

THE THIN PLACE

Intiman Theatre

Kate Whoriskey, Artistic Director | Brian Colburn, Managing Director MAY-JUNE 2010



FROM ARTISTIC DIRECTOR KATE WHORISKEY

Welcome to this performance of The Thin Place, the first world premiere of my new tenure as Artistic Director. This project represents a lot of what I hope to bring to Intiman-a commitment to developing new plays and supporting local artists, to bringing theatre artists together with artists from other disciplines, and to creating work for the city of Seattle and introducing Intiman to new communities in Seattle.

Elsewhere in this program, you will read about the making of the play, which began as an idea inspired by the personal reflections of Dan Savage. What you see on stage is the result of many people coming together to use all the dynamic possibilities of theatre as an art form. The Thin Place is traditional neither as a docudrama nor as a one-man show. A 'play with one actor,' it is based on the stories of real Seattleites, which have been transformed and theatricalized by playwright Sonya Schneider; the play she has written follows the heightened journey of a single character, Isaac, who is wrestling with faith, loss, grief and moving forward.

Telling a story about Seattle at this time was a very intentional part of season planning for this year. As my

family and I get settled, moving forward on our own journey, I wanted to begin to investigate this city. We are looking at what people believe-how some people find strength in their faith, and others find a different kind of comfort in accepting the absence of God.

This project is a way for us to open a door to dialogue with people from different backgrounds and beliefs, to bring them into the theatre-and to go out to them, in their own communities. That is a very important part of what we do here at Intiman. It goes to the heart of how we define what it means to be a Seattle theatre. One of the most vital parts of our mission is to create ways for people to talk about issues in our community through the work that we do, both on stage and in our outreach and education programs.

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THIS PROJECT IS A WAY FOR US TO OPEN A DOOR

TO DIALOGUE WITH PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS AND BELIEFS, TO BRING THEM INTO THE THEATRE-AND TO GO OUT TO THEM, IN THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES.

It is also an opportunity to give Sonya Schneider, a promising Seattle playwright, the chance to do something brave and original on our stage. I love the process by which new plays are developed. Lynn Nottage's Ruined (which you will see as the next production on this stage) was a five-year journey that required a tremendous amount of nurturing and work and faith, and a very important story got told. I want Intiman to be a place where stories like that can develop.

And that is the heart of The Thin Place-the coming together of artists who are pushing themselves and asking big questions. Gbenga Akinnagbe is such a powerful and intelligent actor. Not many people can hold the stage for an entire performance and play 11 very different roles-Gbenga can. We are happy to put challenging material in his hands and see where he takes it. I'm thrilled by our entire design and creative team-Etta Lilienthal Ben Zamora. Matt Starritt and Judy Shahn. Donald Byrd is one of the artists I admire most in Seattle, and Marvin McAllister has been a collaborator of mine on other projects, and I'm very glad to have him in my first season as the play's dramaturg.

The core of the play is the experiment and collaboration between Marcie Sillman, Sonya Schneider and Andrew Russell. Marcie is a great journalist; she interviewed me many years ago, when I first directed at Intiman, and she is one of the best interviewers I have ever met. Sonya has been important to this theatre for many years; she has crafted something unique and provocative.

Andrew, who has had a vision and a passion for this play, is a colleague who was integral to the making of *Ruined* and someone I know to be an insightful and exacting theatre artist. He has joined the artistic staff of Intiman this season as our Associate Producer, and is making his debut here with this production.

I hope you enjoy the adventure of this project!

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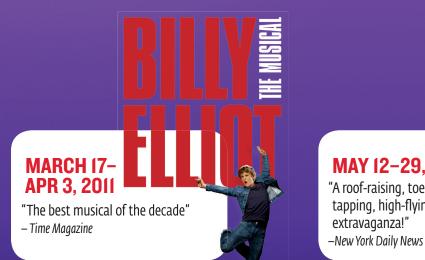


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Intiman Theatre

KATE WHORISKEY, Artistic Director

PRESENTS т н L D

THE **THIN PLACE**

By Sonya Schneider Conceived and Directed by Andrew Russell

Scenic and Costume Designer Lighting Designer Sound Designer Vocal/Dialect Coach Movement and Choreography Consultant Dramaturg Stage Manager Assistant to the Stage Manager

The Thin Place is based on Marcie Sillman's interviews with Seattle residents, commissioned by Intiman Theatre in the fall of 2009. The play is performed without an intermission.

Opening Night: May 21, 2010

The actor and stage manager employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

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Intiman Theatre is a member of the League of Resident Theatres, Theatre Communications Group, Washington State Arts Alliance, Greater Seattle Business Association and Theatre Puget Sound. Intiman operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States, the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, and United Scenic Artists.

BRIAN COLBURN, Managing Director

PREMIERE O F

A Play with One Actor Featuring

Gbenga Akinnagbe

Etta Lilienthal Ben Zamora Matt Starritt Judith Shahn Donald Byrd Marvin McAllister Melissa Y. Hamasaki Lisa Stahler



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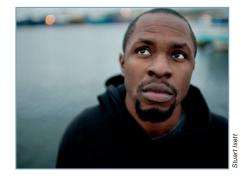
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The Making of a New Play

In the beginning, Dan Savage told a story.



The Thin Place was inspired by Seattle journalist and provocateur Dan Savage's podcast "Return to the Scene of the Crime," which was broadcast on This American Life in May 2009. In the episode, Savage talks about his complex relationship to the Catholicism of his youth and how, after the death of his mother, he found himself unexpectedly drawn back to the faith he had rejected. Listening to the podcast, incoming Artistic Director Kate Whoriskey and her

associate Andrew Russell, who joined Intiman's staff as Associate Producer this season, were inspired to create a new piece about religion. They decided to make the story both in and of Seattle, as a way to get to know their new home city-and as an opportunity to look deeply at responses to God in a city that in some

ways claims to be without religion. In the fall of 2009. Intiman commissioned

KUOW radio journalist Marcie Sillman to interview more than a dozen people about points of crisis in their lives and how they came to question, confront and ultimately embrace their faith. Among the people who shared their stories are a Cambodianborn confinement survivor; a former Episcopal priest defrocked for having converted to Islam; a survivor of the shooting at the Jewish Federation; a Native American woman who returned to her tribe after a childhood in which she often "passed" as white; a committed atheist who grew up feeling like

"They decided to make the story both in and of Seattle, as a way to get to know their new home city-and as an opportunity to look deeply at responses to God in a city that in some ways claims to be without religion."

an outsider in his country and his church; a Buddhist who traveled to Thailand to become a monk; and a gay political activist who grew up in South Africa during apartheid and now believes equally in spiritual and social justice.

Midway through the interviews, Sonya Schneider joined the creative team, bringing a playwright's perspective to the story-gathering process. She then transformed the stories into a theatrical narrative focused around a single person-Isaac, the son of a Pentecostal minister. Doubting his father, his faith and his community and suffering from mysterious episodes, Isaac sets out on a journey to find faith-or accept God's absence. The strangers he encounters in unexpected places (characters crafted from the interviews) become his guides, with Akinnagbe portraying all the roles under Russell's direction.

The Thin Place is the 15th play to have its world premiere at Intiman since it was founded as "Seattle's Classic Theatre" in 1972 and only the third by a local playwright, following R.N. Sandburg's adaptation of Frankenstein in 1989 and Catherine by Louisa Rose in 1992.



the midst of rehearsals, Intiman invited SONYA SCHNEIDER and ANDREW RUSSELL (in photos above) to talk about the process of creating The Thin Place. Here, they discuss the development of the play, what makes Seattle special, and finding your own voice. The other photographs on these pages are of some of the real people who shared their stories during the development of this project. Sonya, Andrew, all the members of the creative team and everyone at Intiman give special thanks and appreciation to them for their honesty and trust in this project.

Sonya: Andrew, you moved to Seattle very recently, and you've just joined Intiman's staff. Congratulations on that! How has our project colored your impression of this city, and vice versa?

Andrew: Kate and I already started a conversation about the play before I had ever been to Seattle-so my first experience with the city was calling all of these places of worship to schedule a visit to discuss the project. Within my first three days of being in Seattle I had been to a church, a mosque and a temple-which, considering I'm an atheist from New York City, felt very odd. Talk about an introduction! I was overwhelmed. Then later, as I listened to the interviews, I felt like I was getting to know a lot about religion and about Seattle-the importance of the outdoors, the steadiness of pace, the desire for truth and facts, a keen sense of inquiry and curiosity, and a real sense of consideration. I've now been here a month and a half and all of that has turned out to be very true. Just recently I told a friend back in New York, "I like the effect Seattle is having on

me." Our protagonist comes to Seattle for a purpose-to get away from something, and to find something-and I now wholeheartedly understand the city's allure. I will forever think of The Thin Place as my transition to a new home in Seattle, and that's incredibly special.

"I wrestled with how to present the stories honestly, yet dramatically"

I know that you have a long history with the theatre. What's it been like for you to return as a playwright? And what's it like to be a playwright working in Seattle?

Sonya: Yes, I started at Intiman soon after moving from New York to Seattle. One of the ideas of a "thin place" that intrigues me is the sense of sacred physical spacewhether it is a church or a sandy beach or a theatre. In a sense, Intiman's building has

taken on this sacred meaning for me—every part of this theatre contains living memories for me, especially the rehearsal studio, where I have watched wonderful stories come alive.

Working as a playwright in Seattle is encouraging because the theatre is everywhere (dare I say it's one of our religions?). This was also true in New York—but here I see friends in the audience and I can also take a tree-filled hike with my husband and daughter every day. Still, it's not easy carving out a place as a playwright, and, I would go so far as to say, especially as a female playwright. In many ways what Isaac says about Seattle being a place where things have to be substantiated is true of our community - you have to prove yourself. But you have to have people, like Kate, who are willing to take risks, to provide the opportunity in which to do that.

It's funny to me that, even though we didn't know each other before this process, we both assisted Kate at different times, and we've both assisted very strong playwrights-Craig Lucas in my case, and you worked with Tony Kushner for three years.



"The Thin Place is not just a spiritual collision between humans" and the divine; it's a collision between people

Andrew: Being an assistant is the best education—you learn how others handle situations and challenges you know you one day will face. Having worked with Tony and Kate was a gift and I often hear myself echoing them. Also, working closely with a playwright and a director who is so skilled at collaborating on new work has made me fall in love with new works and new-play development. When I don't have a playwright in the room I feel off balance!

You joined us early in the process, when there was a commitment for Intiman to produce the play but when we were still calling this the "Untitled Faith Project." What was it like for you to dive in like that?

Sonya: When we first spoke, seven months seemed like no time at all. Today, it feels almost perfect—which is in large part due to having such close collaborators, including the guidance of Marvin, who is a wonderful dramaturg, and the ability to do two concentrated workshops with you, him and Gbenga.

It was a little daunting that a week after joining the project, we had to come up with a title—normally for me that is literally the final step of a project. In this case, you

had an idea of what it might be, so when I was listening to the interviews that had been done-there were five of them at that point—I had a sense of what I might be listening for. When I heard the phrase "thin places" from one of our interviewees, I was immediately intrigued. I thought, well, that's the kind of direction I'd like the play to take—one of intrigue.

The interviews Marcie did are so powerful and personal. I wrestled mightily with how to present the stories honestly, yet dramatically. When I recently read one interviewee's response to the finished play, that she felt her story was represented with artistry and integrity, I was so happy! I'm thankful for the chance to get to know these people in the way only theatre can let us know each other.

What has it been like for you to direct the play?

Andrew: I've so enjoyed the process with you and opening it up to a rehearsal room with Gbenga has been a delight—he brings as much energy as a cast of 11! The play itself is tricky because so much is happening. We have to find the authentic physical and vocal life for almost a dozen people,

establish relationships between these people and a single protagonist, lay out a clear arc for that protagonist, integrate a dynamic sound and light design that will glue all of the elements together....and every single day there is only one actor who needs to be motivated, driven, excited, cheered and challenged. At the end of the day the story rests on his shoulders, and he's the one that truly owns it.

One thing that has been very exciting for me personally is feeling that I have learned something new. The abstract and otherworldly quality of your play, not to mention working with a single actor and our jungle gym of a set, has inspired me to explore storytelling more through movement, gesture and sound as well as through words. This process is inspiring me to go further in that direction and how I collaborate with choreographers, musicians and artists of other performance-based (and non-performancebased) mediums.

Sonya: I understand that. Having the set and other design elements happen around me pushed me to express the essence of the play, and to have faith in the vision of our designers, in a very (continued on page 10)

The Pulitzer Prize and a Platform for Cause

This year. Intiman Theatre is embarking on one of the most ambitious undertakings in its history. We are launching a five-year series of plays designed to inspire a dialogue with global culture-to explore both what makes us unique and what we can learn from the rest of the world. This initiative, called the International Cycle, is about crossing borders and disciplines to make great art, and it is about being a platform for cause.

The most acclaimed new play of 2009, Ruined received the Pulitzer Prize for Drama and numerous other honors. In a small mining town in the war-torn Democratic Republic of Congo, Mama Nadi both protects and profits from the young women who come to her rain forest bar and brothel-Salima, stunned yet resilient; Josephine, sensual yet fragile; and Sophie, elegant

Unflinching in its portrayal of the horrors of war, sexual crimes and violence, *Ruined* is a play not about victims, but survivors.

The series launches this summer with the Pulitzer Prize-winning play Ruined, which will be co-produced with the Geffen Playhouse in Los Angeles and then travel to South Africa. This passionate and shattering play was inspired by the real experiences of Congolese women who bravely shared their stories with playwright Lynn Nottage and director Kate Whoriskey. For this reason, it is important that Ruined be brought back to Africa, where it will be shared with audiences at the internationally renowned Market Theatre and Congolese refugees in Johannesburg.

A five-year series, the International Cycle will include plays-like Ruined-that will be produced both in Seattle and at other theatres around the globe, and new theatre pieces that will be collaboratively developed by artists from Intiman and other countries. One goal of the Cycle is for us to promote relationships between American artists and artists from countries beyond Western Europe. It is also meant to inspire us to look more deeply at our own culture.

and outspoken.

Unflinching in its portrayal of the horrors of war, sexual crimes and violence, *Ruined* is a play not about victims, but survivors. It tells an important story through the eyes and voices of women whose lives are touched by brutality, but also by beauty, strength and artistry. It celebrates and examines the spectrum of human life in all its complexities: the sacred with the profane, the transcendent with the lethal, the flaws with the beauty, and selfishness with generosity.

For more information about the International Cycle and Ruined, including how to purchase tickets, visit www. intiman.org. Don't miss the theatre event of Seattle's summer!

The Pulitzer Prize-winning play Ruined will launch Intiman's new International Cycle this summer under the direction of new Artistic Director Kate Whoriskey, with Condola Rashad and Quincy Tyler Bernstein (in photo) and other original cast members.







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"For me this play is not about believing in a God or not, but about considering the other perspectives and also questioning authority"

(continued from page 8) different way than if they created the world after I handed them a complete text.

Gbenga also played a central role in the development of this play. I started to think about the play in a new way after he was cast-that was the point at which I did the only interview other than the ones conducted by Marcie, with a young African American man undergoing a crisis of faith. His potential role as a narrative force became clear and then, at the first workshop, hearing Gbenga interpret the words of all the characters, and hearing his reactions to the piece, inspired us to take the journey even further.

Donald didn't join us until rehearsals started but the day he came into the room, something clicked for me. The Thin Place is not just a spiritual collision between humans and the divine; it's a collision between people. When Gbenga started working on what it would look like to physically move between characters, I began to see the way this piece could really sing.

Andrew: I also loved how Donald said that for him, this isn't about God or religion but about someone finding their own voice.

Watching Gbenga (as Isaac) learn to occupy his space in the world has made this play click for me.

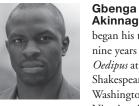
I've never considered myself a believer in the way most people define that word. Has this project changed your perspective on God, religion or faith—or people who believe in any of the above?

Sonya: Working on *The Thin Place* has brought me closer to God in the sense that it's brought me closer to people-to cultivating empathy, which is I think what happens when you work in the theatre. Each character is looking for a space in this world to call their own and that usually involves acceptance and love from a community and oneself. I identify with Isaac's journey not because I ever had a strong faith that I questioned, but because I've had to struggle to find my voice in the world, and that quest-for personal truth-is, in my mind, a common spiritual quest and one that lives at the heart of our identity as humans.

Andrew: I know that you have said the character of Pete was the easiest one for you to write, and in a simple way, he's the character I identify with the most. Just as he says his outsider identity as a black man gave him permission to question the church, I feel the same way about growing up gay in the Midwest. I knew all along I was something different, and that gave me a sense of freedom to always tip-toe outside of the norm.

When I started to work on this project, I was very fundamental in my own atheismnow I consider myself less so. I think I've learned that being fundamentally anything can be a danger, whether it is atheism or any kind of religion. I've read a lot about religion during the development of this piece, and I was struck by something Karen Armstrong wrote; that, in the beginning, the idea of atheism started as a clear opposition to whatever form of religiosity was then dominant—it wasn't necessarily about believing in a God or not, but about being in opposition to something. For me this play is not about believing in a God or not, but about considering the other perspectives and also questioning authority. You should only believe in what you believe-whatever that is-if you've questioned, tested and wrestled with it first.

WHO'S WHO



Akinnagbe (Actor) began his theatre career nine years ago in Oedipus at the Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, DC. A Nigerian-American

actor, he is best known for his role as street assassin "Chris Partlow" on the critically acclaimed HBO series The Wire. His recent film credits include The Taking of Pelham 123 and Edge of Darkness, starring Mel Gibson, and he has a starring role in the upcoming comedy *Lottery Ticket*, opposite Ice Cube and Bow Wow. On television, Gbenga has made guest appearances on The Good Wife, Fringe, Dark Blue, Law & Order, Conviction, Cold Case and Law & Order: SVU, and he starred in the Showtime series Barbershop. An accomplished stage actor, he was seen in The Public Theater's production of Henry Vat the Delacorte Theater. Gbenga frequently works with LAByrinth Theater Company, founded by Philip Seymour Hoffman and John Ortiz. His work with the group stemmed from his collaboration with Hoffman and Laura Linney in the Oscar-nominated independent feature The Savages. An avid world-traveler, he became a freelance writer for the New York Times in 2009 after the newspaper published his first article on his trip through the Himalayas. Gbenga's proudest accomplishments lie within his community outreach; he actively lends his energies to several non-profits: All for Africa, Youth at Risk, Rewired for Change and Shine on Sierra Leone. Gbenga Akinnagbe currently resides in New York.

Sonya Schneider (Playwright) has been writing all her life. In 2003, she became an intern at Intiman Theatre in the artistic department, where she was hired as Artistic Assistant under Bartlett Sher and worked in the production, casting and dramaturgical sides of the theatre for four seasons. Among the most inspiring moments of her Intiman tenure were: assisting Craig Lucas on Prayer for My Enemy and Kate Whoriskey on Blue/ Orange, working the ins-and-outs of the American Cycle and helping to cast, alongside Kate Godman, over a dozen productions. She left Intiman to focus on writing full-time and her debut play, Wake, premiered in 2008 at Seattle's Little Theatre, produced by Onward Ho! Productions and directed by Laurel Pilar Garcia. She is currently writing an adaptation of a Pulitzer Prize-winning novel for Seattle's Book-It Repertory Theatre and working on her latest play, Boy Lies, which recently had a read-

ing at Canoe Social Club. Prior to moving to Seattle, Sonya interned at Manhattan Theatre Club and The Samuel Bronfman Foundation. both in New York City. She graduated with an English degree from Stanford University in 2000 and has subsequently studied playwriting at the University of Washington and Seattle Dramatists. She is honored to return to this stage as a playwright. Thank you to Stuart, Calliope Pearl and our loving family for your support and inspiration.

Andrew Russell (Conceiver/Director, Associate Producer) joined Intiman's staff as Associate Producer this season. His recent credits include directing Jeanine Tesori's American Songbook concert for Jazz at Lincoln Center and overseeing Tony Kushner and Tesori's Courage in Concert at The Public Theater. Also in New York, he has directed for Ensemble Studio Theatre, the Subjective Theatre Company, The Gallery Players, Downtown Urban Theater Festival, Cherry Lane Studio Theatre, Columbia University and New York University. He has assistant directed productions at The Flea, Signature Theatre and Manhattan Theatre Club, and worked with the Sundance Theatre Laboratory and the Orchard Project. In addition to his work as a director, he was Tony Kushner's assistant for more than three years, worked in creative development with David Stone and was a producer with Naked Angels. He was the assistant director to Kate Whoriskey on the world premiere of Ruined and the recent Broadway production of The Miracle Worker. Andrew attended Carnegie Mellon University, where he studied acting and directing.

Etta Lilienthal (Scenic and Costume

Recent scenic design credits include theatre and dance performances for Seattle Rep, Devil Theatre, Maureen Whiting Dance Theater and UMO Ensemble. Film credits and The Sidewalk Never Ends. Etta studied scene design at Smith College and Textile

Designer) is a scenographer, production designer and visual designer residing in Seattle. Seattle Children's Theatre, ACT, New Century Theatre, Washington Ensemble Theatre, Book-It, Madison Rep, Theater Schmeater, Printer's Company, 33 Fainting Spells, Spectrum Dance include Production Design for the feature films Cthulhu (Regents Releasing 2008) and Police Beat (Sundance Film Festival, SIFF 2005), and the short films Arthur, C.C. 2010, Rainbow (SIFF Fly Film) *Diggers* (IFP Spotlight Winner) Design at Glasgow School of Arts in Scotland, and she holds a Bachelor and Master of Fine Arts in Scene Design from California Institute

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of the Arts. Awards include the 2003-2005 NEA/TCG Career Development Program for Designers, a 2000 Artist Trust/Washington State Arts Commission Fellowship and a 1998 Princess Grace Foundation Scholarship Award for Scene Design. Her work has been featured in City Arts, Entertainment Design, Arts Patron, American Theatre, Seattle Weekly, The Stranger, and the Seattle Times Magazine and has been shortlisted three times for The

Stranger's Genius Awards. Her latest collabora-

tion, with lighting designer Ben Zamora, is for

the new Velocity Dance Center in Seattle.

Ben Zamora (*Lighting Designer*) received an MFA in Lighting Design from the University of Washington and a BA in Theatre from the University of California, Santa Cruz. His designs have been seen at venues around the world including Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York; the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia; the Los Angeles Philharmonic with Esa-Pekka Salonen at Walt Disney Concert Hall; De Doelen with the Rotterdam Philharmonic in The Netherlands; Connecticut Grand Opera; Off Broadway at Theatre Row; Joyce SoHo in New York: SUSHI Performance and Visual Art in San Diego; and Portland Institute of Contemporary Art. In Seattle he has designed for The Moore, Book-It Repertory Theatre, Seattle Shakespeare Company and various premieres at On the Boards. Recently, he designed Tristan und Isolde (The Tristan Project) in collaboration with director Peter Sellars and video artist Bill Viola. Ben was listed on The Stranger's 2009 Genius Awards Shortlist along with his artistic collaborator, Etta Lilienthal. He is an Adjunct Faculty Member at Seattle University and an Ensemble Member and Co-Artistic Director of Washington Ensemble Theatre.

Matt Starritt (Sound Designer) is a freelance sound designer for both theatre and dance and a writer from Seattle. A founder of the Washington Ensemble Theatre, he was the resident sound designer for the company's first four seasons. Recent designs: Glengarry Glen Ross, Speech and Debate, Opus, Breakin' Hearts & Takin' Names, The Seafarer, boom! and The Imaginary Invalid for Seattle Rep; Washington Ensemble Theatre's BlahBlahBlah:BANG! at On the Boards; pro re nata for LAUNCH dance theatre; Waxie Moon's Extreme Boylesque at the OTB Northwest New Works Festival 2008; The K of D for Pistol Cat Productions; Confederacy of Dunces, Even *Cowgirls Get the Blues* and *Persuasion* for Book-It Rep; Iphigenia in Aulis, Crumbs Are

Also Bread, Museum Play, CRAVE and Finer Noble Gases at Washington Ensemble Theatre; Henry V and Swansong for Seattle Shakespeare Company; and *Ring Round the Moon* for the UW School of Drama.

Judith Shahn (Vocal/Dialect Coach) most recently worked on Intiman's production of Paradise Lost. Other shows at Intiman include A Thousand Clowns, All the King's Men, To Kill a Mockingbird, Native Son, Our Town, Heartbreak House, Homebody/Kabul and Singing Forest. Locally, she has also worked at Seattle Rep (Glengarry Glen Ross, The Road to Mecca, The Three Musketeers, The Cook, The Waters of Babylon, Doubt and Private Lives) and ACT (The Clean House, A Number, The Night of the Iguana and A Marvelous Party). Other credits include The Light in the Piazza (national tour), Oregon Shakespeare Festival and Utah Shakespearean Festival. Judith has taught at the University of Washington's School of Drama for the last 20 years.

Donald Byrd (*Movement and Choreography* Consultant) is Artistic Director of Spectrum Dance Theater. He received a Tony Award nomination for the Broadway musical The Color Purple and subsequently recreated his work on that show for two national tours. This season he directed and choreographed the premiere of the Broadway-bound musical White Noise (New Orleans) as well as a production of the Tim Rice/Elton John musical Aida (Big Easy Award nominee for Best Choreography). His recent work with Spectrum includes A Chekhovian Resolution (2009) and Farewell: a fantastical contemplation on America's relationship with China (2010) both part of Spectrum's innovative three-year programming initiative PAMU (Beyond Dance: Promoting Awareness and Mutual Understanding), which produces dance/theatre works that promote dialogue around geopolitical themes. To many he is probably best known for The Harlem Nutcracker, a reworking of the Christmas classic that toured nationally for five years. He has worked at many leading American theatres including Intiman, Seattle Children's Theatre, Centerstage (Baltimore), The Public Theater/New York Shakespeare Festival and La Jolla Playhouse; choreographed for Seattle Opera, San Francisco Opera, Dutch National Opera and New York City Opera, and collaborated with the great American theatre artists Anna Deavere Smith and Peter Sellars as well as with the late jazz great Max Roach. His work has been seen in many modern dance and classical repertory companies including Alvin Ailey American

WHO'S WHO

Dance Theater, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, Pacific Northwest Ballet, MaggioDanza diFirenze, Oregon Ballet Theater, Aterballetto and The Joffrey Ballet of Chicago, to name a few. He was a Fellow at Harvard's Institute on the Arts & Civic Dialogue for three years, served three terms as a commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs (Seattle Arts Commission), served on the Board of Dance/USA, and currently serves on the Board of Trustees for Dance Theater Workshop in New York.

Marvin McAllister (Dramaturg) is the author of "White People Do Not Know How To Behave At Entertainments Designed For Ladies and Gentlemen of Colour": William Brown's African and American Theater, a tumultuous history of a Negro theatre company in 1820s Manhattan. His current research projects include a broad study of whiteface minstrelsy and stage Europeans throughout four centuries of African American performance and a focused history of the Howard College Dramatic Club/ Howard Players and their transition from early modern European classics to modern "race" dramas. Marvin has taught drama and theatre courses at universities across the country, including the University of South Carolina where he is currently an Assistant Professor. His undergraduate degree is in history and theatre studies from Yale University, and he holds an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in theatre/drama from Northwestern University. He has worked as a dramaturg and literary manager for theatres in Chicago, the District of Columbia and Cleveland, and he is especially grateful to Kate, Andrew, Sonya, and the rest of Intiman for this spiritually gracious new play.

Marcie Sillman (Interviews) has been a radio journalist for more than 30 years. Since 1985, she's worked at KUOW, Seattle's NPR affiliate, where she is currently Senior Reporter and Special Projects Producer specializing in arts and cultural coverage. Marcie has interviewed and profiled such artists as playwright August Wilson, guitarist Bill Frisell and painter Jacob Lawrence. Her documentaries and feature stories have earned her numerous regional and national awards. In 2009, Marcie was selected as a National Endowment for the Arts fellow in arts journalism, with a focus on dance criticism. She and her family live in Seattle.

Melissa Y. Hamasaki (Stage Manger) is pleased to return to Intiman, where she has stage managed the Living History program. Local credits include: Extraordinary Chambers, The Women, Fiction (ACT), Everyone Knows What a Dragon Looks Like



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(Seattle Children's Theatre), Carmen, The Tales of Hoffmann (Seattle Opera), Seven Brides for Seven Brothers, Mame, Memphis (5th Avenue Theatre) and Two by Pinter (Shadow and Light). Selected regional credits: Metamorphoses, Five Guys Named Moe (Utah's Pioneer Theatre); L'elisir d'amore (Michigan's Pine Mountain Music Festival), Evening of Elegance (Virginia School of the Arts). Training: Allen Lee Hughes Fellowship Program at Washington, DC's Arena Stage; Technical Apprentice at the Santa Fe Opera in New Mexico.

Intiman Theatre's core commitment is to make theatre that is relevant to our time. It is celebrated as an activist theatre that produces ambitious and exciting productions of classics and new plays. Through its work on stage, innovative community engagement programs and a statewide arts education program, Intiman fosters conversation and debate among its audiences, students and people with limited access to the arts. Guided by the vision of Artistic Director Kate Whoriskey and Managing Director Brian Colburn, Intiman supports the development of new works, interdisciplinary and international collaborations, and diverse voices. Founded in 1972, Intiman was awarded the 2006 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre.

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Cover photograph of Gbenga Akinnagbe © Stuart Isett

Special Thanks

All the Seattleites who bravely shared their stories for this piece, Dan Savage, Lora-Ellen McKinney, Noah Benson, Patricia Murphy, Marshal McReal, Kerstin James, Kevin Malgesini, Mark and Laurie Russell, Ashley Nicole-Sherman, Kylee Rousselot, Gaius Charles, Tim Stone, Macky Alston, Leonard Cox, Katy Sewell, Crunchy Mama Granola, Stuart Nagae, Marcia and Randy Schneider, Marcia and Jerry Nagae, Matt Schneider, Emily Trenkner, Laurel Garcia, Rebecca Sherr Christian, Kate Godman, and Richard E.T. White and Cornish College of the Arts.

Join Us!

Intiman will host post-show conversations-'Spirited Discussions'—after every performance of The Thin Place following opening night. The bar will stay open, with

SAVE THE DATE

Grand Opening of Theater Commons & **Dedication of Donnelly Gardens** at Theater Commons

Tuesday, June 15, 4 pm—6pm **Theater Commons South Terrace**

This new, sustainably landscaped north campus entry area welcomes visitors with a tree-lined pedestrian corridor, terraced seating area, attractive and functional vehicle turnaround and small accessible parking court.

Created in collaboration with the Seattle Repertory Theatre and Intiman Theatre. Theater Commons offers active open space. improved visibility to the theaters, innovative storm water detention and an engaging natural experience.

Please join Seattle Center, Seattle Repertory Theatre and Intiman Theatre and Seattle Center Foundation the afternoon of June 15th for the dedication, entertainment and celebration!



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behind the scenes with the artists from this

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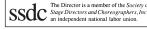
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