

NIU'S SCHOOL OF THEATRE AND DANCE PRESENTS

WITCH



JEN SILVERMAN



NIU School of Theatre and Dance presents

Witch

By Jen Silverman

Director

Kendra Holton

Assistant Director

Sarah Blickem

Scenic Designer

Alicia Margerum

Costume Designer

Alix Burkhardt

Lighting Designer

Timothy Peters

Technical Director

Tracy Nunnally

Properties Designer

Ski Sciaraffa

Intimacy Choreographer

Bethany Mangum-Oles

Fight Choreographers

J. Cody Hunt and Stanton Davis

Dramaturg

Elizabeth Nowak

Stage Manager

Linnea Strack

This show is approximately 90 minutes and will have no intermission.

CAST

Elizabeth Sawyer

Scratch

Sir Arthur

Frank

Cuddy

Winnifred

Cornelia Hayes

Hardy Louihis

J. Cody Hunt

Logan Blake

Paul James Lang

Kyara Chisolm

Director's Note

The world has changed since the team and I began building this subversive fable. We've seen new war, human rights rollbacks, increased wealth disparity, decreased access to resources, the list goes on. So it is with the six characters you'll meet here: they're entangled in a machine of a world that won't stop turning, losing to systems built by the powerful, for the powerful. And it hurts.

As in our time, systems reliant on oppression spare no victims.

As in our time, it is difficult to have hope.

I invite you to let their questions linger: what do you want? Can you imagine a better world? What are you willing to give to get it?

And if you had the chance to start from scratch...could you?

From the Dramaturg

Why this play now?

Witch is a feminist retelling of *The Witch of Edmonton* written by John Ford, Thomas Dekker and William Rowley. The 400-year old play is inspired by real events in Edmonton, England in 1621. Then as now, women were often misrepresented and not given a place in society. Many of those class structures still exist, and we wonder if life will ever change.

Witchcraft in Early Modern England

Well-behaved women rarely make history. Women today owe some of their freedoms to women who misbehaved in the past. Throughout European history, women were considered the weaker sex and therefore vulnerable to being tempted by the Devil. In England, women who were rejected by society for their age, marital status, physical appearance or class might subsequently be accused of witchcraft. English villages held witch trials, often ending in the death of the accused woman. The existence of defiant women of the early modern period helped change the lives of women today.

Witch of Edmonton

Researching Elizabeth Sawyer's life has connected me to a woman cast out by society for reasons that could overtake any woman. She was feared because she was unmarried. She was questioned because she was aging. She was found guilty because she had a birthmark. Elizabeth Sawyer was convicted of witchcraft and hanged at the age of 49. Word of Elizabeth's fate was spread in a variety of ways, through pamphlets, ballads and plays. She was dramatized, demonized and defiled, but she never got to tell her own story.

A Note on Museum Theatre

You're invited to view an exclusive, student-curated exhibit connecting to *Witch* in the lobby. The survey data collected will be used to understand how museum objects can enhance the audience's engagement with a play.



Scan the code
to participate

Setting

The Village of Edmonton, a small town lost in the country. Then-ish.

Content warnings

sexism, classism, poverty, sexual themes, death, grief, violence

CAST BIOS



Logan Blake (Frank) is a third year B.F.A. acting major. He has a tremendous passion for the craft and is thrilled to be in this show. At NIU, he has previously been seen in the 24 hour theatre festivals, the 72 hour film festival, the improv shows, *Sonnets for an Old Century*, *Need to Know*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Life is a Dream*, and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. Logan also works on various independent short films with his classmates and friends. Additionally, he holds actor combatant status in the Society of American Fight Directors. Logan would like to thank his family, friends, and faculty for their endless support and wisdom over the years. He hopes that everyone enjoys the show as much as he enjoyed working on it.



Kyara Chisolm (Winnifred) is a third year B.F.A. acting candidate here at NIU. Her previous roles at NIU include Helena (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) directed by Melanie Keller, Peggy Rogers (*The Children's Hour*) directed by Andrea Dymond and Verges (*Much Ado about Nothing*) directed by Kay Martinovich. She is delighted to be in this production of *Witch* and share it with everyone. Kyara has had such a wonderful time being a part of this show and would like to give a shoutout to everyone involved in the show for making this such a memorable experience and her loved ones for always supporting her dream. Love to all of you!!!



Cornelia Hayes (Elizabeth Sawyer) is a second year M.F.A. acting candidate. Previously on the NIU stage she has played Peter Quince in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Fiona in *In a Word*. She graduated with a B.A. from Northwestern College in 2020, double majoring in theatre and marketing. She also holds a Diploma in Classic Acting from the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA). Cornelia has worked professionally across the Midwest, Pacific Northwest, and London. Before coming to NIU, she toured with Taproot Theatre Company, a regional theatre in Seattle. Stage credits include: *The Last Five Years* (Cathy), *Next to Normal* (Diana), *Love's Labour's Lost* (Rosaline), *The Changeling* (Beatrice), *Shrek: The Musical* (Fiona), *Noises Off* (Belinda), *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (Siobhan). Film/commercial credits include: The Alternative, Washington State Department of Health commercial, and Real Northwestern. Thanks to my family and my husband Harry for the continual love and support. Instagram: @iamunicornelia

CAST BIOS



J Cody Hunt (Sir Arthur) is proud to be pursuing his M.F.A. in acting. NIU credits include Azdak in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Man in *In A Word*. Regional credits include *Unto These Hills* at The Mountainside Theatre, North Carolina; *Sleeping Beauty* at Birmingham Children's Theatre, Alabama; Blue Gate Musicals, Indiana. Cody was a fight choreographer, stunt performer and fight captain for shows like *SAMSON* at Sight and Sound Theatres, and played the role of Jesus in *JESUS*, Pennsylvania and Missouri. His Chicago credits include Chicago Kids Company; *Lost In Time*, Magnified Gift Theatre; *Low Hanging Fruit*, Fearless Fiction Productions. He received his B.A. in drama with a concentration in performance at Jacksonville State University in Alabama. Cody would like to thank his wife Elena and daughter Emerson for their endless support.



Paul James Lang (Cuddy) (he/him) is a second year M.F.A. acting candidate, originally from the Northeast and now happy to call the Midwest home. He received his B.F.A. in musical theater from The Boston Conservatory. Some of Paul's favorite credits include Mikhail/The Child in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and Giuliano in *Big Love* at NIU, as well as Horst in *Bent*, Sir Andrew in *Twelfth Night*, the Envoy in *The Balcony*, and several different characters in TheaterWorks USA's touring production of *Junie B. Jones*. He is thrilled to be returning to the NIU stage with this production. Thank you so much to Kendra and our brilliant team behind the scenes, as well as my family for all of their love and support.



Hardy Louihis (Scratch) is a year-two M.F.A. acting candidate at Northern Illinois University (N.I.U.). Hardy received his Bachelor of Arts in Theatre from the Metropolitan State University of Denver. He was in the N.I.U. production of *In A Word* (Guy), directed by Professor Kay Martinovich, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Oberon), directed by Melanie Keller. He is happy and grateful to working on this production with such a dedicated and professional cast and crew. He is thankful to have the support of his family and friends.

PRODUCTION BIOS

Jen Silverman (Playwright) (they/them) Plays include: *Spain*; *Highway Patrol*; *Collective Rage: A Play in 5 Betties*; *The Moors*; *The Roommate*; and *Witch*. Their plays have been produced off-Broadway (Second Stage Theatre, MCC Theater, The Playwrights Realm), across the U.S. (Steppenwolf, The Goodman, The Humana Festival, Williamstown Theatre Festival, The Huntington, South Coast Repertory Theatre, Writers Theatre etc), and internationally in Australia, the U.K., the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Brazil, Spain, and elsewhere. Books include: the debut novel *We Play Ourselves* (a finalist for the Lambda Literary Award), story collection *The Island Dwellers*, poetry chapbook *Bath*, and new novel *There's Going to be Trouble* forthcoming from Random House on April 9, 2024. Silverman is a three-time MacDowell Fellow, a member of New Dramatists, and a Scholar of Note at the American Library in Paris. They wrote *The Miranda Obsession* as a narrative podcast for Audible, starring Rachel Brosnahan. They also write for TV and film, including *Tales of the City* (Netflix) and *Tokyo Vice* (Max). Honors include fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Guggenheim.

Sarah Blickem (Assistant Director) is a fourth year B.A. theatre studies candidate at Northern Illinois University (NIU). This is her first time assistant directing, and her last show at NIU. Credits include stage manager for *RUR*, *Melancholy Play*, *The Children's Hour*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at NIU, *Sizwe Banzi is Dead* with Outer Loop Theater Company, *On an Average Day* with Kane Repertory Theatre, and assistant stage manager for Timber Lake Playhouse's 2022 summer season. She is incredibly grateful for the opportunity to create with such an amazing team, and would like to thank all the people she worked with during her time at NIU. She would also like to thank her parents and partner for their unwavering love and support.

Alix Burkhardt (Costume Designer) is a fourth-year B.F.A. design and technology student specializing in costuming. She is so proud to have been a part of this amazing team. She co-designed *Big Love* last Spring here at NIU. Her other design credits include *Sizwe Banzi is Dead*, *Broken Mirrors*, and *13 Suits* with The Outer Loop Theater Company. She would like to thank everyone in the costume shop for enabling her crazy ideas and for teaching her so much. She would also like to thank her parents for all the late-night video calls and her roommate Cam for all the little treats.

Stanton Davis (Co-Fight Choreographer) serves as the head of voice speech and dialects at Northern Illinois University. He studied at the Professional Theatre Training Program at the University of Delaware. He has acted, directed, coached, and taught at theater institutions across the United States.

PRODUCTION BIOS

Kendra Holton (Director) (she/they) is a queer, climate-focused experiential educator. The former head of movement training for the NIU School of Theatre and Dance, Kendra has logged thousands of classroom hours including most classes in the B.F.A. and B.A. performance sequences and nearly a decade curating curriculum as associate director of the Gately/Poole Conservatory. Previous NIU productions include *She Kills Monsters*, *The Wolves*, *The Revolutionists*, *Blue Stockings*, and *Good Person of Setzuan*. Raised on Florida swampland by way of NYC, she trained at Moscow Art Theatre and Shakespeare and Company, and mentored under multiple master teachers in several performance disciplines. She's among the last of the certified Williamson Technique teachers, and an intimacy designer for stage and film. Kendra is the co-founder of Actors Movement Camp, a nature-based retreat series for performance artists, and DeCarbon DeKalb, an environmental advocacy nonprofit providing local resources and solutions. Kendra is currently on leave from arts academia to explore the ways in which performance training can be of service to the fight for climate adaptation. She lives in Dekalb with her son, two cats, and a growing urban farm.

J Cody Hunt (Co-Fight Choreographer) is proud to be pursuing his M.F.A. in acting. NIU credits include Azdak in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Man in *In A Word*. Regional credits include *Unto These Hills* at The Mountainside Theatre, North Carolina; *Sleeping Beauty* at Birmingham Children's Theatre, Alabama; Blue Gate Musicals, Indiana. Cody was a fight choreographer, stunt performer and fight captain for shows like *SAMSON* at Sight and Sound Theatres, and played the role of Jesus in *JESUS*, Pennsylvania and Missouri. His Chicago credits include Chicago Kids Company; Lost In Time, Magnified Gift Theatre; Low Hanging Fruit, Fearless Fiction Productions. He received his B.A. in drama with a concentration in performance at Jacksonville State University in Alabama. Cody would like to thank his wife Elena and daughter Emerson for their endless support.

Bethany Mangum-Oles (Intimacy Choreographer) is thrilled to have collaborated on this production! She is an actor, director, educator, and mama of two born and raised in southern California. Bethany holds a B.F.A. in acting from California State University, Fullerton, and an M.F.A. in acting from Northern Illinois University (NIU). While at NIU, her studies took her internationally to the Moscow Art Theater School in Moscow, Russia and the Adana International Theatre Festival in Adana, Turkey. Bethany is a Certified Intimacy Captain and currently in pursuit of her Trauma-Informed Yoga and Yoga Nidra Certifications. She has made her artistic home at NIU as full-time performance area faculty and head of B.F.A. acting recruitment. Bethany also has the unique privilege of serving as rotating voice and movement faculty at the renowned Gately-Poole Acting Conservatory and was recently named artistic director of Kane Repertory Theatre. www.bethanymangum.com.

PRODUCTION BIOS

Alicia Margerum (Scenic Designer) is a second year M.F.A student studying scenic design. Credits include *Red*, *Once on this Island*, and *All American Boys* at Mississippi State University as well as *Big Love* at Northern Illinois University. She is grateful for the opportunity to have worked on this show with such a wonderful team and cannot wait to design for more shows in the future.

Elizabeth Nowak (Dramaturg) (They/Them/Theirs) Is a first year theatre studies and anthropology double major. Their passions include dramaturgy, museum curation, creating props and conducting research. Elizabeth was on the flight crew for NIU's fall 2023 production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Tracy Nunnally (Technical Director) Professor Tracy Nunnally is the technical director and head of the Design and Technology Area at the Northern Illinois University School of Theatre and Dance; the owner and system designer at Vertigo™. He has been a professional technical director since the 1980s, and his professional TD credits span the full spectrum of genres, continents, and spaces. He is an ETCP Certified Rigger, Recognized Trainer, and Recognized Employer; a certified trainer for Lift Trucks and MEWPs; and a long-term member of IATSE, USITT, ESTA, ITA, URTA, and EdTA.

Timothy Peters (Lighting Designer) is a fourth-year B.F.A. design and tech major with a lighting focus. He recently designed/worked on the productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *In A Word* at Northern Illinois University, *Almost Maine* at Indian Trail High School Academy, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Mamma Mia!* during the 2022 season of the Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival. He wants to thank his partner Cameron for their unwavering support, and his high school theatre director Bob Allen for guiding him toward a path of love for theatre and life.

Ski Sciaraffa (Properties Designer) is a second-year M.F.A. costume and props design candidate. Previous works include props designer for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (NIU 2023); costume craftsperson for *The Three Musketeers* (Montana Shakespeare in the Parks) and *She Kills Monsters* (NIU 2022); draper and stitcher for *The Children's Hour* (NIU 2023); props designer for *Just a Dream: The Green Play* (Augustana College) and *Anonymouse* (NEIU); and costume designer for The Actor's Garden's productions of *Becky Thatcher*, *Off to Olympus*, *Just So*, and *Pots & Pan*. They would like to thank their family, friends, professors, and colleagues for their immense love and support.

Linnea Strack (Stage Manager) is a first-year theatre design and technology B.F.A and psychology B.A. double major from Hainesville, Illinois. Past credits include stage managing *Chicago*, *The Addams Family*, *Clue*, *Little Women*, *Schoolhouse Rock Live!*, and *Rage Play*. In her free time, Linnea enjoys listening to music and doing word search puzzles. Linnea wants to thank the amazing cast and crew for all their hard work and dedication. She would also like to thank Will, Lexi, her B.F.A. design and technology classmates, and her family for all their support.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Scenery

Scenic Coordinator	Sahin Sahingolu
Scene Shop Supervisor	Adam Rager
Scene Shop Graduate Employees	J. Cody Hunt, Paul Lang, Alicia Margerum, Tyler Page
Scene Shop Undergraduate Employees	Jade Doherty, Mike Kozel, David Mortenson, Sasha Norman
Scene Shop Employee	Hernan Acosta-Contreras
Student Technicians	THEA 295 Students
Run Crew	Darius Murray, Elizabeth Nowak, Francesca Ryan

Costumes

Costume Design Advisor	Jeremy W. Floyd
Costume Director	Lori Hartenhoff
Costume Shop Supervisor	Elizabeth Galba
Costume Shop Graduate Employees	Elias Dennis, Ski Sciaraffa
Costume Shop Undergraduate Employees	Alyssa Altadonna, Alix Burkhardt, B. Leni
Costume Shop 395 Students	Alix Burkhardt, Emily Christanson, Elizabeth Karth, Danisha Gilmore
Student Technicians	THEA 210, 235, and 295 Students
Costume Crew	Azzy Fee, Thomas Reading, Ivan Velazquez

Lighting

Lighting Design Advisor	Brandon Wardell
Resident Head Electrician	Chris Kurszewski
Assistant Head Electrician	Emilia Barerra
Lighting Shop Graduate Assistants	J. Cody Hunt, Paul Lang, Tyler Page
Lighting Shop Undergraduate Employees	Logan Bryant, Conall Doherty, Tim Peters
Student Electricians	THEA 210 and 295 Students
Light Board Operator	Max Garcia
Sound Board Operator	Francesca Ryan

Properties

Properties Director	Dave Doherty
Properties Graduate Assistants	Eric Brockmeier, Alicia Margerum, Ski Sciaraffa
Properties Shop Employees	Sarah Blickem, Elizabeth Nowak
Properties Shop 295/395 Students	Lizzie Ciszczon, Dave Mortenson, Sasha Norman
Properties Crew	Max Garcia, Elizabeth Nowak

Production Management

Technical Direction Advisor	Tracy Nunnally
Production Assistant	Jordan Clifton
House Management Supervisor	Cornelia Hayes

Special Thanks

Roxanna Conner, Rich Grund, NIU SOTD Faculty, Jordan Clifton, Alys Dickerson and Jack Matyas.

SOTD FACULTY AND STAFF

Alexander F. Adducci (Emeritus)

Richard Arnold (Emeritus)

S. Alan Chelser (Emeritus)

Kaitlyn Cheng

Judith Chitwood (Emerita)

Gibson Cima

Roxanna Conner

Stanton Davis

Frankie DiCiaccio

David Doherty

Lila H. Dole (Emerita)

Jeremy W. Floyd

Paula Frasz (Emerita)

Elizabeth Galba

Kent Gallagher (Emeritus)

Kathryn Gately (Emerita)

Alexander Gelman

Richard Grund

Lori Hartenhoff

Kathryn Hubbard (Emerita)

Jennifer Ingle-Grund

Paul Kassel

Chris Kurszewski

Marc Macaranas

Bethany Mangum-Oles

Christopher J. Markle (Emeritus)

Lorri Marshall

Kay Martinovich

Terrence McClellan (Emeritus)

Ken Miller

Randall Newsom (Emeritus)

Tracy Nunnally

Matt O'Brien

Melanie Parks (Emerita)

Donald W. Polzin (Emeritus)

Richard Poole (Emeritus)

Adam Rager

Patricia Ridge (Emerita)

Deborah Robertson (Emerita)

Michel Rodriguez Cintra

Sahin Sahinoglu

Stephanie Sailer

Robert Schneider

Sarita Smith Childs

Willa Taylor

Jere Tulk (Emerita)

Emily Vitrano

Brandon Wardell



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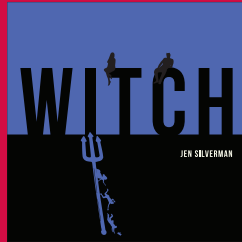
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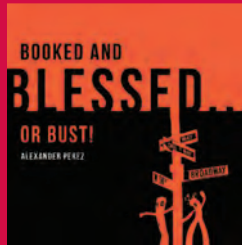
Anxious People

Sally Stevens Players Theatre
February 16-18, 22 and 24



Witch

Black Box Theatre
February 23-25 and Feb. 29 - March 2



Booked and Blessed...or BUST!

Black Box Theatre
April 5-7 and 11-13



Spring Dance Concert

O'Connell Theatre
April 25-28