UmbrellaArts

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL

SEP 27 - NOV 8, 2026

Previews: Sep 25 & 26

Mass Cultural Council

OCT 4, 2026

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BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
DIGITAL PLAYBILL

BAT BOY:
THE MUSICAL

Story and Book by
Keythe Farley and Brian Flemming

Music and Lyrics by
Laurence O'Keefe

Licensed under agreement with
Weekly World News

Directed by
Jeremy Johnson

APPROXIMATE RUN TIME: 150 minutes, including one intermission

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Dramatists Play Service.
ConcordTheatricals.com

Original New York production produced by Nancy Nagel Gibbs, Riot Entertainment, Robyn Goodman, Michael Alden, Jean Doumanian and the Producing Office. | Original cast recording available on RCA/Victor.

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL was developed in New York City at The Directors Company Michal Parva, Artistic/Producing Director BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL had its initial production at The Actors' Gang in Los Angeles, CA The Authors wish to acknowledge the generous support provided through the Richard Rogers Development Award and the Richard Rodgers Production Award. The Richard Rogers Awards are administered by the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that the land we use for classes and events and the land on which The Umbrella is built is the original homeland of the Nipmuc and Massachusett peoples. We acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced removal from this territory, and we honor and respect the many diverse Indigenous peoples still connected to this land on which we gather. To learn more about and support the Nipmuc, start with these resources.

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CAST
IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Johnny Shea* ..... Edgar / Bat Boy
Amy Barker* ..... Meredith Parker
Brian Demar Jones* ..... Dr. Thomas Parker
Michelle Moran ..... Shelley Parker
Will McGarrahan* ..... Sheriff Reynolds
Thomas Vice ..... Rick Taylor, others
Holly B. Faust ..... Ron Taylor, others
Vanessa Calantropo ..... Ruthie Taylor, others U/S Meredith
Maria Sylvia Norris* ..... Mrs. Taylor, Reverend Hightower, others
Max Connor ..... U/S Edgar, Rick, others
Emma Na-yun Downs ..... U/S Shelley, Ruthie, others
Tony Wallace-Light ..... U/S Sheriff, Rev. Hightower
Nora Sullivan ..... Daisy, Bud, others

Featuring Tim Lawton in the role of Pan on October 4.

BAND

Jeff Kimball ..... Keyboard 1 / Conductor
Moira Applebaum ..... Keyboard 2
Ezzie Stone ..... Drums
Warren Olsen ..... Bass
Robert Bekkers ..... Guitar
John Sinclair ..... Bass (sub)
Marnen E. Laibow-Koser ..... Keyboard 2 (sub)

ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION 1913

*Indicates the actors and stage managers as members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

TEAM

Producing Artistic Director	Brian Boruta
Director	Jeremy Johnson
Music Director	Jeff Kimball
Choreographer	Briana Fallon
Technical & Production Manager	Carlie Nieman
Stage Manager	Vanessa C. Hart*
Stage Manager (sub)	Liam Horne*
Assistant Stage Manager	Zoe Pepin*
Lighting Designer	SeifAllah Salotto-Cristobal+
Sound Designer	Alex Berg
Scenic Designer	Cameron McEachern+
Costume Designer	Meagan Bellao
Properties/Set Dressing Designer	Sarabeth Spector
Intimacy Director	Ellen Waylonis
Fight Director	Robert St. Laurence
Dance Captain	Maria Sylvia Norris*
Fight Captain	Johnny Shea*
Stage Crew	Anna Birch
Audio Op/A1	Sarah Hobbs Butler
A2/Wardrobe	Miranda Louf
Wardrobe Supervisor	Tree Brock
Wigs by	Cara Guappone Wig Design & Rentals
Scenic Charge	Page Evett
Executive Director, Umbrella Arts	Eileen Williston
EDI Consultant	Kira Troilo
EDI Consultant	Ariel Welch
Company Manager	Cathie Regan

**Indicates the choreographer as a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.

+Indicates the scenic and lighting designers represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees.

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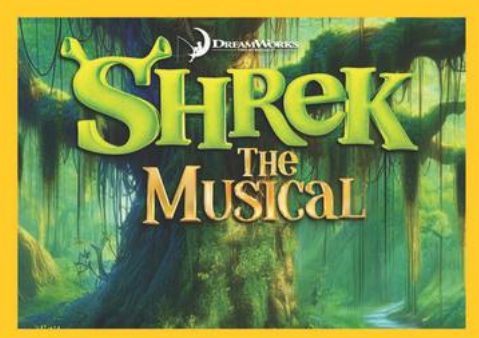

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Anna Slate*

By Weylin Symes
Directed by Weylin Symes and Daniel Begin

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CAST BIOS

(alphabetical)

Amy Barker* (Meredith Parker) is delighted to return to Umbrella Arts having previously appeared in *Network*. Other select credits include *A Little Night Music, Sunday in the Park With George* and *Merrily We Roll Along* (Huntington Theatre), *The Prom* and *[title of show]* (SpeakEasy Stage Company), *Noises Off* (Lyric Stage), *The Full Monty, Incident at Our Lady of Perpetual Help* and *Little Women* (Greater Boston Stage Company), *James and the Giant Peach* (Wheelock Family Theatre), *Hello, Dolly!* and *Full Monty* (Westchester Broadway Dinner Theatre), *Fun Home* (The Company Theatre) and *Nine* (North Shore Music Theatre). A native Texan, Amy began her professional career as an opera-singing plum for *Very Fine Fruit Juice*. Much love and thanks to her family!

Vanessa Calantropo, she/her (Ruthie Taylor, others, U/S Meredith) was last seen at Umbrella Arts in *Tick, Tick...Boom!* (Susan) (Elliot Norton Award Nominee). You may remember her from previous Umbrella Arts performances including *Rent* (ensemble), *Hedwig and The Angry Inch* (Yitzhak), *Hundred Days* (Barrie), *The Wild Party* (Kate), *Hair* (Sheila Franklin). Other favorite Boston credits include American Repertory Theater - *The Donkey Show.* With the Wheelock Family Theater - *The Addams Family.* With the Gold Dust Orphans: *GREECE, Whatever Happened to Baby Jesus,* and *Brokelahomo*. Regional credits: The Company Theater - *Cabaret*, Little Theater of Fall River - *Little Shop of Horrors.* The Amherst Symphony - *Les Mis.* Theater Workshop of Nantucket: *The Last Five Years* and *Grease*. She sends much love to the cast and crew of *Bat Boy*, and the two at home who keep her sane, Tini and Jon. IG: @VCalantropo

Max Connor, he/him (U/S Edgar, Rick, others) is excited to make his Umbrella Arts debut. Recent Boston credits include: *Swept Away* (Little Brother) at SpeakEasy Stage Company, *Hello Dolly* (Barnaby) at The Lyric Stage, *SpongeBob the Musical* (SpongeBob) and *Annie* (Bert Healy) at Wheelock Family Theater. When not acting on the stage, Max is also a music director for the Wellesley Middle School Drama Company. He is a proud graduate of the Emerson College Musical Theater program. He'd like to thank his friends and family for their endless support, and a special shoutout to his Dad whose strength and resilience continue to inspire. IG: @MaxJConnor

CAST BIOS

(alphabetical)

Emma Na-yun Downs, she/her (U/S Shelley, Ruthie, others) is a mixed Korean-American Boston-based actress, singer, and songwriter, who aims to inspire empathy and civic engagement with her work. She is so honored and excited to be joining the company of *Bat Boy*, for her first show with Umbrella Arts! Recent: *My Home on the Moon* (CHUANG Stage), *The Rocky Horror Show* (Central Square Theater), *Mixedfest Play Festival* (NYC, Atlantic Theater Company), *Covenant* (Moonbox Productions). Emma is a songwriter for CHUANG Stage and Company One's original musical *"Boston Chinatown: Stories on Our Streets"*. Emma founded @BostonActorAuditions (BAA) on Instagram, a hub for Boston actors to find local auditions. She is a Tufts University 2022 graduate, and in her free time, she watches sitcoms, lifts weights, plays soccer, and wears fun outfits. www.EmmaNayun.com | IG: @EmmaNayun

Brian Demar Jones*, he/him (Dr. Thomas Parker) was last seen at Umbrella Arts as Mister in *The Color Purple.* His regional acting credits include *Rent* and *The Color Purple* (Umbrella Arts); *The Normal Heart* (New Rep Theatre); *Henry IV, Part 2* and *Love's Labour's Lost* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *The Tempest* (Smith Street Stage); Kate Hamill's *Pride and Prejudice* (Kansas City Rep); *The Brother/Sister Plays* (Portland Playhouse); *Hello, Dolly!* (5th Avenue Theatre); *Ragtime* (Music Theater of Connecticut); *King Lear* and *All's Well That Ends Well* (Hip to Hip Theatre Company); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Interplayers/Modern Theatre); and *Little Shop of Horrors* (Broadway Rose Theatre Company). As a director, his credits include *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Northeastern University); *Henry IV, Part 1* (SUNY New Paltz); *Happy Days: The Musical* (Oregon Conservatory); as well as *Hamlet*, *Our Town, Rumors,* and *She Kills Monsters* (Walnut Hill School for the Arts). www.bdemarjones.com

Holly B. Faust, she/her (Ron Taylor, others) is thrilled to be back at Umbrella Arts! Outside of performing, Holly is on faculty at Boston Conservatory, Berklee College of Music, and Dean College. Holly holds a BA in Theatre/Dance from Roger Williams University, and an MFA in Musical Theatre from Boston Conservatory. Recent onstage credits: Star-to-Be/Boylan Sister in *Annie* (Greater Boston Stage Company), Mrs. Greene, U/S Angie in *The Prom* (Wheelock Family Theatre), Understudy/Replacement in *The Irish and How They Got That Way* (Greater Boston Stage Company), Understudy in *Now. Here. This.* (Umbrella Arts), Ensemble/Associate Choreographer in *All Shook Up* (Reagle Music Theater). Special thanks to Jeremy, Jeff, Briana, Vanessa the cast, and the rest of the team. Enjoy the show! www.HollyBourdon.com

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
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CAST BIOS
(alphabetical)

Will McGarrahan* (Sheriff Reynolds) returns to Umbrella Arts after appearing as Jensen in *Network* and Harold in *The Full Monty*. He recently appeared as Mr. Maraczek at *The Barnstormers* in Tamworth, NH and Claude in *Come From Away* at the Majestic Theater in West Springfield. Other recent credits include the Stage Manager in *Our Town* at Lyric Stage, the Suspects in *Murder for Two* at Greater Boston Stage, Ernie/Oscar in *A Man of No Importance* at SpeakEasy Stage, Toad in *A Year with Frog and Toad* at Wheelock Family Theatre, Callahan in *Legally Blonde* with Moonbox Productions, and Mickey Marcus in *The Normal Heart* at New Rep. He received an Elliot Norton award for *Souvenir* at the Lyric and IRNE awards for *The Drowsy Chaperone* and *Company* at SpeakEasy Stage. Will has acted at many other Boston area stages including Huntington Theater, Gloucester Stage, and Central Square Theater. Will worked as an actor, singer and pianist for many years in Seattle before moving to Boston's South End.

Michelle Moran (Shelley Parker) is beyond excited to make her Umbrella Arts debut! She graduated from Salem State University in 2023 with a BFA in Performance. Selected credits include Inspector Lestrade in *Sherlock Carol* (Lyric Stage), Elle Woods in *Legally Blonde* (Emerald City Theatrical), and Ophelia in *Hamlet* (Shitfaced Shakespeare). She sends all her love to her friends and family for their endless support. IG: @Michelle_Moran | www.MichelleMoran.design

Maria Sylvia Norris*, she/her (Mrs. Taylor, Reverend Hightower, others). After spending the last few years on tour, Maria is thrilled to be back in her home state performing locally at Umbrella Arts once again. She was last seen on the Umbrella Arts stage in 2022 as Joanne in *RENT*. Other favorite credits include Juno/Maxine (*Beetlejuice* 1st National Tour), Sister Mary Patrick (*Sister Act* International Tour), Rafiki (Disney Cruise Line) and Gloria (*Madagascar* 1st National Tour). Maria is a proud AEA member and client of HKA. Endless love to her friends and family for their constant support. Dream big!! IG: @MariaNorris

CAST BIOS

(alphabetical)

Johnny Shea*, he/him (Edgar / Bat Boy) is thrilled to be back at Umbrella Arts after playing Jon in *tick...tick...Boom!* last fall (Elliot Norton Award). Some of his other favorite performances include *The Last Five Years* (Portland Stage), *Peter Pan* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), *The Blue Sky Boys* (Florida Studio Theatre), *Ugly Lies The Bone* (FST), *American Idiot* (American Stage), and *Deathless* (Goodspeed Musicals). BFA Ithaca College, and Fiasco Theater 9WC alum. He thanks Louisa and his family for their love and support!

Nora Sullivan (U/S Ron, Pan, others) is thrilled to return to Umbrella Arts! Nora was seen Off-Broadway as Honor in *Playboy of the Western World* (Irish Repertory Theater). Educational Credits include Ellen in *Belfast Girls* (AADA). Regional credits include Tracy in *Hairspray*, Bridget Sullivan in *Lizzie*, Swing in *The Full Monty* (Umbrella Arts); Tracy in *Hairspray*, Petra in *A Little Night Music* (Sullivan Rep). Local Credits include Belle in *Beauty and the Beast*, Maria in *The Sound of Music*, Olive in *...Spelling Bee* (Weston Friendly Society); Little Red in *Into the Woods* (Flyleaf Theater Company). Nora is a graduate of The American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York City. She serves as the Executive Director for Sullivan Rep, a professional repertory theater company in the Greater Boston area. XO to MDDJB. IG: @NoraSullivan12

Thomas Vice, he/him (Rick Taylor, others) is thrilled to be making his Umbrella Arts debut! Notable credits include: *As You Like It* (Lanes Coven), *Evita* (Reagle Music Theatre), *Llorona, Or the Weeping Women* (BCA), *The Kittie Knox Plays* (Plays In Place), *Anastasia* (Spring Lake Theatre), and *American Buffalo* (Boston University). Thomas hails from the Jersey Shore but now lives in Boston where he enjoys bartending, golfing, cycling, and running. He would like to thank Umbrella Arts for this amazing opportunity, alongside his family and friends for their endless support, with a special thank you to Annika, his Mom and Dad, and Shawna. BFA: Boston University/London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. www.ThomasVice.com | IG: @ThomasVice_

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
DIGITAL PLAYBILL

CAST BIOS
(alphabetical)

Tony Wallace-Light, he/him (U/S Sheriff, Rev. Hightower) is honored to be making his Umbrella Arts debut in this amazing show! Notable productions include: *Next to Normal* (Dan) Stellar Studios, *Little Shop of Horrors* (Orin Scrivello D.D.S.) Little Theater of Fall River, *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Robert Martin) Cohassett Dramatic Club, *Legally Blonde* (Dewey) Massasoit Theater Company, *Sweeney Todd* (Beadle) Mass Arts Center, *Sweet Charity* (Oscar) Hingham Civic, *Heathers: The Musical* (Ram) Massasoit Theater Company. He would like to thank this amazing cast, his friends and family, and his incredible wife for her daily support.

TONIGHT'S FEATURED PERFORMER
For every show of except Oct 17, the role of Pan will be played by...

Davron S. Monroe is a Boston based award winning singer and actor with vocal talents that run the gamut from Opera to Musical Theatre, gospel to jazz and everything else in between. Davron is the 2019 recipient of The Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding Musical performance in Breath and Imagination, the story of Roland Hayes, African-American classic concert artist (who was also a Boston based artist in the later years of his life). Monroe has graced the stages of Lyric Stage Company of Boston, SpeakEasy Stage, Reagle, Company Theater, Moonbox Productions, and Wheelock, among others. Outside of theater, Monroe has appeared with many orchestral and vocal organizations, including Landmarks Orchestra, South Florida Symphony, Houston Ebony Opera Guild, Convergence Ensemble and the New England Spiritual Ensemble. Monroe is an Assistant Professor of Voice at Berklee College of Music. Come sing with me! *DavronMonroe.com/voxmonroe*

SPECIAL THANKS

Adelita, Acqua Sotto Cookies, John Breen, Cambridge Savings Bank, Concord's Colonial Inn, Concord Market / Nosh, Concord Recreation, Concord Visitors' Center, Dance Prism, Ernie Galan, Jim Sabitus, Kira Troilo & Ari Welch, Middlesex Bank, West Village Tavern, Concord Carlisle High School Library, The Concord Bookshop, Boston Conservatory, New England School of Performing Arts, Quannapowitt Players, Sullivan Rep, Walnut Hill School for the Arts, Danielle Domingue Sumi, Reese Stevens, Sophie Legault, Complex Stories, Kai Clifton

CREATIVE TEAM BIOS

(alphabetical)

Brian Boruta (Producer, Director of Performing Arts) is in his 15th season with Umbrella Arts, during which time he has earned multiple Elliot Norton Award Nominations including Outstanding Musical for *The Color Purple* and Outstanding Play for *The Minutes.* Other accolades include Best Production nominations for *Glengarry Glen Ross, Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson, Red, Angels in America, Equus,* and *Bonnie & Clyde;* a DASH Award for Best Play for *True West* and *To Kill A Mockingbird;* and Best Musical for *Parade* and *Big Fish.* His Umbrella Arts directing credits include *Parade* (Dash Award for Best Director of a Musical), *Big Fish* (DASH Nom.), *Hair, Evita, Side Show, Next to Normal,* and *The Rocky Horror Show.* As a designer and educator, Brian has worked with numerous college, high school and community groups including Merrimack College, Goddard College, Framingham State University, The Performing Arts Center of MetroWest, Brookline, Chelsea, and Wellesley Public School. His solo piece, *UnMasqued*, has been workshopped and performed at the Wheeler Theater in Port Townsend, WA. Brian holds a MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts from Goddard College and was named the recipient of the 2014 Framingham State University Young Alumni Achievement Award for his work in the performing arts.

Briana Fallon, she/her (Choreographer)** is thrilled to be making her Umbrella Arts debut! Recent favorite choreography credits include *The Wizard of Oz* (Elliot Norton Nominee) at North Shore Music Theatre, *The Sound of Music*, and director/choreographer *Seussical*. Briana has appeared as a performer Off-B'Way and regionally around the country. Proud member of SDC and AEA. BFA in Musical Theatre from The Boston Conservatory. Owner of Refine Dance Studio in Danvers, MA. She'd like to thank everyone at Umbrella Arts for this opportunity. Special shout out to her husband, parents, and son for being her number one fans. IG: @Briana-Fallon

Keythe Farley (Story and Book) is the co-author (with Brian Flemming and Laurence O'Keefe) of *Bat Boy: The Musical*, which received the Lucille Lortel and Outer Critic's Circle Awards for Best Off-Broadway Musical. He is also a co-author (with Eva Anderson and Tony Bollas) of the spaghetti western Stranger which Daily Variety raved 'has the visceral kick and grungy, lived-in feel of a Sergio Leone classic.' His latest script is the indie-musical F**king Hipsters! Hipsters received a world premiere production at the 2011 New York Musical Theatre Festival. A Los Angeles production is in the works.

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
DIGITAL PLAYBILL

CREATIVE TEAM BIOS

(alphabetical)

Brian Flemming (Story and Book) has written for the Independent Spirit Awards and written for and voice-directed "Rugrats." He has appeared on "Beverly Hills 90210," "Sisters," and the HBO movie "And the Band Played On."

Vanessa C. Hart*, they/them (Stage Manager) New England: The Umbrella Arts Center (The Minutes, Network, The Counter), Reagle Music Theatre (All Shook Up, An American in Paris), Central Square Theatre with The Front Porch Arts Collective and Greater Boston Stage Co (Ain't Misbehavin'), Peterborough Players (2017-2021 seasons). New York: NerveTank and Arts Brookfield NY (The Attendants), Beth Morrison Projects (pssst…The Boot), The Fisher Center at Bard College and Theatre for A New Audience (Mad Forest). Midwest Regional: Cleveland Playhouse (Light It Up!), Rebel and Misfits (Uncle Vanya, Sex with Strangers, and Hamlet: See What I See). Thank you to Matthew, Rowan, and Willow–I love you!

Liam Horne* (Stage Manager (sub)) was last seen backstage at Umbrella Arts for *The Full Monty,* and has also been on the team for *Parade*, *Working*, and *Big Fish.* They have also had the pleasure to work as a frequent concert stage manager for Umbrella Arts, having the opportunity to work with Titus Burgess, Jon Batiste, Norah Jones, and more. While not backstage at the Umbrella, Liam can be found production managing at Company One Theatre.

Jeremy Johnson (Director) is thrilled to be making his Umbrella Arts debut with *Bat Boy*! Most recently, Jeremy directed the New England premiere of The Avett Brothers' new musical *Swept Away* at SpeakEasy Stage. A director, actor, writer and teacher, Jeremy has worked in Boston theater for over 25 years, with directing credits that include productions at Lyric Stage Company (Elliot Norton Award – Best Production – *Speech & Debate*), Gloucester Stage, Argos Productions, Foothills Theatre and Boston Directors' Lab. A proud Emerson College undergraduate, Jeremy earned his Master's from Roosevelt University in Chicago and has trained at Shakespeare & Company in Lenox, MA and Shakespeare's Globe, London, UK. He spent over a decade at StageSource, the Greater Boston Theater Alliance and he currently teaches and directs at The Winsor School.

Jeff Kimball, he/him (Music Director) is delighted to return to Umbrella Arts, having last served as MD for *RENT* in 2022. Jeff is the Resident Music Director & Co-Founder of The Treehouse Collective in Boston, and is a frequent music director, performer and educator around the Northeast. Most recently, he was MD for *The Ballad of Little Jo* with The Treehouse Collective, and *A Gentleman's Guide to Love & Murder* at Vokes Players. Jeff is pretty much always writing, performing, directing, improvising and teaching music and theatre. JeffKimballMusic.com

Cameron McEachern⁺ (Scenic Designer) is excited to be back at Umbrella Arts after designing last season's *Hairspray*. Other select credits include *Something Rotten, The Drowsy Chaperone* and *Little Shop of Horrors* - Puppet Design (The Lyric Stage), *Pippin*, *An American in Paris* and *Evita* (Reagle Music Theatre), *Sweeney Todd, Torch Song, The Rocky Horror Show,* and *Barnum* (Moonbox Productions). He is looking Forward to designing Umbrella Arts' *Into the Woods* later this season. Cameron is currently the Scenic Charge Artist with Wooden Kiwi Productions. Special thanks to Richie - for putting up with him. IG: @CameronMcEachern | CameronMcEachern.com

CREATIVE TEAM BIOS

(alphabetical)

Carlie Nieman, she/her (Technical & Production Manager) is thrilled to be joining the Umbrella Arts team as the new Technical & Production Manager! Previously, she served as the Production Manager for Chester Theatre Company and the Assistant Production Manager for Five College Dance. She is also a freelance stage manager, lighting designer, and technician. A big shoutout to her parter and family for their endless support!

Laurence O'Keefe (Music and Lyrics) was a producer of the original LA and NY productions of *Heathers*, *The Musical* (Drama Desk nomination for music). With his wife Nell Benjamin, he won the Olivier Award (London's Tony) for co-writing *Legally Blonde: The Musical,* which ran 2 1/2 years on the West End and has toured the UK. Blonde received seven Tony Award nominations, two US national tours and several international productions, winning Australia's Helpmann Award for Best Musical. Larry wrote the off-Broadway smash *Bat Boy: The Musical,* which won the Lucille Lortel Award, two Richard Rodgers Awards and the New York Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Musical, and has received 500+ productions worldwide, including the West End, Tokyo, Seoul, Berlin and Edinburgh. He has composed music and/or lyrics for The Daily Show, SyFy's Defiance, the Disney Channel, PBS and Cirque du Soleil. A graduate of Harvard and USC, Larry teaches master classes at Harvard, Yale, NYU and elsewhere.

Zoe Pepin* (Asst. Stage Manager) is thrilled to be back for her fourth season at Umbrella Arts. She most recently stage managed the readings *Lewiston* and *Clarkston*. Other past work at Umbrella Arts includes *The Counter* (ASM) and *Network* (Actor, Camera B Technician).

SeifAllah Salotto-Cristobal⁺, he/him, (Lighting Designer) returns for his 15th season with Umbrella Arts. Seif is a father, husband, educator, and storyteller who travels across the country designing lighting and video for Theatre, Opera, Dance, Concerts, and Live Events. He is the Associate Professor of Lighting Design, Co-Chair, and Head of Production and Design in the Department of Theatre at the University of Southern Maine where he brings his knowledge and experience to help shape the next generation of holistic storytellers and create a more equitable industry. Upcoming projects include: *She Loves Me* (The Boston Conservatory @ Berklee), *La boheme* (The Boston Conservatory @ Berklee), the World Premier of *Thank you, Omu!* (Children's Museum and Theatre of Maine), and *Ain't Too Proud* (Red Mountain Theatre). Seif is a proud member of United Scenic Artists 829. Seif.design

Sarabeth Spector, she/her (Properties/Set Dressing Designer) is a Boston area scenic and props designer. Credits include: *Annie* (Props Designer, Wheelock Family Theater); *Ada* (Props Designer, BabsonArts); *The Spitfire Grill* (Assistant Scenic Designer, Umbrella Arts); *I Love XXX* (Props Designer, Emerson Stage); *Where We Belong* (Props Designer, Umbrella Arts); *A Christmas Carol* (Props Designer, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company); *Mermaid Hour* (Assistant Scenic Designer, Props Designer; Moonbox Productions); *Cost of Living* (Props Designer, SPEAKEASY STAGE); *Legally Blonde* (Scenic Designer, Moonbox Productions); *Honeyhole* (Scenic Designer, Moonbox Productions); *For The Fish* (Associate Scenic Designer, Moonbox Productions); *NIGHTTOWN* (Scenic Designer, Lowell House Opera); *Baltimore* (Scenic Designer, Emerson Stage). www.SarabethSpector.com

CREATIVE TEAM BIOS

(alphabetical)

Kira Troilo, she/her (EDI Consultant) is a Boston-based creative, the CEO and founder of Art & Soul Consulting, and the creator and founder of Inclusive Stages®. A BFA graduate from Emerson College, Kira also holds an HR Essentials certificate from eCornell and is set to be a member of the 2024 ACOM cohort through American Repertory Theatre at Harvard University. She was also recently awarded the distinguished Community Impact Award for SpeakEasy Stage Company's 2024 gala. Kira's groundbreaking EDI work was recently featured in American Theatre Magazine. Kira's consulting work for dozens of organizations has taken her both nationally and internationally. In summer of 2023, she provided tailored support for the world premiere of *Summer Stock: The Musical* at Goodspeed Opera House, starring Corbin Bleu. In the winter of 2024, she provided tailored support for *Something Rotten!* at Stratford Festival in Canada. Kira has also crafted and shared her own, fully-tailored EDI workshop and development sessions with adjudicators, arts educators, theater ushers and volunteers, and boards of directors. In April 2024, Kira launched the first season of her new podcast, "Inclusive Stages", named for her newly crafted framework. With her cohort certification and membership programs, her goal is to standardize the organizational work of EDI for theater and the arts, and to make Inclusion Consultants as common and as crucial as stage managers for productions worldwide.

Ari Welch, she/her (EDI Consultant) is a multihyphenate based in Boston, juggling multiple roles as a top-tier operations leader with over a decade of experience, an EDI consultant, event organizer, producer, and stage manager. She has trained under Kira Troilo since 2023 in the specialized field of EDI consulting for the arts and is now a certified Inclusive STAGES™ consultant. Ari has excelled as both an inclusion consultant and the Programs & Special Events coordinator for Inclusive STAGES™ — providing support in communication and logistics for trainees. Ari boasts a rich theater background (including collaborations with SpeakEasy Stage Company and Company One) and extensive experience in creating immersive events. She plays a pivotal role in the producing team at Weston Drama Workshop, a prominent youth educational theater program. Ari holds a BFA from the Theater School at DePaul University in Chicago.

Ellen Waylonis, she/her, (Intimacy Director) is an intimacy director, circus artist, educator, creative producer, and director based in Boston. Recent projects include Creative Direction for the *Arias Aloft* series with Circus 617 and Opera Untapped; Direction and Creative Production for *Cirque of the Dead* with Boston Circus Guild; aerial choreography for *Swept Away* with Speakeasy Stage Company; and Intimacy Direction with the Contemporary American Theater Festival. Across roles and disciplines, Ellen's work focuses on storytelling through movement and creating spaces where artists can take meaningful risks with clarity, trust, and care. Ellen is Co-Founder and CEO of Esh Circus Arts and a co-founder of the contemporary circus collective Circus 617. EllenCreative.com | @clairifier

ABOUT UMBRELLA ARTS

Welcoming nearly 30,000 visitors each year, Umbrella Arts is a cultural leader in MetroWest Boston providing broad and diverse access to a wide range of performing arts, visual arts, and arts education. Annual programming includes four mainstage plays produced by our resident Stage Company; a beloved concert series featuring GRAMMY®-winning icons to emerging artists navigating the beginning of their exciting careers; film series in partnership with The Concord Film Project; year-round gallery exhibits; wide-ranging classroom offerings; and a popular summer camp. In addition, Umbrella Arts is an artistic home for more than 50 studio artists and a growing cohort of Artists-in-Residence.

Our mission is to be an interdisciplinary creative hub where artists, learners, and audiences can connect, innovate, and thrive. Through welcoming spaces, cultural conversations, and opportunities for artistic expression and skill development, we support artists at every stage of their journey, strengthen communities, enrich lives, and shape the future through the arts.

At Umbrella Arts, we believe in nurturing creativity at every stage, whether curious beginners, emerging artists, or established artists. You are part of a vibrant season spanning theater, music, galleries, and classes that reflect the depth of talent in our region and the joy of discovery through the arts.

THANK YOU
TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

We are grateful to all of our supporters, especially the following members of our 2026/27 Leadership Giving Society*.

Annual gifts at these levels have an outsized impact, providing essential operating support and serving as powerful endorsements of the organization.

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BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL

DIGITAL PLAYBILL

ABOUT THE UMBRELLA ARTS STAGE COMPANY

In 2012, Brian Boruta was named Artistic Director of Umbrella Arts' performing arts program (est. 2008). Under his leadership, Umbrella Arts' Stage Company has staked its claim as one of the most well-recognized and award-winning theaters in Greater Boston. Brian has brought thought-provoking, engaging, and socially relevant theater to Concord through the production of cutting edge plays and musicals and with fresh presentations and technology for revivals and classics. This approach has earned Umbrella Arts over 100 award nominations under his tenure including Best Production awards for *True West, Big Fish, To Kill a Mockingbird,* and *Parade.*

The program's team of designers, directors, actors and technicians works out of a new facility which broke ground in 2017 and opened in September of 2019. One of the most exciting additions to the Greater Boston performing arts landscape in the last decade, this new facility houses two venues, a 344-seat main stage and a 100-seat flexible black box space. With state-of-the-art technology, support spaces, and a superior audience experience, we look forward to many more years of bold, daring, and innovative theater in the heart of historic Concord.

RECENT SEASONS

2025/26

- *The Counter*
- *tick, tick... BOOM!*
- *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- *Hairspray: The Musical*
- *An Evening with Megan Hilty*

2024/25

- *The Spitfire Grill*
- *Where We Belong*
- *An Evening with Tituss Burgess*
- *Now. Here. This.*
- *Network*

2023/24

- *The Full Monty*
- *The Minutes*
- *An Evening with Jeremy Jordan*
- *White Rabbit Red Rabbit*
- *Lizzie, The Musical*

COMING UP IN 2026/27...

I AND YOU

October 9 - November 22, 2026

A homebound teen and an unexpected visitor clash over a Walt Whitman assignment that will lead them to a stunning epiphany.

INTO THE WOODS

February 26 - March 21, 2027

Once upon a time... Fairy tale characters collide on their journeys toward "ever after," sending them soaring into unexpected adventures and new discoveries.

INDECENT

April 30 - May 23, 2027

Pulitzer prize-winning playwright Paula Vogel's powerful tale of freedom and art, censorship and resistance.

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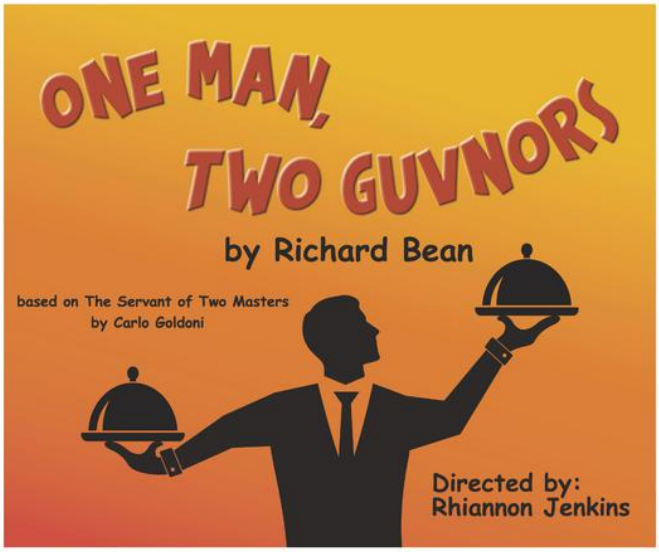
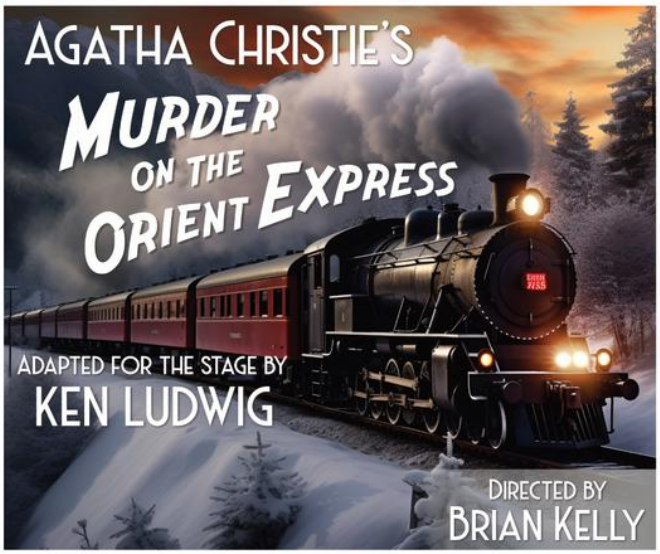
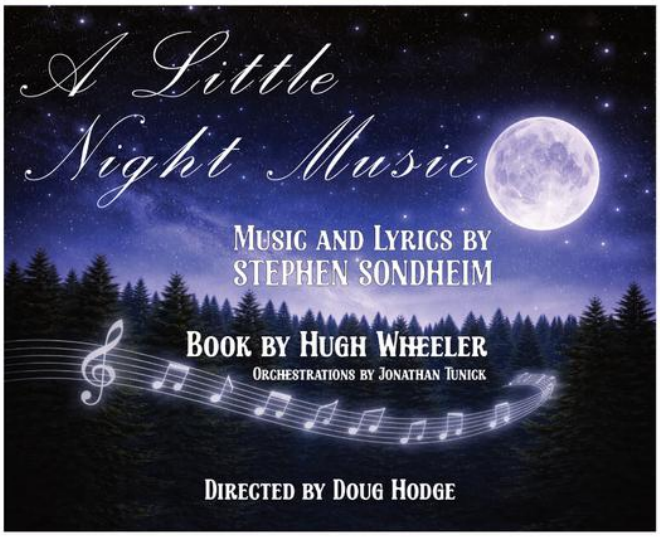


Nov. 6 - 21, 2026



Feb. 12 - 27, 2027



April 30 - May 15, 2027

concordplayers.org 978-369-2990

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
DIGITAL PLAYBILL

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AdelitaConcord.com
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Club Cafe

209 Columbus Ave, Boston, MA 02116
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Concord's Colonial Inn

48 Monument Square, Concord, MA 01742
ConcordsColonialInn.com
(978) 369.9200
Offer: 10% discount off daily room rate with ticket/receipt, pending availability; Meals: 10% off food on day of show with e-ticket; excludes taxes, gratuity, alcohol. Advance reservations recommended.

THANK YOU TO OUR HOSPITALITY PARTNERS!

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FarfalleItalianMarket.com
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Offer: Meals: 15% off food on day of show with ticket/receipt; excludes taxes, gratuity, alcohol.

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Fiorellas.com
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Offer: Meals: 10% off food on day of show with ticket/receipt; excludes taxes, gratuity, alcohol.

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ResidenceInn.com
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WASHINGTON POST

I AND YOU

by Lauren Gunderson

OCT 9 - NOV 22

UmbrellaArts

UmbrellaArts

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

PREPARED BY STAFF MEMBERS OF UMBRELLA ARTS

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL

SEP 25 - NOV 8, 2026

PHOTO BY JIM SABITUS. FEAT. AMY BARKER*, DEMAR JONES*, AND MICHELLE MORAN

*INDICATES A MEMBER OF ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

AN EDUCATION NOTE:

June 23, 1992, the Weekly World News published its iconic headline: "Bat Boy Found in West Virginia Cave!" introducing a half-boy, half-bat creature who rapidly evolved into the paper's unofficial mascot.

Conceived by Keythe Farley & Brian Flemming in 1996 and scored by Laurence O'Keefe, *Bat Boy: The Musical* fuses horror, comedy, tragedy, and satire, as well as musical styles like gospel, rock, and traditional musical theatre. It is a Greek tragedy dressed up as a 1950s American B-movie.

The performance style *Bat Boy's* creators discovered with their company, The Actors' Gang, was built on "the height of expression, the depth of sincerity." Creators found the show works best when its absurd world is played with complete truthfulness and enormous emotional stakes: "take-it-so-seriously-it's-funny-but-it-also-hurts."

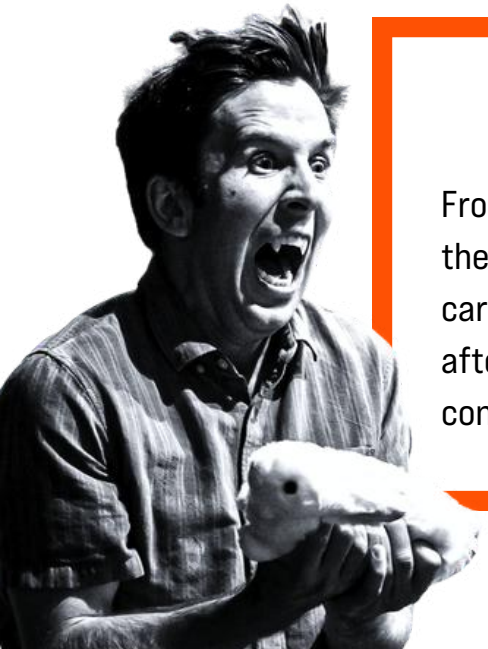
"Keythe and Brian set out to build a darkly comic world around deadly serious themes, primarily the notion of scapegoating – how societies will blame their fears and failures on the unusual, the weak, and the gifted. We decided to make *Bat Boy* all three." - Laurence O'Keefe

Bat Boy has a campy, over-the-top tone, but it is intentional and intelligent about using that style to both entertain and comment on persistent human themes of belonging, prejudice, scapegoating, fate, and what it means to be "human" versus what it means to be "civilized".

Bat Boy is also full of too many allusions and influences to catalogue here, but we hope this guide is a rich starting point to the many worthwhile discussions this musical can inspire!

PRE-SHOW QUESTIONS

- What communities do you belong to?
  - What does this community value or require to be a part of it?
  - How does this community confront problems?
- Do you have or seek out friendships with people who are different than you?
  - How do you bridge or appreciate those differences?
  - How do you make someone is different from you feel welcome?
- What monsters, myths, and urban legends do you find scary? Why? Is there anything scarier to you than such stories and characters?
- The town in this musical is set in is called "Hope Falls". What do you predict will happen in this town, based on the name?
- In stories, do you sometimes relate to or sympathize with characters who are "monsters" or "villains"? Why or why not?
- What does it mean to be "normal"? Can you identify things that all humans, or even all creatures, have in common?
- Have you ever been in a situation where it was easier to blame someone else than own up to your role in creating a problem?
- Can being different be a superpower? What kind of differences benefit a community and how have you seen this in your own life?



SPOILER ALERT

From here onward in the Education Guide, the content may quote the characters, reveal plot points, and more. If you like spoilers, carry on, but if you want to be totally surprised, save the rest for after you've seen *Bat Boy: The Musical*. (For production-specific content warnings, flip to this guide's final spread.)

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

FOLKLORE, LEGENDS, AND CRYPTIDS

"Do you not think that there are things which you cannot understand, and yet which are; that some people see things that others cannot?" - *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, Chapter 14

Folklore and legends have circled communities much longer than we have documentation of. Scotland's Loch Ness Monster, New Jersey's "Jersey Devil" (at right) various forms of Bigfoot, mermaids, and others are considered "cryptids" – reclusive creatures who are not confirmed scientifically to exist, but which persist in stories and eye witness accounts. Often, they are described as hybrids of familiar creatures.

The United States' Appalachian region, which includes a large portion of East Coast states, is home to many of these legends. Many of these folk tales originate from Native American tribes residing on the land, specifically the Cherokee Nation. The Cherokee Nation used folklore to pass down important information from one generation to the next, teach core values to younger members, and promote unity.

Folklore continues to unite communities even today. In Point Pleasant, West Virginia, every third week of September is a festival dedicated to their own legend, Mothman. However, these legends can also be used to explain tragic events that occur within a community.

The cast of *Bat Boy* that plays many different characters can be seen as a chorus that's telling Edgar / Bat Boy's story and perpetuating his legend, especially when they sing their final number less as characters (some of whom have already died in the events of the story) and more as performers compelling the audience to heed the lessons Bat Boy's story offers.

SUGGESTED PODCASTS: Cryptid Zone | Cryptid Campfire

KIDCARE ACTIVITY

Umbrella Arts' KidCare Program gives parents an opportunity to attend select performances while their child(ren) ages 5-12 engage in art activities inspired by the film or show in one of The Umbrella's classrooms with an experienced teacher. If you'd like to better understand or complete the activity at home, here is your guide!

Activity Steps: "Exquisite Cryptid"

1. Get a piece of paper and fold it into three or four even sections (to make four sections, fold in half, then fold in half again in the same direction)
2. Unfold the paper and draw the head and neck of a creature in the top panel. Extend the outlines of the neck a little bit into the next panel to give the next artist a starting point.
3. Fold the first panel down out of sight and pass your paper to another artist to complete the second panel.
4. Repeat steps 1-3 again until all panels are completed, down to the creature's feet! Don't peek at the previous panels during the process.
5. Unfold your paper to view the full, collaborative drawing of a strange new creature!

BOOK KIDCARE

Sun, Oct 18, 2 PM for BAT BOY and 6 PM for I AND YOU

To book KidCare to accompany your tickets to see BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL and/or I AND YOU, simply visit theUmbrellaArts.org/class/kidcare-performances and add the experience to your cart for the appropriate number of young people ages 5-12. Please note that enrollment space is limited and is reserved as first come, first served. For the upcoming productions in our 2026/27 season, KidCare is available March 7 and May 16.

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

RIPPED FROM THE TABLOID HEADLINES

"Heed the tale of a filthy freak, who's just like you!" - BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL

Bat Boy: The Musical is inspired by a World Weekly News headline published on June 23rd, 1992. The title, "BAT CHILD ESCAPES! Coast-to-coast manhunt for cave boy captured just weeks ago!" is one of many absurd titles published by World Weekly News since 1979, when the publisher began selling these eye-catching newspapers at supermarkets.

WWN Headlines

- AMAZING STORY: Man carries unborn twin 21 years inside his head
- Elvis' secret grave found
- Dying planet sends Christmas message to Earth
- Baffling chair of death kills 63!
- Space probe finds dinosaur on Mars
- Baby born with tattoo dated 1917

While the standalone print version stoped publication in 2007, *World Weekly News* still exists today as a website. Today their headlines are much more "in on the joke" than in their earlier publications.

Pulp magazines refer to tabloids printed on cheap wood pulp, rather than fancier papers. These papers were printed from 1896 until around 1955. Characters like Doc Savage, The Shadow, Zorro, and Tarzan all came from pulp magazines! These action stories paved the way for comic books, which emerged in the 1930s.

Suggested Reading

- Bat Boy Lives! An Oral History of Weekly World News by Jake Rossen

AND WHAT ABOUT REAL BATS?

Bats, like many nocturnal creatures, are often feared. But what are these animals truly like, and how does Edgar's character riff on what's real and what's assumed about these creatures? Some bat facts to ponder...

- Massachusetts has nine native species of bats.
- The phrase "blind as a bat" isn't accurate. Bats navigate effectively at night using **echolocation**, plus they have superior sight to humans in darkness or dim lighting, just like Edgar.
- Most bats excel at natural pest control: they are estimated to be able to consume consume up to 1000 mosquitoes per hour. (Not unlike all Edgar's offers to help in "Let Me Walk Among You," this is a welcome service!)
- The legend of vampires, chupacabras, and other bloodsucking cryptids is inspired by the vampire bat, a small (up to 3.5 inches long) critter that feeds via a process called **hematophagy**: they make a small puncture in the skin of a mammal with their sharp teeth then lapping up the blood while their special saliva prevents the blood from clotting during the feed.
- A third type of bat is typically larger (and is therefore called a "megabat") and feeds on fruits, pollen, nectar, and/or vegetation.
- Bats are not generally aggressive toward humans, but they can carry rabies, which is dangerous and potentially deadly disease if treatment of an infected animal (or human) is not treated in a timely fashion.

SUGGESTED READING

- Benefits of Bats
- Why Bats Matter

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME

"Many times I considered Satan as the fitter emblem of my condition; for often, like him, when I viewed the bliss of my protectors, the bitter gall of envy rose within me." - *Frankenstein,* Mary Shelley, Chapter 15

Pan is the Greek god of flocks and fields; however, he does not look like how you may imagine a god to look. Pan is a hypbrid, with the torso of a human, but the horns and legs of a goat, also known as a satyr. In Greek, the word "pan" means "all."

As a hybrid, Pan exists at the boundary of human and animal, civilization and wilderness, repression and desire, sacred and profane. He is a god who asks a disturbing question:

What happens when the animal part of humanity is not conquered, but celebrated? That is why Pan becomes both a symbol of joyful freedom and, later, one of the sources for Western images of the Devil."

When the god appears in *Bat Boy: The Musical,* Pan invites Shelley and Edgar to explore their unconventional love and lust. This supernatural intervention is a common thing that happens in Greek tragedy and Shakespeare. When a god on stage creates a tidy conclusion, it's called a "deus ex machina"; however, Pan's appearance in *Bat Boy* creates more complications in the story.

Ancient themes are littered throughout the production of *Bat Boy,* including excessive violence, incest (when blood relatives become romantically involved, often without realizing it, like Edgar and Shelley), and scapegoating. In ancient Greece, an animal (like a goat) or human might be chosen to represent the impurity within a community. Citizens would then drive the chosen scapegoat out of town to symbolize the city being rid of pollution. How does the town of Hope Falls treat Bat Boy as a scapegoat?

WHAT IS A WEEKEND REVIVAL?

“He will show he’s not what they’re terrified of; he will show them a love they can never destroy.” - BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL

In the Christian faith, a weekend revival is an opportunity for Christians to reaffirm their faith and invites newcomers into the religious community. Activities during a weekend revival involve guest preachers, worship, and prayer.

Weekend Revival meetings started as lengthy prayer services to renew religious fever within a congragagtion. They commonly bring different congregations and church groups together under a common purpose, like the people of Hope Falls deciding whether or not to accept Edgar / Bat Boy. These revivals can create deep bond within communities, giving people a fresh sense of shared identity.

How does faith impact the residents of Hope Falls? Are they willing to open up their circle to new people, like Bat Boy? How does faith play a role in how Bat Bly is treated in the community?

Examples of Weekend Revivals in FIlm

- Big Fish (2003)
- O Brother, Where Art Thou (2000)
- The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (2008)

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

THE STYLE OF CAMP

Bat Boy: The Musical is a mash-up of many genres and inspirations, resulting in a camp horror tragicomedy. But what is "camp"?

Camp originated as an artistic style in 19th century England, but even before that, this word was used by gay men and the broader LGBTQ+ community since at least the 1500s, making it a staple in queer culture.

The style of camp serves as a rallying point and refuge for queer communities. Camp has been noted to help those in the queer community find belonging, viability, and joy in a world that has historically been hostile towards them. In this way, camp responds to unspoken societal rules and norms, redefining what beauty, success, and identity look like.

"Camp" indicates an exaggerated, theatrical style, fully, enthusiastically embodied by a performer(s). Through an animated style of acting , outlandish plot points, and big swings in tone (for example, from the sweet and tender to the dark and morbid) in a single song or scene. *Bat Boy: The Musical* is considered "camp" because it fully exercises the capabilities of theatre, and also reminds and makes you aware that you are watching theater.

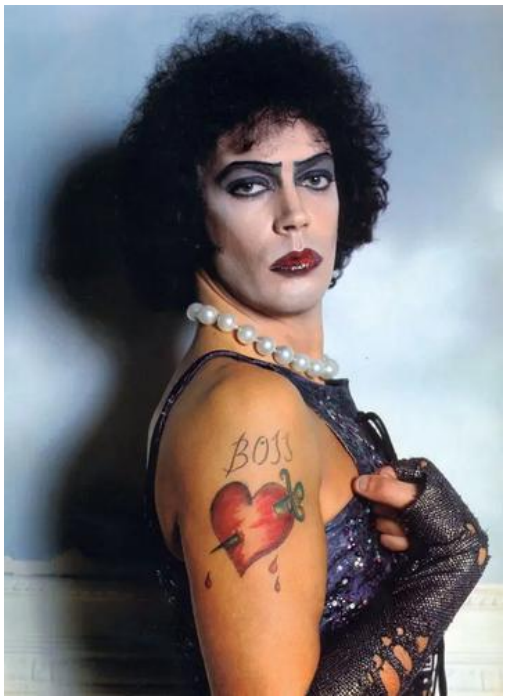
Other examples of "campy" media include *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Death Becomes Her,* and *Hairspray*.

"The hallmark of Camp is the spirit of extravagance."
- Susan Sontag, Notes on Camp (1964)

SUGGESTED READING

- What is Camp? The History & Evolution of a Queer Aesthetic by Rebecca Nagel

ICONS OF CAMP



▲ MOMMIE DEAREST has over-the-top style and feuds.

◀ Tim Curry as Dr. Frankenfurter in THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW. Rickie Lake and Divine as Tracy and Edna in John Waters' film HAIRSPRAY. ▼

▲ Meryl Streep in DEATH BECOMES HER.

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

B-MOVIE HORROR

In the 1950s, the emergence of American teen culture, fears of advancements in science (especially in studies of nuclear power and genetics), and movie studios' ability to mass produce films with chilling special effects yielded a new cinematic genre: the B-movie.

Taking its name from the B-side, meaning the secondary film at a double feature, these "lesser" films like *I Was a Teenage Werewolf* (1957, at right) explored themes of transformation, monstrosity, alienation, uncanny horror, and more. They often by featuring a monster, alien, or otherworldly threat. Films like *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) presented a more stylish, elevated take on paranoia and went on to become influential classics.

"I don't play monsters. I play men besieged by fate and out for revenge."
- Vincent Price

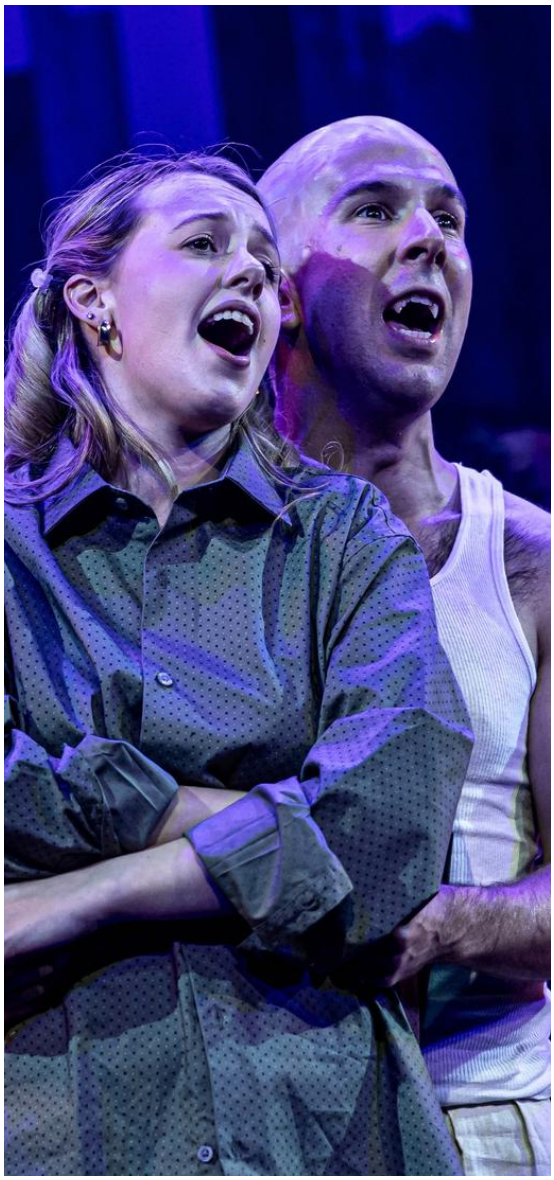
SUGGESTED VIEWING

- *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956): fear of strangers in the suburbs.
- *I Was a Teenage Werewolf* (1957): Adolesence as horrific transformation.
- *House on Haunted Hill* (1959): Vincent Price is both absurd and elegant.
- *The Tingler* (1959): Again, a gleefully unhinged Vincent Price.
- *The Little Shop of Horrors* (1960): a horror comedy with a pathetic protagonist.
- *The Fly* (1958): A twisted science experiment results in hybrid horror.

Above, L to R: Holly B. Faust, Johnny Shea*, Tomas Vice + Michelle Moran, Johnny Shea*, Brian Demar Jones, Amy Barker*. Below, the cast of BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL. Photos by Jim Sabitus. * a member of AEA.

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

AN INTERVIEW WITH STAR JOHNNY SHEA
INTERVIEW BY KILIAN MELLOY OF THEATER MIRROR



Michelle Moran and Johnny Shea*, photo by Jim Sabitus. *indicates amember of AEA.

TM: You won the Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding Performance earlier this year for TICK, TICK… BOOM! Congratulations on that.

JS: Thank you so much.

TM: And now you're back with Umbrella Arts as Bat Boy. Do you see any resonance between the two roles?

JS: Being back at Umbrella Arts is really exciting. I enjoyed working there on TICK, TICK… BOOM!, and in terms of [the main characters'] hunger and passion, I do see a connection. Jon [in tick, tick…BOOM!] is urgently trying to pursue making something meaningful out of his art and his work, and I think Edgar in BAT BOY has that same hunger and passion and desire to belong, and to be accepted into this community. So, in terms of their fire and energy, I think I do see a parallel there.

M: This is a unique play. I don't think I've ever seen a play that said it was "licensed under agreement with Weekly World News."

JS: I know, it's crazy, right? Some of the people in our cast recalled memories from when they were younger and had real fears of this [tabloid] cover. It's amazing that the writers caught wind of the tabloid and decided to let the musical follow.

TM: Edgar starts out as quite feral. Or do you see him more as... raw? Unspoiled by civilization?

JS: I like seeing it both ways. The feral side is probably the biggest challenge of the role. Edgar has been raised by bats, so he's purely animalistic. But I also like how this could mean he's untouched by the world yet — pure and raw. Everything is new to Edgar. Everything is impacting him and changing the way he sees the world. What's interesting about the play is that we see him cultivate seeds of goodness and curiosity but also [we see him] learn darker elements that lead to the play's tragedy.

TM: There's some pretty dark stuff here, for a comedy. How are you finding the funny in the midst of so much mayhem?

JS: It's a real challenge of the show. There could be laughter, or shock, or disgust, or horror. There's a wide range of possible outcomes because it's like a Greek tragedy, but also absurd. I think Jeremy [Johnson], our director, is doing a good job finding the right tone...Lawrence O'Keefe, in the playwright's notes, talks about playing this with real, genuine commitment while in an absurd universe. It's difficult, because it's tricky dealing with things that are really heavy and sad. But I kind of love that it does all of that.

TM: Bat Boy seems like it could be played right now as a metaphor for xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiments.

Xenophobia, noun:
This term comes from the Greek roots meaning strangers (xenos) and fear (phobia), this term refers to fear of foreigners and outsiders that can lead to violence. The oppositre is xenia, or hospitality.

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

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JS: There's a lyric from the storytellers — the ensemble characters who play multiple roles and serve like a Greek chorus — where they sing, "He's much like me" about Edgar. I think he can serve as a metaphor for marginalized or oppressed people. The fear of the unknown and the hatred of things we don't understand is something Edgar and the society around him represent. We have a responsibility to create a sense of poignancy amidst this otherwise silly story so audience members can see themselves in this character. It feels important to do right now because of the political climate. Oppressed people are othered, seen as less than or different, and often driven away or pushed out. This show deals with that pretty head on

TM: The writers touch on something that feels obvious now: Persecution is not always just a matter of fear of the unknown. Sometimes, permission is all people need to hate and attack.

JS: Yeah, scapegoating is a big part of the show. The cows are dying, they need someone to blame, and mob mentality kicks in. There's something about our animal side, the primitive side in all of us that lashes out when we're afraid. Edgar learns this; he didn't start with it. He learned it from the society around him. He embraces it. He says, "I'm not a boy, I'm an animal," and he believes what he thinks are truths about him.

TM: The songs seem to drive much of the story, rather than merely accompany it.

JS: Yeah, it's mostly songs. There aren't that many book scenes. The twists and turns in the songs often drive the plot, which is exciting. Characters make big discoveries in each song... And there are curveballs along the way. That's fun to play, because it's not always the case in musical theater.

TM: Is there a song that hits you particularly hard?

JS: “Let Me Walk Among You” is probably my favorite song to sing. The melodies are lovely, but Edgar’s making his case for why he should be accepted. I’ve dealt with my own feelings of wanting to belong and wanting to fit in. He’s singing about what makes the town beautiful — looking at all these people, children, husbands, wives. There’s a real appreciation of the world around him. It feels like a Quasimodo or Evan Hansen thing, and I can relate to being a wallflower and expressing that through song. I also love “Show You a Thing or Two,” where Edgar transforms from being feral to a refined gentleman in minutes. It has a MY FAIR LADY quality. He rattles off cultural references, and it feels like a celebration of knowledge and curiosity. He just wants a normal day, and I think that helps me appreciate a normal day a little more. It doesn’t always need to be spectacular.

TM: Monsters in stories like this tend to be eloquent — like the Elephant Man, or Frankenstein’s monster. Edgar, too, is highly articulate, and he speaks beautifully even if some people are shocked at his appearance.

JS: Edgar’s always been a genius, even when he was in caves. He just didn’t have the access or resources to unlock that potential. He becomes the smartest bat person in Hope Falls. [Laughter] I’m working to find cleanliness and precision even in my physicality when he becomes a gentleman. There’s a scene where they’re sipping tea, and I need to remind myself to fix my posture because it’s so foreign to me. But Edgar’s so determined to get it right and to fit in. His desire to please is so strong that he really gives it his all...Hopefully the audience will grow to like him and be on his side, and hopefully that makes it a big shift when he embraces his inner darkness. The last lyric is, “Don’t deny your beast inside.” That’s the heart of the show: The knowledge that all of us have a shadow side to one degree or another, and we must embrace it rather than repress it.

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

ALLUSIONS IN "I CAN SHOW YOU A THING OR TWO"

Geography & Landmarks

- Champs-Élysées – The famous avenue in Paris lined with shops, cafés, and monuments.
- Parthenon – The iconic ancient Greek temple atop the Acropolis in Athens.
- Great White Way – A nickname for New York City's Broadway theater district.
- Everglades – A vast subtropical wetland ecosystem in southern Florida.
- Berlin Wall – The barrier that divided East and West Berlin from 1961 to 1989 during the Cold War.
- Autobahn – Germany's famous highway system, known for stretches without speed limits.
- Carnegie Hall – One of the world's most prestigious concert halls, located in New York City.
- Ice Capades – A popular touring ice-skating entertainment show that ran for decades.
- Pentagon – Headquarters of the United States Department of Defense.
- Golden Gate – Refers to the Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco's iconic suspension bridge.
- Amazon – Usually referring to the Amazon River and rainforest, the largest tropical rainforest on Earth.
- Rio Grande – A major river forming much of the border between the United States and Mexico.
- Taj Mahal – The famous white marble mausoleum in Agra, India, built by Emperor Shah Jahan.
- Empire State – Refers to the Empire State Building, one of New York City's best-known skyscrapers.
- Wailing Wall – Another name for the Western Wall, Judaism's holiest accessible prayer site in Jerusalem.
- Disneyland – The original Disney theme park, opened in California in 1955.
- Brooklyn Bridge – The historic suspension bridge connecting Manhattan and Brooklyn.
- Lenin's Tomb – The mausoleum in Moscow where Vladimir Lenin's embalmed body is displayed.
- Watergate – The Washington, D.C. complex that became synonymous with the political scandal that led to President Nixon's resignation.
- Rainbow Room – The famous fine-dining restaurant and event space atop Rockefeller Center in New York.
- Ruby Ridge – The site of a deadly 1992 federal law enforcement standoff in Idaho.
- Liberty Bell – The iconic symbol of American independence located in Philadelphia.
- Bering Strait – The narrow body of water separating Alaska from Russia.
- Bates Motel – The fictional motel from Robert Bloch's novel Psycho and Psycho.
- Timbuktu – A historic city in Mali long associated in popular culture with being an impossibly distant place.

Historical Figures & Thinkers

- Copernicus – The astronomer who proposed that Earth revolves around the Sun rather than the reverse.
- Charles Darwin – The scientist whose theory of evolution by natural selection transformed biology.
- Sigmund Freud – The neurologist who emphasized the role of the unconscious mind in human behavior.
- Vince van Gogh – One of history's most celebrated painters, famous for works like Starry Night.
- Henry David Thoreau – American transcendentalist best known for Walden and civil disobedience.
- Plato – One of the foundational philosophers of Western thought.
- Cato the Elder – Roman politician remembered for advocating traditional Roman values and ending speeches with calls to destroy Carthage.
- Edgar Allan Poe – Master of Gothic fiction and poetry, including "The Raven."
- Jean Cocteau – A multidisciplinary French poet, playwright, filmmaker, and visual artist.
- Jacques Cousteau – Explorer and filmmaker who brought the underwater world to television audiences.
- Federico Fellini – Influential Italian filmmaker known for imaginative, dreamlike cinema.
- Harry Houdini – Legendary magician famous for spectacular escape acts.
- Michelangelo – Sculptor, painter, and architect who created the Sistine Chapel ceiling and David.
- Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis – American cultural icon admired for her elegance and style.
- Marilyn Monroe – Hollywood star who became one of the defining cultural icons of the 1950s.
- Sandro Botticelli – Renaissance artist best known for The Birth of Venus.
- Niccolò Machiavelli – Author of The Prince, famous for his writings on political power.
- Larry Fine – One-third of the classic slapstick comedy trio.
- Curly Howard – The most recognizable member of the Three Stooges, known for his physical comedy.
- Moe Howard – The leader of the Three Stooges comedy team.

ALLUSIONS IN "I CAN SHOW YOU..." (CON'T)

Music, Literature & Performing Arts

- Spartacus – The story of the slave who led a major revolt against Rome, later adapted into a famous film.
- Fargo – The acclaimed crime film by the Coen brothers set in the American Midwest.
- Anchors Aweigh – A classic MGM musical starring Gene Kelly and Frank Sinatra.
- Love Story – A hugely successful romantic drama famous for the line "Love means never having to say you're sorry."
- Key Largo – A classic film noir starring Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall.
- The Remains of the Day – The acclaimed adaptation of Kazuo Ishiguro's novel about duty, regret, and missed opportunities.
- Giacomo Puccini – Composer of beloved operas including La Bohème, Tosca, and Madama Butterfly.
- Otello – Verdi's operatic adaptation of Shakespeare's Othello.
- Vincenzo Bellini – Composer celebrated for elegant bel canto operas such as Norma.
- Wayne Shorter – One of the greatest jazz composers and saxophonists of the twentieth century.
- Elvis Costello – Influential rock musician known for blending punk, pop, and new wave music.
- Masterpiece Theatre – A long-running PBS television series that presents acclaimed British dramas and literary adaptations.
- PBS (Public Broadcasting Service) – America's public television network, known for educational and cultural programming.

Above: the cast of BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL. Photo by Jim Sabitus.

TAKE 5 WITH DIR. JEREMY JOHNSON

1. How would you describe BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL in three words? I would say silly, shocking, and sincere.

2. Tell us about the style of the show? This show has a really interesting personality. It is a mix of sincere tragedy, ridiculous over-the-top comedy, and horror. We've been calling it the three-legged stool, and we bounce back and forth between these three genres throughout the night. Our hope is that the audience is always a little bit on their toes, and not sure what's going to happen next. Just as soon as you feel like you've settled into knowing what the feeling and mood of the production is, we hope to quickly move you somewhere else, so that you're constantly being taken by surprise throughout the evening.

3. This show is unlike any other. What can audience members expect? Audiences can expect blood, thrills, chills, and an exciting evening at the theater! But I hope that when they leave the theater, they take with them a story that is deeper and more thoughtful than they expected when they first walked into the show. I'm excited to explore this show in a really fun and exciting and engaging way, and to have a deeper message that's delivered as they're walking out the door; something they can think and talk about on their walk back to the car or at drinks after the show to process what they've seen.

4. Tell us about the influences you bring to this production? This production is heavily influenced by both the famous Universal monster movies of the 1930s and '40s, like Frankenstein and Dracula, and also borrowing from the sci-fi and B horror movies of the 1950s and '60s, like The Fly and Invasions of the Body Snatchers. In a lot of our design meetings, we've talked about how to pull some of the visual language and style from those movies and incorporate that into the design of the show and the overall tone that the actors are taking to approach the material.

5. What themes and human experiences at the heart of BAT BOY most resonate with you? Edgar has a line in the show, "I know you hate me, but if you could only see me the way that I see all of you, you would understand." I think this is an important message for the show. We're living in a time where the national conversation has gotten really complicated, and we're not seeing each other, and we're not hearing each other. We're talking past one another. I think this show does what all good theater does, which is that it asks us to be empathetic and think about the person that's sitting across from us at that moment. Can we identify with them and what they are going through, and possibly find a connection with that person? Theater's always been about connection, and it's always been about empathy, and I think this show does this in a really funny, unique, quirky, and engaging way. The final message of the production is 'don't deny your beast inside,' which I think is a really interesting examination of the animal and the human parts of ourselves. The musical asks if you can find a balance between the two; can you make peace with this sort of darker animal part of yourself – your anger, your fear, and your desires – and not repress them, but also not allow them to take over and potentially cause disaster? Can you find that way to balance both the human and the animal?

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

POST SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Bat Boy can be seen as a "metaphor for the marginalized" per lead actor Johnny Shea – people on the edges of society who are misunderstood, excluded, and/or blamed for societal problems. Do you see Bat Boy as a metaphor for any particular group today?

- Who or what do you consider the villain or antagonist is of BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL? What motivates them? Do they see themselves as the hero, and if so, why?

- Do you believe Edgar's story could have ended differently, even happily? What would have to change about the characters or community to allow this to happen?

- In the end, Edgar declares "I am not a boy; I am an animal." What do you believe is the relationship between being human, being animal, being civilized, and being moral?
    - Does "being civilized" mean that one is good?
    - Is it possible to "be civilized" without being in relationship with other people in a community?
    - Is there goodness to animals' natural, uncivilized state?

- This unique musical has a ton of allusions, styles, and tonal shifts. What references, lyrics, plot twists, and turns resonated with you? Reminded you of other media or stories?

SPECIFIC CONTENT WARNINGS

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL is inspired by Appalachian cryptids, B-movie monsters, tabloid sensationalism, and Greek tragedy. As such, this camp horror-comedy features...

- Discussions of farm animal harm and death
- Depictions of physical and gun violence
- Theatrical blood effects, poisoning, murder, and suicide
- One scene of simulated sexual acts
- Plot points about sexual assault and unwitting incest
- Themes of (and language related to) bigotry, scapegoating, mob mentality, and religious extremism

The production might be staged with the following elements that some audience members may be physically sensitive to:

- Loud noises, including a gun shot
- Theatrical haze
- Strobe-like lighting effects

There is no rating system for live theater. We encourage you to use the resources available from Umbrella Arts and other online resources such as reviews of the previous productions to gauge whether a production is a good fit for any potential audience member. Umbrella Arts generally recommends BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL for mature audiences, teens and up, while acknowledging that maturity levels can vary widely. **Teens aged 16+** are most likely to appreciate both the darker content and camp sensibility of this show.

Do you have further questions? **Please reach out to our Box Office!**

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