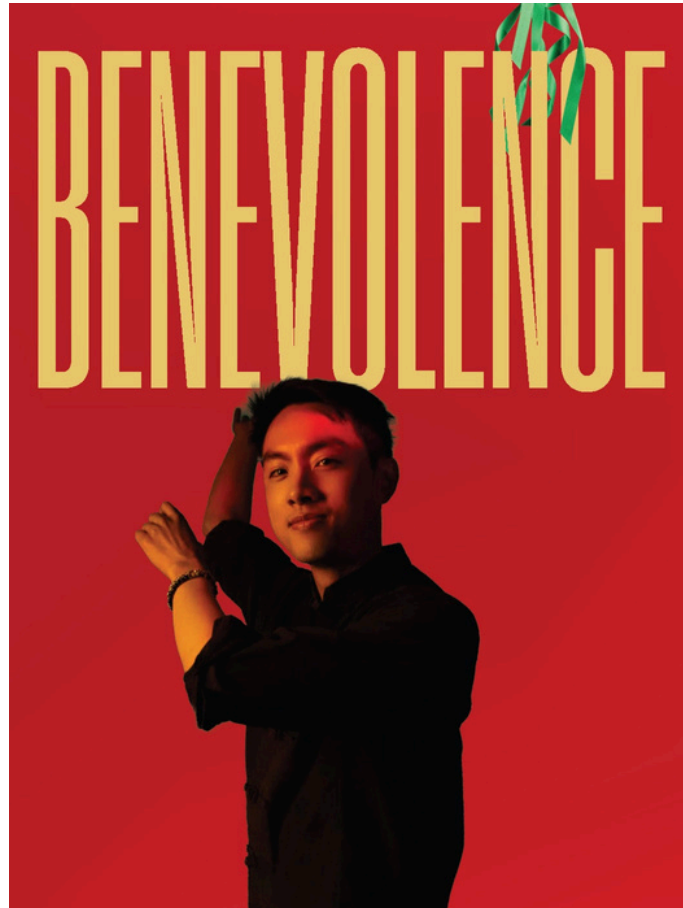


TARRAGON THEATRE

Venue & Show Guide for the
Performance of



Benevolence

Tarragon Theatre, Extraspace

Preview Dates:

Tuesday, April 8 to Tuesday, April 15

Performance Dates:

Wednesday, April 16 to Sunday, May 4

Venue & Show Guide for the
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Venue Guides and Show Guides were developed in priority to autistic and neurodivergent audiences, but anyone may find them helpful.

This information can help you get ready for your visit to Tarragon Theatre.

It can help you understand what your experience might be like.

If you would like more information or want to visit the theatre before coming to a show, please contact Heather Caplap, Tarragon's Education and Community Engagement Manager at education@tarragontheatre.com or 416 536 5018 ext. 249

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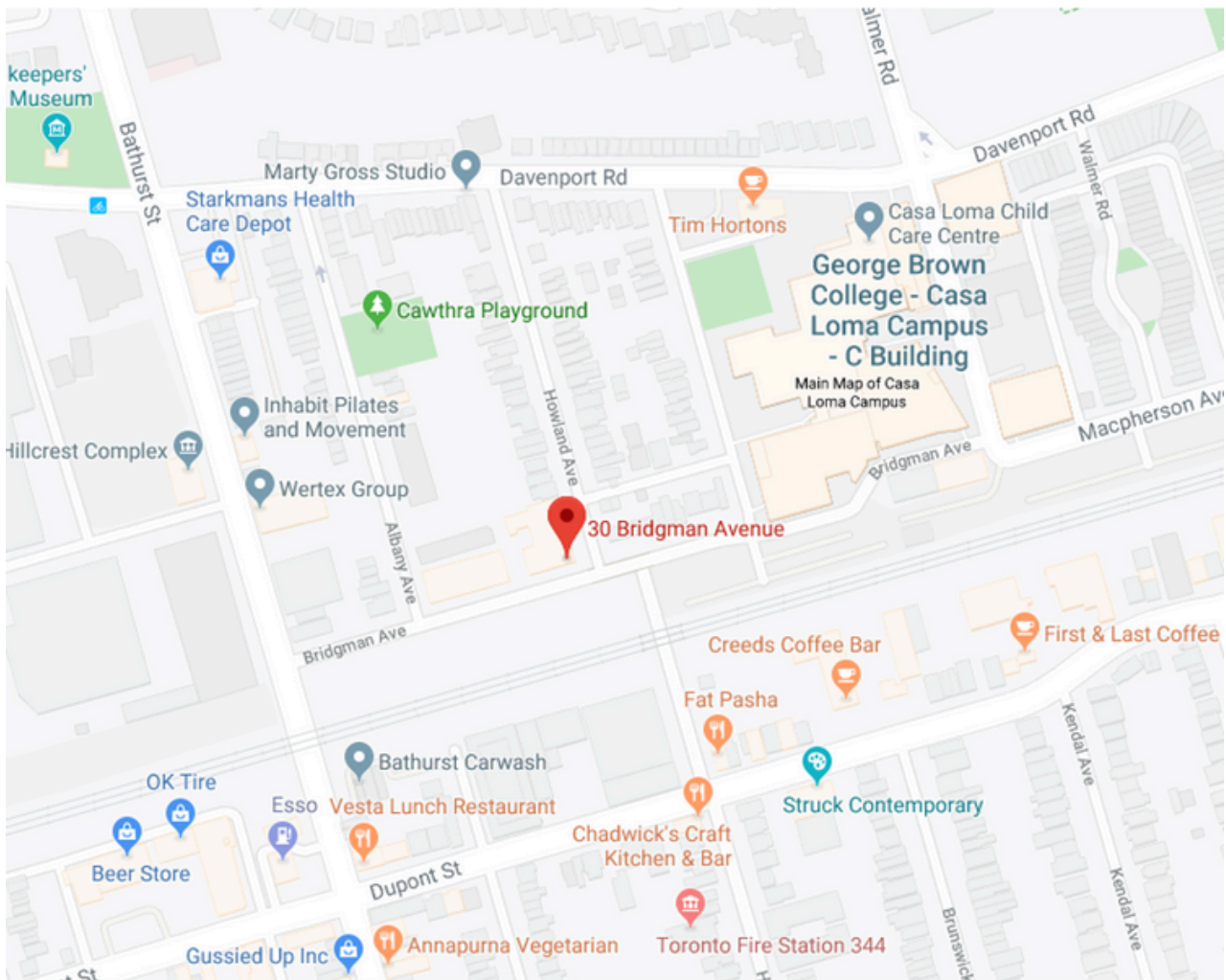
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How to Get Here

Tarragon Theatre is located at 30 Bridgman Avenue in Toronto. It is important to note that our address is on Bridgman Avenue, but our main entrance is on Howland Avenue. There is a bench with a back you can sit on beside the main entrance.

We are one block north of Dupont Street, one block south of Davenport Avenue, and two blocks east of Bathurst Street.



[image shows Tarragon Theatre's location with a red pin on a map of the nearby area]

By Car - Parking Information

Tarragon Theatre is at the corner of Howland Avenue and Bridgman Avenue. One block north of Dupont Street, one block south of Davenport Avenue, and two blocks east of Bathurst Street.

If you are driving to the theatre, we recommend parking in the UnitPark Lot C parking lot on the southwest side of Bridgman, across from the theatre. Tarragon ticketholders can reserve their spot online, in advance, here:

<https://unitpark.info/Purchase-Event-Parking-Ticket>

There is a second parking lot at the southeast corner of Howland and Bridgman. You can find more information about that parking lot here:

<https://www.parkme.com/lot/98367/lot-b-toronto-on-canada>

By TTC

Dupont Station: If you take the north exit of Dupont Station, turn right to go west along Dupont Street. If you take the south exit where there is a rounded bench outside, turn left to go west. When going west on Dupont you will pass a Shoppers Drug Mart soon after exiting the station. Turn right on Howland Avenue and go one block north (Howland Avenue is one block west of Spadina Avenue). The theatre will be on your right.

Bathurst Station: From Bathurst Station, take the 7 Bathurst bus north to the first stop after Dupont Street. The stop is announced as “Bridgman Avenue”. Once off the bus, travel half a block south and turn onto Bridgman Avenue. Travel two blocks east on Bridgman Avenue to the theatre.

You can use this link to the TTC website to plan your trip to the theatre. There is a check box below the “start” and “end” fields that you can check to plan a mobility device accessible trip:

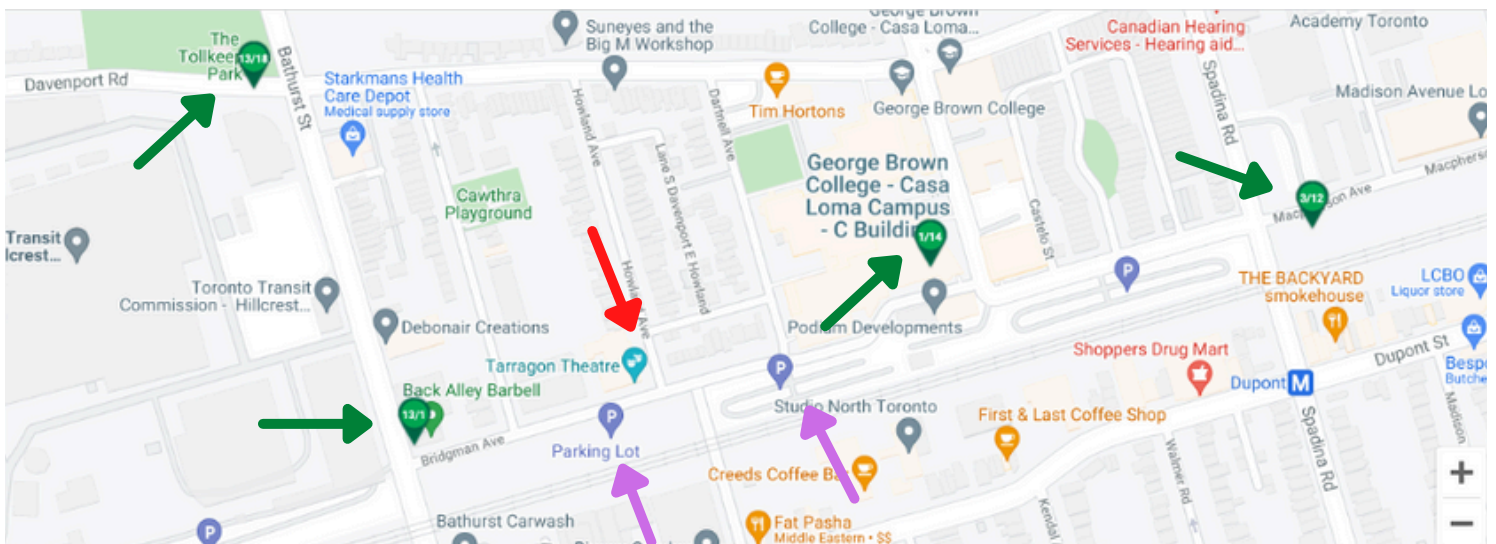
<https://www.ttc.ca/trip-planner>

By Bike

There is a bike lane on Davenport Avenue. You can turn south on Howland from Davenport to reach the main entrance of the theatre. There are six ring posts outside the theatre you can use to lock your bike. There are two to the left of the door, two around the corner, and two more just up the street to the right of the door.

There are two Toronto Bike Share stations close to the theatre. One just west of the theatre, on the corner of Bridgman and Bathurst, and one just east of the theatre on the corner of Bridgman and Kendal Rd.

The image below uses arrows to show where the closest parking lots and Toronto Bike Share stations are. The red arrow shows where the theatre is, the purple arrows show where the parking lots are, and the green arrows show where the Toronto Bike Share stations are.



[image shows Tarragon Theatre's location on a map with nearby parking lots and Toronto Bike Share stations]

The Building

Tarragon Theatre is a large brick building where plays are created and performed. There are two theatres in the building; the Mainspace, which seats 205 people, and the Extraspace, which seats 108 people. Both theatres have accessible seating.



[image of the entrance to Tarragon Theatre with an arrow pointing at a button, situated on the left side of the front doors. The arrow says "Door Button"]

The main entrance to our building is on Howland Avenue, near the corner of Bridgman Avenue. The sidewalk is level and leads up to the glass double doors. On your left there is a button you can press to open the door. This button sometimes gets stuck in the cold weather and you may need to press it more than once. Our staff are happy to help if needed.

The Lobby

When you come in from outside you will enter the lobby. Below is a picture of what the lobby looks like when you enter from the front doors. The lobby may be busy with many people talking and moving around. The lobby is brightly lit and there may be music playing. The art on the walls changes depending on the show.



[image of the lobby right as you enter the main doors]

The lobby is where audience members wait before going into a theatre to experience a show. In the lobby you can sit on a bench, use the washrooms, and buy a snack or drink from the bar.

If you enter through the main doors, the box office is on your left. The box office is where you can purchase a ticket if you haven't already, or connect with a staff member. The doors directly ahead of you go into the Mainspace theatre and to your right are the doors to the Extraspace theatre, as well as the bar, and the washrooms. *Benevolence* will take place in the Extraspace. If you need help directing to the theatres, please approach a volunteer or ask at the box office.

The Box Office

The box office is where you can buy a ticket to see the show. If you already bought a ticket it will have been emailed to you. If you wish, you can pick up a printed ticket at the box office. The box office staff will ask you for your first and last name to find your ticket.

This is what the box office looks like when you come from the lobby.



[image of people sitting and standing in the box office area]

This is the box office window with two of our box office staff. They are here to help.



[image of two box office staff in the box office window]

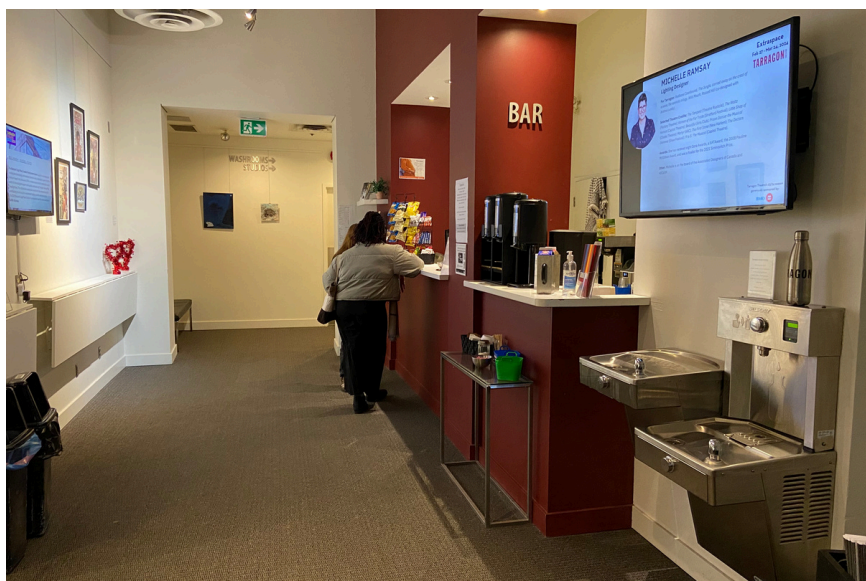
The Bar and Water Fountains

The bar is where you can buy snacks or drinks to have in the lobby. It is to the right of the lobby and beside the Extraspace doors. The bar sells alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. People may be drinking alcohol in the lobby. The bar is not open during Wednesday matinées.



[image of the bar and bartender]

Beside the bar are water fountains where you can fill up your water bottle or take a drink.



[image of the lobby water fountain with people standing at the bar]

The Women's Washroom

Tarragon Theatre has 4 washrooms. The women's washroom is on the main floor just past the bar. The men's washroom, accessible / family washroom, and all gender washroom are on the second floor. You can use stairs or the elevator to get to the second floor. The stairs and elevator are to the right of the women's washroom.

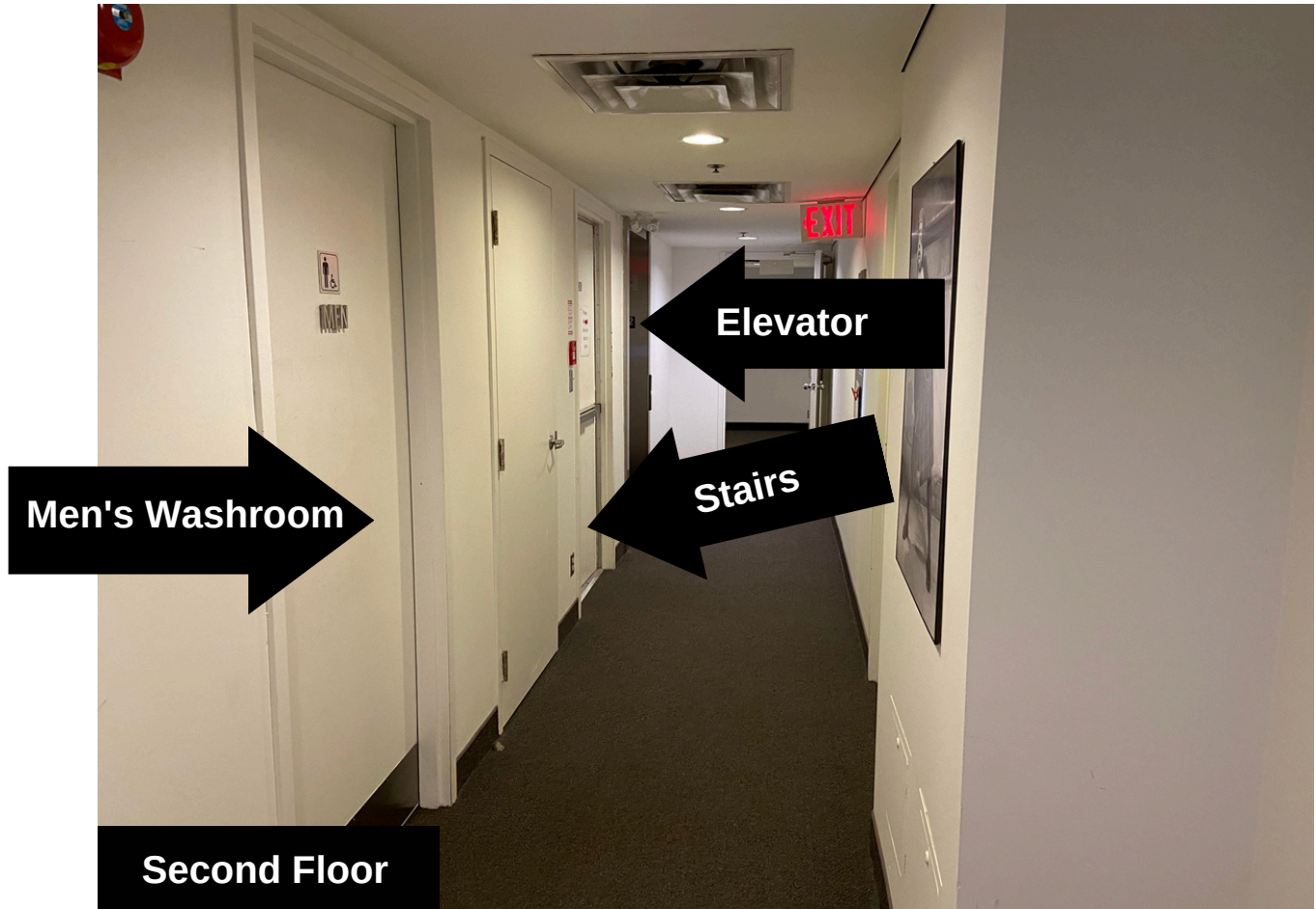
The women's washroom has 4 stalls. This is what the doors to the women's washroom, stairs, and elevator look like on the first floor.



[image of the doors to the women's washroom, stairs, and elevator, with arrows indicating where each is]

The Men's Washroom

The men's washroom has 2 stalls and 2 urinals. To get there, take the stairs or the elevator to the second floor and turn right. This is what the doors to the men's washroom, stairs, and elevator look like on the second floor.



[image of the doors to the men's washroom, stairs, and elevator with arrows indicating where each is]

The Studio Lobby - Accessible / Family Washroom, All-Gender Washroom

The Studio Lobby is where the accessible / family washroom and all-gender washrooms are. To get there, take the stairs or the elevator to the second floor and turn left down the hallway. You will pass through an open doorway on your way down the hallway. This, and the following doorways, are the most narrow doorways in Tarragon. They are 33 inches wide. At the end of the hallway, turn right to enter the Studio Lobby. If the door is closed, there is a push button to the right of the door to open it.

Below is what the entrance to the Studio Lobby looks like when you come from the hallway.



[image of the entrance to the Studio Lobby with arrows pointing to the 'Door Button' and 'Accessible Washroom']

The Studio Lobby - Accessible / Family Washroom, All-Gender Washroom

When you enter the Studio Lobby, directly to your left is the accessible / family washroom. Further into the room, but still on your left is all genders washroom.

There is a push button to open the door of the accessible / family washroom. The door button is to the right of the door. The accessible / family washroom is large enough for a power chair to turn around in. There is also a change table in this washroom.

The all-gender washroom has 2 stalls. It can be used by anyone who wants to use it.

Below is an image of the Studio Lobby.

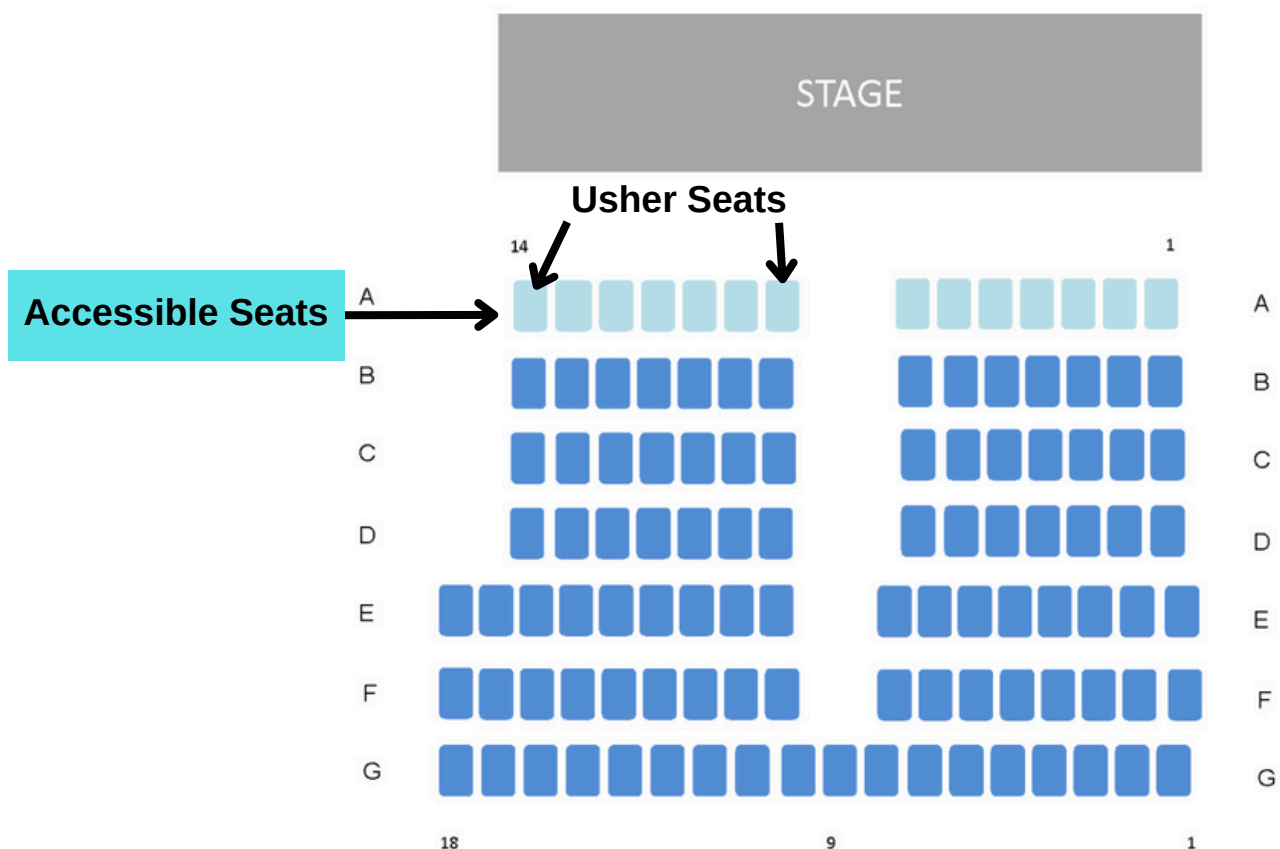


[image of the Studio Lobby with arrows pointing to the 'Accessible Washroom', 'Door Button', and 'All Genders Washroom']

The Extraspace Theatre

The Extraspace is the smaller of our two theatres. It can seat 108 people. If you need accessible seating please let the box office staff know. The doors to the Extraspace are to your right when you enter from the lobby. The doors are beside the bar and water fountains. A volunteer usher will ask to see your ticket when you enter. There is assigned seating in the Extraspace. A volunteer usher can help you find your seat.

The lights will be on and people may be talking before the show starts. Right before the shows begins, a box office staff member will go to the front of the theatre and make an announcement. They will then exit, the theatre doors will close, and the show will start.



[image of the seating chart for the Extraspace with arrows pointing to where the ushers usually sit]

The Extraspace Theatre



[image of the Extraspace entrance]



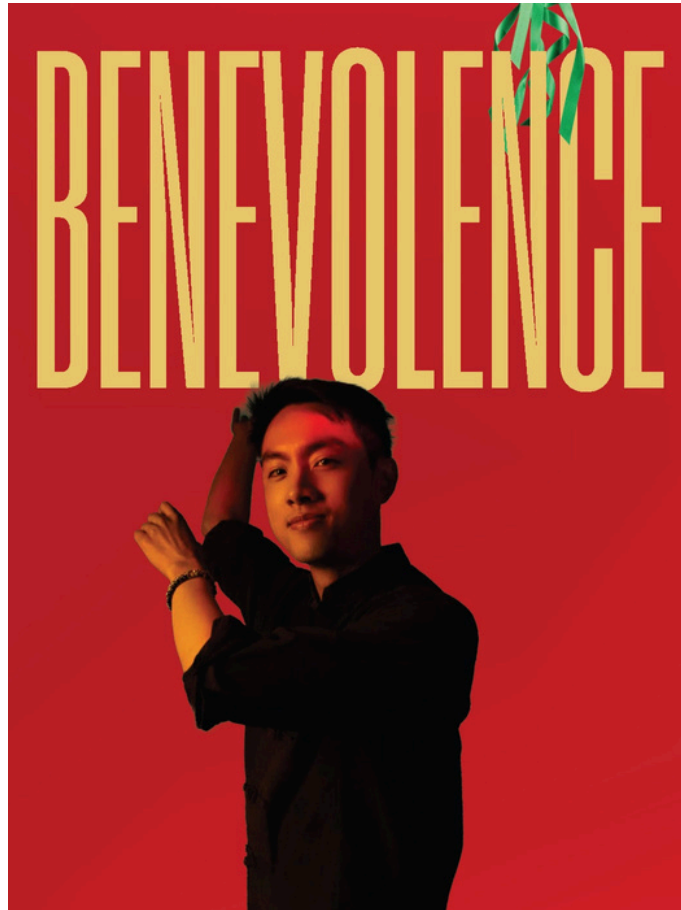
[image of where the audience sits in the Extraspace]



[image of the Extraspace stage from the audience]

Information About the Show

This section discusses the details of the show and contains **spoilers**.



Benevolence contains loud sounds, fog, brief light flashes, knives, and reference to racial violence.

[Click here to check out the program](#)

[Click here to check out the
Audience Resource Guide](#)

Performer Information



Kevin Matthew Wong

is playing:

Himself



Kevin is a Hakka-Canadian theatre artist living and working in Toronto. Throughout the play, **Kevin** plays different versions of himself from different points in his life.

Kevin also embodies other characters during the show. These include:

Sonia Chin - A Hakka-Jamaican woman.

Peter Chong - A Hakka-Canadian man.

Leung Baak - The Steward of a Hakka Temple.

George - A Hakka-Malaysian man.

Pat, Larry,
and Martin - Members of the Toronto Hakka Heritage Alliance.

Production Photos by Jae Yang

The Plot Summary

Kevin enters the stage banging two pot lids together. He asks for two volunteers from the audience to come onstage and help him do a Lion Dance. After the dance, **Kevin** thanks the volunteers and returns them to their seats.

Kevin tells the audience about the appartement he lived in a few years ago and he talks about preparing to welcome guests into his home. Then he offers some tea to two audience members.

Kevin starts telling the story of him meeting Peter Chong in Vancouver, but pauses it to give an explanation of the two thousand year-long migratory history of the Chinese diaspora group known as the Hakka. **Kevin** returns to recapping his visit with Peter, but is later interrupted by the ringing of a phone. **Kevin** checks his voicemail and hears a message from Sonia Chin, asking to meet with him about writing a play.

Kevin narrates his first meeting with Sonia Chin. She asks him to write a script about being Hakka for her Association's presentation at the upcoming 'Hakka World Conference' which is being hosted in Canada for the first time. **Kevin** is reluctant, saying that he doesn't know much about being Hakka, but eventually agrees to try.

Kevin explains how he decided to interview his Grandmother to try and learn more about being Hakka. He plays footage from the interview for the audience. **Kevin** then explains how the interview was a failure because his 100 year-old grandmother couldn't reliably remember much.

Kevin tells Sonia that he isn't the right person to help her, and that he will soon be away in Vancouver for work. Sonia insists that **Kevin** meet with Peter Chong while he is in Vancouver, and eventually **Kevin** agrees.

The Plot Summary (cont.)

Kevin resumes the story of his meeting with Peter where he left off before. Peter tells **Kevin** about a Hakka Temple in Victoria, but that he lost touch with it years ago and isn't sure if it is still there. **Kevin** asks Peter for directions to the Temple and gets on a plane to Victoria. The rolled up banner attached to the back wall unfurls and descends until it touches the floor.

On the plane, **Kevin** tells the audience about the hardship and bigotry early Chinese settlers faced on Canada's West Coast, and the 'Benevolent Associations' these settlers created in response. **Kevin** also talks about how the discrimination of the Hakka by other Chinese people continued in Canada, requiring them to make their own Associations separate from the Chinese ones.

In Victoria, **Kevin** nearly gives up searching for the Temple but finds it in the end. He is greeted by the Temple's elderly Steward, Leung Baak. **Kevin** tells the audience about the deity the Temple is dedicated to: Tam Kung. When **Kevin** mentions that he himself is Hakka, Leung Baak invites him to pray and guides him through the process.

After praying, **Kevin** faints. Fog pours onto the stage, and **Kevin** begins to dance in it while shadow copies of himself are projected behind him.

Back in Toronto, Sonia is leading a rehearsal for their Hakka World Conference presentation. **Kevin** arrives late, but starts excitedly talking about his trip to Vancouver and Victoria and the epiphany he had about writing the script for their show. George interrupts **Kevin** and voices his doubts and concerns about **Kevin** being the right person to write their script, given he has only just started to learn about being Hakka. Sonia starts defending **Kevin**'s presence to George, but soon their argument spreads to everyone else at the rehearsal.

The Plot Summary (cont.)

Kevin interrupts the argument to address George's concerns and even voice some of his own. He tells everyone how meaningful his visit to the Temple was and how resolved he now is to discovering what being Hakka means for him, just like they all have.

Kevin is onstage at the Hakka World Conference. He introduces the various performances of the Toronto Association members and how they relate to Hakka history and culture. **Kevin** also embodies several of the performers and recreates parts of their Conference presentation. Pat and Larry sing a Bob Marley song, Martin sings a Bollywood song, and Sonia sings the version of *Bengawan Solo* that she grew up with in Jamaica. As Sonia's son finishes, extra footage from **Kevin**'s interview with his Grandmother is played.

Kevin tells the audience how, a few years after the Conference, a dream prompted him to look up the Temple in Victoria online. From their website he learns that the Temple is in danger of shutting down if they can't raise enough money to fund some necessary building repairs. **Kevin** recounts contacting the Temple to offer his help and going back to Victoria to film a documentary about the Temple.

Kevin starts cutting an apple into slices onstage. As he does so, he talks about a specific moment during the filming of the documentary when he realized that he no longer felt like a guest when at the Temple, but rather a host. **Kevin** offers a bowl of apple slices to the audience.

The Plot Summary (cont.)

A voice over of **Kevin** begins narrating a dream he keeps having about an elderly Temple Steward named 'Kevin' who offers guidance and support to people who come to him with questions and uncertainty.

Kevin drapes the banner hanging at the back of the stage over his shoulders. He then puts on a large mask fashioned to look like a Chinese Lion. **Kevin** dances with the banner flowing behind him.

THE END

Sensor Experience + Content Notes

Benevolence has the following sensory experiences: loud sounds/music, fog, projected video, live singing, brief light flashes, and distorted voice effects.

The show depicts the following content:
Fainting, knives, and subtitled video.

The show mentions the following content:
Bigotry/Oppression, involuntary migration, racial violence, elders outliving their spouse/child, and cultural disconnect.

Kevin offers food and drink to some audience members at specific points in the show.

When **Kevin** asks for volunteers from the audience at the start of the show, you should feel free to say no if you are not interested. If you say yes, **Kevin** will bring you and someone else onstage and give you some metal pot lids. He will ask you to walk in a circle and bang them together for a minute as part of a Lion Dance.

During the opening Lion Dance, metal pot lids are banged together onstage. This sequence lasts for a few minutes.

During the opening Lion Dance, **Kevin** will walk up the audience staircase and invite people to have a short interaction with a prop. Feel free to say No and he will move on.

Both times **Kevin** mentions taking a picture with Peter Chong, a stage light flashes once to simulate a camera flash.

Sensor Experience + Content Notes (cont.)

When a phone rings for the first time, **Kevin** will act as if it is the phone of an audience member and has distracted him. This is part of the show and is a planned sequence.

When footage from **Kevin**'s interview with his Grandmother plays, he will sit in the audience staircase and comment on the footage directly to the audience.

The interview footage is subtitled in English.

When **Kevin** boards the plane to Victoria, footage of the view from an airplane window as it takes off is projected onto the back wall. This plays for about a minute.

On the flight to Victoria, **Kevin** talks about the history of discrimination and racist violence Chinese settlers were subjected to in BC.

While **Kevin** prays to Tam Kung, he simulates striking a gong by hitting a metal rice cooker three times. This makes a high-pitched ringing sound which lingers for a few seconds each.

When **Kevin** finishes praying, he falls to the ground as if fainting. This is a planned part of the show and he is not harmed.

Fog fills the stage right after **Kevin** faints. It lingers for several minutes during a dance sequence. An onstage fan keeps most of the fog away from the audience, but the first few rows might inhale some of it.

Sensor Experience + Content Notes (cont.)

When **Kevin** recreates their performance at the Hakka World Conference, he sings the songs live.

When **Kevin** starts talking about the Temple's website, he takes out a cutting board and kitchen knife from a cupboard. The knife is real and sharp enough to cut fruit, but it remains onstage with **Kevin** and is never brought close up to the audience.

Kevin sanitizes his hands before handling the apple he will slice and offer to the audience.

The voice over describing **Kevin's** dream sometimes uses an echo and a distortion effect.

Set Description and Photo

The Tarragon Extraspace is a Black Box theatre, so the floor and walls are all painted black.

The floor is covered in a rug which has been painted to resemble a concrete floor. By the back left corner of the rug there is a lamp which points down at a small wooden table with a landline phone on it. A few feet in front of that table is a box which has painted to look like a short brick pillar. On the box rests a wicker pouf, a small bowl of apples, and a rice cooker. In the far right corner, behind the rug, are two grey folding tables, a collapsible projector screen, and an oscillating fan. On the right-side edge of the rug is a small wooden cupboard with its door facing away from the audience. On the cupboard is a stack of bamboo steamers. Infront of that is a red plastic stepstool. High up on the back wall of the theatre lots of colourful silk strips hang bunched together. These silk strips are the bottom fringe of long blue banner which descends part way through the performance.



Set Design by Echo Zhou

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about this Venue & Show Guide or planning a visit to Tarragon Theatre please reach out.

We love feedback on our accessible programming, if there is anything you would like to share please send us an email or give us a call.

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We Hope You Enjoy Your Visit to Tarragon Theatre!