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ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE

PRESENTS

THE ALLEY THEATRE WORLD PREMIER PRODUCTION

BORN WITH TEETH

FEBRUARY 7 – MARCH 29

23-24 SEASON





Producing Artistic Director **Peter Rothstein** Managing Director **Ross Egan**
Proudly Present
The Alley Theatre Production of

BORN WITH TEETH

By **LIZ DUFFY ADAMS**

Directed by **ROB MELROSE**

Scenic Design
MICHAEL LOCHER

Costume Design
ALEJO VIETTI

Lighting Design
CAROLINA ORTIZ HERRERA

Sound Design
CLIFF CARUTHERS

New York Casting
MCCORKLE CASTING LTD
PAT MCCORKLE, CSA

Resident Casting Director
CÉLINE ROSENTHAL

Stage Manager
JOCELYN A. THOMPSON*

Assistant Stage Manager
NIA SCIARRETTA*

BORN WITH TEETH received a reading and the world premiere production at the Alley Theatre, Houston, TX
Rob Melrose, Artistic Director **Dean R. Gladden, Managing Director**

BORN WITH TEETH is presented through special arrangement with TRW PLAYS
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Matthew Amendt and Dylan Godwin in Alley Theatre's production of *BORN WITH TEETH*. Photo by Lynn Lane

CAST

IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

MATTHEW AMENDT*.....Kit
DYLAN GODWIN*.....Will

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

Directors are members of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society; Designers are members of the United Scenic Artists Local USA-829; Backstage and Scene Shop Crew are members of IATSE Local 412.

UNDERSTUDIES

Understudies never substitute for listed players unless a specific announcement for the appearance is made at the time of the performance

For Kit: ALEX HATCHER; **For Will:** WILL WESTRAY

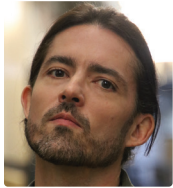
THE SETTING

Part 1: Winter 1591
Part 2: Summer 1592
Part 3: May 1593

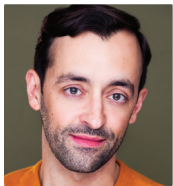
A private back room in a London tavern.

THE CAST

IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER



Matthew Amendt He/Him (Kit) Matthew has appeared on screens and stages across the US and internationally. Broadway: *Bernhardt/Hamlet*. Off-Broadway: *Dracula* (title role at Classic Stage), *Coriolanus*, *'Tis Pity She's A Whore* (Red Bull), *Julius Caesar*, *Tamburlaine the Great*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (Theatre for a New Audience at Polonsky Shakespeare Center), *Henry V* in the title role (The Acting Company and Guthrie Theatre); *The Subject Was Roses*, *The Misanthrope* (Pearl Theatre Compnay). Regional: 13 productions at the Guthrie Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Shakespeare Theatre Co., Alley Theatre, Seattle Rep., Pittsburgh Public, The Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, Westport, and others. Awards: Presidential Scholar, Ivey Award, Emery Battis Award for Acting, Best Production/Leading Man: *Hamlet* – Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Best Actors – Houston Press.



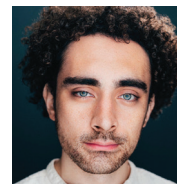
Dylan Godwin He/Him (Will) Dylan is a Resident Acting Company Member at the Alley Theatre in Houston Texas. Recent credits include: *Little Comedies*, world premiere with Richard Nelson (Aplombob); *Agatha Christie's The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* (Ralph Paton); *The Servant of Two Masters* (Silvio); *Clue* (Wadsworth); and *Born With Teeth* (Will) at both the Alley Theatre and Guthrie Theatre; *Fully Committed* (Sam); *Twelfth Night* (Sir Andrew); *The*

Winter's Tale (Clowne); *Picasso at the Lapine Agile* (Einstein). National Tour: *Fiddler on the Roof*. Regional: *Miller, Mississippi* (Dallas Theatre Center); *Beauty and the Beast*, *110 in the Shade*, *Reefer Madness*, *The Music Man*, *First Date*, *Bonnie and Clyde*, *Oliver*, *Sweet Potato Queens* (Theatre Under the Stars); *Life Could Be A Dream*, *Altar Boyz* (Stages). Love to ZH.



Alex Hatcher (u/s Kit) Alex is a current MFA Acting candidate at the FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training and is thrilled to be making his Asolo Rep debut this season! He holds a BFA in

Acting from Boston University with a concentration in Musical Theater and Dance. Favorite stage credits include *West Side Story* (Milwaukee Rep), *1776* (New Rep), *Hamlet* (LAMDA), and *Mr. Burns: A Post-Electric Play* (BU). Alexanderhatcher.com



Will Westray He/Him (u/s Will) Will is grateful to be in his first year at the FSU Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training. Most of his training and professional experiences have been in the DC area and NYC. He holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from Shenandoah Conservatory and is a proud DMV native. He looks forward to continuing this new chapter with the Asolo Repertory Theatre, following his first role as understudy in *Inherit the Wind*.

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Liz Duffy Adams

(Playwright) Liz Duffy Adams' *Born With Teeth* premiered at the Alley Theater in 2022 and moved to the Guthrie Theater in 2023; it received an Edgerton Foundation New Play Award and Houston Theater Awards' Best Play/Production and Best New Play, and was a Steinberg-ATCA New Play Award finalist. Her Neo-Restoration comedy *Or*, premiered Off-Broadway at WP Theater and has been produced over 80 times since, including at Magic Theater and Seattle Rep. She's a New Dramatists alumna; other honors include a Lillian Hellman Award, Women of Achievement Award, New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, Massachusetts Cultural Council Fellowship, and a Will Glickman Award for Best New Play for her post-apocalyptic vaudeville *Dog Act*. More including links to her plays at lizduffyadams.com

Cliff Caruthers

(Sound Design and Original Compositions) Cliff is a West-Coast based sound designer and composer with over 20 years' experience in the field of theatre sound design. He has created music and soundscapes for over 300 productions near and far, including *Troilus and Cressida* for Oregon Shakespeare Festival, *Frankenstein* at Guthrie Theatre, *1984* at Alley Theatre, *Caucasian Chalk Circle* for American Conservatory Theater, *TRAGEDY: A Tragedy* for Berkeley Repertory Theater, *Man in Love* for Kansas City Rep, and *A Clean House* for TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, where he was Resident Sound Designer for seven years. Mr. Caruthers is co-curator and technical director of the San Francisco Tape Music Festival, teaches sound design at San Francisco State University, and is a proud member of United Scenic Artists.

Anna Crace She/Her

(Assistant Director) Director: *Dragons Love Tacos: The Musical* (STC); *The Girl On The Train* (Lyric Arts); *Geminae* (The Southern Theater); *The Daughter Abroad* (Theatre503); *This Wall* (English Theatre Berlin); *you/me/tomorrow* (Apiary Studios); *Stranded* (National Youth Theatre). Associate & Assistant Director: *Born With Teeth* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival, scheduled for Sept. 2024); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Filter Theatre, U.K. Tour); *Born With Teeth* (Guthrie Theater), *Twelfth Night* (Guthrie Theater), *Small Mouth Sounds* (Jungle Theater); *The Seagull*, *The Plough and the Stars*, *Jack and the Beanstalk* (Lyric Hammersmith). Dramaturg: *Vietgone* (Guthrie Theater), *A Different Pond* (STC), *Raymie Nightingale* (STC), *A Christmas Carol* (Guthrie Theater).

Ross Egan

(Managing Director) Ross is the Managing Director at Asolo Repertory Theatre. Ross' arts administration career began in Chicago where he was a co-founder of

Jeff-award-winning Refuge Theatre Project. Ross has served as Managing Director at Barter Theatre, the nation's longest-running professional theatre, and as Director of Marketing & Operations at Illinois Shakespeare Festival. Ross holds a B.F.A. in acting from Michigan State University and an MBA from Illinois State University. He lives with his family in Lakewood Ranch and proudly serves as a den leader for the Boy Scouts of America.

Michael Locher He/Him

(Scenic Design) Michael is pleased to make his Asolo Rep debut with *Born With Teeth*. Recent regional credits include productions for the Guthrie Theater, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Yale Repertory Theatre, California Shakespeare Theatre and Houston's Alley Theatre, where he serves as the Director of Design. Michael's designs have been seen Off-Broadway and at venues throughout New York and the Northeast. Michael served as a professor at San Jose State University for six years and works as an illustrator and graphic designer specializing in work for the performing arts. Graduate: University of California San Diego, Yale School of Drama.

Rob Melrose

(Director) Rob is the Artistic Director of the Alley Theatre where he has directed *The Winter's Tale*, *1984*, *Murder on the Orient Express*, *Sweat*, the world premiere of *Born With Teeth*, as well as his adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*, and his translation of *The Servant of Two Masters*. He has directed at The Public Theater (*Pericles*, *Prince of Tyre*), The Guthrie Theater (*Born With Teeth*, *Frankenstein*, *Happy Days*, *Freud's Last Session*, *Pen*, *Julius Caesar* - with the Acting Company); The Oregon Shakespeare Festival (*Troilus and Cressida* – in association with the Public Theater); Magic Theatre (*An Accident*, world premiere); and The Old Globe (*Much Ado About Nothing*); PlayMakers Rep (*Happy Days*). He was previously the Founding Artistic Director of The Cutting Ball Theater.

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(New York Casting) Pat McCorkle and McCorkle Casting continue to strive for inclusivity and social awareness during their 35 year history in casting. Broadway: Over 50 productions including: *On The Town*, *Amazing Grace*, *End of the Rainbow*, *A Few Good Men*. etc. Off-Broadway, Over 60 productions, Highlights: *Tribes*, *Our Town*, *Driving Miss Daisy*. Regional Theatre: Guthrie, Barrington Stage, George Street Playhouse, hundreds of other regional theatres. Feature films: Currently working on 6 films. Previous projects: *Premium Rush*, *Ghost Town*, *The Thomas Crown Affair*, *Die Hard with a Vengeance* and more. Television: two new films for Hallmark, *Twisted*, humans for *Sesame Street*, *Californication* (Emmy Nomination), *Chappelle Show*, *Strangers with Candy* and more.

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THE CREATIVE TEAM

Carolina Ortiz Herrera

(Lighting Design) Carolina is a Mexican-born and New York-based Lighting Designer for theater, opera, and dance. Broadway: *Good Night, Oscar* (Belasco & Goodman Theatre); Regional: *American Mariachi* (Alley Theatre & Arizona Theatre Company); *Born With Teeth* (Guthrie & Alley Theatre); *Native Gardens* (Dallas Theatre Center); *Everything Rises* (BAM & Royce Hall); *All's Well That Ends Well* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Seven Guitars* (Yale Repertory Theatre); *Doubt: A Parable & 4000 Miles* (Westport Country Playhouse); *Macbeth* (Merrimack Theatre Repertory); *Yellowman*, an Audelco Awards Best Lighting Design nominee (Billie Holiday Theatre); *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna* (Minneapolis Opera); and *Florencia en el Amazonas* (Shubert Theatre). Member of USA Local 829. Graduate of Yale School of Drama. carolinaeortiz.com

Peter Rothstein

(Producing Artistic Director) Peter is the Producing Artistic Director for Asolo Repertory Theatre where he directed *Inherit The Wind*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *Ragtime*. He works extensively as a director of theater, musical theater, opera, and new work development. For 25 years Rothstein served as the Founding Artistic Director of Theater Latté Da, a Minneapolis- based company dedicated to new and adventurous music-theater. Other collaborations include the Guthrie Theater, Children's Theatre Company, Ten Thousand Things, and Seattle's 5th Avenue, as well as the Minnesota Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Florida Grand Opera, and Chicago Opera Theater. Rothstein is the creator of *All Is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914*, which had its Off-Broadway debut in 2018 receiving the Drama Desk Award for Unique Theatrical Experience and has been seen around the globe airing on PBS. Rothstein served on the board of directors for the National Alliance for Musical Theatre, Alive and Kickin', and the Twin Cities' Ivey Awards. He has been a panelist and evaluator for the Playwrights' Center, the McKnight Foundation, the Minnesota State Arts Board, and the National Alliance for Musical Theatre's Festival of New Musicals. He holds degrees in music and theater from St. John's University and an M.F.A. in directing from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Nia Sciarretta

She/Her (Production Stage Manager) Selected Asolo Rep credits include PSM for *Crazy for You*, *Knoxville*, *Cabaret*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Silent Sky*, *Incident at Our Lady of Perpetual Help*, *The Great Leap*, *The Sound of Music*, *Into the Breeches*, *The Music Man*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Sweat*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *Roe*, and the 2020-21 Terrace Stage season, as well as Assistant Stage Manager for *Rhinoceros*, *Guys & Dolls*, *All the Way*, *South Pacific*, and *Hero: The Musical*. Previous of-Broadway credits include work on *Jesus Hopped the A Train*, *In the Blood*, and *The Wayside Motor Inn* at the Signature Theatre. Nia has also worked with Creede Repertory Theatre, the Hangar Theatre, the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, the Flea Theatre, and Penguin Rep. Member of AEA.

Jocelyn Thompson

(Stage Manager) Alley Theatre: *Pictures from Home*, *Edward Albee's Seascape*, *Born with Teeth*; North Carolina Theatre: *The Color Purple*; Guthrie Theatre: *Born with Teeth*; American Shakespeare Center: *Taming of the Shrew*, *Measure for Measure*, *Pass Over*, *Much Ado About Nothing*; Virginia Repertory Theatre: *The Wiz*, *Airline Highway*, *West Side Story*, *Raisin in the Sun*, *Fences*, *Once*; Cutting Ball Theater: Marcus Gardley's ...*And Jesus Moonwalks the Mississippi*, *Ubu Roi*, *The Chairs*; Jocelyn has also worked at Brava for Women in the Arts, Shotgun Players, Portland Center Stage, Richmond Shakespeare, and Magic Theatre. Training: Howard University. Member of AEA.

Alejo Vietti

He/Him (Costume Design) Originally from Argentina. New York: Broadway's *Allegiance* (Drama Desk Nomination), *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical* - (also West End - Olivier Nomination, National Tour, Australia and Japan) and *Holiday Inn*, as well as works for the Radio City Rockettes, Roundabout Theatre, Manhattan Theatre Club, NYC Center Encores!, Atlantic Theatre Company, NYC Opera, Primary Stages, and MCC, among others. Has also extensively designed for regional Theatres across the U.S., commercial projects, and dance. Other credits: *Titanique* (Lucille Lortel Award), Disney's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* in Japan, Germany and Austria, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Minnesota Opera, Donesk Opera (Ukraine), Colorado Ballet, and the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus. Recipient of the 2010 TDF Irene Sharaff Young Master Award. @alejo_vietti_costume_design

About Alley Theatre:

Alley Theatre, one of America's leading nonprofit theatres, is a nationally recognized performing arts company led by Artistic Director Rob Melrose and Managing Director Dean R. Gladden. The Alley is committed to developing and producing theatre that is as diverse as the Houston community.

The Alley produces up to 11 plays and nearly 400 performances each season, ranging from the best current work and classic plays to new plays by contemporary writers. Home to a full-time resident company of actors and expert artisans in all theatre crafts, the Alley engages theatre artists of every discipline – actors, directors, designers, composers, playwrights – who work on individual productions throughout each season as visiting artists.

Alley Theatre performs at the Meredith J. Long Theatre Center which is comprised of two state-of-the-art theatres: the 774-seat Hubbard Theatre and the 296-seat Neuhaus Theatre. The Alley reaches over 200,000 people each year through its performance, education, and community engagement programs.

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A CONVERSATION WITH PLAYWRIGHT LIZ DUFFY ADAMS BY DRAYTON ALEXANDER



When *Born With Teeth* premiered at the Alley Theatre in 2022, Liz Duffy Adams’ speculative history of William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe was an instant sensation. Theaters around the country clamored to bring Rob Melrose’s sparkling production to their audiences: it was seen at the Guthrie Theater in 2023, kicks off 2024 here in Sarasota, and will soon hit the West Coast at Oregon Shakespeare Festival this summer.

Literary Manager Drayton Alexander recently chatted with Liz Duffy Adams via Zoom from her Western Massachusetts cabin. Talk soon turned to her early years in New York, when she lived in a fourth-floor East Village walk-up with a bathroom in the kitchen. Adams remembered having friends over for tea while she soaked in the tub.

Drayton Alexander: Liz, you are really an old school bohemian.

Liz Duffy Adams: Ha, that’s actually one of my self-definitions: bohemian rhapsodist. A riff on the Queen song of course but also because I write out of a state of rhapsody, and I want to create an experience for the audience that sweeps them into a state of expansion and excitement.

Drayton: What is the rhapsody in *Born With Teeth*?

Liz: With historical fiction, you’re not writing about the past in an escapist way, you’re using the past to talk about the present. But at the same time there is a sense of time travel, of being a fly on the wall in a familiar yet unknown world. Here, we’re all dropped into this room with these two fascinating, complex playwrights, and there’s no time to think or breathe, you just get swept up in it. That’s how it was to write it: as soon as I started, the characters ran away with me and I could barely keep up. So that’s a rhapsodic experience that I am offering to the audience.

Drayton: *Born With Teeth* is this intoxicating jumble of history, but you’re really brilliant at not getting bogged down in the facts or stopping the action to give us a history lesson.

Liz: One of the things I take from Shakespeare is that a play should have multiple levels, something for everyone. So, there’s Easter eggs for people who really know a lot about this period – they get the extra giggle – but it’s also a spy thriller, and a dangerous love story, and a backstage drama/comedy. You don’t need to know anything about Shakespeare or Marlowe, you just need to go on the trip

with these two fellas and the emotional journey they’re on. It’s the same in fact with Shakespeare: when you’re watching *Henry VI*, you don’t have to remember, “well, wait, whose side is Somerset on now?”, you can just go along for the ride.

Drayton: You began studying Shakespeare as a teenager, so you’ve lived with him quite a while, but it’s still a big swing to say, “I’m going to inhabit the bodies and voices of two of the most celebrated, mysterious, deeply poetic playwrights of our culture.” How did you prepare for this?

Liz: I’m a big believer in what I call accidental research, where you just go deep into anything you’re attracted to without thinking of where it will lead. For all these decades, I’ve been casually reading books about Shakespeare, just because I love it, and then at a certain point, I was like, “what’s the deal with Marlowe?” So I read this fabulous book by Charles Nicholl called *The Reckoning*, which is a very key source for *Born With Teeth*, and I read Marlowe’s complete works, and I almost wrote a play about him in the 1990s, but then David Grimm wrote his fabulous Marlowe play, so I set that idea aside. But the seeds were there.

Drayton: What finally led you to writing your own play?

Liz: A few years ago, it was announced that scholars had proven that Marlowe and Shakespeare had collaborated on the *Henry VI* cycle of plays. On the one hand, we know that Elizabethan playwrights worked together a lot. Theater was the dominant narrative form, and everybody went to the theater, but runs were short - three performances was a hit - so you constantly needed new material. It’s similar to how TV writers’ rooms work today. But nobody knew that Shakespeare and Marlowe had ever collaborated. When I heard that, my brain lit up, and I very quickly knew that this was the story I wanted to tell.

Drayton: A lot of us have ideas in our head of who Shakespeare and Marlowe were, and one of the great joys of your play is that you suggest we should question our expectations. Your Shakespeare is more ruthless than the person I had in my imagination, but then so is the world he’s in.

Liz: The thing is, it cannot be an accident to survive and thrive to the degree that he did. He couldn’t be a complete naïf, he had to be strategic and intentional about what he wanted. Sure, to a huge degree his genius drove his career and his fortunes, but it was pretty easy to put your foot wrong in that era and literally not survive, let alone having your work survive. I think we also see that in his writing, in the profundity of his world view. This is somebody who paid attention to

the world, this is somebody who had his eyes open, who was extraordinarily interested in everything. And then Marlowe; we all have these exciting ideas about Marlowe, but he wasn’t a nice person. The work he did as a spy was quite nasty, it was *make somebody your best friend and then get them killed*, and he obviously took a lot of relish in it. He’s an extraordinarily attractive theatrical personality, but he’s no hero.

Drayton: There’s a question we’re exploring this season in *Inherit The Wind* that is also asked in this play: who decides what we are allowed to believe, and what do we lose when we’re not allowed to explore certain ideas? There’s this very intimate scene in *Born With Teeth* where Will and Kit talk through the forbidden topic of God, and it’s the closest they get to each other, even while doing something that is quite illegal.

Liz: For me, that’s a really core moment. Part of the point of the play is how authoritarianism mutates us – I’ve thought of the analogy of trees that are pollarded, so that they’re forced to grow against a wall. They’re denatured, which I find an almost torturous image. Part of the genius of Shakespeare and Marlowe is that they find a way, despite a system that wants to control what they think, to be free in their minds, and when they share that with each other, that’s the most incredible intimacy.

Words create thought, so when your words are manacled, whole populations become incapable of thinking certain things; that’s when you need visionaries like artists who find a way to break those manacles, who think and say what is dangerous to think and say, because that’s a gift to everyone. It keeps the door cracked open for everyone.



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Thank you to the dedicated and generous donors who played a leading role by supporting our 65th season at Asolo Rep.

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Audio 2
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Jojo Glodek

Assistant Master Electrician
Michele Marcus

Head of Wardrobe
Jodi Urias

Wig Assistant
Lisa Dufresne

Theatre Properties Head
Christy Perry

Grips
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Spot Operators
Steve Cooksey, Oliver Vasquez

Dressers
Karle Murdock, Carmelita Torres, Manuela Torres

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David M. Covach

Assistant Costume Shop Manager
Jordan Jeffers

Resident Hair/Wig and Makeup Designer
Michelle Hart

Lead Draper
Laine June Marr

Drapers
Jessica Hayes, Skyler Niedziela

Lead Cutter/First Hand
Teresa Consolvo

First Hand
Kris Grooms

Lead Stitcher
Maureen Klein

Stitchers
Meg Carlson, Cassidy Van Brink

Dyer-Crafts Artist
Sarah Cox

STAGE MANAGEMENT
Production Stage Manager
Nia Sciarretta

Stage Managers & Assistant Stage Managers
Alexa Burn, Jaclyn Kanter, Kristin Loughry, Jacqueline Singleton, Jocelyn Thompson

Stage Manager Apprentices
Hanna Hagerty, Peyton Otis, Bailey Shea

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION SUPPORT
Born With Teeth

Assistant Director
ANNA CRACE

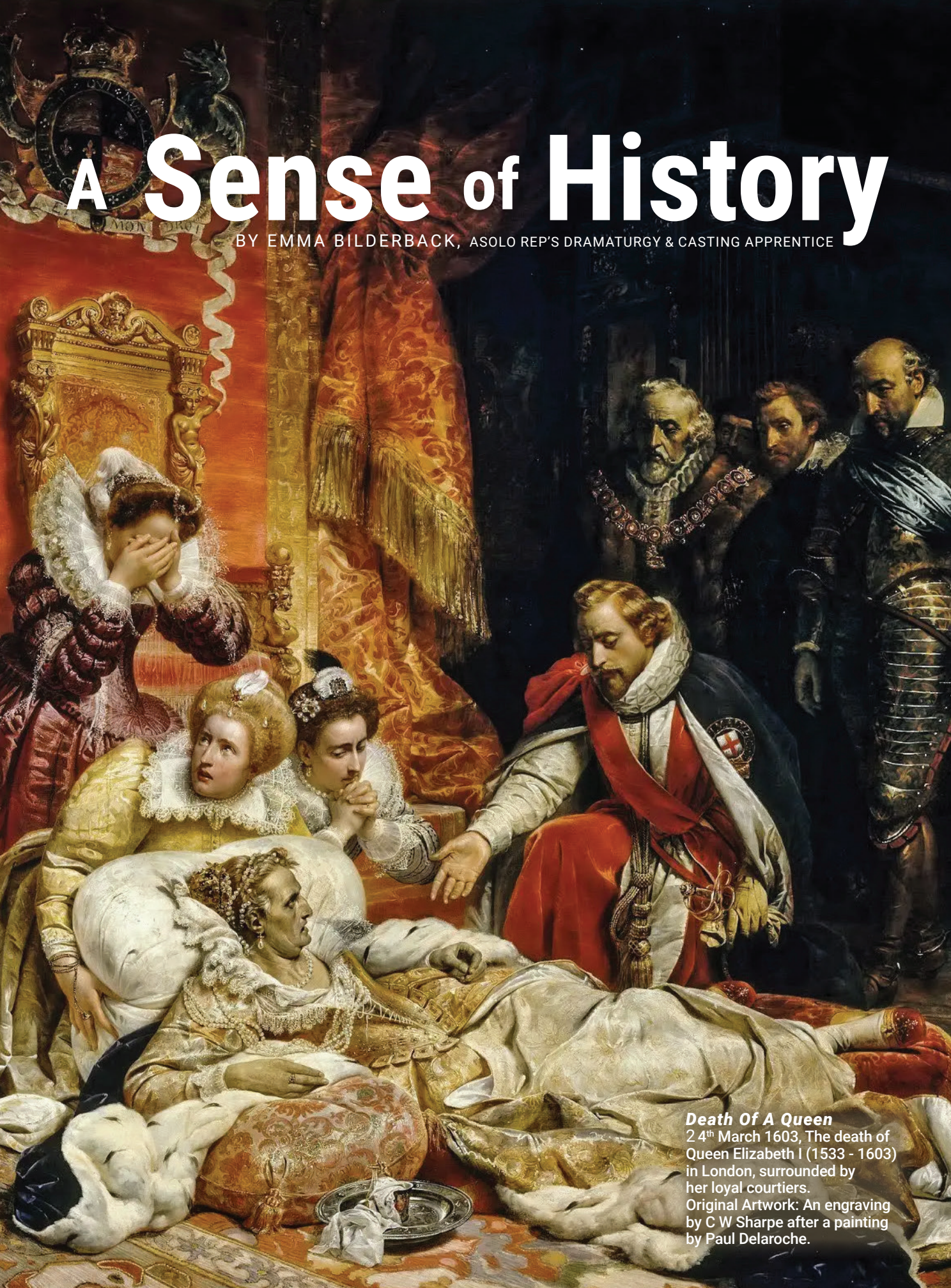
SM Apprentice
BAILEY SHEA

Associate Lighting Design
ALICE TRENT

Fight Director & Intimacy Specialist
ADAM NOBLE

Violence Consultant
MARK ROSE

Dialect Coach
ROSIE WARD



A Sense of History

BY EMMA BILDERBACK, ASOLO REP'S DRAMATURGY & CASTING APPRENTICE

Death Of A Queen
24th March 1603, The death of Queen Elizabeth I (1533 - 1603) in London, surrounded by her loyal courtiers.
Original Artwork: An engraving by C W Sharpe after a painting by Paul Delaroche.



CHRISTOPHER
MARLOWE



WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARE

The past is a mystery that we attempt to interpret by assembling scraps of information into a narrative we call history. We imagine that history is a factual recollection, but it is in part a hypothesis about the world that came before us, which we use to understand who we are now. *Born With Teeth* is one such endeavor, a history play about two men writing a history play. Liz Duffy Adams pulls from the few available facts and the large pile of scholarly speculations to weave a tale about how precarious writing history can be.

Shakespeare wrote what is still the definitive model of a history play with *The Henriad*, an eight-play cycle concerned with the lineage of English monarchs stretching from Richard II through Henry IV, V, and IV, and ending with Richard III. Together, they tell of over 100 years of power struggles that led to the Tudors gaining the English crown. It is a single yet significant contribution to what is now known as the "Tudor Myth," invented to mark Queen Elizabeth's reign as golden and prosperous by creating arts and literature that posed much of the 15th century as a time of anarchy and bloodshed.

Shakespeare lets us know right at the beginning of *Born With Teeth* that this is not how contemporaries viewed their time. The Tudors' reign was messy, to say the absolute least: issues with heirs and bloodlines, questions of legitimacy, attempts to maintain feudal rule. Queen Elizabeth was cautious of revolution, especially arising from the divide between Catholics and Protestants. This fear wasn't

unfounded: the Tudor reign ended with Elizabeth I, who left behind no heir. King James VI and I, her successor, was ushered into power during Shakespeare's life by one of the Queen's Triangle of Intrigue, Robert Cecil.

It was Cecil's secret correspondence with James that solidified the latter's ascension to the throne and the unification of England and Scotland under one ruler, marking the beginning of a Stuart reign that would last until the early 1700s. The two other points of the triangle, The Earl of Essex and Sir Walter Raleigh, were each executed by monarchs: Essex for a coup against Elizabeth (which may have actually been focused on ousting Cecil from his government position), and Raleigh for a plot against James I. With all this intrigue swirling around them, Shakespeare and Marlowe had to tread carefully and be thoughtful about how they told the story of the bloody civil war that led to Elizabeth's rule (if indeed they wrote together at all).

Sometimes history plays are crafted from transcripts, verbatim from the mouths of their utterers, and sometimes the facts are so sparse our imagination must fill the void. *Born With Teeth* is of the latter category, one of many artistic endeavors that want us to get closer to the artists whose work we continue to perform and the world they once inhabited. Shakespeare and Marlowe are titans of their craft; after all of their histories, they deserve one of their own.

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Asolo Rep is grateful for the corporate support provided by Sarasota Herald-Tribune | LOCALiQ, Innovative Dining, and WUSF Public Media for the production of *Born With Teeth*.

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