

MISSION STATEMENT

Frank Theatre is a professional theatre company committed to producing unique work that stretches the skills of the artists who create the work while simultaneously challenging the everyday perceptions of the audience through the exploration of ideas and issues of social, political and/or cultural concern.

Frank Theatre was founded with the desire to produce work that provides opportunities for artists to grow, to stretch, to work outside of and beyond the typical opportunities provided by theatres with a greater commercial interest. The theatre has successfully pursued this goal through the consistent staging of works that require the actors, designers, and director to challenge themselves and each other.

The theatre is a Twin Cities' based company, founded in 1989 by Artistic Director Wendy Knox. In its eighteen-year history, the theatre has staged 38 productions.

The theatre is committed to producing work that reflects the world in which we live.



Call the Guthrie
Box Office at
612-377-2224
for tickets
& information.

Want to receive Frank Theatre updates via e-mail? Join our CyberPatrol®! Send us an e-mail at info@franktheatre.org, and we'll keep you cyberposted!

WHY THIS PLAY?

I don't often direct plays that I have seen before. One of the strongest impulses that drives me is an insatiable curiosity. The process of excavating a script, of asking what, why and how, combined with asking the same questions of the artistic team (*Why are we doing this play? What does it mean to us, to an audience, today? How can we best put this thing up on its feet?*), is my favorite thing about my job.

I saw *THE PILLOWMAN* in New York, and it was one of the most theatrically satisfying experiences I have ever had. I admit: I am a tough audience member. I want good theatre. I want theatre that makes me work, makes me think, question, and that gives me food for thought long after I have left the building. I want to see the artists wrestle with their abilities, and to soar with new challenges. I want theatre that is smart, that tickles my imagination, and that makes me think about the world we live in. There's not a whole lot of theatre out there that can fill that ambitious bill, so when I find a piece that does so, it's such a treat. I want to wrestle with what makes theatre good—what makes it GREAT.

Working day after day in the theatre, sometimes simply going to a performance becomes yet another aspect of the job. The occasions when you are transported (as you might have been when you first discovered the potential of live theatre) become, sadly, fewer and farther between. Yet, just a couple of years ago, I was thrilled to have the experience of seeing three GREAT productions in a very short window of time. Two of them were local (Jim Lichtscheid's *KNÖCK* and Nautilus' *MAN OF LA MANCHA*); the third was the New York production of *THE PILLOWMAN*, which offered a script that was oh, so smart and oh, so WRONG, performances that were delicious, and scene design that was breathtaking and mundane at once. The play is astonishingly brutal and hysterically funny at the same time; the script is a delightful little hall of mirrors, a psychological thriller that offered a new twist every time I thought I had the story figured out—right up to the end. (One reviewer wrote "This is the most disturbing, yet funniest, play I have seen in a long time.") It was storytelling at its finest, and the performance that I saw was an exquisite example of the theatrical form fully realizing its potential—at least, according to my twisted aesthetic and warped sensibilities.

I had no idea *THE PILLOWMAN* would become the hit that it is; the humor is dark and disturbing, the subject matter is serious, and oh, there are just so many things about it that are deliciously wrong. I was mistaken. We spent two years trying to get the rights. As we don't often produce work that other theatres want to do, it was a new experience—both odd and frustrating—to be wrestling for rights to the play. Once we succeeded, I confronted a new dilemma: wondering if I really needed to direct the play after seeing such a complete production. Would those delightfully nagging questions that propel me through a rehearsal process still drive me, and would I be able to erase that production from my mind? Once I assembled the artistic team for this show, that dilemma quickly evaporated. We have a delightful and wonderfully twisted mix of artists who are having a field day with the script. The opportunity to stage this piece in the new Dowling Studio space at the Guthrie is a treat—and not just because the building offers heat unlike the adventurous space we recently occupied directly across the river (the Pillsbury A Mill). We're thrilled at the possibilities this project offers.

Ben Brantley included this advisory note in his review: "severed fingers and heads, electric drills, barbed wire and premature burial all figure prominently." No, this is not storytelling for the kids. *THE PILLOWMAN* has outraged and thrilled audiences in London, New York, Chicago, and San Francisco. Be forewarned, but also be ready for a great show. We look forward to seeing you at the Dowling Studio!

Wendy Knox, Artistic Director



PHOTO BY ANN MARSDEN

FRANK T H E A T R E

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
3156 23rd Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55407-1907
www.franktheatre.org



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U.S. Postage
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Minneapolis, MN

SEPTEMBER 20 - OCTOBER 14, 2007

Frank Theatre receives the generous support of The McKnight Foundation, DigitalRiver, TCF Foundation, Metropolitan Regional Arts Council through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature, General Mills Foundation, the Nash Foundation, several family funds of the Minneapolis Foundation, and many, many generous individual contributors.

Frankly Speaking

NEWS OF FRANK THEATRE • SEPTEMBER 2007

The Guthrie Presents
Frank Theatre's production of

MARTIN MCDONAGH'S **THE** **PILLOWMAN**



PHOTO BY TONY NELSON

SEPTEMBER 20 — OCTOBER 14, 2007

IN THE DOWLING STUDIO AT THE GUTHRIE

818 2nd Street South, Minneapolis

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

- Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 7:30pm, Sundays at 1:00pm, also Wednesday, October 3 and 10 at 7:30pm.
- Tickets are \$18 to \$34 with a \$5 discount for students, seniors.
- For info and reservations, call the **Guthrie Box Office at 612-377-2224.**
- Post-show panel discussions are Sunday, September 23, September 30 and October 7.
- The performance on Friday, October 12 is audio described and ASL interpreted.
- September 29 is a Silent Auction Benefit for Frank Theatre; tickets must be purchased in advance through Frank Theatre (call 612-724-3760 for info). Tickets for this event are \$60, including wine, appetizers, the performance, and silent auction.
- For other information, please call Frank Theatre at 612-724-3760, or check www.franktheatre.org.



DIRECTED BY WENDY KNOX

SET DESIGN BY JOEL SASS, LIGHTING DESIGN BY MICHAEL KITTEL,
COSTUME DESIGN BY KATHY KOHL, SOUND DESIGN BY MICHAEL
CROSWELL, STAGE MANAGED BY SPENCER PUTNEY

Featuring Chris Carlson, Jim Lichtscheidl, Grant Richey and Luverne Seifert with Maria Asp, Patrick Bailey, Kai Russell and Aru Shiney Ajay.

ABOUT THE PLAY

Veering from the macabre to the hysterical, this viciously funny and disturbingly gruesome thriller centers on Katurian, a writer in a totalitarian state, who is brought in for questioning when the plotlines of his stories bear an uncanny similarity to real-life crimes that have been committed in the community. Intertwining family secrets with the irrepressible power of storytelling and imagination, Martin McDonagh's **THE PILLOWMAN** takes on some of today's most potent issues—from censorship and the power of the state, to freedom of speech and the rights of the individual—all wrapped in a testament to the power of the imagination.



DIRECTIONS TO THE GUTHRIE AND PARKING:

(Please double check on Mapquest or Google!)

THE GUTHRIE is located in downtown Minneapolis on the west bank of the Mississippi River at 818 South 2nd Street.

FROM THE SOUTH: I-35W

Heading north on 35W, follow the downtown exit to 5th Av. Take 5th Ave. to 2nd St. S. Turn right onto 2nd St. S. and travel 2 blocks. The Guthrie will be on your left.

FROM THE NORTH: I-35W

Please take the Highway 280 detour (bypassing the 35W bridge over the Mississippi River) and follow directions for "From the East: I-94," or take alternate routes.

FROM THE NORTH: I-94

Heading east on 94, take the 4th St. N. exit (230). Turn LEFT onto 3rd Av. S. Turn RIGHT onto 2nd St. S. and go 4 blocks. The Guthrie will be on your left.

FROM THE WEST: I-394

Heading east on 394 to the downtown exits, take the 3rd Ave/Washington Ave. exit (9C). Take the Washington Ave. ramp. Turn RIGHT onto Washington Ave. Turn LEFT onto Chicago Ave. S. Turn RIGHT onto 2nd St. S. The Guthrie will be on your left.

FROM THE EAST: I-94

Heading west on 94, take the 5th St. exit. Turn right onto 11th Ave. S. Turn LEFT onto 2nd St. S. and go 2 blocks. The Guthrie will be on your right.

PARKING

Parking is available in the ramp on 2nd St. S. directly across from the Guthrie and in numerous parking lots throughout the neighborhood. Online parking reservations for the parking ramp across the street are available through the City of Minneapolis at a reduced rate of \$6. Visit www.mplsarking.com and click on Reservations and select option "Create a Parking Reservation for an Event."

BUS STOP/LIGHT RAIL

The nearest MetroTransit bus stop for the Guthrie is the Route 7 or Route 22 stop on the corner of Washington Ave. at Chicago Ave. For light rail use the Downtown East/Metrodome Station stop.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Playwright Martin McDonagh's first play, **The Beauty Queen of Leenane**, premiered in Dublin in 1996, and then transferred to London's Royal Court Theatre and to Broadway, where it won four Tony awards (1999). The play is the first in his Connemara Trilogy, which also includes **A Skull in Connemara** and **The Lonesome West**. **The Cripple of Inishmaan**, the first of his trilogy of Aran Island plays, which also includes **The Lieutenant of Inishmore** and **The Banshees of Inisher**, opened at Britain's National Theatre, also transferred to New York, and received productions across the U.S. **THE PILLOWMAN** won a Tony nominee for Best Play in 2005, and was an Olivier Award winner in 2004. McDonagh has been a resident playwright at the Royal National Theatre and the recipient of numerous awards, including the Evening Standard Award for Most Promising Playwright.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Maria Asp (Mother) most recently appeared in Frank's production of **THE EXONERATED** and **MOTHER COURAGE**, while she continues as the captain of CTC's Neighborhood Bridges program; **Patrick Bailey** (Father) also appeared in **THE EXONERATED** and **MOTHER COURAGE**, and looks forward to his upcoming role in the Jungle's production of **SHINING CITY**; **Chris Carlson** (Ariel) makes his Frank debut with his appearance as the 'bad cop' in **THE PILLOWMAN**; **Michael Croswell** (Sound Designer) returns to Frank after his recent stint with Circus Juventas and the Nebraska Shakespeare Festival, following his stellar performance as the musical director of Frank's **MOTHER COURAGE**; **Mike Kittel** (Lighting Designer) bounces back to Frank after lighting the Bloomington Civic Theatre's **A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC**; **Kathy Kohl** (Costume Designer) continues to hold her place as the reigning queen of Frank costumes; **Jim Lichtscheidl** (Katurian) returns to Frank after a 14 year recovery from his last turn in a Frank show, **MEASURE FOR MEASURE**, and he does so on the heels of his brilliant performance in **Ten Thousand Things'**

hysterical LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS; **Grant Richey** (Michal) played the nasty government official in Frank's **THE GOD OF HELL**, and the Chaplain in **MOTHER COURAGE**; **Kai Russell** (Boy) earned his title, "the official dead kid of Frank Theatre" with his role in our production of **THE WOMEN OF TROY**, but this time appears as a live kid; **Joel Sass** (Set Designer) returns to Frank after designing **VENUS** for Frank in 2006, while he looks forward to directing **SHINING CITY** at the Jungle this fall; **Luverne Seifert** (Tupolski), who appeared frequently with Frank in the early days, returns as the "good cop" for this show—he is also head of B.A. Performance at the U of MN and will play the title role in Frank's upcoming **MACBETH**; **Aru Shiney Ajay** (Girl) is a 5th grader at Pratt who was a stand-out in Artistic Director Wendy Knox's class at the school last year, and she is also a regular with Solidarity Youth Kids' Theatre; **Spencer Putney** and **Katie Burger** deserve medals of honor for their continued roles as Frank's official stage management duo; **Steve Matuszak** and **Shannon C. Harman** assist the artistic staff.

THE FRANK PANEL DISCUSSION

Several years ago, we began a series of Sunday afternoon post-show panel discussions, spurred by a request from an audience member who felt the need to talk about Frank shows after seeing them. We invite members of the community to join us for these discussions—people who have varied experience with, or interests in, some aspect of the subject matter of the play at hand. Immediately after the show, these community members participate in a casual conversation with the audience, the artists, or anyone who wants to drop in that day. We have attracted some fabulous participants in the past, resulting in many stimulating, insightful conversations. Not only do we get to hear your feedback and response to the work, but it also helps us achieve the goal of placing Frank's work in a larger context. Please join us on Sunday **Sept. 23, 30, and Oct. 7**, following the 1:00 matinees. The discussions are **FREE** and we would love to have you!



FROM THE PREZ...

A cool breeze greets me this morning as the sun rises. It feels like September and it's with anticipation that I look forward to autumn and a new Frank show—not in an abandoned armory, loading dock or machine shop, but a cutting-edge theatre building on the Mississippi. Wendy has assembled a terrific group of artists for our staging of **The Pillowman** at the **Guthrie's Dowling Studio**. A new season, a new show, a brand new building—no wonder I'm filled with anticipation!



The excitement continues even behind the scenes, where Frank continues to develop its Board of Directors. In the past year or so, we have welcomed four new board members. Catherine Ahlin-Halverson has enjoyed theatre on both coasts before exploring the Twin Cities' scene. She practices law when not caring for two young children. Rebecca Stibbe comes to us with lots of arts administrative experience and theater volunteer work, and she works in development for a non-profit organization. Susan Viall is a working scientist but keeps her left-brain healthy with her involvement at Frank (all juggled with a brand new baby!). Joe Holan had been an active Frank volunteer before becoming our most recent Board member, in addition to his work at Wells Fargo. The Frank Board is instrumental in keeping Frank moving, so we are grateful to have such a wonderful group of people volunteer their time, energy and expertise.

In addition to the Board, we also welcome our new office assistant, Tessa Flynn, an Augsburg graduate who just completed a two-year Americorps stint at North High. She's a great addition to Frank. We continue to have a dedicated long-term Community Advisory Board, which advises the Artistic Director and the Board on various issues as they arise, and the Artistic Council (who assist in season selection, our play reading series and help clean up old warehouses). We also have a fantastic bunch of Frank-ophile volunteers that help make Frank happen. If you'd like information on how you can join in the fun, check out the Frank web site at www.franktheatre.org, and/or call the office at 612-724-3760.

We hope you share our excitement about all the new things happening at Frank. And don't forget about our FABULOUS **Frank Fancy Pants Affair**—our annual silent auction **September 29**. We look forward to seeing you at the Guthrie for **The Pillowman**!

I look forward to seeing you at the show!

Linnea Asp,
Board President

FRANKS ANNUAL SILENT AUCTION!

Frank Fancy Pants Affair!



Our annual silent auction! This year, the auction will be held in the atrium of the Padilla Speer Beardsley building, across Gold Medal Park from the Guthrie. Park your car for free at PSB, and beginning at 5:30 pm, please join us for wine and hors d'oeuvres. Watch your bidding fever rise as showtime approaches, as the auction offers up some FABULOUS items from our supporters: a night at a B & B in Lanesboro, dinners at some of the best restaurants in town, sweet little luxuries to pamper yourself with, great gift items! Once the cutthroat bidding is suspended, you can stroll (or we'll shuttle you over) to the

theatre for the show. The riveting action of the performance of **THE PILLOWMAN** will temporarily suspend your desire to know what you won in the auction. Stroll back to the PSB building after the performance, have a glass of champagne and some dessert, load your winnings into your conveniently parked car and head for home, thrilled with the knowledge that you scored some great stuff AND you helped a small theatre out tremendously! Dust off those fancy duds and make this a fancy pants affair!

Tickets for this event **MUST** be purchased in advance, so please call 612-724-3760 for info or reservations.



COMING UP AT FRANK! Our spring show is yet to be announced (sign-up on the Frank CyberPatrol so you'll be the first to know!). But next fall, look out! An irreverent staging of **MACBETH** that will outshine any other! Frank will reunite many performers who worked on a local production 14 years ago to reinvestigate what the play means at this time. Led by the "good cop" of **THE PILLOWMAN**, Luverne Seifert (who played MacBeth in our last go-around) and Virginia Burke (who also played his wife in our early production of **MACHINAL**). We promise to bring you an innovative and electrifying evening of witches, curses, and unbridled ambition. **Don't miss it!**

FEATURED RECIPE

MUSHROOM PILLOWS

These make a great appetizer or light dinner served with a salad. Yield: 4 - 6 servings

2 sheets frozen puff pastry	1/2 cup shallots or onions, minced	2 tsp thyme
1 egg	4-5 cloves garlic, minced	1 tsp tarragon
3 Tbs milk	3 tablespoon olive oil	1/2 tsp cayenne pepper
1 Tbs sesame seeds	2 Tbs butter	1 T brandy or sherry
16 oz. mushrooms (pref. a selection of wild mushrooms)	1 Tbs parsley, chopped	1 cup cream
		3/4 cup grated gruyere or swiss

Thaw puff pastry. Using a little flour, unfold sheets and cut each one into either 4 squares or 9 rectangles, depending on how you plan to serve them (appetizer or main course). Using a sharp knife, lightly score the surface diagonally to create a criss-cross of diamonds on top. Let rest for about 20 minutes. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Mix egg and milk, and brush evenly over the pastry pillows. Sprinkle sesame seeds on top, and bake pillows for 15-20 minutes, until golden brown, then remove and keep warm.

Clean and slice mushrooms (do not wash, as they will absorb the water—just brush them off.) Heat 2 T. butter and 3 tbsp oil in a pan, add the diced shallot or onion and garlic and saute for 2-3 minutes. Add mushrooms and sauté until the liquid released is almost gone. Add brandy or sherry, sauté until it is reduced by half. Add the cream, thyme, tarragon, cayenne, salt and pepper; bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer until the cream gets very thick. Stir in cheese and add parsley. Set aside.

Split the pastry pillows with a sharp knife and arrange the bases on warm plates. Spoon several tablespoons of mushroom mixture over the base, then cover with the top and serve immediately.