



# LORENA: *a Tabloid Epic*

by ELIANA PIPES

directed by ERICA TERPENING-ROMEO

October 14-24

Boston University College of Fine Arts  
School of Theatre and  
Graduate School of Arts & Sciences



BOSTON  
UNIVERSITY

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# A WELCOME FROM OUR ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dear Friends:

We are BACK! It feels so rewarding—even under these COVID restrictions—to be together once again. Thank you for being with us. And in return for your faith in us, we are keeping you as safe as we possibly can with adherence to strict protocols and rehearsal/performance rules. We do not take these rules lightly. All of our artistic and administrative staffs have been masked (and vaccinated) for the duration of our rehearsal periods. Performers may be maskless when they are on stage, but the social distance between you and our artists is more than safely adequate. Our ventilation systems have been updated with state-of-the-art technologies, and outside air is pumping through the theatre. So...WELCOME!

And now I'm privileged to talk about our upcoming season beginning, of course, with Eliana Pipes' wonderful *LORENA: a Tabloid Epic*. Had the quarantine not stopped us last year, we would have produced our five upcoming plays in person; instead, we worked with the gifted artists at the BU School of Theatre to "workshop" these plays over Zoom with actors and directors and designers. The result is what you will see in our Season of New Plays in the coming months.

For those of you old enough to remember the circus-like atmosphere around Lorena and John Bobbitt in 1993, this play will bring back many fond/horrified memories of that time. For those of you to whom this is "new" news, surprise! It really happened! But the "facts" of the case do not do justice to the psychological, physiological, and personal repercussions of the abuse and the subsequent actions taken by Lorena. The spectacle of the trial was only the tip of the iceberg, so to speak. We know now how deeply our own reactions to the case played upon the actors in that drama.

The press "coverage" of Lorena's journey reverberated across the country, and the reporting was extravagant and shocking; it was the first in what is now a long litany of sensationalized reporting at the expense of accuracy. I dare say that this made the case even more devastating and far-reaching. The facts alone still make men cringe and women debate over the morality of Lorena's actions. But don't be fooled by the "fun" of Lorena's journey. The story is Greek in its tragic consequences—not only for John and Lorena, but for us as well. We must look to ourselves to ask...What are the commonsense standards by which we want to live? How does sensationalism in the press color our lives now, and what should we believe or disbelieve? How do we retain our humanity and

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understanding in the wake of a media hailstorm of emotion? We must answer these questions for ourselves, but Eliana's play illuminates the necessity.

Welcome to *LORENA: a Tabloid Epic*, and a cautionary tale for all of us. Enjoy!

With warmest regards,

*Kate Snodgrass*

P.S. And please join us in November for something completely different—*Gone Nowhere* by Daniel C. Blanda, directed by Noah Putterman. When old friends meet, long-simmering grudges open the door to recriminations and...something sinister.

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# ***LORENA: a Tabloid Epic***

By Eliana Pipes

Directed by Erica Terpening-Romeo

*A BU New Play Initiative production, produced by Boston Playwrights' Theatre  
and the Boston University College of Fine Arts School of Theatre*

Scenic Design	Meg McGuigan
Lighting Design	Amanda Fallon
Sound Design	Sean A. Doyle
Costume Design	Emma George
Properties Design	Steven Doucette
Stage Manager	Lindsey Walko*
COVID Safety Manager	Elise Wien
Production Manager	Jeffrey Petersen
Sound Assistant	Feitong Wang
Costume Assistant	Andrew Wehlin
Production Assistant	Elise Wien
Production Crew	Butch Flowers, Samuel Kisthardt, Baz Kouba
Master Electrician	Anna Brevetti
Lighting Crew	Catherine Giorgetti, John Holmes, Matt Leal
Carpenter	Patrick Carpanedo
Sound Crew	Alexander Baker, Matt Leal, Sara Vargas
Paint Charge	Lydia Anderson
House Manager	Catherine Giorgetti
Front of House Staff	David L. Caruso, Jay Eddy, Matt Leal, Fatima A. Maan, Mavis Manaloto, J.C. Pankratz

## **CAST**

The Playwright	Valyn Lyric Turner
Lorena	Gabriela Medina-Toledo
John	Michael Ticknor
Medea	Victoria Omoregie
Chorus	Erin Davis, Fady Demian, Sydney Meyer, Emma Mineo, Abbey Scobee, Julien Tornelli, Ivan C. Walks, McKayla Witt

***LORENA: a Tabloid Epic* runs approximately 90 minutes with no intermission.**

\*Member, Actors' Equity Association

*Content advisory: Because it follows Lorena Bobbitt's case, this play contains descriptions (not depictions) of sexual assault and domestic violence. A strobe light is also used in the performance.*

The video and/or audio recording of this performance by  
any means whatsoever is strictly prohibited.



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## A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

I was a little girl when Lorena Bobbitt became a household name. What I remember at the time was the sense that all the adults in the world were sharing a very private, very adult joke, except someone had accidentally flipped a switch from “Off Air” to “On Air,” and now all us kids were hearing the joke, too. I was the kind of little girl who tried to impress adults with my knowingness and maturity, so I also remember pretending to know—raising my eyebrows and shaking my head at Lorena’s story in imitation of the grown ups around me.

Some of you will remember Lorena’s time in the spotlight much better than I do, while others may be hearing her name for the first time tonight. This show is for all of you—of us—no matter our orientation to Lorena’s story as we look back. We live in an oddly reflexive time right now, relitigating the crimes and vices of our past. That lens seems especially trained on the styles, scandals, and media of the 1990s—when cameras first entered courtrooms, and wall-to-wall coverage allowed us to gawk at the disappearing line between private horror and public entertainment.

I believe that all theatre is reflexive, and so our play is not just about what we see when we look back, but about the act of looking back itself. Theatre uses form and spectacle to solve the problems of ourselves: our impossibilities, unbearabilities, and contradictions. It’s a fool’s errand—those “problems” never get “solved”—but we fools need errands, and our earnest attempts hopefully bring us closer to the center of something, since looking back is inevitably also a process of looking within.

I was lucky enough to be in the room when Eliana Pipes, our brilliant playwright, brought the first 20 pages of this play into class for the first time. Those breathless, wild, dizzying pages knocked the wind out of me, as I humbly hope they will knock the wind out of you. Afterwards, when the storm clears and the dust settles, and we all get our bearings again, I hope we will find ourselves at least a little closer to the center of something.

—Erica Terpening-Romeo

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## CAST & CREW

**ERIN DAVIS (Chorus)** is an actor, dramaturg, and playwright from Marietta, Georgia. Recent credits at Boston University include *The Punk Dyke Play* (Poppy) directed by Sophronia Vowels; *The Penelopiad* (Icarus/Suitor 2) directed by Noah Putterman; and as the playwright of *honeyhole* directed by Leila Ghaemi. They will graduate from Boston University's School of Theatre in May, 2022, with a BFA in Theatre Arts. Thank you to family and friends and the entire team of *LORENA*!

**FADY DEMIAN (Chorus/Judge/Hype Man)** is an actor and writer currently pursuing a BFA in Acting at Boston University. His passions center around physical theatre, clowning, absurdism, and Shakespeare; he enjoys doing work internationally such as in Prague and Denmark. Previous work in Boston includes a devised piece titled *Walls with Playback Theatre* and the lead in a short film titled *The New Tenant* which is currently being screened at various film festivals. Fady can be seen next in *T: An MBTA Musical* at the Rockwell as well as *Incels and Other Myths* also here at the BPT. Instagram: @fadyd5

**SEAN A. DOYLE (Sound Design)** makes his Boston debut for a sound design for in-person theatre with *LORENA*. He is a third-year MFA Sound Design student at Boston University. He has designed lights and sound academically and professionally for more than 100 productions, most notably Lehigh University, Touchstone Theatre, Fresno State, The Roxey Ballet Company, The Women's Shakespeare Company, New Harmony Repertory Theatre, Just Off Broadway Theatre, Wheelock Family Theatre, and The United Way of Connecticut. Mr. Doyle is an alum of Lehigh University and Gonzaga College High School.

**AMANDA FALLON (Lighting Design) (they/she)** is a theatre artist and educator with a deep love for new work and devising. She and her characteristically loud bouts of laughter have called parts of Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts home, but after recently completing her Master of Fine Arts in Lighting Design at Boston University, she's excited to continue exploring the East Coast. She previously interned with Ko Festival (MA), The Public Theater (NY), and Williamstown Theatre Festival (MA), and has taught with the Boston University Summer Theatre Institute as well as with Wheelock Family Theatre. [www.amandafallondesign.com](http://www.amandafallondesign.com)

**EMMA GEORGE (Costume Design)** is a third-year MFA candidate at Boston University and has been designing costumes since the age of four, coordinating looks for plays and other spectacles starring her and her two younger sisters in their living room. Since then, her work has taken her to NYC, Savannah, Atlanta, and now Boston working in theatre, as well as in film and TV as a costume designer, stitcher, and hair and makeup artist. Past productions at BU include *Mansfield Park* (Opera Institute) and *Photograph 51*. [www.ecgcostumes.com](http://www.ecgcostumes.com)

**CATHERINE GIORGETTI (House Manager)** is a fourth-year student at Northeastern University double majoring in Theatre and History with a

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Playwriting minor. She is currently on co-op at Boston Playwrights' Theatre after completing a co-op at Underground Railway Theater in Spring 2020. Catherine is a playwright, dramaturg, director, and actor who loves using theatre as an explorative and storytelling tool. She is currently working on *Rocky Relationships* as part of Moonbox Productions' Boston New Works Festival; *City of Lost Love* for Silver Masque Theatre Company; and a playwriting project with the goal to fill educational gaps for Northeastern's Jill Gabbe Creative Leader Fund.

**MEG MCGUIGAN (Scenic Design)** is a designer specializing in stage and space based in New York City. Her work includes design for theatre, events, and window displays. She has worked as a freelance artist for companies such as B Street Theatre, Spaeth Design, Squeaky Bicycle Productions, Randomly Specific Theatre, and Stagedoor Manor, and earned her MFA in Scene Design from Boston University. Her joy in exploration brought her to this medium and remains the reason she continues to pursue it.

**GABRIELA MEDINA-TOLEDO (Lorena)** is a first-generation Mexican-American actress, director, influencer/content creator, and theatre artist. She is currently a senior at Boston University where she is fulfilling a BFA in Theatre Arts focusing on Performance with a Minor in Arts and Leadership and a concentration in film and television. Prior to BU, Gabriela studied acting at The University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory where she was presented with the Most Prolific Actor Award at the Cinematic Arts and Media Showcase and played principal roles in multiple short films including *Me or You*, *Peppermint*, and *Sugarbaby*. She has also participated in three Cincinnati Fringe Festivals and assisted in developing the first Spanish theatre company in Cincinnati, La Alfombra Teatro. Her favorite experiences include performing at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, being an extra in Yorgos Linthamos's *Killing of A Sacred Deer*, and being an actor/writer in the award-winning immersive Cincinnati Fringe Festival show *Between 3 and 5*. [www.gabrielamedinatoledo.com](http://www.gabrielamedinatoledo.com)

**SYDNEY MEYER (Chorus)** is a senior Theatre Arts major at Boston University's School of Theatre. Some of her favorite past work at BU includes playing #13 in *The Wolves* and Lou in *honeyhole*. She is a member of SAG and is excited to be a part of her first EMC show. In addition to studying acting, Sydney is also minoring in Film and TV and enjoys writing.

**EMMA MINEO (Chorus)** is so thrilled to be making her BPT debut. She is a senior acting major at the Boston University School of Theatre where she was last seen as Ashleigh in *Horse Girls* by Jenny Rachel Weiner. She is a Berkshires native where she appeared in productions at Berkshire Theatre Group, Barrington Stage Company, and most recently as Hermia in *Midsummer* at Pittsfield Shakespeare in the Park. Thanks to the whole team for their generosity and dedication!

**VICTORIA OMOREGIE (Medea)** is ecstatic to take part in *LORENA* as Medea at the Boston Playwrights' Theatre. Now a senior acting major at BU, Victoria has

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worked on *In the Red and Brown Water* by Tarell Alvin McCraney and *Othello* by William Shakespeare. In her freetime, she loves to write poems, listen to music, read books, and write freestyle monologues. Victoria also has her own jewelry line ([osakutreasures.com](http://osakutreasures.com)) where she sells jewelry to encourage people to be not only confident in themselves, but bold!

**ELIANA PIPES's (Playwright)** plays include *DREAM HOUSE* (world premiere co-production with the Alliance Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, and Baltimore Center Stage), *Unfuckwithable* (Drama League DirectorFest), *Cowboy and the Moon* (Dramatists Guild Foundation Fellowship, NNPN MFA Playwright's Workshop), *LORENA: a Tabloid Epic* (The Playwright's Realm Scratchpad Series, UCSB LaunchPad), *Stand and Wait* (The Fire This Time Festival), and more. Her writing awards include the Alliance/Kendeda National Graduate Playwriting Competition, KCACTF's Harold and Mimi Steinberg National Student Playwriting Award and Ken Ludwig Scholarship, Leah Ryan Fund Prize for Emerging Women Writers, National Latinx Playwright Award, Dr. Floyd Gaffney National Playwriting Prize, and a two-time finalist status for the Eugene O'Neill National Playwriting Conference. As a filmmaker she was awarded the Academy Gold Fellowship for Women through the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the inaugural WAVE Grant through Wavelength Productions. As a screenwriter she recently completed a romantic comedy feature screenplay for Foton Pictures and Naim Media Group. BA Columbia University, MFA Playwriting Boston University.

**ABBEY SCOBEE (Chorus)** is a senior acting major of the College of Fine Arts at Boston University. She started her acting career in Seattle, Washington, in roles such as Scarlet in *Clue* and Imogene Herdman in *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. She also originated the role of Juno in the *Punk Dyke Play* at BU. Since then Abbey has explored her craft through radio plays and podcasts during COVID-19. She is so grateful to be back on the stage and exploring the world of physical performance again.

**ERICA TERPENING-ROMEO (Director)** is a director, actor, teacher, and writer in Western Massachusetts, where she runs Hilltown Theatre Anonymous. She is the co-founder of the Shakespeare company Anon It Moves and former Literary Manager of Portland Actors Ensemble, both in Portland, Oregon; the former Managing Director of The Strain Theatre in Manhattan, New York; and co-founder of Singing House Productions in Lafayette, Colorado. Erica received her MFA in directing from Boston University. She has contributed to the anthologies *How and Why We Teach Shakespeare*, *Why the Theatre*, and *Playing with Reality*, all published by Routledge Press.

**MICHAEL TICKNOR (John)** is a senior Acting major at Boston University. Though COVID-19 took away many of his potential credits, his most noteworthy experiences include *A Seagull* (Trigorin), a modern adaptation of Chekhov's *The Seagull*, written and directed by Blair Cadden, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Demetrius). Graduating in the spring, he will return to his home in Los Angeles where he looks forward to continuing training and auditioning.

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**JULIEN TORNELLI (Chorus)** is a junior Theatre Arts major with a minor in Film and Television hailing from Brooklyn, NY. As an actor and singer at the Professional Performing Arts School in Manhattan, Julien performed several times on Broadway stages through the Shubert HS Festival, and during his time in the Brooklyn Youth Chorus was able to perform on notable music halls around the country. He can also be seen in Peter Hedges' feature film *Ben Is Back*. Julien will continue this semester with BPT in its upcoming production of *Incels and Other Myths*.

**VALYN LYRIC TURNER (The Playwright)** is a theatre artist, spoken word poet, and activist hailing from Atlanta, Georgia, the ancestral homeland of the Cherokee and Creek native nations. Valyn is a third-year Posse Scholar at Boston University where she double majors in Theatre Arts and Spanish. Some of her recent roles include Esme in Wheelock Family Theatre's *Walking the Tightrope* and Pilot in *Grounded* with Boston University's School of Theatre. Some of Valyn's most notable spoken-word poems include "Race in the Classroom" and "Bleeding Red, White, and Blue," both of which have been featured on the LA-based podcast *The Only One in the Room*. Valyn also stars in the radio drama, *Iris*, available on Spotify or wherever you get your podcasts. Valyn's mission is to inspire, empower, and serve others through her craft. She's positively thrilled you're here.

**LINDSEY WALKO\* (Stage Manager)** is a Boston-based multidisciplinary artist currently working as a freelancer across theater, film, and television. Selected credits include *Julia* (HBO, costume design PA), *Black, In My Element* (Open|up, Producer), *Until the Flood* (Merrimack Repertory Theater, PA), *If I Forget* (Barrington Stage Company, SM Intern), *America v. 2.1* (Barrington Stage Company, SM Intern), *The Exonerated* (Boston University, SM), and *Black Snow* (Boston University, SM).

**IVAN C. WALKS (Chorus)** is honored and blessed to be returning to live theatre! He is a senior acting major at Boston University's School of Theatre pursuing minors in both dance and Chinese! His most recent on stage credits include BU's *The Pride* (Pete/Doctor), directed by Kevin Kolton Bradley, and *Little Rowboat; Or, Conjecture* (George/Easton) by Kirsten Greenidge, directed by Adam Kassim. Ivan is also a member of BU's Fusion Dance Troupe and can be seen performing with them throughout the fall. He will also be in MoonBox's production of *Passing Strange* (Youth) this coming December! Thank you for coming back to the theater! Hope you've been smiling lately!

**ELISE WIEN (Production Assistant)** is a playwright from New Rochelle, NY, who likes funny, formally unusual, heart-wrenching work. Her plays include *[cowboy face]* (finalist, Leah Ryan Fund for Emerging Women Writers; winner, KCACTF Mark Twain Prize for Comic Playwriting); *Craters, or the making of the making of the moon landing* (reading, Corkscrew Theater Festival); and *cara has a hole in her head* (finalist, Samuel French OOB Short Play Festival). She has worked with The 24 Hour Plays: Nationals, The Tank, and the Hopkins Center for the Arts in Hanover, NH. She is currently attending BU's Playwriting MFA program.

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**MCKAYLA WITT (Chorus) (she/her/hers)** is an actor, writer, and dramaturg—sometimes she even stage manages! She is best known for her film role in *Santa Girl* (2019) and her favorite theatrical experiences include *Horse Girls* (Robin), *Generations: A Devised Piece* (company member), *A Game of Life: A Modern Ritual Drama* (Pavo), and many, many new works workshops. She serves as an associate producer at Asian American Theatre Artists of Boston and is a leading member of School of Theater Anti-Racist Student Initiative (SARSI). She will graduate next spring with a degree in Theater Arts and Political Science from Boston University.



\*Actors' Equity Association (AEA) was founded in 1913 as the first of the American actor unions. Equity's mission is to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Today, Equity represents more than 49,000 actors, singers, dancers and stage managers working in hundreds of theatres across the United States.

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Nicholas Y. Chen, Tavern of Tales, Marc Olivere

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## LISTEN TO TYPECAST

Episode 1 of **Typecast: Boston's New Play Podcast**—about the process of bringing a new play into the world—features *LORENA: a Tabloid Epic* playwright Eliana Pipes. Listen: <https://www.bu.edu/bpt/community/typecast/>

or [BostonPlaywrights.org](http://BostonPlaywrights.org) > Community > Typecast

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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.

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Boston Playwrights' Theatre is an award-winning professional theatre at Boston University dedicated to new works. Founded in 1981 by Nobel Laureate Derek Walcott, the heart of BPT's mission is the production of new plays by students and alumni of BU's MFA Playwriting Program—a collaboration with BU's renowned School of Theatre. The program's award-winning alumni have been produced in regional and New York houses, as well as in London's West End. BPT's productions have been honored with numerous regional and Boston awards, including awards from the Independent Reviewers of New England (IRNE) and Boston Critics' Association (Elliot Norton Awards).

From class workshops to our Season of New Plays, BPT employs the best of New England's professional actors, directors, and designers to bring each playwright's vision to its first audiences.

Each spring we produce New Noises: Massachusetts Young Playwrights' Project. Area high schools work with professional playwrights, directors, and actors to see student works on stage for the first time.

Fifty local theatre companies join us annually for the Boston Theater Marathon, a showcase of new ten-minute plays by New England playwrights chosen each year from hundreds of entrants. Each play is produced by a different New England theatre company in a single ten-hour event with all proceeds going to charity.

When we are not producing plays, we continue our mission through the New Play Odyssey Program, which makes theatre space available to other New England theatre companies and playwrights for readings and festivals of new plays.

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