

ARSENIC AND OLD LACE

**Written by Joseph Kesselring
Directed by Matt M. Morrow**



**September 8 - 29, 2024
Margaret Leshar Theater**

DIGITAL PROGRAM

Beginning in 2022, Center REP adopted the use of digital programs meant to be viewed on mobile devices. By cutting our paper use and eliminating substantial printing costs we are sustaining our mission to elevate the arts in the greater Contra Costa region.

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View digital programs before the performance begins or during intermissions.

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CenterREP

FROM CENTER REP'S ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Welcome to Center REP's 57th Season, and the technicolor, Looney Tunes world of the Brewster home. I chose *ARSENIC AND OLD LACE* to kick off my inaugural season as Artistic Director because, after over 80 years, it's still outrageously funny. I also chose it because it has something to say about being seen and the unexpected depths we discover in one another.

While revisiting the text, I was delightfully surprised by how these ladies were getting away with murder: ***no one sees who they really are.*** People see them for what they present on the surface: two sweet elderly sisters who are cornerstones in their community. But they are so much more! This theme of identity and not being seen

for who you truly are runs through most of the characters of *ARSENIC AND OLD LACE*, priming it for a queer interpretation that mines anew at the comedy, horror, and theatrical roots of the story itself. After all, who knows more about life hidden in broad daylight than the queer community?

Kesselring picks up where queer auteurs of the 1920s and 30s left off, referencing no one more than James Whale, the visionary director behind *FRANKENSTEIN* and *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*. These monster movies are still viewed as coded narratives for the queer experience before one could live their authentic selves safely out and proud. One person's monster is another's hero, depending on your vantage point.

This notion of discovering the monsters and heroes in our everyday lives is as potent today as it was when Kesselring wrote *ARSENIC AND OLD LACE*. As Kesselring was

penning *ARSENIC*, America was perched on the precipice of World War II, and the rise of Fascism and the Nazi party was not just abroad, but also in our own backyard. In 1939, over 20,000 people attended a Nazi rally at Madison Square Garden. I think some Americans then, like now, were surprised to learn some hard truths about their neighbors.

As one of the oldest professional theatres in the region, Center REP has a storied history of producing classics. Inclusion is a central value at Center REP, and I'm proud to build on this pillar of our company with this re-envisioned classic. Our queer and allied troupe of theater makers have had a ball bringing this classic to life for you. I will forever be grateful to them for their incredible tenacity, talent, robust funny bones, and open hearts. In the queer community, and the family we find in *ARSENIC AND OLD LACE*, chosen family is essential to living a meaningful life. And now

you, our audience, are part of that family.
Thank you for coming and being part of the
party!

Gratefully,



A handwritten signature of Matt M. Morrow in white ink, featuring a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

MATT M. MORROW

Artistic Director

Don't miss Center REP's 2024-25 season of comedy, musicals and world-premieres!

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A COMEDY TO DIE FOR: THE TRUE-CRIME HISTORY BEHIND ARSENIC AND OLD LACE

By Randy Taradash

It's hard to believe that one of *the* great comedies of American theatre was inspired by a rash of horrific murders attributed to one of the few female serial killers in American history.

Playwright Joseph Kesselring's original treatment for *Arsenic and Old Lace* is said to have been inspired by the infamous story of Amy Archer Gilligan



Amy Archer Gilligan, 1911

who, with her second husband (a wealthy businessman named Michael W. Gilligan), opened the Archer Home for the Elderly

and Infirm in Windsor, Connecticut in 1907. When Michael died three months after their marriage, Amy inherited his fortune and continued to run the Home.



Archer Home for the Elderly and Infirm, Windsor, Connecticut. Photo taken by Matt M. Morrow.

For its first few years, elderly boarders moved in, and Amy provided “care” services as they aged and lived out their lives. Things became suspect in 1911 when a multitude of untimely deaths suddenly plagued the Home, with records documenting *48 residential deaths* between 1911-

1916, whereas only a dozen deaths were documented in the years prior.

While townsfolk gossiped about the high rate of death, a sister of one of the deceased men found a correspondence from Amy to her brother, pressuring him to give her money. This prompted the sister to contact local police, who initially ignored her requests for investigation. Not wanting to give up, she turned to the local newspaper, the *Hartford Courant* with a plea to look into the matter. Reporters began investigating the large string of deaths at the Home, and in May of 1916 a series of articles focusing on the “Murder Factory” started to gain traction.

The local police and district attorney finally took notice and exhumed four recently deceased residents—as well as Amy’s second husband—all of whom showed traces of arsenic or strychnine in their systems. Local

merchants confirmed that not only had Amy purchased large quantities of arsenic (that she claimed she was using as rat poison), but records showed some of the residents she killed were sent *by Amy* to purchase the drugs she used to poison them!



*Skyler Sullivan (right) at the Infirmary house over the summer.
Photo taken by Matt M. Morrow.*

Police also examined her second husband's will (the source of her wealth) and determined that Amy had secretly forged a new will that transferred his wealth to her upon his death.

Amy was eventually arrested, and in 1917 she was charged and tried for five counts of murder. Eventually the counts were dropped to a single charge of murder, and she was found guilty and sentenced to death. She appealed and in her second trial pled insanity and was again found guilty—but this time sentenced to life imprisonment. She remained at the Connecticut Hospital for the Insane until her death in 1962.

Kesselring, who most likely heard the story of the gruesome murders growing up, originally wrote the play as a drama titled *Bodies in our Cellar*. His producers, the famed writing / producing team Howard Lindsay and Russell Crouse (who co-wrote the original theatrical script for *The Sound of Music*), suggested that making the play a comedy would make it all that more effective, even suggesting the title—which itself was a spin on a popular work by humorist Frank Sullivan titled

Broccoli and Old Lace.

The play was an immediate hit on Broadway and in London's West End and was the most popular of Kesselring's dozen plays. In 1944 it was adapted into a hit movie, directed by Frank Capra and starring Cary Grant. The Broadway production saw several national tours, was made into a TV movie and even a radio play. The last Broadway revival was in 1986 with Polly Holiday, Jean Stapleton, Tony Roberts, and Abe Vigoda.



CenterREP

**Center REP thanks the
Shadelands Ranch Museum
for hosting our photoshoot!**



**The historic Penniman home, located at
2660 Ygnacio Valley Rd, Walnut Creek**



***Arsenic and Old Lace* cast members Michael Patrick Gaffney (Martha) and
Danny Scheie (Abby) at the Shadelands Ranch Museum.**

**See more historic photos and learn about events and visitation hours at
WCHistory.org/museum**

WALNUT CREEK'S HISTORIC HOME SUBSTITUTES FOR 1920s BROOKLYN

This past August, *Arsenic and Old Lace* director Matt M. Morrow, actors Danny Scheie (Abby Brewster) and Michael Patrick Gaffney (Martha Brewster) and photographer Cheshire Dave met at the Shadelands Ranch Museum on Ygnacio Valley Road for a pre-production photo-shoot that gave us our first public looks of the Brewster sisters from this historic comedy.

Listed with the National Register of Historic Places, the Shadelands Ranch Museum was the perfect spot to photograph this incredible cast in early 20th century surroundings.

Built in 1903, the Museum was originally the home of Hiram Penniman, an early Walnut Creek resident. Hiram moved to Walnut Creek

in 1850 and over time owned over 500 acres of fruit and nut orchards throughout the Ygnacio Valley.

The large, redwood framed Colonial Revival house was built by Penniman to provide for the future of his unmarried daughter, Mary, and is still furnished with many of her original belongings!

The home is operated today by the Walnut Creek Historical Society and is open for public tours and a multitude of special events throughout the year. Center REP thanks them and especially Jackie Bird, Shadelands Ranch Museum Office and Events Manager, who graciously allowed us to explore this beautiful Walnut Creek historic setting.

To see photos and learn more about the Shadelands Ranch Museum and the Walnut Creek Historical Society, please visit WCHistory.org/museum.



CenterREP

Artistic Director

MATT M. MORROW

Managing Director

CAROLYN JACKSON

ARSENIC AND OLD LACE

By

JOSEPH KESSELRING

Stage Manager

TAYLOR MCQUESTEN*

Assistant Stage Manager

JOE COE*

Scenic Designer

YI-CHIEN LEE

Costume Designer

BROOKE KESLER

Lighting Designer

KURT LANDISMAN+

Sound Designer

JAMES ARD

Wig and Make Up Designer

EMILY HAYNES

Properties Designer

ALYSSA TRYON

Dialect Coach

NANCY CARLIN

Intimacy Coordinator

ELENA WRIGHT

Fight Choreographer

BRANDON DIPAOLOA

Movement Consultant

SKYLER SULLIVAN

Mental Illness Consultant

AMBER HUGHES

Casting Consultant

CHRIS STEELE

Directed by

MATT M. MORROW

"Arsenic and Old Lace" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.

www.concordtheatricals.com

Original Broadway Production By
HOWARD LINDSAY AND RUSSEL CROUSE

CAST

(in alphabetical order)

ELIO AMADOR..... OFFICER BROPHY

RONNIE ANDERSON..... UNDERSTUDY
ABBY BREWSTER, MARTHA BREWSTER

BRENDA ARELLANO..... OFFICER KLEIN

TANIKA BAPTISTE* LIEUTENANT ROONEY

DEANNA DRISCOLL* JONATHAN BREWSTER

MICHAEL PATRICK GAFFNEY* MARTHA
BREWSTER

CARLA GALLARDO..... ELAINE HARPER

KALLI JONSSON* DR. HARPER,
MR. GIBBS, MR. WITHERSPOON

ADDAM LEDAMYEN..... OFFICER O'HARA

CATHRINE LUEDTKE* TEDDY BREWSTER

DANNY SCHEIE* ABBY BREWSTER

CODY SLOAN* MORTIMER BREWSTER

SKYLER SULLIVAN..... DR. EINSTEIN

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

+Member of United Scenic Artists Unions

CAST



Ronnie Anderson
*Understudy Abby Brewster,
Martha Brewster*



Elio Amador
Officer Brophy



Brenda Arellano
Officer Klein



Tanika Baptiste*
Lieutenant Rooney



DeAnna Driscoll*
Jonathan Brewster



Michael Patrick Gaffney*
Martha Brewster



Carla Gallardo
Elaine Harper



Kalli Jonsson*
*Dr. Harper, Mr. Gibbs,
Mr. Witherspoon*



Addam Ledamyen
Officer O'Hara



Catherine Luedtke*
Teddy Brewster



Danny Scheie*
Abby Brewster



Cody Sloan*
Mortimer Brewster



Skyler Sullivan
Dr. Einstein

CAST

RONNIE ANDERSON

Understudy, Abby Brewster, Martha Brewster

Ronnie (he/she/they) is thrilled to return to Center REP (featured as “the Corpse” in *CORPSE!*) and to be part of this extraordinarily creative cast & company.

ELIO AMADOR

Officer Brophy

Elio Amador (he/they) is a queer Chicane actor based in the Bay Area, happily making their Center REP debut. He was last seen as Clown in *All's Well That Ends Well* at Theatre Rhinoceros. He was also in The 2023 Fresh Baked Pears One-Act Festival, The Emperor's New Posts for NCTC's YouthAware program, and the Musical Cafe Fall Showcase. Last year they completed actor training via ACT's SF

Semester program. Before that he was an understudy for the Margaret/Verges track during SF Shakes' *Much Ado* production. He is always excited to do queer theatre and work with amazing artists. They are grateful to everyone who has supported them in their creative journey.

Instagram: @littlecelestialone

BRENDA ARELLANO

Officer Klein

Brenda Arellano (she/her) is a performer and deviser based in Oakland after almost a decade in Chicago. She is an alumni of the Neo-Futurists in Chicago (2011-2014) and the San Francisco Neo-futurists (2016-2017). She last performed with the Neos in their digital play *45 Plays for America's First Ladies* (which garnered a 'NY Times Critic's Pick') in 2021 and *Remember The Alamo* in

2019. She was also a member of Playmaker's Laboratory (formerly Barrel of Monkeys) and performed with Chicago Children's Theater, The House Theater, and Teatro Vista, as well as the monthly live lit event, Paper Machete. In the Bay Area, she continues to do guest runs with the San Francisco Neo-Futurists, recently performing in *The Infinite Wrench*. She has also been an actor for Berkeley Repertory Theater's Ground Floor Summer Lab and Shotgun Theater. She has a bachelor of fine arts from Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle. She currently works as a teaching artist for Word for Word Theater and for Medical Clown Project as a hospital clown since 2015. She likes to have a good time, a beautiful time, a ridiculous time, and a profound time.

TANIKA BAPTISTE*

Lieutenant Rooney

Tanika (she/her) is a proud auntie, sister, and

daughter! A SFBATCC winning director, actor, vocalist and costume designer in the Bay Area. Regional credits: Deloris Van Cartier in *Sister Act* (Woodminster Summer Musicals) Adenikeh in *Nollywood Dreams* (San Francisco Playhouse) MC in *Ni;ER LOVERS* (Magic Theatre) She/Angie in *Is God Is* (Oakland Theatre Project) Tessie Tura in *Gypsy* (Mountain Play/RVP) Swing in *Beehive* (Center REP) SBF 1 in *Single Black Female* (Lorraine Hansberry Theatre) Effie in *Dreamgirls* (Berkeley Playhouse). Select directorial credits: *Crumbs From the Table of Joy* (Townhall Theatre) *Giraffes Can't Dance* (Bay Area Children's Theatre) *At the Wake of a Dead Drag Queen* (Theatre Rhinoceros) Tanika is a 2023 cohort of Theatre Bay Area's Arts Leadership with Theatre Rhinoceros and a proud member of AEA and the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.

Psalms 28:7-8

Instagram: @tanikabaptiste

DEANNA DRISCOLL*

Jonathan Brewster

DeAnna Driscoll (she/her) is proud to make her debut performance with Center REP and is very grateful for the opportunity.

DeAnna was most recently seen at San Diego's Cygnet Theatre playing the role of Sharon in the world premiere of *SHARON* by Keiko Green. Other theatres include:

The Old Globe Theatre, Cockpit Theater, San Diego Repertory, Diversionary Theatre, Intrepid, and many more. Some of her favorite shows include: *HIR*, *SHARON*, *THE EFFECT OF GAMMA RAYS ON MAN-IN-THE-MOON*, *MARIGOLDS*, *SUPERIOR DONUTS*, *THE QUALITY OF LIFE*, and *THE GOOD BODY*.

DeAnna is the recipient of several acting awards including two Critics Circle Awards for

best lead, The Backstage Garland Award, and The Pate Award for her work over the years. Television and film credits include: *Unverified*, *Lincoln Heights*, *Point Pleasant*, *Veronica Mars*, and *Decaf*. DeAnna is a proud member of both Actor's Equity and SAG/AFTRA.

CARLA GALLARDO

Elaine Harper

Carla Gallardo (she/her) is a Bay Area actor, and is beyond honored to have an opportunity to perform here at Center REP for the first time! Her previous credits include: *Cost of Living* (Oakland Theater Project), *Doméstica Realidad*, *Las Azurduy* (La Lengua Teatro), *Exodus to Eden*, *Book of Sand (a fairytale)* (Oakland Theater Project), *References to Salvador Dalí Make Me Hot* (Custom Made Theater), just to name a few. Through acting, she has worked with many programs surrounding education

& awareness on a myriad of topics with students all over Northern California with NCTC's YouthAware, Word 4 Word's Youth Program, the San Francisco Mime Troupe's Youth Theater Project & Kaiser Permanente's Educational Theater. On her down-time, she enjoys quality time with her loved ones, sipping on a cafecito, exploring beaches on warm, sunny days, and dancing to anything that makes her move & groove!

Instagram: @instacarlita

Facebook: @Carla Gallardo

MICHAEL PATRICK GAFFNEY*

Martha Brewster

Michael (he/him) is very excited to be performing again with Center REP! He was last seen as Doc Gibbs in *Our Town* a few years back. Other Center REP shows include: *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Anything Goes*, and

the *25th Annual Putnum County Spelling Bee*. Michael has been performing in the Bay Area since 1995 and has worked with 42nd Street Moon, Aurora Theatre Company, Shotgun Players, Word for Word and San Jose Stage Company to name a few. He is a proud member of Actors Equity Association.

KALLI JONSSON*

Dr. Harper, Mr. Gibbs,

Mr. Witherspoon

Kalli's (he/him) first role was as seven year old in a production at the National Theater in his home country of Iceland. Previous shows at Center Repertory include: *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Other credits include: *Travels With My Aunt* (Cinnabar Theater); *The Internationalist* (Just Theater);

On the Waterfront (San Jose Stage Co.);
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead
(Theater First); *Let the Northern Lights*
Erase Your Name (Campo Santo); *The Dying*
Gaul and In the Garden (New Conservatory
Theater); *Twelfth Night* (California
Shakespeare Theater); *The Hairy Ape* (Marin
Theatre Company); *Richard III, A Midsummer*
Night's Dream, Macbeth, Pericles, Measure
for Measure, Twelfth Night, The Compleat
Works of Willm Shkspr (Shakespeare at
Stinson); *Porcelain* (Crowder Fire Theatre Co.);
A Midsummer Night's Dream and Amadeus
(Shakespeare Santa Cruz).

ADDAM LEDAMYEN

Officer O'Hara

Addam (they/them) is thrilled to return to the Leshar to make their Center REP debut! They are also a company member of Synergy Theater with whom they regularly perform

full-length improvised plays in a variety of styles in the Vukasin Theatre. Addam is a graduate of Oakland School for the Arts' Musical Theatre program and holds a BA in Musical Theatre from American University (DC). Currently, they are pursuing their MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts and Writing at the California Institute of Integral Studies (SF). Like O'Hara, Addam does happen to be a playwright - and novelist, actually - but they promise not to tie you in a chair and make you listen to their next plot.

Instagram: @addamledamyen

Facebook: @addamledamyen

Substack: @addamledamyen

Website: addamledamyen.substack.com

CATHERINE LUEDTKE*

Teddy Brewster

Catherine Luedtke (she/they) is a British actor

who works in the Bay Area and Europe, and is thrilled to make her Center REP debut! They are a founding member of The Director's Theatre/Writer's Theatre (DTWT) in London, where she has devised and performed in stage, radio and film productions. They are also a proud Resident Artist at her Bay Area artistic home: Crowded Fire Theater. Credits include: SF Shakes- *Cymbeline*, The Anarchy Quartet- *Exit Theater Prod.*, California Shakespeare Theater- *Macbeth*, *War of The Roses* and *Pygmalion*. The National Theatre/Young Vic/Good Chance- *The Jungle* and *Crowded Fire's Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again.* Other theaters include- PlayGround, Villa Design Group at M. I. T., The Breadbox, Stanford Rep, NCTC and YBCA. She is a TBA, SFBATCC, and Titan award finalist and member of Actors' Equity Association. She studied Acting at Studio A.C.T., and Shakespeare at RADA.

Instagram: @luedtkecat

Website: catluedtke.com

DANNY SCHEIE*

Abby Brewster

Danny (he/him) holds a PhD from Cal. Previously at Center REP: *The Pavilion* (director). Recent credits include playing the Scarecrow in Sam Pinkleton's direction of *Wizard of Oz* and the late great Frank Galati's direction of *Ionesco's Rhinoceros*, both at American Conservatory Theater (SF), two pantos at the Presidio, the title role in Daniel Handler's *Ghost of the Dead Rabbit* at Berkeley Rep, Dvornichek in Stoppard's *Rough Crossing in Santa Cruz*, *The Music Man* in *Phoenix and Tucson*, *She Loves Me* at South Coast Rep, and *Richard III* at Calshakes (where over thirteen seasons he played also played Bottom, Puck, Dogberry, Feste and the Dromios). He has acted at Yale Rep,

Trinity Rep, the Folger, Arena Stage, Asolo Rep, The Old Globe, Pasadena Playhouse and appeared in multiple world premieres of plays by Amy Freed and Peter Nachtrieb. TV: *Physical* (Apple TV+); *Almost Family* (Fox); *Nash Bridges* (CBS).

CODY SLOAN*

Mortimer Brewster

Cody Sloan (he/him) is an La based actor and producer. Center REP premiere! Off Broadway: *Seven Deadly Sins*, Tectonic Theatre project, directed by Moisés Kaufman. Regional: world premiere of *Becoming a Man*, American Repertory Theater, directed by Diane Paulus; *As You Like It* (directed by Chris Ashley and Will Davis), *Pick Me Last*, La Jolla Playhouse; *Men on Boats*, SpeakEasy Stage; *Nurse Play* (IRNE Award Nom, Best Actor), Exiled Theatre; *Amadeus*, Moonbox Productions. He has also worked

at Celebration Theatre, Diversionary Theatre, and FringeNYC. He has developed new plays at IAMA Theatre, the Kennedy Center, MTA Playwrights Lab, Huntington Theatre Company, UC San Diego, Synecdoche Works, and others. Film: *Selah and the Spades* (Amazon, Sundance Film Festival 2019), *Hobbies*, *Birder* (TLA Releasing), and *Thalia* (upcoming). Cody is the co-founder of Baby Teeth, an LA based production company. MFA in Acting: University of California, San Diego.

Instagram: @codydsloan

Website: codysloanactor.com

SKYLER SULLIVAN

Dr. Einstein

Skyler Sullivan (he/they) is thrilled to be making their Center REP debut in *Arsenic and Old Lace*! San Diego: Diversionary Theatre: A

Civil War Christmas, Ballast, The Mystery of Irma Vep, New Village Arts: Emile, The Servant of Two Masters. Skyler's love of physical comedy and storytelling has allowed them to collaborate with such companies as: Bread and Puppet, American Mime Theatre, Sesame Street, Medical Clown Project, and The San Francisco Mime Troupe. He currently teaches drama at the Walden Center and School in Berkeley, and is a therapeutic clown with Healthy Humor, in residence at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital in Palo Alto.

Instagram: @skylersullivan

PRODUCTION TEAM

MATT M. MORROW

Artistic Director

Prior to joining Center Repertory Company as Artistic Director, Matt M. Morrow (she/they/he) was the Executive Artistic Director of Diversionary Theatre since as 2014, where she grew the operating budget from \$500,000 to over \$2 million, and completed a \$2.7 million renovation of its facility, adding a third performance venue in the Clark Cabaret. Under Matt's leadership, Diversionary was nominated for 35 San Diego Critics Circle Awards (SDCCA) over seven years, she has produced and directed numerous World Premieres and second productions of new work, including *Ballast* (Winner, 2017 Best New Play, SDCCA), *The Hour of Great Mercy* (Winner, 2019 Best New Play, SDCCA), and *Lizard Boy* (Winner 2017

Outstanding Lead Performance in a Musical, SDCCA, Off Broadway transfer 2023). Matt was honored with the inaugural Larry T. Baza Arts & Culture Award from San Diego Pride, and was the Creative Catalyst Fellow with The San Diego Foundation and La Jolla Playhouse. She has developed new work with The Sundance Theatre Institute, The Old Globe, The Banff Centre, Center Theatre Group, American Conservatory Theater, Lincoln Center, PlayPenn, and Page 73 Productions. Matt also held the position of Associate Artistic Director of City Theatre Company in Pittsburgh while serving as The John Wells Professor of Directing at Carnegie Mellon University's School of Drama (Graduate & Undergraduate Directing programs), and has also taught directing in UCSD's Graduate Directing program. Morrow conceived the musical TEETH based on the cult movie, penned by Michael R. Jackson and Anna

Jacobs, which is transferring from its World Premiere production at Playwrights Horizons to a commercial Off Broadway production this fall.

TAYLOR MCQUESTEN*

Stage Manager

Taylor McQuesten (she/her) is thrilled to join Center REP's stage management team after over a decade of hanging and focusing electrics for their productions. Taylor works internationally as a stage and tour manager, electrician, and stuntwoman. Select credits include: *Lizard Boy* (Assistant Director - Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and Production Stage Manager - TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, Hope Mill Theatre in Manchester, England, The Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland), eleven seasons at Tony Award-winning TheatreWorks Silicon Valley (Resident Production Stage Manager), Tour

Manager for Evan Rachel Wood and Zane Carney's band EVAN+ZANE, SF Sketchfest (Assistant Technical Director and Associate Production Manager), California Shakespeare Theater (Production Electrician), Legion A/V (Head of Lighting), Playfaire Productions (Swordswoman), The Independent SF (Lighting Designer), Highlander Films (Production Assistant), American Conservatory Theater, Cabrillo Stage, Hillbarn Theatre, and Magic Theatre. She also trains historic mêlée weapons at Davenriche European Martial Arts School under master swordsman, Sir Steáphen Fick.

Instagram: @willdirect4food

JOE COE*

Assistant Stage Manager

Joe Coe (he/him) has been part of the Center REP family for over 16-years and worked in a

variety of capacities with the company.

YI-CHIEN LEE

Scenic Designer

Yi-Chien Lee (she/her) is a San Diego-based set designer working in theatre and film. Her credits include *The Great Leap* (Center REP), *Kairos*, *On This Side of the World* (East West Players), *Tick Tick Boom*, *Sharon*, *The Little Fellow*, *Life Sucks* (Cygnet Theatre), *Future is Female* (Flint Rep), *King of the Yees* (Sierra Madre Playhouse), *The Great Khan* (SD Rep), TL; DR: *Dyke Remix*, *Eighty-Sixed*, *Girlfriend*, *A Kind of Weather* (Diversionary), *Mother of the Maid*, *The Pleasure Trials* (Moxie), *Proof*, *How I Learned to Drive*, *God of Carnage* (Backyard Renaissance), and *The Comedy of Errors-Globe For All* (Old Globe). She received the Craig Noel Award 2022 for Outstanding Scenic Design for her work on the *October Night of Johnny Zero* for Backyard

Reinassance.

Instagram: @yichien91015

Portfolio: yichienlee.com

BROOKE NICOLE KESLER

Costume Designer

Brooke Kesler (she/her) is thrilled to be joining the team at Center Repertory for the first time! Recent designs include: *The Gondoliers* (Ohio Light Opera), *Cymbeline* (University of San Diego/The Old Globe), *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* (University of San Diego/The Old Globe), *The Mystery of Irma Vep* (Diversionary Theatre), and *Interstate* (East West Players). She currently is faculty in costume design and technology at San Diego State University, and was the 2020 recipient of USITT's Zelma H. Weisfeld Award in Costume Design and Technology. Education: M.F.A. in Design and Technology, Costume

Design from San Diego State University.

Instagram: @brookesler

Website: brookenicolekesler.com

KURT LANDISMAN⁺

Lighting Designer

Kurt Landisman (he/him) is happy to return to Center REP having lit 55 shows for the company since 2003. Mr. Landisman's designs have been seen at most Bay Area Theaters, past and present, including ACT, San Jose Rep, Marin Theatre Company, Magic Theatre, Berkeley Rep, TheatreWorks, Cal Shakes, and many others. His work in Opera includes productions for San Francisco Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Minnesota Opera, Hawaii Opera Theatre, Virginia Opera, and others. Internationally, he has designed for theaters in Shanghai, Tokyo, and Singapore. His Designs have received 22 Bay Area Critics

Circle Awards.

Website: kurtlandisman.com

JAMES ARD

Sound Designer

James Ard (he/him) is a sound designer, composer and noisemaker with a focus on new works, live experiences, and immersive stage productions, whose work was most recently heard at CenterREP in Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*. Ard's design has also been heard in collaborations with The Public Theater, American Conservatory Theater, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, Summerhall at the Edinburgh Fringe, Sibiu International Theatre Festival, Aurora Theatre Company, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Guthrie Theater, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Portland Center Stage, Cutting Ball Theatre, Shotgun Players, San Francisco Playhouse,

Ensemble Theatre Company, Joe Goode Performance Group, Stanford University, UC Berkeley, and the Atlantic Theatre Company. Ard is a Resident Artist with Golden Thread Productions and Crowded Fire Theater.

Instagram: @ardsounddesign

EMILY HAYNES

Wig and Make Up Designer

Emily Haynes (she/her) is delighted to be making her designing debut with Center Repertory Company. She has been a part of the hair, makeup, and wardrobe team with Center Repertory Company since 2022. Recent/Favorite credits include *Cabaret*, *The Legend of Georgia McBride*, and *Sweat* with Center Repertory Company. She also recently has designed makeup, hair, and special effects makeup for different independent film companies. She has an Associates Degree

in Technical Theatre. *Cabaret, A Christmas Carol* (twice), *The Legend of Georgia McBride, Crowns, In the Heights, Sweat, Beehive.*

Instagram: @emmiekate_mua

ALYSSA TRYON

Properties Designer

Alyssa Tryon (she/her) has been the Resident Properties Designer for Center REP since 2019. Originally from New Jersey, she worked in New York for six years prior to moving to the Bay Area. Her work has been featured Off-Broadway, at Sacramento Broadway at Music Circus, and with the Merola SF Opera Program. She has a Bachelor's in Theatre Performance & Theatrical Design from Maymount Manhattan Collage. She would like to thank her family, friends, and fellow creatives for all of their love and support!

NANCY CARLIN

Dialect Coach

Nancy Carlin (she/her) returns to Center REP, where she directed *Clue*, *Arms and the Man*, and *Proposals*, and appeared in *Spring Awakening*. Nancy has performed, directed, and coached extensively in regional theaters, including the American Conservatory Theater, California Shakespeare Theater, Berkeley Rep, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Aurora Theatre, Jewel Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, TheatreWorks, Shotgun Players, San Jose Rep, and Shakespeare Santa Cruz. A former longtime company member of A.C.T. and associate artist with Cal Shakes, Carlin is a member of PlayGround. A theater arts lecturer with UC Berkeley, and SJSU, Carlin holds a BA in comparative literature from Brown University and an MFA in acting from A.C.T. Ms. Carlin is a member of AEA, SAG-AFTRA, and SDC.

Website: www.nancycarlin.com

ELENA WRIGHT

Intimacy Coordinator

Elena (she/they) is a Bay Area actor, educator, and fight/intimacy director. Elena has designed violence and/or intimacy for SF Playhouse, Santa Clara University, Chabot College, Left Edge Theatre, The Pear Theatre, Aurora Theatre, College of Marin, Shotgun Players, AlterTheatre, TheatreFirst, Custom Made, Sonoma State University, Landmark Musical Theatre, City Lights Theatre, Role Players Ensemble, SPARC, Ross Valley Players, Marin Shakespeare Company, and Laney College among others. Elena received their MFA in acting from the University of Washington, and a BS in theatre from Northeastern University. She is an artistic associate at Marin Shakespeare, a Playground company member, and a teacher with

Dueling Arts International.

Instagram: @ela524

BRANDON DIPAOLOA

Fight Choreographer

Growing up in Hawaii but originally from the Bay Area, Brandon DiPaola (he/him) is an actor, fight director and instructor with Dueling Arts International. Brandon started his training at the Hawaii Conservatory of Performing Arts where he found a love for theater. His passion for the craft lead him to study at the East 15 Acting School in England where he holds a Bachelor's in Acting and Stage Combat. Brandon was performing in theaters all over the Island such as Paliku Theatre, UH Manoa, and Kumu Kahua Theatre. He has appeared in many seasons of the Hawaii Shakespeare Festival in prominent roles as Cuddy Banks (*The Witch*

of Edmonton) and Edgar (King Lear). Some of his fight directing credits include The Three Feathers and Cabaret for the Lesher, Midsummer Night's Dream and multiple productions of She Kills Monsters.

Instagram: @dipaola.brandon

AMBER HUGHES

Mental Illness Consultant

Amber (she/her) is a mental health consultant with a heart for both psychology and the arts. She holds a BS in developmental psychology from CUNY Graduate School and a BFA in theatre from Columbus State University. Amber is currently pursuing her MA in clinical psychology at Pepperdine University, on the path to MFT licensure. With years of experience as an educator and current performing arts teacher at The Seven Hills School, Amber is passionate about

how theatre can uniquely illuminate mental health. Amber loves helping actors and directors bring authentic, sensitive portrayals of mental illness to the stage, fostering a deeper connection between the performers and the audience.

Instagram: @amburrito

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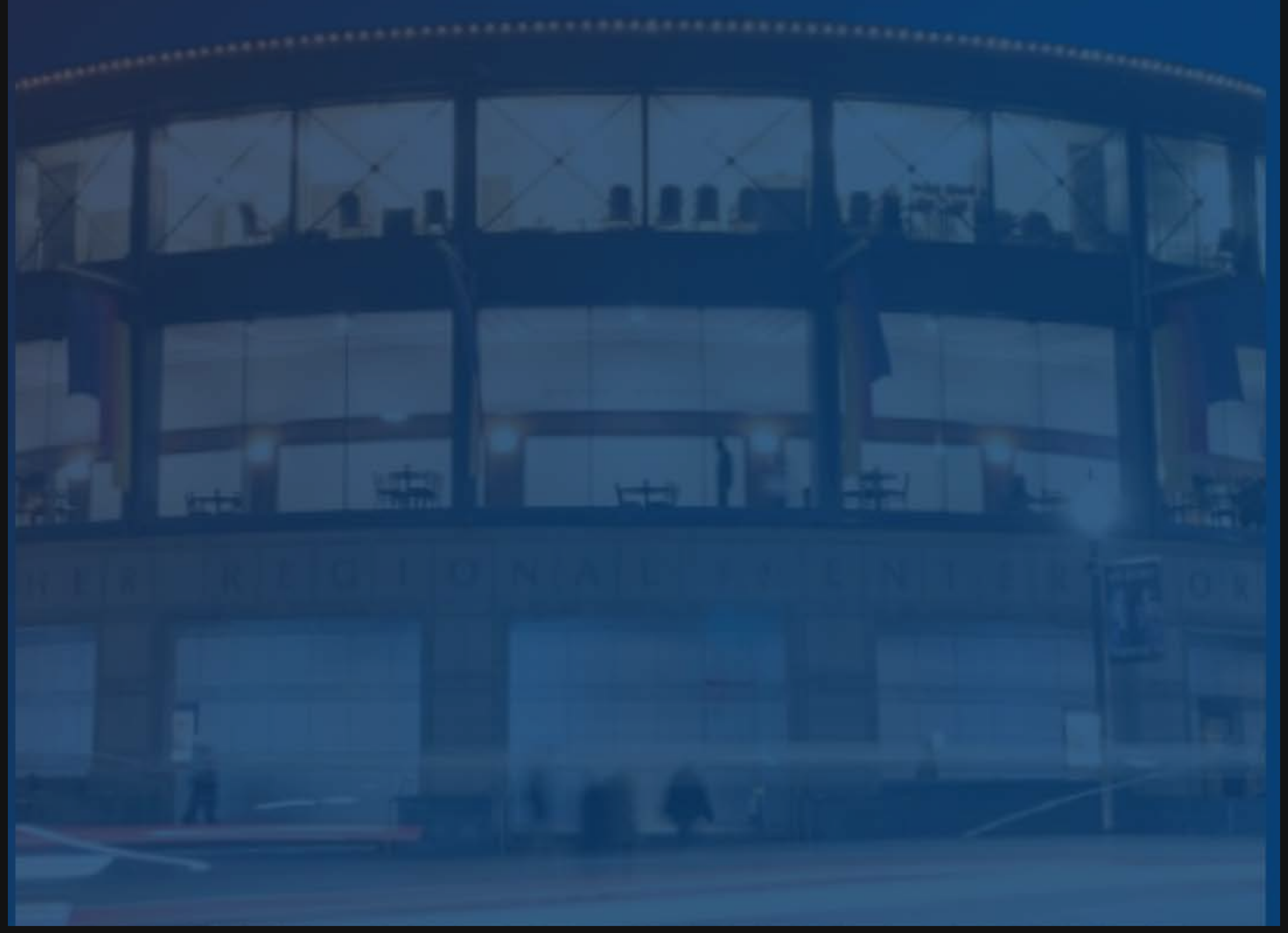
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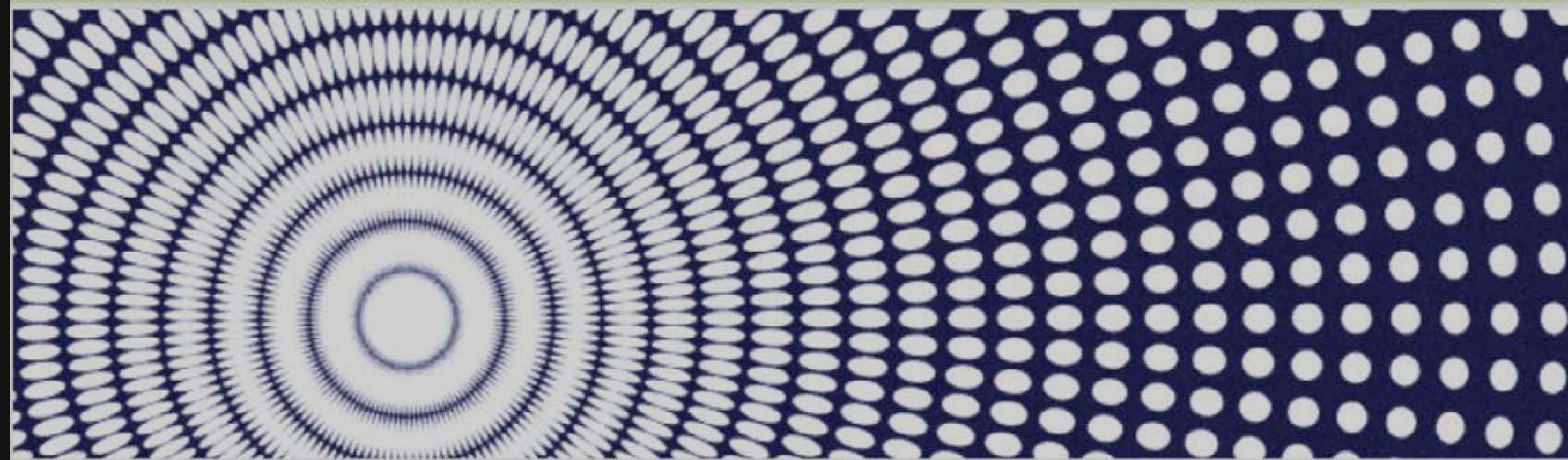


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