

PRESS RELEASE

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Arts Club Theatre Company presents

ReACT

New Plays in Progress

November 13 – November 15, 2007
at the Granville Island and Revue Stages
Open to the public. Admission by donation

Vancouver, B.C.—Don't miss this opportunity to look behind the scenes as we prepare new works for the stage. Experience live public readings and be part of the process as some of Canada's most talented actors, directors, dramaturgs, and playwrights bring new scripts to life. After each reading, audience members are invited to take part in a discussion with **Bill Millerd**, Artistic Managing Director, and the artists. Comment, ask questions, and learn about the process of script development.

Arts Club's Literary Manager **Rachel Ditor** remarks, "The diversity of styles and stories in **ReACT** is always stimulating, and this year is no exception. It's a great reflection of the writing community's range of interests and unique voices, as well as our own eclectic taste in programming. For me, the public behind-the-scenes look at a script in progress delivers an undeniable thrill and sense of anticipation."

SCHEDULE OF PUBLIC READINGS

(programme and dates subject to change):

Tuesday, November 13, 8 pm, Revue Stage: ***The Fall of Sister Judy***, by **Shawn MacDonald**

Wednesday, November 14, 8 pm, Granville Island Stage: ***Poster Boys***, by **Michele Riml**

Thursday, November 15, 8 pm, Granville Island Stage: ***Paradise Garden***, by **Lucia Frangione**

IN BRIEF: Arts Club Theatre Company presents the 8th annual public reading series, ReACT: New Plays in Progress, running November 13 – 15, 2007, at the Granville Island Stage (1585 Johnston St) and Revue Stage (1601 Johnston St). ReACT 2007 will feature three new works in progress by Lucia Frangione, Michele Riml, and Shawn MacDonald. Admission is by donation (\$5 suggested) and tickets are only available at the door. For more information, visit www.artsclub.com.

PLAY SYNOPSES AND PLAYWRIGHT BIOS

Public reading: **Tuesday, November 13, 8 pm** at the Revue Stage
The Fall of Sister Judy
By Shawn MacDonald

Sister Judith McLean is loved. She's the most popular professor at the university, and her theology classes are packed. But something is missing. As her year at school begins, Judy's world begins to shake: her best friend, Father Frank, announces he's leaving the priesthood, the Dean starts pressuring her to change her mind about taking a leave of absence, and one of her students, Ruth, is routinely disrupting her lectures. Ultimately Judy is unable to answer Ruth's questions, and the bedrock of her own faith begins to crumble. What is behind this brilliant student's relentless pursuit of the truth? As Judy unravels, so does the story of her past, revealing old wounds, and new fears. *The Fall of Sister Judy* explores the idea of truth, personal responsibility, and our experience of Love in the world.

Shawn MacDonald is an award-winning actor and playwright who has been acting and writing in Vancouver since 1990. He co-wrote two hit comedies for the Arts Club in the mid-90's, 'World's Greatest Guy' and 'Fear Knot' (both with Gary Jones), and more recently wrote 'Prodigal Son,' his first solely-penned full length drama, which was developed by Touchstone Theatre, and who co-produced it last March with Pacific Theatre. 'Prodigal

Son' won the Jessie Award for Outstanding Original Script and the Xtra West Hero Award for Live Performance of the Year. 'Prodigal Son' will be published in the new year by New Bard Press. Shawn is currently developing two new plays, 'Demon Voice' and 'The Fall of Sister Judy,' which was commissioned by the Arts Club as part of their Silver Commissions Project.

Public reading: **Wednesday, November 14, 8 pm** at the Granville Island Stage

Poster Boys

By Michele Riml

When advertising creative director Caroline Larion puts out the casting call for a bank ad featuring the bank's gay customers, the last thing she expects is for the estranged love of her life to walk into the audition. Putting aside her personal feelings, Caroline casts her old beau, Jack, and his new beau, Carson, as the bank's poster boys. Then the sparks begin to fly. When the campaign goes public, the divided response forces the trio to examine their own beliefs and motives in the light of an all-too-public forum. *Poster Boys* is an exploration of the issues of love, same-sex marriage, fear vs. faith, and the marketing of belief.

Michele Riml is the author of the recent Arts Club hit *Sexy Laundry*, which is being produced across Canada and is poised for an international debut in London, England. Riml came to the attention of Vancouver audiences with her critically acclaimed play *Miss Teen*, later published in part in *Taking Stage: Canadian Women in Theatre*. Her play *Under the Influence* went from a sell-out Fringe Festival production to an audience favourite at the Arts Club and was most recently produced in Quebec. Her work for Green Thumb Theatre for Young People includes the plays *Cool* and *The Invisible Girl*, which has been produced throughout Canada, and her new play, *The Skinny Lie*, which is currently touring B.C. schools. Her play *RAGE*, also produced by Green Thumb Theatre, recently won the Sydney Risk Award for Outstanding New Play and the Jessie Richardson Award for Outstanding Large Theatre Production.

Public reading: **Thursday, November 15, 8 pm** at the Granville Island Stage

Paradise Garden

By Lucia Frangione

Day McKinnon and his mother live in the historic McKinnon family estate which they've split into a duplex to pay the bills, post divorce. The estate backs onto a secluded bay off the West Coast and boasts a neglected but luxurious paradise garden shared with the new Turkish neighbors, the Zeki's. Cemile Zeki, suffering from cancer, and her daughter, Layla, and husband, Munsif, tag team as her caregivers. Layla yearns to break free from her familial, social and religious constraints. By contrast, the good looking boy next door, Day, seems to have no occupation aside from smoking dope, drinking, getting laid and skinny dipping at all hours when he's supposed to be keeping up the garden as part of the sale agreement. *Paradise Garden* follows the love story that unfolds between Layla and Day as they struggle to find their similarities and understand their differences.

Lucia Frangione is thrilled to be working with the Arts Club as part of the Silver Commission new play development initiative. She is an internationally produced and published playwright, best known for performing in her own works: *Espresso*, *Cariboo Magi*, *Chickens*, and *Holy Mo*: all world premiered by Pacific Theatre in Vancouver. She is the recipient of the Gordon Armstrong and Sydney Risk playwright awards. *Espresso*, was nominated for seven Jessie awards and toured Western Canada in 2004 and has been running for a year at the Jelenia Gorski theatre in Poland. Her seventeen plays have been produced by theatres such as The Belfry, Ruby Slippers, Solo Collective, Chemainus Theatre and Prairie Theatre Exchange. She is currently finishing a new play, *Leave Of Absence*, developed by Pacific Theatre, ATP and Playwrights Theatre Centre. She also has two films in development: her short, *Pop Switch*, which just received KickStart support, and her feature, *Out To Pasture* will be produced with acclaimed producer/actor Gina Chiarelli. Lucia is a critically acclaimed actor, has been nominated for several Jessies and won the CAEA Stage West National emerging artist award in 2004.

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