



## **DAPHNE'S INFERNO** The only way out... is through.

For immediate release, July 2, 2021

Toronto, ON - Award winning playwright Barb Scheffler, who brought you "Pirates Don't Babysit!", is back at the Fringe with something completely different. Her new play "Daphne's Inferno" follows the journey of Daphne, a woman who accidentally stumbles into the portal to Hell. Unable to leave until she makes it through all the circles of the Underworld, she is forced to relive the worst moments of her life as she struggles to find redemption.

This deeply personal play was inspired by experiences in the playwright's own life. Although the idea for "Daphne's Inferno" was rattling around in Barb's head for years, several things prompted her to finally write it: the #metoo movement, the long hours of (obsessive) self-reflection brought on by the pandemic, and finally the Toronto Fringe New Play Contest which gave her a deadline for the first draft. After getting a slot in the Fringe, a flurry of rewrites ensued! Generous feedback from her friends, her husband Michael Harms, and the cast helped to shape the final script.

Originally written as a stage play, "Daphne's Inferno" was re-envisioned as a Zoom production. When the Fringe required a pre-recorded project, the vision had to change again. Dealing with an extremely short timeline, and a pandemic shut down, proved to be a challenge in even more ways than expected. Props and costumes were almost impossible to source. Places like Value Village, the Fringers best bet for costumes on a budget, were closed. The space secured for the filming was small, and to keep social distancing the majority of the scenes were shot one actor at a time. Having it pre-recorded, however, afforded the opportunity to get creative in the editing. Making the end product not just a recorded stage play, but not really a film either. It is something new! A Digital Theatre Experience.

Barb Scheffler plays the title role of Daphne. A current member of the Canadian touring company of "Menopause the Musical", Barb sets aside her comedy chops to dive deep into Daphne's tortured psyche. Veteran performer, Jillian Rees-Brown, known for playing Grandma in the Mirvish production of "Billy Elliot" plays Daphne's sympathetic guide Virginia. M. John Kennedy plays all the male characters that populate Daphne's life. Erin Eldershaw chews the scenery as the diabolical Lucy. And finally, veteran director Michael Harms brings the story to life.

A compelling story of self-doubt, despair, and ultimately – forgiveness, "Daphne's Inferno" is worth the journey. Remember, the only way out... is through.

### **Bad Seed Productions**

in association with **The Toronto Fringe Festival** presents

*Daphne's Inferno*

written by Barb Scheffler

directed by Michael Harms

starring Barb Scheffler, M. John Kennedy, Jillian Rees-Brown and Erin Eldershaw

digital editing by Barb Scheffler and Michael Harms

**Opens July 21 – 31, 2021**

Online at <https://fringetoronto.com/digital-fringe/show/daphnes-inferno>

**Tickets and Memberships:** patrons can purchase online at [fringetoronto.com](https://fringetoronto.com)

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