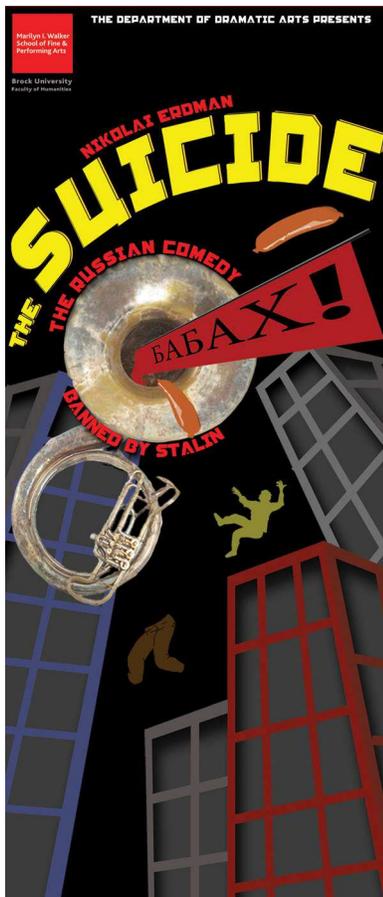


A Special Invitation to bring your students
for innovative and energizing theatre experiences
presented by the Department of Dramatic Arts at Brock University!

brocku.ca

The Suicide! The Russian Comedy by Nikolai Erdman, *banned by Stalin in 1930!*
Friday, November 9, 2012 at 11:30 a.m. Tickets start at \$10 each, discounts available
Curriculum Ties: History (Russian Revolution), Social Studies (Citizenship, Political Systems),
Drama (Commedia dell'Arte) and Comparative Literature Studies (Adaptation, Translation).
Teaching aids: script and study guide available for download.

Twice a year our faculty and students present mainstage productions on the stage of our 535-seat theatre. Directed and designed by faculty and guest artists, performed and produced by students in our Honours BA program, these productions offer you an affordable opportunity to engage your students with original performances that examine provocative thematic ideas. Stimulating course-related content will animate and enrich your teaching curriculum. Our faculty and students bring you the very best of their work in professional-level productions distinguished by their verve and energy. This is a great opportunity to enhance your teaching and to bring excitement to your classroom with a visit to the Sean O'Sullivan theatre of Brock University.



The Suicide!

The Russian Comedy by Nikolai Erdman
banned by Stalin in 1930!

Directed by Gyllian Raby / Set design by Nigel Scott
Costume design by Roberta Doylend
November 8, 9, 10, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

Student Matinee: Friday, November 9, 2012 at 11:30 a.m.

Never has such a funny play risen from such tragic circumstances. Playwright Nikolai Erdman was the toast of revolutionary Moscow for his comedies. Three theatres were competing for the right to produce *The Suicide!* -- but then things went terribly wrong. As Soviet society slid into totalitarianism, Stalin banned the play and exiled Erdman to Siberia. Meyerhold the famous director of *The Suicide!* was later executed for his work on the production. The play was smuggled abroad in various versions but Erdman never saw a production. It first hit the boards in Sweden in 1968; Alan Richardson produced an English adaptation in Toronto, 1972, but it didn't reach Russia until 1989. Critics are unsurprised that the play was banned: Erdman's comic juggling of poverty, the dangers of celebrity, and the lure of political power, would make any government gulp.

The Story

Semyon is unemployed and miserable. The October Revolution promised him a new world, but it didn't materialize. Semyon is hungry and, arguing with his wife about baloney sausage, he accuses her of wishing he was dead. This false step sets him sliding down a slippery slope of misunderstanding where he even finds himself buying a revolver to do the deed. Suddenly, every political lobbyist in the city is knocking at his door to persuade him to die as a martyr for their cause...and shenanigans ensue.

Artistic Direction

Our production draws on the Italian Commedia dell'Arte in order to emphasize Erdman's flights of zany and paradox. Commedia style lazzi celebrate the imaginative ingenuity of the underdog and the triumph of love, in contrast to the totalitarian environment that is motivated by fear and greed.



What's a lazzi? It's an improvised comic dialogue or action.

For our production we have created a new adaptation. It is inspired by Commedia lazzi routines and by the call for social justice the play shares with the **Occupy** movement. Both popular movements satirize leadership personality cults, advocate a common-sense vision of social-support networks, and insist that the ninety-nine percent be recognized and enfranchised in a just society. Above all, *The Suicide!* is a celebration of life and of youth. We particularly want to share this work with students from high schools and universities!



The Director Gyllian Raby presenting the concept of the *Russian constructivist* set design by set designer Nigel Scott.

Curriculum Ties

The play will interest teachers of History (Russian Revolution), Social Studies (Citizenship, Political Systems), Drama (Commedia dell'Arte) and Comparative Literature Studies (Adaptation, Translation). The script is available as an e-document, along with a study guide. The writers of this adaptation, Professor Gyllian Raby and Anna MacAlpine (Brock Graduate, 2012), are available to discuss the play with classes either before or after the production.

Student Matinee Booking

The student matinee for *The Suicide!* is Friday, November 9, 2012 at 11:30 a.m. held in the Sean O'Sullivan Theatre on the Brock University campus. Tickets for the student matinee start at \$10 for each student and teacher. To book your school, please telephone the Centre for the Arts Box Office, 905-688-5550 ext. 3257, long distance toll free 1-866-617-3257, and reserve your group tickets.

The deadline for reservation by telephone is Friday, November 2, 2012. Once you have made your booking through the Centre for the Arts, we will confirm your reservation by telephone on Monday, November 5, 2012.

Study Guide/School Outreach

Study guides contain background information and research articles that provide critical information for use in the classroom. A study guide will be available online mid-October. Both the guide and the script can be downloaded from our website at: www.brocku.ca/humanities/departments-and-centres/dramatic-arts/events-at-dart

Our next mainstage production at DART!

Plan now to bring your students to see ***The Blue Room***, premiering Thursday, February 14, 2013. The student matinee for ***The Blue Room*** is Friday, February 15, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. Reservations should be made by Friday, February 8, 2013.

Directed by Professor Virginia Reh, ***The Blue Room*** is David Hare's 1998 adaptation of Schnitzler's *Der Reigen (La Ronde)*, first produced in 1921. The plot is a "sexual daisy-chain": the Girl couples with the Cab Driver, then the Cab Driver with the Au Pair, etc. Each time the new participant in one scene moves on to the next scene and so on, until in the final scene the Girl returns and encounters the Aristocrat. The play looks at casual sexual encounters as a (mostly) unsatisfactory substitute for human connection. This is a universal and timeless quest. The play is an important exploration with diverse current points-of-view: as each character has encounters with two different partners, the play explores the shifting status relationships (both social and personal). The relational dynamics of the play have interesting correspondences to explorations on social media. Theme-oriented and moderated workshops led by Professor Joe Norris and the students of his course ***Social Issues Theatre for Community Engagement*** will be available. Please contact us for more information.

We look forward to engaging your students and providing provocative thematic ideas and stimulating course-related content to animate and enrich your teaching curriculum. Contact us now to become part of these remarkable theatrical presentations.

the Mainstage performances are:

- appropriate for High School-Age Audiences
- may contain mature language and situations
- Post-performance Q&A with the actors and creative team are available for both productions.
- Teacher Workshops are available
- Audience Maximum: (535) in the Sean O'Sullivan Theatre

Prices:

Single Student rate: \$12
Groups rates are available:
10-20=\$10.00 ea;
20-30=\$9.00 ea;
30-40=\$8.00 ea;
40-50=\$7.00 ea;
over 50=\$6.00 ea.

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