Curious Inceident of the Dog in the Nightime

Department of Theatre and Dance

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The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time
A play by Simon Stephens

March 18 | 19 | 23 | 24 | 25, 2022
Memorial Auditorium

Montclair State University
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time

A play by Simon Stephens

Based on the novel by Mark Haddon

Director Heather Benton
Choreographer Bryan Knowlton
Scenic Designer Louis J. Medrano
Costume Designer Katherine Victoria
Lighting Designer Justin Stuart

Sound Designer Daniel Gonko
Hair/Makeup Designer Julyzza Santiago
Dramaturg Emilia Siracusa
Fight/Intimacy Director Rick Sordelet
Production Stage Manager T. Rick Jones*

Cast (in order of appearance)
Christopher Boone .......................................................... Andrew Linden
Mrs. Shears/Voice 1/Posh Woman/Shopkeeper ........................................... Marie-Pier Poulin
Siobhan .......................................................... Haley Amann
Policeman 1/Uncle Terry/London Policeman ........................................... Erwin Guerrero
Policeman 2/Number 40/Lady in the Street/London Transport .................. Laura McHale
Duty Sergeant/Voice 2/Drunk 1/Roger .................................................. Brett Fox
Voice 4/Reverend Peters/Drunk 2/Man on Phone ................................ Anthony Piccininni
Voice 5/Punk Girl/Woman on Heath ...................................................... Anna Moceri
Judy .......................................................... Alex Key
Voice 6/Mrs. Alexander/Station Guard .................................................. Edmillie Binet
Ed .......................................................... Ethan Metz
Voice 3/Mr. Thompson/Station Policeman ............................................. Khalil Louigene
Mr. Wise/Man with Socks/Man Behind Counter ................................ Jared Preston
Mrs. Gascoyne/Woman on Train/Information .................................. Jessica Sconfienza
Ensemble ................................................................................ Elijah Davis, Jannette Fisher

Understudies Elise Bednar (Voice 6/Mrs. Alexander/Station Guard/Mrs. Gascoyne/Woman on Train/Information), Jack Declan (Christopher Boone/Ed/Duty Sergeant/Voice 2/Drunk 1/Roger/Ensemble/Voice 3/Mr. Thompson/Station Policeman), Laura McHale (Siobhan/Judy), Jace Pastras (Ensemble/Policeman 1/Uncle Terry/London Policeman/Voice 4/Reverend Peters/Drunk 2/Man on Phone/Mr. Wise/Man with Socks/Man Behind Counter), Allison Rosofsky (Policeman 2/Number 40/Lady in the Street/London Transport/Voice 5/Punk Girl/Woman on Heath/Ensemble/Mrs. Shears/Voice 1/Posh Woman/Shopkeeper)

*Member of Actors’ Equity Association

Time & Place: Swindon and London UK, 2014

Duration: Two hours, including one 15-minute intermission.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time was first presented by the National Theatre, London at the Cottesloe Theatre on August 2, 2012 and transferred to the Gielgud Theatre, West End, London on March 12, 2013. The Play opened in the USA at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre on October 5, 2014.

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The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time is presented by special arrangement with Broadway Licensing, LLC, servicing the Dramatists Play Service collection. (www.dramatists.com)

In consideration of both audiences and performers, please turn off all electronic devices. The taking of photographs or videos and the use of recording equipment are not permitted. No food or drink is permitted in the theater.
CAECMH and MSU Theatre Department Joint Statement

This production is based on a fictional character, whom the author does not identify as an individual diagnosed with autism. Although some of his tendencies align with the diagnostic characteristics of an autism spectrum diagnosis, he is not representative of all people with this diagnosis. People with this diagnosis are more likely to be victims of violence or bullying than perpetrators.

Director’s Note

_The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time_ was adapted by Simon Stephens for the stage from the novel by Mark Haddon and features a fictitious central character, Christopher Boone, who describes himself as “a mathematician with some behavior difficulties.” While Haddon has expressed that “Curious Incident is not a book about Asperger’s,” the character of Christopher is frequently portrayed as an individual on the Autism spectrum based on his unique perspective and behavior as articulated in the novel. Haddon goes on to say that “if anything (the novel) is about difference, about seeing the world in a surprising and revealing way.” Enter the term “neuro-diversity,” which has been leading our process and exploration, and it is in this spirit in which this production has been created.

“In the late, 1990s, a sociologist named Judy Singer—who is on the autism spectrum herself—innovated a new word to describe conditions like autism, dyslexia, and ADHD: neurodiversity. In a radical stroke, she hoped to shift the focus of discourse about atypical ways of thinking and learning away from the usual litany of deficits, disorders, and impairments. Echoing positive terms like biodiversity and cultural diversity, her neologism called attention to the fact that many atypical forms of brain wiring also convey unusual skills and aptitudes.” (“Neurodiversity Rewires Conventional Thinking about Brains,” Stephen Silberman, WIRED, April 2013)

Here at MSU, we are fortunate to be in conversation and collaboration with the specialists from the Center for Autism and Childhood Mental Health and several MSU Theatre and Dance alumni who are either neuro-diverse and/or have neuro-diverse family members. Our objective in working on this production has been to work from an empathetic and human place, finding the authenticity of the character through the imaginative, descriptive language in the novel (our primary resource), education and research about neurodiversity, and connecting to the actors’ unique truths in the portrayal of Christopher, his perception of the world, his interaction with others, and the different ways the world responds to him.

This production was originally a pre-pandemic baby. We began a full design process in the winter of 2020, and like so many productions everywhere, we hit the pause button as the restrictions of virtual, masked, or socially distanced actors conflicted with the artistic vision and demands of the play. And we waited until conditions were favorable to continue. Now, after a year and half of lock down, the play resonates in a more immediate way. We have a collective understanding of isolation, what it is to feel powerless and overwhelmed in an unpredictable and potentially dangerous world. Have these pandemic experiences reignited our empathy in new ways? Neurodiversity encompasses so many different ways in which an individual might experience the world. Can this production ultimately invite audiences to create more space for and ultimately celebrate neurodiversity?

The concept for this production celebrates theatrical design and actor-driven physical storytelling in a large live theatrical space. The Broadway production was an enormous success and a beautiful production featuring extensive interactive video projections and spectacular ensemble movement in an intimate space. Our production strives to create Christopher’s unique perspective through shape-shifting scenic design elements manipulated by the ensemble, a physical approach to storytelling, silhouettes with transformative costume pieces, an intense sound scape, and dynamic lighting without the use of projections or video.

—Heather Benton, Director
Arts + Cultural Programming

Jedediah Wheeler | Executive Director
J. Ryan Graves | Director of Production
Laurel Brolly | Business Administrator

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Maya Siguenza | Administrative Assistant

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Andy Dickerson | Production Coordinator
Kevin Johnson | Audio Supervisor
Chriissy D’Alleo Fels | Company Liaison

Robert Hermida | Audience Services Director
Jeff Lambert Wingfield | Box Office Manager
Maureen Grimaldi | House Manager
William Collins | Assistant House Manager
Yazeed Alomar, Jacob Batory, Shannon Mulraney, Martin Pyda, Katyra Reyes | Box Office Lead Associates
Susan R. Case | Program Copy Editor
Bart Solenthaler | Program Layout Design

Production Staff

Heather Benton | Coordinator of Acting
Mysti Stay | Coordinator of Design, Technology, and Management
Peter J. Davis | Production Manager
Mary Gragen | Assistant Production Manager
Cyndi Kumor | Production Associate
Lisa Grimes | Social Media and Promotion Manager
Linda Moats | House Manager
William Collins | Assistant House Manager
Dalton Gorden | Production Office Assistant
Erhard Rom | Scenic Design Mentor
Benjamin Merrick | Technical Director
Daniel Graham | Assistant Technical Director
Daniel Hausssler | Head Carpenter
Jeanette Meises | Scenic Charge Artist
Alison Merrick | Props Supervisor
Robin McGee | Costume, Hair and Makeup Design Mentor
Judith Evans | Costume Shop Supervisor
Jeanette Aultz | Assistant Costume Shop Supervisor
Amanda Phillips-Balingit, Katie Pippin, Robin Ankerich | Drapers
Marlene Olson Hamm | Wardrobe Supervisor
Nicholas Kolin | Lighting Design Mentor
Osmans M. Morales | Head Electrician
Zachary Brieniza | Assistant Electrician
Megan Culley | Sound Design Mentor
Daniel Gonko | Head Sound Technician/Mentor
Nick Kandcris | Assistant Sound Technician
Mysti Stay | Stage Management Mentor

College of the Arts

Daniel Gurski | Dean
Ronald L. Sharps | Associate Dean
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Randy Mugleston | Theatre and Dance
Patricia Piro | Broadcast and Media Operations
Megan C. Austin | Director, University Galleries

Staff for the Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time

Dennis Oliveira | Assistant Director
Dr. Costa, Dr. McKeating, Kaitlin Mulcahy, Corinne Catalano from the Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health, and Robert Getz and Jeremy Landes | Neuro-Diversity Consultants
Anna Moceri | Dance Captain
Alexis Key | Assistant Dance Captain
Collin Sordelet | Assistant Fight/Intimacy Director
Brett Fox | Fight Captain
Becca McLarty | Voice and Dialect Coach
Jess Pace | Voice and Dialects Assistant
Alison Merrick | Head Props
Frankie Scarnati | Assistant Set Designer
Valentina Canaan | Deck Carpenter
Sofia Dietze | Assistant Costume Designer
Sydney Cheplic | Assistant Lighting Designer
Joey Messana | Head Electrician
Levi Morici | Assistant Head Electrician
Ryan Randazzo | Deck Electrician
Axiom Cutler | Light Board Op
Nick Caburis | Sound A1
Prince Bawuah, Ammiel Moses | Sound A2
Anastasia Swan | SFX Operator
Mia Watson | Wardrobe Head
Sammy Bravos, Alex Burgess, Cassandra Kohlmayer | Wardrobe Crew
Eva Burke, Brianna Guilレン, Griffin O’Connor | Assistant Stage Managers

Programs in this season are made possible in part by funds from:
The Alexander Kasser Theater Endowment Fund
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To view our complete season and for more information, visit peakpersfs.org.

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Production Biographies

Heather Benton (Director) specializes in integrated physical approaches to acting/directing and devised theater. She has been a performer and theater maker for the past two decades and has worked internationally, nationally, in regional theater, and downtown NYC. She is co-creator of *Necessary Digression, a performance collective, and a frequent collaborator with Blessed Unrest, a NYC physical theater company, and has created devised pieces for the Company at American Academy of Dramatic Arts, Kenyon College, and MSU. Directing credits at MSU include *Wedding Band* by Alice Childress, *Iphigenia at Aulis* by Euripides, and *Wintertime* by Chuck Mee. Her Senior Capstone projects and Devised Theatre at MSU include *Riders on the Storm*, devised with original text and text from *Small Mouth Sounds* by Bess Wohl; *Yerma* by Simon Stone, adapted from Frederick Lorca’s play; *Ten X Shanley*, devised with scenes from plays by John Patrick Shanley; *Sentience, Sex, Love and Information*, devised with original text and text from *Love & Information* by Caryl Churchill; and *Polaroid Stories* by Naomi Iizuka. Benton is the program coordinator for the BFA Acting program and associate professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance. She holds an MFA in Acting from ART/MXAT and is a member of Actor’s Equity and the Stage Directors and Choreographers’ Society.

Bryan Knowlton (Choreographer) has an extensive career that has spanned dancing on Broadway in the 2006 revival of *A Chorus Line* to appearing in multiple national tours, film, and TV. He is an award-winning choreographer with credits that include *Cabaret* and *Chicago* (NH Theatre Award “Best Choreographer,” OnStage Theatre Award nomination “Best Choreography”), *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Kennedy Center American College Theater Award “Outstanding Choreography”), *Beehive!* (Berkshire Theatre Award nomination “Best Choreographer”), *Saturday Night Fever/Mamma Mia* (SALT Award nomination “Best Choreographer”), *Curtains* (Broadway World Award nomination “Best Choreography”), *Gypsy* (NH Theatre Award nomination “Best Choreographer”), *A Chorus Line, Pippin, Damn Yankees, The Rocky Horror Show, Urinetown, Hairspray, Rent, Godspell, Guys and Dolls, 9 to 5, Oliver!, West Side Story, The Hunchback of Notre Dame, Hair, La Cage aux Folles, Smokey Joe’s Café, A Christmas Story*, and *A Christmas Carol*. For more information visit bryanknowlton.org.
Louis J. Medrano (Scenic Designer) is a set designer, assistant, model maker, and more. An MSU graduate, he also designed and won the National Award for Scenic Design from the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival for *Daughters of the Rebellion*, a New Works Initiative. He has recently worked on two films, *The Blue’s Clues & You Movie* and an undisclosed Disney movie, as an assistant.

Katherine Victoria (Costume Designer) is very excited to be working on her fourth production at MSU. She has previously worked on *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* (2021), *Top Girls* (2021), and *An Enemy of the People* (2020). She would like to send love to her friends and family, as well as Heather Benton and the rest of the creative team for their endless hard work.

Justin Stuart (Lighting Design) is a senior at MSU. He has previously designed *Rent, Back to Life, and Spring Dance 2020*. Additionally, he has assisted on *The Wolves* and *The Rover*.

Daniel Gonko (Sound Designer) is an audio engineer and percussionist in the Greater New York area. He earned bachelor’s degrees in Music Theory/Composition and Music Education at Central Michigan University and graduated with his master of music degree from Western Carolina University in Commercial and Electronic Music. He was the head audio engineer for ACT of CT in Ridgefield, CT, where he mixed over 125 performances per season, has worked as an audio engineer/designer Off-Broadway, and has served as the head media engineer for the Aspen Music Festival and School.

Julyzza Santiago (Hair/Makeup Designer) is very thrilled to be working on her third production at MSU. She has previously worked on *The Names We Gave Him* (2021) and *The Rover* (2019). She appreciates the endless hard work from Heather Benton and the rest of the creative team. She sends out her love towards her family and friends, who have supported her through this journey.

Emilia Siracusa (Dramaturg) is a senior in the Theatre Studies BA/MA program. Her previous work includes the 2021 MSU New Play Fest serving as artistic director and production dramaturg. She is incredibly grateful for the opportunity to work on such a special show and see this world come to life.

Rick Sordelet (Fight and Intimacy Coordinator) has served as this country’s most prolific fight director for over 28 years. He and his son, Christian, created Sordelet Inc.,
an action-based company providing stunt coordination, fight direction, and intimacy consulting for film, television, and theater. He has worked on over 80 shows on Broadway, from Beauty and the Beast and Lion King all the way to Tina. Sordelet just returned from the UK, where he revived the fight direction on Disney’s Beauty and the Beast, coming to Broadway next season. Rick and Christian are the resident fight directors for the Santa Fe Opera, where they staged the fights for As You Like It and Eugene Onegin. They are also stunt coordinators for television and film: 12 years with Guiding Light, four years with One Life to Live, both seasons with Kevin Can Wait and The Crew, both starring Kevin James. Their most recent film is Ben Is Back starring Julia Roberts. They are currently filming One True Loves with Simu Liu and Phillipa Soo. Sordelet taught at Yale School of Drama for 22 years as well as at Kean University, Montclair State, and the William Esper Studio. From fight direction and teaching, Sordelet developed into a writer as well, selling several screenplays and a television series. He and his partner, David Blixt, run an E-publishing company called Sordelet INK.

T. Rick Jones (Production Stage Manager) is excited to be joining MSU as a guest PSM. A 20-year veteran of the Actors’ Equity Association, he is currently the resident stage manager for Nantucket’s White Heron Theatre Company and has previously been the resident SM for Seven Angels Theatre, Ivoryton Playhouse, and Colonial Theatre—Shakespeare in the Park, where he was also the associate producer. Other credits include Regional: Actors Shakespeare Project—Henry VI; As You Like It; White Plains Performing Arts Center—The Color Purple (Regional Premiere); Aida; Gilbert & Sullivan in Brief(s); and Off-Broadway: Sessions, the Musical. Jones also writes for Sherlock Holmes Magazine and is set to have his first piece of fiction published in the forthcoming anthology Sherlock Holmes: Adventures through the Multiverse.

Lorenzo DiAndrea (Cover Artist) This one-of-a-kind piece of artwork was created by artist Lorenzo DiAndrea, a SAORI weaving and silkscreen monoprint artist who produces work under the simple alias of “Lorenzo.” As an artist whose personal narrative includes ongoing medical care as well as support for communication and daily living, Lorenzo has consistently found in the arts an outlet for self-expression, personal growth, and healing. To find out more about Lorenzo, please visit his website at www.LoveLorenzo.art and stay up-to-date by following Lorenzo on Facebook and Instagram @lovelorenzoart.
Cast Biographies

Haley Amann (Siobhan) is a junior in the BFA Acting program with a minor in Film. Previous MSU performance credits include *Top Girls* (Marlene), *Enemy of the People* (Billing), F.A.S.T. (*Jesus Hopped the A Train, Intoxicated Love*), and New Works Initiative’s *Grey Lady* (Chorus).

Elise Bednar (Voice 6/Mrs. Alexander/Station Guard/Mrs. Gascoyne/Woman on Train/Information Understudy) is a freshman in the MSU BFA Acting program. Previously she studied acting at Governor’s School in North Carolina, and acted in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* at MSU.

Edmillie Binet (Voice 6/Mrs. Alexander/Station Guard) is a sophomore BFA Acting major with a minor in Film. This is her first official production at MSU. Her previous credits include writing and directing an original play, *Deadline*, for F.A.S.T. and background work for productions like HBO’s *And Just Like That* and Amazon Prime’s *Shelter*.

Elijah Davis (Ensemble) is a freshman in the BFA Acting major. This is Davis’s second production at MSU, his first being *As You Like It*. He is excited to learn from his crewmates and cast and be in many more MSU productions to come.

Jake Declan (Christopher Boone/Ed/Duty Sergeant/Voice 2/Drunk 1/Roger/Ensemble/Voice 3/Mr. Thompson/Station Policeman Understudy) is a BFA Acting junior, and this will be his fourth MSU production. Declan was the male swing for spring 2020’s Bully Tour and participated in the MSU New Student Play Festival. You may have seen him as Actor 1/White Man in *We Are Proud to Present…* and as Satan in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*.

Jannette Fisher (Ensemble) is a senior at MSU studying in the Design Tech Management program with a concentration in costume design. This is her first show at MSU.

Brett Fox (Duty Sergeant/Voice 2/Drunk 1/Roger) is a New York–based actor. His first show at MSU was *Lysistrata*, and he was working on an educational sketch show about bullying known as Theater on the Move up until the pandemic cut the process short. Recently, he has worked with “The UnderGrads” in the short films *50’s ex* and *Burglary*. 
Erwin Guerrero (Policeman 1/Uncle Terry/London Policeman) recently performed in the NWI’s production of *The Names We Gave Him* as Claude and Poussin. His other work includes Bergen PAC’s productions of *Aladdin* (The Sultan) and *The Producers* (Bryan). Guerrero is currently in their final semester at MSU where they will receive a bachelor of arts in Theatre Studies with a minor in Musical Theatre.

Alex Key (Judy) is a BFA Acting senior, and *Curious Incident*... is her seventh and final show at MSU. This show is very dear to her heart, and she can’t wait for everyone to see the cast’s hard work pay off.

Andrew Linden (Christopher Boone) is appearing in his third mainstage performance at MSU. Other credits include Pope Joan/Nell (*Top Girls*) and Lord/Forester (*As You Like It*). Outside credits include Edna (*Hairspray*), Billy Flynn (*Chicago*), and Dave (*Almost, Maine*).

Khalil Louigene (Voice 3/Mr. Thompson/Station Policeman) is a sophomore in the BFA Acting program and is extremely excited to be in his first-ever mainstage production at MSU. #AGTG

Laura J. McHale (Policeman 2/Number 40/Lady in the Street/London Transport, Siobhan/Judy Understudy) is a freshman Acting major who is thrilled to be in her first-ever mainstage production at MSU. Previous shows include *Yellow Moon* (Leila Suleiman), *Guys and Dolls* (Sarah Brown), and *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Molly Aster). Instagram (@laurajmchale

Ethan Metz (Ed) is wrapping up his senior year at MSU. He most recently appeared as Dom in the production of *Drought* at the Latea Theater and in MSU’s mainstage *As You Like It*. Some other notable performances include Bay Street Theater’s *Safe Space*, *Incognito*, and *Annie Get Your Gun* in Sag Harbor. Metz will be closing his MSU career as Ed in *Curious Incident*... and is excited to move forward having received his BFA in Acting.

Anna Moceri (Voice 5/Punk Girl/Woman on Heath) is a junior BFA Acting major at MSU. Her previous MSU show credits include *As You Like It* (Amiens) and *The Wolves* (Understudy). Other show credits include *Cabaret* (Lulu/Gorilla/Dance Captain) and *Small Mouth Sounds* (Judy). She is currently the music director at Center Moriches High School.
Jace Pastras (Ensemble/Policeman 1/Uncle Terry/London Policeman/Voice 4/Reverend Peters/Drunk 2/Man on Phone/Mr. Wise/Man with Socks/Man Behind Counter Understudy) is ecstatic for his second MSU production. This fall he was in *As You Like It* as Dennis and Jacques Understudy at MSU. He is also a freshman BFA Acting major and looking forward to the years ahead.

Anthony Piccininni (Reverend Peters/Voice 4/Man on Phone/Drunk 2) is thrilled to be in his third production at MSU. Previous credits include Shakespeare’s *As You Like It* and *Brooklyn’s Bridge*.

Marie-Pier Poulin (Mrs. Shears/Voice 1/Posh Woman/Shopkeeper) is a French-Canadian performer from Québec City, Canada. She attended a three-year musical theater conservatory program at Collège Lionel-Groulx, located in Montreal. Upon graduating, she was cast as Elle Woods in Montreal’s first French production of *Legally Blonde, The Musical*. Shortly after the production ended, Poulin decided to pursue her BFA in Acting at MSU, where she is currently a junior. Her credits at MSU include New Play Festival 2021 and Chorus/Understudy in *’Tasha*. This is Poulin’s first mainstage and in-person show at MSU, and she’s really grateful to be part of this journey.

Jared Preston (Mr. Wise/Man with Socks/Man Behind Counter) is a sophomore in the BFA Acting program. He has most recently appeared in MSU’s *’Tasha* and *As You Like It*, directed by Tia James and Avery Glymph, respectively.

Allison Rosofsky (Policeman 2/Number 40/Lady in the Street/London Transport/Voice 5/Punk Girl/Woman on Heath/Ensemble/Mrs. Shears/Voice 1/Posh Woman/Shopkeeper Understudy) is a freshman in the BFA Acting program at MSU and ecstatic to be working on her second mainstage production. Her most recent credit includes *As You Like It*, directed last semester by Avery Glymph.

Jessica Sconfienza (Mrs. Gascoyne/Woman on Train/Information) is a sophomore BFA Acting major. She most recently worked on *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* at MSU. Other credits include Kaufman’s *The Laramie Project* and Francke’s *Father of the Bride*. 