

# **Aquila Theatre**

presents

**Jane Austen's**

## **Pride + Prejudice**

adapted for the stage by the ensemble cast

### **Cast**

Listed alphabetically

Lydia Bennet/Georgina Darcy/Charlotte Lucas/Ensemble  
Mr. Bingley/Mr. Wickham/Mr. Collins/Mary Bennet/Ensemble  
Elizabeth Bennet  
Jane Bennet/Miss Bingley/Ensemble  
Mr. Darcy/Mr. Bennet/Ensemble  
Mrs. Bennet/Mr. Gardiner/Lady Catherine de Bourgh/Ensemble

Elizabeth Belfast  
James Counihan  
Leda Douglas  
Katie Housley  
Conner Keef  
James Lavender

### **Creative Team**

Director  
Transcriber and Script Coordinator  
Lighting and Scenic Designer  
Projection Designer  
Costume Designer  
Sound Designer

Desiree Sanchez  
Alex Moon  
Bob Rogers  
Lianne Arnold  
Kara Branch  
Alex Duncker

### **Production Team**

Technical Director  
Production Stage Manager  
Assistant Stage Manager  
Company Manager  
Production Manager

Bob Rogers  
Alex Duncker  
Cynthia Caridad  
Brian Bailey  
Bob Rogers

There will be one fifteen-minute intermission.

The taking of photographs or the use of any kind of recording device is strictly prohibited.

*This Performance and affiliated workshops and readings are part of Aquila Theatre's Warrior Chorus: American Democracy program made possible in part by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities: Democracy demands wisdom.*



*This production is supported in part by New City Department of Cultural Affairs and New York State Council on the Arts.*

## SYNOPSIS

When wealthy Mr. Bingley moves into a nearby estate with his sister, Mrs. Bennet, the mother of only daughters, is particularly excited at the prospect of a rich suitor for one of them. When the family meets Mr. Bingley at a country ball, they are charmed by him and he seems equally taken with the eldest Bennet daughter, Jane. The evening is marred, however, by the presence of Bingley's aristocratic friend Mr. Darcy, who appears arrogant and snobbish. Mr. Bingley and Jane become increasingly attached, despite the objections of his sister and Mr. Darcy. Although he continues to find fault with the behavior of her family, Mr. Darcy is drawn to Elizabeth's sharp wit and beautiful eyes.

Elizabeth meets a handsome officer named Wickham, who tells her a story of Mr. Darcy's ill treatment of him, and Elizabeth - already disposed to dislike Darcy - believes it. The Bennet family receives a visit from their cousin, a clergyman named Mr. Collins who will one day inherit the Bennet estate due to the entail system whereby only male relatives can inherit property. Believing it to be a great honor on Elizabeth, Mr. Collins proposes and is stunned into disbelief when, much to her mother's dismay, she rejects him. He ultimately marries Elizabeth's dear friend, Charlotte Lucas, who explains to a disappointed Lizzy that as an unmarried twenty-seven-year-old without fortune, her options are exceedingly limited.

The Bingleys depart suddenly for London, leaving Jane heartbroken. Elizabeth visits Charlotte at her new home and meets the formidable Lady Catherine de Bourgh, who happens to be Darcy's aunt. Darcy pays a visit while Lizzy is there, and seems anxious to spend time with her. One day, he shocks Elizabeth by proposing marriage to her, but he criticizes her family and admits that he helped break apart Jane and Mr. Bingley. Enraged, Elizabeth spurns his proposal. Darcy writes her a letter revealing the truth behind Mr. Wickham's false allegations. Elizabeth wonders if she has misjudged Mr. Darcy's character.

After returning home from her visit, Elizabeth goes on a trip to Derbyshire with her uncle and agrees to tour Pemberley, the grand ancestral home of the Darcy family, after being assured the owner is away. She is greatly impressed by the beautiful house and grounds, and is then mortified to realize that Darcy is actually at home. Darcy, however, is delighted to see her, and is gracious and introduces her to his sister, Georgiana, who Elizabeth befriends. Elizabeth receives a letter that her youngest sister, Lydia, has run away with the roguish Mr. Wickham - a scandal that would certainly ruin the entire Bennet family. Secretly, Mr. Darcy intervenes to arrange their marriage and maintain the Bennet's reputation.

Bingley soon returns and asks Jane to marry him. Lady Catherine de Bourgh, who has heard a rumor that Darcy and Elizabeth are engaged, makes a surprise visit to the Bennet family home. She angrily admonishes Elizabeth on the inappropriateness of the match, and demands that Elizabeth promise she will never wed Darcy. When Elizabeth refuses to make such a promise, it gives Darcy hope that Elizabeth's feelings for him have changed. He proposes, and she happily accepts him.

## CAST BIOS

**ELIZABETH BELFAST** (*Lydia Bennet/Charlotte Lucas/Georgiana Darcy/Ensemble*) is elated to be joining the Aquila Theatre Company and would like to thank Desiree for allowing this to be her first professional theatre credit. She began her BFA in Acting at Texas State University and has since transferred to the Los Angeles Film School to pursue her Bachelor's in Screenwriting. Recent credits include Aquila's most recent tour of *Macbeth (Understudy)* and *The Great Gatsby (Understudy)* as well as *In Arabia We'd All Be Kings (Daisy)*, *Stupid F\*cking Bird (Mash)*, and *Romeo and Juliet (Juliet)*. She would like to thank her parents Tracey and Brennon Belfast for always trusting her to follow her dreams, her partner Tanner for his unwavering love and support, and Bob Adams and Jake Dogias for giving her the confidence to pursue acting and being the greatest teachers an actor could ever wish for.

**JAMES COUNIHAN** (*Mr. Bingley/Mr. Wickham/Mr. Collins/Ensemble*) is a New York based actor originally from Pittsburgh, PA. He received his BFA from Ithaca College and this will mark his second national tour with Aquila. Other credits include City Theatre, Ithaca Shakespeare Company, and Columbia University's Graduate Theatre Department. James wants to thank his family and friends for their constant love and support. James-Counihan.com

**LEDA DOUGLAS** (*Elizabeth Bennet*) is a British actor with an extensive background in dance and choreography (Shaftesbury Theatre, The Curve). She trained in Lecoq's method before graduating from The Oxford School of Drama in 2018. Recent theatre credits include: *Heart of the Mind* (National Theatre), *Shudder* (Soho theatre), *Henry VIII*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Nuclear Future* (The Lowry), *The Night Before Christmas* (Polka Theatre), as well as leading roles in; *The Time Machine*, *The Gunpowder Plot* and *Alice in Wonderland*. Short film credits include: BLACK MONEY, HOUSEKEEPING, I AM, and WOMAN TO WOMAN; including her production company's (Mixed Productions) first short, DINAH, now touring the film festival circuit.

**KATIE HOUSLEY** (*Jane Bennet/Miss Bingley/Ensemble*) is a Canadian stage and screen actress based in New York. Selected theatre credits include: *Twelfth Night* (Classical Theatre Project), *Encore!* (U.S. National Tour), *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea* (Alliance Repertory Theatre), and *Disgraced* (Black Box Studios). Her play, *Midnight on a Monday*, won the Playwrights Guild of Canada/Toronto Fringe Festival's 24 hour playwriting contest before receiving its world premiere at New York's WorkShop Theatre as part of the Midtown International Theatre Festival where it went on to receive a nomination for Best Short Subject. Her other plays include *Karaoke Confessional* (NYC's UnFringed Festival at the Secret Theatre), and *Homecoming* (New Writers Series at Toronto's Paprika Festival). Her film work has premiered at various film festivals throughout North America and Europe. She is a graduate of the University of Toronto and of the conservatory at Stella Adler.

**CONNER KEEF** (*Mr. Darcy/Mr. Bennet/Ensemble*) Brooklyn-based, Kentucky-born actor. Training includes: Williamstown Theatre Festival ('18), The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey ('19), BFA Acting - Western Kentucky University ('19). Credits include: Marlowe's *Faustus* (The Secret Theatre), *Romeo and Juliet* (Spokehouse Productions), Ken Ludwig's *The Three Musketeers* (The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey), *The Great Gatsby*, *Macbeth* (Aquila Theatre Company). As one might guess, Conner's readiness to step into this field of work is owed to their teachers, friends, family, and not least of all, their mother.

**JAMES LAVENDER** (*Mrs. Bennet/Mr. Gardiner/Lady Catherine de Bourgh/Ensemble*) Theatre credits: For Aquila Theatre; *Macbeth*, *As You Like It*, *An Enemy Of The People*, *Hamlet*, *The Tempest*, *Sense & Sensibility*; *Henry V* (Antic Disposition) *The War of The Worlds* (Layered Reality); *Sleeping Beauty*, (Rhodes Arts Complex); *Loves Labours Lost*, *Twelfth Night*, *Comedy Of Errors*, *The Importance Of Being Earnest* (Oxford Shakespeare Company); *Peter Pan*, *Cinderella*, *Jack & The Beanstalk* (Sheringham Little Theatre); *Much Ado About Nothing* (Lord Chamberlain's Men); *Philoctetes* (BAM New York); *Macbeth* (Gym at Judson Theatre, New York); *Adventures in Wonderland*, *Supermarket Shakespeare* (Teatro Vivo); *Aladdin* (Hazlitt Theatre); *The Taming of The Shrew*, *As You Like It* (Groundlings Theatre); *Jack and the Beanstalk* (Millfield Theatre); *Headlines* (BAC); *Sleeping Beauty* (Georgian Theatre Royal); *The Jungle Book* (Birmingham Stage Company); *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Greenwich Playhouse); *Plebeians Rehearse the Uprising* (Arcola Theatre). James trained at Rose Bruford.

## CREATIVE & PRODUCTION BIOS

**DESIREE SANCHEZ** (*Director*) has been Aquila's artistic director since 2012. This season she will be directing a new adaptation of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Past productions she has directed include *The Great Gatsby* and *Macbeth* (Spring 2022), *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *The Odyssey* (2019); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Frankenstein* (2018); *Hamlet* and *Sense and Sensibility* (2017); *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Our Trojan War* (2016); *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* and *Philoctetes* (2015); *The Tempest* and *Wuthering Heights* (2014); *A Female Philoctetes* at BAM Fisher's Hillman Studio (2014); *Twelfth Night* and *Fahrenheit 451* (2013); *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Cyrano de Bergerac* (2012); *Herakles* (2012) at the Festival of the Aegean in Syros, Greece and at the Michael Cacoyannis Foundation in Athens and at BAM in 2013; *Macbeth* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (2011); and *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (2010). Desiree wrote the stage adaptations for *Frankenstein*, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, and *Wuthering Heights* for the Aquila Theatre and choreographed for: *A Very Naughty Greek Play*, based on Aristophanes' *Wasps* (2004); *Julius Caesar* (2006), *Catch-22* (2007); *The Iliad: Book One* and *The Comedy of Errors* (2008). Desiree had a twenty-year career in dance which included working as a principal dancer for the Metropolitan Opera Ballet.

**LIANNE ARNOLD** (*Projection Design*) Lianne is a video & scenic designer and interdisciplinary artist working in theater, opera, music, dance, film, & art installation. For Aquila: *1984*, *Hamlet*, *Sense and Sensibility*. Other recent performance & film projects include *Lil Buck & Jon Boogz' Love Heals All Wounds* (projections / CAP UCLA & MOVE on Netflix), Prospect Theater Co.'s *VISION Series & The Hello Girls* (scenic & projections), HBO's *The Lady and the Dale* (animations), *Jazz Singer* (projections / Abrons Artspace), *Oscar at the Crown* (projections / 3 Dollar Bill), *Words on the Street* (co-creator & projections / Baruch), Joseph Keckler's *Let Me Die* (projections / Opera Philadelphia/FringeArts) and Joseph Keckler's *Train With No Midnight* (projections / Prototype Festival/HERE). When the Covid-19 shutdown happened in March 2020, Lianne was working as the associate projection designer on *The Lehman Trilogy* on Broadway. Lianne teaches Video Design/Creative Technologies at The New School and is a member of Wingspace Design Collective. MFA from CalArts. [www.liannearnold.com](http://www.liannearnold.com).

**BRIAN BAILEY** (*Company Manager*) Brian hails from the rural Appalachian region of Ohio where he grew up on a pig and cattle farm with his family. He graduated from Northern Kentucky University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre and had a career for several years on Broadway and National Tours in shows like *CATS*, *THE LION KING*, and *THE ADDAMS FAMILY*. While at home during CoVid pandemic Brian completed courses in Dinosaur Paleobiology with the University of Alberta, was a Zookeeper for over 75 species, taught World History at a middle school, became an editorial contributor for Getty Images, and was a radio personality for a country music station! After a decade long career at sea serving as a Cruise Director and spending two seasons in Antarctica on expedition vessels, Brian is thrilled to return to land and return to theatre as the company manager for Aquila Theatre.

**KARA BRANCH** (*Costume Designer*) is a New York based costume designer. Her recent design projects include *Fidelio* with Heartbeat Opera Company, *Machinal* at Boston Conservatory at Berklee and *The End of Hester*, *Imagining Madoff* and *Brecht: Call and Response* with New Light Theater Company. Recent Assistant design credits include *Hamilton*

(Broadway, National Tours and International Germany Tour), *Slave Play* (Broadway), *The Secret Life of Bees* at Atlantic Theater Company, *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark* at Signature Theater Company and *Detroit '67* at The McCarter Theater. [karabbranchdesigns.com](http://karabbranchdesigns.com)

**CYNTHIA CARIDAD** (*Assistant Stage Manager*). Cynthia got her start in stage management with Santa Monica Rep's 2011 production of *The Tempest* in Santa Monica, CA. After graduating with a BA at California State University Fullerton, she worked as a stage manager on cruise ships for 6 years. She is now based in New York. Selected Regional: ...what the end will be (PA), EgoManiac (PSM), Luisa Fernanda (PSM), Salir/Dido (PSM). She is grateful for her family's support throughout all her adventures.

**ALEX DUNCKER** (*Production Stage Manager*) Hailing from beautiful Jackson Hole, Wyoming, Alex began her love affair with the performing arts at her local western dinner theatre. After progressing from showgirl to stage manager, she ventured east to pursue a Theatre degree from the University of Vermont. Since moving to New York in 2016, Alex has dabbled in film, managed several inventive new works (*Meshahnye*, *Late Night at the Serpent*, *Codependent*, *Cartography*, *Voyeur*), and produced a pop-up theatre (*Destiny Manifests*) in a repurposed storefront that presented Sam Shepard's *Fool for Love* alongside original poetry, dance, live music, visual and performance art. Now, Alex is elated to be back on the road for her fourth tour with Aquila to continue her career of working with women-led artistic endeavors.

**ALEX MOON** (*Transcriber and Script Coordinator*) is a nonbinary theatre artist and translator who's worked with organizations such as The American Repertory Theatre; Ensemble Studio Theatre; Speakeasy Stage Co; Boston University; Emerson College; Theatre Collaborative, and more. Recently, their short play, "Bugs" was chosen to be published by Concord Theatricals as part of the 47th Annual Off-Off Broadway Theatre festival. Their full-length play "G-Town", was a finalist for the 2021 Eugene O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, and their most recent work, "Ari + Dee", was produced by Broke People Play Festival and The Chain Theatre. As a translator, their editions of the Homeric Hymns to Dionysus will be featured in the forthcoming issue of *Persephone: The Harvard Undergraduate Classics Journal*. They are a member of New York University's class of 2022 double majoring in Dramatic Writing Classics, having trained as well with the Yale School of Drama, Frantic Assembly, and One Year Lease's Apprentice Program in Papingo, Greece. [www.alexmoondrama.com](http://www.alexmoondrama.com)

**BOB ROGERS** (*Production Manager, Set & Lighting Designer, Technical Director*) is excited to be back with Aquila theatre for another exciting season. Bob's technical career started in 2005 at Crossville Tennessee. Since then, he has worked on cruise ships, theme parks, tours, regional theatres, circuses, and even 100 foot diameter balloons. Bob has done technical theatre in every state of the continental US, Guam, and even China.

## AQUILA THEATRE

Aquila Theatre is one of the foremost producers of classical theatre in the United States and has been bringing audiences world-class actors, captivating designs, innovative adaptations, and impactful direction since 1991. Aquila Theatre also provides extensive educational offerings and is an award-winning leader in the field of public arts and humanities programming. Aquila Theatre's mission is to create innovative interpretations of the classics for today's audiences. By

diversifying the classics and expanding the canon, Aquila seeks to enhance the plurality of our perspectives.

Aquila regularly produces in New York, most recently at The Brooklyn Academy of Music, GK Arts in DUMBO, and ART/NY. The company also visits 50 - 60 American cities per year with a program of two plays, workshops, and educational programming, and is under the Artistic Directorship of Desiree Sanchez. Aquila has been awarded numerous grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, The National Endowment for the Humanities, from which it received a Chairman's Special Award, the New York State Councils for the Arts and Humanities, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. Aquila has performed at the White House under the Bush and Obama administrations and has performed for the U.S Supreme Court and for the National Council on the Arts. Aquila was also recently invited by Lin-Manuel Miranda to perform at the U.S. Capitol in support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, for its groundbreaking theatre and humanities program: *The Warrior Chorus*.

**PRODUCTIONS IN NEW YORK CITY:** Aquila is a major part of New York's theatrical landscape, producing a regular season of plays. Aquila recently produced: *The Trojan War: Our Warrior Chorus*, based on the writings of Homer, Aeschylus, Euripides, Sophocles and reimagined through the experiences of modern day military veterans at Brooklyn Academy of Music; *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* and *Philoctetes* at GK ArtsCenter in Brooklyn; a staged workshop production of *A Female Philoctetes* at BAM Fisher's Hillman Studio as part of our YouStories program; Euripides' *Herakles* at BAM; Shakespeare's *Macbeth* at the GYM at Judson; Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, Shakespeare's *As You Like It* and Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* at the Skirball Center for the Performing Arts at New York University; Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*; and Homer's *The Iliad: Book One* Off-Broadway at the Lucille Lortel Theatre.

**A MAJOR ANNUAL NATIONAL TOUR:** Aquila is the foremost producer of touring classical theatre in the United States, visiting 50-60 American cities per year. Recent past touring seasons include: George Orwell's *1984* and Homer's *Odyssey* (2019/2020) Shelley's *Frankenstein* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2018/19); *Hamlet* and Austen's *Sense & Sensibility* (2017/18); *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Murder on the Nile*, as well as *The Trojan War: Our Warrior Chorus* (2016/17); *Romeo and Juliet* and Doyle's *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (2015/16); *The Tempest* and Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (2014/15); *Twelfth Night* and Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* (2013/14); *Taming of the Shrew* and Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac* (2012/13); *Macbeth* and Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (2011/12); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (2010/11); *As You Like It* and Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* (2009/10).

**INTERNATIONAL PERFORMANCES:** Aquila has appeared in numerous festivals and at venues around the world including performances in London, Holland, Germany, Greece, Scotland, Canada, Bermuda and at the Festival of the Aegean in Syros, Greece and the Michael Cacoyannis Foundation in Athens. Most recently Aquila performed *A Female Philoctetes* in Athens, Greece and Shakespeare's *The Tempest* at New York University's campus, La Pietra, in Florence, Italy as part of their summer event series.

**EDUCATION PROGRAMS:** Aquila is dedicated to theatre arts education and produces three major initiatives: *Workshop America*, a nationwide program that provides an opportunity for people to share in the art of Aquila; *Theatre Breakthrough*, which brings America's schools to

the stage; and *Hear Our Call!*, a drama training program for NY based teens from immigrant, refugee, asylee, and underserved families.

**WARRIOR CHORUS: AMERICAN DEMOCRACY** - The Warrior Chorus is a national initiative that trains veterans to present innovative public programs based on ancient literature, presented in partnership with the National Endowment for the Humanities. It will create national discussions around Democracy led by the people who fight for it. Staged readings, workshops and a series of discussions around the meaning and future of Democracy will tour in tandem with this year's national tour of *Julius Caesar* and *Pride and Prejudice*.

### AQUILA STAFF:

Executive Artistic Director  
Founding Director  
Company Management  
Accountants

Desiree Sanchez  
Peter Meineck  
Brian Bailey  
InsightLedger

Represented by OPUS 3 Artists



Aquila Theatre  
100 Washington Square East, Silver Center, Room 503  
New York, NY 10003  
[aquila@aquilatheatre.com](mailto:aquila@aquilatheatre.com) & [www.aquilatheatre.com](http://www.aquilatheatre.com)

Follow Aquila Theatre on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, [aquilatheatre.com](http://aquilatheatre.com) and [warriorchorus.org](http://warriorchorus.org).

