

| THE | INTERSTITIAL | 

present

YOU MUST WEAR A HAT

by

C. Meaker

Directed by
Erica Wray



THEATERLAB

357 W 36th St, 3rd Floor, New York, NY

October 10 - 12, 2024 @ 7:30 pm

***You Must Wear a Hat* by C. Meaker**

for Danny

Setting: A millinery shop at the Great Barrier Reef

Company

Tuesday **Sushma Saha**
Weeks **Genevieve Simon***
Rabbit (u/s Tuesday & Weeks) **Amy BG Bruhns**

Directed by **Erica Wray**

Produced by **The Interstitial**

Scenic & Lighting Design by **Courtney Gaston**

Sound Design & Composition by **Joshua Dumas**

Costumes, Makeup, & Puppet Design by **Chelsea June**

Dramaturgy by **Morgan Grambo**

Stage Managed by **Lindsay Warnick***

Assistant Stage Managed by **Sydnee Davis**

Poster art by **Joshua Dumas**

* Equity Member appearing with permission of Actors' Equity Association without benefit of an Equity contract in this Off-Off Broadway production.

You Must Wear A Hat was developed at the Kennedy Center MFA Workshop in association with the National New Play Network in 2018.

Special thanks to A.R.T./New York, Theaterlab (Orietta, Oldi, and Gabriela), Mark Benedetti, Dani Bryant, Roberto Cambeiro, Isabelle Chirls, Alex Etling, Bo Frazier, Rory Gaston-Norton, Charles Green, Bethany Kasperek, Colten Langfitt, Eric Marlin, Joseph O'Malley, Ren Pepitone, Brilliant Qi-Bell, Susan Regan, Z. Quinn Reynolds, Luke White, Matt DeWine, and Jessica, Benjamin, and Alexander Dumas.

Spotlight on C. “Meaks” Meaker

C. “Meaks” Meaker (they/them) is a playwright, essayist, and teacher whose work often explores queerness, monstrosity, and the end of the world.

Their plays have been performed and developed across the United States, including the Kennedy Center, Seattle Repertory Theatre, San Francisco Playhouse, Annex Theatre (Seattle), Hub Theater (D.C.), Fat Theater Project (Chicago), and About Face (Chicago).

They are a Stranger Award Genius Nominee (*That’swhatshesaid*), and Gregory Award Outstanding New Play Nominee (*The Lost Girls*). Their play *That’swhatshesaid* garnered international attention for using the female dialogue and stage directions of the most-produced plays in America (reported by Theatre Communications Group in *American Theatre Magazine*) as its inspiration and source material. It’s still staged nationally and internationally today with writers adding their own contributions to the material.

They are a former Jerome Fellow at the Playwrights’ Center, an alumna of Seattle Repertory Theatre’s Writers Group, and former Walter E. Dakin Fellow at Sewanee Writers’ Conference. They’re a two-year finalist for the Dramatist Guild National Fellows program and a recent finalist for the Jerome Hill Theater Arts Fellow. Their essay “S(wallow)” won the Editor’s Prize at *Porter House Review* and they’re a 2024 Lambda Literary Fellow in creative nonfiction.

They received an MFA in Playwriting from University of Iowa’s Playwrights Workshop.

The Interstitial recommends more plays by Meaks...

Ghosts in the Graveyard

Then: Fifty years ago, in the town of Grimdale, the Sleuth Club solved the Mystery of the Haunted Carnival, an achievement that earned each of them jobs and security within Grimdale’s rising-star company, The Factory. // *Now:* At The Factory retirement party for the remaining Sleuth Club members, their children and grandchildren gather to celebrate. But a loving reenactment of the original mystery uncovers a long-buried truth —

the Sleuth Club pinned the case on the wrong costumed-villains. The generations must unite to find the truth, grieve what's been lost, and figure out how to rebuild over toxic sludge. *Ghosts in the Graveyard* is a multigenerational play about grief, family, and the terror of capitalism.

The Lost Girls

2008, before the recession truly began and Obama was elected for the first time. Five recent college grads are charged with keeping a slew of hormonal teenagers alive at an all-girls summer camp. Saddled with crippling student loans and terror over what they'll do next in life, the counselors forego their actual work to have one last hurrah before adulthood kicks in. But the camp has many mysteries around its history and there are more monsters here than their looming debts. *The Lost Girls* is a horror-comedy that's part ghost story and part history play about elections and that specific time of life between college and the real world before we realized how bad things could get.

comma his wife

It's the big day! Bride and Groom have awaited the chance to celebrate with family and friends, inviting several witnesses to their bondage ritual. The only trouble is, they can't consummate the wedding before hitting the dance floor (fuck first, right?), setting off a terrible chain of events for the rest of their marriage. Bride and Groom must reckon with marriage's ramifications on their genders, lives, friends, family, ghosts, and werewolves. Loosely inspired by Jacobean drama and reality TV, *comma his wife* explores the horrors of the marriage system and its impact on gender and heterosexuality through a rotating cast of queer performers.

Coming Soon!

Pretty Girls Don't Beg

A werewolf cheerleader horror comedy

To get in touch, visit www.cmeaksmeaker.com and on Instagram @cmeaksmeaker.

A Note from The Interstitial

You Must Wear a Hat entered our lives over seven years ago, and we're honored to shepherd it into this next phase of its journey. Thank you to our entire team for making this an unforgettable process.

- Morgan & Erica

Composer's Note

When I first read *You Must Wear a Hat* I was so moved by the play's humanity—how our species will surely struggle to connect and seek companionship, even at the very end.

I too was struck by the setting, the location that undergirds the piece. Audience persons may not know this, but repeatedly in the text itself, in the stage directions, we learn that “Tuesday and Weeks make hats on the Great Barrier Reef.” And so, as I considered my sound design for the show, I wanted to try to ‘give voice’ to the Reef, to the place.

So I built two algorithmically generated soundbeds. Throughout the show, you will hear waves, a crashing against the shore, against the reef, the ancient cycle ever-present.

And you will hear an abstract sonic representation of the Reef itself. The Australian government has an offshore weather station less than a mile from the setting of our play! It publishes near real-time climate conditions, online. So I wrote a bit of code that takes that data, amplifies it by forecasted human-induced climate change models, and transforms it into sound. A bubbling soundbed where water temperature data becomes pitch, where windspeed data shifts tempo, and where barometric pressure affects timbre.

And so the tender human drama of this gorgeous play is underscored by an evocation of the future climate conditions of the Great Barrier Reef itself. Each performance will sound a little different, based on today's Reef weather. It's a voicing of our now, and our future. A strange quiet lullaby for a changing, fading place.

- Joshua Dumas

Company Bios

Amy BG Bruhns (Rabbit, u/s Tuesday & Weeks) (they/them) is a Bay Area-born actor, playwright, director, and avid nerd. BG graduated from the BFA Acting program at Pace University. BG is also an arts educator and is currently a dance teacher with Kindergartners in Brooklyn. You might also find them buying house plants, repairing their bike, or playing video games for 10 hours straight. Thank you so much to everyone at Theaterlab, The Interstitial, and the entire You Must Wear a Hat team!

Sydnee Davis (Assistant Stage Manager) (she/they) was born in Houston, TX and received her BA at Hendrix College (Conway, AR). She is excited to join The Interstitial team and help present this show to audiences. SM/APM Credits include: *Spring Awakening* (Epic Players), *For Colored Girls* (The Booth), *Into The Woods* (Epic Players), *Prince Charming*, *You're Late* (Tiger Bear Productions), *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Epic Players), *Twelfth Night* (Match:Lit), *She talks to Beethoven* (DramaLeague), *Verbatim* (Peach and Frog), *Wizard of Oz*, *Kid Frankenstein* (Vital Theatre), *The Wiz*, *Da Kink In My Hair*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *Eighth Day of the Week* (The Ensemble Theatre), *The Flick*, *We're Gonna Die*, *Evocation*, *Church* (HorseHead Theatre), *In Darfur*, *Small Jokes about Monsters*, *This Is Modern Art*, *The Redemption Series*, *Gambrels of the Sky*, *Ten Ways on a Gun* (The Landing Theatre).

Joshua Dumas (Sound Design & Composition) (he/they) is a new media artist exploring social and ecological justice through technology. He performs in *Mending* with Kate Adams, solo as *Tired Circuits*, and hosts *Bad at Goodbyes*. Recent credits include "La Musica Deuxième" at Torn Page, "Four Studies" at PS122, Helen Banner's "Westphalia", and "In the Castle of Eternal Sunset" with the Interstitial. He is so thrilled to collaborate with the Interstitial again and with this incredible cast and creative team!

Courtney Gaston (Scenic & Lighting Design) is an Assistant Professor of Theater at Wesleyan University in Connecticut. As a lighting, scenic, and media designer, their work focuses on integrating new technologies with live performance including motion-tracking and wearable lighting technology. Their research and design work has been featured at the Prague Quadrennial, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and SheLA Arts Summer Theater Festival. Recent work includes the design of a large-scale,

immersive, interactive installation at Wesleyan University titled *An Oceanic Journey* and lighting and media design for *Love Force* featuring renowned composer and musician Sunny Jain.

Morgan Grambo (Dramaturg) (she/her) is a dramaturg, producer, writer, and educator dedicated to the production of new plays. She has worked with Roundabout Theatre Company, Hartford Stage, Athena Project, University of Iowa, Salve Regina University, and The Juilliard School, in addition to supporting artistic and new play development efforts at several organizations across the country. Morgan received her MFA in Dramaturgy and a graduate certificate in Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies from the University of Iowa. She is one half of *The Interstitial*. www.morgangrambo.com

Chelsea June (Costumes, Makeup, & Puppet Design), a 2020 MFA graduate from Ulowa, is a versatile designer based in NYC with a specialization in costume, puppetry and media design. Her notable work includes her long-term role with *Media Clown*, which premiered at the Prague Quadrennial in 2019. Chelsea's expertise in both costume and media design deeply influences how a theatrical production communicates time, place, character, and mood. By integrating elements such as aging, maturing, and transforming, she helps audiences immerse themselves in the narrative, creating a visually and emotionally compelling experience. Inspired by a range of artistic sources, Chelsea crafts detailed and dynamic designs that enhance the storytelling and engage the audience on a profound level.

Sushma Saha (Tuesday) Broadway: *1776* (Roundabout). Off-Broadway: *Interstate* (Theatre Row). Off-Off Broadway: *Presencia* (Bushwick Starr), *7 Minutes* (Waterwell), *Girlfriend* (The Drama League). Regional: *The Wolves* (ATL), *Little Shop of Horrors* (Little Shop of Boos). Sushma is a queer South Asian-American multi-hyphenate artist (actor, singer, dancer, voice actor, model, & songwriter) based in NYC. Her most recent/notable works include playing Judge James Wilson of Pennsylvania in the Broadway rival of "1776", and winning 'Outstanding Performance in a Leading Role' at New York Musical Festival for playing Henry in "Interstate" by Melissa Li & Kit Yan. They are currently working on their first EP "This Isn't About You" to be released on all music-streaming platforms. Instagram & TikTok: @sushmasahahaha

Genevieve Simon (Weeks) (they/he) is an Equity actor and writer based in New York. They performed the title roles in *Hamlet* and *Coriolanus* at Nebraska Shakespeare Festival and Actors' Shakespeare Project, respectively, and have helped playwrights develop new work at Clubbed Thumb, AF Creative Media, Ensemble Studio Theatre, The Playwrights Realm, New Georges, The Bushwick Starr, The Brick, The Tank, The Drama League, Tectonic Theatre Project, The Civilians, Bedlam, The New School, Hunter College, and Columbia University, among others.
www.genevieve-simon.com

Lindsay Warnick (Stage Manager) has worked in various capacities with the Public Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, New York Stage and Film, the Juilliard School, Ars Nova, ART/NY, and Mint Theater Company. She is thrilled to reunite again with some of the grad school gang - and to work with this amazing cast and team. Thank you for always asking me to play a part with *The Interstitial*; it means a lot. Lindsay holds an M.F.A. in Stage Management from the University of Iowa.

Erica Wray (Director) is a Brooklyn-based new play director, Laban Movement Analyst, and Intimacy Director. With *The Interstitial*, she has produced and directed a range of projects, including: *Denial* by Eric Marlin, *In the Castle of Eternal Sunset* by Charles Green, and *ward* by Jarek Pastor. She spent 15 years in Chicago and served as Co-Founder of Knife & Fork, a theatre company dedicated to social practice around food and body politics, and as Co-Artistic Director of Blank Line Collective, a movement-based, devising theater company. Erica holds an MFA in Directing from the University of Iowa. She is an associate member of Stage Directors and Choreographers.

The Interstitial is a producing partnership between Erica Wray and Morgan Grambo dedicated to amplifying exciting new works by theatremakers interested in creating uniquely compelling theatre events that frequently fall "in-between" our understanding of traditional new work development. The Interstitial meets each piece we encounter at its point of development, which is often post-reading(s) or in need of an in-room workshop collaboration to answer a specific question. New plays can often flounder in the spaces between generation | exploration | presentation. We are interested in providing resources to embrace these interstitial moments in artistic development and support the playwrights

in these unmoored periods in a project's lifespan. Our projects have included *Denial* by Eric Marlin (staged reading) at A.R.T./New York's Dark Night Series (February 2023), *In the Castle of Eternal Sunset: A Module for Ten 0th Level Characters* by Charles Green at Brick Aux (August 2023), and *ward* by Jarek Pastor (developmental reading, recipient of Queens Arts Fund: New Work Grant) at Court Square Theater (June 2024).
www.theinterstitialnyc.com

TLAB SHARES invites a curated selection of guest artists to produce their work in our space at affordable rates. Applications for TLAB Shares are accepted on a rolling basis and should be emailed to theaterlab36@gmail.com.

Actors' Equity Association (AEA), founded in 1913, represents more than 50,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO, and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. The Equity emblem is our mark of excellence. www.actorsequity.org



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