

# EURYDICE

BY SARAH RUHL



FEBRUARY 16 - 25, 2012



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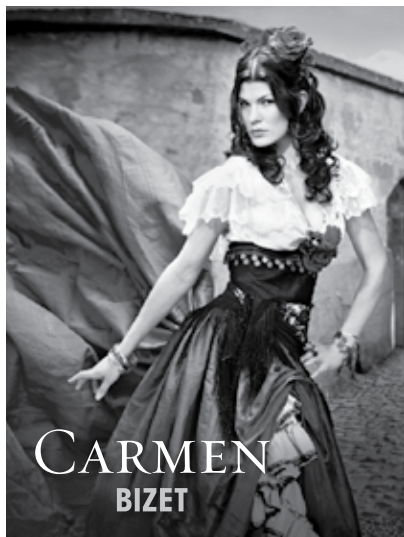
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# Eurydice

by Sarah Ruhl

## CREATIVE TEAM

Director	<b>Jeffrey Pufahl</b>
Production Designer	<b>Mary Kerr</b>
Lighting Designer	<b>Bryan Kenney</b>
Sound Designer	<b>Neil Ferguson</b>
Stage Manager	<b>Sarah Watson</b>
Assistant Lighting Designers	<b>Simon Farrow, Michelle Lo</b>
Projection Designer	<b>Scott Bell</b>
MFA Supervisors	<b>Linda Hardy, Allan Stichbury</b>

## CAST

<b>Alysson Hall</b>	Eurydice
<b>Peter McGuire</b>	Father
<b>Graham Miles</b>	The Interesting Man
<b>Derek Wallis</b>	Orpheus

A Chorus Of Stones

**Andrew Barrett**  
**Jethro Lee Herring**  
**Sarah Johnson**  
**Chelsea Keene**  
**Taryn Lees**  
**Angie Lopez**  
**Hayley McCurdy**  
**Simon Walter**

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## Director's *Notes*



Playwright Sarah Ruhl lost her father to cancer at the age of twenty and much of her early writing is dedicated to mourning and coming to terms with his death. *Eurydice* is very much the story of Sarah and her father. Told through the lens of myth and imagination, the play is not a realistic exploration of this story, but rather an expression of the complexity of the complexity of Ruhl's emotional journey. Entering the world of Sarah Ruhl is like stepping into a dream where time is suspended and reality melds with the magical and whimsical mind of the dreamer. This is why I find this play so mesmerizing; it challenges us to peer through the veil of death and see the far-reaching consequences of our actions.

When starting on this project, I felt I needed to re-imagine and create a version of the play that was unique to the George theatre. I wanted not only to explore the potential of the space but also the theories of great theatre practitioners of today and yesterday. Designer Mary Kerr was the perfect person with which to embark on the journey of asking "what is it?" rather than saying "this is it". Together we have created a bold, kinetic world that awakens imagination and breathes life into Ruhl's poetic language and odd characters.

I want to extend my sincere gratitude to Linda Hardy and all the artists and technicians who've worked on making this dream a reality at UVic.

**Jeffrey Pufahl**



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## Playwright's *Bio*



Sarah Ruhl was born in Wilmette, Illinois in 1973, where her father instilled in her a love of music and a fascination with language. She initially aspired to specialize in poetry while studying at Brown University. However, her father's untimely death instead inspired her first play, *The Dog Play*. She earned a BA in 1997 and an MFA in 2001. *Eurydice* was written in 2003 and saw productions at Circle X Theatre, Georgetown University, Berkeley and Yale before making it to New York's Second Stage Theatre in 2007. While *Eurydice* was making this journey, Ruhl found success with shows such as *Melancholy Play*, *Virtual Meditation #1*, and *Passion Play: a Cycle*, which won the Pen American Award and the Fourth Freedom Forum Playwriting Award from The Kennedy Center. *The Clean House* (2004) won the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize and was a Pulitzer Prize finalist. In 2006 she received a MacArthur Fellowship "genius grant" for "creating vivid and adventurous theatrical works that poignantly juxtapose the mundane aspects of daily life with mythic themes of love and war." More recently, her play *Dead Man's Cell Phone* (2008) explored the personal disconnection that stems from the progression of modern technology, and *In the Next Room (or The Vibrator Play)* (2009) examined the early history of the vibrator and its use as a clinical device for the treatment of "hysteria." *In the Next Room* was Ruhl's Broadway debut and earned three Tony Award nominations, including Best Play. It was also her second play to be named a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Drama. Her newest play, *Stage Kiss*, debuted in Chicago in May of 2011.

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## Creative Team



**Jeffrey Pufahl** *Director*

Jeffrey is excited to be finishing up his MFA in Directing at UVic with this stunning piece of theatre. Last season at the Phoenix, he was the Assistant Director/Music Director for *Yerma* and *Twelfth Night*. His work as a theatre artist has been seen across Canada, the US and Europe. He directed numerous productions for The Souris Valley Theatre and Regina Lyric Light Opera and was the Artistic Director of BSide Productions for five years. He was the Associate Director/Production Manager for the Armonico Consort's highly acclaimed opera production of Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, which toured the UK. Jeff has also written and directed three documentary films for the award winning series *Landing: Stories from the Cultural Divide*. As an actor/singer, Jeff has performed with Chemainus Theatre Festival (*Fiddler on the Roof*), Persephone Theatre, Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan, Globe Theatre, The Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Regina Symphony Orchestra, Infinit Theatre – Montreal, The Charlottetown Festival, and Off Broadway in *Caligula – An Ancient Glam Epic* – which won the Audience Choice Award at the New York Musical Theatre Festival in 2004. Jeff has written, produced and performed in two International Fringe Festival hits: *Prairie Salt* and *Caberlesque!* (Best Musical, Victoria Fringe), and toured Canada with Pau Miro's *It's Raining in Barcelona*. He holds his Bachelor of Music in voice from McGill University and an MFA in performance from the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. Jeff is also a certified Hatha Yoga Instructor and a Transformational Breathing Facilitator. [www.jeffreypufahl.com](http://www.jeffreypufahl.com)



**Mary Kerr** *Production Designer*

Mary Kerr has a distinguished career as a leading production designer in theatre, dance, opera, television, exhibition and special events design. Her award-winning, artistically unique sets and costumes have been seen at the Shaw Festival, Stratford Festival, The National Arts Centre, The National Ballet of Canada, The Royal Winnipeg Ballet, The Danny Grossman Dance Company, The Canadian Opera Company, and most major regional theatres. Her work has been showcased internationally in New York, London, New Zealand, the Paris Opera, the CBC, the 1994 Commonwealth Games Opening and Closing Ceremonies and the award-winning PBS children's television show, *The Toy Castle*. She has represented Canada at international competitions such as World Stage Design 2005 and 2009 and The Prague Quadrennial Design Competitions. Recent work includes *Sweeney Todd* at the Citadel Theatre and *Bella: The Colour of Love*, a new musical she designed and co-wrote for the Philadelphia Theatre Company and Philadelphia Museum of Art in 2011 about Marc Chagall's wife Bella. Mary was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 2010 and received an Honorary Doctorate in 2011 from the University of Manitoba. Mary is Canadian Research Editor for *World Scenography Vol.1 and 2* and has designed numerous productions at the UVic theatre department including *Arturo Ui* and *The Wind in The Willows*.

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## Creative Team



**Bryan Kenney** *Lighting Designer*

Bryan received his BA in Technical Scenography from Dalhousie University in Halifax. This is his second year in the MFA Theatre Design program at UVic. Some of his most memorable credits include lighting designs for the Phoenix Theatre (*Inside* and *Rookery Nook*), Opera Nova Scotia (*Zaide*), Ship's Company Theatre (*Ferry Tales*), DMV Theatre (*The Blue Light*, *The Leisure Society*) and set designs for Halifax Theatre for Young People (*Merlin*, *Gravesavers*). Bryan has also designed lighting for Theatre Inconnu's *Pornography*, *Shining City* and *Love Kills*.



**Neil Ferguson** *Sound Designer*

Neil has enjoyed being a part of the creative team for *Eurydice*. Most recently Neil designed the sound in the Phoenix Theatre's production of *Rookery Nook* as well as alongside Andrew Wade at the Victoria Fringe Festival's presentation of *BFA: The Musical!* At the Phoenix, Neil has been fortunate enough to work on both *Romeo and Juliet* and *Twelfth Night* as well as design and perform technical work for a number of productions for the Student Alternative Theatre Company.



**Sarah Watson** *Stage Manager*

Sarah Watson is a third year student in the Department of Theatre. Previous stage management credits include *Twelfth Night* (Phoenix Theatres, 2010), *The Wolf in the Mirror*, *Shelf Life*, *Thought Talk*, and *New Canadian Kid* (SATCo 2010/2011), and *The Tirades of Love* (Victoria Fringe Festival 2011). She looks forward to her fourth and final year at the Phoenix.

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# Cast



**Andrew Barrett** *Stone*

Andrew graduates from the theatre department in June. His company, Impulse Theatre, has created works for Intrepid's YOU Show Series, SKAM's Bike Ride, and Victoria Fringe; his piece *The Wolf in the Mirror* was picked as the Best SATCo of 2011. Next up, he will be creating *The Damned Girl* for the Fringe in August.



**Alysson Hall** *Eurydice*

Alysson is so excited to be completing her final year in the theatre department's acting specialization with such a brilliant cast. Previous credits include: *Orangedale Whistle* (FIND Series), *Yerma* and *Rookery Nook* (Phoenix Theatre). Alysson intends to continue writing, acting and improvising in Vancouver after graduation.



**Jethro Lee Herring** *Stone*

Jethro is thrilled to be taking part in his second production here at the Phoenix. Jethro is a third year student in the comprehensive program and is excited to be jumping into the realm of myth in *Eurydice*. His past credits include *Twelfth Night*, *The Tirades of Love*, and *Geez!*



**Sarah Johnson** *Stone*

Sarah is in her fourth year in theatre and is specializing in Applied Theatre. Past credits include *The Tirades of Love* (Victoria Fringe Festival), *Yerma* (Phoenix Theatre), *Katkaista* (SATCo), and *Geez!* (SATCo). She is excited to be working in such a collaborative environment on a fantastic show.



**Chelsea Keene** *Stone*

Born and raised in the Comox Valley, Chelsea has always been involved in community theatre. Her passion for acting, dance, voice and teaching has led her to the University of Victoria. Now in her second year, Chelsea looks forward to performing in her first show with the department!



**Taryn Lees** *Stone*

Taryn Lees is a second year student in the theatre department's acting program and is delighted to be taking part in their spring production of *Eurydice*. Past credits include *Rookery Nook* (Phoenix Theatre) and *Pride and Prejudice* (Kate Rubin Theatre).



**Angie Lopez** *Stone*

Excited to be a part of *Eurydice*, Angie will be graduating this spring from the acting specialization. Angie has worked on previous Phoenix Theatre mainstages (*Yerma*, *Inside*). This past summer Angie could be seen at the Victoria Fringe Festival working with Impulse Theatre (*The Tirades of Love*) and GarbageBear Productions (*The Pink Shoelaces*).



**Hayley McCurdy** *Stone*

Hayley McCurdy, a second year acting student at UVic, is excited about premiering in her first Phoenix show. Past roles include Leigh Simpson in *BFA: The Musical!* (Victoria Fringe Festival) and Angel in *Celebration* at Arts & Communication Magnet Academy. She thanks her director, cast, and crew for their hard work and making this show a wonderful experience.



## Cast



**Peter McGuire** *Father*

Peter is a senior instructor in the theatre department, teaching directing and acting. He has worked in Canadian regional theatres, the Stratford Festival, the National Arts Centre and the Charlottetown Festival. He also worked in theatre administration in London's West End and was the Associate Conservatory Director at the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco.



**Graham Miles** *The Interesting Man*

Graham Miles is a fourth year student in the theatre department's acting specialization. Selected credits include *BFA: The Musical!* (Victoria Fringe Festival 2011), *Father's Son* (FIND Festival), and *The Moons of Jupiter* (Phoenix Theatre). Graham also wrote and directed *Shelf Life* for the Student Alternative Theatre Company in September of 2011.



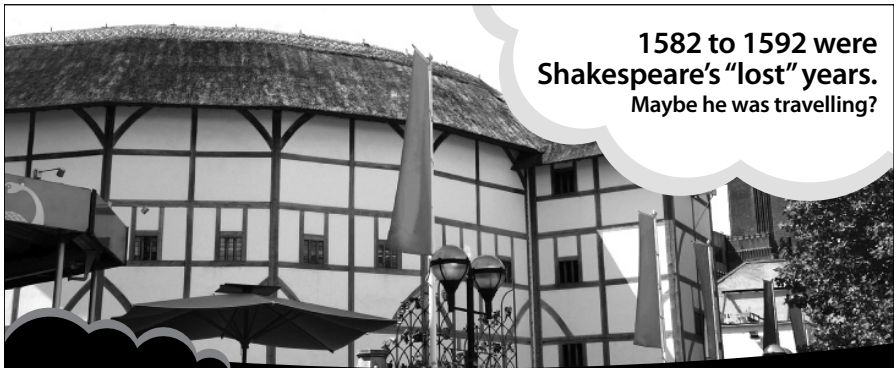
**Derek Wallis** *Orpheus*

Derek is thrilled to take part in his third mainstage production at the Phoenix Theatre, *Eurydice*. Derek is a third year student enrolled in the acting specialization. His previous mainstage credits include Gerald Popkiss in last fall's production of *Rookery Nook*, and Malvolio's Under Butler in *Twelfth Night*.



**Simon Walter** *Stone*

Simon is in his fourth and final year of the acting program at UVic and thrilled to be finishing his BFA with *Eurydice*. Previous Phoenix credits include *Rookery Nook*, *Twelfth Night*, *Yerma*, *The Moons of Jupiter*, and *The Unusual Case of Mr. Morton*.



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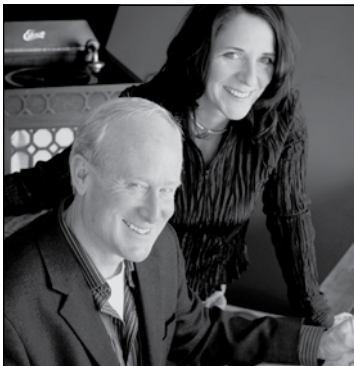
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## Phoenix *Phacts*

Phoenix Theatre productions, alumni and faculty were well represented in the 2011 Critics' Choice Spotlight Awards. Critics from the *Times Colonist*, CBC Radio, and *Culture Vulture* Victoria chose the awards for the 10th annual contest. The "Best New Play" award went to *Inside*, which had its world premiere at the Phoenix in March of 2011. Acclaimed Canadian writer **Daniel MacIvor** was in residence during the production process, and tailored the script to the student actors involved. "Best Community Production" was also awarded to a Phoenix show: the groovy, 1960's rendition of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* directed by professor **Linda Hardy**.

"Best Performance in a Community Production" went to alumnus and theatre instructor **Clayton Jevne** (BFA '85, MFA '88, PhD '03) for his work in *Moscow Stations. Ride the Cyclone*, directed by past theatre student **Jacob Richmond** and alumna **Britt Small** (BFA '98 MFA '04) starring alumni **Rielle Braid** (BFA '09), **Matthew Coulson** (BFA '10), **Kholby Wardell** (BFA '08) and **Sarah Jane Pelzer** (BFA '09), won "Best Musical Production." Finally, "Best Professional Production" went to Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, which featured graduates **Alex Plouffe** (BFA '11) and **Celine Stubel** (BFA '02), and was directed by professor **Brian Richmond** (who also won for "Best Direction.") Congratulations to all the winners!

*Kitt and Jane*, the newest creation from SNAFU Dance Theatre, founded by alumni **Ingrid Hansen** (BFA '09), **Victor Dolhai** (BFA '07) and **Sarah Jane Pelzer** (BFA '09) in 2006 for a Student Alternative Theatre Company production, will be premiering at the Belfry Theatre this March. The production was selected for the Belfry Theatre's Incubator Project, which offers independent theatre companies mentorship and performance opportunities, culminating in a spot in their SPARK Festival. *Kitt and Jane*, created by Hansen and former Phoenix student **Kathleen Greenfield**, is the follow-up to their 2011 Fringe hit *Little Orange Man*. Theatre graduate **Amitai Marmorstein** (BFA '07) was recently seen on the big screen at the Victoria International Film Festival, starring in the independent comedic mockumentary *Sunflower Hour*. Amitai plays David, a sweet and tormented amateur puppeteer who hopes to go professional. Other recent parts for Amitai have included roles in *Donovan's Echo*, a science-fiction thriller, and the Golden Globe-nominated *50/50*.



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Assistant Stage Manager (Props)	<b>Imogen Wilson</b>
Assistant Stage Manager (Costumes)	<b>Claire Friedrich</b>
Assistants to the Costume Designer	<b>Nicole Bobick, Halley Fulford, Kat Jeffery</b>
Costume Cutter	<b>Katri Tahvanainen*</b>
Coordinating Wardrobe Supervisor	<b>Carly Mackay</b>
Wardrobe Supervisors	<b>Nicole Steudel, Pauline Stynes</b>
Dressers	<b>Dallas Ashby, Becca Jorgensen,</b> <b>Levi Schneider, Emily Yarnold</b>
Hair and Makeup Coordinator	<b>Kimberley Black</b>
Hair Dresser and Cuts	<b>Nancy Buchanan*</b> of David Levi Salon, Oak Bay
Millinery	<b>Tierre Taylor*</b>
Assistant to the Set Designer	<b>Breanna Wise</b>
Electrician	<b>Carl Eggert</b>
Lighting Board Operator	<b>Erin Osborne</b>
Projections Operator	<b>Freya Engman</b>
Follow Spotlight Operators	<b>Katelyn Clark, Keisha Palm,</b> <b>Melissa Taylor, Clare Mathison</b>
Assistant to the Sound Designer	<b>Francis Melling</b>
Sound Operator	<b>Victoria Tennant</b>
Assistant Carpenters	<b>Brandon Lauriente, Sean Thompson</b>
Scenic Carpenters	<b>Brian Culp*, Cameron Stewart*</b>
Scenic Seamstress	<b>Danielle Brochu*</b>
Rigger	<b>Tom Heemskerck*</b>
Props Coordinators	<b>Francis Recalma, Josh Turpin</b>
Marketing Assistants	<b>Barb Hall, Max Johnson</b>
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# The Original Greek Myth of Orpheus and Eurydice

Sarah Ruhl's play *Eurydice* is a contemporary retelling of the ancient Greek myth that focuses on the hero Orpheus in his quest to save his love Eurydice from the underworld. Orpheus was a legendary musician, poet, and prophet, whom Apollo taught to play the lyre. The ancient Greek poet Pindar referred to Orpheus as the "Father of Songs" with music that was said to charm living things, rocks and trees. In the original myth, Eurydice (sometimes referred to as Euridice and also known as Agriope) is walking among her people in some tall grass at her wedding when she falls into a nest of vipers (sometimes told as serpents) and is bitten on her heel. The poison shoots into her body and kills her instantly. Orpheus discovers her body and, overcome with grief, plays such sad and mournful songs that all the nymphs and gods wept. On their advice, Orpheus travels to the underworld and by his music, softens the hearts of Hades and Persephone who agree to allow Eurydice to return with him to earth. There is one condition: he must walk in front of her and not look back until they both had reached the upper world. Setting off with Eurydice following, Orpheus, in his anxiety, turns to look at her as he reaches the upper world but before Eurydice is at the threshold. She vanishes for the forever and he has lost her for a second time.

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