



THE LARAMIE PROJECT

written by **MOISÉS KAUFMAN** and the
MEMBERS OF TECTONIC THEATER PROJECT

head writer **LEIGH FONDAKOWSKI**
associate writers **STEPHEN BELBER, GREG PIEROTTI, STEPHEN WANGH**
dramaturgs **AMANDA GRONICH, SARAH LAMBERT,**
JOHN MCADAMS, MAUDE MITCHELL, ANDY PARIS,
BARBARA PITTS, KELLI SIMPKINS

October 6-8, 2023 at The Waldron
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A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Stages' production of *The Laramie Project* marks 25 years since the hate-driven beating and murder of 21-year-old gay University of Wyoming student Matthew Shepard. Over two years following that event, the Tectonic Theatre Company interrogated the many complex social issues that arose in its aftermath by traveling to Laramie, Wyoming and conducting hundreds of interviews. Compiled from those interviews and other primary source materials, *The Laramie Project* pulls into focus a landscape of struggle for LGBTQ+ rights, hate speech, the AIDS epidemic, the death penalty, religious ideology, collective trauma, and media sensationalism as it existed in a place and time not too far removed or dissimilar from our own.

The mission of our production has been to draw a line between the issues on display in *The Laramie Project* to the issues before us here and now. In order to "say it right, say it correct" as Father Roger Schmit would put it, we must use our production as a vehicle to enact positive change. While the past quarter-century has witnessed significant strides in LGBTQ+ rights, we find ourselves in a moment where those rights are under threat and hate crime is again on the rise. The talented young actors before you are affected by anti-LGBTQ+ legislation passing through Indiana state legislature. Senate Bill 480, for example, bans any gender-affirming care for minors in the state of Indiana. And HB1608, the "Education Matters" bill, bans conversation on human sexuality in schools. It also requires educators to notify parents when students wish to use another name or pronoun, effectively stripping trans students of the right to come out privately when and to whom they choose. Honoring Matthew Shepard to us means celebrating the progress we've made, while keeping the urgency of the fight at the frontier of the struggle for LGBTQ+ rights.

As we navigate the challenges of this play, we are compelled to recognize the interconnectedness of the LGBTQ+ struggle across time and place, and the intersectionality of LGBTQ+ rights with BIPOC rights and indeed with all human rights. Our production serves as both a tribute to the past and a call to arms for the present, inspiring audiences to join us in the ongoing fight for equality, justice, and compassion. Together, we can honor Matthew Shepard's memory by ensuring that his story continues to shed light on the urgent issues of our time.

— Devin May, director

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PRODUCTION NOTES

A devised play is one that begins without a script. It uses other source materials, like interviews or court transcripts. The process of devising a play is one that involves a lot of play and exploration, trial and error, and bold failure. Our production employed design choices intended to impress the devised nature of *The Laramie Project* on our audiences. The script hides no character changes; written for 8 actors and 65+ characters and numerous settings, there is no production of *The Laramie Project* without a healthy suspension of disbelief. To maximize the suspension of disbelief among our audience, we chose to put our entire "offstage areas" on full display; we hide nothing. In the spirit of Tectonic Theatre's original production, we use bits and pieces of costumes and scenic elements, and, through mere suggestion, we conjure these people and places in the imagination of our audiences. We call upon our audience to suspend their disbelief and enjoy an electrifyingly stylized theatrical experience.

ADDITIONAL CREDITS

The US West World Premiere
produced by The Denver Center Theatre Company.
Artistic Director in association with Tectonic Theater Project: Donovan Marley
Artistic Director: Moisés Kaufman

Originally produced in New York City at the Union Square Theatre
by Roy Gabay and Tectonic Theater Project
in association with Gayle Francis and the Araca Group
Associate Producers: Mara Isaacs and Hart Sharp Entertainment

The Laramie Project was developed in part with the support of
The Sundance Theatre Laboratory.

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PRODUCTION TEAM

Director	Devin May
Assistant Director	Ashley Massie
Set Design and Construction	Brian Lewis
Dramaturg	Emma O'Mahoney
Costume Designer	Emma O'Mahoney
Angel Wings Design and Construction	Nola Hartman
Technical Manager	Marc Tschida
Lighting Designer/Master Electrician	Jesse Goryl
Property Master	Marc Tschida
Playbill Graphic Design	Jordan Nel
Playbill Printing	World Arts

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The cast and production team of *The Laramie Project* would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their help and support of the production:

Parents of the cast
First Christian Church for a rehearsal space
Chad Carrothers
Brian and Amanda Cook
Paul Daily
Laura Gross
Mandy Hussey
Janell Norton
Catharine Rademacher

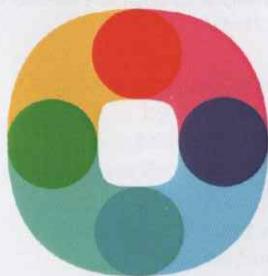
We are grateful for the support from the Matthew Shepard Foundation: to Katie Hanna for arrangements, and Matthew's father, Dennis Shepard, who met with our actors for a virtual cast chat and will join us via Zoom for a post-show talkback facilitated in person by Bloomington's Darrell Ann Stone at Saturday's evening performance, October 7.

Special thanks to Rick Armstrong who encouraged Stages Bloomington to produce this show for the 2023-2024 season.

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We've got to be as clear-headed about human beings as possible, because we are still each other's only hope.

— James Baldwin

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CAST

Sam Clarke

Roles: Rulon Stacey, Matt Mickelson, Philip DuBois, Jury Foreperson, Governor Jim Geringer, Jeffrey Lockwood

Fletcher Coley

Roles: Moisés Kaufman, Stephen Mead Johnson, Murdock Cooper, Jon Peacock, Dennis Shepard, Harry Woods, Shadow

Vincent Cook

Roles: Amanda Gronich, Marge Murray, Aaron McKinney, Bill McKinney

Coco Duneman

Roles: Greg Pierotti, Sargeant Hing, Shannon, Judy Shepard, Anonymous Friend of Aaron McKinney, Jedadiah's Mom, Cal Rerucha, Kristin Price

Timsil Goodman

Roles: Stephen Belber, Matt Galloway, Baptist Minister, Jedadiah's Dad, Gil Engen, Conrad Miller

Ben Jaffe

Roles: Rob Debree, Doc O'Connor, Andrew Gomez, Russell Henderson, Reverend Fred Phelps, Jedadiah's Scene Partner

Pierre James

Roles: Leigh Fondakowski, Zackie Salmon, Romaine Patterson, Tiffany Edwards, E-mail Writer, Phone Caller

Simone Monrás-Pickard

Roles: Aaron Kreifels, Trish Steger, Judge/Bailiff, Father Roger Schmit, Jonas Slonaker, April Silva, Phil Labrie

Veronica Piurek

Roles: Rebecca Hilliker, Reggie Fluty, Alison Mears, Jen, Sherry Johnson, Baptist Minister's Wife, Waitress

Helen Schomacker

Roles: Barbara Pitts, Catherine Connolly, Zubaida Ula, Sherry Aanenson, Lucy Thompson, Eileen Engen

Cooper Tucker

Roles: Andy Paris, Jedadiah Schultz, Doug Laws, Dr. Cantway, Kerry Drake, Bartender

IMPORTANT: The video taping or other video or audio recording of the production is strictly prohibited. Please silence all cell phones.

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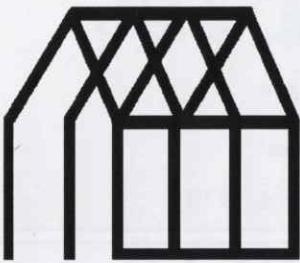


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Understudy (\$100-\$249)

Bob Agranoff and Susan Klein, Pat Anderson, Ann Armstrong, Debbie Atlas, David and Naomi Balto, Laurence Behrens, Sam Burton, Patty and Danny Callison, Michael Collins, Susan Colston, Brian, Amanda, Vincent and Julian Cook, Vickie Edington, Paul Engle, Ellen Epstein, Laura and Payton Gross, Jacqueline Hall and Lloyd Orr, Audrey and Ken Heller, Mandy Hussey, Laura Kao, Danielle Magid, Elizabeth O'Farrell, Mike and Cindy O'Mahoney, Chris and Susan Parker, Dara Parker, Jeff Rudkin, Eric Scheper, Ellen Stauffer, Penny and Dwight Stauffer, Beverly Watkins, Michael and Avril Weisman, Karina Willats

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