# WELLESLEY GIRL

by Brendan Pelsue Directed by James Fleming



#### Compass Theatre presents WELLESLEY GIRL by Brendan Pelsue Directed by James Fleming

#### CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE:

Мах	Brandon Boler
Garth	Denise Hoeflich*
Marie	Allyce Torres
RJ	Darren Jones
Scott	Todd Wojcik
Hank	Ted James*
Donna	Deanna Reed-Foster*
Mick	Grant Lewis
Donnie	Noah Villarreal

U/S Max	Faiz Siddique
U/S Garth	Caroline Kidwell
U/S Marie M	
U/S RJ	
U/S Scott	Thomas Tong
U/S Hank	John Dooley
U/S Donna	Noelle Klyce

#### **PRODUCTION TEAM**

Director - James Fleming Scenic Design - Sotirios Livaditis Costume Design - Rachel Sypniewski Lighting Design - Cat Davis Sound Design - Stefanie M. Senior Property Design - Bren Coombs Production Manager - Robert Salazar Technical Direction - Evan Sposato Stage Manager - Caitlin Body\* Assistant Stage Manager / Covid Safety Manager - Sunniva Holmlund Associate Director - Isabel Brodsky



\* Member of Actor's Equity association, The Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers.

#### **ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT**

Brendan Pelsue is a playwright, librettist, and translator whose work has been produced in New York and regionally. His play WELLESLEY GIRL premiered at the 2016 Humana Festival of New American Plays. HAGOROMO, a dance-opera piece for which he wrote the libretto, has appeared at the Brooklyn Academy of Music and the Pocantico Center. Other work Includes NEW DONMESTIC ARCHITECTURE at the Yale Carlotta Festival, READ TO ME at the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, LOST WEEEKEND at the Actors Theatre of Louisville Professional Training Company, a translation of Moliere's DON JUAN at the Yale School of Drama, PETRA AND THE SAINTS with the Telephonic Literary Union and DIAGRAM OF A KIDNAPPING with Brown University New Play Festival. He has taught or mentored at Yale College and Wesleyan University. Originally from Newburyport, Massachusetts, he received his B.A. from Brown University where he received the Weston Prize in Playwriting, and his M.F.A. from Yale School of Drama.

#### **DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

What does it mean to be an American? We are living through a crisis. The global COVID-19 pandemic has caused suffering and death, and has further exacerbated the already strained body politic in America. Fear and mistrust are rampant. During this intense time of polarization in America, Wellesley Girl questions what it means to live in society together. How do people make decisions about what is best for the country? How do we hold the tension between collective prosperity and self-interest? By creating circumstances in which every living adult serves as a member of Congress, Brendan Pelsue makes the political explicitly personal. He invites us to examine the ways that emotional arguments driven by fear, pain, or pleasure can sway the crowd and affect collective decision making. Ultimately, it is a play about how to decide what makes life worth living. When is it worth preserving something and when is it time to let go?

#### **ABOUT COMPASS THEATRE**

Compass Theatre's mission is to discover the understanding and compassion for others though challenging contemporary storytelling and open discussions. Fundamental to human connection is the ability to see, hear, understand, and empathize with experiences different than our own. There is no better medium for that than live theatre. Visit us at www.compasstheatre.org.

#### COMPASS THEATRE SINCERELY THANKS THE SPONSORS OF THIS PRODUCTION OF WELLESLEY GIRL:

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This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.

#### **CAST BIOGRAPHIES**



#### Brandon Boler - Max

Brandon Boler is a professional Actor, Model, and Producer based in Chicago. He has always enjoyed collaborating with a diverse and inclusive group of people, leading him to work in National and Regional commercials, and Theaters developing new theatrical and film projects. He's currently represented by BMG Talent, and recently became a member of Invictus Theatre Company in Edgewater, an Artistic Associate with Eclipse Theatre, and Cabinet of Curiosity. Follow him on Instagram @brandboler or www.BrandonBoler.com



#### John Dooley - U/S Hank

This is John Dooley's first production with Compass Theatre. He has previously appeared in shows at the Williamstown Theatre Festival, Hangar Theatre Fall Tour, and Minnesota Fringe Festival. John received his BA in theatre from Southern Illinois University. He gives all of his love to his wife Ariel, and his children Jack and Fiona.



#### Denise Hoeflich – Garth

Denise Hoeflich is thrilled to return to live theatre in Chicago! She was last seen in Compass Theatre's inaugural production WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST. Other theatre credits include HINTER (Steep Theatre), CHAGRIN FALLS, SKIN FOR SKIN (Agency Theatre Collective), THE SEEDBED (Redtwist), and DREAMS OF THE PENNY GODS (Halcyon Theatre). Web/Film credits include THE HAVEN (Mia McCullough, Elisabeth Laidlaw producers) and WE ARE NOTHING (WetheArtist producers). Denise is a graduate of The Academy at Blackbox Acting and is a member of AEA. Special thanks to Adam for all his love and support.



#### Ted James - Hank

Ted James is a Chicago-based actor, writer and director. Recent stage credits include Ben in WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST (Compass Theatre) and Clitander in SCHOOL FOR LIES (The Artistic Home). As a writer and director, his films have screened and received awards at film festivals across the country, including the Chicago International Film Festival, Sedona International, LA Shorts and many others. Ted was previously a staff writer, producer and on-air talent for NBC. His work has been seen on Nightly News, The Today Show, Dateline, CNBC and MSNBC. He is a member of SAG-AFTRA and Actors' Equity Association.



#### Darren Jones - RJ

Darren Jones is an actor born and based in Chicago. His recent stage credits include HAMLET (Invictus Theatre), AMERICAN SON (Beverley Arts Center), LABYRINTH (Broken Nose Theatre), KING LEAR (Redtwist Theatre), ONE 4 THE ROAD and NEVER THE MILK AND HONEY (MPAACT), CRIME AND PUNISHMENT and THE HEAVENS ARE HUNG IN BLACK (Shattered Globe Theatre Company) where he is an Artistic Associate. Television credits include CHICAGO PD (NBC), CHICAGO FIRE (NBC). Movie credits include HYDE PARK, RUNNER, CHI-RAQ, HOOD, ROAD TO FREEDOM, and MO' MONEY.



#### Caroline Kidwell - U/S Garth

Caroline Kidwell is delighted to be making her Compass Theatre debut with WELLESLEY GIRL. Previous acting credits include HERSHEL AND THE HANUKKAH GOBLINS (Strawdog), LANGUAGE OF ANGELS (Three Crows), BLOODY BLOODY ANDREW JACKSON (Three Brothers), and Erasing the Distance's school touring program. In late 2022, she can be seen next in KRUGOZOR with Theatre Evolve. Much thanks and congratulations to the rest of the team of WELLESLEY GIRLenjoy the show!



#### Noelle Klyce – U/S Donna

Noelle Klyce holds an Acting BFA ('18) from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her most recent theatre credits include Lana Sherwood in IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE: A LIVE RADIO PLAY (Oil Lamp Theater), Ted Sorensen in THIRTEEN DAYS (City Lit), Alonsa in THE TEMPEST (Oak Park Festival Theatre), Julie Dunn in VOICE OF GOOD HOPE (nominated for the 2020 Black Theater Alliance Awards for "The Phylicia Rashad Award: Most Promising Actress") at City Lit, various roles in BOOKS ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK (City Lit), and Wanda in CROWNS (MPAACT). She's also worked as a voiceover artist and thrice in the green show for Chicago Shakespeare Theatre in the Parks. 1 John 3:18



#### Grant Lewis- Mick

Grant Kennedy Lewis is thrilled to return to the stage as Mick in Compass Theatre's production of WELLESLEY GIRL. A native of Long Beach City at heart, Grant traveled to Chicago for school, where he graduated from Northwestern University with a BFA in Theatre and a minor in Linguistics. Past theatre work includes understudying roles in MIDDLE PASSAGE at Lifeline Theatre and THE RECOMMENDATION at Windy City Playhouse. He has also had on-camera appearances on CHICAGO MED, THE CHI, and HOW TO LOVE (a webseries about the unsung heroes of tennis). When he is not performing, Grant spends his time tutoring at The House Tutoring Lounge, playing D&D with his friends, and scoring all the goals on his pick-up soccer team. He sends many thanks to his amazing reps over at Gray Talent Group!



#### Maria Clara Ospina – U/S Marie

Originally from Medellin, Colombia and a recent college graduate, Maria Clara Ospina is honored to be understudying for her first time ever at Compass Theatre! Her Chicago credits include ROMEO + JULIET (Chicago Shakespeare), HAMLET (Invictus Theater), TRUE STORY OF THE 3 LITTLE PIGS (ABS Productions) and COVID CHRONICLES (Corn Productions). She is extremely honored to have gotten the opportunity to watch and learn from so much talent and hopes that you love the show as much as she does!



#### Deanna Reed-Foster - Donna

Deanna Reed-Foster is thrilled to be working with Compass Theatre. She is an ensemble member of Shattered Globe Theater (SGT). SGT credits include: BE HERE NOW, MILL FIRE and MARVIN'S ROOM. Other Chicago credits include: THEATRE FOR ONE (Court Theatre), THE FIRST DEEP BREATH (Victory Gardens) Joseph Jefferson Award Winner; NINA SIMONE: FOUR WOMEN (Northlight Theatre), HELA (SideShow Theatre), THE WATSON'S GO TO BIRMINGHAM 1963 (Chicago Children's Theatre), BARBECUE (Strawdog Theatre) and EVEN LONGER AND FARTHER AWAY (The New Colony Theatre) Joseph Jefferson Award Nomination. Film credits include CHRISTMAS AGAIN, LAST FLAG FLYING, and SOUTHSIDE WITH YOU. Deanna completed the Gately Poole Acting Conservatory. Deanna is a member of AEA, Sag-Aftra, and represented by DDO Artists Agency. www.deannareedfoster.com



#### Eric Roberts - U/S RJ

Eric K. Roberts is an actor and social worker living and working on Chicago's West Side. He is a permanent Theatre Y ensemble member, seen last summer in Theatre Y's outdoor walking performance YOU ARE HERE: THE EMERALD CAMINO PROJECT.



#### Faiz Siddique – U/S Scott

Faiz Siddique is an actor based in Chicago. This is his first production with Compass Theatre, and he is beyond grateful to work with such a talented and brilliant group of artists. Recently he was seen performing as Karl Gustav in Trap Door Theatre's production of QUEEN C, understudying as Matt Friedman for Oil lamp's production of TALLY'S FOLLY, playing Dexter for Dragonfly Theatre company's virtual premier of HARD CANDY, as well as Josh in Theatre L'Acadie's reading of COME WHEN I CALL. Looking ahead, Faiz is excited to attend BADA's Midsummer in Oxford program in the summer of 2022.



#### Thomas Tong – U/S Scott

Thomas Tong (he/him/his) is excited to be working with Compass Theatre for the first time. He's been keeping pretty busy with his full time job at Shedd Aquarium as well as his handful of a cat, India. Most recently, he worked with The House Theatre of Chicago in their production of THE SNOW QUEEN. Other theatres include Dunes Summer Theatre, Pride Film and Plays (known now as PrideArts), Unicorn Theatre, BYOT Theatre, Death and Pretzels, and more. He is represented by Gill Talent.



#### Allyce Torres - Marie

Allyce Torres is an actor, deviser, and puppeteer from San Diego, CA. Previous credits include KEEPERS OF THE RIVER at Mirror Stage, ALL ONE: THE DR. BRONNERS PLAY with Passage Theatre, WAKE UP BROTHER BEAR at Chicago Children's Theatre, and THE TABLETOP TRAGEDIES with Cabinet of Curiosity. Allie would like to dedicate this performance to in memory of her Aunt Cindy.



#### Todd Wojcik - Scott

Todd Wojcik is so happy to join the cast of WELLESLEY GIRL with Compass Theatre. Todd is a native of Rhode Island and has been living and acting in Chicago for the past ten years. Most recently, Todd was seen in the production of EURYDICE with The Artistic Home theatre where he is an ensemble member. Favorite roles include Army in the Jeff Award Winning production of REQUIEM FOR A HEAVYWEIGHT, and Narrator in THE PAVILION also with The Artistic Home. Todd would like to thank his family, Andrea, and all the people at Compass theatre for the opportunity, passion, and dedication to get this very important story told.



#### Noah Villarreal – Donnie

Noah (he/him) is excited to be making his debut with Compass Theatre playing Donnie. Recent/Favorite theatre credits include THE MADNESS OF EDGAR ALLEN POE with Oak Park Theatre Festival, JOSEPH... DREAMCOAT with Music Theater Works, and ALL SHOOK UP with Zilker Hillside Theater. You may have also seen him in commercials for Upstart, Hickory Farms, or Huntington Bank. He is a graduate with a BFA in Musical Theatre from Millikin University. Noah is proudly represented by Gray Talent Group.

#### **PRODUCTION TEAM**

#### James Fleming - Director

James Fleming is a freelance director based in New York and Chicago. Recent credits include Grace McLeod's SCARE ME and Fin Coe's FUN HARMLESS WARMACHINE (The New Coordinates); Grace McLeod's HERLAND, Thornton Wilder's OUR TOWN, and MJ Kaufman's SAGITTARIUS PONDEROSA (Redtwist Theatre); Rudi Goblen's GREEN SUGA BLOOS (Yale School of Drama); Alexandra Matthews and Eric Shoemaker's adaptation of Kate Chopin's THE AWAKENING (ArtsOnSite NYC). He has assisted at Goodman Theatre, Court Theatre, and Greenhouse Theatre Center. James is currently pursuing his MFA in Directing at Yale School of Drama. Prior to Yale, James served as Associate Artistic Director at Redtwist Theatre and as Director of New Works at The New Coordinates in Chicago, where he created and produced the inaugural UNCHARTED Festival, a two week developmental showcase of ambitious new works by Chicago-based playwrights.

#### Sotirios Livaditis - Scenic Design

Sotirios Livaditis is a scenic designer, illustrator and storyteller based in Chicago. Recent projects in Chicago include THIS WIDE NIGHT (Shattered Globe Theatre); TEENAGE DICK (Theatre Wit); MOSQUITOES (Steep Theatre); OUT OF LOVE (Interrobang Theatre Project); HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN (Northwestern University); and FOR SERVICES RENDERER (Griffin Theatre – Jeff nomination). He has worked as an associate designer with The Alliance Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre and The Irish National Opera. Upcoming projects include BRIGHT STAR at (Hope College) and LIGHT FALLS (Steep Theatre). He will be teaming up with his mentor Todd Rosenthal on the world premiere of Christina Anderson's THE RIPPLE, THE WAVE THAT CARRIED ME HOME (Goodman Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre) and THE SEAGULL (Steppenwolf Theatre). He received his MFA from Northwestern University. Please experience more of his work at www.sotiriosdesigns.com.

#### Rachel Sypniewski – Costume Design

Rachel is thrilled to be collaborating with Compass for the first time! Other companies she has worked with include Goodman, Music Theater Works, Trap Door, Oak Park Festival Theater, Broken Nose, Black Button Eyes, Jackalope, The New Colony, Emerald City, Lifeline, Haven, Griffin, CityLit, Chopin, Promethean, Strawdog, Vitalist, Rasaka, the Factory, Red Tape and Redtwist. She also has designed at Wheaton College, Governor's State University, North Central College, St. Patrick's High School, Indiana University Northwest, and the Chicago Academy for the Arts. She is a seven-time Non-equity Jeff nominee, having been awarded one for LA BETE at Trap Door. More info at www.rachelsyp.com

#### Cat Davis – Lighting Design

Cat is delighted to be working with COMPASS Theatre. She has worked with Redtwiat previously on BETWEEN RIVERSIDE AND CRAZY, KING LEAR, KEELY & DU and DEATH TAX, and will be designing ISAAC'S EYE. She was also designed with Mudlark Theatre in Evanston, Broken Nose Theatre, and Halcyon Theatre where she received an award for RIVERBRIDE and a nomination for DETROYA.

#### Stefanie M. Senior – Sound Design

Stefanie is delighted to sink her teeth into this wonderful script. Regional: WORKING, LADY DAY AT EMERSON'S BAR & GRILL (Depot Theatre); TOP DOG/UNDERDOG (Lake Dillon Theatre Company). Chicago: WHOSE BODY (Lifeline); NON-PLAYER CHARACTER (Red Theatre); PUMP BOYS & DINETTES (Porchlight); 8-TRACK (Theo Ubique). Stefanie works on the podcast I've Been Meaning To Listen To That. www.stefaniemsenior.com.

#### Bren Coombs - Property Design

Bren Coombs is a nonbinary producer and designer of film, theatre, events, and social media content. Recent theatre credits: 8-TRACK (Theo Ubique); HEAD OVER HEELS (Chicago College of Performing Arts); YEAR OF THE QUEER (Fireflower Productions); HOW TO DEFEND YOURSELF (Victory Gardens). Upcoming: FIREFLIES (Northlight); SPRING AWAKENING (CCPA). Bren is also currently co-producing a documentary about LGBTQ representation on TV with The Clexa Project. RadBren.com

#### **Robert Salazar- Production Manager**

Robert Salazar is a content creator based in Chicago. His video portfolio includes directing the feature film TIME TRAVELER, co-creating WALTZER TV, and (mainly) editing for documentaries. Past theater credits include writing and performing for the national tour of LOS SECRETOS DE SANTA MÓNICA, directing DISPLAYED with the New Coordinates, creative producing GOOD EVENING WITH PAT WHALEN, and production managing Compass Theater's inaugural show WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST. In 2021, he began sitting on the board for Compass Theater. He'd like to send love to Anna for supporting him through his late nights and long-running bits. Enjoy the show!

#### Evan Sposato – Technical Direction

Evan Sposato has spent the last two decades in and around the theatre as an actor, director, stage manager, technical director, and production manager. He spent eight years at the Waterville Opera House in Waterville, Maine, working both onstage and behind the scenes. During the Opera House's centennial renovation, he was the technical advisor to the building team and wrote grants totaling more than \$2 million. While in Maine, Evan also served as the longtime president of the board of directors of Aqua City Actor's Theatre and worked with Bossov Ballet Theatre and Everyman Repertory Theatre. Since moving to the Chicago area, Evan has worked as the Technical Director and Production Manager at Drury Lane and has built shows for Steep, Jackalope, Rivendell, Interrobang, City Lit, New Colony (company member), Citadel, and others. When Evan isn't in a theater, he designs and builds props and scenery for commercials.

#### Caitlin Body – Stage Manager

Caitlin Body is excited to be doing another show with Compass Theatre. Stage Manager for NUNSENSE (Porchlight Theater); MLK PROJECT (Writers Theatre); LA HAVANA MADRID (Teatro Vista); WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST (Compass Theatre); THE COMEDY OF ERRORS, ANDARES (Chicago Shakespeare); FORGOTTEN FUTURE, GENDER BREAKDOWN, CONNECTED, ENCOUNTER, BLUE ISLAND, PEACEBOOK (Collaboraction); FOR HER AS A PIANO (Pegasus Theatre); WILD DUCK (Halcyon Theatre); JULIA DE BURGOS: CHIILD OF WATER (Urban Theater Company); PEN THE MUSICAL (Chicago Musical Theatre Festival). Assistant Stage Manager for SCHOOL GIRLS (Goodman Theatre). Founding member of Stage Managers of Color – Chicago.

#### Sunniva Holmlund – Assistant Stage Manager / Covid Safety Manager

Sunniva Holmlund is grateful to return to in-person theatre with her first production with Compass Theatre. She is a Chicago native from the West Side and a graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University, where she focused in stage management, lighting, and theatre for development. Sunniva is a company member of Collaboraction Theatre Company, and her stage management work includes credits with Redtwist Theatre, Teatro Vista, and Dominican University.

#### Isabel Brodsky – Associate Director

Isabel Brodsky (she/her) is excited to be bringing this story to life with Compass Theatre! Isabel is a playwright, actress, and director from the DC area. Writing credits include: IN DEFENSE OF THE TUNA JELLY (The Theater Initiative) and BIO-LOGICAL CLOCK (Adventure Theater and 4615 Theater). Acting/directing credits: UNCLE VANYA (Brown University), TOGETHER APART (24 Hour Plays), THE PENELOPIAD (Brown University), and YERMA (Brown University). Isabel is a proud 2020 Zoom graduate of Brown University where she studied Anthropology, Playwriting, and speaking in the third person.





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Everyone here: folks in the audience... the person who handed you this program... somewhere on or off the stage there are actors... if you look up in the corner you might get a glimpse of the stage manager in the booth... We're all in this room for the same reason: to be a part of this shared experience. No matter who they are or where they come from; no matter if they are complete strangers or familiar faces; no matter how different the age, the race, or the walk of life; after this performance, you will have something in common. So, strike up a conversation in the lobby, introduce yourself to someone new. Meet our staff, shake hands with an actor, get a drink from our bar. We're all in this together.

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Theater is part of the Chicago experience. Each year, over 200 theaters present thousands of shows to Chicago's loyal and enthusiastic theater-going audience. Chicago's theater community is recognized around the world for its talent, its innovation and its power to entertain and enlighten. If Tony awards were sports championships, our artists would beat out the combined efforts of Michael Jordan, Bobby Hull, Jim McMahon, Jermaine Dye, and the entire Chicago Cubs roster going back 100 years. This stage is a Chicago stage, contributing to the vibrant artistic life of our city and the economic development of our neighborhood. Very few cities on the planet offer the theatrical richness and diversity of Chicago. But you get to share in it. Because you are here.



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