

poiema productions
sweet
lies

NEWS RELEASE

Written and Directed by Kenneth Brown
September 20th
Key City Theatre, 20-14th Avenue North

***Identities get confused in this quirky and delightful new comedy
by Kenneth Brown.***

Cranbrook, August 30th, 2014 - Poiema Productions is excited to bring their latest play, *Sweet Lies*, written and directed by Kenneth Brown, to the Key City Theatre this fall. *Sweet Lies* is a brand new play by the acclaimed playwright and debuted at the Edmonton Fringe Festival this past August, receiving rave reviews.

Sylvie is a beautiful girl with such serious control issues that she cannot see the man who loves her right under her nose. So, when he writes her a passionate and anonymous love letter, she thinks the best thing to do with it is to pass it on to her lovelorn mom. These lies with good intentions create quite the interesting love triangle in this quirky and delightful new comedy by Kenneth Brown.

Starring Byron Trevor Martin, Liana Shannon, Brianne Jang, **Cranbrook's own** Candice Fiorentino, and Melissa Blackwood, *Sweet Lies* has a cast to be proud of.

Writer, Kenneth Brown, is an actor, director, musician, producer, teacher and playwright. He is the author or co-author of over thirty produced plays; his writing has been produced in five countries in three languages.

Poiema Productions is an Edmonton-based theatre company founded in 2009 by Candice Fiorentino, Melissa Blackwood, Brianne Jang and Sara Vickruck. Their past productions include *Happily Ever After?*, *The Seminar*, *Middleton: a folk musical*, and *Anatolia Speaks*. Each year, they have brought their original productions to Cranbrook and have performed at the Key City Theatre as well as the Stage Door.

VENUE: Key City Theatre
20-14th Avenue North

SHOWTIME: Saturday, September 20th, 8:00pm

TICKETS: \$22 General Admission
\$20 Seniors/Students

For tickets, visit www.keycitytheatre.com.

For more information, please contact:

Candice Fiorentino

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FULL BIOGRAPHIES

Kenneth Brown | Writer, Director

Kenneth Brown began getting paid to do theatre in 1971. He has been some part of the creative team for more Fringe productions than anyone in North America. Hit plays with his name on them (in some capacity) include ***Life After Hockey***, ***Letters In Wartime***, ***Sextete***, ***Bouncers***, ***Be A Man***, ***The Old Curiosity Shop***, ***Boy Groove***, ***Metis Mutt***, ***Homeless***, ***Grimmer Than Grimm***, ***Cowboy Poetry***, ***The Spiral Dive Trilogy***, and ***Anatolia Speaks***. He tries to write, direct, produce, or act in plays that preserve the spoken word as a sacred trust. He also tries to write plays that tell our stories, our Canadian stories, as long as they're about human beings who aspire to something bigger than themselves. And he tries like hell to do theatre that grabs you by the brain and the guts and take you for a fast ride.

Poiema Productions

Poiema Productions is an Edmonton-based theatre company founded in 2009 by Candice Fiorentino, Melissa Blackwood, Brianne Jang and Sara Vickruck. All four are graduates of the Grant MacEwan University Theatre Arts Program, where they met and built a strong friendship based on laughter, love and respect. Each bring their own personal skills and individual talents to the company, making collaborative and experimental work a pleasure to create. Every member seeks to build their talents outside of the company in order to constantly improve and continue to grow. They also find great importance in working with local and emerging artists like themselves every chance they get. The four girls envisioned a company based on hard work, solid values and theatre with a purpose. As a company, Poiema hopes to enlighten, enliven and entertain. They strive to use art and theatre to bring awareness to important issues in our world and community. As writers, producers and performers, Poiema Productions promises- you will never be bored.

Byron Trevor Martin | Eduard

Byron is a Sterling nominated actor with an MA in Musical Theatre from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and a graduate of the MacEwan Theatre Arts Program. Recent credits include ***Aladdin*** and ***Pinocchio*** with Alberta Opera (over 500 performances), ***Afterlives*** and ***Guernica*** with Surreal SoReal Theatre, ***Trout Stanley*** with Cold.Dead.Fish Theatre as well as ***Blue Heaven*** and ***The Curse of Pigeon Lake*** with The Capitol Theatre. Byron has taught theatre for St. Albert Children's Theatre, Trickster Theatre, Concrete Theatre and outreach classes for the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Byron is also the Artistic Director of Grindstone Theatre. Byron is an alumni of Rapid Fire Theatre, studied at the Magnet Theatre in NYC and performed with Die Nasty- The Legendary Improvised Soap Opera. In 2013, Byron was recognized by the Edmonton Journal as one of the top five Emerging Artists in Edmonton.

FULL BIOGRAPHIES (continued)**Liana Shannon | Carmen**

Liana Shannon is an actor in both theatre and film. She is seen regularly on stage and in film and television spots. Liana's acting training came from the Etobicoke School of the Arts, the Academy of Theatre Arts (Toronto), the University of Guelph, (where she received her BA and her MA in Drama), and countless workshops. Once she completed her theatre training, she trained in film acting in Vancouver and L.A. Liana recently appeared in ***The National Elevator Project II*** with Theatre Yes and ***Clean House*** with Trunk Theatre. Some of her other favorite Edmonton acting credits include: ***Metamorphoses*** (The Citadel Theatre), ***Afterplay*** and ***Ashes to Ashes*** at the Edmonton Fringe, ***Double Double*** with Workshop West, ***Fear Itself*** on NBC and ***Blackstone*** on APTN. Liana also teaches adult acting at The Foote Theatre School in Edmonton.

Brianne Jang | Producer, Sylvie

Brianne Jang is an actor, writer and producer. Born in Edmonton, Brianne began performing when she was eight years old. In 2008, Brianne earned her diploma of Theatre Arts at Grant MacEwan University. She is co-founder of Poiema Productions, an Associate Producer of Grindstone Theatre, and co-founder of the photography company, BB Collective. She enjoys the creation process and the thrill of performing works she had a hand in building from the ground up, such as ***Happily Ever After?***, ***The Seminar***, ***Middleton: a folk musical***, and Grindstone Theatre's ***The 11 O'Clock Number!***

Candice Fiorentino | Producer, Jenny

Candice is a co-founder of Poiema Productions and has been in the acting industry for the past nine years. Starting off on the Wild Horse Theatre Stage in Fort Steele, B.C., Candice moved to Edmonton to pursue her career by enrolling in the Theatre Arts Program at Grant MacEwan University. Since then she has been a part of the creative process of new works including RibbitRePublic's ***Grimmer Than Grimm***, ***Grimmer Than Grimm Than Grimm Than Grimm***, ***Passages***, the Mummerts Collective, and ***Happily Ever After?***, ***The Seminar***, and ***Middleton: a folk musical***, from Poiema Productions. She is currently touring her one-woman show, ***Anatolia Speaks***, written and directed by Kenneth Brown, in which she was nominated for a ***Sterling Award for Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Fringe Show***. Candice seeks to do work that brings passion about and awareness to important social and community matters.

FULL BIOGRAPHIES (continued)**Melissa Blackwood | Producer, Harley**

Melissa is an Edmonton actor and not only has a passion for theatre but also for film and creating new works. Melissa is a theatre arts graduate from Grant MacEwan University. She has been involved in either creating shows, or professionally acting in Edmonton for the past 6 years. Other than her busy summers with the fringe, Melissa has been teaching acting classes and directing musicals for the past 4 years at Stageworks Academy for the Performing Arts. She has also been working on various film projects. Melissa is excited to be extending the Poiema family on this fun project!

REVIEWS OF “SWEET LIES”

Edmonton Journal, Fish Griwkowsky, 4 out of 5 stars

Modernizing and feminizing Cyrano de Bergerac, Sweet Lies is a seamlessly executed farce set in a hair salon. Uninterested in love, Sylvie (Brianne Jang) is in the sights of shy Eduard (Byron Trevor Martin). An anonymous love letter he writes mistakenly ends up in the hands of Sylvie’s lovelorn mother (the terrific Liana Shannon) — cue Three’s Company theme music.

But what gives this farce its panache is the dignity with which circumstances play out. Inevitably, Eduard ends up directed by Sylvie into the arms of the older woman, but we’re asked if this is not such a bad place to be, and there’s admirable heart here as the situation sorts itself out.

Thoughtfully, a screen above the play with beautiful French paintings cues location shifts, and the comedic antics of Candice Fiorentino and Melissa Heagy — the play’s R2-D2 and C-3PO of sorts — need to be acknowledged. As does Martin’s dead-on French accent and great acting within the Rube Goldberg machine he’s batted around.

Good clean fun all around with a great female spirit throughout, this takes farcical theatre to its peak, well past where the kisses are hers and hers and his.

EdmontonFringe.ca, Kathleen Bell, 4 out of 5 stars

Sweet Lies is a delightful romantic comedy, with a crisp, well-paced story and a charming cast. Sylvie is a hairstylist focused on helping her mom bounce back after a recent divorce. But when Sylvie receives an anonymous love letter and passes it on to make her mom think she has a secret admirer, antics ensue. The actors sell every moment and even amongst the quirkiness they never go over the top. Though what

REVIEWS (continued)

truly won over the audience from the beginning is the cast's dancing set changes - a cute lil' touch to a cute lil' story.

INTERESTING FACTS!

- Kenneth Brown's last play, *Anatolia Speaks*, garnered two Sterling awards nominations: *Outstanding Fringe New Work* and *Outstanding Performance by an Actress* (**Candice Fiorentino**)
- Poiema Productions has been touring their shows to Cranbrook, BC, each year.
- This is the 5th production by Poiema Productions.
- Poiema Productions also holds Fashion For Freedom each spring, an annual fundraiser and awareness event in support of a different charity each year.

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- #sweetliesplay

For more information, please contact:

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