Conceived, Written and Originally Performed by

Anna Deavere Smith

Sept 20 - Oct 13, 2019

Directed by

Marcella Kearns & C. Michael Wright***

Veronica Zahn*
Stage Manager

Lisa Schlenker**
Scenic Designer

Leslie Vaglica
Costume Designer

Sarah Ramos
Sound Designer

Raeleen McMillion
& Rick Pendzich
Dialect Coaches

Melissa Centgraf
Propmaster

**
Member of United Scenic Artists, local 829.

*
Appearing through an Agreement between this theatre, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, and Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

***
The Director is a member of the STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREographers SOCIETY, a national theatrical labor union.

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CAST

Actor One ........................................................................................................................................... Marti Gobel*
Actor Two ........................................................................................................................................... Elyse Edelman*

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SETTING

PLACE: Here
TIME: Now, and 1991

Photography and video and/or audio recording of this performance by any means whatsoever is strictly prohibited. The audience is asked to silence mobile phones and refrain from using electronic devices during the performance.

SPECIAL THANKS

Molly Dubin & Jewish Museum Milwaukee
Rabbi Dena Feingold
Reggie Jackson
Mary Jensik
Matt Orlando with Cutwater Spirits

ABOUT MILWAUKEE CHAMBER THEATRE

Founded in 1975, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre (MCT) produces intimate and accessible theatrical works that engage and challenge the audience, while employing and nurturing principally local theatre artists. Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director C. Michael Wright and Managing Director Kirsten Finn, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre performs at the Broadway Theatre Center in Milwaukee’s Historic Third Ward. For more information, visit milwaukeechambertheatre.com.

We welcome people of all races, all religions, all genders, all countries of origin, all sexual orientations, and all abilities. We welcome everyone. We stand with all those who feel unheard or silenced, and will ensure this is a safe place for all who enter.
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Milwaukee Ballet, The Nutcracker, 2017, Marize Fumero, Photo by Mark Frohna;
First Stage, The Wiz, DiMonte Henning, Darrington Clark and Reese Parish, Photo by Paul Ruffolo;
Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra, Photo by Ron Oshima
It is with distinct pleasure that Milwaukee Chamber Theatre designates Marti Gobel as our seventh Ruth Schudson Leading Lady honoree.

Milwaukee Chamber Theatre was born in 1975, the brainchild of two local actors: Montgomery Davis and his muse and partner-in-crime, Ruth Schudson. Throughout her career, including 65 productions with Milwaukee Chamber Theatre alone, Ruth has served as a mentor, role model, and friend to countless aspiring and established actors.

The MCT board of trustees, staff, and friends have honored her achievements by raising over $100,000 to establish the Ruth Schudson Leading Lady Fund. The Leading Lady Fund promotes the work of women on the Milwaukee Chamber Theatre stage, and embodies MCT’s mission to employ and nurture local theatre artists by supporting the salary of one actress each season.

Marti has appeared on many of Milwaukee’s theatre stages. With MCT, her acting credits include BROKEN AND ENTERED, AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHTY DAYS, and WELL. Most recently, Marti has been part of the MCT team as a director. In 2018, she directed a stunning mainstage production of THE BROTHERS SIZE. Marti also directed the one-act, A SISTER’S BOND, in our Young Playwrights Festival Showcase in 2012-2013.

Thank you to the many generous donors who made the Ruth Schudson Leading Lady Fund possible, and congratulations to Marti Gobel!

DIRECTORS’ NOTES

“It is not light that we need, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.” - Frederick Douglass

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ANGELA DAVIS – Rope

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CROWN HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN, AUGUST 1991
RABBI JOSEPH SPIELMAN – No Blood in His Feet
THE REVEREND CANON DOCTOR HERON SAM – Mexican Standoff
ANONYMOUS YOUNG MAN #1 – Wa Wa Wa
MICHAEL S. MILLER – “Heil Hitler”
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2019 / 2020

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By Jen Silverman
Directed by Suzan Fete
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HAPPY DAYS
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ANNA DEAVERE SMITH (Playwright)

Anna Deavere Smith is an actor, teacher, playwright, and creator of unique one-woman plays based on interviews. Anna Deavere Smith has won two Obie Awards, two Tony nominations for TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES, and a MacArthur Fellowship. A Pulitzer Prize finalist for her play FIRES IN THE MIRROR, Ms. Smith is founder and director of the Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue at New York University. As an actress she has appeared in many films and on the television series “West Wing.” Her book “Letters to a Young Artist” is published by Anchor Books. www.annadeaveresmithworks.org

ELYSE GORENS EDELMAN (Actor Two)

Elyse is thrilled to be working at Chamber Theatre for the first time. Wisconsin theatre credits as an actor include multiple productions with First Stage, American Players Theatre, Renaissance Theaterworks, Door Shakespeare, Forward Theater Company, In Tandem Theatre, and Milwaukee Repertory Theater. Other regional theatre credits as an actor include The Guthrie, Park Square Theatre, People’s Centre Theatre (Minneapolis/St. Paul), Utah Shakespeare Festival (Cedar City), Chicago Children’s Theatre, The Accidents (Chicago), and Riverside Theatre in the Park (Iowa City). She is also a teaching artist and develops curriculum for many of the professional theatres in the state. She is a proud graduate of the University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theater BFA Actor’s Training Program. Website: www.elyseedelman.com.

MARTI GOBEL (Actor One)

A San Diego, California native, Marti Gobel is an actor, director, and teaching artist and proud member of AEA and SAG-AFTRA. A 2008 graduate of University of Wisconsin-Whitewater with a BA in Performance Theatre and Philosophy (with an emphasis in Religious Studies), Ms. Gobel also studied at The J. F. Kennedy Center to complete her training in Effective Residency and Lesson Planning. Upon graduation, Ms. Gobel was Producing Artistic Director of UPROOTED theatre, a company she co-founded, from 2009-2015. An accomplished actress with a body of work that spans over a decade, Ms. Gobel has performed routinely for every Equity house in Milwaukee in a variety of roles from Shakespeare to Morisseau. She is thrilled to return to the Milwaukee Chamber Theatre stage for this most important piece of work… “Free your mind and the rest will follow” (En Vogue)!

MARCELLA KEARNS (Co-director, MCT Associate Artistic Director)

Marcy returns to MCT mainstage work after directing SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE CASE OF THE JERSEY LILY and VANYA AND SONIA AND MASHA AND SPIKE and most recently appearing as Frankie in FRANKIE AND JOHNNY IN THE CLAIR DE LUNE and Berthe in BOEING BOEING. A Milwaukee-based actor, director, and teaching artist, Marcy also serves as MCT’s Associate Artistic Director and as an instructor with Carthage College and First Stage. Marcy holds an MFA in Acting from the University of South Carolina. She is a proud member of Actors’ Equity Association and a former Fulbright Fellow (Austria). Next up: directing the First Stage Young Company production of THE
WINTER’S TALE and the world premiere of FIGHTING FOR HOME, a verbatim theatre project about women in the U.S. military currently in development by Martin McClendon. Many thanks, now and always, to Uncle Mike, whose mentorship has been priceless, “as precious as a Stradivarius.”

C. MICHAEL WRIGHT
(Chairman, MCT Producing Artistic Director)
Currently celebrating his 15th anniversary at MCT, Michael has directed quite a number of productions here over the years. The list includes STRANGE SNOW, DOUBT, MIRACLE ON SOUTH DIVISION STREET, THE FEW, LOBBY HERO, SLOWGIRL, DRIVING MISS DAISY, and THE TRAIN DRIVER, as well as four original works: CHRISTMAS IN BABYLON, OCTOBER, BEFORE I WAS BORN, THE DALY NEWS, and DICKENS IN AMERICA (which he also directed at American Players Theatre). Before MCT, he served as Associate Artistic Director of Next Act Theatre for eight years. Since moving to Wisconsin in 1988, Michael has directed well over 100 productions. Some favorites have been THE STORY OF MY LIFE for Milwaukee Opera Theatre, THE RETREAT FROM MOSCOW for Next Act, THE SYRINGA TREE for American Players Theatre, Renaissance Theatreworks, and Delaware Theatre Company, and A NIGHT IN NOVEMBER for Next Act, Madison Rep, and Riverside Theatre in Vero Beach, Florida. Michael has been acting professionally for over forty years, having appeared in regional theatres all across the country, as well as in Athol Fugard’s “MASTER HAROLD”…and the boys on Broadway, in Israel, and in the national tour. His most recent performances include Vanya in VANYA AND SONIA AND MASHA AND SPIKE here at MCT. In 2009, Michael was honored with an “Artist of the Year” award by the City of Milwaukee Arts Board.

VERONICA ZAHN
(Stage Manager)
Veronica is returning to the Milwaukee Chamber Theatre booth after last season’s STRANGE SNOW; she has also ASMed COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (ABRIGED) [REVISED] for Chamber. Since joining Equity, she has SMed at Next Act, Renaissance, Skylight, Optimist, and UWM, in addition to teaching at Carthage. Veronica serves the Stage Managers’ Association as Vice Regional Rep for Milwaukee, as well as Bethel’s Theatre Alumni Chapter as Networking Specialist. She received a BA in Theatre Arts from Bethel University (Indiana) and her MFA in Stage Management from Wayne State University. Top acknowledgement billing goes to her husband, Matt Norby, for all the time, tools, and insight he gives on this stage management journey. Thank YOU for your attendance! For JC. www.veronicazahn.com

LISA SCHLENKER (Scenic Designer)
Ms. Schlenker is excited to join Marcy, Michael, the creative team, and MCT staff for this dynamic project, as Chamber continues the tradition of focusing light on impactful conversations in contemporary society. Lisa is a Milwaukee based Scenic Designer who enjoys a diverse freelance life on top of serving as Production Manager for Florentine Opera. Avocationally, Lisa can be found giving care to Wisconsin’s native bats at Wisconsin Humane Society Wildlife Center, where she is an active wildlife rehabilitator. Lisa’s book with co-author Sandra Strawn, The Properties Director’s Tool Kit, is available on Amazon.com. Recent design work: WINDJAMMERS, DAIRY HEIRS, WE LIKE IT WHERE, and DAD’S SEASON TICKETS for Northern Sky; and MARY JANE for Forward Theatre. Upcoming projects: NUNSENSE - Milwaukee Rep; HAPPY DAYS - Renaissance
BIOGRAPHIES CONT.

Theaterworks; THE TRAGEDY OF CARMEN - Florentine Opera; and THE BLACKSMITH - Opera Lafayette at the Kennedy Center Terrace Theatre. Thank you for supporting live local theatre!

LESLIE VAGLICA (Costume Designer)
Leslie Vaglica is a designer based in Milwaukee. Leslie holds degrees in Art and Political Science from University of Wisconsin Eau Claire and Fashion from Mt. Mary. Regionally, she's designed for opera, dance, and theater. Favorites include WEST SIDE STORY and THE OLD MAN AND THE OLD MOON at HSRT, RIVER OF SONG at Milwaukee Rep, SVADBA with Milwaukee Opera Theater and Wildspace Dance Co., THE BROTHERS SIZE with Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, MR. BURNS with Luminous Theater, and THREE DECEMBERS with Milwaukee’s Florentine Opera. Many thanks to Amelia Strahan for her design assistance and Adam Beadel for his ongoing support and help in researching for FIRES IN THE MIRROR.

MARISA ABBOTT (Lighting Designer)
Marisa works as a freelance Lighting Designer, Electrician, and Scenic Artist around the Milwaukee Area. She is excited to return to Milwaukee Chamber Theatre after lighting BEN BUTLER last season. Other recent lighting designs include EVERYBODY, THE ALL NIGHT STRUT!, and LOST GIRL (Milwaukee Repertory Theater); THE MIRACLE WORKER, THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER, and THE GIRLS IN THE BOAT (First Stage); MOMENTUM (Milwaukee Ballet II); Con Amore Concert (Florentine Opera Company); MY FAIR LADY and ELF THE MUSICAL (Fireside Dinner Theater); and SKELETON CREW (Forward Theater Company). She has also painted scenery for the Milwaukee Rep, Renaissance Theaterworks, and Kohl’s Wild Theatre. ma-stagedesign.com

SARAH RAMOS (Sound Designer)
Sarah is an Audiovisual Consultant for Charcoalblue, an international theatre, acoustic, and digital design consultancy. She previously spent nine years as the Resident Audio and Video Supervisor at Court Theatre in Chicago. She returns to Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, having previously sound designed VANYA AND SONIA AND MASHA AND SPIKE. Additional Milwaukee credits include Renaissance Theaterworks and First Stage Children’s Theatre. Her Chicago credits include: Court Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre, Drury Lane Theatre, American Blues Theatre, Griffin Theatre, About Face Theatre, Gift Theatre, Congo Square Theatre, Bailiwick Chicago, Teatro Luna, Prop Thtr, Firebrand Theatre, and Livewire Chicago. Regional credits include: Indiana Repertory Theatre (IN), AndHow Theater Company (NY), Gateway Playhouse (NY), and Piedmont Opera (NC). She is an alumnus of the North Carolina School of the Arts.

MELISSA CENTGRAF (Propmaster)
Melissa is thrilled to be back with Milwaukee Chamber Theatre. Previous works at Chamber Theatre include FALLEN ANGELS, SLOWGIRL, JEEVES TAKES A BOW, and THE TRAIN DRIVER. She also designs props for Renaissance Theaterworks where she recently tested her “gardening skills” on their production of NATIVE GARDENS. Previously, she was a prop artisan for seven years at Milwaukee Repertory Theater and a costume craft artisan at Utah Shakespeare Festival. When not propping for theater, Melissa can be found decorating restaurants, managing a Destination Imagination team, assisting Girl Scout troops, playing in hockey tournaments, or rock climbing. Thanks to my family, Mark, Cecilia and Bridget, for all your support!
RAELEEN MC MILLION (Dialect Coach)
Raeleen is happy to be working again with friends at Chamber! She has been working in Milwaukee's professional theatre community for 25 years as an actor and vocal coach. She has coached several shows for Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, including A LESSON FROM ALOES, FALLEN ANGELS, SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE CASE OF THE JERSEY LILY, CHRISTMAS IN BABYLON, BEN BUTLER, and UNNECESSARY FARCE. For other Milwaukee groups: SKIN TIGHT, THE ROAD TO MECCA, LETTICE & LOVAGE, THE BALLAD OF EMMETT TILL, and TOP GIRLS at Renaissance Theaterworks; and SWEENEY TODD, LAC EGE AUX FOLLES, MY FAIR LADY, and VIOLET for Skylight. Raeleen worked at Next Act on OUTSIDE MULLINGAR and most recently, on Louisiana Sounds with the company of BLOOD AT THE ROOT. She is a member of the BFA Acting faculty at UW-Milwaukee's Peck School of the Arts where she teaches Acting, Voice & Speech, and Dialects. Raeleen is a proud member of two labor unions – Actors Equity and the American Federation of Teachers. She is a member of Voice & Speech Trainers Association (VASTA) and The American Dialect Society.

COLIN GAWRONSKI (Production/Company Manager)
Colin is very excited to be part of the Milwaukee Chamber Theatre staff and to contribute to the vibrant theatre community in Milwaukee. Colin is a lighting designer and theatrical technician native to Milwaukee. He has worked extensively with Danceworks, Inc. as well as such local companies as Renaissance Theaterworks, Skylight, Milwaukee Opera Theatre, UWM Dance, Next Act, Kohl’s Wild Theater, PrideFest Milwaukee, Bard and Bourbon, Gina Laurenzi Dance Project, Black Arts Milwaukee and the Bronzeville Arts Ensemble. Colin has also worked with the Sacramento Music Circus, the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, Theatre Lila and has taken productions to the Indianapolis and Chicago Fringe Festivals. Favorite productions include: IGNITE: A HIP HOP EXPERIENCE, SECRETS FROM THE WIDE SKY, BLACK NATIVITY, RUSSIAN TRANSPORT, FRANKIE AND JOHNNY, STORIES FROM A LIFE, THE GLASS MENAGERIE, SERENDIPITY, MARUTIUS, THRILL ME, IN A BLACK MOOD, GRUESOME PLAYGROUND INJURIES, MY FAIR LADY, LAMPS FOR MY FAMILY, and VAGABONDARE. Give Love Always.

KIRSTEN FINN (MCT Managing Director)
Kirsten is in her eleventh season as Managing Director of Milwaukee Chamber Theatre. Previously, Kirsten served as a major gifts officer for Milwaukee Public Television Friends and ran her own development consulting firm, KM Creative. She has previously been managing director of Wild Space Dance Company and development director of the Florentine Opera and the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin. Kirsten holds a bachelor’s and master’s degree in theatre and communications from Marquette University and is a Certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE).
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Stage Manager ............................................................. Veronica Zahn*
Stage Manager (10/2 - 10/6) .................................................. Judy Martel*
Scenic Designer ............................................................. Lisa Schlenker**
Costume Designer ............................................................. Leslie Vaglica
Lighting Designer ............................................................. Marisa Abbott
Sound Designer ............................................................. Sarah Ramos
Propmaster ................................................................. Melissa Centgraf
Dialect Coaches ............................................................ Raeleen McMillion & Rick Pendzich
Dialect Coach Assistant .................................................. Tessa Larson
Assistant Stage Manager, Wardrobe Supervisor & Deck Chief .................................................. Jena Tolksdorf
Costume Design Assistant ............................................. Amelia K. Strahan
Scenic Charge .............................................................. Simone Tegge
Lighting & Audio Supervisor ........................................... Craig Zemsky
Scenic Builders ............................................................ Edge Grain Studios: Timothy Linn, Rayne Kleinfoten
Technical Director ......................................................... Tony Lyons
Master Electrician ........................................................ Corbin Putz

* Appearing through an Agreement between this theatre, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, and Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

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This production was 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.

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Actors’ Equity Association (“Equity”), founded in 1913, is the U.S. labor union that represents more than 50,000 actors and stage managers. Equity seeks to foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of society and advances the careers of its members by negotiating wages, working conditions and providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. Actors’ Equity is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. #EquityWorks
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Exchanges: Season subscription tickets may be exchanged free of charge for another performance of the same production up to 48 hours in advance. Single tickets may be exchanged for another performance of the same production up to 48 hours in advance for a $5 per ticket fee. Contact the box office at 414.291.7800 to exchange.

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Concessions: The Skylight Bar & Bistro, operated by Indulge Wine Room.

CABOT THEATRE PERFORMANCES: The Skylight Bar & Bistro on the second floor is open two hours before performances and during intermission. Patrons can enjoy full menu by ordering counter service. Accessible locations. Hearing devices are available for both Cabot Theatre and Studio Theatre productions; see house manager to use a hearing device.

Food & Beverages: Bottled water and beverages in plastic containers are permitted in the Cabot and Studio Theatres. Lids, available at the Skylight Bar & Bistro, are required for shows in the Cabot Theatre and recommended for shows in the Studio Theatre.

ViewPoints: ViewPoints is a free series in which knowledgeable presenters share their insights about a particular MCT production, followed by an interactive discussion with the audience. ViewPoints takes place at 6:30 p.m. prior to a Wednesday evening performance.

Talk Theatre: Prior to Wednesday matinees is Talk Theatre, an opportunity for patrons to participate in an informal discussion with the producing artistic director and other artists involved in a production. The Talk Theatre discussion begins at 11:00 a.m.

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Ushers: Volunteers interested in ushering should contact the house manager at 414.291.7811 x250 or housemgr@skylightmusictheatre.org.

Support MCT: To become a donor contact Milwaukee Chamber Theatre at 414.276.8842 or dawnw@milwaukeechambertheatre.com or visit milwaukeechambertheatre.com.

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