

Virtual 2020 Fall Ex

DOMINION

a virtual adaptation of
Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*
by Catherine Alam-Nist

Show Dates:

November 13, 7 PM EST

November 14, 7 PM EST

November 15, 2 PM EST

November 15, 7 PM EST

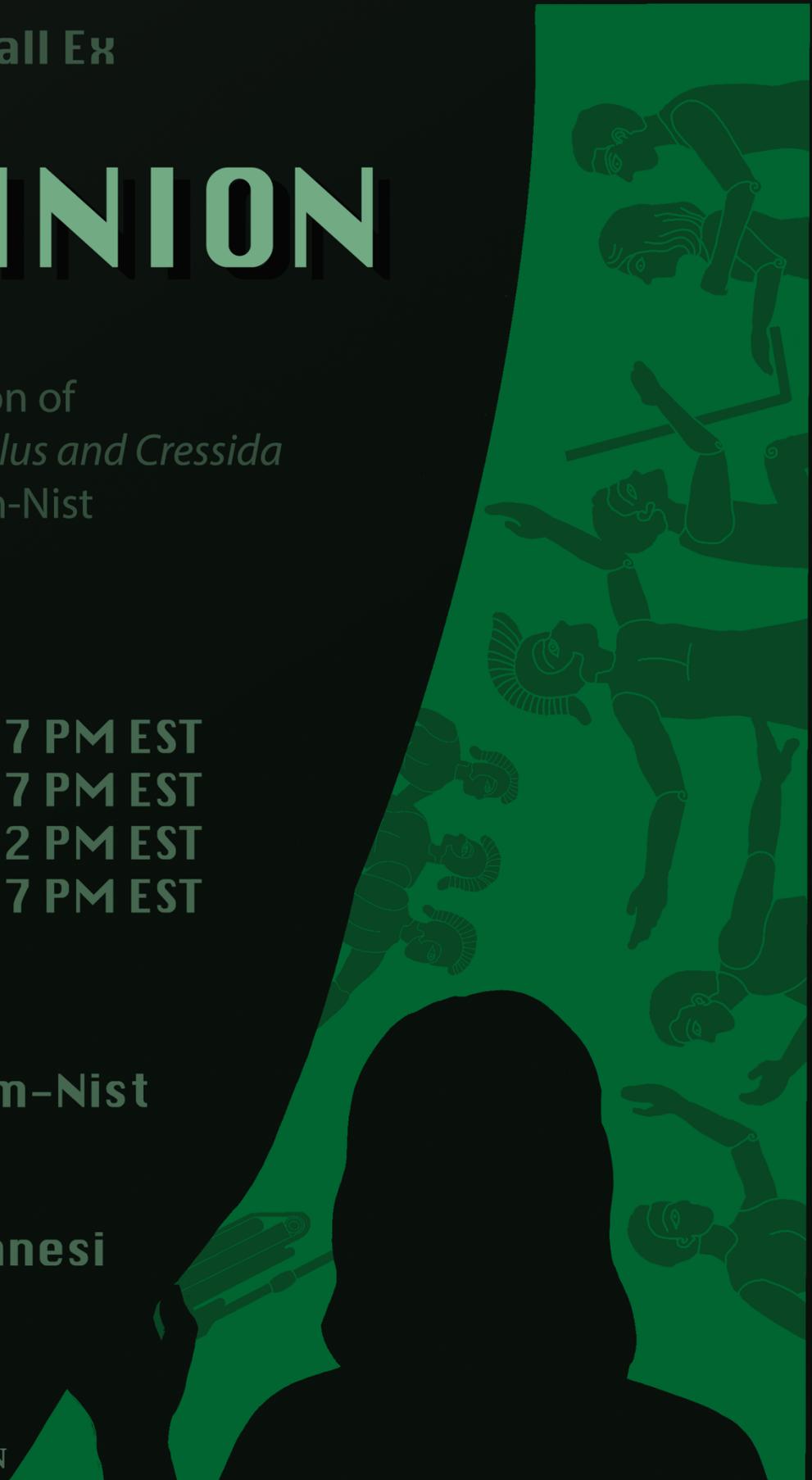
Directed by
Catherine Alam-Nist

Produced by
Jenan Cameranesi



YALE
DRAMATIC
ASSOCIATION

tickets available for free at yaledramat.org/dominion



The Yale Dramatic Association

presents

Dominion

by

Catherine Alam-Nist

DIRECTED BY

Catherine Alam-Nist

PRODUCED BY

Jenan Cameranesi

November 13 – 15

Presented Virtually

Lighting Designer
Casey Tonnies

Stage Manager
Sophia Dopico

Sound Designer
Avery Brown

Props Designer
Ruthie Davis

Set Designer
Claire Sattler

Makeup Designer
Kara O'Rourke

Costume Designers

Ruthie Davis & Claire Sattler & Casey Tonnies

director's note



Catherine Alam-Nist

If you'd told me eight months ago that at this point in the future, the most exciting piece of theater I had ever worked on would be about to debut, I probably would have had a very different mental image of how that show would look. Like many people, the phrase 'virtual theater' did at some point in the past seem somewhat antithetical to me. Theater was, I thought, innately linked to people being together in the same space; mental, creative and spiritual communion intrinsically tied to physical communion. Therefore, the fact that coming together in the same space was no longer possible meant that all of these other elements of theater that have always drawn me to it were also inevitably lost for the foreseeable future; like for many other theatermakers, this belief weighed incredibly heavily on me for the months following the beginning of the pandemic, along with all of the other enormous losses and griefs which these months wracked upon the Yale community, the country and the world.

However, as we have also seen all over the country and the world these past months, in the face of many obstacles can spring up so much creativity, resilience, passion and energy. I am delighted to say that I have witnessed this first-hand on a micro-level in the production process of this show. After Jenan (Producer), Sophie (Stage Manager) and I found out that the planned in-person production of a pre-existing play was definitely not going to be able to happen this fall, and we would probably not be able to get the rights to do any pre-existing play virtually either (due to the difficulty of accruing performance rights to do shows virtually), we were faced with the option of either delaying our planned production until some unknown date when in-person theater would again be feasible, or starting from scratch and completely re-building our plans to make a virtual theater piece—whatever that might end up looking like. Obviously, we chose the latter. Whilst none of us had ever been involved in the creation of virtual theater before, the ingenuity, adaptability, and trust in one another that we shared was enough to make me certain even from that early point that this could somehow work. I had written and directed two original plays in high school, so I had some experience writing theater from beforehand. We also felt that it could possibly be wise to adapt from something in the public domain, so as to give our show a little bit more direction and focus, given the unavoidable degree of unpredictability which we knew doing a virtual show would bring. I had always been interested in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, a comparatively rarely-performed play in the canon, not so much for the answers it gave its audiences, but more for the questions it raised; as a queer and non-binary theatermaker, I was particularly interested in the questions surrounding gender and sexual identity which the play touched upon.

I had the enormous privilege of working with the most talented group of dramaturgs whilst we were initially working towards the first full draft of the script, whose insights and individual areas of expertise helped colour the initial draft of the script in the most interesting and exciting ways. Afterwards, once auditions had been completed, the investment which all of the actors showed in helping shape their characters and the world of the play with me was probably the most exciting experience I have had as a theatermaker. I've always believed that the most

collaborative rehearsal processes produce the most beautiful and impactful pieces of art, as the widest range of experiences, backgrounds and worldviews are reflected in the end-result. It has been such a delight to work with such a dedicated and talented group of actors to take these characters that I initially only had vague images of in my head, and see them become fully fleshed-out, complex and fascinating human beings, whose stories could be told in the way that the actors found most interesting and empowering. In this way, what initially seemed like it could be considered an obstacle the production faced - that we couldn't get rights to the script we initially wanted to use, so we had to create our own one - actually became, in my opinion, one of the most wonderful and fulfilling elements of the show.

I believe that the same holds true for the practical elements of the show as well as the literary; to quote cast member AJ, who plays Patroclus, 'Dominion is a very intimate and emotionally intense play, and I think the Zoom format helps play up these elements'. In rehearsal, we were forced to ask questions like: what does it mean to portray romantic relationships in a play where the actors cannot physically touch each other? Arguably, this plays up the importance of the mental/emotional/spiritual dimensions of the relationships we're portraying - perhaps an element of our show that also says something about the new virtual reality in which we all are now living. This tension between the physical isolation and emotional connection that are both present in the show were also fascinating to explore in terms of some of the design elements of the show; what does it mean to build, instead of one physical set, lighting state or costume rack which the actors all share, 16 individualised miniature performances spaces, all part of a shared story? Working with a fantastically gifted production team to address these questions, and getting to see the beautiful and innovative responses that they produced through their design plans, has also been an essential part of what makes this show feel incredibly special and bold.

As one of the two First-Year Liaisons for the Yale Drama Coalition, it has been an additional point of pride that this show has so many first-years among the cast, as well as several upperclassmen who are first-time actors within Yale theater. I firmly believe that Yale theater, as well as theatrical spaces in general, thrive most when they are as open, accessible and welcoming as possible, and I have been particularly inspired by the creativity, dedication and energy which the first-years in the cast have shown, especially given the current challenges they are all facing by beginning college in a completely unforeseeable set of circumstances. This production has also gained immeasurably from the first-years working on it in a production capacity, whether via assistant production roles, or the shadowing programme our prod team instituted to allow as many first-years as possible to meet upperclassmen working in the areas of production that they're interested in. (A particular shout-out to Hank and Beza, who have been the most wonderful Assistant Directors I could have possibly hoped to work with!)

This is a show that asks questions particularly pertinent to our time, in the medium of our time: what happens to the love we share in a time when isolation seems imperative? Who gets to define what 'love' is, and how can this change as people lose and gain power? And in an ever-shifting world, what can we hold onto as unchangingly true and meaningful, even as our circumstances morph so quickly? Even though so many parts of our lives may feel as though they've been put on pause, this show has taught me first-hand that perhaps the most important elements of both theater, and human interaction in general, are very much still alive and thriving: community, creativity, friendship and innovation. So although I may watch the show and wish that I could be in the same space at the actors as they perform, I still find joy and inspiration in the fact that I know there are 16 wonderful theatermakers working together in that moment to bring this story to life; a feeling that I can only hope the audience will delight in as much as I do. This show has meant the world to me this past semester, and I am so excited for all the time, love, effort and passion that has gone into this show to finally be witnessed by our audiences this week.

production team

CAST

Cressida	Lauren Marut
Achilles	Sophia DeVito
Helen	Zada Brown
Troilus	Phoebe Cardenas
Pandarus	Clara Montgomery
Patroclus	AJ Laird
Paris	Sarah Sotomayor
Hector	Isa Dominguez
Cassandra	Tandi Weeks
Menelaus	Bradley Nowacek
Diomedes	Anna Tredway
Agamemnon	Abigail Maher
Ajax	Ed Kuperman
Nestor	Helena Lyng-Olsen
Briseis	Selin Gören
Antenor	Christelle Thieba

PRODUCTION STAFF

Writer	Catherine Alam-Nist
Director	Catherine Alam-Nist
Producer	Jenan Cameranesi
Associate Producer	Natalia Perez
Assistant Producer	Jacquelyn Daigneau
Stage Manager	Sophia Dopico
Assistant Stage Manager	Naomi Schwartzburt
Assistant Stage Manager	Rose Bae
Dramaturg	Sarah Valeika
Dramaturg	Sara Armstrong
Dramaturg	Jean Wang
Assistant Dramaturg	Lily Pérez
Set Designer	Claire Sattler
Lighting Designer	Casey Tonnies
Sound Designer	Avery Brown
Props Designer	Ruthie Davis
Costume Designer	Ruthie Davis
Costume Designer	Claire Sattler
Costume Designer	Casey Tonnies
Makeup Designer	Kara O'Rourke
Graphic Designer	JR Im
Assistant Director	Hank Graham
Assistant Director	Beza Tessema
Shadow Lighting Designer	Olivia Fugikawa
Shadow Prop Designer	Brian Li

biographies

Catherine Alam-Nist (Writer & Director) is a rising sophomore in Hopper College, majoring in Theater and Performance Studies. *Dominion* is the fourth show Catherine has directed, having directed three productions in high school, and taking an original verbatim play to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in August 2018. This show marks Catherine's directorial debut at Yale, and their second time working with the Dramat, having performed in *Sweeney Todd* in fall 2019. They are so grateful for all of the energy, creativity, dedication and courage the cast and prod team of this show have shown, and cannot imagine a more wonderful group of people to have gotten to work with. They send love in particular to Jenan and Sophie, for being part of this amazing (and slightly crazy) journey from the very beginning.

Sara Armstrong (Dramaturg) is a junior in Jonathan Edwards. After participating in Yale theater as an actor and a playwright, this is her dramaturgical debut. She's excited to bring together her love for theater with her love for Classics in this brilliant, touching, and all-too relevant show. Thank you to Catherine and the rest of the *Dominion* dramaturg team for making this a wonderful process!

Rose Bae (Assistant Stage Manager) is a first-year in Ezra Stiles. She sends her love and thanks for her fellow production team members without whom 12-1 PM on Sundays would have been devoid of constant affirmation, love, and reminders to vegetate and drink water. She is incredibly grateful to Sophie for this amazing opportunity and continuous support.

Zada Brown (Helen) is a first-year in Trumbull. Some of her favorite roles include the Phantom in *Phantom of the Opera* and Matilda in *Matilda*. She is so grateful for the cast and production team for making her first show at Yale so incredible, despite all the challenges of Zoom. Much love to her suitemates for always keeping our suite quiet during rehearsals, too!

Jenan Cameranesi (Producer) is a second-year student in Morse, majoring in History of Art. Previously, she was assistant stage manager for *Agnes of God* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*, as well as costume designer for *American Idiot*. She is grateful to her family, friends, the cast and crew for all their love, dedication, and support. This is her first time producing a show at Yale.

Phoebe Cardenas (Troilus) is a gap-year senior in Benjamin Franklin College. This is the twenty-third production she's taken part in at Yale and her first production with the Dramat. Relevant credits include Jill in *Contemporaries* (2018) and starting a rumor about herself (2017). She is grateful for the opportunity to play a comedic role, since she is an expert at making a fool of herself. She'd like to thank her friends, her family, and the Fifth Humour. They know what they did.

Jacquelyn Daigneau (Assistant Producer) is a sophomore in Berkeley. Her favorite roles include Heather Chandler in *Heathers* and Persephone in *Hadestown*. A big thank you to Catherine, Jenan, Natalia, and Sophie for bringing her onto the team, and making her first production a memorable one. She is so appreciative for the opportunity to be part of something so fulfilling and rewarding due to all of their hard work.

Ruthie Davis (Props Designer & Costume Designer) is a sophomore in Franklin. Last year she worked on *The Wolves* as ASM and in various designing positions for shows that were unfortunately cancelled for COVID. She's so excited to have this opportunity to work on *Dominion* (her first Dramat show!) and so grateful to Jenan, Catherine and Sophie for making this crazy corona-theater adventure such a great experience.

Sophia DeVito (Achilles) is a junior in Trumbull majoring in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. Some of her favorite past roles include Niki in *Curtains* and the Leading Player in *Pippin*. She excited to be tackling this new realm of zoom theater with this lovely cast and prod team, and would like to thank her mom and Hailey for their support this semester!

Sophia Dopico (Stage Manager) is a sophomore in Franklin, currently enrolled remotely out of Miami, FL. She is so excited to be working on *Dominion* with such a talented cast and crew, and would like to thank Jenan and Catherine for bringing her onto the team and putting up with her Google Calendar craziness. She would also like to thank the entire cast for their enthusiasm and flexibility as they navigate the world of virtual theatre together.

Olivia Fugikawa (Shadow Lighting Designer) is a first-year in Ezra Stiles. *Dominion* is the first production she's been involved with, and she's so grateful for all the resources and support that introduced her to theater at Yale. Many thanks to Casey and the lighting designers!

Selin Gören (Briseis) is a first-year student in TD. This is her first-ever Dramat show! Her all-time favorite role from her past shows is Katherine from *The Taming of the Shrew*. She's so grateful for the cast and crew of *Dominion* for putting so much effort and staging such a powerful performance amidst these crazy times. Though she had to get up at 3 am in Turkey for the tech week, she feels so lucky that she got to be a part of this diligent team. Being an actor in *Dominion* has been one of the highlights of her first semester at Yale and she looks forward to staging a play with these amazing people hopefully on the actual stage soon.

Hank Graham (Assistant Director) is a first-year in Davenport College. This is his first production at Yale, but he has worked as a performer and technician in various productions in the past. He is so grateful to the entire cast and crew of *Dominion* and would like to extend special thanks to his co-AD and identical twin Beza Tessema.

JR Im (Graphic Designer) is a sophomore in Benjamin Franklin. This was her first time working as a graphic designer for a production, and she expresses lots of gratitude towards the production team for making this such a memorable experience. She sends love to Sophie and Monique, who gave continuous support and love throughout the process and Jack for introducing her to theater at Yale.

AJ Laird (Patroclus) is a first year student in Benjamin Franklin College. *Dominion* is their first play. They have loved getting to know everyone involved in the production. They have also enjoyed learning new skills, like how to do their own makeup and how to turn a dorm room into a set.

biographies

Helena Lyng-Olsen (Nestor) is a junior in Pierson. She'd like to thank everyone on the *Dominion* team, and she is excited to be a part of her first production at Yale.

Abigail Maher (Agamemnon) is so excited to be performing in her first Yale Dramat performance. Before coming to Yale, she has been in several productions, including *The Crucible*, *Annie*, *Othello*, and *All's Well That Ends Well*. She would like to extend her heartfelt gratitude to all members of the production team, her fellow cast members, and Catherine for making this show such a wonderful experience, especially given the current circumstances. She would also like to extend her thanks to you, the audience, for coming virtually. Enjoy the show!

Lauren Marut (Cressida) is a first-year in Davenport and thrilled to be joining the Dramat season for the first time. Hailing from Chicago, some of her most recent credits include the Baker's Wife in *Into the Woods* and Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. She is so grateful to the entire production team and cast who make Zoom performance look so effortless, but especially Catherine for their continued patience and support throughout this process.

Bradley Nowacek (Menelaus) is a sophomore in Morse. Past Yale theatre highlights include smashing a pear on the floor of the Whitney Humanities Center (*Measure for Measure*), getting muscles drawn on his arms (*American Idiot*), and being a delightfully gay carpenter for absolutely no reason at all (*Sweeney Todd*). Special thanks to Catherine for all the effort they have put in to make this production possible.

Kara O'Rourke (Makeup Designer) is a gap-year junior in Branford. She has done makeup for eight shows now and is so grateful for the opportunity and challenge of being part of *Dominion*. She would like to thank the actors for being patient with her surveys and emails and Zoom makeup tutorials - they are truly doing quintuple duty to prepare their personal stages to bring this show to you.

Lily Pérez (Assistant Dramaturg) is a first-year in Branford. She is currently trying to survive DS, but was happy to revisit the world of Homeric poetry in her work with some of the talented cast!

Natalia Perez (Associate Producer) is a sophomore in Trumbull. Outside of theatre, she likes to read and nap! She is so grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in this wonderful show and to keep on doing theatre during the pandemic.

Claire Sattler (Set Designer & Costume Designer) is a sophomore in Pauli Murray who plans to double major in Biomedical Engineering and TAPS. This is her second production she's ever set designed, after last year's *Rumpringa*, and her first time costume designing. She's incredibly grateful to the *Dominion* cast and crew for all their hard work and for tackling virtual theatre full-force. She hopes you enjoy her 16 different sets designed on \$12.50 each, and offers huge thanks to Jenan, Catherine, and priority shipping for making her designs possible!

Naomi Schwartzburt (Assistant Stage Manager) is a first-year student in Pauli Murray. After graduating from the technical theater department at LaGuardia High School, she is excited to be stage managing her first show here at Yale. Putting up a remote show is a new and daunting task, but she commends the efforts of the entire cast and production team for putting this together. This being her second show over Zoom, she is looking forward to live in-person theater coming back.

Beza Tessema (Assistant Director) is a first-year in JE. This is her first production at Yale though she has assistant directed and stage managed in the past. She has had so much fun getting to know the cast and crew of *Dominion*. She is especially grateful to her co-assistant director and twin, Hank Graham.

Christelle Thieba (Antenor) is a sophomore in Benjamin Franklin. This is her first show at Yale and she has had a wonderful experience. She'd like to thank her friends as well as the cast and crew for their inspiring dedication, exuberance, unforgettable Zoom shenanigans, and never-ending support especially given the show's unconventional format. She is particularly grateful to Catherine and Jenan for this opportunity and their endless support along the way.

Casey Tonnies (Lighting Designer & Costume Designer) is a sophomore in Morse on a leave of absence. She has lots of experience in live theater lighting, most recently the Dramat's 2020 FroShow *Lost Girl*. This was her first experience with live Zoom theater and costuming, and she learned a lot along the way. She'd like to give a shoutout to the desk lamps and white t-shirt coverings that made lighting for this show possible.

Anna Tredway (Diomedes) is a first year in Timothy Dwight. Her favorite roles include Queen Aggravain in *Once Upon a Mattress* and Mrs. Sowerberry in *Oliver*. She is grateful for the cast and crew for making her first show at Yale a fun and unforgettable experience filled with lots of memes and zoom emojis.

Sarah Valeika (Dramaturg) is a junior in Saybrook. She feels lucky to be engaged in the theatre world at Yale as a multi-hyphenate, dramaturg-actor-director, and her most recent project was directing *Marjorie Prime*! She sends big hugs to the cast and crew of this show, and is endlessly grateful for this creative and resilient community.

Jean Wang (Dramaturg) is a first-year in JE. She enjoys musicals, Shakespeare and writing plays. She is grateful to work with this amazing team for her very first show at Yale.

Tandi Weeks (Cassandra) is a first year in Jonathan Edwards. Some of her favorite roles include Velma Kelly in *Chicago* and Dorothy in *The Wiz*. Despite the odd circumstances, Tandi is grateful for this show being a kind and exciting welcome to theater at Yale. She would like to thank her friends and family, both at home and in New Haven for their support, jokes, zoom calls, and movie nights.