

CENTENARY
STAGE
COMPANY

Women Playwrights Series Presents

WPS
WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS SERIES



JANE,
QUEEN'S FOOLE
BY BARBARA BLATNER

April 12th - 7:30pm

Sponsored by:



**THE HOUSE OF THE
GOOD SHEPHERD**
Welcome to Joyful Living at Riverwalk Village



Sitnik Theatre | 715 Grand Ave | Hackettstown, NJ 07840
908.979.0900 | Centenarystageco.org

MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT...

A Note from:

Barbara Blatner

Why did I write *Jane, Queen's Foole*, about the only documented female Fool/jester in the English court?

I love Fools because they were not “normal.” I adore Shakespeare’s *King Lear* Fool who shows Lear both his own foolishness but his tender, humble heart.

Fools were outsiders, deviants. Historically, “natural fools” were disabled physically and/or developmentally, objects of ridicule. Yet the court Fool, in particular, had great freedom. Financially supported by the monarch she or he served, the court Fool could mock the Queen or King in words that would be offensive in someone else’s mouth.

In Mary Tudor and her father King Henry VIII’s time in England (early 16th Century), the existence of Jane Foole, as she was called, is documented only in traces in bursary accounts of Anne Boleyn, King Henry VIII’s second wife, famously beheaded by him. Jane is thought to have been the jester of Queens Catherine Parr, Mary Tudor and, perhaps, of Boleyn herself. Other characters in my play, Will Somer and Lucretia (Lucrece) the Tumbler, were actual court entertainers; Will Somer was famous as Henry VIII’s primary Fool and pal. Lucretia was a highly skilled acrobat-tumbler.

In *Jane, Queen's Foole*, I have taken my own fool’s freedom and invented Jane, a lame, “crazy” country girl begging on the streets of London. Jane rhymes compulsively, is psychologically and physically challenged, yet she engages Princess Mary Tudor with her wit and a prophecy, and becomes Mary’s Jane Foole. As Jane Foole was the first female fool in the English court, Princess Mary was, for real, Britain’s first governing queen. My play foregrounds these two women who were both foolish and wise in very different ways in the Tudor court.



Barbara Blatner: SECRET PLACES was produced in 2022 by Manhattan’s New Circle Theatre Company. HAMLET LEAVES ENGLAND was a Main Stage production at Pittsburgh New Works 2022; TWO SISTERS was presented at the Inge Festival 2022. YEARS OF SKY, produced at the 59E59 Theatres, won the Columbia-Greene and New Works of Merit contests. NO STAR SHINES SHARPER, produced for radio by New Voices/Public Media Foundation and published by Baker’s Plays, aired on National Public Radio stations, and was acquired by the Museum of TV and Radio. NYQ Books published two full-length poetry collections, THE STILL POSITION and LIVING WITH YOU.

Jane, Queen’s Fool
 By Barbara Blatner
 Directed by Georgia Mallory Guy

THE CAST

JANEEMALINE WILLIAMS
 MARY.....JOELLE ZAZZ
 CHESTER.....OSBORN FOCHT
 WILL SOMER.....DONALD DANFORD
 LUCRECE THE TUMBLER.....SARA GIACOMINI
 NARRATORBRANDON VITA

CREATIVE TEAM / CREW

DIRECTORGEORGIA MALLORY GUY
 WPS PROGRAM DIRECTORMIKAELA KAFKA
 STAGE MANAGEROLIVIA TOMLIN

Setting: Tudor London. Act 1: 1536. Act 2: 1553-1558.

Princess Mary Tudor’s dwelling in London – Mary’s chamber, other rooms and hallways, garden.

A stable on the palace grounds.

A field near London.

Sponsored By:



**THE HOUSE OF THE
 GOOD SHEPHERD**
 Welcome to Joyful Living at Riverwalk Village



This event is part of the New Jersey Theatre Alliance 2023 Stages Festival, made possible by support from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts; Bank of America; The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey; OceanFirst Foundation; New Jersey Historical Commission. www.njtheatrealliance.org/stages



Made possible by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.



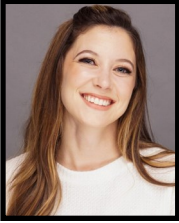
The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey



Special Thanks to our 2023 WPS Committee!

Rebecca Engborg, Vita Morales, Robin Gurin, Emily Miller,
 Debra Scacciafero, Maria Brodeur, Ruth Zamoyta,
 Kimberly Bollard, and Catherine Rust

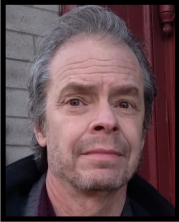
THE CAST



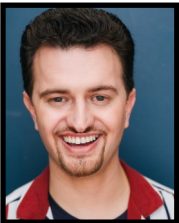
Emaline Williams (Jane) is an Ohio born but NJ based Equity actor. NYC: Vampire Cowboys Theater Co (*Alice in Slasherland*, *GEEK!*) NJ: Centenary Stage Co (*Meteor Shower*, *Turning*, *The Sunshine Boys*, *Dracula*, *Hitler's Tasters*), Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey (*A Child's Christmas in Wales*), Vivid Stage (*Ways to be Happy: a radio play*, *Life's Work*, *Soft Animals*), The Bickford Theatre (*Accomplice*), The Growing Stage (*Tales from the Garden*) & Alliance Repertory (*Bluff*, *Trying*). Emaline holds a BFA in theater performance from Ohio University. www.emalinewilliams.com



Joelle Zazz (Mary) Joelle Zazz is a professional actor, fight director/captain, and wig runner for theatre. Tours: Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief (TYA 1st Nat'l), Votes For Women (Speranza Theatre Company). Regional: Centenary Stage, The Shakespeare Theatre of NJ (5+ years), Mile Square Theatre, Premiere Stages, Speranza Theatre Company and more. Rep: The Luedtke Agency. joellezazz.com.



Osborn Focht (Chester) has appeared with Centenary Stage Co. as MAURICE in *Beauty and the Beast*, Oliver Warbucks in *Annie*, George Banks in *Mary Poppins*, Captain Hook in *Peter Pan*, Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*, Bill Sykes in *Oliver*, Don in *Rounding Third*, Tartuffe in *Tartuffe*, and Chrysalde in *The School for Wives*. Other credits include Paul Simon's *The Capeman* on Broadway, *The Magdalene* off-Broadway, *Kristina the Musical* at Carnegie and Royal Albert Halls recorded on the Decca label, *The Sound of Music* at Paper Mill Playhouse, *Sweeney Todd* at Center Stage Baltimore, *Eleanor*; an *American Love Story* at Ford's Theater, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Oklahoma!*, and *Moby Dick*; the Musical at Seaside Music Theater, *Spring Awakening* at The Garage Theater Group, and has worked with East Lynne and Speranza Theater Companies VERN, in the Kaytha Jentis film *Bad Parents*. The bass of The Mervtones with Merv Griffin and his orchestra under the direction of Mort Lidsey, *Late Show Carolers* on *Late Show with David Letterman*, five seasons with The Opera Co. of Philadelphia, stage and film collaborations, including *These Two* channel on YouTube featuring CoVitures, with his lovely young bride, Mikaela Kafka.

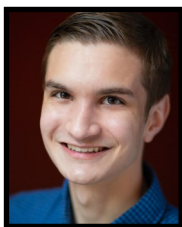


Donald Danford (Will Somer) is thrilled to be working with CSC again! Recent credits include, *Maddie & Eleanor*, *The Land of Forgotten Toys*, *Mr. Poppers Penguins* (Admiral Drake) *John Henry* (Jaryl Walker) and *Babes In Toyland* (Tweedle Dum) with The Growing Stage. Other credits include *Mary Poppins* (Robertson Ay), *StartDown* (Matty) with Centenary Stage Company. *The Norwegians* (Tor) with Alliance Rep, *The Lion In Winter* (John) with 12 Miles West. He also had the pleasure of working with the Monomoy Theatre in Chatham Massachusetts. In 2014 he received his B.F.A in Theatre Performance from Ohio University. Donald would like to thank his mom, dad, and his wife Sarah for all of their love and support!

THE CAST (Continued)



Sara Giacomini (Lucrece) currently works as an actress and teaching artist throughout the NJ/NYC area. Some of her previous acting credits include: *The Ghost Train* (Peggy Murdock) at Centenary Stage Company, *A Christmas Carol* (Understudy/Performed as Old Jo) at McCarter Theatre Center, *The Little Foxes* (Alexandra) at Hudson Theatre Works, *Dr. Faustus* (Robin) at the Secret Theatre, and *Curious George: The Golden Meatball* (George) at The Growing Stage. Shakespeare Credits Include: Romeo, Puck, Viola, Feste, and Hermia. BA in MT from FDU. www.saragiacomini.com "Never apologize for your art."



Brandon Vita (Narrator) graduated from Drew University with a BA in Theatre Arts, acting in mainstage productions, as well as several developmental works. He performed in Drew's New York Semester where he participated in devising the play *Monstress* in collaboration with Tectonic Theatre Project (actor & puppeteer). Other experiences included serving as dramaturg on Drew's production of *Working*, choreographing a tap piece for the Spring 2022 Dance show, and serving as a Producer for their "Plays In Process" program, putting up student written plays in development. Brandon's involvement with CSC extends back to before college as a member of the Young Performer's Workshop. Some YPW credits included *Damn Yankees* (Mr. Applegate), *South Pacific* (Luther Billis), *A Chorus Line* (Don Kerr), *The Robber Bridegroom* (Jamie Lockhart), *She Loves Me* (Steven Kodaly), *Company* (Peter). He also performed in Centenary's Equity productions of *Mary Poppins* (Ensemble), and *Newsies* (Newsie). Most recently, Brandon served as Dramaturg for CSC's productions of *Living Dead in Denmark* and *Macbeth*.

MEET THE DIRECTOR...

Georgia Mallory Guy



is a professional actor/director, whose regional credits include: Milwaukee Rep., Orlando Shakes, Pittsburgh Irish and Classical, Centenary Stage, Palm Beach Dramaworks, Florida Rep., American Stage, freeFall, Jobsite, Stageworks, Tampa Rep., Banyan, A Simple Theatre, ThinkTank, The Show Palace, Monomoy and Festival 56 among others. She is also the Producing Artistic Director of ThinkTank Theatre. Georgia has served as professor of theater at Centenary University, the University of South Florida, Ohio University, and a Guest Artist at Troy University.

Georgia is a proud member of Actors' Equity. Georgia attended Troy University, then Troy State University, and earned degrees in Music Education, Communications/Theatre, and a minor in Vocal Performance. She graduated with her MFA in 2010 from Ohio University's Professional Actor Training Program. IG – [georgiamrsguy](https://www.instagram.com/georgiamrsguy), IG – [thinktanktya](https://www.instagram.com/thinktanktya), Twitter [@georgiamrsguy](https://twitter.com/georgiamrsguy), [@ThinkTankTYA](https://twitter.com/ThinkTankTYA)

A Note from the WPS Program Director:

Four Weeks...Four Playwrights.....and YOU!!!

First off, Congratulations!!! to our fabulous playwrights; Michele Aldin Kushner, Barbara Blatner, Jaqueline Goldfinger, and Arlene Hutton. Thank you for your work!

As told to me from the illustrious founder of this Series, Catherine Rust, whose position I have stepped into this year, "I like to think of it as an Adventure Series.!" I

concur! Each of these women playwrights is bringing us a brief look at humanity; each with their own subtle and sometimes not so subtle, unique touch. Each one its own adventure! From the 16th Century... to just Two Weeks into the Future, these plays will hopefully move you, make you question, allow you to step away..... and Enjoy!!!

And... that's what we want to find out after the show!!! Please stay for the talk back. You are the last piece of the puzzle!



It all starts back in the Fall with our fabulous committee of readers. The heart, mind, and time they put into voraciously reading the over 200 submissions is mind blowing. These women are the backbone; selecting these strong pieces, celebrating their unique voices and stellar uses of the art form. Next, thanks to the Directors who have come on board, bringing them from the page to the stage. They are also the ones responsible for our amazing lineup of actors.a much desired piece of the puzzle. And thank you, actors, for bringing your talent to the series! They say that casting is 90% of the game, and these directors have lined up a great group!

Now here we are, LIVE... in the theatre. The final piece of the puzzle!!! Thank you to our Administrative staff for getting the word out!

Since 1992, the year the Women's Playwright Series began here at Centenary, the percentage of Women playwrights being produced has increased, but we still have a ways to go. We, here at Centenary, are proud to be celebrating women's voices in the theatre! We are proud to be telling their stories.

So, now, and finally...Thank you to the crew, who will be dimming the lights shortly... allowing us to sit back and Enjoy the Adventure!

Sincerely,

Mikaela Kafka

Mikaela Kafka
Program Director, WPS 2023

Don't Miss NEXTstage Rep's production of



The Addams Family

April 20-30th

**Follow us online and stay up-to-date
with all of our upcoming events!**



**AND for a full list of our shows this season, or to read up on
our new COVID-19 Policies, go to our website at:**

[CentenaryStageCo.org](https://www.CentenaryStageCo.org)



Diane is getting her affairs in order. As she prepares for “departure” from her present life, her family takes sides. Is this being forced upon her or does she wish to leave life on her own terms?

The reign of the Tudors, King Henry VII. Jane meets Princess Mary Tudor, becoming the first female Foole of the court. We join two very different women as they bond finding agency in the male centric court.



When a soldier returns from war carrying the ghosts of the tour, she is faced with a sobering decision: address the alarming PTSD with Virtual Reality therapy, or risk losing access to her family forever.

Two women: one traveler in need of medical attention; one Lawyer, just doing her job. In this surreal, kafka-esque world, we find these women at opposite sides of the table amidst legal precedents & moral obligation.

