

THE
BERKELEY REP
MAGAZINE

2024/25 | ISSUE 4



THE THING ABOUT JELLYFISH

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY **ALI BENJAMIN**

ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY **KEITH BUNIN**

DIRECTED BY **TYNE RAFAELI**

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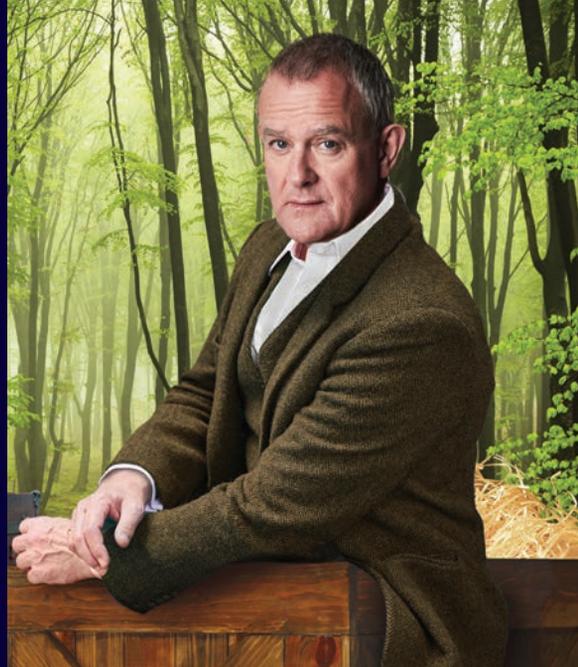
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Food and drink: Beverages in cans, cartons, or plastic cups with lids are welcome in the theatre during unmasked performances. Food is prohibited in the theatre during all performances.

Courtesy reminders: To avoid disruption to everyone, please turn off your cell phones, beeping watches, and electronic devices, and refrain from unwrapping cellophane wrappers during the performance. For the comfort of all patrons, please avoid wearing strongly scented personal products.

Photos: Photos may be taken in the theatre before and after the performance and during intermission. Photos and videos during the performance are strictly prohibited. Photos posted on social media must credit Berkeley Rep and the show's designers.

Smoking and vaping: Berkeley Rep's public spaces are smoke- and vape-free.

One of the joys of live theatre is the collective experience. Audience members respond to the show in many different ways. We invite you to join together and enjoy the show! If there is anything we can do to make your experience more enjoyable, please see a member of the house staff.

Get closed captioning on your smartphone! Closed Captioning is available for the following performances: evenings Feb 6, 7, 9, 11, and 12 and every matinee through Mar 6.

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CREATIVE DIRECTOR
DC Scarpelli

GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Quinn Barringer

PROJECT MANAGER
Heather Orth

CONTRIBUTORS
victor cervantes, jr.
Ashley Lim
David Mendizábal
DC Scarpelli

CONTACT BERKELEY REP
Box Office: 510 647-2949
Groups (10+): 510 647-2918
Admin: 510 647-2900
School of Theatre: 510 647-2972
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PAUL HEPPNER

President & Publisher

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Vice President of Sales

SHAUN SWICK

Brand & Creative Manager

CIARA CAYA

Marketing & Communications Manager

GENAY GENEREUX

Accounting & Office Manager

CALEB AGEE

Design & Publications Manager

LIZELLE DIN

Production Designer

NINA ANTIC

Account Executive

MARILYN KALLINS

Bay Area Representative

LYLE LAVER

Regional Sales Representatives

Encore Media Group

1631 15th Ave W.

Suite 219

Seattle, WA 98119-2796

206.443.0445

info@encoremidiagroup.com

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I write this letter from

an airplane, flying between Berkeley and New York. Which seems appropriate somehow

because in so many ways, *The Thing About Jellyfish* is a story of liminality. The space between childhood and adulthood. The distance between life and death. Between grief and joy. Between that which is unknowable, and the process of reconciling yourself to that. About recognizing that things that are incomprehensible can also fill us with wonder, even awe.

I think it's so important that in the present day of the story, Suzy (*Jellyfish*'s protagonist, whom you are about to come to know deeply) is twelve, almost thirteen. Many cultures around the world look at that time as one of the significant transitions in a person's life, as they traverse the distance from being a child to becoming an adult. In this day and age I can think of very few 13 year olds who can or should function as adult members of society, but there is a reason that humans have long built rituals designed to acknowledge that specific moment of maturation. One of the qualities that Suzy possesses in abundance, that feels intrinsic to her age and stage of life, is profound curiosity. There is an insatiable quality to her quest for understanding. It is one of the things that makes her challenging — to her peers as well as her teachers and parents — but also what will likely save her.

One of the beautiful things about the process of bringing this piece to life has been the opportunity to watch these gifted artists of varied generations meet as peers, and share in the task of building something new together.

Jellyfish is a story about change, about investigation, about discovery. About fear. And bravery. About buoyancy.

It is a privilege to share this brand-new piece of theatre with you.

Warmly,

Johanna Pfaelzer
Artistic Director



Welcome to *The Thing About*

Jellyfish — Berkeley Rep's 87th world premiere production! This poignant and imaginative coming-of-age story,

adapted from Ali Benjamin's acclaimed novel, is brought to life on stage by the remarkable talents of playwright Keith Bunin and director Tyne Rafaeli. Exploring themes of loss, grief, wonder, and the profound power of human connection, the story invites us to see the world through Suzy's innocent yet inquisitive eyes. Her journey reminds me of the courage it takes to embrace the inexplicable, accept life's unchangeable truths, and marvel at the boundless resilience of the human spirit and imagination. I hope this extraordinary story captivates and inspires you as deeply as it has inspired me.

As we pass the midpoint of the 2024/25 season, there is even more to look forward to at Berkeley Rep. Up next are three more unforgettable productions: the bittersweet comedy *Uncle Vanya*, featuring Hugh Bonneville (*Downton Abbey*); the revelatory docudrama *Here There Are Blueberries* by Tectonic Theater Project; and Jiehae Park's tender and surreal world premiere, *the aves*.

Looking ahead, we're thrilled to be planning the 2025/26 season and can't wait to share what theatrical adventures are in store. Current subscribers, watch for details soon about Early Bird renewal opportunities—secure your seats at an extra discount before the new season is announced in April!

I also invite you to join us for our annual Ovation Gala on Saturday, March 29, at the Ritz-Carlton in San Francisco. This signature event raises vital funds for our artistic, educational, and community programs. Visit berkeleyrep.org for details.

Thank you for being part of our community. Your involvement, support, and patronage mean the world to us.

Enjoy the show!

Tom Parrish
Managing Director



Berkeley Repertory Theatre acknowledges and honors its presence on the unceded ancestral lands of the Chochoyenyo-speaking Ohlone people, now colonially known as Berkeley. The land from which we benefit continues to be a place of foremost importance to the Ohlone and all descendants of the Verona Band. Berkeley Rep is committed to actively centering antiracism and living our values by promoting the history and culture of the Ohlone People and sustaining an ongoing relationship which supports the art, resources, and values of indigenous peoples and tribes. We are grateful to our friends at the Sogorea Te' Land Trust and the Confederated Villages of Lisjan for their support and guidance as we continue to educate ourselves and our community to uplift and support our indigenous communities.



Young Voices Center Stage

AN INTERVIEW WITH BERKELEY REP'S TEEN COUNCIL

As *The Thing About Jellyfish* so poignantly reveals, navigating hardship, finding avenues for self-expression, and simply surviving school are difficult things to juggle for young people. While there is no single solution to the many challenges young people face in today's fast-paced world, Berkeley Rep's Teen Council is just one of the many programs established to foster community, mentorship, and artistic enrichment for high school students across the Bay Area. The program, comprised of a core group of 10-15 student leaders, aims to not only engage the next generation of artists and theatregoers, but also invite young people to make themselves at home here at Berkeley Rep, as part of our community.

Teen Council leaders Amelia, Harper, Hyacinth, Kit, and Maya recently sat down to share their experiences both as individual artists, and as a creative cohort with Teen Council this year.

Top: Teen Council members Amelia Costales-Downey, Harper Iles, Hyacinth Taylor, Kit Lunt, and Maya Madsen

What excites you the most about live theatre?

HARPER: Theatre is a home, first and foremost. I think it's really cool that so many people, whether they're interested in acting, directing, designing, or anything else, can still come together and feel at home when you work on a creative project.

HYACINTH: I think theatre allows us to explore our own lives through seeing elements of ourselves onstage. Even though you can tell a story in a million different ways, on film or through writing, there's something very human about theatre.

What kinds of stories have been the most impactful to you? What kinds of stories do you like to create?

MAYA: I'm always blown away by theatre that finds a universal truth within a specific group. Being able to find yourself within one trait of a story, but then watching it transform and grow into something that's so much bigger than yourself is really inspiring.

KIT: One thing I love about Berkeley Rep's work is just how many things I've seen on stage that I'd never seen before in my life. *Goddess* was unlike anything I'd ever seen before, and experiencing a show that centered Black joy and African mythology was really beautiful.

AMELIA: I agree; it's really important to show the beauty and vibrance of other cultures, not just the trauma within marginalized communities.

What are some highlights from your experience as a Teen Council Leader so far? What made you want to join this cohort?

HARPER: It's cool to see so many different minds creating in such different ways. Within our council, we could have one group of teens developing interview questions for our Teen Night guest artist, while another group will be developing games, and another group will come up with social media marketing, so it's just cool to see everyone collaborate in that way.

MAYA: The environment that we cultivate when we see shows together is one of the best! Being able to debrief with people after the show is always one of my favorite things because it brings different viewpoints to light. Our debrief after *Galileo* was insane in the best possible way, and it always pushes me to see things more critically and think deeply about all the lenses that you can see the show through.

HYACINTH: That's my favorite part too — getting to hear everyone's thoughts on *The Matchbox Magic Flute* was so fun, and it's so important for us to have a space where we can do that and just listen to one another.

AMELIA: Being a part of a group of like-minded theatre-loving folks has also taught me to be more forgiving of myself. It's really easy for us to be harsh on ourselves when we branch out and experience new things, because we're teens and that's what we do, but being a part of something where everyone is the same age and likes the same stuff as me is comforting and allows me to get into a headspace where I can be creative without having to worry about messing up or being judged by anyone.

Have you encountered stories about young people's experience of grief? If so, do you feel this is an important topic for your generation to be talking about?

MAYA: As a society, we're taught that grief is something to be handled privately, so I think it's really underrepresented in media. Grief can mean a lot more than the death of a loved one. There are a lot of things to grieve about, and I think resonating with that experience is important. As young people, I think it gives us a sense of community when we're allowed to experience these stories together. ■

CONVERSATION FACILITATED BY ASHLEY LIM, SCHOOL OF THEATRE MARKETING AND REGISTRATIONS MANAGER

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KABIR H.
KIT L.
LALIMA G.
MAYA M.
SAUL K.



The Thing About **WORLD- BUILDING**

Creating the onstage visual world for *The Thing About Jellyfish* was no easy task, but director **Tyne Rafaeli**, set designer **Derek McLane**, and projection designer **Lucy Mackinnon** were up for it. Berkeley Rep's associate producer of new work, victor cervantes jr., gathered the three visionary artists to discuss their process and the relationship between the set and projection designs in the telling of this story. Below are excerpts from that conversation.

PHOTO: DC SCARPELLI

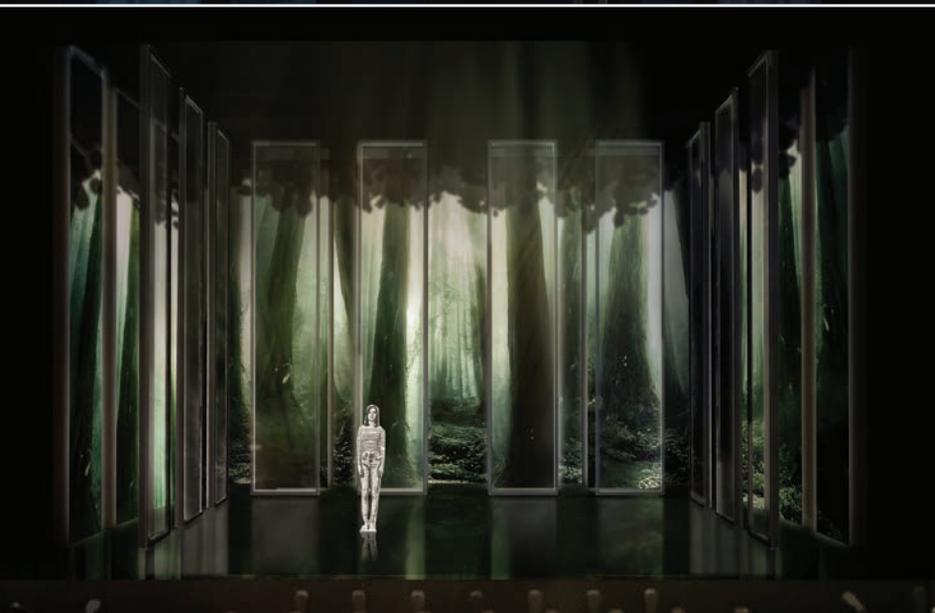


Tyne Rafaeli on directorial vision and choosing designers:

The story takes place in the wild imagination of a 12-year-old girl and travels from the cosmos, to the deepest part of the ocean to the wilds of middle school. It moves from the real to the metaphysical at the speed of light, which was something I thought was inherently theatrical and rarely seen in plays.

And you might ask: How does that kind of complex, existential human experience translate to a design? Well, Derek and Lucy and the rest of the team have created a space that is able to iris into the smallest detail of human experience and then iris out to the most unanswerable of human experiences in the blink of an eye.

Pictured throughout: initial scenic renderings by Derek McLane



Derek McLane on the need for projections:

The story really grabbed my attention, and I also thought about how difficult it would be to design – moving between realities; between real and imagined moments, the present and the past. It's a story told from the point of view of a child, but there are also different ages of her childhood [represented in the play]. It's particularly challenging in this play because of the very fluid nature of the transitions and the speed at which the world transforms between all these realities. As the designer, I must think about the things we can do to make that happen in the blink of an eye. So, projections became particularly useful because they change at the same speed that light changes. You're sometimes limited by the fact that physical objects take longer to move, and they often take up more psychic energy for the audience. With projections, there is something about the effortless with which they can transform. They are, in a way, an extension of light.

Lucy Mackinnon on the role of projections in creating stage magic:

Projection has become a lot more commonplace in theatre over the last 10 to 15 years, which is also the span of time that I've been working on it. The thing that is continuously challenging is finding ways to make projections still feel magical on

stage. One of the biggest reasons to have it is to make beautiful images that couldn't be made other ways; hopefully, to make images that the audience doesn't quite understand, can't quite conceive of how they were done. It's also why film was invented in the first place. Some of the earliest filmmakers were stage magicians, like the Lumière brothers who were doing performances in front of people. They realized they could create interesting new images through film, and they projected those on stage as part of their acts. The connection between magic and stagecraft and projection is a close one and an old one.

Derek and Lucy on how projection design has evolved:

DM: The first time I really saw projections used on stage in a big, big way was the original 1993 Broadway production of *The Who's Tommy*, which Wendall K. Harrington designed. There were no video projectors, and she took, I don't know, maybe 30 carousel slide projectors and figured out the placement of all the slides. She knit all these different slide projectors together to make big images on stage. You think of how far the equipment and technology have come since then, and the biggest thing that I've noticed over the last 10 years is

that the resolution and brightness of the images have become better and better and better, and that the equipment has become quieter. It used to be that the projectors were so loud that you could almost not use them in plays because they would drown out the actors.

LM: As Derek said, over the last 15 years, 20 years, all the technology has improved. So just the experience of being in a room with projectors is much easier, and I'm excited to be a part of it and to be continuously also brought into the conversation by directors, by writers, by scenic designers who are interested in the possibilities of using projections. I think we can continue to find ways to surprise people and to do things on stage that people haven't encountered or seen before, even on TV.

Tyne on the future of projections in theatre:

Adapt or die. The integration of any new technology is always a process: we learn its creative power, and we also learn its danger. We're doing that dance all the time, but you can't put the genie back in the bottle. You know it is out. It is here to stay. I've seen the erosive effect of projections and video on our art form, and the profoundly additive effect. We're in a teething process, still figuring out how to use this technology. This is how the next generation is

thinking about the world now. So, I do think, adapt or die, in terms of integrating this technology into an art form that is ancient and live — that is the job of the next stage of our theatrical work. ■

FROM AQUARIUM TO ADAPTATION



Author Ali Benjamin

PHOTO: CRAIG CLEMOW

The Thing About Jellyfish began as a novel written by **Ali Benjamin** in 2015. Now, 10 years later, Berkeley Rep is thrilled to be producing the world premiere stage adaptation written by American playwright and screenwriter, **Keith Bunin** (*The Coast Starlight* and Pixar's *Onward*).

Berkeley Rep's associate producer of new work, Victor Cervantes Jr., sat with Ali and Keith to discuss the differences between adaptation and original writing, what drew them both to this story, and their relationship as artists. Below are edited highlights from the conversation.

Keith, what originally drew you to this novel about the friendship between two 12-year-old girls?

KEITH BUNIN: I totally relate to that monomania that Suzy has for learning about everything. I am still an obsessive person, but I was very much an obsessive 12-year-old. I could talk about movies, the history of movies, I would read old books about movies and then I would record those movies on VHS when they played on TV late at night. So, Suzy drew me in as a character: as someone who is incredibly smart at what she's smart at, but it's something that not all her peers necessarily respond to. She feels both very impassioned and very isolated because of that. That made utter sense to me and felt incredibly powerful. So that was very easy for me to climb into.

In contrast, I am not an expert, by any stretch, about the relationships of 12-year-old girls. I've had close friendships, and I have observed mother-daughter relationships. Certainly, my mother and my sister had a lot of similarities to Meg and Suzy. So, one thing I've loved about this project was the opportunity to explore living vicariously through the characters that Ali has created. There's some stuff that I immediately understand and some stuff where I don't have this experience, but Ali has done so much great work for me already that the gift I get is to play around in her world and I get to learn so much from doing that.

ALI BENJAMIN: You, Keith, were able to take this work and adapt it so any adult will feel it's a story for them. The play operates on multiple levels concurrently. It's a hard story to tell on stage. It takes place concurrently in the past, in the present, and in Suzy's imagination. So, figuring out how to stage a character to be simultaneously in her bedroom at twelve years old, in a pool at five years old, and imagining and inventing things while looking toward the future... that's a constraint for the stage. It's a lot to accomplish. Keith, your theatrical vocabulary is extraordinary. I knew you could pull it off when I went to see your 2023 production of *The Coast Starlight* at Lincoln Center, which also creates multiple realities simultaneously.

Ali, in addition to novels, you have co-written non-fiction stories in the past (such as *The New York Times* best-seller *The Keeper*). Can you speak on your experience as a co-author or supporting others in telling their story? What is it to be in support of someone else's story?

ALI: One recent collaboration [the memoir *Breaking Through: My Life in Science* by Dr. Katalin Karikó] was with a molecular biologist who won the Nobel Prize [in 2023]. She grew up in postwar Hungary behind the Iron Curtain, and for almost her entire adult life, she was absolutely focused on this very specific area of science (messenger RNA). Her life was singular. Lives are always

Lives are always singular. But experiences are more universal. My goal is to find that universality inside their unique story.

—ALI BENJAMIN

singular. But experiences are more universal. My goal is to find that universality inside their unique story. The process typically begins just by sitting with them, asking questions, and listening. It's nonlinear; you don't yet know what the book is going to look like. You don't know if the questions you're asking are going to be important to the finished work. So you are asking about very personal things, and at first, you can't necessarily say why. You're just moving by instinct toward a story. There's a lot of trust building in that — as Keith, I imagine there is for you in the adaptation process. But it can be a beautiful process.

Keith, can you share your experience in adapting Ali's writing for the stage?

KEITH: This is the first adaptation I've done for the theatre. I've adapted a number of novels into screenplays, but I've never adapted a book into a play. Sometimes I'm not allowed to meet the author — the film producers wanted to keep us apart. So, it's wonderful to be able to work so closely with Ali. One rule I have is that I never take on a piece of material that I don't like or love. That I don't respond to. I think that that's deadly. I had the fortune to sit with Ali for three days before I even wrote a word and just downloaded. Ali was so generous. It was so helpful to hear things articulated: why she wrote the book and what I was responding to. We had note cards up on the board: what are the immovable cornerstones of the book? And in contrast, what pieces can we

pick up, rearrange, and move around? Then there are things that you simply discover as you go, that are wonderful secrets that the writer may know or may not know.

I think of it closer to an act of translation. The language of one medium works differently than the language of the medium that this person originally wrote in.

ALI: Keith, I'm curious, listening to you, whether adaptation is a fundamentally different sort of experience than writing an original work. I've found co-writing to be a much more cerebral process than novel-writing. Whereas writing an original work is more mysterious — I don't even know where it comes from.

KEITH: Yes. Yes. Especially in the early stages, you just have to be honest about the fact that it's like liquid flowing in various directions. What I've realized is some writers say things like, "Oh, I read the book and then I put it away and didn't look at it when I wrote the first draft of the adaptation." I cannot do that. I cannot pretend that the thing didn't exist. In fact, when I was brought on to do this — after we talked — I said to our producers at Madison Wells Live and to director Tyne Rafaeli, "I'm just going to essentially vomit Ali's book back into a theatrical format (laughs). I'm not gonna try to write a play yet but really internalize what's there."

How do you keep what you love? In this case, the big difference is that the book is written in first person. That is an incredibly powerful experience — and there is no way to replicate that on

Playwright Keith Bunin

stage in the same way. I think at the end of the day, a lot of what I'm doing, to be honest, is ransacking the book for all the material I can use. There's this wonderful book that I'm ransacking for treasure, and I spread out all the great scenes and moments in front of me, and I put them back together in a way that will work on stage.

ALI: I just want to say that what I have seen of your adaptation process is far more than ransacking (laughs). You also created a couple of fantastic scenes that did not come from the book, and which really sing.



BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATRE

JOHANNA PFAELZER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | **TOM PARRISH**, MANAGING DIRECTOR

In association with Madison Wells Live and Emerald Drive

presents

THE THING ABOUT JELLYFISH

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY

ALI BENJAMIN

ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY

KEITH BUNIN

DIRECTED BY

TYNE RAFAELI

MOVEMENT DIRECTOR

YASMINE LEE

SET DESIGN

DEREK MCLANE

COSTUME DESIGN

LINDA CHO

LIGHTING DESIGN

LAP CHI CHU

SOUND DESIGN & ORIGINAL MUSIC

DAN KLUGER

VIDEO DESIGN

LUCY MACKINNON

DIALECT COACH

JESSICA BERMAN

CASTING

STEPHANIE YANKWITT, C.S.A., tbd casting

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Matilda Lawler* Suzy
Stephanie Janssen* Meg
Kayla Teruel* Franny
Andy Grotelueschen* Dan
Christiana Clark* Franny's Mom, Mrs. Turton,
 Dr. Legler, and Everyone Else
Antonio Watson Justin
Lexi Perkel. Aubrey
Robert Stanton* Jamie
Jasper Bermudez. Dylan

UNDERSTUDIES

Colby Kipnes* Suzy
Rebecca Schweitzer* Meg, Franny's Mom,
 Mrs. Turton, Dr. Legler,
 and Everyone Else
Lexi Perkel. Franny
Cassidy Brown* Dan, Jamie
Maxwell Hamilton Dylan, Justin
Sydney Walker Freeman. Aubrey

Understudies never substitute for listed performers unless a specific announcement or notice is made at the time of appearance.

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

This theatre operates under agreements with the League of Resident Theatres, Actors' Equity Association (the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States), the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, and United Scenic Artists.



Please turn off your cell phones, beeping watches, and electronic devices, and refrain from unwrapping cellophane wrappers during the performance.

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OPENING NIGHT: FEBRUARY 5, 2025
RODA THEATRE

RUN TIME IS ONE HOUR AND 45 MINUTES, WITH NO INTERMISSION



This production is dedicated to the memory of our colleague and friend Jared Hammond, Berkeley Rep's Finance Director since 2019.

JARED HAMMOND
1962–2024

FOR THIS PRODUCTION

Associate Director..... **Adam Coy**
 Assistant Director..... **Manon McCollum** (Bret C. Harte Artistic Fellow)
 Associate Scenic Designer..... **Tony DiBernardo**
 Associate Costume Designer..... **Herin Kaputkin**
 Costume Assistant..... **Patrick Bevilacqua**
 Associate Lighting Designer..... **Kaitlin Trimble**
 Assistant Lighting Designer..... **Renata Taylor-Smith** (Electrics Fellow)
 Assistant Sound Designer and Music Editor..... **Kaileykielle Hoga** (Harry Weininger Sound Fellow)
 Associate Video Designer..... **Heekyung Kim**
 Production Assistants..... **Charis Lam, Anthony Lopez**
 Deck Crew..... **Julia Englehorn** (Stage Supervisor), **Gabriel Holman** (Associate Stage Supervisor),
Chris Russell (Automation Operator), **Siobhán Slater** (Lead Fly Operator),
Michael Boomer, Sasha King, Matt Sykes, Emma Walz
 Wardrobe Crew..... **Barbara Blair** (Wardrobe Supervisor), **Dieyla Diop, Caz Hiro, Malia Sittler**
 Hair and Wigs Crew..... **Kat Lee**
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Trinity Wicklund Stage Management Fellow



Jasper Bermudez
Dylan

Jasper is excited to make his Berkeley Repertory Theatre debut! He is a San Francisco native and currently trains with American Conservatory Theater's Young Conservatory. He has also trained with Broadway Artists Alliance in New York City. Regional: *A Christmas Carol* (American Conservatory Theater 2019, 2022 & 2023). Thank you to my parents, family, and friends for all your support! (PRONOUNS: HE/HIM) Instagram: @bermudez.jasper



Christiana Clark*

Franny's Mom,
Mrs. Turton, Dr. Legler,
and Everyone Else

Broadway: *Doubt*. Off-Broadway: *FLEX*, *Pure Confidence*.

Regional highlights: *the ripple, the wave that carried me home* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre); *How to Catch Creation*, *The Way the Mountain*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *UniSon*, *The Odyssey*, *The Wiz*, *Hamlet*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Blue* (Penumbra Theatre); *Primary Trust*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci* (Goodman); *Twelfth Night*, *All's Well That Ends Well* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); *As You Like It* (Guthrie Theater); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare Theatre Company); *Gleam* (Baltimore Center Stage); *Othello*, *Il Campiello*, *Endgame* (Ten Thousand Things Theater). TV/film: *FBI: Most Wanted*, *Law & Order: Organized Crime*, *Étoile*, *The Gilded Age*, *Candyman*



Andy Grotelueschen*

Dan

Andy was nominated for a Tony Award for his performance as Jeff in the acclaimed musical *Tootsie*. Additional Broadway credits

include *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window* with Oscar Isaac and Rachel Brosnahan, and *Cyrano de Bergerac* directed by Jamie Lloyd. He was nominated for a Lortel Award for his work in *Into the Woods* and received the St. Clair Bayfield Award for *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* - co-produced by TFANA and Fiasco Theater - where he is a long-time company member. He's appeared Off-Broadway as Petruchio in TFANA's *The Taming of the Shrew* and in many other Shakespeare plays, as well as many world premieres of new work. Film: *A Complete Unknown*, *The Legend of Juan Jose Mundo*, *Música*, *Here Today*, *Coin Heist*, *Ordinary World*, *Still on the Road*, *Tumorhead*. TV: *The Gilded Age*, *Lincoln Rhyme*, *Elementary*, *The Good Wife*, *The Good Cop*, *The Knick*.



Stephanie Janssen*

Meg

Broadway: *Goodnight, Oscar*, *Death of a Salesman* (dir. Mike Nichols), *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. Off-Broadway: *Queen* (NAATCO), *Ivanov*

(Classic Stage Company, dir. Austin Pendleton), *Clive* (The New Group, dir. Ethan Hawke), *PTSD* (EST), and *Arcadia* (PTPNY). Regional: *Problems Between Sisters* (Studio Theatre), as well as work at Westport Country Playhouse, McCarter Theatre, Denver Center Theatre, and Actor's Theatre of Louisville.TV/Film: *Succession*, *New Amsterdam*, *FBI*, *The Blacklist*, *Mysteries of Laura*, *The Good Wife*, *Elementary*, *Law & Order*. Stephanie wrote and performed in *The Umbrella Plays* (NYC Fringe, winner Outstanding Play). B.A. Middlebury College, M.F.A NYU Tisch Grad Acting.



Matilda Lawler*

Suzu

Matilda made her Broadway debut in Jez Butterworth's *The Ferryman*. She made her professional stage debut in *The Net Will Appear* starring

alongside Richard Masur. Her TV credits include *Station Eleven* on HBO Max, which earned her a Gotham Award nomination for Outstanding Performance, *The Gilded Age*, *The Santa Clauses* on Disney+, and *Evil*. Film credits include *Exra*, *Flora in Flora & Ulysses* on Disney+, and *Block Island Sound*. Upcoming: *IT: Welcome to Derry* on HBO. She'd like to thank her family and all the other people in her life who never stop encouraging her to learn and change and grow.



Lexi Perkel

Aubrey, u/s Franny

Lexi is excited to make her Berkeley Rep debut in *The Thing About Jellyfish*. Lexi is best known for her featured role in the Emmy®-nominated

Netflix special *John Mulaney & the Sack Lunch Bunch*, including her musical number *Pay Attention!* with David Byrne. Lexi recently completed a staged reading of the musical *Fly to Tomorrow* (Young Marley) for JOODA Culture and Evan Bernardin Productions. Recent film credits include *We Should Eat* (Agi), opposite Tovah Feldshuh and Jackie Hoffman, *Mabel* (Callie), alongside Judy Greer. More at lexiperkel.com



Robert Stanton*

Jamie

Broadway: *Uncle Vanya*, *Ink*, *Saint Joan*, *A Free Man of Color*, *Mary Stuart*, *The Coast of Utopia*. Off-Broadway: two-

dozen credits include an Obie Award for *All in the Timing*; *Love Child*, performed with co-writer Daniel Jenkins. Regional: extensive credits include *Death on the Nile* (Arena Stage); *The Critic & The Real Inspector Hound* (Emery Battis Award), *Strange Interlude* (Shakespeare Theatre Company); *The School for Wives* (Two River); *Twelfth Night*, *Once in a Lifetime*, *The Homecoming* (American Repertory Theater). Films: over 20, from *A League of Their Own* to *Jason Bourne*. Recent television: *Blue Bloods*, *Pretty Little Liars*; *Original Sin*, *Mr. Mercedes*.



Kayla Teruel*

Franny

Kayla is thrilled to be joining the cast of *The Thing About Jellyfish!* Broadway: *The Music Man* (Amaryllis). National Tour: *Les Miserables* (Little

Cosette/Young Eponine), *The King and I* (Princess Ying Yaowalak). Immense gratitude to the entire creative team, Leslie Zaslower and the Buchwald team, Jen Merlino and team, and Walker Clark. Love to Mom, Dad, Jana and extended family. Glory to God!



Antonio Watson (HE/HIM)

Justin

Antonio is thrilled to join *The Thing About Jellyfish* at Berkeley Rep. Broadway debut as Young Craig in *Tina: The Tina Turner Musical*.

Regional: *Beauty and The Beast* (Chip) at Paper Mill Playhouse, *Caroline, or Change* (Joe Thibodeaux) at Tantrum Theater, *This Ain't No Disco* (Charlie) at Atlantic Theater Company. Television: *Evil* (CBS), *Extrapolations* (Apple TV+), *The Late Show With Stephen Colbert* (CBS), *Blue Bloods* (CBS). Film: *All the Little Things We Kill*, *Lily* (short), *In the Field* (short), *SHIP* (short). V/O: Franklin in *Peanuts* and Nickelodeon's *Zoomed-In Zoo*. Thanking Victoria Kress, Kim Pedell, and his family for their support. @antonio.jwatson



Cassidy Brown*

u/s Dan, Jamie

Cassidy is happy to return to Berkeley Rep, where he previously appeared in *Imaginary Comforts*. He has appeared at TheatreWorks in *Fallen*

Angels, *Doubt*, *Distacted*, *The 39 Steps* and at San Jose Rep in *Game On*. Other Bay Area credits include *The Great Leap*, *Ella*, *The Underpants*, and *The 39 Steps* (Center Rep); *Bosoms and Neglect*, *Safe House* (Aurora Theatre); *Don Quixote*, *Othello* (Marin Shakespeare); *The 39 Steps* (San Jose Stage); *You Mean to Do Me Harm* (San Francisco Playhouse). Regionally he has appeared in multiple plays at both Capital Stage and Pacific Repertory Theatre. (PRONOUNS: HE/HIM)



Maxwell Hamilton

u/s Dylan, Justin

Maxwell is thrilled to be an understudy for Dylan and Justin in *The Thing About Jellyfish*. A passionate performer from San Jose, California, Maxwell is 13 years old. His previous roles include Simon in *13 The Musical*, Fletcher Blake in *Freaky Friday*, Ugly in *HONK!*, Bobby Child in *Crazy for You*, Donkey in *Shrek*, and the Ghost of Christmas Present in *A Christmas Carol*. Maxwell is also a musician, playing piano, singing, composing music, and a member of band and choir at school. Maxwell was recently nominated for the Joshua Grant Brawn Award at CMTSJ.



Colby Kipnes*

u/s Suzy

Colby is thrilled to join this cast in the telling of this amazing story. Broadway: *Grey House* (Squirrel). Select Regional Theatre: *Tuck Everlasting* (Winnie Foster, Bottenwieser Hall, 92nd St Y), *A Christmas Carol* (Fan/Martha, WPPAC), *Godspell*, *Evita*, *Joseph...Dreamcoat* (ACT of CT). TV: *The Beast in Me*, *Fleishman Is In Trouble*, *Saturday Night Live*, *Bubble Guppies*, *Nella the Princess Knight*, *Butterbean's Cafe*. Film: *Theo's Tears*, *Perception*, *Jump Cut*. Many thanks to this cast, crew, creatives, Avalon Artists Group, Bercy Talent, Devin Ilaw, Janine Molinari & Emily Bauer. Love to Mom, Dad, Asher, & Kyle. Instagram: [@colbykipnes](https://www.instagram.com/colbykipnes), [ColbyKipnes.com](https://www.colbykipnes.com)



Rebecca Schweitzer*

u/s Meg, Franny's Mom, Mrs. Turton, Dr. Legler, and Everyone Else

Rebecca is delighted to be part of this wonderful production. She was last seen as Carol in *Hurricane Diane* at Aurora. She's performed locally at Marin Theatre, Center Rep, SF Playhouse, PCPA. Her voice can be heard in a variety of video games (*The Walking Dead*, *Back to the Future*, *World of Warcraft: Legion*, *League of Legends*) as well as in TV and radio ads. She narrated the audio tour for the retrospective of Tamara de Lempika currently at the DeYoung Museum. This is dedicated to her mother and grandfather whose love and support have been the foundation for her success. She would like to thank her husband for his unwavering support.



Sydney Walker Freeman

u/s Aubrey

Sydney is thrilled to be making her Berkeley Rep debut! Regional: *Ragtime* (Little Girl)

and *Tuck Everlasting* with TheatreWorks Silicon Valley. Training: Eight year member of StarStuck Theatre, performing in six Mainstage productions, including *Beauty and the Beast* (Madame de la Grande Bouche) and *The Little Mermaid* (Flotsam). As a member of the James Logan Speech and Debate program, she finished in the top 60 in the country for Humorous Interpretation. Thank you to Kelly Burge, Justin Kurup, StarStruck, her speech team, and her parents for supporting her.

Ali Benjamin

Novelist

Ali is a New York Times bestselling author and National Book Award finalist. *The Thing About Jellyfish*, her first novel, was an international bestseller and was translated into 25 languages in over 40 countries. Ali lives in Massachusetts.

Keith Bunin

Playwright

Keith's most recent play *The Coast Starlight* premiered at La Jolla Playhouse in 2019 and received its NYC premiere at Lincoln Center Theater in 2023. His plays *The Credeaux Canvas*, *The World Over*, and *The Busy World Is Hushed* all premiered Off-Broadway at Playwrights Horizons. His other plays include *Sam Bendrix at the Bon Soir* (La Jolla Playhouse/City Theater Pittsburgh), *The Unbuilt City* (New York Stage and Film), and *The Principality of Sorrows* (Pure Orange Productions), as well as the book for the musical *10 Million Miles* (Atlantic Theater Company). His film writing credits include *Onward* (Disney/Pixar), *Horns* (Mandalay), *Which Brings Me To You* (BCDF Pictures/Anonymous Content), and *Nimona* (Netflix/Annapurna). He was also a writer for the HBO TV series *In Treatment*.

Tyne Rafaeli

Director

Tyne directs for stage, screen, and audio. Recent stage productions include Brian Watkins' *Weather Girl* (Edinburgh Festival, Fringe-First Award, the Lustrum Award, and The List's Best International Production), Jen Silverman's *Spain* (Second Stage); Keith Bunin's *The Coast Starlight* (Lincoln Center Theater, NY Times Critic's Pick); Brian Watkins' *Epiphany* (Lincoln Center Theater, NY Times Critic's Pick); Sylvia Khoury's *Selling Kabul* (Playwright's Horizons, NY Times Critic's Pick); Ming Peiffer's *Usual Girls* (Roundabout, NY Times Critic's Pick); Craig Lucas' *I Was Most Alive With You* (Playwright's Horizons, NY Times Critic's Pick); and Lauren Yee's *In a Word* (Cherry Lane, NY Times Critic's Pick). Recent TV directing includes *The Beast in Me* (Netflix); *Tell Me Lies* (Hulu); *Elsbeth* (Paramount+); *The Good Fight* (Paramount+); *Single Drunk Female* (Hulu); and *Evil* (Paramount+). Tyne has directed multiple audio series including most recently *The Miranda Obsession* written by Jen Silverman and starring Rachel




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Brosnahan, and *Madam Ram* starring Toni Collette. Upcoming theatre productions include *Becoming Eve* at New York Theatre Workshop and *Weather Girl* at Soho Theatre, London.

Yasmine Lee

Movement Director

Yasmine's work spans theatre, film, television, music videos, and large-scale events in over 30 countries. Select credits as choreographer and/or movement director include *Disco Show* (Caesar's Palace), *Parable of the Sower Opera*, *World Expo 2020 Opening Ceremony* (Dubai), *SOCIAL! The Social Distance Dance Club* with David Byrne, *Made For Love* (MAX), *American Horror Story: Delicate* (FX), *Wild Goose Dreams* (Off-Broadway), *Knives in Hens* (Off-Broadway), *Tender Napalm* (U.S. Premiere, Off-Broadway). As Associate Choreographer she has contributed to the Broadway productions of *A Beautiful Noise: The Neil Diamond Musical*, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *The Crucible* (2016 Revival), *Once*, and *RENT*. She worked on Francis Ford Coppola's *Megalopolis*, *SNL* (w/Katy Perry), *Across the Universe* (Julie Taymor), *Opening Ceremonies of The Winter Olympics in Sochi*. She was the Associate Movement Director of *Sweeney Todd* (Barrow Street Theatre) and *Let The Right One In* (Berkeley Rep).

Derek McLane

Scenic Design

Broadway: *Death Becomes Her*, *Purlie Victorious* (Tony nomination), *MJ* (Tony nomination), *Moulin Rouge!* (Tony Award), *A Soldier's Play* (Tony nomination), *The Price*, *Beautiful*, *Gigi*, *33 Variations* (Tony Award), *How to Succeed in Business...*, *Follies*, *Anything Goes*, *Ragtime*, *The Pajama Game*, *I Am My Own Wife*. Television: Six years of *Academy Awards* (Emmy Award), four NBC musicals, including *Hairspray* (Emmy Award). Board Chairman of The New Group Theatre, awards include multiple Tonys, Emmys, Obies, Drama Desks, Lucille Lortel Awards, and Art Directors Guild Awards. Designed the 2024 Met Gala.

Linda Cho

Costume Design

Linda received the Tony Award for Best Costume Design in a Musical for *The Great Gatsby* and *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, and she was nominated for a Tony, Outer Critic's Circle, and Drama Desk Award for *Anastasia*. Her work in ballet and opera can be seen at The Metropolitan Opera, Washington National Opera, and American Ballet Theatre. She is the recipient of the Theatre Development Fund's Irene Sharaff Young Master Award, and is currently serving on the advisory committee of the American Theatre Wing and is also a judge for the Susan Blackburn Playwriting Prize. MFA Yale School of Drama. More at lindacho.com

Lap Chi Chu

Lighting Design

Berkeley Rep: *The Great Wave*, *Emotional Creature*, and *Ruined*. Broadway: *Suffs*, *Yellowface*, *Uncle Vanya*, and *Camelot* (Tony Nomination). New York: The Public Theater, Roundabout Theatre Company, Lincoln Center Theater, New York Theatre Workshop, Signature Theatre. Regional: Mark Taper Forum, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, La Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe, American Contemporary Theater, Goodman Theatre, American Repertory Theater, Arena Stage, Dallas Theater Center, and the Alley Theatre. Recognitions include the Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Lighting Design and an Obie for Sustained Excellence in Lighting Design. Head of Lighting Design at UCLA. lapchichu.com

Dan Kluger

Music and Sound Design

Broadway: *Oh Mary!*, *Oklahoma!*, *The Sound Inside*, *Seawall/A Life*, revival of *Marvin's Room*, world premiere of *Significant Other*. Off Broadway: premieres of *Spain*, *The Coast Starlight*, *You Will Get Sick*, *Epiphany*, *Judgment Day*, *Animal*, *The Village Bike*, *Man From Nebraska*, *Tribes*, and *Women or Nothing*. Film Scores: *A Christmas Carol* (2021), *The Courtroom* (2021), *Duolo* (2017), *Health to the King* (2020), *Hello Again* (2017, orchestrations). Audio: *Vapor Trail* (2022), *The Miranda Obsession* (2022), *OFFENSE* (2022), *The Guilty* (2021). Resident composer music producer at Renaissance Recording. danielkluger.com

Lucy Mackinnon

Projection Design

Lucy is a projection designer and video artist who lives in Brooklyn, New York. She is a two-time Tony Award nominee whose Broadway design credits include *All In*, *The Notebook*, *Kimberly Akimbo*, *A Christmas Carol*, *How I Learned to Drive*, *Jagged Little Pill*, *The Rose Tattoo*, *Lifespan of a Fact*, *Six Degrees of Separation*, and Deaf West's revival of *Spring Awakening*. She teaches projection design at Brooklyn College and has previously taught at Ithaca College and Fordham University.

Jessica Berman

Dialect Coach

Jessica Berman is a dialect, voice, and text coach. With Berkeley Rep, she has coached *Harry Clarke*, *School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play*, *Becky Nurse of Salem*, *The Good Book*, *Paradise Square: A New Musical*, *Angels in America*, *What the Constitution Means to Me*, and *Monsoon Wedding*, among others. Most recently, she served as co-head of voice and dialects for *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* at The Curran, SF. Jessica is a lecturer in the department of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies at U.C. Berkeley. She holds an MFA from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

Stephanie Yankwitt, C.S.A.,

tbd casting

Casting

Broadway: *The Laramie Project* (upcoming), *Frankie & Johnny...* (with Audra McDonald & Michael Shannon). Off-Broadway/NYC: *The Great Privation* (Soho Rep/Playwrights Horizons, upcoming), *Give Me Carmelita Tropicana* (Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, Soho Rep), and Tectonic Theater Project's *Here There Are Blueberries* (La Jolla, STC, NYTW). Film/TV: *Still Life* (Alexander Dinelaris writer/director, starring Zoe Saldaña, upcoming), *In The Summers* (official selection, 2024 Sundance Film Festival, Grand Jury Prize), and *Growing Up* (Disney+, Culture House). Resident casting office for Soho Rep and Tectonic Theater Project. Ongoing work with La Jolla Playhouse. [@tbdcastingco](https://tbdcastingco)

Rachel A. Zucker*

Stage Manager

Berkeley Rep Debut! Broadway: *JOB, SIX, Tina: The Tina Turner Musical*, *The Prom*, *True West*, *Pretty Woman*, *Farinelli and the King*, *Indecent*. Select Off-Broadway: *JOB* (Soho Playhouse, Connelly Theater); *Scene Partners*, *Lessons in Survival: 1971* (Vineyard Theater); *Kinky Boots* (Stage 42); *Misty, HELP* (The Shed); *Tiny Beautiful Things*, *Twelfth Night*, *Plenty*, *Southern Comfort*, *Grounded* (The Public Theater); *Hamlet, Othello*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Cymbeline* (Shakespeare in the Park); *Working: A Musical*, *Roadshow* (New York City Center); *Lazarus* (New York Theater Workshop); *Curse of the Starving Class* (Signature Theatre Company.) MFA: Stage Management, Columbia University. Love to Tyne, Chris, Team SM & Team Jellyfish. For Mom, Dad, & Cary. (PRONOUNS: THEY/THEM) Insta: @rucker37

Becky Fleming*

Assistant Stage Manager

Berkeley Rep debut! Broadway: *Newsies* (OBC and 1st National Tour), *Waitress* (OBC & 2021 revival), *A Strange Loop*, *The Skin of Our Teeth* (Lincoln Center Theater), *The Wiz*. Her work on this production is dedicated to the living memory of her longtime collaborator and PSM Thom Gates.

Chris Steckel*

Assistant Stage Manager

Berkeley Rep Debut! Broadway: *JOB* (Hayes Theatre); Tours: *Madagascar The Musical* and *Million Dollar Quartet Christmas*; Select Off-Broadway: *JOB* (Soho Playhouse, Connelly Theater), *Breaking The Story* (Second Stage), *The Great Gatsby: Immersive Show* (Gatsby Immersive), *Cheek to Cheek*, *Enter Laughing*, *Penelope*, *Forbidden Broadway: The Next Generation*, *Lonesome Blues* (York Theatre), *Spamilton* (PRITT), *Hard Times*, *The Evolution Of Mann* (Cell Theatre), *Crackskull Row* (Irish Rep), and *Twelfth Night* (Classical Theatre of Harlem). Thanks to Team SM, especially Rachel for always being the best.

Madison Wells Live

Producer

The live entertainment arm of Madison Wells, Gigi Pritzker's award-winning, independent production company who believes in telling stories by, and about, badass women, as well as people who love pushing boundaries. Led by Executive Producer Jamie Forshaw, Madison Wells Live focuses on producing purpose-driven projects through collaboration with partners who are aligned in the belief that great storytelling can provoke, inspire, and move audiences around the world. Broadway: *Swept Away*, *Water for Elephants*, *Jaja's African Hair Braiding*, *Shucked*, *Company* (Tony Award for Best Revival), *The Old Man and The Pool*, *Pass Over*, *Hadestown* (Tony Award for Best Musical), *The Inheritance* (Tony Award for Best Play), *Million Dollar Quartet*. West End: *Kathy & Stella Solve a Murder!*, *The Motive and the Cue* and *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*. Off-Broadway: *Mindplay*, *We Live in Cairo*, and *Seven Deadly Sins*. For more information about Madison Wells Live, visit www.madisonwellsmedia.com

Emerald Drive

Producer

The production banner of Teague Theatrical Group (TTG), an award-winning company founded by Townsend Teague and Liesl Lar, who believe great stories make the world a better place. An emerging powerhouse in the entertainment space, the company produces original works and invests in theatre, media, and entertainment ventures. Broadway credits include *Appropriate* (Tony Award for Best Revival Play), *Stereophonic* (Tony Award for Best Play), and the forthcoming *Real Women Have Curves* (Broadway 2025) and *Kissing in Manhattan*. West End: *Stereophonic* (2025). Australia: *MJ the Musical* (2025). Film: *Yes or Yes*. Television: *The Boy Who Wanted to Rock* (in development). Townsend and Liesl view theatre and other narrative art forms as bridges to connect people by amplifying the core of what binds us: empathy, understanding, and shared experiences. TTG is dedicated to fostering collaboration, support, and empowerment of artists and entertainment industry entrepreneurs, including underrepresented voices. For more information, visit: www.teaguetheatrical.com

Johanna Pfaelzer

Artistic Director

Johanna joined Berkeley Rep in 2019 as its fourth artistic director, following 12 years as artistic director of New York Stage and Film (NYSAF), a New York City-based developer of new works for theatre, film, and television. Johanna is proud to have developed work by notable established and early career writers like *Hamilton* by Lin-Manuel Miranda; *Goddess* by Saheem Ali, Michael Thurber, and Jocelyn

Bioh; *The Humans* by Stephen Karam; *Hadestown* by Anais Mitchell; *The Wolves* by Sarah DeLappe; *The Invisible Hand* by Ayad Akhtar; *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music* by Taylor Mac; *The Homecoming Queen* by Ngozi Anyanwu; *The Great Leap* by Lauren Yee; *Doubt* by John Patrick Shanley; *The Fortress of Solitude* by Michael Friedman and Itamar Moses; *The Jacksonian* by Beth Henley; and Green Day's *American Idiot*. Johanna previously served as associate artistic director of American Conservatory Theater and is a graduate of Wesleyan University and the Actors Theatre of Louisville Apprentice Program. She lives in Berkeley with her husband, Russell Champa, and their son, Jasper.

Tom Parrish

Managing Director

Tom has served as a theatre leader and arts administrator for over 20 years, with experience in organizations ranging from multi-venue performing arts centers to major Tony Award-winning theatre companies. Prior to Berkeley Rep, he served as executive director of Trinity Repertory Company, Geva Theatre Center, and Merrimack Repertory Theatre and as associate managing director/general manager of San Diego Repertory Theatre. His work has been recognized with a NAACP Theatre Award for Best Producer and "Forty Under 40" recognition in Providence,

Rochester, the Merrimack Valley, and San Diego. He received his MBA/MA in Arts Administration from Southern Methodist University; BA in Theater Arts and Economics from Case Western Reserve University; attended the Commercial Theater Institute, National Theater Institute, and Harvard Business School's Strategic Perspectives in Nonprofit Management; and is certified in Leading Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion by Northwestern University. He and his husband live in Berkeley.

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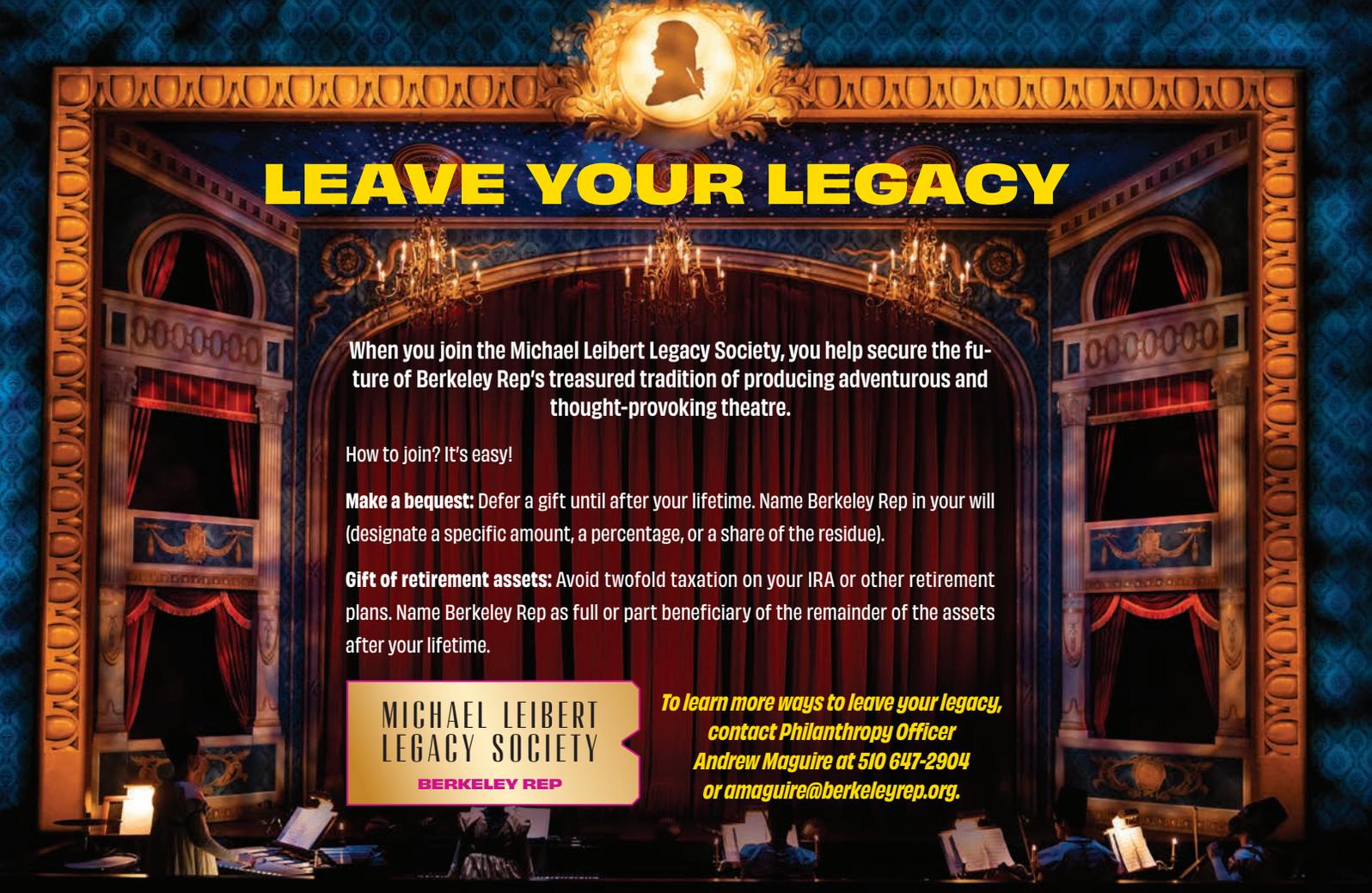
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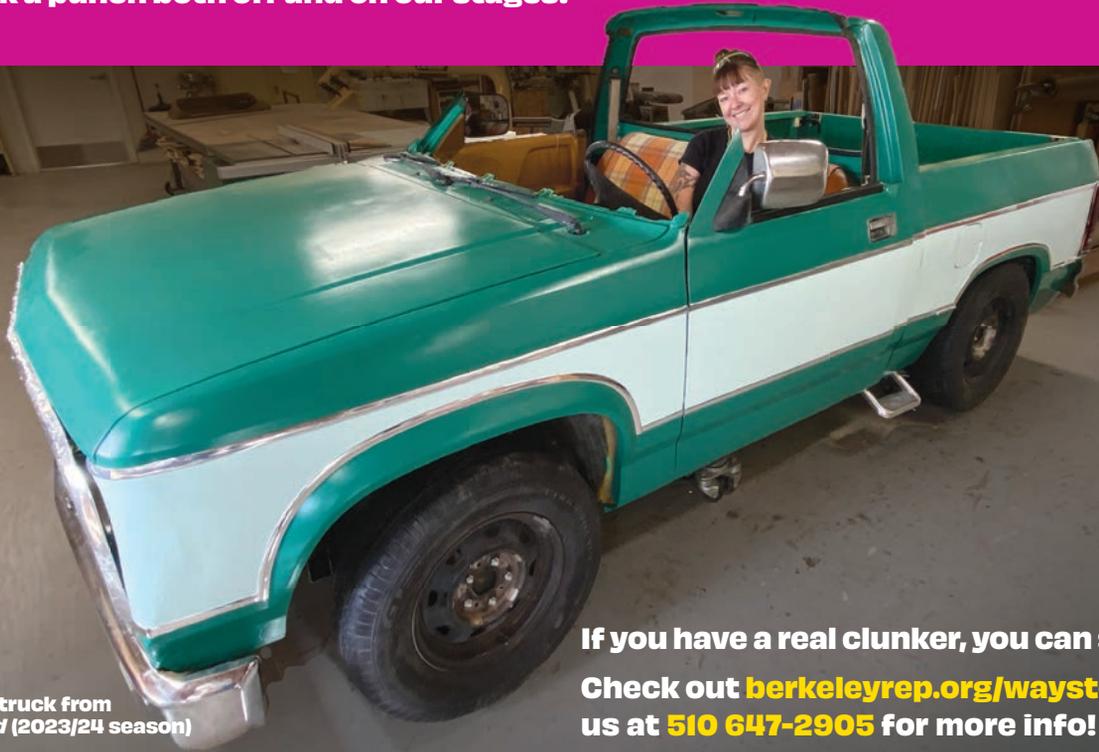
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A CO-PRODUCTION WITH
SHAKESPEARE THEATRE COMPANY



When the distinguished elderly owner of a rural estate returns with a new, young wife, chaos erupts. Tensions run high, marriages reach their limits, confessions — and vodka — flow freely, and weapons are drawn. Hugh Bonneville (*Downton Abbey*, *Paddington*) plays Uncle Vanya in this heartbreaking comedy about the eternal battle between futility and change.



Tickets at
berkeleyrep.org

MAKING THEATRE

MEET THE ARTISANS WHO BUILD OUR SHOWS

BY CREATIVE DIRECTOR DC SCARPELLI

The use of motion projections to enhance theatrical storytelling is not a new thing. In fact, the practice may well be approaching its centennial.

Avant garde German theatre director Erwin Piscator is often credited with pioneering the use of projections in his productions from 1925 on, influencing theatrical techniques throughout Europe and America. These were projected films coordinated to the action on stage — a technical feat for the time. Piscator's theatrical aims were overtly political, attempting to sway Weimar audiences away from right wing politics by compelling them with theatrical spectacle.

Czech director Josef Svoboda continued to innovate in the realm of projections throughout the middle of the 20th century, using multiple screens to enhance and comment on the stage action.

Since the advent of video, projections have moved from the avant garde to the mainstream. Berkeley Rep sound/video supervisor Lane Elms: "There have been so many innovations. Projectors have gotten smaller, brighter, quieter, and much more efficient. Projectors used to use incandescent lamps, and now the professional ones use lasers as their light source. LED panels have also gotten much more affordable, efficient, lighter, brighter, and higher resolution. The processing power of computers has increased dramatically, and servers can better process video in real time for live content generation. This opens up a new set of tools for the designers."

Associate artistic director David Mendizábal has used projections most recently in their production of *Mexodus*. David: "Projections provide an opportunity to add another dimension to the design of a production, whether by adding layers of texture or new perspectives, and even grounding an audience in time and place. I've seen them used in a variety of ways and I think we're still at the beginning stages of seeing what projections can really do in a theatrical setting." ■

SOURCE: PROJECTN.COM/SVEN ORTEL



Alfons Paquet's *Sturmflut*, directed by Erwin Piscator, with films by Johann Alexander Hübler-Kahla, Berlin, 1926



Bernd Alois Zimmermann's projection design for *Die Soldaten*, directed by Josef Svoboda, 1976



Brian Quijada and Nygel D. Robinson's *Mexodus*, directed by David Mendizábal, made extensive use of Rasean Davonté Johnson's on-screen and projected designs, 2024

PHOTOS (TOP TO BOTTOM): AKADEMIE DER KÜNSTE, BERLIN; ALLIANCE GRAPHIQUE INTL; BEN KRANTZ



Galileo, book by Danny Strong, songs by Michael Weiner & Zoe Sarnak, directed by Michael Mayer, filled the Roda stage with explosive projections designed by Jason H. Thompson and Kaitlyn Pietras, 2024

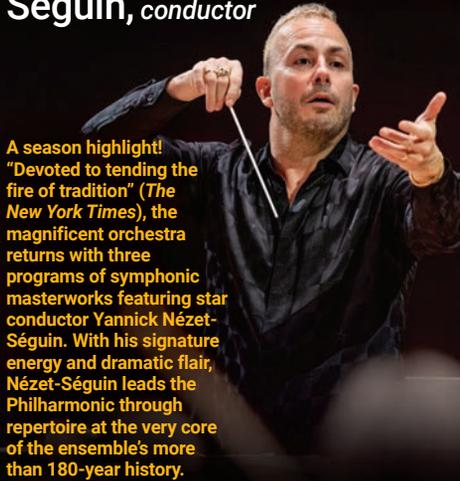
"You have to strike a balance: be really beautiful but not distracting. The design has to move the story along. I think Hsuan-Kuang Hsieh created projections that were precise, beautiful, and really supported the script and the action on stage."

— Sound/video supervisor Lane Elms

Hsuan-Kuang Hsieh's projections for Lloyd Suh's *The Far Country*, directed by Jennifer Chang, grounded us not only in the setting — the Immigration Station at Angel Island — but in the experiences of detainees, showing carved poems left on the station's walls, 2023

PHOTOS: KEVIN BERNE

Maria Manetti Shrem and Elizabeth Segerstrom California Orchestra Residency
Vienna Philharmonic
Yannick Nézet-Séguin, conductor



A season highlight! "Devoted to tending the fire of tradition" (*The New York Times*), the magnificent orchestra returns with three programs of symphonic masterworks featuring star conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin. With his signature energy and dramatic flair, Nézet-Séguin leads the Philharmonic through repertoire at the very core of the ensemble's more than 180-year history.

Mar 5–7
 ZELLERBACH HALL, BERKELEY

BAY AREA PREMIERE
William Kentridge's
The Great Yes, The Great No

A Cal Performances Co-commission

William Kentridge, concept and director
 Nhlanhla Mahlangu, associate director and choral composer
 Phala O. Phala, associate director
 Tlale Makhene, music director
 Mwenya Kabwe, dramaturg

The internationally acclaimed South African artist returns to campus with his latest creation for the stage, a chamber opera set on a 1941 sea voyage from Marseille to Martinique. The production merges surrealist imagery with real-life historical events, lush South African choral music, dance, and poetry.

An *Illuminations*: "Fractured History" event.
calperformances.org/illuminations

Mar 14–16
 ZELLERBACH HALL, BERKELEY

Story Boldly's
Defining Courage
 An Immersive Live Event

Defining Courage commemorates the struggles and sacrifices of the Nisei soldiers of World War II through vivid cinematography, stirring live music, eyewitness interviews, and deft storytelling.



An *Illuminations*: "Fractured History" event.
calperformances.org/illuminations

Apr 4
 ZELLERBACH HALL, BERKELEY

Patti LuPone
Joseph Thalken, piano
Songs from a Hat

The decorated Broadway star sings an intimate cabaret-style evening of songs, with the titles randomly chosen from a hat—expect signature favorites from the musicals that made LuPone a household name, such as *Evita*, *Gypsy*, *Company*, and *Les Misérables*, woven together with stories from her remarkable life in the limelight.



Apr 5
 ZELLERBACH HALL, BERKELEY

Alvin Ailey
American Dance Theater

Strength, precision, and passion remain the hallmarks of this august company more than 65 years after its inception. Ailey's dancers return to Berkeley with new and classic works that illuminate the rich panorama of Black American experience.



Apr 8–13
 ZELLERBACH HALL, BERKELEY

Mark Morris
Dance Group
Pepperland
 Mark Morris, choreography
 Ethan Iverson, composer

Pepperland is back! A joyous romp through the Beatles' groundbreaking concept album Sgt. Pepper's *Lonely Hearts Club Band* that is bursting with energy and buoyant creativity, neon costumes, spectacular ensemble numbers, inspired Beatles arrangements, and original music.



May 9–11
 ZELLERBACH HALL, BERKELEY