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STATION 5 in collaboration with
THE FIFTH FLOOR presents
THE WORLD PREMIERE OF

GONI

WRITTEN BY

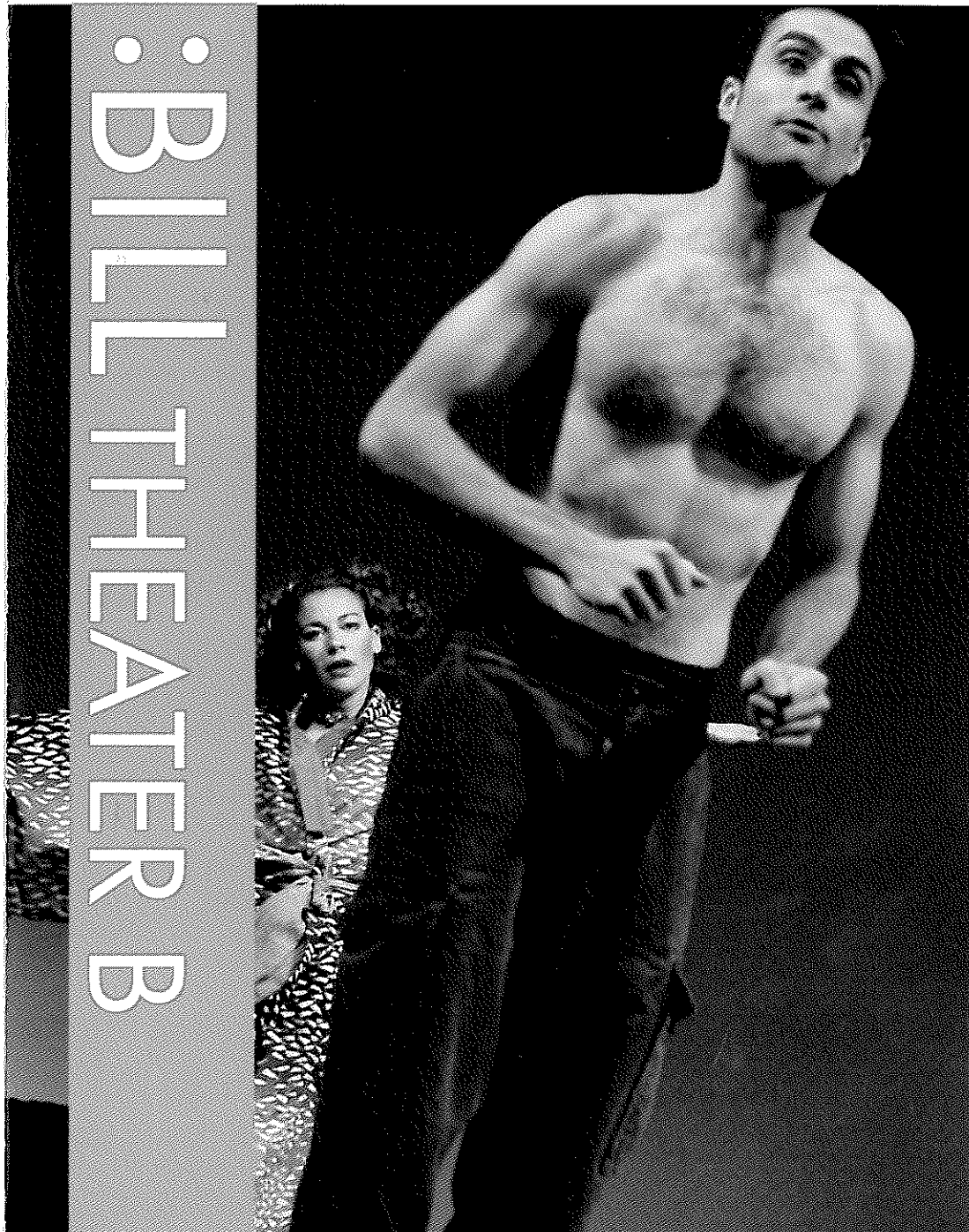
CHARLES L. MEE, JR.

DIRECTED BY **KENN WATT**

FEBRUARY 1 - FEBRUARY 11

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BILL THEATER B





the
fifth
floor

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THE FIFTH FLOOR presents
THE WORLD PREMIERE OF

GONE

WRITTEN BY
CHARLES L. MEE, JR.
DIRECTED BY **KENN WATT**

Equity Approved Showcase

FEATURING

JENNIFER WRIGHT COOK
PAM DIEM*
SIGNE V. HARRIDAY*

CLARK HUGGINS*
JAKE MANABAT*
PETER RICHARDS*

*Appearing Courtesy of Actors' Equity



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CHARLES L. MEE (Author) has written *bobrauschenbergamerica*, *Wintertime*, *Belle Epoque*, *Vienna: Lusthaus*, *Snow in June*, *A Perfect Wedding*, *Limonade Tous les Jours*, and a number of other plays in addition to his work inspired by Greek plays: *Big Love*, *True Love*, *Orestes 2.0*, *Trojan Women A Love Story* and others. His plays have been performed at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, American Repertory Theatre, New York Theatre Workshop, the Public Theatre, Lincoln Center, the Humana Festival, Steppenwolf, and other places in the United States as well as in Berlin, Paris, Amsterdam, Brussels, Vienna, Istanbul and elsewhere.

His complete works are available at www.charlesmee.org.

His work is made possible by the support of Jeanne Donovan Fisher and Richard B. Fisher.

KENN WATT (Director) is the founder and artistic director of The Fifth Floor - DramaLogue, Black Box, Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle and Goldie awards, California Arts Council, Creative Work Fund, Flintridge Foundation, the Zellerbach Family Fund, San Francisco Arts Commission. Directed for California Shakespeare Festival, Eureka Theatre, Encore Theatre, Life on the Water, A.C.T., Magic Theatre. In New York, Charles Mee's *The Bacchae 2.1* for Rude Mechanicals and an original production last year, *K. or The Future's So Green*, at the HERE American Living Room Series. Mr. Watt is an actor and teacher also, and has been on the faculties of SF State University, UC, Santa Cruz, and A.C.T. Directed and performed regionally throughout the US and in Ireland and Austria. Recipient - TCG/NEA Directing Fellowship, TCG/PEW National Theatre Artist Residency Award (with Mr. Mee). In 2001-2, Associate Artistic Director of the Magic Theatre in San Francisco. Graduate of Tufts University, Trinity College, Dublin, the American Conservatory Theatre Advanced Training Program, and NYU. He is currently enrolled in the PhD program at CUNY.

KIRSTEN BOWEN (Dramaturg) is the Literary Associate for Signature Theatre Company. She was a production dramaturg at American Repertory Theatre and Williamstown Theatre Festival where she worked with directors who included János Szász, Mark Wing-Davey, Robert Woodruff and Moisés Kaufman. MFA Dramaturgy from A.R.T. Institute at Harvard University and BA from Smith College.

JENNIFER WRIGHT COOK (Actor/Choreographer) is a performer, creator and writer. She is working on a *Terror Alert* trilogy - including *Part Two: The Madrid Solo* and *Part Three: The New York Duet* about intimacy, vulnerability and primal scream therapy. She has shown her work in Madrid, San Francisco, Portland, OR and in New York at Danspace Project, Chez Bushwick, the Gene Frankel, the Flea and University Settlement. Jennifer toured with the Joe Goode Performance Group (San Francisco, 1998-2004). In her free time she is Co-Director of The Field (www.thefield.org).

PAM DIEM* (Actor/Producer) New York: *Millennium Lounge* (dir. Elizabeth Swados), *Infared* by Mac Wellman (dir. Travis Preston). Elaine in *Arsenic and Old Lace* (dir. Alison Shigo). Other: Agnes in *A Bright Room Called Day* (dir. Scott Zigler), *Love's Labour's Lost* (dir. Robert Bella), Lady Fanciful(u/s) in *The Provok'd Wife* (dir. Mark Wing-Davey, A.R.T.), *The Foreigner* (Catherine), *Native Speech* (Janis). Film: "*Lysistrata*" (MacMillian Films for PBS), "*Law and Order*". BFA from Tisch, NYU, MFA from A.R.T. Institute at Harvard University. Pam also owns and runs the jewelry company, www.littlemissdrama.com.

SIGNE V. HARRIDAY* (Actor/Producer) is a multidisciplinary artist. Co-founder of MaMa mOsAiC and Associate Company Member of Pillsbury House Theatre. Theatre credits include: *Miss Julie*, *N This Hous*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Trojan Women*, *Dido*, *Queen of Carthage(u/s)*, *Olly's Prison (u/s)*, *Spring Awakening*, *Famous Amos*, *Making Medea*, *Taming of the Shrew, for colored girls...*, *All Night Strut*, *Menstruation Project*, *The Bi Show*, *Mr. A's Amazing Maze Play*. She is also a teaching artist for Lincoln Center and New Victory Theatres. MFA from A.R.T. Institute at Harvard University.

CLARK HUGGINS* (Actor/Producer) (SAG/AFTRA) New York Stage: *Welcome to Our City*, *The Mint Theater*; *Richard III*, *The Pearl Theatre*. Regional credits include: *Dido*, *Queen of Carthage*, American Repertory Theatre; *By the Bog of Cats*, *The Magic Theater*; *The Forest*, *As You Like It*, *The Tempest*, Shakespeare Santa Cruz; *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Comedy of Errors*, San Francisco Shakespeare Festival. Television: "*Law & Order*", various commercials. MFA from A.R.T. Institute at Harvard University. Clark is also a professional storyboard illustrator with Ogilvy & Mather in New York & Storyboards Inc. LA.

DEBORAH KNOX (Producer) Acting Credits: Currently playing Susan Smith in Carson Kreitzer's new play, *1:23* (dir. Mark Wing-Davey; Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park). New York: *GONE* (CUNY Prelude Festival Fall '06). At 59E59: U.S. premiere *deathvariations* (dir. Sarah Cameron Sunde), workshop of Wallace Shawn's adaptation of *The Master Builder* (dir. Andre Gregory). Regional: Belinda in *The Provok'd Wife* (dir. Mark Wing-Davey; American Repertory Theatre), Klara in *Amerika* (Theatre de la Jeune Lune/A.R.T.). Film: "*Carrie II*", "*The Rose Garden*". Education: MFA from the A.R.T. Institute at Harvard University, B.A. from Dartmouth College.

JAKE MANABAT* (Actor) Tour: *Rent*. New York: *Joy*, *Sodom*, *The Rink*. Regional: *The Provok'd Wife*, *Dido*, *Queen of Carthage*, *The Island of Anyplace* (American Repertory Theatre); *The Long Season* (George Street Playhouse); *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (West Virginia Public Theatre); *The King & I*, *Babes in Arms* (Willows Theatre Company). A.R.T./MXAT Institute productions: *For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls*, *Spring Awakening*, *Party Time*, *A Bright Room Called Day*, *Love's Labour's Lost*. BA in Economics, University of California at Berkeley. MFA from A.R.T. Institute at Harvard University.

PETER RICHARDS* (Actor/Producer)

New York: Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* (Lion Theater) and *Coriolanus* (Beckett Theater) with ShakespeareNYC. Regional: *Olly's Prison* (dir. Robert Woodruff) and *Dido, Queen of Carthage* (dir. Neil Bartlett) at American Repertory Theatre; Orlando in *As You Like It* at Opera House Arts. International: *Spring Awakening* and *Fear and Misery in the Third Reich* (Moscow Art Theatre). Los Angeles: *Dark Ages* (UCLA New Plays); *The House on Lake Desolation* (LA Repertory Theater). Film: "Stroke". Training: MFA from A.R.T. Institute at Harvard University. BA from Harvard College.

MOLLY MARTIN* (Stage Manager)

is honored to be working with the creative force of Station 5. Hails from Chicago where she was a founding member of Appetite Theatre. Chicago credits: IO, Second City, Chicago Shakespeare (*Midsummer's*), Royal George (*Fully Committed*), and Victory Gardens. Other credits: Montana Rep, Actors Theatre of Nantucket, and director of *Mexico* by Peter Blomquist (Groove Mama Ink). Molly currently works and has toured with ArtsPower. Molly thanks her mom, Diane, for everything, Pam (her pillar of strength), Kenn for his insight and J.R. for keeping her afloat. Go White Sox!

KIM BRAUN (Assistant Stage Manager)

Kim graduated from Temple University with a degree in Theater. She has worked actively behind the scenes for seven years within the Philadelphia area. Kim made her NYC debut with *Mexico* at the Interart Annex. She has gone to work on such shows as *The Bronx Express*, *Seussical the Musical*, and *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea*. Kim is currently serving as the resident Stage Manager for Groove Mama Ink, LLC at the Gene Frankel Underground. For more on the company and upcoming events, please visit www.groovemamaink.com

SCOTT BOLMAN (Lighting Designer)

Ongoing: Recreating Jennifer Tipton's lighting for *Die Zauberflöte* (Belgium, France, Israel, Italy) Off-Broadway: *Happy Days* (CSC), *Moonlight Room* (Beckett) New York: *Billy the Kid* (Columbia University), *Harvest* (LaMama) Regional: *Taming of the Shrew*, *Fighting Words* (Yale Rep) Dance: *Map* (Shen Wei Dance Arts, Lincoln Center Festival)

DREW VANDERBURG (Sound Assistant)

is a burgeoning director and designer in the New York City metropolitan area. He has recently directed a production of Kobo Abe's *The Man Who Turned Into A Stick* at New York University, from which he will soon have a BFA in Drama. Sound Design credits include *I'm Really Here* (Playwrights Horizons Theater School), *Guernica* (NYU Tisch), *Floyd Collins* (NYU GAP), and several shows this summer at the 52nd St. Project in Hell's Kitchen. Drew wishes you happiness!

CHELSEA WHITE (Costume Designer)

Past productions with the ART Institute: *Love's Labour's Lost*, *A Melancholy Play*, *This is How it Goes*, *Trojan Women* and *The Bacchae*, other Boston credits: *Traps*, *Gagarin Way*, *A Doll's House*, and *Brooklyn Boy*. She now lives and works in Brooklyn.

JO WINIARSKI (Set Designer)

Her most recent design credits include the fall 2006 season at The Utah Shakespearean Festival- (*The Merchant of Venice*, *Johnny Guitar*, *Peg o' My Heart*), *I Love You Because* (The Village Theater), *One Way Ticket to Hell* (Marilyn Monroe Theater, LA), *What Then* (Ohio Theater), and *Bloodline*, *The Children Of Argos* (Hangar Theater). She is the assistant set designer for *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* on Broadway (and the associate designer for San Francisco, Chicago, and national tour productions). Jo received her M.F.A. from New York University.

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THE "LATE" CHARLES MEE

In *On Late Style*, Edward Said imagines that "lateness", the recognition of endings in human lives, constitutes, for the artist attempting to depict this condition, a peculiar style. But what is this style?

For some, like Shakespeare and Sophocles, lateness brings a touch of mature wisdom with the awareness of life's transience. For others, like Ibsen, this same condition brings renewed youthful vigor. For Said, what matters most, what is most interesting is the grappling with death that carries along with it a sense of "anachronism and anomaly" - a resistance to anything resembling settledness or simple answers or easy endings. I think this is what Chuck Mee is after in his newest work, *Gone*.

Of course this isn't really "late" Chuck Mee. The prolific Mee shows no signs of infirmity or slowing down. Said writes about artists facing their own mortality and reconciling their own sense of history with the ways of nature and the tearing apart of the body with age and illness. *Gone*, by contrast, is a requiem - a piece written on the occasion of the death of a friend of the author. But the piece is still a "late" piece. *Gone* is all about anachronism and anomaly - and is anything but settled. The text is all voices; no narrative. The voices - Proust, Ginsberg, Philip Larkin, Sophocles, along with Ruth Siems - the inventor of stove-top stuffing, travel agents and a blogger or two don't really belong in the same theatrical world. There is no "story". There are no stage directions and no real "characters".

But there they all are, speaking of loss and mourning, joined by the voices of lovers from Mee's earlier plays speaking of love's loss and mourning. That's all that connects them - the recognition that they all survive and witness loss. In rehearsal, our work centers around finding a performative world for this disparate set of voices - the play places unusual demands on the performers and the design team, and on my sense of the direction of the piece. Where can mourning make sense among the fragments of lost moments? Who do the actors "play"? What is the piece "about"? How does it work?

I say that *Gone* is a late Mee play partly because of my sense of the trajectory of Chuck Mee's own career and life. From an early start as a writer in the Off-Off movement of the early 1960's, Mee became a historian, a "citizen-activist" writer whose books were noted for their ability to look at the world-changing decision through the lens of the telling human detail. When he returned to writing for the theatre,

the blend of the very personal and the very historically aware made up a potent theatrical vision realized in post-dramatic adaptations like his *Orestes*, *Time To Burn*, *Full Circle*, *The Bacchae 2.0* and others. Chuck did, in these plays, what directors like to do - take "classics" and "update" them. Except that directors tend to update them in one direction only - taking the characters and the plots, and dressing them in contemporary period styles allowing a simple collision only. Chuck's approach destabilized the easy assimilation of old and new and mixed things up, blending voices from many sources: popular, trashy, elevated and debased, authoritarian and those of the excluded so that *everything* was anomaly and anachronism always. *Gone* is the logical result of this way of working - as though the structure of a previous play that gave his earlier plays their form has been removed and what's left is the voices that "haunt" that structure.

For the director, then, the challenge with Chuck's plays isn't to take one realm of theatrical reality and fit it into another. It's to create a field where all those many voices: Pentheus and the sex workers, Orestes and Anita Hill, Fellini and the triple murderer, Proust and John Updike and the bloggers can co-exist without the burden of historicity and genealogy. It's not a world like the ones we know in the theatre with outcomes that reinforce what we already know - here, hierarchies and arrangements and understandings are troubled, disrupted, made strange. The ground is leveled, and the voices are distributed equally throughout the space, throughout the time-space. It is a space of memory, and it functions the way memory is haunted - from the familiar to the defamiliarized, from death to the moment that we first learned of death, from the end we think we know back to the mystery of origins.

So that's why this is a late play - because it is troubled by an uneasy mourning. We know that mourning is about repetition - of the voices of the lost, the voices that have to be raised up so that they can be mourned and put to rest. Somewhere in the middle of this - the raising of the voices that haunt our memory, and their release - is the moment of theatre.

PROUST

But when from a long-distant past nothing subsists,
After the people are dead,
After the things are broken and scattered,
Still,
Alone,
More fragile,
But with more vitality,
More unsubstantial,
More persistent,
More faithful,
The smell and taste of things remain poised a long time,
Like souls,
Ready to remind us,
Waiting and hoping for their moment,
Amid the ruins of all the rest,
And bear unfaltering,
In the tiny and almost impalpable drop of their essence,
The vast structure of recollection.

We are called to memory. The voices come unbidden, and bid us come to them. We create in the theatre the one place where the dead and the living exchange phone numbers and dance on graves.

This article was written by Ken Wait and appeared in the Brooklyn Rail.

NEXT IN THEATER B

FEB 21 - MAR 25

The Play Company presents

THE ATTIC

By YOJI SAKATE
Translated by LEON INGULSRUD
And KEIKO TSUNEDA
Directed by ARI EDELSON

The English-language premiere of a dark comedy by celebrated Japanese writer Yoji Sakate about *hikikimori*, a widespread phenomenon in Japan in which young people withdraw into their rooms, refusing any contact with the outside world. The play imagines a world in which a mysterious corporation manufactures tiny "attics" and sells them to people who "go hikikimori".

TUE-FRI 8:15, SAT 3:15 & 8:15, SUN 3:15
\$35 (59E59 MEMBERS \$24.50)



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