



**For Immediate Release**

May 14, 2024

**Press Contacts:**

Amy Killion, [amy@bucklesweetmedia.com](mailto:amy@bucklesweetmedia.com)

Rebecca Calkin, [rebecca.calkin@woollymammoth.net](mailto:rebecca.calkin@woollymammoth.net)

**WOOLLY MAMMOTH THEATRE COMPANY WITH CULTURALDC  
AND THE WASHINGTON BLADE  
PRESENT**

**ROSE: YOU ARE WHO YOU EAT**

**Conceived, Written, and Performed by John Jarboe  
Compositions by Emily Bate, John Jarboe, Daniel de Jesús, Pax Ressler, Be  
Steadwell  
Directed by MK Tuomanen  
Music Directed by Emily Bate**

*In Association with The Bearded Ladies Cabaret  
Rolling Theatrical World Premiere with La MaMa ETC and FringeArts*

**WASHINGTON, DC –Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company with CulturalDC and The Washington Blade present John Jarboe’s ROSE: YOU ARE WHO YOU EAT, in association with The Bearded Ladies Cabaret. Conceived, written, and performed by Jarboe (*she/her*), and directed by MK Tuomanen (*they/them*) this multi-disciplinary work explores gender expression and identity through performance, film, floral couture, and original music. This show has its rolling theatrical world premiere with **La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club** and **FringeArts**.**

The production runs at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company (641 D St NW) from **June 5 – 23**. Tickets and further information can be found [here](#). The press opening night is Saturday, June 8.

Once upon a vine, John Jarboe's aunt revealed that John not only had a twin sister in the womb, but that John consumed her: "You ate her. That's why you are the way you are." This was a lot for John to swallow! In this musical shrine to the consumed twin, named Rose, John welcomes you into a feast of gender through song, storytelling, and a full plate of wordplay.

"My aunt's processing of my gender as a result of fetal cannibalism is the seed for this piece: a celebration and 'digestion' of this newfound twin, who I later learned would have been named 'Rose,'" Jarboe said. "As queer folx, however we identify, we are always in dynamic tension between being who we are authentically and the tyranny of respectability: fitting in by making ourselves more palatable to get through the day, escape harassment, and for some of us, just to survive. I don't pass. I don't fit into a clean, commercialized narrative of transition. What I love about the story of 'Rose,' is that it is unmistakably disrespectful, pretty tasteless, and entirely me."

"ROSE: YOU ARE WHO YOU EAT is wildly Woolly," says **Artistic Director Maria Manuela Goyanes**. "John is a brilliant performer and I know audiences will love her witty storytelling through costumes, cabaret-style songs, toys, and performance art. This season has been a garden of queer joy, and ROSE is blooming just in time for Pride Month. Speaking of gardens, we have a bountiful bouquet of collaborators on this show, including CulturalDC, the Washington Blade, Capital Pride, the Bearded Ladies Cabaret, Works & Process at the Guggenheim, the Fabric Workshop, La MaMa, FringeArts, and so many more! It's been so exciting to all come together to provide a platform for this magnificent show."

Rose was commissioned by **Works & Process** and developed in collaboration with The Bearded Ladies Cabaret. The work was created during the COVID-19 pandemic in Works & Process bubble residencies at Mount Tremper Arts and Bethany Arts Community, with the support of the Mellon Foundation and Doris Duke Foundation. Early iterations of Rose were presented by Works & Process in the Guggenheim Rotunda (2021) Guggenheim Theater (2022), and CulturalDC (2022).

### **ART INSTALLATIONS – THE ROSE GARDEN**

In conjunction with the performance, Cultural DC will be hosting [The Rose Garden: Green Room](#), a fully immersive art installation by John Jarboe, in its Mobile Art Gallery. The gallery will be located just outside of Woolly at 7<sup>th</sup> and D Street (outside of Oyamel), as

well as into Woolly's lobby spaces. The space will be filled with video, music, and sentimental items to connect the visitors to the essence of John's consumed twin, Rose.

In addition to the Mobile Art Gallery, the activation includes an all-inclusive queer closet, in collaboration with the DC LGBTQ+ Community Center. Visitors will have a chance to shop for clothes from *Rose's Closet*, with all items free. Additional activations include videos from the production and a cozy space for writing letters to your gender.

The installation is free and open to the public, running from June 8-July 14. During the run of *Rose*, the mobile art gallery will be open Wednesday-Saturday from 12-7PM and Sunday from 12-6PM. The installation's opening will take place on June 8 from 4-7 PM.

At The Fabric Workshop and Museum in Philadelphia, [\*The Rose Garden\*](#), John Jarboe's first solo museum exhibition, will be on view through September 29. *The Rose Garden* is an immersive performance space filled with video, music, and objects devoted to John's consumed twin, Rose. Visitors can weave their way through a multi-room domestic environment reimagining John's gender journey. Through interaction with Surrealist-inspired video sculptures, visitors will discover a series of short films with original songs, hidden treats, and an immersive maze of memories and provocations.

#### **THORNS: A PRIDE DRAG FUNDRAISING EVENT**

Cultural DC and Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company are proud to co-present [THORNS: A PRIDE DRAG FUNDRAISING EVENT](#) on Saturday, June 15 at The Line DC from 12PM-3PM. The event will include performances by local drag artists, including Vagenesis and Hennessy, as well as brunch, drinks, and a wildly fun time. Proceeds from Thorns will support the production of ROSE: YOU ARE WHO YOU EAT.

Tickets go on sale on May 13 and sponsorship options are available for corporate partners and groups.

#### **ABOUT THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM**

**John Jarboe** is the Writer, Performer, and Composer; **MK Tuomanen** is the Director; **Emily Bate** is the Music Director, Musician, and Composer; **Danel de Jesús** is Musician – Cello and Composer; **Mel Regn** is Musician – Drums; **Yifan Huang** is Musician -- Keys; **Pax Ressler** and **Be Steadwell** are composers; **Jecca Barry** is Producer; **Carlos Diaz Stoop** is Associate Producer; **Christopher Ash** is Set & Video Designer; **Kate McGee** is Lighting Designer; **Taylor Jedlinski** is Sound Designer; **Rebecca Kanach** is Costume Designer; **Brian Freeland** is Production Manager; **Nic Labadie-Bartz** is the Original Production Stage Manager.

**Molly Prunty** is the Production Supervisor; **Sarah Velkovich** is the A1 Sound Operator; **Scott Monnin** is the Lighting Programmer; **Simon Sinnreich** is the Props Supervisor; **Reina Ramos** is Light Board Operator; **Thomas Nagata** is Dresser/Sound Board Operator; **Stephen Lyons** is Crew Swing.

### PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

*ROSE: YOU ARE WHO YOU EAT* runs a limited engagement from June 5-23. The typical performance week includes Wednesday - Sunday performances, with weeknights at 8:00 PM, Saturdays at 3:00 PM and 8:00 PM, and Sundays at 2:00 PM and 7:00 PM. View the full performance schedule at [woollymammoth.net](http://woollymammoth.net). There will be one Tuesday evening performance on June 18, as the theatre will be closed on June 19 for the Juneteenth holiday.

### SPECIAL PERFORMANCES

- There are Pay-What-You-Will preview performances on June 5 & 6 at 8:00 PM.
- Previews run through June 7, with the invited Opening Night on June 8 at 8:00 PM.
- A special Golden Ticket member appreciation night will be held on Thursday, June 18 at 8:00 PM with a pre-show mix-and-mingle and freebie for any of Woolly Mammoth's Golden Ticket holders in attendance.
- Pride Night (LGBTQ+ Affinity Night) will be on June 14 at 8:00 PM.
- A pre-show performance by Rose collaborator Be Steadwell will take place on Friday, June 21 at 7:00 PM in Woolly's lobby (before the 8:00 PM show).
- Members of The Gay Men's Chorus of Washington DC will be performing alongside John Jarboe during the 2 PM matinee performance on Sunday, June 23.

### TALKBACKS (IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE PERFORMANCE)

- Golden Ticket Night, Thursday, June 13 at 8:00 PM
- Pride Night, Friday, June 14 at 8:00 PM
- Sunday, June 23 at 2:00 PM

### ACCESS PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

- **ASL INTERPRETED PERFORMANCES** Saturday, June 15 at 8 PM and Sunday, June 23 at 2 PM
- **OPEN CAPTIONED PERFORMANCES** Wednesday, June 12 at 8 PM and Friday, June 14 at 8 PM
- **AUDIO DESCRIBED PERFORMANCES** Saturday, June 15 at 3 PM and Saturday, June 22 at 3 PM
- **MASK REQUIRED PERFORMANCES** Sunday, June 16 at 2 PM and Tuesday, June 18 at 8 PM

Assistive listening devices are available for all performances. Transmitters and accompanying headsets and ear speakers are available at the Box Office. For more information on Access Performances please visit [the play's website page](#).

## TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets start at \$34 and are available at [woollymammoth.net](http://woollymammoth.net), by phone at (202) 393-3939, and via email at [tickets@woollymammoth.net](mailto:tickets@woollymammoth.net).

Preview Pay-What-You-Will performances on June 5 and 6 have all pay-what-you-will tickets, and tickets will be available through Woolly Mammoth and TodayTix two weeks prior to the first date. There are also Pay-What-You-Will tickets available for every remaining performance by selecting the PWYW seats and adjusting the ticket price at [woollymammoth.net](http://woollymammoth.net).

Patrons who are 30 years old and younger may purchase tickets starting at \$25 for any performance. There are also discounts available for educators, first responders, and active U.S. military personnel, spouses, and veterans. Stampede tickets (rush tickets) for \$25 are also available for every performance, subject to availability. More information is available at [woollymammoth.net](http://woollymammoth.net).

###

## ABOUT JOHN JARBOE

John Jarboe (she/her) is a director, producer, writer, performer, and the founding artistic director of The Bearded Ladies Cabaret. After receiving a BA and a BFA in English and Theater from the University of Michigan, Jarboe moved to Philadelphia, where in the past 14 years she has created and performed work for organizations including The Wilma Theater, The Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia Horticultural Society, FringeArts, and Opera Philadelphia. She and her company The Bearded Ladies gained notoriety for their annual Bastille Day show at Eastern State Penitentiary, which grew under her writing and directing from a street festival to an hour long performance attended by over 10,000 people by 2018. Jarboe has received a 2013 Independence Fellowship, was named best drag performer in Philadelphia (2018) by Philadelphia Magazine and is a 2022 Transformation Grant awardee (The Leeway Foundation). Outside of Philadelphia she has toured original work to Miami, Seattle (Seattle Symphony) France, Poland, New Zealand (Performance Arcade), and Australia (Malthouse Theater). She has also written, performed, and directed original work for La Mama ETC, Joe's Pub, Lincoln Center's American Songbook Series, and The Guggenheim's Works & Process series. She has written for and directed original cabarets for famed opera star Anthony Roth Costanzo and is the drag dula of Stephanie Blythe. She is also a resident artist at The Fabric Workshop in Museum and recently debuted her first installation of films and objects in The Rose Garden on view till October 2024. See her upcoming work at [www.beardedladiescabaret.com](http://www.beardedladiescabaret.com) and [@johnjarbeaux](https://www.instagram.com/johnjarbeaux) on instagram.

## ABOUT WOOLLY MAMMOTH THEATRE COMPANY

The Tony Award®-winning **Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company** creates badass theatre that highlights the stunning, challenging, and tremendous complexity of our world. For over 40 years, Woolly has maintained a high standard of artistic rigor while simultaneously daring to

take risks, innovate, and push beyond perceived boundaries. One of the few remaining theatres in the country to maintain a company of artists, Woolly serves an essential research and development role within the American theatre. Plays premiered here have gone on to productions at hundreds of theatres all over the world and have had lasting impacts on the field. Currently co-led by Artistic Director Maria Manuela Goyanes and Managing Director Kimberly E. Douglas, Woolly is located in Washington, DC, equidistant from the Capitol and the White House. This unique location influences Woolly's investment in actively working towards an equitable, participatory, and creative democracy.

Woolly Mammoth stands upon occupied, unceded territory: the ancestral homeland of the Nacotchtank whose descendants belong to the Piscataway peoples. Furthermore, the foundation of this city, and most of the original buildings in Washington, DC, were funded by the sale of enslaved people of African descent and built by their hands.

### **ABOUT THE BEARDED LADIES CABARET**

The Bearded Ladies Cabaret is a queer arts organization that sits on your lap and sings you a story. Whether it's an opera, a home-made cabaret, a musical walking tour, or a show on a truck, we employ song, spectacle, storytelling, and heart to welcome audiences into moments of joy, healing, and subversion. Through sharing our original pieces and creating bespoke platforms for performance at home in Philadelphia, nationally, and abroad, we nurture artistic connection for a community of misfits, rabble-rousers, chanteuses and the people who love and need them.

### **ABOUT CULTURALDC**

CulturalDC supports innovative artists across all disciplines and makes their work accessible to diverse audiences, providing space for relevant and challenging work essential to nurturing vibrant urban communities. CulturalDC has made a name for itself in providing a platform for bold contemporary artists to interact with audiences in thought-provoking ways. Current and most recent programs include Stephanie Mercedes' Gun Destruction Opera, Never in Our Image and TORRENTS: New Links to Black Futures. In addition to presenting, CulturalDC has brokered more than 350,000 square feet of artist space since 1998. CulturalDC owns Source Theatre and the Mobile Art Gallery, a 40-ft shipping container transformed into a gallery that has been shown in all eight wards of the city and has seen over 90,000 visitors.

### **JOIN THE CONVERSATION**

Facebook: [Facebook.com/WoollyMammothTC](https://www.facebook.com/WoollyMammothTC)

Instagram, Threads, & Tiktok: @woollymammothtc

Twitter: @WoollyMammothTC