



The Margaret Ghost

a transcendentalist love story
by Carole Braverman



JUNE 17 – 20, 2010
The First Church in Belmont,
Unitarian Universalist
404 Concord Ave, Belmont, MA
www.TheatreAtFirst.org



MARGARET FULLER
1810 BICENTENNIAL 2010

Margaret Fuller image courtesy of the Cambridge Historical Commission

Enduring Spirit

Margaret Fuller has inspired so many people. In her short life she knew and influenced the thinking, writing, and political dreams of an entire generation, putting an indelible stamp on Transcendentalism, American literature, feminism and activism that has faded in and out of our consciousness for two hundred years, encountered again and again as she “haunts the corridors of history”.

As I have worked with the Margaret Fuller Bicentennial committee over the past year, I have been struck by the marvelous variety, enthusiasm and talents of the people drawn to her work and her story. Authors, activists, actors, artists, scholars and religious leaders have come together to celebrate Margaret throughout the Boston area, across the country and around the world. At each event I hear new, individual stories of how these amazing people first encountered what Henry James called “the Margaret-ghost”. And I am struck over and over by the close, personal relationship that so many people have with her, the ways they speak of Margaret as a beloved sister, friend, and muse.

I was lucky enough to see *The Margaret Ghost* in 1985—the last time it was staged before our original production in 2006. That was my first experience of Margaret Fuller and I was inspired and excited to make her acquaintance. Little did I know then the inspiration and opportunities that she would bring to my life.

The enthusiasm and support of the Margaret Fuller Bicentennial committee for this project has been the motivating force in bringing it back to the stage. Carole Braverman’s generosity with her work and her time has been incredible and invaluable. My love and thanks go out to each member of my amazing cast—whose willingness to return to this play with me, bringing their own new insights and experience, has made this production even richer than what came before—and to my crew, whose energy and creativity are the underpinning of everything you see before you.

Most of all, I want to thank Margaret Fuller for drawing to her an endless array of astonishing individuals, connecting me to them through our connection with her, and inspiring us all to bring our talents together to honor her memory and follow her example in our own ways. Truly, I am haunted by a generous spirit.

— *Elizabeth Hunter*

The Margaret Fuller Bicentennial

An Extraordinary Celebration for an Extraordinary Woman!

The Margaret Fuller Bicentennial is an opportunity to celebrate and learn about an extraordinary woman and continue her global vision of equality and human rights.

The year-long celebration includes:

- PROGRAMS and EVENTS
- CONVERSATIONS SERIES offered monthly in 2010
- ONGOING EXHIBITS at various locations
- TRAVELING DISPLAY available for display in your town
- WORSHIP MATERIALS
- WALKING TOURS
- RESOURCE MATERIALS

The Bicentennial hopes to raise awareness of Margaret Fuller, so that her story may inspire people of all ages to follow her lead and think independently, express their thoughts clearly, defend their convictions with courage, learn through dialogue and the free exchange of opinions, believe in the equality of all people, and be open to change. Then her legacy will be assured.

Please visit www.margaretfuller.org to view our events calendar and find resources for more information about Margaret Fuller.

MARGARET FULLER
1810 · BICENTENNIAL · 2010

Cast

Margaret Fuller.....	Andrea Humez
Anna Ward.....	Alissa Lerman
Sophia Hawthorne.....	Erica Schultz
Nathaniel Hawthorne.....	Jason Merrill
Ralph Waldo Emerson.....	John Olson
Horace Greeley.....	Jack Dietz
James Nathan.....	Nick Bennett-Zendzian
Giuseppe Mazzini.....	David Policar
Angelo Ossoli.....	Santiago Rivas

Settings

ACT I

Margaret's home in Cambridge, MA, 1844

Scene 1: afternoon

Scene 2: two hours later

ACT II

Margaret's office in New York City, 1846

ACT III

Margaret's apartment in Rome, 1849

There will be a 15 minute intermission between each act

Music used in this production:

From the Heart © Alexander Franke 2009

Signs © Alexander Franke 2008

NOTICE: No smoking inside the building. Flash photography is not allowed during the performance. Please silence your cell phones, pagers, and other anachronistic devices.

About the Play

Margaret Fuller (1810–1850) was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts and rigorously educated by her father, beginning at age 3. She taught at Bronson Alcott’s Temple School in Boston and at the Green Street School in Providence. She also lead series of Conversations at which women were encouraged to develop the ability to read, think and discuss critically the important issues of the day.



An author, editor, critic and educator, Fuller was widely considered the most well-read person—male or female—in New England. She was a member of the Transcendentalist community that included Emerson and Thoreau, and was the founding editor of their journal, *The Dial*. Her influential works include *Summer by the Lakes in 1843* and *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, the first book by an American author on the subject of equality for women and an inspiration for the first wave of feminism.

Fuller was the first woman permitted to enter Harvard Library as a researcher, the first full-time book reviewer, the first woman editor on a major daily newspaper, the first woman foreign correspondent and the first war correspondent to serve under combat conditions. While equality for women—especially in education and employment—was central to Fuller’s work, she was also concerned for the plight of the homeless and those living in poverty and supported the abolition of slavery, rights and fair treatment for Native Americans, and prison reform. She knew and influenced many of the great thinkers and writers of her time in America and Europe.

The Margaret Ghost follows Fuller as she leaves Boston for New York and then Italy, where she is caught up in the Revolution of 1848. It focuses on Fuller’s struggle to balance her formidable intellect and intense spirit as she strives to find respect and love as both author and woman.

The Margaret Ghost was first performed by the Berkeley Repertory Theater in 1984 and first performed by Theatre@First in 2006. We are excited to revive this thought-provoking and emotionally resonant work as part of the Margaret Fuller Bicentennial.

About the Other Characters



ANNA BARKER
WARD

One of Fuller's closest friends, Ward was a renowned beauty married to another of Fuller's circle, Samuel Gray Ward. They had several children and were instrumental in founding the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.



NATHANIEL
HAWTHORNE

A key figure in the development of American literature, his works include *The Scarlet Letter*. Besides his role as an author, he also worked as a customs official and as U.S. consul to Liverpool.



SOPHIA PEABODY
HAWTHORNE

A talented painter and illustrator, she also published her journals and various articles. Sophia and Nathaniel married relatively late—she was 32—and were, in his words “...as happy as people can be, without making themselves ridiculous, and might be even happier; but, as a matter of taste, we choose to stop short at this point.”



RALPH WALDO
EMERSON

After his departure from the ministry, Waldo formulated the philosophy of Transcendentalism and became one of the greatest orators of his time, lecturing throughout the northern states and taking a leading role in the intellectual development of the age.



HORACE
GREELEY

Editor of a leading newspaper, reformer and politician, Greeley was a founder of the Republican party and ran for President in 1872. His *New York Tribune* was America's most influential newspaper of the time.



JAMES
NATHAN

A German-American merchant and literary enthusiast, James later changed his last name to “Gotendorf”. Fifty of Margaret Fuller’s letters to him were published under the title *Love-Letters of Margaret Fuller*.



GIUSEPPE
MAZZINI

An Italian patriot, philosopher and politician, Mazzini served as the main leader of the short-lived Roman Republic, and his efforts helped bring about the modern Italian state.



(GIOVANNI)
ANGELO OSSOLI

An impoverished Italian nobleman, Ossoli fought in the Italian Revolution of 1848.

Music

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About the Playwright



Carole Braverman's plays have been produced in New York, London, Boston, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and various other venues. *The Yiddish Trojan Woman* won London Weekend Television's "Plays on Stage" award and has been published by Dramatists Play Service and in anthology.

The Margaret Ghost was originally produced by the Berkeley Repertory Theater, where she was Playwright in Residence from 1983–1985. "Original Tenants", the first chapter from a recently completed novel, was published by "The Jewish Quarterly" (London).

She taught English at Phillips Academy in Andover for 27 years.

Many thanks to Carole for treasuring the memory of Margaret Fuller and bringing her to life again for theater audiences.

Staff

Producer..... Beckie Hunter
Director..... Elizabeth Hunter
Technical Director..... Jo Guthrie
Stage Manager Kerri Babish
House Manager Chris DeKalb
Graphic Design Gilly Rosenthol
Sound Design Neil Marsh
Costume Design..... Elizabeth Ryan
Lighting Design..... Giles Hall
Props Manager..... Judy Yen
Costume Construction Assistant Paulo Ruffino

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Special Thanks

Theatre@First thanks the following:

First Church in Belmont, Unitarian Universalist for their generosity in the use of their beautiful theater space, and for the help and support of their members and staff

The College Avenue United Methodist Church in Somerville for granting us rehearsal space, and staying open until we could use it

Rev. Betty Walker and all the members of the Unity Church of God in Somerville for set-construction space and so much more

Stan at Fleming Printing in Cambridge for printing our programs

Aimée Jack for her web-searching skills

Lara Jay for stage combat assistance

The arguing Italians: Donna and Charlie Maligno

Julia Lunetta for shouting in Italian

Emily Matthews, our Italian Correspondent, for her excellent translations

Ron DeMarco and Emerson College for their assistance in dressing our set

Ian Osmond for his expert bar-tending skills at the gala

Our dedicated and tenacious team of volunteers, including various members of the cast and crew. Thank you for building our set, working the box office, selling snacks, ushering and generally making these shows happen.

We also thank our friends, family, and all the members of our audience. Without your support of the arts, we wouldn't be here.

Biographies

KERRI BABISH (*Stage Manager*) is incredibly excited to be helping reprise the amazing story of Margaret Fuller. She is perhaps more thrilled to be taking on the role of pregnant production staff member this time around. She thanks Mike, as always, and looks forward to future endeavors (when she has time for them again).

NICK BENNETT-ZENDZIAN (*James Nathan*) has been working onstage or backstage in local community theaters for the last four years. He has performed with T@F, Post-Meridian Radio Players, Unreliable Narrator, Arlington Friends of the Drama, and most recently The Concord Players. In real life, he works in the Contact Center at Harvard University Employees Credit Union.

CHRIS DEKALB (*House Manager*) is happy to be working on his 21st show with T@F. When he's not handling tickets and selling cookies he's an outsource project manager at Books24x7.com.

JACK DIETZ (*Horace Greeley*) is most happy to once again be urging this same cast to solve the nation's problems by writing faster. This is his seventh T@F show as cast and/or crew, and he couldn't ask for a more delightful group. He spends his days down the street at BBN Technologies exhorting packets to go faster.

JO GUTHRIE (*Set Design/ Technical Director*) Fresh off her extended contract tour as a QA Team Lead, Jo jumped into her role as Set Designer/Technical Director with enthusiasm. Taking things out of her imaginary world and making them real has been magical. Please say nice things about her clever set changes and consider her for any Technical Lead positions at your company.

GILES HALL (*Lighting Design*) has brightened the stage for several T@F shows, including *Never After* and *Festival@First 6: Tables Turned* last year. He is not technically classified as a natural disaster, but please reserve the "junk shot" option in the rare event your public estimates suffer from unprecedented miscalculation.

ANDREA HUMEZ (*Margaret Fuller*) vowed to curtail her theatrical activities while in grad school, but has somehow managed in the past two years to direct *The Rimers of Eldritch* (T@F) and *Spike Heels* (Occasional Players), and to appear onstage as a grandmother (*Ten Tiny Shows*) and a Fairy Godmother (*Never After*, T@F), before reprising her role as Margaret Fuller. She talks nearly this much in real life.

BECKIE HUNTER (*Producer*) is a founder of T@F. She started acting like an old lady in *Arsenic & Old Lace* in high school, and has grown into the role in real life. This is the eighth show she's produced for T@F. In between plays, she helps improve teaching at Harvard's Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, and dotes on her niece Alice.

ELIZABETH HUNTER (*Director*) is the founding Artistic Director of Theater@First and has directed seven previous T@F shows, including *Never After* last fall at the Somerville Theatre, in addition to working with various other college and community theatre organizations throughout the Boston area. Special thanks to Alice for her patience, and to the crack team of babysitters that make all of this possible.

ALISSA LERMAN (*Anna Ward*) is excited for the chance to revisit Margaret's world. Previous roles with T@F include a chorus member in *Murder in the Cathedral* and Sally in *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. Thanks to the cast and crew for doing theater without drama, and her family and friends for their support.

NEIL MARSH (*Sound Design*) has been providing soundscapes for T@F productions since their very first show. His most recent involvement was on the highly-successful production of *Dracula* at the Elizabeth Peabody House in East Somerville. Neil

spends most of his time these days developing live and studio productions for his radio drama performance troupe—T@F's sister organization—The Post-Meridian Radio Players (www.pmrp.org).

JASON MERRILL (*Nathaniel Hawthorne*) is delighted to have another chance to realize his Dark Vision. A regular on the T@F stage, he has most recently appeared as Leontes in *The Winter's Tale* and Robinson in *Never After*. By day he works on the GNU C++ compiler for Red Hat, and the rest of his time he plays Alice's Daddy.

JOHN OLSON (*Ralph Waldo Emerson*) has performed in a dozen T@F shows, most recently as a fabulously Merry Man in *Never After*, and as a blithering newscaster in *Tragedy, a Tragedy*. It is a particular pleasure to portray my friend Ralph again, and to work with my talented colleagues to bring this splendid show to new audiences.

DAVID POLICAR (*Giuseppe Mazzini*) has been with T@F for six years, and *The Margaret Ghost* is both his sixth and eleventh show with them. Other T@F performances have included *Murder in the Cathedral*, *Talley's Folly*, *Arms and the Man*, and (most recently) *Dracula*. He looks forward to combining his love of erudite theatre with his inexplicable fondness for palindromic prime numbers.

SANTIAGO RIVAS (*Angelo Ossoli*) looks forward to working with the original cast and crew, wearing the uniform and moustache again after four years. In that time, he has continued to work with T@F, surviving jurors, Shakespeare, musicals, and lightsaber duels with his wife. Many thanks continue to go to his Fabulous Redhead for her continual support. And, once again, many apologies to the rest of the world for this OUTRAGEOUS ITALIAN ACCENT.

GILLY ROSENTHOL (*Graphic Design*) is thrilled to have had the chance to design the first edition script for *The Margaret Ghost*, in addition to all the promotional material. See RosentholDesign.com for more of her work or to inquire about affordable custom print design. Gilly also acts with T@F, and has appeared most recently in such shows as *Never After* and *Dracula*, and with T@F's first graduating class, Cat Soup, in the new *Impromptu* improv program.

PAULO RUFFINO (*Costume Production Assistant*) has discovered how much fun theater can be—having previously only been part of the audience—when introduced to the cool folks that make T@F shine. He loves putting his sewing machine to work. In his other life he is a computer geek and doggie chew toy.

ELIZABETH Q. RYAN (*Costume Design*) has been making costumes for many years. She is amazed at what she continues to learn, from millinery to that trick with the dental floss, it never ends. She is also learning to delegate. (Thanks Jo; you were right. I am much more relaxed.) She thanks everyone who helped her with this show. You know who you are. She loves you all.

ERICA SCHULTZ (*Sophia Peabody Hawthorne*) has, between 2006 and now, been seen as Georgie in *Spike Heels* (Occasional Players), Zeresh in *Springtime for Haman* (North Cambridge Family Opera Co.), and Tessa in *The Gondoliers* (MIT Gilbert & Sullivan Players), as well as in T@F's *The Winter's Tale*. She sings with Jewish a cappella group Honorable Menschen, is active at Temple Beth Shalom of Cambridge, and lives in Somerville.

JUDY YEN (*Props Manaager*) is absolutely thrilled to be a part of another T@F production, and hopes to be a part of many more to come. When she's not busy wrangling props and costumes, she's happy to be working as a research scientist across the river.

Support Theatre@First

T@F is Somerville's largest community theatre and part of the Massachusetts Community Theatre Corporation, a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation.

Our mission is to work together to provide a fun, friendly, and creative theatre experience for cast, crew, and audience alike. We welcome volunteers at all levels of experience, without regard to race, color, religion, ethnicity, ancestry, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, national origin, body type, age or disability. We encourage a supportive environment in which to work, play, grow, and explore new areas of the theatre arts. We offer affordable and eclectic performances to the community, aiming to surprise, delight, entertain, and educate our audiences.

As an all-volunteer organization, we depend on our audience for support. Please consider becoming a subscriber to T@F and supporting our work as a contributor.

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Beckie Hunter
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The End

Margaret Fuller would have hated her own death.

She died in the shipwreck of the *Elizabeth* 300 yards off Fire Island, NY on July 19, 1850, on her return trip from Italy with Ossoli and their two year-old son, Nino. The boy's body was found in the arms of a dead sailor, but there was no sign of his parents. It was said that Ossoli could not swim and Margaret would not leave him. Curiously, her account in Act III of dreams involving shipwrecks is accurate—these dreams recurred throughout her life.

Although Emerson sent Thoreau to comb the beach for any scraps of Fuller's belongings, nothing was ever found, and her *History of the Italian Revolution* had vanished beneath the waves. Her last great work was lost and her memoirs were edited by well-meaning friends and relatives who feared for her reputation. They burned the letters and papers they felt were inappropriate.

You can visit her memorial on a grassy, tree-lined hill at Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge. A plaque there reads “By birth a child of New England; by adoption a citizen of Rome; by genius belonging to the world. In youth an insatiable student seeking the highest culture; in riper years teacher, writer, critic of literature and art; in maturer age companion and helper of many earnest reformers in America and Europe.”

Instead of offering us yet another cautionary tale of an independent woman destroyed by her own life choices, Carole Braverman stops short of that tragic conclusion and *The Margaret Ghost* ends with a message of hope for those who attempt to count higher than most.

I think Margaret would approve.



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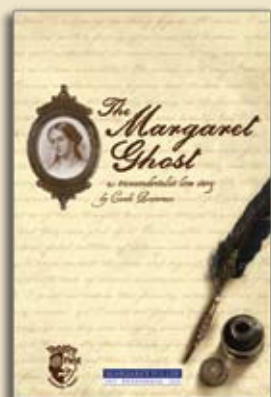
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