

# **en-DANGER!-ed**

part of New Play Festival

By A.R. Corwin

Directed by Jillian Johnson

7:30 p.m. Feb. 20-21

Virtual Performance  
School of Music, Dance and Theatre  
Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts  
Arizona State University

## Land Acknowledgment

Arizona State University acknowledges the twenty-two Native Nations that have inhabited this land for centuries. Arizona State University's four campuses are located in the Salt River Valley on ancestral territories of Indigenous peoples, including the Akimel O'odham (Pima) and Pee Posh (Maricopa) Indian Communities, whose care and keeping of these lands allows us to be here today. ASU acknowledges the sovereignty of these nations and seeks to foster an environment of success and possibility for Native American students and patrons. We are advocates for the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge systems and research methodologies within contemporary practice. ASU welcomes members of the Akimel O'odham and Pee Posh, and all Native nations.

## Playwright's Corner

### **What is the first thing that you do when you sit down to write?**

Unfortunately, I can't just sit down - I have to get out of my house! I write best in places where there are other people working. During Covid, I've found some nice outdoor spots on campus where I'm distanced from people but get a similar effect. When I get to my writing space, I choose a type of music that matches the mood or feeling of the piece I'm writing. For en-DANGER!-ed, I listened to 1950s and 1960s Doo-Wop, multiple versions of the song "Loch Lomond," Tchaikovsky's "Swan Lake" and "Sleeping Beauty," and David Bowie.

### **What is your favorite line in "en-DANGER!-ed"?**

"Just imagine - Blobfish dish towels. Blobfish socks. Maybe - maybe even a blobfish stuffed animal. A blobfish in every child's room!"

### **What do you want audiences to get out of this play?**

I've tried to write characters with multiple perspectives and experiences, and I hope everyone will identify with someone. Overall, I'd like audience members to walk away with a deeper recognition of what is happening to vast amounts of animals all over the world and how humans are connected to this.

### **What will your next play be about?**

It's tentatively titled, "A History of Climate Change, Part 1" (spoofing Mel Brooks' film of a similar name) and is going to explore the roots of human-made climate change, unpacking the connections between today's time bomb-like situation and historical actions like colonization, slavery, the industrial revolution, and more. Like its film namesake, the play will jump through time, leading to both comic and disturbing revelations.

A.R. Corwin

## **Meet the Director**

As a director, working on new plays is really an exercise in minimalism. You want to let the play and the story being told lead the process as opposed to your own ideas about staging. In some ways being on Zoom has helped me slow down and focus more on the script since creating elaborate staging isn't really in the cards right now

### **What are you most excited for the performance?**

This play is incredibly funny but also has a heartbreaking message to deliver. One of the things I love most about "en-DANGER!-ed" is how it lures you in with a comedic tone before bringing to light some of the bigger issues around the impacts of climate change, deforestation, and other practices that severely affect our planet. A.R. humanizes these animal characters in a way that makes their crises our crises too. I'm looking forward to getting feedback from audience members on how this balance played out in the performance.

### **What was the greatest challenge that you've faced while creating your piece for this virtual performance?**

Creating Zoom-friendly blocking was a huge challenge. Simply coordinating with the actors on which direction their scene partner was in relationship to them took some trial and error navigating how Zoom usually mirrors participants' videos. I ended up asking the actors to point to the direction they thought their scene partner was before we rehearsed each scene. It became our joke that I would tell them 'face Zoom left' or 'Zoom right'. On top of that, we ran into the unique challenge of blocking moments when characters would have to touch or pass a prop to one another which obviously can't happen over Zoom. We attempted some creative staging for these moments, some involving duplicate props. See if you can spot them!

Jillian Johnson

## en-DANGER!-ed Production Team

Playwright	A.R. Corwin
Director	Jillian Johnson
Video Editing	A.R. corwin
Virtual Background & Props Creation	Olivia Hernández, Matthew Venrick

Thank you to the ASU Costume and Props departments!

## Acting Company

Museum Visitor/Galvin	Jacob Buttry
Stack/Publicist/Daisy/Girlfriend	Lauryn Shelley
Great Auk/Assistant/Cleaner	Olivia Hernández
Manny/Immigration Official/ Spotty/Human/Geneticist/Jón	Soren Steinfeldt
Bobby/Max/Boyfriend/ Veterinarian/Ketill	Matthew Venrick
Pole/Docent/Conservation Voice	James Berggren
Whiskers/Campaigner/ Announcer Voice	Jenna Nilson

## Biographies

**Jacob Buttry (Museum Visitor/Galvin)** is a first-year MFA student in the Theatre for Youth & Community program. He is enjoying his first year in Tempe and excited to be a part of his first production at ASU. He was born and raised in the Dallas-Fort Worth area in Texas, where he graduated from Texas Christian University (go frogs) with BAs in theatre and psychology. His most recent theatre work has been in the roles of director, sound designer, or playwright at TCU for shows such as “Jackie & Hide” (Sam Sturgeon), “Silent Sky” (Lauren Gunderson) and “The Mental Health Monologues”.

**Jillian Johnson (Director)** is a 3rd year MFA student in Theatre for Youth and Community here at ASU, heading toward graduation in May. Last year she assistant directed ASU’s production of “The Snow” by Finnegan Kruckemeyer. You may have recently seen her in the TheatreLAB production of “Lost Boy” or DogEar Theatre’s production of “Between Two Worlds”. Originally from the Seattle area, Jillian has worked as a youth theatre director and teaching artist for Bellevue Youth Theatre, Book-It Repertory Theatre, and schools around the Puget Sound as well as teaching for Childsplay here in Arizona. Favorite directing credits include “Merry Fairy Tales” (Bellevue Youth Theatre), “The Little Mermaid Jr.” (Tyee Middle School) and “Seussical” (Stage Notes). Jillian is passionate about inclusion and accessibility in the arts and has worked as a theatre facilitator for people

who are neurodiverse. Up next: catch Jillian's applied project performance at Selleh Park in April as part of the City of Tempe's Arts in the Park program.

**Olivia Hernández (Great Auk/Assistant/Collector)** is a second year graduate student earning her MFA in Theatre: Interdisciplinary Digital Media & Performance studies. She previously performed as Peter in Tori Esposito's TheatreLAB reading of "Lost Boys", and Jeff McMahon's "Handwash" which debuted on Dixie Place TV last year. Olivia is an interdisciplinary artist whose art encompasses animation, performance, puppetry and creative coding. She is excited to next contribute robots design and fabrication to ASU's upcoming production of "Heddatron", premiering March 18. Learn more about her work at [www.xonoh.com](http://www.xonoh.com).

**Jenna Nilson (Whiskers/Campaigner/Announcer Voice)** is currently a third-year in the Theatre for Youth and Communities MFA program at ASU. She has previously worked as a deviser/actor in DogEar Theatre Company's "Between Two Worlds" at Tempe's Arts in the Park event at Scudder Park. At ASU, she has participated as an actor in TheatreLABs "Herlandia" and "Lost Boy".

**Lauryn Shelley (Stack/Publicist/Daisy/Girlfriend)** is a third year theatre major in the acting concentration. She is also a musical theatre minor and a biochemistry minor. Shelley has been involved in many theatre productions over the last few years including Dorothy in The Wiz and Catherine in Pippin. Lauryn Shelley was born in Las Vegas, Nevada, and has been performing all over town for as long as she can remember. Shelley also does film acting as well as theatre and has been in various commercials, tv shows, and short films. She is currently working on the capstone films for the senior film majors.

**Soren Steinfeld (Manny/Immigration Official/Spotty/Human/Geneticist/Jón)** is a current sophomore at ASU and is excited and proud to be a part of "en-DANGER!-ed"!

**Matthew Venrick (Bobby/Max/Boyfriend/Veterinarian/Ketill)** is a recent graduate from ASU, dual majoring in theatre (acting) & psychology. His last performance was the online production "CAESAR" in October as Julius Caesar. Other previous productions include: "Just Be" (SAI - Scratching our Artistic Itches), "Roar! A Celebration" (Bridge Initiative: Women+ in Theatre), and "Indian School" (ASU School of Music, Dance and Theatre), which recently won an arizoni Award for Best Original Script of a Play. He would like to thank his director, the playwright, and fellow castmates for this incredible experience and opportunity.

## **School of Music, Dance and Theatre Production Faculty and Staff**

School Director	Heather Landes
Assistant Director of Theatre	Constance Furr
Artistic Director	Bill Partlan
Production Manager	Carolyn Koch
Dramaturg Faculty	Karen Jean Martinson
Faculty Technical Director	Chris Winnemann
Staff Technical Director	Andrew Steele
Design & Production Advisors	Max Bernstein, Stephen Christensen, Danielle Deutschmann, Constance Furr, Daniel P. Jaquette, William Kirkham, Julia Lee Rogge, Chris Winnemann, Laura Winnemann
Sound and Media Supervisor	Stephen Christensen
Props and Paint Supervisor	Julia Lee Rogge
Lighting Supervisor	Danielle Deutschmann
Costume Shop Coordinator	Cari Smith
Senior Costume Technician	Lois Myers, Gwendolyn Basala
Marketing Coordinator	Danielle Munoz
Videography	Rebekah Cheyne
Facilities	Patti Jones