

# CRACKPOT

by Rachel Wyatt



A lust for life...A life of lust

Director Fran Gebhard / Set Designer Laurin Kelsey / Costume Designer Sabrina Miller / Lighting Designer Michael Franzmann

Sound Designer Amy Kirkpatrick / Stage Manager Tanya Gadsby

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# Crackpot

Written by Rachel Wyatt

Based on the novel by Adele Wiseman

## CREATIVE TEAM

Guest Director	<b>Fran Gebhard</b>
Set Designer	<b>Laurin Kelsey</b>
Costume Designer	<b>Sabrina Miller</b>
Lighting Designer	<b>Michael Franzmann</b>
Sound Designer	<b>Amy Kirkpatrick</b>
Dialect Coach	<b>Lisi Tessler</b>
Stage Manager	<b>Tanya Gadsby</b>
Faculty Supervisor (Dialect)	<b>Ned Vukovic</b>
Faculty Supervisor (Set Design)	<b>Allan Stichbury</b>
Faculty Supervisor (Costume Design)	<b>Mary Kerr</b>
Guest Supervisor (Lighting Design)	<b>Ereca Hassell</b>

## CAST

<b>Rielle Braid</b>	Mrs. Letz
<b>Julia Cameron</b>	Gusia
<b>Jamaine Campbell</b>	Uncle Nate
<b>Peter Carlone</b>	Limpy Letz
<b>Brian Culp</b>	Lazar
<b>Ryan Haché</b>	Morgan / Soldier
<b>Laura Harris</b>	Miss Botholmsup
<b>James Kot</b>	Polonick
<b>Sam Mullins</b>	Danile
<b>Graham Newmarch</b>	David
<b>Bryan Nothling</b>	Yankl / Deli Customer
<b>Kaitlyn Regehr</b>	Mrs. Yankl
<b>Celine Richmond</b>	Hoda
<b>Lisi Tessler</b>	Nurse / Mother

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## Note from the *Director*



When I was asked to direct Rachel Wyatt's play *Crackpot*, I trudged through the snow to the library (I was in Regina) to find a copy. I couldn't devour the play fast enough. I was intrigued, delighted, shocked and moved.

*Crackpot*'s protagonist, Hoda, is a wise cracking, naïve, bawdy character. After the death of her Mother she does what she must to stay with her blind father and preserve her family. Her methods are unorthodox, to say the least, but she is a survivor and for this I applaud her. She captivated me with her humour and her lust for life.

In setting and costuming the play I wanted to bring you a heightened look at Hoda's world, a world that spans a thirty-three year period from 1912 – 1945 in the north end of Winnipeg. For influences, designers Laurin Kelsey, Sabrina Miller and I looked to artists Chagall and L.L. Fitzgerald and researched the Yiddish Theatre of the early 1900's.

The play is set against a backdrop of historical events, World War I, the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919, the Royal Visit, the Depression of the 1930's and finally World War II. Although many of these events are sombre, Hoda, our larger than life heroine, shows us the heart and the humour.

*Crackpot* speaks to me about family, mothering, community, survival, hope and love. I hope it speaks to you as well.

I would like to dedicate my work on this play to my mother Ona McDermott (May 1920 – February 2007).

**Fran Gebhard**

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## About the *Playwright*



Rachel Wyatt emigrated to Canada from England with her husband and children in 1957. She is the author of five novels and four collections of stories. She has written uncountable radio dramas for the CBC and the BBC. Her stage plays have been produced across the country, in the United States and in the UK. Her most recent collection of short fiction is *The Magician's Beautiful Assistant*, published by Hedgerow Press. For many years she was Director of Writing at The Banff Centre. She is a member of the Order of Canada and a recipient of the Queen's Jubilee Medal.


## Note from the *Playwright*

Writing this play was both a joy and a sorrow. A sorrow because I was adapting the novel for radio and stage as a memorial to its author. But it was a joy and a challenge to give the various characters in this wonderful book another life. Sadly there were some who had to be left out if the play was not to be five hours long, and now and then I sense them lurking backstage waiting for their cues. This is the ninth production of *Crackpot* and I'm delighted that it is now being put on here at the Phoenix. Wherever she has gone, Hoda, the heroine has won friends through her courage and her generosity—qualities that belonged also to her creator, my late friend, Adele Wiseman.

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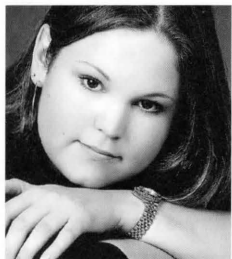
**Fran Gebhard** *Director*

Fran is thrilled to be back at the University of Victoria directing and teaching. She spent last year at the University of Regina where she taught all levels of acting and directed *The School for Scandal*. Other directing credits include *Twelfth Night*, *The Shadow Box*, *As You Like It*, *The Affections of May*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *For The Pleasure of Seeing Her Again*, and *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. Fran received her MFA in Directing at UBC.

Last seen at the Phoenix as Martha in *Amigo's Blue Guitar*, Fran has worked in theatres across Canada. Favourite credits include Lady Wishfort in *Way of the World*, Lycus in *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum*, Brutus in *Julius Caesar*, and Mary in *Kilt*. She also does regular performances of her one-woman show *Looking For Kitty*.

Film and television credits include *Blue City Slammers* (for which she received a Genie nomination), *The Chris Issak Show*, *Just Deal*, *Ernest Goes to School*, *Shame*, *Police Academy*, *Common Ground* and *Moment of Truth*, Stephen Kings' *Dead Zone*, *Taken* and the soon to be released *Case No. 39* with Renee Zellweger. Fran was also a series regular on *A Nice Show* for CBC.

Fran has had a varied career in the theatre. In addition to acting and directing she hosted her own radio show, *Fran's Culture Showcase*. She enjoys working as a dramaturge and is a former program head of the Banff playRites Colony. She is looking forward to adjudicating two play festivals this Summer for Theatre BC.



**Laurin Kelsey** *Set Designer*

*Crackpot* is Laurin's first project working as a Set Designer but also her final project before graduating from the department this April. Recent work on main-stage productions includes *Richard III* (Asst. Set Designer and Scenic Painter), *Tartuffe* (Asst. Set Designer and Scenic Painter), *Tyrants* (Scenic Painter), *Metamorphoses* (Asst. Costume Designer) and *Guys & Dolls* (Props Asst.). Laurin is a winner of the 2006 President Award at UVic for academic excellence as well as the I.O.D.E's Provincial Arts Award.

She has also had film experience working in the Art Department on the set of the television series *Stargate SG-1*.



**Sabrina Miller** *Costume Designer*

Sabrina started designing costumes and sets as a hobby while she pursued her career as a palaeontologist. Her enjoyment of the art of design led her away from dinosaurs to the Department of Theatre's Design specialization, in which she is in her third year. Previous designs include *Tartuffe* (Phoenix Theatre), *Charlotte's Web* (Kaleidoscope), *Macbeth* (Victoria Shakespeare Society), *Little Women* (Kaleidoscope), *Beanstalk* (Four Seasons), *Forever Plaid* (Oak Bay Beach Hotel) and *Fiddler on the Roof* (VOS).

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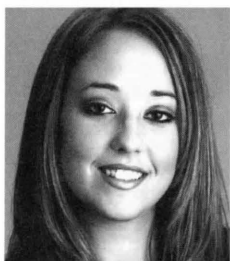
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**Michael Franzmann** *Lighting Designer*

Michael has previously designed lights for SATCo (Student Alternative Theatre Company), Four Seasons, The Gilbert and Sullivan Society and sound design for Victoria Operatic Society. An active member within the department, Michael has been involved in nearly every Phoenix main-stage since he started in 2004 and he serves as an executive member on the Theatre Course Union, Technical Director for SATCo and Student Senator for the Faculty of Fine Arts. After spending the past summer as a lighting work-study at the Banff Centre, traveling to Thailand next year where he will study design at Chulalongkorn University.



**Amy Kirkpatrick** *Sound Designer*

Amy is a fourth year student at the department working on her first main-stage sound design. In the past four years, she has worked on several Phoenix productions, including lighting board operator for *Amigo's Blue Guitar*, *That Elusive Spark* and *Guys and Dolls*. This year Amy was the electrician on both *Tartuffe* and *Richard III*. *Crackpot* will be her last project at the Phoenix Theatre and she will be continuing a career in music after graduation.



**Lisi Tessler** *Dialect Coach/Nurse/Mother*

A second year student at the Department of Theatre, *Crackpot* is Lisi's first main-stage production at the Phoenix. Past credits include *Macbeth* (Victoria Shakespeare Society), *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (Tarragon Theatre Arts Fair), and her self-written play *The Interview*, which she directed and acted in at the Sears Ontario Drama Festival.



**Tanya Gadsby** *Stage Manager*

Tanya is a fourth year theatre student and *Crackpot* is her first show as stage manager. She previously worked as an assistant stage manager for *Metamorphoses* and *That Elusive Spark* and performed as the Maid in *Rodeo Star*. Tanya also wrote *Flealess* which recently debuted in the 2007 FIND Studio Series. This past summer Tanya worked as a production assistant for the first Yukon International Film Festival in her hometown of Whitehorse, Yukon. This past fall she acted in a short film for Bravo!FACT that was shot in the Yukon. Tanya hopes to pursue playwrighting, acting, design and stage management.



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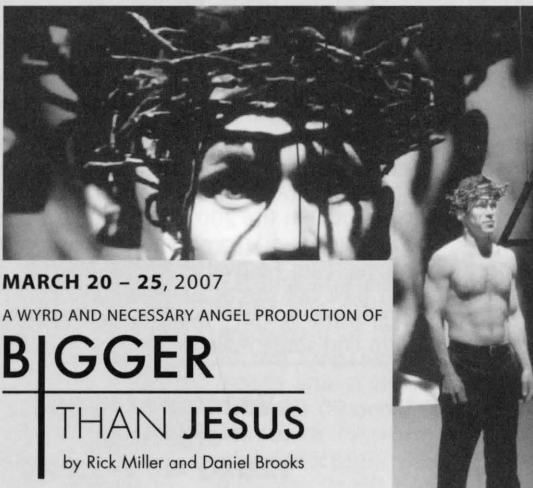

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# Phoenix *Phacts*

## Alumni, Faculty, Staff and Students News and Kudos

Alumni **Jason Donaldson**, a teacher at Gulf Islands Secondary School, led his students to victory in the Canadian Improv Games Vancouver Island Regional Tournament this past month. The team will compete against the best across the country at the national tournament in Ottawa this April... Expedition Theatre presented **Charles Tidler's** new play *Cross This Bridge At A Walk* as part of the Belfry Theatre's Incubator Project this February. Charles is a sessional instructor in the Department of Writing at UVic. The production featured an all UVic cast of **Lee Cookson, Trevor Hinton, Carey Wass** and **Chris Wilson** and they were directed by alumni **Christie Little**. **Kathleen Greenfield** designed the production and **Katie Hood** stage-managed. Charles and Christie were both supported by our Chair on leave, **Brian Richmond** who was dramaturge for the new play... The 2007 M Awards were announced and the Department and its alumni were delighted to receive recognition for their work. Our fall production of *Richard III* received a nomination for favourite overall production, along with **Trevor Hinton's** nomination for favourite actor. Alumni **Meg Braem** and **Celine Stubel** were also nominated for favourite actor. Nominees for favourite new play had Phoenix connections, with *Legoland*, *The Qualities of Zero* and *The Third Taboo* all being recognized. Phoenix alumni also made up the majority of nominees for favourite director: **Ian Case, Clayton Jevne** and **Britt Small** all received nods... **Sarah Pelzer** and **Scott Hendrickson** both appeared in BumbleBee Theatre Collective's play *Yellow Ribbon* this February. The new play was written and directed by alumni **Jen Braem**, who was recently seen at the Phoenix as guest Stage Manager for *Tartuffe*.



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
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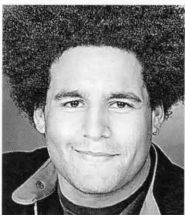
**Rielle Braid** *Mrs. Letz*

Rielle is in her second year of the acting program and *Crackpot* marks her first main-stage. Previous performances include directing scenes: *In Through The Living Room Window*, *The Tempest*, *Jackals and Arabs* and SATCo's *Butoh*. She also sang and danced in Summerstock's *Fiddler On the Roof* and *Annie Get Your Gun*.



**Julia Cameron** *Gusia*

A little rusty in the vernacular after portraying Margaret in last semester's *Richard III*, Julia tackles another linguistic challenge with this role in her final semester of the acting program. Other credits include *Pericles* (VSS), *Excedera*, *Emelia* (SATCo), and the FIND Studio Series (2005, 2006).



**Jamaine Campbell** *Uncle Nate*

Jamaine, now in his third year of the acting program at the department, is both a film and stage actor. Selected credits at the Phoenix include Brakenbury in last semester's *Richard III*, Poseidon and Midas in *Metamorphoses* and Henry Johnson in *Tyrants*.



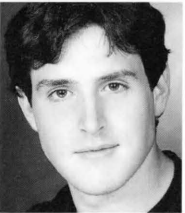
**Peter Carlone** *Limpy Letz*

Peter is a third year acting student and *Crackpot* is his second main-stage performance after playing Catesby in *Richard III* last semester. His previous credits include *In Transit* for the 2005 FIND Studio Series, *The Prisoner of Second Avenue* (directing scene), *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *The Hobbit* with Calgary's Storybook Theatre.



**Brian Culp** *Lazar*

Brian is in his first year at the University of Victoria, recently transferring from Portland, Oregon, where he spent the past three years studying. Recently appearing as Garcin in *No Exit* (student project), *Crackpot* marks his second performance in Victoria. Brian wishes to pursue stage acting professionally and work on the side as a designer.



**Ryan Haché** *Soldier*

Ryan is a second year acting student at the Department of Theatre. *Crackpot* is his Phoenix main-stage debut.



**Laura Harris** *Miss Botholmsup*

Laura is a fourth year acting student and *Crackpot* marks her final main-stage at the Phoenix Theatre. Laura was recently seen in the role of Dorine in last semester's *Tartuffe* and Isabella Bird/Win in last season's *Top Girls*. She also played Thesia in *Pericles*.

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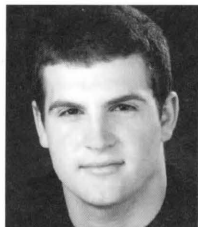
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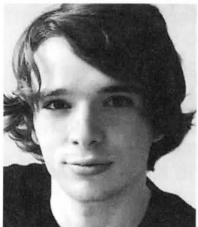
**James Kot** *Polonick*

*Crackpot* marks James' fifth and final main-stage at the Phoenix. Previous credits include *Richard III*, *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, *Guys and Dolls*, *HE Who Gets Slapped* and *Death of a Clown* for SATCo. James' last role at the Phoenix will be Max in the student project of *Bent*, which will be performed at the end of the month.



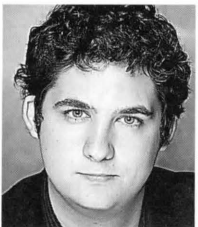
**Sam Mullins** *Danile*

This is Sam's second main-stage at the Phoenix Theatre. In this season's *Tartuffe* he portrayed the role of Cléante. Other credits include *The Dinner Party* and *The Romantic Animal* in the 2005 and 2006 FIND Studio Series and *One Man Igloo* on the SATCo stage.



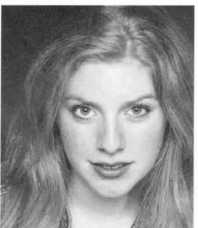
**Graham Newmarch** *David*

Graham is in his third year of the acting program at the department, and this is, coincidentally, his third main-stage performance. Recent credits include the role of Billy in Lee MacDougall's *High Life* for SATCo and the role of Valère in Molière's *Tartuffe* for the Phoenix.



**Bryan Nothing** *Yankl*

*Crackpot* marks Bryan's second main-stage at the Phoenix after playing Derby in *Richard III*. He transferred into the second year of the acting program this year after receiving a Diploma in Theatre from Capilano College in North Vancouver.



**Kaitlyn Regehr** *Mrs. Yankl*

Kaitlyn says farewell to the Phoenix in *Crackpot*, her final production. This year she performed at the Toronto Fringe Festival and on previous trips east at the Tarragon Theatre, the Passe Muraille backspace and Factory Theatre Lab. Some memorable UVic experiences include *Laughter!* (SATCo) and *Guys and Dolls*, *Metamorphoses* and *Richard III* (Phoenix).



**Celine Richmond** *Hoda*

Celine is currently in her third year of the acting program at the Department of Theatre and *Crackpot* marks her third main-stage performance. Previous credits include *Metamorphoses* and last fall's production of *Tartuffe*.

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Yariv Aloni, Associate Music Director

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János Sándor, Conductor

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MOZART Concerto in E flat K. 495

1st movement: Allegro moderato

Soloist: *Mar Murray*, tuba

WEBER Concerto in F major

Soloist: *Laura Barton*, bassoon

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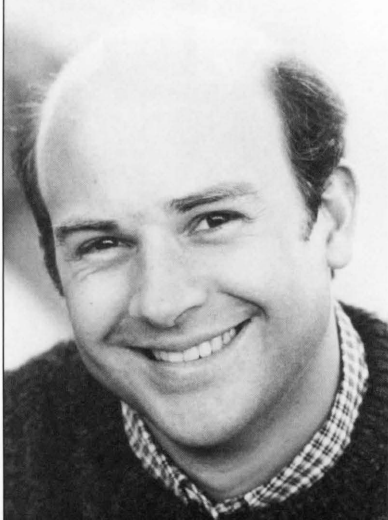
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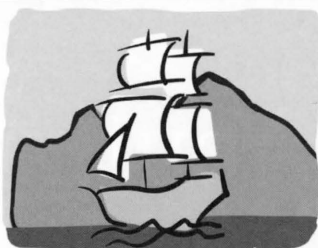
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