



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE January 24, 2007

**MEDIA RELEASE**

Please include in FEBRUARY & MARCH  
calendar listings and announcements

**Media Contact:** Julie Sutherland  
604.731.5483 [julie@pacifictheatre.org](mailto:julie@pacifictheatre.org)

**Pacific Theatre presents Canadian Premiere of *Grace*,  
by *Six Feet Under* writer Craig Wright**

**IN SHORT:** Pacific Theatre is proud to present the **Canadian premiere** of *Grace*, a darkly funny and provocative new play by a writer of HBO's hit television series, *Six Feet Under*. Running March 15-April 14, this examination of **twisted fundamentalism** is directed by Angela Konrad and stars Craig Erickson, Kerry van der Griend, Alexa Devine, and Duncan Fraser as Karl. Things are never what they seem in this play about a zealous Christian couple, their disfigured neighbour, and the way religious ideas make sense – and sometimes nonsense – of life's events.

**Runs March 15-April 14. For tickets (\$16-\$32) call 604.731.5518 or [pacifictheatre.org](http://pacifictheatre.org).**

Vancouver, BC – March 15-April 14, 2007 (opens March 16)

Fanatic control. Bizarre love triangle. Insane jealousy. These are the elements of *Grace*, a darkly funny and provocative new play by a writer of HBO's hit television series, *Six Feet Under*. Produced by **Pacific Theatre**, and running March 15 - April 14, this examination of **twisted fundamentalism** is directed by Angela Konrad (*Last Train to Nibroc*), and boasts an incredible cast. **Craig Erickson** (*Peer Gynt*, *Prodigal Son*) stars as Steve, the deeply disturbed husband. He is joined by **Alexa Devine** (Jessie Award winning *The Big League*) as his dangerously compliant (and finally dangerously rebellious) wife, and **Kerry van der Griend** (*Lonely Planet*) as their tormented and disfigured neighbour.

Pacific Theatre is also delighted to announce Jessie Richardson winner **Duncan Fraser** (*The Birthday Party*, *No Great Mischief*) in the role of the embittered insect exterminator, Karl. This first-rate cast is joined by Stephen Waldschmidt (scenery design), Erin Harris (lighting design), Dan Amos (sound design), Francesca Albertazzi (costume design), and Sarah Pearson (stage management).

Things are never what they seem in this play about a zealous Christian couple, their antagonistic neighbour, and the way religious ideas make sense – and sometimes nonsense – of life's events. Pacific Theatre is thrilled to produce the **Canadian premiere** of a show which has been reviewed as "**surely the most controversial and talked about play of the year**" (Tom Williams, Theater in Chicago).

**Details:** **GRACE** by Craig Wright  
**When:** **Mar. 15-Apr. 14** (Opens Mar. 16), Wed-Sat at 8pm, Sat at 2pm (Pay-What-You-Can Preview Mar. 15)  
**Where:** **Pacific Theatre**, 1420 West 12th Ave (at Hemlock St), Vancouver, BC  
**Tickets:** \$16-\$32 (GST incl.) – To reserve call **604.731.5518**, or visit **[pacifictheatre.org](http://pacifictheatre.org)**, or in person at the Box Office.

World Wide Web Information available at [pacifictheatre.org](http://pacifictheatre.org) – contact Julie for interviews or further info.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE February 21, 2007

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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calendar listings and announcements

**Media Contact:** Julie Sutherland  
604.731.5483 [julie@pacifictheatre.org](mailto:julie@pacifictheatre.org)

**Pacific Theatre Explores Twisted Fundamentalism in *Grace*,  
by Craig Wright**

**IN SHORT:** Some "happy clappy" Christians have a secret: **they aren't so happy**. A mid-west American couple who moves to Florida to begin a chain of Christian hotels has just such a secret: they have a dark side – a deeply unhappy, lonely, insecure side. This aspect of their lives is explored in Pacific Theatre's production of *Grace*, a **darkly funny** and **provocative** new play by a writer of HBO's hit television series, *Six Feet Under*.

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**MEDIA CALL: Wed. March 14, 3-4 pm. Camera footage, interviews, photos, RSVP to Julie Sutherland**

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Proclaimed as "the most controversial, talked-about show of the year" (Tom Williams, Theater in Chicago), this examination of **twisted fundamentalism** runs at Pacific Theatre March 15 - April 14, starring **Craig Erickson** (*Peer Gynt, Prodigal Son*), **Alexa Devine** (Jessie Award winning *The Big League*), and **Kerry van der Griend** (*Lonely Planet*). Pacific Theatre is also delighted to announce Jessie Richardson winner **Duncan Fraser** (*The Birthday Party, No Great Mischief*) in the role of Karl.

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Pacific Theatre | 1440 W 12th Ave, Vancouver, BC V6H 1M8 | tel: 604.731.5483 | fax: 604.733.3880 | [pacifictheatre.org](http://pacifictheatre.org)

## CRAIG WRIGHT (PLAYWRIGHT)

CRAIG WRIGHT's plays include *The Pavilion* (Rattlestick Theater-- 2005-2006 Drama Desk Nominee for Outstanding Play, City Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville), *Main Street* (Great American History Theatre), *Orange Flower Water* (The Edge Theatre, CATF, the Jungle, Steppenwolf), *Recent Tragic Events* (Playwrights Horizons, Woolly Mammoth) *Molly's Delicious* (Arden Theatre) and *Melissa Arctic* (Folger Theatre—Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding New Play) and *Grace* (Woolly Mammoth—Helen



Hayes Nomination for Outstanding New Play, Northlight Theatre, Furious Theater- LA Drama Critics Nomination for Best Play). His plays are published by Dramatists Play Service, Playscripts Inc., Dramatic Publishing, Samuel French and Smith & Kraus. He is the recipient of fellowships from the McKnight Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. He holds an M.Div. degree from United Theological Seminary and lives in Los Angeles with his wife, Lorraine LeBlanc, and their son, Louis.

*"Like so many of my plays, I think GRACE is about time," states Craig Wright. "It's about how religious ideas give people ways to make sense of time. This happens, then that happens and we try to figure out what the connections are between things. Ideas like God, God's grace, God's providence, karma...these are just ways to mentally connect events and see a form and, sometimes, a benevolent intentionality at work in them. Are they true? No one knows. But do they affect the way we treat each other? Completely."*

GRACE was originally commissioned and produced on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2004, by Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company in Washington D.C. Howard Shalwitz, Artistic Director; Kevin Moore, Managing Director. It was performed at The Warehouse Theater in Washington, DC. The play was commissioned and developed through a partnership with A.S.K. Theatre Projects New Plays/New Ways program and Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company in Washington DC. Audrey Skirball-Kenis Theater Projects is a nonprofit organization that supports new work for the American stage.

It has also been produced at Northlight Theater in Skokie, IL; The Furious Theater Company in Pasadena, CA; The Pure Theater in Charleston, SC.

Upcoming productions at The Chester Theatre Co in Chester, MA; Luna Theater Co in Philadelphia and Third Rail Repertory Theatre in Portland, OR.

# AMERICAN THEATRE

VOLUME 21 NUMBER 10 DECEMBER 2004

## FRONT<sup>and</sup>CENTER

WASHINGTON, D.C.

### MORE THAN FLESH & BLOOD

When playwright Craig Wright learned the real-life story that inspired his play *Grace*, something within him started to vibrate: "I heard about a love triangle—with religion, romance and disfigurement as elements—but what happens within that story is all mine, and completely fictional."

In *Grace*—running through Dec. 19 at **Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company** in Washington, D.C.—the consequences of this all-too-human muddle of faith and desire are fatal. Wright's drama opens with a quadruple murder, and then scrolls backward to the betrayals that catalyzed the bloodshed. Steve and Sara, an optimistic evangelical couple, have a plan to start a multimillion-dollar franchise of Christian-themed hotels. They've just moved to a condo in Florida, and Sara reaches out a friendly hand to their neighbor, Sam, a man with a scarred face who lost his beloved young wife in a car wreck. As the

three lives become increasingly intertwined, the snares of a conjoined fate tighten around the characters. We already know how it all ends; what we don't know is why.

Wright works with time in this play as a sculptor might, bending it at right angles and making it double back to support his play. The author of last season's Off-Broadway hit, *Recent Tragic Events*—about an uncomfortable blind date in the aftermath of 9/11—Wright acknowledges that certain ideas do connect the two works. "There's a continuity," he says. "I was trying to make sense of what culpability means in a world where everyone is so connected."

Wright himself—now a writer for HBO's series *Six Feet Under*—went through an intense search for faith in his early years. After leaving home at 14, he became a born-again Christian and eventually enrolled at a seminary in the Twin Cities. But right on the brink of his ordination, the theatre claimed him with her sweet darts—and the aspiring pastor became a playwright.

Wright says, "Most of my plays are demystification processes. People start with a definition, but they discover there's too much paradox; they have to rethink their paradigm. *Grace* is about trying to make sense of a unity. The big lie is we can go someplace and have secrets. There are invisible lines of energy that connect us. There's more to human beings than bones and skin." —Pamela Renner



More than meets the eye: left, David Fendig, Jennifer Mendenhall and Paul Morella in Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company's *Grace*; right, playwright Craig Wright.

## Director's Notes

Angela Konrad

We all look for signs. Glimpses of insight that make sense of our lives, or at least help us get through them. Even those with no faith find themselves asking “why me?” or just “why?” in times of crisis. Believers see the hand of God in their lives, unveiling meaning in fragments; clearly, but never completely. And some of the most zealous converts reject mystery altogether, claiming certain knowledge of the Almighty's intentions.



One of my favourite truisms is: Perspective is Everything. I like the double entendre of it – the idea that how we look at things changes those things, and the idea that if we can get perspective on something we get it all.

*Grace* is a play about a collision of perspectives, of truths and half-truths and flat-out lies. Of trying to make sense of our lives. Of looking for signs.

A few days into rehearsal, I was reading to my daughters at bedtime. The 10-year old narrator of the novel offered this wisdom:

*There's one good thing about getting in trouble: It seems like you do it in steps. It seems like you don't just end up in trouble but that you kind of ease yourself into it. It also seems like the worse the trouble is that you get into, the more steps it takes to get there. Sort of like you're getting a bunch of little warnings on the way; sort of like if you really wanted to you could turn around.*

Like Steve, the narrator doesn't manage to avoid the trouble, despite all the warnings. Like the narrator, we have the opportunity to turn around.



## About Pacific Theatre

Pacific Theatre was founded in Vancouver in 1984 as a professional theatre company which aims to delight, provoke, entertain and engage its audience by presenting stories that explore the spiritual aspects of human experience in a non-propagandist way that respects all faith orientations, and which strives to operate with artistic, spiritual, relational and financial integrity. The company was founded by Artistic Director Ron Reed, and it continues to thrive under his leadership.

Pacific Theatre is a member of the Greater Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance, the Alliance For Arts & Culture, and an affiliate member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres. To date the company has produced 63 shows, including nearly 2 dozen premieres, such as ESPRESSO by Lucia Frangione, and received over 65 Jessie Award nominations. In our 2005-06 season, Pacific Theatre received 16 Jessie nominations and 4 awards, the highest of any theatre. What's more, in June, 2004, Pacific Theatre was voted "ONE OF VANCOUVER'S FAVOURITE LIVE THEATRES" in the Stars of Vancouver Readers' Choice Awards, Vancouver Courier (along with the Arts Club and The Vancouver Playhouse).