

Gordon McCall, Artistic Director

# CENTAUR

THEATRE COMPANY

October 22 - December 1, 2002

Production Sponsored by



Assats and Values

A large, textured, monochromatic painting in shades of grey and white. It depicts a woman's face in profile, looking down, with her hand near her face. There are roses in the lower left and a glass teapot on a table in the foreground. The overall style is expressive and somewhat somber.

*impromptu  
on  
nuns' island*

*by  
Michel Tremblay*

*translated by  
Linda Gaboriau*

*directed by  
Diana LeBlanc*



CENTAUR  
THEATRE  
COMPANY

Gordon McCall,  
Artistic Director



A CO-PRODUCTION WITH TARRAGON THEATRE, TORONTO

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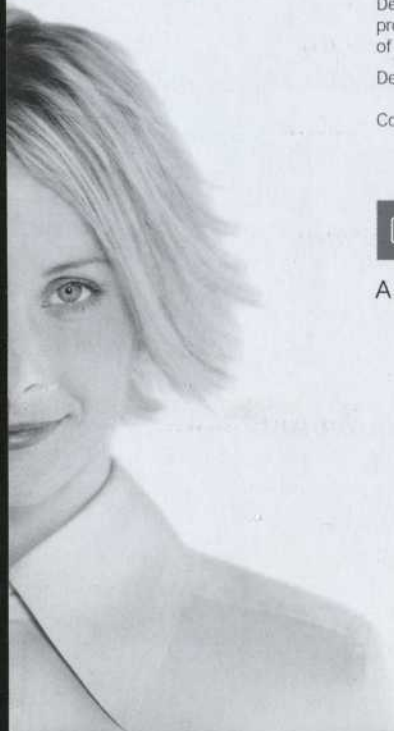
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Assets and Values



October 22-December 1, 2002

# Centaur Theatre Company

A CO-PRODUCTION WITH TARRAGON THEATRE, TORONTO

presents

THE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE WORLD PREMIERE

## *impromptu on nuns' island*

By **Michel Tremblay**

Translated by **Linda Gaboriau**

Directed by **Diana Leblanc**

starring (in alphabetical order)

*Michelle*

*Estelle*

*Richard*

*Patricia*

**Diana Donnelly**

**Patricia Hamilton**

**Robert Persichini**

**Dixie Seattle**

*Set Design*

*Costume Design*

*Lighting Design*

*Assistant Director*

*Stage Manager*

*Apprentice Stage Manager*

**Guido Tondino**

**Jan Cogley**


**Steven Hawkins**

**Graham Cozzubbo**

**Wendy Rockburn**

**Sarah Accarion**

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### TIME AND PLACE:

Nuns' Island, May, Present Day

**THERE WILL BE NO INTERMISSION**

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## Welcome from Gordon McCall

It is an honour to be presenting the English-language World Premiere of *Impromptu On Nuns' Island*. This is the second English-language World Premiere of a Michel Tremblay play that we've presented at Centaur Theatre within the last four years.

In 1998, we were privileged to present the premiere of *For The Pleasure Of Seeing Her Again*; Monsieur Tremblay's most autobiographical play. The enormous success of this charming, poignant play led to a cross-Canada tour and a run at the world-renowned Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. during their 2000-2001, 50th anniversary season. In January of 2002, I had the honour of directing this wonderful play at Dublin's Abbey Theatre. The occasion celebrated the play's European Premiere and the first time that a Canadian play had ever been produced at Ireland's National Theatre.

On this special occasion, we would also like to welcome Diana Leblanc, a native Montrealer, to Centaur's stage. A renowned Canadian director, we feel privileged that *Impromptu On Nuns' Island* marks Diana's directorial debut in her hometown.

We are presenting this play as a co-production with Toronto's Tarragon Theatre, an important member of the Canadian theatre community. We are extremely pleased to be working in partnership with Tarragon on this landmark occasion.

We wish you all a great evening of theatre.

Gordon McCall, Artistic Director  
Centaur Theatre Company

## Directors Notes

Michel Tremblay's latest play to be translated into English by the talented Linda Gaboriau, is a complex, multi-layered affair.

On the one hand, he has given us four vividly drawn characters who are artists; two actresses, one opera singer and her accompanist. They are brought together by a crisis in the opera star's career.

This flash point in Patricia's life brings her home from Paris to her apartment on Nuns' Island for a reunion with her daughter Michelle, an actress, and her mother Estelle, also an actress. Into this generational crisis Michel throws (and that's the word) the beleaguered, talented pianist Richard, who has been Patricia's colleague for twelve years.

So we already have a rich tapestry of artistic crisis, family confrontation; into this Tremblay weaves a dialectic which explores the last forty years of Quebec's political and cultural life.

In this no-holds-barred engagement, positions are challenged and hearts are laid bare.

It is a wonderful achievement: a debate worthy of Shaw, engaged in by four endearing, infuriating, funny and vulnerable people.

Merci Michel Tremblay,

Thank-you Gordon McCall,

Diana Leblanc



**Michel Tremblay** (*Playwright*) has been a dominant figure of Quebec theatre since the late 1960's. He is also renowned as a novelist, translator and screenwriter. He was born June 25, 1942 in the industrial east end of Montreal. While still in high school, he began writing plays and novels. In 1964, he won first prize in a competition for young writers, sponsored by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for his play, *Le Train*. In 1965, Michel Tremblay wrote *Les Belles Soeurs*, which was first produced in 1968 at the Théâtre Du Rideau Vert, in

Montreal. *Les Belles Soeurs* has been called "the single most important event in the history of Quebec theatre." Many of Tremblay's plays have been well received abroad. His plays have been performed throughout Canada and the United States, as well as in Europe, South America, Asia and Australia. His recent play *For The Pleasure Of Seeing Her Again* was first produced in 1998 at the Théâtre du Rideau Vert and the English-language World Premiere opened almost simultaneously at the Centaur Theatre. The Centaur production then went on to tour Canada in 1999-2000. In February 2002, the European premiere of *For The Pleasure Of Seeing Her Again* opened at the Abbey Theatre, in Dublin, directed by Centaur's Artistic Director, Gordon McCall, featuring an all Irish cast.

Mr. Tremblay has received several grants and many honours, including "Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres de France" in 1984 (promoted to "Officier" in 1991) and in the same year, "Chevalier de L'Ordre National du Quebec". He has received four honorary doctorates from Concordia University, McGill University, University of Windsor, and from Stirling University in Scotland. The ensemble of Tremblay's work now includes 25 plays, 3 musical comedies, 12 novels, 1 collection of tales, 4 collections of short stories, 7 film scripts, the libretto of an opera and several translations and adaptations. For the originality of his style, the broad range of his expression, and his profound vision of the world in which we live, Michel Tremblay is undoubtedly one of the most significant writers of our times.



**Linda Gaboriau** (*Translator*) has translated some 60 plays, including the works of some of Québec's most prominent playwrights. Her translations of plays by Michel Marc Bouchard, Normand Chaurette, Daniel Danis, René-Daniel Dubois, Michel Garneau, Gratien Gélinas, Jovette Marchessault, Michel Tremblay and Théâtre de la Marmaille (*Deux Mondes*), to name only a few, have been published and widely produced across Canada and abroad. Her translation of Michel Marc Bouchard's *Les Feluettes* (*Lilies*) won both the 1990-1991 Dora Mavor

Moore Award for Outstanding New Play and a 1992 Chalmers Award for an outstanding Canadian play. In 1993, her translation of Normand Chaurette's *Les Reines* (*The Queens*) also received a Chalmers Award for an Outstanding Canadian play. *Stone and Ashes*, her translation of the Daniel Danis play, *Cendre de cailloux*, was nominated for a 1995 Chalmers Award and won the 1996 Governor General's Award for Literary Translation. She won a Masque award (Académie Québécoise du Théâtre) for the best Translation or Adaptation, for *The Orphan Muses*, her translation of Michel Marc Bouchard's play presented at Centaur Theatre in the fall of 1997, which also won a 1999 Chalmers Award. *For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again*, her translation of Michel Tremblay's widely acclaimed play, *Encore une fois, si vous permettez*, premiered at the Centaur Theatre in October 1998 and won the Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding New Play. Ms. Gaboriau also works as a freelance journalist and broadcaster. She has a longstanding association with Montreal's Centre des auteurs dramatiques (CEAD), coordinating the Centre's exchange projects with English and Spanish-speaking countries, and has taught second-year students in the Playwriting Programme (French Section) at the National Theatre School.



**Diana Leblanc** (*Director*) was born and raised in Montreal. She was a "founding student" of the National Theatre School in 1960. This is her directorial debut in Montreal. She has acted in and directed several Michel Tremblay plays, in French and English, and won a Gemini for her television portrayal of Albertine in *La Maison Suspendue*. Directing credits include *The Maids* for Souleppper in Toronto, *The Seagull*, *Macbeth*, *Sweet Bird Of Youth*, *Death Of A Salesman*, and *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (Stratford). She has directed several operas, including *Traviata*, *Madame Butterfly*, and *Les Dialogues des Carmélites* and *Rape of Lucretia* for the Canadian Opera Company. Her television acting credits include *Swiss Family Robinson* and more recently *Tales Of The City* and *Further Tales of the City* as well as *A Man's Life* by Paul Quarington. Her upcoming projects include directing *Macbeth* at the National Theatre School, *Copenhagen* (a Neptune and NAC co-production) and *Les Femmes Savantes* at Théâtre Français de Toronto.



**Diana Donnelly** (*Michelle*) This is Diana's Centaur debut. She was last seen on stage in Montreal in *After The Dance* and *Undiscovered Country* at the Saidye Bronfman Centre (Montreal Young Company). Recent credits include *Nurse Jane Goes To Hawaii* (Grand Theatre), *The Importance Of Being Earnest* (Globe Theatre), Rosalind in *As You Like It*, Olivia in *Twelfth Night* (York Shakespeare Festival), Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* and Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Repercussion Theatre), *A Little Night Music* (Da Capo Productions) and Daniel MacIvor's *You Are Here* (da da Kamera/National Theatre School). Diana is a graduate of the National Theatre School.



**Patricia Hamilton** (*Estelle*) is pleased to be returning to Centaur, where she was last seen in *Juno and The Paycock* and in *Bordertown Café*. Patricia has recently completed her sixth season with the Shaw Festival, where her selected theatre credits include: *The Return Of The Prodigal*, *The House Of Bernarda Alba*, *Easy Virtue*, *The Matchmaker*, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, and *The Lady's Not For Burning*. Other notable credits include *Three Tall Women* (Grand Theatre) and *Angels in America* (Canadian Stage). Audiences will remember Patricia for her role as Rachel Lynde in *Anne Of Green Gables* and *Road To Avonlea*, for which she won a 1996 Gemini Award for Best Supporting Actress in a Dramatic Series. Her other selected television and film credits include: *Happy Christmas*, *Miss King*, *Traders*, *Swan Song*, *A Holiday Affair*, and *Street Legal*. Next season at the Shaw Festival, she will co-direct the musical, *On the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, and will also act in two plays.



**Robert Persichini** (*Richard*) is pleased to be working at the Centaur for the first time. This past summer he played the role of Bottom in the Canadian Stage production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Other credits with Can Stage include *The Weir*, *Communicating Doors*, *The Stone Angel* (with the Grand Theatre), *Arcadia* and *Blue Dragons*. Recent productions include *The Lonesome West* (Manitoba Theatre Centre), *Trick Or Treat* (Factory Theatre) and *School for Wives* (Souleppper Theatre Co.) At the Tarragon theatre he performed in *Lion in the Streets* and in Michel Tremblay's *Counter Service*. Robert has spent 3 seasons with the Stratford Festival, 2 seasons with the Shaw Festival, and two seasons at Blyth.



**Dixie Seattle** (*Patricia*) This is Dixie's first time at Centaur, and her second time working with Diana Leblanc, who directed *Death Of A Salesman* at Stratford. Selected theatre credits include: Emilia in *Othello*, Lady MacDuff in *Macbeth* (Stratford), *Patience* (GCTC), *Thirteen Hands* (NAC), *Plenty* (Canadian Stage), and *A Moon For The Misbegotten* (Saidye Bronfman Centre). Selected film credits include *Piano Man's Daughter*, *Jacob Two-Two*, *Joe's So Mean to Josephine*, and *Tickets to Heaven* (Genie Nominee). Her selected television credits include the series *Adderly* (Gemini Award Winner), *Population of One* (Gemini Nomination), *A Gift to Last* (Actra award nomination). Most recently she appeared in *It's Always Something – The Gilda Radner Story*, the CBS mini series *Salem Witch Trials*, and the series *Paradise Falls*, for which she is currently a Gemini nominee. She will also be seen this season in the upcoming series *Street-Time*.



**Guido Tondino** (*Set Design*) Guido's association with Centaur Theatre Company dates back to it's eleventh season. His most recent work at Centaur was for last season's production of *The Cripple of Inishmaan*. Centaur audiences will also remember his work on such productions as *Love and other Games*, *Saltwater Moon*, *Not about Heroes* and *Zen of an Intelligent Machine* amongst others. He has also recently designed set and costumes for Soulpepper's *The Winter's Tale* and sets for Soulpepper's *A Chorus of Disapproval*. Guido's work has been seen in most of Canada's major theatres, as well as in the United States where he resided from 1980 to 1986. From 1986 to 1991, Guido was Associate Director at Theatre Calgary. He is currently teaching design at The University of Alberta. From 1998-2002 he was the Director of Scenography at the National Theatre School of Canada.

**Jan Cogley** (*Costume Design*) started her career in costuming nearly 25 years ago at the National Arts Centre. Since then she has worked in many incredible places with many wonderful people. She was most recently working for the National Theatre School. Jan is currently working as a freelance designer, coordinator and cutter. Her most recent design credits for the Atlantic Theatre Festival were *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *The Miracle Worker*. She is very pleased to have the opportunity to work with the Centaur Theatre and wishes to thank Jean for all his support.



**Steven Hawkins** (*Lighting Design*) has designed for major theatres across the country. For Centaur, his designs include *Balconville*, *The Island*, *A Lesson from Aloes*, and *Travesties*. Other credits include *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Cyrano de Bergerac* (Stratford Festival), *The Winter's Tale*, *A Chorus of Disapproval* (Soulpepper), *Cabaret* (Grand Theatre/Manitoba Theatre Centre), *Whale*, *Macbeth* (Young People's Theatre), *Tartuffe*, *Amadeus*, *Summer and Smoke* (Theatre Calgary), *La Maison Suspendue*, *Tartuffe* (Canadian Stage), *Fences*, *Lilies* (National Arts Centre), *The Cherry Orchard* and *Lion in the Streets* (Tarragon). He has received eight Dora Award nominations and his work has been seen at the Shaw Festival, Theatre New Brunswick, Grand Opera House in Belfast and the Old Vic in London.



**Graham Cozzubbo** (*Assistant Director*) is pleased to be making his Centaur debut. A graduate of the University of Calgary, he spent two seasons at Alberta Theatre Projects and co-founded Calgary's New Century Stage. Committed to new work and music, he began a long association with the Contemporary Opera Program at the Banff Centre for the Arts, where he was the assistant artistic director. Branching into traditional opera, Graham has directed a new production of *Nabucco* for Pacific Opera Victoria, and Calgary Opera's *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Recently in theatre, he has directed Gratien Gélinas' *The Passion of Narcisse Mondoux* at Theatre New Brunswick, and *Krapp's Last Tape*, featuring John Neville, for Toronto's DuMaurier World Stage Festival and Soulepper Theatre.



**Wendy Rockburn** (*Stage Manager*) *Impromptu* marks Wendy's eighth show at Centaur. Previously she has stage managed *Waiting For Godot*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *The Gin Game*, *Oliver!*, *Art*, *Freeze*, and *Dinner With Friends*. Wendy returns in the spring for *Copenhagen*, but in between then she'll be travelling to Africa to participate in an Earthwatch Expedition studying black rhinos in Kenya for two weeks!



**Sarah Accarion** (*Apprentice Stage Manager*) This is Sarah's first production working with Centaur Theatre Company. Her past experiences include *Fully Committed*, with the Just for Laughs Festival at Centaur, *Peter Pan*, and *Noises Off* at John Abbott College, as well as *Mortal Escape* during the Montreal Fringe Festival. In the New Year, Sarah will be returning to John Abbott College to complete her D.E.C. in Technical Theatre.

## SEAGRAM ART GALLERY

at CENTAUR THEATRE

### Giuseppe Gallaccio

Originally from Montreal, Giuseppe Gallaccio has lived in Toronto since 1999, working as a professional actor. A self-taught painter, Giuseppe's work reflects an ongoing fascination with personal identity and what it means to be 'Canadian' while maintaining strong connections to one's country of origin.



For rental information call : 288-1229

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## CENTAUR THEATRE COMPANY

Founded in 1969 by Maurice Podbrey and Herb Auerbach. Some thirty-four years later, Centaur Theatre Company remains in the forefront of new play development and theatrical collaborations. In particular, under the Artistic Directorship of Gordon McCall since 1997, Centaur has led the way in celebrating and participating in major collaborations in the Montreal and Quebec French theatre community. So much so that the last two Michel Tremblay plays have received their English-language world-premieres at Centaur Theatre and in the case of *For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again*, it went on to tour both nationally and internationally, receiving international recognition.

Centaur Theatre Company can now add the names of Michel Tremblay, Michel Marc Bouchard, Anne Lambert, Marianne Ackerman, Kit Brennan, Stephen Orlov, Dulcinea Langfelder, Jean Marc Dalpé, Evelyne de la Chenelière and Steve Galluccio to the honor roll of playwrights that have received premiere productions at this distinguished theatre which includes David Fennario, Vittorio Rossi, David Gow, and Bowser and Blue.

### *For Centaur Theatre:*

Artistic Director	Gordon McCall
General Manager	Charles Childs
Production Manager	Howard Mendelsohn
Technical Director	Mitch Jamieson
Public Relations / Marketing Director	Vanessa Herrick
Development Director	Terry Diab
Chairman of the Board of Directors	Richard McConomy

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## TARRAGON THEATRE

Toronto's Tarragon Theatre, founded by Bill Glassco in 1970, is a leader in the development, creation and production of new Canadian plays. Over 170 works have premiered at Tarragon by such celebrated and award-winning writers as Jason Sherman, Judith Thompson, John Murrell, Joan McLeod, Morris Panych, Guillermo Verecchia, Ann-Marie MacDonald, Ted Dykstra, and Richard Greenblatt, James Reaney, David French, Mavis Gallant, Kristen Thomson, and Michael Healey.

Tarragon is a pioneer in presenting Quebec plays in translation, most notably the works of Michel Tremblay. We have produced thirteen of his plays, eight of which have been English-language world-premieres. Other Quebec writers include Carole Frechette, Serge Boucher, Roland Lepage, Rene Daniel Dubois, Roch Carrier, Jovette Marchessault, Michel Garneau.

Tarragon operates two theatres: the 205-seat Mainspace, and the 100-seat Extra Space. Richard Rose became the artistic director in July, 2002 following the death of Urjo Kareda who had been Tarragon's leader for 20 years.

### *For Tarragon Theatre*

Artistic Director	Richard Rose
General Manager	Mallory Gilbert
Associate Artistic Director	Andy McKim
Production Manager	Henry Bertrand
Administrator	Craig Morash
Publicist	Tim Chapman
President, Tarragon board of directors	Marianne Anderson

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*For information on the benefits of supporting Centaur Theatre Company, please contact the Development Department at 288-1229 ext. 235/240.*

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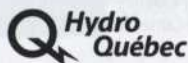
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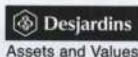
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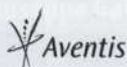
**Impromptu on Nuns' Island**

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**Proof**

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# BRAVO!

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## The inside track:

Centaur Theatre Company's **Director's Circle**

Donors who contribute \$50 and more to Centaur's annual fundraising campaign are invited to join Artistic Director, Gordon McCall, in the **Director's Circle**.

All donations to Centaur Theatre Company are fully tax deductible. **Director's Circle** members receive a subscription to The Centaur Scene Newsletter – an insider's look at Centaur and at theatre-world goings-on. All donors are acknowledged in the final program each season and in Centaur's Annual Report. Based on the level of giving, added **Director's Circle** benefits include:

### **Chorus** (\$50 to \$124):

invitations to **Director's Circle** Members' Events.

### **Ensemble** (\$125 to \$249):

invitations to **Director's Circle** Members' Events and invitations to Centaur 2 dress rehearsals.


### **Featured Players** (\$250 to \$499):

invitations to **Director's Circle** Members' Events, an invitation to all Centaur dress rehearsals, invitations to the company's season launch press conference and a behind-the-scenes tour of Centaur.

### **Leading Roles** (\$500+):

invitations to **Director's Circle** Members' Events, an invitation to all Centaur dress rehearsals, invitations to the company's season launch press conference. As well, you will receive a behind-the-scenes tour of Centaur Theatre and a special invitation for the Artistic Director's Season Launch Party.

Recent **Director's Circle** Members' Events have included an "Actor's Studio" style gathering with award-winning actress Rosemary Dunsmore, and most recently, an "Up Close and Personal" interview by Centaur's Chairman of the Board Rick McConomy with Gordon McCall.



THE  
DIRECTOR'S  
CIRCLE

## Without A Parachute

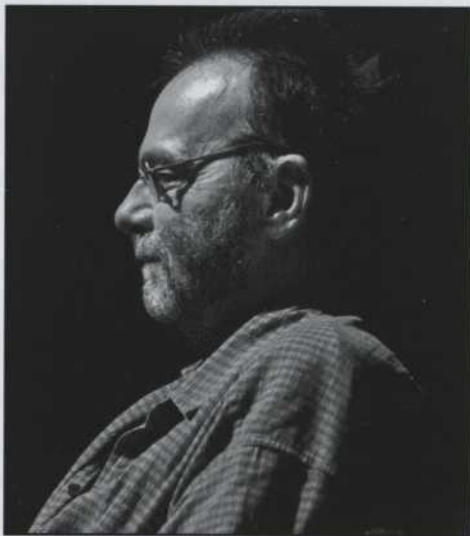
Benefit for David Fennario

An Unqualified Success

Last September 9<sup>th</sup>, Centaur held a benefit evening for Montreal playwright, David Fennario, who has been suffering from Guillain-Barré syndrome.

Artistic Director, Gordon McCall, called the event "a mid-career celebration for one of the foundation blocks of this theatre."

**Without A Parachute** was an evening of celebration named after the title of Fennario's first published book. Hosted by Gordon McCall with warmth, humour and heartfelt support, the show featured several testimonials, tributes, excerpts of his plays and documentary film footage. Friends



David Fennario

photo: John Mahoney, The Gazette

and fans of David packed the house and responded genuinely to every joke, acknowledgment, and poignant moment.

David's rapid development from having no theatre background, to becoming one of Canada's foremost playwrights is a phenomenon that Centaur is proud to have nurtured. David was invited to be Centaur's first playwright-in-residence, and went on to pen some of Canada's most celebrated productions including *On The Job*, *Nothing To Lose*, and Canada's first bilingual play, *Balconville*. According to Gordon McCall, "David put Centaur on the map in the late seventies and eighties both nationally and internationally."

### **Getting Involved**

is produced by Centaur's Development Department and sponsored by Assante Financial Management Ltd. Look for these pages in Centaur's house programs and soon on our web site at [www.centaurtheatre.com](http://www.centaurtheatre.com) For further information on Getting Involved and on all of Centaur's fundraising activities, contact the Development Department by phone 288-1229 ext. 235/240 or by fax at 288-8575.

**Gordon McCall**  
Artistic & Executive Director

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### Production

**Mark Baehr** Head Technician C1

**Daniel Barkley** Head Scenic Artist

**Sonya Bayer** Sewer

**Richard Brown** Properties Builder

**Pietro Cerone** Audio Technician

**Margaret Collis** Welder

**Rich Dawson** Head Technician C2

**Paul Gorrie** Assistant Carpenter

**Mitch Jamieson** Technical Director

**Nadia Lombardo** Painter

**Vickie Marston** Head of Properties

**Howard Mendelsohn** Production Manager

**Ron Rolfe** Hair

**Mary Thomas** Wardrobe Supervisor

**Susana Vera** Wardrobe Mistress

**Alan Yeoman** Head Carpenter

### Set-Up Crew

**Rob Burgess**

**Brandon Darbyson**

**Louis Fredette**

**Tony Hoffman**

**Jason McCulloch**

**Sharlanne McStay**

**James Richardson**

**Rob Sassade**

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Centaur Theatre Company is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres and engages artists who are members of Canadian Actors' Equity Association, under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement. Centaur Theatre Company performs under the auspices of the Centaur Foundation for the Performing Arts.

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