

## New York playwright comes home to Virginia City



Elise Milner, a producer, actress, and playwright, takes in the view from the box seats in Piper's Opera House. She'll be showing "An Awkward Inheritance" July 15-17 in Virginia City. Photo by Faith Evans.

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Northern Nevada native Elise Milner is coming home to Virginia City, and she's bringing a party with her. The playwright, producer, and actress is showing the off-Broadway play "An Awkward Inheritance" at Piper's Opera House in July.

The story follows the three children of deceased Mabel Kane, who knows how to put the "fun" in "funeral." With a disco party roaring and her ashes in a gumball machine, Mabel posthumously scandalizes her kids, who have traveled all the way home to the fictional Roundhouse, Nevada to attend her memorial and settle her estate.

Throughout their adventure, Mabel's adult children learn more about the community that their mother built and discover the awkward inheritance awaiting them.

"At first conception, (An Awkward Inheritance) has always deserved to be in Northern Nevada. That's where everyone is going to get the jokes," Milner said.

It will be the first time she's shown a play in Nevada – and one of the few times she has performed in one of her own productions. She'll play Marigold Goldsmith, Mabel's daughter who works as a therapist in Incline Village.

"Let's just say she's a little cold and resentful that her mother built this life in Roundhouse. ... Now she has to come home and deal with what she left behind," Milner said. "This character was born from my journey and peace and the full-circle journey I took as a kid (to adulthood)."

Milner vividly remembers her childhood in Gold Hill. Traveling up the mountain to Virginia City was a day out on the town for her and her best friend, Suzanne Lynn, who is serving as her assistant director and costar in the show.

At 13 years old, "We used to go up town and ask every shop owner if we could sweep their sidewalk for 50 cents ... so we could go to the shooting gallery or grab a candy apple and just hang out for the day," Milner said.

She even got her performing start as a sixth grader in Virginia City when she played the witch in "Christmas in Oz." The play showed at First Presbyterian Church just down the hill from Piper's Opera House.

Though she attended school in Virginia City and Carson City, she graduated her senior year in Florida. In 1999, she traveled to New York.

"(That) same year I met my husband. Same year I started the company with literally 22 cents in the bank. I didn't have anything to my name, and I just rolled with it," Milner said.

She opened her first show in 2002, and has been producing full-time ever since, with 15 shows to her name.

For her, showing "An Awkward Inheritance" in Virginia City is the perfect way to come back strong from the pandemic and her two-year hiatus from theater.

"This is (to) pay homage to my hometown. They raised me, and I am the person that I am and the writer that I am because I was raised here with this community," she said.

"An Awkward Inheritance" will run July 15-17 at Piper's Opera House in Virginia City. Tickets are \$30. For information, visit [www.HCPTickets.com](http://www.HCPTickets.com).