



Proudly Presents the World Premiere of ...

UNSEEN



WRITTEN BY
Mona Mansour

DIRECTED BY
ENSEMBLE MEMBER
Maureen Payne-Hahner

SCENIC DESIGNER
Sarah JHP Watkins

LIGHTING DESIGNER
John Kelly

COSTUME DESIGNER
Rachel Sypniewski

SCENIC ARTIST
Elyse Balogh

PROJECTIONS DESIGNER
Brock Alter

SOUND DESIGNER
Sarah Ramos

PROPS ARTISAN
Sarahi Salazar

STAGE MANAGER
* Corinne James

DIALECT COACH
Sammi Grant

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
David Preis

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Sarah Luse

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers

February 10 – April 9, 2016

The Gift Theatre Company
4802 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, IL 60630
(773) 283-7071 | www.thegifttheatre.org
"Come Closer."

The Gift Theatre Company's 2017 season is made possible, in part, by generous contributions from The Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (RIC), The Alphawood Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, an Anonymous Donor and The SaintsSM.

FEATURING (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

Derya (and others) Ashley Agbay
Mia *+Brittany Burch
Jane (and others) *+Alexandra Main



*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers
+Indicates Gift Ensemble Member

UNDERSTUDIES

Jane (and others) Sandra Bogan
Mia Scottie Caldwell
Derya (and others) Gloria Petrilli

Understudies do not substitute for listed players unless an announcement is made at the time of the performance.

SHOW INFORMATION

PLACE:

Unseen takes place, for the most part, in an apartment in Istanbul, Turkey, some months before the attempted coup of 2016

The play runs approximately 1 Hour 30 minutes.
The play is performed without intermission.

Please be advised that there will be a loud noise, simulating an explosion.

Unseen was originally commissioned by South Coast Repertory for the inaugural Crossroads commissioning program with support from the Time Warner Foundation.

Developed at The Lark Play Development Center, New York City

Developed and presented in a Staged Reading by The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis

Unseen was developed by the Cape Cod Theatre Project, Hal Brooks, Artistic Director

DIRECTOR'S NOTES



Learn more about "devil's breath" at
[www.theguardian.com /devilsbreath.](http://www.theguardian.com/devilsbreath)

As a courtesy to the actors and fellow audience members, please turn off your cell phone!

Please do not text during the performance.

The use of recording devices is strictly prohibited.

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Unseen is made possible with the support, enthusiasm and more than generous contributions of the following individuals and organizations:

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FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT:

Nichole Sobecki, the late David Gilkey, Deidre Schoo, Adam Kolber, Kelly Miller and Andy Knight at South Coast Rep, Dina Eletreby, Dr. Anthony Feinstein, Dr. Elizabeth Loftus, Shaykh Jamaal Diwan, Islamic Center of Irvine, Maria Khani;
And gorgeous collaborators: Evren Odcikin, Erin Anderson, Nicole Shalhoub, and Linda Gehring, whose imprint on the play remains

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“Acting is a particularly thankless art. It dies with the actor. Nothing survives him but the reviews, which do not usually do him justice anyway, whether he is good or bad.

So the only source of satisfaction left to him is the audience’s reactions... The actor, in this special process of discipline and self-sacrifice, self-penetration and molding, is not afraid to go beyond all normally acceptable limits...

**The actor makes a total gift of himself”
— Jerzy Grotowski, *Towards A Poor Theatre***

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Ashley Agbay (*Derya and Others*) is delighted to be working with The Gift for the first time. A proud graduate of Boston University, Ashley is a transplant

from the East Coast. She's loved exploring the Midwest and Chicago theatre; most recently she appeared in Halcyon's *Fefu and her Friends* and Collaboraction's final Sketchbook Festival. Thanks to the cast and crew for the amazing experience!



Brittany Burch (*Mia*) is proud to be an ensemble member here at The Gift Theatre where she has been seen in *Richard III*, *Good For Otto*, *The Royal*

Society of Antarctica, *Othello*, *Thinner Than Water*, *Oh The Humanity*, *Absolute Hell*, and *The Lonesome West*. Brittany has also worked with Steppenwolf, Wildclaw, Redtwist, the Goodman, and Lakeside Shakespeare. Other regional credits include Perseverance Theatre, Artists Repertory Theatre, and Chautauqua Theatre Company. She is a graduate of the School at Steppenwolf and would like to thank Sherman and her family for all their love and support.



Alexandra Main (*Jane and Others*) has been a proud ensemble member of The Gift Theatre since 2002. She was last seen in *The Grapes of Wrath* and

prior to that in critically acclaimed long running world premiere of David Rabe's *Good for Otto* both at The Gift. Other productions at The Gift include *Mine*, *Absolute Hell*, *Cloud 9*, *Northwest Highway*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *The Ruby Sunrise*, *Stop Kiss*, *W;t* (Jeff nomination),

Blithe Spirit, *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *The Clearing*, *A Young Man in Pieces*, "6", *County Fair*, *The Countess*. She holds an MA in performance studies from Northwestern University. Special thanks to my fellow Gifters, to Rita and Frank, to best friends and always to dwp. For Elbee. For Sheldon.



Sandra Bogan

(*Understudy: Jane and Others*) is a native Chicagoan. She is a graduate of Carnegie-Mellon School of Drama. Sandra began

her career with The Second City and then moved onto The Guthrie Theatre. Her favorite role at The Guthrie was Lissette in *Infidelities*. Sandra's television and film credits include: *Moonlighting*, *The Young and the Restless*, *Chicago Hope*, *Alias*, *Punk Vacation* and *Limit Up*. In Chicago she has appeared at Victory Gardens and The Mercury Theatre. Recently, Sandra had the pleasure of playing Sonia in *Vanya, Sonia, Masha and Spike* at Triton Theatre with Kurt Naebig directing. She is thrilled to be working with The Gift Theatre for the first time!



Scottie Caldwell

(*Understudy: Mia*) most recently appeared as Nina in Akvavit Theatre's *Hand in Hand* and as Gabrielle in First Floor Theater's *The*

Awake, both in its initial run and in the remount at Theater on the Lake. Other recent work includes *A Map of Virtue* (Cor Theatre); *Matawan*, *Common Hatred* (The Ruckus); *The Arsonists*, *After Miss Julie* (u/s) (Strawdog Theatre Company); *Fault Lines* (Broken Road Theatre Company); and *Theories of the Sun*, *Maria/Stuart* and the staged reading of *Liberty Tree* (Sideshow Theatre Company). She appears in the web series *The Scarlet Line*, in addition to other

film projects, and is thrilled to be working with The Gift on this production.



Gloria Petrelli

(*Understudy: Derya and Others*) is thrilled to be working with The Gift for the first time. She is a graduate of Illinois State University's

School of Theatre and Dance and was most recently seen in the Waltzing Mechanics' production of *Cosmic Events Are Upon Us* as Tatiana Romanov. Gloria would like to thank her friends and family for the boundless love and support.

Mona Mansour (*Playwright*) The Vagrant trilogy was recently presented at New Dramatists in NYC after a workshop at the Vineyard Arts Project with the Public Theater. Of the trilogy: *The Hour of Feeling* (directed by Mark Wing-Davey) received its world premiere in the Humana Festival at Actors Theatre of Louisville, and a new Arabic translation was just presented at NYU Abu Dhabi, as part of its Arab Voices Festival. *Urge for Going*: productions at Public LAB (dir. Hal Brooks) and SF's Golden Thread (dir. Evren Odickin). *The Vagrant* was commissioned by the Public and workshopped at the 2013 Sundance Theater Institute. *The Way West* received its NY premiere at Labyrinth Theater in April 2016, directed by Mimi O'Donnell. Prior to that, the play was at Steppenwolf, directed by Amy Morton, and Marin Theatre Company, directed by Hayley Finn. Mona was a member of the Public Theater's Emerging Writers Group and a Core Writer at Minneapolis' Playwrights' Center. With Tala Manassah she has written *Falling Down the Stairs*, an EST/Sloan commission. Their short play *Dressing* is part of *Facing Our Truths: Short Plays about Trayvon, Race and Privilege*, a collection of plays commissioned by the New Black Festival. Other commissions include *Waterwell*, La

Jolla Playhouse and Oregon Shakespeare Festival's "American Revolutions." 2012 Whiting Award. 2014 Middle East America Playwright Award.

Maureen Payne-Hahner (*Director*) is an ensemble member since 2002 and grateful to be back in wonderful Chicago with the The Gift Theatre! Her work has appeared in London, off-Broadway, Chicago, Los Angeles, Vienna, Munich, Zagreb (Croatia) and Bangalore, India. She currently co-develops several new plays with rising playwrights. Upcoming new plays under her direction include *The Tongue That Tells Me So* by Mariah Sage and Bruce Seymour (Test Flight Program, Cleveland Public Theatre, 2017); *Winston & The Duke*, a new play by Rory Fellowes (London, 2017); and *The Crowded Hour* by David Mulei. Maureen lives in Germany with her family and is an avid supporter of the World Wildlife Fund and several humanitarian outreach programs. For a complete listing of her work visit her website: www.maureenpaynehahner.com. Special Thanks: My family, Christoph and Liv, Michael Patrick Thornton and The Gift Theatre, the *Unseen* design and production team, playwright Mona Mansour, and my friends of Istanbul, Tayfun Kucukoglu and family, for their generosity in hosting me in their both beautiful and historically rich city.

Sarah JHP Watkins (*Scenic Designer*) is delighted to return to The Gift Theatre for *Unseen*. Last season, Sarah designed the scenery for *A Life Extra Ordinary*. Her work has also been seen at Lookingglass Theatre Company (*Lookingglass Alice*, Tour 2015), Steppenwolf Garage Theater, Chicago Dramatists, Strawdog Theatre Co, The New Colony, City Lit Theatre Company as well as at Grinnell College, Northwestern University, among others. Her design work was exhibited at the 2012 Prague Quadrennial in the Czech Republic, and her photography work at the New York see.me

exhibitions. Sarah is an Assistant Professor at Northeastern Illinois University's Department of Communication, Media, and Theatre where she teaches courses in theatrical design and technology. Training: MFA in Stage Design for Scenic Design (Northwestern University); BA in Theatre and Studio Art Minor (Hope College). Portfolio: www.sarah-jhp-watkins.com

Elyse Balogh (*Scenic Artist*) is a graduate from DePaul University's Theatre School, with a BFA in Scenic Design. Recently, she has designed *Death of a Salesman* (Redtwist) and *Rutherford's Travels* (Pegasus Theatre Company). Recent paint charges include *A Life Extraordinary* and *The Grapes of Wrath* (The Gift), *The Full Monty* (Peninsula Players), *American Beauty Shop* (Chicago Dramatists), and *The Seagull* (Artistic Home). Upcoming designs: *Henry*

V (Babes with Blades) and *For the Love Of* (Pride Films and Plays).
www.elysebalogh.com

John Kelly (*Lighting Designer*) is very excited to be working with The Gift for the first time. Other designs include, *Great Expectations*, *DOA*, *Charles Ives Take Me Home*, *Distance*, *The Long Christmas Ride Home* (Strawdog Theatre); *I Am My Own Wife*, *Abraham Lincoln was a Faggot* (About Face Theatre); *Mike Mother*, *Trust Us/Screw You* (The Neofuturists); *Hairy Ape* (Oracle Theatre); *MERGE*, *Plastic Revolution*, *Stanley in the Name of Love* (The New Colony). He is an ensemble member with Strawdog Theatre Company.
www.johnkellydesigns.com

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Rachel M. Sypniewski (*Costume Designer*) is thrilled to be making her debut with The Gift. She is very excited to be a part of telling this important story. Ms. Sypniewski has designed over 250 productions in the Chicago area. Among her favorite credits are *Merchild* (16th Street Theatre); *Miss Holmes* (Lifeline Theater); *Titanic: The Musical* (Griffin/Non-Equity Jeff Nominated Best Costume Design); *La Bete* (Trap Door/Non-Equity Jeff Award Best Costume Design); *The Ghost is Here* (Vitalist); *Tiger at the Gates* (Promethean/Broadway World Nomination for Best Costume Design); *Universal Wolf*; *Fairytales Lives of Russian Girls*; *The Balcony* (Trap Door); *Hotel Aphrodite*; *'Namosaur, Hey! Dancin'! Hey! Musical!* (Factory); *Caucasian Chalk Circle* (Wheaton College). Rachel is the resident costume designer for Trap Door, an artistic associate with 16th Street Theatre and a company member with the Factory. www.rachelsyp.com

Sarah Ramos (*Sound Designer*) has been the Resident Audio and Video Supervisor at Court Theatre for seven years. Locally, she has worked sound for Goodman Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre, Drury Lane Theatre, About Face Theatre, American Blues Theatre, Congo Square Theatre, Bailiwick Chicago, Teatro Luna, Prop Thtr, and Livewire Chicago. Nationally, she has worked with Indiana Repertory Theatre (IN), First Stage (WI), Milwaukee Chamber Theatre (WI), Renaissance Theatreworks (WI), AndHow Theater Company (NY), Gateway Playhouse (NY), and Piedmont Opera (NC). She is an alumnus of the North Carolina School of the Arts.

Sarahi Salazar (*Props Artisan*) is new to Chicago from the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Some of her favorite works include scenic design for *In The Heights*, *Cabaret*, and *Into the Woods*. She is very excited to be working at the The Gift Theatre.

Sammi Grant (*Dialect Coach*) is thrilled to be returning to The Gift Theatre after having previously coached *The Grapes of Wrath* and *Broadsword*. Other theatres she has worked for include: Drury Lane, Windy City Playhouse, Timeline Theatre, Strawdog Theatre, Sideshow Theatre, Eclipse Theatre, The Artistic Home, Pride Films and Plays, and many more. In 2016, Sammi coached on select episodes of the first seasons of *The Exorcist* (Fox) and *Patriot* (Amazon Prime). She also works as a voiceover artist and is represented by Big Mouth Talent. She would like to thank Colin and her mom.

Brock Alter (*Projections Designer*) is a Chicago based video and projection artist. He works for Blue Man Group Chicago as well as with Stoptime Live and A.B.L.E. Ensemble. Recent credits include: *I Am My Own Wife* with About Face Theatre, *Fly By Night* at Theo Ubique, *Wicked City* with Chicago Theatre Workshop, and *Multitudes* with Rasaka/Vitalist Theatre Company and the premiere of *20K*, an adaptation of Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. As a live video artist he has performed with KC & The Sunshine Band, been on tour with Tiesto & Calvin Harris, and performed at EDC, Ultra Music Festival, Summer Set Music Festival, and Freaky Deaky Halloween. He studied Cinema and Television at The University of Southern California where he graduated with a BA.

Corinne James (*Stage Manager*) is thrilled to work with The Gift Theatre again to stage manage *Unseen*. A proud member of the Actors' Equity Union, Cori has stage managed a number of Chicago productions, most recently *The Grapes of Wrath* (Gift Theatre), *The Bachelors* (Cole Theatre), *Good for Otto* (Gift Theatre), *The Royal Society of Antarctica* (Gift Theatre), *The Downpour* (Route 66 Theatre), and *Cicada* (Route 66 Theatre). Cori spent four years working as the assistant stage

manager at Northlight Theatre, and has also previously worked for Ravinia Theater Festival. Cori thanks her family, friends, and her husband Rob for their love and support.

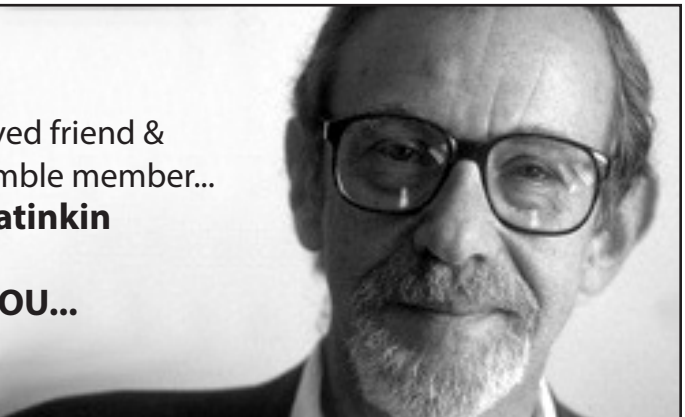
David Preis (*Technical Director*) has contributed his woodworking, general handyman, and all around technical expertise to The Gift since 2002, becoming Technical Director in 2006. He has worked as a luthier for over 35 years – making cellos and basses for Englehardt-Link based in Elk Grove Village. David studied theatre and design at Illinois Wesleyan and has worked as the sound engineer for “The Night Crawlers,” a Chicago area blues band. Throughout the years, he has designed, built, and/or coordinated lighting, set, and sound for a number of Chicago area productions including critically acclaimed productions of *Tango* and *Josephine, The Mouse Singer* both at Chicago Actors Ensemble, *Brick/Walls Open Spaces* for Shakti Dance Company, *Crying Woolf* at Zebra Crossing Theatre, and *Light Up the Sky* at Gurnee Theatre Company.

Sarah Luse (*Production Manager*) is very excited to be beginning her second season as The Gift’s production manager with *Unseen*. Other production management credits include *Richard III*, *Grapes of Wrath*, and *A Life Extra Ordinary* (The Gift); *The Dead Prince*, *Half Brothers Mendelssohn*, and *The Spirit Play* (The Strange Tree Group); and *Escape From Happiness*, *A Doll’s House* and *The Crucible* (Infamous Commonwealth). Along with production management, Sarah is also a stage manager. Recent stage management credits include *The Temperamentals* (About Face Theatre); *A Life Extra Ordinary*, *Richard III*, and *Bethany* (The Gift); and *Bad Jews* (Theater Wit).

Emjoy Gavino (*Casting Director*) Chicago acting credits include Court, Northlight, Steppenwolf, Victory Gardens, Remy Bumpo, Paramount, Broadway Playhouse, Lookingglass, The Neo-Futurists, The Goodman and Second City Theatricals. Regional credits: Repertory Actors Theatre, Village Theatre and 5th Avenue Theater. Film/TV: Chicago Med, Empire, Chicago Fire, Mob Doctor, Boss, and Freudian Slip. Emjoy is a company member and teaching artist with Barrel of Monkeys, an ensemble member of Remy Bumpo

To our beloved friend &
fellow ensemble member...
Sheldon Patinkin

WE MISS YOU...



and is the founder and producer of The Chicago Inclusion Project. She has been a consultant for casting several projects in the Chicago area since 2012.

Michael Patrick Thornton (*Artistic Director and Co-Founder of The Gift*) was most recently seen as Richard in The Gift's production of *Richard III* at Steppenwolf's Garage and prior to that in fellow Gift ensemble member Will Eno's one-man show *Title And Deed* (Lookingglass, directed by Gift ensemble member Marti Lyons); the nationally-acclaimed rolling premiere of fellow Gift ensemble member Andrew Hinderaker's *Colossal* (Kennedy Center/UT-Austin/Olney Theatre); as lago in *Othello* (The Gift, directed by Jonathan Berry); and *Our Town* (Actors Theatre of Louisville, directed by Les Waters). As a director, Michael recently directed the world premiere of David Rabe's *Good For Otto* (The Gift). At Steppenwolf, Michael directed *Of Mice And Men*, was a very grateful assistant director on the Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning *August: Osage County*, is a former student of (class of 2001) and current instructor at The School at Steppenwolf, played the title role in *The Elephant Man*, and the role of

Mechanic in the Midwest Premiere of Will Eno's *Middletown*, directed by Les Waters. Like so many Chicago actors, Michael began his Chicago career performing *Romeo And Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at ungodly early hours at The Ivanhoe Theatre, which is now a Binny's, though the difference back then was negligible. Awards: Joseph Jefferson Award (Solo Performance: *The Good Thief*, The Gift) Time Out Magazine "Best Actor" Award (*Title And Deed*); Tree of Life Award: Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago; Chicago Finalist: National Shakespeare Contest (Mitzi-Newhouse Theatre; Lincoln Center) 3Arts Artist Award; Northlight Theatre's Jack Springer Award for Outstanding Performance; The Tim Meier & Helen Coburn Meier Foundation Achievement Award, The Second City Foundation's Jim Zulevic Chicago Arts Award, and induction into The University of Iowa and St. Patrick High School Halls of Fame. Film/TV: ABC's *Private Practice*, FOX's *The Chicago Code*, Ron Howard's *The Dilemma*, *THE JAMZ*, and the films *The View From Tall*, *Liquors*, and *Soup du Jour*. He lives blissfully in the Jefferson Park neighborhood of Chicago with his wife, the performance artist Lindsey Barlag Thornton. We miss you, Sheldon.



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This November, The Gift lost one of our most passionate and passionately generous supporters. **Carol Cyganowski** was and will always be an angel to all of us at The Gift. As a subscriber, Carol was at every production and it was a joy to hear her refreshingly wry, wonderful, spot-on critiques. And as a Production Sponsor, Carol got to be in the room with one of her theatrical heroes, David Rabe, as The Gift rehearsed and premiered his new play *Good for Otto*, a production that quite literally could not happen without the generosity of the Cyganowskis.

The best way we at The Gift can honor Carol's memory is to continue to seek out great, daring writing for the American Theatre and to present it with only the highest of aesthetic values. This memorial fund will allow us to do precisely that for next season and the seasons to come.

We'll miss you, Carol.

Thank you for giving us a kick in the pants when we needed it.
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