

eclectic mayhem productions presents

TIRESIAS' TITS



a genderbending surrealist burlesque

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TIRESIAS' TITS

a genderbending surrealist burlesque

written and produced by Rebecca Rose Vassy

directed by Sean Butler

based on the play *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* by Guillaume Apollinaire

premiering at the 2017 Capital Fringe Festival

at the Lang - Atlas Performing Arts Center

1333 H Street NE, Washington, DC

sat 7/8 @ 9 pm

thu 7/13 @ 9:15 pm

sun 7/16 @ 2:45 pm

tue 7/18 @ 5:15 pm

fri 7/21 @ 8:15 pm

sat 7/22 @ 7 pm

<http://eclecticismayhemproductions.com>

This production is presented as a part of the 2017 Capital Fringe Festival, a program of the Washington, DC non-profit Capital Fringe.

**CAPITAL
FRINGE**

Scenes

Prologue: Director's Speech

Scene 1: Therese and Mari's kitchen

Scene 2: A street on the border of Little Zanzibar and Paris Heights

Scene 3: Therese and Mari's kitchen

Scene 4: A street corner in Little Zanzibar

Scene 5: Therese and Mari's kitchen

Scene 6: The streets of Little Zanzibar

Scene 7: Therese and Mari's kitchen

Scene 8: The streets of Little Zanzibar

Scene 9: A street on the border of Little Zanzibar and Paris Heights

Scene 10: The Lang - Atlas Performing Arts Center

Scene 11: Therese and Mari's kitchen

Scene 12: The streets of Little Zanzibar

Scene 13: Therese and Mari's kitchen

Accomplices to the Shenanigans

THE DIRECTOR, an Activist Artist.....Shortstaxx
SOCIAL MEDIA, no literally the character is Social Media.....Alexandra Wehr
THERESE/TIRESIAS, a White Feminist.....Diva Darling
MARI, her husband, an Artisanal Hipster.....Buster Britches
LACOUF, a Beltway Insider, Gerrymanderer,
and obviously a Clown.....Chantal Martineau
PRESTO, a City Politician and Corruption Expert, also a Clown.....Shortstaxx
THE DETECTIVE, a Film Noir Refugee and Not At All
Problematic Law Enforcement Officer.....Cherie Sweetbottom
APOLLA, an Assertive Busker and
Defender of Little Zanzibar.....Boneza Valdez Hancock
THE DEVELOPER, Part Cyber, Part Bro, All Douche.....Emma Zonn
THE REPORTER, an Internet Social Commentator and Predestined Reality TV Producer
with an Impressive YouTube Following.....Cristina Sanchez
MÊME, the Clickbait Journalist offspring of Mari and Social Media.....Nastya Djakov
THE WOMEN OF LITTLE ZANZIBAR/VARIOUS PEOPLE OF THE CITY/
THE BABIES.....Nastya Djakov, Ginger Jameson,
Enemy Jones, Izzy LaFleur, Clair(e) Martinez, Kate McGowan, Cristina Sanchez, Katie
Wicklund, Emma Zonn

Production Staff and Crew

Producer.....	Rebecca Rose Vassy
Director.....	Sean Butler
Playwright.....	Rebecca Rose Vassy
Stage Manager.....	Toni Goldberg
Production Assistant.....	Stephanie Davis
Booth Tech.....	Ártemis López
Costume Designer.....	Carrie Smith
Choreography.....	Diva Darling, Cherie Sweetbottom, Buster Britches
Fight Choreography.....	Sean Butler
Props Coordinator.....	Christine Smith
Graphic Design and Marketing/PR.....	Rebecca Rose Vassy
Sound Design and Editing.....	Sean Butler
Projection Design.....	Rebecca Rose Vassy and Sean Butler
Photography.....	Ophelia Hart Photography and Chris Jay Photography

Acknowledgements and Thanks

“District Four”, “Fluffing a Duck”, “Mary Celeste”, “Merry Go Slower”, “Night on the Docks - Trumpet”, “Run Amok”, “Sneaky Snitch”
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Mari’s corset by Bound Boutique
<http://lotusblooms.com>

Special Thanks To:

The Puppet Co. at Glen Echo
Mindi Mimosa
Eric Smith
Wingate Hughes Architects

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Buster Britches (*Mari*) “The Camp Counselor of Burlesque” Buster is the producer of DC’s Camp Variety Cabaret and an established burlesque dancer, sideshow performer and drag artist. He has performed in cities around the country including New Orleans, Atlanta, St. Louis, Providence, Baltimore and Richmond. He is a current cast member of Homo Erectus, an all-boylesque revue at the historic Stonewall Inn in New York City. He has been called the Mid-Atlantic King of Halloween, and this Halloween will be bringing the capital a festival length weekend of Halloween performances entitled *The Dreadful Cabaret*. He is also fluent in Betazed, but you’ve probably never heard it.



Diva Darling (*Therese/Tiresias, Choreographer*) A classically-trained triple threat who ran away to join the burlesque, Diva Darling is a force of nature who’s the perfect storm of high femme and lowbrow. Diva is a Fringe regular, whose appearances in shows including *Barenaked Comedy*, *Vaudevillian Romp*, and *A Midsummer’s Burlesque Dream* (as Titania) were hailed by reviewers as “mesmerizing”, “fierce”, and “brought the house down”. She has performed burlesque regionally from Baltimore through Virginia Beach, and can be lured back to mainstream theater for a good Shakespeare production; favorite roles include Titania in a Vegas-themed *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and Paulina in *A Winter’s Tale* with the Rude Mechanicals. Diva also co-produces and co-hosts Smut Slam

DC, a first-person storytelling open mic about sex, monthly with Mindi Mimosa at the Songbyrd Music House and Café. She received her theater education at HB Studios in Greenwich Village. Follow her exploits at <http://divamojo.com>!



Nastya Djakov (*Meme/Woman of Zanzibar/Baby*) Step-Mother Russia and champion of the proletariat, Nastya is no stranger to a good rebellion. She’s ready to take to the streets and seize the means of reproduction from the patriarchy (#nomorebabies). A cunning linguist, Nastya used the spotlight as a warm escape from the cold winters in St. Petersburg. After years of classical dance and theatre, she fell in love with burlesque’s absurdity and extravagance. She’s spent the past year and a half performing with DC’s oldest queer burlesque troupe, the DC Gurly Show and is excited to be back at Fringe after performing last year in Burlesque Classique’s *A Midsummer’s Burlesque Dream*.



Boneza Valdez Hanchock (*Apolla*) is making her splashy, spectacular, and sensational Eclectic Mayhem Productions debut with *Tiresias' Tits*. A play title she desperately needed to adorn her pretty snazzy resume which includes other illustrious but sadly, less cheeky DC Metro Area theatre credits such as *Henry V*, *Antigone Reflected*, and *Julius Caesar* with The Rude Mechanicals, *Timon 2016* with Off the Quill, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Macbeth* with Castaways Repertory Theatre. The support of her boo-thang Daryl and fur-babies Fidel and Meatball make all of these theatre fever dreams possible. Education: Studio Theatre Conservatory.



Ginger Jameson (*Woman of Zanzibar/Busker/Burlesque Baby*) Spicy and intoxicating, Ginger Jameson knew her curves couldn't be contained by tights and tutus....this Southern Bombshell needed to bust out in a glittery blaze. After relocating from Tennessee, this Bible Belt baby found the DC Gurly Show, which helped convert her from jumps and drills to heels and thrills. Ginger started thrilling audience members at Fringe last year in *A Midsummer's Burlesque Dream*. Once she was bitten by the Fringe bug, there was no looking back. When Ginger is not performing on the Fringe stage, you can catch her with the DC Gurly Show!



Enemy Jones (*Woo Girl/Construction Worker/Woman of Zanzibar/Baby*) This is Enemy's first burlesque production, and she's very excited. A dancer, fitness instructor and choreographer in her professional life, she's grateful for the opportunity to expand her performance repertoire to include acting and burlesque (and finally use some of the skills from all those musical theatre productions her parents paid for). Education: BFA in Dance from The Ohio State University, CityDance Conservatory.



Izzy LaFleur (*Woman of Zanzibar/Baby*) is excited for her first performance with Eclectic Mayhem Productions! Her former performances include Peter Quince in Burlesque Classique's *A Midsummer's Burlesque Dream* and several performances with the DC Gurly Show. Prior to moving to DC, Izzy taught various styles of dance at Dance Arts Studio in Syracuse, NY and cheered professionally for the Syracuse Crunch and the Syracuse Soldiers. Izzy is thrilled to be an original cast member of *Tiresias' Tits* and looks forward to what comes next in her acting career.



Kate McGowan (*Hipster/Construction Worker/Woman of Zanzibar/Baby*) A southern Maryland native, this is Kate's burlesque debut. Recently, Kate appeared in *The Apocalypse of Darkness* in last year's Capital Fringe Festival as The Soldier, and in FABUM, Inc's *A Strong Woman: 1 Night, 5 Plays* in a piece about the Women's Airforce Service Pilots of WWII. Kate is also a historical interpreter and museum educator with the Accokeek Foundation, where she plays Minnie Dunning, an 18th century woman living

on a southern Maryland tobacco farm. Kate has also written, produced and performed in over 5 museum theatre pieces on a variety of topics for the Accokeek Foundation and most recently staged a puppet show about the foundation's heritage breed sheep. When not working you can catch Kate hiking, playing with cats, or thinking about outer space.



Chantal Martineau (*Lacouf*) is delighted to be making her official debut in the world of burlesque after first meeting many of her current partners in crime when stepping in as a last-minute replacement for the final performance of Burlesque Classique's *A Midsummer's Burlesque Dream*. She has clowned with Borealis Theatre, Clowns Without Borders, Occupy Circus, and the Baltimore Physical Comedy Colloquium in *The Dirty, Dirty Clown Show with Naked Clowns*; and performed various roles in Faction of Fools' 2nd-5th annual celebrations of Commedia dell'Arte, the Fool for All. She has a variety of other performance experience, ranging from being a member of an imaginary theatre collective, to a robot in a live-action video game, to

improv - and even straight theatre. Chantal co-produces Clown Cabaret, a semi-monthly performance laboratory for clowns and other physical comedy.



Clair(e) Martinez (*Food Truck Chef/Woman of Zanzibar/Burlesque Baby*) With a performance history as eclectic as their wardrobe, Clair(e) has meandered through music theater, opera, drag, and now burlesque. They moonlight as div0id, promoting the height of beauty beyond binaries one fantastical selfie at a time. This is their debut at Fringe and they couldn't be more ready to bring you some genderqueer surrealist madness with this fabulous cast and crew. Education: B.M. Classical Voice Performance, University of Maryland.

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Cristina Sanchez (*Woman of Zanzibar/Woo Girl/Reporter*) is making her debut performance on the Capital Fringe stage and in the spicy world of burlesque art. Cristina began her acting career in Madrid, Spain where she participated in university theatre. In 2015, she moved to Vancouver, Canada to study acting at Vancouver Film School. Cristina recently starred in UBC's staging of Ayad Akhtar's play *Disgraced* and is currently working on a number of webseries and short films in the D.C. area. She is excited to be a part of Eclectic Mayhem's vibrant, fun, and timely kick-ass show! #babydaddy



Shortstaxx (*The Director/Presto*) Shortstaxx is a 13-year veteran of DC and Baltimore's burlesque and variety scenes. Producer of the Staxx Burly-Q Revue, company member of Baltimore's Sticky Buns Burlesque, femcee of DC's variety show Tilted Torch, Staxx has peeled all over the DMV and in Philly, Pittsburgh, Roanoke, Knoxville and her dream venue - Sideshows by the Seashore in that Sodom by the Sea - Coney Island. She sometimes shimmies with rock bands - most notably Southern Culture on the Skids - who she performed with in June at Gypsy Sally's in Georgetown. Also an actor, Kris Roth has worked with many companies over 25 years in the DMV and is currently co-creating a new work - which will run in October at DC Arts Center - with the experimental Theatre du Jour with whom she's worked for over a decade. She is thrilled to help bring to life Rebecca Rose Vassy's brilliant burlesque adaptation of Apollinaire's revolutionary surreal play!

Psst, tell your friends-- you can click here to vote for us for Best Comedy and Best Overall in the Capital Fringe Audience Awards 2017 sponsored by TheaterMania! Sharesies!



Cherie Sweetbottom (*The Detective*) Armed with a megawatt smile, chameleon-like shape-shifting abilities, and a posterior that's been described as "hypnotizing", Cherie has performed in burlesque since 2011. She produces House of Sweetbottom and DC's premiere nerdy burlesque troupe, the Evil League of Ecdysiasts, and performs regularly with Naked Girls Reading DC. She has been voted *Washington City Paper's* Best of DC Reader's Poll first runner up for Best Performance Artist in 2016 and 2017 and has toured the country with *Burlesque is Coming*, the only Game of Thrones burlesque tribute personally approved by George R.R. Martin. Education: B.F.A. Theatre, Shenandoah Conservatory



Alexandra Wehr (*Social Media*) A true visionary and master of her craft, Alexandra flawlessly embraces a style all her own with unrelenting passion. Her love for theatre and acting began when she was a small child mimicking the great works of comedic geniuses such as Carol Burnett, Steve Martin, and Jim Carrey. Additionally, her distinctive dance moves and beatboxing skills have been influenced by the innovative styles of Justin Timberlake and Michael Jackson. Alexandra's career started in 2010 where she starred in an adaptation of Euripides' Greek tragedy *Trojan Women*. Shortly after, her career expanded to film and television work. In 2012, Alexandra had the opportunity

to work alongside Donnie Wahlberg on the CBS hit show *Blue Bloods*. Her first DC production debut was with DC Women's Theater Group in *Lost Letters: From the Front Line to the Home Front*. In 2014, Wingate Hughes Architects, DC's leading architecture firm, chose Alexandra to represent their company by modeling in the annual IIDA's Mid-Atlantic Chapter's Cosmo Couture event. She competed against 25 other models and won Best Performance which was featured in *Architect Magazine*. Alexandra looks forward to perfecting her craft in the DC area and is honored to be a part of Capital Fringe. #blessed
Education: B.F.A. Theatre, Ramapo College of New Jersey



Katie Wicklund (*Construction Worker/MTA Worker/Woman of Zanzibar/Baby*) A super huge fan of glitter, clowns, and reproductive choice, Katie is extremely elated to make her Fringe AND burlesque debut with Eclectic Mayhem's hilarious re-imagining of *Tiresias' Tits*. Recent performances include DC's One Minute Play Festival, staged readings with Flying V Theatre, and Next Day Theatre's Space Cadets. Katie has studied at the Theatre Lab and Studio Theatre Conservatory and currently leads movement classes for young actors. She's loved every minute of being part of this insanely talented and supportive cast and crew!

Thanks for keeping an eye out, Bratnatch.



Emma Zonn (*The Developer/Woman of Zanzibar/Burlesque Baby/SJW Baby*) With a history of performing as long as her legs, Emma Zonn takes no prisoners when she takes the stage! This statuesque star brings over 15 years of experience in theater and dance to her ecdysial art, not to mention a natural inclination towards exhibitionism. Emma Zonn made her debut last year on the Fringe stage as Helena in Burlesque Classique's *A Midsummer's Burlesque Dream*, and is delighted to return to her roots again this summer. With a year of performing with DC's oldest queer burlesque troupe the DC Gurly Show under her belt, Emma has conquered stages and hearts around the city, as

well as throughout Virginia, Maryland, and New Jersey.



Sean Butler (*Director*) Sean loves the feeling of being immersed in Fringe once again. A Maryland resident, Sean has lived, performed, and directed in Pennsylvania, New York City, and the greater DC metropolitan area. Locally, he has directed *Wait Until Dark* at Silver Spring Stage and a Las Vegas-themed *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the Rude Mechanicals. For Fringe, Sean has directed the Rude Mechanicals' re-mount of *The Tempest: A Celtic Musical*—in which he also played Caliban—as well as assistant directing and appearing in Eclectic Mayhem Production's first show, *Mirabilia*. Most recently he was seen at last year's Capital Fringe Festival as Nick Bottom in Burlesque Classique's *A Midsummer's Burlesque*

Dream. Thanks to his partner in both life and art of over 20 years, Rebecca, for writing such a wonderful, hilarious project for him to sink his directorial teeth into. Thanks to his other partner of over 10 years, Christine, for all the amazing hard work she put into this project, above and beyond the call of duty. I love you both so much. And thanks to the wonderful, joyful, talented, weird, and wild cast and crew of this show for being a part of this project. I am in love with you all!

Stephanie Davis (*Production Assistant*) Stephanie Davis is a NoVA native who is thrilled to be back at work with Capital Fringe after a several year hiatus. Following her lifelong passion for theater and the performing arts, Stephanie has worked in almost every aspect of the biz- from performing to costume design to house management and more. Serving as the Production Assistant for *Tiresias' Tits*, however, takes the cake for most unusual and most fun project she has worked on to date, and she looks forward to making more spreadsheets about rubber duckies in the future!

Toni Goldberg (*Stage Manager*) is happily returning to Fringe with *Tiresias' Tits*! Favorite companies to stage manage with include Adventure Theatre MTC, Constellation Theatre, Forum Theatre, Washington Revels, Happenstance Theatre, Flying V Theatre, Pointless Theatre Company, Live Action Theatre, and HalfMad Theatre. When she's not stage managing, Toni can be found helping you get your tickets and find your seats at ATMTC, The Puppet Co., and Silver Spring Black Box. Toni is in her fifth season in residence with Bowen McCauley Dance. She earned her BA in Theatre Studies at Hiram College.



Ártemis López (*Booth Tech*) Queer Eurotrash hiding in the dark. This is Ártemis' fifth Fringe, and his third year Fringe-ing it up with Diva and Sean. Buy him a sour drink at the Arts Bar and he'll tell you about the Gazpacho Controversy, the Great Onion Divide, and other Spanish trivia you shouldn't waste your time on. Only buy him hoppy drinks if you want to make him cry. Currently an Assistant Production Manager, Ártemis has been a Stage Manager, Production Manager, Light/Sound Operator, Carpenter, Venue Manager, and many many more things around DC over the past six years.

Carrie Smith (*Costume Designer*) has been taking your everyday normal clothes and turning them into theatrical pieces of art for 15 years. Sewing since she was 5 and creating costumes since she was 12 years old, she was hypnotized by the creative process of creating costumes. She got her professional start with Oracle Productions, a theatre company in Nashville, TN. After working with Oracle she moved to D.C. where she did not work in the theatre scene for 7 years. It wasn't until Lola Rose, director and crazy creative genius behind the 2016 Fringe show, *A Midsummer's Burlesque Dream*, did she get hurled back into the theatre life. She was honored to get a call from director of *Tiresias's Tits*, Sean Butler, asking her to create the costumes for Eclectic Mayhem Productions for Fringe 2017. She has been finding deals and creating costumes ever since.



Christine Smith (*Props Coordinator*) Christine is thrilled to be at Fringe as more than an enthusiastic spectator this year. She made her debut with the Rude Mechanicals in 2011's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Peaseblossom). Although she is working behind the scenes for *Tiresias' Tits*, you can see her onstage with the Rudes in *Arden Now* (Phebe), which has performances here at Fringe as well as at Greenbelt Arts Center in late Aug-early Sept. Many thanks to Eric and Veronica for their steadfast love and support. Special thanks to Sean and Rebecca for their enduring love and friendship, and for encouraging her to be the theatre person they always knew her to be.

Rebecca Rose Vassy (*Producer/Playwright/Graphic Design & Marketing*) is Diva Darling's less flamboyant but equally outspoken alter ego, and co-founder (with partner Sean Butler) of Eclectic Mayhem Productions. *Tiresias* has been her dream three years in the making. A marketing director, graphic designer, and writer by trade, she does marketing and sex education for local adult boutique Lotus Blooms. Her extensive experience as a theatrical/event producer spans Fringe, indie theater, video, Smut Slam DC, and 200-person feasts and rituals. Her writing credits run the gamut from an Equity showcase production of a new adaptation of *Dracula*, to the National Film Challenge, to feature magazine writing, to lead authorship on a feature article for the Department of Education. Rebecca is grateful beyond words to her Dream Team of cast and crew for bringing her vision for *Tiresias' Tits* to life and for being such a joy to work with, and to Sean for over 20 years of creative mayhem, unwavering love, and the #seanandrebeccashow.

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Playwright's Notes

Tiresias' Tits was born the night I went to see the dress rehearsal of the Wolf Trap Opera Company's production of Poulenc's comic opera *Les Mamelles de Tirésias*, based on Guillaume Apollinaire's 1917 play of the same name (fun fact: the play for which the term "surrealism" was coined). It was the single weirdest thing I had ever seen on an opera stage. I was in love.

I knew immediately that I wanted somehow to use the story as a framework for a genderqueer burlesque show—the idea of Therese/Tiresias' breasts being helium balloons during her transformation struck me as the ultimate reveal in a strip/reverse strip act. At first I thought of it as a structured theme for a more traditional lineup of burlesque and vaudeville acts; then I began to imagine telling the story through a combination of scripted scenes and variety acts. When I performed last year in Burlesque Classique's *A Midsummer's Burlesque Dream*, which took a very similar approach to re-telling *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and saw how well it worked, my basic concept was cemented.

The decision to write my own adaptation of the play and to modernize it served a few purposes. First, I wanted to remain true to the spirit of Apollinaire's work while being free to make some story changes—in particular, to follow more of Tiresias' exploits. Therese/Tiresias has, ironically, very little stage time in the original. Second, *Les Mamelles* was presented very much as a piece of its time, making meta-references to friends of Apollinaire's and headlines of the day, and shaped by his experiences in WWI and the state of postwar France. Third, and most importantly, so many of the ideas in the original—the gender fluidity, the feminist protests, the social commentary, the choice to place Parisians in "exotic" Zanzibar—struck me as a rich source for both satire and cultural critique in a contemporary setting where I could explore things like gentrification, gender relations, queerness, intersectionality and racial tensions in feminism, and evolving ideas about identity and family. (Therese's announcement of her three wives in the original just begged for a shoutout to polyamory!)

I kept many of the original story elements that had delighted me so much with their casual oddness—Mari's peculiar obsession with bacon, Presto and Lacouf's "friendship" that always ends in mutual murder, the gendarme's Pepe LePew-like fascination with Mari, the unexplained production of 40,049 babies, and of course the balloon boobs—while updating or altering several of them. Most notably, Apollinaire dressed an actor as a news kiosk and placed them onstage throughout the show; I re-imagined the character as Social Media, a trickster-like persona who is so omnipresent that they can go completely unnoticed or remarked upon as needed.

My completely original addition to the story is the character of Apolla. Knowing that I would be playing Therese/Tiresias in my burlesque persona Diva Darling, and that I had framed Presto and Lacouf's arguments about whether they're in Paris or Zanzibar as a gerrymandering/gentrification battle between the fictional neighborhoods of run-down Little Zanzibar and hyper-developed Paris Heights, I realized that I needed to present Therese as a *white* feminist and not to shy away from putting her under a critical lens. Tiresias-as-white-savior needed a foil and reality check, a woman of color who would become a reluctant mentor and then a speaker of truth to power.

Poulenc, in writing his opera version of *Les Mamelles*, included some melancholy musical themes. His reason for it stuck with me: he said he felt it did justice to the sadness behind Apollinaire's smile. Indeed, Apollinaire wrote his play years prior to the Great War but revised it afterward based on the changes he experienced as a result of fighting in it and witnessing its effects. He satirizes the French propaganda about the importance of making babies even while ultimately urging the audience to go out, make love, and repopulate war-devastated France.

Likewise, my mostly-lighthearted concept changed in the wake of our election nightmare. I wanted to simultaneously celebrate—without irony—the “beautiful trouble” of protest culture, the passion and energy of it, the spirit of #resistance, and to critique the very real problems of lack of focus, racism, and armchair activism. It’s almost pointless to satirize things like government corruption and misogyny when they have become such parodies of themselves, and I thought it would be much more interesting to comment on the “weekend social justice warrior” aspects of “On Saturday, we march; on Sunday, we brunch” mentality. (I point at the world with one finger and at myself with three—I criticize my own stop-and-go action or lack thereof, my own privilege, as much as anyone else’s.)

Apollinaire, who was first and foremost a poet, added his Director’s Prologue after the war as well, using it to explain his concepts of surrealism and the power of imagination in envisioning and creating a more beautiful new world. I was moved to tears the first time I read it, with the sheer beauty of his plea to the audience to light the inner stars and be the flame of a new world. I’ve always loved the idea of entertainment that can also be a powerful agent for change, of the idea that imagination and play are necessary to meaningful creation. So I kept the prologue, changing its context from war to large-scale protests like Occupy and NoDAPL, and relished the opportunity to return to my own roots as a poet in my young adulthood as I wrote my own version of the story of the stars.

I wanted to add a final note about the queerness of this piece. As a queer artist myself, I thought there was something beautiful and delightful about the way that gender and sexuality were presented so fluidly and even whimsically in the original play. Who hasn’t wished that we could magically—or through simple force of will—change our bodies, try on a new identity, even take on a whole new life? As a producer, I loved the opportunity it presented to showcase the talents of many queer, nonbinary, and LGBTQ artists as well as to have a cast that is almost entirely women-identified to some degree or other. As a writer, I wanted to update the antiquated implication that gender-swapping is weird or outré and instead present it as part of a larger journey of self-discovery and exploration, something that simply happens without being really remarked upon or questioned. Throughout the play, I have tried to be careful not to let Mari or Therese/Tiresias be labeled in any fixed way, or to define their genders strictly by markers like clothing or facial hair. Ultimately, I don’t answer the question of their gender identities, and in my eyes they haven’t necessarily answered it for themselves either. To me, the important thing was that they’d found the permission to ask the questions in the first place.

I’ve lived with this play in my head for almost three years now, and it has been my great joy and privilege and delight to finally see it come to life in the hands of this insanely talented, charming, and lovable cast and crew, under the skillful artistic guidance of my beloved life partner, director Sean Butler. I hope that you have as much fun watching this story unfold as we’ve had bringing it to the stage. And may you, too, light the inner stars as you dare to imagine and create a more beautiful, delightful new world.

Rebecca Rose Vassy, July 2017

Once more for the folks in the back-- please click [here](#) to vote for us for Best Comedy and Best Overall in the Capital Fringe Audience Awards 2017 sponsored by TheaterMania! Thank you! We love you!

THE NASTY WOMEN of the Ecstatic Rainbow Mystical Retreat



**CAPITAL
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July 11-23 Atlas Performing Arts
Cntr - Sprenger



The Changeling Child

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(BASED ON SHAKESPEARE'S AS YOU LIKE IT)



7/12 - 7/22

Eastman Studio Theatre
Gallaudet University
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This production is presented as a part of the 2017 Capital Fringe Festival, a program of the Washington, DC non-profit Capital Fringe.

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7/11 at 7:15; 7/12 at 5; 7/15 at 1;
7/19 at 7; 7/21 at 7:15; 7/23 at 11
a.m.

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