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buddies
IN BAD TIMES THEATRE

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BUDDIES IN BAD TIMES THEATRE ANNOUNCES PROGRAMMING FOR ITS 2011- 2012 SEASON

Artistic Director **Brendan Healy**

For its 2011/12 Season, Buddies in Bad Times Theatre offers a collection of some of the world's major dramatists including Jean Genet, Martin Crimp, Caryl Churchill, Larry Kramer and Margaret Atwood. It is a season of bold re-imaginings and revisions of canonical works and sacred stories that furthers Buddies' position as one of the country's most dynamic theatre companies.

The season kicks off with Artistic Director Brendan Healy's production of Jean Genet's *The Maids*, in a translation by Martin Crimp. Featuring Stratford veterans Diane D'Aquila, Ron Kennell and Maria Ricossa, this queer reclaiming of Genet's masterpiece will delve deeply into the play's abject sexuality and its ruthless position against social subjection.

The Maids is followed by the presentation of another queer classic: *The Normal Heart* by Larry Kramer, produced by Studio 180 Theatre. This depiction of the struggle to get government officials to take action against the HIV/AIDS epidemic could not feel more salient at a time when our city's current mayor has made several remarks about cutting funding to HIV/AIDS service organizations.

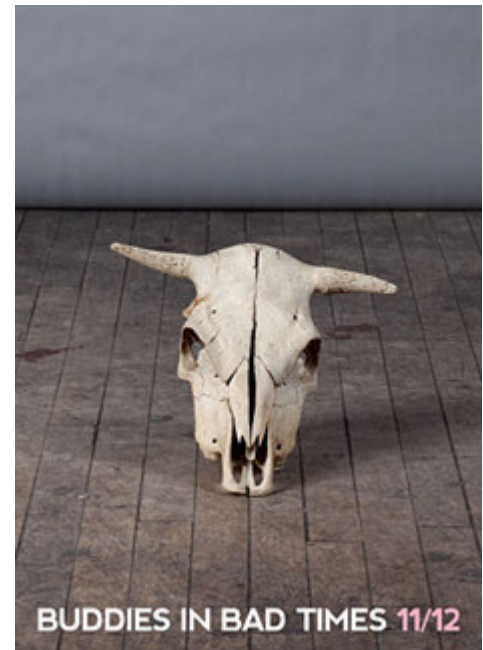
Buddies' commitment to offering theatre that challenges the norm is broadened by Modern Times Stage Company's production of *Hallaj*, a theatrical account of the martyrdom of beloved 10th century Sufi mystic Mansur e-Hallaj who bravely stood up against the religious orthodoxy of his time to promote a message of liberty and compassion.

Next, two of Canada's leading female writers radically revise two texts from the Western canon. With Nightwood Theatre's production of *The Penelopiad*, Margaret Atwood offers a feminist retelling of Homer's *Odyssey*. With *free as injuns*, Native Earth Performing Arts' new Artistic Director Tara Beagan re-appropriates Eugene O'Neill's classic play *Desire Under the Elms* to write a powerful interrogation of Canadian racial hierarchy.

As always, the *Rhubarb Festival* returns for its 33rd edition, with Festival Director Laura Nanni at the helm for her second season.

Caryl Churchill meets Céline Dion in *Bliss*, a darkly surrealistic dissection of celebrity culture and its alienating effects by a rising star of the Québécois stage, Olivier Choinière. Churchill's translation of this internationally acclaimed play was originally presented at the Royal Court in London, UK. Buddies is thrilled to present the English-Canadian professional premiere of *Bliss*, in association with Candles are for Burning.

Sky Gilbert's Cabaret Company returns with *Dancing Queen*, a collaboration with the infamous Keith Cole that tells the story of an inter-generational love triangle through dance and theatre.



The season caps off with seminal New York City feminist duo Split Britches (Peggy Shaw and Lois Weaver) performing on Buddies' stage for the first time in their thirty-year history. Split Britches bring us a limited run of their latest piece *Lost Lounge*.

Please join us for a season of fearless theatre that advocates rebellion in the face of oppression, celebration in the face of shame and self-assertion in defiance of erasure. Artistic Director Brendan Healy remarks: "This past year, we have witnessed many communities feel the pressures of an increasingly conservative political climate, the queer community included. In response to this shift, I offer a season of brave works that speak to the struggles and victories of our pasts as marginalized peoples. I believe that by remembering our histories through the theatre, we will gain wisdom and power as we work together to ensure that our futures remain bright."

2011 - 2012 PROGRAMMING

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre presents

THE MAIDS

By **Jean Genet**

Translated by **Martin Crimp**

Directed by **Brendan Healy**

Starring **Diane D'Aquila, Ron Kennell** and **Maria Ricossa**

Production Designer **Julie Fox**

Lighting Designer **Kimberly Purtell**

Music and Sound Designer **Richard Feren**

September 17 – October 9, 2011

1933. French police find Madame Lancelin and her daughter face down, in their living room, mutilated. Upstairs, two maids are found naked, huddled together in one of two single beds. Their motive: self-defense against an abusive mistress. This true story was the inspiration for queer iconoclast Jean Genet's masterpiece. A powerful statement against servitude, this psychosexual thriller is brought to you by the creative team behind last season's acclaimed production of Sarah Kane's *Blasted*.

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre proudly welcomes
a **Studio 180 Theatre** production

THE NORMAL HEART

By **Larry Kramer**

Directed by **Joel Greenberg**

Featuring **Alex Poch-Goldin, Sarah Orenstein, Mark McGrinder** and **Mark Crawford**

October 14 – November 6, 2011

Larry Kramer's landmark play chronicles the rise of the AIDS crisis in New York City as seen through the eyes of writer/activist Ned Weeks, the gay Jewish founder of a prominent HIV advocacy group. *The Normal Heart's* political and sexual polemics polarized the gay community when it was first performed in 1985. It has since been recognized as an important document of queer history and is widely considered to be one of the most significant plays of the 20th century. Buddies is pleased to welcome back Studio 180 Theatre, seven years after their celebrated production of *The Laramie Project*.

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre proudly welcomes
a **Modern Times Stage Company** production

HALLAJ

By **Peter Farbridge** and **Soheil Parsa**

Directed by **Soheil Parsa**

Featuring **Stewart Arnott, Steven Bush, Peter Farbridge, Keon Mohajeri, John Ng, Beatriz Pizano, Costa Tovarnisky** and **Bahareh Yaraghi**

Lighting Design **Andrea Lundy**

Sound Design **Thomas Ryder Payne**

Costume Design **Angela Thomas**

November 18 – December 4, 2011

Hallaj tells the story of the legendary 10th century Sufi mystic, Mansur e-Hallaj, whose poetry and teachings inspired the love of his people and the wrath of the religious orthodoxy. In the current age of political and social upheaval in the Middle East, *Hallaj* offers a powerful message of compassion from a culture so often perceived as “other”. *Hallaj* marks Modern Times Stage Company’s return to Buddies for the first time since their stunning production of *Macbeth* in 1995.

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre proudly welcomes
a **Nightwood Theatre** production

THE PENELOPIAD

By **Margaret Atwood**

Directed by **Kelly Thornton**

Designed by **Denyse Karn**

Lighting Designer **Kimberly Purtell**

January 10 – 29, 2012

The iconic Margaret Atwood offers a daring revision of Homer’s *Odyssey* by giving voice to Penelope. Condemned to spend eternity in Hades, Penelope recounts her life’s story and the murder of her twelve handmaidens by her vengeful husband Odysseus. Atwood’s acerbic wit brings one of history’s most powerful myths to the contemporary imagination. The Toronto premiere of *The Penelopiad* is helmed by award-winning director Kelly Thornton, Artistic Director of Nightwood Theatre, Canada’s national women’s theatre company.

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre presents

THE RHUBARB FESTIVAL

Toronto’s 33rd annual convergence of contemporary performance

Festival Director **Laura Nanni**

February 8 – 19, 2012

Canada’s premiere experimental performance festival offers Toronto fresh, live encounters with contemporary theatre, performance art, dance and music. For two weeks, hundreds of local and international artists descend on Buddies to share new ideas in performance creation with adventure-loving audiences.

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre proudly welcomes
a **Native Earth Performing Arts** production

free as injuns

by **Tara Beagan**

Directed by **Ruth Madoc-Jones**

Featuring **James Cade**

Lighting and Set Designer **Andy Moro**

February 28 – March 18, 2012

In a provocative retelling of the American classic *Desire Under the Elms* by Eugene O'Neill, *free as injuns* tells the story of Even Cabot and his struggle to reclaim his late mother's land from the oppressive hands of his father. Questions of land ownership, identity and birthright are the battleground for a bitter family war. Award-winning playwright and newly-appointed Native Earth Performing Arts Artistic Director, Tara Beagan, pens this provocative interrogation of Canadian racial hierarchy.

Candles are for Burning

In association with **Buddies in Bad Times Theatre** presents

BLISS

By **Olivier Choinère**

Translated by **Caryl Churchill**

Directed by **Steven McCarthy**

Featuring **Delphine Bienvenu, Jean-Robert Bourdage, Trent Pardy** and **France Rolland**

Set and Costume Designer **James Lavoie**

Sound Designer **Diane Labrosse**

Lighting Designer **Andrea Lundy**

March 27 – April 8, 2012

Céline Dion speaks through an Oracle to a group of cashiers at a Wal-Mart. She takes us on a journey from her triumphant farewell concert to the bedroom of her number one fan, who has spent most of her life chained to a bed by her family. Our insatiable appetite for celebrity is the topic of this darkly surrealistic play by Québécois dramatist Olivier Choinière. Buddies is thrilled to present the professional English Canadian premiere of this internationally acclaimed play, in a translation by Caryl Churchill.

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre proudly welcomes

A **Cabaret Company** production

DANCING QUEEN

Written and Directed by **Sky Gilbert**

Choreographed by **Keith Cole**

Featuring **Nick Green, Ryan Kelly** and **David Tomlinson**

Set and Lighting Designer **Andy Moro**

Costume Designer **Sheree Tams**

April 18 – 29, 2012

A beautiful young man moves to the big city. There he meets two older men. He falls in love with one and the other falls for him. *Dancing Queen* plays on gay culture's fear of aging to ask scandalous questions about sex, love and monogamy. Buddies founding Artistic Director, Sky Gilbert, collaborates with notorious performance artist Keith Cole to tell the story of an intergenerational love triangle through dance and theatre.

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre presents

LOST LOUNGE

By **Split Britches (NYC)**

Written and performed by **Peggy Shaw** and **Lois Weaver (Split Britches)**

Sound and music by **Vivien Stoll**

Choreography by **Stormy Brandenberger**

May 3 – 5, 2012

Legendary New York performance group Split Britches offer up a tribute to what we have lost in the rising sea of urban gentrification. *Lost Lounge* is a refuge for a culture that sits on the edge of extinction. Through loving recreations of seminal lounge acts from the glory days of NYC's Bowery Corridor, *Lost Lounge* resurrects the people and places that are quickly fading into a black and white memory. Since 1980, Split Britches has transformed the landscape of queer performance with their vaudevillian satirical gender-bending performances. Buddies is thrilled to welcome this internationally-acclaimed feminist company to our stage for the first time.

BUDDIES 11/12 SEASON PASS

Buddies Season Passes are now on sale. Save up to 50% on tickets and reserve priority seating for any of the following shows: *The Maids, The Normal Heart, Hallaj, The Penelopiad, The Rhubarb Festival, free as injuns, Bliss, Dancing Queen* and *Lost Lounge*. Season Passes are 100% flexible. You can use your pass to bring a gang on the cheap, or see everything in the season.

THE OPTIONS

8 Ticket Pass \$130

4 Ticket Pass \$85

Under 30 / Arts Worker

8 Ticket Pass \$100

4 Ticket Pass \$65