

**A RED
ORCHID
THEATRE**

A WORLD PREMIERE

VEAL

BY JOJO JONES

DIRECTED BY ENSEMBLE MEMBER DADO



VEAL

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DIRECTED BY ENSEMBLE MEMBER DADO

CAST:

Franny.....Jojo Brown
Lulu.....Carmia Imani
Noa.....Alice Wu
Chelsea.....Alexandra Chopson
Unnamed Male Concubine.....Jasper Johnson

UNDERSTUDIES:

Franny u/s.....Lola Fratto
Lulu u/s.....Christin Prince
Noa u/s.....Amy Yesom Kim
Chelsea u/s.....Kaitlyn Gorman
Unnamed Male Concubine u/s.....Sean McGlynn

CREATIVE & PRODUCTION TEAM:

Scenic & Lighting Designer.....Tianxuan Chen
Costume Designer.....Izumi Inaba^
Sound Designer.....Connor Blackwood
Props Designer.....Ab Rieve
Violence and Intimacy Director.....Jyreika Guest
Assistant Director/Script Supervisor.....Faith Hart
Dramaturg.....Elliott Puckette
Technical Director.....Tom Daniel
Production Manager.....Shelbi Weaver
Stage Manager.....Lauren Lassus
Assistant Stage Manager.....Faith Locke
Assistant Stage Manager.....Dorothy Craven
Casting Director.....Kyle Stoffers
Scenic Painter.....Morgan Laszlo
Master Electrician.....Sebastian Chrzanowski
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Public Relations.....David Rosenberg PR

^ Member of United Scenic Artists-Local USA 829-IATSE

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VEAL artwork by Adam T. Crawford
Playbill design by Stephanie Shum

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A Red Orchid Theatre sits upon the traditional homelands of the Council of the Three Fires: The Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi Nations. Many other Tribes like the Miami, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac, and Fox also called this area home. Located at the intersection of several great waterways, the land naturally became a site of travel and healing for many Tribes. American Indians continue to call this area home, and now Chicago is home to the sixth largest Urban American Indian community that still practices their heritage, traditions, and care for the land and waterways. Today, Chicago continues to be a place that calls many people from diverse backgrounds to live and gather here. Despite the many changes the city has experienced, both American Indians and A Red Orchid see the importance of the land and this place that has always been home to many diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

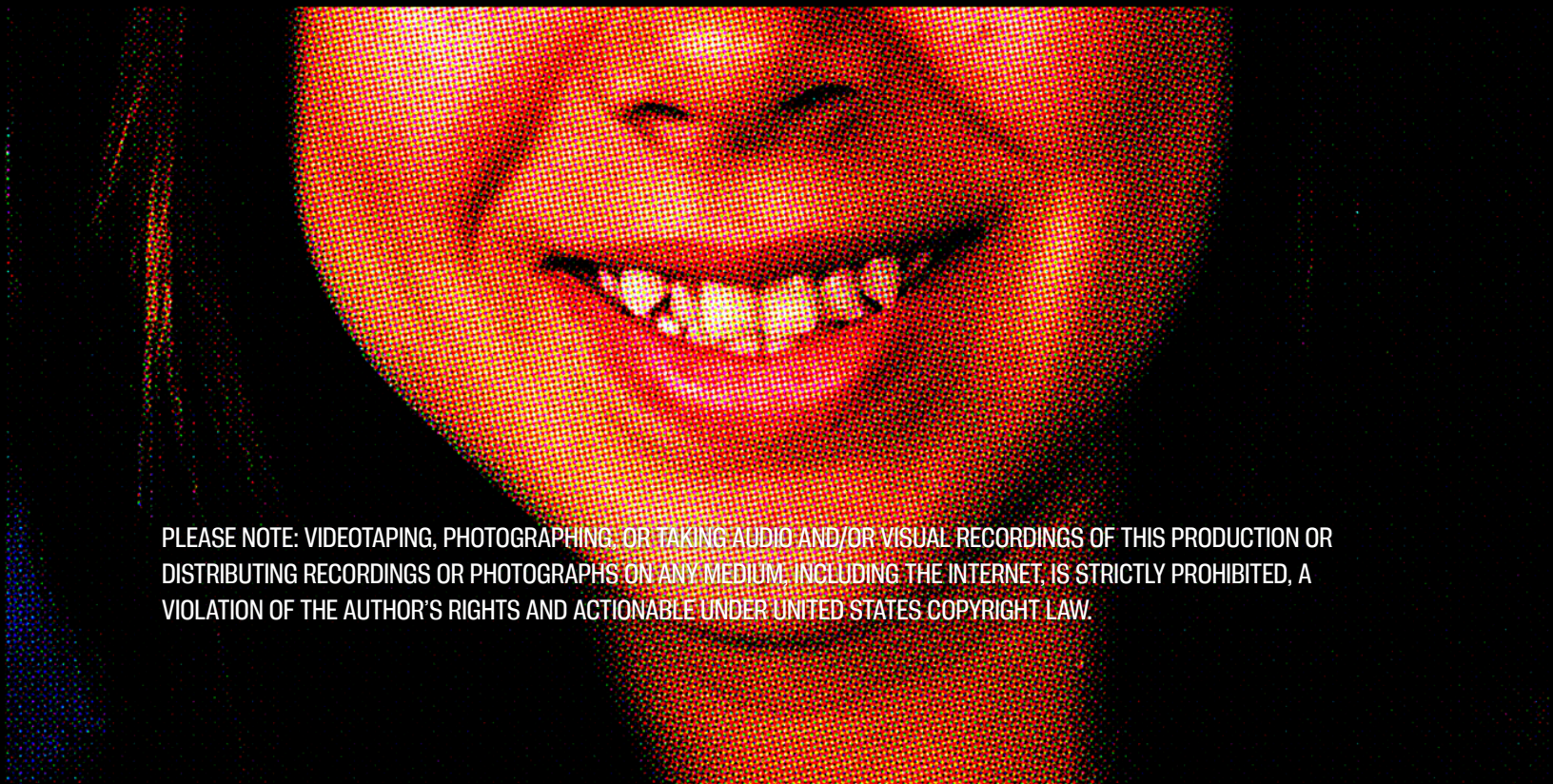
CONTENT WARNING

Strobing lights, haze, violence and blood, bullying, body shaming, and discussions and depictions of disordered eating.

SPECIAL THANKS

Ryan Bergner, Mark Brown, Gequava Van Dyke, Nicholas Grimm, Patti Kazmir, Peterson Plastics, and Patrick Starner.

From playwright Jojo Jones: "Kristoffer Diaz for believing in this play from quite literally day one. Joshua Righton for loving me and listening to me from 14:00-03:00 GMT every single day. Steven Rinehart, Barbara Jones, Charlie Rinehart-Jones, Maria Rinehart-Jones, R. Forest Malley, Chuck Jones, Kimberly Hassenfeld, Sally Hassenfeld, and Lois Jones, all of whom I love very much. Farrah Cukor, Heidi H. Graham, and the wonderful cast, crew, staff, and ensemble at A Red Orchid Theatre. Especially dado."



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PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

I wrote this play about twenty-six-year-olds when I was twenty-three and now I am twenty-six, which makes me clairvoyant probably. People frequently ask me about the meaning behind this play and I find it hard to talk about because I don't know if there's anything "behind" it. It's about what it purports to be about: girls talking and playing. They do it all right in front of you.

I wish I could say I was someone with no regrets but I have a thousand, mostly—because my life has been pretty great, and I have been pretty cautious—things I didn't do that I thought I couldn't but now realize would have been trivially easy. This rumination is a kind of nostalgia I guess, a fixation like licking my lips, which is why they're always chapped (another thing I could have fixed). Sometimes I think: I now realize I could have done X. It would have been easy. I could have not done Y. It would have been easy. If I'm the same person now anyway, does it even matter?

Sometimes I tell myself those things I worry about didn't happen, that my worries about them were all a dream, one of those dreams that makes sense when you're in it, but you'll see when you wake up that it was full of gaps and holes. I had a dream last night that I was running through the airport trying to find my gate to fly to Labneh, a country on the northern border of Australia. In retrospect it's silly, because no country borders Australia, and labneh is a delicious yogurt. And also there was no need to run, because they had already checked my bag.

This note isn't particularly funny, which is not representative of what you're about to watch because 90% of the play I wrote just to make myself laugh. That's my answer to most "why" questions about the play: I thought it would be funny. And I think it is!

Anyway, I hope you laugh. I know we all get just one life and that really sucks. We know we shouldn't spend it thinking about things that have already happened. But we do anyway.

Free Palestine.



DADO



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

"Children want to change,
as Adam Phillips asserts,
but adults want to stay the same.
I have no regrets about my eagerness to
flee childhood in order to get to the future.
If I had loved myself as I was,
I might not be who I am.
This is the cunning of reason.
We long to change and eventually do.
Who is to say that the longing wasn't the
most purposeful agent of that change?
It's the things I wanted and never got,
the way I focused in an almost religious
manner on idealized scenes, that prove to
me now that I really did have a childhood.
Childhood is a strange and slightly
melancholy dream from which
you finally awake.
You're there. An adult. You've made it."

- What I Wanted, What I Got by Rachel Kushner
The New Yorker (September 14, 2025)

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PROFILES



JOJO BROWN (Franny) [she/her] is a Chicago-born & raised actress who made her A Red Orchid Theatre debut in 2016, performing in *THE ROOM* (also directed by dado). Off-Broadway credits include *CHARM* (MCC Theater) and *7 MINUTES* (Waterwell). Chicago credits include *THE BRIGHTEST THING IN THE WORLD* (About Face Theatre), *THE PORTRAIT OF DORIAN GRAY* (The Runaways Lab Theatre), and *LET ME DOWN EASY* (American Theater Company). On television, she's appeared in "Single Drunk Female" (streaming on Prime Video), "Broad City" (Comedy Central), "Billions" (SHOWTIME), "Manifest" (NBC), "New Amsterdam" (NBC), "Younger" (Paramount+), and "Clean Slate" (Prime Video). She dedicates everything she does to her remarkable mother.



ALEXANDRA CHOPSON (Chelsea) [she/her] is elated to return to A Red Orchid Theatre following her Season 31 debut (*IN QUIETNESS*, Jeff Award Nomination, Performer in a Supporting Role). Latest: *LATE*, *A COWBOY SONG*, Couch Penny Ensemble (Red; original melodies composition). Other credits: *NOISES OFF*, *Steppenwolf* (Dir. Anna D. Shapiro); special projects with The Gift Theatre, Chicago Dramatists, and The Den Theater. Originally from Nashville, Chopson is, of course, also a singer/songwriter. She earned a BFA in Acting from Ball State University, is represented by Gray Talent Group, and her favorite Lunchable is tiny pizza. Big Love to my people. @alex.andra.grace



CARMIA IMANI (Lulu) [she/her] is thrilled to make her A Red Orchid Theatre debut! She's a company member of PlayGround-Chicago and an ensemble member of A Short Leap Theatre Company. Chicago credits: *CLEARING* (A Short Leap); *FIELD OF FLESH* (Leisure); *BROTHER SISTER CYBORG SPACE* (u/s, Raven Theatre). Regional: *SKELETON CREW*, *DEATH OF A SALESMAN* (The Black Rep); *MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING* (u/s, Commonwealth Shakespeare). She holds a BFA in Acting from Ball State University, where she produced "AmeriKKKa" (Best Film, Hoosier Films Festival 2021). She gives endless thanks to God, her family, and friends for their unwavering support. Instagram: @carniaimani



JASPER JOHNSON (Unnamed Male Concubine) [he/him] is excited to work with A Red Orchid again, after understudying *IN QUIETNESS*. He's worked with Drury Lane Theatre and Griffin Theatre Company, among others. TV: "Chicago Med," "Dark Matter." FILM: "Young Men," "Love Language," "The Eden Theory." He is a graduate of The Theatre School at DePaul University, and moonlights as an EMT in Chicago. He's represented by DDO Artists Agency and a member of SAG-AFTRA. Love to Sierra. yellowpadpictures.com

PROFILES



ALICE WU (Noa) [she/her] At A Red Orchid Theatre: REVOLUTION (u/s), STAFF MEAL (Taste of Red Series). Select Chicago: TIME IS A COLOR...BLUE (Avalanche Theatre), SOUND, INSTRUMENT, SINGING (Dizzy Turek), THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH (Remy Bumpo), A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM (Midsommer Flight), ARABIA, ARABIA! (The Plagiarists), Select Regional: THE MANY DEATHS OF NATHAN STUBBLEFIELD (Humana Festival), CIRCLE MIRROR TRANSFORMATION (u/s) (Actors Theatre of Louisville). Select TV/Film: "Chicago Fire" (NBC); "Empire" (FOX); "ESPN" (ESPN); "Wheelhouse" (web), "Tears to a Glass Eye" (Jack Kenny). Education: BFA, NDSU; Professional Training Company, Actors Theatre of Louisville. Ensemble member: Avalanche Theatre, Red Theatre. Representation: DDO Artists Agency.



LOLA FRATTO (Franny u/s) [she/her] is thrilled to make her professional debut with A Red Orchid Theatre. A recent BFA Acting graduate from the University of Illinois Chicago, she has brought bold, dynamic characters to life in productions including PEOPLE, PLACES, AND THINGS (Emma, dir. Dado), HURRICANE DIANE (Diane, dir. Monet Felton), and FEFU AND HER FRIENDS (Fefu, dir. Xiomara Cornejo). Additional credits include SHE CAME FROM THE BRONX with the Q Brothers and a professional staged reading of ROMERO by Xiomara Cornejo (Teatro Vista, dir. Sandra Marquez). Lola is deeply grateful to A Red Orchid for this opportunity and excited to share this journey.



KAITLYN GORMAN (Chelsea u/s) [she/her] Chicago credits include CLEARING u/s (A Short Leap Theatre Co) and SEXUAL PERVERSITY IN CHICAGO (ego death theatre collective). She has a piece of paper at her parents house that proves she got a BFA from UConn in acting. Before coming to Chicago three years ago, she was working 9-5 in NYC. Now, she still works a 9-5 but also does other things like theater. Anything is possible if you just believe. Many thanks to the A Red Orchid team for such a wonderful experience!



AMY YESOM KIM (Noa u/s) [she/her] is thrilled to be working at A Red Orchid Theatre for the first time! Originally from Seattle, WA, Amy came to Chicago to study Musical Theatre at Roosevelt University. Recent credits include THE STINKY CHEESE MAN AND OTHER FAIRLY STUPID TALES Tour, FRINDLE Tour (Griffin Theatre), THE SNOW QUEEN (Marriott Theatre), and THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL (Kokandy Productions). Outside of acting, Amy is an early childhood educator specializing in arts, music, and movement at Bubbles Academy. She is proudly represented by Gray Talent Group. Much love to her family, friends, and Andrew! @amyyesom | amyyesomkim.com

PROFILES



SEAN MCGLYNN (Unnamed Male Concubine u/s) [he/she/they] is a Chicago-based actor and is so excited to be doing their first show with A Red Orchid! Sean recently moved to Chicago after graduating with their BFA in Acting from Ohio University. While not onstage you can catch them walking at ungodly speeds throughout the city, if you're lucky. Enjoy the show!



CHRISTIN PRINCE (Lulu u/s) [she/her] is an actor, singer, director and producer based here in Chicago, IL. She is ecstatic to collaborate and cultivate a relationship with all of the artists at A Red Orchid Theatre. Previous credits include Essential Invisible Theater (ARACHNAE - Chorus), Foaming at the Mouth Play Festival (GLORY - Princess Dashkoff), MagiCorps Theatre Company (mochaunicorn.93- Isabella et. al), and Blue in the Right Way (WOMEN BEWARE WOMEN- Bianca). Christin can be found painting portals to other worlds and playing D&D in her free time.



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JOJO JONES (Playwright) [she/her] is a writer and performer from New York City. Her work has been read at The Jungle, A Red Orchid Theatre, The Tank, the Brooklyn Center for Theatre Research, and more. Her play VEAL was nominated for the 2023 Venturous Fellowship and the Goldberg Prize and long listed for the Theatre503 International Playwriting Award. One time Wallace Shawn held the door open for her at the Jewish Community Center on 76th and Amsterdam.



DADO (Director) [she/her] Last season, dado directed SIX MEN DRESSED LIKE JOSEPH STALIN by Dianne Nora at A Red Orchid Theatre as well as LOBSTER by Kallan Dana for the Wirtz Center at Northwestern University. Previously, dado directed Anna Ouyang Moench's IN QUIETNESS (A Red Orchid), THE LOVER by Harold Pinter (with Yasen Peyankov at Facility Theatre), as well as RIGHT NOW by Catherine Anne Toupin (Facility Theatre), and PEOPLE, PLACES, AND THINGS by Duncan MacMillan (University of Illinois). Later this year she will direct DANCE NATION by Clare Barron. She is currently teaching at the University of Illinois.

TIANXUAN CHEN (XUAN) (Scenic & Lighting Designer) [any pronouns with respect] is a Chicago-based scenic and lighting designer with an MFA in stage design from Northwestern University. She's honored to work with AROT for the first time! Recent design credits include: JESUS HOPPED THE "A" TRAIN (Citylit, Scenic); THE TENDER TRAP (Blue in the Right Way, set & lighting); NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH (Jackalope, Scenic); THE LOVE OBJECT (The Story Theatre, Scenic); 2 PIANOS 4 HANDS (Northlight, Scenic); WOMEN BEWARE WOMEN (Blue in the Right Way, Scenic & Lighting); EVERYBODY (Wirtz Center, Scenic); BLOOD WEDDING (Wirtz Center, Scenic). Xuan is the winner of the 2024 USITT Scenic Design Award and currently working on the PQ2027 emerging exhibition as co-designer.

IZUMI INABA (Costume Designer) [she/her] Previously at A Red Orchid Theatre: THE NEW ELECTRIC BALLROOM. Recent Credits: SANCTUARY CITY (Next Act Theatre), COME FROM AWAY, CATS (Paramount Theatre), ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW (Penobscot Theatre Company), THE PLAY THAT GOES WRONG (Indiana Repertory, Geva Theatre), NOISES OFF (Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Geffen Playhouse) NOISES OFF, EMPTY RIDE (The Old Globe). Upcoming: HAPPY BIRTHDAY MARS ROVER (University of Chicago), TWO SISTERS AND A PIANO (Writers). Izumi is a member of United Scenic Artists Local USA 829 and represented by Gersh.

CONNOR BLACKWOOD (Sound Designer) [he/him] is excited to be collaborating with A Red Orchid Theatre for the first time on this production. He has been working freelance AV in the Chicago area for number of years, and is currently working as an AV Specialist at the theatre design firm Schuler Shook. Recent work includes A NEW BRAIN (Pride Arts) and ANGRY F*GS (Ghostlight Ensemble). He graduated from Ball State with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in theatrical design, and would like to thank his wife Madison and son Caspian for their constant support.

PROFILES

AB RIEVE (Props Designer) [they/them] is a theatrical designer, practitioner, and illustrator. They received their BA from Columbia College Chicago with a double major in Illustration and Theatre Design and Technology in 2023. Recent credits include FIDDLER ON THE ROOF at Music Theater Works (props design), A TALE OF TWO CITIES at Shattered Globe (props design), TIME IS A COLOR AND THE COLOR IS BLUE at Avalanche Theatre (co-scenic design), SIX MEN DRESSED LIKE JOSEPH STALIN at A Red Orchid Theatre (props design), and TELL ME ON A SUNDAY at Theo Ubique Cabaret Theater (props design).

JYREIKA GUEST (Violence & Intimacy Director) [she/her] is an actor, dancer, and intimacy choreographer/director in Chicago. Her work can be seen onstage and onscreen as it exhibits the nuance of character development in movement and physical storytelling in relationships. The work she does with actors, artists, and dancers builds security in ensemble devising for brave storytelling. She brings her greatest empathy into the space for performers to fully connect with the narrative while maintaining the integrity of their humanness. Credits include: AIN'T NO MO (Woollymammoth Theatre); IS GOD IS (Red Orchid Theatre); ROCK OF AGES (Paramount Theatre); FIRE SHUT UP IN MY BONES and CHAMPION (Lyric Opera); SHEEPDOG (Shattered Globe); BROOKLYN LAUNDRY, LITTLE WOMEN, SELLING KABUL, INTIMATE APPAREL, FIREFLIES (Northlight Theatre); THE LIGHT (Coalescence Theatre); THE CHILDREN OF EDGAR AND NINA (The Neighborhood Theatre); OCTOBER STORM and THE LAST PAIR OF EARLIES, HOODOO LOVE (Raven Theatre); FIRST DEEP BREATH - Asst. (Victory Gardens). Film/TV: Starz "Power Book Series: Force."

FAITH HART (Assistant Director/Script Supervisor) [she/her] is grateful to be working at A Red Orchid for the first time and assisting Dado for the second. She is a part of site-specific theatre collective Snails on a Bike, where she co-directed EURYDICE alongside Jill Marlow and produced UNTITLED (BLOOD, MARBLE). Additional directing credits include CONSTELLATIONS (Clarendon Cottage, London), KRAPP'S LAST TAPE (Haven Chicago), and her play MAINTENANCE, a narrative experience centering sanitation workers (Pivot Arts). Assistant directing credits include FOOL FOR LOVE (Steppenwolf Theatre), PUSSY SLUDGE (Facility Theatre), THE BAND'S VISIT and EVERY BRILLIANT THING (Writers Theatre), and 'ART' (Guthrie Theater). faithhart.com

ELLIOTT PUCKETTE (Dramaturg) [she/they] is a multidisciplinary theatre artist and educator who is proud to be making their debut with A Red Orchid Theatre. Chicago: Nonsense Productions (BLOODSHOT, As You Like It), Midsommer Flight (LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST), Theatre EVOLVE (MEDEAMEDEAMEDEA), and Eclectic Full Contact Theatre (Patchwork Play Festival). Wisconsin: Whoopsocker, Renaissance Theaterworks, Mad Rogues, Forward Theater Company, StageQ, Music Theatre of Madison, and the Young Shakespeare Players. Thanks to Jojo, dado, and Kirsten. Love to Michael and Miranda. elliottpuckette.com

PROFILES

TOM DANIEL (Technical Director) [he/him] is once again THRILLED to technical direct another A Red Orchid production! He recently just built the set for American Blues Theater's production of THINGS WITH FRIENDS and GOLDEN LEAF RAGTIME BLUES, Hell in a Handbag's production of QUEEN FOR A DAY, and A Red Orchid's last two productions of SIX MEN DRESSED LIKE JOSEPH STALIN, and THE CAVE, all of which have been Jeff recommended. Tom would like to thank Kirsten, Dado, Tianxuan, Morgan, Faith, and Shelbi.

SHELBI WEAVER (Production Manager) [she/her] is a Chicago-based production manager. She attended the University of Northern Colorado, where she received a B.A. in Acting. Since moving, she has production managed at First Floor Theater, The Story Theater, and Chicago's NOITP. She was also an on-staff stage manager at iO Theater, managing hundreds of shows during her stay there. She currently works as the Co-Director of Production at First Floor Theater. This is her first time working with Red Orchid and she is both honored and grateful to be collaborating with such an incredible group of people!

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LAUREN LASSUS (Stage Manager) [she/her] is thrilled to be back at A Red Orchid stage managing another show with dado. Recent credits include: SIX MEN DRESSED LIKE JOSEPH STALIN and IN QUIETNESS also at A Red Orchid; A SLOW AIR, and A CASE FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD at Steep Theatre co where she is an Ensemble Member.

FAITH LOCKE (Assistant Stage Manager) [all pronouns] is an Assistant Stage Manager for VEAL, and this is their sixth time working at A Red Orchid Theatre! Faith was the Stage Manager for ROAD SIGNS and an Assistant Stage Manager for THE CAVE, TURRET, REVOLUTION, and IS GOD IS. Other credits include Stage Manager for INFERNAL (produced by Proboscis Theatre, performed at Bramble Arts Loft), ROYKO: THE TOUGHEST AN IN CHICAGO (performed at Chopin Theatre), TEMPEST (produced by Proboscis Theatre, performed at City Lit), and QUEER DANCE FREAKOUT (produced by Genderfucked Productions).

DOROTHY CRAVEN (Assistant Stage Manager) [she/they] is a Chicago based stage manager and graduate of the University of Iowa. Previous production credits include: ASM on CYGNUS (The Gift Theatre), THE COMEDIANS (Raven Theatre), HAPPY DAYS ARE HERE (AGAIN) and A CASE FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD (Steep Theatre). She is grateful to be working with A Red Orchid Theatre for the first time and would like to thank the entire team for making this such an amazing process!

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