

NEW FRINGES

SEASON

**The
Workroom
(L'Atelier)**

by
Jean Claude Grumberg

UW

**School of
DRAMA**

**The Penthouse Theatre
55th Season
402nd Production
March 3rd, 4th, and 5th**

The Workroom

by Jean-Claude Grumberg

translated by Daniel A. Stein with Sara O'Connor

Director
Costume Coordinator
Lighting Designer
Technical Coordinator
Stage Manager
Sound Designer

MARK JENKINS
SARAH NASH GATES
AMY KUES
CHARLES LESLIE
JOE FEATHERSTON
DAVID RUSSELL

There will be one fifteen-minute intermission.

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Assistant Stage Manager	Tracy Grant
Propmaster	Alex Danilchik
Production Electrician	Britney Casey
Costume Assistants	Sara Jaecks, Elizabeth D. Lentz
Props Assistant	Janelle Saylor
Running Crew	Britney Casey, Catherine Connally, Theron Hill, James Nash, Julie Pare, Carlton Pleasant
Electricians	Drama 212 Students
House Management	Justin Deguire, Heath Kelts, Veronica Lavenz, Kelli Summers
Production Office Staff	Rebecca Brown, Carys Kresny
Graphics	Thomas Repp
Ticket Sales	UW Ticket Office

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to M. Burke Walker, John Dillon, Helene Valavella,
A Contemporary Theatre, Intiman Theatre Company,
Seattle Repertory Theatre, and Seattle Opera.

Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French Inc.

Cast (in order of appearance)

Helene	SUSAN CHAMPION*
Simone	THEA MERCOUFFER*
Giselle	ALICE DODD*
Marie	JULIE REEVES*
Madame Laurence	ADRIANNA DuFAY*
Mimi	STEPHANIE STEPHENSON*
Leon	FRANK MARTINEZ*
First Presser	GILLEN MORRISON*
Machine Operators	DAVID FRAIOLI*, NEIL WORDEN*
Jean	DAVID FRAIOLI*
Max	NEIL WORDEN*
The Boy	DAMON VECCI

**Member of the Professional Actors Training Program*

— Place: A tailoring workroom in Paris 1945-1952 —

Scene 1: THE TRY OUT, 1945, Fall,
Early Morning, Start of the work day

Scene 2: SONGS, 1946, Winter,
Late Morning, Before lunch

Scene 3: NATURAL SELECTION, 1946, Fall,
End of the work day

Scene 4: THE PARTY, 1947, Spring, Late afternoon

Scene 5: NIGHT, 1947, Fall, Night

Scene 6: THE COMPETITION, 1948, Spring, Before noon

Scene 7: THE DEATH CERTIFICATE, 1949, Winter,
Late Afternoon, Before lunch

Scene 8: THE MEETING, 1950, Summer, 5:30 in the evening

Scene 9: TO REBUILD HER LIFE, 1951, Summer, Evening

Scene 10: MAX, 1952, Winter, Late Afternoon

FROM THE DIRECTOR

This past summer I toured the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Poland. I was dazzled and moved to awe by the tangible remains of so many histories, so many epochs, so many struggles. My American sense of time in history exploded from its two hundred year reference point. Cathedrals and castles, streets and houses. Gothic, Baroque, Rococo, Art Nouveau. Facades and stairways, alleys, spires and roof tops. Museums filled with art and splendor. Then there is Auschwitz. It stands grimly frozen in its own time, its unremarkable architecture suggesting a Henry Ford era small Midwestern factory in America, but for the loops of barbed wire.

The guided tour is structured like a national park tour but turned inside out and upside down. The "sights" and details revealed, displayed and pointed out are almost unbearable to look at, to comprehend, to assimilate. The guide who strives to appear without affect talks to us only in facts, putting what we are witnessing into a context that is even more horrific. "This was one of the smallest death factories. It served as a model for much larger and more efficient camps. The most that were ever gassed in Auschwitz was 60,000 in one day." Something went deep beneath my skin and nerves at Auschwitz.

In Krakow there exists what is left of a Jewish ghetto never rebuilt after W.W.II. It is very sparsely populated. An old Synagogue, musty and crumbling, sits next to a cemetery. A wall has been placed around the grounds. The wall is made out of fragments of old Jewish gravestones stolen by the Nazis and used as paving stones. Seeing Auschwitz, nearby Birkenau (now mostly dismantled), the old Synagogue has changed me. I'm also not able to forget another sight, that of two young, thin girls, silently, listlessly playing in a narrow street by the cemetery wall as I passed by. It seemed as if they were only going through the motions of playing.

As I have been working on *The Workroom*, I have come to realize in a way I've not recognized before that material created from words (in this case the playwright's), coupled with the work of dedicated actors can for a time, in a non-mystical way, actually raise the dead to the extent where we, the living, can at least honor them. The Word *can* be life.

The Workroom is, in part, a play about the haunted, about those who cannot forget. Our task, I feel, is to *become* haunted so that we do not forget. I dedicate this production to the two playing girls in what is left of the Jewish ghetto in Krakow.