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presents

The

Fairest

by Cameron Darwin Bossert

October 5, 6, & 7

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Firestone Theatre

Firestone CLC § The Akron School for the Arts
presents

The Fairest

by **Cameron Darwin Bossert**

October 5, 6, & 7, 2023

Linda B. Kersker Auditorium

Harvey S. Firestone Community Learning Center

directed by

Mark A. Zimmerman

original music by

Cameron Darwin Bossert

scenic design by

Garrett Markgraf

costume design by

Tuesday Michaels*#

lighting design by

Mark A. Zimmerman

sound design by

Zack Pinto*#

hair and make-up design by

Ra'Myah Brown*#

stage manager

Wittman Sullivan*#

Produced by special arrangement with Thirdwing.

The Cast

Frances	Alaina Tennent*#
Betty Ann	Hannah Gippin#
Grace	Maggie Vollman*#
Helen	India Wray*#
Hazel Sewell	Myliyah Phok*#
Margie Belcher	Miranda Bryan#

Setting

Summer, 1937 in Los Angeles

The Walt Disney Studios on Hyperion Avenue

The Inking and Painting Department

Acknowledgements

Tina Loughry, campus principal
Ginelle Rasnick, academy principal
Bianca Heard, academy counselor
Randel Lockhart and the entire Custodial Crew

Laura McFalls, Colleen Tennant, Melissa Pinto, Michelle Bryan,
Elise Vollman, Emily Snider, Catherine Gardner
and all the fantastic volunteers of the Firestone Theatre Association
Jacquelyn Miller

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Dr. Michael Robinson, superintendent

The Crew

Stage Manager	Wittman Sullivan*#
Assisatant Stage Manager	Sebastian Garlando#
Production Manager	Elynmarie Kazle
Scene Shop Foreman	Garrett Markgraf
Resident Stage Management Mentor/Production Manager	Elynmarie Kazle
Resident Lighting Mentor	Mark A. Zimmerman
Student Chair of Stage Managers	Erika Hunt*#
Student Scene Shop Foreman	Eamonn Baeslack#
Student Charge Artist	Lulu Emanuelle#
Student Costume Chair	Tuesday Michaels*#
Student Chair of Lights	Wittman Sullivan*#
Student Chair of Sound	Zack Pinto*#
Student Hair and Make-Up Chair	Ra'Myiah Brown*#
Front of House Manager	Tamirah Coleman*
Auditions Manager	Lauren Jackson
Student Marketing Manager	Stanley Niekamp*#, Maggie Vollman*#
Student Assistants	Rylee Horowitz*# Erika Hunt*#, Tuesday Michaels*#, Clarice Regan#, Wittman Sullivan*#, Naja Williams
Set Construction and Paint	Eamonn Baeslack#, Cecilia Bailey*#, Noa Beree#, Gennie Brooks#, Anna Foltz*#, Lulu Emanuelle# Erika Hunt*#, Stephen Kraus*#, James Richards, London Wilson#
Light Board Operator	Alex Coffield#.
Light Crew	Tyrese Hill, Brooklyn Ingoll, Ameya Johnson, A'Niyah Turner, Lucas Westfall, Naja Williams
Sound Crew	Clarice Regan*# Gwyneth Baer#
Costume Crew	Rylee Horowitz*# Clarice Regan,*#
Hair and Make-Up Crew	Katie Williams*#, Chloe DeCastro, Troy Weiss#

Names marked with an asterisk (*) represent members of the International Thespian Society Troupe #5570.

Names Marked with a pound sign (#) represent members of the Akron School for the Arts housed at the Firestone Community Learning Center.

Director's Notes

Mark A. Zimmerman, theatre director

This play is like an onion. When we pull one layer off in rehearsal there is another one waiting for us. At least that is how it has been for me throughout the rehearsal process. Early last week I was still making discoveries that were already apparent to the cast.

This onion thing is a common metaphor but nowhere more than in the theatre. My friends and I talked about onions so much in grad school it eventually became a go-to joke – an explanation for anything that was not immediately understood.

There are many connections and levels of meaning in *The Fairest* that are not readily apparent, at least to me. With every rehearsal some new discovery is made connecting the themes of the play. I think I am only now at the time of this writing getting a full understanding of the play which on the surface appears to be somewhat simple.

In *The Fairest*, women struggle in the ink and paint department at the Walt Disney studio, rushing to finish “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” in time for Christmas, 1937, with little pay, little time, and no air conditioning. We borrowed this plot synopsis from somewhere and have used it freely in our promotion of the show. But *The Fairest* is about so much more. The play primarily explores two themes: the exploitation of women in the entertainment industry and the influence of the assembly line system on the artistic process.

The women featured in *The Fairest*, and many more like them, arguably had more to do with the success of “Snow White” than did the Disney’s “nine old men” who received the credit. They were seen as a cog in the machine whose job it was to crank out hand-drawn images without any creative input or agency. A role still played by many in the vast entertainment complex.

I was initially drawn to *The Fairest* by its historical relevance. It provides a peak behind the curtain of the Disney empire but over time I have come to realize the play is about so much more. It has layers. Like an onion.

Bios

Miranda Bryan (Margie Belcher) is a freshman Akron School for the Arts theatre student appearing in her first Firestone Theatre production. She sings in Firestone's Treble Choir and with the Summit Choral Society, and has studied piano for 11 years. Miranda has also participated in the Thespy Competition as an eighth grader at Miller South School.

Sebastian Garlando (Assistant Stage Manager) is freshman Akron School for the Arts theatre student working on his first Firestone Theatre production. He has a long history of theatre experiences starting at a young age. Sebastian is also part of the Law Leadership Institute.

Hannah Gippin (Betty Ann) is a freshman Akron School for the Arts choral music student appearing in her first Firestone Theatre production. She has had four years of vocal training and really loves being involved in the arts. Hannah has previously appeared in productions of Seussical, Jr., The Wizard of Oz, and The Redemption of Gertie Green.

Tuesday Michaels is a senior Akron School for the Arts theatre student working on her first design. She has helped with costuming for other productions such as *The Prom* and *Tuck Everlasting*. After high school, Tuesday plans to attend the University of Akron to major in early childhood education.

Myliyah Phok (Hazel Sewell) is a junior Akron School for the Arts visual art student appearing in her second Firestone Theatre production. She has served on costume crew many times and is also involved in Akron's art community. Myliyah recently served as an intern at the Summit Artspace and volunteers for Akron's many arts events. She also plays varsity and travel softball.

Zack Pinto (sound designer) is a senior Akron School for the Arts student working on his first show this year. He is the Chair of Sound on the C7 and is a member of our Thespian troupe. He is planning a career in theatre sound and music recording.

Clarice Regan (props coordinator) is a junior Akron School for the Arts theatre student who has been a consistent presence on our sound crew. She is a proud member of our Thespian Troupe, #5570.

Maggie Vollman (Grace) is a sophomore Akron School for the Arts theatre student appearing in her third Firestone Theatre production. She is co-chair of Social Media and Promotion on the Committee of Seven (C7). Maggie is a proud member of Thespian Troupe 5570.

Wittman Sullivan (Stage Manager) is a sophomore Akron School for the Arts theatre student working on his fifth Firestone Theatre production. He is active in various artistic and leadership activities in the Akron area. Wittman recently served as an intern at Rubber City Theatre and has performing and backstage experiences at many area theatres. He is an Akron native who advocates for biking and public transportation.

Alaina Tennant (Frances) is a senior Akron School for the Arts theatre student appearing in her fifth Firestone Theatre production. In addition to acting, she enjoys drawing, painting, writing, and studying history. She previously appeared in our productions of *Twelfth Night*, *The Prom*, and *On the Verge*. She has also played roles in *The Crucible* (Orrville Community Theatre) and *The Diary of Anne Frank* (Weathervane Playhouse).

India Wray (Helen) is a senior Akron School for the Arts theatre student appearing in her first Firestone Theatre production other than the four 24-Hour Theatre Projects in which she has participated. She previously served as chair of our media and promotion crew. India sings in Symphonic Choir, leads our Black Student Union, and is a member of the Always Climbing Program.

Cameron Darwin Bossert (playwright) is a playwright-director and founder of Thirdwing, a hybrid streaming and live theater company. Credits include the hybrid streaming and theater cycle *A Venomous Color* which included *The Fairest* (2021) and *Burbank* (2022) (“Remarkable... smart and entertaining” - *The New York Times*) as well as *The United Nations: the Border and the Coast* (2022), and *Television* (2023). His directing credits include the streaming anthology, *The Female Genius*, by Rachel Carey (2020) and feature films *The Last 48* (2011) and *Jewtah* (2018). As an actor he appeared in Bambi Everson’s *The Thin Man in the Cherry Orchard* (NYC Fringe, 2019) and Rachel Carey’s *The Disciple* (2021). His next play, *The United Nations: a Dream for the Wise*, opens October 24th at the New Ohio Theater in NYC.

Garrett Markgraf-Grimes (Scene Shop Foreman / Scenic Designer / Lighting Designer) is a technical theatre artist and educator. Born and raised in Michigan, Garrett attended Oakland University and received a BFA in musical theatre. Upon graduation, Garrett moved to NYC and made the decision to focus on technical theatre. During his time in NYC, Garrett was able to stage manage multiple shows in Off-Broadway venues (including *UnCensored* at MCC) as well as work as a freelance stage electrician at The Juilliard School and Columbia University. Prior to the pandemic, Garrett was the Technical Director at Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School, a middle and high school on the Upper

West Side of Manhattan. Since the pandemic, Garrett and his partner, Gregory, have relocated to Garfield Heights to be closer to their family. Prior to this position, Garrett was the Technical Director at Cleveland Public Theatre, as well as the Tech Lead for the STEP program in 2021 and 2022.

Elynmarie Kazle (Production Manager) is a fundraiser, theatre consultant, stage and production manager with an extensive resume that includes dance, theatre, opera and special events on both coasts. She serves on the board of the Stage Managers Association, Ohio Valley USITT, and is the founding Chair of the Stage Managers' Association Foundation. Pro credits include: Cleveland Play House, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Great Lakes Shakespeare, San Diego's Old Globe and Opera Companies, as well as Opera Columbus, LA Classical Ballet and Columbus Dance Theatre. Recently completing eight years as Chair of the Stage Managers' Association (USA), she will receive their Founders Award this November.. A Fellow of United States Institute for Theatre Technology, she created their Stage Management mentoring program and last spring was honored with their Joel E. Rubin Founders' Award. She's been an active participant in the National Theatre Conference, Production Managers Forum and the Gateway Project as well as teaching/adjudicating at many US Thespian Festivals. Following a successful run at Tiffany Theatres, she went on tour with Paul Linke/Time Flies taking the show to Playwrights Horizons, NY Theatre Workshop, numerous US cities, and on to Malmo and Stockholm, Sweden. Alongside her pro career, she has mentored students in stage and house management, and has served as PM and props mentor for over 20 years.

Mark A. Zimmerman (Director) has served as the theatre director at the Akron School for the Arts since 1995 and has been the guiding force for the educational theatre program that has been named an "Outstanding School" by the Educational Theatre Association (2013). Shows under his direction have so far earned 8 Dazzle Awards from the NE Ohio Musical Theatre Competition including "Best Musical" in 2018. Zimmerman has been among the first area directors to present many musical productions including *The Prom* (2022) *The Little Mermaid* (2016), *Ghost the Musical* (2015), *Mary Poppins* (2014), *Monty Python's Spamalot* (2013), *The Color Purple* (2012), *Legally Blonde* (2012), *Hairspray* (2011), *The Producers* (2009), *Side Show* (2008), and *Urinetown* (2007). Mark's local directing credits include productions at the Akron Civic Theatre / All-City Musical (*Mary Poppins*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Shrek*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *Ragtime*, *Hairspray*) as well as productions at the Cleveland Public Theatre, Weathervane Playhouse, Stow Players, the Western Reserve Playhouse, Coach House Theatre, and the University of Akron. He is a member of the state chapter board of the Ohio Educational Theatre Association.

Martell

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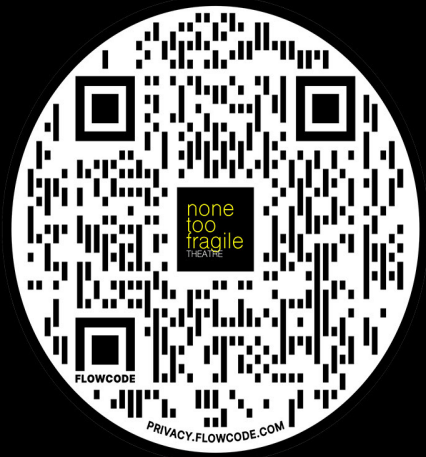
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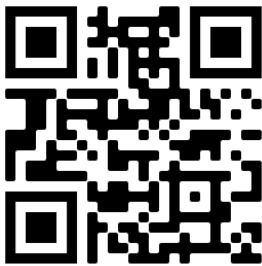
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