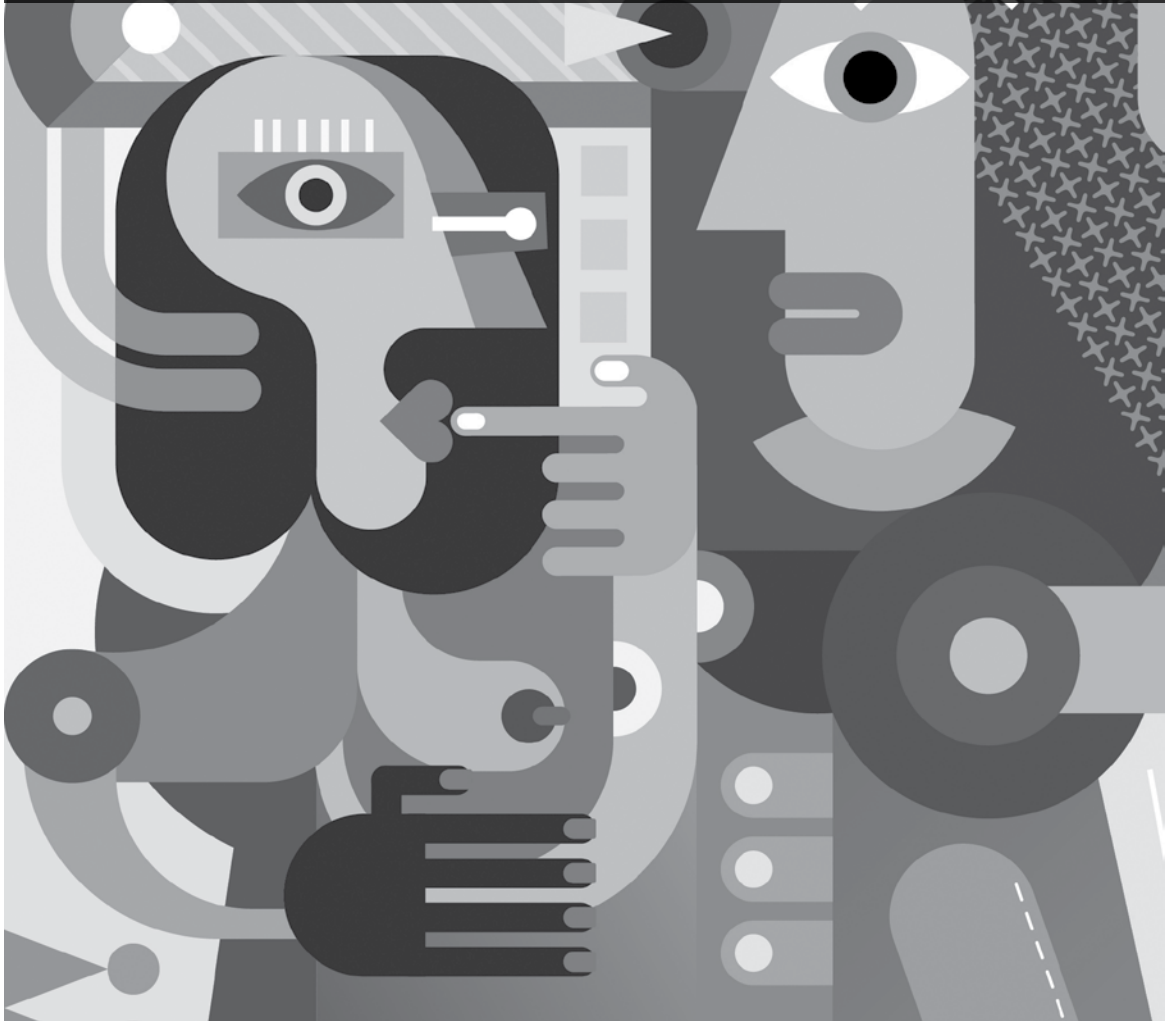


ILLINOIS THEATRE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY SEASON 1967-2017



IN THE NEXT ROOM, OR THE VIBRATOR PLAY
ILLINOIS THEATRE

By Sarah Ruhl | Lisa Gaye Dixon, director
Thursday-Saturday, October 26-28, 2017, at 7:30pm
Tuesday-Saturday, October 31-November 4, 2017, at 7:30pm
Sunday, November 5, 2017, at 3pm
Studio Theatre



RESISTANCE REVOLUTION RESURGENCE

I've been making, studying, and teaching theatre for most of the last 40 years. And I'm often asked about the role of theatre. Is it meant to entertain and educate, as Roman philosopher Horace wrote in the *Ars Poetica*? Or do we follow the Sanskrit *Nāṭya Śāstra*, which suggests that the primary goal of theatre is to transport the audience to a parallel reality of wonder and joy? And what about Brecht, who wanted to create a 20th-century theatre that spurred its audience to action? For me, the best theatre—the theatre we offer this season—does all three.

We are obviously a theatre that educates. Our productions are basic texts for students in a variety of courses, including the thousands in THEA101: Introduction to Theatre Arts. Productions are also research

labs for our students, who use them to prepare as professional theatre artists. Our first two, *All the King's Men* and *Travesties*, are perhaps the most educational. They are both about historical moments of **resistance** to the political status quo as well as the limits of that resistance.

Of all the revolutions, I think the sexual **revolution** might be the best. Sarah Ruhl's funny, feminist *In the Next Room, or the vibrator play* takes the invention of the vibrator as a starting point for the revolution in how women conceived of their sexuality, maternity, relationships, and labor.

Barbecue is also revolutionary, though in a more Brechtian sense. It demands we rethink what we "know" and then act on our new knowledge.

We also transport audiences to a better world. *Twelfth Night* invites us to imagine a kingdom of filial and romantic love (sometimes thwarted) and offers wonder and joy. My hope is always **resurgent** after seeing Shakespeare.

Of course, we entertain. *Assassins*, Steven Sondheim's history of the men and women who've failed and succeeded in killing a president, is a darkly comic but always exuberant song-and-dance extravaganza.

I am thrilled to be part of a department determined to make relevant, revolutionary theatre. Thank you for being with us as well.

Dr. Kirsten Pullen
Head, Department of Theatre



PROGRAM

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Original Broadway Production by Lincoln Center Theater

New York City, 2009

In the Next Room, or the vibrator play was originally commissioned and produced by Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Berkeley, CA

Tony Taccone, Artistic Director / Susan Medak, Managing Director

In the Next Room, or the vibrator play was developed at New Dramatists

IN THE NEXT ROOM, OR THE VIBRATOR PLAY

PLAYWRIGHT

Sarah Ruhl

DIRECTOR

Lisa Gaye Dixon

SCENIC DESIGNER

Yue Shi

COSTUME DESIGNER

Nicole Zausmer

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Michael Cummings

SOUND DESIGNER

Brandon Reed

PROPERTIES MASTER

Kira Lyon

HAIR/MAKEUP COORDINATOR

Samantha C. Jones

VOCAL COACH

Sigrid Sutter

STAGE MANAGER

Lavine Leyu Luo

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Bobby Reynolds

DRAMATURG

Lindsay Rose Russell

CAST

DR. GIVINGS

Jordan Coughtry*

Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

CATHERINE GIVINGS

Ellen Magee

SABRINA DALDRY

Elana Weiner-Kaplow

ANNIE

Jacklyn Ovassapian

LEO IRVING

Ryan Luzzo

ELIZABETH

Maya Prentiss

MR. DALDRY

Nick Lannan

**Appears through the courtesy of Actors' Equity*



SCENIC BREAKDOWN

TIME: The dawn of the age of electricity; and after the Civil War; circa 1880s

PLACE: A prosperous spa town outside of New York City, perhaps Saratoga Springs

ACT I

20-minute intermission

ACT II

This production contains adult language, adult content, nudity, and is intended for mature audiences only.

In the Next Room, or the vibrator play is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

DRAMATURG'S NOTE

In the Next Room is a tale of technology. Set in 1888, it offers an intimate portrait of a professional tool: the vibrator. Electrical apparatuses designed for sexual stimulation were a cutting-edge medical technology then, though they addressed an age-old problem: unhappy women. Doctors as far back as Hippocrates (ca. 400 BCE) had struggled to cure women of what they called *hysteria*, a strange set of symptoms that included (but was by no means limited to) anemia, muscle spasms, insomnia, anorexia, frigidity, licentiousness, nervousness, weariness, ticklishness, and troublesomeness. By the Victorian period, as many as three-quarters of the female population were thought to suffer from hysteria. But that alarming statistic indicates what is now largely accepted in and beyond the medical profession: hysterical symptoms weren't symptoms at all; they were the normal functioning of female sexuality, or, in many cases, the normal response to suppressed or unsatisfied female sexuality. Every orgasm in *In the Next Room* marks a dozen or more desires suppressed and unsatisfied. And not simply for sexual gratification but for education, independence, intellectual stimulation, mutual respect, suffrage, equal pay, or any number of freedoms denied women (and differently gendered artists) over the ages.

In the 1880s, the richness to be found in a life of science was broadly accessible, even to housewives. Clubs and societies supported the professional and amateur interests of affluent men, but women and working-class citizens read about Edison and attended scientific lectures and exhibitions. *In the Next Room* physically stages a moment when boundaries—between science and sentiment, professional and domestic, masculine and feminine—had yet to be built and were crowded into a single space.

In the hands of benevolent male physicians, the vibrator did not turn out to be the solution to all female maladies. But its history, as told here in Sarah Ruhl's play, is an important reminder that fundamental forms of energy—like electricity or sexuality or personality—require expression. They must move, connect, interact. In a storm, lightning seeks ground to restore imbalance between earth and sky; in humans, desire seeks a sort of balance also.

—Lindsay Russell, assistant professor,
Department of English

PROFILES



Jordan Coughtry (Dr. Givings) is in the MFA acting program at the University of Illinois. His acting credits include *Iago's Plot*, *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play*, and *John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath* (Illinois Theatre); *Very Very* (J, J & Z); *Murder in the Cathedral* (Hoi

Polloi); *Be Story Free* (InVerse Theatre); *Winter Journey* (P.S. 122); *Godspell* (Olney Theatre Center); *Twelfth Night* (Westport Country Playhouse); *Red* (TheatreWorks); *Emma* (Pioneer Theatre); *Candida* (Two River Theatre); *Shakespeare's Amazing Cymbeline*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Failure: A Love Story*, *Macbeth*, and *The Comedy of Errors* (Illinois Shakespeare Festival); *All's Well that Ends Well* (Alabama Shakespeare Festival); *Love's Labour's Lost* (The Shakespeare Theatre/RSC); *Amadeus*, *Our Town*, *Wittenberg*, and *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare Theatre of NJ); *Hamlet*, *Richard III*, and composer of original songs for *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Twelfth Night*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre).



Nick Lannan (Mr. Daldry) has appeared at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts in *Failure: A Love Story* (Chorus/Pal/Front Door); *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play* (Matt); and *John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath* (First Agricultural Officer/Deputy Sheriff). He

has also performed at the Armory Free Theatre and the Illini Ballroom in roles as Deputy Figgle in *Midsummer's Nightmare*, Third Shepherd in *The Second Shepherd's Play*, Priceps 3 in *The*

Assumption of Mary, Michael Doyle in *Listen*, "FAP-App" Developer in *Moonside Manners*, and at Parkland's Second Stage Theatre as The Mute in *The Fantasticks*. Nick is in his senior year as an acting major at the University of Illinois, after spending six years in the United States Marine Corps. Outside of stage work, Nick is featured in a few local commercials and works on independent films within the Champaign-Urbana community.



Ryan Luzzo (Leo Irving) is a senior in the BFA acting program at the University of Illinois. While in pursuit of his degree, Ryan has performed in Illinois Theatre mainstage plays, independent movies, experimental student work, and dance. As a James

Scholar, Ryan has participated in cross-departmental experiences, notably his theatrical adaptation of *St. Lucy's Home for Girls Raised by Wolves*—a finalist at the Undergraduate Research Symposium and the IPRH Bio Humanities Symposium. Most recently, Ryan participated in Inlet Dance Theatre's Summer Intensive in Cleveland, Ohio, and starred in *a corner for august*, a short film produced by Protagonist Pizza Productions (PPP). This year, Ryan can be seen in *Young Dems* (PPP's latest web series) and in a work by Kemal Nance in *February Dance with Dance* at Illinois.



Ellen Magee (Catherine Givings) hails from Ann Arbor, Michigan, and is a senior pursuing a BFA in acting at the University of Illinois. She appeared most recently in Illinois Theatre's productions of *Failure: A Love Story* (Gerty) and *Mr. Burns, a post-electric*

play (Jenny). Other credits include Illinois Theatre's productions of *Kingdom City* (Katie) and *1984* (Kid/Prole Woman), the Lyric Theatre @ Illinois production of *Kiss Me, Kate* (Gangster #2), and the Celebration Company at the Station Theatre's production of *Appropriate* (Cassidy). This past summer, she helped create new work with the Theatremakers 2017 at the National Theatre Institute.



Jacklyn Ovassapian (Annie) is a sophomore in the BFA acting program at the University of Illinois. Jacklyn has appeared in *Spring Awakening* (Ilse), as well as student presentations of *Things We Want* (Stella) and *Circle Mirror Transformation* (Theresa). She also recently

served as an intern at Citadel Theatre in Lake Forest, Illinois. This will be Jacklyn's debut performance at Krannert Center.



Maya Prentiss (Elizabeth) is a third-year MFA acting candidate from Richmond, Virginia. She recently graduated from Spelman College where she received a BA in drama. Maya has an extensive background in spoken word poetry and

mentoring, which have taken her around the world—from the Apollo Theatre in New York City

to Akure, Nigeria. Some of her past productions include *An Octoroon* (Victory Gardens Biograph Theatre); *Romeo and Juliet*; *Dontrell, Who Kissed the Sea*; and *In the Blood* (Illinois Theatre); *King Henry V*; *Real Women Have Curves*; *Crowns*; and *Shakespeare in the Park*.



Elana Weiner-Kaplow

(Sabrina Daldry) is a senior pursuing her BFA in acting at the University of Illinois. Her previous productions at Krannert Center include *Iago's Plot* (Desdemona) and *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play* (Susannah/Lisa/Itchy). She has

also appeared in *A Dream Play* (Kristin/Billsticker), a staged reading of *Middletown*, and Student Playwrights Outreach Theatre. She has also performed in a number of Armory Free Theatre productions including *Ludus de Antichristo* (Synagoga), *Sisephus Happy*, *The Wild Party*, and *Assassins* (Emma Goldman).



Lisa Gaye Dixon (Director) has worked professionally across the country and around the globe. She began her professional career with the Steppenwolf Theatre Company of Chicago in a revival of *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide*

When The Rainbow is Enuf, and has performed on the stages of the Royal Shakespeare Company and the New Globe Theatre in London, and regionally in the United States at the Attic Theatre (Detroit, Michigan), Performance Network (Ann Arbor, Michigan), Lost Nation Theatre (Vermont), The Kitchen Theatre (Ithaca, New York), GEVA Center (Rochester, New York), the Illinois Shakespeare Festival, and Milwaukee Shakespeare. In October 2015, she premiered her

one-woman show (which she co-wrote and performed) entitled *My Case Is Altered: Tales of a 21st Century Roaring Girl* at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon.

This fall, she will reprise her role as The Ghost of Christmas Present in the 40th anniversary production of The Goodman Theatre's *A Christmas Carol* in Chicago.

Film credits include *The Trouble with Men and Women* (BBC/IFC), *Leading Ladies*, and *USING*. At the University of Illinois, Lisa has directed several popular productions for Illinois Theatre—all dealing with a range of social, cultural, and political issues—that address and reveal the common threads of humanity, and the universality of experiences across racial, cultural, class, economic, gender, and sexual lines.

Michael Cummings (Lighting Designer) is a second-year graduate student at the University of Illinois. He is pursuing an MFA in lighting design and holds a BA in psychology. Previous work at the University of Illinois includes *Studiodance I* (Lighting Designer) and *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play* (Assistant Lighting Designer) as well as an ongoing assistantship at Krannert Center.

Lavine Leyu Luo (Stage Manager) is a senior international student in the stage management program at the University of Illinois. Before she transferred to theatre, Lavine received Associate of Arts and Associate of Business degrees from Pierce College in Washington State. Lavine has worked for professional touring productions such as *Samajam South China Tour* (Production Touring Manager), *42nd Street National Tour* (Assistant Stage Manager/ASM), *How the Grinch Stole Christmas National Tour* (ASM), and *Guangzhou Grand Opera* (China) as a tech interpreter for international touring productions including *Sister Act*, *Wicked*, *Shrek*, *Swan Lake on Ice*, and *My Fair Lady*. Her other credits at the U of I include

Dontrell, Who Kissed the Sea (ASM); *Kiss Me, Kate* (ASM); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (ASM); *Henry V* (Stage Manager); and *The Other Shore* (Production Assistant).

Kira Lyon (Prop Master) is a second-year MFA graduate student studying properties design and management. She is a native of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and received her BFA in theatre performance from the University of Southern Mississippi. Last spring she debuted her work at the University of Illinois as the Properties Master for *Failure: A Love Story*. Before attending school, Kira worked as a freelance designer in Chicago. Some of her credits include *Byhalia*, *Ms* with Definition Theatre Company, *New Colony*, and *Steppenwolf*, and *Passing Strange* with University of Illinois at Chicago. Her most recent professional position was Properties Master for the 2017 summer season with Virginia Heritage Theatre Company.

Christina Rainwater (Scenic Charge Artist) is a member of United Scenic Artists Local 829 and has been a professional scenic artist for 16 years. She received a BFA in theatre from Missouri State University and an MFA in scenic art from University of North Carolina School of the Arts. There, she developed the workshop "A Distressing Subject" on distressing techniques for scenery, properties, and costumes. She was the Scenic Charge Artist at the Flat Rock Playhouse in Flat Rock, North Carolina, for two years. She has an ongoing working relationship at Goodspeed Musicals, where she had the pleasure of working on the musicals *Camelot*, *Carnival*, *Carousel*, *Hello Dolly!*, and *La Cage aux Folles*. She also worked for Feld Entertainment in Palmetto, Florida, including Disney's *Princesses on Ice* and Disney's *Playhouse Tour II*. This summer she worked for six weeks at The Muny, St. Louis, as a journeyman scenic artist.

Brandon Reed (Sound Designer) is a second-year MFA student in sound design and technology. Previous credits at the University of Illinois include sound design for *The Light in the Piazza*, *Poppea*, *St. Lucy's Home for Girls Raised by Wolves*, and sound engineer for *Failure: A Love Story*. Regional credits include Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre (*Love's Labour's Lost*, *Julius Caesar*, *The Music Man*, *Taming of the Shrew*), Bristol Valley Theatre (*Silent Sky*, *Elijah*), and Chautauqua Theater Company (*Our Town*, *Afterlove*, *Engine of Our Ruin*). Chicago credits include Congo Square (2016 Jeff Nomination for *A Small Oak Tree Runs Red*), The Hypocrites (*Adding Machine: A Musical*), Teatro Vista (*In The Time of the Butterflies*), About Face Theatre (*Brave Like Them*, *Ad Hoc Home*), Bluebird Arts (*Three Hotels*, *Hello and Goodbye*), and many more. He is an alumni of the Steppenwolf Theatre Company apprenticeship program. He received his bachelor's degree from Ball State University.

Bobby Reynolds (Technical Director) is a second-year MFA candidate in the scenic technology program. He hails from the flat lands of Ohio where he received his BA at Wittenberg University. Prior to his arrival at the University of Illinois, he worked at Playhouse on the Square for productions such as *Mary Poppins*; *Memphis*; *American Idiot*; and *Kiss Me, Kate*. Bobby also recently served as a trusty carpenter for the Heritage Festival at the University of Virginia.

Lindsay Rose Russell (Dramaturg) is an Assistant Professor of English and writing studies at the University of Illinois. A feminist historian of the English language, Russell specializes in the role of women and gender in the history of dictionary making. She also teaches classes on rhetoric, profanity, and queer theory.

Yue Shi (Scenic Designer) is originally from China and moved to the United States for graduate school. She received her BA from the National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts. She is an artist, scenic designer, painter, illustrator, and also involves film areas and TV programs. She is currently in her third and final year at the University of Illinois. Her past scenic design experiences include *Waiting for Godot* (NACTA Theatre), and *Poppea* (Illinois Theatre).

Sigrid Sutter (Voice and Speech Director) has travelled abroad and across the United States for her work and studies. In Chicago, she worked with A Red Orchid Theatre, Steep, Jackalope, Northlight, Back Room Shakespeare Project, and many others. Her voice and dialect coaching credits include a dozen productions for The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, including the world premiere of *The Invisible Hand* by Ayad Akhtar, *Sense and Sensibility* adapted and directed by Jon Jory, and Pulitzer Prize-winning *Clybourne Park*. Her film credits include *Colma: The Musical* and *Strange Culture*, and her television credits include *Chicago Justice* and *Ellen*. She has taught courses and workshops in acting Shakespeare, voice and speech, and movement at The Guthrie Theatre, The Theatre School at DePaul University, The Conservatory at Webster University, The University of Chicago, Washington University, Gustavus Adolphus College, and other top institutions. She is a certified teacher of Fitzmaurice Voicework and Pilates. Ms. Sutter trained at The Shakespeare Theatre Company/George Washington University, earning an MFA in classical acting.

Nicole Zausmer (Costume Designer) is a third-year MFA costume design student at the University of Illinois who received her BA from Indiana University in 2012. Recent designs include *Failure: A Love Story* (Illinois Theatre), *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play* (Illinois Theatre), *Man of La Mancha* (Bigfork Summer Playhouse), *Boeing-Boeing* (Town Hall Arts Center), and *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (Oklahoma City Theatre Company).

PRODUCTION STAFF

ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR

Caylei Hallberg

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Colleen Accardo

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Grace Chariya

ASSISTANT COSTUME DESIGNER

Larissa Almanza

ASSISTANT SOUND DESIGNER

Miykael Hutchins

ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER

Stephen Moderhock

HAIR/MAKEUP ASSISTANT

Sharne Van Ryneveld

COSTUME TECHNICIAN

Miriam Jurgensen

Caitlin Leyden

SCENIC CHARGE

Christina Rainwater

MASTER ELECTRICIAN

Konrad Ciolkosz

AUDIO ENGINEER

Luke Parker

DECK RUNNING CREW

Ashton Goodly

Illana Weiner

PROP RUNNING CREW

Kara Hynes

Brienna Taylor

COSTUME RUNNING CREW HEAD

Larissa Almanza

COSTUME RUNNING CREW

Olivia Harmon

Bennett Kosma

Kayla Lee

MAKEUP TECHNICIAN

Jessica Hensley

Caitlyn Leyden

MAKEUP RUNNING CREW

Blas Nache

Tonatiu Ruiz-Escobedo

LIGHT BOARD OPERATOR

Shelby Dorsey