

CALL ME ELIZABETH

WRITTEN BY **KAYLA BOYE**

DIRECTED BY **ERIN KRAFT**

Streaming April 23—May 9

PICTURED: KAYLA BOYE. PHOTO BY KACHI MOZIE.

KB PRODUCTIONS

PRESENTS

THE STREAMING PREMIERE OF

CALL ME ELIZABETH

WRITTEN BY **KAYLA BOYE**

DIRECTED BY **ERIN KRAFT**

Associate Producer	Christopher Pazdernik
Cinematographer	Ryan Cassell
Composer	Ethan Deppe
Vocalist	Bethany Thomas
Production Photographer	Kàchi Mozie
Wardrobe	Glamourland Vintage
Hairstyling	Necia's Hairstyling

PRODUCTION SUPPORT



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

IN-KIND SUPPORT



CAST

Elizabeth Taylor.....Kayla Boye

SETTING

A bungalow of The Beverly Hills Hotel, California. A late morning in May, 1961.

CREATIVE TEAM

Director/Dramaturg.....Erin Kraft
 Associate Producer.....Christopher Pazdernik
 Cinematographer.....Ryan Cassell
 Composer.....Ethan Deppe
 Vocalist.....Bethany Thomas
 Production Photographer.....Kàchi Mozie
 Wardrobe.....Glamourland Vintage
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SPECIAL THANKS

Karl & Susan Boye	Jennifer Marie Ledesma
Geoff Button	Arlene Malinowski
Erica Evans	Emma Parssi
Tom Freer	Porchlight Music Theatre
Michael Halberstam	Hollis Resnik
Michael & Mona Heath	Ed Tracy & Denise McGowan Tracy
Ronald Keaton	Senator John Warner
Christopher Kidder-Mostrom	Michael Weber
Sandy Lakoff	Lawrence Wright
Lawyers for the Creative Arts	Writers Theatre

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

When Kayla first sent me *Call Me Elizabeth*, I'd been staying-at-home for almost two months. I was still shocked by my broken routines and freshly afraid of dying young. I thought Kayla's play was eerily aligned with this strange and scary time we're all enduring.

We meet Elizabeth Taylor in the summer of 1961, basking in the glow of her recent Oscar win and recovering from a case of pneumonia that nearly killed her. Production for *Cleopatra* has shut down due to her hospitalization, and for the first time in her adult life, Elizabeth is compelled to take an extended break from her normally frenetic schedule. She's had a lot of time to think. And she's getting ready to take back control of her life and her story.

Elizabeth grew up as a child star on the movie lots of MGM. Like Judy Garland before her, and countless others in her wake, she learned a painful truth: When you are young and famous, there is no such thing as control. Especially for young women.

Neither the media nor the public have changed their appetites much in the past 60 years. We still build women up so that we can destroy them. I'd never given Elizabeth Taylor much thought before I started research for this play. But her story has struck a deep chord in me and challenged me to examine the ways I still unthinkingly participate in the misogyny of our tabloid culture.

Today, I've been staying-at-home for a year. After my first read of the play, in those dark days of Spring 2020, I told Kayla, "Oh my god. You wrote a play about DEATH." We've lost so much life over the past 12 months. As we inch closer to that light at the end of the tunnel, I'm reminded that the other side of death is REBIRTH. And I wonder, after our long year away from each other, who will we decide to become next?

Erin Kraft, March 2021

AUTHOR'S NOTE



PICTURED: KAYLA BOYE. PHOTO BY KACHI MOZIE.

Like so many, I have long been fascinated with Elizabeth Taylor, a pop culture icon who continues to captivate. In her youth, Taylor epitomized movie stardom, later becoming associated with her fabulous jewels, her popular perfumes, and her activism in the fight against HIV/AIDS. But what is the story behind the image? How does a star develop into a legend, and how does that legacy sustain itself? *Call Me Elizabeth* details the formative events in the life of this extraordinary woman, exploring how the strength of her character enabled her to break barriers with unshakable bravery and signature style.

I am inspired to tell the stories of trailblazing women, particularly influential figures in the entertainment industry, to show the substance behind the glamorous images created by the studio system. These women, including Elizabeth Taylor, were more than just pretty faces. They were smart, savvy, innovative feminists. Ironically, Elizabeth Taylor, arguably the biggest star of all, was responsible for destroying the very system that created her stardom. By securing her \$1 million contract with *Cleopatra*, the highest salary for a woman on film to date, she effectively ended studio domination by taking control of her projects and her life, and leading the way for subsequent generations of women to create their own work and opportunities. I seek to honor her legacy with *Call Me Elizabeth*.

Kayla Boye, March 2021

ARTIST PROFILES



Kayla Boye (Writer/Actor/Producer) is a Chicago-based artist whose recent credits include: *The Wizard of Oz* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater), *South Pacific* (Drury Lane Theatre), *Can-Can*, *Billy Elliot*, *Little Me* (Porchlight Music Theatre), *Pippin*, *Mary Poppins* (Mercury Theater Chicago), *Anything Goes*, *Gypsy*, and *Mame* (Music Theater Works.) Regional credits include: *Guys & Dolls*, *A Christmas Story* (Fireside Theatre), *On the Town* (Capital City Theatre),

and seasons with Bigfork Summer Playhouse and The Huron Playhouse. She holds a BA in Professional Writing & Editing from Youngstown State University and is a Certified Nonprofit Professional through the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance. kaylaboye.com



Erin Kraft (Director/Dramaturg) is a Chicago-based director whose recent projects include: *In A Word* (Urbanite Theatre, Sarasota), the world premiere of *The Great Inconvenience* (Annex Theatre), *We Are Proud to Present a Presentation...*, *The Fairytale Lives of Russian Girls*, *Circle Mirror Transformation*, *Tender*, *The Lady From the Sea*, and *The Merchant of Venice* (The Theatre School). She's directed new play workshops and world premieres for Seattle

Repertory Theatre, Chicago Dramatists, 20% Theatre, Prop Theatre, Washington Ensemble Theatre, Book-It Repertory Theatre, and Northwest Playwrights Alliance. She is a member of the Lincoln Center Director's Lab, the SDCF 2018-2019 Observership Class, and earned her MFA in Directing from The Theatre School at DePaul University, where she is currently a directing faculty member for the Summer High School Training Program. erinkraft.com

ARTIST PROFILES



Christopher Pazdernik (Associate Producer) is a Chicago-based artist with a "a near encyclopedic knowledge of musicals" (NewCity Stage). Past highlights include his Jeff Award-winning production of *High Fidelity* (Production of a Musical & Director of a Musical) for Refuge Theatre Project, where he also served as Artistic Director for three seasons; directing eight productions for Porchlight Revisits, Porchlight Music Theatre's

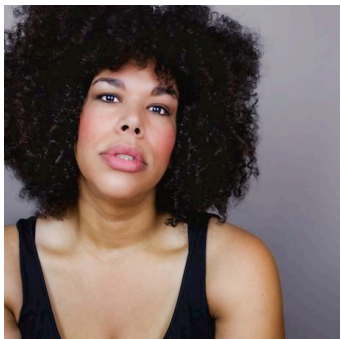
lost musicals series; curating multiple cabaret revues on the history of musical theatre; and his current position as Producing Associate & Company Manager for Porchlight. A staunch advocate for new works, Christopher has also directed many new musicals in development, served as a judge for the Chicago Musical Theatre Festival, served as reader for the National Alliance for Musical Theatre and cast the World Premiere of *Miracle* in 2019. An openly HIV+ artist, he is also very involved with HIV/AIDS advocacy work, having served on the Ambassador Committee for AIDS Run/Walk Chicago and Chairperson of Howard Brown Health's Community Advisory Board, as well producing *Belt Fest*, an annual benefit concert for Howard Brown.

ARTIST PROFILES



Ethan Deppe (Composer) is a Chicago-based composer, musician, and electronic music designer. Raised on a unique diet of classical music, heavy metal, and musical theatre, he attended the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. As a composer for the theatre, Ethan has written four original musicals and contributed original songs and scores for dozens of plays throughout Chicagoland and around the country. A prolific

composer for the screen, Ethan's music can be heard virtually every day on television. Credits include: *20/20*, *60 Minutes*, *Good Morning America*, *The Today Show*, *CBS This Morning*, *The Bold and the Beautiful*, *The Young and the Restless*, *The Nate Berkus Show*, *What Would You Do?*, *Let's Make A Deal*, *NY Med*, *Katie*, *Nightline Presents*, *Dateline NBC*, *Boston EMS*, *The Real Housewives of Melbourne*, *The Real Housewives of Sydney*, and *The Real Housewives of Auckland*. ethandeppe.com.



Bethany Thomas (Vocalist) is a Chicago singer/actor/songwriter known for her work with Writers Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Porchlight Music Theatre, Marriott Lincolnshire, The Goodman, and Milwaukee Rep; and also frequently entangled with The Fly Honeys, The Paper Machete, The Neo Futurists, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Second City, WBEZ and the Hideout. A 3Arts Awardee in music, BT tours and records with the

alt-country project Jon Langford's *Four Lost Souls*, and writes and records her own music. 2020 saw the release of her critically-acclaimed, debut album *BT/She/Her*, and another with longtime collaborator Tawny Newsome, entitled *Material Flats*. Find Bethany on Bandcamp, Spotify and everywhere else. ig: [@bethanyt80](https://www.instagram.com/bethanyt80). bethanythomasmusic.com

ARTIST PROFILES



Ryan Cassell (Cinematographer) is the founder and creative director of Castlelight Productions, a Chicago-based production house with an emphasis on visual storytelling. At the core, Cassell is a creator: making the story a central feature of his work. He specializes in filming, editing, audio engineering and post-production finessing. He works with clients ranging from music festivals and large-scale events to tourism, non-profit and

educational organizations, as well as major brands like Sony, Weber Grill and United Airlines. His care for details is one of the reasons his clients trust his vision and selection. Cassell lends his skills to events such as Coachella, the Latin GRAMMYS and Bonnaroo. His footage is also featured in the documentary *Pooh* that follows NBA player, Derek Rose. castlelightproductions.com



Kàchí Mozie (Production Photographer) is a portrait and lifestyle photographer who began his photographic journey in the picturesque city of Jos, Nigeria. While working as a music producer, he took up photography as a fun creative outlet and quickly discovered the power of the camera as a medium to connect with people. This led to deeper dives into photography education and experimentation which ultimately led him to Chicago and

photography as a career. He believes that the pursuit of light and human connection through the camera is one that will have no end as long as the earth has people and stories. His ever favourite subject to photograph remains his wife and business partner, Jeanine. kachimozie.com



Howard Brown
Health

MISSION

Howard Brown exists to eliminate the disparities in healthcare experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people through research, education and the provision of services that promote health and wellness.

SERVICES

- **Health Services**
Aging Services, Alternative Insemination (AI) Program, Broadway Youth Center, COVID-19 Services, Dental Services, Insurance Enrollment Assistance, Men's Health, OB/GYN Services, Pediatric Services, Primary Care, Trans & Nonbinary Health, Women's Health
- **HIV/AIDS Services**
Case Management, Community Testing Sites & Outreach Services, Howard Brown Health Express, Linkage To Care, Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), Services for HIV+ Women and Youth, Sexual and Reproductive Health Clinic
- **Social Services**
Behavioral Health, GED Program, In Power: The Sexual Harm Response Program, Intimate Partner Violence, Smoking Cessation, Substance Use & Abuse, Support Groups and Workshops

GET INVOLVED

To connect or donate, visit howardbrown.org

Howard Brown Health
Locations across Chicago
(773) 388-1600

BRAVE SPACE

ALLIANCE

EXPLORE YOUR WHOLE SELF

MISSION

Brave Space Alliance is the first Black-led, trans-led LGBTQ+ Center located on the South Side of Chicago, and designed to create and provide affirming and culturally competent services for the entire LGBTQ+ community of Chicago.

SERVICES

- Mutual Aid Programs
- Crisis Pantry Network
- Support Groups
- Employment Justice Program
- LGBTQ + BIPOC Job Board
- HIV Testing
- Telehealth Program
- Makeup Room
- The Den
- Training
- Organizing

GET INVOLVED

To connect or donate, visit bravespacealliance.org

Brave Space Alliance
1515 E. 52nd Place , Chicago, IL 60615
(872) 333-5199



a benefit concert for howard brown health

"SUNDAY, MAY 16, 2021"
6 P.M. CT"

ONLINE

howardbrown.org/beltingforlife

TICKETS GO ON SALE MAY 1

Jeff Award-winning director and HIV+ activist Christopher Pazdernik presents the sixth annual Belting For Life, a benefit concert for Howard Brown Health!

Streaming online this year, Belting for Life features over 25 award-winning musical theater performers, singing both musical theatre and pop songs. Enjoy a night of sensational singing while supporting one of the nation's largest LGBTQ organizations.

100% of the proceeds support Howard Brown!

 @BeltingForLife

 Howard Brown Health

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ONLINE AND IN-PERSON!**

**NEW FACES
SING BROADWAY**

1961

PORCHLIGHT **ONLINE**



HOSTED BY JEFF AWARD-WINNER
KELVIN ROSTON, JR.

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NOW THROUGH SUNDAY, MAY 16

JOIN US LIVE AND OUTDOORS THIS JUNE!

**NEW FACES
SING BROADWAY**

1979



HOSTED BY JEFF AWARD-WINNER
ALEXIS J ROSTON

FEATURING HIT SONGS FROM
**EVITA, SWEENEY TODD,
THEY'RE PLAYING OUR SONG
AND MORE!**

SATURDAY, JUNE 12 AT 8PM
NORTH SHORE CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS IN SKOKIE

TICKETS AND MORE AT
PORCHLIGHTMUSICTHEATRE.ORG

PORCHLIGHT **MUSIC THEATRE**



**NORTH SHORE CENTER FOR
THE PERFORMING ARTS IN SKOKIE**

TIME, DATE & SCHEDULED
PERFORMANCES SUBJECT TO CHANGE.
SEE WEBSITE FOR DETAILS.

CALL ME ELIZABETH

STREAMING ON-DEMAND

Friday, April 23 at 7:30PM — Sunday, May 9 at 11:59PM CDT

2021 APRIL						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1

2021 MAY						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

CONNECT



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