



AU RUDE MECHANICALS PRESENTS

# HAMLET

DIRECTED BY EMMA BURTON & ALEC MCKEE  
ARTISTIC DIRECTION BY SIENA MAXWELL

KATZEN 112  
DECEMBER 2 AT 7:30 PM  
DECEMBER 3 AT 2PM || DECEMBER 3 AT 7:30 PM

# CAST

## PROTAGONISTS:

HAMLET: Andrew Cianciolo

HORATIO: Rin Carroll

CLAUDIUS/GHOST: Kaveh Moasser

GERTRUDE: Abigail Chase

POLONIUS: Jae K. Gee

LAERTES: Finn Fairfield

OPHELIA: Maddy Cooper

REYNALDO: Lauren Seppala

## PLAYERS:

MARCELLUS/PRIEST: Elliot Pinch

BERNARDO/GRAVEDIGGER: Morgan Kullen

ROSENCRANTZ: Sylvia Hensley

GUILDENSTERN: Sara Wiser

ENSEMBLE: Gabby Landis, Grace Black, India Siecke

## UNDERSTUDIES:

HAMLET: Morgan Kullen

HORATIO: Elliot Pinch

GERTRUDE: Sylvia Hensley

OPHELIA: Sara Wiser

POLONIUS/REYNALDO: Gabby Landis

MARCELLUS/BERNARDO/ROSENCRANTZ: India Siecke

CLAUDIUS/GHOST/LAERTES/GUILDENSTERN: Grace

Black\*

\*GRACE BLACK will play GUILDENSTERN at all performances

# CREW

PRODUCER: Mikaila Mack

DIRECTORS: Emma Burton & Alec McKee

DRAMATURG: Abigail Chase

STAGE MANAGER: Nathan DiPinto

ASSISTANT SM: Lauren Gersten & Aaron Miller

FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER: Jae K. Gee

INTIMACY COORDINATOR: Siena Maxwell

SET DESIGNER: Siena Maxwell

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR: Zoe Tompkins

COSTUME & MAKEUP DESIGNER: Ryleigh Marcus

LIGHTING DESIGNER: Stella Guzik

SOUND DESIGNER: Maggie Troast

PROPS DESIGNER: Elinor Aspegren

Public Relations Director Olivia Kozlevcar (Koz)

## CREW:

MASTER CARPENTER: Meredith Meyer

SET TECHNICIAN: Hope Jorgenson

COSTUME & MAKEUP TECHNICIAN: Noah Puzzo

SOUND TECHNICIAN: Alma Thompson

PROPS TECHNICIAN: Eva Helfter

# EBOARD

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Mikaila Mack

ARTSITIC DIRECTOR: Siena Maxwell

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR: Zoe Tompkins

MANAGING DIRECTOR: Abigail Chase

FINANCIAL DIRECTOR: Emma Burton

PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR: Olivia Kozlevcar (Koz)

OUTREACH DIRECTOR: Ally Moore



HAMLET will run around 2.5 hours with one intermission.

# DIRECTOR STATEMENT

Hamlet is a goliath play. The language is vicious, the characters are rich with meaning and purpose, the length is monumental even when pared down, and the pressure to put on a worthy production of the Bard's most famous work is immense. Where better to realize a new take on The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark than 1930s mafia New York? We wanted to emphasize the angst of this show and the meaty moments of violence and anger that plague the characters and the very walls they live between. This show is an endless cycle of indecision and questioning. When violence is a self-perpetuating masculine machine, how does one break out without losing the respect of the other cogs? What can you do when that violence becomes a part of you? Do you risk losing yourself? How can you engage with those you are told to love when you cannot love them? What do you do when you love those you are told you cannot love? They say it is lonely at the top, but are you ever truly alone?

These questions, and their answers, are the central theme of Hamlet and the mafia setting we find ourselves in. The questions are what led me to working on Hamlet. I wanted to delve into a play where there are more questions than there are answers and the answers are unsatisfying at best. I knew that we could contextualize the script into a modern-esque context that could highlight the themes of masculinity/femininity, violence, suicide contagion, and near-constant surveillance in the play that many find themselves facing as they navigate the world today.

The work that the cast, production team, creative team, the Executive Board, and my co-director Alec have done is certainly worthy of Shakespeare himself. We have taken a story that has been told time and time again and have made it our own. I have never been more proud of a group of people and I am certain that we will give you a show to remember.

*Emma Burton*

# DIRECTOR STATEMENT

The modern rise of toxic masculinity among younger men is terrifying to me. The view of women as inferior and good for nothing more than sex is an outdated ideal that while never truly killed, was thought to have at least been quieted. Through social media and the consumption of influencers content, this idea has risen again. Therefore, I think it is important to put on a show that shows how truly toxic this form of masculinity is and the decimation it will ultimately leave in its wake. By no means do I believe this show can fix someone, but if we can plant thoughts in peoples heads of the signs of someone going down a toxic or "incel" route, the goal is to help stop violence like we see in the show, and like we see today.

The time period we chose for this help to reflect this theme about masculinity we wanted to get across. Not only did this time period silence the voices of women (unless it benefited men to listen of course) but the mafia especially had problems dealing with sexism. Women were never let into the fold, not for the sole purpose of protection as was often told, but because they were believed to not be smart enough, or strong enough, or emotionally tough enough to deal with the work that is done. The male characters in our production of Hamlet exemplify these ideas of masculinity and their presence in the mafia, and the female characters show how these actions and ideas of the men have consequences, bloody horrible consequences. Thank you to Emma (my co-director), the cast, crew, and everybody else who did incredible work to make sure this show was happened.

*Alec McKee*

# DRAMATURG STATEMENT

The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark might be the most famous tragedy in the English language. Adapted over and over again, this play perseveres as a resonant, rich text. In our version, we have transformed the traditional setting of our royal Danish estate into the “Elsinore,” a prohibition era bar in New York City, rife with moral decay and mafia activity. Setting this play in the early 1930s, drawing from the tumult of the Castellammarese War, we have adapted this show into a cautionary tale on the abuse that can lie beneath patriarchal and shame-based cultures.

This version of Hamlet sets out to lean into the patriarchal structure of mafia culture and the prevalent themes of violence against women in this show. Hamlet, though tortured himself, uses every woman he interacts with as an outlet for both dissatisfaction and sexual frustration, something we chose to elucidate through the gender-bending of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (we reimagine them here as kind of honeypot agents working for King Claudius), the violent misogyny directed at our female characters, and the suicide contagion effect he has on Ophelia and Gertrude. Our work heavily leans into the suicide contagion aspect – Hamlet’s “To be or not to be” speech, perhaps one of the most iconic pieces of text in the English language, is Hamlet contemplating how meaningless and brutal life is and whether or not it would spare him suffering to kill himself. This soliloquy is in part witnessed by Ophelia, who hides behind an arras with her father and the king and queen. Do these words stir something in her? Is her madness perhaps prompted by her own interpretation of Hamlet’s words, especially when coupled with her inescapable ties to subjugation due to her gender? When Queen Gertrude, then, sees Ophelia driven mad by the maelstrom of misogyny and violence, how does she justify going on living? For the women in this world, surviving is a nasty and thankless job.

The men in this show are also hurt and transformed by violence; in a way, it is almost gender affirming. Hamlet, especially, subscribes to what we might call incel ideology in the present day. He is hopeless, dejected, and “blackpilled” to the point where the solace he sees is in suicide and tormenting the women who he believes are at fault for his suffering. They are simply scapegoats for a much deeper mental decay, one that is perceived as inescapable, and one has motivated misogyny terrorists and antifeminist shooters in real life. The real boogeyman in Hamlet is less the corruption of this rotten family of New York, and more the ideology that Hamlet uses to justify relentless violence against women. Whether 1599, 1931, 1989, or present day, this same ideology has persisted – it is more than the ghosts in this play that haunt our protagonist, but the society that condones strict and baseless repression with no accountability.

*Abigail Chase*



# BIOGRAPHIES

## SIENA MAXWELL

Artistic Director / Intimacy Coordinator / Set Designer

Siena is very excited to be working on her eleventh production with the Rudes! She's very proud of everyone involved, even if she was fired from her starring role as Yorick only last week unexpectedly.

## GRACE ANGELINE BLACK

Player / Claudius US / Laertes US / Guildenstern US

Grace Black is pursuing her masters in Creative Writing. This is her second show with the Rude Mechanicals. In her free time, she enjoys singing, playing the piano, and roller skating. She would like to thank Alec and Emma for giving her the opportunity to be in this show and for being such wonderful directors.

## ALMA THOMPSON

Sound Technician

Alma is a Junior philosophy major and computer science minor, with not much theater experience post-middle school.

## MORGAN KULLEN

Bernardo / Gravedigger / Player / Hamlet US

Morgan is in their first year at AU, and this is their second production with Rude Mechanicals. They're studying theatre performance, and their interests include Dungeons & Dragons, contemporary horror, and, of course, Shakespeare.

## JAE K. GEE

Polonius / Fight Choreographer

Jae Gee is a junior theater arts major with a political science minor. Jae is thrilled to be returning to the Rude Mechanicals in Hamlet, having previously appeared in the Rude Mechanicals production of 'Pride and Prejudice' (Mr. Collins). American University DPA credits include 'Everybody' (Somebody), 'The Winter's Tale' (Antigonus), and 'Let Me Just' (Jack). Jae would like to thank the entire Rude's production team that made this show come to life.



# BIOGRAPHIES

## EMMA BURTON

D i r e c t o r

Emma is excited to present her directorial debut, put together by an incredible creative team, production team, and cast. She hopes you enjoy the show and admire the hard work that everyone has put into it. Special thanks to Brian David Gilbert for creating the hit song Pumpkin Cowboy, the only thing keeping Emma going right now.

## GABBY LANDIS

B a r t e n d e r / P l a y e r

Gabby is a first year student at AU studying Political Science and Education Studies. This is her second show with the Rude Mechanicals, the first being the Fall '22 Variety Show: A Shakespeare'd Silver Screen. Outside of Rudes, Gabby is an AU Ambassador and a First Year Fellow for the School of Public Affairs Undergraduate Council. She hopes you find her bartending skills superb.

## LAUREN GERSTEN

A s s i s t a n t S t a g e M a n a g e r

Lauren is a political science major. This is Lauren's second show with the Rudes, and she's having a fun time!

## FINN FAIRFIELD

L a e r t e s

Finn is a freshman MT major at American University. They are super excited for their first Rude Mechanicals production! Some notable roles of their past include Ilona in She Loves Me and Rhonda in Almost, Maine. They hope you enjoy the show, and they promise they aren't as creepy in real life.



# BIOGRAPHIES

## MEREDITH MEYER

Master Carpenter

This is Meredith's first show with Rude Mechanicals and at AU, but Meredith performed throughout high school. For Meredith, it has been really cool to see this show progress technically, and hopes to do more with Rudes in the future!

## ABIGAIL CHASE

Dramaturg / Queen Gertrude

Abigail Chase (she/her) is so excited to be a part of this production! She is a dramaturg, actor, and playwright and the current managing director of AU Rudes. She is a junior studying terrorism and security. Her previous credits with Rudes include both directing (Variety Show 2022) and acting (Regina, Ghosts).

## NOAH GRACE PUZZO

Costume Technician

Noah (they/them) is so excited to be returning to Rude Mechanicals for their second production! They are a sophomore in SIS from Nashville, Tennessee, and are reprising their role as “snark clothier” that was previously in Eurydice. They have had a blast the past couple months making numerous 1930s Pinterest boards, holding lights, running around Katzen with accessories and iPads, and making many trips to their second home, the Cage. They would like to shoutout Ryleigh for being an amazing mentor and designer for this production, and sends thanks to everyone coming to see this show! Peace!

## ZOE TOMPKINS

Technical Director

"Yay Hamlet!" - Some lady in New York City



# BIOGRAPHIES

## ELLIOT PINCH

Marcellus / Priest / Horatio US

Elliot is sophomore, a political science major, and Elliot's favorite Shakespeare show is Twelfth Night.

## LAUREN SEPPALA

Reynaldo

Lauren is so excited to be playing Rey Rey in this production of Hamlet! You may have seen her previously in the Rude Mechanicals Variety Show, but she's otherwise a freshman. In her free time, you can find Lauren being a lawyer, doing law, or hanging out in Katzen Arts Center. She hopes you enjoy the show!

## INDIA SIECKE

Player, Marcellus / Bernardo / Rosencrantz US

India Siecke is a freshman studying the art of "holy shit what do I major in." Previous roles she's played include the gay one in every Shakespeare and the gay one in Eurydice. She would like to shout out you (yes you!) the audience member for coming to see a college production of Hamlet during your weekend. Though it is kind of sad you have nothing better to do.

## SYLVIA HENSLEY

Rosencrantz, Gertrude US

Sylvia is a senior at AU majoring in International Studies and minoring in French and Spanish. Her two greatest accomplishments in life are having successfully pulled out a Jenga block that was the only one left in its row and having correctly guessed the identity of Gossip Girl within the first episode and she really just wanted an excuse to share. She would like to thank everyone involved in Hamlet for such an amazing experience and distraction from her looming capstone due date! Enjoy the show!



# BIOGRAPHIES

## EVA HELFTER

Props Technician

As a lifelong performer, Eva is super excited to try something new by joining the production team from Hamlet! Eva is a Sophomore majoring in Political Science and minoring in History and Theatre. When not working with or hanging out with the Rudes, Eva enjoys reading, singing in the Katzen practice rooms, mindlessly scrolling through TikTok, eating bagels, and going through Trader Joe's. Eva would like to thank Elinor for being a wonderful mentor and for all of her hard work throughout the process as well as Zoe and the directing team for giving her this opportunity!

## KAVEH MOASSER

King Claudius / Ghost

Now somehow a senior, his fourth year in the Rudes, his credits include Richard III, Pride & Prejudice, Macbeth, Ghosts, and Eurydice

## RIN CARROLL

Horatio

Rin is a freshman computer science major with a passion for the dramatic. She has been doing productions consistently since kindergarten and has loved every second of it. She has recently played Mephistopheles in "Dr. Faustus", Benny Southstreet in "Guys and Dolls", and Wayne Hopkins in "Puffs." She loves this cast and crew and is so thankful to have this opportunity!

## ALEC MCKEE

Director

This is Alec's 4th production with the Rude Mechanicals but his first time directing for them! He hopes you all enjoy the show and the massive amount of work that has gone into to it.



# BIOGRAPHIES

## ELINOR ASPEGREN

Props Designer

Elinor is a master's student in history from the Bay Area, California. This is her third show with the Rudes.

## RYLEIGH MARCUS

Costume Designer

Ryleigh is a senior who loves vintage fashion and thrifting for cool finds. She is so excited to dress this version of Hamlet!

## MIKAILA MACK

Executive Director/Producer

Mikaila is Polish and loves her dog. She's happy to be here but sometimes she is not. When she's not here she is in court or in bed. Have fun at the play.

## ANDREW CIANCIOLO

Hamlet

Andrew is very excited to let his Discord moderator roots shine as incel Hamlet. Sorry to anyone he has bruised during this production, it was never personal, only business.

## MADDY COOPER

Ophelia

Maddy is a freshman theatre performance major here at AU, this is her second show with Rude Mechanicals and her 5th Shakespeare production. Other favorite roles of hers include Eurydice in Eurydice, Titania in A Midsummer Nights Dream, and Juliet in Romeo and Juliet. In her free time she likes to cosplay both a 78 year old woman and a 12 year old horse girl as well as frolicking the fields of that one country Lauren forgot the name of (Siecke, Seppala).



# BIOGRAPHIES

## KOZ

P u b l i c R e l a t i o n s D i r e c t o r

Born again woman of mystery,

## AARON MILLER

A s s i s t a n t S t a g e M a n a g e r

Aaron Miller is a freshman from New York (not the city) and is studying political science. He is thrilled to announce his debut performance of being behind the scenes of Hamlet as one of the assistant stage managers. In his free time which isn't much, Aaron can be seen playing board games and claim to others that seltzer is one of the best beverages. He has had so much fun being an assistant stage manager. He would like to thank Zoe, Emma, and Alec for giving him this opportunity. Enjoy the show!

## MAGGIE TROAST

S o u n d D e s i g n e r

Maggie?

