a Rock Concert in 40 Whacks

THEATER WIRKS HARTFORD

twhartford.org

#### From the Director

In August of 1892, Lizzie Borden was accused of brutally murdering her father and stepmother with an axe. Testimonies were muddled, evidence incomplete and the case was never solved. Over a century later, we're still examining the infamous story behind the nursery rhyme "Lizzie Borden took an axe, gave her mother forty whacks." LIZZIE delves into the mysterious mind of Lizzie Borden and speculates about her possible motivations: loss of inheritance, sexual oppression, abuse... madness.

It has been an honor and thrill to direct a musical that speaks deeply to me in its raw, unapologetic, raging rock feminist voice. It is a voice for the marginalized, the furious, oppressed and ignored. For our queer community and anyone that's been told "young girls cannot go and do and have." It is for the Lizzie in all of us.

- Lainie Sakakura

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cover art by Rich Hollant / CO:LAB

LIZZIE has been developed with the assistance of tiny mythic theatre company, HERE Arts
Center, Took An Axe Productions (Hillary Richard & Peter McCabe), Brisa Trinchero/Corey
Brunish (Make Musicals) and Van Dean/Kenny Howard (Broadway Consortium).

LIZZIE was presented at the National Alliance for Musical Theatre's Festival of New Musicals in 2010 and further developed by Village Theatre, Issaquah, Washington (Robb Hunt, Executive Producer • Steve Tomkins, Artistic Director).

LIZZIE was produced by Theatre Under The Stars, October 2013.

The West Coast Premiere of LIZZIE was produced by Portland Center Stage, Chris Coleman, Artistic Director.

Original European and London premiere produced by Fredericia Theater and Soren Moller, Denmark.

LIZZIE is presented by special arrangement with Broadway Licensing, LLC.

(www.broadwaylicensing.com)

To purchase recordings and sheet music, or for more information, please visit:

www.LizzieTheMusical.com

\*Appearing through an agreement between this theater and Actors' Equity Association, the

Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829 of the IATSE is the union representing Scenic, Costume,

Lighting, Sound and Projection Designers in Live Performance.

LIZZIE is the 1st show of the 2023-2024 Season
TheaterWorks Hartford • 233 Pearl Street • Hartford, CT 06103 • 2023



#### Music by STEVEN CHESLIK-DEMEYER and **ALAN STEVENS HEWITT**

#### Lyrics by STEVEN CHESLIK-DEMEYER and TIM MANER

Book by TIM MANER

Additional Music by TIM MANER

Additional Lyrics by ALAN STEVENS HEWITT

Based on an original concept by STEVEN CHESLIK-DEMEYER and **TIM MANER** 

Orchestrations by ALAN STEVENS HEWITT

#### THE CAST

(in alphabetical order)

Emma Borden **COURTNEY BASSETT\*** 

Alice Russell **KIM ONAH\*** 

Bridget Sullivan **NORA SCHELL\*** 

**SYDNEY SHEPHERD\*** Lizzie Borden

Set Design **BRIAN PRATHER** Costume Design **SAAWAN TIWARI** Lighting Design **ROB DENTON MEGAN CULLEY** Sound Design **CAMILLA TASSI Projection Design** 

Hair & Make-up Design **ASHLEY RAE CALLAHAN** JOHANNA MORRISON Dialect Coach

Casting Director HARDT CASTING, LLC

**TOM KOSIS\*** Stage Manager

> music director ERIKA R. GAMEZ directed by LAINIE SAKAKURA

Conductor/Keyboard 1

Guitar 1

Guitar 2/Keyboard 2 Bass Cello Drums

ERIKA R. GAMEZ **BILLY BIVONA JEFF CARLSON** CHRISTIE ECHOLS **ESTHER BENJAMIN MOLLY PLAISTED** 

twhartford.org



COURTNEY BASSETT (Emma Borden | she/her) is happy to be making her TWH debut! Credits include Broadway: The Great Comet. TV: Manifest, Good Morning America, The Today Show, The 71st Annual Tony Awards. Film: Bros. Courtney just finished a year-long run in the original cast of the Lucille Lortel Award winning Titanique. Other regional/Off BWay

favorites: Thelma Louise Dyke Remix (NAMT), Bedbugs!!, POP! (Who Shot Andy Warhol?), "Somewhere" vocalist for NYC Ballet's West Side Story Suite. Singer/Songwriter for indie pop band Starbird & the Phoenix. Courtney plays Starbuck in and is on the book writing team for the upcoming Kill the Whale: A Moby Dick Rock Opera. Next up: The world premiere of new musical Teeth, at Playwrights Horizons in NYC. Thank you to the fierce Lizzie team, TWHartford, and DGRW.



KIM ONAH (Alice Russell | she/her) is thrilled to be making her TWH debut! A graduate from Harvard University, Kim is an NYC-based actor, singer, and writer. Favorite credits include: & Juliet (Broadway); Beautiful (Tour Company); Aida (as Aida); Guys and Dolls (as Sarah Brown); All Shook Up (as Lorraine). So much love and thanks to her

family, friends, and agents at The Collective. kimonah.com @kimona93



NORA SCHELL (Bridget Sullivan | they/them) is making their TWH debut. Nora graduated from The University of Michigan with a BFA in Musical Theatre and a minor in Gender, Race and Nation. They received Drama Desk, Drama League and Clive Barnes Award nominations for their performance and Off-Broadway debut in Spamilton. Nora

made their Broadway debut in Jagged Little Pill. With their educational background, Nora continues to cultivate a career focused on the intersection of performing and social justice. Love and gratitude to Gregg Baker Management, their family and Jane.



SYDNEY SHEPHERD (Lizzie Borden | she/her) is elated to be making her TWH debut. Selected stage credits includes Broadway: First Date, Regional: August Rush (Lyla), Jasper in Deadland (Agnes). Selected TV/Film: Red Dead Redemption II, Netflix's Ask the Storybots, and the upcoming feature The Midnight Song, a film for which she also wrote the title

track. Sydney is % of the critically acclaimed indie folk-pop band Bandits on The Run. They've released several albums, toured internationally, and played festivals like The NPR Tiny Desk Tour, Cambridge Folk Fest, and Singapore Formula 1 Grand Prix. Sydney is also a longtime collaborator of actor/musician Christopher Sears, and originated the role of The Moon in Sears' Moonchildren the Opera. Sydney is currently working with collaborators Adrian Enscoe, Regina Strayhorn, Christopher Sears, and Peter Hedges on a new stage musical. @sydneytorin @banditsontherun



STEVEN CHESLIK-DEMEYER (Music and Lyrics)
Fresh out of art school in the early 80s, Steven bought
a used guitar in a junk shop on St. Marks Place,
learned three chords, and taught himself to write songs
by listening to Dolly Parton records. He insinuated
himself into the post-punk neo-folk scene in the East
Village, but soon discovered the world of downtown

theater. Through the late 80s and early 90s, he wrote and performed music

in several experimental productions with Tiny Mythic Theatre Company and directors Kristin Marting and Tim Maner. In 1992, he and Jay Byrd created an act called Y'all, singing original songs and telling stories in the style of old-time country vaudeville. The act sprang from the downtown theater scene but went on to play in coffeehouses, churches, retirement homes, and rock clubs across the U.S., Canada, and Europe. In ten years, Y'all recorded four CDs, published two books, appeared on MTV and Comedy Central, and went broke. Their last two years together, they lived in a camper on the road with a third partner. Steven made a documentary about that relationship and the final years of Y'all, Life in a Box, which premiered in the San Francisco International Film Festival in 2005. After the demise of Y'all, Steven returned to New York where he continues to make music and theater and musical theater. He is a 2019 Jonathan Larson Grant finalist, a MacDowell Fellow, and a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin with a degree in American Studies. stevencheslikdemeyer.com.



TIM MANER (Book, Music and Lyrics) Right out of college, Tim co-founded the tiny mythic theatre company with a focus on developing the work of creator/directors and a mission to "disrupt the american living room/rearrange the furniture in the american mind." tiny mythic's work became a staple of the downtown alt-theatre scene of the

early 90s, and just a few years later, the previously transient company transformed into the award-winning NYC arts center, HERE, called "One of the most unusual arts spaces in New York – and possibly the model for the cutting edge arts space of tomorrow" by The New York Times. His producing/presenting history at HERE included hundreds of productions brought to life by thousands of artists. He remains an active founding board member working to expand opportunities for mid-career artists. Tim has created over twenty original works as a creator/director including: The Hawthorne Project, a six-year collaboration with writer/adaptor Elizabeth Banks building a trilogy of multi-layered multi-media events adapted from Nathaniel Hawthorne's three American novels and The Opera Project, a five-year collaboration with writer Ruth Margraff and composers Matthew Pierce and Fred Ho creating a series of original new wave operas. Outside of the work he created with his own companies he has directed at The New York Shakespeare Festival and New Dramatists Guild, was a guest artist/teaching fellow at Harvard University, and has taught at New York University/Playwrights Horizons. He's also sung in some bands, arranged and conducted a Cowgirl Chorus, and originated roles in two Robert Wilson shows: Hamletmachine (NY/European Tour) and Salomé (La Scala, Milan). He is a graduate of NYU/ Tisch School of the Arts.



ALAN STEVENS HEWITT (Music and Lyrics) grew up in a musical family, the son of a Philadelphia Orchestra oboist. He cut his teeth as a teenager recording for Ruffhouse/Columbia Records at Studio 4 in Philly, and during the '90s as member of alt-folk band The Low Road (Caroline Records), touring with Los Lobos, Barenaked Ladies, and label-mates Ben

Folds Five. He moved full-time to New York City in the late '90s to pursue his conservatory degree in Composition at Mannes College of Music/The New School, where he studied with Robert Cuckson and Carl Schachter. In the mid-aughts, with partners, he opened The Coral Room, a nightclub in the Chelsea section of Manhattan, which featured a 10,000 gallon saltwater aquarium with live "mermaid" performances and hosted cutting edge bands, performance artists, events, and DJs nightly. As an actively performing musician, his credits include Broadway's Frozen, Come From Away, The Band's Visit, Fun Home (also 1st Natl. Tour), Finding Neverland,

Matilda, Sting's The Last Ship, Rocky, Jekyll & Hyde, Lysistrata Jones, Green Day's American Idiot, Spring Awakening (also 1st Natl. Tour), Off-Bway's Closer Than Ever, RENT, tours in the U.S. and abroad, and numerous recordings as a player, composer, arranger, and producer. His first score for theatre was for a production of Bertolt Brecht's Baal that The New York Times thought was awful. He lives in the Lower Hudson Valley and enjoys motorcycles and longboarding.



LAINIE SAKAKURA (Director) is a NYC based freelance director and award winning choreographer. Recipient: 2015 Joe A. Callaway Award Outstanding Choreography and 2002 Joseph Jefferson Award Best Choreography. Broadway: FOSSE, Dance Reconstructions (1999 Tony Award Best Musical) and Broadway veteran performer of 6 original casts.

Lainie has directed work in NYC at Cherry Lane, Peter Jay Sharp Theatre, Joyce Theater, Bruno Walter Auditorium, Neighborhood Playhouse, Theatre 71, Summer Stage, and solo shows for the late, great Alvin Ing. NYU Tisch NSB adjunct professor and guest teacher/artist/director in a dozen universities. Long time advocate for diversity and inclusion in the performing arts. Passion projects include: My AAPI Broadway Story: Breaking Barriers, Lincoln Center Library for the Performing Arts (Concept/Direction); Corner of Bitter and Sweet, adaptation of the NYT Bestseller Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet (Book/Direction); BCEFA Red Bucket Follies 2018 with 42 AAPI Broadway performers (Co-Conceived/Writer). Rockettes of Color Alumnae (Co-founder/Co-chair). Theatre Producers of Color (2023 Cohort). Always for my daughters, Avelina and Isabela.



ERIKA R. GAMEZ (Music Director/Keyboard 1) is a NYC-based conductor and keyboardist. Off-Broadway: The Harder They Come (The Public). National Tour: Summer: The Donna Summer Musical. Regional/Selected: Next To Normal (Greenbrier Valley Theater); Aida (STAGES St. Louis); A Christmas Carol (McCarter Theatre); On Your Feet!

(John W. Engeman Theater); Little Duende (NAMT); Miss You Like Hell (Patio Playhouse); Allegory (La Jolla Playhouse WOW Festival). MM in Conducting, San Diego State University; BA in Music Education, Fresno State. Proud Local 802 AFM member. Many thanks to our incredible cast, crew, and band. All my love to my family, friends, and Andrew dearest. Cheers! erikargamez.com



BRIAN PRATHER (Set Design) is always excited to design for one of his adopted artistic homes. His most recent TheaterWorks Hartford designs include: Secondo, The Who and The What, American Son, Fully Committed, Girlfriend, The River, and Relativity, among many others. Recent Off-Broadway designs include: Mrs. Warren's Profession (GTG), Daniel's

Husband (Primary Stages), Widower's Houses (TACT/Gingold), A Christmas Carol (St. Clement's), Becoming Dr. Ruth (Westside), Freud's Last Session (New World Stages), and The Burnt Part Boys (Playwrights Horizons). International: Chung-mu Art Hall (South Korea). Regional: Asolo Rep, Goodspeed Musicals, Cincinnati Playhouse, Alley Theatre, Barrington Stage Co., Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, Capitol Rep., among many others. Jeff Award winner (Chicago), Emmy nomination (New England) for The Kate on Public Television, two-time Berkshire Theatre Critics Assoc. Award winner, Associate Artist at Barrington Stage Co., Asst. Professor of Theatre at Central CT State University and member of USA Local 829. See Brian's work at brianprather.com.



SAAWAN TIWARI (Costume Design | they/them) is a proud graduate of the University of Michigan. Beyond designing, they teach through Roundabout Theatre Company. Credits: Off-Broadway: The Gospel According to Heather (Theatre 555). Additional credits: Hip Hop Cinderella (New Victory Theatre), Footloose (American Stage), Bruise and

Thorn (Pipeline Theatre Company), Far From Canterbury (Barnstormers Theatre). Saawan is a proud member of the LGBTQ+ and AAPI communities. saawandesigns.com



ROB DENTON (Lighting Design) is thrilled to be returning to TheaterWorks Hartford where he last designed Fun Home. Rob's recent designs include Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors (Off-Broadway); Chess and Little Shop of Horrors (The Muny); The Wizard of Oz (Capital Repertory Theatre); Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park); The

Marvelous Wonderettes (Alabama Shakespeare Festival); Jersey Boys and A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum (Maltz Jupiter Theatre). Rob's upcoming designs include: The Jerusalem Syndrome (Off-Broadway). IG @rdentexdesign



MEGAN "DEETS" CULLEY (Sound Design)
Selected Design: Antigone (Cleveland Play House);
The Loophole (The Public Theater); Holmes & Watson
Apt. 2B (KCRep); Grounded, Hurricane Diane, Stew
(Dobama Theater); Terminus (New York Theatre
Workshop); Stranger Sings! (Off-Broadway); 25th
Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (ACT of CT);

Inanimate (The Flea Theater); The Last Match (B Street Theatre); Roan @ the Gates (Luna Stage); The Color Purple (Theatre Horizon). Broadway Associate Design: A Christmas Carol with Jefferson Mays; Jaja's African Hair Braiding; Flying Over Sunset. Other Selected Associate Design: The Secret Garden with Sierra Boggess (Center Theatre Group); King James (MTC); Come Fall In Love (The Old Globe); Kiss My Aztec (Hartford Stage); The Old Man and the Old Moon (KCRep).



ASHLEY RAE CALLAHAN (Hair and Make-up Design | she/her) is an Emmy Nominated Hairstylist. Her design work includes Annie (National Tour); West Side Story, Sweeney Todd, Disney's Beauty and the Beast (Muny); Evita (ART, STC & NYCity Center); Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors (NWS & Maltz Jupiter) and Once Upon a One More Time (STC). Broadway

& Television Associate/Assistant Designer Credits include: New York New York, Beetlejuice, Ain't Too Proud, NBC's Jesus Christ Superstar Live!, Summer, Six Degrees of Separation, The Color Purple Revival, Summer: The Donna Summer Musical, Holiday Inn, Beautiful: The Carole King Musical and Allegiance. Television/Movies Hairstyling: The Crowded Room, Stranger Things, Marvelous Mrs. Maisel, Ghosted, Oppenheimer, Eileen, Law and Order: SVU and The Gilded Age



CAMILLA TASSI (Projection Design) is a projection/video designer, producer, and musician from Florence, Italy. She's excited to be back at TheaterWorks Hartford, where she designed Fun Home. Design credits include King Arthur (Lincoln Center), Falling Out of Time (Carnegie Hall), Fires in the Mirror (Baltimore Center Stage & Long Wharf Theater),

L'Orfeo (Apollo's Fire), Boheme (Music Academy of the West), Malhaar: A Requiem For Water (LA Master Chorale, Disney Concert Hall), Magic Flute (Berlin Opera Academy), Secret Garden (ACT of CT), Side by Side (Rep Theatre of St. Louis), and Alcina (Yale Opera). Tassi holds degrees in computer science, music, and projection design. MFA in Design at Yale. Burry Fredrik Design Award recipient, Robert L. Tobin Opera Design winner. camillatassi.com IG: camtassi

JULIAN KELLEY (Assistant Projection Designer) is a projection designer, motion graphics artist, and 3D animator who recently graduated with his MFA in Video & Media Design at Carnegie Mellon University's School of Drama. Selected projection design credits include Fort Dicks: The Musical (American Theatre of Actors, NYC), Hide and Seek (Feinstein's/54 Below, NYC), Cinderella and The Little Mermaid (Sierra Repertory Theatre, Sonora CA) Caged (Passage Theatre, Trenton NJ), and Fun Home (4th Wall Theatre, Montclair NJ). IG @juliankelleydesign



PAUL HARDT (Casting Director | he/him)
Broadway: West Side Story, Come Fly Away, August:
Osage County, A Moon For The Misbegotten, On
Golden Pond, Hot Feet, Caine Mutiny Court Martial,
Once Upon A One More Time. National Tours:
West Side Story (US and World tour), A Bronx
Tale, Dirty Dancing, Legends!, Whistle Down the

Wind, On Golden Pond, August: Osage County, The Bodyguard, and the current tours of Cats and Annie. Regional Theatres include: Goodspeed Opera House, Bucks County Playhouse, Delaware Theatre Company, TUTS, Pasadena Playhouse and Asolo Rep.



ROB RUGGIERO (Producing Artistic Director) has been a part of TheaterWorks Hartford artistic leadership for 30 seasons. He has directed over 70 shows, including TWH productions of Fun Home, The Sound Inside, American Son, The Legend of Georgia McBride, Constellations, Next to Normal, Relativity (starring Richard Dreyfuss) and Christmas on the

Rocks, which he also conceived. His Broadway credits include Looped (starring Valerie Harper in a Tony-nominated performance) and High (starring Kathleen Turner) which had its world premiere at TWH. He also conceived and directed the musical revue Make Me a Song: The Music of William Finn which moved off-Broadway and was nominated for Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards. Rob conceived and directed Ella, a musical about Ella Fitzgerald, which saw sold-out runs in 24 regional theaters and was produced as a National Tour. His work on plays and musicals has received multiple awards in Connecticut and around the United States. Rob regularly directs at Goodspeed Musicals where over his 16-year relationship he has directed many award-winning musical productions. Internationally he directed Fiddler on the Roof in Athens, Greece.

MIKE LENAGHAN (Director of Production) This season is Mike's 12th with TheaterWorks Hartford. Mike's professional career began at Goodspeed Musicals, followed by Juilliard School's Production Department, and Westport Playhouse. Broadway credits include Thoroughly Modern Millie, Our Town and Fortune's Fool. Off Broadway: The It Girl, Suburb and The Summer of '42.

TOM KOSIS (Production Stage Manager) recently stage managed TheaterWorks Hartford productions of Clyde's, The Rembrandt, Secondo and Christmas on the Rocks. Tom's Broadway credits include Mary Poppins, Side Show, The Scarlet Pimpernel, Flower Drum Song,

Bye Bye Birdie, A Chorus Line, My Fair Lady, Grand Hotel and Nice Work If You Can Get It. His National and International Tour credits include Irving Berlin's White Christmas, A Chorus Line, Song & Dance, West Side Story and Dreamgirls. From 2015 to Spring 2023, Tom was the AEA Production Stage Manager for UConn's Connecticut Repertory Theatre where he also supervised their stage management students. tomkosis.com

ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION ("Equity"), founded in 1913, is the U.S. labor union that represents more than 51,000 professional Actors and Stage Managers. Equity fosters the art of live theatre as an essential component of society and advances the careers of its members by negotiating wages, improving working conditions and providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. Actors' Equity is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. #EquityWorks



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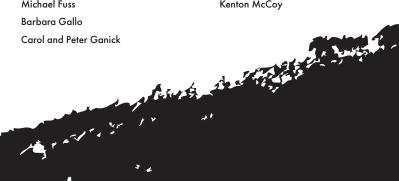
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