



SOULPEPPER

YOUNG CENTRE
FOR THE
PERFORMING ARTS

DISTILLERY
HISTORIC
DISTRICT

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Production background notes

Written by Soulpepper Resident Artist Paula Wing

THE HEIDI CHRONICLES

WENDY WASSERSTEIN

When *The Heidi Chronicles* premiered in 1988, Wendy Wasserstein was hailed as a pioneering feminist playwright. The play, which won a Tony Award and a Pulitzer Prize, made New Yorker Wasserstein a Broadway darling. Her unique voice, part Chekhov and part Flatbush, sang the hopes, dreams and frustrations of the first generations of women who came of age expecting to have it all: a brilliant career and financial parity with men; a sexy, supportive, fully egalitarian marriage and time for group consciousness-raising; full reproductive rights and emotionally healthy children; political involvement and personal fulfillment. The writer finds comic absurdity and poignance in the way her valiant characters grapple with these impossible expectations. In a world where women have so many more choices than their mothers and grandmothers, are they happy? Wasserstein tartly points out that liberation gave women new obligations without releasing them from the old ones. Long-time company member Gregory Prest makes his Soulpepper directing debut with *Heidi*, taking on Wasserstein's ambitious episodic structure, gliding from the flower power sixties through the Vietnam War seventies to the AIDS crisis eighties. Title character Heidi Holland is driven enough to be a tenured professor at Columbia University and emotionally fragile enough to question the meaning of all she's achieved. Surrounding her are friends and lovers brought to zesty life by Wasserstein's trademark combination of humour and bracing honesty. *The Heidi Chronicles* is as relevant – and funny – today as it was when it first appeared.