

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

***Jehanne of the Witches* by Sally Clark**

Friday, February 14, 2014 at 1:00 p.m.

Group tickets start at \$12.00 + HST each, discounts available
eyeGO tickets are \$5.00 + HST for individual high-school students (not in groups),
with valid ID.

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.



***Jehanne of the Witches* by Sally Clark**

Directed by Virginia Reh
Scenography by David Vivian
Assistant Direction by Casey Gillis
Assistant Design by James McCoy
Dramaturgy by Brittany Stewart

February 13,14,15, 2014 at 7:30 PM

Student Matinee:

Friday, February 14, 2014 at 1:00 PM

Black magic, illusion, and the suppression of Truth. Voices swirl as Joan of Arc and Gilles de Rais, the infamous Bluebeard, concoct a witches' brew of sexuality and the use - and abuse - of power.

The Department of Dramatic Arts of the Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts is proud to present this play by Canadian playwright Sally Clark. Ms Clark was part of a wave of female playwrights in the 1980s who wrote plays about notable women from a female perspective. The play is mostly based on solid historical fact; Clark weaves her magic through unique interpretation and theatricality.

In *Jehanne of the Witches* Clark explores the relationship between Joan of Arc (Jehanne, an older form of the French Jeanne) and Gilles de Rais, the notorious Bluebeard - warrior, alleged mass murderer of young boys, scientist and one of France's first theatrical producers. It is historically accurate that Jehanne and de Rais fought together at the pivotal battle of Orleans and that after Jehanne's death de Rais staged a theatrical extravaganza in Orleans celebrating that victory. Clark's research into the period took her deep into the pagan worship that competed with the early Christian Church. An important element of that worship was of the Moon Goddess. When the Church failed to wean the populace from their Old Religion gods, it simply transformed them into Christian saints. In Clark's play Joan's voices are Old Religion goddesses, who are identified as saints. The playwright was drawn to the notion of the pagan feminine religion being overcome by the male Church. That transition was far from peaceful - Jehanne was among the first of millions of women to be burned at the stake, the vast majority for witchcraft (in Jehanne's case for heresy). A substantial number of men met the same fate, including Gilles de Rais. Both Jehanne and de Rais were later exonerated.

Artistic Direction

In her introduction to the play, Sally Clark writes, "This play is about Magic, Truth and Illusion: three themes to be juggled in the air and kept aloft". The play is very fluid, jumping back and forth between different time frames and mixing fact and fiction. We have therefore chosen a sort of flashback/flash forward approach. In our production Gilles de Rais is in a perpetual hell or purgatory where he is condemned to endlessly relive the events of his life from his first contact with Jehanne to his own death. The team has been influenced by gaming and fantasy media. The play is also something of a mystery, challenging the audience to question at every turn. The script was originally performed by 8 actors (4 women, 4 men), who played over 20 roles, with women playing both male and female roles. This is significant because the play also addresses questions of gender identity. Our cast of 10 performs the production in the same manner.

Curriculum Ties

This production of *Jehanne of the Witches* will provide an opportunity for corresponding study in the following curricular subject areas: Women's studies, Religious studies, Gender studies, Languages (French, English, Latin), Medieval and Renaissance studies, Theology, History, and Comparative literature.

Student Matinee Booking

The student matinee for *Jehanne of the Witches* is Friday, February 14, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. held in the Sean O'Sullivan Theatre on the Brock University campus. Tickets for the student matinee start at \$12 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, February 7, 2014**. Once you have made your booking through the Centre for the Arts, we will confirm your reservation by telephone on **Monday, February 10, 2014**.

Study Guide/School Outreach

Study guides contain background information and research articles that provide critical information for use in the classroom. A study guide prepared by the Director, Dramaturge and Assistant Director will be available online mid-January. The guide will be available for download from our website in the middle of December, 2013:

www.brocku.ca/humanities/departments-and-centres/dramatic-arts/events-at-dart

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.

<p><i>the Mainstage performances are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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	<p>Prices: (add + HST for total)</p> <p>Single Student rate: \$15 Groups rates are available: 10-20=\$12.00 ea; 20-30=\$11.00 ea; 30-40=\$10.00 ea; 40-50=\$9.00 ea; over 50=\$8.00 ea.</p> <p>eyeGO tickets: \$5.00 + HST for individual high-school students with valid ID.</p>
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Presented earlier this year: *Twelfth Night (or, what you will)* by William Shakespeare
November 7, 8 9, at 7:30 p.m. with a Student Matinee on Friday, November 8, 2013 at
11:00 a.m. ***A brilliant performance that received standing ovations at every show.***