



2018 AMNA Nomination

Prepared By: Owner

Professional Artist Award

Nominee

Chelsea Restall

Artist Type

Performing Arts

Organization/Business

Torchlight Theatre



Photo

Nomination

Chelsea is a multi- talented, community minded artist. As the founder and artistic director for Airdrie's Torchlight Theatre, Chelsea provides an outlet for aspiring actors and creates an inviting atmosphere for patrons to the shows. Chelsea has been acting professional for almost 10 years and has many credits to her name. She also directs, acts, manages and handles marketing for the theatre and their youth acting program, Spark. Chelsea works hand in hand with Airdrie Victory Church and generates an abundance of community engagement. She really brings a new feel to the cultural scene here.

Questions

Start

How long have you been a professional artist and what prompted you to enter the field that you are in?

I've been pursuing the career of a performing artist for over 12 years, but I an actor since grade school. At a young age, the desire was to merely entertain people, but as I grew up, I discovered that there is an incredible power in the performing arts. It connects with people in ways that sometime gets overlooked. Through theatre you're able to have difficult conversations and bring ideas out that people might never have thought of. At the same time you can offer people hope or an escape. If a play or a movie is done well, then for the duration of the show, people can get lost in this fantasy world of mystery or comedy or romance and, just for a moment, can take a break from the struggles and trials they are facing in their life. It is a powerful thing when people come up to you and say that your performance helped them or the story you told touched them. I think that is what I love so much about theatre and film, and that is what drives me as an artist. How can I help you? Even if it's just making you laugh.



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Enhancement

How do you feel (or can you give examples) of how you've personally enhanced arts & culture in your chosen field and within our city?

In 2015 I founded Torchlight Theatre Society in Airdrie in the hopes of bringing more quality arts opportunities for local artists and great entertainment for the people of Airdrie and surrounding areas. My desire was also to help put Airdrie on the map as an arts and culture hub. We've been able to bring in award winning talent to help further that goal, like the 2015 Betty Award Winning Director Valerie Planche. Not only do we do productions for a growing audience but I also started the SPARK Youth Program with Kim Cheel to give more opportunities to emerging youth performers, opportunities I didn't have when I was their age. I believe that Torchlight Theatre will continue to grow and expand and become known as an artistic landmark for the city of Airdrie and I am excited to see where it goes in the future and who we can impact with what we do.

Sphere of Influence

Do you currently belong to any programs, groups or organizations that encourage the growth and development of arts & culture? Ex) Through mentoring, volunteering, critiquing, etc... If so please list them and give a brief description of what they do.

I am a part of Theatre Alberta and the Calgary Alliance of Community Theatre. We are all working towards the betterment of arts in our perspective communities. But the biggest sphere of influence I have would be with the SPARK Youth Program and the artists and audience members that come through the doors at Torchlight Theatre. The SPARK Program offers training through weekly classes, camps, workshops and production opportunities for kids between the ages of 7-17. Torchlight Theatre's main stage program is open to anyone to auditions for. Many of our technical crew is volunteer based and we are always looking for more people to bring on board!

Magnum Opus

To date, what has been your greatest achievement in your field and why do you feel it is the magnum opus of your body of work?

To date my greatest achievement is the Launch of Torchlight Theatre. I think I reached a maturity in my artistic journey when I decided to start Torchlight. My ideas were no longer self-serving. I started to think about other artists and the art we produced as a whole. I saw an opportunity for betterment of more than myself and I jumped in. Often, Torchlight takes me away from what I love, which is performing, but it is still my greatest artistic achievement to date. But I won't stop there.



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Professional Development

Do you have any plans to develop your skills further or set challenges for yourself? If so can you please tell us what your future plans are and how they will affect your portfolio.

I'm registered to take further training in the area of Artistic Directing; it's definitely something I just figure out along the way and I believe that it would be a huge benefit for me to come under some mentor ship in this area. My desire is to take Torchlight Theatre to a professional level and continue to bring quality, top notch entertainment to Airdrie. I also am working on film projects and would like to further branch out into that area of production. As an artist, you are constantly taking workshop and classes from the professionals to learn all you can. You never stop learning.

Additional Links

<http://www.torchlighttheatre.ca/>