

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

Good grief dear humans. This play began as a 10-minute short, a response to "reimagine history" in celebration of 100 years of women's suffrage. A call put out in 2019. I spiraled out a tiny news story on a dead son's sperm into a full-length work over the length of COVID and submitted it to Actor's Ensemble with Lauren almost exactly a year ago.

What a formidable, beautiful victory over sickness and fear to sit here and watch these brilliant humans sparkle across our makeshift stage. What a goddamn joy it's been to wrangle this admittedly rather harrowing play into being.

To think I was once consumed with such miserable ennui I used to linger by the grocery checkout clutching my milk in the hungry hopes of devouring 25 more seconds of conversation.

I have a lot of morbid curiosity. Which is to say I'm very invested in where we're headed as a species. And being a 38-year-old woman, that means a lot of humans in my orbit are having children, can't have children, are paying to conceive children, are burying unborn children — tiny beautiful stones rushed away by a strange river of blood.

The questions of life and how we make it, of mothers and birth and skin and glass began to consume me. Still do I suppose.

And everything you'll hear in this play is something that has happened—including the ghosts, just ask my father!—or is poised to.

And what of my heart? It's racing with gratitude. To Lauren, my dear comrade without whom none of this would have been possible, the actors and their spectacular spirits, to Adam, whose love burns bright bright when I'm dark dark dark, to my given family (who came from near and far!) and my chosen one.

Thank you for coming out. I hope you enjoy watching it as much as we've enjoyed making it.

Katie Tandy, Playwright

ACTORS ENSEMBLE



About Actors Ensemble of Berkeley

Actors Ensemble (AE) has been around the block (and just around the corner from you) since 1957, making us the longest-running stage company in Berkeley. Since 1965 we have performed primarily at Live Oak Theatre in North Berkeley. Recently we have also taken the opportunity to bring the magic of theatre to the John Hinkel Park Amphitheatre, BAMPFA, and many other venues. As Berkeley's only true community theatre company, we depend on our volunteers to bring their energy and creative vision to each play we produce. If you would like to volunteer in our theatre, send us an email!

We'd love for you to play a part in our next show!

Check out AEB's Summer 2022 in John Hinkel Park FORTINBRAS

by Lee Blessing + directed by Michael R. Cohen Performances Sat/Sun at 4 p.m. July 2nd - July 17th / Plus Monday, July 4th 41 Somerset Place Berkeley, CA 94710

Check out AEofBerkeley.org or email us at info@AEofBerkeley.org to subscribe to our newsletter and audition and show notices!

DATES & THANK YOUS

BAMPFA

BERKELEY ART MUSEUM PACIFIC FILM ARCHIVE Saturday April 16th — 7pm + Sunday April 17th — 3pm

Mothers All, programmed by Sean Carson, is performed as part of BAMPFA's Full program, an eclectic mix of music, dance, and performance pieces typically performed on the evening of the full moon. More events in the Full series can be found at bampfa.org/program/full.



MONKEYBRAINS WAREHOUSE

Friday April 23rd — 8pm + Saturday April 24th — 8pm

Monkeybrains is a San Francisco based internet service provider (ISP) founded by Rudy Rucker and Alex Menendez in 1998. Monkeybrains operates a hybrid network of fiber optic and high capacity wireless links servicing over 14,000 locations with over 50 new locations coming online every week. Monkeybrains takes a progressive stance on Net Neutrality and we believe the Internet should be secure, unbiased and available to all!

Special Thanks

Jerome Solberg for his patience, grace, and tenacious generosity of spirit in the face of our ever-sprawling production dreams; Sean Carson and the staff of BAMPFA; the inimitable Isaiah Tweed forever and always; Carlos Michaud for his beautiful photography; BD's building prowess and everyone at Monkeybrains; Luke Stenzhorn for designing our spooky as hell poster and program; Joanne Sterricker for rehearsal space and Susan Dunn for set help; Mercedes Cohen for filming the show; and of course the AE Board of Directors.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Around the time I started to help Katie edit *Mothers All*, I was going through the process of freezing my eggs. In this obvious moment of life imitating art, I acutely felt the burden of being a woman in our "modern" times—a burden of biology, society, culture, expectations, and the like. Putting my body through what felt like an unnatural (if not remarkable) science experiment, I caught a tiny glimpse of the future that *Mothers All* portends. And while I'm very grateful I had the means and ability to go through the process, it tugged at that part of me that looks at our future with trepidation and wonders: how much stranger might the science get?

I certainly hope it doesn't get as strange and awful as the world we created in *Mothers All*. Katie and I have often turned to each other in rehearsal, tears in our eyes watching a moving performance by our actors, and whispered to each other: "Why is this play so sad? Who even wrote this horrifyingly sad play?!" Inevitably our inside joke always ends with cackling laughter at the idea of subjecting you all to this tragedy. Because yes, while life is nothing but relentless—especially for the characters in *Mothers All*—finding joy amongst the sorrow is usually the only way through.

And what greater joy might one find than creating art with friends and amazing collaborators? I am overjoyed to have found a cast of wildly talented and passionate actors who have brought their entire selves to these characters—working diligently to represent them truthfully on this stage. And to Katie, who holds the rarest title of dear friend and best creative collaborator, I am so grateful for your partnership, ever and always.

Please remember to laugh through the tears!

Lauren Rosenfield, Director



A PLAY BY KATIE TANDY WITH LAUREN ROSENFIELD

Starring

Misha Carlson Glenn Havlan Sarah Lee Muffy Koster Miyoko Sakatani Max Seijas Billie J. Simmons Rachael Richman Susannah Wood

Directed by Lauren Rosenfield with Katie Tandy

Stage Manager Natasha Morrondoz Music Design Andrew MacIver Producer
Jerome Solberg

Lighting Design Nathan Boger Costume Design Jenny Yang &

Zanib Naeem

Visual Design Luke Stenzhorn

Fabricator & Host
Isaiah Tweed & Monkeybrains

Mothers All runs 90 minutes long and will be performed without an intermission.



Katie Tandy (Playwright)

Katie is an editor, journalist, and rising playwright. She is the former co-founding editor of three online magazines centering social justice, and currently runs a civil rights magazine for the Oakland non-profit Public Rights Project. Her original rock musical adaptation of Ovid's *Pygmalion*—renamed *Galatea*— was produced with Musical Cafe in Berkeley and CounterPulse in San Francisco. She is the recipient of the Turkeyland Cove Foundation and Hambidge writing residencies, and a 2021 finalist with Blackacre. When she's not scrawling, she's singing with the Oakland rock band The Shattucks.



Susannah Wood (Samantha Ponlius)

Susannah is incredibly happy to explore gender issues with AE's great cast, for her first in-person show after the pandemic. Just before lockdown, she enjoyed performing in AE's *Skin of Our Teeth* and Anton Well's production of *NAME*. When not working, she likes to play board games, walk in the woods, and make soup with a lot of garlic & ginger.



Luke Stenzhorn (Visual Design)

Luke has spent the past two decades designing a bit of everything. After spending his intitial years in advertising in London, he moved on to pursue fashion, setting up the menswear label Percival. Now Luke mostly consults for other brands who need brand and design guidance. Helping with design and visuals for *Mothers All* has been a design purest's dream and watching Katie and Lauren at work has been a real inspiration.



Billie J. Simmons (Pastor Finley)

Billie is a native of Oakland, California. She received her B.A. in Dramatics in Speech from Fisk University, Nashville, TN. She has spent the past forty years serving the community as a "Preacher's Wife" and all that entails. After forty years away from the stage, Billie returns in honor of her late father—Tobie G. Levingston—the Founder and President of the East Bay Dragons motorcycle club founded in 1959. I am the Daughter of a Dragon.



