



REMY BUMPPPO

think theatre

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**Remy Bumppo Theatre Company
Announces Cast, Creative and Production Team for
DEAR ELIZABETH
by Sarah Ruhl
Directed by Christina Casano
October 17 - November 17 at Theater Wit**

CHICAGO – Remy Bumppo Theatre Company is pleased to announce the cast, creative and production teams for *Dear Elizabeth*, the first production of its 2024 - 2025 season, written by **Sarah Ruhl** and directed by Remy Bumppo Creative Producer **Christina Casano**, October 17 - November 17, at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave. Previews are Thursday, Oct. 17 at 7:30 p.m.; Friday, Oct. 18 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, Oct. 19 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, Oct. 20 at 2:30 p.m. with the **press opening Monday, Oct. 21 at 7 p.m.** Regular performances are Thursdays - Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 2:30 p.m. with additional matinees Saturday, Oct. 26 at 2:30 p.m.; Saturday, Nov. 2 at 2:30 p.m.; Thursday, Nov. 7 at 2:30 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 16 at 2:30p.m. Post-show discussions will be held after the following performances: Sunday, Oct. 27 at 2:30 p.m.; Sunday, Nov. 3 at 2:30 p.m. and Sunday, Nov. 10 at 2:30 p.m. The Audio Description/Touch Tour performance is Thursday, Nov. 7 at 2:30 p.m. and the Open Caption performance is Saturday, Nov. 2 at 2:30 p.m. Discounted two-show subscriptions are currently available at RemyBumppo.org. Single tickets are \$15 - \$55 and are on sale now at RemyBumppo.org. Groups of 10 or more may call the Theater Wit Box Office at 773.975.8150 to receive group discounts and make reservations.

In 1947, Elizabeth Bishop and Robert Lowell's first letters sparked a friendship that spanned 30 years, crossing continents and filling countless pages. Their correspondence, a blend of poetry and personal musings, became the anchor of their tumultuous lives. Despite rare meetings, their connection transcended the bounds of a traditional love story, evolving into a profound friendship.

"*Dear Elizabeth* is a beautiful play that centers on friendship, and I am so excited to dig into this story. I was struck by this script almost immediately when I read it - it's about how love is expansive and isn't just one thing or another," said **Director Christina Casano**. "These are two people who see each other in a way no one else does, who understand each other's artistry and personal struggles in ways no one else can. This play is moving, theatrical and is a story in which two people can build a world together through their letters and love."

Dear Elizabeth peeks into the private lives of two literary giants, revealing their vulnerabilities, insecurities and the intimacy of their bond. Sarah Ruhl creates a poignant narrative by weaving the poets' letters together, providing a window into their extraordinary connection, the enduring power of their words, and, ultimately, the transformative power of language and art.

"*Dear Elizabeth* is a portrait of a relationship that defies definition. I am deeply moved by Sarah Ruhl's exploration of the connection between Elizabeth Bishop and Robert Lowell," said **Artistic Director Marti Lyons**. "This connection never became fully romantic but extended well beyond the platonic. In Ruhl's examination of what-might-have-beens, she illuminates the depths and complexities of a friendship we don't have sufficient language to define. I am thrilled to launch our season with *Dear Elizabeth* and with our Creative Producer Christina Casano at the helm."

The cast for *Dear Elizabeth* features **Leah Karpel*** (Elizabeth) and **Christopher Sheard*** (Robert) with understudies **Morgan Burkey** (Elizabeth U/S) and **JT Nagle** (Robert U/S).

The creative and production team for *Dear Elizabeth* includes **Christina Casano** (Director/Creative Producer), **Jean E. Compton*** (stage manager), **Devon Hayakawa** (dramaturg), **Sophie Goddard** (assistant stage manager), **Eduardo Xavier+** (assistant director), **Catalina Niño** (scenic designer), **Kotryna Hilko[^]** (costume designer), **Max Grano De Oro** (lighting designer), **John Boeshe** (projections designer), **Christopher Kriz[^]** (sound designer), **Isa Noe** (props designer), **Micah Figueroa** (intimacy/movement designer), **Nick Chamernik** (assistant light designer/head electrician), **Janelle Smith** (assistant costume designer), **Marti Lyons** (Artistic Director), **Addoris Davis[^]** (Production Manager), **Tanya Palmer** (artistic producer), **Nick Peebles** (technical director), **Jasmine B. Gunter** (casting director) and **Katie Galetti** (casting consultant).

+ denotes Core Ensemble Member

[^] denotes Associate Artist

* denotes member of Actors Equity Association

ABOUT SARAH RUHL, playwright

Sarah Ruhl is an award-winning American playwright, author, essayist and professor. Her plays include *Orlando*, *The Oldest Boy*, *Dear Elizabeth*, *Stage Kiss*, *In the Next Room, or the vibrator play* (Pulitzer Prize finalist, 2010); *The Clean House* (Pulitzer Prize finalist, 2005; Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, 2004); *Passion Play* (Pen American Award, Fourth Freedom Forum Playwriting Award from the Kennedy Center); *Dead Man's Cell Phone* (Helen Hayes Award for Best New Play); *Melancholy Play*; *Demeter in the City* (nine NAACP Image Award nominations); *Scenes From Court Life*; *How to Transcend a Happy Marriage*, *For Peter Pan on Her 70th Birthday*; *Eurydice*; *Orlando* and *Late: a cowboy song*. Her plays have been produced on Broadway and across the country as well as internationally, and translated into fourteen languages. Originally from Chicago, Ms. Ruhl received her M.F.A. from Brown University, where she studied with Paula Vogel. She is the recipient of a Helen Merrill Emerging Playwrights Award, a Whiting Writers' Award, a PEN Center Award for mid-career playwrights, a Steinberg Distinguished Playwright Award and a Lilly award. She is a member of 13P and New Dramatists and won the MacArthur Fellowship in 2006. She teaches at Yale School of Drama and lives in Brooklyn with her family.

ABOUT CHRISTINA CASANO, director

Christina Casano is a theatre artist based in Chicago. Her training includes a BA in theatre from Miami University, Victory Gardens Theater's Director's Inclusion Initiative and the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's Summer Professional Training Program. Selected directing credits: *I Build Giants* and *Poison* (The Plagiarists), *Henry 4 Pt. 1* (Starling Shakespeare Company), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Stone Soup Shakespeare), *Socks & Co.* (workshop, Eclectic Full Contact Theatre), *Work in Progress* (workshop, The Plagiarists) *How To Murder...* (workshop, Bramble Theatre), *Blood of My Mother's* (workshop, Wayward Sisters), *Plaid As Hell* (Babes With Blades), *Deep Shadows* (audio drama, EFCT), *Fame Heaux* (staged reading, Lanford Wilson New American Play Festival). Other favorite projects: *Short Shakes! Romeo & Juliet* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), *Some Like It Red* and *The Epic of Gilgamesh, etc.* (The Plagiarists), *How To Defend Yourself* (Victory Gardens), *Bury Me* (Dandelion Theatre), *The Light Fantastic* (Jackalope Theatre). She is the Creative Producer at Remy Bumpo.

ABOUT REMY BUMPPO THEATRE COMPANY

Remy Bumpo Theatre Company expands and enriches their community's view of the world, and their own, by producing both the great plays of the past and the important plays of today. As an ensemble-driven theater company, Remy Bumpo authors a more humane culture that listens to, and seeks to understand, the voices, the ideas and the stories of one another.

Since its inception in 1996, Remy Bumpo has produced a blend of modern classics and complex contemporary works, presented in an intimate setting with clarity, wit and passion. We invite audiences to engage directly with the art through conversation with the artists.

PRODUCTION DETAILS:

Dear Elizabeth

Written by: **Sarah Ruhl** (she/her/hers)

Directed by: **Christina Casano** (she/her/hers)

Website link: RemyBumpo.org

The cast (in alphabetical order): **Leah Karpel*** (she/her/hers, Elizabeth); **Christopher Sheard*** (he/him/his, Robert) with understudies **Morgan Burkey** (she/her/hers, Elizabeth U/S); **JT Nagle** (he/him/his, Robert U/S)

Stage Manager: **Jean E. Compton*** (she/her/hers)

Dramaturg: **Devon Hayakawa** (any with respect)

Assistant Stage Manager: **Sophie Goddard** (they/them/theirs)

Assistant Director: **Eduardo Xavier+** (he/him/his)

Scenic Designer: **Catalina Niño** (she/her/hers)

Costume Designer: **Kotryna Hilko^** (she/her/hers)

Lightning Designer: **Max Grano De Oro** (he/him/his)

Projections Designer: **John Boeshe** (he/him/his)

Sound Designer: **Christopher Kriz^** (he/him/his)

Props Designer: **Isa Noe** (she/her/hers)

Intimacy/Movement Designer: **Micah Figueroa** (he/him/his)

Assistant Lightning Designer/Head Electrician: **Nick Chamernik** (he/him/they/them)

Assistant Costume Designer: **Janelle Smith** (they/them//she/her)

Artistic Director: **Marti Lyons** (she/her/hers)

Production Manager: **Addoris Davis^** (they/them/she/her)

Artistic Producer: **Tanya Palmer** (she/her/hers)

Technical Director: **Nick Peebles** (he/him/his)
Casting Director: **Jasmine B. Gunter** (she/her/hers)
Casting Consultant: **Katie Galetti** (she/her/hers)

+ denotes Core Ensemble Member
^ denotes Associate Artist
* denotes member of Actors Equity Association

Location: **Theater Wit**, 1229 W. Belmont Ave., Chicago, IL 60657

Dates:

Previews: Thursday, Oct. 17 at 7:30 p.m.; Friday, Oct. 18 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, Oct. 19 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, Oct. 20 at 2:30 p.m.

Press/Opening Performance: Monday, Oct. 21 at 7 p.m.

Run Time: 90 minutes

Regular Run; Thursdays - Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

Matinee Performances (other than Sundays): Saturday, Oct. 26 at 2:30 p.m.; Saturday, Nov. 2 at 2:30 p.m.; Thursday, Nov. 7 at 2:30 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 16 at 2:30 p.m.

Post-Show Discussions: Post-Show discussions are after the following performances: Sunday, Oct. 27 at 2:30 p.m.; Sunday, Nov. 3 at 2:30 p.m. and Sunday, Nov. 10 at 2:30 p.m.

Audio Description/Touch Tour Performance: Thursday, Nov. 7 at 2:30 p.m.

Open Caption Performance: Saturday, Nov. 2 at 2:30 p.m.

Single Tickets now on sale:

Previews: \$32.00 - \$36.00

Regular Run: \$36.00 - \$55.00

Industry Tickets: \$20.00, available for Thursday and Friday performances using code INDUSTRY

Student Tickets: \$15.00, available for all performances

Group Discounts: For groups of 10 or more, call the Theater Wit Box Office at 773-975-8150.

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Remy Bumpo Theatre Company's season sponsors are Brenda and James Grusecki and Charlotte Toerber.