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T@F is Somerville's community theatre, part of the Massachusetts Community Theatre Corporation, a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation.

Our mission is to work together to provide a fun, friendly, and creative theater experience for cast, crew, and audience alike. We welcome volunteers at all levels of experience, without regard to race, color, religion, ethnicity, ancestry, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, national origin, body type, age, or

disability. We encourage a supportive environment in which to work, play, grow, and explore new areas of the theatre arts. We offer affordable and eclectic performances to the community, aiming to surprise, delight, entertain, and educate our audiences.

As an all-volunteer organization, we depend on our audience for support. Please consider becoming a subscriber to T@F and supporting our work as a contributor.

SUBSCRIBER—For just \$50 you get free admission to all T@F shows for a full year.

CONTRIBUTOR—Support T@F with a tax-deductible donation that you can claim on your tax return.

Please see one of our staff to contribute today, or visit our website:

www.theatreatfirst.org

Thanks for supporting Theatre@First and the arts in Somerville!

BARE STAGE
BARE SOULS
BARE WORKS
BARE WORDS
BARE BONES
STAGED READINGS AT THEATRE@FIRST

Agnes of God

written by John Pielmeier
directed by J. Deschene

Thursday, April 6th - Unity Somerville

presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Jeanné Callinan (*Mother Miriam Ruth*) is so happy to be at Theatre@First in this show. Other roles for T@F have included *Mother* (*'Night Mother*) and *Mrs. Reynolds* (*Pride & Prejudice*). She has directed (*Bully Plays*) and done hair and makeup for many more. She thanks J for her trust. She also loves her ever patient and supportive husband, Charlie, and Iain, the Wunderkind!

J. Deschene (*Director*) is delighted to return to T@F with such a wonderful play like *Agnes of God*. Previous directing credits include *Trojan Women* (2014) and *Lysistrata* (2013). On stage, J. has been seen as Lady Bracknell in *The Importance of Being Earnest* and Lady Catherine in *Pride & Prejudice*.

Anita Harkness (*Dr. Martha Livingstone*) is grateful to be working with T@F for the first time. She moved from Denver to the Boston area just two years ago, and since then, she's played the Player King in Salem Theatre Company's *Hamlet*, appeared in the background of three feature films, and played 18th-century newspaper editor Margeret Draper while giving tours of the Freedom Trail.

Katie O'Reilly (*Sister Agnes*) is thrilled to make her T@F debut! Recent local credits include the American premiere of *Sonic Blossom* at the Boston MFA, Franca in *The Light in the Piazza* and Mrs. Anderssen in *A Little Night Music* (Next Door Theater,) Prilepa in *The Queen of Spades* (Lowell House Opera) and Yum-Yum in *The Mikado* (MIT Gilbert & Sullivan Players) as well as appearances with Moonbox Productions, Performing Fusion Theater, Virtual Voices of Beverly and the Hillyer Festival Orchestra. Other local credits: *The Turn of the Screw* (Opera Brittenica) *Little Women* and *Hansel and Gretel* (MetroWest Opera,) *Lakmé* (Lowell House Opera,) and *HMS Pinafore* (MITG&SP.) Katie sings with Opera on Tap, and is on the faculty at the Community Music Center of Boston. She was also a contestant on the 25th season of Jeopardy! www.katieoreilly.com.

Jess Viator (*Program Director*) has been working with T@F since 2009. Previously, she has directed the Bare Bones performances of Zinnie Harris' *The Wheel*, and Will Eno's *Tragedy: a Tragedy*, as well as *The Eagle and the Cactus* for FirstWorks. Next up, Jess is directing *Peter Pan* for the Post-Meridian Radio Players, April 21-29.

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Betty Walker and Unity Somerville for sharing their space with us.
Our amazing team of house volunteers.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

In March of 1977, a nun, Sister Maureen Murphy, stood trial before a judge in Brighton, New York. Her alleged crime was the murder of her infant, which had been found asphyxiated in a wastepaper basket in her tiny convent room. This might have been an open-and-shut case, but Sister Maureen's claims that she did not remember the conception or any of her pregnancy made such simplicity impossible. Ticket stubs found in her room showed that she had attended a conference out of state exactly nine months prior to the child's birth, but no possible father was ever named during the trial or in any reporting of the incident. After just ten days, the judge ruled that Sister Maureen was not guilty of the murder, by reason of insanity. When all of this came to the attention of playwright, John Pielmeier, the idea for *Agnes of God* was born.

Inspired by Sister Maureen's remarkable and unsettling story, Pielmeier set out to create a modern day saint in the character of Sister Agnes. What one might call the miracles of Sister Agnes---survival through starvation, an angelic voice, and even stigmata---are lifted directly from classic stories of the saints of old. Even so, what Doctor Livingstone says is true: everything that happens to Agnes is explainable by modern psychiatry, and perhaps even more explainable now than when the play premiered in 1982. Despite this, I challenge you not to be awestruck, inspired, or even chilled to the bone by some of the things you'll hear and see tonight. Pielmeier knew what he was doing in this regard. *Agnes of God*, like all miraculous occurrences, presents the viewer with as much information as can be found, and then we are forced to decide for ourselves as to what to believe.

Whatever you decide to believe after seeing this play, I hope you will leave here changed in some way. I hope the waves of richness contained in the conversations these characters have will continue to wash over you and bless you for a long time to come.

J. Deschene
April 2017

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

Restrooms are located on the entry level.

Please join us for a talkback session following the performance.