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MATINICUS

A LIGHTHOUSE PLAY

BY JENNY CONNELL DAVIS



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APRIL

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Learn something new every day! Guest Teachers join DA staff each day for a fun, dramatic and theatrical week. From puppetry to clowning, there's something for everyone this April. Students enrolling in the full week will attend class every day from 10am-3pm. Class will be held at 51A Main Street in Bangor, ME.

Daily Topics!

Monday 4/21:

Puppetry with Ryan Jackson

Tuesday 4/22:

Makeup Design with Ben Layman & Costume Design with Caitlyn Collins

Wednesday 4/23:

Clowning with Andrew Silver

Thursday 4/24:

Musical Theater with Anna Kemble

Friday 4/25:

Improv with Jen Shepard/Larrance Fingerhut & Movement with Kacie Gerow

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Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge Penobscot Theatre Company's presence on the unceded ancestral lands of the Penobscot people. The land from which we benefit continues to be a place of foremost importance to the Penobscot Nation and all descendants of the Wabanaki Confederacy. We recognize that the Wabanaki people continue to seek resolution on issues concerning water, territorial rights, and threats to sacred sites.

The Penobscots have inhabited Maine and the surrounding areas for over 11,000 years. Their ancestral territory included many rivers that flow into the Gulf of Maine, including all the watersheds from the Machias River in the east to Cape Ann in Massachusetts. The Penobscot Nation is one of the oldest, continuously operating governments in the world.

The Penobscot Nation is part of the Wabanaki Confederacy, which also includes the Passamaquoddy, Micmac and Maliseet.

PTC resolves to be an anti-racist institution. We are proud to be members of the Wabanaki Alliance Coalition and are committed to living our values by promoting the history and cultures of the Wabanaki Peoples and sustaining an ongoing relationship which supports the art, resources, and values of indigenous peoples and tribes.



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Jun 12 - Jul 13

Audience Services

Box Office Hours

→ Tuesday – Friday: 12:00pm – 5:00pm

→ The Box Office is open three hours before show time on performance Saturdays & Sundays and through intermission at all performances.

Restrooms

→ 2 all-gender welcoming restrooms are located downstairs from the lobby level.

→ Single-stall restrooms can be found in the 1st floor lobby and in The Stage Door.

If you have any suggestions for how to improve your experience: HouseManager@penobscottheatre.org

Accessibility

→Hearing Loop system available for patrons with T-Coil hearing aids, earbuds, or PTC headset.

→ See Box Office for more info or www.PenobscotTheatre.org/loop

→Large print & digital playbills available.

→Accessible seating is available.

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Assistant Technical Director **James Kuzio**
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Costume Shop Assistant **Caitlyn Collins**
Stage Mgmt. Associate **Jazlyne Williams**
House Sound Engineer **Neil E Graham**

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Stage Management Associate **Jenna Gripshover**
Costume Design **Kevin Jacob Koski**
Sound Design **Neil E Graham**
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Props Supervisor **Thomas Demers**
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A Letter from Jonathan Berry, Artistic Director

Welcome to Matinicus,

Matinicus Rock stands nearly 25 miles off of the Maine Coast in the middle of the Penobscot Bay. The lighthouse was originally built in 1827 to protect ship traffic coming up and down the coast and heading towards the docks of Portland. Even for Maine standards, the windswept and remote island proved a study in isolation for anyone tasked with keeping the light.

It is not a coincidence, then, that this play emerged out of our recent COVID 19 pandemic. Our playwright, Jenny Connell Davis, had been sent a copy of the children's book KEEP THE LIGHTS BURNING ABBIE by her mother. Stuck inside her Texas home with her own family, Jenny stared at the cover art – the young woman staring defiantly out at a churning ocean – and Jenny, having grown up along the Maine coast, couldn't help but see her young self in the image.

And in the midst of a lockdown with her family, so far away from her parents and the place she grew up, the playwright began to take the theatrical maker's path and she imagined; imagined a young girl, uprooted from her life and her friends and placed on the most remote of rocks, surrounded by ocean, with only her family and the seabirds for company. How must it have felt to be tasked with the care of her family and a sick mother while her father sailed to the mainland in search of needed supplies? When she saw the clouds darken and the water rise, what was her fear? How, in that moment, did she summon the necessary courage to continue?

Jenny never actually read the book – she did her own research and started writing. In the midst of her own frightening experience, she put herself in Abbie's shoes and imagined this young girl's courage and her heroic actions. Through imagining, she found some courage of her own to manage her own, terrifying storm. And that is, ultimately, the power of live theater. We sit in the dark till the light of a play sparks, and we imagine something together that has the power to transform hearts and minds.

While there's no way to know for certain, I would bet that if you could ask Abigail about her heroism, she would likely demure and say that she was "just doing what anyone would do under those circumstances." She would probably be uncomfortable with the word "hero" and focus more on how everyone contributed and banded together to survive. An ordinary person in an extraordinary moment, simply doing their part.

But, for me, that IS the definition of heroism and it happens every day. It might not always have the dramatic accompaniment of a ferocious storm, but everyday people, in every community, see a need and step into it. Not for the glory or the honor that may (or may not) accompany the act, but simply because it is something that needs to be done.

Thank you for sharing this story with us -



Jonathan Berry
Artistic Director | Penobscot Theatre Company

Our Mission

Penobscot Theatre Company creates extraordinary theatrical experiences that engage and inspire our community, fostering a better quality of life in the heart of Maine.

Our Work

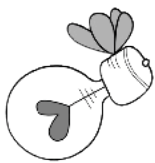
PTC's primary work involves a full season of professional, subscription series, & add-on productions, handcrafted stagings of plays and musicals, new and classic. In addition, our diverse educational programming serves thousands of Maine youths through school-based workshops, student matinees, and summer and after-school programs.

Our History

The company has its roots in the Acadia Repertory Theatre, founded in Bangor in 1973 by George Vafiadis and Lou Collier. Acadia Rep presented 97 productions in Bangor before Penobscot Theatre Company was incorporated in 1983. Acadia Rep still operates on Mount Desert Island as a separate entity, while Penobscot Theatre Company is the nation's Northeastern-most year-round professional regional theatre in Northern Maine. Over its long history, the company has earned a national reputation for quality and innovation as its offerings have expanded and audiences have grown.

Our Partners

Even with solid attendance, the company's income from subscriptions, ticket sales, and program registration comprises only 60% of our total operating budget. As a non-profit charity, we rely on support from private foundations, local businesses and individuals like you, who recognize the importance of theatre to a vibrant culture and robust economy. The generosity of our community-based partners makes our work possible, and we operate always with a strong spirit of collaboration. Help solidify the theatre's place in the heart of Maine, and please consider a gift today.



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The Penobscot Theatre Company production of

MATINICUS

A LIGHTHOUSE PLAY

by Jenny Connell Davis

March 20 - April 6, 2025

Scenic Design
Gwen Elise Higgins

Costume Design
Kevin Jacob Koski

Lighting Design
JP Sedlock

Props Design
Thomas Demers

Sound Design
Neil E Graham

Production Stage Management
Jazlynne Williams*

Directed by
Julie Arnold Lisnet

Starring **Katie Peabody*** as Abigail Burgess

Understudies

Understudies never substitute for listed performers unless addressed.

For Abigail: Natalie Lisnet

Crew

Assistant Stage Manager.....Jenna Gripshover
Scenic Charge.....Gwen Elise Higgins
Sound Engineer.....Neil E. Graham
Wardrobe Supervisor..... Caitlyn Collins
Head Electrician.....Tony Gerow

Setting

Rockland, Maine & Matinicus Rock, Maine - 1850s



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Best,
- The Savvy Traveler

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Katie Peabody* (*Abigail*) is delighted to make her PTC debut. Born & raised in Seattle, she is thrilled to perform in her father's home state, Maine. Select theater credits: LITTLE WOMEN (Beth/Seattle Rep Theater, Milwauke Rep Theater), THE HUMANS (Brigid/Coachella Valley Rep), EVERYONE AGREES (Ceaseless Fun), LEAR'S SHADOW (Ensemble Shakespeare Theater). Katie

performs with E3W Productions, is a member of Harvest Theater Company, and graduated from the University of Southern California (USC) School of Dramatic Arts (McKinlay Award for Outstanding Performance, Doolittle Award for Best Cumulative Artistic Work). Thank you to her family, partner, and in loving memory of Pat Sharp. @ktpbdy, www.katiepeabody.net (She/They)

Natalie Lisnet (*Understudy*) is excited to be involved with her first PTC show! While this is her first time on the PTC stage, she's no stranger to theater. Previous credits: HENRY V (King Henry V), THE BOOK OF WILL (Alice Heminges, Susannah Shakespeare), VANYA AND SONIA AND MASHA AND SPIKE (Nina), MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING (Borachio), ROMEO AND JULIET (Mercutio). She's also acted in theatre productions at the University of Maine School of Performing Arts, including A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM (Titania) and THE MINEOLA TWINS (Myrna/Ensemble), and has also played bassoon in various music ensembles. She'd

like to thank all her family & friends for the support, and she hopes you enjoy the show! (She/Her)

Julie Arnold Lisnet (*Director*) is an actor, director, producer, educator and teacher at UMaine where she received a BA in Theater and MA in Acting. Julie's acted for PTC, Maine Theatre, Theatre of the Enchanted Forest, The Assembled Players, Marsh Island Stage, Shakespeare on the River, Maine Shakespeare Festival, Northern Lights Theatre and True North Theatre. She is a founding member/actor/director/producer for Ten Bucks Theatre, and has directed for The Grand, UMaine. For Penobscot Theatre her directing credits include BECOMING DR. RUTH and CRIMES OF THE HEART. Julie is honored to have directed MATINICUS. (She/Her)

Jazlynn Williams* (*Production Stage Manager*) welcomes you to Matinicus Rock and is excited you have joined us for this heroic tale! PTC CREDITS: DIAL M FOR MURDER (ASM), A CHRISTMAS CAROL (PSM) and BIRTHDAY CANDLES (PSM). Prior to arriving in Maine, she traveled the US & Canada working regionally & on tour. REGIONAL: The Gateway Playhouse (NY), Arvada Center (CO), The Premiere Playhouse (SD), Interlochen Center for the Arts (MI) TOURS: A BRIDGERTON EXPERIENCE (SM), THE STRANGER THINGS EXPERIENCE (ASM). Jazlynn gives love & gratitude to her mom & dad who always support her & come to see the amazing work we do at PTC! www.jazlynnwilliams.com @jazlynn_williams (She/Her)



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Jenna Gripshover (*Assistant Stage Manager*) A recent graduate from Kentucky's Centre College, she is excited to help bring the joy of theatre to the Bangor community! Previous credits include THE WOLVES, GREEK TRAGEDY, MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS, and JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH (Centre College). She would like to thank her family, especially her niece Harper and nephew Hunter. (She/They)

Gwen Elise Higgins (*Scenic Design*) is a multi-hyphenate artist, craftsperson, plant lady from Midcoast Maine. B.A in Theatre from University of New Hampshire. Past design projects include RICHARD III (scenic), FROG AND TOAD (scenic), JAMES & THE GIANT PEACH (scenic/puppets), MY STORY IS GLUSKABE (puppets), SHOUT! (scenic), DRIVING MISS DAISY (scenic), and 50+ productions painted. www.gehiggins.com (She/Her)

Kevin Jacob Koski (*Costume Design*) is a Maine native & awarded graduate of UMaine's Theatre program. He focused on costume design & construction while also designing multiple productions. With a nearly 10-year tenure at PTC, he has designed many mainstage & DA productions including: WIT, ONE BLUE TARP, ALICE IN WONDERLAND, CALENDAR GIRLS, ROCK OF AGES, THE FULL MONTY, MISERY, UGLY LIES THE BONE, & GASLIGHT. (He/Him)

JP Sedlock (*Lighting Design*) is excited to be designing lights for the first time at PTC. He can usually be found at The University of Maine in Orono working as the Scene Shop and Lighting Supervisor for the Division of Theatre and Dance. He just wrapped up WYOMING (Lighting

Designer) in which Jonathan Berry was the director and is currently working on the SPRING DANCE SHOWCASE (Lighting Designer) at the University of Maine. But, his true passion is roaming around Maine with his wife MJ and son Sullivan. (He/Him)

Neil E Graham (*Sound Design*) brings a lifetime of performing arts experience to PTC. Neil is a musician, actor, production engineer, singer, voice-over artist, and host of the nationally syndicated radio show "The Dark Side of the Tune". PTC Credits: DUCK HUNTER SHOOTS ANGEL, OLIVER!, GHOST POSTCARDS FROM MAINE, MAYTAG VIRGIN, HOCKEY MOM, 9 TO 5, THE MUSICAL, BECOMING DR. RUTH, CLARKSTON, MARY POPPINS, & DIRTY DEEDS DOWNEAST. Like any great soundscape, you'll miss it if it's gone. (He/Him)

Thomas Demers (*Prop Design*) is a Bangor resident and has been a part of PTC since his mainstage debut in Matilda The Musical in 2019. Since then he's played Percy Jackson (DA'S THE LIGHTNING THIEF), worked with DA as a props designer and assistant stage manager, and is now PTC's resident prop designer! Responsible for designing all props for not only Mainstage, but also DA shows! Favorite credits: THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL, BIRTHDAY CANDLES, and A CHRISTMAS CAROL. (He/They)

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Lauren Yee, celebrated for her sharp wit and keen observations, brings audiences a comedic and satirical gem with *Mother Russia*. Set in 1992 St. Petersburg, the play is a vibrant and absurd exploration of post-Soviet life, complete with unexpected twists, biting humor, and poignant commentary on societal change.

What's the Story?

In the chaotic aftermath of the Soviet Union's dissolution, opportunity and absurdity abound. *Mother Russia* follows Evgeny and Dmitri, two hilariously inept government surveillance workers, as they attempt to navigate a world of glasnost, perestroika, and fast-food chains like McDonald's. Tasked with spying on Katya, a disgraced pop star with international allure, the duo stumbles into a whirlwind of mistaken identities, a tangled love triangle, and laughably poor espionage tactics. Yee's storytelling captures the bizarre juxtaposition of newfound freedoms and lingering Soviet-era absurdities.

What Audiences Can Expect

Audiences should prepare for a fast-paced, satirical ride through a richly textured world. The 1992 setting provides a colorful backdrop of crumbling Soviet relics and emerging capitalist chaos, with Yee's writing bringing this era to life in vivid detail. Expect a cast of outrageous characters—from bumbling spies to a captivating former pop star—and a whirlwind of clever banter and physical comedy.

Despite the humor, *Mother Russia* doesn't shy away from exploring deeper themes like identity, resilience, and the universal search for purpose in uncertain times. The play's balance of satire and sincerity ensures that audiences will leave both entertained and moved.

Fans of smart comedy and vivid period pieces won't want to miss this delightfully chaotic journey through post-Soviet St. Petersburg. With its sharp writing, dynamic characters, and laugh-out-loud moments, *Mother Russia* is a ticket to one of the most engaging nights at the theater you'll experience this year.

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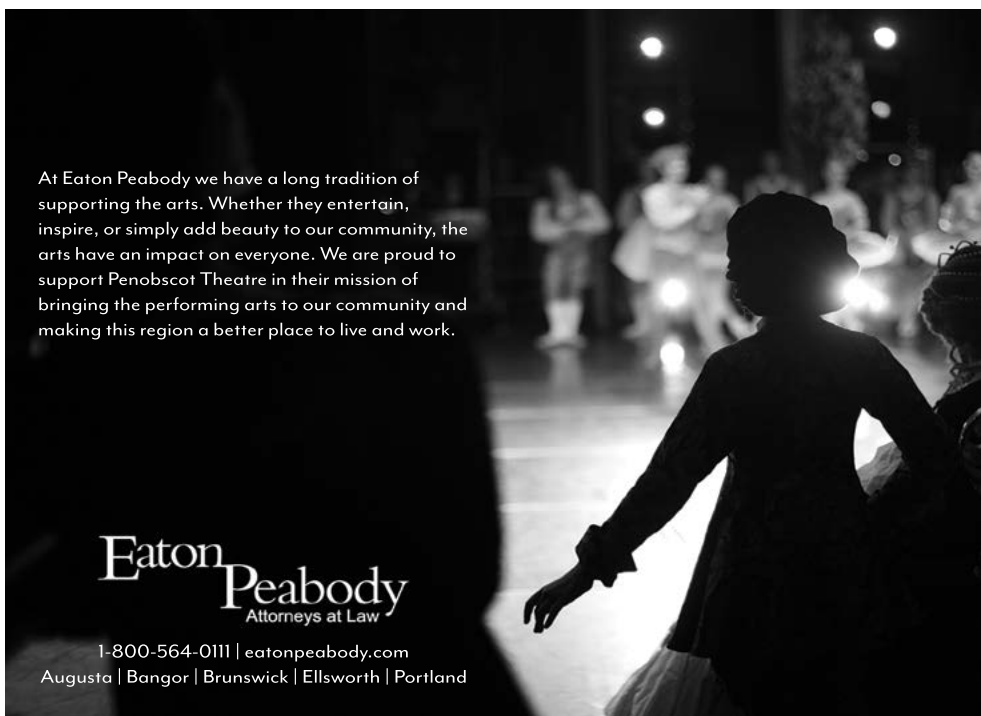
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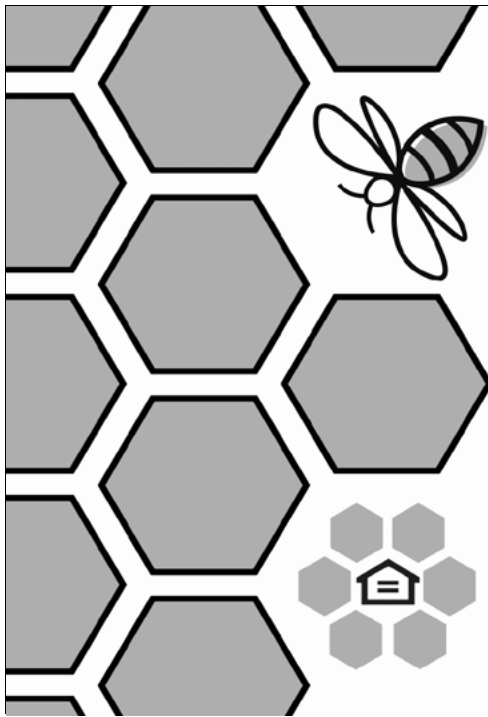
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Jenny Connell Davis (*Playwright*) is the Playwright in Residence and Literary Manager at Palm Beach Dramaworks, where she is responsible for their annual Perlberg Festival of New Plays. Recent plays include Scientific Method (Jeff Nominee for Best New Play) The Messenger (NPNP Rolling World Premiere), Matinicus: A Lighthouse Play (Outstanding New Play, Orange County Theater Guild), and Anton Chekhov Is A Tasty Snack. Her stage plays have been developed or produced with the Neill, The Playwrights' Center, ACT (Seattle), the Araca Group, The Gift Theatre, Stage Left and ATC (Chicago), Ars Nova, Asolo Rep, NAATCO, Theater Mitu, NYSF, Shrewd Productions, Palm Beach Dramaworks, Impact Theatre, Chance Theatre, SPACE at Ryder Farm, among others. She has been a finalist or semi-finalist for Seven Devils, BAPF, the Nicholl and the Heideman Awards, a 3-time honorable mention on the Kilroys list and has been twice-nominated for both the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize and the Lark/PONY fellowship. In addition to Palm Beach Dramaworks, she has been commissioned by Chance Theater, Penfold Theater, and Ars Nova. Jenny served as the in-house writer at Emmy-award-winning Baobab Studios (2022-2024), developing the stories that they iterate across tv, film, books, graphic novels, Roblox and NFT games, and VR. Her short films have screened at festivals worldwide, including SxSW and Toronto. She adapted Jennifer Weiner's The Littlest Bigfoot for Fox, and has developed projects for Amazon, Anonymous Content, Disney, and SONY. She is an Affiliate Artist with the Playwrights' Center, former member of the Ars Nova Play Group, and a recipient of grants from Ars Nova, ScriptWorks, The Playwrights' Center, and the Network of Ensemble Theatres. Jenny was a Writer in Residence at

Baltimore's Center Stage Theater, and a member of the Hyde Park Theater Playwrights Group. Jenny trained as an actor at Court and Steppenwolf theaters in Chicago, and in playwriting at UT Austin. Management: Good Fear.

Jonathan Berry (*Artistic Director*) is the Artistic Director of PTC, where his directing credits include MR. BURNS..., DIRTY DEEDS DOWNEAST, and IRONBOUND. Previously from Chicago, he was an artistic producer at Steppenwolf, where his directing credits include: THE CHILDREN, YOU GOT OLDER, CONSTELLATIONS, & THE CRUCIBLE. Other work includes: Steep Theatre (Company Member): PARIS, RED REX, THE KNOWLEDGE, FESTEN, MOMENT, and THE RESISTIBLE RISE OF ARTURO U. Griffin (Company Member): THE HARVEST, BALM IN GILEAD, GOLDEN BOY, SPRING AWAKENING, PUNK ROCK, COMPANY, & PICNIC. Roundabout Theater: SUICIDE, INCORPORATED. Gift Theatre: the world premieres of DIRTY and SUICIDE, INCORPORATED. Goodman Theatre: THE SOLID SAND BELOW & THE WORLD OF EXTREME HAPPINESS for New Stages. Assistant Director Broadway productions of OF MICE AND MEN & THIS IS OUR YOUTH. He taught classes at UIC, Columbia College, Northwestern & was instrumental in leading the ensemble training program, The School at Steppenwolf. (He/Him)

Jen Shepard (*Executive Director*) has a deep love for PTC, having been cast in IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE: A RADIO PLAY in 2015, which marked the start of her steady involvement with the company. Her favorite credits: BECOMING DR. RUTH, BEAUTY AND THE BEAST, and A KICK IN YOUR DICKENS. (She/Her)



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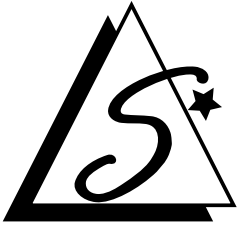
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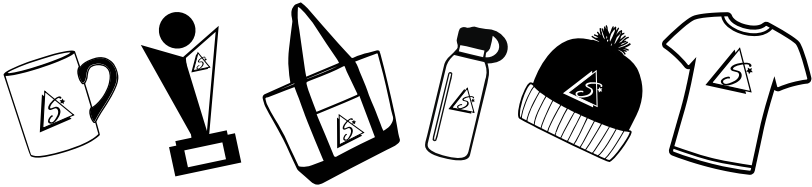
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