

THE GRINNELL COLLEGE DEPARTMENT  
OF THEATRE & DANCE PRESENTS

# *Nice Fish*

by Mark Rylance and Louis Jenkins

Directed by Ellen Mease



October 6-8, 2017  
Friday-Saturday 7:30 p.m. & Sunday 2:00 p.m.

Roberts Theatre  
Bucksbaum Center for the Arts



GRINNELL COLLEGE

The play will be performed without an intermission.

Please turn off all cell phones and pagers.  
No texting or photography permitted during performance.



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THE GRINNELL COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND DANCE  
PRESENTS

# *NICE FISH*

BY MARK RYLANCE AND LOUIS JENKINS  
BASED ON THE SELECTED POEMS OF LOUIS JENKINS

Directed by Ellen Mease

*Nice Fish* was originally commissioned and produced by The Guthrie Theater in 2013 and was further developed by the American Repertory Theatre at Harvard University in 2016. It subsequently transferred to St. Ann's Warehouse in Brooklyn, NY. Sonia Friedman Productions presented the A.R.T. production of *Nice Fish* at The Harold Pinter Theatre in London in 2016-17. The production was nominated for a Best Comedy Olivier Award in 2017.

|                              |                         |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Scenic and Lighting Designer | Stewart Benjamin Farrar |
| Costume Designer             | Erin Howell-Gritsch     |
| Sound Designer               | Michael Croswell        |
| Vocal Coach                  | John Rommereim          |
| Technical Director           | Erik Sanning '89        |
| Stage Manager                | Zoë Aber '18            |

The Grinnell production of *Nice Fish*, the first amateur performance, is presented with the kind permission of The Gersh Agency, Mark Rylance, and Louis Jenkins.

## CAST LIST

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|                                                               |                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Ron.....                                                      | Joseph Robertson '19  |
| A novice on ice, about 50, Erik's college buddy               |                       |
| Erik.....                                                     | Reed Roffis '18       |
| An ice-fishing enthusiast, about 50                           |                       |
| The DNR Man .....                                             | David Gilbert '21     |
| An officer with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources |                       |
| Flo .....                                                     | Christina Collins '21 |
| An independent woman, Wayne's granddaughter                   |                       |
| Wayne .....                                                   | Liam Stowe '18        |
| A devoted spear fisherman, Flo's grandfather                  |                       |

## SCENE

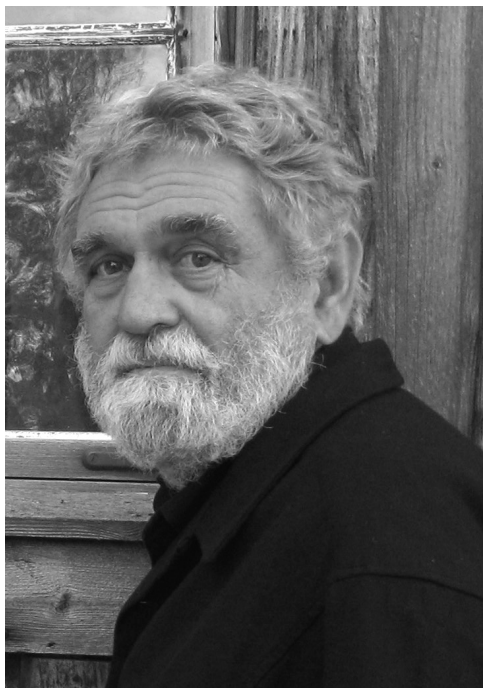
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The play takes place on a single day on a frozen lake somewhere in northern Minnesota. Late winter, early spring. The last day of ice fishing season.



## The Ice Fisherman

From here he appears as a black spot, one of the shadows that today has found it necessary to assume solid form. Along with the black jut of shoreline far to the left, he is the only break in the undifferentiated gray of ice and overcast sky. Here is a man going jiggidy-jig-jig in a black hole. Depth and the current are of only incidental interest to him. He's after something big, something down there that is pure need, something that, had it the wherewithal, would swallow him whole. Right now nothing is happening. The fisherman stands and straightens, back to the wind. He stays out on the ice all day. —Louis Jenkins





## Poetry, Prose and Play

by Mark Rylance

Reprinted from the London *Nice Fish* program

Louis Jenkins is a prose poet and here is his description of a prose poem.

### ***The Prose Poem***

*The prose poem is not a real poem, of course. One of the major differences is that the prose poet is incapable, either too lazy or too stupid, of breaking the poem into lines. But all writing, even the prose poem, involves a certain amount of skill, just the way throwing a wad of paper, say, into a wastebasket at a distance of 20 feet, requires a certain skill, a skill that, though it may improve hand-eye coordination, does not lead necessarily to an ability to play basketball. Still, it takes practice and thus gives one a way to pass the time, chucking one paper after another at the basket, while the teacher drones on about the poetry of Tennyson. –Louis Jenkins*

I suppose every play involves collaboration between imagination and life, poetry and prose. When I was working on this play, I used to sit on the bed of my friend James Hillman, who was dying of cancer. James had studied the psyche all of his life and we would chat about the emerging characters in this play. One day, he said to me: “You know imagination exists. It is not in us. We are in it.”

### ***Autumn Leaves***

*“And you call yourself a poet!” she said, laughing, walking toward me. It was a woman I recognized, though I couldn’t remember her name. “Here you are on the most beautiful day of autumn . . . You should be writing a poem.” “It’s a difficult subject to write about, the fall,” I said. “Nevertheless,” she said, “I saw you drinking in the day, the pristine blue sky, the warm sunshine, the brilliant leaves of the maples and birches rustled slightly by the cool west wind which is the harbinger of winter. I saw how you watched that maple leaf fall. I saw how you picked it up and noted the flame color, touched here and there with bits of gold and green and tiny black spots. I’m sure that you saw in that leaf all the glory and pathos, the joy and heartache of life on earth and yet you never touched pen to paper.” “Actually,” I said, “most of what I write is simply made up, not real at all.” “So . . . ? she said. –Louis Jenkins*



What is this play about? I don't know. I will be making sense of it, word by word, as you are. We have read and reread the hundreds of poems Louis has written, and selected poems and passages to stitch together like an old American quilt of worn beloved garments, each one bearing a pattern of history, an experience. The Minnesota poet Robert Bly, who encouraged Louis, heard the competing voices of a child and an adult in Louis' first book. My experience of the Midwest took place in my teen age, as I moved from childhood to adulthood. Perhaps that early search for an identity that encompassed both experiences drew me to these poems.

### **Jazz Poem**

*I always wanted to write one of those jazz poems. You know the kind, where it's three a.m. in some incredibly smoky, out-of-the-way, little club in Chicago or New York, 14 April 1954 (it's always good to give the date) and there are only a few sleepy people left in the place, vacant tables with half-empty glasses, overturned chairs . . . and then Bird or Leroy or someone plays this incredible solo and it's like, it's like . . . well, you just should have been there. The poet was there and you understand from the poem that jazz is hip, intellectual, cool but also earthy and soulful, as the poet must be, as well, because he really digs this stuff. Unfortunately, I grew up listening to rock and roll and decidedly unhip country music and it just doesn't work to say you should have been in Gary Hofstadter's rec room, 24 July 1961, sipping a Pepsi, listening to Duane Eddy's latest album and playing air guitar. –Louis Jenkins*

Between 1969 and 1978, I lived primarily beside the crumbling shores of Lake Michigan in one of the many crumbling industrial cities of the North Midwest, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Louis began his life in the dust of Oklahoma and followed his heart to Duluth, Minnesota, where he too has lived by a big lake, the deepest of all, Lake Superior. Perhaps it is our shared experience of these deep, dangerous and beautiful lakes bordering our cities that has brought us together. Perhaps it was just the cold, the snow and ice, burying every living thing under a white sheet until the spring wind arrived.

***The Lake***

*Streets run straight downhill to the water. The lake brings the city to an end. It is there, always, changing the direction of my walks. Sometimes I go for days without coming near, catching only a glimpse through the trees: a sail, a white speck turning on the dark blue. Perhaps someone very old touched the back of my wrist, lightly, for only the briefest moment, or you said something to me. What was it? The waters close above my head suddenly without a sound. –Louis Jenkins*

But I think what really draws me to Louis is his ability to express an internal reality of what it feels like to be a human being through the description of an apparently external landscape. Perhaps James was right: “The imagination is not within us, we are within it.”

***Stone Arch, Rock Formation***

*It is higher, more narrow, more treacherous than we imagined. And here we are in a spot where there's no going back, a point of no return. It has become too dangerous to continue as we have. We simply are not as sure-footed and nimble as we were when we started out. There's nothing to do but sit down, carefully, straddling the rock. Once seated, I'm going to turn slightly and hand the bag of groceries back to you. Then I'm going to scoot ahead a few inches and turn again. If you then lean forward carefully and hand me the bag you will be able to move ahead to the spot I previously occupied. It is a miserably slow process and we still have the problem of the steep descent on the other side. But if we are patient, my love, I believe we will arrive safely on the ground again a few yards from where we began. –Louis Jenkins*

I came up with the initial idea of making a play using the poetry of Louis Jenkins, but the words and story and images you will hear and see today have arisen from collaborative play with my fellow actors, stage managers, director, designers and friends, all focusing on the life's work of Louis Jenkins. Now, of course, today, tonight, the play lives or dies in your imagination, and the final, essential, collaboration hopefully takes place. Thanks for coming out. I hope our play returns you safely to the ground only a few yards from where you began.

**Biographical Sketch for Mark Rylance, writer:**

Mark was born in England in 1960 and emigrated with his family to America in 1962. He lived in Connecticut until 1969 and then moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where he lived until returning to London in 1978. Mark trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (1978-1980) under Hugh Cruttwell, and the Glasgow Citizens Theatre gave him his first job in 1980, a year in repertoire, a trip to the carnival in Venice with Goldoni, and an Equity card.

Mark was the artistic director and a leading player of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre from 1996-2006. He last played in London's West End as King Philippe V in *Farinelli and the King* by Claire van Kampen, his wife. Other recent theatre includes: the countess Olivia in *Twelfth Night*, and the title role in *Richard III*, directed by Tim Carroll; and Johnny 'Rooster' Byron in Jerusalem, directed by Ian Rickson and written by Jez Butterworth. He won the Tony Award for Best Actor in 2008 for Robert in Boeing Boeing, in 2011 for Rooster in *Jerusalem*, and in 2014 for Olivia in *Twelfth Night*.

In 2007, he wrote his first play, *I Am Shakespeare*. *Nice Fish* is his second play.

Recent film work includes: Steven Spielberg's *The BFG* (2016) and Christopher Nolan's *Dunkirk* (2017). He won an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor playing the Russian spy Rudolf Abel in Spielberg's *Bridge of Spies* (2015). He played Thomas Cromwell in the BBC series *Wolf Hall*, adapted from Hilary Mantel's Man Booker Prize-winning historical novels *Wolf Hall* and *Bring Up the Bodies*.

Mark is an honorary member of the Middle Temple Hall in London; trustee of the Shakespeare Authorship Trust; an ambassador of Survival, the movement for tribal peoples; and a patron of Peace Direct, working for non-violent resolution of conflict. He was knighted in January 2017. He is married to Claire van Kampen and a proud co-father with Chris van Kampen of Juliet and Nataasha. –Adapted from the London *Nice Fish* program



## A Long Way from Home

A Note from Louis Jenkins

Reprinted from the London *Nice Fish* program

I saw Mark Rylance's performance in the lead role of *Peer Gynt*, at the Guthrie Theater, Minneapolis in February, 2008 and was knocked out. Mark had undertaken to adapt Robert Bly's translation of Ibsen's play for the theater. Who is this guy, I wondered, who could take a strange play like that and make the character of Peer come alive? It turned out that Mark and I had mutual friends in Robert and Ruth Bly and in James Hillman and his wife, Margot McLean, but Mark and I did not meet during that performance.

One evening when I was home in Duluth, I got an excited email from Margot McLean saying that Mark had used one of my prose poems as his acceptance speech for the Best Actor Tony Award. I was flabbergasted. I watched the speech on YouTube and saw that with Mark's delivery the poem had wonderful comic effect. I immediately emailed Mark, and from that contact our collaboration on the *Nice Fish* project began.

The idea Mark proposed was that we use my poems as text of a story that he had envisioned. My first thought was, "this isn't going to work." But I said, "sure," figuring that whereas I knew next to nothing about theatre, Mark probably knew a lot. In December 2008, Mark arranged a workshop performance of one act of the play in New York. When I arrived at Mark's apartment he and Matthew Cowles were rehearsing a scene from the play. Mark had typed out the poems on sheets of paper and arranged them on the wall according to which poem went with which scene. So I joined in, putting my two cents' worth whenever possible. Miraculously, it seemed to me, the play began to come together.

We continued to work on the play over the next few years. Mark had the primary job of constructing and shaping the play. I provided the poems as speeches for each of the characters and, also, occasional bits of plot. It was in a way like putting together a jigsaw puzzle, finding the right place for each piece, the right piece for each place, except that there were extra pieces and places continually shifted.

When the play went to rehearsals at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis in March 2013 the process remained the same, poems on the wall, and with new cast members and Mark's wife Claire van Kampen as director, the discussion



was expanded. Due to this input the play grew and I think got better. I found it all to be great fun. The play went to Cambridge, Massachusetts, and to St. Ann's Warehouse, Brooklyn, NY, in 2016 with some considerable changes in the script and lots of brilliant input from the cast. There are further changes for the London performance but the play remains. I find it the most exciting turn in the play's long journey, something perhaps London theatregoers have not experienced: winter on Minnesota ice. And London's West End! The Harold Pinter Theatre. What could be better?

The writing of poems is a solitary activity, and often the poems never leave the page on which they were written, or the room in which they were written. Working on a play in this manner is a much more collaborative, group effort. Working with Mark has always been a great pleasure. He seems to have endless energy and enthusiasm. And to have my poems take this direction is a total surprise, for them to wander so far from home.

Of course, the poems are all my children. "What?" I say, "You are going into theater?! Oh, well, whatever makes you happy."

### **Biographical Sketch for Louis Jenkins, writer:**

Louis Jenkins was born and raised in Oklahoma. In 1971, he moved with his wife, Ann, to Duluth, Minnesota, where he lived for 45 years and spent most of his time complaining about the weather. They recently moved to Bloomington outside Minneapolis, to be near their son Lars, his wife Amy, and two charming twin granddaughters, Clio and Iris. Not much better weather. Louis has published 18 collections of his prose poems, including *An Almost Human Gesture* (1987), *All Tangled Up with the Living* (1991), *Just Above Water* (1997), *The Winter Road* (2000), *Sea Smoke* (2004), *North of the Cities* (2007), *European Shoes* (2008) and *Before You Know It: Prose Poems 1970-2005* (2009). He has been awarded two Bush Foundation Fellowships for poetry, a Loft Literary Center McKnight Fellowship, and was the 2000 George Morrison Award winner. His poems were included in *The Best American Poetry 1999* and in *Great American Prose Poems* (2003). Mr. Jenkins has read his poetry on *A Prairie Home Companion* and was a featured poet for the Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival in 1996 and at the Aldeburgh Poetry Festival, Aldeburgh, England in 2007. *Nice Fish: New and Selected Prose Poems* was awarded the 1995 Minnesota Book Award for Poetry. His latest collection of poems is *In the Sun Out of the Wind* (2017). –Adapted from the London *Nice Fish* program.



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**Director's Note**

*Nice Fish*, or “*Waiting for Godot* on ice,” is a charming, oddball play set far out on a frozen Minnesota lake. Like *Godot*, it doesn't seem to have much plot, as the poet says. Nothing more than our existential span, as lost souls, as a species, as a threatened planet in an expanding universe. Two old college buddies, Erik and Ron, shoot the breeze as they ice-fish; Erik's the expert, Ron the goofy novice, clowning around with a baloney sandwich and a singing fish. An officious DNR guy tries to shoo them off the ice; a blizzard's approaching. Spring winds carry off their pop-up ice tent. Then it gets bizarre, as a young woman emerges from her sauna hut reading *Moby Dick*—she's Flo, the approaching spring. Her grizzled grandfather Wayne shows up with his fishing spear, like some Norse sea god. A surreal ensemble of five quirky souls muse on life, lost love, and mortality. Wry, wise, wistful, absurd comedians, they are collectively us, suspended between the great fishes of the primeval depths and a bazillion stars beckoning upwards. The ice booms, the spring thaw begins, the fishermen float out into the great dark. They catch a nice fish. They are themselves hooked, hoisted aloft into the heavens.

One of the play's themes is the essential one of all absurdist existential fable: We are ephemerids, creatures of a long day. The world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players. We have time to grow old. The air is filled with our cries and our laughter. We die of silliness finally. On the way, lost souls befriending one another, we tell stories, consoling fictions. As the poet says, “How else are we to live except by denial, by some palatable fiction, some little song to sing while the inevitable, the black-and-white blindsiding fact, comes hurtling toward you out of the deep?” Without the stories, “it might appear that you have no idea what you are doing, that you are merely wandering the earth, no particular reason for being here, no particular place to go.”

This is the first amateur production of *Nice Fish*, which played to sold-out houses in New York and London last year, earning an Olivier Award nomination for Best Comedy. The playwright and the poet wanted to make sure that Louis' work would be presented to its most important audience, liberal arts students who can appreciate the wry humor of Louis' poems and the wild ice antics Mr. Rylance has created for the players. Louis is an old friend. He's nearing 75, and this work with Mark Rylance has made joyous these late years of the poet's life as a plainspoken humorist of the human comedy.



Mr. Rylance says that what draws him to Louis is “his ability to express an internal reality of what it feels like to be a human being through the description of an external natural American landscape. In this light he gives us the same pleasure that the wonderful Transcendentalist writers, Thoreau, Emerson, Whitman have given us.” What the play gives us as well is the gift and sheer pleasure of laughter: laughter at the comedy of ice-fishing manners, the sight gags and pratfalls, the cock-eyed folk-lore, the polka music, the ice groaning and booming as it cracks up under the fishermen, the whacky props, the charming new views of the world, from the perspective of a fish or a seal or a tumbleweed or the moon dying of boredom, climbing the heavens and looking down on the likes of us. Might as well laugh, in spite of everything.

### **SPECIAL THANKS**

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Louis and Ann Jenkins

Scott Newstok '95

Mark Rylance and Claire van Kampen

Venia Smekhov and Todd Armstrong for the Russian poetry recital

Dean Bakopoulos and Writers@Grinnell

Charlie Bath and Sonia Friedman Productions for  
the loan of the nice fish

The Guthrie Theater prop shop for construction of the nice fish

Dave Schrader, Rock Creek Lake fisherman, for gear, beer cans,  
and a handmade Alabama umbrella rig

Jay Lohman

Jim Savage

Kayla Estes for costumes' printing

Judson Mease for Flo's fedora

Alice Mease for the plaid cooler and thermos

Jim Burkett, sports rep, PMI (Professional Marketing Incorporated)  
for the antique electric ice auger and marine gear

Mike Thorndike

Robin Broders & the Grinnell Railway Express Model Railroad Club

Annina Cummins '20

Kate Baumgartner and Erik Sanning - extra run crew



## Nice Fish

When he finally landed the fish it seemed so strange, so unlike other fishes he'd caught, so much bigger, more silvery, more important, that he half-expected it to talk, to grant his wishes if he returned it to the water. But the fish said nothing, made no pleas, gave no promises. His fishing partner said, "Nice fish, you ought to have it mounted." Other people said the same thing. "Nice fish." So he took it to the taxidermy shop but when it came back it didn't look quite the same. Still, it was an impressive trophy. Mounted on a big board the way it way, it was too big to fit in the car. In those days he could fit everything he owned into the back of his Volkswagen but the fish changed all that. After he married, a year or so later, nothing would fit in the car. He got a bigger car. Then a new job, children. The fish moved with them from house to house, state to state. All that moving around took its toll on the fish, it began to look worn, a fin was broken off. It went into the attic of the new house. Just before the divorce became final, when he was moving to an apartment, his wife said, "Take your god-damn fish." He hung the fish on the wall before he'd unpacked anything else. The fish seemed huge, too big for his little apartment. Boy, it was big. He couldn't imagine he'd ever caught a fish that big. —Louis Jenkins

## Fisherman: Stoney Point

Here's an old guy talking to himself. He reels in his bait and says, "Son, you've got to go out there again. I know how difficult it is; the rocks are treacherous, the water is deep. The winds can come up suddenly, and there's no more than the thinnest line ties you to me. This is the way your life is going to be, out and back, again and again, partly in this world, partly in the other, never at home in either. Still, it's what you were born to do. You are young and strong, all steel and hooks. You know I'll do everything I can to bring you back safely. Go out there, boy, and bring home a big fish for your old father to eat." —Louis Jenkins



**Christina Collins '21** (Flo) is an intended Biology major from Denver, Colorado. Throughout high school she took part in multiple theatre and dance productions, including roles in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, *A Piece of My Heart*, *The Wedding*, *Room Service*, and *The Persians*. This is her first Grinnell production.

**David Gilbert '21** (DNR Man) is from Grinnell, Iowa. He makes his Grinnell College acting debut in *Nice Fish*. Previously, David has performed in both Grinnell High School and Grinnell Community Theatre productions.

**Joseph Robertson '19** (Ron) is a Philosophy and Theatre and Dance double major from Denver, Colorado. He previously appeared in *The Tempest* (Ferdinand), *The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *The Laramie Project Project*, and *Playboy of the Western World* (Shawn Keogh).

**Reed Roffis '18** (Erik) is a Biology and Theatre and Dance double major from Boulder, Colorado. He has previously performed here in *Translations* (Doalty), *The Tempest* (Sebastian), *Lord of the Flies* (Roger), *The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Mitch Mahoney), and *The Elephant's Graveyard* (The Clown).

**Liam Stowe '18** (Wayne) is a Political Science and English major from Des Moines, Iowa. He enjoyed performing with the Repertory Theatre of Iowa before attending Grinnell. This is his fourth performance at Grinnell College following performances in *The Tempest*, in the recent Salman Rushdie adaptations, and in *Playboy of the Western World*.



**Maya Adachi '21** (Run Crew) is an undecided major from Yamanashi, Japan. She acted in three musicals and directed two in high school. This is her first Grinnell theatre production.

**Clara Bertaut '18** (Costume Crew) is a Computer Science major from Maryland. She has previously acted in the One-Acts Festival (2014) and *Nobody Gets Hurt* (2015), as well as written and directed for the 24-Hour Theatre project. She worked sound board and projections for the Spring 2016 Dance Ensemble performance. This is her first time working with costumes.

**Audrey Boyle '21** (Assistant Director) is an intended English major from Honolulu, Hawaii. She helped to direct and stage manage multiple shows in high school, including *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* and *Almost Maine*. She is a member of Grinnell's short-form improv troupe.

**Anna Bundy '21** (Assistant Stage Manager) is from Glenview, Illinois. She was involved with several productions throughout high school. This is her first production with Grinnell theatre.

**Ahon Gooptu '21** (Assistant Director and Run Crew) is an intended Psychology and Theatre and Dance major from Calcutta, India. He acted in several high school productions, taking on roles like Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth* and Catherine Petkoff in *Arms and the Man*; stage managed for plays like *The King and I*; and wrote and directed a couple of original short plays.

**Annabel G. Higgin-Houser '20** (Light Board Operator) is an intended Religious Studies major from Apple Valley, Minnesota. This is her first theatre production as well as her first at Grinnell.



**Hannah Hong '18** (Costume Co-Crew Chief) is a Biology major from Iowa City. She has previously worked on costumes here for *The Tempest*, *Constellations*, and *Playboy of the Western World*.

**Anjali Jain '21** (Sound Board and Projections Operator) is from Saratoga, California. Before college, she worked in both high school productions and with professional companies around the Bay Area. This is her first production with Grinnell theatre.

**Katherine Kopp '21** (Assistant Director) is from St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin. In high school she played Wendy in *Peter Pan*.

**Emily Mamrak '19** (Run Crew) is a Chemistry and Studio Art double major from Chicago, Illinois. She has often been a part of the crew for departmental productions, most recently *The Tempest*, and works in the scene shop to help create the sets for theater and dance productions.

**Emily McClure '18** (Costume Co-Crew Chief) is a Chemistry major from Denver, Colorado. This is her fourth year working with the costume shop; productions include *Anna Christie*, *Translations* and *The Laramie Project Project*. She's acted in the Directing class One Acts as well.

**Sydney Quartey '18** (Assistant Stage Manager) is a Biology and Theatre and Dance double major. He acted in *The Elephant's Graveyard* and is now trying his hand at some backstage work. Over the summer he completed an internship in entertainment administration.

**Mayo Sueta '20** (Run Crew) is an English major from Tokyo, Japan. She has been the assistant stage manager for Dance Ensemble.



**Zoë Aber '18** (Stage Manager) is a History major with a concentration in Environmental Studies from Kansas City, Missouri. Previously at Grinnell, she was Assistant Director of *The Tempest* and Assistant Stage Manager of *Anna Christie* and *Playboy of the Western World*.

**Kate Baumgartner '15** (Assistant Technical Director) has been building, designing, and tech directing with various performance groups in the Grinnell area since 2005.

**Michael Croswell** (Sound Designer) is a composer and sound designer from Saint Paul, MN. Past collaboration at Grinnell include Ellen Mease's productions of *Hamlet* (2013), *The Tempest* (2016), and Synge's *Playboy of the Western World* (2017). Upcoming work includes a production of *The Aeneid* at Minnesota State Mankato University opening October 12, 2017 and Frank Theatre's production of *Grounded* at Intermedia Arts in Minneapolis in January of 2018. Recent 2017 work includes composing music and sound for Frank Theatre's production of *Citizen* and a production of *Marie Antoinette* by Walking Shadow Theater Company; a production titled *To Begin With* that featured the great-great grandson of Charles Dickens performing as Charles Dickens, presented by the Hennepin Theatre Trust, written and directed by Jeffrey Hatcher; and Theater Mu's regional premier of *You For Me For You* in The Dowling Studio at The Guthrie in 2016. An immersive production of *Crime and Punishment* by Live Action Set received a 2015 Ivey Award for best production design. Michael also created music and sound for a production of *The Tempest* by Normandale Community College in May 2015. Recent regional work has included a production of *Freakshow* at The University of Nebraska at Omaha in February 2015. Michael also works as a teaching artist, and in 2016 he was commissioned to compose a new work for a combined orchestra that featured The Saint Paul Music Academy and The Saint Paul Civic Symphony. In May of 2016 and 2017 Michael traveled to Prague to perform with The Echofluxe Ensemble at Echofluxe 16, Festival of New Media, Art, and Music.



**S. Benjamin Farrar** (Scenic Designer) is a designer for live performance and film as well as a photographer and graphic designer. Benjamin is the resident designer for Soledad Barrio and Noche Flamenca (a professional dance company based in Madrid, Spain). He has worked as a designer and assistant designer in many venues in New York City, including The Public Theater, The Joyce Theatre, The Lortel Theatre, The Pearl Theatre, The Cherry Lane Theatre, and The New Victory Theatre. He has designed throughout North America in venues such as The Majestic Theatre in Boston, White Bird in Portland, The McCarter in Princeton, The Royal Conservatory in Toronto, Wolf Trap in Virginia, and The Zellerbach Playhouse in Berkeley. He has also designed for venues in Australia, Mexico, Argentina, Peru, Brazil, England, Scotland, and Switzerland. Benjamin has worked as a guest designer at NYU Gallatin School in New York and Dickinson College in Pennsylvania. Benjamin is also a photographer who has been exhibited in galleries in New York and online. He is a graduate of The University of Iowa and Vanderbilt University.

**Erin Howell-Gritsch** (Costume Designer) has designed all Mainstage costumes at Grinnell College since 1999, where she is the resident costume designer. As a Lecturer for the College, she has taught Costume Design, Costume Construction, and Introduction to Technical Theatre. She was previously an Assistant Professor of Theatre at Cornell College. Other design credits include the University of Iowa (Theatre, Dance, Playwright's Festival, Black Action Theatre), Riverside Theatre, RT Shakespeare Festival, RT Young People's Company, Graffiti Theatre, Theatre de la Jeune Lune, Ballet Iowa, and Hurley Dancers. Erin holds a Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Design from the University of Iowa and a Bachelor of Science from Iowa State University.



**Ellen Mease** (Director) directs and teaches European dramatic literature, criticism, theory, and theatre history from the Greeks to Beckett and Stoppard. She also teaches interdisciplinary Humanities classes on ancient Greece (Hum 101), Roman and early Christian culture (Hum 102), and medieval/Renaissance culture (Hum/SSt 140). On Grinnell's London program in 2003 and 2010 she taught courses on plays of ideas, Samuel Beckett, and the 19th c. English "Age of Revolution." In Florence 2006-07 she taught courses on Dante's *Divine Comedy* and the Florentine Golden Age/Italian Renaissance. During the Beckett centenary in 2006, she served as festival dramaturg for Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre's BeckettFest, when she also directed *Krapp's Last Tape*, *A Piece of Monologue*, *Play* and *That Time*. In 2008 she was the dramaturg for PICT's complete cycle of the plays of John Millington Synge, when she also directed his last play, *Deirdre of the Sorrows*. Apart from most of Beckett's plays, directing credits also include Frayn's *Copenhagen*; Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, *Arcadia*, *Travesties*; Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Cherry Orchard*; Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, *Doll's House*, *Lady from the Sea*; Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, *12th Night*, *Measure for Measure*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet* and *The Tempest*. She directed Brecht's *Galileo* in spring 2009, for the 400th anniversary of Galileo's sighting of the largest moons of Jupiter. Acting credits include Dysart in *Equus* and the Donne scholar in *Wit*. B.A., Drama, Vassar (PBK); M.A. Drama, U. Va.; Ph.D., Drama and Humanities, Stanford.

**John Rommereim** (Vocal Coach) is Blanche Johnson Professor of Music at Grinnell College, where he conducts the college's choirs and teaches composition. His choral compositions have been performed by distinguished ensembles across the U.S. He has composed works for voice and piano, flute, and saxophone and string quartets. As a singer, composer and vocal coach, he's supported many theatre productions, including Brecht's *Life of Galileo*, *As You Like It* and *The Tempest*. In June 2015 he created an original score for a theatrical work based on Wagner's *Das Rheingold*, which was performed in collaboration with theatre professor Craig Quintero's



company in Taiwan. He will compose for the upcoming *The First Time I Walked on the Moon*.

**Erik Sanning '89** (Technical Director) is a graduate of Grinnell College. He spent the first two years after graduation working as the Technical Director/Lighting Designer for Ballet Iowa. In the summer of '91 Erik was able to return to Grinnell as the Technical Director. In addition, he is also one of the founding members of Grinnell Productions, a semi-professional theatre company that was based here in Grinnell. Erik has also been a member of IATSE, the professional stagehands union, since 1990.



|                                             |                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Stage Manager                               | Zoë Aber '18                                                             |
| Assistant Stage Managers                    | Anna Bundy '21<br>Sydney Quartey '18                                     |
| Assistant Directors                         | Audrey Boyle '21<br>Ahon Gooptu '21<br>Katherine Kopp '21                |
| Light Board Operator                        | Annabel G. Higgin-Houser '20                                             |
| Sound Board Operator<br>Projection Operator | Anjali Jain '21                                                          |
| Costume Co-Crew Chiefs                      | Hannah Hong '18<br>Emily McClure '18                                     |
| Costume Crew                                | Clara Bertaut '18                                                        |
| Run Crew                                    | Maya Adachi '21<br>Ahon Gooptu '21<br>Emily Mamrak '19<br>Mayo Sueta '20 |
| Poster Image                                | Louis Jenkins                                                            |
| Poster & Program Design                     | Joyce Bergan                                                             |



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**ADMINISTRATION**

|                                           |                      |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Production Stage Manager</b>           | Sooji Son '18        |
| <b>Assistant Production Stage Manager</b> | Lily Fitzsimons '20  |
| <b>Box Office Manager</b>                 | Jeremy Epstein '19   |
| <b>Archivist</b>                          | Rodas Hailu '18      |
| <b>Props Manager</b>                      | Joseph Robertson '19 |
| <b>Assistant to the Chair</b>             | Amaris Bates '18     |

**FRONT OF HOUSE**

|                             |                      |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Front of House Staff</b> | Vedika Haralalka '18 |
|                             | Shudi Pan '19        |
|                             | Luis Rojas '18       |
|                             | Roberta Silva '18    |
|                             | Keli Vitaioli '19    |

**COSTUME STUDIO**

|                                    |                     |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Costume Storage Coordinator</b> | Anh Thu Pham '19    |
| <b>Stitchers</b>                   | Jamie Friedman '20  |
|                                    | Emily McClure '18   |
|                                    | Hannah Hong '18     |
|                                    | Autumn McMillan '20 |
|                                    | Shudi Pan '19       |
|                                    | Anh Thu Pham '19    |

**SCENE SHOP**

|                         |                     |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Scene Shop Staff</b> | Ashley Alto '19     | Emily Mamrak '19    |
|                         | Joshua Ball '18     | Sooji Son '18       |
|                         | Yonu Cha '20        | Carlos Ventura '20  |
|                         | Julia Dursztman '19 | Andrew Zdechlik '19 |
|                         | Nathan Gifford '20  |                     |



## ***The First Time I Walked on the Moon***

Directed by: Craig Quintero

Flanagan Studio Theatre

November 16-19, 2017

## **One-Act Festival**

Flanagan Studio Theatre

December 1-3, 2017

## **Dance Ensemble/ACTivate Fall 2017**

Artistic Director: Celeste Miller

Flanagan Studio Theatre

December 1st and 2nd, 2017