

## Study Guide



As an integral part of the Performing Arts Series, APPlause! offers a variety of performances at venues across the Appalachian State University campus that feature university-based artists as well as local, regional and world-renowned professional artists. These affordable performances offer access to a wide variety of art disciplines for K-12 students. The series also offers the opportunity for students from the Reich College of Education to view a field trip in action without having to leave campus.

Among the 2013-2014 series performers, you will find those who will also be featured in the [Performing Arts Series](#) along with professional artists chosen specifically for our student audience as well as performances by campus groups. All shows in the 2013-2014 series are performed at the newly renovated Schaefer Center for the Performing Arts.

Before you arrive. . .



Familiarize your students with what it means to be a great audience member by introducing these theatre etiquette basics:

- Arrive early enough to find your seats and settle in before the show begins (20-30 minutes).
- Remember to turn your electronic devices OFF so they do not disturb the performers or other audience members.
- Remember to sit appropriately and to stay quiet so that the audience members around you can enjoy the show too.
- Show appreciation to the performers by applauding and reacting to funny or impressive feats.



**PLEASE NOTE:** All audience members arriving by car should plan to park in the Rivers Street Parking Deck. There is a small charge for parking in the deck. Buses should plan to park along Rivers Street – Please indicate to the Parking and Traffic Officer when you plan to move your bus (i.e. right after the show or after lunch) so that they can help keep everyone safe.

Adults meeting a school group at the show will be asked to sign in at the lobby and wait to be escorted to their group by a security guard.

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.....  
**MONTANA  
 REPERTORY  
 THEATRE**

# STUDY GUIDE

by  
 Peter Philips, M.D.  
 Bernadette Sweeney, Ph.D

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**2014  
 NATIONAL  
 TOUR**

# The Miracle Worker

BY WILLIAM GIBSON

## MISSION

**Montana Repertory Theatre tells the great stories of our world to enlighten, develop, and celebrate the human spirit in an ever-expanding community.**

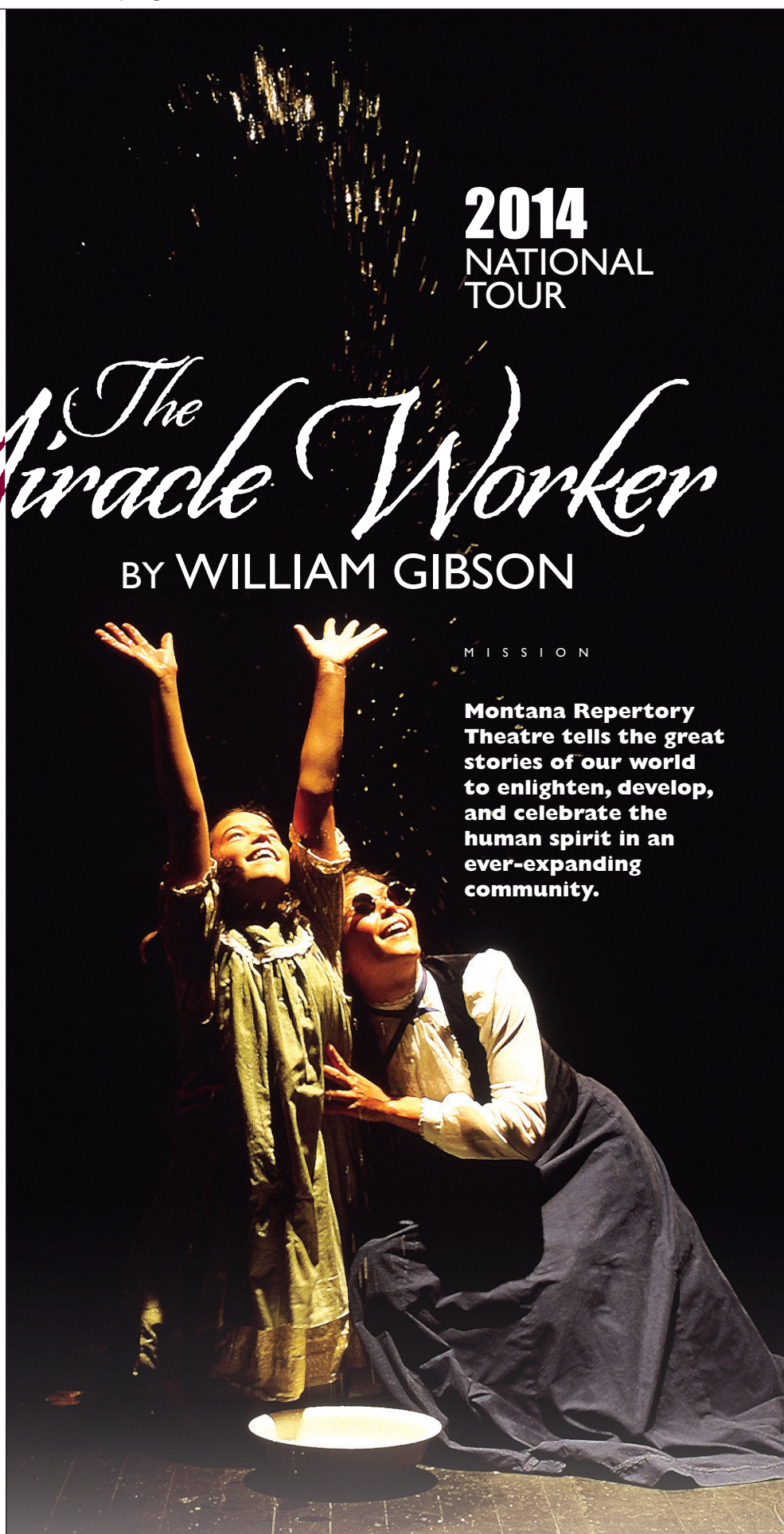


PHOTO BY LAURIE LANE

## In Tuscumbia, Alabama, an illness renders infant Helen Keller blind, deaf and consequently mute (deaf-mute).

Pitied and badly spoiled by her parents, Helen grows into a wild, raging creature by the age of six. Desperate, the Kellers hire Annie Sullivan to serve as a governess and teacher for their young daughter.

After several fierce behavioral battles with Helen, Annie convinces her parents she needs two weeks alone with Helen if she is to achieve any progress in her education. In that time she teaches Helen discipline and, through the use of finger signing, language. Helen's sudden, remarkable grasp of word comprehension cements teacher and pupil in a deep, long-lasting, loving relationship which profoundly affects their lives and the lives of all those with whom they become acquainted.



**Helen Keller with Annie Sullivan vacationing at Cape Cod in July 1888.**

COURTESY OF NEW ENGLAND HISTORICAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY  
BOSTON, MASS

## SYNOPSIS

**ACT ONE:** This Play, *The Miracle Worker* set in the 1880's in Tuscumbia, Alabama follows the Keller family and their struggles with their daughter Helen, who is blind and deaf, and Annie Sullivan, a young teacher hired by the Kellers to help her break out of her dark and silent world. The play begins at night at the Keller home in Tuscumbia, Alabama. Captain Keller, his young wife Kate, and a doctor are discussing how Helen, the Keller's daughter, survived an ailment that has nearly killed her. As the doctor departs, Kate notices that Helen is unable to see or hear.

In the next scene, Helen is six years old and is now the ruler of the house: she terrorizes everyone and gets away with it. No one knows how to discipline her. The Captain and Kate argue about what to do with Helen. They have sought the aid of numerous doctors in an attempt to help her but to no avail; Captain Keller now believes that hiring more doctors would simply be a waste of time and money. Kate, however, is steadfast and refuses to give up. Keller finally relents, and Annie Sullivan, a governess from the Perkins School for the Blind in Massachusetts, is hired.

The next scene finds Annie packing and preparing to leave Perkins. She is twenty years old and has been both patient and teacher during her stay at Perkins. When she was five years old, Annie contracted trachoma, an eye disease that causes repeated, painful infections. For this malady she wears dark glasses to shield her eyes from bright light. The loss of her younger brother Jimmie when both were in the Tewksbury orphanage continues to haunt Annie as she prepares for her new assignment.

When Annie arrives at Ivy Green, the Keller home, the family is apprehensive because of her age and stubborn attitude. When she meets Helen, Annie tries to befriend her with a gift of a doll. Later, in Annie's room, Helen strikes her with the doll, locks her in the room and runs off with the key. With Captain Keller's help, Annie climbs out the window. After dinner, Annie spots Helen at the water pump, where the girl, having hidden the stolen key in her mouth, gropes around to see if anyone is present. Satisfied she is alone, Helen takes the key in her fingers, feels for the pump, lifts a loose board, and drops the key into the well.



**SYNOPSIS** continued from page 2

**ACT TWO:** As Act Two begins, Helen is wreaking havoc on Annie's room. With every item that Helen grabs, Annie forces her hand into the girl's palm, spelling out each item. Kate, watching the scene, is confused and asks Annie why she persists when Helen is only mimicking her, not actually learning. Annie explains that she wants Helen to understand that everything has a name, and once she comprehends that she will be able to learn.

That night, fatigued and discouraged, Annie is again haunted by her difficult ordeal and Jimmie's death while at the orphanage.

At breakfast the next morning, Helen begins her daily routine of terrorizing the household. Annie refuses to allow this behavior, sparking a conflict between Captain Keller and Annie. She wants Helen to learn manners as well as language, and asks the family to leave the breakfast room. Captain Keller is astonished at this request. He admonishes Annie, proclaiming "you are here only as a paid teacher. Nothing more."

But Annie prevails: she is left alone in the breakfast room with Helen. The struggle that ensues is long and difficult but Helen acquires discipline. She learns to eat with a spoon and fold her napkin. Captain Keller, enraged at his daughter's treatment, demands Annie leave their house.

Exhausted, discouraged and angry Annie retreats to her room. She retrieves her suitcase, places it on the bed, and in so doing displaces her Perkin's report onto the floor. As she stoops to retrieve it, she hears a voice, extolling a plea to find courage to disinter and free the human soul within "this blind, deaf, mute woman. Is the life of the soul of less import than that of the body?" Other voices speak of schools which teach "blind ones, worse than you." And finally she hears the voice of little Jimmie, her lost brother, "Annie, it hurts to be dead. Forever." Annie makes her decision.

MONTANA REP PRODUCTION INTERMISSION HERE

As Annie is planning to leave, Keller is planning to fire her. However, during a discussion, both change their minds. Kate and Annie overcome Captain Keller's anger as Annie explains a plan to allow her to live alone with Helen in the garden house on the family premises. Her idea is to make Helen solely dependent on her for everything by isolating herself and Helen from outside influences. Keller reluctantly agrees to a two-week trial. When Helen finds herself alone with Annie she throws a temper tantrum. Using sign language, Annie awakens Helen's curiosity and instills a modicum of trust in Helen.

**ACT THREE:** The two-week separation is nearing its end, and Annie is distressed. Although Helen's demeanor toward her has become friendly, and she has memorized the signs Annie uses to teach meaning, Helen doesn't seem to be connecting them to the fact that they represent real objects and concepts. However, the family is excited by Helen's progress and insist she return to live with them. Annie pleads to let the separation continue, insisting she is on the verge of a major breakthrough, but to no avail.

Back at home, Helen reverts to her wild behavior and the family begins to coddle her again. Annie watches her work slowly being destroyed. When Helen throws a pitcher of water at Annie, Annie feels she has nothing to lose. She drags Helen outdoors to the water pump to force her to refill the pitcher. While there, Annie runs the water over Helen's hand while signing "water" into her palm. Suddenly, the "miracle" happens. Helen drops the pitcher and stands transfixed. There is a change in Helen's face, some light coming into it, something remembered, at last finding its way out as she says "water."

The breakthrough Annie has worked for has occurred. Helen has grasped meaning! She runs about excitedly, reaching out, touching objects, pulling Annie along, signing into her hand for an explanation as to what it is she has touched. She learns "mother," "father," demands to know who Annie is, is *told* "teacher." Finally, Helen comprehends!

Annie spells into Helen's hand:

**"I love Helen ... forever and ever."**

## THE PLAYWRIGHT

### WILLIAM GIBSON

**WILLIAM GIBSON** (November 13, 1914–November 25, 2008) was an American playwright and novelist. He graduated from the City College of New York in 1938. Gibson claimed Irish, French, German, Dutch and Russian ancestry.

Gibson's most famous play, *The Miracle Worker*, is the story of Helen Keller's childhood education, for which he won the Tony Award for Best Play of 1959. For the 1962 film adaptation, he received an Academy Award nomination for Best Adapted Screenplay. Anne Bancroft and Patty Duke won Tony and Academy Awards for their performances on stage and in the film version. Arthur Penn directed both productions.

Gibson's theatrical Broadway debut had been with *Two for the Seesaw* in 1958, a critically acclaimed two-character play. His other plays include *A Cry of Players*, *Golda*, *The Butterfingers*, *Angel*, *Monday after the Miracle*, *Goodly Creatures*, *Handy Dandy*, and a musical version of Clifford Odets' *Golden Boy*. He authored the novels *The Cobweb*, *The Seesaw Log*, *A Mass for the Dead*, and a volume of poetry titled *Winter Crook*.

Gibson married Margaret Brenman-Gibson, a psychotherapist and biographer of Odets, in 1940. The couple resided in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. Gibson died in 2008 at the age of 94.

## THE CAST

Helen Keller . . . . . **Hannah Appell**  
 Annie Sullivan . . . . . **Caitlin McRae**  
 Captain Arthur Keller . . . . . **Jim Gall\***  
 Kate Keller . . . . . **TBA**  
 James Keller . . . . . **Nick Pavelich**  
 Aunt Ev . . . . . **Therese Diekhans\***  
 Viney . . . . . **Sarina Hart**  
 Doctor / Anagnos . . . . . **Hugh Bickley**

\* Member of Actors' Equity Association

**ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION (AEA)**, founded in 1913, represents more than 45,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote, and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. The Equity emblem is our mark of excellence. [www.actorsequity.org](http://www.actorsequity.org)



## THE CHARACTERS

### HELEN KELLER

**DOCTOR:** She'll live.

**KATE:** Thank God.

**KELLER:** Katie? What's wrong?

**KATE:** She can't see! Or hear.

Thus starts the play *The Miracle Worker*, and a six-year period when Helen Keller, rendered deaf and blind by an infant illness, becomes an uncontrollable little creature, spoiled, pitied and pampered by her desperate parents. Into her life comes a young dedicated teacher, Annie Sullivan, who brings light and love into Helen's dark, frightening inner world. The struggle is titanic, taxing the emotional and physical strengths of both teacher and pupil. By hand signs and discipline, Helen's keen mind learns words, their meaning, and knowledge. Her little mind is alert and grapples for details. When finally she comprehends how words learned relate to objects within her world, her excitement is manifest by an outpouring of emotion as she races about touching objects, signing to Annie and receiving back meaning of what she has laid her hand on. Then love and compassion is shown as she *slides into Annie's arms, and lifting away her smoked glasses, kisses her on the cheek.*

**ANNIE SULLIVAN** was born into an impoverished family in Boston, Mass., in 1866. At age eight, following the loss of her mother, her father became unable to care for his children. Annie found herself and her crippled brother Jimmie in the Tewksbury Almshouse. Living conditions were so deplorable that within three months of their arrival, Jimmie Sullivan died. Since the age of five, Annie had suffered from trachoma, a recurring eye infection relieved somewhat by operations that allow her limited sight.

Early in her stay at Tewksbury, Sullivan learned there were schools for blind children. Her ambition to go to such a school became the central focus of her life, and she was eventually admitted to the Perkins School for the Blind. Annie's embarrassment and shame at her lack of reading and writing skills fueled her determination to stand out in her studies and, despite great hardships, she excelled academically, becoming valedictorian of her graduating class.

Perkins' director Michael Anagnos, an admirer of twenty-year-old Annie's intelligence and determination, recommends her to the Kellers for their daughter's tutor. Partially blind herself and a former ward of the state, Annie is well aware of the kind of life that awaited Helen were she to be banished to an institution. Because of her own triumphs over adversity, Annie is also aware of the miracles that might be wrought through persistence and disciplined effort.

**THE CHARACTERS** continued from page 4

**CAPTAIN ARTHUR KELLER** is the father of Helen, James, Mildred and husband of Kate. He is a retired Army Officer who served the Southern Confederacy during the American Civil War. A man in his early forties, he works as editor of the regional newspaper. The Captain is a bit short-tempered, but proud and eager to do what is right for his family. Frustrated and discouraged after six years of dealing with his disabled daughter Helen, and unable to comprehend his son's estrangement, he nevertheless appreciates his wife's determination to do everything conceivable to provide Helen an opportunity to overcome what he considers her "affliction."

**KATE KELLER** is the second, younger wife of Captain Keller and mother to Helen and Mildred. She is first to notice infant Helen's blindness and deafness. Despite numerous unsuccessful consultations during Helen's formative years, Kate nevertheless refuses to allow any suggestion that Helen should be institutionalized. She implores her husband to write to a famous oculist in Baltimore asking for a consultation for Helen. "She wants to talk—be like you and me." Keller, discouraged by previous physician failures, is convinced there is nothing to be done for Helen and argues against further attempts: "Kate, how many times can you let them break your heart?" Her steadfast answer: "Any number of times." It is her belief in Helen that eventually leads Keller to agree to write the letter that brings Annie Sullivan to the Keller household.

**JAMES KELLER** is the adult son of Captain Keller, step-son to Kate, and step-brother to Helen and Mildred. He has a contentious relationship with his father which results in arguments and misunderstandings. Much to Kate's displeasure, he at first advocates putting Helen in an institution and mocks Annie's attempts to teach Helen. His attitude changes as he recognizes and appreciates Annie's devotion and success. He stands up to his father at the critical moment of the play, insisting that Captain Keller allow Annie to continue her efforts: "Let Annie go—she's right! You're wrong! Has it ever occurred to you that on one occasion you might be consummately wrong?"

**AUNT EV** is the middle-aged sister of Captain Keller, who sides with Kate in urging her brother to seek further medical help for Helen. She admonishes James when he suggests putting Helen in an asylum, "This child has more sense than all these men Kellers, if there's ever any way to reach that mind of hers." However, being an aristocratic Southern lady with strong anti-Northern sentiments, she is appalled at Annie's one-on-one obedience teaching of Helen, and reminds everyone that "that child is a Keller and all the Kellers are cousins to General Robert E. Lee." In so many words, Ev lets it be known that Annie is "common" and comes from Boston, well north of the Mason-Dixon Line.

**VINEY** is a black woman who is cook, general house maid and servant to the Keller family. From her activity and interactions with Kate, she has been with the family a good number of years; she knows, shares and appreciates the family's struggles during the six years of Helen's life. She is also keenly aware that although Helen's behavior is deplorable and stressful, and the child is blind and deaf, Helen is smart. As Kate readies herself to meet Annie at the train, she asks Viney of Helen's whereabouts. "She's upstairs, smellin' around. She know something funny goin' on."

**MICHAEL ANAGNOS** is the second director of the Perkins School for the Blind (then Perkins Institution) from 1876 until his death in 1906. In 1886, Anagnos is contacted by Helen Keller's parents seeking a teacher with pedagogical experience with the blind and deaf. He recommends the then twenty-year-old Annie Sullivan, herself almost blind from an eye disease, but with great maturity for her age.

# DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

This production of *The Miracle Worker* has been greatly facilitated by a process of collaboration between cast and crew. Director Bernadette Sweeney is from a European tradition of theatre making, less based in realism, but in image and movement. It has been a pleasure to bring this tradition to a more traditionally realist text. That being said, however, there are moments of the unreal in Gibson's *The Miracle Worker* which give us great scope as theatre makers, such as Annie's memories, or flashbacks.

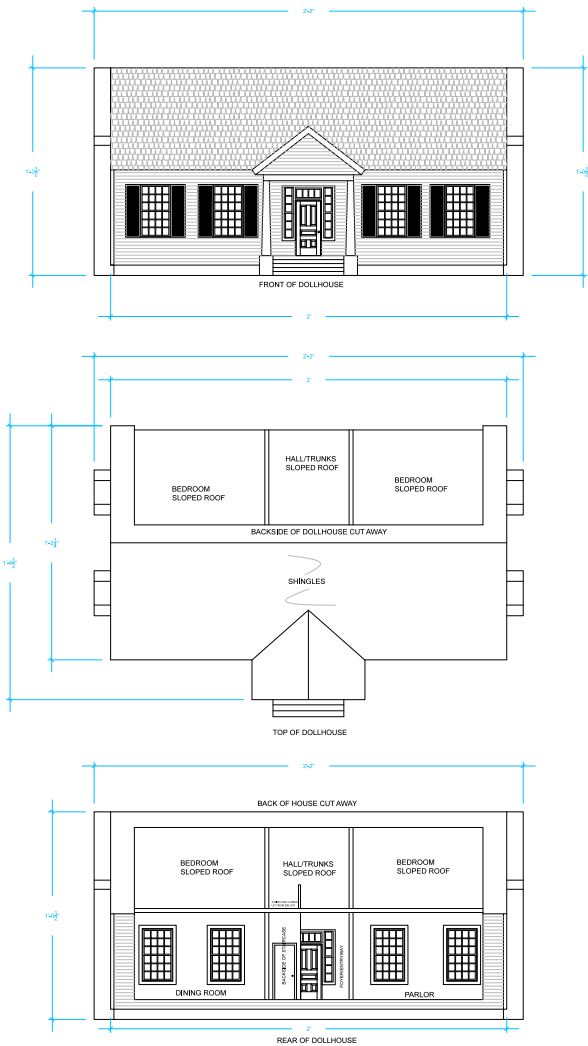
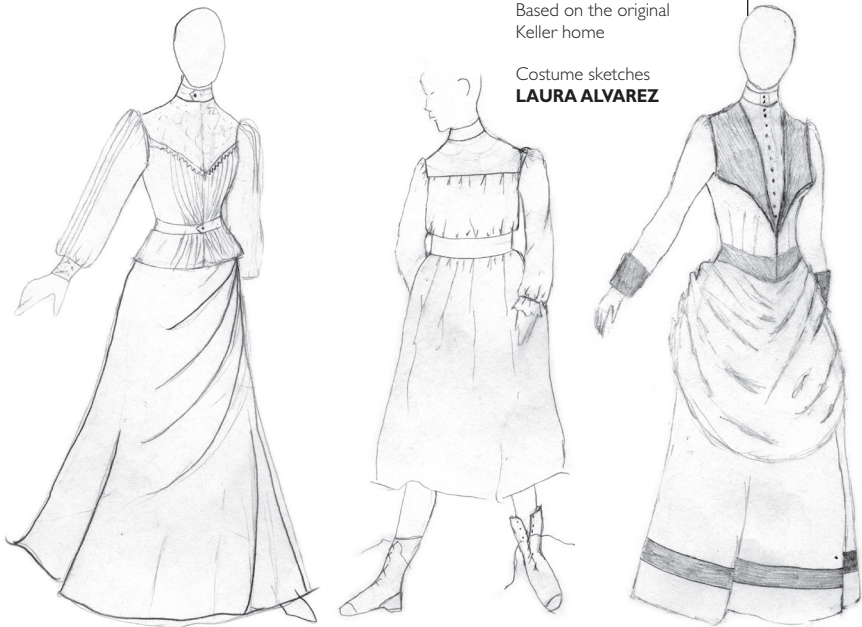
In the design of the piece, lighting, scenic, costume, media and sound designers worked with the director to create Helen's world in a sensory, suggestive way.

In rehearsals actors worked with the director to consider the narrative of the script alongside its references to gestures, objects, moods and images. In any case, the astounding story of Helen and her teacher Annie, as told by playwright William Gibson, remains at the centre of our process.

Director.....**Bernadette Sweeney**  
Scenic Designer.....**Brandon McNeel**  
Costume Designer.....**Laura Alvarez**  
Lighting Designer.....**Derek Vanheel**  
Sound Designer.....**Morgan Cerovski**  
Media Designer.....**Hugh Bickley**  
Assistant Dramaturg.....**Peter Philips**  
Assistant Director.....**Hillary Sea Bard**

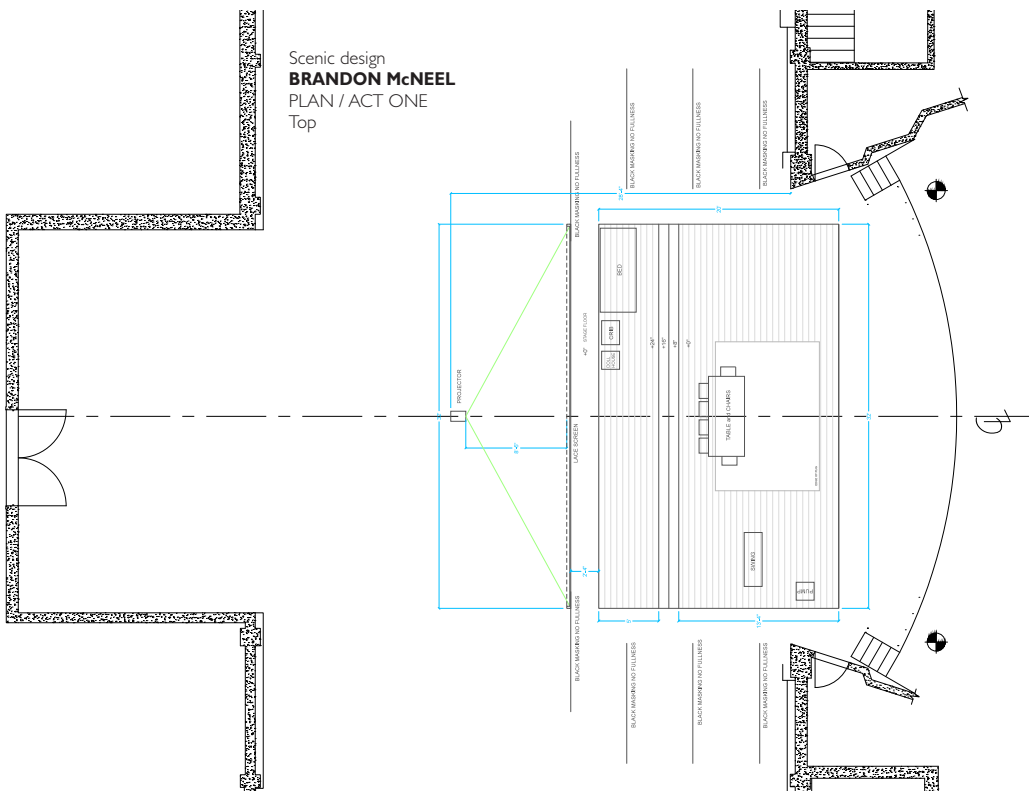
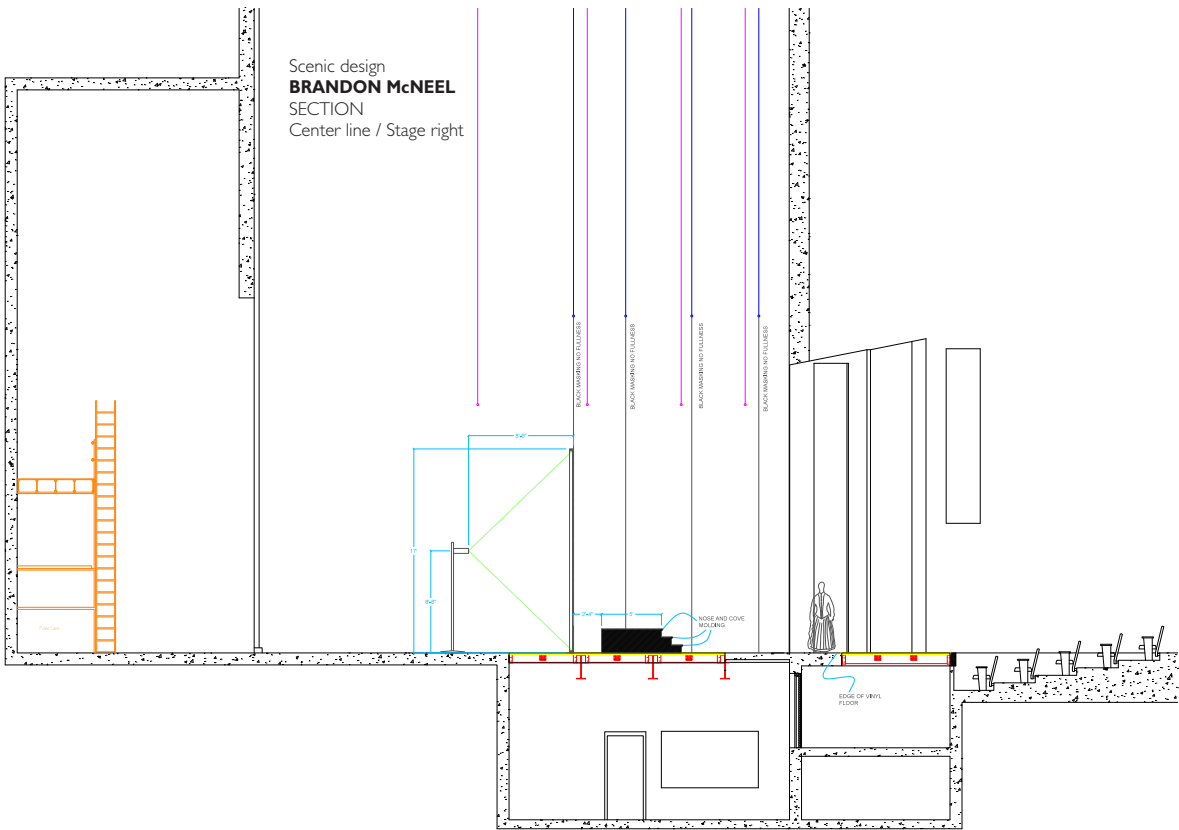
Dollhouse design  
**BRANDON McNEEL**  
Based on the original  
Keller home

Costume sketches  
**LAURA ALVAREZ**





DESIGN AND PRODUCTION continued from page 6



.....  
**MONTANA**  
REPERTORY  
THEATRE

**THE MIRACLE WORKER**  
BY WILLIAM GIBSON

DIRECTION:  
BERNADETTE  
SWEENEY

SETS:  
BRANDON  
MCNEEL

LIGHTING:  
DEREK  
VAN HEEL

COSTUMES:  
LAURA  
ALVAREZ

BRANDON MCNEEL  
SCENIC DESIGN  
307.202.0431  
[BRANDONMCNEEL.COM](http://BRANDONMCNEEL.COM)  
[WWW.BRANDONMCNEEL.COM](http://WWW.BRANDONMCNEEL.COM)

The Designer is responsible for the visual and  
aural aspects of the production only, and it is  
understood that all specifications relate solely to  
lighting and/or sound and not to the matters of  
correcting alterations in any specification found  
to be incompatible by Producer with proper  
safety practices.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

### BERNADETTE SWEENEY

#### "A phantom, living in a world that was no world."

This is how Helen Keller describes herself, as she remembers her childhood before Annie Sullivan arrived. Annie was Helen's teacher, but so much more than that—she was a playmate, a friend, a nurturer and eventually a lifelong companion.

Gibson's play is called *The Miracle Worker*, but this is Helen's play as much as it is Annie's—it took the two of them to make a miracle.

I write this note at the end of my first weekend rehearsal with the actors playing Helen (Hannah) and Annie (Caitlin). Towards the end of the last day I brought in my six-year-old daughter Ruby to work with the actors and "teach them what it's like to be six." She asked me, very seriously, why they needed to be taught this, as they had both been six already ... I couldn't bring myself to tell her that as adults we sometimes forget to find wonder in the world, and we need to be reminded.

Helen was indeed 'a phantom, living in a world that was no world' until Annie came and reached her in a way that no-one else could, and helped her to find wonder in the world, to play, to learn, to be six.

**ANNIE:** ... she has to learn that everything has its name!  
That words can be her eyes, to everything in the world  
outside her, and inside too, what is she without words?  
With them she can think, have ideas, be reached, there's  
not a thought or a fact in the world that can't be hers ...

(*The Miracle Worker* by William Gibson, p. 79)

This is one of the great American stories, and I feel privileged to have been asked to help tell it for the 2014 Montana Repertory Theatre National Tour. As an Irish native I had heard of Helen Keller, but wasn't as familiar with the story as most audience members no doubt are already—although I do recognize the Irish in Annie's stubbornness!

With this wonderful team of actors, designers, and production crew, I have worked to do justice to Gibson's telling of this story of two extraordinary American women. Thanks for coming, and enjoy the show!

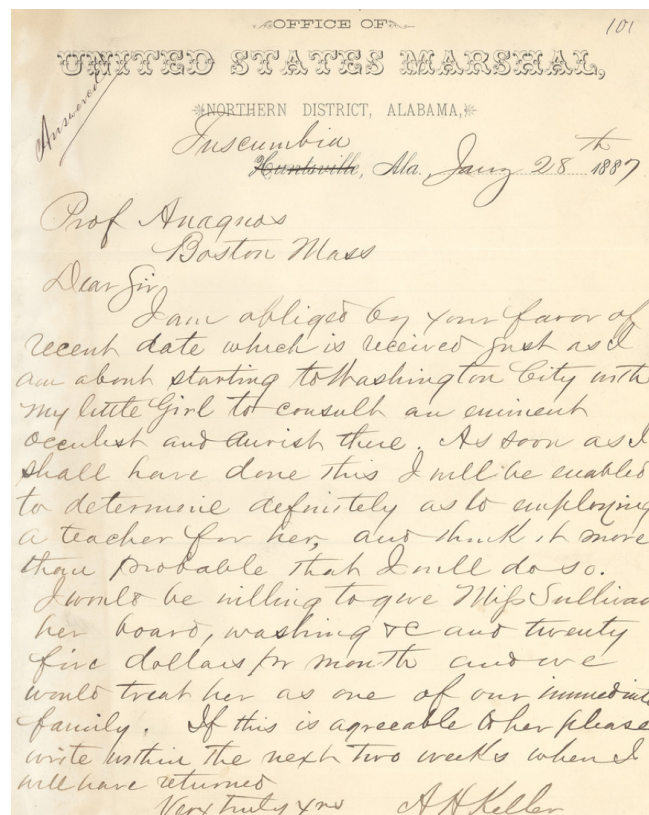
## PERKINS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Founded in 1829, the Perkins School for the Blind was the first school for the blind established in the United States.

No school in the United States has educated more children who are deafblind than Perkins. Sullivan's child-centered methods are the centerpiece of the educational philosophy of the Perkins Deafblind Program.

Samuel Gridley Howe became the director of the then-called New England Asylum for the Blind in July 1832, receiving a few blind children in a private home. Howe was a physician, abolitionist and advocate of education for the blind.

Howe was the life and soul of the school. Through him the institution became one of the intellectual centers of American philanthropy. Howe brought to the school Laura Bridgman, a young deaf-blind girl, who later became a teacher at the school and friend and mentor to Annie Sullivan.



**Letter from Arthur Keller to Michael Anagnos.**

COURTESY OF PERKINS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND, WATERTOWN, MASS.

# THE DISABLED

There was a time not many years ago when people with disabilities were marginalized by society. As the play develops, we learn the difficulties the Keller family had with their daughter Helen for the first six years of her life due to the illness which left her blind and deaf. At the time, little was known concerning the ability of such children to be educated, although some progress was being made in both the Eastern United States and Europe.

A poignant moment in *The Miracle Worker* occurs when Helen's older brother James suggests his sister be placed in an institution. Unfortunately, at the time many such disabled individuals regardless of the cause of their disability were placed in institutions where their overall care was abysmal and efforts at education were nil. Annie Sullivan makes such reference to the condition of the alms house she was sent to, telling Helen's mother Kate how dreadful the conditions were in such institutions.

Aside from the wonderful story of the relationship between Annie and Helen, *The Miracle Worker* underscores how people with disabilities, if given the opportunity, can be educated. Through perseverance and determination, many develop skills that enable them to live productive lives within their societies.

Such people have different styles of learning and multiple intelligences requiring different methods of education. Teaching art, music, drama, dance and physical education as much as basic language and math promotes skill and achievements in these areas, develops self-esteem and leads to greater accomplishment in all subjects.

In 1924, at the age of 44, Helen Keller joined the American Federation for the Blind, the country's leading advocate for the blind or visually impaired. For the next 44 years, she was an ambassador for AFB. She toured the United States developing support for programs that helped the blind and deaf, encouraging government aid for educational programs designed for the disabled.

# THE CIVIL WAR

The **American Civil War**, or simply **the Civil War** was fought from 1861 to 1865. Seven southern states seceded from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America.

The war had its origin in the fractious issue of slavery and its extension into the western territories. After four years of bloody combat, the South's infrastructure was destroyed and the Confederacy collapsed. Slavery was abolished, and the Congressional Reconstruction Bill initiated an attempt to restore national unity and guarantee the rights of freed slaves.



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Annie Sullivan, Helen Keller  
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Helen's *Story of My Life*, and letters
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Samuel Gridley Howe



## THE LATER YEARS

### HELEN KELLER

**With communication skills forged and with Annie at her side, Helen attended Radcliffe College, graduating cum laude in 1904, the first deafblind person to receive a college degree.**

Helen became a major celebrity. She met a number of influential and famous people including Mark Twain, Henry Ford, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and U.S. presidents like John F. Kennedy. Helen soon became an important figurehead to raise funds for related causes, especially the American Foundation for the Blind, with which she joined forces in 1924.

Helen began speaking out not only for the rights of the handicapped, but for others that she saw as oppressed. She supported the rights of laborers as well as equal rights for women and African Americans. She gave personal encouragement to blind and impoverished African Americans, was a founding member of the American Civil Liberties Union, and participated in rallies and marches. She was a vocal supporter of women's right to vote and their right to birth control.

In addition to her autobiography, *The Story of My Life*, Helen published some dozen other books. She was also the author of numerous essays, articles, and speeches. She toured widely, delivering her speeches in favor of various groups and causes.

In all these endeavors, Annie was her constant companion, interpreting the visual and auditory world for Helen through finger signs and explaining Helen's signed words to the world. In later years, many of Annie's duties were taken by assistant Polly Thomson, who assumed the role entirely after Annie's death in 1936. With Polly at her side, Helen continued to be an active speaker on social issues, traveling all over the world to carry her message and meet influential people until shortly before her death on June 1, 1968. After her passing, her work on behalf of the blind was continued through the various institutions that she helped to found and fund, including Helen Keller International and the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youth and Adults.

**The American Foundation for the Blind** was founded in 1921 and for decades guided by Helen Keller—an inspiring, courageous woman who fervently believed that blind people, with just a little help, can lead independent lives and give much more to society than they will ever take. Today, there are many more people, from newborns to the growing elder population, in need of a helping hand than Helen Keller ever imagined.



The following is a quote taken from Helen's writings:

**“Phantom had a mug in her hand and while she held it under the spout Annie pumped water into it, and...kept spelling w-a-t-e-r into the other hand. Phantom understood the meaning of the word, and her mind began to flutter tiny wings of flame.”**

*Teacher: Anne Sullivan Macy*

A tribute by the foster-child of her mind, Helen Keller, p. 40



**Helen Keller as a young girl reading.**

COURTESY OF PERKINS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND, WATERTOWN, MASS.

## THE LATER YEARS

### ANNIE SULLIVAN

**Annie Sullivan's skills as a teacher are deeply respected.** No other individual has had greater influence on the education of children who are deafblind than Annie Sullivan. Helen and Annie remained inseparable, with Annie traveling with Helen on numerous lecture tours. On stage, she helped relay Helen's words to the audience, as Helen had never learned to speak clearly enough to be widely understood.

Annie died on October 20, 1936, at her home in Forest Hills, New York

At her funeral, the bishop officiating remarked that Annie was "among the great teachers of all time occupies, a commanding and conspicuous place ... The touch of her hand did more than illuminate the pathway of a clouded mind, it literally emancipated a soul."



**Helen Keller and Annie Sullivan.**

COURTESY OF PERKINS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND, WATERTOWN, MASS.

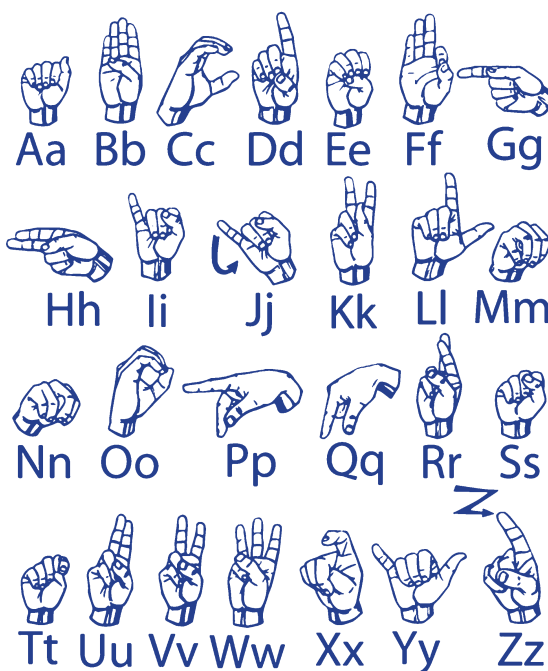


The following are some quotes taken from Annie's letters to her friend, Sophie Hopkins, on her first year working with Helen:

**"I have thought about it a great deal, and the more I think, the more certain I am that obedience is the gateway through which knowledge, yes, and love, too, enter the mind of the child."**

**"Keep on beginning and failing. Each time you fail, start all over again, and you will grow stronger until you have accomplished a purpose—not the one you began with perhaps, but one you'll be glad to remember."**

**"I am convinced that the time spent by the teacher in digging out of the child what she has put into him, for the sake of satisfying herself that it has taken root, is so much time thrown away. It's much better, I think, to assume the child is doing his part, and that the seed you have sown will bear fruit in due time."**



**American Sign Language Fingerspelled Alphabet**