VILLANOVA THEATRE PRESENTS

FEBRUARY 9th - 20th, 2022

THE Revolutionists

by Lauren Gunderson / Directed by Valerie Joyce

FEBRUARY 9th - 20th, 2022
Our Community Agreements

We welcome and celebrate audiences of all ages, abilities, body types, gender identities, economic backgrounds, ethnicities, immigration statuses, races, religious beliefs, sexualities and overall ways of being human. Without exception.

We Agree:

To treat everyone - including performers, audience members, crew, staff and volunteers - with respect, whether in the audience, on stage, behind the stage, at the concession stand or at the front door.

To laugh when we find something humorous, cry when we are moved to tears and affirm feeling vulnerable.

To create and maintain a space that is open, honest and real.

To celebrate one another and to provide encouragement.

To endeavor to provide appropriate content advisories for our audiences.

To reject and speak out against any discrimination, demeaning behavior or harassment against any of our community members. This includes, but is not limited to ageist, ableist, classist, homophobic, nativist, racist, religist, sexist or transphobic language.

For more information, please visit villanovatheatre.org/community-agreements.
About Villanova University

Since 1842, Villanova University’s Augustinian Catholic intellectual tradition has been the cornerstone of an academic community in which students learn to think critically, act compassionately and succeed while serving others. There are more than 10,000 undergraduate, graduate and law students in the University’s six colleges – the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Villanova School of Business, the College of Engineering, the M. Louise Fitzpatrick College of Nursing, the College of Professional Studies and the Villanova University School of Law. As students grow intellectually, Villanova prepares them to become ethical leaders who create positive change everywhere life takes them.

In Gratitude

The faculty, staff and students of Villanova Theatre extend sincere gratitude to those generous benefactors who have established endowed funds in support of our efforts:

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### 2021-2022 Benefactors

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This list is updated as of February 8th, 2022. Gifts of $25 and above are acknowledged in the program. If your name has been misprinted or omitted, or if you are interested in supporting Villanova Theatre, please contact: Kimberly Reilly, Director of Marketing & Public Relations at (610) 519 - 7454.
Villanova Theatre Presents

The Revolutionists

BY LAUREN GUNDERSON

Directed by
VALERIE M. JOYCE

February 9th - February 20th, 2022

Scenic Designer
MARIE LASTER

Costume Designer
JANUS STEFANOWICZ

Lighting Designer
JEROLD R. FORSYTH

Sound Designer
SAMMY HURLEY

Production Dramaturg
AUTumn BLALock

Stage Manager
CHELSEA E. DRUMEL

THE REVOLUTIONISTS is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.
www.concordtheatricals.com
CAST
Olympe de Gouges..............................................................Sarah Stryker
Marianne Angelle.............................................................Veshonte Brown
Charlotte Corday..........................................................J. Bean Schwab
Marie-Antoinette............................................................Ali Scaramella*

THE REVOLUTIONISTS STAFF
Production Manager..........................................................Amanda Coffin
Technical Director..............................................................Jacob Rothermel
Properties Manager...........................................................Sharri Jerue
Costume Shop Manager....................................................Janus Stefanowicz
Cutter/Draper..................................................................Rosemarie McKelvey
Master Electrician............................................................Michael Hamlet
Stage Management Consultant ...........................................John Flak*
Trauma Informed Consultant............................Rachel O’Hanlon-Rodriguez
Business Manager.............................................................Elisa Loprete Hibbs
Director of Marketing & Public Relations......................Kimberly Reilly
Educational Dramaturgy Consultant.................................Cristy Chory
Educational Dramaturgs.....................................................Kenzie Bradley, Kat Ross Kline

*denotes member, Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors
and Stage Managers in the United States.

Assistant Stage Managers.................................Taahira Davis, Anthony Hillanbrand,
Alison Pascale, Joshua Peters, Tomas Torres
Assistants to the Costume Designer........................Autumn Blalock, Veshonte Brown
Scenic Charge.................................................................Kenzie Bradley
Light Board Operator ......................................................Emily Monaco
Sound Board Operator ....................................................Tomas Torres

Set Construction.........................................................Justin Badoyen, Erin Coffman, Ethan Rundell,
Louis Pitingolo, Celia Wusteney
Wardrobe Managers...............................................Maddie Bishop, Olivia Boise, Lily Nguyen,
Rosie Norman, Erin Rodriguez, Anya Speaker
Costume Technicians.....................................................Eileen Cha, Isabella Lussi, Sarina
Sandwell, Allyson Szabo
Properties & Scenic Artists.................................Cecilia Bushway, Thomas DeStefanis,
Alicia Langan, Taylor Molt, Christine Polakewicz, Charlotte Roberts
Business Manager’s Assistant.................................Santino Moffa, Sanjay Reo
Speaker’s Night
with Gabriela Serena Sanchez | February 17th

Gabriela Serena Sanchez, Founder and Co-Artistic Director of Power Street Theatre, has created a Women of Color-led multicultural theatre collective with fellow artists, culturally producing, directing and starring in several powerful new plays in the heart of el barrio. A Philadelphia native, she received a Bachelor of Arts in Theater from Temple University. Her life’s work has been dedicated to theatre, cultural preservation, racial justice and feminism. Gabi’s intent is to take up space and invite others to do the same, “with our bodies, our languages, our cultures, our stories.”

Her former leadership roles include Director of Education at Norris Square Neighborhood Project, Cultural Enrichment and Facility Manager at Taller Puertorriqueño, and six years in residence at the Department of Recreation with Conflict Resolution Theater. As a Teaching Artist, Gabi has explored the diverse imaginations of youth with the Arden Theatre Company, Philadelphia Young Playwrights, Passage Theatre, Theatre Horizon and more.

In Spring 2021, Gabriela was an honoree for the AL DÍA 40 Under Forty: A celebration of the brightest, diverse young professionals in Philadelphia. She received a Citation from Council of the City of Philadelphia for her dedicated work in theatrical production (2020). Gabriela is also a proud recipient of the NEXUS Initiative Artist Grant (2021), Map Fund Artist Grant (2020), Phenomenal Women’s Award (2020), Leeway Art and Change Grant (2016, 2019), GALAEI David Acosta Revolutionary Award (2017), Knight Foundation Emerging City Champions Fellowship (2018) and she was a keynote speaker with Quiara Alegria Hudes at the 2018 Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) Conference, as well as the plenary speaker for the 2019 Theatre Communications Group National Conference.

Health & Safety Procedures and Precautions 2021-2022

Villanova Theatre is following all national, state, local and university guidelines. Villanova University has mandated vaccination for our on-campus community (with a vaccination rate of 95%), provided randomized surveillance testing, increased the frequency of cleaning and sanitization and equipped our facilities with MERV-13 filters.

Masks
In keeping with university guidelines, all audience members must wear a mask at all times while in the theatre and lobby, regardless of vaccination status.

Playbills
We will be providing a limited number of printed playbills for each show in our season. A digital playbill will be available by scanning QR codes that will be posted prominently in our lobby. Thank you for helping us reduce touchpoints!

Seating
At this time, seating for the 2021-2022 season is general admission. We ask audiences to keep a distance between parties when possible, and arrive at least 15 minutes early.
“Teacup bows are the best!” exclaims Lauren Gunderson’s fictional depiction of the royal ex-queen Marie-An
toinette. In the moment she says it, she is comforting Marianne, who has just experienced the loss of her husband. In
that moment, she is using their mutual love for bows as a means of connection. Moreover, she is reminding Marianne
of what the bow of ribbon is a symbol of. Indeed, it’s easy to lose track of what all the fighting is really for when one endures the kind of loss that Mari
anne and her compatriots suffer.

THE REIGN OF TERROR

The year is 1793, the height of the Reign of Terror in France. During this pe-
period of the French Revolution, it is believed that around 17,000 people were
publicly or otherwise executed by the Revolutionary Tribunals – shifty courts
made up of revolutionary extremists. Among these thousands were King Lou-
is XVI, his wife Marie-Antoinette, political and theatrical writer Olympe de
Gouges, and Charlotte Corday, an assassin affiliated with a fringe faction. It
also included a great number of innocent women who opposed the excessive
violence in Paris. Encouraged by extremist writers like Jean-Paul Marat, the
executions continued from 1791-1794 until a new power came to be in France.

In this unprecedented time – sound familiar? – the attention of journalists
and historians was turned to the men of the movement. Many textbooks have
been filled with the works of people like the Marquis de Lafayette and Max-
imilien Robespierre, but this does not mean that there were not women at
the forefront of the movement helping to turn the tides of the French Revo-
lution. In 2015 Lauren Gunderson set out to prove this and began working
on the play that is now The Revolutionists, basing three characters – Olympe,
Charlotte, and Marie – on real women and one character – Marianne – on the
statue and French symbol of freedom, La Marianne. With the inspiring legacy
of these characters, the world of The Revolutionists began to take shape: a
world of tribulation, war and a struggle for freedom for not only the peasants of France but for its women and its slaves.

FROM HISTORY TO “HI, STORY!”

The Revolutionists places us in the imagination of Olympe de Gouges as she prepares herself to face death at the guillotine. In that moment, she takes inspiration from other women who were also executed and imagines a reality where she had the chance to meet each of them. While these women likely never actually met each other in person, there is a beautiful symbol that comes from this imagining. This is the symbol of the ribbons that follow the characters through the play.

Probably most notable on the person of Marie-Antoinette, ribbons have several representations. In fact, they mean something different for each character. Marie-Antoinette loves ribbons as a symbol of joy, frivolity, and peace. They give her a semblance of normality in a world that has turned completely upside down. Charlotte accepts the ribbon and wears it as a symbol of power—a symbol of strength that comes from the being supported by “like minds in like corsets.” Marianne knows the ribbons as a symbol of her children, a reminder of for whom she is fighting so hard. As for Olympe, the ribbon may mean all of these things and more. What I find so beautiful about this production’s inclusion of the ribbon is the way that ribbons tie. I mean this both figuratively and literally.

OUR TIES TO THAT HISTORY

During the show, Marianne demonstrates the act of witnessing. “Witnessing is not just watching,” she insists. She is right. To be a witness is to be an intentional presence that records history as it happens with the purpose of giving that story to the future and giving strength to the perpetrators of future change. Each time she witnesses an execution, Marianne takes from it the ribbon of the deceased. She carries those ribbons with her as memories of each person who has contributed to the journey towards equality. Her act of taking those ribbons gives her more strength to finish what they started.
As audience members, we are witnesses too. This play gives us, citizens and changemakers, something to take with us. This play gives us a lesson that we can choose to carry on. With this play, Gunderson gives an imaginative history lesson about the sacrifices of real people. She doesn’t give us this just for us to leave and tell our friends that it was “interesting.” She gives us this story so that we may take on the courage that these characters give to us. She gives us this story to challenge us to continue their work as, in fact, it is not finished.

Gunderson herself also still has work to do. While she sets out to write plays that benefit all women, her plays actually only uplift one category of women – middle aged white women. Even the character of Marianne, the only person of color in her play, was written as a symbol instead of as a real human meant to be embodied. It cannot be overlooked the way that Gunderson erases other types of women from her work through her lack of inclusion even though she herself lives by writing “what you want” instead of what you know. This includes her erasure of the gender spectrum. What does this mean for an audience that witnesses her work? Recall, to witness is not just to watch. It is to take it in and receive strength to continue to make change.

Today there are classes of women that aren’t viewed equally. Transwomen and people who are socialized as women but identify differently desperately need financial and social support. After you watch this play – after you witness the revolution that Olympe, Marie-Antionette, Charlotte, and Marianne begin – what will you take with you? What story will you tell with your actions? What story will your children tell when they see yours?

You, like these characters, are tied to history. Every day our actions have the chance to change lives for the better, to uplift, and to inspire. Don’t leave as a watcher – leave as a witness.
CAST AND CREW

VESHONTE BROWN (Marianne Angelle) is a second-year graduate student currently pursuing the MA in Theatre and Certificate in Non-Profit Management from Villanova University. They currently serve as a graduate assistant in the Costume Shop and have appeared in WHITE, Dionté and Khai Do Dinner and The Scar Test. They received their BS in Theatre and Graphic Design from Troy University. Their most notable work as a graphic designer has been at Williamstown Theatre Festival and The Rosa Parks Museum in Montgomery, AL. They are the 2018 recipient of the Kennedy Center’s John Cauble Award for Aspiring Artists and Producers, and a member of the inaugural cohort of Black Theatre United’s Early Career BIPOC Theatre-Makers.

ALISON SCARAMELLA (Marie-Antoinette) is a second-year graduate student and Gravina Scholar. Villanova Theatre: Beckett Bites, SLAPHAPPY: A Covid-Era Commedia, The Bakkhai; or I’m trying so hard to be good. New York: Twenty-Six Seconds (The Park Avenue Armory/Columbia Stages), Be the Death of Me (The Civilians), Salamander Leviathan (Joe’s Pub/Arts Nova), Jessica (Sanguine Theatre Company/IRT), Let Trump Be Trump (Davenport Theatre), Girl/Group (La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club), Invader? I Hardly Know Her! and Painting His Wings (FringeNYC) and Murder in the Cathedral (Hoi Polloi). Regional: Opus, Circle Mirror Transformation, boom, Speech & Debate (The Kitchen Theatre Company, Ithaca, NY), The Guard (Ford’s Theater, Washington DC) and Painting His Wings (Berkshire Fringe Festival). Alison received her BA in Theatre from Connecticut College where she was the recipient of The Lee Strasberg Institute Scholarship and has studied at the British American Drama Academy in London.

J.BEAN SCHWAB (Charlotte Corday) is a second-year graduate assistant in the scene shop and Community Matters representative. This is their third role in Villanova Theatre, having previously appeared in SLAPHAPPY: A Covid-Era Commedia and The Scar Test. J.Bean is a multi-disciplinary performance maker, puppet builder and props designer living in West Philadelphia. Their deep dives include installation/immersive art, neurodiverse and genderqueer voices, and circus/movement arts. They hold a BFA from Arcadia University. J.Bean has worked in various positions in the Philly performing arts community with independent collectives, non-profit organizations, and regional theatre companies for the past eight years. Follow @beansplain on Instagram.

SARAH STRYKER (Olympe de Gouges) is a second-year set assistant who has performed in the tri-state area with Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre, Revolution Shakespeare, Pegasus Theatre Project, Langhorne Players and Shakespeare ’70. Sarah graduated magna cum laude from The College of New Jersey with a BA in Philosophy and a BFA in Visual Art. She subsequently trained at Stella Adler School of Acting (NYC ‘12) and Dell’Arte International (CA ‘14.) Sarah received the Erath Award for fostering theatre in the TCNJ community and the Kelsey Award for Lead Actress for her performance in The Winter’s Tale. Favorite credits include WHITE (Jane), Orlando (Orlando),
Much Ado About Nothing (Beatrice), Betrayal (Emma), A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Lysander) and Bug (Agnes). Throughout 2020, Sarah freelanced as a landscape painter to earn funds for the protection of wilderness and wildlife.

VALERIE M JOYCE (Director) has been directing, designing, or performing on stage at Villanova Theatre for more than 30 years. Villanova credits include: SLAPHAPPY: A Covid-Era Commedia, Merrily We Roll Along, The Importance of Being Earnest, Intimate Apparel, Little Women, Translations, The Threepenny Opera, The Light in the Piazza, Carousel, Batboy: The Musical, Annie Get Your Gun, Cabaret and Talley’s Folly. Other credits include: The Meat Opera and Up Your Ante for the New York and Philadelphia International Fringe Festivals, and Thank You for Sharing with Amaryllis Theatre Company. Valerie has also worked as a professional costume designer for local and regional productions including Persistent Memory and Six Story Building (Off Broadway), The Real Thing (Arden Theatre Company), Moon for the Misbegotten (Venture Theatre), True West and Waiting for Godot (Lantern Theatre Company), Billy and Zelda (Opera Delaware), and The Comedy of Errors (Princeton Repertory), as well as many university productions. She has also written a one-woman show dramatizing the lost stories of African American women pre-emancipation entitled I Will Speak for Myself.

AUTUMN BLALOCK (Production Dramaturg) is a second-year graduate assistant who primarily focuses on academic scholarship surrounding Black performance studies. This is her first mainstage production as a dramaturg. Throughout this process her focus has been on bringing light to the power of Gunderson’s story without excusing the playwright for the lack of intersectionality in her writing, a focus that allowed actors to access the play in a new manner. Autumn is also a director and theatre for health researcher. She will also be the dramaturg for Nine Night, a staged reading happening at Inis Nua Theatre. She is grateful to have worked with this team.

CHELSEA E. DRUMEL (Stage Manager) is a second-year Production Assistant pursuing her MA in Theatre with a Certificate in Non-Profit Management. She completed her thesis using her dramaturgical work on Villanova Theatre’s fall 2021 production of Beckett Bites. As a director, stage manager, and administrator, she has worked on productions at Lincoln Center Education, Blueacres Theatre Company, Delaware Theatre Company, Shakespeare Academy @ Stratford, The Brewing Department and Tiltyard. She has trained at ESPA/Primary Stages, The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, and Irish Arts Center. Prior to Villanova, she worked in New York City for six years as an administrator in the financial services sector. At Villanova, she is an ambassador for the McNulty Institute for Women’s Leadership. She holds a BA in Theater from Temple University and is an alum of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Observership program.

JEROLD R. FORSYTH (Lighting Designer) is a theatre lighting designer and consultant. In regards to theatre lighting, Mr. Forsyth has designed over 350 productions to date. Philadelphia-area credits include designs for: The Wilma Theater, Villanova Theatre, Walnut Street Theatre, Arden Theatre Company, Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre, Interact Theatre Company, Simpatico Theatre, Orbiter 3, Fringe Arts, Amaryllis Theatre Company, The American Music
Theatre Festival, People’s Light, Philadelphia Festival Theatre for New Plays, Venture Theatre, and The Philadelphia Drama Guild. Additional east coast credits include: The Kennedy Center, New York Shakespeare Festival, Lincoln Center Theatre, The York Theatre Company, The Village Theatre Company, The Vineyard Playhouse, Opera Ebony-New York and Palm Beach Dramaworks. Design awards include thirteen nominations and two Barrymore Awards for Outstanding Lighting Design. Mr. Forsyth has also twice received “Most Notable Lighting Design” citations from The Philadelphia Inquirer. Mr. Forsyth has consulted on theatrical lighting systems for: The Wilma Theater, The Mainstage and The Playground at the Adrienne, The Mullen Center for the Performing Arts, Delaware County Community College, and the Pennsylvania Institute of Technology. In addition, Mr. Forsyth designed a unique art gallery lighting system for the Bethlehem House Contemporary Art Gallery.

SAMMY HURLEY (Lighting Designer) is a Delco native, and has been working in the industry for almost a decade. They first started their work at Hedge row Theatre Company, a small historic repertory theatre located in Rose Valley, PA. They have been a recurring sound designer for *Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol* since 2018. One of their proudest accomplishments was working closely with the Tony-winning sound designer and composer Robert Kaplowitz for the production *Every Every Man* at Shakespeare in Clark Park. When they are not working in theatre, you may catch them as “DJ Nuzzles” mixing on the decks. They are excited to be apart of the Villanova Theatre design team for this production, and to continue to grow as an artist in the industry.

MARIE LASTER (Set Designer) is a set designer born and raised in Philly. Scenic design credits include *Untitled* (Inis Nua Theatre), *A Boy and His Soul* (Kitchen Theatre), *Cry it Out*, *Natural Shocks* (Simpatico Theatre), *Donna Orbits the Moon* (Tiny Dynamite), *The Agitators* (Theatre Horizon), *Rachel* (Quintessence Theatre). Marie received a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Philadelphia University and enjoys channeling her creative energy through the scenic design process. www.marielasterdesign.com

JANUS STEFANOWICZ (Costume Designer) is Villanova Theatre's resident costume designer and costume shop manager. She has designed costumes for Act II Playhouse, the Arden Theatre Company, Delaware Theatre Company, People’s Light & Theatre Company, Philadelphia Theatre Company, The Wilma Theater, Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, the 2013 Philadelphia International Theatre Festival, The Lantern Theatre Company, Theatre Horizon and Hedgerow Theatre Company. Janus has received 17 Barrymore Award nominations for Outstanding Costume Design, including for Villanova Theatre’s *The Tempest*, *Parade*, *Chicago*, *Children of Eden*, *Into the Woods*, *Candide*, and *Evita*; Cheltenham Center for the Arts’ *The Illusion*; Philadelphia Theatre Company’s *Intimate Apparel* (2006 Barrymore Award winner); The Wilma Theater’s *The Invention of Love*, *Magic Fire*, *Big Love* (2003 Barrymore Award winner), *Galileo* and *Age of Arousal*; Theatre Horizon’s *The Revolutionists*. Most recently she designed Villanova Theatre’s *SLAPHAPPY: A Covid-Era Commedia*. 
Introducing the New Home of Villanova Theatre

Villanova Theatre is now located in the brand-new John and Joan Mullen Center for the Performing Arts, an 85,000-square-foot hub for performances, creativity, engagement and exploration for the University’s performing arts community.

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The Smith Performance Lab is an intimate 100-seat performance space that features flexible seating and first-rate theatrical technology.
VILLANOVA THEATRE FACULTY

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Artistic Director; Professor........................................................................Michael Hollinger, MA
Associate Artistic Director; Associate Professor........................................Chelsea Phillips, MFA, PhD
Resident Director; Associate Professor.........................................................James Ijames, MFA
Resident Director; Associate Professor.........................................................Edward Sobel, MFA
Resident Music Director; Assistant Teaching Professor ................................Peter A. Hilliard, MFA
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VILLANOVA THEATRE STAFF

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Properties Shop Manager & Scenic Charge ..............................................Sharri Jerue, BA
Cutter/Draper................................................................................................Rosemarie McKelvey, BS
Program Coordinator..................................................................................Kevin Esmond, MA

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS AND SCHOLARS

Marketing/PR Assistant...............................................................................Alison Hyde Pascale
Costume Assistants............Autumn Blalock, Veshonte Brown, Brendan T. Cochran, Teya Juarez
Props Assistants..........................Kenzie Bradley
Tuition Scholars...Crys Clemente, Taahira Davis, Chelsea Drumel, Kat Ross Kline, Tomas Torres
Belle Masque Scholar..............................................................................Sheldon Shaw
Conelley Scholar......................................................................................Tomas Torres
Franzetti Scholars.................................................................Kate Fischer, Alycia Gonzalez, Hannah Deprey-Severance, Anna Rose Smith
Maskinas Scholar........................................................................................Kat Ross Kline
Schaeffer Scholar.......................................................................................Sarah Stryker
Gravina Scholars.......................................................................................Alison Scaramella, Erin Coffman
Morgan Scholar...........................................................................................Taylor Molt

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