

Firehall Arts Centre presents  
a rice & beans theatre production

developed in association with Playwrights Theatre Centre  
in association with Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre  
and created with support from the PuSh International Performing Arts Festival

# PEACE COUNTRY

by Pedro Chamale

Coming home hurts more than it used to.

OCTOBER 12-22, 2023



WORLD PREMIERE

[firehallartscentre.ca](http://firehallartscentre.ca) | 604.689.0926

Illustration by Kiana Hipolito

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# A Message from the Firehall's Artistic Producer



Welcome to the Firehall!

Thank you so much for joining us for this first production in the Firehall's 2023-2024 season. We have some fascinating stories lined up for you to enjoy over the next ten months. Told through drama, musical theatre and contemporary dance and involving artists from across Canada, we want to bring you together in our intimate little theatre for unique experiences. And this is just one of them.

Having grown up in rural small town Alberta, when I first heard excerpts of Pedro Chamale's *Peace Country*, I connected to it immediately. The camaraderie, the alienations, the boredom and the challenges being faced by small towns as big box stores move in, industries close and global warming creates change far quicker than ever imagined, it resonated. I knew it was a story that we needed to hear on stage. Firehall has had the pleasure of working with rice & beans theatre in previous seasons with our presentations of *Happy Valley* and *Yellow Objects* and we wanted to offer Firehall's support to the realization of this premiere production of *Peace Country*.

We hope to see you often at the Firehall over the season and hope you will enjoy venturing into Northeastern B.C. with us. We ask for your support in letting your friends and family know about *Peace Country* and other productions coming up at the Firehall. Attending theatre is a great way to connect, escape the day-to-day and discover new ways of thinking and laughing.

Enjoy!

Donna Spencer

## Land Acknowledgement

The Firehall Arts Centre is located on the unceded and traditional territories of the x̱w̱məθkwəy̱əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and Səl̓ílwətał (Tseil Waututh) First Nations where they have lived and gathered together for thousands of years.

Acknowledging their connections to these lands is a significant part of what the Firehall considers when choosing the productions and presentations we undertake and how that work shapes and impacts those around us. We ask our community to reflect on what being present here means to you and those around you.

## Playwright/Director's Note

This is a play about the climate crisis we are in. It is also a play about people. Real people. People that I grew up with and people I love. It is also about an area that I was born and raised in. Peace Country is a place you can go and experience for yourself. A place that is flush with Indigenous culture, natural resources that have driven this province's economy for decades, and people who'd give you the shirt off their backs, if you ever found yourself in need. My small immigrant family experienced this generosity firsthand when I was a teen. I was inspired to bring all of that to this project as it plays a major part in how I view the world today. But I now find myself 20 years removed from living there full time. While I still go back two to three times a year, I no longer call the Peace Region home and with that distance comes perspective. Perspective on how although we may live in the same province, we exist in two different worlds. It also gives the perspective on how far our climate has changed and what is just beyond the horizon for us if we do not find a way to demand accountability from the major player hurtling us towards that future.

This summer we saw the devastation of raging forest fires across our country. In almost prophetic-like fashion, a draft rewrite this spring imagined that the town of Tumbler Ridge had burnt down in a forest fire a month before the real Tumbler Ridge was evacuated due to forest fires. Tears blurred my vision as I delivered that news to the actors in the workshop and the reality of why *Peace Country* was direly needed sunk in. While *Peace Country* the play is set in the near future and the people in it are based on my childhood family and friends, it is real in that like the characters in *Peace Country*, we need to find a way to listen to each other in order to make it through all of this together.

At times it seems that we do not have the language to truly speak to the hurt we are all feeling for what is happening to our world right now. That we are paralyzed by a problem so grand it is easier to carry on doing what we have been doing rather than change. Because hey, one person can only do so much, right? Can only afford to be so green, to stretch oneself so thin in the face of others not seeming to care. So thank you for being here to witness our attempt to grapple with that feeling. Thank you for being willing to hear these young people out. I can guarantee you that there are no answers here tonight, only offers and questions.

Pedro Chamale

Firehall Arts Centre Presents a rice & beans theatre production

# PEACE COUNTRY

by **Pedro Chamale**

developed in association with Playwrights Theatre Centre, in association with Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre and created with support from the Push International Performing Arts Festival

## Performers

Manuela Sosa*	Julia
Sofía Rodríguez*	Alicia
Kaitlyn Yott*	Candice
Sara Vickruck*	Melissa
Angus Yam	Greg

## Production Team

Pedro Chamale	Playwright & Director
Heidi Taylor	Dramaturg
Michelle Thorne	Costume Designer
Jonathan Kim	Lighting Designer
Cindy Kao	Sound Designer
Kimira Reddy	Set/Props Designer
Monica Emme	Set/Props Design Assistant
Andie Lloyd	Video Designer
June Hsu	Video Design Assistant
Julia Lank*	Stage Manager
Anna Brew	Assistant Stage Manager
Kayleigh Sandomirsky	Production Manager

*\*The participation of these artists is arranged by permission of Canadian Actors' Equity Association under the provisions of the Dance•Opera•Theatre Policy.*

## Duration

2 hours & 20 minutes, with one intermission

## Content Warnings

representations of the climate emergency and fire, strong language and discussion of racialized violence

## Sensory Warnings

Loud noise, smoke/haze, strobe lighting

## About the Playwright/Director



Pedro Chamale was born and raised on treaty 8 territory, colonially known as Chetwynd, BC and now creates on the unceded and traditional lands of the x̱w̱məθkwəy̱əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. He received his BFA in Theatre Performance from SFU's School for the Contemporary Arts. He then went on to form rice & beans theatre with Derek Chan, where he is currently Artistic Director. Pedro

is a director, playwright, and performer. He was the Artistic Resident at NewWorld Theatre in 2014, guest curator of the 2018 rEvolver Festival and one of the playwrights in the 2019 Playwright's Lab at the Banff Centre. Pedro was part of the second cohort of Banff's Arts and Culture Leadership, is a co-founder of CALTAC, sits on the Latinx Theatre Commons steering committee and was part of Director's Lab North in 2020. He was awarded the Young Alumni Excellence Award in 2021, along with Derek Chan, for their work with r&b from SFU's FCAT department. In 2023, he was also grateful to be recognized as a BC Multiculturalism and Anti-racism "Breaking Barriers" nominee.

## About rice & beans

rice & beans theatre is a Vancouver-based theatre company founded in 2010 by Pedro Chamale and Derek Chan. We provide a platform for the creation, development and production of boundary-pushing theatre by artists of colour or otherwise marginalized theatre-makers, as well as support to fellow artists by providing dramaturgy, direction, and mentorship. We are dedicated to facilitating original Canadian work that is accessible, honest, uncompromising and personal. In addition to Vancouver, we have also produced original work for audiences in Toronto, Richmond, Nanaimo and Victoria. In 2018, rice & beans was nominated for a Dora Award for its production of 食盡天下/*A Taste of Empire* with Cahoots Theatre in Toronto. In 2019, its production of *Chicken Girl* was nominated for 3 Jessies in Vancouver and in 2022, its production of *Yellow Objects* won a Jessie Innovation Award.

## Special Thanks

This show was developed as part of The Caravan Farm's 2023 National Playwright's Retreat. Paper Crane Cafe, Meaghan Chenosky, Pedro Augusto Meza, Kiana Hipolito, Sally Zori, Liz and Gillian Der, Jessica Hood, Vicki Stroich, Chelsea McPeake Carlson, Ed Hunt, The PTC team and all of the artists and organizations that have been a part of the development of Peace Country: Montserrat Videla, Garvin Chan, Vanka Salim, Jessica Han, Alistair Wallace, Jamie Sweeney, Liam Hunt, María Escolán, Koh Lauren Quan, Mariana Munoz, Mónica Perea, Claire Love Wilson, Howard Dai, Alexandra Lainfiesta, Playwrights Theatre Centre, Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre, Push International Performing Arts Festival, and the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts.

## Funders

The Canada Council for the Arts, the BC Arts Council, the Province of BC, the City of Vancouver, Metro Vancouver, the Hamber Foundation and the McLean Foundation.

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## Staff

Pedro Chamale	Artistic Director
Heather Barr	General Manager
Karla Comanda	Communications Manager
Howard Dai	Associate Artist

## Board

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# Performers

## Manuela Sosa | Julia



Manuela is a trilingual actor living on the stolen, ancestral, and traditional lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. She's a Venezuelan American raised in Canada devoted to telling new stories on stage and screen. Past collaborators include Pi Theatre, The Arts Club, Aluna Theatre, Classic Theatre of Harlem, Theatre in Asylum, The Vancouver Biennale, The Troika

Collective, Music on Main, Leaky Heaven Circus, and The Hong Kong Dance Alliance. Manuela holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Simon Fraser University in French & Theatre, and a Master of Fine Arts in Acting from Columbia University. [manuelasosa.com](http://manuelasosa.com)

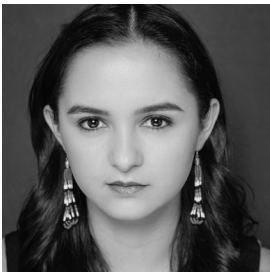
## Sofía Rodríguez | Alicia



Sofía Rodríguez (she/they) was born and raised in Monterrey, México. They are a queer, neurodivergent, multidisciplinary artist based in Toronto; the traditional territories of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples. Selected theatre credits include: *Mi Casa de Incienso* (Soulpepper Queer Cabaret) *mientras tanto* / 缺口 (Rhubarb), *The Solitudes* (Aluna/Nightwood), *Half-*

*Life* (Tarragon), *Beautiful Man* (Factory Theatre), *La Maleta* (Roseneath) *In The Heights* (We Are Here), and the short films *Sinvergüenzilla in 'First Kiss'* (Inside Out), *Love You to Death and Diferente* (Inside Out), *The Morning After* (Inside Out/LA Outfest). You can catch her playing Frida Kahlo next in Electric Company's upcoming show, *Fire Never Dies: The Tina Modotti Project*.

## Kaitlyn Yott | Candice



Kaitlyn Yott (They/She) is a queer Coast Tsimshian and Japanese-Canadian actor based in so-called Vancouver. Select Film credits: *Querencia* (APTN & Bright Shadow Productions - Leo Award Winner for Best Leading Actress), *Les Filles Du Roi* (Urban Ink), *Charmed* (CW). Select Theatre credits: *Kamloopa* (KSH productions), *Pawakan Macbeth* (Akpik Theatre), *Little Women* (Chemainus Theatre) *Les Filles du Roi* and *Children of God* (Urban Ink)

## Sara Vickruck | Melissa



Sara is a queer, multidisciplinary performer, sound designer and creator currently living on the unceded territories of the Halkomelem-speaking peoples. Sara is glad to be back as part of the *Peace Country* Ensemble, and also back at the Firehall where they have performed in shows such as *Talking Sex on Sundays*, *Circle Game*, and *Love Bomb*. Sara has worked and performed across the country with companies such as Theatre Passe Muraille, Buddies in Bad Times, Citadel Theatre, Bard on the Beach and The Arts Club. Sara is a Jessie Award winner and the recipient of the CAEA's Stage West Emerging Artist Award in 2020.

## Angus Yam | Greg



Angus Yam is a Hong Konger-Canadian artist based in Vancouver, B.C., on the stolen, ancestral, and traditional lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations. He has found a great community at rice & beans, and is thrilled to be working alongside many talented artists. Some recent acting credits include: *The Rocky Horror Show* - Brad (Studio 58), *Romeo and Juliet* - Benvolio (Bard on the Beach), *Anne of Green Gables* - Gilbert (Gateway Theatre). Shout-out to his dearest Mama, hater sister, and friends. Glory to God.

## Production Team

### Heidi Taylor | Dramaturg



Heidi Taylor is a dramaturg, director and theatre maker. *Peace Country* is her second dramaturgical collaboration with Pedro Chamale, after a decade of work together in many other roles. Favourite projects include: *Happy Valley*, *yellow objects*, and *Chicken Girl*, all by Derek Chan and produced by rice & beans, Tetsuro Shigetmatsu's *Kuroko* and *Empire of the Son*, Carmen Aguirre's *Anywhere But Here*, Amber Funk Barton's *How to Say Goodbye*, and *Mermaid Spring*, created by The Public Swoon (Barbara Adler and Kyla Gardiner). Heidi is secretary of the board for C-Space (PL 1422), and Artistic & Executive Director at PTC.



## Michelle Thorne-Speir | Costume Designer



Originally from Fort McMurray, Alberta, Michelle Thorne-Speir is a practice-based Director, Designer, and Educator residing on the traditional lands of the x̣ẉṃə̣θ̣kẉə̣ỵəm, Skwxwú7mesh, and Səlílwətał Nations. Thorne's work focuses on building community through innovative and collaborative performance arts experiences. She holds an MFA in Directing from The University of British Columbia and a BFA in Dramatic Arts from The University

of Lethbridge. Thorne is the recipient of the Yvonne Firkins Prize and the Sydney J. Risk Award in Directing with UBC.

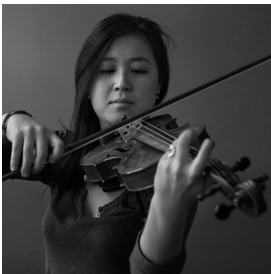
## Jonathan Kim | Lighting Designer



Jonathan Kim, better known as Jono, is a Korean-Canadian artist born and raised on unceded traditional Coast Salish territories, who currently works and lives on the stolen, ancestral, and traditional lands of the x̣ẉṃə̣θ̣kẉə̣ỵəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations (Vancouver, BC). He holds a BFA degree in Production and Design from Simon Fraser University. Jono is a member of the Associated

Designers of Canada and Chimerik 似不像, an interdisciplinary collective. Recent credits: *Starwalker* (Urban Ink & Raven Theatre); *The Wrong Bashir* (Touchstone Theatre); *My Little Tomato* (vAct & Zee Zee Theatre); *Happy Valley* (rice & beans theatre); *God Said This* (Pacific Theatre); *Bright Half Life* (Persephone Theatre).

## Cindy Kao | Sound Designer



Cindy is a Taiwanese actor / sound artist, (Ketegalan and Siraya Nations) based in Vancouver on the stolen, ancestral, and traditional lands of the x̣ẉṃə̣θ̣kẉə̣ỵəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. She received a BFA in Theatre Performance at Simon Fraser University, with a classical violin background. During her studies, Cindy re-acquainted with music, performing as an actor while given the opportunity to sound

design. Since then, much of her work with SFU has allowed her to explore her background as a musician and execute her training as an actor. Cindy's interdisciplinary work has been presented by Whistler Film Festival, Reel 2 Real Film Festival, Music on Main, New York Electroacoustic Music Festival,

NextFest, Gateway Theatre, Blackout Theatre, Theatre Conspiracy, The Frank Theatre, rice & beans theatre, Push Festival and Vancouver Fringe.

## Kimira Reddy | Set/Props Designer



Kimira is an accomplished Artist, Set Designer and Creative Director who channels her artistic prowess on the stolen, ancestral, and traditional lands of the x̱m̱əθkwəy̱əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. She also serves as the Communications Director of Raven Spirit Dance. Kimira's portfolio is a mosaic of immersive virtual reality experiences, exhibition designs, and art installations. Collaborations with UBC, Vancouver Opera, Canada Wild Arts Society, Indian Summer Festival, Zee Zee Theatre, and other esteemed partners have all contributed to the rich tapestry of her creative odyssey. Explore more at: [kimirareddy.com](http://kimirareddy.com)

## Monica Emme | Set/Props Design Assistant



Monica Emme (she/her) is a props creator, set designer, fabricator, and puppet maker currently based in Vancouver. Some favourite recent credits include: production design for *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *The Old Man and the Old Moon* (Arts Umbrella); Props for *In My Day* (Zee Zee Theatre), *My Little Tomato* (vAct & Zee Zee), *Messiah* (Pacific Theatre), *Iron Peggy* (Boca del Lupo), *Oz* (Carousel Theatre for Young People). Images and a

full credit list can be found at [monicaemme.com](http://monicaemme.com)

## Andie Lloyd | Video Designer



Andie Lloyd is a queer interdisciplinary artist and community advocate, currently based on the stolen, ancestral, and traditional lands of the x̱m̱əθkwəy̱əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. She works internationally as a lighting designer and media artist, and is a co-founder of HK House 香港屋 (@hkhouseofficial), a volunteer-powered non-profit based in Vancouver, B.C. Some of her

notable involvements include: *Happy Valley*/馬照跑. 舞照跳 (rice & beans theatre) - Projection Design, *BQFKN Online!* (rEvolver Fest 2023) - Digital Design Director/Lighting Designer, *űtszan (to make better)* (The Cultch) - Projection Designer, *Clean/Espejos* (Newworld Theatre) - Surtitled Designer, *whip* (FakeKnot) - Lighting Designer and she looks forward to designing projection

and lighting for Newworld Theatre's *Fat Joke*, premiering in early 2024. GFHG SDGM.

## June Hsu | Video Design Assistant



June (she/her) is an interdisciplinary artist, musician, and theatre designer. Born and raised in Vancouver, Canada on the stolen, ancestral, and traditional lands of the x̱m̱əθkwə́y̱əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, June has been surrounded by the colourful sounds and sights from the cities to the mountains; sparking an interest in interrelations between sounds and lights. Some of her recent works include projection designing for *Before They Cut Down Our Tree* (Vancouver Fringe Festival), *The Flying Dutchman* (Vancouver Opera) as the assistant projection designer, and *Big Queer Filipino Karaoke Night! Online* (Upintheair's rEvolver festival) as the sound and projection designer.

## Julia Lank | Stage Manager



Julia (she/her) is a stage manager, graphic designer, and improviser living on the stolen, ancestral, and traditional lands of the x̱m̱əθkwə́y̱əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. SM: *[title of show]* (Play On Words), *How To Believe In Anything* (The Cultch); *Le Portrait De Manon* (Vancouver Opera); *Marjorie Prime* (ETC); *Gamma*, *The Cake* (Pacific Theatre); *Alice In Glitterland* (Geekenders); *City Of Angels* (PIT Collective); *Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Jasper In Deadland*, *Tuck Everlasting* (Arts Umbrella). Upcoming: *Gertrude and Alice* (United Players).

## Anna Brew | Assistant Stage Manager



Anna (she/her) is a Stage Manager, Producer and technician currently working and living on the stolen, ancestral, and traditional lands of the x̱m̱əθkwə́y̱əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. Anna's theatre credits include the *Symbiotic*, *Harvest Moon & Cardinal Point* Cabarets (Rumble Theatre), Tremors Festival (Rumble Theatre), *Angels Bone* (Sound The Alarm), Chutzpah! Festival (Norman Rothstein Theatre),

Vancouver Fringe and Bard on The Beach. Anna began her career in the UK as a sound technician on an award winning musical, *TImpson: The Musical!*, at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

## Kayleigh Sandomirsky | Production Manager



Kayleigh Sandomirsky is a production/stage manager, producer, curator and performer. She is also starting to dabble in design and building, and loves to constantly shake things up artistically. Recent Production Management credits: PLUNGE Mentorship Program and *Family Room* by The Falling Company; and *Dancing to Remember* by Aeriosa Dance/Butterflies in Spirit. Stage Management credits: *Lip Service 2: Breaking Down Barriers* by Pulsive Party, *PIÑA* by FakeKnot, *Black and Rural* presented by Pi Theatre, *Double Happiness: Detour this Way* by Nancy Tam and Robyn Jacobs, and *The Array* by UpintheAir Theatre. Touring credits: *Confluence* by Raven Spirit Dance, *BLUSCRN* by FakeKnot, *New Societies* by Re:Current Theatre, and *Ying Yun* by Wen Wei Dance.

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As a not-for-profit arts organization, we could not exist without the kindness of our individual donors. You are the heart of our company.

Ticket sales cover only a small portion of our production costs, so we rely on our friends and supporters in this charitable community to close the gap.

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