

Upcoming Events

GROUNDING, November 11 - 14, 2021

by George Brant

Performed by Anne Penner and Directed by Rick Barbour

An unexpected pregnancy ends an ace fighter pilot's career in the sky. Reassigned to operate military drones from a windowless trailer outside Las Vegas, she hunts terrorists by day and returns to her family each night. As the pressure to track a high-profile target mounts, the boundaries begin to blur between the desert in which she lives and the one she patrols half a world away.

STOP KISS, February 2022

by Diana Son

Directed by Anne Penner

After Callie meets Sara, the two unexpectedly fall in love. Their first kiss provokes a violent attack that transforms their lives in a way they could never anticipate.

CABARET, March 2022

music by John Kander, lyrics by Fred Ebb, and book by Joe Masteroff

Directed by Greg Ungar

"There was a Cabaret, and there was a Master-of-Ceremonies, and there was a city called Berlin in a country called Germany... it was the end of the world, and I was dancing..."
Come to the Kit Kat Klub for lively evening of decadence, music, romance, and human horror.

Our productions could not take place without the invaluable financial support of the following individuals and groups. We are deeply grateful for their gifts, and invite all our patrons to consider joining in support.

The Ralph L. and Florence R. Burgess Trusts

The Estate of Florence Sikes

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OUR TOWN

a staged reading
by Thornton Wilder



UNIVERSITY of
DENVER

THEATRE

NOVEMBER 5 AND 6, 2021

Newman Center for the Performing Arts

Dramaturg Notes:

"...everybody knows in their bones that something is eternal and that something has to do with human beings."

-The Stage Manager

Life is a collection of moments and memory a fickle keeper of them. A hundred moments escaped your attention as you read that sentence. It makes you wonder what narrow specks of life's fragile existence are passing by, without us ever knowing they were here. We choose each moment and in the choosing, a thousand other moments fall away.

Picture in the dark recesses of your mind a wooden shelf stained with age stretching improbably into the unseen, unreachable distances of your past and future. Small jars of light – some brightly shining, some dimly flickering, yet others dark voids of space – line these shelves. Motes of dust float stilly in the air around them, suspended like kind little thought attendants. These jars of light, everyone carries them. Captured flecks of time you can take out and wonder over. Each vial contains a moment in your existence. We all know there are moments when other moments are needed. In this respect, memory serves as the ultimate talisman, the thing you hold close when nothing else will do. It's the moment you give yourself as a gift, as an offering to the gods that be, the celestial Stage Manager, in return for some time to breathe.

In *Our Town*, death becomes the ultimate convalescent moment. The respite where earthy things can be weaned away and the eternal parts have a chance to come out clear. There is an analogy found in the veil of death and the barrier presented by incarceration. Both spaces are haunted by the echoing reverie of if only and remember when. Life is over...in many ways. We carry deep reflections of sorrow and regret. But there is this space, the possibility of purification, of redemption.

We have 8 incarcerated individuals involved in this enhanced staged reading of *Our Town*. We also have 3 formerly incarcerated individuals on stage with our 6 University of Denver students. This has provided a very unique culture for this whole conversation about what it means to be present in life. There are times when each of us feels as if we're in the liminal looking out at those living life on the other side; and times when we're on the other side with a unique perspective on how it should all be appreciated. The thing is we're all right. Thornton Wilder and Dr. Ashley Hamilton have combined and conspired for us to engage this conversation in a very intentional way, in a very intentional space.

Other large, looming life events, like global pandemics, give us the opportunity of forced convalescence as well. A time to look back and long over the simple things we miss, to reflect over the truth of what we thought was important. There is a sweetness found in longing if you do it right. What if we created our own convalescent space in life for these types of reflections? That's the function of art and the theatre, isn't it? To challenge us in our comfort and dare to ask the hard questions, the ones we'd typically ignore... So... Take a breath, look around, and fill your jar. After all, there's nothing so devastating as longing over an empty jar...

Matthew LaBonte, Dramaturg and Narrator
Incarcerated at Sterling Correctional Facility

The DU Prison Arts Initiative (DU PAI) generates creative and collaborative learning experiences that enrich the lives of people who are incarcerated and shift the conversation about prison. As part of DU's commitment to the public good, our programming opens dialogue between incarcerated people and their communities. We empower individuals to see themselves as leaders capable of creating meaningful change, both inside prison systems and well beyond.

For more information please visit <https://liberalarts.du.edu/prison-arts>

OUR TOWN

by Thornton Wilder

A collaboration between the DU Department of Theatre
and the DU Prison Arts Initiative (DU PAI).

Setting: Grover's Corners, New Hampshire between 1901 and 1913

Act I: "Daily Life"

Act II: "Love and Marriage"

Act III: "Death and Eternity"

Cast

Stage Manager	Eric Davist+
Narrator	Matthew LaBonte*
Emily Webb	Ariana Sophia
Charles Webb	Terry Mosley Jr.*
Myrtle Webb	Belle Phelan+
George Gibbs	Nate Cushing
Julia Gibbs	Jamiylah Nelson+
Frank Gibbs	Brett Phillips*
Rebecca Gibbs/ Women from the Dead	Erin Kubat
Bill Warren/Sam Craig	Matt Dohle
Lady in the Box/Ms. Soames	Grady Hicks
Joe Crowell/Wally Webb/ Baseball Player/Man from the Dead	Ryan Thomas
Professor Williard/Baseball Player Si Crowell	Torriano Davis*
Simon Stimson/Baseball Player	Mike Severson*
Howie Newsome/Joe Stoddard	Deshon McKinnie*

Artistic Team

Director	Ashley Hamilton
Lighting Designer	Shannon McKinney
Scenic Designer	Ally Lacey
Scenic Associate and Live Painting	Craig Forbes*
Costume Designer	Janice Benning Lacey
Costume Associate and Painter	Andrew Draper*
Sound Designer	Jason Ducat
Dramaturg	Matthew LaBonte*
Music Creation	Deshon McKinnie*
Poster Artist	Andrew Draper*

Production Team

Technical Director	Steven McDonald
Assistant Technical Director	Ally Lacey
Costume Shop Supervisor	Sarah Zinn
Staff Shop Carpenter	Andrew McGlothen
Stage Manager	Tess Neel
Assistant Stage Manager	Alex Chessnoe
Charge Artist	Naila Martinez
Deck Crew	Will Casela
Wardrobe	Cole Johnsen and Phoebe Link
DU Theatre House Manager	Tamarra Nelson

Shop T.A.s

Lauren Asselin, Gabby Bohl, Layn Rawlings, Janey Rusk, Hayley Sayre

Students of Costume and Tech Studio

Haley Barth, Jack Cansler, Moriah Fine, Madalyne Heiken,
Cole Johnsen, Erin Kubat, Andrew Mitchell, Timmy Pamintuan, Davin Roark,
Débora Rocha, Ryan Thomas

Special Thanks

CDOC Staff -- Director Dean Williams, Deputy Director Matt Hansen,
Warden Jeff Long, Capt. Cris Clare, Lt. Noah Toops, Capt. Braden Piel

*= Incarcerated in Sterling Correctional Facility in the Colorado Department of Corrections (CDOC)

+ = Previously Incarcerated in CDOC and DU PAI Staff