LA MAMA
EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE CLUB

in association with The Assembly presents

SEAGULLMACHINE

Created by The Assembly
Conceived by Nick Benacerraf
Co-directed by Jess Chayes & Nick Benacerraf
Text by Anton Chekhov, Heiner Müller & The Assembly

Ellen Stewart Theatre
66 East 4th Street, NYC, 10003
April 14 - May 5, 2018
SEAGULLMACHINE
Created by The Assembly
Conceived by Nick Benacerraf
Co-directed by Jess Chayes & Nick Benacerraf
Text by Anton Chekhov, Heiner Müller & The Assembly
Hamletmachine translated by Carl Weber

Rolls Andre ........................................ Ilya Afanasyevich SHAMRAEV
Edward Bauer ..................................... Semyon Semyonovich MEDVEDENKO
Ben Beckley* .................................... Boris Alexeyevich TRIGORIN
Marvin Bell* ....................................... Pyotr Nikolayevich SORIN
Emily Caffery ...................................... The Maid
Nehassaiu deGannes* ............................. Irina Nikolayevna ARKADINA
Anna Abhau Elliott ................................. Marya (MASHA) Ilyinichna
Christopher Hurt* ................................ Yevgeny Sergeyevich DORN
Jax Jackson ......................................... KONSTANTIN (Kostya) Gavrilovich Treplev
Layla Khosh* ....................................... NINA Mikhailovna Zarechnaya
Daniel Maseda ...................................... Yakov
Elena McGhee* ..................................... POLINA Andreyevna
Gaby Resende ...................................... The Cook

* Equity Member appearing with permission of Actors’ Equity Association without benefit of an Equity contract in this Off-Off Broadway production.

Dramaturgy by Stephen Aubrey
Scenic Design by Nick Benacerraf & Emmie Finckel
Costume Design by Kate Fry
Sound Design by Asa Wember
Lighting Design by Miriam Nilofa Crowe
Video Design by Ray Sun
Props & Assistant Scenic Design by Jess Cummings

Produced by Lucy Jackson
Associate Producer: Emily Caffery
Production Stage Manager: Devin Fletcher
Assistant Stage Manager: Azure D. Osborne-Lee
Assistant Directed by Miranda Haymon
Associate Costume Design by Karen Boyer
Assistant Costume Design by Emily Schumann
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Load In Crew: Olivia Biggs, Kyle Brodie, Anya Kopischke, Hanna Lockhart, Rob Hille, Theo Maltz, Pablo Solano, Nic Adams, Colm Evans, Paul Piekarz, Zak Kombel, Katherine Dumais, Aaron Amodt, Erick Hagen, Paul Pino, Aaron Ardisson
Additional music by Edward Bauer, Nehassaiu deGannes, Jax Jackson & Aston Hollins McClanahan
Cabaret Choreography by Katie Rose McLaughlin
Music Director: Jax Jackson
The Seagull translated by Stephen Aubrey, Edward Bauer, Ben Beckley, Nick Benacerraf, Emily Caffery, Jess Chayes, and Anna Abhau Elliott
Production Photography by Marina McClure and Theo Cote

2017 Workshop Stage Manager: Anna Engelsman

2014 Cast: Edward Bauer, Ben Beckley, Kate Benson, W. Tré Davis, Anna Abhau Elliott, Christopher Hurt, Matt Korahais, Emily Louise Perkins, Tom Walker, Carrie Ann Quinn
INDIGENOUS LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
The Assembly acknowledges that the presentation of this play, as with most of our work, occurs on the Lenape island of Manhahtaan (Mannahatta) in Lenapehoking, the Lenape homeland. The Assembly pays respect to the Lenape peoples of the past, present, and future, and is committed to resisting colonialism by situating at the core of our work practices of inclusion, equity, and engagement with our responsibility to society and the environment.

PRODUCTION NOTE

Theatrical experimentation is a risky business.

The Seagull was famously booed by the audience on its opening night in 1896 before becoming one of the most iconic plays in theater history. At the end of the 19th-century, Anton Chekhov’s intimate, tragicomic plays were revolutionary; now, they’re cornerstones of modern drama.

Heiner Müller’s Hamletmachine, the product of over 20 years of effort by East Germany’s most prominent postmodern dramatist, has an equally turbulent production history. An attempt to premiere the play in 1978 failed after the leading actor, who insisted on “an understandable, explicable, interpretable play”, departed from the production.

Both plays are, of course, haunted by Shakespeare’s Hamlet. In The Seagull, a young artist-intellectual, unsettled by his mother’s new partner and his own troubled relationship, utilizes a boldly experimental play-within-the-play as a weapon against the mores of his parents’ generation. In Hamletmachine, the figure of Hamlet reckons with the failures of his art and idealism to transform the world, and endeavors to destroy the theater once and for all. Like Müller, he is pessimistic about the prospect of communist utopia, but equally concerned about the brutality of capitalism (“Hail Coca Cola”), which presages both social and environmental catastrophe.

For The Assembly, Hamlet, The Seagull, and Hamletmachine all seem animated in part by the same burning questions. In a world gone mad, what is the role of the theater? Is it a self-serving and meaningless indulgence -- a distraction from the frenzied terrors of social and political upheaval -- or an important way to open up shared space and thought, to challenge us to see each other and ourselves more clearly? Who is at the center of our story?

PRODUCTION TIMELINE

1896 - The Seagull premieres at the Alexandrinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg. Chekhov attends the disastrous opening night and considers giving up playwriting.
1898 - Konstantin Stanislavsky directs The Seagull for the Moscow Art Theatre. The production receives unanimous praise and revives Chekhov’s interest in writing for the stage.
1978 - The first attempt to produce Hamletmachine is abandoned after the actors refuse to perform it.
1979 - After premiering at Théâtre Gérard Philipe in Saint-Denis, France, Hamletmachine becomes an icon of postmodern 20th-century literature.
2010 - The Assembly produces an innovative, intimate production of Chekhov’s Three Sisters directed and with a production concept by Jess Chayes.
2010 - Nick Benacerraf conceives of SEAGULLMACHINE while studying for his MFA in Scenic Design at CalArts.
2012 - Nick Benacerraf presents a complete SEAGULLMACHINE scenic model at the annual Design Meeting showcase in New York City.
2014 - The Assembly presents a workshop of Act I of SEAGULLMACHINE at the undergroundzero festival.
2016 - The Assembly workshops Act II of SEAGULLMACHINE at Williams College Summer Theater Lab.
2017 - The Assembly performs a 10-minute segment of SEAGULLMACHINE at TDF Performeteria.
2017 - The Assembly receives a Residency at LMCC to collectively develop the full production of SEAGULLMACHINE.
2018 - SEAGULLMACHINE has its world premiere at La MaMa E.T.C.’s Ellen Stewart Theatre. Hopefully, it goes better for them than it did for Chekhov and Müller.
Edward Bauer (Medvedenko; Assembly Founding Member; he/him/his) is a co-founder of The Assembly, and currently lives in Los Angeles, serving as the company’s Ambassador to the West. With The Assembly: David (HOME/SICK, New York Times Critic’s Pick), Robert (I Will Look Forward to This Later, The New Ohio) Pip (That Poor Dream, The New Ohio). Other theater: Adventure Quest (Edinburgh Fringe, Dutch Kills Theater), Gorman & Other Stories (The Flea). Voice acting: The Blackwell Deception, Resonance (Wadjet Eye Games). Web Series: Kid Friendly (www.kidfriendlyshow.com). Find him online at edward-bauer.com.

Ben Beckley (Trigorin; Assembly Member; he/him/his) Theater: Small Mouth Sounds (national tour), dir. Rachel Chavkin; Peter and the Starcatcher (national tour), dir. Alex Timbers and Roger Rees; Dying For It (Atlantic), dir. Neil Pepe; Clubbed Thumb Summerworks and Winterworks; New Georges; TACT; Berkshire Theatre Group; Prospect Theater Company; Public Theater/Joe’s Pub; four international tours with Temporary Distortion; and five original works with The Assembly. On Camera: The Onion, The Jew of Malta, and Easy Living. www.benbeckley.com

Marvin Bell (Sorin) appeared in The Peccadillo Theater’s ‘THE SHOW-OFF’ and as Hoke (x4) in ‘DRIVING MISS DAISY, Rev. Delaine in the ‘THE SEAT OF JUSTICE’ at the Charleston Stage, Doaker in ‘THE PIANO LESSON’ at the Cape Fear Theater, Bono in ‘FENCES’ at the New Harmony Theater, and in his network debut on ‘LAW and ORDER:SVU’. Stand-up comedy has taken him to forty-seven states, the Caribbean, Cruise Ships, resorts, and numerous television programs. (www.marvinbell.com).

Emily Caffery (The Maid, Associate Producer; Assembly Member; she/her/hers) is a theater artist and producer. NY credits include: singing in Heather Christian’s Animal Wisdom (Bushwick Starr), assistant line producing the Under the Radar Festival, and directing site-specific garden plays (Communal Spaces and BedStuy Stoops Festivals). Co-artistic director of the nomadic theater company the leastaways. Regional: The Glass Menagerie (Performance Network), Elektra (Penny Seats), Steel Magnolias (Two Muses). emilycaffery.com


Anna Abhau Elliott (Masha; Assembly Associate Artist; she/her/hers) is a multi-disciplinary performing artist. She has performed at the Whitney Biennial, Under the Radar, The Bushwick Starr, JACK, and more. She co-runs Barter Boat, an interactive art project, that has toured to five cities. Anna lives in South Carolina, where she works with local organizations on new plays. Anna is a proud and thankful associate artist of The Assembly. She co-devised HOME/SICK and participated in early iterations of SEAGULLMACHINE. www.AnnaAbhau.com.

Christopher Hurt (Dorn; he/him/his) has performed extensively with Peculiar Works Project, most recently in 3Christs at Judson Church and Manna-Hata at the former main post office building. He’s also traveled to Istanbul and Bulgaria to perform in Bird Machine, for Concrete Temple Theater. He played Chebutykin in The Three Sisters for The Assembly; Polonius in Bonneville Theatre Co.’s Hamlet; and Monty in Theater Breaking Through Barrier’s Rules of Charity. He has recorded more than 400 audiobooks, receiving the Alexander Scourby award for narration of fiction. He’s also an avid solver and creator of crossword and other puzzles, and a former Jeopardy! champ. www.christopherhurt.info
Jax Jackson (Konstantin, Music Director; Jax) Selected theatre: The Fever (international tour & run at Under the Radar), created by 600 Highwaysmen; Don’t Drink From The River, by M.J. Kaufman, directed by Will Davis; Hir, by Taylor Mac, directed by Niegel Smith; and Teddy Ferrara, by Christopher Shinn, directed by Evan Cabnet. TV/Film: High Maintenance; Greta in Hannah Free; & Jamie in Jamie & Jessie Are Not Together. Jax graduated from The Theatre School at DePaul. www.jaxjackson.com

Layla Khosh (Nina; she/her/hers) Select Off-Broadway: Bull in a China Shop (Lincoln Center), Men on Boats (Playwrights Horizons), The Sensuality Party (The New Group), Dido of Idaho (Ensemble Studio Theatre), Wyoming (Lesser America), Nobody’s Girl (New Jersey Rep), Women (Hollywood Fringe), I am Gordafarid (Noor Theater), Romeo and Juliet (the flea). Film: Long Nights, Short Mornings. TV: Instinct. Web: The Death of Cool, My Ex is Trending.

Daniel Maseda (Yakov; he/him/his) is a New York City-based theater artist interested in collaborative, interdisciplinary making practices. As well as a performer, Daniel has been an assistant for Young Jean Lee and Lily Whitsitt/Door 10 and an editor of writing about and around theater and performance.

Elena McGhee (Polina; she/her/hers) most recently appeared in the Golden Globe nominated series The Sinner and award-winning series Louie. In addition: Person of Interest, BlueBloods, The Americans, The Jenny Lumet Pilot. Her theater work is long and varied from Marat/Sade to Shakespeare. She has worked with notable directors such as Diane Paulus, Carey Perloff and David Esbjornson. Elena was nominated by the Innovative Theatre Awards for best ensemble for Mad Forest directed by Julia Beardsley O’Brien. www.elenamcghee.com

Gaby Resende (The Cook; she/her/hers) graduated from Kean University with a BA in theatre as well as a BA in psychology. She is a member of Alpha Psi Omega, the Alpha Gamma Gamma chapter. Credits include: Marisol (Marisol), Patti LuPone’s Don’t Monkey Around (Ensemble), In the Heights (Carla), West Side Story (Margarita), An Alternate Approach (Andrea/Asst. Director), The Children’s Hour (Peggy), Seussical (Bird Girl), Cabaret (Kit Kat Girl), and Crimes of the Heart (Lenny). www.gabyresende.com

Heiner Müller (Hamletmachine Playwright; he/him/his) was an East German dramatist, poet, writer, essayist and theatre director. Born in Saxony in 1929, he is the author of over 30 plays noted for their dense poetic language and political criticisms of both the socialist state of East Germany and capitalism in the West. By the time of his death in 1996, he was considered to be the most influential German playwright since Brecht.

Carl Weber (Hamletmachine Translator; he/him/his) was a theater director and translator credited with introducing German experimental theater to America. He was Bertolt Brecht’s directing assistant and a dramaturg and actor at the Berliner Ensemble theatre company in 1952. After Brecht’s death in 1956, Weber remained with the Berliner Ensemble as a resident director. He was a Professor of Drama at Stanford University until his death in 2016.

Nick Benacerraf (Concept, Co-Director, Co-Set Designer; Assembly Founding Co-Artistic Director; he/him/his) Nick’s work pushes the boundaries for how designers function as lead, generative artists in the creation and facilitation of devised play processes. Additionally, as a freelance set/environment designer Nick specializes in bringing life to new plays at regional theaters and with other process-based collectives. Also playing now: Up & Away at Lincoln Center. Nick studied at Wesleyan, CalArts (MA & MFA), and is currently a doctoral fellow in Theatre & Performance at the CUNY Graduate Center. www.nickbenacerraf.com ig: @benacerraptor

Jess Chayes (Co-Director; Assembly Founding Co-Artistic Director; she/her/hers) is an award-winning Brooklyn-based director of devised work and new plays. Recent directing includes productions at The Warehouse Theatre, The Exponential Festival, Juilliard, New Georges, Lesser America, and Dutch Kills and workshops at NYTW, Williamstown and The Vineyard Theatre. As Associate: Peter and the Starcatcher (Broadway and New World Stages), Misery. She is a NYTW Usual Suspect and a 2018 Audrey Resident with New Georges. Jess is the recipient of the 2017 Lucille Lortel Award from the League of Professional Theatre Women. www.jesschayes.com.
Stephen Aubrey (Dramaturg; Assembly Founding Co-Artistic Director; he/him/his) is a Brooklyn-based writer and dramaturg. With the company, he has written or co-written six plays including That Poor Dream (The New Ohio Theater), HOME/SICK (JACK), The Dark Heart of Meteorology (The Philly Fringe & UNDER St. Marks), We Can’t Reach You, Hartford (Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Fringe First Nominee), as well as dramaturging all Assembly productions. He teaches literature and composition in the CUNY system. MFA: Brooklyn College. www.stephenaubrey.com

Emmie Finckel (Co-Scenic Designer; they/them/theirs) is scenic designer specializing in new work and immersive/sensory design. Recent credits: Riot Antigone (La MaMa), Athena (JACK), The Pillowman (Wesleyan), Folk Wandering (Props - ART/NY), SHE (HERE Arts), Empire Travel Agency, KPOP (Assoc., Woodshed Collective) and Loudan Wainwright’s Surviving Twin (Subculture NYC). Recent assistant credits include productions with David Korins (Hamilton, Dear Evan Hansen). Emmie holds a B.A. from Wesleyan University, and is a proud member of Woodshed Collective. efinckel.com.

Kate Fry (Costume Designer; she/her/hers) is a costume designer and scenographer for theater, opera, dance, film, and international theme parks. Theater credits include Silent Voices (BAM), TIME (UTR The Public), Half Life (SF MOMA), Latter Days (Ars Nova), Liederabend (Walt Disney Concert Hall), The Idiot (HERE Arts Center), IWLFTTL (The New Ohio), and American Buffalo (Dorset Theater). Opera credits include Thumbprint (LA Opera x REDCAT), The Little Matchgirl (Spoleto Opera Festival), The Wreck (Opera Omaha) and Angel’s Bone (3LD & Hong Kong). www.katefry.com @kate_fry

Asa Wember (Sound Designer; Assembly Associate Artist; he/him/his) has collaborated with The Assembly on HOME/SICK, I Will Look Forward to This Later, That Poor Dream, and The Dark Heart of Meteorology, and with Jess Chayes on Holidays/In, The Providence of Neighboring Bodies, Latter Days and The Sister. Other recent work includes Am I Dead with Flux Theatre Ensemble, Adam & Eve with STIIIB, Temping with Wolf 359, In Quietness with Dutch Kills, Wyoming with Lesser America, and Brownsville Song at LCT3/Lincoln Center.

Miriam Nilofa Crowe (Lighting Designer; she/her/hers) designs regularly for Grammy-winner Rosanne Cash (The River and the Thread), Ko-Ryo Dance, The Apothetae, Lehman College and The Collective NY. Recently in New York: HOME/SICK (The Assembly), Platonov (Blessed Unrest), Anna (Dusan Tynek), The Baroness (SATC), PS 160 (Gabrielle Mertz), 6 Characters . . . (Theodora Skipitares), 2Hymnvb (Anneke Hansen), Medea (Bryan Davidson Blue), and Symphony for the Dance Floor (BAM). She is a founding member of Wingspace Theatrical Design and has an MFA from Yale. www.wingspace.com/miriam

Ray Sun Ruey-Horng (Video Designer; he/him/his) is a video artist/designer whose work focuses on human perception, memories and the uncanny experiences in our daily lives. Recent work: Elena Demyanenko’s Echo/Archive at EMPAC. Yu-Ming Yang’s Le Corbusier at Konzert Theatre Bern. Kristin Marting’s IDIOT at HERE Arts Center. Lars Jan’s MAKANDAL at Guggenheim Museum. The Assembly’s That Poor Dream at New Ohio Theatre. Chia-Ming Wang’s Richard III at National Theatre Taipei. Selected for Lincoln Center Director’s Lab (2013). MFA: CalArts. www.raysun.cc

Jess Cummings (Props & Assistant Scenic Design; she/her/hers) is a New York based designer and designer. She is a co-founder of the recently formed Glass Attic Collective and associated artist with The Woolgatherers Theater Group. Recent works include Athena (The Hearth), Folk Wandering (Pipeline Theater Company), and Resistance (Semicolon Theater Company). To find out more about her work, visit jesscummings.org

Lucy Jackson (Producing Director; Assembly Member; she/her/hers) For The Assembly: HOME/SICK (Odyssey, LA & JACK, Brooklyn), I Will Look Forward to this Later (New Ohio, NY). Other producing includes Heather Christian’s Animal Wisdom (Bushwick Starr), Cuddles by Joseph Wilde (Ovalhouse, London & 59E59, NY), Mudlarks by Vickie Donoghue (HighTide, Theatre503 & Bush Theatre, London). Line producing includes Oh My Sweet Land (PlayCo). Tour producing includes Poor People’s TV Room for PerformancePractice.org, Our Carnal Hearts for Rachel Mars and RoosevElvis for the TEAM. www.lsajackson.com
Devin Fletcher (Production Stage Manager; she/her/hers) is a theatre artist originally from the wild coast of Maine. Recent credits: The Comedy of Errors (Two River Theater Company), Suds (Bluelaces), Organic Sofrito (United Solo Festival), Campfire, We Are All Tourists (Trusty Sidekick), Attack of the Elvis Impersonators (Off Broadway), The Little Black Fish (MAAA Art/Downtown Art), MIDSUMMER (Tiltyard). Additional work includes the Oregon Symphony Orchestra, ArtsEmerson, Elm Shakespeare Company, Actors’ Shakespeare Project, Israeli Stage, Boston Playwrights’ Theatre. BA Hons Directing Emerson College.

Azure D. Osborne-Lee (Assistant Stage Manager; he/him/his or they/them/theirs) is a Black queer theatre maker from South of the Mason-Dixon Line. This year he is an inaugural Trans Lab Playwriting Fellow. Azure holds an MA in Advanced Theatre Practice from Royal Central School of Speech & Drama as well as an MA in Women’s & Gender Studies and a BA in English & Spanish from UT Austin. Keep up with Azure at http://azureosbornelee.com

Miranda Haymon (Assistant Director; she/her/hers) Currently serving as the Roundabout 2017/18 Directing Fellow. Former Allen Lee Hughes Directing Fellow at Arena Stage; Co-Artistic Director and Resident Performance Director at The Hodgepodge Group. Graduate of Wesleyan University, recipient of the Rachel Henderson Theater Prize in Directing. mirandahaymon.com

Karen Boyer (Associate Costume Designer; she/her/hers) designs and builds costumes in NYC. For more: karenroboyer.com.

Emma Johnson (Production Manager; she/her/hers) is a Brooklyn-based stage and production manager, specializing in reinterpretations of classical texts and the creation of new works in collaborative, devised settings. Emma is currently a 2050 Administrative Fellow at the New York Theatre Workshop for the 2017-18 season. Emma has received training at SUNY Oswego as well as The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, The Public Theater, Target Margin Theater, and New York Theatre Workshop. Recent credits include The White Dress at the American Theatre of Actors. She is also a photographer and writer with a seasonal green thumb.

Carl Whipple (Technical Director; he/him/his) is a freelance Production Manager and Technical Director based in Brooklyn. Recent: 17c (Big Dance Theater), Pay No Attention to the Girl, Mourning Becomes Electra (Target Margin) Othello, Hadestown (New York Theater Workshop), Elements of OZ (The Builders Association), YOUARENOWHERE (Andrew Schneider), MoMA, The New Museum as well as a variety of shops and venues throughout NYC.

David Gibbs (Press Representative; he/him/his) is the founder of DARR Publicity, a boutique press agency specializing in theater, dance, music-driven shows and unique theatrical experiences. Clients include The Amoralists, The Assembly, Company XIV, Ice Factory Festival, La MaMa, New Ohio Theatre and PTP/NYC. David has publicized shows at many Off-Broadway and Off-Off-Broadway venues throughout NYC. His clients have won Drama Desk, Lucille Lortel and Obie Awards. www.DarrPublicity.com

Actors’ Equity Association (AEA), founded in 1913, represents more than 50,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO, and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. The Equity emblem is our mark of excellence. www.actorsequity.org

The Assembly is a collective of multi-disciplinary performance artists committed to realizing a visceral and intelligent theater for a new generation. Assembly members unite varied perspectives in service of wide-reaching, unabashedly theatrical and rigorously researched ensemble performances, crafted to spark conversation with our audiences. Our work embraces the complexities of our present moment; it is a call for empathy and engagement. Embracing collaboration as the core of the creative process, the company chooses projects through consensus and develops text, action and design side-by-side within the rehearsal environment. From workshops to productions to post-performance discussions, The Assembly is dedicated to rooting its artists, audiences, and peers in a profound sense of community.
The Assembly is Stephen Aubrey, Edward Bauer, Ben Beckley, Nick Benacerraf, Emily Caffery, Jess Chayes, and Lucy Jackson

The Assembly’s Board of Directors: Nick Banner (chair), Nick Benacerraf, Susan Bernfield, Brad Burgess, Jess Chayes, Linda Hillman Chayes, Suzanne Miller-Halegoua, David Milch, and Meredith Lynsey Schade

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NOW PLAYING / COMING SOON

Seagullmachine
April 14 - May 5, 2018
Ellen Stewart Theatre

Martyrs
April 19 - May 6, 2018
The Downstairs

La MaMa Kids - Don Quixote Takes New York
Saturdays & Sundays, April 21 - May 6, 2018 at Noon
The Downstairs

Poetry Electric: Sign Felt!
April 24, 2018
The Downstairs

Coffeehouse Chronicles: Jean-Claude van Itallie
April 28, 2018
The Downstairs

La MaMa Moves! Dance Festival
May 10 - June 3, 2018
Ellen Stewart Theatre & The Downstairs

There’s Blood at the Wedding: Songs for Lorca
May 17 - June 3, 2018
Ellen Stewart Theatre