

OBERON THEATRE ENSEMBLE
PRESENTS

THE MEMORY EXAM

BY
STEVEN FECHTER

DIRECTED BY
TERRENCE O'BRIEN

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THEATER C

SEPTEMBER 3 – 25

OBERON
THEATRE
ENSEMBLE

PRESENTS

THE MEMORY EXAM



BY
STEVEN FECHTER

DIRECTED BY
TERRENCE O'BRIEN

CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

DALE ..... VERNICE MILLER *
TOM ..... GUS KAIKKONEN *
JEN ..... BEKKA LINDSTRÖM *
HANK ..... ALFRED GINGOLD *

CREATIVE TEAM

PLAYWRIGHT ..... STEVEN FECHTER
DIRECTOR ..... TERRENCE O'BRIEN
FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER ..... BRYCE BIEDERMAN
INTIMACY CHOREOGRAPHER ..... REBECCA BRINKLEY
SCENIC DESIGN ..... TAMARA L. HONESTY †
COSTUME DESIGN ..... AMY SUTTON †
LIGHTING DESIGN ..... GREG MACPHERSON †
SOUND DESIGN ..... CHUCK HATCHER †
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER ..... CHARLES CASANO

PRODUCTION TEAM

PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR ..... BRAD FRYMAN
COMPANY MANAGER ..... JENNA LAZAR
SET CONSTRUCTION ..... BAD MONKEY PROPS AND COBALT STUDIOS
CASTING DIRECTOR ..... HELENE GALEK
CREATIVE CONSULTANT ..... MICHAEL COLLUCIO

OBERON THEATRE ENSEMBLE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CRAIG MANZINO (CHAIRMAN), KEITH HANENBERG, KATHY SIMONIS

Run time: 1 hour and 25 minutes with no intermission

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

† Member of United Scenic Artists. Designers in LORT Theaters are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.



FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

The idea for *The Memory Exam* was born during the early part of the pandemic when we lost so many of our elderly souls. I started to write a play about older characters who are as passionate, fearless, and flawed as folks of any age. During the shutdown, when some politicians suggested that seniors should be willing to sacrifice themselves for the good of the economy, I realized that the stakes in my play had to be higher. Much higher. In truth, the play's dystopian world reflects the world I feared we were heading toward.

This is why I believe memory is so important. But which memories are vital and which are disposable? Those are among the questions my play explores. Our elders possess memories and histories that are invaluable. What happens when every survivor of the Holocaust has died? What happens when every activist who fought and bled for Civil Rights in the 60s is gone? The Polish poet Czeslaw Milosz wrote, "Memory thus is our force, it protects us against a speech entwining upon itself like the ivy when it does not find a support on a tree or a wall."

Powerful people here and autocrats abroad are changing the past by rewriting history. How can we stop this? One character in my play says, "I remember where I came from... I remember my values, my beliefs, my ideas... I remember that evil exists, sometimes in the guise of goodness."

We must all keep remembering.

STEVEN FECHTER

ALFRED GINGOLD

(Hank)



Alfred Gingold first played the role of Hank in a reading in 2020 with the New York based Lafayette Salon Series. Other favorite roles include Martin Dysart in ***Equus*** (Gallery Players), Claudius in ***Hamlet*** (Inwood Shakespeare), Judge Wolff in ***Pinocchio's Ashes*** (Scandinavian American Theatre Company), and Matt in ***Talley's Folly*** (Tampa Players). He is the author of several books, including *Dog World and the Humans Who Live There, The Cool Parents' Guide to New York* (with his wife, Helen Rogan), and the national best-seller, *Items From Our Catalog*.

www.alfredgingold.com

GUS KAIKKONEN

(Tom)



New York acting credits include ***A Day by the Sea***, ***Mary Broome***, and ***The House of Mirth*** at the Mint; Tommy Tune's American premiere production of ***Cloud 9***, ***Equus*** (OBC) with Anthony Hopkins and Richard Burton, and ***The Country Girl*** with Hal Holbrook. He co-starred on PBS in *Paul's Case*, appeared on *Law and Order: Criminal Intent*, and had recurring roles on ABC's *All My Children* and *One Life to Live*. He has performed at the Long Wharf, Folger, Goodman, Asolo, Geva, Pioneer, Arden, Aspen, and BoarsHead Theatres. For his performance in ***The Shadow Box*** (Coconut Grove Playhouse), he was nominated for a Carbonell Award. He received Vermont's Bessie Award for Best Actor for his Richard III at the Lost Nation Theatre. His 2018 Off Broadway production of ***Hindle Wakes*** for the Mint garnered a Drama Desk nomination for Best Revival. For 25 years (1996-2020) he was the Artistic Director of the Peterborough Players in New Hampshire.

BEKKA LINDSTRÖM

(Jen)



Bekka Lindström most recently has been playing guitar and singing in the rock concert musical, MoM, which began its run at the NY Fringe Festival and went on to the Barrow Group, Playwrights Theatre of NJ, and Geva Theatre in Rochester, NY. Before that she played Sister Betsy in ***As It Is In Heaven*** at the Stonington Opera House in Deer Isle, Maine. She first appeared in the NY Fringe as Lori in ***The Lightning Field***, which went on to run in London. Bekka Lindström is an actor who also makes a living as a graphic artist, even though she's actually a writer who sings.

VERNICE MILLER

(Dale)



Broadway: ***Disorderly Conduct*** (dir. George C. White). Off Broadway & Regional: ***King John*** (dir. Claire Kelly), ***Eve's Song*** (dir. Jo Bonney), ***(Di)Visions of America 2020*** (dir. John Sims), ***Fast Blood*** (Civic Ensemble), ***All God's Chillun Got Wings*** (dir. Godfrey L. Simmons, Jr.), ***The Trial of One Short Sighted Black Woman*** (dir. Paul Carter Harrison), ***Salt Chocolate & Frankie's Wedding*** (dir. Gabrielle Lansner), ***Lysistrata Project*** (dir. Ellen McLaughlin). Europe: ***Nomansland & Port d'Alger 1962*** (Slovenia, Poland, Ukraine, & France; dir. Seth Baumrin), ***Old Dreams New Hope*** (Denmark). Film/TV: *Law & Order* (NBC), *Through The Wire* (PBS), *Flaming Armadillo* (National Swiss TV), *The Golden Boat* (dir. Raoul Ruiz), *Leo Sonnyboy* (dir. Rolf Lyssy, Switzerland). Solo: London New Play Festival's Best Actress Award for ***Medea Nine-Night.***

www.ALATetc.org

STEVEN FECHTER

(Playwright)

Steven Fechter is a playwright, screenwriter, and librettist. He co-wrote the screenplay for the 2004 film *The Woodsman* (based on his play). ***The Woodsman*** play and his other theatrical works have been staged throughout North America and Europe. This past year his short film, *Miracle Baby*, which he wrote and co-produced, has been shown in numerous film festivals, winning awards for screenwriting, directing, and acting. Fechter is a member of The Dramatists Guild and Oberon Theatre Ensemble. Currently, he is working on a novel titled, *The Big Breeze: A Baseball Fantasy*. More than baseball, it is a story about loss, rebirth, art, and fatherhood.

www.stevenfechter.com

TERRENCE O'BRIEN

(Director)

Terrence O'Brien is the Founding Artistic Director of Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival. He was HVSF's artistic leader for 27 years and he directed over 30 productions of Shakespeare's plays. He directed ***Pimm's Mission*** for Oberon Theatre Ensemble presented at 59E59 Theaters. O'Brien has worked under the auspices of Rehabilitation Through The Arts at Sing Sing Correctional Facility where he facilitated theater workshops and directed his own adaptation of ***On The Waterfront.*** O'Brien lives in Manhattan with his wife, Jane Praeger.

BRYCE BIEDERMAN

(Fight Choreographer)

Bryce has worked as a stunt performer in New York since 2012, and has appeared in films and TV shows such as *Gotham, Blacklist, Blindspot, Daredevil* (Netflix), *The Punisher* (Netflix), *The Irishman, West Side Story, John Wick*, and many others. He specializes in fight choreography and performance, and has received several nominations for outstanding stunt performance from the SAG Film Awards.

REBECCA BRINKLEY

(Intimacy Choreographer)

Rebecca is a New York City-based performer and movement choreographer specializing in both on-stage violence and intimacy direction. Her years as an actor paved the way for a narrow focus on partner connection and physical storytelling in their most heightened and dangerous forms. A few previous credits include ***Dead Man Walking*** (Washington National Opera), ***The Lady Demands Satisfaction*** (Gulfshore Playhouse), ***One and Two*** (Bow and Arrow Entertainment), *Law & Order: SVU* (NBC), *We Want Faces So Bad* (Apple House Pictures).

TAMARA L. HONESTY

(Scenic Design) (she/her)

Tamara L. Honesty is delighted to return to Oberon Theatre Ensemble. Tammy is an award-winning scenic designer, scenic artist, and educator. A few of her favorite designs include ***An Evening with Groucho*** (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park and now being broadcast on PBS), ***Merchant of Venice*** (Cleveland Play House), ***Becky's New Car*** and ***Family Ties*** (Human Race Theatre Company). She co-authored *The Fake Food Cookbook*. This fall, Tammy joined West Virginia University as the Associate Professor of Scenic Design. She would like to thank Brad Fryman and Terrence O'Brien for this opportunity.
www.tammyhonesty.com

AMY SUTTON

(Costume Design)

Recent design credits include: ***Apples in Winter*** (Denizen Theatre), ***Heisenberg*** (Northern Stage), ***Pride & Prejudice*** (Creede Rep.), *Bounce* (Short Film), and *Sparring Partner* (Short Film). Recent assistant design credits include: ***Hamilton*** (National Tour), ***Edward Tulane*** (Minnesota Opera), ***West Side Story*** (Broadway), and ***Pacific Overtures*** (Classic Stage Company). She is a proud union member of USA 829. She received her MFA from the University of California, San Diego, and holds a BFA in Theater and a minor in Art History, from New York University.

GREG MACPHERSON

(Lighting Design)

Greg MacPherson recently designed ***Gratitude*** at Urban Stages, directed by Maria Mileaf. He is a member of Ensemble Studio Theatre where he designed the annual ***Marathon of One-Act Plays*** from 1985 through 2003 and again in 2010, '11, '13, '15, '17, and '19. Other designs include ***Killer Joe*** at Soho Rep, ***The Hotel Play*** at LaMama ETC, ***The Pitchfork Disney*** at Here, and ***Easter*** for Naked Angels. He recently designed ***A Midsummer Night's Dream*** and ***Cinderella*** for Ballet Memphis, ***The Cradle Will Rock*** as a benefit for The Acting Company, ***Meet Me at the Plaza*** for Shuffles, and ***Halcyon Days*** at ART NY. Greg has designed for The 52nd Street Project since 1986 and taught lighting design at Sarah Lawrence College since 1990.

CHUCK HATCHER

(Sound Design)

Chuck Hatcher has been a sound designer/teacher for almost 36 years and has designed over 200 productions at theaters large and small, academic and professional. He was the Resident Sound Designer/Head Audio for 12 years with the Cornell University Department of Theatre and Dance, and a professor of Sound Design/Technology for 13 years at the University of Cincinnati, College-Conservatory of Music. This is Chuck's first Off Broadway show and he would like to thank Oberon Theatre Company, Brad Fryman, and Terrence O'Brien for this opportunity to have a New York City credit, finally!

CHARLES CASANO

(Production Stage Manager)

Charles is a director/actor/stage manager. NY Credits: ***Letter of Intention*** (director), ***G-69 Triple XTreme Oscillator*** (director), ***Ticket To Eternity*** (director) for Planet Connections, ***Sotto Voce*** (World Premiere - author & director Nilo Cruz), ***Trash Story*** (John Jay w/ Allyce Beasley). Storm Theatre: ***A Midsummer Night's Dream*** *(actor/SM)*, ***Our God's Brother*** (actor), ***As You Like It*** (actor/SM), ***The President*** (actor/SM). Other credits: ***Dog Day Afternoon*** (actor), ***Next*** (actor), ***Edge*** (Angelica Page, DR2), ***Salome*** (Al Pacino, The Actors Studio), ***Hitler's Addendum*** (Ruby Dee, Estelle Parsons, Actors Studio). Charles is also Managing Director of Planet Connections Theatre Festivity.

BRAD FRYMAN

(Artistic Director)

Brad Fryman is a founder and the Artistic Director of Oberon Theatre Ensemble, now celebrating its 25th season. At Oberon, Brad has produced 60 plays, many special events, and well over 100 staged readings. Also an actor, Brad has appeared in some Oberon favorites that include: ***The Drawer Boy*** and ***American Rapture*** directed by Alex Dinelaris; ***Order*** by Christopher Stetson Boal, directed by Austin Pendleton; and ***Pimm's Mission*** also by Mr. Boal, directed by Terrence O'Brien here at 59E59 Theaters. Brad recently appeared in Strindberg's ***Dance of Death Parts 1 & 2*** and ***The Father*** as The Captain, directed by Robert Greer at Strindberg Rep; Theo Van Gogh in Natalie Menna's ***Committed***, directed by Brock Harris; ***A Wilder Christmas*** by Thornton Wilder, directed by Dan Wackerman. You might have even seen him in *Blue Bloods* or the short film, *Behind Bars*, by Jeff Wincott.

www.bradfryman.com

JENNA LAZAR

(Company Manager)

Jenna Lazar is thrilled to be back in action for her thirteenth Oberon production. Jenna is a former stage manager turned general manager, who also has extensive experience with production management, company management, and film and event work. She has been working in theater for nearly fifteen years, on projects ranging from non-profit to commercial, local indie theater to national tours, one-woman shows to large-scale musicals. Jenna is currently a general manager at Evan Bernardin Productions, and also serves on the Board of Directors for the League of Professional Theatre Women.

MICHAEL COLUCCIO

(Creative Consultant)

MIchael is a Certified Dementia Care practitioner and has been in the health care field for over 35 years. He has facilitated various "Family Support Groups" over many years and is a frequent lecturer at Kingsboro College's "Aging Mastery Program." He has worked in acute and long term care facilities and is currently the Director of Memory Care at "The Watermark of Brooklyn Heights." He holds advanced degrees in Philosophy, Therapeutic Recreation, Gerontology, and Health Care Administration from NYU and CMU. He is also a theatrical director, producer and writer. He is honored to be a small part of this production and thanks Brad for all his support and trust.



OBERON THEATRE ENSEMBLE BOARD MEMBERS:

CRAIG MANZINO

(Chairman)

Craig specializes in business management, tax, and financial planning for clients in the sports, arts, entertainment, and media industries. His clients include actors, writers, directors, producers, musicians, photographers, models, filmmakers, influencers, and athletes. Craig is passionate about his clients and provides concierge business management services so they can focus on their careers. Clients rely on Craig's strategic advice in all aspects of their lives to help them achieve business and financial goals.

KEITH HANENBERG

A 23-year veteran of the financial services industry, Keith Hanenberg is Executive Vice President of Allied Wealth Partners. In addition to his responsibility of overseeing firm operations, Keith works closely with individuals of the Arts & Entertainment Industry on creating the necessary habits for achieving long-term financial success. In his spare time, Keith stays actively involved with youth sports in his local community. Most recently, he was an assistant football coach with the Parsippany Hills Little Vikings. Keith is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and is an active member of his alumni association. Currently, Keith resides in Morris Plains, NJ, with his wife, Katie, and sons, Tyler and Jared.

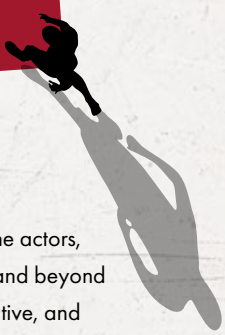
KATHY SIMONIS

Kathy Simonis is a Certified Diversity Professional (CDP), Advisory Board member and Lead Faculty for Diversity Training International University (DTUI.com), and Diversity Executive Leadership Academy (DELA). Kathy has enjoyed an extensive international career in global Financial Services in a cross section of project and people leadership roles establishing and evolving regional, operational, risk management and Diversity and Inclusion functions and teams.

ABOUT OBERON THEATRE ENSEMBLE

Founded in 1997, Oberon Theatre Ensemble is an independent nonprofit theater company. Now in its 25th season, they have produced 60 full-length productions and over 100 staged readings of original plays. Oberon Theatre Ensemble is an active player in New York's independent theater community with a mission to cultivate and invigorate a diverse theater community by confronting contemporary issues through the production of original, contemporary, and classical works. They believe in the joy of a well told story, the connection offered by a supportive community, and the magic of the theater. Oberon actively works to share this magic with others by reaching out to the community. They offer discounted student and senior tickets to our performances and have created shows to take to schools and senior centers. They have also presented free Shakespeare in Central Park. Oberon strives to keep theater accessible and affordable to our community.

Help us continue to create quality, affordable theater.
Please donate online at www.oberontheatre.org.
Oberon depends on your support to bring classical, contemporary, and original works to life.



SPECIAL THANKS

We are incredibly grateful for the Oberon community. A huge thanks to the actors, directors, playwrights, designers and technicians who have gone above and beyond and continue to help Oberon survive, thrive, and create exciting, provocative, and challenging theater.

And a very special thanks to the following who made ***The Memory Exam*** possible: Elizabeth Blanch, Carita Crawford, Gerry Minichiello, Romy Nordlinger, Holly O'Grady, Grace Selkow-Pettijohn, Laura Siner, LanDan Consulting, Allied Wealth Partners, Armanino and West Virginia School of Theatre and Dance

AND THE INCREDIBLE SUPPORT FROM

A.R.T./NEW YORK

Founded in 1972, A.R.T./New York assists over 400 member theaters in managing their theater companies effectively so they may realize their rich artistic visions and serve their diverse audiences well. Over nearly five decades, A.R.T./New York has earned a reputation as a leader in providing progressive services to our members—from shared office and rehearsal spaces to technical assistance programs for emerging theaters—which have made the organization an expert in the needs of the New York City nonprofit theater community.

THE LAMBS

The Lambs ® is America's First Professional Theatrical Club, established in New York in 1874, and not a public restaurant. As a social club, The Lambs nurtures those active in the arts, as well as those who are supporters of the arts, by providing fellowship, activities and a clubhouse for its members. Established Christmas week of 1874, and incorporated on May 9, 1877. It is considered the oldest professional theatrical organization in America.

CURATOR'S NOTE

Welcome to Oberon Theatre Ensemble's production of ***The Memory Exam***. When Director Terrence O'Brien submitted this for consideration, I knew immediately that it had to be shared with you. I was very intrigued and a little afraid of the strangely familiar world Steven Fechter had created. This show is a shining example of how theater can entertain and reflect its audience even as it cracks open invisible windows to expand perception and reveal the unexpected.



Val

VAL DAY
Artistic Director

59E59 THEATERS STAFF

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VAL DAY Artistic Director
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MICIAH WALLACE Box Office Associate /Usher
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ANNA BONGARDINO Usher
ANNE RUTTER Usher
BENJI SILLS Usher
CHRISTIAN MIRANDA Usher
ELLIOT JACOBS Usher
ERIC BERKELEY Usher
FLOWER RIOS Usher
INDIA BOONE Usher
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KAT KHELLBLAU Theater Technician

THEATER C **OCTOBER 20 - NOVEMBER 5**



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

59E59 Theaters reside on the traditional homelands of the Lenni-Lenape People on the Lenape Island of Mannahatta. We acknowledge the Lenni-Lenape as the original people of the land who were forcefully removed during colonization resulting in erased and excluded peoples and culture. We are grateful for the opportunity to work on the land and honor their elders, past and present alongside future generations for their stewardship and continuing relationship with their territory.

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