

GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

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CAST ANNOUNCED FOR GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE WEST COAST PREMIERE OF "TRAYF"

WRITTEN BY LINDSAY JOELLE AND DIRECTED BY MAGGIE BURROWS

FEATURING ILAN ESKENAZI, BEN HIRSCHHORN,
LOUISA JACOBSON AND GARRETT YOUNG

PREVIEWS BEGIN MARCH 1 - OPENING NIGHT IS MARCH 10

LOS ANGELES (January 26, 2022) – Geffen Playhouse today announced the full cast for its West Coast premiere of *TRAYF*, written by **Lindsay Joelle** (*The Messengers*, *The Garbologists*) and directed by **Maggie Burrows** (*Spacebar*, *Damsels*).

The cast includes **Ilan Eskenazi** (*Sing Street*, *Iron Fist*) as Zalmy, **Ben Hirschhorn** (*Closets Keep Suburban Boys Home*, *Practice Funeral*) as Shmuel, **Louisa Jacobson** (*The Gilded Age*, *Romeo and Juliet*) as Leah and **Garrett Young** (*Chicago Fire*, *Thicker Than Water*) as Jonathan.

Previews for *TRAYF* begin Tuesday, March 1 in the Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater at Geffen Playhouse. Opening night is Thursday, March 10.

Zalmy lives a double life. By day, he drives a Chabad "Mitzvah Tank" through 1990s New York City, performing good deeds with his best friend Shmuel. By night, he sneaks out of his orthodox community to roller-skate and listen to rock and roll. But when a curious outsider offers him unfettered access to the secular world, is it worth jeopardizing everything he's ever known? This road-trip bromance is a funny and heartwarming ode to the turbulence of youth, the universal suspicion that we don't quite fit in, and the faith and friends that see us through.

TRAYF

Written by **Lindsay Joelle**

Directed by **Maggie Burrows**

Previews: Tuesday, March 1 – Wednesday, March 9, 2022

Opening Night: Thursday, March 10, 2022

Closing Night: Sunday, April 10, 2022

CAST

Ilan Eskenazi as Zalmy
Ben Hirschhorn as Shmuel
Louisa Jacobson as Leah
Garrett Young as Jonathan

PRODUCTION TEAM

Scenic Designer **Tim Mackabee**
Costume Designer **Denitsa Bliznakova**
Lighting Designer **Lap Chi Chu**
Sound Designer **Everett Elton Bradman**
Choreographer **KC Monnie**
Production Stage Manager **Leia S. Crawford**
Casting Director **Phyllis Schuringa, CSA**

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Monday	No performance
Tuesday – Friday	8:00 p.m.
Saturday	3:00 and 8:00 p.m.
Sunday	2:00 and 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION

Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater at Geffen Playhouse
10886 Le Conte Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets currently priced at \$30.00 - \$149.00. Available by phone at 310.208.2028 or online at www.geffenplayhouse.org. Fees may apply.

Currently, children under six years of age will not be admitted. Proof of vaccination and masks are required – additional policy details can be found at <https://www.geffenplayhouse.org/plan/reopening/>.

Rush tickets for each day's performance are made available to the general public two hours before showtime at the box office. \$35.00 General/\$15.00 Student.

COLLEGE AUDIENCES

Through a variety of events and other opportunities, Geffen Playhouse welcomes college students to experience the live storytelling presented on our stages. We are proud of our association with UCLA's School of Theater, Film, and Television, and open our doors to all college students throughout Los Angeles. More information is available at www.geffenplayhouse.org/college.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Lindsay Joelle (Playwright)

Lindsay Joelle is a Chicago-born, NYC-based playwright, librettist, and screenwriter whose writing explores the rituals, routines, jargon, and humor of micro-communities across America. Her critically acclaimed play *The Garbologists*, an EST/Sloan Foundation Science & Technology commission, recently received a co-world premiere at Philadelphia Theatre Company and is slated at City Theatre in spring 2022. Other plays include: *TRAYF* (Theater J, New Repertory Theatre, Penguin Rep), a Goldberg M.F.A. Playwriting Prize recipient; *A Small History of Amal, Age 7* (Forward Flux & Pratidhwani); and *The*

Messengers, an Audible Theatre Emerging Playwright Commission recorded by Audible. Joelle was the National New Play Network's Playwright-in-Residence at Curious Theatre and is a proud NNPN, New Georges, and American Theatre Wing affiliated artist. Alumna of the BMI Musical Theatre Workshop, Nashville Repertory Theatre's Ingram New Works Lab, Hunter Playwriting Program (M.F.A.), and Columbia University (B.A.). Other writing includes restaurant coverage/food blogs for *New York Magazine's* Grubstreet and the prep book *Tutor Tells All: ACT Test Strategy*. lindsayjoelle.com

Maggie Burrows (Director)

Maggie Burrows is a theater and film director living in New York City. She has worked with Atlantic Theater Company, Playwrights Horizons, New York Theatre Workshop, WP Theater, Roundabout Theatre Company, Manhattan Theatre Club, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and the Geffen. She received her B.A. from Yale University, where she was a nominee for the Sudler Prize for Excellence in the Arts. She is a member of the Lincoln Center Directors Lab, the inaugural 2018-2019 BOLD Resident Director at Northern Stage, and the recipient of the 2018 Boris Sagal Directing Fellowship at Williamstown Theatre Festival. In 2020, in collaboration with the Roald Dahl Story Company, Maggie co-conceived and produced *James and the Giant Peach with Taika and Friends* to benefit Partners in Health. Select theater credits: *On Your Feet!* (The Muny), *Indecent* (Juilliard), *Man of God* (Geffen Playhouse), *Damsels* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), *The Sound of Music* (Northern Stage), *Spacebar* (Wild Project). Film work includes her short *Condolences* and a GOTV video for Michelle Obama's When We All Vote organization. Select associate work: *My Fair Lady* for Bartlett Sher (Lincoln Center Theater), *The Taming of the Shrew* for Phyllida Lloyd (The Public Theatre), and *Constellations* for Michael Longhurst (MTC). Upcoming: *Legally Blonde* (The Muny), Zoe Sarnak and Alexis Scheer's *Shook*, and Mark Sonnenblick's new musical *Devotion*.

Ilan Eskenazi (Zalmy)

Ilan Eskenazi is thrilled to be making his Geffen Playhouse debut. New York City born and raised, he is a graduate of Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School for Performing Arts and a recent graduate of Pace University with a B.F.A. in Acting. Most recently on stage in New York Theater Workshop's production of *Sing Street*, which was planned to debut on Broadway at the Lyceum Theater prior to the COVID-19 shutdown. He can also be seen in Marvel's *Iron Fist* (Netflix). Ilan would like to send much love and thanks to his family, Miranda, and Craig, Ellen, and Rachel.

Ben Hirschhorn (Shmuel)

Ben Hirschhorn is an actor, writer, and director best known for his work in the films *Closets Keep Suburban Boys Home* (2020) and *Practice Funeral* (2019) for which he received the Best Actor award at the Los Angeles Short Film and Script Festival. A native New Yorker, Ben studied acting at Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School for Performing Arts and ventured out to the West Coast to attend USC's B.F.A. Acting program. He made his directorial debut with his new short film *Goggles* (2022), which is currently making its way through the festival circuit. Additionally, he was notably seen in the 2018 New York Stage and Film production of *As You Like It* as "Rosalind/Ganymede." You'll find Ben next playing the loveable "Malcolm" in the new Tupac inspired film *Amaru* (2022), which will have its world premiere at the Pan African Film Festival. Love to Mum, Dad, Jess, and Josh.

Louisa Jacobson (Leah)

Louisa Jacobson is a recent graduate of the Yale School of Drama where she received her M.F.A. in acting. She has appeared regionally as Juliet in *Romeo & Juliet* (The Old Globe), as Mary Dalton in a stage adaptation of Richard Wright's *Native Son* by Nambi E. Kelley (Yale Repertory Theatre), and as Janice in

Carson McCullers' *The Member of the Wedding* (Williamstown Theater Festival). Currently, Louisa can be seen playing the role of Marian Brook in HBO's *The Gilded Age*, an original series from *Downton Abbey* creator Julian Fellowes. In addition to her training at Yale, Louisa attended the British American Drama Academy and holds a B.A. in psychology from Vassar College.

Garrett Young (Jonathan)

Garrett Young is elated to be making his Geffen debut! He has previously worked with St. Louis Shakespeare Festival, the Goodman Theatre, TheatreSquared, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, and he almost made his Oregon Shakespeare Festival debut in their 2020 production of *Everything That Never Happened* which, in fact, never happened. He is a founding member of the Santa Fe-based experience company The Exodus Ensemble. TV credits include: *Chicago Fire*, *New Amsterdam*, *Chicago Med*, and *Chicago Justice*. He studied at The Theatre School at DePaul University and the British American Drama Academy.

25TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON SPONSOR

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ABOUT GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

Geffen Playhouse has been a hub of the Los Angeles theater scene since opening its doors in 1995. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its world-renowned mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and second productions, the not-for-profit organization continues to present a body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who made the initial donation to the theater, the company was founded by Gilbert Cates and is currently helmed by Executive Director Gil Cates, Jr., Artistic Director Matt Shakman and Board Chair Adi Greenberg. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains extensive education and community engagement programs, designed to involve underserved young people and the community at large in the arts.

www.geffenplayhouse.org

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