claus in second grade.

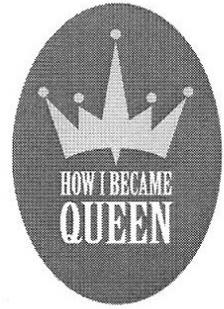
His most recent stage credits include roles as Moonface Martin in *Anything Goes* for Pipedreams, Sammy Fong in *Flower Drum Song* for Applause! Musicals, and now the mysterious and wise Ancient Gardener in *How I Became Queen*. Some of Jimmy's other theatrical performances have been in *The Scarecrow*, *Into the Woods* and *The Misanthrope* at University of Alaska.

Jimmy trained in theatre and dance at the University of Alaska and Actor's Edge Academy in LA. Apart from his acting training, Jimmy also earned a Master of Divinity from Fuller Theological Seminary and worked for 15 years as a youth pastor.

Some of his accomplishments include an Irene Ryan Nomination for his role as *Dickon* in *The Scarecrow*, and a nomination for *Who's Who in America* while at Southeastern College.

Jimmy lives in Coquitlam, BC with his beautiful wife and two lovely daughters.





# The Music

## AK COOPE – ARTIST STATEMENT

*How I Became Queen* is a large-scale musical theatre project that has been percolating in my mind for many years. It draws on many aspects of my background, professional training, and experience.

My musical career commenced at the age of four with the violin and continued a few years later with piano. School orchestras introduced me to both the double bass and the French horn. I sang in every choir available. At the age of 13, I began studying the clarinet and shortly after perceived that music would be my chosen career. While at university, I became interested in music composition and was fortunate to study with some fine composition teachers both at UBC and at Northwestern University.

In addition to music, I was also exposed to both dance and acting studies as a child and as a young adult. After completing my formal education, I began composing seriously for dance, inspired by my own experience and by the many excellent professional dancers with whom I was working. To complete the picture, I have always written and have been fortunate to have had poems published while as a student and again more recently.

I have always loved fairy tales and have long wanted to write one of my own. The best ones combine magical or fantastical elements with stories and emotions that speak to us on a very human level. *How I Became Queen* is a story of a princess who overcomes many difficulties and barriers, ultimately triumphing through lessons learned from mistakes made. And like all good fairy tales, there are archetypal characters of mystery – an Ancient Gardener and the Old Woman who guide her. The story speaks to us all as human beings who struggle to find our way in the world.

As a composer, the prospect of writing a musical theatre piece culminating in high-quality public performances is most exciting. It allows me to draw on elements in my artistic background and to write for a variety of media – solo voice, chorus, small ensemble, and dance. I will have the luxury of working closely with a professional director and choreographer. As well, working with the cast members and musicians will allow me the luxury of receiving first hand feedback to my score.

In today's fast-paced, high tech world, fairy tales don't seem to have much of a place. Both children and adults often seem deprived of a sense of fun and play in our highly competitive world. While globally linked, the value of our local community seems to have declined. For this reason, I feel that a large community project based on the fairy-tale-like *How I Became Queen* provides an opportunity to spark our individual and collective well-being. As well, *How I Became Queen* is a wonderful opportunity for me as a professional artist to draw on, and consolidate, prior experience while pushing me to develop and heighten my skills in new directions.

~ AK Coope, 2006

How I Became Queen



# The Music

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How I Became Queen

## MUSICIANS

- ♪ **Graham Boyle**  
Percussion
- ♪ **Henry Christian**  
Trumpet
- ♪ **AK Coope**  
Clarinet
- ♪ **Chris Light**  
Bass
- ♪ **Gay Northey**  
Violin
- ♪ **Sue Round**  
Cello
- ♪ **Henry Waack**  
Choral Director and Piano