

“A” TRAIN

written & performed by
Anne Torsiglieri

music by
Brad Carroll

directed by
Risa Brainin

PRC²

APR 25 – 29, 2018

Joan H. Gillings Center for Dramatic Art

| playmakersrep.org

| 919.962.7529



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the final show of our 2017/18 Season – *A Season On The Edge*. This year took us beyond where we imagined we could go and we are so grateful that you, our audiences, followed and supported us along the adventurous terrain we traveled. As we gear up for our 2018/19 season, *SHIFTING GROUND: Theatre that Moves*, what more worthwhile precipice to stand on together than the one “*A*” Train explores: a mother’s leap into the great unknown with her child’s diagnosis on the

autism spectrum. Rather than being frightened, writer and performer Anne Torsigliieri leaps off the edge, leading with her heart and humor, and discovers not only an incredible support system, but new possibilities for what happiness can look like.

I have long known both Annie and director Risa Brainin as bright lights in the larger theatre community and am so thrilled to welcome them to the PlayMakers family. As with all PRC² shows, the play itself is only the beginning. We hope you will stay for what we call Act 2, the conversation. Each performance will be followed by a discussion with a panel of experts in the field of autism, including medical experts, activists and those with their own personal, individual experiences.

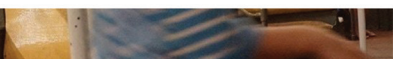
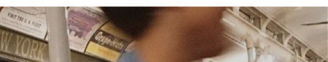
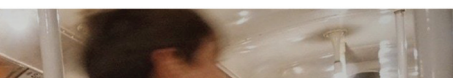
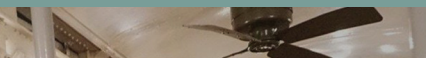
It has been such a pleasure traveling through this season with you, and we hope you will join us in the fall for the start of a new season that promises more of the thought-provoking, heart-stirring, entertaining theatre for which PlayMakers is known. And if you just can’t wait for August, join us this summer for our exceptional Summer Youth Conservatory production of *Cabaret* (July 18-29). SYC is at the heart of PlayMakers’ mission to continue inspiring the next generation to the edge of their own artistry.

For now, hop on the wild ride that Anne is taking us all on, and enjoy “*A*” Train.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Vivienne". The script is fluid and cursive.

Vivienne Benesch
Producing Artistic Director



"A" TRAIN

written & performed by **Anne Torsiglieri***

music by **Brad Carroll**

directed by **Risa Brainin**

Lighting Designer
Michael Klaers

Art Curator
Keri Bowers

Stage Manager
Elizabeth Ray*

"A" Train was developed through LAUNCH PAD
at UC Santa Barbara's Department of Theater and Dance.

SPECIAL THANKS

Special Thanks to dramaturg Liz Engelman and the Tofte Lake Center, all the numerous actors, friends and audiences who have participated in and given feedback to this play over its various incarnations, Lynn Rosen, Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig, Alison Tatlock, Christina McCarthy, Cheri Steinkellner, Irwin Appel, Libby Appel, Suzy Fay and The Lark Theater, Zach Knower, Autism One, UCSB's Department of Theater and Dance, UCSB's Interdisciplinary Humanities Center, The Hellman Family Foundation Fund, Rachel Jones, Keri Bowers, Debi Muzikar and The Art of Autism, Rob Grayson, Boone Graphics, Kevin Smith, Kacey Link, Michael Bernard and the Bernard and Torsiglieri families, and especially the countless individuals who shared their stories, thoughts and hearts and allowed themselves to be interviewed for this project.

*Indicates members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

The Professional Theatre of the Department of Dramatic Art
Adam Versényi, Chair
Vivienne Benesch, Producing Artistic Director
Produced in association with The College of Arts and Sciences
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

ARTIST BIOS



ANNE TORSIGLIERI *Writer, Performer*

Anne has been seen on Broadway in *Top Girls*, *Parade*, *Blood Brothers* and *Miss Saigon* as well as in the National Tour of *Les Misérables* as Fantine. Off-Broadway and regionally she's performed at Manhattan Theatre Club, Second Stage, Playwrights Horizons, Ensemble Studio Theatre, NY Stage and Film, Williamstown Theatre Festival, McCarter Theatre, Baltimore Center Stage, The Huntington, The Eugene O'Neill Theatre Festival, Sundance Theatre Lab, Great Lakes Theatre Festival, Cleveland Playhouse, Northern Stage and others. She is the recipient of Back Stage West/Drama Logue and Garland Awards for her performance as Catherine Sloper in *The Heiress* (Berkeley Rep) and the New Hampshire Theatre Award for Best Actress in a Musical for her performance as the titular role in *The Drowsy Chaperone* (New London Barn Playhouse). TV and film include *Law & Order*, *Kidnapped*, *Gossip Girl* and the award winning *Albert Schweitzer: Called to Africa*. Anne is an Associate Professor in the Dept. of Theater and Dance at UCSB, where she has had the great pleasure to perform in the LAUNCH PAD productions of new plays: *Kingdom City*, *Entangled*, *Appoggiatura* and *Untitled IV* by Ruth Markofsky, all under the direction of Risa Brainin. Most recent performances include Falstaff in *The Death of Kings* (UCSB, dir. Irwin Appel), Rose in *Gypsy* (New London Barn Playhouse, dir. Peter Hackett), Donna in *Mamma Mia* (Northern Stage, dir. Carol Dunne) and Emma in *Stupid F*ing Bird* (Elements Theater Collective, dir. Risa Brainin). She is a graduate of Princeton University and The Juilliard School.

BRAD CARROLL *Composer*

Brad is a recognized regional theatre director, music director and composer whose work has taken him all over the world. He is the composer of *Lend Me A Tenor*, *The Musical*, (Gielgud Theatre, London, 2011) which continues to enjoy success in theatres and opera houses across Europe, and is now also available in the U.S. (www.stagerights.com). Also *Christmas is Here Again* (in association with Renegade Animation and PCPA Theaterfest, premiere 2014). Other produced works include *Amelia Lost* (librettist) with composer, Larry Delinger; *A Christmas Carol: On The Air* (composer/co- author) for the Utah Shakespeare Festival; *Cio Cio San* an opera-theatre re-dux piece (composer/arranger); *Christmas Is... A Musical Memory* and *Robin Hood*. Musical scores composed for dramatic productions - *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *King Lear*, *As You Like It*, *Measure for Measure*, *Timon of Athens*, *Death of a Salesman* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Brad's musical arrangements and orchestrations have been performed by such prestigious ensembles as the San Francisco Symphony

and the Boston Pops. Also Writer, Director and Musical Arranger for Walt Disney Entertainment, TokyoDisneySea. He is currently Resident Artist/Artistic Associate for the Pacific Conservatory Theatre (PCPA) in Santa Maria, CA.

RISA BRAININ *Director*

Risa has directed at many theatres across the country including Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Denver Center Theatre Company, Great Lakes Theatre, Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre and Repertory Theatre of St. Louis. She served as Resident Director and Associate Company Director at the Guthrie Theater, Associate Artistic Director at both Indiana Repertory Theatre and Kansas City Repertory Theatre, and Artistic Director at Shakespeare Santa Cruz. A graduate of the Carnegie-Mellon University Drama Program, Brainin is Chair of the Department of Theater and Dance and Artistic Director of the groundbreaking new play development program LAUNCH PAD at UC Santa Barbara.

MICHAEL KLAERS *Lighting Designer*

Michael is an itinerate lighting designer - currently handling sound and technical duties. Regional credits include Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Great Lakes Theater Festival, Shakespeare Festival of St. Louis, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Guthrie Theater, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts, Florida Studio Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre.

KERI BOWERS *Art Curator*

Keri is a long-time autism advocate, filmmaker, speaker, writer, and program designer/facilitator. Co-founder of The Art of Autism www.the-art-of-autism.com; owner of Normal Films www.normalfilms.com, Keri is a featured writer for Autism Asperger's Digest Magazine. Keri and The Art of Autism are honored to feature the works of AoA collaborating artists in "*A*" *Train*. The Art of Autism is an international non-profit resource for autistic artists, poets, bloggers and other creatives.

ELIZABETH RAY *Stage Manager*

PlayMakers: Company member in her first full season. *Tartuffe*, *Dot*, *The Cake*, *Into the Woods*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Private Lives*. **New York:** *Shows for Days* (Lincoln Center Theater), *In the Secret Sea* (Theatre Row), *Wallenberg*, *Requiem for Mr. B*, *Presto Change-O* (Frankel Green Production Company), *Welcome to Shoofly* (Playwrights Horizons). Work at other regional theatres includes productions at North Carolina Theatre, Theatre Raleigh, Palm Beach Dramaworks, and Cape Fear Regional Theatre. Elizabeth is a member of Actors' Equity Association.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

FRE(E)D, IN SOLO (aka Moontain) A stunning French artist, photographer, musician and writer of aphorisms, Moontain is a prolific artist. “Since I was a child, I always felt Life was bigger & deeper than human’s physical limits. I grew up focusing on the details animating this Whole, riding thoughts & mirages the furthest possible.” www.moontain.org

DAVID IDELL At 24 years old, David uses art to express words he is unable to convey through verbal speech. Privately he stashes his favorite works of art that relate to his passion for his own pleasure, but publicly, he can’t keep pace with the many consignment requests he gets to paint: pets, people, and places. Art has always been a valuable tool for David to support self-determination and general life and arts skills.

SIBTAIN AHMED JUNEJO 16-year-old Pakistani artist Sibtain Junejo who hails from Karachi, participated in John F Kennedy Center for Performing Arts’ VSA International Art Program for Children with Disabilities, and had his artwork selected for a live exhibition in Washington D.C., 2017.

JULIAN ARSI 15-year-old Julian Arsi is a high school student from Newbury Park, California. His interests vary from art and design to building business ideas in his head for his future in a multitude of areas. Julian’s an entrepreneur in training.

CHRISTINA PACCAERELLI “This image captures many elements. The first of which is the color and beauty of the image. There’s great composition, great use of shapes, a unique style, good balance of space and subjects, and demonstrates high technical skill. Then take a deeper look, and there’s tension and sadness and anxiety in the eyes of the captured faces. Look again, and there’s a feeling of calmness, and—as the title suggests—a soothing moment. It’s a single scene but illustrates much more than that. It looks like a page right out of a graphic novel.”

RONALDO BYRD “I am an artist who happens to be on the autistic spectrum. My artwork focuses on the fact that everyone is beautiful. There is beauty in everything I see and everyone has something to offer. My art and I represent differences and my hope is that the world can see beauty and acceptance through my eyes.”

KEVIN HOSSEINI “I like how beautiful the colors are in New York, New York. It makes me want to go there—it’s action and busy too. It reminds me of when I went to Las Vegas one time. I’ve been painting since I was nine years old, and my art has been featured in galleries and museums around the world. Me and my art have been featured in books, magazines, and film. I currently reside in an adult residential facility in El Cajon, California and participate in a day program. One day I desire to have a paying job and live independently.”

JALYN WESTON “I’m Jalyn Weston, a fifteen-year-old artist with autism, and I live in Sweetwater, Tennessee. I like to use a variety of materials and mediums, from pen and pencils to watercolor, acrylic, and digital. My art reflects my internal and external personal life, providing a visual digital timeline of my experiences. These pieces provide glimpses into points on that timeline.”

KIMBERLY GERRY TUCKER It's through Kimberly's passion for art and an innate drive to create, that she expresses herself best. Her paintings have shown at numerous New England galleries since 2007. A published author, Kimberly's stories have appeared in anthologies such as "Women From Another Planet". Her book, "Under The Banana Moon," is a memoir of living, loving, loss and an autism spectrum/selective mutism diagnosis.

BRYAN DUNN For years, Bryan kept his illustrations private, never daring to show them to others. He shared in his work "A Toast to the Master" for the first time simultaneously with the "A" Train play and in an article co-written with life skills coach, Keri Bowers, for Autism Aspergers Digest Magazine. Since then, he has become more bold and is sharing works in The Art of Autism's social media with pride.



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PlayMakers Repertory Company is a Member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre.



This Theatre operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



The scenic, costume, lighting and sound designers in LORT Theatres are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.



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The Director is a member of the
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SHIFTING GROUND:

THEATRE

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THAT MOVES

MAINSTAGE SEASON:

SEP 12-30 REGIONAL PREMIERE

SHERWOOD: THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD

BY KEN LUDWIG

OCT 10-28

SKELETON CREW

BY DOMINIQUE MORISSEAU

NOV 14-DEC 2

SHE LOVES ME

BOOK BY JOE MASTEROFF
MUSIC BY JERRY BOCK LYRICS BY SHELDON HARNICK

JAN 23-FEB 10 WORLD PREMIERE

JUMP

BY CHARLY EVON SIMPSON

FEB 27-MAR 17

LIFE OF GALILEO

BY BERTOLT BRECHT

APR 3-21 PULITZER PRIZE WINNER

HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE

BY PAULA VOGEL

PRC² SEASON:

TEMPLES OF LUNG AND AIR

BY KANE SMEGO

BEWILDERNESS

BY ZACHARY FINE

YOUR HEALING IS KILLING ME

BY VIRGINIA GRISE

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