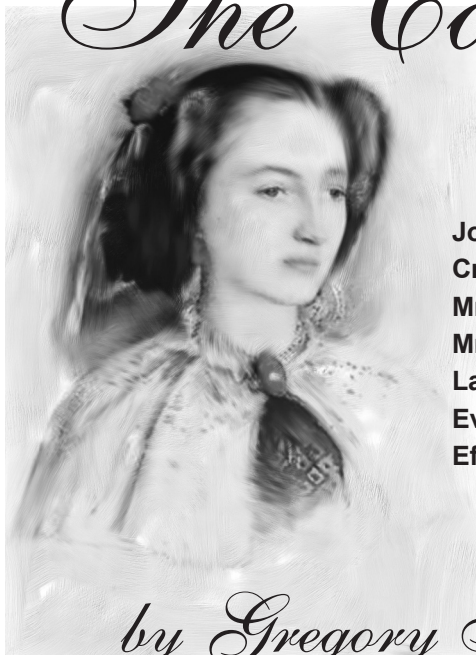


# kanata theatre

presents

## *The Countess*



### CAST

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>John Ruskin</b>     | Geoff Gruson    |
| <b>Crawley</b>         | Branden Lalonde |
| <b>Mr. Ruskin</b>      | Brooke Keneford |
| <b>Mrs. Ruskin</b>     | Dorothy Beak    |
| <b>Lady Eastlake</b>   | Beverley Brooks |
| <b>Everett Millais</b> | Tim Mabey       |
| <b>Effie Ruskin</b>    | Venetia Lawless |

*by Gregory Murphy*

Directed by Gwen Knight

Produced by special arrangement with Dramatist's Play Service Inc.

THE COUNTESS was produced in New York City by Ludovica Villar-Hauser in association with Paul Leyden and Marnee May at the Greenwich Street Theatre in 1995 and was subsequently produced Off-Broadway at the Samuel Beckett Theatre and the Lamb's Theatre in 1999-2000.

There is one intermission. Coffee, soft drinks and desserts are available. Please be considerate: ensure that pagers and cellular phones are turned off. The use of analog or digital media capture during the performance is prohibited by law.

# SETTING

## PROLOGUE

### ACT ONE

|         |                                                                                            |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Scene 1 | London. The Royal Academy.                                                                 |
| Scene 2 | London. The drawing room at Denmark Hill, the home of John James Ruskin.<br>June 21, 1853. |
| Scene 3 | Brig o' Turk, Scotland. Schoolmaster Alex Stewart's cottage. July 9, 1853.                 |
| Scene 4 | July 10, 1853.                                                                             |
| Scene 5 | Mid-August                                                                                 |
| Scene 6 | Mid-September                                                                              |
| Scene 7 | Late October. Afternoon                                                                    |
| Scene 8 | Late October. Evening                                                                      |

## ENTR'ACTE

### ACT TWO

|         |                                                                |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Scene 1 | Edinburgh. The Philosophical Institution. November, 1853.      |
| Scene 2 | London. The drawing room at Denmark Hill. Late December, 1853. |
| Scene 3 | Early January, 1854.                                           |
| Scene 4 | April 13.                                                      |
| Scene 5 | Afternoon. April 14.                                           |
| Scene 6 | Morning. April 25                                              |
| Scene 7 | Evening. April 25                                              |

## EPILOGUE

*Kanata Theatre acknowledges with special appreciation the following friends who have provided items or services to the production:*

Jarrold Chambers  
 Alan Dean Photography  
 Ron Evans  
 Derek Lawless

All KT members who volunteered after the publication deadline.

## HEARING ASSISTANCE FOR OUR PATRONS

Kanata Theatre is proud to announce the availability of the PhonicEar On-Wave hearing assistance system. Small clip-on receivers permit control over listening volume levels. These units are available from the cloak room with regular headsets (or you may use your own headset with 3.5mm jack, if you prefer) or T-Switch hearing aid loops.

## BOX OFFICE HOURS FOR DECEMBER

December 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> 10 a.m. - Noon.

December 27<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> Noon - 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

December 28<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> Noon - 2 p.m.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

In 1848, in Victorian England, three young artists, John Everett Millais, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Holman Hunt, challenged the guidelines or "code" that all artists had to follow if they wished their work to be shown in the Royal Academy. This group, known as the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, was championed by John Ruskin, the foremost art critic of the time. In 1853, to show his support of the group, he commissioned Millais to paint his portrait. Together with Ruskin's wife, Effie, they travelled to Scotland where they shared a cottage in the Highlands.

The events of that summer led to an aftermath that shocked Victorian society and caused a scandal that was not resolved for more than 40 years. *The Countess* tells that story.

## BIOGRAPHIES

**GWEN KNIGHT** (Director) is a founding member and former President of Kanata Theatre. She has acted, directed, produced and worked backstage in countless productions over the past 40 years. She last appeared on stage as Big Mama in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. Over the past few years she directed *Sylvia*, *The Stillborn Lover*, *The Snowball* (for which she won the Capital Critics Circle Award for Best Director in Community Theatre), *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* and *Happy Birthday Dear Alice*.



**DOROTHY BEAK** (Margaret Ruskin) was most recently seen on stage as Alice in *Happy Birthday Dear Alice*, for which she was nominated by the Capital Critics Circle for Best Actress in a community theatre production. She has appeared in *Stillborn Lover*, *Kindertransport*, *Pygmalion*, *Romantic Comedy* and other productions. She has also been a producer and director. Dorothy has served on the board in many positions including president. She is Festival Chair for the Theatre Ontario Festival which will be hosted by Kanata Theatre in May 2009.



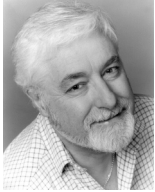
**BEVERLEY BROOKS** (Lady Eastlake) was last seen as Irina Arkadina in last season's *The Seagull*. Bev has acted, directed and worked backstage at KT since 1991. Memorable roles include Jean Brodie, Titania and Maureen in *The Beauty Queen Of Leenane*, for which she won the Capital Critics Circle Award for Best Actor in 2006. Bev has also acted at OLT and TARA and has appeared in two independent films. Her directing credits include *The Woman In Black*, *The Death Of Dracula* and *Enchanted April*. She studied theatre in England and has taught drama at high school.



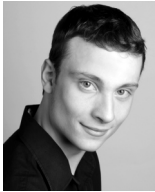
**GEOFF GRUSON** (John Ruskin) – strangely after over 30 years experience on every Ottawa and area stage imaginable, this is my first appearance on the Kanata boards, and I am delighted to be have the opportunity of taking my first steps in line with such a fine director, cast and support team. Recent directing credits include *The Four-some* and *The Melville Boys* at OLT, and acting credits include Willy Clarke in *The Sunshine Boys*; Kipps in *The Woman in Black* and Cyrano in *The Ladies of the Camellias*. Here's to new horizons and new adventures in the West.



**BROOKE KENEFORD** (Mr. Ruskin) acts and directs for Kanata Theatre. His most recent roles include Big Daddy in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, John Smith in *Caught in the Net*, Frank in *Over the River and Through the Woods* and Harry Raymond in *The Stillborn Lover*. Brooke's backstage credits include furnishings, set construction and sound design. He has directed several productions, including *You Can't Take It With You*, *Kindertransport*, *The Cemetery Club*, *Steel Magnolias* and *Noises Off*.



**BRANDEN LALONDE** (Crawley) was last seen on the Kanata Theatre stage in the 2004 production of *Ethan Claymore* where he played Young Ethan. Since then, he has been active with theatre onstage and backstage at All Saints High School. He appeared in *Grease*, *The Miracle Worker* where he played Percy, and *Charlie Brown's Christmas*. Recently he took on the role of the stage manager in *Oklahoma!* Branden has a passion for theatre and hopes to be involved in many more plays to come.



**VENETIA LAWLESS** (Effie Ruskin) is happy to return to Kanata Theatre after making her stage debut with them over 25 years ago. Since then she has worked with Tara Players, Ottawa Little Theatre and Phoenix Players in Ottawa, as well as in Toronto and abroad. Favourite productions include *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Rebecca*, *Death & the Maiden*, *Dracula*, *Move Over Mrs. Markham*, *Enchanted April*, and *Lend Me A Tenor*. It's a pleasure to be working with old friends and new at Kanata Theatre.



**TIM MABEY** (Everett Millais) first appeared on the Kanata Theatre stage as Frederick Arnott in the 2006 production of *Enchanted April*. He has since appeared in *Cat On a Hot Tin Roof*, playing the part of Maggie the Cat's alcoholic husband, Brick. His backstage credits include continuity for *Sylvia* and *To Forgive, Divine*. Prior to joining Kanata Theatre, Tim participated in a number of workshops at the Ottawa Little Theatre and looks forward to being involved in future productions in the theatre community.



## PRODUCTION STAFF

|                            |                                              |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Production Manager         | Anne-Marie Smith                             |
| Assistants to the Director | Sheryne Lalonde, Lisa Murray                 |
| Stage Manager              | Gwendy Tolley                                |
| Assistant Stage Managers   | Sheryne Lalonde, Lisa Murray                 |
| Set Design                 | Peter Jefferson                              |
| Construction               | Tony Francis, Peter Jefferson                |
|                            | Bruce Knowles, Alex Truelove, Bill Williams  |
| Set Painting               | Susan Phillips, Tony Francis                 |
|                            | Peter Jefferson, Bruce Knowles               |
|                            | Gerry Thompson, Alex Truelove, Bill Williams |
| Set Décor                  | Susan Phillips                               |
| Sound Design               | Rob Fairbairn                                |
| Lighting Design            | Steven Truelove                              |
| assisted by                | Jonny Geisler, Alex Truelove                 |
| Costume Design             | Jacqueline Frigon, Marilyn Valiquette        |
| Costume Consultant         | Eufron Williams                              |
| Seamstresses               | Maxime Ball, Kathryn Clarke                  |
|                            | Collette Fournier, Anne-Marie Frigon         |
|                            | Sam Halliday, Nathalie Perreault             |
|                            | Heidi Roberts, Kayla VanderMolen             |
| Dressers                   | Birgit Geisler, Ursula Geisler               |
|                            | Sam Halliday, Marilyn Valiquette             |
|                            | Christine Walton, Ann Williams               |
| Stage Crew                 | Bruce Knowles, Alex Truelove                 |
| Properties                 | Lisa Murray, Shanna Rico, Anne-Marie Smith   |
| Furnishings                | Peter Jefferson, Venetia Lawless             |
|                            | Susan Phillips, Anne-Marie Smith             |
| Continuity                 | Barry Caiger, Jenny Haynes                   |
|                            | Rosemary Keneford                            |
| Make-up                    | Kelly Fuoco                                  |
| assisted by                | Gill Levy, Fiona Rothwell, Heather Sperry    |
| Hair Stylist               | Carol Walkey                                 |
| Green Room                 | Valerie Brennan, Nancy Cormier               |
| Publicity                  | Melissa McCallum                             |
| Programme                  | Wendy Wagner                                 |
| Box Office                 | Sandra Quirt                                 |
| Refreshments               | Jane Maslin, Adele Vickers                   |
| House Manager              | Nedra Nash                                   |

***Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of the House Manager***

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I would like to give you a belated welcome to Kanata Theatre's 40th season. Space constraints in the program booklet for the previous play made it impossible to squeeze in this message.

We are very excited about our 40th season and have a noteworthy lineup of plays for your entertainment and enjoyment.

The first play of the season, *Ken Ludwig's Leading Ladies*, was well received with five sold-out performances.

I hope you will enjoy the play you are about to watch, *The Countess* by Gregory Murphy, and might consider joining us for some or all of the remaining plays of our season.

Rob Fairbairn  
President, Kanata Theatre

## UPCOMING AUDITIONS

### **Bus Stop** by William Inge

November 23<sup>rd</sup> and November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at 7:00pm. To be held in the Ron Maslin Playhouse (please enter at Stage Door).

*In the middle of a howling snowstorm, a bus out of Kansas City pulls up at a small roadside diner. All roads are blocked, and four or five weary travelers have to take refuge until morning. Cherie, a nightclub singer, has the most to worry about. She's being pursued by a young cowboy with all the romantic finesse of a rodeo bull. He's right behind her, ready to sling her over his shoulder and carry her, alive and kicking, all the way back to his Montana ranch!*

The production runs March 17<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

### **Scotland Road** by Jeffrey Hatcher

January 27<sup>th</sup> and January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 7:00pm  
Callbacks January 30<sup>th</sup> To be held in the Ron Maslin Playhouse (please enter at Stage Door).

*A young woman in late nineteenth-century clothing is found floating on an iceberg in the North Atlantic. She speaks only one word: "Titanic". Who is she? What was she doing on an iceberg? She cannot possibly be a survivor of the Titanic disaster, can she? A Titanic expert tries for six days to find the truth. By the end of the play, the secrets of the woman, her interrogator AND his assistants have been laid bare.*

The production runs April 28<sup>th</sup> to May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009.



Music by George Stiles  
 Book & Lyrics by Anthony Drewe

**DECEMBER 27 - 30, 2008**

Performances: 2 p.m. December 27<sup>th</sup> through 30<sup>th</sup>. Tickets \$8 per person.  
 7 p.m. December 27<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. Tickets \$10 per person, reserved seating.  
 Groups of 12 or more: \$6 per ticket matinee, \$8 per ticket evening.

This year's holiday play promises to thrill and entertain the whole family! Come find out how the leopard gets his spots, how the zebra gets her stripes and how the Elephant's Child finally gets her trunk... These are the "Just So Stories" originally written by Rudyard Kipling and brought to vivid life by Anthony Drewe (lyrics) and George Stiles (music).

***The holiday show is often sold out so buy your tickets now!***

## THEATRE ONTARIO FESTIVAL 2009

Theatre Ontario Festival 2009, the 59th annual showcase of Ontario's best community theatre productions, will be co-hosted by Kanata Theatre, Theatre Ontario and EODL, May 13 to 16, 2009.

The Theatre Ontario Festival represents the finals of an Ontario wide theatre festival comprising the four best community theatre productions - one from each region.

Kanata Theatre was honoured to be awarded the Elsie for outstanding production in 2004 for *Over the River and Through the Woods* by Joe Di Pietro. Last year's winner was Peterborough Theatre Guild's *Proof* by David Auburn.

The Festival is also an excellent learning experience with workshops, adjudications and play readings by Canadian writers.

Chris M. Worsnop will publicly adjudicate each production. Worsnop is a distinguished actor, director, author and educator.

Individual tickets are \$20.00 and a subscription for all four plays costs \$75.00.

Check out the websites of Ontario's Regional Theatre Groups

|        |                                                                        |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ACT-CO | <a href="http://www.actco.co">www.actco.co</a>                         |
| EODL   | <a href="http://hometown.aol.com/yodler1">hometown.aol.com/yodler1</a> |
| QUONTA | <a href="http://www.quonta.org">www.quonta.org</a>                     |
| WODL   | <a href="http://www.wodl.on.ca">www.wodl.on.ca</a>                     |

Tickets to the Theatre Ontario Festival will be available beginning December 1<sup>st</sup>. Contact Kanata Theatre through the box office at 613-831-4435, or check out the website at [www.kanatatheatre.com](http://www.kanatatheatre.com).

We look forward to presenting four entertaining productions by four different theatre groups over four days in May 2009. Please join us for what is sure to be an exhilarating and intense theatrical experience!

For further information, be sure to check our website regularly at [www.kanatatheatre.com](http://www.kanatatheatre.com) as we update our festival page.