

THE GREAT WAR THEATRE PROJECT

MESSENGERS OF A BITTER TRUTH



Paul Nash. *Wire*, 1918. Courtesy of The Imperial War Museum.

**WORKING WITH DA VINCI STUDENTS
LETCWORTH FESTIVAL 2015**

THE GREAT WAR THEATRE PROJECT

MESSENGERS OF A BITTER TRUTH

ACTING ENSEMBLE

Inés de la Cruz
Ely Harris
Laura Menzie
Josh Santora

SCENES

PROLOGUE	The Bitter Truth
THE WALTZ	The Picnic War Is Declared
BITTER REALITY	In the Trenches Women in War The Front The Christmas Truce, December 1914 Fireworks Barbed Wire Death Gas Attack Wounded The Telegram Death All Quiet on the Western Front The Pall Bearers The Grave
ELEGY	The War to End All Wars The Next Generation – Why War? I Am the Grass

*The performances will run without intermission.
An audience talk-back will follow.*

VOICES OF THE SPOKEN WORD

PROLOGUE

PAUL NASH, 1889 – 1946

British, soldier, commissioned war artist

THE WALTZ

FRANK WEDEKIND, 1864 – 1918

German, playwright, excerpt from *Spring Awakening*, premiered in Berlin 1906

EDWARD THOMAS, 1878 – 1917

British, essayist, war poet, killed in France

ALFRED LICHTENSTEIN, 1889 – 1914

German, writer, died of wounds in France

VIOLET ASQUITH, 1887 – 1969

British, daughter of war-time British prime minister H.H. Asquith, oldest brother killed in France

RUPERT BROOKE, 1887 – 1915

British, war poet, died on the way to the Battle of Gallipoli

VERA BRITAIN, 1893 – 1970

British, VAD nurse, writer, a life-long pacifist after the war; her fiancé, her only brother, and her two closest friends killed in the war

ALAN SEEGER, 1888 – 1916

American, poet, work published posthumously, killed during the Battle of the Somme, uncle of folk singer/activist Pete Seeger

BITTER REALITY

WILFRED OWEN, 1893 – 1918

British, war poet, killed in France one week before Armistice

ISAAC ROSENBERG, 1890 – 1918

British, war poet, painter, killed in France

SIEGFRIED SASSOON, 1886 – 1967

British, war poet, decorated war hero, outspoken critic of the war

VIOLET CECIL, 1872 – 1958

British, mother of George Cecil who was killed in France in 1914

GERRIT ENGELKE, 1890 – 1918

German, expressionist poet and writer, died of wounds in France

ALFRED ANDERSON, 1896 – 2005

Scottish, last surviving British soldier of the Christmas truce, 1914

FRANCIS LEDWIDGE, 1887 – 1917

Irish, war poet, killed in France

ERNST STADLER, 1883 – 1914

German, expressionist poet, killed in France

SHIRLEY MILLARD, dates unknown

American, VAD in France from March 1918 – November 1918

CYNTHIA ASQUITH, 1887 – 1960

British, daughter-in-law of British prime minister H.H. Asquith, older brother killed in Egypt, younger brother killed in France

ROY C. HOOVER, 1894 – 1918

American, lieutenant, died of wounds in France, three days before Armistice

ERICH MARIA REMARQUE, 1898 – 1970

German, novelist, *All Quiet on the Western Front*

ELEGY

PAUL VALÉRY, 1871 – 1945

French, poet, essayist, philosopher

JEAN DE LA VILLE DE MIRMONT

1886 – 1914, French, poet, short story author, died of wounds in France

IRENE RATHBONE, 1892 – 1980

British, actress, VAD nurse, novelist

CARL SANDBURG, 1878 – 1967

American, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet and author

NOTES



ROSALIND THOMAS-CLARK, *Artistic Director*

Born in England during World War II, my family history was steeped in stories of World War I and the impact it had on my parents and grandparents. My maternal grandfather died in the war, and my hallway in Cambridge has photos of him in his uniform standing proudly next to my grandmother, my mother, and her brothers. I have always been aware of the horrors of

The Great War, and that it clearly was never “the war to end all wars.”

As an adult, I feared that my American friends would be sent to Vietnam and, later, that my own son might be drafted to fight in the Falklands or in the Gulf Wars. Now I have young grandchildren, and still carry that fear for them deep in my soul. As a pacifist, I have always asked myself the question, “Why War?”

Working with Susan Werbe on this piece has inspired my artistic process. The concept is simple. The motifs are clear. Our approach to tell the story of this war through video, music, movement, and dramatized text reinforces the power of theatre as an entry point for audiences to experience and understand an event that changed our culture and history and ultimately the way we now live our lives. I am indebted to all the actors who have helped bring to life my creative ideas and *The Great War Theatre Project*.



SUSAN WERBE, *Executive Producer*

Nearly three years ago, I conceived this project to commemorate the centenary of The Great War, envisioning a multi-media theatre piece incorporating spoken words, images, movement, and music. The concept—and the words themselves—grew out of my personal journey of exploration, a journey that has taken me to collections in US and British libraries,

giving me opportunities to view original writings—such as a letter from the English poet Isaac Rosenberg, a letter from the trenches, an excerpt of which you will hear. The words of his letter are as compelling and real today as they must have been when he wrote them in 1917.

From the outset, *The Great War Theatre Project* has been a wonderful collaboration with Rosalind Thomas-Clark, whose artistic vision has brought the original concept to life with sensitivity and power. The people whose words our extraordinary actors will speak—whatever their views of the war, on whichever side they fought, whether they survived or not—were caught up in a cataclysmic chapter in human history. It is our hope that their words will bring this piece of history alive for you and will pay tribute not only to these men and women, but also to the tragic loss—on both sides—of so much human potential.

CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

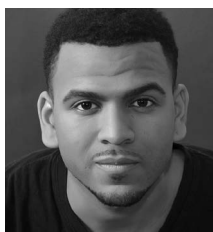


INÉS DE LA CRUZ

Acting Ensemble

Inés hails from Boston. She has been a member of Escena Latina Teatro (ELT) since 2006, and

was recently cast as Luisa in ELT's production of the Spanish play *Entre Mujeres* by Santiago Moncada. She will soon appear as Catalina in the comedic web series *The Pineapple Diaries* by Paloma Valenzuela. Inés is excited and proud to work with TC Squared and form part of the amazing cast of *The Great War Theatre Project*.



ELY HARRIS

Acting Ensemble

Ely is a recent graduate of Bucknell University where he appeared in many of the university's theatre and dance

performances. He graduated from Boston Arts Academy in 2009 as a theatre major. Some of his acting credits include: *Night Train*, *Bolina*, *Macbeth*, *No Exit*, and *Pride and Prejudice*. Ely was a featured dancer in two Bucknell Dance Company Concerts where he performed *Choreographic Offering* by José Limón. He's so pleased to be a member of the cast of *The Great War Theatre Project*.



LAURA MENZIE

Acting Ensemble

Laura is thrilled to be a part of such a unique theatre piece as *The Great War Theatre Project*. Boston credits

include *Soul Mates* with Boston Actors

Theatre, *Songs of the Dragons Flying to the Heavens* with Apollonaire Theatre Company and the IRNE nominated *Nina Variations* with Brown Box Theatre Project. Laura has also worked with Brown Box for *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, and two devised collaborations with Icaro Teatro in Queretaro, Mexico. She holds a BA in theatre from Clark University and studied at the Accademia dell'arte. Laura recently appeared as Sasha in *Orlando* with Bad Habits. She will be moving to Houston in the fall to complete a graduate degree in theatre.



JOSH SANTORA

Acting Ensemble

Josh, a Jamaica Plain native, is ecstatic to rejoin the theatre community after nearly a decade in other worlds. He

began his thespian journey as a theatre major at Boston Arts Academy, where his roles included Egeus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; Lt. Byrd in *A Soldier's Story*; Tiger in *Fresh Flags of America*; Matt Galloway and Aaron McKinney in *The Laramie Project*; and multiple roles in *Grand Magic*. Whoopi Goldberg awarded Josh the accolade of Best Male Actor for his role in *The Lost Elevator* at the Emerson High School Theatre Festival. He was assistant to director Ros Thomas-Clark for the production of *You Must Not Speak*. Josh is delighted to be a member of the TC Squared Ensemble in *The Great War Theatre Project*.

CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

ROSALIND THOMAS-CLARK

AGSM, LRAM, (London, UK),
MA (Brown University)

Artistic Director

Rosalind has worked professionally as an actor and director for stage, radio, and film, but her passion has always been the development of arts and education. As founder and director, she was involved in several start-up arts organizations in Britain, New Zealand, and the US. She was the Founding Chair of Theatre at Boston Arts Academy, and continues coaching professional actors at Company One Theatre, where she also serves on the theatre's board of directors. Committed to theatre for social change, Rosalind started her own theatre company in 1999—TC Squared: New Theatre Outside the Box—and directs productions with local playwrights and actors which address relevant contemporary issues. Among her many honors and awards, she was the recipient of a Surdna Arts Teacher's Fellowship to study with Augusto Boal in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, at the Center for the Theatre of the Oppressed as well as Boston's Teacher of the Year Award in 2005, and a Surdna Artist Colony Grant in 2008. She lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts, near her three children and five grandchildren.

SUSAN WERBE

Executive Producer/Dramaturg

Susan is an independent scholar who for thirty years has pursued her interest in the social, cultural, and political history of early 20th Century England, including a focus on the social and cultural history of World War One. In creating *The Great War Theatre Project* spoken word script, Susan has engaged in WWI

primary source research at the Special Collections of the Boston Public Library, the Bodleian Library and Balliol College Library of Oxford University, and the Berg Collection of English and American Literature at the New York Public Library. In March 2013, she was an invited panelist at the National World War I Museum's International Centennial Planning Conference: A Century in the Shadow of the Great War, held in Kansas City. She served as the dramaturg for Vilda Chaya Collective's production of *A Bright Room Called Day* in New York and mentored Boston Arts Academy student dramaturgs for *Eurydice*. Susan holds a BA in English Literature from New York University and a Master's of Education from the University of Massachusetts/Amherst.

FERNADINA CHAN, Choreographer

Fernadina Chan is the founding artistic dean and chair of the dance department of Boston Arts Academy (BAA). She retired in 2012 after teaching in Boston Public Schools for 34 years. Ms. Chan has received numerous awards: Surdna Arts Teacher Fellowship in 2001; Teacher of the Year from the International Network of Schools for the Advancement of Arts Education in 2005; Boston Educator of the Year in 2011 and 2013 Boston Dance Alliance's Dance Champion to name a few. As an artist, Ms. Chan holds a long list of performance and choreographic credits, including television, film, and stage in Hong Kong, the US, and Canada. Her latest project "Continuum Dance Project" reconnects BAA dance alumni in order to experiment and create new work collaboratively. She is a certified GYROKINESIS® and GYROTONIC® instructor.

CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

KEVIN BLANCHETTE

aka “The Mad Psyentist,” *Composer*
Kevin is a Brooklyn-based music producer, engineer, composer, sound designer, and overall artist. With a degree in Audio Production and over ten years of working experience, Kevin has produced over a dozen full length albums, singles, and EPs with various artists, including his own solo instrumental album. Some of his works have been featured with the MLS team, New York Red Bulls, on the BET network, three independent films, and a documentary. This is Kevin’s second score for a theatrical event. Aside from being an accomplished music producer, he has also played guitar and bass for different bands in New York. For more information and a detailed scope of Kevin’s work, please check out www.themadpsyentist.com

VERONICA WELLS, *Videographer*

Veronica is a Boston native. She majored in theater at the Boston Arts Academy, and majored in film at Massachusetts College of Art and Design where she obtained her BFA. She is a member of the local Latino theatre organization, Escena Latina Teatro, and is a video freelancer. She is honored to have been a part of the creative development of *The Great War Theatre Project*.

MATT TUPPER, *Technical Director*

Matt is a drama teacher and the technical director at The Winsor School in Boston. He worked previously at the American Overseas School of Rome and the Academia Nazionale dell Arte Dramatica. He summers in Newport, RI where you can find him working at the Newport Children’s Theatre and the Theatre at St. Michael’s Camp. His

long association with Ros Thomas-Clark has led him to this adventure with *The Great War Theatre Project*.

JENNIFER VAREKAMP

Costume Designer

Jennifer received her BFA from Massachusetts College of Art and Design and her Ed.M. from Harvard University. She also studied fashion design at London College of Fashion, costume design in Florence, and fashion and jewelry design at Domus Academy in Milan. She is an Associate Professor in Fashion Design at MassArt and was previously the Costume Director at Boston Arts Academy. She has worked for several theaters and costume shops in Boston and Chicago, including the Steppenwolf Theatre. She has designed costumes for shows presented at Boston Symphony Hall, the Boston Center for the Arts, and the Edinburgh Theatre Festival in Scotland. Jennifer’s awards include: MassArt Foundation Fellow in 2012 with travel and research in India, selected participant in the “Creative Industries and Sustainability” tour of Germany in 2009, Surdna Arts Teacher Fellow in 2005, Martin Arts Connection Award 1999, and Ronald William Lane Designer Award Recipient 1999.

KATE HOLLAND, *Script Advisor*

Kate trained in London as an actor and director at the Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art and with Karen Kohlhaas of Atlantic Theatre Company. She has performed in New York, regional theatre, and international arts festivals. Directing credits include: *Little Wing* as part of a Field Artist Residency, *Cloud 9* at the Drayton Theatre in London, *Henry VI Part 1* at the Fall

CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

Festival of Shakespeare in Lenox, MA, *Bongani* in FringeNYC 2011, and the solo shows *Travels with a Masked Man* starring John Hadden and *The Actual Dance* starring Sam Simon. Kate has co-produced and directed *June and Nancy* in FringeNYC 2012, and *Clear Cold Place* and *A Bright Room Called Day* with Vilde Chaya Collective. Kate co-wrote and directed a new play, *No Provenance*, with longtime collaborator Caroline Prugh, which appeared in FringeNYC 2014.

STEVE COHEN, *Historical Advisor*

Steve taught high school history for fifteen years and is in his nineteenth year at Tufts University. He is a Senior Lecturer in Education and also teaches courses in the Peace and Justice and the American Studies programs as well as being an Adjunct in the History Department. He has worked on educational projects beyond the classroom, editing and writing anthologies to accompany the public television documentaries *Vietnam: A Television History* and *Eyes On The Prize*. He has also been working with WGBH on some of their websites for teachers. Steve was a Program Associate with Facing History and Ourselves for two decades and has written articles about teaching controversial issues like the Vietnam War, the dropping of the Atomic Bomb, and the Holocaust. He was the recipient of the Lerman-Neubauer Prize for Outstanding Teaching and Advising in 2003 at Tufts University. He was voted Professor of the Year by the Tufts Student Senate in the spring of 2007. He was voted Professor of the Year by the Tufts Democrats in the spring of 2010.

PHYLLIS BRETHOLTZ, *Photographer*

Phyllis taught English at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School for nearly thirty years, leaving to focus on her photography career. She has created both writer and actor headshots, and has been visual archivist for Boston Arts Academy since its inception in 1998. She was principal photographer for the book *From the Heart of Cambridge: The Longfellow Oral History Project*, published in 2011. She is involved in local Cambridge politics, and has created portraits for the exhibit "Palestinians in Cambridge: Stories from the Diaspora" which was exhibited at the Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center in January 2014. Phyllis is a member of the Board of Advocates of Boston Arts Academy, a Commissioner on both the Cambridge Women's Commission and the Cambridge Arts Council. She has documented the creation process of *The Great War Theatre Project*.

KELLY MASTRACCHIO, *Graphic Designer*

Kelly is a consultant and educator who works with clients on a wide range of projects, including curriculum design, management, and marketing and communications. She designed the title art and program for *The Great War Theatre Project* and other projects for TC Squared. kellymastracchio.com

THANK YOU

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU

For making the TCSquared Theatre Company/Letchworth Residency a reality, we are deeply grateful to Maria Iredale, general manager, Letchworth Arts Centre; David Walker, former chairman, Letchworth Arts Centre; the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation; and Monelle Bryce-Reid, placements manager, Da Vinci Studio School of Creative Enterprise.

SPECIAL THANKS

To the young people who participated in the Letchworth Arts Centre's *Through a Child's Eyes*; the Acting and Production Arts students, and the school team of the Da Vinci Studio School of Creative Enterprise; Eric and Di Adkins, chairman and secretary of the Letchworth Festival; The Broadway Hotel; and Edward Claydon, Ella Kent, Sarah Larkin, Gemma Payne, Hilary Thomas, Olga Thompson, Mark Waites.



Rehearsal (Phyllis Bretholtz)

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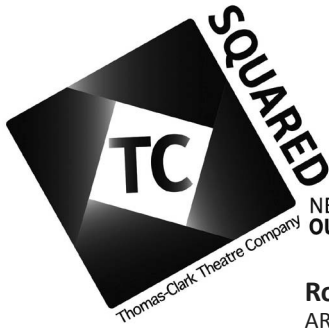
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A complete bibliography for online sources for archival still images and film footage is available.



Rehearsal (Phyllis Bretholtz)



NEW THEATRE
OUTSIDE THE BOX

Rosalind Thomas-Clark
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

FOUNDING BOARD MEMBERS

Erika Cesar
Raiza Cheng
Gabriella Ciambrone
Nikki Prefontaine

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Raiza Cheng
Jadira Figueroa
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ASSOCIATES

Amy Chen, Marketing Director
Lynn Clark, Project Coordinator
Maité Paillet, Treasurer

GWTP EXECUTIVE PRODUCER & DRAMATURG
Susan Werbe

tc2theatrecompany@gmail.com
www.tcsquaredtheatrecompany.org

TC Squared Theatre Company's mission is to encourage and produce staged readings of new works by Boston-based artists who are now writing and acting in the professional theatre. Our role is to mentor young artists to reach diverse audiences through socially relevant theatre, which challenges opinions and pushes artistic boundaries to produce transformative theatre.