



**2 Pianos  
4 Hands**

By Ted Dykstra  
& Richard Greenblatt  
Starring Reza Jacobs & Bryce Kulak  
Directed by Richard Greenblatt

Globe Theatre presentation  
Produced by Marquis Entertainment

sponsored by piano sponsored by

phoenix group St. John's Music PIANO CENTRE YAMAHA

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# A Guide to the Play

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## How to Use This Guide

Welcome to the Globe Theatre!

We are glad you are able to join us for the production of *2 Pianos 4 Hands* – we hope this guide will enhance your experience, inspire thought-provoking discussion and increase your understanding of the production. Throughout the guide, we will introduce you to the crew and artistic team, provide background information on the production, a synopsis of the play and more. There will also be discussion questions and links you can use for further research.

Teachers, there will be a section of discussion questions at the end of the guide. You may choose to prepare your students prior to the production by giving them the questions to consider. Conversely, you can use the questions for a class discussion after your students have seen the play.

Please keep in mind that the content in this guide reveals key plot points and character information you may wish to experience during the live production. We would suggest reading the play guide after seeing the production, if you wish to avoid any potential spoilers.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to email Jonathan Hamelin at [jonathanh@globetheatrelive.com](mailto:jonathanh@globetheatrelive.com)

Enjoy the show!

## Meet the Artistic Team

### Richard Greenblatt | Co-Writer, Director

Richard Greenblatt was born in Montreal and started taking piano lessons with Dorothy Morton at the age of seven. He studied acting at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, England. Since his return to Canada in 1975, he has been acting, directing, writing and composing music for theatre, radio, television and film across the country and abroad. He has played leading roles in regional theatres (The Fool in King Lear, the title role in Spinoza, amongst many others) and in Toronto (George in Possible Worlds, Creon in Antigone, Sam Baum in Adam Baum and the Jew Movie, etc.). He has appeared in feature films (Stardom, Shadow Dancing, etc.) and has played numerous roles on television. He has performed 2 Pianos 4 Hands with Ted Dykstra over 750 times, including 6 months at The Promenade in New York City, ten weeks on the West End in London, and three weeks in Tokyo. He has directed over 80 productions for the stage, the vast majority being original works, and has been a cowriter on some of the most successful new plays in recent Canadian theatre history including The Theory of Relatives; i.d.; and Sibs, which was also made into a CBC movie. Most recently, he just finished a run at Canstage of his oneman play Letters from Lehrer, featuring the work of song satirist Tom Lehrer, and directed both Danny King of the Basement and Wrecked for Roseneath Theatre. He has won four Dora Awards and two Chalmers Awards as well as receiving numerous other nominations. He has taught both acting and directing at most of the theatre training institutions in Canada.

### Ted Dykstra | Co-Writer

Ted Dykstra has received Dora Mavor Moore Award nominations as an actor, director, writer, producer and composer, and was awarded Doras for Fire (Acting) and Two Pianos Four Hands (producing) as well as a Chalmers Award for writing (Two Pianos Four Hands). Co-writer of Two Pianos Four Hands, he has performed it in 11 Canadian cities (including 4 Toronto runs) as well as in New York, Washington DC, London's West End and Tokyo, Japan. He has also directed productions of Two Pianos Four Hands across the US, as well as in Australia and Hong Kong. He has played leading roles on every major stage in Canada, including 3 years of leading roles at the Shaw Festival and 3 years of leading roles at the Stratford Festival. Some of his favorite memories are the title roles in Hedwig and the Angry Inch, Hamlet and Amadeus, Cousin Kevin in The Who's Tommy (Dora nomination), Daffyd Llewellyn in A Chorus of Disapproval (Dora Nomination), Bottom in Midsummer Night's Dream, and Ariel in The Tempest. He has acted in dozens of movies and television shows, and just received a Gemini Award for his performance in Shattered City: The Halifax Explosion. He has composed music for theatres across the country. He is a founding member of Toronto's Soulpepper Theatre. He has directed numerous productions in Toronto including Fool for Love, Aladdin (Dora nomination), Snow White and the Group of Seven, The Dumb Waiter, Tequila Vampire Matinee (Dora Nomination), Science Fiction, Scott Thompson's Lowest Show on Earth, BULLY and The Beggar's Opera. Last year he directed Anne Frank and To Kill a Mockingbird for the Neptune Theatre in Halifax. He wrote and directed Mordecai Richler: A Celebration for the CBC. He is the proud husband of Juno Award winning singer Melanie Doane, and ecstatic father of their two children, Theo and Rosie.

### Reza Jacobs | Performer

Reza is an award winning composer, lyricist, sound designer and music director, known for his versatility in style and genre. His credits include sound design and composition for the Shaw Festival, Factory

Theatre, Volcano Theatre, Cahoots Theatre, Acting Up Stage Theatre, the Luminato Festival and Harbourfront's World Stage Festival. As Music Director, he has won Dora Mavor Moore Awards for *Caroline, or Change* (Acting Up Stage, Best Music Direction & Best Musical 2012) and *Assassins* (TIFT, Birdland Theatre, Award for Best Musical, 2010). He is also the resident Canadian Music Director for Andrea Martin's one-woman show, *Everything Must Go*. Currently, Reza is the Associate Musical Director of the world premiere of *Evangeline* at the Confederation Center (PEI) and he is teaming up with Andrew Kushnir to write a new musical, commissioned by the Belfry Theatre and Acting Up Stage. Reza recently conducted the North American Premiere of *London Road* with Canadian Stage.

### **Bryce Kulak | Performer**

Bryce is an award-winning pianist, composer, singer and actor. Bryce grew up on stage, acting in theatre and playing classical piano. As a vocalist, he has performed with the orchestras of Edmonton, Kingston and Banff. As an actor, he has played major roles at theatres across Canada. Bryce's collaborations with playwright and filmmaker Trevor Anderson have produced the award-winning children's musical *Nami Namersson: the Viking Who Liked to Name Things* and the short movie-musical *The Man That Got Away*, which won the DAAD Short Film Prize at its premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival. The film has screened and won awards at film festivals worldwide. Bryce played piano, sang and composed new music for *Bohemians in Brooklyn* and *The Judgment of Paris*, theatrical chamber music concerts narrated by CBC's Tom Allen. The productions premiered at Music Niagara, Chamberfest Ottawa and the Global Cabaret Festival in Toronto and have toured other chamber music festivals around Ontario. On the *Other Side of the World* at Next Stage Festival featured Bryce's hybrid Chinese-Jewish music for erhu, pipa and cello. His song, *Live In Peace*, was heard in B.C. Place Stadium as the finale of the Yukon Experience at the Vancouver Olympics. He was the composer and conductor of the Toronto Complaints Choir, a public art project produced by Harbourfront Centre involving over 120 choir members. He was the pianist for November Theatre's Dora award-nominated Toronto production of Tom Waits *The Black Rider*. Bryce's albums as a singer-songwriter, *Welcome* and *Tin Can Telephone*, as well as the soundtrack to *The Man That Got Away*, are available on iTunes. Visit [www.brycekulak.com](http://www.brycekulak.com) to hear more.

## Play Synopsis

2 Pianos 4 Hands is the riotous tale of two boys in Canada sharing the same goal: concert pianist stardom. They work fervently towards their dream amidst pushy parents, eccentric teachers, hours of repetitive practice, stage fright, the agony of competitions and the dream of greatness.

Two actors, two pianos and many characters grace the stage as 15 years of learning the art of piano playing unfolds in an hour and a half.

In the beginning each actor plays a younger version of himself while the other becomes the teacher, the adjudicator, the parent. No costume changes – just posture, voice and mannerisms to indicate a new character has entered the scene.

As the boys mature, so does their piano playing. They also become more aware of the gap between the very good and the great – and come to the humbling realization that greatness may be out of reach. Through Ted and Richard, 2 Pianos 4 Hands captures the humour that comes with learning to play the piano, and the sense of loss when eventually learning to let go of the dream.

## Production History

In 1994 Ted and Richard formed Talking Fingers to write and workshop their new script 2 Pianos 4 Hands. The play was subsequently programmed as part of Tarragon Theatre's 1995-'96 season in Toronto, and premiered in April 1996 to rave reviews and sold-out houses. Talking Fingers and Tarragon Theatre shared the 1996 Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding Production, and Ted and Richard received the prestigious Chalmers Award—Canada's National Playwriting Award—that same year.

Immediately following the close of the premiere run in Toronto, Ted and Richard embarked on a national tour. They travelled from coast to coast with the show, stopping back at the Tarragon for a second run in the fall of 1996, and concluding in Vancouver in September of 1997 at the Vancouver Playhouse.

In October of 1997, backed by a team of producers including David and Ed Mirvish, 2 Pianos 4 Hands opened Off Broadway at The Promenade Theatre. The production was widely acclaimed, and ran for six months before transferring to the Kennedy Centre in Washington in the spring of 1998. Ted and Richard returned to Toronto later that summer and again played to sold-out houses, this time at the historic Royal Alexandra Theatre, with Mirvish Productions. The show had its European premiere at the Birmingham Rep in the spring of 1999, a production that transferred later that fall to the Comedy Theatre in the West End of London. Since then, Ted and Richard have twice reunited to perform in Toronto with Marquis Entertainment / Talking Fingers / Mirvish Productions, twice toured to Japan (presented by Shochiku), where they have performed in Tokyo and on tour throughout the country, and in 2011/12 embarked on a Farewell Tour that includes visits to Toronto, Ottawa, Vancouver and Edmonton.

There have been many other productions with other actors, both male and female, in Canada and across the globe. Since its premiere, 2 Pianos 4 Hands has had 4,000 performances at 200 different theatres throughout Canada, the US, the UK, Japan, Australia, Hong Kong, South Africa, Austria, Finland and beyond. Nearly 2 million people have seen the play on five continents worldwide making it one of the most successful Canadian plays ever.

For more information about 2 Pianos 4 Hands please visit the official show website: [www.2pianos4hands.com](http://www.2pianos4hands.com) and [www.marquisent.ca](http://www.marquisent.ca).

# Music

## ACT I

Concerto in D minor, 1st Movement (J.S. Bach)  
Heart and Soul (Hoagy Carmichael)  
The Birch Canoe (Lelia Fletcher)  
By the Stream (Richard Greenblatt)  
Our Band Goes to Town (arrangement J. B. Duvernoy)  
Sonatina No. 6 in F Major (Beethoven)  
Sonata Facile in C Major, 1st Movement (Mozart)  
Sonata for One Piano, Four Hands in D Major, 1st Movement (Mozart)  
In der Halle des Bergkonigs, Peer Gynt Suite 1 (Edward Grieg)  
Concerto in D minor, 1st Movement (J.S. Bach)

## ACT II

Prelude in D flat Major (Chopin)  
Leyenda (I. Albeniz)  
Rondo for Two Pianos, Four Hands in C Major (Chopin)  
Fantasiestucke No. 2 (Schumann)  
Pathetique Sonata No. 8 in C minor, 1st and 2nd Movements (Beethoven)  
Ballade No. 2 in F Major (Chopin)  
Mephisto Waltz No. 1 (Franz Listz)  
A Medley of Pop Tunes  
Impromptu in A flat (Schubert)  
My Funny Valentine (Richard Rogers / Lorenz Hart)  
Piano Man (Billy Joel)  
Horowitz Recording (Mephisto Waltz)  
Concerto in D minor, 1st Movement (J.S. Bach)

## Questions for Discussion

1. Write a review of this production of 2 Pianos 4 Hands. What did you like or dislike about it? Relate your comments closely to the detail of the play and be sure to include remarks on the technical aspects as well.
2. Richard and Ted dreamed of becoming famous pianists. If you were to become famous, what would it be for? What would take for you to fulfill this dream?
3. Pick one piece of music that is performed during the production that you liked. Find out as much as you can about this piece, its composer or singer/songwriter.
4. Several of the characters in 2 Pianos 4 Hands are former teachers of Richard and Ted. Write a short essay about someone who played or plays a significant part in your life. It can be a teacher, a parent or grandparent, a sibling or a friend. Describe that person and how he/she has influenced you. It can be a positive or negative experience.