

## A Live-Cinematic Interpretation of Hell

Co-Production with Electric Company Theatre Brings New Twist to Sartre's Existential Play



Jonathon Young as The Valet in *No Exit*. Nenad Stevanovic photo. Andy Thompson illustration. Sandra Zarkovic logo design.

With great pleasure, The Virtual Stage recently announced that it will be joining forces with Vancouver's Electric Company this May to co-produce Jean-Paul Sartre's modern classic *No Exit*. Artistic Director Andy Thompson approached the Electric Company's renowned director, Kim Collier, to direct the play last summer. Collier quickly began to envision a daring concept that will result in the simultaneous presentation of both a live performance and a film: a natural continuation of The Virtual Stage's investigation into the intersections of theatrical and cinematic art forms.

On the Great Northern Way Campus in the Centre for Digital Media's "Hangar" we are building our own hotel room as the site where Sartre's three characters must endure each other's company for eternity. This sense of entrapment will be intensified as the actors will be literally locked inside the walls of their tiny room. Through the use of modern projection technology, the audience will be able to watch with cinematic intimacy, a meticulously staged live film of what goes on inside the box.

Wait! That's not all! Inhabiting the space between audience, hotel room and giant movie screen is the play's minor character, The Valet (played by Electric Company Artistic Director Jonathon Young). Just what he gets up to out there beyond the confines of the script must be seen to be believed. By creating a theatrical space outside of the walls that traditionally define the perimeter of *No Exit*, we are widening the frame and possibly finding an exit to this famous play about eternal damnation.



**No Exit** co-produced with Electric Company Theatre  
May 1 - 10, 2008 (previews May 1& 2, opening May 3)  
"The Hangar" (577 Great Northern Way, Vancouver)  
Tickets \$20/15 604-684-2787 [ticketstonight.ca](http://ticketstonight.ca)  
**[www.thevirtualstage.org](http://www.thevirtualstage.org)**

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# The Virtual Stage Wins Jessie



Sasa Brown won a Jessie for her portrayal of 'Flower Vines' in *SPANK!*

Two artists involved in The Virtual Stage's production of *SPANK!* were honoured with trophies at the 25th Annual Jessie Richardson Theatre Awards. But not in ways they necessarily expected...

*SPANK!* was nominated for three awards in total. Enigma Arcana received a nod for Outstanding Costume Design for their incredibly detailed and 'out-of-this-world' space suits. The impressive visual effects in the show were acknowledged with a Special Artistic Achievement nomination for Outstanding Technical Design from the *SPANK!* visual design team, which included computer animators Jason Daigneault, Greg Ditson, Adam Jones and Andrew Sharp, interactive visual designer Jamie Griffiths, lead visual designer Jamie Nesbitt and director Andy Thompson.

Sasa Brown, who played multiple characters competing for control over the virtual body of 'Flower Vines' in *SPANK!*, was held by many as the favorite to win the Jessie for Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role. As expected, she took the award, accepting it in a charming speech that was one of the highlights of the night.

The Virtual Stage's Artistic Associate Jamie Nesbitt was surprised when he was called to the stage for an award he didn't even know he was being considered for: the Jessie for Most Promising Newcomer. This marked the second time a designer has won the Most Promising Newcomer award after working on one of our productions. In 2003, lighting designer Itai Erdal grabbed the honours after designing the lights for our acclaimed production of *The Birth of Freedom*.

In all, The Virtual Stage was nominated for three Jessies, with our artists taking home two. This brings The Virtual Stage's historical Jessie Richardson Theatre Award total over four main-stage productions in six years to six nominations, two wins and association with two Most Promising Newcomer award winners.

## In Memoriam

With heavy hearts we experienced the loss of two shining colleagues last fall. Both had worked on our productions. First was Larisa Fayad, who died at the age of 31 on September 16, 2007, in a plane crash in Phuket, Thailand. Larisa was one of our house technicians and lighting operators for the world premiere production of *SPANK!* at the Roundhouse.



Larisa Fayad

Shortly thereafter, on November 4th, we were shocked with the news of the death of a perennial box office volunteer in Vancouver's independent arts scene, Bruce Stuart. Bruce donated his time as box office manager for our 2004 production of *Valparaíso* at Performance Works and was awarded the Mary Phillips Prize for Behind the Scenes Achievement at the 2007 Jessie theatre awards just months before he suddenly passed away.



Bruce Stuart

Both Larisa and Bruce were extremely positive, passionate, generous and talented people in our community. They will be truly missed.

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## Playwright-In-Residence Examines Bedroom Monsters



Shane Laporte

The Virtual Stage is pleased to introduce playwright Shane Laporte as its Artist-In-Residence for the 2007-8 theatre season. While in residence with The Virtual Stage, Shane will be developing his new comedy *The Thing in the Bedroom*. His sharp, multi-layered and devilishly witty two-hander tells the story of a married couple who struggle to deal with everyday life while a mysterious and deadly beast inhabits their bedroom.

The play, slated for production with The Virtual Stage next season, requires an exploration of audio technology as the beast is experienced primarily through sound.

Born in Montreal, Laporte is an honours graduate of the Vancouver Film School's Writing For Film & Television program and a two-time winner of the Praxis Fellowship for Screenwriting.

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### Also Currently In Development

#### *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

a multi-media stage adaptation of George Orwell's timeless classic by Andy Thompson, dramaturgy from Kevin Kerr

#### *The Sleep Project*

a meditation on sleep from Jamie Griffiths, Jamie Nesbitt, Patrick Pennefather, John Popkin and Andy Thompson

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## 2008 Board of Directors

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## Staff

Artistic & Managing Director	Andy Thompson
Associate Artistic Producer	Una Memisevic
Artistic Associate	Jamie Nesbitt
Artist-In-Residence	Shane Laporte

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Want to learn more about our shows and the work that our talented artists are up to? Join our new Facebook group and learn what the fuss is all about. To check it out, go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and search "The Virtual Stage".

The website [facebook.com](http://facebook.com) is a "social networking utility" that is taking the Internet by storm. Also whimsically referred to as 'Crackbook' by many who can't seem to stop cyber-socializing, it appears to be a fad that won't go away. The difference between Facebook and its older rival, MySpace, is that users have the ability to restrict who has access to individual pages, creating an online blizzard of interconnecting permission-based social circles. The ripple effects between real human beings have been notable in the news. The site has also been the talk of many parties, as the converted debate the finer points of computer-based human interactions with neo-hardliners (who refuse to participate out of principle), each side keeping a degree of tongue-in-cheek self-righteousness.

Facebook is transforming how we socially interact with each other before our very eyes. Are you addicted yet?

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# In Need of 25 Champions

The Virtual Stage needs you! In order to make our production of *No Exit* a success, we are reaching out to our base of grassroots supporters in search of 25 'Champions' (donors who give between \$100 and \$249, see categories below). Get in on the action now and join this special group of supporters! All donations over \$25 will receive a charitable tax receipt. Every bit helps, large or small!

## Giving Money Buys You Happiness

We're actually not joking! The Vancouver Sun recently reported that money can buy happiness! In the article (Vancouver Sun March 21/08 issue page A1) a group of UBC and Harvard researchers "found greater happiness among people who give money to charity and buy gifts for friends, regardless of income". We would certainly not want to deprive our supporters of such an opportunity to feel good about themselves! Looking for joy? Well the search is over!



### Giving Makes Me Feel Good!

Yes! I believe! I want to be part of the emerging arts community by helping make things happen for The Virtual Stage! I know it will make me a happier person (and that I'll also get a charitable tax receipt...)

Name:

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Donations can also be made via CanadaHelps.Org and our website!

**[www.thevirtualstage.org](http://www.thevirtualstage.org)**

### Donor Categories

\$10-25	Enthusiast
\$26-49	Intellectual
\$50-99	Sophisticated
\$100-249	Champion
\$250-499	Enlightened
\$500-999	Master
\$1000 +	Omnipotent

cheques can be made payable to:

The Virtual Stage Arts Society  
PO Box 3092 Stn Terminal  
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X6  
p. 604-876-0977  
f. 604-876-0172  
e. [info@thevirtualstage.org](mailto:info@thevirtualstage.org)

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