Dog Days

Office of Arts + Cultural Programming

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COMPOSER’S NOTE

I have always believed that it is an artist’s duty to ask questions—in particular, questions that can be difficult to hear, and often impossible to answer. Day, dog, double exposure, exactly this goal, exploring the unseen truth of what we become upon the dissolution of civilization and the nature of choice and consequence.

Based on the darkly comedic short story of the same name by Judy Day, “Dog Days” has had her stories appear in several publications, including The New York Times Review, The Oxford American, Gunter Grass, Fence, and McSweeney’s. She is the recipient of an ASCAP–Pulitzer fellowship, and in 2007 was named one of Granta’s “Best Young American Novelists.” Her previous works have appeared in the New York Times Notable Book in 1998. Budnitz is also the author of Nice Big American Baby and I’ll Tell You Once, which won the Edward Lewis Wallant Award and was short-listed for the Orange Prize in the United Kingdom. She lives in San Francisco.

Robert Woodworth (Director) has directed over 60 productions across the US at theaters including the Public Theater, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, American Conservatory Theater, Guthrie Theater, and Mark Taper Forum. He directed the Pulitzer Prize–winning Madmen White Snake for Opera Boston and the Beijing Music Festival and Philip Glass’s Appomattox for the San Francisco Opera. Internationally, his work has been seen at the Heineken Houston Grand Opera Festival, Los Angeles Olympic Arts Festival, Edinburgh International Festival, Hong Kong Festival, the Maggio Music and Dance Festival, the Tonge团购阿姆斯特丹, and Spoleto Festival USA. Early work includes many premiere productions with ODC (San Francisco) and the Pulitzer Prize–winning Burned Child in 1976 he founded the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, which continues to be a center for new writing, with more than 200 premieres to its credit. In 2007, Woodworth was the artistic director of American Repertory Theatre. He was named a 2007 USA Fellow by the United States Artists. He teaches at the Yale School of Drama.

Victoria “Vita” Tzykun (Costume Designer) has designed sets, costumes, and projections for companies such as Norwegian Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, Kristiansund Opera (Norway), Julijabl Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Teatro Imera (Athenes), JLD (Jewel), and Muda Center. Her recent work includes Amber’s Fall at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Naked Angels, The New Group, the Manhattan Class Company, New York Theatre Workshop, and Paper Mill Playhouse. She has designed sets for many other theaters, regional and abroad.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

David T. Little (Composer) writes potent dramatic music that draws upon his experience as a rock drummer and fuses classical and popular idioms, often undertaking political and existential themes. His music has been performed throughout the world by such ensembles as London Sinfonietta, Alarm Will Sound, 50 Percussion, NOW Ensemble, Brooklyn Philharmonic, PSK Quartet, New World Symphony, Tyche, and the American Symphony Orchestra. New York City Opera, and Baltimore Symphony Orchestra under Marin Alsop. Upcoming projects include new works for Kronos Quartet, London Sinfonietta, and Maya Beiser. He is a member of the HERA Artist Residency Program (2012–13). He has received awards and recognition from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, P&J Atlantic Foundation, Composer, American Music Center, Harvey Guttman Composition, BMI, and ASCAP and has received commissions from Carnegie Hall, New World Symphony, Print Music Ensemble, and the Young Audiences of New York Upshaw’s Vocal Arts program at Bard Conservatory, among others. He is the founding artistic director and drummer for the amplified chamber ensemble Newspeak, which released its first CD of commissioned works in November 2010 to critical acclaim. Little holds degrees from Susquehanna University, the University of Michigan, and Princeton University. He has taught at Bard College’s Musical Connections program, served as the inaugural digital composer-in-residence for the UK’s Finzi Commissioning Project, and is currently executive director of New York’s MATA Festival. He was recently appointed director of composition and coordinator of new music at Shenandoah Conservatory.

David T. Little’s recent opera, The New Yorker, was presented at Opera Santa Barbara. His plays include Working Dog, Dog Days, and Dog Days (Second Stage). His recent opera works include a new work with Du Yun (Mannheim Opera), Brett Duitsch: The Good Pupil of Szechwan (trans. Tony Kushner), Gurnett Stan’s Doctor Lights the Lights, and Div (Part I) (HERE). He was assistant director on David Lang’s live fal (New Haven Festival of Arts and Ideas, BAM’s Next Wave). Upcoming projects include Orpheus, a site-specific, company-revised riff on The Cherry Orchard (NOLA Fringe). She holds a BM from the University of Oklahoma and an MFA from Columbia University. www.enthesetheater.org

Kate Lindsay (Assistant Stage Manager) has stage managed shows including Food and Fodder (NYTW), Atomic Holden Free (Brooklyn Academy of Music/Winter Streets), The War that Saved Christmas (Nyttwy), Directing credits include Hoppy Hour (Vox Theater), Oyster (Theater/ Theater) and numerous festivals, including Places (Displaced Theater Company) and Double (Dartmouth College). She holds a BA from Dartmouth College.

Michael Minahan (Assistant Scene Designer/Props Master) is currently working with Zane Pilgrim on the new opera Orientale with Le Poisson Rouge and Eurydice for the opera company Chinook. Upcoming design work includes Aids for Opera Charleston. Recently he designed Yellow Jacket (NYIT Fringe), Danny and the Tree (Sea (Seeing Place), Tonts (TAP), and Grove Factory (NYMF)). This spring he partnered with the Wallis Annenberg Center for Music and the Arts to design the production of JOLLY JUMBO for the Big Green Theater Festival. He has painted for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Seaside Opera, and is currently the Technical Director at Portland State University Playhouse. www.minihandesign.com

Prolouge: A Man in a Dog Suit

Act I: Summer

Scene 1: Parents

Scene 2: Friends

Scene 3: Parents

Scene 4: Brothers

Scene 5: Letter

ACT I: Scene 1: Letter

ACT II: Scene 1: Odds

ACT III: Scene 2: Aca

ACT III: Scene 2: Game

Epilogue: The Three Ravens

PLAYS

Three Days

The Cherry Orchard

If I Told You Once

Balance, Battle of Black and Dogs, Pop!

Three Days

The Cherry Orchard

If I Told You Once

Balance, Battle of Black and Dogs, Pop!

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If I Told You Once

Balance, Battle of Black and Dogs, Pop!

Three Days

The Cherry Orchard

If I Told You Once

Balance, Battle of Black and Dogs, Pop!
Peak Performances presents:

**World Premiere!**

**Dog Days**

Composed by **David T. Little**
Libretto by **Royce Vavrek**
Based on the short story “Dog Days” by **Judy Budnitz**
Directed by **Robert Woodruff**
Music Direction by **Alan Pierson**

Scenic and Video Design by **Jim Findlay**
Lighting Design by **Matt Frey**
Costume Design by **Victoria “Vita” Tsykun**
Sound Engineering by **Garth MacAleavey**
Video Engineering by **Connor Lynch**

**CAST:**
- Howard (Father) **James Bobick**
- Marnie Breckenridge **Lauren Wors ham**
- Cherry Duke **Taylor Levine**
- John Kelly **Heidi Schaul-Yoder**
- Michael Marcotte **Kris Saebo**
- Peter Tantsits **Hannah Levinson**
- Lisa Lauren Wors ham **Kris Saebo**
- Justin Jacobs **special guest**

Production Stage Manager **Lindsey Turteitzaub**
Assistant Music Director **Christopher Rountree**
Assistant Director **Ashley Kelly Tata**
Assistant Stage Manager **Kate Lindsay**
Assistant Scenic Designer/Props Master **Michael Minahan**
Costume Assistantship **John Dunnett**
Prince’s Hair and Make-up Design **Ashley Ryan**
Fight Coordinator **Steven White**

*Dog Days was produced by Peak Performances @ Montclair State (NJ) in association with Beth Morrison Projects.*

*Dog Days was commissioned by Peak Performances @ Montclair State (NJ). Selections from Dog Days were commissioned and presented by Carnegie Hall for the Weill Music Institute. Scenes from Dog Days were presented as part of New York City Opera’s VOX Contemporary American Opera Lab. Dog Days makes use of the “1840 Grandfather Clock” sample by daveincamas, found at freessound.org and used under a Creative Commons Attribution license. Special thanks to Dr. Meena Mahdavan, Dr. Amanda Birnbaum, and Denise Redick for their expertise and assistance.*

Duration: 2 hours 15 minutes, including one 15-minute intermission after Act I.

In consideration of both audience and performers, please turn off all electronic devices. The taking of photographs or videos and the use of recording equipment are not permitted. No food or drink is permitted inside the theater.

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- Percussion **Molly Yehr**
- Piano **James Johnston**
- Guitar **Taylor Levine**
- Violin **Heidi Schaul-Yoder**
- Viola **Hannah Levinson**
- Cello **Brian Snow**
- Double Bass **Kris Saebo**

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**An Evening with TRACY K. SMITH**

**October 17, 2012 • 7:30pm**

**Alexander Kasser Theater**

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**September 29–October 7, 2012**

**Alexander Kasser Theater**

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**Dog Days**

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To view the Dog Days libretto, visit www.peakperfs.org/DDlibretto.