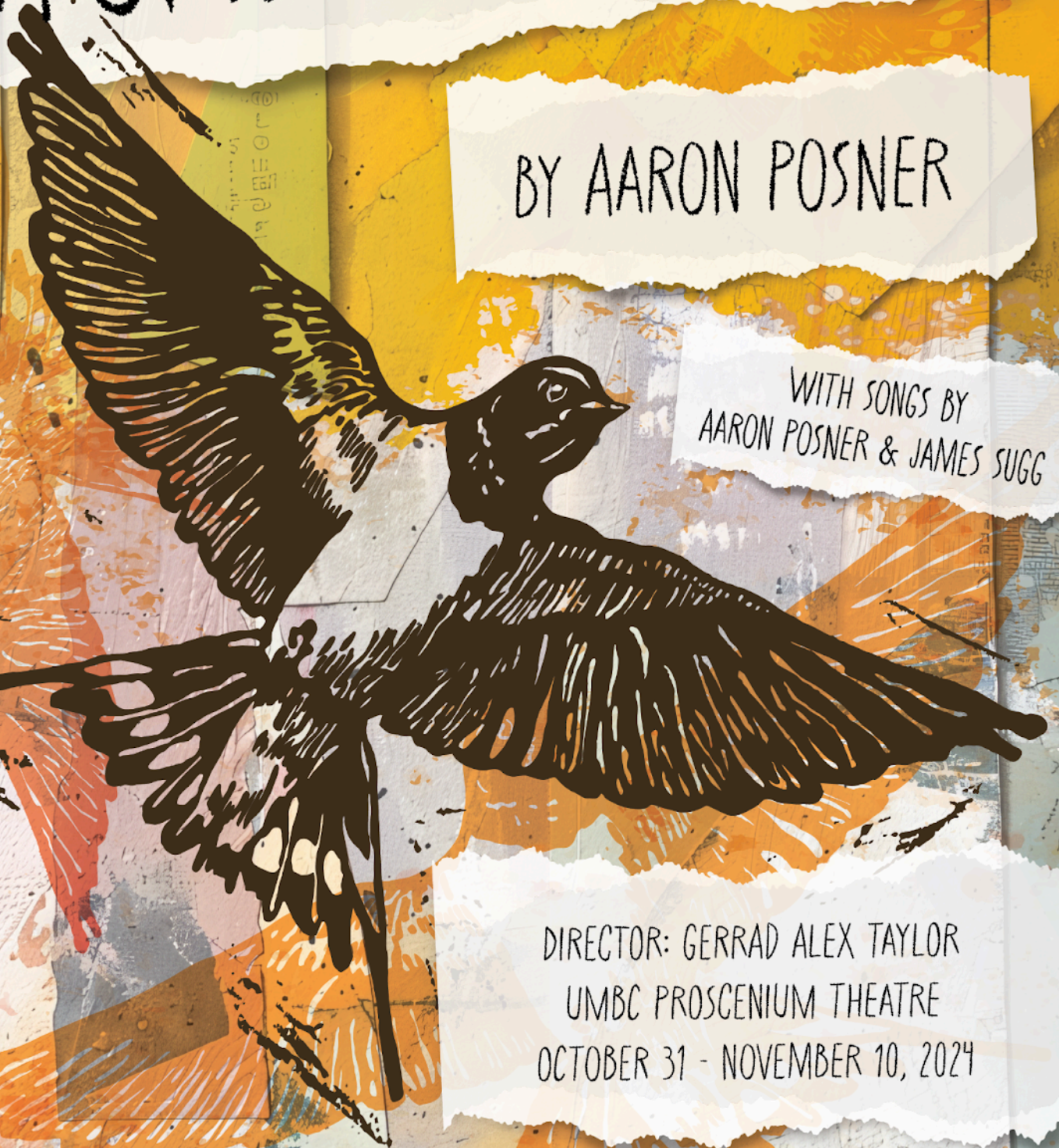


# STUPID F\*CKING BIRD

BY AARON POSNER

WITH SONGS BY  
AARON POSNER & JAMES SUGG

DIRECTOR: GERRAD ALEX TAYLOR  
UMBC PROSCENIUM THEATRE  
OCTOBER 31 - NOVEMBER 10, 2024





UMBC

DEPARTMENT  
OF THEATRE

# Stupid F\*cking Bird

By Aaron Posner

Sort of adapted from *The Seagull* by Anton Chekhov  
With songs by Aaron Posner and James Sugg

Directed by Gerrad Alex Taylor

**Costume Designer**  
Becca Janney

**Sound Designer**  
Kaydin Hamby

**Lighting Designer**  
Adam Mendelson

**Scenic Designer**  
Nate Sinnott

**Assistant Lighting Designer**  
Jay Shovan

**Music Director**  
Andrew Hann

**Movement Director**  
Nigel Semaj

**Intimacy Director**  
Sierra Young

**Stage Manager**  
Morgan Decker

This production will have one 15 minute intermission.

Please be advised: Theatrical haze/fog will be used during this production.

The video or audio recording of this performance by any means is strictly prohibited.

**Content Transparency:** The play contains sexual situations, references and depiction of suicide and mental illness, references of child loss, sounds of gunshots and the use of a non-firing theatrical weapon.

*Stupid F\*cking Bird* was developed and received its world premiere in June 2013 at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Washington, D.C. (Howard Shalwitz, Artistic Director; Jeffrey Hermann, Managing Director)

 **The Kennedy Center**  
**American College**  
**Theater Festival**

# Cast

**Conrad** ..... Hassan Aziz

**Dev** ..... Marlon T. Brown, Jr.

**Mash** ..... Nia Zagami

**Nina** ..... Jamia Tutt

**Emma Arkadina** ..... Franchesca Parker

**Doyle Trigorin** ..... Sean DiGiorgio

**Dr. Eugene Sorn** ..... Wesley Mauder

**Conrad/Dev Understudy** ..... Christian Price-Burnett

**Mash Understudy** ..... Grace Marsh

**Nina Understudy** ..... Shomapti Hussain

**Emma Arkadina Understudy** ..... Brynn Krasney

**Doyle Trigorin/Dr. Eugene Sorn Understudy** ..... Lukas O'Boyle

**PLACE: Right Here**

**TIME: Right Now**

## Production Faculty & Staff

**Production Manager &  
Technical Director**  
Greggory Schraven

**Assistant Technical Director**  
Evan McDougall

**Lead Carpenter, Props & Scenic Artist**  
Tyler Brust

**Production Stage Manager**  
Tessara Morgan Farley

**Costume Shop Supervisor**  
Eric Abele

**Assistant Costume Shop Manager**  
Margaret Caster



# Student Production Staff

**Production Assistant** Mady Sims

**Assistant Stage Manager** Gale Daniel

**Costume Designer Assistant** Sophie Gutierrez

**Light Board Operator** Katie Givens

**Sound Board Operator** Imogen Kanfor

**Light Board Programmer** Katie Givens

**Props Coordinator** Ann Davies

**Deck Head** Lucas Sanchez

**Deck Crew** Sumedha Bhat, Jadyne Fleming, Malaak McDonald, Kayla Laucks

**Wardrobe Head** Lilli Malone

**Wardrobe Crew** Ann Davies, Marcus King, Roya Zafar

**Lead Electrician** Miles Abramson

**Electricians** Students of THTR 262

**Scenic Artists** Ann Davies, Katie Givens, Adam Harper, Jay Shovan, Mady Sima, Nia Zagami

**Carpenters** Sophie Gutierrez, Katie Givens, Adam Harper, Enzo Leone, Jay Shovan, Mady Sims, Nia Zagami, Students of THTR 100 and 264



## Support UMBC Theatre!

Did you know that all ticket sales and donations go directly to scholarships for our students?

**Use the QR code to make a donation today!**

*\*Be sure to designate "Theatre Department" when you make your donation.*



# Director's Note



## A Note on "Form"

As the play starts, you'll hear a lot of discussion on stage concerning "New Forms." At its core, this play grapples with the same eternal question that haunts every artist: how do we find the newest form to tell our stories best?

In our production, we've embraced this quest for innovation in ways that resonate deeply with our audience. For the first time in the UMBC Proscenium Theatre's history, we are placing the audience on stage, breaking down traditional barriers and exploring new actor-audience relationships. Also, throughout rehearsals, the cast, designers, and I have delved into the various theatrical -isms—from realism to absurdism, from naturalism to expressionism—seeking to understand how these frameworks can serve the heart of our narrative.

However, as we've explored these complexities, I've come to realize that the most profound moments in this piece occur when we let go of our preoccupations with theatricality. The true power of storytelling lies in our ability to connect, to listen, and to share our humanity. In those moments of silence and vulnerability, we transcend the roles of actor and audience, becoming participants in a collective ritual of storytelling.

In essence, the strongest "new form" I've discovered is perhaps the oldest one: gathering in the dark, around a (sometimes metaphorical) campfire, sharing our tales as humans connecting with humans. It's here, in this space of authenticity and simplicity, that we honor the original storytellers—the Griots who pass down wisdom through the ages.

I invite you to join us on this journey, to sit with us in this unique space we've created, and to listen closely as we share our story. Together, we can find new meaning in the familiar, and perhaps, a little bit of ourselves in each other.

Enjoy the show.

## Director Bio



**Gerrad Alex Taylor** (he/him/his) is an award-winning director and multidisciplinary theatre artist based out of the Greater Baltimore region and an assistant professor in the Department of Theatre at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. His current creative work and research centers around creating space that preserves history and celebrates culture of the Global Majority.

In 2021 he was named one of Baltimore's "40 Under 40" by the Washington Business Journal. In 2020, he founded Chesapeake Shakespeare's Black Classical Acting Ensemble (BCAE), an affinity space for black actors interested in training and exposure of the "classics" and what an expansion of the classical canon may look like today. In 2024, Gerrad joined colleague Lizzi Albert to take on the roles of Co-Artistic Directors of Perisphere Theater in Montgomery County, MD.

He holds a BA in Neuroscience from the Johns Hopkins University and an MFA in Performance from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He has worked with theatres and educational institutions across the country including the Chesapeake Shakespeare Company, Perisphere Theater, Great River Shakespeare Festival, Shakespeare Festival St. Louis, Pacific Conservatory Theatre-PCPA, Children's Theatre of Annapolis, Everyman Theatre, Constellation Theatre Company, Mosaic Theatre Company, Arena Stage, Studio Theatre, and Washington Stage Guild. He is a member of the Actors' Equity Association and an Advanced Actor Combatant with the Society of American Fight Directors.

## Playwright Bio



**Aaron Posner** is an award-winning director, playwright, teacher, and former Artistic Director of Philadelphia's Arden Theatre and New Jersey's Two River Theatre. He has directed more than 150 productions at major regional theaters across the country including virtually every theatre in the DC area. As a playwright, his re-imaging of Chekhov's *The Seagull*, entitled *Stupid F\*\*king Bird*, was one of the ten most produced plays in the country in 2015 and has had more than 150 productions worldwide. Other plays include *The Heal*, *JQA*, *Life Sucks*, *No Sisters*, *District Merchants*, *Who Am I This Time? & Other Conundrums of Love*, *The Chosen*, *My Name Is Asher Lev*, *The Gift of Nothing*, *Me...Jane: The Dreams & Adventures of Young Jane Goodall*, and many more.

He lives outside of D.C. with his wife, actress Erin Weaver, and his daughter, Maisie. (*Bio is from American University's website*)

# Company Bios

(in alphabetical order)

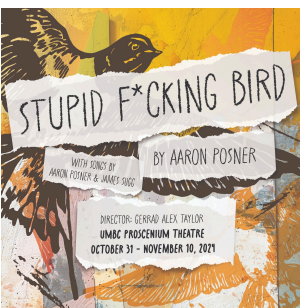


**Hassan Aziz (Conrad)** Entering into his second year at UMBC's Linehan Artist Scholarship Program, Hassan Aziz is dedicated to the work of being a performer. A recent post-graduate of Baltimore School for the Arts' Acting Program, he is currently enrolled in UMBC's Acting BFA and aims to bring authentic and connected experiences to any production he is a part of. However, his skills range outside of just acting, as he graduated from the Maryland State Boychoir in 2023 with 12 years of extensive education and experience with composing, sight-reading, and

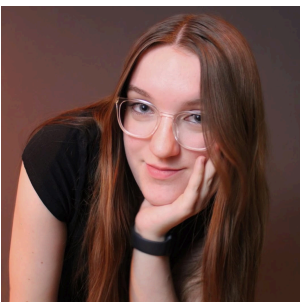
ensemble/solo vocal-performance. With these skills, as well as 2-years of accumulated classical dance training, Hassan plans to perform on both a regional and international scale, setting his sights on any stage willing to tell a story.



**Marlon T. Brown, Jr. (Dev)** (he/they) is a senior acting student at UMBC. He has performed in various plays at this institution and has contributed in a variety of ways in the department beyond just acting. Marlon plans on going to graduate school for playwriting and expanding upon his fledgling body of work. He is eternally grateful for the mentorship and guidance of the UMBC theater department and eagerly awaits the new talent that will grace both the stage and backstage of his soon to be alma mater.



**Gale Daniel (Assistant Stage Manager)** is a junior Theatre Studies and Information Systems double major. Their previous roles at UMBC include Deck Head for *shOUT: The Queer Theatre Project* and Assistant Stage Manager for UMBC MTC's *Legally Blonde*. Gale would like to thank their friends for their support.

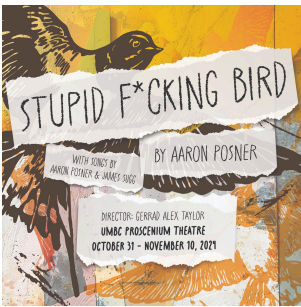


**Morgan Decker (Stage Manager)** (she/her) is a Junior Theatre Design and Production major from Carroll County, MD. This is her third show as Stage Manager with UMBC. Her most recent show, *Slime* by Bryony Lavery, got her a Merit of Excellence Award from the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. Outside of UMBC, she is the choreographer for Constellations Theatre Company. She would like to thank all of her friends and her boyfriend Michael for their constant love, support, and admiration.





**Sean DiGiorgio (Doyle Trigorin)** (he/him) is Junior Theatre Studies Major from Frederick, Maryland. Previous Roles Include: Ensemble in *Newsies* at Other Voices Theatre and Willard in Landless Theatre Company's *Footloose*. Sean was previously seen as Frezzle in the National Premiere of *Slime* by Bryony Lavery here at UMBC, for which he received a Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival nomination. In addition to the stage, you will see Sean behind the camera working on film sets with his company Teddy Bear Wedding Productions. Sean would like to thank his family, friends, and the UMBC Theatre Department for the opportunity to perform in *Stupid F\*cking Bird*. Website: [seandigiorgio.com](http://seandigiorgio.com)



**Kaydin Hamby (Sound Designer)** holds a BA in Theatre Design and Production from UMBC ('19). UMBC sound design credits include *Stories Told Small*, *She Kills Monsters*, *Small Mouth Sounds*, *Everybody*, *Gwyneth*, *Anon(ymous)*, and *Far Away*. Kaydin is an ensemble member at the Maryland Ensemble Theatre in Frederick MD, where sound design credits include: *Sense and Sensibility*, *Three Swingin' Little Pigs*, *Head Over Heels*, *Angels in America Parts 1 & 2*, *Revolutionists*, *Meteor Shower*, *The Tempest*, *Admissions*, *Christmas Carol*, and *Circle Mirror Transformation*. Kaydin is the musical director of MET Comedy Night's *Off Key: An Improvised Musical* and is a Frederick-based singer/songwriter/musician. Listen and learn more at [KaydinHamby.com](http://KaydinHamby.com).



**Andrew Hann (Music Director)** (he/him) is a voice coach, singer, pianist, and yoga practitioner based in Baltimore, Maryland. In addition to offering singing voice work, he offers gender affirming voice care for trans and non-binary folx to help discover their authentic voice which aligns with their identity. As a performer, Andrew has demonstrated his versatility by appearing on stage as a vocalist, harpsichordist, and music director. Favorite roles include Arnalta in *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, Orphée in *La descente d'Orphée aux enfers*, Pane in *La Calisto*, and Jimmy Smith in the 2014 premiere of Frances Pollock's social justice opera *Stinney*. Previous UMBC productions include *ShOUT* and *You Can See Me In The Dark*.



**Shomapti Hussain (Nina Understudy)** is a Senior Graphic Design major and Acting minor from Columbia, MD. Past roles at UMBC include Ensemble in *shOUT: The Queer Theatre Project* and Assistant Choreographer for *Slime*. She would like to thank the incredible director Gerrad Alex Taylor, the amazing designers, as well as the talented cast and crew for all their hard work in this production.



**Becca Janney (Costume Designer)** (thon/they) is so thrilled to be doing their first design at UMBC! Their professional design credits include: Barrington Stage (*Next to Normal*), Chesapeake Shakespeare Company (*Merry Wives*), Gala Theatre (*The Return of Eva Peron: Momia en el Closet*), Imagination Stage (*Cinderella, A Salsa Fairytale*), Creede Repertory Theatre (*Cinderella*), WaterTower Theatre (*Everything is Wonderful, Godspell*) and Stage West Theatre (*Ada and the Engine*). Educational design credits include: American University (*Damn Things Will Kill Ya*), Maryland

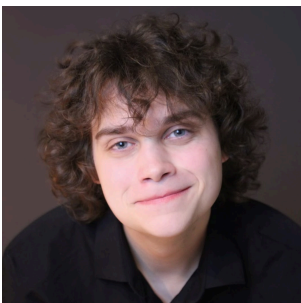
Opera Studio (*Don Giovanni*), University of Maryland (*A Bicycle Country*), Baylor Theatre (*Peter and the Starcatcher*). They got their MFA in costume design at the University of Maryland. Website: [beccajanney.com](http://beccajanney.com)  
Instagram: [@beccajanneydesigns](https://www.instagram.com/beccajanneydesigns)



**Brynn Krasney (Emma Arkadina Understudy)** (she/her) is a BFA Acting Major. Last semester, she performed in UMBC's *Green Theatre Revolution*. Prior to that, she has been seen on stage as Fabian in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and Corinna Stroller in *The House of Blue Leaves*.



**Grace Marsh (Mash Understudy)** (She/Her) is a sophomore BFA acting major and Linehan Artist Scholar. She was recently in UMBC's *Green Theatre Revolution*. Other past roles include Fiona in *Shrek the Musical*, Emma Nolan in *The Prom* and Penelope Pennywise in *Urinetown*. Along with acting Grace has been in vocal training for 5+ years, most recently working under Jennifer Viets. She would like to thank Gerrad and the rest of the production team for giving her this opportunity.



**Wesley Mauder (Dr. Eugene Sorn)** (he/him) is a Senior earning his BFA in Acting as well as his graduate level certificate to teach Computer Science. You can find Wesley pretty much anywhere on campus. He is Lead TA for the Intro to Computer Science program, Vice President and Coach of Dog Collar Comedy, a member of the Gospel Choir, as well as being in both of UMBC Theatre's shows this semester. Wesley hopes to make the most out of his final semesters here at UMBC so if you don't see him around, he's probably got his head buried in the mass amount of coding

assignments he has to grade. Wesley would like to thank his roommates Lucas Sanchez, Nia Zagami and Anthony Rivera for making a home for him to come back to every day.



**Adam Mendelson (Lighting Designer)** (he/him) teaches Lighting and Sound Design at the University of Maryland Baltimore County where he helped prepare the new theatre spaces for the opening of the state-of-the-art Performing Arts and Humanities Building in August of 2012. He previously taught design at the University of Wyoming, the University of Texas-Arlington, Stephens College (Columbia, MO), and Lawrence Academy (Groton, Massachusetts). His design work has been seen across the country and as far afield as Edinburgh, Scotland. He designs lights and sound for our

Theatre department productions and he teaches lighting design students in sophisticated professional level technology and supervises Theatre design majors.



**Lukas O'Boyle (Doyle Trigirin, Dr. Eugene Sorn Understudy)**



**Franchesca Parker (Emma Arkadina)** (she/her) is a senior in the UMBC theater department. You may recognize her from *Trouble in Mind*, playing the strong Wiletta Mayer, and *Dracula: A Feminist Revenge Fantasy*, playing the absolute badass Dr. Van Helsing. Her performance in *Dracula* got Franchesca an actress nomination for The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival - at which she walked away with a vocal and speech award, the VASTA award. Franchesca has returned to her dancing roots, and when not performing in department shows, recently

choreographed a Philly Fringe Festival production called *Carmilla*. She is elated to take the stage as Emma Arkadina and bring this role to life. She'd like to thank her cast and crew for the hours of work put into this production and Gerrad for being an amazing director and role model. Finally, she'd like to thank her Mom and sister for being there for every step of her theater journey. Without them, she truly wouldn't be standing here today. To follow Franchesca on her acting journey and life you can follow her Instagram [@Franchesca\\_m\\_p](#). Please enjoy the show!!





**Christian Price-Burnett (Conrad, Dev Understudy)** (he/him) is a Junior BFA Acting Major from Pikesville, Maryland. His favorite roles include Chuck Cranston in *Footloose* and Phil, Jimmy and East in *Almost Maine* at RCS High School and ensemble for *Matilda*, and *The Secret Garden* at Park Playhouse and Ensemble for *Slime*. His past roles at UMBC include various roles in *SHOUT!!* Christian would like to thank his chorus and music directors, Mr. Fatuzzo and Mrs. McLoughlin, his twin, Christopher, and his dad and mom. Instagram: [wrlld.of.tian](#)



**Nigel Semaj** (they/them) is an Assistant Professor for the UMBC Theatre Department. You may read their bio on the [UMBC website](#).



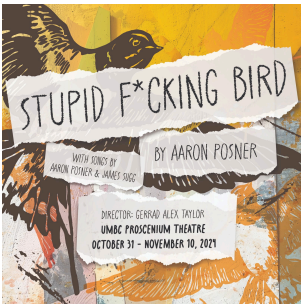
**Jay Shovan (Assistant Lighting Designer)** (they/them) is a senior earning their BA in Theatre Design and Production from Ellicott City, MD. Their past roles at UMBC include Assistant Sound Designer (*Dracula*, *Slime*) and Head Sound Designer (*Green Theatre Revolution*). Their favorite role has been Assistant Sound Designer (Chesapeake Shakespeare Company). They would like to thank their parents, brother, and their incredibly supportive best friends Chloe and Jenna.



**Nate Sinnott (Scenic Designer)** (he/him) is an Associate Professor, and the Scenic Designer for the UMBC Theatre Department. You may read his bio on the [UMBC website](#).



**Jamia Tutt (Nina)** (she/her) is a Junior BFA Acting major with a minor in Asian Studies from Randallstown, Baltimore County, Maryland. Her favorite past roles were being Barb/Ola's Understudy for *Slime*, and being Assistant Stage Manager for the play *Dracula*. "I would like to thank the production team and cast members for their hard work, and supporting each other and me, during this journey!" Instagram: [@miaa.acting](#)

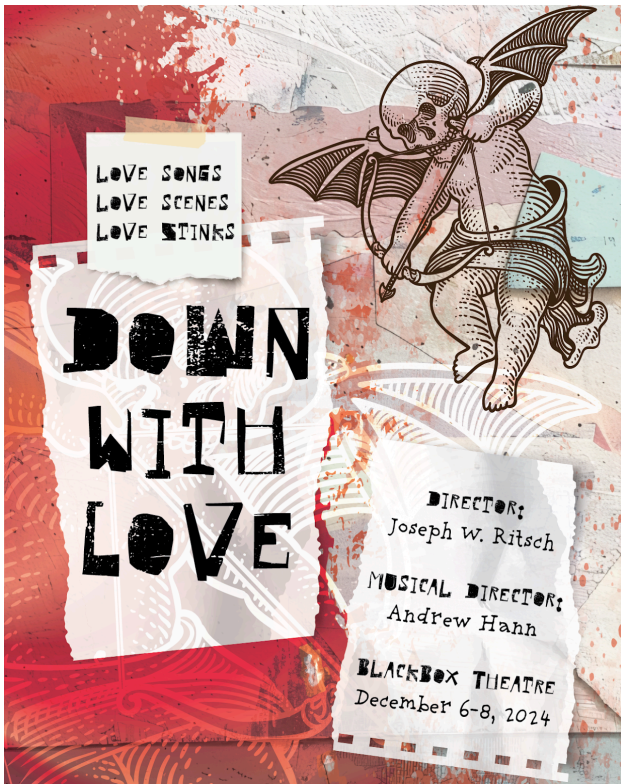


**Sierra Young (Intimacy Director)**



**Nia Zagami (Mash)** (she/her) is graduating this semester with a BFA in Acting and a Minor in Psychology while in UMBC's Pre-Nursing Program. Nia is beyond grateful to perform one last time at UMBC alongside her castmates in *Stupid F\*cking Bird*. Her previous UMBC Theatre Department credits include Ensemble in *Green Theatre Revolution*, Ola in *Slime*, understudy for Van Helsing, Mina Harker, and Renfield in *Dracula: A Feminist Revenge Fantasy*, and Ensemble in *Stories Told Small*. She would like to thank her friends and faculty in the UMBC Theatre Department for making her time at UMBC infinitely better.

## 2024 - 2025 Season On Stage Next...



### **Down With Love: An Actor Showcase**

Directed by Joseph W. Ritsch  
Musical Direction by Andrew Hann

December 6 – 8, 2024  
Black Box Theatre

[Buy Tickets Here!](#)

Join our acting majors for an evening of songs, scenes, and speeches exploring love's highs, lows, and everything in between.



UMBC

# DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE

At UMBC we believe that theatre is an ever-changing art form, responding to and creating new ideas that confront our ethical, political, and artistic ideas and practices. Degree programs leading to an Acting, BFA, a Theatre BA; Theatre Studies Track, or a Theatre BA; Design & Production Track provide students with the interdisciplinary skills to become actively engaged with their art and with the world around them. A dedicated faculty focuses on each student's evolution as an artist and as a person, making the study of theatre at UMBC a life-changing experience that stimulates, challenges and inspires.

## **New Ways and New Plays — Our Vision for the Future:**

UMBC Theatre fosters artistically innovative and socially engaged graduates in a leading liberal arts program. Using the latest technologies and practices, we experiment with theatrical forms, create provocative new work, and give voice where it is most needed.

Learn more at [theatre.umbc.edu](http://theatre.umbc.edu).

**Full-Time Faculty/Staff** Eve Muson (Chair), Eric Abele, Margaret Caster, Tessara Morgan Farley, Nikki Hartman, Becca Janney, Susan McCully, Evan McDougall, Adam Mendelson, Derek Prouty, Greggory Schraven, Colette Searls, Nigel Semaj, Nate Sinnott, Gerrad Alex Taylor

**Part-Time and Adjunct Faculty/Staff** Tyler Brust, Katie Hileman, Joseph W. Ritsch, Susan Stroupe

**Special Thanks To** Dean Kimberly Moffitt, Director of Arts and Culture Tom Moore, Kiirstn Pagan, Laura Schraven and Commonvision, Cael Mulcahy, the CAHSS Operations, and Lynn Cazabon.

**Poster Design** by Eric Abele

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# The Kennedy Center

*The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, part of the Rubenstein Arts Access Program, is generously funded by **David M. Rubenstein**.*

*Special thanks to The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust for supporting the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival.*

*Additional support is provided by The Honorable Stuart Bernstein and Wilma E. Bernstein; and the Dr. Gerald and Paula McNichols Foundation.*

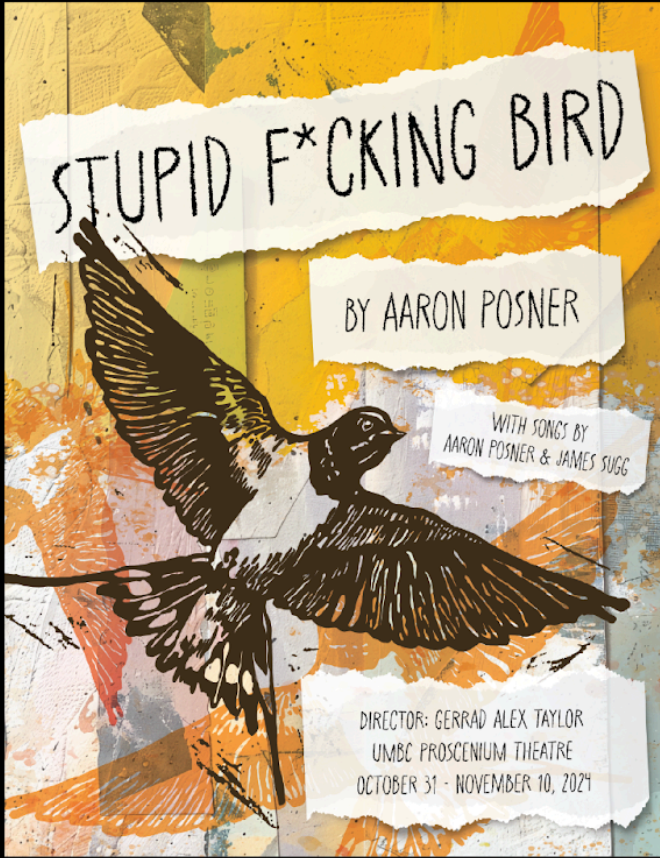
*Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts.*

This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KCACTF representative, and selected students and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year more than 1,500 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.

# UMBC THEATRE

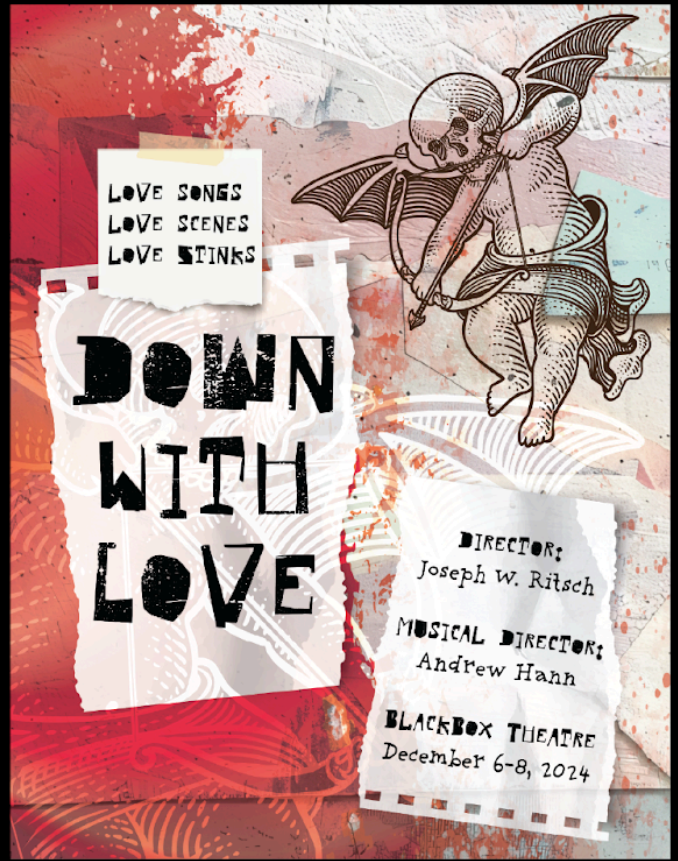


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BY AARON POSNER

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UMBC PROSCENIUM THEATRE  
OCTOBER 31 - NOVEMBER 10, 2024



LOVE SONGS  
LOVE SCENES  
LOVE STINKS

**DOWN  
WITH  
LOVE**

DIRECTOR:  
Joseph W. Ritsch

MUSICAL DIRECTOR:  
Andrew Hann

BLACKBOX THEATRE  
December 6-8, 2024



JOHN PROCTOR  
IS THE  
**VILLAIN**

BY KIMBERLY BELEFLOWER

DIRECTOR: SUSAN STROUPE  
UMBC PROSCENIUM THEATRE  
APRIL 3-13, 2025



**In the  
darkest  
Forest**

Blackbox Theatre  
May 2-4, 2025

Director:  
Nigel Semaj

Let my heart be still a moment  
and this mystery explore...

2024 - 2025 SEASON

