



# *OTP*

a new play by Elise Wien  
directed by Enzo Gonzales

December 8-18 | Tickets: [BostonPlaywrights.org](http://BostonPlaywrights.org)

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



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# A WELCOME FROM OUR ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Welcome to Boston Playwrights' Theatre and to *OTP* by Elise Wien, directed by Enzo Gonzales.

I am so thrilled and honored to be here in my first season as BPT's Artistic Director, carrying forward a slate of brand-new plays by MFA playwrights that was put in motion by the legendary Kate Snodgrass (who retired this year after an extraordinary 35 years at the helm...!) This group of writers—whose entire graduate education has taken place during a global pandemic—offer us critical reflections on the big questions of this moment: “How do we live when we feel like the world is ending?” and “If our very survival depends on resisting old ideas and seeding new ones, what stories must we tell—and how?”

I can't think of a better way to close out 2022 than with Elise's nostalgic, searching, devastatingly smart play. Set in 2015 in the waning twilight of the Obama years, the comedy centers on 15-year-old best friends Ceci and Michelle. By day, they're students in Oak Park, Illinois. By night (or perhaps late-afternoon), they take the internet by storm, crafting an alternate universe where a teenage President Obama courts the teenage President of Oak Park High School—and takes her political advice. I first loved this play for being a lyrical and engaging love letter to fan fiction and teenage friendship—but as I've watched it develop, I've come to understand that it is not so much a love letter as a letter to the editor, a set of questions about how the stories we tell about leadership and followership shape not only our political discourse and our sense of civic responsibility, but also our relationships with others and our capacity to love and be loved.

Enjoy the show!

Best,



Megan Sandberg-Zakian  
Artistic Director, Boston Playwrights' Theatre

P.S. Oh, and [click here](#) for BPT's adorable holiday card. We'd love to be remembered in your year-end giving!

P.P.S. Come back again in February for Fatima A. Maan's *Jado Jehad*, directed by Bridget O'Leary, about three generations of Pakistani women struggling to see and trust each other fully.

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# **OTP**

## **a new play by Elise Wien directed by Enzo Gonzales**

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

Scenic Designer	Peyton Tavares
Lighting Designer	Conor Thiele
Sound Designer	Sean A. Doyle
Costume Designer	Chloe Moore
Stage Manager	Fanni Horváth*
Props Assistant	Addie Pates
Assistant Director	Ciera-Sadé Wade
Directing Assistant	Ava Laroche
Production Assistant	Brandon Zang
Cultural Consultant	Ciera-Sade Wade
Intimacy Coach	Jess Scout Malone
Master Electrician	Jack Culton
Electricians	Silvano Spagnuolo, Jesús Marrero Suárez, Catherine Vess-Ovsiannikov, Irene Wang, Brandon Zang
Set Crew	Simone Crowder, Matt Leal, Sydney Love, Brenna Thornton
House Manager	Sydney Love
Front of House Staff	Simone Crowder, Tina Esper, Matt Leal

## **CAST**

Michelle	Hampton Richards
Ceci	Blanca Isabella
Benny/Barack	Diego Cintròn
Obarack	Dom Carter*

## **UNDERSTUDY**

For Michelle/Ceci—Ambria M. Benjamin

**OTP runs approximately two hours. There will be a 10-minute intermission.**

Content Advisory: This play contains mentions of suicide and depictions of self-harm.

\*Appearing through an Agreement between Boston Playwrights' Theatre  
and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors  
and Stage Managers in the United States.

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

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# FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT: A GLOSSARY OF *OTP*

**AO3:** Archive Of Our Own. One of the largest sites for hosting fanfiction.

**AU:** Alternate Universe

**Crackfic:** Unserious fiction, written as a joke.

**Fan fiction:** Narratives written by fans of popular work or public figures, often to bring to life scenarios not present in the original work. Often a little smutty. E.g., someone writing Harry Potter fan fiction might write about a relationship between Snape and Hermione.

**JSA:** Junior Statesmen of American. Like model UN, but for local government.

**OTP:** One True Pairing, a couple that a fanfic writer believes to be united by destiny.

**Ship:** Short for relationship. The act of pairing characters together, like a matchmaker.

—Elise Wien

## A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

What does it mean to be a leader? And how does a leader navigate changing friendships and the painful realization that they cannot trust the people in power, but must act sometimes as if they do? These are key questions that Elise's new play *OTP* pulls apart and scrambles around so as to put the megalomania of U.S. Democratic Body Politic through a 2015 iPhone Picasso filter app. Taking us back to 2015 suggests many things to many people, but for these two girls, it represents one word: Hope. How do we move from naive, blind faith in the systems to determined incisive actions that make them more fair and just for our complicated world? How do we "man the switchboard of the preposterous" without cracking and crashing our lives into a desolate wilderness? Perhaps the only way to find out is to wander...wander...wander...

—Enzo Gonzales

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## CAST & CREW

**AMBRIA M. BENJAMIN (Understudy Michelle/Ceci)** is a sophomore Theatre Arts major at Boston University. She is happy to be collaborating with the cast and creative team. Whether on stage or behind the scenes, Ambria treasures the opportunity to engage in theatre any way she can. Of the many acting roles she's played, her favorites are Francine/Lena in *Clybourne Park*, Minnie Fay in *Hello, Dolly!*, and Beneatha in *A Raisin in the Sun*. Thanks to her many teachers, in and out of the classroom. Ambria is expanding her horizons into new creative learning experiences and becoming a well-rounded, multi-faceted theatre artist.

**DOM CARTER\* (Obarack)** is a member of Actors' Equity and is blessed and honored to be performing in *OTP*. He was last seen in *Dracula: A Feminist Revenge* at the Umbrella Stage Company. Other credits include *The Light* (Rashad) and *Twelfth Night* (Sebastian) at The Lyric Stage Company of Boston; *The Greater Good* (Michael) at Company One; *The Mountaintop* (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.), *Mothers and Sons* (Katherine Girard), *Violet* (Old Lady) with Lexington Players; *BLKS* (Justin-Understudy) at SpeakEasy Stage Company; *Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train* (Angel), and *RACE* with Hovey Players. Dominic is a graduate of The Atlantic Acting School and the winner of 2021 AACT National Theater Best Actor.

**DIEGO CINTRÒN (Barack/Benny, he/him)** has been fortunate enough to participate in various productions of musical theatre and straight theatrical pieces with talented artists through both college and high school, such as *Purlie* (Purlie, Boston Conservatory), under the direction of Marchant Davis; *Everybody* (Everybody, Boston Conservatory), under the direction of Pascale Florestal; *Rent* (Paul and ensemble, Boston Conservatory), under the direction of Rickey Tripp; *Pippin* (Leading Player, high school production); *Guys and Dolls* (Benny Southstreet, high school production); *Bright Star* (Billy Cane, high school production); and he recently filmed a television pilot as one of its leads. Diego's passion is to tell stories, through any medium—but his favorite is performance. He strives to bring truth, authenticity, passion, nuance, and heart to the characters that he plays and the stories that he chooses to tell. He is a hard worker and a joyous, contagious source of grounded light and energy.

**SEAN A. DOYLE (Sound Designer, he/him/his)** returns to BPT after designing *Eat Your Young* earlier this season and *LORENA: a Tabloid Epic* last season. This past summer season, he was the Sound Supervisor for Barrington Stage Company. Mr. Doyle has designed for Lehigh University, Touchstone Theatre, Fresno State University, 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 received his Masters of Fine Arts in Sound Design from Boston University, and is an alum of Lehigh University.

**ENZO GONZALES (Director, he/him/his)** is an MFA candidate in Boston University's theatre directing program, and is lucky enough to have his Boston profes-

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sional debut at BPT with *OTP*. He worked in NYC with Rising Sun Performance Company, directing plays like *Elephant* by Eva Meiling Pollitt, *Finale* by Dylan Guerra, and *Love Poems* by Meny Beriro at American Theatre of Actors. Last year he directed Madeleine Sayet's *Antigone, or And Still She Must Rise Up*, as well as Steve Yockey's *Mercury*, in the School of Theatre's Masterclass projects. He also directed the first live staged reading of *Salamander and the Impediment* by BU graduate Charlotte Weinman.

**FANNI HORVÁTH\* (Stage Manager)** is thrilled to be back working at Boston Playwrights'! She is very grateful to have worked with such a talented cast and production team. She recently assistant stage managed at Wheelock Family Theatre, previously stage managed for Sleeping Weazel@Arts Emerson, FTLO Theatre, Two Sharp Quills Productions@BPT, Pariah Theatre Company, Eastern Nazarene College, South Shore School of Theatre and Mel'O Drama. When not in the theater, you will find her "stage managing" in real life as a Staff Assistant at Harvard University. Many thanks to her wife, Allison, for her continuous support!

**BLANCA ISABELLA (Ceci)** is an actor from Los Angeles, CA. After graduating from the L.A. County High School For The Arts (LACHSA), Blanca is pursuing her BFA in Acting at Boston University's School of Theatre. Her most recent theatre credits include *Los Pobladores* (Ella Fernando) directed by Justin Huen, *Choice* (Lupe) directed by Malika Oyetimein, and *Everybody* (Everybody) directed by Melisa Pereyra. Her most recent film credits include *Lolo* (Lolo), which premiered at the Inaugural Mexican-American Film Festival, and a new film adaptation of Victor Villaseñor's novel, *Macho!*, set to start production in 2023.

**AVA LAROCHE (Directing Assistant)** is extremely excited and grateful to be a part of the *OTP* directing team. Previously, she has worked as an understudy for *Let the Right One In* (Boston University). Other credits include Corinna Senders in the stage and film *Terezin: Children of the Holocaust* (The Terezin Project), Amelia in *Conflict of Interest: An Original Musical* (Firehouse Center for the Arts), and Kaliope in *She Kills Monsters* (Greater Boston Stage Company). She previously served as an Assistant Director for the METG award-winning productions *Borealis* (St. John's Prep), and a Dramaturg on *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde* (St. John's Prep). Special thanks to Enzo, Ciera- Sadé, and Elise, for letting her join this wonderful team!

**JESSICA SCOUT MALONE (Intimacy Consultant, she/her)** is a choreographer and dramaturg based in Boston. Whether working with playwrights, actors, or creative teams, her focus is always on building confidence and fostering joy. Her work can be seen with companies like Anthem Theatre, Brown/Trinity Rep, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, Company One, and Sparkhaven Theatre. She is a member of the Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD), and holds a BFA in Theatre Arts from Boston University. [jessicascoutmalone.com](http://jessicascoutmalone.com)

**HAMPTON RICHARDS (Michelle, she/her/hers)** is an actress, performer, comedian, dancer, movement director, and writer from the Atlanta area. Her fa-

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vorite experiences have been performing as Florence in *The Odd Couple*, *Aurora Borealis*, Pamela in *Mercury* (also directed by Enzo Gonzales), Nurse in *The Ain Gordon Project*, and Ensemble in *Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again*. This past summer she was an TA/RA for Boston University Summer Theatre Institute. She will receive her BFA in Acting performance from BU in 2024. She would like to thank her family, Black people, and SZA.

**PEYTON TAVARES (Scenic Designer)** is a second-year MFA Theatre Design candidate (MFA'24) in Scenic Design. She achieved her undergraduate degree from Marymount Manhattan College with a dual concentration in Scenic Design and Directing. She is thrilled to have worked on this show and feels very lucky to be a part of this process. Her recent credits include *Let The Right One In* (Boston University in collaboration with Actors' Shakespeare Project), *Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again*. (Boston University), *Dead Man's Cell Phone* (Boston University) and *Antigone, or And Still She Must Rise Up* (Boston University). Upcoming: *Jado Jehad* at Boston Playwrights' Theatre [peyontavares.com](http://peyontavares.com) @Peyton5656

**CONOR THIELE (Lighting Designer)** is a visual artist and collaborator who is driven by the unlimited potential of live performance. Conor is a first-year student in Boston University's MFA program for Lighting Design, and an alumni of the Juilliard Apprenticeship Program (2020). Select credits include Adelphi Dance Showcase (Adelphi University 2021-2022), *She Kills Monsters* (SUNY New Paltz), *The House of Legendary* (American Opera Project), and *Children of Eden* (Bayway Arts Center). Upcoming: *El Nogalar* at Boston University.

**CIERA-SADÉ WADE (Assistant Director/Cultural Consultant, she/her/ella)** is an actor, director, dramaturg, writer, and stage manager. She graduated in 2013 with a BFA in Acting from Boston University. Since graduating, Ciera-Sadé's acting credits include *For Colored Girls* (BU and Praxis StageCompany); *The Weird* (Off the Grid Theatre Company); *Top Eye Open* (Madison Park Development Corporation @ Hibernian Hall); *The Love of the Nightingale* (Open Theatre Project); and *Mary Shelley\** (Nora Theatre Company). Dramaturgical credits include *Splendor*, *FUFU & Oreos* (Company One Theatre); *Saturday Night/Sunday Morning* (The Lyric Stage Company of Boston); and *Little Women* (The Longwood Players). She made her directorial debut in 2019 with *Stick Fly* (Madison Park Development Corporation @ Hibernian Hall).

**ELISE WIEN (Playwright, she/her)** is a writer who works in the genre of tender absurdism—creating worlds that reflect the cruel and chaotic nature of our own, and characters who must rely on each other for connection and support to survive them. Her plays include *[cowboy face]* (winner, Kennedy Center Mark Twain Prize for Comic Playwriting; finalist, Leah Ryan Fund for Emerging Women Writers), *Craters, or the making of the making of the moon landing* (production, Smith College; reading, Corkscrew Theater Festival), and *cara has a hole in her head* (Samuel French Off Off Broadway Short Play Festival). She has worked with Undiscovered Countries, The 24 Hour Plays: Nationals, Dixon Place, The Tank, American Lore Theater, and the Hopkins Center for the Arts. She is currently attending Boston University's Playwriting MFA program.

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# SPECIAL THANKS

Anna Hanh



Actors' Equity Association ("Equity"), founded in 1913, is the U.S. labor union that represents more than 51,000 professional Actors and Stage Managers. Equity fosters the art of live theatre as an essential component of society and advances the careers of its members by negotiating wages, improving working conditions and providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. Actors' Equity is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. #EquityWorks

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#OTPbpt #BUarts #newplay

A poster for the play 'ONCE' at Booth Theatre. The background is a textured, warm-toned image of a person in a dark coat and hat walking through a snowy or misty landscape. The text is overlaid on the image. In the top left is the Boston University logo. In the top right is the text 'Boston University College of Fine Arts School of Theatre'. The title 'ONCE' is in large white letters, with 'BOOK BY ENDA WALSH' below it. In the middle left, it says 'DIRECTED BY SHAMUS MUSIC &amp; LYRICS BY GLEN HANSARD &amp; MARKETA IRGLOVA'. In the middle right, it says 'DECEMBER 7-10, 2022 JOAN &amp; EDGAR BOOTH THEATRE'. In the bottom left, it says 'BOOTH THEATRE 820 Commonwealth Avenue'.



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# JACK WELCH PLAYWRIGHTS' FUND

*We are grateful to our friends for their support of our mission—to provide a home for new works for the stage.*

*If you are interested in making a donation to Boston Playwrights' Theatre, please contact Managing Director Darren Evans at (617) 353-5899 or visit our online donation form at [www.BostonPlaywrights.org](http://www.BostonPlaywrights.org).*

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## **In-Kind Contributions**

Dolly Brooks  
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Jeffrey Petersen  
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Ronán Noone  
Kate Snodgrass

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*The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, part of the Rubenstein Arts Access Program, is generously funded by **David M. Rubenstein.***

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*Additional support is provided by The Honorable Stuart Bernstein and Wilma E. Bernstein; and the Dr. Gerald and Paula McNichols Foundation.*

*Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts.*

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**

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 a festival of student-written ten-minute plays, New Noises, the culminating event of the Massachusetts Young Playwrights' Project. In this program, 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 selected 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 our own plays, we continue BPT's mission through our Play Space program, which makes theatre space available at deeply subsidized rates to other New England theatre companies and playwrights for new-play related events including readings, classes, auditions, rehearsals, conferences, and full productions.

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*Kate Snodgrass, Professor Emerita of the Practice of Playwriting*

**We are proud of our mission.**  
**To get involved, visit [BostonPlaywrights.org](http://BostonPlaywrights.org).**



# ***Jado Jehad***

a new play by Fatima A. Maan  
directed by Bridget Kathleen O'Leary

February 16-26 | Tickets: [BostonPlaywrights.org](https://www.BostonPlaywrights.org)

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