

Flat Earth Theatre Presents

> THE NETHER  
BY JENNIFER HALEY

June 8<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> 2018  
The Black Box at the Mosesian Center for the Arts  
Watertown, MA

# The Nether

by Jennifer Haley

## CAST

Sims/Papa	<b>Bob Mussett</b>
Morris	<b>Regine Vital</b>
Iris	<b>Julia Talbot</b>
Doyle	<b>Jeff Gill</b>
Woodnut	<b>Arthur Gomez</b>

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Producer	<b>Lindsay Eagle</b>
Director	<b>Sarah Gazdowicz</b>
Assistant Director	<b>Cassie Chapados</b>
Stage Manager	<b>Amy Lehrmitt</b>
Technical Director	<b>Cassie Chapados</b>
Set Designer	<b>Rebecca Lehrhoff</b>
Costume Designer	<b>Coriana Hunt Swartz</b>
Assistant Costume Designer	<b>Erica Desautels</b>
Props Designer	<b>Jake Scaltreto</b>
Lighting Designer	<b>Connor S. Van Ness</b>
Sound Designer	<b>Kyle Lampe</b>
Dramaturg	<b>Annalise Cain</b>
Graphic Designer	<b>Jake Scaltreto</b>
Technical Consultant	<b>Leigh Downes</b>
Board Operator	<b>Jake Mariño</b>
House Manager	<b>Kristen Heider</b>

*THE NETHER* is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

Development of *THE NETHER* was supported by the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center during a residency at the National Playwrights Conference 2011, Preston Whiteway, Executive Director, Wendy Goldberg, Artistic Director.

Developed at the Lark Play Development Center, NYC.

Center Theatre Group/Kirk Douglas Theatre, Michael Ritchie, Artistic Director, produced the World Premiere of *THE NETHER* in Los Angeles, CA in 2013.

UK premiere first co-produced by Headlong Theatre and the Royal Court Theatre on July 17, 2014 at the Royal Court and was subsequently transferred to the West End by Sonia Friedman Productions and Scott M Delman in association with Tulchin Bartner Productions, Lee Dean & Charles Diamond, 1001 Nights, JFL Theatricals/GHF Productions, Scott & Brian Zeilinger / James Lefkowitz. The West End premiere took place on February 24, 2015 at the Duke of York's Theatre, London.

New York Premiere at the MCC Theater February 24, 2015. Artistic Directors: Robert LuPone, Bernard Telsey, & William Cantler. Executive Director: Blake West.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

If after leaving the theatre today you find yourself trying to explain this play to your family or coworkers or friends, there is only one thing I can say to you: good luck. Ask anyone on our production team: we still find giving an accurate and succinct summary of *The Nether* challenging to say the least. Where do you start? During the time that I have spent with the play, I have found it to be about how we deal with humanity's most taboo and reprehensible impulses, how our perceptions of who we are can be so easily transformed, our desire to change and control the world around us, our deep need to be loved, and our eternal struggle with the idea and identity of God and the divine. Okay, sure. Putting all that aside, however, it is technology and our relationship with it that defines much of this play.

A central twenty-first century conversation is the question of what is technology's ultimate effect on humanity. For all the ways in which it improves our lives, what are the darker effects of its influence? While there are some who embrace it wholeheartedly in all its aspects, there are others who are more suspicious. This play is not about whether technology is good or bad. What it does is acknowledge the ways in which human impulse and human error allows technology to bring out our darkness, our light, and sometimes both of them at once in ways we never anticipated.

Man versus Machine is a myth. The Machine is simply a new manifestation of our eternal struggle with ourselves and so we are as we ever were: creating the wonderful and astonishing and learning to deal with the consequences of that creation as we move forward.

## 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.

## CAST BIOS

### **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. 1 & 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.

## STAFF BIOS

### **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).

### **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).

### **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 A&T* (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.

### **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

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.

## AUDIENCE SURVEY

We need your feedback! Please complete our audience survey to let us know about your experience. It only takes a couple of minutes, and your responses will help us evaluate and refine our process. Fill it out on paper, or online! Scan the QR code to take the survey, or visit [flatearththeatre.com/survey](http://flatearththeatre.com/survey)



## FLAT EARTH'S MISSION

*Flat 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.*

## ABOUT FLAT EARTH

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.

## SPECIAL THANKS

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## FLAT EARTH THEATRE FOUNDING DONORS

Flat Earth would like to especially thank those who contributed to our Founding Donors campaign. Without the generous support of our donors, *The Nether* would not have been possible. To learn more about how you can contribute to Flat Earth by making a tax-deductible donation, visit [flatearththeatre.com/contribute](http://flatearththeatre.com/contribute).

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## THANK YOU!

We would also like to thank our 2017-2018 season sponsor, The Law Firm of Bove & Langa, P.C. For information on business sponsorship opportunities, email [donor@flatearththeatre.com](mailto:donor@flatearththeatre.com).

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