

For Immediate Release

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VIRTUAL ONE ACT FESTIVAL

Saturday, April 18, 2020 T 7:00PM
Streamed LIVE on Facebook and YouTube

Join us in this cyber artistic medium for a night of comedy, drama and mystery on Saturday April 18th at 7pm. A virtual gathering of Connecticut based actors, artists and musicians will help you beat the social separation blues. Conceived by Executive Producer, Jim Luurtsema, this event brings together over 35 performers, directors and playwrights to bring you an evening of entertainment that can be enjoyed in your own home while your friends and family enjoy from homes as well - social distancing at its best!

Joining Jim as co-producers are Katherine Ray and Sharon W. Houk. Katherine extensive background in directing for both stage and film is essential to putting this together - as most of our performers are veteran stage performers who may not have worked in-front of the camera before. Sharon worked to gather the pieces being performed and securing permission from the playwrights to present their plays in this format - many of them new works that have not been previously published or performed.

There are several challenges to overcome when putting on a festival like this. None of the actors are able to be in the same location while they are rehearsing and performing so we will be working to give the best experience for both the viewers and performers. Each play will have an introduction with a splash card as the cast is being "assembled". When moving into the "performance", the screen will shift into a grid of all the actors involved in the piece. Our focus will be on the acting with good views of everyone's facial expressions on a generic background. Narrators will be used for each production to help set the "scene." Sound effects will be employed as required by each production.

This event will be streamed live on Facebook and Youtube. Links to be posted just before performance commences - visit our website at www.v1act.org for streaming links and additional information.

THE PLAYS/PLAYWRIGHTS

CHARLENE A. DONAGHY - "I Like"

Charlene A. Donaghy is an award-winning playwright with plays produced and/or awarded from New York City to Los Angeles, in Canada and Great Britain. Hansen Publishing Group publishes Charlene's play collection, *Bones of Home and Other Plays*. Other publications include: *Best American Short Plays*, *Best 10-Minute Plays*, *Estrogenius*. Charlene is Producing Director/Tennessee Williams Theater Festival, Festival Director/Warner International Playwrights Festival and she teaches playwriting and theatre at University of Nebraska Omaha. She is a founding member Proscenium Playwrights, and a member of 9th Floor Playwrights, The Playwrights Center, and The Dramatists Guild of America. www.charleneadonaghy.com

IRA HAUPTMAN - "BFOQ"

Ira Hauptman's plays have been performed in New York at the Manhattan Theatre Club, the Ensemble Studio Theatre and Theater for the New City, as well as in Los Angeles, Berkeley, San Francisco, Bangalore, Paris, Brussels and many other cities. He's received two play commissions from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Science & Technology Project. The first was for *Partition* (published by Playscripts), which is about clashing mathematicians in the early twentieth century. The second was for *Starry Messenger* (published by Dramatic Publishing Company), which is about Galileo's recantation of his convictions. Ira is a graduate of Yale Drama School and teaches at Queens College.

HENRY ARTHUR JONES (1851-1929) - "Her Tongue"

The circumstances surrounding the early life of Henry Arthur Jones would generally be considered anything but favorable to a successful dramatic career. He was the son of a Buckinghamshire farmer. What education he received was brief and acquired in a local grammar school. At 13 he went "into business" and was a commercial traveller until he was 30. The people among whom he was raised believed that drama was the invention of the devil and that those who went to the theater were bound straight for perdition. If Jones became a dramatist it was because the urge within him was so strong he couldn't help it. His first play was written when he was 16, two years before he ever saw the inside of a theater. His first produced play, *Only Round the Corner*, was staged in 1878. The melodrama, [*The Silver King*](#), written in collaboration with Henry Herman and produced in 1882, assured his position as a dramatist.

Henry Arthur Jones belongs to that period sometimes referred to as the "Victorian Transition." It was the period when drama was trying to free itself from its inherited superficialities and to become a part of contemporary life. In 1884, Jones made an attempt at serious drama in his *Saints and Sinners*. It was hooted by the first-night audience and condemned by the press. Discouraged, Jones returned to melodrama.

In 1896, when London had become to a certain extent "Ibsen-conscious," Jones made another attempt at serious drama with *Michael and His Lost Angel*. Again he was hooted by the audience and condemned by the critics. It was too forward looking for that generation and not sufficiently plain spoken for the next, as a later attempt at a revival proved. In the opinion of Jones himself and of some of his commentators it deserves to be rated as his best effort. The following year, however, he returned to the polite, superficial comedy with *The Liars*, following it in 1900 with *Mrs. Dane's Defense*. *The Lie* had its première in New York in 1914 and did not reach the London stage until 1923. There even so capable an actress as Sybil Thorndike could not save it from vitriolic comment from the pen of the renowned English dramatic critic, James Agate.

Henry Arthur Jones made a start with the new dramatic movement. He was never able, however, to shake off the influence of that early Victorian period when his work began, nor to achieve a real success with the newer trend of dramatic thought.

DAGNEY KERR - "Initial Velocity"

Dagney Kerr is an LA-based writer and actor, whose plays have been featured in numerous national festivals and competitions, winning Best Original Script, Audience Favorite, and Excellence in Playwriting Awards, among others. Her play, *STAY*, was chosen for the 2018 Warner International Playwrights Festival. Dagney also wrote and starred in the critically acclaimed one-woman shows, *DEEP SEA DAGNEY* and *HITCHHIKING TO MARS*. She also created the Christmas show, *HOLIDAY FEVER*, a Los Angeles theater favorite that ran for twelve sold-out seasons. She's the recipient of, 2020 Women Playwrights Initiative Award, by Ivoryton Playhouse (CT) for her play *DEANNA* and *PAUL*, which recently completed runs in LA and NY.

DAVID MacGREGOR - "Just Desserts"

David is a playwright and screenwriter. He is a resident artist at The Purple Rose Theatre in Michigan, where seven of his plays have been produced. His newest play, *Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Fallen Soufflé*, opened the Purple Rose's 2019-2020 season. His plays have been performed from New York to Tasmania, and his work has been published by Dramatic Publishing, Playscripts, Smith & Kraus, Applause, and Heuer Publishing.

He adapted his dark comedy, *Vino Veritas*, for the silver screen, and it stars Carrie Preston (Emmy-winner for *The Good Wife*). Several of his short plays have also been adapted into films, and his screenplay *In the Land of Fire and Ice* was a 2016 Athena List Winner (best screenplays featuring female protagonists). He teaches writing at Wayne State University in Detroit and is inordinately fond of cheese and terriers.

MARJ O'NEILL- BUTLER - "Into The City"

Marj O'Neill-Butler, a resident of Miami Beach, Florida, is the Regional Rep for the Dramatists Guild – Florida Region. Her work has been seen in 26 states, the District of Columbia, Canada, Great Britain, Scotland and Seoul, S Korea. She has had 39 different plays produced in multiple theatres, numerous readings and just about as many rejections. A published playwright and mother of two grown sons, Marj is a proud member of Equity and SAG-AFTRA.

LARALU SMITH - "Ezell Dorsey and the Right Hand Man"

Laralu Smith is a writer and actor based in NYC. She has written a number of short stories, poems and works of non-fiction – as well as a novella in progress, "The Saga of Ezell Dorsey", from which she has adapted this play. As an actor, she has performed in countless plays, both in NYC and regionally. She is a member of UCB's Diversity Jam and can be seen as 'Woman Who Sees Jesus' in "The Book of Craig" (Studio City Film Festival/Best TV Pilot-2018). B.A. Ohio State. M.A. Northwestern. AEA SAG-AFTRA.

DAVID L. WILLIAMS - "Coding Issues"

David L. Williams is a graduate of the theatre department of Cornell University, where he was a four time award winner in the Heerman's-McCalmon Playwriting contest, and recently received his MFA in playwriting from the University of Nebraska. He has written more than thirty plays and musicals, and his work has been produced across the United States and internationally in Australia, Italy, Canada, Denmark, Norway, and Lithuania. His most recent productions include the world premiere of his full-length play *The Starving at Barter Theatre*. He lives in Bellefonte, PA with his wonderful wife Kathleen and his amazing son Samuel.

www.playwrightdavid.com

THE PRODUCTION TEAM

JIM LUURTSEMA (*Executive Producer/Director, "Coding Issues"*)

SHARON W. HOUK (*Co-Producer/Director "I Like", "Into The City", "Ezell Dorsey and the Right Hand Man"*)

MARILYN OLSEN (*Director, "BFOQ"*)

KATHERINE RAY (*Co-Producer/Director "Initial Velocity", "Just Desserts"*)

JESS SMITH (*Director, "Her Tongue"*)

THE PERFORMERS

MATT AUSTIN (*Curt, "Into The City"/Kris, "Just Desserts"*)

MARY CANTONI (*Joyce, "Just Desserts"*)

JANE COUGHLIN (*Ellyn, "Coding Issues"*)

EMILY DIEDRICH (*Phoebe, "Initial Velocity"*)

IAN DIEDRICH (*Professor Slocum, "BFOQ"/ Ben, "Initial Velocity"*)

MATT DURLAND (*Anthony, "Coding Issues"*)

SUSIE HACKEL (*Narrator, "Into The City"*)

DOREEN LOPEZ (*Narrator, "BFOQ"*)

DAVID MACHARELLI (*Professor Essex, "BFOQ"*)

JASON MAUR (*Dr. Wedgewood Carlyle, "BGOQ"*)

ASHLEY McLEOD (*Ashley, "Into The City"*)

TBD (*Joyce, "Just Desserts"*)

CONNOR PICARD (*Ezell Dorsey*)

COLLEEN RENZULLO (*Minnie Brace, "Her Tongue"*)

DAN RINGUETTE (*Professor Greensward, "BFOQ"*)

STEFFON SAMPSON (*Narrator, "Initial Velocity"/ Evan, "Just Desserts"*)

JEFF SAVAVE (*Walter Scobell, "Her Tongue"*)

CLAIRE SIMARD (*Miss Patty Hanslope, "Her Tongue"*)

INGRID SMITH (*Becky, "Just Desserts"*)

JENNIFER SOKIRA (*Lolly, "Into The City"*)

PATRICK R. SPADACCINO (*Ransom Ball, "Ezell Dorsey and the Right Hand Man"*)

PRISCILLA SQUIERS (*Jean, "Into The City"*)

SCOTT STANCHFIELD (*Fred Bracy, "Her Tongue"*)

EMMA WALLACE (*Maggie, "I Like"*)

LYNNE WILSON (*Narrator, "Coding Issues"*)