

APRIL 17 – MAY 20, 2012



God of Carnage

BY YASMINA REZA /
TRANSLATED BY
CHRISTOPHER HAMPTON

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Theatre



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The Belfry Theatre presents

God of Carnage

By Yasmina Reza

Translated By Christopher Hampton

Starring

Bill Dow Michael Novak
Vincent Gale Alan Raleigh
Sarah Orenstein Veronica Novak
Celine Stubel Annette Raleigh

Director **Glynis Leyshon**
Designer **John Ferguson**
Lighting Designer **Guy Simard**
Sound Designer **Brian Linds**
Stage Manager **Jennifer Swan**
Apprentice Stage Manager **Jess Amy Shead**

God of Carnage was produced on Broadway by Robert Fox, David Pugh and Dafydd Rogers, Stuart Thompson, Scott Rudlin, Jon B. Platt, the Weinstein Company and the Shubert Organization.

God of Carnage is presented by special arrangement with Dramatist Play Service, Inc., New York.

The use of video or audio recording devices is strictly prohibited at all times.

God of Carnage runs approximately 85 minutes without intermission.

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The Belfry Theatre is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres and engages under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement professional Artists who are members of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association.

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Please turn off your cellphones and pagers when you enter the theatre. If you need to be contacted in an emergency, please leave your name and seat number with our House Manager.

Latecomers & Re-admission

The Director of each production designates moments in the show when the seating of latecomers will cause the least amount of distraction for actors and audience members. Should you leave the theatre, our House Manager will not be able to reseat you until one of these breaks.

Babes in Arms

The Belfry is proud to produce adult contemporary theatre. Our productions are not suitable for children 10 and under, including babes in arms.

Recording Devices

No cameras or recording devices are permitted in the theatre.

Audience Advisories / Running Times

We make every effort to advise you of strong language, subject matter or extreme technical effects (strobe lights, fog). Please look for signs at the entrances to the theatre. Advisories and running times are available at the Box Office as of the first preview.

Food & Drinks

Please feel free to take only food and/or drinks you've purchased from the Belfry bar into the theatre. Our goodies are packaged so that they don't make a lot of noise and disturb your fellow audience members.

Perfume & Cologne

Please refrain from using perfume and cologne when you come to the theatre. Some of our patrons are highly allergic to scents.

Thank you for your consideration.
Enjoy the performance.

Artistic Director's Notes

If a season of plays is a banquet, welcome to dessert! (And not just clafouti!) It's been a great season, starting with *And Slowly Beauty*... and Yasmina Reza's smart, sophisticated comedy is the perfect treat with which to wrap things up.

Despite the laughs, *God of Carnage* speaks to us all, revealing how shocking it is to come face-to-face with our baser instincts. We like to believe that we are civilized and in control, but we are forced to question who we really are when we see how easily those beliefs can be shattered.

Ben Brantley in his New York Times review said, "Never underestimate the pleasure of watching really good actors behaving terribly." We have a cast of exceptionally good actors who, under Glynis Leyshon's insightful direction, are behaving very badly indeed.

By now you'll have information about our exciting new season – which we are very anxious to share with you – but first let's celebrate this riotous finish to a year of terrific theatre!

With thanks for your continued support.



Michael Shamata



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Director's Notes

Some years ago I was lucky enough to visit New York with a dear friend and we were looking forward to spending our first evening in the big city at the theatre – watching a new play called *Art* by Yasmina Reza. Neither of us knew a great deal about the play but it had been extremely well reviewed and the cast was stellar. Needless to say we enjoyed the production immensely and we happily set off for a quick supper.



Surprisingly however, the play continued to dominate our evening and we couldn't stop talking about its deft exploration of friendship. Our long and passionate conversation moved from an abstract discussion of the relationships in the play to the specifics of our own friendship – and we experienced one of the most profound, difficult but ultimately rewarding conversations of our long friendship.

Yasmina Reza is one of those playwrights who unerringly leads us to examine the particulars of our own behavior after watching her fictional characters clash, often over seemingly banal incidents. She has a fearless satirical eye and she delights in exploring the primal impulses that lurk just under the surface of our well-mannered and privileged lives. With stunning ease, the well-meaning couples in *God of Carnage* turn an elegant 'home' into a gladiatorial arena, wielding words with the same deadly intent as warriors hurled their swords. The action is short, often nasty and surprisingly hilarious.

As with my own experience seeing *Art*, I hope that this Belfry production will stimulate you to examine your own relationship with profound conflict, and that through *God of Carnage*, you experience the rewarding catharsis that only truly intelligent theatre inspires.

Glynis Leyshon



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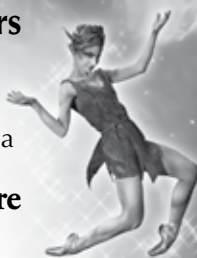


Photo: Derek Ford - Body Art: Kristin Grant

PAUL DESTROOPER - ARTISTIC DIRECTOR - BALLET VICTORIA

Acting Company



Bill Dow

Bill Dow (*Michael Novak*) Bill Dow is an award-winning actor and director in theatre, film, and television, with scores of credits over a long and varied career. He is thrilled to be back at the Belfry, where he has directed and acted in many fine productions, including *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid*, *Anatol*, and *Oleanna*, to name a few. Other non-Island award-winning productions include *Dangerous Corner*, *Of Mice and Men*, *Equus*, and *Glengarry Glen Ross*. He served as Associate Artistic Director at the Vancouver Playhouse, Blyth Festival and Belfry Theatre, and as resident dramaturg at the Banff Playwrights Colony. Bill achieved an M.A. at SFU, where he is currently involved in research toward his PhD and is an instructor of Classical Mythology.



Vincent Gale

Vincent Gale (*Alan Raleigh*) Vincent Gale previously appeared at the Belfry in *Stones in His Pockets*, *The Real Thing* and *The Cryptogram*. Selected theatre credits include *Dangerous Corner*, *True West*, *Vincent in Brixton*, *The Caretaker*, *Proof*, *The Relapse* (Vancouver Playhouse) *Charley's Aunt*, *Tons of Money* (Theatre Calgary), *A Line in the Sand* (Tarragon Theatre), *The Glass Menagerie* (Gateway Theatre), *Waiting for Godot*, *Dancing at Lughnasa*, *7 Stories*, *Glengarry Glen Ross* (Arts Club Theatre), *John and Beatrice* (Persephone) and *The Real Thing* (Manitoba Theatre Centre). Selected film and television credits include *DaVinci's Inquest*, *Queen as Folk*, *Battlestar Gallactica*, *Monk*, *Supernatural*, *The Final Cut*, *Firewall*, *Bye Bye Blues*, *Fathers and Sons*, and Bruce Sweeney's *Dirty*, *Last Wedding* and *American Venus*. Vince has received 4 Jessie Richardson Theatre Awards, a Gemini nomination for the mini-series *Major Crime*, an AMPIA for Best Actor, and the Genie in 2002 for his performance in *Last Wedding*.



Sarah Orenstein

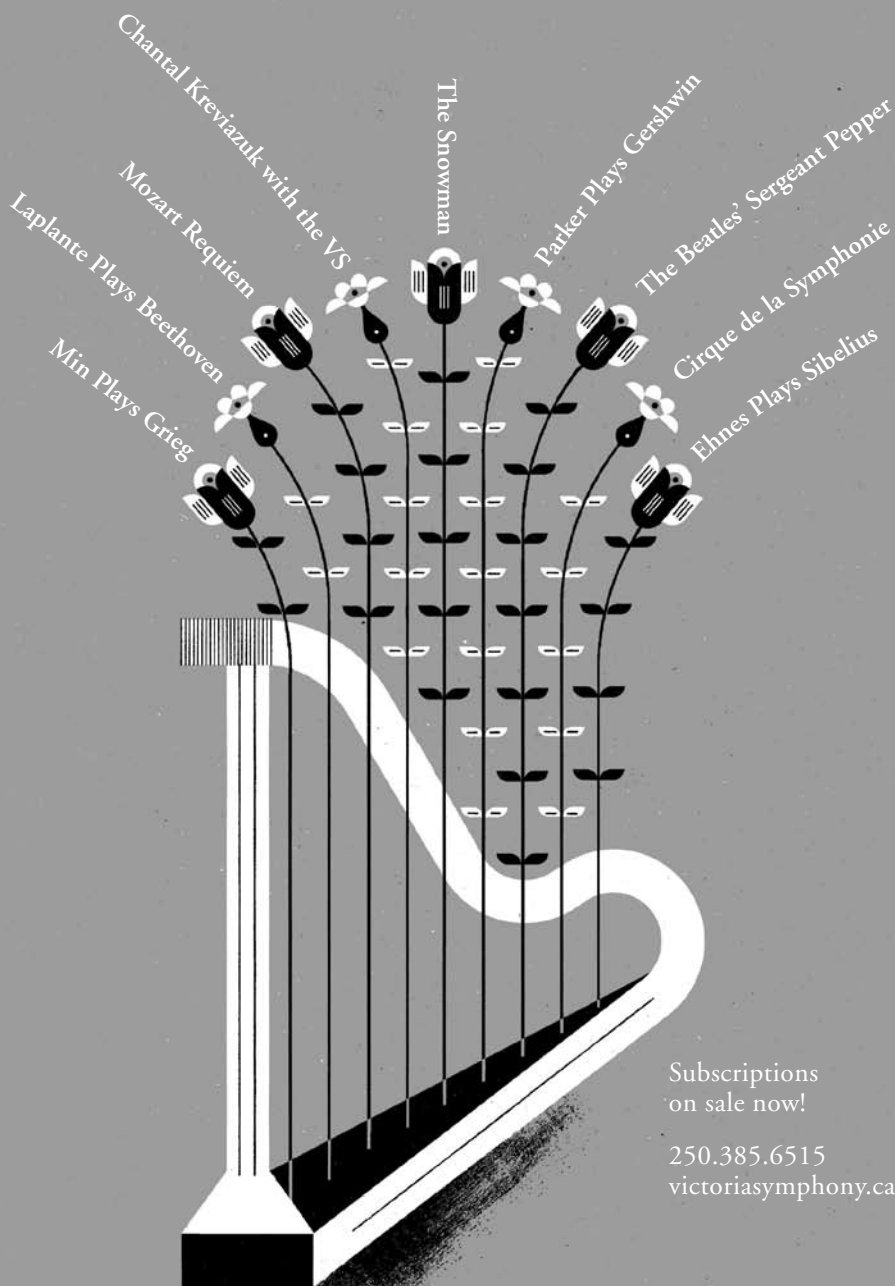
Sarah Orenstein (*Veronica Novak*) This is Sarah's first appearance at the Belfry and an enjoyable return to the west coast with old cohorts after many years. Sarah is an award-winning actress, and has performed on stages across the country. Originally from Nova Scotia, she now resides in Toronto with her husband and children. Selected theatre credits include *The Normal Heart*, *Stuff Happens* (Studio 180/Mirvish), *Patience*, *The Hope Slide*, *After Abkmatova*, *Scorched*, *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid* (Tarragon Theatre), *Apple*, *Beyond Mozambique* (Factory Theatre), *Zastrozzi* (Stratford Festival), thirteen seasons as a member of the Shaw Festival Acting Company, which included *The Millionairess*, *Heartbreak House*, *Counsellor at Law* and *Detective Story*; *Early August* (Blyth Festival), *A Doll's House* (Great Canadian Theatre Company), and *Hanna's Suitcase* (Young People's Theatre). Selected Film/TV: *Fugitive Pieces* (Serendipity Films), *Jesus Henry Christ* (Hopscotch Pics), *Molly*, *American Girl* (Disney), *Breakout Kings*, *Maggie Hill* (Fox), *Rookie Blue* (Thump Productions).



Celine Stubel

Celine Stubel (*Annette Raleigh*) Celine returns home to the Belfry after joining the English Theatre Acting Company at the National Arts Centre, where she performed in *Oliver!* and *And Slowly Beauty...* (co-produced with the Belfry Theatre). Other Belfry credits include *Garage Sale*, *Unless*, and *My Chernobyl* (Jessie Richardson Award). Elsewhere: *Fire*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre), *The Graduate*, *The Constant Wife* (Arts Club Theatre), Electric Company's *Studies in Motion* (Citadel and Canadian Stage), *Tyland* (ATP), *Ride The Cyclone*, *Legoland*, *The Qualities of Zero*, *Circus Fire* (Atomic Vaudeville), *Richard II* and *All's Well That Ends Well* (Bard on the Beach), *Unity* (1918), *Lieutenant Nun*, *My Three Sisters* (Theatre SKAM). Celine is a graduate of the University of Victoria.

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With Friends Like These... Forget about friends with benefits – I seem to attract friends with opinions by John Threlfall



Popular culture loves friends. The TV show, sure, but also the whole idea of friendship: you're my best friend, you've got a friend, that's what friends are for... some days it's tough to turn on the radio without looking for somebody to hug.

But you don't hear that many songs being written about the other side of friendship; you know, the opinions, the attitudes, the belief that someone knows you better than you know yourself. It's funny what can happen when that invisible line of friendship is crossed – a wrong word, a missed birthday, a totally spontaneous New Year's Eve make-out-session with a spouse that isn't your own. Or, say, a marriage.

Here's a true story about a guy and his friends; let's call him Sean, Sean Truffle. Sean was once part of a really close group of friends – one of those annoying geek cliques that can be so hard to break into if you don't speak their specific social dialect. They had all been palling around together for years, some as far back as elementary school, when Sean did the unthinkable: he started dating an outsider. Not only was she from a distant part of the

city, but she was also from a totally different intellectual reality and didn't care about the stuff that seemed to matter to Sean's friends: Pink Floyd, the New Age movement or that new Star Trek series. (Did I mention this was back in the mid-'80s?) Similarly, Sean's friends didn't care much for all that university-educated, critical-thinking crap she was into. Really, all they had in common was Sean.

After three years of tiptoeing along the mutual toleration tightrope, Sean proposed, she accepted and he broke the happy news about the upcoming nuptials to his friends; in exchange, they decided to throw him an intervention. Of course, nobody actually called them interventions yet; it was just your friends butting into your life – but they were your friends, so it was supposed to be okay.

Much like the biting frank characters often found in Yasmina Reza's plays (**ART**, which appeared at the Belfry back in 2001, or the current Tony Award-winning **GOD OF CARNAGE**), it turned out there was a line across which Sean's friends were not willing to step. Despite his ▶

protestations of love, of destiny, of a boho apartment downtown, Sean's friends knew the truth about his engagement he could not see: they were right, and he was wrong... or, more to the point, that they were right she was wrong for him. But since they were positive-energy, crystal aura people, they believed they were only saying it out of love. And, out of a similar sense of love, Sean thought it best to spare them the ordeal of witnessing the marriage that was very much going ahead. (Or, as the bride-to-be put it, "No f***ing way are those people coming to my wedding.")

Inevitably, being pleasant always necessitates compromise. Your spouse's boss, your sibling's family, your children's friends – there's always someone you'd simply rather ignore. Most of us just grin and bear it; few have the social strength for the radical honesty found in *God of Carnage*. ("Behaving well gets you nowhere," says Véronique. "Courtesy is a waste of time.") But there are those rare moments – a wedding, say – when the knot is cut, the Rubicon is crossed, the torpedoes are damned and the truth will out... even if it means trimming the guest list by six or eight people. And a best man.

Looking back now with the wisdom of hindsight (and the stability of a second marriage), it's easy for Sean to see all sides. Did his friends have a valid complaint about her being wrong for him? Possibly, but it's more likely their feelings were just hurt because he was starting a new phase of his life with someone they

didn't really know, or want to know. Was she right in asking him to choose between friends and fiancée? Absolutely, because who in their right mind is going to argue with an imminent bride?

But considering the marriage only lasted a few years, did Sean make the correct choice himself? Tough to say – it's been over 20 years since either the ex-wife or the ex-friends have made an appearance in his life, and sometimes he misses them all. He has new friends, of course, a newer wife that's been around longer than the old one ever was, but there are days when he wishes all those harsh words were never spoken, when all that angry honesty was simply channeled into an inappropriate wedding gift instead. ("A shrunken head? I so don't get your friends.")

"Marriage is the most terrible ordeal God can inflict on you," quips playwright Yasmina Reza in *God of Carnage* – but sometimes I think that honour really goes to friendship. So, like the song says, thank you for being a friend... but just know there are times when I really prefer to get by without a little help from my friends.

Sean Truffle is a local arts writer who married his best friend the second time around and now has no one to complain to about his wife. Not that there's anything to complain about, mind you, as all his current friends well know. He's already fretting about his impending 30th high school reunion this year, and the possible social awkwardness of seeing his former friends again. Neither wife will be in attendance... but he might ask his best friend to come along.

our 2012/13 season

11 productions for Victoria, two productions on tour, the return of programming in Studio A and a collaboration with Pacific Opera Victoria. We're going to be busy.

Michael recently released the details on our new season. We'll produce and present twelve plays and one opera between July 2012 and May 2013. Tucked into your program for *God of Carnage* is our latest brochure with show descriptions. Here are a few more details.



We'll kick off in July with Audrei-Kairen's musical, **BIG MAMA! THE WILLIE MAE THORNTON STORY.**

This production stars Canadian jazz great Jackie Richardson and will tour to the National Arts Centre in Ottawa in April 2013.

In September; in a co-production with the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, we'll produce John Logan's Tony Award-winning play, **RED**, about the iconic American painter Mark Rothko. *Red* will open in Victoria and then travel to Winnipeg in November.

In November and December, we're looking forward to celebrating the season with a new production of the Victorian classic, **A CHRISTMAS CAROL** by Charles Dickens, adapted and directed by Michael.

In January, the Belfry will collaborate with Toronto's Company Theatre to produce the award-winning Australian play, **SPEAKING IN TONGUES.**

Company Theatre was founded in 2004 by actors Allan Hawco (CBC TV – *The Republic of Doyle*) and Philip Riccio, and has garnered much critical praise and twelve Dora Award nominations in just eight years.

In February 2013, we'll relaunch programming in our 90-seat Studio A space with a new production of **HELEN'S NECKLACE** by Carole Fréchette, translated by John Murrell.

A week later, on February 20, the Belfry/National Arts Centre co-production of Michel Nadeau's **AND SLOWLY BEAUTY...** ▶

will open at Toronto's Tarragon Theatre.

From March 2–10, we collaborate with Pacific Opera Victoria on a new production of Benjamin Britten's **LET'S MAKE AN OPERA / THE LITTLE SWEEP**.

Britten wrote some of the most appealing classical music of the last century and was committed to introducing children to the magic of music. *Let's Make An Opera* is a play in which we see a group of children and adults write and rehearse an opera; the second act is a performance of the finished opera, *The Little Sweep*, a touching morality tale that we can all empathize with.

In this unique piece, you take an active role as the chorus of the opera. Don't worry, it will be fun and together we can introduce the children in our lives to the joys of both opera and theatre.

On March 11, we'll start our hugely successful **SPARK Festival** with four major shows including Hannah Moscovitch's **LITTLE ONE** (Toronto), **NIGHT**, created in Nunavut by Christopher Morris, **ONE** by Jason Carnew (Calgary) and **A BRIMFUL OF ASHA**, a delightful new play by real-life mother and son, Asha and Ravi Jain, who share the stage and tell this true (and very Canadian) story of generational and cultural clash.

SPARK will also feature a new raft of the insanely popular miniplays, new play readings and professional development workshops.

The final production of the new season will be the world premiere of a magical new musical, **LET ME CALL YOU SWEETHEART**, written and composed by Fernwood's Bruce Ruddell (*Beyond Eden*) and Bill Henderson, the frontman for the Canadian rock band Chilliwack.

Season ticket packages for the Belfry's Mainstage season (*Red, A Christmas Carol, Speaking in Tongues* and *Let Me Call You Sweetheart*) start at \$76 – yes, \$76 for four shows – many of our fellow theatre companies laugh at us for charging so little.

We've also introduced a **Flex Pass** this season – four vouchers for anything in our season. One person can see four shows, two can see two, or you can bring three friends to the performance of your choice.

For young parents, the theatre offers a **free childcare** programme on Sundays, and for seniors, **Wednesday matinees** at 1 pm.

Season Tickets
are available
now at
250-385-6815.

Tickets for BIG MAMA! THE WILLIE MAE THORNTON STORY will go on sale April 17. Single tickets for the remainder of the season will go on sale in July.

We hope you'll join us for the new season.

If you have any questions or would like to renew or order your season tickets please visit our Box Office.

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Creative Team



Yasmina Reza

Yasmina Reza (*Playwright*) Yasmina Reza is a French playwright and novelist based in Paris whose works have all been multi-award-winning, critical and popular international successes produced worldwide and translated into 35 languages. She has written seven plays (*Conversations After a Burial*, *The Passage of Winter*, *Art*, *The Unexpected Man*, *Life X 3*, *A Spanish Play*, *God of Carnage*, *How You Talk the Game*) and six novels (*Hammerklavier*, *Une Desolation* (*Desolation*), *Adam Haberberg*, *Dans la Luge d'Arthur Schopenhauer*, *Nulle Part* and *L'Aube*, *le Soir ou la Nuit* (*Dawn Dusk or Night*)). Films include: *Le Pique-Nique de Lulu Kreutz*, directed by Didier Martiny and *Chicas*, written and directed by the author.



Christopher Hampton

Christopher Hampton (*Translator*) Christopher Hampton's plays, musicals, and translations have garnered three Tony Awards, two Olivier Awards, four Evening Standard Awards, and the New York Theatre Critics Circle Award. Prizes for his film and television work include an Academy Award, two BAFTAs, a Writer's Guild of America Award, the Prix Italian and a Special Jury Award at the Cannes Film Festival. His plays for the Royal Court include *Treats*, *Savages*, *The Philanthropist*, *Uncle Vanya*, *Total Eclipse*, *Marya*, and *When Did You Last See My Mother*. Other plays include *Embers*, *Three Sisters*, *Art*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *The Talking Cure*, *Alice's Adventures Under Ground*, *White Chameleon*, *Tales From Hollywood*, *Don Juan Comes Back From the War*, *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, *An Enemy of the People*, *The Wild Duck*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Life X 3*, *Tartuffe*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *The Unexpected Man*, and *Conversations After A Burial*. Hampton's plays have been performed at the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Almeida, the Royal National Theatre, and both in the West End and on Broadway. His television credits include *The Ginger Tree*, *Hotel du Lac*, *The History Man*, and *Able's Will*. He has written the screenplays for *Atonement*, *Imagining Argentina*, *The Quiet American*, *The Secret Agent*, *Mary Reilly*, *Carrington*, *Total Eclipse*, *Dangerous Liaisons*, *Wolf at the Door*, *The Good Father*, *The Honorary Consul*, *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, and *A Doll's House*.



Glynis Leyshon

Glynis Leyshon (*Director*) Artistic Director of Vancouver Playhouse Theatre Company from 1997 to 2008, Glynis was previously Artistic Director of the Belfry Theatre for 11 years and headed the Banff Centre's Opera as Theatre program for three seasons. She has directed productions for Pacific Opera Victoria including this season's *The Flying Dutchman*, Calgary Opera, Vancouver Opera, Edmonton Opera, and Opera Lyra, Ottawa. She has directed theatre productions across the country including projects for the Shaw Festival, Canadian Stage Company, Alberta Theatre Projects, the National Arts Centre, Bard on the Beach, the Grand Theatre, and Tarragon Theatre. A recipient of the YWCA Women of Distinction Award, she is looking forward to directing *Arms and the Man* for Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre this summer.

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Creative Team



John Ferguson

John Ferguson (*Designer*) John most recently designed both set and costumes for *And Slowly Beauty...* and has been resident designer for Theatre Calgary, Neptune Theatre, the National Arts Centre, the Canadian Stage Company. He has designed for all the major regional theatres from coast to coast as well as Mirvish Productions, the Canadian Opera Company, Pacific Opera Victoria, the Shaw Festival and the Stratford Festival, where he has designed twenty productions. He is the recipient of two Dora Mavor Moore Awards, Montreal's la Soirée des Masques Award, Vancouver's Jessie Richardson Award and a Tyrone Guthrie Award. Previous Belfry designs include *The Year of Magical Thinking*, *The Real Thing* and *Anything That Moves*.



Guy Simard

Guy Simard (*Lighting Designer*) Born and raised in Montreal, and a graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada, Guy Simard has been teaching lighting design at NTS for more than 20 years. He has also taught at various schools in Belgium and France. With Renaud Doucet and André Barbe he has designed productions for numerous companies such as Opera du Rhin (France), Opera de Marseille (France), Volksoper in Vienna (Austria), Royal Swedish Opera (Sweden), Hamburg State Opera (Germany), New York City Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Arizona Opera, Palm Beach Opera, and Opera Kentucky (USA). His design experience in Circus includes the Cheval Theatre horse show in 2001 and Big Apple Circus shows from 2004 to 2007. Throughout the years he has been the lighting designer for more than 500 productions. He has received several awards for his achievements in lighting, including the Prize of the Public at the first International Symposium of Light of Canada in 2000.



Brian Linds

Brian Linds (*Sound Designer*) Previous sound designs at the Belfry include *The Trespassers*, *Bordertown Café*, *The Violet Hour*, *Turn of the Screw* and *The Girl in the Goldfish Bowl*. His mini-play design, *Iso Tank*, was commissioned as part of the 2010 Spark Festival. Last season, designs included the Electric Company's *No Exit* at ACT in San Francisco, *1984* with Virtual Stage/Studio58 and *August: Osage County* at the Arts Club. He's been nominated for Jessie Awards for *True West* at the Vancouver Playhouse and *The History Boys* at the Arts Club. As an actor you may remember him in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Urinetown*, and *Art*. Upcoming, he is both acting in and designing sound for Blue Bridge Theatre's *Arms and the Man* and *Of Mice and Men*.



Jennifer Swan

Jennifer Swan (*Stage Manager*) It's always wonderful to come home. Since 1999, Jen has worked on and off at the Belfry as Administrative Assistant, Assistant Stage Manager, Stage Manager, and Assistant General Manager. She is thrilled to return to stage manage *God of Carnage*. As a Stage Manager, highlights of working across the country include Theatre SKAM, the Vancouver Playhouse, the Arts Club Theatre, Vancouver Opera, Caravan Farm Theatre, Prairie Theatre Exchange, the National Arts Centre, and many others. She has lived in Vancouver since 2008, where in addition to stage management, she is the Company Manager for Electric Company Theatre.



Jess Amy Shead

Jess Amy Shead (*Apprentice Stage Manager*) Jess started stage managing on *Lord of the Flies* for Company C, the 3rd year program at the Canadian College of Performing Arts. Since graduating in December 2012, she has stage managed *Pornography* and *Shining City* for Fernwood's other resident theatre company, Theatre Inconnu. Jess started off as the Apprentice Stage Manager at the Belfry in January with *on the edge*, and continued as Stage Manager during the SPARK festival for *Belfry 101 Live*, as well as SNAFU Dance Theatre's *Kitt & Jane*. She is honored to finish off this season with *God of Carnage*. Jess enjoys working and furthering her skills in all areas of theatre, offstage and on.

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