

SKAMnanigans S1E12 Transcript

(upbeat music)

- Hello and welcome to "SKAMnanigans," the theatre SKAM podcast. "SKAMnanigans" brings you into the whimsical and wacky world of theatre. I'm your host, Branden Sugden. Let the "SKAMnanigans" begin.

One of the major challenges that face emerging artists is finding venues and audiences to showcase their work. Performers are often made to wait until opportunities are offered by established companies to practice their craft. This is why emerging artists with an entrepreneurial spirit tend to have so much success in the early stages of their careers. Rather than waiting for an invitation to tell their stories, they kick down the door and make space for themselves. This stargazing drive is what spawned Theatre SKAM and is what we try to cultivate and support in this city.

This week, we were lucky enough to have two dream teams who are independently producing their own work on the podcast. And as fate would have it, they both have shows of their own you can go see this weekend. First up, we have a director and member of Time Theft Theatre, Thomas Moore, joined by one of their actors, Ben McPhee, to discuss their production of "Endgame" by Samuel Beckett. Thomas, Ben, thank you so much for joining us on "SKAMnanigans."

- Thanks so much for having us.

So this is sort of funny. I've been joking with Logan about the fact that this is, I think, the third or fourth time we've had Time Theft Theatre on our podcast, but not one time have we had the same person from Time Theft Theatre come back on the podcast. So I don't know whether to refer to you as returning guests or not, but either way, we're happy to have you. I'm curious just to talk a little bit about more generally speaking, the experience of producing independent theatre in Victoria, which is something, Thomas, I know you have some experience with.

- Yeah, if you want me to just speak to that or if there's anything in specific.

Well, I was just gonna kind of ask what your experience has been like, you know, working with different companies and different venues and yeah, what's the climate like as an independent producer of theatre?

- Yeah, I think that, for context, I produced my first show independently last year. My friend Elle Newell wrote this play called "Horse Girl." I played a horse, but I was also producing and we were doing a lot of stuff for the first time, but we just really wanted

to just do the work. And I think we had submitted to Fringe for "Horse Girl," but we didn't get in. And we were like, you know what? I think it's a good enough show. People will show up and have a good time. Let's just do it. And that one was especially difficult because we had no funding. So everything was out of pocket. And so if we didn't make any of our money back, then we would have just been losing our own personal money. And so that would have been difficult to do. And so I think people found it difficult because we were very stressed about how we were gonna make any money because a lot of people that come to our shows are people that are students and are interested in theatre and really like seeing their friends' work, but also they can't pay for it that much. So we were like, we really wanted to offer \$10 tickets. And so we had a sliding scale, which for "Endgame" we have now 15 to 35, just because we have to pay for rights and everything. But that was really stressing me out because we could offer \$10 tickets, but we had to have everyone show up and we had to get so many people to come. So it was a lot of posturing, a lot of walking around downtown, handing out handbills, but it was also a really good experience and also a really rewarding one. Even though our artists weren't compensated for their work financially, I think everybody learned something and everybody had a really good time just doing what they love. And so "Endgame" has been a little bit different because we have a bit of funding from, thank you to the CRD Arts Development Fund. So yeah, so we've been able to just work within that budget and then have some leftover so that we can honor everyone's work. But so far it's been good. It's been kind of scrappy. We've been trying to find as much free things as possible and trying to connect with as many people in Victoria that we know. Like we just, the other guys' theatre just donated six jacks for us so that we could hold up this wall that we're making. And yeah, so we're kind of just trying to do it as effectively, but also as cost-effective as possible.

Absolutely. I love that entrepreneurial spirit that comes with being an independent theatre maker. And what's something that excites you specifically about making independent theatre in Victoria?

Ooh. Well, I find that there are a lot of events and things happening. There's always something happening in Victoria, but I also find that there's sometimes a lack of like, a lack of avant-garde or like experimental theatre that people can go to. Like there's a lack of, and maybe it's just because it's so hard to produce, but a lack of just plays. And even if they're like avant-garde and experimental and exciting, I find that a lot of theatre that happens has to be always a one person or it has to be a cabaret of some sorts. That's still a valuable experience for artists and audiences, but I just, I love to see full shows. And I think that it's a really good learning opportunity for us. And I also think the Victoria audiences really are like, whoa, that's really cool that you did all of this stuff. And we promise a full production and we deliver with a full production. We have a full team. So like always having someone separate that's on set design and stuff like that. And we have a separate lighting designer and things. So we really try and just get a lot of artists involved. And then I think that's what

makes me excited for like Victoria audiences. And I also think that I like to do shows for the people living here. And then if people who are visiting want to come see it, that's really cool. And I love that, but I don't want to ignore the people living here as like audience, as an audience base, rather than tourists. 'Cause I feel like sometimes that's a lot of what entertainment here is. And I also think that just Victoria deals with a lot of issues. And I think a lot of issues are at the forefront in Victoria, like the housing crisis here specifically. I also think that there's a really large discussion around climate change in Victoria as well. And so being able to respond to that in this city is really exciting. And I'm very grateful to be able to do it.

What I find special about Victoria, and this is not to knock on Vancouver, but Vancouver is the major center where most people in this industry wind up, 'cause that's where most of the work is. And there are still remaining behind a wide mix of different kind of artists in this town. And you can find a lot of different skill sets just in a very small space. But I mean, I found in the larger centers. Now, to be fair, I have not lived or worked in Vancouver. So I can't speak to that. I've lived and worked in Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, but a lot of time in the more major centers, it feels like people are really playing, almost playing the hustle. Like they are looking for the next meal ticket. And it's fair enough. This is a sink or swim industry, and it is, forget working paycheck to paycheck, it's working paycheck to do I have a paycheck, which makes a lot of people really pick and choose their projects carefully. And I think there's a lot of pressure to go to a larger center like that, but there's not as many opportunities to sort of come together as a unit and form something that consistently works together. At least that has been my experience. I can't speak to other people's. I'm sure there is definitely counterexamples to the one I put out there. But I definitely appreciate for a city with such a small population, how much talent there is of various degrees in one spot. And I really like that about here.

Yeah, that's something I really appreciate about living here too. And something we're really passionate about at Theatre SKAM is just keeping the local talent here because it's a really great city to be making art in. We'll transition now to talking more specifically about Endgame. I'm glad you mentioned doing avant-garde theatre, Thomas, because Endgame certainly is that. I can't think of actually the last time I saw a poster for like a Beckett play. I'm sure I probably have, but it's been a while. And so I'm just curious, what excites you about working on Endgame specifically in 2024?

Kind of tangentially, I think the last Beckett that was performed in Victoria, and I might be wrong, but I'm pretty sure "Happy Days" was performed in 2019. And that was about it. I think Bluebridge put that on. And I know because when we were deciding on Endgame, I was like, okay, have they done it in the last year? And I just didn't see it for some reason. So I think it's, yeah, it's been a while. And so that's really exciting.

Let's start with in 2024, that part of your question. In 2024, as we know, there's not a lot happening right now. Things are pretty calm. It's not especially turbulent right now. People have this feeling like everything is gonna be fine, and there's lots of longevity. And if you ask people what their prospects of the future are, they say it's looking pretty rosy. I expect to be owning a home and not having to worry about wars. And today is still opposite day, right? No, no, sorry. Okay, I'm hearing in my ear that it is not opposite day. I have to retract that. But that was a really long roundabout way of saying, it speaks to the feeling of, is this whole mess about to come to an end at any time without ever being so specific that you can get bogged down in the politics of the era? And it's not a bad thing to talk about politics in theatre. I mean, there's been lots of playwrights that have either made that their thing, or in Harold Pinter's case, it was not his thing, but certain plays of his absolutely focus on it. One for the road and mountain language come to mind. But Samuel Beckett's approach to endgame was to keep it almost all the things and none of the things. It almost, people throw around the term Schrodinger's cat too much, but I think it actually kind of applies here, 'cause this play is, most of the things that you can think of, what it could mean, the endgame. It could be the end of the world, it could be the end of a game of chess, it could be just two old guys sitting in a room driving each other crazy with their stuff runs out and not really paying attention to their surroundings enough to know that they can go outside. But it functions as kind of a Rorschach test to whatever turbulent sense of existential dread might be lurking under the surface of the society you're living in. And there's enough of that right now. So in 2024 specifically, I think it can almost serve as theatrical therapy to people that are feeling stressed out about the times.

Yeah, it's interesting you mentioned Schrodinger's cat just because they do talk about that in the play itself. They mention, they go, "Go and see, did he hear me?" And then they go, you say yes, and then they go the first time or the second, and then you go, "He doesn't know." And we'll never know. And so I think Beckett might've been onto that as well. I think that, yeah, a lot of what you said, I think that this play speaks to this feeling of dread and this feeling that we sort of keep coming up to these deadlines. And you hear in the news, like, "By 2050, all of this, the ocean will have been risen by this amount." Or, I just found out that our days are getting longer. Our days are getting longer because the ice caps are melting and therefore distributing the weight of the earth towards the equator. And so again, tangential, but that's a horrifying thought. And so then there's all these news stories that are coming, and yet what change do we really see? Why are we still so entrenched in the way we sort of behave? Because I do think that we often want, crave, or need change, but there's always something that might not be able to be described, but there's always something that holds us back. And I think that "Endgame" gives us hope for change because I always remind myself that it's fiction, and it is really up to the audience to decide whether these characters actually make changes in their life in order to sort of better their situation, or at least deal with the circumstances that are around them. But I mean, at least for me, I would like to say that they do, but if

they don't, then it is more of a warning for the audience who has the time left and who has the agency to make that change. It's kind of like, you're not the characters in this play. You can be different if you don't like their situation, and you can see this relating to your life in somehow, then I think make that change.

I think it's also interesting that you bring up Schrodinger's cat in relation to the feeling, the constant feeling of crisis that we kind of live with today, because I think it's also so fascinating. We're surrounded by so much legitimate crisis and also faux crisis at the same time, like just because we're inundated with so much information that our brains are not supposed to be able to process like on a daily basis. So I think that's also kind of an interesting thing there.

This play, I mean, presents us with a situation that I think a lot of people will be able to relate to this because a lot of us are in situations sort of between like "Clovenham." We've got Ham who sort of is, I mean, a power figure. Clove has to do everything he says, but Ham can't do anything for himself. He can't stand, he can't move himself in his chair. Without Clove, he is stuck there. Clove, on the other hand, has to do everything that Ham says, and he doesn't really know why, and even asks him a couple of times why, but still winds up doing it. And I think a lot of us feel that way, honestly, about the systems we're in. We know things are broken. We know things need to change. We don't always know how to articulate it. Some of us think that we can, and we can, I think, we'd best not get down to the specifics of that, or otherwise we'll be here all day on that right now. But it feels like we are spitting our heels trying to figure out a way to defy the master. And part of the problem is a lot of us don't even know who to name as the master to defy, and everyone's got a different idea as to who that is, but we all know that there's a power, and that it's not doing good things for us, and eventually we're going to have to leave that relationship as Clove keeps trying to do over and over and over again, as he says, since he was whelped. And even though audiences can certainly make up their minds as to whether or not that cycle is broken and whether or not Clove leaves by the end, certainly the situation that he is in, and that Ham is in as well, is intolerable. It can't continue to go on as it is. Something must either change, or in this case, it needs to end.

Yeah, we talk about this play often in terms of imagery, and something that comes to mind for us is the image of a spiral, because it seems to us that the play is very cyclical. They constantly talk about, they constantly use the same questions and answers, and they often do the same tasks that we've already seen before. And they even mention, like, you know, why this farce day after day. And then I think in the spiral kind of analogy, it sort of seems to quicken and sort of change and get maybe more anxious. And I can't really describe it. It's something that I feel when it reaches a certain point in the play. And sometimes it changes depending on what kind of run we do. But I go, oh, it's feeling like it's really going down the spiral right now. Like really, it's now, it's ramping up exponentially. But it's really weird because it's the

same pacing, the same pacing of action, but it kind of just has that uneasy feeling. And so I think that is really just one of the reasons why I really like the play. I wanna, and I also just wanted to mention, you talked about sort of this idea of like the master and maybe, you know, asking this question, why we follow the master or who is the master. And something I forgot to mention about maybe why doing "Endgame" in Victoria is because Samuel Beckett was, he was an Irish playwright and he wrote in French and English. And one of the ways that like scholars that have like sort of looked at "Endgame" is like sort of through a decolonial lens where Ham represents like British colonial rule and then Clove representing the Irish colonized culture and people. And so we haven't leaned into that as much because that's just not the context that we're performing in. However, I think it's important to think about sort of this power and also this like ideology that is sort of leading Clove's actions often. And maybe that sort of colonial ideology is something that is part of what kind of traps him in that situation. And kind of just sort of just like the stories we keep telling ourselves or the way we sort of frame our world.

You could talk about "Endgame" all day long for sure as I'm sure you have in rehearsal. But yeah, I think ultimately people just need to come down to the SKAM Satellite Studio and check out your production if they wanna know more about your thoughts on Beckett.

Yeah, please come on down. And if you want to hear more thoughts, we have two experts coming in for a post-show talk back on our Sunday matinee. So if you get tickets to our Sunday matinee at 2:00 p.m. on September 15th, then afterwards we have a post-show talk back with two PhD candidates. One, Barbara Clareyhigh specializes her research on representation of older age in Canadian theatre. And Lucy Khodosovska specializing her research on British and Irish poetry of the 20th and 21st centuries. So should be a fun and interesting time. And they also can answer any questions you might have.

Fantastic. Anything else to add, Ben?

- No matter what experience you have seeing this play, you're gonna feel something walking out of it. And whatever reaction you have to it, I would argue is exactly the one you're supposed to have. And that's what theatre is meant to do, make you feel and examine yourself. Well, thank you, Thomas and Ben so much for joining us on the podcast. We really appreciate having you.

- It has been a pleasure.

- Thanks so much for having us.

- End Game by Samuel Beckett, produced by Time Theft Theatre, will be at the SKAM Satellite Studio at 849 Fort Street this weekend, from September 13th to 15th.

You can get more information and the link to book tickets by checking out Time Theft Theatre on Facebook or Instagram. And End Game is not the only mission running this weekend. Field Research, an event organized by friends of SKAM, Ryan Conneal, Kevin Eastman, and Bragy Theatre, will be featured at the Intrepid Theatre Studio at 1609 Blanchard Street. I got the chance to speak with Kevin this week to ask more about his experience creating independent theatre in Victoria. Kevin, thank you so much for coming on SKAMnigans. We're so happy to have you on the show.

- Thank you very much. I'm very happy to be here.

- So Kevin, you're here talking about your show that you're doing with Ryan Conneal, Field Research.

- Yes, Field Research. That's why I'm here for the most part. Basically, Field Research, right? Let me break it down for you. Hi, I'm Kevin. Field Research is a two-part play. It's something I don't think anyone's ever done before, where you take two plays and you put them on one after another with a brief intermission in between. Jokes aside, this is a project, a little labor of love that is being done with my good friend and collaborator, Ryan Conneal, and with my other friend and other collaborator, Nicholas Guerrero, and Annie Constantinou.

- So the show, Field Research, is a double bill, sort of as you were talking about. So we've got "Consider the Dongfish" by Braggy Theatre, who's been on the show talking about "Consider the Dongfish." So they'll be remounting that, a winner of outstanding production at the Victoria One Act Play Festival. And then you and Ryan are doing a new work, which is called...

- A stage production in which two straight white men attempt to assemble a tent.

- Yeah, so can you tell me a little bit about a stage production where two straight white men attempt to assemble a tent?

- This play originally started as, I believe, a directorial project at the University of Victoria. And it was written by Ryan, and I hadn't touched it at all, I hadn't seen it at all. It's a little bit of a funny story. Me, him, and another friend, Sydney, were on a camping trip. And I think, like he said before, a little bit of that came and it inspired me to make a... 'Cause basically me and him were just fumbling in this camping trip. We were just very bad at doing anything related to camping. So we kinda just did everything sort of wrong, and Sydney was really the one who knew how to assemble things. So yeah, and I think that gave him a little inspiration for this. And it went through a lot of iterations, as many projects do. It went through a lot of changes. And now I think it's really kinda gotten into its final blooming form. I'll tell you a little bit about the premise. I mean, it says it in the name. It's just two guys with not a lot of

melanin in their skin just trying to set up a tent. It's really, it's kinda that classic, like two people who once knew each other very well. You know, your friend from high school that you were like, "Oh yeah, when we were back in the day, we used to love hanging out with each other." Then you are like, "Oh, I'm back in town." And like, "We're not 16 anymore, we're 25." And it's like, "Oh, this is different. I'm a different person, you're a different person." So it's a lot of that. It's gonna be a lot of understanding how different you become as you age through life and how some things don't quite match up with each other. And so the really core interesting thing is going to be a lot of the subtlety in how the two men talk. A lot of the joy will be in seeing how they speak, less like the words they're saying and more the modes of persona that they get. You know, when you're talking to your mom versus when you're talking to your doctor. And I think that's gonna be a real treat for people because it's like, because there's a certain like relation and empathy that you can see in that. Like, "Oh yeah, when I talked to Jason from Williams Lake, oh, it's very different than how I used to talk to him when I was younger, but maybe I could just talk to him like how I was younger. Oh no, can't anymore because, well, I mean, Stephen Harper's not prime minister. Like, I can't do it. Like, we're just not the same anymore." So I think it's gonna be a real good time. It's also kind of a bit more of a cerebral production. A lot of, okay, so I have a disagreement with the playwright. I know a lot more than he does. He may have written it, but I've read it. So I think that the play is quite a little bit avant-garde.

- So Kevin, you've been doing different like performances in a variety of different contexts in Victoria since we both graduated from the university at the same time. You've performed in "SKAMpede." You've also got your podcast that you co-host with Ryan, "The Platform." And so I'm curious as someone who's sort of making their own work in Victoria, what's your experience been as an independent Theatre producer in the city?

- It's been interesting. I suppose like the best way to say is that it's kind of a joy, honestly, because the kind of work I'm doing versus the kind of work I did when I was in school, a lot of the work I did when I was in school was quite mandatory. I mean, obviously I was paying to be there. They're gonna make me do work. Like that's how that works, right? But I think the thing I've noticed about producing like independent stuff is that there's a level of control that you have when you're independent. There's a level of control that you have in terms of who you do it with, how you do it. No one's, it's kind of a blessing and a curse that no one's who is like higher up than you. No professor is there to say, "Don't do this," or "Do it like that." On one hand, you could be making literally the worst mistakes of your life. I know I did a play once right after I graduated where someone pointed out like, "Hey, did you do this thing?" And I was like, "Oh my God, I literally learned don't do that in school." And I was a little embarrassed, but that's fine. That was a fun experience. But the other side of it is it's like, you can really try out new things. And I think that that's really wonderful. It's an absolute joy to be making things that feel fun to make. Like to take the joy of working

in a room with someone you really like or a group you really like and taking that, bringing it out to people. I think that that's like, it feels great. I mean, after every rehearsal I've done for this show, this stage production of two white men assembling a tent and every rehearsal I did for "Fairy Trails" with five stages, I came out of it just smiling, happy. Yeah, it's very fun to do. One thing I'll say before I finish my rambling, it is not easy. It is not easy. I am not super duper a financial kind of person. That's not something I'm quite good at. I lose money. I do not make it. But the thing is, is that that's not necessarily like a deal breaker either, because it's a matter of kind of building a sort of Avengers, like a group that you care for and that you enjoy working with. Now, these people need not necessarily be your friends. Helps if they are. But if you can find folks who pick up the slack where you have it, then I think that that'd probably be the biggest benefit. So I'm very fortunate, I'm very lucky that I know people like Sidney Hunt, like Ryan Kenneal, like Nicholas Guerrero, who can be like, this is how it'll actually happen. And I can say, great, let me buy you a pizza. Let me contribute that way, and I'll say some words.

- Yeah, I mean, assembling the team is sometimes the most important step. People will say that often about directing too, that casting is 60% of the job, because if you cast the right people who complement each other's skills and weaknesses, then you have a really well-rounded team who can kind of tackle any challenge.

- And I'll say the other thing that's really important with that is understanding, I guess I'll call it the vibe. I noticed this a few times, but some productions are gonna feel like you're just hanging out with your friends, and you're just goofing around, you're doing the thing, you're gonna get it done, ha ha, it's all fun and games, right? Other productions will feel, this is a job, this is my work, it's my art, I'm here to do my work, I'm here to do my art. And those two groups are not in, like they're not diametrically opposed, but they are in tension, you know? Because if you're having so much fun, everything's great, you're not getting any work done. But if you're doing all the work, you're not having fun, you're miserable, the work you do isn't gonna be good. So there's a pull and push in regards to the vibe. And I think not just casting, not just knowing the right people, I think being able to suss out the vibe of a given rehearsal space, the vibe of a given project. Are we making Les Miserables, or are we making the platform, which is to say, Ryan wakes me up 20 minutes before we're about to start. And I'm like, let's go. And I make, honestly, some, we make honestly some pretty fun, great stuff. So yeah, I think figuring out the vibe is really important. And that is really, like, there's no way to do that, except practice. You just have to be in the wrong vibe for a few times.

- I'm glad you brought up the platform, 'cause I wanted to sort of zero in on that a little bit. You, I believe, are our first guest on SKAMNanigans, who has a podcast of their own.

- Really?

- Yeah, at least to my knowledge. I could be wrong about that, but I'm getting a thumbs up from Logan, so that seems like a pretty good sign. So the platform, for those who are unfamiliar, is an improvised storytelling podcast. And I'm just sort of curious, first of all, how did the idea for that show come up?

- The platform's interesting. The whole inception of me and Ryan's group, we call ourselves Vocal Components. We're not an official company by any stretch, but that's, when we do a project, we usually call it that. The inception of Vocal Components started with a different project that I had the idea for. It was like an ancient Greek scripted story thing. And that was something that happened a long time ago. And we recorded a few episodes, but it didn't go very far 'cause it was one of those projects where I was in school, I was trying to work, I was trying to do all this stuff, and nothing was going right quite in my brain. So I was like, you know what, that's it, we're not gonna do it. But he had the idea early on of what's kind of a very simple, elegant thing that you can do with just a microphone and two people. That's kind of like the core of me and him. I usually try to go for really big things. He tries to go for very simple, elegant things. And I like that about him. He has always been involved in improv. He works with Paper Street Theatre and Dave Morris. He was the president of the Vyx Improv Team for a while. He's just a improv, honestly, he's probably one of the best improvisers I've ever met. And I love him for it. So he's always, he comes from improv. He comes from doing these wacky, silly things. And he also comes from the teachings of improv. He's a real nerd about it. So I think the place that the platform starts is that we both have this desire to do audio-based things. He studies sound a little bit, I study sound a little bit. And so we both have this idea to like, we wanna make some kind of audio thing. And we're like, what's the simplest thing that combines our disciplines of acting, of improv? I do a little improv too. And we were like, yeah, what if we just did an improv show every week, but you just couldn't see it? Like, it's entirely audio-based. And we were still in school when we came up with this idea. We're like, yes, let's do it. And so what we did was we bulk recorded a few episodes and then we didn't touch it for a year because that's how life is. And we were like, we're gonna, something's gonna end if we try to do this and finish our degrees at the same time. So we sat on it for a bit and then we got back to it once we were both out and we've been recording ever since. I think we're at episode 43 now.

- Oh yeah, that sounds right. Yeah, nice.

- Yeah, and it's been interesting doing that. Like if you've never listened to the platform before, you should, why are you here? But if you've never listened to the platform before, what he always says is that we do shows with no thought whatsoever. And it's basically just a little improv show that you can listen to. There's sound effects. Ooh, yeah. And yeah.

- Now that you're working on this stage production in which two straight white men attempt to assemble a tent, I'm curious, what are the similarities between making a podcast and making a theatre show? And have you learned anything from making the platform that has been beneficial working on this project right now?

- I would say the biggest thing, I wanna say the rapport is built between me and Ryan. Me and Ryan have always worked quite well together, but I think the thing that being involved in an ongoing project and a, I'm thinking more of a transient project, a project that's going to end soon, is that we are able to get right into the mode of acting. We are both quite able to jump into it together. And I think that that's been something that's quite, I suppose that's unique to this. If you wanted something a bit more broad, I would say it's a matter of compromising, or maybe not compromising is the right word. I'm gonna say the right word is responsibility. Responsibility in a very, I'm going to accommodate to make things happen. I'm going to be the one, 'cause really when you're doing these small independent projects, everyone is pitching in, everyone is wearing all the different hats and all that sort of stuff. You don't have very much of a budget. So you will take your expertise and you'll give it to the project. You will take on other responsibilities you wouldn't normally take on. Like I'm the one who figures out the rehearsal venue. Like I'm the one who sometimes buys food for everybody or whatever. And I think that that skill of taking on the responsibility is something that's transferable between a podcast and a physical stage production. Like in the podcast, I move my schedule around to make it work. We adjust things to make it work. We're always like trying our very best to make sure that the two of us in the podcast sense, the two of us are working as best we can. That's something we always do. And I think that we've brought that over to our production. We are always working to make sure that me and Ryan are working the best for each other. We're always checking in. We're always making sure things are good. And I should say that it's not just me and Ryan in the room. It's also Nicholas Guerrero, who is our outside co-director. And he's been fabulous.

- Those relationships, that kind of skill to be able to build that rapport is so important. And that adaptability not only applies to making a podcast and it not only applies to making a stage production, but it also applies to running a theatre company I can attest to.

- The biggest thing about that, and it goes a little bit, I guess, into like the business side, is that if you treat folks that you work with nice, if you treat them correctly, they're going to be willing to do it because they believe in it. They believe in you. They believe in the project. And if you go into projects with like a kind of inflated ego or if you go into it like, you know, I'm the boss. I'm like whatever, like you gotta do this for me. Then people are much less likely. I think it was, I heard this somewhere. It was like the problem with doing shows with your friends is that if you don't do it right, at the end you will have no friends.

- And you can always tell when people on stage are enjoying what they're doing. It always shows up in the end result. And that's actually something that I really enjoy about the platform. Specifically, I can tell that you and Ryan really enjoy making it.

- Oh my gosh, you actually listen to it?

- Yeah, of course I do.

- Oh my gosh, that's incredible.

- Yeah, so I just wanna, yeah, commend you for that and stress to our listeners who wanna maybe make their own podcasts or their own SKAMpi to shows that yeah, rapport and that vibe is really important because it does show through in the work even if you might not think it does.

- I should probably talk about field research. The date and place are going to be September 13th to 14th at Intrepid Studio at 2609 Blanchard Street. Tickets are going to be on Eventbrite. They're going to be \$15. To reiterate, it's not just a stage production in which two straight white men attempt to assemble a tent. It is also the show "Consider the Dongfish" by Nicholas Guerrero and Antikyan Stantonov. And the last thing that I'll say is that I have a funny story about the group name, the field research name. These two plays are actually very different. You already spoke about "Consider the Dongfish." It's a very irreverent, silly, loving play. I've seen it, I love it. I think it's a fabulous piece of work. This other play is very different. It's very grounded. There are real people with real problems. The other one has a disco ball. But we wanted to bring them together in part to have "Consider the Dongfish" shine again because it was in the Wanaki Play Festival. It was only one show. It was only one showing. And a show like "Consider the Dongfish" needs to be seen again and again and again. After that, well, again. And so we wanted to show it again. But we had this problem of how do we tell people that there is going to be a somewhat naturalist play about two men and their feelings? And also this Bill Nye-esque silly time. And so we racked our brains quite a bit for a solution to this problem. And we came up with quite a few names, quite a few ones that didn't quite make it. I think my favorite one, which was suggested by Nick, was something like "Redfish, Bluefish, Tentfish, Dongfish." (laughing) Which I'm really sad didn't make the cut. But the other one, which I told, basically every time we met, we were like, "We gotta come up with a name. We gotta come up with a name for this." And we were doing stuff like, "Oh, Duality. It's about two things. Dual what oh what." Eventually we came into the idea that it's going to be field research. And the framing device that we're using in our show is that you are here to witness a laboratory setting. The laboratory setting of Dongfish is quite obvious. It takes place in a laboratory, literally. But in a stage production, it's a bit more like you are peeping through a kind of two-way mirror. You're looking into the natural world, which is what naturalism's all about. Just seeing the world as it is. And so I think that, it's not going to be distracting, this notion that

we're popping in. But it's going to be there, and I think people will really enjoy it. That was the one thing that my compatriots told me I should talk about, is the name. So there you go.

- All right, there we go. Thank you so much, Kevin, for coming on SKAMnigans. We really appreciate having you.

- Thank you very much, Branden. It's been a pleasure. And to all you listening, stay safe, stay lovely. We'll see you next time.

Field research will be happening at the Intrepid Studio September 13th and 14th. You can get your tickets for this double feature of one-act plays on Eventbrite. I encourage you to go out and support both of these local producers featured on the podcast today, so they can continue creating great independent work. That's our show for this week. SKAMnigans will be taking a brief hiatus for the month, as we have a plethora of administrative obligations to tend to, and some preparation of our own, as we wind up for our new SKAM Satellite series. The SKAM Satellite series features local arts companies and collectives presenting work at the Satellite Studio. First up, we will have Spec Theatre and Cowboy, playing October 17th to 27th. And then we will have Snafu Society of Unexpected Spectacles and Uvenis Productions, November 28th to December 8th. Keep in touch through our Instagram, Facebook, or newsletter to get more updates on the SKAM Satellite series, and to be notified when tickets launch. SKAMnigans will be back to celebrate the SKAM Satellite series blast off on October 17th, featuring a taste of what the series will have to offer. And before you ask, no, we are not supplied by Boeing, so I am confident that our artists will be able to return to Earth safely when the series completes. We can't wait to have you back in our orbit in no time. Until then, this is Starship SKAMnigans signing off. Over and out.

Theatre SKAM is grateful to live, work, and create on the traditional territories of the Lekwungen people, now known as the Esquimalt and Songhees First Nations. SKAMnigans is hosted by me, Branden Sugden. Our producer is Logan Swain. Special thanks to our guests, Thomas Moore, Ben McPhee, and Kevin Eastman. Our marketing materials and graphics are by Janine Joplinski. We would like to acknowledge the support of our operational funders, the BC Arts Council, the Capital Regional District, and the City of Victoria for their support of Theatre SKAM. SKAMnigans can be found wherever you get your podcasts. Subscribe to get notified when new episodes drop. Transcripts for our episodes are available on our website, SKAM.ca/podcast. Thank you so much for listening.