Meet the Artists

LARRY COPELAND, Stage Manager
Larry is a stage manager who divides his time between Canada and the United States. In the US, he has worked on Broadway (Leap of Faith), Off-Broadway (Primary Stages) and regionally (Two River Theater and White Plains Performing Arts Center). In Canada, he has worked for Mirvish Productions, Canadian Stage, National Arts Centre, Charlottetown Festival and Theatre New Brunswick to name a few. Larry joined the Mermaid team in the summer of 2016.

GRAEME BLACK ROBINSON, Performer
Graeme was born and raised in Toronto, Ontario. Since graduating from George Brown College’s Theatre Arts program, he has studied physical theatre forms across Canada with many esteemed teachers. Graeme is the Artistic Director of Toronto’s Silent Protagonist theatre company. He starred in their inaugural mask and puppet show, Or Be Eaten, at the 2013 Toronto Fringe Festival. Most recently he wrote and directed Cryptids of the Canadian Shield for the Toronto Puppetry Collective’s Puppet Allsorts Festival. Graeme joined Mermaid in 2014 and has since toured with Mermaid across the US, Canada, and the People’s Republic of China.

MICHELLE URBANO, Performer
Michelle is a Toronto theatre artist working as an actor, puppeteer, puppet designer, playwright and producer. After graduating from Humber College’s Theatre Performance program she co-founded Artichoke Heart, an object theatre company creating original devised puppetry works. Artichoke Heart completed residencies at Mermaid Theatre and Cahoots Theatre, performed at several puppetry festivals (including Castellers International Festival and Puppetmongers’ Fresh Ideas), and found success at the Toronto and Montreal fringe festivals. Michelle joined Mermaid in 2016.

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Production Associate: Struan Robertson
Artistic Advisor for Music and Sound Design: Steven Naylor
Technical Director: Michael Jamieson
Scenic Painter: Sarah Haydon Roy
Seamstress: Sarah Harvey Hart

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There will be no intermission during this event.
NEIL DEGRASSE TYSON

Neil deGrasse Tyson was born and raised in New York City where he was educated in the public schools clear through his graduation from the Bronx High School of Science. Tyson went on to earn his B.A. in Physics from Harvard and his PhD in Astrophysics from Columbia.

Tyson’s professional research interests are broad, but include star formation, exploding stars, dwarf galaxies and the structure of our Milky Way.

In 2001, Tyson was appointed by President Bush to serve on a 12-member commission that studied the Future of the US Aerospace Industry. The final report was published in 2002 and contained recommendations (for Congress and for the major agencies of the government) that would promote a thriving future of transportation, space exploration and national security.

In 2004, Tyson was once again appointed by President Bush to serve on a 9-member commission on the Implementation of the United States Space Exploration Policy, dubbed the Moon, Mars, and Beyond commission. This group navigated a path by which the new space vision can become a successful part of the American agenda. And in 2006, the head of NASA appointed Tyson to serve on its prestigious Advisory Council, which will help guide NASA through its perennial need to fit its ambitious vision into its restricted budget.

In addition to dozens of professional publications, Dr. Tyson has written, and continues to write for the public. From 1995 to 2005, Tyson was a monthly essayist for Natural History magazine under the title “Universe.” And among Tyson’s ten books is his memoir The Sky is Not the Limit: Adventures of an Urban Astrophysicist; and Origins: Fourteen Billion Years of Cosmic Evolution, co-written with Donald Goldsmith. Origins is the companion book to the PBS-NOVA 4-part mini-series Origins, in which Tyson served as on-camera host. The program premiered on September 28 and 29, 2004.

Two of Tyson’s recent books are the playful and informative Death By Black Hole and Other Cosmic Quandaries, which was a New York Times bestseller, and The Pluto Files: The Rise and Fall of America’s Favorite Planet, chronicling his experience at the center of the controversy over Pluto’s planetary status. The PBS/NOVA documentary The Pluto Files, based on the book, premiered in March 2010.

For five seasons, beginning in the fall of 2006, Tyson appeared as the on-camera host of PBS-NOVA’s spinoff program NOVA ScienceNOW, which is an accessible look at the frontier of all the science that shapes the understanding of our place in the universe.

During the summer of 2009 Tyson identified a stable of professional stand-up comedians to assist his effort in bringing science to commercial radio with the NSF-funded pilot program StarTalk. Now also a podcast and a limited-run television series on the National Geographic Channel, StarTalk combines celebrity guests with informative yet playful banter. The target audience is all those people who never thought they would, or could, like science. In its first year on television it was nominated for an Emmy Award for “Best Informational Programming.”

Tyson is the recipient of 19 honorary doctorates and the NASA Distinguished Public Service Medal, the highest award given by NASA to a non-government citizen. His contributions to the public appreciation of the cosmos have been recognized by the International Astronomical Union in their official naming of asteroid 13123 Tyson. On the lighter side, Tyson was voted “Sexiest Astrophysicist Alive” by People magazine in 2000.

In February 2012, Tyson released his tenth book containing every thought he has ever had on the past, present and future of space exploration: Space Chronicles: Facing the Ultimate Frontier

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Recently Tyson served as Executive Editor and on-camera host and narrator for Cosmos: A SpaceTime Odyssey, the 21st century reboot of Carl Sagan’s landmark television series. The show began in March 2014 and ran thirteen episodes in Primetime on the FOX network, and appeared in 181 countries in 45 languages around the world on the National Geographic Channels. Cosmos, which is also available on DVD and BluRay, won four Emmy Awards, a Peabody Award, two Critic’s Choice Awards and a dozen other industry recognitions.

Tyson is the fifth head of the world-renowned Hayden Planetarium in New York City and the first occupant of its Frederick P. Rose Directorship. He is also a research associate of the Department of Astrophysics at the American Museum of Natural History.

Neil deGrasse Tyson lives in New York City with his wife, a former IT Manager with Bloomberg Financial Markets, and their two children.