

Theater for the New City's Dream Up Festival Presents
"Mary V"
A Battle of the Sexes 400 Years in the Making

WHERE AND WHEN:

August 28 at 5:00 PM, August 30 at 9:00 PM, September 1 at 9:00 PM, September 6 at 9:00 PM, September 8 at 9:00 PM, September 10 at 8:00 PM, September 11 at 8:00 PM, September 18 at 5:00 PM.

Johnson Theater, Theater for the New City, 155 First Ave. (at East 10th Street)

Presented by Theater for the New City (Crystal Field, Artistic Director) as part of the Dream Up Festival 2016.

Ticket Price: \$12.00

Box office: (212) 254-1109, www.dreamupfestival.org

Runs for 2:30 Mins. Reviewers are invited

Press Representative: Jonathan Slaff & Associates, 212/924-0496,

js@jsnyc.com, www.jsnyc.com

In "Mary V," a feminist exploration of the Shakespearean historical play, women battle for control of a production of "Henry V," led by their hero Mary. The play explores the ways in which the division between femininity and masculinity ultimately yields destruction for both sexes, and that peace and understanding of gender is preferably to bias and conflict. Nietzsche's concept of "the abyss gazes back" and faithfulness to one's ideals is also a prominent theme. "Mary V" is written by Rebekah Carrow. It is co-directed by Pati Amoroso and Yonatan Weinstein.

The play acts as a gender-bend of Shakespeare's "Henry V." At a theater, a production of "Henry V" by a traditional male-dominated cast is challenged by an all-female cast, led by Mary. Neither side is willing to give up their rights to perform the play as they wish, resulting in an inevitable conflict between the two casts. As a battle between the sexes looms, Mary finds herself becoming more similar to her rival, Henry, sacrificing her feminine qualities for assured victory in the coming strife. As battle erupts and her friends are put into mortal danger, Mary decides that she will not let power corrupt who she is. Mary's troupe is triumphant, a victory they accredit to their queen.

The moral question at the core of the play is inspired by Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophical assertion that "whoever fights monster should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And if you gaze long enough into an abyss, the abyss will gaze back into you." Mary and her sisters initially stand for their belief that a diversified rendition of the Shakespearean play is essential. However, under the scrutiny of the remote, eerily dominant Director, Mary finds herself becoming more masculine and aggressive, the role of the king beginning to alter her being and sense of morality. The male characters find themselves falling into similar traps as their dedication to defeating women whom they view as threatening leads them down a dark path.

Gender and its societal implications are intricately tied into the moral questions as well, as the play is a commentary on the danger of the masculine/feminine binary and the trouble it yields. Both sides of the battle, the men and the women, are kept separated by a wall in the center of the stage, signifying the artificial constraints society erects between males and females. It is only after the wall is broken down and the battle ought that true peace can be realized with the production of a Shakespearean play involving both men and women in the lead roles.

Lara Vosburgh will be the producer, and Sohailla Mahjour will be the stage manager. The cast will

consist of Rebekah Carrow, Katherine Wadleigh, Caitlin Mileon, Thanh Ta, Moira McCormick, Isabel Langen, Carolyn Becker, Lisa Campbell, Lindsey White, Amy Seidel, Yeena Sung, Joe Reece, Nick Bonaparte, Sebastian Gutierrez, Marcus Guerrier, Timothy Regan, Kevin Stevens, Paul Richards, Trevor Liu, Francesco Chen, Andrew Gonzalez, Scott Shirk, Mike Handelman, Michael Andrews.

The lead role of Mary will be played by author Rebekah Carrow. Carrow is a recent graduate of the Atlantic Acting Studio Evening Conservatory and has spent the past year writing "Mary V." Carrow seeks to expand "femininity on the American stage" and is particularly interested in exploring themes of gender roles and feminism in her work. Past acting credits include the roles of Mercutio in "Juliet & her Romeo," Nurse/Teacher in "B in Oblivion" and Gigi in "231." This is Carrow's first play.

The two co-directors of the play are Pati Amoroso and Yonatan Weinstein. Amoroso started her career as a teenager, producing her first musical at the age of 16. She would later attend some of the most prestigious film schools in Brazil. She has served as an actress, director, producer and translator for many theater and film productions in Brazil. Amoroso studied at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and is now directing an experimental webseries, "My Life as Morgan" and a play, "They'll Be Callin' Us Witches" for New York festivals.

Co-director Yonatan Weinstein directed a film "My Grandma - Frau Masha," in Israel at age 13. The film was broadcast on Israeli National Television and was shown at festivals around the world. Weinstein went on to study at the NYU Tisch School of the Arts and at the BBC in London. With roles in productions ranging from director to video editor to set crew, Weinstein is expanding his work to the theater with his directorial debut in "Mary V."

The seventh annual Dream Up Festival (www.dreamupfestival.org) is dedicated to new works. Presented by Theater for the New City, the Festival will run from August 28 to September 18, 2016 and will feature a variety of original dramas, comedies, musicals, adaptations and experimental plays. The Festival is traditionally a celebration of the arts in a time when cultural and arts funding is in sharp decline due to a number of social and market forces. Now an East Village tradition, it challenges the audience to reflect on the innovative and imaginative ways that they interact with the theater.

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