

CROW CITY THEATRE PRESENTS:

George A Romero's

**NIGHT
OF THE
LIVING
DEAD™
LIVE**

**WRITTEN BY:
CHRISTOPHER BOND
DALE BOYER
TREVOR MARTIN**

**CREATED BY:
CHRISTOPHER HARRISON
PHIL PATTISON**

Time and Place: Spring, 1968. A farmhouse located somewhere outside of Pittsburgh PA.

Night of the Living Dead Live is a play in two Acts. Each Act runs approximately 45 minutes. There will be a 15-minute intermission. This production features flashing lights, simulated gun violence, and limited gore effects. Photography and Video is prohibited. For the safety of everyone, please remain seated during the performance.

Cast:

Ben..... Ajamu Brooks
Sheriff McClelland, Zombie..... Paul Moukperian
Barbra..... Kiefer Schenk
Harry Cooper, Vince..... Ben McRae
Helen Cooper, Judy..... Elise Tarlach
Johnny, Tom..... Kiyomi Oliver
Karen..... Hope Kollarik
Lucienda Caldwell..... Wendy Webster
Nancy..... Andrea Daszkiewicz
Radio Broadcaster(voice)..... Ted Wenskus

Crew:

Director, Producer..... Matt Ralyea
Producer..... John Lolis
Assistant Director..... Ben McRae
Stage Manager..... Andrea Daszkiewicz
Sound Design..... Ted Wenskus
Fight Choreography..... Eva Sarachan-Dubay
Lighting Design..... Ken DeBot
Set Design..... Nick Daszkiewicz
Light and Sound Operator..... Kristina Chomiak
Costume Consultant..... Becky Pastuch

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Director's Note:

The original *Night of the Living Dead* film from 1968 holds a truly unique place in film history in that it revolutionized a movie genre and became the springboard for countless zombie stories that came afterward. Featuring the color-blind casting (rare in 1968) of the talented Duane Jones as Ben, and coming only a few months after the world lost Martin Luther King, Jr., the film unwittingly also became an allegory for the disquieting times it was released in.

I think one of the allures of watching horror films is that it gives us a safe space to feel emotions. This play, a "reinvention" of the story made with George Romero's blessing, is fully aware of the frustrations and fear we feel as we deal with some of the same social issues 56 years later. This is not straight horror. Perhaps the playwrights knew that, like poor Barbra, we are all traumatized enough already; and so they offer us a playground: a creative and inventive space to be a little scared, a little silly, and to laugh at our problems. Like the characters presented in our story, we butt heads. We all try again and again to figure things out. In the end though, I think that when there are no clear solutions it is the act of learning to laugh together that we find the real path forward.

Crow City Theatre:

Night of the Living Dead Live is our second production, following last year's *Mating Dance of the Werewolf*. We aim to bring the dark, the mysterious, and the fantastical side of theater to the Rochester stage. We are deeply grateful for the collaborative spirit and imagination of our members, as well as our audiences who make this community possible. We plan on returning next August for yet another flight of imagination. Stay tuned!

Elise Tarlach (Helen/Judy) is very excited to join the Crow City Theatre as Helen Cooper and Judy in this summer's production of *Night of the Living Dead*. She has participated as a pit orchestra member in local and school musical productions over the past few years, including *Spamalot*, *Beauty and the Beast Jr.* and *Spongebob Squarepants: The Musical*. Elise works as a paraprofessional at the Canandaigua City School District, and volunteers her time as a percussionist for the *Fingerlakes Symphonic Orchestra* and the *Fingerlakes Concert Band*. During her free time, she enjoys playing Dungeons and Dragons, reading books, baking, and attending open mics with her husband, Matthew. Elise wants to thank everyone in Crow City Theatre for being so welcoming to her, and hopes to continue her dream of acting alongside her fellow actors and newfound friends.

Ben McRae (Harry/Vince/etc.) is thrilled to be helping bring his second Crow City Theater production to life - er, undeath. Recent local roles include Azolan in Blackfriars's *Les Liaisons Dangereuse*, Dyson in Nickel Flour's *And the Four Last Things*, and Ken in Crow City Theater's *Mating Dance of the Werewolf*. Other favorites include Werner Heisenberg in *Copenhagen* with DC's Perisphere Theater. Offstage, Ben enjoys hanging with his daughter, the coolest 6-year-old in town; dabbling in wine and creative writing (preferably simultaneously); cats, generally; and crafting delightfully rage-inducing trivia games and puzzles. Catch him this Fringe in the 10th edition of Dashboard Dramas, and then for goodness sake get back in the cellar.

Ajamu Brooks (Ben) is a local Gamer, Actor, Director, Driver, Writer, Monologuer, SpokenWord Artist and Vagabond who somehow always ends up back on a stage no matter how far they stray away from them. This play has been a magical labor of love and joy to be a part of, that will be treasured for many years to come. Special Thanks to Matt, Kiyomi, Ben, Kiefer, My mom (Reneita), My dad (Willis), Luan, Andy, Regis, JFA, and Team AGN. Shout-out Common, one day it'll all make Sense.

Kiyomi Oliver (Johnny/Tom) feels they've been given new life to be working with the rest of these talented "things" in Crow City Theatre's second show! In their spare time from theatrical work, Kiyomi keeps busy painting commissions for their small visual arts business (IG: [@the.edamamenby](#)), working as a Standardized Patient for U of R and as a performance educator for Impact Interactive (www.impactinteractive.org), and lollygagging with their cats – Ebenezer, Tumnus, and Krampus. Recent credits include Jed in *All the Devils* (DVC), Abby in *Mating Dance of the Werewolf* (Crow City Theatre), Jimmy in *Almost, Maine* (Penfield Players), Mr. Tumnus in *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe* (The Open Road Theatre), and Charlie in *Charlie and the Siberian Monkey Goddess* (Out of Pocket, Inc.).

Kiefer Schenk (*Barbra*) This is Kiefer's Crow City Theatre debut. He is a Rochester-based actor who has actively performed in and around the Rochester area for several years. Their most recent appearance was in *And The Four Last Things* by Nickel Flour as the Angel. Other recent credits include *Camp Bushwhacked* with Bushwhacked, Hades in Infinite Spark Theater Company's *The Flower Debt*, Dream Jim Lange in Geneva Theatre Guild's debut production of *Women Of a Certain Age*, Rosencrantz in *Bardbending* (WallByrd Theatre Co.), and No Character in *Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind* (Blackfriars Theatre). They are also a voice actor and a featured voice talent on writecreative.net. Kiefer is pleased to be given another opportunity to be a part of a lesser-known project with inclusive casting. They would like to thank all patrons of Crow City Theatre and other small companies in the Rochester area for their dedication toward community and the arts. He would also like to thank our director Matt, Kiyomi, Ben, and the rest of the cast for being supportive of each other's safety, health, and creativity.

Paul Moukperian (Sheriff McClelland, Zombie) was inspired by his son's masterful portrayal of Scar in The Lion King kids edition recently, and could not be more excited to step into the mighty role of the Chief in his debut; not only with Crow City Theatre but also here at the MuCCC. This play holds a special place in his heart as he has been close friends with the playwrights for decades and is a huge fan of everything they write, produce, and perform. Some of Paul's favorite roles include: Sparky in Forever Plaid, Brian in Final Notice, Romeo in Romeo & Juliet, and the titular role of The Worst Scientist that he wrote and directed at the Rochester Fringe Festival two years ago. Paul would like to thank all of you for coming to see this, his friends and family for their support, and Crista for all her love as well as sharing her car while his was in the shop for four months earlier this year. Additionally, Paul would like to thank his amazing cast and crew for the high bar they set in everything they did with this production and for letting him take ten days in the middle of rehearsal to drive from Denver to Anchorage just for the fun of it. When he is not knee deep in ghouls he can be found entertaining the idea of being yet another photographer, videographer, or middle of the pack YouTuber.

Ted Wenskus (Sound Design) is a playwright and theatre/voice actor who has worked on 100+ audio dramas and radio plays, including live staged performances, audio projects for the National Park Service, and titles for Audible. He also serves on the steering committee of the Atlanta Fringe Festival, the only festival on the Fringe circuit to have a dedicated track of audio programming. His own work has won an Audio Verse Award for Best Writing and national recognition at the HEAR Now Audio Fiction and Arts Festival. His short plays have been produced in England, Dubai, Australia, the Philippines and throughout New York, earning a TANYS award for playwriting in the process as well as accolades in the Short + Sweet play festival in Dubai. Love to George Romero for bringing the Living Dead to life (or unlife) for generations to come.

Andrea Daszkiewicz (Stage Manager/Nancy) is incredibly thrilled to be able to stretch her stage manager legs with Crow City Theatre. Andrea was last seen on stage as Lydia Languish in RCP's production of *The Rivals*. Prior to that, she brought out her inner wolf as Pam in Crow City Theatre's *The Mating Dance of The Werewolf*. Next, she will be directing the upcoming *The Brides of Dracula* for Penfield Players. Andrea would like to thank her husband Nick for always being supportive, especially when the laundry's not done. Andrea would like to dedicate her work on this show to her brother Max, who she would have asked to help her on stage crew if he had not departed from us so soon.

Hope Kollarik (Karen) is excited about her first Crow City Theatre production! Her other credits include *Hamlet* (Rosencrantz), *The Brides of Dracula* (Mina Murray), *Almost, Maine* (Glory), *Arsenic and Old Lace* (Elaine Harper), and *St. Joan* (Charles). In addition to acting, she has been a hair and wig designer for shows such as *Hello Dolly!*, *Anything Goes*, and *The Haunting of Hill House*. Her next project is directing *Before Our Eyes* for the Rochester Fringe Festival.

Wendy Webster (Luciana) has performed with various theatre groups in the Rochester area, most frequently with the Penfield Players. Recent roles on the Penfield stage include Ethel in *Moon Over Buffalo*, Aunt Martha in *Arsenic and Old Lace*, and Mrs. Dudley in *Haunting of Hill House*. She sends out a special thank you to Matt Ralyea and Crow City Theatre for giving her this opportunity to hone her zombie skills. Om-nom-nom!

Matt Ralyea (Producer, Director) This is Matt's second time bringing a Crow City Theatre production to life, after last year's *Mating Dance of the Werewolf*. When not directing he enjoys performing on stage for various theatre companies in Rochester, drawing and playing music. He is deeply grateful to the fearless and dedicated cast and crew of *Night of the Living Dead Live*, and to his husband John, who is the most fearless and dedicated of all. For me there are few things more precious in life than a dream you get to experience with others.

We would like to extend our thanks:

Mario Savastano

Kevin Indovino

Doug Rice

Kurt Schenk

The Flying Squirrel Community Space

The Irondequoit Public Library

The Penfield Players

The Rochester Theatre Community

Needle Drop Records

Millennium Games

Pandemonium Coffee

The Unreliable Narrator

and most of all:

George Romero