

RED BULL THEATER

JESSE BERGER | FOUNDER AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

JIM BREDESON | MANAGING DIRECTOR

PRESENTS

GALLATHEA

BY JOHN LYLY

DIRECTED BY EMMA ROSA WENT

FEATURING

OLIVIA ROSE BARESSI | HELEN CESPEDES

NATHANIEL P. CLARIDAD | YONATAN GEBEYEHU

AMY JO JACKSON | LAYLA KHOSHNOUDI | RAMI MARGRON

CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL MCFARLAND | JASON O'CONNELL

ANEESH SHETH | DAVID RYAN SMITH | ZO TIPP

PRODUCING DIRECTOR | NATHAN WINKELSTEIN

ZOOM COORDINATOR | BETSY AYER

OBS COORDINATOR | JESSICA FORNEAR

GENERAL MANAGER | SHERRI KOTIMSKY

PRODUCTION INTERN | SARAH PRESTON

THIS READING IS A COLLABORATION WITH

THE
DRAMA
LEAGUE

MONDAY, MARCH 15, 2021 | A LIVESTREAM PRESENTATION

A RECORDING OF THE LIVESTREAM WILL BE AVAILABLE UNTIL 7:00 PM EST ON
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26- THEN IT DISAPPEARS.

RED BULL THEATER WISHES TO EXPRESS ITS GRATITUDE TO THE PERFORMERS' UNIONS: ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION, AMERICAN GUILD OF MUSICAL ARTISTS, AMERICAN GUILD OF VARIETY ARTISTS, AND SAG-AFTRA THROUGH THEATRE AUTHORITY, INC. FOR THEIR COOPERATION IN PERMITTING THE ARTISTS TO APPEAR IN THIS PROGRAM.

RED BULL THEATER IS SUPPORTED, IN PART, BY PUBLIC FUNDS FROM THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITY COUNCIL, AND THE NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS, WITH THE SUPPORT OF GOVERNOR ANDREW M. CUOMO AND THE NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE.

ADDITIONAL MAJOR FUNDING HAS BEEN GENEROUSLY PROVIDED BY THE ACHELIS AND BODMAN FOUNDATION, THE AXE-HOUGHTON FOUNDATION, THE AMERICAN THEATRE WING, ROBERT BOYETT, DAVID DESJARDINS AND NANCY BLACHMAN, THE JAMES AND JUDITH K. DIMON FOUNDATION, FUND FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK, THE HOWARD AND MARCIA OWENS CHARITABLE TRUST, HOWARD GILMAN FOUNDATION, THE MARTA HEFLIN FOUNDATION, THE KAM FOUNDATION, NOAH MILLMAN AND CAROLYN SCHIFF, EVANGELINE MORPHOS, THE NOËL COWARD FOUNDATION, THE OFF-BROADWAY ANGELS, THE PRINCESS GRACE FOUNDATION-USA, BETTY AND MICHAEL RAUCH, PETER N. RIGBY, THE SHUBERT FOUNDATION, THE MICHAEL TUCH FOUNDATION, AND STEVEN AND JOAN YOUNG.

RED BULL THEATER IS A PROUD MEMBER OF THE ALLIANCE OF RESIDENT THEATERS/NEW YORK, THE OFF-BROADWAY LEAGUE, AND THEATER COMMUNICATIONS GROUP.



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arts.gov



DONATE TODAY TO SUPPORT RED BULL THEATER AND INVEST IN THE VITALITY OF CLASSICAL THEATER FOR A CONTEMPORARY AUDIENCE. FOR NEARLY TWENTY YEARS, RED BULL THEATER HAS TRANSFORMED THE CLASSICAL THEATER EXPERIENCE WITH SPECTACULAR, HIGH-OCTANE PRODUCTIONS OF SHAKESPEARE AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES, RAUCOUS READINGS OF RARELY-PRODUCED PLAYS, AND VIVID REIMAGININGS OF ICONIC WORKS.

WE'RE DEDICATED TO REVITALIZING THE CLASSICS FOR TODAY'S AUDIENCES, AND WHILE WE TREASURE THESE CLASSICS, OUR APPROACH IS ANYTHING BUT PRECIOUS. YOUR SUPPORT IS.

WE'RE COMMITTED TO CONTINUING CONNECTION DURING THIS HISTORIC TIME.
YOUR SUPPORT WILL HELP MAKE THAT POSSIBLE.

REDBULLTHEATER.COM/makeagift

CAST

Gallathea..... OLIVIA ROSE BARRESI
Venus/Haebe..... HELEN CESPEDES
Rafe..... NATHANIEL CLARIDAD
Melebeus/Astronomer YONATAN GEBEYEHU
Eurota/Dick AMY JO JACKSON
Phyllida LAYLA KHOSHNOUDI
Telusa/Robin..... RAMI MARGRON
Mariner/Augur CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL MCFARLAND
Tityrus/Alchemist..... JASON O'CONNELL
Diana ANEESH SHETH
Neptune..... DAVID RYAN SMITH
Cupid/Peter ZO TIPP

–THIS 90-MINUTE PERFORMANCE WILL NOT HAVE AN INTERMISSION–



GALLATHEA / GALATEA

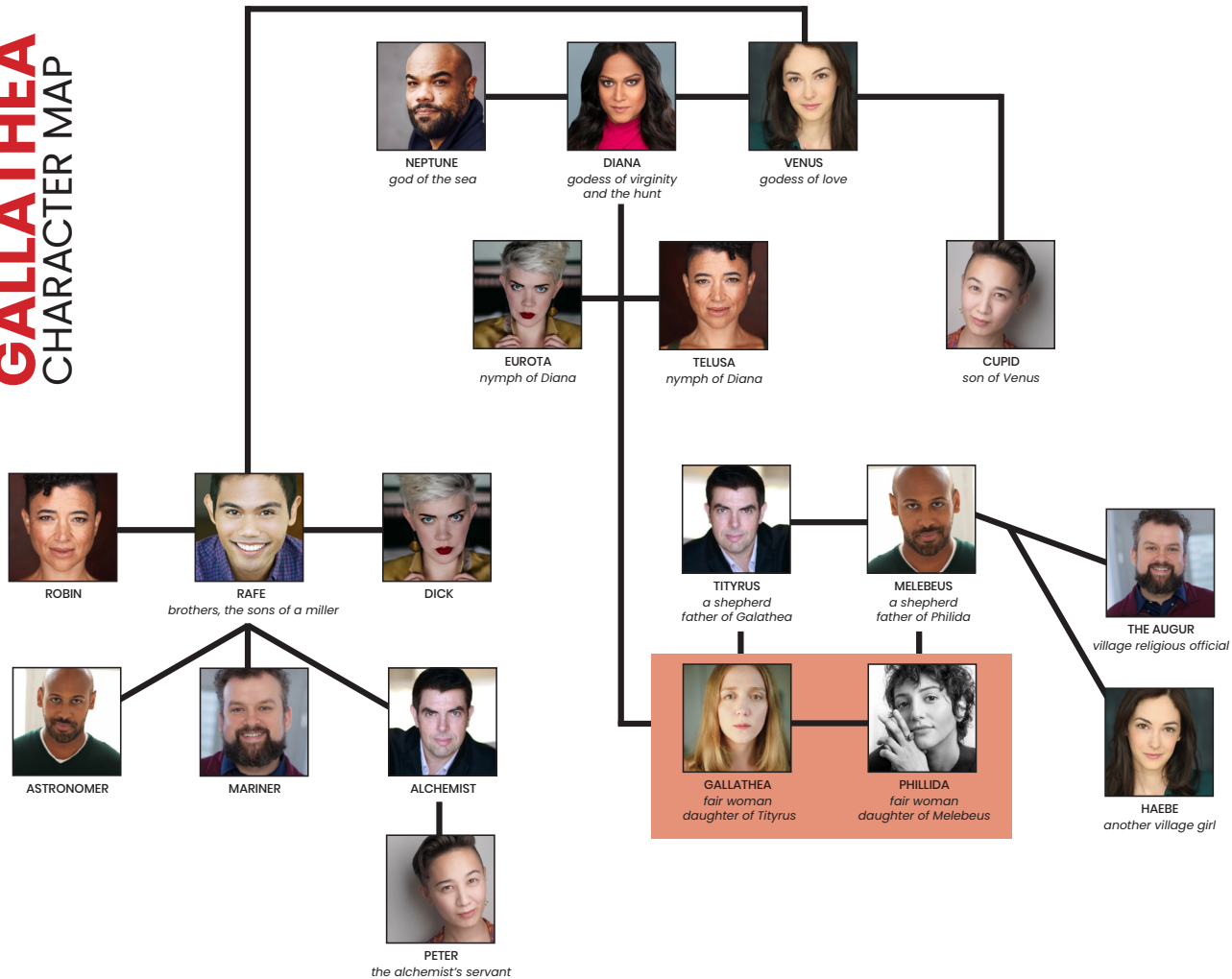
THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2021

7:30 PM EST | LIVESTREAM

Join an interactive discussion with
director EMMA ROSA WENT, playwright MJ KAUFMAN,
scholars JULIE CRAWFORD and LAUREN ROBERTSON,
and members of the companies.

REGISTER at REDBULLTHEATER.COM

GALLATHEA CHARACTER MAP



ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

EMMA ROSA WENT is a Brooklyn-based theatre director. New York work includes: *Initiative* (Playwright's Realm, Ink'd Fest) *Old Names for Wildflowers, Courage! To the Field!* (The Tank) *Much Ado About Nothing* (The Brick) as well as Dixon Place, Trans Lab at WP, The Access Theatre, LPAC Lab, and other venues. Regional/other: *As You Like It, Richard III* (Scranton Shakespeare Festival) Campfire Festival at Boise Contemporary Theatre, Barn Arts. Assisting includes: *Measure for Measure* (TFANA;) *Much Ado About Nothing* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival) *Othello* (Colorado Shakespeare Festival) *The Jammer* (Atlantic). Previously: SDCF Observership, OSF FAIR Program, Sokoloff Creative Arts Fellow. Currently: Resident Artist at Town Stages. Co-founder of The Renovationists and Easy Leap Theatre Company. SDC Associate Member. BA Sarah Lawrence College.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Though his career contains moments of sparkling success, the life of dramatist and writer JOHN LYLY (1554-1606), reveals a man who largely struggled for advancement within early modern England's vibrant intellectual and political culture. He was born to a literary family: his grandfather, William Lily, was a crucial figure in the introduction of Italian humanism to English education, a sixteenth-century intellectual shift that would be responsible for the explosion of English verse and drama by the opening of the seventeenth century.

Lyly enrolled at Oxford in 1569, taking his MA in 1575. His aspirations were academic, but his aim to follow in his family's scholarly footsteps did not come to fruition: he was denied a fellowship at Oxford in 1574. Like so many young men who could not parlay their humanistic education into an academic post or a position at court, Lyly instead set his sights on London. Not long after taking up residence in the rapidly growing city, he published *Euphues, the Anatomy of Wit. Very Pleasant for All Gentlemen to Read*. The extremely popular text combined bits of wisdom and classical quotations to tell the story of a young man who aims to make his way in the world by means of his intellectual gifts—all features that directly appealed to the young men who crowded London's bookstalls in the late sixteenth century. By 1584 Lyly began writing plays for the boy companies that performed for small, select London audiences. Playwrighting also allowed him coveted access to Elizabeth I's court: several of his comedies, including *Gallathea*, were staged for the queen.

But in a theatrical culture as experimental and fast-paced as early modern London's, the mythic romance of Lyly's pastoral comedies quickly became passé. A second generation of English playwrights—John Marston and Ben Jonson among them—parodied Lyly's drama, writing highly satirical comedies for the boy companies that were gradually being supplanted by a varied roster of adult companies. Lyly

appears to have stopped writing plays after 1601, and he expended a great amount of effort in the final years of his life attempting to secure court preferment that was never granted him; a letter written just two years before his death notes his debt and “many children all unbestowed.”

If John Lyly’s personal accomplishments were overshadowed by disappointment, however, at the historical remove of our own moment it is clear how crucial his work was to the emergence of English commercial drama. Lyly’s exuberant adaptations of classical sources, complex wordplay, and thoroughgoing commitment to the delights of ambiguity helped inaugurate the English Renaissance in London’s playhouses.

ABOUT THE PLAY

John Lyly’s *GALLATHEA*, licensed for performance in 1585, is a comedy about metamorphosis and desire. Performed by the boy actors of St. Paul’s, *Gallathea* was staged at court on New Year’s Day in 1588, where the audience included Elizabeth I. The comedy deliberately appealed to the cult of the so-called Virgin Queen; in it, three virgin nymphs—including the huntress Diana of Ovidian myth, with whom Elizabeth was often associated—are made to fall in love through the mischief of Cupid in disguise. Lyly’s comedy may have been perceived as an attempt to convince Elizabeth to marry, though by 1588 it was common knowledge that the aging queen would not produce an heir.

But *Gallathea* is much more than a paean and plea to Elizabeth I. Lyly’s distinctive prose style brings together oppositions through parallel structure, assonance, and alliteration, as in Cupid’s definition of love as a series of contradictions: “a heat full of coldness, a sweet full of bitterness, a pain full of pleasantness.” The result of such tense proximity is radical instability—any seemingly stable state of being might be transformed into its opposite—and this principle of mutability infuses the play’s mythic world of Lincolnshire, where the monster Agar threatens to produce watery catastrophe by flooding the pastoral landscape. To prevent such disaster, every five years “the fairest and chastest virgin in all the country” must be sacrificed to the god Neptune. In an aim to shield their daughters from receiving this dubious honor, the fathers of the beautiful Gallathea and Phillida disguise them as boys and hide them in the woods. There they meet and, both taking the other for a boy, fall in love.

The subplot, which follows three shipwrecked brothers’ arrival in Lincolnshire, acts as a kind of mirror image of the main plot. Rafe embarks on his own journey of transformation, serving an alchemist and an astronomer. The alchemist sees the world in terms of its potential for mutability, seeking to transform fire into gold, wind into silver, and water into lead. The astronomer wishes to occupy the perspective of

the gods, and Rafe is delighted that he might also be “translated from this mortality” through “ethereal contemplation.” Lyly’s depiction of these trades is at once a rumination on the nature of poetry; the word’s origin in the Greek *poiesis* describes poetry itself as a craft, and *Gallathea* is a testament to the poet’s ability to make, transform, and unmake the world just as the gods do.

Gallathea’s thoroughgoing emphasis on metamorphosis is thus a reflection on the power—and delight—of theatrical possibility: the stage has the capacity to imagine into being, that is, what otherwise only could be. The play’s astonishing solution to *Gallathea* and *Phillida*’s wish to marry one another embodies this power of performance. On the surface, it conforms to the heteronormative conventions of Renaissance comedy, but it also suggests, much more provocatively, that a world which celebrates gendered transformation is possible.

– LAUREN ROBERTSON | Columbia University

ABOUT OUR COLLABORATOR

THE DRAMA LEAGUE OF NEW YORK, since 1916, has been at the forefront of the American Theatre community, providing talent, audiences, and prosperous support. The Drama League advances the American theater by providing a life-long artistic home for directors and a platform for dialogue with, and between, audiences. The Drama League opens doors for exceptional stage directors by providing time, resources, and space to work without restriction, while augmenting skills through personalized training, production opportunities, and professional development. The Drama League carefully selects directors whose vision and talent are unparalleled, with a clear commitment to the craft, the field, and audiences.

Through our work, The Drama League celebrates the important role theatergoers have to the future of the industry, and champions the impact theater plays in civic life. The Drama League breaks the formidable barriers that impede success in the arts. These directors, nurtured and empowered by The Drama League’s support, are trained to create the most rigorous work possible, as a live exchange between artists and audiences. In doing so, we elevate the conversation, deeply impacting theaters and their communities. Bringing people together to celebrate difference, share experiences, and discover common ground are crucial needs served by the work of Drama League directors. This necessary cultural practice is the foundation of our shared humanity.

dramaleague.org



JESSE BERGER | FOUNDER AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

JIM BREDESON | MANAGING DIRECTOR

Red Bull Theater brings rarely seen classic plays to dynamic new life for contemporary audiences. Our work unites a respect for tradition with a modern sensibility.

Red Bull Theater is named for the rowdy Jacobean playhouse that illegally performed plays in England during the years of Puritan rule, and was the first London theater to reopen after the Restoration. This bold spirit is central to our identity. With the Jacobean plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries as our cornerstone, Red Bull Theater is New York City's home for dynamic performances of great plays that stand the test of time. The company also produces new works that are in conversation with the classics.

Red Bull Theater delights and engages the intellect and imagination of audiences. A home for artists, scholars and students, we strive to make our work accessible, diverse, and welcoming to all theatergoers. Educational as well as entertaining, our work keeps a rich and vital tradition thriving.

Red Bull Theater believes in the power of great classic stories and plays of heightened language to deepen our understanding of the human condition. We believe in the special ability of live theater to create unique, collective experiences. And we believe in the timeless capacity of classical theater to illuminate the events of our times.

Founded in 2003 with a production of Shakespeare's *Pericles*, Red Bull Theater has been acclaimed by *The New York Times* as "a dynamic producer of classic plays" and by *Time Out New York* as "the most exciting classical theater in New York."

Red Bull Theater serves adventurous theatergoers with OFF-BROADWAY PRODUCTIONS, REVELATION READINGS, and the annual SHORT NEW PLAY FESTIVAL. The company also offers outreach programs including SHAKESPEARE IN SCHOOLS, bringing professional actors and teaching artists into public school classrooms, BULL SESSIONS, free post-play discussions with top scholars, and MASTER CLASSES in classical actor training led by veteran theater professionals.

In our 17-year history, Red Bull Theater has produced 21 Off-Broadway Productions and nearly 200 Revelation Readings of rarely seen classics, serving 5,000 artists and providing quality artistic programming to an audience of 65,000. The company's unique programming has received ongoing critical acclaim, and has been recognized with Lortel, Drama Desk, Drama League, Calloway, Off Broadway Alliance, and Obie nominations and Awards.

Visit REDBULLTHEATER.COM for more information.

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GALATEA

by **MJ KAUFMAN**

directed by **WILL DAVIS**

presented in collaboration with

WP THEATER



MONDAY, MARCH 22, 2021 | 7:30 PM EDT | LIVESTREAM

MJ Kaufman's *GALATEA* is a trans love story set against the backdrop of a climate crisis. Loosely based on John Lyly's 1585 play, *Galatea* tells the story of two young women from a village threatened with flooding who escape to the nearby woods disguised as boys and fall in love.

Presented in collaboration with WP THEATER, *Galatea* is directed by Will Davis (*India Pale Ale*, *Men on Boats*). The cast includes Grammy Award winner Ty Defoe, Jo Lampert (*Hundred Days*, *Joan of Arc*), Pooya Mohseni (*Madame Secretary*) Aneesh Sheth (Netflix's *Jessica Jones*), Futaba Shioda (*Rent* 20th Anniversary tour), and TL Thompson (*Is This a Room*).

REDBULLTHEATER.COM | WPTHEATER.ORG