

Department of Theatre & Dance

Wit

written by Margaret Edson
directed by Craig Quintero



...And death shall be no more, Death thou shalt die...

October 10-12, 2013

7:30 p.m., Flanagan Theatre

October 13, 2013

2:00 p.m., Flanagan Theatre

GRINNELL COLLEGE



**Please join us after the show for a post show discussion with the
cast and medical professionals.**

This one hour forty minute performance will
run without intermission.

Please turn off all cell phones and pagers.
No photography permitted.

This performance is intended for mature audiences.

“*Wit* is presented by special arrangement with
Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.”



Wit

Written by
Margaret Edson
Directed by
Craig Quintero

Costume Designer	Erin Howell-Gritsch
Stage Manager	Rachael Andrew '16
Lighting Designer	Christina Barrigan '97
Music	Cheryl Quintero
Technical Director	Erik Sanning '89
Set Designer	Justin Thomas

DIRECTOR NOTES

I spent a few months last winter reading scripts, trying to find the perfect play for our students and community. I wanted a play that would challenge our students as actors and artists, one that would push them to approach their craft with honesty and compassion. At the same time, I wanted to stage a play that “mattered,” that had the potential to change us and our audience. When I first read *Wit*, I immediately realized that my search was over.

On the surface, this is a play about one woman’s battle with ovarian cancer and her struggle to find meaning in her life as she faces her mortality, but the story’s implications extend far beyond this fictional character. *Wit* challenges us to think about our own mortality and those of our loved ones, to think about the manner in which we hide from the immediacy of death and dying and shutter these experiences away in hospitals and nursing homes. *Wit* encourages us to take stock of our lives, to give thanks for all of our blessings and to reach out to those in need...

And as I started working on the play last spring, I found myself also reaching out to members of the broader Grinnell community as I grappled with developing a holistic approach to introducing our students to the personal and moral issues linked to death and dying as well as the pragmatics of medical care. I was not prepared for the immediacy and enthusiasm of the responses. I was overwhelmed by the number of people who were eager to tell their stories and share their expertise. If you look at the “thank you” list in the program, you’ll see a diverse range of fields from the Assistant Director of Service Learning and Engagement to professors in Classics and Sociology to hospice care nurses and Grinnell Regional Medical Center employees. With all of the offers to come speak to the cast and crew, my only regret is that our five-week rehearsal process was too short to accommodate all the possibilities.

This experience of seeing the Grinnell community rally around this production has been remarkably uplifting, an important reminder that in life, as in death, we need not be alone...

-Craig Quintero



Kate Loftur-Thun '14 (Vivian Bearing) is excited to be working with the Grinnell Theatre and Dance Department again after a year abroad. She has previously appeared in *Sunday in the Park with George* (Yvette/Naomi), *Broken Mirrors* (Ensemble), *The Rimers of Eldritch* (Evelyn Jackson), and *Release* (Olivia), and codirected *Columbus & Isabella*, an original adaptation of Salman Rushdie's "*Christopher Columbus and Queen Isabella of Spain Consummate Their Relationship, Sante Fé, January 1492.*"

Samuel Palca '16 (Jason Posner), an intended Biology major from Washington, DC, is thrilled to be part of *Wit*. This is Sam's first production at Grinnell outside of class. Sam performed in plays since elementary school. Sam enjoys physical comedy, any Shakespeare production, and any villainous role. Over the last couple years, Sam performed as Jonas in *The Giver* and as The Captain in a comedia del'arte production of *Androcles and The Lion*, at the Roundhouse Theatre in Silver Spring.

Milton D. Garcia '14 (Dr.Kelekian/Mr. Bearing) is a Grinnell DC 6 Posse Scholar. He returns to the main stage from his last production in 2011, the puppet play production of *Naked*, directed by Craig Quintero and Shih Peiyu. While away, Garcia focused on Queer studies and performativity incorporated within art. He currently volunteers at the Toledo, IA Juvenile Home as a peer mentor, where multimedia is used as a positive outlet to talk about the social world and positive relationships.

Michelle Risacher '17 (Susie Monahan) is an undecided major from North Vernon, IN. This is Michelle's first production at Grinnell College. In high school she performed in various plays and musicals with her high school and community theatre. Michelle is thrilled to be a part of the Theatre and Dance Department already and hopes to continue to be active in the department during her 4 years at Grinnell.

Lauren Sheely '14 (E. M. Ashford) is a Theatre and Dance major from Chicago, IL. She has participated in a number of productions in the department, most recently *When the Elephant Comes Crashing Through the Roof*. Her theatrical home in Chicago is at TimeLine Theatre Company. Lauren is honored to be spending part of her last year at Grinnell with this hardworking cast and crew, and would like to thank Craig for both his direction and his unwavering support.

CAST

Destini Powell '17 (Ensemble) is from Albany, OR. This is her first show at Grinnell and she is thrilled to be a part of it.

Halley Freger '17 (Ensemble) is from Charlotte, NC and is very excited to be in her first production at Grinnell! She loves theatre and performed in many plays and musicals in high school. Two of her favorite roles were Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the Wicked Witch of the West in *The Wizard of Oz*.

Sandy Barnard '17 (Ensemble) is an intended theatre major and linguistics concentrator from Chicago, IL. This is her first production at the college. Sandy had theatre experience in high school and middle school, and last summer co-starred in an independent film production. She is thrilled to be a part of *Wit* and plans to be a part of many more shows throughout her Grinnell career.

Mollie Jo Blahunka '17 (Ensemble) will be making her Theatre debut at Grinnell in *Wit*. She's greatly enjoyed the opportunity to work with such a talented cast and crew on this truly poignant show. Most recent credits include directing *Seussical* and portraying Yertle the Turtle, producing *Arsenic and Old Lace*, and directing *Wild Dust*. Mollie was proud to be honored as the 2013 Thespian of the Year by the International Thespian Society Troupe #5177. Mollie would like to thank Joe Pulio and John Wanninger for instilling in her a passion for theatre, and the entire cast and crew for an incredible experience.

CREW

John Walther '16 (Sound Board Operator) believes in the immense power of theatre and is enthused to be a part of *Wit*. He finds that all Craig Quintero shows are rather frighteningly beautiful and that *Wit* is no exception. He's also very proud of the cast and crew for their hard work and wishes them the best of ability. Enjoy the show.

Molly Kraus-Steinmetz '17 (Light Board Operator) is delighted to be getting involved in theatre at Grinnell with *Wit*. She's been working in high school theatre for two years, mostly in sets and props, but this is her first time running lights, and she's excited to get such a good seat to see *Wit* so many times. She hopes you enjoy the play as much as she does!



Lucas Verraastro '17 (Stage Crew) is from Pelham, MA and is thinking about becoming a physics major. He spent many hours backstage in high school and is excited to get involved with the Theatre and Dance Department at Grinnell.

Mary Adams '15 (Wardrobe Crew Chief) is a French and Theatre and Dance major from DeKalb, IL. She has worked backstage on a number of Grinnell productions, including assistant stage managing *Waiting for Godot* last fall. Look for her in November in *Hamlet*, both acting and assistant directing. She is thrilled to be costume crew chief for *Wit* and hopes you enjoy the show!

Hannah Storch '16 (Wardrobe Crew) is a History and Classical Studies double major from Albany, NY. Prior to coming to Grinnell, she worked tech crew for many shows during high school including *Once On This Island*, *Seussical*, and *Anything Goes*. Last year, she worked on wardrobe crew for the Grinnell College production of *Waiting for Godot* and is very excited to be helping with this year's *Wit*.

PRODUCTION TEAM

Rachael Andrew '16 (Stage Manager) is an intended physics and theatre/dance double major from Platteville, WI. She is pleased to have had the opportunity to work as stage manager for *Small Elephant Stories* and *The Pitmen Painters* last year. She also worked as assistant director on *Waiting for Godot* last fall. She enjoyed working with the Platteville Community Theatre and the University of Wisconsin Platteville's Heartland Festival both on the stage and off. She hopes you enjoy the show!

Courtney Martin '15 (Assistant Stage Manager) is an Anthropology and Theatre and Dance double major from DeKalb, IL. This is her fourth time behind the scenes as a production team member at Grinnell College and her first time as an Assistant Stage Manager.

Emily Griffith '17 (Assistant Stage Manager) is an intended Physics Theatre and Dance double major from Toledo, OH. This is her first production at Grinnell College. Emily has had theatre experience from high school where she stage managed many shows and participated in Drama club.

PRODUCTION TEAM

Cheryl Quintero (Music) Cheryl has collaborated with Riverbed Theatre for eight years. She has composed music for productions in France, Germany, Singapore, Taiwan, and Japan. She has appeared in numerous productions, including works staged at Taiwan's National Experimental Theatre, Tiny Alice, and LEF.

Erik Sanning '89 (Technical Director and Engineering) is a graduate of Grinnell College. He spent the first two years after graduation working as the Technical Director/Lighting Designer for Ballet Iowa. In the summer of '91, Erik was able to return to Grinnell as the Technical Director. In addition, he is also one of the founding members of Grinnell Productions, a semi-professional theatre company that was based here in Grinnell. Erik has also been a member of IATSE, the professional stagehands union, since 1990.

DIRECTOR

Craig Quintero As the Artistic Director of Riverbed Theatre company, Craig has written and directed thirty original imagebased performances that have been staged in France, Germany, Taiwan, Japan, Singapore, Macau, and the US. He is also a sculptor and installation artist whose work has been shown at the Venice Biennale, Kobe Biennale, the Taipei Fine Arts Museum, the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, and the Shanghai Museum of Contemporary Art. Craig received his Ph.D. in Performance Studies from Northwestern University. He is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance at Grinnell College.

DESIGNERS

Alex Hsieh '14 (Assistant Lighting Designer) is a Theatre and Dance/General Science Chemistry double major from Northbrook, IL. Prior to his second year at Grinnell College, his only theatre experience was an elementary school role as a tonedeaf choir member. His life changed after he took Associate Professor Lesley Delmenico's Introduction to Performance class, and he has been involved with directing, acting, and technical theatre ever since. This past summer, Alex and three other classmates traveled to Taiwan to work with Craig Quintero and his Riverbed Theatre to develop and perform a new production, of which he is very grateful. In his free time, Alex can be found casting a yoyo or launching screaming flying kicks.



Christina Barrigan '97 (Lighting Designer) is a professional theatre artist who has worked in opera, dance, theatre, ballet, independent film and performance art, theme parks, corporate/industrial events, cruise ships and concerts. She believes storytelling is the basis for theatre and always strives to tell stories in the most effective ways possible. She is the Head of Design at Central Washington University and a founding member of DogTown Theatre. It's very exciting to be back at Grinnell working with the wonderfully vibrant theatre artists on *Wit*.

Justin Thomas (Set Designer) Justin is an Associate Professor of Theatre and Design here at Grinnell College, where he has the ability to focus upon his two great passions: teaching and making theatre. Justin's courses run the gamut of theatrical design and technology, theatre history, and literature. He particularly enjoys teaching his first-year tutorial, "Staging Revolution," which uses dramatic texts as a way to examine human rights abuses in world history. Justin's professional scenic and lighting designs have been featured throughout India, Bangladesh, Russia, France, and across the United States in venues both large and small. Justin designs for a variety of performance styles from modern dance and ballet, to Shakespearean tragedy, children's theatre, and contemporary musical theatre. Such collaborations have offered Justin varied and exciting experiences that enrich the teaching and mentoring of his students.

Erin Howell-Gritsch (Costume Designer) has designed costumes for over 100 productions, beginning with the Des Moines Ballet in 1989. She has designed costumes at Grinnell College since 1999, where she is the resident costume designer, and has taught Introduction to Technical Theatre and Costume Design. She has also taught at Cornell College, where she designed productions of *Polaroid Stories*, *Story Theatre*, *Tartuffe* and *Our Town*. Erin's work has also been produced at the University of Iowa (Theatre, Dance, Playwright's Festival, and Black Action Theatre), Riverside Theatre, RT Shakespeare Festival, and RT Young People's Company, Graffiti Theatre, Theatre de la Jeune Lune, and Hurley Dancers. Erin holds a Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Design from the University of Iowa and a Bachelor of Science from Iowa State University.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Assistant Stage Manager Courtney Martin '15

Emily Griffith '17

Stage Manager Rachael Andrew '16

Assistant Lighting Designer Alex Hsieh '14

Light Board Operator Mollie Kraus-Steinmetz '17

Sound Board Operator John Walther '16

Wardrobe Crew Chief Mary Adams '15

Wardrobe Crew Hanna Storch '16

Deborah Tillman '14

Stage Crew Lucas Verrastro '17

Poster & Program Design Stephanie Micetich

SPECIAL THANKS

Mindi Koehler, Susan Sanning, James Lee, Patty Marsho, Alex Thompson, Norma Hirsch, MD, FAAHPM, FAAP, DHL, Assistant Professor, Des Moines University and her students

Sara Wray, Patty Marsho, Michelle Reitzler and the Hospice team at Grinnell Regional Medical Center

Gina Fuller and the Radiology team at Grinnell Regional Medical Center

Les Ollinger & Facilities Management

Jerry Wehr MD, JR Paulson MD, Lynnda Risting & Grinnell Family Care

Megan Cooper at Visions Salon-12 inches of Kate's hair was donated to Locks of Love



ADMINISTRATION

Production Stage Manager	Deborah Tillman '14
Assistant Production Stage Manager	Rachel Andrew '16
Assistant to the Chair	Kate Whitman '14
Archivist	Benjamin Zeledon '14

FRONT OF HOUSE

Front of House Manager	Lorraine Blatt '14	
Front of House Staff	Teddy Hoffman '14	Deborah Tillman '14
	Deshaun Peters '14	Lorraine Blatt '14
	Quinninta Bellows '15	Anthony Wenndt '15
	Madeliene Hardt '16	Jack Blais '16
	Joe Kloehn '14	

COSTUME STUDIO

Costume Storage Coordinator	Devon Gamble '15	
Stitchers	Kate Loftur-Thun '14	Courtney Martin '15
	Mary Adams '15	Devon Gamble '15
	Mira Hall '16	Sophie Neems '16
	Daniel Nanetti-Palacios '16	Paulina Campbell '16
		Antoinette Cudney '16

SCENE SHOP

Properties Storage Coordinator	Ian Saderholm '14	
Assistant Properties Coordinator	Daniel Nanetti-Palacios '16	
Scene Shop Staff	Alicia Alexander '13	Alex Hsieh '14
	Colin Wong '14	Ian Saderholm '15
	Zoe Wolter '16	John Brady '16



Hamlet

directed by Ellen Mease

Roberts Theatre

November 21-23 - 7:30 PM

November 24 - 2 PM

Exploratorium:

Dancing about the economy

Dance Ensemble/ACTivate

directed by Celeste Miller

December 6-7 - 7:30 PM

December 8 - 1 PM

Balancing Act

directed by Lesley Delmenico

Flanagan Theatre

March 6-8 - 7:30 PM

March 9 - 2 PM

Abundance & Scarcity

choreographed by Celeste Miller

Flanagan Theatre

April 24-26 - 7:30 PM

April 27 - 2 PM