

2022-23 **IMPACT** REPORT



Scene from **BLACK AND RURAL**
Photo by Sarah Race



Our Vision

Pi's vision is to build an empathetic and connected world through theatre.

Our Mission

Pi Theatre produces and presents theatre that is intellectually alive and emotionally charged. We are concerned with creating social moments, community connections, and artistic impact. We believe in work that extends beyond the stage and gets people talking.

About Pi

Founded in 1984, Pi is now under the leadership of Artistic and Producing Director Richard Wolfe, and Operations Manager Libby Willoughby.

Our peers have recognized Pi and its collaborators with 34 Jessie Richardson Awards and 125 nominations for outstanding artistic achievement in Vancouver's professional theatre. The company is a member of the Alliance for Arts + Culture, Arts BC, the GVPTA, Progress Lab, and a full member of PACT.

Pi also runs Prime Placements, a mentorship program for emerging artists and cultural workers. We are committed to accessibility in our work, and support our community with discounted tickets.

Values

EXCELLENCE

We create an environment where individuals are supported in the development of their talent with the resources they need to do their best work.

INSPIRATION

We are passionate and seek to fuel the imagination of artists and audiences.

EXPLORATION

We question our assumptions, and encourage alternative approaches and perspectives.

INTEGRITY

Pi follows the guidelines and fee structures negotiated between PACT, Equity, ADC (IATSE), and PGC, providing a living wage for arts workers and staff while maintaining a safe, open and inclusive workspace.

RIGOUR

We build organizational capacity with well-considered processes and procedures. We are responsive, resourceful, and innovative when realizing our vision and mission.



STAFF AND ASSOCIATES

Artistic and Producing Director: Richard Wolfe
Operations Manager/Associate Producer: Libby Willoughby
Social Media Coordinator: Mary Anne McAllister
Graphic Designer: Terry Wong
Bookkeeper: Meredith Burney

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Daren Mercer
Vice-President: Catherine Ballachey
Treasurer: Craig Boyko
Director: Cheryl Lee Fast
Director: Caleb Dycks



PI THEATRE

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Pi Theatre is grateful to be living and creating on the ancestral lands of the Coast Salish peoples of the xʷməθk-wəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

Pi is a BC Society and is registered as a charitable organization with the Canada Revenue Agency.

BN: 894730159RR0001 | BC Society #: S-24462



2022-23 BUDGET

Income: \$370,229

GOVERNMENT GRANTS: \$298,705

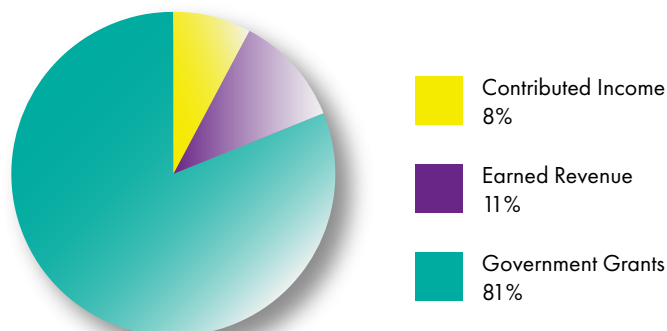
Received from : Canada Council, BC Arts Council, BC Gaming, Canadian Heritage, and the City of Vancouver

CONTRIBUTED INCOME: \$31,925

Includes: \$25,000 (In-Kind contributions), \$2,500 (Vancouver Foundation), \$4,500 (Individual donations)

EARNED REVENUE: \$39,599

Includes: \$19,000 (ticket sales), \$11,000 (guarantees)



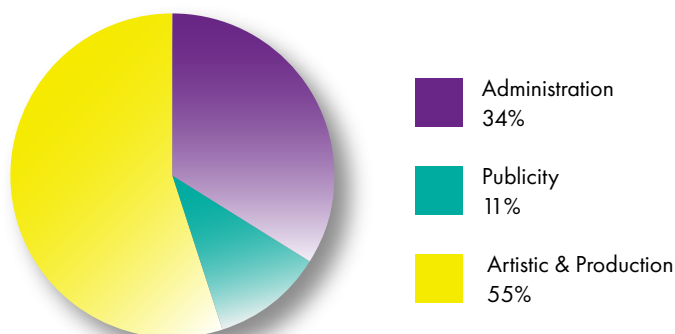
Expenditures: -\$369,667

MARKETING AND PUBLICITY: -\$40,506

ADMINISTRATION: -\$126,277

ARTISTIC AND PROFESSIONAL FEES: -\$128,524

OTHER PRODUCTION COSTS: -\$74,360



Summary

- No outstanding grants
- Areas of uncertainty: donations, ticket sales, fundraising revenue
- All in all, we are in excellent financial health, and are entering our 2023/24 year with a surplus which will be used to add an extra show in to our season

CONTENT

CORNERSTONE PRODUCTIONS

Black & Rural by Shayna Jones; *Truth & Lies* (4 short plays by Sebastien Archibald, Pippa Mackie, Vishesh Abeyratne, and Lucia Frangione)

PI PROVOCATEUR PRESENTATIONS

Szepty/Whispers (Rumble Theatre & V West); *Black Space Jam* (Afro Van Connect); *Untitled Peter Tripp Project* (Curtain Razors)

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

Black & Rural Talkback – Developing Interview-Based Theatre; *Black and Rural Cast Talkback*; *Black History Matters* with Giselle Clarke-Trenaman

CANADIAN WORKS

Black & Rural; *Smother Me In Your Love* (part of *Truth & Lies*); *QAmom* (part of *Truth & Lies*); *Sin Eaters of the 21st Century* (part of *Truth & Lies*); *Disrupted* (part of *Truth & Lies*); *Szepty/Whispers* (Rumble Theatre & V West); *Black Space Jam*; *Untitled Peter Tripp Project* (Curtain Razors)

IMPACT & REACH

ARTISTS AND CULTURAL WORKERS COMPENSATED: 54

TECH AND PRODUCTION WORKERS COMPENSATED: 34

FULL-TIME STAFF: 2

REGULAR CONTRACTORS: 4

BOARD MEMBERS: 5

VOLUNTEERS: 70

AUDIENCE MEMBERS REACHED: OVER 2,000

INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS: 1,646

THREADS FOLLOWERS: 144

TWITTER FOLLOWERS: 2,708

FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS: 1,896



In the 2022-23 season we find ourselves largely free from the restraints of the COVID years. That said, I got COVID during *Truth & Lies*, our final production of the year. The intrepid Libby Willoughby, my colleague at Pi HQ, stepped in to take up rehearsal with the actors! Thanks, Libby, for that and everything else!

The past season saw Pi commission and produce new work, present work from BC and Saskatchewan, tour our own show, partner with like-minded companies such as Rumble and AfroVan Connect, offer Close Encounters events to the community, and begin workshopping another new show, slated for production in '24-'25.

In terms of getting the word out, social media producer Mary-Anne McAllister grew our social media viewership and gave the company a dynamic and modern presence on the web. Publicist Teresa Trovato caught the ear of media outlets all over town. Our bookkeeper Meredith Burney kept the numbers flowing along with our accountants at Clearline Accounting. Graphic designer Terry Wong developed another set of great visual looks for the work, and designer Jane Gowan put together the report you're reading right now. A huge thanks to the whole team, including Pi's illustrious board led by President Darren Mercer for their commitment, diligence and support.

We're truly thankful to our audiences, volunteers and individual donors for their ongoing contribution to the work we do. I can't overstate how grateful we are for their presence.

Thank you one and all.

Richard Wolfe, Artistic and Producing Director



Pi Theatre's 2022-23 season was another exceptionally active year for the company. Our first production, *Black & Rural* (written, performed, and created by the incomparable Shayna Jones, and directed by Richard Wolfe), was derived from dozens of real-life interviews with Black individuals who choose to live away from Canada's urban centres. After premiering this show at Pacific Theatre in Vancouver, we brought it to the Sid Williams Theatre in Courtenay, BC, and Intrepid Theatre in Victoria, BC.

We followed this up with *Truth & Lies* (directed by Libby Willoughby and Richard Wolfe). This experimental production – a collection of three short plays and one virtual reality short film – brought audiences into an intimate, immersive environment to search for meaning in an online world of alternative facts and unreliable narrators.

The Pi Provocateur's Series featured *Szepty/Whispers* (from Rumble Theatre & V. West), *Black Space Jam* (from Afro Van Connect and Black Space Media), and finally *Untitled Peter Tripp Project* (from Curtain Razors). All three presentations were well attended and well received.

Pi Theatre continues to punch above its weight thanks to the dedication and creativity of our staff, led by our director, Richard Wolfe, and our Operations Manager/Associate Producer, Libby Willoughby. This year I've also been proud to welcome Mary-Anne McAllister, who has been instrumental in revitalizing our online presence through a part-time social media coordinator role.

Thank you for another year of supporting Pi, and we hope you will join us for our new season as we continue to produce theatre that is intellectually alive and emotionally charged.

Darren Mercer, President of the Board of Directors



CORNERSTONE PRODUCTIONS



Our Cornerstone Productions are large-scale productions that demand significant resources. Cornerstone Productions are inclusive in our choice of writers, performers, administrators and designers. We primarily hire artists and cultural workers from the local community to create these productions. We typically produce one Cornerstone Production in each season. This year we were pleased to be able to offer our audiences both *Black & Rural* as well as *Truth & Lies*.

PI PROVOCATEUR PRESENTATION SERIES



Our Pi Provocateurs Presentation Series has quickly become a highlight on the pathway to lasting success for featured artists. *Untitled Peter Tripp Project*, which we hosted this year, went on to tour to Sackville, New Brunswick. In 2019, we presented Little Thief Theatre's *In Response to Alabama*, and from that run they were picked up to be a part of the Cultch's femme fest in their 2021/22 season, as well as their 2022/23 digital femme fest. As well, we were happy to see Toronto's beloved bombshell, drag queen Pearle Harbour (17/18 Provocateurs), return to Vancouver for a sold out show as part of the 2020 PuSh Fest. Artists who can create and maintain connections in multiple cities are better positioned for success, and we are an active part of that success-creation ecosystem.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT SERIES



Our audience and engagement series was back this season in conjunction with *Black & Rural*. In addition to a Q & A focusing on the development of theatre using text from original interviews, there was a community facilitated cast and co. Q&A and a special Black History Matters lecture with Giselle Clarke-Trenaman. We also partnered with AfroVan Connect for a presentation evening of superlative black artists and artisans at The Biltmore Cabaret!



Top: BLACK SPACE JAM
Middle: TRUTH & LIES closing party
Bottom left: Scene from SIN EATERS OF THE 21st CENTURY
Bottom right: SPYTRIX studio shot



CORNERSTONE
PRODUCTIONS



BLACK & RURAL

WRITTEN, PERFORMED & CREATED BY SHAYNA JONES

DIRECTED BY RICHARD WOLFE

MARCH 31 – APRIL 15, 2022

Featuring voiceover performances by:
TOM PICKETT, OMARI NEWTON, KWASI THOMAS, GISELLE CLARKE-TRENAMAN, IVY CHARLES, BRITNEY BUREN, MARIAM BARRY

Stage Manager:
KAYLEIGH SANDOMIRSKY

Tour Stage Manager:
MARIA ZARRILLO

Lighting Design:
BRAD TRENAMAN

Set Design & Costume Consultant:
CECILIA VADALA

Sound Design & Composition:
RUFUS CAPPADOCIA

Movement Director:
AMBER BARTON

Dramaturg:
ANGELA KONRAD

“Spell-binding. *Black & Rural* awakens a deep-seated longing in many of us who live busy, noisy, urban lives and wonder why we live the way we do. One life. No rewind.” —Jo Ledingham

“Pi Theatre has brought to the stage an exceptionally important piece of art ...*Black & Rural* puts forward timeless tales and fresh perspectives.” —STIR Vancouver

Our first Cornerstone Production of the year, *Black & Rural* presented as a guest production at Pacific Theatre, before touring to the Sid Williams Theatre in Courtenay, BC, and Intrepid Theatre in Victoria, BC.

Black & Rural is the story of a lone Black country woman struggling to defy the monolith of what matters to Black lives. Derived from dozens of real-life interviews with Black folk tucked away on the countryside across Canada, Shayna Jones weaves together a story of vulnerability, quiet triumph, and striking humanity. The show features Shayna’s unique storytelling voice, interspersed with new folkloric tales and verbatim reflections from her interviewees.

Scenes from *BLACK AND RURAL* Photos by Sarah Race





CORNERSTONE
PRODUCTIONS



TRUTH & LIES

4 SHORT PLAYS

DIRECTED BY LIBBY WILLOUGHBY AND RICHARD WOLFE

JUNE 22 - 25, 2023

Featuring: **CARMEL AMIT, KWASI THOMAS, MANUELA SOSA, AND ROBERT GARRY HAACKE**

Producer:
LIBBY WILLOUGHBY

Stage Manager:
JASMIN SANDHU

Dramaturge:
RICHARD WOLFE

Lighting Designer:
JACOB WAN

Sound Designer & Composer,
Projection Designer:
DAVID MESIHA

Costume Designer:
JULIE EDGELEY

Set Consultant:
JERGUS OPRSA

Sound tech for the VR:
DWAYNE MORGAN

Production Manager:
ALEX FORSYTH

QAMOM by Sebastien Archibald

QAmom explores a seemingly innocuous online relationship that masks sinister intentions. A man and a woman engage in some innocent DM flirtation. A Mommy vlog YouTuber has some fantastic tips on affordable meals for the whole family. But who has time for the frivolous when our children are under threat. The storm is coming. Like and Subscribe.

SIN EATERS OF THE 21ST CENTURY
by Vishesh Abeyratne

When a young man applies to work as a content moderator, he finds the job to be tougher than he expected. Can he stomach its gruesome requirements? An examination of the lives of those who "clean up" the Internet at the expense of their own psychological well-being, *Sin Eaters of the 21st Century* is a pitch-black horror-comedy for the digital age.

DISRUPTED by Lucia Frangione

Politician Aya Lopez wearily warns British Columbians once again of the climate change crisis, only to be met with ridicule. Her husband, Clem, an ASMR artist, tries to support her by laying in similar messages in his ASMR videos. Meanwhile, Aya's sister, Camila, is holed up in a basement suite in her cosplay outfit, living a lie of existence. Her delusions grow as she starts to flirt online with Grig, a Russian disrupter in Canada for some nefarious work.

SMOTHER ME IN YOUR LOVE
by Pippa Mackie (Virtual Reality)

A dark, playful and absurdist VR experience that explores the themes of truth and lies, and thrusts the viewer into an interactive experience. Loosely inspired by certain events in Shakespeare's *Othello*, *Smother Me In Your Love* challenges the audience's role as spectator, and asks what responsibility we all have as viewers.

"...what makes *Truth and Lies* most prescient is its cold grip on reality ... *Truth and Lies* leaves you jarred, introspective, and amused." —Angie Rico for *STIR Vancouver*

This new piece comprised of 3 short plays and one virtual reality short film examines what it means to believe in something, in someone, in a world of *Truth & Lies*.

Scene from *SIN EATERS OF THE 21st CENTURY*
Photo by Richard Wolfe



PI PROVOCATEUR
PRESENTATION
SERIES



SZEPTY/WHISPERS

WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY VERONIQUE WEST
CO-PRODUCED BY RUMBLE THEATRE AND V. WEST
DECEMBER 1-4, 2022

Directed by:
JIVESH PARASRAM

Inclusive Designer:
JD DERBYSHIRE

New Media/Projection Design by:
CAROLINE MACCAULL (CHIMERIK COLLECTIVE)

New Media/Projection Mentorship by:
SAMMY CHIEN (CHIMERIK COLLECTIVE)

Scenography Design by:
CINDY MOCHIZUKI

Sound Designer & Composer:
DAVID MESIHA

Associate Sound Designer:
RILEY ZAPOROZAN

Lighting Design by:
KEAGAN ELRICK

Caption Designer:
JACK CHIPMAN

Blind Artist-Consultant:
AMY AMANTEA

Deaf Artist-Consultant:
REI GA-WUN LEUNG

Artist-Consultants for
the Development Process:
AMY AMANTEA
SIOBHAN BARKER
JUNE FUKUMURA
REI GA-WUN LEUNG
MARIFER DOUGLAS

In *Szepty/Whispers*, a neurodivergent artist probes their family's silence around mental health, sifting through traces of the past. As they grapple with the risks and possibilities of disclosure, they question how culture, migration, and trauma shape generational perspectives on disability. Through fragments of personal narrative, documentary material, and multimedia design, *Szepty/Whispers* attempts to connect across silence - to find kinship without a shared language.

Szepty/Whispers experiments with a creative approach to accessibility, embedding audio description into the performer's lines and captions into the projection design. The writer/performer is neurodivergent, mad, chronically ill, and non-binary. The creative team includes intersectional Deaf, disabled, mad, and neurodivergent artists. The project strives to centre our realities, bringing our communities together, while recognizing our diverse and sometimes contrasting needs.





PI PROVOCATEUR
PRESENTATION
SERIES



BLACK SPACE JAM

BY AFRO VAN CONNECT & BLACK SPACE MEDIA

MARCH 3, 2023

Produced by:
AFRO VAN CONNECT
BLACK SPACE MEDIA

Spoken Word / Poetry:
SHAYNA JONES

Music:
DJ BAZENGA
ebonEMPRESS
KOR

Dance:
BROTHA JASON

Standup Comedy:
MUFARO MBUDZI

The *Black Space Jam* (BSJ) is a live performance showcase that provides local and international artists of African Descent a platform to share and promote their artwork. This showcase intentionally amplifies, celebrates, and centers Black creatives and the Black Experience.

The BSJ was created to enhance the visibility of African descent youth within our local arts and culture community. This platform was made by artists for artists to create opportunities for skill cultivation and brand promotion.

The theme of this particular BSJ was "cultural renaissance". Featuring dance, spoken word, standup comedy, music, and a live DJ; this event offered attendees a cultural experience and spectrum of Black art, as well as the "Black Space Marketplace" which showcased various culturally relevant vendors selling their locally made goods.

PI PROVOCATEUR
PRESENTATION
SERIES



UNTITLED PETER TRIPP PROJECT

CREATED & PERFORMED BY JOHANNA BUNDON,

JAYDEN PFEIFER, & LEE HENDERSON

MAY 4 – 6, 2023

Produced by:
CURTAIN RAZORS, REGINA

Documentation by:
SHELBY FENLON AND LEE HENDERSON

Peter Tripp, a once-celebrated radio DJ, performed a publicity stunt in 1959 wherein he broadcast continuously, for 201 hours, from a glass booth in Times Square. This act was his undoing—he suffered psychological complications from prolonged sleep deprivation, and his increased fame made him a target for investigators who would indict him for commercial bribery in the "payola" scandal of 1960.

Untitled Peter Tripp Project is a physical and poetic interpretation of Tripp's dilemma, created by artists Johanna Bundon, Jayden Pfeifer, and Lee Henderson, and performed by this trio and artist Tess Degenstein. This work highlights the natural interdisciplinarity of performance by composing an atmosphere that activates space, breath, gesture, voice, light, and sound with equal importance.

Endurance-based movement, improvisational and written text, image projection, radio frequency programming, and the fracturing/looping of sound recordings conjure hallucination, fugue states, and doppelgänger-paranoia. The work is imaginative and sensation-rich, and aspires to affect the collective nervous system of its audience through the performers' embodiment of these heightened states of presence.





CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

OUR AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT SERIES



Our audience and community engagement series was back this year in conjunction with our Cornerstone Production *Black & Rural*.

BLACK & RURAL TALKBACK – DEVELOPING INTERVIEW-BASED THEATRE

APRIL 1, 2023

Shayna and Pacific Theatre's 2022/23 season apprentice Emmett Hanly explored developing plays using text from interview subjects. Shayna spent over eighteen months traveling the country and speaking with Black people living rurally, which Shayna used for both text and inspiration when writing and creating *Black & Rural*.

BLACK & RURAL CAST TALKBACK -A FACILITATED CONVERSATION

WITH SHAYNA JONES, RICHARD WOLFE, AND CECILIA VADALA

APRIL 7, 2023

This talk was facilitated by local artist Mariam Barry. Mariam Barry is an actor, writer, director and producer in both theatre and film. Her most recent filmmaking credits include her short documentary, *Cypher*, funded by TELUS Storyhive, a Crazy8s short film titled *Meditation 4 Black Women*, as well as her directing debut *Yaye*, funded by Bell Media currently in the festival circuit.

BLACK HISTORY MATTERS WITH GISELLE CLARKE-TRENAMAN

APRIL 15, 2023

Tackling Canadian Black History in a fun and engaging way, Black History Matters is a program that uses the Arts to impact unintended bias. Created by a theatre artist, BHM is a fully researched and resourced program that works with people to create a truthful awareness of Black Canadians using the arts to inspire and educate. Evoking the Sankofa bird and its meaning, we look to the past to inform our future.

Afro Van Connect Producers post show. Photo by Richard Wolfe





TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF ART, CREATIVITY, ORIGINAL THOUGHT, AND NEW IDEAS. FOR THOSE WHO UNDERSTAND THE POWER OF COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC CONVERSATION, OF SHARED LAUGHTER AND TEARS, OF MUTUAL SUPPORT. WITHOUT YOU, OUR WORK WOULD NOT BE SEEN, FELT, OR HEARD. A MILLION THANK-YOUS.

DONORS

Richard Wolfe & Connie Kostiuk, Jane & Chris Westheuser, Marlie Oden, Rena Cohen & Rick Parnell, Cameron Mackenzie, Brian Porter, Kristen Johnson, Ioana Birleanu, Evelyn Harden, Pamela Hawthorn, Claudia Sjöberg, George & Rita Plawski, Michelle Bjornson, Miranda Huron, Christine French, Jay Dodge, Fran Goldberg, Dawn Padgett, Judith Coffin, Dave Mott, Darren Mercer, Norman Armour, David Kerr, Ian Fenwick, Virginia Cooke, Arthur Close, Keltie & Alexander Forsyth, Ronald Deibert & Jane Gowan, Lindsay Nelson, Peter Dickinson, Kathryn Shaw, Wendy Gorling, Robert Woollard, Anita Romaniuk, Karen Husak, Joey Lespérance, Alma McDonald, Elizabeth Snow, Jergus Opsal, and Kent Gallie. We would also like to acknowledge the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia through BC Gaming.

PARTNERS

Rumble Theatre, Pacific Theatre, Afro Van Connect, Black Space Media, Curtain Razors, the Sid Williams Theatre, Intrepid Theatre

FUNDERS



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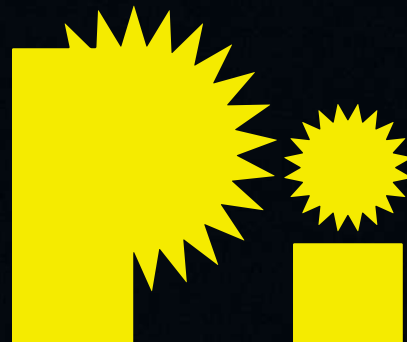
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Photo by Shelby Fenlon