

THE WOMAN IN BLACK

By Stephen Mallatratt and Dame Susan Hill



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Directed by Bernard Cuffling, Presented by CLASSical Act Collective

Oct 19-31, 2023

presentation
HOUSE THEATRE

The Woman in Black

By Stephen Mallatratt and Dame Susan Hill

Presented by CLASSical ACT Collective

Dates and Times:

October 19–31, 2023

Show length:

2 hours

Audience (adult, youth, children):

Adult

CAST

Director; and the roles of “Arthur Kipps and others”: Bernard Cuffling

The Actor: Aidan Wright

PRODUCTION/CREATIVE TEAM

Producer - Famous Artists Limited: Bill Allman

Production Manager and Set Designer: Glenn MacDonald

Stage Manager: Stephen Courtenay

Assistant Stage Manager: Angeles Paz Latapi

Wardrobe Co-ordinator: Catherine Rose

Lighting Designer: Brad Trenaman

Publicist - Famous Artists Limited: Kathleen Gibbs

Original Graphics Designer - Mike's Creative Stuff: Michael McCray

ABOUT THE WOMAN IN BLACK

The Woman in Black is a 1987 stage play, ingeniously adapted by Stephen Mallatratt and based on the 1983 book of the same name by English author, Dame Susan Hill. It is notable for only having three actors perform the whole play. The play premiered in 1987 at the Stephen Joseph Theatre in Scarborough as a “Christmas ghost story”. The production opened in London’s West End in February 1989, followed by the Playhouse in April 1989, and, finally, to the Fortune Theatre in August 1989. On November 9, 2022, it was announced that the show would play its last performance at the Fortune Theatre on March 4, 2023, making it the second longest running non-musical play in West End history after Agatha Christie’s *The Mousetrap*.



All participants (eg. Performers, stage managers, directors, choreographers, designers, etc.) in an ACP form the “collective”. A collective may decide to delegate a specific responsibility or authority to a member of the collective, however, every member of the collective is a full and equal business and legal partner. It is very important that each participant in the collective has a clear understanding of their role and duties for the activity/production. All participants equally and cooperatively manage and control and are responsible for the business and affairs of the collective. Additionally, the collective must agree upon a method for conflict resolution in case an issue arises that needs to be resolved.

THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks and acknowledgements to Jennet Humfrye, Nathaniel Drablow, Ally Rafter, Peter Quint, Susie Salmon, Jacob Marley, Rebecca de Winter, Michael Furey, Celia Brooks, Alexie Grady, Miss Jessell, Alexa Grady, Simon de Canterville, John Torrance, Elvira Condomine, and Lord Banquo.

Many thanks also to the following for their much appreciated assistance with this production: Stephen Courtenay (for things that go bump in the night), Greg Dixon, Krysztof Bryjak (Reel Strength Productions), Bart Charlas, Stephen Heatley, Lynn Burton, Mike Gall, Stephanie Hargreaves, John Harris, Kate Carr, Natasha Lozovsky-Burns and the Russian Community Centre, Nic Harrison, East Van Graphics, Concord Theatricals, Marian Gibbs (music box), Maeve Bolger at The Agency (London) Ltd., and the staff of Presentation House Theatre.

In celebration of Glenn MacDonald's birthday, a donation has been made to Presentation House Theatre. Thank you, and happy birthday Glenn!

Thank you

Many thanks to our sponsors, funders and supporters!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND DRAMATIST



Dame Susan Hill - Author

Dame Susan Hill, Lady Wells, DBE, (born February 5, 1942 in Scarborough, North Yorkshire) is an English author of fiction and non-fiction works. Her novels include ***The Woman in Black***, *The Mist in the Mirror*, and *I'm the King of the Castle*, for which she received the Somerset Maugham Award in 1971.

She was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the 2012 Birthday Honours and Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) in the 2020 Birthday Honours, both for services to literature.

Hill's novels are written in a descriptive gothic style, especially her ghost story, ***The Woman in Black***, which was published in 1983. She has expressed an interest in the traditional English ghost story, which relies on suspense and atmosphere to create its impact, similar to the classic ghost stories by Montague Rhodes James and Daphne du Maurier. The novel was turned into a play in 1987 and continues to run in the West End of London, joining the groups of plays that have run for over twenty years. It was also made into a television film in 1989, and a film by Hammer Film Productions in 2012.

She wrote another ghost story with similar ingredients, *The Mist in the Mirror*, in 1992, and a sequel to du Maurier's *Rebecca*, entitled *Mrs. de Winter*, in 1993. In 2004, Hill began a series of crime novels featuring detective Simon Serrailier, entitled *The Various Haunts of Men* (2004). This was followed by *The Pure in Heart* (2005), *The Risk of Darkness* (2006), *The Vows of Silence* (2009), *The Shadows in the Street* (2010), *The Betrayal of Trust* (2011), *A Question of Identity* (2013), *The Soul of Discretion* (2014), *A Breach of Security, a short story* (2014), *Hero*, another short story (2016), *The Comforts of Home* (2018), and *The Benefit of Hindsight* (2019).



Stephen Mallatratt - Dramatist

Nigel Stephen Mallatratt (born June 15, 1947 in Mill Hill, London) was an English playwright, television screenwriter and actor.

He is best known for his television work on the ITV series, *Coronation Street*, *The Forsyte Saga* (2002), and *Island at War* (2004), and for his stage adaptation of the novel, ***The Woman in Black*** by Dame Susan Hill, which has run in the West End of London since 1989. He was also an actor, appearing in minor roles in *Chariots of Fire* and *Brideshead Revisited*.

Mallatratt died of leukemia on November 22, 2004.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION COMPANY

CLASSical ACT Collective

CLASSical ACT Collective:

Spearheaded by veteran actor Bernard Cuffling, **CLASSical ACT Collective** was launched to bring *The Woman in Black* to life before audiences in Vancouver and on Vancouver's North Shore. The collective expects to expand their philosophy of giving patrons unforgettable nights in the theatre by producing the best, small-cast plays that are guaranteed to entertain!



Famous Artists Limited:

This Vancouver-based production company takes its name from one of the city's legendary promotion companies. Run by Bill Allman and Associate Producer Kathleen Gibbs, **Famous Artists Limited** has brought, among others, **The Glenn Miller Orchestra**, **The Nylons** and **Will Millar** (of **The Irish Rovers**) to stages in B.C. In October of 2022, the company was also the proud producer of the *F*** Cancer* benefit concert featuring a who's who of West Coast Canadian classic rock, including members of **Loverboy**, **Trooper**, **Chilliwack**, **PRiSM**, **Tom Lavin** and the **Legendary Powder Blues** band, the **Lee Aaron** band, and **Nick Gilder**.

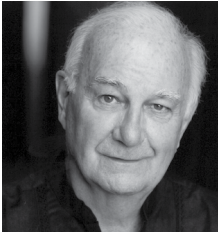
The company has also presented *Bad Jews*, by Joshua Harmon, been the touring presenter of **Ruth Nichol & Jeff Hyslop** in their production of A.R. Gurney's classic play, *Love Letters*, and created and produced the Christmas musical, *Mrs. Claus's Kitchen*, the company's first foray into musical theatre! Subsequent productions include David Sedaris's, *The SantaLand Diaries*, Jason Robert Brown's masterwork, *The Last Five Years*, and the original creation, *Alice: A Murder Mystery*, presented to capacity audiences at the Vancouver Police Museum.

For the last three years, in addition to a host of concerts and events, **Famous Artists** has been presenting Christmas entertainment at Roedde House in Vancouver's West End. Beginning with an immersive adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* (in collaboration with **Grinke Creative**), followed by two years (with more to come) of *Scary Ghost Stories – A Victorian Christmas Tradition*, **Famous Artists** has brought – and will continue to bring – something traditional, and yet different, to the most wonderful time of the year.

Famous Artists is delighted to partner with **CLASSical ACT Collective** for this thrilling production of the gripping masterpiece, *The Woman in Black* (by Stephen Mallatratt and Dame Susan Hill).

Further information on **Famous Artists Limited** may be found at www.famousartists.ca.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES



After over fifty years of being a professional actor/director, I thought to myself that in my “twilight” time, I would like to work at what I enjoyed most over my theatrical journey. So, *The Woman in Black* reared her head.

Now, “Why that one?” you say.

Well, I like a good story. I like an entertaining play (you decide if this is it, though). I love “mystery” theatre that reveals itself scene after scene, but does not explain itself until the end, and then has a surprise for the audience. It’s my experience that *The Woman in Black* has all of the above. And more.

The play was an adaptation from the novel of the same name, written by English novelist, Susan Hill (now DAME Susan Hill). The play has run in London’s West End for nearly thirty-three years. *The Woman in Black* is second only to *The Mousetrap* for the longest run of a non-musical play.

I last directed and acted in this piece at the Chemainus Festival Theatre and now, many years later, I still have new ideas for it.

The production you are about to see has been made possible by the tremendous enthusiasm and dedicated hard work of our amazing collective company. Yes, we are unsalaried, but our love and hearts will see us through.

I cannot thank our company and supporters enough for letting me do this, and also yourselves, our audience, who have helped us overcome the trials and tribulations of the past few years and let it be known that theatre is alive and well, and living in Vancouver.

A Sincere Thank You,



- Bernard Cuffling



Bernard Cuffling – *Director and “Arthur Kipps and others”*

A star performer with a treasury of voices and characters, Bernard has been a part of Vancouver’s theatre scene for almost 50 years. He has worked in most leading theatres in Western Canada, holds the record for most appearances at the Arts Club Theatre, and has received three Jessie Richardson Awards. Favourite roles include: Polonius in ***Hamlet*** at the Stanley Theatre, Doctor in ***The Imaginary Invalid*** and Teddy in ***The Faith Healer*** at the Arts Club Theatre, Freddie in The Playhouse production of ***Noises Off***, Clov in ***Endgame*** at the BC Tel Theatre and David Bliss in ***Hay Fever***. He has played Lafew in Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival’s staging of ***All’s Well That Ends Well*** and as part of the BC Entertainment Hall of Fame, Bernard has numerous film & television credits and has also directed several theatre productions. A Londoner by birth and a Vancouverite by choice, this is his seventh outing in ***The Woman in Black***, a show he both loves and fears.



Aidan Wright – *“The Actor”*

Aidan Wright, with a BFA in Acting from UBC, is eager for the October remount of ***The Woman in Black*** at Presentation House Theatre. Born and raised in Richmond, Aidan not only performs but also manages the Non-Profit Richmond Improv Theatre Society, where he teaches. You may have spotted him in recent productions such as ***The Woman in Black*** at Jericho Arts Centre or ***Opening Night*** at Western Gold Theatres. Additionally, watch out for his cameo in the upcoming ***The Fall of the House of Usher*** this October. Beyond his theatrical pursuits, Aidan has just released a new album titled ***Kiss Your Friends*** with his band, ***The Sweet Hours***, with a new EP on the horizon. He extends his heartfelt gratitude to his family for their unwavering support.

PRODUCTION/CREATIVE TEAM



Bill Allman – *Producer*

As a “recovering lawyer”, Bill has written or co-authored eight feature screenplays, as well as two series pilots. He also created and executive-produced two specialty cable television series, ***Hot Pink Shorts*** and ***How Far Will You Go?***, seen in the US, Canada and Australia. In 2012, Bill, along with writing partners, Kevin O’Brien and Alan Marriott, were pleased to see the BC premiere of their musical, ***Newer! Bigger! Better!***, with further productions of this instantly popular show contracted for 2017, 2013 and 2015 brought the team further success with mountings of their instantly popular Christmas musical, ***Mrs. Claus’s Kitchen***, at Presentation House Theatre in North Vancouver. Licensed again, this festive production was mounted in Prince George in 2022. In addition to practising as an entertainment lawyer, and working as an adjunct professor of law at UBC, Bill has also found time in the last 25 years to be a concert promoter, theatre manager (the Vogue), and president of Theatre Under the Stars. He is currently the president of the BC Entertainment Hall of Fame, and is a member of the Board of Directors for both Presentation House Theatre and the Vancouver Police Museum. An avid writer and theatre history buff, Bill has written tour guide materials for – and leads – backstage tours of Vancouver’s historic Orpheum Theatre. He is delighted to be working with **CLASSical ACT Collective** on this thrilling production of ***The Woman in Black***.



Glenn MacDonald – *Set Designer*

Glenn is no stranger to Presentation House Theatre having stage managed ***The Woolgatherer***, produced ***Arms and the Man*** and appeared in ***Oh What A Lovely War!*** both for White Rock Summer Theatre. He has trained in all aspects of the theatre at the Manitoba Theatre Centre in Winnipeg. He has worked as an actor, Stage Manager, Production Manager and Designer for theatres across Canada and in the US including The Vancouver Playhouse, Arts Club Theatre, Stratford Festival, Charlottetown Festival and Studio Arena Theatre (Buffalo, NY). He co-produced ***Torch Song Trilogy*** at the Cultch, worked in Production Management for Expo '86 Entertainment Department, Stage Managed the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Calgary Winter Olympics and was Operations Director for BC’s MUSIC '91. He also works in television and film in set decoration and has over 100 projects to his credit.

He sits on the Board of Trustees of PAL Vancouver. He is the recipient of the 2016 Jesse Richardson Award for Outstanding Set Design for the production of **Annapurna**. Glenn designed sets for **Collected Stories** at the Revue Stage for Log House Productions, **No Man's Land** for Smoking Gun Collective at PAL, **The Woman in Black** at Jericho Arts Centre, **The Ballad of George Boivin**, **Funny Money**, **The Triumph of Love**, **Opening Night** and **The Importance of Being Earnest** for Western Gold Theatre, where he has been General Manager since 2012. He created the stage and set for the Billy Bishop Legion Theatre for **Tom Crean**, **Antarctic Explorer** and most recently the sets and projections for **The Trials and Tribulations of Whiskey Dick** at Jericho Arts Centre.



Stephen Courtenay – *Stage Manager*

Stephen has staged managed about fifty Shakespearean productions during his twenty-seven years with Bard on the Beach. Prior to that, he spent ten years travelling with the Vancouver Opera Touring Ensemble. In addition, he has worked for the Vancouver Playhouse, Theatre Calgary, Citadel Theatre, Studio 58/Green Thumb, Touchstone Theatre, the Electric Company and numerous others. His most recent ventures have included Touchstone Theatre's **Yaga**, Pi Theatre's **Lampedusa** by Anders Lustgarten, and Touchstone's own world premier of Jason Sherman's **Ominous Sounds at the River Crossing**. Stephen takes great delight in returning to work with Bernard Cuffling after the great success they shared previously with Leslie Mildiner's adaptation of **Coming Up For Air**.



Angeles Paz Latapi – *Assistant Stage Manager*

Angeles Paz Latapi is an emerging artist currently residing in Vancouver, originally from Mexico City. She has been involved with all aspects of theatre throughout her time at Langley Fine Arts School and beyond, having recently graduated from Capilano University's Acting For Stage & Screen program. Angeles continues to happily pursue projects of all shapes and sizes, and is thrilled to once again have the opportunity to work with the wonderful folks in the **CLASSical ACT Collective**. Recent credits include **The Penelopiad** (CapU Theatre) and **Opening Night** (Western Gold Theatre), **Learning and Forgetting**

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(Presentation House Theatre), as well as an upcoming role in **Macbeth** (The Scottish Slay). Angeles is excited to return to work on the macabre tale of **The Woman in Black**, previously done at Jericho Arts Centre, as she loves a good scare. Besides watching numerous horror movies, she can often be found taking long walks downtown or at home making yummy Mexican food.



Catherine Rose - *Wardrobe Co-ordinator*

Catherine holds a Master's degree in public history and has developed an unbeatable set of research skills focused on both academic and highly popular subjects. She has successfully turned true crime into theatre with **Alice: A Murder Mystery** at the Vancouver Police Museum and, as one of the producers/directors of that show, paid diligent attention to costume accuracy and theatricality, employing her own considerable skills in the selection and alteration of period looks for each cast member. Catherine has also given a number of scurrilous lectures and presentations on Vancouver's lengthy history of crime and corruption for organizations as diverse as the Arts Club Theatre and the Canadian Association of Law Libraries.



Brad Trenaman - *Lighting Designer*

Prior to moving to North Vancouver about 7 years ago, Brad lived in Toronto where he worked with many of the city's leading dance companies and choreographers, including Ballet Creole, Menaka Thakkar, Chimera Project and Shawn Byfield. Currently, Brad is the Technical Director and Resident Lighting Designer for Presentation House Theatre where he's lit their hugely popular productions of **Where The Wild Things Are**, **Baking Time**, and **Pop! Pop!**. Other recent West Coast credits include **Seussical** (Align Entertainment), **Always... Patsy Cline** (Theatre Northwest), **Kindred** (Belfry Theatre), **Salmon Girl** (Jessie Award - Raven Spirit Dance/Carousel), **Redpatch** (Jessie Nomination - Hardline Productions/Arts Club), **White Noise** (Savage Society/Firehall Arts Centre) and **The Events** (Pi Theatre). Toronto credits include: **Shakespeare in High Park** and **i think i can** (YPT). Las Vegas credits include: **Matt Dusk** (Hilton residency) and **Menopause the Musical** (Luxor). Touring credits include: The Stepcrew, magician Ted Outerbridge,

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National Chinese Acrobats. Brad is also a freelance writer for Professional Lighting and Production Magazine (with over 20 features published), a member of Associated Designers of Canada (ADC IATSE 659), and the recently elected President of New Works, a Vancouver based dance support organization which will celebrate its 30th anniversary next year. www.batlighting.com



Kathleen Gibbs - *Publicist - Famous Artists Limited*

Since she was dragged, kicking and screaming, to a performance of Charley's Aunt at the age of 13, Kathleen has enjoyed a life-long love affair with live theatre. She extends a heartfelt thank you to the wonderful Bernard Cuffling for this as he was the star of that particular production! With a diverse 30 year background in communications, marketing, sales and organizational methods, her passion for all things creative led her to join Famous Artists Limited, where she works as both an Associate Producer and as a Marketer/Publicist of live theatre and music productions in the Greater Vancouver area. Kathleen is also the owner of Lasting Impressions Creative Services, a company offering a variety of decorating, gift and lifestyle services. For more information on Kathleen, please visit www.famousartists.ca and www.lastingimpressionsvancouver.com.



Michael McCray - *Original Graphics Designer* - *Mike's Creative Stuff*

Mike started making show programmes for his kids' dance studio in the late 90s after realizing that his forays onto the stage with adult ballet were actually scaring the kids. Working the Protection Racket (Insurance) by day, he achieved legitimacy by completing a Certificate in Communication Design with Emily Carr University in 2011. Despite being snubbed for a Juno Award Nomination in 2023 for his cover artwork for the recently released solo album of local rock legend Al Harlow, he continues to design promo posters, advertising materials and custom greeting cards, as well as ready to hang & wearable art and lots of other cool stuff. His company, Michael McCray Graphics & Digital Art, launched in 2015, provides clients with the creative materials that they need to support their projects. Please have a look at his website: <http://www.mmcgda.com> and check back often for new content.

UPCOMING AT PHT



Nov 2-12 2023

Ages: 12+

Produced by Blackout Arts Society
Presentation House Theatre co-presenter of
Theatre Series

Presentation House Theatre is proud to co-present the Theatre Series in the 3rd annual STAND Festival, a celebration of immigrant and refugee performing artists. With intriguing performances by artists from around the world, STAND offers the chance to connect with inspiring newcomer artists and their stories.



Dec 1-17 2023

Ages: 3-7

By Tim Webb and Kim Selody
Produced by Presentation House Theatre and
Oily Cart Theatre

It's Baking Time! The smell of freshly baked bread drifts through the audience as master bakers Bun and Bap try to contain a sticky situation – they've over-yeasted a lively batch of dough and it's GROWING. When Yeasty Beasty rises up and begins to chase newly baked baby Loafy through forests, oceans, and floury snowstorms, Bap and Bun spring to action. But what are they to do?



Dec 13 & 17 2023

Produced by Presentation House Theatre

Ages: 12+

Come gather around for a festive singalong of holiday favourites! We'll bring the song sheets, you bring your voices, and together we'll make some holiday cheer. A casual and warm embrace of the songs of the season.

BECOME A PHT INSIDER

Be Where Ideas Play

Commit to a monthly donation of \$10 or more and you'll automatically become a PHT Insider. It's your ticket to some fantastic access and benefits. You'll be privy to the inside scoop of what's happening in our creative spaces and programs. Most importantly, you'll help ensure ongoing sustainability for our organization.

DONATING TO PHT

Keep the lights on and the ghost happy by donating to PHT!

Our small and mighty team has unlimited creativity, and your support directly impacts our ability to deliver the shows you know and love as well as our top-notch programming beyond the stage.

This building is home to so much more than just the shows you see on stage, it's a creative home for so many people in our community to connect to their inner artist. Your support helps us create and deliver so much wonderful programming to our North Shore community:

- Our popular Firefly Project helps the very young to communicate with each other through writing, drama and art for north shore primary students.
- Seniors in our Golden Firefly Project explore and express shared life experiences through theatrical play, performance and original storytelling. The joy is contagious!
- Interactive, multi-sensory plays for the very young like ***Where the Wild Things Are***, ***Learning and Forgetting***, and ***Baking Time***.
- Working in collaboration with member of the Squamish community, we create inclusive community events such as Nchemús Day and First Welcome Hych'ka.
- We embrace and share the stories of newcomers, new neighbours and new diversity through powerful events such as Weaving Our Humanity with Impact North Shore (Formally North Shore Multicultural Society).
- Each year nearly 3,000 students benefit from our subsidized School Matinee ticket prices.
- The PHT Creative Hub removes barriers for emerging and established artists to explore, create, and share their work!

If you are interested in donating, you can do so by heading over to the box office or filling out a form and slipping it into the donation box on the way out! Every little bit helps sustain us for seasons to come and we cannot thank you enough for continuing to support us here at Presentation House Theatre.

(The ghosts appreciate it too! This is their home as well after all!)



VOLUNTEERING AT PHT

Our wonderful volunteers help Presentation House Theatre bring entertaining, engaging and accessible theatre and programs to our audiences of all ages. Volunteering is a great way to be part of the theatre, connect with the community, meet new people, and contribute to our exciting season of shows year after year.

Are you friendly, reliable, outgoing, and keen about theatre and the arts?

Join our team of volunteers! There are a variety of ways you can volunteer with us from ushering, working in the concession, to bringing your own expertise to help the theatre.

Perks of Volunteering with us:

- While working an Usher shift, our Ushers get to sit inside the theatre and watch the show.
- All volunteers receive 50% off our Concession items.
- Take part in our Zoom Insider Sessions. This is for our volunteers to connect, learn insider info about the theatre, our shows and Q&A sessions with artists in our community.
- For those who volunteer in our Concession, they receive an extra ticket to bring a plus one on the night they are volunteering or two complimentary tickets to another show of the run. (This perk is only for those who volunteer in our concession.)



Interested in volunteering?

Visit <https://www.phtheatre.org/volunteer/> to learn more.

We do require all our volunteers to be 16 years or older.

Please note that we are currently not looking for volunteers for creative duties such as set painters, costume, prop, set, lighting and sound designers, actors and any other role involved in the creation of a show. These are all paid positions.



PRESENTATION HOUSE THEATRE STAFF

Kim Selody | *Artistic Director*
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