

*Pear Theatre proudly presents*

# **The Walls of Jericho**

by

**Diane Tasca**

(based on "Night Bus" by Samuel Hopkins Adams)

Director

**Caroline Clark**

Stage Manager  
**Ben Hemmen**

Scenic Design  
**Charles McKeithan**

Lighting Design  
**Valerie Clear**

Costume Design  
**Linda Atkins**

Sound Design  
**Caroline Clark**

This program is available online at [www.thepear.org](http://www.thepear.org)

### ***The Ensemble*** *(in order of speaking)*

Drew Reitz ..... *Peter Warne*  
Keith Larson ..... *Sandwich-board man; Shapley; Corcoran, etc.*  
Sarah Cook ..... *Elsbeth Andrews*  
Stephanie Whigham ..... *Restaurant patron; Andie Brinkerhoff; etc.*  
Todd Wright ..... *Drivers; Braithe; Thad Baker; Dakes*  
Leslie Newport ..... *Waitress;es Mrs. Dakes, Mrs. Braithe, etc.*  
Dave Sikula ..... *Alexander Bruce MacGregor Andrews*  
Nicolae Muntean ..... *Understudy*

***The Place:*** Various: Miami to New York City

***The Time:*** April, 1933

***This performance runs about 2 hours, including a 10-minute intermission between Acts 1 and 2.***

### ***The Production Team***

Director ..... Caroline Clark  
Producer ..... Diane Tasca  
Stage Manager ..... Ben Hemmen  
Production Manager ..... Patricia Tyler  
Scenic Design ..... Charles McKeithan  
Lighting Design ..... Valerie Clear  
Costume Design ..... Linda Atkins  
Sound Design ..... Caroline Clark  
Dramaturg ..... Jeanie K. Smith  
Assistant Stage Manager ..... Ariel Aronica  
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Videographer ..... John Beamer

### ***Acknowledgments***

For their assistance with this production, we would like to thank Palo Alto Players, Dan Nitzan, and Norm Beamer.

### ***Director's Note***

Odd as it may seem, the most influential words in this script are ones that were never intended to be spoken onstage. On the very last page, the production notes read: "The production should feel very intimate, simple, but inventive—making do with little, just as Peter and Elspeth do." This sentence could easily sum up my entire approach to theatre, directing, acting, life as a whole. What a relevant concept! Taking on a set of challenges, impossible, rough, frustrating, exhausting. Why would we do this to ourselves?! Because we LOVE it and we wouldn't have it any other way.

Directing this show has been an adventure as full of miscellany, heartbreak, improvisation, and whimsy as the play itself. The result has been deep love—love for this cast and crew, love for the piece, and an ever-deepening love of theatre—its ability to always somehow come together in an imperfectly perfect way. I say this with much confidence; as I write this we are eight days from opening and I'm figuring out how in the heck we intend to install the stage floor.

That theatrical sense of ingenuity is something our Silicon Valley audience can undoubtedly relate to. We live in a very special place full of dreams and impossible achievements. We LOVE unfathomable feats. We're a mismatched cast of characters hailing from all over the globe, composing symphonies of ones and zeros by way of melted sand.

The resulting world moves quickly, and is so specifically tailored to our exact wants and desires. It's incredible. Tonight, you could have gone to one of several concerts or sat at home and ordered cupcakes to be delivered while you soaked in a bath, binge-watching a Netflix series. I am so honored that you chose to spend your evening watching *The Walls of Jericho* at the brand-new Pear Theatre. I encourage you to turn off anything electronic you might have, use one of our two brand-new restrooms, partake in our tasty selection of refreshments, settle into the seat of your choosing, and let us tell you a story about how two people fell in love some time ago.

—Caroline Clark

### ***About the Play***

Diane Tasca has taken *The Walls of Jericho* from Samuel Hopkins Adams' short story "Night Bus," which was also the source of Frank Capra's groundbreaking 1934 film *It Happened One Night*. That film not only established Claudette Colbert and Clark Gable as romantic Hollywood stars but created a new kind of movie. Because films had been talking for only about six years, the studios were still experimenting with dialogue, including innuendo and repartee. A second challenge was the newly adopted (but not yet strictly enforced) Production Code, which prohibited nudity, swearing, and showing couples together in bed, among other restrictions. In this evolving situation, screenwriter Robert Riskin, along with Capra (though he is not credited for the screenplay), made major changes to Adams' story to titillate the audience while satisfying the Code. In

doing so, they created what may be cinema's first romantic comedy: a saucy tale of two young people thrown together and falling in love across class lines. It was filmed rapidly and cheaply but became a box-office dynamo that won the five major Academy Awards: Best Picture, Director, Actor, Actress, and Screenplay.

Capra had discovered "Night Bus" in a 1933 number of *Cosmopolitan*, which at the time specialized in popular fiction. He liked what he called its "smell of novelty," but he and Riskin changed the characters and plot significantly. Their adaptation turned the resourceful upper-class heroine, Elspeth, into a naïve virgin called Ellie who is fleeing to New York to consummate her impulsive marriage to a daredevil aviator, and they added glamor by emphasizing her family's wealth. Peter, a multi-talented college graduate in the story, became a brash unemployed reporter. The film's Ellie and Peter, then, are much less equally matched than the short story's protagonists. Adams' Elspeth, particularly, is a liberated "new woman" who shows initiative both in survival skills and in the developing romance. The scholar Robert Sklar says that Elspeth is actually more direct in her actions than most women in popular fiction of the time. Unlike the film's Ellie, who claims she has never been alone with a man, Elspeth, according to father, has repeatedly been "in love with the newest hero in sight." She is not afraid to go after what she wants.

Stories about two people falling in love against their will go back at least to Shakespeare's Beatrice and Benedick, but how their romance progresses reflects the world around them. In the 1930s the heiress Barbara Hutton's extravagant lifestyle and romantic entanglements inspired any number of "runaway heiress" stories, including "Night Bus," but Adams' story is unusual in including signs of the Great Depression such as unemployment, cheap tourist cabins, beaneries, and bad roads. The popularity of glamor films in the 1930s shows that people of modest means were fascinated by luxury, but some of those viewers must also have felt that the rich should learn about ordinary life, as Elspeth does in "Night Bus"—and *The Walls of Jericho*. —Susan Petit

## Who's Who in This Production



**Sarah Cook** (*Elspeth Andrews*) (M.F.A., New School for Drama; B.A., NYU-Gallatin) is thrilled to be back at the Pear, and especially grateful to be working with such a talented bunch on the inaugural work for the new theatre. Trained in Stanislavski-based technique, and first appearing onstage at age eight, she has performed throughout NYC, Northern California, and abroad. Favorite past roles include Solange (*The Maids*, Cherry Lane), Corrine (*The Country*, NSD), Puffer (*Drood*, USF), and Olivia (*Much Ado*, Bus Barn). When not on stage, Sarah can be found swimming, practicing piano, or cultivating a monster pumpkin. Special thanks to her family, and to Trudy, for always believing.



**Keith Larson** (*Sandwich-board man; Passenger; Horace Shapley; Motorbike cop; Corcoran, Policeman, Doorman*) reunited with his lifelong love of performing in 2013. His previous shows include *Birds of a Feather* (Pear), *Social Security* (Broadway West), *Satyr Night Fever* (SF Olympians Festival), *Four Weddings and an Elvis* (Santa Clara Players), and *That Championship Season* (Bellarmine Alumni Theatre). When he isn't onstage, Keith is a loving father of two boys (Charlie and Henry) who teaches high school English, coaches Little League baseball, watches movies, and still celebrates three World Series Championships won by his beloved San Francisco Giants.



**Nicolae Muntean** (*Understudy: Drivers, Braithe, Baker, Dakes*) Nic is glad to understudy these roles for his big buddy Todd "Mr. Huggles" Wright, and so to be part of the first show at the "new" Pear, having performed in the first and last shows at the "old" Pear. Last season, Nic was seen as Jellaby and Noakes in *Arcadia* and as Warn Coucher in *House and Garden*. In earlier Pear seasons, Nic appeared in *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (the theatre's first production), *Midsummer (Winter) Night's Dream*, *The Long Christmas Dinner*, and one of the first *Pear Slices*. He dedicates his service to the memory of Jimmy Gunn, an intrepid source of service to the Arts, and the foremost example of how to live life, day-to-day, to the utmost.



**Leslie Newport** (*Passenger; Waitresses; Mrs. Dakes; Mrs. Braithe.*) last performed at the Pear as Mrs. Pearce in *Pygmalion* and in *Pear Slices 2013*. Recent favorite roles: Josephine Strong in *Urinetown* (Los Altos Stage); Lady Bracknell in *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Santa Clara Players); Yente, the Matchmaker in *Fiddler on the Roof* (West Valley Light Opera); Widow Corney in *Oliver!* (Coastal Repertory Theatre); Goneril in *King Lear* and Dionyza in *Pericles* (Los Gatos Shakespeare Festival); Miss Skillon in *See How they Run* and Sheriff Jane Morton in *Thumbs* (Broadway West); Mrs. Webb in *Our Town* (Palo Alto Players); and Mrs. Alving in *Ghosts* (Santa Clara Players). She has a B.A. in drama from SJSU.



**Drew Reitz** (*Peter Warne*) is excited for his Pear debut! He was recently seen as Halberstam in *The Columnist* with Dragon Productions. Other Bay Area credits include *Take Me Out* (Jason), *Harvey* (Wilson), *Wonder of the World* (Kip), *The Unmentionables* (Don), and *Avenue Q* (Brian). He holds a B.A. in drama from SFSU. Drew is a proud alum and teacher at the Young Actors' Theatre Camp. After

*Jericho*, you can catch him as Ryan in *In Love and Warcraft* with Custom Made Theatre in San Francisco. He thanks the cast and crew for a wonderful experience and sends love to Mom, Pop, and his gal, E\$. He hopes you enjoy the show!



**Dave Sikula** (*Alexander Andrews*) Previous roles: Major Bouvier/Norman Vincent Peale (*Grey Gardens*), Narrator (*Slaughterhouse-Five*), title roles in *Uncle Vanya* and *Bullshot Crummond*, Edna Turnblad (*Hairspray*), Lawrence Jameson (*Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*), Boris Trigorin (*The Seagull*), Hildy Johnson (*The Front Page*), J. Carlyle Benson (*Boy Meets Girl*), John (*Oleanna*), Mike Connor (*The Philadelphia Story*), Victor Prynne (*Private Lives*), Charles J. Guiteau (*Assassins*), Moonface Martin (*Anything Goes*), Artie Shaughnessey (*The House of Blue Leaves*), Pompey (*Measure for Measure*), Oronte (*The Misanthrope*), Dr. Marshall Boyle (*Prelude to a Kiss*), Max Tarasov (*Superior Donuts*), Tom (*Speakeasy*), and Reverend Tollhouse (*Book of Liz*). Love to Pidge.



**Stephanie Whigham** (*Passenger; Andie Brinkerhoff, Narrator*) is thrilled to be making her Pear Theatre debut with this production. Most recently she played Cleopatra in *Antony and Cleopatra* with Silicon Valley Shakespeare. Favorite credits include Glad Hand in *West Side Story*, Don John in *Much Ado about Nothing*, and Elaine in *Last of the Red Hot Lovers*. In addition to acting, she has worked in most aspects of technical theatre, most notably stage managing for Pacific Repertory Theatre, San Jose Stage Company, and Opera San Jose. She is currently the graphic designer for San Jose Stage Company. More info at [www.stephaniewhigham.com](http://www.stephaniewhigham.com)



**Todd Wright** (*Drivers; Abner Braith; Thad Baker; Mr. Dakes*) is excited to return to the Pear. He was recently seen as Vincent Falcone in the Pear's *Birds of a Feather*. Other past Pear roles include Alfred Doolittle in *Pygmalion* and Johann Graupner in *Bach at Leipzig*. Todd has done work all over the South Bay area, from comedy to drama, from musicals to Shakespeare. Some favorite roles include Michael Novak in *God of Carnage* at Palo Alto Players, Juror 3 in *Twelve Angry Men* at Broadway West, Alfred Doolittle in *My Fair Lady* at Foothill Music Theatre, and Petruchio in *The Taming of the Shrew* at the Los Gatos Shakespeare Festival.

**Ariel Aronica** (*Assistant Stage Manager*) was previously seen onstage, rather than off, at the Pear in *Super Villain!!* and *Pear Slices 2014*. Other roles include Babe Botrelle in *Crimes of the Heart*, Helen Keller in *The Miracle Worker*, and Scout in *To Kill a Mockingbird* with the Broadway West Theatre Company.

**Linda Atkins** (*Costume Designer*) has always enjoyed sewing and has taken on many complicated projects over the years. But this is her first time costuming a show! It's been an amazing learning experience, and she has enjoyed working with all these talented folks. She hopes you enjoy these characters in their 1930s garb.

**Caroline Clark** (*Director*) is a lifelong thespian, joining the Pear Steering Committee last year. She is honored to have been selected to direct the first play in the \*New\* Pear. Recent directing credits include *Kimberly Akimbo* (Pear Avenue Theatre) and Dustin Lance Black's *8: The Play* and *The Vagina Monologues* (The Empty Space). Recent acting

credits include Heidi in *[title of show]*, Holly in *Next Fall*, and Prudence in *Beyond Therapy* (The Empty Space). Caroline is excited to work with this dynamic, dedicated cast and crew and hopes you enjoy the show as much as she has enjoyed the process.

**Valerie Clear** (*Lighting Designer*) is happy to be designing at the new Pear. Her favorite shows at the (old) Pear designing lights are *A King's Legacy* and *Superior Donuts*; for designing sound, her favorite is *Pick Up Axe*. Valerie regularly designs lights at Coastal Repertory Theater, where she most recently lit *The Woman in Black* and *Miracle on 34th Street*. Valerie is also the assistant box office manager at Hillbarn Theatre. In her free time, she is working on getting her A.A. in graphic design at CSM.

**Ben Hemmen** (*Stage Manager*) returns to the Pear for this first show in the new space, having been Lighting Designer for *Arcadia*, the last show in the old space. He most recently has been involved as stage manager for *Violet* at Tabard Theatre and for *Art* at City Lights, and he had a brief cameo as Substitute Deck Crew #3 for *The Addams Family* at Palo Alto Players. And one weekend soon he will not have a show to work on, maybe, possibly. (No, I don't have a theater problem; I can stop any time I want.) Questions and comments may be directed to [ben@hemmen.com](mailto:ben@hemmen.com). He is currently looking for a replacement day job as a design/verification H/W engineer.

**Charles McKeithan** (*Scenic Designer*) After a lovely respite from the stage to spend time with his family, Charles is pleased to return to the theatre where you may have seen him onstage in *Arcadia* and *Bach at Leipzig*. Charles has helped to build a number of sets at the "old" Pear. His teenage kids could not be more pleased to see him out of the house. Much thanks to the wonderful cast and crew of the show and to the Pear for many years of amazing theatre.

**Jeanie K. Smith** (*Dramaturg*) Directing highlights include premieres (*Familiar Strangers*), contemporary plays (*House & Garden*), and classics (*The Seagull*, *A Doll's House*, *Three Sisters*, *Long Day's Journey*, *Metamorphoses*, *Moon for the Misbegotten*, *Cherry Orchard*, *Angels in America: Part One*, *The Tempest*) for the Pear; *Noises Off*, *Light in the Piazza*, *Boeing Boeing*, *God of Carnage*, and *Harvey* for PA Players; *Bus Stop*, *The Clean House*, and *House of Blue Leaves* at Bus Barn; *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *Rx* at the Dragon; *Romeo and Juliet* for Shady Shakespeare. Ph.D. in drama, critic for *PA Weekly* and [TalkinBroadway.com](http://TalkinBroadway.com).

**Diane Tasca** (*Playwright; Producer*) is Artistic Director of the Pear and has appeared in many shows at the Pear's previous incarnation, most recently *Birds of a Feather* and *Arcadia*. The Pear has produced her adaptations of Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* and Mark Twain's *Connecticut Yankee*. Many thanks to the intrepid and ever-inventive director, Caroline Clark, for bringing this script to life and to the whole *Jericho* team for their creativity, talent, patience, and resilience during this transition. As ever, much love to Norm and John.

## ***Pear Theatre Donors***

*Our deep and heartfelt thanks go to everyone who has contributed so generously to the Pear over the years. The list of those who donated to the Pear Avenue Theatre between 2002 and 2015 is posted on our website, [www.thepear.org](http://www.thepear.org). Going forward, Pear Theatre programs will acknowledge donations made since June, 2015.*

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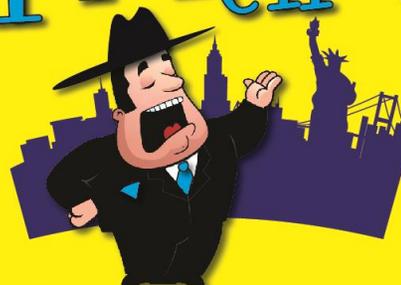
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*by  
Nina Raine*

***November 6 - 22***

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**Witty and poignant, *Tribes* won the 2012 Drama Desk Award.**