

ARBOR ♥ PHILIA

OR THE CHOPPING BLOCK

BY JACOB M. APPEL

Directed by Coleman
February 23 - March 10, 2018

www.strollerstheatre.org
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STROLLERS
THEATRE LTD.

BARTELL THEATRE



STROLLERS THEATRE LTD.

Presents

ARBOROPHILIA, OR THE CHOPPING BLOCK

by Jacob M. Appel

Director
Coleman

Producers
Matthew Korda & Cathy Rasmussen

Stage Manager
Alyssa Pon-Franklin

Set Designer
Jens Hanson

Costume Designer
Brynna Wiser

Lighting Designers
Matt Kerr & Iome Armendariz-Kerr

Tree Designer
Katherine Johnson

Sound Designers
Claire Kannapell & Elliott Puckette

Properties Designer
Abigail Graf

The Bartell Theatre on the Evjue Stage
Madison, Wisconsin

February 23rd - March 10th, 2018

Running Time is 2 hours and 15 minutes
with a 15 minute intermission

Please turn off all cell phones and other electronics

Photography and video/audio recording of this production are strictly prohibited.

Strollers Theatre, LTD. is a member of the Madison Area Production Center (MAPC).

Arborophilia, Or The Chopping Block is presented by special arrangement with
the playwright, Jacob M. Appel

CAST OF ARBOROPHILIA, OR THE CHOPPING BLOCK

Gwendolyn.....	Maxine Fleckner Ducey
Lily.....	Michael Rebekah Fleischman
Laurel.....	Madeline Rose Thompson
Fairmont.....	Benjamin Barlow
Jimmy.....	Wesley Sonheim
Tree.....	Gina M. Gómez
Lucretia.....	Sarah Whelan

PRODUCTION STAFF

Director.....	Coleman
Stage Manager.....	Alyssa Pon-Franklin
Lighting Designers.....	Matt Kerr & Iome Armendariz-Kerr
Scenic Designer.....	Jens Hanson
Tree Designer.....	Katherine Johnson
Costume Designer.....	Brynna Wiser
Properties Designer.....	Abigail Graf
Sound Designers.....	Claire Kannapell & Elliott Puckette
Graphic Designer.....	Katherine Johnson
Board Operators.....	Iome Armendariz-Kerr & Alyssa Pon-Franklin
Master Carpenter.....	Russell Wolff
Construction.....	Erin S. Baal, Benjamin Barlow, Jeremiah Reit, Teresa Sarkela, Karl Stoll, Kathleen Tissot
Electricians.....	Matt Kerr, Iome Armendariz-Kerr, Tom Littrell, Alyssa Pon-Franklin, Cathy Rasmussen
Scenic Artists.....	Jim Agans, Erin S. Baal, Benjamin Barlow, Matthew Korda, Karl Stoll
Producers.....	Matthew Korda & Cathy Rasmussen
Performance Photographer.....	Jonathan J Miner
Videographer.....	Brett Williams

SPECIAL THANKS

This production was made possible with the special contributions of so many people. A special thanks is in order for these individuals and organizations.

CTM, Madison Arts Production Center, Full Compass, Madison Community Foundation, Lakeview Moravian Church, Mercury Players Theatre, Madison Theatre Guild, StageQ, Krass, The Gerald A Bartell Community Theatre Foundation and Kirk Stantis, The Isthmus, Electronic Theatre Controls, Phil Koenig, Jim Agans, Strang Architecture



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I'm a bit hard pressed to say exactly what it was that attracted me to *Arborophilia*.

The 2016 election was over, and I admit to some despondence. I'd previously decided that I wanted to find a new, or new-ish play to propose for Stroller's 2017/18 season. Something in my gut told me I needed to find a play that would assuage my civil despair. Frankly, I was looking for something more overtly political than *Arborophilia*. But then I ran across a review of a 2006 premiere at the Detroit Repertory Theatre. One of the actors in the original production told the Detroit Free Press:

"Arborophilia is a great comedy. It has more laugh-out-loud funny lines than most of the plays I've done. And it speaks to me--about how we can challenge race, age, gender, class and geographical boundaries and how we should challenge them more."

I was intrigued, and contacted the playwright asking for a copy of the script. Half-way through my first reading, I was hooked. *Arborophilia* reminds me that even in that dark night of the soul that characterizes contemporary American politics, laughing at ourselves is often the best medicine.

Coleman - 2018

BIOGRAPHIES

Iome Armendariz-Kerr (Lighting Designer) is lighting their first show with their dad. They are excited to be here and are eager to learn more about the theatrical world.

Benjamin Barlow (Fairmont Fythe) is ecstatic to be on stage again with Strollers Theatre! He has performed with Madison Theatre Guild, Mercury Players Theatre, Madison Shakespeare Company, Left of Left Center, The Heartland Festival, Pioneer Players, Fly-By-Night Productions, The Grand Opera House (Dubuque), Dubuque Fine Arts Players and The Heartland Ballet and soon to be Children's Theatre of Madison. Favorite roles include Cliff Bradshaw (*Cabaret*), Nick Bottom (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Matt (*The Fantasticks*), and Cogsworth (*Beauty and the Beast*). He would like to thank the cast, crew, and Liana for all the things!

Coleman (Director) is a disruptor. In the 1960s, he challenged Richard Nixon, Henry Kissinger and J. Edgar Hoover. Today, he writes and directs disruptive plays. 2018 will see the premiere of three of Coleman's plays: *A Contest of Wills*, a riff on the pre-eminent American value of the 21st century – greed; *Artificial Intelligence*, a true story of the

Coleman (cont.) dysfunction of social media; and *Infamous Mothers*, adapted from the book by Sagashus Levinston, the true stories of women who went through the belly of hell and brought something good back. Coleman is thrilled to be directing Jacob Appel's fantastic script *Arborophilia*, and to be working with this alive cast of seasoned and new Madison actors. (Thank you, Strollers and the Bartell Theatre.)

Maxine Fleckner Ducey (Gwendolyn Gage) is pleased and proud to be part of this wonderful production. Thank you to Strollers, Coleman and the amazing cast and crew. Thank you to the audience for sharing your evening with us here at the Bartell. Let the fantasia begin!

Michael Rebekah Fleischman (Lily) is pretty psyched to be back on the Evjue stage and working with some extremely cool people. Many thanks to the hardworking cast and crew, who have made this show an absolute blast. Her list of Strollers productions ever-grows, most recently appearing as Annelle in *Steel Magnolias*, and producing *Prelude to a Kiss* and *Rhinoceros*. Gratitude & love to the fam, who are rad.

Gina M. Gómez (Tree) is just tickled green to be part of her first Strollers Production! Gina is moved by the TREE-mendous talent of this cast, crew, and production team. This may sound sappy, but Gina is thankful for the amazing talent of Madison area artists and is over-Elmed to be part of this creative community. We hope you pine over this production as she has. So spruce up and enjoy the show!

Abigail Graf (Properties Designer) is delighted to be working on her third show with Strollers, after doing masks for *Rhinoceros* and costuming *Prelude to a Kiss*. Other design credits include *Returning Home* with Wilder Theater, *A Diamond Never Lies* with Madison College and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Monona Grove High School. She would like to thank her friends and family for their enduring support, the cast and crew of this delightful show, and all trees everywhere, if any of them are listening.

Jens Hanson (Scenic Designer) is a graduate of the Juilliard School Drama Division with a BFA in Fine Arts. He spends his days working as an Architect for Strang Inc. He loves Tacos, dogs, Brunettes and Coleman.

Katherine Johnson (Tree Designer) can be found directing, acting, and designing. Favorite past work includes directing 25 scenes from Shakespeare and Sid Caesar and co-directing *Nicholas Nickleby* at local youth theater YSP, and directing *Rhinoceros* with Strollers. She last acted in *Love's Labour's Lost*, and will be back on stage soon in *WtFP*. She also moonlights as a graphic designer. She's pleased to work with Strollers again and to take on such a singular design job. Many thanks to the lovely Gina for putting up with her and special thanks to my mother who has helped me out so much on this project.

Claire Kannapell (Sound Designer) has had a wonderful time working with the *Arborophilia* team and is so excited to see all of their hard work come to fruition. Her recent sound design projects have included *August: Osage County* and *Rhinoceros*. Claire plays bass in the indie rock band Woodrow.

Matt Kerr (Lighting Designer) is, after a long hiatus, happy to be trying his hand at lighting again. In addition to the supportive and talented staff and cast of Strollers, what has made this production special for him is getting to collaborate with his kid.

Matthew Korda (Co-Producer) is thrilled to present this funny and thought-provoking new play to Madison audiences. Mr Appel's witty dialogue has brought together some brand new talent with longtime Madison theatrical mainstays and Matthew feel blessed to be a part of the team.

Alyssa Pon-Franklin (Stage Manager) is excited to be stage managing her first Strollers production. Favorite credits include *Twilight of the Gods* (StageQ), *Parade* (Lake Country Players), and *Oliver* (UW-Waukesha). When is not backstage, she can be found at Oregon High School as a School Counselor, fostering kittens, playing in pit orchestras, or reading copious amounts of YA novels. Thanks to the cast and crew of *Arborophilia* for making this experience unforgettable!

Elliott Puckette (Sound Engineer) has been bouncing around the Madison theater community for a couple of years. She is currently a student at UW-Madison. This is the third show she has been involved in featuring Claire's marvelous compositions (the others were *Rhinoceros* and *August: Osage County*, which Elliott assistant directed).

Cathy Rasmussen (Co-Producer) is excited to dip her toes into the waters of producing. Having previously performed in Stroller's *Amadeus* and Krass's *Wrong for the Part*, and serving on Krass's Board of Directors, *Arborophilia* marks her first foray into this aspect of theatre. Many thanks to Matt for providing the opportunity and my amazing husband Mark for the continual support! Enjoy the show!

Wesley Sonheim (Jimmy Duckfoot) is almost half-bewilderingly stunned to find himself on stage once again (in his very first Strollers production!), though he insists it be unimpeachably known how actually delighted he is to be part of all this. In his spare time, Wesley is no more passionate about plants than he assumes an ordinary person ought to be.

Madeline Rose Thompson (Laurel) is ecstatic to be making her Strollers Theatre debut. A junior at Waunakee High School, last summer Madeline studied at Stella Adler Acting Studio in NYC. Prior to Stella, she spent her summers enrolled at American Players Theater's Acting Camp and Young Shakespeare Players Theater. Recent roles include The Narrator in Central Midwest Ballet's *The Little Matchstick Girl* and Alise in Upstart Crows' Production *The Lion in Winter*. Madeline is grateful to Coleman and Matthew Korda for entrusting her with the role of Laurel. She dedicates her performance to family, friends, teachers (especially her forensic coach Mr. Stenz) and tree huggers everywhere.

Sarah Whelan (Dame Lucretia) has been actively working in theatre for 70 years both acting and directing. She has performed in many US states and a number of European venues on stage, films, commercials and radio programs. She has performed with most of the theatre groups in Madison and served as president of many and creator of some. Strollers was the first theatre group she worked with when she moved to Madison in 1970. She is delighted to be performing with them once again.

Brynna Wiser (Costume Designer) is excited for her first show with Strollers Theatre. Other credits include acting in *Cinderella*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *The Little Mermaid* and many more with Evansville High School as well as designing *Spirit*, *The Red Velvet Cake War* and *A Delightful Quarantine* also with Evansville High School. Currently, she is attending the University of Wisconsin-Platteville with a dual major in Agricultural Education and Theatre. She will also be assistant designing the UW-Platteville spring musical *1776*. She would like to thank Strollers for this amazing opportunity and all the support they have shown her during this process.

Russell Wolff (Master Carpenter) studied set construction and design at the University of Wisconsin -Whitewater. Russell has been designing and building sets in the greater Madison area for over seven years. Russell's work has been featured in; Oregon Straw Hat Players production of *Big Fish*, Stroller's production of *Amadeus*, and most recently Sun Prairie Civic Theater's production of *Noises Off*. Russell's work as a Master Carpenter has earned him a Tommy Award and several Bartie Awards. Russell is grateful for the opportunity to work with Strollers and particularly the opportunity to work with Coleman once again. When Russell's not crafting sets, he can be found performing with Left of Left Center, Sun Prairie Civic Theater, and Wisconsin Public Radio's 9XM players.

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