The Downstairs
66 East 4th Street, NYC, 10003
March 31 - April 10, 2022

in association with
Hell in a Handbag Productions

presents

The Drag Seed
The Drag Seed
A Hell in a Handbag Production, Chicago

CAST
Lee, u/s Ms. Ficus – Kelly Anchors
Miss Charles – David Cerda*
Jennifer Frittata, u/s Lee – Sydney Genco*
Connie Lingus – Ed Jones*
Wendy Breeze – Elizabeth Lesinski*
Carson – Patrick O’Keefe
Summer/Sonny/Paramedic/Fernando – Tyler Anthony Smith*
Ms. Ficus, u/s Miss Charles – Danne W. Taylor*
Understudies: Nicky Mendelsohn* (Carson/Summer/Various), Elizabeth Rude (Jennifer/Wendy), Jamie Smith (Connie)

DIRECTED BY CHERYL SNODGRASS
BOOK & LYRICS BY DAVID CERDA
ARRANGEMENTS BY NANDITA MAHESH

PRODUCTION & DESIGN TEAM
Stage Manager………………………………………….................Andrew Donnelly*
Production Manager............................................................Abby Teel
Choreography..........................................................................TJ Tapp
Technical Director.....................................................................Jack Mink
Scenic Painter...........................................................................Emma Hydorn
Set Design................................................................................Lauren Nichols
Scenic Assistant........................................................................Trent Jones
Build Assistants.................................................................Dylan Sprague & Melina Herman
Costume Design..........................................................................Gregory Graham
Light Design................................................................................Liz Cooper
Lighting Electrician.................................................................Jackson Mikkelson
Sound Design.............................................................................DJ Douglass
Violence Design..........................................................................R&D Choreography
(Victor Bayona & Richard Gilbert)
Wig Design................................................................................Keith Ryan*
Prop Design................................................................................Pamela L. Parker*
Makeup Design..........................................................................Sydney Genco*
Art Director/Graphic Designer..................................................Michael S. Miller*
Photography..............................................................................Rick Aguilar* Studios
Box Office Manager.................................................................Danni Quider*
Artistic Director & Executive Producer.................................David Cerda*
Public Relations/Publicity.........................................................David Rosenburg*

*Denotes Hell in a Handbag Ensemble Member
ENSEMBLE
JD Caudill, David Cerda, Andrew Donnelly, Grant Drager, Sydney Genco, Mealah Heidenreich, Caitlin Jackson, Ed Jones, Lori Lee, Liz Lesinski, David Lipschutz, Stevie Love, Terry McCarthy, Nicky Mendelsohn, Michael Miller, Ryan Oates, Pamela Parker, Danni Quider, Michael Rashid, David Rosenberg, Keith Ryan, Aaron Smith, Tyler Anthony Smith, Danne W. Taylor, Robert Williams, Creative Associate – Peter Neville, Resident Photographer – Rick Aguilar

SPECIAL THANKS
The Chopin Theatre, Redbox Workshop, LaMaMa Experimental Theater Staff and John Issendorf Christopher Maxwell

Berserk video by Peter Neville/Image Control Unit I Want It All vocals by Becca Hobart

SPECIAL APPEARANCES BY
Kirsten Fitzgerald Mierka Girten Shade Murray Doug Vickers

*The Drag Seed* is made possible by the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation & Supported by The MacArthur Funds for Arts and Culture at The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation
CAST BIOGRAPHIES (in alphabetical order)

KELLY ANCHORS (Lee, u/s Ficus) has written, directed and acted in dozens of shows with Sweetback Productions, the company she co-founded with her husband, Mike McKune. Favorites include: PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE, THE BIRDS, BIPOLAR BITCH and DEEP-FRIED and SUCK MY NOSE. She frequently collaborates with the amazing Rick Paul. Kelly has also acted in many shows with Curious Theater Branch, most notably as the lead character in Sarah Kane’s, 4:48 PSYCHOsis directed by Beau O’Reilly. Her new show, DOROTHY, AND THE 1978 HOLIDAY RAMBLER RAMBLETT opens this summer. vortexstories.com

DAVID CERDA (Miss Charles) is proud to celebrate old queens everywhere! He is the co-founder and Artistic Director of Hell in a Handbag Productions and has been seen in various roles in Handbag shows including Joan Crawford (CHRISTMAS DEAREST), and Suzanne Pleshette (THE BIRDS). Cerda has also worked with Court Theatre, A Red Orchid Theatre, The New Coordinates, Lookingglass, Corn Productions, and Sweetback Productions. Cerda dedicates his performance to the holy trinity of Charles- Ludlam, Busch and Pierce. Up next- Lady Fowler in A FINE FEATHERED MURDER at The Chopin Theatre and Dorothy at the world’s first Golden Girls fan convention, Golden.Con- Thank You for Being a Fan at Navy Pier. Thanks to the entire DRAG SEED cast and production team, John Issendorf and the entire LaMaMa staff and production team. Love to Christopher.

SYDNEY GENCO (Jennifer Frittata, Make-Up Design, u/s Lee) holds a BFA in Musical Theatre Performance from Roosevelt University's CCPA. HIAH shows include SNOWGIRLS (Ice Cristal), THE ARTIFICIAL JUNGLE (Roxanne), RUDOLPH THE RED HOSED REINDEER (Elfina), SEXY BABY (Grandma Crystal), CAGED DAMES (Big Lorraine), and many more! Syd was certified at Make Up First School. Outside of Handbag, she’s worked with Oil Lamp Theatre, Circle Theatre, Nothing Without a Company, and more. Big thanks to her amazing parents for their constant love and support! madcbs.com

ED JONES (Connie Lingus) is thrilled to be a part of this modern take on one of his all-time favorite classic movies. He has appeared in numerous productions for HIAH and was most recently seen as Rose in Handbag’s highly popular GOLDEN GIRLS: THE LOST EPISODES. Next for him, the premiere of David Cerda’s newest play, A FINE FEATHERED MURDER. He thanks David, Cheryl and the rest of this insanely talented cast and crew.

ELIZABETH LESINSKI (Wendy Breeze) has proudly been a HIAH ensemble member for the last 12 years. Favorite Handbag roles include Annie Sullivan (MIRACLE!), Emmy Lou (LADY X /LADY X THE MUSICAL), Sylvanya (HAYWIRE), Myrtle (CAGED DAMES), Linda Rogo (POSEIDON! AN UPSIDE-DOWN MUSICAL) and Leslie Anne (SEXY BABY). When not on stage, Liz is a Musical Theatre Teacher at a K-4th public school in N. Lawndale. Love to Cheryl, David, Danni, Grayson, Hazel, and Emy.
PATRICK O'KEEFE (Carson) is thrilled to be making his HIAH debut! Chicago credits include 8-TRACK: THE SOUNDS OF THE 70’S (Theo Ubique); MAMMA MIA! (Music Theater Works); PETER AND THE STARCATCHER (Big Noise); A MAN OF NO IMPORTANCE (PrideArts); HEAD OVER HEELS (Kokandy); and the premiere production of Michael Potsic's FLIGHT (Beverly Arts Center). BFA from Millikin University. Insta: @pat_okeefe.

TYLER ANTHONY SMITH (Summer Breeze/Various) is in show business. He/They is/are a proud Hell in a Handbag ensemble member. Instagram: @judithnightlight

NICKY MENDELSOHN (u/s Carson & Summer) is a proud Handbag ensemble member thrilled to be working with his favorite people! Nicky has been seen at HIAH in POSEIDON and CHRISTMAS DEAREST. In Chicago Nicky has worked with Pride Films and Plays, Williams Street Rep, Citadel Theatre and Chicago Theatre Works. Nicky holds a BFA in musical theatre from Western Michigan University.

ELIZABETH RUDE (u/s Jennifer Frittata & Wendy Breeze) is thrilled to be “at the ready” for her first Handbag show! Select Chicagoland credits include THE SHADOWS OF BIRDS (Glass Apple Theatre), THE EXPLORERS CLUB, DON'T DRESS FOR DINNER, DEATHTRAP (Citadel Theatre), CALIFORNIA SUITE, THE WIND PHONE (Madkap Productions), SOLDIER'S HEART (Clockwise Theatre), NOISES OFF!, NECESSARY TARGETS (Big Deal Productions), CLYBOURNE PARK (Harper College), DOUBT, A PARABLE (Oakton College), MOON OVER BUFFALO (Glenview Theatre Guild), MRS. SORKEN, THE FERRIS WHEEL. (Oil Lamp Theater).

DANNE W. TAYLOR (Ms. Ficus, u/s Miss Charles) has been performing in Chicago for 35 years, working with companies such as Pride Films and Plays, Curious Theatre Branch, Mary-Arrchie and Baliwick Rep among many others. He is an ensemble member of HiaH. Favorite roles include: Nancy Drew, Sylvia Martinelli and Jessica Fletcher with HiaH; Playwright/HIS GREATNESS (best actor International Dublin Gay Theatre Festival), Charlotte/ CASA VALENTINA with PFP; Seedy Man/ THE EVILLER TWIN with Curious Theatre; Professor/ INSIGNIFICANCE with Mary-Arrchie. Next up, the Dowager Countess in David Cerda's A FINE FEATHERED MURDER. Thanks to David, Cheryl and Kelly for the gift of Ms. Ficus.

PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

CHERYL SNODGRASS (Director) is excited to return to HIAH to direct the remount of THE DRAG SEED and its move to LaMama. She first worked with HIAH as Bigger Lorraine in CAGED DAMES. She has since directed DIE! MOMMIE, DIE!, HAYWIRE, RIP NELSON'S HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACLUAR, SCARRIE THE MUSICAL, L'IMITATION OF LIFE and THE BIRDS. Cheryl has also assisted David in developing several scripts. Outside of HIAH, Cheryl has
worked with playwright Jeff Goode for 30 years as a director, actor, and producer. She directed the premiere productions of POONA THE FUCKDOG AND OTHER PLAYS FOR CHILDREN (Trap Door), THE EMANCIPATION OF ALABASTER MCGILL (Studio Roanoke) and THE EIGHT REINDEER MONOLOGUES (Brave Hearts). In the last 5 years she's directed three shows for The Foundlings - TO THE NEW GIRL, HOIST, and THE EIGHT as well as two shows for Glass Apple - SHADOWS OF BIRDS and LIGHOUSES IN THE DESERT. Cheryl recently returned from Maine after directing WHO’S HOLIDAY for Penobscott Theatre. Next up is David’s newest creation, A FINE FEATHERED MURDER.

DAVID CERDA (Executive Producer, Playwright) has written or co-written many plays and musicals including POSEIDON! AN UPSIDE DOWN MUSICAL, RUDOLPH THE RED-HOSED REINDEER, THE BIRDS, CAGED DAMES, LADY X-THE MUSICAL, SCREAM, QUEEN! SCREAM!, TROGG! A Rick and Roll Musical, THE GOLDEN GIRLS- THE LOST EPISODES series, SCARRIE! THE MUSICAL and quite a few more,..., he thinks... Cerda is a recipient of a Joseph Jefferson Lifetime Achievement Award and an inductee to the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame for his body of work and philanthropic efforts with Handbag. His next play, A FINE FEATHERED MURDER will open in June 2022- at The Chopin Theatre.

ABBY TEEL (Production Manager) is a Production/Stage Manager who has recently relocated to Chicago. Originally from Missouri, Abby holds a BFA in Design, Technology, and Stage Management from Missouri State University, after which she worked professionally in Memphis and other regional theatres. She is so excited to be working with HIAH and this amazing group of artists. She would like to thank her partner, their cat (Minnie), and their two dogs (Dakin and Poot) for all their love and support. IG: @abbyteel0203 Web: abbyteel.com

PAMELA L. PARKER (Props) is thrilled to be working with David Cerda, Cheryl Snodgrass, the returning and new cast of The Drag Seed and her co-ensemble members of HIAH! Pamela owns and operates RedBox Workshop – a Chicago scenic & exhibit studio as she has since 1990 which specializes in interactive learning exhibits for children's museums. Properties Design credits include, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Mainstage, Student and Special Productions -eight seasons- Northlight Theater -two seasons- multiple Marriott Lincolnshire Theater mainstage & children's productions, and Silver Dollar City Opera House, Branson, MO -3 award winning original musicals.

KEITH RYAN (Wig Design) is the Wig Designer for the Fabulous, and is delighted to be designing THE DRAG SEED, again. His first magical experience with Hell in a Handbag was CHRISTMAS DEAREST 2015, and has been The Wig Designer, for every show since. Keith does not perform in front of the curtain, but creates Magic behind it! Keith is a 2020 Jeff Award winner for Artistic Specialization, Wig Design. With over 100 shows to his credit, he has created magic with Theo Ubique Theatre, Oak Lawn Park District Theater, Alex Grelle Productions, Tyler Anthony Smith Productions, Sweetback Productions, Firebrand Theatre, New American Folk Theater, Big Noise Theater, Leyden High School and more.
R&D CHOREOGRAPHY (Violence Design) is riding high to be working on another HIAH show! Our work has previously snuck into POSEIDON! (twice in 20 years!), CHRISTMAS DEAREST, and GOLDEN GIRLS. Founded in 1997, R&D has designed violence for over three hundred productions at dozens of Chicago area theatres, including About Face, ATC, Griffin, Goodman, Lifeline, Metropolis, Oak Park Festival Theater, Pegasus, Steep, Strawdog, Theatre at the Center, Theo Ubique, Trapdoor, and Vitalist.

GREGORY GRAHAM (Costume Design) is a theater student at University of Illinois Chicago. He is a freelance designer, tailor, and all around crafts person. Recent credits include: Hell in a Handbag’s GOLDEN GIRLS: THE LOST EPISODES: THE VALENTINE EDITION & VOL. 3.

JACK MINK (Tech Director) is on his second build for Hell in a Handbag and it has been a very memorable experience. He would like to thank the production staff for their support through the entire process, but especially for the rally to help complete the set after an injury made it impossible for him to finish the set on his own. He wishes the cast and crew a smooth run and the audience a grand evening of live theatre!

LAUREN NICHOLS (Set Designer) is a freelance designer, model-maker, and draftsman. Professionally she has designed for local companies such as The Gift, Jackalope, Lifeline, Victory Gardens, Firebrand, Boho, Rivendell, Northbrook, Harper College, DePaul, and UIC. Lauren has also assisted on productions presented at Julliard, Writers, Court, Oregon Shakes, The Opera Theatre of St. Louis, New York Theatre Workshop, Milwaukee Rep, Steppenwolf, and Goodman. She currently serves as an adjunct faculty member at The Theatre School at DePaul. MFA Northwestern. laurenangeldesigns.com

NANDITA MAHESH (Music Arrangements) is ecstatic to have her music be featured in THE DRAG SEED! She is a junior at the University of Pittsburgh studying Marketing and Theatre Arts with concentrations in Film Studies and Music and is so excited to have been given this opportunity. She even had the exciting chance to play Jennifer Frittata back in November with Pitt Stages and wishes an amazing run to everyone involved!

LIZ COOPER (Lighting Design) is excited to be designing for Hell in a Handbag again! Some of her favorite lighting design credits include MARY ROSE, The Authorized Fan Production of DR. HORRIBLE’S SING ALONG BLOG, GHOST QUARTET, NEVERMORE and SHOCKHEADED PETER (Black Button Eyes), CHRISTMAS DEAREST and DRAG SEED (Hell in a Handbag), THIRTEEN DAYS and THE SUNDIAL and PEYTON PLACE (City Lit), BARD FICTION (Commedia Beauregard), A Study in Scarlet and Henry V (Promethean). She is a resident designer at City Lit. Her light plot for CHRISTMAS DEAREST was included in Live Design’s 31 Days of Plots.
TJ TAPP (Choreographer) is so happy to be back working with Hell in a Handbag! Her choreography credits include: CHRISTMAS DEAREST (Hell in a Handbag) and KINKY BOOTS, Associate Choreographer (Paramount Theatre). Her performance credits include KISS ME, KATE (Marriott Theatre); Chicago Sings Rock & Roll Broadway, DOREMI (Porchlight Music Theatre); LEGALLY BLONDE (Metropolis Performing Arts Centre) and Chicago College of Performing Arts, BFA Musical Theatre: Dance. @ tj.tapp

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GIVE to Hell in a Handbag! We’re a 501C3 Organization!
A full program with information on this production can be found on the *The Drag Seed* page of the La MaMa website.

In addition you can scan the QR code Poster located in the theatre lobby for access to the digital program.
La MaMa’s historic, landmark building at 74 East 4th Street is undergoing an urgently needed complete renovation and restoration to preserve the historic façade, create building-wide ADA accessibility, and provide much needed performance, exhibition and community space for decades to come.

La MaMa, founded by Ellen Stewart in 1961, has been on east 4th Street since 1967. La MaMa embraces every person in its community and is legendary as the place where new artists of all nations, cultures, races, and identities are given opportunities. It is the place where art begins.

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The Drag Seed
March 31 - April 10, 2022
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April 14 - 16, 2022
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April 15 - 17, 2022
The Downstairs

Gerald Casel Dance: Not About Race Dance
April 22 - 24, 2022
Ellen Stewart Theatre

Shared Evening: Pele Bauch + Marina Celander
April 22 - 24, 2022
The Downstairs

COMING SOON

Secret Journey: Stop Calling Them Dangerous #3 - Panel
April 23, 2022
47 Great Jones Street

Compañía Cuerpo de Indias: Flowers for Kazuo Ohno (and Leonard Cohen)
April 28 - 29, 2022
Ellen Stewart Theatre

John Scott Dance: Cloud Study
April 29 - May 1, 2022
The Downstairs

La MaMa Kids Dance Workshop with Marina Celander
April 30, 2022
The Downstairs

Valetango Company: Confianza (Trust)
April 30 - May 1, 2022
Ellen Stewart Theatre

La MaMa Remake a World Gala
May 5, 2022
Ellen Stewart Theatre