

Upcoming Production

Hilda

December 1, 2, 3 2022

8:00pm

Powerhouse Theater

By Marie N'Diaye

Translated by Simeon Bremmer*

Director: Kiera Di Gaetano*

Faculty Advisor: Conrad Schott

*Senior Project Members:

Simeon Bremer, Keira DiGaetano, Charlotte Harter

*denotes a senior project in Drama

Reservations can be made two weeks in advance
of the performance.

Email: boxoffice@vassar.edu

Individuals who are seeking special accommodations should contact the Box Office in advance.

Pippin: The Musical

Book by ROGER O. HIRSON

Music & Lyrics by STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

November 3, 4, 5 2022

8:00pm

The Heinlein Stage (Martel Theater)

Guest Director: James Caverly

Music Director: Chelsea Zak*

*Senior Project Members:

Becca Chin, Alice Downer, Halle Jones,

Cameron Long, Chelsea Zak

Faculty Advisors:

Amanda Culp and Christopher Grabowski

Presented through special arrangements with Music Theater International

Sponsored by:

The Joan Kostick-Andrews '52 Memorial Fund for Musical Theater,
The Office of the Dean of Faculty and Creative Arts Across Disciplines

Run time: Approximately 2 hours with a brief intermission

*denotes a senior project in Drama

CAST

Leading Player	Cameron Long (she/her) '23*
Pippin	Becca Chin (she/they) '23*
Charles	Avery Nahf (they/them) '26
Lewis	Lou Griesman (they/them) '24
Fastrada	Alice Downer (she/her) '23*
Berthe	Abbye Friedman (she/her) '25
Catherine	Madelyn Ockner (she/her) '25
Theo	Tori Kim (she/her) '25
Ensemble	Jackson Bernreuter (he/him) '25
	Grayson Bullard (they/them) '26
	Jacqueline Evangelista (she/her) '25
	Alex Papasavas (he/him) '23
	Yesmina Townsley (she/her) '23
	Maya Isabel Estrella Wilson (she/her) '24

SPECIAL THANKS:

Mid-Hudson Interpreter Service, Jeanine Byrnes from Taconic Resources, Dean Hoynes, Tom Pacio, Grant Miller '11, Jonathan Paradox, Emma the cat, Peppa the cat, Jonathan Fuller, Eduardo Navega, Christine Howlett, Carolyn Tobin, Robert Osborne, CAAD summer '22, Our families and friends, Theatre makers working toward positive change.

DRAMA DEPARTMENT FACULTY AND STAFF

Director of Theater	Christopher Grabowski
Costume Design	Kenisha Kelly
Production Manager	Patience Haskell
Technical Director	James Hunting
Scenic Advisor	Omri Bareket '19
Costume Shop Manager	Leigh Davis
Publicity/Box Office/Front of House	Joan Gerardi

DRAMA DEPARTMENT INTERNS

Production Management	Maggie Young '25
Stage Management Intern	Kelly Hatfield '23

DRAMA DEPARTMENT BOX OFFICE STAFF

Assistants:	Sophia Fredericks '26
	Tim Nguyen '23
	Alejandra Robins '24

Drama Department Photographer:	Ana Leon Urrutia '26
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USHERS

Dafne Arreola '26, Katie Brady-Gold '26, Meredith DeCarlo '26, Kyra Lauren Jagolta '26, Rebecca King '26, Caroline Lewis '26, Grace Montas '26, Eden Radifera '26, Kaitlyn Rezek '26, Cody Siegel '26, Aiden Skelly '26, Isaac Steinberg '26, Avery Turnbull '26, Jae Young Nigalye '26

DRAMA DEPARTMENT WORK STUDY STUDENTS

Costume Shop

Drama Academic Interns:

Matt Andres '23, Celeste Brinkhuis '24

Costume Shop Technicians:

Evelyn Boyle '23, Simeon Bremer '23, Nyomen Fowler-Puja '23, Mahalia Hunter '23, Georgia Macy '24, Yasmin Mohammed '23, Madison Powell '23, Eden Radifera '26, Athena Randall '25, Foster Schrader '25, Taylor Talcott '23, Jazmine Williams '26

Costume History & Design Research Assistant:

Presley Wheeler '23

Costume Collection Research Assistant:

Hannah Weintraub '25

Electrics Shop

Drama Academic Interns:

Laurel Hanson '23, Xander Setchko '24

Electrics Shop Technicians:

Grayson Bullard '26, Harry Malins '26, Erin Mee '24, Eden O'Connell '23, Ki'tsai Zangpo '25

Scene Shop

Department Scenic Intern:

Riley Bates '24

Shop Intern:

Jack Francis '23

Scenic Crew:

Becca Bogstad '26, Grayson Bullard '26, Lucinda Carroll '24, Zach Cohen '24, Jack Francis '23, John Vincent Gador '24, Kathryn Hasson '23, Xander Setchko '24, Aiden Skelly '26, Jasper Smith '25, Avery Turnbull '26, Jamie Walsh '25, Kendall Wienecke '24

PRODUCTION

Guest Director

James Caverly

Music Director

Chelsea Zak '23*

Costume Designer

Kenisha Kelly

Guest Scenic Designer

Omri Bareket '19

Lighting/ Sound Designer

Ki'tsai Zangpo '25

Dramaturgs

Alice Downer '23*

Co-choreographers

Cameron Long '23*

Halle Jones '23*

Becca Chin '23*

Kelly Hatfield '23

Intimacy and Fight choreographer

Michael Rossmly

Stage Manager

Halle Jones '23*

Assistant Stage Managers

Kelly Hatfield '23

Eden Radifera '26

Assistant Costume Designers

Claire McHarg '24

Yasmin Mohamed '23

Madison Powell '24

Props/Special Effects Designer

Sam Andrews '25

Light & Sound Board Operator

Ki'tsai Zangpo '25

Costume Build/Run Crew

Eden Radifera '26

Jazmine Williams '26

Georgia Macy '24

Run Crew

Thomas Rombach '25

Set Build Crew

Andrew Griesman '24

Alexandra Polur Gold '25

Vi To '24

Light Crew

Yuchen Zhou '23

Joe Baldwin '24

Interpretors

Carter Beers (they/them)

Emily Donati (she/her)

Rebecca Friedman Lockhart (she/her)

Jennifer Turoff (she/her)

PIPPIN ORCHESTRA

Cello	Raffaella Zanetti '23
Reeds	Arianna Nguyen-Haberneski '23
	Faith Kim '25
	Elizabeth Borchard '24
	Dylan Ouderkirk '25
Percussion	Levi Cannon '25
Drums	Lily Sherwood '26
Keyboard 2	Jon Fuller
Guitar	Molly Freer '25
Trombone	Michael Pincus
Trumpet	Thomas Doyle '25
Mandolin/Banjo	Dylan Needleman '23
Violin	Sophia Steadman '26
Bass	Judah Weekes '26

DRAMATURGY Note by Becca Chin '23 and Alice Downer '23

Masking: changing aspects of one's personality to "fit in" in different spaces by way of conforming to societal norms.

Neurodivergence: different ways of processing and thinking outside of what is considered to be "normal" (known as neurotypical). It is important to note that the experience of neurodivergence is unique to each individual and incredibly hard to define.

Part of my work in engaging with the material in *Pippin* as a **neurodivergent** dramaturg has been to think about all of the ways in which each character in the play **masks** and unmask. Why and when do they **mask**? Is it conscious or unconscious? One of the most beautiful things about *Pippin* is that it holds up a mirror to the audience and forces introspection. Something the audience can keep in mind while watching our production is how they **mask** and unmask in everyday life. The experience of disability differs for each individual. While some **neurodiverse** people choose to label themselves as disabled, others do not. Regarding our iteration of Pippin, the actor who plays *Pippin* does identify as a disabled **neurodivergent** individual opposite a leading player that does not. The layer added atop this identification is the inherent queerness in casting a non-male actor to play a traditionally male role. The opposition to our lesbian **neurodivergent** *Pippin* is our cisgender heterosexual leading player who functions as a stand in for the status quo. She becomes that little voice in your head telling you to be "normal". While **masking** and unmasking is something we all do as people, for those in the **neurodivergent** community it is a lifeline to connection that we are otherwise often alienated from. The perspectives offered by the **neurodiverse** and disabled communities are rich and vital. Every character on every page is written for neurotypical people and the **neurodivergent** are often an afterthought. The world is not built for people with disabilities and the world of our play reflects part of that reality. In our telling of *Pippin* there is a reclamation of **neurodivergent** and disabled perspectives. ~ *Alice Downer '23*

If my work on this thesis has been anything, it's been an exercise in figuring out how to make the theatre that I want to make. We initially proposed another contemporary musical with an interest in the possibility of casting a non-man as the male love interest. When the licensing for our concept didn't work out, we pivoted to Pippin. We realized that we had a unique opportunity to bring a perspective that is often overlooked at Vassar and in theatre at large to our project. The rehearsal room has always been a place where I've felt comfortable unmasking (before I even knew what that was) and existing as I am. But in stepping on stage as actors, we all **mask** whether or not we're **neurodivergent**. With *Pippin*, however, I've been able to look at the way I exist with the goal of incorporating my natural behaviors into my character instead of eliminating them. Actors are asked to leave themselves at the door, but with that ask we are expected to prioritize the theatre being made over the people who are making it. Our take on Pippin is centered around a character who refuses to leave himself at the door. Throughout our rehearsal process we aimed to create a space where actors are encouraged to come in with whatever they are feeling and to meet the work where they're at. Quirks, issues, and all. We recognize that what we're making can be so much more if we are actively choosing to take care of everyone making it. This process has certainly been a labor of love. An exploration into the future we would like to make for ourselves in this industry. While no process or piece will be perfect, I hope the vision we had and the care we took are evident. ~ *Becca Chin '23*

ABOUT: Roger O. Hirson And Stephen Schwartz

Roger O. Hirson was an American playwright, librettist, and screenwriter. He was born on May 5, 1926. Throughout the 1950s, Hirson created a career writing for television anthology series such as The Armstrong Circle Theatre, Goodyear Television Playhouse, Studio One, and The DuPont Show of the Week. He later wrote plays, including World War 2½ and Journey to the Day, which saw off-Broadway runs. Hirson is most notable for his contributions to the musical theatre for having written the books for WALKING HAPPY and the Stephen Schwartz-composed PIPPIN, which both received Tony Award nominations for Best Musical. Additionally, Hirson won an Emmy Award for his six-hour 1991 television miniseries about first lady Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, A Woman Named Jackie.

<https://stageagent.com/writers/869/roger-o-hirson>

American musical theatre lyricist and composer *Stephen Schwartz*, who has written such hit musicals as GODSPELL, PIPPIN, and WICKED. He has contributed lyrics for a number of successful films, including POCAHONTAS, THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME, THE PRINCE OF EGYPT, and ENCHANTED. Schwartz has won the Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Lyrics, four Grammy Awards, three Academy Awards and has been nominated for six Tony Awards. He received the 2015 Isabelle Stevenson Award, a special Tony Award for his commitment to serving artists and fostering new talent.

<https://stephenschwartz.com/>

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Act 1

Magic to Do	Full Company
Corner of the Sky	Pippin
War is a Science	Charles, Pippin, Ensemble
Glory	Leading Player, Ensemble
Corner of the Sky (reprise)	Pippin
Simple Joys	Leading Player
No Time At All	Berthe, Ensemble
With You	Pippin, Ensemble
Spread a Little Sunshine	Fastrada, Ensemble
Morning Glow	Full Company

Act 2

Entracte	Full Company
Right Track	Pippin, Leading Player
Kind of Woman	Catherine, Ensemble
Extraordinary	Pippin
Prayer for the Duck	Pippin, Theo, Ensemble
Love Song	Pippin, Catherine
Corner of the Sky (last reprise)	Pippin
I Guess I'll Miss the Man	Catherine
Finale	Full Company

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR:



James Caverly was born and raised in Royal Oak, Michigan. He graduated with a B.A. in Theatre Arts from Gallaudet University in 2011. Soon after graduation, he joined National Theatre of the Deaf (NTD) for two years: he directed *The McWilliamses*, and performed in several plays, including *Journey of Identity* (playing the character Laurent Clerc) and *A Child's Christmas in Wales* (playing the character Dylan Thomas).

Since then, he has directed several plays and performed both stage and screen. He directed William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* in both American Sign Language and spoken English for Community College of Baltimore County Community Theatre. He has also performed the lead character, Billy, for three different productions of Nina Raine's *Tribes* (SpeakEasy Stage Company, Studio Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre) and was nominated for the Helen Hayes Award (one of the country's most prestigious cultural honors) for his Studio Theatre performances. In 2018, he was the understudy for the character Orin for the Studio 54 (Broadway) production of Mark Medoff's *Children of a Lesser God*. Most recently, he appeared in two episodes of NBC's *Chicago Med* (Season 4): in the premiere episode ("Be My Better Half") (9/27/2018) and the finale episode ("With a Brave Heart") (5/22/2019). He also wrote a short play, "Civil Engagement," that was accepted for a 2019 production in Deaf Spotlight's Short Play Festival (Seattle, Washington). He is best known for playing Theo Dimas on "Only Murders in The Building" on Hulu.

Caverly sees a problem with most portrayals of deaf people on stage and screen: "That they're the problem, they're the issue in the story that needs to be fixed, and frankly I'm just not feeling that that's the lens that the world needs to see."

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR: JAMES CAVERLY

My being here caught me off-guard.

I admit I never heard of Vassar College or Poughkeepsie until a few months ago. I haven't even knew the plot of 'Pippin'. I was selected out of a Google search, apparently, to direct this production—which bizarrely seems to intertwine with Pippin's existentialism crisis in this show. But as Pippin learned about his place in the world, so I too, learned about the journey of Vassar's students and the campus. The show's strength lies in its core led by our Senior Project members Alice, Becca, Cameron, Chelsea, and Halle, who selected a dynamic and stellar cast of beautiful outcasts, miscreants, and darlings whose sole purpose in this show is this: to keep you entertained (plus they're being graded, which does exponentially raise the stakes). It prompts my learnings of the early days of traveling players, where a romping band of professional and amateur actors alike would tour cities and provide whatever performances they have in their repertoire but instead of getting grades, they would get paid. Or fed. Or both. Or not at all.

This is where I'm mindful of the parallel between the education system and nomadic entertainer. We're treating this production as if Vassar is just one stop of a multi-city tour. Our costumes, set, lights, and props are at their most basic-- after all, they can't fit everything in their caravan, can they? But there is no greater joy for people than just watching people do things. So the delight of this show is based on illusion—not of magic and trapeze acts, but of grandeur imagination and simplicity presented by our bodies. And in an educational setting where the arts are severely underfunded—*ahem ahem*—sometimes 'simple' is gold. This forward thinking ties in with our Pippin, played by Becca who identifies as neurodivergent. Part of the appeal of having Becca play Pippin is due to the character's singular viewpoints of the world and how they operate around 'cluttered moments' or people. Neurodivergents have an opaque way of viewing the world which does hamper AND help simplify how they understand things. So Pippin's character arc and neurodivergence does marry each other well in this story. What you see from Becca is deeply personal and relevant as it does reflect her everyday experiences. The show's spark lies in her truth and we welcome it.

Enjoy the show and please feed us.