

WESLEYAN THEATER
DEPT. PRESENTS

THE SELF

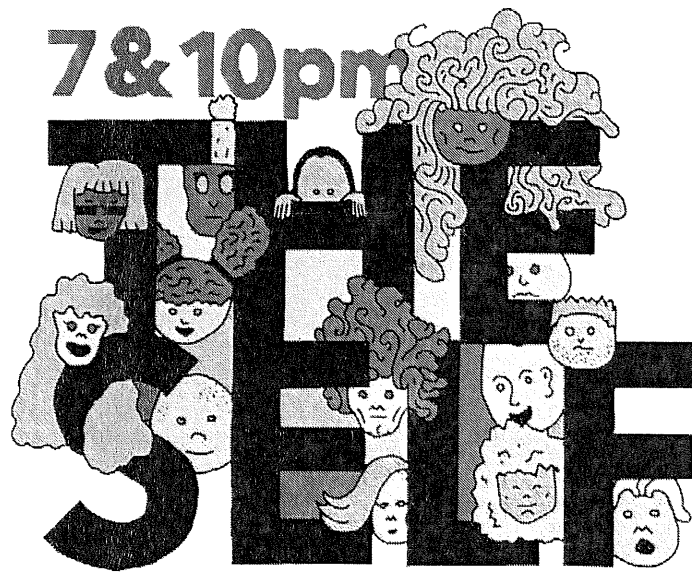
a senior capstone by
JESS WOLINSKY

directed by
EMMA PASAROW

'92 THEATER

DEC 8-9

7&10pm



WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY THEATER DEPARTMENT
CENTER FOR THE ARTS
MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT
WWW.WESLEYAN.EDU/THEATER

Important:

This show contains adult themes and content.

You will be free to use the exit doors toward the rear of the house if you need to leave and take space at any time.

Director's Note

Creating *The Self* was a process of revision. We brainstormed, we wrote, we staged, and then rewrote some more. In every rehearsal and every performance we continued to ask ourselves why we are telling *this* story. Using *Viewpoints* technique and ensemble physical improvisation, we created moments together that represent memories from each of the seven actors' lives. This play is a collection of those moments.

The Self grapples with what it means to be yourself on a stage. It asks how to talk about the past, both the good and the difficult, and how to de-stigmatize stories that are not usually shared. We seek to lend visibility to a few stories that feel invisible. Just like being 20 years old, the very nature of devised theater is a work in progress. We are still researching and investigating our pasts and how to de/reconstruct them in the present. My job as the director was to be a witness, a listener and a facilitator so my peers could articulate their stories on stage. In a series of fortuitous coincidences, we very purposefully strung these moments together so that they could highlight the incredible similarities and irreconcilable differences between them and all of us.

I owe everything to Jess Wolinsky for her leadership and creative vision. She is the driving force of this project. I also have immense gratitude for the other six ensemble members. Telling personal stories is brave and I am so thankful that they have been so open and eager throughout this process. I would like to thank Professor Ron Jenkins for advising this project and Professor Kim Weild for mentoring me in all things directing. I thank Olivia and Zack for their tireless dedication and to all of the designers for helping this play beautifully come to life.

Thank you for coming. Enjoy the show!

Love,
Emma

Actor's Note

I've never felt this vulnerable while acting.

Yes, I have taken on difficult roles before. But I have never done anything quite like this.

It's completely isolating to tell a story about yourself, even in a social setting or with your family, where you'd typically be the most comfortable. You are one voice, and you are pressured to entertain a group of people just enough so they'll listen to you. What initially made me want to take this very specific type of entertainment to the stage mind boggles me, but after having a semester to really delve into this process, I kind of get what junior-year-Jess was thinking.

My favorite roles have always been ones that I can relate to deeply. Lee Strasberg, an acting extraordinaire, calls the idea of using an actor's actual life experience to drive their performance "emotional recall". Not all actors find it useful—many prefer character studies or active verbs. But for me, recalling personal memory to feed a performance is what acting really comes down to.

And if a Senior Capstone project was supposed to be a culmination of my Wesleyan theatre experience and something I have always dreamed of doing, there was no better time to make a piece that relied heavily on the type of acting I find the most rewarding.

And what's emblematic of this type of acting more than anything else?

Putting the most personal moments from my life onstage.

I wanted to grapple with my personal thoughts—which, by the nature of being a human in the current political moment, are not the same as they were in September. I wanted to explore what it meant to have other actors play characters in my life and to be a character in someone else's life. I wanted to create a space for people who are not typically represented onstage a chance to tell their story, straight up, without omitting the uncomfortable.

Actor's Note Cont'd.

I visualized a piece of art that would show an audience that I really am not always laughing. Comedy is my crutch, in many ways, as an actor and a person. But when it comes down to it, and my laughter is accompanying tears, I feel things, big time—in darkness, and in dramatics. That's okay.

Devising *THE SELF* made me see just how exciting feeling things, big time, can truly be.

And I wouldn't trade that for the world.

I would like to thank the outstanding Wesleyan Theater Department for putting faith in my project and working tirelessly to ensure it came alive—especially Professor Ron Jenkins for advising me through each step of devising a piece of theatre, Professor Eddie Torres for instilling confidence in me as an actor, and Rebecca Foster for being meticulous with the look of the show.

Thank you to my out of town family and friends who made the effort to come see something so important to me.

None of what you are about to see would be remotely possible without the leadership, creative integrity, and guidance from our director, Emma Pasarow, and the intense commitment from our Stage Management team, Olivia Morris and Zack Lobel.

Equally, the six other actors in this piece have challenged me to move way past my inhibitions, and I am eternally grateful. They have surpassed my hopes and are so brave for what they are sharing.

To quote one of them, "In a time like this, the simple act of being ourselves—loudly, in public—is radical."

Here's to being radical. Enjoy the show.

—Jess Wolinsky

Cast

Isaac Gotterer
Rachele Merliss
José Luis Sánchez
Campbell Silverstein
Anne Stachofsky
Jess Wolinsky
Suyang Yang

Creative Team

Director: Emma Pasarow
Stage Management: Olivia Morris and Zack Lobel
Scenic and Props Design: Nola Werlinich
Lighting Design: Maia Nelles-Sager
Asst. Lighting Design: Jordan Tragash and Hope Fourie
Costume Design: Celina Bernstein
Sound Design: Miranda Gohh
Projection Design: Russell Goldman and Zack Lobel
Faculty Tutor in Acting and Directing: Ron Jenkins
Faculty Tutor in Costumes, Scenery, and Projections:
Marcela Oteíza
Faculty Tutor in Lighting: Calvin Anderson
Script Supervisor: David Caruso
Poster Design: Seamus Edson

Production Team

Production Manager: Rebecca Foster
Costume Shop Manager: Christian Milik
Master Carpenter: Max Weiner
Carpentry: May Treuhaft–Ali
Master Electrician: Susana Hair
Electricians: Madeleine Sargent, Devon Cooper
Wardrobe Supervisor: Sofie Somoroff
Wardrobe Crew: Doc Polk, Regina Melady
Asst. Props Design: Isaac Gotterer
Projections Operator: Russell Goldman
Light Board Operator: Zack Lobel
Sound Board Operator: Rose Beth Johnson–Brown
Follow Spot Operator: Karan Dhir
Program Editor: Rachel Sobelsohn

Theater Department

Dawn Alger: Administrative Assistant
Calvin Anderson: Visiting Assistant Professor
Katherine Brewer Ball: Visiting Assistant Professor
Rebecca Foster: Visiting Assistant Professor of Theater
Miranda Rose Hall: Visiting Instructor in Theater
Jay Hilton: Guest Sound Designer in Theater
Quiara Alegría Hudes: Shapiro Distinguished Professor of Writing
Ronald S. Jenkins: Professor of Theater
Sarah Mantell: Visiting Instructor in Theater
Christian L. Milik: Visiting Instructor in Theater
Cybele Moon: Visiting Assistant Professor of Theater
Cláudia Tatinge Nascimento: Professor of Theater
Tori Sampson: Visiting Instructor in Theater
Edward Torres: Visiting Assistant Professor of Theater
Kim Weild: Visiting Assistant Professor of Theater
John F. Carr: Professor of Theater, Emeritus
William H. Francisco: Professor of Theater, Emeritus
Gay Smith: Professor of Theater, Emeritus
Leslie A Weinberg: Retired Artist–in–Residence, Theater

Theater Department Cont'd.

Office Staff

Jessica Cummings, Philip Heilbron, Cheyanne Williams

Costume Shop Staff

Celina Bernstein, Hope Fourie, Emma Graham,
Regina Melady, Sofie Somoroff, Sofia Navarrete Zur

Technical Staff

Chloe Briskin, Devon Cooper, Jessica Cummings,
Anthony Dean, Anna Fox, Daniel Gordon, Claire Graham,
Sofia Kinney, Amanda Larsen, Maia Nelles-Sager,
Laura Pérez Maquedano, Blake Pritchard, Olivia Riddick, Jamie Shi,
Rose Shuker-Haines, Avram Stein, Max Weiner, Nola Werlinich,
Cheyanne Williams, Jejomar Erlin Ysit

Production Lab

Jonathan Brudnick, Jules Chabot, Shemaiah Clarke,
Karan Dhir, Rodrick Edwards, Hope Fourie, Dimitri Fulconis,
Capri Gehred-O'Connell, Ava Grob, Susana Hair,
Johnny Hayes, Max Johnson, Marcus Kenner, Justin Kim,
Laura Perez Maquedano, Marcos Plaud Rivera, Doc Polk,
Madeleine Sargent, Madeline Ulevich, Yuki Yu

Center for the Arts

Interim Director: Laura Paul

Interim Associate Director for Programs: Michelle Grove

Associate Director for Facilities & Technical Operations:
Mark Gawlak

Art Director: John Elmore

Press and Marketing Director: Andrew R. Chatfield

Box Office Manager: Kyle Beaudette

Assistant Director for Programs: Hanna Oravec

Technical Director/CFA Theater Manager: Suzanne M. Sadler

Assistant Technical Director/Sound & Video Specialist:
Robert Russo

Assistant Technical Director/Scenery Specialist: Charles Carroll

Business Manager: Alecia Goldfarb

Program Manager, Center for the Arts Initiatives: Rosemary Lennox

Program Coordinator: Ariana Molokwu

Gallery Supervisor: Aidan Earle

Assistant Technical Director: Cazimir Bzdrya

Technical Associate: Anthony Hernandez

Art Studio Technician, Assistant Professor of Art: Kate TenEyck

Upcoming Events

Thesis Theater Production

Resistentialism

Friday, February 3 through Sunday, February 5, 2017 at 7pm

Russell House

Working with the writings of Allan Kaprow and disparate musical and sonic sources, this performance plays with enjoyment, individuality, and perception in the boundary between art and life. This thesis project was conceived and created by Anthony Dean '17, in partial fulfillment for Honors in Theater.

Thesis Theater Production

Mnemonic

Tuesday, March 7 through Thursday, March 9, 2017 – times TBD – please call box office or check CFA web page for more information

Patricelli '92 Theater

"Seeing a naked body of any age we remember our own, putting ourselves in someone else's place, in the gully, for example, five thousand years ago." Virgil is desperately longing for Alice, who abruptly disappeared in search of his thought-to-be-dead father. A mummified corpse is discovered in the mountains, dating back to more than 5000 years ago. As each character remembers the events of the past, connections appear between the two narratives. Mnemonic, by the British theatre company Complicite, incorporates its two parallel stories to explore the act of remembering and the fragmented nature of memory.

This thesis production is directed by Ali Jamali '17, in partial fulfillment for Honors in Theater.

Upcoming Events Cont'd.

Theater Capstone Production

up your aesthetic.

Friday, April 7 and Saturday, April 8, 2017 – Time and Location

TBA – please call box office or check CFA web page for more information

"Women are defective by nature." – Aristotle

A disruptive, devised, women-only performance piece juxtaposing the rage and grief felt by modern women with the Ancient Greek myths of the Amazons.

This senior capstone project in theater was conceived and created by Jessica Cummings '17, Constance Des Marais '17, Nola Werlinich '17 and Cheyanne Williams '17

Thesis Theater Production

Through Everchanging Tracks of Neverchanging Space

Thursday, April 13 through Saturday, April 15, 2017

Time and Location TBA – please call box office or check CFA webpage for more information

Text adaptation and direction by May Treuhaft-Ali '17

"Plenty to see and hear and feel yet. Feel live warm beings near you. Warm beds: warm fullblooded life."

Ulysses is a love story. It is a story about the love between a husband and wife, and the love between a parent and child. It is a story about three individuals searching for a sense of belonging in a community that marginalizes them. It is a story about flowers, hot chocolate, farts, flirtations, shooting stars, and the myriad moments that can transform an ordinary day into an epic journey. Because Ulysses is the epic of everyday life, this piece will be site-specific and take place in locations throughout the Wesleyan campus, as a theatrical intervention in the public sphere.

This thesis production is directed by May Treuhaft-Ali '17, in partial fulfillment for Honors in Theater

Upcoming Events Cont'd.

Faculty Theater – Islands

Friday, April 21 through Sunday, April 23, 2017 – times TBD – please call box office or check CFA web page for more information

CFA Theater

“Islands” is a play celebrating the arts as a means of resistance to colonialism, slavery and injustice. The story begins with two seventeenth century European superpowers trading Manhattan for an East Indies spice island, without the consent of their inhabitants, and moves through the history of other islands of oppression from Malcolm X in solitary confinement to Nelson Mandela’s Robben Island to Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar to contemporary Puerto Rico to African Immigrants in refugee camps on Lampedusa.

Special thanks: Dawn Alger, Rebecca Foster, Seamus Edson, John Elmore, Anthony Dean, Emma Pasarow, Zack Lobel, Olivia Morris, the residents of 34 Lawn, the residents of 85 Home, Russell Goldman, Miranda Gohh, Josh Davidoff, Eddie Torres, Calvin Anderson, Marcela Oteíza, Ron Jenkins, Lex Spirtes, Noah Sellman, Christian Milik, Nola Werlinich, Maia Nelles-Sager, Celina Bernstein, Sofie Somoroff, Cazimir Bzydyra, Suzanne Sadler