DE PROFUNDIS: OSCAR WILDE IN JAIL

BY
GREGORY PREST, MIKE ROSS & SARAH WILSON

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A MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Theatres are sacred spaces because they ask us to see the world through another person's eyes.

This season, our plays explore the radical act of reaching across the distances that separate us—between lovers, friends, generations, and strangers—and discovering our capacity for empathy. In sharing these stories, we are reminded that our hopes, fears, and struggles are not ours alone, and that connection remains one of our most powerful human possibilities.

Thank you for joining us, and here's to many more nights at the theatre together!

Paolo Santalucia
Artistic Director

The artists and staff of Soulpepper acknowledge the original caretakers and storytellers of this land—the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples. In recognition of the caretakers of this land, Soulpepper has made a donation to Anishnawbe Health Foundation to support their services for Indigenous Peoples in Toronto. If you'd like to join us in supporting this organization, please visit SupportAnishnawbe.ca

RUNNING TIME: 95 minutes, with no intermission.

INSIDE THE REHEARSAL ROOM

One page a day, written over three months in prison: Oscar Wilde's famous love letter is the inspiration for *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail*. These photos show the company om rehearsal working to bring the show you're about to see to life.

Top: Gregory Prest, Tamara Protic, Jamie Anderson

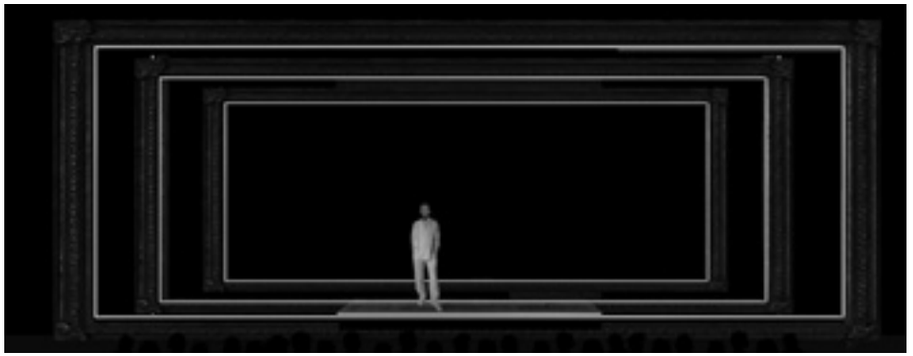
Left: Colton Curtis, Rick Miller

Rehearsal photos by Dahlia Katz

Top: Gregory Prest, Colton Curtis, Damien Atkins

Bottom: Colton Curtis, Damien Atkins

THE DESIGN OF DE PROFUNDIS: OSCAR WILDE IN JAIL



"The Design team's work came together through a shared process, with Gregory serving as the conduit between our disciplines. He brought a clear vision for the production while making room for each of us to contribute our own perspective and interpretation of the text and music."

Lorenzo Savoini
Set & Lighting Designer,
De Profundis: Oscar Wilde In Jail

“Outside of the explorations in rehearsal and workshops, I believe how we landed with the show you see today is because of the trust that we built with each other early in the process. We were not afraid to ask for each other’s opinions or to know when someone else’s design should drive the moment.”

Olivia Wheeler
Sound Designer,
De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail

Colton Curtis as Bosie,
Damien Atkins as Oscar Wilde.
Photo by Dahlia Katz

I was always terrified of Oscar Wilde. I didn't feel clever enough, urbane enough, to appreciate his brilliance. He seemed more like a fictional creation than a real person to me (that probably would have pleased him, actually) but more than that: his life was, to me, a nightmare. Here was a brilliant genius of a man, as famous and adored as a person could be, until his queerness sent him to jail, shamed, reviled and penniless. This is what happens to queers, I thought: *it doesn't matter how special you are, you'll end up alone*.

This impression of mine was just a piece of the larger societal metabolism of Oscar Wilde from a person to a pose: a wit, a long-haired effeminate silhouette, a social butterfly who wrote pithy epigrams that you can stitch onto throw pillows. His plays are brilliant, but they do not tell you much about the man. Even *De Profundis* (arguably his most vulnerable and confessional piece of writing) is complicated: candid but mercurial, slippery, inconsistent. Wise but tedious, generous but arrogant. Compassionate and cruel, maddening and inspiring.

This production takes, I think, a very canny approach in illuminating Oscar Wilde, the Actual Person. It uses the shards of vulnerability in his writing, even the ugly ones, and adds music and movement and absurdity and modernity. It takes the veils that separate us from him and sets them on fire; *it sets the letter itself on fire*. In the prismatic flames that ensue, we get to experience a little of the infuriating and magnetic rock star that Oscar was. And in the tendrils of smoke that follow, just maybe we can glimpse a few ghostly outlines of the human being.

I am not Oscar Wilde. But sometimes, when I'm doing this play, I feel like I can hear the soft thump thump of his little gay heart. I regret that I was ever terrified of him. He deserves better.

Damien Atkins,
Oscar Wilde, *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail*

"I am not Oscar Wilde. But sometimes, when I'm doing this play, I feel like I can hear the soft thump thump of his little gay heart."

CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

Cast

Damien Atkins
Oscar Wilde

Jonathan Corkal-Astorga
Robbie/Musician

Colton Curtis
Bosie

Rick Miller
Oscar Wilde (Alternate)

Oliver Dennis
Carson/Justice Voice Over

Creative Team

Gregory Prest
Writer, Director

Mike Ross
Composer

Sarah Wilson
Lyricist*

Jonathan Corkal-Astorga†
Music Director

liza paul
Assistant Director

Lorenzo Savoini**
Set and Lighting Designer

Ming Wong**
Costume Designer

Olivia Wheeler**
Sound Designer

Frank Donato**
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Nathan Bruce**
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Kelly McEvenue
Alexander Coach

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Jamie Anderson
Assistant Stage Manager

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Bill Stahl
1st Carpenter

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Gunes Agduk
Deck Hand

*Lyrics are original with some adapted from letters by Oscar Wilde & Lord Douglas

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

†Indicates artist on this production that are members of the Toronto Musicians' Association

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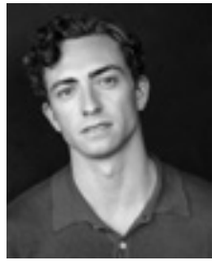
ACTING AND ARTISTIC BIOGRAPHIES

Jamie Anderson
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail*.
OTHER THEATRE: *The Wind in the Willows*, *Perfect Pairings*, *A Christmas Carol*, *La Vie en Rose* (ASM/Apprentice Shaw Festival); *Craze* (Apprentice Tarragon); *Come From Away* (Apprentice You Are Here); *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Carmen*, *Don Giovanni* (Apprentice Pacific Opera Victoria). **OTHER:** Poetry published in *Grain Magazine*, *Room Magazine*, *Contemporary Verse 2*, *QWERTY* & *over/exposed*.

Damien Atkins
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail*.
FOR SOULPEPPER: *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Caretaker*, *King Lear* (2006 & 2022), *The Way of the World*, *Angels in America*, *The Heidi Chronicles*, *A Doll's House*, *Hosanna*, *What the Constitution Means to Me*, *Octet*. **FILM/TV:** *The Vampire Lestat*, *Take this Waltz*, *Slings & Arrows*, *Saving Hope*, *Murdoch Mysteries*, *Puppets Who Kill*, *The Listener*, *Our Fathers*.
AWARDS: Damien has received four Toronto Theatre Critics Awards and multiple Jessie and Dora Awards. **IG:** atkins_damien

Nathan Bruce
SOUPEPPER 2026: *Copperbelt*; *De Profundis, Oscar Wild In Jail*
FOR SOULPEPPER: *Signature Soulpepper* 2024 & 2025, *The Walk-Up* **OTHER THEATRE:** *Rogers V. Rogers* (Crows); *Parelios* (Opera 5); *Enemy Lines* (Aeris Corper); *Canuck Cantatas* (Against The Grain); *In Real Life* (Theatre Sheridan); *Octet* (Crows)
INSTALLATIONS: *Love Across Distance* (Nuit Blanche); *Try To Forget* (Long Winter); *After the Flood* (Charles Street Video)
OTHER: Toronto Theatre Critic's Award (*Rogers V. Rogers*)

Jonathan Corkal-Astorga
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde In Jail*
FOR SOULPEPPER: *Narnia* (with Bad Hats/Crow's);
OTHER THEATRE: *Way Out There* (YES Theatre); *Great Comet* (Crow's/Mirvish/Musical Stage Co.); *Life After* (Yonge St. Theatricals); *Alice in Wonderland* (Bad Hats); *Kelly V Kelly*; *Caroline, or Change*, *8 seasons of UnCovered* (Musical Stage Co.)
AWARDS: Dora Award (*Narnia*)



Colton Curtis
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail*.
OTHER THEATRE: *Billy Elliot*, *A Chorus Line*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *The Music Man*, *Guys and Dolls*, *HMS Pinafore*, *The Hypochondriac* (Stratford). *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Sweet Charity*, *Light Up The Sky*, *Pygmalion* (Shaw).

Frank Donato
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail*.
FOR SOULPEPPER: *Billie, Sarah and Ella: Revolutionary Women in Jazz* (2023); *Detroit: Music of the Motor City* (2023); *Guide to Being Fabulous* (2023); *On A Night Like This* (2023). **OTHER THEATRE:** *Ride the Cyclone* (Sudbury Theatre Centre), *Orestes* (Tarragon Theatre), *Daisy* (Great Canadian Theatre Company), *Ways of Being* (FOLDA/ Kick and Push Festival), *Let's Dance* (Terra Bruce Productions). As an Assistant/Associate Designer: *Tell Tale Harbour* (Confederation Centre), *No Change in the Weather*, *Blindness* (Mirvish)

Indrit Kasapi
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail*.
OTHER THEATRE: *Three Fingers Back*, *Toka*, *Lilies; or, The Revival of a Romantic Drama*, *MSM [men seeking men]*, *Rope Running Out* (lemonTree creations with Tarragon, Theatre Passe Muraille, Buddies in Bad Times), *Les Moutons*, *Machina Nuptialis*, *House Guests*, *Flock of Fliers*, *Nuit Blanche* (Corpus Dance Projects, national and international tours), *Box 4901* (timeshare performance/ Buddies).

Kelly McEvenue
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail*.
FOR SOULPEPPER: Various shows over the years since the company's inauguration in 1998, including faculty of the Soulpepper Academy. **OTHER THEATRE:** Member of the Stratford Festival coaching team for 40 seasons, as well as instructor for the Birmingham Conservatory. **OTHER:** Mentor for Canadian Film Centre Actor's Conservatory, movement consultant for numerous films and television series. Author of *The Actor and the Alexander Technique*.

Rick Miller
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail*.
FOR SOULPEPPER: *Present Laughter*, *MacHomer*.
OTHER THEATRE: *Venus in Fur*, *The BOOM Trilogy*, *MONEY*; (w. Daniel Brooks) *Bigger Than Jesus*, *HARDSELL*; (w. Robert Lepage) *Dragon's Trilogy*, *Lipsynch*, *Zulu Time*, *Geometry of Miracles*; (w. Craig Francis) *HANS, FRANKENSTEIN*, *Jungle Book*, *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea*. **FILM/TV:** *Batwoman*, *Murdoch Mysteries*, *Stage Fright*, *Mulroney: The Opera*.
AWARDS: Dora, Gemini award winner. Rickmiller.ca

liza paul
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail*.
OTHER THEATRE: *pomme is french for apple, MASHUP PON DI ROAD, MASHUP ting!, Don Valley Girls*.
FILM/TV: Writer: *Big Brother Canada, From Ontario With Love*.
OTHER: Artistic Director for comedy is art, 2019–2026. Writer, 2025–2026 Dora Awards.

Gregory Prest
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *De Profundis: Oscar Wild in Jail*.
FOR SOULPEPPER: Over 40 shows as an actor including *A Streetcar Named Desire, Bed & Breakfast, Of Human Bondage, La Bête, Angels in America*. Director of *Rose, Hosanna, The Heidi Chronicles*. **OTHER THEATRE:** *Twelfth Night, The Inheritance* (Canadian Stage); *Bremen Town* (Tarragon), *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* (Mirvish). **AWARDS:** Winner of multiple Dora Awards, Toronto Theatre Critic's Award. **OTHER:** Graduate of the Soulpepper Academy. gregoryprest.com

Tamara Protić
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail*
FOR SOULPEPPER: *Copperbelt* (w/ NAC), *Alice in Wonderland* (w/ Bad Hats Theatre), *Wildwoman* **OTHER THEATRE:** *cicadas* (NAC/Tarragon Theatre), *Trident Moon* (NAC/Crow's Theatre), *Slave Play* (ASM, Canadian Stage), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* (Canadian Stage), *Waitress* (Capitol Theatre), *The Waltz, among men, Lady Sunrise* (Factory Theatre), *Bed & Breakfast* (Capitol Theatre), *Hedda Gabler* (Coal Mine Theatre)

Mike Ross
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail*.
FOR SOULPEPPER: Founding Slaight Family Director of Music. Dozens of shows over 20 years including *Spoon River, Angels in America, The Secret Chord: A Leonard Cohen Experience* and many more. **OTHER THEATRE:** Owns and operates Harmony House—a music hall in Hunter River PEI with his wife Nicole Bellamy
AWARDS: 7 Dora Awards

Lorenzo Savoini
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail, Zoo Story*
SOULPEPPER: *Summer and Smoke* (with Crow's Theatre).
OTHER THEATRE: *Come from Away* (Arts Club), *The Tao of the World, The Hobbit* and *a Midsummer Night's Dream* (Stratford Festival). He has designed over 100 productions for stages throughout Canada, United States, England, Australia and Cuba.
AWARDS: Recipient of five Dora Awards. www.lorenzosavoini.com

Olivia Wheeler
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail, Design For Living*. **FOR SOULPEPPER:** *The Comeuppance, Witch, Alligator Pie*, Associate Sound Designer for *Bad Parent*.
OTHER THEATRE: *Jeeves and Wooster in Perfect Nonsense* (Shaw), *Forgiveness, Cymbeline* (Stratford), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Grand), *Wine in the Wilderness, Twelfth Night, Romeo and Juliet, Playing Shylock* (Canadian Stage)
AWARDS: Dora Award (*Octet*). www.oliviagwheeler.com

Sarah Wilson
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail; Revolutionary Women in Blues* **FOR SOULPEPPER:** 25+ shows as an actor; co-writer of 8 concerts including *The Golden Record* and *Billie, Sarah & Ella*. Co-book/lyrics for *Rose*.
OTHER THEATRE: (Acting) *Ghosts of My House* (Here for Now); *Fifteen Dogs* (Crow's/NAC); *Pride & Prejudice* (The Grand); Stratford Festival. (Co-writer) *Inside American Pie* (Harmony House/Mirvish).

Ming Wong 黃慧明
SOULPEPPER 26/27: *Spring Awakening, De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail, Jaja's African Hair Braiding*. **FOR SOULPEPPER:** Selected: *The Master Plan, Kim's Convenience, A Strange Loop, Three Sisters*.
OTHER THEATRE: Selected: *A Fine Balance, Summer & Smoke, Octet, Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812* (Crow's); *The Tao of the World, Salesman in China, Rent* (Stratford Festival); *The Inheritance*, (Canadian Stage) *One for the Pot, Wait Until Dark, Candida* (Shaw Festival) **AWARDS:** Virginia and Myrtle Cooper Award; three-time Dora Award winner. www.mingwongdesign.com.

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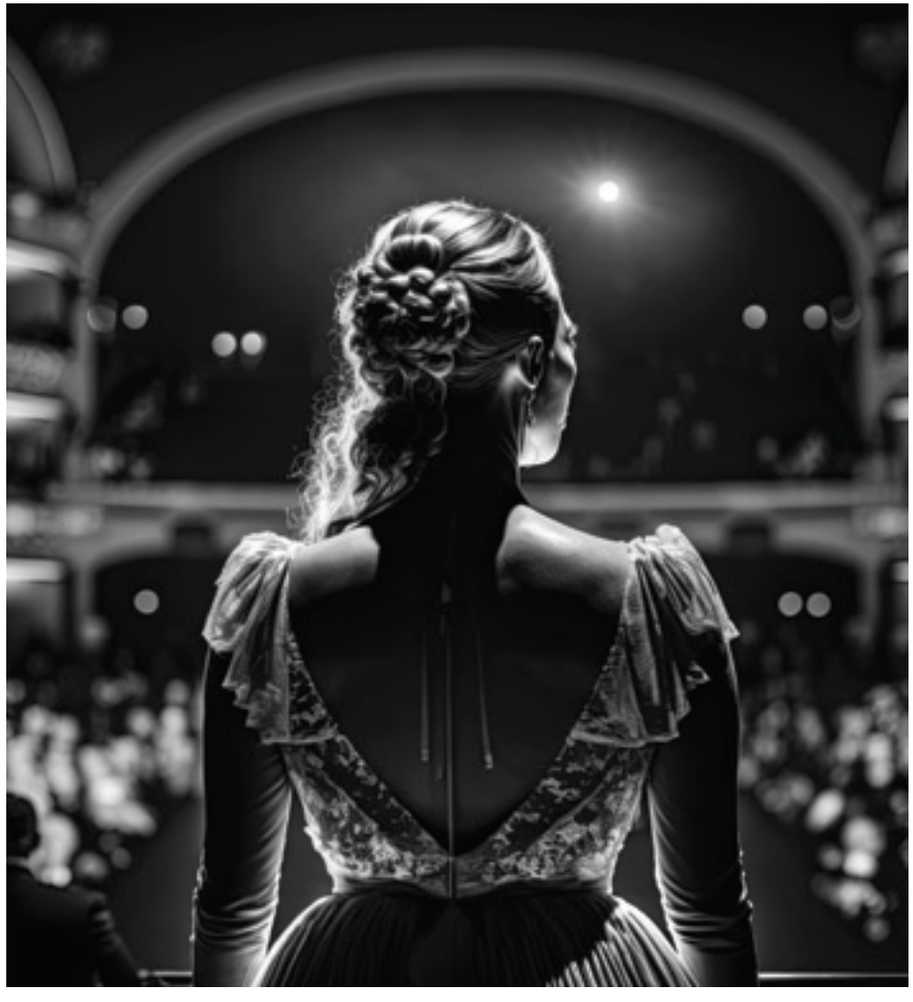

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