

FRIENDS
UNIVERSITY



DAVID LINDSAY-ABAIRE'S PRIZE WINNING DRAMA

RABBIT HOLE

SEP 30 - OCT 2, 2022

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DAVID LINDSAY-ABAIRE'S PULITZER PRIZE WINNING DRAMA

We're given an in-depth look into a family home's private life in rebuilding after a tragedy. A perspective we don't always get to see. The air of tension will be accompanied by a wash of reassurance, knowing that no family has it figured out. After the unexpected death of Becca and Howie's 4-year-old son, Danny, the family dynamic is damaged. We take a front-row seat to how one loss can impact these characters differently and how grief isn't a moment in time but rather a constant presence.

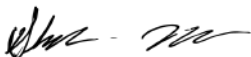
Grieving is the active process of piecing together life after loss. The characters in the show don't settle in their grief; they wrestle with it. The hurt of loss rears its head in moments when you least expect it—causing us to distance ourselves and lash out at loved ones. While grief can become a place of comfort, it can prohibit us from experiencing the current moment's joy. Though we want to linger on these deeply felt emotions because it's comfortable and safe, we're losing the most valuable gift of all....time. Time to spend with loved ones, time to celebrate, times of laughter, times of peace.

Even though the mind and heart stay on what we lost, time continues to move. It's a harsh reality of life. The only thing we can ask ourselves is, "What will we do as time continues to move" How can we take what we've experienced into our future? How will we allow tragedy to impact us? Rabbit Hole is a play about reclaiming and reestablishing one's identity after tragedy strikes. This production is not to belabor the loss of Howie and Becca's son but to honor their love for him by their choice to move forward, which is no easy feat.

Grief is not just the concept of death; it's the idea of loss—the loss of birthdays, time, support, and opportunity. I encourage you to look at grief as a constant presence that influences our perception of the world and, in return, our choices. Throughout this production, you will experience humans expressing some of the most profound, unfiltered thoughts and feelings of their hearts; In ways that use harsh language, ask invasive questions, challenge the presence of a higher power, and question reality as we know it.

I hope you experience this show with listening ears, patient minds, and open hearts.

Peace, Love, and Blessings,



Sheldon Mba
Assistant Professor of Music Theatre & Dance

CAST LIST

Becca Sarah Pressnell
Howie..... Zeke McGhee
Nat..... Lillian Smith
Izzy..... Gretchen Otter
Jason..... Scot Davis

Understudies

Becca Gretchen Otter
Nat..... Andrea Powers
Izzy..... Kelley McDonald

PRODUCTION TEAM

Stage Director - Sheldon Mba
Assistant Director - Taylor Athanasiou
Stage Manager - Rebecca Grosselin, Taryn Sweat
Run Crew - Kelley McDonald, Andrea Powers
Set Design - Brain Stole
Light Design - Brian Stole
Sound - Bob Hett
Poster/Program Artwork - Faith Cox

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special Thanks to
Dr. Nathanael May
Dr. Amy Carey
Alyssa Whalen
Robyn Mabe
The Kennedy Center

BIOGRAPHIES

Sarah Pressnell (Becca)

Sarah is thrilled to be back at Friends performing again this year! Currently a senior, she is studying musical theatre and is also a member of Singing Quakers. Even though she has done several performances over the years, *Rabbit Hole* is her first ever play that she's been in. When not at school, she enjoys drinking coffee, eating good food, curling up in a blanket with a book, or spending time with her wonderful husband and her cat.

Zeke McGhee (Howie)

Ezekiel McGhee was last seen on stage at the Salina Community Theatre's productions of *Murder on the Orient Express, 1776: The Musical* and Disney's *Newsies*. He currently attends Friends University where he is majoring in music education. Zeke is a cellist, performer and an aspiring educator, proclaiming to have "too much energy for life."

Lillian Smith (Nat)

Lillian Smith is a freshman here at Friends University. She is a Musical Theatre major and absolutely loves what she does. She has done many shows in the past but this is her first performance at Friends. She loves coffee, Jesus, her friends, reading, and all things theatre and music! Her favorite verse right now is Isaiah 40:28-29 "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak." Lillian is so excited for you to experience life, love, and loss, through this show! May the Lord bless you and keep you!

Scot Davis (Jason)

Scot Davis is a freshman from Tampa, Florida. His passions include wrestling, theater, and music. In his free time he enjoys hanging out with friends and going to the beach. Scot is really looking forward to playing Jason, and hopes you enjoy the show. He wants to give a special shout out to his wrestling coach, Aaron Meister. #B1st

Gretchen Otter (Izzy and Becca Understudy)

Gretchen Otter is a junior perusing a B.A. in Music Theatre and Minor in Dance at Friends University. She was last seen on the Friends' stage as "Amy" in *Little Women* and "Kate Rushton" in *Working*. She is absolutely thrilled to be playing Izzy in this production, and hopes you enjoy the show!

Andrea Powers (Nat Understudy)

Andrea Powers is a junior this year at Friends University. She is majoring in elementary education because she loves working with kids. She loves theatre equally as much! She has been involved in theatre since high school and continued it into college. She has been involved in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Baskerville*, and *Calamity Town* while at Friends. She has also been a follow spot operator for several productions as well. She really likes this show because of the family at the center of it and how they are working through their emotions. She hopes you enjoy *Rabbit Hole* just as much as she does!

Kelley McDonald (Izzy Understudy)

Kelley is a sophomore at Friends University majoring in Zoo Science with the hope to work on conserving natural wildlife around the world. Theatre played a big part of her life during school. Doing different shows throughout high school *Miss Nelson is Missing*, *Mary Poppins*, *It's A Bad Year for Tomatoes*, *Women and War: A One Act War*, *Morning at 7*, *Suessical*, *A Moment in Time*, *Mirrors*, *Footloose*, *The Game's Afoot*, *Almost Maine*, *Working*, *Baskerville*, *Little Women*, *Calamity Town* doing cast, crew, and even has directed a show. Everything has been done to get the full theatrical experience. She is excited to continue theatre through college.

Rebecca Grosselin (Stage Manager)

Rebecca Grosselin is a sophomore at Friends studying the Natural Sciences. This is her first show at Friends, but she has been doing backstage work for 4+ years and is excited to once again Stage Manage for *Rabbit Hole*. She hopes everyone enjoys the show!

Taryn Sweat (Stage Manager)

Taryn Sweat is a current Graduate Student of Friends University pursuing her MBA in Accounting. She had much experience in the theatre department as an undergraduate and she is excited to be back to help stage manage this show. Taryn is so grateful for this experience and has had much joy working with everyone in this production. The theatre feels like home for her so being back has been an enjoyable blessing. Taryn hopes you enjoy the emotional story of *Rabbit Hole* and thanks everyone for showing their support of the Fine Arts.



The Kennedy Center

*The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, part of the Rubenstein Arts Access Program, is generously funded by **David M. Rubenstein.***

Special thanks to The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust for supporting the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival.

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Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts.

This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KCACTF representative, and selected students and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year more than 1,500 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.

THANKS
FOR COMING!

JOIN US AT ANOTHER EVENT!

OCTOBER

Iris Fletcher Gallery Opening | Oct. 7, 5 p.m.

Concert Jazz Band & Jazz Vocal Ensemble | Oct. 14, 7:30 p.m.

Choral Connections | Oct. 21, 7:30 p.m.

Tower Wind Quintet | Oct. 25, 7:30 p.m.

Casado Jazz Night | Oct. 26, 7 p.m.

Conjunto Latino | Oct. 27, 7:30 p.m.

NOVEMBER

The Gondoliers | Nov. 18-20

Tickets and full calendar at friends.edu/fineartstickets



OUR NEXT ACT

RISE UP CAMPAIGN PHASE TWO

The Riney Fine Arts Center has had a home on the Friends University campus since the 1960s. While it has hosted high-quality music, dance and theatrical performances for decades, it was built without the future in mind.

Friends University is seeking to renovate and expand the performance spaces, entrance, lobby and more to better serve our students and local community for the next fifty years.

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