



American Southwest Theatre Company
at NMSU Theatre Arts
presents



American Southwest Theatre Company & The NMSU Department of Theatre Arts present

Big Frog

by Dylan Guerra
directed by
Nichole Hamilton

SEPT 30TH - OCT 9TH
*SPECIAL PREVIEW PERFORMANCE ON SEPT 29TH

AS/NMSU CENTER FOR THE ARTS
1000 E UNIVERSITY AVE AT ESPINA

TICKETS:



Director
Scenic Designer
Costume Designer
Lighting Designer
Props Designer
Sound Designer
Stage Manager

Nichole Hamilton
Tobias Harding
Chloe Cappuccilli
Alia Belinte
Chloe Cappuccilli
Jim Wilkinson
Luis Alfonso Castro

CAST

BY ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Alycia Herrera (Maya)

Jonathan Cordova (Will)

Yocelin Torres (Mel)

Isaac Goldstein (Nick)

Elia Vasquez (Cody)

Content Advisory:
this play contains adult themes and
language, as well as the use of alcohol,
drugs and weapons.
Viewer discretion advised.

Audiences are reminded to please silence all
electronic devices (cell phones and alarms)
prior to the performance.
Thank you for your consideration.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Jonathan Cordova (Will) Jonathan has been acting for eight years. He has played a variety of roles including: Simba in *The Lion King*, Troy in *High School Musical*, Horton in *Seussical, The Musical*, Daniel Beauxhomme in *Once On This Island*, a chorus member in *Broadway On Stage*, Elya Yelnats and Trout Walker in *Holes*, Tommy Ross in *Carrie: The Musical*. He was also nominated as Best Actor in the 2021 New Mexico Enchantment Awards. Jonathan Graduated from The Public Academy for Performing Arts in Albuquerque, and now is a sophomore musical theatre major at NMSU.

Isaac Goldstein (Nick) Isaac is a senior here at NMSU and has been doing theater for eight years. He started by doing makeup for haunted houses, but he is now interested in directing. He has recently assistant-directed *Marilyn/ God* with Blank Conversations and *Mojada: A Medea in Los Angeles* here at NMSU. He co-directed *Meteor Shower* with Blank Conversations. He is excited to do some acting here for *Big Frog*.

Alycia Herrera (Maya) Alycia is a senior at NMSU, majoring in Theatre Arts. This is her second show with the NMSU theatre program. She was Thespian president of Troupe 2996 in high school. She uses her acting to draw closer to the Lord, and she desires that through her work she might worship and praise Jesus for all He has done and is doing in her life. She'd like to thank her family for being proud of her and always being so eager to watch her on stage, no matter what role she plays.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Yocelin Torres (Mel) Yocelin is currently a senior in NMSU, majoring in Theatre Arts. Yocelin is thrilled to be back for her second show in the NMSU Theatre Program, previously she had performed as Clovia in *A Christmas Carol* and more recently dancing to the Time Warp as Riff Raff in *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (Shadow Cast) She is grateful to her friends and family for their love and support and would like to thank all those involved in *Big Frog* for all the laughs and fun times.

Elia Vasquez (Cody) Elia is a Theatre Arts major who has performed in NMSU productions for three years now. Previous roles include Medea in *Mojada: A Medea in Los Angeles*, as well as Julia in the 2021 *Shakespeare Project*. In addition, they serve as a board member for the student theatre group Ember. They hope you enjoy the show, and want to thank the dedicated cast and crew for their hard work to bring this production together.

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Lisa Hermanson for providing the voice of Dana Brown.

FROM THE INTERIM DEPARTMENT- HEAD AND MANAGING DIRECTOR

Welcome to our 2022-23 mainstage season! If you have been coming to see shows here for years, welcome back. If this is your first time at NMSU Theatre Arts, we are so happy to have you here, and hope this becomes a “home” away from home for you.



As you probably already know (since you’re sitting here), theatres can be special places. They are rare spaces where we all gather together to laugh, cry and think, where we can dig into some of the toughest questions about what it means to be human, where we can grapple with current challenges, or where we can escape for an hour or two from whatever we’re facing in our everyday lives. Here at NMSU, we try to put together seasons of plays and musicals that allow us to do all of that.

We hope in this season you see yourself represented in the characters on our stage, and we also hope you get to know characters who are very different from you.

After the distance between people created by the events of the past few years, we want this theatre to be a place for us to reconnect. We invite you to join us after the shows for our receptions and talkbacks, so that the connections can continue after the performance.

Dylan Guerra sent us *BIG FROG* when we invited him to submit to our High Desert Play Development Workshop, a program founded in 2005 to give NMSU students an opportunity to work with living playwrights and to be a part of the new play development process. When we read the play, we were so struck by the characters, the story and the way it’s told that we couldn’t wait for a chance to work on it, and to share it with audiences.

We’d like to thank American Southwest Theatre Company and the College of Arts and Sciences for helping to support our students with scholarships and travel funds, and for enabling our department to bring in guest artists like Dylan Guerra and our scenic designer Tobias Harding.

We’d also like to thank you for being here, for being game for something new and adventurous, and for bringing your own imaginations, senses of humor and hearts into the room.

To learn about the plays and musicals in our 2022-23 season, please visit theatre.nmsu.edu. Hope to see you back here for all of the very different experiences our season has in store!

With excitement,
Larissa Lury
Interim Department Head

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Dylan Guerra is a queer, Latinx, New York City-based artist originally from Miami, Florida. He is a current member of EST/Youngblood, Ars Nova's Playgroup, and P73's Interstate-73.



Dylan most recently wrote on HBO Max's *The Other Two*. He is currently developing a film with Picture Start & Get Lfd, and two television series-- one with A24 and the other with Family Owned.

His solo-show *Find Him* recurs at Ars Nova. He is also a 2022/2023 recipient of the Clifford Odets commission with the Lee Strasberg Institute, the Playwright's Horizon's Winegarden Commission and an MTC Sloan commission. Other Plays include: *For a Brief Moment I was Something Else* (HERE), *The Yaelmihkeinsploke* (SMU), *There Is a Thing at the End of the Loop* (Yale Cabaret).

BFA: Southern Methodist University.

DIRECTORS NOTES

When I first read *Big Frog* by Dylan Guerra almost a year ago, I could not stop turning the pages. The play's structure is intriguing, the plot mysterious, and the style, well... quite the wild ride we will get to shortly. When I read it again, I found themes of cultural and generational trauma, addiction, sexual identity, isolation, and youth searching for an understanding of their past, present, future and how they tie together.

Despite life's ability to feel redundant and mundane at times, humanity repeating itself through words and gestures, we are complicated and deeply connected in our search to make peace with this existence.

As you prepare yourselves to join us in this wild ride, I invite you to engage with Guerra's words from the script "This play is not about understanding. Lean in to the ridiculous."

Thank you for being here.

GUEST ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Tobias Harding (Scenic Design)

Originally from Germany, he received his MFA in Scenography in 2004 from Ohio University in Athens. Together with his wife Eileen he has worked as a designer and artisan for numerous theatres and opera companies on the East Coast and in the Southwestern US. Tobias, Eileen, and his daughter Liliane are thrilled to have recently made Santa Fe their home base.

You may see examples of his past work on his website at www.tobiashardingdesign.com

This Year at ASTC at NMSU

FALL 2022

Big Frog by Dylan Guerra

October, 2022

A Christmas Carol adapted by
Norman Duttweiler & Robert McNamara
November & December, 2022

SPRING 2023

Hookman by Lauren Yee

February & March, 2023

Godspell

(2012 Revised Version)

Music & Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz

April & May, 2023

Student Production Biographies

Luis Alfonso Castro (Stage Manager) Luis is excited to be back at NMSU as a solo stage manager, which he never thought he would do again after high school. He recently helped co-stage manage *Mojada: A Medea in Los Angeles* for NMSU. He also stage-managed *Meteor Shower* for Blank Conversations Theatre Company. He is very involved in the theatre community outside of NMSU as well acting as the Artistic Director for A Children's Theatre of the Mesilla Valley. There he has directed a huge number of shows including *The Phantom Tollbooth*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Selfie*, *The Legend of Robin Hood... Sort Of*, *Orphan Trains* and *Into the Woods JR.* (which he also choreographed). Outside of theatre he acts as one of Beyonce's choreographers and backup dancers and is also currently working on obtaining his degree in Education and minor in theatre. He hopes to become an English/Theatre hybrid teacher. Once again, he would like to thank Mike Wise for having faith in him to stage manage alone, Nichole Hamilton for an amazing and hilarious new friendship and the entire cast and crew of *Big Frog* for all the hard work they put into making this show reality!

Vance Cook (Assistant Properties Designer) Vance is a sophomore and a theatre major. His previous technical credits include: Properties Designer for *The Yellow Wallpaper* produced by Ember Theatre Company and Blank Conversations Theatre Company and Scenic Designer for *Meteor Shower* produced by Blank Conversations Theatre Company. He appreciates the opportunity to assist on *Big Frog* and would like to thank his father for needling him to do more and take risks.

Alia Belinte (Lighting Designer) Alia's most recent credits include Lighting Designer for *Broadway Onstage* & Assistant Lighting Designer for *Mojada: A Medea in Los Angeles*. She has also served as Assistant Stage Manager for the Four Corners Musical Theatre Company's run of *Mamma Mia* and production stage manager and lighting designer for ENMU's virtual production of *Everybody*, as well as Lighting Designer for *The Yellow Wallpaper* for Blank Conversations. Her lighting design on *Syd the Solstice Kid* at NMSU earned her a meritorious achievement in from the KCACTF organization.

PRODUCTION STAFF

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Theatre Manager | Jim Wilkinson |
| Interim Technical Director | Dave Hereford |
| Production Stage Manager | Mike Wise |
| Scene Shop Foreman | James Jaworski |
| Costume Shop Manager | Tamara M. Carruthers |
| Master Electrician | Jim Wilkinson |
| Original Music | Benjamin A. Ramsey |
| Light Board Operator | Mattie Ruminer |
| Sound Board Operator | Ryanne Bizick |
| Stage Crew | Aslan Chavez, Vance Cook, Benjamin A. Ramsey, Austin Reeve |
| Set Construction | THTR 141L & THTR 346 students |
| Costume Construction | THEA 1310L, THEA 345, Mattie Ruminer (Work Study) |
| Wardrobe Crew Head | Reagan Szulc |
| Costume Crew | Noctis Maciel, Amy Trejo |
| House Manager | Sydney Arnink |
| Assistant House Manager | Dameon Vasquez |
| House Crew | Darcy Harman, Emma Kenney, Jackie Connely, Indira Rucker, |

RESIDENT COMPANY BIOGRAPHIES

Chloe Cappuccilli is a new Visiting Assistant Professor at NMSU working as a costume designer. She received her B.F.A from Columbia College Chicago in 2015 and her M.F.A from West Virginia University in 2020. She has worked as a costume and puppet designer, as well as costume crafts artisan and draper. Costume design credits include: *The Phantom Tollbooth*, *Naga Mandala* (West Virginia University) *Half Life of Memory* (Cold Basement Dramatics) *Moon shot*, *The American Revolution* (Theatre Unspeakable) *The Tempest*, *True West*, *Human Rites* (Columbia College Chicago).

Tamara M. Carruthers received a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Arts from New Mexico State University. She managed NMSU's Costume Shop for three semesters directly after graduation. She then joined Wayside Theatre (Middletown, VA) and spent ten years as their Resident Costume Designer and Shop Manager. She spent five summers in the Costume Shop at Creede Repertory Theatre (Creede, CO) designing and serving as their Draper, Draper/First Hand, Assistant Costume Shop Manager, and Costume Shop Manager. She has been the Costume Shop Manager and an Instructor at NMSU since 2017 and is the proud recipient of the Fall 2021 "A" Mountain Staff Award and the Spring 2022 College of Arts and Sciences Exempt Staff Development Award.

Nichole Hamilton (she/hers) is an Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts at NMSU, teaching classes in vocal production and acting. At NMSU, she has directed *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*, *Inspecting Carol*, *The Wolves*, the 2020 original and interactive virtual play *Tracer*, and last year's production of *Fefu and her Friends*. Nichole has been an actor, director, and instructor for over 20 years and is a proud member of Actors Equity Association and the Hippodrome Acting Company. She is a certified teacher with the National Michael Chekhov Association and a practitioner with the Lessac Training and Research Institute. Nichole is the recipient of the NMSU 2020 Patricia Christmore Faculty Teaching Award.

David L. Hereford received his B.F.A. in Theatre from UNM in 1978. He spent five summers at the Santa Fe Opera and a summer in the props shop at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon, as well as being the Props Master at the Manitoba Theatre Centre in Winnipeg, and a scenic carpenter at the Denver Center Theatre Company.

RESIDENT COMPANY BIOGRAPHIES

Lisa Hermanson is originally from Seattle, Washington. She holds her MFA in Theatre Pedagogy/Performance from Virginia Commonwealth University, where she was also adjunct faculty in Theatre and Speech, and her BA in Theatre and Music from Seattle Pacific University. Lisa is a music director, director, pianist, vocalist, and composer/playwright. She has worked in theatres in both the Seattle and Richmond areas, including Virginia Repertory Theatre (Richmond, VA) and the 5th Avenue Theatre (Seattle, WA), as well as multiple years in theatre education in Seattle. Favorite music credits include *Into The Woods* (TheatreVCU), *Spitfire Grill* (Northwest University), *The Little Mermaid* (Broadway Bound Children's Theatre), several years with Covenant Kids (Shoreline Covenant Church), and work on the revival of *Paint Your Wagon* (5th Avenue Theatre). Favorite directing credits include *Little Shop of Horrors* (TheatreVCU), *12 Angry Jurors* (Meadowdale High School), *The Good Doctor* (Seattle Pacific University), and *Robin Hood* (Shoreline Christian School). In addition to working with published and classic pieces, Lisa also focuses on new work. Her current project is a musical on the question of immigration, the first draft of which was developed and workshopped in Richmond, VA as a culmination of her graduate work.

Wil Kilroy joined NMSU after many years in Maine where he was Chair and Professor of Theatre at the University of Southern Maine. At USM he directed dozens of plays and musicals including *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Laramie Project* which were invited to Kennedy Center regional festivals. Wil has worked nationally as an actor, with roles ranging from Steve in *Becky's New Car* to Laertes in *Hamlet*, and on TV productions such as *All My Children* and *Babylon Five*, and is an annual alumni guest artist with The State Ballet of Rhode Island. As the co-founder of the National Michael Chekhov Association, Wil has taught nationally and internationally. Wil was awarded the Kennedy Center bronze medallion for achievement in Theatre Education in 2014.

James Jaworski comes from Buffalo, NY. Jim is a regionally-recognized artist and bowl maker and spends his "free time" making bowls and finding lumber.

RESIDENT COMPANY BIOGRAPHIES

Larissa Lury is an associate professor, director, deviser, and a former acrobat. She drawn to artwork and experiences that open her to new ways of looking at the world around her, and strives to create those experiences for others. She's directed and workshopped plays for companies including: American Shakespeare Center, The Assembly, Cherry Lane (Mentor Project), The Playwrights' Center, Urbanite, Dorset Theatre Festival, Portland Center Stage, Southern Rep, San Diego Rep, InterAct, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Clubbed Thumb, New Georges, Ma-Yi, New Jersey Rep, Keen Company's Keen Teens, McCarter Theatre's Youth Ink!, Curious Theatre Company, Lake Dillon, Passage Theatre, Abingdon/ Small Pond, Leviathan Lab, Prospect Theatre and of course, American Southwest Theatre Company. She was recently awarded a Next Stage Residency with The Drama League in NYC. She was a member of the inaugural group of National Directing Fellows, an LMCC Process Space Resident, a Resident Director at Ensemble Studio Theatre, and a chashama AREA Award recipient. She is a member of the Lincoln Center Theater Directors Lab, and a New Georges Affiliate Artist. She received a BS from Northwestern University and an MFA from UC San Diego.

Jim Wilkinson is a graduate of Oñate high school in Las Cruces New Mexico where he studied technical theater. He continued his education at Full Sail University in Orlando Florida where he received an associates of science in show production and touring. He returned to New Mexico to become the head of the audio department at the Spencer Theater in Alto, NM. He travelled the U.S. and Canada on tours of Broadway shows including; *Oklahoma*, *Big River*, *My Fair Lady* and *Movin' Out*. In 2007 he moved to New York City and worked as a sound operator and mixer on many Broadway productions including *Hair*, *Spamalot*, *Porgy And Bess*, *A Christmas Story*, *Spiderman: Turn Off the Dark*, and *If/Then*. Jim is thrilled to be back living in the southwest and to be part of the NMSU Theatre Department. He would like to thank his wife, Jackie for her continued support.

Michael Wise received his B.A. in Theatre from UC Santa Barbara and has been working professionally in theatre for over four decades. He has worked for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Bathhouse Theatre Company, A Contemporary Theatre in Seattle, The Laguna Arts Repertory, Intiman Theatre, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, The Seattle Group Theatre, The Empty Space Theatre, Mt. Hood Repertory Theater, The Player's Guild in Canton, Ohio, New City Theater, Fargo Interarts Ballet, Southern California Conservatory Theater, and Seattle Childrens Theatre.

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William & Julia Brogan, Beth Pollack,
Heather Pollard and Denise Welsh

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Kilroy, Richard Radick & Margaret Suzukida,
Norman Todd

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Barb and Irv Ross

From the ASTC Board President

The American Southwest Theatre Company (ASTC) and NMSU Department of Theatre welcomes you to the first play of 2022-23 season *Big Frog*, directed by Nichole Hamilton and written by Dylan Guerra.



ASTC's Mission Statement: The American Southwest Theatre Company seeks to enrich the theatrical and educational experience for NMSU students and for our community by providing professional theatre personnel and production/educational resources. ASTC values respect, collaboration, initiative, education, community outreach, and diversity.

In support of our mission ASTC provided additional funds to the Theatre Department to hire Tobias Harding, a scenic designer and painter, and to bring in the playwright, Dylan Guerra. Mr. Guerra will not only get to see his play performed in our theatre but will meet and talk to theatre and Creative Media Institute students.

Please mark your calendar for this year's adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* directed by Las Cruces actor/director Norman Lewis. November 18th - December 4th.

In the spring get your tickets to see *Hookman*, directed by Larissa Lury and *Godspell* directed by Wil Kilroy.

ASTC relies on donations and fund-raising events to enable us to bring in professionals from all aspects of theatre as well as enabling us to provide funding for: student travel to competitions and graduate auditions and interviews, a scholarship to a graduating senior, and emergency funds to assist with students' educational expenses.

Please visit our website: <https://theatre.nmsu.edu>. Don't hesitate to email me, dwelsh@nmsu.edu, or Larissa Lury, llury@nmsu.edu .

Denise Welsh, President
ASTC Board of Trust

ASTC Board of Directors

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ASTC RESIDENT COMPANY / NMSU THEATRE ARTS FACULTY / STAFF

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Wil Kilroy | <i>Professor/Department Head/Managing Director</i> |
| Chloe Cappuccilli | <i>Visiting Assistant Professor</i> |
| Tamara M. Carruthers | <i>Costume Shop Manager</i> |
| Nichole Hamilton | <i>Assistant Professor</i> |
| David L. Hereford | <i>Interim Technical Director</i> |
| Lisa Hermanson | <i>Assistant Professor</i> |
| Jim Jaworski | <i>Shop Foreman</i> |
| Larissa Lury | <i>Associate Professor</i> |
| Jim Wilkinson | <i>Theater Manager/Sound Designer</i> |
| Michael Wise | <i>Production Stage Manager</i> |
| Melis Derya White | <i>Administrative & Fiscal Assistant</i> |

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Scholarship

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Department of Theatre Arts Scholarship

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Nicholas Mayeux

Alia Belinte

Shawn Pirkle

Vance Cook

Benjamin Ramsey

Cyprian Fira

Esther Rogge

JJ Hanley

Caitlin N. Skibyak

Darcy Harman

Chantel Turner

Joshua Jackson

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*The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, part of the Rubenstein Arts Access Program, is generously funded by **David M. Rubenstein.***

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Additional support is provided by The Honorable Stuart Bernstein and Wilma E. Bernstein; and the Dr. Gerald and Paula McNichols Foundation.

Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts.

This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KCACTF representative, and selected students and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year more than 1,500 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.