

UCI CLAIRE TREVOR SCHOOL OF THE ARTS DRAMA DEPARTMENT

PRESENTS

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dis-ease  
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disease  
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21 Nov. – 6 Dec.

*These Shining Lives*



UCI Claire Trevor | Drama  
School of the Arts

HUMANITIES HALL LITTLE THEATRE

UCI CLAIRE TREVOR SCHOOL OF THE ARTS DRAMA DEPARTMENT  
PRESENTS

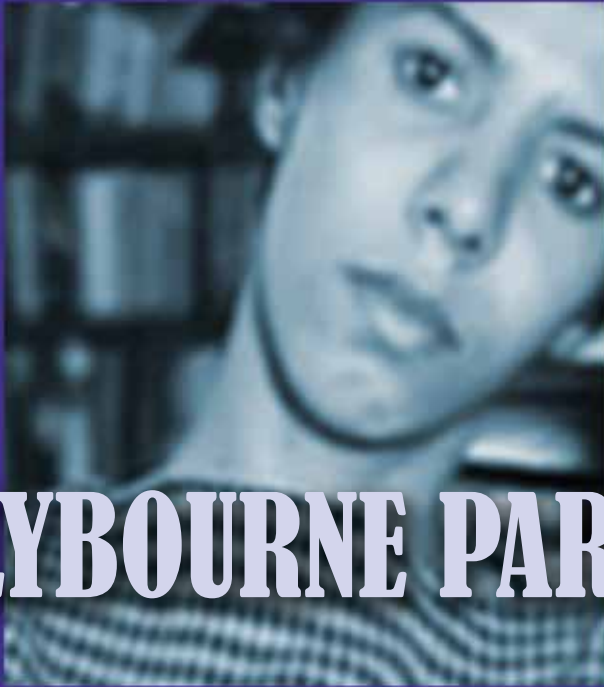
CARE

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2015-16 SEASON

30 Jan. – 7 Feb.



# CLYBOURNE PARK

ROBERT COHEN THEATRE

WRITTEN BY: BRUCE NORRIS  
LESLIE ISHII, GUEST DIRECTOR

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PRESENTS



*These Shining Lives*

*21 November — 6 December 2015*

HUMANITIES HALL LITTLE THEATRE

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fall 2015



MAN OF LA MANCHA

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BOOK: DALE WASSERMAN/  
MUSIC: MITCH LEIGH/LYRICS: JOE DARION  
DON HILL, DIRECTOR  
DENNIS CASTELLANO, MUSIC DIRECTOR  
SHERON WRAY, CHOREOGRAPHER  
IRVINE BARCLAY THEATRE



*These Shining Lives*

21 Nov. – 6 Dec.

WRITTEN BY: MELANIE MARNICH  
SARAH BUTTS, DIRECTOR  
HUMANITIES HALL LITTLE THEATRE

winter 2016



CLYBOURNE PARK

30 Jan. – 7 Feb.

WRITTEN BY: BRUCE NORRIS  
LESLIE ISHII, GUEST DIRECTOR  
ROBERT COHEN THEATRE



Woyzeck

5 – 13 MAR.

WRITTEN BY: GEORG BÜCHNER  
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CLAIRE TREVOR THEATRE

spring 2016



AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE

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WRITTEN BY: HENRIK IBSEN/  
ADAPTATION BY: REBECCA LENKIEWICZ  
JANE PAGE, DIRECTOR  
HUMANITIES HALL LITTLE THEATRE



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27 – 28 MAY

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*Present*

# *These Shining Lives*

Written by

**Melanie Marnich**

<b>Leah Ramillano</b>	Scenic Designer
<b>Jojo Siu</b>	Costume Designer
<b>Wes Chew</b>	Lighting Designer
<b>Matthew Eckstein</b>	Sound Designer
<b>Nathaniel Chase</b>	Stage Manager
<b>Wind Dell Woods</b>	Dramaturge

**Sarah Butts**

*Director*



# Director's Note

*"The past is never dead. It's not even past."*

— William Faulkner

In *These Shining Lives*, playwright Melanie Marnich has given voice to a specific event in American history: the atrocity committed against women working for Radium Dial in Ottawa, Illinois in the 1920s and 30s. This era and this story may initially seem far away, a grave mistake, an appalling act that occurred at a complicated time during which we as country didn't know any better; however, while this *particular* story occurred in the past, its themes and effects are still very much with us. History repeats itself...

I grew up in Western Montana, about one hundred miles from the beautiful Rocky Mountain town of Libby. The mineral Vermiculite was discovered in the mountains near our town, and in the 1960s W.R. Grace & Company purchased a mine and began producing 80% of the world's vermiculite, a fact that brought the community of Libby great pride. The company provided well-paying jobs, and built schools, an ice rink, baseball fields, and a beautiful track that my sister and I ran on during our four years competing in high school. Little did the community of Libby know, however, that for decades they were being poisoned. The material being mined contained tremolite asbestos, a substance the company wrongly told the workers was harmless. It wasn't just the workers themselves being poisoned, the beautiful buildings and public spaces throughout their town now also harbored the lethal material extracted from the mine. Since then hundreds of people in the area have died or acquired severe asbestos-related illnesses, many of them friends of my family.

Stories like this illuminate the ugly side of capitalism, the side that can lead us to view human life — especially the lives of the marginalized or isolated — as expendable, the drive for profit and power prioritized over the health and wellness of human beings. Starting in the 1800s, U.S courts began assigning corporations the rights previously reserved for human beings; corporations were created to serve the people, yet "corporate personhood" continues to overshadow "human personhood."

A quick internet search today would yield an increasing number of such stories. So what do we do? Why do these things keep happening? Who is to blame? These are complicated questions that I can't pretend to have answers for. What I do believe is that we shouldn't look away from human injustices such as these as, uncomfortable as they may be. If we do...if we all keep looking away, what will our future hold?

— **Sarah Butts**

Director

# *Dramaturgical Notes*

“This isn’t a fairy tale, though it starts like one.  
It’s not a tragedy, though it ends like one”

—*These Shining Lives*

*Once upon a time*—1922, to be exact—in the not so far off land of Ottawa, Illinois, a most curious thing took place. A factory opened, providing employment opportunities for young women with dexterous hands. This factory was not like any ordinary factory. By using the wonders of radium to paint the small numbers and dials on the faces of watches, this factory made time glow. Because the factory painted radium on dials, it was called The Radium Dial Factory. And because the young women, with their crafty little hands, painted the glowing substance on the dials, they were called dial painters.

Now the dial painters loved their jobs. The factory provided them a space to commune with other women, the work was fairly easy, and the wages were almost too good to be true. But it all was true, and the dial painters considered themselves very lucky. They were part of something novel, something exciting, and something that made them feel as if they were *shining* like new money. Needless to say, the dial painters were very content, and their futures, like the digits on the timepieces, seemed radiant.

Time was magical.

Until one day, one of the dial painters became very ill, and no one understood what it was that ailed her, but there was something curiously wrong. Then another fell ill. No one would tell them what it was, but there was something surely wrong. Then more dial painters got sick, and they got sicker and sicker. Until one day...until...well—you see the radium substance did glow like magic, but like any good magic trick, one must fall victim to the illusion. The truth was that this newly discovered substance, with its ability to make even the darkest of times “undark”, had a dark side of its own. In the end, many dial painters became very ill, many died. All of them realized, “making good money doesn’t come cheap,” and “work that pays well costs you something.”

The factory finally closed its doors and left the small town, but the stories about this curious time remain. Even some of the radiation remains, and resting in the

cemetery on the hill are many of the remains of the dial painters, their bones still glowing, their stories still radioactive.

*The end  
and the beginning*

*These Shining Lives* isn't a fairy tale, nor is it a tragedy; it is *something else*, something different. What is this something other than, this undefined or perhaps indefinable alternative that haunts from deep in Marnich's dramaturgy? What can we learn from the space in between fairy tale and tragedy, past and present, life and death, that which is spoken and that which is unspeakable?

*"If one woman were to tell the truth about her life,  
The world would split open."*

—Muriel Rukyser

The quote above by poet Muriel Rukyser serves as the epigraph to *These Shining Lives*. The quote comes from a poem titled "Käthe Kollwitz"; its last two lines a question: "what would happen if one woman told the truth about her life?" and an answer: "the world would split open." Kollwitz was a German painter whose artwork depicted the bleak conditions of German workers toward the end of the 19th century. Her work is unapologetic in its portrayal of the poverty stricken circumstances that the workers faced. Much of Kollwitz's art focused on the affect these conditions had on women. There is something haunting about the level of truth she achieved in her paintings. Pain and suffering jump off the canvas. There is also an element of beauty in her portrayal, perhaps a sense of hope, most certainly a sense of *something else*. Rukyser gestures towards this in a descriptive line of the poem that reads, "the faces of the sufferers / in the street, in dailiness, / their lives showing / through their bodies / a look of music / the revolutionary look / that says I am in the world / to change the world." What is the connection between a look that changes the world, indicated in these lines, and a truth that would split it open, as suggested in the epigraph?

I believe that the epigraph functions as both a lens and navigational compass, guiding our direction, even when the traditional markers of dramatic realism, which we often use as points of orientation, fail us. The quote calls us to listen closely to the words of these women, but also to pay close attention to their silences. It demands that we must, in the words of Cornel West, "let suffering speak, if [we] want to hear the truth." But how does one hear a truth that would



*split the world open?* More importantly, how does one tell such a truth? The epigraph forces these questions, and the weight of these questions troubles the play text, as well as our production.

Director Sarah Butts and the artistic team have found creative ways to keep the gravity of these questions in fruitful tension with the play’s many aesthetic layers. Marnich describes the play as being “at times choral, at times docudrama, at times just a play.” Elsewhere she mentions that, the play “moves between fact and fiction, between reality and imagination, to create a theatrical world.” Rather than attempt to situate the play neatly in time and space, this production finds strength in the in between spaces. It locates its forceful presence in the elusiveness of poetry. It works to grasp hold of what Rukyser terms, “the music of truth,” and bear witness to it, even when it is whispered, even when, as Emily Dickinson understood, it is told slant.

*“The sky twinkles with a few stars of luminous numbers,  
fugitive hours that have ran away from the clocks.”*

—These Shining Lives

As a dramaturge I am interested in the notions of time and history. With each production I ask two initial questions: Why a particular play here? And why now? *These Shining Lives* is a play about time *and* history, perhaps time as history. Suzan-Lori Parks suggests that, “history is time that won’t quit.” The exploitation represented in the play as a historical event, I argue exists in a continuum of “time that won’t quit”<sup>1</sup>. Today we still live in a world where the desire for profit eclipses the compassion for people. What to do with this relentless time? Especially when Dr. King reminds us that “time is not neutral...it can be used for good or for evil.” The untimely, question is what to do now? Who will be courageous enough to tell a truth that would make time turn its face?

I encourage you, as you view this play, to keep Rukyser’s words “*If one woman were to tell the truth about her life, the world would split open*” in mind. Let it guide you as you watch this production unearth these radioactive stories, not fairytales, nor tragedies, but something else—something perhaps akin to what Catherine explains in the final moments of the play as, “Faith at the edge [end] of the world.”

— ***Wind Dell Woods***  
*Dramaturge*

<sup>1</sup> See *Elements of Style* by Suzan-Lori Parks, 1995.

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# *Cast*

**Grace Morrison**

Catherine Donohue

**Kelsey Jackson**

Charlotte/Reporter 1

**Kelsey Jenison**

Frances/Reporter 2

**Jade Payton**

Pearl/Judge 2

**Blake Morris**

Tom Donohue/Dr. Dalitch

**Kevin Shewey**

Mr. Reed/Company Doctor/Son/Dr. Rowntree

**Madison McKenzie Scott**

Grossman/Announcer/Daughter

***Running time will be approximately 90 minutes.***

***There will be no intermission.***

***Blacklight Effects provided by Ushio***

# *These Shining Lives Artistic Staff*

Department Chair & Artistic Director/Producer	Daniel Gary Busby
Vice Chair & Associate Producer	Don Hill
Directing Mentor	Jane Page
Scenic Design Mentor	Stephanie Kerley Schwartz
Costume Design Mentor	Holly Poe Durbin
Lighting Design Mentor	Jaymi Smith
Sound Design Mentor	Vincent Olivieri
Stage Management Mentors	Don Hill, Joel Veenstra
Assistant Scenic Designer	David Phillips
Assistant Costume Designer	Beau Hamilton
Assistant Lighting Design	David Hernandez
Assistant Sound Design	Adam Williams
Assistant Stage Managers	Jalisa Jackson, Kelly Musgrove
Production Assistants	Rachel Menendez, Katherine Zofrea

## *Claire Trevor School of the Arts Production Staff*

Production Manager	Keith Bangs
Assistant Production Manager	Shannon Bicknell
Costume Shop Manager	Julie Keen-Leavenworth
Electrics/Lighting Supervisor	Joe Forehand
Electrics Shop Electrician	Sarah Resch
Prop Shop Supervisor	Pamela Marsden
Sound Supervisor	B.C. Keller
Shop Foreman	Jeff Stube
Master Carpenter	Geronimo Guzmán
Director of Space Planning & Facilities	Toby Weiner
Box Office Manager	David Walker
Director of Marketing & Communications	Jaime DeJong
Graphic Designer	Donna Summers

## *These Shining Lives Crew*

**AUDIO CREW**  
Cassandra Grilley

**E-HANG CREW**  
Anthony Benson Chan, Keira Talley

**COSTUME CREW**  
Spencer Andelson, Hannah Jarvis,  
Anna Reiser, Linda Urena

**E-RUN CREW**  
Nina Agelvis

**Phil Anthropy House is proud to support UCI's Drama Department. Culture is currently dominated by the scientific, technical, and profit-making communities. What does it say about a culture that lavishly funds athletic programs yet underfunds fine arts? The fine arts, especially the Drama Department, present our humanness and remind us that we are soulful beings.**

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In addition to enhancing your enjoyment of our season, Guild membership increases the interaction between our faculty and student artists and their patrons, a reciprocity we believe benefits all involved.

We hope you join us as a Golden Anniversary Member of Theatre Guild, and look forward to seeing you soon. For more information, please call (949) 824-8062, or email [UCIDramaNews@uci.edu](mailto:UCIDramaNews@uci.edu)

More information may be found at <http://drama.arts.uci.edu/theatre-guild>

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- Dec. 2\* UCI Guitar Ensembles Concert
- Dec. 3–5 New Slate
- Dec. 4\* Art Song & Artistry Series:  
Songs of Jake Heggie
- Dec. 5 Faculty Artist Series:  
Cecilia Sun, fortepiano

**JANUARY**

- Jan. 9–Mar. 12\* H. M. by Kerry Tribe
- Jan. 9–Mar. 12\* Critical Curatorial  
Program Thesis Exhibition
- Jan. 9–Mar. 12\* Critical Curatorial  
Program Exhibition
- Jan. 9 Faculty Artist Series:  
Lorna Griffitt, pianist with  
Trio de Janeiro
- Jan. 15 Chamber Music | OC  
Presents: All Strings Attached

- Jan. 20–23\* EMERSE: A Media  
Performance &  
Installation
- Jan. 23\* Choral Music at UCI:  
Anteater Choir Fest
- Jan. 30–Feb. 7 C/C/C Series:  
Clybourne Park
- Jan. 30 Faculty Artist Series:  
Maggie Parkins, cello

*\* Free concert*