

PLAYBOOK

WHIM SPACE

alphabet soup

THEATER FROM
QUEER VOICES

KANSAS CITY'S LGBTQ+ SHORT PLAY SHOWCASE



OPENING NIGHT JUNE 23, 2023

WHIM SPACE

WHIM PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

alphabet soup

THEATER FROM QUEER VOICES

WHIM PRODUCTIONS

PRODUCING ARTISTIC MANAGER
Kevin King

ARTISTIC COMMITTEE
Jack Kneessy
Bradley Meyer
Landan Stocker
Kyle Tichenor
Austin VanWinkle

RESIDENT SCENIC DESIGNER
Bradley Meyer

RESIDENT LIGHTING DESIGNER
Austin VanWinkle

For the safety and consideration of those
in the production, the use of **photography**
or video is strictly prohibited.

THE LINEUP

Debating by Kevin King

Outlook Not So Good by Michael Donnici

Marriage Play by Em Swenson

INTERMISSION

Steam by Matthew Beerman

What Did Penis Do by Kraig Kensinger

The Dress by Mylan Gray

THE PLAYS

DEBATING

WRITTEN BY

Kevin King

DIRECTED BY
Bradley Meyer

CAST

Brenden Blue.....Andrew
Jose Alaras.....Colby
Dri Hernaez.....Samantha

OUTLOOK NOT SO GOOD

WRITTEN BY

Michael Donnici

DIRECTED BY
Gary Heisserer

CAST

Adam Austin.....Joe
Karla M. Fennick.....The Voice

MARRIAGE PLAY

WRITTEN BY

Em Swenson

DIRECTED BY
Dri Hernaez

CAST

Diana Watts.....Kelly
Maggie Cargill.....Jessica
Brenden Blue.....Justin

INTIMACY

CHOREOGRAPHY BY
Kevin King

THE PLAYS

STEAM

WRITTEN BY

Matthew Beerman

CAST

Vern WarnerStephen

DIRECTED BY

Kyle Tichenor

Bowie Henderson.....Jacob

INTIMACY

CHOREOGRAPHY BY

Kevin King

WHAT DID PENIS DO?

WRITTEN BY

Kraig Kensinger

CAST

Jason Coats.....Jerry

Brenden Blue.....Penis

DIRECTED BY

Kevin King

Janetta Leigh.....Heart

David Whitner.....Mind

THE DRESS

WRITTEN BY

Mylan Gray

CAST

Nat Weber.....Abel

DIRECTED BY

Karly Kinsey

Brooke Ariel.....Maddie

INTIMACY

CHOREOGRAPHY BY

Kevin King

MEET THE PLAYWRIGHTS

MATTHEW BEERMAN (he/him)

Steam

This is Matthew's first time as a playwright; he was inspired by his husband Adam Yarbrough's contributions to Alphabet Soup in years past. When not writing, Matthew works at a software company here in Kansas City.

MICHAEL DONNICI (he/him)

Outlook Not So Good

Michael Donnici has written and acted in numerous radio theater plays as part of the KKFI 90.1 FM's Shots In The Night ensemble. He has received a number of Gold, Silver, and Bronze level HearNow National Audio Theater Festival Awards for his scripts, including Dauber, Lover's Red, Sweet Dell Surprise, and others. His play "What Am I Doing With My Lives" and numerous other pieces have been staged at KC Fringe, and his play "Grandma's Little Helpers" was staged for the Squeeze Box Theater in Kansas City.

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MEET THE PLAYWRIGHTS

MYLAN GRAY (they/he)

The Dress

Mylan Gray (they/he) is an Eagle Scout turned playwright from Wyandotte County. They have received the Lorraine Hansberry Award from the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival for their play, *Buried in Blood*. Their work has been developed by the Tank Theater, the Workshop Theater, the Kansas City Public Theater, the Whim Theater Company, and the Writing Downtown Residency in Las Vegas. He is a co-producer of the LIT Council at the Tank Theater, and have written fiction podcasts for LWC Studios. They are a graduate of Stanford University and currently pursuing their MFA in Playwriting at UC- San Diego.

KRAIG KENSINGER (he/him)

What Did Penis Do?

Kraig is a seasoned "creative" who expresses himself through writing, acting, puppetry, Edu-tainments and fusion art pieces. Kraig is excited to be part of a second *Soup*, following 2021's "Late Nite Interaction."

KEVIN KING (he/him)

Debating

Producing Artistic Director

Kevin King is a playwright-in-residence at the Midwest Dramatist Center, a member of the Dramatists Guild, and a 2016 playwright-in-residence in The Charlotte Street Foundation's studio residency program. His work ranges from camp and satire to unblinking looks at moments in modern queer lives.

His short play "The Swallows" was selected for the Smith & Kraus Best Ten-Minute Plays of 2022 anthology and for the William Inge Festival's 2019 New Play Lab. It's been produced across the country. His short play "Debating" was a 2021 semi-finalist for the Lanford Wilson New American Play Festival. A reading of his full-length play "Hyenas" was presented by the Dramatists Guild's Kansas/Missouri Region's Footlights series in 2021. In 2022, Kansas City Public Theatre produced a developmental reading of "Boxed," a gay #metoo play.

EM SWENSON (she/they)

Em strives to reveal the pieces of herself and humanity that are often overlooked or ignored. Her plays expose the people behind the labels given by society. She's inspired by those living unashamed of who they are and what they do.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



Jose Alaras (He/Him)

As a 4th year medical student, Jose was very excited to reinvigorate the creative side of him through this play. He has performed previously in student written and directed productions at his Alma Mater at USC, and enjoys connecting with characters and making them come to life on stage. He will be applying into Emergency Medicine residency with a strong belief that the arts create better physicians who are able to convey difficult topics and empathize with patients.

Colby - Debating



Brooke Ariel (They/Them)

Brooke is thrilled to be making her Whim Productions debut in "Alphabet Soup". You might've seen her last as "Natalie" in "Next to Normal" with The Barn Players or "Caroline" in "Titanic" with Musical Theater Heritage. She would like to thank her cats Kevin and Toulouse for all their support and love!

Maddie - The Dress



Adam Austin (He/Him)

This is Adam's second time appearing in Alphabet Soup. He is so excited to be taking on a larger role in this year's production. You can find him around Kansas City as Sister Ethyl Lynn Torch with The City of Fountains Sisters, providing for the queer community. Adam is also known as Hank E. Panky, a nationally acclaimed burlesque performer. He is the co-producer for the Tulsa Burlesque Festival in Tulsa, OK.

Joe - Outlook Not So Good

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Brenden Blue (He/Him)



Brenden Blue is currently in his Junior Year at the Kansas City Art Institute working towards a BFA in Animation. Along with selling artwork in 60 different countries globally, Brenden is also a singer and actor performing locally in Kansas City. He was recently seen last summer in Sweeney Todd at the Warwick Theatre. He is excited to step out of his comfort zone within this production of Alphabet Soup, and to add even more to his artistic journey as a young gay man.

**Andrew - Debating
Penis - What Did Penis Do?
Justin - Marriage Play
The Interloper - Steam**

Maggie Cargill (She/Her)



Maggie is excited to join Alphabet Soup for her debut with Whim Productions. As an improviser, Maggie is looking forward to bringing her spontaneity, humor and heart to a scripted show. You can find her at The Bird Comedy Theatre in the Crossroads.

Jessica - Marriage Play

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



Jason Coats (He/They)

Jason is excited to return to the Whim stage again having performed, written, and directed for the past several seasons of ALPHABET SOUP. Jason has also performed or directed in theatres all over KC including The Barn Players, OCTA, The White Theatre, GTIP, and The Coterie, which he also calls home to his day job. Jason also sings with the Heartland Men's Chorus and is involved with several other LGBTQ+ organizations in the city.

Jerry - What Did Penis Do?



Bowie Henderson (He/Him)

Bowie is excited to be participating in his second year of Alphabet Soup, especially in this brand new beautiful space! Special thanks to his parents for playing taxi, and for birthing greatness. Enjoy the show and let's get steamy!

Jacob - Steam



Dri Hernaez (She/Her)

Dri Hernaez is a Filipina actor, emerging playwright, and director! She is currently a Master of Fine Arts Actor at the University of Kansas City - Missouri. You might have seen Dri's work in Kansas City Repertory Theater's production of "Peter Pan & Wendy" playing Tootles. She's also been in several UMKC Productions including "Fixing King John" as Queen Elinor, "The 39 Steps" as Clown 1, and "Thinner Than Water" as Cassie.

Samantha - Debating

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



Janetta Leigh (She/They)

Janetta is returning to the Alphabet Soup stage to bring her unique genderqueer take on character acting. She was previously in "Step Zero," "The Emancipation of Emi", and "Nothing Without Me."

Heart - What Did Penis Do?



Vern Warner (He/Him)

Vern is very excited for his debut in Whim Productions' Alphabet Soup 2023. He has seen many prior performances and is honored to have a role this time around. You might also know him as Mr. Missouri Leather 2020/2021!

Stephen - Steam



Diana Watts (She/Her)

Diana Watts is happy to be back in the Soup. Diana's a copywriter living in the River Market with Stevie Nicks (the dog), Baby Ed (the ball python), and too many plants. She loves horror movies, Old Fashioneds, and Oxford commas.

Kelly - Marriage Play

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



Nat Weber (They/Them)

This is Nat's first show at Whim. They acted in high school and college, performing in shows such as Under Milkwood, The Foreigner, in which they appeared at the International Thespian Festival, and Spamalot, for which they won a Blue Star. Nat would like to thank their friends and family and everyone at Whim!

Abel - The Dress



David Whitner (He/Him)

David Whitner makes his debut with Whim Productions in the 2023 Alphabet Soup Showcase, having not appeared in a scripted production in over 30 years. He lives in Kansas City. David serves on the board of PFLAG-KC and is active in Toastmasters.

Mind - What Did Penis Do?

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHIES



Gary Heisserer (He/Him)

Gary is excited to be directing his first Whim production. Other Kansas City productions include Dead Man's Cell Phone (Bell Road Barn Players), "Master Harold" ... and the Boys and About Alice (Kansas City Actors Theatre), and How to Steal a Picasso (Unicorn Theatre).

Director - Outlook Not So Good

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHIES



Dri Hernaez (She/Her)

Dri is excited to be making her directorial debut! She's grateful for her wonderful cast, Em Swenson, and everyone at Whim!

Director - Marriage Play



Kevin King (He/Him)

Kevin wants to thank his cast, Kraig for his hilariously play, and everyone who has helped make Whim Space and this festival a reality!

**Director - What Did Penis Do?
Production Intimacy Choreographer**



Karly Kinsey (She/Her)

Karly is a third year theatre and speech teacher with a Theatre Education degree from K-State. Karly is grateful for the opportunity to spend Pride Month connecting with other through LGBTQ+ stories. She thanks her family, friends, and girlfriend for supporting her.

Director - The Dress

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHIES



Bradley Meyer (He/Him)

Bradley is a freelance theatre designer, director, artisan and professional educator originally from Des Moines, IA. A lifelong learner, Bradley holds several degrees in education and studied scenic design in the graduate program at UMKC. Recent Design Credits: AFTER ALL: 60 YEARS OF CHER (Heartland Men's Chorus), MARYS SEACOLE (Unicorn Theater), BETHEL PARK FALLS (UMKC), THE SOUND INSIDE (Unicorn Theater). Bradley will be designing and directing an upcoming production of PLAYING IN THE PERIPHERY (Whim Productions). bradleymeyerdesigns.com

Director - Debating

Resident Scenic Designer

Artistic Committee Member



Kyle Tichenor (He/Him)

Kyle Tichenor is excited to make his directorial debut for Whim Productions. Kyle studied theatre performance at the University of Kansas. Since 2018, he has performed in plays and musicals throughout the greater Kansas City area, including most recently at OCTA, where he performed in two back-to-back shows.

Kyle wishes to thank the actors for their patience and willingness to follow his lead. He also wishes to thank Kevin King for his support and guidance. Lastly he wishes to thank John for his love and support.

Director - Steam

Artistic Committee Member

DESIGNER BIOGRAPHIES



Mabel Bell (They/He)

Mable Is an Audio Engineer in KC with an emphasis on Sound Design, Mastering, and Live Sound Reinforcement. In their spare time they also edit VO and podcasts. Recent plays include: "Once" and "That Day in Tuscon".

Sound Designer



Ian VanDusen (He/Him)

Ian VanDusen is a Lighting Designer in Kansas City. With an extensive portfolio includes collaborations with Wylliams Henry, Faust Theater, Heritage Christian, UMKC, TGDC, and more. Expertise in Lighting, Projections, Photography, Film.

Lighting Designer

ALPHABET SOUP

FESTIVAL DESIGN TEAM

SCENIC DESIGNER

Bradley Meyer

SOUND DESIGNER

Mabel Bell

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Ian VanDusen

INTIMACY CHOREOGRAPHER

Kevin King

COSTUME DESIGNER

The Dress - Karly Kinsey

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Kyle Tichenor

COSTUME DESIGNER

What Did Penis Do? -

Karla M. Fennick

BOARD OPERATOR

Mabel Bell

PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHY /

VIDEO

Janetta Leigh

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to our donors

Kyle Brane, Ryan Conrad, Anthony Fischer
Jill Gillespie, Luc Heimbach, Ashlyn Henderson, Susan Lasater,
Katarina Peterson, Amanda Rhodes, Jessie Salsbury, Kurtis Thiel,
Christopher Werner, Sarah Wilkes, Julie Wittman

You can join them!

Whim Productions is a sponsored project of Fractured Atlas, a non-profit arts service organization. Contributions for the charitable purposes of Whim Productions must be made payable to Fractured Atlas only and are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law with a tax deductible gift through our Fiscal Sponsorship with Fractured Atlas.

**Visit
whimproductions.com/support
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to

John Adams, Sean Arkin, Karla M. Fennick, KC Fringe, Jose Gonzalez,
Joshua Hughes, Jason & Alli Irvin, Everett & Helen King, Diane LeFort,
Rick McConnell & XS Lighting, UMKC Theater Department, Liberty Schools,
Brandon Shelton

Whim Productions is a proud member of the
Mid-America LGBT Chamber of Commerce



and the Pendleton Heights Neighborhood Association

Whim Productions creates challenging and evocative queer theater. We're dedicated to producing works written by LGBTQ+ writers with narratives that center queer characters. We strive to share the diversity of queer lives with Kansas City audiences and enable LGBTQ+ theater artists to tell their own stories.

Queer theater. Whimsical edge.



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