

CIRCLE

an award winning comedy by
SUZANNE BACHNER



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SEX. POWER. INTIMACY. DESIRE.

In this award-winning comedy and Off-Broadway hit,
2 actors play 8 interconnected characters colliding in a
fast, funny daisy chain of intimate encounters.

***The New York Times* raved:**

"Ingenious...it is no accident that so many of the sharp jokes come as complete surprises!"

The London Free Press roared:



"Fast-paced, Poignant, Hilarious!"

Sebastian Cherry of Lord Cherry Reviews stated:

"A phenomenal show! CIRCLE is creative, brilliant, enthralling, and most importantly, feels completely genuine!"

Legendary Filmmaker Radley Metzger proclaimed:

"Suzanne Bachner's CIRCLE, is the finest adaptation of the Schnitzler classic, LA RONDE, since the Max Ophüls masterpiece film!"

Martin Denton of NYTheater Now declared CIRCLE:

"One of the Biggest Hits in Indie Theater History!"



THE STORY

We begin in New York City where hedge fund manager and married man Ben meets 'Louis' who turns out to be Lois for a hook up in a coffee shop; Lois, strips at a frat party and is tricked into bed by frat boy Jason; Jason beds the new inhabitant of his childhood bedroom, German exchange student Evelyn; Evelyn brings us to LA where she stalks the object of her obsession, Country Superstar Chad; Chad tries to make a baby for himself and his partner with his lesbian bestie and fellow heterosexual virgin, Rita; Rita, a submissive, seeks her weekly domination in an S&M dungeon from clueless fill-in "Master" Phil; Phil has a cross-country connection with Bonnie, a lonely NYC married woman and cybersex novice. Finally, back in New York, Bonnie reconnects with her estranged husband, Ben, from the first scene, by giving him an unexpected surprise gift of a huge dildo, which brings us full circle.



PRESS

"Ingenious... it is no accident that so many of the sharp jokes come as complete surprises!"

- The New York Times

"A phenomenal show! CIRCLE is creative, brilliant, enthralling, and most importantly, feels completely genuine!"

- Sebastian Cherry, Lord Cherry Reviews

"Suzanne Bachner's CIRCLE, is the finest adaptation of the Schnitzler classic, LA RONDE, since the Max Ophüls masterpiece film!"

- Radley Metzger Legendary Filmmaker

"They had the sold-out theatre in the palms of their hands and nearly rolling on the floor with laughter. An absolute must-see!"

- Theatre in London

"CIRCLE is hot...a sizzling sex comedy!"

- The Montreal Gazette



"CIRCLE delivers belly laughs from beginning to end... Outstanding performances... Fast-paced, poignant, hilarious... a MUST-SEE!"

- The London Free Press



"CIRCLE is a frank look at the games people play while in pursuit of orgasms, intimacy, power and human connection, it's also very funny!"

- Winnipeg Free Press



"This smart two-hander is sometimes laugh out loud funny, sometimes unsettling, but consistently thoughtful and surprising!"

- CBC Manitoba



"This smart adult comedy moves fast and the dialogue is snappy... There's a message: we are sexual beings, we are isolated and hungry for human touch. It's something we're all feeling together, alone."

- Edmonton Journal



"Sexy yet disturbing... a steamy and thought-provoking play!"

- Edmonton Sun

"The eight unlikely couples in smoking hot CIRCLE show that you can't always get what you want, especially if what you want is to connect. Dialogue so sharp, characters so momentarily real, I'm sure a few from the audience checked their gmail history to make sure no one had access to their real lives."

- Cult Montreal

"Fun sexy comedy... Compelling... Hysterical... Hilarious!"

- Bloody Underrated

"One of the best sexy shows I've seen at the festival in all my years... hilarious, spectacular, polished, heartfelt... CIRCLE has you laughing the entire time, and then subverts your expectations at the end with a dose of reality that's uncannily moving... CIRCLE is the sex show to see at the Fringe this year!"

- Kevin Pennyfeather, Freelance Journalist

"CIRCLE is a smart, sophisticated, well-crafted two-hander... The writing - by New York director and playwright Suzanne Bachner - is snappy and sophisticated, and the actors do the clever script full justice... Bob Brader is a delight. His acting is flawless, and each character is utterly believable... This 'Sexy daisy-chain of sexy sex', has been selling out (for good reason) all across Canada this summer!"

- The Charlebois Post

"A fast-paced sexy romp across the spectrum of human sexuality!"

- The Beat Magazine

"Touching, raw, funny, poignant and honest!"

- Watermark

"Hilarious and poignant, CIRCLE is a cleverly staged show expertly executed by two very talented actors!"

- Orlando Sentinel

"Suzanne Bachner's impressive CIRCLE puts on display a writer with such a winning combination of humor and empathy... elegantly written and moving... Bachner hits her social targets with repeated accuracy!"

- BACK STAGE

"White Hot, Screamingly Funny!"

- Greenwich Village Gazette

"Equally Seductive and Comic!"

- NEXT

"Deft Theatrical Storytelling... Bachner's writing is witty, knowing, compassionate!"

- New York Post

"Laugh Out Loud Funny!"

- OOB

"One of the Biggest Hits in Indie Theater History!"

- Martin Denton, NYTheater Now

COMPANY



Suzanne Bachner.



Bob Brader



Anna Bridgforth



Nathan Faudree

Suzanne Bachner • Playwright & Director

is an award-winning playwright and director and native New Yorker. Her trio of long-running NYC hit plays includes *CIRCLE*, which ran for five months Off Broadway, won Most Daring Show of the London Fringe in its Sold-Out International Tour, and was called “ingenious” by The New York Times. She created and directed two cult hits: *Icons & Outcasts*, which transferred to The Duplex for a six-month run, and *BITE*, the choose-your-own-adventure comedy with 968 unique scripted permutations, which had a five-month NYC run and international tour. Other playwriting and directing credits include the 14-actor San Diego commission and marriage equality epic, *Brilliant Mistake*, and her celebrated kaleidoscopic memoir play, *We Call Her Benny*. Suzanne’s totally true solo show, *The Good Adoptee*, which won the Best Autobiographical Script Award at the United Solo Theatre Festival, has toured to the London International Fringe Festival and across the U.S., has been part of law and life-changing adoptee rights advocacy, and connected with global audiences in its virtual presentations. Suzanne studied playwriting with Romulus Linney and Adrienne Kennedy and holds an MFA from the Actors Studio Drama School at the New School University. She is a four-time OOB Award winner and a member of the Dramatists Guild. Broadway World called her work “the future of theatre.”

SuzanneBachner.com

Bob Brader • Actor

is an award-winning writer, actor, storyteller and monologist. *Spitting In The Face Of The Devil*, Bob’s acclaimed solo show, has toured all over the U.S. and Canada and won 7 Best of Awards including Best Show of the London Fringe, and Best Script and Best Encore at the United Solo Theatre Festival. Bob’s new retelling of the story on the RISK! Podcast was called by RISK! creator and host Kevin Allison: “An absolute stunner. Bob Brader’s story ‘Spitting in the Face Of The Devil’ is one of our best episodes ever.” Bob made his international debut at the London Fringe Festival with his second solo show, *Preparation Hex*, a hemorrhoid tale and love story, which toured Canada and played in NYC at the Directors Company and the United Solo Festival. His monologue, *Smoker*, had its world premiere on Theatre Row as part of United Solo, where it won the Best Autobiographical Show Award and went on to a highly acclaimed Canadian tour.

Bob's numerous acting credits include headlining the two-actor NYC run as well as the sold-out international tour of *CIRCLE* (Most Daring Show, London Fringe). Bob played the title role in *Conversations with my Divorce Attorney*, both on stage in NYC and in the digital live stream. He was in the original cast of *We Call Her Benny* and performed in both the tour and original five-month NYC run of *BITE* with JMTC Theatre, for which he is Executive Director. Film credits include *Eat Me* and DelanoCelli Productions' award-winning *Brooklyn* in July. Bob trained with the Stella Adler Conservatory at the Tisch School of the Arts and is a member of the United Solo Academy, SAG-AFTRA and the Dramatists Guild.

BobBrader.com

Anna Bridgforth • Actor

has lived and worked in New York City since 2004. Her early work includes a series of independent horror films and Off-Off Broadway productions, including *BITE* and *We Call Her Benny*, both written by Suzanne Bachner. In 2015, Anna premiered the one-woman show *The Good Adoptee*—also written and directed by Bachner—at the United Solo Theater Festival, where she won the Best Actress award. She performed *BITE* and *The Good Adoptee* at the Orlando International Fringe and London International Fringe festivals, respectively. In 2008, Anna began performing burlesque under the stage name Boo Bess. As Boo, she has performed at venues across the U.S. and internationally, including The Slipper Room, House of Yes, City Winery and Soho House and she has been the resident emcee at Bathtub Gin NYC since 2013. In 2018, she received the Most Innovative award at the Burlesque Hall of Fame for her duet with Jenny C'est Quoi. In 2017, Anna wrote and directed a trailer for a series concept titled *By Night*, exploring the duality of life as a nightlife performer. The project led to a television development deal with MadGene Media. As an emcee, Anna (aka Boo) has hosted *Mavericks* at The Plaza Hotel and Casino in downtown Las Vegas and currently serves as the host of *The Miss Behave Show* for Virgin Voyages. She is currently developing and workshopping her own one-woman show titled *Skin Hungry*.

AnnaBridgforth.com

Nathan Faudree • Assistant Director & Associate Producer

Nathan Faudree is a writer, director and development exec as well as an Associate Producer at JMTC Theatre. He began writing as an actor and co-writer of the critically acclaimed theatrical production *4PLAY* which enjoyed sold out runs in NYC, Chicago and LA. Several of his short films have been produced, including *KILLGRAVE*, *ISOLATION*, *DANIME*, *THE CITIZEN* and *OMEGA UNIT*. He also wrote and hosted over 26 episodes of the weekly cult-hit comics education web series *MEANWHILE*. Currently, Faudree is the co-writer of *A WOUNDED FAWN* which premiered at *TRIBECA 2022* with director Travis Stevens and then on AMC+ *SHUDDER*. It went on to make many "Top Horror Film of the Year" lists including *SlashFilm*, *AV Club*, *Paste* and certified fresh on *Rotten Tomatoes*. It was also nominated for a *FANGORIA* Chainsaw award. His feature script *UMBRA 9* is in development with Mark Cheng Creative Studios and The Shepherds. He also wrote the pilot *THE PONTIANAK* for JBF Entertainment's anthology series *MYTH TALES*. His cyberpunk Unreal Animation series *EXTRACTED* created with Mark Cheng is in production with Mark Cheng Creative Studios with Leonard Wu starring and producing. Faudree's first feature as both writer and director, *SITE 13*, premiered at the New York City Horror Film Festival. It won *BEST HORROR FILM* at the Montreal Independent Film Festival and the London New Wave Festival and the Italian 8 ½ Festival as well as *BEST AMERICAN DIRECTOR* and *BEST FIRST TIME DIRECTOR* at the Kansas Arthouse Festival. *SITE 13* is distributed by *TERROR FILMS*. He worked with Haz Dulull at Beyond the Pixels, writing and developing their latest video game *ASTROBURN*. As an actor his work ranges from *Law & Order SVU* and cult classics like *Kottentail* and *King Lee* to Shakespeare, playing such pivotal roles as Macbeth and Claudius.

He became Fangoria Radio's Scream King of 2006. He has played Bigfoot in two movies, getting the second film because he had "previous Bigfoot experience". He has also appeared in JMTC's production of WE CALL HER BENNY. He is the Head of Development for BarBHouse Productions. He oversees a diverse genre slate including Jenni (JWOWW) Farley's upcoming feature NANNY CAM, Elric Kane's upcoming feature UNFORMED.

TheNathanFaudree.com

Linda Movish • Associate Producer

is a former writer/producer, programming executive and consultant in the television industry. She has also worked on and been in several movies, she has edited multiple movie and television scripts, been a field producer for a cross-country comedy tour and a nationwide marketing campaign for a prominent single malt scotch distributor. Her jack-of-all-trades background serves her well as Associate Producer for *CIRCLE* and *Kitty Daddy*. This is her second time working with JMTC. She was also an Associate Producer for *Conversations with My Divorce Attorney*.

Chris Kateff • Technical Director

Chris is the Resident Projection Designer at JMTC Theatre. Virtual: *Conversations with My Divorce Attorney*, *Smoker* (JMTC Theatre); *Betwixt & Between* (Maggie Gallant Productions); *Emma: a Pop Musical Stay at Home Version* (Lafayette College). Off-Broadway: *Hamlet*, *Medea* (Titan Theatre Company), *Off the Meter On the Record*, *Rebel in the Soul* (Irish Repertory Theatre), *Sheila's Day* (Lincoln Center Institute); *Rated P For Parenthood* (Westside Theatre); *The Road to Qatar* (York Theatre); *Wine Lovers* (Triad Theater and international touring); *Die Mommy Die* (New World Stages). Off-Broadway associate design: *Assassins* (Classic Stage Company). Off-Broadway assistant design: *Forever Dusty, Now. Here. This* (Richard DiBella, designer). Broadway assistant design: *Ring of Fire*, *Jersey Boys* (Michael Clark, designer).

ckateff.wixsite.com/projections

Katie Chai • Touring Lighting Design

is the lighting designer for JMTC Theatre's Edinburgh Fringe productions of Bob Brader's *Kitty Daddy* and Suzanne Bachner's *CIRCLE*. She has worked with JMTC Theatre since 2012, and her previous designs include *Spitting In The Face Of The Devil*, *The Good Adoptee*, *Smoker* and *Preparation Hex*. She is thrilled to be working with Suzanne and Bob again! Her production history includes technical direction, stage management, lighting design and scenic design. Past designs have been featured in The New York Fringe Festival and United Solo Festival, and previous credits include *Lesbian Love Octagon* (Kraine Theatre), *Atomic* (Theatre Row), *Much Ado About Nothing* (American Globe Theatre), *Something Something Uber Alles* (Under St. Marks). Most recently, she was the lighting designer for *The Office Parody Musical* at Broward Center for the Performing Arts. She is currently the Technical Director at Lynn University in Boca Raton, FL where she oversees all backstage technical production, scheduling, and stage setups at the Keith C. and Elaine Johnson Wold Performing Arts Center.

John Tees, III • Off Broadway Lighting Design

has designed many shows for JMTC including the OOB award winning *Circle*, *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, and *When I was a Girl I Used to Scream and Shout*. Other NYC design credits include productions at The Atlantic Theatre Co., Vineyard Theatre, American Opera Project, Triad Theatre, National Shakespeare Co. Pulse Ensemble and Queens Theatre in the Park. Regional Theatre Designs include The Madison Repertory Theatre, Florida State Opera, Dayton Opera, N.C. Shakespeare Festival, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Live Bait Theatre (Chicago), New American Theatre, Helen Hayes P.A.C., and Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. His Assistant credits include shows on Broadway and in more than 20 cities and throughout the country. John has recently been working on many Fashion Shows, Trade Shows and Live Corporate Events, and is the Production Electrician for off Broadways 2second Stage Theatre. John is a member of United Scenic Artist Local 829 and NABET Local 16.

Michael Koch • Graphic Design & Website Design

is an award-winning graphic designer and photographer. He is the Resident Graphic Designer for JMTC Theatre, having created and run print and digital campaigns from NYC premiere productions to international tours. Mike does freelance graphic design through his own company, M Koch Graphics, as well, serving many local Lehigh Valley privately owned businesses to creating spot on personal and family designs. As Graphics Coordinator at the digital billboard company, Digiview Outdoor Advertising, Mike lined the streets and highways with unique billboard campaigns ranging from Crayola to Whitehall Manor Senior Living to the Tilted Kilt. As a photographer, Mike specializes in portraits, nature, and post-apocalyptic landscapes. Mike is a cherished member of the JMTC family. He is a creative family-oriented individual whose interests include biking, hiking, camping, photography, cars, motorcycles, and traveling.

mkochgraphics.com

Shar Adrias • Video Production

is an award-winning filmmaker and visual storyteller whose work blends cinematic craft with human-centered narrative. She is the founder of Movements by Shar, a production company creating documentary, New Media TV, and branded content rooted in lived experience and emotional truth. Shar has served as Director of Photography on films officially selected for festivals including the Point Lookout Film Festival, Creation International Film Festival, Oasis Film Festival, and Southern Margins International Short Film Festival, where one project received the Grand Prix Award. These works were produced in collaboration with Calesita Films. She also brings extensive experience in red carpet and premiere coverage, having filmed high-profile cultural and entertainment events for the Writers Guild Awards, Peabody Awards, and press lines for major television productions including *The Walking Dead* and *The Diplomat*, alongside New York Fashion Week coverage. Her work further includes live theatrical performances for award-winning Fringe Festival writer-performers Bob Brader and Suzanne Bachner, as well as international music videos for global artists G-Deep and Osvaldo Supino. Grounded in a deep background in movement and performance, Shar brings a refined sense of rhythm, presence, and storytelling precision to every project.

MovementsByShar.com

Alan Rowe Kelly • Photographer & Editor

is an award-winning director and actor, appearing in over 40 genre films. Alan Rowe began his creative career as a hair & make up stylist in Manhattan's fashion industry before switching over to film and television. Alan Rowe has directed 4 features, produced 15 films, keyed make up and special effects on nearly 50 productions, and has edited numerous movies and shorts. Originating the role of "Donna" in Jeanne A. Bossier's "Final Treatment" in 2025 at NY's Theatre Lab under the direction of film and stage director Melissa Skirboll, Alan repeated the role for the upcoming film version under the direction of B. Kelley and produced by Raye Levine. Alan Rowe has served as emcee & host at the New York City Horror Film Festival since 2012. With decades spent behind the scenes, Alan is thrilled to join the JMTC team as one of their principal photographers and editors.

Andrea Alton/Alton PR • NYC Press Representative

is thrilled to be working with JMTC Theatre again. She previously worked on their productions *Spitting In The Face Of The Devil*, *Smoker*, and *The Good Adoptee*. Alton PR was formed in 2011 and provides press services for off and off-off Broadway Theatre, comedy, and theatre/arts festivals. Past and current clients include the off-Broadway productions *Love Quirks* (AMT Theater), *Anne Being Frank*, *Doris Day: My Secret Love*, *Sex Work/Sex Play* (all with Emerging Artists Theatre), and the upcoming *Clowns Like Us* at DR2 Theatre. Andrea has worked on productions with La MaMa, SoHo Playhouse, Peculiar Works Project, Spark Theatre Festival NYC, Rising Sun Performance Company, Retro Productions, among others.

AltonPRandProduction.com

Valerie Potter • Publicity & Marketing

Following a career in the music industry, Valerie has spent just over 20 years working in tour marketing and press, which combines both her love of live performance and the ever-fascinating psychology of putting 'bums on seats'! She visited the Edinburgh Festival Fringe for the first time in 2006 and was immediately hooked by its unique vibe and flood of creativity, returned to work there the following year and has not missed a Fringe since. She has worked on a wide range of acts, both large and small, as she enjoys the challenge of developing a variety of distinctly different campaigns. These have included, at the Fringe, the Russian String Orchestra, South Korean magic show SNAP and unique audio-visual jazz band The Queen's Cartoonists. Regional tours have included the breathtaking Tubular Bells For Two, Finnish a cappella rock band Fork and international dance show Tango Fire, as well as London runs of One-Man Star Wars Trilogy at the Garrick Theatre, the circus Mother Africa at the Peacock Theatre and legendary keyboard player Rick Wakeman's spectacular concerts at the Royal Albert and Royal Festival halls and the London Palladium. Valerie is very much looking forward to working with the JMTC Theatre team. She was once described as someone who loves anything 'quirky' and she reckons their shows will fit that bill!

JMTC Theatre • Producer

is an award-winning, independent, international, artist-driven NYC-based theatre company that transforms personal stories into powerful theatre. By partnering with national and international nonprofit organizations such as Safe Horizon and Adoptees United, JMTC Theatre combines Art and Advocacy to raise both funds and awareness and invite engagement and social change. Founded in London in 1994 by Patrick Hillan, JMTC Theatre is based in NYC and has produced over 50 productions in New York City and collaborated with 100s of incredible theater artists. Past productions include Suzanne Bachner's award-winning Off Broadway hit, *CIRCLE*; Thom Fudal's daring production of Shakespeare's *Othello* starring Patrick Hillan and Geoffrey Owens; Bob Brader's acclaimed solo show, *Spitting In The Face Of The Devil* and Suzanne Bachner's celebrated kaleidoscopic memoir play, *We Call Her Benny*. JMTC has presented work at PSNBC@HERE and 20th Century Fox at the Coronet Theater in LA, The Duplex, The National Arts Club, Flicks on 66 Wild West Digital Shootout (Finalist), the first-ever and 2nd annual FRIGID New York Festival, the Midtown International Theatre Festival (Best of the Fest), and the London International Fringe Festival, among many others. JMTC ran its own unique white box theater space in Chelsea for four years, has received four OOBRA Awards, 14 Best in Fest Awards, and Spirit of the Fringe from the London Fringe.

JMTCTheatre.com

PHOTOS

Photos by Alan Rowe Kelly







POSTER

CIRCLE



AN AWARD WINNING COMEDY BY
SUZANNE BACHNER

STARRING ANNA BRIDGFORTH & BOB BRADER

★★★★ "HILARIOUS!"

- THE LONDON FREE PRESS

"INGENIOUS!"

- THE NEW YORK TIMES



2 ACTORS PLAY 8 CHARACTERS COLLIDING
IN A HILARIOUS DAISY CHAIN OF INTIMATE ENCOUNTERS

WWW.CIRCLETHEPLAY.COM

PRODUCTION HISTORY

JMTC Theatre's original production of Suzanne Bachner's CIRCLE ran for five months **Off-Broadway** in a multi-extended run at the Kraine Theater. It was a co-production with Horse Trade Theater Group (Kimo DeSean, Artistic Director, Erez Ziv, Managing Director) and associate produced by DelanoCelli Productions. Directed by Trish Minskoff, the cast included Bob Celli, Thaddeus Daniels, Felicia Scarangelo, Judy Krause and Danny Wiseman. Anthony Giangrande and Rachel Shapiro were the U/S and Francis P. O'Flynn was the Standby Undresser. The show featured award-winning lighting design by John Tees, III. The late great Shirley Herz was the press rep.

CIRCLE was first presented at the Raw Space in Frank Calo's Spotlight On Festival, followed by an encore presentation at PSNBC @ HERE (Lou Viola, Producer). It was later presented in LA at 20th Century Fox at the Coronet Theater with the following cast: Patrick Hillan, Dionne Jones, Michael Medico, Obie Sims and Liz Sullivan. Suzanne Bachner was the Director and Gwenn Morreale was the Assistant Director.

As a result of its Off Broadway run, CIRCLE was produced nationally, optioned for production in Australia and called "Ingenious" by *The New York Times*.

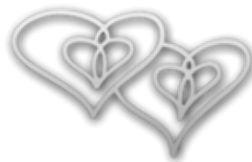
The 2-actor production of CIRCLE had a critically acclaimed **4-Month 7-City Sold Out International Tour** during which it was awarded Most Daring Show of the London Fringe. Directed and designed by Suzanne Bachner, the show starred 4-Time Canadian Comedy Award Nominee Christel Bartelse and 7-Time Best in Fest Award Winner Bob Brader. The Creative Team included Katie Chai, Lighting Design and Rehearsal Stage Manager NYC; Samuel Sherman, Rehearsal Stage Manager Toronto; Michael Koch, Graphic Design; Adam Brick, Photography and Shar Adrias, Video Production.

The touring production of CIRCLE was proud to be sponsored by **Kinkstore.ca!**



CIRCLE was presented at the Bridge Theatre @ Shetler Studios in NYC as part of the APAP Conference starring Bob Brader & Meagan Wells. A portion of the proceeds went to the

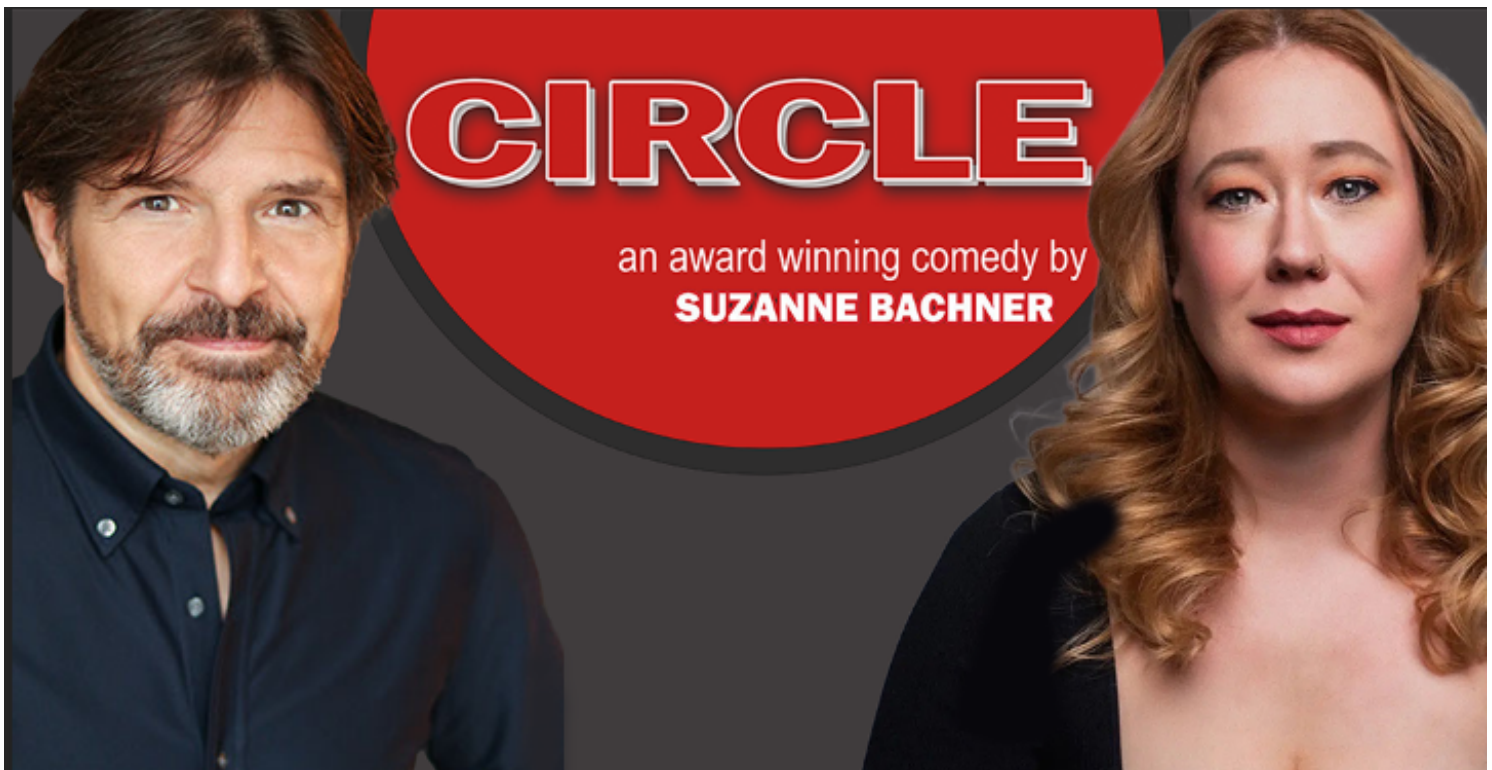
Betty A. Dodson Foundation • www.DodsonAndRoss.com



The JMTC Theatre Edinburgh Fringe Team presented our NYC Previews of CIRCLE in January 2026 at the Chain Studio Theatre.

FUN FACTS

- During CIRCLE's NYC run and tour, audiences walked away from the show believing that there was nudity – when actually there was not!
- In preparation for the first New York production of CIRCLE, Suzanne took the entire cast for a private tour of a famous NYC dungeon (that just so happened to be two blocks away from where they rehearsed) for some research. Even though there were only two cast members who were in the BDSM scene in the play, Suzanne thought the dungeon was the most effective way to look at the power dynamics that pulsed through the whole play.
- When CIRCLE toured across Canada, the show was selling out every night, but you couldn't tell that ahead of time. Demure Canadians wanted to see CIRCLE, but refused to buy advanced tickets. It was as if a credit card statement record of them buying tickets would have irreparable smutty implications. They may not have bought advanced tickets, but they did, in fact, line up around the block to buy them at the door – in cash – and due to the show selling out, many of them had to be turned away!
- Audiences have always responded strongly and positively to CIRCLE. A couple in New York told us that it saved their marriage and an elderly patron at a Montréal matinee told us: "I loved the show! It reminded me of the good ol' days!"
- The Edinburgh Fringe CIRCLE Team rehearsed at what used to be Shetler Studios in NYC, in a speakeasy and a karaoke room of a cruise ship and on Zoom before reuniting in Edinburgh!



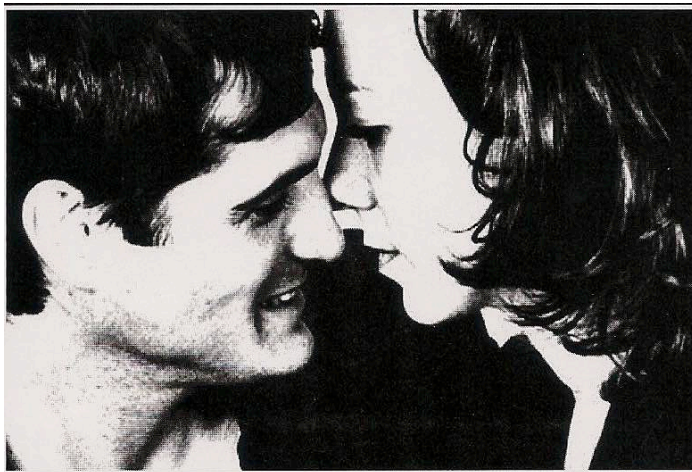
Play for Today: Circle

March 14

Posted by Martin Denton

Today is Pi Day.

What play should we choose for Pi Day? Why, *Circle*, of course. (The area of this play — or, well, actually, of a circle — is pi times the square of its radius.)



Bob Celli and Felicia Scarangelo

Circle, seriously now, is a wonderful play by Suzanne Bachner that modernizes and updates the classic Schnitzler play *Reigen* (which has come to be known as *La Ronde*). Suzanne has written, “I felt that there was room to create more of a riff on the piece, to reflect the full spectrum of human sexuality and 21st century sexual practices and instead of replicating the class issues, to infuse the sexually linked daisy chain story with what I tend to explore in my theatrical work—intimacy, power and human connection.”

Circle opened at the Kraine Theatre in the East Village and ran for five months—making it one of the biggest hits in indie theater history.

The play was originally performed by five actors; a two-person version (featuring her husband Bob Brader) had a long and successful tour recently and, we hope, will be back in NYC soon!

Meanwhile, enjoy it here on Indie Theater Now.

The New York Times

THEATER REVIEW; Playing Spin the Bottle (With an Adult Twist)

By D. J. R. BRUCKNER

In the case of Suzanne Bachner's "Circle," now at the Kraine Theater in the East Village, "back by popular demand" may have a smidgen of truth in it -- even a couple of smidgens. It opened last spring at Raw Space and then moved briefly to Here, where crowds of young downtowners had to be turned away. Its run at the Kraine was supposed to have ended in March but shows no sign of closing.

It is a 21st-century version of "Reigen," a series of 10 dialogues written by Arthur Schnitzler in 1900, reflecting with clinical precision on the sexual pathology of Vienna in its last imperial days. A reigen was a popular German round dance, and in Schnitzler's work 10 people get into bed, two at a time, until finally No. 10 ends up with No. 1. Among people of a certain age the stories are most vividly recollected now from Max Ophüls's 1950 film rendering of the cycle, "La Ronde."

Ms. Bachner preserves the original outline, rejects the softening sentiments laid on by Ophüls, and returns to some of the hard, unforgiving (if not cruel) glitter of Schnitzler's conception. Unlike Schnitzler, she is not a physician, however, so the physical details here tend to inspire laughter without the aftertaste of disgust and fear that parts of "Reigen" can leave behind.

In "Circle" 4 actors take 12 roles in the 10 scenes that run 7 or 8 minutes each. They begin with two gay men finding chance sex in the men's room of a tony coffee shop in Los Angeles. Next, one of them has a date with a lesbian he engages to bear a child for him and his partner, an agreement that messes up her efforts to comfort her lesbian partner in the next episode.

Eventually, after seeing ingenious sex and soul baring among characters who are more types than individuals, we encounter an adventurous couple who come to grief when they discover they are both masochists. One of them then gets into a cybersex session with a woman a continent away, who, it turns out, is married to one of the men who met in the coffee shop, and the circle closes.

Speed is the key to the play's humor, and Trish Minskoff, the director, keeps it moving so fast there is no time to be sidetracked by reflection. People begin laughing at the first sentence and continue to the last; the entire experience can be left in the theater as they go home.

Sexual dysfunction is only one symptom of the global disorder of the characters in "Circle." Their mental vacancy, moral confusion, emotional isolation and social clumsiness are more ridiculous than their absurd desires and gropings.

But Ms. Bachner is no satirist. These 10 people may never have heard of AIDS or of any drug but Viagra. Their world has no shadows. They are defined entirely by their language. To be sure, that is delicious, picked up off the street with cunning discrimination. The sound is often like familiar music, but sense leaks out of their sentences so copiously that the possibilities of hilarious misunderstandings are limitless. It is no accident that so many of the sharp jokes come as complete surprises.

The actors love their roles and let you feel it. To choose just a few: Bob Celli as a college sophomore seducing a stripper at a birthday party is so coarse and so sensuous that he is detestable and admirable all at once. Felicia Scarangelo's face registers shock, delight and lust so vividly as one of her characters seeks orgasm in an Internet chat room that she makes real sex look phony.

The most uproarious moment of the evening belongs to Judy Charles throwing a tantrum of frustration as a woman in bondage who cannot find punishment enough. And Thaddeus Daniels as an MTV superstar who will not touch a gay role to get into movies creates a whole new type of sap; another eight minutes with him would be welcome.

There is a fifth actor, Danny Wiseman, called simply the undresser, whose job is helping the others change clothes onstage between scenes, although in some cases the garb is so spare a breath might waft it away. Mr. Wiseman may have the best part of all. He has no lines to learn and, because his gestures are broad lurid pantomime and he is always in the same role, he sticks in the memory longest.

No wonder there is popular demand. This little show is quick and funny, and requires no assembly by the audience.

CIRCLE By Suzanne Bachner; direction and sets by Trish Minskoff; lighting by John Tees III; technical director/stage manager/sound designer, Alexander R. Warner; costumes by Deborah Alves. The Horse Trade Theater Group presents the John Montgomery Theater Company production. At the Kraine Theater, 85 East Fourth Street, East Village.

WITH: Bob Celli (Ben, Jason and Phil), Thaddeus Daniels (Derek, Chad and Cyberboy), Felicia Scarangelo (Karen, Evelyn and Bonnie), Judy Charles (Lois, Rita and Cybergirl) and Danny Wiseman (Undresser).

CIRCLE

an award winning comedy by
SUZANNE BACHNER

For booking requests or more information about
CIRCLE, please contact:

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