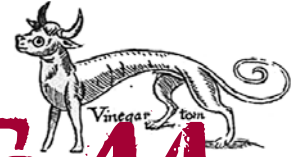


Frankly Speaking

NEWS OF FRANK THEATRE • SEPTEMBER 2008

The Ritz Theater presents a Frank Theatre production of
Caryl Churchill's



VINEGAR TOM

Directed by Wendy Knox

SEPTEMBER 12--
OCTOBER 5, 2008

(no performance September 20)

AT THE RITZ THEATER

345 13th Ave NE, Minneapolis, MN

Set Design by Andrea Heilman

Costumes Design by Kathy Kohl

Lighting Design by Michael Wangen

Sound Design by Zach Humes

Stage managed by Kasey Brandt and Spencer Putney, with
assistance from Katie Burger

Featuring Patrick Bailey, Virginia Burke, Dona Werner Freeman,
Emily Gunyou Halaas, Katrina Hawley, Christopher Kehoe, Lori Neal,
Anika Solveig and Cheryl Willis.

Original music for the show is composed by Annie Enneking, Marya
Hart, George Maurer, Ruth MacKenzie, Willy Murphy and Pablo.



PHOTO BY TONY NELSON

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

- Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 8pm, Sundays at 2:00pm, also Monday, September 22 at 8pm.
- Tickets are \$20 to \$25 with a \$2 discount for students, seniors.
- For info and reservations, call **The Ritz Theater** at **612-436-1129** or go to **www.RitzTheaterFoundation.org**.
- Post-show panel discussions are Sunday, September 7, September 14 and September 21.
- For informaton on the audio described performance please call **612-724-3760**.
- **September 20** 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 \$65, including wine, appetizers, the performance, and silent auction.
- For other information, please call Frank Theatre at **612-724-3760**, or check **www.FrankTheatre.org**.



ABOUT THE PLAY

Set in England in the 17th century, **VINEGAR TOM** explores the witchcraft trials of the time. Alice, a young single mother, has a tryst with a mysterious man in a roadside ditch, and yearns for him to return. Susan, married with two babies, finds herself pregnant again. They both visit a "cunning woman," a midwife who offers charms to heal their ailments. Jack and Margery, tenant farmers, are losing cows from mysterious symptoms. Betty, the 17-year-old daughter of the landowner, wants desperately to escape the marriage her parents have planned for her. Joan, Alice's mother, drinks a bit, becomes the target of Margery's ire, and then becomes suspected of witchcraft. The suspicion grows as Margery seeks to confirm that Joan is a witch, and in the wake of the hysteria — and with the help of a "witchfinder" — several other women are also accused and some are hung. The historical scenes are intercut with contemporary songs that reflect how much of our frightening history remains with us in the present.





DIRECTIONS TO THE RITZ THEATER:

(Please double check on Mapquest or Google!)

THE RITZ THEATER is located at 345 13th Ave NE, at the intersection of University Ave NE and 13th Ave NE. If you have questions, call the Ritz at **612-623-7660.**

FROM THE SOUTH:

Get on I-35W N to Minneapolis, or on to I-94 W. (If you are on 35 W, take the MN-65/I-94 W exit on the left toward "Downtown Exits." Merge onto MN-65 N, and take the exit onto I-94 W.) From I94, take exit 229 for Washington Ave N toward CR-81/W Broadway Ave.; merge onto N 17th Ave and turn left at 2nd St N. At the light, turn right at W Broadway Ave. Turn left at University Ave NE (0.2 mi) and go to 13th Ave. NE, where you will turn right. The Ritz is on your left.

FROM THE NORTH:

If you are coming in on I-94 W, or I-694, look for exit 37 to MN-47/University Ave. Keep right at the fork, follow signs for University Ave S/MN-47 S and merge onto MN-47 S/University Ave. Turn left at 13th Ave NE; the Ritz is on your left.

FROM THE WEST:

Get onto I-394 E/US-12 E toward Minneapolis. Merge onto I-94 W, and follow directions above (From the South) from I-94 W.

FROM THE EAST:

Get on I-94 W and follow directions above (From the South) from I-94 W.



ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Playwright Caryl Churchill was born in 1938. Her first play, written while she was still at university, was staged in 1958. She has written a number of plays for BBC radio and her first professional stage production premiered at the Royal Court Theatre in London in 1972. She was Resident Dramatist at the Royal Court (1974-5) and spent much of the 1970s and 1980s working with the theatre groups 'Joint Stock' and 'Monstrous Regiment'. Her work during this period includes *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire* (1976), *Cloud Nine* (1979), *Fen* (1983) and *A Mouthful of Birds* (1986). *Top Girls* was first staged at the Royal Court in 1982, directed by Max Stafford-Clark, and transferred to Joseph Papp's Public Theatre in New York later that year. (Frank staged *Top Girls* in Minneapolis in 1990.) *Serious Money* was first produced at the Royal Court in 1987 and won the Evening Standard Award for Best Comedy of the Year and the Laurence Olivier/BBC Award for Best New Play. *Mad Forest* (1990, also staged by Frank in 1993) was written after a visit to Romania, and *The Skriker* was written in 1994. *Far Away* premiered at the Royal Court in 2000 (produced locally at Pillsbury House a few years ago). She has also published a new translation of *Seneca's Thyestes* (2001), *A Number* (2002), and her version of August Strindberg's *A Dream Play* premiered at the National Theatre in 2005. Caryl Churchill lives in London. Her latest play is *Drunk Enough to say I Love You?* (2006), which premiered at the Royal Court Theatre in Winter 2006 and recently closed at the Public in NYC.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Patrick Bailey (a chronic Frank offender) returns after delighting audiences with his work in PUNTILA last spring and PILLOWMAN last fall; **Virginia Burke**, another chronic offender whose rap sheet goes back to 1992, made her most recent transgressions in THE EXONERATED, VENUS and THE GOD OF HELL; we're delighted with the return of **Dona Werner Freeman**, who did early time at Frank between 1990 and 1995, including standout portrayals in our production of TOP GIRLS and QUARTET; **Cheryl Willis** made her Frank debut in PUNTILA last spring. An exciting group of first-time offenders join us for this adventure: **Emily Gunyou Halaas** (fresh off of THIRD at the Guthrie and THE DECEPTION at Jeune Lune), **Katrina Hawley** (most recently appearing at Old Log and Red Eye), **Christopher Kehoe** (who just closed COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO on the Showboat), **Lori Neal** (who has done turns at Mixed Blood, Theater Unbound and Pillsbury House), Anika Solveig (returning to her hometown from her current residence in NYC where she

GOSSIPS BRIDLE OR BRANK



works with the Barefoot Theatre Company). Frank Artistic Director **Wendy Knox** directs the show before heading off to Macalester to do CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF and a holiday jaunt with SANTALAND DIARIES at Syracuse Stage; **Kathy Kohl**, whose recidivism at Frank should cause great concern, but instead thrills us, clothes these witches just before decking out Bain Boehlke in A LIFE IN THE THEATRE at the Jungle; **Michael Wangen** survived the 30 Years War in MOTHER COURAGE and he's back for more punishment; newcomers **Andrea Heilman** (scenery) and **Zach Humes** (sound) are exciting additions to the Frank posse. **Marya Hart**, with a string of previous convictions such as MOTHER COURAGE and THE WOMEN OF TROY, wrangles music for the show, which includes original songs by **Annie Enneking**, **Marya Hart**, **George Maurer**, **Ruth MacKenzie**, **Willie Murphy** and **Pablo**. The production is stage managed by **Kasey Brandt**, **Spencer Putney**, and **Katie Burger**. **Steve Matuszak** returns as our dramaturg, with an assist from **Ariane Rindo**; **Eva Nelson** assists Wendy Knox.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Frank marks its **20th Anniversary** this upcoming season. We have ambitious plans to mark this occasion, and we could use your help. If you would like to join the significant number of individual contributors to Frank's work, there's always room in that crowd. Just go to our website, <http://www.franktheatre.org/frank/supportfrank/supportfrank.html>, and pick your category: cocktail wiener, vienna sausage, bratwurst mit kraut ... or send your contribution to **Frank Theatre, 3156 23rd Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55407.** And thanks so much for supporting Frank!



FRANKS ANNUAL SILENT AUCTION!

Autumn temperatures falling, but your fever's risin'?

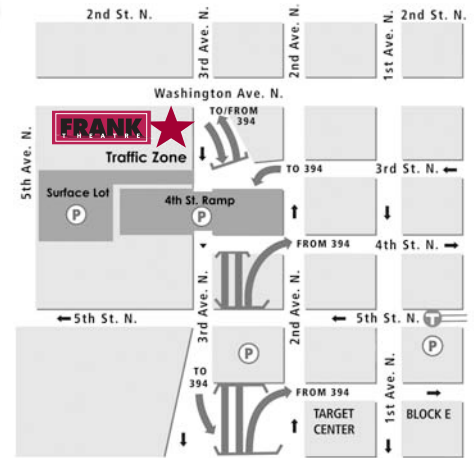
Of course it is! That just means you're ready for Frank's annual **Fall Frank Fabulous Festival of Fun!** That fever you're experiencing is a **BIDDING FEVER!** Frank's annual silent auction is a fantastically fun and funky event that supports the fabulous work that Frank dishes up. 2008 marks Frank Theatre's **LAST YEAR AS A TEENAGER**, so we figured we'd mark that milestone with a party and double the fun by including the silent auction!

Start the evening by fending off your bidding frenzy with delicious appetizer eats and drinks. Your fever will break during the exciting and eclectic silent auction that features highly competitive—yes, let's call it fierce - even **VICIOUS**—bidding for a fantastic array of items and services! We'll attempt to soothe you with musical entertainment, with Frank artists performing

top hits from past Frank shows, such as **THE CRADLE WILL ROCK**, **VENUS**, **THE THREEPENNY OPERA** — performed by Janis Hardy, Ruth Mackenzie, Maria Asp and Razz Russell, Dana Munson, shá cage and e.g. bailey, and others, with Mike Crosswell and his band! Once the fever subsides and prizes are claimed, it's delicious desserts and champagne, a nostalgic toast to our teenhood, then we send you off to bed!

When: Saturday, September 20. Doors open at 6:30 pm. Auction bidding from 7-8:30 pm. Entertainment from 8:30-10 pm. Check-out, bubbly & dessert from 10-11 pm.

Where: Traffic Zone Center for Visual Arts (1st floor), 250 N. 3rd Ave. in the Minneapolis Warehouse District (just south of Washington Ave. on 3rd Ave N).



How: Tickets for the Auction Event must be purchased in advance by September 15. A mere \$65 covers all of the fun described above, and includes one pre-paid ticket to a performance of Frank Theatre's production of **VINEGAR TOM**.

No performance on Sat., September 20; that evening, Frank will host its annual silent auction fundraiser. For information on that event, please call 612-724-3760.)

THE FRANK PANEL DISCUSSION

"I WANNA TALK ABOUT THAT PLAY!!" Frank regularly hosts a series of Sunday afternoon post-show panel discussions, spurred by an audience member who wanted to talk about the shows she was seeing at Frank! We invite various members of the community to join us for these discussions — people who have varied experience, perspective, or interest in some aspect of the subject matter of the play at hand. Immediately after the Sunday matinees, these panelists join 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. 14, 21 and 28**, following the 2:00 matinees. The discussions are **FREE** and we would love to have you!



COMING UP AT FRANK! Frank's next production is Marina Carr's **BY THE BOG OF CATS**, at the **Guthrie's Dowling Studio** **March 12-April 5, 2009**. In this loose retelling of Euripides' *Medea*, Marina Carr blends the mythic with the modern, populating the **BOG OF CATS** with misfits, witches, and ghosts. Set in rural Ireland, **BOG** is an uncompromising tale of abandonment and self-sacrifice. Hester Swane, born of gypsies, is tied to the bleak landscape of the bog where she has lived her whole life. Her lover, Carthage Kilbride, with whom she has a young daughter, is about to be married to younger woman who will bring him land, wealth and respect. Discarded and ignored, Hester sets out with a reckless fervor to reclaim the life that she had. The stellar cast includes Virginia Burke, John Catron, Annie Enneking, Melissa Hart, Grant Richey and others. Following our sold-out production of **THE PILLOWMAN** in the 2007-2008 Guthrie season, we're thrilled to tackle to this bold and uproarious play! *Don't miss it!* Call the Guthrie box office at **612-377-2224** for tickets

FEATURED RECIPE

VINEGAR TOM'S Mom's Dill Pickles

When Frank veteran Tom Sherohman's mother decided to open up her kitchen to the hags of Frank and share the secrets of her **FANTASTIC** pickles, it seemed perfect to use as a recipe for this newsletter. For those of you who have fear of canning, fear not! — these are easy and the most delicious pickles ever! With Pat's guidance, Maria, Virginia and I just canned 44 quarts on a Sunday morning!

1/2 bushel of 3-4" cucumbers	Mustard seed	Pickling salt
1 large Bunch of fresh dill with seed heads	Cider vinegar	Garlic cloves
	Water	Dried red pepper

Prepare the brine: for each quart of pickles, combine 2 c. of water, 1 c. cider vinegar, and 1 T. pickling salt (a half-bushel of cukes will yield about 20 quarts). Combine brine ingredients in large pot and bring to a boil. Meanwhile, sterilize wide-mouth quart canning jars and lids. In the bottom of the jars, place a large head of dill, 2-3 peeled garlic cloves, 1 tsp. mustard seed, and a dried red pepper or two. Pack the jars loosely with the cukes, then top it off with another head of dill. Leaving 1/2" of headspace in the jar, fill with the hot brine. Wipe the rim of the jar clean, place the hot lid on top, screw on the ring, and process in a water bath for at least 15-20 minutes. Remove from water bath and let cool. The lids will pop as the jars cool, confirming that the jars are sealed. Once the pickles have cooled, you'll see witchcraft in action once you open a jar: the pickles will disappear before you can say "Vinegar Tom"! See Bell's Blue Book of canning for additional tips.

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 nineteen-year history, the theatre has staged 40 productions.

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



Call the Ritz Theater at 612-436-1129 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!

FRANK T H E A T R E

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

SEPTEMBER 12 - OCTOBER 5, 2008

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

WHY THIS PLAY?

Last year, we announced that we planned a production of *MACBETH* for this fall. My Big Idea was that I was curious about the process of reuniting some folks that I had directed in a local production of the play 17 years ago, to see what the play meant to us 17 years later, investigating how the world had changed, how our ideas had changed, how we had changed as artists. That plan was torpedoed when we lost one of the main players in the scheme to a higher paying gig. I wasn't so interested in doing just another production of *MACBETH*, given that there was wind that that was happening at another venue in town anyway, so we shelved the plan. I'm not so sure it won't be resurrected, perhaps even next year, since the idea of a Frank production of the Scottish play has seemed so enticing to many people. Meanwhile, we moved to Plan B. Around this time, it was also hitting me smack between the eyes, that — can you even believe it? — Frank was nearing its 20 year mark. **HOLY COW.**

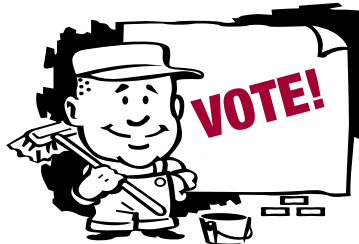
As I reflected on that milestone, I also thought about the playwrights with whom we seem to share the greatest affinity. Brecht is clearly our main man, and we LOVE the Bard; Frank productions of these classic writers have delivered some of our most exciting work. We LOVE doing new work, and we're pining for the day when we can once again work with a playwright to develop a piece, as we did with Carson Kreitzer's *THE LOVE SONG OF J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER*. Obviously, up there on the list is Suzan-Lori Parks, and then there's Caryl Churchill, who penned our 1990 production of *TOP GIRLS* (a performance that even today elicits requests for an encore production. Even in the bloom of our youth, it was a magical production with a stellar cast that featured, among others, Bernadette Sullivan, Mary Alette Davis, MPR's Mary Luchia, and Dona Werner Freeman (who joins us for this production). I became a little melancholic as I thought about *TOP GIRLS*, realizing one of the cast members had been lost to cancer, several others had moved away, and who knows what became of others. We had a great chemistry on that production, audiences LOVED the show, and the difficulty of the script made the reception of the show even more sweet. Tackling another Churchill play seemed a great idea, since we had not tangled with her since our 1993 production of *MAD FOREST*. *VINEGAR TOM* was a piece that had not been staged locally, we thought, since *At the Foot of the Mountain* did so in its waning days in the mid-80s, in the very space where we had presented *TOP GIRLS*. So, failing to summon the witches from *MACBETH*, Frank decided to rear its feminist head once again and tackle a gritty play about the horrifying witch trials in England in the 1600s. In doing so, it has allowed us to wrestle with one of the sharpest playwrights we know of while taking a look at a cultural need that doesn't seem to go away: finding a scapegoat for whatever ails ya. It truly is astounding how the cycle of fear that drove the first round of British witchcraft trials repeats itself so accurately and so periodically; from the 1600s, to the Salem witch trials in the U.S., to the McCarthy witch hunt, to the various permutations of today — whether targeted at "the terrorists" or the woman who is running for president. The fear that drives this cycle, and our deep need to find a place to lay blame for any and everything that makes us uneasy, has tragic and horrifying consequences yet it continues to resurrect itself, and most easily so in times of hardship. This opportunity to once again embrace Churchill's work has also intersected with a chance to take a look at Frank's own history, as well our collective social history.

We're excited to present this piece at the Ritz. We haven't broken with our penchant for making instant theatre spaces in vacant buildings, but we are enjoying a brief respite in the schlepping as we present our season in two bona fide theatre spaces this year. We hope you'll join us for this compelling show, complete with original music composed by some of the most fabulous local musicians — Annie Enneking, Marya Hart, Ruth MacKenzie, Pablo, Willie Murphy and George Maurer. It might be bewitching!

Wendy Knox, Artistic Director



PHOTO BY ANN MARSDEN



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