

Upcoming Productions

A Conversation with Paula Vogel

March 23, 2023

6:30pm - Martel Theater

Open to the Public - Reservations required

The Steerman New Play Festival

Bemused

By Ellery Cordes*

Director: Maya Wilson*

March 30 and 31, 2023

All Shows at 8:00pm - Powerhouse Theater

*denotes senior project in drama

Gate Shut Panic

By Zoe Nelms*

Director: Keira DiGaetano '23

March 29 & April 1 2023

The Marilyn Swartz Seven '69

Annual Playwriting Award

Reading

April 2, 2023

2:00pm Strep Studio

Mad Forest

A play from Romania

By Caryl Churchill

Directed by Christopher Grabowski

April 26, 27, 28 2023

8:00pm - Martel Theater

Reservations

boxoffice@vassar.edu - (845) 437-5599

website: <http://drama.vassar.edu>

Available two weeks in advance of opening

Individuals with disabilities requiring accommodations or information on accessibility should contact the box office in advance.

WITCH

By Jen Silverman

Directed by Claire McHarg '24

February 23, 24, 25 2023

8:00 p.m.

Martel Theater

Senior Project Members:

Kelly Hatfield, Louise Ambler, Jack Francis,
Emma Skinner, Rosalynde Trammell, Presley Wheeler

Presented through Concord Theatricals

Cast

Elizabeth Sawyer
Scratch
Sir Arthur Banks
Cuddy Banks
Frank Thorney
Winnifred

Faculty Advisor

Production

Director
Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Manager
Costume Designer
Scenic Designer
Lighting Designer
Sound Designer/Music & Compositions
Props Designer
Fight Choreographer
Dramaturg
Actors Representative
Light Board Operator
Sound Board Operator
Costume Run Crew
Run Crew
Set Build Crew

Electrics Crew
Poster Graphic Design

Rosalynde Trammell*
Jack Francis*
Alex Papasavas '23
Presley Wheeler*
Emma Skinner*
Margaret Ryan-Byrne '25

* Denotes senior project in drama

Shona Tucker

Claire McHarg '24
Kelly Hatfield '23
Devin Gearty '25
Hanh Rioux '23
Xander Setchko '24
Louise Ambler '23
Acacia McDonough '24
Riley Bates '24
Claire McHarg '24
Rosalynde Trammell '23
Margaret Ryan Byrne '25
Eli Levitt '24
Matthew Fisher '24
Georgia Macy '24
Hanh Rioux '23
Sam Andrews '25
Alice Downer '23
Jackson Bernreuter '25
Linnea Martin '21

Special Thanks

Riley Kader,
Linnea Martin,
Nick Gayle and Vassar Fencing,
Leslie Sachs,
Hannah Littman,
Morris Dancers,
Vassar Rugby,
Lee Sorge and the Wayfinder Experience,
Lev Goldman,
Carolyn McDonough,
Whales,
The month of June

Drama Department Workstudy Students

Costume Shop

Interns: Matt Andres '23, Hanh Rioux '23

Costume History & Design Research Assistant: Presley Wheeler '23

Costume Collection Research Assistant: Hannah Weintraub '25

Costume Shop Tech:

Evelyn Boyle '23, Simeon Bremer '23, Celeste Brinkhuis '24, Mahalia Hunter '23, Georgia Macy '24, Yasmin Mohammed '23, Gus Pointer Mace '25, Madison Powell '23, Eden Radifera '26, Athena Randall '25, Foster Schrader '25, Taylor Talcott '23, Jazmine Williams '26

Electrics Shop

Lighting Interns: Laurel Hanson '23, Xander Setchko '24

Electrics Crew:

Jackson Bernreuter '24, Grayson Bullard '26, Harry Malins '26, Erin Mee '24, Avery Nahf '26, Ki'tsai Zangpo '25, Eden O'Connell '23

Scenic Shop

Scenic Intern: Riley Bates '24

Shop Intern: Jack Francis '23

Assistants:

Becca Bogstad '26, Lucinda Carroll '24, Zach Cohen '24, Eli Levitt '24, Alex Roth '24, Xander Setchko '24, Aiden Skelly '26, Jasper Smith '25, Avery Turnbull '26, Jamie Walsh '25, Kendall Wienecke '24

Drama Department Faculty and Staff

Director of Theater	Christopher Grabowski
Costume Design	Kenisha Kelly
Production Manager	Patience Haskell
Technical Director	James Hunting
Costume Shop Manager	Leigh Davis
Publicity/Box Office/Front of House	Joan Gerardi

Drama Department Interns

Production Management	Maggie Young '25
Stage Management	Kelly Hatfield '23

Drama Box Office Staff

Assistants:	Sophia Fredericks '26
	Tim Nguyen '23
	Alejandra Robins '24
Drama Department Photographer:	Ana Leon Urrutia '26

Ushers

Danny Allan '26, Rose Golick '26, Awien Jel '26, Elainna Kunkler-Peck '25, Lanie Mussina '26, Claire Paris '26, Sydney Petrie '26, Jagger Risk '26, Ellis Rubin '26, Leila Stark '26, Molly Stern '25, Autumn Taliaferrow '26, Chloe Vaiman '26, Yuhui Wang '25

Dramaturgy Note by Rosalynde Trammell '23

“A witch! Who is not?” - The Witch of Edmonton

Between the 15th and 18th centuries, approximately 500 women died during the witch trials in England. Among their number was the real life Elizabeth Sawyer. Indicted for witchcraft in 1621, Sawyer's case was made famous by a pamphlet published by Reverend Henry Goodcole detailing her trial and subsequent confession. This led to the publication of *The Witch of Edmonton* later that same year, a play by Thomas Dekker, John Ford, William Rowley, et al, that created a fictitious narrative surrounding the Devil, Sawyer and other townspeople in Edmonton.

Jen Silverman drew inspiration from this Jacobean drama when writing *Witch* in 2017, a time when mentions of witch hunts were very prominent in the American political landscape, and when, for many, hope seemed just out of reach. Witch hunts have long been associated with stigmatization to the point of danger for many marginalized groups. While the usage of the term in 2017 lacked that context, it nonetheless carried with it a feeling of powerlessness for those same groups. This feeling of devastation bridges centuries, and is what makes it so easy to believe that this play is set out of time, in a space the script refers to as “Then-ish. But also equally of our moment.”

The story of Elizabeth Sawyer is one of cycles, of endless inquiries. Just as history repeats itself, these characters have reprised their roles over several lifetimes, seeking the answers to the same questions each time: What is a soul and what is it really worth? What connects us to one another? What would you ask of the devil? What would the devil ask of you? What would you do for your heart's desire? Who are we when our pretenses are stripped away? Why us? Why now?

Our production invites you to ask these questions of yourselves, to learn from the story put before you, and, most importantly, to ask the right questions before it's too late.

Directors Note by Claire McHarg '24

Dear Elizabeth,

I've been thinking a lot about your question. Ever since I first encountered *Witch*, the task to grapple with this play has felt daunting for many reasons. To ask “Do I have hope that things can get better?” of myself every day for the entire process has been strange to say the least. Have hope about what, Elizabeth? Myself? This team? The future? The State of the World?

When I first really started working on *Witch* last December, I sat alone in this theater to try and start piecing the whole thing together and I struggled to have hope. Or perhaps, more accurately, I worried that my hope would not be enough to keep things all together. As a first time director, working on this show has felt like I was holding someone else's baby and there was so much work to be done before I felt we'd be ready to share our work with the world. This show, this team and project, and this world required more than just my hope to keep it spinning on course.

If this team has taught me anything, then I understand now that the reason we make theater in teams (Senior Project Members, designers, the acting company) is because they're the reason to have hope that it will all work out. It takes a leap of faith to share something as significant as a thesis with people, but perhaps being able to share that terrifying, exhausting, deeply important process is the thing that makes it worth it. Elizabeth, the act of making theater is inherently hopeful, and these people make that seem so easy.

This show has made me think about how we hold onto things to give us hope, especially when everything feels like it is fast fleeting. Please understand that theater is inherently ephemeral, and no two people will sit and see the same thing or leave with the same takeaway. But, in spite of that, I'd like to tell you what I hold onto, perhaps to memorialize it in this moment; I'd like to share a piece of the hope I found in our rehearsals.

There is joy in falling over and re-learning how to walk in the same way there is joy in laughing and dancing; they are freeing.

To Elizabeth & Scratch, Frank & Cuddy, Sir Arthur & Winnifred, I hope you'd find all some hope in our telling of your tales. - Claire McHarg