The Mom Journals

A new play in monologues by Courtney Jett Walker
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THE MOM JOURNALS
A New Play in Monologues

January 28-31, 2021
The performance will last 90 minutes. There is no intermission.

Written by COURTNEY JETT WALKER
Directed by NINA HAIGNEY
Sponsored by THE CAPLIN FOUNDATION
Technical assistance from LIGHT HOUSE STUDIO

CAST
Beth  MANDY SHUKER
Mickey CADESSA DAVIS
Dorcas LAURA MAWYER
Jillian MARY BEST BOVA
Rachel COURTNEY JETT WALKER

PRODUCTION TEAM
Playwright COURTNEY JETT WALKER
Director NINA HAIGNEY
Producer & Production Stage Manager HANNAH VIDAVER
Director of Photography & Editor RACHEL LANE
Virtual Designer AUDREY WATSON
A NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

I wrote THE MOM JOURNALS because I felt that these were stories, though fictional, that I personally needed for my own validation and processing in the midst of being a mother. I truly hope they can be that for other mothers and parents and caretakers as well. THE MOM JOURNALS is a window into motherhood, a journey with unexpected twists, turns, and self-revelations. If you could have a glimpse into any given day of a mother, what you would see behind closed doors might be beautiful, it might be ugly, it might be a swirl of many things, but it would certainly be very real. I love the idea that if we saw any one person unfiltered, no matter what it made us feel, we would at the very least understand them in a much deeper way.

Mickey, Dorcas, Rachel, Jillian and Beth are all mosaics of women who I have known; who I aspire to be more or less like and either tell it like it is or keep me curious about what they hold close to themselves in private. Their stories are closer looks at the lessons we can learn as we raise children and simultaneously grow ourselves. We do indeed go through fires to come out the other side anew.

I’ve had the privilege of being the daughter of a mother who has run the gauntlet of motherhood—from single mom to stay-at-home mom, to mother of five, to working mom, and now a mom of grown children—which means being on call for many phone calls on catastrophe and chaos assessment and problem solving. So it is significant that I include in this note a big Thank You, Mom! I wouldn’t know how to be a mom without mine.

Being a mom is hard work and incredibly important work worth doing. We know this and yet when we live in it, being seen by your peers and your children matters so much. THE MOM JOURNALS is an exploration into how much mothers endure so that young human beings can go out into the world and be okay. This is for you, Moms. May you feel uplifted and seen and validated and worthy of becoming who you are meant to be every bit as much as you know that your children are.

- COURTNEY JETT WALKER
In the middle of a pandemic, Live Arts innovates with local playwrights and actors. The challenge: making our shared screens into a new kind of theatrical forum. After weeks of evening rehearsals on Zoom, we met at the Founders Theater, just a few of us at a time, to film monologues for online production. Solving new problems in new ways, we linked together 15 monologues in front of a green screen, shaping an emerging work of collaborative art unlike anything any of us had seen before. Even so, I think we all recognized how fitting it was to try this experiment with THE MOM JOURNALS, as a real life mother often finds joy in the unexpected.

- NINA HAIGNEY
MARY BEST BOVA
Jillian
Mary served as the resident director for Mill Mountain Theatre in Roanoke for 12 seasons. She has been artist-in-residence as both an actor and director for Hollins University and on the acting faculty at Virginia Tech. Mary was honored to play Ouiser (to Courtney's Annelle) in STEEL MAGNOLIAS for the Victory Hall Players in Scottsville.

CADESSA DAVIS
Mickey
Cadessa is excited to be in this fun play. Her Live Arts credits include RAGTIME (2018) and LOCALLY SOURCED (2020). She has also been seen on stage in HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS, WHITE CHRISTMAS, and HELLO DOLLY at Four County Players. She would like to thank her family and friends for their support!

LAURA MAWYER
Dorcas
Laura has been in and around the Charlottesville theater community for 17 years. Whether costume designing, acting, running light boards, directing, or ushering, she is thrilled just to be a part of it. Laura hopes you will see parts of your life in these five moms, whether you're a mom, a daughter, a son, or a partner. She thanks Courtney for trusting her, and Richard for being there always (and hiding during Zoom rehearsals).

MANDY SHUKER
Beth
Mandy is so honored and excited to be part of this beautifully resonant play with such an incredible cast and crew! Previous local theatrical endeavors include Casey in Irish Creek at Live Arts (LOCALLY SOURCED), Poppy in NOISES OFF at Four County Players, and a turn behind the scenes stage managing THE MOUSETRAP at Four County.

COURTNEY JETT WALKER
Rachel
Courtney is a mother of four, local actress, and writer. She has spent the last 11 years as a stay-at-home mom while working on her writing and participating in local theater. Favorite onstage credits include Frankie in DEARLY BELOVED (Persimmon Tree Players) and Annelle in STEEL MAGNOLIAS (Victory Hall Players).
"At times we want motherhood to be the pretty little bow tied up just right for holiday pictures. But daily life as a mom is the messiest of the messy, and clean-up that no one seems to see. Yet in that mess is the becoming. A self resilience. The choice to always love anyway. To kiss the foreheads, tickle the bellies, return to childhood in the beautiful ways at hand, to be the warm peaceful place. And even when you lose it and feel lost any given day, to come back in and give and receive all that is good and real and full of joy."

-Courtney Jett Walker
COURTNEY JETT WALKER

Playwright
Courtney is a co-facilitator of the Live Arts Playwrights’ Lab and has written and directed for recent LOCALLY SOURCED short play festivals at Live Arts. She holds a BFA in Theater Performance from Longwood University. Courtney thanks James, Ella, Ranen, Shelby and Holden for all the inspiration.

NINA HAIGNEY

Director
This is Nina's directorial debut. As a member of the Live Arts Playwrights' Lab, her short play Tara and Zoe (LOCALLY SOURCED 2020), sparked her interest in the challenges of shared-screen drama. She loves working with the adventurous cast as they bring these five women to life—each one a force of nature in her own way.

HANNAH VIDAVER

Producer & Production Stage Manager
Hannah is excited to be dusting off her stage management skills for THE MOM JOURNALS. Some of her favorite theater credits include: NEWSIES and NEVERMORE at DMR Adventures and HELLO DOLLY and SAVANNAH SIPPING SOCIETY at Four County Players. Having been more on the stage than off, this experience has been especially special!

RACHEL LANE

Director of Photography & Editor
As program director and teaching artist at Light House Studio, Rachel strives to inspire creativity and positive growth in emerging filmmakers. She has a BA in studio art from UVA and an MFA in film, video, animation and new genres from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Rachel’s background in film production has provided her opportunities to collaborate with wonderful organizations like Live Arts!

AUDREY WATSON

Virtual Designer
Audrey is a student at the University of Virginia studying architecture and drama, and is planning on going into production design after graduation. This is her first Live Arts show and her first time working on an online theater production!
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Email volunteer@livearts.org
Give us a call at 434-977-4177

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**Playwrights' Lab**
The Playwrights' Lab gives local playwrights at any level the chance to present their work, participate in feedback, and discuss other Lab members’ plays. THE MOM JOURNALS started in the Lab!

If you are interested in joining as a playwright or actor, contact lab-fac@livearts.org for more info.

**Readers' Circle**
Readers' Circle is a monthly play-reading group created by Carol Pedersen. Readers' Circle currently meets virtually to enjoy and discuss great plays, from the famous to the obscure!

Contact facilitator Gretchen York at gretchengioia@gmail.com for more info.
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