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THEATER

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A Soulpepper Production in association with
American Conservatory Theater and Adam Blanshays Productions

KIM'S CONVENIENCE

By **Ins Choi**

Directed by **Weyni Mengesha**



Photo of actor Ins Choi by Dahlia Katz



When my kids were born, I introduced myself to them as ‘Appa’. Now they’re teenagers and when they do call me, they still call me ‘Appa’. For me, the sound of that word invites feelings of games, stories, humour, adventure and curiosity. I hope my kids’ll say the same one day.

Having originated the role of Jung (the son) almost fifteen years ago, I’m grateful to now be playing the role of Appa (the dad) in this play. My kids have been preparing me for this their whole lives.

My Appa turns 90 this year. I love him. During the Korean war, my Appa and his siblings walked from the north to the south in search of a new start. In 1975, my parents came to Canada with two hundred dollars, three kids and a ferocious amount of hope. We lived with my uncle’s family in Toronto above their convenience store called ‘Kim’s Grocer’. After this play’s premiere at the 2011 Toronto Fringe Festival, my Appa and Umma hugged me and said, “We are very proud of you. Thank you.”. This play is a love letter to them and to all first-generation immigrants who end up making a foreign land, home.

Ins Choi



Playwright Ins Choi and Kim’s Convenience Director Weyni Mengesha in rehearsals. Photo by Dahlia Katz.

CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

Cast

Ins Choi
Appa

Ryan Jinn
Jung

Kelly Seo
Janet

Esther Chung
Umma

Brandon McKnight
Rich, Alex, Mr. Lee, Mike

Creative Team

Ins Choi
Playwright

Wen-Ling Liao
Lighting Designer

Robert Harding
Stage Manager, Fight Captain

Weyni Mengesha
Director

Nicole Eun-Ju Bell
Video/Projection Designer

Angela Mae Bago
Assistant Stage Manager

Joanna Yu*
Set Designer

Fan Zhang
Sound Designer & Original Music

Ming Wong*
Costume Designer

Sean Baek
Fight Director

Production

Andy DeVries
Head Carpenter

Greg Chambers
1st Props Builder/Buyer

Irene Ly
Dresser

Bill Stahl
First Carpenter

Ellie Koffman
Head of Wardrobe

Dalton Villeneuve-Marini
Deck Operator

Paul Boddum
Head Scenic Artist

Claudia Matas
Assistant Head of Wardrobe

Kate Dover
Lighting Operator

Jonathon Parisi and Hilda Chu
Scenic Painters

Erin Halls
Stitcher

Ilia Lagutin
Sound Operator

Lisa Nighswander
Head of Props

Jacqueline Robertson-Cull
Head of Wigs

James Groundwater
Projection Operator

Kim's convenience is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

Kim's convenience was originally produced as part of the 2011 Toronto Fringe Festival. The premiere production of KIM'S CONVENIENCE was produced by Soulpepper Theatre Company, Toronto, ON.

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Soulpepper Theatre is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres and engages professional artists who are members of Canadian Actors' Equity Association under the terms of the jointly negotiated Canadian Theatre Agreement



*Indicated designers on this production are represented by the Associated Designers of Canada, Local ADC659.

Running time:
90 minutes (no intermission)



INS CHOI was born in Seoul, South Korea and was raised in Scarborough, ON. SOULPEPPER 2025: *Kim's Convenience* (Playwright/the role of Appa). FOR SOULPEPPER (ACTOR): *Death of a Salesman, A Midsummer Night's Dream, You Can't Take it With You, Kim's Convenience* - (the role of Jung in 2012) .FOR SOULPEPPER (CREATOR): *Bad Parent, Subway Stations of the Cross, Alligator Pie, re(birth): ee cummings in song, Window on Toronto*. OTHER THEATRE: *Banana Boys* (fu-GEN), *The Odyssey* (Stratford). FILM & TELEVISION: Co-creator, writer and Executive Producer of the TV series, *Kim's Convenience* (Thunderbird, CBC, Netflix). OTHER: His upcoming solo show, *Son of a Preacherman*, will be at Pacific Theatre in Vancouver, April 2-13. When he's not working on projects in theatre and tv, he enjoys hiking with his wife and their two teenagers. SDG.



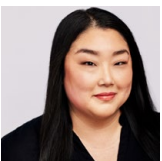
SEAN BAEK is a classically-trained actor (Birmingham Conservatory at the Stratford Festival, 2005) based in Toronto. With an acting career spanning nearly three decades, Sean has worked across Canada and internationally with extensive credits in Theatre, Film, Television, Voice, and Commercials. Sean Fight-Choreographed/-Directed the original Fringe Festival production of *Kim's Convenience*. FOR SOULPEPPER (as Fight Director): *Kim's Convenience* (the inaugural & subsequent productions thereafter); *Pipeline* (2022). FILM & TELEVISION: *Gangnam Project* (BBC/CBC - Season 2 upcoming soon); *SkyMed* (CBC - Season 3); *Transplant* (Season 4); *Reacher* (Season 2); *Murdoch Mysteries* (CBC); *The Expanse* (SYFY); *Killjoys* (CTV/SYFY - 5 Seasons).



ANGELA MAE BAGO is a proud Filipino-Canadian woman who's manifesting a fantastic life thanks to the nurture of her partner, family and friends. She'd like to shoutout her cousin and partner, Janica Mae Trono and David See Jr., for supporting her and being her partners in crime. SOULPEPPER 2025: *Kim's Convenience*. FOR SOULPEPPER: *The Seagull, Draw Me Close*. OTHER THEATRE: *Farm Show: Then & Now* (Blyth Festival); *Prison Dancer The Musical* (National Arts Centre); *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery* (Thousand Islands Playhouse); *15 Dogs* (Crow's Theatre); *Little Women* (Stratford Festival).



NICOLE EUN-JU BELL is a mixed-race multidisciplinary artist born and raised in Toronto, ON. SOULPEPPER 2025: *Kim's Convenience*. FOR SOULPEPPER: Assistant Projection Design: *Billie, Sarah, and Ella: Revolutionary Women in Jazz* (2023). OTHER THEATRE: *White Muscle Daddy* (Buddies in Bad Times), *Perfect Bowl of Pho* (Kick & Push), *Encounters at the Edge of the Woods* (Hart House). As an Assistant Designer: *The Cave* (Luminato/JMar Electric), *Ephemeral Artifacts* (Theatre Passe Muraille). OTHER: As an XR artist, she performed in award winning VR show *Uncanny Alley: A New Day* (Ferryman Collective).



ESTHER CHUNG was born in South Korea and raised in Thornhill, Ontario. SOULPEPPER 2025: *Kim's Convenience* (the role of Umma) OTHER THEATRE: *World Premiere of Bigfoot!* (Port Stanley Festival Theatre); *Calendar Girls; Noises Off; Five Alarm; One Slight Hitch; Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*. FILM & TELEVISION: *Cross; The Horror of Dolores Roach; The Boys; Children Ruin Everything; Shelved; Let's Get Merried*.



RYAN JINN 진윤섭 was born in Los Angeles and raised in Vancouver, BC. SOULPEPPER 2025: *Kim's Convenience* (the role of Jung). OTHER THEATRE: *Kim's Convenience* (Arts Club Vancouver); *An Assertive Girl* (Pull Festival). FILM & TELEVISION: *Reginald The Vampire*; *Kim's Convenience*; *Van Helsing*; *The Good Doctor*; *Charmed*; *2 Hearts*; *Arrow*; *Legends of Tomorrow*; *The Man In The High Castle*. OTHER: Animation: Cocomelon Lane. Award Winning Short Films: So-Ri (소리); Songbird.



ROBERT HARDING was born and raised in Lewisporte, NL. SOULPEPPER 2025: *Kim's Convenience*. FOR SOULPEPPER: Production Stage Manager 2015 - 2019. Over 20 Ccredits including: *A Streetcar Named Desire* (2024), *Three Sisters* (w/ Obsidian Theatre), *The Guide to Being Fabulous*, *Scott Joplin's Treemonisha* (w/ Volcano and Luminato), *The Seagull*, *Queen Goneril*, *Pipeline*, *Almighty Voice and His Wife*, *Rose: A New Musical*, *Waiting for Godot*, *The Anger in Ernest and Ernestine*, *The 39 Steps*, *Marat/Sade*, *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, *Spoon River*, *Of Human Bondage*, & *The Barber of Seville*. OTHER THEATRE: *A Case for the Existence of God* (Coal Mine), *Things I Know to be True* (Company & Mirvish), *Once on this Island* (Obsidian & Musical Stage), *Clybourne Park*, & *Stuff Happens* (Studio 180 & Mirvish). OTHER: Robert is a member of the CAEA SM Committee and was recently elected to CAEA council, Stage Management region.



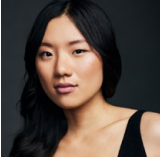
WEN LING LIAO 廖雯伶 was born and raised in Taipei, Taiwan. She is based in the Bay Area, USA. Her works can be seen across USA including American Conservatory Theater, Hartford Stage, Theaterworks Silicon Valley, Denver Performing Arts Center, People's Light Theater, Marin Theater Company, California Shakespeare Theater, Actors Theater of Louisville, Dallas Theater Center, Huntington Theater Company, Merrimack Repertory Theatre, Magic Theater, Center Repertory and San Francisco Playhouse. She got her BA from National Taiwan University and her MFA from University of California, San Diego. SOULPEPPER 2025: *Kim's Convenience* (Soulpepper debut) <http://www.wenlingliao.com>



BRANDON MCKNIGHT is a Canadian actor with Jamaican roots, born and raised in Toronto, ON. SOULPEPPER 2025: *Kim's Convenience* (the roles of Rich, Alex, Mr. Lee, and Mike) OTHER THEATRE: *Judas Noir* (Tarragon Theatre); *Of Mice And Men* (Unit 102 Theatre). SELECTED FILM & TELEVISION: *The Flash* (CW); *The Shape of Water* (FOX Searchlight); *Morningside* (Elevation Pictures); *Most Dangerous Game* (Tubi); *Kim's Convenience* (CBC). OTHER: McKnight is an alumnus of the prestigious CFC Actors Conservatory founded by Norman Jewison (class of 2018). Manager is Daniel Abrams at OAZ and agent is Innovative Artists.



WEYNI MENGESHA was raised in Scarborough and has been the Artistic Director of Soulpepper Theatre Company since 2019. Celebrated for her groundbreaking work and community engagement, her directing credits span Canadian and international stages. Weyni is also a committed educator, mentor, and a producer of youth arts initiatives. In addition to Soulpepper, she has taught at the National Theatre School of Canada and the Canadian Film Centre. FOR SOULPEPPER: *Kim's Convenience* (2025, 2015 and 2012), *What the Constitution Means to Me* (2024); *Billie, Sarah and Ella: Revolutionary Women in Jazz* (2024 and 2023), *A Streetcar named Desire* (2024), *The Guide To Being Fabulous* (2023), *Da Kink in my Hair* (2022), *Queen Goneril* (2022), *Pipeline* (2002), *Jesus Hooped the A-Train* (2020), *Father Comes Home From The Wars* (2016), *A Raisin in the Sun* (2008 and 2010). Other theatre credits include *Treemonisha* (Volcano Theatre/Tolive/Luminato/Soulpepper), *Power of Sail* (Geffen Playhouse), *Seven Spots on the Sun* (Rattlestick Theatre, NY), *Butcher* (Why Not/Mirvish), and *Bars and Measures* (Boston Court, Pasadena). Weyni is so happy to be back with the Kim's family, she would also like to thank her family including her husband and two kids and her father and mother who immigrated here from Ethiopia in the 70's. Thank you all for sharing this story with us.



KELLY J. SEO SOULPEPPER 2025: *Kim's Convenience* (the role of Janet). OTHER THEATRE: *The Melville Boys* (Foster Festival), *Kim's Convenience* (Grand Theatre), *Jenny's House of Joy* (Foster Festival), *Twelfth Night* (St Lawrence Shakespeare Festival), *Kim's Convenience* (Thousand Islands Playhouse), *Hana Hashimoto the Sixth Violin* (Thousand Islands Playhouse), *Fables For the Future* (Clay and Paper Theatre). FILM & TELEVISION: *If I Go Missing* (Tubi), *In the Dark* (CW), *Most Dangerous Game* (Roku), *Age of Samurai* (Netflix), *Dorms* (Office Duo Productions), *Designated Survivor* (ABC), *If I Should Die "Saint or Strangler"* (Apple TV), *The Sanhok Tapes - PUBG Lore Drop* (PUBG), *History Erased: A World Without Korea* (History). EDUCATION/TRAINING: York University Acting Conservatory/Theatre Program. SOCIALS: [@kellyjseo](https://www.instagram.com/kellyjseo)



MING WONG 黄慧明 is an award-winning Toronto costume designer working in theatre, dance, opera, and film & television for over 15 years. She is a graduate from the Ontario College of Art & Design. SOULPEPPER 2025: *Kim's Convenience*, *A Strange Loop*. FOR SOULPEPPER: *The Master Plan*, *Three Sisters*, *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail*, *Sizwe Banzi is Dead*, *Pipeline*. OTHER THEATRE: *Wights*, *Rosmersholm*, *The Wrong Bashir*, *Natasha*, *Pierre*, & *The Great Comet of 1812*, *The Master Plan*, *Red Velvet*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Wedding Party*, Crow's Theatre; *Charlie & The Chocolate Factory* YPT; *Salesman in China*, *Rent*, *Hamlet 911*, Stratford Festival; *Once*, *TIP*, *Things I Know to be True*, Company Theatre/ Mirvish; *Peter's Final Flight*, Ross Petty Productions; *The Wizard of Oz Panto*, *The Inheritance*, *Public Enemy*, Canadian Stage; *Is God Is*, Canadian Stage/Obsidian/Necessary Angel; *Candida*, *Just to Get Married*, *Trouble in Mind*, Shaw Festival; *Hansel und Gretel*, Canadian Opera Company; *The Color Purple*, Citadel Theatre/RMTC. UPCOMING: *Trident Moon*, *Flex*, Crow's; *Wait Until Dark*, Shaw. OTHER: 2021 Virginia & Myrtle Cooper Award recipient, 2 time Dora Award Winner. www.mingwongdesign.com



JOANNA YU 余頌恩 was born in Hong Kong, raised in Thornhill, Ontario. SOULPEPPER 2025: *Kim's Convenience*. FOR SOULPEPPER: *'da Kink in My Hair*, *Three Sisters*. OTHER THEATRE: Mirvish Productions, Stratford Festival, Shaw Festival, National Arts Centre, Canadian Opera Company, Canadian Stage, Arts Club, Belfry Theatre, Theatre Calgary, Citadel Theatre, RMTC, The Grand, Tapestry Opera, Factory Theatre, Buddies in Bad Times, Tarragon, Obsidian, fu-Gen, Cahoots, Nightwood, and many others. OTHER: Recipient of a Dora Award, The Virginia and Myrtle Cooper Award for Costume Design, and the Pauline McGibbon Award. Joanna is a member of the Associated Designers of Canada (ADC659) and sits on the Board of Directors. www.joannayudesign.com



FAN ZHANG 张颿 SOULPEPPER 2025: *Kim's Convenience*. OTHER THEATRE: *Good Bones* (Public Theatre); *Jordans* (Public Theatre), *At the Wedding* (Lincoln Center), *The Far Country* (Atlantic Theater Company); *This Land Was Made* (The Vineyard Theater); *Snow in Midsummer* (Classic Stage Company); *Paris* (Atlantic Theater Company), *Our Dear Dead Drug Lord* (Second Stage Theater), *Pumpgirl* (Irish Repertory Theater), *Suicide Forest* (Ma-Yi Theater Company), *Behind the Sheet* (Ensemble Studio Theatre), Shakespeare Theatre Company, Berkeley Repertory Theater, Arena Stage, Steppenwolf Theatre, Milwaukee Rep, Capital Repertory Theater, American Repertory Theater, Long Wharf Theatre, Pittsburgh City Theatre, Portland Center Stage, Studio Theatre D.C., Two River Theatre, Huntington Theatre and Old Globe. Professor in Sound at Purdue University. EDUCATION: MFA, Yale School of Drama. www.fanzhangsound.com

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ADAM BLANSHAY PRODUCTIONS is a UK Based company with over 60 productions worldwide to date. Recipient of 8 Tony, 10 Olivier, and 1 Helpmann Awards. ABP produced the highly acclaimed 2024 UK première of Kim's Convenience starring Ins

Choi, directed by Esther Jun at Park Theatre and Riverside Studios in London, ahead of a 17 week UK Tour which begins in March 2025. This production won the 2025 Stage Award for Campaign of the Year. Originally from Montreal, Adam is a 2025 EMBA Candidate of Saïd Business School, University of Oxford and received The Linbury Scholarship for his studies. Full bio: adamblanshay.com He dedicates this to his Umma.



AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER is an essential gathering place that brings artists and communities together to inspire and provoke. Under the leadership of Tony Award-winning Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon and Executive Director Jennifer Bielstein,

A.C.T.'s mission is to engage the spirit of the San Francisco Bay Area, activate stories that resonate, promote a diversity of voices and points of view, and empower theater makers and audiences to celebrate liveness. A.C.T. values inclusion, transformational learning, participation and rigorous fun. A.C.T. is a Tony Award-winning nonprofit theater serving almost 200,000 people in the San Francisco Bay Area annually through theater, training, education, and community programs.

THANK YOU'S

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Thank you to the families (and their stores) past and present who kindly shared their photos:

Acton Town Milk, 1990s. Owned by Song family. Submitted by David Song

Bee's Variety, Wilson Ave, Toronto. 1970s. Owned by K.J and M.S Choi. Submitted by Ann Y.K Choi.

Best Convenience, Queen Street West, Toronto, 1970s. Submitted by Suzie Kim.

Bethany General Store, Bethany, Ontario, 1990s. Owned by Keun-Hee (Kennedy) Kang and Eun-Hye (Nancy) Kang. Submitted by Ray Kang.

Eagle Convenience, Cambridge, Ontario, 1990s. Owned by Lee Kyung-Joon. Submitted by Ryan Lee

EZ Mart, Davis Dr/Prospect, Newmarket, 2010s. Submitted by Emily Jung

First Convenience, Roncesvalles & Queen St. West, Toronto, early 2000s. Submitted by Susan Truong

Honey Harbour General Store, Honey Harbour, Ontario, 2017-present. Owned by Yong-Woo Lee. Submitted by Yong-Woo Lee.

Juli Rose Flowers, Toronto. Owned by Julia Kim. Submitted by Jannis Mei.

Midland Jugmilk, Scarborough, late 1980s-2010s. Owned by Mr & Mrs Shin. Submitted by Jini Chen.

Mr. Smoke and Variety, Keele and Wilson, 1990s-2000s. Owned by Jae-Jin and Kyong-Hee. Submitted by Danielle Chiang.

Pinegrove Variety, Oakville, Ontario, 1985-2019. Owned by Chung Jae Lee. Submitted by Edward Lee.

Puppy Chappy, North York. Owned by Eunsook Heo. Submitted by Kelly Seo

Rogers Rd Variety Store, 1960s-70s. Owned by Huang family. Submitted by Andrea James Lui and Christina Lui.


Sun Variety, Scarborough, 1970s-90s. Submitted by Susan Yu

What a bargain, Jones & Danforth, Toronto, 1996-2009. M&D Variety, Jane & Sheppard, Toronto, 2009-2020. Owned by Kang family. Submitted by Jawon Kang

Additional Photos Submitted by: Susan Yoon, Tina Yoo, Harry Lee, Pauline Kim, Jae Pak, Sonia L, Hannah You, Gina Chang and Liz Ryu.

As well as to the community members for providing photos:

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If you have any questions about your recognition or support, please contact us 416-203-6264 x 138 or development@soulpepper.ca

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Thanks to our wonderful legion
of Young Centre volunteers
for their continued support!

Young Centre Facilities Funding:



All front of house staff – floor captains, patron service representatives, baristas and ushers - working for the Young Centre for the Performing Arts are represented by Local B-173 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees.

House and Stage Technicians employed by the Young Centre for the Performing Arts are represented by Local 58 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees.

ABOUT ADAM BLANSHAY PRODUCTIONS & STAFF LISTING

Adam Blanshay Productions (ABP) is a UK Based company with over 60 productions worldwide to date. Recipient of 8 Tony, 10 Olivier, and 1 Helpmann Awards.

ABP produced the highly acclaimed 2024 UK première of Kim's Convenience starring Ins Choi, directed by Esther Jun at Park Theatre and Riverside Studios in London, ahead of a 17 week UK Tour which begins in March 2025. This production won the 2025 Stage Award for Campaign of the Year. Originally from Montreal, Adam is a 2025 EMBA Candidate of Saïd Business School, University of Oxford and received The Linbury Scholarship for his studies. Full bio: adamblanshay.com He dedicates this to his Umma.

STAFF LIST

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Producer

Leon Kay

General Manager
and Associate Producer

Kate Carey

Production Coordinator

Isabelle Heaver

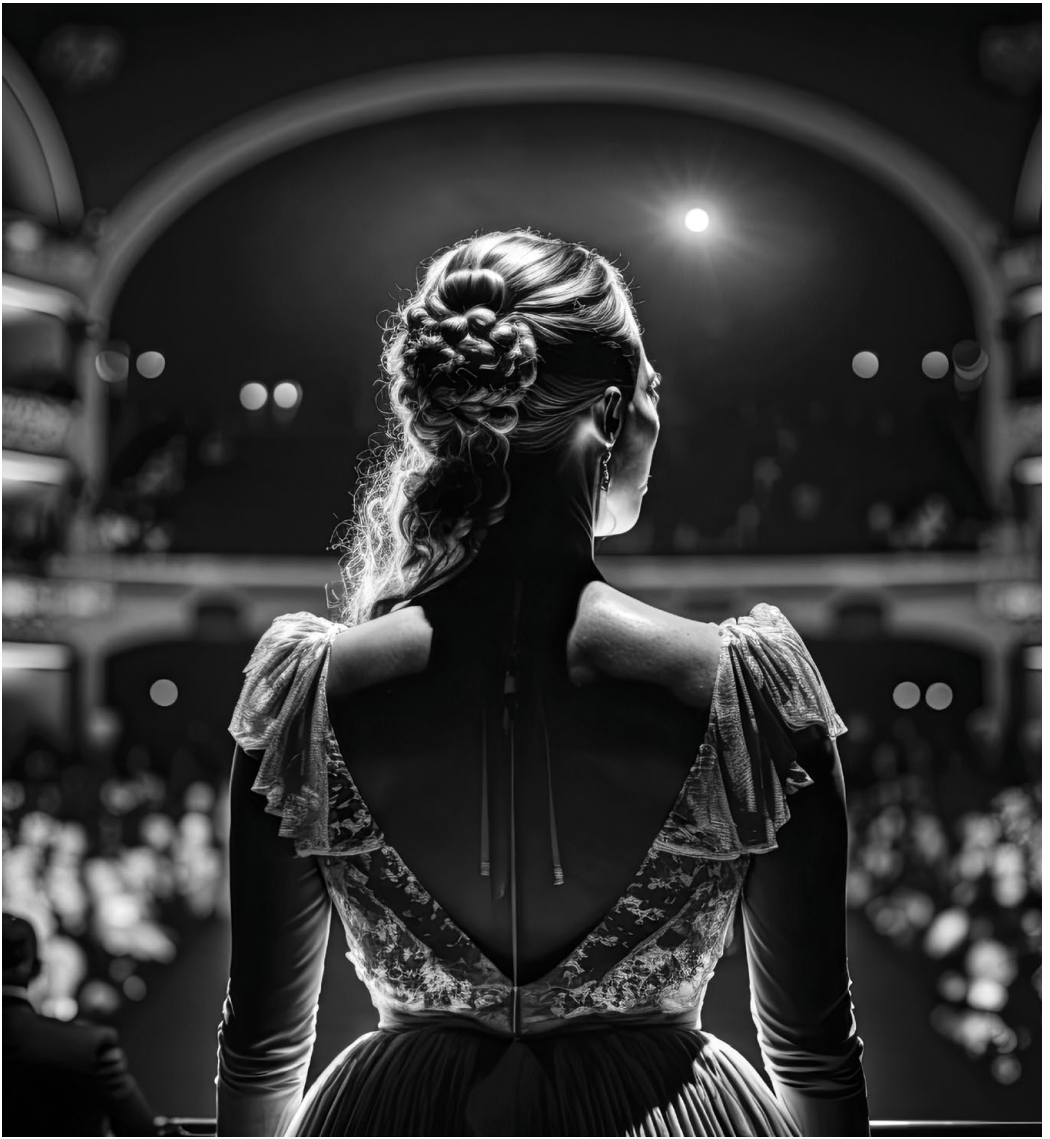
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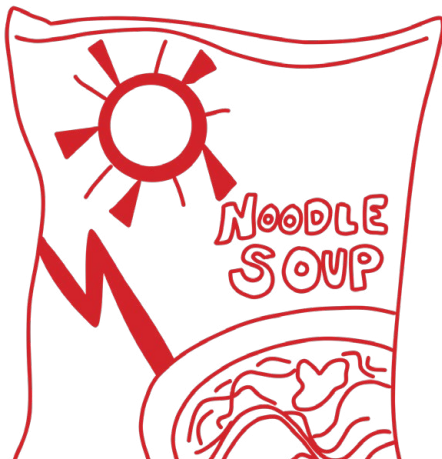
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The artists and staff of Soulpepper and the Young Centre for the Performing Arts acknowledge the original caretakers and storytellers of this land —the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Haudenosaunee, the Anishinaabe, and the Wendat First Nations. We commit to honouring and celebrating their past, present and future.