

THE COMMONWEAL THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

DOUBT

— A PARABLE —

by John Patrick Shanley



a searing drama

SEPT 7—NOV 10

PROFESSIONAL LIVE THEATRE

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We, at the **Commonweal Theatre**, acknowledge that we work and gather on the ancestral lands of the Dakota Nation and other Indigenous peoples. We recognize these Nations as the original caretakers of this land and acknowledge the injustices committed against them. We strive to promote healing and inclusion through storytelling, which is fundamental to our mission.

As artists in our community we have a responsibility to create a welcoming, inclusive, and nurturing environment where visitors and community members can gather and explore big ideas through live theatre. Fostering such an environment begins with education and reflection. Our Land Acknowledgement is just one way the **Commonweal** exercises our commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Thank you to the Minnesota Historical Society, Lanesboro Historical Society, Prairie Island Indian Community, Mississippi Valley Archeology Center, and Mower County Historical Society for assisting in the research that led to the formation of our Land Acknowledgement.



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VICTORIA SCATTERGOOD • WWW.VSCATTERGOOD.COM

Metis artist Victoria Scattergood is inspired by historical ledger drawings which were popular across the northern and southern plains of Canada and the US. She puts a unique perspective on it, using actual historical ledger prints from the late 1800s with beautiful, hand drawn animals.

WELCOME TO THE COMMONWEAL!

Welcome to the fourth production of our 2024 season: John Patrick Shanley's *Doubt: A Parable*. This is a play that has been on our radar since we first produced Mr. Shanley's *Outside Mullingar* to great acclaim in 2015. It rose in consideration to make it to our ill-fated slate of plays for 2020, a season which fell under the sword of the global pandemic.

Now it is finally making its way to our stage this fall. The play speaks to me personally as an insightful exploration of faith: both in its relationship to perception and its role in our modern society. Plus, it has the benefit of offering four "juicy" challenges for our actors. This is also another of our offerings that promises to stimulate many interesting conversations on the drive (or walk) home.

An added benefit is that it will serve as a great companion piece to our midsummer offering, the zany Neil Simon farce *Rumors* and a table setter for our holiday offering *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*, a holiday journey into Jane Austen land. So do enjoy.

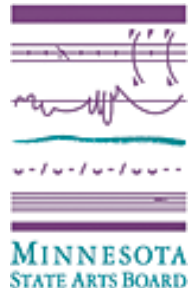


HAL CROPP
Producing Artistic Director



The Commonwealth Theatre Company is a member of Minnesota Citizens for the Arts and a constituent member of Theatre Communications Group. This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

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(800)657-7025 • (507)467-2525
Commonwealththeatre.org



THE COMPANY

THE ARTIST/ADMINISTRATOR MODEL

The Commonwealth Theatre operates under a unique model in which all resident company members have specific, non-artistic responsibilities in addition to their artistic projects. This innovative approach has a great many benefits, most recently illustrated by the fact that we were able to keep our team fully employed throughout the pandemic, allowing us to reopen our doors and once again bring you professional live theatre at the earliest possible opportunity—one of the first theaters in the nation to do so.

LIZZY ANDRETTA (she/her)



Company Member
Since 2017

Actor/Development Associate/Dixon House Artist Residence Manager

This Season: Mary (*Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*), Rachel (*The Outsider*), Cassie (*Rumors*); Co-Props Design (*Ugly Lies the Bone*)

Commonweal Highlights: Amalia (*She Loves Me*), Senga (*Dancing Lessons*), Meg (*Leading Ladies*), Rosa (*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*), Gabriella (*Boeing Boeing*), Mina (*Dracula: Prince of Blood*), Mrs. Kendal (*The Elephant Man*); choreographer (*Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Stones in His Pockets*, and *A Christmas Carol* (2021))

Education: MFA in Acting from the East 15 Acting School; BS from Skidmore College

CODY BEYER (he/him)



Company Member
Since 2022

Actor/Designer/Technical Director & Facilities Manager

This Season: Stevie (*Ugly Lies the Bone*), Scenic Design (*The Outsider*); Co-Scenic Design (*Rumors* and *Doubt*); Mr. Darcy (*Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*)

Commonweal Highlights: Sipos (*She Loves Me*), Edmond Rostand (*Bernhardt/Hamlet*), White Knight (*Alice in Winter Wonderland*); Scenic Design (*Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*); Props Design (*Deathtrap* and *Good People*) **Other Credits:** Chicago credits include: Banquo in *Macbeth* for Theatre-Y; and Tech Director for several Hell in a Handbag Productions

Education: BA Honors Theatre, University of Tennessee-Knoxville

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THE COMPANY

STELA BURDT (she/her)



Company Member
Since 2001

Actor/Music Director/Director of Administration

This Season: Kacie (*Ugly Lies the Bone*), Sound Designer (*Rumors*), Music Director (*Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*)

Commonweal Highlights: Liz (*Women in Jeopardy!*), Ritter (*She Loves Me*), Jeanie (*Good People*), Madame Flo (*Souvenir*), Woody Guthrie's American Song, *Crimes of the Heart*, *Zombies from the Beyond*, *A Midnight Dreary*, Harvey, and *Man of La Mancha*; Sound Design (Scott Dixon's *Dracula: Prince of Blood*) **Other Credits:** music director, sound designer, freelance musician

Education: Proud graduate of Luther College with studies in music and theatre
"Living my role of a lifetime as a mother, with much love to our community for holding our family up." #TeamScottyForever

HAL CROPP (he/they)



Company Member
Since 1992

Producing Artistic Director

This Season: Arthur Vance (*The Outsider*), Ernie (*Rumors*)

Commonweal Highlights: favorite roles have been in *Ghostwriter*, *Dracula*, *Outside Mullingar*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *The Drawer Boy*, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, *Christmas Carol*, *Groucho*, and *Talley's Folly*. Select directing credits include *Headspace Theatre*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Brand*, *Heartland Portrait*, *Wild Duck*, *Measure for Measure*, *Peer Gynt*, *Hedda Gabler*, *A Midnight Dreary*, *Enchanted April*, *Ghosts*, *Little Shop of Horrors* **Other Credits:** He was the Sally Irvine Award winner for Initiative (2006) and has served on the Lanesboro City Council, Economic Development Authority, and Chamber Board of Directors

Education: MFA National Theatre Conservatory; MBA Santa Clara University; AB Brown University

SARA HUESER (she/her)



Company Member
Since 2022

Props and Sound Designer/Properties Manager and IT Technician

This Season: Co-Props Design (*Ugly Lies the Bone*), Sound Design (*The Outsider*), Props Design (*Rumors*, *Doubt*).

Commonweal Highlights: *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*, *Women in Jeopardy!*, *Deathtrap*, *Bernhardt/Hamlet*, *Alice in Winter Wonderland*, *Good People*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *Leading Ladies* **Other Credits:** *The Other Place*, *My Way: A Frank Sinatra Tribute*, *The Wild Party*, *The Party*

Education: BCompSc, Pennsylvania College of Technology; BFA in Dramatic Writing at Savannah College of Art and Design

JACLYN JUNE JOHNSON (she/they)



Company Member
Since 2020

Actor/Director/Intimacy Director/Director of Production

This Season: Intimacy Director (*Ugly Lies the Bone*), Paige (*The Outsider*), Director (*Rumors*), Jane (*Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*)

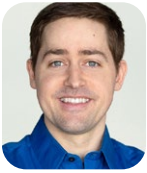
Commonweal Highlights: Elizabeth (*Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*), Director (*Deathtrap*, *Leading Ladies*), Margie (*Good People*), Alice Nutting (*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*) **Other Credits:** Jaclyn has performing, playwriting, directing, and designing credits with companies such as St. Croix Festival Theatre, Children's Theatre of Madison, Creede Repertory, Riverside Theatre, and Chicago's UTG Improv Theatre.

Education: BA, Cornell College

"I'd like to thank, for their loving encouragement: my family, friends, spouse, and our pets. And thank you for supporting the arts—specifically your support of the uniquely healing community of theatre."

THE COMPANY

JOSIAH LAUBENSTEIN (he/him)



Company Member
Since 2018

Actor/Sound Designer/Marketing Team Associate/Video Editor/Literary Manager

This Season: Sound Designer (*Ugly Lies the Bone* and *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*), Dave (*The Outsider*)

Commonweal Highlights: Georg (*She Loves Me*), Jack/Stephanie (*Leading Ladies*), Bernard (*Boeing Boeing*)

Education: MFA in Acting, University of South Carolina

"A very special thank you to my lovely wife, Rachel, and all the love in the world to my two children, Franny & Jude."

ISABELLA ANASTASIA LEIGH (she/her)



Company Member
Since 2023

Production Stage Manager/Administrative Team Associate

This Season: Rehearsal Stage Manager (*Ugly Lies the Bone*, *The Outsider*, *Rumors*, *Doubt*); Performance Stage Manager (*Rumors*); Intimacy Coordinator (*Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*)

Commonweal Highlights: Rehearsal Stage Manager (*She Loves Me* and *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*); Rehearsal/Performance Stage Manager (*Deathtrap*) **Other Credits:** stage management and directing with: Austin Shakespeare, Jarrott Productions, ScriptWorks (Austin, TX); Broom Street Theatre, Children's Theatre of Madison, Forward Theater, Music Theatre of Madison, and StageQ (Madison, WI)

Education: BA in Gender & Women's Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison
"Much love to my kitties: Rosalind, Beatrice, Mercutio, and Tybalt."

SYNTH MANUEL (they/them)



Company Member
Since 2023

Stage Manager/Dramaturg/Designer/Production Team Associate

This Season: Assistant Stage Manager/Props Design (*The Outsider*), Co-Scenic Design and Intimacy Coordinator (*Rumors*), Sound Design/Performance Stage Manager (*Doubt*); Stage Manager (*Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*)

Commonweal Highlights: *The Effect*, *She Loves Me*, *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*, *Women in Jeopardy!* **Other Credits:** Quad City Area Credits include: director (*The God of Vengeance*); stage manager (*Cabaret*, *Ride the Cyclone*); assistant director (*The Threepenny Opera*, *The Mountaintop*); dramaturg at The Spotlight Theatre

Education: BA in Theatre History and Tech & Design, Augustana College
"All my love and gratitude to Isa, Eli, Clarke, and my wonderful family!"

JOHN B. NICOL (he/him)



Company Member
Since 2022

Actor/Assistant Stage Manager/Production & Administrative Associate

This Season: Assistant Stage Manager (*Ugly Lies the Bone*), A.C. Petersen (*The Outsider*), Co-Scenic Designer (*Doubt*), Arthur de Bourgh (*Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*)

Commonweal Highlights: Arpad Laszlo (*She Loves Me*), Michal (*The Pillowman*), Deputy/Nick Cricker II (*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*)

Education: BS in Theatre Arts, Minnesota State University, Mankato
"Thank you to the people who hear, and further thanks for the people who listen."



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THE COMPANY

Laurie Roberts (she/her)



Company Member
Since 2022

Actor/Choreographer/Development Associate

This Season: Jess (*Ugly Lies the Bone*), Chris (*Rumors*), Elizabeth (*Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*), Intimacy Coordinator (*The Outsider*)

Commonweal Highlights: Eight Shoppers (*She Loves Me*), Myra (*Deathtrap*), Assistant Director (*Bernhardt/Hamlet*), The Dutchess (*Alice in Winter Wonderland*), and Choreographer (*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*) **Other Credits:** Chicago credits from A Red Orchid Theatre, Facility Theatre, Hell in a Handbag, and Theatre Y. Cincinnati credits include Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Know Theatre, and Cincinnati Fringe Festival (recipient of the 2015 Producer's Pick.) Laurie has also worked as an acting teacher, movement director, and choreographer.

Education: MFA, University of South Carolina; BA, University of Washington
"Love to my husband, Cody, & the floof-babies: Duke Orsino & Meriadoc Brandybuck."

Jodi Rushing (they/she)



Company Member
Since 2019

Stage Manager/Front of House Supervisor

This Season: Assistant to Costume Designer (*Ugly Lies The Bone, Rumors*), Performance Stage Manager (*The Outsider*)

Commonweal Highlights: Performance Stage Manager (*Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*), Performance Stage Manager (*Good People*), Costume Design (*The Complete Work of William Shakespeare...*), Costume Designer (*I Love to Eat*), Assistant Stage Manager (*On the Verge*) **Other Credits:** Stage Manager (Doniphan Dance Project), Conference Manager (American College Dance Association - South); Makeup Artist (*The Wonder of the World...* currently in post production)

Education: BA in Theatre & Film, University of Mississippi

Tim Sailer (he/him)



Company Member
Since 2021
(plus 2009-2011)

Actor/Assistant Director of Marketing

This Season: Kelvin (*Ugly Lies the Bone*), Ken (*Rumors*), dialect coach (*Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*)

Commonweal Highlights: *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde, She Loves Me, Leading Ladies, The Mystery of Edwin Drood, An Enemy of the People, The Rainmaker* **Other Credits:** More than 50 roles across 35 plays at the American Shakespeare Center in Staunton, VA; Utah, Houston, and Texas Shakespeare Festivals; Park Square Theatre; Theater L'Homme Dieu; audiobook narrator

Education: MFA in Acting, University of Houston
"We must risk delight." – poet Jack Gilbert

Alex Schlesinger (they/them)



Company Member
Since 2021

Actor/Designer/Light & Sound Technician/Marketing Associate

This Season: Projection Design & Performance Stage Manager (*Ugly Lies the Bone*), Lighting Design (*The Outsider*), Glenn (*Rumors*), Charles Bingley (*Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*)

Commonweal Highlights: Waiter (*She Loves Me*), Clifford (*Deathtrap*), Stevie (*Good People*), Nick Cricker/Durdles (*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*) **Other Credits:** Riff Raff (*The Rocky Horror Show*) at New Minowa Players in Decorah; Amos Hart (*Chicago*) at Luther College

Education: BA in Theatre, Luther College

"Thanks to my mentor, professor, and good friend Jeff Dintaman for his years of support and sharing of knowledge that got me to where I am today."

THE COMPANY

ADRIENNE SWEENEY (she/her)



Company Member
Since 2001

Actor/Associate Artistic Director/Director of External Communications

This Season: Louise (*The Outsider*), Cookie (*Rumors*), Props Design (*Christmas at Pemberley*)

Commonweal Highlights: Sarah Bernhardt (*Bernhardt/Hamlet*), *Women in Jeopardy!*, (*Berthe*) *Boeing Boeing*, *Sylvia*

Education: MFA in Acting, University of Arizona

"Thank you for choosing to be here."

JEREMY van METER (he/him)



Company Member
Since 2012

Actor/Director of Development

This Season: Ned (*The Outsider*), Father Flynn (*Doubt*)

Commonweal Highlights: *I Ought to Be in Pictures*, *Come Back*, *Dracula: Prince of Blood*, *Outside Mullingar*, *Brand*, *The Philadelphia Story* **Other Credits:** Barter Theatre Actor in Residence; Riverside Shakespeare Festival; Illinois Shakespeare Festival; Great River Shakespeare Festival; Caffeine Theatre (Chicago) Artistic Associate

Education: MFA in Acting from the University of Iowa

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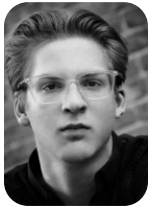
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MEET THE 2024–2025 APPRENTICE CLASS

The Commonwealth Theatre Company offers exciting 10-month apprenticeships intended to help young theatre artists transition into the professional world. Apprentices serve on either a performance or technical track. Additionally, they work alongside company members on the Marketing, Development, and Production teams. Because of this rare organizational model, Commonwealth apprentices experience the full scope of running a nonprofit theatre company. It culminates in a final capstone production which is chosen, designed, and performed by the apprentice company.



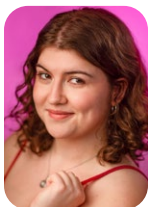
BRI ANGLE (she/her, acting apprentice) is thrilled to be joining the Commonwealth for her first season. Her favorite credits include Nan Carter in *Exit, Pursued by a Bear*; Peter Quince in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; #2 in *The Wolves*; and Agnes in *She Kills Monsters*. Bri is also a former member and co-director of the improv troupe Oddly Appropriate, and has enjoyed bringing fun and fake crime to events throughout Colorado with Murder Mystery USA and Odd Prop Productions. Bri is a graduate of Colorado Mesa University, where she earned her BFA in Acting/Directing.



DYLAN DELAGARDELLE (he/him, technical apprentice) is so excited to be part of the Commonwealth Apprentice program! Dylan is from West Des Moines, Iowa. He has served as stage manager many times for DMACC Ankeny Theater with shows such as *No Exit*, *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, and most recently *Head Over Heels*. Dylan is very excited to continue down his path of technical theater and learn the most he can during his time at the Commonwealth.



ANYA GOLOVKO (she/her, acting apprentice) is thrilled to join the Commonwealth Theatre for her first professional contract! Anya is an actor, choreographer, and technician from Houston, Texas. She has recently graduated from Waldorf University with a BA—double majoring in Musical Theatre and Theatre Performance. Some of her favorite roles include: *Bright Star* (Margo), *Addams Family* (Alice), *The Fantasticks* (Hucklebee), and *Checkout Girls* (Marge). Anya is a firm believer that every performer has to be well rounded in every capacity of theatre, and is thankful for the opportunity to share her work and love for theatre.



MAYA SOL MACKEY (she/her, acting apprentice) is exuberant to be making her professional acting debut! She is a recent graduate of the University of Montevallo 2024 BFA Acting Class and is delighted to be joining the Commonwealth 2024 apprentice class! Her favorite roles include Dorine in *Tartuffe*, Loud Stone in *Eurydice*, and Mr. Zyclo in *Anon(ymous)*, all performed at the University of Montevallo. Maya hopes to bring truth, compassion, and joy to all her roles. Although a native of Alabama, she couldn't be more excited to experience a season in Minnesota with Commonwealth!

Connect with the Commonwealth



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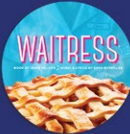


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THIS PRODUCTION ALSO FEATURES...



LYNDA J. DAHL (Mrs. Muller, she/her) is delighted to return to the Commonweal stage. This season she is also playing Claire in *Rumors*. You may have seen her performing as the Liz understudy in *Women in Jeopardy!* As a Twin Cities theatre actress, she's enjoyed roles in Theatre Pro Rata's *Convent of Pleasure*; *The Wanderers* and *Groupthink* with Six Points; *True West* and *Death of a Salesman* with St. Croix Festival; and *Trust* at The Lab Theater. Film credits include features *Faerie* and *Twin Cities*. Lynda would like to thank Scott, the love of her life for his constant love and support.



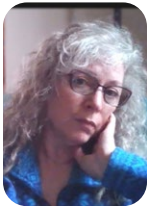
TIANNA DEGARMO (scenic carpenter, she/her) is a lifelong tradeswoman and artist. She owns and operates DeGarmo Designs LLC based out of Lanesboro, MN. DeGarmo Designs is home to her love of woodworking, interior design, and carpentry. She operates a custom shop and provides on-site carpentry services to help you reimagine your home or business.



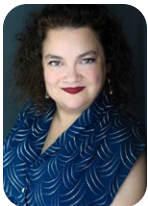
PAUL EPTON (lighting design, he/him) is back at the Commonweal for two productions this season: *Rumors* and *Doubt*. Commonweal favorite designs include *Come Back*, *Sanders Family Christmas*, and *Silent Sky*. He started designing lights as an undergraduate at Carleton College, spent 4 years in grad school (not in theatre) at Rice University, then returned north to Detroit. He moved to Minnesota in 1992 and continues to design and do tech work for numerous companies. A year-round bicyclist, one of his early designs was for *Spokesong*.



CATIE GLYNN (Sister Aloysius, she/her, they/them) is thrilled to join the Commonweal for this production. A theatre-maker for most of her life, Catie is the Artistic Director of Audacious Raw Theater. Influences include working in Japan with Tadashi Suzuki, being an Artistic Associate with the Rude Mechs (Austin, TX), Collaboration (Chicago), creating solo shows here in Minnesota, and spending summers at the Riverside Shakespeare Festival, where she met Jeremy van Meter and joined forces for life! Commonweal highlights include *Blithe Spirit*, *Philadelphia Story*, *Arsenic & Old Lace*, *Arcadia*, *Memory of Water*, and *Pillars of Society*. This work is dedicated to those who were lost and those who have survived.



JANIS MARTIN (Costume Designer) Since 1999 at Commonweal: *Alice in Winter Wonderland*, *Dracula: Prince of Blood*, *Silent Sky*, *Souvenir*, *Last Night of Ballyhoo*, *Drawer Boy*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *A Midnight Dreary*, plus 45 more shows. Locally: Theatre du Mississippi (*The Hired Girl Gets Married*); Saint Mary's University (*Bach at Leipzig*, *Uncle Vanya*, *Urinetown*, *Playboy of the Western World*—also seen at Smock Alley Theatre, Dublin, Ireland); Viterbo University (*On the Verge*, *Spitfire Grill*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Great Expectations*); Mixed Blood (*Take Me Out*). Janis has created over 135 designs nationally, and taught at St. Mary's University, Luther College, Marshall University, and U.C. Santa Barbara.



JEN SHOOK (director, she/her) celebrates her first Commonweal production. Her many hats include director, dramaturg, writer, teacher, and puppeteer. She founded Caffeine Theatre (Chicago, 2002-2012), dedicated to delving the poetic tradition to explore social questions, and has worked with Goodman Theatre, Court Theatre, San Francisco Mime Troupe, Dallas Theater Center, Steppenwolf, TimeLine, the Hypocrites, Chicago Humanities Festival, Eulenspiegel Puppets, and U Iowa's New Play Festival, and juried for Native Voices, 50 Playwrights Project, and the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. She teaches at Grinnell College, combining performance studies with cultural memory, Indigenous studies, community engagement, and digital liberal arts. jenshook.com

DOUBT

— A PARABLE —

by John Patrick Shanley

DESIGNERS & SPECIALISTS

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Director | Jen Shook |
| Scenic Designer | Cody Beyer |
| Scenic Designer | John B. Nicol |
| Scenic Carpenter | TiAnna DeGarmo |
| Lighting Designer | Paul Epton |
| Costume Designer | Janis Martin |
| Sound Designer | Synth Manuel |
| Props Designer | Sara Hueser |
| Intimacy Coordinator | Jaclyn June Johnson |
| Rehearsal Stage Manager | Isabella Anastasia Leigh |
| Performance Stage Manager | Synth Manuel |
| Assistant Stage Manager | Dylan Delagardelle |
| Assistant Stage Manager | Maya Sol Mackey |

CAST

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Father Brendan Flynn | Jeremy van Meter |
| Sister Aloysius Beauvier | Catie Glynn |
| Sister James | Bri Angle |
| Mrs. Muller | Lynda J. Dahl |

SETTING

St. Nicholas, a Catholic church and school in the Bronx, New York (1964).

This production will run without an intermission.

Please see the front of house staff for the precise run time of each act.

CREDITS

Originally produced by the Manhattan Theatre Club on November 23, 2004.

Originally produced on Broadway by Carole Shorenstein Hays, MTC Productions, Roger Berlind and Scott Rudin on March 31, 2005.

DOUBT: A PARABLE is presented by special arrangement with Broadway Licensing, LLC, servicing the Dramatists Play Service collection. (www.dramatists.com)

PRODUCTION UNDERWRITER



WISCONSIN
PUBLIC RADIO

PLAYWRIGHT BIO



JOHN PATRICK SHANLEY is from The Bronx. His plays include *Prodigal Son*, *Outside Mullingar* (2014 Tony Award® nomination for Best Play), *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea*, *Savage in Limbo*, *Italian-American Reconciliation*, *Welcome to the Moon*, *Four Dogs and a Bone*, *Dirty Story*, *Defiance*, *Beggars in the House of Plenty*, and *Brooklyn Laundry*. His theatrical work is performed extensively across the United States and around the world. For his play, *Doubt*, he received both the 2005 Tony Award® for Best Play and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. In the arena of screenwriting, he has ten films to his credit, most recently *Wild Mountain Thyme*, with Emily Blunt, Jamie Dornan, and Christopher Walken. His film of *Doubt*, with Meryl Streep, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Amy Adams, and Viola Davis, which he also directed, was nominated for five Academy Awards, including Best Adapted Screenplay. For his script of *Moonstruck* he received both the Writers Guild of America Award and an Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay. In 2009, the Writers Guild of America awarded Mr. Shanley the Lifetime Achievement In Writing.

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR

Sister James: Aren't the things that actually happen in life more worthy of interpretation than a made-up story?

Father Flynn: No. What actually happens in life is beyond interpretation. The truth makes for a bad sermon. It tends to be confusing and have no clear conclusion.

—John Patrick Shanley, *Doubt: A Parable*

At first glance, *Doubt: A Parable* appears to be a play about religious institutions. In fact, in the old parable tradition (much like the dramatic tradition), the play tells a story about a Catholic school in order to tell a story about institutions more broadly – about communities, about certainty and uncertainty and the thorny dark lands in between.

When *Doubt* premiered in 2004, the long-whispered abuses of children by the church were loudly making headlines. In 2024 we might think of different, or of sadly similar, corruptions. When the institutions fail to live up to their ideals, humans have to find different ways to be in good relation in community together. How do we – can we? – protect the most vulnerable while still offering “benefit of the doubt” to everyone?

In the first scene of the play, Father Flynn offers a parable with no resolution, setting us together on the journey of his flock. This play asks us to seek our own resolutions, and along the way to question our certainties, to question others’ certainties, and to recognize the complexities of any “Truth.” We may come from different starting points, and we may all leave the theater with different conclusions; yet as the parable reminds us, we are bonded by our questions, and by our willingness to keep working for our communities’ good. How can we harness our doubts to drive that work?



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DRAMATURG'S NOTE

By SYNTH MANUEL

John Patrick Shanley began writing *Doubt: A Parable* in 2003. The play was developed relatively quickly, as Shanley was deeply inspired and driven by the subject matter. It first opened on November 23, 2004 at the Manhattan Theatre Club, moving to Broadway on March 31, 2005. In 2008, a film adaptation was released with an exemplary cast including Meryl Streep, Philip Seymour, Amy Adams, and Viola Davis, all of whom received Academy Award nominations for their work. It received its Broadway revival in early 2024 at the Todd Haimes Theatre.

In interviews, Shanley has discussed how the idea for the play came to him rather suddenly and was motivated by his desire to explore the themes of uncertainty, morality, and authority. In the preface of the play, he discusses how certainty can provide comfort and stability, but it can also lead to stubbornness and close-mindedness. However, Shanley claims the concept of having doubt, while unsettling, fosters growth, questioning, and discovery.



To read Shanley's complete preface, scan this QR code.

Interpretations and discussions surrounding the play evolve over time based on societal changes, cultural shifts, and ongoing dialogues about faith, doubt, and authority.

Changes in the social and political climate, including discussions about power dynamics, identity, and social justice, intersect with the play's themes and resonate differently with contemporary audiences. The play takes place in 1964, the same year the Civil Rights Act was passed into law. How the characters grapple with these societal changes are completely different from audiences in 2005 (when the play was first produced), and certainly those in 2024, who live in a world where same-sex marriage has been federally legal for almost a decade.



A year before Shanley started writing the play, *The Boston Globe* published an investigative report on clergy abuse within the Archdiocese of Boston. The *Globe's* Spotlight series uncovered widespread abuse and cover-ups, sparking national and international attention. The newspaper's investigation has had a profound impact, prompting other media outlets, law enforcement agencies, and survivor groups to further investigate and expose cases of clergy abuse across different dioceses and regions. (The Spotlight investigative series is the subject of a 2015 Academy Award winning film by the same name.)

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The Boston Globe

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2002

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Full Access: Page C24

Cardinal Law resigns

Church looks to future free of scandal

By Michael Paulson
© 2002 USA Today

The new archbishop of Boston, Catholic observers say, needs one major qualification: He must be completely uninvolved in the scandal of clergy



In letter, he states: 'I both apologize and beg forgiveness'

By Michael Paulson and Charles M. Sennott
© 2002 USA Today

ROME — Pope John Paul II today accepted the resignation of Cardinal Bernard Francis Law of Boston, effectively ending the tarnished career of a man who had been one of

In 2024, our contemporary world has united through the despair and doubts brought on by the COVID 19 pandemic. Communities in 2005 (especially those in New York City) were still dealing with the emotional fallout from the 9/11 attacks and subsequent war. It's safe to assume then that the characters in *Doubt* felt a similar bond as a population reeling from the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Global traumas like these influence our perspectives on authority, trust, and moral decision making.

While it's only been a little over two decades since this play was written, we live in a very different world than Shanley did when he wrote it. Our collective experiences allow for an even more nuanced perception of the play's themes of uncertainty, morality, and authority.



SPECIAL THANKS

The Commonwealth is grateful for a generous anonymous donation in sponsorship of the entire 2024 season. Special thanks also to Heidi Dying, Louanne Hamann, Guthrie Theater, Lifetime Eye Care of Preston, New Minnow Players, Singing Hammers Construction, Saint Mary's University, and Viterbo University.

If you or a loved one have been wounded by religious or other institutional authorities (priests, ministers, bishops, deacons, nuns, coaches, teachers, and others) here is a resource that offers support.

SNAP—Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests
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FURTHER READING

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A “PARABLE”

A simple, succinct story that illustrates a moral or spiritual lesson, Shanley has explained that the parable is central to understanding *Doubt's* thematic concerns. Typically, parables use human characters and everyday situations to convey deeper truths and ethical teachings.

The play is fundamentally about the nature of doubt, which Shanley sees as a crucial aspect of the human experience. By subtitling the play “A Parable,” he underscores the moral and philosophical questions at its core.

The characters each represent different perspectives on the central conflict, but none are definitively right or wrong.

This moral ambiguity is intentional, and the parable format helps to frame the story as a moral exploration rather than a straightforward narrative. Shanley has noted that he wanted to create a story that reflects the complexity of truth and morality.

The play also examines the nature of authority, both in the Church and in general. The parable encourages viewers to question and reflect on the use of power and the dynamics of suspicion and trust. This exploration is made more potent by the parable format, which places the onus on the audience to interpret the moral implications.



The Blind Leading the Blind
Painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1568

SECOND ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

The Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, commonly known as Vatican II, took place from 1962 to 1965. It was a significant event in the history of the Catholic Church and had a profound impact on Catholic theology, liturgy, and practices.

Vatican II was convened by Pope John XXIII, who announced the council in 1959. The goal was to renew and update the Church in response to the changing modern world. The council addressed a wide range of theological, pastoral, and social issues, including the Church's relationship with other Christian denominations, liturgical reforms, religious freedom, and the role of the laity.



Pope John XXIII

FURTHER READING

Vatican II brought a period of renewal and reform within the Catholic Church including changes to liturgical practices, increased emphasis on Scripture and lay participation, efforts to promote Christian unity and dialogue with other religions, and a greater focus on social justice and human rights. The legacy of Vatican II continues to shape the Catholic Church, theological discourse, pastoral practices, and the Church's engagement with contemporary issues. It is seen as a pivotal moment of updating and returning to sources within Catholicism.

THE ORDER OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY

Sisters Aloysius and James belong to the Order of the Sisters of Charity, a Roman Catholic congregation founded by Mother Seton in Emmitsburg, Maryland in 1809. Their guiding spirit is rooted in the teachings of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac, emphasizing service to those in need, especially the poor, sick, and vulnerable. Sisters of Charity serve in a wide range of ministries, including running schools, hospitals, nursing homes, orphanages, and social service agencies. They often work in partnership with other organizations and collaborate with laypeople and volunteers.



Mother Seton

DWINDLING NUMBERS OF PRIESTS AND NUNS

The 1950s and 60s marked a significant period of change for the Catholic Church, including a noticeable decline in the amount of priests and nuns, for a number of reasons.

The post-World War II era saw rapid social changes, urbanization, and shifts in societal values, including increased secularization. These changes influenced career choices and lifestyles, leading some who might have traditionally entered religious life to pursue other paths – particularly women, who now had greater opportunities for education, careers, and general autonomy.

The 1960s were a time of cultural and political upheaval, with movements for civil rights, social justice, and anti-war activism. These movements influenced attitudes toward institutional structures, including religious institutions.

Demographic changes, such as declining birth rates and changes in family structures, also had an impact. With fewer children being born into Catholic families, there were fewer potential candidates for religious vocations.

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