

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Astor Theatre Society's Board of Directors are pleased to announce the selection of a new general manager for the historic Astor Theatre.

Andrew Bursey, the current general manager of Dixie Lee Family Restaurant in Liverpool, will be stepping into the role of GM at the Astor Theatre in April. Andrew will manage the facility and be responsible for overseeing the Astor's daily operations and administration.

Additionally, Jon Paterson of Vancouver, BC has been selected by the board of directors to fill a dual role. He will act as both Artistic and Technical Director. Jon's responsibilities will focus on the artistic and technical elements of the theatre.

Both Jon and Andrew will be responsible for programming the season and guiding the artistic direction of the theatre.

Andrew's Background:

Born and raised in Liverpool, Andrew "cut his teeth" on the Astor's stage, performing in the Winds of Change's productions of Evita and Camelot.

As a teenager, Andrew was invited to attend Victoria High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Edmonton, Alberta. This is where the "hook was set."

After high school Andrew attended the prestigious Theatre Arts Program at Grant MacEwan University in Edmonton.

Upon graduation, Andrew co-founded the production company "RibbitRePublic" with Jon Paterson and other members of his graduating class. RibbitRePublic still produces original work to this day in venues across the country and internationally.

During Andrew's time with RibbitRePublic, the group produced several critically acclaimed, award winning shows. They toured extensively, giving electric performances to sold out crowds across Canada and the US, including the Just for Laughs Comedy Festival. RibbitRePublic was a tour de force and they were elevated to the upper echelon of Canadian independent professional theatre. They won an "Elizabeth Sterling Haynes" Award(Edmonton) for Outstanding Production for Pilk's Madhouse and a "Dora Mavour Moore" Audience Choice Award(Toronto) for the hit musical comedy BoyGroove. In 2005 the group was featured in an article in Oprah Magazine. A personal highlight for Bursey and Paterson was singing the Canadian and American national anthems at the 2006 Toronto Blue Jays home opener vs the Boston Red Sox.

In 2008, after a decade spent producing and touring various shows, Andrew changed his focus to the administrative and production side of the arts. He was hired by the Edmonton Arts Council and the City of Edmonton as the operations manager for the high profile, publicly funded and hugely popular "WinterLight Festival." The festival was a great success with audience attendance exceeding 100,000 guests annually.

In 2012 Andrew returned home to Liverpool to reopen Dixie Lee Family Restaurant with his parents David and Diane Bursey.

It will be business as usual at Dixie Lee during and after Andrew's transition into his new role at the Astor.

Jon's Background:

Originally from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Jon Paterson has been working as a theatre artist for 25 years and is a founding member and artistic producer of RibbitRePublic Theatre.

He has produced, performed and toured over a dozen RibbitRePublic shows including BoyGroove, Grimmer than Grimm, House, Water and Letters in Wartime.

Jon has performed in a multitude of theatres and festival venues across Canada including: The Centaur Wildside Festival, Canoe Theatre Festival, Just For Laughs Comedy Festival, Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Vertigo Mystery Theatre, the Winnipeg Improv Festival and the Vancouver Comedy Festival.

He currently programs and produces a busy theatre venue at La Cite Francophone as part of the Edmonton International Fringe Festival.

Jon lives in Vancouver, where he is the technical director of Monster Theatre and lighting designer for Vancouver Theatre Sports.

Jon is a stage manager, multi-media designer, stilt walker and Winnipeg Jets fan.

Jon is looking forward to living and working on the east coast and can't wait to meet all the "from here's!"

Jon and Andrew are excited to be working together again and grateful for the opportunity to make a positive impact on arts and culture community in Queens County.

This new change in management will not affect the current schedule of movies and live events on the Astor's calendar. All scheduled events at the Astor will proceed as planned.