THE HEARTH PRESENTS



THE COMMONS

BY LILY AKERMAN

DIRECTED BY
EMMA MILLER

59E59

THEATER C

FEBRUARY 6 – 23

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BY LILY AKERMAN

DIRECTED BY EMMA MILLER

CAST

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

ROBYN	BEN NEWMAN *
JANIRA	OLIVIA KHOSHATEFEH *
DEE	JULIA GREER *
CLIFF	BEN KATZ *
ANNA	OLIVIA ABIASSI

CREATIVE TEAM

PLAYWRIGHT	LILY AKERMAN
DIRECTOR	EMMA MILLER
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	CLARA MOONEY
DRAMATURG	CHRISTINE SCARFUTO
CASTING DIRECTOR	NICOLE VAN DENBURG
SCENIC DESIGN	EMMIE FINCKEL
COSTUME DESIGN	DARA AFFHOLTER
LIGHTING DESIGN	VICTORIA BAIN
SOUND DESIGN	CAROLINE ENG
PROPERTY DESIGN/ASSOCIATE SCENIC DESIGN	HOLDEN GUNSTER
ASSOCIATE LIGHTING DESIGN	QI'ER LUO
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER	HANAKO RODRIGUEZ *

The Commons runs for 1 hour, 40 minutes

ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION 1913

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

BEN NEWMAN

Robyn



International: ***High Plains, A Western Myth*** (Edinburgh, Underbelly, The List: Best Solo Performance). New York: ***Romeo and Juliet*** (Columbia Stages); ***Henry VI, P3***, ***One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*** (Wide Eyed Productions). Regional: ***Pride and Prejudice***, ***Peter and the Starcatcher***, ***General Store*** (Creede Repertory Theatre), ***No Candy*** (Portland Playhouse); ***Astoria: Parts 1 and 2***, ***JAW '14-'16*** (Portland Center Stage); ***Pericles Wet*** (Portland Shakespeare Project), ***A Dolls House*** (Shaking the Tree), ***Middletown*** (Third Rail Repertory Theatre); ***True West***, ***Orlando***, ***Blood Knot*** (Profile Theatre); ***King Lear*** (Kansas City Repertory Theatre), ***Cyrano de Bergerac*** (Denver Center). TV: *Pretty Little Liars: The Perfectionists*, *Grimm*, *The Librarians*.

www.mbennewman.com

OLIVIA KHOSHATEFEH

Janira



Olivia Khoshatefeh is a NYC–based actor/writer. Past theater credits include ***The Who and The What*** (Round House Theatre), ***Julius Caesar*** (Trinity Repertory Company), ***The Love of the Nightingale, Hamlet, Cymbeline*** (Brown/Trinity MFA), and ***See Bat Fly*** (Brown Univ. Playwrights Rep). TV credits include *The Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* (Netflix); *New Amsterdam*, *The Blindspot* (NBC); *Mr. Robot* (USA), *Crashing* (HBO), and *Dickinson* (Apple TV). Education: University of Rhode Island, BFA 2013; Brown University/ Trinity Rep, MFA in Acting 2016.

JULIA GREER

Dee



Julia Greer is an actor, writer, and co-artistic director of The Hearth where she was last seen in ***Athena*** at JACK. Other theater credits include Lincoln Center Directors Lab '19, readings workshops at Playwrights Horizons, Ensemble Studio Theater, BAM, The Tank; and productions at Theaterlab, Primary Stages/Fordham, Columbia University, Lucid Body House, Dixon Place among others. Film credits: *Marriage Story* (Netflix), *Human Capital* (TIFF), *Lady Liberty* (Tribeca FF).

www.juliagreer.co

BEN KATZ

Cliff



Recent graduate of NYU Grad Acting (Class of 2019), where credits include the title role in Mark Wing-Davey's ***Hamlet***, ***Suddenly Last Summer***, and ***Three Days in the Country***. Workshops: Lincoln Center Directors Lab '19, National Playwrights Conference, Clubbed Thumb, New Georges, Huntington Theatre, Hartford Stage, Atlantic, MCC Youth Company, and more.

OLIVIA ABIASSI

Anna



Olivia is an Arab-American singer and actor based in NYC. Recent theater performances include ***Pride and Prejudice*** (Heritage Theatre Festival), ***Narrow Daylight*** (Live and In Color), ***Eh Dah?: Questions For My Father*** (NYTW, Next Door), ***Our House*** (Players Theatre), ***The Tempest*** (Columbia Stages), and ***The Rose Tattoo*** (Williamstown Theatre Festival).

DARA AFFHOLTER

Costume Designer

Dara couldn't be happier to be back designing for The Hearth. She is currently an assistant costume designer for ***Moulin Rouge!***. Her other credits include assistant costume designer for ***Tina–The Tina Turner Musical***, ***Pretty Woman*** (Hamburg), costume shop assistant for Papermill Playhouse and Williamstown Theatre Festival, and costume apprentice for the Juilliard School. Costume design credits include ***Athena***, ***For Annie*** (The Hearth); ***M4M, Life Brief and Glorious*** (The New Collectives); ***Roller Dynasty*** (Sprout Works).

www.daraaffholter.weebly.com

LILY AKERMAN

Playwright

Lily's work has appeared in the Dublin Fringe Festival, Cork Midsummer Festival, YES Noise Festival, and has been developed with Clubbed Thumb, the Bechdel Project, and the New Theatre in Dublin. She has written several opera libretti, most recently the site-specific ***House Trilogy***, performed in the Cork Opera House, and ***Dreamcatchr*** (upcoming, the Peacock Stage at the Abbey). Her opera ***Front of House*** was nominated for Best Opera by the Irish Times, and her play ***Hedgehog Years*** was a winner of Playing-On-Air's 2018 James Stevenson Prize. She's a Fulbright scholar and a New Georges affiliated artist. MFA in Playwriting, Hunter College.

VICTORIA BAIN

Lighting Designer

Victoria Bain is a lighting designer who splits her time between New York and Chicago. Some of the theater companies she has worked with include Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Milwaukee Rep, The Goodman Theatre, The Paramount, The Atlantic Theatre Company, Rattlestick Playwright's Theater, Bluelaces Theater Company, Williamstown Theatre Festival, The Public, Soho Rep, Delaware Theatre Company, and MCC. Some of her designs include ***Newsies*** at the Paramount, ***The White Dress*** at Access Theater, ***Athena*** with The Hearth, ***Sheila*** with The Associates, and ***Not Medea*** at Art House New York. Victoria is a graduate of Loyola University Chicago.

EMMIE FINCKEL

Scenic Designer

Emmie is a scenic designer specializing in new work and immersive design. Recent credits: ***In the Penal Colony*** (NYTW, Next Door), ***Athena*** (JACK), ***Riot Antigone*** (La MaMa), ***Mrs. Murray's Menagerie*** (Props – Ars Nova); ***Folk Wandering*** (Props – Pipeline), ***Suds, Out There*** (Bluelaces); ***The Pillowman, Mr. Burns...*** (Wesleyan); ***And It Felt Like A Kiss...*** (HERE Arts); ***Oklahoma!, The Armor Plays,*** and ***Rhinoceros*** (Fieldston). Assistant/associate design credits: productions with David Korins (***Hamilton, Dear Evan Hansen***) and Gabriel Evansohn (***KPOP, Empire Travel Agency***) as a member of Woodshed Collective. Emmie holds a BA from Wesleyan University and is currently pursuing their MFA in Scenic Design at the Yale School of Drama.

www.efinckel.com

HOLDEN GUNSTER

Property Design/Scenic Associate

Holden Gunster is an NYC-based scenic designer. Some of his design credits include the Off Broadway premiere of ***The Independents*** (The Theater Center), ***Forgiveness*** (Paradise Factory Theater), ***Urinetown*** (Random Farms Kids Theater), ***The Green*** (NY Winterfest), ***Paper Towels*** (INTAR Theater), ***The Revolutionists*** (Binghamton University), and ***The Burial at Thebes*** (Binghamton University). Some of his assistant and associate work includes ***In the Penal Colony*** (NYTW, Next Door), ***Il Re Pastore*** (Merola Program- SF Opera), and the world premiere of ***Replica*** (Stages Repertory Theater).

www.holdengunster.com

EMMA MILLER

Director

Emma is a director, producer, and educator. She is co-artistic director of The Hearth, with which she most recently directed *New York Times* Critics' Pick ***Athena***. She has worked at/with Clubbed Thumb, JACK, Less Than Rent, Queens Theatre, The Tank, Dixon Place, Lucid Body House, KNOW Theatre, Cincinnati Fringe, The Bridge Residency, and more. Emma is a 2019-2020 Clubbed Thumb Directing Fellow and was a Playwrights Horizons Fellow in 2016. She is an alumna of Kenyon College and the National Theater Institute - Advanced Directing at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center.

CLARA MOONEY

Assistant Director

Clara Mooney is a Brooklyn-based theatre artist and director. Recent credits include ***The Woman in Black*** (dir. Robin Herford, National Tour), ***Macbeth*** (Posner and Teller, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), ***A Christmas Carol*** (dir. Emily Penick, ACT Theatre), and ***The Crucible*** (dir. John Langs, ACT Theatre). She holds a BA in Drama from Kenyon College and is thrilled to be working with The Hearth on this wonderful production.

HANAKO RODRIGUEZ

Production Stage Manager

Hanako Rodriguez is a freelance theater professional with a passion for helping to bring to life new works written by underrepresented voices. Her recent New York credits include *New York Times* Critics' Pick ***Athena*** (with The Hearth) and ***The Workshop*** (at HB Studios). She has worked on numerous Off and Off-Off Broadway projects including those with The Fire This Time Festival, National Black Theatre, Two Headed Rep, The Bushwick Starr, horsetrade, The Sheen Center, HERE Arts, and La Mama ETC.



CHRISTINE SCARFUTO

Dramaturg

Christine Scarfuto is the acting director of the MFA Playwriting Program at Hunter College and a freelance dramaturg with over a decade of experience in new play development. From 2015-2019, she was the literary manager of Long Wharf Theatre, where she oversaw a robust new play development program. She recently served as the producer of the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival's developmental theater lab. She has worked as a dramaturg with Signature Theatre, McCarter Theatre, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, Playwrights Center, Lark Play Development Center, Primary Stages, Clubbed Thumb, and Playwrights Realm. She has taught at Fordham, Rutgers, and the University of Iowa.

NICOLE VAN DENBURG

Casting Director

Nicole Van Denburg is the casting associate at Manhattan Theatre Club. Favorite recent productions include ***Choir Boy*** and ***Ink*** on Broadway and ***Sugar in Our Wounds*** and ***The New Englanders*** at City Center. Other credits: ***Patron of the Arts***, ***Opportunities of Extinction*** (Cherry Lane), and ***Okay*** (UglyRhino). She has also worked with The Playwrights Realm, Vertigo Theatre, Playwrights Horizons, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and New York Stage and Film. She is a graduate of Fordham University.

CAROLINE ENG

Sound Designer

Caroline Eng is a New York-based sound designer and audio engineer. Sound design work includes ***The Three Musketeers*** and ***The Salonniéres*** (Greater Boston Stage Company); ***Orlando*** (AADA), ***Uncle Vanya*** (Brooklyn College), ***evoking him: Baldwin*** (New York University), ***Follies*** (Astoria Performing Arts Center, nom: New York Innovative Theatre Award for Outstanding Sound Design). Assistant sound design includes ***Paris*** (The Atlantic), ***Fefu and Her Friends*** (TFANA), ***Eddie & Dave*** (Atlantic Theater Company).

www.carolineengdesign.com

THE HEARTH

The Hearth produces and develops new plays by women. We are drawn to plays that explore female characters who pulse with emotional, intellectual, and psychological complexity. We seek to challenge stereotypes, advance and complicate the conversation about feminism, and expand perceptions of what it means to be a woman. Recent productions include ***She Buried the Pistol*** by Lydia Blaisdell (WoW Festival, La Jolla Playhouse), ***Athena*** by Gracie Gardner (world premiere, *New York Times* Critics' Pick, twice extended, *New York Times* "Most Unforgettable Theater Moments of 2018"), and ***For Annie*** by Beth Hyland (New York Premiere). Current and recent development includes a workshop production of Leila Teitelman's ***Baby Cakes***, commissions by Emma Goidel and Sofya Levitsky-Weitz, and new plays by Nissy Aya, Lizzie Stern, Sophie Weisskoff, Rae Binstock, and Seonjae Kim.

www.thehearththeater.com

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CURATOR'S NOTE

Welcome to *The Commons*, a World Premiere from the visionary new theater company, The Hearth, whose founders Julia Greer (performer) and Emma Miller (director) are impressively on mission with this latest effort to nurture and celebrate an emerging female voice. Playwright Lily Akerman has built an eccentric world populated by housemates whose intricate interactions transform the ordinary and mundane moments of everyday life into dramatic arias. Come what may, both the Devil and God are in the details here.



Val Day
Artistic Director
59E59 Theaters

59E59 THEATERS STAFF

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KATHERINE TEED-ARTHUR Usher
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Design: www.mugdesign.co.uk

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