# **Eat Your Young** a new play by J.C. Pankratz directed by Shamus

October 6-16 | Tickets: BostonPlaywrights.org

**Boston University** College of Fine Arts School of Theatre and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences





# A WELCOME FROM OUR ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Welcome to Boston Playwrights' Theatre and to the first production of our 2022-2023 season: *Eat Your Young* by J.C. Pankratz, directed by Shamus. This is also my first production as BPT's Artistic Director, carrying forward a season that was put in motion by the legendary Kate Snodgrass, who retired this year after an extraordinary 35 years at the helm!

I am delighted to be here and to be producing five brand-new plays by MFA playwrights. This group of writers—whose entire graduate education has taken place during a global pandemic—offer us critical reflections on the big questions of this moment: "How do we live when we feel like the world is ending?" and "If our very survival depends on resisting old ideas and seeding new ones, what stories must we tell—and how?"

I can't think of a better way to begin than with J.C.'s magical, funny, chaotic play. *Eat Your Young* muses on the capricious power of the natural world and posits a thin line between decimation and transformation. There are many leaps of imagination in the play, but sadly the situation of the young campers is not one of them; unregulated "wilderness therapy" programs have been cited for widespread neglect and abuse of their teen participants. You can find more information in our production resources at **BostonPlaywrights.org > Eat Your Young.** Still, I'm betting that this tough, charming, and silly group of campers will steal your heart, as they have mine—reminding us that even in the darkest and weirdest of times, the key is to stick together.

Enjoy the show!

Best,

Megan Sandberg-Zakian Artistic Director, Boston Playwrights' Theatre

P.S. Come back again in November for David L. Caruso's Sävë thë Whälës, etc., an environmental comedy about tourists who decide to visit the last glacier on Earth.

## *Eat Your Young* a new play by J.C. Pankratz directed by Shamus

A BU New Play Initiative production, produced by Boston Playwrights' Theatre and the Boston University College of Fine Arts School of Theatre

Scenic Designer Lighting Designer Sound Designer Costume Designer Properties Artisans Stage Manager Associate Director Assistant Lighting Designer Assistant to the Director Scenic Charge Fight and Intimacy Director Production Assistant Electrician Set Crew

> House Manager Front of House Staff

Marc Andrea Vento Eduardo M. Ramírez Kortright Sean A. Doyle Gabe Bagdazian Alec Haklar, Shamus Geena M. Forristall\* Shira Helena Gitlin Zachary Connell Ambria M. Benjamin **Evan Johnson** Yo-EL Cassell **Isabelle Sanatdar Stevens** Conor Thiele Simone Crowder, Matt Leal, Sydney Love Svdnev Love Simone Crowder, Tina Esper, Matt Leal

### CAST

Lucia	Abacus Dean-Polacheck
Jelly	Charlotte Stowe
Quinn	Maez Gordon
	Ross Beschler*
Marty	
Marty B	Jay Eddy
Ginger	Sunny Feldman

### UNDERSTUDIES

For Ginger—Madeleine Bedenko; for Lucia—Alexa Connors; for Marty—Charley Danger Rusk; for Quinn—Maya Bea Scott-Luib

### Eat Your Young runs 2 hours, 15 minutes. There will be a 10-minute intermission.

A strobe light effect is used during the performance.

Content warnings: Substance abuse disorders, drug use, self-harm, body dysmorphia, disordered eating, fatphobia, violence, and occasional misgendering. More detailed information and a resource list are available here.

\*Appearing through an Agreement between Boston Playwrights' Theatre and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

The video and/or audio recording of this performance by any means whatsoever is strictly prohibited.

# **CAST & CREW**

GABE BAGDAZIAN (Costume Designer, they/them) is a New York-based costumer and 2022 graduate of Boston University's Costume Design MFA program. They have done work with Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, New England Conservatory, Boston Early Music Festival, Global Arts Live, and College Light Opera Company in Massachusetts, as well as Unity Theatre Collective, Kingsmen Shakespeare Company, and Rubicon Theatre Company in California. For more information, please visit www.gabrielbagdazian-costumedesign.com and @gabrielbdesigns on Instagram.

**MADELEINE BEDENKO (Understudy Ginger)** is a senior Theatre Arts major at Boston University. Madeleine is an actor, playwright, singer, mask-maker, dramaturg, and poet. Most recently, she performed as Ophelia in *Hamlet* directed by Rani O'Brien (Boston University). She stage managed a 2019 production of *Everything That Never Happened* directed by Avital Shira, and assistant stage managed *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, directed by Brian Cavanaugh at Buffalo's Shakespeare in Delaware Park (summer 2022). Madeleine is beyond excited to be a part of this beautiful new works process and would like to thank the team for opening up the room to her.

**AMBRIA M. BENJAMIN (Assistant to the Director)** is a sophomore Theatre Arts major at Boston University, happy to be collaborating with the cast and creative team. Whether on stage or behind the scenes, Ambria treasures the opportunity to engage in theatre any way she can. Of the many acting roles she's played, her favorites are Francine/Lena in *Clybourne Park*, Minnie Fay in *Hello*, *Dolly!*, Beneatha in *A Raisin in the Sun*. Thanks to her many teachers in and out of the classroom, Ambria is expanding her horizons into new creative learning experiences and becoming a well-rounded, multi-faceted theatre artist.

**ROSS BESCHLER\* (Marty, he/him/his)** is a founding member of the Wilma Theatre's resident Hothouse Company in Philadelphia. Mainstage productions include *Our Class, Bootycandy, Describe the Night*, the U.S. premiere of Tom Stoppard's *The Hard Problem, Antigone* directed by Theodouros Terzopoulos, and Dmitry Krymov's *The Cherry Orchard*. Ross is also a member of the immersive performance collective Die-Cast, whose *Temporary Occupancy* won the juried prize at No Vacancy, Miami Beach 2020. Other notable projects include *Indecent* (Arden), *Maple & Vine* (City Theatre), *Knives in Hens* (Theatre Exile), *Kate Crackernuts* (The Flea), *Three Sisters Part Two* (EgoPo), *End Days* (People's Light), and Romeo Castellucci's *Julius Caesar. Spared Parts* at the 2016 Fringe-Arts and Crossing the Line festivals. Ross teaches acting at Rider University. MFA: Temple University. TV and Film: *Blue Bloods, Servant, The Jersey Connection, Flight of the Cardinal.* www.rossbeschler.com

**YO-EL CASSELL (Fight and Intimacy Director)** returns to BPT having previously provided the intimacy direction for *Laughs in Spanish*. Locally, his direction, movement direction and choreography has been featured in *Lilly's Revenge* featuring Taylor Mac (American Repertory Theater), *Mr. Burns A Post Electric* 

Play as well as The Understudy (Lyric Stage), Straight White Men (New Repertory Theatre), Colossal (The Booth Theatre), and both The Inheritance and The *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime* (IRNE Award nomination for Best Choreography) for SpeakEasy Stage. His work was also featured in a concert version of *Kiss Me Kate* with Marc Kudisch and Kerry O-Malley at the Boston Hatch Shell as well as A Little Night Music, Alcina, and Orpheus in the Underworld for Boston Opera Collaborative. For eight years, he was the Resident Movement Director Choreographer for Commonwealth Shakespeare Company and has curated for the Boston LandMark Orchestra as well as directed the Off-Broadway production of *Moonlight Interior* in NYC. A graduate of The Boston Conservatory at Berklee and a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, Yo-EL is currently Head of Movement/Assistant Professor for Boston University's College of Fine Arts School of Theatre and a commissioned artist/board member for Celebrity Series of Boston Community Engagement. Mr. Cassell is the recipient of the national Lotte Kaliski Award for Gifted Creative Artists and Minds.

**ALEXA CONNORS (Understudy Lucia, she/they)** is a second-year Theatre Arts student at Boston University School of Theatre. Alexa wishes to continue a career in acting and playwriting and is thankful for the opportunity to be a part of *Eat Your Young* at BPT!

**ABACUS DEAN-POLACHECK (Lucia, they/any)** is a junior Theatre Arts major attending Boston University, where they have previously been seen in *Everybody (Love)* directed by Melisa Pereyra and Jeb Burris, and are currently developing their arts research project *The Queero's Journey* with collaborator Dante Gonzalez. They are delighted to be making their BPT debut, and would like to express gratitude for the devising theatre spaces they had access to as an awkward nonbinary teenager, the opportunity to reprise the experience of being an awkward nonbinary teenager, and their bosses at Made-by-Me paint your own pottery for not being mad at them for missing work.

**SEAN A. DOYLE (Sound Designer, he/him/his)** returns to BPT after designing *Lorena* last season. This past summer season, he was the Sound Supervisor for Barrington Stage Company. Mr. Doyle has designed for Lehigh University, Touchstone Theatre, Fresno State University, The Roxey Ballet Company, The Women's Shakespeare Company, New Harmony Repertory Theatre, Just Off Broadway Theatre, Wheelock Family Theatre, and The United Way of Connecticut. Mr. Doyle received his Master of Fine Arts in sound design from Boston University, and is an alum of Lehigh University.

JAY EDDY (Marty B) is a writer, composer, and performer. They are a recent Richard Rodgers awardee, New Jewish Culture fellow, New Harmony and Yaddo resident, New York Foundation for the Arts and Connecticut Office of the Arts fellow. Their work has been called, "Bracingly original, astonishingly resourceful, and daringly theatrical," and, "a joy to listen to...a beautiful tapestry of sound." As a performer, they've been called, "Kate McKinnon on a cocaine bender." Favorite roles include Crow in *The Tooth of Crime* (The Connelly Theater), Sally Bowles in *Cabaret* (Lyric Hall), and two turns as Nina in *The Seagull* (Columbia Stages and MXAT). MFA Playwriting, Boston University—come back to BPT this spring for their thesis: *Alligator-a-Phobia in 3D!*. MA Music Theatre, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. Thank you to the whole *Eat Your Young* team.

**SUNNY FELDMAN (Ginger)** is excited to return to Boston Playwrights' Theatre in *Eat Your Young*, a work to which she feels a deep connection. She has appeared *Desdemona* (INSeries Theater), *Rising* (Emerald Necklace Conservancy Beyond Walls), *Antigone* (Boston Conservatory), *Stop Kiss* (Little Theatre of Alexandria), and *Stop and Frisk* (Boston Playwrights' Theatre). Up next, Sunny looks forward to completing their senior year at Boston Conservatory at Berklee where she is pursuing a BFA in Contemporary Theatre, a program that focuses on devised, immersive, and multidisciplinary theatre. Sunny is grateful to their fellow cast members for their wonderful support.

**GEENA M. FORRISTALL\* (Production Stage Manager, they/them/theirs)** is a producer, stage manager, gender consultant, and artist whose work centers on queerness and community. In their work (and life), they are passionate about joy, magic, drag, and all things just-a-bit weird. They have most recently produced with Sparkhaven Theatre (*Tales from Camp Strangewood, Nosferatu the Vampyr*), and stage managed with organizations such as New Repertory Theatre, Central Square Theater, Lyric Stage Company, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, Off the Grid, Theater for the New City, Punchdrunk NYC/Emursive's *Sleep No More*, and the international tour of *Kultar's Mime*, among others. You can also find them at StageSource, where they have been the Membership Manager since 2020. Geena is a member of the Gender Explosion initiative and Actors' Equity Association, and holds a BFA from Hofstra University.

### SHIRA HELENA GITLIN (Associate Director and Gender Consultant, they/

**them)** is a director, dramaturg, gender consultant, and musical theatre enthusiast. They have directed for the National Women's Theatre Festival, Moonbox Productions, Flat Earth Theatre, Sparkhaven Theatre, Playwrights' Platform, the Boston Theater Marathon, and more. As a gender consultant, Shira has held Transgender Inclusion workshops for Dramatists Guild, Directors Lab North, individual theatre makers, and various theatres and organizations across the U.S. and Canada. They are also a member of StageSource's Gender Explosion Initiative. Shira is a graduate of the Arden Professional Apprentice Class 26, was an Artistic Fellow at SpeakEasy Stage Company, and is an alumni of Directors Lab North in Toronto, Canada. They have a BA from Hampshire College in directing with an emphasis on musical theatre studies. Upcoming projects include *Indecent* (Concord Players) and *The Prom* (SpeakEasy Stage Company). For more information, please visit shirahelenagitlin.com.

**MAEZ GORDON (Quinn, they/them)** is a passionate storyteller in many mediums. They are currently pursuing degree in Film and Television at Boston University's College of Communication while simultaneously studying acting and directing in the School of Theatre. During their time at BU, they have been involved in the School of Theatre's *Shakespeare's R&J* (Romeo) and *Grounded*  (The Pilot), and performed in *Legacy* (Harper) during the 2022 Boston Theater Marathon. They will be graduating college this winter and continuing their career in stage and screen in New York. For more information visit **www.maezgordon.com**.

**EDUARDO M. RAMÍREZ KORTRIGHT (Lighting Designer)** is a Boston University MFA student in lighting design. He has designed *Patterns of Wind* (Boston University), *The Legend of Georgia McBride* (Boston University), *Revitalized* (Teatro Chelsea), BUSTI (Boston University), *Romeo and Juliet* (Loyola University New Orleans), and *Everybody* (Southern Rep Theatre). Some other credits include Technical Director for Southern Rep Theatre, Director for Theatre for One projects at Loyola University New Orleans, and Southern Rep Theatre One Act Plays. For more information please visit www.emramirez.com.

J.C. PANKRATZ (Playwright, they/them) is a queer, non-binary, transgender playwright and educator writing genre-defying work about gender, class, trauma, and magic. Their plays include *Egg Tooth* (distinguished achievement, Jean Kennedy Smith Award), *Redeemer Mine* (finalist, O'Neill Playwrights Conference) and *Joyless Eye* (semi-finalist, O'Neill Playwrights Conference; runner-up, Jean Kennedy Smith Award). Previous collaborators include Kitchen Dog Theater, Lily + Joan Theatre Company, Seattle Theatre Works and Boston Playwrights' Theatre. They are the recipient of the 2021 FMM Fellowship for Works in Heightened Language from Synecdoche Works for their play *Seahorse*.

**CHARLEY DANGER RUSK (Understudy Marty, he/him/his)** starred in Oscar Award-winning director Cynthia Wade's narrative short, *Sproutland*, released in April 2021 at the Florida Film Festival. The film has won numerous awards and has been featured in more than 20 festivals, with more slated for the coming months. He is an actor from New England currently in his ultimate year in Boston University's School of Theatre. In his junior year, he completed a semester of study in England at the London Academy of Music & Dramatic Art (LAMDA). For more information visit charleydanger.com.

**MAYA BEA SCOTT-LUIB (Understudy Quinn, she/they)** is a second-year Theatre Arts performance major at Boston University's School of Theatre. Their past education includes LaGuardia High School (Drama major, 2021). Maya Bea is a theatre artist, actor, improviser, musical theatre artist, singer-songwriter, and a theatre educator. They'd like to thank Lola and their family for all of their support.

**SHAMUS (Director, he/him/his)** is a third-year MFA Directing candidate at Boston University and is thrilled to be collaborating with J.C. Pankratz after a recent workshop of their new play, *Primordia, Oregon*. Other recent credits include Kevin Esmond's *Vintage Illustrations of the Devil* for PlayPenn; Jay Eddy's *Big Red Button* (Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Short Play Festival) and *Driving in Circles* (Improv Acadia); and the National Puppetry Conference at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. His original musical, *Close Your Legs, Honey*, co-created with Hannah Parke, premiered at PHIT Comedy and was subsequently produced

by Bootless Stageworks. For BU he directed *Machinal, Murder Ballad, Assistance, Shakespeare's R & J,* and *Grounded*. Other favorite collaborations include The Kimmel Center, the Arden, Die-Cast, Temple University and Philadelphia Young Playwrights. Next up: *Once* at Boston University, *Make Way for Ducklings* at Wheelock Family Theatre and *Alligator-a-Phobia in 3D!* right here at BPT! BA, Dickinson College. shamushuntermccarty.com @mononymous\_shamus

**ISABELLE SANATDAR STEVENS (Production Assistant, she/her)** is the writer of such works as *My Brother's Name* (Denis Johnson Playwriting Prize, Five College Consortium; Staged Reading at Horizon Theatre Co.'s YPF 2021), *Ella* (Staged Reading, Smith College), *Mehrsa and the Not So Good Telescope* (Staged Reading, Smith College), *The Elevator* (Horizon Theatre Co. Commission), and *Dreaming When Dead* (Gertrude Posner Spencer Prize). She is a recent graduate of Smith College where she studied theatre, English, and translation. This past summer she had the privilege and joy of working with New York Stage and Film as their Arts Administration Apprentice and the Associate Director of their annual Filmmaker's Workshop. Isabelle is currently a first-year MFA Playwriting candidate at Boston University. She is very excited to be assisting with BPT's production of *Eat Your Young*, and is grateful to work with some of the artists and creatives who make BU and Boston's theatre scene pop. @isabellesanatdarstevens #MAHSAAMINI

**CHARLOTTE STOWE (Jelly)** is absolutely thrilled to be making her Boston Playwrights' Theatre debut. She is a recent graduate from the Boston Conservatory's Contemporary Theatre BFA program. At the Conservatory she has been seen in *Metamorphoses* (Phaeton/Hades), *The Seagull* (Konstantin), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Puck), and *Horse Girls* (Margaret). As a multi-hyphenate theatre artist, Charlotte is also a playwright who, this past summer, brought her one-act *Missing Mercy* to Orlando Fringe and has most recently joined TC Squared's Playwriting lab! She would like to thank her mentors, found family, and wonderful partner for all of their love and support. You can learn more about her escapades in acting, playwriting, directing, and costume designing at www.charlottestowe.biz (or @charlottestowe99 on instagram if you won't judge my selfies).

MARC ANDREA VENTO (Scenic Designer) is a senior scenic design major in the College of Fine Arts at Boston University. He has designed and been involved in other BU productions including *Walking the Tightrope, The Infinite Energy of Ada Lovelace, Patterns of Wind*, and most recently *Exit the King*. Upon graduation, he intends on pursuing other scenic design opportunities both locally and internationally. He is grateful to have been a part of this team and to assist in bringing J.C. Pankratz's story to life.



### **SPECIAL THANKS**

Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Ludmila Cardoso de Brito, Allison Grace Davis

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### #EatBPT #BUarts #newplay



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### JACK WELCH PLAYWRIGHTS' FUND

We are grateful to our friends for their support of our mission—to provide a home for new works for the stage.

If you are interested in making a donation to Boston Playwrights' Theatre, please contact Managing Director Darren Evans at (617) 353-5899 or visit our online donation form at www.BostonPlaywrights.org.

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The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, part of the Rubenstein Arts Access Program, is generously funded by **David M. Rubenstein**.

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Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts.

This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KCACTF representative, and selected students and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year more than 1,500 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.

### Boston **PLAYWRIGHTS'** Theatre

Boston Playwrights' Theatre is an award-winning professional theatre at Boston University dedicated to new works. Founded in 1981 by Nobel Laureate Derek Walcott, the heart of BPT's mission is the production of new plays by students and alumni of BU's MFA Playwriting Program—a collaboration with BU's renowned School of Theatre. The program's award-winning alumni have been produced in regional and New York houses, as well as in London's West End. BPT's productions have been honored with numerous regional and Boston awards, including awards from the Independent Reviewers of New England (IRNE) and Boston Critics' Association (Elliot Norton Awards).

From class workshops to our Season of New Plays, BPT employs the best of New England's professional actors, directors, and designers to bring each playwright's vision to its first audiences.

Each spring we produce New Noises: Massachusetts Young Playwrights' Project. Area high schools work with professional playwrights, directors, and actors to see student works on stage for the first time.

Fifty local theatre companies join us annually for the Boston Theater Marathon, a showcase of new ten-minute plays by New England playwrights chosen each year from hundreds of entrants. Each play is produced by a different New England theatre company in a single ten-hour event with all proceeds going to charity.

When we are not producing plays, we continue our mission through the New Play Odyssey Program, which makes theatre space available to other New England theatre companies and playwrights for readings and festivals of new plays.

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