

MONMOUTH COLLEGE DEPARTMENTS OF THEATRE AND MUSIC
BUCHANAN CENTER FOR THE ARTS
UNITED WAY OF GREATER WARREN COUNTY
& GALESBURG COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

PRESENT

Disney's **THE LITTLE
MERMAID**



1853

APRIL 20-23, 2023
WELLS THEATER
MONMOUTH COLLEGE



UNITED WAY
OF GREATER WARREN COUNTY



GALESBURG
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Vanessa Campagna, Ph.D.

I was four years old in 1989 when Walt Disney Pictures first released *The Little Mermaid*. Packed away in a box at my mother's house is the VHS tape that played numerous times on my family's living room television. Also packed away is an audio cassette tape on which a much younger Vanessa sings Ariel's quintessential vocal line—the ascending "ah-ah-ah-ah" leitmotif has certainly become iconic over the last three decades. In our youth, my sister, Gina, and I even had matching nightgowns that depicted Ariel atop her rock, surrounded by crashing waves. In no uncertain terms, *The Little Mermaid* figured prominently in my childhood, and it continues to hold a place in my personal and cultural memories. Yet, these circumstances had almost no bearing on my decision to direct the stage musical.

In part, I selected *The Little Mermaid* for senior Theatre majors Andrew Cliffl, Gabriela Madu, and Emma Wohlstadter. I felt confident that both Drew and Gabbay would be viable candidates for multiple principal roles, and I was eager to see them display their full ranges in the audition room. As a director, I was drawn to the challenge of finding where they would each best fit within what I knew would be a large cast (and I was right: 40 performers will appear on stage in this performance!). *The Little Mermaid* requires exceptional technical demands, and Emma calls 220 cues in this production. I could not be more grateful to have her calm demeanor and laser focus in the booth. To Drew, Emma, and Gabbay: thank you for the last four years. I am so very proud and grateful.

I was also compelled to direct *The Little Mermaid* because its large cast is well-suited to meeting the Monmouth College student body's significant interest in Theatre. As Chair of the Department of Theatre, I am thrilled that our number of majors and minors has more than doubled

in recent years, and that our participation numbers have climbed upwards of 100 per year (with this year exceeding that total). I am delighted that the greater Monmouth and Galesburg communities also boast palpable interest in the fine and performing arts. The social and cultural ties fostered through partnerships between the Department of Theatre and Buchanan Center for the Arts, United Way of Greater Warren County, and Galesburg Community Foundation are significant. Too often, institutions of higher learning fall short of meaningfully engaging with their broader contexts; Monmouth College's commitment to community engagement is something I am proud to be a part of, and *The Little Mermaid* has provided an unexpected but most welcome opportunity to reflect on this aspect of my work. By the final scene of *The Little Mermaid*, land folk and merfolk forge alliances. I am inspired by this message and see the theme reflected in the circumstances surrounding this Monmouth College/Community co-production. Thank you, Jeannie, Josh, and Kristyne, for the leadership you exhibit in our communities; I am grateful for our partnerships.

My artistic goal in this production has been to balance audience expectations (i.e., present to you a Disney musical that feels familiar) while also engaging the more provocative ideas undergirding the work. *The Little Mermaid* allows us to think critically about colonialism, sexism and women's agency, consent, transgender embodiment and other queer modes of being, and the environmental concerns facing freshwater and marine ecosystems. I invite you to experience the dramaturgical lobby display and to read the Dramaturgy note; I believe your viewing experience will only be enhanced.

On behalf of the cast, creative team, and run crew, thank you for your support and enjoy the show.

MONMOUTH COLLEGE DEPARTMENTS OF THEATRE AND MUSIC BUCHANAN CENTER FOR THE ARTS UNITED WAY OF GREATER WARREN COUNTY & GALESBURG COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

PRESENT

DISNEY'S THE LITTLE MERMAID

Directed and Choreographed by
Dr. Vanessa Campagna

April 20 – 23, 2023

Thursday-Saturday 7:30 p.m. | Saturday & Sunday 2 p.m.
Wells Theater

The production will run approximately 2 hours and 15 minutes,
with one 15-minute intermission.

Content Warning: *This production features strobe lighting and fog effects.*

*Please silence all electronics. Restrooms and drinking fountains are located in the lobby.
Photography and recording of any kind is prohibited.*

The 2022–23 Monmouth College theatre season
is dedicated to the memory of

MARION AUSTIN JONES '50

Loyal alumna, trustee and lover of the arts



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OF GREATER WARREN COUNTY
Local people saving local people



GALESBURG
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

The Buchanan Center for the Arts acknowledges support from the Illinois Arts Council Agency, the National Endowment for the Arts, the United Way of Greater Warren County and the Galesburg Community Foundation.

DISNEY'S THE LITTLE MERMAID

Music by
Alan Menken

Lyrics by
Howard Ashman
and **Glenn Slater**

Book by
Doug Wright

Based on the Hans Christian Andersen story and the Disney film produced by
Howard Ashman & John Musker and written and directed
by **John Musker & Ron Clements**

*Presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI)
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI,
421 West 54th Street, New York, NY 10019*

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT 1

Overture
The World Above
Fathoms Below
Daughters of Triton
If Only (Triton's Lament)
Daddy's Little Angel
Part of Your World
The Storm
Part of Your World (Reprise)
She's in Love
Her Voice
Under the Sea
After "Under the Sea"
If Only (Ariel's Lament)
Sweet Child
Poor Unfortunate Souls
Act One Finale

ACT 2

Positivity
Positaggity
Beyond My Wildest Dreams
Les Poissons
Les Poissons (Reprise)
One Step Closer
Daddy's Little Angel
Kiss the Girl
If Only (Quartet)
The Contest
Ariel Steps Forward
Poor Unfortunate Souls (Reprise)
Ariel's Transformation
Finale Ultimo

THE CAST

(in order of appearance)

ARIEL Emma Romano
PILOT *Ryan Bowman
PRINCE ERIC *Colin Kreipe
GRIMSBY Janis Penn
FLOUNDER James Mayfield
SCUTTLE John Henderson
WINDWARD *Molly White
LEEWARD Elizabeth Guenther
KING TRITON *Drew Cliffler
SEBASTIAN *Edrass J. Chávez-Alvarado
AQUATA *Samantha Zigmant
ANDRINA Grace Cornelius
ARISTA *Reese Hill
ATINA Jadyn Craig
ADELLA Kylie McDonald
ALLANA Dani Lopez
FLOTSAM *Hannah McGhee
JETSAM Drew Carlson
URSULA *Gabriela Madu
PRINCE ERIC'S DOG Jake Wohlstadter
CHEF LOUIS *Eric Pio

ENSEMBLE

Drew Carlson	*Satyr Keeling	James Rozny
Konrad Colclasure	*Calista Lythgoe	Dante Sardelli
Maddie Cook	Norah Mayfield	Hoth Schremser
*Haylee Ford	Fox Nelson	Alexander Silber
Azaria Foshay	*Dareann Pettis	Nancy Stevens
Kiersten Fuhr	Eric Pio	Vaughn Vavrosky
Cora Hall	Anna Rozny	Ricky Warren
Patrick Johnston		

*denotes Alpha Psi Omega membership

PIT ORCHESTRA

Keyboard 1.....	Janell Johnson
Keyboard 4.....	Al Silber
Violin.....	Kelsey Moersfelder
Bass.....	Kailey Cronin
Flute.....	Larissa Pothoven
Flute.....	Rilee Lash
Clarinet.....	Alex King
Clarinet/Bass Clarinet.....	Syneca Baker
Soprano/Alto Saxophone.....	Grace Passaglia
Trumpet.....	Jeff Davis
Trumpet.....	Ty Otto
French Horn.....	Riley Kalnins
French Horn.....	Croasdale
Trombone.....	Zach Lundquist
Trombone.....	Ethan Glidden
Trombone.....	Bindi Gosney
Euphonium.....	Tucker Peterson
Drumset.....	Eli Kelly
Percussion.....	Camille Prentiss
Percussion.....	James Woeltje

CREATIVE TEAM

Director and Choreographer.....	Vanessa Campagna
Vocal Director and Accompanist.....	Janell Johnson
Conductor.....	Justin Swearinger
Scenic Designers.....	Grace Cornelius and Vanessa Campagna
Scenic Painters.....	Grace Cornelius and Doug Rankin
Scenic Painting Assistants.....	Ryan Bowman, Vanessa Campagna, Edrass J. Chávez-Alvarado, Drew Cliffl Reese Hill, Satyr Keeling Calista Lythgoe Gabriela Madu, Molly White, Samantha Zigmant
Lighting Designer and Technical Director.....	Doug Rankin
Assistant Lighting Designers.....	Vanessa Campagna and Emma Wohlstadter
Stage Managers.....	Ryan Bowman, Molly White, Emma Wohlstadter
Sound Designers.....	Skylar Law, Kat Willhardt
Sound Assistants.....	Gabriela Madu and Edrass J. Chávez-Alvarado
Costume Designers.....	Vanessa Campagna and Kansas City Costume Company

Assistant Costume Designers.....	Stacy Lotz, Sarah Mayfield, Madelyn Belville Charlie Conkle, Nick Corman, Gabrielle Crothers Dylan Cullick, Riley Fetterer, Todd Fowler Kiersten Fuhr, Lauren Fulscher, Nick Harris Emily Henson, Satyr Keeling, Gordon Kiesgen Sarah Lahood, Skylar Law, Ahmir Lloyd Halle Majdich, Clayton Matkovic, Adam Maxwell Colby McMillan, Tim McNally, Alivia Palicki Averi Rangel, Luke Reavis, Mason Reed, Makaylea Sepich Emma Seybold, Madison Squire, James Woeltje, Calista Warmowski
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Costume Assistant.....	Dareann Pettis
Props Designer.....	Vanessa Campagna
Props Assistants.....	Eli Douglas and Jeannie Weber
Dramaturgs.....	Dareann Pettis and Vanessa Campagna
ASL Shadow Interpreter.....	Dareann Pettis
Dance Captain.....	Reese Hill
Dialect Coaches.....	Gabriela Madu and Todd Quick
Box Office Manager.....	Skylar Law
Poster Illustration.....	Grace Cornelius
Build Crew.....	Seleena Alvarez, Isaac Anderson, Andre Barnes Jackson Bergren, Blayne Bradshaw, Kendall Brasfield Kayla Braun, Damien Brown, Kenyon Carney, Kiersten Cox, Kailey Cronin, Sawyer Day, Eli Douglass, Ethan Evans Haylee Ford, Omar Ildefonso Godinez Quinones, Thomas Grafe Ethan James, Alexandria King, Brianna Kinkaid Natalie Labicki, Audrey Law, Elikem Ogba, Kyler Pessman Eric Pio, Jamison Reis, Dante Sardelli, Emma Seybold Carson Wallace, Anthony Williams
Run Crew.....	Seleena Alvarez, Isaac Anderson, Andre Barnes, Kendall Brasfield Damien Brown, Kenyon Carney, Kiersten Cox, Eli Douglas Ethan James, Audrey Law, Elikem Ogba, Omar Ildefonso Godina Quinones Dante Sardelli, Emma Seybold, Carson Wallace, Anthony Williams

SPECIAL THANKS

Buchanan Center for the Arts	President Clarence Wyatt and First Lady Lobie Stone	Jeff Rankin
United Way of Greater Warren County	Dean Mark Willhardt and Kat Willhardt	Ramiro Arteaga
Galesburg Community Foundation	Stacy Lotz Todd Quick	Attic Antiques Orpheum Theatre Prairie Players

DRAMATURG'S NOTE

By **Dareann Pettis '26**

with guidance from **Vanessa Campagna**

The *Little Mermaid*'s less obvious themes give audiences the opportunity to think about identity and belonging, power structures, and environmentalism. For dramaturgy, we have taken a liberal arts approach and focused on these topics to give a richer understanding.

Identity and Belonging

The Little Mermaid champions people who struggle to belong. Act 1 sets up Ariel and Prince Eric as central characters who want a life different from the ones they were born into. Ariel's first song is called "The World Above" and has the lyric "this is where I belong." Ariel knows that legs, not mermaid fins, are the body she is meant to have. A queer reading of *The Little Mermaid* can happen because of this. People in the trans community and who are gender fluid or non-binary understand themselves and are aware of the incongruity between gender and sex, or of the flexibility within gender. *The Little Mermaid* shows how important it is to support people's true identities through outward expression or transformation. Prince Eric also sings "this is where I belong." He would trade his royalty status to sail the ocean with "common" sailors because he isn't interested in the monarchy's wealth or customs like arranged marriages. He falls in love with Ariel exactly because they are "a couple of misfits."

Power Structures

The play-world hinges on misunderstandings between the humans and the merfolk. King Triton forbids Ariel from going to the shore because he thinks all humans are "barbarians" and he destroys Ariel's grotto full of human artifacts. Grimsby is convinced that merfolk is "nothing but nautical nonsense" and won't even acknowledge the existence of cultural others for much of the play. It is important that he and Triton overcome their biases by the final curtain. It is also important to recognize that the action takes place in the Caribbean. The fact that the merfolk royalty and human royalty were embodied as white in the original

film, and in most stage productions since, invites careful consideration of colonization. After all, French, English, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, Swiss, and Danish political powers colonized parts of the Caribbean in historical periods. Our production process has recognized the colonial influence in the script and its production history. We condemn systemic racism and cultural imperialism.

Unbalanced power between the sexes is also a part of the play-world, but in a more progressive way than might be expected. When Ursula convinces Ariel to give up her voice, she says, "the men up there don't like a lot of blabber . . . it's she who holds her tongue who gets the man." But the opposite is proven true. The song "One Step Closer" was written for the Broadway musical and it shows that Prince Eric wants to communicate with Ariel, even if she can't use her voice. Dancing becomes their shared language and this undermines the sexist idea that women's thoughts aren't welcome. It also overcomes the ableist idea that verbal communication is superior. This production's use of ASL shadowing was motivated in part by the song. As a freshman theatre major who is a deaf person of color, Ariel has inspired me to trust my instincts, pursue what I want, and reclaim my voice. I hope she will also inspire you.

Environmentalism

Two of the most popular songs from *The Little Mermaid* are "Under the Sea" and "Kiss the Girl." Thinking about the marine and freshwater ecosystems where these songs happen, the costume designs draw attention to environmental concerns. Upcycled materials like corrugated board, scrap fabric, foam, and empty water bottles and toilet paper rolls were collected and used to create most of the costume pieces worn by actors in these scenes.

Our hope is that audiences will enjoy all that is classic and fun about *The Little Mermaid* while also thinking critically about these and other serious themes. Enjoy the show and use your voice!