



**SECRETARIES** A FIVE LESBIAN BROTHERS PLAY WRITTEN BY MAUREEN ANGELOS, BABS DAVY, DOMINIQUE DIBBELL, PEG HEALEY AND LISA KRON

# PROFILE DIRECTED BY THEATRE DAWN MONIQUE WILLIAMS

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR JOSH HECHT MANAGING DIRECTOR MATTHEW JONES

# PLAYWRIGHT PROFILE LISA KRON

## Welcome to the second production of our 2018–2019 season!



For our 21<sup>st</sup> season, we're doing something special: an 18-month "double-season" featuring the works of Anna Deavere Smith and Lisa Kron in dialogue. As a Profile Theatre family member, you get to take a year-long journey seeing the world through the eyes of our Featured Writers. By the end of the season, you'll feel like old friends. So who is Lisa Kron? Welcome to her "Playwright Profile."

Lisa grew up in Lansing, Michigan and like many artists, moved to New York after college. As a teenager and young woman in Michigan and in New York, she pursued acting in straight plays, increasingly dissatisfied with the roles for women, and especially LGBTQ women. Seeing the work of the pioneering group Split Britches had a profound

impact. Lisa writes, "It was so beautiful and complete and so utterly unlike anything I had ever seen before. It was strange yet totally familiar. Funny and heartbreaking and so sexy. It was nonlinear—that blew my Midwestern MIND. And—they made it themselves.To me this was a revelation."

Through Split Brithes, Lisa found her way to the WOW Cafe, a hot-bed for experimental lesbian-centered work in New York's East Village, the city's bohemian heart. At WOW's tiny storefront theatre she found a like-minded tribe of theatre-makers devising their own work, writing their own plays, sometimes in a few months, sometimes in a few days, with sets and costumes made from found materials. It was here that she started doing her own solo work. And it was here that she, her girlfriend Peg Healy, and friends Maureen Angelos, Babs Davy, and Dominique Dibbell, formed **The Five Lesbian Brothers**.

Throughout the '90s, both Lisa's solo work and the plays created with the Brothers gained increasing prominence, and were produced throughout New York at PS 122, The Kitchen, Dixon Place, HERE Arts Center and eventually at large off-Broadway venues like New York Theatre Workshop. In 1997, The Public Theater, produced Lisa's breakout solo play *2.5 Minute Ride* which opened to rave reviews, winning OBIE, Drama-logue and GLAAD Awards.

The Public Theater became an artistic home for Lisa, developing and producing her plays Well, which transferred to Broadway, earning Tony nominations for Lisa and co-star Jayne Houdyshell; In The Wake, Lisa's most traditionally well-made play; and Fun Home, her musical written with Tony-winning composer Jeanine Tessori, which also transferred to Broadway, winning 5 of its 12 Tony nominations, including Best Musical of 2015. The Five Lesbian Brothers reunited at New York Theatre Workshop with a new piece, Oedipus in Palm Springs, winning the 2006 GLAAD Award for Outstanding New York Theater.

Throughout it all, what makes Lisa's writing indelibly Lisa's is her interest in the mix of theatrical forms—from the straight play to solo story-telling to ensemblegenerated work, sometimes co-existing in the same piece—her commitment to politically-engaged work, and her conviction that laughter and tears, joy and sorrow, can inhabit the same moment.



## FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR JOSH HECHT



I've often said that laughter is a way of saying "Me too." We laugh because something is familiar. We laugh because it's true. We laugh because we see ourselves in a comic's words or an actor's portrayal. I think you'll do a lot

of laughing tonight. The Five Lesbian Brothers are comedic icons, and we've gathered an incredibly talented cast and crew to interpret their words.

But the phrase "me too" has a different resonance than it did a year ago. Today, "me too" and another phrase often found in comedy improv circles, "time's up," have become rallying cries for a truth and reconciliation movement that has shone a light on the pervasiveness of misogyny in our day-to-day lives. What is made plain in these moments, when a tear in our cultural fabric reveals a truth that has always been there, is that misogyny, like white supremacy, like heteronormativity, impacts our lives from the moment we are born until the moment we die, because it has been baked into our culture from the start.

#### The Five Lesbian Brothers are comedic icons, and we've gathered an incredibly talented cast and crew to interpret their words.

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 (a rhythm one playwright friend calls "funny funny WHACK!")? But comedy only works when there's empathy. David Grimm has said that comedy, like drama, asks us to acknowledge that we humans are deeply flawed, but whereas in drama our flaws are our undoing, in comedy they are but a chapter in a greater striving to improve.

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. More so. Elaine Romero said recently that comedy both reveals our own complicity and liberates us to point a finger at someone far worse. It is in this way an accusation with empathy. It is a call for all of us to be better.

# FROM THE DIRECTOR DAWN MONIQUE WILLIAMS



As I was just getting started as a young professional in the theatre, I assisted a brilliant and dynamic woman whom I desperately looked to for mentorship. That experience shaped me for years, in fact to this very day. I vividly remember her scolding me when I asked to come in late one day so I could celebrate my daughter's birthday over breakfast, "Don't talk about your

kid!" she told me. "You'll never work." So, for years I carried the shame of being a young mother and never talked about being a single parent in theatre settings. Never made a single excuse. In instances when it came up, I felt panic and embarrassment as if I were meant to keep my being a mother a secret in order to succeed. This same exceptional director reprimanded me in rehearsal once saying, "You eat too much in front of the actors, they won't take you seriously." The evidence of my being overweight was clear and not something that could be hidden or kept secret. For years I refused to eat in front of actors, in rehearsal, in social settings, with low blood sugar and hungry. It didn't matter—I wanted to be taken seriously, to prove I had the stamina. I tortured myself-over my weight, over needing a sitter, over being found out. I worked so hard to make it look easy, until one day, in my thirties, the dam broke. And that is why I am compelled to tell this story. Lisa Kron tells us "The play examines the ways in which women are the enforcers of sexism. The rules that are enforced involve weight, food, sexuality." I know. I have been there. So let's look at it. Let's talk about it. Let's cut it out.

### **ABOUT PROFILE THEATRE**

Founded in 1997 by Jane Unger, Profile Theatre has always centered a season around a single writer, spending much of its first fifteen years exploring the work of some of the 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries most important masters and bringing many of them to Portland to develop work.

Profile's second Artistic Director, Adriana Baer, led the theater from 2012-2015. Adriana was interested in exploring the writers we would come to think of as our "21<sup>st</sup> Century Masters," contemporary writers investigating the most pressing concerns of our time. Josh Hecht became Artistic Director in 2017. His commitment to new work and robust community engagement has led to two new commissions in 2018-2019 and our Community Profile Program that uses art-making as a means of community-building.

Over the past twenty years Profile's Featured Writers have won 10 Pulitzer Prizes (plus 4 finalists), 20 Tony Awards (plus 7 nominations), 18 Drama Desk Awards, 24 Obie Awards and 3 MacArthur "Genius" Awards. In 2010, Profile Theatre was awarded an inaugural "New National Theatre Company" Award from the American Theatre Wing designed to bring national attention to "the most inspiring and innovative theatre companies on our national landscape." More recently, Profile has twice been recognized by Age and Gender Equity in the Arts for its leadership in equity, diversity and inclusion.



# THE SECRETARIES

## A FIVE LESBIAN BROTHERS PLAY

By Maureen Angelos, Babs Davy, Dominique Dibbell, Peg Healey, and Lisa Kron Directed By Dawn Monique Williams<sup>^</sup>

## CAST

DESIGNERS & PRODUCTION

Ke Cla Je	mie M. Rea <sup>*</sup> lly Godell <sup>*</sup> aire Rigsby n Rowe drea White	Ashley Elizabeth Fratangello Patty Johnson Peaches Martin
Wa Jer Jer Em	gan Wilkerson⁺ nda Walden nnifer Lin n Raynak nily Wilken ephanie Mulligan⁺	Costume Designer Lighting Designer Sound Design Props Master
Lil	o Alfaro	Production Assistant

PRODUCERS CIRCLE FOR THIS PRODUCTION Leslie Johnson, Executive Producer

Run time is approximately 90 minutes with no intermission. The Secretaries is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

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This production made possible with support from



Profile Theatre is a member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre. \*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the professional union of actors and stage managers. \*Represented by United Scenic Artists - Local USA 829 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees.



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# CAST & CREATIVE TEAM



#### JAMIE M. REA Dawn Midnight

Seen last on the Alder Stage as Jack in Artist Repertory Theatre's, *The Importance* of *Being Earnest*, Jamie is delighted to make her debut with Profile Theatre Project

in this scathingly funny satire. She was seen most recently as Macbeth, in Shaking the Tree Theatre's *Macbeth*. Favorite other local credits include: Kristine in STT's *A Doll's House* (Drammy: Best Supporting Actress), Anna in CoHo/Many Hats, *The Snowstorm* (Drammy Finalist: Best Actress), and this summer she flies to Chicago to begin work on a commission from the Goodman with Sojourn Theatre, *On the Playground*. She is co-founding Artistic Director of the Beirut Wedding World Theatre Project where she will be directing *Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train* as part of CoHo's 23<sup>rd</sup> season.



#### KELLY GODELL Ashley Elizabeth Fratangello

Kelly is delighted to be back on the Profile stage. She was most recently seen in the world premiere of *Kodachrome* at Portland

Center Stage and is Co-Producing and performing in *Radiant Vermin* at CoHo Theatre in the fall. Other favorite credits include *Noises Off* (Third Rail Repertory) *Miss Julie* (Shaking the Tree) and *Learn to be Latina* (Milagro Theater). Television credits include Grimm and Leverage. Kelly has a BFA from the University of Oregon and is a member of the Actors Equity Association.



#### CLAIRE RIGSBY Patty Johnson

Previously seen at Profile in the staged reading of *Stage Kiss* by Sarah Ruhl, Claire is excited to be making her full production debut with this

wonderfully wacky play full of powerhouse women. Previous Portland credits include *The Thanksgiving Play* at Artists Rep, *A Christmas Carol* at Portland Playhouse and various productions with Oregon Children's Theatre, Broadway Rose, Proscenium Live Reading Project, and Live Onstage. Thanks to Dawn, Josh, and her friends and family for all their support.



#### JEN ROWE

Peaches Martin Jen just closed a production of *This Girl Laughs*, *This Girl Cries*, *This Girl Does Nothing* at CoHo and is delighted to make her Profile debut with *The Sec*-

retaries. Previously seen at Portland Center Stage (JAW Festival [4 years]), Artists Rep (Speech and Debate, Distracted), Third Rail (Middletown), Portland Playhouse (Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson, After the Revolution, Twelfth Night, A Christmas Carol [4 years], Mr. Burns: A Post Electric Play, Peter and the Starcatcher), Our Shoes Are Red/The Performance Lab (Ursula, Oh, The Humanity). She is represented by Q6 Model and Talent. hellojenrowe.com



#### ANDREA WHITE Susan Curtis

Andrea White has been seen on stage as Dyonisia in Portland Experimental Shakespeare Theater's *Pericles Wet*, Antigone in Profile Theater's *Antigone* 

Project and The American Daughter, Artist Repertory Theater's Two Sisters and a Piano and Nickel and Dimed, Portland Playhouse's Radio Golf, Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, and Gem of the Ocean. Andrea is a two time Best Supporting Actor Drammy Award winner for her roles in Theater Vertigo's Hell Cab and Sophia in Artists Repertory Theater's Two Sisters and a Piano. Andrea's Television and Film credits include, Family Matters, Living Single, NYPD Blue, Grimm, and the film Extraordinary Measures. Andrea is currently an Artist and Playwright in residence at Buckman Arts School.

#### 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.

#### MEGAN WILKERSON Scenic Design

Megan is a Resident Artist at Artists Repertory Theatre and a member of Chicago's Women's theatre, The Rivendell Theatre Ensemble. She was a recipient of Chicago's After Dark Award for Outstanding Scenic Design and her work has been recognized by The Chicago Tribune, The Oregonian, The Austin Critics Circle, and The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. Regionally Megan has worked with The Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Skylight Opera, First Stage Children's Theatre, The Michigan Opera, and the Pittsburgh Public Theatre. Next season you can see her work on stage in Portland for Artists Rep and Portland Center Stage.

#### WANDA WALDEN Costume Designer

Wanda is a Costume Designer, Actor, Visual Artist and Writer. She has costumed plays for over thirty years with an impressive amount of credits. Most recent Productions include *In This Corner Cassius Clay* at Oregon Children's Theatre; *All my sons* at Portland Actors Conservatory: *Left Hook* at Vanport Mosaic; *Sibling Rivalry* at Confrontation Theatre; *How I learned What I Learned* at Portland Playhouse and *An Octoroon* at Artists Rep. Wanda is a Board member and Resident Costumer for Passin Art Theatre. Wanda is a prolific writer of Historical Scripts and is Artistic Director of Retro-Spect Productions, A Theatrical Modeling Company.

#### JENNIFER LIN Lighting Designer

Jennifer is a freelance lighting designer and stage technician who has been working behind the scenes for Portland theatre, opera and dance since 2008. She attended Portland State University and in 2007 received The Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival's Achievement Award for her lighting design for PSU's production of *Electra*. Jennifer is a company member of Third Rail Repertory Theatre, and a member of IATSE local 28.

# CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

#### JEN RAYNAK Sound Design

Jen has designed sound in Portland for over 20 years, including stints with Portland Center Stage and Third Rail Repertory Theatre. She recently designed and composed for *This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing* at CoHo Theatre, and designed *Wings of Fire* at Willamette University. By day, Jen is the Carproelsofly Department Head at the Winningstad Theater.

## EMILY WILKEN

Props Master

Emily is a professional artist on staff as the Scenic Charge Artist and craftsperson with Oregon Children's Theatre. This is her third time joining a Profile team, having designed props for The Call and Blue Door. Additionally she's a scenic designer, having designed locally for Action/Adventure Theatre, Beirut Wedding World Theatre Project, Broadway Rose Theatre, Corrib Theatre, Enlightened Theatrics, Lincoln High School, Milagro, and Valley Repertory Theatre. Upcoming designs include Romeo and Juliet with Portland Actors Ensemble, Ordinary Days with Broadway Rose, the Day of the Dead production with Milagro, and The Taming with Coho Productions. www.emilywilken.com



#### STEPHANIE MULLIGAN Stage Manager

Stephanie has stage managed for many fine companies, including Portland Center Stage, Clackamas Rep, Artists Rep, and Broadway Rose.

Most recently, she stage managed *Scarlet* for Portland Playhouse. Stephanie is also a director in both the professional and educational arenas. Favorite recent shows include

Parnassus On Wheels, The Seven Wonders of Ballyknock, Brave Smiles (also by The Five Lesbian Brothers), As You Like It, and Dear Galileo. Based in the Pacific Northwest, she has been a frequent participant in international programming, through which she has collaborated with theatre artists in India, Vietnam, Pakistan, and Australia. Stephanie received her BA in Theatre Arts from Linfield College. She is an Arts Envoy for the U.S. Department of State, and a proud member of Actors' Equity.

## LILO ALFARO

#### **Production Assistant**

An ASM and MBA candidate, Lilo is continuing her work in theatre to engage in conversations like the ones that will inevitably be sparked by this play. Unforgettable performance credits include: intense behindthe-wheel singing, business-y Powerpoint presentations, and hand that appears from behind the curtain with that prop you forgot.

#### KRISTEN MUN

#### Fight Choreographer

Third Rail Repertory, Milagro, Profile Theatre, Portland Playhouse, Action Adventure, defunkt, Shaking the Tree, Theatre Vertigo. Drammy Award winner in 2012 and 2013, Leslie O Grant winner 2015. Outside of Portland: Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Utah Shakespeare Festival, Idaho Repertory Theatre.

#### JOSH HECHT 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 Alegría 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 42<sup>nd</sup> 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.

## FOR THIS PRODUCTION

#### ASL INTERPRETERS

Dot Hearn, Kassie Hughes

GRAPHIC DESIGN Kira Batcheller

PUBLIC RELATIONS Jen Mitas

PRODUCTION SERVICES Artists Repertory Theatre



### THE FIVE LESBIAN BROTHERS

Writers

The Five Lesbian Brothers are Maureen Angelos, Babs Davy, Dominique Dibbell, Peg Healey, and Lisa Kron. The Brothers came together as a theater company in 1989 after performing together in various other combinations at the Obie award-winning WOW Cafe Theatre 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), which was written by Maureen Angelos, Dominique Dibbell, Peg Healey, and Lisa Kron.

The Brothers' work has been presented Off-Broadway and Off-Off Broadway by New

York Theatre Workshop, the Joseph Papp Public Theatre, the WOW Cage Theatre, Downtown Art Company, Performance Space 122, Dixon Place, la Mama, the Kitchen, and the Whitney Museum of American Art at Phillip Morris. They have toured to London, Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, Houston, Columbus, Seattle, Philadelphia, Boston, and the deep woods of Michigan. Their plays have also been produced by other companies throughout the United States and, believe it or not, in Zagreb, Croatia.

The Brothers are the recipients of a Village Voice Obie Award, a New York Dance and Performance Award ("Bessie"), a GLAAD Media Award, and a New York Press Award as Best Performance Group. An anthology of their plays entitled Five Lesbian Brothers/Four Plays was published in 2000 by Theatre Communications Group and was nominated for a Lambda Literary Award.

# PROFILE THEATRE One Playwright, One Vision, One World

**Mission:** To produce a season of first-class productions and community engagement activities centered around a single writer whose vision broadens our perspective on our world and deepens our collective compassion.

#### DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVE

In 2016, Profile Theatre launched its Diversity and Inclusion initiative, committing to three consecutive seasons producing the work of women and writers of color. The Initiative was born out of a desire to correct a persistent imbalance in the diversity and complexity of lives we see reflected on our stages. It is our belief that by actively working to correct this imbalance in our own programming, we more accurately reflect the world around us, produce work of increasing relevance to our city and community, and help dream into being the dynamic and inclusive world we want. We also believe that by continuing to program the most accomplished mid-career writers of our time, all members of our audience, whatever their background, will recognize themselves in these stories.

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2018–2019 Lisa Kron / Anna Deavere Smith 2017 Quiara Alegría Hudes

1999–2000 Constance Congdon 1998–1999 Tennessee Williams

1997–1998 Arthur Kopit

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