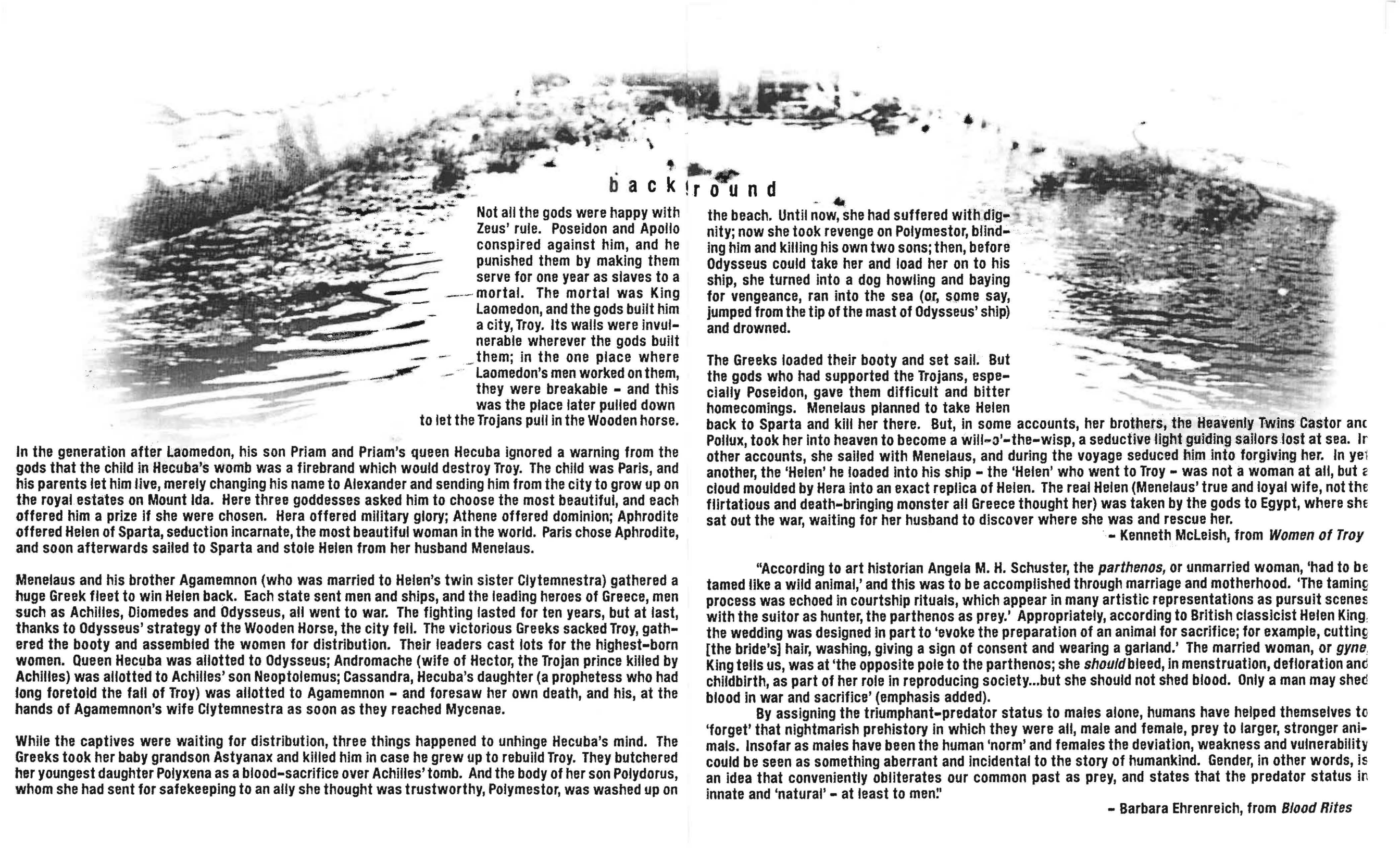


bennington college drama presents



**troy women**  
adapted from euripides by karen hartman

thursday friday saturday december 3 4 5 1998 8:00pm  
matinee saturday 2:00pm margot tenney theatre



## background

Not all the gods were happy with Zeus' rule. Poseidon and Apollo conspired against him, and he punished them by making them serve for one year as slaves to a mortal. The mortal was King Laomedon, and the gods built him a city, Troy. Its walls were invulnerable wherever the gods built them; in the one place where Laomedon's men worked on them, they were breakable – and this was the place later pulled down

to let the Trojans pull in the Wooden horse.

In the generation after Laomedon, his son Priam and Priam's queen Hecuba ignored a warning from the gods that the child in Hecuba's womb was a firebrand which would destroy Troy. The child was Paris, and his parents let him live, merely changing his name to Alexander and sending him from the city to grow up on the royal estates on Mount Ida. Here three goddesses asked him to choose the most beautiful, and each offered him a prize if she were chosen. Hera offered military glory; Athene offered dominion; Aphrodite offered Helen of Sparta, seduction incarnate, the most beautiful woman in the world. Paris chose Aphrodite, and soon afterwards sailed to Sparta and stole Helen from her husband Menelaus.

Menelaus and his brother Agamemnon (who was married to Helen's twin sister Clytemnestra) gathered a huge Greek fleet to win Helen back. Each state sent men and ships, and the leading heroes of Greece, men such as Achilles, Diomedes and Odysseus, all went to war. The fighting lasted for ten years, but at last, thanks to Odysseus' strategy of the Wooden Horse, the city fell. The victorious Greeks sacked Troy, gathered the booty and assembled the women for distribution. Their leaders cast lots for the highest-born women. Queen Hecuba was allotted to Odysseus; Andromache (wife of Hector, the Trojan prince killed by Achilles) was allotted to Achilles' son Neoptolemus; Cassandra, Hecuba's daughter (a prophetess who had long foretold the fall of Troy) was allotted to Agamemnon – and foresaw her own death, and his, at the hands of Agamemnon's wife Clytemnestra as soon as they reached Mycenae.

While the captives were waiting for distribution, three things happened to unhinge Hecuba's mind. The Greeks took her baby grandson Astyanax and killed him in case he grew up to rebuild Troy. They butchered her youngest daughter Polyxena as a blood-sacrifice over Achilles' tomb. And the body of her son Polydorus, whom she had sent for safekeeping to an ally she thought was trustworthy, Polymestor, was washed up on

the beach. Until now, she had suffered with dignity; now she took revenge on Polymestor, blinding him and killing his own two sons; then, before Odysseus could take her and load her on to his ship, she turned into a dog howling and baying for vengeance, ran into the sea (or, some say, jumped from the tip of the mast of Odysseus' ship) and drowned.

The Greeks loaded their booty and set sail. But the gods who had supported the Trojans, especially Poseidon, gave them difficult and bitter homecomings. Menelaus planned to take Helen

back to Sparta and kill her there. But, in some accounts, her brothers, the Heavenly Twins Castor and Pollux, took her into heaven to become a will-o'-the-wisp, a seductive light guiding sailors lost at sea. In other accounts, she sailed with Menelaus, and during the voyage seduced him into forgiving her. In yet another, the 'Helen' he loaded into his ship – the 'Helen' who went to Troy – was not a woman at all, but a cloud moulded by Hera into an exact replica of Helen. The real Helen (Menelaus' true and loyal wife, not the flirtatious and death-bringing monster all Greece thought her) was taken by the gods to Egypt, where she sat out the war, waiting for her husband to discover where she was and rescue her.

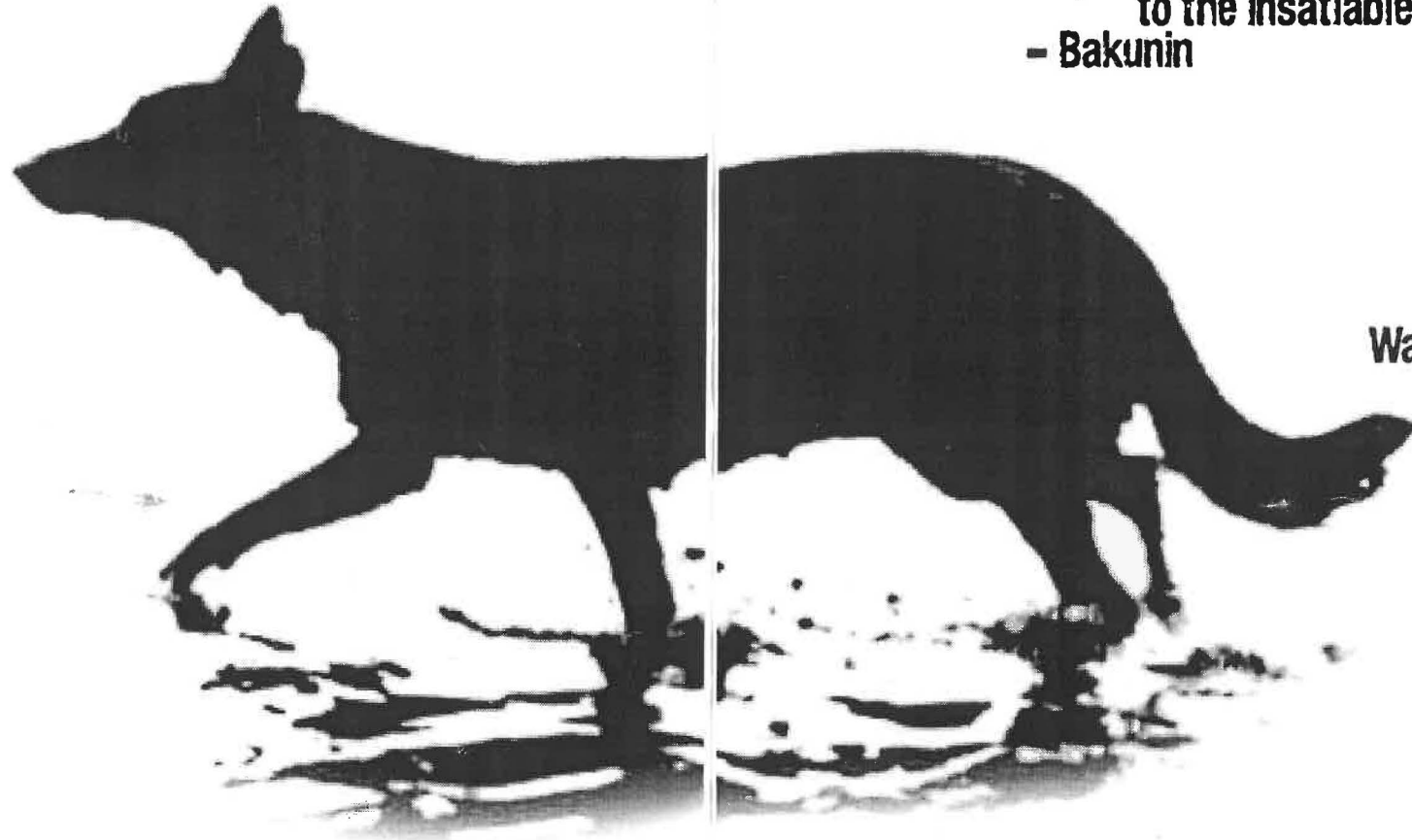
– Kenneth McLeish, from *Women of Troy*

"According to art historian Angela M. H. Schuster, the *parthenos*, or unmarried woman, 'had to be tamed like a wild animal,' and this was to be accomplished through marriage and motherhood. 'The taming process was echoed in courtship rituals, which appear in many artistic representations as pursuit scenes with the suitor as hunter, the *parthenos* as prey.' Appropriately, according to British classicist Helen King, the wedding was designed in part to 'evoke the preparation of an animal for sacrifice; for example, cutting [the bride's] hair, washing, giving a sign of consent and wearing a garland.' The married woman, or *gyne*, King tells us, was at 'the opposite pole to the *parthenos*; she *should* bleed, in menstruation, defloration and childbirth, as part of her role in reproducing society...but she should not shed blood. Only a man may shed blood in war and sacrifice' (emphasis added).

By assigning the triumphant-predator status to males alone, humans have helped themselves to 'forget' that nightmarish prehistory in which they were all, male and female, prey to larger, stronger animals. Insofar as males have been the human 'norm' and females the deviation, weakness and vulnerability could be seen as something aberrant and incidental to the story of humankind. Gender, in other words, is an idea that conveniently obliterates our common past as prey, and states that the predator status is innate and 'natural' – at least to men."

– Barbara Ehrenreich, from *Blood Rites*

Is it not wonderful for a man, having been born a man,  
to die at the hands of another man and then,  
with his quiver and bow at his side,  
lie on the ground as a corpse?  
– Mongolian proverb from the time of Genghis Khan



All religions are cruel, all founded on blood;  
for all rest principally on the idea of sacrifice –  
that is, on the perpetual immolation of humanity  
to the insatiable vengeance of divinity.  
– Bakunin

War is like love;  
it always finds a way.  
– Bertolt Brecht

So elemental is the human need  
to endow the shedding of blood with some great  
and even sublime  
significance  
that it renders the intellect almost entirely helpless.  
– Martin van Creveld

It makes no difference what men think of war ...  
War endures.  
As well ask men what they think of stone.  
War was always here.  
Before man was,  
war waited for him.  
The ultimate trade awaiting the ultimate practitioner.  
– Cormac McCarthy

**SOLIQUY FOR CASSANDRA**

Here I am, Cassandra.  
And this is my city under ashes.  
And these are my prophet's staff and ribbons.  
And this is my head full of doubts.

It's true, I am triumphant.  
My prophetic words burn like fire in the sky.  
Only unacknowledged prophets  
are privy to such prospects.  
Only those who got off on the wrong foot,  
whose predictions turned to fact so quickly -  
it's as if they'd never lived.

I remember it so clearly -  
how people, seeing me, would break off in mid-word.  
Laughter died.  
Lovers' hands unclasped.  
Children ran to their mothers.  
I didn't even know their short-lived names.  
And that song about a little green leaf -  
no one ever finished it near me.

I loved them.  
But I loved them haughtily.  
From heights beyond life.  
From the future. Where it's always empty  
and nothing is easier than seeing death.  
I'm sorry that my voice was hard.  
Look down on yourselves from the stars, I cried,  
look down on yourselves from the stars.  
They heard me and lowered their eyes.

They lived within life.  
Pierced by that great wind.  
Condemned.  
Trapped from birth in departing bodies.  
But in them they bore a moist hope,  
a flame fueled by its own flickering.  
They really knew what a moment means,  
oh any moment, any one at all  
before -

It turns out I was right.  
But nothing has come of it.  
And this is my robe, slightly singed.  
And this is my prophet's junk.  
And this is my twisted face.  
A face that didn't know it could be beautiful.

- Wisława Szymborska



**troy women**  
adapted from euripides by karen hartman

directed by jean randich • musically directed by sarah gancher  
set design by sue rees • lighting design by garin marschall  
costume design by cayli cavaco • sound design by larry wineland  
original music by the performers • dramaturgy by melis bilgin  
movement consultation by sara rudner • stage managed by james cairl

**cast**

(in order of appearance)

voice of the city

poseidon  
athena

hecuba  
chorus 1

2  
3  
4  
5

talthybius  
cassandra  
andromache  
greek boy  
menelaus  
helen

irina petrova  
kaiti carpenter  
gladden schrock  
aadya bedi  
chandler williams  
janis young  
sasha cucciniello  
aadya bedi  
brandi nicole  
sarah kermensky  
amanda b. greves  
chandler williams  
shana onigman  
summer brennan  
michael metivier  
marcos barbery  
courtney reynolds

**musicians**

timpani  
drums

carly huelsenbeck  
clark loro  
alexander vittum



# **C R E W**

technical director  
master electrician  
assistant stage managers

charge painter  
light board operator  
sound board operator  
scenery construction

scene shop staff

alan del vecchio  
garin marschall  
eli hall  
dana kroman-barney  
victoria perry  
jason eksuzian  
becky saffron  
kim androlowicz  
ryan barolet-fogarty  
marcos barber  
jennifer beck-doyle  
melis bilgin  
kelly bryant  
genevieve burke  
kevin casey  
michael close  
laurence cohen  
sally dean  
matthew follette  
bilge gulturk  
kate king  
holly koch  
mia levitt  
nicole macagna  
mariah mcgill  
clodagh mccloskey  
ryan nealon  
melissa st. pierre  
garth silberstein  
travis taylor  
sara teten  
daniel warren  
ana williams  
skye bender-demoll  
kaiti carpenter  
jessamyn harris  
stephen howard  
marlon hurt  
frieda kipar

scene shop staff (ctd.)

scene painters

props

spindles provided by  
costume construction

light hang

run crew

wardrobe

makeup  
poster & program design

dan levitis  
garin marschall  
nathan meier  
aisha walls  
elizabeth ward  
shannon west  
abby summer  
travis magrane  
bronwen davis-mason  
marlon hurt  
jenna white  
sarah courtney  
sasha cucciniello  
chandler williams  
john isherwood  
nathan anderson  
cayli cavaco  
duffy havens  
natasha heines  
hallie lieberman  
guvenc ozel  
nina solzman  
liza stillhard  
rachel street  
lily vose  
rebekah abernathy  
cayli cavaco  
girish deshpane  
adam drake  
jacob durand  
monica hubbard  
frieda kipar  
nura madjzoub  
narayani sharp  
rhiannon wells  
jasmine hamed  
jessica mileto  
anna zimmer  
carly huelsenbeck  
david karevicius  
terri lewin  
dan mohr

# **t h a n k s**

**bob ayers**

**barry bartlett**

**paul cavaco**

**the costume shop employees**

**the costume construction crew**

**the light hang crew**

**tom farrell**

**michael giannitti**

**eli hall**

**maggie halstead**

**jon isherwood**

**dana kroman-barney**

**nathan meier**

**danny michaelson**

**victoria perry**

**evan reed**

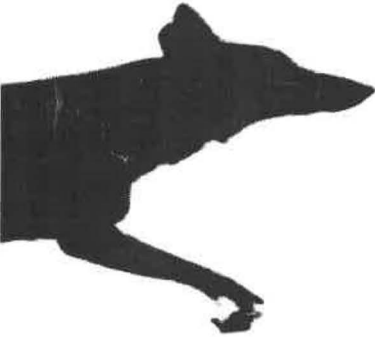
**nat reichman**

**tim sheaffer**

**terry teitelbaum**

**waves**

**karen hartman and the cast, design team, and crew  
for weeks of quick thinking on their feet**



**Bennington College Drama and Design Faculty and Staff**

**Derek Campbell • Jean Randich • Bill Reichblum • Gladden Schrock**

**Janis Young • Alan Del Vecchio • Steven Espach • Michael Giannitti**

**Daniel Michaelson • Sue Rees • Ann Resch • Terry Teitelbaum**