

a new play by Terry Curtis Fox
directed by Avra Fox-Lerner

transgression

Susan Bennett*

Yuval Boim*

Jane Ives*

James Jelskin*

Ivy Rose Cort*

*Member, Actors Equity

July 10 – August 2
HERE Arts Center
145 Sixth Avenue

INFO & TICKETS
here.org/shows/transgression

Transgression

A play by Terry Curtis Fox

Directed by Avra Fox-Lerner

Cast

Black	Susan Bennett
Martin	Yuval Boim
Robin	Ivy Rose Cort
Gina	Jane Ives
Norman	James Jelkin

Production

Sound Designer	Ander Agudo
Wardrobe	Amber Avant
Stage Manager	Huai Huang
Assistant Stage Manager	Grace Keith
Associate Producer	Lisa M. Kopolinsky
Production AV	Patrick Mahaney
Board Op	Jon Naranjo
Intimacy Director	Judi Lewis Ockler
Lighting Designer	Lauren Parrish
Scenic Director	Kate Rance
Prop Designer	SJ Reynolds
Production Electrician	Joe Scardino
Costume Designer	Annie Simon
Casting Director	Jason Styres
Technical Director	B. Tubbs

HERE Arts Center

Jesse Aleck	(Co-Director)
Haley Fragen	(Associate Producer)
Alex White	(Production Manager)

Who's Who

Ander Agudo (Sound Designer)

(San Sebastian, Spain) is a New York-based sound designer and musician. He teaches sound and music at the School of Visual Arts (SVA) and works across film, theater, and dance. His theater collaborations include projects with Lali Ayguadé, Nao Albert & Marcel Borràs, Ember Projects, and Erre Que Erre. His work has been presented at venues around the world, such as Teatre Nacional de Catalunya, Teatre Lliure, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

Susan Bennett (Black)

The Counter, Roundabout, Laura Pels Theater; The House of Blue Leaves, Walter Kerr Theater; Our Town, Barrow Street Theater; Orson's Shadow, Barrow Street Theater; Beautiful Thing, Cherry Lane Theater; Suddenly Last Summer, Westport Country Playhouse; On The Verge, Westport Country Playhouse and Arena Stage; The Dazzle,

Yuval Boim (Martin)

New York theatre credits include Primary Stages (*A Walk With Mr. Heifetz*), The New Group (Mike Leigh's *Two Thousand Years*), NYTW, Public Theatre, Atlantic, HERE, Ma-Yi, Culture Project, Playwrights Realm, and many others. Regionally he has worked at Shakespeare Theatre Company (*Salome* – Helen Hayes Award), George Street Playhouse (*The Pillowman*, *Wilderness Of Mirrors*), Huntington Theatre Company, Pig Iron, Premier Stages and EXIT Theatre. Film and Television credits include "The Plot Against America", "Bull", "Blue Bloods", "Red Oaks", "Believe" "Law & Order: SVU", *That Awkward Moment*, *Norman*. Writing: the feature *D.I.Y.* (Duplass Brothers grant); *Sexcurity* (Cleveland Public Theatre, IRT Theater and Dixon Place). Movement Direction: *L'arbre Enchanté* (Fire Island Opera Festival). Teaching: faculty at Princeton University and Pace University School

of Performing Arts. Training: B.F.A. from Boston University College of Fine Arts; M.F.A. in Lecoq from London International School of Performing Arts. He is a company member of The Actors Center.

Ivy Rose Cort (Robin)

s a recent graduate of the Stella Adler Professional Conservatory. Her credits include *The Baby Shower* (Stella Adler Studio), *Eat the Rich* (Phoenix Theatre Ensemble), and *Eyes They Close* (Bennington College).

Avra Fox-Lerner (Director)

is a writer/director living in Brooklyn NY. Avra became a cinefile at an early age but decided not to pursue film studies. Instead she learned filmmaking as a lighting technician where she learned to problem solve on her feet, how to communicate with crew both above and below the line and honed her craft as a genre creator with a female focus. She is an alum of the New York Stage and Film Screenwriting Lab and the IRIS Writers Lab. She co-wrote BLOODLINE with Henry Jacobson for Blumhouse Pictures. She has written and directed four short films - The Lovers, Such A Shitty Time, Research and most recently Eat Your Heart Out, a silent 16mm horror tone poem. Transgression is Avra's theatrical directorial debut, though her love of and involvement in theater began when she was 3 years old.

Terry Curtis Fox (Playwright)

is a Brooklyn based playwright, screenwriter, and educator. His first play, *Cops*, was commissioned by the Organic Theater of Chicago under Stuart Gordon's direction and later produced by the Performance Group as directed by Richard Schechner. His play *Justice* was produced at Playwrights Horizons directed by Thomas Babe. His extensive television writing included stints at *Hill Street Blues*, *The Marshall*, and *Stargate SG-1* as well as serving as show runner of the Showtime series *The Hunger*. He is co-author of the

HBO feature *Perfect Witness* and the film *Fortress* (also directed by Stuart Gordon). For six years he was Chair of NYU/Tisch's Department of Dramatic Writing, where he still teaches. His journalism has appeared in the *Village Voice*, *Film Comment*, *New York Magazine*, and the *Chicago Reader*, among many other publications.

Huai Huang (Stage Manager) (she/they)

is an international stage manager based in New York with experience across Taiwan, Japan, and the United States. She served as full time stage manager at one of the biggest musical group in Japan, Takarazuka Revue. Her diverse background includes Japanese-edited versions of Broadway musicals, new musicals/ plays, Peking, and Taiwanese Opera. Selected credits include *Trophy Boys* (MCC Theater), *No Singing in the Navy* (-29hour workshop, Playwrights Horizons), *Velour: A Drag Spectacular* (La Jolla Playhouse), *Cabaret* (The Old Globe), *Ocean's 11* (Takarazuka Revue), *On the 20th Century* (Takarazuka Revue). She holds an MFA in Stage Management from UC San Diego and is fluent in Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, and English.

Jane Ives (Gina)

Favorite NYC theatre credits include: *I, ROSE* directed by Susan Einhorn inhabiting fourteen characters, *BRAVE BROOD* written and directed by Robert O'Hara; a Chekhov trifecta *THREE SISTERS*, *SEAGULL*, *UNCLE VANYA*; *BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS* at the Actors Studio; *TOP GIRLS*; *WHEN ZAYDEH DANCED ON ELDRIDGE STREET* a musical directed by Shellen Lubin. Regional favorites: *SMITTY'S NEWS* and *THE SHAPER* at Actors Theatre of Louisville; *CRIMES OF THE HEART*; *THE DINING ROOM*; *QUILTERS*; *ORPHEUS DESCENDING* at Williamstown Theatre Festival directed by Austin Pendleton, *HONOR*, *ON THE VERGE* and *THE SLEEP OF REASON* at the Wilma

Theatre in Philadelphia. This past year Jane has been both lead and supporting actress in several short films, one of which, *GONE BEFORE YOUR EYES*, has garnered ten best film and best actor awards on three continents and can be seen on PBS. She appeared on *THE ENDGAME* on NBC. She is represented by Carol Bruner at Rosenwald & Associates.

James Jelkin (Norman)

is a Brooklyn based actor, seen most recently in Season 12 Episode 12 of *Chicago PD* (NBC). Other favorite credits: Stanley in *A Streetcar Named Desire* and John/Eric/J in *Passion Play* (Red House Art Center); *Band of the Black Hand*, Benedick in *Much Ado about Nothing*, Aramis in *The Three Musketeers*, (Connecticut Repertory Theatre); Roat in *Wait Until Dark* and Hotspur in *Henry IV* (Monomoy Theatre). **Film:** *The Mordeo* (CryptTV; YouTube) *Blood Feuds* (American Heroes Channel). **Audiodrama:** *Visionaries* Podcast. James holds a Master of Fine Arts in Acting from the University of Connecticut. When not on stage or screen, James can be found making coffee, “shopping” the sidewalks of New York City and devouring whatever food is within arm’s reach.

Grace Keith (Assistant Stage Manager)

is excited to be joining this production of *Transgression*. She is an early career stage manager with recent credits as production stage manager for *Leni’s Last Lament* and *Dickhead* at Theatre for the New City and production assistant work with NAMCO and The Public Theatre. Grace graduated from The University with a B.A in Theatre Arts. She spends her time nose deep in excel and trying to complete her long tbr list.

Lisa Kopolinsky (Co-Producer) (she/they)

Lisa’s plays have been produced in NY, Chicago, Minneapolis, and St. Louis. *Dog Park* premiered in 2023 at

Cyrano's Theatre in Anchorage and her play *Bullseye* was produced at the North Carolina School of the Arts. Her plays have been developed with The Bechdel Group and The Workshop Theatre in NY. Residencies: Ragdale, Jentel, Annex Theatre, Elsewhere Studios. Finalist: Shattered Globe Global Playwrights Series, Chicago Dramatists Writer's Residency. Finalist for 2025 Goldberg Playwriting Award. Semi-finalist: Inge Festival, the Ashland New Play Festival and Play Penn. BA, Lafayette College; MFA (Creative Writing), Columbia College, Chicago; MFA (Dramatic Writing), NYU/Tisch. She was the Tennessee Williams School at the Sewanee Writers Conference, a three-time LAMBDA fellow, a finalist for the Goldberg Playwriting Prize, and a Guest Artist in theatre at the University of Wisconsin/Madison and the University of Wyoming. She is a certified kettlebell and movement trainer, will do anything for a dog (cat, rabbit, goat, bird, etc.), is trying to eat her way through all five boroughs (and Jersey).

Judi Lewis Ockler (Intimacy Director) (she/her)

Has collaborated with The Public Mobile Unit (*Much Ado About Nothing*), Classic Stage (*Snow in Midsummer*, *A Man of No Importance*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*), Signature (*Hot Wing King*, *One in Two*, *Jasper*) WP (*Hatef**k*, *Our Dear Dead Drug Lord*, *Dirty Laundry*, *Bite Me*), Intar (OK!), Cherry Lane (*This Beautiful Future*), Westside (*Little Shop of Horrors!*), The Mint (*The Rat Trap*), Bedlam (*Persuasion*), New World Stages (*Dracula*, *a Comedy of Terrors!*), Theater Row (*Cracked Open*, *Inheritance of a Long Term Fault*, *Orlando the Musical*). She teaches/directs intimacy and violence in performance at NYU, NTI, Atlantic Theater School, AMDA, New School of Drama. judilewisockler.com

Lauren Parrish (Lighting Designer/Production Manager)

is a technical production manager and visual designer for live events and spaces. She spent 15 years touring with

dance and theater companies as a production manager and lighting supervisor, such as American Repertory Ballet, Camille A. Brown & Dancers, and the New York Neo-Futurists. During this time, Lauren collaborated on, planned, and adapted dozens of pieces, bringing artists' visions to life on stage. Lauren transitioned into venue management in 2016, where she oversaw infrastructure and capital projects that ensured venues remained safe, functional, and aesthetically pleasing. Lauren's commitment to keeping theater workers employed led to her expanding the services of the scenic shop at Abrons Arts Center to outside companies. Over three years, the shop expanded, serving Off-Broadway shows. In 2024, Lauren founded Parrish Productions, leveraging 20 years of live entertainment experience to create a company that provides a range of production support services, including fabrication.

Kate Rance (Scenic Director)

is a Production & Scenic Designer whose film work has screened worldwide including at Cannes (Palme D'Or nominee), Berlin and Telluride and has won festivals including SXSW and LA Film Festival. Kate designed the set for the Gotham Awards multiple times and has worked on commercial projects for Nike, Canon, the NFL, Glamour, GQ & Conde Nast, among others. Her theatre credits include 'Amigo Duende' (Teatro Del Barrio), 'Aida' (Axelrod PAC), 'Spring Awakening' (Hudson Guild) and 'Steel Magnolias' (Kirkwood PAC). www.katerance.com

Annie Simon (Costume Designer)

has been designing costumes for the stage and screen for 20 years. Some theater projects include *Porgy and Bess* Spoleto Festival, Target Margins *Second Language* and *Uncle Vanya*. Some films include *Pinball: the Man Who Saved The Game*, *Anesthesia*, and *Birth Rebirth*. Most recently released is a TV show called *People*

like me which can be seen on Peacock. Annie happily has worked with Avra and Kate before when she designed costumes for Avra's short films *The Lovers*, *Such a Shitty time* and *Research*. Annie won the Kennedy Center Certificate of Merit for Outstanding costumes and she received her MFA from Tisch NYU. More of her work can be seen at www.asimondesign.com

Jason Styres/The Casting Collaborative (Casting)

Broadway: *A Gentleman's Guide to Love & Murder* (Tony Award), *Dames at Sea*, *Lion King*, *Nice Work...* Film/TV: *Severance* (Apple TV+), *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (Netflix), *Carousel* (PBS), *Six by Sondheim* (HBO), *SYTYCD*, *How You Look at It*. OffBroadway: *Gatsby*, *Little Girl Blue*, *Puffs*, *Midnight at the Never Get*, *Pedro Pan*, *Apple Boys*, *Missed Connections*, 15 different Encores! productions. Tours: *A Gentleman's Guide...*, *Sugar Skull*, *West Side Story*, *Anastasia*, *Fiddler*, *Yemandja*, *King and I*, *Cinderella*, *Lion King*, *White Christmas*. Other: *Dance Lab New York*, *In Pieces*, *Magic Mike Live* (London/Las Vegas), *The Bridgerton Experience*, *Wild* (Black Iris Project), *Phish* (MSG), *Arkansas Rep*, *Arrow Rock Lyceum*, *Virginia Theatre Festival*, *A.C.T. of CT*, *Shakespeare Theatre Company*, *Syracuse Stage*, *Bucks County Playhouse*, and more. www.thecastingcollab.com

Playwright's Statement

(This may be best read *after* you have seen the play.)

This play began at a backyard barbecue. My son and I were talking about an artist whom we both greatly admired. It was discovered that among the materials he left in a publicly accessible archive were deeply personal and offensive material. One of the subjects wanted those artifacts destroyed; the other wanted them preserved. A friend who overheard our conversation joined in and said the material should definitely be destroyed. Another friend, a biographer, rejoined that she needed primary sources. Others began to discuss this with various points of view.

The next morning, while walking in Fort Greene Park, I told my wife that I had to put everything on which I was working aside because this incident provoked a play that I was compelled to write. And that while propelled by a real life incident, I wanted to create fiction in order to focus on the two things that truly interested me.

The first was how we deal with artists whose work we love but whose behavior was reprehensible. Does it change how we view the art? Should it? Does our knowledge of the behavior make it impossible to see the work the way we did when we were innocent?

The second question—the more difficult and more dramatic question—is what do we do about great art that is in and of itself damaging? The theology that informs *Messiah*, among the most beloved music ever written, is the same theology that provoked pogroms and the Holocaust. How do we deal with that?

I love writing dramas about two rights. Gina and Martin are right that Norman's best work deserves to be preserved

and displayed. Robin Black is correct that the photographs are harmful to her and that their very existence is an act of aggression. The play provides no answers. It is intended to provoke thought and argument.

In my youth, I got to write for a film director whose work was central to how and why I write. I discovered that this artist who had shaped my sensibility was reprehensible in his behavior. I still love his films. The very mention of his name makes me shudder.

It was only in rehearsals that I realized that *Transgression* was a coming to terms with a problem with which I have struggled my entire adult life.

Director's Statement

As a director, one of my great joys is to work with stories that live in a place of textual, moral , and artistic complexity. I got to delve into that in spades with *Transgression*. This play has challenged and thrilled me on many different levels. Working with my father, whose work I have been reading and watching since I was a teenager, is literally a once in a lifetime experience. Working on *this* particular piece as an artist has presented a unique task—I have had to spend serious time examining my own artistic influences and the artists who created them. I am a cinephile, an art lover, a theater fan. Much of the work that moved me and shaped me the most strongly in my youth was made by terrible, monstrous men who harmed many of the people working on the projects that I love. I have found that acknowledging this damage, and the behavior of the artists who created that damage, for me, must be a part of the conversation that surrounds the work. And I feel strongly that this play is a part of that conversation.

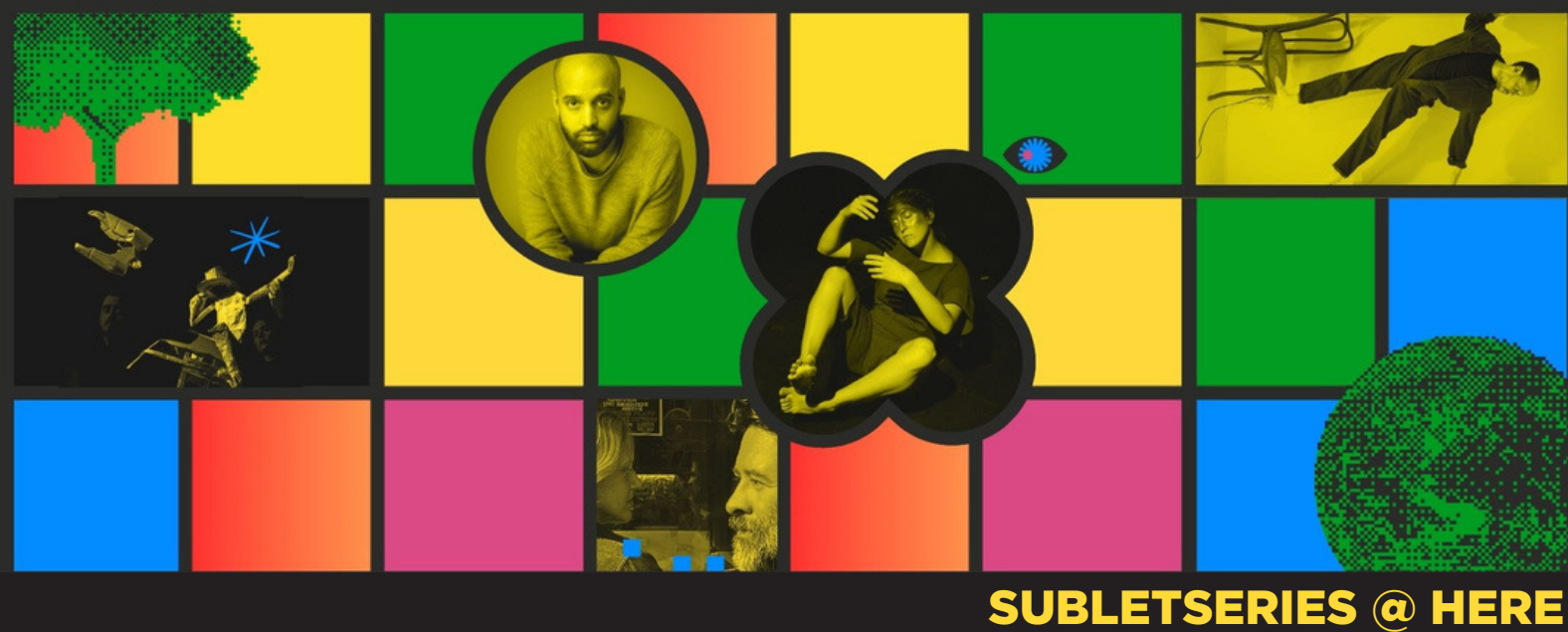
I am also the parent of a teenage girl. A girl who has just finished her freshman year of high school. I am working with material about how easily this moment in youth can be derailed, how vulnerable and tender this time in development is. I come home to my daughter, and I think how difficult the task of parenting someone of this age is. Balancing my responsibility to protect her while also giving her the respect and autonomy to become her own person. It is not a task for the faint of heart. I am heartened that the conversation surrounding abuse and predatory behavior has evolved significantly from the time when I was her age, and still acknowledge that we have a long way to go.

It was essential for me to tell a story about how people are damaged and diminished and scarred by the terrible things that are done to them in their lives. It was also essential

for me to tell a story about how while these events mark and harm the people involved, they do not destroy them. Although the material in this play is very, very heavy, I ultimately see this story as one that ends with notes of hope. The characters living in the 2010 sections of this play grow and change. They are hurt and they are angry and they evolve. New opportunities present themselves to these individuals and they rise to the occasion, as devastating and painful as it is. I believe that in the future, after the story of this play is over, these characters will find a way to live in their lives and thrive. To be better and stronger than the flawed and damaging man who became the central point of their experience.

Content Advisory

This production contains flashing lights, nudity, depicts/ discusses sexual activity with a minor, includes simulated drug use, and suggests video voyeurism.



Welcome!

Thank you for coming to the production of **TRANSGRESSION**, a SubletSeries presentation. SubletSeries is HERE's curated rental program, which provides artists with subsidized space and equipment and a technical liaison.

HERE also supports the work of artists at all stages in their careers through our HERE Artist Residency Program (HARP), which develops and produces the work of our 10 resident artists, as well as Visiting Artist presentations for adult and family audiences. Please check out our other performances and events at HERE.org.

Like all the work at HERE, this SubletSeries presentation was curated based on the strength and uniqueness of the artist's vision.

We hope to see you HERE again soon.

Best,

**Annalisa Dias, Jesse Alick, Lanxing Fu, and Lauren Miller,
Co-Directors at HERE**

HERE SUPPORT

HERE is extremely grateful for the support and encouragement of an important group of Foundations, Corporations, Government Agencies, Elected Officials, and dedicated individuals. We would not be HERE without them.

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