



BLUEBARN
THEATRE

HEROES OF THE FOURTH TURNING

BY WILL ARBERY

PLAYBILL | SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2021



via farina

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

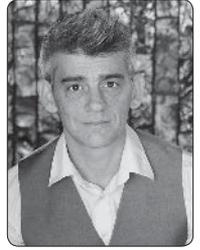
Heroes of the Fourth Turning explores ideas and strategies currently at work in America, currently at the heart of our inability to connect with one another. It asks us to reckon with these ideas. It asks us to reckon with ourselves and our responsibility to them.

Heroes engages with whiteness as a subject of exploration and I must acknowledge the harm that exploration may cause for BIPOC, LGBTQIA2s+, and other community members. There are other lenses we could have chosen, other voices we could be lifting.

This exploration is, on its face, a tool for white people to explore their complicity and complacency, and we invite the entire community to share in that experience- as witnesses, as invested and impacted observers, as those to whom we are accountable.

Heroes is also an exploration of empathy – the need for it, the limits of it, and how much we owe the very real humans with whom we violently disagree. These characters are baffling, hilarious, thoughtful, lost, and striving for ‘the good’-like all of us. But what is the good?

We invite you to listen to them, to experience their humanity with the fullness of your own.



Barry Carman
Barry Carman

WELCOME FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Greetings BLUEBARNers!

Welcome back to another season at the BLUEBARN. A season like no other... in so many ways. While Susan and her incredible creative team pivoted to bring art to the Theatre during the last 18 months like we've never seen - thanks to the flexibility of our space and the brilliant minds that populate it with such visionary ideas - it feels great to nestle into our velvet seats, indoors and intimate once again.

"Embrace" couldn't be a more perfect theme as we embark into Season 33. How many of us got to experience the joy of the embrace this summer as COVID vaccinations rolled out. We look forward to embracing a diversity of stories this season on the BLUEBARN stage - from a tragedy written over 400 years ago to a musical dramedy still having the final finishing touches put on it right now. I can't wait to enjoy them all... with you.

As we open Season 33, a huge thank you on behalf of the Board of Directors to our donors, our season members and our volunteers - you are all the heart of what we do here. It feels so good to be back again.

Sincerely,

Devin Fox
Devin Fox





SEASON 33



Dear BLUEBARNers,

BLUEBARN Theatre is proud to announce Season 33: Embrace. After so much separation and isolation, we are thrilled to welcome you back to a full season of transformative live theatre. After more than a year of disruption and awakening, how do we begin again? How do we embrace the lessons from a long season of the unknown and emerge more focused, more present to one another, and more committed to driving change in our community? How

do we show up for one another, gather with joy and purpose, bringing our best selves and best work?

Season 33 embraces the very best of original, contemporary, and classic work, exactly what you've come to expect from Omaha's Premier Professional Theatre. Our new season also fully embraces our commitment to creating a thriving, equitable arts scene in Omaha. Join us in embracing compassion and justice, join us in embracing extraordinary art and the artists who create it, join us in embracing a stronger sense of community.

As caretakers of our mission, as partners in our work, as our most important collaborators...we embrace you.

With gratitude,

Susan Clement
Producing Artistic Director



presents

HEROES OF THE FOURTH TURNING — BY WILL ARBERY —

Directed by **Barry Carman**

September 30 – October 24, 2021

*This performance runs about 2 hours
with no intermission.*

Playwrights Horizons, Inc., New York City, produced the
World Premiere of *Heroes of the Fourth Turning* in 2019

Heroes of the Fourth Turning was developed by
The Cape Cod Theatre Project, Hal Brooks, Artistic Director

"Nothin" • Written by Townes Van Zandt

©1970, JTVZ Music (ASCAP), Katie Bell Music (ASCAP), Will Van Zandt Publishing (ASCAP)

*This production features simulated gunfire. If you need to leave the auditorium,
please us the exits at the top of the stairs.*

PLEASE TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES AND PAGERS.

The use of video, still or sound recording devices
is strictly prohibited.

PLEASE KEEP YOUR MASKS ON AT ALL TIMES

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

VACCINATION & MASK POLICY

Effective September 1, 2021

At BLUEBARN theatre, patrons will need to be masked and fully vaccinated with an FDA authorized vaccine in order to attend a performance and must show proof of vaccination and identification at their time of entry into the venue when they check in. BLUEBARN performers, backstage crew and staff will comply with vaccination requirements to further ensure the safety of our guests and company members.



REDUCED CAPACITY PERFORMANCE OPTION

The BLUEBARN will safely operate at full audience capacity, however, we will be offering the back row of each performance with reduced capacity seating.

VACCINATION & MASK POLICY

BLUEBARN Theatre requires that patrons attending any performance to follow the protocols below. As guidelines are evolving on a frequent basis, so may these policies, so we ask you to please check back prior to attending to confirm current protocols.

1. **Face coverings:** Right now and for as long as is necessary, the CDC recommends face coverings for all individuals in public indoor settings, regardless of vaccination status. **All visitors must wear a face mask, worn properly over the nose and mouth, for the duration of their time in the theatre.** Please note that bandanas, neck gaiters, and masks with exhalation valves are not accepted. **In lobby spaces, all visitors must wear a face mask when not actively eating or drinking.**
2. **Wellness:** Any person who feels unwell or (a) has any COVID-19 Symptoms (b) has had a positive COVID-19 test in the past 10 days, or (c) has had close contact with anyone confirmed or suspected of having COVID-19 agrees not to come to BLUEBARN. Please call our House Manager at 402-345-1576 where we will be happy to work with you to reschedule your tickets.
3. **Risk:** Attendees understand that there is an inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 in any public place where people are present. Those purchasing or attending BLUEBARN events voluntarily assume all risks related to exposure to COVID-19.
4. **Compliance:** All BLUEBARN attendees must follow all health and safety procedures and signage posted while at BLUEBARN events. BLUEBARN reserves the right to require visitors who do not follow our guidelines to leave an event immediately. Any visitors who are disrespectful or discourteous to other guests, staff, or volunteers may also be asked to leave.

HOW DO I SHARE MY PROOF OF VACCINATION?

You will be required to show a valid photo ID and proof of vaccination upon entering the building. An original vaccination card, a photocopy of your card, or a photo on your smartphone showing your vaccination card is appropriate proof of vaccination.

For your safety, as well as our artists and staff, BLUEBARN will not admit any guests who do not provide the documentation as required above.

WHAT DOES "FULLY VACCINATED" MEAN?

Individuals must show full vaccination with a vaccine approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or by the World Health Organization (WHO). People are considered fully

vaccinated **two weeks after** their completion of a CDC or WHO recommended vaccine regimen. Your ticketed performance date must be at least 14 days after the second dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine, or at least 14 days after a single-dose vaccine.

NEGATIVE TEST CERTIFICATION

For children under 12 and people with a medical condition or closely held religious belief that prevents vaccination, guests may provide proof of a COVID-19 PCR test taken within 72 hours of the performance start time, or a negative COVID-19 antigen test taken within 6 hours of the performance start time.

POLICY TIMELINE

Currently, the policy is in place through December 31, 2021. We will continue to review our policies on an ongoing basis to evolve with the best practices around health and safety and may revise policies accordingly.

Thank you for working with us to keep everyone safe and healthy during this unprecedented time.

If you have any additional questions, please reach out at (402) 345-1576, or bluebarn.org/contact.

CONTENT NOTICE

Heroes of the Fourth Turning features many elements with the potential to activate harmful responses in audience members: physical violence and emotional violence, trauma-inflected subject matter, gunfire and loud disorienting noises. It also deals with a number of ideas and outlooks at work in the world today that are abhorrent, divisive, and actively deny the human dignity of multiple communities and identities. BLUEBARN has engaged sensitivity readers representing impacted communities to identify and disclose impact categories, flag this content, and ensure that all who attend the show do so with intentionality and in full awareness of its potential for harm.

The following are impact categories are at play in *Heroes of the Fourth Turning*: ableism, anti-Blackness, anti-LGBT+ (especially transphobia), antisemitism, anti-choice, classicism, Islamophobia, misogyny and paternalism, patriarchy, racism, religious trauma, sexual stigma (regarding number of partners and health status), sexual violence and rape culture, white supremacy culture (nationalism, tribalism, dog-whistles), and xenophobia.

IMPACT STATEMENT

"I think that the one thing that has remained constant between my seeing of the play and my reading of it is: it is a play for white people, which is deeply upsetting for people who fall into various marginalized communities. It's a play about whiteness and complacency, but also for whiteness and complacency, and I remember wishing I'd known that before I'd gone into the theatre and been deeply disturbed for some time afterwards. My high school experience was full of people with loudly expressed similar views--so loudly to the point that I concluded that I would not graduate college. I felt that I would have a mental or emotional breakdown before I could graduate if I had to endure four more years surrounded by those views (I ended up going to an HBCU out of state)."

Sensitivity Reader, **Jazzy Davis** (they)
Project Manager at *k+r strategies*

EXCERPTS AVAILABLE

Excerpts from the play that have been identified as potentially activating or harmful are available for perusal by request at the Box Office, or digitally by emailing Barry at bcorman@bluebarn.org.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The BLUEBARN invites you to join us in practicing an acknowledgement of the land, a baseline step in recognizing the effects of colonization and anti-Indigeneity. We invite you to draw your awareness to your physical relationship to the earth, from wherever you are joining us today, if possible by making direct contact or grounding yourself in whatever way is accessible to you in this moment.

We acknowledge that the land on which we find ourselves is occupied territory. This is true of anywhere we find ourselves or gather in the United States. It is the traditional land and ancestral home to Native American, Indigenous, and First Nations peoples. The BLUEBARN is located on the unceded territory of the Umo'hoⁿ ("umAHhah") and O héthi Šakówi, in colonized Omaha, NE. We invite you give focus to and honor the people whose lands were forcibly taken from their stewardship. (*Use this website, native-land.ca/, to discover the occupied native land on which you reside or currently find yourself.*)

We also invite you to draw your awareness to the way we are connecting in these times, virtually, digitally. The BLUEBARN recognizes that our internet-based activities use technology and equipment not available to many Indigenous communities and communities of color today. This technology and equipment have a negative impact on the environment. Climate change has a disproportionately negative impact on indigenous communities and communities of color worldwide.

We invite you to join us in recognizing these truths, and the tensions they bring up, as well as our shared power and responsibility to radically re-imagine and boldly co-create a different world.

As we recognize our collective participation in the ongoing process of colonization, we invite you to take a step within the next week that furthers your education about the Indigenous peoples of your region and how you can combat anti-Indigeneity... and share it with another person.

This acknowledgement was developed in community with our partners k+r strategies, a local anti-racism and anti-oppression firm, and is rooted in their practice whenever they gather.

BLUEBARN will continue to refine and build on this practice as we all collectively journey toward equity and justice. Below please find further resources for exploration and ways to connect with the peoples of the native lands where the BLUEBARN is located.

RESOURCES

A guide to Indigenous land acknowledgment:
<https://nativegov.org/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/>

A Truthful Indigenous Peoples' Day:
<https://usdac.us/news/indigenouspeoplesday>

Make Connections with People:
<https://www.facebook.com/omahatribeofnebraska>
<https://www.facebook.com/llumiNativeOrg>
<https://www.facebook.com/nuihc>

Omaha Tribe of Nebraska:
<https://www.omahatribe.com>

Ponca Tribe of Nebraska:
<https://www.poncatrIBE-ne.org>

ACCESS

Due to the extraordinary circumstances and restrictions at play during the ongoing pandemic, many elements of our access initiatives are currently suspended or altered.

These adjustments are reflected in *italics* below.

BLUEBARN Theatre is committed to ensuring that our boundary-breaking theatre is accessible to everyone. We are committed to easing cost barriers for young professionals and students. We are committed to providing low-cost, last-minute opportunities for anyone to see a show. We are committed to recognizing those that give the most in service to our community.

BLUCrew Program for Young Patron Development

Anyone 35 or under is eligible. Members receive rush pricing for most Sunday and Thursday shows throughout the season with no upfront cost. *Due to capacity restrictions, BLUCrew members will receive special pricing for digital access to our productions.*

Rush Tickets

Every unsold seat. Every show. \$20. Available only at the box office, 45 minutes before curtain. If we're not sold out, you have a new way in. *Rush tickets are unavailable this season.*

Nebraska Educators, Healthcare Workers, and Military Personnel

\$5 off all tickets. All the time.

*Captioning will be available for virtual performances upon request.
To request captioning, please contact Barry at bcarman@bluebarn.org.*

A sign-language interpreted performance is offered for every mainstage production on the second Friday show, generously supported by the Nebraska Arts Council. *For pandemic impacted performances, ASL services will be provided upon request.*

Audio enhancement devices are available for the hearing impaired for mainstage productions. *Bonfire Series productions will be miked and amplified.*

The BLUEBARN Theatre offers an **Audio Description Service** for the blind and visually impaired. Audio description provided by Outlook Nebraska. These performances fall on the third Thursday of each run, when requested.

To request additional accommodation or for more information, please call (402)345-1576 or email Barry at bcarman@bluebarn.org.



National New Play Network
Associate Member

BLUEBARN THEATRE is an Associate Member of the
National New Play Network.

NNPN is an alliance of professional theatres across the country who are evolving and exploring the frontiers of the American theatre. **BLUEBARN** has long been Omaha's home for professional contemporary theatre, bringing diverse perspectives, new voices, and provocative work to our community. **The National New Play Network** has become the most powerful, growing force in new play development, production, and promotion in the nation.

BLUEBARN is committed to seeking out collaborative relationships with other **NNPN** member theatres, producing and supporting the work of the most dynamic emerging voices in contemporary playwrighting, and promoting local artists on a platform with national reach.

To support New Play Development at the BLUEBARN contact Barry at bcarman@bluebarn.org. To learn more about NNPN and their programs visit www.nnpn.org

ENGAGE

**ENGAGEMENT
EVENTS ARE
FREE AND OPEN
TO THE PUBLIC.**

HOLDING SPACE

AFTERWORDS | AFTERCARE

Following every performance

Heroes of the Fourth Turning invites us to examine inherently destabilizing ideas. Immediately following the performance, BLUEBARN (in partnership with k+r strategies) is holding space in the theatre for conversation and decompression with a facilitator. Through both the lenses of white supremacy culture and empathy, and your own lived experiences, share space and engage with your fellow audience members. Guest facilitators include: Rachel Grossman, Nate Ruleaux, Kael Sagheer, and Emily Taber.

FRIDAY NIGHTS

CATALYST CONVERSATIONS

Post-Show: October 1st, 8th, 15th, and 22nd

Join us in conversation after our Friday shows to discuss the calls to action in Heroes of the Fourth Turning. Each Friday explores a distinct topic at work in the play and our current cultural moment: Conservatism, LGBTQIA2s+ Affirmation, Reproductive Rights, and Misinformation. In partnership with UNO's Gender and Sexuality Resource Center, Women and Gender Equity Center, and k+r strategies, we'll be featuring unique perspectives who will offer up ways to focus reflection on the show and support you in bending the arc of the universe towards justice.

BLUEBARN SCHOLAR FORUMS

WHITENESS & ERASURE

Sunday, October 10th, following the 2pm Show

Sunday, October 17th, following the 6pm Show

*"We've seen whiteness centralized frequently...but centralized in order to continue its dominance, and it's never been centralized to understand its paranoia, its violence, its rage."
— Claudia Rankine*

Will Arbery was influenced by the thinking of poet, essayist, and playwright Claudia Rankine in focusing on how Whiteness operates in the world. Join us for two powerful conversations facilitated by Professor Peggy Jones that center the problem of Whiteness and its destructive impact on multiple intersecting communities that are actively and passively erased in the play and the world. Featuring local advocates, scholars, and artists at the forefront of the ongoing fight for human rights, including: Fly Jamerson, Jay Irwin, Alecia Anderson, and Jennifer Harbour.

READINGS AGAINST WHITE SUPREMACY

DUNDEE BOOK COMPANY POP-UP

October 17th Pre and Post Show in the Mammel Lobby

Visit the lobby before and after performances of *Heroes of the Fourth Turning* to find a collection of books available for purchase. These titles have been selectively curated by Ted Wheeler of Dundee Book Company to offer pathways to action and contemplation in response to the show. With fiction and non-fiction titles focusing on anti-racism and anti-oppression, and the literature and ideas referenced in the show, you'll find just the right next step.

BLUEBARN THEATRE'S ANTI-RACIST | ANTI-OPPRESSION ETHOS

BLUEBARN owns that systemic racism is real, always at play, and intersects with multiple systems of oppression, and that all must be fought against wherever and however they show up – in our community, in our theatre, in ourselves.

HEROES OF THE FOURTH TURNING & AR|AO

We invite you to experience *Heroes of the Fourth Turning* with both compassion and critical distance. BLUEBARN Theatre chose this extraordinary work to open its 33rd season in the wake of a national reckoning on race, during an ongoing public health crisis, and amid a national crisis of spiraling political and cultural polarization. The playwright frames this play as an exploration of Whiteness and the way it operates in the world. As a predominately white institution, with predominantly white audiences, BLUEBARN is confronting the nature of Whiteness and its destructive impact (including on white people) with full awareness that this is a responsibility white people should take on deliberately, rigorously, for the duration of our lives. In producing this play, we are choosing to call-in ourselves and the community, inviting reflection around and action against Whiteness as an essential part of our anti-racism work and our mission 'to provoke thought, emotion, action, and change.'

BLUEBARN ANTI-HARASSMENT & INCLUSION

BLUEBARN Theatre is committed to fostering a culture of civility, dignity, and respect as a right and responsibility of all who walk through its door. Employees, guest artists, volunteers, and patrons are entitled to and responsible for maintaining an environment of mutual trust-free from intimidation, exploitation, harassment, and discrimination. Offensive, abusive, or unwelcome verbal or physical conduct will not be tolerated. Adhering to this standard is vital to the BLUEBARN's mission.

DIVERSE AUDIENCE PRACTICES PRINCIPLE

Hospitality has always been one of the BLUEBARN's core values. Welcoming you to this space is our great joy. You are invited to bring your full self to the experience. Audible reactions and responses are absolutely welcome. For some people theatre is church, for some a meditative space, for others an escape, and we invite you to respect the ways that others engage in the experience based on their individual or cultural practices. By gathering at the BLUEBARN you have committed to a shared experience in community with others, free from etiquette shaming, microaggressions, and entitled behavior.

CASTING STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

BLUEBARN Theatre acknowledges the historic exclusion and lack of opportunity for artists who identify as Global Majority (Black, Indigenous, and people of color), LGBTQIA2S+, neuro-diverse, and artists with disabilities. We are committed to identity-conscious casting, and actively working against the field-wide implicit bias and systemic inequities that result in default white, cisgender, heteronormative casting. BLUEBARN is likewise committed to countering ableism, agism, sexism, sizeism, lookism and other modes of discrimination in casting that continue to create barriers to participation in the theatre.

BLUEBARN is indebted to the work of countless BIPOC artists who have labored to make our cultural spaces truly inclusive and welcoming to all cultures and identities. If you have experienced harm at the BLUEBARN Theatre, please reach out to any staff member or connect with board members Kasey Hesse peterersonkasey@hotmail.com or Laura Peet Erkes at lauraerkes@gmail.com.

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THANK YOU!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

CAST	CHARACTER
Thomas Gjere	Justin
Anna Jordan	Emily
Michael Judah	Kevin
Suzanne Withem	Teresa
Jana (Joey) Hartshorn	Gina

PRODUCTION CREATIVES

Director	Barry Carman
Producing Artistic Director	Susan Clement
Dramaturg	Rachel Grossman
Physical Choreographer	Matthew Olsen
Stage Manager	Chris Hernandez
Set Designer	Jason Jamerson
Lighting Designer	Homero Vela
Costume Designer	Jocelyn Reed
Props Designer	Amy Reiner
Sound Designer	Bill Kirby
Scenic Artist	Craig Lee
Sound Operator	Mindy Cotner
Carpenter	Ezra Colón
Electrician	Johan Leclerc

STAFF

Susan Clement Producing Artistic Director
Amy Reiner Director of Production & Prop Master
Barry Carman Resident Dramaturg & Director of Engagement
Heather Hoyt Development Director
Bill Kirby Resident Creative and Technical Director
Quinn Dowling Box Office Manager
Chris Hernandez Resident Stage Manager
Tricia Cottrell Bookkeeper

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Michael Walenta
Susan Clement , ex-officio

CAST



Thomas Gjere – Justin – He/Him

Thomas is an Omaha-based actor, singer, and writer. He returns to the BLUEBARN after last appearing as Kurt Kelly in *Heathers: The Musical*. Thomas has been seen on stages around Omaha; his favorite roles include Jamie in *The Last Five Years*,

Bank Manager in *Once* (Elaine Jabenis Cameo Award), Robert Kincaid in *The Bridges of Madison County* (Mary Peckham Award), Tom in *Murder Ballad* (all at Omaha Community Playhouse), Michael Trent in *Across Rhodes* at Shelterbelt Theatre, and Actor 1/White Man in *We Are Proud to Present...* with SNAP! Productions. When not performing, Thomas can usually be found at his laptop, writing for the screen and stage.

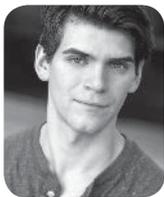


Anna Jordan – Emily – She/Her

Anna is thrilled to be returning to the BLUEBARN after playing Nimmee in the Strangemen Theatre Company's *The Woodsman*, and Caroline in *I and You* (OEAA Nominee, Outstanding Actor in a Play). Anna holds her Bachelor of Arts in theatre performance and directing from UNO. For the past decade, she has worked as an actor,

director and educator at many companies in Omaha, including The Rose Theater, The BLUEBARN, Juno's Swans, Brigit Saint Brigit Theatre Company, Great Plains Theatre Commons, Nebraska Shakespeare, RESPECT, Omaha Symphony, Omaha Performing Arts, and has toured nationally with the Nebraska Theatre Caravan. In 2019, Anna started The Found Ensemble and directed *Darkness Like a Dream*, her adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, for the inaugural Omaha Fringe Festival. She appeared in the independent short film *Other Side* (Best Film, 48 Hour Film Festival) and will appear in Edison Creative's upcoming short film, *A New World*. Most recently, Anna directed the reading of *Perennials* for the Great Plains Theatre Commons, and participated in the SITI Company Virtual Summer Workshop at Skidmore College, where she trained in Suzuki and Viewpoints under Anne Bogard and the SITI Company ensemble. Anna was the recipient of Amplify Arts' 2021 Drew Billings Artist Support Grant, and through their support, launched The Founder's Project—a mentorship program for theatre artists.

Website: annajordan.co | Instagram: [@annakatjordan](https://www.instagram.com/annakatjordan)



Michael Judah – Kevin – He/Him

Michael Judah is an Omaha native and has been seen locally throughout the years at the Omaha Community Playhouse, Nebraska Shakespeare, Great Plains Theatre Conference, and Omaha Arts and Culture. He is a recent graduate of the FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training where he has performed as Romeo (*Romeo and Juliet* - tour), Orland (*As You Like It*), and Valentine (*Arcadia*). He is incredibly grateful to be back on stage and would like to thank you for supporting the arts in our community.

Instagram: @mtjudah



Suzanne Withem – Teresa – She/Her

Suzanne is an Omaha based actor, director, and educator. Previous roles include Chana in *Indecent* at the BLUEBARN, Dierdre McDavy in *I Hate Hamlet* at the Omaha Community Playhouse, and Mariana in *All's Well That Ends Well* with Nebraska Shakespeare. Offstage, Suzanne directed the American Premiere of *Before After* at BLUEBARN, *Much Ado about Nothing* at the Bellevue Little Theatre, *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* at Ozark Actors Theatre (Rolla, MO), *Goosebumps, the Musical* at The Rose Theater, and *Stupid F@#%ing Bird* at the Omaha Community Playhouse. She is currently the Interim Managing and Education Director at Ozark Actors Theatre. In her work, Suzanne focuses on cultivating a creative and open environment, encouraging multidisciplinary collaborations, and providing learning opportunities for artists of all ages. Suzanne earned both her Bachelor's Degree in Theatre and Master's Degree in English from the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Website: www.suzannewithem.com | Facebook: facebook.com/suzanne.withem



Jana (Joey) Hartshorn – Gina – She/Her

Hero's of the Fourth Turning will be Joey's debut performance at the BLUEBARN Theatre.

Joey Hartshorn has performed at OCP in *Bridges of Madison County* (Barbara Ford Award), *Ragtime* and *Once*. She has also performed at The Rose Theatre in *Naked Mole Rat Gets Dressed* and *Ella Enchanted*.

Other acting credits: *Sweeny Todd*, *Vagina Monologues*, *Urinetown*, *Wit*, *Pirates of Penzance*, *God of Carnage*, *Oliver*, *Boys Next Door*, *Rabbit Hole*. Directing credits: *Heathers*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Green Day: American Idiot*, *Freud's Last Session*, *An Evening With Shel Silverstein*. She has performed in a traveling improv group and teaches piano/voice/acting. She is currently part of OCP's Directing Fellowship and has a B.F.A. in theatre and vocal performance from Briar Cliff University. Joey thanks her family and friends for their constant support. **Shout out to Local, Live Theatre! Support the Arts! Cheers!!!**

PRODUCTION CREATIVES

Will Arbery – Playwright

Will Arbery is a playwright from Texas + Wyoming + seven sisters. His plays include *Heroes of the Fourth Turning* (Playwrights Horizons), *Plano* (Clubbed Thumb), *Evanston* *Salt Costs Climbing* (New Neighborhood), *Wheelchair* (3 Hole Press). He's currently under commission from Playwrights Horizons and Shadowcatcher Entertainment. He's a member of New Dramatists, *The Working Farm* at SPACE on Ryder Farm, *Page 73's Interstate 73*, *Colt Coeur*, *Youngblood*, and an alum of Clubbed Thumb's Early Career Writers Group. His plays have been developed at Clubbed Thumb, Playwrights Horizons, NYTW, *The Vineyard*, SPACE on Ryder Farm, Ojai Playwrights Conference, Cape Cod Theater Project, *The New Group*, *EST/Youngblood*, *The Bushwick Starr*, *Alliance/Kendeda*, and *Tofte Lake Center*. Dance work: *Pioneer Works*, *MCA Chicago*, *Watermill Center*. MFA: Northwestern. BA: Kenyon College. willarbery.com



Rachel Grossman – Dramaturg – She/Her

Rachel is a director, devised theatre artist, collaborative playwright, and performer working in the U.S. theatre. Her work activates audiences to discover and participate in theatrical events she creates, in order to propel people to action in their own lives and communities. In the last twenty years she has co-created and directed plays with children, teens, and senior citizens, as well as artists who are Deaf and DeafBlind. Rachel moved to Omaha in July 2020, but first visited in 2015 to co-write and direct a local adaptation of dog & pony dc's *BEERTOWN* at Omaha Community Playhouse. She directed *THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK* at The Rose Theater of Omaha in early 2020. During the pandemic Rachel directed a digital production of *SHE KILLS MONSTERS* at UMD College Park, supported engagement strategy for San Diego REP's online *BEACHTOWN LIVE!*, and workshopped the new play *THE GIFT*, which she co-wrote and appeared in with collaborator Tosin Olufolabi. She is the "r" in Omaha's equity and justice consultancy firm, *k+r strategies*. Thank you Barry for inviting me to create with you. Website: abigeyedfish.com



Jason Jamerson – Set Designer

Jason is an Assistant Professor of Scenic Design at UNO, an avid cyclist and the proud father of 18 month old Ruby. His design work regularly appears Off Broadway and in regional theatres from New York to California. He has worked as an Assistant Designer for several Broadway productions, as well as for national and international tours

See his work at www.jasonjamerson.com



Homero Vela – Lighting Designer

Homero is an Omaha based designer who has designed theater, dance, corporate and immersive events. After serving as Master Electrician for the BLUEBARN for Season 30, Homero is back with the BLUEBARN designing lights for Season 33. Homero holds a Juris Doctor and Bachelor of Arts in Theater from Creighton University and in his spare time helps clients protect their business and personal legacies.



Jocelyn Reed – Costumer Designer – She/They

Jocelyn is an artist based out of Omaha, Nebraska but who is a Kansas girl at heart. They spent this summer doing repertory theatre with the Brownville Village Theatre (2021), and have participated in several festivals such as Great Plains Theatre Conference (2019-2020), and the Omaha Fringe Festival (2019) in recent years. Currently earning their BA In Theatre with a concentration in costume design, as well as a BFH in Black Studies at the University of Nebraska Omaha (UNO), they're on board as a producer for UNO's inaugural Black Arts festival, an event that hopes to shed light on the unique and vibrant experiences of BIPOC individuals within the caste of a large city. When Jocelyn isn't delving into photography, playwriting, and trying to juggle life as they find it, they enjoy reading, connecting with strangers on the internet, and trying to master their cartwheel. Jocelyn is so thrilled to be on board with a production at BLUEBARN and thanks their mentors, Charleen Willoughby and Patrick Reading.



Matthew Olsen - Physical Choreographer – He/Him

Matthew is a facilitator of artists in many capacities—process, craft, movement, physicality—and is happy to be exploring these areas here at the BLUEBARN. Previous appearances at the BLUEBARN include *R3³*, *The Woodsman & Venus In Fur*. You may have seen him on stage at the Rose Theatre (*Howie D. Back in the Day & It's a Wonderful Life*), Brigit St. Brigit (*Berhardt/Hamlet*), or with Nebraska Shakespeare—On Tour (*Hamlet, R&J, Midsummer, As You Like It*) & On The Green (*Much Ado, King John, Merry Wives, King Lear, Macbeth, Taming of the Shrew, As You Like It, Othello*). Regional credits include: *The Matchmaker, Both Your Houses, True West, School for Lies* and *Oleanna*.

Matthew holds a BFA from the University of Minnesota-Duluth and an MFA from Florida State University/Asolo Conservatory. Thank you to my Family (theatrical & biological).

Craig Lee – Scenic Artist

Mr. Lee has lived in the Midtown area of Omaha, Nebraska since 1985. His work has been featured on Omaha theatre stages including the Omaha Community Playhouse, BLUEBARN Theatre, Brigit Saint Brigit Theatre Company, Opera Omaha, Orpheum Theater, the Rose Theatre, Creighton University, University of Nebraska at Omaha, and the Nebraska Shakespeare Festival. His work has appeared in the motion pictures *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar, About Schmidt, Up in the Air*, and *Lucky*, and in many homes and businesses throughout the Omaha area. He has been featured in numerous publications and has worked with the finest designers in the area on countless theatrical productions. Craig has done commissioned drawings, paintings, indoor and large scale outdoor murals, production design, signage and an array of specialty finishes and visual effects, in addition to teaching scenic painting at the University of Nebraska Lincoln. He is especially proud of his association with the BLUEBARN Theatre and happy to be a small part of their 33rd season.

Mindy Cotner – Sound Operator

Mindy has been involved in Omaha-area theater since age 11, first appearing onstage as Lullaby League #2 in a production of *The Wizard of Oz*. After earning a BFA from the University of Nebraska at Omaha Writer's Workshop, she came to roost in technical theater and discovered the joys of working on the "dark side." Favorite productions in her 15 seasons with BLUEBARN include *The 39 Steps*, *Spring Awakening*, and *Every Brilliant Thing*. She has also worked on several productions with the Ollie Webb Center's Art of Imagination, appearing onstage as the Banshee and Selkie Queen in *Fear Liath*, and running follow spot for *The White Gander* and *Morozko*.

RESIDENT CREATIVES

Susan Clement - Producing Artistic Director – She / Her

Susan has served as BLUEBARN's Producing Artistic Director since 2002. She has directed numerous productions at the BLUEBARN, beginning with *The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me* in 1993 and most recently *Circle Mirror Transformation*, *The City in the City* and *Every Brilliant Thing*. Awards include TAG Award – Best Director: *Our Town* (2015), *Spring Awakening* (2012), *Three Tall Women* (2011), *The Goat or Who is Sylvia* (2009), *A Piece of my Heart* (2003); Best Drama: *The Christians* (2016), *33 Variations* (2014), *Bug* (2012), *Rabbit Hole* (2010), *The Dresser* (2006); OEA Awards – Best Director: *Our Town* (2015), *39 Steps* (2013), *Spring Awakening* (2012), *Seascape* (2008); Best Play - *Our Town* (2015), *Red* (2013), *The Pillowman* (2006). Recent award-winning shows include *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* and *Silent Sky*. As director of the BLUEBARN, Susan alongside Shannon Walenta (Managing Director at the time) spearheaded the capital campaign that enabled the BLUEBARN to build its own stand-alone theater, and saw the dream fulfilled when BLUEBARN moved into its new home at 10th and Pacific in 2015. Susan holds a BFA in Theatre/Film from the State University of New York at Purchase Conservatory.

Barry Carman – Director, Resident Dramaturg and Director of Engagement – He / Him

Barry's affiliation with the BLUEBARN began in 2002, as production dramaturg for *Arcadia*. He has since served as dramaturg for a host of BLUEBARN productions, counting *The Pillowman*, *The Christians*, *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, *Hir*, and *Venus in Furs* among his favorites. In 2004, he co-founded BLUEBARN'S *Witching Hour*, a collaborative ensemble for which he wrote, performed, and directed for five years. In 2009, Barry joined Out of Hand Theater in Atlanta where he conceived and directed *The SHOW!*, and developed *Without Which Nothing*. In 2017, he joined the BLUEBARN staff as Resident Dramaturg and Director of Engagement. He directed BLUEBARN's productions of *Wakey, Wakey* and *I and You*, *Natural Shocks* and *The Trump Card* for BLUEBARN'S Out of the Blue Series, and *8 Songs for a Mad King* for the Omaha Under the Radar Festival. He was most recently onstage in the BLUEBARN's production of *The Woodsman*. He holds a B.A. in Theatre Studies from Emory University.

Amy Reiner - Director of Production and Props Designer – She / Her

Amy joined the BLUEBARN in 2012 as Production Manager and Properties Master. Amy went to college at the University of Nebraska Lincoln where she received a BFA in technical theatre with an emphasis on Scenic and Lighting Design. After leavening Lincoln, she spent three years freelancing in Los Angeles in the fields of film and television. Returning to her hometown of Omaha in 2000, she worked as Properties Master for 12 years at The Omaha Community Playhouse where some of her favorite shows were *Violet*, *The Battle of Shallowford* and *The Fantastics*.

Some of Amy's favorite BLUEBARN shows include *Red*, *American Buffalo*, *the 39 Steps*, and *A Very Die Hard Christmas*. In her free time Amy enjoys volunteering at a few places including HETRA, a Gretna based equine therapy program. She especially loves her fur children Ethel, Norman, Pearl and Mama as well as her goldfish Elmer Fudd and Sylvester.

Bill Kirby – Technical Director and Sound Designer – He / Him

Bill joined the BLUEBARN staff as the Resident Creative and Technical Director in 2019, after working as a freelance designer for the two previous seasons. Favorite BLUEBARN productions include *Venus in Fur*, *Wakey, Wakey*, *Indecent* (OEA Award for Outstanding Sound Design), and *Red Summer* (OEA Award). Before relocating to Omaha in 2017, Bill spent 10 years as the resident sound designer and head sound engineer at Princeton University's McCarter Theatre Center. Bill's favorite McCarter productions include sound designing the original workshop production of Danai Gurira's *Eclipsed* and serving as the production sound engineer for the world premier of Christopher Durang's *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, which would go on to win the 2013 Tony Award for best play. Kirby has worked nationally and internationally, including productions at the New York Fringe Festival, LA's Kirk Douglas Theatre, the Wuzhen Grand Theatre in China, and the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, where he recently co-designed the world premiere of *Dreaming Zenzile*. Bill is a graduate of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Website: kirbysound.live

Chris Hernandez – Resident Stage Manager – He / Him

Chris returns to BLUEBARN this season as the Resident Stage Manager, having stage managed *Marjorie Prime*, *Sunset to Starlight*, and *Buffalo Women* last season. Previously, he worked as a stage manager at Midland University on *Legally Blonde*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, and *The Miracle Worker*, and received the Outstanding Technical Arts Student of the Year as a senior. Before that he toured as a stage manager with The Young Americans, both nationally and internationally. Chris is originally from Oakland, California, and is a huge Bay Area sports fan!

DRAMATURG'S NOTE

"...unlike many theatres now, the BLUEBARN is encouraging the audience to view and process the show through frameworks—white supremacy culture and empathy. In addition, there's a clear, stated reason for producing this play, at this time—a predominantly white theatre is inviting its predominantly white audience to reckon with whiteness, together."

Why are we here? Why have we come together live, at a specific moment, to share story, space, and breath? to communally witness an imagined reality of people from another place and time? Theatre's uniqueness as an artform is directly derived from its ephemerality, it's "here one moment, gone the next" quality, and, as a result, its frequent aspiration to unite humans through a collective experience of meaning making and emotional journey. Theatre's aspiration is what leads us from form to function, what's the purpose of stimulating audience's thoughts and feelings, especially with a heated, controversial piece like Will Arbery's *Heroes of the Fourth Turning*?

One answer comes from Aristotle's *Poetics*. Aristotle posits that theatre ("dramatic poetry") places imitations of human behavior in front of spectators so that they may personally experience heightened emotions (fear and pity primarily), sympathizing or feeling for the characters, and eventually attaining a heightened passionate state (a catharsis) which cleanses the emotional system. The feelings purged from the audience's systems, they can then return to daily life more well-balanced, productive citizens. Why are we here? —to be swept up and then purge all those troublesome feelings.

Another answer comes from Bertolt Brecht: theatre is an instrument of social change designed to provide audiences insight into themselves and their political reality. "Art is not a mirror to reflect reality," Brecht famously stated "but a hammer with which to shape it." Audiences shouldn't emotionally lose themselves in performances, but rather be analytical spectators, watching at a distance. This way, audiences can notice the correlations to contemporary events outside the theatre and learn directly applicable lessons. Why are we here? —to better understand socio-political influences and how we might alter them.

A false dichotomy arises if Aristotelian and Brechtian goals of theatre are pitted against one another, especially since contemporary theatregoers don't tend to list emotional catharsis or intellectual distancing among the reasons why they attend theatre. More often, it's a combination of the two purposes that attracts audiences: being introduced to new perspectives, narratives, or cultures while being engrossed in the performance. Colloquially, this is noted as the theatre's ability to evoke empathy as the audience "walks in another's shoes." Contemporary theatre artists have been wrestling more than ever with the purpose question because of this. The squishy concept of "empathy" isn't an end in and of itself. Taking into account that theatregoers in the United States tend to be affluent, older, and white, walking in another's shoes easily slides into almost a colonizing activity.

Audiences believe they are feeling with people of other cultural backgrounds, social identities, or lived experiences (many of them historically marginalized or oppressed), and yet theatre is a safe, limited-time event for the audience, not requiring emotional labor, self-inquiry, or an effort to change. What's happening on stage asks nothing of the audience.

A third answer for the purpose of theatre comes from Indian artistic tradition: the transmission of emotional tastes, juices, or essences - "rasas"- from artists to audience. A rasa is an aesthetic, emotional flavor; the same Sanskrit word is used in Ayurvedic texts describing flavors in food. Like a cook seeks to ignite the response of a diner's tastebuds, artists aim to spark the response of emotional spirits in the audience. These aren't intended to be the actual emotions, as one would feel them generated in an immediate, real-world experience, but the flavor of the emotion. The emotion is felt, and then it dissipates. In this way, the audience is able to be an analytical spectator (similar to Brecht) and have their own emotions moved (Aristotle).

U.S. mainstream theatre trends toward Aristotelian and is influenced heavily by Brechtian. *Heroes of the Fourth Turning* by Will Arberry is deceptively neither, despite containing characters who tempt audiences to sympathetic responses as the characters' humanity shines through their politics and a tendency for liberal- or left-leaning theatremakers to want to openly demonstrate disagreement with the characters' arguments in the production. Using the foundational idea of rasas, the artists at BLUEBARN leaned into the sparking audience's "emotional taste-buds" in order to avoid them empathizing with the abhorrent characters speaking words of erasure, injury, and deception. Then, unlike many theatres now, the BLUEBARN is encouraging the audience to view and process the show through frameworks—white supremacy culture and empathy. In addition, there's a clear, stated reason for producing this play, at this time—a predominantly white theatre is inviting its predominantly white audience to reckon with whiteness, together. And then *do something about it*. Like the emotions experienced on stage are felt by us in the audience, the characters are us.

The function of theatre isn't predetermined by other people, history, or traditions. The purpose of the artform is determined by those who make it, which include the audience. The artists at BLUEBARN believe that to come together, live, at a specific moment, to share story, space, and breath, to communally witness an imagined reality of people from another place and time allows for the provocation of "thought, emotion, action, and change." The production begins this chain of provocation, but you the audience are an integral link. The answer to "why are we here" is in you. What will you do with the experience of *Heroes of the Fourth Turning*? How will you allow it to impact you beyond this moment? To excite not only your heart and mind, but move you to do and be different as a result?

Rachel Grossman
Dramaturg
Heroes of the Fourth Turning

WHITE SUPREMACY CULTURE CHARACTERISTICS

"This play is, in part, about whiteness and the way it operates in America. Each character is implicated... bear in mind that this is a white environment, and these characters are speaking to each other accordingly."

While this was written by playwright Will Arbery in the casting note for *Heroes of the Fourth Turning*, BLUEBARN invites audiences to examine the production from the framework of whiteness—how do these characters embody and portray white supremacy in order that we may see it in ourselves?

What is white supremacy culture?

"White supremacy culture is the idea (ideology) that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to People of Color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions."

— "White Supremacy Culture," <https://www.dismantlingracism.org/white-supremacy-culture.html>

White supremacy culture "also extends to how systems and institutions are structured to uphold this white dominance." White supremacy culture is "... an ideology, a paradigm, an institutional system, and a worldview that you have been born into by virtue of your white privilege."

— Layla F. Saad. *Me & White Supremacy. Sourcebooks, 2020.*

How does white supremacy culture show up in our daily lives?

FEAR (the soil white supremacy culture is grown in): "White supremacy culture cultivates our fear of not belonging, of not being enough. Living in fear that we are not enough teaches us to fear others (or hate others) in an attempt, sometimes

overt, sometimes unspoken, to prove to ourselves that we are ok."

PERFECTIONISM: "the belief that we can be perfect or perform perfectly. The question has to be asked: according to who? Who decides what perfect is?... White supremacy culture uses perfectionism to preserve power and the status quo."

EITHER/OR (BINARY) THINKING: "explores our cultural assumption that we can and should reduce the complexity of life and the nuances of our relationships with each other and all living things into either/or, yes or no, right or wrong"

DEFENSIVENESS & DENIAL: reflects "our cultural dis-ease with truth telling, particularly when we are speaking truth to power."

PROGRESS IS BIGGER/MORE: "the goal is always to be/do/get more and be/do/get bigger. This leads to an emphasis on what we can 'objectively' measure—how well we are doing at being/doing/getting more—as more valuable than the quality of our relationships to all living beings."

"QUALIFIED": "Internalized primarily by middle and owning class white people, formally educated, who are taught by the culture that they...are qualified and even duty bound to fix, save, and set straight the world.... Closely aligned with dominant mainstream Christian ideology that teaches a Christian duty to convert the 'heathen,' the 'savage,' the 'impure'.... particularly violent both psychically and physically in its determination to ignore and/or erase the culture, wisdom, genius, joy of people and communities being 'saved.'"

— Quotes from Tema Okun: "White Supremacy Culture—Still Here (2021)"

For the complete list of characteristics visit: whitesupremacyculture.info.

EMPATHY

“Empathy is empty. Hannah Arendt says we don’t need to feel what someone else is feeling - first of all that’s impossible, second of all it’s self-righteous and breeds complacency, third of all it’s politically irresponsible. Empathize with someone and suddenly you’re erasing the boundaries of your own conscience, suddenly you’re living under the tyranny of their desires. We need to know how to think how their thinking. From a distance.”

Teresa’s words from *Heroes of the Fourth Turning* call attention to a tension in the play around the role of empathy in theatre and society writ large. BLUEBARN invites audiences to examine the production from the framework of empathy—how it operates, is expressed, motivates action, and is weaponized by the characters and ourselves.

What is empathy?

The word “empathy” came into the English language in the early 1900s, originating from the German “Einfühlung” or “in-feeling.” When first used, the term described the act of outwardly demonstrating one’s feelings or memories while experiencing something emotional. Theresa Wiseman’s 1996 seminal study *A concept analysis of empathy* outlines four attributes of empathy: see the world as another sees it; do so without judgement; understanding the other’s feelings; communicate the understanding. These days, vulnerability expert Dr. Brené Brown defines empathy as “feeling with people.”

How does empathy show up?

Empathy is often subdivided into two types: cognitive empathy (understanding another’s feeling or perspective); emotional or affective (feeling as another does, sometimes as if it was you). Some add a third: empathetic concern, sometimes called compassion (sensing another’s needs and acting to assist or support them). Empathy differs from pity or sympathy, because these involve feeling for another and possess an inherent power differential (the observer who is the stronger, the feeler who is weaker). The concept of empathy presupposes there are emotional commonalities across diverse lived experiences.

What’s the problem with empathy?

There’s no action associated with empathy. Because empathy is generated mostly at the unconscious level, it’s an impulsive experience and not likely to lead to intentional action. Empathy is, at its core, voyeuristic, presumptive, and colonizing; one’s empathy necessitates seeing another’s pain, assuming a like-mindedness or shared emotional understanding, and appropriates it as one’s own. Empathy can also be used nefariously, in the case of “dark empathy.” Dark empathes are highly attuned cognitive empathes who use their empathy to manipulate others for their own benefit (think emotional manipulation).



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The Artists' Fund

At BLUEBARN we believe that artists should be honored for their work not only with applause but with a paycheck. We believe that every theatre artist deserves to be paid fairly for their work, and we are committed to providing payment to every actor or artist working in our theatre. To honor this commitment, BLUEBARN has established **The Artists' Fund** to support the creative spirits who help continue and propel the life of the BLUEBARN.

We recognize the following donors who have made contributions to The Artists' Fund, and we'd like to add your name to this list! If you would like to contribute, please email Heather Hoyt at hhoyt@bluebarn.org, or donate online at www.bluebarn.org.

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