

FHSU MUSIC AND THEATRE PRESENTS

THE AMISH PROJECT

BY JESSICA DICKEY



DIRECTED BY

CATHERINE TRIESCHMANN MILLER

“THE AMISH PROJECT” IS PRESENTED BY ARRANGEMENT
WITH CONCORD THEATRICALS ON BEHALF OF SAMUEL
FRENCH, INC. WWW.CONCORDTHEATRICALS.COM

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

I chose to direct *The Amish Project* as my first production for FHSU Theatre because of the play's timeless message about the power of forgiveness.



As the play demonstrates, there is darkness and light in all of us. Sometimes the darkness prevails, and human beings do terrible things to one another. How do we respond in the face of these atrocities? Do we let trauma engulf us and do harm to others in turn? Or do we walk the difficult path of grace and reconciliation? In the case of the Nickel Mines schoolhouse shooting, the Amish responded with compassion and love. May we all.



THE PLAYWRIGHT



Jessica Dickey is an award-winning playwright whose writing was hailed by *The New York Times* as having “freshness, economy, cheeky vulgarity, with a fine

measure of poetic insight.” Jessie is currently developing a series for Netflix, starring Ginnifer Goodwin, and a feature film for Searchlight.



Jessie is most known for her award-winning play *The Amish Project*, which premiered Off-Broadway at Rattlestick Playwrights Theater and has since been produced around the world.

Other theatrical premieres have included *Galileo's Daughter*, *Nan and the Lower Body*, *The Convent*, *The Rembrandt*, *Charles Ives Take Me Home*, and *Row After Row*. Jessie just released a book co-authored with her sister called *Sistering: The Art of Holding Close and Letting Go* (Pilgrim Press).



THE HAPPENING

West Nickel Mines School Shooting-- also called “The Happening” by the Amish Community

The Amish Project is a fictional exploration of the Nickel Mines schoolhouse shooting. It began as a one-woman show, performed by playwright Jessica Dickey, who was inspired by the radical act of forgiveness expressed by the Amish community.

On October 2, 2006, gunman Charles Roberts entered the Nickel Mines Schoolhouse in the Bart Townships of Pennsylvania and took hostages.



When state troopers arrived to rescue the hostages, Roberts shot ten girls and killed himself. Five girls were fatally wounded, one succumbed to her injuries later.the remaining four survived.

The schoolhouse was torn down on Oct. 12, the following week.

The Amish Community responded with incredible forgiveness. Not only did they visit and comfort Roberts' widow and family, but they established a charitable fund for them. Some even attended Roberts' funeral.



Their kindness especially touched Terri Roberts, the shooter's mother. She would go on to write *Forgiven: The Amish School Shooting, a Mother's Love, and a Story of Remarkable Grace*. She also became a motivational speaker, reaching out to communities and families who had suffered school shootings.

The characters Velda and Anna in the play were inspired by Marian and Barbara Fisher who negotiated with Roberts to kill them first and spare the others. Marian was killed, but Barbara survived and recovered enough to pitch softball for her school the following year, despite shoulder injuries.



PRODUCTION CREDITS:

Director: Catherine Trieschmann Miller

Assistant Director: Lauryn Gaddis

Music Director: Allie Straub

Choreographer: Brooklyn Raacke

Stage Manager: Jacob Wegner

Costume Design: Cristi Green

Costume Assistant: Rachel Plank

**Set Design: Kathy Bannister
and Seeca Smalley**

Lighting Design: Carl L. Sage

Light Board Operator: Samantha Berg

Production Assistant: Debbie Berg

Marketing Graphic Design: Grace Woods

CAST LIST

Velda Kasheia Peterson

Anna Addyson Brown

Aaron Karter Smith

Amish Mother Holly Trullinger

Amish Girl Lillyan Kimberlin

Carol Grace Betts

Eddie Caleb Johnson

Sherry Rebecca Cole

Margaret North Allie Straub

America Hailey Maldonado



SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: GRACE BETTS



Hi! My name is Grace Betts. I'm a senior student studying theatre here at Fort Hays. I grew up in Russell, KS and graduated from Russell High School.

I've been in *Music Man* as an ensemble member, *Rumors* as Cassie, *Independence* as Evelyn, and *Gentlemen's Guide to Love and Murder* as Phoebe. Finally, in my last show, I'm playing Carol in *The Amish Project*.



SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: LAURYN GADDIS

Lauryn Gaddis is a senior Performing Arts and Theatre student set to graduate in December 2024. Lauryn has been involved with FHSU Theater since 2021.



When not on or around the stage, Lauryn works as a Community Assistant on campus. After graduation, Lauryn plans to move to Texas to focus on voice acting and directing.



MUSIC CREDITS

“GOD IS SEEN”

TUNE BY CAPTAIN KIDD,
ARRANGED BY ALICE PARKER,
PERFORMED BY THE CAST AND
THE SMOKEY HILL CHORALE

“IDUMEA”

ARRANGED BY RICK BJELLA,
PERFORMED BY HOLLY TRULLINGER

“COME AWAY TO THE SKIES”

WORDS BY CHARLES WESLEY,
ARRANGED BY DAVID L. MENNICKE,
PERFORMED BY THE CAST

“WE ARE NOT ALONE”

WORDS AND MUSIC BY
PEPPER CHOPLIN,
PERFORMED BY THE CAST



SPECIAL THANKS

Kathy Bannister

Benjamin Cline

Dr. Terry Crull

Dr. David Macey

Seeca Smalley

Alex Underwood

Smokey Hill Chorale

