



# THE CHILDREN

BY LUCY KIRKWOOD

DIRECTED BY STEPHEN WEITZ



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Butterfly Effect Theatre of Colorado presents

# THE CHILDREN

by Lucy Kirkwood

Directed by  
Stephen Weitz

Stage Manager  
Hannah Tripp

Set Design  
Ron Mueller

Costume Design  
Sarah Zinn

Lighting Design  
Colin D. Young

Sound Design  
CeCe Smith

Properties Design  
Katie Hopwood

Dramaturg  
Heather Beasley

Dialects and Text Coach  
Gabriella Cavallero

Assistant Stage Manager  
Rowan Livengood

Season Benefactors  
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Karolynn Lestrud

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*The Children* was first performed at the Royal Court Jerwood Theatre Downstairs, Sloane Square, London, on November 17, 2016, and was produced on Broadway by the Manhattan Theatre Club (Lynne Meadow, Artistic Director; Barry Grove, Executive Producer) and the Royal Court Theatre on November 28, 2017.

The Royal Court commissioned *The Children* with a generous grant from the Berwin Lee New Play Commission.

***The Children* is presented without intermission.**

**SETTING**  
The East coast of England. The Present.

## Cast of Characters

Hazel .....Martha Harmon Pardee  
Rose .....Gin Walker  
Robin .....Sam Gregory <sup>AEA</sup>

<sup>C</sup> Member of BETC’s Artistic Ensemble  
<sup>AEA</sup> Appearing through an Agreement between Butterfly Effect Theatre of Colorado and Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States





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## CAST



**Sam Gregory**<sup>AEA</sup> (Robin) has performed once before with BETC in *Bach at Leipzig*. He appeared in fifty shows at the Denver Center Theatre Company from 1991 through 2021. He has worked at many regional theater companies including the Cleveland Play House, Seattle Repertory Theatre Company, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre Company, and Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park. He has performed with the Alabama, California and Colorado Shakespeare Festivals. Locally, he has also performed with the Arvada Center Black Box Repertory and Curious Theatre Company. He lives in Denver with his wife Sylvia and two cats.



**Martha Harmon Pardee** (Hazel) most recently appeared as Gov. Ann Richards in *Ann for Cherry Creek Theatre*. Other roles include Martha in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, Amanda in *The Glass Menagerie*, Abby in *The Mercy Seat* (Paragon Theatre); Agnes in *A Delicate Balance* (The Edge); Mistress Quickly/Alice in *Henry V*, Ursula in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Felicia Dantine in *I Hate Hamlet* (Colorado Shakespeare Festival); Mrs. Gardiner in *Pride and Prejudice* (Denver Center); Ginnie in *Admissions*, Aunt Chris in *Up*, Linda in *Fiction* (Curious Theatre Co.); Paige in *Hir* (Miner's Alley); and *Stories on Stage*. Martha has narrated over 3,000 audiobooks and is a teaching artist for Voice Over classes at the Denver Center.



**Gin Walker** (Rose) performed with the Cambridge University Footlights in England, and on various stages across the UK. Favorite recent shows in Colorado include *Noises Off*, *The 39 Steps*, and *Calendar Girls* (StageDoor),

*Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol* (Vintage), *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* (Backstage), *Woman in Mind* (Edge), *Oh My God* (Theatre Or), *Rope* (Spotlight), *As You Like It* (Band of Toughs), *The Real Inspector Hound* (Foothills), *In The Shadow Of The Glen* (Evergreen Players) and *Miss Witherspoon* (Bug).

## PRODUCTION TEAM

**Heather Beasley**<sup>C</sup> (Dramaturg) has worked with BETC as a dramaturg, literary manager, director, playwright, and grant writer since 2007. She oversees the BETC Writers Group, the Science Shorts program, the Generations new play development program, and the (inter)Generations playwriting program. She is also an instructor of Dramatic Writing and Arts and Cultural Management for the University of Denver. Her play *The Gentle Life Changing Magic of Burning it All Down to the Ground* will premiere at Benchmark Theatre in Denver in late 2022. Other recent productions of her plays include *Amelia's Big Idea* at BETC (co-written with Richie Cannaday and Edie Carey), and *Bone Records* at Relative Theatrics in Laramie, WY. She has also worked with Imagination Makers Theatre Company, Seattle Public Theatre, the University of Colorado Boulder's Eklund Opera, and Nebraska and Colorado Shakespeare Festivals.

**Gabriella Cavallero** (Dialects and Text Coach) is thrilled to be working with BETC again. She has been Coach for Denver's top theatre companies, including Butterfly Effect Theatre of Colorado, the Arvada Black Box Theatre Company, the DCPA Theatre Company, and Curious Theatre Company. Shows for BETC include coaching dialects and text for *Outside Mullingar*, *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*, and *Bloomsday*, and dialects and movement for *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. Her acting work includes the DCPA Theatre Company (twenty-six seasons), Arvada Center, Curious Theatre Company, and

Aurora Fox. As a bilingual narrator, Gabriella has recorded over 1200 audio books for the National Library Service and PBS documentaries. She is a Communications Coach for ARTiculate: Real & Clear and an Associate Artist of LOCAL Theatre.

**Katie Hopwood** (Properties Designer) is fairly new to the Colorado theatre scene and is excited to be working with BETC again! She recently did properties design for BETC's touring theatre truck shows, *Amelia's Big Idea* and *Dorothy's Dictionary*. She also recently has stage managed *Meteor Shower* at Benchmark, was the ASM for BETC's recent production of *Fourteen Funerals*, and stage managed *Amelia's Big Idea*. She graduated from Salisbury University in December 2020 with a degree in theatre production. She looks forward to working on more productions in the community!

**Lucy Kirkwood** (Author) is an acclaimed playwright and screenwriter. In 2009, Lucy's play *It Felt Empty When The Heart Went At First But It Is Alright Now* was produced by Clean Break Theatre Company at the Arcola Theatre. The play was nominated for an Evening Standard Award for Best Newcomer and made Lucy joint winner of the 2010 John Whiting Award. *NSFW* premiered at the Royal Court Theatre in 2012, starring Janie Dee and Julian Barratt. *Chimerica* premiered at the Almeida Theatre in 2013 and subsequently transferred to the West End, earning Best New Play at the 2014 Olivier and Evening Standard Awards, as well as the Critics Circle Award and the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize. Recent work includes *Mosquitoes* (presented by special arrangement with Manhattan Theatre Club), which opened at the National Theatre, London, in summer 2017; and *The Children*, which premiered at the Royal Court Theatre, London, in 2016. *The Children* opened on Broadway in December 2017. Lucy also writes for screen: She has written for "Skins" (Company Pictures); created and wrote "The Smoke"



(Kudos/Sky 1); wrote and directed the short film “The Briny”; and is developing projects with Raw TV, Cowboy Films, Clio Barnard, and Lenny Abrahamson. Her new six-part season “Adult Material” (Tiger Aspect Productions) and the mini-series of her play *Chimerica* (Playground Productions) have both recently been greenlit.

**Rowan Livengood** (Assistant Stage Manager) is a local sound technician, proud to be working with BETC again after having done their touring truck shows, *Amelia’s Big Idea* and *Dorothy’s Dictionary*. He has previously done work as a radio intern at KGNU and as a board operator at South High School.

**Ron Mueller** (Scenic Designer) is the Production Director for the College of Music at the University of Colorado Boulder. Also a BETC Ensemble member, he previously designed scenery for *Bloomsday*, *The Realistic Joneses*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*, *Guards at the Taj*, *An Iliad*, *Outside Mullingar*, *The Aliens*, and *Seminar*. He designed scenery and lighting for BETC’s *Annapurna* and also co-designed scenery with Tina Anderson for *Ripcord* and *Cyrano*. Other recent designs include scenery for Parker Arts Center’s *South Pacific*. He has also designed scenery and/or lighting for productions at Crested Butte Music Festival, Skylight Opera Theatre, Colorado Shakespeare Festival, Boulder’s Dinner Theatre, Theatre X, Milwaukee Chamber Theater, Boulder Broadway Company, CU Theatre and Dance, and University of Denver’s Lamont School of Music.

**CeCe Smith** (Sound Designer) is a sound designer based in Colorado. Her recent sound design projects include *The Rocky Horror Show* at Phamaly Theatre Company, *Native Gardens* at Creede Repertory Theatre, *Fireflies* at Curious Theatre Company (co-sound designer), *The Bluest Eye* at Theatreworks, and *One Way Back Day* at The Catamounts. CeCe received her first Henry Award Nomination in 2019 for *Flame Broiled or the ugly play* at Local Theatre Company and has worked across

the state of Colorado. When she isn’t working on theatre (which she always is) she is reading comics or watching movies like the introvert she is.

**Hannah Tripp** (Stage Manager) is delighted to be stage managing her first show with BETC. Other local credits include *Bite & Other Bits* with In the Wings Aerial; *Matilda*, *The Addams Family*, and *Legally Blonde* with Rocky Mountain Theatre for Kids; and *Pippin* with the Actors Academy for the Performing Arts. She is a graduate from Metropolitan State University of Denver with a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre.




**Stephen Weitz** (Producing Artistic Director) directed BETC’s first production, Jean Anouilh’s *Antigone*, as well as *Fat Pig*, *The Sunset Limited*, *Gross Indecency*, *How the World Began*, *Bach at Leipzig*, *Seminar*, *Ambition Facing West*, *Stupid F##king Bird*, *Ideation*, *An Iliad*, *The SantaLand Diaries*, *Guards at the Taj*, *The Rembrandt*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *The Realistic Joneses*, *The Nina Variations*, and the world premieres of *And the Sun Stood Still*, *Full Code*, and *Birds of North America*. Stephen co-wrote and directed BETC’s theatrical documentary film, CO-2020. He has performed in the BETC productions *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea*, *Copenhagen*, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)*, *Morisot Reclining*, *Doubt*, *Shipwrecked!*, and as the title character in *Cyrano*. He has been a guest artist at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, where he has directed *Tribes* and *Jackie & Me*. He has also appeared in

DCPA productions of *Tom Sawyer*, *King Lear*, *Richard III*, *Othello*, and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Stephen has worked at other prominent area theatres such as Creede Repertory Theatre, Colorado Shakespeare Festival, and the Arvada Center.

**Colin D. Young** (Lighting Designer) BETC: *Fourteen Funerals*, *Bloomsday*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. Curious Theatre: *Gloria* and *The Secretary*. Off-Broadway - Public Theatre: *Detroit ’67*; Signature Theatre: *Fragments & Talking Pictures*; Primary Stages: *In the Continuum*; Classical Theatre of Harlem: *Native Son*, *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*, *The Blacks: A Clown Show*, *Crazy Locomotive*, (Audelco Award); 59E59 Theatres: *Havana Bourgeois*, *Rearviewmirror*, and *Widows*; Reverie Productions: *Fatboy*, *American Ma(u)l*, *Mephisto*. Regional - Yale Rep, Woolly Mammoth, Kirk Douglas, Goodman, PTC, and Cincinnati Playhouse. Events: World Science Festival (2012-2019) and Climate Reality Project’s 24 Hours Of Reality broadcast (2011-2018); Education: MFA - Yale School of Drama; Founding Festival Tech Director: NY International Fringe Festival; Playwright: *Beowulf*; Artistic Director: Co-founder of Reverie Productions, where he produced 18 New York, U.S., or World Premieres.

**Sarah Zinn** (Costume Designer) is a costumer from Boulder, CO. She received her MFA in Costume Design and Technology from Rutgers University and currently works as the Costume Shop Supervisor at the University of Denver and Head Draper for Opera Colorado. She has previously built costumes for film and theatre, including *Fantastic Four* (2015), *The Great Wall* (2015), *The Rockettes Christmas Spectacular* (2018) and the world premiere of the stage adaptation of *Moulin Rouge* (2018). This is her first show with BETC.

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## **Ms Holmes & Ms Watson** by Kate Hamill **Feb. 2-25**

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# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The overpass in Futaba, Japan, translated, reads: "Nuclear energy is the energy of a bright future." Photo credit: Arkadiusz Podniesinski, 2015.

To create the world of *The Children*, playwright Lucy Kirkwood drew on the tragic events of the Fukushima earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disaster that began on March 11, 2011.

On that sunny Friday afternoon, at 2:46 p.m., an earthquake of magnitude 9.1 struck off the coast of Honshu Island. The six nuclear reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant shut off in response to the quake tremors, as designed, and cut them off from the Japanese power grid.

Roughly one hour later, a 46-foot tsunami, unleashed by the earthquake, overtopped the seawall.

The seawall in place at Fukushima had been designed to guard against a tsunami

less than half that size. A 2008 report calling for a higher seawall had been interminably delayed due to internal politics at the Tokyo Electric Power Company. The report was finally issued to Japan's nuclear safety agency just four days before the 2011 catastrophe, and it predicted a much higher tsunami wave was likely to occur in the event of a quake of magnitude 7.2 or above.

Once the seawall was breached, the resulting flooding inundated the Fukushima Daiichi facility. It disabled the backup diesel generators, all but one of which were housed underground, and washed away their fuel tanks. When electrical power was lost, most of the emergency core cooling system was disabled. The resulting problems began to

cascade from reactor to reactor, as their cores overheated and began to melt down. By 9 p.m. on March 11, evacuations of the area began.

In the ensuing weeks, the world watched in horror as the consequences of the combination of natural and man-made disasters became ever more evident.

Combined, the earthquake and tsunami resulted in over 18,000 people dead or missing. An estimated 400,000 people were evacuated that day. 160,000 were residents of the "exclusion zone" of roughly 12 miles around the Daiichi plant. That area remains off-limits to permanent habitation over ten years later, due to radioactive contamination. Cleanup efforts have been ongoing, expensive,



The tsunami sweeps over the seawall into Miyako Harbor, Japan, on March 11, 2011. Photo credit: BBC.

and largely unsuccessful. Efforts to remove radioactive topsoil and other contaminated surface debris have only relocated the problematic waste.

The playwright imagines the action of her play taking place mere weeks after such a disaster has occurred in England. Inside

the cottage of *The Children*, the characters are under staggering pressures, as they are confronted with tragedy on a personal level, and at a scale beyond human comprehension.

Yet these three nuclear engineers are well aware of the flaws in the man-made

systems meant to prevent such massive disasters. On the night we meet Rose, Hazel, and Robin, they are faced with an impossible decision. What do they owe to future generations? And what will they do to be true to their own deepest desires?

"I think that any play that considers itself first and foremost social activism is probably going to be a really dreadful play," said the playwright. "Absolutely I think you can talk about large issues, but unless you employ your craft, to make your play something other than a pamphlet, then it's not going to be a particularly edifying theatrical experience." Kirkwood continued: "People are always asking me questions about nuclear power, but this play...is a larger metaphor for human intervention into the environment and what the consequences of that are, and how we're grappling with those consequences and our responsibility to those things."

Aerial view, taken from a drone, of one of the thousands of area dump sites. These sites house millions of bags of radioactive soil, taken from inside the exclusion zone. Photo credit: Arkadiusz Podniesinski, 2015.







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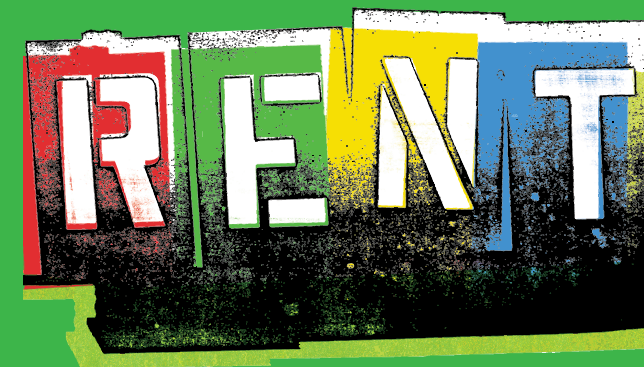


November 2022

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Feb. 2023



Feb. & March 2023

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The Technical Theatre Internship Program provides students with paid opportunities to work with professional companies and designers in a supportive setting that prepares them for work in the entertainment industry.



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