Billy Bishop tackles the stage after owning the sky

**theatre preview**

**Billy Bishop Goes to War**
Directed by Justin D. Sandford
Written by John Gray and Eric Peterson
Starring John Ulyatt and Ryan Sgard
Runs September 18 to October 13 at 7:30 p.m. and Thursday matinees at 2:30 p.m.
Cladwell Marliac Theatre
9092 Blackbyrd Ave.
$34.70+$9.35 for students at cladwelltheatre.com

**JSFB REEL**
Managing Editor

There are a surprising number of monikers attached to Billy Bishop Canada’s first war hero, flying ace, amazing storyteller, and national icon. But why? What would the Owens Moniker want? Is this the name being appropriated to sing about? What if Ulyatt, who will play Bishop in the信贷的 performance of Billy Bishop Goes to War, there’s a bigger concern at work here. While Bishop deserves the respect usually afforded to the First World War pilot, he wants to make sure he’s rehashed in John Gray and Eric Peterson, the writers of the original play.

"[Gray and Peterson] performed it for so many years. I think the play and characters are more associated with Eric Peterson," than with Bishop, Ulyatt explains. "I think the pressure lies in that — trying to stand on the shoulders of giants."

The play has been touring on and off for more than 10 years, from Vancouver where it originally premiered, to places like London and Los Angeles, as well as across numerous stages. Written in the 70s, when Canadian audiences were clamouring to hear more about their own country told, the show was only a modest success outside of the great white north, playing for only a few months, both on and off Broadway. But now the Citadel is bringing it back in Alberta, with Ulyatt in the starring role.

"Playing the character of Billy Bishop is kind of an open book. Very few people know the guy, especially in western Canada," Ulyatt says.

In order to step into the role, Ulyatt researched Bishop’s life thoroughly. The pilot’s son Arden published a book in the 80s, The Courage of the Early Morning, which detailed his father’s youth spent in Ontario all the way through to the battles in France that made him famous. Ulyatt says that he referenced the book, as well as a documentary made about Arthur that was filmed by Bishop’s grand-daughter, to prepare for taking on the historic role.

Bishop shot down 77 planes in the First World War and won seven different awards, including the Victoria Cross, the Canadian military’s highest honor. He joined the Royal Military College in 1911, and moved to the Mississippi Horse Cavalry regiment when she was broke out, before transferring to the Royal Flying Corps after watching an aircraft returning, remembering that at least. "It’s clean up there!" By March 1917, he was shooting down German aircraft in France on life in becoming arguably this country’s most famous pilot. Bishop would become an honorary Air Marshall in the three-decked, minited Royal Canadian Air Force and now has two airports named after him to commemorate his efforts for the most his heroes in the First World War: Billy Bishop goes to War. "It’s a lot of black humour, according to the world."

"When I was growing up, both my parents were English. It’s hard to put into words, but amidst the horror of everything, there were some funny things happening," Ulyatt explains. "There was a squadron that Billy Bishop joined, [The No. 2 Training Squadron]. There’s an interesting thing that happens with soldiers is in situations like that [...] it’s going to be a whole bunch of fun or [high for your country], but in the midst of it, you get back and you’re so goddamn hateful to be alter [you get] visited with your friends.

"They were very resourceful at finding humor," Ulyatt adds.

While parts of the show are set to music, Ulyatt is quick to dismiss the notion that it’s a musical at all. "It’s a play with music — a major difference he thinks."

"It’s not a musical in a sense that the songs focus the plot. They don’t do that, they illustrate certain feelings, feelings like loss, joy, and regret come into play, but there was also camaraderie and a sense of belonging among soldiers. While Bishop may have been a pilot, flying high above the main trenches of Europe, he was still among a group of friends all facing similar hardships in the early days of air warfare.

"Using airplanes for battles was unknown to anybody back then, I think there’s a certain gallows humour about it. Billy Bishop describes it as a like with a motor on it. They were made out of canvas and balsa wood."

Soulful singer Justin Nozuka heartbroken over indefinite world

**music preview**

**Justin Nozuka**
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, September 16 at 6 p.m
Staircase Room (300-102 16th St E)
$10 at Blackfalds and Viltermat

**JUSTIN DREMBER**
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Speaking with new-song-songwriter Justin Nozuka reminds me of the words of the Dalai Lama. That may seem like an exaggeration, but it’s a reflection of his back-homework and seemingly endless words of wisdom. It reminds me to find that an increasingly manufactured society, the easy-going performer and humble stage presence is not merely an act. He appears almost reluctant to talk too much about himself, however, there are certain topics that get his words flowing. His passion for his craft is obvious, yet even in his most innovative, his voice still remains timeless.

Since the release of his first album Molly in 2003, Nozuka has graduated from high school and scored extensively. A few months ago, he released his sophomore album, You I Want Land and Sea, with the backing of a full band this time.

"It felt like music, I am trying to express something meaningful. Definitely I think that there’s a big difference between my first and second albums, but it’s still my life and it comes through in the music that I play," he says.

"I’ve been touring for a few years, experiencing new places and relationships with my hand and the people I am touring with. That’s all part of the fun. I think that’s all about everything is vibration [...] My life is changed by those vibrations, the music comes out of them."

"It’s a secret that the vibrations come from his family. You can almost hear the entire family on his face as he talks about getting together and feeling the connection after the inevitable separation that comes with touring.

"My whole family, we feed each other deeply [...] It’s so wonderful to go home and hear everyone’s new songs, it really pulls me out of all the bullshit that I deal with in my mind, from whatever reality the world puts me in."

"I’m going to be playing a song that comes from my brother’s soul, it just hits me hard." When he does admit that he has dark days, he is able to find some light in his life. Nozuka borrows his modesty when talking about his philanthropic work. Recently featured on the Young Artists for Peace and Justice’s "World Stage," he finds his music is important when it helps make a positive mark on the world.

"It’s about finding peace inside of myself. Finding love inside of myself. Reconnecting with that love of life and not getting caught up in illusion," he says. "Of course, I look around and I’m heartbroken. If I imagine myself as a child at a place of war — if I put myself in that situation and really just think about it — I’m shocked by that reality."

"It’s so wonderful to go home and hear everyone’s new songs. It really pulls me out of all of the bullshit that I deal with in my mind, from whatever reality the world puts me in."

"It’s a nightmare, you know," he continues. "The system is very cruel, very corrupt, and very dirty. I realize that and see it and I want to do something. The most exciting thing is that the only way that I can really do something is to do something for myself. As greedy as that sounds, I realize that’s the reality of it. If I’m for peace then I have to be on the peace side. I have to ‘be the change’. I’ve been realizing that the only way that I can do something is to become the human of love."

Whatever it is, he’s got a voice and emanating the Dalai Lama’s speech, Justin Nozuka is spreading his message of love and compassion to anyone who will listen. Of course, the Dalai Lama doesn’t use a guitar.