



November 13 - December 7, 2025

Goblin in Market

by Polly Pen and Peggy Harmon

Music by Polly Pen

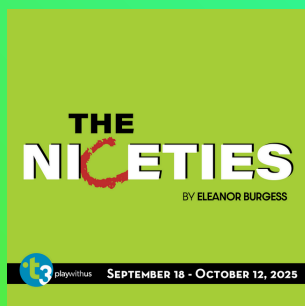
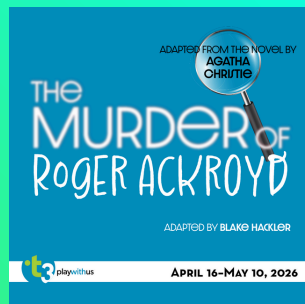
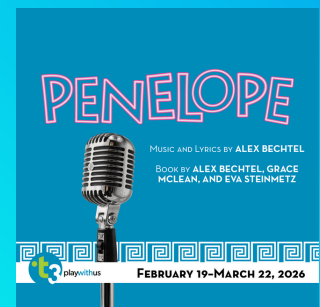
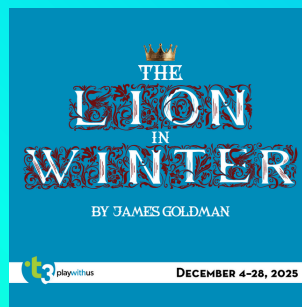
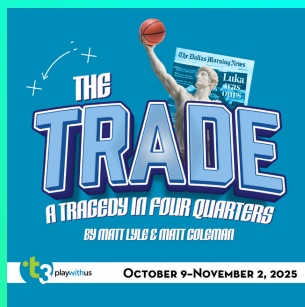
Adapted from the Poem by Christine Rossetti

Directed by
James Chandler

Music Directed by
Vonda K Bowling



25-26 Season



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Photo by Jeffrey Schmidt



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by Polly Pen and Peggy Harmon

Music by Polly Pen

Adapted from the Poem by Christine Rossetti

ARTISTIC STAFF

DIRECTOR

James Chandler

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Vonda K Bowling

CHOREOGRAPHER

Tilda Grace

SCENIC/PROJECTION DESIGNER

Jeffrey Schmidt

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Caroline Hodge

COSTUME DESIGNER

Christie Vela

SOUND DESIGNER

Dylan Hearn

Intimacy Choreographer

Claire Fountain

CAST

LIZZIE

Elizabeth Kensek*

LAURA

Jessica Humphrey

UNDERSTUDY

Briana Berk

BAND

PIANO/CONDUCTOR

Vonda K Bowling

PERCUSSION

Kami Lujan

CELLO

Molly Wang

PRODUCTION STAFF

STAGE MANAGER

Ash Peterman*

SPECIAL THANKS

Dallas Opera

Dallas Children's Theater

Dallas Theater Center

**indicates members working under Actors' Equity Association contracts in this production*

To Read the poem by Christine Rossetti [click here](#)



Photo by Jeffrey Schmidt

Bios

Polly Pen is a 1996 Obie Award winner for the score of *Bed and Sofa*, which received seven Drama Desk nominations and has been recorded on CD by Varèse Sarabande. Her first Off-Broadway production as both composer and co-author, *Goblin Market*, received five Drama Desk Nominations and the BEST PLAYS Special Citation for Music Composition and Adaptation. Other works include *Her Lightness* (Sarasota Opera), *The Dumb Cake* (McCarter Theatre), and *Christina Alberta's Father* (Vineyard Theatre), which received a Richard Rodgers Award, an Obie, and a Drama Desk Nomination for Outstanding Music. Polly is the recipient of Gilman & Gonzalez-Falla Commendation Awards and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts. Polly serves on the board of Dramatists Play Service, the council of the Dramatists Guild, and on the nominating committee of the Tony Awards. She is currently a National Theatre Artist-In-Residence at the McCarter Theatre.

Peggy Harmon is the co-writer of the book of *Goblin Market*, with music by Polly Penn, debuted at the Vineyard Theater in 1985 and enjoyed a subsequent production at Circle in the Square Theater in 1986. It is published by Dramatists Play Service.

James Chandler, he/him (Director) - No stranger to the Theatre Too! stage, James is thrilled to be returning to direct wonderful so with such an amazing production team. NYC: The York Theater (Off-Broadway), Gotham Comedy Club, NETworks National Tours; Regional: T3, Casa Manana, Uptown Players, Dallas Children's Theater, Undermain Theater, Theatre Britain, Fun House Theatre and Film, Collin Theater Center; Voiceover/TV: "Encore!" (Disney+), "Attack On Titan", "Space Dandies", "One Piece", "Dragon Ball GT", "Fairy Tail" and others (Crunchy Roll/Funimation) James is also a member of Actor's Equity Association.

Tilda Grace, She/They (Choreographer) is thrilled to be making her Theatre Three choreographic debut with this incredible team. They have been working as an actor and choreographer in the DFW area for the past three years. Tilda is currently pursuing a BFA in Musical Theatre at the University of Texas at Arlington. Recent credits include *Lord of the Flies: Literature in Motion* (Director/Choreographer) with FIT Fest/Theatre Three, and *Cabaret* (Kit Kat girl) at Theatre Arlington. Tilda would like to thank the amazing Theatre Three team, and her friends, and family for their continued love and support.

Vonda K. Bowling (Music Director/Conductor)
Theatre Three: *Carrie*, *Pirates of Penzance*, *Next to Normal*, *The Music Man*, *The Manufactured Myth of Eveline Flynn*, *Assassins*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Crazy for You*, *A Dog's Life*, *Lost in the Stars*, *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *I Love You You're Perfect Now Change* (x4), *Another Night Before Christmas*, *Songs From an Unmade Bed*, *Blankity-Blank*, *A Catered Affair*. Dallas Theater Center: *Waitress*, *In The Heights*, *Public Works Dallas' As You Like It*, *Public Works Dallas' A Winter's Tale*, *Hairspray*, *Hair*, *Hood: The Robin Hood Musical Adventure*, *Public Works Dallas' The Tempest*, *The Christians*, *Bella: An American Tall Tale*, *Dreamgirls*, *A Christmas Carol* (2015-2021), *Moonshine: That Hee Haw Musical*, *The Rocky Horror Show*. Casa Mañana: *Smokey Joe's Cafe*, *Bonnie & Clyde*, *Always...Patsy Cline*, *Grease*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*, *Tuck Everlasting*, *Frank - N - Friend*, *Matilda*. WaterTower Theatre: *Chaplin*, *The Bridges of Madison County*, *The Ballad of Little Jo*, *One Addison Concert*, *Ella's Swingin' Christmas*. Uptown Players: *Everybody's Talking About Jamie*, *The Prom*, *Kinky Boots*, *Broadway Our Way* 2020 & 2023. Much love to Jeffrey, Harrison and Mason. For TD.

Jeffrey Schmidt, he/him (SCENIC/PROJECTION DESIGN) Recent credits include directing, designing and filming T3's *The Immigrant*, and designing *Xanadu*. He has worked with many of the professional theaters in the metroplex including Dallas Theater Center, Casa Mañana, Shakespeare Dallas, Trinity Shakespeare, Kitchen Dog Theater, Undermain Theatre, Dallas Children's Theatre, Second Thought Theatre, StageWest, and WaterTower Theater to name a few. Jeffrey has worked professionally in broadcast, film, stage and behind the scenes for over 25 years. Recently, he's made appearances on *Queen of the South*, *American Crime*, *Land Man*, and worked on a live cinema project called *Distant Vision* with Francis Ford Coppola. He's Artistic Director of T3 and co-founder of the acclaimed The Drama Club..

Caroline Hodge (Lighting Design, she/her) is a Dallas based programmer and designer who is delighted to be making her design debut at Theatre Three. Favorite credits include *Every Brilliant Thing* and *Waitress* with the Dallas Theater Center, *Hair* with Arts Mission Oak Cliff, *Mini Movement Fest* ('23, '24 and '25) and *Seeds* ('23, '24, and '25) with Agora Artists, *Jet Fuel* and *A Dallas Hedda* with Bishop Arts Theatre Center and *The Persians* at Undermain Theatre. Caroline would like to thank her family and her colleagues for their support. See more of her work at CEHodgeLighting.com.

Bios Continued

Dylan Hearn, he/him (Sound Designer) is a graduate of Savannah College of Art and Design with a B.F.A. in Sound Design. He is working as the Production Manager at T3, a place where diverse artists make diverse work, and inclusivity thrives. He loves making weird sounds in multiple different mediums like animation, film, and theatre. The people in the office love his work. Dylan has experience as an Audio Engineer, Sound Designer, Re-recording Mixer, and his favorite, otamatone player. Again, the people in the office love his work. His love of both theatre and film pushes him to be a sound designer that blends the two realms of media and creates something new.

Christie Vela (Costume Designer) currently serves as the Associate Artistic Director at T3, is a founding member of the Brierley Resident Acting Company at Dallas Theater Center, a company member at Kitchen Dog Theatre, and an artistic associate at Second Thought Theater. You've seen her work as a director/actor in the Metroplex at Dallas Theater Center, Kitchen Dog, Second Thought, Echo Theatre, Amphibian Stage, Undermain Theatre, Shakespeare Dallas, Circle Theatre, and Stage West. She frequently directs outside of Dallas at Trinity Rep in Rhode Island. Christie also recently directed her first feature film *The Finale*, available now for streaming on Amazon. She's thankful to John, Isa, Dante, Jones, Scully, Roxie and Stella for their patience & support.

Claire Fountain, she/they (Intimacy Choreographer) is an intimacy choreographer, actor, and playwright based in Dallas. Recent intimacy choreography credits include *Debbie Does Dallas* at Theatre Too, *Camp Contrition* with SheDFW, *Romeo and Juliet* with Greenville Theatre Works, for the rest of our lives with Arts Mission Oak Cliff, *The Taming of the Shrew* with Shakespeare Everywhere, *Almost, Maine* and *Calendar Girls* at Allen Contemporary Theatre, *How I Learned to Drive* at Sundown Collaborative Theatre, and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* at Theatre Denton. She wants to thank her mom for her endless love and support.

Ash Peterman, they/them (Stage Manager) is so excited to once again be back at Theatre Three! They have been bouncing around the Dallas theatre world for the last five years in roles ranging from run crew to stage management. Recently they worked on *El Rey del Pollo* with Echo Theatre (Stage Manager), *Most Likely Forever Yours* the Elevator Project at Wyly Theatre (Stage Manager), and the Theatre Three 2024-2025 Apprenticeship Program where they completed the Production Assistant track. On the rare occasion they aren't at rehearsal, they spend their time sewing, watching horror movies, or planning their upcoming wedding.



Photo by Jeffrey Schmidt

Bios Continued



Elizabeth Kensek, she/her (Lizzie) is honored to be making her T3 debut. Recent DFW credits include: Judy in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* at Theatre Arlington; Sugar in *Tiny Beautiful Things* at Circle Theatre; Diane in *The Little Dog Laughed*, Laurel in *Torch Song & Broadway Our Way* at Uptown Players. NYC credits include: *Into the Woods* (Baker's Wife); *Assassins* (Sarah Jane Moore); *Twelfth Night* (Viola/Cesario); *The Cradle Will Rock* (Sister Mister); and *Rusalka* (Adleta). Elizabeth is Managing Director of Amphibian Stage in Fort Worth & proud member of Actors' Equity. For my little sister, Victoria.



Jessica Humphrey, she/her (Laura), a Dallas native, is an Assistant Professor of Theatre at Texas Christian University. She holds a BM from Western Carolina University, an MFA from San Diego State University, and will complete her doctorate in Spring 2026. A working director, choreographer, and performer on stage, screen, and voiceover, she also serves as President of the Musical Theatre Educators' Alliance. Beyond theatre, Jessica holds a WSET Level 2 Certification in Wine and Spirits and hosts the podcast Tannins and Tunes. Learn more at www.jessicamhumphrey.com.



Briana Berk, she/her, (Understudy) is thrilled to be working at Theatre Three for the first time! Briana is a proud graduate of Texas Christian University, where she received a degree in Church Music. In college, she studied voice and organ, and performed in many operas. Some of Briana's favorite roles include Bea Bottom/*Something Rotten!*; Christine/*Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*; Sister Mary/*Disaster!*; Regina/*Rock of Ages*; and Margot/*Legally Blonde*. Briana was born and raised in North Carolina where she sends all her love and thanks to her family.

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Goblin Market

Goblin Market

By Polly Pen and Peggy Harmon
Music by Polly Pen

Adapted from the poem by Christina Rossetti

The lettering is ornate and the linework is heavy: this is the cover for the Dramatist Play Services, Inc., libretto of the 1985 musical *Goblin Market*. There, in the lower curve of the letter G, sits a fantastical figure with batlike ears, offering up what looks to be a piece of fruit from a basket in its lap.

The creature offers the fruit to a pair of women nearby, who luxuriate on the outer wings of the letter M. These women appear to be mirror images of each other, yet the one on the left, posing as she does, is turned slightly toward the creature. That's all; there's little to suggest anything but an offer we might be wise to decline. Still, one might say there's an allure here, an itch to tease out more meaning. But it's only fitting that this book - or libretto - should resist being judged so easily by its cover, for what awaits inside is just as mysterious.

Goblin Market, the narrative poem from which the 1985 chamber musical is faithfully adapted, was written in 1862 by Christina Rossetti. It tells the story of Laura and Lizzie, two sisters who wrestle with the temptation to buy "apples and quinces, lemons and oranges, plump unpeck'd cherries, melons and raspberries," and more, from the goblins who have set up shop by the sisters' home. When Laura gives in, and seems upon eating the fruit to fall supernaturally ill, her sister Lizzie must summon all her courage and familial love to save Laura's life. Rossetti, for her part, insisted it was a tale for children, as much of her literary output was. But is it really that simple?

Polly Pen, one of the two authors of the musical, recalled that she had been introduced to the poem in college, after which point she "began to read it every Halloween with friends." Which only makes sense: there's the ghostly, elegiac register of Rossetti's verse; the allusions to sin, despoliation, and death; and of course the titular goblins. It's all in good, creepy fun. But is it possible that *Goblin Market* has endured for so long not just for its haunted trappings, but because it invites us - dares us - to make sense of it?

Goblin Market

If so, we as audience members would not be alone in the effort. Some scholars have read the work as a piece of erotic mysticism; others, a feminist critique of Victorian morality; others still a reification of the same. Of this disagreement Dolores Rosenblum, in *Christina Rossetti: The Poetry of Endurance*, writes that "the poem presents the same problems as a Kafka fable: the reader cannot but interpret, and no interpretation can account for all the details." To extend Rosenblum's comparison, is it possible that the search for a definitive meaning dooms us, like Kafka's Josef K., to go wandering in search of a castle or a fair judgement that slips away as we draw near?

Pen and her co-author Peggy Harmon forgo any particular reading, preferring to foreground the relationship between the sisters. "These are not black and white caricatures," they write in their authors' notes, "Laura has as many fears within her as Lizzie, while Lizzie has as much of an adventurous spirit as Laura. They simply take different paths." It's a clarity of artistic purpose that served the authors well: *Goblin Market*, the musical, opened at the Vineyard Theatre in New York City. It was well-received, gaining performance and technical nominations for the Drama Desk Awards; the very next year the chamber musical was revived with its original cast - Ann Morrison as Lizzie, and Terri Klausner as Laura - at Circle in the Square.

James Chandler, director of *Goblin Market* at Theatre Three, elects for a similar, character-first approach, taking full advantage of the opportunity to stage a two-hander in T3's intimate downstairs space. "A two-person show," Chandler says, "can always give you the ability to play in ways that you can't with a larger cast; the relationship between the [sisters] becomes far more important when there's only two on the stage...it heightens everything from the get go."

And to Chandler, a sense of playfulness is a key part of this story. Laura and Lizzie share the memory of the *Goblin Market* by turns as an in-joke, a memory game, or a duet; yet unto death they retain the same youthful spirit. The sisters, Chandler says, "can go on this adventure one more time, as they did when they were kids." And the beauty, the director says, is that *Goblin Market* invites its audience to join in the journey too, "to play as you did when you were a child."

Maybe the perfect cover design need not say everything about a work - maybe all it needs to do is to get us to turn the first page, and so take part in the adventure of imagination.