



BROWN

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Brown University Theatre Presents a Modern Reimagining of *Hecuba*

Brown University Department of Theatre Arts and Performance Studies and Sock & Buskin present the third show of their 2016–17 season. *Hecuba*, a modern reimagining written by Marina Carr and directed by senior student Sienna Vann '17, runs December 1 through 4 in Leeds Theatre on the main campus at Brown University.

Providence, RI — *Hecuba* by Marina Carr is a retelling of the Greek play by Euripides. Hecuba, the wife of King Priam, has survived the death of her husband and the defeat of her people at the hands of the victorious Agamemnon. She suffers further agony as her children are taken from her and her previous life is destroyed. In this visceral retelling of the myth, Carr uses contemporary language and staging to give a new voice to Hecuba as a woman of agency and power. As the narrative moves forward, Carr's Hecuba makes new choices and takes back control of her legacy. Stepping out from her own myth, Hecuba challenges us to consider how we want to be remembered.

This production is Brown Theatre's annual Senior Slot. The Senior Slot production is reserved for a production proposed by a Brown undergraduate senior student. The

design team for the Senior Slot is also led by Brown students, with mentorship and support offered by the production staff and faculty of the department. With a large budget and the resources of the department behind it, the Senior Slot offers an unparalleled opportunity for students to experience professional theatre making and create a fully realized theatre production on a scale not available anywhere else at Brown.

The director of *Hecuba* is Sienna Vann '17, the Chair of Sock & Buskin, the student-faculty board that produces the mainstage performance season for Brown Theatre. Vann is a double concentrator in the Department of Theatre Arts and Performance Studies and the Department of Modern Culture & Media and was recently seen as the eponymous lead in *By The Way, Meet Vera Stark* (Leeds Theatre, September 29–October 9). Taking on this project, Vann hopes to bring attention to the legacies of women in history and in war: how women find the strength to continue in the face of overwhelming adversity, and how history judges women for their choices.

Speaking about this production, Vann says:

This is Hecuba's story, not the story of Hecuba. We are bringing this ancient Greek myth into the twenty-first century. Using modern theatrical techniques, we are re-examining the role of women in times of great calamity, and the way the classics have the power to shed light on modern acts of war and genocide. Our production stimulates audiences' imagination as we move through the myth. Though not depicted graphically, there is blood, violence, and murder. This is not a violent play, rather it is a play about a type of violence that transcends time and the strength and courage of women at the heart of it. Carr's *Hecuba* is unique in that the language is accessible to a much wider audience as the story is delivered in modern idiom. The characters become the chorus for one another, directly addressing the audience in accessible speech, describing and responding to the horror before them. The story is told with minimalism and suggestion, which gives space for images in the mind of the audience more visceral than an embellished staging of Euripides could realistically depict. *Hecuba* challenges what gets recorded as history and written in stone.

As the director of this year's Senior Slot, I am excited to have the chance to work at this level of professional production. The freedom of expression and the resources of the department that are offered to us demonstrate the trust the department holds in its students and its conviction to creating diverse and powerful theatre that meets the expectations of the Brown Theatre audiences.

This year's performance season grew out of ongoing conversations on campus at Brown University about issues of diversity and inclusion. Sock & Buskin, the student-faculty board that selects the Brown University Theatre season, wanted to represent this

conversation through their choice of plays, writers, directors, and casting. The season aims to reflect the strengths and the challenges that students face in making contemporary performances that embrace diversity and can effect social change. This play deals with themes of war, genocide, and womanhood and asks deep questions about how we remember women in the past, and how we think about the creation of our own legacy. How will you be remembered, and how do you change your own story?

Hecuba runs December 1 to 4 in Leeds Theatre on the main campus at Brown University (83 Waterman Street, Providence, RI 02912). Performances take place Thursday through Saturday at 8pm, with matinees at 2pm on Saturday and Sunday. Appropriate for high school students and above.

Brown University Theatre's 2016–17 performance season is produced by the Brown University Department of Theatre Arts and Performance Studies and by Sock & Buskin, a student-faculty board that has an unbroken record of producing theatre at Brown University for over 100 years.

Tickets are \$15 (adults) / \$12 (seniors) / \$7 (students). For more information visit brown.edu/theatre. To book tickets, call (401) 863-2838, or visit the Box Office in the Leeds Theatre Lobby (83 Waterman Street, Providence, RI 02912), Tuesday–Friday from 12–4pm during the semester, or email boxoffice@brown.edu. To book online, visit: brown.edu/tickets.

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