



THE WIDOWS

By Joyce Carol Oates



OATES AT STRINDBERG'S

Strindbergs Intima Teater arranges theatrical performances and other activities for the stage in the spirit of Strindberg. His rich dynamic authorship forms the basis of the repertoire, though both contemporary and foreign pieces that capture the essence of Strindberg are included. In 1907, already, Intima Teatern was international in its spirit. Strindberg himself attracted George Bernhard Shaw to the theatre at that time. Max Reinhardt and Gordon Craig, well known theatre personalities, were present and influenced the artistic direction of the theatre. The playwright Maurice Maeterlinks production of L'Intruse finished the first era.

During the short, but productive lifespan of the new Intima Teatern, we have hosted several new foreign and international co-productions. Harold Pinter, Tom Stoppard, Brian Friel, Joyce Carol Oates, Ovidius, Tjcheov and Lars Norén have been performed in English. During the two last years we have welcomed actors from Zimbabwe, Italy and Russia and have offered French drama, Italian experimental theatre and Danish opera for children. Occasionally Strindberg's own plays are performed in english or in other languages.

We now have the honour of welcoming the actors Cecilia Nilsson and Bo Corre as well as the director Hedvig Claesson. Both Cecilia and Bo have performed here before in english productions. This mix of english-speaking and swedish actors has been a great success in the past. An acclaimed performance by The Actors Studio, New York, also has made its mark 2007 when we had the good fortune to have Joyce Carol Oates' Homesick on the repertoire. Now we welcome her back with the production of The Widows. Two broken worlds in a chamberplay. Snow is falling. Two recent widows. Beatrice and Moira. One talks, the other listens, at first. Scene by scene, more and more is revealed. The presence of their dead husbands is more and more evident and the complexity of their lives unfold before us. It could be a description of Strindberg's The Stronger. It is, however, Joyce Carol Oates visiting Strindbergs Intima Teater.

Welcome!


TURE RANGSTRÖM, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

THE AUTHOR

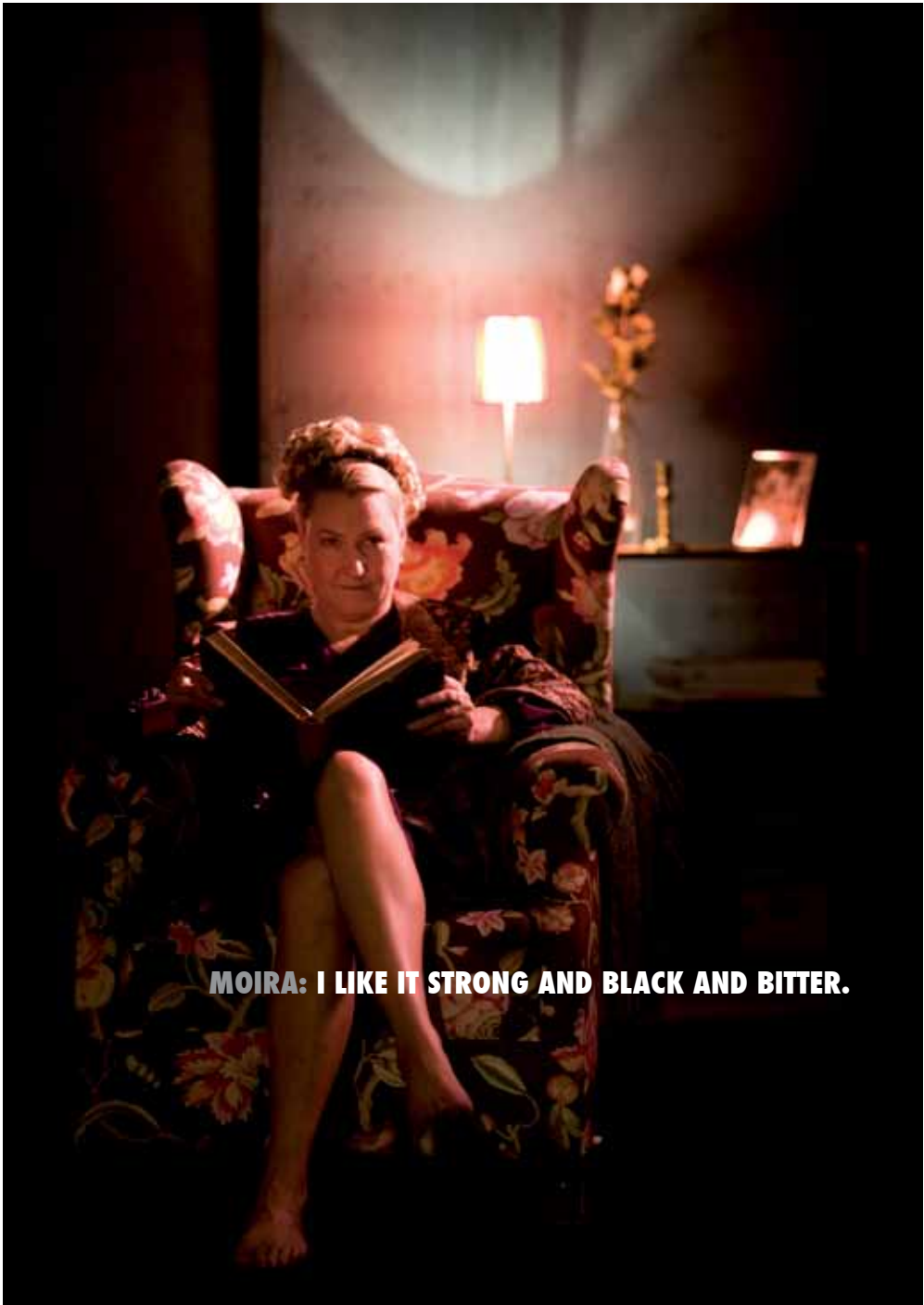
Joyce Carol Oates is one of the most important authors of our time. She is an unparalleled depicter of the American life and the American landscape – and one could add – it’s “hard to find” Soul. Her abundant productivity covers most genres. Since making her debut in 1964, she has written about forty novels, twenty volumes of collected short stories, and about ten collected works of child and adolescent stories. Under the pseudonyms Rosamond Smith and Lauren Kelly, she has written a dozen psychological detective novels. Moreover, since 1966, she has taught Anglo-Saxon literature and creative writing at a number of universities in the United States. For the last 25 years she has taught at Princeton, in her hometown.

Oates is perhaps less known as a playwright despite her productiveness as a writer for the stage. Her play *Homesick* had its first performance at Strindbergs Intima Teater two years ago and *I Stand Before You Naked*, ten monologues about women under influence, has had several stage versions in Sweden. Women are often at the heart of Oates work and she presents them to us with both loyalty and understanding. As is done in *The Widows*, where she describes the fatal change that affects the two women who recently and almost simultaneously have lost their husbands. In addition to her writing, Oates is also a skilled boxing referee and *The Widows* might be characterized as a boxing match in seven rounds, as well as a play in seven scenes. The boxing ring, where the contracting parties meet in highly skilled verbal duels, is the living room of each of their homes, joined together on the stage. After throwing their combination punches, they withdraw into their corners, considering and weighing their relative strengths and options of winning. Convictions and failing trust are unleashed with such accuracy that makes the affluent suburban environment Oates has created border on Pinter country.

Oates is not just one of the most productive writers of our day, but she is perhaps one of Literature’s most devoted advocates. In her daily life there are no days of rest. Her electric typewriter is always prepared as an inviting and serving tool. The cardinal words in her life, discipline and conscientiousness, are perhaps inherited from her adolescence in a simple farm environment in the northwest of New York state. “When I write poetry and novels I consider everything down to the smallest comma”, she once said. “My poetry are pieces of formalistic obsessions where even the margins and the spaces on the paper are part of the poem.” In the theatre she has encountered another freedom. “When I write for the theater, I write with the hope that my texts will hit the creative cord in the director and the actor to release their sensibilities that are as eccentric as mine. For me a text is a text – inviolable, but still without life. A play is completely different. In theatre something mystical happens when others fantasy cooperates with mine and awakens my interest.” / **STIG BJÖRKMAN**



**MOIRA: HE HAD ASSIMILATED ME, YOU KNOW,
SO HE COULDN'T SEE ME. THAT'S MARRIAGE.
BEATRICE: THAT'S MARRIAGE.**



MOIRA: I LIKE IT STRONG AND BLACK AND BITTER.

CLEANING THE BASEMENT

Cecilia Nilsson/SIRIS

In the spring of 1981, I read a short-story collection by Joyce Carol Oates, ("Normal kärlek") and was caught in the Oates-world, it captivated me totally. I was enchanted, I read everything I could get my hands on, and as a newly examined actress I also started searching for plays by her. Her Swedish agent, Englands Förlag, sent me "The Widows". I read it and liked it, but was at that time unable to take it further. And on top of that, I mislaid the script! Englands called several times, but I just couldn't find it. The years passed. Englands gave up on me, and I had almost forgotten about it. In 2000, coming over to New York with the Bob Wilson production of Strindberg's "The Dreamplay", I met Bo Corre; we discovered a mutual love for the work of JCO and the play came to my mind as a memory of something possible.

One day, cleaning the basement, the script was in my hands. Christer Englund forgave me and I purchased the rights to it, at that time without knowing where to perform it. Hedvig Claesson, Bo Corre and I formed "SIRIS Original theatre" in order to realize the project. But who would have us? Strindbergs Intima Teater is a small, but great little theatre, daring to undertake odd projects. Ture and Katharina fell for our idea. In the new municipal system of bonuses to commercial thinking theatres it might not pay off, but our joint aim is to challenge you and hopefully bring you the playwright - Joyce Carol Oates!

BACKGROUND

The Widows is set in a small college town, Manitock, New Hampshire, USA. Moira Greary (Cecilia Nilsson) is the widow of the prominent professor Arthur Greary who has suffered a slow death from cancer. Beatrice Kern (Bo Corre) is the widow of David Kern, a teacher at the same university, who has died suddenly in a violent car crash.





BEATRICE: MEN HAVE LOVED YOU. DON'T PLAY THAT GAME WITH ME.
MOIRA: WELL... ONE OR TWO MEN HAVE LOVED ME. THATS TRUE.
BEATRICE: YOU SUCKED THE LIFE FROM THEM...
MOIRA: YOU SHOULD TALK!



A close-up photograph of a woman with light brown hair, looking slightly to the right with a concerned or distressed expression. She is holding a black mobile phone to her ear with her right hand. She is wearing a dark-colored plaid shirt. The background is dark and out of focus, with a warm, glowing light source visible on the left side. The overall mood is somber and reflective.

BEATRICE: I REALLY HAVEN'T ANALYZED MYSELF.

CURRICULUM VITAE

CECILIA NILSSON, ACTOR: Cecilia Nilsson studied at Scenskolan, Stockholm 1978-81 and has worked in theatre, film and television since then. Among some of her theatre work is Rädsla äter själen (Fear eats the soul), Galeasen; Önskekonsert (Request Concert) and Personkrets 3:1 (The human circle) at Riksteatern, and Blommor av stål (Steel Magnolias) at Vasateatern 2009. Television viewers may remember her as Nina Molander in Morden, SVT, a TV series. In 2004 Cecilia played Charlotte in Tom Stoppards The Real Thing at Strindbergs Intima Teater, also in english. She is a member of Teater Alliansen since 1999.

BO CORRE, ACTOR: Educated at The Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art in London and The Stella Adler Conservatory of Acting in New York. She is a lifetime member of the prestigious Actors Studio where she has introduced plays by Lars Noren, including Autumn And Winter which will be produced in the U.S. in the fall of 2010. Her theater work includes The Bitter Tears Of Petra von Kant, Miss Julie, Molly's Dream and In Search Of Strindberg (with Viveca Lindfors). Some of her movie work includes Mulberry Street (Lions Gate, 2008), winner of several independent film awards; a supporting role in The Don of 42nd Street; and the short film The Address for HBO. At Strindbergs Intimate Theatre in 2007, she produced and performed in The Stronger and Joyce Carol Oates's Home-sick. She recently formed A STO'NY BRIDGE, a theatre company dedicated to cultural exchanges in the U.S. and Sweden.

HEDVIG CLAESSION, DIRECTOR: Hedvig Claesson studied at Stockholm Filmskola 1994-95, and earned an M.A in Theatre and Film at Stockholm University 1998. Hedvig has directed Järn (Iron) by Rona Munro for Stockholms Stadsteater, Önskekonsert (Request concert) by Franz X. Kroetz and Jungfruleken (The Maids) by Jean Genet for Riksteatern. Her filmproduction includes Indy och ballongerna, Oskar and Redet.

ZOFI NILSSON, STAGE DESIGN & COSTUME DESIGN: Zofi Nilsson studied at Wimbledon School of Art in London 1995-97. Some of her work includes Därfinkar och dörnicker, Krig och Fred (War and peace), Petra von Kants bittra tårar (The Bitter Tears Of Petra von Kant) and Invasion at Stockholms Stadsteater. The two latter were nominated for Teaterbiennalen 2007 and 2009. Zofi's most recent project was Kvarteret Skatan - i nöd och lust for Rival, Stockholm.

ELLEN RUGE, LIGHT DESIGN: Ellen Ruge, educated as a stills photographer at Fotoskolan in Stockholm 1982 and as a videographer at Videoakademin in Göteborg 1986. She has been a professional light designer for stage, opera, dance and art events in Stockholm and abroad since the mid 80s. Among directors and choreographers she has worked with are John Caird, Mats Ek, Suzanne Osten and Eirik Stubö.

JANINA ROLFART, MAKE-UP: Janina Rolfart was educated as a make-up artist at Dramatiska Institutet 1978-80. Janina has things worked at Västernorrlands Regionteater, Operan, Dramaten, Stockholms Stadsteater, Riksteatern, Turteatern and Teater Komet. She teaches make-up and wig design at Dramatiska Institutet, Stockholm.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

MOIRA GREARY **CECILIA NILSSON**
BEATRICE KERN **BO CORRE**

DIRECTOR: HEDVIG CLAESSON

COSTUME & SET DESIGN: ZOFI NILSSON

LIGHT DESIGN: ELLEN RUGE / LIGHT ASSISTANT: JENNY SPERENS

MAKE UP ARTIST: JANINA ROLFART / MAKE UP ASSISTENT: HANNA HOLM

STAGE TECHNIQUE: JOAKIM EKSTRÖM

SET CONSTRUCTIONS: PHILIPSSON & FRANK

GRAPHIC DESIGN, PROGRAMME: KATARINA JOHANSSON

GRAPHIC DESIGN, POSTER: LENNART CLAESSON

PHOTO: PETRA HELLBERG

TRANSLATION, PROGRAMME: CECILIA NILSSON, JENNIE AHLGREN, JAN ÖHQVIST

ECONOMY: MARIE-LOUISE JAENSSON BJÖRKÉN

PRODUCER: KATHARINA LIND

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: TURE RANGSTRÖM

PRODUCTION: STRINDBERGS INTIMA TEATER

in collaboration with SIRIS ORIGINELLA TEATER

WORLD PREMIERE AT STRINDBERGS INTIMA TEATER STOCKHOLM

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FOLLOWING MUSIC IS PLAYED IN THE PERFORMANCE:

Nina Persson/The Cardigans: 03.45 No Sleep, Lykke Li: Tonight, Marit Bergman: Let`s just fall in love, Anna Ternheim: Shoreline, Maia Hirasawa: The worrying kind, Annika Norlin/Hello Saferide: Middle class, Robyn: With every Heartbeat



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