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T@F is Somerville's largest community theatre and part of the Massachusetts Community Theatre Corporation, a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation.

Our mission is to work together to provide a fun, friendly, and creative theater experience for cast, crew, and audience alike. We welcome volunteers at all levels of experience, without regard to race, color, religion, ethnicity, ancestry, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, national origin, body type, age or disability. We encourage a supportive environment in which to work, play, grow, and explore new areas of the theatre arts. We offer affordable and eclectic performances to the community, aiming to surprise, delight, entertain, and educate our audiences.

As an all-volunteer organization, we depend on our audience for support. Please consider becoming a subscriber to T@F and supporting our work as a contributor.

SUBSCRIBER—For just \$50 you get free admission to all T@F shows for a full year.

CONTRIBUTOR—Support T@F with a tax-deductible donation that you can claim on your tax return.

Please see any of our staff to contribute today, or visit our website:

www.theatreatfirst.org



BIRTHRIGHT

written by Kira Rockwell

directed by Liz Adams

June 22, 2017

FirstWorks is Theatre@First's workshop program for new works by local playwrights. For each session, a script is chosen and an experienced director and cast are recruited to engage with the playwright in reviewing, reworking, and revising their work over the course of several months. As the culmination of the program, a staged reading is presented and the public is invited to give feedback on the script during a talkback session with the director and playwright.

You are encouraged to stay for this conversation with the playwright and director following tonight's performance. Thank you for your participation!

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am delighted to have participated in T@F's play development program, particularly with this up-and-coming playwright as she hones her writing voice. This play asks a question that comes up often: Why not require parents to earn the right to have their children? The play takes that passing thought, and runs with it to a dystopian vision of what that would really look like. Kira and I began our work with a face to face meeting, to get to know each other before diving into the play - communication style can be hard to convey in writing, and it helped to know how she said things and what kinds of things those might be. The playwright changed the play substantially during the development process, sometimes in response to hearing sections of it aloud and sometimes after discussion and reasoning through what the story demanded. Some of the more "out there" choices of setting or action would be fairly simple to convey in a full production, so I particularly encouraged her to think big, and not to self-censor. Our work has focused on honing what part of the story Kira really wanted to tell with this piece, and we worked together with a dramaturg and the cast to clarify that for the audience.

Liz Adams
June 2017

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Liz Adams (*Director*) is delighted to be back with T@F, where she directed Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls* and a short piece in *Festival@First 7: Shaken Up Shakespeare*. She is an award-winning Boston-based theatre artist and teacher (2017 IRNE Award - Best Actress and Best Production, Fringe; 2016 Norton Award - Best Production, Fringe). Recent directing credits include work for Roxbury Repertory Theater, Open Theatre Project, the One Minute Play Festival and the Boston Theatre Marathon, Fort Point Theatre Channel at the Outside the Box Festival, MIT Shakespeare Ensemble, and MassArt Playwrights Workshop. In addition to a heavy performance schedule of traditional plays, she works regularly with new play development, performs as a troupe member with The Murder Mystery Company New England and with Pazzi Lazzi commedia dell'arte troupe, and teaches in the Boston Public Schools and elsewhere. Her work has taken her to the New York International Fringe Festival, the Kennedy Center, and to theaters large and small throughout the Boston area. She recently completed a master's degree at Emerson College in Theatre Education.

Nick Malakhov (*Lynx*) is a theatre teacher, writer, director, and performer. After graduating from Swarthmore College, he taught acting and English literature and directed over 20 productions at Westtown School in the Philly area. Nick recently finished his MA in Theatre Education at Emerson College. Favorite acting credits include *The Bacchae* (Dionysus), *Fat Men in Skirts* (Howard), *The Shadow Box* (Mark), and *Phaedra's Love*. He will begin teaching Middle and Upper School literature and theatre at Brimmer and May School in Chestnut Hill this coming fall.

Kira Rockwell (*Playwright*) is a playwright from Dallas, Texas currently earning her MFA in Playwriting at Boston University. Her play *NOMAD AMERICANA* will be produced by Fresh Ink Theatre this coming February! Kira and her hubby Mark are the proud owners of a hyper lab mutt of love named Koda. www.kirarockwell.com

Alexandra Smith (*Shape Shifter*) makes her second appearance with T@F after playing Pope Joan/Win in *Top Girls*, also directed by Liz Adams. Other Boston area credits include multiple roles in *Eight By Tenn* (Zeitgeist Stage Company), William Walker in *Dreambook* (Fort Point Theatre Channel), multiple roles in *If You Dream* (Bad Habit Productions), and Gretchen in *Boeing Boeing* (The Footlight Club). Upcoming projects this summer include the role of Libby in the Boston-based web series *We've Got History*, stage manager for the Codman Summer Theatre Institute production of *Twelfth Night*, and presenting about educational dramaturgy at the American Alliance for Theatre and Education's national conference. She is a Core Member of Open Theatre Project, serves on the board of the Theatre Community Benevolent Fund, and is the Manager of Curriculum and Instruction in the Education Department at the Huntington Theatre Company.

Joye Thaller (*Falon*) is thrilled to return to the T@F stage in her second FirstWorks reading. She has previously been involved in T@F as an actor and director for *Festival@First*, our summer one-acts program. She has a soft spot for new plays and fringe theatre. When not doing theatre, she spends her days wrangling college students. She thanks Liz for including her in this project.

Vickie Wu (*Program Director*) is thrilled to be a part of the FirstWorks program. She has a habit of trying to do all the things, all the time, and loving every minute. Past productions include: *Tartuffe* (Director), *Love's Labour's Lost (in Space)* (*Jaquenetta*), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Producer), *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (Squires Tim and George), *Trojan Women* (Costume Designer), *Henry 4th* (Stage Manager), *Top Girls* (Angie), and plenty more that she's probably forgetting. When not at the theatre Vickie is the kitchen manager of the Beacon Hill Friends House.

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Betty Walker and Unity Church for sharing their space with us and to our wonderful house volunteers for all they do to make this show possible.