

Regional Premiere

the ~~x~~ Lifespan of a Fact ~~x~~

by Jeremy Kareken & David Murrell
and Gordon Farrell

DIRECTED BY
CHRISTY MONTOUR-LARSON

September 18 - October 16

Season Sponsors

Chip Horne & Jan Kennaugh
Diana & Mike Kinsey
Susan & Jeremy Shamos
Lori & Jim Steinberg
The Harold & Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust

Platinum Show Sponsors

Ann Corrigan & Kent Rice
Karloynn Lestrud

Gold Show Sponsors

Barbara Bridges
Lynne & Jon C. Montague-Clouse
Mickey Zeppelin In Honor of Lulu Zeppelin

Silver Show Sponsors

Gary & Kathryn Dudley

ABOUT CURIOUS

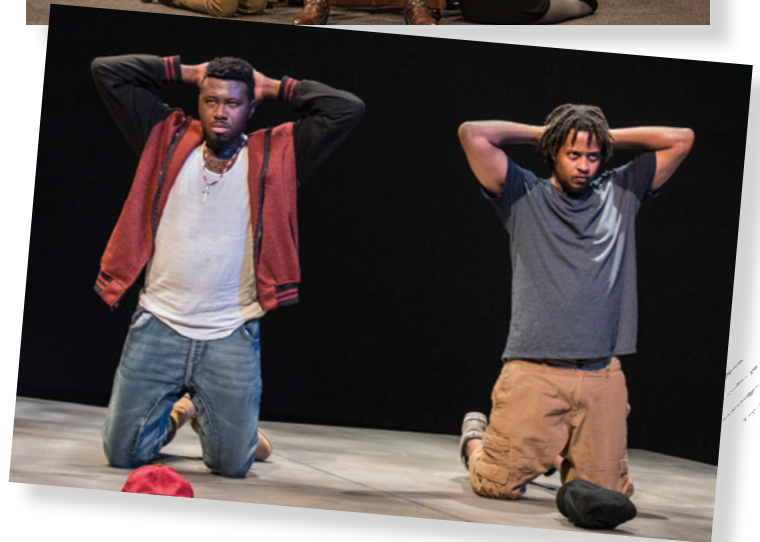
NO GUTS NO STORY

“No guts, no story” embodies the ethos of Curious Theatre Company. Established in 1997 by a vanguard Artistic Company that has since grown to 24 professional actors, designers, and directors, Curious brings the best new theatre to Denver. We produce thought-provoking plays designed to challenge ideas, stir emotions, and leave audiences thinking and talking for days.

Curious has cultivated a local and national reputation as a destination for artists and playwrights to foster and develop new work, and as a place where audiences are challenged.

Now in our third decade of bringing thought-provoking theatre to Denver, Curious Theatre Company’s rich history showcases our commitment to playwrights with gutsy things to say.

The Secretary, 2020



Pass Over, 2019

A NOTE FROM THE PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

On Friday, March 13, 2020, the lights went dark here at Curious. At the time, like almost everyone else in the world, none of us had any idea that it would be 18 long and unimaginable months before we would be able to gather the Curious family together again. Like many other things that we took for granted before the pandemic, our reasons to gather—opening nights, Curious New Voices, special events—now seem even more powerful and bonding than ever before. For me, my appreciation and gratitude for each and every one of you has grown immensely.

I have always believed that the real magic of live theatre is not only the actors transforming into characters, or the designers imagining and constructing entire worlds onstage, or the incredible stories that we have the honor of bringing to life on our stage; the real power of live theatre is embedded in the communion involved in the act of coming together *in person*, of witnessing *collectively*, and of engaging in a real-time *shared* experience. Nothing can come even close to replicating that, and if there is one decent thing that comes out of these past 18 months, may it be that we never, ever take that for granted again.

Thank you for keeping your faith in the work that we do here at Curious, thank you for continuing to believe in the power of live theatre, and most of all—thank you for coming back! We are all so incredibly fortunate that this Curious community has rallied alongside us at every step of the way! Although none of us knows what the future may hold, I think that now, one thing that we do all know is that we will find our way back together again. No. Matter. What.

And with that...welcome to Season 24! And to the Regional Premiere of *The Lifespan of a Fact*. I hope that you enjoy this show in a way that you haven't in a *very, very* long time!



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chip Walton'.

Chip Walton
Producing Artistic Director



**SUPPORT
CURIOUS** → → →

Help support Curious's return to the stage by making a donation at CuriousTheatre.org/donate

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

True words are not beautiful. Beautiful words are not true.
— Lao-tzu

How negotiable is a fact? Are any facts negotiable? If so, which ones and who decides?

John D’Agata is a real-life author who wrote a real-life essay about a real-life teenager who committed suicide in Las Vegas. The essay was then fact-checked by a real-life fact-checker named Jim Fingal. What resulted from that assignment was a wealth of arguments, negotiations, and revisions as the two struggled to navigate the boundaries of “truth and accuracy and whether it is appropriate for a writer to substitute one for the other.”

So, in 2012 they wrote a book about their experience. In a way. Whereas the argument in the book is partially about the “shaping” that’s necessary in all art forms, D’Agata and Fingal recreated some of their exchanges, completely fabricated others, and cast themselves as two characters that were loosely based on them but were not *actually* them. As a result, the book touched a nerve in literary and journalistic circles and those who like to argue about ethics in art.

One Sunday morning, playwright David Murrell read the passionately negative *New York Times* review of the book. “It just struck me—this is classic—this is a play right here,” and reached out to his frequent collaborator, Jeremy Kareken. Fittingly, the playwrights were free to draw inspiration from the book but were not bound by it. “We have no responsibility to the real people involved,” said Murrell. “The book is a tower of confabulations—embellishment and imagination atop embellishment and imagination. This play is the latest iteration of that.” After

a six-year development process, Gordon Farrell joined the team as it prepared to open on Broadway in 2018.

This play wants you to grapple with dichotomies. Between fact and fiction, youth and experience, desert and the city, Manhattan, and Vegas, black and white. Between those entrenched in technology and the old guard holding onto positions of power. It is these opposites that invite the ridiculous and give us permission to laugh at the absurdity of where we find ourselves.

In the age of the internet and the backdrop of fake news, we can obtain essentially any information we seek. Information is literally at our fingertips, and yet it is harder than ever to know what is actually real. As a society, we grant ourselves license to curate facts to shape the stories we present to the world. Our news stories, art, literature, movies, and social media all present a different version of the truth, supported by varying degrees of fact. Our culture seems to have an unspoken code for blurring the line between fact and fiction, but at what point do we lose the ability to decipher between the two? Some of the characters in this play might argue that this is an instance when asking the question is more important than knowing the answer.

I think it is right that this thoughtful and funny play kicks off Curious’ 24th season as it homes in at the very nature of truth, fact, and storytelling.

It is an honor to give this play to you.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christy M-L". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "L" at the end.

Christy Montour-Larson
Director

CURIOUS THEATRE COMPANY

PRESENTS

THE LIFESPAN OF A FACT

by Jeremy Kareken & David Murrell and Gordon Farrell

Based on the book by John D'Agata and Jim Fingal

Directed by **Christy Montour-Larson****

CAST

Jim Fingal: *John Hauser*
Emily Penrose: *Sheryl McCallum**
John D'Agata: ***William Hahn****

SETTING

Now. New York City & Las Vegas.

SPECIAL THANKS

University of Denver Department of Theatre
Janet Day

PRODUCTION TEAM

Set Design by Charles Dean Packard
Costume Design by Janice Benning Lacek
Lighting Design by Charles Dean Packard
Sound Design by El Armstrong
Projections Design by El Armstrong
Props Design by Wayne Breyer
Stage Manager, Stephanie M. Holmes*
Assistant Stage Manager, Evangeline B. Read
Scenic Construction, Roy MacFarlane
Board Operator, Nick Luecking
Run Crew, Angie Kalen

The production will be performed without an intermission.

THE LIFESPAN OF A FACT is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.

THE LIFESPAN OF A FACT was originally produced on Broadway by Jeffrey Richards, Norman & Deanna Twain, Will Trice, Barbara H. Freitag, Suzanne Grant, Gold/Ross Productions, Jamie deRoy, Jennifer Manocherian, Barbara Manocherian, ManGol Productions, Carl Moellenberg/Wendy Federman, Ken Greiner, Van Kaplan, Dominick LaRuffa Jr., Marc David Levine, WitzEnd Productions, Eric Falkenstein/Moreland Mott, Caiola Productions, Rimmel T. Dickinson, & Jayne Baron Sherman

Bold = Curious Artistic Company Member

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

**Member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.



BIO



John Hauser (Jim Fingal) was last seen on the Curious stage as Jason/Tyrone in *Hand to God* and you might also recognize him from a few Curious New Voices staged readings. John has also appeared as Shreddy Eddy in *Airness* at Benchmark Theatre, The Guy in *Once* at Miners Alley, and Harry in *Papercut* at Local Theater.



William Hahn (John D'Agata) most recently appeared in Miner's Alley's world premiere production of *Zen and the Art of Profit*. Other stage appearance include: Johnny in *Frankie and Johnny*, Henry Miller in *Queen of Conspiracy*, Moss in *Glengarry Glen Ross*, Pale in *Burn This*, Fountainhead in *Water by the Spoonful*, Doran in *Opus*, Max in *Becky Shaw*, Ralph in *Frozen*, *The Archbishop's Ceiling*, *King Lear*, and *To Kill a Mockingbird*. This production is William's eighth appearance with Curious Theatre Company.



Sheryl McCallum (Emily Penrose) was last seen (pre-pandemic) for one preview in *For Peter Pan on her 70th Birthday* at Aurora Fox Theatre, on Broadway in Disney's *The Lion King*, Aunt Eller in DCPA's *Oklahoma* and Melpomene in *Xanadu* at the Garner Galleria, Ruby Baxter in *I'll Be Home For Christmas* and Soul Singer in *Jesus Christ Superstar*, both at Arvada Center PAC. Her Curious work includes Aunt Eleggua in *Marcus: Or The Secret Of Sweet*, and several Curious New Voices.

Christy Montour-Larson (Director) Christy is a 4-time Colorado Theatre Guild award-winning director. Also named Top Director by *Westword Magazine* and *5280 Magazine*. She recently directed *The Secretary* at Curious, where she has been a member of the Artistic Company for 19 years and directed 14 productions, including: *Charles Ives Take Me Home*, *Good People*, *Time Stands Still*, and *Red*. She has also directed in Colorado at the Denver Center (*Shadowlands*, *Two Degrees*), the Arvada Center (*The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Cabaret*), Creede Repertory (*August: Osage County*, *General Store*), Theatre Aspen (*Sex With Strangers*), Phamaly (*Into The Woods*), Theatreworks, Co Springs Fine Arts Center, Lake Dillon, Local Theater, Town Hall Arts Center, and Boulder Ensemble. Nationally she has directed at Pioneer Theatre, Tent Theatre, New American, Rochester Civic, Duluth Playhouse, and for Seven Devils New Play Foundry. A passionate supporter of new work, she has directed more than 30 staged readings and world premieres. MFA in Directing; Rutgers.

Jeremy Kareken (Playwright) is a playwright living in New York and Baltimore. His short plays, *HOT ROD*, *BIG TRAIN*, and *80 CARDS* have been performed around the country and internationally.

David Murrell (Playwright) was born and raised in New York City. He graduated from Stuyvesant High School and the University of Chicago, currently lives in Queens, and has written a sea chest's worth of TV and film treatments and spec scripts.

Gordon Farrell (Playwright) Trained as a playwright at the Yale School of Drama, Gordon received an MFA in 1986 and went on to work with major Hollywood studios, initially as a story analyst for Warner Brothers and Columbia Pictures, and eventually as a screenwriter.

For full playwright biographies, visit our show webpage by scanning the QR code on the next page.

BIOS

El Armstrong (Sound and Video Design) is an award-winning sound designer whose works have been heard in theaters and films all over the world. He is a Primetime Emmy® nominated video editor and a Grammy® nominated sound editor/mixer. El is also a recipient of a Henry Award for Special Achievement in Theater Technology and Engineering. In his spare time, he also directs, with recent productions including *Godspell*, *Voices In The Dark*, *Dietrich and Chevalier*, *Rashomon*, *Jekyll And Hide*, *Dracula*, and *She Kills Monsters*.

Stephanie M. Holmes (Stage Manager) is a Denver local stage manager who previously worked for Curious Theater Company on the 2019 production of *The Thanksgiving Play*. Some of her other notable credits include Broadway: *Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella*; Off-Broadway: *The Liar* (Classic Stage Company); Regional: *Waitress*, *OPC*, *Witness Uganda* (American Repertory Theater), *Heartbreak House* (Hartford Stage Company), *For Peter Pan on her 70th Birthday* (Aurora Fox Arts Center), *Mamma Mia!* (Lake Dillon Theater Company), *Where Did We Sit on the Bus?*, *Matilda the Musical*, *Shakespeare in Love* (Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center). Stephanie earned a BFA in Stage Management from Syracuse University in 2010.

Janice Benning Lacek (Costume Designer) *The LifeSpan of a Fact* marks Janice's 20th Curious production since 1999—most recently 2019's *Sanctions*. National credits: *Marisol*, *The Swan*, *What the Butler Saw* (La Jolla Playhouse); *Scapin* (ACT); *Goodnight, Desdemona...* (San Diego Rep); *Reverger's Tragedy* (Sledgehammer Theatre); *Pair of Threes* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Cymbeline* (Utah Shakespearean Festival); *All's Well* (Great River Shakespeare Festival); *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Henry V*, *Tempest*, *Midsummer*, *Twelfth Night* (Tennessee Shakespeare Company); *Richard II*, *12th Night*, *As You Like It* (CSF); *Fences* (Lone Tree Arts Center)

MFA: UC San Diego. She is a professor of costume design & technology at the University of Denver.

Charles Dean Packard (Scenic and Lighting Design) was the Executive Producer at the Aurora Fox for many years. Notable productions include *Metamorphoses*, *The Color Purple*, and *Black Elk Speaks*. Over the past 20 years, Charles has provided designs for many area theaters including The Fox, Curious Theatre Company, Phamaly, and Magic Moments. He has been nominated for and won numerous awards including the Henry award for *Metamorphoses* and the True West Award for Phamaly's *The Wiz*. His work last appeared on the Curious stage for *The Thanksgiving Play*. One of his career favorites, *Bug*, was also here at Curious.

Evangeline B. Read (Assistant Stage Manager) is a local theatre artist who has worked in various roles for the Vance Brand Civic Auditorium, Longmont High School, Jester's Dinner Theater, and the Longmont Theater Company. Her favorite stage management credit to date was a student written production, *Cubicle the Musical*. Evangeline is thrilled to get back to live theatre and to be a part of Curious Theatre Company's *The Lifespan of a Fact*.

GO DEEPER



SCAN ME

To learn more about *The Lifespan of a Fact*, go to our Go Deeper section on the Curious website or scan this QR code. CuriousTheatre.org/event/the-lifespan-of-a-fact

BIOS

Chip Walton (Producing Artistic Director) co-founded Curious Theatre Company in 1997 and has served as Producing Artistic Director for the entire history of the organization. Named Denver's "2005 Theatre Person of the Year," he has directed more than fifty shows for Curious over the past 24 years and his work has garnered more than 100 local and national awards. In 2008, Curious was honored with the Mayor's Award for Excellence in the Arts. Chip has served as the President and Vice President of the National New Play Network, a network of professional, non-profit theatres across the country dedicated to the development and production of new plays for the American theatre. Chip was also selected in the inaugural class of the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation Livingston Fellows, recognizing exceptional non-profit leaders with significant potential for contribution, change and leadership in Colorado's nonprofit sector; additionally, he served on the Board of Directors of the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation as their first Community Trustee. Chip has participated in the Visiting Professionals program at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center, as well as serving on the Leadership Group for Imagine 2020: Creating a Future for Denver's Culture. He has directed in the National New Play Network Showcase of New Plays, the Kennedy Center's MFA Playwriting Festival in Washington, D.C., and accepted a National Theatre Company Award in New York for Curious from the prestigious American Theatre Wing. Most recently, Chip was honored to serve as a 2017 Aspen Ideas Festival Speaker.

Actors' Equity Association ("AEA" or "Actors' Equity"), founded in 1913, represents more than 49,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO, and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. The Equity emblem is our mark of excellence. www.actorsequity.org

NEXT UP

Join us for our next production:

american son

NOVEMBER 6 - DECEMBER 11

Winner of the prestigious Laurents/Hatcher Award and a *New York Times* Critic's Pick, this explosive new drama examines our nation's racial divide through the eyes of parents on the brink. Curious Artist-in-Residence **Jada Suzanne Dixon** directs and stars in this moving production.

BOARD, COMPANY & STAFF

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jim Steinberg, *President*
Jeremy Shamos, *Vice President and
Honorary Lifetime President*
Susan France, *Secretary*
John Flanigan, *Treasurer*

Toni Baruti
Peter R. Bornstein
Kristel Jelinek Brown
Tara Cleare
Eric Fonacier
Scott Gannon Patton
Rehan Hasan
Chip Horne
Michael Hughes
Michael Potts
Jamie White
Alyssa Williams
*Roscoe Hill, *Board Member Emeritus*
*Chip Walton, *Producing Artistic Director*
*Erik Sandvold, *Artistic Company Member*
*Cajardo Lindsey, *Artistic Company Member*
*non-voting members

STAFF

Artistic
Chip Walton, *Producing Artistic Director*
Dee Covington, *Education Director*
MARIKE FITZGERALD, *Artistic Producer*
Lisa Prater, *Production Manager & Resident Stage Manager*
Michael Morgan, *Technical Coordinator*
Jada Suzanne Dixon, *Artist-in-Residence*

Administrative

Annie Oldakowski, *Administrative Director*
Lisa Boehm, *Finance Manager*
Hallie Denman, *Patron Services Manager*
Brynn Starr Sater, *Patron Development Associate*
Graham Smith, *House Manager*

COMPANY

Lisa Boehm
Kevin Brainerd (In Memoriam)
Dee Covington
Richard Devin
Jada Suzanne Dixon
Jason Ducat
Brian Landis Folkins
Kathryn Gray
William Hahn
Josh Hartwell
Markas Henry
Jim Hunt
John Jurcheck
Cajardo Lindsey
Kristin MacFarlane
Shannon McKinney
Michael McNeill
Christy Montour-Larson
Michael Morgan
Josh Robinson
Erik Sandvold
Karen Slack
Chip Walton
Todd Webster

OUR AUDACIOUS SUPPORTERS

BELOW IS A LIST OF PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE THAT THEATRE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD, AND WHO GAVE BOLDLY, FIERCELY, AND GENEROUSLY TO SUPPORT FEARLESS ART. THEY MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE.

To donate to Curious, call 303-327-4193, talk to the box office today, or visit curioustheatre.org/donate

\$25,000+

Bloomberg Philanthropies
Bonfils-Stanton Foundation
The Denver Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
SCFD: Scientific and
Cultural Facilities District
Shubert Foundation
Jim & Lori Steinberg
The Harold and Mimi Steinberg
Charitable Trust
Venturous Theater Fund

\$10,000–\$24,999

The Addy Foundation
Fred and Jean Allegretti Foundation
The Sheri and Les Biller Family Foundation
Merle Chambers
Edgerton Foundation
The Virginia W. Hill Foundation
Diana & Mike Kinsey
MAP Fund
The Nord Family Foundation
Rose Community Foundation
Susan & Jeremy Shamos

\$5,000–\$9,999

The Honorable Karen Brody
& Michael Hughes

Isabelle Clark
Ann Corrigan & Kent Rice
John & Stephanie Flanigan
Sheila Fortune Foundation
Susan & John France
Sidney E. Frank Foundation –
Colorado Fund
Jeane & John Garment
Roscoe Hill
Chip Horne & Jan Kennaugh
Keating, Wagner, Polidori, Free, P.C.
Kinder Morgan Foundation
Karolynn Lestrud
Lynne & John C. Montague-Clause
National New Play Network
Heidi Pearlman-Swartz & the Swartz Family
Michael Potts
Reflection Signs and Graphics
Susan Tucker

\$2,500–\$4,999

Richard & Joanne Akeroyd
Elizabeth & Evan Anderman
Barbara Bridges
The Colorado Health Foundation
Joan & Dale Coplan
Laura Cowperthwaite & LiveWork Denver
Leslie Crispelle
Lucy Dinneen

Fine Arts Foundation
Shelley Fleetwood & Jim Gusek
Nancy & Samuel Gary
Rehan & Aliya Hasan
Imagine 2020: Denver's Cultural Plan
Ellen & Dale LaGow
Sharon & Lanny Martin
Occasions Catering
Sammy Scoma
Patricia Kingsbury Simpson
Jamie White & Andrew Sirotnak
Wiegand – Attorneys & Counselors, LLC
Robert Wiegand II &
Kimberly Raemdonck
Mickey Zeppelin
In Honor of Lulu Zeppelin

\$1,500–\$2,499

Abasi & Toni Baruti
Kristel Jelinek Brown & Darin Brown
Armando & Shawn Bustamante
Brent & Christine Case
Steve Choquette
Tara Cleare & Jesse LaNunziata
Michael & Bonnie Collins
Max & Joyce Douglas
Gary & Kathryn Dudley
Eric Fonacier & Rebecca Holmes
Erica & Gregory Grossman

OUR AUDACIOUS SUPPORTERS

Dianne Howell
 Paul Manoogian
 Margulf Foundation
 Elizabeth & Jim Neid
 Lori Pidick & Mark Niles
 Linda & Frank Plaut
 David Price
 Kelci Price & Jason Stoddart
 Dr. Jay Seller & Paul Ferraresi
 Carole & Robert Slosky
 Elizabeth Steele
 Alyssa Williams

Carol Wolf in Memory of Kevin Brainerd
 Mary Zinn

\$1,000–\$1,499

American Theatre Wing
 Rosalyn & Robert Benson
 Peter Bornstein
 Howard & Kathleen Brand
 Rebecca Czarnecki & Nate Barker
 Lois & Bruce Feinstein
 Sherry & David Fitzpatrick
 Gordon Foundation

Dr. Mark Groshek
 Josh Hartwell
 Carol Levin
 Dr. Nancy McMahon
 Miral Family Fund

Gifts received in support of our last performance Season 22 and our canceled Season 23.

We are grateful for gifts of all sizes! For a full list of donors \$100+ please visit our website.



Keating, Wagner,
 Polidori, Free P.C.



EST. 1970

OCCASIONS

CATERING

EAT UP, PARTY ON



PROUD SPONSOR OF THE ARTS FOR OVER 50 YEARS

303.789.1867 | occasionsdenver.com | info@occasionsdenver.com | [@occasionscater](https://www.instagram.com/occasionscater) | [#EatUpPartyOn](https://www.tiktok.com/@occasionscater)