WP THEATER

SignatureTheatre

FISH



written by
MELIS AKER

directed by
TATIANA PANDIANI

in association with
NEW LIGHT THEATER PROJECT

consulting producer
NOOR THEATRE

WP THEATER SignatureTheatre NEW LIGHT THEATER PROJECT Nagar theatre

Present

FISH

Written by **Melis Aker**

Directed by **Tatiana Pandiani**

Featuring

Alyssa May Gold Sara Haider Kario Marcel

Roxanna Hope Radja Yasmin Ranz-Lind

Scenic Design
Emmie Finckel

Costume Design
Siena Zoë Allen

Lighting Design
Reza Behjat

Sound Design
G Clausen

Properties Design
Emmarose Campbell

Intimacy Director
Judi Lewis Ockler

Dialect Coach
Atticus Orsborn

Hair/Makeup Consultant
Caitlin Molloy

Casting Director
Kelly Gillespie, CSA
Joe Gery

Production Management
Gary Levinson

Production Stage Manager
Aisling Galvin

Press Representative
Vivacity Media Group
Whitney Holden Gore
Leslie Papa

Fish was originally commissioned and developed by Signature Theatre, NYC

Fish is produced with the generous support of Jana Hesser and Tim Davidson.

Signature Theatre's Launchpad Residency for Melis Aker is supported by Pablo Salame.

Cast

(In alphabetical order)

Libby/Voices.....**Alyssa May Gold**
Isha/Voices.....**Sara Haider**
Jon/Voices.....**Kario Marcel**
Ceyda/Voices.....**Roxanna Hope Radja**
Karya.....**Yasmin Ranz-Lind**

Fish is performed without an intermission

TIME
2016
PLACE
London

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ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION 1913
The Actors and Stage Managers employed in this production are members of ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States

LOCAL USA 829
UNITED SCENIC ARTISTS
UNITED SCENIC ARTISTS, Local USA 829, is a labor union and professional association of Designers, Artists and Craftspeople

SDC
The Director and Choreographer are Members of the STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS SOCIETY, a national theatrical labor union.

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A NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

I started writing toward *Fish* in 2016, although I didn't know that was what I was doing yet. That year, I saved two news stories in a "Curiosities" folder on my computer. One followed mothers searching grainy ISIS execution videos for signs of their missing sons, and the other concerned a group of Chechen women who catfished ISIS recruiters online, persuading them to send money for a fictitious journey to Syria, and were subsequently prosecuted themselves. I desperately wanted to reconcile these two stories. I wanted to crystallise a deep-seated anxiety that I (and many other young people) were feeling at the time: about the uncertainty of truth and safety, and the increasingly uneasy relationship between the two. That instability felt especially destabilising for young people who were actively trying to form a sense of self in a world that felt like it had no sense of self left. Beneath the question of what is true sat, for me, a more primal one: what do we need to believe in order to feel safe?

It wasn't until years later, reflecting on the tumult of 2016, that I found a home for all of this in *Fish*. The breakthrough in finding the right narrative container came when I realised I didn't want to write a play "about" terrorism, radicalisation, or even the internet. I wanted to look at these enormous, terrifying, absurd subjects through a much smaller aperture: a teenage girl trying to understand her mother, her friend, her grief, and herself. Placing a young person inside a culture undergoing its own crisis of certainty felt like putting one unstable system inside another, but Karya's humour, impulsiveness and ferality became a way of approaching material that otherwise felt unbearably solemn.

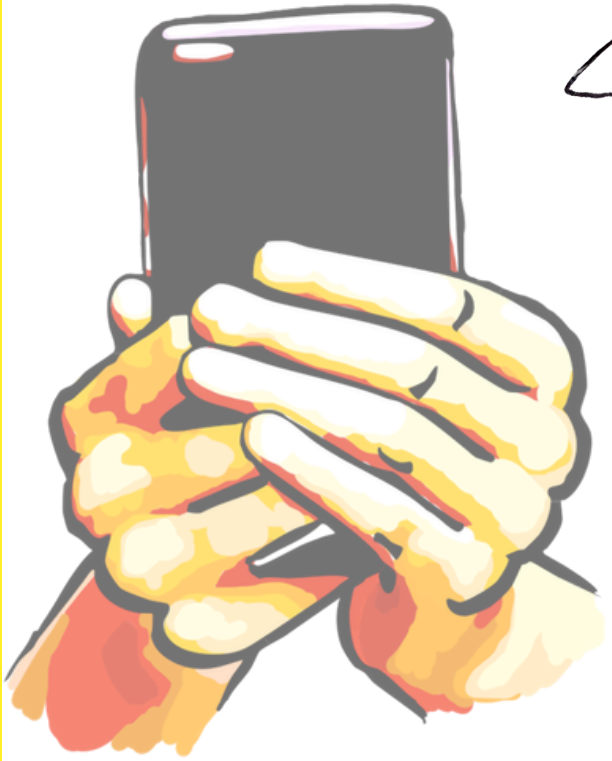
Set against the backdrop of 2016, in a drastically shifting landscape of London, the play became a coming-of-age narrative for the characters inside it and the world they inhabited, which was wrestling with its own loss of a certain kind of innocence. By 2016, the internet was already embedded in our emotional lives, but we had not yet learned to doubt quite everything we encountered there. By the mid-2010s our relationship to the internet had begun to change in a fundamental way. "Fake news" and "post-truth" were only beginning to enter viral vernacular, alongside a tide of major populist agendas worldwide. The internet was no longer only a place we visited to do some research or talk to our friends, but a space through which we understood reality itself. In some ways it became a force capable of shaping our consciousness and, at times, our livelihoods: a playground where increasingly nobody could agree on the rules, or on what was real.



A NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

Looking back now, before deepfakes and generative AI became ordinary, 2016 feels more like an origin story for our current moment than like recent history. The technology has changed almost beyond recognition, but I'd say the emotional machinery operating it has remained the same, and is, of course, ancient; we still want attention, intimacy, proof, validation. We still want strangers to tell us we are real, that we are beautiful, that we are correct, that we belong, that we are funny, that we are smart, and unforgettable. Fish lives somewhere between those impulses and the very old business of growing up: the stories we invent when certainty isn't available, the identities we try on for size and try to control before we know who we are or what we like, and the dangerous, ridiculous lengths we may go to feel less alone, even if briefly, in the midst of chaos and insecurity.

In his essay "The Optimism of Uncertainty", Howard Zinn emphasizes that optimism is rooted in recognizing the unpredictable aspect of human history. Bernard Beckett similarly writes about optimism as a willingness to accept the uncertainty of the future, and about the possibility that uncertainty itself is what leaves room for surprise, and revision, forgiveness and change. Ultimately, the question I would like to pose for us all through this story is: How do we learn to live (and live well) with uncertainty?





Melis Aker

WHO'S WHO

Melis Aker (*Playwright*) is a London-and New York–based playwright/screenwriter, actor, and musician from Turkey. Her plays have been developed and presented Off-Broadway and regionally in the U.S. and U.K. at Signature Theatre Company in New York (*Fish*, LaunchPad resident playwright), Theatre503 (*Murmurs*, 503Five resident playwright), The Old Vic (*Hundred Feet Tall* co-written with Benjamin Scheuer), Ars Nova and PlayCo (*Hound Dog*), and Williamstown Theatre Festival (*Indigo Dreams*). She has received commissions from Signature, Atlantic Theatre Company (Middle Eastern Mixfest), and La Jolla Playhouse, and has been awarded the American Theatre Wing's Jonathan Larson Grant (*Azul*), named on the Kilroy's List (*Field*, *Awakening*), and recognized as a "Woman to Watch" by the Broadway Women's Fund. Her short play *Scraps and Things* was recorded for *Playing On Air* starring Carol Kane, where she was also co-star and composer.

Aker's short film *Baba in Graceland* was developed with support from the Sundance Institute's Interdisciplinary Grant and was an official selection for the 2025 Izmir Short Film Festival. Her feature screenplay *ARI [Bee]* was accepted to Maison des Scénaristes at Cannes, Berlinale Script Market, and the Proof of Concept Film Festival at the American Cinematheque. She is currently adapting *The Most Beautiful: My Life with Prince*, Mayte Garcia's New York Times bestselling memoir for Crazy Legs Features, and developing an immersive game project with Sinan Eczacıbaşı of Curious Gremlin.

Aker was a NYTW 2050 Fellow, an Ars Nova Play Group member, a DGF Playwriting Fellow, and a screenwriter for Morgan Freeman's Revelations Entertainment. She has taught playwriting/screenwriting at The New School, and prose fiction at King's College London. She holds an MFA in Playwriting/Screenwriting from Columbia University and is completing a PhD in Creative Writing at King's College London. She is represented by CAA, Berlin Associates, and CURATE Management.

Tatiana Pandiani (*Director*) is a New York City–based Latin American director, choreographer, and writer whose work spans theatre, film, and immersive performance.

Recent Off-Broadway projects include *Torera* (WP Theater/Long Wharf Theatre/Sol Project/Latinx Playwrights Circle) and *Someone Spectacular* (Signature, NYC). Her work has been seen at major regional theatres including Goodspeed Musicals, La Jolla Playhouse, Alley Theatre, Miami New Drama, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Long Wharf Theatre, Dallas Theater Center, Perseverance Theatre. Upcoming projects include *WOMB 2.0* by Marisela Treviño Orta at the Alley Theatre.

Tatiana's original bilingual musical *AZUL* received the Jonathan Larson Award, and she is the recipient of a Lucille Lortel Alcove Commission for her new play *HINGE BABY*. Her short film *How to Fix Grief* won the Film in Focus Award and the New York Film Academy Award in 2024.

Beyond traditional theatre, she has developed large-scale and immersive work for Warner Bros. Europe, RWS Global, and experiential projects including The Bluey Experience. She also conceived *FOSSE VERDON: The Duet that Changed Broadway*, a live dance documentary now running fleet-wide on Holland America Cruise Lines.

Tatiana holds an MFA in Directing from Columbia University and has taught at Yale, NYU Hofstra, and the Atlantic Acting School.

WHO'S WHO

Alyssa May Gold (*Libby*) is delighted to return to WP Theater after appearing in the acclaimed world premiere of *Our Dear Dead Drug Lord*. Her notable work onstage includes the Tony-nominated Broadway revivals of *How I Learned to Drive* (MTC) and *Arcadia*, *Queens* (MTC), Pocket Universe's *Julius Caesar* (set in an all-girls high school), *Brilliant Traces* (Art of Warr), *Lemon Sky and Middle of the Night* (Keen Company). Her film/TV appearances include *Rebel in the Rye*, *Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood*, *Taking Woodstock*, "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel," and "Law and Order: SVU." Alyssa is the founder of Pocket Universe, a theater company dedicated to reconsidering and reimagining classic stories and conventions, whose production of her play, *The Girl You Talk To*, was named one of NY Theatre Guide's Top Theater of the Year. She is represented by Clear Talent Group. Proud Member: Team SMASHY. @heylyssamay || @universepocket

Sara Haider (*Isha*) is SO excited to be channelling her full Muslim immigrant baddie for Isha! Ever grateful to Melis Aker, Tatiana Pandiani, WP Theater, and The Signature.

Singer and actor from Karachi, Pakistan, recent credits include Attorney Wendy Stratford on NBC's *Law & Order* (Michael Pressman/Season 23); and *The Curfew* (Shehrezad Maher; Venice Biennale).

Stage work includes Gladys Mottram in Mint Theater Company's *Garside's Career* (Drama Desk–nominated); Jasmine Sharma's *Peachy* (The Public); *The Collectivists* by Jaclyn Backhaus (Manhattan Theatre Club); *And Scene!* (New York Comedy Festival); *The Good Ones* by Sopan Deb (Ma-Yi/ART/NY); *Mxx: The Dignity Project* by Deepa Purohit (The Hermitag/Asolo Rep);*That Girl* by Ari Afsar and Rehana Lew Mirza (NMTC/The O'Neill); *Wait Until Dark*; Jackson Gay and *Ms. Holmes & Ms. Watson – Apt. 2B*, Aneesha Kudtarkar (Dorset Theatre Festival); *ALAA Family Trilogy*, Adam Elsayigh & Shadi Ghaheri (NYTW x Dartmouth); *Partnership* dir Jackson Gay (Mint Theater Company); Mahira Kakkar's *Draupadi*, dir Danilo Gambini (Rattlestick/The Huntington); and shows at The Juilliard School.

In Pakistan, Sara is a touring musician and live performer. Best known for "Ae Dil Kisi Ki Yaad Mein" with Ali Zafar on Coke Studio Pakistan, featured in Seasons 7, 8, and 9.
AADA NYC (AOS); The Juilliard School (MFA)
Representation: Mark and Steve @ Principal Entertainment LA; Katie @ Buchwald
@sarahaiderlive

Kario Marcel (*Jon*) Originally from Aruba, Kario Marcel is an actor and writer passionate about multi-generational, multi-cultural voices and stories. MFA NYU Grad Acting. Theater: *Troilus and Cressida* (Public Theater), *Romeo and Juliet* (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company), *Three Sisters* (Living Room Theater Company). Television and Film credits include *Chicago Fire*, Tyler Perry's *A Jazzman's Blues*, Amazon's *Dead Ringers*, *Broad City*, and more. He is currently developing his award winning pilot script Latte into a full comedy series. Love to Rana and Iah always.

Roxanna Hope Radja (*Ceyda*) Broadway: *Torch Song*, *Frost/Nixon* (Broadway and national tour), *The Women*, and others. Off-Broadway: Playwrights Horizons (*Wish You Were Here*) Manhattan Theatre Club (*Ruins of Civilization*, Dan Cody's *Yacht*), Second Stage (*Torch Song*) Rattlestick (*Horsedreams*) Blue Light (*Princess Turandot*) and others . Regional: *English* (Guthrie, Goodman, and Denver Center) *Hedda Gabler* (Hartford Stage), *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *Richard III*, *Pericles*, and *Julius Caesar* (Shakespeare Theatre NJ); *Tartuffe*, *Indian Ink*, and *Hecuba* (American Conservatory Theater); *Princess Turandot* (Westport Country Playhouse), Huntington Theater, Kennedy Center, Williamstown Theater Festival, and others. Film/TV: "CIA," "She Said," "The Betrayers," "Puncture," "The Blacklist," "Law and Order: SVU," "Blue Bloods," "The Good Wife," "Law and Order," "Law and Order: CI," "Unforgettable," and "All My Children." MFA/The American Conservatory Theater

WHO'S WHO

Yasmin Ranz-Lind (*Karya*) WP/Signature Theater debut! Yasmin is a NYC-based Moroccan-American actor. Off Broadway: *Smile* (J2 Spotlight), Regional: *Hershel and the Hannukah Goblins* (Actors Theatre of Louisville), *Sherwood: The Adventures of Robin Hood* (Theater of the Big Bend), NY Theater: Originating the role of Princess/Chambermaid in the workshop of *Allerleirauh: A New Musical* (Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre), *Bad Jews* (Off the Lane), *Lost Sock Laundry* (Up Theater). BFA Syracuse University. Endless thanks to this unbelievable creative team, her incredibly supportive family and friends, TLJ, Michele, Lisa, Totoro (the cat) and her mentors and teachers who remind her "it's called a play for a reason." @yasminranzlind, yasminranzlind.com

Emmie Finckel (*Set Designer*) is a queer, Asian-American scenic designer. Recent credits include *Nothing Can Take You from the Hand of God*, *In the Amazon Warehouse Parking Lot* (Playwright's Horizons), *Animal Wisdom*, *The Watering Hole* (Signature Theatre), *Indian Princesses* (Atlantic), *I'm Not Even Half, Have You Ever Thought About?* (Bushwick Starr), *And Then The Rodeo…* (Ars Nova), *Comedy of Errors* (Public Theater), *53% Of* (2nd Stage), *Torera* (WP Theater), *Business Ideas* (Clubbed Thumb), *Medea: Re-Versed* (Red Bull), *See What I Wanna See* (Out of the Box), *Indian Princesses*, *As You Like It* (La Jolla Playhouse), *Becoming A Man* (A.R.T.), *Problems Between Sisters* (Studio Theater), *Last Call…*, *She Loves Me* (Long Wharf), *The Snow Goose*, *Ragtime* (Goodspeed), *Hurricane Diane*, *The Hot Wing King* (Hartford Stage), *Sanctuary City* (TheaterWorks Hartford). Emmie holds a BA from Wesleyan University and an MFA from the Yale School of Drama, and teaches at the Playwrights Horizons Theater School. www.efinckel.com.

Siena Zoë Allen (*Costume Designer*) (she/her) is a New York based costume designer for theater and opera. Recent credits: *Heathers the Musical* (New World Stages), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Goodspeed Opera House), *The Eyes of the World* (Carnegie Hall), *November 1918: The Great War & The Great Gatsby* (Boston Symphony Hall, PBS), *Monte Cristo* (Theatre at St. Jean's), *Goodnight, Oscar* and *The Lehman Trilogy* (Maltz Jupiter Theatre, Carbonell nom.), *someone spectacular* (Signature Theatre), *Savior* (City Lyric Opera), *Here Be Sirens* (Mannes Opera), *See What I Wanna See* (Out of the Box Theatrics), *The Shark is Broken* (George Street Playhouse). MFA NYU Tisch. Princess Grace Award Winner. Zoë is represented by United Talent Agency. More at www.sienazoeallen.com.

Reza Behjat (*Lighting Designer*) is an Obie Award-winning lighting designer based in New York City. He began his career in Iran, collaborating with the country's most prominent theater artists before transitioning to the United States. Broadway: *ENGLISH*, Off-Broadway: Atlantic Theatre, BAM, Signature Theatre, Public Theater, The New Group, MCC, Playwrights Horizons, Primary Stages, Audible, Page 73, Redbull Theater, Ars Nova, etc.
Regional: La Jolla Playhouse, Guthrie Theater, Steppenwolf, Theatre, Berkeley Rep, Old Globe, Milwaukee Rep, Seattle Rep, Hudson Valley Shakespeare, Milwaukee Rep, Wilma Theater, Arizona Theater Company, Actor Theater of Louisville, Geva Theater, Long Warf, Alabama Shakespeare, etc.

G Clausen (*Sound Designer*) is an award-winning sound designer and composer based in NYC. Some of his theatre credits include: The Fire This Time Festival (Victoria Theatres at The Apollo); *Torera* (WP Theater); *House of McQueen* (Aurora Productions); *A Freeky Introduction* (Atlantic Theare Company); *Syncing Ink* (Victora Theaters at The Apollo); *Twisted Melodies* (St. Louis Repertory); *Queen of the Night* (Victory Gardens Theatre); *I Am Deliverd't* (Co-Pro Dallas Theater Center and Actors Theatre of Louisville); *Crumbs From the Table of Joy*, *How I Learned What I Learned*, *Native Son*, *Skeleton Crew* (Playmakers Repertory); *PYG or The Misedumacation of Dorian Belle* (Studio Theatre); *Peter Panto* (People's Light); *The 39 Steps*, *Member of the Wedding*, *Dirty Blonde*, *Fences*, *Don Juan*, *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, *And Then There Were None*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Two Wolves and a Lamb* (Triad Stage); *The Piano Lesson*, *Too Heavy for Your Pocket*, *How I Learned What I Learned*, *Intimate Apparel*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Hooded, or Being Black for Dummies* (Pyramid Theatre Company). More info can be found at gclausen.com.

WHO'S WHO

Emmarose Campbell (*Properies Design*) is a NYC-based designer, performer, and producer. She is thrilled to be returning to work with WP Theatre after designing *The Waterfall*. Other recent credits include *The Loved Ones* (Irish Rep), *Music City* (Bedlam), and *Beau the Musical* (OOTB). She is the co-creator of Chorus Girl Productions, a company that focuses on work for, by, and about women. Insta: @emmarosegcampbell

Judi Lewis Ockler (*Intimacy Director*) is a NYC based fight/intimacy director. Past collaborations include Imperial Theater (*Chess*, Broadway production) The Public Theater (*Much Ado About Nothing*, Mobile Unit), Classic Stage Company (*Snow in Midsummer*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*), Westside Theater (*Little Shop of Horrors!*), Signature Theater (*Hot Wing King*, *One in Two*, *Jasper*) WP Theater (*Hatef**k*, *Our Dear Dead Drug Lord*, *Dirty Laundry*, *Bite Me*), Cherry Lane Theater (*This Beautiful Future*), St. Anne's Warehouse (*Weathergirl*), New World Stages (*Dracula, a Comedy of Terrors!*), The Mint (*The Rat Trap*), Williamstown Theater Festival (*A Raisin in the Sun* with Jeremy O'Hara, *A Human Being, of a Sort*, with Whitney White). She teaches/directs intimacy and violence in performance at NYU, NTI, Atlantic Theater School, AMDA, New School of Drama. judilewisockler.com

Atticus Orsborn (*Dialect Coach*) is a director and voice & speech specialist based in NYC. Trained as an actor at the Stella Adler Studio of Acting and then acquired an MA in Voice Studies: Teaching and Coaching from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. Recent credits include *THE THREE LITTLE PROLETARIAT PIGS* on Amazon Prime Video, and *HONOR SHMONOR* at The Tank NYC. His second feature film *SOY BOY* is premiering at the Dumbo Film Festival in November 2026.

Caitlin Molloy (*Hair and Makeup Consultant*) is thrilled to be the Hair and Makeup Consultant for *FISH*! Her latest designs can be seen at *Heathers* at New World Stages. Follow her on Instagram @caitlinmolloy.hair. Special thanks to her friends and family for their support. Sparkle Magic.

Aisling Galvin (*Production Stage Manager)* is thrilled to be working with WP Theater. Previous credits include *MEAT SUIT* (Second Stage), *Pericles* (Public Theater); *Artificial Flavors*, *Sex Variants* (The Civilians); *MEMNON*, *Othello* (Classical Theatre of Harlem); *Gruesome Playground Injuries* (Lucille Lortel Theatre); *Passing Strange* (Long Wharf); *Mystic Pizza* (Paper Mill Playhouse); *Mojada: A Medea* in Los Angeles, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* (Yale Rep); *Paradise Ballroom* (New York Stage and Film).

Morgan Grant (*Assistant Stage Manager*) is a NYC-based Stage Manager, and is thrilled to be working on *Fish*! Recently she has been working with the New York Philharmonic [Concerts in the Park] and The Vineyard Theater [*Bughouse*]. Morgan was the Production Stage Manager of Off-Broadway's *The Office! A Musical Parody* for several years, as well as a Stage Manager on *Friends! The Musical Parody* and *Singfeld! A Musical About Nothing!*. Other credits include working with The Public Theater [*PERICLES*], The Classical Theater of Harlem [*MEMNON*], SoHoShakespeare [*Second Murderer*], David Dorfman Dance [*(A)way Out of My Body Tour*] and *Broadway Bares: Hit The Strip!*. Morgan graduated with her MFA in Stage Management from Columbia University. She wants to thank her family, her partner Gabe, and Ais Galvin for making this all possible :)



WHO'S WHO

Kelly Gillespie, CSA (*Casting Director*) WP credits include: *Dirty Laundry*, *Sancocho*, *sandblasted*, *Our Dear Dead Drug Lord*, *Natural Shocks*, *Hatefuck*, *What We're Up Against*, *Sundown Yellow Moon*, *Stuffed*, *Ironbound*, *Dear Elizabeth* and *Bright Half Life*. She is a Casting Director at Manhattan Theatre Club, where some favorite projects include *Jaja's African Hair Braiding*, *Mary Jane*, *Prayer for the French Republic*, *The Best We Could*, *Skeleton Crew*, *Ink*, *Choir Boy*, and *The Explorers Club*. She had the pleasure of casting four of 13P's shows: *Melancholy Play*, *A Map of Virtue*, *The Zero Hour* and *Monstrosity*. She has also cast productions for Arena Stage, Arizona Theatre Company, Berkshire Theatre Group, The Old Globe, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Marin Theater Company, City Theatre, Merrimack Rep, The Foundry Theater and EST, as well as twelve productions for off-Broadway's T.A.C.T. and six seasons for Keen Company.

Joe Gery (*Casting Director*) Theater with Caparelliotis Casting - Select Broadway: *The Fear of 13*, *Good Night and Good Luck*, *Grey House*, *Macbeth*, *The Minutes*, *The Boys in the Band*. Off-Broadway: Signature (NYC), Atlantic, Ars Nova. Select Regional: The Old Globe, Arena Stage, Berkeley Rep. TV with Meredith Tucker Casting: *The White Lotus* (HBO, S1-4), *Crystal Lake* (Peacock), *Godfather of Harlem* (EPIX), *Ray Donovan* (Showtime), and *The Bold Type* (Freeform).

Vivacity Media Group (*Press Representative*) has led the PR campaigns for over fifty theater productions. Select Broadway credits include: *The Great Gatsby*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, *How to Dance in Ohio*, *Once Upon A One More Time*, Mike Birbiglia's *The Old Man & The Pool*, Alex Edelman's *Just For Us*, *POTUS*, *Jagged Little Pill*, *On Your Feet!*, *Rock of Ages*, *Slava's SnowShow*, *Chicken & Biscuits*. Off-Broadway highlights: *Titanique*; *Little Shop of Horrors*; *Liz Kingsman's One Woman Show*; *Derek DelGaudio's In & Of Itself*; *Heathers: The Musical*; *Cruel Intentions*; *Accidentally Brave*; *A Clockwork Orange*; *The Other Josh Cohen*; and nine seasons for the Obie, Lortel & Drama Desk Award-winning WP Theater. Theatrical Institutions: American Theatre Wing, The Drama League, and Outer Critics Circle.

WP Theater (*Co-Producer*), entering its 48th Season, is the nation's oldest and largest theater company dedicated to developing, producing and promoting the work of Women+ at every stage in their careers. For almost five decades, we have served as leaders at the forefront of a global movement towards gender parity, and the example we set and the artists we have fostered have grown into a robust and thriving community of artists in theater and beyond. WP Theater received a 2018 Lucille Lortel Award, a 2019 Obie Award, and a 2020 Drama Desk Award, all for Outstanding Body of Work, recognizing WP's unique place and vital work in the theatrical landscape. WP empowers Women+ of all kinds to reach their full potential and, in doing so, challenges preconceptions about the kinds of plays Women+ write and the stories they tell. As the premiere launching pad for some of the most influential Women+ theater artists today, our work has had a significant impact on the field at large. Nearly every prolific female theater artist has been through our doors, including 2024 Tony Winner for Best Direction of a Musical, Danya Taymor; 2019 Tony Winner for Best Direction of a Musical, Rachel Chavkin; 2018 Tony Winner for Best Direction of a Play Rebecca Taichman; 2013 Tony Winner for Best Direction of a Play Pam MacKinnon; 2013 Tony Winner for Best Direction of a Musical Diane Paulus; 2023 Pulitzer Prize Winner Eboni Booth; 2021 Pulitzer Prize Winner Katori Hall; 2018 Pulitzer Prize Winner Martyna Majok; and two-time Pulitzer Prize Winner Lynn Nottage. These powerful women found an artistic home at WP and are a testament to our role as a driving cultural force.

WHO'S WHO

WP was founded in 1978 by visionary producer, Julia Miles, to address the significant under-representation of women in theater. Today, WP accomplishes its mission through several fundamental programs, including: the WP Lab, a celebrated two-year mentorship and new play development program for Women+ playwrights, directors,and producers; the Space Program subsidized rental program; the Developmental series of workshops and readings; the Commissioning series, and the Mainstage series, which features a full season of Off-Broadway productions written and directed by extraordinary theater artists. Current artists under commission are: Mathilde Dratwa, Donnetta Lavinia Grays, Emily Kaczmarek, MJ Kaufman, Zizi Majid, Rehana Mirza, Zoe Sarnak, Rachel Wax, and Leah Nanako Winkler. WP is proud to have the legendary New Federal Theatre as our Resident Theater Company.

When we say Women+ we mean: cis women, trans, non-binary, or gender-nonconforming people and all gender identities which have been systematically oppressed throughout history in the theater and beyond.

For more information, please visit www.WPTheater.org.

Signature Theatre (*Co-Producer*) is an artistic home for storytellers. Founded in 1991 in New York City by Jim Houghton as a theater devoted to artists across their bodies of work, Signature deepens the relationship between artists and audiences alike through their groundbreaking and ever-evolving, residency and producing model that amplifies the resonances between an artist's works.

Now under the leadership of Artistic Director Emily Shooltz and Executive Director Timothy J. McClimon, the organization continues to extend residencies to both playwrights and other visionary generative theater artists. Signature makes a singular—and extremely rare, in the theater world—commitment to its diverse cohort of Resident Artists by saying "yes" upfront to at least three productions. At Signature, it's the storyteller who drives the conversation. That trust, in turn, yields incredible results from artists who are free to take chances and uncover new terrain in their work, while Signature provides holistic creative and professional support.

Signature audiences have gotten deep dives into the distinct visions of recent Resident Artists, including Stephen Adly Guirgis, David Henry Hwang, Samuel D. Hunter, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, Tony Kushner, Lynn Nottage, Anna Deavere Smith, Dave Malloy, Dominique Morisseau, Sarah Ruhl, Lauren Yee, and others; in 2025, the theater welcomed its newest resident, Heather Christian. Signature and its artists have been recognized with Tony Awards, Pulitzer Prizes, MacArthur "Genius" grants, and Lucille Lortel, Obie, Drama Desk, AUDELCO, and Artios Awards as well as the 50/50 Award for Gender Parity in Theatre, among many other distinctions. In 2014, Signature became the first New York City theater to receive the Regional Theatre Tony Award for its body of work and accomplishments as an institution.

In 2012, Signature Theatre moved into a permanent home: The Pershing Square Signature Center, the capacious and dynamic three-theater facility on West 42nd designed by Frank Gehry Architects. The Center supports and encourages collaboration and cross-pollination among artists, cultural organizations, and local communities, and serves as a meeting place and watering hole for the larger theater community.

WHO'S WHO

New Light Theater Project (*In Association With Producer*) (NLTP) founded by Sarah Norris (Artistic Director) and Michael Aguirre (Managing Director), nurtures a Collective of artist-practitioners by presenting compelling stories across theatrical genres.

NLTP believes in the strength of ensemble work and is committed to fostering our Collective, composed of writers, actors, directors, stage managers, designers, and other artist-practitioners from diverse backgrounds. At least 50% of an NLTP production engages our Collective, while the rest of the production team consists of innovative artists with whom we hope to cultivate deeper relationships.

NLTP strives to provide sustained opportunities for our Collective. What started as a weekly Sunday gathering of friends over pancakes, coffee, and plays has evolved into a community of artists who care about the work we contribute to the theatrical makeup of New York City, and ultimately, seek to ensure a work environment that embodies a brave, communal spirit.

Since 2013, NLTP has been a twice Drama Desk-nominated company that has mounted over 50 full productions which have received critical praise including numerous Critics' Picks, Best of Theater 2019 (The Stage + Slant Magazine), Best of Theater 2014 (The L Magazine), induction into Indie Theater Now's People of the Year/Indie Theater Hall of Fame, and received residencies from 59E59 Co Op Resident Company, Theatre Row on 42nd Street, The Flea Theater's Anchor Program, Woodstock Byrdcliffe Residency Fellowship, Chicago Dramatists Grafting Project, IRT 3B Residency, 13th Street Rep, Access Theater Residency Program, and the New Theater at 45th Street (now Davenport).

NLTP is proud to call NYC home, but our work has also been seen in London, Edinburgh, Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington D.C., Louisville (KY), East Hampton (NY), Saranac Lake (NY), Woodstock (NY), Ridgefield (CT), Sylva (NC), and Redlands (CA).

Noor Theatre (*Consulting Producer*) is an Obie-winning company dedicated to supporting, developing and producing the work of theatre artists of Middle Eastern, Southwest Asian and North African descent.

Noor was founded in 2010 in order to serve these artists; we develop and amplify their voices for diverse audiences. As New York City's only company with this mission, we provide an important space for MENA/SWANA voices to be heard. In doing so, we counter negative stereotypes, share nuanced work that reflects the unique perspectives of our artists, and ensure that our communities are represented and celebrated in the larger theatre ecosystem.

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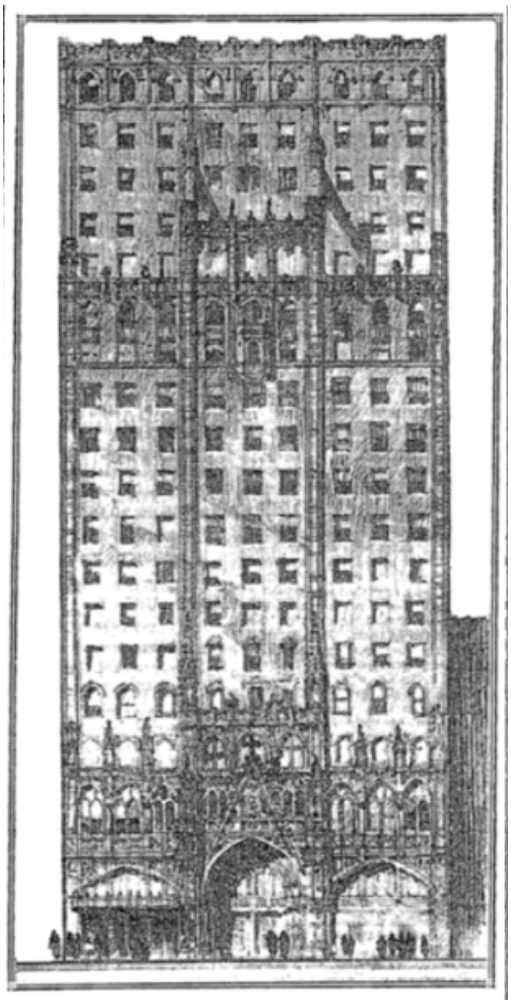
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ABOUT THIS THEATRE



WP Theater stands on Lenape Land. Before this building came into existence, this was wooded land filled with villages of families active with trading and gathering spaces. While descendants of those first families live in this area today, many Indigenous People were forcibly removed with the arrival of European settler colonists. It was on an empty corner lot of this land that a small church was built, then taken apart and rebuilt into this building.

The "skyscraper church" that holds this theater, **once the Manhattan Congregational Church,** has housed many businesses and residents since its construction in 1930, including 200 WAVES during World War II. In 1969, the first-floor auditorium of the church was transformed into the Promenade Theatre, named after its inaugural production: the María Irene Fornés musical, **Promenade, a show recently revived at Encores! Off-Center.**

Though WP's theater sits on the third floor, we are delighted to produce work in a building with a theatrical history forged by Fornés, **a woman whose leadership of the off-off-Broadway movement and longtime collaboration with WP helped secure the legacy of this institution and paved the way for future female theatremakers.**

In 1979, Carole Rothman and Robyn Goodman co-founded Second Stage Theatre and made this their permanent venue in 1984, dubbing the theater McGinn/Cazale after the late actors Walter McGinn and John Cazale. McGinn's widow Robyn Goodman and Cazale's fiancée Meryl Streep wanted to honor the actors' passion for their craft and commitment to the New York theater community in the dedication of this theater and Second Stage's first ever production. WP made the McGinn/Cazale our home, in partnership with Second Stage in 2015, as WP Theater had not had a permanent home since the closing of the Julia Miles Theater, named after our founder, in 2011. As of 2022, the theater is now wholly run, year round, by WP Theater.

To encourage this growth, Jann Leeming, Board Chair Emerita, and Executive Director and Senior Trustee of the Royal Little Family Foundation, generously gifted WP a founding grant to support our first three years' residence in this building. **WP Theater now celebrates nearly 50 years of challenging preconceptions about the kinds of stories Women+ tell and working towards gender parity in theater. Since WP Theater mounted its inaugural production in this venue, the New York premiere of Dear Elizabeth by Sarah Ruhl, we have been honored to make this storied theater a home for Women+ to reach their full potential.**

COMMUNITY PARTNERS



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COMMUNITY EVENTS

10/02	SWANASA Affinity Mixer Free Drink with Ticket Purchase Code BODRUM for $30 tickets
10/09	SWANASA Affinity Night Artist Talkback Code DM30 for $30 Tickets
10/16	Closed Caption Performance CC
10/17	Childcare Matinee Free Childcare with Ticket Purchase
10/22	Closed Caption Performance CC

Captioning is provided, in part, by a grant from NYSCA/TDF TAP Plus

WP THEATER SEASON 2026 - 2027



Learn more at WPTheater.org

SUPPORT WP THEATER

For nearly 50 years, WP Theater has remained focused on putting Women+ artists center stage, and that mission has never been more important. Our #WPCommunity includes all of us: artists, donors, staff, audiences, local businesses, and YOU! Your support helps us continue the vital, resilient, and necessary work of Women+ artists–we are so grateful to you for your support

There are various Benefits of Giving available at each contribution level. ***Learn more about those benefits here***.

If you enjoyed the show and want to support WP's mission, please consider ***donating here***.

WP THEATER

SignatureTheatre

FISH



written by
MELIS AKER

directed by
TATIANA PANDIANI

in association with
NEW LIGHT THEATER PROJECT

consulting producer
NOOR THEATRE