

RIT

College of Liberal Arts
School of
Performing Arts

RIT School of Performing Arts presents

ADA AND THE ENGINE

By Lauren Gunderson

April 4-7 at 7:30 PM

Sklarsky Glass Box Theater,

Student Hall for Exploration and Development (SHED)

\$5 for students, \$10 for faculty/staff/alumni, \$12 for general public

All performances will include ASL, Spoken English, and captions

ADA AND THE ENGINE is presented by special arrangement with
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Service collection. (www.dramatists.com)



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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.

RIT School of Performing Arts proudly presents

ADA AND THE ENGINE

By Lauren Gunderson

A Central Works Method Play Commissioned and Premiered by
Central Works At the Berkeley City Club on October 17, 2016

Original music composed by The Kilbanes

England, 1835–1852.

The Victorian era. The houses of intellectual elites.

The play runs approximately 120 minutes and will include one 10-minute intermission.

Dr. Kelley Holley
Director

Darian Slattery
**Assistant Director and
Director of Artistic Sign Language**

Dane Noble Rosema
Music Director

Alison Maselek
Dramaturg

Catherine Hamppe
Stage Manager

Amanda Doherty
Costume Designer

Andrew DG Hunt
Lighting Designer

Dan Roach
Projection Designer

Simon Mastroserio
Scenic Designer

RIT recognizes that we gather on the traditional territory of the Onöndowa'ga:’ or “the people of the Great Hill,” in English known as Seneca people, “the keeper of the western door.” We honor the land on which RIT was built and recognize the unique relationship that the Indigenous stewards have with this land.

Our Ada: A Dramaturgy Note **by Alison Maselek**

Ada and the Engine, by Lauren Gunderson, is the story of how the first computer program came to be - written for a machine that wouldn't be built for over a century. The titular 'engine' refers to Charles Babbage's Analytical Engine, the first programmable fully automatic calculating machine. The Analytical Engine, while it was never built in Lovelace nor Babbage's lifetime, is viewed as the theoretical precursor to modern computers. However, *Ada and the Engine* is more than the technology that is woven into the loom that is our play - it is about the humans that lived the stories we may hear in history books. Past the endless equations and analytics, this is a story about family, relationships, love, and loss. The electricity of this show comes not through the developing foundation of modern computers, but from our fiery protagonist: Ada.

Ada Lovelace is widely considered to be the first computer programmer. She translated mathematician Luigi Federico Menabrea's article on Babbage's Analytical Engine from French to English adding her own notes in the process, effectively tripling the length of it. In those notes, she included a step-by-step process for calculating Bernoulli numbers using the engine. This program was the first of its kind, proving that machines were not just big calculators, but could actually compute complex algorithms. Ada's idea of manipulating a machine to do something bigger than just basic calculation was years ahead of its time. She imagined its application for more than just algorithms, including in her notation that the machine could someday be used to write music. She was a visionary, understanding the potential for this machine that even its own maker could not see, including in the arts.

While Ada is now a prominent figure in computing history, she was also a living, breathing person. Real people are so much more complex than the way history books may depict them, especially in our case. In our play, Ada is simply a young girl. On top of being a genius, she's soft and at times, vulnerable. Like all of us, she wants to understand where she came from. Unfortunately for Ada, having the "mad, bad, and dangerous to know" Romantic poet Lord Byron as her father does not make this task an easy one. Ada wants the things that every young girl wants, whether it be the year 1835 or 2024: to be heard, seen, appreciated, and loved.

At RIT, each of our nine colleges has their own Adas; young pioneers writing the future here within our glass walls. Like Ada, they are doing this while experiencing all of the ups and downs that come with being a young adult. In 1851, Ada attended the Great Exhibition, an international display of industry and art that featured technological advancements from around the world, including the vertical printer and the Jacquard Loom. For this event, Hyde Park in London was covered in a huge structure made of glass, the Crystal Palace. When developing the foundation for the modern computer, Alan Turing used Ada's program over a century after she wrote it. We know that within our walls, countless advancements like this are being discovered that will change the world for the next coming centuries, just as Ada did. As we share Ada's story, we invite you to not only celebrate her amazing achievements, but to celebrate the achievements being made by our Adas right here at RIT.

In the last years of her life, Ada wrote a poem entitled "The Rainbow." Though Ada is widely associated with mathematics, wonderfully, she was also a poet - a woman, a scientist, a poet, and many things in between. She was a kaleidoscope of roles, relationships, passions, and pursuits. Her diverse talents exemplify the notion that we are not confined to singular labels but are, in fact, a blend of various hues. We hope that *Ada and the Engine* reflects the full spectrum of colors in Ada's life, as well as the beautiful colors of the community here at RIT.

She Walks in Beauty

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.
One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.
And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

—Lord Byron, 1813

The Rainbow

Bow down in hope, in thanks, all ye who mourn;—
Where'in that peerless arche of radiant hues
Surpassing early tints,— the storm subdues!
Of nature's strife and tears 'tis heaven-born,
To soothe the sad, the sinning, and the forlorn;—
A lovely loving token to infuse;
The hope, the faith, that pow'r divine endures
With latent good, the woes by which we're torn.—
'Tis like a sweet repentance of the skies;
To beckon all those by sense of sin opprest,—
And prove what loveliness may spring from sighs!
A pledge:— that deep implanted in the breast
A hidden light may burn that never dies,
But bursts thro' clouds in purest hues exprest!

—Ada Byron Lovelace, 1850

Cast

Ada Byron Lovelace.....	Becca Lewis ^{^*}
Charles Babbage.....	Skyler Herman ^{^*}
Annabella Byron	Anna McClanahan [^]
Lord Lovelace	Sean Shapiro [^]
Mary Somerville	Serena Rush ^{^*}
Lord Byron.....	Ryanne Wilson
Mary Somerville's Interpreter	Abby Hill [*]

Crew and Administration

Director	Dr. Kelley Holley
Assistant Director and Director of Artistic Sign Language	Darian Slattery
Music Director	Dane Noble-Rosema
Dramaturg.....	Alison Maselek ^{^*}
Stage Manager.....	Catherine Hampp ^{^*}
Assistant Stage Managers.....	Hannah Dunaway [*] , Mak Kirish ^{^*}
Scenic Designer.....	Simon Mastroserio [^]
Scenic Design Mentor	Eric JJ Moslow
Projection Designer	Seth Tyler Black
Costume Designer.....	Amanda Doherty
Lighting Designer.....	Andrew DG Hunt
Difference Engine Designer.....	Catherine Hampp ^{^*}
SHED Technical Operations Manager	Josh Labman
Production Interpreters	Anna Walton, Nancy Kikendall
Light Board Operator.....	Kristina Chenevey ^{^*}
Sound Board Operator.....	Keiran Daly [*]
Projections Operator.....	Bennie Williams ^{^*}
Run Crew.....	Erin Heh ^{^*} , Nate Mount [^] , Jaide Winant [*]
Wardrobe Crew	Brinda Bhattarai ^{^*} , Taylor Hanners ^{^**}
Graphic Designer.....	Bari Hayden

RIT School of Performing Arts

Inaugural Director.....	Dr. Erica Haskell
Director of Operations.....	Ben Willmott
Associate Director, Performing Arts Scholarship Program	Laura Conyers
Assistant Manager for Operations and Events.....	Michael Dyer
Senior Staff Assistant, Marketing, Program Designer	Emily Rhone
Theatre Ensemble Instructor	Alexa Scott-Flaherty
Theatre Arts Program Director.....	Andy Head

* Indicates that student is currently enrolled in Theatre Ensemble

[^] Indicates that student is currently a Performing Arts Scholar

^{**} Indicates that student is currently enrolled in an NTID Theatre Practicum

Bios

Brinda Bhattarai [she/her] (Wardrobe Crew) is a 4th-year SOIS student studying Writing for the Arts. Some of her favorite roles include acting as Emily Brent in *And Then There Were None* and writing short scripts for RIT Players' 24 Hour Show. She also enjoys reading and karaoke with friends. Thank you for watching the show, enjoy!

Seth Tyler Black [he/they] (Projection Designer) is an interdisciplinary artist & designer, with strong artistic roots in Buffalo. Being a designer and prop master for theatre and film since 2011, a few of Black's credits include *Nightmare Alley*, *A Quiet Place 2*, and *Gabriel's Inferno* in film, along with productions of *Faust*, *Hedwig & the Angry Inch*, *Buffalo Gal*, *Angels in America*, and newly devised pieces with Amy Taravella & Gerry Trentham in theatre.

Kristina Chenevey [she/her] (Light Board Operator) is from Las Vegas, Nevada. She is a 3rd-year Mechanical Engineering Technology major. She has been working with set/stage design for seven years, and loves the hands-on experience she gets when building sets. She looks forward to working with lighting!

Keiran Daly [any] (Sound Board Operator) is a 4th-year 3D Digital Design major, and is in charge of the sound board. "You probably won't see me, but enjoy the show!"

Amanda Doherty [she/her] (Costume Designer) is an Adjunct Professor in the departments of Performing Arts at NTID, and 3D Digital Design at RIT. She is a costume designer and historian who has been working principally in the professional entertainment industry for 25 years, and is now teaching costume and character design at RIT/NTID and Nazareth University. She received her Masters of Fine Arts in design from Penn State University.

Hannah Dunaway [she/they] (Assistant Stage Manager) is from Wellsville, NY and a 3rd-year Mechanical Engineering student with a minor in Cellular and Molecular Biology. She was an actress throughout middle/high school but this is her first show at RIT and her first time ever being an ASM. She would like to thank her friends and family for supporting her and the show. Thank you and remember to be an emu.

Catherine Hampp [she/her] (Stage Manager) is a 4th-year Mechanical Engineering major with a Theatre Arts minor from Binghamton, NY. Her favorite roles include directing *How to Succeed in High School Without Really Trying* and stage managing *Ordinary Days*. She would like to thank her friends and family for their love and support. Enjoy the show!

Skyler Herman [he/him] (Charles Babbage) is a 5th-year Software Engineering major from Montville, New Jersey. You may have seen him in the NTID & SPA Productions of *Thy Name is Woman* as Hamlet or in *She Kills Monsters* as Chuck. He would like to thank his friends and family for their constant support, as well as the production team for giving him one last opportunity to make theater during his time here at RIT.

Erin Heh (Run Crew) is thankful for the opportunity to participate in such a wonderful production. Enjoy the show!

Bios

Abby Hill (Mary Somerville's Interpreter) is a 4th-year ASL Interpreting major from Dallas, TX. Her previous roles include Guide in *Thy Name is Woman*, Powell in *Men on Boats* and Gwendolen Fairfax in *The Importance of Being Earnest*. She is excited for a wonderful last show at RIT!

Andrew DG Hunt [he/him] (Lighting Designer) is particularly interested in storytelling. His work spans the gamut of dance, theater, opera, and architectural lighting. He is most excited by new work, and stories that look at the 'commonplace' through a slanted point of view. Andrew aims for simple, elegant design solutions while recognizing that "simplicity is complicated."

Mak Kirish [she/her] (Assistant Stage Manager) is a 3rd-year Industrial Engineering major from Pittsburgh PA! This is Mak's second show at RIT, after a crazy journey in *Men on Boats* she was excited to return! On and off the clock Mak is involved a lot on campus including but not limited to: Tech Crew, WITR Studio C, Sportsnetwork Audio, SHED Tech Operations, WE@RIT, and a new member of Delta Phi Epsilon! She thanks her friends for all the love, support and food they have given her. <3

Becca Lewis [she/they] (Ada Byron Lovelace) is a 2nd-year Medical Illustration major with two minors in Theater Arts and ASL hailing from Colorado. She has played strong female characters at RIT such as Vera in *And Then There Were None* and Ophelia in *Thy Name is Woman*, but Ada is the first non-fiction character in her repertoire, (which could be the difference between zero and one.) Thank you to everyone sharing the stage, on and off it, and thank you to the audience for watching!

Alison Maselek [she/her] (Dramaturg) is a 2nd-year interpreting major and a first time dramaturg! She's previously been seen onstage at RIT and is excited to be on the production side of this show. She is a lifelong theatre-maker and is a student employee in RIT's School of Performing Arts. Huge thank you to Kelley for introducing her to the world of dramaturgy and mentoring her this semester. Thank you to the entire team for including her in this process, and to her friends and family. Thank YOU for supporting the arts!

Simon Mastroserio [he/him] (Scenic Designer) is a 5th-year Mechanical Engineering major with a Theatre Arts minor from Brick, NJ. Favorite past credits include set design for *Chicago* and props design for *Ordinary Days*. He would like to thank his friends and family for their support and Eric for his guidance.

Anna McClanahan [she/her] (Annabella Byron) is a 4th-year Film major specializing in writing and directing. She is a member of comedy club Fowl Play and a troupe member on RIT improv troupe "Off-Topic". Her previous theatre roles include Constance O'Brien in *The New Albion Radio Hour*, Annabel in *The Dolls of New Albion*, Roxie in *Chicago*, and Sir Robin in *Spamalot*. She will also be in the immersive theatre show *The Machine*.

Bios

Eric JJ Moslow [he/his] (Scenic Design Mentor) is the Technical Director for NTID Performing Arts. He received his MFA in Scene Design from Illinois State University. While also doing some other design work here on campus and supporting the performing arts ecosystem, he is happy to help mentor Simon through this process.

Nate Mount [he/his] (Run Crew) is a 3rd-year Computer Science student at RIT, and is thrilled to do his part to bring this production to life!

Dane Noble-Rosema [he/him] (Musical Director and Pianist), is thrilled to be working again with faculty and students that make up the directors and cast of *Ada and the Engine*. Dane has spent the majority of this musical career on the stage and in the theatre, and has been involved at RIT music directing and accompanying the School of Performing Arts' production of *Ordinary Days*, and working as a collaborative pianist with the studios of instrumental and vocal faculty.

Serena Rush [she/they] (Mary Somerville) 4th-year majoring in Psychology with a minor in Theatre Arts. She is from Silver Spring, Maryland! Previous favorite roles include Harper in *Angels in America*, Lottery Role in *Everybody*, and Tilly in *She Kills Monsters!* You can also see her as Heather Chandler in her 11th and final RIT production, *Broadway Bake Off!* Many thanks to family, friends, and most importantly her mom! Hope you enjoy the show!

Sean Shapiro [he/him] (Lord Lovelace) is a 3rd-year Game Design & Development major from Summit, NJ. He would like to thank his friends and family for their years of continued support.

Darian Slattery [she/any] (Assistant Director and Director of Artistic Sign Language) has been working full-time as a Creative Producer for Morpheyes Studio at NTID since graduating RIT/NTID in 2021. After assistant directing under Kelley Holley for *Ordinary Days* last spring, Darian could not be more excited to expand her role this year. She wants to thank Kelley as well as the entire RIT/NTID community for all the opportunities, encouragement, and love she's received in her seven years here.

Bennie Williams [he/him] (Projections Operator) is a 3rd-year Illustration major with a Theatre Arts minor. His favorite roles include Anne Shirley in *Anne of Green Gables*, and wardrobe crew for *Angels in America!* He would especially like to thank his friends and family for their continuing love and support. Enjoy the show!

Ryanne Wilson [she/her] (Lord Byron) is honored to be part of such a wonderful and loving theater group at RIT. This is her third theater performance; she's also played Laurie in *Little Women* and Mike in *Freaky Friday* at her high school. She's a 1st-year Industrial Engineering major. For fun, Ryanne plays jazz piano and designs board games! She thanks her amazing friends for all of their support.

Jaide Winant [she/her] (Run Crew) is an RIT/NTID student majoring in American Sign Language-English Interpreting. She has had the opportunity to act in 3 productions since transferring here with the most recent being the role of Ophelia in last Fall's production of *Thy Name is Woman*. This is her first time working behind the scenes and she is excited to be trying something new. Enjoy the show!

Performing Arts at RIT Upcoming Productions

RIT School of Performing Arts presents

THE MACHINE

DIRECTED BY Ryan Underbakke
CREATED BY the Ensemble

RIT School of Performing Arts

April 11-14

NTID Performing Arts presents

DEAF CREATORS PLAY FESTIVAL

RIT National Technical Institute for the Deaf
Performing Arts

April 19-21

RIT School of Performing Arts presents

Broadway Bake Off

April 27

Scan the QR code with your phone's camera to learn more, purchase tickets, and join our mailing list.



Special Thanks:

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