



ORIGIN STORY
ILLINOIS THEATRE

By Nathan Alan Davis

Lisa Gaye Dixon, director

Friday-Saturday, November 5-6, 2021, at 7:30pm

Tuesday-Friday, November 9-12, 2021, at 7:30pm

Saturday, November 13, 2021, at 2pm

Studio Theatre

PROGRAM

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TIME: Now

PLACE: The 'Burbs

This performance will include a 20-minute intermission.

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

ORIGIN STORY received a developmental workshop at DETOUR: A Festival of New Work at WaterTower Theatre in Addison, Texas, in 2018.

A workshop production of ORIGIN STORY was produced by the Department of Theatre Arts & Dance at Sonoma State University, directed by Delicia Turner Sonnenberg.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I am so proud and happy to be able to work on this funny, sweet, quirky play, written by our BFA acting alum Nathan Alan Davis.

It is an oft-repeated truism that stories and plays reveal us to ourselves, and this instance is no different. No matter our status in life, we humans are always in need of connection—brief, sustained, calm, or chaotic—we need to know we matter, that we are seen.

Origin Story is about people—young and not so young—searching for themselves, for meaning, and for connection, all while grappling with the self-induced isolation of technology and living in the “age of irony,” yet still in need and searching for the warmth of human contact—in whatever form. “Who am I? Why am I here? What’s that smell?” are all questions I think we have asked of ourselves and others at least once in our lives, and *Origin Story*—not unlike the tales of the superhero universe—takes us on a journey through a week in the life of a “regular, everyday, recent post-college nobody” experiencing an existential quarter-life crisis as she quietly searches for answers to “what it’s all about.”

We in the performing arts often teach about the “universality of theatre,” and while the current zeitgeist rightly challenges many of the assumptions of decades past, I do truly believe that a story well written and well told can move you deeply, dear audience, even as the lives and

traits of the characters may differ greatly from your own. It is my hope that you can see a part of yourself in young millennials, Gen-X, Y, and Z-ers, and even the dreaded Baby Boomers!

This is my first live stage work since “The Before Time,” and I am excited and reminded of WHY I fell into and in love with live theatre—there is simply nothing like it. No disrespect to the varied and multiple types of screen work, but there is SOMETHING about sharing a space with perfectly imperfect humans—wearing any and everything from velvet jackets to tattered converse—and the crackle of energy between the audience and performers as the lights dim, knowing we are about to commune with one another with laughter, tears, and anything in between. And even though we may come away with wildly differing views of what we’ve just seen (another cool thing about live theatre), we have a shared experience to relive with each other around whatever serves as our version of the water cooler the next day at work. There is simply nothing like it.

So, I hope you enjoy and are moved by the perfectly imperfect journey on which we are about to embark.

Welcome back.

We've missed you so!

—Lisa Gaye Dixon, director

ORIGIN STORY

PLAYWRIGHT

Nathan Alan Davis

DIRECTOR

Lisa Gaye Dixon

SCENIC DESIGNER

Emma Brutman

COSTUME DESIGNER

Taylor Pfenning

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Nic Sole

SOUND DESIGNER

Nick Yovina

MEDIA DESIGNER

Ian Olson

MOVEMENT COACH

Genesee Spridco

INTIMACY DIRECTOR

Zev Steinrock

STAGE MANAGER

Grecia Bahena

CAST

ANITA

Raiya Wen

MARGARET

Haven Janeil Crawley

VAL

Lauren Ashley Hayes

DEX

Benjamin Matthew

ROXANNE

Maya Vinice Prentiss

BOBBY

Destin Sorin

GARY

David Stasevsky

PROFILES



Raiya Wen, she/her, (Anita) is pursuing her BFA in acting at the University of Illinois, coming all the way from California. Her Illinois Theatre credits include *Lysistrata*, *Between Us* (Mary), and is pleased to be back on the stage again for the in-person

production of *Origin Story*. Browning cherishes any experience that teaches her more about the work. Her most recent venture was directing "Bitter Root," a short play in *The 48* collection.



Lauren Ashley Hayes, she/her, (Val) is currently pursuing her BFA in acting at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign after completing her associate degree at Rock Valley College in Rockford, Illinois. Her previous Illinois Theatre credit includes *She*

Kills Monsters: Virtual Realm (Evil Tina). She is involved in productions at Rock Valley College's Starlight Theatre. Her previous Rock Valley College Starlight Theatre show credits include *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* (Lady Eugenia), *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Potiphar's Wife), *Mamma Mia!* (Ensemble), and *The Taming of the Shrew* (Tailor). Hayes is interested in pursuing opportunities at The Second City in Chicago in the future.



Haven Janeil Crawley

(Margaret) is a senior pursuing a BFA in acting at the University of Illinois. This is their fourth live performance with Illinois Theatre, having previously worked on *Titus Andronicus*, *Cabaret*, and "The Piano Lesson" in *Great*

Scenes from American Kitchen Sink Theatre. They spent this past summer as an intern at the Illinois Shakespeare Festival. They will also be appearing in Krannert Center productions next semester as Alasken in *Varslaren (The Whistleblower)* and Cynthia in *Sweat*. Outside of the theatre, they pursue several art forms including poetry, painting, and aerial performance.



Ben Mathew, he/him, (Dex) is currently a senior pursuing a BFA in acting at the University of Illinois. This production of *Origin Story* will be his fifth performance with Illinois Theatre. In the past, he has appeared in such productions as *Titus Andronicus* (Lucius),

Eurydice (The Nasty Interesting Man/Hades), *Lysistrata* (Male Chorus 1), and *She Kills Monsters* (Chuck) at the University of Illinois as well as various roles at the Illinois Shakespeare Festival in the summer of 2021. In his free time, Mathew performs and tours nationwide with The Other Guys, a comedy octet. The Other Guys are also the music ambassadors of the University of Illinois.



Maya Vinice Prentiss, she/her, (Roxanne) is returning to the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign where she received her Master of Fine Arts in Acting. Her Chicago credits include Nana in *School Girls; Or, the African Mean Girls Play*; Dido in *An*

Octoroon (Definition Theatre Company); Helena in *Eclipsed* (Jeff Awards Nominee, Pegasus Theatre Company); Riley in the world premiere of *How to Catch Creation* (Goodman Theatre), and Lady Montague in *Romeo and Juliet* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre). Regional credits include Ama in *School Girls; Or, the African Mean Girls Play* (TheatreSquared), Celia in *As You Like It*, Miss Bingley in *Pride and Prejudice*, and Marulla in *Caesar* (Illinois Shakespeare Festival). She also holds a BA in drama from Spelman College.



Destin Sorin (Bobby) is currently a senior pursuing a BFA in acting at the University of Illinois. His previous Illinois credits include *Titus Andronicus* (Mutius) and *Curse of The Starving Class* (Wesley). He has also performed in *Eurydice* (Orpheus), an Armory

Free Theatre production. Sorin will be performing in the spring production of *Varslaren* (Ensemble). He will also be performing in a future Armory Free Theatre production as well as working in his classmates' performance pieces throughout the year. When not on stage, Sorin spends his time doing vocal training and honing his musical talents.



David Stasevsky, he/him, (Gary) is currently a junior pursuing his BFA in acting at the University of Illinois. His theatre credits include *Great Scenes from American Kitchen Sink Theatre* (Wesley Understudy) and *She Kills Monsters: Virtual Realms* (Great Mage Steve).



Lisa Gaye Dixon (Director) is Professor of Theatre, Professor of Dance, Producer for Illinois Theatre, and professional actress. She has worked professionally across the country and around the globe, beginning her career with the renowned Steppenwolf

Theatre Company of Chicago in a revival of Ntozake Shange's *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf*. She has had the good fortune to perform on the stages of the Royal Shakespeare Company and The New Globe Theatre in London and at various regional theatres including The Attic Theatre, Performance Network, Lost Nation Theatre, The Kitchen Theatre, The GEVA Center, Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Milwaukee Shakespeare, and Goodman Theatre, (where she appeared as the Ghost of Christmas Present in the 40th anniversary production of *A Christmas Carol* and Lucy in *The America Play*). She premiered her one-woman show entitled *My Case Is Altered: Tales of a 21st Century Roaring Girl* under the direction of internationally recognized choreographer and director Struan Leslie at Willamette University, Salem, Oregon. Professional directing credits include *Detroit '67* (Clarence Brown), *Ladyish*, and *King Lear*. Film Credits include: *The Trouble with Men and Women* (BBC/IFC), *Leading Ladies*, *USING*, and her most recent starring role in the short film *Ruby Love*. As poet, playwright, and deviser, Dixon finds interest in the intersections of humanity—where we may find universality of experience inside the specificity of identity.

Grecia Bahena, she/her, (Stage Manager) is a junior pursuing a BFA in stage management at the University of Illinois. Recent credits at Krannert Center include *Great Scenes from American Kitchen Sink Theatre* (Assistant Stage Manager), *Cabaret* (Spotlight Operator), and *Titus Andronicus* (Production Assistant) with Illinois Theatre; November Dance 2020 (Stage Manager) and Studiodance I 2020 (Assistant Stage Manager) with Dance at Illinois; and *Songs for a New World Encore* (Assistant Stage Manager) with Lyric Theatre @ Illinois. Bahena is also a production intern for WPGU 107.1 FM where she assists in recording and editing commercials for broadcast.

Emma Brutman, she/her, (Scenic Designer) is currently a third-year student pursuing her MFA in scenic design. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Theatre and English from Augustana College in 2017. Her Illinois Theatre credits include *Cabaret* (Assistant Scenic Designer), *Why Did Desdemona Love the Moor?* (Scenic Coordinator) and *She Kills Monsters* (Digital Scenery and Media Designer). When not working in the theatre, Brutman pursues other artistic endeavors such as knitting, cooking, gardening, and painting.

Dylan Kind (Technical Director) is the theatrical scene shop coordinator at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. He has been with Krannert Center since 2020, coming from Aspen, Colorado. Previously, Kind has served as the technical director for the Aspen Music Festival and School, a world class opera and music intensive summer program. He is a former graduate of the MFA program at the University of Illinois. Prior to his time as a student at the University, he worked in New York City as a fabricator with various theatres and companies including the Signature Theatre, New York Shakespeare Festival and The Public Theater. One of his favorite experiences

was serving as a fabricator and automation understudy for the world premiere of *Hamilton*. Kind earned his BFA in scenic technology and design from the University of Evansville (Indiana) with a focus on technical direction. He enjoys using his experiences and expertise to help guide the next generation of theatre and entertainment professionals.

Ian Olson (Media Designer) is currently a first-year graduate student pursuing a master's in media design at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He has worked previously as an actor and as the media and sound shop manager at Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota. There, he worked on multiple projects that ranged from creating projections for student pieces to being the cinematographer and editor for multiple campus short films (*Sonder*, *365 Days/365 Plays*, *2020: What We Saw, What We Said*, etc.). In his free time, he loves to create daily digital art for his Instagram @ianolson_art; he is currently over 500 days in and plans to reach at least 1,000 days, then go from there. Olson's dream goal is to one day work in the cinema field, whether it be acting in front of a camera or being the one behind it.

Taylor Ann Pfenning, she/her, (Costume Designer) is a third-year costume design master's student at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. A Chicago native, she started her theatrical career primarily as an actor, having studied acting at New York University and working professionally for six years in New York City before studying for her master's. This will be her first fully produced work at the university, having previously designed *Police Deaf Near Far* with Illinois Theatre. Stay tuned this spring for Pfenning's next design, *La Nozze di Figaro*, for Lyric Theatre @ Illinois.

Nic Sole, he/him, (Lighting Designer) is a first-year lighting MFA, and this is his first production with Illinois Theatre. He earned his undergrad at University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and looks forward to learning and growing more at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He has spent the last few summers in the Chicagoland area working concerts and cooperate events.

Nick Yovina (Sound Designer) is currently a second-year MFA sound designer at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Previously at the U of I, he was the sound engineer for the radio play *Track 13*, and in his undergrad at Central Connecticut State University, he was the lead sound designer for *Sweeny Todd*, *Creature*, *Pippin*, *Welcome to Arroyo's*, *The Fatherless Project*, and *Into the Woods*. He also produces hip-hop music, and many of his songs are still played on the radio station Hot 93.7 in his home state of Connecticut.

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Abbey Nettleton

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Alyssa Thompson

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Jeremiah Stearns

HEAD ELECTRICIAN

Kyle Wurtz

AUDIO ENGINEER

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Land Acknowledgement

The University of Illinois System carries out its mission in its namesake state, which includes the traditional territory of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Menominee, Ho-Chunk, and Chickasaw Nations. These lands continue to carry the stories of these Nations and their struggles for survival and identity.

As a land-grant institution, the University of Illinois has a particular responsibility to acknowledge the peoples of these lands, as well as the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution for the past 150 years. We are also obligated to reflect on and actively address these histories and the role that this university has played in shaping them. This acknowledgement and the centering of Native peoples is a start as we move forward for the next 150 years.

Krannert Center affirms the commitment by the university to move beyond these statements, toward building deeper relationships and taking actions that uphold and preserve Indigenous rights and cultural equity.

As we gather to experience this performance, we have an opportunity to reflect on the ways that systems of oppression have shaped our society. We can work together to create systems that support human dignity, establish equity, strengthen cross-cultural relationships, and draw upon the creative capacity of all people that make up this community, state, nation, and world.

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We are living through history. In the midst of it, Illinois Theatre continues to be a leader in producing art that helps us know ourselves and the world we live in. We are training students today to imagine the art of tomorrow. If you'd like to help, we welcome you as a Friend of Illinois Theatre. We'll use your financial contributions to support our students through scholarships, visiting artist residencies, new work development, and production. Help Illinois Theatre make theatre that matters today, tomorrow, and beyond.

*Contributions to Friends of Illinois Theatre can be made by visiting **theatre.illinois.edu/giving**, scanning the QR code, or by check payable to UIF/Friends of Illinois Theatre and sent to: University of Illinois Foundation, PO Box 3429, Champaign, IL 61826-3429.*



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The Illinois Department of Theatre is grateful to those who support us in providing opportunities for our theatre students to grow and develop their skills in all facets of production and performance.

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Elizabeth Henke, Catering Manager
Michael Bunting, Intermezzo Supervisor
Chuck Hanson, Intermezzo Assistant
Taylor McCoy, Snack Bar Attendant
Zia Moon, Patron Services Assistant

Ticket Services

Whitney Havice, Ticket Services Director
Ty Mingo, Jon Proctor, Ticket Office
Supervisors

PRODUCTION

Terri Anne Ciofalo, Associate Director
for Production
Amber Dewey Schultz, Assistant
Production Director

Audio Department

Rick Scholwin, Audio Director
Alec LaBau, Assistant Audio Director/
Video Director

Costume Shop

Andrea Bouck, Costume Director
Richard Gregg, Costume Rentals Director
Tonya Bernstein, Assistant Costume Shop
Manager
April McKinnis, EB McTigue,
Cutters/Drapers
Julianna Steitz, Theatrical Stitcher

Lighting Department

Michael W. Williams, Lighting Director
Lisa Kidd, Associate Lighting Director

Properties Department

Adriane Binky Donley, Properties Director
Megan Dietrich, Assistant Properties
Director and Rentals Coordinator
Kira Lyon, Assistant Properties Director

Scene Shop

Ryan Schultz, Technical Director
Tatsuya Ito, Associate Technical Director
Bill Kephart, Scene Shop Chief Clerk
Dylan Kind, Theatrical Scene Shop
Coordinator
Vincent Meade, Theatrical Scene Shop
Assistant
Bobby Reynolds, Theatrical Scene Shop
Assistant

Stage Management

Cynthia Kocher, Production Stage Manager

WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE AT THE CENTER

We work to create the best possible setting for the experiences you seek and find here.

NECESSARIES

Restrooms are located in the foyers of Foellinger Great Hall, Tryon Festival Theatre, and Colwell Playhouse; the east entrances on the Lobby level; and in each elevator lobby on Level 1 and Level 3. Lobby restrooms and one restroom in each elevator lobby are fully accessible and contain baby-changing stations.

Ushers will be happy to provide you cough drops courtesy of St. Joseph Apothecary, or disposable foam earplugs if the place starts rockin'.

If you or a companion needs medical assistance, contact an usher or other staff member.

Please take a moment before the performance to note the theatre exits nearest to you. If it becomes necessary to evacuate the theatre, please remain calm, follow the instructions of the house staff, and exit in an orderly fashion to the appropriate safe meeting location, which will be announced to you.

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

The use of cell phones, cameras, and recording devices during performances is prohibited unless otherwise announced from the stage.

LATE ARRIVALS

As a courtesy to performers and audience members, latecomers will be seated only at times selected in advance by the artist. Should you find that you've arrived late to a performance, our Patron Services staff will keep you informed about the earliest seating opportunity.

LOST ITEMS

If you are in need of Lost and Found, please visit the Patron Services counter. We will do our best to reunite object and owner!

TICKET RETURNS

If you find you can't attend a performance, please contact the Ticket Office in advance, preferably by 6pm the day before the performance (kran-tix@illinois.edu or 217.333.6280). We never charge a handling fee on ticket transactions.

SERVICES

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts is committed to making experiences accessible for all patrons, and we are delighted to provide a number of services to assist you. Krannert Center is equipped with an assisted listening system, wheelchair-accessible and no-step/few-step seating, and large-print programs, Braille programs, and American Sign Language interpreters are available with three weeks' advance notice.

For assistance regarding your visit, please email: Para ayuda en relación con su visita, favor de enviar un email a:

Pour vous aider dans votre visite, prière de nous envoyer un courriel à:

欢迎! 如您对您的造访需要帮助, 请发送电子邮件至:

स्वागत है! अगर आपको अपने रहने के लिए मदद चाहिए, ईमेल कीजिए:

환영합니다! 방문에 관해 도움이 필요하실 때에는...

에게 이메일로 문의하시기 바랍니다:

PATRONSERVICES@KRANNERTCENTER.ILLINOIS.EDU
217.333.9716



DINING

Our lobby services are open day and evening to serve you:



intermezzo cafe

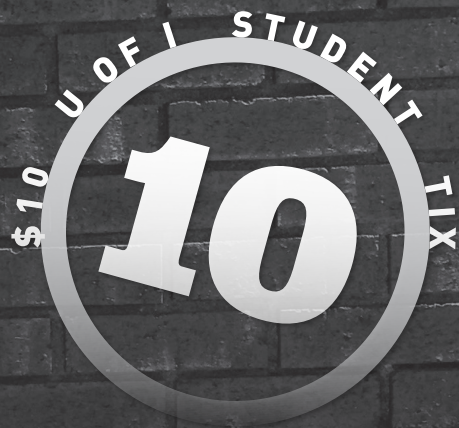
SUSTAINABLE SPECIALS +
EVERYDAY INDULGENCES

STAGE5BAR

SMOOTH SELECTIONS +
ARTISANAL APPETIZERS

WHY WAIT?

Order before you head into the theatre, and we'll have your food and beverages waiting for you at intermission or after the show.



COME AS YOU ARE. LEAVE DIFFERENT.



U of I students, come on in. In whatever clothes, whatever state of mind, from whatever world of experience, you are welcome here. We don't have a dress code, we don't have an opinion code, and we want the Center to be your kind of place. Because of the vital support of Krannert Center donors and the Krannert Center U of I student fee, U of I students never pay more than \$10 for a ticket, and dozens of events each year are completely free.

Your presence helps to make Krannert Center a place like nowhere else—and what you can experience here makes your education like nobody else's. If you are inspired by what you find here, invite others to join you.

When you come to Krannert Center, we promise that you'll leave different: refreshed, reaffirmed, renewed!

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