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Relations**



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University of British Columbia

Frederic Wood Theatre
presents

Blood Relations

by
Sharon Pollock

directed by
Charles Siegel

September 17-27
1986

**University of
British Columbia
FREDERIC
WOOD
THEATRE**

THE CRUCIBLE

by Arthur Miller
Directed by Stanley Weese
November 12 - 22

**THE SCHOOL
FOR WIVES**

by Moliere
Directed by
John Brockington
January 14 - 24

THE WINTER'S TALE

by William Shakespeare
Director to be announced
March 4 - 14

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**Sharon
Pollock
Lecture**

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Reality

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Theatre and English

Tuesday, September 23
Frederic Wood Theatre

12:30 p.m.

Frederic Wood Theatre
Magazine

PUBLISHER

Joseph G. MacKinnon

DIRECTOR OF SALES

Doug Henderson

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Stuart Dee

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BLOOD RE

by

Sharon

Directed by Charles Siegel

Set and Costumes designed by
Brian H. Jackson

Lighting designed by
Douglas Welch

CAST

THE ACTRESS (who will play Lizzie) Susan Elworthy
MISS LIZZIE (who will play Bridget) Cynthia Ford
HARRY (Mrs. Borden's brother) Michael Fera
EMMA (Lizzie's older sister) Kathleen Wright
ABIGAIL (Lizzie's stepmother) Tanja Dixon-Warren
ANDREW (Lizzie's father) Dennis Kuss
DR. PATRICK (also the defense lawyer) Neil Gallagher

Setting: The Borden house in Fall River, Massachusetts
Sunday afternoon, 1902

There will be one intermission of 10 minutes.

SPEC
HOMECOM

AN ORIGINAL REVUE BY ERIC NICOL "MAKING THE POINT"

Under the auspices of President David W. Strangway, Theatre, Athletics and the Alma Mater Society are co-operating in the presentation of a lighthearted look at the history of the University of British Columbia. *Making The Point* by Eric Nicol will be performed for a limited engagement only — October 18 to 25 (except Sunday).

John Brockington will direct, John Gray will provide the musical accompaniment, the cast will consist of well known theatre graduates and each evening will feature several famous U.B.C. alumni as comperes.

As well as the personal satisfaction you will enjoy by contributing to our scholarship fund, the Gala evenings will feature: special guests, champagne, caviar and canapes before the show and at intermission: special programmes and souvenirs, a party on stage after the show, and your name(s) on a special plaque to be installed in the Frederic Wood Theatre Lobby.

RELATIONS

by
Pollock

PRODUCTION

Technical Director Ian Pratt
 Properties Sherry Darcus
 Costume Supervisor Rosemarie Heselton
 Set Construction Don Griffiths, John Henrickson
 Lighting Operator Bonnie Beecher
 Sound Operator Robert Eberle
 Stage Manager Siobhan Ryan
 Assistant Stage Manager Julie Akers
 Wardrobe Jannette Bijde-Vaate
 Dance Choreography Bruce Dow
 Scene Painters Don Davis, Jean Kempinsky, Robert Moser
 Costume Cutter Charlotte Burke
 Wigs Terry Kuzyk
 Makeup Cynthia Johnston
 House Manager Johnna Wright
 Box Office Michael Fera, Carol Fisher, Linda Humphries
 Business Manager Marjorie Fordham
 Production Norman Young

Vocal Coach Rod Menzies

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Justin Marples Errol Durbach Kathryn Bracht
Studio 58 Theatre Calgary

ICIAL MING EVENT

Schedule of Performances:

GALA Saturday,	October 18	\$ 100 per ticket
Monday,	October 20	\$ 20. per ticket
Tuesday,	October 21	\$ 20. per ticket
Wednesday,	October 22	\$ 20. per ticket
Thursday,	October 23	\$ 20. per ticket
Friday,	October 24	\$ 20. per ticket
GALA Saturday,	October 25	\$ 100 per ticket

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Department of Theatre



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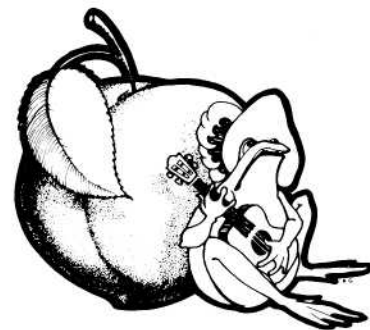
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A Note On The Author

"If I didn't write plays," Sharon Pollock mused in a 1980 interview, "I would be in jail, I'm sure. I see my work as an attack on society. Not an abusive attack, but a creative form of criticism." For fifteen years, in a career that has brought her to the forefront of Canadian theatre, Pollock has consistently focused her dramatic lens on the evils men and women do in the name of Necessity, the betrayals they wreak to preserve the status quo, and the resulting carnage. Using multiple levels of chronology and perspective she examines the lives of those victimized by the *Realpolitik* of families or government and those, like Lizzie Borden, who finally refuse to be victims.

Born in Fredericton, New Brunswick in 1936, Pollock started acting while at university and later won a Best Actress award at the Dominion Drama Festival. In 1967, pregnant with her sixth child, she wrote her first play, *A Compulsory Option*, which won the Alberta Playwriting Competition. Now living in Vancouver, Pollock developed through the New Play Centre the work that established her national reputation, *Walsh*, first performed at Theatre Calgary in 1973. Chronicling the four years that Sitting Bull and the Sioux spent in Canada in flight from the American Army after the Battle of the Little Big Horn, the play centres not on the great Sioux chief but on the NWMP officer trapped between his duty to his uniform and his sense of natural justice.

A similar perspective governs nearly all Pollock's other major plays. In *The Komagata Maru Incident* (1976), written during her productive four-year association with the Vancouver Playhouse, she shows us the institutional racism of Canadian authority turned against a boatload of would-be Sikh immigrants by dramatizing the actions of a middle-level bureaucrat in a Vancouver brothel. A bloody hostage-taking at the B.C. Pen becomes the story of the female rehabilitation officer who is its primary casualty in *One Tiger to a Hill* (Edmonton, 1980). Pollock's most recent stage work, the autobiographical *Doc* (Calgary, 1984), reveals through a daughter fully implicated in all its devastation the ravages of a family ruled by a patriarchal, authoritarian order that is the domestic equivalent — as is the Borden household — of the other plays' political landscapes.

The Lizzie Borden play was one of Pollock's last projects in 1976 before leaving Vancouver for Alberta where she has lived, written, taught and directed ever since. Originally titled *My Name Is Lisbeth*, it premiered at New Westminster's Douglas College with Pollock herself in the title role. The revised and retitled *Blood Relations* saw its first production at Edmonton's Theatre 3 in 1980. *Blood Relations* has gone on to become one of the most successful and frequently produced Canadian plays of the decade, and winner of the Governor General's Literary Award in 1981. It is the play that epitomizes the passionate, vividly theatrical "creative criticism" which is Sharon Pollock's distinctive gift to the Canadian stage.

— Jerry Wasserman

A Note On The Play

One August morning in 1892, Andrew Borden (the richest man in Fall River, Massachusetts) and his second wife, Abigail, were brutally murdered in their own home. Each received over 10 axe blows to the head. Andrew's 32 year old daughter from his first marriage, Lizzie, was in the eight-room house while the murders were committed. She claimed she heard nothing. No murderer was seen entering or leaving the house. No axe was found. There was no blood on Lizzie's clothes.

In her book, *Women Who Kill*, Ann Jones presents a provocative analysis of problems that Lizzie Borden posed for the Victorian society around her:

"Feminists were concerned, quite correctly, that Lizzie Borden would not get a fair trial from a jury of men — although they did not foresee that the unfairness would swing in her favor For the men of the Borden court shared — in addition to a host of fears — a body of beliefs about true womanhood ...: ladies aren't strong enough to swing a two-pound hatchet hard enough to break a brittle substance one-sixteenth of an inch thick. Ladies cry a lot. Ladies love to stay at home all the time. Ladies are ceaselessly grateful to men — fathers or husbands — who support them. Ladies never stand with their legs apart. Ladies cannot plan more than a few minutes ahead. Ladies' conversation arises from ignorance, hysteria, overenthusiasm, or the inability to use the language properly, and in any case, is not to be taken seriously The support that Lizzie Borden received from religious and social woman's clubs and from ... leaders of the suffrage campaign ... must have amplified the fears men already felt as husbands, fathers, patriarchs. Society seemed to be coming unglued."

The jury seemed to find that a conviction would question too many of the basic assumptions of their society. So, Lizzie was acquitted. The Borden murders became a classic "unsolved mystery". Of course, most people really thought she did it, and Lizzie was stuck in a limbo of guilt and innocence. Excluded from polite society, she stayed in Fall River but spent most of the rest of the 35 years of her life in relative seclusion. The one time that she became more active socially was when she became involved with Nance O'Neill, an actress who was famous for playing tragic heroines in Shakespeare and Ibsen.

Playwright Sharon Pollock has taken these pieces of the life of Lizzie Borden and fashioned them into a highly dramatic play. By starting ten years after the murders, she is able to set several different time-frame-realities reverberating in a way that keeps building the theatrical energy of the piece. It is sophisticated theatre. On one level, the play presents a convincing solution to the "unsolved mystery." At the same time, the play examines the destructiveness of a society that insists on locking women into powerless positions. Perhaps most powerfully, it is the story of one woman trying to resolve the burden of her own personal guilt.

— Charles Siegel

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