

*Dive Into  
the New Year!*



MARY ZIMMERMAN'S

## METAMORPHOSES

A NEW PRODUCTION  
DIRECTED BY TED PAPPAS

### JANUARY 15 - FEBRUARY 15, 2009

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
11	12	13	14	15 P 8 pm	16 TGIF P 8 pm	17 P 8 pm
18 P 2 pm P 7 pm	19	20 P 8 pm	21 P 8 pm	22 P 8 pm	23 O 8 pm	24 8 pm
25 2 pm 7 pm	26	27 8 pm	28	29 8 pm	30 8 pm	31 2 pm 8 pm
1 SF 2 pm 7 pm	2	3 8 pm	4 8 pm	5 8 pm	6 8 pm	7 2 pm 8 pm
8 2 pm 7 pm	9	10 7 pm	11 8 pm	12 2 pm 8 pm	13 8 pm	14 2 pm 8 pm
15 2 pm	16	17	18	19	20	21

P - Preview TGIF - Post-show entertainment in the main lobby  
O - Opening ☕ - Saturday Brunch Series SF - Sunday Forum Series

A pool at center stage transforms The O'Reilly into a magnificent universe for Mary Zimmerman's adaptation of Ovid's classic tales. From King Midas to Aphrodite, from Orpheus to Narcissus, Zimmerman reveals how myths and legends from our past still enthrall us today. With its phenomenal setting and dynamic acting ensemble, *Metamorphoses* is a theatrical juggernaut not to be missed.



#### FREE LECTURE SERIES

**MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 7:00 P.M.**

O'REILLY THEATER

Helen Wayne Rauh Rehearsal Hall (3rd floor)

#### OID: CHANGING THE UNIVERSE, ONE HEART AT A TIME

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* has been an inspiration for 2,000 years. Why do we keep revisiting these ancient stories? Mark Possanza, an Associate Professor in the Classics Department at the University of Pittsburgh, will tell us in this free lecture. Reservations are recommended. Call 412.316.1600. Visit [ppt.org](http://ppt.org) for more information.



#### FREE PLAY READING SERIES

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 7:00 P.M.**

Mark your calendar for the next Public Exposure new play reading. Details about the play will be announced on [ppt.org](http://ppt.org).

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\$15 single tickets are available for full-time students and individuals 26 years of age and younger. Valid ID is required. Seating is subject to availability in designated seating areas. On Friday and Saturday nights this rate is valid at the door only—no phone orders. A \$.50 per ticket District Fee will be added at time of purchase.

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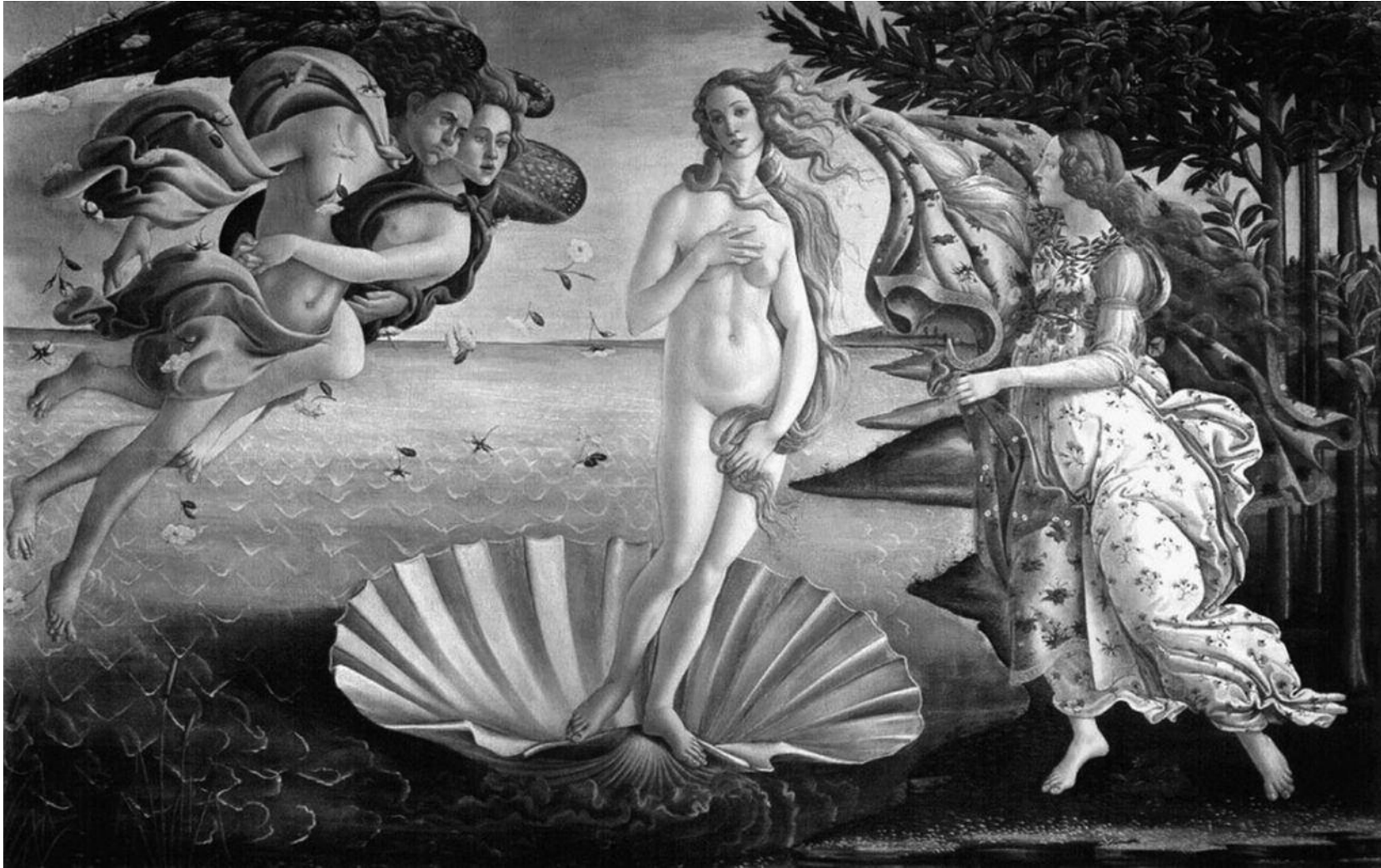
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# OVID'S OCEANS OF CHANGE

By Heather L. Helinsky



The Birth of Venus by Sandro Botticelli

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is an ocean, without continental boundaries. The epic poem, on which Mary Zimmerman's play is based, audaciously spans the whole of time, from the chaos of creation to predicting the future of the Roman Empire. It is not a reflection or a recounting of heroes, but an event. It covers every major and minor mythological story in the Greco-Roman world, linking heroic warriors to old married couples. *Metamorphoses* contains scenes of seduction, separation, idiocy, wisdom, beauty, brutality, and above all – passion. And through all the changes of history itself, it is a work that Western culture has constantly revisited as a well-spring of revival, refreshment, and rebirth.

Ovid (43 BC - AD 17) made his debut as a poet during a party for the social elite of Rome. Rejecting his father's wishes to live a life of public service, Ovid dedicated himself completely to poetry. Poetry in ancient Rome was created to be heard, not read, since reproducing a published text was a tedious, handwritten process on a scroll. This wealthy teenager boldly stood up to read his graphically descriptive *Ars Amatoria*, an "instructive" poem written in the verse of a love ballad about the art of seducing women, with a final chapter on how women should seduce men. Ovid tantalized his audience in one passage that cleverly describes a woman undressing from her shoulders to her legs, with the final epigram:

"What happens afterwards? Who does not know?  
Exhausted, we both rested.  
May midday often be like that for me."

Ovid may have been writing in the Roman tradition of love poetry, but his entrance into Roman society certainly twirled a few togas. His work must have scandalized Augustus, officially Rome's first Emperor, who was beginning to impose conservative laws about marriage to clamp down on the prostitution and sexual immorality that ran rampant in the new Empire. Ovid grew up and benefited from the new peace and stability of Augustus's rule, as he was only 12 when Augustus won his definitive victory over Antony and Cleopatra at Actium. Ovid watched as Rome's first Emperor used the stories of the gods as a dramatic narration of Rome's illustrious past and triumphal future.

Ovid explored the theme of love in a variety of ways. In *Epistulae Heroidum*, the glamorous Helen, Penelope, and Dido write letters to treacherous lovers, pine over long distance relationships, and express their ire to husbands. His poem *Remedia Amoris*, which translates as 'Cures for Love,' has a witty subtext of 'How to Fall Out

of Love Now That I've Taught You How to Fall In.' While Ovid was the most popular and well-known writer of his generation, no one expected him to write *Metamorphoses* in the epic verse style of Homer and Virgil.

In *Metamorphoses* there are plenty of gods, but no *divinities*. The gods lack omniscience as they react to human behavior or fall in love with a beautiful woman. Mercury, for example, preens about his appearance like a young man on a date before pursuing Herse.

While gods behave like humans, men and women find themselves magically changed into new and sometimes extraordinary beings. The first human transformation in Book One of *Metamorphoses* features a man named Lycaon. In order to test whether Jupiter is a really a god, Lycaon slaughters a man and serves him to Jupiter for dinner. Jupiter, repulsed, changes Lycaon into a wolf, demonstrating that Lycaon's physical body may have changed, but his nature remains the same. Ultimately, there is no lesson to be learned, but the cannibalism is vividly described by Ovid, titillating the audience like a good horror film by showing the worst in man.

After Ovid composed *Metamorphoses*, he displeased Augustus because of "a poem and a mistake." His punishment sent him to the edge of the Empire, ironic for a man who thrived on being at the center of Roman culture. Yet his work did not die with him, as generations of monks copied his poems through the Middle Ages to the Renaissance.

Church leaders during the Renaissance progressively allowed artists to depict stories from mythology, and artists jumped at the opportunity to render a rich repertory of love stories. Ovid became a primary source because of the lavish visual detail of his poetry. The stories in *Metamorphoses* provide artists with images of human bodies in motion as nymphs and beautiful youths flee from their divine admirers.

In the educational system of Elizabethan England, children of bricklayers and merchants – people who themselves could barely read or write English – were sent to schools to be masters of Latin. Learning Latin was upward mobility. Translating Ovid may seem like schoolroom drudgery, but more often than not schoolboys sequestered themselves in the back of the classroom to read Ovid's purple passages. University students imitated Ovid in their new verses. From John Donne's poem "To his Mistress Going to Bed" to Christopher Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, Renaissance writers were drawn to Ovid's art of dramatizing desire.

Young Shakespeare was clearly influenced by Ovid during his schoolboy days. In 1598, his contemporaries recognized him for carrying Ovid's mantle, "for the sweet witty soul of Ovid lives in the mellifluous and honey-tongue of Shakespeare." In *Titus Andronicus*, Book Six of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is replicated when Lavina is raped and mutilated like Philomena, and accuses her attackers by pointing out a passage from Ovid to her father and uncle. At the end of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Bottom botches a theatrical performance of Ovid's tale of Pyramus and Thisbe. Characters like Touchstone from *As You Like It* joke: "I am here with thee and thy goats as the most capricious poet honest Ovid was among the Goths."

In the nearly 2,000 years since Ovid's death, readers enjoy both his entertaining linguistic display of storytelling fireworks and recognizable truths about the human experience. A painting in the Scaife Gallery of Pittsburgh's Carnegie Museum of Art



Gianlorenzo Bernini's Apollo and Daphne

is a good example. Here in the center of Steeler Nation resides *Venus Lamenting the Death of Adonis*, painted by Benjamin West of Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. The work depicts a goddess tending to her languishing mortal young man, injured by one of Cupid's arrows. Vestiges of Ovid are everywhere.

In *Metamorphoses*, Ovid tosses every mythological character from antiquity into the shallow pool of love, only to find them in a churning ocean. In both the play and the poem, *Metamorphoses* invites us to see the world in both its depth and its shallowness – the gods are blind with passion, causing challenges for the human world, while humans drown in their obsession with wealth and prestige. They are all transformed, however, by the power of love.

Heather Helinsky is the Resident Dramaturg for Pittsburgh Public Theater



# A GLOSSARY OF THE GODS

A playbill always lists a cast of characters, those people who come into contact and conflict with each other in the world of the play. That world is usually a place we, as an audience, recognize; the same one we inhabit. The world of *Metamorphoses*, however, takes the realm of reality to a whole new level. Three levels, really. While we'll see mortals who exist on the earthly plane, we'll also meet gods who preside over the heavens as well as the underworld. To find the stories of these gods, playwright Mary Zimmerman reached back to the work of Ovid, who lived in ancient Rome. Ovid, in turn, had taken many of his tales from classical Greece. The exact origin of the Greek pantheon is lost in the mist of history. It's easy to understand, however, why the people of this civilization needed to acknowledge the power of nature and their own equally powerful and inexplicable inner drives. They did this by endowing their gods with attributes and personalities, then placating and celebrating them through ritual and art. Despite 2,000 years of scientific advancements, humanity is still at the mercy of sweltering sun and overheated romance; catastrophic earthquakes and devastating greed. We can still find relevance in these gods born so long ago. And we still use ritual and art to appease and express – theater is a perfect example of this. In case you've forgotten about them, here is an introduction to the gods you'll see in *Metamorphoses*.



Poseidon, the god of water

**APOLLO** was the Greek god of the sun, clarity and truth. He is sometimes shown as a golden-haired archer who shoots his arrows like rays of light. NASA named its manned spaceflight program after him. Also a patron of music and the arts, Apollo was attended by The Muses, those nine daughters of Zeus who spark creativity.

**BACCHUS** was the Roman god of wine and revelry who is known for making people shun their responsibilities and go wild. Today, we still use the word bacchanalia to describe a boisterous, drunken festivity.

**CERES** was the Roman goddess of growing plants, particularly grains. She is often depicted with a basket of fruit and flowers and a necklace made from ears of corn. The word cereal derives from Ceres.

**EROS** was the Greek god of sexual attraction, a winged boy with a bow and arrows. Golden arrows with dove feathers aroused love and lead arrows with owl feathers caused indifference. Eros was charming but could be cruel, often wounding the hearts of his unsuspecting victims.

**HADES** was the Greek god of the underworld who presided over the dead. His name means "the invisible." Because precious metals are found beneath the earth, he ruled over gold and silver, and also greed.

**HERMES** was the Greek god of commerce and thieving; skill and dexterity. A trickster and the messenger of Zeus, he is depicted as handsome and athletic, the bringer of luck and grace.

**IRIS** was the goddess of the rainbow. Her father was a marine god and her mother a cloud nymph. Her arc spanned the distance between ocean and sky, so it was believed that she replenished the rain clouds with water from the sea.

**MORPHEUS** was the Greek god of dreams and a son of Hypnos, the god of Sleep. The pain-relieving drug morphine, made from opium, derives its name from Morpheus.

**POSEIDON** was the god of water, salt and fresh, and also ruled earthquakes and horses. Although he was considered to be temperamental, he was one of the most popular gods in the pantheon.



Ceres, goddess of growing plants

**SILENUS** was the jovial old god of wine, drunkenness and dancing. Depicted with a pot-belly, snub-nose and the ears and tail of an ass, he led the tribes of Satyrs and Nymphs.

**VERTUMNUS** was the Roman god of vegetation and springtime. Known for his shape-shifting power and disguises, he presided over transformation and change.

**ZEUS** was the king of the gods, sky, weather, law, order, and fate. He was said to hurl thunderbolts at those who displeased him. While he is depicted as regal and mature, his true form is lightning. The eagle is his symbol.

—Margie Romero



Zeus, king of the gods

**APHRODITE** was the Greek goddess of love and pleasure. She surrounded herself with gaiety and glamour and her beauty made her irresistible. Aphrodite's name is the root of the word aphrodisiac, that mysterious something which arouses intense sexual desire.

## The Cast of *Metamorphoses*

For the inside scoop on the company members, visit [ppt.org](http://ppt.org)



J.T. Arbogast



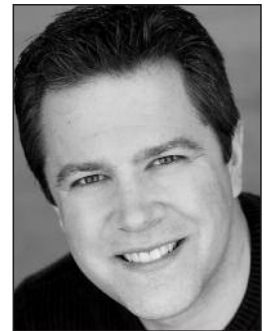
Craig Baldwin



Ka-Ling Cheung



Tami Dixon



Darren Eliker



Daina Michelle Griffith



Lara Hillier



Daniel Krell



Sipiwe Moyo



Bhavesh Patel



# MEET THE BOARD CO-CHAIRS OF THE PUBLIC'S DEVELOPMENT-MARKETING COMMITTEE

## ALESSANDRA BASSO

**Where did you grow up?** I grew up for the most part in a town about an hour outside of Washington, DC called Winchester, VA.

**Tell us about your career.** I have been in specialty store retail merchandising for over 20 years. I joined American Eagle Outfitters in 1994 and have held a variety of positions ranging from Assistant Buyer to Sr. Director to the President and Chief Merchandising Officer of AEO, Inc. I am currently Sr. Director of Merchandising for 77 kids by American Eagle.

**Tell us about your family.** I have a wonderful husband and two children - Sam, age 11, and Sofia, age 7. We live in Squirrel Hill.

**Describe your first experience with theater.** It was in middle school where I played the role of Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. My mother helped with costume design which was almost as interesting to me as the acting.

**Why did you become a trustee?** I was approached with several trustee opportunities for local theaters by the AEO Foundation. I researched all of them and was particularly drawn to The Public and its artistically diverse agenda.

**What were you surprised to learn about The Public that others may not know?** Every seat in the house is a good one. There is a \$15 ticket program for full-time students and anyone under age 26.

**What is your favorite PPT production?** *The Secret Letters of Jackie and Marilyn*.

**How does theater impact your life?** It not only provides joy and entertainment but can also offer different perspectives on life issues.

**How does The Public impact the community?** It enriches the local culture in different ways. It cultivates a wide and engaged audience by offering high quality, artistically diverse productions. The education initiatives are a tremendous resource for children and have the ability to instill in them a life-long love and appreciation of theater.

**Is there a particular aspect of theater that interests you the most?** Education and outreach interests me the most because it offers the theater experience to those who may not otherwise have access to it.

**Why should others support The Public?** To keep a great thing going.



## JEFF BURD

**Where did you grow up?** I was raised in Lancaster, PA. Moved to Lock Haven, PA at 15 and that was home through my high school and college years.

**Tell us about your career.** I have spent my entire career providing information to the construction industry, 14 years on my own. I also publish a magazine and do consulting.

**Tell us about your family.** I have been married to Chris for over 25 years, and have two daughters in college. Sarah is a senior at the University of Richmond, and Anna is a sophomore at Pitt.

**Describe your first experience with theater.** One of my business friends introduced me to Ted Pappas in 2003, and I was impressed by his energy and passion. Chris and I began attending plays regularly after that, and I became a contributor.

**Why did you become a trustee?** Pittsburgh allowed me to grow a business here and I believed that I have an obligation to give back.

**What were you surprised to learn about The Public that others may not know?** The strong sense of fiscal responsibility surprised me. The attention given to the business of theater is impressive.

**What is your favorite PPT production?** It's hard not to say *Amadeus*, but I think the best show I've seen was *The Bird Sanctuary*.

**How does theater impact your life?** Art in all forms has always reminded me that there are many more perspectives on life than my own. Watching someone portray the life of another, live and up close, leaves a much deeper impression on me than film usually does.

**How does The Public impact the community?** Our region has a number of 'big city' quality amenities that shouldn't be in a city the size of Pittsburgh, but are. I believe The Public is one of the best of those, and is one of the defining elements of the 'new' Pittsburgh.

**Is there a particular aspect of theater that interests you the most?** I think the commitment to producing plays that are unlikely to be commercially successful has yielded some real valuable theater for the community. That risk-taking meets a need for an audience that wouldn't be met if the selection criterion was the best chance for high ticket sales.

**Why should others support The Public?** The Public is a reliable source of an art form that is diminishing across the nation, local theater. It's important to remember that The Public can get that much better, offer more art to those who cannot afford it, reach out to schools and amateurs, but only if the community pushes it forward by supporting it.



## 15TH ANNUAL SHAKESPEARE MONOLOGUE & SCENE CONTEST

**Registration Begins:** Monday, December 1, 2008

**Preliminary Round:** Monday, March 16 – March 20, 2009.  
8:30 A.M – 6:00 P.M. daily.

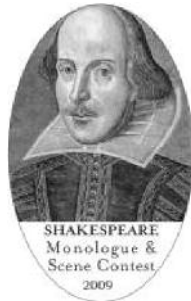
**Showcase of Finalists:** Monday, March 23, 2009, 7:00 P.M.

### GUIDELINES:

- All students in grades 4 – 12 are eligible to participate.
- Students may participate in either the monologue or scene contest, or both.
- No previous acting experience is necessary.

### PRIZES

- All participants receive a voucher for two to attend a Public Theater performance.
- All participants receive a Pittsburgh Public Theater t-shirt.
- Finalists receive Shakespeare texts.
- Division winners receive two season subscriptions.



**For more information, please contact**

Mara Letterle at [mletterle@ppt.org](mailto:mletterle@ppt.org) or 412.316.8200 ext 721, or visit <http://www.ppt.org/content/studentshakespearemonologue.cfm>

### SUMMER 2009 CLASSES FOR STUDENTS

Visit [www.ppt.org/content/studentclassesworkshops.cfm](http://www.ppt.org/content/studentclassesworkshops.cfm) for details

**Acting Workshop: Scene Study (Ages 13 – 17), June 15 – 26.**

**Introduction to Playwriting and Screenwriting (Ages 13 – 17), June 22 – July 10.**

**Acting Workshop: Making It Real (Ages 10 – 12), June 15 – 26.**

**Acting Workshop: Improv (Ages 13 – 17), July 6 – 10.**

**Acting Workshop: Shakespeare Intensive (Ages 13 – 17), July 13 – 31.**



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