



# Flat Earth Theatre

>THE NETHER  
BY JENNIFER HALEY

## ***Press Kit***

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A digital version of this press kit is available for download at:  
[flatearththeatre.com/shows/season-12/the-nether/press-kit.pdf](http://flatearththeatre.com/shows/season-12/the-nether/press-kit.pdf)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – MAY 21, 2018**

**Flat Earth Theatre Presents Mind-blowing Virtual Reality Crime Drama**

# ***The Nether***

**By Jennifer Haley**

## **WHAT**

Flat Earth Theatre presents **THE NETHER** by Jennifer Haley

## **WHEN**

**THREE WEEKS ONLY:** Friday, June 8th @ 8pm; Saturday, June 9th @ 8pm; Sunday, June 10th @ 2pm; Monday, June 11th @ 7:30pm; Friday, June 15th @ 8pm; Saturday, June 16th @ 8pm; Sunday, June 17th @ 2pm; Thursday, June 21st @ 8pm; Friday, June 22nd @ 8pm; and Saturday, June 23rd @ 8pm

## **WHERE**

The Mosesian Center for the Arts  
(formerly The Arsenal Center for the Arts)  
321 Arsenal Street, Watertown, MA, 02472

## **TICKETS**

<http://www.mosesianarts.org/index.php/shows/visiting-productions/TheNether>

Box Office Phone: 617-923-8487, Adults – \$25\* | Students – \$12.50†

## **PRESS NIGHT**

Monday, June 11th @ 7:30pm

## **FOR PRESS TICKETS**

Lindsay Eagle  
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**WATERTOWN, MA (May 28, 2018)** – Flat Earth Theatre concludes its 12th season of “Dissent” with science fiction powerhouse Jennifer Haley’s **THE NETHER**, an electrifying examination of morality and reality in a technophilic society. **THE NETHER** will run June 8–23, 2018 at the Mosesian Center for the Arts, 321 Arsenal Street in Watertown, MA. Tickets may be purchased for \$25, or \$12.50 for students at <https://www.flatearththeatre.com/shows/season-12/the-nether/>.

The Nether is an immersive online wonderland where anything is possible. The mysterious “Papa” holds court in his virtual garden, a sensory utopia where patrons may indulge their darkest fantasies under digital anonymity and without real-world consequences. But when Detective Morris investigates Papa’s dealings, she uncovers a series of darkly unsettling acts which throw morality, the law, and human nature itself into question. Hailed by The Independent as “a gripping and deeply disconcerting look at the Internet and its role in one of the most disturbing issues of our time,” Jennifer Haley’s science fiction crime drama **THE NETHER** tackles the impact of technology on human relationships, identity, and desire.

“An issue being argued with some frequency is whether technology is serving to elevate or destroy humanity,” says IRNE Award–winning director Sarah Gazdowicz. “I think what **THE NETHER** asks us to consider is that technology, in all its aspects whether positive or negative, is still driven by primal human needs and desires: the

\* Includes MCA Facilities Fee

† Student ID Required



desire to make sense of the world, the desire to connect with something larger than ourselves and the desire to be loved and understood. Technology has and will continue to open incredible doors for us, but the questions we contend with at each new threshold are the same ones we have always asked.”

**THE NETHER** concludes Flat Earth’s 2017–18 season of “Dissent.” Featuring *A Bright Room Called Day* by Pulitzer Prize–winning playwright Tony Kushner (*Angels in America*); *Antigone*, Jean Anouilh’s adaptation of the mythic tale of one woman’s persistent defiance of a tyrant’s decree; and **THE NETHER**, emerging powerhouse Jennifer Haley’s electrifying examination of morality and reality in a technophilic society, Flat Earth’s 12th season posed the question, where does moral responsibility end and where does it begin?

## STAFF & CAST

Helmed by director and longtime Flat Earth collaborator Sarah Gazdowicz (assisted by Cassie Chapados), **THE NETHER**’s design team includes Rebecca Lehrhoff (Set Design), Coriana Hunt Swartz (Costume Design; assisted by Erica Desautels), Connor Van Ness (Lighting Design), Jake Scaltreto (Props Design), and Kyle Lampe (Sound Design). The Producer is Lindsay Eagle, the Stage Manager is Amy Lehrmitt, the Technical Director is Cassie Chapados, the Dramaturg is Annalise Cain. The cast features Bob Mussett as Papa/Sims, Regine Vital as Detective Morris, Julia Talbot as Iris, Jeff Gill as Cedric Doyle, and Arthur Gomez as Thomas Woodnut

## ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Jennifer Haley is a playwright whose work delves into ethics in virtual reality and the impact of technology on our human relationships, identity, and desire. She won the 2012 Susan Smith Blackburn Prize for her play, *The Nether*, which premiered with Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles and has been produced off-Broadway, on London’s West End, across the US and internationally. Other plays include *Neighborhood 3: Requisition of Doom*, a horror story about suburban video game addiction, and *Froggy*, a noir thriller with interactive media. Jennifer has worked with the Royal Court Theatre, Headlong, MCC, Sonia Friedman Productions, Woolly Mammoth, the Humana Festival of New Plays, The Banff Centre, Sundance Theatre Lab, O’Neill National Playwrights Conference, Lark Play Development Center, PlayPenn, and Page 73. For television, she has written on Netflix’s *Hemlock Grove* and *Mindhunter*. Jen is a member of New Dramatists in New York City and lives in Los Angeles, where she founded the Playwrights Union.

## ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Since graduating from Boston University in 2009, Sarah Gazdowicz has worked in Boston as a director, performer, and educator. As a performer, Sarah has worked many times with imaginary beasts, including their annual Winter Pantomimes, *Knock* (IRNE Best Ensemble) and *Betty Bam!*. Recently she has collaborated with Liars and Believers, appeared in *The 39 Steps* (Moonbox Productions – IRNE Best Ensemble) for which she was nominated for a 2018 IRNE for Best Actress. She also performed and directed in the collaborative effort *A Palpable Hit* (Gunpowder Plot), and is a proud ensemble member of the long-running, high-brow entertainment *Sh\*t-Faced Shakespeare*. Recent directing credits include *Penny Penniworth: A Story of Great Good Fortune* (Titanic Theatre Company), *Laura* (The Greater Boston Stage Company), *Polish Joke* (Titanic Theatre Company), *A Winter’s Tale* (Maiden Phoenix Theatre Company) and *The Farnsworth Invention* (Flat Earth Theatre – IRNE Best Director, Best Production). As an educator, Sarah has worked many times with The Greater Boston Stage Company’s Young Company, where she has directed *Argonautika*, *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, *Macbeth*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. Sarah’s upcoming work includes returning to The Greater Boston Stage Company for The Young Company’s 2018 Summer Festival and *Peter and the Starcatchers* with Hub Theatre this fall. Sarah recently received the 5th Annual Bob Jolly Award, presented in conjunction with the IRNE Awards.



# About the Cast

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## **BOB MUSSETT – *Sims/Papa***

Bob Mussett is excited to make his Flat Earth debut with *The Nether*. He is an ensemble member with the ongoing and hilarious *Sh\*t-Faced Shakespeare*. Other recent highlights include *The 39 Steps* (Moonbox Productions, IRNE - Best Supporting Actor), *The Real Thing* (Bad Habit Productions, IRNE nomination - Best Actor), *Luna Gale* (Greater Boston Stage Company), *Boys in the Band* (Zeitgeist Stage, IRNE nomination - Best Supporting Actor), *Light Up the Sky* (Lyric Stage), and the past four yearly Winter Pantos (imaginary beasts). All his love to Sarah.

## **REGINE VITAL – *Morris***

Regine Vital is thrilled to join this incredible crew at Flat Earth for *The Nether*! She is an actor/teacher/writer/storyteller from Somerville, MA with a deep, abiding, uber nerd-level passion for Shakespeare, whose work she will finally tackle (as an actor!) this summer in Praxis Stage's *Henry IV, Pts. I & 2*. Recent roles include: Antigone, Jean Anouilh's *Antigone* (Flat Earth Theatre); Hope/Hope Williams, *An Education in Prudence* (Open Theatre Project); Clara Stahlbaum, *Club Drosselmeyer* at Oberon/ART (Green Door Labs); Shawna Duchamps, *Coyote on a Fence* (HUB Theatre Company). All my thanks to wonderful friends and family! To the FET crew/ *Nether* cast & crew: You're all beautiful "pure spirits"!

## **JULIA TALBOT – *Iris***

Julia Talbot is a graduating Senior at Medford High School. This is her debut with Flat Earth Theatre. Among others, she has worked with the Greater Boston Stage Company (*The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*), Boston Children's Theatre (*Reflections of a Rock Lobster*), and Wheelock Family Theatre (*Pippi Longstocking*, *Alice* – IRNE nomination). She plans on studying Educational Theatre and English at NYU this fall.

## **ARTHUR GOMEZ – *Woodnut***

Arthur is pleased to be returning to Flat Earth for his third production. His other Flat Earth credits being *Blinders* and *Tales of a Fourth Grade Lesbo*. He's ecstatic to work on such an intriguing and thought provoking piece with Sarah and his fellow cast members. He'd like to thank everyone who continues to support live theater!

## **JEFF GILL – *Doyle***

Jeff Gill thanks the Flat Earth gang for inviting him to be this part of this wonderful, disturbing play. Jeff is a 4-time IRNE nominee. He won in 2012 for his one-man show "The Auerbach Dynasty," performed here at the Mosesian. Jeff has worked with Theater on Fire, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, and many other Boston-based companies. He founded The Theater at Hollywood and Vine in 2004. Based in Plymouth, MA, the group has performed over 250 one-act plays in its pub theater venue. All my love to Pamela.

# About the Staff

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## **SARAH GAZDOWICZ – *Director***

Sarah is delighted to be rejoining her friends and collaborators at Flat Earth to take on this extraordinary and challenging piece! Sarah's previous Flat Earth projects include *The Pillowman*, *Enigma Variations* and the IRNE Award-winning *The Farnsworth Invention*. Recent directing credits include *Penny Penniworth: A Story of Great Good Fortune* (Titanic Theatre Company), *Laura* (The Greater Boston Stage Company), *Polish Joke* (Titanic Theatre Company) and *A Winter's Tale* (Maiden Phoenix Theatre Company). As a performer, Sarah has recently worked with Liars and Believers, appeared in *The 39 Steps* (Moonbox Productions), both performed and directed in the collaborative effort *A Palpable Hit* (Gunpowder Plot) and is a proud ensemble member of the long-running, high-brow entertainment, *Sh\*t-Faced Shakespeare*. Sarah's upcoming work includes returning to The Greater Boston Stage Company for The Young Company's 2018 Summer Festival and *Peter and the Starcatchers* with Hub Theatre this fall.

## **ANNALISE CAIN – *Dramaturg***

Annalise Cain is a dramaturg, actor and playwright hailing from Western Massachusetts. In 2016, she co-founded the Clementine Collective, a nomadic theater collective dedicated to producing new and neglected works and to connecting young theater artists. Annalise is the recipient of the National Partners of the American Theater Playwriting Award. Her work has been developed by Playhouse on Park and the Tribe Theater Company. In August, her play, *If You Give A Kid A Sucker*, will receive its NYC premiere with Clementine.

## **AMY LEHRMITT – *Stage Manager***

Ames has been a member of Flat Earth since 2009, stage managed many Flat Earth productions, produced *The Pillowman*, *Rocket Man*, *Tales of a Fourth Grade Lesbo*, *Fat Pig*, and *Antigone*, and penned the radio adaptations *Lovecraft's Unnamable Tales* and *Lovecraft's Tales Outside Time & Space*. Her adaptation of "The Masque of the Red Death" was performed with the Post-Meridian Radio Players in *Tomes of Terror: Nevermore*. Her next project will be producing Flat Earth's *Delicate Particle Logic* this fall. Ames resides in Medford with her boyfriend / company founder Jake and two cats named Jim.



### **CONNOR S. VAN NESS – Lighting Designer**

Connor is a freelance lighting designer/director and production electrician for theatre, live entertainment and television. He has been collaborating with Flat Earth since 2007, having worked as a board op, lighting designer (*Enigma Variations*) and technical director (*Blinders*). His most recent theatrical designs have been *The Lyons* and *Penny Pennyworth* (Titanic Theatre co.), *Brendan* (Happy Medium Theatre) and *A Southern Victory* (Vagabond Theatre Group). His work can be seen most frequently at the Wilbur Theatre, where he works as a lighting director and house electrician.

### **REBECCA LEHRHOFF – Scenic Designer**

Rebecca is a Somerville-based visual, performing, and teaching artist. She is an artistic associate of Liars & Believers, a resident company at the Boston Center For The Arts. Rebecca holds a MFA in Contemporary Performance from Naropa University and a BA in theater from Skidmore College. Scenic credits include: *Winter Panto 2018: 20,000 Leagues Under The Sea* (Imaginary Beasts), *Yellow Bird Chase*, *Who Would Be King* at Ars Nova's Theater 511, *A Story Beyond* (Liars & Believers), *Penny Penniworth: A Tale Of Great Good Fortune*, *Polish Joke* (Titanic Theater Company), *How Soft The Lining* (Bad Habit Productions), *The Farnsworth Invention* (Flat Earth Theatre), *Still, Now* (Heart & Dagger Productions), *From The Sea To Somewhere Else* (Flotsam Productions), *Chalk* (Fresh Ink Theater).

### **KYLE LAMPE – Sound Designer**

Kyle has been designing sounds and music for Flat Earth for almost 5 years now! After graduating from UMass Amherst with a degree in theatre, he decided to pursue a more audio focused career with a certificate in Audio Production from Boston University. His most recent works with Flat Earth have been composition and sound design for *Silent Sky* and *Fat Pig*. He also works with Hub Theatre and recently designed *Waiting for Waiting for Godot* last year, and will be designing *The Taming* with Hub next month. He is based in Boston/South Shore and is starting a project writing just for fun!

### **CORIANA HUNT SWARTZ – Costume Designer**

Coriana Hunt Swartz has belonged body and soul to Flat Earth Theatre since early 2008, with brief sabbaticals to design for The Commonwealth Opera of Western Mass, Lobsterback Entertainment, and Happy Medium Theatre, and also to act with the Happy Medium Theatre (*Family DeValues*) and the Independent Drama Society (*Eurydice*). Within Flat Earth, Coriana has appeared as Thomas in *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains it All for You* and as Juror #2 of the *Twelve Angry Jurors*. Her costume design credits include *Blood Relations*, *Pirate Lives! The Musical!*, *Enigma Variations*, and *Terra Nova*, among others. Coriana is utterly fascinated by the bounded tensions inherent in the construction of wings.

### **ERICA DESAUTELS – Assistant Costume Designer**

Erica is a Boston-based costume technician and designer who is thrilled to return to Flat Earth! Her technical work has been seen at Boston Ballet, Boston Lyric Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Disney Cruise Lines and many other large and small stages. Her designs have been recently seen in *The 39 Steps* (Moonbox Prod.), *Penny Penniworth* (Titanic Theater Co.), *Sense and Sensibility* (Maiden Phoenix), *Laura* (Stoneham Theater), *Dog Act* (Theatre On Fire), *Citizens of the Empire* (Boston Public Works), *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Carrie: The Musical* (Stoneham young company), *Polish Joke* (Titanic), *The Farnsworth Invention* (Flat Earth), and *Chalk* (Fresh Ink Theatre), among others. Catch her next show in July, *The Taming*, produced by Hub Theater.

### **JAKE SCALTRETO – Props Designer**

Jake is a director and designer based in Boston, and is a cofounder of Flat Earth. He has designed props for numerous productions and revels in *bringing bizarre things to life*. Among his favorite builds are fake sausages, a ship's helm, laser guns, a boombox light organ, and the various oddities you'll see tonight!

### **CASSIE CHAPADOS – Technical Director & Assistant Director**

Cassie is a recent graduate of Boston College with a degree in Theatre. At Boston College she worked as a technical director, carpenter, actor, director, and designer. She is also currently the technical director and production manager at Central Square Theater. She is glad to be back with Flat Earth for her second show and in her first professional directing role. Recent directing credits include *Despite Everything* (Boston Theater Marathon), *Where We're Born* (Central Square Theater), and the upcoming production of *On the Verge* (Boston College).

### **LINDSAY EAGLE – Producer**

Lindsay Eagle is a critically acclaimed actor, director, and producer; a Company Member of Flat Earth Theatre; and Flat Earth's Marketing & Publicity Manager. Focusing on social justice theatre, feminism, and body image activism, Lindsay earned critical acclaim, including an Elliot Norton Award and IRNE Award for Best Actress – Small Theatre, for her portrayal of Helen in *Fat Pig* (Flat Earth Theatre). Her directorial credits include *Antigone* by Jean Anouilh (Flat Earth), as well as several productions with all-female casts, including *The Good Body* by Eve Ensler (Hub Theatre Company of Boston) and the first all-female professional production of *Radium Girls* by D.W. Gregory (Flat Earth). Lindsay has also produced many shows for Flat Earth, including the IRNE Award-winning *The Farnsworth Invention*, and is very proud to support the extraordinary artists and technicians working on *The Nether*.

[www.lindsayeagle.com](http://www.lindsayeagle.com)



# About the Playwright

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Jennifer Haley is a playwright whose work delves into ethics in virtual reality and the impact of technology on our human relationships, identity, and desire. She won the 2012 Susan Smith Blackburn Prize for her play, *The Nether*, which premiered with Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles and has been produced off-Broadway, on London's West End, across the US and internationally. Other plays include *Neighborhood 3: Requisition of Doom*, a horror story about suburban video game addiction, and *Froggy*, a noir thriller with interactive

media. Jennifer has worked with the Royal Court Theatre, Headlong, MCC, Sonia Friedman Productions, Woolly Mammoth, the Humana Festival of New Plays, The Banff Centre, Sundance Theatre Lab, O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, Lark Play Development Center, PlayPenn, and Page 73. For television, she has written on Netflix's *Hemlock Grove* and *Mindhunter*. Jen is a member of New Dramatists in New York City and lives in Los Angeles, where she founded the Playwrights Union.

## About Flat Earth Theatre

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### Mission Statement

**F**lat Earth Theatre crafts experiences that challenge the worldview of both artist and audience. Through evocative, intimate staging and visceral, intelligent performances, we inspire the community to question their preconceived notions and expand their perspective. We stage productions of neglected and underperformed scripts, as well as new and in-development pieces, and conceive unique takes on more conventional works. Flat Earth Theatre thrives in its egalitarian approach, engaging the diverse ideas and skills of its company members and collaborators to create thought-provoking theatre that informs and entertains.

### History

Flat Earth Theatre was established in the summer of 2006 by Kevin Mullins and Jake Scaltreto, long-time friends from Watertown seeking a creative outlet. Now wrapping its twelfth season, Flat Earth has grown to fourteen members and established itself as a distinctive voice in Boston theatre. Over the years, the goal organically emerged to focus on challenging audiences to question their preconceived notions about the world. The company focuses on intellectual themes – often scientific, literary, or historical – as well as topical issues that explore elements of society that inspire thought and discussion.

Flat Earth has no Artistic Director. Rather, all decisions from season selection down are made by company consensus. Each member contributes their own talent and perspective to shape the identity of the company. Flat Earth functions as an egalitarian community of artists, a consortium of creative minds brought together in the pursuit of great theatre.

Featured productions include our award-winning staging of *The Pillowman* (2012), the IRNE Awards–sweeping

*The Farnsworth Invention* (2015), and last season's *Silent Sky*, recipient of the 2017 Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding Fringe Production.

### Our Theatre C.R.E.D.

**Collaborative** – As an egalitarian company, collaboration among production teams and company members is at the core of decision making. All planning starts with discussion in which every member has equal opportunity to express their opinion and be part of the conversation, and all resolutions are determined through the accord of those involved. Flat Earth Theatre's objective is that everyone has ownership of the outcome, whether that be in how a show looks, what plays are selected, or how the company is run.

**Resourceful** – Flat Earth showcases creative approaches to complex theatrical matters, onstage and off. We create productions of formidable quality, but remain budget conscious by pushing our artists to think outside the box, embrace their inventiveness, and be truly original in their work.

**Evocative** – Through our productions and other interactions, Flat Earth Theatre strives to challenge both audience member and artist to reassess what they know about the world around them. Unfamiliar themes and little-known stories awaken an interest in our audience to learn more and discuss with others, and they leave the theatre transformed by what they have just experienced.

**Daring** – Flat Earth's risk-taking style pushes us in unexpected directions, enabling us to craft theatrical works with an approach unique to our company. Our ambitious choices push us into new, exciting territory and give audiences an experience not often seen on Boston stages.



AUTUMN 2018

*Delicate  
Particle  
Logic*

*by Jennifer Blackmer*

SPRING 2019

**NOT** MEDEA

BY ALLISON GREGORY

SUMMER 2019

KING OF SHADOWS

by Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa