

FROM: CHILLIWACK ARTS &
CULTURAL CENTRE SOCIETY
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High Resolution photo: [Cancer195.jpg](#)
Photo Description: Bruce Horak as CANCER
Photo Credit: N/A

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HEALING WITH HUMOUR

CHILLIWACK, BC – A narcissistic show boater, clad in gold lame, desperately wanting to impress, seduce and unwittingly destroy us... *This is CANCER*. CANCER is a deluded, egotistical jerk who goes on his own journey of denial, anger, bargaining and acceptance only to discover that the whole world hates him in this award-winning, one-man, satirical show **March 19 at 7:30pm**. The Chilliwack Arts & Cultural Centre Society presents cancer-survivor **Bruce Horak** who portrays CANCER giving the cabaret performance of a lifetime in a theatre show that is funny, uplifting, charming, and powerful.

Horak survived cancer as a child, and having lost his father to it almost six years ago, he is well aware of the stigma the word carries in our culture. "It's always been a part

of my life; there's always been this demon hanging over my head of this fear of cancer, and certainly in my family because it's so predominant," he says. "There are a couple of phrases or mantras that were used during the creation of the piece. One of which was to go into the dark places with the flashlight. And the flashlight that we're using is the light of humour. We've found that for a lot of people that can be very difficult, and make them rather uncomfortable, but the flipside of that is there's a great deal of release" says Horak.

Walking an emotional razor's edge, Horak as the character Cancer boasts irreverently about his most recent victims and then seems hurt to discover that we all despise him. It's hilarious, but he doesn't stop at grim humour: Cancer is also "a collector of moments", and these include some of Horak's own experiences with the disease. This is a rare show that will take you in many emotional directions in the space of an hour. "I'm not up onstage as Bruce Horak telling my story. I'm actually up there as an effigy. So people are able to vent whatever it is they are feeling about cancer" says Horak.

The creepy personification of humankind's most feared disease is not something anyone ever expects to meet, much less find him to be a weirdly charming cabaret performer. With missing teeth, dark rings around his eyes and lesions on his face, Horak becomes the dreaded Cancer. He loves people and wants to eat us up he loves us so much, and then we die. People love him back... or so he thinks. ***This is CANCER*** is an opportunity for the audience to see the world through cancer's eyes. It's completely bizarre, and one of the most rewarding and difficult pieces Horak says he's ever done.

Performing as one of humanity's most feared diseases, ***This Is Cancer*** definitely runs the risk of being taken as an attempt at tasteless shock value. Horak insists otherwise, there is a message of love and hope that comes through in this show. Despite what the gut reaction to the show's title may be, audiences over the past four years have agreed with him. Touring ***This Is Cancer*** to mass acclaim across multiple fringes, with an increasing demand for performances, the appeal might be the embodiment of cancer and the interaction with the audience that takes place. It lends the people in the room a chance to settle their feelings on cancer, to perhaps even laugh at it, robbing the disease of its unspoken power.

A survivor himself, and Canada's only legally blind actor (having lost 90% of his vision to the disease), Horak has created the human embodiment of cancer in ***This is CANCER*** to provide people with a venue to humorously "face" the disease. With superb comedic timing and stellar dance moves, he has produced a show that is really more about lightly examining life's lumps and bumps than it is about getting too serious. Making fun of Cancer by turning him into a self-centred, deluded character, he adds some toxic humour, shiny clothes, odd lumps and creates a smoking, singing, dancing, deluded narcissistic egomaniac of a character with a suave accent. "Scared of Cancer? See it. Not scared of Cancer? See it anyway" states the Victoria Times-Columnist.

Directed by award-winning director/performer Rebecca Northan (Canadian Comedy Award - Best Sketch Group, Gemini and Dora Award nominee, CTV's "Alice, I Think") ***This is CANCER*** will leave you wondering how you could fall in love with such a

deadly performer. **Bruce Horak**, the creator/performer of "Cancer", is an actor, writer, director and musician and is the recipient of the Betty Mitchell Award for Outstanding Performance in a Musical or Comedy for his work in ***This Is CANCER***. He has worked all across Canada with Vancouver's **Monster Theatre** and is a Fringe Festival favourite. The show came out his own personal experiences facing his fear of living with a disease that has been part of his life for as long as he can remember. As a baby of 18 months, he was diagnosed with bilateral retinoblastoma - cancer of the retina - which robbed him of most of his vision. "For me, personally, when I was dealing with my father's cancer, it was a call to live, to embrace the time you have left," says Horak. That's the underlying theme of the show: it's asking you to live - and have a laugh.

Nominated for Outstanding Performance of a Musical or Comedy, and WINNER of Outstanding Actor in a Musical or Comedy, CANCER is an emotionally charged show that should be seen. "The wildest, most thrilling ride you'll take this season" states The Calgary Herald.

This is Cancer is generously sponsored by Simpson Notaries, The Chilliwack Progress, Department of Canadian Heritage and the British Columbia Arts Council.

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Additional Information

[*This is Cancer website*](#)

<http://www.chilliwackculturalcentre.ca/event/this-is-cancer/>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=seblVBiCj2w>

For additional information and to arrange interviews, contact:

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Contact the Centre Box Office in person

(Mon-Fri, 9:30am-9:00pm, Sat & Sun, 9:30am-5:00pm)

by phone at 604.391.SHOW(7469)

or online at www.chilliwackculturalcentre.ca.

Chilliwack Cultural Centre

Since opening the Chilliwack Cultural Centre September 2010, over 44,800 tickets have been sold through the Centre Box Office, with a value exceeding \$750,000. The Chilliwack Arts & Cultural Centre Society, whom oversees operation on behalf of the City of Chilliwack, are pleased to be on target for their initial projected budget and overall use projections for the Centre.

Chilliwack Cultural Centre highlights:

- 597 seat performance theatre
- 168 seat recital hall / rehearsal space / dance studio / meeting space
- Chilliwack Art gallery (22-foot high display area)
- 21 music instructional rooms
- Arts and crafts studios
- Storage and Archival Resource Room

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