

Portland Center Stage at

THE ARMORY

THE BREATH OF LIFE

Written by David Hare

Directed by Ken Schmoll

May 4 – June 16, 2019

In the Ellyn Bye Studio

Artistic Director | Marissa Wolf

Managing Director | Cynthia Fuhrman

THE BREATH OF LIFE
Written by David Hare
Directed by Ken Rus Schmoll

Scenic Designer
Lizzie Bracken

Costume Designer
Brynn Almlı

Lightning Designer
Solomon Weisbard

Dialect Coach
Jane Guyer Fujita

Stage Manager
Janine Vanderhoff

Production Assistant
Sarah Stark

THE CAST (in order of appearance)

Gretchen Corbett *Madeleine Palmer*

Julia Brothers..... *Frances Beale*

Setting: The Isle of Wight, 2002

*Originally presented by Robert Fox at the Haymarket Theatre,
London on October 4, 2002.*

Videotaping or other photo or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

If you photograph the set before or after the performance, please credit the designers if you share the image.

The Actors and Stage Manager employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

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THE CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

Gretchen Corbett, *Madeleine Palmer*

Gretchen has appeared on and off Broadway and in leading roles in prominent regional theaters across the country, including the New York, New Jersey and Oregon Shakespeare Festivals, Circle in the Square Theatre, the Eugene O'Neill International Festival of Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and Center Theatre Group. She has appeared in numerous films and television series. Her local stage appearances include productions for Portland Center Stage at The Armory, Portland Playhouse, Third Rail Repertory Theatre, CoHo Productions, and Sojourn Theatre. She received lead actress awards for *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Happy Days*, *Molly Sweeney*, *It Had to Be You*, and *A Lesson from Aloes* in Portland and for *The Fox* and *Voice of the Prairie* in Los Angeles. Gretchen is also an award-winning theater director.

Julia Brothers, *Frances Beale*

Julia is so excited to be at Portland Center Stage at The Armory for the first time! Recent credits: *God in Weightless: A Rock Opera by The Kilbanes*, directed by Becca Wolff, at The Public Theater's Under The Radar Festival, American Conservatory Theater, and Z Space. Other world premieres: playing Arthur Miller in Jeremy Tiang's *Salesman* 之死 for Laguardia Performing Arts Center's Rough Draft Festival. Broadway: *George Is Dead* by Elaine May (directed by John Turturro). Off-Broadway: *Clever Little Lies* by Joe DiPietro at Westside Theatre. Regional: Walter Anderson's *The Trial of Donna Caine* at George Street Playhouse. *Women in Jeopardy!* at Geva Theatre Center; *Be Aggressive* and *Ambition Facing West* at

TheatreWorks; and *Seagull* (as adapted by Libby Appel), *Magic Forest Farm*, and *Fortune* at Marin Theatre Company, among others. Julia is a company member of B Street Theatre and PlayGround, and an artistic associate at Merrimack Repertory Theatre and Arizona Theatre Company. A recipient of several regional theater awards, Julia was also named an “MVP for theater” by *San Francisco Chronicle*.

David Hare, *Playwright*

Playwright and filmmaker David Hare has written over 30 stage plays, including *Plenty*, *Pravada* (with Howard Brenton), *The Secret Rapture*, *Racing Demon*, *Skylight*, *Amy’s View*, *The Blue Room*, *Via Dolorosa*, *Stuff Happens*, *The Absence of War*, *The Judas Kiss*, *The Moderate Soprano*, and *I’m Not Running*. For film and television he has written over 25 screenplays, which include *Licking Hitler*, *Dreams of Leaving*, *Saigon: Year of the Cat*, *Wetherby*, *Damage*, *The Hours*, *The Reader*, *Denial*, and *The Worricker Trilogy: Page Eight*, *Turks & Caicos*, and *Salting the Battlefield*. Most recently, David created the four-part series *Collateral* for BBC and Netflix, starring Carey Mulligan and Billie Piper. His new film about Rudolf Nureyev’s defection to the West, *The White Crow*, opened in the UK in March, and his update of Ibsen’s classic *Peter Gynt* opens at the National Theatre in June. In a millennial poll of the greatest plays of the 20th century, five of the top 100 were his.

Ken Rus Schmoll, *Director*

Ken has directed readings in six of the last 10 JAW Festivals at Portland Center Stage at The Armory. His work has been seen in New York City at Playwrights Horizons, New York Theatre

Workshop, Vineyard Theatre, BAM, Lincoln Center's LCT3, Clubbed Thumb, Page 73, Foundry Theatre, and Encores! Off-Center, among others. Regionally, he has directed plays at American Conservatory Theater, Marin Theatre Company, Long Wharf Theatre, Two River Theater, Philadelphia Theatre Company, and the Humana Festival for New American Plays, among others. He is the recipient of two Obie Awards, a Lucille Lortel Award nomination, and a Drama League Award nomination. Upcoming productions include Zhu Yi's *You Never Touched the Dirt* for Clubbed Thumb, David Greenspan's adaptation of Thornton Wilder's *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* at Miami New Drama, Jordan Tannahill's *Botticelli in the Fire* at Marin Theatre Company, and Mia Chung's *Catch as Catch Can* at Steppenwolf Theatre Company.

Lizzie Bracken, *Scenic Designer*

Lizzie is delighted to be back at Portland Center Stage at The Armory after designing for *The Magic Play* last season. Regional: *The Magic Play* at Actors Theatre of Louisville, Olney Theatre Center, and Goodman Theatre; *Lord of the Flies*, *The Book Thief*, *Blacktop Sky*, and *See What I Wanna See* at Steppenwolf Theatre Company. Additional credits include *On Clover Road* with American Blues Theater; *Burning Bluebeard* with The Ruffians; *Endgame*, *Ivywild*, and *Six Characters in Search of an Author* with The Hypocrites; *PopWaits* and *44 plays for 44 Presidents* with The Neo-Futurists. Lizzie received her M.F.A. from The University of Texas at Austin and her bachelor's degree in architecture from The University of Notre Dame. Prior to her career in theater, Lizzie was a designer with Fairfax and Sammons Architects.

Brynn Almli, *Costume Designer*

Brynn is a California-based costume designer working in theater, film, television, dance, and special events. Originally from Minneapolis, she studied comparative literature, sculpture, and fashion design before earning an M.F.A. in Design for Stage and Film from NYU Tisch School of the Arts. She lived and worked in New York City for six years before relocating to the Bay Area. Recent theater credits include *Sagittarius Ponderosa* (NAATCO), *Birdbath* (Kitchen Table Works), *Plenty* (NYU Graduate Acting), and *Alphabetical* (Columbia University). She has assisted on productions for Broadway, Hartford Stage, The Shakespeare Theatre, Theatre For A New Audience, Guthrie Theater, New York Musical Festival, Aspen Music Festival, and The Williamstown Theatre Festival.

Solomon Weisbard, *Lighting Designer*

Born in Portland, Solomon spent the last 13 years as a New York Citybased lighting designer for all types of performance. With director Robert Wilson, productions in Germany at Festspielhaus Baden Baden and in Italy at Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Teatro Regio di Parma, Ancient Theatre of Pompeii, Teatro Olimpico di Vicenza, and Teatro Mercadante di Napoli. Local credits include Portland Playhouse's *A Christmas Carol* (Drammy nomination), *pen/man/ship* (Drammy nomination), *Jitney*, *You for Me for You*. Select Off-Broadway: *Duat* (Soho Rep); *Men on Boats* (world premiere, Playwrights Horizons/Clubbed Thumb); *America Is Hard to See* (HERE); *The Film Society* (Keen); and four productions with The Barrow Group. Regional theater: Arden Theatre Company, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Magic Theatre, Portland Stage,

Quintessence, Westport Country Playhouse, Yale Repertory Theatre. M.F.A. from Yale School of Drama.

Sharath Patel, *Sound Designer*

Before arriving in the Pacific Northwest, Sharath spent nearly a decade as a lead sound designer in New York City. Designs include *Wolf Play*, *Teenage Dick*, *Skeleton Crew* (Artists Repertory Theatre); *Nina Simone: Four Women* (Alabama Shakes); *Christmas at Pemberley Pt.2* (Marin Theater Company); *Ibsen in Chicago* (Seattle Repertory Theatre); *The Crucible*, *The Royale* (ACT Theatre); *As You Like It* (California Shakespeare Theater); *Free Outgoing* (East West Players); *WIG OUT!* (American Rep/ CompanyONE).

Regional/international credits include designs in Washington, D.C., Norfolk, Raleigh, Aspen, Dublin, India, France, England, Germany, and Romania. Sharath is a member of United Scenic Artists Local 829, IATSE, and the Theatrical Sound Designers and Composers Association. He is an Arts Envoy for the U.S. Department of State and a resident artist at Artists Repertory Theatre. M.F.A. from Yale School of Drama. sharathpatel.com.

Jane Guyer Fujita, *Dialect Coach*

Jane is a New York-based voice specialist and dialect coach on faculty at New York University's Graduate Acting Program.

Production coaching includes: Broadway, Ensemble Studio Theater, LCT3, The Flea Theater, La MaMA, The Playwrights Realm, Primary Stages, The Public Theater, Signature Theatre, Theater for the New City, Page 73, American Repertory Theater, Williamstown Theater Festival, Yale Repertory Theater, Hudson Valley Shakespeare, The Curran Theater, Actors Shakespeare Project. Film: *Sidney Hall*,

Strange Love, Freedom, The Makeover. TV: *Seven Seconds, Power, Z: The beginning of everything, Red Oaks, The Family*. She earned her M.F.A. from the ART Institute at Harvard, where she studied voice and speech pedagogy under Nancy Houfek.

Janine Vanderhoff, Stage Manager

Janine is thrilled to be back for her fourth season at Portland Center Stage at The Armory. She recently stage managed *Tiny Beautiful Things, A Christmas Memory/Winter Song*, and *The Color Purple*. Other favorites include: *Wild and Reckless, The Oregon Trail*, and *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*. In New York, Janine worked on *The Lion King*, as well as with many Off-Broadway and regional companies. Portland credits: *Sweeney Todd* (Portland Opera), *Play, How to End Poverty in 90 Minutes* and *The Other Place* (Portland Playhouse). Touring: *The Graduate, Cats, The Vagina Monologues, Jekyll & Hyde*, and *Show Boat*. Production management: *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* "Democalypse 2012 Republican National Convention" (Tampa, FL); Straz Center (Tampa, FL); The Fox Theatre (Atlanta, GA). Proud NYU graduate and AEA member.

Sarah Stark, Production Assistant

Sarah is a recent Portland transplant from Chicago. She has previously worked as a production assistant at The Armory for productions of *Tiny Beautiful Things, The Second City's A Christmas Carol: Twist Your Dickens*, and *A Life*. Regional and Chicago stage management credits include: *Silent Night, The Cunning Little Vixen, Porgy and Bess* (The Glimmerglass Festival), *Little Shop of Horrors* (American Blues Theater); *Civility!* (The Syndicate); *Ellen Bond, Union Spy* (The House Theatre of Chicago); *Love's Labour's Lost*,

Belleville, Urinetown: The Musical (The University of Chicago). Sarah is thrilled to be continuing her education as a stage management apprentice this season.

THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS OF *THE BREATH OF LIFE*

DRS. ANN SMITH SEHDEV & PAUL SEHDEV

A play can take a theme like middle age (is there such a thing?) and put it in front of you like a nerve-wracking, slowly growing run in a stocking, or an eye-burning, layered white onion, or a multifaceted diamond that sends heart-lifting, and kinetic sparkly lights throughout the room. A play can take a conversation of two “middle age” women on one night and leave you pondering life choices, questioning morality, giggling with an endorphin high, and remembering the simplicity of what it means to be human. Enjoy.

DR. BARBARA HORT

Beneath its deft banter and deceptive brevity, *The Breath of Life* challenges us to examine some of our most important (and most hidden) concerns ... including what we perceive to be the meaning of our lives. It is my honor to sponsor this exceptional production, but even more, it is a gift to be able to join in its journey. I hope you will come to feel the same way.