

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS & DANCE PRESENTS

# Stop Kiss

WRITTEN BY DIANA SON  
DIRECTED BY SALVATORE MANNINO  
AND BAYLEE ROBERTSON

THE LOWER DEPTHS  
EXPERIMENTAL THEATER  
MARCH 18 - 27, 2021



LOYOLA  
UNIVERSITY  
NEW ORLEANS

The Department of Theatre Arts & Dance Presents

# STOP KISS

By Diana Son

## LOWER DEPTHS EXPERIMENTAL THEATER

March 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 26, 27 @ 7:30

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### DIRECTED BY

Salvatore Mannino & Baylee Robertson

### FEATURING

Meagan Daves, Sonya Ewing, Thomasita Gilbert,  
Aria Jackson, Ian Kansas, Briannah Letter, Sebastian Phillips,  
Lauren Shavor

### COLLABORATIVE ARTISTS

Kate Bartels, Duncan Becker, Bridget Boyle, Mariola Chalas,  
Sophia Christilles, Hilary Nguyen, Emily Patrick, Cass Poulin, David  
Raphel, Chiara Romano, Gabi López Rúa, Grace Smith, Kaci  
Thomassie, Abby Trahant, Mandi Wood

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*Photography or recording of any kind is strictly prohibited.  
No late entry and no re-entry during the performance is allowed.*

# CAST

Callie Pax .....Aria Jackson  
Sara..... Sonya Ewing  
George/Peter/Detective Cole .....Sebastian Phillips  
Mrs. Winsley/Nurse/Detective Cole ..... Lauren Shavor  
Callie (Understudy) ..... Meagan Daves  
Sara (Understudy)..... Briannah Letter  
George/Peter/Detective Cole (Understudy) ..... Ian Kansas  
Mrs. Winsley/Nurse/Detective Cole (Understudy) ..... Thomasita Gilbert

# ARTISTIC STAFF

Director..... Salvatore Mannino & Baylee Robertson  
Producer..... Mariola Chalas  
Costume Designer..... Bridget Boyle  
Assistant Costume Designer ..... Grace Smith  
Costume Consultant..... Kaci Thomassie  
Scenic Designer .....David Raphel  
Props Designers..... Emily Patrick & Chiara Romano  
Lighting Designer..... Cass Poulin  
Assistant Lighting Designer..... Hilary Nguyen  
Lighting Consultant..... Mandi Wood  
Sound Designer..... Sophia Christilles  
Intimacy Coordinator..... Kate Bartels

# PRODUCTION STAFF

Stage Manager .....Abby Trahant  
Assistant Stage Manager..... Gabi López Rúa  
Production Manager & Technical Director.....Duncan Becker

# CREW

House Crew ..... Vivian Bulleit, Zane Syjansky, & Noelle Timberlake  
Publicity Crew.....Mariola Chalas  
Hair/Makeup Crew..... Gabrielle Garcia & Jen Lepore

# DIRECTOR'S NOTES

What does it mean to speak truth to power? The protagonists of *Stop Kiss* ponder this question in the aftermath of the hate crime that leaves one of them in a coma. Through this young couple, we're all called to courageously confront this traumatic moment, witnessing a point in time so powerful that it alters the life of those involved.

This play addresses women's issues of gender discrimination, but it also encourages a leap of self-awareness. Testimonial performances like *Stop Kiss* share collective stories of hardship, transformation, and peace. The works call on citizens to bear witness to truth, healing, and reconciliation. These experiences help us feel the calling to stand up for what's right; to support and stand with those who experience such life changing events. As theater artists, our job is to promote empathy more than anything else. From empathy comes community. From community comes understanding. From understanding comes compassion. From compassion comes communal growth.

COVID has pushed many people to look past their social performance and become the same person they are behind closed doors, in their outside lives. Some of us are Callie, and some of us are Sara, but no matter who you identify with more, this play tells us that it's okay to not have all the answers. It's never too late to start being the person you really want to be.

"Let's stop playing games, and just kiss."

- *Salvatore Mannino & Baylee Robertson*

# CAST

## **ARIA JACKSON (CALLIE PAX)**

Aria Jackson is a current sophomore at Loyola University New Orleans studying Theatre Arts. This year she participated in her first Loyola production, starring in Tori Sampson's *Cadillac Crew* as Rachel U/S. She is excited to play Callie in Diana Son's *Stop Kiss*, as she acknowledges that "this is a story that needs to be told." Born in Washington DC, Aria graduated from Archbishop Carroll High School in 2019 participating in 8 high school productions. Her favorite credits include: *Dreamgirls* (Jimmy Thunder Early), *How The Grinch Stole Christmas* (Grinch), *A Chorus Line* (Kristine Urich) and *The Wiz* (Tin-Man).

## **SONYA EWING (SARA)**

Sonya Ewing has moved from Michigan to Budapest to Boston to Seattle and back again to Michigan! She is currently studying Musical Theatre at Loyola University New Orleans and is a recent graduate of the Theatre Arts program at Interlochen Arts Academy. Her favorite recent credits include: Seneca Howland in *Men on Boats* (Interlochen Arts Academy), Ensemble in *Anonymouse* (Interlochen Arts Academy), Cathy Hiatt in *The Last Five Years*, and Cinderella in *Into The Woods*. Sonya is so honored to share the stage with these talented people!!

## **SEBASTIAN PHILLIPS (GEORGE/PETER/DETECTIVE COLE)**

Sebastian Phillips is an actor from Mexico City. Since a young age, he has pursued his dream of being an actor with the support of his family of artists like Alex Phillips jr. (Grandfather), Pedro Armendariz Jr. (Godfather), David Phillips (Father) and Ofelia Medina (Grandmother) who personally mentored him. Sebastian received his basic fight choreography training in high school. He has served as a director and fight choreographer for many productions. He has been in four student films, and two plays (*You Can't Take it With You* and *Cabaret*) at Loyola University. He is a senior and is as honored as he is excited to be in a production such as *Stop Kiss* in his final semester.

## **LAUREN SHAVOR (MRS. WINSLEY/NURSE/DETECTIVE COLE)**

Lauren is excited to be joining the cast of *Stop Kiss* as Detective Cole/Mrs. Winsley/Nurse. They are currently a first year at Loyola University New Orleans and is majoring in Theatre Arts with a Minor in Business. This is Lauren's first time performing in a Loyola TAD production. Formerly, Lauren has been seen as Jan in *Grease*, Grown-up Wendy in *Peter Pan*, Ursula in *The Little Mermaid*, and Mrs. Peacock in *Clue: Onstage*, all with the Destrehan Theatre Department. Lauren is extremely grateful to be involved with *Stop Kiss* and is excited to dive deep into such a beautiful piece of theatre.

### **MEAGAN DAVES (CALLIE - UNDERSTUDY)**

Meagan Daves is a senior Studio Arts major with a Theater Arts minor. Meagan has been working behind the scenes for many of Loyola's productions for the past years. Shows include *The Christians* (build crew), *Informed Consent* (soundboard operator), *Violet* (assistant projections designer), and *Theatre For One: Hands* (Video Designer/ Projection designer). This is Meagan's first time on Loyola's stage as an actress since she arrived in the arts program. Meagan has had so much fun learning and working with the *Stop Kiss* cast and crew throughout its production process. It has been an honor to help make this show come to life during a time when theatre is thought to be on pause. Meagan would like to thank her friends, family, and Loyola faculty for all their love, support and encouragement to keep making art and telling stories.

### **BRIANNAH LETTER (SARA - UNDERSTUDY)**

Briannah Letter (she/her) is incredibly thrilled to be a part of her third Loyola University New Orleans theatre production! She is in her second year at Loyola majoring in Musical Theatre and Theatre Arts. After two shows on the technical side of production, serving as the understudy for Sara in *Stop Kiss* will be her first onstage role. Briannah would like to thank her family and friends for all of their support and kindness!

### **IAN KANSAS (GEORGE/PETER/DETECTIVE COLE - UNDERSTUDY)**

Ian Kansas is a freshman at Loyola majoring in theatre. He is thrilled to be performing in his second show at Loyola. In the past he has worked on *Theatre for One* at Loyola University, *All is Calm* with NOCCA Stage Door Company, *South Pacific* at JPAS, and many more! Ian Kansas would wholeheartedly like to thank all members of the cast and crew for creating a positive work environment!

### **THOMASITA GILBERT (MRS. WINSLEY/NURSE/DETECTIVE COLE - UNDERSTUDY)**

Thomasita Gilbert (She/Her) is a first year at Loyola, whose major is Theate Arts. She is from Luling, LA. Before choosing Loyola, she had offers from Conservatory of Theater at Purchase College and Boston Conservatory at Berklee. This is Thomasita's first show at Loyola. Some shows that she has been in are *Men on Boats*, *South Pacific*, *Too Much Light Makes The Baby Go Blind*, *Truth And Reconciliation*, *a Wrinkle in Time*, and other various student devised work.

# ARTISTIC AND PRODUCTION CREW

## **SALVATORE MANNINO (DIRECTOR)**

Salvatore Mannino is an independent creative producer. He has collaborated with a variety of companies in New York, Los Angeles, and New Orleans. In addition to producing independently, Mannino is also a co-founder of NightLight Labs, a Los Angeles-based interactive media company specializing in technology-driven storytelling. Mannino has served as a producing associate with Mara Isaacs and her company, Octopus Theatricals where he collaborated on the Tony Award winning musical, *Hadestown*, Signature Theatre's presentation of *Theatre For One*, and the US tours for Brooklyn's Phantom Limb Company, Hungary's Bela Pinter and Company and Poland's Song of the Goat Theatre. Mannino currently teaches at Loyola New Orleans where he serves as the Artistic Director for Department of Theatre Arts & Dance. He has previously taught at CalArts, and served as a guest lecturer at University of Colorado - Boulder, and the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts. He holds his MFA in Creative Producing from the California Institute of the Arts and his BA from the University of Southern Mississippi.

## **BAYLEE ROBERTSON (DIRECTOR)**

Alumna Baylee Robertson is a recent graduate of Loyola University, and is extremely excited to make her professional debut as a Director on her favorite play (of all time) *Stop Kiss*. Although she's usually sewing, Baylee recently stage managed Loyola's production of *Cabaret*. Baylee's most relevant costume credits include *The Uninvited* by Goat in The Road Productions and Tulane Little and Junior Lyric's *Aladdin Jr.* and *Shrek Jr.* Baylee thanks her wonderful partner, Mary Grace for their continued love and support.

## **MARIOLA CHALAS (PRODUCER)**

Mariola Chalas is the first ever student producer for a Loyola Theatre Production. Mariola is in her third year of college studying Musical Theatre. She has worked in several productions at Loyola including *You Can't Take It With You*, *Cabaret*, *Theatre for One* and now *Stop Kiss*. She is very excited to produce such an important and amazing show like *Stop Kiss*. "It is such a wonderful cast and team. I feel so lucky to be a part of this."

## **BRIDGET BOYLE (COSTUME DESIGNER)**

Bridget Boyle is a third-year Musical Theatre major. She recently performed in Loyola's production of *Theatre For One*, in the show *Lizzy*, and as Paris in *Romeo and Juliet*. Although the production was cancelled last March, she was also the Assistant Costume Designer for *Cabaret*. She is very happy to be able to do theatre right now!

## **GRACE SMITH (ASSISTANT COSTUME DESIGNER)**

Grace Smith is a second year student at Loyola studying Theatre Arts and Graphic Design. Their most recent production credit was Loyola TAD's *Cadillac Crew* (stage manager). Last year, they were involved in multiple TAD productions including *You Can't Take it With You* (wardrobe crew), *Romeo and Juliet* (stitcher), and *Cabaret* (wardrobe supervisor). Local professional credits include *Period of Adjustment* (TWTC, Asst. Stage Manager, wardrobe assistant), *Something Rotten* (Le Petit Théâtre Du Vieux Carré, swing dresser), and *The Uninvited* (Goat in the Road Productions, stitcher).

## **KACI THOMASSIE (COSTUME CONSULTANT)**

Kaci Thomassie is a New Orleans native costume designer and stylist. She is an ensemble member with Goat in the Road Productions (2017), and she won the 2018 Big Easy Award for "Best Costume Design" for her co-design of The NOLA Project's *The Three Musketeers*. Additionally, Kaci has costumed locally for Southern Rep, Tulane Summer Lyric, Le Petit Theatre, Melange Dance Company, and Lusher Charter School. Nationally, she has worked at Barnard College, the prestigious StageDoor Manor where she costumed several large-scale musicals, and interned in the fast-paced environment of Martin Izquierdo's costume production company in NYC. She holds a degree in Theatre and Dance from Samford University.

## **EMILY PATRICK (PROPS DESIGNER)**

Emily Patrick is a junior at Loyola University, and loves that she was given the opportunity to work on this show. She has previously been the assistant props designer for Tennessee Williams Theatre Company's *Period of Adjustment*, and the props designer for Loyola's production of *Cadillac Crew*. She is very grateful to have gotten to work with such an amazing team.

## **CHIARA ROMANO (PROPS DESIGNER)**

Chiara Romano is a junior theatre major. This is the first play that she is a props designer for and is incredibly excited for this experience! She has had some electrician and sound experience with some of the previous performances at Loyola, *Life Sucks* and *Violet*, but is super excited to branch out and gain new experience. She has ambitions to continue working on props and scenic design after graduating so the opportunity to be one of the props designers for *Stop Kiss* was perfect and much needed.

## **CASS POULIN (LIGHTING DESIGNER)**

Cass Poulin is a senior Theatre Major. They have projection and light designed several previous shows at Loyola including *Cadillac Crew*, *Theatre for One*, *Cabaret*, *These Shining Lives*, and many others. Cass is thrilled to have worked on this production and is excited to see all of the talent come together on stage. They would like to thank everyone who helped put this production together on and off stage. Lastly, a special thanks to their parents and friends for the unconditional support.

## **HILARY NGUYEN (ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER)**

Hilary Nguyen is excited to be helping as the Assistant Lighting Designer for *Stop Kiss*. She also recently helped out with *Theatre for One* at Loyola as the Front of House Manager. A first-year Theatre Arts and Environmental Science student at Loyola, Hilary is excited to start off on a new journey here at Loyola and would like to thank all of her teachers, family, and friends for supporting her in all of her endeavors.

## **MANDI WOOD (LIGHTING CONSULTANT)**

Mandi Wood is a lighting designer based in New Orleans and received her MFA in Production and Design from Tulane University. In the last decade, Mandi has had the pleasure of working for numerous theatre and production companies in the Pacific Northwest, Colorado, Montana, Texas, Florida, and Louisiana. Mandi works extensively as a lighting designer in the worlds of theatre, opera, dance, and film and is a member of the stage hand union IATSE local 39. Previous Loyola credits include lighting designs for *Pygmalion*, *These Shining Lives*, *Violet*, *Cabaret*, *Cadillac Crew*. Mandi is teaching Lighting Design for Loyola's Department of Theatre Arts & Dance this semester, and is thrilled to be advising Cass Poulin on this beautiful lighting design!

## **SOPHIA CHRISTILLES (SOUND DESIGNER)**

Sophia Christilles is a senior at Loyola University and will be receiving her BA in Theatre Arts with a minor in Business in May. *Stop Kiss* is her third sound credit at Loyola. Her work at Loyola has ranged from stage management, house management, sound design, and carpentry. She plans to work in the nonprofit sector of AmeriCorps while continuing theatre projects after graduation. Sophia thanks her family, friends, and professors for their support.

## **KATE BARTELS (INTIMACY COORDINATOR)**

Kate Bartels is a native New Orleanian and avid Saints fan. She is currently a full-time production manager for See-Hear Productions. In addition, she is also an AEA and AGMA stage manager, props master, and technician. She garnered a MFA in Production Management from Boston University and a BA in Theatre Design and Technology from Louisiana State University.

## **ABBY TRAHANT (STAGE MANAGER)**

Abby is a senior Latin American Studies and Theatre major. She is very thankful for the time she got to spend here at Loyola. She would like to thank the whole *Stop Kiss* team for their energy, talent, and hard work.

## **GABI LÓPEZ RÚIZ (ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER)**

Gabriela López Rúa is a junior at Loyola University and she is very excited to be working as an assistant stage manager for the show!! She is so thankful to be able to be working in a theatre during COVID, and has loved working with this cast and production team. Last year she worked as an assistant manager for Loyola's cancelled production of *Cabaret*, and last semester she was a part of Tulane's virtual festival where she played the Co-host in *Miss Most Pressing Issue*. She would like to thank her friends, family, and boyfriend for their support!

## **SPECIAL THANKS**

Dean Kern Maass  
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