

# FRANK

T H E A T R E

1989-2009

The Guthrie Theater presents Frank Theatre's production of

Marina Carr's

# By the Bog of Cats

Directed by Wendy Knox

Set Design by John Bueche  
Lighting Design by Jeff Bartlett  
Costume Design by Kathy Kohl  
Sound Design by Michael Crowell  
Stage Managed by Spencer Putney

Featuring

Virginia Burke, John Catron, Bob Davis,  
Annie Enneking, and Melissa Hart, with  
Sulia Altenberg, Gabe Angieri, Tony Brown,  
Christopher Kehoe, Izzy Rousmaniere,  
Eric Sharp, Anika Solveig and Cheryl Willis

March 12-April 5, 2009



at the Guthrie Theater's  
Dowling Studio,  
818 2nd St. S.,  
612.377.2224, or  
[www.guthrietheater.org](http://www.guthrietheater.org)

Photos by Tony Nelson  
Design by A Williams

# Frankly Speaking

NEWS OF FRANK THEATRE • FEBRUARY 2009

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PHOTO BY TONY NELSON

## PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

- Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 7:30 pm, Sundays at 1:00 pm, also Wednesday March 25 and April 1 at 7:30 pm.
- Tickets are \$18 to \$34. Call the Guthrie box office at 612-377-2224 or go to [guthrietheater.org](http://guthrietheater.org).
- Post-show panel discussions are Sunday, March 15, 22 and 29.
- The 1:00 performance on Sunday, March 29 is audio described and ASL interpreted.
- **March 21 is Frank's 20th Birthday Party**, a benefit for the theatre celebrating its 20 years! Tickets for this event are \$75, including wine, appetizers, the performance, live auction and birthday cake! Tickets must be purchased in advance through Frank Theatre (call 612-724-3760 for info).
- For other information, please call Frank Theatre at 612-724-3760, or check [www.franktheatre.org](http://www.franktheatre.org).



## ABOUT THE PLAY

**BY THE BOG OF CATS** is set in the Irish midlands, in a small community on the edge of the bog where Hester Swane (Virginia Burke) has spent her entire life. An Irish Traveller (a group of nomadic people of Ireland), Hester has a child with a local man, Carthage Kilbride (John Catron). The play takes place on the day that Carthage plans to marry Caroline Cassidy (Anika Solveig), the young daughter of a farmer, Xavier Cassidy (Bob Davis). Carthage has offered to buy Hester out of the house he built for her, and plans to move in with his his new bride. Hester will have none of this, and refuses to leave the bog where she has spent her life. She also refuses to believe that Carthage will leave her. As the play unfolds (with a hysterically funny wedding scene), secrets of the past emerge, twilight figures populating this world and another move the action along, and events move to their tragic end, updating the Greek tragedy of Medea which inspired **BY THE BOG OF CATS**.



## DIRECTIONS TO THE GUTHRIE AND PARKING:

(Please double check on Mapquest or Google!)

**THE GUTHRIE** is located in downtown Minneapolis on the west bank of the Mississippi River at 818 South 2nd Street.

### FROM THE SOUTH: I-35W

Heading north on 35W, take the 3rd Ave/Washington Ave. exit (17C). Turn LEFT onto Washington Ave. Turn RIGHT onto 11th Ave. S. Turn LEFT onto South 2nd St. and go 2 blocks. The Guthrie will be on your right.

### FROM THE NORTH: I-35W

Heading south on 35W, take the Washington Ave. exit (17C). Turn RIGHT onto Washington Ave. Turn RIGHT onto 11th Avenue S. Turn LEFT onto South 2nd St. and go 2 blocks. The Guthrie will be on your right.

### FROM THE NORTH: I-94

Heading east on 94, take the 4th St. N. exit (230). Turn LEFT onto 3rd Av. S. Turn RIGHT onto South 2nd St. and go 4 blocks. The Guthrie will be on your left.

### FROM THE WEST: I-394

Heading east on 394 to the downtown exits, take the 3rd Ave/Washington Ave. exit (9C). Take the Washington Ave. ramp. Turn RIGHT onto Washington Ave. Turn LEFT onto Chicago Ave. S. Turn RIGHT onto South 2nd St. The Guthrie will be on your left.

### FROM THE EAST: I-94

Heading west on 94, take the 5th St. exit. Turn right onto 11th Ave. S. Turn LEFT onto South 2nd St. and go 2 blocks. The Guthrie will be on your right.

### PARKING

Parking is available in the ramp on South 2nd St. directly across from the Guthrie and in numerous parking lots in the neighborhood. Online parking reservations for the parking ramp across the street are available through the City of Minneapolis at a reduced rate of \$6. Visit [www.mplsarking.com](http://www.mplsarking.com) and click on Reservations and select option "Create a Parking Reservation for an Event."

### BUS STOP/LIGHT RAIL

The nearest MetroTransit bus stop for the Guthrie is the Route 7 or Route 22 stop on the corner of Washington Ave. at Chicago Ave. For light rail use the Downtown East/Metrodome Station stop.

## ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

**Marina Carr** is an Irish playwright, born 1964 in County Offaly, in the midlands where **BOG...** is set. She attended University College Dublin before holding posts as writer-in-residence at the Abbey Theatre and Trinity College Dublin. In 2003, she served as Heimbold Professor of Irish Studies at Villanova University. Her awards include *The Irish Times* Best New Play Award, the Dublin Theatre Festival Best New Play Award 1994, a Macauley Fellowship, a Hennessey Award, the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, and an E.M. Forster Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. She is most notably distinguished by her loose retellings and allusions to classical Greek myths.

“ Frank Theatre director Wendy Knox often tackles projects that are long on spectacle and short on plot, but **THE PILLOWMAN** is precisely the opposite – a taut, well-acted play that fits the Guthrie’s Dowling Studio space perfectly...those who haven’t experienced Frank in action have an excellent opportunity to see why Knox is one of the most versatile, interesting directors around. She just knows how to make a play work—and my advice is to get over to the Guthrie and let her work work on you.” [Mspmag.com](http://Mspmag.com)

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Virginia Burke** has worked with Frank since 1992, appearing in 11 Frank productions including **MACHINAL**, **THE TAMING OF THE SHREW**, **THE GOD OF HELL**, and most recently **VINEGAR TOM**; **Annie Enneking** is making her fifth Frank appearance with this production, having previously taken us by storm in **THE LOVE SONG OF J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER**, **SICILIAN NIGHTS**, **WOMEN OF TROY** and **MOTHER COURAGE**; **Melissa Hart** recently moved to the Twin Cities from New York, and immediately fell into some bad company with Wendy Knox when they collaborated on **THE SOUND OF MUSIC** at the Ordway; **Tony Brown** last appeared with Frank in **PUNTILA**; **Anika Solveig** and **Christopher Kehoe** made their Frank debuts in **VINEGAR TOM**, and didn’t learn their lessons so they’re back for more; **Bob Davis**, **John Catron** and **Gabe Angieri** are making their Frank

debuts, as are **Sulia Altenberg** and **Izzy Rousmaniere** (who will alternate in the role of “Josie”); **Eric Sharp** previously appeared in **MOTHER COURAGE** for Frank; **Cheryl Willis** previously appeared in **PUNTILA** and in **VINEGAR TOM**. **Wendy Knox** is directing her 43rd production for Frank; **John Bueche** has designed seven shows for Frank, most of them warehouse installations; **Jeff Bartlett** has designed lights for 15 Frank shows since 1991, most during his tenure at the Southern Theater; **Kathy Kohl** is among the most dangerous of the repeat offenders at Frank, second only to Artistic Director Wendy Knox, with 24 costume designs on her rap sheet; composer/sound designer **Michael Crowell** is close on the heels of Kathy Kohl with 17 Frank credits in his name; stage manager **Spencer Putney** is wrangling the whole crew for his 13th time at Frank with a hand from **Katie Burger**.

“ What a piece of work...Frank Theatre’s spirited and persuasive production of Churchill’s (**VINEGAR TOM**)...viscerally transports us into a world ruled by rumor and superstition...Knox’s production is first-rate and engaging...” [StarTribune](http://StarTribune)

## THE FRANK PANEL DISCUSSION

Frank has established a tradition of giving our audience a chance to talk back, to ask questions, to digest our work and place it in the larger context of the world we live in. **Every Sunday afternoon** (except for our final performance), we invite you to stick around (or come back) and join us in wrestling with the ideas sparked by the play. We gather a panel of community members who have some experience with, or interest in, some aspect of the subject matter of the play. We ask them to respond to the performance, and then we invite you to ask your questions and offer your comments. We’re interested in **YOUR** ideas, and we’re interested in your response to the play. These have proven to be fascinating, stimulating, and insightful conversations. They’re free, they’re casual, and we would love to have you. **Stop by the 9th floor of the Guthrie any Sunday during our run!**



## FROM THE PREZ...

Frank celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. As we have been planning the celebration, we have talked about our favorite Frank shows. Wonderfully, each of us has a different answer, and a different reason for picking a particular show. Perhaps it was seeing a show in the perfect “found” space, like the A Mill or the Sears building, or it was a special performance by a Frank artist, or a script that challenged us. What I like about seeing any Frank show is that I walk into the theater knowing I am going to see something surprising, and I’m going to leave thinking about it. During Frank’s 20th year, I would encourage you to think about your own favorite Frank show. Think about why you have joined us for shows over the years, and then come see our latest production, *BY THE BOG OF CATS*, at the Guthrie. Better yet, on March 21, come join us for Frank’s 20th Anniversary Party — where you will see *BY THE BOG OF CATS* — and celebrate with us. If you are able, please put Frank on your list this year. In these difficult economic times, it is more important than ever to support the fearless, exciting work of Wendy Knox and her band of talented Frank artists. With our support, as audience members and donors, we can help to make Frank’s next 20 years possible!



Catherine Ahlin-Halverson,  
Board President

## COMING UP AT FRANK!

We’re scouting the territory for a venue for another sprawling warehouse project to round out our 20th year! Watch our website for updates on where Frank will emerge next fall!

Want to receive  
Frank Theatre updates via e-mail?

**Join our CyberPatrol!**

Send us an e-mail at  
**info@franktheatre.org**  
and we’ll keep you cyberposted!

Check out our website at  
**www.franktheatre.org**



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO FRANK!! Help us blow out the candles!

To kick off a year-long celebration of Frank’s endurance and to recharge the batteries for another 20, we’re throwing a big, Frankalicious **BIRTHDAY PARTY**, and YOU’RE invited! Join us on **Saturday, March 21** at 5:30pm at the Padilla Speer Beardsley atrium, directly across Gold Medal Park from the Guthrie, for appetizers and wine (hosted by Barefoot Wine). There will be a live auction of some very choice selections (bring your checkbook!), including weekend stays in Taylor’s Falls and Grand Marais, and dinner of the month packages for some of our favorite local restaurants. You’ll be treated to the premiere viewing of a short video documentary, highlighting Frank’s eclectic history with commentary by artists, produced by Location Images/iDream.tv! Then we’ll shuttle you over to the Guthrie for the performance of *BY THE BOG OF CATS*. The evening will be topped off with champagne and, of course, delicious birthday cake! All in all, a very sophisticated birthday party for a 20 year old! Free parking in the PSB lot. **Tickets for this event are \$75 (\$40 tax-deductible) and MUST be purchased in advance, so please buy your tickets online at [www.franktheatre.org](http://www.franktheatre.org) or call 612-724-3760 for info or reservations.**

## FEATURED RECIPE

### Bittersweet Chocolate Irish Whiskey Cake

*What could be more perfect? It’s a tragedy, so the recipe is bittersweet. Chocolate is high-currency with anything Frank. Irish whiskey? Well, on any opening night at Frank Theatre, there’s usually a bottle of Jameson stashed somewhere within reach (except for that misguided attempt with MAD FOREST to observe the Eastern Europeans when we substituted a bottle of Slivovitz...). This dressed up brownie hits all the Frank notes for a 20th birthday cake!*

1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons Irish whiskey	1/3 cup (plus another handful for garnish) sliced almonds, lightly toasted	7 T. sugar, divided
6 oz. bittersweet (70% cocoa) chocolate, chopped	6 T. flour, divided	3 large eggs, separated
2 tsp. instant espresso powder, dissolved in 6 T. hot water	3/4 cup (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature, divided	Pinch of salt
1 T. vanilla		2 oz. semisweet chocolate, chopped

Preheat to 350°F. Butter and flour 8-inch-diameter springform pan. Boil 1/2 c. whiskey in small saucepan until reduced to 1/4 cup, about 2 minutes. Combine chocolate, espresso powder mixture, and boiled whiskey in small metal bowl. Place bowl over saucepan of simmering water; stir until chocolate melts and mixture is smooth. Remove bowl from over water, add vanilla. Finely grind almonds with 2 T. flour in food processor. Using mixer, beat 1/2 c. butter and 6 T. sugar in medium bowl until fluffy. Beat in egg yolks 1 at a time, then add salt. Fold in chocolate mixture, then ground almond mixture. Using clean dry beaters, beat egg whites in another bowl until soft peaks form. Gradually add 1 T. sugar, beating until stiff peaks form. Fold whites into batter in 3 batches, alternately with remaining 4 tablespoons flour. Pour batter into prepared pan. Bake cake until tester inserted into center comes out clean, about 40 minutes. Cool in pan on rack 30 minutes. Remove pan sides and cool cake completely.

Combine semisweet chocolate and remaining 2 tablespoons whiskey in small metal bowl. Place bowl over saucepan of simmering water and stir until smooth. Remove bowl from over water. Add remaining 1/4 cup butter to chocolate mixture, 1 small piece at a time, whisking until each piece is melted before adding next. Place bowl over larger bowl of ice water. Using whisk or electric mixer, beat icing until thickened to spreadable consistency, about 1 minute. Spread icing over top and sides of cake, and garnish with almonds.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Frank Theatre is a professional theatre company committed to producing unique work that stretches the skills of the artists who create the work while simultaneously challenging the everyday perceptions of the audience through the exploration of ideas and issues of social, political and/or cultural concern.

Frank Theatre was founded with the desire to produce work that provides opportunities for artists to grow, to stretch, to work outside of and beyond the typical opportunities provided by theatres with a greater commercial interest. The theatre has successfully pursued this goal through the consistent staging of works that require the actors, designers, and director to challenge themselves and each other.

The theatre is a Twin Cities' based company, founded in 1989 by Artistic Director Wendy Knox. In its twenty-year history, the theatre has staged 43 productions.

The theatre is committed to producing work that reflects the world in which we live.



**Call the Guthrie Theater at 612-377-2224 for tickets & information.**

Want to receive Frank Theatre updates via e-mail? Join our CyberPatrol®! Send us an e-mail at [info@franktheatre.org](mailto:info@franktheatre.org), and we'll keep you cyberposted!

## WHY THIS PLAY?

Frank is thrilled to mark the 20th anniversary of the opening of our very first show in spring of 1989. Since that time, over 500 artists and volunteers have helped realize 43 productions as we have performed in nearly 20 different locations in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Many of Frank's artists have rap sheets of 8, 11, 15, 24 productions. Board members have helped Frank thrive by hanging in there for 10 years at a stretch. Artist peers have shown up when needed — time after time. There are long-term donors and audience members who keep coming back, following us to one zany location after another. And there's fresh blood constantly moving through Frank — the cross-pollination of grizzled Frank veterans alongside those making their first appearance with Frank is one of the most exciting things to watch in a Frank show. As I watched Edie and Paul of Location Images put together a documentary about Frank's history (to be premiered at our birthday party March 21 — don't miss it!), I was amazed at how Frank has impacted so many people in its 20 years, and overwhelmed with gratitude to all who have helped us survive and thrive. Thank you, thank you, thank you, to all of you.

Kicking off our 20th anniversary is a script that was chosen because the artists all said, "We gotta do this play." A friend from college was teaching in Ireland and mentioned a play by an Irish writer named Marina Carr that he thought would be great for one of our warehouse projects. I had heard her name but was unfamiliar with her work, so I ordered the script, wrangled some actors and we read the play. After its final dramatic moments, nearly everyone around the table looked up and agreed we had to do it. The ancient tale of MEDEA, wrapped in a new cultural context, holds a story so compelling; Carr's skill as a writer is to make you forget you are hearing a story that's been told, as she draws you into a rich world that she has (re)created, and the ending — which you already know — takes you by complete surprise. Many of the actors have said, "It's just a really *good play*." That consensus helped land it on the docket of our 20th season.

This is our second go 'round with this story. In 1991, we staged a version of MEDEA by Beverly Smith-Dawson. We flooded the floor of the Southern with a pool of water, which Crocodile God Peter Macon danced across. Beth Gilleland, Mary Luchia, Thomasina Petrus and Lorilyn Williams danced on platforms 8' above the "pool." Kim Hines anchored the play as the Nurse, Bernadette Sullivan donned a platinum wig as the Ice Queen, and Lisa Belfiori was the "girl toy." A band composed of dear Frank Wharton, keyboardist Kevin Jackson, and a 16 year old budding percussionist, the fabulous Kevin Washington (with occasional guest stints by his flutist mother, Faye Washington) made this Frank's first musical, tracing the costs of cultural assimilation with a musical track that reflected how far from her roots Medea had gone. Wow, that was a big show.

This time around, it is Carr's remarkable ability to make the story new, fresh, and to reframe the questions that drive the Greek tale that piqued our interest. This retelling retains many of the threads that, centuries later, still rivet your attention: a woman of another culture (this time, she's an Irish Traveller, a "tinker," an oppressed minority in Ireland) sacrifices her roots for her lover. The romance fizzles, the woman fights to hang on to what she believes is rightfully hers, and she takes action that — in her mind — saves the child from what she believes is a worse fate. The mythic roots of this tragedy still give rise to discussion of the centuries-old questions of the tale, as it continues to resonate with our contemporary world. However, Carr creates a new cultural context for the story, weaving in a surprising amount of lively, dark Irish humor, providing a spark and a charm that seduces you into forgetting the story you know, and becoming totally engaged in the one that is being spun before your eyes.

We're thrilled that the Guthrie is helping us to bring her work to the Twin Cities' audience. We look forward to seeing you in the Dowling Studio!

Wendy Knox, Artistic Director



PHOTO BY ANN MARSDEN

# FRANK T H E A T R E

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
3156 23rd Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55407-1907  
[www.franktheatre.org](http://www.franktheatre.org)

**MARCH 12 - APRIL 5 2009**



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Minneapolis, MN

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