

Jonah Sea Knight (Beana, Playwright) — As a playwright, Jonah has been produced in five states and Hong Kong. In 2005, he was commissioned by the city of Frederick to write a play commemorating the city's origins. The Maryland State Arts Council awarded him an Individual Artist Grant for Playwriting also in 2005. In 2003, he was one of 20 playwrights admitted into the Kennedy Center's playwright training program.

On Island provides a rare acting turn for Jonah (playing Beana in the show), last appearing on stage in McDaniel College's *Escape From Happiness* in 2002. He has been the producing artistic director of the New Play House since the company's inception in 2004, where he directed *The Early Miracle* and *Holmes & Watson*. He served as the interim managing director of the Frederick County Arts Council in the summer of 2006 and as the writer-in-residence at the Open Space Arts Center in Reisterstown, MD, from 2002 to 2004. He currently produces "Theatrically Speaking," the longest running playwriting podcast in the history of the world (see www.jonahofthesea.com or iTunes).

Jessica Lefkow (Director) — Jessica (B.F.A., Catholic University of America) has lived, directed, acted, coached, and taught across Europe and Asia. Since her return to the Washington, DC, area, Jessica has continued to return to Hong Kong to collaborate with Faust International Theatre. This is her second staged work for the New Play House, after participating in 2005's Frederick's Shorts evening of one-act plays, directing William Steo's *Disposition of the Mail*. Other local directing credits include: 2007 Capital Fringe Festival (*Margherita*), 2006 Capital Fringe Festival (*Frida Vice Versa*), Firebelly Productions (*Conversing 11s, Not So Soft*; this production toured to Hong Kong's Faust Festival in spring 2005), Calliope Productions/the Muslim Community School of Potomac, MD (*Spirit of the Faiths*), Washington Jewish Historical Society (*Anna Shulman, The Queen of H Street*). Readings: 2004 and 2005 "Page to Stage" Festivals at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, for Firebelly Productions and the New Play House, multiple readings for Theater J, Washington Shakespeare Company, Theater Lab, and Playwrights Forum. *Frida Vice Versa* traveled to New York as part of the Songs From Coconut Hill Festival at Teatro La Tea, and again, as part of Caicedo Productions' ONE Festival.

Not So Soft by Jonah Sea Knight

will be part of the upcoming

One Act Festival

Produced by Sandy Spring Theatre Group

November 9 and 10, 2007

Gaithersburg Arts Barn • The Kentlands, Gaithersburg, MD

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ON ISLAND
by Jonah Sea Knight
Directed by Jessica Lefkow

AUGUST 24, 25, 31 AND
SEPTEMBER 1 AT 8 P.M.
AUGUST 25-26 AND
SEPTEMBER 1-2 AT 2 P.M.

the
New Play House
— Est. 2004 —

DESIGN BY LAURA GARBER GRAPHIC DESIGN

ON ISLAND

by Jonah Sea Knight

Directed by Jessica Lefkow

Cast

Andi	Erika Jarecki
Jay	Brady Kirchberg
Shelly/Lou	Susan Holliday
Beana	Jonah Sea Knight
Pam	Alice Anne English

Crew

Director	Jessica Lefkow
Stage Manager	Elizabeth Johnson
Assistant Stage Manager	Courtney Hawkins
Sound Design	David Ballenger
Marketing	Laura Cascella, Lisa Knight

Time: Contemporary. Spanning 2 weeks in the early fall.

Place: The island of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.

Setting: Multiple locations. Newspaper office, bar, beach, hotel, cannery, outdoor streets.

There will be one 10-minute intermission.

Artwork

Original design for production art (poster, postcard, playbill cover) thanks to the highly talented Laura Garber.

The New Play House, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) non-profit theatre production company dedicated to the development of new plays and new playwrights. Founded in August 2004 in Frederick, MD, the company's readings, workshops, full productions, and other creative operations provide support for new playwrights seeking to bring their scripts alive on stage.

This performance is made possible in part by a grant from the Frederick Arts Council.

Montgomery Playhouse. She was last seen as Gwendolyn Pigeon in the Playmakers' production of *The Odd Couple*. Her favorite roles include Mrs. Prentice in *What the Butler Saw*, Ginger Rayle from *Sandbag*, *Stage Left*, and Billy in *Born Yesterday*.

Elizabeth Johnson (Stage Manager) — Liz is pleased to be doing her first show with the New Play House. She is more often seen locally as the stage manager/prop designer for the Musical Theatre Factory. Other work includes the Maryland Shakespeare Festival and Folger Shakespeare Theatre.

Brady Kirchberg (Jay) — Having a "Drama Mama" his whole life, Brady is no stranger to the stage. He has been involved with theatre from a young age and has always loved entertaining. After minoring in theatre at Bowdoin College, Brady moved back to his home town of Washington, DC, to continue pursuing his interests in acting. Recently he played Billy in Edward Albee's *The Goat ... Or Who Is Sylvia?* at Cedar Lane Stage. He also just finished understudying two roles, Simon and Araboolie #1, for *The Araboolies of Liberty Street* at Imagination Stage. Previous roles have included the title role in *Hamlet* in a Shakespeare Theatre Master Class, Prior in *Angels in America* (Bowdoin College), King Alfonso in *The Tempest* (Bowdoin College), and Justice Wargrave in *Ten Little Indians* (Bowdoin College). Outside of theatre endeavors, Brady starred in a Discovery Channel pilot, "Between Life and Death," as Tommy, the boyfriend whose plans for a day of fun with the lady go awry when he begins to drown. Brady has acted in a number of industrial videos and independent films (*Mr. Sexy*, *Miasma*, *The Lives and Deaths of the Poets*, *Maps*) in the greater-DC area, including one shot in Australia (!). In addition to *On Island*, he is currently working on two other film projects, *Tangents* and *One-Eyed Horse*, shooting this fall. In his free time, Brady enjoys being outdoors, in any capacity. He is thrilled to be working with such a talented cast and crew for the premiere of *On Island*.



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Susan Holliday (Shelly/Lou) — Susan portrays Clara Barton for school audiences in *Clara Barton: The Courage Within* for Adventure Theatre. She's now rehearsing *Anna Shulman: Queen of H Street* for the Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington. The one-woman show is also directed by Jessica Lefkow and will open in October. Susan appeared in the first DC-area professional production of Pope John Paul II's play, *The Jeweler's Shop*, before sell-out audiences at the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center. She's performed at Quotidian Theatre Company, including her leading portrayal of a survivor in *September 11 was a Tuesday*. Susan has worked for Round House Theatre, the Kennedy Center's Page to Stage (reading Jonah Sea Knight's *Take Stock*), Playwrights' Forum, and Bethesda's Play in a Day. She has appeared in local TV commercials, on episodes of Discovery Health Channel's *Accident Investigator*, and in independent films, including the upcoming short film *Trisomy 16*. She lives in Takoma Park, MD, with her husband, two sons, and golden retriever.

Erika Jarecki (Andi) — No stranger to the stage, Erika began performing in musicals at the age of six in *A Christmas Carol*. Her studies include the American Music and Dramatic Academy in New York City, and the Groundlings and Playhouse West in Los Angeles. To pay for her studies she worked as a production assistant for commercials and television shows such as "Big Brother," "Todd TV," and "R U the Girl." After moving to Maryland, she has been performing with groups like the Potomac Playmakers and the

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From the Director

I'm delighted to be working again with the New Play House. As a past collaborator and audience member, I've enjoyed the flair that this company brings to all of its productions. Their dedication and commitment to sharing new works with the region is matched by some of the most cheerful and relaxed optimism it has ever been my pleasure to encounter in the business.

I first read *On Island* in the winter of 2005–06, when I was commissioned to direct the play for a public reading produced by the New Play House. Playwright Jonah Sea Knight and I had worked together before. I had taken his one act, *Not So Soft*, with me to Hong Kong as one of a pair of new plays produced by Arlington, VA's Firebelly Productions (*Two For the Road*, 2005), and I had directed two readings of Jonah's time-hopping murder mystery, *Take Stock* (Playwright's Forum Public Reading Series, 2005 Kennedy Center Page to Stage Festival).

Like all of Jonah's plays, *On Island* features a mystery. What has been causing the high cancer rates amongst the island populace, and how are the machinations of the town council tied up with Andi's attempts to write about it for the local newspaper? As Andi works to find the answers to these questions, her personal life becomes increasingly complicated; unexpected romance sparks where an older affection never seems to come into its own. It's in this latter aspect that Jonah has moved to new territory—*On Island* is his first light romance.

It's not a radical storyline. Echoing the tradition of the island community in which it's set, it follows the tides in the affairs of men. But it's a story we never seem to tire of either, whereby people meet and fall in love, picking their battles and choosing their destinies from whatever swims into their lives. In Jonah's telling, Andi and her fellows are characters we can grow to care about, and in the hands of this cast and crew, we think you'll find our tale a perfect one to spend a moment on, here at summer's end.

Enjoy the show.

— Jessica Lefkow



The New Play House, Inc.
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From the Playwright

The most common question that I've been asked about this play is "How long did it take to write?" The quick answer is that I don't know, because it isn't done.

Writing a play has almost nothing in common with writing a piece of fiction. When you write a novel, at some point it will be published (hopefully), and after that you will probably never do another draft. For better or worse, the novel is done.

Having a play produced for the first time does not mean that it is done. A production means that you now have more ideas on how to improve the piece to encourage subsequent productions. Having a play published also doesn't mean that it's done. You can find three different published drafts of *Escape From Happiness* by George F. Walker if you look. Even the playwright dying does not mean that the play is done. In the hands of directors and producers, this seems to be the time when old plays evolve the most (Shakespeare, anyone?).

I think that I finished the first draft of this play in 2004. It was workshopped, read aloud by three different sets of actors, presented before audiences here in Frederick as well as at the Kennedy Center, and now it is ready for you. It is as done as a play can be, which means very little after all.

— Jonah Sea Knight

The New Play House extends special thanks to

- Joann, Terry, and Mike Reed, for graciously helping us transport set pieces.
- Matt Van Mantgem, for loan of the surfboard.
- Nell Codner and Kelly Jackson, for providing island-worthy artifacts for set dressing.
- Jaye Holly for repeated use of her garage and backyard, and wonderful costume assistance.
- The Musical Theatre Factory, for assistance with props and furniture.

Cast & Crew Bios

David Ballenger (Sound Design) — David has lived in the Frederick area since 1980. He has been involved with local Frederick theatre since 1992, studying at Frederick Community College and being involved with various local theatre companies as an actor, director, and crew member. He has also been involved in the Frederick music scene for many years, playing guitar and singing both in local rock bands and performing solo, most recently in the band Knocking Shop. David works in the Metro DC area as a sound engineer and production/audio designer for many political, corporate, and special events. He has a wonderfully supportive girlfriend whom he never gets to spend enough time with.

Alice Anne English (Pam) — Alice Anne is thrilled to be a part of *On Island*, her second production with the New Play House. She appeared as Sue in *The Annapolis Trip*, also by Jonah Sea Knight, part of Frederick's Shorts in 2005. She has also participated in several play readings with the New Play House, including the reading of *On Island*, a staged reading of *Birth*, and *Riding the Bull*, a production of which is part of this year's New York Fringe Festival. Speaking of fringe festivals, Alice Anne just completed a run as Beth, the muscle, of the *Ninja Motorcycle Babes* with Notorious Woman Productions and part of the Second Annual Capital Fringe Festival in Washington, DC. Previously Alice Anne has toured with Encore! Richmond Shakespeare On Tour playing Lady MacDuff in the "Scottish Play" and Maria in *Love's Labour's Lost* among other roles, and she has performed in Washington, DC, with the Studio Theatre, Studio Theatre Secondstage, Scena Theatre, Landless Theatre Company, and Venus Theatre, among others. Favorite roles include Annie Wilkes in *Misery* and Gertrude in *Hamlet*. She thanks Jessica and Jonah for inviting her to be a part of this production and thanks Jonah, Lisa, and all the New Play House family for creating and sustaining this great company.

Courtney Hawkins (Assistant Stage Manager) — Courtney has been in seven productions throughout her life. This is the first time she has had the pleasure of working with a professional theatre and is very excited for the new experience. This show will be the first one for which she has been backstage, and she looks forward to the different view.

🌀 🌀 Many thanks to our volunteers for this show! 🌀 🌀

David Ballenger
Cara Breeden
Laura Cascella
Laura Garber
The Hawkins family
Joyce Holly

Kelly Jackson
Jonah Sea Knight
Lisa Knight
Tammy Melletz
Matt Mowczko
Rob Perkins