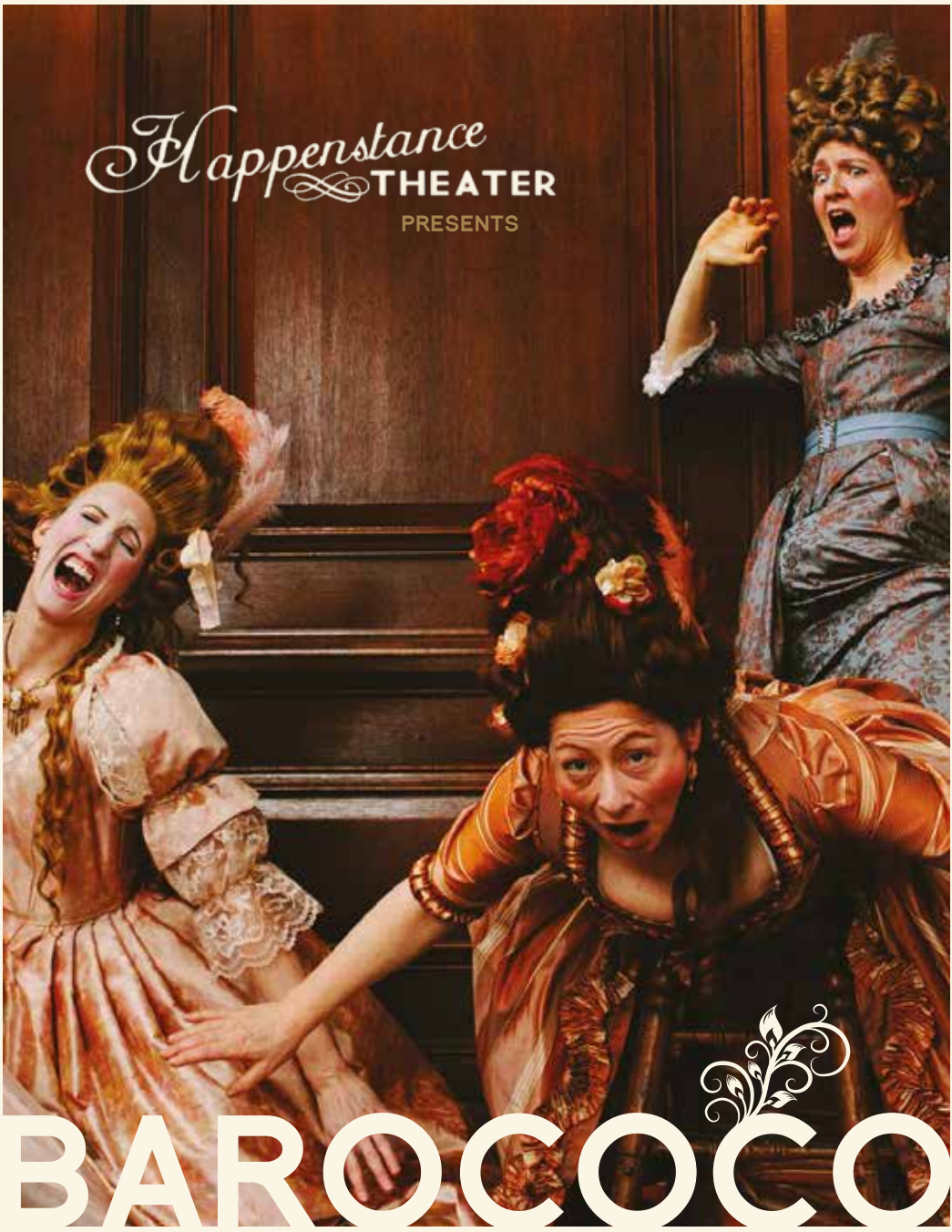


Devised and Written by

THE HAPPENSTANCE THEATER ENSEMBLE

Directed by **MARK JASTER**

and **SABRINA SELMA MANDELL**

59
59

THEATER B

FEBRUARY 9 – MARCH 6

Happenstance THEATER

PRESENTS

BAROCOCO

Devised and Written by

THE HAPPENSTANCE THEATER ENSEMBLE

Directed by

MARK JASTER

and

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Performers / Characters

GWEN GRASTORF
BARONESS CONSTANCE BLANDFORD PLAINVIEW

CALEB JASTER
LUCCIO PATATINO VON DUSSELKOPF

MARK JASTER
ASTORIO CAVALIERI

SABRINA SELMA MANDELL
COUNTESS OLYMPIA STROGANOVSKAYA

SARAH OLMSTED THOMAS
DAUPHINE MARIONETTE

ALEX VERNON
DUC LESLIE PAMPLEMOUSSE DE CITRON-PRESSÉ

DANIEL WEISSGLASS
LIGHTING DESIGN

SABRINA SELMA MANDELL
COSTUME DESIGN AND WIG CONSTRUCTION

NANCY MENDEZ
COSTUME CONSTRUCTION

DARIELLE SHANDLER
STAGE MANAGER

The European "Baroque" period fostered a dramatic, highly ornate, and elaborate style that flourished from the early 17th to mid-18th century. It then evolved into the even more extravagant "Rococo." Our title is a portmanteau of these words. The end of this period saw the privilege enjoyed by the French Aristocracy, the 1% of their time, implode with Revolution.

In *BAROCOCO*, we portray oblivious entitlement, elegance, and excess on the brink of extinction.

We have chosen to tackle the complex and ornate style of the late Baroque within the limitations of a spare design. This has allowed us to focus on period restraint, manners, and style through essentialized gesture and language, and to unleash the comic potential of all that structure as it crumbles. We drew inspiration for the situational premise from *Last Letters: Prisons and Prisoners of the French Revolution* (1987) by Olivier Blanc. We hope you will find the play resonant.

Voting is a democratic alternative to the guillotine.

- Mark Jaster & Sabrina Selma Mandell



Music, References and Inspirations

L'ALY RUPALICH
by CPE Bach (1714-1788)

SARABANDE FROM SUITE IN D MINOR
by G.F. Handel (1650-1785)

MINUET II FROM SUITE IN G MINOR
by JP. Rameau (1683-1764)

THE ARRIVAL OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA FROM SOLOMON
by G.F. Handel

LARGO FROM WINTER IN THE FOUR SEASONS
by A. Vivaldi (1678-1741)

SONATA IN D MINOR
by D. Scarlatti (1685-1757)

LARGHETTO FROM CONCERTO FOR KEYBOARD AND ORCHESTRA IN C
by Antonio Salieri

And other musical selections of the period.

THE DANCING MASTER (1725)
by Pierre Rameau

ART OF DANCING (1782)
by Soame Jenyns

LAST LETTERS: PRISONS AND PRISONERS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION (1987)
by Olivier Blanc

Paintings of **Antoine Watteau**, **François Boucher**, **Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun** and **Jean-Honoré Fragonard**.

Music for the original production chosen, composed, and arranged by Karen Hansen. Period Dance and Movement guidance by **Caroline Copeland** from The New York Baroque Dance Co. and Fight consultation with **Brad Waller,** founding member of The International Order of the Sword and the Pen.

GWEN GRASTORF

(Baroness Constance Blandford Plainview)



Gwen Grastorf is a performer and actor based in the DC metro area. She has been devising with Happenstance since 2009 and has been a company member since 2012. She is also the Social Media Maven for Happenstance. Gwen has worked elsewhere in DC with Constellation Theatre Company, Faction of Fools, Taffety Punk, Washington Revels, Rorschach Theatre, and the Tarot Reading. Gwen was raised in Frederick, Maryland and got her degree at the University of MD, College Park.

www.GwenGrastorf.com

CALEB JASTER

(Musician/Luccio Patatino Von Dusselkopf)



Caleb Jaster is a Brooklyn-based pianist and freelance arts administrator, splitting his time as a Publicity Associate at Classical Music Communications and Royal Road Productions as the Executive Assistant. He has been involved in the NYC classical music scene for the last 6 years, working behind the scenes to support organizations including: Baruch Performing Arts Center, Cantata Profana, Heartbeat Opera, The Little Orchestra Society, Shuman Associates, plus the New Hampshire Independent School of Music and Staunton Music Festival. He is a graduate of Sarah Lawrence College, where he studied harpsichord and piano with Carsten Schmidt.

MARK JASTER

(Co-Director/Astorio Cavalieri)



Mark Jaster is Artistic Co-Director of Happenstance Theater with the abstract subtitle, "Structure & Ground." He has co-directed and appeared in all Happenstance productions since its founding in 2006, winning Theatre Washington's Helen Hayes/Robert Prosky Award for his performance in ***Impossible! A Happenstance Circus*** in 2016. He studied mime with French masters Étienne Decroux and Marcel Marceau and served as Mr. Marceau's teaching assistant in a 1980's series of seminars in Michigan. Performance credits beyond Happenstance include 35 years as a featured act at the Maryland Renaissance Festival, 20 years with the Big Apple Circus' Clown Care Unit, many years as Drosselmeyer in the Maryland Youth Ballet's ***Nutcracker***, performances with the Washington and Cambridge Revels, and frequent collaborations with world-class musicians: the late great jazz bassist Keter Betts, Celtic Harper Sue Richards, and Piffaro, the Renaissance band. He teaches frequently in artist residencies, theaters, and academic programs and has served as mime and movement consultant for many DC area theaters, including The Shakespeare Theatre Company, Ford's Theatre, Round House Theatre, Theater J, Olney Theatre Center, Constellation Theatre Company, Adventure Theatre, Imagination Stage, and Baltimore's Center Stage.

www.MarkJaster.com

SABRINA MANDELL

(Co-Director/Costume Designer/Countess Olympia Stroganovskaya)



Sabrina Mandell is the founder, Artistic Co-Director, Executive Director, and "Visionary Tornado" of Happenstance Theater. Sabrina has written, produced and performed prolifically since the company's founding in 2006. She was nominated for a Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Actress in 2017 and has won two Helen Hayes Awards for Outstanding Costume Design. Sabrina performed for 10 years with the Big Apple Circus' Clown Care Program in DC and Baltimore and has taught Theatrical Clown and Physical Comedy at the Shakespeare Theatre DC, Everyman Theatre in Baltimore, Round House Theatre, Duke Ellington School of the Arts, and the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. She is also a poet, visual artist, and graphic designer.

www.SabrinaSelmaMandell.com

SARAH OLMSTED THOMAS

(Dauphine Marionette)



Sarah Olmsted Thomas is a fifth generation performing artist. In 2012, she joined Happenstance Theater with whom she has devised 10 full-length productions. Sarah is also half of the Jim Henson Foundation-awarded Alex and Olmsted, which has played Symphony Space in New York as well as festivals in Denmark, South Korea, and Canada. Sarah trained with the Pig Iron Theatre Company in Philadelphia and Le Samovar, École de Clowns, in Paris. B.A., Sarah Lawrence College.

www.AlexAndOlmsted.com

ALEX VERNON

(Duc Leslie Pamplemousse de Citron-Pressé)



Alex Vernon has been a Happenstance company member since 2012. He is a DC-based actor and puppeteer whose previous work has been seen with Constellation Theatre Company, Pointless Theatre, Imagination Stage, Adventure Theatre, WSC Avant Bard, and Washington Revels. He is also the other half of Alex and Olmsted, with which he creates original puppet works that have toured internationally.

www.AlexAndOlmsted.com

HAPPENSTANCE THEATER

Happenstance Theater is a professional company committed to devising, producing, and touring original, performer-created visual, poetic theater. Our ensemble is made up of multi-talented performers who craft all aspects of our work from concept to realization. Under the artistic co-direction of Mark Jaster and Sabrina Selma Mandell, we harvest imagery from the past and re-contextualize it in works that address eternal themes of life and death. With the simplest means — humor, music, silence, text, and beauty — we seek to elevate the moment when the performers and audience meet, to lift the encounter beyond the daily and pedestrian into the realms of dreams, poetry, and art. Meaning is often discovered by happenstance.

www.HappenstanceTheater.com

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SPECIAL THANKS

The Share Fund, Morgan Fund at Seattle Foundation, Nora Roberts Foundation, Charles Hazlehurst Moura Family Foundation, Baltimore Community Foundation, Marilyn Meyerhoff and Sam Feldman, and all those who have donated and continue to individually support Happenstance financially and with elbow grease and love, including Nancy Rodriguez, Nancy Mendez, April & Jerry Blum, Sharon Crissinger, Leslie Swan Photography, and Photos by Kintz. Thank you to Amy Taylor for providing the harpsichord and to Karen Hansen for loan of the string drum and gift of the cello, to Peter Asbill & Lizzie Fortunato for van parking, and thanks to Tori Munõz, Jen Diamond and those who helped with load-in and tech. Thank you also to everyone at 59E59 Theaters.

BAROCOCO

Was originally co-produced by the Capital Fringe Festival as part of their Curated Series and premiered at Arena Stage in the Kogod Cradle in July 2018. It received the TheatreMania award for "Best Comedy of the Fringe." It was then remounted at The Baltimore Theater Project. We are delighted to share ***BAROCOCO*** with a broader audience in New York through the generosity of our donors and in collaboration with 59E59 Theaters.



SUPPORT HAPPENSTANCE!
MAKE A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION!

Happenstance Theater is a sponsored project of *Fractured Atlas,* a non-profit arts service organization. Your donation helps us continue to pay our performers, tour and remount our standing repertoire, and afford things like insurance and office supplies. You are our sustenance.

You can donate online at:

https://fundraising.fracturedatlas.org/happenstance-theater

or send check/money order contributions to:

Happenstance Theater, 12718 Veirs Mill Rd., Rockville, MD 20853

Checks should be made payable to **'FRACTURED ATLAS'** with **'Happenstance Theater'** in the memo line.

Contributions on behalf of Happenstance Theater are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law. www.fracturedatlas.org

FRACTURED ATLAS



CURATOR'S NOTE

Welcome to ***BAROCOCO***, brought to us by the aptly self-described visionary tornadoes of Happenstance Theater. Are they just a bunch of clowns or astute commentators on the absurd behaviors of an over-privileged upper class? Why not both? This gorgeous show, devised by the performing ensemble, brilliantly showcases each member's distinctive talents of performance and design and their collective creation is a feast for both the eyes and the mind.



VAL DAY
Artistic Director

59E59 THEATERS STAFF

ELYSABETH KLEINHANS President/Founding Artistic Director
VAL DAY Artistic Director
BRIAN BEIRNE Managing Director
ELIZA JOHNSON Finance Associate/Office Manager
CATE PUGLIA Receptionist/Administrative Assistant
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CRISTINA GREENFIELD Marketing Manager
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ANDREA ARVANIGIAN Box Office Associate
JORDAN ELMAN Box Office Associate
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ANNE RUTTER Usher
BENJI SILLS Usher
CHRISTIAN MIRANDA Usher
FLOWER RIOS Usher
ISRAEL ORENGO Usher
ITAI ADAM VAGNER Usher
JOSCA MOORE Usher
JOVIAN DIXON Usher
LILY WELSH Usher
MICIAH WALLACE Usher
NATALIE LILAVOIS YUSTY Usher
RICHARD RODRIGUEZ Usher
TAYLOR BROADARD Usher
VICTORIA PARKER Usher
JOHN D. IVY Theater Technician
KAT KHELLBLAU Theater Technician
SAM DAVIS Theater Technician

NEXT IN THEATER B **MARCH 18 – APRIL 10**



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

59E59 Theaters reside on the traditional homelands of the Lenni-Lenape People on the Lenape Island of Mannahatta. We acknowledge the Lenni-Lenape as the original people of the land who were forcefully removed during colonization resulting in erased and excluded peoples and culture. We are grateful for the opportunity to work on the land and honor their elders, past and present alongside future generations for their stewardship and continuing relationship with their territory.

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