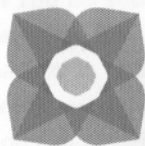


SOUTHWEST THEATRE PRODUCTIONS
PRESENTS

THE UNDERSTUDY

by Theresa Rebeck

DIRECTED BY
JONI LORRAINE



SOUTHWEST THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

Southwest Theatre Productions (SWTP) was founded in 2014 by Jan Wallace Phillips, Maureen Slabaugh and Katherine Sparks. Our company is dedicated to presenting entertaining and thought-provoking theatre based on new, established, or original works with an emphasis on materials that feature at least one key female character in a pivotal role.

During the 2016-17 season SWTP produced *The Other Place* by Sharr White, *Cages* by Leonard Manzella, and *THE UNDERSTUDY*, by Theresa Rebeck. Southwest Theatre Productions is proud to help support our men and women in the military by providing free tickets through VetTix as well as to the F7 group, an organization supporting our active-duty military females. Look for our 2018 season announcement fall of 2017.

The World Premiere of *The Understudy* was produced by the Williamstown Theatre Festival. Nicholas Martin, Artistic Director, July 23, 2008. *The Understudy* was commissioned by Playwrights Horizons with funds provided by The Leading National Theatres Program, a joint initiative of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. *The Understudy* is presented through the exclusive arrangement with Dramatist Play Services, 440 Park Avenue South, New York NY 10016.

Southwest Theatre Productions
is a member of Austin Creative
Alliance, Austin Texas.



Austin Creative Alliance

The Understudy is sponsored in
part by Cultural Arts, City of Austin
Economic Development fund.



Cultural Arts

CITY OF AUSTIN
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

**The Understudy is also sponsored in part by
Producers Fritz and David Ketchum and Executive Producer
Elizabeth Riley, Luxe Property Group, Powered by EXP Réalty**

CAST

Harry – Nicholas Kier

Jake – Devin Finn

Roxanne – Kristin Chiles

PRODUCTIONS STAFF

Director – Joni Lorraine

Stage Manager – Lynn Beaver

Scenic Design – Susan Harris

Lighting Design/ Light board Operator – Ryan Salinas

Sound design – Fabian Duran

Photographer – Joni Lorraine

Poster and Program Design – Matthew Slabaugh

Samuel Carey at



Voted Best Salon of 2014 in The Austin Monthly

supports Southwest Theatre Productions.

Letter From The Director

Everyone has an opinion about acting and actors. Of all the professions, it seems the easiest to critique and stereotype. Perhaps it is because as an industry, there are very few people on the planet who aren't exposed to it a great deal on a daily basis. Entire industries have been created to support it - journalism, education, theme parks. If you think about it, actors could be viewed as nothing more than a commodity, and they more often than not, are reduced to that in the industry. And that ego actors are reputed to have? It's unforgivingly necessary if you spend your life being treated as if you were a product or the latest trend. Your meaning fluctuates with your marketability. Your financial survival depends on not your particular skill set but your "look" your "sound" or some other variable about yourself that you often can't change. It requires great courage and a healthy ego.

Actors are in some ways exactly the way we've stereotyped them. Egotistical, inaccessible, eccentric. And there is a caste system of a sort, whether we care to admit it or not, among them. Film actors aren't always the best actors, and lurking in any theatre around the country like this one, you can find talent that exceeds the capacity of many actors you've seen on screen. Alternately, we might not ever know how brilliant an action star may be outside of their pigeon holed roles in popular movies (Wolverine can sing?!)

Admittedly though, theatre actors are snobs, just like the character Jake in Rebeck's play says. I must be too, because I believe the sustained work of engaging others in a story using mostly nothing but your body, voice, imagination and the partnership of the rest of the people onstage is a real challenge. In live theatre there's no going back. The present moment is all you get to get it right.

Rebeck's three actors in *The Understudy* are trapped in a certain kind of (hilarious) hell, just as the characters in Kafka's heretofore unknown masterpiece they're rehearsing for, traps its antagonist in a castle. And they're resilient, these actors, for the constant courage it takes to simply do what they love.

I've been blessed with a cast that loves what they do as well, and they're great at doing it. I have patient and gracious producers with Southwest Productions, and the best stage manager a gal could ask for. In fact, my stage manager, the set designer, and I went to high school together. It's a

testament to the passion theatre generates, that after all these years I could without hesitation, ask them to join me on this ride, and they'd say yes.

I'm grateful you're here too, so that we don't work our craft in a vacuum. This work is thrilling in and of itself, but it wouldn't happen without you.

We hope you enjoy the show.

About The Director



Joni Lorraine joins Southwest Productions after a lengthy sabbatical from the Central Texas theatre community, where she has worked with companies that include the Temple Civic Theatre, The Georgetown Palace and Austin Children's Theatre. She is the previous founder and leader of the NxNW Theatre Company, former member of Austin's premiere professional children's theatre company, Pollyanna Theatre, and former board member of Sam Bass Theatre in Round Rock. As a director her credits include the B. Iden Payne award winning *I Love You You're Perfect, Now Change*, *Agnes Of God*, *You Can't Take It With You* and *Steel Magnolias*. Currently, she is a reviewer for Broadway World Austin and member of the Austin Critic's Table.

PLACE AND TIME: New York City. Current day

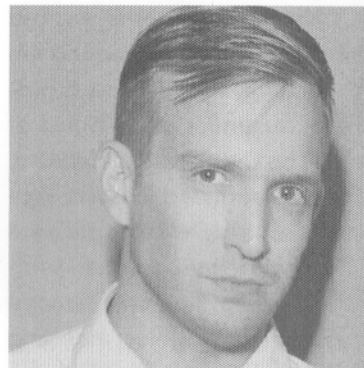
THE UNDERSTUDY RUNS APPROXIMATELY 90 MINUTES
WITH NO INTERMISSION.

PLEASE REMEMBER

No flash photography

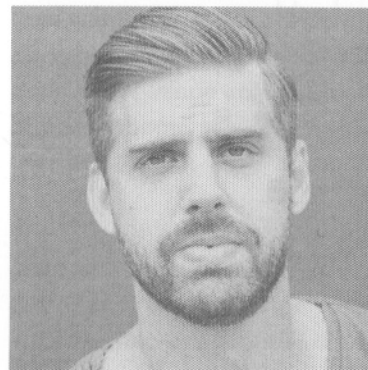
No recording devices

Please turn phones to "off"



Nicholas Kier (Harry) is co-founder of Austin Theatre-Collective, Theatre Synesthesia, as well as a BFA graduate from Texas State University. past credits include Kbus in *Butcher Holler Here We Come*, Puke Godfell In *Marfa Lights*, Ryzard in *Pontiac Firebird Variations* (Theatre Synesthesia), Robertson Ay in *Mary Poppins*, The Paper Queen/March Hare in *Alice In Wonderland*, Frog in *A Year With*

Frog And Toad (Zach Theatre) and Berowne in *Love's Labour's Lost* (Present Company). Nicholas is excited to be working with Southwest Theatre Productions for the first time and performing in a play where he isn't drinking vodka martinis on stage, getting his butt burned on a stove or convincing children that he is, in fact, a white haired matriarch and that, yes, sometimes queens have stubble.



Devin Finn (Jake) *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Winters Tale* (Austin Shakespeare) *Othello*, *Taming Of The Shrew* (Houston Shakespeare Festival) *The Great God Pan*, *Bull* (Street Corner Arts) *Marfa Lights*, *Kill Devil Hills*, *Pontiac Firebird Variations*, *Queen Is Dead* (director), *Butcher Holler Here We Come* (Theatre Synesthesia). Co-founder and executive

director of Theatre Synesthesia. BFA in acting from Texas State University.



Kristin Chiles (Roxanne) is excited to collaborate with Southwest Theatre Productions again! Recent productions in Austin include *Crimes of the Heart* (The City Theatre) *Rapture*, *Blister, Burn* (Southwest Theatre Productions) and *A Delicate Balance* (The City Theatre). Additional credits include *The Pavilion* and *Orange Flower Water* (Los Angeles) and *King Lear* (New York). Kristin is a graduate

of the University of Texas and studied Shakespeare at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art.

Lynn S Beaver (Stage Manager) has been working in Austin theatre for the past 22 years. In that time she has filled every role possible as an actor, director, administrator, producer and toilet scrubber. She has designed and built too many sets to count and taught youngsters how to become successful well rounded theatre people. She has directed many plays over the years including *Hamlet*, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, and *The Hallelujah Girls* along with many others. Lynn is extremely happy to be back working backstage for SWTP for a second time and she's thrilled to be able to work with Joni McClain Lorraine again. When she's not backstage, Lynn is busy as a Contributing Editor for BroadwayWorld Austin or spending time with her grandchildren.

Susan Harris (Set Designer) her professional career as a theatre technician in Fullerton, California in 1989 managing four theatres. She has been the technical director of a large traveling show and national conferences. She has worked in set, audio and lighting design. Susan debuts her set design in Austin community theatre with *The Understudy*.

Special Thanks

Warren Steel
Austin Playwrights Studio

Sang Cho
McKillican America

Elizabeth Riley
Luxe Properties, EXP Realty

Fritz and David Ketchum

Ken Webster
Hyde Park Theater

Ryan & Roen Salinas
Santa Cruz Studio Theater

Matthew Slabaugh

Kevin Slabaugh

Antiques and Things