

**the Rude Mechanicals  
in residence at the Greenbelt Arts Center  
present**

# **CYMBELINE**

**written by William Shakespeare  
adapted and directed by Erin Nealer**



# CYMBELINE

## CAST

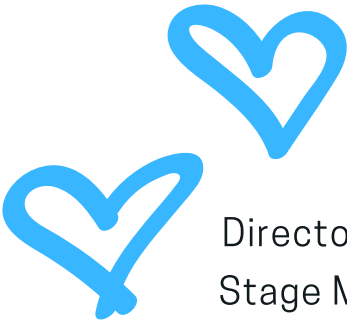
*in order of appearance*

Kid.....Stephen Duda  
Papa.....Alan Duda  
Cymbeline.....Jaki Demarest  
Imogen.....Katie Wanschura  
Queen.....Melissa Schick  
Cloten.....Spencer Dye  
Posthumus.....Erin MacDonald  
Pisanio.....Sarah Pfanz  
Cornelius.....Liana Olear  
Bartender.....Joshua Engel  
Iachimo.....Evan Ockershausen  
Belarius.....Bill Bodie  
Guiderius.....Sean Eustis  
Arviragus.....Will Robey  
Caius Lucius.....Sam Kopel



## CREW

Director.....Erin Nealer  
Stage Manager.....Allison McAlister  
Apprentice Director.....Justin Bigelow  
Lighting Design & Filming.....Jeff Poretsky  
Producer.....Joshua Engel  
Social Media.....Wes Dennis  
Book Binder.....Alan Duda



# Director's Note



Welcome back! Boy, am I glad to see you all again.

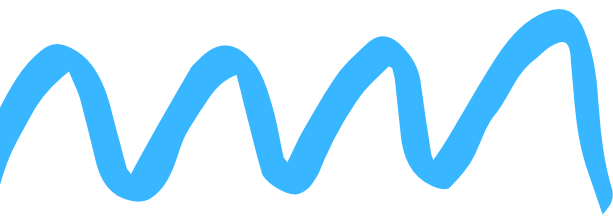
When I first started planning for this show back in 2019, I honestly wasn't sure why audiences would be interested in seeing *Cymbeline*. Relatively few people have even heard of it - it's the only Shakespeare play the Rude Mechanicals have never performed. People tend to prefer plays that hold up a mirror to our modern lives; the politics of *Julius Caesar* and drama of *Macbeth* are always in style. *Cymbeline*, by contrast, is a goofy little story so far removed from our modern lives that it feels like a fairytale.

Then, 2020 happened. And then 2021. And suddenly, a goofy little fairytale is *exactly* what Dr. Fauci ordered.

*Cymbeline* was first performed in 1611, just as London was recovering from the plague in 1610 - which makes me wonder if Shakespeare felt the same way. To Shakespeare's post-quarantine audience, *Cymbeline* must have felt like an escape to a simpler time - a time of infinite possibility. A time without worries. A time a lot like childhood.

So I hope you can also embrace the childlike wonder of hearing a good story - perhaps for the very first time. I hope you can escape this year for a few minutes and let good always triumph over evil and true love conquer all.





# Synopsis

King Cymbeline has recently married a wicked Queen. She wants her son, the brutish, foolish Cloten, to marry Cymbeline's daughter from a previous marriage, the clever and kind Imogen, to secure their places in the royal line. Imogen is already married to her childhood friend Posthumus, a clever young man who loves her dearly. The Queen enchants Cymbeline, who exiles Posthumus on her recommendation.

In exile, Posthumus meets Iachimo at a bar. To settle an old argument, Iachimo wagers that he can persuade Imogen to sleep with him - Posthumus believes so deeply in Imogen's faithfulness that he agrees, adding his ring (a gift from Imogen) to the betting pool. Iachimo tries to flirt with Imogen, and when she proves too faithful and wise for his advances, he sneaks into her bedroom at night to steal her bracelet (a gift from Posthumus) to prove she was disloyal. He reveals this to Posthumus, who writes to his servant Pisanio - he wants Pisanio to kill Imogen for her infidelity. Pisanio takes Imogen into the forest on the pretense of meeting Posthumus, but can't bring himself to kill her. She disguises herself as a boy, and hides in the forest while Pisanio tells Posthumus she's dead.

Meanwhile, Belarius, a former knight of Cymbeline's court, is raising two boys - Arviragus and Guiderius - in the woods. The boys don't know they're Cymbeline's sons, stolen as babies by Belarius decades ago, when Cymbeline believed him to be a Roman spy. Imogen meets her brothers in the forest and instantly feels kinship to them, even if she doesn't know why. Cloten disguises himself as Posthumus and hunts for Imogen in the forest - but finds the boys instead, who kill him. When Imogen finds his body, she believes it to be that of Posthumus, and she is bereft. She meets Cymbeline in the woods and, still in her male disguise, becomes his page.

When the Romans invade England, everyone comes together to defend the land - and suddenly, the boys' true parentage, Imogen's disguise, the Queen's wickedness, and Iachimo's lies all come to light.

# Cast & Crew

**Justin Bigelow** (*Apprentice Director*) has been very grateful for the opportunity to serve under the inimitable Erin Nealer, Director. He would like to thank the entire cast for making his inaugural foray into the wonderful world of "not-on-the-stage" theatre so much fun. He waits impatiently for the day of scandalously naked faces returning to the stage.

**Bill Bodie** (*Belarius*) is appearing in his sixth RM production, having previously done Uncle Vanya, Love's Labour's Lost, The Tamer Tamed, Faustus, and Gallathea. Elsewhere in the DMV, he has worked on The Beatle Club and Bobby Gould in Hell for the Providence Players; Hamlet and Ada and the Engine for the Charm City Classics Company; Someone to Watch Over Me at the DC Black Theatre Festival; and A Piece of My Heart and The Women of Lockerbie at the Bowie Playhouse. He is excited to be back from the undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveler returns, a.k.a., Zoomland.

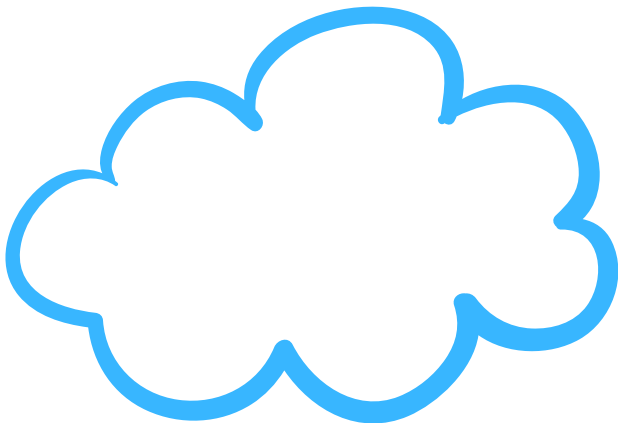
**Jaki Demarest** (*Cymbeline*) thanks Erin Nealer for this opportunity to spike the canon as Prince Humperdinck's Princess Imogen's forgetful father! Thanks and love to everyone who's ever been a Rude, glad you're the company I keep!

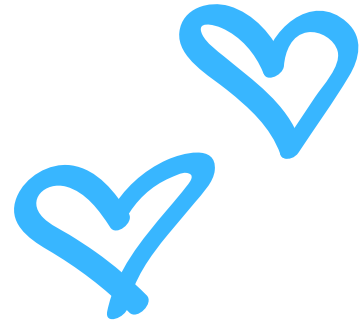
**Wes Dennis** (*Social Media*) will not judge you on how you've knotted your tie...in public.

**Alan Duda** (*Papa & Book Binder*) thanks Erin, Allison, et al. for letting him play as we scrape the bottom of the barrel. Love to Jaki, and Stephen - "Yes, you're very smart, shut up."

**Stephen Duda** (*Kid*) was born into the Rudes, last fled the stage as Fleance, ran lights for Country Wife with the best timing the lighting director had ever seen, and projected for Love's Labour's Lost. Thanks all for the support. "Jesu, Papa, what did you read me this thing for?!"

**Linda "Spencer" Dye** (*Cloten & Costumer*) is incredibly pleased to be back acting and costuming with the Rudes in person. As fun as zoom theater can be, it's good to be back.





**Sean Eustis** (*Guiderius*) is overjoyed to help spike the canon! He was last seen onstage with the Rudes as Holofernes in *Love's Labour's Lost* and as Fluellen in *Henry V*; and online as Jacques in *The Tamer Tamed* and *24-Hour ZoomFests*. Other notable appearances have been in Scharf's *Schorts* earlier today at Spotlighters Theatre, *Rozencrantz/Gravedigger* in *Hamlet* (in Original Pronunciation) with Baltimore Shakespeare Factory, and in *King Kirby* with *Off the Quill*. (Pronouns: he/him/hon)

**Joshua Engel** (*Bartender & Producer*) is deeply humbled to have participated in every single one of Shakespeare's plays with the Rude Mechanicals, and kept the tradition alive during a plague of Elizabethan proportions. *Bartender* is the perfect way to spike this canon.

**Erin MacDonald** (*Posthumus*) has been part of the Rude Mechanicals for 19 years and has gotten the opportunity over the years to be part of so many obscure Shakespeare shows. They are pleased to have this opportunity to play such a Himbo while also arguing with their real life husband. They would like to thank their fiancé for running lines with Evan so they didn't have to, and just for general support. Here's to finishing the completed works of The Bard.

**Allison McAlister** (*Stage Manager*) is a DC-based actor who occasionally steps backstage...and loves it every time. Allison is grateful to Erin and the Rudes for continuing to let her play in the Shakespeare sandbox with this fairytale!

**Erin Nealer** (*Director*) has been with the Rudes for what feels like a very long time indeed. She previously adapted and directed *HAMLESS* (online, 2020) and hopes her future artistic endeavors will continue irritating the more pedantic among Shakespeare's fans. She's eternally grateful to the directing team for their wisdom and kindness, the cast for their boundless creativity, and to viewers like you.

**Evan Ochershausen** (*Iachimo*) is returning to the stage in a role he only agreed to do because he was assured it was the worst character in the show (*Debatable*). Previous worst characters include the titular King John and Prince Hal in *Henry IV*. In his spare time he likes to slick his hair back and go out for sloppy steaks with his crew.

**Liana Olear** (*Cornelius*) is thrilled to be a part of Rudes' journey to the end of the canon, and thanks Erin for letting her join the ranks of Shakespearean purveyors of fake death potions. Recent virtual ventures included directing *Macbeth*, *Tamer Tamed* and *Two Noble Kinsmen* and appearing on screen as Augur (*Galathea*), Junior (*Revenger's Tragedy*) and a totally different Cornelius (*Doctor Faustus*) for the Rudes, as well as Shylock in *District Merchants* (*Globe Openstage/CBT*). She now must find a production of *Hamlet* to Cornelius it up in, even if she has to direct it herself. She'll be here.



**Sarah Pfanz** (*Pisanio*) is hyped to be back on a physical stage with the Rudes for the first time in over two years! She has more recently been seen online in the Rudes' productions of *Romeo and Juliet* (Mercutio), *The Tamer Tamed* (Rowland), and *Gallathea* (Ramia). She is angry at Shakespeare for forgetting how scansion works in this play, but happy about getting to actually interact with her scene partners.

**Jeff Poretsky** (*Lighting Design & Filming*) is happy to help push the boundaries of what a local theater troupe can do. And he still hasn't forgiven Alan.

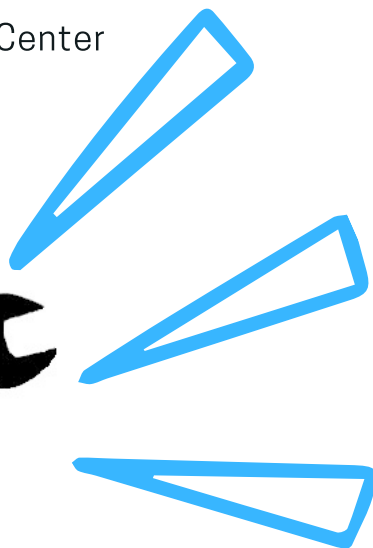
**Will Robey** (*Arviragus*) has been acting with the Rudes for eight years, on and off, and has greatly enjoyed acting in *Lysistrata*, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, *Julius Caesar*, and *King John*. Will enjoys being a fount of puns, various genres of dorkery, a full-time hobbit, husband, boyfriend, and archivist in Severn, MD, and is proud to return to the stage in such estimable company!

**Melissa Schick** (*Queen*) has been acting and directing with the Rude Mechanicals since the early days. Favorite roles have included Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Valentine in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and Timon in *Timon of Athens*. She has also directed three full length productions with the Rudes (*The Winter's Tale*, *Arden Now* [*As You Like It*], and *Uncle Vanya*) as well as two one-acts (*Naomi in the Livingroom* [*Acts of Public Rudeness*] and *In the Pipeline* [*First Annual 24-Hour Zoomfest*]). She also wrote a one-act for and hosted the *Second Annual 24-Hour Zoomfest* and designed dank memes for *Love's Labour's Lost*. It is a privilege to help the Rudes "spike the canon."

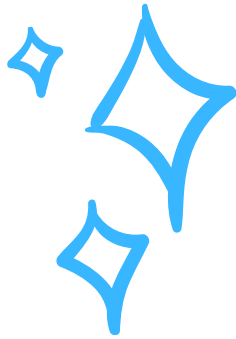
**Katie Wanschura** (*Imogen*) is thrilled to be back on stage in real human person, if masked. In 2021, she appeared on your computer screen in the Rudes' *Gallathea*, *2nd Annual 24-Hour Zoom Fest*, and *Two Noble Kinsmen*. Favorite roles include Elaine, *Night Watch* (BCT); Adelaide Booker, *A Christmas Cactus*, Elizabeth, *Frankenstein* [2021] (OTQ); Annelle, *Steel Magnolias* (St.Mark's Players); and Woman, *Veronica's Room*, Edmund, *King Lear*, Don Pedro/Benedick(u/s), *Much Ado About Nothing*, Proteus, *No Gentlemen of Verona* (Rudes). Katie thanks Erin, Allison, Justin, Josh, and the whole production for inviting her to spike the canon with them!

## Special Thanks

The Greenbelt Arts Center  
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