

Upcoming Productions

Fall 2023

Forever & Sometimes

Written by Joe Baldwin '24*
Directed by Claire McHarg '24*
November 2 & 3, 2023

Bacchanal

By Stefen Dodson '24*
Directed by Christopher Grabowski
November 29 & December 2, 2023

Fury

By Sydney Duncan '24*
Directed by Ella Talerico '25
November 30 & December 1, 2023

Spring 2024

The Game

by Solomon Hess '24
Modfest reading
Powerhouse Theater
January 26 8:00pm

The Game

By Solomon Hess '24
Private Reading & Reception
January 27 2:00pm

Skin

By Naomi Iizuka
February 22, 23, 24 8:00pm
SKIN is produced by special arrangement with
THE GERSH AGENCY, 41 Madison Avenue, 29th Floor,
New York, NY 10010

Hurricane Diane

By Madeleine George
Directed by Kendall Wienecke '24*
March 28, 29, 30 8:00pm
Special arrangement made through Concord Theatricals.
Sponsored in part by the E. J. Safirstein '83 Memorial Fund

Or

By Liz Duffy Adams
April 18, 19, 20 8:00pm
OR, is presented by special arrangement with Broadway
Licensing, LLC, servicing the Dramatists Play Service

*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.

Seven Minutes

Written by Jean Fassler '24*

Directed by Abby Bettencourt '25

*Senior Project members include:

Lou Griesman '24 and Nathaniel Grosjean '24

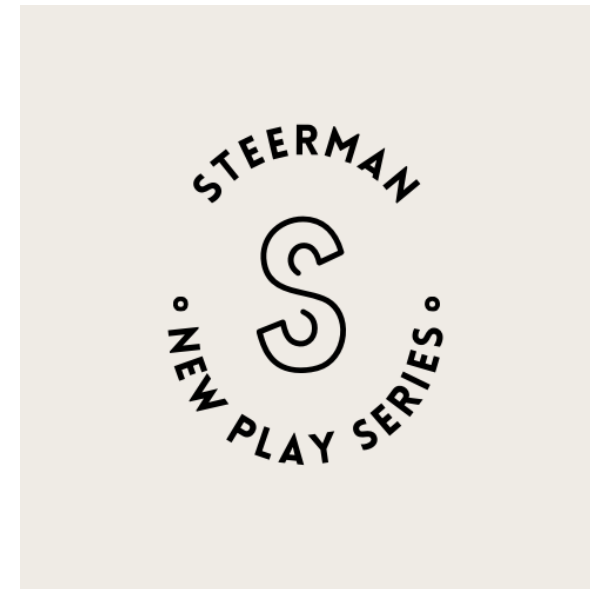
Steerman New Play Series

November 1 & 4, 2023

8:00 pm

Powerhouse Theater

*Denotes senior project member



CAST

One	Jacqueleine 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 Eden Radifera '26 Ava Sclafani '25
Light & Sound Board Operator	Alissa Seedansigh '26
Run Crew	Georgia Macy '24
Build Crew	Jackson Bernreuter '25
Actor Representative	Angelina Papa '24

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

* Denotes senior project member

Drama Department Faculty and Staff

Director of Theater	Peter Gil-Sheridan
Costume Design	Kenisha Kelly
Production Manager	Patience Haskell
Technical Director	James Hunting
Scenic Design Faculty	Dan Daly
Costume Shop Manager	Leigh Davis
Publicity/Box Office/Front of House	Joan Gerardi

Drama Department Interns

Production Management	Maggie Young '25
Stage Management	Anica Acuña '24

Drama Box Office Staff

Assistants:	Miriam Barker '27
	Sophia Fredericks '26
	Alejandra Robins '24
Drama Department Photographer:	Quin Taylor '27

Ushers:

Avery Berg '27, Willow Eaton '27, Jonathan Eccher-Mullally '27,
Miranda Henry '27, Gabriel Leonard '27, Nicolette Wu '27

Special Thanks: Professor Wendy Graham, Maggie Young, Anica Acuña, Sydney Duncan, Joe Baldwin, Solomon Hess, and Stefen Dodson, Sarah Schuster, Foster Schrader, Sam Andrews, Cora Blackwell, Michele Wilson, Rafi Ettinger-Finley, Matthew Peeples, the Bettencourt family, the Fassler family, Vassar EMS, and Dr. Mauricio Garrido and the cardiac ICU staff at Jefferson Abington Hospital in Abington, PA.

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.

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.