

# Ruby Theatre at THE COMPLEX

Rubidor Productions *presents* the World Premiere of

## A Misunderstanding

Written by Matt Chait  
Directed by Elina de Santos

Starring

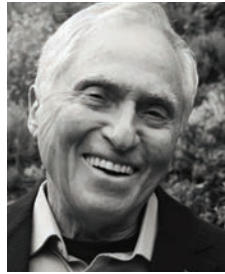
Amy-Helene Carlson, Dennis Renard, Matt Chait and Bruce Katzman



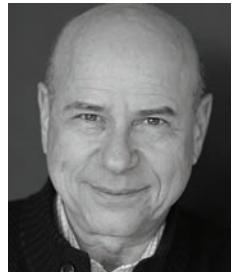
Amy-Helene Carlson



Dennis Renard



Matt Chait



Bruce Katzman

**Casting Director**

Michael Donovan, CSA

**Casting Associate**

Richie Ferris, CSA

**Publicity**

Lucy Pollak

**General Manager**

Matthew Herrmann

**Production Stage Manager**

Tempest Rockbell

**Set Design**

Todd Faux

**Lighting Design**

Leigh Allen

**Costume Design**

Michael Mullen

**Sound Design**

Ross Chait

*All actors appear courtesy of Actors' Equity Association, The Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States*

# WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

**AMY-HELENE CARLSON** (*Melinda Brownstein*) Amy-Helene Carlson is a graduate of the William Esper Studio in New York City and a regular contributor for theater company Naked Angels. You can catch her on the new series, *All Hail Beth*. Huge thanks to Matt and Elina.

**DENNIS RENARD** (*Howard Blair*) Dennis Renard was born and raised in Mississippi before moving to Chicago for high school. There he studied acting at the Goodman Theatre and then moved to the West coast to further his training at UCLA's undergrad theater program. He made his professional theater debut last year in *12 Angry Men* at the Laguna Playhouse. He then went on to play Leroi Jones in a workshop production of *Beatniks: the Musical* and recently finished the world premiere run of *Baby Eyes* by Donald Jolly, produced by Playwrights Arena. TV/Film credits: *Mississippi Requiem*, *Lifetime's Sinner Minister*, *San Andreas: Mega Quake*, and *Humor Me: Season 1*. @dennisrenardii

**MATT CHAIT** (*Bertram Cates*) I have been fortunate to have spent the great majority of my life in theatre. I attended the Neighborhood Playhouse, studied with some great teachers, worked in theater in New York, LA and all over the country, and have owned and operated The Complex for twenty-seven years, retiring last January. I taught acting at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, UCLA and I had my own acting studio for over twenty years. I am very grateful that you are here and that I get to do this show that has been a dream of mine for a long time and to work with such a remarkable director as Elina de Santos and such a wonderful cast. When I created the Complex I named this theater the Ruby theater in honor of my father, Reuben; and the theatre across the way the Dorie Theater in honor of my mother, Dorothy. So if it seems like I'm quite at home here, it's because I am home. Welcome!

Oh, yes. I do have to beg forgiveness from my family. Whenever I do a project that is this personal to me, I get so wrapped up in it that I am sort of a husband and father 'in absentia.'

Sorry, Angela, Ross and Lily, but I'll be back soon. Love, Matt

**BRUCE KATZMAN** (*Joshua Brownstein*) LA stage appearances: *Snow Geese* at the Independent Shakespeare Company Studio (2017); *Flowers for Algernon* at the Deaf West The-

atre (2013); as Jacob and Jack in *Jacob And Jack* at the Zephyr (2012); Gottfried in *Way To Heaven Circle* and *LA Weekly*). Broadway credits include the Tony Award-winning revival of *Cabaret* and the premiere season of Tony Randall's National Actors Theater. Bruce appeared in Central Park with the NY Shakespeare Festival in productions of *Richard III* (w/Denzel Washington) and *Othello* (w/Raul Julia and Christopher Walken). Off-Broadway he was in *Sylvia* (Sarah Jessica Parker) for the Manhattan Theatre Club and he appeared on many off-off-Broadway stages. LA audiences might have also seen Bruce at The Pasadena Playhouse (*Stormy Weather*); The Mark Taper Forum (*The Talking Cure*); NoHo Arts (*That Perfect Moment*); in *Saturday Night At Grossinger's* for Theatre West; in *Charlotte: A Life Or Theatre* at the MET Theatre in Hollywood. He has appeared on more than 30 prime-time TV shows, including *Black-ish*, *The Mindy Project*, *Agent Carter*, *Criminal Minds*, *Scandal*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Castle* and others. Bruce directed critically acclaimed productions of *King Lear* (2003) and *Uncle Vanya* (2002) at the MET Theatre. An acting teacher and coach, he has taught workshops on the plays of Anton Chekhov in Oxford, England, in Denmark, and in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He is a 1988 graduate of Yale School of Drama.

**ELINA DE SANTOS** (*Director*) Elina de Santos is co-artistic director of Rogue Machine Theatre. She has directed world premieres of *Hostage* by Michelle Kohlos Brooks, *Family Riots* by Gideon Jeph Wabvuta, *In the Valley of the Shadow* by Katherine Cortez, *Dirty Filthy Love Story* by Rob Mersola, *Nice Things* by Vince Melocchi, *Razorback* by John Pollono, *Church & State* by Jason Odell Williams, *Yard Sale Signs* by Jennie Webb and *The Sexual Life of Savages* by Ian McDonald; the American premiere of *Daytona* by Oliver Cotton; West Coast premieres of *Smart Love* by Brian Letscher (upcoming in 2019 at PRT), *Bhutan* by Daisy Foote, *Falling* by Deanna Jent, Nicolas Wright's *Vincent in Brixton* (Pasadena Playhouse) and *New Jerusalem* by David Ives; and L.A. premieres of *Stop Kiss* by Diana Son (co-director, Matthew Elkins), David Mamet's *Speed the Plow* and Edward Albee's *A Delicate Balance*. A small sampling of other directing credits includes *Broken Glass*, *All My Sons* and *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller; *Awake & Sing!* (in 1994-95 and again in 2015-16 at the Odyssey,

as well as at the Berkshire Theatre Festival and Pittsburgh Public Theatre) and *Rocket to the Moon* by Clifford Odets; Tennessee Williams' *Orpheus Descending* (LADCC Award for direction), *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen, *Orphans* by Lyle Kessler (OC Weekly Award for best production), and *Romeo & Juliet: Circus Verona* (Deaf West Theatre). Elina is the recipient of the Milton Katselas Award for career achievement in direction from the Los Angeles Drama Critic's Circle

**MATT CHAIT** (*Author*) When I was touring in a show many years ago, my girlfriend back in New York told me over the phone that she was doing 'exercises that made you high.' I had never heard of such a thing. I hadn't experimented much with drugs, but 'exercises that made you high' sounded really intriguing. They were called 'yoga' and I resolved that I would try a yoga class as soon as I returned to New York. The classes that I found were under the guidance of someone called Swami Satchidananda. And, yes, they did make me high, in a very lucid and relaxed way, in fact so relaxed that I barely recognized myself. This experience began a spiritual journey for me that lasted eight years. At the end of that time I had a way of looking at the world and myself that I was quite content with.

Much later on I got married and had children, and I found myself, because of mother's groups and play groups and school volunteer groups, meeting people that I wouldn't ordinarily have come into contact with. It turned out that a number of these people were scientists, and they would say things about the world, in casual conversation, that I thought were completely wrong. When I tried to interject, it just didn't work. They were momentarily bewildered by my remarks, in fact speechless, and then continued their conversations pretending that my interruption just hadn't happened.

When blogs appeared, I thought that would be an ideal way for me to express myself; where I would be able to explain a whole argument rather than a one line rejoinder. I began the blog "beyondevolution-istheregodafterdawkins.blogspot.com" eleven years ago. And in this process I learned a whole lot more about science, especially biology and physics. Then I had the idea of writing a play that would combine my life long passion for theatre with this passion for explaining science from a spiritual perspective. My first attempt was a play called *Disinherit The Wind*, which I am very proud

of. This play, *A Misunderstanding*, is an attempt to present many of the same ideas but in a more relational context. The play is just as much about relationships and how these different ways of looking at the world effect these relationships as it is about the ideas.

I thank you for coming and sincerely hope that you enjoy the show.

**TEMPEST ROCKBELL** (*Stage Manager*) Tempest Rockbell graduated from Chapman University with a B.A. in Theatre. Stage Management: (Chance Theater) *Gutting*, *The Orange Garden*; (Wilderness) *The Day Shall Declare It*; (Segerstrom Center for the Arts) Aziz Ansari, *Into the Woods* 20th Anniversary Reunion, *Candlelight Gala* 2014; (OK Mozart Festival) Main Stage 2010-11, OKC Stage 2012, Stage B 2009; (Chapman University) *If All the Sky Were Paper*, *Hamlet*, *A Night of Noh Theater*, *A Servant of Two Masters*. For inquiries contact [tempestrockbell@gmail.com](mailto:tempestrockbell@gmail.com)

**TODD FAUX** (*set design*) Todd is a theater educator and designer, a grad student, and a current teaching associate for the Theatre & Dance Dept. at Cal State Fullerton, where he had the pleasure to design for director, Elina de Santos. As Manager of Entertainment Design at Knott's Berry Farm, Todd designed 18 seasons of Halloween Haunt and Knott's Merry Farm Christmases, including *Elvira's Ghost Stories Spookactular*, and the award-winning *Snoopy's America on Ice*. He has also created scenery for shows as diverse as *Mr. Burns: A Post-Electric Play*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

**LEIGH ALLEN** (*Lighting Designer*) is a recipient of the Los Angeles Drama Critics' Circle Award for Career Achievement. Accolades include: Ovation, Best Production for *Dying City* and *Killer Joe*; Ovation, Best Production of a Musical for *When Jazz had the Blues*; LADCC award, Production for *One Night in Miami*; Garland Award for Lighting Design, *Cousin Bette*; LA Weekly Lighting Design Award for *Treefall*; BroadwayWorld Santa Barbara Regional Lighting Design Award for *Mary Poppins*; GLAAD Award for *Like A Dog on Linoleum*; Macy Award for *The Secret Garden*; and LADCC and LA Weekly Awards for *Johnny Got His Gun*. She has also toured with *Masters of Illusion, Live!*; *Vox Lumiere* and designed numerous shows for Regent and Princess cruise-lines, *School of Rock* for multiple theme parks, and corporate retreats for Hampton Inn. She has had the privilege of

working with local theatre companies such as Musical Theatre West, South Bay Civic Light Opera, The Old Globe, Pasadena Playhouse, Rogue Machine Theatre, Pacific Resident Theatre, and Antaeus Theatre Company, among many others. Currently Leigh teaches full time at Santa Monica College.

**MICHAEL MULLEN** (*Costume Design*) is a costume designer and actor. Among his theatrical design credits are: *Dreamgirls* (Ovation Award, Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award, N.A.A.C.P. Theatre Award, L.A. Weekly Theatre Award, Broadway World Award), *The Boy From Oz* (Ovation Award, Ticketholder Award, Robby Award, Broadway World Award, Stage Raw nomination), *Siamese Sex Show* (Ovation Award), *Fugue* (Ovation nomination), *When Jazz Had The Blues* (Ovation and N.A.A.C.P. nominations), *Burners* (Ovation nomination), *Cabaret* (Ovation nomination), *Year Of The Rooster* (Ovation nomination), *Fixed* (Stage Raw nomination), *Sweeney Todd* (Stage Raw nomination), and *American Idiot* (Ticketholder Award). He has received several StageSceneLA Awards for "Costume Designer Of The Year" as well as "Costume Designer Extraordinaire". He would like to thank his family, friends, and everyone involved with this show for being awesome! :)

**ROSS CHAIT** (*sound design*) Ross Wallace Chait is a composer, sound designer, teacher, writer and drummer based in Los Angeles. When he's not creating sound effects and editing music for *A Misunderstanding*, he can be found writing music for theater and film, for his band Total Heat, teaching music lessons or touring / recording as a drummer for hire.

**MICHAEL DONOVAN** (*casting director*) Michael is the recipient of 7 Artios awards presented by the Casting Society of America for Outstanding Achievement in casting. He has cast shows produced at the Hollywood Bowl, the Ahmanson Theatre, Pasadena Playhouse, the Kirk Douglas Theatre, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Laguna Playhouse, International City Theatre, the El Portal Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, the Getty Villa, the Ricardo Montalban Theatre, the Falcon Theatre, the Colony Theatre, the Theatre @ Boston Court, Valley Performing Arts Center, the 24th St. Theatre, San Francisco Symphony, Arizona Theatre Company, Arkansas Rep, Kentucky Shakespeare Festival, Indiana Rep, Totem Pole Playhouse, and the Alliance Theatre - as well as several national tours. Michael

has also cast numerous films, TV series and commercials. Michael, who also teaches at UCLA, serves on the Boards for both the Foundation for New American Musicals, and Camp Bravo.

**LUCY POLLAK** (*Public Relations*) Lucy Pollak has been providing publicity services to the Los Angeles arts community for the past 27 years for companies including 24th Street Theatre, Antaeus Theatre Company, The Echo Theater Company, Fountain Theatre, International City Theatre, L.A. Theatre Works, Latino Theater Company at the LATC, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, Odyssey Theatre Ensemble, Padua Playwrights, Theatre Planners, Will Geer's Theatricum Botanicum; numerous independent theater and dance productions; and large events and festivals such as the annual L.A. County Holiday Celebration at The Music Center. From 1981 to 1990, she was production manager/staff producer at the Odyssey Theatre, where she co-produced over 100 productions with artistic director Ron Sossi. For the 1993 Los Angeles Festival, she line produced Reza Abdoh's controversial *Quotations From A Ruined City*. She is the recipient of a Los Angeles Drama Critic's Circle Award (*Master Class*), an LA Weekly Award (*Mary Barnes*), four Drama-Logue Awards (*Mary Barnes*, *Idioglossia*, *Accidental Death of An Anarchist*, *It's A Girl!*), and a Women in Theatre Recognition Award. She has served on the boards of directors of the Los Angeles Theatre Alliance (now L.A. Stage Alliance), Women in Theatre and P.A.T.H. (Performing Arts Theatre for the Handicapped).

**MATTHEW HERRMANN** (*General Manager*) hails from southern Indiana, which explains his height. A graduate of the Savannah College of Art and Design and the Groundlings, Matt was a driving force behind the recent Hollywood productions of *I Only Have Eyes For You* and *Prairie-oke!*. He is the creator of the punk rock stage show *Tom and Barry 2 nights only*. He has also directed over 35 productions for the famed French Woods Festival of the Performing Arts. A proud member of AEA and SAG/AFTRA, Matt is a strong believer in the power of theater to help build confidence, community, respect and responsibility in the youth of today. Upcoming productions include Peaches Christ's new parody *Mean Gays* starring Kim Chi, Willam and LaGanja Estranja in March and the *RuPaul's Drag Race* season 11 tour, later this year.