

arvada  center
BLACK BOX THEATRE

PRACULA

A Feminist Revenge Fantasy, Really





LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities acknowledges that our facilities stand atop ancestral lands that include the Tsétséhéstaestse (Cheyenne), the Hinono'eiteen (Arapaho), Nuche (Ute), and Oceti Sakowin (Lakota) nations. We offer our respect to people of these nations—past, present and future.



The plaque emblem was created by artist Walt Pourier (Oglala Lakota).



A NOTE FROM PHILIP C. SNEED

ARVADA CENTER PRESIDENT AND CEO



The Stakes are High

If you're reading this, you're most likely at the Arvada Center to see our production of *Dracula: A Feminist Revenge Fantasy, Really*. You may be wondering, "What's up with that weird title?" And who could blame you?

Bram Stoker's novel, *Dracula*, was published in 1897, and the first stage version (by Stoker himself) played just one performance, eight days before the book was published; the theatre's owner deemed it "dreadful." According to one source, there have been over 200 film adaptations alone - 11 of them so far in the 2020s - plus the many versions for stage, TV, ballet, and opera. Some of the adaptations have been faithful to the novel (or at least attempted to be), while others have veered far from it, and even into camp and parody. Below is just a sampling of these:

- *Dracula, the Musical*
- *Love at First Bite*
- *Dracula A.D. 1972*
- *Billy the Kid vs. Dracula*
- *The Brides of Dracula*
- *Fangs Ain't What They Used to Be*
- *Dracula Sabbat*
- *Zoltan, Hound of Dracula*
- *The Satanic Rites of Dracula*
- *Dracula vs. Frankenstein*

Get the picture? Suddenly our title doesn't seem quite so weird, does it?

In 2000, I commissioned and produced a new adaptation of the novel at the theatre company I led in California, and it was later staged at the Maxim Gorky Theatre in Vladivostok, Russia (I directed, and the costume design was by Clare Henkel, who is also the designer of the production you're about to see). The Russians told us that the story had never been staged in Russia (although I find this hard to believe), and the actors said that it seemed like a child's fairy tale. The theatre's Artistic Director wanted to attract a younger audience, so we used the music of Marilyn Manson. The Russian Goth youths came in large numbers and did great damage to the auditorium, so the production closed early.

Recently, my wife and I went to Romania and spent some time in Transylvania. We saw the only castle that's purported to be "Dracula's Castle"; it wasn't the least bit scary and in fact looked more like Snow White's in Disneyland. In the medieval town of Sighisoara, we ate lunch in a restaurant that now occupies the house where the historical Dracula - Vlad the Impaler - was born. Dracula merchandise was for sale everywhere. Bram Stoker launched a whole pop culture industry.

Dracula: A Feminist Revenge Fantasy, Really is among the more recent entries into the catalog of Draculas, and one of the smarter and more fitting adaptations I know of. It's long past time for the women in this story to have something more substantial to sink their teeth into, and the stakes this fall couldn't be higher. Plus, it's all far preferable to what Vlad the Impaler did. That dude was truly evil.

Philip C. Sneed
President and CEO



A NOTE FROM CAROLYN HOWARTH

DIRECTOR

Honestly, I was never a fan of the horror genre. Vampires? Too scary. Ghosts? Forget about it. And zombies? Leave my brains alone! But even more than the fear factor, something about the way the female characters are treated in traditional horror stories irritates me. Really irritates me. They are usually portrayed as maidens in distress, or in some kind of subjugation to the male characters, or just really insipid. And slightly stupid.

Enter: *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, in all her emancipated splendor. Though I was supposedly much too old for a teenage show - by the end of the pilot episode, I was hooked. Her high school was a Hellmouth (I could totally relate). Here was a vampire story I could get behind. The sarcasm and quick wit were intoxicating, and the female characters took matters into their own hands. They were powerful and independent and not putting up with anybody sucking their blood. (Well, maybe Spike. I mean, come on. If you know, you know.)

Kate Hamill's adaptation hits me in much the same way. It makes me laugh and cheer and scream.

This is a Dracula, building on the back of, and heavily inspired by, the Buffys of the world. Here are women fighting off the Big Bad and not going back to the way it was. Here are women determined to step out of the shadows and create a more equitable world. Here are women recognizing the predators strutting around in broad daylight - looking just like the good guys - and reminding them, rather forcefully, that "No" means NO!

No matter where you fall on the "I love vampires" or "I hate vampires" meter, I think you're gonna dig this adaptation. It's funny AND scary. It surprises. And this feels like exactly the right moment for this particular twist on this particular classic. And though couched in the form of a horror story, it really is so much more. It might even be a call to action.

So strap in. Be the hand that holds the stake. And let's get to it.

Carolyn Howarth
Director



PRACULA

A Feminist Revenge Fantasy, Really

DRACULA
A Feminist Revenge Fantasy, Really
Based on the novel by Bram Stoker
by Kate Hamill

Originally produced by Classic Stage Company; John Doyle, Artistic Director

ARVADA CENTER BLACK BOX THEATRE
Sept 27 - Nov 3, 2024

Director
Carolyn Howarth*

Scenic Design
Tina Anderson

Silks Choreographer
Noelia Antweiler

Sound Design
Jason Ducat

Costume Design
Clare Henkel

Movement Director
Geoffrey Kent

Lighting Design
Jon Olson

Dialect Consultant
Jeffrey Parker

Intimacy Director
Katrina Stelk

Stage Manager
Kaylyn Kriaski*

Assistant Stage Manager
Melissa J Michelson*

Artistic Director
Lynne Collins

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Underwritten by: Diana and Mike Kinsey



Any video and/or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

DRACULA is presented through special arrangement with
TRW PLAYS 1180 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 640, New York, NY 10036. www.trwplays.com



Jessica Austgen*



Annie Barbour*



Lance Rasmussen*



Geoffrey Kent*



Mel Schaffer



Katrina Stelk



Noelia Antweiler*



Gareth Saxe*



Prentiss Benjamin*

This Theatre operates under an agreement with Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

*Member of Actors' Equity Association

°Member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society



CAST

Renfield	Jessica Austgen*
Mina Harker	Annie Barbour*
Jonathan Harker	Lance Rasmussen*
Dracula	Geoffrey Kent*
Drusilla/Merchant/Miller	Mel Schaffer
Marilla/Maid	Katrina Stelk
Lucy Westenra	Noelia Antweiler*
Doctor George Seward	Gareth Saxe*
Doctor Van Helsing	Prentiss Benjamin*

*Member of Actors' Equity Association



ACTOR BIOGRAPHIES

NOELIA ANTWEILER* (Lucy) is delighted to return to the Arvada Center, having previously performed in *Noises Off*, *Stick Fly*, *The Liar*, and *Animal Farm*. Select NYC credits: *Leah*, *The Forsaken* (NY Times mention, Metropolitan Playhouse); *The Tempest*, *Hair*, *As You Like It* (Secret Theatre). Other Denver credits include: *The Winter's Tale*, *One Man, Two Guvnors*, *Macbeth*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Colorado Shakespeare Festival); *Heroes of the Fourth Turning* (Curious Theatre Company); *Dreamgirls* (Lone Tree Arts Center); *Treasure Island*, *The Jedi Handbook* (Aurora Fox Arts Center). Noelia is also a professional aerialist, specializing in Silks and Dance Trapeze. Thank you for supporting the arts.
@noelia.antweiler

JESSICA AUSTGEN* (Renfield) has performed at the Arvada Center in 14 productions, including *Sense & Sensibility*, *Murder on the Orient Express*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Tartuffe*; and was the playwright for *Sin Street Social Club*, *The Family Tree* and *Christie Con*. Other credits: *Theater of the Mind*, *Corduroy*, *Cult-Following* (Denver Center for the Performing Arts); *Arcadia*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Theatreworks); *Men on Boats* (Catamounts). jessicaaustgen.com
@jess_a

ANNIE BARBOUR* (Mina) has performed at the Arvada Center in five productions: *Small Mouth Sounds*, *Murder on the Orient Express*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, and *The Moors*. Other credits include *Emma*, *The 39 Steps*, *Theatre of the Mind* (Denver Center for the Performing Arts); *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Measure for Measure* (Theatreworks); *We Had A Girl Before*

You (Greater Boston Stage Company); *King John*, *Romeo and Juliet* (Great River Shakespeare Festival). Training: BFA, Webster's Sargent Conservatory.

PRENTISS BENJAMIN* (Van Helsing): Arvada Center debut! Select regional credits: *Boeing Boeing* (Arts Center of Coastal Carolina); *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (Boarshead Theatre); *The Dining Room* (Cape Playhouse); *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Mousetrap* (Fulton Opera House); and *Sunrise at Monticello* (Writer's Theatre of New Jersey). Locally, Prentiss has appeared in multiple productions at Theatreworks, including *The Half Life of Marie Curie*, *The Little Prince*, and *Heisenberg*. Prentiss is a former ballet dancer. Training: Northwestern University (David Downs). Special thanks to Gardino's Kempo Karate.

GEOFFREY KENT* (Dracula) Recent roles for the Arvada Center include Don Kirshner in *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, Stage Manager in *Our Town*, Col. Brandon in *Sense & Sensibility*, Ned in *Small Mouth Sounds* and Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Other acting includes Bob Cratchit in *A Christmas Carol*, Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing* and Beaverton in *Rubicon* (Denver Center for the Performing Arts); Polixines in *The Winter's Tale* and Buckingham in *Henry VIII* (Utah Shakespeare Festival).
@geoffreykent



ACTOR BIOGRAPHIES

LANCE RASMUSSEN* (Harker) returns for his 7th production with the Arvada Center, having been seen previously in *Sin Street Social Club*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *All My Sons*, *The Electric Baby*, *Sense and Sensibility*, and *The Foreigner*. Local Credits include: Curious Theatre Company, Catamounts, and Pkknik Theatre. Regional Credits include: Lyric Repertory Company, Utah Shakespeare Festival, and Swine Palace. Training: B.F.A. Caine College of the Arts at Utah State University, M.F.A. Louisiana State University.

GARETH SAXE* (Seward) returns to the Arvada Center in *Dracula*. Arvada Center: *Noises Off*, *Sylvia*, *Plaza Suite*. Broadway: *The Lion King*, *The Homecoming*, *Heartbreak House*, *Nicolai and the Others*. Off Broadway: *Harper Regan* (The Atlantic); *Richard III* (Public Theater); Regional: *Hamlet* (Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey); *iWitness* (Mark Taper Forum). Local: *Coriolanus*, *All's Well That Ends Well* (Colorado Shakespeare Festival); *You Lost Me*, *Hotter Than Egypt* (DCPA Theatre Company); Film: *Public Enemies*; TV: *SVU*; *Law & Order*. Training: M.F.A. - N.Y.U.

MEL SCHAFFER (they/them) (Drusilla/ Miller/Merchant) is so excited to be returning to the Arvada Center for the second time. Mel most recently appeared at the Arvada Center in *The Laramie Project*. Other recent credits include: *A Chorus Line*, Sherlock in *Miss Holmes* (Phamaly Theatre Company); Alex in *Impossible Things* (Catamounts). Training: BFA (Hons) London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art.

KATRINA STELK (Marilla/Maid, Intimacy Director) is making her Arvada Center debut! Other acting credits: *Toil and Trouble* (Yellow Tree Theatre); *A Servant of Two Masters*, *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* (Lyric Arts); *Love's Labour's Lost* (Classical Actors Ensemble); *Macbeth*, *Who's Afraid of Winnie the Pooh?* (Clevername Theatre). Intimacy Direction: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Female Nude Seated* (Wisconsin Shakespeare Festival). Training: B.A. University of Northern Colorado, Intimacy Directors and Coordinators. katrinastelkactor.com



CREATIVE TEAM

CAROLYN HOWARTH (Director) Past directing credits: multiple productions at the Utah, Colorado, Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festivals, Orlando Shakespeare Theatre, Foothill Theatre Company (Nevada City, CA), Capital Stage (Sacramento), Perseverance Theatre Company (Juneau, AK). Acting credits: The Jewish Theatre of San Francisco, B Street Theatre, Sacramento Theatre Company, Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival, Foothill Theatre Company, and Maxim Gorky Drama Theatre (Vladivostok, Russia). Member: Actors' Equity Association and the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society. Training: M.F.A: University of CA, Davis.

TINA ANDERSON (Set Design) is thrilled to be back at the Arvada Center. Her last design was *The Laramie Project*. Other credits: *POTUS*, *Cullud Wattah* (Curious Theatre Company); *Heartbeat of the Sun*, *Headliners*, *Moon for the Misbegotten* (Cherry Creek Theatre); *What the Constitution Means to Me*, *Coal Country* (True West Award), *Eden Prairie, 1971* (Henry Award nomination), *The Royale* (BETC); *The Road to Letha* (Benchmark Theatre); *POTUS* (Thunder River Theatre Company).

NOELIA ANTWEILER (Silks Choreographer) cut her teeth training as an aerialist in NYC, and while she performs on all apparatuses, she specializes in Silks and Dance Trapeze. In NYC, she has performed for corporate events and galas, and in the nightclub scene, including The Slipper Room and The Box. In Denver, she has performed at The Oriental, ReelWorks, and The Dairy. She has two teacher training certifications from Aerial Physique in Los Angeles, and currently teaches aerial at Denver Circus Collective.

JASON DUCAT (Sound Designer) returns to the Arvada Center where he has designed over 15 shows including *Noises Off* last season. Jason has designed for many theatres across Colorado including the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Curious Theatre Company (where he is an Artistic Company member), Colorado Shakespeare Festival, Boulder Ensemble Theatre Company, Creede Repertory Theatre, Local Theater Company, and Theatreworks. International credits include: Prague Quadrennial, Vienna English Theatre, Prague Shakespeare Company, and The Royal Exchange Theatre. Jason currently teaches sound design and technology at the Denver School of the Arts.

CLARE HENKEL (Costume Designer). AC favorites include: *Bright Star*, *Sunday in the Park with George* (Henry Award), *Sense and Sensibility*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Miss Saigon*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Twelfth Night*, *Ragtime*, *Death Takes a Holiday* and *Tartuffe*, among others. Her work has been seen at the Old Globe Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, DCPA Theatre Company; Colorado, Idaho, Lake Tahoe and San Francisco Shakespeare Festivals; San Jose Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, Dallas Theatre Center, Geva Theatre, and the Indianapolis Symphony's Pops shows (including Carnegie Hall). clarehenkel.com



CREATIVE TEAM

GEOFFREY KENT (Movement Director) Selected Arvada Center productions: *The Moors*, *Sin Street Social Club*, *Les Misérables*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Cabaret*. Other choreography includes fourteen seasons with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, two decades with the Denver Center for the Performing Arts and seasons with the Utah Shakespeare Festival, The Orlando Shakespeare Theatre, the ASOLO Rep, Aspen/Santa Fe Ballet and Opera Colorado. Geoffrey is one of twenty recognized Fight Masters with the Society of American Fight Directors and teaches stage combat for the University of Denver. geoffreykent.com

JON OLSON (Lighting Designer / Lighting Director) has been a member of the Arvada Center since 2003. *Dracula: A Feminist Revenge Fantasy*, *Really* marks Jon's thirteenth Arvada Center Black Box design. Jon has received Henry Award nominations for *The Drowning Girls* and *Educating Rita*. Other Arvada Center design credits include: *The Laramie Project*, *Animal Farm*, *Sylvia*, *Plaza Suite*, *Blithe Spirit*, *The Mousetrap*, *The Archbishop's Ceiling*, *All My Sons*, *The Moors*, the world premiere of *I'll Be Home For Christmas*, and the regional premiere of *Trav'lin: The 1930's Harlem Musical*.

JEFFREY PARKER (Dialect Consultant) (he/him) is a professor of Theatre, a voice / text / dialect director, a two-time Henry award winning actor, and an author. Previous credits at the Arvada Center include *Murder on the Orient Express*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Small Mouth Sounds*, *The Liar*, *Damn Yankees*, and *Noises Off*. Other favorite coaching credits include *The Lehman Trilogy* (Denver Center for the Performing Arts) and *King Lear*

(Colorado Shakespeare Festival). He is the co-author of *Experiencing Speech*, available at Amazon and Routledge.

KAYLYN KRIASKI (Stage Manager) is thrilled to be stage managing her first Black Box show with one of her favorite directors! Other credits: SM: *Cinderella* (Arvada Center); *King Lear*; *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It*, *King Charles III* (Colorado Shakespeare Festival); *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Three Musketeers*, *Henry IV Part 1*, *Hamlet*, *Gertrude and Claudius* (Orlando Shakes). ASM: *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*, *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, *Damn Yankees*, *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*, *Into the Woods* (Arvada Center); *Macbeth*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Book of Will*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Colorado Shakespeare Festival). Training: B.A in Theatre from the University of Southern Mississippi.

MELISSA J MICHELSON (Assistant Stage Manager) AC credits: *Noises Off*, *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*, *The Laramie Project*, *Our Town*, *The Book Club Play*, *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*, *The River Bride*, *Stick Fly*, *The Liar*, *Sylvia*, *Small Mouth Sounds*, and *Murder on the Orient Express*. Other favorites: *Legally Blonde*, *Come From Away*, *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, *Doubt*, *RENT*, *Gypsy*, *Jersey Boys* (Theatre Aspen); *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *Tiny Beautiful Things* (Boulder Ensemble Theatre Company); Shows with Local, Berkshire Theatre Group, Orlando Shakes, Goodspeed Musicals, Westport Country Playhouse; Four years working with actors with disabilities (Magic Moments Inc.). B.A. Theatre; Colorado State.



THE AUTHORS

KATE HAMILL (Author) is a playwright and actor based in NYC. For the last three seasons, she has been included on the most-produced playwright list in American Theatre magazine. Her most recent work includes the virtual production of *Badass Galboss Power Hour for Primary Stages*; *Dracula* at Classic Stage Company; the New York premiere of *Little Women* by Primary Stages (commissioned and received its world premiere at Jungle Theater in Minneapolis); and *Mansfield Park*, which was commissioned by and debuted at Northlight Theatre. Recently, she debuted *Ms. Holmes & Ms. Watson – Apt. 2B* at KCRep and *Emma* at Guthrie Theater. She is currently working on an adaptation of *The Odyssey* which will be produced by Artists Repertory Theatre, as well as several new original plays, including *The Piper* (2019 O’Neill NPC finalist; PlayPenn selection) and *The Prostitute Play* (developed at Cygnet Theatre). katehamill.com

BRAM STOKER (Author) Born in Ireland in 1847, Bram Stoker studied mathematics at Dublin’s Trinity College and embarked on his longtime role as an assistant to actor Sir Henry Irving in the 1870s. He also began carving out a second career as a writer, publishing his first novel, *The Primrose Path*, in 1875. Stoker published his most famous work, *Dracula*, in 1897, though he died before the fictional vampire would achieve widespread popularity through numerous film and literary adaptations in the 20th century.



FEMINIST HORROR READS

As a genre, horror can act as a window into our society's fears; things we consider terrifying, perverse, or taboo. Horror can be validating, empowering, and cathartic at the same time that it grosses us out, makes us squirm, or sends chills down our spine. We can't look away; sometimes, we don't want to.

Dracula: A Feminist Revenge Fantasy, Really fits into a long history of women using horror to take back the narratives we're often victims in. I've put together a list of some of my favorite horror stories to thrill you this Halloween season. All of these stories, like Kate Hamill's play, experiment with conventions of gender, feminism, sexuality, and terror.

- Sarah Kolb, Director of Marketing and Communications

The Haunting of Hill House by Shirley Jackson

An iconic haunted house story from America's Queen of Gothic Horror: A group of investigators delve into the secrets of a labyrinthian old house. Protagonist Eleanor is haunted and trapped by her desires - for love, freedom, sexual expression. You're never really sure if the terror is supernatural or just in Eleanor's head. In the end, it doesn't really matter.

Mexican Gothic by Silvia Moreno-Garcia

A young Mexican socialite must rescue her cousin from the clutches of a sinister British family and their decaying mansion. Moreno-Garcia uses the trappings of Gothic horror to explore race, gender, obsession and abuse - with a dose of creepy fungi to boot.

Ring Shout by P. Djèlí Clark

1920s Georgia: A ragtag group of Black women slay extra-dimensional demons known as Ku Kluxes. A demonic-horror twist on the Jim Crow South, Ring Shout blends Black history, Gullah culture and commentary on modern racism.

Ready Or Not directed by Matt Bettinelli-Olpin and Tyler Gillett

A bride's wedding night takes a sinister turn when her eccentric new in-laws force her to take part in a terrifying game. This pulpy horror-comedy is giddily entertaining, kind of gross, and so much fun. Come for the crossbows, stay for the clever socio-economic comedy and sweet, sweet revenge.

My Heart Is A Chainsaw by Stephen Graham Jones

A teen girl with an encyclopedic knowledge of slasher films struggles to get others to listen when she realizes a serial killer is targeting her community, famous for a massacre 50 years before. Stephen Graham Jones is a Colorado local, and his love letter to 80s slashers is both a deconstruction and homage of the genre.



DRACULA: A FEMINIST REVENGE FANTASY, REALLY

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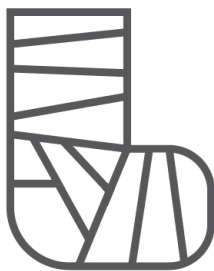
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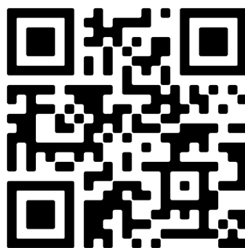
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DENVER ACTORS FUND

For when you break a leg





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AT THE ARVADA CENTER

AUG 30 - OCT 13

Waitress

SEPT 27 - NOV 3

PRACULA
A Gothic Horror Fantasy Novel

NOV 22 - DEC 29

*Once Upon a
MATTRESS*

JAN 21 - FEB 28

**Lyle the
crocodile**
Theatre for Young Audiences

FEB 14 - MAR 30

**CLYBOURNE
PARK**

MAR 28 - MAY 11

A GENTLEMAN'S GUIDE TO
**LOVE and
MURDER**

AC Restroom Use Policy: Anyone that visits the Arvada Center is allowed to use a facility that best corresponds with their gender identity. The restroom policy is designed to ensure that everyone feels comfortable and safe within the existing facilities. Arvada Center is also aware of the need for a permanent, publicly accessible gender-neutral restroom. The Center is working with the City of Arvada to work through building codes, capital expenses, and other obstacles to fulfill this need.



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The Arts for All Gala benefits the Arvada Center's arts education programming, as well as our theatre and gallery offerings. Help us celebrate and elevate the human condition through engaging, entertaining and enlightening programs for all.