

# ANPF

## ASHLAND NEW PLAYS FESTIVAL

VOL. 6 NO. 2

FALL 2014

### THE ANPF 2014 WINNING PLAYS

#### HOME COMING by Michael Edan ■ Directed by Barzin Akhavan

An ironic incident at his parents' home on Thanksgiving Day begins the civilian reintegration process for Robert, a disabled Iraq War veteran returning to his small hometown in Michigan. We see challenges with his wife, Jenna; his enduring connection with his childhood friend, Jake; and his stubborn resistance to therapy. Displaying a false resiliency, Robert keeps hidden his pain from both the trauma of war and a specific haunting memory, until a late night confessional with his father, who has his own traumatic memories of Vietnam. The Homecoming looks at how the after-effects of war require a different kind of courage: a willingness to face truth and not turn away. ■ *Underwritten by Teresa and Ted Rihn*  
Wednesday, October 22, 8 p.m. ■ Thursday, October 23, 2 p.m.

#### IRREVERSIBLE by Jack Karp ■ Directed by Catherine Lynn Davis

It is 1944 and Robert Oppenheimer and his brother, Frank, are frantically working to beat the Nazis to the nuclear bomb. Afraid that Germany has a two-year head start, Robert and his boss, General Groves, push their scientists to avoid "waking up to a mushroom cloud over New York." With difficulties mounting and growing concern over his Communist associations, Robert has no time to think about the consequences of his "gadget." But in 1945, when they finally see their weapon's devastation, Frank has doubts about its use. General Groves, however, is determined to go forward, and when he tells Robert that opposing the weapon will ruin his and his brother's careers, Robert is forced to choose between his conscience and his ambition, his brother and his bomb. ■ *Underwritten by Lucretia Weems*  
Thursday, October 23, 8 p.m. ■ Saturday, October 25, 2 p.m.

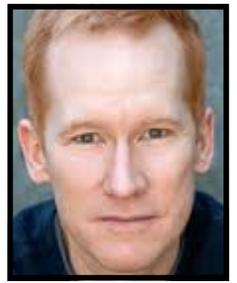
#### THE GROYSER by James Harmon Brown ■ Directed by Kenneth Albers

Groyser is a Yiddish term meaning "the oldest" or "the big one." For Dinah it was the impersonal name her mother gave her as the oldest child of Holocaust survivors, and Dinah has carried this hurt into middle age. Her husband hasn't worked in a while, and their already strained relationship is exacerbated by his growing fondness for scotch. Their son, Jason, has just married an Afro-Brazilian girl—a green card marriage which Dinah opposed. With everything in her life at a high pitch, Dinah is thrown one more curve: Jason and his new wife turn up on Dinah's doorstep with her mother, Bess, for the purpose of making a documentary about Holocaust survivors and their children, a story Bess has never told to anyone. The Groyser is about mothers and daughters, husbands and wives, parents and children, where all try so very hard to understand and be understood by the people they love. ■ *Underwritten by Jane and Bill Bardin*  
Friday, October 24, 2 p.m. ■ Saturday, October 25, 8 p.m.

#### A LITTLE QUID PRO QUO by Bob Clyman ■ Directed by John Stadelman

Mark, a respected moral philosopher, has never wavered from his bedrock belief that people are fundamentally good. Ben, who investigates intellectual property fraud, is equally convinced that any apparent act of kindness is simply a more subtle tactic for pursuing the same self-serving results. Their close but unlikely friendship has always been tense, with Mark's persistent efforts to help Ben achieve greater fulfillment matched in intensity by the seething resentment his efforts stir up in Ben. When Ben decides to stop investigating white-collar criminals and instead begins turning previously law-abiding employees into them, he proposes a bet, ostensibly to settle their longstanding argument over human nature but in reality with a much darker purpose in mind. ■ *Underwritten by Norma and Fred Wright*  
Friday, October 24, 8 p.m. ■ Sunday, October 26, 2 p.m.

### Theatre Talk with Dan Donohue Kicks Off Festival Week



ANPF 2014 hits the ground running on Friday, October 17, at 7:30 p.m. with an ANPF Theatre Talk interview with Oregon Shakespeare Festival actor Dan Donohue and host John Rose. The event will be held at the Dancing People Company Studio, 310 Oak Street in Ashland.

"Dan is undoubtedly among the most experienced Shakespearean actors in the country," says Rose, "so the expanse of the artistic territory he's explored and excelled in is tantalizing for anyone like me who is passionate about understanding the journeys actors undertake and the choices they make to create indelible and memorable performances. My hope is that we can explore the processes he employs to bring together his artistic talent, professional experience, and personal understanding as an actor—and that such an exploration will result in a conversation that our audience will find informative and fascinating."

Tickets to the Theatre Talk are \$10 and available only at [ashlandnewplays.org](http://ashlandnewplays.org). The event is underwritten by Carole and David Florian, and seating is limited.

The readings of the winning plays at the Unitarian Center, 87 4th Street, begin Wednesday, October 22, at 8 p.m. and run through the Sunday matinée. Each performance is followed by a moderated talkback with host playwright EM Lewis.

The playwriting workshop, "All Our Yesterdays," led by Lewis, is on Saturday morning at the OLLI space on the SOU campus: Campbell Center, Room E, 655 Frances Lane. \$10 at the door. RSVP to [gray@ashlandnewplays.org](mailto:gray@ashlandnewplays.org).

#### ► See inside for Ticket Presale Order Form

Tickets are available now at [ashlandnewplays.org](http://ashlandnewplays.org); they will also be available at Paddington Station October 1 through 21 (cash or check only).

We are thrilled with the lineup of talented actors who will grace our stage at the Unitarian Center. A couple of roles are yet to be filled, but so far Artistic Director Douglas Rowe and our directors have cast the following actors:

Kenneth Albers	John Pribyl
Christine Albright	Geoffrey Riley
Catherine E. Coulson	Monique Robinson
Catherine Lynn Davis	Douglas Rowe
Tony DeBruno	Mickey Rowe
Al Espinosa	Vilma Silva
Mauro Hantman	Jeremy Thompson
Caitlin Lushington	U. Jonathan Toppo
Dee Maaske	Rachael Warren
Holly Weber Neimark	David Wood

For more information and to print the full Festival Week schedule, visit [ashlandnewplays.org](http://ashlandnewplays.org).

SEE YOU AT THE FESTIVAL!

# Order Tickets in Advance for Savings and a Guaranteed Seat

Take advantage of the Festival Ticket Package for \$50 when you purchase one ticket for each of the four readings. Use this form for both the \$50 Festival Ticket Package and the \$15 individual tickets. Advance \$15 tickets are on sale now at [ashlandnewplays.org](http://ashlandnewplays.org) and will be available at **Paddington Station**, 125 E Main Street, October 1 through 21. Tickets will also be available at the door and are sold first come, first served. We recommend advance purchases. All performances are at the Unitarian Center, 87 4th Street in Ashland. **Your tickets will be held in the lobby at Will Call** (not mailed as in the past).

## ANPF 2014 Ticket Presale Order Form

Your order must be received by **Wednesday, October 8**, for discounted ticket prices to apply. **Questions?** Call (541) 488-7995.

name \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

address \_\_\_\_\_ city \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

home phone \_\_\_\_\_ mobile phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Each Festival Ticket Package includes one reading of each play.**

**Homecoming** by Michael Edan  
Directed by Barzin Akhavan

Wednesday, 10/22, 8 p.m.  
No. of tickets \_\_\_\_\_

Thursday, 10/23, 2 p.m.  
No. of tickets \_\_\_\_\_

**Irreversible** by Jack Karp  
Directed by Catherine Lynn Davis

Thursday, 10/23, 8 p.m.  
No. of tickets \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday, 10/25, 2 p.m.  
No. of tickets \_\_\_\_\_

**The Groyser** by James Harmon Brown  
Directed by Kenneth Albers

Friday, 10/24, 2 p.m.  
No. of tickets \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday, 10/25, 8 p.m.  
No. of tickets \_\_\_\_\_

**A Little Quid Pro Quo** by Bob Clyman  
Directed by John Stadelman

Friday, 10/24, 8 p.m.  
No. of tickets \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday, 10/26, 2 p.m.  
No. of tickets \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Festival Ticket Packages at \$50 each \_\_\_\_\_ Total tickets \_\_\_\_\_ Total cost \_\_\_\_\_

Number of individual play tickets at \$15 each \_\_\_\_\_ Total cost \_\_\_\_\_

Your tax-deductible donation \_\_\_\_\_

Submit via US mail: Ashland New Plays Festival  
PO Box 3314  
Ashland, OR 97520

Total enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make check payable to ANPF*

**To qualify for this discounted pricing, your order must be received by Wednesday, October 8, 2014.**  
**Your tickets will be held at Will Call in the lobby of the Unitarian Center during Festival Week.**

Admission to the playwriting workshop on Saturday morning at OLLI is \$10 and payable at the door.

## ANPF NEEDS YOU

As a nonprofit organization run by volunteers, ANPF relies on contributions from people like you. Whether your gift is large or small, it is *you*—our donors—who make it possible for us to continue bringing new works to the stage. During the magic moments of rehearsals, readings, and discussions, a playwright can discover new insights to refine a good script into a masterpiece. You can help make this happen by donating to ANPF—one of the premier new plays festivals in the country. Check out our donor levels at [ashlandnewplays.org](http://ashlandnewplays.org). All gifts are significant and tax-deductible, and every little bit helps. We appreciate your ongoing support!

# SPOTLIGHT ON THE WINNING PLAYWRIGHTS

**BOB CLYMAN** ☿ While it's easy to imagine how my "other job" as a therapist might have enriched my writing, my experience as a playwright has contributed equally to my craft as a psychologist. I've learned that a good therapy session needs an underlying structure and a dramatic arc as much as an effective play does. No amount of interesting dialogue will keep an audience from becoming restless if the question *What is this play about?* remains unclear. Similarly, therapy clients want to know what a given session is about. They will start to feel they're floundering and that "all this talk," however insightful, is pointless, unless the therapist can help them find the structure; i.e., a coherent theme buried in all the talk. And, as with a play, this clarity has to emerge with enough time remaining for the client to achieve, if not a full resolution, a sense that one might be achievable. Dialogue is fragile. One extra syllable at the end of a build can turn a moment of emotional power and clarity into mush. As a therapist, I can't interrupt a session to fashion my words precisely, but I've spent enough years telling characters what to say that when I open my mouth with a client, the words that tumble out are more likely to land.



**MICHAEL EDAN** ☿ I started writing plays in 2009. Let's just say I was over 50. So it's never too late to venture into something new—well, somewhat new. For many years I have been involved in theatre as an actor, and I pursued it professionally in New York City during the 1980s. My primary theatrical experience during the past 15 years has been with a wonderful community theatre, Elmwood Playhouse, in Nyack, New York. That experience has also fostered my work as a director, which I enjoy very much, and, since 2009, as a playwright. Although my plays have been presented at several one-act festivals, this is my first professional festival for a full-length play, and I am very excited, pleased, and honored. There are a *lot* of playwrights out there. I also work in the holistic health field as a practitioner and an educator in various environments, which allows me a certain amount of flexibility in structuring my time for writing—and in this case traveling to Ashland. I'm working at present on several plays, but the one I'm most involved with is the completion of a three-act that explores mythological motifs and the vulnerable, controversial territory where diagnosed mental illness interfaces with psychic and spiritual awakening.

**JACK KARP** ☿ I have been writing and producing plays for the past 16 years, but I do it only as a way of paying my bills while I pursue my true passion—sitting in a cubicle and working my way up to middle management. I am currently chasing this dream in Brooklyn, New York, where I also helped start and run the immersive theater company The Story Gym. We just finished putting up a technology-driven, interactive show called *The Photo Album* at this past August's NY International Fringe Festival, which required audience members to scan photographs with their smartphones to get instructions sending them to find and cue actors, who then delivered monologues and scenes. When not thinking up interesting ways like this to torture actors, I work as a copy editor for a nonprofit philanthropic organization. I am also an avid snowboarder who is currently counting the days until the first snowfall in Vermont, which as of this writing was about 124. I have never been to Ashland before but have heard wonderful and amazing things about both the town and the festival, and I am very excited to be participating.



**JAMES HARMON BROWN** ☿ My first writing job happened for me at age 17, when I was conscripted to write *The Elroy Hirsch Show*, a five-minute radio broadcast hosted by the former LA Rams football star, who was a friend of my father's. And as a sports-loving high school senior, I worked pretty cheap. For \$5 per show, I began my professional writing career that subsequently included newspapers, magazines, books, and especially television, where I've made my living for the past 25 years. But writing for the theatre has always been my biggest dream. I didn't start pursuing it seriously until a few years ago, when a friend suggested I try a playwriting workshop moderated by Trey Nichols. This is where I learned what makes writing for the stage so different from the other work I'd been doing. I was hooked. Over the course of several years, I developed four full-length plays, including *The Groysler*. My patron saint as a writer is Paddy Chayefsky, whose unique ability to mine the extraordinary in ordinary lives is a rare gift that still resonates. *Marty* will always bring a lump to my throat. *Network* still seethes with anger and black humor, not to mention Chayefsky's uncanny foretelling of what the television business would ultimately become. Another influence is Hunter S. Thompson.

Whenever I got stuck, I would reread sections of *Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail* for the scatological majesty of Thompson's humor and insight and the amazing way he could string words together like nobody else. It gave me something to shoot for if nothing else. It also taught me to just write it all down because you never know when magic might happen. When my wife asked what I wanted to do for my birthday this year, I told her without hesitation that I wanted to go to Ashland for the Shakespeare Festival. It had been on my to-do list for years, and I was determined to finally get there in 2014. I never imagined I would be going with my own play and be allowed to participate in this prestigious event. It's an amazing honor to be included among the fine writers at ANPF 2014, and it goes a long way toward making that dream of mine come true.

## SAVE THE DATES

### Theatre Talk with Dan Donohue

Friday, October 17 # 7:30 p.m.  
Dancing People Company Studio

### ANPF 2014 Festival Week

October 22 through 26  
Unitarian Center

### Playwriting Workshop:

#### All Our Yesterdays

Saturday, October 25  
9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
OLLI Space, Room E

### Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol

December 4 # Temple Emek Shalom  
December 15 # Camelot Theatre



## Say Good-Bye to Snail Mail

This is likely our last postal mailing. If you do not have email, please call and tell us so that we can still stay in touch with you: **(541) 488-7995**

## Want to Help Choose the Plays for ANPF 2015?

ANPF is seeking applicants for the Reading Committee to assist in the selection of finalists for next year's festival. It is a big commitment: between December and June, each reader will read 50 to 60 plays. It is also a lot of fun—we offer social opportunities galore, from large parties to intimate discussion groups.

Never done anything like this before? Not to worry: if you have a passion for theatre, several training sessions will bring you up to speed on the process.

ANPF's Reading Committee is the very soul of the organization. We expect 300 or more submissions, and it is our readers' diligent efforts that reduce that pile to a list of 12 finalists from which the ANPF 2015 winners will be selected.

If you would like to join in this exciting venture, please contact Gray McKee ([gray@ashlandnewplays.org](mailto:gray@ashlandnewplays.org)) or Sunny Anderson ([sunny@ashlandnewplays.org](mailto:sunny@ashlandnewplays.org)).

## OUR MISSION

Ashland New Plays Festival assists playwrights in the development of new works through public readings and offers an educational forum to the community through discussions and workshops.

## Board of Directors

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