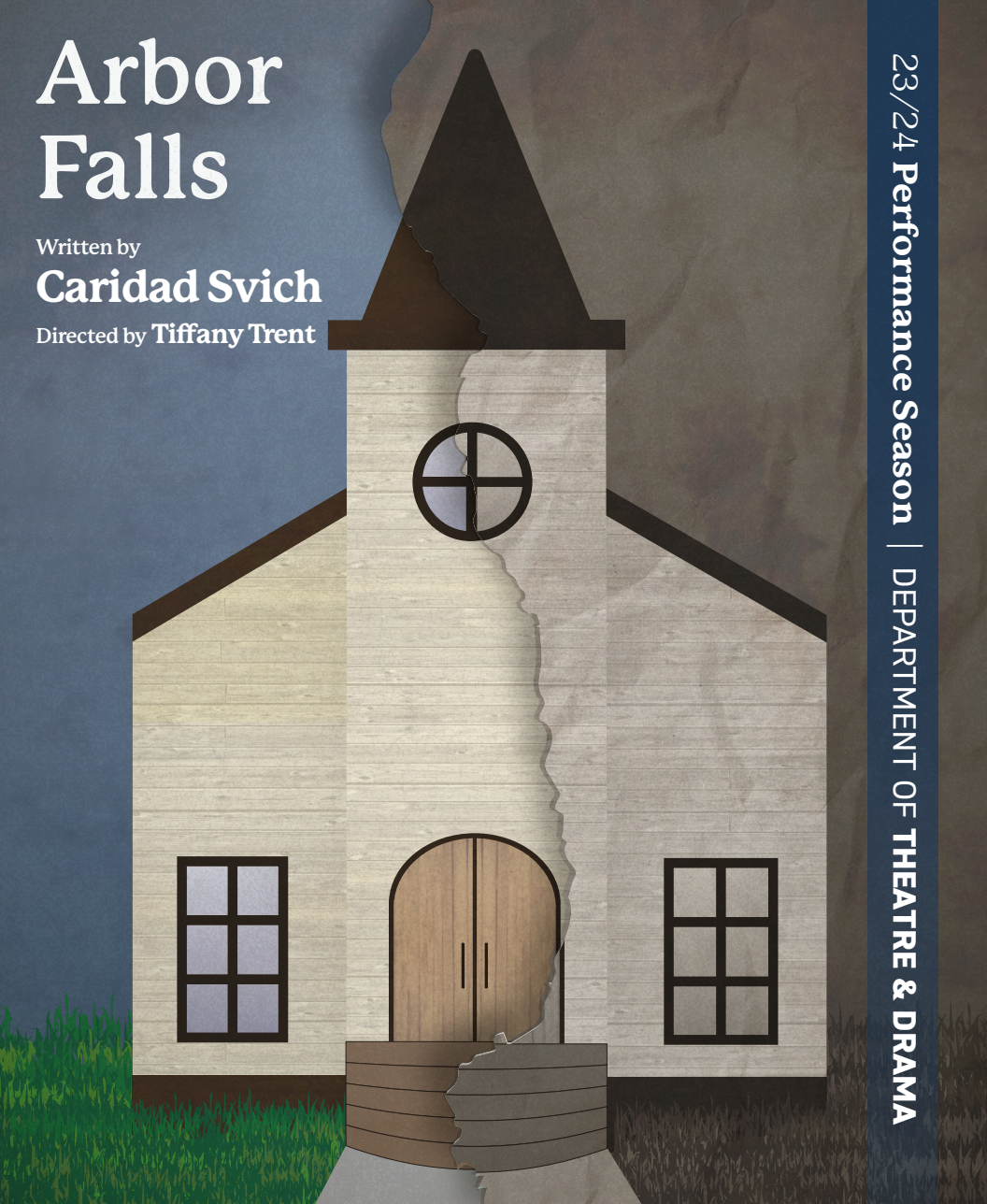


Arbor Falls

Written by

Caridad Svich

Directed by **Tiffany Trent**



23/24 Performance Season | DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE & DRAMA

February 15 - February 18

Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre

M | MUSIC, THEATRE & DANCE

U-M School of Music, Theatre & Dance
Department of Theatre & Drama presents

ARBOR FALLS

Written by **Caridad Svich**

Arbor Falls received a Roundtable reading at the Lark Play Development Center. Also developed with Illinois State University, Nebraska Wesleyan University, and Grinnell College.

Director

Dr. Tiffany Trent

Assistant Director

Kate Ivanov[‡]

Scenic Designer

Sophia Chen[‡]

Costume Designer

Sarah M. Oliver

Lighting Designer

William Webster[‡]

Sound Designer

Henry Reynolds

Dramaturg

Shavonne Coleman

Resident Intimacy

Choreographer and Cultural
Consultant

Raja Benz

Hair and Makeup Designer

Brittany Crinson

Voice Coach

Jeremy Sortore

Music Director

Tyler Driskill

Fight Director

Emilia Vizachero

Production Stage Manager

Charlotte "Lottie" Stallings[‡]

Assistant Lighting Designer

Gabriela Ribeiro Znamensky[‡]

Assistant Dramaturgs

Brooke Galsky[‡], **Grace Walton**[‡]

Associate Sound Designers

Nicholas West[‡], **Clayton Wade**[‡]

Assistant Voice Coach

Mary-Kate Mahaney[‡]

^{*}*SMTD Guest*

[‡]*SMTD Student*

Arbor Falls is produced by special arrangement with the Playwright and Elaine Devlin Literary, Inc., 1115 Broadway, 121st floor, New York, NY 10010

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Preacher

Mackenzie Holley

Lover

Bella Detwiler

Cheyenne

Tessie Morales

Owner

Nathan Goldberg

Traveler

Zachary Gergel

Churchgoer 1

Hannah Long

Churchgoer 2

Schnadè Saintil

Ensemble

Sophia Santos Ufkes

u/s Preacher

Mary-Kate Sunshine Mahaney

u/s Lover, Cheyenne, Traveler

Sophia Santos Ufkes

Latecomers will be seated at a suitable break. As a courtesy to others, please turn off cellular phones and pagers and refrain from texting during the performance. Photography, audio recording, and videotaping of any kind are not permitted.

The performers in this production are students in the Department of Theatre & Drama. The designers for this production are students, faculty, and/or guests of SMTD. Scenery, costumes, properties, sound, and lighting were realized by the students and staff of University Productions, the producing unit of the SMTD. Thank you for supporting our educational mission.

ABOUT THE CAST

Mackenzie Holley (*Preacher*) Senior, BFA Theatre Performance:
Acting, West Bloomfield, MI

Bella Detwiler (*Lover*) Junior, BFA Theatre Performance: Acting,
Louisville, KY

Tessie Morales (*Cheyenne*) Sophomore, BFA Theatre
Performance: Acting, Holland, MI

Nathan Goldberg (*Owner*) Senior, BFA Theatre Performance:
Acting, Glenview, IL

Zachary Gergel (*Traveler*) Junior, BFA Theatre Performance:
Acting, Troy, MI

Hannah Long (*Churchgoer 1*) Junior, BFA Theatre Performance:
Acting, Boston, MA

Schnadè Saintil (*Churchgoer 2*) Sophomore, BFA Theatre
Performance: Acting, Boynton Beach, FL

Sophia Santos Ufkes (*u/s Lover, Cheyenne, Traveler*)
Sophomore, BFA Theatre Performance: Acting, Seattle, WA

Mary-Kate Sunshine Mahaney (*u/s Preacher*) Sophomore, BFA
Theatre Performance: Acting, New York, NY

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I have always loved how theatre allows us to practice walking in other people's shoes. When I read Caridad Svich, I encounter a storyteller who requires me to practice seeing other folks in my shoes. Instead of the familiar temporary immersion in someone else's story while ultimately knowing that I reside as myself and in my sphere, this playwright demands a kind of Advanced Neighborliness through imagining someone else laying claim to stories that I think belong to me.

This script from Caridad Svich's **American Psalm** play series challenges us to accept that characters' stories may be true for myriad embodiments or representations or identities of actors if we

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

will choose to face our histories, chronologies, intersections, and the ambiguities of our religious pluralism. For me, *Arbor Falls* reflects how our national narrative claims a faith foundation when it's convenient, and then denies religious embeddedness when it's inconvenient. Svich challenges us to wrestle with the difficulty of that extraction and undercurrent. Simultaneously, the play celebrates that we can choose community and care: most character names reflect their role and relationship; they are framed in terms of what they contribute to the greater good, framed by what they are able to share. In naming only Cheyenne, Svich anchors the question of what it means to share space.

The delightful and diligent student cast, faculty and student designers, and wider production team imagined and collaborated and mirrored together, collaging contemporary life with ancestral echoes such as Caridad Svich conjures in her poetry. Our playwright weaves a sense of global locality/local globalism that holds the tension of placing hospitality to the outsider alongside taking care of home. Always, she invites us to practice what is true.

~Dr. Tiffany Trent

Chair and Associate Professor, Department of Theatre & Drama

FROM THE DRAMATURGS

Arbor Falls is an exploration of "...life, love, the mess of all things human" (p. 49). A part of the American Psalm seven-play cycle, it is a poignant unfolding of what we believe to understand of a small town with an even smaller population that bears the weight of its dwindling community. Is it battling the lack of sustainability for the life they know and love, or is the true battle that of the preacher's wavering faith?

Caridad Svich was born in the United States, with her parents being of Cuban, Argentine, Spanish, and Croatian descent.

FROM THE DRAMATURGS

Svich, with her nuanced storytelling, explores the intersection of spirituality, morality, and the unraveling fabric of a close-knit community. Not unlike many of the plays she's written, this play explores the idea of wander and migration as well as belief systems and spiritual emotions. With the fluidity of practice in a spiritual place not cemented by traditional religion, we see the folks of Arbor Falls explore whether their reality or what remains behind from their ancestors flows on forever or is easily blown away by the next strong gust of wind. Caridad Svich wrote, in the article "Economic Precarity and Resilience in Theatre: an American Psalm," "As a child of immigrant, working-class parents, I am inevitably drawn perhaps to stories about the disenfranchised and disaffected in our political landscape."

As the director, cast, and production team dug through the layers buried between the lines of the text, we found that there was much more to this piece than an invitation of critical reflection toward an ambiguous religion; it also playfully, poetically, and in some moments painfully teeters around ambiguity to get you to critique, identify with, or reflect on, at any given moment, your own beliefs around political, social, and religious understandings and doings, among many other human realities. *Arbor Falls* is not too different from Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Dexter, or even Detroit. We share this world with you because in each of our worlds, there are "... no answers for how we can all seek kindness," only commit oneself to seeking and giving.

~*Shavonne Coleman, dramaturg*

ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

Jie (Sophia) Chen (*Scenic Designer*) is a fourth year undergraduate student at the Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, majoring in architecture. Also having a passion for theatrical design, she is working towards a D&P minor in set design. She is passionate and curious about curating spaces that are directed by both narrative and form. Realizing and embracing the overlaps and differences of the two design fields, she is excited to share with the audience her first design for production, *Arbor Falls*.

Brittany Crinson (*Hair and Makeup Designer*) is the hair and makeup studio manager for U-M's University Productions. Crinson has worked at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Joffrey Ballet, Drury Lane, Des Moines Metro Opera, Atlanta Opera, Hawaii Opera, and the Detroit Opera House. Living in Chicago, she's also been involved with several TV and film productions. She is thrilled to share her expertise with the University of Michigan.

Shavonne Coleman (*Dramaturg, she/they*) is a fabulist, facilitator, teaching/performing artist, writer, director, and cultivator of community from Detroit, Michigan. With a background in applied theatre, she has performed and directed in various settings, including community and educational theatre, professional theatre, and short films. Coleman served as the theatre for dialogue coordinator at the University of Texas at Austin and later received recognition for her work in transformative learning. She has directed numerous youth performances, including internationally. Coleman has contributed to *TYA Magazine* and received the Anne K. Flagg Award from AATE. Currently, she is ecstatic to be developing a new work commissioned by Seattle Children's Theatre. Her work in dramaturgy on this production, along with other creative endeavors, aims to help cultivate a more inclusive and equitable field, promoting accessibility and increasing representation of identities that are often historically

ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

and presently erased or forgotten.

Tyler Driskill (*Music Director*) is an assistant professor of music in the Department of Musical Theatre at the University of Michigan's SMTD. Having served for nearly 20 years as a collaborative pianist for the U-M Departments of Musical Theatre and Dance, Tyler has enjoyed an extensive career as a music director, conductor, arranger, vocal coach, and educator. Recent music direction credits include *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Sophisticated Ladies* (assoc. MD), and *Hair* for the University of Michigan (Linda Goodrich and Justin Keyes, directors) and *Smokey Joe's Cafe*, *Always Patsy Cline*, and *Mamma Mia* for the Encore Musical Theatre Company. Tyler performs regularly at Kerrytown Concert House as music director for the perennial favorites, *Wine, Women & Song* and *Valentine's Day Cabaret*, and has appeared there with harpist Maurice Draughn, in addition to presenting tribute concerts to Barbra Streisand and Peggy Lee with Broadway artist and fellow U-M MT faculty member, Chelsea Packard. Additional music direction credits include *Sweet Charity* (Mark Madama, dir.) for the University of Michigan, and, for the Encore Musical Theatre Company, *Fun Home* (Vincent J. Cardinal, dir.), *Brigadoon* (Wilde Award nomination for Best Music Direction), *West Side Story*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Assassins* (Wilde Award for Best Music Direction), *Into the Woods* (Wilde Award for Best Music Direction), *My Fair Lady* (Tony Walton, dir.), *Into the Wild* (developmental premiere, Mia Walker, dir.), *Sondheim on Sondheim*, and *An Evening with Jeremy Jordan*.

Sarah M Oliver (*Costume Designer*) is an assistant professor of costume design and technology in the Department of Theatre & Drama. Design credits: (U-M) *Don Giovanni*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *somebody's children*, *Hair*, *Nora: A Doll's House*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Godspell*; (regional) Music Academy, Kansas

ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

City Repertory Theatre, Kansas City Actors Theatre, Nelly Don Ltd., Unicorn Theatre, The New Theatre Restaurant, University of Kentucky Opera Theatre, UMKC Conservatory of Music, and Kansas University Opera. Costume construction credits: (International) St. Lawrence Center for the Arts, Celebrity Cruises Quixotic Fusion, G&S Society, Bermuda, Spanish Summer Dance Festival, the Hong Kong Ballet, and Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. (New York) The Juilliard School, the Irish Repertory Theatre, and New York City Opera. (Regional) Theatre Aspen, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Des Moines Metro Opera, Kansas City Actors Theatre, Unicorn Theatre, the Coterie Theatre, Gulfshore Playhouse, the Magic Theatre, Washington National Opera, Crossroads Theatre, Wylliams.

Henry Reynolds (*Sound Designer*) is an assistant professor in the Department of Theatre & Drama and the sound engineer and information systems manager for UProd. U-M: (sound designer) *Everybody, The Importance of Being Earnest, Bonnets, The Heart of Robin Hood, Moscow Moscow Moscow Moscow Moscow, Junk, Nora, Flint* (co-designer), *Love & Information* (co-designer), *Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play, Clybourne Park, Henry IV, Part I, All My Sons, Stupid Fucking Bird, Fuente Ovejuna, Dead Man Walking, Good Kids, Marisol, Hay Fever, Three Sisters, Red Noses, August: Osage County, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Trumpets and Raspberries, Trafford Tanzi, Macbeth, Jonesin', J.B., Playing for Time, The Laramie Project, The Rover, The Nutcracker, A Streetcar Named Desire*. Regional Theatre: (sound design) *Of Mice and Men*, 2008 Fort Worth Opera Festival.

Jeremy Sortore (*he/him/his, Voice/Dialect Direction*) is an assistant professor in the Department of Theatre & Drama. Regional: American Repertory Theater, Utah Shakespeare Festival, Colorado Shakespeare Festival. Member, National Alliance of Acting Teachers; associate faculty, Theatrical Intimacy Education;

ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

associate teacher of Fitzmaurice Voicework; certified teacher of Knight-Thompson Speechwork; PAVA-recognized vocologist; editorial board, *Journal of Consent-Based Performance*; associate editor, *Voice & Speech Review*. Education: Moscow Art Theatre School/American Repertory Theatre Institute at Harvard University. www.JeremySortore.com

Charlotte "Lottie" Stallings (*1st Assistant Stage Manager*) is a junior design & production stage management major at the University of Michigan. Her previous projects include (UProd) *Bernarda Alba* (1st ASM), *Sleek Disturbances* (1st ASM), and *The Ties that Bind* (2nd ASM). When she is not working on UProd productions she stage manages for student performance groups such as Groove and Yotonix. She would like to thank Nancy Uffner for her guidance, her family for their support, she and would like to dedicate her work on this show to her late mother Kathy Stallings.

Tiffany Trent (*Director*) serves as chair of the Department of Theatre & Drama, where she is an associate professor. Trent has Chicago theatre roots as a director (Chicago Dramatists, Pegasus, ETA, MPAACT, University of Chicago), teaching artist (Goodman Theatre, Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education, Humanities Council), and board president of Definition Theatre. New play development workshops include Alabama Shakespeare Festival, the New Harmony Project, and Women's Theatre Alliance of Chicago. As a scholar, Trent studies theatre for youth, applied theatre, and practical theology. Her national service includes the American Alliance for Theatre and Education and *Youth Theatre Journal*.

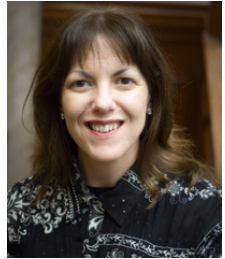
Emilia Vizachero (*Fight Director*) is an actor, writer, educator, and fight coordinator in their final semester as a BFA acting major at the University of Michigan. Recent fight direction credits include *True West*, *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* (T&D senior thesis), and *Heathers* (MUSKET).

ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

William Webster (*Lighting Designer*) is a junior pursuing a dual degree in microbiology and theatre design & production with a concentration in lighting design. Lighting design: (U-M) *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Murakami by the Sea*; (Rude Mechanicals) *Attempts on Her Life* (also scenic designer), *Animal Farm*. Assistant lighting design: (Purple Rose Theatre Company) *A Jukebox for the Algonquin*; (U-M) *The Cunning Little Vixen*; (MUSKET) *A Chorus Line*, *Little Shop of Horrors*. Lots of love to their friends and family for all their support!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Caridad Svich (*Playwright*) received a 2012 OBIE Award for Lifetime Achievement in the theatre, a 2012 Edgerton Foundation New Play Award and NNPN rolling world premiere for *Guapa*, and the 2011 American Theatre Critics Association Primus Prize for her play *The House of the Spirits*, based on Isabel Allende's novel. She has won the National Latino Playwriting Award (sponsored by Arizona Theatre Company) twice, including in the year 2013 for her play *Spark*. She has been short-listed for the PEN Award in Drama four times, including in the year 2012 for her play *Magnificent Waste*. Her works in English and Spanish have been seen at venues across the US and abroad.



She sustains a parallel career as a theatrical translator, chiefly of the dramatic work of Federico Garcia Lorca, as well as works by Calderon de la Barca, Lope de Vega, Julio Cortazar, Victor Rascon Banda, Antonio Buero Vallejo, and contemporary works from Mexico, Cuba, and Spain. She teaches creative writing and playwriting at Rutgers University – New Brunswick and Primary Stages' Einhorn School of Performing Arts. She has taught playwriting at Bard, Barnard, Bennington, Denison, Ohio State, ScriptWorks, UCSD, and Yale School of Drama. Website: <http://www.caridadsvich.com>

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The University of Michigan is located on the territory of the Anishinaabe people. In 1817, the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Bodewadami Nations made the largest single land transfer to the University of Michigan, ceded in the Treaty of Fort Meigs, so that their children could be educated. We acknowledge the history of native displacement that allowed the University of Michigan to be founded. Today we reaffirm contemporary and ancestral Anishinaabek ties to the land and their profound contributions to this institution.

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Directed by **DANIEL CANTOR**

23/24 Performance Season

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE & DRAMA

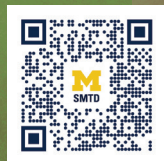
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Winter 2024 Highlights



2/15-2/18 | LYDIA MENDELSSOHN THEATRE

Arbor Falls

The Department of Theatre & Drama

2/18 | 7:00 pm | HILL AUDITORIUM

University Philharmonia Orchestra

FREE!

2/22 | 8:00 pm | RACKHAM AUDITORIUM

Jazz Ensemble FREE!

2/23-2/24 | 8:00 pm | HILL AUDITORIUM

Piano Concerto Concerts FREE!

3/20 | 8:00 pm | HILL AUDITORIUM

University Symphony Orchestra FREE!

3/21-3/24 | LYDIA MENDELSSOHN THEATRE



3/21-3/24 | LYDIA MENDELSSOHN THEATRE

Elizabeth Cree

The Department of Voice & Opera and
University Philharmonia Orchestra

3/26 | 8:00 pm | HILL AUDITORIUM

Arts Chorale FREE!



4/4-4/14 | ARTHUR MILLER THEATRE

The Cherry Orchard

The Department of Theatre & Drama

4/9 | 8:00 pm | HILL AUDITORIUM

University Choir FREE!

4/11 | 8:00 pm | STAMPS AUDITORIUM

Chamber Choir FREE!

4/14 | 7:00 pm | STAMPS AUDITORIUM

Orpheus Singers FREE!

4/18-4/21 | POWER CENTER



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The Department of Musical Theatre

5/5 | LYDIA MENDELSSOHN THEATRE



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