

UMD School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies presents

MEN ON BOATS



SCHOOL OF
THEATRE, DANCE, &
PERFORMANCE STUDIES

Friday, March 1–Saturday, March 9, 2024
KAY THEATRE
AT THE CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

THEATRE DANCE

THE PROM

Book & Lyrics by Chad Beguelin
 Book by Bob Martin
 Music by Matthew Sklar
 Based on an Original Concept by Jack Viertel
 Directed by Nathaniel Claridad '04
 Produced by Randall "Randy" W. Lord '77
 and Stephen "Steve" Fessler

KAY THEATRE

SEPTEMBER 29–OCTOBER 7, 2023

A BICYCLE COUNTRY

By Nilo Cruz
 Directed by Fatima Quander

KOGOD THEATRE

NOVEMBER 10–17, 2023

MEN ON BOATS

By Jacklyn Backhaus
 Co-Directed by KenYatta Rogers and
 Elena Velasco

KAY THEATRE

MARCH 1–9, 2024

ARE WE AT WAR YET

By Mikhail Durnenkov
 Directed by Yury Urnov

KOGOD THEATER

APRIL 19–26, 2024

FALL M.F.A. THESIS DANCE CONCERT

Choreographed by Gerson Lanza
 and Javier Padilla

KOGOD THEATRE

OCTOBER 12–15, 2023

FACULTY DANCE CONCERT

Directed by Alvin Mayes
 Choreographed by Adriane Fang, Kate
 Ladenheim, Ama Law, and Alvin Mayes

KAY THEATRE

DECEMBER 8–10, 2023

SPRING M.F.A. THESIS DANCE CONCERT

Choreographed by Brit Falcon, Mary
 Kate Ford and Rebecca Steinberg

DANCE THEATRE

FEBRUARY 16–18, 2024

UMOVES: UNDERGRADUATE DANCE CONCERT

Directed by Ama Law

DANCE THEATRE

MAY 3-5, 2024

VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORDING OF THIS PRODUCTION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

SCHOOL OF THEATRE, DANCE, AND PERFORMANCE STUDIES

MEN ON BOATS

By Jacklyn Backhaus

Co-directed by KenYatta Rogers and Elena Velasco

Co-Director	KenYatta Rogers
Co-Director	Elena Velasco
Scenic Designer	Gavin Mosier
Costume Designer	Colin Franz
Lighting Designer	Christina Kouni Laverty
Projection Designer.....	Leo Grierson
Sound Designer	Sam Crawford
Stage Manager	Erin Sanders

CAST

John Wesley Powell.....	Gab Ryan
William Dunn	Katrina Marinelli
John Colton Sumner	Ilana Mongilio
Old Shady	Drew Okoye
Bradley.....	Katie Quinn
O.G. Howland/Johnson.....	Alaina (AJ) Jenkins
Seneca Howland/Just Jim	Precious Ogunsola, Àjíkẹ́
Frank Goodman/Mr. Asa.....	Lucy Bond
Hall.....	Sabrina Lenett
(WR) Hawkins.....	J. Royal Miller

UNDERSTUDIES

John Wesley Powell.....	Hannah Alisse Collins
William Dunn	Nekko Sanders
John Colton Sumner	Gabriella Loshin
Old Shady	Thomas Raff
Bradley.....	Nina Omatsola
O.G. Howland/Johnson.....	Aida Nyabingi
Seneca Howland/Just Jim	Elizabeth Enworom
Frank Goodman/Mr. Asa.....	Nani Gildersleeve
Hall.....	Sophie Bagheri

FRIDAY, MARCH 1–SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 2024

KAY THEATRE

The performance will last approximately 2 hours with no intermission

Please take this opportunity to silence your cell phones, and anything else that might beep or buzz. Photography and audio or video recording are prohibited. And finally, please take note of the nearest exit from the venue in case of emergency.

“Our eyes, the eyes of hunters and explorers and land-rovers like us. Our eyes will be old someday, and new eyes will not see the things we see with such a sheen.” — Backhaus, *Men on Boats*.

For so long history has been just that—*his* story. The accounts of John Wesley Powell’s 1869 expedition through the Grand Canyon are an account by one who had the opportunity to experience the spotlight—the pioneer on the frontier, supported by the US government to enter territory long inhabited by the indigenous of the lands. Powell had expeditions before and after this one, and in fact, was accompanied by his wife, Emma Dean Powell, on some of these travels (she was the first woman ever recorded to climb Colorado’s Pikes Peak). Emma Dean and Powell’s sister, Emily, actually played vital roles as key contributors to the collection and documentation of his scientific research¹, and yet, like many other women in the sciences and exploration, were largely written out of *his* story.

This is where Jaclyn Backhaus entered as she crafted *Men on Boats*.

No, there is no mention of Emma Dean Powell beyond the presence of the boat named after her (and this was not an expedition she accompanied), but the playwright’s requirement to have these historic male explorers embodied by racially non-binary, trans and female-identifying artists speaks volumes to how our perspective can shift when the frame shapes the form. Might have *Manifest Destiny* sustained greater respect for the earth and their original stewards if the “discovers” were not white, male colonizers? This play is not a condemnation of Powell and his men; it is written that Powell’s wish was to more deeply understand and connect with the Ute people, to make peace with the Shivwits (who were believed to have killed some of his men) and to understand the land in the West². But explorations such as these also opened up Pandora’s box for American opportunists. If we could just wonder—what would have transpired in different hands?

And so now, several generations later, with fresh eyes we must look past the tales told of “this country built on the idea of newness” to uncover the actual wonder of these waterways, lands and majestic skies. Backhaus’ Powell contemplates that “Eventually it will all get old.”

No, Mr. Powell. Not if we see the story with different eyes, ones that now have a chance to tell the story, giving us the opportunity to examine the relationship between the land of the Americas and its past and current “Americans.” This production gives us the opportunity to embrace UMD’s vision laid out in its land acknowledgement statement giving us a “vocal reminder for each of us as two-leggeds to ensure our physical environment is in better condition than what we inherited, for the health and prosperity of future generations.”

“And now, we truly begin!”

—KenYatta Rogers and
Elena Velasco, co-directors

¹Greene, Candace. “Women of the Powell Expeditions: The Contributions of Emma Dean Powell and Ellen Powell,” *History of Anthropology Review*, July 2020. <https://histanthro.org/notes/women-of-the-powell-expeditions/>

²“Lost in the Grand Canyon: John Wesley Powell’s Undertakings,” *American Experience*, PBS, 1999. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/john-wesley-powell-undertakings/>

Sophie Bagheri (Hall u/s) is a sophomore theatre performance major, and a Creative and Performing Arts Scholar. She is excited to be a part of her first UMD mainstage show, and she hopes you enjoy it!

Lucy Bond (Frank Goodman/Mr. Asa) is a senior theatre major. She has participated in Capitol City and Charm City Fringe Festivals. Her other TSPA credits include being an understudy in *The Late Wedding*. She would like to thank everyone in the audience for attending the show!

Jack Campbell (Assistant Stage Manager), first-year computer science and theatre double major. Outside Credits: *She Loves Me*, Next generation Arts Council (SM, TD), *The Hunger Games (Unofficial) Musical*, 32 Bars (SM, TD, Sound Designer), *The Addams Family*, 32 Bars (ASM).

Sophia Cichetti (Assistant Director), senior theatre and psychology double major. Creative and Performing Arts Scholar. UMD credits: *The Prom* (Alyssa Greene), Fearless New Play Festival (Woman, Lo), *Stick Fly* (Kent u/s). Outside credits: Camp Half-Blood/Jupiter (Quest Performer).

Hannah Alisse Collins (John Wesley Powell u/s), freshman music education and theatre double major. This is her first production at UMD. Outside credits: *Taming of the Shrew* (Rose), *Antigone* (Chorus/Ismene u/s), *The Magic Toy Shop* (The Lost Toy).

Matthew Cruser (Assistant Director), junior theatre major, member of the Jiménez-Porter Writers' House. UMD credits: *The Prom* (Trent), *The Late Wedding* (Narrator u/s), Fearless New Play Festival.

Elizabeth Enworom (Seneca Howland/Just Jim u/s), junior theatre performance major. This is her first TDPS production on a main stage show. Outside credits include *WandaVision Concept Album* (2021), *Sister Act* (2018) and *Hairspray* (2019).

Colin Franz (Costume Designer), first-year M.F.A. design candidate. UMD Design credits: *Men on Boats* (Costume designer). Outside credits: *Twelfth Night*, The PLAT, MI (Scenographer); *She Kills Monsters*, OU Student Center, MI (Puppets Designer); *Pippin*, Varner Studio Theatre, MI (Costume Designer); *How I Became A Pirate*, Varner Studio Theatre, MI (Costume Designer).

Nani Gildersleeve (Frank Goodman/Mr. Asa u/s) has enjoyed working on this production. She is a current freshman and CAPA Scholar. Her previous credits include *Anastasia* (2024), *Sound of Music* (2023), and *Puffs* (2023). She has passion for acting, and hopes you enjoy the show!

Alaina (AJ) Jenkins (O.G. Howland/Johnson, Movement Captain), junior theater performance major. UMD credits: *The Prom* (Shelby, Dee Dee Allen u/s). Outside Credits: 32Bars Musical Theater Club: *Spring Awakening* (Anna), *Heathers* (Martha u/s), *The Addams Family* (Director).

Christina Kouni Laverty (Lighting Designer), third-year M.F.A. design candidate. UMD Design Credits: *Albert Herring* (2023), *The Late Wedding* (2023), *Last Dance*, *Lost Dance* (2022), *Bodily Intelligence* (2022), *The Magic Flute* (2021). Other Credits: Designer, *Frozen Jr.*, St. Albans School (2023); Assistant, *The Nutcracker*, Warner Theatre (2023); *Trouble in Mind*, Hartford Stage (2023); *Heroes of the Fourth Turning*, Studio Theatre (2022); Lighting Intern, Washington Ballet (2023-2024); Lighting Apprentice, Wolf Trap Opera (2021).

Sabrina Lenett (Hall), junior theater performance major with classical mythology minor. UMD credits: *As You Like It* (Corin), Fearless New Play Festival (Abby). Outside credits: *Hairspray* (Penny).

Gabriella Loshin (John Colton Sumner u/s), sophomore theatre and communications double major. This is Gabriella's UMD debut and she is excited to show everyone all of her hard work! Outside credits: *Mama Mia* (Ensemble), *Broadway Unmasked* (Ensemble, soloist).

Katrina Marinelli (William Dunn), senior theater and American studies double major, Black women's studies minor. She's excited to be on stage working with this incredible cast, crew and production team. Previous UMD credits: *The Late Wedding* (Fen, Raya, and Han).

J. Royal Miller (Hawkins), senior performance major, Creative and Performing Arts Scholar, and once a certified, actively competing chef. Credits: *The Book Club Play* (Will), *Camp Half-Blood/Jupiter* (Quest Performer), *Everybody* (Usher/God/Understanding), and more! To Magpie. PARTY BOAT!

Ilana Mongilio (John Colton Sumner, Movement Captain), theatre major, Italian minor, UMD credits: *The Prom* (Ensemble, Emma u/s), *By The Way*, *Meet Vera Stark* (Gloria u/s). Outside Credits: *Hunger Games: The Unofficial Musical* (Writer, Director, Peeta Mallark).

Gavin Mosier (Scenic Designer) is a Washington D.C./metro area scenic designer and art director working in theatre, film and environmental design. Gavin is pursuing his M.F.A. in scenic design at the University of Maryland. Current theatrical design credits include *Human Museum* at Rorschach Theatre, *As You Like It* and *Later the Same Evening* at UMD. Current film credit: *Popular Theory* (Art Director).

Aïda Nyabingi (O.G. Howland/Johnson, Movement Captain), first-year theatre major. Outside Credits: *Chicago* (Velma u/s, Ensemble), *Midsummer Night's Dream* (Lysnader), 25th Annual Putnam Spelling Bee (Logainne), *Into the Woods* (Florinda).

Precious Ogunsola, Àjìkẹ́ (Seneca Howland/Just Jim), is currently in her fourth year pursuing dual degrees in theatre and government and politics with a concentration in international relations. Her credits at UMD include roles in *As You Like It* (Lord 1 and 2), and *The Book Club Play* (Lily Louise Jackson u/s).

Drew Okoye (Old Shady) sophomore theatre performance and psychology double major. Creative and Performing Arts Scholars, Media Scholar. UMD credits: *The Prom* (Kaylee, Trent u/s), *The Late Wedding* (Actor 3 u/s). Outside credits: *The Addams Family* (Morticia, Gomez u/s), etc.

Sofía Olivar (Assistant Scenic Designer) is a second-year scenic design M.F.A. from Mexico. UMD credits: *A Bicycle Country* (Scenic Designer). Outside credits: *Damn Things Will Kill Ya*, American University (Scenic Designer), *It Happened in Key West*, Fulton Theatre (Assistant Scenic Designer).

Nina Omatsola (Bradley u/s), second-year theatre and psychology double major. Outside credits: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Titania).

Katie Quinn (Bradley), fourth-year theatre and agriculture science major. UMD TDPS Credits: *A Bicycle Country* (A.D. and Dramaturg), *As You Like It* (Lord). Outside Credits: *Head Over Heels*, Wildwood Summer Theatre (Dramaturg and Musidorus), *The Lightning Thief* (Choreographer).

Thomas Raff (Old Shady u/s) freshman English and theatre double major. Outside Credits: *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* (Caruther/Ted Ragg), *Mean Girls* (Mathlete), *Hamlet* (Francisco/First Player/Player King).

KenYatta Rogers (Co-Director) is an assistant professor of performance with the School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies here at UMD. Directing credits include productions with Mosaic Theatre, Ally Theatre, African Continuum Theatre and The InSeries. Acting credits include productions with the Kennedy Center, Round House Theatre, Arena Stage, Signature Theatre, Everyman Theatre, Woolly Mammoth, Ford's Theatre, Olney Theatre, Folger Theatre, Shakespeare & Company and Baltimore Center Stage. KenYatta earned his B.A. from Clark Atlanta University and his M.F.A. from the University of Pittsburgh. Upcoming directing projects include *IS GOD IS* at Constellation Theatre, *JOE TURNER'S COME AND GONE* with Chesapeake Shakespeare Company and *METAMORPHOSES* here at The Clarice next fall.

Gab Ryan (John Wesley Powell) is a senior theatre and journalism double major. UMD credits: *The Prom* (Angie/Dance Captain), *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark* (Anna Mae/Afua), *Proskeno* by Amber Smithers (The Woman), *Fefu and Her Friends* (Julia u/s). Outside Credits: *A Chorus Line*, *32 Bars* (Choreographer/Sheila). Next Up: TDPS Experimental Performance Series (Dancer).

Erin Sanders (Stage Manager), junior theater major with a concentration on stage management and lighting design. UMD credits: Fall M.F.A. Dance Thesis Concert 23 (SM), UMoves (SM), *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark* (ASM), Spring M.F.A. Dance Thesis Concert 22 (ASM). Outside credits: *Dead Man's Cellphone* (SM), *Hamlet* (Lighting Designer).

Niara “Nekko” Sanders (William Dunn u/s), senior theater performance major. UMD credits: *By The Way*, *Meet Vera Stark* (crew member), EPS (Lighting Designer), EPS (Co-Lighting Designer), UMoves (Lighting Designer), Faculty Dance Concert (Lighting Programmer and Light Board Operator). Outside credits: *The Key* (Professor Tanen), *Pushing Through* (Assistant Director, Boom Operator, and extra), *NBC* (extra). This will be Nekko’s last semester here at UMD and she is grateful to be a part of this production.

Elena Velasco (Co-Director) is a Helen Hayes nominated theatre artist serving DC and Greater Boston. Directing/Choreography Credits: Convergence Theatre (Founding Artistic Director), GALA Hispanic, 1st Stage, Syntetic Theater, Keegan Theatre, NextStop Theatre, Adventure Theatre, Arts on the Horizon, Kennedy Center’s New Visions/ New Voices, and Central Square Theatre (Boston). A commissioned playwright and researcher, she has written for Routledge, Intellect Books, and several TYA musicals, and has served on panels for Boston Conservatory, George Mason University, and Theatre Washington. She was the 2023 recipient of SDCF’s Barbara Whitman Award and is a theater professor at Bowie State University.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, DESIGNERS AND STAGE MANAGERS

Assistant Director	Sophia Cichetti
Assistant Director	Matthew Crusier
Assistant Stage Manager	Jack Campbell
Assistant Stage Manager	Rachel Heney
Assistant Scenic Designer	Alex Diaz-Lopez
Assistant Scenic Designer	Sofia Olivar
Assistant Lighting Designer.....	Scott Monnin
Assistant Sound Designer	Kiefer Cure
Movement Captain	Alaina (AJ) Jenkins
Movement Captain	Ilana Mongilio
Hair and Makeup	Priscilla Bruce

PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT

Assistant Director of Production and Operations	Jennifer Schwartz
Production and Operations Coordinator	Devin Kohn
Production and Events Coordinator.....	Kate Wander

PRODUCTION**SCENIC**

Technical Director	Michael Driggers
Scene Shop Coordinator	Reuven Goren
Lead Carpenter.....	Earl Browne
Carpenters	Ella Gammel, Sarah Mack, Maura Martin, Terence Ngwafor, Harsh Senjaliya, Sophia Tiedt
Carpenter Graduate Students.....	Trey Pope, David Wilson
Student Carpenter.....	Amberley Kuo

SCENIC PAINTING

Scenic Charge Coordinator	Ann Chismar
Graduate Students	Thea Luo, Margarita Syrocheva
Scenic Artists	Tifani T. Carnes, Bobbie Carter Dewhurst, Sherri Howells, Nicole Panebianco
Student Scenic Artists	Mars Burggraf, Kayla Harvey-Ali, Layla Nordrum, Guinivere Roberts, Hudson White

PROPS

Prop Shop Manager.....	Timothy Jones
Prop Shop Artisan	Tyra Bell
Props Graduate Student.....	Jonas Rimkunas
Prop Shop Student Artisans.....	Adam Hawley, Chris Lee, Charlotte "C" Macko, Seth Mohan, Robert Pang

VENUE OPERATIONS

Stage Crew Leads	Steven Bronocco, Alex Hayes, Cole Owens
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TECHNOLOGY

Technology Shop Manager	Jeffery Reckeweg
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LIGHTING

Lighting Coordinator Carrie Barton
 Technology Shop Technician Cameron Smith
 Lead Electricians Max Abramovitz, Eli Bendel-Simso,
 Alex Bryan-Taff, Buruk Daniel, Isaac DeMarchi,
 Malory Hartman, James Newman,
 Liza Raney, Trey Wise
 Student Electricians Briana Bush, Mariah Faulkner,
 Jady Fine, Ella Gammel, Alana Isaac,
 Jerran Kowalski, Mel Mader, Royal Miller,
 Drew Okoye, Emily Pan, Erin Sanders, Ronak Shah,
 Pranav Shinde, Dylan Speiser, Amelia Talbot

PROJECTIONS

Projections Coordinator Zachary Rupp
 Projections Technician Cassandra Saulski

AUDIO

Assistant Manager of Audio James O'Connell

COSTUMES

Costume Shop Manager Jen Daszczyszak
 Assistant Costume Shop Manager and Crafts Lisa Burgess
 Costume Tailor and Draper Tessa Lew
 Costume Drapers MJ Hromek, Steven Simon
 First Hand Dennis Kitmore
 Costume Graduate Assistant Olivia O'Brien
 Costume Technicians Brooke Baney, Mackenzie Gardiner,
 Grace Guzman, Ilana Mongilio, Jasmine Voon
 Costume Student Crew Rachel Heney, Wendy Saltsburg, Morgan Smiley

SHOW CREW

Light Board Operator Kayla Harvey-Ali
 Sound Board Operator Keifer Cure
 Projection Board Operator Amelia du Bois
 Captioning Terence Ngwafor
 Dresser Jordan Embrack
 Dresser Bridget Knott
 Dresser Medhanit Desta
 Dresser Sadie Forman
 Deck Keegan Perry
 Deck Jalyn Manu
 Deck Cy Escalera
 Deck Raymond Zajic

FACULTY

Jennifer Barclay
 Amith Chandrashaker
 Andrew Cissna
 Dan Conway
 Sam Crawford
 Crystal Davis
 Carla Della Gatta
 Adriane Fang
 Leslie Felbain
 James Harding
 Frank Hildy
 Helen Huang
 Misha Kachman
 Maura Keefe
 Kate Keeney
 Kate Ladenheim
 Ama Law
 Caitlin Marshall
 Alvin Mayes
 Jared Mezzocchi
 Lisa Nathans
 Sara Pearson
 Kendra Portier
 Fatima Quander
 Scot Reese
 KenYatta Rogers
 Van Tran Nguyen
 Patrik Widrig

STAFF

Gabrielle Ching
 Crystal Gaston
 Isiah Johnson
 Devin Kohn
 Susan Miller
 Renee Nyack
 Jenn Schwartz
 Catalina Toala
 Kate Wander
 Teri Zillmer

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Ronya Lee Anderson
 Breeanah Breeden
 Kevin Clark
 Christina Collins
 Atiya Dorsey
 Eran Eads
 Yasmin Eubanks
 Britney Falcon
 Mariah Faulkner
 Mary Kate Ford
 Colin Franz
 Luis Garcia
 Leo Grierson
 Bailey Hammett
 August Henny
 Christian Henriquez
 Rebecca Janney
 Shartoya Jn.Baptiste
 Mher Kandoyan

Mina Kawahara
 Tim Kelly
 Marissa Kennedy
 Jerran Kowalski
 Gerson Lanza
 Margaret Lapinski
 Christina Kouni Laverty
 Kaela Lawrence
 Rashonda Lazar
 Gianina Lockley
 Thea Luo
 Daniel Miramontes
 Scott Monnin
 Gavin Mosier
 Sofia Olivar
 Javier Padilla
 Peter Pattengill
 Kristopher Pourzal
 Mike Riggs
 Brandon Roak
 Jalen Rose
 Doni Rotunno
 Patrik Saunders
 James Sivert
 Angela Smith
 Rebecca Steinberg
 Melissa Sturges
 Margarita Syrocheva
 Sophia Tepermeister
 Cody Von Ruden
 Zoe Walders
 Caitlin Woods

