

BENNINGTON COLLEGE DRAMA DEPARTMENT PRESENTS

GRANDPA DAVE



BY EDIE SALAS-MILLER
DIRECTED BY KAIYA KIRK

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KAROLI ESPARZA MIA

DEJA HALEY DAFNEY

DANIELA NARANJO-ZARATE MAMA

HANNAH BUTCHER DYLAN

PAUL BIRTWISTLE ALLAN

SET DESIGN DANIELA NARANJO-ZARATE

LIGHT DESIGN PAOLA GARZA

COSTUME DESIGN SONISE LUMBACA

STAGE MANAGER AMRITA LI NEWTON

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER HANNAH PEREIRA

PRODUCTION MANAGER MARGARET FORTUNA YASSKY

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Over a year ago I read the final draft of a play Edie had written for her playwriting class. It was a lot like the plays I had read in the theatrical canon, those by the likes of Sam Shepard, Tracy Letts, Edward Albee, Harold Pinter, but it was a Mexican family in L.A. that reminded me a lot more of my own family than any families written by the aforementioned. Edie would tell you she's not a playwright and I would tell you I'm not a director, but after that first reading we both fantasized about what it would be like to collaborate on a project unlike anything we had seen at Bennington thus far. Come last November, that play, Grandpa Dave, was chosen to be a part of the 2020 Bennington Plays festival and I had been chosen to be its director.

Anyone who had anything to do with Grandpa Dave can tell you that I was extremely insecure in my role as a director. I didn't feel like I had any authority to tell any amount of people what I thought or what I wished they would do, I had absolutely zero training as a director and I suffered deeply from imposter syndrome that made me feel like I didn't deserve my place at the table. I did, however, feel extremely passionate about the work and the impact it would have on anyone who authentically opened themselves to it. So in the same way I'm not a director and Edie's not a playwright, I didn't care if the cast was made up of "actors". It mattered more that I had people who could see themselves, their families, their experiences reflected on the page. I was desperate to start a conversation about what it means to genuinely open the theater department to people of color and the magic that is possible when people see themselves in a story, and Grandpa Dave is this experiment.

When the production moved remote as a result of COVID-19, I was saddened that the work of the production team and stage managers was for naught but I was uplifted by the lively community built among the cast and between myself and Edie. It's only because of this community that we were able to adapt the play to its current format and continue to tell the story as best we possibly could. Though this isn't the original production of Grandpa Dave as I would have it in a perfect world, I am extremely proud of and grateful to those who had a role in this iteration.

I want to thank everyone who had anything to do with this production and the Bennington Plays festival. The Drama faculty, especially Dina Janis, Jenny Rohn, and Sherry Kramer, for their thoughtful oversight even when things seemed their most bleak. The directors and playwrights of the three productions which, with this one, make the Bennington Plays a reality. The production and stage management teams, Margaret Fortuna-Yassky, Alicia Katz, Amrita Newton, and Hannah Pereira, for literally being my brain, which was unfortunately lost in the Zoom transition. The designers, Paola Garza, Sonise Lumbaca, and Daniela Naranjo-Zarate, for being lovely, resourceful, and adaptable. The cast, for enduring my manic episodes and bringing your full selves to this wild process. Ahmad Yassir, for designing the visual material and being supportive and realistic. My family, for listening to me even when I know you're not quite sure what I'm talking about. And Edie Salas-Miller, for being my rock, the only reason any of this was possible, and understanding what I mean even before I do.

In the end of this program you'll find remnants of what Grandpa Dave would have been if staged in its full potential. I hope they'll give you a taste of the magic of this play.

Thank you, and enjoy.

NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

I am an actor before I am a playwright. The play that made me want to be an actor was August Osage County- I found the characters to be so compelling, but I knew that the only role I would get cast as would be Johnna, the housekeeper. Yes, Johnna has a life beyond cleaning the white family home and problems beyond the family that are very real, but we don't experience that the same way we do with the white characters. If I were to be in August, I would have been cast as Johnna.

I wrote Grandpa Dave because I couldn't find any contemporary roles that I would want to play, so I wrote Mia and the Perez family and Dafney. The Perez family isn't a family based off of their multi cultural background, they're not talking about it. I was getting so tired of reading roles for me where I would be talking about being brown or being brown and oppressed or being brown and worshipping whiteness or just being ignored.

My heart is in this play. Dafney speaks how I felt when I got to college, really overwhelmed and really confused. Take from this play: don't be a hypocrite, don't be self important, be empathetic, be kind, talk is cheap.

When we could no longer do the production, I thought it would be dull of me to try and leave the play as is and try to do it on zoom. So, I rewrote it for Zoom. It's been amazing working with these actors who have really pushed through to make this happen. My best friend Kaiya is directing and has blown my mind and made my world have purpose and sense.

Thank you and please enjoy the show!

M E E T T H E F A M I L Y

PAUL BIRTWISTLE (Allan) is a senior studying drama. While at Bennington he has directed *Lewiston*, assistant directed *The Christians*, and stage managed *East Coast Curriculum*. Professionally he has worked on *Stupid F**king Bird* (Hubbard Hall), *The Price of Thomas Scott* (Mint Theater Company), and *Arsenic and Old Lace* (Portland Stage Company). So many thanks to Edie and Kaiya for this opportunity!



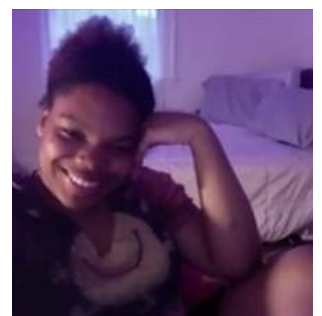
HANNAH BUTCHER (Dylan) is a freshman, intending to study music, theater, and public action. She is eager to present this meaningful piece of work in a new medium, and is really grateful to have been a part of bringing this wonderful new play to life!



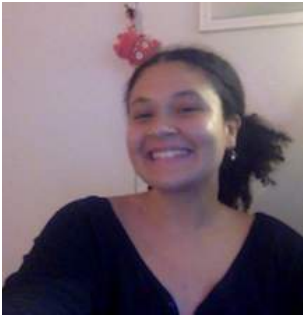
KAROLI ESPARZA (Mia) is planning on studying hip hop journalism at Bennington in the future. From Little Village, Chicago, Karoli's beverage of choice is either coffee or water. A cup of each, side by side, is her ideal choice. She thanks Grandpa Dave for everything it is and isn't!



DEJA HALEY (Dafney) is a student of Black Studies, Literature and Psychology. Her academic path at Bennington has been driven by a desire to understand how we create belonging and community through our differences. She is grateful to have worked with everyone involved in Grandpa Dave!



MEET THE FAMILY



KAIYA KIRK (Director) will earn her BA in theater and black studies from Bennington College in May 2020. She is a lifelong lover of theater and has had a myriad of roles in shows including Good Friday (ASM), The Place We Built (Aisha), and Everybody (Dramaturg, Friendship). Her education thus far is dedicated to creating more equitable, diverse, and inclusive theater practices.



DANIELA NARANJO-ZARATE (Mama, Set Designer) is a sophomore studying theater and feminist and minority studies. Aside from assistant stage managing The Christians and a senior work Around the Fire last year, this is her first production acting and stage designing for a Bennington College production. She was extremely inspired and moved by the work being done both with the cast and production team, and hopes that Bennington continues to work and encourage diversity in theater.



EDIE SALAS-MILLER (Playwright) is a senior studying acting and has spent the past four years at Bennington trying to establish a solid foundation for theater. Edie was born and raised in Los Angeles and her family has been from LA for multiple generations making it very special and sacred to her. In quarantine, she has picked up sewing, making miso soup, running, and sleeping a lot.

M E E T T H E F A M I L Y

PAOLA GARZA (Lighting Designer) is a Latinx sophomore studying Visual Arts at Bennington. She works primarily in photography and animation with a focus in lighting throughout all her work.

SONISE LUMBACA (Costume Designer) transferred to Bennington College and is currently a 7th term senior, studying visual and performing arts. She is originally from New York and currently calls Vermont home.

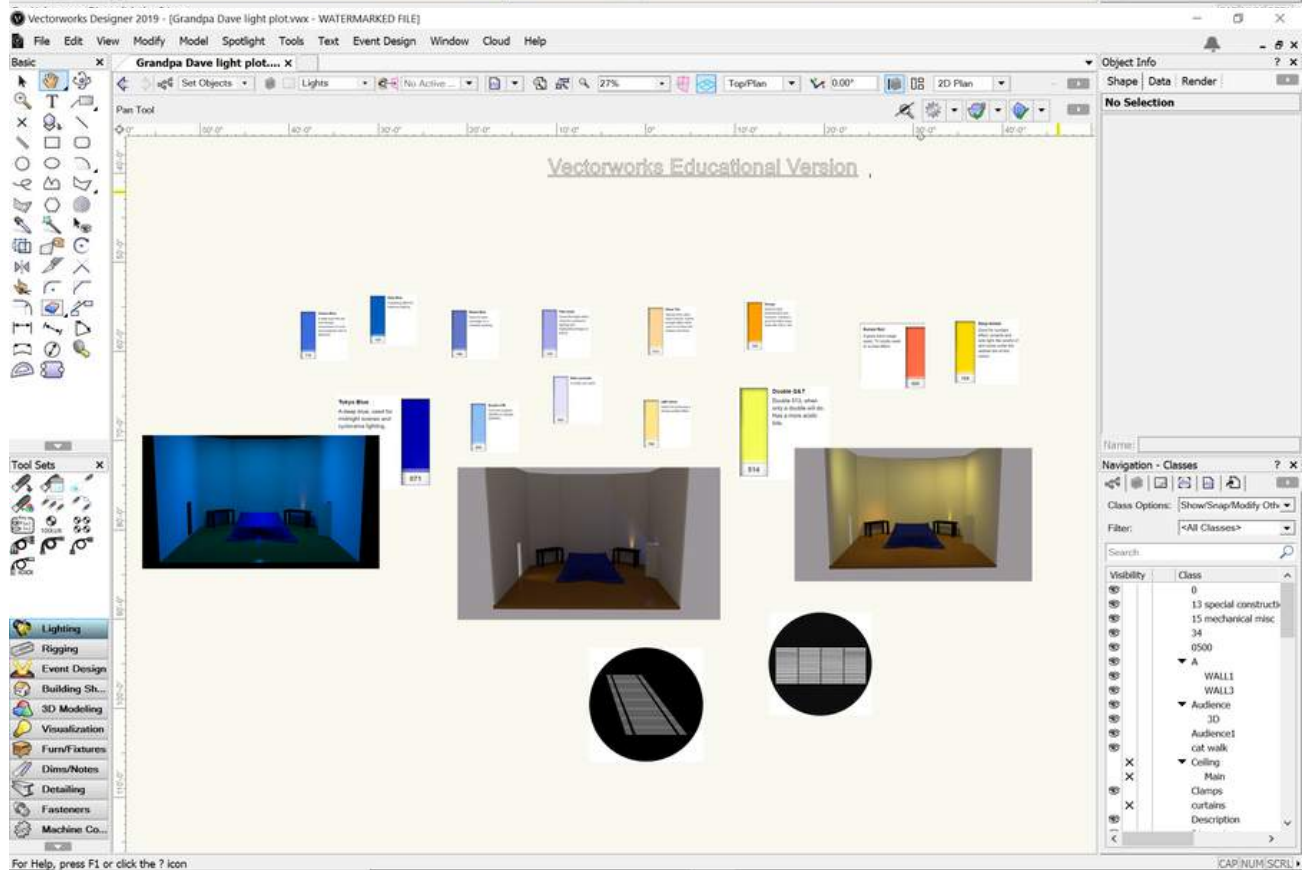
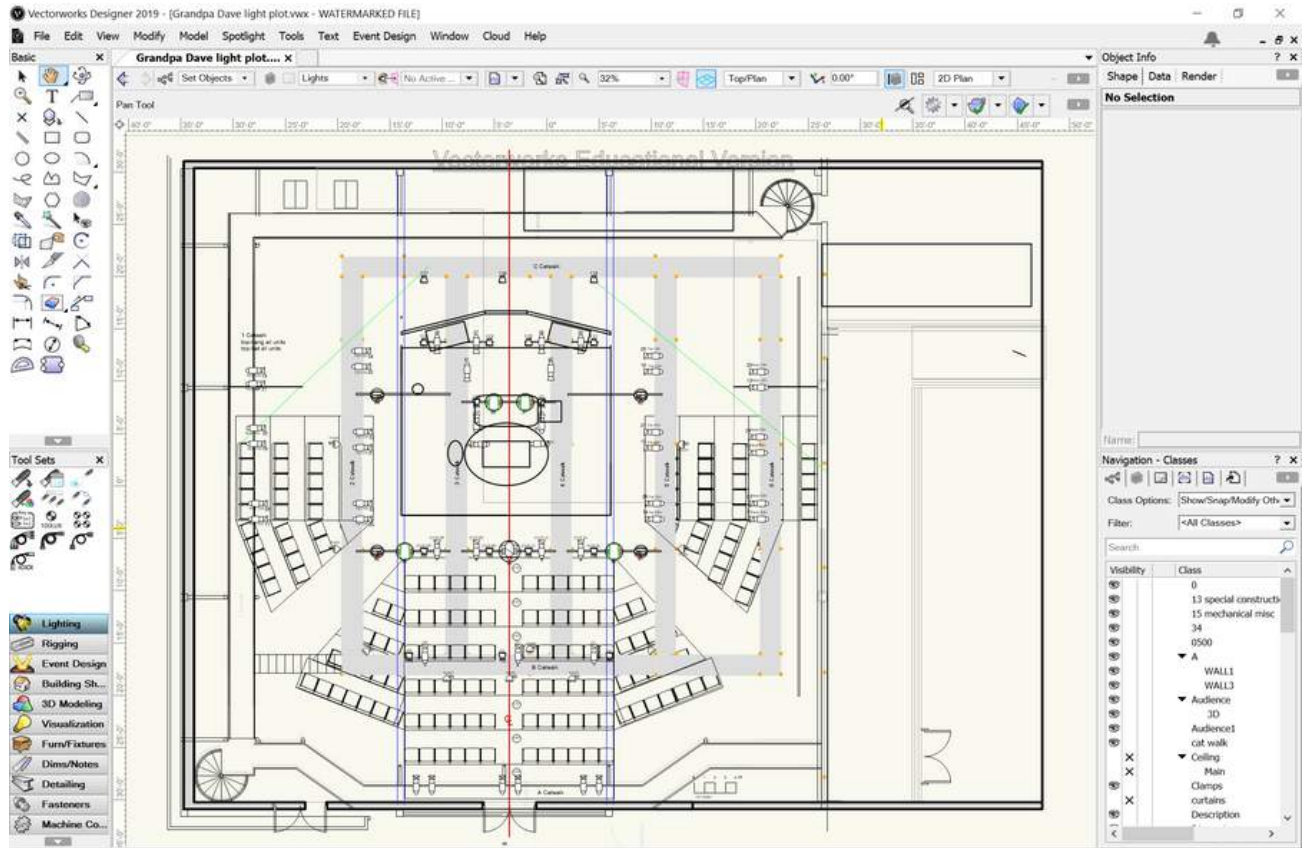
AMRITA LI NEWTON (Stage Manager) has spent the majority of her time in the theater on the stage in shows including Stupid Fucking Bird (Nina), Everybody (Kinship), and The Place We Built (Szuszanna). This was her first time stage managing and the experience was a wonderful opportunity to say the least. She wishes all the performers the best for the shows!

HANNAH PEREIRA (Assistant Stage Manager) is a freshman at Bennington College. She thoroughly enjoyed working with everyone and was honored to be surrounded by such talented people!

DESIGN PHOTOS



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Name	Age	Clothing Style	Role	Ethnicity	Setting	Scene 1	Scene 2	Scene 3	Scene 4	Scene 5 (Early After)	Scene 6	Scene 7	Scene 8
Mia Perez	18	All Black, not Goth		Hispanic	November	Black hoodie, t-shirt, leggings or cut-offs	Long princess like dress	dressed for a night out, high heels, handbag	Dressed for clubbing, handbag/ changes to hoodie and sweat bottoms, socks	Black lounging outfit		Wearing a signature outfit her mother would wear with sleeves that can rip easily during fight scene	wearing something black?
Dalney	29	American Eagle Outfitters, shorts or khakis, Vans footwear	Mia's Best Friend	African American		All Rammed short-sleeve shirt with t-shirt and khaki pants		Adidas pants, looks sharp (t-shirt or matching adidas jacket)		Ad outfit, MAGA hat		Black suit and tie	
Mama	49	Fun and adventurous dress (into heavy metal)	Mia's Mother	Hispanic		Pink flowery dress, black cross beaded necklace around her neck	knitted sweater, yoga pants		loungewear, knitted top, yoga pants maybe			wearing the dress she was buried in? (long sleeve?)	
Dylan	22	Michael Kors watch, clubbing, sockhalla	Mia's older sister	POC			USC sweatpants and stained grey hoodie		Dressed for clubbing, handbag, later changes into t, blue robe and underwear	(fluffy grey blanket) hoodie, tracksuit pants		No mention of what she is wearing	blue dress
Alan	48	Dressed like a techie	Mia's father	Caucasian				Light jacket, button up shirt, t-shirt, slacks, running shoes (adidas), backpack and headsets	sweatshirt, sweatpants (different color)	dressed like a techie		dressed like a techie, carries red shoes and the dress of his wife, woman's wallet	dressed like a techie





PROGRAM BY AHMAD YASSIR