



UNITED PLAYERS
OF VANCOUVER



HEDDA GABLER

BY HENRIK IBSEN | MAR 24 - APR 16 2023

TRANSLATED & ADAPTED BY ERROL DURBACH
DIRECTED BY MOYA O'CONNELL



MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Hedda Gabler or simply Hedda. That name, to female actors, is like saying to a male actor: Hamlet. The ingénue's and the leading lady's dream... One day maybe I will play... Hedda!

The audition call for *Hedda Gabler*, I would venture to say, had one of the largest responses in the history of United Players. Of course, having Shaw Festival/Bard on the Beach's leading lady Moya O'Connell at the helm is a great boon. And the adapter? Only... renowned Ibsen Scholar and Professor Emeritus Errol Durbach.

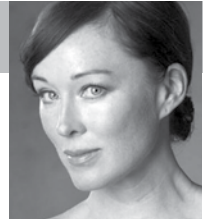
The beguiling character of Hedda has been igniting conversations and differing views for over a century. When director Moya arrived for her first meeting with Errol, they began chatting about the piece. His lovely wife, Oona, immediately began a lively debate on the character of Hedda – totally opposing points of view! Moya sat back and took in this rich discourse – loving the intellectual sparring and the passionately disparate perspectives.

Indeed, this heroine continues to challenge, provoke, infuriate and bewilder us. Sit back and decide for yourself... and by the time you leave, perhaps you will all be 'looking like you have vine leaves in your hair – flushed and fearless.!

Sarah Rodgers – Artistic Director



DIRECTOR'S NOTES



Hedda Gabler throbs with life.

Watch the characters trap and unpeel each other in the confines of a sitting room over the course of 48 hours. Fighting politely for their lives and souls – backs against the chintz. Watch the two young women at the centre of this play struggle to self define, recognizing in one another both friend and fiend. One finds herself trapped in a house, with a life and marriage that cannot satisfy her. We seek to understand the shape of her discontent, the breadth of her longing. The other has abandoned society's expectations of what a woman must do and is forging a new way forward. Each as complicated and hungry-hearted as the other.

At the centre of the play is a manuscript. A work of art co-authored by two of the characters. I am most fascinated by Ibsen's examination of the creative act and the artist. Who is an artist in this play? What does it take to become one? And what happens if the creative impulse is subjugated and denied? The presence of destruction is at the very core of creation.

I am honoured to work on this translation by Errol Durbach. His translation taps Ibsen's dark heart and humour. Lean. Playable. Thrilling.

Moya O'Connell – Director

Dylan Thomas Under Milk Wood

Directed by Joan Bryans

Jericho Arts Centre: April 21-30, 2023
Tickets: vitalsparktheatre.com

Metro Theatre: May 5-14, 2023
Tickets: metrotheatre.com





PLAYWRIGHT – HENRIK IBSEN

In the late 1800s, playwright Henrik Ibsen rewrote the rules of drama with a realism still seen in theatres today. He turned the European stage away from what it had become—a plaything and distraction for the bored—and introduced a new order of moral analysis. Ibsen brought his audience into regular people’s homes, where the bourgeois kept their carefully guarded secrets. He then placed the conflicts that arose from challenging assumptions and direct confrontations against a very realistic middle-class background and developed them with piercing dialogue and meticulous attention to detail. He is considered the second most influential and insightful dramatist and poet of the 19th century, eclipsed only by Shakespeare.

Ibsen was born March 20, 1828, in Skien, Norway. He belonged to an affluent merchant family settled in the port town of Skien, which was known for shipping timber. In 1862, he was exiled to Italy, where he wrote the tragedy **Brand**. In 1868, Ibsen moved to Germany, where he wrote one of his most famous works: **A Doll’s House**. In 1890, he wrote **Hedda Gabler**, creating one of theatre’s most notorious characters. By 1891, Ibsen had returned to Norway a literary hero. He died on May 23, 1906, in Oslo, Norway.

Sources: <https://www.famousauthors.org/henrik-ibsen/>; <https://www.biography.com/writer/henrik-ibsen/>; <https://www.visitnorway.com/things-to-do/art-culture/literature/henrik-ibsen/>



TRANSLATOR/ADAPTER – ERROL DURBACH

Errol taught drama at the University of British Columbia for over 40 years, during which time he also published a number of articles and three books on Henrik Ibsen: “A Doll’s House: Ibsen’s Myth of Transformation”, “Ibsen and the Theatre” and “Ibsen the Romantic”. He and his director (John Wright) of Blackbird Theatre won the Dorothy Somerset Award for “Best Production” in Vancouver of Ibsen’s **Peer Gynt** in the year commemorating Ibsen’s death.

Since his retirement Errol has been translating Ibsen’s plays: some commissioned by UBC, others by theatres in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. **The Master Builder** was seen in the Telus Theatre at UBC and he is currently working on a translation of **John Gabriel Borkman** for the same theatre. He is delighted that United Players has shown an interest in **Hedda Gabler** and that it has been directed by Moya O’Connell, who has played this demanding role at the Shaw Festival. Audiences should not be distressed at their inability to determine whether Hedda is a hero or a villain: she is both – in a play that George Steiner calls a good example of “meaningful undecidability”.



DIRECTED BY

Moya O'Connell*

*who dedicates this production
to Martha Henry*

CAST

Hedda Gabler Hayley Sullivan

Thea Elvsted Lola Claire

Berthe Penny Handford

Auntie Julle Nicky Anderton

Jorgen Tesman Ayush Chhabra

Ejlert Lovborg Victor Ayala[‡]

Judge Brack Nick Rempel^{‡‡}

SETTING

A sitting room in the new home of Jorgen and Hedda Tesman
1890 Oslo, Norway. September

Act 1: Morning

Act 2: Afternoon later that day

Act 3: Dawn the following morning

Act 4: Evening later that day

Content warning: This production includes depictions of suicide, suicidal ideation, gun shots, gun violence, and substance abuse.

There will be a 15-minute intermission

United Players acknowledges that we work and perform on the unceded territories of the x^wməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and Səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples.

* The participation of Moya O'Connell is arranged by permission of Canadian Actors' Equity Association under the provisions of the Dance Opera Theatre Policy (DOT).

‡ Appearing by permission of Canadian Actors' Equity Association.

‡‡ The participation of Nick Rempel is arranged by permission of Canadian Actors' Equity Association.

THE COMPANY in alphabetical order



Nicky Anderton – Auntie Julie

Nicky is a Vancouver-based actor, director and producer. Nicky studied theatre in both South Africa and San Francisco, with special focus on the Meisner technique. Select acting credits include: **Problem Child** (Blank Slate Theatre), **Lost in Yonkers** (Metro Theatre), **Boys Don't Cry** (San Francisco) and **Hands Across the Sea** (San Francisco). This is Nicky's first play with United Players, and she is thrilled to be part of this production! Thank you for supporting live theatre in Vancouver!



Victor Ayala – Ejler Lovborg

Victor is elated to be part of such a talented cast and crew. He has acted in a number of plays, playing Kitty in **Kitty Kitty Kitty** by Noah Haidle with now-dissolved theatre company Blind Pig, previously Ninja Pirates theatre. Aside from other theatre performances such as Mitchell in **Forty Deuce** (Big Bowne productions), Victor has a number of TV/film credits, notably roles in the **What We Do in the Shadows** television series, and **iZombie**. This is Victor's return to the stage after a hiatus, partly due to the Covid lockdowns.



Ayush Chhabra – Jorgen Tesman

Ayush is an actor and singer who started his journey in India performing street theatre mostly for social awareness. He went on to perform in various theatre festivals across India in multiple languages. This is his second play with United Players, after appearing in **Amphitruo** in 2021. Instagram: [ayush.chhabra](#)



Lola Claire – Thea Elvsted

Lola is an American/Canadian British-trained actor. She is delighted to be making her first foray into Vancouver Theatre! Lola has taken to the stage in London (award-winning comedy **The Starship Osiris**), Prague, Castelsardo, and across the U.K. In addition to acting, directing and writing for stage, Lola has appeared in films (**A Star-Crossed-Romance**), T.V. (**The Power**), theatre, voice-overs and commercials. Lola recognises the tremendous support of family, friends and community. She thanks United Players and the whole **Hedda** team for their beautiful work.



Penny Handford – Berthe

Penny came to acting later in life when she fell passionately in love with the craft. She is deeply grateful for the support of her coaches, instructors, the Arts Club Bill Millerd Artist Fund, family and friends. Theatre credits include: **Hamlet** (Harlequin Theatre); **Emilia** (United Players); **Much Ado About Nothing** (Theatre in the Country); **Lea Inc** (1001 Steps Theatre). She is honoured and excited to be working with Moya O'Connell and the amazing people creating this **Hedda Gabler**.

THE COMPANY in alphabetical order



Nick Rempel – Judge Brack

A recent Vancouver transplant, Nick feels privileged to be part of this wonderful production. He has performed with the Oregon, Seattle, Nevada, Berkeley and Baltimore Shakespeare Festivals, as well as Off-Broadway. Look for him next onscreen in *Amorosa*, *Dead Mom Card*, and *Straight Man*. Past film/TV credits include *Clay Farmers*, *Robin Hood: Men In Tights*, and *All My Children*. Nick has an MFA in Acting from USC, and an MA in Shakespeare from the University of Essex.



Hayley Sullivan – Hedda Gabler

Hayley trained at both Actors Centre Australia and The Atlantic Acting School in New York. Theatre credits include: *Passenger Seat* (OUT-stages), *Flowers of the Rarest* (Performance Works), *Forever Hold Your Peace* (Opera Unbound), *Waiting for Garbo* (Curious Creations), *Emilia* (United Players), *The End of Straight History* (OR Festival), *A Coveted Wife of East Van* (Vancouver Fringe Festival), *Russian Transport* (Darlinghurst Theatre), *Fat on Purpose* (Mantaur), *Fragments Of I Am* (The Nest) and *A Winter's Tale* (ACA).



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- * Voting rights at the AGM
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✦ Sponsorships for individual shows are also available - get in touch to learn more!

Please address donations to: United Players of Vancouver
Jericho Arts Centre, 1675 Discovery Street, Vancouver, BC V6R 4K5

THE COMPANY

PRODUCTION TEAM

DIRECTOR	Moya O'Connell*
PRODUCER	Fran Burnside
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR	Michael Methot
LIGHTING DESIGN	Mark Carter
LIGHTING ASSISTANT	Nicole Huang
LIGHTING CREW	Nicole Huang, Gordon Law
SET DESIGN	Emily Dotson
SET ASSISTANT	Chloe Zhang
HEAD CARPENTER	Bruce Suttie
SET CONSTRUCTION	Bill Bone, Ken Scott, David Shewell
SET PAINTERS	Aaron Au, Isabelle Barlow, Francisca Dennis, Nicola Eriksen, Claudia Golombiewski, Victoria Henderson, Stacey Kaser, Yena Lee, Chris Magnusson, John Ross, Jacki Ross, Emily Sherwood, David Siu, Margo Willis, Chloe Zhang
COSTUME DESIGN	Julie White
SEWING ASSISTANTS	Sarah Dunsdon, Alex Godlewski, Susan Mellor, Joanne Stevens
MUSIC COMPOSER/ SOUND DESIGN	Torquil Campbell
SOUND ASSISTANT	Victoria McNeil
PROPS DESIGN	Josina de Bree
VOCAL COACH	Mathilde Shisko
STAGE MANAGER	Finnley O'Brien
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS	Olga Ozkaya, Chloe Zhang
PUBLICIST	Joan Bryans
RESIDENT GRAPHIC DESIGNER	Lydia Avsec at Copilot Design
PROGRAMME DESIGNER	Susan Mellor
PROGRAMME EDITOR	Fran Burnside
PHOTOGRAPHY	Nancy Caldwell
VIDEOGRAPHER	Chris King

FOR UNITED PLAYERS

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR	Sarah Rodgers
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RESIDENT GRAPHIC DESIGNER	Lydia Avsec at Copilot Design
DESIGNER & WEBMASTER	Susan Mellor

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THE COMPANY



Moya O'Connell – Director

Director. Actor. Educator. Directing credits include: *Oil* by Ella Hickson, *Oh, The Humanity* by Will Eno, *Syco* by Paul VanDyke. MFA in directing for theatre – UBC. Eleven seasons at Shaw Festival: *Hedda Gabler*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Middletown*, *The Philadelphia Story*, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. Eight seasons Bard on the Beach: Lady Macbeth, Ophelia, Portia. Serving up heroines and harridans at: CrowsTheatre, Soulpepper, TheatreCalgary, National Arts Centre, Arts Club Theatre, Centaur, Segal Centre, etc. Moya teaches at UBC and Vancouver Film School.



Fran Burnside – Producer

Fran's first stint with UP was as a "pillar-turner" in the crew of *The Herbal Bed* in 2000; her last was as producer of *Haven*. In between were numerous acting roles in the Lower Mainland, the last in First Impression Theatre's *The Memory of Water*. Fran previously acted and produced on the Sunshine Coast and in Mexico, where a highlight was playing Viola/Cesario in *Twelfth Night* and producing it in a 19th-century opera house. Many thanks to this wonderful team!



Michael Methot – Technical Director

The many facets of putting a technical plan together for any show is immensely satisfying. When a good crew comes together, it makes the job a lot easier. The group of people involved with this crew ensures you will enjoy every bit of sight and sound. Michael has toured all over the continent with many types of shows, in many capacities – he appreciates being part of a crew that wants to put on a show with depth.



Mark Carter – Lighting Design

Credits for UP include: *Silent Sky*, *Amphitruo* and *The Thursday Night Bridge Circle*. Recent credits: *The Wizard of Oz* (St. George's school), *RESPECT!* and *Making Spirits Bright* (Vancouver Men's Chorus). Next Mark will design *Gaslight* for Chemainus Theatre, then direct *The Lighting Thief* and *The Wizard of Oz* for C.T.O.R.A. Mark works primarily as a professional theatre technician (latse 118). He is the founding Artistic Director of DSR Productions, and owner of Vanstage Productions, providing affordable wireless microphones to the Theatre community.



Nicole Huang – Lighting Assistant

Lulan (Nicole) graduated from SFU majoring in Theatre Production and Design. She is currently in Vancouver, unceded traditional territories of the Coast Salish peoples of the x^mməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and Səlilwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations where she started her exposure to art. With a passion for theatre, she is still learning and experimenting in the exploration of the impact of light and colour on emotions to enrich herself among more professions.

THE COMPANY



Emily Dotson – Set Design

Emily is so excited to be a part of this wonderful team! Emily is an assistant set and costume designer with the Shaw Festival, set designer for *Cry Heart, but Never Break* with Axis Theatre, and painter at Metro Theatre. Recent credits include *Kill the Ripper* (set designer) with Affair of Honor, *Wittenberg* (set designer) with United Players, and *Shawground* (set and costume designer) with the Shaw Festival. Portfolio: EmilyDotson.design



Chloe Zhang – Set Assistant • Assistant Stage Manager

Jingyi (Chloe) is a fourth-year SFU undergraduate Theatre Production and Design student who was born and raised in China. Chloe is currently exploring possibilities in theatre both in stage management and lighting/stage/projection design. She hopes to combine her passion for life to create a fun, aesthetic and passionate stage. Driven by comprehensive disciplines, she likes to combine technology, culture and life in her work. Chloe wishes to contribute to her community with her artwork.



Julie White – Costume Design

Julie is pleased to be part of the creative team of *Hedda Gabbler*. This is Julie's fifth production with United Players, having costumed *Wittenberg*, *A Tender Thing*, *Silent Sky* and *Jerusalem*. She received a Jessie nomination for her work on *Cherry Orchard* (Smoking Gun Collective) and has won an Ovation Award for Align's *Addam's Family*. Most recent productions have been *Marjorie Prime* and *Passover* (Ensemble Theatre).



Torquil Campbell – Music Composer • Sound Design

Torquil is a musician. This machine kills fascists.



Victoria McNeil – Sound Assistant

Victoria is a fourth year Theatre Design and Production student at the University of British Columbia. Past credits include *The Wolves* (2023) directed by Leora Morris and *Oil* (2021) directed by Moya O'Connell. She is thrilled to be joining the *Hedda Gabbler* team, and wants to thank all of her family and friends for all of their support. victoriamicneil.ca

THE COMPANY



Josina de Bree – Props Design

Josina began acting with the Cowichan Kids' Theatre Troupe in 1999. She soon decided that she preferred being backstage and made the switch to stage management. In 2014, after taking design classes at ECUAD, Josina switched gears again and began designing props. Select design credits include: *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* (Ensemble Theatre Company), *Last of the Red Hot Lovers* (Lovebird Artist Collective), *The Cripple of Inishmaan* (Ensemble Theatre Company), and audience favourite, *Wittenberg* (United Players).



Mathilde Shisko – Vocal Coach

Mathilde has been an actor since graduating from NIDA in Sydney, Australia in 1990. She has worked across stage, film, television and audio drama for 30 years. Mathilde is a proud board member for the Jericho Arts Centre, an acting instructor at KPU, a voice instructor at the VFS and Andrew McIlroy and Associates, and is a TEDx Speaker Coach. Her longest running and most enjoyable role is as mum to her two adult children, Ellie and Tye. Mathilde is thrilled to be vocal coach for these Gablers!



Finnley O'Brien – Stage Manager

Finnley (she/her) is an emerging stage manager and near graduate of UBC's BFA Theatre Design and Production program. She would like to thank the entire cast and crew for their exceptional work. Previous stage management credits include *Endgame* (ASM, UBC), *We Will Rock You* (ASM, Theatre Under the Stars), and *Oil* (SM, UBC). Enjoy the show!



Olga Ozkaya – Assistant Stage Manager

Olga is an actor and Argentine tango dancer. Following her acting training in Istanbul, she performed in numerous productions including *Macbeth*, *The Good Doctor*, *Matchmaker* and *Chaos Theories*. She holds an MA in Theatre and Performing Arts from the University of British Columbia. Her research focused on post-dramatic performance, dance theatre, and absurd theatre. Currently, she is working on her first play, *The Queen Is Dead*. *Hedda Gabler* is Olga's first role as an ASM.



Chris King – Videographer

Chris is happy to be helping to tell this wonderful story in a different medium. He has enjoyed bringing many of United Players' plays to the streaming video world. He has directed, sound designed and filmed many works for UP, including: *She Sells Sea Shells*, *Merrily*, *Death of Walt Disney*, *Thursday Night Bridge Circle*, *Wittenberg* and *Thy Neighbour's Wife*. Chris is a music director, actor, composer and writer. He has recently started professional composing for TV and Film; look to DuoPhonik.com for more info. Please enjoy this wonderful production.

✦ MANY THANKS TO...

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Hero of the day/month/year/decade... times FOUR!



John Harris as Sir Clifford Allen in *Taken at Midnight*, October 2017.
Photo: Nancy Caldwell

JOHN HARRIS has been lending his many talents and insights to United Players for an incredible **40 YEARS!**

It is thanks to John, in large measure, that we have a theatre here at all.

As set builder, riser mover, producer, volunteer organizer and board member, John has turned his hand to almost all aspects of our theatre.

He is a darn fine actor, too!



THANK YOU, John, for your many years of wonderful service. Please don't be going anywhere soon – we need you!

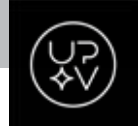
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We're grateful for your essential support during 2023

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THE ANDRÉE KARAS SCHOLARSHIP



After dedicating nearly forty years of service to United Players of Vancouver ('UP'), Andrée Karas retired as President and Artistic Director in October 2020. Andrée's inspired leadership of UP, and her contribution to the theatre community in Vancouver at large, have helped to recognize and foster talent amongst young and emerging artists.

Each year, to honour her achievements, UP will award the **Andrée Karas Scholarship** (AKS) of \$2,500.00 to a student in the Dramatic Arts in order that they may pursue studies in their chosen area of theatre. This award applies not just to acting, but to other areas of stage craft, including technical studies.

Applications may be submitted from May 1 to July 10 of the year in which their relevant course/program/unit is starting.

See unitedplayers.com for details.

YOUTHEATRE presents...

SHALEM'S FAIR

written & directed by: Lee Jay Bamberry

Jericho Arts Centre

May 5 - 20, 2023 | 7:00pm

604 424 8275 | story@youtheatresociety.com

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Jericho
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2022-2023 GUEST PRODUCTIONS

See also United Players' season of plays.

UNDER MILK WOOD

by Dylan Thomas, directed by Joan Bryans

April 21 – 30, 2023

"A dazzling combination of poetic fireworks and music hall humour."

Welcome to a tiny village where the inhabitants seem all a bit eccentric if not quite mad! Yet the more we follow them through the day, the more we come to identify with them if not love them. More than anything, Thomas reminds us of what it is to be human in all its glorious, intricate complexity. As one critic wrote, "It would be hard for any work of art to communicate more directly and funnily and lovingly what it is like to be alive."

presented by Vital Spark theatre

SHALEM'S FAIR

written and directed by Lee Jay Bamberry

May 5 – 20, 2023

Rhoda, the unsuspecting lady hero, is on her way to the train station to collect her husband, or so she thinks. With a touch of cosmic absurdity Rhoda encounters a series of endearing characters on their way to the County Fair, or so she thinks. They all seem to know her and honour her accordingly as she struggles to connect the dots, trying to make sense of everything that is unfolding. This timeless tale is spun with comedy and heartfelt moments all pointing to the mystery of who Rhoda really is, where she is going, and what is going to happen next? As a "touching comedy" that offers pause for thought about death, dementia, and our true heroes of yesteryear, Shalem's Fair is a real place especially in the minds of those who believe in the miraculous.

presented by YOUTHEATRE Movement Productions

604-224-8007 ext. 3

1675 DISCOVERY STREET www.jerichoartscentre.com



2022-2023 SEASON

Presented at the Jericho Arts Centre with a strict Communicable Disease Plan in place.
Select productions are also offered online. Learn more at www.unitedplayers.com

THE THURSDAY NIGHT BRIDGE CIRCLE Sep 9 – Oct 2, 2022

by Ray Kennedy, directed by Sarah Rodgers

August 1970, La Grange, NC – population 5,000. Three generations of women have gathered for cards, refreshments and conversation. They have years of stories and opinions, but this Thursday night there's something new: desegregation has come to La Grange public schools. The black housekeeper, Margaret, has been an important part in all their lives for years as a largely silent witness, but all that may be about to change...

WITTENBERG

Nov 11 – Dec 4, 2022

by David Davalos, directed by Adam Henderson

Denmark's Prince Hamlet is back at university and finds himself in the centre of a debate between two of his professors, the aggressively spiritual Martin Luther and the lowly logical John Faustus. Davalos's 21st-century comedy explores the issues of faith and skepticism with a wickedly modern sense of humour in this prequel to both *Hamlet* and *Doctor Faustus*.

THY NEIGHBOUR'S WIFE

Jan 20 – Feb 12, 2023

by Tara Beagan, directed by Melissa Oei, mentor director Tamara McCarthy

Canada, 1915. This play centres around the true story of the first woman who was sentenced to hang in Alberta for a crime that, when a similar one was committed by a man, was seen as "defending the decency of his home". A frank and scrutinizing look at marriage, manners, money and murder.

HEDDA GABLER

Mar 24 – Apr 16, 2023

by Henrik Ibsen, trans. & adapt. by Errol Durbach, directed by Moya O'Connell

Mesmerizing, enigmatic, destructive, Hedda Gabler is one of the theatre's most infamous characters. Returning from her honeymoon, already bored with her marriage, Hedda finds herself caught between the brilliant but dissolute Ejlert Lovborg and the clutches of the predatory Judge Brack. As a shocking path of destruction unfolds, there can be only one outcome...

A FLEA IN HER EAR

Jun 2 – 25, 2023

by Georges Feydeau, adapt. by David Ives, directed by Brian Parkinson

Feydeau's classic farce involving a complex series of mistaken identities, clandestine assignations and misplaced but explosive jealousies, all happening at breakneck speed. The update by Ives into the twentieth century serves to heighten the sexual allusions which make the play so hilarious.

All plays subject to availability

Jericho Arts Centre, 1675 Discovery St. Vancouver, BC V6R 4K5

Tel: 604-224-8007 ext. 2 www.unitedplayers.com