

What happens when an out-of-town tryout of “The Crucible” - helmed by a once-legendary director making his comeback and funded by his renowned actress wife - casts an arrogant veteran theatre actor opposite a beauty influencer with absolutely no experience? A Lot! In 2024, the search for truth in the role of Abigail Williams puts Arthur Miller’s classic on trial...



Directed by Georgia Mallory-Guy  
April 10<sup>th</sup> 2024



Playwright – Sarah Tuft

When I first read “The Crucible” as an adult woman, I was shocked by the portrayal of Abigail Williams as a seventeen-year-old “psycho stalker,” which is how ABIGAIL’s protagonist refers to the representation. But it wasn’t until I read details about Arthur Miller’s relationship with Marilyn Monroe, that I set out to explore these ideas in my play ABIGAIL. Having started the play at the height of the #MeToo movement, I’m delighted with the nuance that four years of development have brought to the play. I’m grateful for how the team of amazing theater artists at Centenary Stage Company’s Women Playwrights Series have furthered ABIGAIL’s development and hope we give audiences much to discuss after tonight’s reading!!

- Sarah Tuft





Directed by Zoya Kachadurian  
April 17<sup>th</sup> 2024

When fiercely independent Vivian gets a knock on her door from Carla, a young hospice volunteer desperate to shine, the two strike up an unlikely and unforgettable friendship. Enter Val (Valium) and Di (Digoxin), who lend a hand in exploring life's choices.

Through a series of red carpet rants, Lifetime interviews, and a truly unique game show, Vivian and Carla help each other in making some life-altering decisions.



Playwright – Wendy Herlich



Several years ago, I read the book *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande, which addresses the advancements and limits of modern medicine when it comes to end-of-life care and support. I was hooked from the moment I cracked it open. Gawande illuminates how our culture's profound discomfort with talking about death is making the difficulty of leaving this world even more painful for so many people. This book was the first step into a period of deep engagement with the topic. I sat at my grandfather's bedside at the moment of his death, witnessed my mother-in-law suffer through years of dementia, worked as a hospice volunteer, having the privilege of coming into people's lives as the "last neighborly friend" they would ever meet. I devoured countless other books, podcasts, and movies on death and the nest of thorny issues that come along with it, including medically assisted dying. Finally (at last, at least!) I found myself writing this play. Because I'm from a family that finds the opportunity to laugh even during moments of tragedy, I couldn't imagine any other way. Let's make jokes, imagine fantastical worlds, argue, hold to our beliefs; as long as we start opening up to discussing our wishes, what we fear, what brings us greatest joy. And after we've had the first conversation about our deaths, we have to keep having them. The stakes are too high, and the rewards could be end-of-life-changing.



Directed by Mikaela Kafka  
April 24<sup>th</sup> 2024

**It's 1974. Cosmonauts Dmitri and Yuri are aboard a secret Soviet space station, a tiny capsule miles above Earth. As the cosmonauts argue the mundane intricacies of life--particularly the best way to woo Pat Nixon--they're interrupted by an urgent radio message.**

**Suddenly the fate of the world rests in the hands of these two unlikely heroes, who must do everything in their power to discover the truth and ultimately determine the right thing to do.**



Playwright – Sophia Naylor

In 1974, the Soviets launched the secret spy space station Almaz, which is what this play's Bor'ba station is based on. The Almaz had a huge telescope to take extremely detailed photos of Earth. It also had a defensive cannon. (Alas, the Bor'ba has no such cannon.) Almaz's cannon was remotely tested, and while successful, caused such a vibration that crews refused to be onboard for subsequent testing. A prime example of "we do what we must, because we can."\*

The bravado, ambition, recklessness, fear, and lies of both the Soviet Union and America fascinate me, especially the ways in which they fueled the Cold War and its two races—the Space Race and the Arms Race. The same rocket could start a nuclear holocaust, or send an astronaut to Mir (a precursor to the International Space Station).

I began writing this play before the Ukraine war, without knowing how brutally relevant it would become. I hope that, while a period piece, the play can also be a timeless and human story of two people thrown into impossible circumstances. It can be difficult to do the right thing, and even more challenging to know what the right thing to do is.

\*This is a line from the videogame Portal's final song "Still Alive." The song continues: "For the good of all of us./Except the ones who are dead./But there's no sense crying over every mistake...And the Science gets done./And you make a neat gun./For the people who are still alive."

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I would like to acknowledge the two previous and excellent readings For A Brighter Tomorrow has had: one at the Pear Theatre in California (2022) and one with Broad Horizons in New York (2023). The dedication and commitment to new works of both organizations is deeply meaningful, and I am thrilled to add the Women Playwrights Series to that list.

