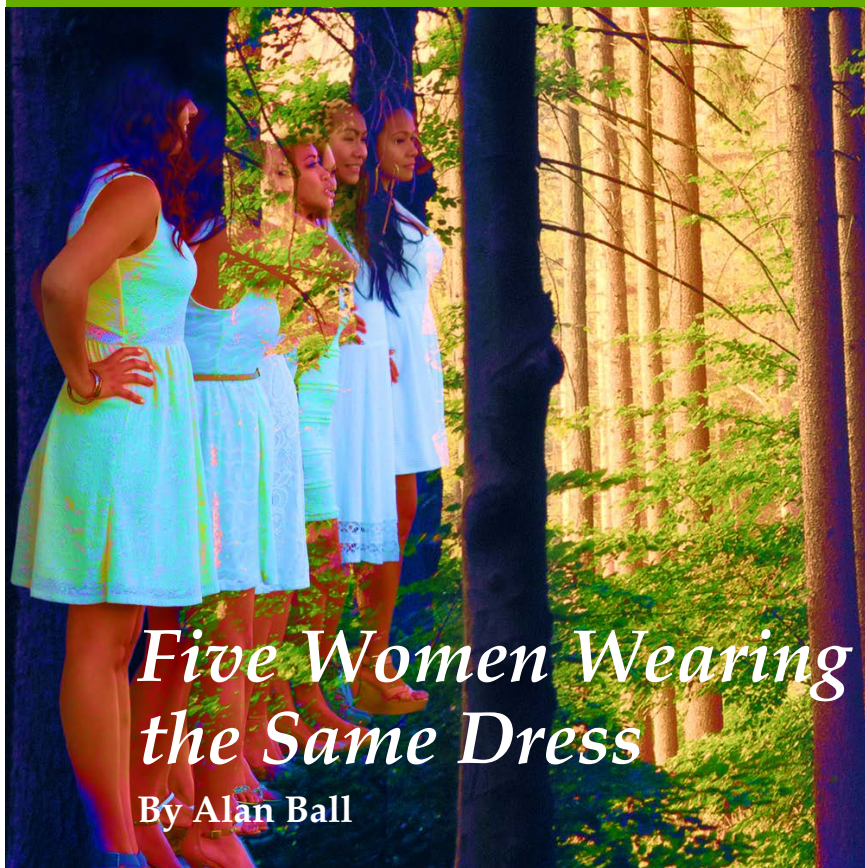


SUNY New Paltz
2022- 2023 Mainstage Season
McKenna Theater



*Five Women Wearing
the Same Dress*

By Alan Ball

December 2 & 3 at 8 p.m.
December 4 at 2 p.m.

F&PA
SCHOOL OF FINE &
PERFORMING ARTS

 **New Paltz**
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

www.newpaltz.edu/theatre

Director's Note by Jenna Sargent

March 12th, 2020. That was the last time Parker Theatre was home to the Praxis Series. It's been almost two whole years since the department has hosted a fully produced production in this theater; and I could not be more honored, or more thankful, on this day of December 2nd/3rd or 4th of 2022, to be welcoming back the space with all of you!

This production of *Five Women Wearing the Same Dress*, by Alan Ball, is a celebration of each other, and meant to blur the lines between audience and actor. In the days of Shakespeare, Elizabethan-Aged Theater, there was no line between audience and actor. Asides would be given to the audience members sitting at the actors feet, and soliloquies weren't given alone on a stage to a dark room; they were given in broad daylight to a crowd. As time moved on, and as modern theatre evolved, we had constructed a fourth wall between the players and watchers. Suddenly, it was no longer "cool" to have fights or try to take attention away from the players on stage (this is sarcasm. It was never cool.). But the 4th wall did more than just aid in theatre etiquette, it also blocked some of our most intimate connections with one another as artists and audience.

My goal in this production was to not remove the 4th wall, that wall is a key player in our story, but rather to create some holes -windows- to peer through. A principle of comedy is voyeurism (think of all your favorite sitcoms, *The Office*, *Friends*, etc.) There is a fly on the wall effect that lets us feel in on the joke. I've flipped that premise into reverse with this show, so not only will you be watching, but you will also be watched. It may be when a character looks into the mirror, or while on their bike, or at any moment looking out from the stage, the actor behind the character will see you, and you will see them. Finally, in that moment, connection.

I hope tonight you will feel that connection, not only to my wonderfully talented cast, but to each other. The lights in the house are on to illuminate you, and remind you that you are not alone, that you are just as key a part in this show as the ones on stage. I encourage you to laugh and be present with the people around you, that energy will carry on into the players, as well as the other audience members.

After nearly two years of an empty theatre, and for many of us, empty hearts, let's relax tonight and enjoy our time together. Let's stop separating from one another and realize we are all here together, actors and audience, consumers and creators, artists all in our own right. After all, we wouldn't be here without you watching us. So here's to you audience members! And here's to us, to Praxis, to Parker Theatre, and to those five women in that darn same dress!

Thank you all so much, and enjoy the show!

Dramaturgy Note by Matt Doherty

In 1947, author John Gunther referred to Knoxville, Tennessee, the setting for our play, as "the ugliest city in America." Whether or not this directly prompted the rapid structural and economic reform of the city over the following forty is anyone's guess, but Knoxville would make sure it became a city that no one would call ugly again. At least, not on the outside. Internally, the city faced the same issues that all major metropolises faced in the 1980s, from gentrification of neighborhoods to encroachment of larger businesses over smaller ones to an unwillingness for ideas to change as the city and the world around the people of Knoxville. Then there were the issues facing the queer community of Knoxville, both from the general pushback to queer people and the incoming AIDS crisis being thrust upon them. Knoxville had, and still has, a prominent queer community, who despite all the challenges being faced by them would not let themselves be defined by those challenges. They are people who loved, laughed, and found joy within one another, something that many people of the era struggled to do as more and more crises were being thrust upon them.

Alan Ball, the playwright, has always been an outspoken queer voice in theater, film, and television, which can even be seen in a work as early in his career as *Five Women Wearing the Same Dress*. Mindy is an outspoken lesbian who doesn't let the jabs and issues of those around her get her down, making her arguably the most secure out of all of the characters. *Five Women Wearing the Same Dress* shows a group of women coming together over a series of shared traumas by the same people. But these traumas aren't what make these women who they are. It's what they do outside of that, how they interact with others, and the way they're able to make each other laugh that makes them. Though this play makes reference to hard issues, it is ultimately a comedy, and shows us people overcoming hardship rather than succumbing to it. In a world with so much hardship as it is, a laugh can make all the difference.

Five Women Wearing the Same Dress

By Alan Ball

Director

Jenna Sargent

Costume Designer

Anastasia Blanchet

Dramaturg

Matt Doherty

Hair & Makeup Supervisor

Kevin Maguire

Intimacy/Consent Consultant

Connie Rotunda

Lighting Designer

Abby Rose

Production Stage Manager

Max Rosenfeld

Production Manager

Catherine Doherty

Producers

Kaitlyn Kociela Taylor

Jenna Sargent

Props Artisan

Julia Rattenni

Scenic Designer

Caitlin Auriemmo

Sound Designer

Keirsten Lamora

Technical Director

Sylviane Sherwin

Wardrobe Supervisor

Kevin Maguire

Cast

Meredith

Hailee Elias

Trisha

Cayla Schimmel

Frances

Eileen Bronk

Mindy

Annika Wakefield

Georganne

Stephanie Schiano

Tripp

Chris Tomer

Understudy Frances,

Olivia Riddle

Georganne and Trisha

Understudy Mindy,

Mia Mirabile

Meredith and Tripp

Five Women Wearing the Same Dress is presented by special arrangement with Broadway Licensing, LLC, servicing the Dramatists Play Service collection.

Parker Theatre is situated on the ancestral lands of the Esopus, Munsee and Lenape People.

Crew

Assistant Director
Sky Rolnick

Assistant Stage Manager
Aditri Khadilkar

Production Assistant
Tiffany Poborsky

Assistant Costume Designer
Faith Abigayle

Lightboard Operator
Maya Stark

Assistant Lighting Designer
Colin Gallagher

Production Electrician
Maya Battistella

Head Carpenter
Katherine de Onis

Associate Sound Designer
LeeAnn Epstein

Sound Board Operator
Emerson Wachnik

Crew

Dresser
Lindsay Feldherr

Costume Technicians
Faith Abigayle, Gina Lardi, Ashlie Morrison, Ellie Brown, Kiana Duggan-Haas, Irem Berfin Yasar, Anastasia Blanchet, Shaniah Alexander, Abbe Schulties, Sage Engasser, and Hailee Elias

Front of House
Katie Gudzik, Evan Finke, Stefan Kloss, Millie Topper, Cayla Schimmel, Robert Manzueta, Ryan D'Alessandro, Ellie Brown

Electricians

Adam Castanza, Khalil Coates, Amelia Murray, Jess Romanowski, Abby Rose, Max Rosenfeld, Maya Stark, Gabriella Wright

Scene Shop

Max Rosenfeld, Mack Baird, Jocelyn Mejia, Chris Tomer, Maya Battistella, Khiara Richards, Luiza Braga, Dani Procaccini, Sebastian Rodriguez

Sound Load-In Crew

Julia Dubinsky, Jacob Lingley, Ashlie Morrison, Shady Tadroos

Back Stage Crew

Hope Lantz-Gefroh

**Content Warning: play contains discussions of abortion, sexual assault and grooming.*