# Upcoming Productions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2023</th>
<th>Spring 2024</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Forever &amp; Sometimes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Seven Minutes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Written by Joe Baldwin ‘24*</td>
<td>Written by Jean Fassler ‘24*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directed by Claire McHarg ‘24*</td>
<td>Directed by Abby Bettencourt ‘25</td>
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<td>November 2 &amp; 3, 2023</td>
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<td><strong>Bacchanal</strong></td>
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<td>By Stefen Dodson ‘24*</td>
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<td>Directed by Christopher Grabowski</td>
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<td>November 29 &amp; December 2, 2023</td>
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<td><strong>Fury</strong></td>
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<td>By Sydney Duncan ‘24*</td>
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<td>Directed by Ella Talerico ‘25</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 30 &amp; December 1, 2023</td>
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*Denotes senior project member

**Email:** boxoffice@vassar.edu  
**Call:** (845) 437-5599  
**Website:** http://drama.vassar.edu

Individuals with disabilities requiring accommodations or information on accessibility should contact the box office in advance.
CAST

One                Jacqueline Evangelista ‘25
Two                Nate Grosjean ‘24*
Three              Angelina Papa ‘24
Scene Actor        Jackson Bernreuter ‘25
Scene Actor        Joe Lippman ‘26
Scene Actor        Lou Griesman ‘24*
Scene Actor        Mia LaBianca ‘26

PRODUCTION

Playwright         Jean Fassler ‘24*
Director           Abby Bettencourt ‘25
Stage Manager      Rebecca King ‘26
Lighting Designer  Avery Turnbull ‘26
Scenic/Props Designer Anne Goldsmith ‘24
Dramaturg/Sound Designer Lou Griesman ‘24*
Costume Designer   Madison Powell ‘24
Wardrobe Crew      Noe Perry-Greene ‘26
Light & Sound Board Operator Alissa Seedansigh ‘26
Run Crew           Georgia Macy ‘24
Build Crew         Jackson Bernreuter ‘25
Actor Representative Angelina Papa ‘24

* Denotes senior project member

DRAMA DEPARTMENT WORK STUDY STUDENTS

Costume Shop
Interns:    Celeste Brinkhuis ‘24, Madison Powell ‘24,
            Jazmine Williams ‘26
Costume History & Design Research: W. Ashton Scott ‘26
Costume Collection Research Assistant: August Pointer Mace ‘26
Costume Shop Technicians: Grace Fure ‘27, Eli Hinerfeld ‘24,
                          Majka Kiely-Miller ‘27, Georgia Macy ‘24,
                          Elsie McKendry ‘26, Noe Perry-Greene ‘26, Eden Radifera ‘26,
                          Emma Raff ‘26, Anisa Schmeil ‘27, Ava Sclafani ‘25,
                          Abigail Straus ‘25, Jazmine Williams ‘26

Electrics Shop
Lighting Intern: Xander Setchko ‘24
Electrics Crew:  Willow Eaton ‘27, Devin Gearty ‘25,
                 Harry Malins ‘26, Erin Mee ‘24, Eliana Mor ‘27,
                 Avery Nahf ‘26, Ella Talerico ‘25, Ki’tsai Zangpo ‘25

Scenic Shop
Scenic Intern:   Riley Bates ‘24
Scenic Crew:     Becca Bogstad ‘26, Zach Cohen ‘24,
                 Eli Levitt ‘24, Alex Roth ‘24, Maria Shansonga ‘27,
                 Aiden Skelly ‘26, Jasper Smith ‘25, Avery Turnbull ‘26,
                 Jamie Walsh ‘25, Kendall Wienecke ‘24, Yuchen Zhou ‘24
MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR ABBY BETTENCOURT ‘25

As a director, I love nothing more than bringing a story to life on stage. Throughout this process, I’ve had the opportunity to collaborate with so many incredible actors, designers, and managers. However, what is unique about Seven Minutes is that I got the opportunity to work alongside an incredible new playwright as well. There is something thrilling about being handed a brand-new script and just running with it. There are no previous productions to look at for guidance or to compare our show to. This is it. This will be the first time this show is produced. Wherever Seven Minutes finds itself in the future, its roots will always be here in this little black box.

As for the audience, I hope that you are able to experience this show in the same open, exciting, and curious way I did. Amongst all the chaos in this show, don’t forget to take the time to focus on the relationships. Relationships between characters, between your friends, your family, even the person sitting next to you. Because that’s ultimately what life boils down to. I know I wouldn’t be where I am today without my greatest relationships.

Thank you all so much for being here and letting us finally share this story with you. I hope you have a wonderful time.
A MESSAGE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT, JEAN FASSLER ‘24*

In early fall, 2021, I wrote the pages that would become the very beginning of Seven Minutes. My friends and I had just started working on a student-theater production of my play, Therewolves, which heavily explored queerness and the importance of sharing certain stories. I wanted to write a play where I explored death from a Jewish lens, since Judaism spends much more time focusing on caring for the living and grieving than it does on the dead. The title— and the play’s center concept— come from a scientific fun fact: did you know that, after the heart stops, the human brain is active for another five to seven minutes? I wanted to know what happens in those five to seven minutes. Life, of course, likes to be ironic.

I got sick in September of 2021. It took until the beginning of November to realize what was wrong— at nineteen, I was in heart failure from a bacterial infection. To this day, we still don’t know why this happened. Maybe I’m chronically unlucky. A cow valve, a pacemaker, and a whole lot of healing later, and I’m completely fine. I was very angry for about a year afterwards. Why me? Why at that moment? I wrote a bunch of other things, trying to get my thoughts about it all in order, before I remembered Seven Minutes. I had started saying what I needed to say before I knew what it was.

My heart was stopped medically, so I can’t really tell you what being dead is like (or what those seven minutes are like), but I have a lot of thoughts on dying. Mainly, it sucks. And it hurts a bunch. Writing Seven Minutes allowed me to explore what I struggled with most: that this terrible thing had happened to me, and somehow I was supposed to move on. I finished writing the first draft of this play in the fall of 2022. Right around the same time, my Uncle Frank was diagnosed with cancer. He died in May of 2023. My uncle was the type of person who carried two-year-old me around at his own wedding because he was the only one who could get me to stop crying. Our last conversation was over text— I sent him a photo of the two of us from his wedding. The last thing he ever said to me was, “I loved you then and still do.” Frank was a deeply caring, kind, funny person who affected everyone he met positively. I carried him with me as I edited this script, and I carry him with me into the performances of this show.

I can’t pretend like this show is light and fun. It’s got its moments, but it’s not a happy show. I wrote it looking for comfort, for expression of the terrible grief I was shouldering. I hope that it brings you comfort, too.

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A MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR OF THEATER PETER GIL-SHERIDAN

The Steerman Festival has changed this year. For our 4th iteration of brand new work written by our Seniors, the Steerman Festival has become The Steerman Series. The series is named for James Steerman to honor his work as the longtime chair of the Drama and Film Department. The Drama Department hoped to support the 5 writers who wished to see their plays produced. But we also recognized what a major undertaking that has been to do all of them in one or two back to back weekends.

When I came to Vassar three years ago, I’d hoped to build a robust festival of new work that showcased our student’s ingenuity and vision for the future of American Theatre. Through the hard work of our students, faculty, and staff, Vassar has become a place where new work by living writers is at the heart of our curriculum and season.

Solomon Hess was up first with his solo performance piece, When I Grow Up, a comic rendering of his journey from childhood to adulthood. In early November, Jean Fassler will premiere their play Seven Minutes and Joe Baldwin will premiere his play Forever and Sometimes, two plays that wrestle with mortality and the meaning of why we live. And in December we’ll enter Stefen Dodson’s world through his play Bacchanal, the story of young Caribbean-Americans navigating life and love in New York. We’ll also be introduced to Sydney Duncan’s, Fury, a modern re-telling of the Oresteia.

I continue to be filled with pride that I work at a college that puts so many resources and so much care into the realization of new work. Alongside the writers, our designers and technicians are building new worlds, our actors are originating roles that have never been filled, and our directors are interpreting ever-shifting texts to bring the writer’s best vision to life. It’s an enormous undertaking and I am grateful to you, our community, for giving audience to these original dramas.