

# Hedda Gabler

By Henrik Ibsen

Translated from Norwegian by Paul Walsh

Directed by Heather Lee Harper

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

2 p.m. Nov. 22

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

## Director's Note

Initially when ASU approached me to direct Hedda Gabler it was a no brainer. It's a staple in the Classical Cannon that is on every artist's list, but I had not yet had the opportunity to explore. Return to my Alma Mater to direct a traditional, period production performed live on the Galvin's big beautiful stage? Of course! Then the world shifted and everything changed.

Globally, we are transitioning through a deep period of evolution. Over the last few months while sequestered by COVID, hundreds of years of cultural and societal structure that have been subconsciously embedded in our thoughts- not to mention the very foundation of our global existence & economy- have begun to be revealed. They are being uprooted and brought to the surface to be seen as the outdated, archaic, inhumane narratives of fear and control that they are. We are living in a time of great revolution. Everything is shifting. Everything is changing. These shifts are not simple or easy. And not a single one of us can escape deep personal reflection, evolution, and growth. What an exciting time to be alive! What an incredible time to be an artist!

Through this process, I continually asked myself 'Why this play? Why now?' As I dove deeper into research, I uncovered countless similarities between Ibsen-Hedda's world and our current one: political unrest, socio-economic upheaval, the dying of 'the old guard'/outdated class structures, the transcendental renaissance of the arts, heck! The third world plague! All the elements line up to a massive shift in consciousness, awakening, and revolution.

As I continued to research under quarantine I realized, this feeling that we are in the middle of, \*THIS\* is the very world that Hedda lives in. At its core Hedda Gabler isn't a play about a man eating woman, a mentally imbalanced socio-path, a woman ahead of her time, nor is it a suicide play. Every character in this play is a multi-dimensional being, experiencing huge shifts in their reality. They are seeking safety, understanding, fulfilment, love and freedom within a societal structure that is desperately clinging to control. We too are human beings blazing with passion, full of hopes, dreams, and big ideas that the current state of our world doesn't offer the space to express. We are confined and forced to dream within the confines of restriction in the very same way these characters are bound within their status. This is a play about the endurance of the human spirit. It's a play about evolution.

We, as a theatrical community, are redefining what Theater means and how it continues to exist in these times. Often that meant making it up as we go, honest moment-by-moment creation. This has not by any means been an easy feat. As our brilliant systems manager said "It's not redefining the wheel... its inventing it. The wheel doesn't even exist yet." What you are about to see is not any of the countless ways I had planned, re-conceptualized, or ever imagined this show would turn out. In my opinion, its better. To say I am proud of these students would be a laughable understatement. This production is the result of a team of highly inspired and insanely talented artists, educators, and students rising together to create in a time where creation seems unfathomable. It is a symbol of resiliency and of hope. Please enjoy.

Heather Lee Harper

## **Dramaturg's Note**

The playwright Henrik Ibsen was writing at a time when Norway was developing its own cultural identity. His early playwriting attempts aimed to idealize the mythology of Norway's history. When these failed to capture the public imagination, he exiled himself from his home country, living for many years all over continental Europe. Looking from the outside in gave him a unique perspective to critique what he saw as society's ills, such as the suppression of the individual. He became a firm believer in aristocratic individualism - the idea that the individual can only achieve control and self-actualization outside the confines of societal conformity. This included women; while not a feminist in the modern sense, Ibsen believed women could only achieve self-realization outside of their expected gender norms. The most affirming demonstration of this is Nora Torvald in *A Doll's House*, who by the end of the play decides to take control of her circumstances. One might argue that Nora's inverse is the titular Hedda Gabler, who longs for control over her circumstances, but for many reasons both interior and extenuating, is unable to attain it.

Newly (though not happily) married, Hedda's life has drastically changed at the start of the play. As she and her husband return from their honeymoon to settle into a new life, Hedda is confronted by the limited agency and social isolation this new life holds for her. While it is easy today to dismiss Hedda as a bored upper-class woman who decides to manipulate those around her for the fun of it. However, it perhaps more productive to consider how Hedda instead suffers anxiety over the loss of control. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic sending communities into quarantine, we gain insight into Hedda's situation. A literature review compounded by the *Lancet* cites the five biggest stressors of isolation during quarantine: Duration, Fears of Infection, Inadequate Supplies, Inadequate Information, and Frustration/Boredom. While each of these ties to some extent into what Hedda experiences, the last stressor is particularly salient, given that 1890 (the year the play was written) was pre-social media and telecommunication. How does Hedda cope with her frustration over her circumstance when she has few options with which to alleviate it? Furthermore, how does an intelligent, ambitious woman operate in a society that, despite the prominence of female authors such as Camilla Collett and Amalie Skram, still actively dissuades women from stepping outside of their gendered expectations?

These questions, and more, got me thinking dramaturgically about contextualizing Hedda Gabler for a pandemic-era audience, especially considering how our collective adjustment to a "new normal" has only added to the stress of our pre-pandemic lives. For Hedda, adjusting to her "new normal," with a new husband and a new house and a new form of existence, proves to be a challenge for reasons beyond boredom and frustration. How she confronts this challenge, and how she attempts to take hold of her situation, were how we aimed to examine and present her story. While you're watching the play, I invite you to pay attention to how Hedda attempts to gain control of her circumstances. How does she attempt to obtain autonomy and control in a society that denies it to women like her? And what happens when she loses it?

And how do we, as a society, cope with a situation none of us have any control over, one that has no immediate end in sight?

By Dave Osmundsen

## **Hedda Gabler Artistic Team**

Director	Heather Lee Harper
Dramaturg	Dave Osmundsen
Stage Manager	Rachel Cooper
Assistant Stage Manager	Bianca Harrison, Savannah Gunton, Allie Fair
Scenic Designer	William Kirkham
Costume Designer	Emil Mendoza
Lighting Designer	Leah Zweig
Sound Designer	Kamille Ritchie
Media Designer	Dallas Nichols

## **Acting Company**

Hedda	Bronwyn Doebbling
Mrs Elvsted	Kara Scott
Berte	Ann Ethington
Miss Tesman	Ausette Anderies
Tesman	Victor Yang
Lovborg	Nick Devor
Brack	Patrick Rivers

## **Biographies**

**Ausette Anderies (Mrs. Tesman)** is studying theatre and political science here at ASU. Some of her previous stage credits include Desdemona in “Othello,” Irina in “Three Sisters,” Woman “Head in Trade Trade Love” and Green/Salisbury in “Richard II.” She recently studied with the Prague Shakespeare Company and performed as Margaret in “Much Ado About Nothing” at the Estates Theatre.

**Kyle Blomquist (technical director)** is finishing his final semester as an undergraduate student in the theatre design & production program. Recent credits: technical director, “The Snow” at ASU; props artisan, “CREAM!” at ASU; carpenter, “Hamlet” and “Joseph...Dreamcoat” at Utah Shakespeare Festival.

**Lauryn Buchanan-Camacho (assistant master electrician)** is a junior theatre design and production major. Last spring she was an assistant stage manager for ASU’s production of “The Crucible” which unfortunately couldn’t be finished due to the pandemic. She has also done smaller lighting jobs on ASU’s productions “Good Friday” and “Cream!” in 2019. Camacho is looking forward to the next year and a half she has left at ASU.

**Cal Bucher (assistant technical director)** is a senior majoring in Theater:

design and production. They have previously worked with ASU productions of “Cream!” as the master carpenter in 2019 and “The Crucible,” as automation technician in 2020. Before coming to ASU they were the technical director for “Arcadia” 2017 and assistant technical director for “Avenue Q” in 2017 with the RPI Players.

**Chloe Cobb (assistant props master)** is a junior theatre design and production major. Last fall she served as co-props artisan on “An Unsettled Supper” (Binary Theatre) and assistant scenic designer for ASU’s “Kiss of the Spider Woman.”

**Rachel Cooper (stage manager)** is a senior theatre design and production major with minors in both sociology and film and media production. This is the second virtual production Rachel has stage managed, her first being *Rabt*, a devised movement piece reworked to a virtual setting when COVID hit. Other credits at ASU include assistant stage manager for “CREAM!”, crew head for the 2018 SpringDanceFest, assistant technical director for “Tigers Be Still”, lead welder for “The Snow”, and master carpenter for “Trade Trade Love”. Other credits include working as the A2 on Summer Theatre of New Cannan’s equity productions of “Pippin” and “Treasure Island”.

**John Curtiss (coms manager)** is a sophomore theatre design and production major. Last spring he worked as assistant master electrician for ASU’s production of “Indian School”. He intends to get involved in productions with Binary Theatre Company once he can get back on campus in addition to future productions with the School of Music, Dance and Theatre.

**Nick Devor (Ejlert Lovborg)** is a sophomore at ASU majoring in Journalism & Mass Communications with minors in fashion and digital audiences. This is his third ASU School of Music, Dance, and Theatre production. He has previously been seen onstage in “CREAM!” (TV Crew) and was almost seen onstage in “The Crucible” (Judge Hathorne). He would like to express lots of joy and gratitude to his director Heather Harper for bringing him aboard this process, and a special thank you to his roommate Bronwyn Doebbeling for telling him to send an email.

**Bronwyn Elizabeth(Hedda)** is a sophomore studying Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership. She recently portrayed Juliet (“Romeo and Juliet”) and Hermia (“A Midsummer Night’s Dream”) with Southwest Shakespeare Company. Last season, she played Theodosia in ASU’s production of “The Snow”. She is thrilled to continue to portray Hedda through a new lens in “HEDDATRON!” as Jane, and will continue with Southwest Shakespeare as a Company member. Portraying Hedda has been the most incredible experience imaginable and she cannot thank Heather Harper enough for her trust, vision, and brilliance in a show that is truly the first of its kind.

**Ann Ethington (Berte)** is finishing her junior year at ASU working towards her degree in theatre with a concentration in acting. This is her first time acting for an ASU school of Film, Dance and Theatre season production. Ethington’s other acting credits include Evil Gabby in “She Kills Monsters”, Catherine in “Pippin” (Phoenix College Theatre), Ann in “Subhumane”, Our Girl in “Bacon Brits”, Annie in “Dead West” (LooKitt Productions) and Violinist Steamer in “Theo’s Blues (Lemonade Acre).

**Allie Fair (assistant stage manager)** is a Junior studying Theatre with a concentration in design and production. She served as the light board operator for “The Snow”, at ASU spring 2020, after transferring to ASU from Paradise Valley Community College. There she acted as a stage manager for student directed one acts, and an assistant stage manager for “Much Ado About Nothing”.

**Savannah Gunton (assistant stage manager)** is in her final year at ASU studying Design & Production concentrating in stage management, with minors in communication, business management, and film and media design. Her previous positions include stage manager for “Kiss of the Spiderwoman”, assistant stage manager for “AJAX”, technical director for “Indian School”, and assistant technical director for “This is Modern Art”. She is super excited to be apart of the “Heddatron” next semester! Thank you everyone for the wild journey into the unknown virtual realm.

**Heather Lee Harper (director)** An award winning artist, Ms. Harper’s work contributes to a long conversation of Performance as a Spiritual Expression. She is dedicated to reaching elevated levels of reality in performance by exploring the dimensions between the seen and the unseen world. When not performing, Ms. Harper devotes her time to the mission of spreading Mindfulness and Self Care in Artistry. Training: Arizona State University (BA in Theater Arts), American Academy of Dramatic Arts LA, PAN Theater (Paris). Ms. Harper is a founding member of the Active Theater Company (NYC), a member of Blue Roses Theater Company (NYC), and a proud member of the Actor’s Equity Association.

**Bianca Harrison (assistant stage manager)** is a third-year theatre design and production student at ASU. She specializes in props and stage management. Previously she worked as prop master for “The Crucible” (ASU), props master and assistant stage manager for “Annie Get Your Gun” (DFT), as well as, assistant props master for “Kiss of the Spiderwoman” (ASU). She also currently works as Binary Theatre Company’s company manager and she has helped produce new virtual zoom productions such as “If It’s Any Constellation”, “Human Nature”, and our radio show “There’s Something Out There”.

**Jenna Jacobsen (Stitcher)** is a junior theatre design and production and film and media production major. She last worked on “The Crucible” for the ASU School of Music, Dance and Theatre as assistant charge artist and was an assistant video editor for Binary Theatre’s virtual summer production of “If It’s Any Constellation”. She also likes to play music and do puzzles in her free time.

**Troy Jansen (sound and media systems engineer)** is a senior theatre design and production major at ASU. He Previously worked on “The Crucible” as assistant sound designer and “CREAM!” as assistant stage manager, both at ASU. He would like to thank Steve, Dan and Cassidy for all their hard work and guidance throughout this new and challenging process.

**Jordan McAuliffe (assistant master electrician)** is a second year theatre design and production major. He most recently worked as an ensemble member in the first ASU season production of the semester, “MACHOS”.

**Ashlyn McDonald (electrician)** is a sophomore theatre major. Last spring she served as props artisan for the ASU School of Music, Dance, and Theatre production of “Indian School”, and she has also been backstage crew for the ASU School of Music, Dance, and Theatre production of “Kiss of the Spider Woman” in Fall 2019.

**Emil Mendoza (costume designer)** is a senior in the theatre production and design program for costumes. He’s honored to have been on Hedda Gabler as costume designer after getting experience as a stitcher the prior school year. His experience lies in wardrobe, stitching, and a prior costume designer credit at Scottsdale Community College’s “Failure: A Love Story.”

**Dave Osmundsen (dramaturg)** is a third-year MFA student in dramatic writing at Arizona State University. As a playwright and dramaturg, his work has been seen and developed at the Kennedy Center, B Street Theatre, the William Inge Theatre Festival, the Midwest Dramatists Conference, Phoenix Theatre Company, and others. His play “Light Switch” was a semi-finalist for the 2020 New American Voices Playwriting Festival and a semi-finalist for

the 2020 National Playwrights Conference. In addition to playwriting, he has also written theatre reviews for StageBuddy and TheatreIsEasy and has had short stories published on ScholarsAndRogues.com.

**Kamille Ritchie (sound designer)** is a senior theatre major. This is her first ASU School of Music, Dance and Theatre season production.

**Patrick Rivers (Commissioner Brack)** is a 4th year theatre major with a concentration in acting, as well as a double major in film & media production with a concentration in producing. His previous acting roles include Reverend Parris in "The Crucible," Laszlo Daniels in "CREAM!" and Death in "Masque of the Red Death." He also co-founded a local film company start-up Waver Films. This is Rivers' third and final ASU School of Music, Dance and Theatre season production.

**Kyra Weaver (sound mixer)** is a senior theatre major. She has worked on many student films for NAU students and ASU students and is currently working with ASU New American Film School's sound team to help mix for 3 capstones. She was a transfer from NAU and has worked as a board Op. on their production of "Secret Garden." This is Kyra's First ASU production.

**Victor Yang (Jorgen Tesman)** is a fourth-year Theatre major with a concentration in acting. He is also 2020's ASU Gammage Scholar and a core company member of Southwest Shakespeare Company. Notable theatrical roles include: John Hale ("The Crucible"), Claudio ("Much Ado About Nothing"), Dose ("This is Modern Art"), and Odysseus ("Ajax"). His work is present in many student films and commercials around the valley, alongside an appearance in Fox Studio's TV series, "Run Coyote Run". His play, "With You Always", which he co-wrote with Diego Sutcliffe, debuted in 2019. He is auditioning for Juilliard in December and hopes to enroll after graduation in order to continue his training as an actor.

**Leah Zweig (lighting designer)** is a senior in the theatre design and production concentration. This is her sixth show with the school of music dance and theatre. Her previous work includes the School of Music, Dance and Theatre's "Kiss of the Spider Woman" and "The Snow" as the lighting designer, "The Flick" as an electrician, "Trade Trade Love" as assistant master electrician and "Spring Dance Fest" as master electrician. She is thrilled to have been able to work with so many imaginative creators during these trying times!

## **Hedda Gabler Production Team**

Technical Director	Kyle Blomquist
Assistant Technical Director	Cal Bucher
Properties Master	William Diehl
Assistant Properties Master	Chloe Cobb
Properties Artisan	Francesaca Sosky
Charge Artist	Sam Duran
Crafts Artisan	Alex De La Huerta
Cutter/Draper	Sierra Woodward
First Hand	April Maytorena
Stitchers	Jenna Jacobsen, Luzette Romo
Master Electrician	Ian Irizarry
Assistant Master Electricians	Lauryn Buchanan-Camacho, Jordan McAuliffe
Electrician	Ashlyn McDonald
Sound Systems Engineer	Troy Jansen
Sound Technician, Media Tech	John Curtiss
Sound Mixer	Kyra Weaver
Media Systems Engineer	Troy Jansen

## **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 Deustchmann
Costume Shop Coordinator	Cari Smith
Senior Costume Technician	Lois Myers, Gwendolyn Basala
Marketing Coordinator	Danielle Munoz
Videography	Rebekah Cheyne
Facilities	Patti Jones
Poster Design	Brunella Providente

