Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris

Production Conception, English Lyrics and Additional Material by Eric Blau and Mort Shuman

Based on Jacques Brel’s Lyrics and Commentary

Music by Jacques Brel

April 29 - May 9
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presents

Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris

Production Conception, English Lyrics, and Additional Material by Eric Blau and Mort Shuman
Based on Jacques Brel’s Lyrics and Commentary
Music by Jacques Brel

Directed by Alan Stanford
Music Direction by Douglas Levine

Daina Michelle Griffith*
Justin Lonesome*
Caroline Nicolian*
Jonathan Visser*

Scenic Designer
Alan Stanford

Sound Designer
Kris Buggey

Stage Manager
Cory F. Goddard*

Lighting Designer
Steve Cuden

Production Manager /
Technical Director
George DeShetler, Jr.

Assistant Stage Manager
Liam Nute

Costume Designer
Lindsey Tejan

Props Master
James Thome

Scenic Artist
Jennifer Kirkpatrick

*Member of the Actor’s Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.
Cast

Daina Michelle Griffith*

Justin Lonesome*

Caroline Nicolian*

Jonathan Visser*

BAND

John Marcinizyn ..................... Guitar (Most performances)

Zach Reeder ......................... Guitar

(April 29 at 10 a.m. & April 30 at 8 p.m.)

Paul Thompson ..................... Bass (Most performances)

Pierce Cook .......................... Bass

(April 29 at 10 a.m. & May 1 – 3)

R.J. Heid ............................. Percussion (Most performances)

P.J. Gatch ............................ Percussion

(April 29 at 10 a.m. & May 1 – 3)

Douglas Levine ...................... Keyboard

PICT Classic Theatre is honored to recognize Jack Kerr for underwriting the musicians for this production.

*Member of Actor’s Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

PICT Classic Theatre receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

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And when you’re humming the tunes next week, smiling, and enjoying the memories, please take a moment to make PICT smile, too.

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Chuck Moellenberg

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Production Team

Director/ Scenic Designer ........................................... Alan Stanford
Music Director ............................................................ Douglas Levine
Costume Designer ....................................................... Lindsay Tejan
Lighting Designer ....................................................... Steve Cuden
Sound Designer .......................................................... Kris Buggey
Props Master ............................................................. James Thome
Production Manager/ Technical Director ....................... George DeShetler, Jr.
Stage Manager ........................................................... Cory Goddard*
Assistant Stage Manager ............................................ Liam Nute
Scenic Charge Artist ................................................... Jennifer Kirkpatrick
Light Board Operator ................................................ Lucas Blanchard Glueckert
Carpenters ............................................................... Drew Palajsa
Sound Board Operator ................................................. Natalie Moran

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A Note from the Dramaturg

By Abigail Cady

Born in Brussels, Belgium on April 8, 1929, Jacques Brel’s childhood experiences of the Great Depression and German occupation of Belgium during World War II shaped his sharply cynical sensibilities and stocked his imagination with the vivid characters and images he created in his work. Neither school nor his father’s cardboard business suited the young Brel. He began playing guitar at age 15 and performed songs with a Catholic charity group. Brel moved to Paris in the early 1950s after marrying, serving in the Belgian military, and debuting as a performer on Brussels stages and radio. His relationship with his wife, Miche, and his three daughters was complicated by his success and his many affairs. These women were the inspirations for many of Brel’s songs, and the complexity of his life and relationships suffuses his work.

Brel wrote and recorded around 150 songs across almost 20 albums over the course of his career. Many of his songs, such as “Ne Me Quitte Pas (Don’t Leave Me)” (1959), became staples in the Francophone music world and around the world and have been covered by various artists in French and dozens of other languages. Brel’s impact on contemporary music cannot be overstated, and he is cited as an influence by musicians as varied as David Bowie and Scott Walker.

However difficult it is to capture the emotional intelligence and intensity of Brel’s original lyrics, Brel in performance defied and surpassed all translation. Though not classically handsome, Brel magnetized audiences with his reportedly strange face and suit-clad body. The passion of the music seemed to possess his frame – he flailed his arms and clenched his hands, his enunciation burst forth from deep inside him, and he dripped sweat at the end of each show – he transcended language and drew international audiences into his tortured musical soul.

Brel retired from his grueling live tours in 1967, but he continued recording and appeared on the stage and in numerous films. He bought a yacht in 1974 and set sail with his mistress Maddly Bamy on a circumnavigation of the globe. A diagnosis of lung cancer stopped his voyage in the South Pacific. After multiple treatments and a brief recovery and relapse, Brel died in Paris on October 9, 1978, at the age of 49. He is buried on the island of Hiva Oa in French Polynesia near the grave of the painter Paul Gaugin.
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**Who’s Who in the Cast**

**Justin Lonesome** recently made his first appearance at PICT, starring as Henry in the world premiere of *For the Tree to Drop*. **Other credits:** Barry Belson in the first national tour of *Jersey Boys*, Jim Conley/Riley in *Parade* (Front Porch Theatricals), Sargent Thomas in the world premiere of *Soldier's Heart* (Pittsburgh Playhouse), Che Guevara in *Evita*, B.U.S. (Bricolage), and several summer seasons at the Pittsburgh CLO. **Point Park Conservatory credits:** Antigone, Evita, Parade, Thoroughly Modern Millie, and No Place to Be Somebody. Justin just wrapped filming on *Let it Snow*, starring Olivia Wilde, Amanda Seyfried, and John Goodman. He graduated with a BA from Point Park University in 2011.

**Daina Michelle Griffith** is thrilled to return to PICT for her fifth season! **PICT credits:** Ruth in *Blithe Spirit*, Octavia in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Martin Giles’ *Beautiful Dreamers*, and James Joyce’s *The Dead*. **Other Pittsburgh credits:** Pittsburgh Public Theater, Quantum Theatre, City Theatre, The REP, Off the Wall, barebones, No Name Players, CARNIVAL Theatrics, Front Porch Theatricals, Bricolage, Saint Vincent Summer Theatre, Prime Stage, Pittsburgh CLO, and Pittsburgh Musical Theater. **Regional/NYC credits:** Gateway Playhouse, Kansas City Starlight, Human Race Theater, Oxford Village Playhouse, heXtc, and NYC International Fringe. **Film credits:** *The Dark Knight Rises* (Foley’s wife), *Hollidaysburgh* (Angela), and *Civilians* (Tilly). **TV credits:** *Guiding Light*, *Munhall*, and the upcoming Webseries *I’ll Call You* (Christine). **Award:** Performer of the Year 2013 (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*). **Upcoming:** PICT’s next production of *How the Other Half Loves*. 
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Jonathan Visser is excited to return to PICT for his fifth season. PICT credits: George Anderson in *Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme*, Zygmunt in *Our Class*, Solyony in *Three Sisters*, Kosykh in *Ivanov*, Gurov in *Yalta Game* and Captain Neville St. Clair in *The Crucifer of Blood*. Other Pittsburgh credits: Bricolage, City Theatre, The Rep, Pittsburgh CLO (recently in *Judge Jackie Justice* and *Ruthless*), and Unseam’d Shakespeare (recently in *Orlando*). Regional credits: Dallas Theater Center, Casa Mañana, Clarence Brown Theater, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Kentucky Shakespeare Festival, Hope Summer Repertory, and PCPA. Jonathan is a proud graduate of the MFA program at the University of Tennessee, 2010.

Caroline Nicolian is thrilled to be making her debut with PICT! She is a Pittsburgh native and has been seen in numerous companies throughout the city. Her most recent credits include *My Fair Lady* at the Pittsburgh Public Theater, *A Grand Night for Singing* at St. Vincent’s Summer Theater, and *Judge Jackie Justice* and *Side by Side by Sondheim* at the CLO Cabaret. She received her BFA from Point Park University and is a proud member of Actor’s Equity.

Kristiann Menotiades (Understudy) is thrilled to be working at PICT for the very first time. She is currently the Director of Fox Chapel High School’s Fall Drama and an instructor at The Pittsburgh CLO Academy of Musical Theater. She just finished working as the choreographer for *The Addams Family* at Riverview High School. She was the Associate Director/choreographer for the world premiere of 21, the Roberto Clemente musical, at the Pittsburgh Playhouse and starred in *SCARRIE: The Musical* as Coach and Mama at Bricolage. Kristiann has performed in numerous CLO Cabaret shows over the past 10 years such as *Shear Madness; I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change; My Way; Ruthless; and You Say Tomato, I Say Shut Up*, to name a few. Kristiann would like to thank everyone on the production team, the cast, and her family for their support.
Jones Day is proud to support the Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre. PICT’s commitment to the creation of high-quality, professional, thought-provoking theatre deserves a standing ovation. All rise!
Who’s Who in Production

Kris Buggey (Sound Design) is proud to be working with PICT for the first time as a sound designer after having worked on Macbeth, Great Expectations, and For the Tree to Drop as sound board operator. Kris’ previous works include Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson and A Soldier’s Heart for the Pittsburgh Playhouse, as well as The LAB Project’s The Gospel Singer, and recently Bricolage’s BUS10 and their first Immersive Environment. He will return to Bricolage for their upcoming project Saint’s Tour. Kris recently graduated from Point Park University in 2014 with a BFA in technical theatre and design.

Steve Cuden (Lighting Designer) has designed stage lighting for such renowned directors as John Cassavetes, Scott Wittman, Mimi Leder, Monte Markham, Andy Tennant, and many others. His lighting designs include In Trousers, Love Streams, Knives, Snoopy!, Strider, Marie and Bruce, and The Rocky Horror Show. Steve is proud to design his first show for PICT, where he serves on the board of directors. As a writer, Steve is known for co-creating the hit Broadway and international musical, Jekyll & Hyde, writing the show’s original book and lyrics with composer Frank Wildhorn. Jekyll & Hyde has played Broadway twice, including a four-year run at the Plymouth Theater. The musical is regularly produced around the U.S. and in numerous venues the world over. Steve has written nearly ninety teleplays for popular animated TV shows such as: X-Men, The Batman, Iron Man, Xiaolin Showdown, The Mask, Goof Troop, Gargoyles, Beetlejuice, Pink Panther, RoboCop, Extreme Ghostbusters, and numerous others. Steve directed and co-produced the cult-favorite horror-comedy movie, Lucky, which won awards for Best Feature at The New York City Horror Film Festival and AKA Shriekfest in L.A. As a faculty member, Steve teaches screenwriting at Point Park University. For more, please visit stevecuden.com.

George DeShetler, Jr. (Production Manager / Technical Director) is in his fourth season at PICT. He began at PICT as the props master in 2012 and came on in July 2013 as production manager. Other Pittsburgh credits: Production manager at Prime Stage Theatre and temporary staff carpenter at CMU School of Drama. Regional credits: Arena Stage, Imagination Stage, Contemporary American Theater Festival, and Indiana Repertory Theatre. George graduated from Otterbein College in Westerville, Ohio, with a BFA in theatre design and technology.

Cory F. Goddard (Resident Stage Manager) is in his 11th season with PICT. Favorite PICT Credits include: Heartbreak House, Stuff Happens, Lieutenant of Inishmore, House & Garden, Salome, In the Next Room or the vibrator play, Waiting for Godot, and the Beckett, Synge, Pinter, and Chekhov festivals. Other Pittsburgh credits: Quantum Theatre, Bricolage, The REP, and Kelly Strayhorn Theatre. Cleveland Credits: Parade, The Laramie Project, Grey Gardens, and the non-equity premieres of Brooklyn, Phantom of the Opera, and [title of show]. Cory is a graduate of Baldwin Wallace College. He would like to thank Rebekah, George, Vicki, Philliam, Alicia, Gianni, Liz, and the Wetness.
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Who’s Who in Production

Jennifer Kirkpatrick (Scenic Artist) is in her third season at PICT. PICT credits: For the Tree to Drop, Great Expectations, Macbeth, Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme, Woman and Scarecrow, Waiting for Godot, Blithe Spirit, Sherlock Holmes & the Crucifer of Blood, A Skull in Connemara, Don Juan Comes Back from the War, and Lady Windermere’s Fan. Other credits: scenic artist for Il Mondo Della Luna, Seven Guitars, The Trojan Women: A Love Story, Lives of the Saints, and You Can’t Take It With You (Carnegie Mellon University) and scenic artist for Stage Door (Lincoln Park Performing Arts Center). Jennifer is a graduate of Ohio University with a BFA in production design and technology.

Douglas Levine (Musical Director, Keyboard, Conductor) is delighted to return to PICT, having previously written music for Our Class, Beautiful Dreamers, Jane Eyre, Pride and Prejudice, The Shaughraun, The False Servant, The Rivals, and She Stoops to Conquer, and musical directed The History Boys, Private Lives, Boston Marriage, Tonight at 8:30, and The Dead. His original scores include Eastburn Avenue, Mother Courage, and Peer Gynt (Playhouse REP), Stuff (Gateway to the Arts), Losing It (Raymond Laine Memorial One Acts), Deadend (Attack Theatre), Mimoun (Pennsylvania Dance Theatre), Colorfast (Pittsburgh International Children’s Theater Festival), and Shakespeare Street (Playhouse Junior). Doug has written or arranged music for companies including City Theatre, Pittsburgh Public Theatre, Pittsburgh Musical Theater, The Renaissance City Women’s Choir, and Pitt Repertory Theatre. This June, Microscopic Opera Company will produce the world premiere of his new chamber opera, Mercy Train. www.levinemusic.com

Liam B. Nute (Assistant Stage Manager) is returning to PICT as the assistant stage manager after working on Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme and Macbeth as an ASM and Great Expectations as the light board operator. He is excited to be back working with the wonderful people at PICT! He would like to thank his parents for all of the support and just going with it. Liam would also like to thank his wonderful girlfriend for always pushing him not to settle and to reach for more.
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Who’s Who in Production

**Alan Stanford** *(Director/ Scenic Designer)* is in his eighth season at PICT. He was for more than thirty years a principal and leading actor with the renowned Gate Theatre, Dublin, where he recently directed his adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*, which was taken to the Hong Kong Arts Festival in February 2015. He founded Ireland's Second Age Theatre Company. **PICT credits:** For the Tree to Drop, Great Expectations, Macbeth, Woman and Scarecrow, Macbeth, Pozzo in Waiting for Godot, Blithe Spirit, Don Juan Comes Back from the War, Lady Windermere’s Fan, and The Kreutzer Sonata. **Other credits:** The School for Scandal (Point Park Conservatory), works by Shakespeare, Molière, Noël Coward, Oscar Wilde, Shaw, Beckett, and Brecht.

**Lindsay Tejan** *(Costume Designer)* is returning as costume designer after her design debut with PICT in Waiting for Godot and Woman and Scarecrow. **Previous costume design credits:** Tell It To the Marines (Sam Hazo Original Play) Day Room Window (New Hazlett), Importance of Being Earnest, Turn of the Screw, Walk Two Moons, and The Great Gatsby (Prime Stage Theatre), Women of Troy (Veritas Vita Collaborative), and Talk to me Like the Rain and Let me Listen, Torrent, and The Fog (Raymond Laine). **Assistant Costume Design/Wardrobe Supervisor credits:** Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme, Sherlock Holmes and the Crucifer of Blood, Our Class, The School for Lies, In the Next Room: or the vibrator play, and Jane Eyre (PICT), and Room Service (Point Park). **Upcoming projects:** How the Other Half Loves with PICT Classic Theatre.

**James Thome** *(Props Master)* is in his first full season at PICT after acting as props master for For the Tree to Drop. He also acted as the assistant props master for Sherlock Holmes and The Crucifer of Blood and a carpenter for Great Expectations for PICT. Lately, he has been freelance working for Artistic Adventures (Orlando, FL), Dallas Baptist University’s Phantom of the Opera (Dallas, TX), Heritage Theater Festival (Charlottesville, VA), and for Carnegie Mellon University and others within the Greater Pittsburgh Area. As a Pittsburgh local, he is excited to be working in his hometown for PICT and is looking forward to working with such talented artists to create an epic theater season.
Jacques Brel is widely considered one of the greatest songwriters who ever lived. He was born in Brussels in 1929 and studied commercial law in his youth before working in the family cardboard-merchandising business. But the Flemish bourgeois life did not sit well with Brel, and for a time he seriously considered leaving the family business to become a chicken breeder or a cobbler. Fortunately, Brel never followed through with these vocational aspirations. Instead, in 1953, he released his first record, a 78 with two songs backed by an accordion band. The release went largely unnoticed, except by the talent scout and director of a famous Parisian nightclub Jacques Canetti. At Canetti’s invitation, Brel went to the City of Lights to perform some of his songs in the cabarets and music halls and the following year settled there permanently. In 1957, with the release of “Quand On a que L’amour” (“If We Only Have Love”), the songwriter began his legendary ascent. The song was wildly successful, and that same year, the head of Columbia’s A.R. department, Nat Shapiro, persuaded his CBS superiors to release an American debut. The next few years saw Brel’s marvelous output increase exponentially with the release of dozens of albums and singles. Interpretations of Brel’s songs began to appear on the American and British soundscapes, covered by such diverse artists as Frank Sinatra, the Kingston Trio, Ray Charles, Petula Clark, Barry Manilow, and even David Bowie. In 1974 Terry Jacks hit number one in the U.K. and the U.S. with his interpretation of “Le Moribund” as “Seasons in the Sun,” and Brel’s talent had finally and irrevocably made its international mark. Brel made his final album in 1977, “Les Marquises,” which sold 650,000 copies on the day of its release and eventually sold over two million copies. The following year Brel died of cancer. He is buried on the island of Hiva Oa in the Marquesas Islands, where in 1973 he had retired to the simple, tropical life of Gauguin.
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About the Playwrights

Eric Blau (Production Conception, English Lyrics, and Additional Material) is a distinguished novelist, poet, playwright, and lyricist, a film scenarist, and a producer-director in theatre, film, and television. Mr. Blau created the revolutionary mega-hit musical *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*, now celebrating over thirty years of continuous worldwide performance. *The New York Times* selected Eric Blau’s song lyrics as among the best of the 1960s. King Baudoin of Belgium had a medal struck in Mr. Blau’s honor for creating *Jacques Brel*. For his novel *The Beggar’s Cup*, *The New York Times* called him a combination of Herman Wouk and Eli Wiesel. His first mystery novel, *The Keys to Billy Tillio*, won the Mystery Writers of America’s Edgar Allen Poe Award. His poetry, published in the United States and abroad, has been translated by the great French poet Paul Eluard. Mr. Blau won his first literary prize in 1938, a first prize of four dollars in the City College of New York Humour Contest.

Mort Shuman (Production Conception, English Lyrics, and Additional Material) was born in Brooklyn to Jewish immigrant parents. He studied at the New York Conservatory but felt rejected by and alienated from his peers in Brooklyn. Identifying with the Black community in Harlem, Shuman’s true musical education came within the area’s raucous R&B clubs, where he soaked up the sounds of Ruth Brown and others. Shuman started penning lyrics at eighteen and found success when his songs, such as “Surrender,” were recorded by Elvis. In 1958 the songwriter met fellow white R&B devotee Doc Pomus and the two took up residence in a small Greenwich Village flat, forming a successful songwriting partnership. Together the duo signed on as writers at the Brill Building, penning hits for the Drifters (“Sweets for My Sweet”), Elvis (“Little Sister”), and Dion and the Belmonts (“Teenager in Love”). Those early sixties songs represented the zenith of Shuman’s creative output, but he continued to write for Janis Joplin, Andy Williams, and the Small Faces, among others. In 1966 Shuman had something of an epiphany when he heard the work of Belgian composer Jacques Brel. He immediately moved to France and began translating Brel’s work into English. In the early seventies he wrote and directed *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*. Shuman also became a star in his own right in France when several of his French-language songs (filtered through a New York accent) became hits. In 1991, shortly before undertaking a musical based on his life, Shuman died at the age of fifty-two in a London hospital from complications due to a liver operation.
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Discover more about the brilliant songwriting and performing career of Jacques Brel in a variety of books, recordings, videos and vocal music scores at Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's Music, Film & Audio Department. Reserve your copies now at www.carnegielibrary.org:

**BOOKS…**

*Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*, by Eric Blau
A brief but fascinating account of how the revue came to the stage, accompanied by first production photos and a French/English libretto of song lyrics.

*Jacques Brel: la Vie Bohème*, by Alan Clayson
The first and only full-length English language biography; Clayson captures details of Brel’s formative years that shed new light on his creative process.

**MUSIC CDs & DVDs…**

*Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*
The production conception, English lyrics, and additional material are by Eric Blau and Mort Shuman, based on Brel’s lyrics & commentary. Originally released in 1968, with Elly Stone, Mort Shuman, Shawn Elliott, Alice Whitfield, vocalists, and Wolfgang Knittel, arranger and conductor.

*Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris* (DVD)
Originally released as a motion picture in 1975, this film “transforms Mort Shuman and Eric Blau’s beloved 35-song stage revue into an infectious movie musical that showcases the famous travelling troubadour Jacques Brel’s astonishing songwriting and the resourceful boldness of 70’s filmmaking.”

**VOCAL MUSIC SCORES…**

*Vocal Selections from Jacques Brel is Alive & Well & Living in Paris*, by Jacques Brel
Twenty-two songs from the revue, with accompaniments arranged for piano (including chord symbols), and the English lyrics by Eric Blau and Mort Shuman, based on the original lyrics of the composer.

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