

Mel Hinch - Director

Mel has worked in the fields of music education, classical music and musical theatre for most of her adult life. She has taught middle and high school choral music, drama and musical theatre in both Ontario and Belgium. While living abroad, Mel sat on the International Schools Music Council and was the guest conductor for one of the International Schools Middle School Honor Choir Festivals. In addition, she has been a guest clinician for various church choirs in the GTA, a vocal adjudicator at last year's Orillia Kiwanis Music Festival and this spring will be adjudicating the vocal/choral entries in Midland's Kiwanis Music Festivals (French and English divisions).

In the area of musical theatre, Mel has directed/music directed school productions and amateur community theatre productions. She has had the pleasure of working with the Pickering West Hill Music Theatre and South Simcoe Theatre. Recent directing/music directing/vocal coaching credits include *A...My Name is Alice*, *Company*, *Ned Durango*, *Little Shop of Horrors* and *Fiddler on the Roof*. Mel is thrilled to be making her debut this spring with KCP.

Apart from her work in education and amateur theatre, Mel has performed professionally as a singer. She was a member of the Canadian Opera Company Chorus, The Elora Festival Singers and the professional core of The Toronto Mendelssohn Choir. She has been a soloist with the Winnipeg, Toronto and Oshawa Symphonies, as well as with the Scarborough Choral Society, local churches and community choirs.

Sandi LaPlante – Choreographer

First introduced to theatre in high school as choreographer for The Music Man, Sandi took a very long hiatus from theatre until setting her tap shoes on stage for 42nd Street (SST 2000). A new love was found and since then she has been seen on stage in several shows with KCP and SST and has choreographed, directed and/or designed/constructed costumes for KCP, Theatre By The Bay, Blackhorse Village Players (nominated for the THEA for Best Costumes for Last Summer) and SST (won the THEAs for Best Costumes for Annie, Urinetown and Blithe Spirit). She's happy to be back for Closer Than Ever working with Mel, Gayle and the fabulous cast (two of whom were in the last play she directed and choreographed for KCP...9 to 5 The Musical). Enjoy the show!

Julie Underhill – Producer

Julie has enjoyed helping bring together the artistic skills and talents of this team and support them to bring this final product to life. She has also enjoyed lending a hand to Wendy, Charlie and Meri in the art of lifting furniture! On a more regular basis, Julie sits on the KCP board of directors in the role of Vice Chairperson, and is a Secondary School Principal with SCDSB.

Gayle Haley – Rehearsal accompanist / Band Leader

Gayle has been active in community theatre and local high school productions for many years, most often as keyboard player or music director. She has done productions with KCP and South Simcoe Theatre. Occasionally she gets brave enough to take to the stage as well. Gayle is retired as a teacher of the deaf but continues to teach piano, vocals, and beginning guitar to local students. She is also often called on to accompany vocalists and instrumentalists and choirs. As a member of Barrie Soundwaves Chorus she gets to sing a Capella (Barbershop style) and has done some vocal arrangements as well. She hopes you really enjoy the amazing talent and beautiful/entertaining music this show offers. It's been a journey!

Richard Doria - Cast

Richard was born and raised in Toronto and began studying music at the age of seven. He first learned the organ, then piano, musical theory, and then at age 11 he began playing the violin, which he played for seven years. For the last 2 years of high school, he was the first chair violin (concert master) of his school's symphony orchestra. After high school he took up vocal studies. Voice issues with his first band, a rock cover band, forced him to take lessons. After his first teacher wasn't able to teach him how to sing with the range of vocalists such as David Coverdale of Whitesnake or Ronnie James Dio of Rainbow/Black Sabbath/DIO fame, he found The Royans School of Vocal Music. Now studying under Diana Yampolsky and her 'Vocal Science' method, he increased his range by over an octave and could sing an entire show, 2 hours or more, without any noticeable loss in vocal ability. While rehearsing with another band, he realized the band life wasn't for him so he just enjoyed Karaoke to keep his voice in shape. In 1999 he saw one of his favourite vocalists, Paul Stanley from the band KISS, take on the lead role in the Toronto production of Phantom of the Opera. After that show, he always had aspirations of performing in a musical theatre production one day. While living in Coldwater, a local theatre group, The Village Players, were auditioning for The Addams Family Musical in the fall of 2016. Being his first musical, he thought he might get a chorus part. He was surprised when he was given a speaking part with a solo, as he had never even taken drama in high school. After a successful run, the musical bug hit him. He heard rumours that one of his favourite shows, Rock of Ages, was set to run in Midland the next summer. He was crushed to find out he would be in Hawaii for the entire audition schedule. Luckily, they offered him an early audition, so he auditioned for the part of Dennis DuPree, the rock club owner. Shocked when the cast list came out and he was given the coveted role of Stacey Jaxx, the

arrogant rock star and lead singer of the fictitious band Arsenal. Eleven sold out shows later and it was official; musicals would be his hobby for a long time!

Lindsay Cadieux

Lindsay is thrilled to be returning to her “happy place” again. She was last seen as part of the Friends of KCP right here at the Ferndale Banquet Hall for their Holiday performance this December. She has been a part of 4 KCP shows, including Mme Thenardier (Les Miserables), Narrator (Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat), Olive (Spelling Bee), and Judy (9 To 5). Lindsay would like to thank the amazing team that helped to produce this incredible show, including her fellow cast members – you are all an amazingly talented group. She would also like to thank her husband for his support in holding down the fort 3 nights a week while she recharged her batteries through music.

Anne Johnston - Cast

Ann is very happy to be a part of Closer Than Ever and to have the opportunity to sing this wonderful music!! Ann has had a very busy theatrical season, appearing as Yente the Matchmaker in SST's Fiddler on the Roof (a role for which she was recently honoured with a nomination for best performance by a female in a supporting role in a musical from the Association of Community Theatres--Central Ontario) and as Shelby with the Huronia Players production of The Spitfire Grill in Midland. Ann is a familiar face to KCP audiences, having performed with the group since 1987. Favourite KCP roles include Lady of the Lake (Spamalot), Miss Andrew (Mary Poppins), Georgie (The Full Monty), Miss Adelaide (Guys and Dolls), Marian (The Music Man) and being part of the ensemble in the amazing Les Miserables. Enjoy the show!!

Ty Kennedy

Ty is extremely proud and happy to be a part in this fantastic company and feels Closer than Ever to his passion of making theatre. Performance highlights include Charlie Brown (You're a Good Man Charlie Brown), Gilbert Blythe (Anne of Green Gables), and Trevor Graydon (Thoroughly Modern Millie) Hot Blades Harry (Urinetown) and Annas (Jesus Christ Superstar) Tommy (The Who's Tommy) and The Scarecrow (The Wizard of Oz). His interests include Broadway musicals, mastering various accents and character voices, martial arts and film reviewing. He is deeply excited to be a part of this terrific production and cast and hopes you enjoy the show.

Ralph Johnston – Bass & Guitar

Ralph Johnson plays Electric and String Bass. Ralph studied music at the University of York and Humber College in the Jazz Performance Programs. Ralph played across North America for several years during his career, and for the last few years has been working and playing in the Barrie area. He has been performing in such groups as The Baytown Big Band, Huronia Symphony, Barrie Concert Band and many small jazz and rock groups. He is passionate and excited to be working with the Kempenfelt Community Players

John Underhill – Percussion

John currently plays with a classic rock band. He has played a number of musicals over the years with several community theatre groups, including Wasaga Beach Community Theatre, South Simcoe Theatre and KCP.

Wendy Missen

Wendy realized a love of the stage at a young age. She also learned that, while she can't carry a tune, she's an expert at carrying furniture!

Noah Hollinshead – Sound Technician

Noah is once again excited to be involved with KCP. He has been part of several KCP productions both backstage and onstage. As well as in the surrounding community with groups such as Moving Art and just recently SST. Noah aspires to be involved in theatre production as a profession, and is thankful for the experience KCP has given him. Select recent credits include: Wizard Of Oz (Assistant Director and Sound Technician-KCP), Lion King Jr (Assistant Stage Manager-Moving Art), Peter Pan Jr (Captain Hook- KCP), Four Play (Director-SST) and coming this fall Aladdin Jr (Co-Director-KCP)

Mauro Vadacchino – Spot Light

Mauro is a grade 9 student at St. Joan of Arc High School here in Barrie. He is very excited to work on his first show with Kempenfelt Community Players. Mauro would eventually like to pursue a career in film. He looks forward to more opportunities to work in community theatre and technical aspects of show production.