

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Winnipeg Fringe Festival to Host the World Premiere of Original Musical "Just Friends" at John Hirsch Mainstage

**June 25, 2024** – Lavender Theatrical Productions, in collaboration with Recycled Talent Productions, is thrilled to announce the world premiere of the original musical *Just Friends*, with music and lyrics by Amber Landry and book by Jill Kooymans. The musical will be staged as a part of the 2024 Winnipeg Fringe Festival at the prestigious John Hirsch Mainstage, with performances starting on Thursday, July 18th.

*Just Friends* tells the heartwarming and compelling story of Taylor and Lainey, lifelong friends who have spent years communicating solely through letters after moving away from their hometown. When Taylor abruptly ends her relationship with her brooding boyfriend and Lainey leaves her toxic fiancée, fate brings them both back to town. Reunited, they realize that much has changed, including their feelings for each other. With a vibrant score ranging from catchy pop hooks to soul-stirring ballads, *Just Friends* delves into the complexities of queer love, lingering emotions for exes, and the profound bond between best friends.

The creation of *Just Friends* marks a significant milestone for both Amber Landry and Jill Kooymans. Both artists had taken a hiatus from theatre, disheartened by the scarcity of authentic queer narratives. Their paths crossed serendipitously in February when Jill responded to one of Amber's TikTok videos, sparking a collaboration that has culminated in this powerful new musical. This project is their first collaboration, and their partnership has brought a fresh and genuine perspective to the stage.

Lavender Theatrical Productions is honoured to produce *Just Friends* and to work alongside Recycled Talent Productions, who are co-producing the show. Jill Kooymans has previously collaborated with Recycled Talent Productions, having met Tara (playing Lainey) and Phil (playing Greg) while assisting with the set design for their summer production of *Footloose*.

### Performance Schedule:

- Thursday, July 18 at 4:45 PM
- Saturday, July 20 at 7:45 PM
- Tuesday, July 23 at 6:30 PM
- Thursday, July 25 at 2:45 PM
- Friday, July 26 at 4:15 PM
- Saturday, July 27 at 2:45 PM
- Sunday, July 28 at 8:30 PM

All performances will be held at Venue #1, the John Hirsch Mainstage. Tickets are available now and can be purchased through the Winnipeg Fringe Festival website or at the theatre box office.

Join us for an unforgettable journey that celebrates love, friendship, and the courage to embrace one's true self. For more information, please visit [www.lavendertheatrical.com](http://www.lavendertheatrical.com) or contact us at [jillian.charlotte.kooymans@gmail.com](mailto:jillian.charlotte.kooymans@gmail.com).

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Performance videos:

<https://www.lavendertheatrical.com/news>