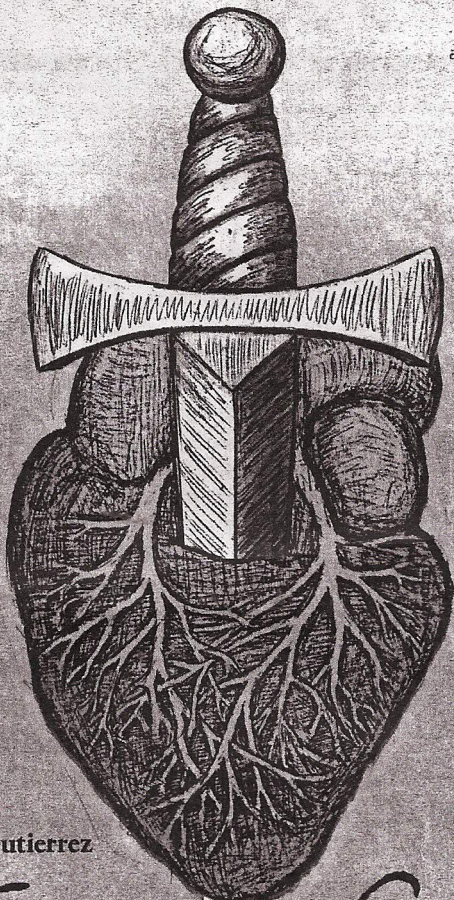




7-TOWERS presents



austin creative alliance



Directed by
Christina Gutierrez

'Tis pity she's a
WIFE

June 22 - July 15
Cathedral of Junk - Austin, Texas

'Tis Pity She's a WHORE

BY JOHN FORD

DIRECTED BY CHRISTINA GUTIERREZ

Cast

in order of appearance

FRIAR BONNAVENTURA

GIOVANNI

VASQUEZ (*servant to Soranzo*)

GRIMALDI

FLORIO (*father to Giovanni and Annabella*)

SORANZO

PUTTANA (*companion to Annabella*)

ANNABELLA

BERGETTO (*nephew of Donado*)

POGGIO (*servant to Bergetto*)

DONADO

RICHARDETTO

HIPPOLYTA (*presumed widow of Richardetto*)

CARDINAL

BANDITTO

SERVANT

*NOTE: July 13-15, the roles of Vasquez and Richardetto will be played by Aaron Black

TRAVIS BEDARD

KEVIN GATES

NATHAN LAHAY

DEVIN FINN

DAVID J. BOSS

SAM MERCER

MEGAN RABUSE

SARA CORMIER

TRAVIS BEDARD

DAVID J. BOSS

SAM MERCER

NATHAN LAHAY

MEGAN RABAUSE

TRAVIS BEDARD

DEVIN FINN

DEVIN FINN

Production Team

DIRECTOR, CO-PRODUCER

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, SET DESIGNER, CO-PRODUCER

STAGE MANAGER

COSTUME DESIGNER

PROP DESIGN, PRODUCTION MANAGER

DRAMATURG

MUSIC SUPERVISOR

ORIGINAL COMPOSITION

GRAPHIC DESIGN

VIDEOGRAPHY

CHRISTINA GUTIERREZ

AARON BLACK

BRYAN RUSSELL

SALLY ZIEGLER

KATY BILICK

ELEANOR OWICKI

DAVID J. BOSS

MICHAEL BOSS

ANNA BERKEN

MATT LATHAM

Cast

TRAVIS BEDARD *FRIAR, BERGETTO, CARDINAL*

Travis Bedard has recently performed with Capital T Theatre: *Spirits to Enforce* (Untangler), Exchange Artists: *Story Seekers* (Story Teller), and Last Act Theatre Company: *A Midnight Dreary* (Doctor) and *Titus Andronicus* (Titus Andronicus). Bedard is the Artistic Director of Cambiare Productions and the Managing Editor of 2amTheatre.com. Megan is awesome.

DAVID J. BOSS *FLORIO, POGGIO, MUSIC SUPERVISOR*

Austin Shakespeare: *Twelfth Night* (Fabian), *Arcadia* (Captain Brice), *Hamlet* (Guildenstern, Fortinbras), *The Tempest* (Antonio), *Mary Stuart* (Sir Andrew Melville), *Measure for Measure* (Provost), *Romeo and Juliet* (Prince); Breaking String Theater: *Flying* (Volodya), *The Cherry Orchard* (Yasha); Hidden Room Theatre: *Taming of the Shrew* (Biondello, Tailor). Twitter: @bossdavidj

SARA CORMIER *ANNABELLA*

Fitchburg State University: *The Taming of the Shrew* (Kate), Falcon Players: *Seascape with Sharks and Dancer* (Tracy), Cornerstone Stage Company: *Outside The Wire* (Michelle), Stratton Players: *The Wizard of Oz* (Dorothy) Sara graduated from Fitchburg State University in the spring of 2011 and has since moved to Austin, Texas. This will be Sara's first production in the Lone Star state.

DEVIN FINN *GRIMALDI, BANDITTO, SERVANT*

Devin is a recent graduate of Texas State University's BFA acting program. Some university credits include *Suburbia*, *Macbeth*, *Servant of Two Masters*, *Electra*, *As You Like It* and *This is Our Youth*. Devin was fortunate enough to spend a month studying with the Royal Shakespeare Company in England in the summer of 2010. Since graduation Devin has performed at the Houston Shakespeare Festival (*Taming of the Shrew*, *Othello*) and with the Austin Shakespeare Company (*Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*).

KEVIN GATES *GIOVANNI*

Kevin was last seen as Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* at City Theatre. Other roles include Prospero in *The Tempest* (EmilyAnn Theatre and Gardens), Last Act Theatre Company: *Titus Adronicus* (Marcus), and The Baron's Men: *Twelfth Night* (Feste).

NATHAN LAHAY *VASQUEZ, RICHARDETTO (JUNE 22- JULY 8 ONLY)*

Nathan's most recent roles include: Woodlawn Theatre *Avenue Q* (Nicky/Bad Idea Bear), Trouble Puppet Theatre *The Jungle* (Jurgis), and Austin Shakespeare *The Dream* (Flute). As always, thanks to his family and friends for their love and support; infinitely so for his wife, Elyce.

SAM MERCER *SORANZO, DONADO*

Sam is, was, but won't always be. Enjoy him while you can. He is very happy to be a part of this production.

MEGAN RABUSE *PUTTANA, HIPPOLYTA*

Shakespeare at Winedale: *Julius Caesar* (Brutus), Spirit of Shakespeare: *The Tempest* (Ariel), *Merchant of Venice* (Nerissa), Foot in the Door Theater: *Doubt* (Sister Aloysius), Broccoli Project Theater: *Oedipus for Kids* (Catalina). Megan studies Plan II and Theatre & Dance at the University of Texas at Austin.

Production Team

KATY BILICK PROP DESIGN, PRODUCTION MANAGER

This is Katy's first production with 7 Towers. Her recent credits include production and stage management for *Paradise Key* (2011), and *Glengarry Glen Ross* (2012), both with A Chick and A Dude Productions. Katy has a BA in Public Relations and a BA in English from Texas State University, and is excited and honored to be asked to work with such a great group!

AARON BLACK ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, SET DESIGNER, CO-PRODUCER VASQUEZ/RICHARDETTO UNDERSTUDY

Aaron is from Norman, Oklahoma. He holds a Bachelors of Fine Arts in Acting from OU and a Masters of Fine Arts from the The New School for Drama/The Actors Studio in New York. He has worked for the Vestige Group, Austin Shakespeare, Present Company and City Theatre in Austin and has also worked as an actor in New York, Los Angeles, Atlanta, New Jersey and Oklahoma. Aaron and Christina Gutierrez are Co-Artistic Directors and founders of the 7 Towers Theatre Company, an Austin Creative Alliance 501 (c) (3) sponsored project. Aaron would like to thank everyone who has supported 7 Towers and his acting, his family, and the teachers who have inspired him. You may see Aaron in future theatre productions in Austin and as production voice, movement, and acting coach for various productions in Austin.

ELEANOR OWICKI DRAMATURG

Eleanor is a PhD candidate in UT's Performance Public Practice program where her dissertation research focuses on performances of memory and history in contemporary Northern Irish theatre. Dramaturgy credits include *The Threepenny Opera* and *Trojan Women* at UT and *The Sisters Rosensweig* at Theatreworks in California.

BRYAN RUSSELL STAGE MANAGER

Bryan Russell is a Senior BFA Performance and Production major at Texas State University. Some of his previous work includes stage managing *Picasso* at the Lapin Agile at Texas State, stage managing *Sundown Town* at the Wimberley Players, and assistant stage managing *As You Like It* at Texas State.

SALLY ZIEGLER COSTUME DESIGNER

Sally Ziegler is a student of the theatre and collaboration. Recent credits include assistant designer on Texas State's production of *The Cherry Orchard* and ACC's production of *The Lucky Spot* as well as costume design for Wit's End's *A Season in Hell*, and ACC's productions of *In2theWest* and *1940s Radio Hour*. She is grateful for the opportunity to work with such a talented group of artists and fulfill her life long dream of designing a play steeped in catholic dogma and drama. Sancta Maria, Mater Domini nostri, ora pro nobis peccatoribus, nunc, et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen. Enjoy the show.

MICHAEL BOSS COMPOSER

This is Michael's first show as music composer with 7 Towers Theatre and second show in the Austin theater community. In 2011, he composed original music for City on a Hill's production of *Agamemnon*, for Frontera Fest. Michael holds a Bachelor of Music in Film Scoring from The Berklee College of Music and composed for many mediums in the arts including film, theater and dance. Choreography pieces include *Sincerity*, by Charles Flachs in New York, and *Ascending Actuality*, by Alexis Zaccarello in Mt. Holyoke, MA. Films include Lucid Film's *Danny Boy*, and *The Cannibal*, directed by Manuela Viera-Gallo. Michael is currently based in Dallas and is in-house composer for Trolley House Productions. www.mbossmusic.com

Dramaturg's Note

A PRECARIOUS SOCIETY

Drawing from the social instability rife in John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, our production transports the characters to a post-apocalyptic society fighting for its survival. Like most "revenge tragedies," *'Tis Pity* depicts a corrupt world in which power structures are unable (or unwilling) to administer impartial justice. Thus, the protagonists reject these structures to pursue their own (generally bloody) goals. Generally, at the end of a revenge tragedy, the community is entirely destroyed by both the protagonists' actions and its own inability to govern with integrity.

Much of the instability in *'Tis Pity* arises from anxieties about the family structure, which was seen as a microcosm of society in Renaissance England. Just as the king ruled his country, the father/husband ruled his family. In either case, if the leader failed to exert his authority, those governed would fall into chaos. Thus, the success of the family (as a concept) was directly linked to the success of a state. Misbehavior within a family was seen as an attack on the entire community. As such, the space of the home was not assumed to be private – neighbors had a legitimate interest in what happened behind closed doors. Although in reality many could exist without their neighbors invading their homes, this was never viewed as a fundamental right.

Sexual transgressions offered a particular threat to the family and therefore also to society. In Renaissance England, incest, fornication, and adultery threatened both the stability of individual families and the fabric of society as a whole. The most extreme example of this within the play is the incestuous relationship between Giovanni and Annabella. In 1596 Thomas Beard wrote that incest "break[s] the bounds of [civil] honesty, required in all contracts" and "turn[s] all the good order of things into confusion." Thus, what is at stake is not only Annabella and Giovanni's happiness, or even the happiness of their family, but instead the stability of their city. Incest is not the only sexual offense in *'Tis Pity*, however; Hippolita's adultery also proves to be destructive. By rejecting traditional bonds and contracts, sex outside of marriage threatened the family and society. In particular, illegitimate children disturbed the patriarchal transfer of power and wealth (this was one reason that women's purity was considered more important than men's).

Ford's Parma is also politically unstable. For the Renaissance English, Italy represented a more "modern" society: cosmopolitan, but also morally unsound. England was united by a monarch who ruled with a divine right, but Italy was a collection of loosely affiliated city-states governed by those who had made money through trade. This more humanist foundation rooted in commerce both allured and frightened many English commentators. In addition, Italy was the seat of the Catholic Church, which the Protestant English viewed as inherently corrupt. In *'Tis Pity*, the presence of the Cardinal signals the struggles for power that occurred between the Church and the secular rulers of the city.

-ELEANOR OWICKI

Director's Note

I have wanted to direct *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* from the moment I read it in a graduate seminar seven years ago. It's not that I find myself particularly drawn to plays about incest, but that this play feels so shockingly modern. Ford's cynical treatment of religion, his willingness to explore taboos, to question traditional morality and to comment on gender roles, all result in a play that brings the late Renaissance into conversation with the morals, values, and aesthetics of the twenty-first century. Only rarely in rehearsals did we struggle to understand these characters' beliefs or worldviews, and more often than not, found ourselves commenting on how little seems to have changed across the centuries.

Our post-apocalyptic vision of *'Tis Pity* is a reflection of this textual hyper-modernity, as well as my solution to the difference between Renaissance and contemporary views of incest. Although we tend to think of incest in relation to psychological or sexual disorders, Ford's audiences would have read Annabella and Giovanni's relationship in terms of its disruption to Parma as a whole. Textually, this is a group of people deeply and desperately invested in their own survival. As such, notions of communal concern and social engineering were central to my conceptualization of this production. Florio sells his young (and fertile) daughter to the highest bidder out of concern for the community around him. Annabella and Giovanni hide their love not to avoid judgment, but for fear of extreme consequences. Similarly, Ford's version of Parma is rife with the religious fundamentalism and strict hierarchies which humans tend to turn to in times of deep crisis.

Our Cathedral of Junk is a refugee camp, a ruined city, and, ultimately, a reminder of how dangerous it is to legislate morality. In our heated political climate—in which human rights can be voted upon—nothing seems more relevant than Ford's 1630 commentary on love and religion. I hope you enjoy this play as much as I do, and find in it something that speaks to you as loudly as it does to me.

-CHRISTINA GUTIERREZ

About the Director

Christina is the co-artistic director and resident dramaturg of the 7 Towers Theatre Company. She served as dramaturg and producer for last year's production of *Burn This*, and as director for the 2010 Frontera Fest production of *Talk to Me Like the Wind and Let me Listen*. She is a Ph.D. student in performance as Public Practice at UT, and a freelance dramaturg in Austin in addition to her work with 7 Towers. Previous dramaturgy credits include work with Austin Shakespeare, the Austin Shakespeare Young Shakespeare program, UT, the Rude Mechs, Salvage Vanguard, Penfold, The Hidden Room, the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, the University of Colorado at Boulder, and Whittier College. She would like to thank everyone involved for helping her to produce a play she's been imagining on stage for almost 10 years.

About 7 Towers

WHO WE ARE

Aaron Black and Christina Gutierrez began 7 Towers in 2010 as a collaboration between an actor and a dramaturg, both interested in the basic relationship between story, performer, and audience. Placing a particular emphasis on organic rehearsal processes and honest storytelling, we value fundamental methods of communication over flashy spectacle. We are committed to the use of research in the creative process, striving for the closest possible representation of life, emotion, and events. In this way, we utilize the spectrum of academic and practical approaches to performance, continually connecting text to human experience. In the rehearsal room, we value improvisation and intellect, allowing actors' intuitive understanding of self and story to shape both process and product. We thrive on experimentation.

We are motivated by what Martha Graham describes as a "queer, divine dissatisfaction, a blessed unrest that keeps us marching and makes us more alive." Our fundamental vision is of a theatrical process that searches for precise and deep truth, deeper than what the average person, or even the average artist will accept as sufficient.

OUR MISSION

7 Towers is dedicated to making theatre that challenges the status quo, both in content and in production style. We seek to produce both new and classic plays that ask exhaustive and probing questions about the society we live in and the function of art within it. We are not interested in asking questions we already know the answers to. Our dedication to process simultaneously grants actors a greater degree of creative freedom in the rehearsal room and makes them more responsible for the product in production.

We believe that exploring contemporary experience through direct, honest, and often irreverent storytelling can open live theatre to new and diverse audiences. Whenever possible, we produce in venues that allow us to explore the connection between space and story, often creating opportunities for interaction with new communities.

7 Towers is a sponsored project of Austin Creative Alliance, a non-profit arts service organization.



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