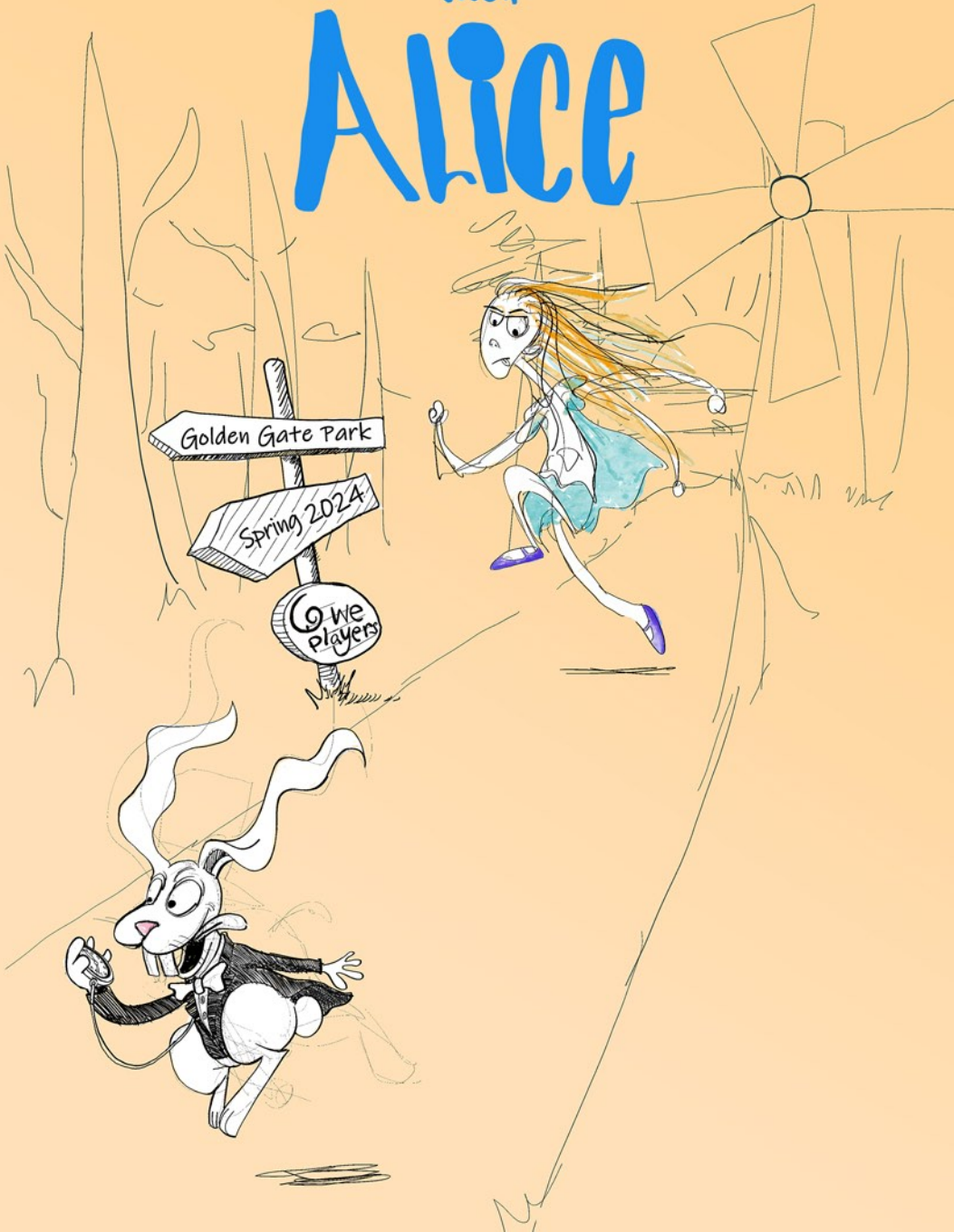


WE PLAYERS PRESENTS

Adventures

with

Alice



We Players Presents

Adventures with Alice



Adapted and Directed by Ava Roy

Alice: Regina León

Humpty Dumpty & Mad Hatter: Alan Coyne

Tweedle Dee & Dormouse: Chris Steele

Tweedle Dum & March Hare: María Ascención Leigh

Red Queen: Drew Watkins

White King: Benoît Monin

White Queen: Libby Oberlin and Lauren Hayes (played alternately)

White Rabbit: Britt Lauer

Costume Designer: Brooke Jennings

Master Seamstress: Dana Taylor

Illustrator: Jesse Patel

Composer and Music Director: Charlie Gurke

Properties & Technical Assistance: Susan McComb and JD Durst

Stage Manager: Lana Richards

House Manager: Monica Herbert

Production Crew: Willow Baker, Patrick Becerril, Colin Epstein,

Max Fermin, Lily Marylander, Ben Miller, and Casey Selden

Trombone: Greg Stephens

Saxophone: Charlie Gurke and Will Berg

Trumpet: Chris Aschman and Darren Johnston

With tremendous thanks to We Players'
2024 Production Sponsor, The Henry L. Hecht Family Fund.

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Ramaytush, Ohlone, and Muwekma, the original people of the land currently called San Francisco. For countless generations Indigenous communities have lived here, and continue to. As guests, we recognize that we benefit from this indigenous homeland and aspire to carry forth their legacy of harmony with nature and the interconnectedness of all things. We humbly recognize and extend our deep gratitude to the ancestors, elders, and all members of these indigenous communities and affirm their rights as first peoples.



The Story

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland is an 1865 English novel by Lewis Carroll, aka Charles Dodgson, a math professor at Oxford University. The book has never been out of print and has been translated into 174 languages. Its legacy covers adaptations for screen, radio, art, ballet, opera, musicals, theme parks, board games and video games. Carroll published a sequel in 1871 entitled *Through the Looking-Glass*. While *Wonderland* incorporates a playing card motif throughout, *Looking-Glass* is set on a great chessboard. Artist John Tenniel created the much beloved wood-engraved illustrations for both books. As with many adaptations, We Players' *Adventures with Alice* incorporates characters and scenes from both stories.



The Place

Golden Gate Park was carved out of unpromising sand dunes known as the Outside Lands, in an unincorporated area west of San Francisco's then-current borders. Field engineer William Hammond Hall prepared a survey and topographic map of the park site in 1870 and became its first commissioner. To stabilize the sand dunes covering 3/4 of the park's 1,017 acres into green land, Scottish gardener John McLaren planted bent grass seedlings to hold the ground together. McLaren was then able to introduce new species, and is credited with adding over 700 new types of trees to California within one year. The park has continued to grow and evolve both in landscape and usage ever since. Today, San Francisco Recreation and Parks tends and cares for this green and Golden park, among many others, with devotion and a sustained vision of 'Parks For All Forever'. Explore and enjoy!



Production Notes

"Alice! The dream child wandering through a land of wonders wild and new...."

Callooh! Callay! Oh frabjous day! We've come galumphing back, ready to play in new ways, with new eyes of wonder! We're delighted to share this journey with YOU, fellow traveler, through the looking-glass, and through a lush and verdant stretch of Golden Gate Park. Itself something of a fantasy made real, the park is the dream child of public landscape visionaries and champions, William Hammond Hall and John McLaren. The two guided the transformation from tract of sand dunes to over 1000 acres of dynamic ecosystem guarded by tall cypress and eucalyptus, with welcoming branches for red-tailed hawks to perch in the branches above. Now, together, let's follow Alice following the white Rabbit and search for where the momeraths outgrabe.

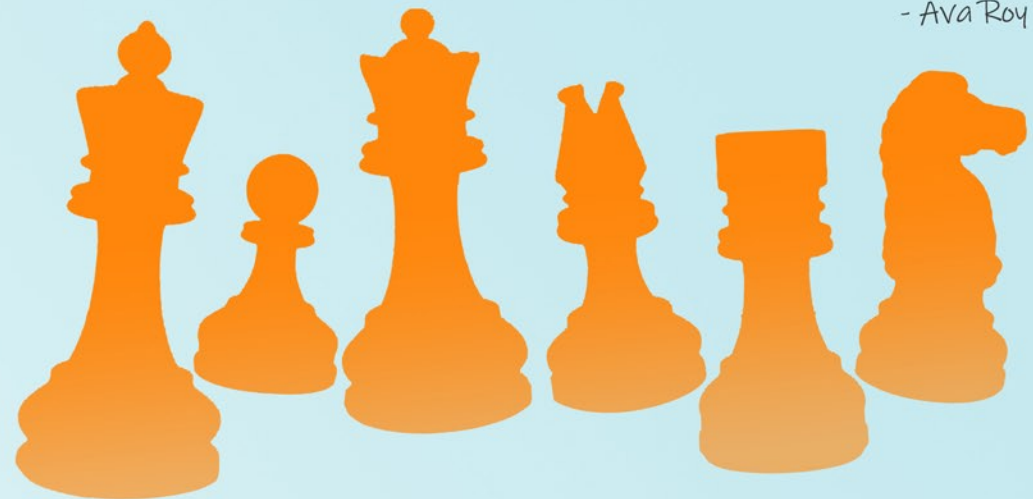
*In 1999, when I was 18 and a high school senior in the quiet wilderness of western Massachusetts, I directed my first full-blown production. The piece? My first adaptation for the stage: *Ecila*. Alice inverted, backwards, and through the looking-glass. My fellow young thespians, from both my own and neighboring county schools, banded together to create our own new world. My father built the 10' pillar that served as perch for the omniscient Cheshire Cat who lounged on high while observing/puppeting Alice through the potent pockets of wonderland. In 2003, I marked another right of passage (college commencement) with a romp through the wilds, albeit far more manicured, on the grounds of the Stanford mausoleum and surrounding arboretum. *Jabberwocky*, my senior thesis, involved the talents of students transformed from folks studying medicine and law and anthropology and astrophysics into red queens and white queens and acrobatic eggs and twins with Mohawks (and one with an inverse mohawk) and even into slithey toves and bandersnatches cavorting and balancing each other and partnering with the environs. 20+ years later, on the cusp of *We Players'* 25th anniversary, another threshold, another Alice.*

Today, under the tumtum trees we'll share stories and wander through a land of wonders wild and new. Pay attention, there are details to notice and savor. There are white Rabbits to catch glimpses of in the distance. And hawks who might perch overhead. Certainly there are colors and textures in the landscape, and flashes of sunlight to dazzle you.

There are familiar faces and new ones too. Creatures you'll recognize, and new interpretations to become curious about. There are lots of silly jokes and general wonderland whimsy and wildness. But as you listen closely, perhaps there are also poignant moments of pathos and profundity to catch and collect and stash in your pocket for further wonderment. There are questions and expressions of Time to marvel at. Does it really move forward in an unbroken chain of sequential tics and tocs? Or is it more slippery and circular? What sort of things do you remember best? Perhaps those that haven't happened yet, like the White Queen? A lesson in imagination perhaps?

Stretching that critical sixth sense takes practice, you know. And if you practice practice practice, perhaps you too will come to believe at least six impossible things before breakfast! Or perhaps, one day you will meet a real live unicorn, who you will marvel at and be a bit frightened by; and the unicorn will wonder at you too - having never met a real person such as yourself. You and the unicorn will cautiously agree to believe in one another. And thus, your imagination will have given you strength to explore and connect and wander through this land of wonders wild and new with clear eyes and a kind heart. Let's practice together now shall we? Draw a long breath, and close your eyes... Or rather, we'll modify the White Queen's instruction. Instead, tie your shoes, zip up your jacket, adjust your pack, and grab your folding stool. It's time. Follow the dream child. Alice! Off we go!

- Ava Roy



The Cast and Crew

Alan Coyne (he/him, Humpty Dumpty & Mad Hatter) is on his third adventure with We Players, after appearances both live and dead as the Cobbler/Cinna the Conspirator in CAESAR MAXIMUS and the Cat Sith in PSYCHOPOMP. He has performed with the SF Shakespeare Festival (*Much Ado About Nothing*, *Pericles*, and multiple Tours, including the current *As You Like It*), Center Rep (*The Legend of Georgia McBride*), *Ferocious Lotus (Evolutions)*, *Golden Thread (Autobiography of a Terrorist)*, and Lafayette Town Hall Theatre (*Angels in America*, *Antigone Presented by the Girls of St. Catherine's*). He has improvised with Oakland's Pan Theater, and currently performs, composes, and arranges with the a cappella group Spot the Octopus. Excerpts from his cosmological musical, *The Theory of Everything*, appeared at the 2016 Musical Cafe Showcase, and his 2-person adaptation, *2ELFth Night*, infiltrated 2019's Edinburgh Festival Fringe. You can see him next at Central Works in Berkeley: this July/August, reprising his role as #AllTheMen in the latest installment of Patricia Milton's *Victorian Ladies' Detective Collective* series, *Accused!*, and then in September/October as Niccolo Macchiavelli in Part 3 of Gary Graves' *The Contest*. He would like to thank his cat, Toblerone, for always letting him know when it is time for tea.



Ava Roy (she/her, Director) is the Founding Artistic Director of We Players, the Bay Area's premiere site-integrated theatre company. Her unique style of dynamic, site-responsive performance aims to highlight the historical and natural treasures of the local landscape and encourage new ways of appreciating these places. Ava has pioneered unique partnerships with the National Park Service, the California State Park system, San Francisco Recreation and Parks, and other municipal and regional park sites, creating spectacular immersive performances throughout the Bay Area and beyond. Ava is an actor, director, and educator. Inspired and guided by Shakespeare since her teenage years, she has explored many characters from the canon, ranging from Juliet to Henry V, Mercutio to Lady Macbeth. In addition to playing Shakespeare, she creates original works as well as new works adapted from classical texts. As an educator, she co-teaches a course at California College of the Arts centered in embodied and sensory based modes of inquiry and expression and leads specialized yoga classes at the SF Opera Center, SF Conservatory of Music, as well as online in her digital shala. Like Alice, she enjoys chasing the unknown and fervently pursuing wonder. She draws inspiration and delight from the natural world, especially the big blue ocean and the miniature worlds of moss. She'd like to thank the brave cast and crew, We Players' alums near and far, and YOU, for joining in this adventure.

Ben Miller (he/him, Production Crew) is a native Oaklander who is thrilled to be joining the We Players community. Ben trained as an actor at Oakland School of the Arts and is currently studying architecture at California College of the Arts with aspirations of becoming a set designer. He adores the theatre and is a crew member at Shotgun Players in Berkeley and though it has been a while you may have seen him in *Hamlet* as Hamlet at Oakland School for the Arts, or an ensemble member in *Snow White* at the Throckmorton Theatre Company.

Benoît Monin (he/him, White King) is a stage actor and improviser. He is a company member of Oakland Theater Project, La Compagnie Carmina, La Lengua Teatro en Español, RagTag Improv, and improv duo Chatterbox. He has also worked with Stanford Rep, Theater Rhinoceros, Half Moon Bay Shakespeare, Cal Shakes (understudy), Ragged Wing Ensemble, Shelton Theater, Inferno Theatre, Generation Theater, Coastal Rep, and others. He narrated the award-winning fiction podcast *The Rapsallion Agency*. Benoît trained with BATS Improv, American Conservatory Theater, and Shakespeare & Co. He was nominated in 2018 for Outstanding Performance in a Featured Role (TBA Awards) and in 2019 for Best Featured Actor in a Play (Broadway World SF). www.benoitmonin.com

Britt Lauer (she/her, White Rabbit) is a theatre maker living and working on the unceded lands of the Ramaytush Ohlone. As Associate Producer of We Players, over the past five years Britt has helped to create work in over a dozen national, regional, and city park sites. She is the co-founding Artistic Director of Poltergeist Theatre Project, a queer collective that reclaims problematic classics and seeks to shift the predominant narrative through work that is radically queer, feminist, and intrinsically participatory. As an actor, recent credits include: *The Julie Cycle* with Poltergeist Theatre Project, and *CAESAR MAXIMUS*, *Roman Women*, and *Midsummer of Love* with We Players. In addition to her work on stage Britt is passionate about applying theatrical skills in nontraditional contexts, working in the medical and business industries to help develop and enhance empathic communication. Britt holds a BA in Theatre with an emphasis in acting from Willamette University and a Semester Credential from the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts. Enormous gratitude to Mom and Dad and this beautiful We family.

Brooke Jennings (she/her, Costume Designer) is delighted to return to We Players with this moving show. A graduate of UC Santa Cruz's Theater Arts Masters Program, Brooke is an award winning Costume Designer working in the Bay Area and beyond. Her recent credits include Shotgun Players (*The Claim*, *Vinegar Tom*, *Arcadia*), San Francisco Playhouse (*You Mean To Do Me Harm*, *The Effect*, *Colossal*, *The Nether*), We Players (*PSYCHOPOMP*, *Undiscovered Country*, *CAESAR MAXIMUS*, *Roman*

Women, Ondine), Magic Theater (Asst. Designer: Monument, A Lie of the Mind, Bad Jews), FaultLine Theater (Maggie's Riff, Dead Dog's Bone), Virago Theatre (The Singularity, New York Premier), Custom Made Theater Company (Belleville, Six Degrees of Separation, Sam and Dede, SF and NY Premieres), City Lights Theater (Rocky Horror Show), and Santa Cruz Shakespeare (Asst. Designer, A Year with Frog and Toad). She thanks her husband, Cole, for his unwavering support and encouragement.

Casey Selden (she/her, Production Crew) comes to We Players with a background in experience design and alternative education. From backcountry guide to pretend paleontologist, teacher/naturalist to renegade museum tour guide, her career path has been a meandering one. But the through line that connects all of these endeavors is a passion for bringing people together, offline, to cultivate community and spark curiosity. She is delighted to be working with the creative community that is We Players.



Charlie Gurke (he/him, Composer & Music Director) has been composer and music director with We Players since 2010's *Hamlet on Alcatraz*, contributing original scores to many productions (*Alice is #14*), as well as co-producing concerts, and recordings of original music. His albums with We Players include *Canciones Del Mar* (2015), *Hamlet on Alcatraz* (2022), *Twelfth Night at Hyde Street Pier* (2023), and *The Odyssey on Angel Island* (2023). The album *Macbeth at Fort Point* is forthcoming in 2024. Charlie performs and records with his own group, Gurkestra; the John Santos Sextet; the Electric Squeezebox Orchestra; Edgardo Cambon and Candela; and more. He is on faculty at Laney College in Oakland, and the Community Music Center in San Francisco. www.gurkestra.com

Chris Aschman (he/him, Trumpet) is a jazz trumpeter/steelpan musician who enjoys a multi-faceted career as a performer, educator, studio musician, and arranger. A Baltimore native, Chris segued to Philadelphia to study jazz trumpet at the University of the Arts in 2004 and became a mainstay in the Philly scene. Since this time he has enjoyed a diverse career, having shared the stage with artists such as Paquito D'Rivera, Stanley Clarke, Dionne Warwick, Bakithi Kumalo, Chaka Khan, Kool and the Gang, Andy Narell, Ray Holman, Lotus, Dopapod, Tauk, and many others. Since relocating to the San Francisco Bay Area in 2022, he has launched his new project, Sky.Daddy, combining his loves of jazz funk, latin jazz, and steelband music into an exciting modern sound.

Chris Steele (they/she, Tweedle Dee & Dormouse) is a queer trans nonbinary performance artist, writer, and activist. Their work centers on highlighting queer narratives throughout history and combating bigotry and white supremacy. You might've previously seen her with We Players as Benvolio in

Romeo and Juliet, Puck/Titania in *Midsummer of Love*, Casca in *CAESAR MAXIMUS*, Horace in *Undiscovered Country*, and the Valkyries in *PSYCHOPOMP*. As a writer they premiered adaptations of *Angel Street (or Gaslight)*, *Miss Julie*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Dracula* with queer collective Poltergeist Theatre Project. Her award-winning drag persona Polly Amber Ross can be found on instagram @pollyamberross. As a producer, Chris specializes in Marketing and Communications, and is currently the Communications Manager of Eye Zen Presents and the Curation Director of Cutting Ball Theatre.

Colin Epstein (he/they, Production Crew) is a performer and writer based in Berkeley. Frequently seen performing with 13th Floor, Lizz Roman & Dancers, and Tara Pilbrow Dance, he has performed in parks, theaters, houses, bank vaults, on floating docks, and more in the 15 years they have called the Bay Area their home. Colin recently started a podcast to share his love of Dungeons & Dragons and storytelling - find The Roll Report on a podcast platform near you!

Darren Johnston (he/him, Trumpet) is a Canada-born trumpeter/composer who works primarily within jazz, jazz adjacent, and purely improvised music, while also studying and performing many other styles, including music of the Balkans, Jamaica (Groundation), contemporary classical, and more. He is particularly drawn to music that defies categorization. He has performed and/or recorded with luminaries such as Marshall Allen, Gerald Cleaver, Fred Frith, ROVA Sax Quartet, Ben Goldberg, Allison Miller, Mark Dresser, Myra Melford, Marcus Shelby, Pete Escovedo, Erik Jekabson's "Electric Squeezebox Orchestra," and many others, across the USA and around the world, including at festivals such as Monterey Jazz Festival, Montreal Jazz Festival, Hyde Park Jazz Festival, and others.

Drew Watkins (he/him, Red Queen) was born and bred in Oakland, California. He is grateful for the opportunity to explore the realm of wonder that is San Francisco's Golden Gate Park. Drew has been seen playing Anubis in the We Players production of *PSYCHOPOMP*, Romeo in a hip-hop inspired production of Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet*, as a kooky comic book superhero of racial justice in the Playground SF premiere production *Scapegoat*, and many other roles over his time as a performer. After completing his training at The Meisner Technique Studio he has acted and directed on stages around the Bay Area. Drew is also a lifelong student of martial arts, most recently adding historical European swordwork to his studies. He is excited to bring all of his practices and playfulness on this We Players journey through the curious and captivating world of Wonderland. Drew is blessed to be a father to his brand new baby girl, a husband to his loving wife and partner, and is dedicating his performance to them. He is unbelievably grateful for the love and support of his family and friends through the odyssey of his career.

Greg Stephens (he/him, Trombone), trombonist, conductor, composer and arranger, has spent the last several years performing and recording with such ensembles as Tango #9, Ad Hoc Brass Band, Idris Ackamoor and the Pyramids, Mission Delirium, The Bogues, Saul Goodman's Klezmer Band, Frank London, and Inspector Gadje. Diverse ramblings in music theater have included performances with We Players (*Ondine*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Roman Women*, *CAESAR MAXIMUS* and *Adventures with Alice*), *The Residents*, *Circus Bella Allstars*, *BATS*, *City Summer Opera*, Allison Lovejoy, Dohee Lee and Freddi Price, among others. He is in his seventeenth season as Music Director in the Drama Department at Riordan High School in San Francisco. Greg attended CSU Northridge, where he studied trombone with Bill Booth. He received his BA from UCSB, where he studied composition with Stephen Hartke. Greg is overjoyed to be continuing his journey with We Players in the current production of *Adventures with Alice*.

JD Durst (he/him, Technical Advisor) is a graduate of University of California at Santa Cruz. He has worked for various companies including Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Yale Repertory Theater, Santa Fe Opera, the McCarter Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theater and Pickle Family Circus. For more than thirty years, he has been a member of IASTE Local 16 of San Francisco providing him with a wide range of experiences and a fulfilling career in professional theater. These days he finds creative fulfillment through his association with We Players, with the support of his wife, Susan and his dog, Bingo.



Lana Richards (she/her, Stage Manager) is a director focused on new work development, site specific work, and adaptation. She likes big plays about small things (and vice versa), the tender awkwardness of growing up, and stories that connect people to place. She has worked with Cutting Ball, The Pear Theatre, Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, We Players, *The Civilians*, *The Hearth*, *Ruthless Nightingale*, *Parallel 45*, *PlayGround*, and *Pacific Repertory Theater*, and is an alumna of Connecticut College where she studied theater and environmental studies. She co-founded *The Wickies* in 2019 with collaborators Anna Nemetz and Allison Snyder. She was the 2019 Directing Fellow at *Parallel 45 Theater*, and a Directing Apprentice & Producing Fellow at *PlayGround* in 2020 where she is now the Associate Director of Development. Recent credits: An adaptation of *Herzstück* by Heiner Müller for Cutting Ball's *Variety Pack*, *Please Don't Slow Me Down* by Melina Cohen Bramwell at Potrero Stage, and *Tips For Nervous Fliers* (self-written and directed solo performance) at *PlayGround*. Lanarichards.com



Lauren Hayes (she/her, White Queen) is thrilled to be back rollicking outdoors with We Players! Past projects include We Players (*CAESAR MAXIMUS*, *Roman Women*), *Shotgun Players* (*Champaign Series - My HB Letter to the GRB American Theatre*),

Central Works (*Roan & The Gates*), *Cutting Ball Theater* (*The Bald Soprano*, *Variety Pack*), *The Breadbox* (*MacBitch*), *The Flea Theater* (*These Seven Sickness*, *The Mysteries*, *Serials & The Flea*), *Saint Ann's Warehouse* (*Stop the Virgens*), among others. Lauren loves working across a variety of genres, delving into topics old and new, and collaborating on shows at all stages of development. Besides theater, some of her favorite things include piping hot cups of tea, reading books, writing fiction, bird watching, and long hikes. Thank you to Nathan, for always cheering me on, rain or shine. www.LaurenHayes.info

Libby Oberlin (she/her, White Queen) is an actor, theater educator, and director who counts herself lucky to be a frequent We Player. She is elated to flit, float, and bound around as the effervescent, wacky, and wonderful White Queen. We Players credits include: Caesar in *CAESAR MAXIMUS*, Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet* - TBA Award Nomination-Best Featured Actress, *Violante* in *Ondine* - TBA Award Nomination-Best Ensemble, and *Penelope/Siren* in *The Odyssey* on Angel Island. Select Bay Area credits include: *Vivian Vance* in *Sidekicked*, a solo performance at Sonoma Arts Live, *Tessa* in the West Coast premiere of *Dream House* at Shotgun Players, *Mazeppa* in *Gypsy* at Mountain Play, *Maria Callas* in *Master Class* at Sonoma Arts Live, and *Schwartz* in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* at Landmark Musical Theatre. Libby holds a Master's Degree in Educational Theater from New York University and a Bachelor's Degree in Theater Arts from Hofstra University. All my heart to Maeve and Miller for their support, inspiration, and love.

Lily Marylander (she/her, Production Crew) is a recent addition to the We Players family and is psyched to be involved! She is a former student of Ava's and working on her double BFA in Sculpture & Jewelry/Metal Arts as well as a minor in Ecological Practices at California College of the Arts. Lily has been involved in backstage theater and live production shows since middle school plays and high school where she was in the Production Design Department at Oakland School for the Arts. She has also worked internships and wardrobe for the Fox Theater in Oakland. Lily prefers to be behind the scenes, making props, designing sets, and supporting the cast rather than in the spotlight, but she also loves a good party. She currently resides in the Mission District of San Francisco and enjoys the crazy, creative, and supportive company of her three housemates, a cat, and the Bay Area artist community.

María Ascención Leigh (she/her, Tweedle Dum & March Hare) has flocked with geese for *The Odyssey* on Angel Island, ushered in the fog under the Golden Gate Bridge as a Weyard Sister in *Macbeth* at Fort Point, and hurtled from castle walls, through manicured lawns, and across parched courtyards as *Juliet* in We Players' *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Capulet Ball*. María has also up-ended classics and created new works with companies including Cutting Ball Theater, *Rapid Descent*,

Idiot String, and Berkeley Rep. Special thanks and love to Hunter Leigh without whom this work, and life, would be nearly impossible.

Maximiliano Fermin (he/him, Production Crew) is excited to work on his first show with We Players, as well as his first show in the Bay Area. He is currently a drama student at New York University Tisch school of the arts. Max loves to get involved in all aspects of theater making and wishes to write, produce, direct, and perform more shows in the future for the We Players and other companies far and wide. His current credits are all from work he did in New York City, including his role as Pisanio in Stag n Lion Theater Company's production of *Cymbeline*, as well as his role as The Father of the Bride in the Atlantic Acting School's mainstage production of *Blood Wedding*. His favorite hobbies are playing basketball and building Legos.

Monica Herbert (she/her, House Manager) has been involved with We Players ever since shepherding audience members around Angel Island in 2012 for We Players' *The Odyssey* on Angel Island and has gone on to greet, orient and guide hundreds more since then. She is thrilled to be a part of *Adventures with Alice* and looking forward to the opportunity to reconnect with old friends among cast and crew, and make new connections with those she hasn't had the privilege to work with yet. She is working on her MFA in Playwriting from Hollins University, Roanoke, Virginia, and in addition to her passion for theater is a lover of the textile arts. It is her aspiration to follow the instruction of the Roman rhetorician Quintilian in his *Institutio Oratoria* wherein he states "after you have chosen your words, they must be weaved together into a fine and delicate fabric." Monica hails from Montclair, New Jersey and has been on sojourn in San Francisco since 1989. She shares a home with her son, Aharon.

Patricio Becerril (he/him, Production Crew) was born in Leon Guanajuato, Mexico, raised in Sonoma County, and attained his BA in Theatre Arts from the University of California San Diego, where he focused his undergraduate honors thesis on absurdist theatre. Since completing his studies, he has immersed himself in the Bay Area theatre scene, lending his talents both as an actor and a crew member across multiple productions. UC San Diego Credits include: *Mojada*, *Napoli*, *Nonna Kills the President*, and *Promithes, Promithes*. Selected Credits: *Exhaustion Arroyo* (Cutting Ball Theatre), *Cymbeline* (San Francisco Shakespeare Festival), *A Skeptic A Bruja*, *Conjunto Blues*, and *Untitled Puppet Show* (San Diego Repertory).

Regina León (she/her, Alice) is an actress, dancer, and Mission District native who found her truest self on the stage. She graduated from San Francisco State University

with a degree in Drama in 2018 and studied at the Stella Adler Acting Studio of Acting in New York City. Since graduating from drama school, her interest in and love for devised work has partnered her up with companies such as SoundPlay Media, Forum Collective and We Players. She has helped devise work inspired by Chekhov, Ionesco, Marx, and all the mythologies. Playing Alice was always her dream, and last year, the dream came true! She is delighted to bring Alice back to the mossy, magical, wondrous playground in Golden Gate Park. Le doy gracias y muchisimo amor a mi Mariri, mi Papuki y mis Amiges.

Susan McComb (she/her, Properties) was an architect before she knew she was. A graduate of University of Texas at Austin, she moved to the West Coast to escape the summer heat of Texas. She has a Masters of Arts in Historic Preservation from Savannah College of Art and Design. As a practicing architect for well beyond thirty years and eventual partner in a large San Francisco architectural firm, she found she was doing larger and larger projects but enjoying her career less and less. So when she got a chance to retire and participate in the magic that is We Players, she took it. Of course, with the support and encouragement of her husband, JD and her dog, Bingo.

Will Berg (he/him, Saxophone) is a SF based woodwind doubler and jazz musician. A few of his favorite theater credits include *La Cage Aux Folles* (Bay Area Musicals), *Follies* (42nd St Moon), *Let's Dance* (Transcendence Theater Company), *Cabaret* (Contra Costa Civic Theater), *Fiddler on the Roof* (STARS 2000) & *Ain't Too Proud* (2022 National Tour). He is very lucky and forever grateful for the unconditional support and love his wife, Tessa, gives him every day. He thanks Ava, Charlie and the whole We Players team for putting on a great performance and having him on board!

Willow Baker (they/them, Production Crew) has never taken a college level drama class and never plans to. Despite this, they are overjoyed to enter their seventh season with We Players and return to Alice's wonderful world. A rising senior at Kenyon College, they are majoring in Art History, minoring in Studio Art, and moonlighting in theater. Their academic work has led them to focus on photography, queer spaces in art, and the museum world, which is complemented by their role at The Gund as a Collections Management Associate. Last spring, Willow curated a public exhibition on campus that showcased American post-mortem photography across the nineteenth century, and they plan to pursue a career in collections work. When they are not exploring the art historical world, they do as much theater as they can: in addition to having stage managed two department productions, they also work as an intimacy coordinator on multiple student shows per semester. A huge thank-you to We Players for a community that always feels like coming home.



Support We

*"Why sometimes I've believed six impossible things before breakfast!"
- White Queen, Through The Looking-Glass*

We Players creates work that meets the moment, encouraging audiences to question, interpret, and imagine. **You - yes YOU! - can support our mission of connecting people with places both real and imagined.** Together we'll celebrate and explore living landscapes, believe in all sorts of impossible things and together, make them come true! **By contributing to We Players, you help fuel more wondrous adventures through precious public places. Your gift elevates art and culture in the Bay Area and beyond. Together, We are We Players.**

Donate online at weplayers.org/donate. We Players is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and all donations are tax deductible.



Special Thanks

Sincerest special thanks to Don and Elissa Roy, Doug and Pat Lauer, and Kate Smith for the quiet, behind-the-scenes ways they continually support our creative process. More thanks and praise to Henry Hecht, the ARB Fund, We Players' invaluable Board of Directors, and to Phil Ginsburg, Keith Roberts, and the entire team at SFRP. We extend heartfelt appreciation to our extended community of volunteers, patrons, and supporters - including YOU - without whom we wouldn't be able to travel through the looking-glass.



Our Partners



NYBG



montalvo arts center

About We

We Players' site-integrated performances in public parklands and historic monuments aim to awaken the senses and enliven the spirit. Performances are intimate and interactive, using dynamic in-situ staging and emotional storytelling to activate places and heighten one's sense of self in the world. We bring communities together, reclaiming local spaces for public discourse and civic celebration through art. Transforming local environs into inspired landscapes where classical antiquity and modern truth synthesize, we extend the transformative powers of performance beyond the stage, inviting our collaborators and audience to engage fully and awaken to the spectacular world around us.

We Players' site-integrated focus and commitment to engage with history and ecology, build community, and use art to foster a personal connection with place has led to unprecedented partnerships with the National Park Service, California State Parks, and San Francisco Recreation and Parks. Our performance and engagement programs are accessible to a diverse population of regular park users, and also draw new visitors to discover the park sites in which we work.



Who We Are

STAFF:

Founding Artistic Director: Ava Roy
Office Manager: Stacy Davis
Culinary Artist: Frieda De Lackner

Associate Producer: Britt Lauer
Music Director: Charlie Gurke
Photographer: Lauren Matley

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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Julie Parish
Lisa Diaz Nash
Rick Holden
Susan Miller-Davis

More joyous performance coming soon with



Be sure to join our mailing list and check our website at weplayers.org to stay apprised of all our offerings.

May 18 & 19: *The Queen's Tea*

We Players' celebrates the launch of the NY Botanical Garden's 2024 exhibition *Wonderland: Curious Nature*. Our Red Queen will host the afternoon tea atop Daffodil Hill while Alice chases the White Rabbit and the Tweedles stir up mischief amongst the guests. Send your East Coast allies to celebrate and play!

Summer: *See Clown: a story of self-love*

Stay tuned for the digital release of this sweet, short, silent film about a little clown traveling through the wilds of San Francisco, and learning to know and love herself along the way.

September: *Mother Lear*

An irascible Shakespeare scholar with early onset dementia communicates with her caretaker daughter using the only language available to her, the text of *King Lear*, as the two struggle with aging, love, and their own balance of power. Since 2017, this award-winning production has toured throughout the Bay Area and beyond. Recently released as a film (motherlearfilm.com), We Players is thrilled to co-present the return of the live production as part of Cal Shakes' 50th anniversary season. Join us at the beautiful Cal Shakes campus in Orinda for this intimate and moving theatrical experience.

September: *Our Lady of the Moon*

Premiering at Cal Shakes, experience this intimate and interactive exhibit, featuring Regina Leon (*Alice in Adventures with Alice*). A hybrid visual art and performance installation, guests are guided by signage to a calming eucalyptus grove where the temple of the Moon mother stands tall. Inspired by Ix Chel, the Mayan goddess of the moon, signage and audio engage the visitor, while on select days the Goddess herself will be present.