



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
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## PHOENIX CELEBRATES SISTERHOOD - ON STAGE AND IN THE WORLD

*Dark comedy and deep wounds at the heart of Pulitzer Prize-winning play*

### 2017-18 Season

#### Crimes of the Heart

February 15 - 24, 2018

By Beth Henley

Director: Peter McGuire  
Set Design: Stefanie Mudry  
Costume Design: Madeline Lee  
Lighting Design: Patrick Du Wors  
Sound Design: Nicholas Atkinson  
Dialect Coach: Iris MacGregor-Bannerman  
Stage Manager: Leah Hiscock

*Set against the backdrop of 1970s Mississippi, Beth Henley's Pulitzer Prize-winning dark comedy sees sisters Meg, Babe and Lenny reuniting at their granddaddy's home after years of growing apart.*

Thank you to our Production Resource Partner:



Up next:

#### The Comedy of Errors

March 15 - 24, 2018

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Jeffrey Renn (MFA Candidate)

*Mystery and mayhem are at the heart of Shakespeare's shortest and funniest comedy, that features a pair of twins – twice! Our contemporary musical take on this classic, set during Mardi Gras, will have you dancing in the aisles.*

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Growing up with five sisters, Peter McGuire understands how complicated family dynamics can be. Beth Henley, author of the Pulitzer prize-winning play and Oscar-nominated screenplay, **Crimes of the Heart**, had three sisters and during her university years, turned away from an acting career to focus on writing better roles for women on stage. With the intention of giving the women in UVic's Theatre program an opportunity to shine, faculty member Peter McGuire chose to direct Henley's dark comedy for the Phoenix Theatre, running February 15 – 24, 2018.

**Crimes of the Heart** tells the story of the Magrath sisters who have grown into adulthood and gone their separate ways: Meg escaped Hazlehurst, Mississippi to pursue her Hollywood dreams; Babe married an ambitious young lawyer; and Lenny remained at their Granddaddy's side in their family home. After Babe commits a violent crime, the three sisters reunite at home for the first time in years. Hilarity ensues (and a few inappropriate giggle fits) as personalities clash, new and old relationships evolve, and deep wounds are soothed by the tenderness of family.

*"I've got five sisters, so when I watch these women interacting, and loving each other, and fighting, and dealing with the family history, I think, that's me sitting in our kitchen watching my sisters coping with their lives," says McGuire. "The play is about human relationships, family, sisterhood. Those are complex relationships. Whether they're working or not working, functioning or not, at the heart of sibling relationships is love."*

While drawing from his own past, McGuire sees this as an important play to perform now. *"The news has shown us that we need to tell more women's stories," says McGuire. "Although set in the 1970s, it's clear that society is still struggling with many of the issues that the women in Crimes of the Heart contend with. This play won a Pulitzer prize for a reason. It's about family, hope, and redemption, and I think the world can use some of that right now."*

A Phoenix alumnus who describes himself as "professionally curious," McGuire never wanted to be pigeon-holed and has enjoyed a diverse career in theatre. His stage management career grew into production management, talent management, administration, and producing with theatre organizations such as the Stratford Festival, the Charlottetown Festival, and the National Arts Centre. He has worked internationally for the Maybox Group in London's West End, and the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco. McGuire now teaches acting, directing, stage management, and introductory theatre courses for students across campus. In 2016, McGuire won the Victoria Critics' Choice Award for best director for the Phoenix production of *Wild Honey*.

As audience members step into the theatre and see the set for the first time, McGuire hopes that it feels like they are coming home. Designed by graduating student Stefanie Mudry, the Magrath's Victorian-era house shows subtle updates over the family's history, and the kitchen (where the entire play takes place) feels like the heart of the home. Costume designs by Madeline Lee evoke 1974 apparel from the South, and the more stylish fashions from California. The lighting design is by faculty member Patrick Du Wors and the sound design, by third-year student Nicholas Atkinson, takes us back in time with the music and sounds of life in small town Mississippi in the 1970s. Dialects will be coached by the internationally acclaimed voice instructor Iris MacGregor-Bannerman. This will be the final project for graduating Stage Manager Leah Hiscock.

The public is encouraged to join us for our free **Preshow Lecture, Friday, February 16 at 7pm** with the director, Peter McGuire, joined by Department Chair and theatre historian, Allana Lindgren. Performances are as follows:

**Public Previews @8pm:** Tuesday and Wednesday, February 13 & 14

**Evenings @8pm:** (Monday - Saturday) Feb. 15 (opening), 16 (lecture), 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24

**Matinees @2pm:** Saturdays, February 17 & 24

**Preshow Lecture @7pm:** Friday, February 16

**Tickets:** Weekdays & Matinees: \$15 Student, \$20 Senior, \$26 Adult | Weekend Evenings: All seats \$26 (Previews: \$8.00 only after 5pm on day of performance)

**Phoenix Box Office Opens:** February 6 for sales in person, or by phone at **(250) 721-8000**.

Open Monday through Saturday from 12:00pm to 8:30pm (Closed Family Day, February 12).