THE GREAT WAR THEATRE PROJECT
MESSENGERS OF A BITTER TRUTH

Paul Nash. Wire, 1918. Courtesy of The Imperial War Museum.

BOSTON ATHENÆUM
OCTOBER 5, 2014
THE GREAT WAR THEATRE PROJECT
MESSengers OF A BITTER TRUTH

ACTING ENSEMBLE
Inés de la Cruz
Ely Harris
Laura Menzie
Josh Santora

SCENES

PROLOGUE  The Bitter Truth

THE WALTZ  The Picnic
            War Is Declared

BITTER REALITY  In the Trenches
               Women in War
               The Front
               The Christmas Truce, December 1914
               Fireworks
               Barbed Wire Death
               Gas Attack
               Wounded
               The Telegram
               Death
               All Quiet on the Western Front
               The Pall Bearers
               The Grave

ELEGY  The War to End All Wars
        The Next Generation – Why War?
        I Am the Grass

The performance runs 25 minutes without intermission.
An audience talk-back will follow.
PROLOGUE

PAUL NASH, 1889 – 1946
British, soldier, commissioned war artist

THE WALTZ

FRANK WEDEKIND, 1864 – 1918
German, playwright, excerpt from Spring Awakening, premiered in Berlin 1906

EDWARD THOMAS, 1878 – 1917
British, essayist, war poet, killed in France

ALFRED LICHTENSTEIN, 1889 – 1914
German, writer, died of wounds in France

VIOLET ASQUITH, 1887 – 1969
British, daughter of war-time British prime minister H.H. Asquith, oldest brother killed in France

RUPERT BROOKE, 1887 – 1915
British, war poet, died on the way to the Battle of Gallipoli

VERA BRITTAINE, 1893 – 1970
British, VAD nurse, writer, a life-long pacifist after the war; her fiancé, her only brother, and her two closest friends killed in the war

ALAN SEEGER, 1888 – 1916
American, poet, work published posthumously, killed during the Battle of the Somme, uncle of folk singer/activist Pete Seeger

VIOLET CECIL, 1872 – 1958
British, mother of George Cecil who was killed in France in 1914

GERRIT ENGELKE, 1890 – 1918
German, expressionist poet and writer, died of wounds in France

ALFRED ANDERSON, 1896 – 2005
Scottish, last surviving British soldier of the Christmas truce, 1914

FRANCIS LEDWIDGE, 1887 – 1917
Irish, war poet, killed in France

ERNST STADLER, 1883 – 1914
German, expressionist poet, killed in France

SHIRLEY MILLARD, dates unknown
American, VAD in France from March 1918 - November 1918

CYNTHIA ASQUITH, 1887 – 1960
British, daughter-in-law of British prime minister H.H. Asquith, older brother killed in Egypt, younger brother killed in France

ROY C. HOOVER, 1894 – 1918
American, lieutenant, died of wounds in France, three days before Armistice

ERICH MARIA REMARQUE, 1898 – 1970
German, novelist, All Quiet on the Western Front

ELEGY

PAUL VALÉRY, 1871 – 1945
French, poet, essayist, philosopher

JEAN DE LA VILLE DE MIRMONT
1886 – 1914, French, poet, short story author, died of wounds in France

IRENE RATHBONE, 1892 – 1980
British, actress, VAD nurse, novelist

CARL SANDBURG, 1878 – 1967
American, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet and author
Born in England during World War II, my family history was steeped in stories of World War I and the impact it had on my parents and grandparents. My maternal grandfather died in the war, and my hallway in Cambridge has photos of him in his uniform standing proudly next to my grandmother, my mother, and her brothers. I have always been aware of the horrors of The Great War, and that it clearly was never “the war to end all wars.”

As an adult, I feared that my American friends would be sent to Vietnam and, later, that my own son might be drafted to fight in the Falklands or in the Gulf Wars. Now I have young grandchildren, and still carry that fear for them deep in my soul. As a pacifist, I have always asked myself the question, “Why War?”

Working with Susan Werbe on this piece has inspired my artistic process. The concept is simple. The motifs are clear. Our approach to tell the story of this war through video, music, movement, and dramatized text reinforces the power of theatre as an entry point for audiences to experience and understand an event that changed our culture and history and ultimately the way we now live our lives. I am indebted to all the actors who have helped bring to life my creative ideas and The Great War Theatre Project.

Nearly three years ago, I conceived this project to commemorate the centenary of The Great War, envisioning a multi-media theatre piece incorporating spoken words, images, movement, and music. The concept—and the words themselves—grew out of my personal journey of exploration, a journey that has taken me to collections in US and British libraries, giving me opportunities to view original writings—such as a letter from the English poet Isaac Rosenberg, a letter from the trenches, an excerpt of which you will hear. The words of his letter are as compelling and real today as they must have been when he wrote them in 1917.

From the outset, The Great War Theatre Project has been a wonderful collaboration with Rosalind Thomas-Clark, whose artistic vision has brought the original concept to life with sensitivity and power. The people whose words our extraordinary actors will speak—whatever their views of the war, on whichever side they fought, whether they survived or not—were caught up in a cataclysmic chapter in human history. It is our hope that their words will bring this piece of history alive for you and will pay tribute not only to these men and women, but also to the tragic loss—on both sides—of so much human potential.
**CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM**

**INÉS DE LA CRUZ**
*Acting Ensemble*
Inés hails from Boston. She has received training from Company One’s Professional Development for Actors program, The Actor’s Workshop, and Boston Casting’s Media Performance Institute. She is featured in various MassArt student films, ESL, and Spanish language educational videos. Inés has been a member of Escena Latina Teatro (ELT) since 2006, and has performed in various company productions. She was recently cast as Anyula in ELT’s production of the Argentine play, *La Nona* by Roberto Cossa. Inés is excited and proud to work with TC Squared and form part of the amazing cast of *The Great War Theatre Project*.

**ELY HARRIS**
*Acting Ensemble*
Ely is a recent graduate from Bucknell University where he appeared in many of the university’s theatre and dance performances. He graduated from Boston Arts Academy in 2009 as a theatre major. Some of his acting credits include: *Night Train, Bolina, Macbeth, No Exit, and Pride and Prejudice*. Ely was a featured dancer in two Bucknell Dance Company Concerts where he performed *Choreographic Offering* by José Limón. He’s so pleased to be a member of the cast of *The Great War Theatre Project*.

**LAURA MENZIE**
*Acting Ensemble*
Laura is thrilled to be a part of such a unique theatre piece as *The Great War Theatre Project*. Some Boston credits include *Soul Mates* with Boston Actors Theatre, *Songs of the Dragons Flying to the Heavens* with Apollinaire Theatre Company and the IRNE nominated *Nina Variations* with Brown Box Theatre Project. Laura has also worked with Brown Box for *Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Macbeth*, and two devised collaborations with Icaro Teatro in Queretaro, Mexico. She holds a BA in theatre from Clark University and studied at the Academia dell’arte.

**JOSH SANTORA**
*Acting Ensemble*
Josh, a Jamaica Plain native, is ecstatic to rejoin the theatre community after nearly a decade in other worlds. He began his thespian journey as a theatre major at Boston Arts Academy, where his roles included Egeus in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*; Lt. Byrd in *A Soldier’s Story*; Tiger in *Fresh Flags of America*; Matt Galloway and Aaron McKinney in *The Laramie Project*; and multiple roles in *Grand Magic*. Whoopi Goldberg awarded Josh the accolade of Best Male Actor for his role in *The Lost Elevator* at the Emerson High School Theatre Festival. He was assistant to director Ros Thomas-Clark for the production of *You Must Not Speak*. Josh is delighted to be a member of the TC Squared Ensemble in this world premiere of *The Great War Theatre Project*. 
CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

ELLE BORDERS
Understudy
Elle holds a BFA from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts where she studied with the Atlantic Theatre Company. She worked on the ABC pilot “Boston’s Finest” (2010) and was featured in the short film “Sung” (2012). Her most recent credits are Actor 6/Black Woman in We are Proud to Present a Presentation... (Company One), First Voice/ Sweet in The Purple Flower, and She in 27 Tips for Banishing the Blues with Sleeping Weazel Theater Company. She is excited to embark on this adventure with The Great War Theatre Project and she graciously thanks her friends and family for their continuous support.

BRANDON G. GREEN
Understudy
Brandon’s previous acting credits include: Lloyd Boateng in One Man, Two Guvnors (Cape Rep), Marty in ..U.M.. (Brandeis) which he also wrote, and Actor 2/Black Man in We are Proud to Present a Presentation... (Company One). He holds an MFA from Brandeis University and a BA from Alabama State University.

ROSALIND THOMAS-CLARK
AGSM, LRAM, (London, UK), MA (Brown University)
Artistic Director
Rosalind has worked professionally as an actor and director for stage, radio, and film, but her passion has always been the development of arts and education. As founder and director, she was involved in several start-up arts organizations in Britain, New Zealand, and the US. She was the Founding Chair of Theatre at Boston Arts Academy, and continues coaching professional actors at Company One Theatre, where she also serves on the theatre’s board of directors. Committed to theatre for social change, Rosalind started her own theatre company in 1999—TC Squared: New Theatre Outside the Box—and directs productions with local playwrights and actors which address relevant contemporary issues. Among her many honors and awards, she was the recipient of a SURDNA Arts Teacher’s Fellowship to study with Augusto Boal in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, at the Center for the Theatre of the Oppressed as well as Boston’s Teacher of the Year Award in 2005, and a SURDNA Artist Colony Grant in 2008. She lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts, near her three children and five grandchildren.

SUSAN WERBE
Executive Producer/Dramaturg
Susan is an independent scholar who for thirty years has pursued her interest in the social, cultural, and political history of early 20th Century England, including a focus on the social and cultural history of World War One. In creating The Great War Theatre Project spoken word script, Susan has engaged in WWI primary source research at the Special Collections of the Boston Public Library, the Bodleian Library and Balliol College Library of Oxford University, and the Berg Collection of English and American Literature at the New York Public Library. In March 2013, she was an invited panelist at the National World War I Museum’s International Centennial
FERNADINA CHAN, Choreographer
Fernadina Chan is the founding artistic dean and chair of the dance department of Boston Arts Academy (BAA). She retired in 2012 after teaching in Boston Public Schools for 34 years. Ms. Chan has received numerous awards: Surdna Arts Teacher Fellowship in 2001; Teacher of the Year from the International Network of Schools for the Advancement of Arts Education in 2005; Boston Educator of the Year in 2011 and 2013 Boston Dance Alliance’s Dance Champion to name a few. As an artist, Ms. Chan holds a long list of performance and choreographic credits include television, film, and stage in Hong Kong, the US, and Canada. Her latest project “Continuum Dance Project” reconnects BAA dance alumni in order to experiment and create new work collaboratively. She is a certified GYROKINESIS® and GYROTONIC® instructor.

KEVIN BLANCHETTE
aka “The Mad Psyentist,” Composer
Kevin is a Brooklyn-based music producer, engineer, composer, sound designer, and overall artist. With a degree in Audio Production and over ten years of working experience, Kevin has produced over a dozen full length albums, singles, and EPs with various artists, including his own solo instrumental album. Some of his works have been featured with the MLS team, New York Red Bulls, on the BET network, three independent films, and a documentary. This is Kevin’s second score for a theatrical event. Aside from being an accomplished music producer, he has also played guitar and bass for different bands in New York. For more information and a detailed scope of Kevin’s work, please check out www.themadpsyentist.com

VERONICA WELLS, Videographer
Veronica is a Boston native. She majored in theater at the Boston Arts Academy, and majored in film at Massachusetts College of Art and Design where she obtained her BFA. She is a member of the local Latino theatre organization, Escena Latina Teatro, and is a video freelancer. She is honored to have been a part of the creative development of The Great War Theatre Project.

MATT TUPPER, Technical Director
Matt is a drama teacher and the technical director at The Winsor School in Boston. He worked previously at the American Overseas School of Rome and the Academia Nationale dell Arte Dramatica. He summers in Newport, RI where you can find him working at the Newport Children’s Theatre and the Theatre at St. Michael's Camp. His long association with Ros Thomas-Clark has led him to this adventure with The Great War Theatre Project.

JENNIFER VAREKAMP
Costume Designer
Jennifer received her BFA from Massachusetts College of Art and Design and her Ed.M. from Harvard University. She also studied fashion design at London College of Fashion, costume design in Florence, and fashion and jewelry
design at Domus Academy in Milan. She is an Associate Professor in Fashion Design at MassArt and was previously the Costume Director at Boston Arts Academy. She has worked for several theaters and costume shops in Boston and Chicago, including the Steppenwolf Theatre. She has designed costumes for shows presented at Boston Symphony Hall, the Boston Center for the Arts, and the Edinburgh Theatre Festival in Scotland. Jennifer’s awards include: MassArt Foundation Fellow in 2012 with travel and research in India, selected participant in the “Creative Industries and Sustainability” tour of Germany in 2009, Surdna Arts Teacher Fellow in 2005, Martin Arts Connection Award 1999, and Ronald William Lane Designer Award Recipient 1999.

**KATE HOLLAND, Script Advisor**
Kate trained in London as an actor and director at the Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art and with Karen Kohlhaas of Atlantic Theatre Company. She has performed in New York, regional theatre, and international arts festivals. Directing credits include: *Little Wing* as part of a Field Artist Residency, *Cloud 9* at the Drayton Theatre in London, *Henry VI Part 1* at the Fall Festival of Shakespeare in Lenox, MA, *Bongani* in FringeNYC 2011, and the solo shows *Travels with a Masked Man* starring John Hadden and *The Actual Dance* starring Sam Simon. Kate has co-produced and directed *June and Nancy* in FringeNYC 2012, and *Clear Cold Place* and *A Bright Room Called Day* with Vilde Chaya Collective. Kate co-wrote and directed a new play, *No Provenance*, with longtime collaborator Caroline Prugh, which appeared in FringeNYC 2014.

**STEVE COHEN, Historical Advisor**
Steve taught high school history for fifteen years and is in his nineteenth year at Tufts University. He is a Senior Lecturer in Education and also teaches courses in the Peace and Justice and the American Studies programs as well as being an Adjunct in the History Department. He has worked on educational projects beyond the classroom, editing and writing anthologies to accompany the public television documentaries *Vietnam: A Television History* and *Eyes On The Prize*. He has also been working with WGBH on some of their websites for teachers. Steve was a Program Associate with Facing History and Ourselves for two decades and has written articles about teaching controversial issues like the Vietnam War, the dropping of the Atomic Bomb, and the Holocaust. He was the recipient of the Lerman-Neubauer Prize for Outstanding Teaching and Advising in 2003 at Tufts University. He was voted Professor of the Year by the Tufts Student Senate in the spring of 2007. He was voted Professor of the Year by the Tufts Democrats in the spring of 2010.

**PHYLIS BRETHOLTZ, Photographer**
Phyllis taught English at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School for nearly thirty year, leaving to focus on her photography career. She has created both writer and actor headshots, and has been visual archivist for Boston Arts Academy since its inception in 1998. She was principal photographer for the book *From the Heart of Cambridge: The Longfellow Oral History Project*, published in 2011. She is involved in local Cambridge politics, and has created portraits for the exhibit “Palestinians in Cambridge: Stories from the Diaspora” which was exhibited at the Cambridge Multicultural Arts Cen-
Phyllis is a member of the Board of Advocates of Boston Arts Academy, a Commissioner on both the Cambridge Women’s Commission and the Cambridge Arts Council. She has documented the creation process of *The Great War Theatre Project*.

**Kelly Mastracchio, Graphic Designer**

Kelly is a consultant and educator who works with non-profits, schools, and small businesses on a wide range of projects, including curriculum design, management, and marketing and communications. She designed the title art and program for *The Great War Theatre Project* and other projects for TC Squared. kellymastracchio.com

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**WE ARE GRATENT** to the following actors who participated in *The Great War Theatre Project*’s two-day workshop in January of this year, enabling Artistic Director Rosalind Thomas-Clark to explore her creative concept for this piece: David Castillo, Alex Castillo-Nunez, Raiza Cheng, Inés de la Cruz, Jadira Figueroa, Gianella Flores, Anthony Goss, Jordan Lloyd, Danny Mourino, Nikki Prefontaine, Josh Santora.

**SPECIAL THANKS** to Dylan Fort and Douglas Williams who appear in the video and represent the youth of today. Their honesty and energy added immeasurably to the power of the video.

**A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU**

We are deeply grateful to Professor Arianne Chernock, Boston University’s History Department, for hosting the first performance of *The Great War Theatre Project: Messengers of a Bitter Truth*.

**SPECIAL THANKS**


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**TO BOOK A PERFORMANCE** of *The Great War Theatre Project*, please contact Susan Werbe at s.werbe@verizon.net or 617.519.8219.
THE SPOKEN WORD


Cross, Tim, ed. The Lost Voices of World War I. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989.


Hoover, Roy C. From the Fannie Hoover Lang and Bickford Lang Family Papers.


**PAINTINGS**


A complete bibliography for online sources for archival still images and film footage is available.
TC Squared encourages and produces staged readings of new works by Boston-based artists who are now writing and acting in the professional theatre. Our role is to mentor young artists to reach diverse audiences through socially relevant theatre, which challenges opinions and pushes artistic boundaries to produce transformative theatre.

Rosalind Thomas-Clark
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

FOUNDING BOARD MEMBERS
Erika Cesar
Raiza Cheng
Gabriella Ciambrone
Jadira Figueroa
Nikki Prefontaine

HONORARY BOARD MEMBERS
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