# THE YEAR OF MAGICAL THINKING By Joan Didion



# FEBRUARY 10 - FEBRUARY 26, 2023





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# THE AURORA FOX PRESENTS

# THE YEAR OF MAGICAL THINKING

By Joan Didion

#### **DIRECTOR**

Christy Montour-Larson†

# **FEATURING**

Billie McBride\* as Joan

#### STAGE MANAGER

Misha Zimmerman\*

#### SCENIC DESIGN

Brandon Case

# **COSTUME DESIGN**

Terri Fong-Schmidt

# SOUND DESIGN

Joseph Lamar

#### PROJECTION DESIGN

Brandon Case

#### PRODUCTION MANAGER

Jen Orf

## **CARPENTERS**

Adena Rice, Casey Burnham, Wesley Schwarz, Mykail Cooley

# ACTING EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Beau Bisson

# PROMOTIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Gail Bransteitter



\*Denotes membership in the Actors Equity Association.

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† Denotes member of SDC, the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society



‡ Denotes member of United Scenic Artists

This show is performed in One Act with No Intermission.

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# **CONTACT US:**

Mailing address: P.O. Box 11182, Denver, CO 80211 DenverActorsFund.org | DenverActorsFund@gmail.com | Follow us on Facebook/Twitter

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MLK Jr. Library Staff for receiving shipments on behalf of The Fox; The City of Aurora Graphics and Print Shop team for their superb work and support



# Christy Montour-Larson† (Director)

Christy's work has also been seen in Colorado at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts (SHADOWLANDS) the Arvada Center (THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK), Creede Repertory (AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY) Local Theatre, Town Hall Arts Center, Phamaly, BETC, Theatreworks and the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center. Nationally, Christy has directed at Pioneer Theatre, Tent Theatre, New American Theatre, Rochester Civic Theatre, the Duluth Playhouse, Dark Horse Theatre and for Seven Devils Playwright Conference. A member of the Artistic Company at Curious

Theatre for over 18 years, her recent directing credits include THE LIFESPAN OF A FACT and THE SECRETARY. A passionate supporter of new work, she has directed many staged readings and world premieres, including; MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL by Lee Blessing, SUICIDE, INCORPORATED by Andrew Hinderacker, NO MORE SAD THINGS by Hansol Jung, TWO DEGREES by Tira Palmquist, GENERAL STORE by Brian Watkins and THE RAPE OF THE SABINE WOMEN BY GRACE B. MATHIAS by Michael Yates Crowley. Christy's accolades include 4 Colorado Theatre Guild Henry Awards, out of 13 nominations. She has also been named Top Director by the Denver Post, Westword, 5280 Magazine and CBS4 Denver. BFA in Theatre from University of Minnesota, Duluth. MFA in Directing from Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University. Proud member of Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers

# **DIRECTORS NOTE**

The Year of Magical Thinking started as an acclaimed autobiography about grief and mourning. It recounts Joan Didion's journey of loss, perseverance, and ultimately hope, using her signature wit to draw an intimate portrait about the resilience of the human heart. It won the 2005 National Book Award for Nonfiction and was a finalist for both the National Book Critics Circle Award and the Pulitzer Prize.

Joan Didion had no clear memory of when the notion of making a play out of The Year of Magical Thinking took hold. When first asked if she would consider it, she was vehemently negative. "I had never wanted to write a play. I did not know how to write a play." Yet at some point she was seized by the idea that the fact she had never written and did not know how to write a play could be the point, the imperative, the very reason to write one. "I was no longer exactly the person I had been," she said. "It was necessary to try something new."

I have negotiated grief. I have gotten that phone call when life changed in an instant, when life as I knew it ended. Perhaps you have, too. And when your rational mind is trying to tell you things you don't want to hear, even the toughest of us will go looking for the loophole. You know, the one that gives a fighting chance to negotiate beyond the rational. The one that makes you keep your loved one's shoes just in case they might need them when they returned.

By gathering us in the theatre, Didion can share with us her lessons for survival through her personal quest to the impossible. To bring her husband back. Make her daughter well. And somehow prepare us for events which we hope to avoid, but cannot. I find this play to be a stunning meditation on unexpected loss and immeasurable love, poetic in its blunt honesty, and channeled through the exceptional Billie McBride. I can't imagine a better actor to meet the clarion call of Joan Didion's truth telling. It is an honor to give this play to you.

Christy Montour-Larson, Director



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# **Billie McBride**

Billie McBride\* (Joan) is so very pleased to be returning to the Fox where she was supposed to open the play For Peter Pan on her 70th Birthday the day we were locked down for the pandemic. She spent 20 years in NYC prior to moving to Colorado doing theatre

and Television. Her NY stage credits include *Torch Song Trilogy* (Helen Hayes); *Safe Sex* (Lyceum) and *The Kurt Weill Cabaret* (Bijou Theatre). Since moving to Colorado she has worked in many of the theatres in Colorado as a director and actress including the DCTC, The Arvada Center, Curious Theatre, Miners Alley Playhouse, And Toto Too, The Denver Children's Theatre, CSFAC, CCT and Theatreworks. Recently she did *The Treasurer* and *Before You Go* (Miners Alley Playhouse) and directed *The Fantasticks* (THAC) and *Same Time Next Year* (CCT). TV and film includes *All My Children, Secret Storm, The Return of Ironside, Perry Mason, The Shining* and *The Laramie Project*.

Billie has won 3 Henry Awards for acting and directing, The True West Award for Theatre Person of the year (2016), the Theatre Lifetime Achievement Award in (2014) and a True West Award (2021).



# **CREATIVE BIOS**

# **CASEY BURNHAM (THEATER TECHNICIAN / SOUND)**

When he's not in the studio, you can find Casey digging through record crates or sauntering about a botanic garden. For more: CrashAndBurnham.com

At the Aurora Fox: FOH Sound Mix for Hurricane Diane, A Very Merry Unauthorized Children's Scientology Pageant, Disney's Freaky Friday, Futurity, and The Jedi Handbook; Laserist for The Jedi Handbook; Live Stream/Sound Engineer for Aurora Fox's Cultural Concert Series

**Other Credits:** The City and County of Broomfield Auditorium, The Lab Studioz, Epiphany Lutheran Church (Sound Design and Engineering). Casey has also worked as a DJ and producer for Denver Open Media and KRCX Radio.

Education: University of Colorado - Bachelor's Degree in Record Arts

# BRANDON PHILIP CASE (SCENIC DESIGN AND TECHNICAL DIRECTOR)

At the Aurora Fox: Scenic Design for Futurity; The Jedi Handbook; Freaky Friday; Hundred Days; Myth; Priscilla, Queen of the Desert; Company; Hi-Hat Hattie; Tales of a 4th Grade Nothing; Songs for a New World; Caroline, or Change; Cinderella Eats Rice and Beans; Miss You Like Hell; The Squirrels; Secrets of the Universe; For Peter Pan on Her 70th Birthday; Odyssey 3000, Black Nativity; The Pavilion; A Very Merry ... Scientology Pageant, Dontrell, Who Kissed the Sea, Hurricane Diane, and more. Director of Photography for all Virtual Stage endeavors.

**Other Colorado Theaters:** Resolutions (Edge Theatre); Cabaret (THAC); Death of a Salesman (Benchmark)

Awards: Brandon was the recipient of a True West Award in 2017; he was nominated for two Henry Awards in 2019 for his designs on Songs for a New World and Caroline, or Change.



# **CREATIVE BIOS - CONTINUED**

# **JOSEPH LAMAR (SOUND DESIGN)**

Joseph Lamar is a singer-songwriter, producer, sound designer, actor, pianist and more. In 2020, he released a "post-apocalyptic-gospel" album called SIN. [Act I]. According to 303 Magazine it "... shatters convention and rebukes the notion of what an artist can be...with intimate emotional honesty and musings typically reserved for the confession booth."

At the Aurora Fox: Actor: Porgy & Bess; Passing Strange Other Projects: In The Heights (Town Hall Arts Center); Sound Design for The Wolves (Fine Arts Center), Every Brilliant Thing (Theatre Works) and an interactive music interface for Denver's Meow Wolf.

# **TERRI FONG-SCHMIDT (COSTUME DESIGN)**

Thank my wonderful husband Charlie for your love and support.

At the Aurora Fox: Hurricane Diane; A Very Merry Unauthorized Children's Scientology Pageant; For Peter Pan on her 70th Birthday

**Other Projects:** Totally Awesome 80s Ski Town (Breckenridge Backstage Theater); Avenue Q, Once Upon a Mattress, Shrek the Musical, and many more (Littleton Town Hall Arts Center); Wardrobe and run crew for Denver Center Attractions' Galleria Theater, Curious Theater Company, Evergreen Players, and more.

# MISHA S. ZIMMERMAN\* (STAGE MANAGER)

Misha is thrilled to be stage managing her first show at The Aurora Fox.

Misha is the Executive Producer at Local Theater Company, Boulder, CO. Her stage management credits with Local include Discount Ghost Stories: Songs from the Rockies, Paper Cut, Wisdom from Everything, The Rape of The Sabine Women, and numerous Local Labs play readings. Additional Stage Management credits include Sisters in Law (Theater Or), The Secretary (Curious Theatre Company), The Headliners (Cherry Creek Theatre), Florencia en el Amazonas (Opera Steamboat), and The Enchanted Pig (Opera Steamboat).

**Education:** Misha holds a BA in Theater and Literature from the University of Colorado.

# **CREATIVE BIOS - CONTINUED**

# **BRETT MAUGHAN (LIGHTING DESIGN)**

At the Aurora Fox: Wonderland: Tomfoolery: The Music of Black Nativity: Queens Girl in the World; Caroline, or Change; Miss You Like Hell; Passing Strange; Hedwig and the Angry Inch; Company; Priscilla Queen of the Desert; Chinglish; Little Women; The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe; Sideways Stories from Wayside School; Revenge of the Space Pandas. New York Credits: Tapeire: Driven By Rhythm (The New Victory Theatre & Western Canada and UK Tours); World Inferno Friendship Society: Addicted to Bad Ideas (Philly Live Arts Festival); Eric Whitacre's Paradise Lost (Carnegie Hall); New York Theatre Ballet (Florence Gould Hall & US Tours) Other Colorado Theaters: Ragtime; Avenue Q; White Christmas; Beauty and the Beast; A Christmas Story; I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change; The Little Mermaid; Annie; Rock of Ages; Footloose; Peter and the Starcatcher; Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story; Mary Poppins; Fiddler on the Roof; Shrek the Musical Murder on the Orient Express (Candlelight Dinner Theatre); Little Shop of Horrors; Green Day's American Idiot (Littleton Town Hall Arts Center); Drowsy Chaperone (Performance Now); Holiday Inn (Candlelight); Smoke and Mirrors (Elitch Garden's magic show) Awards: Henry Award (Mary Poppins); Marlowe Awards (The Addams Family & Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat).

# **JEN ORF (PRODUCTION MANAGER)**

**At the Aurora Fox:** The Jedi Handbook; Hundred Days; Twist Your Dickens; Songs for a New World; Hedwig and The Angry Inch; Porgy and Bess; Something Wicked This Way Comes; The Color Purple; The Legend of Sleepy Hollow; Jekyll and Hyde; and Ben Dicke's production of Bloody, Bloody Andrew Jackson.

Other Colorado Theatres: Denver Children's Theatre (Lighting Designer), In the Trenches (Lighting Designer), Mekong Joe (Tour Production Stage Manager), Davis Contemporary Dance (Lighting Designer); New York Theatre Ballet (Tour Production Manager/ Stage Manager) Awards: Jen received Henry Award nominations in Lighting Design for her work with Paragon Theatre, and in Scenic Design for her work on Rashomon at the Aurora Fox Arts Center. She is also an Ovation Award winner for her work with Paragon Theatre and Phamaly Theatre and a Marlowe Award winner for her work on The Sound of Music and (W)hole.



# A word of appreciation from the Aurora Fox staff.

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