

My father used to weed eat our carpet. Right here in this room as a matter of fact
Imagine That Productions presents...
Not that he would remember of course. But once a week, every week, for years, he

swore that the carpet had actually grown—sometimes as much as a whole inch or
And since the riding lawn mower wouldn't fit through the front door, weed eating
the only logical solution. He only did it around the walls, but especially in the ce
and under the windows. Mother was always afraid someone was going to see him
through this window, so she made sure curtains were always hung and drawn—

which would eventually lead to the one it's death according to my father. I was
One night I was sitting at the kitchen table looking out the window to meet Max on
The night before the one I remember. I was sitting at the kitchen table looking out
and I was thinking about the red patent leather pants he had fashioned after I
wrote it in my diary. I was sitting at the kitchen table looking out the window
and I was thinking about the red patent leather pants he had fashioned after I
wrote it in my diary. I was sitting at the kitchen table looking out the window

here to be found. I wasn't e
sure what was going to happen that night, but I remember not wearing
pajamas or a bra. It was cold, and the breeze was invigorating as I
barreled down toward the sidewalk, feeling from ear to ear—through cl
enched teeth to prevent the butterflies from escaping my
stomach. When I got to the front gate was chained and padlocked

With a second's thought, I tried to scale the looming fence, perhaps
It had already frayed, be-
cause I barely had time to get up and take a look and take a look and take a look
I was sitting at the kitchen table looking out the window, but the look must be
so, but I was sitting at the kitchen table looking out the window, but the look must be
so, but I was sitting at the kitchen table looking out the window, but the look must be

It tasted like bou-
Everything stopped. The
bourbon. That night I
I remember... When I was fifteen I was sitting at the kitchen table looking out
Spring Dance together. And when I was fifteen I was sitting at the kitchen table looking out
since it wasn't a question, there was a question, there was a question, there was a question
I'm incapable of making decisions on my own. Even when I do, it's invariably the wrong one. For
you, had there been an actual invitation. Two and a half years later, Mother walked me home after the
him after graduation. I remember him trying his best to get the ring around my finger, when he did he
size too small. Yeah, No, I must've been born a size too large. He finally gave up, and just headed m

started in on how he was going to provide for me, and take care of me and some other business about love. I
couldn't stop thinking about that lime green tuffan dress Priscilla Jackson wore to the dance-- And how
the evening went atop her head. And nothing I had worn a lime green tuffan dress, and that Brenda &
country Queen because at least she was still a virgin. And then I started to cry. Which must have made
horrible, because he quickly left. After he was gone, I walked home. I didn't have a
front porch. He already seemed so nervous. For

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August 6-23, 2009

Thur-Sat @ 8 pm; Sun @ 5 pm

Austin Playhouse at Penn Field~3601 S. Congress, Bld. C
Box office: (512) 476-0084 ~ Info: www.it-productions.org

About That!

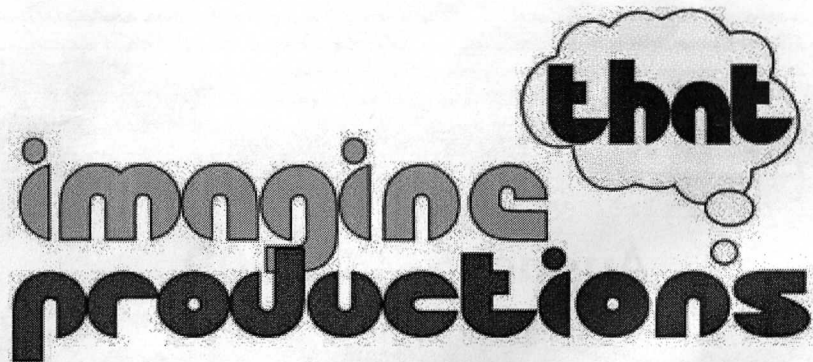
Imagine That Productions is dedicated to exposing new voices of American theatre to the stage. By seeking out new plays by emerging writers, **Imagine That** hopes to help bridge the gap between the page and the stage for artists who are at the start of their careers.

By amassing other talented artists of various disciplines at varying stages in their career, **Imagine That** provides the avenue for these talents to come alive, through collaboration, all in the pursuit of creating quality theatre.

Imagine That's mantra is "believing is seeing."

Knowing the limitations that exist for the "theatre on a budget," and recognizing the economic situation of our time, **Imagine That** believes it does not have to be at the expense of quality theatre. By going that extra mile, putting in that extra hour, wearing that extra hat, mapping out that un-thought of strategy, and constantly thinking outside of the box, **Imagine That** strives to bring to its audiences a product worthy of their time.

We will continue to believe, so that you can continue to see.



IMAGINE THAT PRODUCTIONS

presents

House of Several Stories: a tragedy in two acts of nonsense

Written & Directed by
A. John Boulanger

Lighting Design.....Jason Amato
Costume Design.....Jillan Hanel
Wig Design.....Matthew Kelbaugh
Set Design.....Griffon Ramsey
Properties Design.....Jade White
Stage Manager.....Jennifer Anderson
Sound Design.....Craig Brock

Acknowledgments:

House of Several Stories was written as A. John Boulanger's thesis project towards his masters degree from Texas State University-San Marcos. It received a workshop staged reading directed by Isaac Byrnes of Working Man's Clothes (NYC), and a university production directed by Jeremy O. Torres of The Search Party (Austin) at Texas State University. Boulanger won the National Student Playwriting Award from the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, and *House of Several Stories* was performed at the Kennedy Center Family Theatre as part of the 2009 KC/ACTF National Festival.

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Sue..... Lauren Lane*
Bastian Martin Burke*
Rissa Meredith McCall
Abigail Kelli Schultz
Thom Adam Pearson

*Member Actor's Equity Association

Time: Thanksgiving, we think.
Place: Easton; home sweet home.

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

Taping, filming, recording, or broadcasting of this play (either in part or full), and the taking of photography (with or without flash) is strictly prohibited.

Production Staff

Assistant Stage Manager Kris Newby
Production Assistants Kris Newby, Jade White
..... and Corey Jaramillo
Costume Design Assistant Jenny Hannah
Master Electrician..... Sam Chesney
Electrician Adam Crankshaw
Master Carpenter Thomas Meche
Sound Operator Jade White and Kris Newby
Program Layout Kevin Farr
Publicity Manager Kelsey Kling
House Manager Corey Jaramillo

Special Thanks To Our DONORS

Shirley L. Boulanger
Joel and Noah Earley
Steve & Shelly Fankhauser
Lory Fuller
Kasey Korth
Cari McGowan Unger
Connie M. McMillan
Ernest and Laura Rivas
Scott Schroeder
Monique Taylor

AND

Special Thanks To

Barbara Chisholm • Ann Ciccolella • Austin Scenic Co-op
Connor Hopkins • Paul Flint • Blair Hurry
Don Toner • Lara Toner • Cyndi Williams • John Fleming
Sheila Hargett • Lindsay Jones • Gavin Free
Texas State University Department of Theatre
Zilker Theatre Productions

About the Company

Martin Burke (Bastian) has appeared in a number of productions at ZACH Theatre, such as *Take Me Out*, *Fully Committed*, *Santaland Diaries* (1998-2003, 2006-7), *House Arrest*, *The Laramie Project*; *Circumference of a Squirrel*; *Shakespeare's R&J*; *Mystery of Irma Vep*; *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* and *Perestroika*. Martin has also appeared in *Twelfth Night* (Sneak Up! Productions, Vortex Repertory Company); *Jeffrey* (Capital City Playhouse); *Richard III/2 Actors* and *Family Affair* (Public Domain); *Shopping and F***king* and *Fur* (Vortex). Martin has received B. Iden Payne Awards for his roles in *Take Me Out*; *Circumference of a Squirrel*, and *Laramie Project*. He has also won Austin Critics' Table Awards for *Circumference of a Squirrel*, *Santaland Diaries*, *Shakespeare's R&J*, *Twelfth Night*; *Angels in America: Perestroika* and *Family Affair*.

Meredith McCall (Rissa) has been seen several times on the ZACH Theatre stage in productions such as *Caroline or Change*, *Present Laughter*, *Urinetown*, *Cabaret*, *Side Man*, *The Pavilion*, *The Laramie Project*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Jouet*, *Pride's Crossing*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *The Santaland Diaries*, *Tommy*, *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* and *Perestroika*, *The Taffets*, *Jack and Jill*, *Ruthless! The Musical*, *Rockin' Christmas Party*, *Das Barbecu*, *Born Yesterday*, *Avenue X*, *Beehive*, and *Falsettos*. Her other regional credits include *Antigone: Looking Into the Sun* (Austin Theatre Works), *Jouet* (Actors Theatre of Louisville), *Guys and Dolls* (Zilker Summer Musicals), *She Loves Me* and *Pump Boys and Dinettes* (Live Oak Theatre). Meredith received Austin Critics' Table Awards for her roles in *Jouet* and *Angels in America*, and B. Iden Payne Awards for *The Pavilion*, *Born Yesterday*, and *Falsettos*. Meredith earned her Master of Arts degree in theatre from Northwestern University, and has recently released a solo album, *The Joy in Your Heart*.

Lauren Lane (Sue) played the role of Lane in last summers' production of *The Clean House* at ZACH Theatre. She was also seen in Zach's production of *The Vagina Monologues*. Lauren has worked extensively in regional theater and is proud to have been a company member for five years of The Actors Gang, Tim Robbins' award winning theater company, where she performed in numerous productions. In addition, Lauren has worked regionally at theaters including Berkeley Repertory Theatre, The Mark Taper Forum, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Dallas Theatre Center, and The American Conservatory Theatre. Lauren played C.C. Babcock for six seasons on the CBS comedy series, *The Nanny*, as well as Detective Chris Novak on the NBC detective drama, *Hunter*, and Julie Rayborn on *L.A. Law*. She is a graduate of The American Conservatory Theatre's Masters Program, and has taught acting at The University of Texas, The American Conservatory Theatre and is currently an Assistant Professor at Texas State University. She lives in Austin with her daughter Kate.

Adam Pearson (Thom) is a stage, film, and commercial actor. He has had principal roles in films such as *Mia's Father* (Lifetime), *My New Life in New Mexico*, *The Peacemaker*, and *UnReal*. Adam has done commercial work for companies such as H&R Block (print), Time Warner Cable, and Polaroid Spec. He has been seen on stage in *Click* (Frontera Fest), *All The Saints*, *Othello* (Pale Horse Productions), and *Rock of Ages* (Narrow Journey Productions).

Kelli Schultz (Abigail) is ecstatic to be playing Abigail, a character she was introduced to almost two years ago. Starring in dozens of high school productions, she won UIL Best Actress for her role as Elmire in *Tartuffe*. Kelli also played Sharpay in ZACH Theatre's production of *High School Musical* for which she received a B. Iden Payne nomination. You might recall Joel McHale making fun of Kelli on E's *The Soup with Joel McHale*. Entering her second year as a Theatre and Dance major at the University of Texas, Kelli is excited to be delving into "Theatre of the Absurd" with such an incredibly talented cast and crew.

About the Artistic Staff

A. John Boulanger (Director/Playwright/Co-producer) is a recent graduate from Texas State University-San Marcos with his masters in playwriting. His most recent play, *House of Several Stories*, garnered this year's National Student Playwriting Award given by the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. The Texas State production of his play was also invited to Washington, DC, to perform at the Kennedy Center Family Theatre in April 2009. Also in 2009, Boulanger traveled to Independence, Kansas, after winning the William Inge Directing Initiative from the William Inge Center for the Arts where his cast of actors performed the award-winning scene inside the boyhood home of William Inge. Boulanger is a member of the Dramatists' Guild, as well as the Playwrights Center. Boulanger just returned from Sundance, UT, from an observership he received to Robert Redford's Sundance Theatre Lab.

Shannon Richey (Production Manager/Co-Producer) has been a production and stage manager in Austin for more than ten years. She was recently production manager on Austin Shakespeare's *An Ideal Husband* at the Rollins Theatre/Long Center, and is stage managing their upcoming fall production of *Measure for Measure*. Her regional stage management credits include: Anna Deavere Smith's *Let Me Down Easy* at American Repertory Theatre. At ZACH Theatre: *Let Me Down Easy*, *Jennifer Holliday in Concert*, *Cabaret*, *Love! Valour! Compassion!*, *Hair*, *The Laramie Project*, *Jelly's Last Jam*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *The Exonerated*, *Jouet*, *Tapestry*, *Pride's Crossing*, *The Santaland Diaries*, *The Rocky Horror Show* and *The Mystery of Irma Vep*; and *TexArts' Carousel*, *Music Man* and *Big River* at the Paramount Theatre. Ms. Richey has also been a Wardrobe Supervisor on *Angels in America*, *Dreamgirls*, *Love, Janis*, *Jack and Jill*, *Ruthless! The Musical*, *Sylvia*, *Das Barbecu* and toured as company manager for Joe Sears and Jaston Williams on *The Foreigner*.

Jason Amato (Lighting Design) is the resident lighting designer for Blue Lapis Light, Tapestry Dance Company, The Vortex, and ZACH Theatre, having lit more than 400 shows in Austin. In 2002, he was deemed "Best Dazzler" by The Austin Chronicle critic's poll. He has received Austin Critic's Table Lighting Designer Awards for *Requiem*, *I Am My Own Wife*, *The Souls of Our Feet*, *Take Me Out*, *Whispers of Heaven*, *Keepin' It Weird*, *Vampyress*, *Urinetown: The Musical*, *Dark Goddess 2006*, *The Exonerated*, *Cabaret*, *Ghost from a Perfect Place*, *Where Nothing Falls II*, *Two Cities*, *Love! Valour! Compassion!*, *Smokey Joe's Café*, *Limonade*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Knowledge and Melancholy* and *The Well Inside*. Jason has also received B. Iden Payne Lighting Design Awards for *Trickster*, *The Exonerated*, *Omnium-Gatherum*, *Triskelion*, *Panoptikon*, *Despair's Book of Dreams* and *The Deluge*. A website of his work can be found at www.jasonamato.com.

Craig Brock (Sound Design) has been a freelance audio engineer since 1989. He works internationally as a recording engineer and music producer. At ZACH: *Love, Janis*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, Anna Deavere Smith's *Let Me Down Easy*, *Shooting Star*, *Beehive*, *Caroline or Change*, *The Clean House*, *Altar Boyz*, *Porgy and Bess*, *Speeding Motorcycle*, *Seussical*, *High School Musical*, *Jesus Christ Superstar/Jesucristo Superestrella*, *Plaid Tidings*, *An Almost Holy Picture*, *Take Me Out*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *I Am My Own Wife*, *Crowns*, *Urinetown*, *Shear Madness*, *Hank Williams: Last Highway*, *The Vagina Monologues*, *Aida*, *Rockin' Christmas Party* ('04-'06 & 2008), *The Santaland Diaries* ('03-'04 & 2008), *Crowns*, *Cabaret*, *It Ain't Nothin' But The Blues* (sound mixer). REGIONAL: Zilker Hillside Theatre, *The Music Man*, Austin Shakespeare, *Romeo & Juliet*, Sound mixer for *Starlight Express* (Las Vegas Hilton). Album credits include: El Tri, Mana, Luis Miguel, La Maldita Vecindad, Jose Jose, Beppe Gambetta, Ofra Haza, Michael Jackson, Ray Charles, Barbra Streisand, Guns and Roses, David Crosby, Stephen Stills.

Jillan Hanel (Costume Design) is a graduate of Texas State University-San Marcos, where she studied under internationally renowned costume designer Sheila Hargett. Jillan has designed costumes for several university productions including *Chicago*, *Little Shop of Horrors* and *Blood Wedding*. She has acted as costume shop manager for Texas State, as well as the Emily Ann Theatre's Shakespeare Under the Stars summer program. Jillan costume designed *Meet Me in St. Louis* and *City*

of *Angels* at the San Pedro Playhouse and *Lend Me a Tenor* at the Sheldon Vexler Theatre in San Antonio. Other design credits include *The Boys Next Door*, *Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up?*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. Jillan currently designs costumes for her 2 year old daughter, Lillie. *House of Several Stories* is Jillan's first project in Austin and she is "thrilled to be working with such a wonderful group of people on this exciting new play!"

Griffon Ramsey (Set Design) began her studies in Theatre Technology and Design, but graduated with her BFA in Directing from Texas State University. Griffon has worked as costume designer for *Oklahoma!* at St. Edwards University; assistant set designer for *School for Scandal* at the Vortex; assistant set designer of *Pirates of Penzance* for The Gilbert and Sullivan Society; and props manager on *Cyberella* for KidsActing. She also served as dramaturg on *Oceana* at the Vortex; lighting designer for Theatrikids' original play *How To Be A Rockstar*; and has done puppetry builds for Malapropos and Trouble Puppet Theatre. Outside of theatre, Griffon writes the popular web comic *Rooster Teeth Comics*, and will be publishing her third book in August. She is also creator of the weekly online comedy show *Pajamachievements*. This past spring she designed and decorated the set of Rooster Teeth's popular mini-series *Captain Dynamic*.

Jennifer Anderson (Stage Manager) is proud and excited to be working with the *House of Several Stories* cast, production team, and crew. Jennifer's stage management credits include *The Clean House* (ZACH Theatre), *When Something Wonderful Ends* (Rude Mechanicals/Red Then co-production) and *Plays Well With Others* (ZACH Theatre co-production with Les McGehee and Owen Egerton). Jennifer has helped bring more than 30 productions to the stage as a production assistant and crew member at ZACH Theatre, including *Keepin' It Weird*, *Urinetown*, *The Musical*, *I Am My Own Wife*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Plaid Tidings*, *Present Laughter*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Porgy and Bess*. Jennifer is currently an assistant stage manager for Austin Lyric Opera.

Kris Newby (Assistant Stage Manager) is a recent graduate from Texas State University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre. Her passion lies in stage management, but she enjoys all aspects of technical theatre. Her most recent credits include stage managing the tour of Charles Pascoe's *Backyard Story* and directing *Al Takes a Bride*. Outside of theatre, she is also the band manager for When Pandas Attack! She is very grateful to Imagine That for giving her the opportunity to be a part of *House of Several Stories*.

Kasey Korth (Dramaturg at Large) is a graduate from Texas State University-San Marcos where she earned her Master of Arts degree in Theatre History and Criticism. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Dramatic Media and History from Texas Lutheran University in May of 2006. Kasey has presented research at the William Inge Theatre Festival (2008), The Hawaii International Conference in the Arts and Humanities (2009), and the Texas State Graduate Student Symposium (2009). Her master's thesis involved dramaturgy for Texas State's fall 2008 production of *The House of Blue Leaves*, directed by Jay Jennings. Kasey is a member of Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas and the Theatre Communications Group. Kasey currently resides in Goodyear, Arizona.

Jade White (Properties Design) is a recent graduate of Texas State University with a BFA and Teacher's Certification in Theatre. Jade began her career as an actress, but has since moved to the area of theatre technology and design, as well as teaching. Jade was stage manager on Troupe Texas' *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*. She has taught at Smithson Valley High School and recently completed the year teaching theatre arts and technical theatre at Seguin High School, where she was the technical director on *Digging Up the Boys* and set designer and technical director of *Grease*. *House of Several Stories* is Jade's first involvement with Austin theatre, and she is looking forward to future projects with Imagine That!

Matt Kelbaugh (Wig Design) is excited to be part of *House of Several Stories*. National Tours: *CATS*, *Grease* (Frankie Avalon/Chubby Checker), *Carousel*, *Joseph...Dreamcoat* (Jodi Benson, Patrick Cassidy and Amy Adams), *Sophisticated Ladies* (Mary Wilson), *Jolson* and *Copacabana*. Thanks to Shanny for introducing me to the the *House of Several Stories* family.

A Note on Absurdism in Theatre

The award-winning play, *House of Several Stories*, has been coined "an absurdist comedy" since its first public reading at Texas State University-San Marcos in Spring 2008. But what makes a play "absurd," and what exactly does "absurdism" mean for the theatre?

The term was coined by theatre critic Martin Esslin, who was describing a change in the type of theatre that was written and performed in the 1950s. Playwrights like Samuel Beckett and Eugene Ionesco were writing and producing works that did not fit any previously established theatre mold. In an attempt to "categorize" this new breed, Esslin created the "Theatre of Absurd." According to Esslin, absurdist characteristics could include lack of specific time, generically-named characters, and confusion between real happenings and a dream/nightmare world. All of these characteristics can be seen in *House of Several Stories*. However, those characteristics describe plays written in the social and historical context of the 1950s. Can an original, new work be considered a true absurdist drama? And does it matter? Or are categories merely a means of trying to get an initial understanding of complex works that expand beyond their categorization?

Part of the beauty of *House of Several Stories* is its playful language, its labyrinth-styled structure, and its cyclical patterns. In an interview with Geoff West in May 2009, Bou-langer stated that he thought he was writing a "wacky comedy," while Isaac Byrnes, who directed the first public reading, saw it less as a comedy, and more as "a hilarious tragedy."

Ultimately, it is up to you, the audience member, to decide--to make the play your own and put it in your own category, your own understanding of the play's meaning.

Kasey Korth
Dramaturg at Large

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