

MISALLIANCE REPERTORY THEATRE
PRESENTS

JM BARRIE'S

THE NEW WORD

DIRECTED
BY
BARBARA
ZAHORA



Bachtell

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

James Barrie's **THE NEW WORD**, one of four one-act plays that the author published under the title **ECHOES OF THE WAR**, became one of our best-loved works performed at ShawChicago. I think we all fell in love with the father and son in this story – two men who struggle to show their affection for one another on the night before the son goes off to fight in The Great War – and we wanted to share it once again with our Misalliance audience.

Beyond painting a portrait of an amusing and heartwarming family on the brink of great change, the play's themes are particularly resonant to us now. Back when the play was first performed in March of 1915, British citizens were still adjusting to the daily use of words like “war” and ranks like “second lieutenant” in their lives, as they had entered World War I only eight months prior. Our world changed dramatically almost two years ago with the introduction of a new virus and we're still adjusting to words like “pandemic” – along with the great upheaval to our usual existence that has come with it.

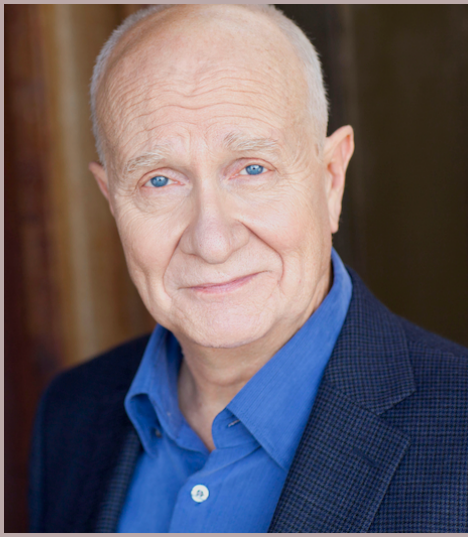
You'll often hear people these days saying, “In the Before Times...” and referencing the world as it was before coronavirus appeared. It's easy to imagine people doing the same thing back then, speaking longingly of times “before the war,” and thinking about a “normal” that seemed far away. We can't go back, of course – either to our youth or to the times before impactful life events change us. James Barrie seemed to have great sympathy for and fascination with this fact.

Second lieutenants in the King's Royal Rifle Corps (KRR) were junior commissioned officers, going to the front line trenches in places like The Battle of the Somme. J.R.R. Tolkien, author of **THE LORD OF THE RINGS**, was one during the war. The danger was great, and both the young men who fought for their country and the families they left behind knew that they would never be the same. Yet even in the danger and all the changes there were gifts to be found. Maturity, compassion, re-prioritizing the things and people that really matter – isn't that what we've been finding too?

I hope you enjoy your time with the Torrance family, on a very important night in their lives.

Barbara Zahora

MRT Associate Artistic Director



THE CAST



RICHARD HENZEL (JOHN TORRANCE)

is delighted to return to this play in which he appeared at ShawChicago Theatre, where he also appeared in *Noel Coward In Two Keys*, *Dear Liar*, *Heartbreak House*, *Misalliance*, *The Doctor's Dilemma*, *James Barrie's Quartets*, and his own solo show *Mark Twain In Person*. Other Chicago credits include: *Of Mice And Men* at **Steppenwolf**, *Return of the Hip Messiah* at **The Second City**, 1984 at **Lookingglass**; *Rap Master Ronnie* at the **Theatre Building**; *Huck Finn* at **The Goodman**; *Affluenza* and *The Action Against Sol Schumann* at **Victory Gardens**; 1776, *Grover's Corners*, *A Funny Thing...Forum*, *Pajama Game*, *West Side Story*, and *Gypsy* at **Ravinia**. **Regional:** *On Golden Pond* at **The Purple Rose**; *Heroes* at **Stormfield Theatre**, *Death of a Salesman* at **Human Race**; *Copenhagen*, *A Walk in the Woods*, and *The Price* at **Madison Repertory**; and *Hanging Fire*, *A Murder, a Mystery*, and *a Marriage*, and *The Count* at **Florida Stage**. Henzel is also narrator and publisher of *The Mark Twain in Person Audio Library*. Love to Jennie, Fred and Sam.

AUSTYN WILLIAMSON (ROGER TORRANCE)

is very honored to be making his **Misalliance Repertory Theatre** debut in *The New Word*. Previous voiceover credits include the *Innocent Dreams* radioplay project. Regional theatre credits include *The Tempest* (**Oak Park Festival Theatre**), *Rabbit Summer (u/s)* (**Redtwist Theatre**), *How To Defend Yourself (u/s)* (**Victory Gardens Theatre**), *Henry V* (**First Folio Theatre**), among others. He would like to thank Barbara, Daniel, and his talented cast mates for their collaboration and support!
www.austynwilliamson.com

THE CAST



MARY MICHELL (ELLEN TORRANCE)

first performed with ShawChicago Theatre Company in 1999, and fell in love with Shaw's wit, precision, powerful themes, and unique challenges for actors. She had the good fortune to work with and learn from Robert Scogin and his accomplished ShawChicago ensemble until the company's last season in 2018, for which she directed *Arms and the Man*. In Chicago, she has appeared at Oak Park Festival Theatre, Chicago Dramatists, Bailiwick Repertory, Drury Lane, The Shakespeare Project of Chicago, Illinois Theatre Center, The Ivanhoe Theatre and The Academy Playhouse and Ravinia. Regional work includes The Arena Stage (DC); Actors Theatre of Louisville; Mummars Theatre (Oklahoma City) Cherry County Playhouse in Traverse City MI). As Artistic Director for Misalliance Repertory, Mary hopes to continue Bob Scogin's legacy of honoring playwrights through deep exploration of their words, which allows us to give full voice to all the richness, clarity and humor the writer intended.



PRICILLA TORRES (EMMA TORRANCE)

is a Chicago based actor and is thrilled to be working with Misalliance Repertory Theatre. Recent credits include Georgie in *Spike Heels* (The Studio Theatre Tierra Del Sol), Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* (The Shakespeare Project of Chicago), Anne Bullen and Others in *Undiscovered Country*, *Henry VIII* (Oklahoma Shakespeare) and u/s Justine in *The Jigsaw Bride* (First Folio). She received her B.F.A. in Acting from UW-Stevens Point.
www.pricillatorres.com



THE CREW



BARBARA ZAHORA (DIRECTOR)

was a regular performer at ShawChicago for many years, where some of her favorite roles included Catherine in *Arms and the Man*, Hesione in *Heartbreak House*, the title roles in *Major Barbara* and *Candida*, Maud and Carlotta in *Coward in Two Keys*, Nora in *John Bull's Other Island*, and Maggie in *What Every Woman Knows*. Other acting credits include American Players Theatre, Colorado Shakespeare Theatre, Writers' Theatre, Oak Park Festival Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Northlight, the Goodman, Lookingglass and multiple appearances with Shakespeare Project of Chicago, where she served as associate artistic director for eight years. In 2018 Barbara became artistic director of Oak Park Festival Theatre, where she directed *The Tempest* in July 2021. Many thanks to all of you for supporting Misalliance, and to Bob Scogin for continuing to inspire us every day.

DANIEL MILLHOUSE (MANAGING DIRECTOR)

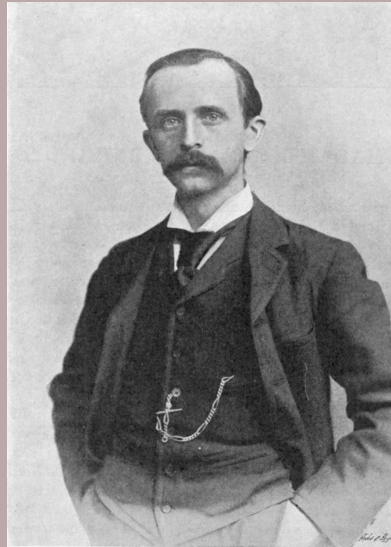
first worked with ShawChicago Theatre Company in the company's closing production of *The Doctor's Dilemma*. Daniel has been drawn to Shaw's wit and humor and the ways Shaw's characters react to each other and the world around them. Chicago Theatre: Buffalo Theatre Ensemble, The Shakespeare Project of Chicago, ShawChicago, A Crew of Patches, Remy Bumpo, and The Second City Training Center. Regional Theatres: Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Great Lakes Theater, Michigan Shakespeare Festival, and Great River Shakespeare Festival. Television: *Chicago Fire*. Motion Capture: *Call of Duty* Video Game Franchise. Voiceover: The Onion's *The Topical* Podcast and *The Vanishing Act*. Education: MFA - University of Wisconsin-Madison; BS - Eastern Michigan University. Daniel is an Acting Adjunct Professor at the College of DuPage and Roosevelt University, a proud member of AEA, and is represented by Big Mouth Talent.



GEORGE ZAHORA (AUDIO EDITING AND SOUND EFFECTS)

is a sound designer and composer who has worked extensively with the Shakespeare Project of Chicago, Oak Park Festival Theatre and other groups. He also composed music and created sound effects for the final few seasons at ShawChicago, and is therefore suitably excited to be working with Misalliance Rep.

J.M. BARRIE



Born on 9 May 1860, in Kirriemuir, Angus, J.M. Barrie was the seventh child of modestly successful weavers. He wrote that his birth was of such little note in his large family that what was celebrated on that day was the arrival of six new chairs. In the evenings, his mother told the children stories of her childhood and read to them, sparking in young Jamie a lifelong love of hearing and creating stories. You may recall that Peter Pan, his most famous character, is attracted to the Darling household because he is unable to resist the bedtime stories he hears while hovering just outside the nursery window. In 1884, The *St. James Gazette* published Barrie's first series of stories about a fictional Scottish town called Thrums. Within a few years he was a well-published writer in British magazines. A chance meeting with the young Llewelyn-Davies boys in Kensington Gardens led to a life-long friendship with the family, and the genesis of *Peter Pan, or The Boy Who Would Not Grow Up*. He gifted the copyright for *Peter Pan* – including the book, play and all associated sales – to the Great Ormond Hospital for Sick Children in London. The hospital continues to benefit from his generosity. Other well-known theatrical works include the *Echoes of the War* series of one-acts, *The Twelve-Pound Look*, *What Every Woman Knows*, and *The Admirable Crichton*. His first biographer, Denis McKail, describes Barrie's unique literary gift as “an almost telepathic self-spiriting into the emotions of others.”

Further reading:

J.M. Barrie and the Lost Boys by Andrew Birkin

Peter Pan and Other Plays by J.M. Barrie

J.M. Barrie by W. A. Darlington

BRITISH SOLDIERS IN WORLD WAR I

A TYPICAL DAY IN THE TRENCHES

- 5AM 'STAND-TO' (SHORT FOR 'STAND-TO-ARMS', MEANING TO BE ON HIGH-ALERT FOR ENEMY ATTACK) HALF AN HOUR BEFORE DAYLIGHT
- 5.30AM RUM RATION
- 6AM STAND-DOWN HALF AN HOUR AFTER DAYLIGHT
- 7AM BREAKFAST (USUALLY BACON AND TEA)
- AFTER 8AM CLEAN SELVES AND WEAPONS, TIDY TRENCH
- NOON DINNER
- AFTER DINNER SLEEP AND DOWNTIME
- 5PM TEA
- 6PM STAND-TO HALF AN HOUR BEFORE DUSK
- 6.30PM STAND-DOWN HALF AN HOUR AFTER DUSK
- 6.30PM ONWARDS WORK ALL NIGHT WITH SOME TIME FOR REST (PATROLS, DIGGING TRENCHES, PUTTING UP BARBED WIRE, GETTING STORES)

SOLDIERS ONLY GOT TO SLEEP IN THE AFTERNOON DURING DAYLIGHT AND AT NIGHT FOR AN HOUR AT A TIME. DURING REST TIME THEY WROTE LETTERS AND PLAYED CARD GAMES.

- FROM THE BBC WORLD WAR I

[HTTPS://WWW.BBC.CO.UK/PROGRAMMES/P01NB93Y](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/P01NB93Y)



MISALLIANCE

REPERTORY THEATRE

Misalliance Repertory Theatre is a group of artists collaborating to bring you the works of George Bernard Shaw and his literary kindred: hilarious and provocative plays, rooted in social commentary. As we explore these plays with our audiences, we hope to start a conversation about the kind of world we want to live in.

We welcome your partnership, and look forward to bringing you great theatre for many years to come. For more information, or to offer your support, visit us at misalliancerep.org.

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mary@misalliancerep.org

Daniel Millhouse, Managing Director
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Gary Alexander, Barbara Zahora, Associate Artistic Directors
Adrianne Cury, Outreach Coordinator
Alison Henderson, Fundraising Coordinator

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