



renaissance
THEATERWORKS
Theater by Women For Everyone

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Renaissance Theaterworks has some Magic up their Sleeves with WITCH

Renaissance kicks off their season with a devilishly fun comedy

UPDATED September 22, 2023 (Milwaukee, Wis.) Renaissance Theaterworks (RTW) opens their 31st season with the biting dark comedy, *WITCH* by Jen Silverman, October 22nd - November 12th with preview performances on October 20th and 21st, at the Theater on 255 S Water Street in Milwaukee's Harbor District. *WITCH* will be directed by RTW's Artistic Director Suzan Fete and features an impressive ensemble cast of Marti Gobel, Neil Brookshire, Reese Madigan, James Carrington, Joe Picchetti and Eva Nimmer. Tickets are available on r-t-w.com 24 hours-a-day, by phone at 414-278-0765 or in person at the box office, 255 S. Water St., from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily and 2 hours before performances. Full list of performance dates, times and special shows below.

Play Synopsis

A charming devil arrives in the quiet village of Edmonton to bargain for the souls of its residents in exchange for their darkest wishes. Elizabeth should be his easiest target, having been labeled a "witch" and cast out by the town, but her soul is not so readily bought. As the devil returns to convince her – and then returns again – unexpected passions flare, alliances are formed, and the village is forever changed. An inventive retelling of a Jacobean drama, this sharp, subversive fable debates how much our souls are worth when hope is hard to come by.

The Return of Milwaukee Favorites

WITCH is going to be a reunion of Milwaukee favorites. In 2019, RTW produced Silverman's play *THE ROOMMATE* which was also directed by Fete and featured Gobel, and it was one of the most well received shows that season by both audiences and critics. "We had a great time doing *THE ROOMMATE* and we were thrilled that audiences felt the same." says Fete "Now that we're on the other side of the pandemic, we sense that audiences want to come to the theater and really enjoy themselves. They can expect to laugh heartily with our production of *WITCH*." Not only does Silverman's dark wit flourish in the hands of Fete, she has assembled a powerhouse of talent to bring this story to life.

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“We’re so excited to be working with Marti [Gobel] again, on another play by Jen Silverman.” says Fete. “And joining her is some of the best talent around. Neil [Brookshire], Reese [Madigan], James [Carrington], Joe [Picchetti] and Eva [Nimmer] are all so gifted and wonderful to work with. This is the cast you will not want to miss!”

The cast should sound familiar to RTW audiences, because everyone has been in a previous RTW production. Gobel has been seen in numerous shows with RTW including NEAT, THE VIOLET HOUR and CRUMBS FROM THE TABLE OF JOY. Brookshire was in THE VIOLET HOUR and PHOTOGRAPH 51. Madigan was last seen in the acclaimed RUSSIAN TRANSPORT. Carrington was in the powerful production of THE BALLAD OF EMMETT TILL. Picchetti made an impact in PHOTOGRAPH 51. And lastly, Eva Nimmer commanded the stage in ACTUALLY.

Cast

ELIZABETH SAWYER.....Marti Gobel*
SCRATCH.....Neil Brookshire*
SIR ARTHUR BANKS.....Reese Madigan*
CUDDY BANKS.....James Carrington*
FRANK THORNEY.....Joe Picchetti
WINNIFRED.....Eva Nimmer

Production Team

DIRECTOR..... Suzan Fete
PRODUCTION MANAGER & STAGE MANAGER.... Bailey Wegner*
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR..... Tony Lyons
LIGHTING DESIGN.....Noele Stollmack**
SCENIC DESIGN.....Jeff Kmiec**
SOUND DESIGN.....Josh Schmidt**
COSTUME DESIGN..... Amy Horst
PROP DESIGN..... Olivia Bastien
FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHY.....Jamie Cheatham
MOVEMENT DESIGN.....Jayne Regan Pink
INTIMACY DIRECTION.....Jennifer Dobby
SHOW MASCOT.....**Rowena Theadora Witch**

*Member of Actors' Equity Association

^Member of Stage Directors and Choreographers

** Member of the United Scenic Artists of America

Playwright/Director/Cast Biographies

Jen Silverman PLAYWRIGHT

Jen Silverman is a playwright, novelist, poet and screenwriter. Jen's plays include *Collective Rage: A Play in 5 Betties* (Woolly Mammoth, MCC, Southwark Playhouse London); *The Moors* (Yale Rep, Playwrights Realm); *The Roommate* (Humana Festival, Williamstown, Steppenwolf, South Coast, Long Wharf) and *Witch* (Writer's Theatre, Geffen, Huntington). Jen's plays have been produced internationally in Australia, the UK, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Spain, and elsewhere. Jen is the author of the debut novel *We Play Ourselves* and the story collection *The Island Dwellers* (Random House) and the poetry chapbook *Bath*, selected by Traci Brimhall for Driftwood Press. Additional work has appeared in *Vogue*, *The Paris Review*, *Literary Hub*, *Ploughshares*, the *Yale Review* and elsewhere. Jen wrote *The Miranda Obsession* as a narrative podcast for Audible/ Vice, starring Rachel Brosnahan. Jen is a three-time MacDowell Fellow, a member of New Dramatists, and an Affiliated Artist with New Georges, Clubbed Thumb, Space on Ryder Farm, and the Playwrights Center. Honors: The Helen Merrill Award, the Yale Drama Series Award, the Lilly Award, Fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council. Jen is a 2022 National Endowment for the Arts Fellow (prose) and 2022 Guggenheim Fellow (theatre). Jen also writes for TV and film. Education: Brown, Iowa, Juilliard.

Suzan Fete DIRECTOR

Suzan is a graduate of University of Illinois. Suzan co-founded RTW in 1993. Favorite RTW projects include: directing *TOPDOG/UNDERDOG*, *THE SHAPE OF THINGS*, *BLACKBIRD*, *TOP GIRLS*, and *THE ROAD TO MECCA*, touring *NEAT* to Port Elizabeth, South Africa in 2013 and finishing as finalists with *ALL OF THE EVERYTHING* and *LUCKY NUMBERS* in the Samuel French Off Off Broadway Short Play Festival, in 2015 and 2019 respectively. Suzan is especially proud that RTW won the prestigious 50/50 in 2020 International Applause Award for the 2015-16 season in recognition of RTW's commitment to women playwrights. Suzan lives happily in Wauwatosa with her husband, Jeff.

Marti Gobel ELIZABETH SAWYER

Marti Gobel is an Actor, Director and Teaching Artist. She returns to Renaissance Theaterworks with great love and affection. Past RTW acting credits include: *THE PERSIANS*, *CRUMBS FROM THE TABLE OF JOY*, *NEAT 2012/2021* (Milwaukee, Sheboygan, South African), *THE VIOLET HOUR*, *SEX WITH STRANGERS* and *THE ROOMMATE*. Past R-T-W directing credits include: *THE BALLAD OF EMMETT TILL*, *NATIVE GARDENS* and *POOF!*. Ms Gobel is a proud member of both AEA and SAG-AFTRA.

Neil Brookshire SCRATCH

PHOTOGRAPH 51, *THE VIOLET HOUR* (Renaissance Theaterworks). Additional Milwaukee credits: *THERE IS A HAPPINESS THAT MORNING IS*, *THE LAST WHITE MAN* (Next Act Theatre).

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Wisconsin and Regional companies: Peninsula Players, Door Shakespeare, Great Lakes Theater, Boise Contemporary Theater, Idaho Dance Theatre, Opera Idaho, Company of Fools, Seattle Novyi Theatre, People's Light, Cadence Theatre Co, Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival, Tennessee Shakespeare Co., and ten seasons with Idaho Shakespeare Festival. He has performed the solo show, BENT COMPASS, in three festivals in Canada. Neil has a BA in Interdisciplinary Studies from Boise State University, and an MFA in Acting from Northern Illinois University.

Reese Madigan SIR ARTHUR BANKS

Reese is thrilled to be back at RTW, where he's previously been seen as Misha in RUSSIAN TRANSPORT, and as many people in AMELIA. He's played both on and Off Broadway and at many regional theaters around the country. At Next Act he's appeared in SILENT SKY and LOMBARDI; and in 20 productions at Milwaukee Rep where a few favorites include A CHRISTMAS CAROL (Bob Cratchit), DEATH OF A SALESMAN, (Biff Loman), CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF (Brick Pollitt), LOMBARDI (Paul Hornung). Other Wisconsin credits: BORN YESTERDAY (Paul Verrall), APT; LIFE SUCKS (Astor), Forward Theatre and as MACBETH, Door Shakespeare. Later this season, he's honored to be back at both The Rep in A CHRISTMAS CAROL and Next Act in THE TREASURER. Many thanks to Suzan and Jayne!

James Carrington CUDDY BANKS

James Carrington is thrilled to be back with Renaissance Theaterworks! James is an actor and singer based in Milwaukee and a graduate of UW-Madison's Acting Specialist B.F.A. Program. Some favorite roles include Matt in MR. BURNS: A POST ELECTRIC PLAY, Man 3 in THE BALLAD OF EMMETT TILL, The Lion in THE WIZ, William Barfèe in THE 25TH ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE and Jim Fingal in LIFESPAN OF A FACT, Dun in PIPELINE and Golden Thunder in AIRNESS. James has been fortunate to work with many Wisconsin theaters, to name a few: Northern Sky Theater, Children's Theatre of Madison, Milwaukee Opera Theater, Door Shakespeare, First Stage Theatre, Skylight Music Theatre, Northern Sky Theater and Forward Theater. Up next James will be diving in to assistant direct THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER with First Stage! Be safe, be well, be loved. Support the arts!

Joe Picchetti FRANK THORNEY

Joe Picchetti is thrilled to be returning to Renaissance Theaterworks for WITCH! Previous credits with Renaissance include PHOTOGRAPH 51 (Don Caspar) and STILL (Constantinople). Currently based in Milwaukee, he has been lucky enough to perform with numerous regional companies throughout the midwest. Recent credits includes A CHRISTMAS CAROL (Children's Theatre of Madison); PRELUDES (Milwaukee Opera Theatre); THE LION IN WINTER (Milwaukee Chamber Theatre); A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM, AS YOU LIKE IT, and THE COMEDY OF ERRORS (Summit Players Theatre). He would like to thank his family, friends, and Maddy for their never-ending love and support!

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Eva Nimmer WINNIFRED

Eva returns to Renaissance Theaterworks having appeared previously in their 2022 production of ACTUALLY. Selected stage credits: GOD'S SPIES, THE REVOLUTIONISTS, RED HERRING, EQUIVOCATION (Next Act Theatre); THE NATIVITY VARIATIONS (Milwaukee Repertory Theatre); WRITE ME A MURDER, RIPCORN (Peninsula Players Theatre); CHRISTMAS IN BABYLON (Milwaukee Chamber Theatre); MR. BURNS: A POST-ELECTRIC PLAY (Luminous Theatre); LUMBERJACKS IN LOVE, THE FISHERMAN'S DAUGHTERS, VICTORY FARM (Northern Sky Theater). Eva is also a writer and musician, and sometimes appears singing backup with Milwaukee-based band Long Mama. www.evanimmer.com

Performance Schedule & Special Events

Week 1

Friday, October 20, 2023	7:30 p.m.	Preview & Pay-what-you-choose
Saturday, October 21	4:00 p.m.	Preview & Open Captioning

NEW TIME:

Sunday, October 22	5:00 p.m.	Opening Night & Reception
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Week 2

Wednesday, October 25	7:30 p.m.	Wine Wednesday
Thursday, October 26	7:30 p.m.	SheLeads (A Women's Networking Night)
Friday, October 27	7:30 p.m.	PRIDE Night & Talkback
Saturday, October 28	4:00 p.m.	Open Captioning
Sunday, October 29	2:00 p.m.	Play Club

Week 3

Wednesday, November 1	1:30 p.m.	Matinee & Talkback
Wednesday, November 1	7:30 p.m.	Wine Wednesday
Thursday, November 2	7:30 p.m.	Open Captioning
Friday, November 3	7:30 p.m.	Pre-show talk @6:45
Saturday, November 4	4:00 p.m.	
Sunday, November 5	2:00 p.m.	ASL Interpreted

Week 4

Wednesday, November 8	1:30 p.m.	Sensory Friendly Performance
Wednesday, November 8	7:30 p.m.	Wine Wednesday
Thursday, November 9	7:30 p.m.	Open Captioning
Friday, November 10	7:30 p.m.	Audio Described
Saturday, November 11	4:00 p.m.	
Sunday, November 12	2:00 p.m.	Closing

Season Sponsors: Laura & Mike Arnow, Jan Serr & John Shannon, Herzfeld Foundation, Shubert Foundation, Bert L. & Patricia S. Steigleder Charitable Trust, CAMPAC, City of Milwaukee Arts Board, UPAF, Wisconsin Arts Board, The Greater Milwaukee Foundation

Show Sponsors: Sherry & Rick Lundell and Sandy Zingler

About Renaissance Theaterworks

RTW is Milwaukee's first professional theater company founded and led by women and the nation's second-oldest professional theater devoted to gender equality. RTW is a resident company at 255 South Water St. in Milwaukee's Harbor District, with increased capacity and improved accessibility.

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