UMD School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies presents ARE WE AT WAR YET?
THEATRE

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 Clariedad ’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 THEATRE
APRIL 19–26, 2024

DANCE

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

This performance will include live captioning for our audience. To view the captions on your phone, please scan the QR code.
ARE WE AT WAR YET?
By Mikhail Durnenkov
Directed by Yury Urnov

Director ........................................................................................................... Yury Urnov
Dramaturg ..................................................................................................... Hudson White
Stage Manager .............................................................................................. Adam Hawley
Scenic Designer ............................................................................................. Sophia Tepermeister
Costume Designer ......................................................................................... Doni Rotunno
Lighting Designer ......................................................................................... Mike Riggs
Projection Designer ...................................................................................... Timothy Kelly
Sound Designer & Composer ........................................................................... Michael Kiley*
Intimacy Director ......................................................................................... Teresa Spencer

CAST
F1 ............................................................................................................... Amberley Kuo
F2 ............................................................................................................... Mars Burggraf
M1 ............................................................................................................... Raymond Zajic
M2 ............................................................................................................... Cy Escalera
M3 ............................................................................................................... William Nash
M4 ............................................................................................................... Kiefer Cure

UNDERSTUDIES
F1 ............................................................................................................... Amelia du Bois
F2 ............................................................................................................... Medhanit (Medi) Desta
M1 ............................................................................................................... Keegan Perry
M2 ............................................................................................................... Terrence Bartlebaugh
M3 ............................................................................................................... Hayden Polsky
M4 ............................................................................................................... Matthew Dietrich

*The sound designer and composer in this production is represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.

FRIDAY, APRIL 19–FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2024
KOGOD THEATRE

The performance will last approximately 90 minutes 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.
Are We At War Yet? (AWAWY) was written shortly after Russia began its first stage of invasion of Ukraine in 2014. Back then it felt like crossing a red line even though a great many lines had been crossed prior to that moment and, as we now know, it certainly wasn’t the last red line that Putin would cross. Since the year 2000, when he first became a president, step by step and year by year, he built his version of the totalitarian, imperialistic Russia. This was a long and multi-layered project: the poison of hatred, lies, and the sense of national superiority was methodically injected into Russian society.

Playwright Mikhail Durnenkov is exploring how this poison works on both micro and macro levels, how it affects families and relationships, and how it slowly changes the country. George Orwell’s kind of doublethink makes the minds of the TV anchor and his wife explode, making them live between two truths—the public and the personal ones. Two parents, scared for the life and well-being of their child, talk themselves into another Orwellian maxim: war is peace. A young teenage tech geek helps a mysterious company develop dangerous military software, without even recognizing what he is doing. The scariest feature of the script is that most characters, like that teenager, don’t take notice of the effect that brainwashing has already had on their psyche, and don’t feel how absurd they sound or behave. Other episodes, like the final one, serve as metaphors for larger geopolitical processes: Durnenkov translates the conflict between Russia and Ukraine into psychological realities of the domestic violence scene.

For me personally, a lot in this script reminds me of Bob Fosse’s Cabaret, where politics is being represented through personal and vice-versa. It is also hard not to notice major similarities between early Nazi Germany and late-Putin Russia: both nations piqued by the loss of former power (doesn’t matter whether real or perceived), are plagued by growing nationalism, and seek reclamation and revenge under the leadership of an insane tyrant.

What makes me truly sad is the fact that the play was written almost ten years ago, when Russian society might yet had a chance to change course, to wake up from this dangerous, rancid dream, and before the monstrous transformation we are witnessing today was truly, comprehensively complete.

Staging a play is, at a basic level, a process of translation and interpretation—even when the play is written and produced in the same language—a word on a page isn’t the same thing as a word being said on stage. In the case of AWAWY, this translation involved the interpretation and juxtaposition of cultural realities, behavioral patterns, and habits. And even more so, it was about the translation of politics—and discovering the astonishing degree to which Russian political issues translate into and project onto the realities of America today. I’m afraid that we have found too many recognizable similarities. So, my only wish is that when watching the play and looking at its characters, the audience doesn’t immediately think: “Oh, it’s about them, it’s not about us.”

—Yury Urnov, director
It’s Absurd, Isn’t It?

February 2014 may be popularly remembered for the Sochi Winter Olympics, but it also included a declaration of war between Russia and Ukraine by means of an annexation of the Crimean Peninsula. The land is owned by Ukraine and occupied by many ethnic Russians who moved there during the reign of the Soviet Union. This event marked the first time a European nation annexed the territory of another since World War II, and it also inspired Russian playwright, Mikhail Durnenkov, to write Are We At War Yet?

In 2022, three years after the script was written, the Russo-Ukrainian War escalated with a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. After speaking out against the invasion, all of Durnenkov’s plays were removed from theatres across Russia. Today, ten years after the outbreak of the initial war and writing of the script, this production is offering the UMD community a glimpse into a deeply complex conversation on Russia’s relationships with Ukraine and the West, and the moral dilemmas civilians struggle with during war.

While this play is steeped in Russian culture, the structure lends itself to be universal. The play consists of twelve independent episodes, the characters have no names, and the scenes have no dates or identifiable events. This structure also allows two conversations to happen at once. One side is of civilian relationships affected by the pressure of war, the other side is ongoing relationships between Russia, Ukraine, and the West.

Much of the dramaturgical and directorial work of this script is in finding the threads between these wildly unique characters and moments. I’d like to offer you what we found:

The characters of this play are driven by an intense fear of the physical and moral implications of war. When a threat as big as the prospect of war looms, people grasp onto the things right in front of them, leading to intense reactions to the people in their immediate surroundings.

Beyond this fear, there is also an attachment to the way things have been, and the people or country that represents home. These characters are navigating their fear and searching for what’s beneath. Some characters may find patriotic allegiance, a sense of responsibility to their families, and even genuine love.

Although the themes discussed are heavy, a frequent conversation in our rehearsals involved leaning into the absurd comedy of the stories. The absurdity of having to ask oneself the merits of leaving your entire home behind for a life you haven’t planned, or being punished for a thought you didn’t have are explored here as exactly what they sound like on paper. Hilarious.

I invite you to enjoy the spectacle, laugh at the jokes, and find your own reality in the absurdity of modern life.

—Hudson White, dramaturg


Mars Burggraf (F2), third-year theatre and dance major. Creative and Performing Arts Scholar. Arts Scholars Alumni. UMD Credits include: *The Prom* (Emma Nolan) and *The Late Wedding* (Actor 3).

Kiefer Cure (M4), fourth-year theatre major and Banneker Key Scholar. Sound designer/composer, director, and performer. Recent acting credits include *Hamlet* (Hamlet), *The Book Club Play* (Will u/s), *As You Like it* (Touchstone), and *Little Women* (Mr. Lawrence u/s).

Medhanit (Medi) Desta (F2 u/s), sophomore theatre performance major. This is Medi’s first UMD production. She is excited to be a part of this production. Outside credits: *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Peter Quince).

Matthew Dietrich (M4 u/s), freshman theatre and psychology double major and University Honors student. UMD Credits: *The Addams Family* (Lucas u/s). Recent outside credits: *The Prom* (Barry), *Big Fish* (Edward), and *Beauty and the Beast* (Lumiere).


Adam Hawley (Stage Manager), junior theatre major. Creative and Performing Arts Scholar. Recent Credits: *Hamlet*, The Maryland Shakespeare Players (Sound Designer), Fall MFA Dance Thesis Concert, UMD (Stage Manager), Props Carpentry Apprentice, Santa Fe Opera 2023, *The Book Club Play*, UMD (Assistant Stage Manager).

Heather Hernandez (Assistant Stage Manager), sophomore theatre major. Outside credits: *Cinderella*, Art Centric/Baltimore Center Stage (Deck Carp), *Sherk Jr.*, Young Artists of America (Assistant Stage Manager), *Incendiary*, Woolly Mammoth (Sound Board Operator), *We Could Be Heroes*, Howard Community College (Stage Manager).
**Timothy Kelly** (Projection Designer) is a second-year M.F.A. media design candidate and creative technologist from the UK. He’s passionate about work that plays with form and sits at the intersection of performance, accessibility and technology. Selected credits: *Waffle House: The Musical*, Andy’s Summer Playhouse (Projection Designer), *Trade* (Lighting and Projection Designer, UK Tour), *Antigone* (Lighting Designer and Production Manager, New Diorama, London, UK), *Electrolyte* (Lighting Designer, UK Tour).


**Amberley Kuo** (F1), sophomore theatre performance major with LGBTQ+ studies minor. She wants to say hello to everyone who comes to see the show :) UMD credits: Fearless New Play Festival (Violet/Beth), *The Late Wedding* (Actor 3 u/s).

**William Nash** (M3) is very excited to be performing in his second theater MainStage production here at UMD! He would like to thank all of the faculty for their support and trust and his family and friends for their support as well. UMD Credits: *The Prom* (Nick), UMoves Undergraduate Concert 2023 (Internalization).

**Keegan Perry** (M1 u/s), freshman theatre and performance studies major. UMD Credits: *Dead Man’s Cell Phone* (Mrs. Gottlieb). Previous Credits: *SpongeBob SquarePants: The Broadway Musical* (Squidward), *Comedy of Errors* (Egeon), *The Fantasticks* (Hucklebee).

**Hayden Polsky** (M3 u/s), first-year theatre and government/politics major. UMD credits: *The Prom* (Assistant Music Director). Favorite outside credits include: *Anastasia*, Cappies Award winner (Vlad), *She Loves Me* (Georg), *Newsies* (Davey), *The Addams Family* (Gomez), *Into the Woods* (Rapunzel’s Prince).

**Mike Riggs** (Lighting Designer) is a mid-career designer pursuing an M.F.A. with a focus on teaching. His work on this production is dedicated to all of the fine artists who comprise TDPS.

**Doni Rotunno** (Costume Designer), first-year M.F.A. design candidate. UMD Credits: *Are We At War Yet?* (Costume Designer). Outside credits: *Henry IV Part I*, American University (Associate Costume Designer); *Orpheus and Eurydice*, Carolina Ballet (Makeup Designer); *Good News!*, Theresa Lang Theatre (Scenic Designer).
Amelia Talbot (Assistant Projection Designer), junior computer science and theatre major. Banneker/Key Scholar. UMD: UMoves Undergraduate Dance Concert (Media Designer), Men On Boats (Assistant Media Designer), Spring M.F.A. Dance Thesis Concert (Assistant Media Designer), The Prom (Mrs. Greene, Fight Captain). CSPAC Venue Technician.

Sophia Tepermeister (Scenic Designer) is a second-year M.F.A. candidate in scenic design at UMD. Originally from Boston, she received her B.F.A. in scenic design from Penn State University. Previous work includes: Angels in America, Penn State; Men on Boats, Penn State; Daughters of Leda, American University.

Yury Urnov (Director). Born in Moscow, Russia, Yury graduated from the Russian Academy of Theater Art (GITIS) in 2000. Since 2009, he has lived and worked in the United States. Currently, Yury serves as a co-artistic director of the Wilma Theater in Philadelphia, where his directing credits include Twelfth Night, Minor Character and Mr. Burns, a Post-Electric Play. Woolly Mammoth Theater has been Yury’s first artistic home in America. Here, Yury directed My Mama and the Full-Scale Invasion, KISS, and Marie Antoinette. In 2009-2011, he was a Fulbright Scholar in Residence at Towson University, MD where he still teaches.

Hudson White (Dramaturg) is a junior theatre performance major. Credits include: The Color of Guilt, Howard Players (Director), Seven Guitars, Howard University (Set Crew Chief), She Kills Monsters, Howard Players (Lighting Designer), Heathers, Howard University (Set Crew Chief), Stark Raving, Howard Players (Camera Operator), The 25th…Spelling Bee, Howard University (Set Crew Chief).

Raymond Zajic (M1), a sophomore architecture and theater dual degree student. This is his first UMD performance and he is excited to work with everyone on Are We At War Yet?
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, DESIGNERS AND STAGE MANAGERS
Assistant Director ................................................................. Hudson White
Assistant Stage Manager .................................................... Heather Hernandez
Assistant Projection Designer ............................................. Amelia Talbot

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, Eliana Kindred, Sarah Mack,
Maura Martin, Terence Ngwafor, Harsh Senjaliya, Sophia Tiedt
Carpenter Graduate Students ............................................. Trey Pope, David Wilson
Student Carpenters ............................................................ Amberly Kuo, Precious Ogunsola

SCENIC PAINTING
Scenic Charge Coordinator .................................................. Ann Chismar
Graduate Students ............................................................ Thea Luo, Margarita Syrocheva
Scenic Artists ..................................................................... Aiden Galbraith, 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, Alexix Hayes, Cole Owens

TECHNOLOGY
Technology Shop Manager ................................................... Jeffery Reckeweg
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,
                                                             Jadyn 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 ............................................................. Kevin Volland
Sound Board Operator ............................................................. Sophie Bagheri
Projection Board Operator/Captioning ..................................... Autumn Whetstone
Dresser .................................................................................. Nani Gildersleeve
Dresser .................................................................................. Miele Murray
Dresser .................................................................................. Aida Nyabingi
Deck/Automation ................................................................. Drew Okoye
Deck ...................................................................................... Elizabeth Enworom
Deck ...................................................................................... Julia Smith
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

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
Timothy 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