



ALTARENA PLAYHOUSE



Artistic Director: Katina Letheule

THE CLEAN HOUSE

by Sarah Ruhl

AUGUST 9 - SEPTEMBER 8, 2019

DIRECTED BY JACQUI HERRERA

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ALTARENA PLAYHOUSE PRESENTS

THE CLEAN HOUSE

By **SARAH RUHL**

Directed by JACQUI HERRERA

PRODUCTION SPONSORS

Gary & Katherine Hoffer
Beverly Blatt & David Filipek
Jennifer Nixon & Charlie Wood

Presented by



Kim & Dale Arrivee

Dona Fuller

THE CAST

LISTED ALPHABETICALLY

MATILDE.....	JANELLE AGUIRRE
LANE.....	MARSHA HARRISON
ANA.....	ADRIANA PALHARES
VIRGINIA.....	JEANETTE SARMIENTO
CHARLES.....	LOUIS SCHILLING

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

In full disclosure, I really struggled with writing the director's notes for this play. I mean, what is this play about? From a theme and thesis standpoint and the lens that I used to direct this piece, this play is about how we humans desperately try to control the forces of life, death, and love. One could make the argument that a simpler way to say this is: This play is about life.

So if this play is about life, I need to summarize what life is about and your guess is as good as mine. The question alone is a surreal thing and I think this is why Sarah Ruhl tells her allegory in this way.

Our author sets her play in "A metaphysical Connecticut or a house that is not far from the city and not far from the sea." All of these characters break the fourth wall and YOU, the audience, becomes another character in this play as they look to you for answers, comfort, validation, or maybe even forgiveness. Why is this important?

Environmental boundaries melt together like one of Dali's clocks as props defy the rules of the set by moving from one space to another with total disregard for traditional theatrical conventions.

Time is distorted as memories of the characters invade the current space and time. Sarah Ruhl is very clear that the two actors playing Ana and Charles should also play Matilde's parents. What is the significance of that mirroring and what does it have to say about love and relationships?

In this world of big ideas, we tried to embrace the beautiful chaos and find our truth in the questions.

Finally, what's the deal with the FISH?!! You will find that we got creative with how we represented some props and actions, a choice we felt was well-supported by the material. To this end and in the interest of not using a living being as a prop, Ana's fish is represented by an artistic rendering of a fish.

We want to thank you for bringing your imagination and open mind and we hope that you enjoy being a part of *The Clean House*.

-Jacqui Herrera

P.S. I feel like I owe everyone I know at least one of my internal organs. Thanks to: Sue Trigg for asking me to direct this beautiful piece and picking a show that gives Women a place to shine; Katina Letheule and the IN-CREDIBLE design team for their patience, support, and guidance; This cast who put their heart, soul, and creativity into every moment and made this process a dream; Cameron, my stage manager extraordinaire, you are a rock star; My Grandfather, Celso Salaiz Jr. who inspired me with his bravery, strength, and love as he faced the final days of his battle with cancer while we were in rehearsals for this play.

Many people have been touched in some way by cancer. If you need support after the show, please reach out for help.

The Cancer Support Community

<https://www.cancersupportcommunity.org>

The Cancer Support Helpline is available for anyone affected by cancer. Call 1-888-749-7610.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Setting:

A metaphysical Connecticut. Or, a house that is not far from the city and not far from the sea.

Intermission between Acts: 15 minutes

There will be wine and refreshments available in the lobby

ABOUT THE ALTARENA PLAYHOUSE

Since 1938, Alameda Little Theatre Inc. has been presenting live theater in Alameda. In 1957 the company acquired an abandoned grocery store on High Street and turned it into the Altarena Playhouse, where we have been presenting creative, intimate, and artistically ambitious stagings of plays, musicals and revues ever since. Because the building was so small, it was decided to seat the audience on all four sides and perform in the middle. Because this style of "in-the-round" theater is often referred to as "arena" seating, the initials of Alameda Little Theatre (ALT) and the "arena" style of performing were combined into the name "ALTarena." Altarena is the oldest continuously operating community theaters in the Bay Area.

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Brian Copeland returns to Altarena!

Not a Genuine Black Man

September 20



Brian's record-setting show about growing up in San Leandro in the '70s. He's performed it around the world, and he brings it back to Altarena.

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The Great American St Show**

September 21

A night of thoughtful and hilarious work by Brian and his pal Charlie Varon, touching on the issues of the day, #MeToo, and turning a red seat blue.



PRODUCTION STAFF

Artistic Director..... Katina Letheule
 Director..... Jacqui Herrera
 Stage Manager..... Cameron King
 Assistant Stage Manager..... Sabrina Serna
 Set Designer, Scenic Carpenter..... Craig Cutting
 Lighting Designer..... Peet Cocke
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 Costume Designer..... Adriana Gutierrez
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WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST



Janelle Aguirre (*Matilde*) . . . A Bay Area native, Janelle is excited about acting in her first production at the Altarena Playhouse, and even more excited to be playing Matilde in the *The Clean House*. Some of her most recent credits include performing as Ana in *Real Women Have Curves* (Douglass Morrison Theatre in Hayward), Dorine in *Tartuffe* (B8 Theatre in Concord), La Guerrillera in *The Prida Project* (Mission Cultural Center in SF), and Sabina and Ensemble in *The Skin of Our Teeth* (Actor's Ensemble of Berkeley). Janelle has had the opportunity to study with some very inspirational Bay Area artists while attending Chabot College Theater of the Arts and Cal State East Bay. She also hopes that you may be inspired by these unique characters that our cast is bringing to life in this incredible show.



Marsha Harrison (*Lane*) . . . A graduate from the University of Oklahoma's School of Performing Arts, Marsha was presented top performance awards for theater and dance. Classically trained in acting, dance, and vocal performance, with repertory and touring work under her belt, she has performed in numerous plays and musicals. As an Artist-In-Residence, she was given the distinction of "Arts For All Performer of the Year" and regarded as a triple threat in productions of *A Chorus Line*, *West Side Story*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, and *Ain't Misbehaving* to name a few. In 2004 Marsha moved to Alameda where she sings for The Home of Truth and is a chorus and board member of Alameda Sings!

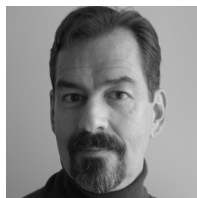


Adriana Palhares (*Ana*) . . . was born and raised in Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, where she attended Villa Lobos Music Conservatory and acting schools Tablado and Cau. In Brasil, she had a Bossa Nova band called Bossinha - a style of Brazilian music derived from samba but placing more emphasis on melody and less on percussion- which is one of her specialties. While at Tablado, she worked as an actress at the local theatre, performing in musicals and also singing in choirs. In 1994, she moved to the United States to work for Club Med in Miami as a singer and entertainer. In 1995, she left Miami and ventured out to the west coast to live in San Francisco for a different life, and fell in love with improv. Once again, she started her own Bossa Nova band, Dahlia, consisting of a trio of voice, percussion and guitar. They are still performing today. Adriana has recently shifted her focus to acting. In 2015 she attended First Take acting school in San Francisco, and is now continuing her studies at the Beverly Hills Playhouse drama and acting school in San Francisco.



Jeanette Sarmiento (*Virginia*) . . . is delighted to be making her Altarena debut in this wonderful play! She first hit the footlights at age 4 as Jiminy Cricket (in top hat and tails) and moved on to Broom Street Theatre and At the Foot of the Mountain in the Midwest. Favorite roles include Frosine (*The Miser*) and Elmire (*Tartuffe*) for Generation Theatre; Costanza (*Enchanted April*) and Amanda Urbane (*The Mystery Plays*) for Masquers Playhouse; and Judy Graves (*Junior Miss*) for Broom Street

Theatre. She has also enjoyed writing and performing radio comedy, and working in bilingual, puppet and mask, readers and solo theatre. She studied locally with Ron Campbell, Joy Carlin and Jean Shelton and is an ACT Summer Training Congress graduate. Thank you dream cast/crew, family, friends and teachers!



Louis Schilling (*Charles*) . . . was last seen at the Altarena Playhouse two years ago in *The First Supper*. Earlier this year, he performed in *Other Desert Cities* and *Come Blow Your Horn* at Pacifica Spindrift Players. Favorite roles include Vanya (*Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*), John Barrymore (*I Hate Hamlet*), Father Flynn (*Doubt*), Henry Drummond (*Inherit the Wind*), Otto Frank (*Diary of Anne Frank*), Joe Keller (*All My Sons*) and Doremus Jessup (*It Can't Happen Here*). Up next is vampire slayer Van Helsing in *Dracula* at Coastal Rep.

SPECIAL THANKS

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Gary & Katherine Hoffer met at UC Berkeley many years ago when she worked in the University administration and he was a physics graduate student. After several post school moves, we ended up back in the Bay Area and have lived in Alameda on Bay Farm Island since 1989. We are now both retired and enjoy travel, good food, old movies, music and walking around Alameda. Gary likes to indulge in his hobby of photography and Katherine asks dog owners where she can find the perfect black toy poodle. We have enjoyed attending plays as subscribers of Altarena, and two years ago we took the next step of becoming production sponsors. We are pleased this year to be supporting the presentation of *The Clean House*.



Beverly Blatt & David Filipek grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and became friends in high school. They re-met at their 25th high school reunion and married the following year. Dave has been in the Bay Area since the 1960's, and Bev moved here in 1988. They both love theater and particularly enjoy having the Altarena a short walk from their house. Both are retired and enjoying a life filled with theater, dance, baseball, basketball, travel, and 7 grandchildren ranging in age from twenty months to nine years.



Jennifer Nixon & Charlie Wood live in Piedmont. They are both Bay Area natives and 4th generation Californians, and greatly enjoy all the wonderful benefits this area has to offer—such as theatre! Charlie has spent nearly his entire career in technology working in Silicon Valley. (If you have ever owned an iPod, iPhone, Palm device – or done banking – his work influenced your experience). He also enjoys classic cars, playing guitar, and cooking. Jennifer is board chair of the San Francisco Choral Artists (sfca.org), an award-winning a capella group that performs an eclectic range of choral music, including many commissions. Jennifer really appreciates that Altarena supports the creation of new plays! Currently retired, her previous positions were in the publishing, environmental, management consulting, and nonprofit (poverty alleviation) sectors. Hobbies include cooking, travel, music, theatre, and her church choir. Married in 2014, they have 4 children between them, all out of the nest!

Pamela Curtis

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WHO'S WHO IN THE PRODUCTION STAFF

Sarah Ruhl (Playwright) . . . has been an award-winning playwright since graduating with an MFA from Brown University in 2001. Her plays include *Eurydice*, *The Clean House*, *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, and *In the Next Room (or The Vibrator Play)*, which was nominated for a Tony and became a finalist for the 2010 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. She is a MacArthur Fellowship recipient. Her latest play, *For Peter Pan on her 70th Birthday*, debuted Off-Broadway in 2017



Katina Letheule (Artistic Director) . . . is humbled to serve as Altarena's new Artistic Director, especially when this theatre holds such a dear place in her heart; it's where she grew up and cut her theatrical teeth. Her training includes studying with Jean Shelton, the Berkeley Rep School, and Goldsmith's College in London. Some favorite projects include directing *The Savannah Sipping Society* and *The Honky Tonk Angels* (for which she received a Theatre Bay Area nomination for outstanding direction of a musical) at ALT, *Dial M For Murder*, *Other Desert Cities* at Chanticleers Theatre, and assistant directing Altarena's productions of *Glengarry Glen Ross* and *The Elephant Man*. She has worked at Douglas Morrisson Theatre, Berkeley City Club, Masquers Playhouse, and Theatre Rhinoceros. She would like to honor the memory of Dick Shore and thank John Maio, both of whom were mentors to her.



Jacqui Herrera (Director) . . . is honored to return to Altarena, this time as director. She was previously seen on stage at Altarena as a cast member of *Eat the Runt*, Sylvie in *The Odd Couple-Female Version*, and Truvy in *Steel Magnolias*. Her last directorial project was *Tuesdays With Morrie* (Chanticleers Theatre), which won Best Production of the Year at their annual awards ceremony. She studied directing with the late great Jim Kirkwood and previous directorial projects include *Conduct of Life* and a new work in development called *Squid and Fishy*. She is so grateful for this opportunity and to Katina Letheule, Chris Ciabattoni, and her superstar design team and crew for their amazing support and guidance in helping us bring *The Clean House* to life. She thanks her BRILLIANT cast for their bravery and passion! She dedicates this show to her Mama Anna, her Mother-in-law Heather Frankle, and her Grandfather Celso Salaiz Jr., who bravely fought their battles with cancer and LIVED until their last breaths. And our friend, Jer Kruse- you will be missed.

Cameron King (Stage Manager) . . . is joining Altarena for his 6th production with the company. He is very excited to finally be stage managing a production from start to finish. The young stage manager has experience mostly backstage, though he has been known to appear under the lights instead of behind them every so often. This has been his first full production as stage manager outside of education and he feels honoured to have been given this role.

Craig Cutting (Set Designer, Scenic Carpenter) . . . was the set builder for Broadway West in Fremont up until it closed last year. Craig helped start that theater 21 years ago. He built the seating, stage, light booth and helped with the lighting - along with building more sets than he can remember. Craig also acted in many plays, winning best actor for *Arsenic and Old Lace* and best supporting actor for *Sylvia*. Now retired, Craig will be Altarena's set builder for as long as he can.

Adriana Gutierrez (Costume Designer) . . . holds a degree in Fashion Design from Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising. She serves as costume designer and

stylist for theater, film, TV, commercials and print. She is the teaching artist for Costume Design at Tamalpais High Schools CTE (Conservatory Theater Ensemble) drama program and at the College of Marin. Her most recent theater work includes *After Miss Julie* (Main Stage West), *Henry IV, Part 1* (Curtain Theater), *Uncle Vanya* (Birdbath Theater), *Teen Stage Pippin* (Berkeley Playhouse), *The River Bride* and *Skin of Our Teeth* at the College of Marin.

Susan Dunn (Prop Designer) . . . is overjoyed to be back working on another Altarena Production! Favorite ALT productions from the past: *Cabaret* (PM), *Loot* (Props) in 2005, *Merrily* (SM) in 2006, *Castle Happy* (PM) in 2017. Other ALT roles since 2002: Historian, President, Box Office, Volunteers, Mural Painter, Emergency Gutter Cleaner, and some other really weird jobs. Other theaters: Berkeley Playhouse, Hillbarn Theater, Island City Opera. Sarah Ruhl is a favorite playwright and I'm thrilled to be contributing to this *Clean House*. Working on my perfect joke for this show. Love to all my family that has supported my theater mania.

Simon Liu (Sound Designer) . . . just finished a short stay with *Volta* by Cirque Du Soleil and is studying Business Management at Cal State East Bay while freelancing various operations with Insomniac Events, Live Nation Entertainment, Latitude 38 Ent, and Cirque Du Soleil (*Volta*, *Luzia: A Waking Dream of Mexico*, *Kurios: Cabinet of Curiosities*). Much love to the Techies, the Cirquadors, and the Night Owls.

Peet Cocke (Lighting Designer) . . . is a director, playwright, and designer based in Oakland. He has an MFA in Dramatic Art from UC Davis and an MFA in Visual Art from USC. He is currently the Properties Director for the Department of Theatre Dance & Performance Studies at UC Berkeley. Some of his directing credits include Adam Douglas's *Pinned Butterfly*, Susan Sobeloff's *Jubilee*, Naomi Wallace's *No Such Cold Thing*, and Charles Mee's *Under Construction* and *Heaven on Earth*. His plays include *Crush and Hum*, *Extraordinary Mysteries*, *Even at A Funeral*, *Already Done to You*, and an original adaptation of the novel *Voices*, by Ursula Le Guin, entitled *Through the Glass Darkly*. For more information visit www.peets-brain.com

Cassandra Brown (Assistant Lighting Designer) . . . is excited to be working with Altarena as an Assistant Lighting Designer. She has also Assisted Lighting Design for Arcadia. Other roles include being assistant props master for *Evita*, run crew for *Ah! Wilderness*, and ASM for *Heathers*.

Randal Smith (Scenic Artisan) . . . joined the technical theatre program at PCPA in the fall of 1988. By midsummer 2017, his career in set painting had begun. His name-dropping includes Lucasfilm, Pixar, and Taco Bell (because the arts ain't easy in this country).

Kelty Robinson (Make-up Consultant) . . . is an Oakland-based artist who offers custom art works, including painting, drawing, and styling hair and makeup for any occasion. Her work can be found and purchased at kweenovartz.com.

Jayne Catalano (Graphic Designer) . . . is a graphic designer based in Marin. When she's not designing graphics, she's an actress. Check out Chromakit.com and her upcoming acting projects at jaymecat.com. She's a founding member of Awesome Theatre and serves as the Artistic Director for ShotzSF.

Laurel Wilton (Program) . . . has been with Altarena since 2012. She works at Encinal Nursery. Laurel graduated from SFSU with a BA, BS and minor. Many thanks to Joe Mallon, and Fred and Carol Chacon.

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Ours is a story of falling in love again with the Bay Area. Particularly Alameda and everything it represents for us; a small town in a culturally stimulating atmosphere. Although both of us were raised in the Southern California area, Kim had the opportunity to attend college in the Bay Area and start his maritime career here, originally owning homes in both Alameda and Oakland. After returning to Southern California, we both pursued our careers and were involved in raising our four sons in Long Beach before we were transplanted back to Northern California in 1989, where we bought our home in Alameda. Although we could be considered newcomers to Alameda compared to the many natives we have met, we now consider ourselves Northern California folk.

Our four sons have attended colleges in California and Washington. We are proud to say that one of them got his degree from Cal Berkeley (go Bears!). Now, two of our sons have settled locally and two have homes in Bend, Oregon. One of our Bend sons has blessed us with three grandchildren. Needless to say, we make many trips up to Bend to spend time with them.

Throughout the years our family has enjoyed so many activities that are available in the Bay Area including hiking, mountain biking, skiing, and sailing on the Bay and the Delta. We have been very active with the Elks and the Aeolian Yacht Club, where Kim was the Past Commodore. Dale volunteers at the Alameda Foodbank and Kim volunteers at the Alameda Community Sailing Center.

We have tended to be involved in more cultural activities since our relocation in Northern California. We enjoy visiting museums and attending the live entertainment offered through many concerts and theater performances. Since our retirement in early 2000, we have found that opportunities for involvement in local activities and volunteering have increasingly filled our lives. We were delighted to discover that an intimate live theater was located right here in Alameda and we became Al-tarena season subscribers. The opportunity to be members and contributors to this historic Playhouse has brought us a great sense of fulfillment.



-Kim and Dale Arrivee

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October 4 - November 3, 2019

Picasso at the LAPIN AGILE

Written by Steve Martin
Directed by Timothy Beagley



Paris, October 1904: The Lapin Agile, beloved Montmartre watering hole to struggling artists and would-be geniuses, welcomes two young, and soon-to-be legends, for one extraordinary night. Pablo Picasso and Albert Einstein, whose egos are as big as their intellects. These two spar with the quirky and unique regulars and each other about art, science, fame, inspiration, sex, love, and the promise of the 20th century. Throw into this mix a mysterious visitor, and you're in for a brilliant, witty and hilariously charming evening of theatre.

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