



Penfold Theatre Company & Breaking String Theater present

GHOSTS

BY HENRIK IBSEN ~ DIRECTED BY GRAHAM SCHMIDT

OCTOBER 13-NOVEMBER 5, 2011, HYDE PARK THEATRE

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Few plays in the dramatic cannon have so scandalized critics as *Ghosts*. One early reviewer for The Daily Telegraph immortalized himself with positively baroque condemnations: "An open drain...Gross, almost putrid indecorum...literary carrion...crapulous stuff." Most critics in polite society dismissed Ibsen's treatment of syphilis and incest as a transparent effort to shock.

But over the past century the play's resonance has only increased. Syphilis no longer shocks, but the A.I.D.S. epidemic in the United States (which has not abated in some parts of the world) lent public discussion of sexuality life-and-death urgency. Victorian morals have been thoroughly autopsied, yet the defense of marriage proceeds unabated in the corridors of power. We rarely invoke "the dead among us" to describe inherited genes, but we freely admit that this inheritance exerts profound influence over our lives.

Indeed, the play's central metaphor – ghosts – arises from characters' struggles with their pasts, and with their community's inherited ideals. These ghosts bear little resemblance to ones found in haunted houses, but perhaps our fear of them ought to be just as visceral. Helene Alving's certainly is.



Graham Schmidt
Director

Penfold Theatre Company

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Breaking String Theater

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PENFOLD THEATRE COMPANY AND BREAKING STRING THEATER PRESENT

GHOSTS

BY HENRIK IBSEN

TRANSLATION BY R.F. SHARP, ADAPTED BY GRAHAM SCHMIDT

CAST

Helene Alving Babs George*
 Pastor Manders Michael Stuart*
 Oswald Alving Ryan Crowder
 Regina Engstrand Kim Adams
 Jakob Engstrand Travis Dean

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director/Adapter Graham Schmidt
 Assistant Director Nathan Jerkins
 Stage Manager Lisa Filemyr
 Set and Properties Designer Ia Ensterä
 Lighting Designer Steven Shirey
 Costume Designer Buffy Manners
 Sound Designer Buzz Moran
 Dramaturge Elizabeth Richmond-Garza
 Movement Coach Jim Hancock
 Graphic Design and Photography Kimberley Mead

BREAKING STRING THEATER

Co-Producing Artistic Directors Graham Schmidt,
 Matt Davies, Liz Fisher, Robert Matney

PENFOLD THEATRE COMPANY

Producing Artistic Director Ryan Crowder
 Associate Artistic Director Nathan Jerkins
 Managing Director Zena Vaughn

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers. Paymaster services provided by the Austin Creative Alliance.

THE CAST



Kim Adams (*Regina*) is thrilled to be joining Penfold Theatre Company and Breaking String Theater for this production. She most recently played in *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Man and Superman* (Austin Shakespeare); *Baal*, *Machinal* (Paper Chairs); *The Virgin w/ 10,000 Arrows* (D&V); *Talk to Me Like the Rain* and *Let Me Listen* (7 Towers, Frontera Fest); and *The Sound Ascending* (Cohen New Works Festival). Kim holds a BA in Theatre and Dance from the University of Texas at Austin.



Ryan Crowder (*Oswald*) is co-founder and Producing Artistic Director of Penfold Theatre Company. He has recently been onstage in *Servant of Two Masters*, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*, 'Art' (Penfold); *Love's Labour's Lost* (Austin Shakespeare); *Inherit the Wind* (Austin Playhouse) and *Taming of the Shrew* (Hidden Room), for which he won Austin Critics and B. Iden Payne Awards for Acting in a Lead Role. Ryan holds an MFA from the Professional Actor Training Program at Ohio University and a BFA from Abilene Christian University. He thanks his wife Erica for her unwavering love and support.

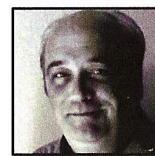


Travis Dean (*Jakob Engstrand*) is making his debut with Penfold and Breaking String. Travis has done theatre in Austin since 1988. You may remember him in *The Middle of the Night*, *Bingo*, *Up in the Old Hotel*, *The Jinn*, *I [heart] Wal-Mart*, *The Possibilities*, and most recently, *A Lie of the Mind*, among other productions. Travis has also done fight choreography for *King Lear*, *My Favorite Year*, *Macbeth*, *Killer Joe*, *Hunter Gatherers* and others he's probably forgotten. He's delighted to be a part of this wonderful cast, and he dedicates the performance to his wife of many years, Melanie.



Babs George* (*Helene Alving*) has been a professional actress and member of Actors' Equity and Screen Actors Guild for 30 years. She has worked regionally in Washington D.C., Oregon, New Mexico, Utah, Michigan, and Indiana. A resident of Austin for 24 years, she has been seen at Austin Playhouse (where she is a company member), Austin Shakespeare, St. Edward's University, Zach Theatre, Breaking String and

TexArts to name a few. Recent television credits include *Friday Night Lights* and ABC's *My Generation*. Babs holds an MFA from The Shakespeare Theatre and George Washington University. She is creator and director of The State Theatre School of Acting and has been an instructor in the theatre departments of St. Edward's University, University of Texas, Texas State University, and Southwestern University.



Michael Stuart* (*Pastor Manders*) acted and directed in over forty productions as Artistic Director of ONSTAGE Theatre Company from 1996 to 2007. He is also a company member of the Austin Playhouse and portrayed Senator Johnson at the LBJ Presidential Library. Stage credits include *August Osage County* (Zach); *The 39 Steps*, *Frost/Nixon*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Dead Presidents Club* (Austin Playhouse); *Harvey*, *True West*, *Twelfth Night* (ONSTAGE); *The Drawer Boy* (Hyde Park); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Austin Shakespeare); and many, many others. Michael has received numerous B. Iden Payne and Austin Critics Table awards, as well as the Partners in Humanities Award from the Austin City Council.

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Actor's Equity Association

Actors' Equity Association (AEA), founded in 1913, represents more than 49,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO, and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. The Equity emblem is our mark of excellence. www.actorsequity.org.



Special Thanks

Special thanks go to Jennifer Davis, Elias Ensterä, Pam Friday, Diana Huckaby, Eric Johnson, Bill McMillin, Heather Barfield, Stephen Price, Stacy Wegner, Austin Community Foundation, University of Texas, and Westover Hills Church of Christ.

THE PRODUCTION TEAM

Ia Ensterä (*Set Designer*) is originally from Finland. A production designer for the past 18 years, her stage work includes *Flying*, *Uncle Vanya* (Breaking String); *Tempest*, *Just Bee*, *Ducks vs. Squirrels* (Pollyanna); *Down the Drain* (Imagine That!); *Psycho Beach Party*, *When Pigs Fly*, *Pageant* (Naughty Austin); and over 70 others. Some of Ia's film work can be seen in *The Two Bobs*, *The King*, *Idiocracy*, *The Ringer*, *Man From Orlando* and *The Association*. Her commercial projects include World Wildlife Fund, Maidenform, HEB, and others. The recipient of several B. Iden Payne Awards, Ia is also an interior designer, storyboard artist and illustrator.

Lisa Filemyr (*Stage Manager*) returns to Penfold Theatre Company for her third show. She previously stage managed *Going with Jenny* and *Three Days of Rain*. Lisa works with numerous performing arts organizations throughout Austin, including Zilker Theatre Productions, Austin Lyric Opera, Zach, River City Pops, Second Youth Family Theatre, and ProArts Collective. Favorite past productions include *Footloose*, *Crazy for You*, *My Favorite Year*, *Beauty and the Beast* and *Hair*. Outside of theatre, Lisa is a software developer and is active in the Junior League of Austin and the University of Virginia Club of Austin.

Buffy Manners (*Costume Designer*) returns to Breaking String after designing *The Cherry Orchard* and is humbled to be involved with this extraordinarily talented group of artists. She is currently the resident costume designer for Austin Playhouse. Her work has been nominated for several Austin Critics Table Awards, most notably for *An Ideal Husband*, *Macbeth*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Henry V* and *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. She has also been nominated on several occasions for B Iden Payne Awards, most recently for Austin Shakespeare Festival's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Buzz Moran (*Sound Designer*) recently worked with Penfold on *Going With Jenny* and has provided sounds for an exhausting number of Austin theatrical shows. Buzz is responsible for the sporadic *Foleyvision* at the Alamo Drafthouse, wherein odd foreign films receive new music, voices, and sound effects performed live in the theater, and he is the co-creator of *The Dionysium*, a monthly show featuring lectures, drinking, and debates. He has recorded, mixed, and produced several CDs, as well as various soundtracks with Graham Reynolds. Buzz is a Capricorn, if that means anything.

Steven Shirey (*Lighting Designer*) has an MFA in lighting design from the University of South Carolina and was the technical director for the Stephen F. Austin State University School of Theatre from 2001 to 2007, where he worked with scenic designer Tomy Matthys. Austin lighting design credits include *Uncle Vanya*, *Flying* (Breaking String); *The Bird and the Bee* (Capital T); *Down the Drain* (Imagine That!); *No Exit*, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)* (Chaotic Theatre); *A Thought in 3 Parts* (Rubber Rep); and others. Also a musician, Steven performs in the bands Psyfolkology and Sweet Chariot.

BREAKING STRING THEATER

Breaking String Theater is a professional theater company dedicated to exploring Russian drama. By staging award-winning productions of traditional and avant-garde Russian plays, and by hosting visiting guest artists from Russia, Breaking String strives to be a thread in the rope connecting the Russian and American theater communities. Breaking String Theater is very excited to "cross the Baltic" to explore the works of Henrik Ibsen, whose plays have had an outsized influence on the Russian theater in the 20th century. Breaking String is a sponsored project of the Austin Creative Alliance, a 501(c)(3) organization and receives funding from Austin's Cultural Arts Committee.

BIOGRAPHIES

Graham Schmidt (*Director / Co-Producing Artistic Director*) is co-founder of Breaking String Theater Company. His recent work as a director and translator for Breaking String includes *Uncle Vanya*, *Flying* (in association with the Rude Mechanicals, Fusebox Festival and the Center for International Theatre Development), *The Cherry Orchard* and *The Seagull*. He has been nominated and received awards from the B. Iden Payne Council, Austin Critics Table and a range of arts publications. He holds a degree from UT's Plan II liberal arts honors program and a Masters degree from UT's department of Slavic and Eurasian Studies. While at DSES he pursued research at the Moscow Art Theater, focusing on Stanislavsky's direction of Chekhov's plays. Next up for Graham are the domestic premiere of Maksym Kurochkin's *The Schooling of Bento Bonchev* in March of 2012 and the publication of his latest translation, *Phantom Pains* by Vassily Sigarev. Graham is a two-year vet of the Shakespeare at Winedale program, directed by James

Loehlin. Graham would like to thank James and fellow string-breaker Robert Matney for their inspiration and friendship.

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PENFOLD THEATRE COMPANY

Penfold Theatre Company is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to opening and operating a live, professional theatre for the north Austin-Round Rock metro area. After three years of award-winning programming that has made a pioneering impact on arts in the north, 2011-2012 is Penfold's most ambitious season to date. The line-up includes a mix of classic and modern favorites: *Servant of Two Masters* (August 2011), *Ghosts* (October 2011), *It's a Wonderful Life: a live radio show* (December 2011) and *The Pavilion* (April 2012).

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Julie Cowan, President	Nathan Jerkins
Darrell Gest, Vice President	Cathy Kincaid
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Ryan Crowder, Secretary	Ashley Morgan
Diane Graden	Kris Whitfield

BIOGRAPHIES

Ryan Crowder (*Producing Artistic Director*) has worked in some of the nation's finest professional theatres. Most recent acting credits include *Servant of Two Masters* (Penfold), *Love's Labor's Lost* (Austin Shakespeare) and *Taming of the Shrew* (Hidden Room Theatre), for which he won the Austin Critics' Table and B. Iden Payne Awards for Acting in a Lead Role. Ryan is also a teacher, director and fight choreographer, who has coached performers of every age and education level, from elementary to graduate school. He holds an MFA from the Professional Actor Training Program at Ohio University and a BFA from Abilene Christian University. Beyond that, Ryan has trained with two Tony-Award winning regional theatres, the Denver Center for the Performing Arts and Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park.

Nathan Jerkins (*Assistant Director / Associate Artistic Director*) has been a professional actor here in Austin for 6 years and has received multiple awards and nominations for his many roles on stage. In addition to acting, he works as a freelance stage technician. Nathan has also taught theatre in non-profit and public school settings, and prior to becoming a founding member of Penfold Theatre Company, he also participated in the founding of the Itinerate Theatre Company, which performed for audiences in Abilene and Dallas. Recent acting credits include productions at Scottish Rite Children's Theatre, Abilene Shakespeare Festival, Austin Shakespeare, City Theatre, Hidden Room and Itinerate Theatre Company. Design and technical credits include productions at Abilene Shakespeare Festival, Abilene Christian University, Ballet Austin, and Zach Theatre, among others.

Zena Vaughn (*Managing Director*) While in Chicago, Zena served as the Managing Director of the Raven Theatre Company. She oversaw a 1000% increase in season ticket holders and executed the highest grossing production in the organizations' 27-year history. During her tenure, Raven received top honors from the Joseph Jefferson Committee, Chicago's body that celebrates excellence in theatre. Prior to her stint in Chicago, Zena was a company member of Austin's Coda Theatre Project, which was named in the top ten companies that are "charging up Austin theatre" by the Austin Chronicle in 2006. Zena holds a Masters Degree in Non Profit Management from DePaul University in Chicago, a Bachelors of Arts in Theatre from Texas A&M University in Corpus Christi, and is a 2001 Round Rock High School graduate.

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PENFOLD SEASON

Servant of Two Masters

August 4-21, 2011

Mistaken identities, reunited lovers and over-the-top
hilarity!

Ghosts

October 13 - November 5, 2011

Yesterday's secrets return to haunt you.

It's a Wonderful Life: a live radio show

December 2-17, 2011

Fall in love with this timeless story of hope all over
again.

The Pavilion

April 26 - May 13, 2012

Can you ever go home again?

BREAKING STRING SEASON

Ghosts

October 13 - November 5, 2011

Yesterday's secrets return to haunt you.

The Schooling of Bento Bonchev

(Domestic premier)

March 9 - 31, 2012

A new history of love

