



SUDDENLY LAST SUMMER

JUNE 25 – JULY 19

FISHER CENTER LAB CIVIS HOPE
COMMISSION/WORLD PREMIERE

FISHER
CENTER

FISHERCENTER.BARD.EDU
845-758-7900

Bard

Dear Friends,

Welcome to SummerScape 2026! The festival opens with two performances from Fisher Center LAB, our residency and commissioning program: the world premiere of ***Suddenly Last Summer***, an operatic setting of Tennessee Williams's taut thriller by renowned composer Courtney Bryan; and ***Lucinda Childs: Momentary Reprieve***—a one-of-a-kind evening of new and iconic dances by Lucinda Childs, one of the leading choreographers of our time.

Both productions exemplify LAB's commitment to realizing the highest dreams of great artists, and to bringing you—our audiences—daring and glorious performances that you can only experience at the Fisher Center.

I first met Courtney Bryan almost two decades ago when she was a student in a collaboration course I taught at Columbia University, and I've been in awe of the range and humanity of her musical voice ever since. When director Daniel Fish (whose many LAB productions include *Aquanetta*, *Most Happy*, and his legendary *Oklahoma!*) sent me the original play of *Suddenly Last Summer*, I was struck by the musicality and intensity of Williams's writing, and had a sense it needed to be not just spoken but *sung*. Courtney's vocal music is peerless, and we were thrilled when she agreed to transform the play with a ravishing score that straddles opera, theater, and melodrama.

The production—the first of our Civic Hope Commissions—unites many longstanding Fisher Center LAB artists, including soprano Mikaela Bennett (for whom Courtney wrote the role of Catherine), designers Marsha Ginsberg, Terese Wadden, Garth MacAleavey, and Joshua Thorson (with Tony Award-nominated lighting designer Stacey Derosier joining the team), music director Nathan Koci, movement director Beth Gill, casting director Taylor Williams, and associate director Mikhaela Mahony. It's a delight to welcome the great actors Tina Benko and Brandon Lindsay, both making their LAB debuts, and for us to be partnering with Opera Philadelphia, where *Suddenly Last Summer* will perform in October.

SummerScape is a vast operation, and I'd like to salute all my colleagues in the Fisher Center's production, producing, and administrative departments, as well as our summer seasonal teams, for their tireless work in bringing the festival to you. Above all, thanks to you for joining us today. We wish you a wonderful time in the theater, and hope you will return again this summer, for another LAB production, or the SummerScape Opera, the Bard Music Festival, or in the Spiegel tent.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Gideon Lester". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gideon" being more prominent than the last name "Lester".

Gideon Lester

Artistic Director and Chief Executive

Fisher Center at Bard

Chair Jeanne Donovan Fisher

Artistic Director and Chief Executive Gideon Lester

Executive Producer and Chief Operating Officer Aaron Mattocks

SUDDENLY LAST SUMMER

Fisher Center LAB Civis Hope Commission/World Premiere

Music by Courtney Bryan

Libretto by Gideon Lester and Daniel Fish based on the play by Tennessee Williams

Directed by Daniel Fish

Music Direction and Supervision by Nathan Koci

June 25 at 7:30 pm

June 27 at 7:30 pm

June 28 at 3 pm

June 30 at 7:30 pm

July 1 at 3 pm

July 3 at 3 pm

July 5 at 3 pm

July 8 at 3 pm

July 9 at 7:30 pm

July 11 at 3 pm

July 12 at 3 pm

July 15 at 3 pm

July 16 at 7:30 pm

July 18 at 3 pm

July 19 at 3 pm

LUMA Theater

COMPANY

Catherine Holly	Mikaela Bennett
Mrs. Venable	Tina Benko
Dr. Cukrowicz	Branden Lindsay
Mrs. Holly	Miriam Silverman*
George	Nick Westrate*
Choral Ensemble	Young People's Chorus of New York City
Painter	Lucy Tarquinio
Catherine Holly (Cover)	Amanda Sheriff

*The performances of George and Mrs. Holly have been pre-recorded.

ORCHESTRA

Piano and Associate Music Director	Sean Forte
Tenor Trombone	Freddie Frederickson
Bass	Eleonore Oppenheim
Cello	Leah Coloff
Flute I	Isabel Lepanto Gleicher
Flute II	Alice Jones
Percussion	Clara Warnaar
Saxophone	Ken Thomson
Viola	Sunjay Jayaram
Violin I	Sarah Goldfeather
Violin II	Darian Donovan Thomas

CREATIVE TEAM

Associate Director	Mikhaela Mahony
Scenic Design	Marsha Ginsberg
Costume Design	Terese Wadden
Lighting Design	Stacey Derosier
Projection Design	Joshua Thorson
Audio Design and Mixing	Garth MacAleavey
Movement Direction	Beth Gill
Hair and Wig Design	Bobbie Zlotnik, Anne Ford-Coates
Makeup Design	Anne Ford-Coates
Producer	Carter Edwards
Casting Director	Taylor Williams, CSA
Assistant Director	Danica Selem
Stage Manager	Jason Kaiser
Assistant Stage Manager	Sam Forrest
Literary Consultant	Thomas Keith
Speech Consultant	Gigi Buffington
Dialect Consultant	Sam Lilja
Assistant Scenic Designer	Michael Lewis

Assistant Scenic Designer	Erica Zhang
Assistant Costume Designer	Adeline Santello
Assistant Lighting Designer	Tyler Dubuc
Assistant Lighting Designer	Manny Delgado
Music Assistant	Jenia Marquez
Company Manager	Madie Reilly

CHORAL ENSEMBLE

Young People's Chorus of New York City

Artistic Director and Founder	Francisco J. Núñez
Conductor	Ahra Cho
Conductor	Emma Sway
Assistant Conductor	Jiabao Guo

CHORISTERS

Avery Bayani, Leo Bravo, Landon Chen, Chaitanya Dhall, Julien Jobson-Larkin, Suisei Nakamura, Omario Napiza, Ugenio Napiza, Loic Nguyen, Maximilian Richert-Wang, Aarav Thum, William Xu

Funding

The Fisher Center is generously supported by Jeanne Donovan Fisher, the Henry L. Kimelman Family Foundation, Rebecca Gold Milikowsky, Daniel Shapiro, Stephen E. Simcock, the Martin and Toni Sosnoff Foundation, Felicitas S. Thorne, the Advisory Board of the Fisher Center, Fisher Center members and general fund donors, The Shubert Foundation, and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

Suddenly Last Summer is co-commissioned by Fisher Center LAB and Opera Philadelphia. Fisher Center LAB is funded by the Lucille Lortel Foundation and the Fisher Center's Artistic Innovation Fund, with lead support from Rebecca Gold Milikowsky and additional funding from The William and Lia G. Poorvu Family Foundation.

Major development support for Suddenly Last Summer has been received from the Fisher Center's Hope Commissions Fund, generously endowed by the Civis Foundation and Bard College.

Additional commissioning support was provided by the Howard & Sarah D. Solomon Foundation and the Henry L. Kimelman Family Foundation. The commissioning of Courtney Bryan received funding from OPERA America's Opera Grants for Women Composers program, supported by the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation. Suddenly Last Summer was developed with residency support from the Camargo Foundation and the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM).

Special Thanks

Jason Baruch, Francois Battiste, Sonya Belaya, Jordan Bellow, Elizabeth Blaufox, Steven Bradshaw, Julie Chénot and the Camargo Foundation, Laura Cocks, Rashard Deleston, Joel Dyson, Amy Garapic, Massimo Greco, John Habich, Daniela Hart, Nick Hawrylko, Ethan Helm, Clara Kennedy, Alex Koi, Morgan Mastrangelo, Dami Park, Liz Perlman, Jacob Pooler, Michael Rudko, Andrew Solomon, Joshua Stewart, and Uptown Works; Amy Cassello, John Hoobyar, Jenifer Leeson, Brian Sciarra, Bofang Zhou and everyone at Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM); Nancy Bloom, Lindsay Bogaty, Francisco Nunez, and the staff of Young People's Chorus of New York City (YPC).

SYNOPSIS

Suddenly Last Summer takes place in Mrs. Violet Venable's grand home in the Garden District of New Orleans. Mrs. Venable is showing a young brain surgeon, Dr. Cukrowicz, around the tropical garden created by her late son, Sebastian. Sebastian died last summer while traveling with his cousin, Catherine Holly. Since Catherine returned to New Orleans, she has been obsessively recounting the events that led to Sebastian's death and has been committed to a private mental asylum, St. Mary's, at her aunt's expense.

Mrs. Venable tells the doctor of her close relationship with her late son, a poet who wrote just one poem a year. She recalls a trip that she and Sebastian took to the Galapagos Islands, where they observed birds of prey devouring sea turtles on a beach.

The doctor tells Mrs. Venable of his pioneering work in brain surgery at Lion's View, a state asylum. He has developed an experimental lobotomy procedure, for which he needs funding. Mrs. Venable offers to support his research—if he agrees to perform a lobotomy on Catherine that will prevent her from telling the story that threatens to destabilize the Venable family. She has brought him to the house to evaluate Catherine and to persuade him to undertake the operation.

Catherine arrives at the house, in the care of nuns from St Mary's. As she waits to meet her aunt and the doctor, she again begins the story of Sebastian's death in the beach town of Cabeza de Lobo, as the nuns attempt to restrain her. Catherine reveals that Sebastian was homosexual, and that she—like his mother before her—was procuring young men for him when he died.

Catherine's mother and brother, George, arrive and try to silence Catherine. Their reason is in part financial; Sebastian's will contains a substantial provision for Catherine and George, which Mrs. Venable is planning to contest if Catherine continues telling her story.

Mrs. Venable and the doctor return. Catherine realizes that he is from Lion's View, the State Asylum, and understands what her aunt is planning to do to her. Catherine confides in the doctor that Sebastian rescued her and took her to Europe last year, after a stranger had tried to assault her during a Mardi Gras ball.

The doctor prepares to examine Catherine. He injects her with a truth serum, and she recounts the entire story of Sebastian's demise in Cabeza de Lobo.

WRITING THE VOICE OF TRUTH: AN INTERVIEW WITH COMPOSER COURTNEY BRYAN

This interview with Courtney Bryan is reprinted courtesy of Boosey & Hawkes, the composer's publisher.

Can you describe the conceptual ideas behind the piece and how they shaped the decision to create a hybrid opera-play format, where singers and actors share the stage?

CB: The drama centers on uncovering the truth of what happened to Sebastian—a character we never actually meet since he dies before the play begins. The only person who knows what really happened to Sebastian is his cousin Catherine, whom the rest of the characters are trying to silence.

We began exploring a conceptual idea that director Daniel Fish suggested: Catherine, as the “voice of truth,” would be the only character who sings, while the other characters are speaking roles. In this way, the piece was developed through a collaborative process with the creative team, drawing on a music-theater model of development.

In addition to Catherine singing, the work includes a boys' choir. We chose to specifically include the voices of preteen boys, which are integral to the story, at times representing the group of boys Sebastian exploited, and who ultimately bring about his demise.

What's the dramatic impact of combining speech and singing in performance?

CB: I wrote the score knowing I needed to balance the music and acting happening onstage simultaneously, without one form taking precedence over the other. It's like you're watching two scenes at the same time.

For example, Catherine—who is being held in a mental institution—is onstage while her aunt describes her as babbling and incoherent. As the other actors speak, Catherine sings these long notes that don't form complete, intelligible phrases. The audience sees and hears her, but her presence feels abstract because you don't understand what she's saying. The speech and singing exist in different universes, and that juxtaposition makes Catherine feel both present and removed.

Timing was also a very important consideration—like, how to balance the pace of spoken text with sung text. Speech moves more quickly, while singing, even at a fast tempo, is musical and spread out. I had to create a score with flexibility built in for the different types of performance being layered.

How did you approach writing music for Catherine, the “voice of truth”?

CB: Over the course of the opera, Catherine goes from singing really stretched-out, unintelligible phrases to, ultimately, speaking her truth. After being given a truth serum, she begins to deliver text more quickly and clearly, almost as if speaking (though she's singing throughout). It's a gradual progression that builds to a climax in Scene 4.

As she begins singing her truth, the music becomes very dramatic. I loved the idea of exploring the full range of her voice. There are moments when she's sharing some very disturbing details, and the music moves into her low register, giving her a grounded, controlled quality. At these

big moments in the opera, I wanted Catherine to move between different modes of expression—something between babbling and shouting out her truth.

What's the significance of birdsong in this opera?

CB: Birds are referenced throughout Tennessee Williams's play. In his notes, he includes specific descriptions of which birds are heard and the kinds of sounds they make. While they aren't main characters, they form a presence in the world of the play. At the end, the boys are described as transforming into black birds that devour Sebastian.

I knew early on that I wanted to incorporate birdsong into the musical language of the opera. Williams mentions sweet-singing birds and flesh-eating ones, which led me to research different types, like the yellow warbler, red cardinal, and vultures, as well as birds native to uptown New Orleans, where the story is set. I created a chart of bird song transcriptions for the ensemble players, with instructions for how to follow the general shape of the bird call while also improvising, so the effect feels natural. Some passages feature notated bird calls, while others suggest the sound of wind or flapping wings.

In Scene 2, there's a Choral Feature written for the boys' choir that explores two types of writing. Some of the choral writing features harmonies inspired by Billy Strayhorn and Duke Ellington, sung on open vowels. And then there's writing for the choir that goes into improvised birdsong.

As a New Orleans native, what drew you to this play, and what did you want to capture through this drama?

CB: It was a great challenge to take on a play set in New Orleans. When I first read the script, I could hear the accents and the pacing of the voices immediately. But it represents a very different place than *my* New Orleans. The play is about a very rich white family in the 1950s Garden District—what someone from New Orleans would recognize as “old money.” So it was interesting to engage with a different side of New Orleans than I know.

What drew me most to the project was the emotional intensity of Tennessee Williams's writing. As a composer who thinks about capturing a lot of different types of emotions in music, I knew his text could push me in new musical directions.

For example, in the closing aria, Catherine describes Sebastian's final moments as he runs and the boys transform into birds and devour him. Setting that scene to music was a particular challenge. I'm used to dealing with difficult topics in my music, but oftentimes I bring an element of hope. Here, the only sense of hope we found was in Catherine finally speaking her truth—but there's so much gruesomeness in that last image.

Ultimately, it was the intensity of Tennessee Williams's storytelling—how his stories haunt you and stick with you—that drew me to this project the most.

“THE WORK OF A POET IS THE LIFE OF A POET”: THE SOURCES OF SUDDENLY LAST SUMMER

by Teagan Walsh

Tennessee Williams often incorporated aspects of his own life and personal experiences into his plays, and *Suddenly Last Summer* is no exception. Here are some of the most prominent autobiographical elements of the play:

Lobotomy

Williams's beloved sister Rose underwent a lobotomy in 1943. The procedure was seen as a last resort for her, after years of being shuffled between various psychiatric institutions and convalescence homes in an attempt to cure her psychological torment, eventually diagnosed as schizophrenia. Williams was very close with Rose, who was three years his senior, and though he hated her outbursts, which were often violent and sexual in nature, what he hated more was the idea of turning his beloved sister into a shell of her former self. In a 1936 letter to his grandparents, following one of Rose's many hospital stays, Williams said that Rose was “not normal and probably has not been for a long time, but is not ranting around like she was before.” His parents' decision to approve the lobotomy—then a relatively new and experimental procedure, first performed just 8 years earlier—caused anguish for Williams, and created a significant rift in the family. In July of 1943, just a few months after the lobotomy, Williams told his parents in a letter that “It is obvious that [Rose] still has her delusions, and I don't see how she could live outside an institution of some kind.”

The Venable House

The distinctive Venable house where the play takes place, with its grand central elevator and lush, tropical gardens, also has a real-world counterpart. In 1958, as he wrote *Suddenly Last Summer*, Williams was staying in the Freret-Bultman House, a historic home in the Garden District of New Orleans owned by his friend Muriel Bultman-Francis. The house, built in 1859 in the Greek revival style, includes a large indoor garden which still exists, and which, as Williams describes in the opening stage directions, looks “more like a tropical jungle, or forest in the prehistoric age.” Bultman-Francis, an art collector and public-relations agent, is described by her obituary as helping “a struggling playwright named Tennessee Williams. She found Mr. Williams a place to live, which turned out to be the setting for a play later made into the film *Suddenly Last Summer*.”

Cannibalism

Williams often returned to the theme of cannibalism in his writing. As he noted in an interview in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, “Someone is always eating at someone else for position, gain, triumph, greed, whatever. The human individual is a cannibal in the worst way.” He explored the subject in two short stories in the collection *One Arm and Other Stories*, published in 1948, a decade before *Suddenly Last Summer*. In “The Poet,” he describes a nameless artist who captivates a group of children with his stories. Upon his death, they find and surround his skeleton. The poet closely resembles Sebastian Venable: an attractive writer who wanders the beaches like

the Pied Piper, a gaggle of local children at his heels. In “Desire and the Black Masseur,” he tells the story of Anthony Burns, a wholesale clerk who enters into a violent sexual relationship with a masseur, who eventually eats him. For Burns, the purpose of the consumption is twofold: it fulfills a lifelong desire to be “swallowed up,” to attain a sort of suffocating sense of inclusion, and serves as atonement for his perceived moral wrongdoing. Cannibalism, for Williams, always seems to be accompanied by or the result of some sort of sexual impropriety; Sebastian’s homosexuality, the Poet’s promiscuity, Anthony Burns’s masochism.

Psychotherapy

As the theater critic John Lahr notes in his biography of Williams, “*Suddenly Last Summer*...was a direct product of Williams’s turmoil on the analyst’s couch.” Williams underwent extensive psychoanalysis in 1957 with the psychiatrist Lawrence Kubie, who was famed for his ability to “cure” homosexuality. This period of outside pressure, combined with the forced introspection of analysis, led to both the shift in Williams’s view of his familial dynamics and also a renewed motivation to create something from the experience. As part of his treatment, Williams was confined to the Austen Riggs Center in Massachusetts and was cut off from all of his “addictions,” writing being one. Despite this, his time spent under analysis would provide ample material to be dramatized: the mental institution, the clinical but curious psychoanalyst, and a renewed fixation on atoning for his own homosexuality. Of course, there was no keeping him from his work, and less than a year later, *Suddenly Last Summer* reached the stage.

Teagan Walsh '28 is a student in Bard's Theater & Performance Program.

A MORE ACCESSIBLE TRUTH—THE EXPERIMENTAL IMPULSES OF TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

by Thomas Keith

“Expressionism and all other unconventional techniques in drama have only one valid aim, and that is a closer approach to truth. Everyone should know nowadays the unimportance of the photographic in art: that truth, life, or reality is an organic thing which the poetic imagination can represent or suggest, in essence, only through transformation . . .”

— Tennessee Williams, 1945

In 1974, Tennessee Williams told an interviewer: “The truth is more accessible when you ignore realism.” Williams considered himself an experimental writer from the time he began writing plays in the mid-1930s until the end of his life. Most critics disagreed with him, and many still do. Yet his first commercial success, *The Glass Menagerie*, was met with some consternation because it did not fit the formulas of content and structure that were prevalent in 1945. Arthur Miller described *Menagerie* as “[a] play utterly at odds with standard Broadway fare. Seeing it was like stumbling on a flower in a junkyard.” Miller observed that playwriting then was akin to engineering, “structure and its problems taking first place in the art. *Menagerie* appeared to have no structure or, at best, the structure of a lyric.”

Chicago critic Ashton Stevens, who had been reviewing plays since 1894, was hard pressed to classify *Menagerie*, calling it a “mystically vivid play . . . a lovely thing and an original thing,” “true poetry couched in colloquial prose,” “eerie and earthy in the same breath,” with “a sustained atmosphere of other-worldliness.” After briefly recounting the action and addressing the ambiguity of *Menagerie*’s non-traditional ending (i.e., Laura does not get married), Stevens wrote, “The play leaves you in the air. But I like this air. It is rare, rich.”

Influenced by Chekhov, Strindberg, O’Neill, Elmer Rice, Erwin Piscator (mentor to Brecht), and others, Williams wrote dozens of short plays throughout his career, many that are well beyond the boundaries of what was, or is, considered realism. From the German Abstract Expressionist painter Hans Hofmann, whom he met in Provincetown, Massachusetts, during the summer of 1940, Williams adopted the word “plastic” to describe visual composition and cinematic techniques applied to playwriting. Hofmann believed that space and opposing colors as formal contrasts, a “push and pull” he called it, could sculpt depth and evoke feeling on canvas. After seeing the Russian film *Alexander Nevsky* by Sergei Eisenstein in September 1943, Williams wrote, “The influence of modern music and surreal art, both present in this film masterpiece, could be used as powerfully in a poetic stage play. . . nearly everything I have written for the stage has been overburdened with dialogue . . . I am now determined to think in more plastic or visual terms.” He further pledged to write a more epic and symbolic kind of play that could be understood as poetic tragedy.

In a preface to his detailed production notes regarding slide projections, music, and lighting for *Menagerie*, Williams puts forward the idea of a “plastic theatre,” by which he meant the *playwright*’s use of non-literary elements—space, light, sound, music, movement, projected imagery, or film—to create meaning, mood, and subtext. Williams then proposes, “These remarks

are not meant as a preface only to this play. They have to do with a conception of a new, plastic theatre which must take the place of the exhausted theatre of realistic conventions." In the original production of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Elia Kazan maintained all the sound effects Williams indicated in his script that are meant for the audience to experience as part of Blanche's interior life: the voices, music, gunshots, jungle sounds, distortions, and echoes. Toward the end of the scene in which Stanley ultimately rapes Blanche, there are "lurid shapes" and shadows of "grotesque and menacing form" moving "sinuously as flames along the wall spaces." Not the stuff of kitchen sink realism.

After reading a draft of what later became *The Rose Tattoo*, Irene Mayer Selznick, who had triumphed with *A Streetcar Named Desire* only three years earlier, declined to produce the play. Her note to Williams read, in part, "This is not a play but rather a libretto—far more than either, it is a ballet. As presently, it cries out to be danced or sung, or both, in its entirety. It could be painted, but not played. It is all mood and movement—a violent, colorful pattern for emotion and lustfulness." Selznick was not off the mark; Williams was continuing to experiment with unconventional style and language. *The Rose Tattoo* still contains long stretches during which the action is told visually, described in stage directions rather than driven by dialogue.

In a similar way, the longer dramatic monologues in Tennessee Williams's plays do not always adhere to realistic conventions and have been referred to by actors, directors, and Williams himself as arias. This is fitting when one considers the soaring emotional stakes characters like Blanche, Amanda, Maggie, Big Daddy, Serafina, Violet, Catherine, and Lady Torrance reach in their long speeches.

In an undated document titled "Notes for Staging," Williams describes *Suddenly Last Summer* as comprised primarily of two monologues that are dramatic opposites. He identifies the style of the play as "epic," which meant to him that "realistic conventions should not prevail." Citing the dynamics of the script as being mostly verbal, Williams cautions that the cadence and emotional pitch of the lines must be interpreted with "precision and vitality, all the way through."

On the one hand, this makes complete sense: Williams always maintained that the story of *Suddenly Last Summer* should *not* be taken literally because it is a poetic allegory. If that's the case, it would follow that the character's words and feelings reach a highly theatrical pitch. On the other, because the story is grounded in characters and feelings that bear the semblance of truth, the experience does not necessarily invite an audience to step back and consciously consider what the metaphor or allegory might be. Sometimes, *Suddenly Last Summer* plays more like a horror movie than a poem—an early title for the play was *A Play for the Grand Guignol*. The playwright appears to have wanted it both ways. This opposition in Williams's plays can turn out to be quite a challenge—how to honor the poetic, plastic, or expressionistic elements Williams demands while maintaining the truth of a complex, psychologically believable story. A good example of this is *Sweet Bird of Youth*. Take away the sounds of the lamenting winds and the scenes projected in real time onto a gigantic screen, eliminate the arias spoken by Chance and The Princess, remove their relationships with the audience via direct address, and the play is in danger of becoming merely melodrama. Williams's stage works require a balance in the tension between what is fairly thought of as character-driven psychological realism and the sometimes self-consciously theatrical flourishes.

Playwrights and directors now employ all kinds of non-realistic storytelling, mix theatrical styles, or blend naturalistic dialogue with presentational elements, and it doesn't usually attract special notice, except when the choices don't work or are especially powerful. But for the first twenty-five years of Williams's professional life, commercial and experimental theatre were separated by a canyon. Seemingly aware that his idiomatic dialogue combined with a heavy hand might not produce the atmospheric moods he envisioned, William's words his inclusions of sculptural elements carefully, often with implicit invitations to collaborate: "with the help of a gifted designer . . ."; "I will leave the set description to the designer . . ."; "an imaginative director may invent . . ." The often contradictory fusion of style and content, Williams constructs cannot best be understood in the blueprint of the script but rather in the live event, based on the collaboration among directors, designers, and composers.

Frequently, Williams suggests paintings and painters—Van Gogh, de Chirico, Picasso, Pollock, O'Keeffe, Ben Shahn, and others—for understanding spatial relationships, tone, and mood. Williams will evoke a particular painter to help describe his vision for light, sky, and depth—he tends to place a play's immediate setting within a larger, more expansive landscape. The legendary Jo Mielziner created designs for nine of Williams's original Broadway productions, and later wrote of the playwright: "Even as an inexperienced young writer, Williams revealed a strong instinct for the visual qualities of the theatre. If he had written plays in the days before the technical development of translucent and transparent scenery, I believe he would have invented it."

In his stage directions, Williams consistently specifies that the settings for his plays are to be "nonrealistic," "fragmented," "transparent," "romantic," "spectral," or "dreamlike," and the selective use of abstract elements found in all of his plays belies the notion of a realistic style. In spite of what choices directors made, what critics wrote, or how audiences responded, Williams regularly asserted he was an experimental writer and that his plays were not realistic; he conceded only that they were lyrical metaphors about human suffering.

Thomas Keith has edited the Tennessee Williams titles for New Directions since 2002, including four volumes of previously unpublished one-act plays. Keith teaches theater at Pace University and works as a dramaturg and consultant.

WHO'S WHO



©Taylor Hunter

Courtney Bryan (Composer)

Courtney Bryan is a Steinway Artist and 2023 MacArthur Fellow, who currently serves as composer-in-residence with the New Haven Symphony Orchestra.

Recent works include *DREAMING (Freedom Sounds)*, performed by the International Contemporary Ensemble at New York's Kaufman Music Center; *Visual Rhythms*, a new art-inspired orchestral piece for Jacksonville Symphony; *House of Pianos*, which Bryan premiered in 2023 with the LA Phil New Music Group (chamber ensemble version) and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra (full orchestra version); and *Gathering Song* (libretto by Tazewell Thompson), composed for bass-baritone Ryan Speedo Green and the New York Philharmonic.

Bryan's compositions have been performed by Opera Philadelphia (Composer in Residence, 2022–2024), the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra (Creative Partner, 2020–2023), Jacksonville Symphony (Mary Carr Patton Composer-In-Residence, 2018–2020), London Sinfonietta, LA Phil, Orchestra of St. Luke's, and Chicago Sinfonietta in a wide range of renowned venues, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Walt Disney Concert Hall, and Blue Note Jazz Club.

Recent accolades include the Herb Alpert Award in the Arts (2018), Samuel Barber Rome Prize in Music Composition (2019–2020), United States Artists Fellowship (2020), and the Civitella Ranieri Foundation Fellowship (2020–2021). She is the Albert and Linda Mintz Professor of Music at Newcomb College in the School of Liberal Arts at Tulane University. Her music is published by Boosey & Hawkes.



©Tei Blow

Daniel Fish (Librettist & Director)

Daniel Fish is a New York-based director who makes work across the boundaries of theater, film, and opera. He draws on a broad range of forms and subject matter, including plays, film scripts, contemporary fiction, essays, and found audio. His acclaimed 2019 production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* transferred to Broadway from St. Ann's Warehouse, following its premiere at the Fisher Center at Bard, and won the Tony Award for Best Revival of a Musical. The production then transferred to London's West End, where it won the Olivier Award for Best Musical Revival.

Other recent work includes *White Noise*, inspired by the novel by Don DeLillo (Ruhrfestspiele Recklinghausen, Theater Freiburg, NYU Skirball Center), Michael Gordon's opera *Acquanetta* (Prototype, and also a Fisher Center premiere), *Who Left This Fork Here* (Baryshnikov Arts Center, Onassis Stegi), and Ted Hearn's *The Source* (BAM Next Wave, LA Opera, San Francisco Opera).

His work has been seen at theaters and festivals throughout the U.S. and Europe, including the Walker Art Center, PuSh, Teatro Nacional D. Maria II, Lisbon & Estoril Film Festival, Vooruit, Festival TransAmériques, Noorderzon Festival, The Chocolate Factory Theater, The Public Theater's Under The Radar, Opera Philadelphia/Curtis Opera Theatre, American Repertory Theater, Yale Repertory Theatre, McCarter Theatre, Signature Theatre, The Shakespeare Theater Company, Düsseldorfer Schauspielhaus, Staatstheater Braunschweig, and the Royal Shakespeare Company. Residencies and commissions include MacDowell, Baryshnikov Arts Center, Mass MoCA, The Chocolate Factory Theater, and LMCC/Governors Island. He is a graduate of Northwestern University's Department of Performance Studies and has taught at The Juilliard School, Bard College, Princeton University, and the Department of Design for Stage and Film at NYU Tisch School of the Arts. He is the recipient of the 2017 Herb Alpert Award in the Arts for the Theater, as well as an Obie Award and a Tony nomination.



©Erik Tanner

Gideon Lester (Librettist and Artistic Director)

Gideon Lester's previous translations and adaptations for Fisher Center LAB include Molière's *Dom Juan* and Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita*, and at the American Repertory Theatre, Marivaux's *Island of Slaves* and *The Dispute*, Büchner's *Woyzeck*, Brecht's *Mother Courage*, and stage adaptations of Wim Wenders's *Wings of Desire* (with Toneelgroep Amsterdam) and Kafka's *Amerika* (with Theatre de la Jeune Lune). The Fisher Center's Artistic Director and Chief Executive, he is a Tony and Olivier award-winning creative producer, festival director, and dramaturg, and has collaborated with and commissioned a broad range of American and international artists

across disciplines. A professor of Theater and Performance at Bard College, he has also taught at Columbia University's School of the Arts and at Harvard. He was co-curator of Crossing the Line Festival, and Acting Artistic Director and Dramaturg at the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge, MA.

Nathan Koci (Music Direction and Supervision) is a collaborative performer and music director working across disciplines, including theater, folk music, jazz, contemporary classical music, dance, and karaoke singing. His music direction credits include *The Seat of Our Pants* (Ethan Lipton); *Illinoise* (Justin Peck/Sufjan Stevens); *Hadestown* (Nat'l Tour; Anais Mitchell/Rachel Chavkin); Daniel Fish's *Oklahoma!* (Broadway, West End); *Most Happy in Concert* (Williamstown Theater Festival, Bard SummerScape); and Ted Hearn's *The Source* (SF Opera, LA Opera, BAM). Performance credits include William Kentridge's *The Great Yes The Great No*, and *The Head and The Load*; Guy Klucevsek's *Bellows Brigade*; Maira Kalman and John Heginbotham's *The Principles of Uncertainty*; *The Solomon Diaries*; a multi-volume duo project with composer/clarinetist Sam Sadigursky; chamber-improv-folk quartet *The Hands Free*, with Caroline Shaw, Eleonore Oppenheim, and James Moore; *And Friends*, a collaborative oral history and music project with Elena Moon Park and Brett Parnell; and The Wildebeest Wind Quintet featuring Jeff Lederer, with an upcoming release of music by Ornette Coleman, Eric Dolphy, and Oliver Nelson.



©Jenny Anderson

Mikaela Bennett (Catherine Holly) is a celebrated singer and actress praised for her artistic versatility on stage and in concert halls around the world. She has premiered new compositions by leading composers, including Sarah Kirkland Snider, Derek Bermel, Michael Gordon, and Michael Tilson Thomas. Additional career highlights include her New York City solo recital debut at Alice Tully Hall, her Lyric Opera of Chicago debut in *West Side Story* (Maria), Ricky Ian Gordon's *The Grapes of Wrath* (Rosasharn) with MasterVoices at Carnegie Hall, and Handel's *Israel in Egypt* with the Orchestra of St. Luke's at Carnegie Hall. Mikaela is a recipient of the Lincoln Center Award for Emerging Artists and was also named one of WQXR's "40 Under 40: A New Generation of Superb Opera Singers."

In the 25/26 season, Mikaela made her LA Opera debut in the world premiere of Sarah Kirkland Snider's *Hildegard* (Richardis von Stade), followed by a return to the Prototype Festival in the same production. She also returns to Bard SummerScape for the world premiere of Courtney Bryan's *Suddenly Last Summer* (Catherine), an opera written for her. On the concert stage, she debuted at Emerald City Music in a solo recital featuring the premiere of a new Molly Joyce song cycle, and appeared with MasterVoices in Fauré's *Requiem* and the world premiere of *Sins and Grace* at Alice Tully Hall. In December 2025, she appeared in Holiday Pops programs with the Grand Rapids, Cincinnati, Toronto, and Edmonton Symphony Orchestras.

In the 24/25 season, Mikaela made her debut at Festival Musica Strasbourg in Ted Hearne's contemporary oratorio *The Source*. Additional concert appearances included debuts with the Orlando Philharmonic for Mahler's Symphony No. 4 under Eric Jacobsen; Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra in an all-Gershwin program; Kansas City Symphony for their Memorial Day concert; and the Baltimore and Nashville Symphony Orchestras in Mary Lou Williams's *Zodiac Suite* with the Aaron Diehl Trio. Operatic engagements included her debut at the Prototype Festival in Christopher Cerrone's *In a Grove* (Leona Raines/Leona's Mother) and a return to The Glimmerglass Festival for the world premiere of Derek Bermel and Sandra Cisneros's *The House on Mango Street* (Esperanza), written with her voice in mind.

Mikaela is a native of Ottawa, Canada, and a graduate of The Juilliard School.



Courtesy of Artist

Tina Benko (Mrs. Venable) recently performed on Broadway in Noel Coward's *Fallen Angels* and Branden Jacobs Jenkins's *Appropriate*. Other credits include the premieres of David Ives's *Pamela Palmer* at Williamstown Theatre Festival; Emily Mann's adaptation of *The Pianist* at George Street Playhouse; and Claudia Rankin's *Help* at The Shed. Other Broadway includes: *The Rose Tattoo*; *The Crucible*; *Macbeth*; *The Cherry Orchard*; and *Not About Nightingales*. Off Broadway includes: *Becky Nurse of Salem* and *Nantucket Sleighride* at Lincoln Center; *SpindleShuttleNeedle* at Clubbed Thumb; *Scenes From a Marriage* and *The Little Foxes*, both directed by Ivo Van Hove for NY Theatre Workshop; Jonathan Spector's *Eureka Day*; Rajiv

Joseph's *Describe The Night*; and Daniel Fish's *Who Left This Fork Here* at Baryshnikov Arts, as well as *Desdemona/Othella* in the international tour of Toni Morrison's play *Desdemona* directed by

Peter Sellers. Film and TV credits include: *Elsbeth* (recurring); *And Just Like That*; *The Betrayers*; *Worldbuilding*; *The Rehearsal* (Emmy Award/best supporting actress/digital series); *Kaleidoscope*; *Mother May I Have a Kidney*; *Mapplethorpe*; *Life After You*; *The Sound of Silence*; *Can You Ever Forgive Me*; *The Scottish Play*; *Fair Market Value*; *Turn: Washington Spies*; *The Other Two*; *FBI*; *Raising Kanan*; and *Nobody Wants to Shoot a Woman*. She is certified in PEM and has taught at Columbia University, Fordham College, HB Studios, Carnegie Mellon, and OnCamJam.



©Leo Moon

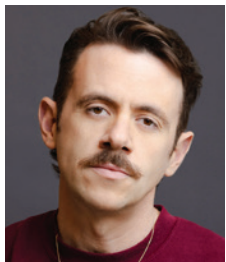
Brandon Lindsay (Dr. Cukrowicz) most recently appeared in the Best Picture-nominated *Train Dreams*. His other film credits include *The Greatest Beer Run Ever* (dir. Peter Farrelly). Television credits include guest-starring roles on *Awkwafina Is Nora from Queens*, *Blue Bloods*, and *Evil*. On stage, he starred on the national tour of *A Soldier's Play* (dir. Kenny Leon). New York stage credits include The Public Theater's Shakespeare in the Park production of *Merry Wives* (dir. Saheem Ali). Regional credits include *Mother Road* by Octavio Solis at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Brandon holds an MFA from New York University and is a native of South Carolina.



©Justin Patterson

Miriam Silverman (Mrs. Holly) won the 2023 Tony Award for Best Featured Actress in a Play for her critically acclaimed performance as 'Mavis' in the Broadway production of *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window*, as well as winning the 2023 Drama Desk Award for the same role at BAM. Silverman can currently be seen recurring on the Apple+ hit series *Your Friends and Neighbors*, as well as *Landman* on Paramount+ and the Netflix limited series *Vladimir* opposite Rachel Weisz. Other television and film include *The Night Agent* (Netflix), *Dead Ringers* (Amazon), *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* (Amazon), *Fleishman is in Trouble* (Hulu), *The Blacklist* (NBC), *Blue Bloods* (CBS), the independent feature *Motherland*, *Breaking*, and the upcoming *Sacrifice* for Romain Gavras.

Silverman recently starred in *The Disappear* for Audible Theater at Minetta Lane Theatre. Silverman's other Broadway/New York Theater credits include *Junk* (Lincoln Center), *Anatomy of a Suicide* (Atlantic Theater Company), *You Got Older* (Page 73), as well as Clubbed Thumb productions of *Deep Blue Sound*, *Plano* and *Find Me Here*. Next up, she will star in *The Verge* at The Public Theater this fall. Miriam holds a BA and MFA from Brown University.



©Walls Trimble

Nick Westrate (George) is a theater and film artist based in New York City. His credits on Broadway as an actor include: *Bernhardt/Hamlet*, *Casa Valentina* & *A Moon for the Misbegotten*. Recently: Ibsen's *The Wild Duck* directed by Simon Godwin at Theatre for a New Audience (NYC) and The Shakespeare Theater (DC), Victor Frankenstein in Emily Burns' new version of *Frankenstein* (Shakespeare Theater) and Prior Walter in *Angels in America* for director János Szász. Off-Broadway, he has starred in *Tribes* at The Barrow Street Theater, *A Delicate Ship* for Playwrights Realm, *Galileo* and *Unnatural Acts* for Classic Stage Company, *Love's Labor's Lost* at the Public, Ivo Van Hove's *The Little Foxes* for NYTW, and *The Boys in the Band* (Drama

Desk nomination, 2010) for Transport Group. On television, he is best known as Robert Townsend on AMC's *Turn: Washington's Spies*, and also for Todd Haynes' HBO miniseries *Mildred Pierce* and Bruno Barreto's HBO miniseries *The American Guest*. Currently, he can be seen as Edwin Booth in the Apple TV+ miniseries *Manhunt*. On film, he stars in the feature *American Insurrection* and in Jonathan Demme's *Ricki & the Flash* opposite Meryl Streep. He is the recipient of his own special Drama Desk Award for his versatility in performance Off-Broadway, is a graduate of the Juilliard School, and is the director, designer, and producer of The Streetcar Project, which tours Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire* to found spaces around the country. This summer, he will be playing Iago in *Othello* for The Classical Theatre of Harlem in New York City.



©Frankie Tyska

Lucy Tarquinio (Painter) is a New York-based artist. She obtained her BFA from Cooper Union in 2021. Her process-based practice explores the relationship between abstraction and real space. Her primary interest is making site-specific and layered oil paintings for experimental and difficult spaces, with the intention of avoiding traditional methods of viewership.

Prior recent shows include *Winter Painting* presented by Entrance Gallery in Spring 2026, and a solo exhibition in October 2025, *Cave Paintings*, held as a one-day exhibition inside the Dover Stone Church Cave, in Dover Plains, NY.



©Brihem Johnson/ Vi3ions photography

Amanda Sheriff (Catherine Holly Cover) recently completed her second year as a Studio Artist with The Atlanta Opera, where she performed and covered multiple roles. Most recently, she returned to Atlanta as Barbarina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, made her debut as Sarah in *Ragtime* with Opera Montana, and returned to Opera Baltimore as Yniold in *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Last season featured Musetta in *La Bohème* at Opera Montana, Satirino/L'Eternità in *La Calisto* at the Glimmerglass Festival, and Jess in *The Listeners* with Opera Philadelphia. She also joined the Greenville Symphony as soprano soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and closed the year as Papagena in *Die Zauberflöte* with The Atlanta Opera. Other

highlights include Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* with Opera Philadelphia and the world premiere of *Steele Roots* for Atlanta Opera's 96-Hour Opera Project. In 2022, Sheriff won first prize in the prestigious Lotte Lenya Competition and appeared with Opera Delaware and Opera Baltimore. Additional credits include performances with Des Moines Metro Opera, Florida Grand Opera, and Seagle Music Colony, where she was acclaimed for her Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*.

Marsha Ginsberg (Scenic Design) is an Obie Award-winning designer celebrated for bold, interdisciplinary work in theatre and opera presented at theaters and museums in the U.S. and Europe. Broadway credits include *English*, for which she received a Tony nomination. Previously, for Bard SummerScape, she created the scenic design for Leonard Bernstein's *Peter Pan* (directed by Christopher Alden) and *Love in the Wars* (an adaptation of Kleist's *Penthesilea*). Recent highlights include Britten's *Midsummer's Night Dream* directed by Ted Huffman, currently being revised at Deutsche Opera Berlin and travelling to Volksoper Vienna; *Data* (world premiere,

Lortel Theatre/Arena Stage), *Primary Trust* (world premiere, Roundabout Theatre Company, La Jolla Playhouse, Center Theater Group, Los Angeles), *English* (world premiere, Atlantic Theater Company/Roundabout), *The Lehman Trilogy* (Guthrie Theater, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Milwaukee Rep), *Don Pasquale*, *Treemonisha* (Opera Theatre of Saint Louis), and *Letters from Max* (world premiere, Signature Theatre). She is a Rome Prize recipient from the American Academy in Rome and has held residencies at MacDowell and Robert Wilson's Watermill Center. She is an Associate Arts Professor at NYU Abu Dhabi.

Terese Wadden (Costume Design) is a Hudson Valley-based costume designer. Recent credits include *Kramer/Fauci* (Skirball), directed by Daniel Fish, Korngold's *Die stumme Serenade* (Mannes Opera), *Die Zauberflöte* (Shepard School of Music), *Vanessa* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), and *Giulio Cesare* (Hudson Hall). She designed costumes for Kate Soper's opera *The Hunt* (Miller Theatre), *Candide* (Opera de Lyon), *Most Happy* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), *Così fan Tutte* (Santa Fe Opera), and the Tony Award-winning production of *Oklahoma!* (Broadway, West End, Touring, and St. Ann's Warehouse), *Peter Pan* (Bard SummerScape), and Michael Gordon's *Acquanetta* (Bard SummerScape and Prototype Festival). Her work has been seen at the Canadian Opera Company, Glimmerglass Festival, Tanglewood, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Chicago Opera Theater, New York City Opera, Opera Colorado, Central City Opera, Portland Opera, Baryshnikov Arts Center, the Mark Taper Forum, Brooklyn Academy of Music, and National Sawdust. She was awarded a Rome Prize from the American Academy in Rome in 2020-2021.

Stacey Derosier (Lighting Design). *Mother Russia & Grangeville* (Signature Theatre), *Teeth* (Playwrights Horizons), *The Counter & The Refuge Plays* (Roundabout Theatre), *The Welkin* (Atlantic Theater), *All the Devils Are Here* (DR2), *The Half-God of Rainfall* (NYTW), *Uncle Vanya* (O'Henry), *On Set with Theda Bara* (Exponential Festival). Obie Design Award 2023, 2018 Lilly Award Daryl Roth Prize.

Garth MacAleavey (Audio Design and Sound Mixing) is a theatrical and concert sound designer based in New York. Recent design credits include: *What to Wear* by Richard Foreman/Michael Gordon at BAM; *Primero Sueño*, a touring processional opera by Paola Prestini; *The Gospel at Colonus* at Little Island by Lee Breur/Bob Telson; *Illinoise* on Broadway/Park Ave Armory/Bard SummerScape by Sufjan Stevens/Justin Peck; *Black Lodge*, a touring metal opera by David T. Little; Vail Dance Festival; *Song of Songs* by David Lang/Pam Tanowitz at Bard SummerScape/The Barbican; *Sensorium Ex*, an AI and technology based opera about accessibility by Paola Prestini; *The Let Go* by Nick Cave at the Park Avenue Armory; and he is a touring sound designer with the Kronos Quartet. MacAleavey is an expert in modular acoustics, spatial sound, and speaker systems design in conjunction with Meyer Sound's Constellation and Space Map systems. He is the acting Director of Sound and Technical Design at Brooklyn's National Sawdust.

Josh Thorson (Projection Design) is a New York-based artist and writer. His recent video work for theater includes the St. Ann's Warehouse and Tony Award-winning Broadway productions of *Oklahoma!*, which were recognized with an Obie Award and a Drama Desk nomination for Outstanding Projection Design, and his work on the Young Vic and East End productions in London was honored with a What's on Stage Award for Best Video Design in 2023. Thorson has a BA in Cultural Studies and Film Studies from the University of Minnesota—Twin Cities (2001), an MFA in Film/Video from Bard College (2006), and a Ph.D. in Electronic Art at Rensselaer Polytechnic

Institute (2013). He is an Associate Professor of Photography at RIT, where he teaches concepts, theories, and practices of photography and related media. In 2020, he received the Richard & Virginia Eisenhart Provost's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Beth Gill (Movement Direction) is an award-winning choreographer working in dance, theater, and fashion, and has been based in New York City since 2005. Her own multidisciplinary works are captivating, cinematic timescapes, the product of long-term collaborations with celebrated artists. Gill is the proud recipient of the Herb Alpert, Doris Duke Impact, Foundation for Contemporary Art, and two "Bessie" awards. She has toured nationally and internationally and been honored with (among others): Guggenheim Fellowship, NEFA's National Dance Project grant, Princeton's Hodder Fellowship, and Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Extended Life Artist in Residence.

Bobbie Zlotnik (Hair and Wig Designer) Off-Broadway; *Emojiland* (Drama Desk Nom.), *Ibsen's Ghost*, *Richard II*, *Gatsby Immersive*, *Fairycakes*, and many more. National Tours: *On Your Feet*, *Here You Come Again*, *Emojiland*, *Cocomelon LIVE*. Regional: Bucks County Playhouse, Cape Playhouse, Drury Lane, George Street Playhouse, Gulfshore Playhouse, The Lexington Theatre Company, Pittsburgh CLO, The Ordway, Syracuse Stage, Theatre Aspen, Tuacahn, Williamstown, and many more. Film/TV: *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, *The Gilded Age*, *A Holiday Spectacular*, *Halston*, *Getting Curious With Jonathan Van Ness*. BobbieZlotnik.com

Anne Ford-Coates (Makeup Designer/Pre-recorded segment Hair Designer) has designed hundreds of theater and opera productions across Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Australia, and North America, and is an IATSE Local 798 makeup artist for film and television. Broadway credits: Hair & Makeup Designer for *Becky Shaw*, *Oklahoma!*, and *The Nap*, Makeup Designer for *Frozen*, *A Bronx Tale*, *On Your Feet!*, *Disaster!*, *It Shoulda Been You*, and *On the Twentieth Century*. Selected career highlights: Hair & Makeup Designer for Wagner's complete *Ring Cycle* (Washington National Opera), *The Music Man* (Royal Opera House Muscat in Oman), *The Crucible* (MezzoTV opera competition in Hungary), *The Wolves* (Lincoln Center), *Lost in the Stars* (Glimmerglass Festival); Makeup Artist for the *Metropolitan Opera Live in HD* and *The Gilded Age* (HBO); and Makeup Designer for *Frozen* the musical streaming on Disney+. During the pandemic theater closures, Anne studied sociology online at CUNY's School of Professional Studies, graduating summa cum laude in 2023. In 2025, she earned a master's degree at the University of Chicago, conducting original research on post-pandemic creative gig-economy labor markets. Anne is continuing her research this fall as a PhD student in sociology at Johns Hopkins University.

Taylor Williams, CSA (Casting Director) Film: *Via Negativa*, *Union County*, *Good One*, *Omni Loop*. Broadway: *Death of a Salesman*, *John Proctor is the Villain*, *All In*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Stereophonic*, *Illinoise*, *An Enemy of the People*, *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window*, *POTUS...*, *Slave Play*, *What the Constitution Means to Me*. Upcoming: *The Chaperones*, *Ancient History*, *Thumb*. TaylorWilliamsCasting.com

Mikhaela Mahony (Associate Director) Mikhaela Mahony is a Brooklyn-based director working at the intersection of theatre, opera, and film. This past season, she made her directorial debut at Lyric Opera of Chicago and Alice Tully Hall, in addition to continuing collaborations with the

award-winning musical artists Aaron Jafferis, Dahlak Brathwaite, and Daniel Bernard Roumain; the playwrights at EST/Youngblood; and as a member of the WP Lab 2024-2026. She has developed work with the Ensemble Studio Theatre, where she most recently directed Brittany K. Allen's *Redwood* and Abby Rosebrock's *Dido of Idaho*; the Bushwick Starr, Primary Stages, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Little Island, Boston Lyric Opera, the Chautauqua Institution, Fisher Center at Bard College, New York City Opera, Columbia University, and Detroit Opera, among others. In 2023, she co-founded Double Feature, a project dedicated to staging reimagined classics in intimate locations all over New York. She serves on the faculty of Mannes School of Music at The New School, mentors with the Playwrights Horizons School at NYU, and volunteers with The 52nd Street Project. Select credits include: Director: *Redwood* (Ensemble Studio Theatre, nominated for 3 Audelco Awards including Best Play), *Hippolytus* (Fisher Center at Bard College), *Macbeth* (Double Feature), *Dear Erich* (New York City Opera), *Dido of Idaho* (Ensemble Studio Theatre), *Miss Mitchell* (Little Island), *The Medium* (City Lyric Opera), *Rigoletto* (Chautauqua Institution), *The Listeners* (Revival Director, Lyric Opera of Chicago). Associate Director: *Oklahoma!* (London's West End, US National Tour; dir. Daniel Fish), *The Listeners* (Opera Philadelphia, dir. Lileana Blain Cruz), *The Handmaid's Tale* (Boston Lyric Opera, dir. Anne Bogart). Training: MFA from Columbia University School of the Arts, BA from Barnard College.

Jason Kaiser (Stage Manager): At Fisher Center at Bard: *Jubilee*, Urban Bush Women's *SCAT!*, *Most Happy in Concert*, *The Gauntlet*, and many others. *What To Wear* (BAM); *CATS: the Jellicle Ball* (Perelman); *Grenfell: in the words of survivors* (St. Ann's); *Bark of Millions* (Sydney Opera House, tour); *Kiki and Herb SLEIGH* (BAM); *Oklahoma!* (Broadway, St. Ann's); Taylor Mac's *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music* (St. Ann's, tour); *Available Light* with Lucinda Childs Dance Company; *Einstein on the Beach* (BAM, tour); three world-premiere plays by Athol Fugard. Up next: *Bark of Millions* at the Delacorte; *Music for 18 Musicians* at Park Ave Armory; *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music* with the Philharmonia Orchestra at Royal Festival Hall, London.

Thomas Keith (Literary Consultant) has served as a dramaturg or consultant for Mabou Mines, Sundance Institute Theater Lab, La MaMa E.T.C., New Ohio Theatre, Southern Repertory Theatre, on London's West End, and for various productions as the resident dramaturg at Provincetown Tennessee Williams Theater Festival since 2006. Consulting editor for New Directions Publishing, he has edited over twenty Tennessee Williams titles since 2002, including previously unpublished plays, stories, poems, essays, and four volumes of one-act plays. Keith edited *Love, Christopher Street*—original LGBTQ essays about New York City by Jewelle Gomez, Christopher Bram, Ocean Vuong, Val McDermid, Felice Picano, and many others; he is co-editor of *The Luck of Friendship: Letters of Tennessee Williams and James Laughlin*; and his writing has appeared in *American Theatre*, *The Gay & Lesbian Review*, *Studies in Scottish Literature*, *Early Stories by Tennessee Williams*, *Oxford Handbook of Robert Burns*, and *Provincetown Arts*, among others. Keith is an Associate Adjunct Professor at Pace University in New York City.



FISHER CENTER PERFORMING ARTS LAB

A new building designed by Maya Lin

Situated in meadows to the west of its landmark Gehry-designed building and overlooking woodlands and the Catskill mountains, a new 23,500-square-foot studio building now expands Bard College's cultural campus, housing rehearsal and teaching facilities, and providing an artistic home for artists at all stages of their careers, including students from Bard's undergraduate programs in Dance and Theater & Performance. The Performing Arts Lab, opening this fall, will also serve as the home for Fisher Center LAB, the center's acclaimed residency and commissioning program for professional artists.

Fisher Center LAB

Since its launch in 2012, LAB has supported residencies, workshops, and performances for hundreds of artists, incubating new projects and engaging audiences, students, faculty, and staff in the process of creating contemporary performance. Productions developed by Fisher Center LAB, such as Tony Award-winning *Illinoise* and a re-imagined version of *Oklahoma!*, often premiere in the annual Bard SummerScape festival and frequently tour nationally and internationally. Last year, Fisher Center LAB received a landmark gift from the Civis Foundation to establish the Civis Hope Commissions. The gift creates an endowed commissioning fund that will support, in perpetuity, the development and production of major new works in the performing arts that explore the subject of hope.

For more information on Fisher Center LAB or to pledge your support, please contact Alessandra Larson, Director of Institutional Advancement and Strategy, Fisher Center, 845-758-7990 or alarson@bard.edu.

FISHER CENTER

The Fisher Center is a premier professional performing arts center and a hub for research and education that demonstrates Bard College's commitment to the performing arts as a cultural and educational necessity. To support artists, students, and audiences in the examination of artistic ideas, the Fisher Center develops, produces, and presents performing arts across disciplines through new productions and context-rich programs that challenge and inspire.

Home is the Fisher Center for the Performing Arts, designed by Frank Gehry and located on the campus of Bard College in New York's Hudson Valley. This world-class theater building will soon be complemented by a new studio building designed by Maya Lin, scheduled to open in October 2026. More than 200 events and 50,000 visitors are hosted at the Fisher Center each year, and over 300 professional artists are employed annually. As a powerful catalyst of art-making regionally, nationally, and worldwide, the Fisher Center produces 8 to 10 major new works in various disciplines every year. The Fisher Center offers outstanding programs to many communities, including the students and faculty of Bard College, and audiences in the Hudson Valley, New York City, across the country, and around the world. Building on a 166-year history as a competitive and innovative undergraduate institution, Bard is committed to enriching culture, public life, and democratic discourse by training tomorrow's thought leaders.

The Fisher Center was born from the Bard Music Festival, founded in 1990, which, for the first 13 years of its existence, occupied several spaces on campus, including a large tent. Each summer, the Music Festival focuses on the life, work, and influences of one composer, promoting new ways of understanding and presenting the history of music to a contemporary audience. When the Fisher Center and its two theaters opened in 2003, the summer festival expanded to include a fully staged opera, as well as theater and dance performances. The highly acclaimed opera program brings unjustly neglected works to the stage in major productions—often making their U.S. debuts.

Through Fisher Center LAB, the Center's acclaimed residency and commissioning program, artists are provided with custom-made support toward their innovative projects, and their work has been seen in over 100 communities around the world. Resident choreographer Pam Tanowitz's 2018 *Four Quartets* was recognized as "the greatest creation of dance theater so far this century" by *The New York Times*. In 2019, the Fisher Center won the Tony Award for Best Revival of a Musical for Daniel Fish's production of *Oklahoma!*, which began life in 2007 as an undergraduate production at Bard and was produced professionally by the Fisher Center in 2015 before transferring to New York City. *Illinoise*, a 2023 Fisher Center world premiere from artists Sufjan Stevens, Justin Peck, and Jackie Sibbles Drury, was recognized with a Tony Award for Best Choreography following its tour and transfer to Broadway.

The Fisher Center is home to several of Bard's academic programs in the performing arts. Year-round, it hosts performances by the undergraduate Dance Program and Theater and Performance Program; the US-China Music Institute of the Bard College Conservatory of Music; The Orchestra Now (TÖN), a Bard graduate program that is training the next generation of classical-music ambassadors; and students at the Bard Conservatory, the first (and so far only) conservatory to require all its students to pursue a bachelor of arts degree in a field other than music in addition to their specialized music studies. As a hybrid institution, the Fisher Center brings together professional and academic art-making of the highest caliber, where student and professional artists work side by side, learning from each other and informing one another's practices.

BARD COLLEGE

Founded in 1860, Bard College is a four-year residential college of the liberal arts and sciences located 90 miles north of New York City. With the addition of the Montgomery Place and Massena properties, Bard's campus consists of more than 1,200 parklike acres in the Hudson River Valley. It offers bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, and bachelor of music degrees, with majors in nearly 40 academic programs; advanced degrees through 14 graduate programs; 10 early colleges; and numerous dual-degree programs nationally and internationally. Building on its 166-year history as a competitive and innovative undergraduate institution, Bard College has expanded its mission as a private institution acting in the public interest across the country and around the world to meet broader student needs and increase access to liberal arts education. The undergraduate program at the main campus in upstate New York has a reputation for scholarly excellence, a focus on the arts, and civic engagement. Bard is committed to enriching culture, public life, and democratic discourse by training tomorrow's thought leaders. For more information about Bard College, visit bard.edu.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT FOR BARD COLLEGE IN ANNANDALE-ON-HUDSON

Developed in Cooperation with the Stockbridge-Munsee Community

In the spirit of truth and equity, it is with gratitude and humility that we acknowledge that we are gathered on the sacred homelands of the Munsee and Muhheaconneok people, who are the original stewards of this land. Today, due to forced removal, the community resides in Northeast Wisconsin and is known as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. We honor and pay respect to their ancestors, past and present, as well as to future generations, and we recognize their continuing presence in their homelands. We understand that our acknowledgement requires those of us who are settlers to recognize our own place in and responsibilities towards addressing inequity, and that this ongoing and challenging work requires that we commit to real engagement with the Munsee and Mohican communities to build an inclusive and equitable space for all. For more information about the Stockbridge-Munsee Community, please visit mohican.com.

For over two decades, the Fisher Center at Bard has created exceptional performing arts experiences that challenge and inspire. We thank the following donors for joining our founders, including the late Richard B. Fisher, with their generosity and partnership.

Special thanks to those who have supported our programs with their commitments to the Bard College Endowment Challenge. Thank you for ensuring Bard's continuity as a beacon for higher education, bolstering the development of innovative programs that offer access to rigorous, high-quality education for new populations around the world.

Donors to the Bard College Endowment Challenge for the Fisher Center and Bard Music Festival

Anonymous
Jamie Albright and Stephen Hart
Roger Alcaly and Helen Bodian
Bettina Baruch Foundation
Carolyn M. Blackwood and Gregory H. Quinn
Civis Foundation
Michelle R. Clayman
Noah Coleman '92
Jason Drucker '93 and Joe Ortiz
Amy K. and David Dubin
Robert C. Edmonds '68
Jeanne Donovan Fisher
Dr. Sanford Friedman and Virginia Howsam Friedman
Helena and Christopher Gibbs
Matthew M. Guerreiro and Christina Mohr
Andrew Gundlach and Barbara Gundlach
Susan and Roger Kennedy
Dr. Barbara Kenner
Edna and Gary Lachmund
Alfred* and Glenda Law
Lazard Foundation
Gideon Lester
Anthony Napoli
Eileen Naughton and Craig Chesley
James and Mary Ottaway
Michael Privitera
Dr. Irwin Richman and Dr. M. Susan Richman
David and Susan Rockefeller
Denise S. Simon and Paulo Vieira da Cunha
Martin and Toni Sosnoff
Felicitas S. Thorne
Irene Zedlacher

Donors to the Fisher Center

Leadership Support

Dr. Penny Axelrod '63
Carolyn Marks Blackwood and Gregory H. Quinn / Nancy and Edwin Marks Family Foundation
Annie and Jim Bodnar
Katie and Paul Buttenwieser
Civis Foundation
Ethan Coen and Tricia Cooke

Mark Cohen and Jerrold Hyman
Jeanne Donovan Fisher
Judith R. And Alan H. Fishman
The Educational Foundation of America
Rebecca Gold Milikowsky
Ronald and Amy Guttman
Donald and Gay Kimelman
Lizbeth and George Krupp
Lucille Lortel Foundation
MART Foundation
Nina Matis and Alan Gosule
Anthony Napoli
New York State Council on the Arts
O'Donnell-Green Music & Dance Foundation Inc.
OPERA America
Mark and Martha Patricof
David R. Pozorski and Anna Romanski
Michael Privitera
The William and Lia G. Poorvu Family Foundation
The Righteous Persons Foundation
Rockefeller Brothers Fund
Myrna B. Sameth
Daniel Shapiro
The Shubert Foundation
Stephen E. Simcock
Denise S. Simon and Paulo Vieira da Cunha
The Simons Foundation
Howard and Sarah D. Solomon Foundation
Mardi Solomon
Rowan Solomon
Martin and Toni Sosnoff
Felicitas S. Thorne
Illiana van Meeteren and Terence C. Boylan '70
Waverley Street Foundation

Director

Jamie Albright and Stephen Hart
Robert Amsterdam '53
Roland Augustine
Michael Berlin and Alessandra Zorogniotti
Harvey and Carol Berman
Angela Bernstein, CBE
Olivia B. Carino
Ann Marie Carr
Jean M. Churchill
Gary DiMauro/Four Seasons
Sotheby's International Realty

Irene and Tom Esposito
The Ettinger Foundation
Catherine C. Fisher
Thomas and Bryanne Hamill
Barbara and Sven Huseby
Chris Kerr and Kirsti Gholson
Gil Mandelzis Family Fund
Lynn and Nick Nicholas
Gail and George Hunt Reeke
Kathleen Vuillet Augustine

Patron
Catherine M. Baiardi
Gregory E. Bulger and Richard J. Dix
Mary and Kevin Casey
Frederick and Jan Cohen
Ronald Cohen and Donna Kramer
Kara Cross
Jason P. Drucker '93 and Joseph Ortiz
Dr. Carola P. Friedman and Dr. Alan D. Egelman
Jeffrey and Helen Friedman
John Frishkopf
John Geller and Alan Skog
The Barbara and Robert Glauber Charitable Fund
Eileen Guilfoyle and David Moody
Adria Hillman
Arnold Iovinella Jr. and William Bozzetto
Beth Jones/Third Eye Associates
Dani Korwin and Anthony DiGiuseppe
Prof. Nancy S. Leonard and Dr. Lawrence Kramer
Gideon Lester and Tom Sellar
Robin Lynn
Alan Miles and Drew Glick
Dr. M E Montemayor
Alex Payne and Nicole Brodeur
Samuel and Ellen Phelan
Judi Powers and Russell Jones
Ted Ruthizer and Jane Denkensohn
Sherry Salman
Karen R. Schlather and R.B. Schlather
David Schulz and Marc Miller
Susan M. Simon
Ted Snowdon and Duffy Violante
Sarah and David Stack
Adam Stettner and Rebecca Weller
Kornelia Tamm '00
Pedro and Naomi Torres-Mackie
George Wen and Sal Capolarello
Howard Zar and Raymond Kurdziel

Donors to the Bard Music Festival

Leadership Support

Roger Alcaly and Helen Bodian
Michelle R. Clayman
Robert C. Edmonds '68 / Bettina
Baruch Foundation
Jeanne Donovan Fisher
Dr. Sanford Friedman and
Virginia Howsam
H&L Family Foundation
Susan and Roger Kennedy
Edna and Gary Lachmund
Marstrand Foundation
Eileen Naughton and Craig Chesley
James and Mary Ottaway
Michael Privitera
Denise S. Simon and
Paulo Vieira da Cunha
Felicitas S. Thorne
Kathleen Vuillet Augustine
Millie and Robert Wise

Director

Jamie Albright and Stephen Hart
Amy K. and David Dubin
Robert and Linda Kahn
Dr. Shalom and Rachel Kalnicki
Burton Kassell Family Foundation of
the Jewish Communal Fund
Karl Moschner and Hannelore Wilfert
Lenore S. Nemeth
Edith Penty
Myrna B. Sameth
Thendara Foundation
Anthony and Margo Viscusi
Richard and Dee Wilson

Patron

Jack and Marion A. Auspitz
Lydia Chapin and David Soeiro
Curtis DeVito and Dennis Wedlick
Helena and Christopher Gibbs
James Gillson
Elena and Fred Howard
George and Barbara Kafka
Susan Karayannides
Alison L. Lankenau
Glenda A. Law
Evelyn and Don McLean
Andrea and Kenneth L. Miron
Alexandra Ottaway
Drs. M. Susan and Irwin Richman
Tatiana Serafin and Mick Kalishman
Janet and Michael Sirotta
Thomas and Diane Stanley
Edward Steinberg and Judy Halpern
Ronnie Streichler
Irene Zedlacher
William C. Zifchak, Esq.

**Deceased*

List current as of 4/1/2026

BOARDS

Bard College

Brandon Weber '97, *Chair*
Barbara S. Grossman '73, *Vice Chair*;
Alumni/ae Trustee
Charles S. Johnson III '70, *Vice Chair*
Elizabeth Ely '65, *Secretary*
Andrew S. Gundlach, *Treasurer*
Fiona Angelini
Leon Botstein, *President of the*
College, ex officio
James M. Clark Jr. SR '76, *ex officio*
Marcelle Clements '69, *Life Trustee*
Andrew Delbanco
Asher B. Edelman '61, *Life Trustee*
Kimberly Marteau Emerson, *ex officio*
Emily H. Fisher
George F. Hamel Jr.
The Rt. Rev. Matthew F. Heyd,
Honorary Trustee
Catharine "Cappy" Bond Hill
Mark N. Kaplan, *Life Trustee*
George A. Kellner
Fredric S. Maxik '86
Jo Frances Meyer, *ex officio*
Juliet Morrison '03
James H. Ottaway Jr., *Life Trustee*
Myran Parker-Brass, *ex officio*
Hilary Pennington
Martin Peretz, *Life Trustee*
Lucas Pipes '08
Stanley A. Reichel '65, *Life Trustee*
Stewart Resnick, *Life Trustee*
David E. Schwab II '52, *Life Trustee*
Roger N. Scotland '93, *Alumni/ae*
Trustee
Annabelle Selldorf
Jonathan Slone '84
Thomas J. Valley
James A. von Klemperer
Susan Weber

Fisher Center

Jeanne Donovan Fisher, *Chair*
Carolyn Marks Blackwood
Leon Botstein, *ex officio*
Mark A. Cohen
Jason P. Drucker '93
Stefano Ferrari
Alan Fishman
Nina Matis
Rebecca Gold Milikowsky
Anthony Napoli
Stephen Simcock
Denise S. Simon
Martin T. Sosnoff, *Emeritus*
Toni Sosnoff, *Emerita*
Felicitas S. Thorne, *Emerita*
Taun Toay '05, *ex officio*
Claire Wood

Bard Music Festival

Denise S. Simon, *Chair*
Jamie Albright
Roger Alcaly
Leon Botstein, *ex officio*
Michelle R. Clayman
David Dubin
Robert C. Edmonds '68
Jeanne Donovan Fisher, *Emerita*
Dr. Sanford J. Friedman
Christopher H. Gibbs, *ex officio*
George Harar '14
Thomas Hesse
Robert Kahn
Susan Petersen Kennedy
Barbara Kenner
Gary Lachmund
Thomas O. Maggs
Andrea Miron
Eileen Naughton
James H. Ottaway Jr.
Michael Privitera
Joseph M. Stopper
Felicitas S. Thorne

ADMINISTRATION

Bard College

Senior Administration

Leon Botstein, *President*
Coleen Murphy Alexander '00, *Vice*
President for Administration
Jonathan Becker, *Executive Vice*
President; Vice President for
Academic Affairs; Director, Center
for Civic Engagement
Erin Cannan, *Vice President for Civic*
Engagement
Deirdre d'Alberty, *Vice President;*
Dean of the College
Malia K. Du Mont '95, *Vice President*
for Strategy and Policy; Chief of
Staff
Peter Gadsby, *Vice President for*
Institutional Research, Registrar
Max Kenner '01, *Vice President;*
Executive Director, Bard Prison
Initiative
Debra Pemstein, *Vice President*
for Development and Alumni/ae
Affairs
Taun Toay '05, *Senior Vice President;*
Chief Financial Officer
Stephen Tremaine '07, *Vice President*
of Network Education
Dariel Vasquez '17, *Vice President*
of Strategic Partnerships and
Institutional Initiatives
Dumaine Williams '03, *Vice President*
for Student Affairs; Dean of Early
Colleges

Fisher Center Staff

Artistic Director and Chief Executive Gideon Lester

Executive Producer and Chief Operating Officer Aaron Mattocks

Administration

Thomas Flynn, *Director of Finance and Administration*
Daia Bromberg, *Finance and Administration Associate*
Paul Laibach, *Manager, Technical Services*
Sharonica Littlejohn, *Personnel and Special Projects Manager*
Jazmine Williams, *Executive Coordinator and Advisory Board Liaison/Spiegeltent Front of House Operations Manager*

Producing

Jason Collins, *Producer and Spiegeltent Curator*
Carter Edwards, *Producer and Partnerships Manager*
Marco Nisticò, *Opera Producer*
Madeleine Reilly '22, *Assistant Producer and Event Manager/ Suddenly Last Summer Company Manager*

Development

Debra Pemstein, *Vice President for Development and Alumni/ae Affairs*
Alessandra Larson, *Director of Institutional Advancement and Strategy*
Will Hogue, *Development Operations Manager*
Jessica Wolf, *Associate Director of Development*
Linda Baldwin, *Events Manager*
Emily Cavotti, *Events, Assistant Manager*

General Management

Shannon Csorny, *General Manager*
Eleanor Gresham '24, *General Management Coordinator*
Jess Webber, *Programs and Festival Operations Manager*

Environmental Services

Bill Cavanaugh, *Environmental Specialist*
Drita Gjokaj, *Environmental Specialist*

Facilities

Carmine Covelli, *Facility Operations and Safety Manager*
Mitchell Holmes, *Building Operations Coordinator*

Peter Servatius '18, *Building Operations Assistant & Fire Panel Watch Staff*
Hazaiah Tompkins '19, *Building Operations Coordinator*

Marketing And Audience Services

David Steffen, *Director of Marketing and Audience Services*
Taylor Bartenope, *Box Office Supervisor*
Emily Berge-Thielmann, *Box Office Supervisor*
Brittany Brouker, *Associate Director of Marketing*
Michael Hofmann VAP '15, *Associate Director of Audience Services*
Asa Kaplan '23, *Associate House Manager*
Hanna Okalava '27, *Assistant House Manager*
Hasti Safaei IAP '27, *Assistant House Manager*
Garrett Sager HRA '23, *Marketing Manager*
Ryan Silverstein, *Box Office Supervisor*
Paulina Swierczek VAP '19, *Box Office Manager*
Courtney Williams, *Audience and Member Services Coordinator*

Communications

Jennifer Strodl, *Director of Communications*
Amy Murray, *Videographer*

Publications

Mary Smith, *Director of Publications*
Jenna Obrizok, *Production Manager*

Production

Jared Goldstein, *Director of Production*
Danelle Morrow, *Production Administrator*
Jane Briguglio, *Associate Production Manager*

Audio

Lex Morton, *Audio Supervisor*

Costumes & Wardrobe

Moe Schell, *Costume Supervisor*
Parker Nelson, *Wardrobe Supervisor*
Sawyer Sa, *Assistant Costume Shop Manager*

Lighting

Josh Foreman, *Lighting Supervisor*
Walli Daniels, *Electrician*
Jesse Dewane, *Electrician*
Dale Gibbons, *Electrician*
Nick Hawrylko, *Head Electrician/ Spiegeltent Lighting Designer*

Orchestra

Stephen Dean, *Orchestra Production Manager*
Marlan Barry, *Head Classical Recording Engineer/Producer*

Emanuel Cohen, *Orchestra Stagehand*
Liz Cohen, *Orchestra Stage Manager*
Dávid Kéringér IAP '24 TÖN '26, *Assistant Orchestra Stage Manager*
Michael Lynam, *Piano Technician*
Nora Rubenstone-Diaz '11, *Associate Orchestra Production Manager*
Ellie Wolfe-Merritt, *Orchestra Stage Manager*
Mara Zaki '25, *Assistant Orchestra Stage Manager*

Scenic

Rick Reiser, *Technical Director*
Zoe Barash, *Carpenter*
Emma Cummings, *Assistant Technical Director*
Sam Dickson '19, *Carpenter*
Maggie McFarland '21, *Props Coordinator*
Mike Murphy, *Carpenter*
Hick Renadette, *Head Rigger/ Flyperson*

Video

Kat Fitzalangan, *Video Supervisor*
John Gasper, *Video Engineer*
May Pocsy, '22, *Video Engineer/ Video Supervisor, Suddenly Last Summer*

Theater & Performance And Dance Programs

Jennifer Lown, *Program Administrator*
Sabrina Sa, *Artistic and Administrative Assistant*

Bard Music Festival

Executive Director

Irene Zedlacher

Artistic Directors

Leon Botstein
Christopher H. Gibbs

Associate Director

Raissa St. Pierre '87

Scholar in Residence 2026

Simon P. Keefe

Program Committee 2026

Byron Adams
Leon Botstein
Christopher H. Gibbs
Simon P. Keefe
Richard Wilson
Irene Zedlacher

Director of Choruses

James Bagwell

Vocal Casting

Joshua Winograde

SUMMERSCAPE SEASONAL STAFF

Audience & Member Services

Andrea Ábel '23, *Seasonal House Manager*
Sophie Berger, *Parking Coordinator*
Sanjit Chidambaram, *SummerScape Intern*
Brynn Grogan, *Senior Assistant House Manager*
Grace Hill '26, *Seasonal House Manager*
Rafael E. Rodriguez Matos, *Parking Captain*
Sadie Mormon-Horn, *SummerScape Intern*
Tic Treitler, *SummerScape Intern*
Maha Abdul Wahab '25, *Senior Assistant House Manager*

Box Office

Marta Baj '27, *Box Office Representative*
Alex Cunningham '28, *Box Office Representative*
Brandon Jones, *Box Office Representative*
Caroline Harbour, *Box Office Representative*
Lucia Link BGC '28, *Box Office Representative*
Maggie Lyerly '28, *Box Office Representative*
Ariha Shahed '26, *Box Office Representative*
Anjalee Wanduragala MS '27, *Box Office Representative*

Front of House Staff

Mohammad AbdNikfarjam APS '24 IAP '26
Moises Arteaga '27
Afsatou Badolo '28
Aine Casey '26
Elisvanell Celis '27
Ivy Chen '28
Jiani Dong '29
Mona Haidari '26
Holdan Arbey Silva Acosta TÖN '26
Michaela Ishimwe '29
Jalaluddin Jamal '27
Rebecca Nanyange '28
Frederick Otieno '28
Leo Qosimov '26
Mehria Reshta '28
Juan Diego Mora Rubio '27
Imran Sherzad '27
Carlos Villegas Superlano '29
Htoo Thazin '28
Carla Mendoza Trejo '27
Saint Tun '28
Abdul Bais Wardak '28
Kaseim Washington '27
Benjamin Wheeler

Development

Anne Borzner, *Development Intern*
Ori Ruthe McMullan, *Development Intern*

Finance and Administration

Reed Rudowsky, *Finance and Administration Assistant*

General Management

Company Management

Dávid Banoczi-Ruof '22, *Company Management Driver*
Cissie Brotzman, *Hospitality Operations Coordinator*
Emily Cady, *Company Management Assistant*
Amit Hevrony, *Company Manager, The Egyptian Helen & BMF*
Mikalah Jenifer '22, *Housing Company Manager*
Lennon Lotardo, *Company Management Assistant*
Eli Miller, *Hospitality Manager, Spiegeltent*
Emma Miller, *Hospitality Company Manager*
Connor O'Donnell, *Assistant Company Manager, Spiegeltent*
Mars Peterson, *Housing Operations Coordinator*
Jill Reitzel, *Travel and Transportation Company Manager*
Sabrina Sa, *Company Management Finance & Administration Assistant*
Shahd Safi '27, *Company Management Assistant*
William Schuyler, *Lead Company Manager*
Owen Setlik '26, *Company Management Assistant*
Wyland Stephenson '25, *Company Management Assistant*
Haley Tamtoro, *Company Management Assistant*
Hannah Weisman, *SummerScape Company Management Intern*
Dashay Williams, *Company Management Driver*

Spiegeltent

Phil Carroll '20, *Spiegeltent Host Supervisor*
Norah Culler, *Spiegeltent Host*
Tess Curtis, *Spiegeltent Host*
Tariq Ghafoori '27, *Spiegeltent Host*
Sawyer Gracer '26, *Spiegeltent Host*
Adam "Monkey" Krandle, *Spiegeltent Site Supervisor*
Jonny Porkpie, *Spiegeltent Carpenter*
Ava Reistroffer, *Spiegeltent Host*
Laura Wesolowski, *Spiegeltent Venue Staff*

Production

Audio

Jesse Brady, *Sosnoff A2*
Danny DaCosta, A2, *Suddenly Last Summer*
Kat Daniels, *Sosnoff A2*
Keyon Lewis, *Audio Engineer, Spiegeltent*
A. Roberts, *Audio Engineer, Lucinda Childs Dance*
Jason Rosenthal, A2, *Suddenly Last Summer*

Costumes & Wardrobe

Tilly Adams, *Draper*
Lilly Agnetta, *Dresser*
Margaret Andrews, *Stitcher*
Kaimana Apana-Chan, *Stitcher*
Maka Arnold, *Dresser*
Jordan Au, *Stitcher*
Wilbur Flynn Banasik, *Dresser*
Sabrina Barton, *Stitcher*
Ayelet Book, *Crafts Artisan*
Leo Bunger, *Stitcher*
Pia Cárdenas '26, *Dresser*
Kat Collins, *Assistant Wardrobe Supervisor, Suddenly Last Summer*
Al Eburne '28, *Dresser*
Devin Zain Elliott, *Dresser*
Bell Hansen, *First Hand*
Juno Jacobs, *Crafts Artisan*
Uvenka Jean-Baptiste, *Assistant Wardrobe Supervisor, Lucinda Childs Dance & The Egyptian Helen*
Zane Kealey, *Costume Shop Foreperson*
Fatima Lyda, *First Hand*
Josie Madzik, *Dresser*
Imani Oluoch VAP '26, *Dresser*
Vivi Potee '26, *Costume Shop Assistant*
Kira Kristianne Ricarte, *Stitcher*
Vinni Rossi, *Dresser/Wardrobe Supervisor, Suddenly Last Summer*
Wanda Shaffer, *Wardrobe Supervisor, Lucinda Childs Dance & The Egyptian Helen*
Ally Jack Starishevsky, *Crafts Artisan*
Tyler Swartz, *First Hand*
Rex Tans, *Dresser*
Jaclyn Vela-Olsen, *Dresser*
Theo Watson Ley, *Dresser*
Nicole "Nico" Weaver, *Dresser*
Catherine York, *Dresser*

Hair & Makeup

Lani Barry, *Hair & Makeup Artist, Suddenly Last Summer*
Nat Carlson, *Makeup Artist, Suddenly Last Summer*
Matia Emsellem, *Hair & Makeup Supervisor, Suddenly Last Summer*

Elaya Gass, *Makeup Artist, The Egyptian Helen*
 Bryan Gonzalez, *Hair Stylist, The Egyptian Helen*
 Isaac Grnysa, *Hair & Makeup Supervisor, The Egyptian Helen*
 Christina Jacobs, *Hair Stylist, The Egyptian Helen*
 Elise "Rosae" Rosa, *Hair & Makeup Artist, The Egyptian Helen*
 Luanda Sentmanat Blanco, *Hair & Makeup Artist, The Egyptian Helen*

Lighting

Ivy Comery, *Head Electrician, Suddenly Last Summer*
 Madison Dillon, *Lighting Assistant, Spiegeltent*
 Harry Enriquez, *Electrician*
 Anna Heath '27, *Electrician*
 Avery Hudgins '26, *Electrician*
 Conor Kimlicko, *Electrician*
 Dalyn Kvapil, *Light Board Programmer, Lucinda Childs Dance & The Egyptian Helen*
 Yichun Li, *Electrician, FollowSpot Caller*
 Catcher Reeves, *Electrician*
 Max Rosenfeld, *Light Board Programmer, Suddenly Last Summer*
 Alisa Saisakorn, *Electrician*
 toby santoro, *Electrician*
 Emma E. Smith, *Electrician*
 Conor Thiele, *Festival Head Electrician*
 Andrew Wilmot, *Electrician*

Production & Stage Management

Hannah Ackerman, *SummerScape Production Intern*
 Nikki Alday, *Production Management Assistant*
 Lilly E. Cadow GCP '22, *Senior Festival Coordinator & Assistant Chorus Master*
 Jon Collazo, *BMF Special Events*
 Patricia Garvey, *Assistant Stage Manager, The Egyptian Helen*

Hila Gotlieb, *SummerScape Production Intern*
 Taryn Greenwood, *Assistant Orchestra Stage Manager*
 Laura Hirschberg, *Production Stage Manager, Spiegeltent*
 Tracy D. Hofmann, *Assistant Stage Manager, The Egyptian Helen*
 L Krohn, *Livestream Stage Manager, The Egyptian Helen*
 Lynn Krynicki, *Production Stage Manager, The Egyptian Helen*
 Yichun Li, *Assistant Stage Manager, BMF*
 Maya Liu, *Production Assistant, The Egyptian Helen*
 Roscoe McDonald, *Production Management Assistant, BMF*
 Ana Muñoz, *Assistant Stage Manager, Spiegeltent*
 Abbey Murray-Stark, *Assistant Stage Manager, The Egyptian Helen*
 Robert Strickstein, *Assistant Production Manager, BMF*
 Matthew Thomas Strieder '21, *Production Management Assistant, BMF*
 Tic Treitler, *SummerScape Production Intern*
 Ellie Van Houten, *Production Assistant, The Egyptian Helen*
 Piper Vaught, *Associate Production Manager*

Props

Nicholas Bernard, *Assistant Props Supervisor*
 Jharrel Liam Bernardo, *Props Artisan*
 Elizabeth Elliott, *Props Artisan*
 Emma Jordan, *Props Artisan*
 Elizabeth "Lizzy" Soglin, *Props Artisan*

Orchestra

Angel Ruiz Araujo '27, *Orchestra Stagehand*
 Moises Arteaga '27, *Orchestra Stagehand*
 Piper Holley, *Orchestra Stagehand*

Beitong Liu '24 MA '25, *Stagehand*
 Kainani Iara Nitz '30, *Stagehand*
 Dennis O'Keefe IAP '27, *Orchestra Stagehand*
 Nathaniel Valsania IAP '27, *Orchestra Stagehand*
 Alison J. Wall, *Orchestra Stagehand*
 Lana Zaki '28, *Orchestra Stagehand*

Scenic

Luiza Braga, *Stagehand/Carpenter*
 Margo Buchanan, *Stagehand/Carpenter*
 Thomas Butler, *Stagehand/Carpenter*
 Emma Covert, *Lead Carpenter*
 Daisy Taysom, *Lead Carpenter*
 Artemis Doyle, *Stagehand/Carpenter*
 Alden Girsch, *Stagehand/Carpenter*
 Jonathan Jensen, *Lead Carpenter*
 John Macy '28, *Carpenter*
 Eli McKenna, *Assistant Technical Director, Suddenly Last Summer*
 Judus McKinny, *Stagehand/Carpenter*
 Mike Murphy, *Carpenter*
 Fiona O'Halloran '26, *Carpenter*
 Cameron Rhode, *Assistant Technical Director, The Egyptian Helen*
 Benjamin Sexton, *Stagehand/Carpenter*
 Ross Werner Winslow '25, *Stagehand/Carpenter*

Video

KB Ballay, *Assistant Video Engineer*
 Marcus Cox '28, *Video Technician*
 Lily Isaacson, *Video Technician*
 John McCall Jr., *Assistant Video Engineer*
 Doaa Ouf, *WATCHOUT Programmer, The Egyptian Helen*
 Ashur Rayis, *Video Supervisor, Lucinda Childs Dance & The Egyptian Helen*
 Mila Rybtsova '26, *Video Technician*
 Xavier Vassallo, *Video Engineer*
 Ke Xu, *WATCHOUT Programmer, Suddenly Last Summer*
 Arrien Zinghini, *Video Engineer*

SUPPORT THE FISHER CENTER

At the Fisher Center, we inspire creativity, connection, and community through new productions and context-rich programs. Guided by a belief in the performing arts as a societal and educational necessity, we develop, produce, and present performing arts across disciplines and nurture and support artists at all stages of their careers.

From world premieres by today's leading creators to rare revivals of masterworks, SummerScape is where ambitious ideas become reality. None of this happens without the support of donors who believe in the power of fearless art to move, challenge, and inspire.



SCAN TO SUPPORT DARING CREATIVE WORK

Your contribution of any size helps us fulfill our mission of creating exceptional performing arts experiences that challenge and inspire.

OTHER WAYS TO GIVE

Online: fishercenter.bard.edu/support

Phone: 845-758-7916

Mail: Fisher Center at Bard College
PO Box 5000
Annandale-on-Hudson, NY 12504

BE A PART OF OUR PATRON PROGRAM

Concierge ticketing. The best seats in the house. Invitations to exclusive events and the Patron Lounge. Donors who give \$2,000 or more become a part of our Patron Program and gain unique access to the artists and performance experiences on our stages in the Hudson Valley and beyond.

BECOME A MEMBER

Advance access to tickets. Waived fees. Behind-the-scenes experiences. Members of the Fisher Center and Bard Music Festival enjoy a variety of benefits. Join us at \$75 or above.

BARD SUMMERSCAPE

LUCINDA CHILDS: MOMENTARY REPRISE

JUNE 26–28 Fisher Center LAB Commission/ North American Premiere

Choreography by **Lucinda Childs**

Collaborations with **John Adams, Frank Gehry, Philip Glass, Anri Sala, and Robert Wilson**

Featuring **Lucinda Childs Dance Company**

THE EGYPTIAN HELEN

JULY 24 – AUGUST 2 SummerScape Opera/New Production

by **Richard Strauss**

Libretto by **Hugo von Hofmannsthal**

Directed by **Christian R  th**

American Symphony Orchestra

conducted by **Leon Botstein**

Sung in German with English supertitles

SPIEGELTENT

JUNE 26 – AUGUST 15 Returning for a 19th season of
music, cabaret, comedy, and nightlife

THE 36TH BARD MUSIC FESTIVAL

MOZART AND HIS WORLD

AUGUST 7–9

The Perils of Genius

AUGUST 13–16

The Universal Musician



SUDDENLY LAST SUMMER

A new opera

After Tennessee Williams' play

Libretto by Daniel Fish and Gideon Lester

Music by Courtney Bryan

CHARACTERS

Catherine Holly — soprano

Mrs. Venable (Catherine's aunt) — spoken role

Dr. Cukrowicz — spoken role

Mrs. Holly (Catherine's mother) — spoken role

George Holly (Catherine's brother) — spoken role

Chorus of young men

(Final Fisher Center libretto)

SCENE ONE

MRS VENABLE

Yes, this was Sebastian's garden.
The Latin names of the plants
Were printed on tags attached to them
But the print's fading out.
Those ones there— *[She draws a deep breath]*
Are the oldest plants on earth,
Survivors from the age of the giant fern-forests.
Of course in this semi tropical climate—
Some of the rarest plants,
Such as the Venus flytrap—
You know what this is, Doctor?
The Venus flytrap?

DOCTOR

An insectivorous plant?

MRS VENABLE

Yes, it feeds on insects.
It has to be kept under glass
From early fall to late spring
And when it went under glass,
My son, Sebastian,
Had to provide it with fruit flies
Flown in at great expense from a Florida laboratory.
Well, I can't do that, Doctor.
[She takes a deep breath.]
I can't, I just can't do it!
It's not the expense but the—

DOCTOR

Effort.

MRS VENABLE

Yes. So goodbye, Venus flytrap!— like so much else . . .
Whew! . . .

CATHERINE (*offstage*)
When...

MRS VENABLE

I don't know why,
but—I already feel I can lean on your shoulder,
Doctor— Cu? — Cu?

DOCTOR

Cu-kro-wicz.
It's a Polish word that means sugar.

MRS VENABLE

Well, now, Doctor Sugar
You've seen Sebastian's garden.

DOCTOR

A well-groomed jungle.

MRS VENABLE

Nothing accidental,
Everything planned and designed
In Sebastian's life and his...

CATHERINE
Can...

MRS VENABLE

Work.
His *life* was his occupation.
Sebastian was a poet.
The work of a poet is the life of a poet
The life of a poet is the work of a poet
A poet's life is his work and his work is his life....

CATHERINE
I...

MRS VENABLE

Oh...

DOCTOR

Mrs. Venable.

Did your doctor okay this?

Meeting this girl

You think is responsible

For your son's death?

MRS VENABLE

I've waited months to face her.

I won't collapse! She'll collapse!

I mean her lies will collapse

Not my truth

CATHERINE

When...

MRS VENABLE

Not the truth

Sebastian had no public name as a poet

Didn't want one

Refused to have one.

"Violet? Mother?

You're going to live longer than me.

When I'm gone,

It will be yours, in your hands."

Well here is my son's work, Doctor!

Here's his life going *on*!

DOCTOR

"Poem of Summer"?

CATHERINE

Can....

MRS VENABLE

“Poem of Summer.”

Date of the summer.

There are twenty-five of them.

He wrote one poem a year

Which he printed himself

On an eighteenth-century hand-press

At his—atelier in the—French—Quarter—

So no one but he could see it...

DOCTOR

He wrote one poem a year?

MRS VENABLE

One for each summer we traveled together.

The other nine months...

CATHERINE

I....

MRS VENABLE

...were only preparation.

DOCTOR

Nine months?

MRS VENABLE

The length of a pregnancy, yes.

DOCTOR

The poem was hard to deliver?

MRS VENABLE

Yes, even with me.

Without me, impossible.

He wrote no poem last summer.

DOCTOR

He died last summer?

MRS VENABLE

Without me he died last summer.

His last summer's poem.

One long-ago summer

My son Sebastian said:

MRS VENABLE

"Mother listen to this:

The Encantadas"

CHORUS (*offstage*)

The Encantadas

Galapagos Islands

Five and twenty heaps

Of cinders dumped

Some of them magnified

Mountains

Vacant lot

The Sea

The Encantadas

Enchanted islands

MRS VENABLE

He said we had to go there

So we did, that summer

Chartered a boat

Four-masted schooner

CATHERINE

When....

CHORUS

Extinct volcanoes

CATHERINE

Can....

MRS VENABLE

The Encantadas

Great sea-turtles crawl

Once a year the female

Crawls up out of the equatorial sea

Blazing sand beach

CATHERINE

Blazing...I

Stop....running...

MRS VENABLE

Dig a pit in the sand

Deposit their eggs

Their annual egg-laying

Long and dreadful thing

Depositing of the eggs

Sand pits

Finished, exhausted female turtles

Crawl back to the sea, half-dead.

Never see their offspring.

We did. The hatching of the sea-turtles

Their desperate flight to the sea!

CHORUS

Narrow beach

Color of caviar

All in motion.

The sky in motion, too...

MRS VENABLE

Flesh-eating birds

The noise of the birds

Horrible savage cries

Carnivorous birds

CATHERINE

When can I stop....

When can I stop...stop...

Running down...

MRS VENABLE

The narrow black beach

Just-hatched sea turtles
Flesh-eating birds made the sky
Black as the beach

CHORUS
The Encantadas
The Encantadas

CATHERINE
That steep....
White....

MRS VENABLE
Sand all alive, all alive,
Hatched sea-turtles made their dash for the sea
Birds hovered and swooped to attack

CHORUS
And hovered and swooped
Attack and hovered
Swooped to attack!

CATHERINE
Hill....

MRS VENABLE
Diving down on the sea-turtles
Turning them over
Tearing the undersides open
Rending and eating their flesh.

DOCTOR
This fascinated your son?

CATHERINE
When can I stop

MRS VENABLE
My son was looking for...
Let's just say he was interested in sea-turtles.

CATHERINE
Running down
That steep white hill
In Cabeza de Lobo...

DOCTOR
That isn't what you started to say.
Say what you started to say.

CATHERINE
When can I stop
Running down
That steep white hill
In Cabeza de Lobo?

MRS VENABLE
I started to say that my son was looking for God.

DOCTOR
Mrs. Venable,
Doctors look for God, too.
Some do. I do.
The first operation at Lion's View.
How anxious, nervous I was.
The patient a young girl
Hopeless, put in the Drum,
the violent ward at Lion's View
Like the inside of a drum....
Very bright lights, burning all day, all night...
After the operation I stayed with the girl
As if I'd delivered a child.
I stayed with her
Walked along by the rolling table
Holding onto her hand, my heart in my throat...
Nice afternoon, as fair as this one.
Wheeled her outside,
She whispered, she whispered,
"Oh how blue the sky!"

CATHERINE
Cousin Sabastian
Said he was famished for blonds

DOCTOR
Till then her speech,
Everything babbled

CATHERINE
Fed up with the dark ones

DOCTOR
A torrent of obscenities!

MRS VENABLE
My son *was* looking for God.

CATHERINE
Famished for blonds

MRS VENABLE
He spent the whole blazing equatorial day
In the crows-nest of the schooner
Watching this thing on the beach
And when he came down from the rigging
He said :
“Well now I’ve seen Him!”
And he meant God.
From then on we still lived in a world of light and shadow
Shadow almost as luminous as light.
You would have liked my son
He would have been charmed by you.
He insisted upon good looks in people around him
A perfect little court

CATHERINE
That’s how he talked about people

MRS VENABLE
A little entourage

CATHERINE
As if items on a menu

MRS VENABLE
The beautiful, the talented, the young.

DOCTOR
Your son was young, Mrs. Venable?

MRS VENABLE
Both of us were young, and stayed young, Doctor.

DOCTOR
Could I see a photograph of your son, Mrs. Venable?

MRS VENABLE
Yes, you could indeed, Doctor.
I'm going to show you not one photograph but two.
Here. Here is my son Sebastian
In a Renaissance pageboy's costume
At a masked ball in Cannes.
Here is my son Sebastian
In the same costume
At a masked ball in Venice.
These two pictures were taken twenty years apart.
Now which is the older one, Doctor?

DOCTOR
This photograph looks older.

MRS VENABLE
The photograph looks older but not the subject.
It takes character to refuse to grow old, Doctor.
Discipline, abstention.
One cocktail before dinner, not two, four, six...
A single lean chop
And lime juice on a salad.

CATHERINE

“That one’s delicious
That one is appetizing”

MRS. HOLLY [*offstage*]

Violet, dear, we’re here.

MRS VENABLE

Wait upstairs in my upstairs living room for me.

DOCTOR

Mrs. Venable —

Did your son have a...well...

What kind of a *personal*, well, *private* life did...

CATHERINE

He liked me

And so I loved him...

MRS VENABLE

Listen to me

Before you hear from the girl:

My son, Sebastian, was chaste.

Not c-h-a-s-e-d —

oh he was chased in that way of spelling it too.

CATHERINE

If he’d kept hold of my hand

MRS VENABLE

I meant he was c-h-a-s-t-e! Chaste.

CATHERINE

I could have saved him.

MRS VENABLE

I was the only one in his life

That satisfied him...

We were a famous couple.
“Sebastian and Violet
Violet and Sebastian”

CHORUS
Violet and Sebastian
Sebastian and Violet,
Violet and Sebastian

CATHERINE
Sebastian suddenly said to me last summer

MRS VENABLE
Every appearance, every time we appeared

CATHERINE
Let’s fly north little bird

MRS VENABLE
Attention was centered on us!

CATHERINE
I want to walk under
Those radiant cold northern lights

MRS VENABLE
Everyone else – Eclipsed!

CATHERINE
I’ve never seen
The Aurora Borealis

MRS VENABLE
Most people’s lives...

CATHERINE
We’re all of us children

MRS VENABLE
What are they but trails of debris

CATHERINE
In a vast kindergarten

MRS VENABLE
Every day more debris, more debris

CATHERINE
Trying to spell God's name

MRS VENABLE
Long trails of debris with nothing to clean it up

CATHERINE
With the wrong alphabet blocks

MRS VENABLE
But, finally, death...
My son, Sebastian, and I constructed our days
Each day
Like a piece of sculpture.
We left behind us a trail of days
A gallery of sculpture!

MRS VENABLE
But...last summer...
I can't forgive him for it

CATHERINE
Cabeza de Lobo

MRS VENABLE
He let in this...*vandal*...

MRS VENABLE
We put bread in her mouth
And clothes on her back.

CATHERINE
Big city beach

MRS VENABLE
The role of benefactor is worse than thankless.
The role of a victim, Doctor

CATHERINE
The harbor

MRS VENABLE
A sacrificial victim, yes
They want your blood, Doctor

CATHERINE
Grabbed my hand

MRS VENABLE
They want your blood on the altar steps
They can't shut her up at St Mary's

CATHERINE
Dragged me in

MRS VENABLE
She *babbles*!
They couldn't shut her up
In Cabeza de Lobo
Or at the clinic in Paris
She babbled

CATHERINE
In the water

MRS VENABLE
Babbled, babbled

CATHERINE
All the way in

MRS VENABLE
Smashing my son's reputation.

CATHERINE
Cabeza de Lobo

MRS VENABLE
"So shines a good deed in a naughty world,"
Doctor—Sugar...

DOCTOR
Mrs Venable
In your letter last week
You made some reference to a...
To a...fund of some kind...
An endowment fund of...

MRS VENABLE
My lawyers and bankers and accountants
Are setting up
The Sebastian Venable Memorial Foundation
To subsidize the work of young people like you
That are pushing out the frontiers of art and science
But you have a financial problem.
You have a financial problem, don't you, Doctor?

DOCTOR
We need a separate ward for my patients
I need trained assistants
I'd like to marry a girl I can't afford to marry.
I don't want to turn you against my work at Lion's View
But I have to be honest with you,
There is a good deal of risk in my operation.
Whenever you enter the brain with a foreign object...

MRS VENABLE

Yes.

CHORUS

Yes...

DOCTOR

Even a needle-thin knife...

MRS VENABLE

Yes.

CHORUS

Yes...

DOCTOR

In a skilled surgeon's fingers...

MRS VENABLE

Yes.

CHORUS

Yes...

DOCTOR

There is a good deal of risk involved in...

The operation...

MRS VENABLE

You said it pacifies them

It quiets them down

It suddenly makes them peaceful.

DOCTOR

Yes, but...

MRS VENABLE

What?

DOCTOR

It may be the person will always be limited afterwards

Relieved of acute disturbances

But—*limited*, Mrs. Venable...

MRS VENABLE

What a blessing to them
To be just peaceful
To be just suddenly peaceful...

MRS VENABLE

After all that horror
After those nightmares
Just to be able to lift up their eyes and see
A sky not as black with savage, devouring birds
As the sky we saw in the Encantadas, Doctor.

DOCTOR

I can't guarantee that a lobotomy
Would stop her—*babbling!*

MRS VENABLE

That may be, maybe not
But after the operation
Who would believe her, Doctor?

DOCTOR

My God...
Suppose that after meeting the girl
I feel that non-surgical treatment
Insulin shock...Electrical shock...

MRS VENABLE

SHE'S HAD ALL THAT AT SAINT MARY'S!!
Nothing else is left for her.

DOCTOR

But if I disagreed with you?

MRS VENABLE

That's just part of a question.
Finish the question, Doctor.

DOCTOR

Would you still be interested in my work at Lion's View?

MRS VENABLE

Aren't we always more interested
In a thing that concerns us personally, Doctor?

DOCTOR

You're such an innocent person
It obviously doesn't occur to you
That anybody less innocent than you
Could interpret this offer of a subsidy
As, well, as sort of a *bribe*...?

MRS VENABLE

Name it that—I don't care—
She's a destroyer.
My son was a *creator*!
Now if my honesty's shocked you
Pick up your little black bag
Without the subsidy in it
And run away from this garden!
Nobody's heard our conversation
But you and I, Doctor Sugar...
I'm not ready to face her.
I have to have my five o'clock cocktail. To fortify me.

CATHERINE

Five o'clock!

MRS VENABLE

Doctor? Sugar?
You may stay in the garden if you wish to

CATHERINE

Five o'clock
Time to meet him
Outside the bath houses

MRS VENABLE

Or run out of the garden if you wish to

CATHERINE

That five o'clock lunch
At one of those fish places

MRS VENABLE

Or go in this way if you wish to

CATHERINE

Five o'clock, Along the harbor

MRS VENABLE

Or do anything that you wish to

CATHERINE

of Cabeza de Lobo

MRS VENABLE

Or do anything that you wish to
But I'm going to have my five o'clock daiquiri—*Frozen!*
Before I face her.

CATHERINE

Hot blazing white. Five o'clock in the afternoon.

[Catherine enters and sees the Doctor]

CATHERINE

Do you want to bore a hole in my skull
And turn a knife in my brain?
Everything else was done to me!

SCENE TWO

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Sit down.

Be still.

[CHORUS vocalizes throughout the scene]

CATHERINE

When...

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Put it back.

CATHERINE

Can I stop...

Too late!

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Give it here.

CATHERINE

When can I stop....

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Give it here.

CATHERINE

Running....

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Give it here.

CATHERINE

Let me smoke!

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Catherine, give it here.

CATHERINE

This is an afternoon out.

Don't be a bully!

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Give me that cigarette.

The violent ward.

CATHERINE

When can I stop

Running down that steep white hill...

I'm not being violent.

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Give me that cigarette!

CATHERINE

In Cabeza de Lobo...

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Give me that cigarette!

CATHERINE

All right, take it, here!

Take it, here! Take it, here!

Take it, here! Take it, here!

Take it, here!

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

You burned me!

CATHERINE

When can I stop

Running down that steep white hill

In Cabeza de Lobo
I didn't mean to.

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)
You deliberately burned me!

CATHERINE
I'm *sick*
I'm *sick*—of being *bossed* and *bullied*!

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)
Sit down!

CATHERINE
There goes the Waring Mixer
Aunt Violet's five o'clock frozen daiquiri
You could set a watch by it!
We're in Sebastian's garden.

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)
Did you have any medication?

CATHERINE
No. Give me some?

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)
The doctor will.

CATHERINE
I knew I was being watched!

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)
Sit down.
Be still.

CATHERINE
Lion's View, is it, Doctor?

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Sit down, dear.

CATHERINE

Is it Lion's View, Doctor?

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Be still....

CATHERINE

When can I stop running down
That steep white hill in Cabeza de Lobo?

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Catherine dear, sit down.

CATHERINE

I loved him!
Why wouldn't he let me save him?
I tried to hold onto his hand
He struck me away
And ran, ran, ran in the wrong direction!
If they give me an injection
I won't have any choice
But to tell the truth
It makes you tell the truth
Everything comes out
Decent or *not* decent
You have no control
But always
Always the truth!
I didn't invent it
It's hideous
A true story of our time
What did truly happen
To Cousin Sebastian
In Cabeza de Lobo...

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Catherine dear, be still.

CATHERINE

The Doctor's still at the window

He's too blond to hide

He catches the light

He shines.

We were going to blonds

Blonds were next on the menu.

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Be still now. Quiet, dear.

CATHERINE

He was famished for blonds

Fed up with the dark ones

Famished for blonds.

Copenhagen...Stockholm.

Fed up with dark ones

Famished for light ones:

That's how he talked about people

Items on a menu.

"That one's delicious, that one appetizing"

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Catherine, be still.

MRS VENABLE (AS SISTER FELICITY)

Catherine, be still.

CATHERINE

He liked me so I loved him...

If he'd kept hold of my hand

I could have saved him!

Sebastian suddenly said to me last summer:

CHORUS

“Let’s fly north, little bird
I want to walk under those
Radiant, cold, northern lights,
I’ve never seen
The Aurora Borealis.”

MRS VENABLE

We’re all of us children
In a vast kindergarten
Trying to spell God’s name
With the wrong alphabet blocks!

— CHORAL INTERLUDE —

SCENE THREE

MRS. HOLLY

Catherine, dear! Catherine—

GEORGE

Jesus! What are you up to? Huh? Sister?

Are you trying to RUIN us?

MRS. HOLLY

GAWGE! WILL YOU BE QUIET.

George inherited Cousin Sebastian's wardrobe

But everything else is in probate!

And Violet can keep it in probate as long as she wants.

The horrible death of Sebastian

Just about *killed* her!

Dear...

I'm sure you understand

Why we haven't been out to see you at Saint Mary's.

They said you were too disturbed...

Not a soul even knows that you've come back from Europe.

When people enquire we just say you've stayed abroad.

[She catches her breath.]

Be *very* careful what you say to Aunt Violet

About what happened to Sebastian

In Cabeza de Lobo.

Just don't repeat that same fantastic story!

For my sake

And George's sake

The sake of your brother and mother

Don't repeat that horrible story again!

GEORGE

You were the only witness to it, Cathie.

MRS. HOLLY

Sebastian has BEQUEATHED! —

To you an' Gawge in his *will* —

GEORGE

To each of us

Fifty

Grand

Each!

AFTER! TAXES! — GET IT?

Cathie, Cathie

You got to forget that story! Can'tcha?

For *your* fifty grand?

MRS. HOLLY

If Aunt Vi contests the will, and we know she'll contest it,

She'll keep it in the courts forever! We'll be—

GEORGE

It's in PROBATE NOW!

And'll never get out of probate

Until you drop that story.

We can't afford to hire lawyers

Good enough to contest it!

So if you don't stop telling that crazy story

We won't have a pot to—cook *greens* in!

CATHERINE laughs wildly.

MRS. HOLLY

Don't laugh like that

It scares me.

GEORGE

She's crazy like a coyote!

We won't get a single damn penny, honest t'God.

MRS. HOLLY

Cathie, why, why, why!

GEORGE

Lose us a hundred thousand! Cathie?

You are a BITCH!

MRS. HOLLY

GAWGE!

GEORGE

A bitch!

She isn't crazy, Mama, she's just perverse!

MRS. HOLLY

Gawge, Gawge

This is no way to talk to your sister.

You tell your sweet little sister

You're sorry you spoke like that.

GEORGE

I'm sorry, Cathie

But you know we NEED that money!

I got *ambitions*!

And, Cathie, I'm YOUNG!

I *want* things, I *need* them, Cathie!

Will you please think about ME?

Us?

MRS. HOLLY

Catherine, Gawge put it very badly but you know that it's TRUE!

WE DO HAVE GET WHAT SEBASTIAN HAS LEFT US

IN HIS WILL, DEAREST!

AND YOU WON'T LET US DOWN?

PROMISE?

YOU WON'T? LET US DOWN?

GEORGE

[fiercely shouting]

HERE COMES AUNT VI!

Mama, Cathie, Aunt Violet's...

Here is Aunt Vi!

SCENE FOUR

MRS VENABLE ENTERS

MRS VENABLE

She sees me and I see her.

MRS. HOLLY

Gawge, tell Aunt Violet
How grateful you are for...

GEORGE

Aunt Vi? About the will?
I was just wondering
If we can't figure out some way to...to...

MRS. HOLLY

To EXPEDITE it!
To get through the red tape quicker?

MRS VENABLE

Get the Doctor.

DOCTOR

He had to answer an urgent call
From Lion's View.

MRS. HOLLY

Not Lion's View!

MRS VENABLE

Are you all prepared
To put out a thousand a month
To keep the girl at St Mary's?
I'm paying to keep her in a private asylum.
Your mother's dependent on me.
All of you are! — Financially...

MRS. HOLLY

Cathie, Cathie dear

Tell Aunt Violet how grateful you are

For makin' it possible for you to rest an' recuperate

At such a sweet, sweet place as St. Mary's!

CATHERINE

No place for lunatics is a sweet, sweet place.

MRS VENABLE

Doctor, I thought you'd left us

With just that little black bag to remember you by.

This is Dr. Cukrowicz.

He says it means "sugar"

We can call him "Sugar" —

MRS VENABLE

He's a specialist from Lion's View.

CATHERINE

WHAT DOES HE SPECIALIZE IN?

MRS VENABLE

Something new.

When other treatments have failed.

CATHERINE

Do you want to bore a hole in my skull

And turn a knife in my brain?

Everything else was done to me!

DOCTOR

A quiet atmosphere will get us the best results.

Your niece seems to be disturbed.

MRS VENABLE

She has every reason.

She took my son from me.

CATHERINE

You couldn't travel. You'd had a—

[She stops short.]

MRS VENABLE

Go on!

She meant that I had a stroke.

I DID NOT HAVE A STROKE!

I had a slight aneurysm.

A little vascular convulsion!

Not a hemorrhage

Just a little convulsion of a blood-vessel.

She was trying to take my son away from me.

A little temporary—muscular—contraction—

I was disgusted, sickened.

She'd lost her head over a young married man

Made a scandalous scene at a Mardi Gras ball

My son Sebastian felt sorry for her

And took her with him last summer instead of me.

CATHERINE

I can't change truth, I'm not God!

MRS VENABLE

She was in love with my son!

CATHERINE

Cabeza de Lobo

MRS VENABLE

All right, *Lion's View!*

MRS. HOLLY

CATHERINE! CATHERINE!

DOCTOR

I'd like to be left alone with Miss Catherine.

GEORGE

Cathie can't go to Lion's View.

Everyone in the Garden District

Would know you'd put your niece in a state asylum.

MRS VENABLE

Get me away from these people!

Let me go or I'll strike you!

CATHERINE

Sebastian couldn't use her.

DOCTOR

Use her?

MRS VENABLE

We all use each other

And that's what we think of as love

And not being able to use each other

Is *hate*.

DOCTOR

What was your feeling for your cousin Sebastian?

CATHERINE

The feelings you have in a dream.

Last winter...

Suddenly last winter...

DOCTOR

Something happened last winter?

CATHERINE

Last winter, a Mardi Gras ball,

Boy that took me
Got too drunk to stand up.
I wanted to go home.
Somebody took my arm:

CHORUS
"I'll drive you home"

CATHERINE
Don't think I'd ever seen him before.
Took me another place first
The Dueling Oaks

CHORUS
The Dueling Oaks

CATHERINE
Stopped...
What for?
Didn't answer
Struck a match
In the car
Light a cigarette
In the car

CHORUS
[*whispered*]
In the car

CATHERINE
Looked at him
In the car
I knew what for.
I got out
Of the car
Walked through the wet grass
To the great misty oaks
As if somebody was calling us for help there
Help!

I lost him.
He took me home
Said an awful thing
I sat there thinking a little
Went right back to the Roosevelt Hotel
Ball still going on
Gone back to make a scene
On the ballroom floor
I spotted him on the floor
Ran up to him
Beat him as hard as I could
Cousin Sebastian took me away
Couldn't go out any more.
Couldn't go out any more.

MRS VENABLE

One morning Sebastian
Said: "Get up!
Mother can't go abroad with me
This summer.
You're going to go with me
This summer
Instead of Mother."

CATHERINE

If you're still alive after dying,
Well then, you're obedient, Doctor.

DOCTOR

Miss Catherine, let me give you something.

MRS VENABLE

What is she going to be stuck with this time, Doctor?

DOCTOR

Miss Catherine?
I want you to give me the truth.

CATHERINE

One hundred! Ninety-nine!
Ninety-eight! Ninety seven!
Ninety-six! Ninety-five!

MRS VENABLE

They say truth is at the bottom of a bottomless well.

CHORUS

Ninety-four! Ninety-three!

DOCTOR

Relax.

CATHERINE

Truth.

DOCTOR

Give me all your resistance. See
I'm holding my hand out. I want you to put yours in mine
And give me all your resistance.
Pass all your resistance out of your hand into mine

CATHERINE AND MRS VENABLE

Let me! Let! Let! Let me! Let me, let me, oh, let me!
I've been so lonely.
It's lonelier than death
If I've gone mad it's lonelier than death!

DOCTOR

Now, Miss Catherine
You're going to tell the true story.
Last summer...?

CATHERINE

Last summer. Oh last summer.

DOCTOR

About last summer: How did it begin?

CATHERINE

With his kindness

And six days at sea

So far from the Dueling Oaks.

He was affectionate

So sweet and attentive

People took us for a honeymoon couple

Till they noticed we had separate staterooms

And then in Paris

He bought me so many new clothes

I turned into a peacock!

Of course, so was *he*...

Responding too much to his kindness

Taking hold of his hand, his arm

Leaning on his shoulder

His kindness

MRS VENABLE

A poet's vocation, Doctor...

CATHERINE

And suddenly...

MRS VENABLE

rests on something...

CATHERINE

Last summer...

MRS VENABLE

As thin and fine as the web of a spider.

CATHERINE

He began to be restless...and—oh!

I failed him.
I wasn't able to keep the web from—breaking.

MRS VENABLE

Now the truth's coming out.
We had a covenant between us
Which he broke last summer
When he took her with him!
When he was frightened his hands would shake
And his eyes looked in, not out
I'd touch his hands with my hand
Until his hands stopped shaking
And his eyes looked out, not in.
In the morning the poem would be continued
Continued until it was finished!
He was *mine*! I knew how to help him!
You didn't, you couldn't!
I would say, "You *will*" and he *would*.

CATHERINE

Something had broken
That string of pearls
Old mothers hold their sons by.
An umbilical cord...

MRS VENABLE

She means I held him back
From destruction.

CATHERINE

Last summer
Cabeza de Lobo
And suddenly, last summer
Cabeza de Lobo
A big city beach near the harbor.
He bought me a swimsuit
White
A one-piece suit

Made of white lisle
He'd grab my hand and drag me into the water
All the way in
I'd come out looking naked!
I was PROCURING for him!
She used to do it, too.
In nice places, in decent ways.
She used to do it too.

MRS. HOLLY
Oh, Cathie! Sister...

DOCTOR
Hush!

MRS VENABLE
Sebastian was lonely, Doctor.
I knew what I was doing.

CATHERINE
When the weather got warmer
And the beach so crowded
He didn't need me anymore;
The ones on the free beach
Began to climb over the fence
Or swim around it
Bands of homeless young people
That lived on the free beach
Like scavenger dogs
Hungry children...
I'd go to a faraway empty end of the beach
Write postcards and letters
Till it was five o'clock
Time to meet him
Outside the bathhouses
On the street.
He would come out, *followed*.
The homeless, hungry people.

He'd pass out tips among them
As if they'd shined his shoes
Each day the crowd
Bigger, noisier, greedier!
Sebastian began to be frightened.
We stopped going out there.
One day
One of those blazing
White days
In Cabeza de Lobo.
An open-air restaurant on the sea.
Sebastian was white
As the weather.
Spotless
White silk Shantung suit

CHORUS

White...

CATHERINE

White silk tie
White Panama
White shoes
White-white lizard skin pumps!
Kept touching his face and his throat
White silk handkerchief
Popping little white pills
Bad time with his heart
Frightened.

CHORUS

"We ought to go north"

DOCTOR

"We ought to go north"

CATHERINE

He said.

CHORUS

"We've done Cabeza de Lobo,"

MRS VENABLE

"We've done Cabeza de Lobo,"

CATHERINE

He said.

CHORUS

I think we've done it, don't you?"

DOCTOR

"I think we've done it, don't you?"

CATHERINE

I thought we'd done it.

Where was I?

Oh yes

That five o'clock lunch

At one of those fish-places

Along the harbor of Cabeza de Lobo

Naked children along the beach

A band

Of frightfully thin

Dark naked children

Like a flock of plucked birds

Blown there by the wind

The hot white wind from the sea

Cousin Sebastian

Popping those little white pills said:

DOCTOR

"Don't look at those little monsters.

Beggars are a social disease in this country."

CATHERINE

The band of children

Began to—serenade us.

CHORUS
OOM PAH OOMPAH!!

CATHERINE
On Instruments!
Make music!
If you could call it music..

DOCTOR
Your Cousin Sebastian was entertained by this—*concert*?

CATHERINE
He was *terrified*!
He recognized some of the boys
Between childhood and—older...
He said...

DOCTOR
“They’ve got to stop that!”

MRS VENABLE
“Waiter, make them stop that!”

GEORGE
“I’m not a well man”

MRS HOLLY
“I have a heart condition”

GEORGE
“It’s making me sick!”

CATHERINE
The waiters charged the barbed wire
Beat the little musicians away with
Clubs and skillets, anything hard
They could snatch from the kitchen!
Cousin Sebastian left the table

Stalked out of the restaurant
Throwing a handful of money on the table
Fled from the place.
I followed.
White outside
White hot
Blazing white hot
Hot blazing white
Five o'clock in the afternoon
In the city of Cabeza de Lobo.
It looked as if...

DOCTOR
It looked as if...?

CATHERINE
A huge white bone
Had caught on fire in the sky
And blazed so bright
It was white
And turned the sky and everything under the sky
White!
Cousin Sebastian seemed to be paralyzed
Near the entrance of the café
I said, "Let's go!"
He started up the steep street
Hand stuck in his jacket
Pain in his chest
Palpitations...
Walked faster and faster in panic,
The faster he walked the louder and closer it got
The oompa of the following band.
They'd gotten through the barbed wire
Out onto the street
Following, following up
The blazing white street.
The band of naked children
Pursued us up the steep white street

Sebastian started to run
They all screamed at once
And seemed to fly in the air
Outran him
I screamed.
I heard Sebastian scream
He screamed just once before this flock of
Black plucked little birds
Pursued him and overtook him
Halfway up
The white hill.
I ran!
Down! Down, down, down, down
The hot, white, blazing street
Screaming, "Help!"
Cousin Sebastian had disappeared
In the flock of
Featherless little black sparrows
He was lying naked
Against a white wall
And this you won't believe
Nobody *has* believed
Nobody *could* believe
Nobody, nobody on earth
Could possibly believe—
They had *devoured*
Parts of him.
Torn, cut
Parts of him
Away with their hands
Torn bits of him away
Stuffed them
Into those gobbling
Fierce little empty black mouths.
Not a sound anymore
Nothing to see but Sebastian
What was left of him
Like a big white-paper-wrapped bunch of red roses

Torn, thrown, crushed!—
Against that blazing
White wall...

MRS VENABLE
Lion's View! State asylum!
Cut this hideous story out of her brain!

GEORGE
Mom, I'll quit school, I'll get a job, I'll...

MRS. HOLLY
Hush, son!
Doctor, can't you say something?

DOCTOR
[Pause. Comes downstage. After a while, reflectively, into space]
I think we ought at least
To consider the possibility
That the girl's story
Could be true...

END