

GRAND

MEDIA RELEASE

***Primary Trust*, Pulitzer Prize-winning drama, takes the stage at the Grand Theatre**

Directed by Cherissa Richards

January 20 to February 7 on the Spriet Stage at the Grand Theatre

Co-Production with Crow's Theatre

January 13, 2026 – London, ON – *Primary Trust*, one of the most exciting scripts to grip modern theatre, is set to run on the Grand Theatre's Spriet Stage. Director **Cherissa Richards** leads the way through the tender, quirky, and Pulitzer Prize-winning pages of Playwright **Eboni Booth** in this all-new, London-made production.

Primary Trust is one of those stories that grabs you. Kenneth leads a very simple life. And at the same time, what he has faced – and continues to face – is complex, personal, hard to believe. You'll catch yourself laughing with Kenneth and Bert over mai tais, shedding both hard and joyful tears, and ultimately cheering along with your whole heart.

"This is the story of a friendship. Of how I got a new job. A story of love and balance and time. And the smallest of chances."

– Kenneth in *Primary Trust*

"This is my favourite play that I read for the season, and now I am so excited to get to share it with London audiences," relays **Rachel Peake**, Artistic Director of the Grand Theatre. "Full of magic realism, humour, and heart, *Primary Trust* lets you walk in the shoes of someone else in a way that unlocks the world a little differently."

Primary Trust opened Off-Broadway in 2023 with William Jackson Harper (NBC's *The Good Place*) leading the cast as Kenneth. The play – and Harper's performance – were quickly nominated for a suite of high-profile awards and won the 2024 Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

"A simple and elegantly crafted story of an emotionally damaged man who finds a new job, new friends and a new sense of worth,

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illustrating how small acts of kindness can change a person's life and enrich an entire community."

– The Pulitzer Prizes

For the past several months, Booth's celebrated script has been in the hands of theatre artists recruited from across Canada – including director **Cherissa Richards**, and designers **Julie Fox** (set), **Rachel Forbes** (costume), **Imogen Wilson** (lighting), and **Thomas Ryder Payne** (sound). Together, they are building "a world that feels like ours, that looks like reality," explains Peake, "but in fact, is not bound by the laws of physics or time and lives inside an active idea."

Primary Trust whisks audiences into the styled yet realistic, gritty yet beautiful world of a Tiki Hut regular, Kenneth. "We are taken back to a recent time, but a time before smartphones, in North America – where connection wasn't merely a click away and interpersonal connection took some work," shares Richards. "We lean into how Eboni Booth explores loneliness and the complicated need for connection."

One 'happy hour' at a time, the character of Kenneth will unfold on the stage, seemingly set with a life-size diorama. "The characters will step out into a frozen photograph and bring it to life. Surreal, fragmented buildings, slices of evocative settings, signalling to the audience that we are only being let in on part of the story – the rest is in your imagination," reveals Fox. "There is a tumbleweed feel of boarded-up storefronts and empty spaces that resonates as we continue to come back from the pandemic in our own cities. In this kind of desolate, urban landscape – so typical across North America – we still manage to find beauty and connection, and the unexpectedness makes it that much more special."

"Because I was an actor for so long, as a writer, I always want to give actors fun things to do. I want it to be something they can sink their teeth into."

– Eboni Booth

Extraordinary, ordinary, Kenneth will be played by **Durae McFarlane**, who is making his Grand Theatre debut after a series of theatre and TV roles. Musician and actor **Lawrence Libor** will perform keys on stage, adding a live soundtrack to the show. Libor is known to Grand audiences, having previously been in last season's smash-hit musical *Waitress*, as well as the three-times-extended run of *Cabaret*, which set a record as the longest-running show on the Grand's studio stage. **Peter N. Bailey** (Stratford, Canadian Stage) also makes a much-anticipated return to the Grand, after performing in August Wilson's *Fences* (2018/19). The cast also includes **Ryan Hollyman** (Soulpepper, National Arts Centre, Mirvish), and **Khadijah Roberts-Abdullah** (Stratford Festival) who are both making their Grand Theatre debut.

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Primary Trust plays on the **Spriet Stage** at the Grand Theatre from **January 20 until February 7**. Single tickets range from **\$25 to \$97** and in-person at the Box Office, by phone at (519) 672-8800, and online at <https://www.grandtheatre.com/event/primary-trust>.

The Grand Theatre is grateful to offer **Canada Life Pay What You Can** pricing, presented on Sunday, January 25 at 2 p.m., as well as a **Performance with ASL Interpretation** on Saturday, January 31 at 2 p.m.

The Grand Theatre gratefully acknowledges Season Sponsor **BMO** and Downtown Community Partner **Old Oak Properties** for their support.

To learn more about *Primary Trust* at the Grand Theatre, please visit www.grandtheatre.com/event/primary-trust. Follow the production and peek behind the scenes by following @thegrandlondon and #GrandTrust on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Threads](#), [Bluesky](#), [YouTube](#), & [TikTok](#).

Tickets can be purchased online at [grandtheatre.com](https://www.grandtheatre.com), by phoning the Box Office at 519.672.8800, or by visiting the Box Office in person at 471 Richmond Street (weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Saturdays from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.).

Flex Packages are available and allow audiences to bundle **any 3 or 4 plays** from the 2025/26 Spriet Series, on any performance date. Visit www.grandtheatre.com/flex-packages to learn more.

PRIMARY TRUST

By Eboni Booth

Directed by Cherissa Richards

January 20 to February 7 on the Spriet Stage at the Grand Theatre

Co-Production with Crow's Theatre

CREATIVE TEAM

Cherissa Richards – Director

Julie Fox – Set Designer

Rachel Forbes – Costume Designer

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Imogen Wilson – Lighting Designer

Thomas Ryder Payne – Sound Designer

Vanessa Spence – Assistant Director

Kai-Yueh Chen – Stage Manager

Emma Jo Conlin – Assistant Stage Manager

Finnley O'Brien – Apprentice Stage Manager

CAST

Peter N. Bailey – Bert

Ryan Hollyman – Clay / Sam / Le Pousselet Bartender

Lawrence Libor – Musician

Durae McFarlane – Kenneth

Khadijah Roberts-Abdullah – Corrina

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The Grand Theatre is located on the traditional territories of the Original storytellers and caretakers of this land and the Nations, both settler and Indigenous, who continue to uphold the various treaties of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, and Lunaapéewak. We value the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations, and all of the Original Peoples of Turtle Island (colonially known as North America), and acknowledge the traditional lands upon which we live, work, share, and tell stories together.

ABOUT THE GRAND THEATRE – WORLD CURIOUS. LONDON MADE.

The Grand Theatre is known for **world-class theatre created and built in London, Ontario**. As **southwestern Ontario's premier producing theatre** and **one of the most beautiful theatre spaces in Canada**, the company has deep ties to the community and to its artists, artisans, and technicians.

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As a vibrant cultural hub and not-for-profit professional theatre, the Grand serves to gather, inspire, and entertain audiences in London and beyond. At our home in downtown London, we create productions on two stages: the Spriet Stage (839 seats) and the Auburn Developments Stage (144 seats). The Grand season of theatrical offerings runs from September to May, and we collaborate with companies and artists across the country through our co-productions that see London-made artistic and creative work travel to audiences nation-wide. Through our successful **New Play Development Program**, the Grand is committed to developing and premiering new, original works and supporting the growth and reach of theatre writers and creators. Our recently renovated venue offers a contemporary and welcoming environment that is also home to several successful music series', community arts rentals, and cultural and special events.

A cornerstone of the organization is our place as a teaching theatre, exemplified in our many mentorship programs and highlighted in our annual **Grand Theatre High School Project**. As the first program of its kind in the country and currently in its twenty-seventh year, the High School Project involves as many as one hundred high school participants annually from schools across the region. These students participate at no cost and take on roles both on stage and off, in a fully realized mainstage production under the direction of a professional creative team.

For more information, visit: grandtheatre.com.

MEDIA CALL

When: Tuesday, January 20 at 1:00 p.m. (Cameras, please arrive at 12:30 p.m. to set up)

Where: Spriet Stage, Grand Theatre, 471 Richmond Street, London, Ontario

What: Photo, video, and interview opportunities for media.

PHOTOGRAPHY

<https://thegrandtheatre.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/MarketingDept/lqDUVh4oCL-ySakHz0X33xZfAUgR9AAKe1n6tNJIYeHjsVc?e=d5melt>

When available, production photography will be added to the linked folder above. If you are working towards a deadline and are including photography, please contact Melissa Mae Shipley for the best and fastest options available

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at any moment. Melissa can be reached via email at mshipley@grandtheatre.com or by phone at 519.672.9030 x266.

FOR MORE INFORMATION & ALL MEDIA INQUIRIES

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