

JOAN

A full-length play by Donna Kaz

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

JOAN of Arc/Ensemble.

ACTRESS 1, French History Professor/St. Margaret/French Notary/Ensemble.

ACTRESS 2, St. Catherine/Theologian/Prelate/Ensemble.

ACTRESS 3, Joan's mother/The Dauphin, Charles VII, Earl of Warwick/Ensemble.

ACTOR 1, Joan's Father/Medieval Weapons Expert/Bishop Pierre Cauchon/Ensemble.

ACTOR 2, St. Michael/French Soldier/Inquisitor of the Faith/Ensemble.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

The movement is an intrinsic part of this play and helps to tell the story and move the action forward. It is important to establish an ensemble during rehearsals that will work together to create the scenes of this piece that do not contain text. Slow, almost dance-like movement, combined with music and lighting are essential ways the actors establish mood and telegraph the story prior to each written scene. It is important to balance the use of this technique between dramatic battle scenes and the other dramatic scenes of Joan's life with the element of joy and fun within the play. While the movement can be an honest way to portray battles, it should also be used to tap into the comedy and bliss that Joan must have felt as a teen who fully embraced what she became when she listened to her heart.

(An empty space with audience seated on three sides. The playing area is defined with a rope placed on the floor. Inside the square there are 6 large, heavy duty black rubber containers that will be moved by the actors and used for all set pieces.)

(MUSIC: Stravinsky's Symphony of Psalms. The ENSEMBLE walks slowly into the playing space. In slow movement they circle each other. Soon they begin to bump into each other and this leads to fighting. They form a circle and one by one, each actor is thrust into the center while the others taunt them. Eventually one actor cannot escape, is pounded to the ground and raised up by the others. All let out a sound as they collapse onto the floor. Lights change. The SOUND OF BELLS. The ensemble begins to slowly come back to life, each whispering one of their lines from the play. They rise and search the playing area while their voices get louder and louder. Eventually they are shouting one sustained vowel sound together. Lights change. MUSIC: French. The ensemble changes the set into a class room.)

ACTRESS 1/FRENCH HISTORY PROFESSOR:

A brief history of France! (*The ensemble creates a class of third graders. They react joyously when they hear what their lesson will be:*) The Kings of England have always claimed France. In 1337 the Hundred Years' War begins. Now the Hundred Years' War means that for a hundred years the Kings of England attempt to unite France and England under one crown—their own. In May 1420 a treaty between the French and the English is signed. The treaty states that 1) Henry V of England will take the title of regent and heir of France. 2) Henry V will marry Catherine, the daughter of the French King Charles VI. And 3) the son of King Charles, the Dauphin, will have no say at all in the affairs of France and be declared a bastard. (*All react with shock. They rise and act out the following:*) June 1420. Henry V marries Catherine of France.

August 1422. Henry dies.

October 1422. Charles VI dies as well.

Henry V and Charles VI each leave a son. Henry VI, a baby 9 months old and Charles, the Dauphin, now 19. According to the treaty, Henry VI, an infant, is recognized as King of France and England and the Dauphin is excluded from his succession to the French throne. France divides into two parties—The Burgundians and the Armagnacs. The Burgundians support the English.

(*BURGUNDIANS improv some "English" lines such as "Would you like a cooked breakfast?"*.)

The Armagnacs become the Nationalist Party. (*ARMAGNACS improv some "French" such as "Oui, oui!"*.) The French fight the English! (*MUSIC: Praetorius. French and English battle/dance as PROFESSOR holds up cards which denote the passage of time:*) 2 years! 14 years! 53 years! 87 years! (*Eventually All are exhausted and die:*) June 1424. Joan, a peasant girl, hears her voices for the first

time. She is told that she will solve the problem between the French and the English. She is 13 years old.

(LIGHTS CHANGE.)

ST. CATHERINE: Joan! This is Saint Catherine speaking. You are destined to lead a different kind of life!

ST. MICHAEL: Joan! Your main man Saint Michael is speaking to you! You will accomplish miracles!

ST. MARGARET: Saint Margaret here, Joan! You have been chosen by the King of Heaven to restore Charles to the throne of France!

CATHERINE: You shall put on masculine clothes.

MICHAEL: You shall bear arms and become the head of the army.

MARGARET: France shall be guided by your counsel. **MICHAEL:** Give me a J!

CATHERINE & MARGARET: J!

MICHAEL: Give me an O!

CATHERINE & MARGARET: O!

MICHAEL: Give me an A!

CATHERINE & MARGARET: A!

MICHAEL: Give me an N!

CATHERINE & MARGARET: N!

MICHAEL: What's that spell?

CATHERINE/MARGARET/MICHAEL: Joan! Joan? Joan? Joan?! JOAN!?

JOAN!? JOOOOOAAAN!

JOAN: Yes?

MARGARET: You have been chosen by the King of Heaven to restore Charles to the throne of France.

JOAN: What?

CATHERINE: You shall put on masculine clothes!

MICHAEL: You shall lead an army.

JOAN: Are you sure you have the right person?

(Lights change. MUSIC: The Can Can. MOVEMENT: The joy of country life. Joan's country home.)

MOTHER: Joan! Joan, come home this instant! Joan, if you are not here by the time I count to ten you are grounded young lady. And don't think I won't do it.

One. Two. Three. Four. Don't push me. You know not to push me. Five. Six.

You're pushing. Seven. Eight. Joan, I'm getting a headache. Nine.

JOOOOAAAANNNNN!

JOAN: I'm here mother.

MOTHER: Just in the nick of time, as always. Where have you been?

JOAN: In the woods.

MOTHER: What? I told you never to go in those woods. Last year they found a dead dog in there. You don't know what's in those woods...

JOAN: Mother, I heard voices. Saint Michael, Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret spoke to me. They told me that God wants me to help save the Kingdom of France.

MOTHER: What kind of books are they making you read in school?

JOAN: I heard the voice of God, Mother.

MOTHER: Yes? Did He tell you that you should milk the cow?

JOAN: I don't know what to do!

MOTHER: I'll tell you what to do. Go and milk the cow. And don't tell your father you were in the woods. You know how he...

(FATHER enters.)

FATHER: Joan! Where have you been? You're always going off somewhere. Last night I dreamt that you ran off with a band of soldiers.

JOAN: Father, I have been in the woods. And there I heard the voice of God. He wants me to put on men's clothes and restore Charles to the throne.

FATHER: That's very nice, Joan, but did God happen to tell you how we are to escape being attacked by the Burgundians?

JOAN: No.

FATHER: Then what good is he? Next time tell him to tell you something useful.

MOTHER: You didn't really hear anything did you Joan.

JOAN: I did! I heard the voices of the saints. They told me that I must lead an army!

FATHER: That's enough! You keep talking like that and you won't be allowed out of this house!

MICHAEL: Don't listen to him Joan.

JOAN: Did you hear that?

MOTHER: Now listen to me. Go milk the cow right now young lady.

CATHERINE: Forget the cow. Listen to us!

JOAN: I am listening to you.

MOTHER: Good.

MARGARET: You must leave home. You must save France.

JOAN: I must save France!

FATHER: Fine, fine. Just do it after you milk the cow.

CATHERINE: Go to France, Joan.

MOTHER: Set the table. Supper will be ready soon.

FATHER: Milk the cow. And don't run off again.

CATHERINE: Run, Joan.

MARGARET: Go to France.

JOAN: Now?

FATHER: Now, tomorrow and the next day! See that you do your chores and don't be late for supper.

(Joan, Mother, and Father freeze.)

CATHERINE: Her father and mother watched her closely after that day.

MICHAEL: She did not go to France for three years.

MARGARET: Finally, she could not put it off any longer.

(Lights change. The woods.)

CATHERINE: Come on, Joan.

MICHAEL: Let's go, Joan.

MARGARET: Move it, Joan!

JOAN: Shut up!

MICHAEL/CATHERINE/MARGARET: What?

JOAN: I'm sixteen. Leave me alone.

CATHERINE: Oh no, no, no, no, no. Vaucoulers is the nearest town held in the name of the Dauphin.

MARGARET: Go and visit your uncle there.

MICHAEL: From there find an escort into France.

JOAN: You've got the wrong person.

MICHAEL/CATHERINE/MARGARET: We've got the wrong person not!

CATHERINE: You are destined to lead a different kind of life.

MARGARET: Listen up, girlfriend.

JOAN: Me?

MARGARET: You see anybody else here? Yoo hoo! Focus!

JOAN: But I'm a peasant girl!

MICHAEL: Yeah, so? You will accomplish miracles!

MARGARET: You have been chosen by the King of Heaven to restore Charles to the throne of France.

JOAN: You've made a big mistake.

CATHERINE: You shall put on masculine clothes.

MICHAEL: You shall bear arms and be the head of the French Army!

JOAN: Please go away.

CATHERINE: You shall put on masculine clothes.

MARGARET: France shall be guided by your council.

JOAN: This is a mistake!

CATHERINE: You shall put on masculine clothes!

MICHAEL: Check this out. You shall lead an army.

JOAN: But I don't want to lead an army!

MARGARET: You have been chosen by God, honey!

JOAN: Guess he's got to choose somebody else.

MARGARET: Wake UP! Do you want to stay here and milk the cows?

MICHAEL: Or do you want to do something!

CATHERINE: You shall put on masculine clothes!

MICHAEL: You will, like, be remembered for all time.

CATHERINE: You shall put on masculine clothes...clothes of masculinity!

JOAN: Stop saying that!

MARGARET: Wake UP! WAKE UP! Do you really, really want to stay here and milk the cows?

MICHAEL: You will, like, really, really be remembered for all time.

CATHERINE: You shall put on... COMFORTABLE clothes! (Joan's Mother and Father enter.)

FATHER: Joan? Where are you? Did you milk the cow?

MARGARET: You could stay in these totally boring fields forever.

MOTHER: Joan? Joan? JOOOOOOOAAAAAANNNN!

MICHAEL: Or you could accomplish something really cool.

FATHER: Joan, I've been thinking. Soon you'll be at the age where most young girls get married.

CATHERINE: Choose, Joan. Marriage?

MOTHER: Joan, did you milk the cow?

MICHAEL: Choose, Joan. Cows!? Or action!

(Saints urge Joan to choose. Mother and Father urge her to milk the cow and get married until...)

JOAN: ALRIGHT! I'll do it! I'll save France! (Saints celebrate. Mother and Father turn away.)

MICHAEL/CATHERINE/MARGARET: We shall be with you to help you.

JOAN: What do I do? How do I begin? When do I go?

MICHAEL/CATHERINE/MARGARET: You. You. You. You go now!

(Lights change. MUSIC: Medieval chanting. Women change into male clothing. MUSIC: Hildegard Von Bingen. MOVEMENT: The walk to Vaucoulours.)

JOAN: Stop! Is this Vaucoulers?

ALL: Yes!

JOAN: The Kingdom of France is not the Dauphin's but my Lord's. My Lord wills that the Dauphin be made King of France. Though I wear my legs to the knees on the road, I shall see the king crowned.

(Lights change. Dramatic MUSIC plays under MOVEMENT: a battle scene. Lights restore.)

ACTRESS 3: In 1428 the English began to lay siege to Orleans. The war was deadlocked. Charles held France south of the Loire River, while Henry held the north.

ACTOR 1: There is no record of what Joan looked like. The only certain aspect of her physical being is that she was a virgin.

JOAN: My voices instructed me. I must remain a maid.

ACTOR 2: January, 1429. Joan, aged 17, leaves her home town forever.

ACTOR 1: She arrives at Vaucouleurs and asks the commander of the army to send her to the king.

JOAN: I am Joan the maid. Send me to the King.

ACTOR 1: At first he laughs. Until he recalls the prophecy that said that France would be saved by a virgin.

ACTOR 2: He give her a sword, a horse and an escort.

ACTRESS 2: Joan, who never road a horse before, rides like a master.

(Joan gets on her horse, All follow on their own mounts. She skillfully gallops to the King while All try to keep up. MUSIC: Uptempo 15th century.)

ACTOR 2: She arrives at the King's castle in Chinon.

ACTRESS 3: She has gained the confidence of the men in her company.

ACTRESS 1: Not one of them lays a finger on her.

ACTRESS 2: She is talked about in the towns.

ACTOR 1: So far she has accomplished...nothing! Joan requests a meeting with the Dauphin. For two days he sends messengers to interview her.

JOAN: I shall only speak to the Dauphin.

ACTRESS: Finally, the Dauphin agrees to see her. On her way into the castle a man yells out...

ACTRESS 2/MAN: Is that not the maid? Why if I had her for one night she wouldn't be the same! Ha!

JOAN: Why do you deny God when you are so near death?

ACTRESS 2/MAN: Near death. Why I'm just a young lad...(Man dies.)

ACTRESS 3: Joan enters the castle. The Dauphin attempts to conceal himself.

(Dauphin puts the crown on someone else and seats her on the throne. Joan knocks on the door.)

ALL: Who eez it?

JOAN: I am Joan the Maid. I am here to see the King!

ALL: Entres!

(At first Joan kneels at the feet of the imposter but suddenly gets up and picks the Dauphin out of the laughing crowd. She kneels at the Dauphin's feet.)

JOAN: The King of Heaven sends me to you with the message that you will be crowned King in the town of Reims.

ACTRESS 3/DAUPHIN: It is not I who is King.

JOAN: I know it is you.

DAUPHIN: Leave us! (*All but Joan and Dauphin sit on the side:*) Why are you here?

JOAN: I come directed by God.

DAUPHIN: How do you know it is God who directs you?

JOAN: He told me.

DAUPHIN: When?

JOAN: When I was thirteen.

DAUPHIN: How old are you now?

JOAN: Seventeen.

DAUPHIN: And you still believe it?

JOAN: Yes.

DAUPHIN: Good for you.

JOAN: God will give you back your kingdom. You will be crowned at Reims.

DAUPHIN: Prove it.

JOAN: Give me an army and I shall.

DAUPHIN: How do I know you won't turn on me? How do I know you will not use the army against me.

JOAN: Charles, you must put your faith in God.

DAUPHIN: Who are you to tell me such a thing? I'll tell you who you are. You're nothing. A peasant girl! You don't know how to read or write. You have no money. You're a girl dressed up to look like a boy. You have no strength for battle. Quite frankly, you're weird.

JOAN: Please listen to me. I have come to make war on the English. I will lead the battle of Orleans.

DAUPHIN: That is the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard.

JOAN: I need soldiers.

DAUPHIN: Why don't you ask God for them?

JOAN: God would give them to me, if this were his kingdom. But is your kingdom.

DAUPHIN: It is not mine, it is Henry's Kingdom!

JOAN: It is the Lord's and the Lord wishes you to be made King.

DAUPHIN: You just said that it is not God's.

JOAN: It is one and the same. God is for you Charles.

DAUPHIN: Why can't he tell me that himself? Why does he need you to come here and tell me?

JOAN: I do not question. I only do as I'm told.

DAUPHIN: Then go away.

JOAN: I cannot. I must lead your army and drive the English out of France. I must bring you to be crowned at Reims.

DAUPHIN: You expect me to trust you just like that? Did you trust your voices from the very beginning?

JOAN: Yes.

DAUPHIN: Why?

JOAN: I did not trust them at first. I did not do what they told me right away. But I always knew that they were from God.

DAUPHIN: How?

JOAN: I don't know. You just know things like that.

DAUPHIN: I don't. I don't trust anything.

JOAN: You believe in God.

DAUPHIN: Of course I do.

JOAN: Then give me your army.

DAUPHIN: Let me think about it. Go away.

JOAN: I don't blame you for not trusting me. It's just that there is nobody in all the world who can recover the kingdom of France except me. Believe me, I would rather have remained at my mother's side, for it is not my nature...yet, I must go and I must do this thing because my Lord will's that I do it.

DAUPHIN: He wills you through your voices?

JOAN: Yes.

DAUPHIN: Let me hear these voices. Tell them I wish to speak to them.

JOAN: I cannot do that.

DAUPHIN: Why not? I am the King. God certainly will speak to me.

MARGARET: I'll speak to you.

MICHAEL: No.

CATHERINE: Why not? It would be cool to speak to the Dauphin.

MICHAEL: Because I said no.

CATHERINE: Oh, get over yourself already. Hey, Dauphin!

MICHAEL: Stop that.

MARGARET: Yoo! hoo! Dauphin. Can you hear us?

CATHERINE: Listen and you will hear.

MICHAEL: That's enough.

CATHERINE: Since when are you in charge?

MARGARET: Yeah, just because you're an archangel doesn't mean you can tell us what to do.

MICHAEL: Come on. Let's not get into this again. (*Saints argue loudly.*)

JOAN: Please be quiet!

DAUPHIN: Who are you talking to? It's them, isn't it. Where are they? How come I can't hear them?

CATHERINE: Because you don't know how to listen.

JOAN: Let me handle this.

DAUPHIN: Where are you? Speak to me!

MARGARET: We are standing right beside you.

CATHERINE: Listen and you will hear!

MICHAEL: He can't hear you. It's no use.

DAUPHIN: I can't hear you.

MICHAEL: When I am right I am so right. Told you.

MARGARET: I can make him listen.

CATHERINE: Me too.

MICHAEL: I won't work. You cannot make anyone listen.

CATHERINE: Oh yeah? Watch this. Hey, Dauphin. Listen up.

MARGARET: Yoo Hoo! Focus, focus, focus. This way. Over here! Listen up!
(*Margaret and Catherine try to make the Dauphin hear them:*) OK so I admit you were right about that.

CATHERINE: Now what do we do?

MICHAEL: We are saints, right? We show him a sign.

CATHERINE: A sign?

MARGARET: I get it. Who's got a pen. We'll make it really big. And it can say Saint Margaret...

CATHERINE: And Saint Catherine in red glitter...

MARGARET: And hearts and stars...

CATHERINE: It'll have a big arrow pointing to my name...

MARGARET: And exploding lights and confetti...

CATHERINE: We'll put it up on the side of a church...

MICHAEL: Not a sign, sign. A SIGN!

CATHERINE: We know.

MARGARET: We're on it. A sign.

MICHAEL: Just get behind me. God, I'm a Saint and people don't get what I'm doing. Joan, tell him you will be King.

JOAN: What?

MICHAEL: Just do it, alright? Tell him.

JOAN: I shall be King.

MICHAEL: Good. Now tell him that he doesn't want to be the King.

JOAN: He doesn't want to be the King. I mean, you don't want to be King.

MICHAEL: You will be King instead.

JOAN: I will be King instead.

DAUPHIN: What are you talking about?

MARGARET: Oh, I get it.

CATHERINE: Me too. You are awesome...

MARGARET: So smart...

CATHERINE: I so totally understand why you are an archangel.

MICHAEL: Shhhh...Joan, tell him to listen. (*Saints chant "Listen." MUSIC:*)

JOAN: Listen, if you will not agree to allow me to lead your army to battle, then I will be King.

DAUPHIN: You cannot be King.

JOAN: Give me the crown.

DAUPHIN: I will do no such thing.

JOAN: Give me the crown. I will be King.

DAUPHIN: You are not King.

(Saints pass the crown from Catherine to Margaret to Michael. The Dauphin turns just in time to see it float onto Joan's head.)