



STUDIO THEATRE WORCESTER PRESENTS:

The Thanksgiving Play

BY LARISSA FASTHORSE

DIRECTED BY CHRIS ORTIZ



November 3, 4, 10 & 11 at 7:30pm

November 5 & 12 at 2:00pm

"The Thanksgiving Play" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com



The Thanksgiving Play

BY LARISSA FASTHORSE



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Myths are engrossing and enchanting. They transcend the borders of our imagination and transport us to fantastical worlds where men turn to beasts and temperamental deities rule over the world, controlling the environmental and political climate. Myths are the reason we have theatre today! The storyteller has a great deal of responsibility and influence in which stories and how stories are told. Unfortunately, historical events have been distilled to myths, skewed by the power of the storyteller. The events surrounding the original Thanksgiving and the Native Peoples of this land have been recounted for centuries, distilled from its historical accuracy to present a more pleasant and celebratory narrative - after all, we have to teach this to children! Thankfully, and regretfully, we somehow face the facts. Uncomfortable, lamentable, eye-opening facts. What struck me the most when I first read this play - aside from the hilarious wit of FastHorse - is how destabilizing the process of unlearning is. That pesky dissonance. Ever notice how when we are confronted with the truth, we scramble different parts of what we think we know and piece them together to make sense or to defend the myths we have been holding onto for years? It's not fun - but it is necessary. Unlearning is the first step of allyship. Even after rehearsing this show for months and presenting it to you I still have questions: Who should be telling stories? How do we know for certain that what we are learning or teaching is actually true? What is the responsibility of actual cultural influencers? How am I exacerbating the problem of miseducation? I hope you leave with some questions too - that's the point - and take the space needed to reflect on what it means to be an ally. Now sit back, relax, laugh, and enjoy!

~ CHRIS ORTIZ

The Thanksgiving Play

BY LARISSA FASTHORSE



Larissa FastHorse Playwright
Chris Ortiz Director
Rob Klimeczko Producer
Morgan Fitzpatrick Stage Manager
Lydia Cochran Production Manager
John Wayland Somers Technical Director
Hazel J. Peters Set & Props Designer
Hannah Schuurman Costume Coordinator
Charlie Wynn Lights & Sound Board
Aya Khoury Dramaturg
Vincent Pellegrino Assistant Dramaturg
Kim Dexter House Manager

WITH

Alison Butts Logan
Johnny Esposito Jaxton
Erik Johnsen Caden
Sandy Clancy Alicia

The Thanksgiving Play

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SITE-SPECIFIC THEATRE

We are excited to embrace a site-specific theatre approach to our production of The Thanksgiving Play by Larissa FastHorse. At STW, we are committed to creating visceral experiences for our audience and site-specific theatre can be a great tool to immerse patrons in the story.

WHAT IS SITE-SPECIFIC THEATRE?

Site-specific theatre is the staging of theatrical performances in unique spaces other than conventional theatre venues. These spaces may mimic the setting of the play, be adapted to immersive outcomes, or take advantage of underused spaces or natural spaces.

WHERE IS THIS PLAY SET?

In an high school drama rehearsal space as the characters prepare for a Thanksgiving pageant.

AREN'T YOU PERFORMING IN A CHURCH? HOW IS THAT SITE SPECIFIC?

Many of us may remember the days spent in school cafeterias, gyms, and "cafetoriums," where spaces were adapted for performances and presentations.

STW will be using the gym space at Salem Covenant Church for that same multipurpose school space vibe.

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THE CAST



ALISON BUTTS (LOGAN)

Alison is a Boston-based actor, lighting electrician, scenic painter, and arts administrator. She holds a B.A from the University of Massachusetts Amherst and is an alumni of Shakespeare and Company's Month Long Summer Training Institute. Recent credits include Dance Nation (Sofia), Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley (Lydia Wickham- EACT DASH Nominee), and Indecent (u/s Chana, u/s Halina). alisonbutts.com



JOHNNY ESPOSITO (JAXTON)

Johnny is excited and grateful to make his STW debut among this immensely talented ensemble. Most recently, he starred as Boy/Peter in Peter and the Starcatcher at Curtain Call Theatre. Johnny holds a B.A. in Theatre and Psychology from Bates College, where he had the opportunity to fulfill a dream of his, directing, designing, and starring in a production of Every Brilliant Thing that he produced in tandem with the college's theater department. Currently Boston-based, Johnny is always attempting to expand his artistic horizons and provide a sense of connection and validation for his audiences. For more: johnnyesposito.com

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THE CAST



ERIK JOHNSEN (CADEN)

This is Erik's first production with Studio Theatre Worcester. Previously he has been Mitch in *A Streetcar Named Desire* and Pontius Pilate in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* for 4th Wall Stage Company, as well as Brick in *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof* at Stageloft Repertory Theater and The Professor in *Gilligans Island: The Musical* for Stageloft Repertory Theater as well as Calliope Productions. Erik hopes the audience will enjoy this show with this wonderful cast and crew. He appreciates the opportunity to get to play this role. And thanks to his wife, Angela, and daughter, Grace, for encouraging him and their unending patience.



SANDY CLANCY (ALICIA)

Sandy is a graduate of Johns Hopkins University who is delighted to be making her Studio Theatre Worcester debut with such a talented team. Previous shows include *A Doll's House, Part 2* (Emmy, The John Astin Theater), *She Kills Monsters* (Agnes, The JHU Barnstormers), *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (Sherlock Holmes, The John Astin Theater), and *The Curious Savage* (Fairy May, The JHU Barnstormers).

The Thanksgiving Play

BY LARISSA FASTHORSE



PRODUCTION TEAM



LARISSA FASTHORSE

(PLAYWRIGHT)

Larissa FastHorse (Sicangu Lakota Nation) is a 2020 MacArthur Fellow, award winning writer/choreographer, and co-founder of Indigenous Direction, the nation's leading consulting company for Indigenous arts and audiences. Her satirical comedy, *The Thanksgiving Play* (Playwrights Horizons/Geffen Playhouse), is one of the top ten most produced plays in America this season. She is the first Native American playwright in the history of American theater on that list. Additional produced plays include *What Would Crazy Horse Do?* (KCRep), *Landless and Cow Pie Bingo* (AlterTheater), *Average Family* (Children's Theater Company of Minneapolis), *Teaching Disco Squaredancing to Our Elders: a Class Presentation* (Native Voices at the Autry), *Vanishing Point* (Eagle Project), and *Cherokee Family Reunion* (Mountainside Theater).

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PRODUCTION TEAM



CHRIS ORTIZ (DIRECTOR)

Chris is a theatre and visual artist born and raised in Worcester, Ma. They hold a BA in Theatre Arts from Gordon College. He is grateful for the opportunity to partner with Studio Theatre Worcester and the artists involved in this project to bring this hilarious and important play to life. Much appreciation for his teachers and mentors for their encouragement and inspiration, and for his family and friends for their support.

Instagram: [Chris.Ortiz.Lopez](#)



MORGAN FITZPATRICK (STAGE MANAGER)

Morgan Fitzpatrick is a recent graduate of Sacred Heart University with a BA in Theatre and Media Arts. She is thrilled to join Studio Theatre Worcester as the Stage Manager for The Thanksgiving Play! Since she was a child, Morgan has been passionate about theatre, performing in her first show at six years old. In college, she developed a love of working behind the scenes and is excited to see where this new path takes her. Some past credits include Production Assistant/Assistant Stage Manager/Props Master (Legally Blonde, Hopkinton Center for the Arts), Assistant Producer (A Chorus Line, Sacred Heart University), Costume Crew (Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike, Sacred Heart University), Assistant Director (Sondheim on Sondheim, Sacred Heart University).

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PRODUCTION TEAM



LYDIA COCHRAN

(PRODUCTION MANAGER)

Lydia Cochran joined the Studio Theatre Worcester team in July 2022, having returned to her hometown after spending a year in Wisconsin as the Literary Resident at Milwaukee Repertory Theater. She earned degrees in History and Theater from Carleton College, and continues to use both backgrounds in her current work as a dramaturg, director, archivist, and administrator. Lydia is grateful to her peers at Studio Theatre Worcester and their nomination of her as Co-Artistic Director of the company this season. She is looking forward to continuing to grow alongside this new and amazing company she now calls her theatrical home.



JOHN WAYLAND SOMERS

(TECHNICAL DIRECTOR)

John Wayland Somers has over 30 years of experience in theatre as a performer, director, and educator. He grew up in the Northern Virginia area and holds a B.A. degree from the College of William and Mary and an M.F.A. in Acting from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Professional Theatre Training Program. Outside of his theatre experience, John brings over 20 years of new business development and project management experience into his role with Studio Theatre Worcester. John was in the Leadership Worcester cohort of 2021 and is a proud member of Actor's Equity Association (AEA), Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC), and SAG/AFTRA.

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PRODUCTION TEAM



HAZEL J. PETERS

(SET & PROPS DESIGNER)

Hazel J. Peters (Scenic Designer and Props Artisan) -- Studio Theatre Worcester: The Mad Ones (Stage Manager). Lyric Stage Boston: Assassins (Assistant Director), The Great Leap (Assistant Stage Manager). Bennington College: Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind (Director), Golden Chain (Stage Manager), The Chechens (Sound Designer). Hopkinton Center for the Arts: Finding Nemo Jr (Stage Manager), Legally Blonde (Stage Manager). Hazel received their BA in theatre and audio engineering from Bennington College in 2022. In their time at Bennington, they were the recipient of the Nicky Martin Scholarship for the Performing Arts.

Instagram: @hazelmakesnoise Website: hazelpeters.com



HANNAH SCHUURMAN

(COSTUME COORDINATOR)

Hannah Schuurman (Costume Designer) - Berklee College of Music: Pinocchio. Company Theatre: Hair. Entropy Theatre Boston: The Skriker. Gordon College: Men on Boats, My Favorite Year, Measure for Measure, Beauty's Daughter, I, Malvolio. Endicott College: Rocky Horror. Lightmark Creative: Restitute.

(Wardrobe Supervisor) - Lyric Stage Company Boston: Assassins, Rooted, The Play That Goes Wrong, Fabulation, or the Reeducation of Undine, The Light, Mr. Parent. Reagle Musical Theater: West Side Story, Pippin. Brown/Trinity Repertory Theatre: The Late Wedding. Totem Pole Playhouse: Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Ain't Misbehavin', Murder for Two, Mamma Mia. Gordon College: I, Malvolio, Silent Sky, As You Like It, Blood and Gifts, Between Bodies.

Website: hannahnoeldesigns.net

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PRODUCTION TEAM



AYA KHOURY

(DRAMATURG)

Aya is a graduate of Bridgewater State University. During her time at BSU Aya acted, stage managed, and served as a dramaturg. She has worked with Studio Theatre Worcester as Dramaturg for The Thanksgiving Play and The Mad Ones, and Assistant Dramaturg for Into the Breeches. Aya serves as Studio Theatre Worcester's education coordinator where she is helping to develop a conservatory style curriculum available to the Worcester community.



VINCENT PELLEGRINO

(ASSISTANT DRAMATURG)

Vincent Pellegrino is excited to be returning to Studio Theatre Worcester in his first show as Assistant Dramaturge on their production of The Thanksgiving Play. He has previously performed with Studio Theatre as Stuart in their production of Into The Breeches! last winter. His most recent theatrical work was voice acting as the topically-named "The Voice" in Museful Intent's production of On Our Terms. He hopes you enjoy the play and have a wonderful holiday season!

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PRODUCTION TEAM



CHARLIE WYNN

(LIGHTING DESIGNER & BOARD OPERATOR)

Charlie is excited to be back for her second production with Studio Theatre Worcester, and her first dip into solo Lighting Design work. Previously she ran the lights and sound for STW's Mad Ones. In recent years, she has also participated in various technical roles for Peterborough Players (Peterborough, NH) and MoCo Arts (Keene, NH). She is looking forward to future opportunities with STW and elsewhere in our local theatre community.



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PRODUCTION TEAM



KIM DEXTER

(HOUSE MANAGER)

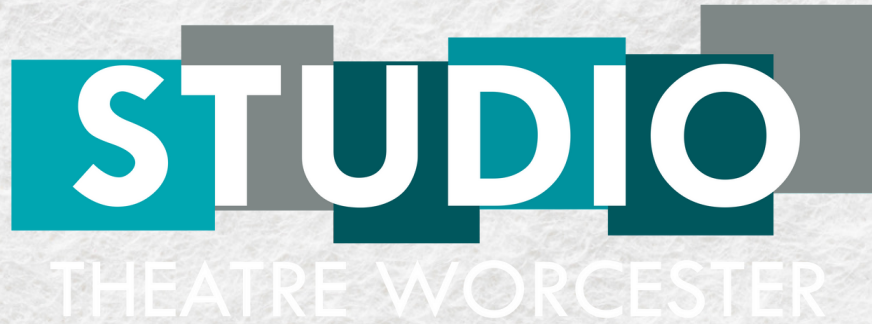
Kim is a board member with Studio Theatre Worcester where she lends her professional expertise in administration, human resources, policy development, and practices supporting equity, inclusion, and anti-racism. Kim enthusiastically contributes to the building of various platforms and structures for STW productions as her one physical skill set appropriate for the stage. Kim has worked at Framingham State University since 2005 where she currently serves as Assistant Vice President of Human Resources and Equal Opportunity. Kim holds a Bachelor's in Finance from University of Maryland College Park and a Master's in Nonprofit Management from Worcester State University.



ROB KLIMECZKO

(PRODUCER)

Rob graduated in 1996 with a Bachelor of Science in Advertising and a minor in Theater from the State University of New York College at Fredonia. Some of his Boston highlights include...featured soloist in Carousel starring Shirly Jones at Reagle Players; Will Parker in Oklahoma at Turtle Lane Playhouse; Pippin in Pippin at Longwood Players; Ethan in The Full Monty at Turtle Lane Playhouse; and El Gallo in The Fantasticks at WSP. In 2003, Rob was hired by Comcast Spotlight, the advertising division of Comcast/NBC Universal, as a Television and Internet Executive. After 13 years, Rob left Comcast/Universal and was hired by and currently working with Screenvision Media who produces the show "Front and Center" on movie screens across the country. Rob brings over 20 years of experience to both the Advertising and Theater field and is excited to join the Studio Theatre Worcester team.



MISSION

Studio Theatre Worcester is committed to a differentiated, professional theatre experience that reflects the diversity and vibrancy of Worcester communities. Our high quality, theatrical productions and education programs inspire and challenge our audiences while providing compensated opportunities for artists.

VISION

Studio Theatre Worcester will be the professional theatre of choice for artists, designers, educators and theatregoers in Central Massachusetts.

VALUES

Produce QUALITY productions that elicit VISCERAL experiences for our patrons.

Foster INCLUSIVITY, DIVERSITY, and EQUITY throughout all areas of our organization.

Encourage continued learning by providing EDUCATION opportunities.

Promote and invest in the use of LOCAL talent.

Invest in INNOVATION to keep the costs of our productions and classes affordable.

Develop a strong bond with the COMMUNITY.

Identify and DISMANTLE SYSTEMS that inhibit access to theatre.

Build SUSTAINABLE VALUE through fiscal responsibility.

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DONATE

Studio Theatre Worcester is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the US Internal Revenue Code. Your financial contributions make it possible for us to continue producing productions and creating programs that enrich the city of Worcester. Please consider making a donation today.

FOLLOW US

In addition to our website at www.studiotheatreworcester.org, we generate a lot of additional content and sneak peeks on our social media channels. If you don't currently follow us on Facebook and Instagram, we invite you to do so.

VOLUNTEER

Would you like to join our team of volunteers? We are always on the lookout for people who love theatre as much as we do and also want to connect more with the community.

We have many areas in which you can volunteer including, but not limited to:

- Box Office
- Ushering
- House Management
- Light & Sound Board Op
- Props Coordination
- Play Reading
- Production Assistant
- Back Stage Crew
- Wardrobe/Dressers



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