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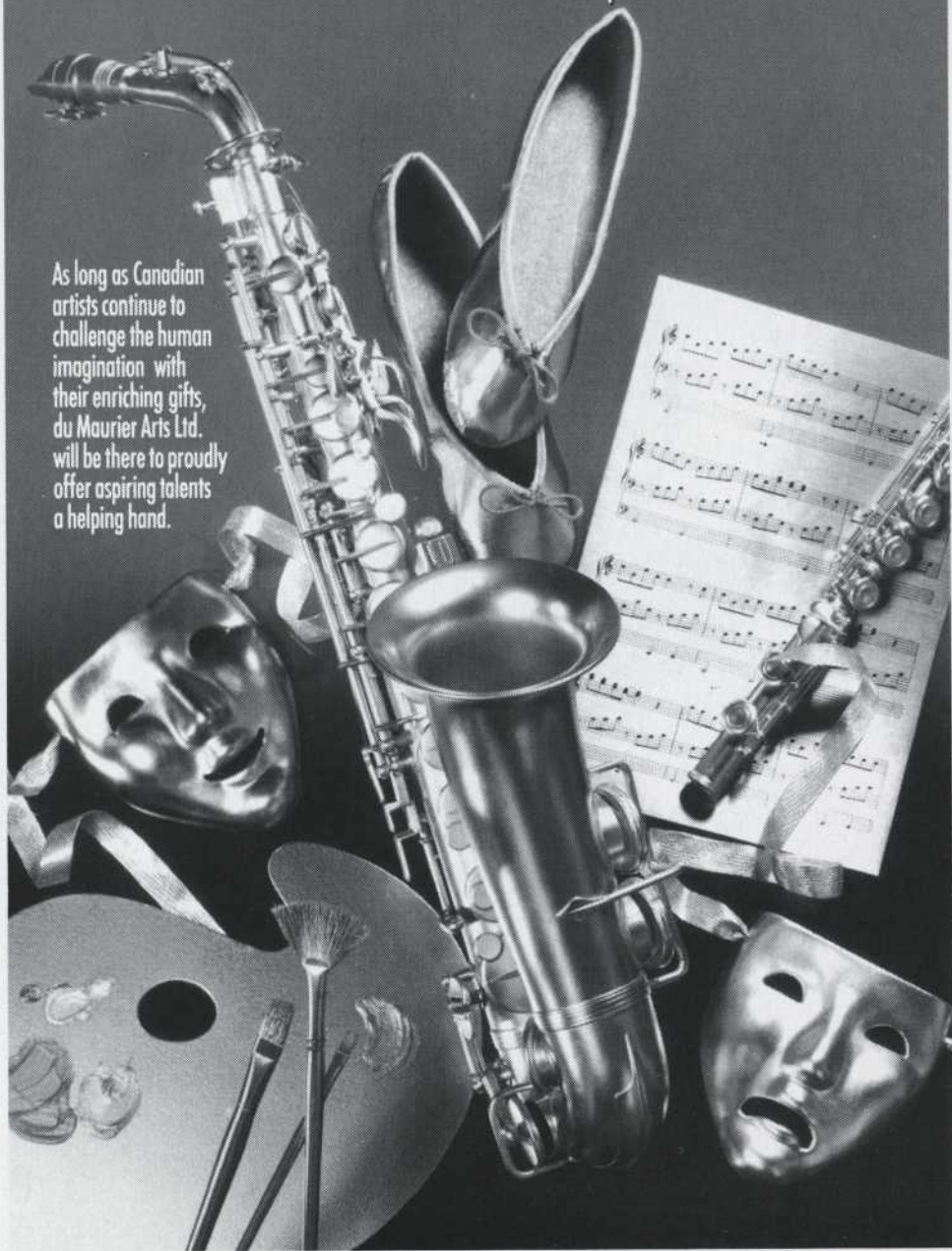
# La Bête

*by David Hirson*  
directed by John Palmer



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# La Bête

by David Hirson

March 17 - April 10, 1994

(previews March 15 & 16)

## CAST

(in order of appearance)

<i>Dorine, a serving maid</i>	<b>Kristen THOMSON</b>
<i>Elomire, leader of the troupe</i>	<b>Maurice PODBREY</b>
<i>Bejart, his second in command</i>	<b>Griffith BREWER</b>
<i>Valere, a troubadour</i>	<b>Michael McMURTRY</b>
<i>Prince Conti, patron of the troupe</i>	<b>Peter FARBRIDGE</b>
<i>Madeleine Bejart, Bejart's sister</i>	<b>Sheena LARKIN</b>
<i>De Brie</i>	<b>Andrew TARBET</b>
<i>Catherine De Brie, De Brie's wife</i>	<b>Valerie VALOIS</b>
<i>Rene Du Parc</i>	<b>Martin KEVAN</b>
<i>Marquise-Therese Du Parc, Du Parc's wife</i>	<b>Susan ALMGREN</b>
<i>Pages</i>	<b>Jamie ELMAN</b>
	<b>Amanda CHICOINE</b>
	<b>Michel LEJEUNE</b>
	<b>Katherine WHEELER</b>
	<b>John PALMER</b>
	<b>Michael EAGAN</b>
	<b>Kevin LAMOTTE</b>
	<b>Christopher SMITH</b>
	<b>John RAYMOND</b>
	<b>Johanne POMRENSKI</b>
	<b>Jennifer CAPRARU</b>

Directed by

Set & Costume Design by

Lighting Design by

Original Music by

Stage Manager

Assitant Stage Manager

Assistant to the Director

**TIME:** 1654

**PLACE:** Prince Conti's estate in Pezenas.  
Languedoc, France.

There will be one intermission.

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The Director would like to dedicate this production to **Eric Steiner**.

\* Originally produced on the Broadway Stage by Stuart Ostrow.

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## DAVID HIRSON

Playwright

David Hirson was born in New York City in 1958 and was educated in America at Yale and in England at Magdalen College, Oxford. As an undergraduate, he was commissioned to write an adaptation of Alessandro Scarlatti's 1690 opera *Gli Equivoci Nel Semeiante*, which was presented at Yale and later broadcast on Public Radio. David has contributed essays and criticism to such journals as the *Times Literary Supplement*, the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, and the *London Review of Books*.

With *LA BÊTE*, his first play, he made his Broadway and London debuts, winning the John Gassner Award of the Outer Critics Circle, the New York Newsday /Oppenheimer Award, and the Marton Prize of the Dramatists Guild for Best New American Playwright. *LA BÊTE* also received the special Best Play citation in the American theatre annual *Best Plays 1990-91*, five Tony Award nominations and six Drama Desk nominations including Best Play 1991. For the London production of *LA BÊTE*, David won the 1992 Laurence Olivier Award for Comedy of the Year.

Recent major North American productions of *LA BÊTE* have been staged in Toronto, Edmonton, Calgary, British Columbia, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Atlanta, Seattle, and Washington, D.C. and at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and the Actors Theatre of Louisville. David lives in New York City, where he is at work on a new play.

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## THE CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

**Kristen Thomson** (*Dorine*)

Kristen is a recent graduate of The National Theatre School of Canada. In her final year, she played on the Centaur stage as Margery Pinchwife in *The Country Wife* and as Irena in *Mad Forest*. Kristen has since performed at The Piggery Theatre as Maria in *Lend Me a Tenor* and at the Manitoba Theatre Centre and National Arts Centre as Rose in their co-production of *Dancing at Lughnasa*. After *LA BÊTE*, Kristen will go to London, Ontario to perform at The Grand Theatre.

**Maurice Podbrey** (*Elomire*)

Maurice Podbrey is celebrating his 25th Anniversary as Executive and Founding Artistic Director of Centaur Theatre Company. Over the years, Maurice has directed numerous acclaimed productions including *MASTER HAROLD...AND THE BOYS*, *K2*, *THE REAL THING*, *BILOXI BLUES*, *WOMAN IN MIND*, *MY CHILDREN! MY AFRICA!*, *THE AFFECTIONS OF MAY*, *COME GOOD RAIN*, and *SOMEONE WHO'LL WATCH OVER ME*. He is also remembered by Montreal audiences for his portrayals of Vanya in *UNCLE VANYA*, "Captain" Jack Boyle in *JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK*, the Irish Man in the *GIGLI CONCERT*, Prokhor in *VASSA*, Stalin in *MASTER CLASS* and Mordechai Weiss in *A SHAYNA MAIDEL* to name but a few. Maurice Podbrey has acted as Chairman of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT) for two terms and is currently a member of the Board of the Directors of the National Theatre School of Canada and of Alliance Quebec. He is a recipient of the Order of Canada and of an honorary Doctor of Law degree (1992) from Concordia University.

**Griffith Brewer** (*Bejart*)

Griffith Brewer has been part of the Centaur team as Properties Master since the Company's inception in 1969. Audiences by now are very familiar with his numerous stage appearances over the years in Centaur Theatre Company's productions of *ON THE JOB*, *BLOOD RELATIONS*, *MOVING*, *84 CHARING CROSS ROAD*, *THE SEAGULL*, *SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES*, *GUYS AND DOLLS* (Griffith's first musical role), *OBSERVE THE SONS OF ULSTER MARCHING TOWARDS THE SOMME*, *JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK*, and most recently, last season's *LOOK BACK IN ANGER* and *UNCLE VANYA*. Griffith has also worked extensively in radio and film, including a role in the feature film *Bayo*.

**Michael McMurtry** (*Valere*)

Michael has studied at Queen's University, the London Academy of Performing Arts, and Circle in the Square Theatre School in New York City. Since his first show, a half-hour solo piece about the life of Jack Kerouac entitled *Jack*, Michael has written and acted in the short play, *He Made the Stars Also*, at the Toronto Fringe of '93; has written and performed a short adaptation of Chekhov's *The Seagull* at the Toronto Summerworks Festival in August '93; and while at university, wrote, directed and acted in a half hour film comedy, *I Felt It*



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*That Time*. Recently, Michael performed his one-man show, *The Enthusiasm of the Species*, here at Centaur. It previously ran at the Ohio Theatre in New York City in '93 and at Passe-Muraille Theatre in October '92 where he also played "Itty" in *Sleeproom* (a play by Daniel MacIvor, Robin Fulford, John Mighton and Sally Clark) and "John" in the award-winning *Stone Angel* based on the novel by Margaret Lawrence. Currently, Michael is writing a play for the Toronto Fringe of '94 - in which he will also perform.

**Peter Farbridge** (*Prince Conti*)

This is Peter's first appearance on a Centaur stage. A native of Toronto, he has been living and working in Montreal for over a year now. Besides recently creating the role of Ernest in Global Screaming Kettle's *The Anger in Ernest and Ernestine*, Peter has performed before Montreal audiences in Shakespeare-in-the-Park's *Cymbeline* and *Romeo and Juliet* this past summer. In Toronto, Peter has worked for Grub Street Repertory and the Inner Stage; and he spent a season at the Stratford Festival in 1990. Peter is co-founder of and has worked extensively for the Modern Times Stage Company in Toronto.

**Sheena Larkin** (*Madeleine Bejart*)

Sheena Larkin is no stranger to Montreal theatregoers having performed the role of Maggie in *A Life* (for Foolhouse Theatre at Centaur); Mrs. Crombie in Vittorio Rossi's *SCARPONE* (for Centaur Theatre Company); Mrs. Boyle in *The Mousetrap* (for Avanti Plus at Centaur); Pippa in *Playing Bare* (for Street People Theatre), and Maryia Vassilievna in Centaur's *UNCLE VANYA* last season. In addition to her stage work which has taken her to Stratford, The Citadel (Edmonton); Neptune Theatre (Halifax); La Poudière (Montreal), the National Arts Centre (Ottawa), and The Piggery (North Hatley), Sheena has also worked extensively in film and television. Credits include among others: *The Boys of St. Vincent*, *Agaguk*, *Highlander III*, and *Movement du Desire*.

**Andrew Tarbet** (*De Brie*)

*LA BÊTE* marks Andrew's first appearance with Centaur Theatre Company. He has, however, played on the Centaur stage. A member of last year's graduating class at the National Theatre School, he played Harcourt in William Wycherly's *Country Wife* and Mihai in Caryl Churchill's *Mad Forest* here at Centaur. Since graduating he has enjoyed playing Le Baron, ringmaster, in Cirque du Soleil's *Saltimbanco* and will rejoin the circus this summer in Tokyo.

**Valerie Valois** (*Catherine de Brie*)

Valerie has studied theatre at the Banff School of Fine Arts and at Dawson College. On stage, she has appeared in *Des Moutons Noirs Pure Laine* for Théâtre des Cascades, as Sylvia in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* at the Banff Festival, and as Groucha in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* at the Dome, Dawson College. Her film and television work includes *Lance et Compte III* and *Lance et Compte Spéciaux*, *Scanners III*, *La Misère des Riches II*, *Blanche*, and most recently, *Les Grands Procès "Affaire Pitre"*.



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**Martin Kevan** (*Rene Du Parc*)

After a fifteen year absence, Martin Kevan returns to the anglophone stage. As a Montreal actor, he is best remembered for his roles in *End Game* by Samuel Beckett and *Panique à Longueuil* by René-Daniel Dubois. In 1979, he was nominated as Best Actor in a Short Drama by the Canadian Film Awards for his role in *Happiness Is Loving Your Teacher*, which he co-wrote with John M. Smith. He is the author of two novels, *Racing Tides* and *Psy Spy*; a guide book, *The Best of Montreal & Quebec City*; and several essays, short stories and poems. In collaboration with the CBC and Le Studio de Musique Ancienne de Montréal his *The Music of New France* won "most imaginative program" at New York's International Radio Awards. In 1986, he translated René-Daniel Dubois' play *Ne Blamez Jamais les Bédouins*, which was recorded as a cantata by Diffusion i MÉDiA in 1992. He appears regularly in the radio plays of Radio Canada. He is happy to be back on stage.

**Susan Almgren** (*Marquise-Therese Du Parc*)

Susan Almgren has had two babies since her last appearance as Annie in the 1987 production of *THE REAL THING* at Centaur and is delighted to be back. Other stage credits include Perdita in *A Winter's Tale*, Desdemona in *Othello*, and Elizabeth in A.P.A.'s *Laundry and Bourbon*. Film work includes *Are You Afraid Of The Dark?*, leads in the thrillers *Deadly Surveillance* and CBS's *Twin Sisters* as well as a docu-drama entitled *Surrogate Motherhood*.

**Jamie Elman** (*Page*)

Currently a student at Dawson College, Jamie most recently performed in the school's production of *Goodnight Desdemona, Good Morning Juliet*. Jamie also had leading roles in *Annie Get Your Gun* for the Shaar Hashamayim Players; in *Godspell* and *As You Like It* for Chapel Hill Chauncy Hall Summer Theatre; and for television, in *Are You Afraid of the Dark?*

**Amanda Chicoine** (*Page*)

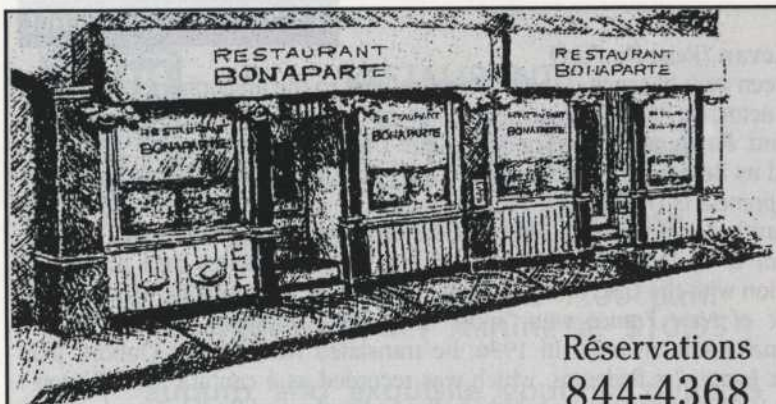
Prior to this, her debut at Centaur, Amanda has worked on stage and television as a dancer, appearing in *Dans' Atout '93* at Polyvalente Cavalier de LaSalle, *Stepping Out In Style* at Riverside Park Academy and in *Three's A Crowd* for the Lakeshore Players. Television dance credits include *Imprimeur Chic* for Drakkar Productions and *Jeunes d'Aujourd'hui* for Télé-Métropole. Amanda is also a former Miss Teen Montreal finalist and past co-anchor for the *Youth News Network* (CFCF/Lumac Film Prod.).

**Michel Lejeune** (*Page*)

Michel's performance credits include acting, modelling, and dance. Most recently, he was a dancer in *Une Parodie de la Danse*, and previously in *Influence* for Val D'Or 1982-93. Audiences from Le Carrefour will also remember his performances in *Cabaret Comédie* and *Camp d'été du Dumain Forget*.

**Katherine Wheeler** (*Page*)

This role marks Katherine's stage debut. Her special skills include singing, alpine skiing, sailing and gymnastics and she is pleased to be adding acting to the list.



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**John Palmer** (Director)

John Palmer directed *TOOTH OF CRIME* for Centaur's Season 5. He has directed at the Glasgow Citizens' Theatre, The Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Juilliard School, the Stratford Festival, schools and theatres across Canada, and *Karla and Grif* for Centaur's Season 23. Last season he directed Kyle Tingley's *The Elastic Band Effect* for Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, Toronto. Mr. Palmer was resident playwright for 1993 at the National Theatre School.

**Michael Eagan** (Set & Costume Designer)

Michael Eagan is one of Canada's foremost stage designers and a regular at Centaur with over 20 productions to his credit, including *EVE*, *BACK TO BEULAH*, *TRAVESTIES*, *NIGHT AND DAY*, *THE SEAGULL*, *GUYS AND DOLLS*, *LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS*, *A WOMAN IN MIND*, *A SHAYNA MAIDEL*, *ROUGH CROSSING*, and *ARMS AND THE MAN*. An alumnus of the National Theatre School, he is currently head of the Design Section. Two seasons ago, Michael designed *Baal* for the Banff Summer Festival and *Les Contes D'Hoffman* for l'Opéra de Montréal. Recent projects include the Prairie Theatre Exchange's *The Raft* (Winnipeg), Rainbow Stage's *Guys and Dolls* (Winnipeg), 1949 for Neptune Theatre and *Jitters* for the National Arts Centre, Ottawa. Upcoming projects include *Une Soirée Feydeau* for the Théâtre français de Toronto and the opera, *The Rakes' Progress*, at the Banff Festival this summer.

**Kevin Lamotte** (Lighting Designer)

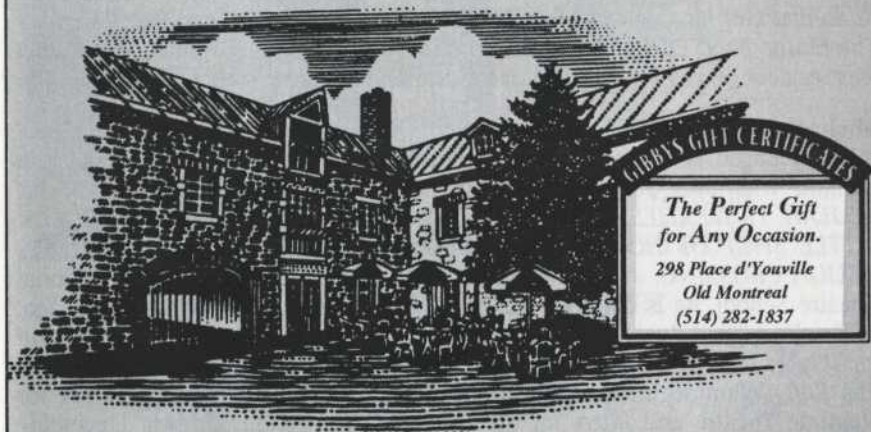
The recipient of the 1990 Pauline McGibbon Award and five Dora Mavor Moore nominations, Kevin Lamotte returns to Centaur having previously designed the lighting for last season's *ARMS AND THE MAN*. A member of the Associated Designers of Canada, his recent design credits include: *If We Are Women* for Vancouver Playhouse and the Canadian Stage Company and *The Nightingale* for Young People's Theatre; *Councillor At Law*, *On The Town*, *Doctor's Dilemma*, *Enrico IV*, *Drums in the Night*, *The Silver King*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, and *Candida* for the Shaw Festival; *M. Butterfly* for Alberta Theatre Projects; *Hedda Gabler* and *Medea* for Manitoba Theatre Centre; *Dancing at Lughnasa* for the Manitoba Theatre Centre and National Arts Centre; *Three Sisters*, *La Tragédie de Carmen*, and *Don Giovanni* for the Banff Centre; and *Cloud 9* and *The Prince of Homburg* for the University of Rochester N.Y. He has also designed for the National Arts Centre (theatre and opera), Tarragon Theatre Plus, Prairie Theatre Exchange, Vancouver Opera, Opera Hamilton and Theatre New Brunswick. Kevin was the Lighting Design Associate for *Cats* Canada and *Les Misérables* in Canada and Australia.

**Christopher Smith** (Composer of Original Music)

Christopher studied trombone at McGill University and received his Master of Music degree in composition from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. Besides writing and playing for local bands such as *Streetnix* and *Saramanda*, he teaches jazz arranging at McGill. Some of his most favourite recent theatre assignments were Tom Stoppard's *Rough Crossing* for Centaur, Neil Kroetch's *Jack, From You To Us To You 3* for Geordie Productions, Shakespeare's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and writing arrangements for the world premiere production of George Gershwin's *Reaching For The Moon*.

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**John Raymond** (*Stage Manager*)

John Raymond returns to Centaur after teaching stage management at both the National Theatre School and Concordia University this fall. This marks his eighth season with Centaur, his second as Stage Manager in Centaur 2. Three seasons ago, he was Company/Stage Manager of Centaur's Canadian tour of *MY CHILDREN! MY AFRICA!* which travelled to the Citadel (Edmonton), Theatre Calgary, The Grand (London) and Manitoba Theatre Centre. At Centaur, he has stage managed *BROADWAY BOUND*, *MOTHER OF ALL THE BEHANS*, *FIRE-SALE*, *FOOTPRINTS ON THE MOON*, *MURDER OF SUSAN PARR*, *THE GIGLI CONCERT*, *A SHAYNA MAIDEL*, *ROUGH CROSSING*, Centaur's 1991 revival of *BALCONVILLE*, and *A DAMSEL FOR A GORILLA*.

**Johanne Pomrenski** (*Assistant Stage Manager*)

Johanne recently stage managed Centaur's *THE LAST ADAM*, *Passages* at the Strathearn Intercultural Center, and this past summer, *Artichoke and Odd Fish* at the Ship's Company Theatre in Parrsboro, N.S. Some of Johanne's previous Centaur credits include the Canadian tour of *MY CHILDREN! MY AFRICA!*, *BALCONVILLE*, *KARLA & GRIF* (as Stage Manager for the final week in C1), *UNE PUCELLE POUR UNE GORILLE/A DAMSEL FOR A GORILLA*, *PLAYBOY OF THE WEST INDIES*, *ARMS AND THE MAN*, and *UNCLE VANYA*. Johanne was Stage Manager for the Just For Laughs Festivals '91 & '92 at Club Soda. She returns to Centaur later this season as ASM on *CABARET*.

**Jennifer Capraru** (*Assistant to the Director*)

Jennifer Capraru most recently directed Fleisser's *Purgatory In Ingolstadt* for Theatre Asylum, a Toronto company that presents plays by and about women, and of which she is co-founder. 1992 was spent in Germany on a directing grant at the Volksbühne, Berlin and the Landes Theater Tübingen. She was Assistant Director on *Woyzeck* at Equity Showcase and *8 Songs For A Mad King* at the Musica Festival in Strasbourg, France. Recent acting credits include *Metamorphosis Of A Shadow* (Sound Image Theatre), *Blood and Ice* (Theatre Asylum), and the Dora-nominated *Marat/Sade*. In the spring, she will direct Sarah Daniels' *The Gut Girls*.

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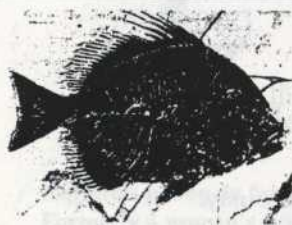
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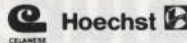
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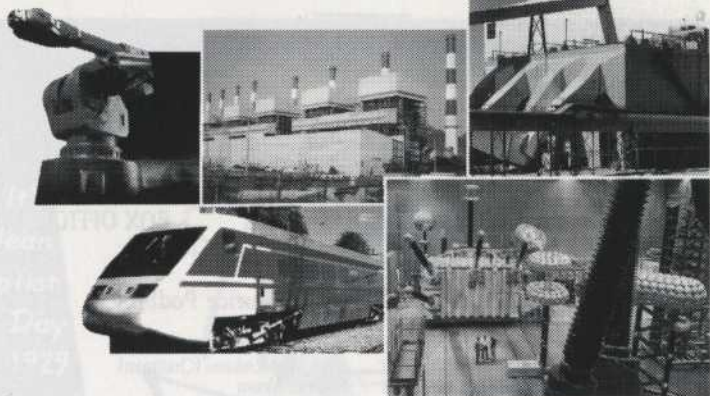
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Griffith Brewer  
Laura Calver  
Jean Charette  
Mike D'Amato  
Krista Hansen  
Lynn McQueen  
Howard Mendelsohn  
Elaine Normandeau  
Dave Prior  
Michael Taylor  
Mary Thomas  
Valérie Viertel  
Tim Whyte

Technician C2  
Wardrobe Mistress  
Properties Master  
Head Technician C1  
Asst. Carpenter  
Production Manager  
Stage Manager C2  
Stage Manager C1  
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Anne Marie Pidgeon, Volunteer  
Primavera Catering  
Raymonde Tanguay, Translator  
Elyssa Wasserman, Volunteer

#### FOR THIS PRODUCTION

Hair  
Head Painter  
Painters

Benjamin Robin  
Wendell Dennis  
Mark Buntrock  
Julie Fox

Props  
Seamstress  
Wardrobe

Peter Vassilakos, George Venkus  
Mme Aras  
Isabelle Bouchard  
Cathy Cochrane,  
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Mary-Judith Dowe  
Sheila Shojai  
Pierre Lafontaine

Wigs



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Centaur Theatre Company is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatre 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.

Centaur gratefully acknowledges the following funding agencies for their support: The Canada Council, Le Gouvernement du Québec-Ministère de la Culture, Le Conseil des Arts, and The Department of the Secretary of State of Canada.

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