THE SECRETARIES
A FIVE LESBIAN BROTHERS PLAY
WRITTEN BY MAUREEN ANGELOS,
BABS DAVY, DOMINIQUE DIBBELL,
PEG HEALEY AND LISA KRON
DIRECTED BY DAWN MONIQUE WILLIAMS
Welcome to the second production of our 2018–2019 season!

For our 21st 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 Britches, 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 ensemble-generated 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.

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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.

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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 and liberates us to point a finger at someone else. It is in this way an accusation with far worse. It is in this way an accusation with the power to make us better.

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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.

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 20th Century’s 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 “21st 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.
Presents

THE SECRETARIES

A FIVE LESBIAN BROTHERS PLAY

By Maureen Angelos, Babs Davy, Dominique Dibbell, Peg Healey, and Lisa Kron
Directed By Dawn Monique Williams

CAST

Jamie M. Rea* .......................................................... Dawn Midnight
Kelly Godell* .......................................................... Ashley Elizabeth Fratangello
Claire Rigsby ........................................................... Patty Johnson
Jen Rowe ................................................................. Peaches Martin
Andrea White ............................................................. Susan Curtis

DESIGNERS & PRODUCTION

Megan Wilkerson* .......................................................... Scenic Design
Wanda Walden ............................................................ Costume Designer
Jennifer Lin ................................................................. Lighting Designer
Jen Raynak ................................................................. Sound Design
Emily Wilken .............................................................. Props Master
Stephanie Mulligan* .................................................. Stage Manager
Lilo Alfaro ................................................................. Production Assistant
Kristen Mun ............................................................... Fight Director

Run time is approximately 90 minutes with no intermission.
The Secretaries is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.
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PRODUCERS CIRCLE FOR THIS PRODUCTION
Leslie Johnson, Executive Producer

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.
JAMIE M. REA
Dawn Midnight

Dawn, a 2016 Princess - Artist Rep, and Lynn Not all their support.

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 Thankgiving 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 Secretaries. 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 Dynonia 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 Drama 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 a two time Best Supporting Actress, Drama 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 represented by Q6 Model and Talent. hellojenrowe.com

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 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 behind-the-wheel sailing, business-y Powerpoint presentations, and hand that appears from behind the curtain with that prop you forgot.

KRISTEN MUN
Fight Choreographer

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 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.

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 Cafe 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.
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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