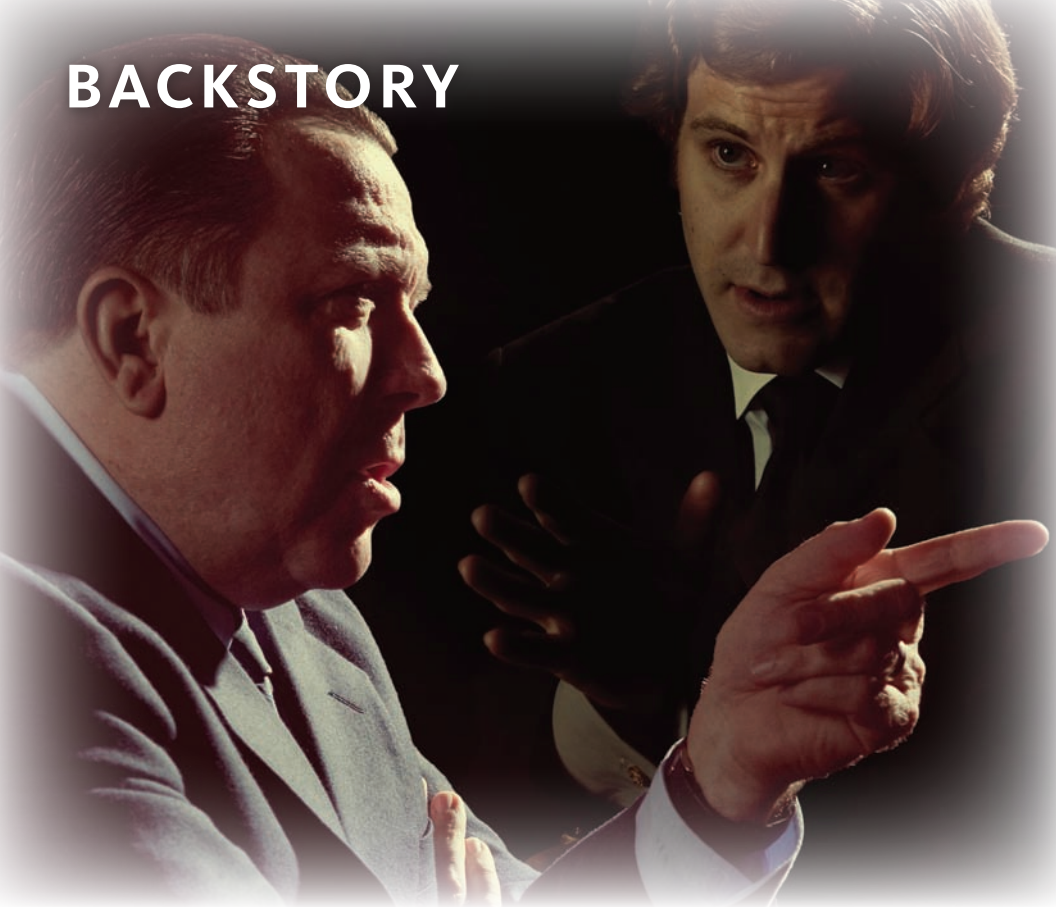


BACKSTORY



BY PETER MORGAN

FROST / NIXON



Your behind-the-scenes look at TimeLine productions

YESTERDAY'S STORIES.
TODAY'S TOPICS.

TimeLine
Theatre Company

a message



Dear Friends,

Welcome to TimeLine's 14th season! The last year has been a tremendous one: We increased subscriptions by 50 percent, consistently played to sold-out houses, and presented some of the most critically acclaimed work in our history.

Now we are poised to keep pushing TimeLine forward.

By attending, donating and passionately advocating our work, you have helped TimeLine raise the bar for what we can achieve, both on stage and off.

Your support is what enables us to aggressively pursue ambitious productions, tailoring them to fit our intimate theatre and resonate through our historical approach. And it allowed us to add two dynamic talents to our full-time staff: Tracy Domeracki as Audience Services Manager and my long-time colleague and fellow TimeLine co-founder Nick Bowling as Associate Artistic Director.

All of these moves are designed to enhance what you experience here. We want TimeLine to be a place for people to come together, feel a sense of community and engage in a dialogue about our place in history through great and thought-provoking theatre. We are grateful for this recent wave of success, and we're eager to keep it going by talking about what's next.

As TimeLine's Company Members discussed plans for this season, we returned once again to our history-based mission and our core value of fostering a connection with you. That interchange is at the heart of everything we choose to produce. With every play the ultimate question always is: "What is the dialogue this will start for our audience? What's the conversation to be had?" And I couldn't be more excited about our 2010-11 season — four plays that will get you talking and hopefully raise your curiosity to learn more.

We begin in a place that feels a bit like where we just left off. During our extended run of *The Farnsworth Invention*, TimeLine spent many months examining the birth of television and the possibilities that

Philo Farnsworth and David Sarnoff dreamed about for that new medium. Now we fast forward a few decades. In *Frost/Nixon*, two different titans clash as they attempt to leverage television for their own advantage.

David Frost had everything to gain when the driven, media-savvy personality won the prize to be the first interrogator of Richard Nixon following the president's resignation. And Nixon had nothing left to lose as he clung to aspirations of regaining a sense of prominence and respectability.

It was a clash of hubris, played out for millions of viewers in a defining moment of television. Farnsworth's invention was redefining the political landscape, transforming how our elected officials package themselves for public consumption.

Frost/Nixon is an ideal fit for TimeLine, not only as the follow-up to *The Farnsworth Invention*, but as the launch to a year of plays that all grapple with driven individuals leveraging different forms of media (television, book publishing, newspapers) to convey a story and inspire action.

Our season will transport you with Paul and Julia Child to France in the 1950s. Initially they aimed to expose Parisians to the best of America. Little did they know that Julia would ultimately do the reverse, igniting a food frenzy in this country via French cuisine and culture. It's a foodie love story for the ages.

From France we will travel to Sudan for Winter Miller's must-see drama *In Darfur*. Inspired by her travels with *The New York Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof, Miller

puts us in the shoes of an American journalist doing what she can to get the world to notice a developing genocide. It's a powerful, provocative piece and I hope you'll be a part of the conversation it sparks this winter.

Finally, we'll return to our own backyard for Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur's comedic time capsule, *The Front Page*. Surely much has changed in Chicago politics and journalism since their days on the beat in the 1920s? Or not. Don't miss this hilarious and dark

look at how far things have (haven't?) come in the frantic world of breaking news and political maneuvering.

So let's get started. Welcome back for a glimpse at what was next for the television dreams of Farnsworth and Sarnoff. We're proud to give you the Chicago premiere of Peter Morgan's *Frost/Nixon*. And we hope you'll keep tuning in throughout the year.

All the best,

Special Events and Resources

the conversation

TimeLine looks forward to engaging our audience in conversations inspired by our productions. We hope you will participate in the array of additional resources and online communities available:

SUNDAY SCHOLARS

After the show on **Sunday, Sept. 12** is Sunday Scholars, a one-hour panel discussion featuring experts talking about the play's themes and issues. **Admission is free.** Visit timelinetheatre.com to learn more.

COMPANY MEMBER DISCUSSION

Our Company Members shape the artistic vision and choose programming for TimeLine. On **Sunday, Sept. 26**, join them for a free post-show discussion.

POST-SHOW DISCUSSIONS

On **Wednesdays, Aug. 25, Sept. 8 and 22; Thursdays, Sept. 2 and 16; and Sundays, Aug. 29, Sept. 5 and 19**, moderated by a TimeLine Company member and featuring cast and production staff.

DRAMATURGY

A **study guide** is available at timelinetheatre.com.

BLOG AND MORE!

Find behind-the-scenes insight and conversation on our blog, **Behind the 'Line**, via timelinetheatre.com.



For the latest, be a Facebook fan (**TimeLine Theatre Company**) and follow us on Twitter (**@timelinetheatre!**)

Peter Morgan

the playwright

“It will be a sort of intellectual Rocky.”

— Peter Morgan, describing to David Frost his idea for a play about Frost’s interviews with former President Richard Nixon

Peter Morgan was born April 10, 1963, in London, England. He holds a degree in fine arts from the University of Leeds. Morgan is the author of numerous screenplays. With David Frears he has written *The Deal* and *The Queen*. For television, he wrote *Mickey Love*, *The Jury* and *Longford*. For film, he wrote *Martha*, *Meet Frank*, *Daniel and Laurence*; *The Last King of Scotland*; and *The Other*

Boleyn Girl. *Frost/Nixon* was Morgan’s first stage play; he also wrote the screenplay for the film. He was nominated for an Academy Award for the screenplays of *Frost/Nixon* and *The Queen*. He also has been nominated for numerous other screenwriting awards. He won British Academy of Film and Television Arts awards for the movie *The Last King of Scotland* and the television



Peter Morgan.

program *Longford*. He won a Golden Globe award for *The Queen*. He wrote the screenplay for the upcoming *Hereafter* and co-wrote the screenplay for the soon-to-be-filmed *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* with John le Carré, the novel’s author.

Production History

the story

Frost/Nixon premiered at the Donmar Warehouse, London, in August 2006. It moved to Broadway in 2007. Both productions starred Frank Langella as former president Richard Nixon and Michael Sheen as broadcaster David Frost. The actors reprised their roles for the film, which was released in December 2008 and directed by Ron Howard. A national tour starring Stacy Keach as Nixon and Alan Cox as Frost played in Los Angeles, Sacramento, Seattle, Cincinnati, Houston, Boston, Dallas and Washington, D.C. Productions also have been staged in Memphis and Boca Raton, Fla.



(Left) Poster image from the original Donmar Warehouse production of *Frost/Nixon*, 2006.

(Below) Michael Sheen and Frank Langella as Frost and Nixon.



TIMELINE: The Nixon Presidency

- **November 5, 1968** Richard Nixon is elected the 37th president of the U.S. with only 43.4 percent of the popular vote.
- **January 20, 1969** Nixon is inaugurated.
- **May 12, 1969** White House aides install wiretaps after a leak about the secret bombing of Cambodia results in an article in *The New York Times*.
- **July 23, 1970** Nixon approves the Huston Plan, which widely expands intelligence gathering. He rescinds it five days later.
- **June 13, 1971** *The New York Times* publishes the Pentagon Papers, a leaked government report that further erodes support of the Vietnam War.
- **February 21-28, 1972** Nixon travels to the People’s Republic of China for talks with Mao Zedong, chairman of the Chinese Communist Party.
- **May 22-29, 1972** Nixon visits the Soviet Union for talks with Leonid Brezhnev, the general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Their talks lead to the signing of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT), the first pact to limit nuclear weapons.
- **June 17, 1972** Five men — James McCord Jr., a former CIA agent, and Cuban-Americans Bernard Barker, Frank Sturgis, Eugenio Martinez and Virgilio Gonzalez — are arrested breaking in to the Democratic National Committee (DNC) headquarters in the Watergate building.

Richard M. Nixon

the president



Shelves have been dedicated to books on Richard Milhous Nixon and his presidency. His life and presidency are marked by great contrasts. He rose in politics by capitalizing on fears of communism, yet his great foreign-policy successes as president were opening relations with the People’s Republic of China and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. However, these successes are over-

shadowed by his abuses of presidential power and the scandal relating to the break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate building. Nixon resigned during the scandal; he was the first president to resign from office. His reputation never fully recovered.

Nixon was born Jan. 9, 1913, in Yorba Linda, Calif., to working-class parents Harold and Hannah Milhous Nixon.

Though Nixon excelled in school, he was a loner. He lost his campaign to be senior class president of his high school. He had scholarships to Yale and Harvard universities but enrolled at nearby Whittier College because of the family’s limited finances. He was a debater, actor and football player. After graduating from Whittier in 1934, he went to the Duke University School of Law and became the Duke

Bar Association president. Although he graduated third in his class in 1937, he was rejected by East Coast law firms and went to work at a law firm in Whittier.

At this time, he began pursuing Thelma Catherine Ryan, known as Pat. It was a two-and-a-half year courtship and they married June 21, 1940. They had two daughters: Patricia (Tricia), born Feb. 21, 1946, and Julie, born July 5, 1948.

When the Republicans asked Nixon to run for the U.S. House of Representatives in 1946, he seized on the growing fear of Communism as part of his campaign against the incumbent Democrat, Jeremiah "Jerry" Voorhis. The tactics were successful, and as the freshman Congressman from California, he sat on the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

In 1950 he ran successfully for the U.S. Senate, again painting his opponent as soft on Communism.

In 1952, Nixon was tapped to be Dwight Eisenhower's vice-presidential running mate. He was almost dropped from the ticket when he was accused of having a private campaign fund for personal use.



Richard and Pat Nixon, circa 1977.

Nixon gave a televised speech to try to rehabilitate his image. He listed the family debts and income but stated that the one item he intended to keep was the cocker spaniel that his daughter Tricia had named Checkers. The speech came to be known as the Checkers speech and succeeded in bringing him back from the brink of scandal.

After two terms as vice president, Nixon unsuccessfully ran against Massachusetts Sen. John F. Kennedy for president. In 1960, they participated in the first televised presidential debates. Those who listened to the debate on radio thought Nixon won, while those who watched the debate on television thought Kennedy won. It was the beginning of a new era for the role television would play in presidential politics.

In 1962, Nixon ran for governor of California and lost. It seemed to be the end of his

political career. He did not run for president in 1964; instead he campaigned for Republican candidates nationwide. By the time he announced his candidacy for president in 1968, most Republican candidates owed him a favor, and he won the nomination. Nixon portrayed himself as the candidate of stability and beat Democratic candidate Hubert Humphrey by approximately 500,000 votes.

In 1972, running against Sen. George McGovern of South Dakota, Nixon was re-elected by a landslide.

Despite his administration's numerous policy successes, Nixon's presidency always will be marred by the events surrounding the cover-up of the June 17, 1972, break-in of the Democratic National Committee headquarters.

There is no evidence Nixon authorized the break-in. However, six days after five men were arrested he approved Chief of Staff H.R. Haldeman's plan to make it appear to FBI investigators that the break-in had been authorized by the CIA, and to have the CIA pressure the FBI to stop its investigation. The president's personal attorney, Herbert Kalmbach, and other campaign advisers

"I have never been a quitter. To leave office before my term is completed is abhorrent to every instinct in my body, but as president, I must put the interest of America first."

— Richard Nixon's resignation speech, Aug. 8, 1974

ers paid hush money to the Watergate burglars.

The details of Watergate unraveled in newspapers, particularly *The Washington Post*, and on national television during the Senate Watergate hearings. On March 23, 1973, James McCord Jr., one of the five Watergate burglars, implicated the White House in the cover-up. On July 16, Alexander Butterfield, Nixon's deputy assistant, revealed that the Oval Office had a taping system. On July 23, special prosecutor Archibald Cox subpoenaed the tapes. Two days later, Nixon refused to surrender them. On April 29, 1974, Nixon addressed the nation on television and offered to release edited transcripts of the tapes, but he misjudged the American public, which was incensed

over the scandal. On July 24, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered Nixon to turn over the tapes. Later that month, the House Judiciary Committee passed three articles of impeachment, including obstruction of justice, abuse of power and violating his presidential oath. Nixon resigned on Aug. 8, 1974, rather than face impeachment proceedings in Congress.

Pat Nixon died on June 23, 1993, of lung cancer; a lifelong smoker, she never permitted anyone to photograph her smoking. Richard Nixon died on April 22, 1994, four days after suffering a stroke.

This is an edited version of a longer article, which you can find in our Study Guide at timelinetheatre.com.

Chief Domestic Advisor John D. Ehrlichman (from left), Chief of Staff H.R. Haldeman and National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger with Nixon in 1971.



- **June 20, 1972** Nixon discusses the arrests with H.R. Haldeman, his chief of staff. Later, it is discovered 18½ minutes of the tape of this conversation is erased.
- **September 15, 1972** A federal grand jury indicts G. Gordon Liddy, Howard Hunt, both part of the White House Plumbers Unit (an internal group created to investigate and stop leaks), and the five Watergate burglars.
- **November 7, 1972** Nixon is re-elected president with 60.8 percent of the popular vote.
- **January 1973** Guilty pleas are entered by the five men who broke into the DNC offices. Liddy and Hunt are tried for their involvement and found guilty.
- **March 21, 1973** Nixon and John Dean, the White House counsel, discuss the continued silence of the burglars, hush money and clemency. Hunt's attorney receives \$75,000 later that day.
- **April 15, 1973** Nixon announces the resignations of Haldeman, Chief Domestic Advisor John D. Ehrlichman and Attorney General Richard Kleindienst. Dean's dismissal also is announced.
- **May 17, 1973** The Senate Watergate Committee begins televised hearings.
- **May 18, 1973** Archibald Cox is named the special prosecutor for any legal issues related to Watergate.
- **June 1973** Dean testifies before the Senate Watergate Committee and accuses the president of being involved in the cover-up.

the interviewer

David Paradine Frost was born April 7, 1939, in Tenterden, England. He was the only son of a poor Methodist minister, the Rev. W.J. Paradine Frost, and his wife, Mona, born after two sisters.

Frost went to Gillingham Preparatory School, then Wellingborough Grammar School, both state-funded schools. He was religious and preached occasionally for his father and at other Methodist churches. He was an avid football and cricket player; he regularly played with his staff and at charity events after he became famous. He was awarded a scholarship to Gonville and Caius College at Cambridge University.

While at Cambridge, Frost was more active in extra-curricular activities than in his studies. He was editor of the literary magazine

David Frost, age 9.



Granta and part of the comedy troupe Footlights.

As Footlights had for many of its members, Frost's work with the group helped launch him into television. He worked for ITV regionally before 1962, when he became the host of the satiric television program *That Was The Week That Was* on BBC. Though the BBC pulled the contentious but successful show less than a year later, TW3, as it was known, launched Frost's career.

He then hosted a series of television programs, including the satiric *The Frost Report* (which featured a young John Cleese, later a member of Monty Python's *Flying Circus*) and *The Frost Programme*, where he became known as an interviewer of famous and sometimes controversial individuals. He also had television programs in the United States and Australia.

He won two Emmys for the *David Frost Show*, in 1970 and 1971, and the BAFTA Fellowship. Between 1993 and 2005, he had a BBC current-events program called *Breakfast with Frost*.

Frost is not just a television interviewer, though: He is

an author, speaker, televi-



David Frost featured on the cover of *People* magazine, May 1977.

sion and film producer and co-founder of two British television networks, LWT and TV-am.

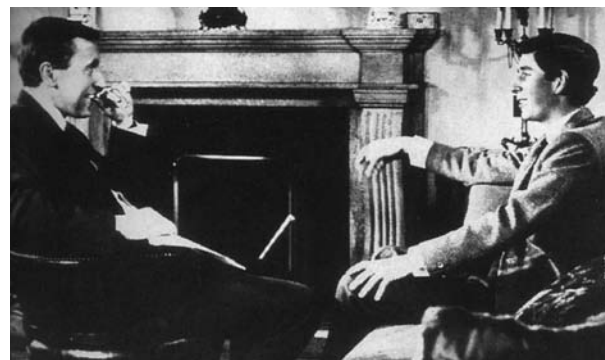
In addition to Richard Nixon, during his career Frost has interviewed six other presidents: Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. He also has interviewed the eight most recent British prime ministers: Harold Wilson, Edward Heath, James Callaghan, Margaret Thatcher, John Major, Tony Blair and both Gordon Brown and David Cameron when they were still Members of Parliament.

In the U.S., Frost remains best-known for his 1977 interviews of former President Nixon. At the

At the time of the interviews, he was perhaps best known as a talk-show host and not thought of as a serious journalist.

time of the interviews, he was perhaps best known as a talk-show host and not thought of as a serious journalist. However, he had done substantive interviews with a variety of world and American political figures. For example, he interviewed the 1968 presidential candidates for American television: Robert Kennedy, Richard Nixon and George Wallace. However, questions he put to the candidates such as "What is a distinguishing American characteristic?" and "What is the root of the American malaise?" may not have been perceived as sufficiently hard-hitting.

Interviewing HRH Prince Charles, circa 1969.



In his personal life, Frost was known for liaisons with beautiful and famous women. He also is known for remaining friendly with past girlfriends. He dated actress Janette Scott, who ended her relationship with Frost to marry singer Mel Tormé; singer and actress Diahnn Carroll; and socialite Caroline Cushing. He married actress Lynne Frederick, the widow of Peter Sellers, in 1981; they divorced the next year. He married Lady Carina Fitzalan-Howard March 19, 1983; they have three sons.

Frost was appointed to the Order of the British Empire in 1970. He was knighted in 1993, becoming Sir David Frost.

- **July 18, 1973** The presidential taping system is dismantled.
- **July 23, 1973** Cox subpoenas the recordings of nine presidential meetings.
- **July 25, 1973** Nixon refuses to turn over the recordings, citing executive privilege.
- **August 29, 1973** Judge John J. Sirica, chief judge for the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, rules the president must surrender the tapes. The White House says it will appeal.
- **October 10, 1973** Vice President Spiro Agnew resigns after admitting to unrelated tax-evasion charges.
- **October 12, 1973** The U.S. Court of Appeals rules the White House must turn over the tapes. Nixon names Rep. Gerald R. Ford of Michigan, House minority leader, as vice president.
- **October 20, 1973** Nixon orders Attorney General Elliot Richardson to fire Cox. He refuses and resigns. William Ruckelshaus, the deputy attorney general, also refuses and resigns. Robert Bork, the solicitor general, becomes the acting head of the Justice Department and carries out the order. This becomes known as the Saturday Night Massacre.
- **October 23, 1973** Twenty-two bills are introduced in Congress calling for an impeachment investigation.
- **November 1, 1973** Leon Jaworski is named the new special prosecutor.
- **November 3, 1973** Fred Buzhardt, Special White House Counsel for Watergate Matters, and Leonard Garment, acting counsel to the president, recommend to Nixon that he resign.

the interviews

Beginning March 23, 1977, David Frost sat down and interviewed former President Richard Nixon for 28 hours over 12 days held over four weeks. It was agreed the interviews would cover domestic and foreign policy, the Watergate break in and subsequent investigation and Nixon the man. These would be edited into four programs.

The Watergate segment, which aired May 4, 1977, drew the largest world audience for a news interview. It was watched by 45 million Americans and remains to this day the largest audience for a political interview.

The interviews could not take place in Nixon's home in San Clemente, Calif., because the transmissions from a nearby U.S. Coast Guard station interfered with the film equipment. Instead, they were held in the home of Republicans Martha Lea and Harold Smith, in nearby Dana Point. The couple was compensated for the use of their home. They would leave



David Frost interviews Richard Nixon, 1977.

during the day and receive a call when filming was finished and they could return. The Frost and Nixon teams used the entire home while they were there. For example, Nixon ate by himself in the master bedroom, and the Nixon team prepped in the den. The Smiths still live in house.

The Frost/Nixon interviews were not without controversy. Some questioned whether an Englishman had sufficient understanding of and interest in American politics to be a good interviewer. Although

Frost retained complete editorial control, questions also circled about Nixon profiting from the interview. Nixon was paid \$600,000 plus 20 percent of the profit. Frost was criticized for checkbook journalism, though NBC had offered \$300,000 to be able to interview the former president before dropping out of the bidding. To add to the difficulties, none of the major U.S. networks wanted to buy the interviews. Frost had to sell the programs to individual television stations, find financial backers and find half the advertisers.

“Richard Nixon has had the last laugh in his long and bitter feud with the press. By selling his story of his presidency and its disastrous end to David Frost and friends he has rejected the news business in favor of show business.”

—Charles B. Seib in *The Washington Post* after the Frost/Nixon Interviews were announced

the others

James Reston, Jr.

James Reston, Jr., was born in 1941 in New York City and raised in Washington, D.C. He attended the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill and received a bachelor's degree in philosophy. He was an assistant to U.S. Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall from 1964-1965 and in the U.S. Army from 1965-1968. His father, who was a journalist at *The New York Times*, was on President Richard Nixon's enemies' list. A writer and historian, he has written numerous books and articles for national magazines. In 1976, when David Frost asked him to join his team preparing for the Nixon interviews, Reston was working on a novel and teaching creative writing. His book *The Conviction of Richard Nixon: The Untold Story of the Frost/Nixon Interviews* is his account of the events surrounding the interviews based on his journals, which were also used by Peter Morgan in writing *Frost/Nixon*.

Jack Brennan

John “Jack” Vincent Brennan was born Aug. 16, 1937. He graduated from Providence College in Rhode Island in 1959. A Marine, he saw combat in Vietnam and was awarded a Bronze Star and the Purple Heart after the battle for Khe Sanh. He became an aide to President Nixon in 1968. He accompanied Nixon on his historic visit to the People's Republic of China in 1972, and he was on the helicopter that took the Nixon family to San Clemente after Nixon's resignation. Brennan was Nixon's chief of staff during the time of the Frost/Nixon interviews. He retired as a Marine colonel.

Caroline Cushing

Caroline Cushing was born in Ascot but attended Swiss boarding schools. The former wife of socialite Howard Cushing, she was instrumental in securing financial backers for the Frost/Nixon interviews — she had been dating Frost for several years at the time. She described her first date with Frost as flying to Zaire for the George Foreman-Muhammad Ali fight now known as “The Rumble in the Jungle,” where Frost was going to host the fight. Their relationship ended after the interviews and Cushing remained in California. In Los Angeles, she wrote for the *Herald Examiner* and later worked as editor of a variety of periodicals including *Vanity Fair*, *The New Yorker* and *Talk* magazine. She is the co-founder of C4 Consulting, a marketing and media relations firm. She remains good friends with Frost and his wife. She is now married to Bill Graham, the son of the late Katherine Graham, publisher of *The Washington Post*.

- **November 21, 1973** White House attorneys disclose that 18½ minutes on the June 20, 1972 tape is missing.
- **March 1, 1974** The federal grand jury indicts seven men in the cover-up: Haldeman; Erlichman; John Mitchell, a former attorney general and the head of Nixon's re-election committee; Robert Mardian, former assistant attorney general and counsel for the committee to re-elect the president; Charles Colson, a former special counsel for Nixon; Gordon Strachan, an aide to Haldeman; and Kenneth Parkinson, counsel to the re-election committee. Nixon is named an un-indicted co-conspirator, although this is kept secret.
- **April 29, 1974** Nixon appears on television and announces he will turn over the edited transcripts and make them public; he does so the following day, but still refuses to turn over the tapes subpoenaed by the special prosecutor.
- **June 10-19, 1974** Nixon visits the Middle East.
- **June 25-July 3, 1974** Nixon attends a summit meeting in the Soviet Union.
- **July 24, 1974** The U.S. Supreme Court rules unanimously that the president must turn over all 64 tapes.
- **July 27-July 30, 1974** The House Judiciary Committee passes three articles of impeachment, including obstruction of justice and abuse of power.
- **August 9, 1974** Nixon resigns. Vice President Gerald Ford is sworn in as president.

the interview

TimeLine Associate Artist Mike Tutaj has designed video or projections for numerous productions at TimeLine, including *The Farnsworth Invention*, *The History Boys*, *Tesla's Letters*, *Fiorello!*, *This Happy Breed* and *Martin Furey's Shot*. He returns again to design projections and, for the first time at TimeLine, live video for *Frost/Nixon*. During the rehearsal process, TimeLine Artistic Director PJ Powers (PJP) interviewed Mike (MT) about his busy career and his work at TimeLine.

(PJP) So how long have you been doing video and projections for theatre, and how did you start doing it? It's not what you studied in college, correct?

(MT) I studied music at DePaul University, with a focus on sound recording. After graduating, I found myself more and more drawn toward theatre and was able to translate my knowledge of audio, acoustics, technology and music into designing sound for the stage.

My first video design was in 2002, for *Barrel of Monkeys*, an educational theatre company of which I'm a member. The move to video/projection design seemed pretty smooth, as I was able to parlay my skills in sound design into the visual realm. Both disciplines are achieved through sequencing and blending elements that color the scene and help in telling the story, just through different senses. Though, so often, audio is incorporated

directly into a video design, so I think my background in sound is a real strength in creating the design that I hope to realize.

(PJP) Video imagery is becoming a much bigger part of many theatre productions, and now many college theatre programs are even starting to add majors in this field. Why do you think there is a growing trend toward video use in plays?

(MT) It's a number of factors. Certainly the more that theatre artists learn about what this design element can do, the more comfortable they are to introduce to their own project, and the more they come to rely on it. This too goes for audiences. Video and multimedia are growing omnipresent in the modern human experience, and it stands to reason that art created in this time would not only reflect this, but also utilize it as a means of communicating a story or emotion. We're seeing playwrights who are now



detailing media elements into their plays. We are seeing directors who are stretching the possibilities of their vision by having experience with the new tools of theatre, and audiences that have an expectation of what they know it can do.

(PJP) One of the first shows you did here, *Martin's Furey's Shot*, used a ton of old slide projectors to achieve your design. That was just five years ago. How has the field — and technology — changed your work?

(MT) Yeah. I still think about that show and shake my head at how we pulled that off. That show was such a learning experience for me in terms of having to embrace the technology that we have to create the design I'm imagining. And this is true of every aspect of design — as technology progresses, we all have to relearn our craft with new tools making things possible that were impossible only a few years ago. Learning new

technologies really gets me thinking in new ways and inspires me.

(PJP) I know you always walk a fine line between adding visual elements that complement and enhance the storytelling, and not overpowering the story or the actors on stage. How do you find the right balance?

(MT) It's really the goal of the entire design team to create a cohesive process for delivering the story. That's the reason, after all, that we are creating live theatre. Anything that takes away from the story or breaks the audience connection with the world we're creating is a detriment. With projections and media it's easy to distract. Try to engage in a conversation with

someone when there's a TV with a music video on right behind them!

Apart from the visual distraction, there is also the issue of intellectual distraction. Projection designs are not always an omnipresent element in production. So when they appear, are they understood and seamless, and do they establish a trust with the audience in terms of rules and function?

This speaks to a larger challenge of projection design. Projections can serve many roles in the context of a play. They can be digital scenery, they can create lighting effects or special effects, they can interact with the actors as would another character, or they can supplement gaps in the narrative. If the function of the media elements isn't clear, it can be just as distracting to the audience as a flashy video during a quiet moment.

(PJP) Right now we're in rehearsal for *Frost/Nixon*, and I know you're still toying with how video will play out in the show. Knowing that things may still change before opening night, can you talk about your plans?

(MT) One of the critical aspects that this play addresses is the power of the

televised image. Our two eponymous characters have very different relationships with the medium and how it has shaped their public images. So with that in mind director Louis Contey and I agreed that the magnified images of Nixon and Frost would do well in connecting the audience with the larger-than-life significance and stakes of these historical interviews. So we mean to utilize two cameras — one on each of them — like in the original interviews. There will be a bank of television monitors on each side of the set so the audience can see each man's reactions magnified, and one larger screen upstage, which represents the editorial of the broadcasters. We're also using projections to show select other television moments for each man that appear in the script.

(PJP) What are the benefits and challenges of designing in TimeLine's space?

(MT) The size of the space is at once TimeLine's best asset and biggest challenge. I'm constantly amazed at the scale of the shows that have gone into this space, while maintaining the intimacy and proximity to the action on stage. Of course, a space this size limits the

*Projections were an integral part of the design of *Tesla's Letters* (2007).*



number and placement of instruments, but it keeps the productions agile and creative as we find ways to use the space.

(PJP) What have been some of your favorite shows to work on at TimeLine?

(MT) The process for each show tends to be vastly different, and I like that. The first show I did at TimeLine was *This Happy Breed* in 2004. I still count that as one of my favorites as it was so instructive in understanding more about TimeLine as a company, and it's big part of why I always love coming back. I really enjoyed the challenges of *Tesla's Letters*, filming

sequences with the actors and helping to create video installations for the adapted lobby space. I also particularly enjoyed *The History Boys* as I was able to inject the video sequences with much of my own humor and personality. And I'll just add that while I didn't work on it, I particularly loved *Not Enough Air*. I mean, while we're talking about favorite TimeLine shows!

(PJP) You're in high demand nowadays. How many shows do you design each year, and how do you juggle all of them while also doing crazy things like, say, riding a bike across the country like you did last summer?

(MT) Indeed I've been keeping busy, working on 12-15 shows a year. I've been really fortunate to have worked with so many talented artists in the last few years. It's really keeping myself busy working with these folks that helps me to continue to shape my design skills. So you, and those who know me, can imagine what a big deal it was for me to slow down and take so much time off to do some pedaling last summer. It was a great time and therapeutic.

It was nice to get away, but nicer to know I had a great home here to come back to.

In Martin Furey's Shot (2005), the entire set became a projection surface for Mike Tutaj's designs evoking South Africa.



In grateful appreciation of the generous support of our donors, TimeLine invites our supporters behind-the-scenes for special events and opportunities to connect with artists, Company Members and staff.

Dine with the Artistic Director

Exclusively for donors of \$10,000 or more — A private dining experience with Artistic Director PJ Powers.

Opening Nights

Invitation to all openings for donors giving \$5,000 or more; Invitation to a select opening for donors giving \$2,500 or more — Two complimentary tickets to one or more Opening Night celebrations, including a post-show reception with members of the cast and production team as well as TimeLine's Board, staff and Company Members.

Autographed Play Poster

Exclusively for donors giving \$2,500 or more — A show poster signed by the entire cast of one production.

The History Makers Event

Monday, September 27
Exclusively for donors giving \$1,000 or more — This party was created to thank TimeLine Theatre's most generous donors. Mingle with Company Members,

artists, staff and other TimeLine enthusiasts over hors d'oeuvres and drinks.

Private Play Reading Event

Monday, January 31
Exclusively for donors giving \$750 or more — Be among the select few to experience the reading of a play under consideration for next season. TimeLine Company members will be on hand at the conclusion of the performance to answer your questions about the reading and the season selection.

Dessert on Stage

Friday, November 5
Exclusively for donors giving \$500 or more — Join the cast of *Mastering the Art* onstage after the 8 pm performance for champagne and treats.

Donor Breakfast

Sunday, May 22
Exclusively for donors giving \$250 or more — Join Artistic Director PJ Powers and Managing Director Elizabeth K. Auman for a light breakfast as they discuss their vision for TimeLine.

Lobby Donor Board Listing

Donors of \$150 or more

Program Book Listing

Donors of \$100 or more

Visit timelinetheatre.com or contact Development Manager Lydia Swift at (773) 281-8463 for more information about donating to TimeLine.

BACKSTORY: THE CREDITS

Dramaturgy @ Historical Research by Maren Robinson

Written by Maren Robinson, PJ Powers, Lydia Swift and Lara Goetsch

Edited by Karen A. Callaway & Lara Goetsch

Photography by Lara Goetsch

Graphic Design by Lara Goetsch

Frost/Nixon Photo by Ryan Robinson

Backstory is published four times each season.

Pictured on front cover (from left): Actor Matthew Brumlow; director Louis Contey; actors Beth Lacke and Andrew Carter; dramaturg Maren Robinson; and actor Terry Hamilton.

Pictured on back cover (from left): Scenic designer Keith Pitts; actor Michael Kingston; actors Don Bender, Ian Maxwell and Jessica Thigpen; costume designer Alex Wren Meadows; actor Dennis Grimes; and dramaturg Maren Robinson and actor David Parkes.

Our Mission:

TimeLine Theatre presents stories **inspired by history** that connect with today's social and political issues.

Our collaborative artistic team produces provocative theatre that engages, educates, entertains and enlightens.

the play



August 21 - October 10, 2010

previews 8/17 - 8/20

by **PETER MORGAN**

directed by **LOUIS CONTEY**

Chicago Premiere! Three years after the Watergate scandal ended his presidency, Richard Nixon has agreed to break his silence in a series of interviews with up-and-coming British broadcaster David Frost. Behind-the-scenes it's a battle of egos for the upper hand in controlling history, but as the cameras roll, the world is riveted by a remarkably honest exchange between one man who has lost everything and another with everything to gain.

Cast

Matthew Brumlow**
 Don Bender
 Andrew Carter
 Dennis Grimes
 Terry Hamilton
 Michael Kingston
 Beth Lacke
 Ian Maxwell
 David Parkes
 Jessica Thigpen

**Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers.

Production Team

Keith Pitts, U.S.A.:
Scenic Designer
 Alex Wren Meadows:
Costume Designer
 Keith Parham, U.S.A.:
Lighting Designer
 Andrew Hansen:
Sound Designer
 Mike Tutaj:
Projections Designer
 Julia Eberhardt:
Properties Designer
 Maren Robinson: *Dramaturg*
 Cheney Tardio: *Stage Manager*
 John Kearns:
Production Manager

Those designers and scenic artists identified by U.S.A. are members of United Scenic Artists, IATSE Local 829, AFL-CIO

AUGUST 2010

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
23	24	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

SEPTEMBER 2010

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

OCTOBER 2010

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10						

- Regular Performance**
- Preview Performance**
- Opening Night *Sold Out***
- Post-Show Discussion** with cast & production crew **Free**
- Sunday Scholars** a one-hour post-show panel discussion with experts on the themes and issues of the play **Free**
- Company Member Discussion** a conversation with TimeLine's Company members **Free**

SHOW TIMES

PREVIEWS 8 PM
 OPENING NIGHT 7 PM
 WEDNESDAYS & THURSDAYS 7:30 PM
 FRIDAYS 8 PM
 SATURDAYS 4 PM & 8 PM
 SUNDAYS 2 PM