

Rivendell
Theatre Ensemble
IT'S WOMEN'S WORK

Tara Mallen
Artistic Director

Jackie Banks-Mahlum
Managing Director

Proudly present

I Wanna Fucking Tear You Apart

by Morgan Gould

Directed by Jessica Fisch

February 15–March 23, 2019

2019 SEASON

I Wanna Fucking Tear You Apart was originally produced by Studio Theatre, Washington, DC in January 2017 (David Muse, Artistic Director; Meredith Burkus, Managing Director)

I Wanna Fucking Tear You Apart received developmental support through the 2016 Beatrice Terry Residency Program of The Drama League of New York, Roger T. Danforth, Artistic Director, Gabriel Shanks, Executive Director

Additional development support was provided by Lark Play Development Center, SPACE on Ryder Farm, and Brooklyn College MFA Playwrights Workshop

I Wanna Fucking Tear You Apart is produced by special arrangement with United Talent Agency.

Dining Partner:

CELLARS
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This production is sponsored in part by Dramatists Guild Foundation.

www.RivendellTheatre.org

I Wanna Fucking Tear You Apart

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CAST (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

Sam	Teressa LaGamba*
Leo	Robert Quintanilla
Chloe	Jessica Ervin+

The play runs approximately one hour and forty minutes with no intermission.

PRODUCTION TEAM

Playwright	Morgan Gould#
Director	Jessica Fisch#
Artistic Producer	Rebecca Spence+
Drag Consultant.....	Gina Marie Hayes
Stage Manager	Miranda Andreson*
Scenic Design.....	Regina García+^
Projections Design	Tony Churchill
Lighting Design.....	Heather Gilbert
Original Music and Sound Design.....	Jeffrey Levin
Costume Design	Alison Siple^
Properties Design.....	Jonathan Berg-Einhorn
Production Manager	Catherine Allen
Technical Director	Manny Ortiz
Master Electrician	Garrett Steinke
Assistant Stage Manager	Sophie Goddard
Assistant Director	Hannah Siglin
Box Office Manager	Trisha Hooper+

RIVENDELL THEATRE ENSEMBLE STAFF

Producing Artistic Director	Tara Mallen+
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Development Consultant / Grant Writer.....	Catherine Painter
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* Denotes member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional stage actors and managers;

+ Denotes member of Rivendell Theatre Ensemble; # denotes a member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical and labor union; ^ denotes a member of United Scenic Artists, The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Welcome to Rivendell Theatre Ensemble's 2019 Season! Plays that offer a meaningful and impactful experience have become Rivendell's signature and I cannot imagine a more appropriate way to be kicking off 2019 than *I Wanna Fucking Tear You Apart* by Morgan Gould, directed by our dear friend Jessica Fisch. I so love everything about this play that probes the often overlooked joys and tribulations of deep friendships while

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S NOTE CONT.

facing down a form of marginalization and straight-up discrimination that we so rarely consider. Morgan's voice is unique, contemporary, in your face and FUN. Her characters are loud, authentic, hilarious, heartbreaking, and absolutely unforgettable and you are in for a wild, thrilling roller coaster ride with this talented ensemble. I am delighted to share Morgan's refreshing and resonant voice with our Chicago audiences.



Tara M. Mallen
Artistic Director

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

I'm Morgan, the playwright of *I Wanna Fucking Tear You Apart*. I'm so excited to bring this play to Chicago, and doubly excited to work with the fierce and amazing Jessica Fisch, whom I met when I was 23 doing a terrible internship that they cancelled after our year because we drove them so crazy. Fast forward almost ten years later, and here we are in this theater right now! Most likely, you are thin, and WHAT a true blessing. I have never been thin. Or medium. I have basically always weighed over 300 pounds, so when people are like "I feel you, my mom put me on Weight Watchers when I was 12, it was hard!" I think, "That sounds nice." But chubby, medium, big-boned, plus-size, fat (my preferred)...whatever describes you, I acknowledge our collective suffering and all its gradations under the umbrella of one of the last unbridled totally socially acceptable forms of bigotry in America: sizeism.

A lot of people who aren't gay or fat ask about why I wrote this play—about a pair of best friends who are fat and gay respectively—and the simplest answer is that I wrote it because I very rarely feel seen or represented on stage or on TV or in movies, and I rarely see the relationships that have mattered to me most in my life depicted in a way that is not the butt of a joke (a stupid, baby food, low hanging fruit joke involving the phrase "fag hag"...ugh). At best, fat women are dying in hospital beds, catfishing hot guys, suicidal in some way or, at worst, dorks, sidekicks, or punchlines. No person is a minor character in the story of their life. You'd better believe I have always been the fucking goddamn LEAD. So I wrote this play because though this particular individual fat woman, like ALL characters, is incredibly flawed, she does NOT *#spoileralert* kill herself in the end. There is not even a mention of dieting. (I know! Can you believe it?!) I wrote this to give a fat actress a really big lead role. I wrote this because I wanted to show a gay man in all his dirty, messy, idiotic, hilarious, brilliant, passive aggressive, lazy, special glory. I wrote this because even though the events of the play are not autobiographical (THEY ARE NOT!), I know what happens when traumatized people love each other. To be clear: I'm not claiming it will change your life. I'm not pretending I'm like the Tony Kushner of fat people (he is honestly VERY thin). But I want people to know we aren't just crying and wishing for a boyfriend or stuffing our faces. We've always known that, but now maybe other people can too.

Morgan Gould
Playwright

SPECIAL THANKS

Brent Eickhoff, Jessica Ervin, Ivan Misetich, Glenn Obrero, Mickie Paskal and PR Casting, Danielle Pinnock, Nick Rabkin, Courtney Williams, and York High School.

The playwright would like to thank Studio Theatre in DC, Rachel Viola, Corinne Hayoun, Nicole Spiezio, Tommy Heleringer & Anna O'Donoghue, and all the fat actresses who auditioned (and the gays, too!)

ELOQUII

We would also like to thank the 48th Ward Alderman Harry Osterman, State Representative Kelly Cassidy, the Andersonville Chamber of Commerce, and the Edgewater Chamber of Commerce and their staffs for their support and generosity in supporting the Edgewater community.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



Teresa LaGamba (Sam) is a Chicago based actor/musician from Pittsburgh, PA. She has performed feature roles in productions with

Porchlight Music Theatre, Paramount Theatre, Boho Theatre, Marriott Theatre, Kokandy Productions, Emerald City Theatre, Broadway in Chicago, Griffin Theatre, Haven Theatre and more. She received her BA in Acting and American Sign Language from Columbia College Chicago. In her free time, Teresa writes music and spoken word poetry, stares at her plants and pretends like she can cook like her mother. For her coven for their unconditional love/very literal support, Jess for her fierce ally-ship and Morgan for her courage BUT ALSO for having such a pretty face. And for the fat girls. Mostly to the fat girls. Proud member of Actor's Equity Association. Represented by Paonessa Talent.



Robert Quintanilla (Leo) is thrilled to make his Rivendell debut with this incredible team! Chicago credits include productions with

Porchlight Music Theatre, The House Theatre, Circle Theatre, Pride

Films and Plays, and Music Theatre Works to name a few. He would like to thank Jessica Fisch and Tara Mallen for this amazing opportunity and Morgan Gould for this important text. This production is dedicated to all the baby fats and gays out there creating their own Team Fat/Gay! Robert sends his love to his family and Shirley Hamilton Talent for all their support! Follow Robert on Instagram @princequesadilla! www.robertquintanilla.com



Jessica Ervin (Chloe) is an ensemble member at Rivendell. She received an Equity Jeff nomination for her portrayal of Ester in *Dry Land*, and has also worked with Rivendell on

Scientific Method (understudy), *Alias Grace*, *The Firebirds Take the Field*, *WOMEN AT WAR*, and the staged reading *381 Bleecker*.

Additionally, Jessica has worked with The Sound, Walkabout Theatre, Route 66, Erasing the Distance, The Public House, and Blue Goose Theatre Ensemble. Most recently, Jessica returned to Ball State University, her alma mater, to devise and perform an adaptation of *Frankenstein* as part of Indiana Humanities' One State One Story initiative. She can be seen on film in *Princess Cyd* and the upcoming projects *Teacher, Injustice*, and *Stalled*.

PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

Morgan Gould (Playwright) is a fat-fat, not TV fat New York based writer/director who is a Resident Playwright at New Dramatists and current Lila Acheson Wallace Playwriting Fellow at Juilliard. Morgan's play *I Wanna Fucking Tear You Apart*, is a Beatrice Terry/ Drama League Award Winner, and had its world premiere at Studio Theatre in Washington, DC in February 2017 (with Morgan directing). It was nominated for a Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding New Play, and DC Metro Arts said that Morgan's work "shows every bit as much promise as Edward Albee's early work, arguably more." Morgan has directed productions at the Humana Festival, Marin Theatre Company, Ensemble Studio Theatre, P73, and more. Morgan is also the Artistic Director of Morgan Gould & Friends—her theater company with 9 actors, 3 designers, and a filmmaker (www.morgangouldandfriends.com), and their work has been seen at many NYC venues including HERE Arts Center, Ars Nova, The Ice Factory and more. Morgan is developing a half hour original series with Amazon Studios and Will Graham/Field Trip Productions.

Jessica Fisch (Director) is excited to be back at Rivendell after directing the World Premiere of *The Firebirds Take The Field* and *Fefu and Her Friends* (Goodman Theatre/Rivendell Latinx Celebration). Recent credits: *Cry It Out* (Northlight Theatre), *You Across From Me* (Actors Theatre of Louisville, Humana Festival), *Late Company* (Cor Theatre), *Straight White Men* (Associate Director, Steppenwolf), *Trudy, Carolyn, Martha and Regina Travel to Outer Space* (Actors Theatre of Louisville, Humana Festival), *The Rosenkranz Mysteries: An Evening of Magic* (The Royal George), *Opulent Complex and That Thing That Time* (Actors Theatre of Louisville, The Tens). Jessica is so FUCKING thrilled to be collaborating with her dear friend Morgan Gould on this project. They literally climbed

up from the bottom together (or more aptly climbed the 6 flights of stairs at Ensemble Studio Theatre together). Jessica is a proud SDC member and #MomDirector. MFA: Northwestern University. www.JessicaFisch.com

Gina Marie Hayes (Drag Consultant) (Lucky Stiff) is a drag and variety performer working in Chicago and New York. Their work spans theater, burlesque, and performance art and takes inspiration from Weimar Germany, pierrot clowns, and golden age musicals. They have been seen at Berlin Nightclub (Chicago), Steppenwolf Theater, Disco Dining Club (Los Angeles), Hardware Bar and Metropolitan (New York), Bushwig 2017, Ace Hotel Chicago, and Soho House Chicago, among many others.

Miranda Anderson (Stage Manager) is excited to be working at Rivendell! Recent Chicago credits include productions with The House Theatre, The Hypocrites, TimeLine Theatre, First Folio Theatre, Steppenwolf and Lookingglass. Regional credits include touring with The Hypocrites' Gilbert and Sullivan productions to Olney Theatre Company, Pasadena Playhouse, Skirball Center at NYU, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville and American Repertory Theatre. Miranda is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

Regina García (Scenic Design) As an RTE Ensemble member, Regina designed sets for Baron's *Eat Your Heart Out* and Dillman's *American Wee-Pie*. She has long standing relationships with the Latinx Theatre Commons and its renowned *Teatros* including Repertorio Español, the Puerto Rican Traveling Theater, Teatro Vista and Pregones Theater. Recently completed projects include: Merrimack Repertory Theatre; Steppenwolf; and The Denver Center for the Performing Arts in co-production with The Old Globe. She is a Fellow of the NEA/TCG Career Development Program for Designers and the Princess

Grace Awards, USA; and a Regional Associate member of the League of Professional Theatre Women. She teaches at The Theatre School @ DePaul University. www.Garciaportfolio.com
@rmgp1977

Anthony Churchill (Projections Design) collaborates on media for theatre, events, and installations. After last season's *Scientific Method* at Rivendell, recent projections and media work include Marriott Theatre, Raven Theatre, *The Cher Show*, *Q Brothers*, Porchlight Music Theatre, Silk Road Rising, Theatre Wit, Stage Left, Museum of Broadcast Communications, Big Noise Theatre, 16th Street Theatre Berwyn, and BoHo Theatre—where he is a proud company member. Tony has been nominated for 3 Jeff Awards for Projections, winning one in 2017 for *Body of An American*. When not working on plays, he enjoys sculpting tiny astronauts in peril, and playing projections with his band, Grape Juice Plus. www.artlabchicago.com

Heather Gilbert (Lighting Design) is a Chicago based designer. Her designs have been seen on many Chicago stages including The Hypocrites, The Goodman, Court Theatre, Writers' Theatre, Northlight Theatre, and countless storefronts all over the city. Her regional credits include Oregon Shakespeare Festival, American Repertory Theater, Studio Theatre, Magic Theatre, Kansas City Rep, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Huntington Theatre, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Alley Theatre, Berkeley Rep, Pasadena Playhouse, and Actors Theatre of Louisville. Off Broadway includes Barrow Street Theatre. International credits include the Almeida in London and the Singapore Repertory Theatre. Heather was a recipient of the NEA/TCG Career Development Grant and the 3Arts Award. Heather serves as the Head of Lighting Design at Columbia

College Chicago, and received her MFA at the Theatre School at DePaul.

Jeffrey Levin (Original Music and Sound Design) is a composer, sound designer, and musician based in Chicago. Jeffrey is happy to be working with Rivendell for the first time. Jeffrey has contributed original music and sound designs for over 100 productions for many theaters in and outside of Chicago. Awards and recognitions include 8 Joseph Jefferson Award Nominations for Sound Design and Original Music and one win, the Edes Award for Emerging Artists, the Michael Philippi Prize (2016), the Kleinman Composition Competition Winner, a Chicago Theatre Award (The Hawk Chicago), 2 Broadway World nominations, and a Wilde Award Nomination. Education: Masters of Music from DePaul University and Bachelors of Music from Columbia College Chicago. www.jeffreylevinmusic.com

Alison Siple (Costume Design) Recent projects include *On Clover Road* (American Blues Theatre), *Fantastic Mr. Fox* (Emerald City Theatre) and *Guards at the Taj* (Milwaukee Rep). alisonsiple.com

Jonathan Berg-Einhorn (Properties Design) is a Chicago-based designer and artisan. Jonathan has previously worked with companies including The Goodman, Chicago Shakespeare, Paramount Theater, Hope Summer Repertory Theater, Underscore Theatre, Something Marvelous, and Mudlark Theatre. Favorite design credits include: *HeLa*, *Scientific Method*, *Haymarket*, *Johnny 10 Beers' Daughter*, *Bomber's Moon*, *Curious George: The Golden Meatball*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Ghosts*, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *Endgame*, and *Prometheus Bound*. He holds a BFA in Scenic and Costume Design from Boston University. Jonathanbergeinhorn.com

Catherine Allen (Production Manager) is thrilled to continue her work with Rivendell where she was previously

Production Manager for *Scientific Method*, *The Cake*, and *Cal in Camo*.

Other production management credits include work with Steep Theatre, where she is also an Artistic Associate, About Face Theatre, Griffin Theatre, Route 66, Congo Square, Oak Park Festival Theatre, Pegasus Theatre Chicago, Haven Theatre, Chimera Ensemble, and many circuses with Actors Gymnasium where she is the staff Production Manager. She is a graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she received a BFA in Acting.

Hannah Siglin (Assistant Director) is so happy to be working with Rivendell for the first time! Other Chicago credits include *Suddenly Last Summer* (Assistant Stage Manager) at Raven Theatre and *The God of Isaac* (Assistant Stage Manager) at Piven Theatre. Hannah recently graduated from Columbia College with a B.F.A. in Theatre Directing. Her directing credits at the college include *Orlando*, 24-Hour Play Festival, One-Act Play Festival, *Carmilla*, and *Springtime*.

Tara Mallen (Rivendell Artistic Director / Producer) is an actor, director, and the Producing Artistic Director at Rivendell Theatre Ensemble. She is the 2017 3Arts William Franklin Grisham Awardee and the 2014 Volunteers of America Silver Star Awardee. Most recently Mallen was seen onstage in *The Cake* for which she won the 2018 Jeff award for Performer in a Principal Role. In 2016 she performed in the world premiere production of Lynn Nottage's *Sweat* at Arena Stage. Prior to that she was in Rivendell's Jeff nominated world premiere productions of *Look, we are breathing* and *Rasheeda Speaking*. Tara appeared in Steppenwolf's *How Long Will I Cry: Stories of Youth Violence* written by Chicago Journalist Miles Harvey. She was part of the ensemble in Rivendell's world premiere, Jeff nominated production of *The Walls* and played Jolene Palmer

(inspired by the true-life story of Aileen Wuornos) in Rivendell's award winning production of *Self Defense, or the Death of Some Salesmen*—both productions part of Steppenwolf's Visiting Theater Initiative. For Rivendell, Tara has produced and acted in over twenty-five productions. She received a Joseph Jefferson Award for Supporting Actress for her portrayal of Gwenyth in *WRENS* as part of that production's Jeff-winning ensemble. She was nominated the following year for Actress in a Principal Role for her work in *My Simple City*. Her screen credits include Steven Soderbergh's film *Contagion* opposite Kate Winslet, the Starz series *Boss* starring Kelsey Grammer, the NBC pilot of *Chicago Fire*, the CBS/Sony Pictures pilot *Doubt*, the NBC series *Chicago P.D.* and the Netflix series *Sense8* directed by Lana and Andy Wachowski. With Rivendell, Tara conceived and directed the world premiere of *WOMEN AT WAR*, directed the Jeff nominated Midwest premieres of *The Electric Baby*, *26 Miles* (co-production with Teatro Vista); *Fighting Words*; *Psalms of a Questionable Nature*; the co-production of *Elliot, a Soldier's Fugue* with Stageworks/Hudson in Hudson, NY; and the brief and brilliant *Shady Meadows* by Lisa Dillman as part of the 2007 Chicago Humanities Festival.

Jackie Banks-Mahlum (Rivendell Managing Director / Producer) is an arts manager, producer, and educator based in Chicago. She was thrilled to join the Rivendell Theatre Ensemble as the Managing Director in March 2014. Jackie is also the Membership and Development Associate at Arts Alliance Illinois, and the Co-Producer for Theatricum Botanicum. Previously Jackie was in the Los Angeles area where she worked with Center Theatre Group's P.L.A.Y., the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Theatricum Botanicum. She has also freelanced regionally where she has had the opportunity to work in a variety of performing arts including

PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHIES CONT.

opera, ballet, modern dance, improv, and theatre. She is a member of Actors' Equity Association, has a Bachelor of Science in Theatre Production and Business

Management from Bradley University, and a Masters of Fine Arts in Producing from the California Institute of the Arts.

RIVENDELL THEATRE ENSEMBLE. IT'S WOMEN'S WORK.

Rivendell Theatre Ensemble is an award winning, critically acclaimed professional theatre company committed to recognizing and cultivating the talents of women in theatre— from playwrights and actors to designers and managers. Rivendell's productions explore the unique female perspectives of everyday stories in an intimate, salon environment. For more than twenty years, Rivendell has grown to fill an important role in the Chicago theatre community as the only Equity theatre in Chicago committed to advancing the lives of women through theatre. Rivendell is a leader in new play development and a major port for new writers, and also offers a brick and mortar artistic home for women theater artists.

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