

University of Puget Sound
Department of Theatre Arts

Senior Theatre Festival 2009

THE GENE POOL

BY CHRISTI STEWART-BROWN

DIRECTED BY RACHEL WOLFE

Friday, April 10, 2009 • 7:30 p.m. • ASL Interpreted Performance

Saturday, April 11, 2009 • 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Norton Clapp Theatre, Jones Hall

UNIVERSITY of
PUGET SOUND

Est. 1888

The Gene Pool
by Christi Stewart-Brown

DirectorRachel Wolfe*
Scenic DesignerHanna Kregling
Costume Designer.....Georgina Cohen
Lighting Designer.....Max Westhelle
Sound Designer.....Claire Mason
Dramaturg.....Maggie Milligan*
Stage ManagerGrant Freeman

*In partial fulfillment of Senior Thesis

Produced by special arrangement with Bruce Ostler, ROSENSTONE ADAMS, LLC, 448 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036

PLEASE TURN OFF ALL PAGERS, CELL PHONES, AND ANY OTHER NOISE OR LIGHT-MAKING DEVICES DURING THE PERFORMANCE.

CAST
(In Order of Appearance)

Mira GrayJen Davis
Claire Gray.....Shannon Woods*
Peter GrayJacob Tice
Paige.....Hanna Kregling
Harold Carter Taylor Griffin

*In partial fulfillment of Senior Thesis

There will be a 10 minute intermission.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

In this time of talk about “the threat to traditional marriage,” it was wonderful to stumble across a play about what is, in many respects, the very traditional “marriage” of Dr. and Mrs. Gray. An update on the classic American family drama, this drama-comedy follows the lives of the Gray family through many of the emotions, fears, and issues that modern families have to face today. No matter what your personal politics, it is my hope that you will sit back, relax, laugh at the jokes, sympathize in the emotional moments, and enjoy this play, which—at its core—is not about politics but about love, trust, forgiveness, family, and the bonds that hold us together through the good times and the bad.

—Rachel Wolfe

DRAMATURG'S NOTES

When you hear the word “family,” what do you think of?

In 1947 the term “nuclear family” was coined, referring to a family group consisting of a mom, a dad, and some kids, and this is the sort of “family” that many people believe to be normal or traditional.

Dissatisfied with this limited definition for family, I searched through all of the dictionaries I could find before I finally came across the fourth edition of the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, which told me that family was “Two or more people who share goals and values, have long-term commitments to one another, and reside usually in the same dwelling place.”

In *The Gene Pool*, Christi Stewart-Brown introduces us to the Gray family—a family group that, although far from nuclear, is extremely traditional in all ways except one: rather than a father there are two loving mothers, Mira and Claire, who are given the gift of a son with a little help from a sperm bank and a (mostly) anonymous sperm donor. This family is founded on love and acceptance rather than tradition and normalcy.

The Gray family, with their unorthodox yet familiar antics, gently remind us that no family is perfect, and that many of the best things in our lives sneak up on us wearing the most unlikely disguises.

—Maggie Milligan

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Assistant Stage Manager	Claire Mason
Technical Director.....	Robin Macartney
Sound Board Operator	Marissa Miles Cocco
Light Board Operator	Robert Pore
Props Master.....	Grant Freeman
House Managers.....	Maddy Ryen and Maggie Milligan
Wardrobe.....	Georgina Cohen
Costume Construction Crew	Lisa Armstrong
	Isabelle Choiso
	Georgina Cohen
	Riley Gabriel
	Sarah Gibson
	Kelsey McCornack
	Sandie Shields
	Emily Swisher
Dressers.....	Brynna Cole and Sarah Gibson
Scenic Construction.....	Emily Cohen
	Lindsey Flatt
	Justin Harvey
	Daniel Smith
	Thea Trindle
	Julia Welch
	Mandi Wood
Lighting Crew.....	Pat Casados
	Adam Colton
	Will Swannack
	Tim Van Loan
	Julia Welch
	Max Westhelle
	Rachel Wolfe
	Mandi Wood
Production Photographer.....	Deborah Hayes
Sign Language Interpreter	Jane Brazell

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to Virginia Stone for volunteering so much time at the last minute to make this production a success.

THE SENIORS

Matt Beman has enjoyed his tenure at Puget Sound. He has worked extensively with both main stage shows and through student theater arts productions. On the main stage he performed in *Romeo and Juliet* 2005 and *One Mad Day* 2008. In student theater he has been an actor, director, producer, and writer especially with Ubiquitous They Sketch and Improv. He would like to thank all of his professors and colleagues for a fantastic four years.

Patrick Casados has been an active participant in every aspect of theater at University of Puget Sound, ranging from the most informal scene work in class to acting as an assistant to student projects like *Star Wars in 60 Minutes*, to *Zoo Story*, to acting, and sound designing for main stage shows. He is most interested in directing and producing, and is currently directing *The Woman In Black*. This show wraps up a diverse career at Puget Sound that will hopefully serve as a launching pad for aspirations of directing or producing at a regional theater. His immediate plans, while not written in stone, include full season internships for Portland Stage Company or McCarter Theater. He is also considering a master's program in teaching, as well as a short academic sabbatical to summon his energies for the increasingly daunting real world.

Emily Cohen came to this school from the Big Island of Hawai'i where she had never seen a professional production or ever heard of stage combat. In her years at Puget Sound, she has acted in several main stage productions, including *Arcadia*, *One Mad Day!*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, as well as past Directing Class One Acts and Senior Theatre Festivals. Emily received theater scholarships to work as an acting and stage combat pedagogue for the past two years, and is now recognized by the SAFD as being proficient in single sword and unarmed stage combat. She has also worked on many student productions, acting in Town Crier, Infinite Monkeys Festival, and the Hispanic One Acts, as well as co-writing a one-act show. As president for Student Theater Productions she has produced both the one-act and full-length festivals, and last year brought to stage *Star Wars in 60 Minutes*. Emily is excited to start fake fights in the real world and is thrilled to say, "May the Force be with you, always."

Peter Frost is both shocked and thrilled to find himself directing a production of *Peter Pan*, having done almost no theater until his sophomore year at Puget Sound. He started his theatrical career as an actor in Student Theater Productions and has gone on to work as a writer, scenic designer, lighting designer, director, and dramaturg. After this monumental effort, he hopes

to head off into the great Pacific Northwest to work in children's theater, or anywhere else that fame and/or fortune may take him. He would like to extend a deep and heartfelt thank you to everyone who dissuaded him from becoming an IPE major.

Over her four years at Puget Sound, **Megan Knottingham** has acted in the Town Crier Festival, Directing Class One Acts, Senior Theatre Festival, Hispanic One Acts, Double Shot Theatre Festival, and one of the Northwest Playwrights' Alliance new play readings. She has acted in the Puget Sound main stage productions *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Arcadia*, and *Uncle Vanya*, as well as in the staged reading of *1620 Bank Street*. In the summer of 2007, Megan was an education intern with the Seattle Children's Theatre. Although she directed for the Directing Class One Acts this past December, *Death and the Maiden* is her first full-length play directing endeavor.

Maggie Milligan's theater career was kickstarted at age 5 with her brilliant portrayal of "Pilgrim" in her school's Thanksgiving play. Eventually her passion for theater helped steer her toward Puget Sound. Throughout her college years, she dabbled in acting (*Service, Love, and Polaroids*, *Voices*, *The Sandbox*, *The Spread*, *The Florentine*), assistant directing (*Moving In*), and directing (*A Thing Of Beauty*). After a semester studying acting in Ireland, she made the decision to focus her theater energies on theory and dramaturgy and plunged headlong into her dramaturgical work on *The Gene Pool*, where she made fascinating and rewarding discoveries about motorcycles, in vitro fertilization, and zucchini. After graduating in May, she intends to stay in the SeaTac area and looks forward to finding theater hidden in unexpected pockets within her future life.

Anna Rowley knew by December of her senior year of high school that she was going to attend University of Puget Sound. Since coming to Puget Sound, she has performed in UPSstageM (the oncampus musical theater group), Town Crier (student theater), and *Collage of Comedy*. She had her directing debut this past fall in the Directing Class One Acts. Anna has enjoyed her time at University of Puget Sound, but is excited and ready to begin the next stage of life outside of campus. During the summer of 2009, she will be directing *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the Cascade Community Theatre in Duvall, Wash.

Jake Sherman is an intensely private individual.

Emily Strait came to Puget Sound with no theater experience and no real knowledge of theater itself. This changed after taking the theatrical experience class for a fine arts requirement. Her major switched from comparative sociology to theater arts, and since then she has met wonderful people and had the time of her life. This past fall, having received a theater scholarship, she had the opportunity to work as an acting pedagogue and has appeared in main stage shows, including *The Arabian Nights*, *The Man Who Couldn't Dance*, and *Slaying Bob Marley and the Minion of Babylon*, and directed *Deus-X* for Directing Class One Acts. Emily is happy to end her Puget Sound career on a high note working on *Death and the Maiden*.

Julia Welch began her colligate theatrical career as an actor in such shows as *Kiss Me, Kate!*, *The Arabian Nights*, *Kiltartan Cross*, and *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. She also worked with Ubiquitous They in both their sketch and improvisational comedy troupes. Julia directed *The Fifteen Minute Hamlet* last fall and also directed *Art for Art's Sake* with Student Theater Productions. An SAFD-recognized actor/combatant, she choreographed fights for several productions and served as a stage combat pedagogue. More recently Julia found her passion to be in technical theater, volunteering as a scenic carpenter, scenic artist, and electrician, as well as designing *Beyond Therapy* and this season's *The Woman in Black*. She is honored to have worked with Puget Sound students and faculty and is proud to graduate with the Class of 2009.

All my love, always. ~J

David Wolf has acted at Puget Sound in the main stage productions of *WASP*, *Slaying Bob Marley and the Minion of Babylon*, *Arcadia*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *One Mad Day!*, and *Uncle Vanya*. He has also acted in Town Crier Festival, Infinite Monkeys Festival, and Ubiquitous They. David sound designed for *Mort* and *Uncle Vanya* as well as directed *The Rock Garden*.

Rachel Wolfe has been directing plays since elementary school, when she would stage productions in her living room for friends and neighbors. Since then, she has gone on to act in a multitude of school, community, and professional theater productions, and only in the last two years rediscovered her love of directing through directing productions of *Under Lubianka Square* by Constance Congdon, and *Yo también hablo de la rosa* by Emilio Carbadillo. She is happy to be finishing off her college experience by directing Christi Stewart-Brown's *The Gene Pool* for her thesis. After college Rachel plans to continue working in the theater and hopes someday to get her Master of Arts degree in directing for the stage.

Despite never doing theater before in any serious capacity, **Shannon Woods** entered University of Puget Sound a declared major. Four years later nothing has changed. Her first piece was a highly experimental student-written play called *Italics Mime* which, while intensive and strange, just furthered her passion for acting. Since then Shannon has acted in *Kiss Me, Kate!*, *A Midsummer's Night's Dream*, and directed and acted in a whole slew of one-piece musical theater numbers including pieces from *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *The Wild Party*, and *Scarlet Pimpernel*. She is currently working on the show *The Gene Pool* and getting used to not smiling for scenes on end. Shannon is planning on taking a year off to return to the Bay Area for a law internship and travel opportunities before returning to the world of academia to get a law degree.

THEATRE ARTS DEPARTMENT

Chair, Theater History, Acting, and Playwriting	Jac Royce
Director of Theatre Production, Design	Kurt Walls
Acting and Directing.....	John Rindo
Dramaturgy, Theatre History.....	Geoff Proehl
Director of Public Events.....	Margaret Thorndill
Scene Shop Supervisor.....	Robin Macartney
Costume Shop Supervisor	Mishka Navarre
Theatre Arts Office Coordinator	Kay Compton
Office Student Assistant.....	Chris Brennan

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THEATRE ARTS SEASON

The Department of Theatre Arts offers several dramatic performances each year. A faculty-directed production takes stage each semester in the Norton Clapp Theatre, along with Student Directed One Acts in late fall and the Senior Theatre Festival in April. Recent faculty-directed plays include *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Tartuffe*, *Iphigenia at Aulis*, *Angels in America, Part I*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Kiss Me, Kate*, and *Arcadia*. Students have directed and designed such plays as *All My Sons*, *Big Love*, *Top Girls*, *Richard III*, *Fefu and Her Friends*, *The Glory of Living*, and *Anton in Show Business* as part of the Senior Festival. The Matthew Norton Clapp Endowment for Visiting Artists brings outstanding contemporary theater makers to campus for workshops and presentations. Past guest artists have included Bill T. Jones, Guillermo Gomez-Peña, Godfrey Hamilton and Mark Pinkosh, Holly Hughes, Steven Deitz, and Russell Davis, as well as Pulitzer Prize winners Edward Albee and Robert Schenkkan. Theatre Arts Department encourages all university students, regardless of major, to participate in all aspects of theatrical production, both onstage and behind the scenes. The department Web site (www2.ups.edu/theatrearts) provides up-to-date information on auditions and upcoming performances.

Functioning independently of the Theatre Arts Department, ASUPS Student Theatre Productions, and other campus groups present an exciting variety of theater throughout the year in Rausch Auditorium and in other campus venues.

NORTON CLAPP THEATRE

Norton Clapp, chairman of the Laird Norton Company and president and chairman of Weyerhaeuser Company, served as a trustee for more than half of University of Puget Sound's first century—from 1933 until 1995. This 62-year term included work with four university presidents (Todd, Thompson, Phibbs, and Pierce). Clapp served as chairman of the board for 19 years, and later was named chairman emeritus and then honorary chairman of the board, for a term running "forever." The board reported that "no other trustee in the history of University of Puget Sound has contributed for as many years or more significantly than Mr. Clapp in advancing the institution's national academic standing, nor has any trustee been more admired or appreciated by so many students, alumni, faculty, staff, and trustees." The board of trustees named the Inside Theatre the Norton Clapp Theatre in 1998 to commemorate his committed service to University of Puget Sound.

UPCOMING PRODUCTIONS

Senior Theatre Festival

- The Woman in Black* by Stephen Mallatratt, April 3 and 4
The Gene Pool by Christi Stewart-Brown, April 10 and 11
Peter Pan or The Boy Who Would Not Grow Up by J. M. Barrie,
adapted by John Caird and Trevor Nunn, April 17 and 18
Death and the Maiden by Ariel Dorfman, April 24 and 25

\$8 general, \$6 Puget Sound student/faculty/staff, senior citizen, student.
Tickets available at Wheelock Information Center,
remaining tickets available at the door.
Call 253.879.3419 for credit card purchase.