

## **I Don't Belong Here – A Play with Music**

### **Joëlle Rabu – Concept creator, Co-author, Actor, Singer**

Joëlle Rabu has enjoyed a dynamic 40-year career on the stage, highlighted by a diverse array of theatre roles, including leads in 'Cabaret', 'Irma la Douce', 'John Gray's Don Messer's Jubilee', 'Anything Goes' and 'Marion Bridge', to name but a few. Her critically acclaimed portrayal of Edith Piaf has enjoyed a long run and re-runs, with over 2,000 performances across Canada and the US.

Beyond the stage, Joëlle has made significant contributions as the host and writer for Knowledge Networks 'Arts Edge' and was featured in the documentaries 'Passeport Musique' in Mali and Moncton. She also played a role during the 2010 Vancouver Olympics as host and writer for the French CBC's live radio show 'Correspondances'.

Joëlle's expertise extends to directing and writing for special events, and she has served as a creative consultant on more than a dozen projects, including the acclaimed 'Symphony of Sound and Light-Reflections of Canada' which played on Canada's Parliament Hill for 5 years.

Her awards include two Jessie Richardson Theatre wins plus a third nomination; a Juno nomination; the 'Ambassadrice Culturelle' de la C-B, a BC Touring Artist award, and most recently, the BC Governor General 'Queen Elizabeth's 70th Jubilee Excellence in the Arts and Music' award among others. Joëlle, who lives on Vancouver Island, is passionate about world cultures, speaks several languages, and has traveled throughout 5 continents. She is also a recording artist with eight independent albums to her name. She is looking forward to retirement when she can complete her three, as of yet unpublished, children's books.

*"I Don't Belong Here"* is Joëlle's second full-length play and holds a special place in her heart for two reasons: the stories are thoughtfully fashioned in collaboration with Kelly, her best friend of over 55 years, and the supporting music, by the late great Harry Nilsson, is faithfully shaped by the intuitive talents of her son, Nico, arranger and music director.

### **Kelly Wyatt – Co-author, Actor, Singer**

With a profound passion for capturing the essence of human nature in her writing, co-author Kelly Wyatt was a natural choice when her childhood friend, Joëlle Rabu, invited her to join the creative team for *"I Don't Belong Here"*.

Kelly's artistic background includes a fifteen-year modeling career, several lead roles in TV commercials, and being cast as the body double and stand-in for Karen Allen in the movie "Backfire". She eventually left the glamour of showbiz to focus on raising her family, which now includes six grandchildren. After retiring from a 30-year career in the education sector, Kelly rekindled her love for the arts by enrolling in classes at the Victoria Academy of Dramatic Arts and Spotlight Academy. A strong community supporter, she has also lent her time as a cast member for the PACE Musical Theatre company in Victoria.

Kelly and Joëlle first met in Grade 8 in Courtenay on Vancouver Island, and nearly 55 years later, these best friends have joined artistic forces to continue telling stories that matter to them.

## **Nico Rhodes – Music Director, Arranger, Artistic Direction**

Nico Rhodes is a genre jumping, multilingual musician who collaborates with other artists and art forms to experience and explore music in as many styles as possible. Growing up touring around the globe surrounded by artists and the world of theatre – he is equally comfortable playing jazz, classical, funk or roots music, orchestrating a symphony, writing musicals, and conducting choirs.

Nico Rhodes is one of the most in demand young arranger/musical directors in Canada, with 40 stage musicals to his credit. He's written 400 original compositions, four original musicals and arranged two symphonic pops concerts. He's been nominated for two Jessie and five Ovation Awards and in 2019 was honoured with Nanaimo's Emerging Cultural Leader Award. He composes for stage, screen, and media, collaborates with multiple choirs, enjoys playing with several jazz trios and solo concert singers. In addition to his roles as producer, director, and writer, Nico's most recent creation, 'Piano Heist', has been met with such high demand that he and his childhood friend and co-creator, Patrick Courtin, have tours scheduled for the next two years, and they are already working on a sequel to their hit show.