

BACKYARD
RENAISSANCE
THEATRE COMPANY

presents

GOD *of Carnage*

by
Yasmina Reza

translated by
Christopher Hampton

Directed by
Rob Lutfy

Starring: Francis Gercke, Keiko Green, Jessica John and MJ Sieber

Presented by special arrangement with **Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York**

MAR 2-25, 2023
@Tenth Avenue Arts Center
(930 Tenth Ave., San Diego, CA 92101)

www.BackyardRenaissance.com

GOD *of Carnage*

By
YASMINA REZA

Cast of Characters

ALAN RALEIGH – Francis Gercke*
ANNETTE RALEIGH – Keiko Green*
MICHAEL NOVAK – MJ Sieber*
VERONICA NOVAK – Jessica John

Place

The Cobble Hill area of Brooklyn, NY.

Time

2008.

An early November afternoon.

(There will be no intermission)

* Actor appears through the courtesy of Actor's Equity Association,
the Union of Professional Actors & Stage Managers in the United States.

About Backyard Renaissance



Backyard Renaissance Theatre Company is a non-profit 501(C)(3) with an "art to the gut" sensibility. Founded in 2015 in San Diego, CA, Backyard Renaissance believes that exceptional storytelling is rooted in a sense of joyful play, human connection and gutsy intensity. For more info: www.BackyardRenaissance.com

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Jessica John Gercke

Backyard Renaissance Artistic Director

Francis Gercke

Backyard Renaissance Producing Director

Anthony Methvin

***God of Carnage* Director**

Rob Lutfy

***God of Carnage* Associate Director**

Hannah Meade

***God of Carnage* Set Designer**

Yi-Chien Lee

***God of Carnage* Lighting Designer**

Chris Rynne

***God of Carnage* Sound Designer & Fight Choreographer**

George Ye

***God of Carnage* Technical Director**

Chad Ryan

***God of Carnage* Master Electrician**

Kate Rose Reynolds

***God of Carnage* Costume Designer**

Jessica John Gercke

***God of Carnage* Stage Manager**

Anna Younce

***God of Carnage* Assistant Stage Manager**

Liam Sullivan

***God of Carnage* Photographer**

Daren Scott

***God of Carnage* House Manager**

Nan Pace

About The Players



Francis Gercke* (PLAYING Alan Raleigh)

Francis has been an actor, director and producer in San Diego for the past 20 years. He is currently the artistic director of Backyard Renaissance which he co-founded with his wife Jessica John in 2015. He is a graduate of the Actors Studio Drama School. Recent roles include: *Noises Off*, *Camping with Henry and Tom*, *The Explorers Club*, *Equivocation*, *Freud's Last Session* (Lambs Players); *Stupid F***ing Bird*, *True West*, *Fool for Love* (Cygnet Theatre); *Abigail's Party*, *The Dazzle*, *American Buffalo*, *An Experiment with an Air Pump*, *Smokefall*, *The Zoo Story*, *Abundance*, *The Elephant Man*, *Parlour Song* (Backyard Renaissance); *The Behavior of Broadus* (Capital Stage Company); *In the Next Room*, *Honky* (San Diego Rep); *Accomplice*, *Suzette Who Set to Sea* (La Jolla Playhouse WOW and POP Tour); *A Life in the Theatre*, *Time Stands Still* (NCRT); *The Pride* (Diversionary Theatre). He is a resident artist with Cygnet Theatre and recipient of the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Award for acting and directing. He teaches at Palomar College and privately through ActorsApproach. His first play *The October Night of Johnny Zero* received its stage debut in November of last year.



Keiko Green* (PLAYING Annette Raleigh)

Keiko Green is a performer, playwright, and screenwriter, currently based in Los Angeles and Seattle. She was last seen in San Diego as Connie in Cygnet Theatre's *The Great Leap*, a role she originated at the Denver Center and Seattle Rep. She is a Core Company Member at Seattle's ACT Theatre, where she has been seen in *Stupid F@#Sing Bird*, *Dangerous Liaisons*, *Bad Apples*, and *A Christmas Carol*. Other credits include: *As You Like It*, *The Comparables* (Seattle Rep); *Ivanov*, *The House of Bernarda Alba* (National Asian American Theatre Co); *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Love's Labours Lost* (Seattle Shakespeare Co); *Water by the Spoonful* (Theatre22), for which she won the People's Choice Award for Best Supporting Actress at the Gregory Awards. As a playwright, Keiko has two plays premiering in San Diego this year: *Exotic Deadly: Or the MSG Play* at the Old Globe in April, and *Sharon* at Cygnet Theatre in June. Her plays have been produced/developed by the O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, the Kennedy Center, Atlantic Theatre Co, Ensemble Studio Theatre, the Playwrights Realm, and Seattle Rep among others. She is Chance Theatre's 2023 Playwright in Residence and holds commissions from the Old Globe, ACT Theatre, and Seattle Shakespeare Co. In the TV/film world, Keiko has been seen on NBC's *Grimm* and Syfy's *Z Nation*, as well as the feature film *C.O.G.* starring Jonathan Groff. She was also a writer on the upcoming Hulu series *Interior Chinatown*, currently in production. www.keikogreen.com



Jessica John (PLAYING Veronica Novak)

Jessica is the co-founder and executive director of Backyard Renaissance. She has performed as an actor in Backyard Renaissance's *The October Night of Johnny Zero*, *Abigail's Party*, *Dry Powder*, *The Dazzle*, *An Experiment with an Air Pump* (SD Critics Circle - Outstanding Featured Performance), *Smokefall*, *Abundance*, *The Elephant Man*, and *Parlour Song*. Other select work includes *The Roustabouts: No Way Back*, North Coast Rep: *Gabriel*, *School for Lies*, *A Shana Maidel*; Lambs Players: *Noises Off*, *The Explorer's Club*; Cygnet Theatre: *Private Lives*, *Desire Under the Elms*, *Mauritius*, *Communicating Doors*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (SD Playbill - Best Actress), *Burn This* (SD Critics Circle - Outstanding Lead Performance); ion theatre: *Angels in America*; New Fortune: *Dangerous Liaisons*; New Village Arts: *The Playboy of the Western World* (Patte - Best Actress); and Renaissance Theatre: *A View from the Bridge* (SD Critics Circle - Outstanding Lead Performance).



MJ Sieber* (PLAYING Michael Novak)

Most recently in San Diego, MJ was featured as 'Vanya' with Cygnet Theater's production *Life Sucks* also directed by Robby Lufty. Before this he appeared in LA's Circle X Theater in their production of *Do You Feel Anger* by Mara Nelson-Greenberg. He spent 20 years in Seattle on the stages of Seattle Rep (*Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Outside Mullingar*, *Dry Powder*, *Photograph 51*, *What the Constitution Means to Me* and the world premiere of *Mr Dickens and his Carol*), ACT Theater (*Oslo*, *The Crucible*, *Lt of Inishmore*, *Stupid Fucking Bird*), Intiman (*Native Son*), Seattle Shakespeare Co (*Midsummer*, *Winters Tale*, *She Stoops to Conquer*, *Much Ado*) and Strawberry Theater Workshop (*Elephant Man*, *Prelude to a Kiss*, *Everybody, Gutenberg the Musical*). He was a founding member and Associate Artistic Director of New Century Theater Company and appeared in their award winning productions of: *The Adding Machine*,

O Lovely Glowworm, Festen and directed the west coast premiere of Annie Bakers Pulitzer Prize winner *The Flick*. Film/TV: *Z Nation* (SyFy), *The Gift*, *The Boarding House*, *Danger Diva*. He will next be seen back as Cygnet in his incredible wife and co-star Keiko Green's world premiere production of *Sharon*.

* Actor appears through the courtesy of Actor's Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors & Stage Managers in the United States.

About The Production Staff

Rob Lutfy (GOD OF CARNAGE DIRECTOR)

Rob was awarded the 2019 Craig Noel Award for Director of the Year. He was formerly the Associate Artistic Director at Cygnet Theatre in San Diego, where he directed 18 plays and produced many others over seven seasons. This season at Cygnet he will direct the world premieres of *The Little Fellow* by Kate Hamill and *Sharon* by Keiko Green. This past year he directed *Dunsinane* by David Greig at Marin Theatre Company, *Witch* by Jen Silverman at Charlotte Conservatory Theatre, *Life Sucks* by Aaron Posner at Cygnet, and an upcoming workshop of a new opera at SDSU. At Cygnet he was the head of new play development where he commissioned 20 plays with the Bill and Judy Garrett Finish Line Festival. He has developed plays at Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis, The Theatre at Boston Court, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, The John F Kennedy Center, The O'Neill Theatre Center, Woolly Mammoth Theatre, Burning Coal Theatre, The Hub Theatre and Dual Rivet Dance Company. He has taught at San Diego State University, Grossmont College, UNCSA, and UCSD. He was the 2012-2013 William R. Kenan, Jr. Directing Fellow at The John F. Kennedy Center. He was the 2014-2015 National New Play Network Producer-in-Residence at Marin Theatre. Rob is a graduate of the directing program under Gerald Freedman at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. Robbytheartist.com

Special shout outs: Wendy Nash for being such a wonderful host mom; Fran, Jessica, and Anthony for making theatre with integrity; and my associate Hannah Meade (everyone hire her).

Hannah Meade (GOD OF CARNAGE ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR)

Hannah's directing credits include Cygnet Theatre: *Life Sucks* (Assistant Director); Houston, TX: Stages: *ROE* (Assistant Director) *NSFW* (Assistant Director), *Murder for Two* (Assistant Director). Kennedy Center Directing Fellow 2022, 2021, 2019. Sam Houston State University: *Actually* (Director), *Clybourne Park* (Assistant Director) BFA: Sam Houston State University.

Yi-Chien Lee (GOD OF CARNAGE SET DESIGN)

Born and raised in Taiwan, Yi-Chien is currently a San Diego-based set designer. She was just awarded the 2022 San Diego Critics Circle Award for her design of Backyard Renaissance's *The October Night of Johnny Zero*. Other theatre design credits include *Life Sucks*, *Water by the Spoonful*, *The Great Leap* (Cygnet Theatre), *Eighty-Sixed*, *Girlfriend*, *A Kind of Weather* (Diversionary Theatre), *King of the Yees* (Sierra Madre Playhouse), *Mother of the Maid*, *The Pleasure Trials* (Moxie Theatre), *The Winter's Tale*-globe for all (Old Globe). Projection design credits include *Everybody* (Antaeus Theatre). Also, she wants to thank "The Mesa College Theatre Company" for all the support. yichienlee.com.

Chris Rynne (GOD OF CARNAGE LIGHTING DESIGN)

Chris is a lighting and scenery designer of theatre, opera, museum exhibitions and architectural features. His theatrical design work has been seen in productions around the country including The Old Globe, San Diego Rep, San Diego Opera, Cygnet Theatre, Pasadena Playhouse, Madison Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Hartford Stage, Geffen Playhouse, Laguna Playhouse, Berkeley Rep and Off-Broadway. He has been responsible for lighting a number of independent touring theatrical productions that have played around the United States as well as London, Paris, and Tel Aviv. In addition to his lighting design work, Chris also specifies theatrical, entertainment and architectural control systems for theatres, houses of worship, hospitality, theme parks, schools, museums and architainment features. He is a member of USA829.

George Ye (GOD OF CARNAGE SOUND DESIGN & FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHY)

George is very excited to be back working with Backyard Renaissance where he last created the sound design for *Witchland*. He has design credits with San Diego Theatres and independent film. Notable productions include: *Venus in Fur*, *Restless Spirits*, *Nuevo California*, *Proof*, San Diego Rep; *The Glass Menagerie*, *Cabaret*, *Little Shop of Horror*, *Fences*, *Bluest Eye*, *The Piano Lesson*, *Fully Committed*, *A Number*, *Arcadia*, *Yellowman*, *Copenhagen*, *Escanaba in the Da Moonlight*, Cygnet Theatre; *Woman From the Other Side of the World*, *Flipzoids*, *Struggling Truths*, *FOB*, Asian American Rep Theatre; *Never the Sinner*, *M Butterfly*, *The Little Dog Laughed*, *Love Valor Compassion*, Diversionary Theatre. He also has

Production Staff continued...

designed for North Coast Rep, Old Globe/MFA program, Playwrights Project, & Bad Cat Films. George teaches theatre at San Diego Mesa College. He is also known for his work as a fight director, and is a proud member of Actor's Equity.

Jessica John Gercke (GOD OF CARNAGE COSTUME DESIGN)

Jessica is the co-founder and executive director of Backyard Renaissance Theatre Company. Her costume designs include Backyard Renaissance: *Abigail's Party*, *Witchland*, *American Buffalo*; *Mr. & Mrs. Fitch*, *The Zoo Story*, *Bachelorette*, *Tarrytown*, *Gutenberg! The Musical!*, *Parlour Song*; Cygnet Theatre: *True West*, *Fool for Love*, *A Behanding in Spokane*, *Man from Nebraska*, *Mauritius*, *Love Song*; Ion Theatre: *Shining City*, *Angels in America Millennium Approaches* and *Perestroika*; Scripps Ranch Theatre: *Almost Maine*, *How the Other Half Lives*, *Crimes of the Heart*, *Deathtrap*; New Village Arts: *Humble Boy*, *True West*, *Sailor's Song* (SDCritics Circle Award – Best Costume Design), *Three Sisters*, *Crimes of the Heart*.

Chad Ryan (GOD OF CARNAGE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR)

Chad is excited to return to Backyard Renaissance where he recently made his return to the technical side of theatre on *The October Night of Johnny Zero*. In his many years on stage as an actor, Chad has appeared across the US from California to New York, most notably The Muny, The Guthrie, Walnut Street Theatre, Carnegie Hall - "Broadway Today" Concert Series. Broadway: *Phantom of the Opera*, *Beauty and the Beast*. Last 13 years have been spent working the real estate industry. Most fulfilling adventures have been as Technical Director Cedar Falls High School, technical advisor to Crystal Lake South High School and Jack-of-all-trades at The Old Creamery Theatre in Amana, Iowa. BA: Theatre. University of Northern Iowa.

Kate Rose Reynolds (GOD OF CARNAGE MASTER ELECTRICIAN)

Kate Rose Reynolds is an actor/director/designer, most recently winning the 2022 San Diego Critics Circle Award for her appearance in *Iron* with Roustabouts Theatre Company. Lighting design credits include over 15 years with the Chequamegon Children's Theatre in northern Wisconsin, as well as technician and assistant-design work throughout San Diego. She is a founding member of Loud Fridge Theatre Group, and just directed their San Diego premiere of *Ripped*. She also stars in the independent horror film *Soul to Keep*, currently streaming on a variety of platforms. www.katerosereynolds.com.

Anna Younce (GOD OF CARNAGE STAGE MANAGER)

Anna Younce is a graduate of UC San Diego (BA-Theatre) where she developed her identity as a theatre maker with multiple areas of interest. Highlights include an award-winning Honors Thesis in Playwriting with her first full-length play *Self-Talk*; a staged reading of emerging playwright Dave Harris's *Incendiary* (Asst. Stage Manager); *Our Town* (Asst. Dir. under Kim Walsh); writing, directing, and designing a production of two one-act plays as a studio project (*Give Me Something/Whatever You Need*). Professional credits include *The October Night of Johnny Zero*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Abigail's Party*, *Witchland*, *Dry Powder*, *The Dazzle*, *American Buffalo* (Stage Manager, Backyard Renaissance); *gUnTOPIA* (Stage Manager, The Roustabouts Theatre Co.); *Written in Stone* for Without Walls Festival 2019 ("Tour Guide," Backyard Renaissance & La Jolla Playhouse).

Liam Sullivan (GOD OF CARNAGE ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER)

Liam is excited to join Backyard Renaissance on this amazing production of *God of Carnage*. He is a graduate from SDSU where he got his degree in Theater, and has worked for theaters all over San Diego from down in the Coronado Playhouse to all the way up in Vista at the Moonlight. As always thank you to my friends and family for their love and support.



Playwright Yasmina Reza & God of Carnage

God of Carnage playwright Yasmina Reza is a French dramatist, novelist, director, and actress best known for her brief satiric plays that speak to contemporary middle-class anxieties. She received acclaim for her first two plays but it was *Art*, which premiered in 1994 about three friends quarrelling over a work of modern art, that brought Reza wide notice. The play appeared on major stages worldwide, winning Molière Awards for best author, play, and production; a British Laurence Olivier Award for best comedy; and a Tony Award for best play. Reza continued

to receive high praise for additional works including *Life x 3* in 2000 and *God of Carnage* which made its London debut in 2008 (subsequently winning a Laurence Olivier Award), and opened on Broadway one year later, earning a Tony Award for best play. The Broadway production exploded onto the stage in 2009 with an all-star cast that included James Gandolfini, Marcia Gay Harden, Hope Davis and Jeff

About the Playwrite *continued...*

Daniels. Originally expected to run for a short period of time, the show was extended several times before it was eventually converted to an open-ended run. The power-house roles earned all four actors Tony nominations (with Harden winning one) and the play itself won the 2009 Tony Award for Best Play. Other well-known actors who took over the roles in the Broadway extension included Christine Lahti, Jimmy Smits, Annie Potts, Janet McTeer, Dylan Baker, and Lucy Liu.

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- Cygnet Theatre
- Mesa College Theatre Company
- Palomar College Performing Arts Dept.
- Mark Arapostathis
- Wendy Nash
- Peter Pan Junior Theatre
(*Oliver* runs March 26 - April 1
Tickets available at PPJT.org)
- Skyline San Diego Trade Show Exhibits
- **Set Crew:** Christopher Ware and Bill Carlton

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