

Wow

Walking on Water Productions

proudly presents



COMFORT FOOD



— a musical in three parts —

by Rachel Lampert and Larry Pressgrove





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Comfort Food is supported in part by our production sponsors and a grant from the Community Arts Partnership of Tompkins County.

Mansour Jewelers



PRODUCTION INFORMATION



Performances:

Friday, February 12 at 7:30 PM EST though Sunday, February 21 at 10:00 PM EST. The performance will stream at anytime within the date range listed above. Running time is approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes without an intermission.

CAST



Part 1: *Harriet's Kitchen*

Harriet Emily Jackson

Part 2: *Gabriel's Kitchen*

Gabriel..... Jahmar Ortiz

Part 3: *Estelle's Kitchen*

Estelle..... Kristin Sad

MUSICIANS



Composer, Arranger, Track Pianist Larry Pressgrove

Additional Orchestrations..... Rob Preuss

Guitarist – *Gabriel's Kitchen* Paul Livant

Mansour Jewelers

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140 The Commons Place, NY
Mansourjewelers@hotmail.com
607-878-1310

CREATIVE AND PRODUCTION TEAM



Book & Lyrics..... Rachel Lampert

Music..... Larry Pressgrove

Part 1 – *Harriet's Kitchen*

Director..... Rachel Lampert

Music Director Larry Pressgrove

Production Design & Director of Photography Tyler M. Perry

Additional Orchestrations..... Rob Preuss

Part 2 – *Gabriel's Kitchen* and Part 3 – *Estelle's Kitchen*

Director..... Priscilla Hummel

Music Director Benjamin Stevens

Additional Orchestrations..... Rob Preuss

Video Editor..... Mike Carroll

Sound Mixer..... Anna Marcus-Hecht

Camera Operator – *Estelle's Kitchen*..... Blaise Bryski

Camera Operator – *Gabriel's Kitchen* Patrice Hrabowskie

Production Assistant – *Gabriel's Kitchen* Aylanna Edwards-Wright

WALKING ON WATER STAFF



Founder / Producing Artistic Director Priscilla Hummel

Marketing & Communications Director..... Mike Carroll

Marketing Associate Ally Collins

Graphic Designer..... Heather Hamilton



MUSICAL NUMBERS

PART 1: HARRIET'S KITCHEN

Featuring Emily Jackson as Harriet

"Theme Song: Sing For Your Supper"

"Legumes"

"Peeling An Onion"

"Valentine's Day"

"10 Minutes"

"Wedding Plans"

PART 3: ESTELLE'S KITCHEN

Featuring Kristin Sad as Estelle

"Breakfast For One"

"Waiting For Spring"

"Man In The Kitchen"

"Just Go"

PART 2: GABRIEL'S KITCHEN

Featuring Jahmar Ortiz as Gabriel

"Gabriel's Kitchen"

"Cheerios"

"Campbell's Soup"

"P.B. & J."

"Mac & Cheese"



SPECIAL THANKS

Barbara Adams, Chris Alinger, Adrian Beers, Maria & Nabil Beers, Eric Brooks, Ithaca Times, Ithaca Voice, Susan Johnston, Rachel Lampert, Maritza Ortiz, Chet Osadchey, Benno Ressa, Tobi Scheck, Bill Snyder, Pamela Tan, Roger Theise, Buddie Woodridge, WRFI, and WSKG

PRODUCTION SPONSORS

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This production is made possible in part by a grant from the Community Arts Partnership of Tompkins County

DONORS

Scott Aaseng, Kathy & Mike Carroll, Audrey & John Hummel, Rachel Lampert, David Squires, Buddie Woodridge

A NOTE FROM WOW'S ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Welcome to Walking on Water Productions' fifth season! We are delighted to be producing not one but TWO musicals this year—*Comfort Food* and *The Angle of the Sun*—both written by Rachel Lampert and Larry Pressgrove! How is producing two musicals in the middle of a pandemic possible, you might ask? Because we have an amazing circle of generous supporters AND dedicated artists, all of whom are hungry to make art and connect with their community (while working in a safe, no contact environment of course).

We can't thank the businesses and individuals enough who've shared their resources with us freely and generously—we are amazed by the organizations who have come alongside us in both 2020 and 2021 to provide grants and sponsorships; we've also been moved by the patrons and friends who have made generous contributions, knowing full well that there are so many worthy arts organizations in the area to give to. Additionally, we've been inspired by the artists who've been willing to work in a new medium, learn on the fly, and take on both anticipated as well as surprising challenges... not to mention unordinary ones. All of this is a huge testament to the community we have built over the past four years, even through the toughest of times. It gives me hope that we are on the right path and even brighter days are ahead of us as we work through another challenging year—together.

While we can never create the same dynamic connection offered by the immediate and ephemeral essence of live theatre, we have embraced the challenge of finding ways to connect with and engage our audiences as we strive to keep this precious artform alive. So as we kickoff our 2021 season with another virtual show—right on the heels of our *Virtual Cabaret* last November—we invite you to experience this unique mashup of theatre and film...a little bit of musical theatre magic inspired by onstage storytelling through the lens of a movie musical! This piece has been an exhilarating, challenging, and fruitful process for all of us "on set" and behind the scenes. We couldn't be prouder of everyone's willingness to roll up their sleeves, explore, adapt, and take a deep dive into uncharted waters.

And so, during the dead of winter as this season of social isolation continues, while we long for things to return to normal and continue to crave comfort and connection, it is our hope that *Comfort Food* will provide you with joy, inspiration, humor, and hope. Now—before you hit "play"—go grab a plate or bowl of *your* favorite comfort food (maybe you already have something ready to chow down on from one of our partnering Ithaca restaurants!) and enjoy some comfort food for your belly as well as your soul.

Bon appétit!

Priscilla Hummel
 Founder, Producing Artistic Director
 Director of *Estelle's Kitchen* & *Gabriel's Kitchen*

WRITER'S NOTES



When we (Larry & Rachel) start thinking about a new project, it can begin with a small kernel of an idea. *Comfort Food* started with the idea of writing a musical that happened in a kitchen, or maybe a few kitchens, with real cooking going on. In 2006 when we wrote the play, the public was beginning to become obsessed with cooking shows and chefs were gaining celebrity status. Maybe one character should be a chef? My husband David and I share a love of cooking and Larry, David, and I have shared a lot of great food together. Of course, there's a musical in there somewhere! And, because it was going to premiere in January 2007, why not have cold winter weather figure into the play? A little meta, but I've always liked seeing a play that coincides with the season it is produced in. Once we raised the stakes by adding the abrupt breakup of an engagement, *Harriet's Kitchen* got underway.

The vegetarian/vegan movement has existed forever, but when several friends and a few relatives not only changed their food preferences but took on an almost evangelical passion to spread the movement, the conflict in *Gabriel's Kitchen* was born. Some couples can live with different political views, dog or cat inclinations, but how do they share a kitchen when food choices are so disparate? Definitely the makings of a musical!

Estelle's Kitchen happens on New Year's Eve continuing the winter theme. The story was inspired in part by a friend's unexpected death of her spouse. Setting it in a kitchen felt right to me because I spend so much time in my own kitchen cooking alongside my husband, so imagining being alone in the same kitchen fueled the story and the lyrics. Discovering what would become Estelle's journey to the next phase of her life was a compelling subject. For this virtual production, this section had the biggest revisions. Originally a two-hander, we gave the whole story to Estelle so we could keep the "no-contact" policy.

We could write extensively on the logistics of filming in people's kitchen with extensive equipment needs, varying levels of video experience, of lighting experience, of working in front of the camera and more. Many of us were learning-on-the-job and fortunate to have a team of people who were willing to do everything from re-paint their kitchen, to recruit their spouse, and do it all with grace and enthusiasm. Shout out to Mike Carroll, Tyler M. Perry, Patrice Hrabowski, Blaise Bryski, Anna Marcus-Hecht, Rob Preuss, and Benjamin Stevens whose behind-the-scenes work really made this all come together. Thank you to Priscilla Hummel and WoW Productions and the whole *Comfort Food* team of actors and for their commitment and good-humored work on this project.

ARTIST'S PROFILES



MIKE CARROLL (Video Editor – *Estelle's Kitchen* & *Gabriel's Kitchen*) is a graduate of the Park School of Communications at Ithaca College and holds a MA in Communications from the College of Saint Rose. Mike is currently the Communications Manager at the Boyce Thompson Institute (BTI), a non-profit affiliate of Cornell University. In this role, he focuses on both internal and external communications: producing multiple newsletters, creating videos, editing web pages, managing social media, and much more. Prior to BTI, Mike worked for the Marketing and Communications team at the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. Mike's videos and photos have been featured on Animal Planet, the Discovery Channel, CNN, BBC, CBS Evening News, The Dodo, and other networks. Mike is excited for everyone to watch this virtual production because it has been both challenging and rewarding to edit something completely different from his normal day-to-day type videos. He is also very proud of his wife, Priscilla, for undertaking such an incredible project while being such a wonderful mom to their little girl, Lila Joy.

PRISCILLA HUMMEL (Director – *Estelle's Kitchen* & *Gabriel's Kitchen*)



is delighted to see WoW succeed in its fifth season! Priscilla directed and choreographed WoW's inaugural production of *Godspell* in 2017, followed by *The Fantasticks* in 2018, *Katrina, A New Musical* in 2019, and *A Virtual Cabaret – celebrating the past, present, and future* in 2020. After obtaining her MFA in Acting (directing concentration) from Regent University and her BA in Theatre (dance minor) from Brenau University, Priscilla spent nine years in Chicago working as a director, choreographer, education director, teaching artist, on-camera actor, and dancer. Chicago directing credits include *The Magic Paintbrush* (Theatre Building Chicago), *Heidi*, *Matthew Three Horn*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Pinocchio*, *Camp Super Friend*, and *New Girl* (Provision Theater, Chicago); *Snoopy! The Musical* and *Rumpelstiltskin* (Northbrook Theatre, IL); and *A Musical Theatre Revue* (Trinity Christian College). Local directing and/or choreography credits include *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Wells College); *Alice In Wonderland*, *Seussical Jr.*, and *Marry Poppins Jr.* (Hangar Theatre); *Once Upon A Mattress* and *Mamma Mia!* (Lansing High School); *Annie Jr.*, *Shrek Jr.*, *The Addams Family Jr.*, and *Frozen Jr.* (DeWitt Middle School). Priscilla is an adjunct professor of theatre and dance at Wells College and Western Carolina University. She teaches group fitness and physical education classes at Island Health & Fitness and Cornell University. Priscilla is incredibly grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with Rachel and Larry on this delightfully delicious piece of theatre and to explore it with such an amazingly talented group of fellow artistic collaborators. All my love to Mike and Lila Joy.

ARTIST'S PROFILES, CONTINUED



EMILY JACKSON (*Harriet – Harriet's Kitchen*) is a NYC-based director and actor. She is excited to be venturing into the world of virtual plays with Walking on Water Productions - and is especially happy to be collaborating again with Rachel, Larry, and Tyler! She was last seen on the Ithaca stage as Mack/Mabel in *Precious Nonsense* and Molly in *Peter and the Starcatcher* (SALT Award) both at Kitchen Theatre Company. Other credits include Shedevel in *Flaming Guns of the Purple Sage*, Ursula in *Bye Bye Birdie*, Elizabeth I in *Mary Stuart*, and Amelia Earhart in *They Promised Her the Moon*. Emily's directing credits include, for Holmdel Theatre Company: *Little Women the Musical*; TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, *They Promised Her the Moon* (assistant director); KTC: *I and You*, *The Soup Comes Last*, *Physics Fair* and *Count Me In*; for Cider Mill Playhouse: *Urinetown* and *Stage Kiss*. Emily has held several artistic leadership positions, including serving as Artistic Associate at Kitchen Theatre Company, Artistic Director of Sanguine Theatre Company, and Lark Theatre Literary Wing Member. Originally from Dallas, Texas, Emily received her BFA from The University of Oklahoma's Peggy Dow Helmerich School of Drama.

Check out WoW's Comfort Food Specials available for takeout with our partnering restaurants!
Click [HERE](#) for details.

COLTIVARE

Hawi Ethiopian Cuisine

**RACHEL LAMPERT** (*Writer & Lyricist / Director – Harriet's Kitchen*)

is a playwright, director, choreographer and served for 20 years as the artistic director of Kitchen Theatre Company, in Ithaca, NY. She is pleased to be working with WoW Productions for the first time. She has written the book & lyrics with original music by composer Larry Pressgrove for *Bed No Breakfast*, *Tony & the Soprano*, *Waiting for Spring* and *The Angle of the Sun*. *The Angle of the Sun* was produced at NYMF and *Tony & the Soprano* had a California production. Her musical *Precious Nonsense* has had several productions in around New York state, remounts at the Kitchen Theatre Company and a west coast production. A proponent of encouraging young people to attend the theater, she is the author of many family-musicals including *I Have a Song to Sing O*, *Scout*, *Sizzle & Slide*, *The Mystery of the Magic Flute* and *A Case for the Classics*. With composer Lesley Greene she has written *Emmett & Ella: A Big Apple Escape*, *Emmett & Ella: The Puppy Plot*, *Winter Tales*, and *Fools Schmools*. With composer John Coyne she has written *The Memory Book: A New Aunt Mae Story*, *Aunt Mae Comes to Town* and *Emmett & Ella: A Doggone Mystery*. Her plays include *The Book Club*, *Count Me In*, *The Soup Comes Last*, *Losing Myself*, *And...lately* and adaptations of *Frankenstein*, *The Trial* and *A Christmas Carol*. She has twice been commissioned by Hangar Theatre to write plays for their Kidstuff Series. *The Amazing Tale of the Backyard Overnight Adventure* (2018) and *Mario and The Twelve Dancing Princesses* (2020). She is currently working on an opera with composer Sally Lamb McCune and co-librettist Yvonne Gray set in Orkney Islands, Scotland that will be workshopped by Opera Ithaca later in 2021. She has received a SALT (Syracuse Live Theater Award) for Best Actress in 2004 and SALT Lifetime Achievement Award in 2017. She is the recipient of four NEA Choreography Fellowships, grants from NYSCA, A.R.T./NY and an SOS Grant from Community Arts Partnership of Tompkins County. She lives in Ithaca, NY with her husband David Squires and their two dogs. Her most recent family musical *The Memory Book: A New Aunt Mae Story* is available free on-line at www.fitzandstartzproductions.org.



ANNA MARCUS-HECHT (*Sound Mixer – Estelle's Kitchen & Gabriel's Kitchen*) is a current Masters student at the NYU Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program and a graduate of Ithaca College with a B.M. in Composition. Anna has worked with Walking on Water in the past, as the sound mixer and production assistant for their recent *Virtual Cabaret* and as orchestrator and saxophonist for *Katrina* in the Summer of 2019. Anna is happy to be able to help bring theatrical performance back to the Ithaca community during this pandemic.

ARTIST'S PROFILES, CONTINUED

JAHMAR ORTIZ (*Gabriel – Gabriel's Kitchen*) (they/them) is a senior at Ithaca College originally from Willingboro, NJ. Their previous Ithaca College credits include *Shifting Spaces: the Fall 2020 Dance Concert* (Assistant Choreographer), *Hedda Gabler* (Tesman), and *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* (Belize). Their other credits include *A Day* (Alfonso) at The Cherry Artspace, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Oberon) at Ithaca Shakespeare Company, as well as *Saturday Night Fever* (Double J) and *Newsies* (Bunsen) at Cortland Repertory Theatre in Cortland, NY.



TYLER M. PERRY (*Production Design & Director of Photography – Harriet's Kitchen*) is an award-winning designer for theatre, television, and live events. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Theatrical Production Arts - Design from Ithaca College, where he was recently an Instructor of Lighting Design. As a proud member of United Scenic Artists Local 829, he was the Assistant Lighting Designer for the 2017 Broadway revival of *Miss Saigon*, and national tours of *Cinderella*, and *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*. His work has been seen onstage at regional theaters across the country, and on television and the web at Bravo TV, NBC Sports, Fox Sports 1, AOPA Live, ABC, and Monumental Sports Network. Tyler is the Technical Director and Technical Theatre Instructor at Riverdale Country School in Bronx, NY.



LARRY PRESSGROVE (*Composer, Arranger, and Track Pianist / Music Director – Harriet's Kitchen*) has served as music director, conductor, and orchestrator on Broadway, Off-Broadway, and national tours, and has composed, arranged, and worked as vocal coach and educator in numerous award-winning productions and programs. He served as Music Director and Orchestrator, and originated the role of 'Larry', in the Tony-nominated Broadway musical [title of show]. He then collaborated with that same team to create the original Off-Broadway musical *Now. Here. This.* at the Vineyard Theatre. Larry was Associate Music Director for *Disaster!* on Broadway. He can be heard on the original cast albums of these musicals and *Children's Letters to God*. He has conducted the Broadway production of *Cats* and the National tours of *Phantom of the Opera* and *Les Misérables* and music directed galas featuring such performers as Ben Vereen, Norm Lewis and Tyne Daly. As a composer, Larry's original musicals include *Waiting for Spring*, *Bed No Breakfast*, *Tony and the Soprano*, and *The Angle of the Sun*, which was featured as the premier production of NMYF's 2007 season. In 2013, he received the NYMF Award for Best Orchestration. Larry also serves as Music Supervisor for various projects at the prestigious 'Fame' school – La Guardia Arts High School. Amongst the hundreds of students he has mentored are Oscar-nominated Timothee Chalamet (*Call Me By Your Name*), Ansel Elgort (*The Fault in Our Stars*, *Baby Driver*), Micaela Diamond (*The Cher Show*) and Jharell Jerome (*When They See Us*, *Moonlight*). He has conducted residencies at various universities including Baldwin Wallace University and The University of Illinois at Champagne/Urbana.



ROB PREUSS (*Additional Orchestrations / Sound Mixer – Harriet's Kitchen*) Originally from Ontario, Canada Rob began playing piano at the age of 5. At 15 he joined The Spoons, a synth-pop band, and they had several radio hits. After a few years with the Spoons, Rob joined the rock band Honeymoon Suite and toured all over Canada, USA, Europe and Asia. His love of all types of music led him to theater where he has played piano and keyboards for shows including *Phantom Of The Opera*, *Beauty And The Beast*, *Miss Saigon* and *Blood Brothers*. Rob was Musical Director for *Mamma Mia's* Broadway and National Tour as well as Associate Musical Supervisor for *Once The Musical* on Broadway and National Tour. Rob was a piano coach to the actor Rami Malek, helping him prepare for his Academy Award-winning role as Freddie Mercury in the film *Bohemian Rhapsody*.



ARTIST'S PROFILES, CONTINUED

KRISTIN SAD (*Estelle – Estelle's Kitchen*) has been a member of the amazing Ithaca theater community since she became an Ithacan in 2007 and is tickled to be making her initial foray into the WoW artistic world! Since graduating from the Actors' Workshop of Ithaca, it has been her great good fortune to work with many of the theater companies in town. Some favorite roles: Lady M (*'Scottish Play'*, Ithaca Shakespeare Company), Martha (*Virginia Woolf*, Homecoming Players), Ginky (*Love, Loss & What She Wore*, AWITC), Hillary Clinton (*Mrs. Satan & The Nasty Woman*, Kitchen Theater) and Lydia (*I Carry Your Heart*, Hangar Theatre). Rachel & Larry have crafted *Estelle's Kitchen* as the story of an "everywoman" (of a certain age) and her journey through grief, joy, friendship, resilience, and food; it has been such fun, and she hopes you become as fond of her as she is! Thank you to Priscilla, Mike, Ben, and Anna for making this project happen. Last but not least, love to Blaise and her beautiful family, without whom none of this makes any sense at all.



BENJAMIN STEVENS (*Music Director – Estelle's Kitchen & Gabriel's Kitchen*) has been a part of Walking on Water Productions since its inception, having been the music director for all three previous shows, as well as performing in their inaugural production of *Godspell* as Judas. It has been a delight to revisit these shows and create something with this wonderful group of people, even at a distance.

WALKING ON WATER BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Siouxie Easter

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Priscilla Hummel

Buddie Woodridge

Iska Ziver

OUR MISSION



Walking on Water Productions (WoW) is a Tompkins County musical theatre company that empowers local theatre artists by training, collaborating with, and showcasing them through production opportunities, internships, and educational workshops that provide individual development and community connection; together, we present both classics and new works that multi-generational audiences can enjoy.

www.walkingonwaterproductions.org

Stay tuned for details about our summer 2021 production!

