

DIRECTED BY
JESSA BLACHTHORNE

MUSICAL DIRECTION BY
SCOTT BURZYNSKI

CHOREOGRAPHY BY
BONG DIZON

WEST HUDSON ARTS AND THEATER COMPANY PRESENTS

DISASTER!

BY SETH RUDETSKY AND JACK PLOTNICK

CONCEPT CREATED BY
SETH RUDETSKY AND DREW GERACI

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL BY
DREW GERACI

A 70'S DISASTER MOVIE...MUSICAL



THE THEATER AT WHAT CO
15 FRANK E RODGERS BLVD S. HARRISON, NJ
FREE PARKING IN THE FENCED LOT AT JERSEY STREET

APRIL 26 AT 7:30 PM | APRIL 27 AT 1 PM AND 7:30 PM
APRIL 28 AT 2 PM | MAY 2, 3, 4 AT 7:30 PM

Original Poster Art Designed for WHATCo by Ashton Nanke

**Sensory Warning: Flashing lights, strobe effects, and fog
will be used throughout the performance.**

www.whatconj.org | info@whatconj.org | (201) 540 - WHAT (9428)



WHATCONJ



WHATCO_NJ



*This program is made possible by a grant from the New Jersey State Historical Commission,
a division of the Department of State, and administered by the Hudson County Office
of Cultural & Heritage Affairs, Craig Guy, Hudson County Executive &
the Hudson County Board of County Commissioners.*

West Hudson Arts & Theater Company
presents

DISASTER!

"DISASTER!"

is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.
www.mtishows.com

By

SETH RUDETSKY and JACK PLOTNICK

Concept Created by Seth Rudetsky and Drew Geraci

Additional Material By Drew Geraci

Musical Arrangements and Scoring by Joseph Joubert
Song Arrangements by Seth Rudetsky
Vocal Arrangements by Michael McElroy
Dance Arrangements by David Dabbon
Piano/Vocal Score Arrangements by Steve Marzullo

Originally Produced on Broadway by
Robert Ahrens
Mickey Liddell/LD Entertainment
Hunter Arnold
James Wesley
Carl Daikeler
Burba Hayes

Production Manager
Brandi-Leigh Miller

Director
Jessa Blackthorne

Musical Director
Scott J. Burzynski

Choreographer
Bong Dizon

Set Designer
Brian Sullivan

Stage Manager
Athena Nakrosis

Asst. Stage Manager
Jasmine Viera

Sound Designer
Jim Miller

Lighting Designer
Luis Andrade

Costume Designer
Julia Sharp

Voiceover Engineer Frankie Perez
Technical Advisor Keith Raulerson

Properties
Brandi-Leigh Miller

Featured Choreography for "Beethoven" by Leo Vasile

From the Director

Thank you for joining us for Disaster! It's my debut directing a full-length show, and I'm incredibly proud of the outcome. I hope it leaves you with a sense of joy and escapism. For those unfamiliar, I'm Jessa Blackthorne, an actress, choreographer, costume designer, and the director of this production, also proudly autistic.

As our opening weekend coincides with the end of Autism Acceptance (Acceptance, not Awareness) month, I wanted to discuss how I incorporated being autistic into the creative process. From the outset of rehearsals, I openly shared my autistic identity, emphasizing potential differences in communication and approach and encouraging an open dialogue with the cast and crew. I also aimed to seamlessly integrate my neurodiversity into not just my communication, but my directing approach as well. As an example, I was much more willing to try out unusual or impractical ideas during the rehearsal process. Even though some of those ideas didn't work, some of them became our best segments of the show! Drawing on a hyperfixation with disaster movies, I meticulously organized the production in a way my brain could process it while still being clear to others, collaborating closely with my team to bring our vision to life. With steadfast support from our producer, Brandi, I hope to spotlight autistic creatives in theatre, advocating for increased opportunities and visibility.

I leave you with this:

In life, disasters happen. They are inevitable, no matter how well you plan or prepare. No matter how confident you are in how things are going and how they will go, you just can't control for every variable. They can seem random, and cruel, and unfair. But I've learned in my lifetime so far that all you can do when they happen is keep going. Stopping and wallowing in fear and despair is not an option. You have to keep pushing forward, even if everything seems bleak, and no way out presents itself to you. Even if you feel like you'll be trapped in the same sinking ship forever. You can't let that anxiety swallow you whole. You need to keep moving forward. Even if you feel like you're not strong enough to go on, I promise you can do it. Even if you don't believe in yourself, whoever you are, I believe in you. Because, no matter how unlikely it seems, no matter how immense and unforgiving the darkness is, on the other side of every disaster, daybreak is never far away.

I hope this show will remind you of that.

For my mom, who taught me to always keep fighting.

Jessa Blackthorne
Director, DISASTER!

DISASTER!

SENSORY WARNING: FLASHING LIGHTS, STROBE EFFECTS, AND FOG WILL BE USED THROUGHTOUT THE PERFORMANCE.

Setting: 1979 Manhattan, on the opening night of the Barracuda,
New York's first floating casino and discotheque.

Today's performance will run approximately 2 hours and 5 minutes
with one 15-minute intermission

CAST

Ted Scheider	Dylan Myers
.....	Gunnar Holmberg*^ (4/27 matinee)
Tony Delvecchio	John Jesse Jeffords
.....	Ashley Nichols (4/27 matinee)
Chad Rubic	Frankie Perez
Scott	Roman Koster
Marianne Wilson	Maria Ruppert^^
.....	Holly Stefanik (4/27 matinee)
Jackie Noelle	Samantha Egge
Ben and Lisa	Maisie Kelly
Levora Verona	Lily Mayo
.....	Judy Espailat* (4/27 matinee)
Sister Mary Downey	Jessica Nelson*
.....	Maggie Madere (4/27 matinee)
Maury Summers	Robert Strauch
Shirley Summers	Melissa Broder*
.....	Karina Munoz* (4/27 matinee)
Jake	Matt Masiello

Ensemble

Paula Baratta, Richard Dwyer, Judy Espailat*, Gunnar Holmberg*^, Maggie Madere, Karina Munoz*, Ashley Nichols, Amanda Regan*, Leo Vasile*, Danubia Vilar*

Dolphin Dancers

Maria Ruppert^^, Holly Stefanik, Leo Vasile*, Danubia Vilar*

*First appearance with WHATCo

^ Music Captain

^^ Dance Captain



SCAN FOR
CAST BIOS



SCAN FOR
CREATIVE &
CREW BIOS

DISASTER!

CREW & CREATIVE

Director *Jessa Blackthorne*
Musical Director *Scott Burzynski*
Choreographer *Bong Dizon*
Stage Manager *Athena Nakrosis*
Assistant Stage Manager *Jasmine Viera*
Set Design *Brian Sullivan*
Costumer *Julia Sharp*
Sound Designer *Jim Miller*
Lighting Designer *Luis Andrade*
Technical Advisor/Audio..... *Keith Raulerson*
Inclusion Coordinator *Joseph Jones*
Combat/Fall/Intimacy Coordinator *Matt Masiello*
Properties *Brandi-Leigh Miller*
Public Relations *Linda Kraus D'Isa*
Social Media Ma..... *Michelle Almeida*
Original Artwork *Ashton Nanke*
Producer *Brandi-Leigh Miller*

Barracuda Show Band

Scott Burzynski: Conductor, Keyboard 1

Owen Seaver: Keyboard 2 | Guitar: Joe Dolahan | Drums: Dan Giannone

Reeds: John Kubowicz

Team Barracuda

Crew Captain/Mr. Shark: Brian Sullivan

Slot Machine Attendant: Ellen Lebofsky

Running Crew: Athena Nakrosis, Jasmine Viera, Mary Nakrosis, Tommy Vinacco

PLEASE SILENCE CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

No video or audio recording!

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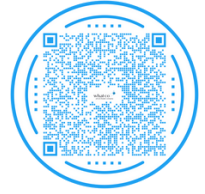
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**All proceeds from tonight's event will go directly towards
WHATCo's mission of providing high-quality arts
opportunities to the West Hudson community!**

SHOP

Purchase your WHATCo swag and apparel

<https://www.bonfire.com/store/whatconj/>
(online sales only)



GIVE

Make a tax-deductible donation today

- Cash or Check (Payable to WHATCo)
- Online at whatconj.org
- By Venmo to @WHATCONJ



venmo

VOLUNTEER

Visit whatconj.org

For volunteer opportunities,
tickets, auditions, and other information



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www.whatconj.org
info@whatconj.org
(201) 540 - WHAT (9428)

West Hudson Arts & Theater is a 501c3 non-profit organization.
All donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.

West Hudson Arts and Theater Company
presents



MAY 17 & 18, 2024 AT 7:30 PM

THE THEATER AT WHAT Co
15 FRANK E. RODGERS BLVD. S., HARRISON, NJ
FREE PARKING IN THE FENCED LOT AT JERSEY STREET

Featuring Original One Act Plays

Choices by Constance G.J. Wagner
Directed by Beatriz-Esteban Messina

**20 Magical Minutes of Darkness and
Silence and Peace by Tara Meddaugh**
Directed by Frankie Perez

Like Mom Used to Say by F.J. Hartland
Directed by Holly Stefanik

The Experience by Clinton Festa
Directed by Bong Dizon

The Meadow by Ryan Kaminski
Directed by Steven Jon Kaplan

Bag of Bees by John Mabey
Directed by Joseph Jones

Gown by Robert Weibezahl
Directed by Karina Munoz

Unclaimed Baggage by Keith Whalen
Directed by Jessica Jones

**What Happens in Pre-K, Stays in Pre-K:
Unadulterated Classroom Conversations by Holly Stefanik**
Directed by Christopher Reyes

\$10 GENERAL ADMISSION
TICKETS: WHATCONJ.ORG/TICKETS

