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MONTANA REPERTORY THEATRE
 PROFESSIONAL THEATRE-IN-RESIDENCE • UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

EDUCATIONAL PACK

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH
2017 TOUR

Raised in the Saddle

The Phantasmagorical Journey of a Future Rodeo Queen

BY JAY KETTERING



EDUCATIONAL PACK CONTENTS:

Thank you for bringing Montana Repertory Theatre's Fall 2017 Educational Outreach Tour of ***Raised in the Saddle***, written by Jay Kettering, to your community. We hope you enjoy this educational packet. Please give it to the instructor whose students will be viewing our performance. It includes the following materials:

- **Notes from the playwright and director**
- **Workshop outlines used by the tour actors**
- **Discussion questions and essay prompts**
- **Hints on theatre etiquette**

As always, Montana Repertory Theatre is honored to be a part of your community, your school, and your lives. Thank you again for this opportunity. If you have any questions, please call me at (406) 243-2854 or email me at teresa.waldorf@umontana.edu.

Teresa Waldorf / Montana Repertory Theatre / Educational Outreach Coordinator



MONTANA REP is funded in part by grants from the Montana Arts Council (an agency of state government), The Dramatists Guild, and The Shubert Foundation, with support from the Montana State Legislature, the University of Montana, the Montana Cultural Trust, NorthWestern Energy, Dr. Cathy Capps, Dr. Sandy Sheppard, Jay Kettering & Gwen McKenna, and Jean Morrison.

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PLAYWRIGHT

Jay Kettering fell in love with theatrical writing the first time he heard an actor speak his words and understood that the words he had written no longer belonged to him. Surprisingly, it was a great feeling. Jay earned his BA in English/creative writing at the University of Montana in 1982 and is currently a working writer living in Missoula. *Raised in the Saddle* is his latest commissioned play for Montana Repertory Theatre's Educational Outreach; previous productions included *Writing Wild: The Adventures of Jack London* and *An Unladylike Battle for Survival in the Sunnyside Library*. Montana Public Radio produced Jay's radio comedy trilogy, *Notes from the Huntley Project*, the first episode of which, *My Dad and Pre-Socratic Thought*, won Best Audio Play at the 2016 Moondance International Film Festival. Jay's one-act play, *Flotsam, Jetsam and Bill*, premiered at the Theatre of Western Springs in suburban Chicago in 2015. Constant inspiration comes from his local writing group, the Zoola Writers. To help pay the bills, he drives for Uber, so give him a call and he'll give you a ride and tell you a story.

DIRECTOR

After receiving his BA in Drama from the University of California: Irvine, **Joel Shura** worked in LA as an actor and professional improviser while performing with Orange County's premier clown troupe, Clownzilla. Wanting to pursue a career in education, he took the position of Resident Theatre Director and Acting Instructor at a highly respected youth performing-arts school named SPACE in Ukiah, California. While there, he additionally worked as an adjunct faculty member at Mendocino College, teaching a wide array of theatre classes. Joel is currently working on his MFA in Directing at the University of Montana. Past notable directing credits include *Dracula*, *Legally Blonde*, *Disney's The Little Mermaid JR.*, and *The Laramie Project*.

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

Alice Greenough broke a lot of bones.

This was one of things that first jumped out at me when I began my research for this play. Of course, there were other historic bone-breakers—Evel Knievel comes to mind, but when Evel went flying through the air, he wore a helmet. Alice wore a hat.

I also discovered that this Big Sky Country has produced a lot more famous folks than I had realized. But there were other reasons Alice made it to the top of my list. As a young girl, Alice was 'breakin'' horses—big horses—not the cute Shetland ponies of the petting-zoo variety. These were fully grown horses who had never been ridden before, and how you 'broke' a horse was to stay on it until it bucked itself to exhaustion.

By the age of 17, Alice was already an expert horse racer and bronc rider, with roping and trick-riding skills to boot! When she started competing in rodeos, her dad would tell her to "take Willy with you," and by that good ol' boy phraseology, what he meant was she should take her willpower with her. Boy, did she! Grit, guts, determination, willpower, whatever you want to call it—she always brought it with her. This fierce competitor went on to become the best in the world and she seemed to be having nothing but fun along the way.

I imagine Alice, a true pioneer of the rodeo, would've been the perfect model for the brush strokes of Charles M. Russell—all action, all color, all drama.

So that's how I approached the writing of this play set in 1919. I tried to keep that idea in mind when I went looking for moments of Alice interacting with the slew of Montana celebrities she meets on the train. That seemed to work well because her history is neither old nor dusty: it is as alive and kickin' as that young cowgirl trying to stick to a horse named Earthquake.

And it's because of that, when the actor playing Alice comes on stage and tips her hat and smiles, well, I think you'll find that smile turning the past into the present.

—Jay Kettering

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

In its most simplistic form, this show is about the dreams we have when we are young and our tenacity in seeing those dreams through to fruition. How far are we willing to go? What stands in our way? As a third-year graduate student at the University of Montana, I only recently realized that I have spent half my life trying to reach this point in my career: to become a working theatre educator. I think back on sacrifices made and naysaying voices, and I can't help but feel a minute connection with Alice in her almost single-minded determination to be the something she has always dreamt of being. And that's what really drew me into this play: Alice's determination to do what she loves. That and an incredibly wild script by one of the most fun playwrights I've ever had the privilege of meeting. So please, take your seat (the conductor will be by shortly to collect your ticket) and enjoy this phantasmagorical journey on the Northern Pacific Railroad.

—Joel Shura

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WORKSHOPS

These 45- to 75-minute workshops are designed to fit into your school's schedule. Each workshop can accommodate up to 35 students and is best held in an open space but can also be conducted in a typical classroom setting. We try to be as flexible as possible.

WORKSHOP ONE:

WHAT IF? Bringing Historical Figures to Life

What if you were a teenager in a Butte mining disaster?

What if you were the daughter of a copper king at an ice-cream social?

What if you were a traveling performer, fortune-teller, artist, or photographer in early 1900s Montana?

Students will engage in a series of improvised scenes to answer just that.

WORKSHOP TWO:

Theatricality vs. Reality!

Students will learn the difference between staging something in a Theatrical manner and a manner involving Realism. Using short excerpts from familiar stories and tales, students will "stage and block" their own group scenes in the most *theatrical* manner possible and then discuss how they made their decisions, chose roles, and used their bodies to suggest furniture, set pieces, props, weather, time of day, etc.

WHO IS WHO?

Alice Greenough: A stylish teenage spitfire who can rope and ride with the best of them. She is all grit and determination and smiles on her way to becoming a champion rodeo athlete. Age 17.

Jeannette Rankin: A true pioneer for women's rights. The first woman to hold federal office in the U.S. and a life-long activist for justice. Age 39.

Pretty-shield: A medicine woman of the Crow Nation and iconic representative of the beauty and spirit of her people. Age 63.

Catarina: A Gypsy fortune teller who never lies (unless it works better than the truth). Age unknown.

Charles M. Russell: The cowboy artist who beautifully captured for posterity the life of indigenous peoples and their collision with the men of the Old West. Age 55.

William A. Clark: A copper king and, as Mark Twain portrayed him, the very embodiment of Gilded Age excess and corruption. Age 86.

Shamus O'Leary: A 'powder monkey' at Butte's Orphan Girl mine. Responsible for loading dynamite in the mines and stealing Alice's heart. Age 17.

Frank "Gary" Cooper: A Helena ranch hand with looks that could turn heads, including Alice's. He is destined for Hollywood stardom. Age 18.

Maurice Hilleman: A microbiologist, specializing in vaccinology, who is credited with saving more lives than any other medical scientist of the twentieth century. Age 5 months.

William the Kid: Horse rustler, gunfighter, and train robber. No relation to Billy the Kid. Age 22.

Henry Jones: Train conductor. No relation to Casey Jones. Age 45.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, ESSAY PROMPTS, ETC.

- Alice Greenough had a dream to become a world-renown bronc rider and rodeo performer. She was only able to see this goal through to reality with hard work, determination, and practice. What personal goal resonates with you and what are you doing every day to achieve it?
- Describe the puppets. How were the puppets used? Did you think they were used effectively? Identify the Parts of a Story: Exposition, Inciting Incident, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, Resolution.
- The production you saw was full of very THEATRICAL elements: shadow work, puppetry, sound and lighting effects, visual effects ... not to mention one of the actors played more than six roles. Did you feel these theatrical elements were effective? Why or why not?
- *Raised in the Saddle* offers us a glimpse into a few well-known historic women from Montana (Alice Greenough, Jeannette Rankin, Pretty-shield). Who are some other well-known women in American history and why are they important?
- What other famous Montanans from this time period would you have liked to see appear as characters in this play? How would you have them be woven into the story?
- Put your creative mind to the test: Imagine you were the writer, producer, director, or designer of this show. What would you change about these various aspects of the production if you could? Imagine having both a \$0 budget and a \$1,000,000 budget to play around with.
- This play fictionally took place in 1919, when Alice was seventeen years old. What time period, past or present, would YOU want to be 17 years old in, and why?
- The fictional character Shamus O'Leary was a seventeen-year old "powder monkey" in the Butte mines before he lost his life. What other really dangerous jobs exist in the world today? Would you do them? Why or why not?

Raised in the Saddle



THEATRE ETIQUETTE

Dear Principals and Teachers,

Thank you for this opportunity to perform for your students. Our actors will give a curtain speech before the show. Because we want this experience to be as pleasant as possible for you, your students, and the performers, we ask that you also please take time to cover these basic theatre-etiquette rules with your students before they enter the theatre or performance space.

- 1.** Please remain seated for the entire performance. Please use the restroom before you are directed to your seat. This performance is less than an hour long, with no intermission.
- 2.** Please turn off your cell phone. Also remember that the use of recording equipment and cameras is not permitted.
- 3.** Please do not eat, drink, or chew gum during the performance.
- 4.** Please do not talk to the actors on stage, or to your friends, during the show.
- 5. LAUGH, CLAP, AND HAVE FUN!**

Please let the stage manager and actors know if you would like to have a 10-minute question-and-answer period for your students after the show.

Thank you so much for your support in creating the future's well-mannered and appreciative live performance audience members!



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