BABES WITH BLADES THEATRE COMPANY
PRESENTS


plaid as hell

WRITTEN BY CAT MCKAY

It's never just a weekend in the woods.
BABES WITH BLADES THEATRE COMPANY

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ARTS FOR ILLINOIS RELIEF FUND

GAYLORD & DOROTHY DONNELLEY FOUNDATION
proudly presents

PLAID AS HELL

By Cat McKay

Winner of the 2019-2020 Joining Sword & Pen Playwriting Competition and the Margaret W. Martin Award

Director .................................................................Christina Casano
Fight Director & Intimacy Designer ..............................Maureen Yasko*
Scenic Designer ............................................................Erin Gautille
Lighting Designer ...................................................... Anna Schultz-Breef
Costume Designer ...................................................... Jennifer Mohr
Props Design ............................................................. Meg X. McGrath
Sound Design ............................................................. Hannah Foerschler
Stage Manager ............................................................. Roxie Kooi
Technical Director ...................................................... Line Bower
Production Manager ..................................................... Faith Roush
Assistant Director ....................................................... Devon Hayakawa
Asst. Fight Director ...................................................... Kate Lass
COVID Compliance Officer ................................. Tab Mochner

* Denotes BWBTC Ensemble Member

Time: Late fall, 2017

Place: A cabin in the woods surrounding Devil’s Lake, Wisconsin

This production uses realistic staged violence in the telling of the story.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO RECORDING OF ANY KIND IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED
CAST
(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Emilie .................................................................................................................................Cayla Jones
Cass ...............................................................................................................................Reagan James
Kelly .............................................................................................................................Alice Wu
Jessica ............................................................................................................................Ashley Yates
Understudies .............................................................. Alexandra Alontaga (Kelly), Kate Lass (Cass),
.................................................................................................................................Aleta Soron (Jessica) and Liv J. Wilson (Emilie)

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

All the best love stories are about friends. It may be cheesy, but my favorite stories are
about the power of friendship fixing all problems. The friendships in Plaid As Hell are
imperfect and complicated, and they feel so real because of it. I have been lucky
enough to get to watch three different casts develop beautiful relationships both on-
age and off, and I am grateful to be able to finally put these four characters in front of
an audience.

In 2020 I was invited to direct the staged reading of this script for Fighting Words Festi-
val. I had known Cat for awhile through mutual friends, and I was excited to get to col-
laborate with her to put a very new play out in front of an audience. I remember sitting
in my living room in February 2020 with four incredibly fun actors, laughing and gasp-
ing and finding our way through this play.

And then the whole world changed, and we changed with it, and I was asked to revisit
this play in 2021 for a full production. I had the pleasure of collaborating with an incred-
ible group of actors that brought themselves fully to the process. I want to thank Ga-
 briela Diaz, Alexandria Moorman, Mackenzie Wilkes, Alice Wu, Alexandra Alontaga,
Debbie Baños, Reagan James, and Song Marshall for being a part of a process that
involved bravery and honesty in devising, improvisation, and continual script develop-
ment over the course of that rehearsal period. Their contributions have lead to the
script you will see performed today.

In January 2022, with the emergence of Omicron, we made the hard
choice and postponed the production. I feel very lucky to be part of a process support-
ed by such a fantastic leadership team that took our concerns seriously at every step
of the process, and who brought us up back up to speed very quickly to get us ready
for this production. I am so grateful to everyone that was able to stick around for this
production, and all the new faces we’ve gotten to invite into our cabin in the woods.

It is because these four characters are imperfect and complicated that I have loved
getting to spend so much time with them, discovering all the corners of their personali-
ties. I love their messiness, their pettiness, their rage. It's not often that we get to see women that are blood-thirsty, scared, and ready to burn it all to the ground anyway. I've never read a story quite like Plaid As Hell - no spoilers, but the actions of the women in this play took me completely by surprise after a first act that feels like a rom com. The genre-bending and surprise twists in this play make for a really enjoyable experience that makes me laugh even when it gets dark.

Thank you for joining us, and may the power of friendship fix all the problems.

WHO'S WHO

ALEXANDRA ALONTAGA (they/she; Kelly US) is honored to take part in their first production with BWBTC. Alex has been a part of shows with The Plagiarists, Munroe Park Theatre Guild, Random Acts Chicago, Ghostlight Ensemble, Blank Theatre Company, and more. Her most recent projects include Meeting Our Desires for Night Out in the Parks, Sue/Tommy in Carrie (MPTG), and Monitor US in I Build Giants (Plagiarists). Aside from theatre, you can catch Alex teaching Pre-K and spoiling their two cats at home.

REAGAN JAMES (she/her; Cass) is stoked to be performing in her BWBTC debut! She has been a fan of Plaid as Hell since 2020 and is thrilled to be a part of the team showcasing it now. She is a proud member of the Plagiarists Theatre company and Midnight Summit Ensemble. Her favorite roles include Shelby Boden in You Are The Blood (Midnight Summit Ensemble,) the Cabdriver in Hellcab (the Agency Theatre Collective,) and Cheer in Millennial Bears (The Second City.)

CAYLA JONES (she/her; Emilie) is a Chicago-based actor who is thrilled to be playing the role of Emilie in Plaid as Hell! Since graduating from Illinois State University in 2019, she has had the opportunity to pursue all forms of theater such as Education at Chicago Children’s Theater, Playmakers Laboratory, and Once Upon A Time Capsule as a Teaching Artist. She also is a company member and works in Outreach for Avalanche Theatre in Chicago. Previous Chicago Credits include: Plays with a Purpose (Black Ensemble Theater), Lift Every Voice (Collaboration Theater), Jane: Abortion in the Underground (Connective Theater Company), Hertha Nova (Imposters Theater Company), and Outlaws (Avalanche Theater). Theater for social change is near to Cayla’s heart and she is grateful for the constant support of her family and friends!
KATE LASS (she/her; Cass US and Asst Fight Director) is excited to be back with BWBTC after choreographing and acting in the 2021 Fighting Words Festival. Other Chicago credits include: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hope*, and *American Jornalero* (Teatro Vista), *Killed a Man* (Joking) (First Floor Theatre / The Sound), *The Bloody Bathory Project* (The Barrens Theatre Company), *Masque Macbare* (Strawdog Theatre), and *Wasteland Hero* (Reutan Theatre). Kate is a graduate of Columbia College Chicago and an Advanced Actor Combatant with the SAFD. See more about her work at katelass.com.

ALETA SORON (she/her; Jessica US) is incredibly excited to make their BWBTC debut! Some of her favorite credits include *The Crucible*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Children's Hour*. Aleta Soron is a graduate of AMDA where she received her BFA in Theatre & Drama. During the pandemic she started a business called GarbageArt where she creates visual art out of trash.

LIV J. WILSON (she/they; Emilie US) is incredibly excited to work with BWBTC for the first time. Previously, she worked with The Griffin Theatre of Chicago on their tour of *Letters Home*, and performed in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in The Nighttime* and various children’s theater shows at the Florida Studio Theatre. Liv is a graduate of Ohio University where she received her BFA in Theater Performance. In her free time she enjoys relaxing and playing with her pup, Memphis Blue.

ALICE WU (she/her; Kelly) is very excited to be working with BWBTC. Theatre Credits include: *The Many Deaths of Nathan Stubblefield* (Humana Festival), *The Skin of Our Teeth* (Remy Bumppo), *Non Player Character* (Red Theatre), *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Midsommer Flight), *BLISS* (or Emily Post is Dead) (Promethean Theatre Ensemble), *Circle Mirror Transformation u/s*, *Home Invasion* (Actors Theatre of Louisville). TV/Film Credits: Chicago Fire (NBC); Empire (FOX); Hive (web); Wheelhouse (web); The Onion Labs (The Onion); Godzilla King of the Monsters (commercial, ESPN). Education: BFA at North Dakota State University and the Professional Training Company acting apprenticeship at Actor’s Theatre of Louisville. Alice is an Artistic Associate with Promethean Theatre Ensemble and represented by Stewart Talent Agency.
ASHLEY YATES (she/her; Jessica) is THRILLED to be back on the BWBTC stage! Chicago credits include: *The HOA* (Factory Theater) *Last Night in Karaoke Town* (Factory Theater), *Women of 4G* (BWBTC) and *Hell Followed With Her* (WildClaw Theatre). She wants to thank the cast and production team for being so insanely talented and a huge thank you to her fierce Grandma Janie for passing her love of theater down to her.

**PRODUCTION TEAM**

LINE BOWER (they/them; Technical Director) is a Chicago-based freelance technical director, carpenter, and SAFD-certified stage combatant. They are thrilled to be working with BWBTC for a second time this season! A recent graduate of Columbia College Chicago, they were the college’s first student technical director of a mainstage production. Recent credits include *Sancocho* (Visión Latino Theatre Co), *Richard III* (BWBTC), and *Hortensia and the Museum of Dreams* (Columbia College Chicago). Love and thanks to their mentors, Kal Grissom and Grant Sabin.

CHRISTINA CASANO (she/her; Director) is a theatre director based in Chicago. Her training includes a BA in Theatre from Miami University, Victory Gardens Theater’s Director’s Inclusion Initiative, and the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey’s Summer
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**HANNAH FOERSCHLER** (she/her; Sound Design) is thrilled to join BWBTC once again to design! Hannah is a Chicago-based sound designer and musician. She holds an MA in Sound Arts & Industries from Northwestern University and a BA in Music from Kenyon College, and she apprenticed with the Purple Rose Theatre Company during their 2015-2016 season. Her design credits span from podcasting to theater, including work on the audio dramas *Unwell* and *The Vanishing Act*, BWBTC’s *Women of 4G*, and plays produced by Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, Strawdog Theatre Company, and other Chicagoland theaters.

**ERIN GAUTILLE** (she/her; Scenic Design) is a freelance scenic and properties designer here in Chicago as well as a Circus Aerialist. She is excited to return to BWBTC after last getting to design Othello here. Other recent Chicago credits include *Last Hermanos* (A Red Orchid Theatre), *Desire in a Tinier House* (Pride Film and Plays) *Leftovers* (Something Marvelous) *Herland* (Redtwist Theatre) *Mike Pence Sex Dream* (First Floor Theatre) Before moving back to Chicago she worked as a scenic designer and technical director for Cardinal Stage in Bloomington Indiana. She designed their productions of *Rounding Third, The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe and Robin Hood*. She has also returned to her alma mater to design set for shows including *Falling, The Amish Project* and *Cyrano De Bergerac*. She is very thankful and excited for this opportunity to jump back into the wonderful world of making theatre. Enjoy!

**DEVON HAYAKAWA** (any; Assistant Director) is thrilled to make their BWBTC debut! Previous "jack of all trade" Chicago credits include work with Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Paramount, Bramble Theatre, Chicago Dramatists, Wayward Sisters, and Underscore Theatre. Regionally, Devon has worked with Farmers Alley Theatre, Rogue Theatre Festival, Women’s Theatre Festival, American Lives Theatre, and Alleyway Theatre. Devon is a graduate of Ball State University where they received their BFA in Musical Theatre. In their free time they are a D&D nerd, crochet novice, and mediocre plant parent. Devon is proudly represented by DDO Artists agency. devonhayakawa.com.
ROXIE KOOI (she/her; Stage Manager) is delighted to return from COVID exile with BWBTC. Chicago credits include *Hell Followed With Her* (Wildclaw Theatre), *The Killer, Naked* (Trap Door Theatre), *No Home for Bees, Shake Teeth Shake, Little Women, Outside Agitators* (20% Theatre Company), *The Passion of Boudicca* (We Three Plays), *Steampunk Christmas Carol, MacSith* (EDGE Theatre), *iN/ILUX, Whatever, Push Button Murder* (the side project), *The Late Henry Moss, Les Parents Terrible* (The Artistic Home), *This Is War* (Signal Ensemble), and *The Timey Wimey Fantastic Brilliant Extravaganza* (Geronimo!) (Right Brain Project). In conclusion, SSDGM!

MEG X. MCGRATH (they/them; Props Design) is stoked to be doing a full production with BWBTC after directing a pre-covid reading of SCUM. Meg worked with Wildclaw Theatre for many years, directing/ADing (*Future Echoes/Hell Followed With Her, The Woman In Black*), stage managing (*The Revenants, Motel 666*), curating salons (*The Brood, Deathscribe at City Winery*) and designing the blood cannons and other fun special effects. Meg has also worked with City Lit since 2007, as a stage manager (*Frankenstein*), AD (*Volpone, d. Sheldon Patinkin*) and the production assistant for the yearly Adaptation Festival of New Plays. For the last few years they've helped adapt and perform scripts for Books on the Chopping Block, City Lit's yearly celebration of banned books. Meg is currently a props assistant at Writer's Theatre, and loves doing crafts of all kinds. Outside of theatre, Meg loves camping, horror, books, and cats.

CAT MCKAY (she/her; Playwright) is a proudly bi actor/playwright and Babes fangirl. She has worked with The Plagiarists, WildClaw, and About Face. Cat trained at RADA and is a graduate of Case Western Reserve’s theater and music programs. Her most recent acting project, Rational Creatures, a queer webseries retelling of Jane Austen’s *Persuasion*, is now streaming on YouTube. Love to Dan and Bex.

YASMIN ZACARIA MIKAIEL (she/they; dramaturg for initial 2020 production) is a Chicago-based dramaturg, journalist, and oral hxstorian. Their multi-disciplinary work as a queer, fat, brown, femme endeavors to amplify and archive stories that go lost/stolen/forgotten. They currently work at the South Side journalism lab City Bureau as their Digital Producer and as an adjunct professor at The Theatre School at DePaul University. Their writing can be found in *American Theatre* magazine, *Teen Vogue, Chicago Reader*, among others. Learn more at [www.yasminzacaria.com](http://www.yasminzacaria.com) and follow them on Twitter @yasminzacaria (dramaturgically, it tracks).

TAB MOCHERMAN (they/them; COVID Compliance Officer) is from North Carolina and misses Southern cooking every day. They currently work full time as the COVID Safety Coordinator for Goodman Theatre. They have also worked with Pride Arts, Hubbard Street Dance Company, Grant Park Music Festival and Collaboraction doing administrative work. They are excited to work with BWBTC again.
**JENNIFER MOHR** (she/her; Costume Design) is so incredibly excited to be working with Babes with Blades again - this time as a designer! She has designed costumes for several Chicago theatre companies including Arc Theatre and New Millennium Theatre Company. Jennifer also works as an actor in Chicago most recently playing The Witch in Fever’s Sleepy Hollow Immersive Cocktail Experience. Other Chicago companies include Midsommer Flight, First Folio, Birchhouse Immersive, Laughingstock Theatre, and Artemisia Theatre. Regional credits include *Noises Off* (Tent Theatre); *Reefer Madness* (Springfield Contemporary Theatre). She also spent a year touring with Missoula Children’s Theatre. Jennifer would like to thank her friends and family for their love and support!

**FAITH ROUSH** (she/her; Production Manager) is working virtually on Plaid as Hell from Kent, Ohio. This is Faith’s first production working with BWBTC, as well as their Chicago theatre debut. They are a 2020 graduate of Kent State University with a background in production and stage management. Some credits include *The Revolutionists* (SM – Equality Productions Cincinnati OH), *Parade* (PSM – Kent State University), *Disney’s Newsies* (SM Intern – Porthouse Theatre), *Kiss Me, Kate* (ASM/Fly Chief – Kent State University), and many more theatre and dance productions through KSU. Faith is ecstatic to be back in the theatre production world and is grateful for the support of their partner, Hali Adkins for her continuous love and support.

**ANNA SCHULTZ-BREEF** (she/her; Lighting Designer) is a Stage Manager for theatre
and dance, as well as a Theatre Artisan with an adoration for Carpentry and Lighting Design. Her most recent work consists of: Community Engagement Production Manager for the Grant Park Music Festival, the Master Electrician for the Northwestern University Opera department, Production Manager for Arts Alliance Illinois 40th Anniversary, Lighting Designer for Echo Dance Ensemble Concert, Stagehand for Columbia College Dance Center, and Stage Manager for Sea Change for the Chicago International Puppet Festival. Anna graduated from Illinois Wesleyan University in 2021 and holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Theatre Arts. Along with a double minor in Theatre Design & Technology, and Asian Studies.

MAUREEN YASKO (she/her; Fight & Intimacy Director)* Jeff nominated Fight Director & BWBTC Affiliate Artist has appeared onstage with BWBTC in Julius Caesar, Bo Thomas…., L’Imbecile, Titus Andronicus, and The Promise of a Rose Garden. She fight directed Witch Slap!, Women of 4G, and Richard III, which she also intimacy directed. Other Recent Projects: A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Midsommer Flight), I Build Giants (The Plagiarists), The Secret Council (First Folio). Maureen also serves as Resident Intimacy Director/Associate Fight Director of Midsommer Flight. Other Chicago-land choreo credits: The Factory Theater, Red Theatre, Citadel Theatre, Cor Theatre, The Conspirators, Aurora University. Maureen is a Certified Teacher with the SAFD; has received training from Intimacy Directors International and Intimacy Directors & Coordinators; and she is also a Certified Yoga Instructor.

SPECIAL THANKS

BWBTC would like to thank the following actors who were a part of the Winter 2021 rehearsal process. The show would not be what it is without their talent and input:

Debbie Baños (she/her), Gabriela Diaz (she/her), Song Marshall (she/her), Alexandria Moorman (she/her) and McKenzie Wilkes (she/her).
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About Joining Sword & Pen and the Margaret W. Martin Award

The Joining Sword & Pen international playwriting competition launched in 2005 to generate more scripts that featured women in roles involving stage combat. Created in collaboration with Artistic Advisor and Fight Master in the Society of American Fight Directors David Woolley who sponsors the competition, scripts inspired by a specific image are submitted and go through a blind judging process. The winning script goes through BWBTC’s new play development program, but also receives a full production, cash prize and the Margaret W. Martin Award.

Margaret W. Martin was ahead of her time. In the 1960s and 70s, she maintained her full time job, taught piano, and raised a family of 6 children (4 girls, two boys) all while she traveled the globe from the States to Saudi Arabia, across Europe and Vientiane Laos during the height of the Vietnam war. She founded the American International School – Riyadh (K-12) in Saudi Arabia in 1963, and it has flourished as an institution since then. The Margaret W. Martin Award is in honor of Artistic Advisor and SAFD Fight Master David Woolley’s mother.
ENSEMBLE

Jazmín Corona
Kim Fukawa
Samantha Kaufman
Jillian Leff
Jennifer L. Mickelson
Megan Schemmel
Avi Vodnoy Wolf

Alison Dornheggen
LaKecia Harris
Kelsey Kovacevich
Morgan Manasa
Izis Mollinedo
Hayley Rice
Kathrynne Wolf

BOARD

Lata Balagangadharan
Jowi Estava
Kelsey Kovacevich
James Piche

Melanie Bolen
Claire Johnson
Catherine Mallers
Hayley Rice

**BWBTC IS ONE OF LESS THAN 15% OF CHICAGO THEATRE COMPANIES**
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*(and the only one who uses stage combat as a consistent storytelling tool.)*

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Babes With Blades Theatre Company uses stage combat to tell stories that elevate the voices of underrepresented communities and dismantle the patriarchy. Through performance, script development, training and outreach, our ensemble creates theatre that explores the wide range of the human experience, and cultivates broader perspectives in the arts community and in society as a whole.

BabesWithBlades.org