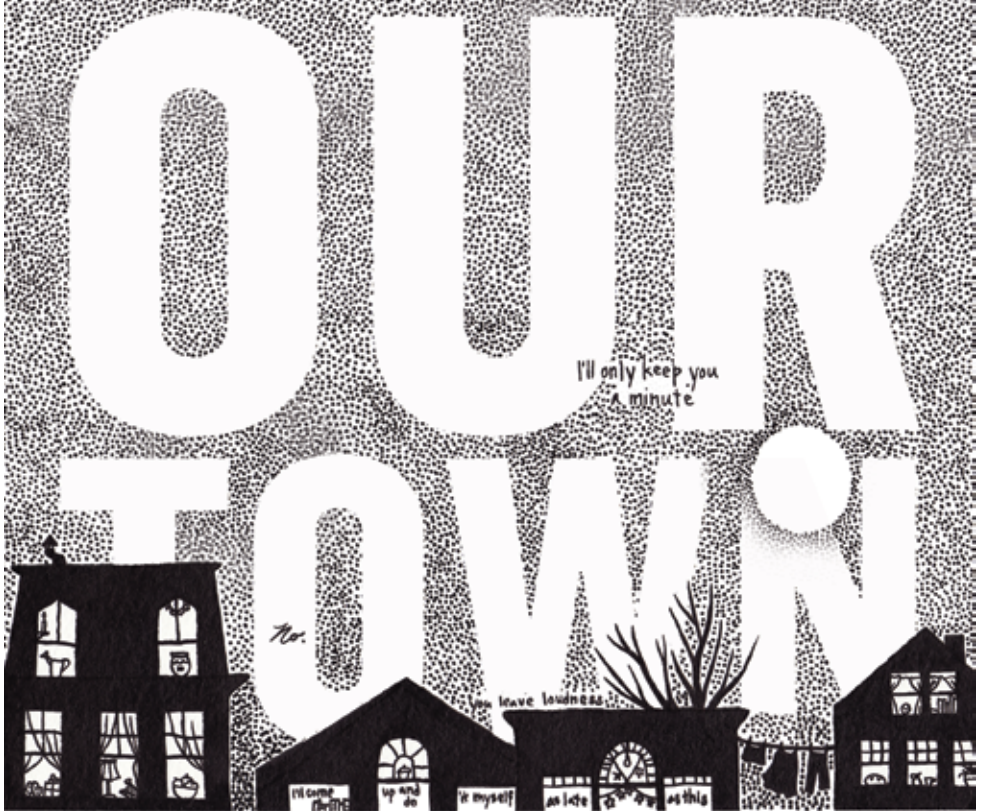


MAR 09, 10, 11 / 8:00 PM

*In collaboration the School of Humanities Arts and Social Sciences (HASS),
The RPI Players, The Rensselaer Union, The Rensselaer Choir, and the
Seattle 4Culture grant program. Presented in EMPAC Studio 1.*

A NEW MEDIA THEATRICAL EXPERIENCE

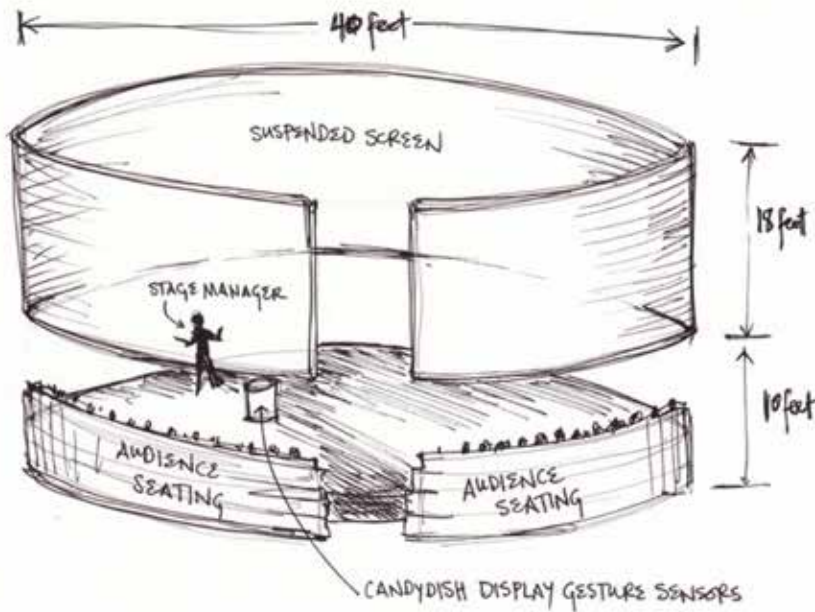


DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Welcome to this very special production of *Our Town* at Rensselaer's EMPAC. This production has been nearly three years in the making, and was the brainchild of a collaboration between myself and Prof. Marc Destefano (Dept. Of Cognitive Science), visual artist Clare Johnson, and composer Brendan Padgett. Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* has long been a favorite play of mine, and seemed ripe for injection with new technologies in the name of making the familiar strange again, to bring it to life in a new way. *Our Town* is one of the most performed plays at high schools and colleges across our country, and has sometimes been misunderstood as folksy Americana kitsch. In contrast, our production celebrates the play's powerful call to slow down and value the small moments in life, before they pass us by.

This Rensselaer production breathes new life into Wilder's classic play, using large-scale, immersive, interactive technology, in a way that could only be possible here at EMPAC, on the Rensselaer campus. In a world in which digital technology often pulls us away from immediacy, and out of the present moment, our production of *Our Town* uses digital technology to invite a further sense of immersion in the storyworld of Grover's Corners for our audience. Our production also marks a unique partnership of several campus entities—EMPAC, HASS (The School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences), The RPI Players, The Rensselaer Union, and the Rensselaer Choir. It is my hope that our project will be a stepping stone that will enable further collaborations, yet to be imagined.

A huge team has made this production possible. I encourage you to peruse the bios of everyone who contributed to see the depth and range of talent involved. The list includes current Rensselaer students majoring in a variety of STEM-focused fields, community members from the Capital Region pursuing careers in performance, professional stage media engineers at EMPAC, recent Rensselaer alums, and professional artists from Troy, Washington DC, and Seattle! If you are interested to learn more about how the project developed, we invite you to visit the exhibit *Behind the Scenes in Our Town*, in the EMPAC cafe just outside Studio One, before the play begins and during intermissions.



OUR TOWN:
Elevated Screen View

On behalf of the *Our Town* project team, I must extend the warmest thanks and gratitude to our funders, not only for their support that allowed us to make our vision reality, but also for their encouragement to pursue this big idea. A very special thanks to:

*Dr. Mary Simoni, Dean, School of Humanities Arts and Social Sciences
(HASS)*

*Johannes Goebel, Founding Director, Experimental Media and Performing Arts
Center (EMPAC)*

Emily Phillips, President, The RPI Players

*Amy Corron, Assistant Director of Student Activities, The Rensselaer Union
Seattle 4Culture Grant Program*

Many thanks to my family, my wife Ann, and my mom Sandra, for supporting my involvement in *Our Town* - I am incredibly grateful to you both. And finally, thank *you* for joining us, And enjoy the show!

PRODUCER NOTE:

Our Town is a production unlike anything Rensselaer has ever seen. In EMPAC's eight year history, there has not been as much traditional theatre to cross its stages. The RPI Players, however is currently staging it's 87th Season and no end is in sight. Together with funding from the School of HASS, the Rensselaer Union, and Seattle 4Culture, we've staged a classic piece of theatre in a way that has never been done before.

As someone who has worked in technical theatre, but who is also pursuing a degree in Electrical Engineering and Electronic Arts, I can say that *Our Town* captures the creative and technical aspects of production while elevating the art form to a new level. We are also proud to say that our Design Team is made up of mostly undergraduate students here at RPI, with the exceptions being other RPI affiliates. This opportunity is unprecedented and we are so grateful to EMPAC for working with us and providing us with their years of experience in the field.

CAST AND CREW

CENTRAL PRODUCTION AND PUBLICITY

Nick Karalexis / *Producer*

Rebecca Rouse / *Director*

Molly Kerwick / *Assistant Director*

Marc Destefano (ΑΨΩ) / *Interactive Media Designer*

Alex Fig / *Assistant Interactive Media Designer*

Jack Magai / *Choreographer*

Fiona Smith (ΑΨΩ) / *Stage Manager*

Yarden Ne'eman / *Assistant Stage Manager*

Kathleen Quinlan / *Publicity Coordinator*

CAST

Rob Stewart (ΑΨΩ) / *Stage Manager*

Barnabé Bouchenoir / *George*

Rachel Ruller / *Emily Webb*

Zachariah Spurrier / *Dr. Gibbs*

Monica Hoh / *Mrs. Gibbs*

Taylor Turner (ΑΨΩ) / *Mrs. Webb*

Imani Taylor / *Rebecca*

Mark Blum / *Wally*

Kyle Johnson (ΑΨΩ) / *Mr. Webb*

Jackson Wong / *Simon Stimson*

Micaïla Dean (ΑΨΩ) / *Mrs. Soames*

Patrick Quinn / *Professor / Constable / Joe Stoddard*

Logan Rando / *Joe / Si / BB Player 1*

Dan Marion / *Howie / Man in Box / BB Player 2*

Pixie Sirois / *Sam Craig / Woman in Audience / BB Player 3*

Heritage Weems / *Lady in Balcony / Mrs. Carter*

DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Clare Johnson / *Visual Artist / Scenic Designer*

Brendan Padgett / *Composer / Musical Director*

Nicholas DeMaison / *Choir Director*

Jenna Shulman / *Hair and Makeup Designer*

Micaïla Dean (ΑΨΩ) / *Costume Designer*

CAST AND CREW *(continued)*

Alex Zylka / *Lighting Designer*
Erin Napier / *Set Designer / Properties Master*
Jeffery Schwartz (ΑΨΩ) / *Sound Designer*
Mark Florkowski / *Sound Designer*
Jefferson W. Kielwagen / *Exhibit Co-Curator*
Kasalina Maliamu Nabakooza / *Exhibit Co-Curator*
Abigail Ireland / *Hair and Makeup Assistant*
Alexandra Laing / *Costume Assistant*
Sam Jensen / *Lighting Assistant*
Deb Lark (ΑΨΩ) / *Lighting Assistant*
Anna Tiberi / *Set Assistant*
Alexis Down / *Set Assistant*
Zan Koenig / *Sound Assistant*
Jean-Claude Paquin / *Sound Assistant*
Aquiél Godeau / *Sound Assistant*

EMPAC STAFF

Kim Strosahl / *Production Coordinator*
Geoff Abbas / *Director of Stage Technologies*
Eric Ameres / *Senior Research Engineer*
Eric Brucker / *Lead Video Engineer*
Michele Cassaro / *Guest Services Coordinator*
John Cook / *Box Office Manager*
Alena Samoray / *Master Electrician*
Todd Vos / *Lead Audio Engineer*
Eileen Baumgartner / *Graphic Designer*
Josh Potter / *Marketing and Communications Manager*

BIOGRAPHIES

REBECCA ROUSE

Rebecca Rouse is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication & Media with a courtesy appointment in the Department of the Arts at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Rouse is a core faculty member in the Games and Simulation Arts and Sciences (GSAS) program, and a member of the Emergent Reality Lab (ERL). Rouse holds a PhD in Digital Media from the Georgia Institute of Technology, an MA in Communication & Culture from the joint program at York University and Ryerson University (Toronto), and a BA in Theatre Studies and German Studies from Brown University.

With over a decade of experience in Augmented Reality (AR) and other interactive media, Rouse's research focuses on theoretical, critical, and design production work with storytelling for new technologies. Rouse designs and develops projects across museums, cultural heritage sites, interactive installations, and theatrical performance, all with the thread of investigating and inventing new modes of storytelling. This design work dovetails with Rouse's research in design methods, media theory, and media archeology. Rouse teaches courses in Mobile AR Design, Mixed Reality Performance Design, Playwrighting, Games Studies, and the History of Technology at World's Fairs and Expositions.

With a background in theatre directing and playwrighting, she has studied directing and writing under John Emigh, Paula Vogel and Nilo Cruz at Brown University, and studied experimental performance forms with Ellen Stewart, Jonathan Hart Makwaia, Maureen Fleming, and Roberto Sifuentes at the Trinity/La MaMa Experimental Theatre Company Program. Highlights from her portfolio of technology performance projects include a production of *Machinal* that cast a robot as an actor, an entirely augmented reality musical version of *Woyzeck* with composer Brendan Padgett, and a production of *after the quake* that utilized a music-responsive costume sewn with e-wire lights as well as a gesture system for manipulating procedurally generated waveform projections.

www.rebeccarouse.com



MARC DESTEFANO

Marc Destefano is a Lecturer in the Department of Cognitive Science, and co-founder of the Games and Simulation Arts & Sciences program, where he teaches game design and development. 2017 marks Marc's 20th year of working with the RPI Players, which includes directing a production of *Much Ado About Nothing* in 2012. He is endlessly fascinated with procedural graphics, virtual reality, and new ways of interacting with computers. He wishes to give a huge amount of thanks to Melissa for giving him the time to see this through.

CLARE JOHNSON

Clare Johnson is a visual artist and writer, originally from Seattle and trained at Brown University (BA Visual Art and Creative Writing), and the Slade School of Fine Art (Studio Programme in Painting) and Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design (MA Visual Art) in London. As a writer, she is a Michael S. Harper Poetry Prize winner and a Hugo House New Works Competition finalist, with publications including *Blithe House Quarterly*, *quiet Shorts*, *Cranky*, *Shake The Tree*, and *Jack Straw Writers Anthology*. She is also the author of DK Publishing's recent book *How to Draw* (Penguin Random House), with art in publications including *Poetry Northwest*, *14 Magazine*, *Lumina*, *New Walk*, and *Frogmore Papers*, and cover art for two recent books. Johnson has exhibited throughout the Pacific Northwest and England, including at London's Jerwood Space (where she was shortlisted by Gavin Turk for the Polly Campbell award) and Lauderdale House (as a winner of Pride in the House, a UK-wide competition for LGBTQ artists).

Solo exhibitions include Oxford's North Wall Arts Centre, Bridport Arts Centre, Seattle's Richard Hugo House, Storefronts Seattle, and Guy's Hospital in London, where her 35-piece drawing project about childhood experiences with asthma was acquired for permanent display. The asthma project is one of many combining both art and writing: her ongoing Post-it Note Project (drawing and writing on a post-it note every night to remember something from the day, for 10 years and counting), which garnered a cover feature in *Real Change* and won a *Seattle Magazine* Best of 2011 for 'Best New Take on the Memoir'; her Drawing from

Literature Project (a growing series of art inspired by favorite books), for which she received an Artist Trust grant; and *Roses*, a limited edition book pairing her set of 27 drawings with poems by Rainer Maria Rilke, published in 2014. In addition to her art for *Our Town* (funded in part by a 4Culture grant), Johnson is currently working on a book-length poetry and fiction project called *Will I live here when I grow up*, for which she received a 2015 Jack Straw Writing Fellowship.
www.clarejohnson.com

BRENDAN PADGETT

As both a composer and a dramaturg, Brendan's composition work is heavily influenced by a dramaturgical understanding of theatricality and narrative. His music compositions with collaborator Rebecca Rouse include *Woyzeck* (York University, Toronto), *Ascent* (Georgia Tech), *Voices of Oakland* (Oakland Cemetery, Atlanta), *[inbox]* (Berkeley Art Museum), *Harold and the Purple Crayon* (a stop-motion music video), and *Transforming Jimmy Dalton* (Brown University). Currently the Senior Press Representative for Theater at the Kennedy Center, he has worked as a publicist for Disney Theatrical Group as well as a freelance dramaturg for numerous theatrical productions including the off-Broadway production of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Theater Row) and *Tess, a Rock Opera* at New York Musical Theater Festival (NYMF). He has produced a development series for new musical theatre writers, 8-Minute Musicals and served on the selection committee for NYMF. Brendan is also a founding member of Two Turns Theatre Company, a company presenting site-specific theater productions in New York City, where he has worked on *Turn of the Screw* at The Merchants House Museum and *I Am My Own Wife* at a Brooklyn vintage shop. MFA, Columbia University; BA, Trinity College.



NICHOLAS DEMAISON

Nicholas DeMaison is a composer and conductor, and Senior Lecturer in the Arts Department. He has lead dozens of premieres of new operatic, instrumental, choral and multi-media works, described variously as “consistently invigorating” (*New York Times*), “spine tingling” (*Feast of Music*) and “enchanted” (*Seen and Heard International*).

His music has been performed by the New York Philharmonic, Iktus Percussion, Sinopia Trio, PRISM Saxophone Quartet, and ensemble dal niente, among others, and his creative projects have been featured in the *Wall Street Journal*, *Time Out New York*, *Time Out Chicago* and *Chicago Magazine*. He is a regular conductor with New York’s Ensemble Moto Perpetuo, and has recently worked as a Music Supervisor with critically acclaimed production company Giants Are Small, and the music staff with Live from Lincoln Center and PBS.

JACK MAGAI

Jack Magai employs objects, methods and sites traditionally beyond the theatrical in order to probe theatrical boundaries. This has led him to form the Troy Chainsaw Ensemble and to dance with chickens.

His dance and performance work focuses on the evolution of attitudes about nature, often using food as a subject. In 2008 he co-founded the Emergent Scores Lab (ESL), a weekly meeting of artists in temporal media in Troy, NY to investigate the spontaneous development of improvisational structures. He studied dance and literature at Bennington College.

He has collaborated with, among others: choreographers Dayna Hanson, Karn Junkins, Heather Kravas and Eva Lawrence; musicians Paul deJong, Lori Goldston and Kyle Hanson, Suzie Kozawa and John Shaw; visual artists Adam Frelin and Michael Oatman and scenic designer Edwin Triggs.

He has performed in works of Jennifer Monson, Karen Finley, Margit Galanter and Maureen Ellenhorn, among others.

JEFFERSON W. KIELWAGEN

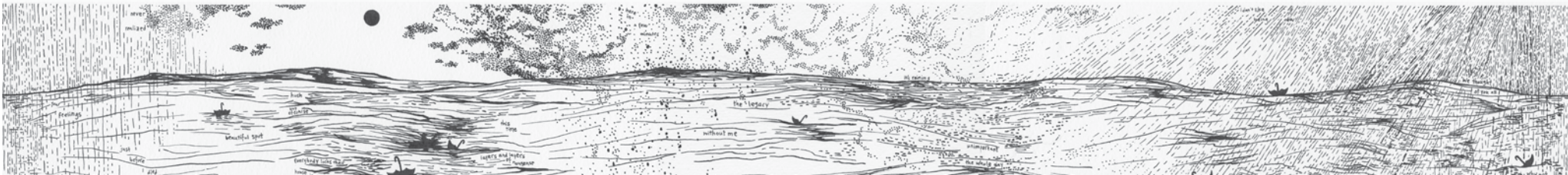
Kielwagen (Brazil, 1979) is a lecturer in the Department of the Arts at RPI. With a background in Sculpture and History & Theory of Art, Kielwagen is also active as a practicing artist and a curator. His artwork has been exhibited internationally, highlighting the Ghetto Biennale, in Haiti, and his research is currently focused on issues of world art history.

KASALINA MALIAMU NABAKOOZA

Nabakooza is the EARTS MFA 2018 Student Curator of the Shelnutt Gallery at RPI where she curated a photography exhibition of New York City Art Director Jamala Johns, founder of Le Coil, and “Speed Dating Duchamp” an exhibition in collaboration with Professor Oatman’s architecture class, which was dedicated to Professor Pauline Oliveros. She also curated a show in the West Hall Gallery for the graduating Masters Architecture student James Regnier this spring. Her background is in illustration and her site specific fall MFA graduate installation “HATCH,” incorporated animation, sound and an HTC VIVE headset. Nabakooza’s upcoming thesis project will be a multimedia project based on her research of Bugandan art and the artistic legacy of her uncle George Kakooza, the first Ugandan to head the art department of Makerere University.

NICK KARALEXIS

Nick Karalexis is an accomplished lighting designer with extensive experience in technical direction. He is one of the current Lighting Chairs for the RPI Players’ 87th season and a Production Technician at EMPAC. He is studying Electrical Engineering and Electronic Arts at RPI and serves as a liaison between several theater groups on campus. Outside of producing, his interests lie within the design and development of music and theatre technologies. He has also done freelance work in audio engineering and sound design.



ERIN NAPIER / SET DESIGNER

Erin is very excited to have had this opportunity to design and construct a set for one of her favorite shows! This experience of working with Players and EMPAC has been wonderful, and she would like to thank everyone who's helped out!

MARK R. FLORKOWSKI

Is excited to be part of the first collaborative show between the RPI Players and EMPAC. A junior studying Computer Systems Engineering, Mark has assisted sound design/operation for a number of Players' shows including "The Love of 3 Oranges", EOP 2016, "The Mystery of Edwin Drood", and "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels". This will be Mark's first official Master role as Sound Designer.

ALEX ZYLKA

Alex Zylka is excited to be lighting the first student-driven production at EMPAC. Having lit Our Town for the first time years ago, this opportunity to introduce more technology and explore the space in which the show takes place has been a fantastic journey. He looks forward to future collaboration with EMPAC and thanks the staff for the time and energy they were able to give to this show. A special thanks goes to Jerome J. Curran III for his support through this process.

PATRICK J. QUINN

Born into a family of artists, musicians, actors, singers, writers filmmakers, directors, Patrick fell for theater in Dublin's renowned Synge St. School where, with Donal Donnelly, Milo O'Shea, Jack McGowran and others he came under the tutelage of the brilliant elocutionist/director Ena Burke.

In Dublin he had leading roles in *Dubhairt-se Dabhairt-se* (Gaelic version of Lady Gregory's *Spreading The News*) and Otelo Players' *The Valiant*. In Rome he was in Joseph Flaherty's comedy *San Giorgio e Il Dragone*. His latest role was Ernst Janning in Classic Theater Guild's *The Judgement at Nuremberg*.

TV work includes Hstory channel's *Ankor Wat* and Bill Moyer's *America's River* on PBS. He has lectured with character readings, on James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake* and *Dubliners* and he has recorded, in Dublin's Moore Street vernacular, a unique version of *Anna Livia Plurabella*.

As an architect Patrick worked on the redesign of Dublin's Gate Theater with Michael Scott, former Abbey actor and designer of Dublin's new Abbey Theater. He says "this version of OUR TOWN is excitingly innovative".

TAYLOR TURNER

Taylor is excited to be in her last show at RPI. She would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people who have supported and worked with her at the Playhouse, and will carry fond memories of her time into the future.

MONICA HOH

Monica is an actor located in the Capital Region. Her previous acting credits include Kalonike in *Lysistrata* (NETE), Leigh in *Really Really*, and Trix in *The Drowsy Chaperone*. She thanks Rebecca Rouse for giving her this opportunity, and thanks her family and friends for their support!

YARDEN NE'EMAN

Yarden is grateful to be a part of such a unique theatrical experience. Thanks to Fiona and the rest of the Our Town cast and crew for an amazing time!

MARK BLUM

Mark is excited to be doing his first show here at RPI, and inside EMPAC too. He is studying Computer Science at RPI and has previously been apart of shows such as *Anything Goes*, *Urinetown*, and *A Chorus Line*.



ROBERT J STEWART

An RPI alum who performed in many RPI Players productions during his undergraduate career. Robert is excited to be working with the RPI Players again, and with the HASS School and EMPAC to bring Our Town to life in this exciting experimental incarnation.

KYLE JOHNSON

Kyle is proud to have been a part of such an impressive collaboration among so many talented individuals and organizations, and he hopes his small part in it will entertain you all. Enjoy the show!

LOGAN RANDO

Logan Rando is an actor and voice-over artist based in the Capital Region of upstate NY. He is currently studying film and stage acting at Blue Horse Repertory Theatre in Troy. He has narrated two fiction audiobooks and is pursuing commercial and animation voice-over in addition to on camera work.

MOLLY KERWICK

Molly is a Player and an Idiot. She is a sophomore physics major with an affinity for turn of the century small towns. She has had a wonderful time working with Rebecca, Marc, Nick, and the wonderful cast as Assistant Director.

PIXIE SIROIS

I am so grateful I have gotten the chance to work on this one of a kind show. Getting to watch the tech and acting come together has been such an experience, and I hope you enjoy watching it as much as I have enjoyed acting in it.

DANIEL MARION

Daniel is very excited for the opportunity to work with the RPI Players in the EMPAC venue. This technically upgraded version of Our Town has been incredibly fun to perform in and Daniel would like to thank Nick Karalexis, Rebecca Rouse and Mark Destefano for all their incredible work making this production possible.

SAMANTHA JENSEN

Samantha Jensen thanks all who have helped to make this production possible. She has enjoyed being able to work on such a cutting edge project. She wants to give a special thanks to the talented Producer Nick Karalexis and the accomplished Lighting Designer Alex Zylka for giving her this great opportunity.

ZACHARIAH SPURRIER

Zachariah Spurrier calls West Virginia, the Mountain Mama and the 35th State of the Union, his home. Here in the North he studies Bioinformatics & Molecular Biology, but he'd rather be sipping on some hot coffee and telling a joke.

JACKSON WONG

While I've acted in some out-there things before, I have never part of such a technically and artistically masterful experimental piece of this magnitude. I hope you enjoy the final product as much as I have enjoyed making it. Welcome to our town.

Note: prior drawing calls at 5.M. singer "that you'll do." Then for a couple paragraphs, an act.

- ① **Stage silhouettes (and large trees at each side) start to appear** when stage manager sings "Baby let's notice how the million people in it"
 - houses (and their chimneys/crooked roofs) appear as part of this, but the objects in them (incl. carriages & shutters) DO NOT come
 - other than details (from windows, parterre, balcony silhouettes, streetlamps) also DO NOT come in till later
- * notice how silhouettes of this stage should be fully in by the time 5.M. sings "and in our living and in our dying"
- ② When 5.M. sings "Well Good-bye of that's gone by" - the **delimited/shuttered sky** appears suddenly...
 - ②a First, VERY fast: most of the sky's stars in, up to the small moon disk and most houses, but not quite reaching the areas yet where words "will be" - still getting towards them...
 - ②b At Simon's "come closer" "you come closer" sky lets reach those same words and those words appear, continue filling in clip up to and including words, in order remembered as stage below - AND also lamp posts, benches, lamppost, lamppost



- ②c At 5.M. sings "you're welcome" we should get to the remaining words in sky (the unremembered ones) and simultaneously some of the window objects (and/or shutters, etc.) start appearing. Once sky is all done, continue with work in the windows (including pans) -> **silhouettes this phase starts with Dr. Gibbs saying "I'll only keep you a minute"**
 - * details in windows should appear in random-felling order, bouncing from side to side sometimes, not completely logically like in first train scene
- ③ While opening should be in by Dr. Gibbs saying "as late as this" (these words can be last ones to appear) Then the act stage still ~~ends~~ until...
- ④ At 5.M. Gibbs saying "the train has been through" these words disappear, and moon starts to **grow** (almost imperceptibly at first), just remaining rings of dots slowly to **expand** outer edge of circle. more consistent than scene
- ⑤ At Mrs. Webb saying "Goodnight, Louella" more details in windows start to disappear slowly, **simultaneously** **submerged** / **medium** in other normal picture, until stage direction for Dr. Gibbs "blowing out the lamp" at which point **all remaining** **disappear** and a few **random** windows are **blacked out**.

THE GESTURE SYSTEM IN GREATER DETAIL