



Newsletter

Fall 2014



Greetings from the Past President

Emma Dacquisto

We have reached the end of another great season at the Black Hole Theatre Company! I am so proud of the accomplishments of the company during the 2013-2014 season, and honored to have worked with so many talented people this year.

A huge thank you to the 2013-2014 executive council, who played a big part in making this year what it was. The council was made up of Daniel Tompkins, Meg Ferguson, Jonah Wilde, Daniel Grant, Mark Finnbogason, Brendan Noyes, Lauren Gowler, Connor Lavoie, Garret



Emma with her sidekicks
Dan Tompkins and Dan Grant

Rusnak, Laurie MacDonell, and of course, Bill Kerr, who oversaw and advised the council. Jonah, I extend to you a very special shoutout on behalf of everyone, for the outstanding work you did to keep everyone organized and on track. Acknowledgements to Bill as well for putting up with a very passionate, opinionated

council. He helped us to make good decisions for the company while also allowing us to maintain the special characteristic of the BHTC, that it is a student run council. This kind of structure encourages a feeling of ownership amongst the students, that makes everyone work that much harder and feel that much more passionate about this company. This passion came through and made it an absolute delight to serve as President with this executive.

The creative endeavors of the company this year were both unique and challenging, and the risks taken definitely paid off. Alumnus Ivan Henwood started the year off with a thrilling production of *Lion in the Streets*, written by Canadian playwright Judith Thompson. Our entry into the Master Playwright Festival was *Aristocrats*

Continued on page 2...

Featured Alumnus

Ian Ross

Ian Ross, Black Hole Theatre alumnus is now a University instructor who has written numerous plays and considers himself very lucky to have had every one of them produced.

When asked about his time at the Black Hole, Ross said "This place was very influential for me."

Originally Ian came to the university to go into medicine. But after taking an Introduction to Theatre course with Chris Johnson and becoming involved with the Black Hole Theatre Ross realized he wanted to follow a much more creative path.



In Chris Johnson's class he was given the choice to write a short scene in place of a longer paper. When unable to choose a scene to present at the end of the year with his classmates, Johnson suggested the one he had written earlier that year. Ross was reluctant but when he asked his group they jumped at the opportunity. This scene, the first Ross wrote for theatre, created a long class discussion.

Wow I wrote something that got people talking! That's what hooked me.

His classmates did not focus on playwriting, most of them were more interested in acting or directing. This void, along with the great reaction from the class, inspired Ross to start writing plays.

If it weren't for Johnson, Ross believes he would have just drifted off and done whatever. But living an artistic life is very rich and he is happy to be making a living as a writer.

He wants people who are thinking about a career with any kind of creative work to see that it can be done and try to achieve it because he finds it to be very rewarding.

Continued on page 3...

13/14 Season

The Black Hole Theatre's 2013-2014 season was a super fun time! We had an erotic start to the year with *The Lover* by Harold Pinter directed by Caitlin Belton. Mark Finnbogason frightened the love right out of *Love and How to Cure It* by Thornton Wilder, directed by Daniel J. Tompkins. Our first mainstage was *Lion in the Streets* by Judith Thompson. Ivan Henwood directed this ensemble piece that explored the drab mediocrities and dark secrets of modern suburbia, but don't worry no lions were harmed in the making of the production. Garrett Rusnak's set design put us back into the round, really making the audience part of the story.



Gislena Patterson discovering she's a ghost while Tasha Roth, Erica Hoiss, and Steve Csincsca watch during *Lion in the Streets*.

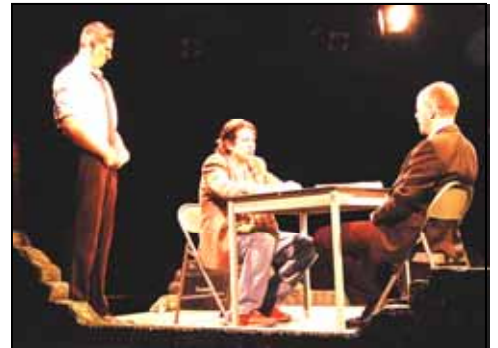
Continuing with the raunchiness, Nick Petuhoff and Jayse Meyer directed the fast paced *Red Cross* by Sam Shepard. Our second mainstage was *Aristocrats* by Brian Friel at the Gas Station Theatre. We almost got the entire O'Donnell family together dressed in their 70's era outfits designed by Karen Schellenberg. Ainsa Bellefeuille's lighting design managed to capture that rare thing, a sunny Irish day. Next the Black Hole was introduced to a neat Japanese style of theatre with *Kyogen*. What a great cultural lesson taught to us by professor/director Bill Lee!



Only Natalie Durand is excited during this scene from *Aristocrats*. Also featuring Logan Stephanson, Sydney Wiebe, Brennen Hakes, Jeysa Martinez-Pratt, and Brandon Vink.

Our final mainstage was the Winnipeg premier of *The Pillowman* by Martin McDonough. Kevin Ramberran bravely directed this horrific tale, on Jeremy Rampton's super creepy set, shocking the audience with the

combination of gore and comedy. If they weren't dead or bleeding the cast looked fabulous in Erin Thorleifson's costume design. We finished off the season with a double bill lunchhagg of two playwrights named David, *Timeflies* by Ives, directed by ME, and *School* by Mamet, directed by Marjorie Roden. The creepy teachers and the tragic mayfly love affair prepared us for the *Scene Night* host stylings of Dan Grant and Dan Tompkins.



It doesn't get much creepier than *The Pillowman*. Here, Corey Malone and Ivan Henwood interrogate Akalu Meekis (centre).

Thanks for a super duper season! Great work everyone!

**Laurie MacDonell,
Publicist 2013/2014**

Continued from page 1— President's Message

by Brian Friel, directed by Bill Kerr, a beautifully written take on Chekhov's *Three Sisters*. Finally we finished off the year with a disturbing yet comedic play by Martin McDonough, *The Pillowman*, directed by master's student and recent grad Kevin Ramberran. It was a season of both laughter and darkness, and everyone involved in the shows, as well as the entire BHTC community, should be so proud.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Black Hole Theatre Company for everything that it has given me in the past three years. This company and the people involved have had a huge influence on who I am, both as an artist and a human being. I would not be where I am today without it, and I could not be more grateful or more proud to have been President this past year. Though I am no longer in Manitoba to enjoy it with everyone, I will forever brag about the talented people I've met and the amazing creative accomplishments of the BHTC.

To the new executive, best of luck for this year. You will get out of the experience what you put into it, so give it everything you have! To the cast and crew members of the productions this upcoming season, break a leg, I am sure you will continue to impress the Winnipeg theatre community.

2014/2015 Executive

President– Daniel Tompkins
Vice President– Daniel Grant
Treasurer– Laurie MacDonell
Secretary– Kat Petrash
Member at Large– Mark Finnbogason
Onstage Rep– Brendon Noyes
Backstage Rep– Ryan Bjornson
Publicist– Rebecca Gossel
Intro Reps:
A01 (Ross)- Tara Noel
A02 (Kerr)- Abbas Butt
A03 (Groome)- Evan Martin
Artistic Director- Bill Kerr

Continued from page 1—

Ian has taught Intro to Theatre courses at the University of Winnipeg for three years and is now pleased to be teaching Intro Theatre and Playwriting at the University of Manitoba.

Ross has received many awards for writing including the Governor General Award and the McNally Most Promising Writer Award.

Ross's newest play, *Fabric of the Sky* opened November 26th with Urban Indigenous Theatre Company.

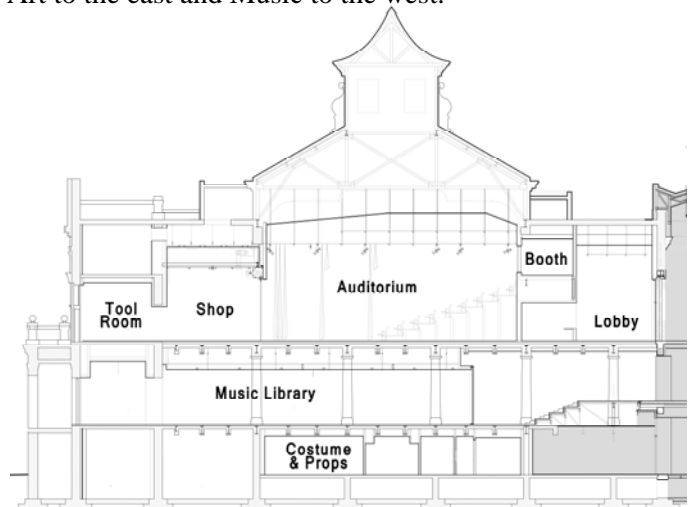
He hopes to keep writing and is now working on a play to be produced in the new Conklin Theatre in March of 2016 with the Black Hole Theatre.

T Minus 7 Months and Counting...

That's how much time the project managers are saying until we get keys to our new performance space: The Conklin Theatre. It will still be over a year until we officially open for public performances but we get closer everyday to the new reality for the Theatre Program and the Black Hole Theatre.

The Conklin will primarily be an end-stage theatre with retractable seats which will allow for black box staging possibilities. Amenities will include a real green room next to the stage, bathrooms and showers in the dressing rooms, a booth you can see out of, a lighting grid you can't hit when you swing a dead cat, a carpentry shop that can be used any time of day, a wardrobe facility with a washer/dryer right in the room, and a props room with a vent hood. There may even be windows in the offices!

All of this fits neatly in Centre Block of the old Tache Residence now named the Tache Arts Complex with Fine Art to the east and Music to the west.



Contact Information

Box Office: 204-474-6880
 Production Office: 204-474-7655
 Production Manager: Karen Schellenberg: 204-474-9474
 Technical Director: Shane Stewart: 204-474-8087
 Office Assistant Melanie Matte: 204-474-9581
 Teaching Assistant: Kevin Ramberran
 Margaret Groome: 204-474-9539
 Chris Johnson: 204-474-9758
 Bill Kerr: 204-474-8819
 Bob Smith: 204-474-9605
 Or e-mail us at: theatre@umanitoba.ca
 Visit us on the web at: BHTC.ca

Who was Conklin and why is the theatre named for him?

John J. Conklin (1868-1952) was a newspaper man with the Winnipeg Free Press who spent 51 years (1886-1937) working as a journalist (drama, music, & movie critic) and impresario. As an impresario, he brought many celebrities to Winnipeg including Mark Twain and Rudyard Kipling. He was also a national correspondent during the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 and a huge supporter of Victoria Beach and its development.

The family of John Conklin directed some of his estate to the University specifically to create a theatre. Our new performance space will be named in his honour.

http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/54/conklin_jj.shtml

Staff Doings

MARGARET GROOME

Margaret enjoyed her usual summer trip to London, England. Research in various libraries and archives was interspersed with seeing a lot of theatre and enjoying jazz, pubs and, best of all, jazz in pubs. Theatre highlights included a brilliant *Titus Andronicus*, directed by Lucy Bailey, *King Lear* at the National Theatre of Great Britain, O'Casey's *The Silver Tassie*, and several sparkling comedies, including Coward's *Relative Values*, an innovative *Importance of Being Earnest* and *Jeeves and Wooster*. Margaret especially enjoyed the superb performances in *Handbagged*, a political satire concerning the fraught relationship between the Queen and Margaret Thatcher.

CHRIS JOHNSON

In January, Chris Johnson returns from a six months study leave. He used the time to write, and to direct: he was the director of the Fringe production of Megan Andres' new play, ...*only just*, and this fall, he co-directed the BHT production of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* with Bill Kerr. Chris looks forward to two years working in the new Conklin Theatre in the Tache Arts Project complex, after which he plans to retire, from teaching if not from making theatre or writing books.

BILL KERR

Bill has just finished directing *Titus Andronicus* with Chris Johnson. He is also dramaturging several plays. He cannot believe that he now has a sixteen year old daughter.

KEVIN RAMBERRAN

Kevin just wrapped up some work with *Titus Andronicus* and is trying his hardest to pound out a new play for his

thesis. In October, Kevin released his second hip-hop album under the alias 'KayR.' Kevin's production company *The 28th Minute* will be producing Stephen Belber's *Tape* for the 2015 Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival in which Kevin will be acting.

KAREN SCHELLENBERG

Karen has settled into the big office in the basement and finally has enough room to grow plants. With Elly in grade two and Jamie starting Kindergarten this fall, life is very busy.

ROBERT SMITH

Bob has a sabbatical coming up and he can hardly contain his excitement. Plans include an extended trip to Europe for research. He also spends his time fretting about his grandchildren (like any good grandpa.) Expect to see his coastal tan when he returns in the spring.

SHANE STEWART

Shane has spent the past 3 months enjoying the excitement of taking on the role of TD at the Black Hole Theatre Company. After 14 seasons as the scenic carpenter at Prairie Theatre Exchange the wide variety of challenges and opportunities at BHTC has really got Shane's blood (wait until you see Titus) going! With lots to look forward to during the 2014/15 Season, including designing *Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolfe*, (does anyone have a vintage bar/stereo unit they would like to loan us?) Shane is thrilled to be working with and learning from his colleagues and the amazing students at U of M.

New Staff

There has been a bit of fluctuation within the staff of the theatre program lately. After over 20 years with Marilyn and Dennis running the show, we've been suffering some growing pains but things appear to be settling down.

One of the biggest changes has been to break Dennis's job down into manageable parts. To that end, the theatre program now has a Production Manager and a Technical Director; two jobs that are entwined but not the same. Karen has refashioned herself as the Production Manager and Shane Stewart has been swiped from Prairie Theatre Exchange to a life in academia as our Technical Director.

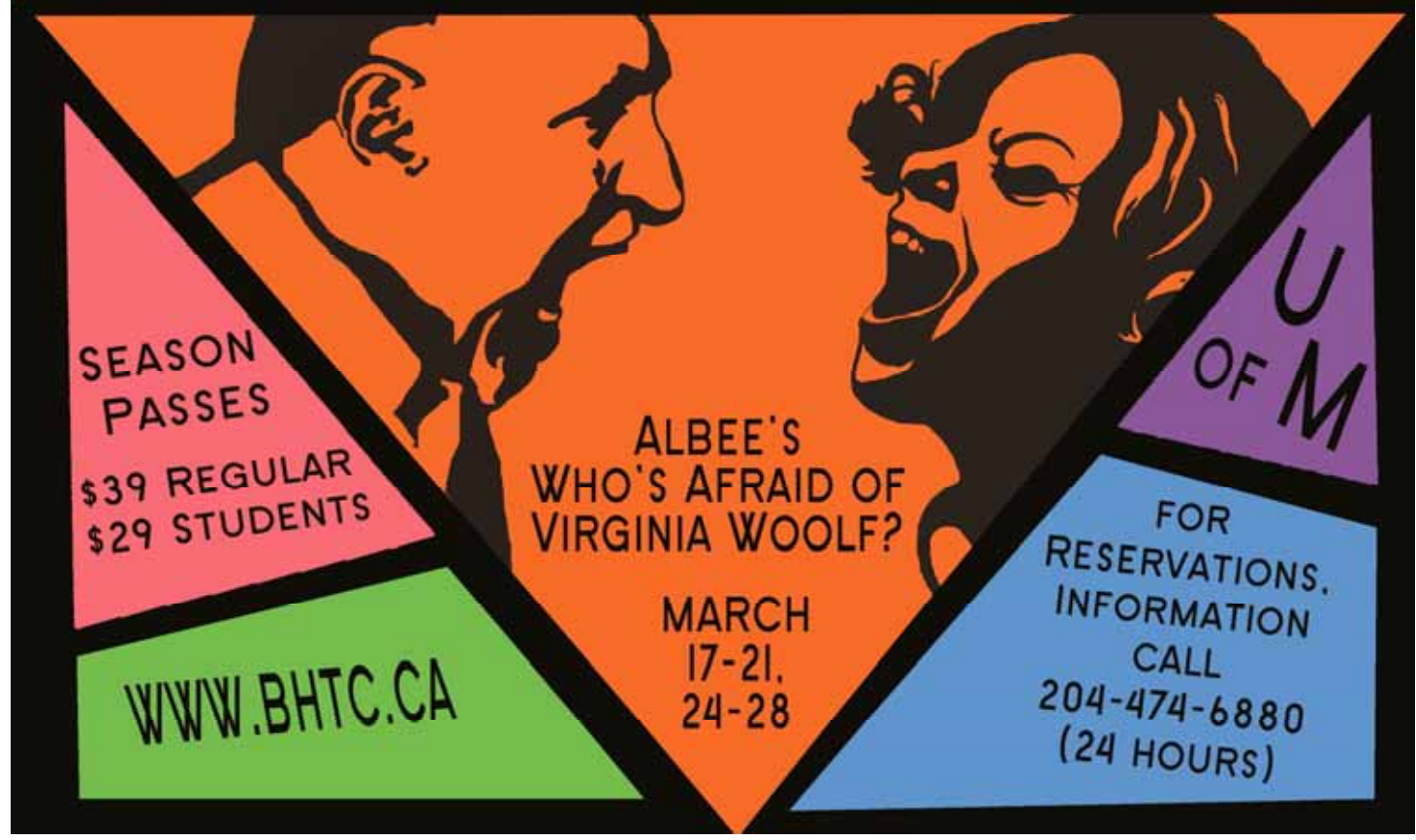
The Film & Theatre office job, once ably done by Marilyn and her assistant (all while running the whole Classics department) has turned into a part time position focused just on Film & Theatre. Jane Walker filled the position for a year but was lured away to a full time job elsewhere. We miss her but are happy to add to our family Melanie Matté. Melanie comes from the Faculty of Medicine. Look for her to start handing out keys while running the office in December!



THE
BLACK
HOLE
THEATRE
2014-15
SEASON

SHAKESPEARE'S
TITUS
ANDRONICUS
NOVEMBER
18-22,
25-29

COWARD'S
HAY
FEVER
JANUARY
23-25,
27-31



SEASON
PASSES
\$39 REGULAR
\$29 STUDENTS

ALBEE'S
WHO'S AFRAID OF
VIRGINIA WOOLF?

MARCH
17-21,
24-28

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OF M

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RESERVATIONS,
INFORMATION
CALL
204-474-6880
(24 HOURS)

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Scholarships and Bursaries

There are several scholarships available that must be applied for. These include the Hirsch Memorial Scholarship (for creative writing), the Cohen Prize, the Promethean Endurance Award, and the Charles Birkett Rittenhouse Memorial Scholarship.

A new bursary has also been created: the Sharon Greening Memorial Bursary. It is \$1000 and available for a full time advanced Film or Theatre major in third or fourth year. Apply for it through Aurora.

Promethean Endurance Award

The Executive did not receive any applications this year.

COME ON PEOPLE. IT'S FREE MONEY!!!!

2014 STUDENT, FACULTY, AND ALUMNI NEWS

MEGAN ANDRES is a storyteller at the Manitoba Museum and a drama teacher at the Crescentwood Community Centre. Scenes from her play, *only just...*, were given a public reading at one of the TPM Salons last season, and MEGAN performed in a Salon reading of Cairn Moore's play, *Habsolute Perfection*. MEGAN performed in the Tara Players production of *Uncle Vanya* for ChekhovFest 2014. She also performed in the reading of *Platonov* directed by MARGARET GROOME. She directed one of the entries in the MAP/Scirroco Manitoba High School Playwriting Contest at the Warehouse last spring. In March, she directed the Tara Players production of *The Frenzy of Queen Maeve*, and in October, she performed in MARGARET's production of Ibsen's *Ghosts*. MEGAN will be directing *The New Electric Ballroom* for the Tara Players this season. *

JOSEPH ARAGON's musical, *Bloodsuckers*, was produced at Sisler High School with LEITH CLARK directing. JOSEPH wrote one of the Short Shots, *Cross Words*, presented in the CAROL SHIELDS Festival of New Work at the Prairie Theatre Exchange in May. JOSEPH wrote the music for Manitoba Theatre for Young People's production of *Jabber* this fall. He is a member of the Playwrights Unit at PTE. *

GAIL ASPER has been awarded this year's Honorary Membership in Canadian Actors' Equity: GAIL and her foundation have for a long time been champions of the performing arts in Canada. GAIL performed in last season's "lawyer play", *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, at the RMTC Warehouse. Every year, members of the

WE'RE ON FACEBOOK!!!

We have created a Facebook group to help keep the Alumni of the Black Hole Theatre up to date on current Black Hole Theatre Events, and to help Alumni reunite.

Join the group "BHTC Alumni" on Facebook Today!!!

In Memoriam

Michael Gottli

1965-2014

MIKE was a comic force in the Black Hole in the late 1980s. I have vivid memories of him playing the title role in *Tartuffe*, crossing himself with a gigantic turkey drumstick while arguing with GARY JARVIS as Cleante, and grinning wickedly at the audience as ARI COHEN's Orgon (literally) kissed his ass. MIKE performed in two GUY MADDIN movies, *Tales from the Gimli Hospital* and *Archangel*. (Take a look – Mike's the funny big guy.) He also appeared in a number of TV shows, including *Kids in the Hall*. A gifted stand-up comedian, MIKE joined Yuk Yuk's comedy circuit after leaving university. In 1994, as Mike was driving to a gig in northwestern Ontario, his car hit a moose and Mike was seriously injured, his ability to move and speak severely impaired. Thereafter, he lived in care homes. Mike faced the hardships of his life with courage and humour: he will be remembered and missed.

Sharel McCulloch

1960-2014

SHAREL was a Theatre student and performed with the Black Hole in the 1980s. Perhaps her most memorable role was that of Chorus Leader in our production of *Oedipus Rex* – she had a big voice, and used it beautifully and intelligently. SHAREL was a gifted artist and photographer, and taught classes in these areas. She was KYLE MCCULLOCH's sister, and the mother of three children.

Manitoba Bar Association put on a show at the Warehouse as a fund-raiser to benefit the RMTC.

JOHN BARNARD's film, *The Sheepdogs Have At It*, was aired on Super Channel.

IAN BASTIN performed in an episode of *Pinkertons* (he plays a Shakespearean actor).

MIKE BELL co-wrote and performed in *The One?*, a short film screened at the CAROL SHIELDS Festival of New Works at PTE in May.

AINZA BELLEFEUILLE is working on the PTE lighting crew this season.

CAITLIN BELTON continues to participate in the Gas Station Arts Centre fundraiser *Girls! Girls! Girls!* along with other alumna KIM ZEGLINSKI, JESSICA BURLESON, SARAH CONSTIBLE, ANDREA VON WICHART, & BRENDA MCLEAN.

STEPHANIE BEYKO teaches drama at John Taylor Collegiate.

JESSICA BLAIKIE had a baby boy, OWEN. JESSICA is a guidance counsellor at Stanley Knowles school.

CHRISTY BOETTCHER started a permanent teaching job at St. Anne's Collegiate this fall.

SIMON BRACKEN performs in *Flush*, a web series. Last year, he performed in the Shakespeare in the Ruff production of *Richard III*.

HEATHER BRAUN teaches drama at Stonewall Collegiate.

DON CALLIS is the Executive Director of Manitoba Trade and Investment.

SEAN CARNEY teaches in the English department at McGill University.

TERRI CHERNIAK is an actor based in Winnipeg. She performed in the Warehouse production of *The Seagull* for ChekhovFest 2014.

JONAS CHERNICK plays the lead in the new CBC TV series, *The Best Laid Plans*. He's currently shooting a new film, *Borealis*, whose script he wrote and for which he plays the lead.

LARRY CLARK teaches technical theatre at the University of Alberta.

LEITH CLARK teaches drama at Sisler. He directed a production of JOSEPH ARAGON's *Bloodsuckers* there last winter. *

ARI COHEN was back in town last season to perform in the RMTc production of *Good People*. He also appears in the movie, *Maps to the Stars*, released this year.

SARAH CONSTIBLE performed in the Winnipeg Jewish Theatre's production of *Ivanov* for ChekhovFest 2014. *Eye Through the Window*, a play she co-wrote with ROSS MCMILLAN, was one of the play's presented as a staged reading as part of the CAROL SHIELDS Festival of New Works at PTE in May. This fall, she performed in the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre production of *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Jersey Lily*.

JONAH CORNE teaches film studies at the University of Manitoba.

ANDREW COYNE is the National Editor of *Maclean's* magazine, and appears as a political commentator on the *At Issue* panel with Peter Mansbridge on CBC TV.

EMMA DACQUISTO is in Los Angeles studying in the Film and TV program at the University of Southern California.

TRACY DAHL has been named one of Canada's 100 most powerful women by BMO. TRACY is a world renowned coloratura soprano. TRACY recently returned to the stage after taking time off to battle cancer. In December, she played Despina in *Così fan tutte* for the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto.

DECO DAWSON made the videos used in the RMTc production of *The Glass Menagerie* last season.

DAVE DEGROW has started studying in the doctoral program at the University of Toronto.

SEAN DIXON is a lawyer practicing in Winnipeg

NATHAN DUECK was in town in June for the McNally Robinson launch of his new book of poetry, *he'll*.

NATHAN works as a sessional instructor at a number of colleges and universities in Calgary.

PAUL DUNCAN came back to us last season to perform in *The Pillowman*. He's currently studying in the Faculty of Education.

PHILLIP DUNCAN teaches drama at Morden Collegiate.

NATHASHA DURAND performed in the reading of *Platonov* directed by

MARGARET GROOME for ChekhovFest 2014, and came back to us to play Claire in our production of Brian Friel's *Aristocrats* for the same festival. *

AUDREY DWYER was back in town last season to perform in the RMTc production of *Good People*.

CAROLINE EVANS teaches drama at Springfield Collegiate.

DARCY FEHR won one of the acting awards in this year's ACTRA Awards. He is currently performing in *Pinkertons*, the TV series being shot in Manitoba. DARCY appears in two movies released this year, *Black Rainbow* and *Heaven is for Real*. DARCY will come back to us this season to play George in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*.

KATHY FRANCE is busy teaching theatre, acting, and producing plays in Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

BARB GEHRING (MELNYCK) revived her show, *Girls Only*, in Denver last season. There was another production of the show in Houston last season, and yet another in Rochester, New York, this season. BARB also performed in "OFF BOOK – Actor's Nightmare or Improvisers' Dream?" at the Boulder Fringe Festival.

TRACY GEMMEL teaches English at Dawson College in Montreal.

REBECCA GIBSON's new play, *The Naked Woman*, was produced as part of this year's FemFest, the annual Winnipeg event presented by Sarasvati Theatre.

EMILY GINGERA teaches at James Anderson school in Langley, B.C.

MICHAEL GRAJEWSKI performs in the big McCafe TV commercial that's been getting a lot of air play lately. He also works as a production assistant on the Rick Mercer Report on CBC TV.

DANIELLE GREGOIRE lives in Seattle, and is very active in the stand-up scene there.

MARGARET GROOME enjoyed a very busy and productive year, especially during her Research/Study Leave from January to July 2014. In January Margaret directed a staged reading of Chekhov's first play, the four hour-long *Platonov*, as a fundraiser for the Actors' Fund of Canada, performed as part of



ChekhovFest 2014. She also presented the lecture "Introducing Chekhov" which opened the Festival. Margaret then researched and wrote a lengthy article on three key directors of Samuel Beckett's work. A shortened version of the article has been published, in Spanish, in the a special issue of the journal *Revisita Pasodegato* Octubre 2014. The full version of the paper will appear as a chapter in the book *El teatro de Samuel Beckett bajo la lupa: 14 lecturas innovadoras*. The book will be published in April 2015. The English title of Margaret's article/chapter is "Samuel Beckett, Peter Hall and Alan Schneider on Directing Beckett's Work: The Challenges of Linking Form and Feeling." In the spring of 2014 Margaret worked as the producer for the Adriana Theatre Collective's independent production of Henrik Ibsen's classic play, *Ghosts*. Margaret also played the major role of Mrs. Alving in this production, one of the most demanding roles for an older woman in the Western dramatic repertoire. She received a Creative Works Grant from the U of M to assist with the production. Rehearsals were conducted in August and September and the production ran from September 30th through October 5th in the Colin Jackson Studio Theatre. Margaret is currently in rehearsals again, directing the BHT's production of *Hay Fever* for CowardFest 2015 and she will be giving the "Introducing Coward" Lecture that kicks off the Festival.

DANNY GUNN is a lawyer practicing in Winnipeg.

HOLLY HARRIS writes the "Music Matters" column for the *Winnipeg Free Press*, and also reviews music and dance performances for the newspaper.

CHRISTINE HARAPIAK is a family court judge.

ROSE-ANNE HARDER is the Director of the Manitoba Arts Network.

ELLIE HARVEY is an actor based in Vancouver. She performs in the YTV series, *Some Assembly Required*.

JOHN HARVEY performed in the Manitoba Bar Association production of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*.

ANGELA HECK's film, *Buzz*, a short documentary about mosquitoes, is available to MTS subscribers through "Stories from Home" (Video on Demand).

IVAN HENWOOD came back to us last season to direct the BHT production of *Lion in the Streets* and to perform in *The Pillowman*. IVAN performed in the staged reading of *The House Left Standing* by Priscilla Pakielashek in the CAROL SHIELDS Festival of New Work at PTE in May. IVAN and his wife, JANE WALKER, have rented a studio space in the Exchange District and are renovating it for theatrical performances. *Snakeskin Jacket* will be reviving their production of Tom Noonan's *Wang Dang* later this season.

ROB HERRIOT directed *Don Pasquale* for Manitoba Opera last season, and he was the assistant director of the Winnipeg Jewish Theatre production of *Ivanov* for ChekhovFest 2014. He performed in the Dry Cold production of *A Man of No Importance*, and last summer, he directed the Opera Calgary production of Leonard Bernstein's *Candide*.

CYNTHIA HIEBERT-SIMKIN is a lawyer practicing in Winnipeg.

SEAN HOGAN is the lead singer of *Seanster and the Monsters*. They just released an album last year and played the Winnipeg International KidsFest.



Sean with two of the Monsters: Kim Neufeld and Tim Braun

ADAM HURTIG performed in the made for TV movie, *The Christmas Heart*, broadcast on Showcase last Christmas, and worked on the web series, *Wind City*. He appears in the TV series, *Pinkertons*. This fall, ADAM starred in an indie production of *Evil Dead: The Musical* at the Park Theatre. (Another Black Hole alum, RYAN WARD, played the lead in the original production in Toronto and New York.)

GARY JARVIS' new play, *Carmella, or, A Strange Agony* was workshopped by the Manitoba Association of Playwrights this fall. BILL KERR was the dramaturge.

KELLY JENKEN worked on the RMTTC mainstage production of *The Glass Menagerie* as apprentice director last season, and this season, is the apprentice director for the PTE production of Morris Panych's *Vigil*. *

NORM JENSEN directed a production of *Glee* at the university in South Korea where he taught last year. He's now back in Manitoba after several years living and working overseas, working as the EAL Director for Assiniboine College.

SANDY JOBIN-BEVANS is one of the hosts of the Canadian version of the TV reality program, *Deal With It*. You can also see him in reruns of *Life With Boys*, the YTV teen series which ended in 2013; SANDY plays the Dad.

CHRIS JOHNSON helped fill in for Theatre Project Manitoba's Artistic Director, Ardith Boxall, for part of last season while Ardith took some leave for professional development. CHRIS serves on the TPM board. Last spring, CHRIS received a Merit Award for Service from the university, largely in recognition of his work with TPM. His article, "Beckett's Legacy in the Work of Three Canadian Playwrights: Michael Cook, George F. Walker, and Morris Panych", will appear soon in a book being edited by DEFT professor, Fernando de Toro. The Manitoba Writers' Guild and the Manitoba Association of Playwrights have named their new award for best new published or produced play the "CHRIS JOHNSON Award" in his honour. CHRIS is co-directing the BHT production of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* with BILL KERR this season; this will be the first time the play has been

produced in Manitoba. *

SARAH ANNE JOHNSON's work was the subject of an exhibition, "Wonderlust", at the Stephen Burger Gallery in Toronto this fall. Other recent solo and group exhibitions of her work include *Oh Canada* at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, the Canadian Biennial at the National Gallery of Canada, and *House on Fire* at the Art Gallery of Ontario. SARAH ANNE was trained as a photographer but uses a variety of media including painting, sculpture, and performance in her work.

WILLIAM JORDAN performed in the Reality Theatre production of *The Samovar* in ChekhovFest 2014. He was a supernumerary in the Manitoba Opera Association productions of *La Boheme* and *Fidelio*. WILLIAM performed in the TV series, *The Pinkertons* and continues to play Captain Morgan in various liquor promotional events throughout the prairie provinces.

ANDREA KARR is an editorial assistant with *Canadian Living*.

MAGDALENA KAZUBOWSKI-HOUSTON teaches at York University.

LEIGH-ANNE KEHLER will be performing at the Toronto Storytelling Festival this coming spring.

BILL KERR co-directed the production of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* with CHRIS JOHNSON in the current BHT season. This fall, he worked as dramaturge on the MAP workshop of GARY JARVIS' new play, *Carmilla, or A Strange Agony*. He has been also been working as a dramaturge with Cairn Moore on her plays *Shiksa* and *Habsolute Perfection*, and with Steven Ratzlaff on his plays *Child and Family Services* and *Mobile Vasectomy Unit*, and will be working with Ian Ross on his new play to premiere next season for the BHT in the Conklin.

ANGUS KOHM and his partner, STEFANIE WIENS, are working on a film about the Winnipeg actor, Doreen Brownstone.

FRANCES KONCAN has earned her MFA in playwriting from Brooklyn College. Her play won the Bake Off event at Sarasvati Theatre's FemFest this fall. *

ROBERT LAFERRIERE has been elected counsellor in the municipality of Russell-Binscarth.

MATTHEW LAGACE was the apprentice stage manager working on the RMTc productions of *The Glass Menagerie* and *Good People* last season, and supervised the children in their production of *Jane Eyre*. In the summer just past, MATTHEW had a stage managing gig at a summer theatre on Prince Edward Island.

DALE LAKEVOLD teaches Creative Writing at Brandon University. He's working on a stage adaptation of Margaret Lawrence's novel, *A Jest of God*.

MARIA LAMONT directed *La Petit Renard rusee* for Opera de Lille, and Janacek's *Janufa* in Essen, Germany, last season.

JEFF LECLERC is Secretary of the University of Manitoba. He and his wife are expecting their second child.

TANNIS LEHMANN teaches English and drama at Kildonan East Collegiate.

KATY LEITHHEAD got married this fall.

CURTIS LOWTON teaches at St. George's school.

JEFF MADDEN played Vershinin in the Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre production of *The Three Sisters* for ChekhovFest 2014. This year, he'll be directing WMT's production of *Nude With Violin* for CowardFest 2015. JEFF teaches at Isaac Brock school.

GUY MADDIN's new movie, *The Forbidden Room*, premieres at the Sundance Festival next year.

JOCK MARTIN is a drama teacher at St. John's Ravenscourt.

JUDITH MATE works for the International Students' Centre at the U of M.

SUE MATHESON teaches English at Red Deer College in Alberta.

KYLE MCCULLOCH writes scripts for *South Park*.

CHUCK MCEWEN is Executive Producer of the Winnipeg Fringe Festival and the Master Playwrights Festival.

BRENDA MCLEAN was Head of Wardrobe at PTE for the 2013/14 season, and is in that position again this season. In the spring, she directed the PTE Adult Company production of *The Weir*, and performed in the Sarasvati production of *Fefu and Her Friends*. BRENDA performed in the staged reading of Priscilla Yakielashek's *The House Left Standing* in the CAROL SHIELDS Festival of New Work at PTE in May, and designed the costumes for the Shakespeare in the Ruins production of *The Comedy of Errors* in the summer. This year, she will once again be the instructor/director working with the PTE Adult Company. BRENDA performs with the clown troupe, the Talentless Lumps.

ROSS MCMILLAN played Stephen Harper in the Theatre Projects Manitoba

production of *Proud* this fall. ROSS won one of the acting awards at this year's ACTRA Awards. He played Dr. Dorn in the MTC Warehouse production of *The Seagull* for ChekhovFest 2014 last season. *Eye Through the Window*, a play he co-wrote with SARAH CONSTIBLE, was one of the plays presented in a staged reading as part of the CAROL SHIELDS festival of New Work at PTE. ROSS appears in *A Warden's Ransom*, a movie released this year. You can also see him in reruns of *Less Than Kind*.



Ross as Harper. Photo by Leif Norman

AKALU MEEKIS has been busy this fall shooting *Hyena Road*, the new Adam Beach movie in which AK plays a sniper. The project involved several days shooting in Jordan. Last season, AKALU came back to us to play Katurian in our production of *The Pillowman*.

BRUCE MICHALSKI performed in the Tara Players production of *Uncle Vanya* for ChekhovFest 2014.

RYAN MILLER performed in the Theatre Projects Manitoba production of *The Miser of Middlegate* and the RMTC production of *The Glass Menagerie* last season. In May, RYAN performed in the staged reading of Alix Sobler's *The Great Divide* in the CAROL SHIELDS Festival of New Work at PTE. This season, he played Oscar Wilde in the RMTC production of *Sherlock Holmes and the Jersey Lily*. RYAN got married this summer.

STEPHANIE MOROZ performed in Pi Theatre's production of *Between the Sheets*, and in Persephone Theatre's production of *Leading Ladies* in Saskatoon last season. This season, STEPHANIE performed in *Over the River and Through the Woods* at the Chemainus Theatre Festival.

CARSON NATTRASS was one of the readers presenting staged readings of news plays in the CAROL SHIELDS Festival of New Work at PTE. CARSON performed in the Dry Cold production of *A Man of No Importance*, and directed the Rainbow Stage production of *A Closer Walk with Patsy Clyne*. This season, he played Dr. Watson in the RMTC production of *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Jersey Lily*.

KEVIN NAUGHTEN stage managed the PTE Adult Company production of *The Weir* last spring. He has moved to Australia.

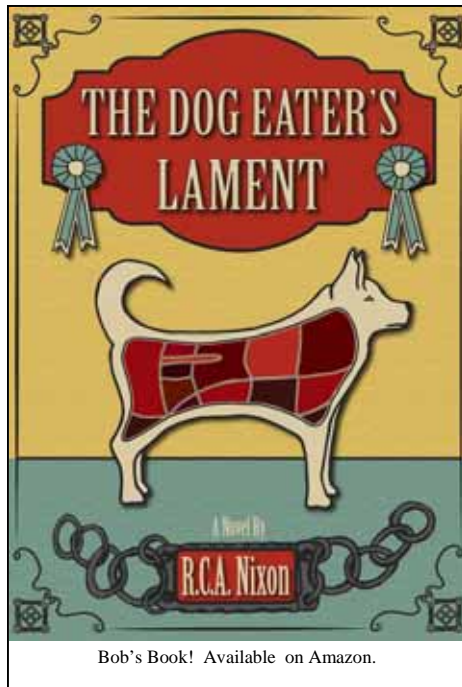
IVORY NEAL (SEOL) has a new baby boy.

JASON NEUFELD has moved to New York City, where his wife, Alix Sobler, will be studying for her MFA in playwriting at Columbia. JASON had been working as the Manager of the Winnipeg Fringe Festival. He performed in the WJT production of Ginny Collins' *Good Intentions* last season.

KAYLEIGH NICHOL has started teacher training at the University of Western Ontario.

BOB NIXON has published a new novel, *The Dog Eater's Lament*. BOB lives in Vancouver, and works for CBC Radio.

YVETTE NOLAN's new play, *The Unplugging*, has been published by Playwrights Canada. She won the Jessie Richardson award for the play in 2013, and more recently won the 2014 Mallory Gilbert Leadership Award from PACT (the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres), primarily in recognition of her nine years service as Artistic Director of Native Earth Performing Arts in Toronto. YVETTE is currently President of the Indigenous Performing



Bob's Book! Available on Amazon.

Arts Alliance and serves on the board of the Saskatchewan Arts Alliance.

THERESA OSWALD resigned her provincial cabinet seat as Minister of Jobs and the Economy, joining four colleagues in asking Premier Selinger to step down. THERESA continues to sit as an MLA.

GERALD PAULS teaches English in Winkler, and directs for the Poor Theatre Company.

TRACY PENNER played Masha in the MTC Warehouse production of *The Seagull* in ChekhovFest 2014, and later last season performed in the Sarasvati production of *Fefu and Her Friends*.

NANCY PITCAIRN teaches drama at Vincent Massey high school in Brandon.

KEVIN RAMBERRAN is working on a creative M.A. in the Department of English, Film, and Theatre at the University of Manitoba. He directed the Black Hole production of Martin McDonagh's *The Pillowman* last season. His alter ego KayR has released 2 albums this year: *Skyline Mirages* and *Comedy*.

JENNIFER RATTRAY is Associate Vice President of Indigenous, Government, and Community Affairs at the University of Winnipeg.

STEVE RATZLAFF performed in the staged reading of Rheal Cenerini's play, *Oswald*, in the CAROL SHIELDS Festival of New Work. STEVE's new play, working title "Child and Family Services", is in development at TPM.

MIKE REALBA is a busy TV and movie actor; recently, he has appeared in *Decker*, *Soldier's Girl*, *The Path to 9/11*, *Mayday*, *Tracker*, and *Fringe*. Also recently, he became the father of a baby boy.

NALINI REDDY performed in this year's "lawyer play", *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, at the Warehouse.

KERRIE REID gave birth to a baby girl last March, a little sister for BRADY. KERRIE teaches at an international school in Macau.

NEIL REIMER is a reporter for *The Interlake Spectator*. A movie in which NEIL performed in 2013 when he lived and worked in South Korea, *Haebangchon*, premiered in Seoul in November.

CHRISTINE REINFORT is studying acting at Studio 58 at Langara College in Vancouver.

JORGE REQUERA's band, Mariachi Ghost, won a Western Canadian Music Award. IAN MIKITA is also in the band.

TRACY RETTIG SEWELL is back on the job as a drama teacher at Dakota Collegiate after her mat leave. This fall, she directed a production of *The Boyfriend* at the school.

GAVIN RICH is on the board of the PTE Foundation Trust.

ANGIE ROBBIE (GANNON) is coming back to us this season to play Martha in the BHT production of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* ANGIE's daughter, ROWAN GANNON, performs in our production of *Hay Fever*. ANGIE teaches at St. John's High School.

IAN ROSS is the resident playwright at the University of

Manitoba this year. He's teaching the playwriting course, and a section of Intro. He's also writing a play which the Theatre Program commissioned, and which will open the new Conklin Theatre on campus in the 2015/16 season. IAN's play, *Fabric of the Sky*, was produced by the Urban Indigenous Theatre Company at the Bandwidth Theatre (formerly the Ellice Theatre) in November.

GARRETT RUSNAK has been working on lighting and set crews at all around town. He has also taken up refereeing football. Last season, he worked for the Theatre Program at the U of M. *

KAREN SCHELLENBERG has been hired to fill a new position, Production Manager, at the U of M, replacing half of DENNIS SMITH, who retired last year. She ran Tent A at Kids Fest this June.*

DEANNA SCHUERBEKE lives in Portland, Oregon, and holds an executive position with Nike. She's also on the board of Third Rail Theater, a small, cutting-edge theatre company.

JOFF SCHMIDT is Executive Producer of *Content Factory* and *Definitely Not the Opera* on CBC radio. He also reviews plays for the CBC.

RYAN SEGAL is working on a Master's degree in City Planning at the U of M.

GIORGIA SEVERINI directed a production of Sam Shepard's *Ages of the Moon* for the Edmonton Fringe Festival.

KHAL SHARIFF is the founder and CEO of Project Whitecard, one of Manitoba's biggest video game companies.

JULIE SIMPSON is the Drama and Dance teacher at Gordon Bell high school. She directed a production of *Alice in America* at the school last March. This year, she's working on *Macbeth*.

JEFF SINCLAIR teaches English in Korea.

DENNIS SMITH can be found on Vancouver Island working as a pool boy and grounds keeper for CAROLYN KUTCHERA's thriving canine aqua therapy business.

CHRIS SOBZCAK directed the staged reading of *The House Left Standing* in the CAROL SHIELDS Festival of New Work at PTE in May.

JASON SPARLING teaches for Lorette Collegiate.

LESLIE STARK teaches high school drama in Vancouver. Last year, she directed a production of the musical, *Legally Blonde*, for her school. This summer, she worked with the Elegant Ladies Collective, creating and directing *Eidola*, a site specific exploration of Shakespeare's female characters, for the Vancouver Fringe Festival.

TERI STVENS hosts a radio show, "Penis Envy", on UMFH.

SHANE STEWART has been hired as Technical Director at the U of M. SHANE was formerly set carpenter at PTE.

KELLY STIFORA teaches at Red River College.

RAY STRACHAN performed in a reading of scenes from Alix Sobler's new play, *She's Not There*, at one of the TPM Salons last season, and he performed in the WJT production of Ginny Collins' *Good Intentions*. This summer, he supervised the outdoor stage at the Winnipeg Fringe Festival. He also performed in the reading of *Platonov* which MARGARET GROOME directed for ChekhovFest 2014, and in the staged reading of *The House Left Standing* in the CAROL SHIELDS Festival. This fall, he's been busy playing a major, ongoing role in the TV series, *Pinkertons*, which is being shot in Manitoba.

MICHAEL STRICKLAND is studying at the Vancouver Film School.

JEFF STROME performed in *The Three Sisters: A Black Opera* in ChekhovFest 2014. *

FIONA STRYJAK-SMITH is working on an M.A. in distance education.

MARINA TAGGART runs a children's theatre in California.

GORDON TANNER performed in the RMTTC productions of



Dennis in his tractor.



Cast and Crew of our production of *Titus Andronicus*.

Christmas Story and *Jane Eyre* last season. He appears in the movie, *Mr. Hockey*.*

THERESA THOMPSON teaches at MTYP.*

JOHN TITLEY has a new job as Director/Producer of Skinny Films at Frank Digital.

THOMAS TOLES performed in a production of Beckett's *Endgame* at Oxford University last season, and also performed with the Oxford Imps Improv group. Having completed an M.A. in film, THOMAS returned to Oxford this year to do a Masters in Psychology. He is the winner of a Rhodes scholarship.

DAMION TRYON teaches English at Kildonan East Collegiate.

ANNIE TUMA is in the third year, graduating class in acting at George Brown College in Toronto.

ANDREA VON WICHERT designed the set for the Theatre Projects

Manitoba production of Debbie Patterson's *Sargent and Victor and Me* last season, and was also scenic artist for the PTE production of *Harvest*. This season, she was scenic artist for the TPM production of *Proud* and the PTE production of *Vigil* this season. Last spring, she did a writer's residency at the Banff Centre for the Arts, and this fall, one in Slovenia.

BRANDON VINK performed in the reading of *Platonov* which MARGARET GROOME directed for ChekhovFest 2014.

JANE WALKER worked as Administrative Assistant for the Film and Theatre Programs at the U of M for a few months this



The view from the booth in the Conklin.

year. She directed one of the entries in the MAP/Scirocco Manitoba High School Playwriting contest at the Warehouse last spring.*

WAYNE WATSON became the proud papa of a baby girl last year. He teaches drama at a private school in Leysin, Switzerland.

TIM WEBSTER performed *On the Harmfulness of Tobacco* for Merlyn Productions in ChekhovFest 2014. He was a supernumerary in the MOA production of *Fidelio*.*

FLORA WIEBE played Olga in the Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre's production of *The Three Sisters* for ChekhovFest 2014.



Looking stage left to right onstage of the Conklin. The stairs lead to a storage area above the green room and booth & gallery access.

RYLAN WILKIE performed in *Around the World in 80 Days* at Alberta Theatre Projects, and in ATP's festival of new plays, Play Rites. In the summer, he was a member of the Stratford Shakespeare Festival company, performing in *King John* and *Alice Through the Looking Glass*. RYLAN returns to Stratford for the 2015 season, playing Ananias in *The Alchemist* and appearing in *The Physicists* and *The Adventures of Pericles*.

DAVID WILLIAMSON is Dean of Arts at the University College of the North.

TANIS WOODLAND is an office assistant working for Disability Studies at the U of M.

KIM ZEGLINSKI teaches at Rockwood School.*

ALLEN ZINYK completed his ninth season with Bard on the Beach in Vancouver. This year, he performed in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest*.

Fringe 2014



Wang Dang by Tom Noonan. Directed by Professor George Toles, DEFT, and performed by alumni Ivan Henwood and Kerri Wolosyzn, and Jane Walker, who is an alumna and a U of M support staff employee. The stage manager is alumna Carol Moriyama.

Only Just... by alumna Megan Andres. Directed by Professor Chris Johnson, DEFT, and performed by alumni Jeremy Rampton, Natashia Durand, Tim Gray, and Megan. Stage managed by current Arts student Dan Tompkins.

Suddenly Last Summer by Tennessee Williams. Directed by Kevin Ramberran (DEFT grad student and alumnus) with the assistance of Thomas Toles (alumnus). Cast: Faculty of Arts students Erin Thorleifson, Lyndon Radchenka, Laurie MacDonell, and Sarah Putnam, and alumna Katilynn Porath. Stage managed by Winson Jackie Lee, a current student.

In this House: Vices, Virtues and Vixens. Written and directed by current Arts student, Shaylyn Maharaj-Poliah, and performed by an all Arts student cast: Jessica Varnes, Ian Bastin, Renata Echtenkamp, Nickolas Petuhoff, Kat Petrash, Lindsay Bodnar, Jayse Meyer, and Loren MacDonald.

Substitute Teacher from Hell. A one-woman show directed by alumna Erin Essery and performed by alumna Vicki Rutkowski.

GOD by Woody Allen. Directed by Natalie & Emma Daquisto (alumni) and performed by a cast which includes Arts students Dan Grant and Mark Finnbogason, and alumni Logan Stefanson, David Fox and Tim Gray. The stage manager is current student Laurie MacDonell.

Quo Vadis composed by Olaf Pyttlik, book by alumnus Angus Kohm. Actors include alumni Jeff Strome and Gord Tanner

Making Believe, a one man show written and performed by

alumnus Jason Broadfoot.

Spec. Ed., a one man show written and performed by alumnus Leith Clark.

Confessions of a Promiscuous Woman. The cast includes alumna Theresa Thomson.

In Wonderland. Created by alumna Theresa Thomson and performed by Theresa's students at MTYP.

Communion by Daniel MacIvor. Directed by alumna Carly Gallant, and stage managed by current student Meaghan Labossiere. Cast includes alumna Karen O'Brien.

Little Red by alumna Frances Koncan.

Bloodsuckers by alumnus Joseph Aragon and directed by alumnus Leith Clark. The cast includes alumni David Fox and Kelly Rae Jenken.

MITTELSCHMERZ, a one woman show written and performed by alumna Kim Zeglinski.

Undress Me by Kevin P. Gabel. Directed by alumnus Ivan Henwood

The War and Peace Show by Debbie Patterson. The cast includes alumni Sarah Constible, Ross McMillan, and Gordon Tanner.

XHL By alumnus Raphael Saray, directed by alumnus Paul Madziak. Cast includes alumna Sandy Krahn.

CHUCK MCEWEN is the Executive Producer and JASON NEUFELD is the Festival Manager. TIM WEBSTER was Kids' Fringe Co-ordinator. FRANCES KONCAN worked in box office. GARRETT RUSNAK, KAREN SCHELLENBERG, and AINZA BELLEFEUILLE were venue technicians. JOFF SCHMIDT, KELLY STIFORA, MICHELLE PALANSKY, and JIM TAYLOR wrote reviews for the CBC.

This edition of the Black Hole Theatre Co. Newsletter was compiled by Karen Schellenberg with Alumni & Fringe News provided by Chris Johnson. Feature Alumni Articles by Rebecca Gossel

What's Happening Alumni

We would love to know what you are up to, and include an update of the successes of our Black Hole Alumni in future editions of our newsletter. Get in touch with the Theatre and tell us all about how amazing you are!