



Directed by **Nicole Charles**

December 15-19, 2020

THE CAST

(alphabetically)

AVA.....Saffia Charles
 LORRAINE.....Noma Dumezweni
 ZOE.....Lydia Fleming
 SIMON.....Alistair Petrie

Stage Manager: Jereme Kyle Lewis

Video Editor: Rocco DiSanti

Stage Directions/Assistant Director: Ava Robinson

FRIENDLY MONSTERS is a Manhattan Theatre Club/Bobbie Olsen Play Commission.

Director of Play Development/Sloan Project Manager.....Scott Kaplan
 Literary Associate.....Elizabeth Sharpe-Levine
 Literary Assistant.....Helena Pennington
 Artistic Development Consultant.....Jerry Patch
 Artistic Producer.....Nicki Hunter
 Artistic Production Associate.....Jasmine Johnson
 Casting.....Kelly Gillespie & David Caparelliotis
 General Management Assistant.....Marie Fischer

TED SNOWDON has supported new plays and playwrights his entire career, working in both the commercial and non-profit sides of theater. His producing credits reach back to 1979's Tony Award-winning *The Elephant Man* and include more recent plays and musicals like *Buyer & Cellar*, *The Visit*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, *The Mountaintop*, *Reasons To Be Pretty*, *The Little Dog Laughed*, *Spring Awakening*, and *Souvenir*. With MTC he co-produced *Master Class*, *Time Stands Still*, and *LoveMusik*. He has long championed the arts and LGBT causes. He is on the boards of Primary Stages and the Glimmerglass Festival. Most recently he produced Allan Leicht's comedy about Wagner, *My Parsifal Conductor*, and Michael McKeever's play *Daniel's Husband* at the Westside Theatre. This past season, he was a producing partner on Broadway's *The Great Society*, starring Brian Cox as LBJ, and Charles Busch's hit *The Confession of Lily Dare*, which played to rave reviews in February at Primary Stages.

PENELOPE SKINNER (*Playwright*) is a playwright, screenwriter and director based in the UK. Theatre work includes: *Angry Alan* (Edinburgh Festival/Soho Theatre); *Meek* (Headlong); *Linda* (Royal Court/MTC); *The Ruins of Civilisation* (MTC); *Fred's Diner* (Chichester Festival Theatre/Magic Theatre, San Francisco); *The Village Bike* (Royal Court/MCC); *Eigengrau* (Bush Theatre); *F*cked* (Old Red Lion/Edinburgh Festival). Upcoming TV/Film work includes: "The Following Events Are Based on a Pack of Lies" (Sister/BBC); "Angry Alan" (NBC). Previous work includes: *The Unicorn* (short, as director/writer); 4 seasons of "Fresh Meat" (channel 4); *How I Live Now* (dir. Kevin Macdonald). Penelope is currently under commission to: The Royal Court, MTC and The Bridge Theatre.

NICOLE CHARLES (*Director*) is a Theatre and Screen Director, from London, UK. Her work has been staged at the Young Vic, The Bush Theatre, Shakespeare's Globe, Theatre Royal Haymarket, Chichester Festival Theatre and The Vaudeville, London, to name a few. Recent work includes a comedy pilot for Sky Studios; a documentary for Channel 4 with Emma Dabiri and Pulse Films; *Sing Yer Heart Out for the Lads* by Roy Williams (Chichester Festival Theatre; described as 'a spellbinding ensemble production' in The Guardian); *Glutathione* by Winsome Pinnock (Young Vic, 2017); assistant directing the critically acclaimed production of *The Jungle* (West End; St. Ann's Warehouse, New York; described as 'wonderfully humane and illuminating' in The Independent); *Emilia* by Morgan Lloyd Malcolm (Shakespeare's Globe; West End transfer, Vaudeville Theatre; three Olivier nominations, 2020), of which The Stage wrote, 'Traditional storytelling conventions are challenged in Nicole Charles' magnificent production.' Before becoming a director, she trained as an actress at RADA and the BRIT School.

SAFFIA CHARLES (*Ava*) is a 7 year old actress and dancer from London. She loves swimming, her friends and vegan ice-cream. This is Saffia's professional debut.

NOMA DUMEZWENI (*Lorraine*) originated the role of Hermione Granger in Broadway's *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, a role for which she won the Olivier Award for the London West End premiere, and was nominated for a Tony Award. Previous theater credits include her Olivier-winning performance in *A Raisin in the Sun* at the Lyric theater, the title role in *Linda* at the Royal Court and a dozen other Shakespeare

and classical plays. Screen credits include Chiwetel Ejiofor's directorial debut, *The Boy Who Harnessed The Wind*, which premiered at Sundance 2019, *Mary Poppins Returns*, *The Kid Who Would Be King*, and the Hugo Blick/Netflix series "Black Earth Rising." Past television credits include a recurring role on "Dr. Who," BBC's limited series "Capital," and Philip K Dick's "Electric Dreams." Noma can currently be seen in HBO's "The Undoing" and Amazon Prime's "Wheel of Time," and is currently filming the HBO Max series "Made For Love" with Cristin Milioti and Ray Romano.

LYDIA FLEMING (*Zoe*) will shoot a lead role in the Netflix series "In From the Cold" opposite Margarita Levieva from January 2021. Lydia trained at the prestigious Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London.

ALISTAIR PETRIE (*Simon*): Notable roles include Mr Groff in the Netflix original series "Sex Education," General Draven in *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*, and Sandy Langbourne in the multi-E Emmy nominated "The Night Manager." Further credits include Ron Howard's *Rush*, *The Bank Job*, *Cloud Atlas*, *The Face of An Angel*, and *Sulphur and White*. TV credits include National Geographic's "Genius: Einstein," BBC's "Undercover," "Utopia" for Netflix, "The Terror," "Deep State," and Channel 4's comedy "Year of the Rabbit." Upcoming: Sean Ellis' new feature *Eight for Silver* with Boyd Holbrook and Kelly Reilly. In addition to his acting work, Alistair is a patron of premature birth charity, Borne. In 2007, as a fundraising effort, Alistair and his wife successfully swam the English Channel in 12 hours and 21 minutes, becoming the first ever married couple to complete the crossing.

AVA ROBINSON (*Stage Directions/Assistant Director*) is a British-American actor based in London. Currently training at Rose Bruford College, she has had a wide breadth of experiences in actor training, both in the UK and in the US, including time at Columbia College Chicago and the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in Los Angeles. Having roots in the theatre as well as a passion for film, Ava has participated in a variety of projects; from acting and directing independent film to directing Shakespearean adaptations for stage with her college company. She is incredibly passionate about the directorial process and also enjoys travelling frequently between the US and UK.

JEREME KYLE LEWIS (*Stage Manager*): Broadway: *Caroline, or Change*, *The Height of the Storm*, *Bernhardt/Hamlet*, *M. Butterfly*, *Present Laughter*, *Our Mother's Brief Affair*, *Sylvia*, *Hand to God*, *The Trip to Bountiful*. Off-Broadway: *Continuity* (MTC), *White Noise* (The Public), *Sugar In Our Wounds* (MTC), *Tiny Beautiful Things* (The Public), *The Roads to Home* (Primary Stages), *The City of Conversation* (LCT), *The Madrid* (MTC). Regional: Williamstown Theatre Festival, Center Theater Group, The Wallis, Arena Stage, Goodman Theatre, Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. Tours: *Grey Gardens*, *The Trip To Bountiful*.

ROCCO DISANTI (*Video Editor*): USA 829 Projection Designer with multiple on and off-Broadway credits including; Broadway: *The Snow Geese*, *The Columnist*, *Wit*, *Collected Stories*, *Time Stands Still*, *The Nap*. Off Broadway: *Incident at Vichy* (Signature); *Desire*, *Lift*, *Inner Voices*, *Wide Awake Hearts* (59E59); *Completeness* (Playwrights Horizons); *A Second Chance* (The Public) and more. Regional: *Fly* (Florida Studio Theatre); *The Threepenny Opera*, *Spin*, *Company*, *A Second Chance* (Signature Theatre); *Kansas City Swing*, *Lift*, *The Adventure of Fishy Waters In Bed With The Blues* (Crossroads). Awards: Nominated for a 2012 Henry Hewes Design Award for *Completeness*.

We wish to express our gratitude to the Performers' Unions: Actors' Equity Association, American Guild of Musical Artists, American Guild of Variety Artists, SAG-AFTRA through Theatre Authority, Inc. for their cooperation in permitting the Artists to appear on this program.

Thank you for joining us for the series!

For more information about the reading series and all of MTC's virtual programming, please visit the virtual page on our website, at manhattantheatreclub.com/virtual.

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About the Ted Snowdon Reading Series:

Manhattan Theatre Club's reading series is named in recognition of generous support from Ted Snowdon, an MTC friend and co-producer who has championed new plays and playwrights his entire theatre career in both the commercial and non-profit sectors.

In 1999, MTC first launched a public reading series to help support the development of new works. The first year of the series featured David Auburn's *Proof*, which MTC went on to produce in 2001, and which garnered a Tony Award® for Best Play and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Between then and now, the reading series has helped develop more than 100 new plays, including Molly Smith Metzler's *Close Up Space* and Eleanor Burgess's *The Niceties*, which went on to full productions at MTC. Plays from this reading series that have been produced elsewhere in New York and around the world include Brittany K. Allen's *Redwood*, Paola Lázaro's *There's Always the Hudson*, Sharyn Rothstein's *Right to Be Forgotten*, Jen Silverman's *Dangerous House*, Nick Gandiello's *The Blameless*, Michael West's *The Chinese Room*, Halley Feiffer's *I'm Gonna Pray for You So Hard*, Ethan Lipton's *Tumacho*, Ayad Akhtar's *The Who and the What*, Penelope Skinner's *The Village Bike*, and Joshua Harmon's *Significant Other*.

From 2006 through 2016, the reading series was funded by the Ernst C. Stiefel Foundation, which contributed almost \$1 million in support of more than 65 new plays.