



# FIRST BITE NEW PLAY SERIES

## DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH

BY LANE RICHINS

PERFORMED AS A STAGED READING ON ZOOM  
6:00 P.M. (PCT) MARCH 2 & 2:00 PM (PCT) MARCH 3, 2024

### Note from the Playwright

*During Covid, I wrote a play about Flannery O'Connor which was not the lightest fare. But I started getting tired of the darkness of Covid, and the alienation. At that point, I decided I was going to write about things that provided me joy...my last play was about baseball, this is about television, two huge sources of joy in my life...and stories of hope. Hope has become a central theme of mine, as has fixing fractured relationships, and the pursuit of closure. And I just...I'm tired of the dark. Same with theatre. I'm from Salt Lake City, and it is one of the great theatre towns in the west. So many amazing companies, such incredible work. But often, I left the theatre feeling cold. I don't want to be that playwright. I want you leaving warm with a sense of hope. That's my goal as a writer, and that's the goal with this piece. It's awash with nostalgia and humanity. I hope you enjoy, and walk out a little happier, and, maybe, a little more hopeful. Huge shout-outs to B.M.R. and C. F., without whom this play wouldn't exist.*



-- Lane Richins  
Playwright, "Diamond in the Rough"

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### Artistic Team

Playwright.....Lane Richins  
Director.....Jere Lee Hodgins  
Technical Supervisor & Stage Directions.....David Harlan

### CAST (in order of appearance)

Fiona Flurm.....Natalie Keezer  
Sam Diamond aka Bertram Flurm aka Ronald.....Jay Perry  
Preston Hayworth aka Tim.....Randy Reinholz  
Margot Del Mar.....Jean Bruce Scott



University of Idaho  
Department of Theatre Arts

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## BIOS (in alpha order)

**DAVID HARLAN** (Technical Supervisor & Stage Directions) is an instructor in theater and English at U of I and the founding artistic director of Moscow Art Theatre (Too). He received his MFA in playwriting and directing from U of I in 2010 and has worked with U of I theater and Idaho Repertory Theater as an actor, director, designer and technician for the past 15 years.

**JERE HODGIN** (Director) has produced over 200 productions, many of which were new and premiere works, and his directing career includes more than 250 plays, operas, and musicals. For 20 years, Jere was the Producing Artistic Director of Mill Mountain Theatre in Virginia, where he founded the nationally recognized Norfolk Southern New Play Festival. Jere also served as Artistic Director for Idaho Repertory Theatre and Co-Producer/Artistic Director of Highlands Playhouse in North Carolina and has directed internationally and at numerous theatres across the country including The Fulton Opera, Walnut Street Theatre, The Barter Theatre, Salt Lake Acting Company, Theatre Artists Studio, Phoenix Theatre, and Montana Repertory Theatre. He has directed at Shenandoah Playwright's Retreat, Montana Rep's Missoula Colony, NW Playwright's Alliance/Seattle Repertory Theatre, Native Voices, 7 Devils New Play Foundry Conference, Westval Playwrights Festival, and The Phoenix Theatre New Play Festival. Jere is a past president of the Southeastern Theatre Conference. He served as Vice President of the board of The National Alliance for Musical Theatre. He is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC), Actor's Equity Association, and the National Theatre Conference. He is the recipient of the Perry F. Kendig Arts and Culture Award for outstanding support of arts in SW Virginia and Citizen of the Year Award for Roanoke, VA.



**NATALIE KEEZER** (Fiona Flum) Natalie Keezer is a Los Angeles based actor and a proud member of the Actors Equity Association with a diverse background in regional theater. Hailing from Idaho and Utah, she has performed in roles such as Clare in Tennessee Williams' "Two Character Play," Rose in "Caroline or Change" both at Good Company Theatre, Babe in "Saturday's Voyeur" at Salt Lake Acting Company, and Lady M in "Tragedy Averted" at Pygmalion Productions. Natalie most recently portrayed Pepper in Lane Richins' "Near Mint" also at Pygmalion Productions, and she is honored to be collaborating on his new project, "Diamond in the Rough." Holding an MFA from Idaho State University, she is currently honing her craft at the Upright Citizens Brigade Training Center in Los Angeles.

**JAY PERRY** (Sam Diamond) Jay Perry (AEA) is an award-winning actor, having performed in numerous professional theatre productions in Salt Lake City as well as in regional productions coast-to-coast and off-Broadway.

Jay has originated dozens of roles in world-premiere and regional-premiere productions with Plan-B theatre company and Salt Lake Acting Company, and has performed with Pioneer Theatre Company, The Utah Symphony, The Grand Theatre, Salt

Lake Shakespeare, Pygmalion Productions, Intermezzo Chamber Orchestra, Nova Chamber Music, Paradigm Chamber Orchestra and The Salt Lake Symphony. His voice has been featured by Ballet West, Squatters, Hertz, The Utah Arts Festival, Chair Entertainment for Xbox Live, Reading Horizons, KUER 90.1FM's Radio West, and many others.

Jay worked for several years as Program Coordinator and Theatre School Faculty at University of Utah Youth Theatre, where he gained valuable experience in arts administration with the largest and longest-running theatre school for young people in the state of Utah. Jay has also directed and taught acting, improv, speech, and movement for young artists at Utah Theatre Arts Conservatory, the Egyptian Youth Theatre in Park City, Spyhop Productions, and as a teaching artist-in-residence at The Leonardo Museum.

Jay's passion for creating new opportunities for theatre artists in his community led him to his current work serving as Festival Director for the Great Salt Lake Fringe Festival, and as General Manager of Alliance Theater at Trolley Square - a cultural facility of The Utah Arts Alliance.

When he's not on a theatre stage or working behind the scenes, you may catch Jay performing at your favorite local watering hole with his band, The Vitals.





**RANDY REINHOLD** (Preston Hayword)) is an enrolled member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, and Artistic Director Emeritus of Native Voices at the Autry, the nation's premier Equity theater company dedicated exclusively to developing and producing new plays by Indigenous playwrights.

An accomplished, director, playwright, actor, professor, and activist, producing over than 35 new scripts and directed nearly 80 plays in the United States, Australia, Mexico, Great Britain, and Canada. Beyond Native Voices some notable theaters where Randy's worked are Oregon Shakespeare Festival, La Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe Theatre, New York's Public Theater, Perseverance Theatre, the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, Montana

Rep, The Alaska Native Heritage Center, Arizona Repertory Theatre as well as a number of universities and tribal communities around the U.S.

Reinholz has received Playwrights' Arena's Lee Melville Award, the Association of Theatre in Higher Education's Ellen Stewart Award for Career Achievement in Professional Theatre, The Los Angeles Drama Circle's Gordon Davidson Award, a McKnight Fellowship, a Map Grant, a Ford Foundation Grant, and numerous NEA grants. A tenured Professor at San Diego State University since 1997, where he also served as Director of the School of Theatre, Television, and Film. He also served as a Council Member (Board of Directors), for The Dramatist Guild of America. [randyreinholz.com](http://randyreinholz.com) Reinholz is with Bret Adams Ltd.

**LANE RICHINS** (Playwright) is an MFA candidate in Playwriting at University of Idaho, and will graduate Spring 2025. His previous play, "Near Mint," received its professional debut last May with Pygmalion Theatre Company in Salt Lake City. He has also written several other plays you've never heard of. "Diamond in the Rough" is slated for a live reading this summer in L.A. He is currently working on "Yard Wars" or, "May the Growth Be with You," a play about two warring neighbors and a lawn contest.



**JEAN BRUCE SCOTT** (Margo Del Ray) Jean Bruce Scott is a producer, director, dramaturg, and actor familiar for numerous lead and recurring roles on "Days of Our Lives," "Magnum, P.I.," "Port Charles," "Newhart," "Matlock," "Airwolf" and "St. Elsewhere" and guest starring on many other series and television movies. Her illustrious background includes extensive theatre credits, serving as president of Sine Bahn Productions (an independent production company developing screenplays, teleplays, and stage plays), and founder and Producing Executive Director emeritus of Native Voices at the Autry. Scott spent 25 years developing new plays, including more than 200 by Native American playwrights. She produced 38 plays (including 27 world premieres), 25 New Play Festivals, 9 Short play Festivals, 16 Playwrights Retreats, and 22 national and interna-

tional tours. <https://www.facebook.com/JeanBruceScottArchive>

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## ABOUT FIRST BITE PLAY SERIES

The "First Bite Play Series" is a showcase for emerging U of I Master of Fine Arts playwrights, featuring free staged readings of new works. Each performance is followed by a question-and-answer session with the playwright.

## ABOUT THE MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN THEATRE ARTS (M.F.A.) AT UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

The Master of Fine Arts degree at University of Idaho is a rigorous two to three year, 60-72 credit degree designed for students wishing to prepare themselves for a career in the professional theatre in the areas of Dramatic Writing, Directing, Pedagogy, Stage Management or Design and Technology. The MFA is also the terminal degree expected for individuals teaching at the university or college level. Degree tracks in areas of design, directing, performance, playwriting and technical production are built around specific curriculum categories and individual courses are selected by the candidate in consultation with his or her major professor.

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