

FOR IMMEDIATE MEDIA RELEASE:

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Profile Theatre presents rare staging of [THE SECRETARIES](#)

Written by Queer comedy icons The Five Lesbian Brothers and set in Big Bone, Oregon

"How did a decent girl like me get involved with a cult of murderous secretaries?"

"The Secretaries is like a mashup of Twin Peaks and Portlandia." - [Chicago Tribune](#)



PORTLAND, OREGON, USA. May 29, 2018 - Just in time for Pride Month, [PROFILE THEATRE](#) presents a rare staging of the outrageous comedy **The Secretaries** by The Five Lesbian Brothers, the performance collective co-founded in the late-1980s by Pulitzer and Tony-winning playwright Lisa Kron. First performed in 1994, the play lampoons the style of the “slasher flick” to comment on the violence of internalized misogyny and homophobia. Twenty-four years later, The Secretaries' fake blood and bawdy stereotypes delivers timely insights into the grotesquery of sexual politics in the workplace. The Profile Theatre production features an all-female cast including some of Portland’s most gifted comedic actors. The all-female creative team (from director to line producer, fight choreographer, stage manager

and all designers) is helmed by Dawn Monique Williams, who recently staged the uproarious *Merry Wives of Windsor* at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival last season.

WHERE: Artist Repertory Theatre's Alder Stage, 1515 SW Morrison Street, Portland OR 97205

WHEN: June 14 - July 1, 2018. Thursday-Saturday at 7:30pm, Sunday at 2pm.

TICKETS: Now available online at www.profiletheatre.org

Or contact box office at (503)-242-0080 or boxoffice@profiletheatre.org

[Season Subscriptions](#) on sale now with flex packages to see 4 or 5 plays for \$80-\$170

[Single Tickets](#) on sale now for \$20-\$38

*Discounts offered for groups, students, teachers, ASL, 30-and-under, Arts for All and previews.

ABOUT THE PLAY

The Secretaries by The Five Lesbian Brothers

Pretty Patty Johnson is thrilled to join the secretarial pool at the Cooney Lumber Mill in Big Bone, Oregon under the iron-fisted leadership of sultry office manager Susan Curtis. But she soon begins to feel that all is not right—the enforced diet of Slim-Fast shakes, the strange clicking language between the girls, the monthly disappearance of a lumberjack. By the time Patty discovers murder is part of the office skill set, it's too late to turn back! In the guise of satiric exploitation-horror, *The Secretaries* takes an unflinching look at the warping cultural expectations of femininity, the violence of internalized misogyny and the ways women themselves are often the enforcers of sexism.

"95 minutes of gritty, bawdy, bloody humor pregnant with incisive social commentary." –

San Francisco Examiner

"Lisa Kron is one of the funniest playwrights I've ever met," says Profile's AD Josh Hecht. Kron is recently well-known as the Pulitzer and Tony-winning writer of the musical *Fun Home*. But for nearly three decades, her writing has run the gamut from award-winning solo shows to groundbreaking plays on Broadway, often using her own family as the source material for some of the most insightful (and hysterical) observations of human nature. She's a writer full of big ideas with a bold, inimitable voice.

“Our unique mission allows us to present her early work with the iconic downtown performance troupe The Five Lesbian Brothers,” continues Hecht, “To her career-defining solo show *2.5 Minute Ride*, which launched our season last February, to her 2006 Broadway hit *Well* and her 2010 political comedy-drama *In The Wake*.”

Hecht elaborates on *The Secretaries*: “Misogyny is the subject of *The Secretaries*, though the Brothers have turned their incisive lens on the painful ravages of internalized sexism. Heavy stuff for a June comedy. But hasn’t this always been the function of our best comics? To reveal us to ourselves? To disarm us with laughter before they hit us with a mordant truth? Lisa has said that for her, this play’s focus is not the cartoonish violence enacted on the lumberjacks, but the far more insidious emotional violence between the women. *The Secretaries* premiered in 1994, but its comedy feels as fresh and its critique feels as necessary today as it ever has.”

The Five Lesbian Brothers, Playwrights



For the past 23 years the **Five Lesbian Brothers** have created provocative lesbian theater for the masses using the fine feminist art of collaboration. They are **Maureen Angelos, Babs Davy, Dominique Dibbell, Peg Healey, and Lisa Kron**. They came together as a theater company in 1989 at the Obie- Award-winning WOW Café Theater in New York City’s East Village. Together the Brothers have written five plays, *Voyage to Lesbos* (1990), *Brave Smiles* (1992), *The Secretaries* (1994), *Brides of the Moon* (1996), and *Oedipus at Palm Springs* (2006) – as well as numerous event-specific show-stopping acts.

The Brothers’ plays have been produced off Broadway and off-off Broadway and beyond by theaters such as New York Theatre Workshop, The Public Theatre, the WOW Cafe Theatre, Downtown Art Company, Performance Space 122, Dixon Place, La Mama, the Kitchen and the Whitney Museum of American Art at Phillip Morris. The Brothers have toured their work to London, Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, Houston, Columbus, Seattle, Philadelphia, Boston and the deep woods of Michigan.

Their plays, published by TCG and licensed by Samuel French, have been produced by other companies throughout the United States and, believe it or not, in Zagreb, Croatia. The Brothers have received an Obie, a Bessie, and a Lambda Literary Award, as well as a 2011 Independent Theater Award for lifetime achievement. Their plays are taught in theater and queer/feminist studies courses in colleges and universities throughout the country.

Dawn Monique Williams, Director



A native of Oakland, California, Dawn is a resident artist at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival where she directed *Merry Wives of Windsor* in 2017. Dawn, a 2016 Princess Grace Theatre Fellowship recipient, is a director, poet, and scholar whose recent directing credits include *Romeo and Juliet*, August Wilson's *The Piano Lesson*, and Lynn Nottage's *By the Way, Meet Stark*. She's directed a range of plays including the English language premiere of Gracia Morales' *NN12*, *Othello*, *Twelfth Night*, *In the Blood*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Children of Eden*, *The 25th Annual Spelling Bee*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Burial at Thebes*, *Medea*, *Antigone Project*, and *La Ronde*; international directing credits include Edinburgh Festival Fringe productions of *Scapin The Cheat*, *Anna Bella Eema*, and *The Tempest*. Dawn, who frequently lectures on contemporary Shakespeare performance and African American Theatre History, was awarded a TCG Leadership U residency grant, funded by the Mellon Foundation, and is a former Killian Directing Fellow at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. She is an alum of the Drama League Directors Project and holds an MA in Dramatic Literature and an MFA in Directing. Dawn is a proud member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.

The **All-Female cast** includes

Claire Rigsby (*The Thanksgiving Play*, Artists Repertory Theatre),
Jen Rowe (*This Girl Laughs*, *This Girl Cries*, *This Girl Does Nothing*, CoHo)
Kelley Godell (*Kodachrome*, Portland Center Stage at The Armory)
Jamie Rea (*The Importance of Being Earnest*, Artists Repertory Theatre)
Andrea White (*Antigone Project*, Profile Theatre)

The **All-Female Creative Team** includes:

Dawn Monique Williams, Director

Megan Wilkerson, Set Design

Wanda Walden, Costume Design

Jennifer Lin, Lighting Design

Jen Reynak, Sound Design and Original Music Composition

Emily Wilkins, Properties Master

Kristen Mun, Fight Director

Elizabeth Rothan, Vocal Coach

Stephanie Mulligan, Stage Manager

Lilo Alfaro, Production Assistant

*for additional bios or to arrange interviews with artists, please contact Marketing Consultant Jen Mitas

Josh Hecht, Profile Theatre Artistic Director



Josh is the Artistic Director of Profile Theatre where he recently directed the Concert Staging of Anna Deavere Smith's *Twilight*: Los Angeles, 1992 as well as the rotating repertory productions of Quiara Alegria Hudes' *Water by the Spoonful* and *The Happiest Song Plays Last*. He is a Drama Desk Award-winning director whose productions have been seen in New York at MCC Theater, The Cherry Lane, The Duke on 42nd Street, New World Stages, Culture Project, regionally at The Guthrie Theater, the Berkshire Theatre Group, the Humana Festival at Actors Theatre of Louisville, Signature Theatre (DC) and internationally at the Dublin Arts Festival and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and elsewhere. His collaboration with Ping Chong and Company was

commissioned by and premiered at The Kennedy Center before touring the northeast. His writing has received the support of the Jerome Foundation. He is formerly the Director of Playwright Development at MCC Theater and the Director of New Play Development at WET. He's served on the faculty of the New School for Drama MFA Directing program, the Fordham University MFA Playwriting program, Purchase College SUNY's BFA Dramatic Writing program and has been a guest artist at The Juilliard School, NYU's Dramatic Writing MFA, Carnegie Mellon's MFA Playwriting, University of Minnesota's BFA Acting program and others.

Outreach and In Dialogue Readings and Events

In Dialogue Staged Readings include new and contemporary plays in conversation with Lisa Kron's and Anna Deavere Smith's work, as well as readings of Kron and Smith plays not in the Main Stage season. Staged Readings will be announced throughout the season. In Dialogue Events prior to or following every performance including lectures, pre-show talks, concerts and mat chats with cast and creative. Schedule posted on website. Before performances the second and third weeks of the run, Profile will present short readings and other events in the lobby of the Alder Stage as part of its In Dialogue series.

Week 2

June 21 at 7pm: Stand-up comedian Joanie Quinn

June 22 at 6:30pm: Queer Night with wine and beer mixer and fun and fabulous door prizes

June 23 at 7pm: Stand-up comedian Jennifer Lanier

Week 3

Profile is pleased to partner with InCite, the Queer Reading Series hosted by Literary Arts to pair award-winning Queer writers with local actors.

June 28 at 7pm: Lambda Literary finalist Karelia Stetz-Waters

June 29 at 7pm: Tammy Lynne Stoner

June 30 at 7pm: C.M. Spivey

Week 4

July 1 after the 2 pm matinee: A panel on the role of comedy in moments of political resistance.

July 2: Profile presents its second-annual 24-Hour PlayFest. The evening of July 1st, Profile will gather 25 emerging artists on the set of *The Secretaries* and give them #MeToo rallying cry "Time's Up!" as a theme and a list of theatrical ingredients. Over the next 24 hours, the playwrights will write, the directors will interpret and the actors will rehearse, presenting the final product on the Alder Stage **Monday, July 2 at 7:30pm**. Tickets to the 24-Hour PlayFest are \$12 and will be available online at www.profiletheatre.org or by calling or emailing the box office at 503.242.0080 boxoffice@profiletheatre.org.

About Profile Theatre

Now in its 20th season, Profile Theatre's mission is to produce a season of first class productions and community engagement activities focused on a single playwright whose vision broadens our perspective on the world and deepens our collective compassion. With the 2018-2019 season, Profile begins the third year of an Initiative for Diversity and Inclusion, a three-year commitment to producing only the works of women and people of color and to examining how the core values of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion can be woven into their practices. There is energized and passionate conversation happening in theatres throughout the country around the ideas of diversity and inclusion. With this initiative, Profile places itself not only at the center of that conversation, but also on the leading edge of change.

Season Sponsors

Profile Theatre's 2018 Season Sponsor is Ronni LaCroute. Additional support by The Regional Arts and Culture Council and Work for Art, The Meyer Memorial Trust, The James F. & Marion L. Miller Foundation, The Oregon Community Foundation, The Collins Foundation, The Kinsman Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, and the PGE Foundation.

For more information, visit Profiletheatre.org or call 503.242.0080

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