



UMBC Theatre Presents

THE LARAMIE PROJECT

by MOISÉS KAUFMAN &
MEMBERS OF TECTONIC
THEATER PROJECT

Directed by
NYALLS HARTMAN

NOV. 30 – DEC. 11, 2011

umbc.edu/arts

THE LARAMIE PROJECT

BY MOISÉS KAUFMAN
& MEMBERS OF TECTONIC THEATRE PROJECT

DIRECTOR
NYALLS HARTMAN

SET & COSTUME DESIGN
ELENA ZLOTESCU

LIGHTING & PROJECTION
DANIEL COVEY

DIALECT CONSULTANT
J. LYNN WATSON

SOUND DESIGN
JEFFREY DORFMAN

DIALECT COACH
RACHEL HIRSHORN

STAGE MANAGER
DIANE SCHRAMKE

CAST

(ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

STEPHEN BELBER	CHRISTOPHER DEWS
AMANDA GRONICH	KATIE HILEMAN
MERCEDES HERRERRO	JESSIE POOLE
JOHN McADAMS	DAVID BRASINGTON
ANDY PARIS	JOSH HOLOBER-WARD
GREG PIEROTTI	ANDERSON WELLS
BARBARA PITTS	SAMRAWIT BELAI
KELLI SIMPKINS	SHANNON ZIEGLER
ENSEMBLE #1	MEGHAN HUDECHECK
ENSEMBLE #2	SAM VAN SANT
ENSEMBLE #3	DAN FRIEDMAN
ENSEMBLE #4	BRAD WIDENER

TIME: TODAY & 1998

THERE WILL BE A 10 MINUTE INTERMISSION

PRODUCTION STAFF

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR	GREGGORY SCHRAVEN
COSTUME SHOP SUPERVISOR	SHELLEY STEFFENS JOYCE
COSTUME SHOP CO-SUPERVISOR	M. CELESTINE RANNEY-HOWES
SCENIC/PROPERTIES ARTIST	LIAN FRENCH
ASSISTANT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR	PIXI BARRET
ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER	WILLIAM D'EUGENIO
ASSISTANT PROPERTIES ARTIST	KATHRYN BISHOP
ASSISTANT TO DIRECTOR	DAN ROEDER
COSTUME SHOP ASSISTANT	AJA MORRIS-SMILEY
STITCHERS	KAT SCHUSTER, AJA MORRIS-SMILEY, CAHTRINA PEELE
COSTUME CONSTRUCTION	KATHRYN BISHOP, SYDNEY KLEINBERG, CAHTRINA PEELE, LIZ RICHARDSON, BRIAN ROWAN
MASTER ELECTRICIAN	WILLIAM D'EUGENIO
SOUND ENGINEER	SAM ZUCKERMAN
MASTER CARPENTERS	AMBER CHANEY, LIZ RICHARDSON, MATTHEW WOOD
SET CONSTRUCTION	JEFFREY CAVEY, ABID CHAUNDRY, CODY JAMES, RACHAEL KNOBLAUCH, BENJAMIN KORBELAK, ZACHARY PENNINGTON, ROBERT TEMPLE, PHILLIP VANNORRBECK, SHANEEKA WILLIFORD, THE STUDENTS OF THTR 100
LIGHT OPERATOR	BENJAMIN KORBELAK
SOUND OPERATOR	ZACHARY PENNINGTON
WARDROBE CREW	RACHAEL KNOBLAUCH, SYDNEY KLEINBERG
PROJECTION OPERATOR	PHILLIP VANNOORBEEK
PHOTOGRAPHY	RICH RIGGINS
BOX OFFICE/HOUSE MANAGERS	DOMONIQUE PITTS, PATTY WILSON

PLEASE TURN OFF ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES, AND REFRAIN FROM TEXTING
DURING THE PERFORMANCE. ALL RECORDING EQUIPMENT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

IN 1998 MATTHEW SHEPARD WAS BEATEN TO DEATH BECAUSE HE WAS GAY. HE WAS TIED TO A FENCE, PISTOL WHIPPED, AND LEFT TO DIE ON THE PRAIRIE OUTSIDE OF LARAMIE, WYOMING. WHILE HIS DEATH FOCUSED WORLD-WIDE ATTENTION ON HATE, MATTHEW WAS NEITHER THE FIRST NOR THE LAST PERSON TO BE BEATEN AND MURDERED BECAUSE OF THEIR SEXUAL IDENTITY.

IN RESPONSE TO THE CRIME AGAINST MATTHEW, MEMBERS OF TECTONIC THEATRE PROJECT CONDUCTED OVER 200 INTERVIEWS WITH THE PEOPLE OF LARAMIE IN AN ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND HOW SUCH AN INHUMANE ACT COULD OCCUR, AND WHAT SUCH AN ACT DOES TO THE VERY FABRIC OF A COMMUNITY. FROM THOSE INTERVIEWS THEY CREATED, THE LARAMIE PROJECT, A 'DOCUMENTARY STYLE' PLAY THAT CAPTURES THE EVENTS THAT LED UP TO AND FOLLOWED THE MURDER OF MATTHEW SHEPARD. AS ONE OF THE MOST PRODUCED PLAYS IN THE LAST DECADE, THE LARAMIE PROJECT HAS HELPED TO SHIFT WORLD-WIDE ATTENTION FROM HATE TO THE NEED FOR TOLERANCE, ACCEPTANCE, AND HUMANE ACTION.

IN THE 13 YEARS THAT HAVE PASSED SINCE MATTHEW'S MURDER MUCH HAS HAPPENED IN OUR WORLD. INTOLERANCE, GAY-BASHINGS AND CRIMES OF HATE, LIKE SHOOTINGS ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES AND YOUTH SUICIDES, HAVE BECOME EVERYDAY OCCURRENCES. WHILE WE ARE NOT AS NAÏVE AS WE ONCE WERE, WE ARE ALSO LITTLE DIFFERENT. OUR INSTANT NEWS CULTURE HAS US BOMBARDED WITH AND ACCEPTING OF GROSS INJUSTICES. SHELL-SHOCKED, WE HAVE BECOME JADED, RENDERED DUMB, AND THINKING MUCH LIKE THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THE PLAY, "WELL, THAT'S JUST THE WAY THINGS ARE." THE PASSING OF TIME HAS HAD OTHER EFFECTS AS WELL. RELATIVE TRUTHS REGARDING THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE MURDER OF MATTHEW SHEPARD HAVE BEEN SEEN IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT AND FORCE US TO QUESTION THE ISSUES AND IDEAS THE PLAY ORIGINALLY ASKED US TO CONSIDER.

IN PRODUCING THE PLAY TODAY, WE WORKED MUCH LIKE THE ORIGINAL WRITERS—COMBING OVER THE TEXT, CULLING MATERIAL GARNERED FROM RESEARCH, AND WEIGHING THE PREVAILING SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS MORES OF THE TIME. WE ALSO WORKED TO MAKE SENSE OF AN OLDER WORLD, ONE WHERE OVER THE LAST DECADE WE HAVE BEEN EXPERIENCING AN UNFATHOMABLE PROLIFERATION OF HATE CRIMES AGAINST GAY, LESBIAN, AND TRANSGENDERED COMMUNITIES.

IN 2009, MORE THAN 10 YEARS AND 77,000 HATE CRIMES FOLLOWING MATTHEW SHEPARD'S DEATH, HATE-CRIME LEGISLATION WAS ENACTED IN THE UNITED STATES. SADLY, IN THE YEAR THAT FOLLOWED, THE NATIONAL COALITION OF ANTI-VIOLENCE PROGRAMS (NCAVP) REVEALED A 13% INCREASE IN HATE-CRIME INCIDENTS. CLEARLY, LAWS DO NOT DETERMINE THE ACTIONS OF A HUMANE SOCIETY. RATHER, AS DENNIS SHEPARD DEMONSTRATES IN THE PLAY SPARING THE LIVES OF HIS SON'S MURDERERS, IT IS THE CHOICE OF HUMANE ACTION—THAT CREATES A HUMANITY.

WE CHOSE TO PRODUCE THE LARAMIE PROJECT BECAUSE 13 YEARS AFTER THE BEATING DEATH OF MATTHEW SHEPARD OUR COMMUNITY HERE IN BALTIMORE, OUR VERY NATION, AND THE ENTIRE WORLD IS STILL DEALING WITH ACTS OF VIOLENCE, HATE CRIMES, AND THE PERSECUTION OF PEOPLE BECAUSE OF THEIR DIFFERENCES. IN THE PLAY, FR. ROGER ASKS: HOW DO WE LEARN? WHAT IS IT THAT WE AS A SOCIETY DO TO TEACH YOU THAT?

THE NEWS REPORTS AT THE END OF THE PLAY ARE BASED ON REAL INCIDENTS. THEY ARE JUST A FEW OF THE THOUSANDS OF HATE CRIMES THAT HAVE OCCURRED SO FAR THIS YEAR.

IT BEGS THE QUESTION, "HOW ARE WE LEARNING?..."

-NYALLS HARTMAN
DIRECTOR



SPECIAL THANKS TO DEAN JOHN JEFFRIES, TOM MOORE AND ALAN KREIZENBECK, AS WELL AS THE COMMONS OPERATIONS STAFF - SIMON REILLY AND CHRISTIAN ALEXANDER.