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SHOTGUN PLAYERS
PRESENTS

The (curious case of the) Watson Intelligence

Written by **Madeleine George**
Directed by **Nancy Carlin**

“I want to know: How can we leverage technological advances to create empathy for real human lives?” - Eliza, *Watson Intel.*

Berkeley - What is more perilous than intimacy? With every technological innovation, our lives become both easier and more complicated. Madeleine George explores four different eras of innovation with inventions ranging from the telephone to artificial intelligence, all with characters striving for connection. *The (curious case of the) Watson Intelligence* explores the thrilling, ambitious quest for technology against the ever-combustible minefield of human emotions. ***The (curious case of the) Watson Intelligence* begins previews on August 3, opens on August 10, and runs through September 10, 2017, at The Ashby Stage.**

A finalist for the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, Ms. George’s play delves into the thorny issue of how technology permeates every facet of our lives. Yet Ms. George cleverly reminds us that this is not a recent phenomenon; her play weaves together turning points of modern invention that each changed the world irrevocably.

Shotgun’s Founding Artistic Director Patrick Dooley revels in moments when the cultural zeitgeist shows up onstage. He says: “No question is dominating the global conversation more than the influence of technology on our lives. And while many advances are designed to make us feel more ‘connected’ - some led us to a deeper sense of alienation. The fear that we cannot wind back this clock is seeping into our collective consciousness. These are the questions and issues that *The (curious case of the) Watson Intelligence* thrusts forward.”

Director Nancy Carlin first became acquainted with Madeleine George’s incredible narrative skills when she performed at Shotgun in George’s play *Precious Little* back in 2012. In examining *Watson*, Carlin is most interested in the parts of humanity that can’t be constructed or programmed. She muses: “It’s the heart that can’t be replicated or designed like the brain. Intelligence comes from listening, which is something that can’t be quantified. Maybe that machine brain needs to meld with a human heart?”

Nancy Carlin is Bay Area theater legend. A former company member of the American Conservatory Theater, Nancy has been an associate artist with the California Shakespeare Theatre for 10 years, and she has performed and directed extensively in regional theaters, including A.C.T., Berkeley Rep, and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

Playwright Madeleine George has found kindred spirits in both our organization and Carlin as director on this project. She writes: “This play in particular, which asks questions about our current technological moment and its implications for the future of human relationships, craves this [Ashby Stage] audience. I believe that a Shotgun production, directed by an artist already in deep dialogue with my work, will be the capstone to that process. *Watson* needs Shotgun.”

Madeleine George's plays have been produced at theaters around the country. She was a founding member of the Obie-winning playwrights' collective 13P (Thirteen Playwrights, Inc.), and she is a resident playwright at New Dramatists in New York.

George describes her play as a “love story crossed with a mystery.” After being featured in our Champagne Staged Reading Series last year, audience members were eager to discuss the ramifications of technology upon our lives. Some patrons loved the idea of creating a supercomputer that could emulate the best of human nature. Others argued that the play is a cautionary tale. Shotgun’s commitment to post-show discussions after every performance will continue this conversation.

The cast of *The (curious case of the) Watson Intelligence* features **Sara Mitchell, Mick Mize, and Brady Morales Woolery***.

The creative team features Set Design by **Nina Ball**, Prop Design by **Mia Baxter**, Sound Design by **Cliff Caruthers**, Costume Design by **Valera Coble**, Light Design by **Ray Oppenheimer**, Assistant Direction by **LeeAnn Dowd**.

(*Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers.)

CALENDAR LISTING

WHAT: What is more perilous than intimacy? With every technological innovation, our lives become both easier and more complicated. Madeleine George explores four different eras of innovation with inventions ranging from the telephone to artificial intelligence, all with characters striving for connection. *The (curious case of the) Watson Intelligence* explores the thrilling, ambitious quest for technology against the ever-combustible minefield of human emotions.

WHEN: Wednesday–Sunday, August 3–September 10, 2017

WHERE: The Ashby Stage, 1901 Ashby Avenue, Berkeley

TICKET PRICES: Pay What You Can Previews August 3–9. Regular tickets \$25–\$40. Advance reservations strongly advised—shows will sell out!

For more information, go to www.shotgunplayers.org or call 510.841.6500