LIVE ARTS THEATER
Season 29 ~ 2019-20

MEN ON BOATS

By Jaclyn Backhaus

March 6-28, 2020
A Charlottesville job with a world of possibilities.

Of course you can move to NYC, or L.A., or Chicago... Or you can stay right here in Charlottesville and work in a place with a view and a really contemporary viewpoint. We’re WorldStrides, and we’ve been at home here for fifty years. In fact, today we’re 500 employees strong! This is where great work is done and friends are made. This is where careers take flight—right from the Downtown Mall.

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The first question I get about this show is typically something along the lines of, “If it’s meant to be cast entirely with not cis-men, why are YOU directing it?” In response, I can only pass the buck. I will not presume to speak for Bree Luck, but I can say that she handed me three scripts and asked which I wanted. MEN ON BOATS was irrefutably the one that spoke loudest to me, and that is a “Why?” that I can speak to.

About a week before I read MOB, my wife, Tricia, and I learned that our incoming child was to be a girl. Francesca is the first girl born into my family in five generations and possibly longer, so we were a little surprised. And when I say “a little surprised,” I mean that we asked for confirmation four separate times. And then Bree gave me a script exploring the vagaries of maleness, history, ownership of narrative, Manifest Destiny, and entrenched power structures.

Y’know. Light fare.

And yet, it IS light. It is a script that is steeped in playfulness and the joy of exploring. And similarly, our process has been buoyed by camaraderie and teamwork. Every member of our expedition has done their part and more, and what we have is truly greater than the sum. And, perhaps unknowingly, they have all allowed a space for me to take my own journey. As a first time dad of a little girl, the question of what it means to be a man has never been so profound and important to me.

Then I found myself questioning if those details were important. Shouldn’t I be asking the same questions regardless of my child’s gender or my own? In order to be a better parent, shouldn’t I be challenging all of my own preconceived notions and assumptions? Shouldn’t I be doing all of that work simply in order to be a better person? This fun, light-hearted, and irreverent little romp through history has turned out to be a vehicle for deep personal exploration. Ultimately, it feels more like MEN ON BOATS chose me rather than I chose it.

I hope you enjoy what you see as much as we enjoyed making it.

Jeremy Duncan Pape
Director, MEN ON BOATS
Interim Artistic Director, LIVE ARTS
A NOTE FROM THE PRODUCER

On a recent pilgrimage to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, I found myself in the American Wing confronted with Emanuel Leutze’s depiction of George Washington’s 1776 attack on Trenton, “Washington Crossing the Delaware” (1851). Though it technically depicts a major event in American history, Leutze’s painting also represents an American cultural myth of bravery (or bravado) in the face of wrathful nature: a dignified General Washington stands perfectly balanced toward the prow of his boat; two of his soldiers hoist the American Flag upward; Other soldiers navigate around dangerous chunks of ice. Yet while taking in the painting’s enormity (a whopping 12 ft. 5 in. x 21 ft. 3 in.), there was one thought I could not banish:

There are a lot of men on that very small boat.

Twelve of them to be exact. If you took Washington out of the painting, you’d just have a bunch of guys struggling to row across a dangerous river. Leutze’s painting was finished six years after journalist John O’Sullivan coined the term “Manifest Destiny”: a policy of continental colonization that long determined America’s program of exploration, largely at the expense of Native guardians of the land. Looking closely at Leutze’s painting quietly reveals a figure wearing Native moccasins and a shoulder pouch, as well as a Black soldier rowing at the prow of the boat. The faces of both figures are partially obscured, but their presence is unmistakable—they cannot be written out of even this performative myth of American history.

Though performative in its own way, MEN ON BOATS distances us from the image of the victorious conqueror who faces off against both Man and Nature to claim what is his; Instead it draws us toward the mundane practicalities of exploration by river and the bonds that develop there. It provides a picture of male intimacy for a culture that still glorifies a rugged, individualistic, stoic masculinity.

It’s been a true pleasure to produce MEN ON BOATS, this season’s Mentor/Apprentice show. Everything you see tonight results from the collaboration of a creative team of designers and their student apprentices. Here at the theater, we know—as do Powell and his crew—that nothing great is ever accomplished alone. Thank you for being here.

Kelli Shermeyer
Producer, MEN ON BOATS
Thank you for the warm welcome to Live Arts during my first month on the job! I’m thrilled to have joined such a remarkable group of people committed to the shared cause of forging community and theater. I’m struck by both the number (1,246 at last count) and the talent of our volunteer corps. No less impressive is the support within the Charlottesville community. That combination makes Live Arts a national model for community theaters.

That said, I realize that we are not a typical community theater. “Community” certainly describes who we serve, but it understates the caliber of our work and our impact on audiences.

Perhaps a more apt way to describe us is “a professional theater powered by volunteers.” The juxtaposition of professional and volunteer takes people by surprise. Rightly so. It’s a rare thing that you’ve forged in Charlottesville.

As we prepare to celebrate our 30th anniversary, we honor the founders who made this milestone possible. We also acknowledge that what was once a fledgling arts community has come into its own. For the first time ever, Charlottesville has been named one of the 40 most vibrant arts communities in America.* As the nation starts to see us differently, we can start to define ourselves differently.

That’s part of my job as executive director. I handle the business, education and community-building side of the organization so the artistic director can focus on “shepherding the volunteer experience and ensuring the artistic integrity of the season,” in the words of Jeremy Duncan Pape. Our roles are separate, but our approach is decidedly collaborative.

One of my first tasks is to hire the permanent artistic director. I’ve enlisted the help of a nine-person search committee which convenes this month. We welcome your input and appreciate your ongoing support!

*Arts Vibrancy Index, published August 2019 by SMU DataArts, the National Center for Arts Research

Anne Hunter
Executive Director, LIVE ARTS
SILVERCHAIR
PRESENTS

MEN ON BOATS

LIVE ARTS
MARCH 6-28, 2020

Written by Jaclyn Backhaus

Directed by Jeremy Duncan Pape

Sponsored by Barbara & Jay Kessler

Act 1 is 50 minutes.
There is one 15 minute intermission.
Act 2 is 50 minutes.

Pre-order drinks for intermission before the show!
Concessions are on the 3rd floor.
Restrooms: 3rd and 1st floors. Gender Neutral/Family: 4th floor.

TAKING PHOTO AND VIDEO IS PROHIBITED.
Please turn off phones, electronics, and other beeping things.

MEN ON BOATS
is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.

Supported in part by a grant from the Virginia Commission for the Arts &
The National Endowment for the Arts.
CAST

JOHN WESLEY POWELL
WILLIAM DUNN/MR. ASA
JOHN COLTON SUMNER
OLD SHADY
BRADLEY
O.G. HOWLAND/TSAUWIAT
SENeca HOWLAND/THe BISHOp
FRANK GOODMAN
HALL
HAWKINS

Jennifer Peart
Ti Ames
Stella Bowman
Mariah Layman
Anne Loebs
Abri Roberts-Kedes
Alana Adams
Gretchen York
Jen Lawless
Deborah Arenstein

PRODUCTION TEAM

PRODUCER
DIRECTOR
ASST. DIRECTOR/SOUND DESIGNER
STAGE MANAGER
MENTOR-APPRENTICE FACILITATOR
SCENIC DESIGNER
LIGHTING DESIGNER
COSTUME DESIGNER
PROPERTIES DESIGNER
HAIR & MAKEUP DESIGNER
SCRIPT COACH
DRAMATURG
LIGHTBOARD OPERATORS
SOUNDBOARD OPERATORS

Kelli Shermeyer
Jeremy Duncan Pape
Skye Devlin
Shelby Marie Edwards
Miller Murray Susen
Maya Wood
Heather Hutton
Amy Goffman
Daryl O'Connor
Riley Gonzalez
Tim White
John Conover
Margaret Ryan-Byrne
Sarah Meyer
Kathleen Mueller
Suzy Cincinnatti
MENTOR/APPRENTICE PROGRAM

Part of Live Arts’ commitment to forging theater and community includes developing future theater artists behind the scenes. This season we have paired teenage apprentices with experienced theater professionals on the production team of MEN ON BOATS.

Please join us in recognizing the incredible work done by the mentors and student apprentices who worked on this production!

MENTOR/APPRENTICE TEAM

PRODUCTION MENTOR Kelli Shermeyer
APPRENTICE Parker Nelson

SCENIC DESIGN MENTOR Annie Temmink
APPRENTICES Dakota Duncan
Phoebe Rebhorn

LIGHTING DESIGN MENTOR Heather Hutton
APPRENTICES Sarah Meyer
Margaret Ryan-Byrne

PROPERTIES DESIGN MENTOR Daryl O’Connor
APPRENTICE Marietta Feigert

COSTUME DESIGN MENTOR Amy Goffman
APPRENTICES Georgia Wyatt
Sofie Swift

The Live Arts Mentor/Apprentice Program provides a hands-on opportunity for teens to learn the crafts of direction, stage management, and theater design while working alongside experienced designers and staff. Together, they create the look, sound, and feel of a mainstage production. The program requires a lot of investment and hard work on behalf of both mentors and apprentices, and we couldn’t be more grateful to these stalwart volunteers for helping us fulfill an important part of our educational mission!

Visit livearts.org/education for more information.
ALANA ADAMS
SENeca HOWLAND/THE BISHOP

Alana is excited for her first performance with Live Arts. Previous performances include Servant 1/ Hugh Oatcake in MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING (Quill Theater). Before that, Alana enjoyed performing in productions at Randolph-Macon College, St. Mary’s Summerstock, and Leonardtown High School.

TI AMES
WILLIAM DUNN/MR. ASA

Ti is hype to be back onstage after spending the past few years directing! Their directing credits include BLACK MAC (Charlottesville Players Guild), THE BROTHERS SIZE (Oberlin College), and RENT (Live Arts). Ti is also a local theater educator and vocal/acting coach. Much love to the #NoMenNoBoats fam, especially TiBorah :) 

DEBORAH ARENSTEIN
HAWKINS

Deborah is on the Live Arts Board, and has been both onstage (WELL) and backstage (FIGHT NIGHT, FUN HOME, DEATH OF A SALESMAN). She consults with nonprofits as a Board Whisperer, performs improv, and rides horses as often as possible. Much love for MEN ON BOATS! Thanks to her family for holding down the fort.

STElla BOWMAN
JOHN COLTON SUMNNER

Stella is ecstatic to be making her Live Arts debut. Barbara Gordon is her hero, the moose is her life’s pursuit, and she is overjoyed to have found a kindred spirit and fellow adventurer in Sumner. “audentis Fortuna iuvat.” (Aeneid 10.284) Much love and appreciation to her parents!

JENNIFER LAWLESS
HALL

Jen loves volunteering at Live Arts, both onstage and off. Recently she designed props for THE HUMANS, and made art for FOLLIES and various Live Arts fundraisers. She’s been onstage as Margaret in PHILADELPHIA STORY, Hella in THE MASTER AND MARGARITA, and Isabel/Sabine in THE LIAR. Party Boat!

MARIANH LAYMAN
OLD SHADY

Mariah is incredibly thrilled and grateful to be taking part in her first ever Live Arts performance. She has participated in local and school theater most of her life. Since graduating from Monticello in 2018, she has taken acting classes and courses both in NYC and Charlottesville. In her downtime, Mariah loves to draw, take naps, and create editorial style makeup looks.
ANNE LOEBS
BRADLEY

Anne is excited about her first Live Arts production. Previously she played Patsy in DEARLY BELOVED and Fiona in OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MURDER (Persimmon Tree Players). Anne is grateful to the MEN ON BOATS cast and crew for their patience, wisdom, and insight.

JENNIFER PEART
JOHN WESLEY POWELL

Jennifer was last seen on the Live Arts stage many moons ago in FLOYD COLLINS. She’s been hiding out as a director, with credits including CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE, MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM, and OLIVER! She is also an improviser with Playback Theater of Virginia. Big thanks for this awesome experience to Deb, Larry, Jeremy, and her family! Steady on!

ABRIANA
ROBERTS-KEDES
O.G. HOWLAND/TSAUWIAT

Abri is excited to be in her first show at Live Arts. She has been seen onstage at Tandem Friends School, where she is a senior, and at Malibu Playhouse, where she is also a set builder. She wants to say thanks to Deborah for the Skittles!

GRETCHEN YORK
FRANK GOODMAN

Gretchen made her Live Arts debut in 2018 with TOP GIRLS. She has since performed in area productions of ANGELS IN AMERICA (ShenanArts) and A DOLL’S HOUSE (Oak Grove). Behind the scenes at Live Arts, she facilitates the Carol Pedersen Readers' Circle and has been the dramaturg for CRY-BABY and THE WOLVES.
PRODUCTION TEAM BIOS

SUZY CINCINNATTI
SOUNDBOARD OP

Suzy dramaturged for THE HUMANS and appeared in A VERY SPECIAL LIVE ARTS HOLIDAY SPECIAL. She studied at UVA and Boston University, worked at WME, Bravo, and Central Casting, and thinks she could live at Live Arts. Suzy happens to enjoy a good decaf mocha.

JOHN CONOVER
DRAMATURG

John has enjoyed a variety of roles at Live Arts: on stage, off, and in governance. Being an dramaturg is a way to clasp hands with the building of a play and the thinking and choices behind it. This crew would have made it all the way on the water.

SKYE DEVLIN
SOUND DESIGNER

Skye has worked on many shows at Live Arts as a light and sound board operator but they are so thrilled to be working as sound designer and Assistant Director for MEN ON BOATS! All their love goes to the all-star cast and crew for making this all come together so beautifully.

DAKOTA DUNCAN
SCENIC DESIGN APPRENTICE

Dakota is so excited to have worked on the set for this show! Her previous credits involve costuming for 12 shows, the most recent works being Costume Designer for ANNIE JR. at DMR Adventures and THE WOLVES at Live Arts.

SHELBY MARIE EDWARDS
STAGE MANAGER

Shelby is so thrilled to be back home in Charlottesville and even happier to work on this production! Previous roles at Live Arts have included: Spotlight Operator (LEGALLY BLONDE), Soundboard Operator (DREAMGIRLS) and Dramaturg (RAGTIME). Visit her in the office by day to talk about engagement and development at Live Arts.

MARIETTA FEIGERT
PROPERTIES DESIGN APPRENTICE

Marietta has spent many years at Live Arts in various positions. They are a junior at Charlottesville High School. Some of their credits at Live Arts include RENT, CRYBABY, and PIPPIN. While at school they have been involved in almost everything for the past three years.

AMY GOFFMAN
COSTUME DESIGNER

Amy has been costuming plays in Charlottesville theaters for many years. Last year she costumed HELLO DOLLY (Four County Players) and SEVEN HOMELESS MAMMALS WANDER NEW ENGLAND (Live Arts), and this year she costumed WHITE CHRISTMAS (Four County Players). It has been great fun because the characters (and the actors playing them) are so vivid, and because of her two fantastic apprentices, Georgia and Sofie. Thanks to our growing Live Arts Sewing Group for making bags and shirts for the men in the boats, and for many hours of fun. Thanks as always to Jim for putting up.
RILEY GONZALEZ  
HAIR & MAKEUP DESIGNER

Riley, while previously involved in Live Arts shows, (Mimi in RENT, Core dancer in CRYBABY), has never been on the technical production side of a production! She has had a blast exploring the other side of theater. She hopes you enjoy Men on Boats.

HEATHER HUTTON  
LIGHTING DESIGNER

Heather Hutton has been a professional lighting designer for 20 years. At Live Arts: SWEET CHARITY, THE SUGAR, GREY GARDENS, HE WHO GETS SLAPPED, EURYDICE, LYSISTRATA, 24/7, and Gala. Heather is also the Master Electrician for the Live Arts’ Fringe Tech Team. Big Shout Out to my lighting apprentices: you ROCK our electrics boat!

SARAH MEYER  
LIGHTING DESIGN APPRENTICE/ LIGHTBOARD OP

MEN ON BOATS is Sarah’s first experience working on the tech side of things, and she’s loved every minute of it. Previously, Sarah has performed in productions with Tandem Friends, DMR Adventures, and CHS, where she is currently a tenth-grader. In her free time, she loves playing music.

KATHLEEN MUELLER  
SOUNDBOARD OP

Kathleen is so excited to be a part of this amazing production! She started volunteering in 2012 building sets and moved onto board operation, stage management, sound design and producing. Every show is truly a joy no matter the role. Come and join us as a volunteer, we always have loads of fun.

PARKER NELSON  
PRODUCTION APPRENTICE

Parker is so excited to be a part of this production. This is her first experience in the Mentor/Apprentice Program, and she is so thankful for the opportunity to learn from Kelli and the rest of the creative team. Enjoy the show!

DARYL O’CONNOR  
PROPERTIES DESIGNER

Daryl has propped many shows over the years and MEN ON BOATS will remain a favorite. What a fun challenge to recreate Powell’s expedition complete with snakes, fish, and sextants. Enjoy this entertaining journey through the canyons of the American West. Kudos to the wonderful cast and crew!

JEREMY DUNCAN PAPE  
DIRECTOR

This is Jeremy’s first directorial outing with Live Arts. Before returning home to Charlottesville, Jeremy worked extensively with The Amoralists, Rattlestick Playwright’s Theater, and EndTimes Productions. He is the founding artistic director of No-Win Productions. He is honored that this team has joined him on this journey.

PHOEBE REBHORN  
SCENIC DESIGN APPRENTICE

Phoebe is honored to be one of the apprentice set designers for MEN ON BOATS. Although she has participated in summer camps and workshops at Live Arts for many years, she had never done anything behind the scenes, and she is thrilled to be able to explore the world of tech. She enjoys painting, traveling, and playing field hockey in her spare time.
MARGARET RYAN-BYRNE
LIGHTING DESIGN APPRENTICE/LIGHTBOARD OP
Margaret is so happy to be a part of this show! She is a junior at Charlottesville High School, and has been involved in productions there, such as MAMMA MIA! and SHE KILLS MONSTERS. When not doing homework or shows, she is hanging out with her dogs and reading.

KELLI SHERMEYER
PRODUCER
Kelli is delighted you’ve made it to MEN ON BOATS! Recent credits include: Director (THE WOLVES, THE ELECTRIC BABY, NEIGHBORHOOD 3: REQUISITION OF DOOM), Producer (SWEET CHARITY, DEATH OF A SALESMAN, THE SUGAR, THE MASTER AND MARGARITA), and Dramaturg (UVA: SHE KILLS MONSTERS; Live Arts: HUNTER GATHERERS, LOCALLY SOURCED). By day, she teaches drama and contemporary literature at UVA.

SOFIE SWIFT
COSTUME DESIGN APPRENTICE
Sofie Swift is excited to work on her first show at Live Arts! Previous roles include: Spotlight Operator (BEAUTY AND THE BEAST JR), Lightboard Operator (MARY POPPINS JR.), and Scenic Painter (FROZEN JR, HAIRSPRAY Jr). When not doing theater, Sofie loves doing art and cosplay, and going on strange adventures with her friends.

GEORGIA WYATT
COSTUME DESIGN APPRENTICE
Georgia is delighted to be a costume apprentice in her first ever Live Arts production. Previously, she has helped with costumes for a summer camp production of ALICE IN WONDERLAND. Georgia is a student at Charlottesville High School and spends her free time either doing homework or avoiding it.
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Brian Dowd
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Dawn Schimke
Deanna Sheedy

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Zack Beamer
Karen Boyette
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Readers’ Circle is a monthly play-reading group created by Carol Pedersen.

Join us Sunday, March 15, 3-6pm (4th Floor, Rehearsal B)
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