

Leon Theatre presents:

BRAINstorm

Inside the *Messy* Teenage Brain

Created by: Ned Glasier & Emily Lim
with Company Three,
in collaboration with neuroscientists
Professor Sarah-Jayne Blakemore
& Dr Kate Mills

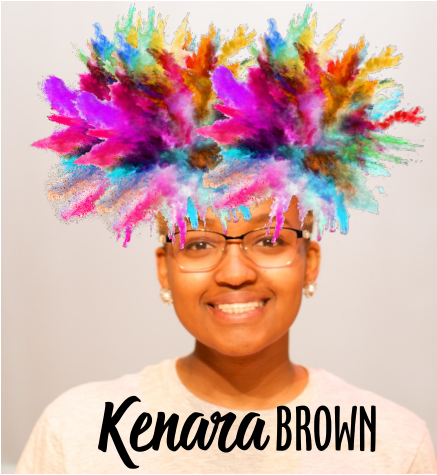
An amateur production
by arrangement with
Nick Hern Books

Written by:
the cast & crew
of *Leon's Brainstorm!*

march
29 & 30.2019
@Leon High School
7pm on Friday (29th)
3pm & 7pm on Saturday (30th)

www.LeonTheatre.com





Kenara BROWN



Caden WESSNER

Tech Crew:

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR: Caden Wessner

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR & STAGE MANAGER: Kenara Brown

WRITING: Alexa Schoffel, John Malley, Mia Ford-Green, & Emma Bryson

ASSISTANT TO DIRECTOR: Sydney Newman

COSTUME/MAKE UP: Claire Haisten & Leah Mazur

LIGHTS: Caden Wessner

SOUND: Caden Wessner

PROPS: Kaitlyn Lineberry

MARKETING: Sarah Brock

HOUSE MANAGERS: Ashley Campbell & Tia Huettel

SET BUILD: Mike Mock

CREW MEMBERS: River Frazier, Alexis Hunnewell, Cansas Dowell, Skyler Myers, Siena Duncan, & Riley Branham

Cast:

18 year olds: John Malley, Caitlyn Burke, Sebastian Hill

17 year olds: Mia Ford-Green, Tait Treadwell, Cate Bilbrey

16 year olds: Harris Mosteller, Trevor Lee, Mary Neel

15 year olds: Anabelle Peoples, Raven Maki, Kayden Washington

14 year olds: Emma Bryson, Mason Whiting, Evan Treadwell

PARENTS: Nick Petty, Sebastian Hill, Mia Ford-Green, Emma Bryson, Raven Maki, & Cate Bilbrey

THE *Brainy* BUNCH

Emma BRYSON



Evan TREADWELL



Kayden WASHINGTON



Mason WHITING



Raven MAKI



Annabelle PEOPLES



Trevor LEE



Harris MOSTELLER



Mary NEEL



Cate BILBREY



Mia FORD-GREEN



Tait TREADWELL



Sebastian HILL



John MALLEY



Caitlyn BURKE



Nick PETTY



Alexa SCHOFFEL



River FRAZIER



Skylar MYLERS



Riley BRANHAM



Kaitlyn LINEBERRY



Sarah BROCK



Alexis HUNNYWELL



Sydney NEWMAN



THE *Brainy* BUNCH

Kenara Brown has been a part of 4 shows with Leon Theatre but this is her first show as Assistant director/stage manager. She has enjoyed working with and getting to know the cast over the past weeks and she is so proud of all their dedication and hard work in order to make this show all that it could be. She would like to thank the cast, the crew, and Mrs. Marshall for giving her this opportunity and for being her partner in crime.

Caden Wessner is a senior and he is ecstatic to be working on his final show for the theatre department. He has previously been the head of set for *937*, *The Foreman in Les Miserables*, and the head of sound for *The Arsonists*. He is a member of Madrigals, Capital Singers, The Mane Event, and Technical Theatre. Caden would like to thank Mrs. Marshall, Mrs. Peck, and Mr. Pursino for creating a welcoming home for him here at Leon. He would also like to thank his family, his friends, and everyone who has supported him through high school.

Emma Bryson is a sophomore who is excited to be in Leon's production of *Brainstorm!* As member of Leon chorus she is grateful for the chance to be back on the stage acting. She's previously appeared in *The Arsonists* and as a costumer for Leon's summer production of *Les Mis*. She would like to thank her family, friends, Ms. Marshall, and all the wonderful people who have helped her acting improve!

Evan Treadwell is a sophomore at Leon, he has previously been in *The Arsonists* and *937*. At Leon he is an active Thespian and a member of Rebus Gestis.

Kayden Washington is a freshman at Leon High School. This is her first play at Leon High School. Kayden is also apart of Marching Band. She would like to thank her dad, her brothers, and Mrs. Marshall for pushing her to her limits and encouraging her to audition for this role.

Mason Whiting is a sophomore at Leon High School. He has been involved in theater for about 5 years and has starred in several Leon productions such as *The Little Mermaid* (Flounder) and as a member of the ensemble in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. He hopes to accomplish many things in the future.

Raven Maki is a Freshman at Leon High School. She is a singer, dancer, actress, musician, and artist with a passion for learning and aspires to eventually be a professor. She choreographed an original dance for this show.

Anabelle Peoples is a sophomore who has been involved with Leon Theatre since she began attending. She has been acting for nearly seven years now and has loved it ever since she began in elementary school. She also enjoys writing and enjoyed helping with the devising process of the script. Her character, Jenny, is as a reflection of her experience starting high school and adjusting to a new environment. She enjoyed creating a character who shared her experiences but not her personality, and was excited to give adults an inside perspective on a high schooler's experience with school.

Trevor Lee is a sophomore at Leon. He has a lot of theatre experience and he really does enjoy working on Theatrical productions. He started in 6th grade and it is incredible how much he did during his middle school years as a thespian and he can't wait for many more years of theatre at Leon High School.

Harris Mosteller is a tenth grader at Leon. Her hobbies include Band, Reading, and Listening to Music. She would like to thank her friends and family who helped her through the anxieties of her first show at Leon and for pressuring her to do it in the first place.

Mary Neel is a sophomore at Leon. Her hobbies include obsessing over baby goats and complaining about not being emo enough (seventh grade Mary would be disappointed). She wants to thank her little brother as inspiration for Lillie, and Mary Jane (yes, that is a real person & a friend) for helping her overcome her own daily anxieties.

Cate Bilibrey Cate is a junior at Leon, and this is her 4th production with Leon Theatre. Along with Thespian Society, Cate is president of Leon's Model UN team, and a member of Peace Jam. She would like to thank her family, friends, and of course, Lea Marshall.

Mia Ford-Green is a Senior and this is her eighth show at Leon. Mia was apart of *Prospect High: Brooklyn, Antigone, To Kill a Mockingbird, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Hunchback of Norte Dame, Steel Magnolias, A Christmas Carol, and Les Miserables*. Mia is heavily involved in the performing arts programs at Leon and she would like thank her theatre/chorus teachers, friends, and family for pushing her to step out of her comfort zone to do the best she can on stage.

Tait Treadwell is a senior. He's been passionate about Theatre since middle school and has played Agellos in *Antigone*, Dill in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Gottlieb Biedermann in *The Arsonists*, and Otto in *937*, all produced by Leon. He also built the set for Leon's production of *Steel Magnolias*. This will be his last Leon production before graduation. He'd like to thank Mrs. Meis and Mrs. Marshall for being amazing theatre teachers. He'd also like to thank all his family and friends for supporting him and coming to see his shows.

Sebastian Hill is excited to be in this production. He has previously played the roles of Gustav Schröder in the Fall One Act, *937*. He would like to thank his parents and Mrs Marshall for allowing him to be a part of *Brainstorm* (because HE IS A THEATRE KID.)

John Malley is a junior at Leon. He has previously appeared in Leon's productions of *937* (Max Loewe), *Les Miserables* (Mr. Thenardier), *The Arsonists* (Billy Eisenring), *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (Dom Claude Frollo), and *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Atticus Finch). He has been a theatre student and a Thespian for three years. He is also very involved in the chorus program. John would like to thank his family and friends for their support, his fellow writers for making him look smart, and the entire cast and crew of *Brainstorm* for all of their hard work to make this show happen.

Caitlyn Burke This is Caitlyn's ninth and final show at Leon High School. Caitlyn has dedicated her high school career to the Leon theatre department through acting and makeup. She'd like to thank her friends and fellow actors for encouraging her and sticking with her through all of high school. And for the last time she proudly represents Leon theatre and troupe 1429.

Nick Petty Nick is 17 years old and a junior at Leon High School. This is his first show ever, and he would like to thank his friends and family for support in his decision to start theatre and hopefully continue for a long time to come.

Alexa Schoffel is lead script writer for the show, *Brainstorm*. She was in Theatre Tech at Leon her freshman year, and loves working behind the scenes with Leon shows. In addition to tech, she has made a trailer for Leon's *937*, and made a short documentary for Leon's summer show, *Les Miserables*. Alexa looks forward to working with more Leon shows in the future. And Leon Theatre looks forward to one day doing a totally original Alexa show!

Skyler Myers is a freshman at Leon and this is his first time working in tech or doing a Leon Theatre show and *Brainstorm* has been an amazing experience and he is so glad he was able to be a part of it.

Riley Branham has been rebuilding his house for the last year so he wanted to help construct the set. When it comes to theatre he likes it... sorta. He likes to help with a play but doesn't like acting or telling people what to do. His is also enjoying hanging out with the other cast/crew. However he was not a fan of doing the acting exercises earlier in the beginning of *Brainstorm*. Overall it's fun, and he had a good time.

Kaitlyn Lineberry is a junior here at Leon. She recently was the assistant stage manager in the fall play, *937*. She would like to thank Mrs. Marshall for being such a great role model. She would also like to thank her dad for providing all her rides constantly. She would like to thank the cast and crew for being so amazing, and she looks forward to participating in the plays next year.

Sarah Brock is a sophomore at Leon High School and is pleased to be working on *Brainstorm* this year with such an amazing cast and crew. She would like to thank Mrs. Marshall for appointing her as head of marketing and for giving her such a tremendous learning opportunity of what it takes to do that job. She would also like to thank her parents for encouraging her to participate in more school events.

Alexis Hunnewell is a part of the crew for *Brainstorm* and loved how everyone made everything super fun and interesting while still working hard. She would like to thank Mrs. Marshall for making this possible and her parents for supporting her.

Sydney Newman is excited to be working on this production. This is her first time working on a play at Leon High School. Sydney has always had a love for the arts and would like to thank her supportive family. She would also like to thank Mrs. Marshall for giving her this opportunity to shadow and learning what it takes to be a great director.

A very special thank you to. . .

JESSICA MCMULLEN: Set Shopper Extraordinaire & Maker of Brain Food!

MIKE MOCK: Set Builder Genius

TABITHA PECK: Technical Theatre Goddess

ALL THE BRAINSTORM PARENTS who sent in the most beautiful letters to their teenagers that made us all cry.

THE INCREDIBLE PERFORMING ARTS TEAM, THE ADMINISTRATION, & FACULTY @ LEON HIGH SCHOOL who support Leon Theatre in so many wonderful ways. This is truly a collaborative effort and would not be possible without everyone in this village!

WHAT IS *devised* THEATRE?

Devised theatre has numerous definitions. Eric Grode on the TDF Theatre Dictionary website states that a devised process *"typically begins with little more than a rehearsal space and a group of eager, committed theatre practitioners. Through a series of improvisatory theatre games or other conceptual ice-breakers, they start to tease out the kinds of stories they'd like to tell and the way they'd like to tell them. Over time, a text emerges, one covered with the fingerprints of each and every participant."* I love the way the students' (and parents') fingerprints are all over our script.

Vanessa Garcia in the article "The Paradox of Devised Theater on the Twenty-First Century Stage" states that it is *"theatre that begins without a script. The script gets "written" as the rehearsal process takes place through a series of improvisations and collaborations."* Our scenes were "written" through our devising sessions and then put onto paper/computer by our writing team of Alexa Schoffel, John Malley, Mia Ford-Green, and Emma Bryson. It took a lot of caffeine and cookies to really get this script put together. We are grateful to Panera for their contribution in these specific food areas.

The simplest definition is given by John Walton in the article "Devised Theatre: Ten Tips for a Truly Creative Collaboration." He states that devised theatre is *"a process in which the whole creative team develops a show collaboratively. From actors to technicians, everyone is involved in the creative process."* Our tech team was involved from the very beginning with our devising process and that made a difference and added a lot of variety to our script and the technical areas of this show. I am grateful to this cast and crew that were able to live without knowing the ending or how this was all going to come together (or even knowing IF it would all come together.) It was an exercise in trust, for them to trust me, and for me to trust this process and the magic of theatre. I am so excited about the way it all come together & all the things we have learned about the teenage brain & how hard it is to write a play!!!

This process began with a blueprint that included a TED talk by Sarah-Jayne Blakemore and a desire for us to follow our Leon Theatre theme for 2018/19 *"The stories are there if you listen. . ."* I really wanted to listen to the stories that the students wanted/needed to tell AND merge that with the latest neuroscience about the adolescent brain development and how beautiful & messy & ESSENTIAL this stage of life is for us all. I hope you enjoy and are informed & inspired by our BRAINSTORM!

thoughtfully yours,
lea marshall, director



How each scene was devised by our Cast/Crew. . .

Scene 1: CHARACTER SINGLE STATEMENTS & ROOM MONOLOGUES

These single statements began at our first Audition Workshop. Inspired by photos taken by other cast/crew members, each actor wrote their own monologues for auditioning. The single statements were the most important lines in their monologues. We chose one monologue for each "age" to represent that stage of brain development. These monologues were also springboards for each actor to create their teenage character. Note the intentional spacing of the statements in each room to reflect the scatter mindedness of each stage. . . .

Scene 2: FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL/INTRODUCTIONS

Thanks to our creative story telling writing team, our uniting story was that all the teenagers were in the same Psychology class. This gave them all a common purpose, a way to introduce themselves, and a project to work on. . . all about the teenage brain! What? A group project assigned on the first day of school? Classic.

Scene 3: BRAIN PROJECT BEGINS

Notice that only the 18 year olds are actually working on their project. Wellll, 2 out of 3 18 year olds. . . .

Scene 4: BRAIN SCAN

The teenage brain development is being explained in the 18 room and displayed in the other rooms as we peek inside the minds/rooms of teenagers.

Scene 5: POPCORN INNER QUESTIONS

This was a fun scene to create with questions all submitted by our cast/crew members of random thoughts that actually run through their head all day long. We tried to show the overwhelming nature of all those thoughts through the timing and intensity of the random thoughts.

Scene 6: BRAIN PROJECT CONTINUES

Back to work in the bedrooms with Troy explaining his understanding of the brain development as being like a messy teen bedroom. This visual was the inspiration for our bedrooms and even their colors represent the colors of a brain scan with pink/red being more prominent in younger brains and green/blue in older brains.

Scene 7: ELIA'S MONOLOGUE

Catilyn Burke wrote such a powerful monologue showing a teenager who is dependent on medication to keep her brain at its best. We wanted to include it because it is an important piece to consider in brain development. Our cast also spent time talking about what alcohol and drugs do to brain development and how recreational use can delay necessary brain development for years or even stop it for a lifetime.

Scene 8: SPROUTING & PRUNING

This is one of the most interesting concepts in teenage brain development! The amount of connections that you can make during your teenage years is greater than at any other point of your life. Your brain's elasticity is at a premium. This is the time to learn ALL. THE. THINGS.

Scene 9: YOU TUBE TUTORIALS

Our cast chose some fantastic YouTube tutorials for their characters to learn and recreate in their own video tutorials. What a wonderful set of skills to expand your brain at this time of life. . . things like raccoon wrangling. Sprouting is so useful. . . almost as useful as raccoon wrangling.

Scene 10: PARENT INTRO

We needed some parental guidance in our show. Because as you are about to see, most of our teens are missing a really important part of their brain. . .

Scene 11: THE PREFRONTAL CORTEX

Since no one on stage actually has a fully developed PREFRONTAL CORTEX, we had to bring on a mom and dad to help us illustrate the rational, planning, reality of consequences part of the brain.

Scene 12: CONTENTLESS DUOLOGUES

We loved the idea of using contentless duologues to show the lack of actual meaningful communication that sometimes (often) occurs between teenagers and their parents (and sometimes even each other.) Mrs. Marshall has raised three teenagers and thought that contentless duologues fully captured the many conversations that she had with her teenagers multiple times a week during those teen years.

Scene 13: LIMBIC SYSTEM/NEVER HAVE I EVER

There really isn't another way to show the INCREDIBLE power of the highly active teenage LIMBIC SYSTEM than to play "Never Have I Ever." We all have those moments where we should have said/shouted "NO, THIS IS A STUPID IDEA" and yet, kept on making dumb decisions. . . right? And there is no time where we see these risky decisions becoming life changing events, than in the teenage years when you don't have the PREFRONTAL CORTEX and an overactive LIMBIC SYSTEM rewarding you for all those risk taking moments.

Intermission

If you made a donation to Leon Theatre and received a SNACK PASS, then you can bring it to "mom" & grab a study snack served by a lovely "mom" who cares about your mental health and your grade on this Psychology project. ENJOY and then let's get back to work on our project!

Scene 14: LIMBIC SYSTEM/DARE YOU

As the Director of the show (and the only operational PREFRONTAL CORTEX in the bunch) I really was surprised by how much understanding of the overactive LIMBIC SYSTEM affects emotional responses helped me as a person who deals daily, hourly, minute by minute with these fascinatingly emotionally driven teenagers. And I hope it was helpful for these fascinating emotionally driven teenagers to maybe slow down and take a moment to breathe and think before making emotionally driven decisions during these messy/beautiful years.

Scene 15: PARENT & TEEN SUBTEXT

This was another fun scene to devise. And we loved the idea of subtext on the placards. And how glad are we that our subtext isn't always written on placards for everyone to see?

Scene 16: LULLABY DANCE/NIGHTTIME PARENT LETTERS

This might be my favorite scene in the show, not only because of Raven's beautiful lullaby dance, but because this is the scene that was devised by these students' parents. I asked parents to write letters to their teens and each parent monologue is made up of lines from the letters that were sent to me from the parents. I read the full versions of the letters (without names given) to the cast/crew and most of us cried throughout that reading. These were beautiful heartfelt letters and I wish we could read them all to you. I hope I captured the honest and loving sentiments of these incredible parents. I am grateful for the way they shared their thoughts and stories with us all.

{song credit: *Secret for the Mad* by Dodie Clark, dance choreographed and performed by Raven Maki}

Scene 17: POSITIVE RISKS

So the teenage brain LOVES risks and doesn't have a PREFRONTAL CORTEX to stop it from taking them, so what could be the benefit of that? Well, positive risks that change the world in wonderful ways is the answer. We need risk taking teenagers who find injustice, inspirations, and ideas that challenge our older static brains and push back the darkness of the world in brilliant ways that only these sprouting, risk taking brains can think to do.

Scene 18: YOU SAY TO ME, I SAY TO YOU

The teenage brains aren't broken, they are instruments to help fix this broken world in unique ways that are only possible at this stage of development. We (as adults) don't need to FIX their brains to be like ours but support their development and find the beauty amidst the messiness and celebrate it all while encouraging positive and healthy growth. There is complexity and purpose to this teenage brain that is amazing and we need to celebrate it! I hope we have done this well with this production!

Scene 19: YOU DON'T KNOW THIS YET

And here is where we hear from YOU! Hopefully if you are older than a teenager, you filled out a card when you entered telling us something you know NOW that you didn't know as a teenager. We will be reading some of these out at the end to bring the focus into the future and all its powerful possibilities!

and then comes the . . .

Dramatic Epilogues

I love to know "the rest of the story" and so we had the students write about where their characters ended up as fully functional adults. And then we decided to share those with you all. Mostly because they were funny. . . and sweet.

THE *Brainy* BUNCH

