



Flat Earth Theatre

10TH
ANNIVERSARY
SEASON 2006 – 2016

BLINDERS
BY PATRICK GABRIDGE

Electronic Press Kit

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Presidential Politics Get Even More Absurd in BLINDERS

WHAT

Flat Earth Theatre presents **BLINDERS**, Boston-based playwright Patrick Gabridge's absurdist romp through the American political circus.

WHEN

THREE WEEKS ONLY: Friday, June 10th @ 8pm; Saturday, June 11th @ 8pm; Sunday, June 12th @ 2pm; Friday, June 17th @ 8pm; Saturday, June 18th @ 8pm; Sunday, June 19th @ 2pm; Monday, June 20th @ 7:30pm; Thursday, June 23rd @ 8pm; Friday, June 24th @ 8pm; and Saturday, June 25th @ 8pm

WHERE

The Arsenal Center for the Arts, Black Box
321 Arsenal Street, Watertown, MA, 02472

TICKETS

\$20 in advance; \$25 at the door; \$10 student rush

<http://flatearth.ticketleap.com/blinders/>

PRESS NIGHT

Sunday, June 12th @ 2pm

FOR PRESS TICKETS

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WATERTOWN, MA (May 10, 2016) – Imagine the Trump campaign. Now double it. In this high-stakes election year, Flat Earth Theatre is proud to present **BLINDERS** by prolific Boston-based playwright Patrick Gabridge, a cautionary tale about the dangers of the American political circus. **BLINDERS** will run June 10th – 25th at the Arsenal Center for the Arts, 321 Arsenal Street in Watertown, MA. Tickets can be purchased at <http://flatearth.ticketleap.com/blinders/> for \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door, or \$10 student rush.

In **BLINDERS**, the world is in awe of a scientific miracle: two genetically identical humans, unrelated but more twin than twins, exactly the same in every way! No one can tell them apart – except journalist Karen Sayer, whose declaration to the brainwashed public that they don't look anything alike destroys her career and throws her sanity into question. As the duplicates parlay their commercial success into a bid for President of the United States, Karen's quest for truth takes her on an unexpected mission with some unlikely allies and even stranger enemies.

According to playwright Patrick Gabridge, **BLINDERS** has become frighteningly relevant since he wrote the play nearly 20 years ago. "With our current election circus," says Gabridge, "**BLINDERS** no longer feels like a script that's speculating on a strange and distant future. Instead, each passing day seems to make the play feel like it was written only yesterday. As a playwright, I'm glad that this kind of weird, funny play now seems more relevant than ever. And, as a citizen, I'm deeply unsettled by this fact."

“I’m especially grateful to Flat Earth for choosing to produce this play right now,” adds Gabridge, “because these are the kinds of moments where theatre can be the most immediate and most important. We’re seeing a surge of political satire and political plays on stage in Boston right now, because we need the conversation and the examination. And they’re a hell of a lot of fun.”

BLINDERS will be the second of Gabridge’s plays to be produced in Boston this summer. In partnership with the Bostonian Society, Gabridge’s *Blood On the Snow*, recounting the Boston Massacre and its rippling effects, will be presented this May at the Old State House, in the room the historical events actually took place – making it a busy season for the Medford playwright.

BLINDERS continues Flat Earth’s 2016 season, “Ten Years at the Edge of the World,” three shows that highlight the role of the outsider. This season marks the company’s 10-year anniversary, and also featured the East Coast premier of Gina Young’s *TALES OF A FOURTH GRADE LESBO* in March, an 80’s and 90’s pastiche examining gender and sexuality, and will conclude with Suzanne Lebeau’s *THE SOUND OF CRACKING BONES* in November, the devastating story of two child soldiers’ abduction, captivity, escape, and salvation.

STAFF & CAST

Directed by Korinne T. Ritchey, **BLINDERS**’ design team includes Debra Reich (Set Design), Elizabeth Krah (Costume Design), Becky Marsh (Lighting Design), Jake Scaltreto (Props Design), Mac Ritchey (Sound Design), and Lindsay LaPointe (Projection Design). The Producer is Lindsay Eagle, the Stage Manager is Elizabeth Ramirez, and the Technical Director is Connor Van Ness. The cast features Kimberly McClure as Karen Sayer, Craig Ciampa as Stack Thompson, Matt Arnold as Chris, Justus Perry as Alex, and an ensemble consisting of Robin Abrahams, Marge Dunn, Arthur Gomez, Sarah Mass, and Glen Moore.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Patrick Gabridge’s full-length plays include *Blinders*, *Lab Rats*, *Distant Neighbors*, *Constant State of Panic*, and *Chore Monkeys*. He’s worked with more than 40 New England theatres, and has been a Playwriting Fellow with the Huntington Theatre Company and New Rep. His historical plays include work about the Boston Massacre (*Blood on the Snow*, produced in May/June at the Old State House), the creation of the English Bible (*Fire on Earth*), the astronomers Kepler and Tycho (*Reading the Mind of God*), a volcanic eruption on Martinique (*The Prisoner of St. Pierre*), and 19th century Boston publisher Daniel Sharp Ford (*None but the Best*). His short plays have received more than 1,000 productions from theatres and schools around the world. He’s the author of three novels, *Steering to Freedom*, *Tornado Siren* and *Moving [a life in boxes]*. Patrick helped start Boston’s Rhombus Playwrights’ group, two theatre companies in Denver and New York, and the on-line Playwrights’ Submission Binge. He’s a member of the Dramatists Guild, StageSource, and a board member of the Theatre Community Benevolent Fund. He is the co-founder and coordinator of the New England New Play Alliance. In his spare time, he likes to farm and fix up old houses. gabridge.com

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Blinders marks director Korinne T. Ritchey’s fourth collaboration with Flat Earth Theatre, and she is grateful to have the opportunity to help bring Patrick Gabridge’s fabulous script to life with a such a magnificent cast and crew. Other Flat Earth credits include *Tales of a Fourth Grade Lesbo* (Choreographer), *The Farnsworth Invention* (Lizette, et al.) and *Rocket Man* (Rita). Additional recent projects include *Terminus* (director) for the HCE Players, the New England premiere of *Love in a Glass Jar* (Eve), and Artistic Associate/ contributing choreographer for Six One Seven Dance Collective. Korinne completed a Master’s degree in theatre education at Emerson College where she focused on directing, and she currently works as an adjunct theatre professor and disability support specialist at Middlesex Community College.

About FLAT EARTH THEATRE

Flat Earth Theatre (flatearththeatre.com) has been collaboratively crafting thought-provoking theatre in greater Boston since 2006. The goal is to challenge audiences with a theatre experience that inspires them to question their preconceived notions about the world. Featured productions include the award-winning staging of *The Pillowman* with the IRNE-nominated shadow puppetry of Woellert&Clark, the dimension-traveling production of *Rocket Man*, and last year’s IRNE Award-winning *The Farnsworth Invention*.

About the Cast

Kimberly McClure – Karen

Kimberly is excited to join this creative and dynamic cast and crew in this, her first production with Flat Earth. She has been a regular on stages west of Boston for over 20 years, where her work has been recognized by both the DASH and IRNE award programs. Last seen as Margie Walsh in the Hovey Players production of *Good People*, Kimberly's other stage credits include Shawna DuChamp/*Coyote on a Fence*, Blanche DuBois/*A Streetcar Named Desire*, Sue Bayliss/*All My Sons*, Sally Bowles/*Cabaret*, Julia/*Lend Me a Tenor*, Elizabeth Proctor/*The Crucible*.

Matt Arnold – Chris

Matt Arnold returns for his fifth performance with Flat Earth, having previously appeared in *Tales of a Fourth Grade Lesbo* (Billy), *The Memorandum* (George), *Terra Nova* (Bowlers) and the multiple-IRNE-award winning *The Farnsworth Invention* (Stan). He also worked behind the scenes on *Pygmalion* (violence designer) and *Radium Girls* (Master Electrician). Other credits around Boston include *Good People* (Stevie) with Arlington Friends of the Drama, *Human Contact* (Brent Baker) with Unreliable Narrator, *The Shepherd's Singularity* (Gabriel Givens) with Come On Over Productions and *Letters to Medford* (Rev. Charles Brooks) with Two Roads Performance Projects. Matt has also designed fight scenes for Theatre@First, Unreliable Narrator and Boston Latin School.

Justus Perry – Alex

Justus Perry is an actor, comedian, UCB-trained improviser, director, published author, jack-of-all-trades, and collector of things he can call himself. He's appeared in TV shows, movies, commercials, and a few dreams. Justus is enthusiastic about stepping on to the Flat Earth stage for the 8th time, most recently as a part of the IRNE-award winning ensemble of *The Farnsworth Invention*. And even though he's just met you, he loves you.

Craig Ciampa – Stack

Craig Ciampa is beyond ecstatic to be making his debut with Flat Earth. He was last seen as John in the Umbrella Center for the Art's production of *Oleanna* and as George in Acme Theater's production of *Stop Kiss*. He has appeared in many other productions North of Boston. If you meet up with him at Starbucks, he would be more than happy to review these past roles with you over a Frappuccino. Theater has been an important part of Craig's life for 20 years now. When not on stage, he dreams of being in Disney World, with his uber-talented better half Shawna. He is partial to the color Purple and has a healthy fear of flying, stinging insects.

Robin Abrahams – Ensemble

Robin Abrahams is delighted to make her debut with Flat Earth Theatre. *Boston Globe* readers know her best as the author of the "Miss Conduct" advice column in the Sunday magazine. Robin has previously been seen as Jo Jo in Belmont Dramatic Club's *Agatha Christie Made Me Do It* and is a regular dramatic reader (of scientific studies and etiquette-book indexes) on the Improbable Research podcast. Robin is a research associate at Harvard Business School and has a PhD in psychology from Boston University. Her next project is co-directing the opera for the 2016 Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony.

Marge Dunn – Ensemble

Marge Dunn makes her debut with Flat Earth! Previous Boston credits include *Dog Act* (Theatre on Fire), *The Draft* (Hibernian Hall), *Three Sisters* (IRNE nomination, Wellesley Repertory Theatre), *The Great American Trailer Park Musical* (Next Door Theatre), and she continually performs multiple roles in multiple shows for *Sh*t-faced Shakespeare*. Marge is the technical director of theatre at the Roxbury Latin School, and is big believer in doing yoga every damn day and keeping almonds in her pockets.

Arthur Gomez – Ensemble

Arthur Gomez is a Boston based actor who spends his time either on stage, somewhere around the city playing guitar, or playing games. He'd like to thank you for supporting live theatre and advocating for the arts.

Sarah Mass – Ensemble

Sarah Mass is thrilled to be making her Flat Earth debut with this hilarious and ever-so-relevant play! Recent Boston credits include *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare Now!), *Footfalls* (Exiled Theatre), *The Winter's Tale* (Maiden Phoenix Theatre Co) and *Henry V* (Arts Afterhours). Next up, Sarah will appear in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Arts Afterhours and in *Sense and Sensibility* with Maiden Phoenix Theatre Co. Sarah received her BA in Theatre from Boston College (2015) and also studied at the British American Drama Academy in London.

Glen Moore – Ensemble

Glen Moore is thrilled to be working with Flat Earth Theatre. He was last seen at the OBERON as Saul in Liars & Believers original production *WHO WOULD BE KING*. Boston area credits include; *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Moonbox Productions), *Of Mice and Men* (Boston Children's Theatre), *CLOSER* (Bad Habit Productions), *Of Mice and Men* (Moonbox), *The Time of My Life* (Zeitgeist Stage Company), *And Neither Have I Wings to Fly* (BHP), *Arcadia* (BHP), *Eurydice* (Independent Drama Society), and *The Spitting Image* (Happy Medium Theatre). He would like to thank his friends and family for all their support.

About the Staff

Lindsay Eagle – Producer

A freelance Director and Actor and a Company Member of Flat Earth Theatre Lindsay is delighted to put on her producer's hat once again after producing the IRNE Award-winning *The Farnsworth Invention* last summer. Favorite directing credits include *Citizens of the Empire: a Space Opera* by Kevin Mullins, *From The Deep* by Cassie M. Seinuk (Boston Public Works), *Radium Girls*, *What Once We Felt and Rocket Man* (Flat Earth Theatre), *Eurydice* (The Independent Drama Society), and short plays and readings with companies such as The Charlestown Working Theatre, The One-Minute Play Festival and Open Theatre Project. This summer, she will direct Eve Ensler's *The Good Body* with Hub Theatre Company July 15-30, and a remount of *From The Deep* at FringeNYC. www.lindsayeagle.com

Elizabeth Krah – Costume Designer

Elizabeth Krah is thrilled to be working with Flat Earth after more than a year away from theater. Previously costumed shows include *God Hates Musicals: A Musical Parody of the Westboro Baptist Church* with Ministry of Theater, and the premiere production of David Lefkowitz's *Unyfi* in collaboration with The Calliope Project. In addition to a half-dozen Calliope shows, she has also worked with Longwood Players on *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*. When not sewing for others, she sometimes manages to find time to sew for herself.

Lindsay LaPointe – Projections Designer

Lindsay Caddle LaPointe is a dancer, teacher, choreographer, videographer and video editor. She received her bachelor of arts degree in Dance/Performance from Roger Williams University and her master's degree in dance and technology from The Ohio State University's department of dance. In 2010 she started her own video production company, Linden Tree Productions, that provides video support to dancers and artists. LTP has provided video support for the Bebe Miller Company, Locality 2012 Dance Festival, VSA Ohio, the Boston Center for the Arts' Dance Residency Program, The Dance Complex and many independent dance companies. She has taught dance at The Ohio State University, Ohio University and Muskingum University and currently teaches Visual Communications and at Regis College. During the summers she works at the Bates Dance Festival as the Media Supervisor.

Becky Marsh – Lighting Designer

Becky is very excited to be working on *Blinders* with Flat Earth Theatre! Other recent lighting design credits include *Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)* (Wellesley Repertory Theatre), *Tilting Ground* (The Winnepesaukee Playhouse) and *Annie Jr.* (Watertown Children's Theatre). Becky is a freelance lighting designer and technician based out of Boston. Her work has been seen throughout New England and occasionally further afield. She has designed for The Winnepesaukee Playhouse, LSU Opera, Wellesley Repertory Theatre, Wellesley College Theater, Watertown Children's Theatre, Suffolk University, UMass Lowell, Concord Academy, Brookwood School, Riverside Theatre Works, The Tara Little Dance School, Terpsicore Dance, and New Edge Entertainment. www.beckymarshdesign.com

Elizabeth Ramirez – Stage Manager

Elizabeth Ramirez has been stage managing and directing in the small theater scene since graduating from Boston University. She is overjoyed to be working with Flat Earth again. Stage manager credits include *Tales of a Fourth Grade Lesbo* (Flat Earth), *Polish Joke* (Titanic Theater Company), *The Winter's Tale* (Maiden Phoenix), *Echoes* (Brown Box Theater Project), *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (Longwood Players), *The Haberdasher* - ASM, and *The Seabirds* - ASM (Argos Productions). Directing credits include *UNYFI*, *Plaza Suite*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and *Cyrano de Bergerac* (The Calliope Project), and regularly assistant directing with Ministry of Theater.

Mac Ritchey – Sound Designer

Multi-instrumentalist and music producer Mac Ritchey has been turning knobs and tracking audio for over 30 years, spanning genres from Turkish classical to heavy metal, from electronica to guided meditation... But this is the first time he and his wife Korinne get to play in the theater sandbox together! As a member of various ensembles - 35th Parallel, Esthema, Dunham Shoe Factory, and The Response - Mac gets to wear a variety of sonic hats. He has toured the US over the past two decades, performing, educating, and sharing his love for multicultural music through his primary instrument, the oud (Arabic lute). As an acclaimed music engineer/producer and proprietor of Possum Hall Studios in Carlisle MA, his production credits include The Discovery Channel, Animal Planet, MTV "The Real World", Native American Music Award 2008 "Best Instrumental Album of the Year" and Grammy Entry List, and the daytime drama "All My Children". For music, current projects, and more: www.possumhall.com

Korinne T. Ritchey – Director

Blinders marks Korinne's fourth collaboration with Flat Earth Theatre, and she is grateful to have the opportunity to help bring Patrick Gabridge's fabulous script to life with a such a magnificent cast and crew. Other Flat Earth credits include *Tales of a Fourth Grade Lesbo* (Choreographer), *The Farnsworth Invention* (Lizette, et.al.) and *Rocket Man* (Rita). Additional recent projects include *Terminus* (director) for the HCE Players, the New England premiere of *Love in a Glass Jar* (Eve), and Artistic Associate/ contributing choreographer for Six One Seven Dance Collective. Korinne completed a Master's degree in theatre education at Emerson College where she focused on directing, and she currently works as an adjunct theatre professor and disability support specialist at Middlesex Community College. Heartfelt thanks, as always, to Mac Ritchey – husband and sound designer extraordinaire.

Bridget Reagan – A/V Technician

Bridget Reagan is thrilled to be working with Flat Earth Theatre for the first time. She'd like to thank the cast and crew for this great opportunity and the welcoming atmosphere. She'd also like to thank her cats for accepting that they will never be fed on time during rehearsal season and for not turning on each other as a result. When not programming cues into computers, Bridget can be found troubleshooting computers or playing video games on computers, sometimes simultaneously. If stranded on a desert island, she would surely die of internet withdrawal. L2CSV!

Debra Reich – Scenic Designer

Debra is happy to be working on her fourth Flat Earth Theatre project. She designed sets for *Radium Girls*, *Rocket Man*, and *Pirate Lives! The Musical!* As always, it is a privilege to be involved with such a professional and talented group of people.

Jake Scaltreto – Props Designer

Jake is a director and designer based in Boston. He is a co-founder of Flat Earth Theatre, where his directing credits include the award-winning production of *Terra Nova* (2015; MyTheatre awards for Best Director and Best Production), *Reader* (2014), *Copenhagen* (2012), and *Bug* (2011). As a props designer he has built numerous specialty props which have included fake sausages, a ship's helm, laser guns, and a boombox light organ.

Connor Van Ness – Technical Director

A Watertown native, Connor has been working with Flat Earth Theatre since 2007's *All in the Timing* in various capacities, most recently as lighting designer for 2013's *Enigma Variations*. Previous technical direction includes *The Full Monty*, *Moon over Buffalo*, and *Spitfire Grill* (all Barnstormers Theatre). Professionally, Connor works primarily as an entertainment lighting designer and technician, and has designed lighting for recent Boston tour dates for Citizen Cope, Art Garfunkel, Tower of Power, Craig Ferguson, and many others. He has also worked with the Vagabond Theatre Group, Boston Public Works, and will be designing lights for Happy Medium Theatre's upcoming production of *Brendan*. He holds a BFA in Theatre Arts (Lighting Design, Technical Direction) from Hofstra University.

About the Playwright

Patrick Gabridge's full-length plays include *Blinders*, *Lab Rats*, *Distant Neighbors*, *Constant State of Panic*, and *Chore Monkeys*. He's worked with more than 40 New England theatres, and has been a Playwriting Fellow with the Huntington Theatre Company and New Rep. His historical plays include work about the Boston Massacre (*Blood on the Snow*, produced in May/June at the Old State House), the creation of the English Bible (*Fire on Earth*), the astronomers Kepler and Tycho (*Reading the Mind of God*), a volcanic eruption on Martinique (*The Prisoner of St. Pierre*), and 19th century Boston publisher Daniel Sharp Ford (*None but the Best*). His short plays have

received more than 1,000 productions from theatres and schools around the world. He's the author of three novels, *Steering to Freedom*, *Tornado Siren* and *Moving [a life in boxes]*. Patrick helped start Boston's Rhombus Playwrights' group, two theatre companies in Denver and New York, and the on-line Playwrights' Submission Binge. He's a member of the Dramatists Guild, StageSource, and a board member of the Theatre Community Benevolent Fund. He is the co-founder and coordinator of the New England New Play Alliance. In his spare time, he likes to farm and fix up old houses. gabridge.com

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It's a Strange, Strange, Strange World.

by Patrick Gabridge, Playwright

When I wrote *Blinders*, Bill Clinton had recently won reelection by defeating Bob Dole, with nutty/pesky Texan billionaire Ross Perot making his second (and less successful) at becoming president and mucking up the works. The contest was hard-fought, as all American elections are. Voter turnout was at a record low—the candidates sometimes didn't seem that different from each other, despite the typical media hype.



The play started with a simple idea/question—what if two people were found who were exactly alike, the proverbial two snowflakes? Imagine the sensation of it all. And then Karen Sayer popped up, trying to show an unreceptive world the

truth. The gravity field of it all was impossible to escape, and she became sucked into the whole mess.

The show first opened in California and Colorado (under two different titles—it was *Two Snowflakes* in California, and *Blinders* in Denver), and it seemed like an odd fun-house ride, a grand exaggeration. The play had a healthy life, with more productions in New York and Chicago and Boston, and saw politics grow even stranger, with the two elections of George W. Bush.

But now, with our current election circus, *Blinders* no longer feels like a script that's speculating on a strange and distant future, where dark and violent messages lurk in plain sight, right on top of a celebrity explosion that raging out of control. Instead, each passing day seems to make the play feel like it was written only yesterday, as a direct critique of the media and political campaigns. It's an odd thing. As a playwright, I'm glad that this kind of weird, funny play now seems more relevant than ever. And, as a citizen, I'm deeply unsettled by this fact.

I'd like the world to start to deviate from the play as soon as possible. Please. There are people out there like Karen, eyes wide open, trying to tell the truth to the supporters of candidates who seem to have no interest in the truth or facts. I hope that we really do live in a world where there is such a thing

as objective truth. But I could be wrong. Or do we fight for such a thing at our peril, just like Karen?

I'm especially grateful to Flat Earth for choosing to produce this play right now, because these are the kinds of moments where theatre can be the most immediate and most important. We're seeing a surge of political satire and political plays on stage in Boston right now, because we need the conversation and the examination. And they're a hell of a lot of fun. Audiences will still enjoy a lot of laughs at this production of *Blinders* (the cast is such a joy), but I suspect there will be a sense of uneasy recognition behind the chuckles.

I wonder what we'll do about it.

Flat Earth concludes its Tenth Anniversary Season this Fall with...

THE SOUND OF CRACKING BONES

BY SUZANNE LEBEAU

Much like countless children across the globe, Elikia and Joseph have been torn from their homes and families, pressed into service and submission in a brutal civil war. This is the child soldiers' testimonial, the story of an unlikely flight towards freedom where welcome remains uncertain.

Hauntingly evocative and devastatingly beautiful, *The Sound of Cracking Bones* presents a lyrical recollection of two children's capture, escape, and rescue, in the words of the girl who has learned to see the gun as an extension of her arm.

DATES & LOCATION

TO BE ANNOUNCED

