

**WESTERN  
CONNECTICUT**  
STATE UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF VISUAL  
& PERFORMING ARTS



# MELANCHOLY PLAY

A CHAMBER MUSICAL

By Sarah Ruhl and Todd Almond

Directed by Justin P. Cowan

**October 29 & 30 and November 5 & 6: 8pm**  
**October 30 & 31 and November 6 & 7: 2pm**

[wcsuvpac.eventbrite.com](http://wcsuvpac.eventbrite.com)

MELANCHOLY PLAY: A CHAMBER MUSICAL is presented by special arrangement with Concord Theatricals.  
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**WCSU DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS**

PRESENTS

# **Melancholy Play: a chamber musical**

**by Sarah Ruhl and Todd Almond**

directed and music directed by  
**Justin P. Cowan**

Scenic Designer  
**Clifton Chadick**

Lighting Designer  
**Daisy Long**

Costume Designer  
**Joni Johns Lerner**

Sound Designer  
**Arielle Edwards**

Technical Director  
**Tom Swetz**

Production Manager  
**Frank Herbert**

Technical Coordinator  
**Kori Hansen**

Costume Shop Supervisor  
**Christina Beam**

Production Stage Manager  
**Haleigh Oliver**

Producer  
**Pam McDaniel**

Associate Producer  
**Dr. Justin P. Cowan**

Student Production Manager  
**Sara Stone**

**MELANCHOLY PLAY (a new chamber piece) WAS ORIGINALLY  
PRODUCED BY 13P IN ASSOCIATION WITH TRUE LOVE PRODUCTIONS.**

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with Concord Theatricals.

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*In recognition of truth, history, and the enduring relationship between Indigenous Peoples and their sacred lands, we acknowledge that western Connecticut is the traditional homelands of the Schaghticoke, Weantinock, and other Native Peoples. The WCSU community seeks to foster greater knowledge of Connecticut's tribal nations, other Indigenous residents, and those forcibly removed.*

**This show is 90 minutes long with no intermission. Any latecomers will be seated at House Manager's discretion.**

**Please note the use of haze and strobe lights in this production.**

***The video or audio recording of this performance by any means is strictly prohibited.***



VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, WCSU WESTSIDE  
CAMPUS, 43 LAKE AVE. EXTENSION, DANBURY, CONN. 06811  
**WCSU.EDU/SVPA**

## A NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

I've always been interested in the ancient category of emotional and aesthetic experience – melancholy – that has been a wellspring for artists from lyric poetry in Japan before the common era to Shakespeare to Robert Button to the paintings of 19<sup>th</sup> century to Rilke to Satie to Chopin to black and white movies. Melancholy can be active, yearning, hopeful, nostalgic, sexy even, and offers the possibility of communing with others. Melancholy in this play is Bold, Outward, Sassy, Sexy, and Unashamed. It is not introverted. It uses, instead, the language of Jacobean direct address. Melancholy makes us contemplate the inevitable passage of time – the transience of things – and in that sense, it's not neurotic, but rather part of the human condition.

Depression, by contrast, is hermetic, sealed off, inert, hopeless, an emotion hard to communicate to others; an emotion it would be nice to get rid of. I felt that in our cultural zeal to eradicate depression in the current pharmaceutical era (as well we should) that possibly other shades of emotion were getting erased out of the language and the culture at the same time – and perhaps it wasn't worth throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

So, [in 2002] I wrote *Melancholy Play: A Contemporary Farce*. [A play] in which a woman is so drenched in a sensual melancholy that everyone falls in love with her. Then one day she gets happy, wreaking havoc on her paramours. Twelve years later, I met a wonderful composer named Todd Almond. Freud says there are no coincidences.

I always felt there might be more music in the play, and Todd said he heard a string quartet, piano, and an almost sung through score. I trusted Todd implicitly – he has gorgeous green eyes that look as though they are always dreaming of some far off sea – he is from the Midwest, as am I – and his music is beautiful. He wrote the score, effortlessly flinging the music into song, and here is our offering to you.

The other question the play poses is how to reach people who are sealed off – past the point of melancholy, and in a windowless room of depression. The rather simple answer that the play offers is: you go to them. Thank you for traveling to the country of melancholy with us. We take the journey seriously, but we hope that you have some serious fun along the way.

--Sarah Ruhl, 2015

## DRAMATURG NOTE

How often do you bask in melancholy?

Consider first that melancholy is not sadness; rather, it is a fugue state—a longing nostalgia, unashamed and even sexy, as Sarah Ruhl explores it in *Melancholy Play: A Chamber Musical*. Ruhl, relying on the storytelling capacities of magical realism, encourages us to sit and stare out of windows, feel the rain on our skin as if we were grass, throw open balcony doors to cloudy skies, bathe in the light of an autumnal sunset, and most importantly, never be afraid of sincere melodrama.

Sound intriguing? Just wait.

Originally written as a non-musical and produced in 2002, *Melancholy Play* is Ruhl's attempt to defend the artistic need for basking in melancholia. It was not until a decade later that Ruhl met composer Todd Almond. Strongly believing in Freud's theory that there are no coincidences in life, Ruhl entrusted Almond to compose a score for her play, making it a chamber musical set to accompaniment with only pianist and string quartet—a melancholic little band. Thus, the team crafted a portrayal not only of how to embrace melancholy, but also of how to identify and avoid the costs of sinking into it too deep.

Magical realism is timeless, fantastical, and unusual. To the characters, like Ruhl's, who live in a world of magical realism, such metaphysical occurrences do not seem metaphysical. Magical realism evolved from the Expressionism movement in Germany in the 1920s. Through its appropriation by Latin American playwrights such as José Rivera and José Cruz González later in the twentieth century, magical realism challenges Western literary traditions. Plays that embed themselves in magical realism embrace the extraordinary in events that are unexplainable via rational thought—moments where the unreal **becomes** real. It is both dreamlike and nightmarish, marrying the ordinary with the extraordinary. *Melancholy Play: A Chamber Musical* marries strong emotions to both physical and metaphysical states. It doesn't have to **be** real to **feel** real to characters who live in this world.

Now consider what melancholy might be. Is it felt in that strange time between afternoon and evening? Is it found in staring at passing strangers, just to get a glimpse into their lives? When was the last time you threw yourself onto a couch, not because you were tired but because you could indulge in a cathartic feeling of longing or disengagement? Sarah Ruhl expresses this melancholy as an essential part of the human condition. She illustrates her understanding by contrasting melancholia with the sinking feeling we get when we feel we are being swallowed whole by otherwise ordinary events, succumbing to the terror of depression. She asks us to consider what happens when we edge too far into that windowless room, becoming isolated in the stillness and falling into a passive, lonely despair rather than savoring the active longing of melancholy. She illustrates how depression is an all-encompassing monster, an emotional state to eliminate or at least avoid. What do we do when someone we love falls into such despair? It is not enough to ask them to get help or say that we are there for them. When someone we love has entered that state, Ruhl asks us to consider, it is our duty to accept their emotions and then rescue them from this deep, dark dead-end of depression—it is part of the social contract.

*Melancholy Play* illustrates the benefits of melancholy and attempts to eradicate the stigma surrounding depression. Through the love, laughs, and acceptance of each other's pasts, Ruhl's characters—our guides to the salvational power of melancholy—we hope that the play can help all of you navigate treacherous emotional waters in your own lives.

Embrace the melancholic moments of life and enjoy them and the show!

Tori M. Lopez  
Dramaturg

## CAST



Bella Bosco  
as Tilly



Julia Rocchio  
as Tilly



Sydney Maher  
as Frances



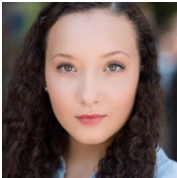
Sam Rogers  
as Frank



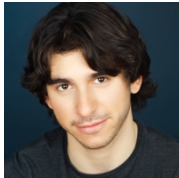
Rachel Faria  
as Joan



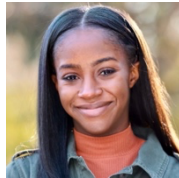
Dean Martin  
as Lorenzo



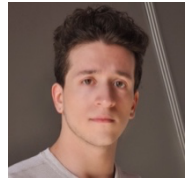
Jamishay Cammann  
u/s Frances



Jackson Tubis  
u/s Frank



Kendyl Davis  
u/s Joan



Raul Calderon  
u/s Lorenzo

## Cast

Tilly .....BELLA BOSCO\*, JULIA ROCCHIO\*\*  
 Frances.....SYDNEY MAHER  
 Frank.....SAM ROGERS  
 Joan.....RACHEL FARIA  
 Lorenzo.....DEAN MARTIN

**\*The role of Tilly will be played by Bella Bosco on:**

Wednesday, Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>  
Saturday, Oct. 30<sup>th</sup>  
Friday, Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>  
Sunday, Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>

**\*\*The role of Tilly will be played by Julia Rocchio on:**

Tuesday, Oct. 26<sup>th</sup>  
Thursday, Oct. 28<sup>th</sup>  
Friday, Oct. 29<sup>th</sup>  
Sunday, Oct. 31<sup>st</sup>  
Saturday, Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>

## Understudies

u/s Frances.....JAMISHAY CAMMANN  
u/s Frank.....JACKSON TUBIS  
u/s Joan.....KENDYL DAVIS  
u/s Lorenzo.....RAUL CALDERON

## Orchestra

Piano, Asst. Music Director.....JACKSON TUBIS  
Violin 1.....HAFEZ TAGHAVI  
Violin 2.....ANTHONY MANCUSO  
Viola .....RICHARD CRUZ  
Cello.....BRANDON CODRINGTON

The pit orchestra for WCSU Dept. of Theatre Arts musicals is composed primarily of current music students and alums. This collaboration with Music provides these students not only with hands on practical experience, but also an opportunity to network and play alongside professional musicians when possible. Many thanks to the Music Department for seeing the value in this experience, and also to the students who are willing to commit the time and energy toward their own education.

## PRODUCTION TEAM

Director, Music Director.....JUSTIN P. COWAN  
Producer.....PAM MCDANIEL  
Assoc. Producer.....DR. JUSTIN P. COWAN  
Asst. Music Director.....JACKSON TUBIS  
Dramaturg.....TORI LOPEZ  
Technical Director.....TOM SWETZ  
Production Manager.....FRANK HERBERT  
Student Production Manager.....SARA STONE  
Production Stage Manager.....HALEIGH OLIVER  
Assistant Stage Manager.....ANNA RAYMOND  
Scenic Designer.....CLIFTON CHADICK  
Set Design Consultant.....ELIZABETH POPIEL  
Master Carpenter.....RYAN HEMSTOCK  
Lighting Designer.....DAISY LONG  
Lighting Board Op...ALEXANDRA COLAIACOVO  
Asst. Lighting Designer.....EVAN BRENNER  
Master Electrician.....EVAN BRENNER  
Sound Designer.....ARIELLE EDWARDS  
A2.....SYDNEY HOPE KUHN  
Prop Design Consultant.....ELIZABETH POPIEL  
Props.....HALEIGH OLIVER, ANNA RAYMOND  
Costume Designer.....JONI JOHNS LERNER  
Costume Supervisor.....JONI JOHNS LERNER  
Costume Shop Supervisor.....CHRISTINA BEAM  
Asst. to Costume Designer.....ALAINA DWYER  
Wardrobe Head.....ALESSANDRA MUNROE  
Wardrobe Run Crew.....LAUREN SCHIFFER  
Fly Crew.....SYDNEY HOPE KUHN

## UNIVERSITY SUPPORT PERSONNEL

University Assistant.....CHRISTINA BEAM  
JOHN BONANNI  
MARK FOCARILE  
VPAC Events Coordinator.....ERIC GOMEZ  
VPAC Technical Coordinator.....KORI HANSEN  
VPAC Audio and Information Tech Coordinator  
.....SHELDON STEIGER

## WCSU THEATRE FACULTY

Dean, School of Visual and Performing Arts.....  
.....BRIAN T. VERNON  
Chair/Professor.....PAM MCDANIEL  
Assoc. Chair/Associate Professor.....  
.....DR. JUSTIN P. COWAN  
Professor.....DR. DONALD GAGNON  
Professor.....FRANK HERBERT  
Professor.....ELIZABETH POPIEL  
Professor.....SAL TRAPANI  
Associate Professor/Coordinator of Musical  
Theatre.....TIM HOWARD  
Associate Professor.....JONI JOHNS LERNER  
Adjunct Professors.....PHILLIP BALDWIN,  
MICHAEL BARTOLI, CHRISTOPHER BOLAN,  
MEGAN BOLAN, LOUISA BURNS-BISOGNO,  
ANTHONY DEPOTO, ARIELLE EDWARDS, ANN  
GERSCHESKI, KORI HANSEN, JOHN HICKOK,  
HOPE KATCHER-STRIANO, NEAL LERNER,  
JAN MASON, ROBIN MCGEE, ELIZABETH  
PARKINSON, HEATHER PATTERSON KING,  
BRENDA PHELPS, NICHOLAS PLACE, JEREMY  
POWELL, JANELLE ROBINSON, TOM SWETZ,  
LINDSEY TIMMINGTON, SCOTT WISE

## UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

Director.....PAUL STEINMETZ  
Associate Director.....SHERRI HILL  
University Assistant.....JANINE AZZI

## UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS AND DESIGN

Assistant Director.....ELLEN MYHILL  
Photographer.....PEGGY STEWART

## WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

**BELLA BOSCO** (Tilly) is a junior BFA Musical Theatre major from Delaware, OH. WCSU Credits include *Hedda Freeman* (Julie), *In The Open* (Madolyn), *Hand to God* (Margery u/s, performed), and *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* (Clark). Other credits include *Shrek* (Fiona). Instagram: @thebellabosco

**RAUL CALDERON** (Lorenzo u/s) is a junior Musical Theatre major from Waterbury, CT. WCSU credits include *Tommy* (Ensemble Swing), *In The Open* (Kev), and *The Covid Decameron* (Performer). Outside credits include *Footloose* (Willard) at The New Paradigm Theatre. Instagram: @\_RaulCalderon\_

**JAMISHAY CAMMANN** (Frances u/s) is a sophomore Musical Theatre major from New Paltz, NY. WCSU credits include *Be More Funny* (Lorraine) and *The Covid Decameron* (Alexis). Outside credits include *Mean Girls* (Gretchen u/s & Ensemble), *Chicago* (Roxie), and *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*.

**KENDYL GRACE DAVIS** (Joan u/s) is a freshman Musical Theatre major from Cromwell, CT. Outside credits include *Heathers* (Heather Duke), *Legally Blonde* (Serena), *13!* (Kendra). Instagram: @kendylgracedavis

**RACHEL FARIA** (Joan) is a senior BFA Musical Theatre major from Brooklyn, NY. WCSU credits include *Tommy* (Ensemble), *Covid 19 & Other Lessons* (Naomi), and *Hedda Freeman* (Hedda). Outside credits include *WHAT* (Audra) at The Black Lady Theatre.

**SYDNEY MAHER** (Frances) is a junior Musical Theatre major from Milford, CT. WCSU credits include *A Little Night Music* (Liebeslieder swing), and *In The Open* (E.A). Outside credits include *Urinetown* (Hope), *Young Frankenstein* (Elizabeth), *Cry-Baby* (Lenora), and *Beat Bugs: A Musical Adventure* (Buzz).

**DEAN MARTIN** (Lorenzo) is a senior BFA Musical Theatre major from Manchester, CT. WCSU credits include *Crazy For You* (Cowboy Swing, Eugene u/s), *A Little Night Music* (Liebeslieder), *The Who's Tommy* (Tommy), *Radium Girls: A Jaw-Dropping New Musical* (Rufus Reed), and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Oberon).

**JULIA ROCCHIO** (Tilly) is a senior Musical Theatre major from Naugatuck, CT. WCSU credits include *Sweat* (Tracey), *The Radium Girls: A Jaw-Dropping New Musical* (Female Ensemble), *The Who's Tommy* (Ensemble Dancer), and *A Little Night Music* (Liebeslieder Singer). Outside credits include *Memphis* (Gladys) at Waterbury Arts Magnet School.

**SAM ROGERS** (Frank) is a senior BFA Musical Theatre major from Portsmouth, NH. WCSU credits include *Uncle Vanya* (Astrov), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Benedick), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Demetrius), and *A Little Night Music* (Liebeslieder/Greek Chorus).

**JACKSON TUBIS** (Frank u/s, Asst. Musical Director) is a transfer sophomore Musical Theatre major from North Haven, CT. WCSU credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Theseus) and *Organizing in...Covid-19* (Ryan).

## FACULTY PRODUCTION TEAM AND DESIGNERS

**JUSTIN P. COWAN** (Director, Music Director, Associate Producer, Associate Chair/Associate Professor) As a Producer/Director: Producing Artistic Director of North Carolina Summer Rep in Greensboro, NC. Producing Artistic Director of Big Arts Herb Strauss Theatre, in Sanibel, FL. *The Santaland Diaries* (Paper Lantern Theatre Company). *Melancholy Play: A Chamber Musical, A New Brain, The Piano Lesson* (UNCG School of Theatre). *Single Rider* (The University of Alabama). As a Conductor/Music Director: New York regional credits include *West Side Story, The Producers, Hairspray, Cabaret*, and *Annie Get Your Gun*. Other regional credits include *Sweeney Todd, Sunday in the Park with George* (North Carolina Summer Rep), *Damn Yankees, Avenue Q, Gypsy, Guys and Dolls, Legally Blonde, How To Succeed...* (Ocean State Theatre Company), *South Pacific, Man of La Mancha, Pump Boys and Dinettes, Dirty Blonde, A Christmas Carol* (Triad Stage), *The Fantasticks* (Florida Repertory Theatre), *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Maples Repertory Theatre), *Always...Patsy Cline, Ethel Waters' His Eye is on the Sparrow* (Florida Studio Theatre), *Little Shop Of Horrors, Something's Afoot, A Grand Night For Singing* (the Schoolhouse Theatre), *The Secret Garden, Into the Woods* (The Gallery Players), *Zombie Prom, The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* (North Carolina Theatre Alliance), *Caroline, or Change, Heathers, Hairspray, Into the Woods*, Monty Python's *Spamalot, Mr. Burns: A Post-Electric Play, A Year With Frog and Toad, Dani Girl, Cabaret* (UNCG School of Theatre). *Church Basement Ladies, Are We There Yet?, The Winter Wonderettes* (Prather Entertainment Group), *Little Women, Single Rider* (University of Alabama), *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, Ain't Misbehavin', Das Barbecü, Songs For A New World and The 25th Annual... Spelling Bee* (BIG ARTS Herb Strauss Theatre). He holds D.M.A. and M.M. degrees in Conducting, a B.A. in Voice, and a Doctoral Cognate in Stage Directing from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

**CLIFTON CHADICK** (Scenic Designer) *Ella es Tango, Tia Julia Y El Escribidor; Perro Del Hortelano; Exquisita Agonia; Fame* (GALA Hispanic Theatre) *Hedda Freeman* (WCSU); *Matilda* (Axelrod); *The Tempest* (R.Evolution Latina); *Only You Can Prevent Wildfires* (Ricochette Collective); *Polaroid Stories* (New School); *Popescical The Musical* (Fringe NYC); *The 20th Century Way* (Rattlestick); *In Fields Where They Lay* (New Ohio); *Mr. Landing Takes A Fall* (The Flea); *Little Women* (OSTC);

*The Last Cyclist* (West End Theatre); *Jesus Hopped the A Train* (Atlantic Stage 2); *Accidentally, Like a Martyr* (Wild Project); *We Are All In Paradise* (NYU); *Grace McLean Live* (Ars Nova); Associate Design: *Oprah's The Life You Want Tour* (EVNT); *Sense and Sensibility* (Folger Shakespeare Library/A.R.T.); *Hamlet* (McCarter); *Tribes* (Barrington Stage); *The Brat Pack Live* (Norwegian Cruise Line); *Pride and Prejudice* (Seattle Rep). Clifton's work can be viewed at CliftonChadick.com.

**CHRISTINA BEAM** (Costume Shop Supervisor) is a freelance costume designer and technician working in New York and New England. Beam graduated from UMass Amherst in May 2019 with an M.F.A. in costume design, after completing an assistantship that also included rigorous work in costume construction. Her recent design credits include *The Revolutionists* by Lauren Gunderson (Silverthorne Theater), *Queen and Now: Sync or Swim* (NYPOP), *She Loves Me* (UConn Opera) and Taylor Mac's *The Lily's Revenge: A Flowergory Manifold* (UMass). Her designs for *The Lily's Revenge* were included as part of the 2019 Emerging Artist/Imagination Exhibit at the 2019 USITT Prague Quadrennial. Since graduation, she has devoted much of her time to working as a draper for Connecticut Repertory Theatre and as a stitcher for Hartford Stage. She is thrilled to be joining the WCSU family in her new role as Costume Shop Supervisor.

**ARIELLE EDWARDS** (Sound Designer) is a former assistant audio supervisor for the Public Theater and Shakespeare In the Park, working on shows there from 2008 through 2013. As a freelance sound engineer off-Broadway, she worked on productions of *Altar Boyz* at New World Stages, *Walmartopia* at Minetta Lane, and *Jack Goes Boating* starring Philip Seymour Hoffman with Labyrinth Theater Company. Winner of the Connecticut Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Sound Design for *dance of the holy ghosts* at Yale Repertory Theatre. She holds a B.A. from Vassar College and an M.F.A. from Yale School of Drama.

**KORI HANSEN** (Technical Coordinator, Adjunct Professor) is responsible for the training and maintenance of the equipment for the Art, Music and Theatre Arts departments in the building. She is also an adjunct professor in the Theatre Arts Department, teaching techniques in lighting

and rigging. Hansen received her B.F.A. in Theatre Design Technology from SUNY Purchase and has spent more than 30 years working in live entertainment production and management. Her early work includes touring as an electrician for the Big Apple Circus and working on the lighting crew at Harrah's Casino in Atlantic City. From there, she went on to work for Kliegl Brothers Lighting and was exposed to theatrical lighting from the manufacturing of fixtures to the design for some of the first computer and digital lighting systems. Before arriving at WCSU, she worked for a production company as a technical director for corporate events and most recently spent 12 years as the production manager for the Paramount Center for the Arts in Peekskill, New York, where she managed more than 500 shows including children's shows, dance and countless rock-and-roll performances.

**FRANK HERBERT** (Production Manager, Professor) has spent 45-plus years in theatre production and management, with some design, direction and performing throughout his career. As owner of the Corner Shop Scenic Studios, he served most of New York's off-Broadway theatres, dance and opera companies, trade, industrials and television. Some of those credits include work on the original production of Miguel Pinero's *Short Eyes*, the Broadway premiere of *Medea and Jason*, David Mamet's *A Life in the Theatre* (the marquis display sits in his office to this day) and David French's *Leaving Home*. Herbert served on the staff of the Performing Arts Center at SUNY, where he joined the design/tech faculty and was the associate producer of the internationally acclaimed Pepsico Summerfare bringing music, theatre and dance from Japan, Indonesia, Australia, Europe and throughout the United States and Canada to the newly created arts center. He has been on the WCSU faculty since 1990 and served as the Theatre Arts Department's first chairman. He originated the department's productions for Ives Concert Park's Summer Concert Series in 2008 with *Shalamazoo*, which was later taken to Edinburgh. He has enjoyed guest assignments with the Aspen Music Festival, as a scenic and lighting designer at the University of Pennsylvania, and as lighting designer for modern dance at TRC.

**JONI JOHNS LERNER** (Costume Designer, Costume Shop Manager, Associate Professor) has been working in the New York professional costume industry for more than 35 years. As a textile artist, her work can be seen on the stages of the Broadway, National Tours, European and Asian companies of *The*

*Lion King* for the last 23 years. Other examples of her work have been seen on the Broadway and National Tour of *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and *Wicked*. Multiple projects have included New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theater, San Francisco Ballet and Kansas City Ballet, and Bette Midler's *Kiss My Brass* and Las Vegas shows as well as the Spider-Man costumes at Universal Studios Theme Park in Florida. Lerner was co-owner of Fabric Effects in New York, a fabric dyeing, painting and silk screening company serving the theatre, film and fashion industries. She has collaborated with numerous designers of stage, screen and ballet, including Maurice Sendak on several opera projects and an exclusive hand painted scarf series.

**DAISY LONG** (Lighting Designer) is a lighting designer for theater, opera, concert and dance. Originally from Cambridge, MA, she now lives in New York City. New York credits include BAM, Atlantic for Kids, The Flea, Primary Stages, Abingdon Theater Company, Mason Holdings, HERE Arts Center, LaMaMa, NYU, AMERINDA, TADA! Youth Theater (National Youth Arts Award for Outstanding Lighting for *The Perfect Monster*), Manhattan School of Music. Regional credits include Speakeasy Stage Company (IRNE Award for Best Lighting for *The Scottsboro Boys*), Kitchen Theatre Company, Yale, Connecticut College, Interlochen. Proud member, USA 829.

**PAM MCDANIEL** (Producer, Professor, Chair) is a professor of acting, directing and play production, and chair of the WCSU Department of Theatre Arts. At WCSU, she has directed productions of *Major Barbara*, *Sweeney Todd*, *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*, *City of Angels*, *Cabaret*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Nine*, *The Full Monty*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* and *Kiss Me, Kate*. She also directed *Two Nights Near Doolin*, a play written by WCSU faculty member Louisa Burns-Bisogno. Her production of *The Cherry Orchard* received a Merit award as Outstanding Associate Production for Region 1, and her production of *Sweeney Todd* was chosen for the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). Prior to coming to WCSU, McDaniel produced and directed extensively in San Francisco and Dallas/Fort Worth. She was a co-founder and artistic director of San Francisco's Annual Working Women Festival, spotlighting outstanding female theatre artists, and she has worked with new plays for the New York Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. Her M.F.A in Directing is from the University of Texas-Austin with additional study at the American Conservatory

Theatre in San Francisco, the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in London, Actors Theatre of Louisville, and New York City casting with Daniel Swee at Theatre Communication Group.

**ELIZABETH POPIEL** (Props & Set Design Consultant, Professor) holds an M.F.A. in Scenic Design (Costume second concentration) from SUNY Purchase where she was the first M.F.A. Scenic Design graduate in 1988. She is a proud member of United Scenic Artists Local 829 (SD) and Local 52 IATSE and has been teaching at Western since 2001. Selected design credits in theatre include Edinburgh Fringe for WCSU, Lambs Theatre (New York), Trinity Rep, SoHo Rep (New York), Durham Summer Rep, Open Eye (New York), Neighborhood Playhouse (New York) and EFX at MGM Grand (Las Vegas), and most recently The Sharon Playhouse (Connecticut). Film art department credits

include *Meet Joe Black*, *Book of Henry*, *The Devil's Own*, *Bait* and *The Seagull*. TV design credits include *The View* (original design) and *ABC Good Morning America Weekends* since 2005 (five Emmy and one Morrow awards). She has designed and painted more than 40 productions at Western. She is very proud of all her students who have advanced to great places in the theatre design world. The classes taught in the theatre design areas at WCSU have been developed by Popiel over a period of 19 years. She teaches Set Design, Costume Design, Design Fundamentals, Scenic Art, Decoration and Decor, Allied Crafts and Puppetry.  
[www.popieldesigns.com](http://www.popieldesigns.com)

*A full list of WCSU Department of Theatre Faculty is available on*  
[www.wcsu.edu/theatrearts/faculty](http://www.wcsu.edu/theatrearts/faculty)

## STUDENT PRODUCTION TEAM

**ALAINA DWYER** (Assistant to the Costume Designer) is a senior Theatre Performance and Design Tech major from Orange, CT. WCSU credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Snug/The Lion), *The Covid Decameron* (Gwen), *Dognap on Dekalb* (Costume Head), and the one-act play *Sentences and Words* (Maggie).

**RYAN HEMSTOCK** (Master Carpenter) is a senior Theatre Performance and Design Technology major from Orange, CT. WCSU credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Lysander), *Organizing in the Time of COVID-19* (Aaron), and *Hand to God* (Timothy u/s performed).

**SYDNEY HOPE KUHN** (Audio 2, Fly Crew) is a junior Design Tech major from New Haven, CT. WCSU credits include *SWEAT* (Costume Designer/Head Costumer), *In the Open* (KCACTF Nominated Graphics/Projections Designer), and *Hand to God* (Wardrobe Crew).

**TORI M. LOPEZ** (Dramaturg) is a junior Theatre Performance major from Westchester, NY. WCSU credits include *In The Open* (Sofia), *The Office* (One), and *Death Valley DQ* (Luna).

Outside credits include *Mamma Mia!* (Featured Dancer), *How To Succeed...* (Dance Captain), and *Damn Yankees* (Featured Dancer).

**ALESSANDRA MUNROE** (Wardrobe Head) is a junior Theater Design/Tech major (Costume concentration) from Bridgeport, CT. WCSU credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Assistant Costumer) and *Be More Funny* (Assistant Costumer).

**HALEIGH OLIVER** (Production Stage Manager) is a sophomore Theatre Arts Management major from Delaware, OH. WCSU credits include *Be More Funny* (Assistant Stage Manager) and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Production Stage Manager).

**ANNA RAYMOND** (Assistant Stage Manager) is a sophomore Theatre Arts Performance major from Pomfret, CT. WCSU credits include *Relatable* (Helen) and *The Covid Decameron* (Dancer).

**LAUREN SCHIFFER** (Wardrobe Run Crew) is a transfer junior Theatre Arts Performance major from Southington, CT. Outside credits include *Seussical* (Gertrude), *Once on This Island* (Erzulie), and *Beauty and the Beast* (Mrs. Potts).



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# The Kennedy Center

*The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, part of the Rubenstein Arts Access Program, is generously funded by David M. Rubenstein.*

*Special thanks to The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust for supporting the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival.*

*Additional support is provided by The Honorable Stuart Bernstein and Wilma E. Bernstein; and the Dr. Gerald and Paula McNichols Foundation.*

*Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts.*

This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KCACTF representative, and selected students and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year more than 1,500 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.



## WCSU.EDU/SVPA

### About the School of Visual and Performing Arts

Western Connecticut State University's School of Visual and Performing Arts (SVPA) establishes Western as the premier regional center for cultural, intellectual and artistic excellence. SVPA brings together the departments of Art, Theatre Arts and Music, allowing the university to better promote and grow all three creative disciplines.

### Mission Statement

- To offer the highest-quality educational, pre-professional and professional programming within a liberal arts environment.
- To utilize fully our regional advantage in the arts and arts-related professions, including access to outstanding faculty, guest artists and resources of New York City.
- To recruit the most talented students in the arts disciplines.
- To fulfill the role of designated center for the arts of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities system.
- To attract major funding for scholarships and endowed faculty chairs.
- To enhance the cultural life and image of the university.
- To provide significant experiences in the arts for all students in academic programs across the university.

### Contact Us

For more information about the school and its programs, please contact the Office of the Dean at (203) 837-8851 or visit [wcsu.edu/svpa](http://wcsu.edu/svpa).

### Giving to the School

For information on giving opportunities to the SVPA, please contact the Office of Institutional Advancement at (203) 837-8279.



### **The Marian Anderson Naming Campaign**

Please help us achieve our goal to name the School of Visual and Performing Arts at Western Connecticut State University in honor of the legendary Marian Anderson. Your gift will bring us one step closer to naming both the School and Visual and Performing Arts Center in recognition of this cultural icon and longtime Danbury resident. The *Anderson School* will be committed to excellence, opportunity and inclusion.

All contributions to the Marian Anderson Fund will go to the naming, development and enhancement of the School of Visual and Performing Arts and community programming. A donation envelope may be found at the box office.

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