



DEPARTMENT
OF THEATRE



THIS EVENT IS FUNDED BY THE ARTS+ INITIATIVE

USER AGREEMENT

BY BEN HOLBROOK
DIRECTED BY SEAN DIGIORGIO
UMBC BLACK BOX THEATRE
MAY 1-3, 2026

NEW PLAYS NEW WAYS

UMBC DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE

User Agreement

By Ben Holbrook

Directed by Sean DiGiorgio ('26)

**Sound Designer
& Directing Mentor**
Nigel Semaj

Lighting Designer
Niya John

Technologist
Adam Mendelson

Intimacy Choreographer
Katie Hileman

Dramaturg
Joseph Hoffman

Costume Designers
Becca Janney
& Eric Abele

Scenic & Projection Designer
Tyler Brust

Ollie Animator
Grace Horne

Props Coordinator
Ann Davies

Stage Manager
Kayla Laucks

This production will have no intermission.
The video or audio recording of this performance by any means is strictly prohibited.

PLEASE NOTE: This production utilizes strobe lights, and loud sounds.

Content Disclosure: The play contains strong language, sexual situations (kissing, embracing, flirtation, implied sexual activity), references to enslavement, references to and use of drugs and alcohol, references to and depictions of mental illness including anxiety, panic attacks, and trauma.

UMBC Theatre events are open for full participation by all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or any other protected category under applicable federal law, state law, and the University's [nondiscrimination policy](#)



NEW PLAYS NEW WAYS

UMBC DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE

Cast

Sy: Jamia Tutt

Theo: Amani Abdullah

Leif: Gabriel Zuniga

Nimbus: Lily Arbaugh

Ollie: Emma Parsons

Sy/Theo Swing: Camila Hidalgo

Leif Understudy: Lilith Hohlbein

TIME: The near future, or perhaps you're already there

PLACE: New York



This production is entered in the **American College Theatre Festival (ACTF)**, a national educational network that recognizes and promotes excellence in collegiate theatre production and training.

Through ACTF participation, productions are eligible for response, feedback, and consideration for regional and national recognition. Students and faculty may also be invited to participate in ACTF educational programs, scholarships, and professional development opportunities across a range of theatrical disciplines.

By entering this production, our theatre department participates in a nationwide effort to celebrate and advance exemplary work in college and university theatre.

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Production Faculty & Staff

Production Manager

Greggory Schraven

Technical Director

Tyler Brust

Head Electrician & Assistant Technical Director

Evan McDougall

Production Stage Manager

Grace Shepperd

Staff Electricians

Miles Abramson

Assistant Costume Shop Manager

Margaret Caster

Student Production Staff

Production Assistants: Sumedha Bhat, Ash

Morris, Jada Abbott

Light Board Programmer & Operator: Jada

Abbott

Wardrobe Crew: Emma Oakes

Stitchers: Tim Clark, Lily Arbaugh, Emma

Oakes, Aurora Hoffman, Molli Martin, Gwyneth

Watson

Electricians: Malaak McDonald, Ash

Cox-Pinckney

Painters: Maura Bohn

Carpenters/Technicians: Abigail Adams,

Jason Altizer, Maura Bohn, Will Brown-Taylor,

Timothy Clark, Ash Cox-Pinckney, Ann Davies,

Nex Duncan, Aidan Fitzgerald, Adam Harper,

Malaak McDonald, Brenden Reyes, Jess

Johnson

Support UMBC Theatre!

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**Be sure to designate "Theatre Department" when you make your donation.*



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From the Director:

It's a noisy world. Not in the literal sense, but in the constant, antagonizing distractions that make genuine connection more difficult than ever. In a society dependent on user agreements as the price of participation in modern life, we sign without question, because opting out of technology is no longer a real choice. It can feel like you're drowning.

With that in mind, the play asks its audience a simple question: are two souls able to connect? From there, relationships become the heart of the story.

In response, it was important to me that this world feels inherently recognizable. I wanted a space that feels warm and comforting, and a soundscape that's natural and healing. I was drawn to the idea of living in space with these characters and the complexities that come with existing in an age so detached from ourselves. From this detachment, the production takes on a euphoria that shines even through the darkest waters.

My mentor Nigel says that "you can't make art in a vacuum." Beyond art, I take this to mean that we are shaped by the people around us. Every conversation, every argument, every shared space builds toward an experience that lives beyond the bounds of technology. Something immediate and real.

As I prepare to enter a rich and relevant artistic space, I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to direct a fully realized production while still a student. While the process was not always smooth, and I had to navigate the disorienting obstacles that come with creating art; it fostered a spirit of collaboration that made this production possible.

At its core, this play is about connection: magnetic bonds that persist through the static. As you ride the wave of this play with its characters, I hope you'll cherish the quiet that can emerge when we truly connect with one another. Like an engaging conversation, I invite you to be drawn into the lives of the characters, to dance with them and discover moments of stillness within the noise.

All the best,
Sean DiGiorgio

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Biographies



Sean DiGiorgio (Director) (he/him) is a Multifaceted Theatre and Film Artist in the DMV, and upcoming UMBC Graduate. During his time at UMBC, Sean was the Assistant Director for last year's *in the darkest forest*, and performed on stage in *Stupid F*cking Bird* and *Slime*. Other theatre credits include: Director; *Murder on the Orient Express* (Milburn Stone Theatre) Sound Designer; *the shark is broken* (Vagabond Players) Production Assistant; *Call Me by Any Other Name...just as sweet* (The Voxel). In January, Sean received the SDC Regional Selection for Directing at the American College Theatre Festival, and will go on to represent his Region at the National Festival. In film, Sean's recent short film *He Doesn't Bite*

premiered at AwesomeCon in 2025 and received an honorable mention at the Maryland Film Festival. Sean would like to thank the Department of Theatre for fostering his education throughout the past four years, and for taking the chance on him directing this production as a student. He would like to thank his family for their constant support, his friends for keeping his spirits high, and his mentor Nigel Semaj for all of the time, effort, and guidance that they have put into developing him as a director. He is forever grateful. seandigiorgio.com



Ben Holbrook (Playwright) is a Brooklyn-based (originally from NC) playwright and filmmaker whose works have been produced, developed, or commissioned by: The High Line, The Exponential Festival, The Brick, Theatre Untitled, Maker's Ensemble, Fundamental Theater Project, Ruddy Productions, The New York International Fringe Festival, The Memphis Fringe Festival, The Motor Company, Voices of the South (TN), Ugly Rhino (LA), Seoul Players (SK), Holiday House, Find the Light (LA), The Irish Arts Council, 45th Street Block Association, and Paper Lantern Theatre Company (NC). His films have been seen at the Big Apple Film Festival, The Imaginarium Convention, The Comedy of Horrors Festival, The

Sickest Short Films Festival, and The Films Open Mic Festival. He's been awarded the Williamstown Theatre Festival Artist Residency, the Edward Albee Foundation fellowship, the Drama League Rough Draft Residency (partnering with Sam Underwood), Fresh Ground Pepper's Playground Playgroup Residency, The WildWind Performance Lab Residency at Texas Tech, The New Concepts Theatre Lab at UNC-Greensboro, Magic Time at Judson Church, has been a finalist for Juilliard's playwriting fellowship and the O'Neill's National Playwright's Conference, and is the inaugural recipient of the Peter Shaffer Award for Excellence in Playwriting and the winner of the 47th Samuel French OOB Festival. Also a budding futurist, Ben enjoys exploring our futures from a mythological perspective in his writing, but has also worked with Extrapolation Factory, a designed based research studio for participatory futures studies, to create pieces for Ikea's Space 10, The Ford Motor Company, and Walker Art Center. Ben is the co-owner of Full Metal Workshop, an LLC that creates web based experiences, both original and for clients. (Bio and photo from New Play Exchange. Learn more about Ben at <https://www.baholbrook.com/>).

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Biographies Continued



Amani Abdullah (Theo) (she/her) is a third year BFA Acting and Psychology BA major with a minor in Entrepreneurship. This is her third UMBC production and she is very excited. Her last role was in UMBC's *Shakespeare in Harlem* as Madam K. This was one of her most notable roles and was pivotal in her developing career. She would love to thank her family and friends for supporting her love of art and her craft. She hopes this show connects with everyone as much as it did her and she hopes you can find something beautiful to takeaway.



Eric Abele (Costume Designer) (he/they) is a Teaching Professor in Theatre and Affiliate Faculty in Visual Arts at UMBC. His research, with colleague Lauren Roark, is developing digital rendering pedagogy for costume designers through their online learning platform, [Design with Procreate](#). BA Dramatic Arts and German: Centre College. BFA Art + Design and BS Art History: Towson University. MFA Costume Design: University of Tennessee and MFA (in process) Studio Art: Towson University. Website: [ericmakesstuff.art](#).



Lily Arbaugh (Nimbus) (she/her) is a sophomore BFA Acting and Psychology BA major. This is her first role in a UMBC Theatre production. Past credits have included Crissy in *Hair* (Vagabond Players) and Ilse/Martha U/S in *Spring Awakening* (Maryland Theater Collective). She would like to thank her friends and family for their endless support.



Tyler Brust (Scenic & Projection Designer) (He/Him) is a scenic designer and technical director based out of Western Maryland. He received his BA in Theatre Design and Production from UMBC (2022). Currently, he works for the UMBC Department of Theatre as part time staff, serving as a lead carpenter and scenic charge artist. Past credits include: *Shakespeare in Harlem* (Lead Carpenter / Scenic Artist; UMBC); *The America Play* (Scenic Designer / Technical Director, Perisphere Theater); *Tiny Lights* (Scenic Designer, Theater Jr); *shOUT* (Co-Scenic Designer, UMBC); and *Katalepsis* (Technical Director, Submersive Productions); His portfolio can be found at: [tylerbrust.com](#).

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Ann Davies (Props Coordinator) is a Senior Linehan Artist Scholar pursuing dual degrees in Theatre, Design and Production and Visual Arts, Cinematic Arts at UMBC. This is her fourth season as Props Coordinator, with credits including *Shakespeare in Harlem*, *John Proctor is the Villain*, and *Stupid F*cking Bird*. Outside of props, Ann is building skills in costume design. She thanks her friends and family for all their constant support!



Camila Hidalgo (Sy/Theo Swing) (she/her) is a third year Linehan Artist Scholar, an Acting BFA with an additional minor in art-focused Entrepreneurship. After last year's spring internship as a "cast member" down at Orlando FL's Walt Disney World, she is so excited to be back as a cast member in her second UMBC Theatre Department show. Previous roles include Mrs. Fiorentino from last winter's *Street Scenes*, as well as several cabaret solos and featured roles at Silhouette Stages and UMBC's Musical Theatre Club. After these weeks of frantic script annotating and character analysis, she believes she could not have asked for a more exciting opportunity than to serve as the swing of such complex, fascinating leads she has grown to care for so much and equally. Sending love and gratitude towards the cast and crew, professors, and all her loved ones! Not just for supporting and strengthening her passion for theatre, but especially for constantly finding opportunities to stretch and challenge that dedication which they better not stop ♡ ig: [@camilarubina.mp3](https://www.instagram.com/camilarubina.mp3)



Katie Hileman (Intimacy Choreographer) (she/hers) is a DIY theatre maker from Baltimore, MD. She is the General Associate for the UMBC Theatre Department, where she also choreographs intimacy and teaches acting as an adjunct professor. For UMBC, Katie has choreographed intimacy for *The Grown-Up*, and *Slime*, and she has co-directed *Green Theatre Revolution* with Susan McCully, and *Street Scenes* with Eve Muson. Katie will be directing *Witch* by Jen Silverman in the Black Box this fall. Katie is the Artistic Director and co-founder of Interrobang Productions, where she has produced over a dozen new works for the stage since 2014. Katie holds a BFA in Acting from University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) and an MFA in Theatre Arts from Towson University, and is a collective member of Submersive Productions.



Lilith Hohlbein (Leif Understudy) (she/they) is a sophomore BFA Acting and Computer Science major from Sykesville, Maryland. This is Lilith's first production with UMBC and she is very excited to start her journey here. Previous roles include Lysander and Baltus van Tassle in Liberty High School's productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Sleepy Hollow*, respectively. She would like to thank her family, partner, and the many wonderful friends she has made at UMBC.

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Gracie Horne (Ollie Animator), also known as Grace, is a Junior Visual Art and Animation Student at UMBC with a background in Character Design, Visual Development, and Story Art. This is her first time working in a theatre production, and she is grateful to have been given the opportunity to bring Ollie the Octopus to life through her work as an Animation Designer. She would like to give special thanks to Eric Abele for being such a great mentor throughout the production!



Becca Janney (Costume Designer) (Thon/They) Professional design credits include: Barrington Stage (*Next to Normal*), The Voxel (*Call Me By Any Other Name...*) Shenandoah Summer Musical Theatre (*Little Women*), Chesapeake Shakespeare Company (*Merry Wives*), Gala Theatre (*Boleros*, *The Return of Eva Peron: Momia en el Closet*), Imagination Stage (*Cinderella A Salsa Fairytale*), WaterTower Theatre (*Everything is Wonderful*, *Godspell*) and Stage West Theatre (*Ada and the Engine*). Educational design credits include: UMBC (*Street Scenes*, *Stupid F*cking Bird*, *Down With Love*) American University (*Damn Things Will Kill Ya*), Maryland Opera Studio (*Don Giovanni*), University of Maryland (*A Bicycle*

Country), Baylor Theatre (*Peter and the Starcatcher*). They got their MFA in costume design at the University of Maryland. Website: beccajanney.com



Niya John (Lighting Designer) is a lighting designer and programmer from P.G. County, Maryland. She is beyond excited to be back at UMBC, where she received her B.A in Theatre with a concentration in Production and Design. Recent credits include *Primary Trust* (ALD, Westport Country Playhouse), *Her Portmanteau* (The Strand), *Midiculous* (Keegan Theatre), and American Ballet Theatre 2025 Summer Season (Lighting Intern, Lincoln Center). Upcoming projects include *Lysistrata* (Dance Loft on 14th), and International Dance Festival (Publick Playhouse). Learn more about her at nvjdesigns.com.



Kayla Laucks (Stage Manager) (she/her) is a Sophomore Linehan Artist Scholar and Theatre Design and Production Major from Fleetwood, Pennsylvania. Most recently Kayla was a Production Intern at American Dance Festival for their 2025 Season. Previous Stage Management credits include: *Street Scenes* (UMBC), *I'll Follow Tomorrow* (UMBC), *The Nutcracker* (Berks Ballet Theatre), *In Nature's Studio* (Reading Theatre Project), *Something Rotten* (RACC), and *Young Frankenstein* (RACC).

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Adam Mendelson (Technologist) teaches Lighting and Sound Design at the University of Maryland Baltimore County where he helped prepare the new theatre spaces for the opening of the state-of-the-art Performing Arts and Humanities Building in August of 2012. He previously taught design at the University of Wyoming, the University of Texas-Arlington, Stephens College (Columbia, MO), and Lawrence Academy (Groton, Massachusetts). His design work has been seen across the country and as far afield as Edinburgh, Scotland. He designs lights and sound for our Theatre department productions and he teaches lighting design students in sophisticated professional level technology and supervises Theatre design majors.



Emma Parsons (Ollie) (she/her) is a Freshman BFA acting major from Columbia, Maryland. She is thrilled to be in her first UMBC production. Favorite past roles include Juror #9 in *Twelve Angry Jurors* (Mount Saint Joseph High School) and The Tin Man in *The Wizard of Oz* (Laurel Mill Playhouse). She would like to thank her family for supporting and driving her, and the UMBC Theatre Department for inspiring her and giving her this amazing opportunity.



NIGEL SEMAJ (Directing Mentor & Sound Designer) (they/them) is a Baltimore-based director, movement director, and educator originally from Washington, D.C. They are an Assistant Professor of Performance and Affiliate Assistant Professor of Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Website: www.nigelsemaj.com Instagram: [@nigelsemaj](https://www.instagram.com/nigelsemaj)



Jamia Tutt (Sy) (she/her) is a Senior BFA Acting major with a certificate in Korean MLL and from Randallstown, Baltimore County, Maryland. Her favorite past roles were being Nina from *Stupid F*cking Bird*, Mamie Jackson from *Street Scenes*, and being Assistant Stage Manager for the play *Dracula*. "I would like to thank the production team and cast members for their hard work, and supporting each other and me, during this journey!" Instagram: [@miaa.acting](https://www.instagram.com/miaa.acting) Website: www.jamiatutt.com

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Gabriel Zuniga (Leif) (he/him) is a transfer student from Montgomery College currently pursuing a BFA in Acting. He has appeared in *Grease* as a member of the ensemble and as Lyle in *Footloose*, and performed the role of Jaxton in *The Thanksgiving Play*. Gabriel also directed the scene UH-OH from *Love/Sick* by John Cariani and has been actively involved in run crew and stage craft, contributing to productions such as *The Liar* and *The Visit*.



At UMBC we believe that theatre is an ever-changing art form, responding to and creating new ideas that confront our ethical, political, and artistic ideas and practices. Degree programs leading to an Acting, BFA, a Theatre BA; Theatre Studies Track, Theatre BA; Design & Production Track, or a Theatre BA; Theatre Education Track provide students with the interdisciplinary skills to become actively engaged with their art and with the world around them. A dedicated faculty focuses on each student's evolution as an artist and as a person, making the study of theatre at UMBC a life-changing experience that stimulates, challenges and inspires.

New Ways and New Plays — Our Vision for the Future:

UMBC Theatre fosters artistically innovative and socially engaged graduates in a leading liberal arts program. Using the latest technologies and practices, we experiment with theatrical forms, create provocative new work, and give voice where it is most needed.

Learn more at theatre.umbc.edu.

Full-Time Faculty/Staff Eve Muson (Chair), Eric Abele (Interim Chair), Margaret Caster, Nikki Hartman, Becca Janney, Susan McCully, Evan McDougall, Adam Mendelson, Gregory Schraven, Stephanie Schuster, Colette Searls, Nigel Semaj, Grace Shepperd, Nate Sinnott, Gerrad Alex Taylor

Part-Time and Adjunct Faculty/Staff Miles Abramson, Tyler Brust, Andrew Hann, Katie Hileman, Joseph W. Ritsch, Susan Stroupe

Special Thanks To Interim Dean John Stolle-McAllister, Director of Arts and Culture Tom Moore, Kiirstn Pagan, Laura Schraven and Commonvision, Cael Mulcahy, the CAHSS Operations, Eva Grandoni, and Lynn Cazabon.

Poster Design by Eric Abele

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