

CalArts

SCHOOL OF THEATER

CalArts School of Theater
presents

The Fig and The Wasp

By Samantha Behr
Directed by Josh Sobel

Performances

December 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 | 8:00 PM
December 4 | 2:00 PM

Running Time

2 hours 30 mins, with a 15 minute intermission

Free | Walt Disney Modular Theater

California Institute of the Arts

theater.calarts.edu

Cast

Rosaura Flagg: Ishika Muchhal

George: Victoria Zajac

Cara Flagg: Fiona Rose Dyer

Harla Monroe: Avalon Greenberg Call

Darwin Flagg & Pres. Curlew: Jeremy Spektor

Ensemble: Jamie Cayer, Heather Friedman, Willington Liu, Ronaldo Medina, Olivia Michael

Creative Team

Director: Josh Sobel

Scenic Designer: Yuki Ding

Lighting Designer: Violet Smith

Costume Designer: Lena Sands

Video Designer: Nat Nicholas

Sound Designer: Steven Cobilich

Co-Sound Designer: Claire Marie Nemanich

Composer: Sam Wells

Choreographer/Movement Director: Livya Howard-Yashar

Co-Technical Director: Karim Abuabara

Co-Technical Director: Sam DuBois

Graphic Designer: Jen Dorman

Assistant Director: Harry Golby

Assistant Scenic Designer: Jane Hamor

Assistant Scenic Designer: Yueyi Zhang

Assistant Lighting Designer: Cad Apostol

Assistant Lighting Designer: Stephanie Atwood

Assistant Costume Designer: Yi-Lun Chien

Assistant Costume Designer: Danica Martino

Assistant Video Designer: Ghazal Bazargan

Assistant Video Designer: Zoë Lappin

Assistant Sound Designer: Claire Marie Nemanich

Stage Manager: Jordie Marie Rippon

Producer: Angelina Jian

Assistant Stage Manager: Cassy Sottile

Assistant Stage Manager: Nicole Theep

Associate Production Supervisor: Katherine Paez Froehlich

Project Description

How do you fight hopelessness? A senator from a well-known political family, Rosaura Flagg promotes stability to her fellow citizens, even as the country is crumbling. As a mysterious disease starts to spread, her daughter lies in a hospital room in a coma-like sleep. *The Fig and The Wasp* explores the destruction caused by isolation and the power of care and connection, against the backdrop of a world on fire.

Notes from the Director

How do you fight hopelessness at the end of the world?

This play was first written in 2016.

Special thanks to Alexis Randolph, Ian Damont Martin, Angela Salinas, Carol Cohen, Merrina Millsapp, Mia Park, Aria Szalai-Raymond, Sharyon Culberson, Simon Hedger, Dani Weider, Kyra Leigh, Stephanie Shum, Oona O'Brien, Claire Chrzan, Rasean Davonte Johnson, Jeffrey Levin, Christine Pascual, Leon J. Evans, Catherine Miller, Emily Boyd, Gaby Labotka, Madisen Dempsey, Corbin Paulino, Lewis Klahr, Janie Geiser, Peter Flaherty, Barbara & Sidney Sobel, Eleanor Kahn, Shaurjya Banerjee, Ariel Bookman, and Terry Bookman.

Notes from the Playwright

Whenever something ends, some things remain.

Special thanks to Matthew Behr for the nugget of inspiration, our complex conversations, and always helping make space for me to create. To my family for the unending support from day one of my existence. To Kim Doppe and her Colina St. apartment, for giving me shelter and a cozy space for those first readings and draft reworkings, as well as thoughtful insight into the work and life in general. To Laura Hedli, Jaclyn Biskup, Melanie DuPuy, Tina Rutsch, and to everyone who gave a bit of time to read the many works in progress and share such valuable feedback. To Haven and the Chicago-based artists involved in the 2019 workshop of *The Fig and The Wasp*. And to Josh Sobel for being such a consummate supporter of my writing and an essential part of this process.

Use of Headphones

To present an immersive audio experience, audiences are required to wear overhead headphones during the performance. Headphones will be provided at your seat and will be sanitized before every performance.

Content Warning

This story contains themes of suicide, depression, anxiety, quarantine, isolation, environmental and political upheaval, and death.

This production contains strobe lighting effects, theatrical haze, and loud sound effects.

Bios

Cast

Ishika Muchhal (Rosaura Flagg, BFA3) is an actor, singer, dancer, writer and producer whose art and advocacy focus on intersectional social issues. She's a California Arts Council "Individual Artist Fellow" grantee for her interview series "A QISSAA with Ishika: Quintessential and Inspiring Stories of South Asian Artists." Credits include Edinburgh Fringe Festival, *Into the Woods* (Baker's Wife), *King Lear* (Gloucester- A Noise Within), *Spring Awakening* (Wendla), *Tarzan* (Kala), CalArts School of Theater's *King Lear*, and short films. Gratitude to her parents, friends, teachers, supporters, and the incredible cast and creative team for valuing human connection amidst hopelessness. www.ishikamuchhal.com

Victoria Zajac (George, MFA3) is an LA based actor/director. Previously based in Cleveland, Ohio, her work has been seen at the Cleveland Public Theatre, Beck Center for The Arts, Cleveland Playhouse, and Glaciy Theatre Collective. Victoria has been seen in the CalArts Center For New Performance workshop *Cries and Whispers*. This is Victoria's premier CalArts School Of Theater Production. MFA in Acting, CalArts.

Fiona Rose Dyer (Cara Flagg, BFA4) is so happy to be here with you all tonight sharing live theater. Fiona was recently seen in *Nap the Play* (National Tour and Off-Broadway Premiere) alongside fellow CalArtians; and *Here, Nowhere*, a short filmed in Chicago last fall. She would like to thank the entire *F&W* team for being compassionate rockstars, in addition to her mother, Kelly, and her grandmother, Deanna, for their unconditional love and support, always. As with all of her work, she would like to dedicate her performance(s) to her late - and great - friends, Rocky G. Whiteside and Jaedon Bain. Tonight when you get home, or tomorrow when you wake up, Fiona urges you to check in on someone you haven't heard from in a while, just to see how they are. Enjoy the show.

Avalon Greenberg Call (Harla Monroe, BFA3) is thrilled to be a part of this production of *The Fig and The Wasp*. Avalon is BFA 3 Actor and Digital Arts student in the CalArts School of Theater where she continues to grow as a multidisciplinary artist. Her previous roles include: Ruth (*Light Falling Down*), Cordelia (*King Lear*) and Whitney (*Piece of my Heart*). Avalon has trained with the Old Globe Theatre of San Diego and has enjoyed expanding her craft at CalArts.

Jeremy Spektor (Darwin Flagg & Pres. Curlew, MFA2) was born and raised in the Pacific Northwest. He received his BA in Drama from the University of Washington School of Drama and furthered his performance studies at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts as well as The Groundlings School of Comedy, Story Pirates, UCB, Lesly Kahn & Co, and RAW Acting Studio. Recently he played Stanley Kubrick in a production which debuted at REDCAT's New Works Festival. IG: @spektorisland

Jamie Cayer (Ensemble, BFA4) is a Boston/LA based actress, thrilled to be sharing *The Fig and The Wasp* with everyone! Previous CalArts works include *Uncle Vanya*, *Miss Sugar*, and *You on the Moors Now*. She recently wrapped production on her first film, *Nightmare in Negligee*, coming soon! Thank you to Mom, Dad, Jess, F2, and the incredible cast & crew! Let's have a bones show! IG: @jamie_cayer

Ronaldo Medina (Ensemble, BFA 3) is an LA based actor who has been acting since the age of 17. While at Golden Valley High School Ronaldo has been in two theater competitions and two Shakespeare Festivals. Select Golden Valley High School credits include *The Book of Mormon* (Elder Green and Doctor), *Sense and Sensibility* (John Dashwood), and *High School Musical* (Chad). His CalArts School of Theater productions include *The Romeo and Juliet Experience* and *The Fig and The Wasp*.

Willington Liu (Ensemble, BFA 3) is an LA and Beijing based performer. Before attending CalArts, he acted in the Chinese Blockbuster *Fengshen Trilogy* (封神三部曲) directed by Wuershan (乌尔善). In preparation for the film, he was professionally trained in equestrian, martial arts, weapons combat, archery, Chinese drumming, and wireflying. He has received acting training from renowned Chinese celebrity acting instructor Tianchi Liu (刘天池). He is also professionally trained and competed in Latin and Ballroom dance. Special thanks to Mom, Dad, Charlie, Anna 妈妈, and Uncle Doug.

Olivia Michael (Ensemble, BFA 4) is an LA-based performer originally from the Appalachian Mountains of North Carolina. She has worked professionally with the Interlochen Shakespeare Festival, Acadia Repertory Theatre, and Ensemble Stage. Previous CalArts School of Theater production credits include *The Labyrinth* and *Bobbie Clearly*. Olivia attended the North Carolina Governor's School for Theatre in 2017 and graduated from the Theater Performance program at Interlochen Arts Academy in 2018. She is currently pursuing a BFA in Acting at CalArts. Olivia would like to thank her parents, Amy and Kurt, her partner Jake, and her friends.

Heather Friedman (Ensemble, MFA2) is thrilled to be in the first production of *The Fig and The Wasp* and her first production at CalArts. Her work has been seen at The Beverly Hills Playhouse, The Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center, and the Experimental Theatre at California State University Northridge. Education includes California State University Northridge (BA Theatre) and California Institute of the Arts (MFA2 Acting). Special thanks to her parents, Madeleine Barnette, Sebastian Schug, her CalArts cohort, and all her mentors. IG: @heather_kat

Creative Team

Josh Sobel (Director, MFA3) is a director, developer/dramaturg, and educator specializing in pop-influenced and multi-disciplinary tales of adversity and hope. He has garnered awards and recognition from the Chicago Tribune, Sun-Times, Washington Post and Time Out, and was named one of Newcity Stage's "Players 2019: The Fifty People Who Really Perform for Chicago." Credits include *Bobbie Clearly* by Alex Lubischer (director, CalArts); *Daddy* by Monty Cole (dramaturg, CNP); the short films *Whole + Six Feet Apart* (executive producer, FutureHome Productions). Formerly Artistic Director, Haven Chicago. Recipient, SDCF Observership. BA, Oberlin College. Janet Bookspan. jmichaelsobel.wixsite.com/home

Yuki Ding (Scenic Designer, MFA2) is an MFA Scenic Design student at the California Institute of the Arts.

Violet Smith (Lighting Designer, MFA2) believes lighting design is watercolor painting in a 3D space. She is interested in mixed media art and her next cup of coffee, and extends special thanks to you for being here.

Lena Sands (Costume Designer) is an award winning costume designer for live performance. Using a variety of materials and methods to create bold and distinctive visuals, Lena collaborates with ensembles and communities to investigate bodies, histories, and the divine. Lena's designs have been seen at The Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), The Guthrie Theater, The Wallis, The Kirk Douglas Theater, The Getty Villa, The Skirball Cultural Center, Boston Court, and REDCAT. CalArts School of Theater productions include *Paradise by Design* and *When Spring Comes to Hills and Dales*. MFA in Costume Design, CalArts. Lena is thrilled to be back.

Natalie Nicholas (Video Designer, MFA2) is a nonbinary, multimedia performance artist based in Los Angeles pursuing an MFA at CalArts with a métier in Interactive Media for Performance and a concentration in Integrated Media. Using quirky and playful perversity, Nicholas builds visual experiences that encourage unrepressed expressivity and divine authenticity. Nicholas' work is both spectacle and heart. Incorporating video installation, clown, and live performance, their work pushes back on society's view of normalcy. Nicholas has worked in the film and television industry for the past five years.

Steven Cobilich (Sound Designer, BFA2) is an LA based audio engineer and designer. With a decade of live sound experience, he has designed audio systems and mixed artists at world class festivals such as Coachella and EDC. He also designed and installed the audio systems at the Echo and Echoplex in Los Angeles. He is excited to center his first theatrical design around immersivity and cutting edge technology as he is pursuing a career in themed entertainment. Special thanks to Carlos Mosquera and the entire team at L'Acoustics, Chris Baine and Avae.io, and Auggie Esquivel from Sound Factory Systems.

Clare Marie Nemanich (Co-Sound Designer, Assistant Sound Designer, MFA1) has worked with The National WWII Museum, Southern Rep Theatre, and The NOLA Project. Her sound designs in New Orleans have won two Big Easy Entertainment Awards. She left a long career in radio for a new future at CalArts and has never been happier. Special thanks to her husband and parents who have always helped her dreams become everyday life. Planetclareproductions.com

Sam Wells (Composer, DMA3) is a trumpeter, composer, and improviser who creates evocative and narrative multimedia performances. Sam has performed throughout North America and Europe, as well as in China. Sam is a member of SPLICE Ensemble. Sam has performed with Contemporaneous, Metropolis Ensemble, TILT Brass, the Lucerne Festival Academy Orchestra, and the Colorado MahlerFest Orchestra. Sam has recorded on Scarp Records, New Amsterdam/Nonesuch, New Focus Records, SEAMUS, and Ravello Recordings labels. Sam is on faculty at SPLICE Institute, Molloy College, Temple University, and CalArts. slewm.as

Livya Howard-Yashar (Choreographer/Movement Director, MFA2) is a dancer, choreographer, dramaturg, educator, and musician native to Los Angeles. Her work has been presented at various Los Angeles and New York based venues such as Highways Performance Space, Human Resources LA, St. Mark's Church, Center at Park West, Theater for the New City, and Theater West. She has also held workshops and participated in artist residencies in Israel, China, Greece, Ghana, Denmark, and the UK. With an extensive background in the performing arts and cross cultural studies, Livya's work draws upon the interconnectivity of language, storytelling, music, and dance. Livyahy.com

Kariam Abuabara (Co-Technical Director, BFA3) is a BFA Technical Direction student at the California Institute of the Arts.

Sam DuBois (Co-Technical Director, BFA3) is a human focused on realizing and developing the ideas of his collaborators. Ever since building his first haunted house at the age of 13, Sam has been focused on creating spectacles that surround audiences. His work can be seen in a number of settings from intimate immersive theater to "E ticket" theme park attractions. SamDuBois.com

Jen Dorman (Graphic Designer) is a creative director dedicated to concepting, crafting, and curating new ideas. She is fascinated and motivated by how innovative digital experiences can enhance and inspire change IRL. Backed by over a decade of experience guiding work across a wide range of

disciplines including interactive design, experiential, branding, and campaign creation, she is a strong advocate for craft, research, and strategy (and always pursuing a new path forward).

Harry Golby (Assistant Director, BFA 4) is a British-born, Qatar-bred, and LA-based Artist. He is thrilled to have been able to work with such a kind, joyful, and passionate cast and crew. And he is unbelievably proud of the work that has been created this fall. He acknowledges how sweet it is that we get to bring this theater back to life together. And finally, he would love to thank his family and friends for all the support they have given him, and Josh for giving him the chance to sit on the other side of the table.

Jane Hamor (Assistant Scenic Designer, MFA1) is an MFA Scenic Design student at the California Institute of the Arts.

Yueyi Zhang (Assistant Scenic designer, MFA1) is a Chinese scene designer. She has worked with The Chengdu City Concert Hall, Italia Conti Academy of Theatre Art, and Chengdu Chemical Plant Drama Space. She has also worked on themed immersive experience entertainment company The Volcanoer. MFA in Scene Design, CalArts. Special thanks to mom, dad and Ray. zoranazhang.wixsite.com

Cad Apostol (Assistant Lighting Designer, MFA1) is an LA-based lighting designer. They have worked with companies such as The Industry, Long Beach Opera, Metropolitan Master Chorale, and Studio School. BA in Theatre, with a focus on Lighting Design, at California State University, Northridge. Honored to work with such a wonderful creative team and lighting designer.

Stephanie Atwood (Assistant Lighting Designer) is an LA-based lighting designer. She has worked for The Fisher Center, VenueTech, Role Players Ensemble, Verducci Event Productions, and Los Medanos College. CalArts School of Theater productions include *Bacchae*. BFA in Theatrical Design, Technology, and Management, University of Idaho.

Yi-Lun Chien (Assistant Costume Designer, MFA1) is a MFA1 Costume Design student. Prior to attending CalArts, she was active in film and TV in Taiwan as an assistant costume designer and wardrobe. Her most recent assistant costume designer work in Taiwanese Netflix original series, *Light the Night*, will soon be released. Her film credits include *KANO* (2014), *Silence* (2016), *The Bold, the Corrupt, and the Beautiful* (2017), *Territory of Love* (L'Autre Continent, 2018), *Moneyboys* (2021). Special thanks to the production team and the costume shop.

Danica Martino (Assistant Costume Designer, MFA1) is an MFA Costume Design Student at the California Institute of the Arts.

Ghazal Bazargan (Assistant Video Designer, MFA1) is an MFA Interactive Media for Performance student at the California Institute of the Arts.

Zoë Lappin (Assistant Video Designer, BFA2) is somebody who does things. Sometimes those things are collage, or animation, or graphic design, or sound design, or knitting, or sculpting, or writing film reviews on Letterboxd, or shopping for records, or being a person with a body. Their work at CalArts includes management for Lars Jan's devised project *20202021* which premiered at the 2021 School of Theater Virtual Festival, and consulting on the creation of the festival's website.

Jordie Marie Rippion (Stage Manager, MFA3) will be graduating with her Masters of Fine Arts in Creative Producing and Management this Spring. Some of her past work has included *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Claire Performance Hall, Lancaster PA), *Star Wars the Untold Socka* (Creative Works,

Lancaster PA), *Unfolding Seeds* (Paperhand Puppet Intervention, Chapel Hill NC). At CalArts: *King Lear*, *Oedipus*, *Hirkari*, and Production Stage Managing the 2021 CalArts School of Theater Virtual Festival 2020-21. She hopes you enjoy being back in a theater as much as she does.

Angelina Jian (Producer, MFA3) is an MFA Producing student at the California Institute of the Arts.

Cassy Sottile (Assistant Stage Manager, MFA1) is a stage manager currently based in LA. She received her undergraduate degree from Washington College, where she stage managed *Dancescape*, *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*, *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*, *Dreaming Brave and True*, and *Or*. Most recently, Cassy worked as the stage manager for *The Effect* by Lucy Prebble. Cassy would like to thank her fellow MFA stage managers for their support and friendship, as well as her friends and family back in Maryland who encouraged her to pursue this degree.

Nicole Theep (Assistant Stage Manager, MFA2) is a California stage manager who experienced her first taste of stage management in community college as an ASM for *Cabaret*. Assistant stage manager credits include: *Shrew! The Musical* and *Die Fledermaus*. PSM Credits include: *The Beaux Stratagem*, *The Macbeth Project*, *An Atlas to "The Night & Other Electric Flowers"*. She is currently an Associate Production Manager on CalArts Actor Showcase and The Coffeehouse Projects. She is excited to be involved in the CalArts community and looks forward to new opportunities. MFA in Experience Design & Production - Management.

Katherine Paez Froehlich (Associate Production Supervisor, MFA 1) is an LA-based creative producer and production manager. She has previously worked with Universal Creative, Universal Studios Hollywood – Entertainment Production, the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, and City Theatre. CalArts School of Theater productions include *The Romeo & Juliet Experience* (Producer) and 2021 CalArts School of Theater Virtual Festival (Assistant Production Manager, XDP Series). Katherine would like to thank her partner, her parents, and her Rainbow Room for all the love and support.

CalArts School of Theater Faculty and Staff

Travis Preston, Dean; Head of Directing; CNP Executive Artistic Director
Christopher Akerlind, Lighting Design
Cristian Amigo, Sound Design
Mecca Andrews, Movement
Shaurja Banerjee, Technical Direction
Christopher Barreca, Head of Scene Design
Grayson Basina, Production and Studio Associate, Master Carpenter
Camille Benda, Head of Costume Design
Ashley Bruce, Applied Arts
Marissa Chibas, Acting; CNP Director of Duende CalArts; CNP Producing Artist
Julanne Chidi Hill, Speech
Monty Cole, Theater History
Michael Darling, Head of Technical Direction
Bart DeLorenzo, Showcase
Kate DeWall, Master Electrician
Heather Ehlers, Movement
Julianne Figueroa-Castro, Stage Management
Peter Flaherty, Head of Interactive Media for Performance
Estela Garcia, Movement
Westley Garcia-Encines, Director of Operations
Janie Geiser, Directing; Object Performance
Jenifer Gilbert, Experience Design and Production
Jon Gottlieb, Sound Design
Karen Gutierrez, Producing
Mona Heinze, Dramaturgy
Nikki Hyde, Stage Management
Mara Isaacs, Producing
Lars Jan, Acting
Mirjana Jokovic, Director of Performance; Head of MFA Acting
Daniel Alexander Jones, Theater History
Mark Kanieff, Experience Design and Production
Donovan Keith, Experience Design and Production
Lewis Klahr, Directing; Screenwriting; Film
Lillie Kroll, Budget Analyst/Accounting Specialist
Amber Larosa, Experience Design and Production
Andrea LeBlanc, Associate Dean; Co-Head of BFA Acting
Damian D. Lewis, Co-Head of BFA Acting; Voice/Speech
Rafael Lopez-Barrantes, Voice
Babette Markus, Movement
Ellen McCartney, Director of Experience Design and Production
Charles McNulty, Dramaturgy
Anne Militello, Head of Lighting Design
Ed Monaghan, Stage Combat
Anthony Nikolchev, Movement
Tanya Orellana, Experience Design and Production
Daniel Passer, Acting; Associate Director of Performance
Elizabeth Pickens, Entrepreneurship
Jane Pickett, Writing for Performance
Kelsey Rainwater, Stage Management
Michael Rossmly, Stage Management

Victor Sandoval, Costume Shop Director
Rachel Scandling, Producing; CNP Producing Director
Heidi Scheller, Voice
Shannon Scrofano, Associate Director of Experience Design and Production
Evelyn Serrano, Theater History
Amanda Shank, Associate Dean; Theater History; CNP Associate Artistic Director
Julie Shelton, Movement
Bree Sherry, Stage Management
Kristin Showalter, Applied Arts
Adam J. Smith, Director of Financial Aid; Performance Program Coordinator; Voice
Patrick Smith, Production Associate
Toni Smith, Speech
Chris Swetcky, Production Manager
Jeff Teeter, Experience Design and Production
Judith Teitelman, Entrepreneurship
Paul Turbiak, Communications Manager/Executive Assistant to the Dean; CNP Director of Communications
Kalean Ung, Voice
Hunter Wells, Associate Costume Shop Manager
Terry Wolverton, Entrepreneurship
Chi-wang Yang, Acting; CNP Associate Artistic Director

Other Events

Bacchae

By Euripides

Translation by Paul Woodruff and Gilbert Murray

Directed by Anthony Nikolchev

December 9-11, 2021

Butler Building 2

CaLARTS

For more information, please visit
Theater.calarts.edu