

# PRESS RELEASE

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Arts Club Theatre Company presents

## ReACT

New Plays in Progress

**February 10 – 12, 2008**

at the Granville Island Stage and Revue Stage  
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 second installment of ReACT this season gives us an opportunity to hear the third of our four Silver Commissions plays, Hiro Kanagawa's *The Patron Saint of Stanley Park*, read for the first time in front of a live audience – a critical event in the life of any new play. I also look forward to the return to *My Turquoise Years* after a year of intense development, and to the exciting contributions of our wonderful young LEAP playwrights."

### SCHEDULE OF PUBLIC READINGS

(programme and dates subject to change):

Sunday, February 10, 7 pm, Granville Island Stage: **LEAP: Teen Playwriting Class Readings**

Monday, February 11, 8 pm, Revue Stage: **My Turquoise Years**, by **Marion Farrant**

Tuesday, February 12, 8 pm, Revue Stage: **The Patron Saint of Stanley Park**, by **Hiro Kanagawa**

**IN BRIEF:** Arts Club Theatre Company presents the 9th annual public reading series, ReACT: New Plays in Progress, running February 10 – 12, 2008, at the Granville Island Stage (1585 Johnston St) and Revue Stage (1601 Johnston St). ReACT 2008 will feature three new works in progress by Marion Farrant, Hiro Kanagawa, and the playwrights of the Arts Club's LEAP Playwriting Intensive. Admission is by donation (\$5 suggested) and tickets are only available at the door. For more information, visit [www.artsclub.com](http://www.artsclub.com).

### PLAY SYNOPSES AND PLAYWRIGHT BIOS

Public reading: **Sunday, February 10, 7 pm**, at the Granville Island Stage

**LEAP: Teen Playwriting Class Readings**

<http://www.artsclub.com/education/leap.htm>

Come and hear a cast of some of Vancouver's best theatre actors read short plays by the members of the Arts Club's LEAP Playwriting Intensive. Twenty young playwrights, aged 16 to 18, will share some of their first works. Stay for the talkback, and listen to these inspiring young artists discuss their work and writing process. Hosted by this year's LEAP Instructor, **Shawn Macdonald**.

**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-'90s, *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 co-produced last March with Pacific Theatre. *Prodigal Son* won the Jessie Award Richardson Award for Outstanding Original Script and the Xtra West Hero Award for Live Performance of the Year. *Prodigal Son* will be published later this year by New Bard Press. Shawn is currently developing two new plays, *Demon Voice* and *The Fall of Sister Judy*, the latter of which was commissioned by the Arts Club as part of their Silver Commissions Project

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Public reading: **Monday, February 11, 8 pm**, at the Revue Stage  
***My Turquoise Years***  
**By Marion Farrant**

A touching and hilarious stage adaptation of Farrant's memoir about an absent mother and a vanished time.

Throughout her childhood, Marion Farrant heard exotic stories of the sophisticated life her mother, Nancy, led aboard cruise ships and in Australia. Nancy's world of furs, jewels, cigarette holders, and handsome men seemed miles away from the west-coast hamlet of Cordova Bay, where Farrant lived with her aunt and uncle. But things changed the year she entered her teens. Nancy threw everyone into a tizzy with the surprise announcement that she was coming for a visit.

In this memoir of her fourteenth summer, Farrant captures a lost time and place with hilarity and affection. The setting is Vancouver Island, the year 1960. It is the heyday of the nuclear family; the time of the Three Stooges, the Red Menace, and Whipper Billy Watson; the apex of plastic, arborite, and everything turquoise: high heels, pedal pushers, refrigerators, cars, and even, at Easter, the fur of live rabbits. Witty, tender, and wry, *My Turquoise Years* is a story for anyone who remembers being a teenager.

**Marion Farrant** is the acclaimed author of eight collections of satirical and humorous short fiction. Her writing has been widely anthologized in North America and dramatized for television. Farrant is also a frequent contributor to leading magazines such as *Adbusters* and *Geist*. CBC Radio has serialized *Girls Around the House* and has broadcast many of her other stories; a ten-part serialization of her 2004 memoir *My Turquoise Years* was broadcast in June 2005 and read by Nicola Cavendish.

Farrant has taught fiction workshops in Canada and Australia. She was a visiting writer-in-residence at Macquarie University in Sydney. A full-time writer currently residing in North Saanich, B.C., she also teaches occasionally in the creative writing department at the University of Victoria and reviews books for the *Vancouver Sun* and *The Globe and Mail*. An active promoter of literary arts, she is the co-producer and host of the Sidney Reading Series.

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Public reading: **Tuesday, February 12, 8 pm**, at the Revue Stage  
***The Patron Saint of Stanley Park***  
**By Hiro Kanagawa**

Set in Vancouver during a catastrophic Christmas Eve wind storm, *The Patron Saint of Stanley Park* tells the story of a would-be patron saint named Skookum Pete and his relationship to two troubled kids having a hard time getting into the Christmas spirit. Siblings Josh and Jennifer are struggling to cope with the loss of their father, Kevin, who disappeared in a float plane accident the year before. Their grieving mother, Marcia, is facing financial trouble caused by city construction in front of her bookstore. When Marcia insists that Josh and Jennifer spend Christmas Eve with relatives, the children set out to Stanley Park on their own for a private memorial for their father.

Josh and Jennifer are caught in the wind storm and rescued by Skookum Pete who takes them to a fantastical bunker beneath Prospect Point. During the course of the magical night, the children will experience wondrous visions--visions which may help them understand the truth about their father, their mysterious saviour, and the healing power of love.

**Hiro Kanagawa** is a Vancouver-based writer and actor. He was a contributing writer on boca del lupo's *Hold Your Head Tight* and Theatre Replacement's *Sexual Practices of the Japanese*. His first full-length play, *Slants*, placed third in the 1997 Herman Voaden National Playwriting Competition and received a public reading at East West Players, Los Angeles. His next play, *Tiger of Malaya* premiered in 2003 in a co-production between Factory Theatre, Toronto, and the National Arts Centre, Ottawa. Currently, Hiro has a commission with Vancouver's Rumble Productions for *Tom Pinkerton: The Ballad of Butterfly's Son*, a sequel to Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. He is also one of the recipients of the Arts Club Theatre Company's Silver Commissions, for which he wrote *The Patron Saint of Stanley Park*. For the past four years, Hiro has also worked as a story editor on the CBC drama series *Da Vinci's Inquest*, *Da Vinci's City Hall*, and *Intelligence*.

As an actor, Hiro has performed in countless stage, film, television, and animation productions. Distinctions include a Jessie Richardson Award for his performance in John Juliani's production of *A View from the Bridge*, a Betty Mitchell Nomination for Alberta Theatre Projects production of *The Plum Tree*, a Leo Award Nomination for the short film *Hiro* and the lead role in the 2007 premiere of Philip Kan Gotanda's *After the War* at American Conservatory Theater, San Francisco.

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