

THE REVOLUTIONISTS

BY LAUREN GUNDERSON
DIRECTED BY TRACY LABRIE



FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 8

HANK WILLOUGHBY FOUNDATION
CENTER FOR THE ARTS (FA BUILDING)
BRAD AND LINDA GOTTFRIED THEATER



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**SOUTHERN
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Director Notes

The Revolutionists, by Lauren Gunderson, feels like a conversation I can't stop having with friends, colleagues, students, and with myself. It asks: What do we do when the ground beneath us shifts? When speaking feels dangerous, but silence feels worse? We are surrounded by political division, social upheaval, and constant questions about whose stories are told and whose voices are dismissed.

I wanted to bring this story to CSM specifically because community colleges are revolutionary spaces. They are built on access, possibility, and the belief that voices grow stronger when they are invited in. CSM students bring diverse experiences, perspectives, and realities into every classroom and every rehearsal. Much like the women at the heart of this story, they don't always agree, and they don't always like each other, but they understand that silence has consequences and so they persist. We chose the black box format for our production because the best conversations happen face-to-face, intimately, and uncomfortably close.

Though set during the French Revolution, *The Revolutionists* feels urgent, contemporary, and alive. It pulses with arguments about power, art, survival, friendship, and memory. It asks who gets to speak, and who is forced to be silent and disappear. This play reminds us that words can wound, but they can also ignite.

This production is our invitation to listen, to argue, to laugh, and to imagine. Revolutions do not arrive fully formed. They begin in spaces just like this, with people willing to dream, to question, and to speak. Thank you for spending your evening with us. Welcome to the revolution!

Tracy Labrie

Tracy Labrie

Director

The College of Southern Maryland

Presents

THE REVOLUTIONISTS

By

Lauren Gunderson

Commissioned and first produced by
Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park.

With original music by **Jim Watson**

Directed by **Tracy Labrie**

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The Cast (in order of appearance)

Olympe de Gouge..... Finn Coy-Gresavage
Marianne Angel Sunni Lii
Charlotte Corday Casey Cleary
Marie Antoinette..... Kate O’Conner

Production Staff

Producer/Theater Program Coordinator AnnMarie T. Saunders
Director Tracy L.W. Labrie
Set Designer Erik Braun
Costume Designers..... Alexis Tischler, Leah Tischler
Lighting Designer Erik Braun
Original Music and Sound Designer James D. Watson
Props Master Kelly Phipps
Stage Manager Emma Curry
Sound Operator Darby Latimer
Projection Designer..... Michael Russell
Costume ConstructionSuzanna Tischler, Erin Timmermann
Lighting Operator Taylor Scott Hines
Box Office..... Erin Timmermann

Special Thanks

Carol Russell and the Port Tobacco Players Costume Guild for the loan of costume pieces, Bekah Carmichael for the loan of costume pieces, Patrick Labrie for help on set building, the CSM Drama Club for hosting our intermission receptions, The Rad House, Pizza Hotline, our wonderful ushers, and all who pitched in after this program was finished.

Setting

Act I

Prologue

One: Olympe's study

Two: Marat's bathroom, no, really, his bathroom; the National Assembly; Marianne's heart; Olympe's study

Three: Olympe's study

Four: Prison cell, across town

Intermission*

Act II

One: Olympe's study

Two: The scaffold

Three: Olympe's study

Four: The Revolutionary Tribunal, the scaffolds

Five: Olympe's study

Six: The Tribunal

Seven: Olympe's mind

* Please join us for a 20-minute intermission reception in classroom 139.

Meet the Revolutionists

Finn Coy-Gresavage as Olympe de Gouges



Finn Coy-Gresavage is a performer and activist from the backwoods of Nanjemoy, Maryland - proof that revolutionary spirit can absolutely grow in rural soil. They previously appeared in *The Prom* at CSM and electrified audiences as the gloriously misunderstood D-Vicious in *Airness*, as well as the ever-honorable Lodovico in *Othello* at Port Tobacco Players. Coy-Gresavage trained at the New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts before earning a bachelor's degree in theater, film, and media studies from St. Mary's College of Maryland. Their artistic life spans theater and drag, with a particular love for stories that provoke, disrupt, and dare audiences to think harder. Offstage, Coy-Gresavage channels that same fire into human rights advocacy, using both digital platforms and face-to-face organizing to speak up for those pushed to the margins. They remain forever grateful to their ever-enabling sister Mary, their loving spouse, Justin, and the brilliant constellation of friends and family who cheer them on from near and far.

Olympe de Gouges was not interested in behaving. A playwright and political firebrand of the French Revolution, she wrote "The Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen" in 1791, politely suggesting that perhaps "liberty" should include women. She advocated for abolition, social welfare, marriage reform, and freedom of expression. And, had the audacity to publish under her own name. Gasp. She criticized the monarchy, then criticized the revolution, which is generally not how one survives revolutions. In 1793, she was executed by guillotine. De Gouges believed words could topple systems. History suggests she was right.

Sunni Lii as Marianne Angelle



Sunni Lii is honored to take the stage as Marianne Angelle in *The Revolutionists* at CSM. A proud Waldorf, Maryland, native and graduate of the American Musical and Dramatic Academy (New York City and Los Angeles), Lii is devoted to storytelling that refuses to be quiet. She approaches her work with emotional precision, deep empathy, and the belief that theater should move people sometimes gently, sometimes like a thunderclap. Beyond the stage, Lii has actively participated in Black Lives Matter protests and community advocacy efforts, standing in solidarity against systemic racism and fighting for equity and accountability. She is driven by a personal commitment to see a more just and equal world for Black people within her lifetime. Portraying Marianne feels especially powerful, as the character's devotion to liberation mirrors the ongoing struggle for racial justice today. Lii is grateful for the opportunity to tell this story and thanks her family and community for their unwavering love and support and her boyfriend, Jackie, for all his help. Lii would like to give a special thank you to all the men and women who have fought for equal rights and gave their lives to ensure the children of the future get to live in peace and harmony.

Marianne Angelle is inspired by Suzanne Simone Baptiste Louverture, connected to the Haitian Revolution (the only successful slave revolt in history). Born enslaved in Saint-Domingue, Suzanne Simone Baptiste Louverture survived a system engineered for brutality. She married Toussaint Louverture, and when revolution erupted in 1791, her life shifted from plantation bondage to relentless war. As Toussaint Louverture rose to power, Suzanne Simone Baptiste Louverture navigated invasion, political upheaval, and impossible choices all while protecting her family. In 1802, Napoleon's forces captured Toussaint Louverture through deception and Suzanne Simone Baptiste Louverture and her sons were seized and exiled to France. Widowed in captivity, she bore the intimate cost of national liberation. Angelle stands in her legacy, unbreakable, unbowed, and unwilling to let history forget.

Casey Cleary as Charlotte Corday



Casey Cleary is a brilliant middle school math teacher by day and a bold actor by night - two professions that require timing, bravery, and the ability to command a room. She was last seen on the PTP stage in *Airness* (Cannibal Queen) and before that at CSM in *Agatha Christie's Witness for the Prosecution* (Judge). Other credits include *Murder on the Orient Express* (Princess Dragomiroff), *The Prom*, *Rent*, *The Addams Family*, and *Young Frankenstein*. Cleary gravitates toward characters who are sharp, formidable, and just a little dangerous. In her classroom, she champions her students with the same intensity she brings to the stage, encouraging them to think boldly and stand confidently in their own reasoning. She thanks her family and friends for their unwavering support and for embracing her long-running trend of portraying women who alter the course of events.

Charlotte Corday, lovingly named the “Angel of Assassins” by her fans, believed in reason. During the French Revolution, that made her unusual. A supporter of the moderate Girondins, she watched as radical violence escalated. She eventually became convinced that journalist Jean-Paul Marat was accelerating the bloodshed. In 1793, she traveled alone to Paris, gained access to Marat, and assassinated him in his bath. She did not run. She did not apologize. At her trial, she calmly defended her actions as an attempt to save lives and restore balance. She faced execution with composure and clarity. Corday walked into history deliberately and left a mark no one could ignore.

Kate O'Connor as Marie Antoinette



Kate O'Connor's theatrical résumé could be subtitled *Women, Murder, and Consequences*. She was last seen at CSM in *Murder on the Orient Express* (Helen Hubbard/killer). Additional casualties include *Macbeth* (Lady Macduff/killed), *These Shining Lives* (Francis/killed), *Confessions of an Axe Murderess* (Lizzie Borden/killer), *How I Married the World's Fair Killer and Other Stories* (Minnie Williams/both), and most recently *The Gulf* (Kendra/killer of fish and her girlfriend's good time). A historian by trade, O'Connor moved to Maryland to study the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and has worked closely with artifacts tied to that event. She now works in animal care, beginning at the Charles County Humane Society and currently working one-on-one with dogs at Spalding Farm Only Paws. Love always to her mom in New York, her brother in Luca, and her bunny at home.

Marie Antoinette was married off at 14 and crowned queen at 19. And then blamed for nearly everything shortly thereafter. Born Maria Antonia of Austria, she entered France as a political alliance disguised as a bride. Though painted as frivolous and extravagant, she was intelligent, strategic, and increasingly devoted to charitable causes as the nation's financial crisis deepened. After becoming a mom, Marie Antoinette dedicated more of her time to her heart's passion – her children, and to many charities, hospitals, orphanages, education reform, and her other passion - dogs. Her girlish love of fashion and parties receded as she embraced the naturalist movement, which had entered France in the late 1860s. The movement focused on the observable world, scientific practices, and the importance of nature on human experience. Her clothing became less structured and ostentatious. She started showcasing her natural hair, which was described as both strawberry-hued blonde and very light brown. When revolution ignited, she became a symbol. Unfortunately symbols rarely receive mercy. Imprisoned, separated from her children, and subjected to a highly politicized trial, she faced execution in 1793 with striking composure. History made her a caricature. Reality was far more complicated.

Meet the Revolutionary Crew

Tracy L.W. Labrie (Director) is humbled, honored, and thrilled to be leading this amazing cast and production crew. After retiring from the U.S. Army in 2019, Labrie started taking on minor backstage roles in local community theater productions. Those grew into not-so-minor roles designing for properties and costumes, a couple of turns as assistant director and one as a producer, and one small part on stage (she'll never do THAT again). She wishes to thank her kids for all of their support and the following incredible local directors for their mentorship and examples of brilliant directing: AnnMarie Saunders, Mike Gahan, Beth Sanford, and Rebecca Waters.

Emma Curry (Stage Manager) is excited to be returning as stage manager once again for *The Revolutionists*. No stranger to this position, Curry was the stage manager for CSM's *The Prom*, and assistant stage manager for *Murder on the Orient Express*, and *The Glass Menagerie*. Curry is finishing up her time at CSM and will be transferring to a four-year university in the fall to pursue a degree in theater stage management.

James D. Watson (Sound Design and Composer) has worked on over 110 productions in Maryland, Virginia, Washington, D.C., North Carolina, and Pennsylvania as composer, arranger, orchestra director, accompanist, and sound designer. He shared his talents most recently composing original music and doing sound design for *A Christmas Carol for Edgar Allen Poe* with the National Edgar Allen Poe Theater in Baltimore.

Alexis Tischler (Costume Designer) is thrilled to be co-designing costumes with her sister for this production of *The Revolutionists*. Her previous costuming credits include *The Prom* and *Witness for the Prosecution* at CSM and *Beetle Juice, Jr* at PTP. Tischler is getting ready to graduate from Whitmore High School and will be a full-time student at CSM this fall. When not costuming and studying, she enjoys baking bread and goodies, a hobby her fellow cast and crew members have really enjoyed!

Leah Tischler (Costume Designer) is excited to be helping with costumes on another show! However, this show is special to her because it is her first time stepping up from costume team to lead costume designer. Tischler is a rising Senior at Whitmore High School, and soon to be fulltime college student at CSM this fall. She has also lent her costuming talents to *The Prom* and *Witness for the Prosecution* at CSM and *Beetle Juice, Jr* at PTP. Tischler is also an accomplished artist and cat wrangler.

Kelly Phipps (Props Master) After years of being the face of the front of house at PTP, Phipps stepped out earlier this year as the set decoration and properties designer for *Airness* at PTP and is now lending her talents to *The Revolutionist* team. Phipps is well known around town for her roles in the La Plata Farmers Market and Keep La Plata Beautiful initiative. She is super stoked to be part of the team bringing history to life.

AnnMarie Saunders (Producer/Theater Program Coordinator) is CSM's associate professor of theater and the program coordinator for theater and dance. Saunders has worked as an educator and professional director and actor for more than 20 years in theaters and colleges across the United States, winning several awards in the process. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Performance from the University of Memphis, a Master of Arts in Directing from Texas State University, and a Ph.D. in Theatre History and Performance Studies from the University of Maryland, College Park. Over the years, Saunders has directed several productions at CSM, including *Murder on the Orient Express*; *The Prom*; *The Addams Family*; *The Glass Menagerie*; *A Thousand Cranes*; *Almost, Maine*; and the regional premier of *Rent*. Other directing work includes productions of *Hairspray* and *Romeo and Juliet* at Anne Arundel Community College, *She Stoops to Conquer* for Washington, D.C.'s Pallas Theatre Collective, and the original musical *Alice, Although* at Ohio's award-winning Yellow Springs Kids Playhouse. Saunders would like to thank her family, particularly her husband, A. W. Saunders, for their constant support and love.

Lauren Gunderson (Playwright) is a playwright, screenwriter, and short story author from Atlanta, Georgia. She received her Bachelor of Arts in English/Creative Writing at Emory University, and her Master of Fine Arts in Dramatic Writing at NYU Tisch, where she was also a Reynolds Fellow in Social Entrepreneurship. She has been one of the most produced playwrights in America (*American Theatre Magazine*) since 2015, topping the list thrice including 2022 and 2023.

Upcoming Events

Events are held at the La Plata Campus, Hank Willoughby Foundation Center for the Arts, Brad and Linda Gottfried Theater unless otherwise noted.

Into the Woods

April 10, 11, 17, and 18 at 7:30 p.m.

April 12 and 19 at 3 p.m.

Tickets: \$10

21st Annual JazzFest

April 24 and 25 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$5

A Spring Choral Celebration

April 30 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$5

Dance Performance

May 5 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$5

Music Student Honors Recital

May 6 at 3 p.m.

Tickets: Free

Latin Ensemble Concert

May 6 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$5

Southern Maryland Concert Band

May 9 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$5

Purchase tickets for our Spring 2026 events now!

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