THE SECRET MASK
by Rick Chafe

Directed by
Edward Morgan

Scenic Design
Rick Rasmussen

Costume Design
Dana Brzezinski

Properties Design
Heidi Salter & Shannon Sloan-Spice

Lighting Design
Aaron Sherkow

Sound Design
David Cecsarini

Stage Manager
Jessica Connelly*

*Member of Actors’ Equity Association

November 16 – December 10, 2017

Generously sponsored by Steve & Nancy Einhorn

Next Act Theatre's 2017-18 Season is supported in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts.

THE SECRET MASK was commissioned by Prairie Theatre Exchange and the premiere production was produced by them in Winnipeg in November 2011.

THE SECRET MASK is presented by arrangement with Kensington Literary Representation, 34 St. Andrew Street, Toronto, ON, Canada, M5T 1K6, 416.878.9648, kensingtonlit@rogers.com

Thank you to Bob Metcalfe and the PTE Playwrights Unit for being with me scene by scene, draft by draft throughout the writing. Thank you to Martine and Charlotte for being with me always. This play is for my father. - Rick

The video and/or audio recording of this performance by any means whatsoever is strictly prohibited.

Next Act Theatre | 255 S. Water Street | Milwaukee, WI 53204
**THE CAST**

*Ernie* ...................................................................................................................James Pickering*
*Mae and other assorted roles* ........................................................................ Tami Workentin*
*George* ................................................................................................................Drew Parker*

*member of Actors’ Equity Association

**TIME:**
2011

**PLACE:**
Vancouver

The play will be performed with one intermission.

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Next On Tap... Brewery
Saturday, December 2, 2017
If we’re lucky, we inherit our parents’ strengths. Sooner or later, however, we also have to reckon with their weaknesses. If we become parents, the same is true for our children. That’s the nature of family and it’s one of the themes of this rich and wonderful play. These dynamics unfold in a story about memory: a father and son are digging for what they’ve lost, both trying to recover essential pieces of themselves. It’s funny and it’s painful as recollection falters and the awkward present wrangles with the past. Finally though, THE SECRET MASK affirms our capacity for change. What’s done is done; we can’t go back. But sometimes we can reconcile with shadows and regrets, forgive ourselves and others and move forward with a lighter step.
come as you are.

Taking in a little song or dance or drama does not require fancy pants. Just be real. Because what you're gonna experience is real. All you need is a ticket - just show up. It never happens the same way twice. But happen it will. With or without you. Right here. In Milwaukee.

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RICK CHAFE  (Playwright)
Rick Chafe has been writing for theatre since just before the first Winnipeg Fringe Festival, 1989. His most recent plays are MARRIAGE: A DEMOLITION IN TWO ACTS (Prairie Theatre Exchange, Winnipeg), THE SECRET MASK (PTE Winnipeg, GCTC Ottawa, Presentation House Vancouver), and BEOWULF (Two Planks and a Passion Nova Scotia). Other plays include SHAKESPEARE’S DOG, adapted from Leon Rooke’s Governor General’s Award-winning novel, THE ODYSSEY, and STRIKE! THE MUSICAL co-written with Danny Schur, now in pre-production as a feature film. This year Mr. Chafe is co-writing a new play with Yvette Nolan commissioned by PTE, BOTH ALIKE IN DIGNITY. He’s also writing a play for Theatre Projects Manitoba about a couple going for Time Travel Therapy, FIVE MOMENTS, and working with fifteen under-30’s artists to develop a playwriting/devised theatre hybrid creation laboratory in Theatre for Young Audiences at Manitoba Theatre for Young People. Mr. Chafe lives in Winnipeg with his wife, Martine, and their daughter, Charlotte.

DREW PARKER  (George)
Drew is grateful to be making his Next Act Theatre debut and excited to reunite with director Edward Morgan who most recently directed him in K2 at Virginia Stage Co. Born in Michigan, he received his BFA from the University of Detroit. Recent credits include the title role in HAMLET (Waterworks Theatre Co), Jake in 2AZ (Purple Rose Theatre), Happy in DEATH OF A SALESMAN (Alabama Shakespeare Festival) and Brendan in THE WEIR (Abreact Theatre). Drew currently lives in Los Angeles, CA but appreciates the chance to experience a Midwest fall and winter again. Thank you Casey for your selfless love and support. Thank you David, James (Pick) and Tami for welcoming me to Milwaukee. Thanks to our hard working crew and designers. Most importantly thank you, our audience, for choosing to spend a little of your time with us. Cheers.

JAMES PICKERING  (Ernie)
Jim makes his gleeful return to Next Act Theatre three years after his appearance in THE SAME OBJECT by Henry Murray. Previous appearances at Next Act include Alan Ayckbourn’s RELATIVELY SPEAKING, Jeffrey Hatcher’s MERCY OF A STORM, and THE EXONERATED by Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen, the inaugural production in the current Next Act performance space in 2011 – and the first production in which he acted opposite his wife, Tami Workentin. As a leading member of the Milwaukee Rep’s Resident Acting Company for nearly forty years he gave many memorable performances among which his favorites include Candy in OF MICE AND MEN, Walter Burns in THE FRONT PAGE, Niels Bohr in COPENHAGEN, and Ebenezer Scrooge in 14 iterations of A CHRISTMAS CAROL, a role he performed 450 times. He has been seen on many Wisconsin stages: American Players Theatre, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Renaissance Theaterworks, Alchemist Theatre, Door Shakespeare, and Optimist Theatre’s Free Shakespeare in the Park, a company he helped found, and for whom, most recently, he played Dogberry in MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING. Next summer for Optimist he will essay the title role in KING LEAR at Peck Pavilion in downtown Milwaukee.

TAMI WORKENTIN  (Mae, et al)
Tami is delighted to return to Next Act where she has performed some of her favorite roles in MOTHERHOOD OUT LOUD, WELCOME HOME, JENNY SUTTER and THE EXONERATED,
where she met her husband, Jim Pickering. She would like to point out that he arrested her in that show and she has never forgiven him. Tami recently appeared as Caroline in LUNA GALE. Other Renaissance credits include STRING OF PEARLS. Elsewhere in Milwaukee she was seen in GOOD PEOPLE, A CHRISTMAS CAROL, and SHEAR MADNESS (Milwaukee Repertory Theatre); TWELFTH NIGHT (Milwaukee Shakespeare); and HANA’S SUITCASE, CHRISTMAS STORY, and BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA (First Stage); LOVE STORIES, Rosemary in PICNIC, THE SUBJECT WAS ROSES, BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS and KIMBERLEY AKIMBO (Milwaukee Chamber Theatre). Directing credits include Margaret Raether’s P.G. Wodehouse trilogy: JEEVES INTERVENES, JEEVES IN BLOOM and JEEVES TAKES A BOW, and Renaissance’s BARNEY AND BEE. Please look for Tami in 2018 in the remount of the record breaking Milwaukee Rep Stackner Cabaret production of ALWAYS...PATSY CLINE. Other regional credits include The Goodman Theatre, Court Theatre, Organic Theatre, and Bailiwick Repertory Theater in Chicago, the inaugural season of Orlando Shakespeare Festival, Shakespeare-in-the-Park Fort Worth, TX and Taproot Theatre, Seattle. Tami lives in Bay View with Jim, her desperate-to-drive-1½ year old Edan and their two incredibly adorable and rotten hounds Frankie and Joxer. Joxer is on Prozac. He’s Jim’s dog.

EDWARD MORGAN (Director)
Mr. Morgan has directed lots of plays for Next Act, most recently UnSILENT NIGHT, which he co-wrote with John Kishline. Other Next Act favorites include THE EXONERATED and FAITH HEALER. Earlier this fall, he directed RICHARD III for Titan Theatre in New York. Last summer in Montana, he directed the premiere of NO GREATER LOVE, a musical about the worst hard-rock mining disaster in U.S. history, and for which he also co-wrote the book. Other relatively recent credits include directing AS YOU LIKE IT at Idaho Shakespeare Festival and Great Lakes Theatre, K2 at Virginia Stage Company, and seeing his play WAY DOWNRIVER produced at North Coast Rep in San Diego. He’s also worked at Utah Shakespeare Festival, Merrimack Rep, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Round House, The Kennedy Center, and at theatres and festivals in India, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic. Mr. Morgan was also formerly Associate Artistic Director at Milwaukee Rep and directed many plays there. Other credits include work as a Casting Partner for CIRQUE DU SOLEIL, having his work honored with Helen Hayes Awards and nominations for directing and sound, being a recipient of the Drama League of NY Director’s Project fellowship and serving on the Fulbright Roster. This play is for A. Robert Smith, with gratitude and admiration.
JESSICA CONNELLY  
(Resident Stage Manager)  
Since 2006 Jessica has been the Resident Stage Manager for Next Act Theatre. She has stage managed 50 of the last 51 shows at Next Act. A few of Jessica’s favorite projects include: DEAR ESTHER, MASTER HAROLD and the BOYS, LAST OF THE BOYS, MYSTERY OF IRMA VEP, GREETINGS, FAITH HEALER, PURGATORIO, GOING TO ST. IVES, VIGIL, THREE VIEWS OF THE SAME OBJECT, TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES, 1992, BLOOMSDAY and SILENT SKY (Next Act Theatre), A RISING WIND (John Michael Kohler Arts Center), CHESAPEAKE, TROJAN WOMEN, THE SHAPE OF THINGS, and the US premiere of SKIN TIGHT (Renaissance Theaterworks), FENCES (Milwaukee Repertory Theater) SANTALAND DIARIES (Marcus Center for the Performing Arts), HAIRSPRAY (Little Theatre on the Square). Jessica is a proud member of Actors’ Equity Association.

RICK RASMUSSEN  (Scenic Designer)  
Calling Seattle, WA home, this former resident of Milwaukee travels the Midwest designing for various theatre companies. Rick has worked with the theatre artists at Next Act for 28 years and always finds their work stimulating and rewarding. Most recent design projects include BRAVO, CARUSO!, THE TAMING, UnSILENT NIGHT, BLOOMSDAY, SILENT SKY (Next Act Theatre); TINTYPES, DAMES AT SEA and GERSHWIN AND FRIENDS (Skylight Music Theatre); WEST SIDE STORY, 9 TO 5 and LEGALLY BLONDE (Fireside Dinner Theatre). He has also worked locally with Renaissance Theaterworks, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre and In Tandem Theatre.

AARON SHERKOW  (Lighting Designer)  
Aaron Sherkow received his MFA from Boston University in 2011. He is thrilled to be making theatre in Milwaukee and delighted to continue to work with Next Act Theatre. In addition to his freelance design, he is also an Adjunct Professor and Technical Director at Lawrence University. Recent shows with Next Act include TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES, 1992, BACK OF THE THROAT and RACE. His work has also contributed to WHO WOULD BE KING? with Liars & Believers, JULIUS CAESAR and MIDSUMMER NIGHTS DREAM with Door Shakespeare, ROMEO ET JULIETTE with the Boston Opera Institute and ROAD TO MECCA with Boston Center for American Performance.

DANA BRZEZINSKI  (Costume Designer)  
Dana Brzezinski is thrilled to be doing her fifth show with Next Act, after doing UnSILENT NIGHT last year, BRAVO, CARUSO! and BACK OF THE THROAT in 2015, and WELCOME HOME, JENNY SUTTER in 2014. Other recent design credits include EXTREMITIES with Umbrella Group Theatre and THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK with Waukesha Civic Theatre.

HEIDI SALTER  (Properties Co-Designer)  
Heidi Salter has been co-props designer for the past three seasons and is so happy to be back again this season working with her friends at Next Act. Heidi is also a freelance director and is the founder of Imagination Theatre in Germantown where she has directed some of her favorite shows (INTO THE WOODS, DEATH OF A SALESMAN, RUN FOR YOUR WIFE, and BAREFOOT IN THE PARK). When not doing theatre, Heidi enjoys watching her three daughters perform and grow into the next generation of amazing theatre artists.

SHANNON SLOAN-SPICE, Ph.D.  
(Properties Co-Designer)  
Shannon Sloan-Spice is pleased to be returning to Next Act Theatre as Props Master with her great partner-in-crime, Heidi Salter for their fourth season! Shannon is best known as a theatre educator and directs many spring musicals around Greater Milwaukee. She was head-master and Lead Teacher at First
Stage this summer. In 2015, she directed In Tandem’s first summer arts conservatory program. She splits her time between Milwaukee and Chicago and teaches World Mythologies at Oakton Community College, IL where she is part of the new Environmental Studies Concentration.

DAVID CECSARINI  
(Sound Designer)  
Long before his professional theatre debut, David busied himself in the basement performing radical surgery on the family’s electronic devices. Eventually he put down his soldering gun in favor of just twirling the knobs – and, more recently, pointing and clicking the mouse – and has designed sound effects and scores for over 100 professional productions. Favorite sound designs include THE VOICE OF THE PRAIRIE, THE DRESSER, LAST OF THE BOYS, THE BRIDGE AT MO DUC, MARY’S WEDDING, MICROCRISIS and TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES, 1992. He has proudly served as Producing Artistic Director for Milwaukee’s Next Act Theatre for 26 years.

ANNE LEHMER  
(Development Director)  
A nonprofit fundraising professional since 2005, Anne became Development Director of Next Act in January of 2016. Previously, she held development positions at San Francisco State University in CA, and, the Nordic Heritage Museum, United Indians for All Tribes Foundation and the YWCA in Seattle, WA. She was an active member, advocate and volunteer in the Northwest Development Officers Association and the WA Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals, eventually serving on the Board of Directors. She also served a teen mentoring organization, the Service Board, as a Board member and as Board Chair. Anne holds a B.A. in Anthropology from Mills College and a M.A. in Museum Studies, Fundraising and Administration, from San Francisco State University. Currently, Anne enjoys exploring our many local museums, historic architecture and green spaces, and the bounty of festivals, music, dance, ethnic and cultural events. That is, when she’s not putting in her vegetable garden.

REBECCA MODER  
(Marketing Director)  
Becky has been with Next Act Theatre since 2012. Before that she ran the marketing department at the South Milwaukee Performing Arts Center. She holds a B.A. in Arts Management with a Business minor from UW-Stevens Point. When not at Next Act, Becky is spending time with family up north in Three Lakes, WI or working on home renovation projects with her husband, Tim.

MICHAEL VAN DRESER  
(Technical Director)  
Mike has served as Next Act Theatre’s Technical Director since the 2011-12 season, taking on the additional roles of Facility Manager and Rental Coordinator in the 2014-15 season. Previously Mike was the resident Master Electrician and Light Board Operator, beginning in 2005-06. Mike studied with renowned Lighting Designers Jason Fassl and Andrew Meyers and has done Lighting Design for NEXT ACTORS SUMMER THEATRE FOR TEENS, UnSILENT NIGHT, BRAVO, CARUSO!, IT’S A WONDERFUL LIFE LIVE RADIO SHOW, PERFECT MENDACITY (Next Act Theatre), WHEN THE CURTAIN FALLS, and KISS ME KATE (Greendale High School).
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**FOOD AND BEVERAGES** – Food is not permitted in the theatre, but drinks may be taken in.

**ENTERING AND EXITING THE THEATRE SPACE** – Please use walkways to access the seating areas and refrain from crossing over the stage.

**CANCELLATION POLICY** – Next Act does not cancel or reschedule performances due to inclement weather or sporting events, nor do we offer refunds.

**LATECOMER POLICY** – Latecomers will not be seated until an appropriate time in the performance. This may be at the intermission. *Seating may not be permitted 30 minutes after the start of a performance. If you are running late, please call the Ticket Office at 414-278-0765.*

**LISTENING AUGMENTATION DEVICES** – Please ask the House Manager on duty for assistance.

**LOST PROPERTY** – Items left at the theatre are kept in Lost & Found for 30 days. Call the Ticket Office at 414-278-0765 if you have lost an item.

**TICKET EXCHANGES** – Subscribers may exchange their tickets, without fee, up to 48 hours prior to the performance (price adjustments may apply). Single ticket buyers may exchange their tickets for a fee of $5 per ticket up to 48 hours prior. Exchanges are based strictly on availability. Patrons are strongly urged to request exchanges well in advance.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES** – To avoid disturbing the performance, NO cameras or recording devices of any kind are allowed to be used in the theatre. Please turn off all electronic equipment including pagers and cell phones.

**SMOKING** – The Next Act Theatre facility is a smoke-free environment.

**STUDENT AND SENIOR CITIZEN DISCOUNTS** – Seniors and students receive a $5 discount per ticket on advance sales. Students may also purchase half-price rush tickets with a valid student I.D. one half-hour prior to curtain, based on availability. Discounts are not available on performance run extensions.

**GROUP DISCOUNTS** – Groups of 10 or more receive a discount of 20%. To book groups, contact Becky at 414-278-7780. Discounts are not available on performance run extensions.
Gunner is beginning to forget words and getting confused. Torn between his wife’s desire to move them from their beloved home in Chesapeake Bay and tormented by the menacing grip of an aging mind, he hatches an unorthodox plan to secure his uncertain future. A touching human drama sprinkled with gentle humor by award-winning playwright Bruce Graham.

Featuring James Pickering as Gunner!

February 23 - March 18, 2018

Purchase tickets at:
www.InTandemTheatre.org
414-271-1371