

Untitled Flamingo Play

Access Guide



The performer dancing with a flamingo sock puppet. Photo by Daniel Wittnebel | OutFest 2023.

Welcome!

This access guide tells you what you can expect when you attend a performance of *Untitled Flamingo Play*. This guide is for anyone who:

- Wants more information about the content of the play.
- Is sensory sensitive and wants to know what sensory elements to expect.
- Wants more information about how to behave as an audience member.
- Is curious about education and community resources related to the play.

Content and Environment warnings

- A loud and sudden school-bell sound effect recurs throughout the show.
 - A loud soundscape of a flock of flamingos honking happens at the beginning and the end of the show.
 - A purple toy cat used as prop in a show makes a high-pitched squeaking noise several times during the performance.
 - A loud burst of jazzy music recurs throughout the show.
 - Live yelling: The performer will sometimes yell angrily or make loud noises as part of their performance.
 - The play contains swearing, and some homophobic and femmophobic language.
 - There is a moment where green slime comes out of one of the props (a red deodorant stick with a ripped label.)
 - There is a dance sequence in which the performer is quite close to the audience and moves with big, expressive gestures. At the end of the dance, there is a sudden sound of wings flapping.
 - There is a blackout at the end of the play.
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Where is *Untitled Flamingo Play* happening?

Untitled Flamingo Play is part of **Incoming Fest**, a festival of new work from artists across the country and right here in Victoria. You can learn more about the shows happening as part of Incoming Fest [here](#).

Incoming Fest is produced by **Intrepid Theatre**. Intrepid was founded in 1986 to produce the Victoria Fringe Theatre Festival. 35 years later, their original mandate continues: To enhance awareness and appreciation of contemporary theatre, by encouraging, developing, and producing new and/or experimental work for public performance, and the promotion of new artists and their work through theatre festival production. You can learn more about Intrepid Theatre via [their website](#).

Untitled Flamingo Play will happen in the **Intrepid Studio**. Intrepid Theatre has made an amazing visual story for the studio with information about the theatre's location, the building, and accessibility. [Check it out via this link](#).

What will I experience when I attend *Untitled Flamingo Play*?

When you enter the Intrepid Studio, you will hear the sound of flamingos making honking noises and water splashing, while a narrator with a British accent talks about flamingos. On the stage, there will be a simple set: a table covered in Black fabric. On top of the table, there will be various toys and objects.

When the show begins, the lights in the audience will dim, and the lights onstage will become brighter and more colourful. A performer will enter. They will wear a beige trench coat covered in paintings of different birds; a white short-sleeve hoodie under the trench-coat painted with a pink floral pattern; a green ribbon around their neck; pink pants with feathered cuffs; and blue sneakers.

Here is a sketch of the costume created by designer Hannah Fisher. This is an early sketch, so the costume will be similar to what you see here but not exactly the same!



The performer will act out the story of *Untitled Flamingo Play* using the toys and objects on the table — as well as some more toys and objects hidden behind the table. The performer will play all the characters in the show. The performer will change their body language and the sound of their voice to play different characters. Sometimes, the performer will use an object to represent a character. For example, a toy bird will represent a character named Addison. (See the character section on the next page for more information.)



Photo by Scott Cooper.

Other times, the performer will represent a character themselves. For example, the performer will put on glasses to become the character Iris. (See the character section on the next page for more information.)

At the end of the play, after the stage lights fade out in a blackout, the audience lights and stage lights will come on again, and the performer will bow to the audience.

How should I behave in the theatre, during the show?

As long as you are being respectful of the performer, feel free to react as vocally and loudly as you want. Laugh, gasp, applaud, whatever you feel! “As long as you are being respectful” means as long as you are not trying to disrupt or stop the show, or using homophobic, transphobic, and/or otherwise violent language. You are welcome to enter or leave the show at any point. If you need to leave or enter the performance space while the show is happening, please try to do so as quietly as possible.

Who are the characters in *Untitled Flamingo Play*?

ADDISON (he/him) is a child starting Grade Three at a new school. He’s pretty nervous about it! Addison is obsessed with birds. He has a toy flamingo that comes to life and gives him advice. Sometimes, the performer embodies Addison. Other times, Addison is represented by a toy bird.



HELEN (she/her) is a child in Addison's Grade Three class. She is obsessed with movies, especially Old Hollywood films. Helen is an overachiever with a busy schedule. Helen is represented by a toy cat.



DAVID ALEXANDER (he/him) is a boy in Addison's Grade Three class. David Alexander identifies as gay, enjoys working out, and is eager to grow up. David Alexander is represented by a red deodorant stick with a ripped label.



GEOFF (he/him) is Addison, Helen, and David Alexander's Grade Three teacher. He wishes he was young again and regrets many things about his life. Most of the time, Geoff is represented by a pink sheep stuffy. Sometimes, though, the performer embodies Geoff.



THE FLAMINGO (they/them) is a toy flamingo that Addison's mother gives them for the first day of school. The Flamingo comes to life and gives Addison advice. Sometimes the flamingo is a stuffed animal; sometimes they are a plastic figurine; and sometimes they are a sock puppet.



IRIS (she/her) is a biology professor and Addison's mother. She tries to offer Addison guidance and support. The performer wears glasses to represent Iris.



Photo by Scott Cooper.

What is the story of *Untitled Flamingo Play*?

The performer enters. The performer listens to the sound of a nature documentary: flamingos honk and water splashes, while a narrator with a British accent talks about flamingos.

The performer watches the skies with a pair of binoculars. The performer notices the audience. The performer goes behind a table that is centrestage, covered in toys and objects.

The performer introduces himself to the audience as Addison. Addison practices introducing himself some more, in preparation for the first day of Grade Three. He gets stressed. He finds a toy bird and begin to act out his story, using the toy-bird as his stand-in. (In other words, the toy bird is now Addison.)

Addison call his mother, Iris. Iris tries to persuade Addison to go to school, but Addison is afraid to go. Iris, knowing that Addison loves birds, gives Addison a toy flamingo to keep him company at school. Iris tells Addison to keep the flamingo in his backpack. She doesn't want anyone to make fun of him for bringing a pink stuffed animal to school.



The performer as Iris. Photo by Scott Cooper.

Addison goes to school, where he meets Helen. Helen is a “cinophile,” which means she is someone who loves movies. Helen invites Addison to her birthday party Sunday.

Geoff, Addison and Helen’s teacher, introduces himself. Geoff asks Addison to introduce himself too, since he is a new student. Addison tries not to talk about the flamingo, but he is too excited. He takes it out and makes a speech about how much he loves flamingos. The other kids laugh at Addison.



The Performer acts out Geoff (the sheep) as Helen (the cat) and Addison (the bird) listen.
Photo by Daniel Wittnebel | OutFest 2023.

Helen invites all the kids in the class to her birthday party on Sunday, where they will watch the movie [Bringing Up Baby](#). Helen describes the movie and shares how much she loves its star, [Katharine Hepburn](#).

Geoff gives the kids their first assignment: find a role model for the rest of your life!

On the playground at recess, a boy in Addison’s class named David Alexander tries to talk to Addison. Addison is afraid at first, but David Alexander assures Addison that he is not going to hurt him and asks if Addison likes boys in a romantic way. Addison falls in love with David Alexander.

David Alexander offers that he could be Addison's role model. He also proposes marriage to Addison. Addison accepts both offers. David Alexander tells Addison not to go to Helen's party because none of the other kids like her.

David Alexander and Addison have a wedding ceremony.

Later that day, Addison tells Iris about the first day of school. Iris orders Addison to go to Helen's party even though he doesn't want to.

Addison goes to Helen's party. He brings his flamingo. When Addison arrives, no one else is there. Helen tells Addison that she invites everyone every year, that no one ever shows up, and that her parents are angry with her.



Addison (the bird) with his toy flamingo, and Helen (the cat), at Helen's house.

Photo by Scott Cooper.

Addison tries to comfort Helen and asks if she still wants to watch a movie. Helen says they can watch short scenes from each of her favourite movies. Helen says that Geoff's assignment is unfair because she has too many role models: famous actors from the

movies she loves like Katharine Hepburn, [Gloria Swanson](#), [Brigitte Helm](#), and [Eartha Kitt](#).

Helen reveals to Addison that she has created her own role model: a made-up alter ego named Leonora Screwball. Helen dresses up in a cape and wig and pretends to be Leonora. Leonora tells Addison that Helen is running away because her parents put too much pressure on her, and that Leonora is going to take Helen's place at school.

Addison is confused but accepts that Helen is Leonora. Helen takes off the costume and becomes herself again. Addison tells Helen that he admires her, and gives her a birthday gift: a red hummingbird feeder. In return, Helen gives Addison a pink dress that reminds her of a bird. Addison is hesitant to put it on, but Helen convinces him. Addison discovers that he loves the dress.

Helen asks Addison if she can kiss him, for practice. Addison agrees. Helen and Addison kiss. They enjoy it, but realize that they are not supposed to be in a relationship. Helen reveals that she does not identify as a girl, and Addison discovers that he may not identify as a boy.

Addison remembers that he married David Alexander and feels guilty about kissing Helen. Helen tells Addison that David Alexander bullies her, but Addison refuses to believe this. Helen and Addison fight, and Helen tells Addison to get out of her house.

At home, Addison shows Iris the dress. Iris tries to encourage Addison's newfound love for dresses, but advises Addison to only wear them at home, as a way to stay safe at school. Addison gets angry at his mother and defies her, wearing the dress to school.

On the playground, David Alexander beats up Addison when he learns that Addison went to visit Helen, despite David Alexander's orders. Addison tells David Alexander he wants a divorce. David Alexander calls Addison toxic and says he isn't worthy of the dress.

Addison's Flamingo comes to life (in the form of a sock puppet) and advises him to look after himself and his heart more carefully.

Helen (pretending to be Leonora Screwball) finds Addison. Addison tells Leonora that he now has no husband, no role model, and no friends. Leonora assures Addison that she is there to support him, and offers to write him into her role model presentation.

Later that day, Geoff asks the class who is ready to give their presentation. Addison says that he and Helen will go first. Together, Addison and Helen (as Leonora Screwball) present a wild presentation in rhyming verse. Addison says that his role model is his dress. Helen-as-Leonora says that she is her own role model.



Helen (as Leonora Screwball) and Addison's role model presentation.
Photo by Daniel Wittnebel | OutFest 2023

Geoff gets angry at Addison and Helen: he tells them they did not complete the assignment properly. The kids protest. Geoff tries to convince Addison that wearing a dress is not something men should do. Addison questions Geoff's logic, and Geoff swears at Addison and yells at him: "He doesn't wear a floaty little dress, kid, or life is really gonna fuck him in the ass!"

Time stops for Addison. The Flamingo comes to life and advises Addison to take revenge on everyone who has wronged him. The Flamingo gives Addison magic powers: Addison turns Geoff into play-doh, turns David Alexander into slime, and buries Helen underneath a pile of trophies.



Addison takes revenge on his enemies. Photo by Scott Cooper.

The Flamingo praises Addison and asks him how he feels now that he's taken revenge. Addison says that he feels hollow inside. The Flamingo dismisses Addison's emotions and offers to turn Addison into a stuffed animal.

Addison stops using the toy bird to act out his story. Addison (as the performer) rejects the Flamingo's offer. Instead, Addison offers to make the Flamingo real. Addison and the Flamingo perform a dance in front of the table. The performer, as Addison, removes the sock-puppet: this represents the Flamingo becoming real and flying away.

Addison uses the toy bird to act out his story again, and goes back to the moment before Geoff yelled at him. Addison cuts Geoff off and tells him, "You're not even real." Geoff warns Addison and Helen that he is going to call their parents, and exits.

Helen gives up pretending to be Leonora Screwball and says that her parents will ground her for life. Addison says he'll be grounded too, but tries to encourage Helen not to despair.

At the last moment, a hummingbird flies into the classroom and opens a portal to another world, which will allow Helen and Addison to escape. In the play, the hummingbird is made of paper and the portal is a paper clock that opens like a set of double-doors. The toy versions of Helen and Addison escape through the portal. The performer plays Addison again.

Addison becomes a flamingo. Onstage, this change is represented by the following: the performer puts on their trench coat inside-out, revealing the glittery pink lining and frilly arms. The performer puts on a flamingo mask. The performer unbuttons their hoodie, revealing a feathery head-piece. The performer honks at the audience like a flamingo as the lights fade onstage.



Addison becomes a flamingo. Photo by Scott Cooper.