

The Kitchen Witches aimed to be season opener for Theatre Aurora

Their Henderson Drive doors have been largely closed to the public for more than a year-and-a-half due to the global pandemic, but Theatre Aurora has something brewing to make the magic happen once again.

Auditions will begin this week for *The Kitchen Witches*, a work by Canadian playwright Caroline Smith.

Directed by Kay Valentine and produced by Neill Kernohan, *The Kitchen Witches* follows the feud between Isobel Lomax and Dolly Biddle, two cable-access cooking show hostesses with a decades-long beef over a man.

'Circumstances put them together on a TV show called *The Kitchen Witches*, and the insults are flung harder than the food!' says Theatre Aurora. 'Dolly's long-suffering TV producer son, Stephen, tries to keep them on track, but as long as Dolly's dressing room is one inch closer to the set than Isobel's, it's a losing battle and the show becomes a ratings smash as Dolly and Isobel top both Martha Stewart and Jerry Springer!'

Auditions for the roles of two women aged 50+, a man between the ages of 30 and 35, and a man or woman 18+ (a non-speaking role) will be held August 12, August 14, and August 16, from 7 ? 9 p.m.

'We were looking for projects that had a small cast and this is also a comedy, which we were also looking for,' says Kernohan. 'Caroline Smith has been to Theatre Aurora doing adjudication (on their productions) so we thought this was the perfect play for us to start with.'

The Kitchen Witches is not new ground for Valentine, having first directed the play for the Halliburton Summer Festival.

'I loved it then and I think it is a lovely piece for the actors because it is not just a comedy, it also has heart, which all good comedies should have,' she says. 'It has ridiculous stuff in it, it has heartwarming stuff, and the two main ladies are polar opposites; one is over the top and one is pretty uptight and they are great to play off each other.'

As theatre companies, including Theatre Aurora, look to the future, they are hoping everything will go according to plan. Since announcing their auditions, Kernohan says not many other theatres have kick-started this process and there is still some worry about what might be coming.

'There is still a feeling of trepidation [in that] we don't know exactly what is coming completely, we feel a little worried about what's next around the pandemic situations, but we made the decision to forge ahead and live in hope that everything will be okay and we'll be able to put this show on in October.'

Adds Valentine: 'Live people and interaction back and forth ? we're desperate for it and I think the actors who want to come and audition are feeling the same way. They want to be involved in their craft. For audiences, I want them to leave having had a wonderful experience, having laughed, having smiled, and I want them to be impressed with the professional job they just saw and I want them to be impressed with the fact that this theatre is in our Town and we need to be here more.'

For more on how to audition for this fall's Theatre Aurora production of *The Kitchen Witches*, visit theatreaurora.com/auditions, email auditions@theatreaurora.com, or call 905-727-3669.

By Brock Weir Editor Local Journalism Initiative Reporter