

*Review from Broadwayworld.com*

## Mrs. Warren's Profession: I've Got the Whores Right Here

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It may seem bizarre to modern audiences that [George Bernard Shaw's](#) *Mrs. Warren's Profession* was originally banned from production (it took eight years to get to the stage at all, and even *then* everyone involved was arrested); the play is not licentious, and though prostitution is one of the issues hotly debated, it is couched in the most innocuous euphemisms throughout. Today the play can be performed with no one being arrested, and a very good thing it is, too- for BOO-Arts is now presenting a wonderful production at Manhattan Theatre Source, starring the great [Joy Franz](#) in the titular role.



The story is simple; Miss Vivie Warren ([Caralyn Kozlowski](#)) has seen little of her mother Mrs. Warren (Franz), but has been supported financially, and indeed has graduated from Cambridge with honors. Her mother's friend Mr. Praed ([Joseph Franchini](#)) comes to meet them both, shortly followed by Mrs. Warren herself, on the arm of Sir George Crofts (David Palmer Brown), who has eyes on Vivie for a rather mercenary marriage. Vivie, meanwhile, has eyes for Frank Gardner (James Dutton), the handsome fellow who lives nearby with his father, Reverend Samuel Gardner (Ashton Crosby), who also knows Mrs. Warren of old. All is well and good until the beans are spilled regarding Mrs. Warren's profession (the madam of several high-class brothels), and the debates begin. It's some fascinating stuff, the themes of which I won't go into here.

Kathleen O'Neill has made great use of the divided seating at Manhattan Theatre Source by staging the play in the manner of a tennis match- the audience's heads whipping back and forth as the epigrams and philosophical ideas fly. One convention of having the people "inside" the house (spare set by by Ben Salzbach) simply face the back wall of the theater is odd, but doesn't spoil matters.



The acting is great. Though everyone has their moments, when Franz or Kozlowski are onstage, the scenes crackle; and together they are dynamite. Kozlowski is one to watch, Franz is one to continue watching (I also recently saw her (though did not review) in The Cardinal Group's production of *Avow*, and she stole every scene she was in). Dutton gives an appropriately diffident performance as the lackadaisical Frank. Brown is wickedly smarmy. Franchini is hilariously affected and foppish (he is especially well-served by [David Withrow](#)'s wonderful costumes). Crosby is nicely befuddled as the reverend.

It's a great production of a very interesting play.

### **Mrs. Warren's Profession**

By [George Bernard Shaw](#)

BOO-Arts

Directed by Kathleen O'Neill

Manhattan Theatre Source

**ONLY ONE WEEK LEFT** (Last Performance April 18th)

Wed-Thu @7 PM

Fri-Sat @8 PM

Tickets are \$18 and are now available online at [www.TheatreSource.org](http://www.TheatreSource.org) or by calling 212-501-4751. Tickets may also be purchased in-person at the Manhattan Theatre Source, 177 MacDougal Street.

Photo Credit: Clint Alexander

1. [Joy Franz](#) & [Caralyn Kozlowski](#)
2. James Dutton & [Caralyn Kozlowski](#)