

THE
**THEATRE
SCHOOL**
AT DePaul University

presents



by **Emily L. Witt**

Director – Krissy Vanderwarker
Movement Director – Patrice Egleston
Scenic Designer – Mara Ishihara Zinky
Costume Designer – Megan Pirtle
Lighting Designer – Mattias Lange-McPherson
Sound Designer – Victoria Deiorio
Dramaturg – Lauren Quinlan
Stage Manager – Alexa Santiago

May 19 - 27, 2017

Our 2017 Spring Quarter is dedicated in loving memory to Joe Slowik (1927-2017), an alumnus and Professor Emeritus of acting and directing at The Theatre School at DePaul University, founded as the Goodman School of Drama, where he taught for 54 years. Countless directors and performers were impacted by his mentorship.

The Theatre School at DePaul University
Fullerton Stage
2350 N Racine Ave, Chicago IL, 60614
Email: theatreboxoffice@depaul.edu | (773) 325-7900

Presenting Level Sponsor



CAST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Ron/Mr. Milkshake.....	Jack Disselhorst
Waiter.....	JJ McGlone
Ann/Sympathy	Carolyn Moore
Polly.....	Dekyi Ronge
Max/Ian	Shea Petersen
Donald.....	Daniel Gadaj
Niko.....	Nikhaar Kishnani
Sarah.....	Rebecca Keeshin
James.....	Vinh Nguyen

Place and Time

Anywhere in the good ole' USA.
The cafe scenes take place over the course of one day.

The content of this production deals with abuse and sexual assault.

The play will be performed without intermission.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Assistant Director.....	Abaigeal O'Donnell
Assistant Stage Managers.....	Jonathan S. Campbell, Chloe Schweizer
Assistant Scenic Designer.....	Alyssa Mohn
Technical Director.....	Alyse Porsella
Assistant Technical Director.....	William Young
Assistant Costume Designer.....	Kiera Pitts
Assistant Lighting Designer.....	James Mitchell
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PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

In October 2015, during the primaries for the 2016 presidential election, I brought a scene into playwriting class that was based on my fears.

The piece painted the grim view of a future in which women had to meet a state-mandated weight requirement, and each citizen had to send a personal thank you card, along with a \$300 check each month to President Donald J. Trump.

During our class feedback session when I said that my piece was based on my fear that Donald Trump would be our next president, someone in class chuckled.

That chuckle felt a lot like a dare to me.

I began to think; if Mr. Trump were elected, what would be at stake?

The answer felt obvious; the rights that were already at stake.

In my home state(s) of Oklahoma and Texas, as well as nationally, numerous pieces of legislation have been introduced to curtail women's reproductive rights. As I started my research, the process of getting an abortion almost began to seem comical.

Comical in that lawmakers actually expect us to believe these regulations were created for the safety of women and not for our humiliation.

The absurdity of the entire process drove me. I wondered how to make people who never have or never will have an abortion understand the impact of these laws.

The laws represented in the play are my theatrical illustration of state-mandated and federally-mandated legislation that has been and continues to be attempted in multiple states. Because access to abortion is being constantly challenged, the laws in the play are meant to represent the fluctuating nature of the undue burdens women face when seeking abortions.

We are living in a particularly polarizing time period, and abortion has always been a divisive subject. What most often keeps us from empathizing with each other as a society is our habit of generalizing people with views that oppose our own. Something I strive to do with this play is craft characters who are individuals with multifaceted perspectives, instead of cardboard cutouts from pro-life and pro-choice rallies. It feels particularly special that the world premiere of the play is at a Catholic University, and I feel unendingly grateful for DePaul's willingness to support work that sparks important discourse.

~Emily L. Witt, BFA4/Playwriting

INTERVIEW WITH THE PLAYWRIGHT

Lauren Quinlan: *What drew you to write Mrs. Phu's?*

Emily L. Witt: I'm from Oklahoma and Texas, and I've always been interested in how abortion rights have been under fire there. My mom had me when she was twenty, so I was always aware of the fact that it would have made perfect sense for her to have chosen abortion had she wanted to. I have really been interested in the ways that laws taking away the right to access abortion have been introduced in the past five years or so. It's kind of crazy – if I wanted to get an abortion in Oklahoma five years ago it would have been significantly easier than today, and the same for my mom twenty-five years ago. I decided to investigate what might actually be at stake if Trump were to become President in response to a classmate laughing at my silly, farcical scene about my fear of a Trump presidency. It seemed obvious to combine those passions and curiosities together into a play.

LQ: What made you want to be a playwright?

ELW: Reading *Ruined* by Lynn Nottage. I'm a transfer student, and I used to be an actor. They didn't teach us how to pick monologues, and I was also ignorant about what an actor should or shouldn't play. I also have a background in speech, and there it doesn't matter if you're playing something that's not your race or age, so I had no perception of that as a problem. I brought in a monologue from *Ruined* about a woman from the Congo who was raped and had lost her child. A nineteen-year-old from Oklahoma should not be doing that monologue. All I wanted to do in acting class was rewrite the lines, and I realized that if I'm a writer, I get to make the work that I want to make. I wrote my first play after that, and the school was not supportive – they basically tried to shut it down, so I did it at a community theatre.

LQ: What is the most challenging thing about new work?

ELW: Realizing that what works really well on the page doesn't always work well when you stage it. It's also challenging to figure out what is in the text and what's not being picked up on the director side or the actor side, which may result in changing things you as a playwright don't want to change. When we do plays that aren't new, we just take for granted that it's right, and I think that sometimes when people are having problems with a moment in a new play, they assume it's the playwright's fault and want the playwright to change it. I've been lucky with this process because I don't think that's something that's happened.

~Lauren Quinlan, BFA4, Dramaturgy/Criticism

BIOGRAPHIES

Jack Disselhorst (*Ron/Mr. Milkshake*) BFA4/Acting. Jack grew up in Crystal Lake, Illinois. Previous credits at The Theatre School include *Hedda Gabler*, directed by Michael Burke; *Trouble in Mind*, directed by Jacob Janssen; *God's Ear*, directed by Andrew Peters; *12 Angry Men*, directed by Matt Hawkins; and the world premiere of *The Women Eat Chocolate*, directed by Heidi Stillman. He is also an apprentice teacher of acting at Piven Theatre Workshop in Evanston, Illinois.

Daniel Gadaj (*Donald*) BFA4/Acting. Daniel grew up in Northern New Jersey as a first-generation Polish-American. During his time at DePaul, he has worked on various playwrights and styles of theatre, including Shakespeare and other heightened text, new work, solo performance material, and original clown work. Daniel is an alumnus of the Senior Corps training program at the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey.

Rebecca Keeshin (*Sarah*) BFA4/Acting. Becky is originally from Highland Park, Illinois. Theatre School credits include *The Lady from the Sea*, *Prospero's Storm*, *Peter Pan* and *Wendy*, and *Desdemona: a play about a handkerchief*. Chicago credits include work with First Folio Theatre, The Music Theatre Company, and Writers Theatre. Up next for Becky is *Have a Nice Day!* and *Tomorrow Morning* at Canterbury Summer Theatre.

Nikhaar Kishnani (*Niko*) MFA3/Acting. Nikhaar is from New Jersey. She is an improviser and a former television show host. Her Theatre School credits include *The Women Eat Chocolate* (Dot), directed by Heidi Stillman; *Twelfth Night* (Olivia), directed by Stuart Carden; *Prospero's Storm* (Gonzala), directed by Damon Kiely; and *The Children's Hour* (Rosalie), directed by Nathan Singh.

JJ McGlone (*Waiter*) BFA4/Acting. JJ is from Quincy, Massachusetts. Theatre School credits include *Next Fall*, directed by Nathan Singh; *Romeo and Juliet*, directed by Cameron Knight; *The Misanthrope*, directed by Brian Balcom; *Prospero's Storm*, directed by Damon Kiely; and *The Lady From the Sea*, directed by Erin Kraft. JJ is an alumnus of Walnut Hill School for the Arts and the British American Drama Academy's Midsummer in Oxford program. The next leg of JJ's artistic journey will begin in the fall at the Yale School of Drama, where he will be a candidate for an MFA in acting.

Carolyn Moore (*Ann/Sympathy*) BFA4/Acting. Carolyn was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area. Her past credits include Yseult in *Tristan and Yseult*, Michael Darling in *Peter Pan*, and Aldonza in *Man of La Mancha*. She completed training with American Conservatory Theatre's clowning course this past summer.

Vinh Nguyen (*James*) BFA3/Acting. Vinh is a 3rd year BFA, from Houston, Texas. His past roles included Arthur Krantz in *The Kid Who Ran For President*, Luke in *Next Fall*, and +M in *Lungs*.

Shea Petersen (*Max/Ian*) BFA4/Acting. Shea hails from Richmond, Texas. Past credits at The Theatre School include *Richard III*, directed by Jacob Janssen; *The Kid Who Ran for President*, directed by Ernie Nolan; *How I Learned to Drive*, directed by Keira Fromm; *12 Angry Men*, directed by Matt Hawkins; and *Stupid F*cking Bird*, directed by Stuart Carden. Shea is also an alum of The William Esper Meisner Studio in New York City.

Dekyi Rongé (*Polly*) MFA2/Acting. Credits include Duchess of York in *Richard III* and Prince in *Romeo and Juliet* (The Theatre School); Juno in *The Tempest* and Fred's Wife in *The Christmas Carol* (A Noise Within); Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* and Hero in *Much Ado About Nothing* (Pacific Repertory Theater); and Ensemble in *Macbeth* (San Francisco Shakespeare Festival) Dekyi received a BA in Theatre and Performance Studies from UC Berkeley.

Emily L. Witt (*Playwright*) BFA4/Playwriting. Emily hails from the three-stop-light town of Wilburton, Oklahoma. Recently, her short play *Silhouettes* was commissioned by Victory Gardens for College Night, and her work has had staged readings at The Theatre School's Wrights of Spring Festival. Currently, she is a staff writer and graphic designer for The Theatre School's dramaturgy blog, The Grappler. Emily is also a visual artist, and her work has been published in the online magazine *Outrageous Fortune*. Directly after graduation, Emily will be beginning her professional career as a drama specialist with One In A Hundred summer camp, where she will specialize in helping children with Autism and other anxiety disorders learn social skills through drama activities. www.emilylwitt.com.

Krissy Vanderwarker (*Director*) Krissy is a freelance director and the Co-Artistic Director of Dog & Pony Theatre Co. D&P directing credits include *Breach*, *Counterfeiters*, *The Dinner Party Project*, *God's Ear*, *As Told by the Vivian Girls*, *Mr. Marmalade*, *Ape*, *Osama the Hero*, *Crumble* (*Lay Me Down*, *Justin Timberlake*) and *As Much As You Can*. Other professional directing credits include *Thaddeus and Slocum: A Vaudeville Adventure* (Lookingglass), *Harry & The Thief* (Pavement Group), *The Grown-Up* (Shattered Globe), *Bethany* (First Look Festival/Steppenwolf), *As Fat As You Can* (Next Theatre), *CLEAR* (About Face), *What Once We Felt* (About Face) and *As Much As You Can* (Hendel Productions West). She graduated with her MFA in Directing from The Theatre School at DePaul University and is currently a faculty member. krissyvanderwarker.com.

Abaigeal O'Donnell (*Assistant Director*) BFA4/Theatre Arts, Theatre For Young Audiences. Abaigeal is a Chicago native. Previous Theatre School credits include Director of *Legoland*, Assistant Director for *Down the Rocky Road* and *All the Way to Bedlam*, *God's Ear*, *The Day John Henry Came to School*, and *The Triangle Factory Fire*

Project. She interned at Free Street Theatre and has taught with Infinity Arts Academy and Improv Playhouse.

Mara Ishihara Zinky (*Scenic Designer*) BFA4/Scenic Design. Mara is from Cambridge, Massachusetts. In Massachusetts, she has worked as a Scenic carpenter at Reagle Music Theatre and Company One. Previous Theatre School credits include Scenic Designer for *The Killing Game* and *Prospero's Storm*, and Prop Master for *The Misanthrope*. Mara also works in The Theatre School's Prop Shop.

Alyssa Mohn (*Assistant Scenic Designer*) BFA2/Scenic Design. Alyssa's past theatre experience includes the NHSI Theatre Arts Cherubs Program, and *Eurydice* and *Hedda Gabler* at The Theatre School. She looks forward to designing *Augusta* and *Noble* at the Merle Reskin Theatre in the fall.

Megan Pirtle (*Costume Designer*) BFA3/ Costume Design & Technology. Megan has served as an Assistant Costume Designer for The Theatre School's *The Lady From the Sea* and *The Misanthrope*. She has also worked as a Costume Technician on shows such as *Prospero's Storm*, *Romeo & Juliet*, and the Goodman Theatre's production of *Wonderful Town*. She recently designed costumes for the new children's play, *Night Runner*, for Chicago Playworks.

Mattias Lange-McPherson (*Lighting Designer*) BFA3/Lighting Design. Previous Theatre School credits include Lighting Designer for *The Merchant of Venice* and Assistant Lighting Designer for *Eurydice*.

Katelyn Le-Thompson (*Master Electrician*) BFA2/Lighting Design. Previous Theatre School credits include *The Maids*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Glass Menagerie*, *Contractions* (Lighting Designer); *The Kid Who Ran for President* (Master Electrician); *The Woman Eat Chocolate* (Assistant Master Election); and *Tom Paine* (Assistant Lighting Designer/Master Electrician).

Victoria Deiorio (*Sound Designer*) Victoria has a BFA in Musical Theatre from Syracuse University, and studied classical acting in London at RADA and LAMDA. Her compositions and sound design have been heard Off-Broadway in productions including *Cassie's Chimera* – Joe's Pub, The Public Theatre; *The Bluest Eye* – Steppenwolf Theatre @ The Duke Theatre; and *Ophelia* – NYC Fringe Festival. As associate designer Off-Broadway: *Boy and Dedication* or *the Stuff of Dreams* – Primary Stages, *God of Hell* – Actor's Studio Theatre, *Luminescence Dating* – Ensemble Studio Theatre, and *Live Girls* – Urban Stages. Victoria is a founding member of Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, an Artistic Associate of The Next Theatre, and a member of Lifeline Theatre. She has been nominated for nine, and has received five, Joseph Jefferson Awards as well as two After Dark Awards. She has produced two CDs of her own original music. For more information, visit www.victoria-sound-design.com.

Alyse Porsella (*Technical Director*) BFA4/ Theatre Technology. Alyse is originally from Long Island, New York. Previous shows Alyse has worked on at The Theatre School include *God's Ear* (Assistant Technical Director), *The Lady From the Sea* (Technical Director), and *Elemeno Pea* (Assistant Technical Director/Master Carpenter).

William Young (*Assistant Technical Director*) BFA3/Theatre Technology. William is from Cincinnati, Ohio. He has previously worked as the Assistant Technical Director for *Eurydice*, Master Carpenter for *Night Runner* and *The Translation of Likes*, and Carpenter for *Prospero's Storm* and *The Lady from the Sea*. He is traveling abroad to London next fall to work on Production Management.

Lauren Quinlan (*Dramaturg*) BFA4, Dramaturgy/Criticism. Theatre School credits include *We Are Proud to Present...*, directed by Erin Kraft; *God's Ear*, directed by Andrew Peters; *Esperanza Rising*, directed by Lisa Portes; and *The Great God Pan*, directed by Nathan Singh. She has created

dramaturgical material for *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* and *By The Water* at Northlight Theatre, and Mary Zimmerman's *Treasure Island* at Lookingglass Theatre Company.

Danielle B. Szabo (*Assistant Dramaturg*) BFA4/Theatre Arts. Danielle proudly hails from Flint, Michigan.

Jack Rhea (*Access Coordinator*) BFA3/ Theatre Management. Jack was recently seen as an ensemble member in *Night Runner*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Esperanza Rising*. This past summer, Jack served as a Production Assistant on *The SpongeBob Musical* and stage managed a production of *In the Heights* at WPPAC in White Plains, New York.

Martin Wilde (*Audio Describer*) Martin has described dozens of plays, operas and events for Chicago-area performing arts and cultural organizations. He last described The Theatre School's production of *The Lady From the Sea*. Martin also provides description for TV shows, films, and the National Park Service.

Sheila Kettering (*Sign Language Interpreter*) (CI/CT) Sheila has been interpreting for 25 years in the Chicagoland area in a variety of settings, such as medical, business, educational, video relay interpreting and is especially passionate about theatrical interpreting. Her most recent interpreted performances were *Oklahoma* and *A Christmas Story*, The Paramount Theater; *The Heir Apparent*, Chicago Shakespeare Theater; *Never the Sinner and Hillary and Clinton*, Victory Gardens Theatre; *Arcadia*, Writer's Theatre; and *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, Chicago Children's Theatre.

Philip Lewis (*Sign Language Interpreter*) Phillip "Lip" Lewis is a Chicago native and strong advocate of intersectional art and inclusion. He currently works as a health and resource navigator for Queer identified men of color on the South Side of Chicago, as well as acts as co-chair of Accessibility for Chicago Deaf Art

Organization. He is typically seen working as a freelance director, playwright, caption technician, and queer black educator and author. Interpreting is a practice he has studied for 8 years while engaging and immersing himself into the community. His art is storytelling and his medium is communication and intersectionality.

Alexa Santiago (*Stage Manager*) BFA4/ Stage Management. Alexa hails from the island of Puerto Rico. Professional credits include Stage Management Intern (KÁ by Cirque du Soleil), Stage Management Intern (*Mr. and Mrs. Pennyworth* by Lookingglass Theatre Company), Stage Manager (2015 Prague Quadrennial). Theatre School credits include Stage Manager for *The Kid Who Ran for President* and *God's Ear* and Assistant Stage Manager *The Misanthrope*, *Metamorphosis*, *In the Heights* and *The Scavengers*. Alexa is the Chair of the USITT at DePaul Student Chapter.

Jonathan S. Campbell (*Assistant Stage Manager*) BFA2/Stage Management. Jonathan comes from West Chester, Pennsylvania, and Windermere, Florida. He works mainly as a Stage Manager of opera. Previous credits include Assistant Stage Manager of DePaul Opera Theatre's productions of *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi*. When not growing pale from all his time in theatres you can catch him playing a round of golf. He will be an Assistant Stage Manager at Brevard Music Festival for their summer season.

Chloe Schweizer (*Assistant Stage Manager*) BFA1/Stage Management. Chloe hails from California's San Francisco Bay Area, having worked for several years in theatres from Santa Cruz to Redwood City. Past stage management and assistant stage management credits include *Evita*, *Rent*, *A Chorus Line*, *Anna Christie*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, and *Gypsy*.

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Last year more than 1,300 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.

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Craig Bergmann, CSH '81
Craig Bergmann Landscape Design
John Bowab
CDCT Land Company, LLC
Joyce Chelberg

Monsignor Kenneth Velo
Bryan Williams
Derrick Winding, SNL '12 & Shannon Stone-Winding, SNL '14
Ted Wolff
Xcel Energy Foundation

ANNOUNCING OUR 2017-2018 SEASON

CHICAGO PLAYWORKS FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG AUDIENCES

Augusta and Noble

by Carlos Murillo
directed by Lisa Portes
October 5 – November 11, 2017

Junie B. Jones Is Not a Crook

by Allison Gregory
adapted from the book series by Barbara Park
directed by Krissy Vanderwarker
January 11 – February 17, 2018

The Cat in the Hat

by Dr. Seuss
directed by Jeff Mills
April 19 – May 26, 2018



ON THE FULLERTON STAGE

Into the Woods

music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim
book by James Lapine
directed by Barry Brunetti
musical direction by Mark Elliott
November 3 – 12, 2017
(previews 11/1 & 11/2)

TBA

directed by Michael E. Burke
February 9 – 18, 2018
(previews 2/7 & 2/8)

Three Sisters

by Anton Chekhov
directed by Jacob Janssen
April 13 – 22, 2018
(previews 4/11 & 4/12)

New Playwright Series

Title, Playwright, and Director TBD
May 18 – 26, 2018
(previews 5/16 & 5/17)

IN THE HEALY THEATRE

Seven Homeless Mammoths

Wander New England
by Madeleine George
directed by April Cleveland
October 20 – 29, 2017
(previews 10/18 & 10/19)

Mr. Burns, a Post-Electric Play

by Anne Washburn
music by Michael Friedman
directed by Jeremy Aluma
January 26 – February 4, 2018
(previews 1/24 & 1/25)

MFA 18, Title TBD

An ensemble performance created by MFA III actors, directed by Dexter Bullard
May 4 - 13, 2018
(previews 5/2 & 5/3)

GENERAL INFORMATION

BOX OFFICE TELEPHONE

(773) 325-7900

REGULAR BOX OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday - Friday: noon - 4 p.m.

PERFORMANCE BOX OFFICE HOURS

The Box Office opens 90 minutes prior to curtain for all performances.

NO SMOKING

In compliance with the City of Chicago Clean Air Ordinance, smoking is prohibited in The Theatre School. We appreciate your cooperation.

EMERGENCY EXITS

Please note the location of emergency exits in the theatre.

NO CELLULAR PHONES, TEXT MESSAGING, RECORDING DEVICES, PHOTOGRAPHY, PAGERS, FOOD AND BEVERAGES

Please do not use the above listed items in the theatre. Patrons with electronic pagers or cellular telephones are asked to either turn off their equipment in the theatre or check them with the House Manager prior to curtain. We discourage text messaging during the performance. The light from the screen can bother other patrons. We allow photographs to be taken before and after but never during the performance. You may also check cameras and recording equipment with the House Manager who will secure them until final curtain.

RESTROOMS

Restrooms are located in the lobbies on the main floor and balcony levels.

LOST AND FOUND

If you find an item or have lost an item, please contact the House Manager. You may also call (773) 325-7900 the next day to determine if an item has been found.

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE CALLS

Patrons with electronic pagers are requested to either turn off their pagers in the theatre or check them with the House Manager prior to showtime. Should you need to give an emergency telephone number where you can be reached during a performance, please alert the House Manager of your seat location and give the Box Office telephone number for emergencies, (773) 325-7900.

PARKING ARRANGEMENTS

When you attend an event at The Theatre School in Lincoln Park, you may park at DePaul's Clifton Parking Deck, 2330 N. Clifton, with the DePaul rate: \$7.25. Validate your parking ticket at the Building Receptionist desk near the Racine entrance.

CAPTIONING AND LISTEN UP LISTENING SYSTEMS AVAILABLE FOR OUR HEARING-IMPAIRED PATRONS

See the box office to receive either the Captioning or Headset device. We require the security deposit of a driver's license or other identification during the performance. The ID will be returned when you return the device.

LARGE PRINT PROGRAMS

You may request a large print program from the ticket taker or the House Manager.

SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETING

Selected performances will be interpreted in American Sign Language. Call the Box Office or see the website for the schedule.

AUDIO DESCRIPTION

Designated audio-described performances and pre-performance touch tours are scheduled throughout the 2016-17 season. Call the Box Office or see the website for the schedule.