

UALBANY THEATRE

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC & THEATRE
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
PRESENTS

FRESH ACTS

A Festival of New Plays

Artistic Director: Kate Walat

Program A:

Wednesday, April 7 at 8pm & Saturday, April 10 at 2pm

Please Listen

by Witnie Dupre

Directed by Billy Feerick

Face the Music

by MJ Johnson

Directed by Liv Larson

Stage Manager: Naishaly Velez Galan

Program B:

Thursday, April 8 at 8pm & Saturday, April 10 at 8pm

Hope

by Christopher Guillaume

Directed by Colin Gioia

Brewed Kindred

by Ryan Buchholz

Directed by Natasha Daniels

Stage Manager: Ashley Lewis

Solo Showcase:

Friday, April 9, 3pm

Written & presented by Deborah Brannan, JadeElise Brown,
Ryan Buchholz, Natasha Daniels, Claire Dell-Priscoli, Jordyn Drue,
Witnie Dupre, Christopher Guillaume, Vyanna Hill, Ben Sinkora

*This production is made possible with generous support from
The John Orser '55 Theatrical Endowment*

The Company

Please Listen

Jasmine: Khemasia Pierce
Ebony: Gnereke Traore
Lynnette: Shadie Thompson

Face the Music

Maria: Rheonna Koss
Charlie: Marilyn Feerick
The Mayor: Daniel Croteau
The Guest: Andrew Mercado
Townfolk #1: Khemasia Pierce
Townfolk #2: Gnereke Traore

Hope

Jeff: Jack Besterman
Woman: JadeElise Brown
Grace: Yetunde Babalola
Mike: Joseph Olawoye
Baldwin: Claire Dell-Priscoli
Ria: Emily English

Brewed Kindred

Delilah: Claire Morrow
Jonah: Jack Besterman
Mr. Whalers: Joseph Olawoye
Carianne: Yetunde Babalola
Trina: Emily English

Pre-show music:

“Day Trips” and “Free to Use” by Ketsa,
“Vienna Beat” by Blue Dot Sessions, “Beyond the Line” by Bensound,
“Savour the Moment” by Shane Ivers, “And Add” by Broke for Free

Welcome to FRESH ACTS 2021!

This is the fourth annual offering of the UAlbany Theatre Program's festival, with an exciting new approach to developing plays: collaborating online and presenting the work in livestream readings over Zoom. We will also share the works-in-progress in script format, in a collection together with our dramaturgs' interviews with the playwrights and directors. While we are not able to gather in person, the online readings and manuscript will allow us to share these new plays with the FRESH ACTS's largest audience ever.

FRESH ACTS is modeled on professional play development festivals across the country, such as the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Playwrights Conference and PlayLabs at the Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis. Festivals like these offer playwrights the opportunity for invaluable conversations with creative collaborators—directors, dramaturgs, and actors—to gain a better understanding of the theatrical potential of their plays before entering a full production process.

This year the in-person experience has been replaced by the Zoom rehearsal room, allowing collaboration to continue with perhaps even more urgency, as we all look for ways to connect and continue to create theatre.

The four plays in this year's FRESH ACTS were selected through a competitive submission process that began in December and continued through the start of the semester. Three of these works began in playwriting classes at UAlbany, and one was written in a creative burst over winter break. This year's festival also includes a Solo Showcase of five-minute pieces created and presented by 10 writers from our Crafting Solo Performance class this spring.

The FRESH ACTS pieces are as individual and diverse as the writers that created them. Thank you for being part of their process of development, adding the invaluable final element: the audience.

~ Kate Walat

PRODUCTION TEAM

Production Manager: Steve Michalek

Assistant Stage Managers: Jed Evans and Jade McGovern

Dramaturgs: Christopher Guillaume and Ashley Lewis

Marketing: Natasha Daniels

House Manager: Vanessa Miller

WHO'S WHO – Program A

DANIEL CROTEAU (The Mayor) is a Senior at the University at Albany. He is a Communication major and Theater minor. This is first time participating in a production at the university and he is excited to participate in this unique experience of FRESH ACTS. He would like to thank his family, peers, and the staff at the university for their continued support and camaraderie that helped him get to where he is today.

WITNIE DUPRE (Playwright – *Please Listen*) is a Junior at the University at Albany. She is a Communications major with a minor in Theatre. FRESH ACTS will be her first production with the Theatre Department and her first time as a playwright. She is excited to be a part of this production because this is the first play she's ever written. Witnie would like to thank her friends and family for supporting her and the Theatre Program for giving her this opportunity.

JED EVANS (Assistant Stage Manager) is a Theatre major at the University at Albany. This is the first theatre production he has worked on. He is thrilled to be a part of it as an assistant stage manager. He would like to thank his family and friends for their support.

BILLY FEERICK (Director - *Please Listen*) is a Senior studying theatre and business at UAlbany. He participated in FRESH ACTS last year as a playwright, and is very excited to participate this year as a director.

MARILYN FEERICK (Charlie) is a Sophomore Theatre and English major. Her past productions with UAlbany include *Six Scenes in a Theatre*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Love and Other Destinations*. She is so jazzed to be a part of fresh acts this year and would like to thank the cast and crew!

NAISHALY VELEZ GALAN (Stage Manager) is a Sophomore at the University at Albany with a major in Theatre and Sociology and a minor in Film Studies. This is her first production with the Theatre Program at UAlbany. Her past work includes multiple productions at Albany High School and Illuminate Theatre in Albany, NY. She is very excited to be working on this production and extends her love and gratitude to her family, friends, colleagues, and the Universe.

MJ JOHNSON (Playwright – *Face the Music*) is a Senior at the University at Albany, with majors in Theatre and History. This is their third production with UAlbany, having previously worked as Video Designer for *New Works/New Ways* and Sound Board Operator for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. They are ecstatic to have the opportunity to take part in FRESH ACTS and work alongside such great company. This is their fourth virtual production, and they are consistently inspired by everyone's creative adaptability. They would like to thank their family, friends, and everyone who has helped encourage them.

RHEONNA KOSS (Maria) is a Junior at UAlbany. She is double majoring in Theater and Psychology and plans on continuing her psychology education in graduate school. Rheonna is playing "Maria" in *Face the Music*. This will be her second virtual show and she hopes to return to the stage soon. She has recently played "Duckling" in *Country's Good* and "Beatrice" in *Lovers and Lunatics*.

LIV LARSON (Director – *Face the Music*) is a Senior Theatre major, musical theatre minor at the University at Albany. This is her first time participating in the FRESH ACTS festival and she is thankful for the opportunity to work with so many creative and hard-working people, including the stage managers, Kate Walat, and the amazing playwrights, directors, and actors.

ANDREW MERCADO (The Guest) is a Junior at Ualbany, majoring in both Music and Theatre. This is his first time performing in FRESH ACTS so he's very excited to perform and show off the students' amazing works.

KHEMASIA PIERCE (Jasmine, Townsfolk #1) is a Pre-med Freshman at the University at Albany with a major in Psychology and Theater with a minor in Acting. She is very excited to be a part of her first production and is honored to have been chosen for a role. She wants to send her thanks to everyone who believed in her and all the people who saw her potential. She cannot thank you all enough.

SHADIE THOMPSON (Lynnette) is a Graduate Student at University at Albany. She is a Higher Education Leadership and Policy major. This is her first production at the University at Albany. She is excited to work on this production of new works. She would

like to thank everyone and Theatre Program for giving her the opportunity.

GNEREKE TRAORE (Ebony, Townsfolk #2) is a first-year student at the University at Albany who is studying Human Biology as a major with a minor in Theatre. Without having worked on any previous works, she is still excited to be part of such a good organization. The Theatre Program is a place for family and growth and she can't wait to meet her cast mates and colleagues.

WHO'S WHO – Program B

YETUNDE BABALOLA (Grace, Carianne) is a Junior at the University at Albany with a major in Political Science and a minor in English. She is very excited to work on her first FRESH ACTS festival. She would like to thank her Black Theatre Productions family and her friends for their overwhelming support and guidance.

JACK BESTERMAN (Jeff, Jonah) is a Sophomore theatre major who's spent years working both onstage and behind the scenes. He's looking forward to his first acting role at the University at Albany after assistant directing for the first time last semester.

JADEELISE BROWN (Woman) is a Theatre major and a double minor in Creative Writing and Acting. She is very excited to be joining her first show on and off campus. She has loved the idea of *FRESH ACTS* ever since she ushered a show her freshman year and couldn't wait to audition. Her dream is to be in a horror movie and/or a role as a female superhero. She wants to thank her mom and dad for always believing in her. She wants to give a shoutout to everyone involved in the show; you are all so talented.

RYAN BUCHHOLZ (Playwright - *Brewed Kindred*) is a Senior Theatre major with a minor in Musical Theatre. This is Ryan's first FRESH ACTS festival. Previous plays include *Me, You, Them, and 'The Other One'* and *Exposure Therapy*. Previous performance credits include *Jerick (Mothman)*, *Snug (A Midsummer Night's Dream)*, and *Hanschen (Spring Awakening)*. He can be seen as a company member in the upcoming UAlbany production *Love and Other Destinations*. Instagram: @ryan_buchholz

NATASHA DANIELS (Director - *Brewed Kindred*) is a Senior who majors in Theatre and minors in Acting. She was previously in *Intimate Apparel* (Ester Understudy), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Mustardseed), *New Works/New Ways* (Neev), and in FRESH ACTS 2018- 2021 as an actor and playwright and now a director. She is very excited to get work on FRESH ACTS for a fourth year. She is very grateful for the opportunity. She wants to thank her family and friends for the support. She also wants to thank the cast and crew for their hard work. She hopes you'll guys enjoy the show.

CLAIRE DELL-PRISCOLI (Baldwin) is a Sophomore at the University at Albany, majoring in English and minoring in Theatre. Previous productions include shows such as *Suddenly Last Summer* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Claire is a solo performer who enjoys writing play-works, and playing lots of video games in her spare time. Claire wants to thank her friends and family for helping her get this far!

EMILY ENGLISH (Ria, Trina) is a Junior theatre major. Previous credits include Ali in *Mamma Mia*, and Poppy in *Six Scenes in a Theater*. You can see her this spring in *Love & Other Destinations*. Thank you to all her loved ones for their endless support and encouragement! Follow the merry misadventures on Instagram! @emilyoenglish

COLIN GIOIA (Director - *Hope*) is very excited to be a part of FRESH ACTS this year. He is a Senior Theatre major/Musical Theatre minor. His past credits include Jesus in *Godspell*, The Phantom in *Phantom*, and the Ensemble in *A Killer Party*. He would like to thank his girlfriend and family for their continued love and support.

CHRISTOPHER GUILLAUME (Playwright - *Hope*) is a Senior at the University at Albany with a major in Theatre and a minor in Business. He is very excited to be a part of his second FRESH ACTS festival. He would like to send gratitude to God, Kate Walat, and friends and family from Black Theatre Productions for all their love and support.

ASHLEY LEWIS (Stage Manager) is a Senior at UAlbany. She is a Theatre major and a Creative Writing minor. She has been the assistant stage manager for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at

UAlbany, *The Niceties* with The Black Theater Troupe of upstate NY, *ROE* with WAM Theatre and stage manager for *New Works/New Ways* at UAlbany.

JADE MCGOVERN (Assistant Stage Manager) is a Theatre major and Theatre Design/Tech minor, and this is their first production at UAlbany. She has worked as Assistant Director for productions of *Young Frankenstein* and *Elf Jr.* Throughout high school, Jade was a part of the running/technical crew for productions of *West Side Story*, *The Addams Family*, and *The Boy Friend*.

CLAIRE MORROW (Delilah) is a first-year student at the University at Albany, and is a Human Biology major. This is her first production at Ualbany. Some of the productions she's been in include: *Almost, Maine*; *The Drowsy Chaperone*; and *Mamma Mia*. She is very excited to participate in this production and would like to thank everyone involved as well as the Theater Program.

JOSEPH OLAWOYE (Mike, Mr. Whalers) is a Senior who aspires to be a professional actor, director and producer. He can be recognized for his performances at SUNY Albany as the Aborigine in *Our Country's Good*, George in *Intimate Apparel*, and in *Lovers & Lunatics*. He'd like to thank his professors Chad and Kim for pushing him to be the performer he is today, his family and Father.

WHO'S WHO – Solo Showcase

DEBORAH BRANNAN is a senior in the English Honors Program with a minor in Theatre at UAlbany. This is her first time performing in a UA production; however, she has done some solo work in other productions such as *Everyone Does It* at the Hudson Opera House and *Don't Iron While the Strike is Hot!* with DramaAcademics. She has performed her own work before, yet not as the sole performer and writer. As graduation quickly cometh, she would like to thank her family, teachers and professors, fellow students and performers, pizza, and God for getting her this far.

JADEELISE BROWN is a theatre major and a double minor in Creative Writing and Acting. She is very excited to be joining her first show on and off campus. She has loved the idea of FRESH

ACTS ever since she ushered a show her freshman year and couldn't wait to audition. Her dream is to be in a horror movie and/or a role as a female superhero. She wants to thank her mom and dad for always believing in her. She wants to give a shoutout to everyone involved in the show; you are all so talented.

RYAN BUCHHOLZ is a Senior Theatre major with a minor in Musical Theatre. This is Ryan's first Fresh Acts festival. Previous plays include *Me, You, Them, and 'The Other One'* and *Exposure Therapy*. Previous performance credits include *Jerick (Mothman)*, *Snug (A Midsummer Night's Dream)*, and *Hanschen (Spring Awakening)*. He can be seen as a company member in the upcoming UAlbany production *Love and Other Destinations*. Instagram: @ryan_buchholz

NATASHA DANIELS is a Senior who majors in Theatre and minors in Acting. She was previously in *Intimate Apparel* (Ester Understudy), *A Midsummer Night Dreams Mustardseed*, *New Works New Ways* (Neev), and in FRESH ACTS 2018- 2021 as an actor and playwright and now a director. She is very excited to get to work on FRESH ACTS for a fourth year. She is very grateful for the opportunity. She wants to thank her family and friends for the support. She also wants to thank the cast and crew for their hard work. She hopes you'll guys enjoy the show.

CLAIRE DELL-PRISCOLI is a Sophomore at the University at Albany, majoring in English and minoring in Theatre. Previous productions include shows such as *Suddenly Last Summer* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Claire is a solo performer who enjoys writing play-works, and playing lots of video games in her spare time. Claire wants to thank her friends and family for helping her get this far!

JORDYN DRUE is a Junior at University at Albany. She is a Human Biology major and a Theatre minor. She was a narrator for *Peter Pan* way back in elementary school and recently began pursuing theatre again her sophomore year in college. Her love with solo performing is strong because of the freedom to make the smallest choices and take the show wherever you want. She would like to give thanks to her father for always feeding the fire and keeping her passion for acting alive. She hopes that you all resonate with something today and follow your dreams!

WITNIE DUPRE is a Junior at the University at Albany. She is a Communications major with a minor in Theatre. FRESH ACTS will be her first production with the UAlbany Theatre Program and her first time as a playwright. She is excited to be a part of the Solo Showcase. Witnie would like to thank her friends and family for supporting her and the Theatre Program for giving her this opportunity.

CHRISTOPHER GUILLAUME is a Senior at the University at Albany with a major in Theatre and a minor in Business. He is very excited to be a part of his second FRESH ACTS festival. He would like to send gratitude to God, Kate Walat, and friends and family from Black Theatre Productions for all their love and support.

VYANNA HILL is a senior at UAlbany, whose major is Computer Science and Applied Math and minors Theatre and Math. They are excited about their first time in the theatre and original work through FRESH ACTS. Vyanna would like to thank their loved ones and Pebbles.

BEN SINKORA is a senior at the University at Albany. He is an English major and a Theatre minor. He is very excited to be a part of FRESH ACTS this semester as part of the Solo Showcase. Ben would like to dedicate his piece and performance to Betty Buckley, without whom none of this project would be possible. Ben hopes you are all just as excited as he is to watch everyone perform in FRESH ACTS. He appreciates you.

THEATRE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Theatre Program Director/Producer,
Head of History, Literature & Criticism.....**ESZTER SZALCZER**

Head of Design and Technology.....**STEVE MICHALEK**

Head of Performance.....**CHAD LARABEE**

Head of Acting.....**KIM STAUFFER**

Administrative Services**PAC STAFF**

THEATRE PROGRAM FACULTY AND STAFF

Professors.....ANDI LYONS
ESZTER SZALCZER

Associate Professor.....KATHRYN WALAT

Full Time Lecturers.....RENEÉ M. BELL
CHAD LARABEE
KIM STAUFFER
STEVE MICHALEK

Instructional Support Associate.....JOHN KNAPP

Adjunct Instructors.....MELISSA HURT
ANGELA LEDTKE
RACHEL MACKENZIE
R. CHRISTOPHER MAXWELL
BHAVESH PATEL

SUPPORT UALBANY THEATRE

Thank you for supporting 110 years of live theatre at the University at Albany. The UAlbany Theatre Program has a long, proud history of creating thought-provoking theatre while training the next generation of theatre artists, and we need your help to continue.

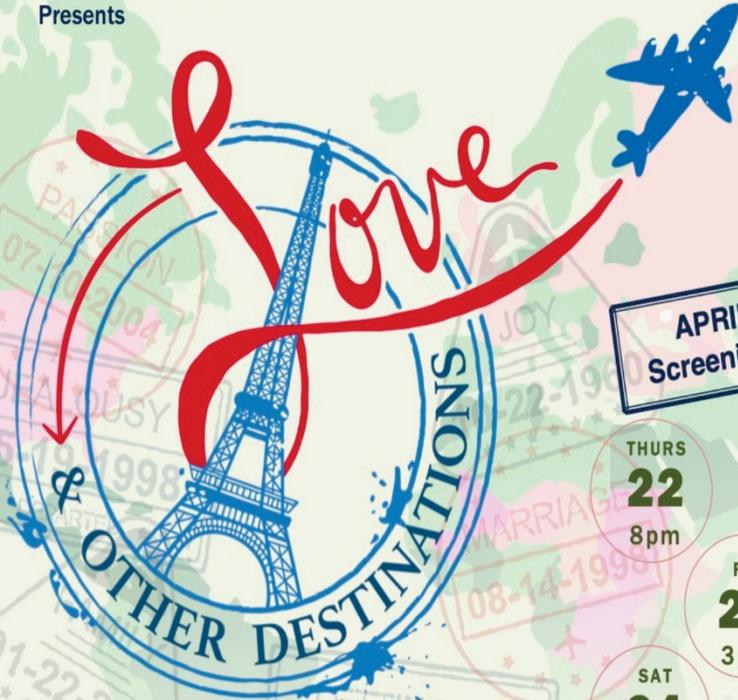
We hope you will consider making a donation to the UAlbany Theatre Program to support our productions, student scholarships, and special endowments to ensure we can provide the best training for our talented students for the next 100 years. You will also help cover a portion of the costs of the sets, costumes, lighting, royalties, and other expenses required to produce theatre. For more information on how you can help, contact the Theatre Program at 518-442-4200.

**www.albany.edu/theatre
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UALBANY THEATRE

College of Arts & Sciences
Presents



APRIL
Screenings

THURS
22
8pm

FRI
23
3pm

SAT
24
2pm

SAT
24
8pm

SUN
25
2pm

A MUSICAL FILM

Music By

BRAD ROSS

Lyrics By

MICHAEL COOPER

Lighting Designer
ANDILYONS

Costume Designer
RENEÉ M. BELL

Stage Manager
EMMETT COSTELLO

Music Director
JENNY KIM-GODFREY

Choreographer
LIV LARSON

Directed by
CHAD LARABEE

This production is made possible with generous support from The John Orser '55 Theatrical Endowment.

ADMISSION IS FREE AND REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.
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