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A note from the Director

Our Founding Artistic Director, Carla says, “I love how Heidi Schreck takes this esoteric document that all of us think of as kind of a monolith (or at least I do) and breaks it down, placing the amendments in the historical and social context from which they were born, and showing through personal stories, the impact it has had on her life, and the lives of her predecessors. It’s not a preachy diatribe about “a republic if we can keep it.” It’s sassy, irreverent, and insanely personal, which makes it SO much fun to watch.”

More than anything, we love producing new plays. When Theatre NOVA began, our mission was to create a theatre that celebrates and fosters new work and finds an eager audience for those plays. Often, we produce a Michigan premiere by a playwright that our audiences haven’t seen before.

We are so grateful you’ve chosen to spend your time with us. The positive support and feedback we’ve received this year has been truly humbling. We know that the decision to engage in live theatre is not as easy as before the pandemic, and we appreciate you helping make it a safe and comfortable space for everyone who participates. We hope you will join us as we continue to produce important plays that ask you to think.

If you like the work we do, the best way you can support us is by buying a subscription - not only does it allow you to see all six shows that we’re producing this year, but it signals to us that you appreciate the wide variety of shows we curate for you.

Thank you again for your support and for spreading the word about our work. We’ll see you at the theatre!

- Carla, David, Bri, Shelby, and Becky
Theatre NOVA administrative team

Mission Statement

Theatre NOVA is dedicated to raising awareness of the value and excitement of new plays and new playwrights, and providing resources and outlets for playwrights to develop their craft by importing, exporting, and developing new plays and playwrights.

Support Theatre NOVA.

When you shop at smile.amazon.com, Amazon donates.



presents

What the Constitution Means to Me

by Heidi Schreck

DIRECTOR

Briana O'Neal

STAGE MANAGER

Carolyn Pierce

SET DESIGNER

Paul Taylor

COSTUME DESIGNER

Genevieve Compton

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Jeff Alder

SOUND DESIGNER/PROPS

Carla Milarch

WHAT THE CONSTITUTION MEANS TO ME runs approximately 90 minutes without an intermission.

"What the Constitution Means to Me" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals, on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

Original Broadway Production Produced by

Diana DiMenna, Aaron Glick, Matt Ross, Madeleine Foster Bersin, Myla Lerner/ Jon Bierman
Jenna Segal/ Catherine Markowitz Jana Shea/ Maley-Stolbun-Sussman Rebecca Gold/Jose Antonio Vargas
Level Forward Cornice Productions Lassen Wyse Balsam Nederlander Productions/ Kate Lear

What the Constitution Means to Me was commissioned by True Love Productions.

This production originated as part of Summerworks in June and July 2017,
produced by Clubbed Thumb in partnership with True Love Productions.

West Coast premiere produced by

Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Berkeley, CA, Tony Taccone, Artistic Director/Susan Medak, Managing Director.

"What the Constitution Means to Me" had its Off-Broadway premiere in New York City at New York Theatre Workshop,
Jim Nicola, Artistic Director, Jeremy Blocker, Managing Director, 2018

Please remember to silence all electronic devices.

The video or audio recording of this performance by any means is strictly prohibited.

Theatre NOVA wishes to acknowledge and honor the land upon which we gather is granted by the Anishinaabeg Council of Three Fires of the Odawa, Ojibwe, and Potawatomi peoples, and the Wyandot (Huron) peoples of the Northwestern confederacy. We acknowledge their elders, both past and present, as well as future generations. We recognize that we are part of a society founded upon the erasures of many Indigenous peoples, including those on whose land this building is located. This acknowledgment is part of our participation in the process of dismantling the legacies of settler colonialism.

Cast

Heidi.....	Emily Tobin-Wilson
Legionnaire	David Galido
Debater	Skye Soleà

SETTING:

what appears to be an American Legion hall in a small, rural town.

Cast Biographies



Emily Wilson-Tobin (Heidi) is honored to return to the Theatre NOVA stage after her performance in *The Language Archive* last season. An Ann Arbor native, Emily earned a BA in Theatre and French Language/Literature from Wesleyan University and an MFA in Applied Drama/Theatre for the Young from EMU. She is the Director of Community Ensemble Theatre at Community High School and was previously the Theatre Director at Greenhills School. Past acting credits include work with Tipping Point Theatre, Ellipsis Theatre, and the Blackbird Theatre. Thanks to her family, friends, and the amazing CET community for all of their support during a busy time, and thanks to Briana, Carla, Carolyn, David, Skye, and the NOVA staff for this opportunity to perform and share the stage in such a meaningful, powerful piece.



David Galido (Legionnaire) is excited to make his Theatre NOVA debut in this unique and important show. He earned his BA in Theatre from Albion College before serving as an officer in the United States Air Force. He studied with Aaron Speiser in Los Angeles, wrote and performed educational shows at the Michigan Science Center, and was a member of the Michigan Shakespeare Festival Interstate Tour. Some of his favorite past roles include James (*Time Stands Still*), Eli Duffy (*The Renaissance Man*), and John Wilkes Booth (*Assassins*). David enjoys running, breakfast foods, the musical stylings of Weird Al, making desserts, playing D&D with his friends, and editing the Star Wars prequels into watchable films. He'd like to thank his friends and family for their support, the cast and crew for all of their hard work bringing this show to life, and you for choosing to be here to witness live theater.



Skye Soleà (Debater) is a 17-year-old actress whose journey in the world of entertainment is marked by creativity, dedication, and a passion for storytelling. Her remarkable career took flight when she and her friends crafted a compelling film, "1776: Back In Time", an endeavor that not only showcased her talents but also earned them a prestigious award at the INAFF Student Film Festival. Skye's pursuit of excellence led her to study under esteemed coaches like Wallace Bridges at Eastern Michigan University, honing her craft and expanding her repertoire. With an impressive repertoire of short films to her credit, including notable titles like "The Easy Path" and "The Last Call," and her current engagement in the final stages of a feature film project, Skye is firmly establishing her presence and making an indelible mark within the realm of cinema. Now, Skye is gearing up for an exciting transition from film to theater, eager to explore the nuances of live performances. Her enthusiasm knows no bounds as she embarks on this new artistic journey, armed with her talent, dedication, and youthful passion for the stage. The future holds endless possibilities for Skye as she continues to shine brightly in both film and theater.

Production Biographies

Briana O'Neal (Director) is a proud graduate of Eastern Michigan University with a Bachelor's degree in Theatre Arts and Political Science. She has been working with Theatre NOVA since 2019, first as the Resident Stage Manager and now also as the Company Manager. She is so grateful for the opportunity to direct *What the Constitution Means to Me* and to the whole team at Theatre NOVA for continuing to produce thought-provoking and innovative new plays. Some of her favorite credits with Theatre NOVA include directing *Splattered!* and stage managing *Arabic to English*, *Mlima's Tale*, *The Language Archive*, *Sanctuary City*, *Relativity*, and four of our annual holiday Pantos, including *Sugar Plum Panto* most recently. She wants to thank the incredible creative team for all their support and dedication and Emily, David, and Skye for taking this journey together and creating something wonderful.

Carolyn Pierce (Stage Manager) (she/her) began her time with Theatre NOVA as an intern, and she is so grateful that she has been able to spend more time learning from this fantastic group of creators. Briana O'Neal especially has been an incredible teacher and friend. Carolyn received her Associates degree from WCC in December 2022. Thanks to the many educational experiences with Theatre NOVA and Washtenaw Community College, she is looking forward to her career in the arts with optimism and determination.

Paul Taylor (Set Design and Construction) is really an actor who is thankful he took tech and design classes in college. He has acted in many area productions over the years, with occasional design and directing positions. He was a high school theatre technical director from 2009 to 2020 (Pandemic.) He holds a bachelor's degree in theatre arts and a Master's degree in Arts Administration and spent two extremely wonderful Summers at Interlochen so long ago. His dog, Atticus, is an awesome tri-paw and cuter than your dog.

Jeff Alder (Lighting Designer) Past NOVA productions that Jeff Alder designed lighting for were *The Language Archive*, *Sanctuary City*, *Sing Happy*, *The Stone Witch*, *Follies in Concert*, *Mrs. Fifty Bakes a Pie*, and *The Elves and the Schumachers*. Jeff also used to design lights for Pablo Cruise, War, Santana, Huey Lewis and the News, Cyndi Lauper, Alice Cooper, Ozzy Osbourne, and Aerosmith.

Genevieve Compton (Costume Design) is very excited to be working with Theatre NOVA. She learned the fundamentals of costume design while working in the costume shop at Arena Stage in Washington DC and has always enjoyed working with costumes. She has worked as a director and has directed projects at Studio Theatre Second Stage (Washington DC), Woolly Mammoth (Washington DC), Kennedy Centers Page to Stage (Washington DC), Berkeley Reps Theatre Lab (Berkeley CA) and readings at Performance Network (Ann Arbor MI). She is a member of The Directors Lab - West. Genevieve also worked as an Equity Stage Manager for many years. Genevieve is a Graduate of Guilford College and has studied at the Studio Acting Conservatory, Shakespeare Theatre of DC and Shakespeare and Co.

Carla Milarch (Sound Design/Props) is a former artistic director of Performance Network Theatre, whose passion for new plays led her to co-found Theatre NOVA. As a dramaturg and director, she has helped bring 25 brand new plays to fully-staged productions, as well as hundreds of plays to staged readings, including those at the Michigan Playwrights Festival, the Fireside New Play Festival, the NNPN National Showcase of New Plays (board member), and the Kennedy Center's MFA playwrights' workshop. She served as board president of the Michigan Equity Theatre Alliance. Some awards include "Best Overall Season/Artistic Direction" from the Oakland Press, "Outstanding Contributions to an Ensemble" from The Detroit Free Press, "Most Valuable Performer" from the Oakland Press, and the Between the Lines "Angel" award for outstanding contributions to the LGBT community. Carla's love and experience for both sides of the stage have taken her from producing theatre at The Barn Theatre in Port Sanilac, MI, to co-founding a theatre in Amarillo, TX with her Purchase classmates, to producing theatre in a barn again - this time in the middle of a world-class city.

Production Biographies, continued

Heidi Schreck (Playwright) is a writer and performer living in Brooklyn. Her critically acclaimed play *What the Constitution Means to Me* played an extended, sold-out run on Broadway in 2019 and was nominated for two Tony Awards. It had subsequent runs at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, the Mark Taper Forum, the Guthrie, Seattle Repertory Theatre, the McCarter Theatre, and theatres in Houston, Miami, Omaha, Nashville, Charlotte, and Chicago. A filmed version of the play premiered on Amazon Prime Video and was nominated for a Critics Choice Award, a PGA Award, and a DGA Award. *What the Constitution Means to Me* was named Best of the Year by The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, The Chicago Tribune, Time Magazine, The Hollywood Reporter, The New Yorker, and more. Schreck's other plays, *Grand Concourse*, *Creature*, and *There Are No More Big Secrets*, have also been produced in NYC and all over the country. Screenwriting credits include "I Love Dick," "Billions," "Nurse Jackie," "Dispatches from Elsewhere," and shows in development with Amazon Studios, Plan B and A24. She is the recipient of three Obie Awards, a Drama Desk Award, a Theatre World Award, as well as the Horton Foote Playwriting Award and the Hull-Warriner Award from the Dramatists Guild. Schreck was awarded Smithsonian Magazine's 2019 American Ingenuity Award for her work in the Performing Arts.

Theatre NOVA staff

Carla Milarch.....	Founding Artistic Director
David Wolber.....	Producing Artistic Director
Briana O'Neal.....	Resident Stage Manager, Company Manager
Shelby R. Seeley.....	Associate Artistic Director, Literary Manager
Sarah Elisabeth Brown.....	House Manager
Meghan VanArsdalen.....	Elementary Education Instructor
Justin Montgomery.....	Elementary Education Instructor
Lindsey Brown.....	Elementary Education Instructor
Becky Fox.....	Business Manager, Education Director

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Becky Fox.....	Treasurer
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David Powers • Judith Rowe • Carol Tolis-Bucklin

THANK YOU!!!

Remaining 2022-2023 Season @ Theatre NOVA (Flex Tix available)



WHAT THE CONSTITUTION MEANS TO ME by Heidi Schreck

Michigan Premiere

"Not just the best play on Broadway, but also the most important." – *New York Times*

Fifteen-year-old Heidi earned college money by competing in Constitutional debate competitions across the U.S. In this hilarious and hopeful play, adult Heidi looks back at her younger self, her mother, and her grandmother, tracing the impact the Constitution had on all of their lives.

Oct. 20 - Nov. 12, 2023

THE YEAR WITHOUT A PANTO CLAUS by Carla Milarch & R. MacKenzie Lewis

Bring your whole family to this boisterous holiday musical!

Santa's been watching too much depressing cable news again. When he decides to take the year off, elves Jingle and Jangle search the globe to find him and bring back Christmas cheer. From the brilliant minds that brought you *An Almost British Christmas* and *Sugar Plum Panto*.

Dec. 15, 2023 - Jan. 7, 2024, Fri.@7:30, Sat.@3 & 7:30, & Sun.@2pm



FORTUNE by Deborah Zoe Lauffer

Michigan Premiere

This madcap romantic comedy is full of mishaps and mistaken identities!

Madame Rosa is looking for a new job. Typist? Astronaut? Anything would be better than being a storefront psychic who can actually see the future. And Jeremy is desperate. A nebbishy accountant looking for love, he stumbles into Madame Rosa's to find answers once and for all.

February 2-25, 2024

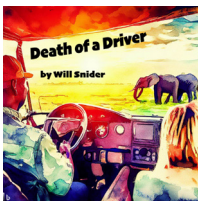
the ripple, the wave that carried me home by Christina Anderson

Michigan Premiere

A memory play about family and the complicated truths we pass along.

In 1960s Kansas, a Black family fights to integrate public swimming pools. When their youngest daughter, Janice, is pressured by her father to participate, she grows to resent him, eventually leaving to start a life elsewhere. Years later, she looks back on the past she tried to forget.

March 22 - April 14, 2024



DEATH OF A DRIVER by Will Snider

Michigan Premiere

Can two friends from different worlds try to make change before their worlds tear them apart?

Sarah is an American engineer, and Kennedy is an East African driver. When Sarah moves to Kenya to build a highway, they strike up a friendship with a shared mission to transform rural Kenya. But a local election dispute tests their alliance, and they clash over the realities of doing good abroad.

May 17 - June 9, 2024

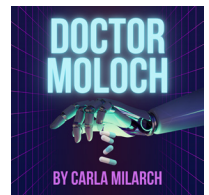
DOCTOR MOLOCH by Carla Milarch

World Premiere

Science Fiction theatre about Artificial Intelligence.

It's 2029, and tech startup VitalAI is about to launch the first humanoid robot doctor, capable of personalized medicines and single-cell cancer detection. There's only one problem: the good doctor has no empathy. When actress Serena Blaise arrives to teach him how to "be human," she gets much more than she bargained for.

July 12 - August 4, 2024



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