Wait, She's Alive?! Playing Characters Based on Real, Living People

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Wait, She’s Alive?!
Playing Characters Based on Real, Living People

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts in Theatre

by

Courtney Gardner Jensen
Southern Utah University
Bachelor of Science in Theatre, 2003
Southern Utah University
Master of Education, 2006

May 2018
University of Arkansas

This thesis is approved for recommendation to the Graduate Council.

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Committee Member
Abstract

This thesis is for the performance of Sara Jane Moore in *Assassins* and for development, contributions, and performance of a new play written for our graduating class, *A Hamlet: West of Why*. This thesis also consists of my statement of artistry, documentation of artistic materials, and thesis related performance materials.
Acknowledgements

Special thanks to:

My husband, Jerry for loving who I am and what I do.

My mother, Wendy who has seen every production I’ve been in.

My father, Chris for keeping me grounded but giving me wings to fly.

My family, for their love and support.

My church family, who help me keep an eternal perspective.

My friends, for their unconditional love.

My professors, for their faith in me, guidance, and support to be the best artist I can.

Last and not least, my grad mates, Chris, Cody, Grant, and Charlie. You’ll forever be my “Breakfast Club.” Glad I got stuck in “Detention” with you.
Dedication

To Jerry. You know what you did.
Table of Contents

I. STATEMENT OF ARTISTRY.................................................................1

II. THESIS ROLE PROGRAM AND PHOTOGRAPH.................................2

III. THESIS PERFORMANCE PROGRAM AND PHOTOGRAPH....................13

IV. APPENDIX A: WEBSITE LINK..........................................................22

V. APPENDIX B: HEADSHOT.................................................................23

VI. APPENDIX C: RESUME .................................................................24

VII. APPENDIX D: PROOF OF PERMISSIONS........................................25
I. Statement of Artistry

When I was very young, I used to make Oscar acceptance speeches in the mirror. I thought I would be famous. I’ve always wanted to be an actress. I understand now that acting isn’t about being famous. And the idea of fame isn’t what keeps me wanting to act.

The feeling that I get watching a live theatre performance can uplift me, educate me, or just plain help me escape a bad day. I love that when I am on the “other side” and I get to collaborate with a bunch of people who want to make amazing art, I can give that feeling back to others in the audience. I can help them think about issues, deepen their empathy, make them laugh; forget their troubles. Most importantly, the audience will feel something.

This is why I act. To share a beautiful human experience with an audience, to work with others on creating art, and sharing those gifts I have been given. And as a bonus, I get to say and sing things that I otherwise wouldn’t be able to because I can’t come up with the words on my own. Thank goodness for playwrights!

With playing Sara Jane Moore, I learned to really trust my instincts. That little bit of confidence has helped me to see myself as an artist. A collaborator. A storyteller. I can now approach a job knowing that I can bring things to the table that another actor may not, because they are not me. Also, I know now that when I am in a room with a director or producers I know that I am a colleague and not a blank body who is told what to say and how. With my final graduate performance in *A Hamlet: West of Why*, I was able to approach the process with this wonderful, confident, and creative mindset and I plan on continuing that approach.

To be honest, sometimes I still make acceptance speeches in the mirror.
II. Thesis Role Program and Photograph

Program for *Assassins*, courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. Pages 18 and 1.
Program for *Assassins*, courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. Pages 17 and 2.
Dear Theatre Friends,

We would like to welcome you to the final production of our 2016-17 Mainstage Season with an outstanding production of the Tony Award winning musical, Assassins by Stephen Sondheim. This will be the second time the Department of Theatre (then the Department of Drama) will present this musical. The first time the piece was presented was April of 2002. The timing of that production was unique as it was presented just over 6 months after the attacks on our country on September 11, 2001 making our production a patriotic response to the tragic events. Fast forward 15 years to 2017 with a country that is undeniably divided, this dark and thought provoking musical takes on an even greater meaning in the lives of both audience members and participants alike.

In 2016-17 we produced 8 shows with approximately 450 opportunities where students experienced substantial and meaningful collaborative relationships between peers, faculty, staff and guest artists. The University Theatre, Global Campus Theatre, and Studio 404 serve as our formal “laboratories” where this work takes place, however, our classrooms serve as the foundation for their training. We take great pride in our hands-on approach to teaching the art and craft of producing high quality theatre. The productions you see on our stages are the direct result of our dedicated faculty, staff, and support members, as well as our engaged and talented student body. Our students exhibited great success as actors, directors, playwrights, scenic artists, carpenters, and designers earning national recognition in directing, lighting design, set design, and acting. Additionally, many of our students spent this past summer working at summer stock theatres and regional theatres. We also saw a number of recent graduates pursue their dreams of a career in the theatre by moving to New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago. So, keep an eye out for their successes – they are going to be abundant!

I want to close by thanking you all for your continued patronage of the Department of Theatre. We are grateful that you have chosen to be a part of our “family” by supporting the outstanding work of the students, faculty and staff. We believe that it is our obligation to challenge our audiences, students and faculty; to provoke; to inspire; and ultimately, to change. We hope that by participating in our productions – created by the next generation of world leaders in the arts and beyond – you are moved to engage in a dialogue about the world in which we live, and perhaps even more importantly, the world we will leave to those who come after us.

Once again, thank you for joining us, and enjoy Assassins.

Michael J. Riha
Chair of Theatre

OUR 2017-2018 SEASON SHOWS

Festival of New Works

Featuring new plays by Paul McInnis and Meghan McEnery

Join us for eight nights of exciting original works from the next generation of playwrights! This festival will include original one person shows, new plays from MFA playwrights Paul McInnis and Meghan McEnery. It will also feature Theatre for One, a mobile state-of-the-art performance space for one actor and one audience member conceived by Tony Award-winning scenic designer, Christine Jones. Admission to all festival events is included in both the Mainstage and All Stages season subscriptions. April 20 - 29, 2018

SECOND STAGE SERIES

The Undergraduate Project

Back by popular demand, The Undergraduate Project is known for its packed houses and large student draw. Come see our highly talented undergraduate students in a production selected especially for them. Previous titles include Macbeth, The Bachelorette, and Lilies on the Land.

Dates to be Announced

The Graduate Project

In the same vein as our Undergraduate Project, the Graduate Project is a show chosen specifically for our Masters of Fine Arts candidates. This production will showcase our talented MFA actors and designers. Previous examples include Down the Road, Love Letters, and The Mother**ker with the Hat.

Dates to be Announced

Visit theatre.uark.edu or call (479) 575-4752

Program for Assassins, courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. Pages 16 and 3.
WE ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE

MAINSTAGE SERIES

The Glass Menagerie
By Tennessee Williams
Our season opens with a powerful drama full of poetry and emotion from the author of Cat on a Hot Tin Roof and A Streetcar Named Desire. The Glass Menagerie depicts a fragmenting family against the stark background of the Great Depression. Join us for this classic piece of American theatre from Tennessee Williams.
September 29 - October 8, 2017

Avenue Q
Music and Lyrics by Robert Lopez & Jeff Marx, Book by Jeff Whitty
Humans and puppets share the stage in this hilarious tale of young adults learning to live and love in New York City. This Tony Award-winning Broadway musical has often been compared to a grown-up version of Sesame Street, featuring plenty of adult humor and hit songs such as “Everyone’s A Little Bit Racist” and “It Sucks To Be Me.” Don’t miss the first production of this gut-busting comedy to be done by a Northwest Arkansas theatre company!
November 10 - 19, 2017

Life is a Dream
By Pedro Calderon de la Barca
This Spanish masterpiece examines the eternal question of Fate vs Free Will. Two travelers in a mystical world discover a prince who has spent his life locked away alone due to a prophecy predicting he would destroy his father’s kingdom. Together, the strangers grapple with family turmoil and their own destinies in this whimsical tale.
February 16 - 25, 2018

Season subscriptions are now on sale!

When Caesar had conquered the enemies of Rome and the power that was his menaced the liberties of the people, Brutus arose and slew him. The stroke of his dagger was guided by his love of Rome. I answer with Brutus; he who loves his country better than gold or life.

- John Wilkes Booth

The issue here is who fired that shot, the Dotty or me? - Charles Guiteau

I killed the president because he was the enemy of the good people - the working people. I am not sorry for my crime. - Leon Czolgosz

Lousy capitalists! No picture! Capitalists! No one here to take my picture! Go ahead.

Push the button! - Giuseppe Zangara

When people around you treat you like a child and pay no attention to the things you say, you have to do something. - Lynette “Squeaky” Fromme

I did not want to kill anybody, but there comes a point when the only way you can make a statement is to pick up a gun. - Sara Jane Moore

I think it all begins with the lack of respect. - Samuel Byck

There is no borderline between one’s personal world and the world in general. - Lee Harvey Oswald


We are sitting in the dark, still wondering how such a deed could have been done by a man in his sound and sober senses in far and free America and appalled at the possibility of a sane man murdering an American president. An observation made after the McKinley assassination in 1901

The most violent element in society is ignorance. - Emma Goldman

Program for Assassins, courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. Pages 15 and 4.
About the Assassins cont.

Edwin Walker, an avowed anti-communist. In October, he began working at the Texas School Book Depository. On November 22, he assassinated President Kennedy. While being taken to court, on November 24, Oswald was shot and killed by Jack Ruby.

Samuel Byck (1920-1973)


Samuel Byck was divorced, had three children with whom he had little contact, and had few, if any friends. He was an unemployed taxi driver. Convicted that the American system was fundamentally corrupt, Byck wanted much of the little money he had to organizations like the Black Liberation Army. During the Christmas holidays of 1971, Byck got a job playing Santa Claus. On Christmas Eve he gave the White House wearing his Santa Claus suit. He concocted a plan, which he called "Fenster's Bizarro," to assassinate President Richard Nixon by hijacking a commercial jetliner and crashing it into the White House. He attempted to implement the plan at Baltimore-Washington International Airport on February 22, 1972, making it onto a commercial plane and killing two people before he killed himself as police stormed the aircraft.

Lytte "Squeaky" Fromme (1946-)

Attempted to assassinate President Gerald Ford as he left the Senator Hotel, Sacramento, California, September 6, 1975.

Lytte "Squeaky" Fromme was a middle-class suburban of Los Angeles. She took piano lessons and was a cheerleader in high school. In 1967 she met Charles Manson in a Venice, California. She became one of his disciples and a member of the Manson Family, which committed the brutal Tate-LaBianca murders for which Manson was tried and imprisoned. Though Fromme was not involved in that event, Fromme believed that Manson was the Messiah and that the world would be saved only if he fixed his teaching. She decided to commit a crime for which she would be arrested and put on trial; at the trial Manson would be called as a witness and would address the world. On September 6, 1975, she aimed a loaded gun at President Gerald Ford as he left the Senator Hotel in Sacramento. Manson was not allowed to testify at trial. Fromme was sentenced to life in prison and, despite a brief escape in 1987 when she attempted to see Charles Manson, she was released in 2010.

Sara Jane Moore (1930-)

Attempted to assassinate President Gerald Ford as he left the St. Francis Hotel, San Francisco, California, September 22, 1975.

Sara Jane Moore was a schoolgirl who grew up in Charleston, West Virginia. She heard music and was interested in the counterculture lifestyle and revolutionary politics of the time. The FBI recruited her as an informant and she became a double agent, providing the FBI with information on her radical friends and her radical friends with information on the FBI. Eventually she confessed her duplicity and was barred from the movement forever. On September 22, 1975, in an attempt to reestablish her radical credentials, she attempted to assassinate President Gerald Ford. She was given a life sentence and released from prison in 2007, after serving 33 years.

John Hinckley (1955-)


John Hinckley was the son of a successful oil company executive and self-styled "model liberal" father. His upbringing in the nation's capital was not particularly happy; his drug addiction began as a teenager and continued until his late 20s. He attended college at Texas Tech for seven years without graduating. He returned home and lived with his parents, living in his parent's basement for as long as his father would permit. Hinckley developed an obsessive infatuation with the movie actress, Jodie Foster. He saw her film, "Taxi Driver," at the time. His delusional attempts to meet Foster failed, he developed a plan which would make him impossible to ignore. He attempted to assassinate President Ronald Reagan on March 30, 1981. He fired six shots, hitting four people, including Reagan and Press Secretary James Brady. He was tried and found not guilty by reason of insanity. In September 2018, he was released from a mental hospital after more than 30 years.

Program for Assassins, courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. Pages 14 and 5.
About the Assassins

John Wilkes Booth (1838-1865)
Assassinated President Abraham Lincoln during a performance of "Our American Cousin" at Ford's Theatre, Washington, DC, April 14, 1865. Although his brother, Edwin, was the pre-eminent actor of his day, John Wilkes Booth was himself, in the words of one critic, "a star of the first magnitude," especially in the South. When the Civil War broke out, he became a passionate supporter of the Confederate cause. As a Southern victory seemed likely, Booth determined to plunge the Union Government into chaos by assassinating Lincoln, General Grant, Vice-President Johnson and Secretary of State Seward, all on the same night. His co-conspirators either failed or died, and only Booth and Lewis Powell escaped. Powell was captured in a barn in Virginia, where he was either killed or killed himself to avoid capture.

Charles Guiteau (1841-1882)
Assassinated President James Garfield in the waiting room of the Baltimore & Potomac Railroad Station, Washington, DC, July 2, 1881. Charles Guiteau pursued many different careers, from the law to evangelism, and failed at all of them. In 1880 he tried his hand at politics, composing a speech for the Republican Presidential candidate, James Garfield. Although in all likelihood Guiteau never saw the speech, Guiteau believed that it was responsible for his election and asked Garfield to appoint him ambassador to France. When the appointment was not forthcoming, he determined that Garfield should be "removed." Guiteau shot Garfield twice in the back. At his trial Guiteau pleaded insanity, dances, played, shouted out and stabbed the jury. On the morning of his execution he composed a poem, "I am Going to the Lord's," and pronounced it on the gallows, "Praise to music, these verses may be rendered effective."

Leon Czolgosz (1873-1901)
Assassinated President William McKinley during a public speech at the Temple of Music Pavilion at the Pan-American Exposition, Buffalo, New York, September 6, 1901. Leon Czolgosz, the son of immigrants recently arrived from Poland, was put to work at the age of five. By the time he was twenty, he was a full-time laborer in a glass factory. In 1897 he lost his job and began attending political meetings and reading radical literature. On September 6, 1901, he assassinated President William McKinley. Czolgosz freely acknowledged his guilt and his trial lasted less than eight hours. When the cold and composed assassin was strapped into the electric chair, he turned to the witnesses and "in a clear and distinct voice" repeated the explanation he had given since his arrest. Czolgosz's act, the third presidential assassination, brought the wrath of public opinion upon anarchist groups and resulted in federal protection of the Secret Service.

Gustave Zangara (1890-1933)
Attempted to assassinate President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt as Roosevelt greeted well-wishers at Miami, Florida, February 15, 1933. Gustave Zangara was in immigrant, coming to the United States in 1923 from his native Calabria. He was a bricklayer who had abandoned his employment because of burning pains in his stomach. Three pears were the focal point of his life. He attributed them to his having been taken out of school and put to work at the age of six and blamed him for his career and his evil "tesserae." Since my stomach hurt I got even with capitalists by killing the President." On February 15, 1933, he attempted to assassinate President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt as he spoke in a crowd of supporters. Too short to see over the crowd, he stood on a chair, which wobbled, sending him to miss Roosevelt, and instead kill Mayor Anton Cermak of Chicago.

Lee Harvey Oswald (1939-1963)
Assassinated President John F. Kennedy from the sixth floor of the Texas Book Depository, Dallas, Texas, November 22, 1963. Born in New Orleans, the youngest of three boys whose father died two months after his birth, he also left home and joined the Air Force until he was four and his mother remarried. Although bright he played truant from school and came to the attention of the authorities. He joined the Air Force and was court-martialed. He "defected" to the Soviet Union where he was refused citizenship, grew disillusioned, and attempted suicide. Oswald met the 19-year-old Marina Prusakova and they married less than six weeks later. They moved to the United States in June of 1962. In April of 1963, Oswald tried to kill Fidel Castro General

Program for *Assassins*, courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. Pages 13 and 6.
Who’s Who in the Production

Jason Burrow (Music Director) recently joined the faculty at the University of Arkansas as Assistant Professor of Musical Theatre. New York credits include A Raisin in the Sun (CTG/NT), Capricorn (Theatre Squared), and Charles Strouse, Alan Menken, and Glenn Yarbrough’s The Hunchback of Notre Dame (Theatre Squared). He is currently the music director for the 2023-24 season of the Arkansas Shakespeare Festival. Jason holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Arkansas and Master of Music degree from Ohio University.

Noah Chace (Ensemble/Ivy) is from Fayetteville, AR. He is a freshman at Fayetteville High School. His previous credits include Jesus Christ Superstar (Greenville High School, Logan, October 2022) and Urinetown (Greenville High School, Logan, April 2023).

Emily Clarkson (Lighting Designer) was born in a small Michigan town some years ago. She has a background in acting and design and enjoys working with light. She is currently a student at the University of Arkansas Department of Theatre.

Will Davis (John Hinckley) is thrilled to share his talents with the cast and crew of Assassins. He is a sophomore at the University of Arkansas, where he has performed in over 20 productions. His recent credits include Richard III (Hamlet), The Tempest (Prospero), and A Christmas Carol (Ebenezer Scrooge).

Anna Grace Estates (Ensemble) is from Little Rock, AR. Her previous credits include Alice in Wonderland (Rocky River Players), The Little Mermaid (Arkansas Arts Center), and Beauty and the Beast (Arkansas Arts Center).

Chandler Reid Evans (John Wilke Booth) is from Little Rock, AR. He is currently a student at the University of Arkansas Department of Theatre, where he is pursuing a career in acting.

Program for Assassins, courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. Pages 12 and 7.
Who's Who in the Production

Landen Stickler (Ensemble) is a freshman Theatre Performance major at the University of Arkansas. Hailing from Billings, Missouri, he has vast experience in school theatre and forensics. He would like to thank his family, friends, and past and present directors and educators for their overwhelming support as he pursues a career in theatre. This is his first main stage production.

All Wright (Loretta "Squeaky" Toomey) is a senior Theatre major from Mountainburg, Arkansas. Previous credits include Sorrel in A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Corinna in King Lear, and Chloe in Twelve Night with The Circle Mechanicals. Her future plans include pursuing a career in acting and working for a Shakespeare company.

Nikkar Zefti (Assistant Stage Manager) is from right here in Fayetteville, Arkansas. Her previous credits include Ajax for American Idiot performance in The Cherry Orchard as Ophelia, Doctor Faustus as Mephistopheles, and The Unlikely Monologue in the ensemble. In the future, she plans on attending Stella Adler’s summer conservatory for acting and pursuing an MFA in acting.

Jacob Gibson (Ensemble) is a junior at the University of Arkansas. He is a transfer student from the University of Central Arkansas, majoring in Criminal Justice. His interest in theatre began sparked after coming to the University of Arkansas. In the past, he has worked backstage on multiple shows before deciding to move into stage management. He was in an assistant stage manager for The Diary of Anne Frank. This is his first show as a stage manager. After he graduates in the fall, he plans on pursuing a career in stage management.

Lauren Green (Ensemble) is from Bentonville, AR. She is a 2013 graduate of Bentonville High School. Her previous credits include Blanks in The Turning of the Shrew at The Classical Edge. She has also played Jackie in King Lear, Dan in KILLER at the University of Arkansas as well as Kate Bell in Killing Pictures. She will be moving to NYC this May to pursue acting professionally. She plans to move back here one day to teach drama and literature at Bentonville High School.

M.J. Hall (Costume Designer) is from Detroit, MI. She has a BFA in Theatrical Design & Technology with a specialization in Costume Design. She is a second year MFA Candidate in Costume Design. Her previous credits include Costume designer for The Metal Children at the University of Arkansas, Eurydice at the University Theatre, Forset at the Bonneville Theater, Birth and After Birth, Time Stand Still, and Broken Glass at the Studio Theater, and Rapture, Blister, Burn with the Metro Theater Company in Detroit, MI. Her plan after graduating with her degree is to teach at a college level.

Maggie Hanlin (Emma Goldman) is from Ft. Worth, TX. She is a Senior drama major. Her previous credits include Lysistrata at Lysistrata, Kate in Turning of the Shrew at Classical Edge Theatre, iris in Little Boy in Little Rock at Arkansas New Play Fest, Mike Isaac in Heads Gutter, Celia in KILLER, Myra in Killing Pictures at the University of Arkansas. She plans to eventually move to Chicago where she plans on taking comedy classes and pursuing acting.

Maggie Harless (Assistant Stage Manager) is a senior Theatre major from Fayetteville, Arkansas. Previous production credits include assistant stage manager for American Idiot and Eurydice at the University of Arkansas. Previous performance credits include Ensemble in Lysistrata at MFA, Frank in The Diary of Anne Frank. In light of her rapidly approaching graduation, she plans to have at least several professional credits and to continue working towards attending graduate school in fall of 2018.

Amy Herzberg (Director) is a Distinguished Professor and Head of Acting for the Theatre Department. She has extensive professional credits as an actor and director, including Alabama Shakespeare Festival, La Jolla Playhouse, Stages Rep, English Theatre Berlin, and San Diego Rep, where she was part of the resident acting company. Her touring includes The Actors Center in New York, American Conservatory Theatre, and an MFA in Acting from California Institute of the Arts. Amy is co-founder and Associate Artistic Director of TheatreSquared, a national award-winning theatre in Northwest Arkansas. Honors include the Kennedy Center’s National Acting Teacher Fellowship, Baum Faculty Teaching award, Governor’s Art Award, and the Fulbright-College Master Teacher award. She serves as co-chair for the National Alliance of Acting Teachers. Amy is from Phoenix, Arizona. Future plans include hopefully working with the wonderful and talented students at the U of A and hanging out with her amazing husband and delightful dog. Amy also has two cats.

Program for Assassins, courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. Pages 11 and 8.
Who's Who in the Production
Jonathan Benjamin Jarman (Proprietor) is from Oshkosh, WI. He is in his final semester of the undergraduate program. His previous credits include Ensemble in Green Day’s American Idiot, Simon Bates in Hay Fever and originating the role of Jeff in Poor Relations. He plans to pursue work as an actor/continues to grow.

Courtney Jansen (Tessa Jane Moore) is from Blackfoot, Idaho and a second year MFA Acting Candidate. She holds a B.S. in Theatre and an M.Ed from Southern Utah University. She has been acting professionally for several years in regional theatres such as the Utah Shakespeare Festival, Utah Summerfest, and the Tisch School of the Arts. Most recently she was seen as Mrs. Van Dam in The Diary of Anne Frank, The Lost in The Diary of Anne Frank, and a Lute in Great Expectations. She has a God of Carnage at the UA Theatre. In addition to her theatre credits, Courtney has worked on a number of independent films, local commercials, and a national web series. Currently, she is teaching a section of Acting One here at the UA and performs with the improv troupe, Rodeo Book Club. After graduation, she plans to move to NYC, where her husband works in theatre and film.

Austin Lenburg (Balladini, etc) Harvey Oswald is a Senior undergraduate theatre major. His previous credits at the University include Lovis in Angels in America: Millennium Approaches and Sunny in American Idiot. He’s also performed with The Circle of the Musical Theatre in Chicago, Thrust Theatricals as Edmond in King Lear, Democracy in Midwest Night’s Dream and Malcolm X in Macbeth. He plans to move to New York to pursue a career in stage acting.

Kiah Kayser (Scenic Designer) is a third year MFA scenic designer who is from a small town in Minnesota, on the border of Iowa and South Dakota. She was the scenic designer for Anne Frank at the University of Arkansas. Last summer she worked at Ohio Light Opera as a scenic design assistant and scenic artist. Her credits at University of Arkansas include The Chairs, and Twelfth Night along with co projection designing American Idiot. Kiah got her BA from Iowa State University where some of her design credits include: Romeo and Juliet, A Steady Rain, and God of Carnage. After graduation she plans to become a professional scenic painter and designer.

Justin Mackey (Charles Guiteau) is a 2 year MFA scenic design candidate who is from St. Louis. He has a Bachelors of Science in Theatre from Grand Valley State University. His previous credits include: Otto Frank in Diary of Anne Frank at the University of Arkansas along with credits at Grand Valley including Father in 6 Characters in Search of an Author, Gary in Betrayal, Adam in The Shape of Things, Clouds in Much Ado About Nothing, and many more. Other companies that he’s worked with include: The University of Illinois, Azusa Pacific, Pikes Peak, the University of Northern Iowa, and Tisch University. He has also worked professionally in New York as a drapper’s assistant on a variety of Broadway productions and as a draper for the Colorado Shakespeare Festival and the Utah Shakespearean Festival. She is a member of USITT, a recipient of three ACT design awards and served as Costume Design and Technology Commissioner for USITT from 2002-2006.

Who’s Who in the Production
Tyler Michael (Sound Designer) is from Madison, SD. This is Tyler’s first year at the University of Arkansas as the Lighting and Sound Supervisor. He recently graduated the University of North Dakota with his M.F.A. in Design Technology emphasizing in Lighting and Sound Design. His Bachelor of Science is in Digital Arts and Design emphasizing in Audio Production from the State University. While in graduate school, he designed for productions including: Jessica the Musical. Next to Normal, Chicago, Chicago, Chicago, The Addams Family, Pestig, Mars, and She Loves Me. Tyler has been recognized by the Kennedy Center-American College Theatre Festival for lighting designs for A Sensation of Two, Moby, and Bus Stop.

Charlie Rodriguez (Giangoppo Zangara) is from Carrollton, TX. He has a BA in Theatre from Texas Women’s University. He is a second year MFA grad student. He is currently studying with professor Amas Anan in Water by the Spoonful, A New England and William in Henry IV. He plans to move to Chicago and start his own company.

Melissa Rooney (Makeup Designer) is from Guy, Arkansas. She holds a B.A. in Theatre Arts from Henderson College. She designed costumes for Hendrix College’s production of Time Stands Still. She was also the assistant costume designer for Angels in America Part One.

Emily Riggs (Ensemble) is from St. Louis, Missouri. She is a Senior theatre major. Her university credits include Calisthenics in Lynchstritt, Rox in 9 to 5, Kiss, Annie in Alcatraz, and Tour in The Land, Evadica in Evadica. Her other credits include: The Women in The River with Ozzie Black Box Theatre, Key in Andromeda with the Arkansas New Play Festival, and Petrocito in Classical Edge’s Taming of the Shrew. She plans to pursue an acting career in Chicago.

Scott Russell (Leon Colgrove) is a first year MFA student. A graduate of The Conservatory at Act One Studios - Chicago, previous work includes: Otto Hurley in Metamorphosis (University of Arkansas), Children of a Lesser God (Esthlik Theatre, Chicago), A Christmas Carol (Metropolis PAC), Passion (Theatre in the Square, Indianapolis), The Crucible and A Christmas Carol (Indiana Repertory Theatre), The Winter’s Tale and To be or not to be (Heartland Acting Repertory Company, Cincinnati, Ohio), Romeo and Juliet (Actors Theatre of Indiana), Water by the Spoonful (Distillation (Wisdom Tooth Theatre Project), and many more. He is also a night choreographer and combat instructor, and a member of the Society of American Fight Directors, Diving Arts International, the Society of Australian Fight Directors, IFC Fighting Directors and Canada. The British Academy of Stage and Screen Combat, and the Nordic Stage Fight Society. Scott would like to thank Amy and the cast for this opportunity, thank you, the audience, for coming out and supporting live theatre, and sends of all of his love to his amicably gifted and brilliant wife. He is a selfish yet deserving, adventorous, inquisitive, and loving son.

Chris Terronez (Samuel Byck) is a 2nd year MFA Acting candidate. He hails from Houston, Texas, where he has been working in theatre and arts education for the past 2 years. His work has been seen in such theatres as The Immovable Mole Theatre, Main Street Theatre, and The Playhouse Theatre. His previous credits include the University of Arkansas royalty, D. Cohn’s Prior II in Angels in America: Part One and Part Two, and Nasty Interesting Mael’s Land of the Underworld in Evadica.

Program for Assassins, courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. Pages 10 and 9.
Courtney Jensen as Sara Jane Moore (with Scott Russell, Chandler Reid Evans, and Justin Mackey) in the University of Arkansas Production of *Assassins*. April 2017. Photo Courtesy of the University of Arkansas Department of Theatre.
Courtney Jensen as Sara Jane Moore (with the cast) in the University of Arkansas Production of *Assassins*. April 2017. Photo Courtesy of the University of Arkansas Department of Theatre.
III. Thesis Performance Program and Photograph

Program for *A Hamlet: West of Why*, courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. Pages 18 and 1.
Program for *A Hamlet: West of Why*, courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. Pages 17 and 2.
Dear Theatre Friends,

As we bring our 2017/18 season to a close we do so by welcoming you into our new “home.” The ArtType Festival of New Works marks the culmination of an almost 4-year dream I had the first day I walked into this room (when it was an auditorium). That dream was then set in motion when I had a conversation with the Vice Provost for Distance Education, Donald P. Judges, back in October of 2016. The building in which this new theatre is located, also happens to be the home of the University of Arkansas Distance Education team known as, Global Campus. The former auditorium (the room that is now this beautiful black box theatre) has been used as an acting classroom and occasional performance venue for the Department of Theatre since 2014. However, it was an antiquated and poorly equipped space that was underutilized due primarily to its configuration and lack of functional space. When I learned that a renovation was scheduled to begin on the 4th and 5th floors of this building during the Summer of 2017, I casually said, “Well Don, as long as you are renovating the 4th and 5th floor, we might as well see if we can renovate the auditorium and make it a state-of-the-art studio theatre.” Not knowing what I was actually getting myself (and the entire Department of Theatre) into, his response was, “That’s a great idea! If it is going to serve more students and patrons, let’s talk to your Dean. But know this, we are going to have to move quickly!”

To make a long story short, here we are, only 18 months after the initial idea. The theatre is equipped with a cutting edge digital sound and projection system, an LED, energy efficient lighting rig, and flexible seating that will allow us to reconfigure the room to accommodate multiple seating/performance arrangements. It will also be a huge asset as we work to become a nationally accredited theatre department. This state-of-the-art flexible black box will allow the students, faculty, staff and patrons an opportunity to participate in intimate, exciting, smaller scaled live theatre where the audience will be no further than twenty-two feet from the performers and as close as three feet!

This is also a very exciting time for the University of Arkansas’ arts programs in general. With the recent $120 million dollar gift to establish the Fulbright College School of Art, arts philanthropy is certainly at an all-time high. Not only will this provide the School of Art the resources to compete on a whole new level for top notch students, faculty and staff, it will also pay great dividends to all three of the arts programs within the Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences. Part of the gift has been dedicated to support a total restoration of the sixty-seven year-old, Edward Durrell Stone Fine Arts Center – home to the University Theatre, the Stella Boyle Concert Hall, and the School of Art. In addition to modernizing all of the building’s infrastructure, it will also address the concerns for additional space that is desperately needed for all three programs. Details are yet to be developed and there is a long way to go in securing the necessary funding, but we are all very optimistic that this is more than just a dream – it is a reality on the horizon.

Again, welcome to our new home and thank you for attending the ArtType Festival of New Works. We hope you enjoy the performance!

Michael Riha
Chair of Theatre

Program for *A Hamlet: West of Why*, courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. Pages 16 and 3.
In the beginning, I wanted to pay homage to the Blaxploitation films of the seventies. As a child, I was in love with the images of Pam Grier as the title character in Foxy Brown. I carried this passion into adulthood which led me to become invested in the feminist classic, Coffy, which also stars Pam Grier. These films helped shape the character, Neferitty Green. My love and admiration of Dorothy Dandridge takes form in the showgirl herself—Miss Soleil Dandridge. I fell in love with Dorothy Dandridge after watching her portrayal of Carmen in Carmen Jones. **Rise** is a love letter to my days as a young man at Jackson State University. At Jackson State University, I learned the importance of legacy and tradition. As a member of the prestigious “Sonic Boom of the South” Marching Band, I learned lessons of hard-work, dedication, and sacrifice. The Department of Speech and Theatre—mentors like Nadia Bodie-Smith and Yolanda Williams—built the foundation of my career as a playwright. Their kind words and undying support will never go unnoticed.

I am thankful for my mother, Mary Floyd. She has been my biggest support system throughout this entire process. She’s always instilled the importance of education into my life. When I lost sight of the end goal, I had her in my corner steering me back into gear. I would also like to thank my aunt, Cindy Hall, for allowing me to blunder through her Jacksonian yearbooks. Those books inspired me to choose Jackson State as my “Dear Old College Home”. This play is dedicated to all the Jacksonians—deceased and living. 1400 J.R. Lynch Street is more than an address. It’s a way of life that only a true Jacksonian will understand. It’s the place where the Prancing J-Settes started a trend, the place where Phillip Gibbs and James Green lived were laid down, and the place that brings us—Alumni—joy. I’m excited to share this story with an audience. Cole Wimpee, the director of **Rise**, has done a beautiful job with aiding the stage life of this story. I am thoroughly pleased with the progress of the play. Hope everyone enjoys the colorful and vibrant tale. Peace and Blessings to all.

Be Blessed,
Paul McNnis
Program for *A Hamlet: West of Why*, courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. Pages 14 and 5.
Program for *A Hamlet: West of Why*, courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. Pages 12 and 7.
(I)sland T(rap)

(I)SLAND T(RAP): the epic remixology of the Odyssey

All roles including: Austin Dean Ashford, Old Woman, Begwende, Gorilla, Calypso, Theresa, Ruth, Sarah, Assata, Dad, Cyclops.................., Austin Dean Ashford

Production Team

Director ................................................. Cole Wimpee
Playwright .............................................. Austin Ashford
Stage Manager, Sound Designer ...................... Katie O’Rear
Lighting Designer ...................................... Eric Armstrong
Scenic Designer ........................................ Kathleen Schmidt
Dramaturg, Faculty, and Playwright Advisor .......... John Walch

Setting:
Place: The Dock of a Major American City/An Exotic Island of the Imagination
Time: Now

(I)SLAND T(RAP) will be performed without an intermission.

WARNING: Strobe Light, Intense Language, & Disturbing Imagery.

(I)SLAND T(RAP) is an original adaptation by Austin Dean Ashford and has received developmental presentations in tandem with the University of Arkansas Department of Theatre, TheatreSquared, and the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.

This story is inspired by a variety of sources, chiefly The Odyssey by Homer, the art of Romare Bearden and Aaron Douglas, the films of Walt Disney, the comparative mythology of Joseph Campbell, and the autobiographical experiences of Austin Dean Ashford.

LatinX Theatre Project

Presents
Scratch That - an original new play

Cast

Arionna................................................. Betty Brutus
Antonio/SpringDizzle............................... Damian Dena
Bruno................................................. Martin Garay
Brendan.............................................. Samuel Lopez
Sylvia................................................. Coco Vasquez
Julius............................................... Fernando Valdez
Nick................................................... Ever Villalobos
Lucy................................................... Audrey Romero
Isabelle.............................................. Savannah Vaughan
Patricia.............................................. Saitha Vela
Luis................................................... Alex Nilsson
Marisol.............................................. Samm Canales

Production Team

Playwright, Sound Designer ....................... Ashley Edwards
Director .............................................. Michael Landman
Production Manager, Lighting Designer ............ Shannon Miller
Scenic & Properties Designer ....................... Ashleigh Burns
Stage Manager, Assistant Sound Designer .......... Felicia Deatherage
Assistant Stage Manager ............................. Laken Montgomery
Producer ............................................. David Jolliffe
Associate Producer, Arts Center of the Ozarks ...... Kathleen Trotter
Photographer, Web Designer ......................... Alicia Pitts
Social Media Manager .............................. Anna Vilner
Composer of Original Beats ....................... Joaquin Vela
Writing Mentor ...................................... Vicente Yeye

Sponsored by the Walton Family Foundation, in partnership with the University of Arkansas Brown Chair for Literacy, Northwest Arkansas Community College, and Arts Center of the Ozarks

Program for A Hamlet: West of Why, courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. Pages 11 and 8.
Theatre for One

Theatre for One is a mobile state-of-the-art performance space for one actor and one audience member. Conceived by Artistic Director Christine Jones and designed by LOT-EK architects, Theatre for One commissions new work created specifically for this venue’s one-to-one relationship. Embracing serendipity and spontaneity, Theatre for One is presented in public spaces in which audience members are invited to engage in an intimate theatrical exchange and enter the theatre space not knowing what to expect. Actor and audience member encounter each other as strangers in this suspended space and through the course of the performance allow the divisions and distinctions that separate us to dissolve.

A Hamlet: West of Why

Cast
Alain ................................................. Charlie Rodriguez
Clay ................................................. Grant Hockenbrough
Joyce ................................................. Courtney Jensen
Chase ................................................. Cody Shelton
Paul .................................................. Chris Tennison

Digital Assistants
Rimshot/Troll/Other Voices ........ Mason Bell, Caroline Dean

Production Team
Director .............................................. Shana Gold
Playwright .......................................... John Walsh
Assistant Director ......................... Jeremiah Albers
Fight Choreography .................... Charlie Rodriguez
Set Designer ................................. Brandon Roye
Lighting Designer ......................... Kathleen Schmidt
Costume Designer ......................... Kelsey Looney
Sound Designer ........................ Austin Aschbrenner
Scenic/Projection Designer ............ Brandon Roye

Crew
Stage Manager .............................. Samuel Murphy
Assistant Stage Manager ............ Caroline Dean
Wardrobe Crew Head ................. Adam Rutiaga
Wardrobe Crew ......................... Haley Goodebbie
Deck Crew ................................. Samantha Schreyer
Light Board Op ......................... Annika Howard
Properties ..................................... Autumn Peary

Setting:
Place: The open road—America.
Time: A few years from now, toward the tail-end of a tour.

Appendix A: Website Link

https://www.courtneygjensen.com
Appendix B: Headshot

Photo courtesy of J’adore Photography.
Appendix C: Resume

COURTNEY JENSEN
AEA Eligible

Actors Casting Agency 479.236.6849
actorscastingagency@gmail.com

Hair: Blonde
Eyes: Blue
Height: 5'6"
Voice: Soprano (C3-C6) Belt (F5)

FILM
ARE THERE ANY KINGS? Lead Independent Breedland Bryant
THE BENEVOLENT STALKER Lead School of Art Institute Chicago Ella Zhu
THE BET Lead RubberSquare Michael Dunn
LEVELS OF LOVE Supporting SaddleUp Productions Ty Gregson
#NEWS (Web Series) Recurring Balloon Pictures David Schoner
PARKER’S ANCHOR Featured Purpose Pictures Marc Hampon
YOUR LOCAL NEWS Featured Arkansas Films Josh Irwin

TELEVISION
TRUE DETECTIVE Featured (Wilma) HBO Jeremy Saulnier

THEATRE
A CHRISTMAS CAROL: ON THE AIR Carrollette/Emily Utah Shakespeare Festival Brad Carroll
*LEND ME A TENOR: THE MUSICAL Anna/Ensemble Utah Shakespeare Festival Brad Carroll
PEG O’MY HEART Peg u/s Utah Shakespeare Festival Jins O’Connor
FUN HOME Alison/Helen u/s TheatreSquared Amy Herzberg
PETER AND THE STARCATCHER Molly/Peter u/s TheatreSquared Mark Shanahan
ONCE UPON A MATTRESS Winnifred Empress Theatre Shawn Maxfield
GUYS AND DOLLS Adelaide Empress Theatre Shawn Maxfield
HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS… Rosemary Centerpoint Legacy Theatre Mairie Tarbox
PLAZA SUITE Karen/Norma Neil Simon Festival Bradford Garrison
THE ODD COUPLE (FEMALE VERSION) Renee Neil Simon Festival Richard Bugg
SOUTH PACIFIC Nurse/Ensemble Tuachatn Center for the Arts Tim Threlfall
MY BIG FAT UTAH WEDDING Marmalade Desert Star Playhouse Scott Holman
THE BI-POLAR EXPRESS Elphaba Desert Star Playhouse Mary Williams
ALASKA CABIN NITE Amber/RJ Alaska Cabin Nite Theater Todd Norris
A HAMLET: WEST OF WHY Joyce University of Arkansas Shana Gold
ASSASSINS Sarah Jane Moore University of Arkansas Amy Herzberg
DIARY OF ANNE FRANK Mrs. Van Daan University of Arkansas Kate Frank
HEDDA GABLER Thea Elvsted University of Arkansas Cole Wimpee
GOD OF CARNAGE Veronica University of Arkansas Jeremiah Albers

COMMERCIALS
Available for viewing at www.CourtneyGJensen.com

TRAINING
MFA Acting - University of Arkansas, 2018
BS Theatre: Acting/Directing – Southern Utah University
Acting: Amy Herzberg-(Meisner), Michael Landman-(Viewpoints), Steven Marzolf, Jason Burrow-(Musical Theatre)
Voice/Dialects: Mavourneen Dwyer
On Camera: The Actor’s Workshop with Michael Flynn - SLC, UT
Shakespeare Fellowship: Rebecca Guy, Ralph Zito-Shakespeare Directing Workshop at The Juilliard School

SPECIAL SKILLS
Dialects: RP, Std, American, Irish, Scottish, French, var. Southern (excellent ear, quick learner)
Instruments: Piano (Advanced), Flute & Piccolo (Advanced), Renaissance Woodwinds (Advanced)
Dance: Jazz (10 years), Ballet (6 years), Tap (1 year), Musical Theatre, Folk, learns quickly
Improv: Long & Short form comedy
Other: Teaching Artist, Music Direction, Valid Passport, Drives Manual & Automatic, Puppetry, ABO Certified Optician
Appendix D: Proof of Permissions

To: Graduate School and International Studies, University of Arkansas

From: Ashley Cohea, Business Manager for Department of Theatre

Date: April 14, 2018

Re: Use of Department of Theatre production programs, photos, and publicity materials in thesis publications

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If there are any questions on this matter, or any dispute over whether production material is being used in an inappropriate manner, please contact the Department of Theatre Business Manager, listed below.

Ashley Cohea
228 Fine Arts Center
University of Arkansas
(479) 575-6067
acohea@uark.edu
J'adore Photography™

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