

JEHANNE OF THE WITCHES

by Sally Clark

Director: Virginia Reh

Cast

All the roles are played by 8 actors:

Women:

Jehanne the Maid, François

Voice 1, (The Archangel Michael), also Poulengy, Fool, Minguet,
The Bastard of Orleans, Whore 1 and a Mother

Voice 2, (Saint Catherine), also de Baudricourt, La Hire, Whore 2
and a Mother

Voice 3, (Saint Margaret), also plays Isabelle (Jehanne's mother)

Men:

Gilles de Rais

Charles le Dauphin, also plays God and a Bishop

George de Tremouille, also plays Bishop Cauchon

Priest (Pierre), also plays Village Priest, Archbishop of Rheims
and Pasquerel

...and a few other unnamed characters

The actors will require a certain agility to jump between characters, genders, times
and locales. There will be armed and unarmed combat. Singing may be required.

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ABOUT THE PLAY

Jehanne of the Witches is Sally Clark's exploration of Joan of Arc (Jehanne la Pucelle), with particular emphasis on her relationship with Gilles de Raie, the notorious Bluebeard - warrior, alleged mass murderer of young boys, scientist and theatrical producer. It also examines the conflict between the Old Religion and Catholic Church and how the Church assimilated the old goddesses and spirits and turned them into saints. Joan was the first of millions of women to be burned at the stake as a witch. A substantial number of men met the same fate, including Gilles de Raie.

The play has a cast of 8: 4 women and 4 men, playing a variety of roles of both genders. We discover part way through the play that we are actually watching a play within a play and there is some ongoing ambiguity about when it is "reality" and when that play.

Sally Clark was part of a wave of female playwrights in the 1980s who wrote plays about notable women from a female perspective. Most of the play is based on solid historical fact; it is in the interpretation and theatricality that Clark weaves her magic.

Production history

- Commissioned: by Clarke Rogers - July, 1986.
- Workshop: Theatre Passe Muraille – November, 1987
- First production: Tarragon Theatre – November 1989
- Published: First published in *Theatrum* in 1990

The current edition was published by Playwrights Canada Press in 1993, in a 2-play volume: *Big Time Women from Way Back When*. The other play was *A Woman's Comedy* by Beth Herst – a play about the 17th century playwright Aphra Benn.