

# THE ROOMMATE JEN SILVERMAN

**DIRECTED BY  
SAMANTHA GINN**



**NEW  
VILLAGE  
ARTS**

**APR 1 - 23, 2023**  
**SAN DIEGO PREMIERE**



# THE ROOMMATE JEN SILVERMAN

DIRECTED BY  
SAMANTHA GINN

## SETTING

**Time:** Now. Summer.

**Place:** A house in Iowa City.

<i>Stage Manager</i>	<b>ALEX HAJJAR*</b>
<i>Assistant Stage Manager</i>	<b>JOE PRETE</b>
<i>Scenic Design</i>	<b>CHRISTOPHER SCOTT MURRILLO^</b>
<i>Costume Design</i>	<b>KATRINA DEROCHE</b>
<i>Lighting Design</i>	<b>ANNELISE SALAZAR</b>
<i>Sound Design</i>	<b>MARCUS RICO &amp; SAMANTHA GINN</b>
<i>Props Design</i>	<b>ANDREA MORIARTY</b>
<i>Intimacy Director</i>	<b>KANDACE CRYSTAL</b>
<i>Master Carpenter</i>	<b>GREG ERTEL</b>
<i>Production Manager</i>	<b>NATHAN WAITS</b>

## CAST

*Sharon* **MILENA (SELLERS) PHILLIPS\***

*Robyn* **KIM STRASSBURGER**

*Understudy/ French Voiceover* **Wendy Maples**

*Voice of Sharon's son* **Elijah Howlet**

THE ROOMMATE runs approximately 95 minutes with no intermission.

## AUDIENCE ADVISORY:

Herbal cigarettes and an herbal mix are smoked in this production.

*The Roommate* is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. [www.concordtheatricals.com](http://www.concordtheatricals.com).

*The Roommate* was produced by Williamstown Theatre Festival in July 2017

Mandy Greenfield, Artistic Director

World premiere in the 2015 Humana Festival of New American Plays at  
ACTORS THEATRE OF LOUISVILLE

*The Roommate* was developed in part with assistance from  
SPACE on Ryder Farm ([www.spaceonryderfarm.com](http://www.spaceonryderfarm.com))

\*Appearing through an Agreement between this theatre, New Village Arts, and Actor's Equity Association,  
the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

^Member of United Scenic Artists - Local USA 829 - IATSE

## NEW VILLAGE ARTS ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

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**DAVINA VAN DUSEN**  
**TOM AGOSTA**  
**ZARRIYAH CHENAULT**  
**ALEXA LUGO**  
**CHRISTIANE HURNAUS**  
**DOMINIQUE DUREN**  
**JAC MANNION**  
**KIARA HUDLIN**  
**RENEE FEGAN**  
**TORI JONES**  
**JACOB CREVOISERAT**

### PRODUCTION STAFF

**NICK TIMM**  
**JESSE JAMES CONSTANTINO**  
**GLENN JOHNSON**

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Three years ago, our plan was to open this play in March 2020. We were well into rehearsals, the set had been built, and we were about to head into tech weekend. Then I get a call. "The theatre is shut down for the week." Then I get another call a week later. "The theatre is shut down indefinitely." *The Roommate* was canceled and life, as we knew it, would never be the same.

A month into the pandemic, ironically, I was suddenly on the search for roommates. Due to financial hardship, I had to find a new place to live. So, I made a call. "Mom. Dad. Can I come home?" Not in my original life plan at 36, but they welcomed me in without hesitation. Oh, if you were a fly on a wall at the Ginn household. Cut to my father, a very chatty morning person wanting to interact and talk about my car insurance at 7am. Cut to myself, a very grumpy morning person who does not like to interact with anyone until after the second cup of coffee is complete. We made it through two and a half years of living together under one roof, and in hindsight, I am so grateful for that time with my parents. Roommates come into your life for a moment in time...and truly change you.

Jen Silverman's play captures so much of the hilarity and vulnerability that comes with living with a roommate. Especially a roommate who is your complete opposite. These characters are also in moments of their lives when they are dealing with immense amounts of change...or trying to change and failing at it. Change and growth is uncomfortable. Silverman has written a play that allows us to delight in watching these characters deal with life when they're trying to burn it all down and start over. Thank you to Kim and Milena for finding the humor and the heart of this play every night. The laughter has been healing.

So here we are. Three years later. We have changed in so many ways. For one thing, we value understudies more (thank you Wendy Maples!). Sometimes our plans do not go as we wish. But I'm glad Kristianne Kurner decided to give me another call. "Ready to direct *The Roommate* again?" Yes. Yes, I am. Here we go, take two.

**Samantha Ginn**  
Director



We acknowledge that The Dea Hurston New Village Arts Center operates on the unceded land of the Payómkawichum (Pye-om-ko-wi-chom) (Luiseño) and Kumeyaay peoples. We further acknowledge that NVA was founded upon exclusions and erasures of many Indigenous peoples, including those who are the traditional Custodians and First people of the land on which we work, play, gather, share, and learn.

## HOW TO SUPPORT

During this production of *The Roomate*, New Village Arts is amplifying Indigenous Women Rising.

Indigenous Women Rising is committed to honoring Native and Indigenous People's inherent right to equitable and culturally safe health options through accessible health education, re-sources, and advocacy.

Please consider donating via the QR code below.

SCAN TO DONATE!



## COMING UP

**SINGIN'**  
*IN THE*  
**RAIN**

**MAY 12 - JUL 2, 2023**

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*For information about NVA's Board,  
contact Rae Henderson-Gray,  
Managing Director at  
[rae@newvillagearts.org](mailto:rae@newvillagearts.org)*

**MILENA (SELLERS) PHILLIPS\****(she/her)***Sharon**

Milena is delighted to be working with the very talented Kim Strassburger and director Sam Ginn. She was last seen as Dorothy in *1222 Oceanfront, A Black Family Christmas* (New Village Arts), she is one of the co-creators and the author of the original songs within the show. Milena also appeared in *Intimate Apparel, Having Our Say, and Men on Boats* (New Village Arts). Other credits include *Seven Guitars, King Hedley II* (Cygnet Theatre) (Critics Circle Award for Best Ensemble), *Bull In A China Shop* (Diversionsary Theatre), and *Rasheeda Speaking* (Vantage Theater). TV credits include: *When Vows Break, The Bold and The Beautiful, and Blood Runs Cold*. Milena is the co-founder and director of the Jonathan Sellers & Charlie Kever Foundation, a non-profit dedicated to the safety and well-being of children. She co-authored the children's book *Always Fly Away* with writer and child advocate Deborah Dorn.

**KIM STRASSBURGER***(she/her)***Robyn**

Kim is happy to return to New Village Arts in *The Roommate*. Acting credits include: *Simpatico* (New Village Arts); *Agatha in The Moors, Scrooge in Scrooge in Rouge, and Dear Harvey* (Diversionsary Theatre); Emma Brookner in *The Normal Heart* (Craig Noel Award), *All in the Timing, Parasite Drag, The Pillowman* (ion Theatre); *Noises Off and Biedermann and the Firebugs* (Cygnet Theatre); *Berzerkergang, Kid Simple, A Dream Play, and Bronze* (Sledgehammer Theatre). Kim was the recipient of a National Artist Teacher Fellowship that funded her study at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA). Kim is also a member of Lincoln Center Theater's Directors Lab. In addition to her professional work, Kim teaches Acting and Theatre at the Coronado School of the Arts.

**WENDY MAPLES (she/her)****Understudy**

Wendy Maples (Understudy Sharon/Robyn) is thrilled to be back at New Village Arts where she was last (not) seen playing backup keys on *Buddy!* Stage credits include *Steel Magnolias* (Backyard Renaissance) *For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls* (The Roustabouts Theatre Co.) *Dance Nation* and the world premiere

of *Orange Julius* (MOXIE Theatre) *PIPPIN, Fair Use* (Diversionsary Theatre) *Dog Sees God* (InnerMission Productions.) Additionally, she has directed and performed with The Playwrights Project, InnerMission Productions and the Theatre Arts School of San Diego. Wendy is a San Diego theatre teacher and playwright; her original writing has been featured in the Bocón! Festival of New Plays, La Jolla Playhouse's *WithOut Walls* (WOW) Festival, and in *Palabras del Cielo*, to be published later this year by Dramatic Publishing. Thank you to Sam, Kim, and Melina.

**CREATIVE TEAM****SAMANTHA GINN (she/her)****Director**

Samantha is thrilled to be directing *The Roommate* at NVA! Other professional directing credits include: *Falling* with InnerMission Productions. Samantha also loves directing summer productions for actors with neurodiversity with NVA. Some of those shows include: *The Little Prince, Secret Superheroes, The Great, Smelly, Slobbery, Small-Tooth Dog* (Dove Library), *Stellaluna, The Mechanicals* (The Flower Fields). In May, *Stellaluna* will also be going on a show tour to schools around North County. Currently, Samantha is also the Director of Education at NVA and has enjoyed teaching the "Professional Acting Training" program for actors with neurodiversity in the new education room. Apart from directing and teaching, Samantha also loves performing and can't wait to get back onstage soon. She has been seen in over 50 productions across San Diego. Some of her past NVA shows: *Sylvia, The Miss Firecracker Contest, The Weir, Men on Boats, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, and The Servant of Two Masters* (co-writer). "I would like to dedicate this show to my roommates during the pandemic... my parents! Love ya Mom and Dad! Sorry I'm not great at cleaning dishes."

**ALEX HAJJAR\****(he/him)***Stage Manager**

Select Broadway / Touring: *Blast! Japan Tour, Les Miserables, After Midnight, Fun Home, Cursed Child, The Realistic Joneses*. Select Off-B'way: *English* (Atlantic) *Into the Woods, Fun Home, Head of Passes* (The Public), *Aubergine* (Playwrights Horizons) *Georgia McBride, School Girls, or... (MCC), This American Life (BAM), Belleville* (NYTW), *We are Proud to Present* (SoHo Rep). Select Regional: *The Color Purple* (Muny), *Everybody Black* (ATL), *The Roommate, February House, Train Driver* (Longwharf)

# CREATIVE TEAM

## **JOE PRETE** (he/him)

### **Assistant Stage Manager**

Joseph Prete (ASM) - Joe has joined NVA during the production of *The Servant of Two Masters* in 2019. Recently he has worked as part of the backstage crew for the Moonlight Amphitheater during their 2022 summer season. He is grateful to be working with such an incredible cast again along with one of his favorite directors.

## **KATRINA DEROCHE** (she/her)

### **Costume Design**

Katrina DeRoche is excited to be back at New Village Arts after working on NVA's production of *The Ferryman*. She has worked as a costume designer in San Diego for several years. In addition to her design work, Katrina is a co-founder of Groundworks Theatre - a local educational theatre organization. Katrina was named an Industry Expert by the Del Mar Unified School District for her work extending arts education beyond the classroom walls. Her most recent costume design credits include *The Laramie Project*, *Radium Girls*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Groundworks Theatre).

## **ANNELISE SALAZAR** (she/her)

### **Lighting Design**

Annelise, is happy to be back at New Village Arts this year, where she has previously designed *The Ferryman*, *Leonard Bernstein's New York*, and *Desert Rock Garden* (SD Theatre Critics Circle nomination). Elsewhere: *Irma Vep* (Diversions), *Mother of the Maid* (MOXIE); *Water by the Spoonful* (Cygnet Theatre, ALD), *How The Grinch Stole Christmas* (Old Globe, ALD). Past work includes Bay Street Theatre, Tuyo Theatre, and Bicon theatre. Annelise earned a BFA in Design and Technology from Millikin University and was an MFA student at San Diego State University. Thank you to KK and the entire NVA family for their fantastic support. As Always, Love to my partner Emily for standing beside me as I pursue this incredible career!

## **MARCUS RICO** (he/him)

### **Co-Sound Design**

Marcus graduated from Mt. San Jacinto College with an AA in Audio Technology. Previous NVA credits: *Leonard Bernstein's New York* (Sound Designer/Sound Engineer), *Into the Woods* (Sound Engineer), *1222 Oceanfront: A Black Family Christmas* (Sound Engineer), *Beehive* (Sound Engineer), *Murder for Two* (Sound Engineer), *Around the World in 80 Days* (Sound Engineer), *Little Shop of Horrors* (Sound Engineer).

## **SAMANTHA GINN** (she/her)

### **Co-Sound Design**

See bio above.

## **CHRISTOPHER SCOTT MURRILLO** (he/him)

### **Scenic Design**

Christopher is a scenic designer, artist, and educator based in Los Angeles, CA. He is thrilled to be working with the New Village Arts once again. Christopher is a member of United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829. Additionally, Christopher is an assistant professor of Theatre Arts at Loyola Marymount University. He is a 2016 recipient of the Princess Grace Foundation Theater Fellowship - Pierre Cardin Award. <http://www.christopherscottmurrillo.com/>.

## **ANDREA MORIARTY** (she/her)

### **Props Design**

Andrea is at a thrift store 4 times a week due to her son's obsession with VHS tapes. This role has given her a new meaning on that odyssey. She previously assisted with the Props Design for *The Ferryman*.

## **KANDACE CRYSTAL** (she/her)

### **Intimacy Director**

Kandace is a multi-hyphenate theatre maker who graduated with a BFA in Acting from Florida State University and is a teaching Artist at Intimacy Directors and Coordinators, Inc. Select intimacy credits include: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (The Old Globe), *The Children* (Moxie Theatre), *Ripped* (Loud Fridge Theatre Group), *Murder on the Orient Express* (Coronado Playhouse). She hopes to continue advocating for safe spaces and reducing harm in our industry. Feel free to keep up with her journey on social media @KandaceCrystal on all platforms.

## **NATHAN WAITS** (he/him)

### **Production Manager**

Nathan has been set building and stage managing productions around San Diego for 9 years. Previously, he has served as the master carpenter for *1222 Oceanfront*, and stage manager for *Desert Rock Garden*, and *The Ferryman* (New Village Arts). He served as the resident set builder for Scripps Ranch Theatre (including shows such as *Lucky Stiff*, *Extreme Home Makeover*, *The Outsider*, *I Hate Hamlet*, *The Taming*, and more) the resident set builder/designer for Sage Creek High School (*Les Miserables*, *Chicago*, *Legally Blonde* and more), and served as the technical director for *Mother of the Maid* (MOXIE Theatre). Other credits include serving as the stage manager for *Mary Poppins*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, and *Lion King* (Carlsbad Community Theatre); *Shrek the Musical*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, and *Beauty & the Beast* (Oceanside Theatre Company). He is very happy to be continuing his work in the theatre world and he hopes you enjoy the show!



**Jen Silverman** is a playwright, novelist, poet and screenwriter. Jen's plays include *Collective Rage: A Play in 5 Betties* (Woolly Mammoth, MCC, Southwark Playhouse London); *The Moors* (Yale Rep, Playwrights Realm); *The Roommate* (Humana Festival, Williamstown, Steppenwolf, South Coast, Long Wharf) and *Witch* (Writer's Theatre, Geffen, Huntington). Jen's plays have been produced internationally in Australia, the UK, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Spain, and elsewhere. Jen is the author of the debut novel *We Play Ourselves* and the story collection *The Island Dwellers* (Random House) and the poetry chapbook *Bath*, selected by Traci Brimhall for Driftwood Press. Additional work has appeared in *Vogue*, *The Paris Review*, *Literary Hub*, *Ploughshares*, the *Yale Review* and elsewhere. Jen wrote *The Miranda Obsession* as a narrative podcast for Audible/ Vice, starring Rachel Brosnahan. Jen is a three-time MacDowell Fellow, a member of New Dramatists, and an Affiliated Artist with New Georges, Clubbed Thumb, Space on Ryder Farm, and the Playwrights Center. Honors: The Helen Merrill Award, the Yale Drama Series Award, the Lilly Award, Fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council. Jen is a 2022 National Endowment for the Arts Fellow (prose) and 2022 Guggenheim Fellow (theatre). Jen also writes for TV and film. Education: Brown, Iowa, Juilliard.