



Austin Playhouse presents

# The Battlefields of CLARA BARTON

By Suzan Zeder and Jenn Hartmann Luck

*Directed by*  
Lara Toner Haddock  
*Musical Direction by*  
Lena Gabrielle  
*Assistant Musical Direction*  
Ezri Claire Killeen  
*Stage Managed by*  
Kenedi Delgado  
*Sound Designed by*  
Robert S. Fisher & Tyler Parks  
*Costume Designed by*  
Buffy Manners  
*Dramaturgy*  
Taji Senior

## Featuring

Michelle Alexander Sarah-Marie Curry Laura Huffman Powell  
Espy Biehle Claire Grasso Sarah Fleming Walker  
Charlita Brooks Bella Ouellette Sarah Zeringue

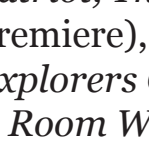
*Conductor/Piano* Lena Gabrielle *Percussion* Richard Huntley *Bass* Gary Calhoun James *Guitar* Adam Sultan

## Production Sponsor

The Carolyn Rice Bartlett Charitable Foundation

## With Special Thanks To

The American Music Theatre Project at Northwestern University  
The Paramount Theatre  
Hyde Park Theatre  
Penfold Theatre Company  
Trinity Street Playhouse



Poster Image Design by Colleen Quinn Rice

# Production Bios

**Lara Toner Haddock** (Co-Producing Artistic Director) has directed over twenty productions for Austin Playhouse including *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, *Red Hot Patriot*, *The Book of Will*, *Summer and Bird* (world premiere), *Monroe* (world premiere), *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*, *Sense & Sensibility*, *Silent Sky*, *The Explorers Club*, *The Norwegians*, *Roaring*, *Venus in Fur*, *And Then There Were None*, *A Room With A View* (which she also adapted), *Age of Arousal*, *Dug Up*, *Women Who Steal*, *Moonlight and Magnolias*, and *A Texas Romance*. She also directed *Age of Arousal* at Northwestern University. She is a member of the Austin Playhouse Company. Favorite Austin Playhouse roles include Tracy in *The Philadelphia Story* (Austin Chronicle Top 10 Performances of 2015), Catherine in *The Foreigner*, Brooke in *Other Desert Cities*, *The 39 Steps*, Hypatia in *Misalliance*, Lottie in *Enchanted April*, and Thomasina in *Arcadia*.

**Suzan Zeder** (Book & Lyrics) has been recognized nationally and internationally as one of the nation's leading playwrights for family audiences. Her plays have been performed in all fifty states, Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Japan, Korea, Israel, Australia, and New Zealand. She is a six-time winner of the Distinguished Play Award given by the American Alliance of Theatre and Education. Recent plays include *When She Had Wings*, commissioned by Imagination Stage and developed at New Visions New Voices at the Kennedy Center, and the book/ lyrics for a new musical, *Gretel!* with music and lyrics by Jenn Hartmann Luck. In 2013, Zeder retired from The University of Texas at Austin where she led the Playwriting/Directing program for over 23 years and was the first holder of an Endowed Chair in Theatre for Youth/Playwriting. As President of the Board of Trustees of The Children's Artists Foundation of America, she helms an organization that provides grants to theatre, bestows awards and funds collaborative activities in the field of Theatre for Young Audiences.

**Jenn Hartmann Luck** (Music & Lyrics) is a singer, songwriter, performer, arts educator, and an accomplished creator of new musical theatre. Notably, she is composer and co-lyricist of *Gretel! The Musical*, co-written with award-winning playwright Suzan Zeder. *Gretel!* premiered at Austin's Paramount Theatre in 2019, was produced by First Stage Milwaukee in 2020, and is available for licensing through Dramatic Publishing. Also with Zeder, Jenn received a Kennedy Center commission in 2020 for the short piece *The New Next-door Neighbor*. Jenn's other musical theatre workshops as composer/lyricist include *You Can't Win* and *Footprints: An Eco-Musical*. Jenn most recently served as Director of Partnerships and Programming for Education at the Paramount Theatre, on the Board of the International Association for Performing Arts for Youth, and as a Lecturer in the Department of Theatre & Dance at the University of Texas at Austin. She holds a BA in Theatre from Arizona State University and an MFA in Drama and Theatre for Youth and Communities from The University of Texas. Jenn's credits also include two original solo albums, *I Admit and Silly Urban Girl*, and her one-woman show *Not a Chorus Girl*, which played to audiences in both New York and Los Angeles. She was beyond proud to be invited by the White House to sing the National Anthem for President Obama in 2014 and is equally as proud to adapt children's stories into songs with the Paramount Story Wranglers.

**Lena Gabrielle** (Music Director/Arrangements) is a New York City and Austin-based music director, arranger/orchestrator, composer/lyricist, and performer specializing in new works development. Favorite NYC and regional credits include *Emojiland* (NYT Critics Pick January 2020), *Endangered!*, *The Most Miserable Christmas Tree*, and *A Taste of Things to Come*. Upcoming: *Falling in Love With Mr. Dellamort*. Lena's original songs and musicals have been performed all over the country, and her musical *Tink* received an award for excellence in family theatre at the New York Musical Festival in 2016. As an advocate for mental health awareness, Lena is a volunteer crisis counselor with Crisis Text Line, and she is also developing a one-woman show about living with and embracing mental illness. For Grandma. lenagabriellemusic.com.

**Ezri Claire Killeen** (Assistant Music Director) is a recent graduate of Northwestern University, where she received a BM in Voice and BS in Journalism. In addition to her degrees, she graduated with a certificate in Music Theatre and a concentration in Music Direction. Currently, she serves as the Music Director and Supervisor for the web series *Life Now* with The National Theatre and Imagine U. Recent credits include: *The Secret of Camp Elliot* (90th Annual Waa-Mu Show), *Pippin* (The Dolphin Show). All her inspiration comes from her incredible mother, Lynn.

**Kenedi Delgado** (Stage Manager) has been working backstage on productions with Austin Playhouse since 2014, including *She Loves Me*, *Summer and Bird*, *Copenhagen*, *Bloomsday*, *Baskerville*, *A Little Night Music*, *Chicago* and *The Foreigner*. She has also acted on the Austin Playhouse stage in *The Smartest Girl in the World*, *The Arkansas Bear*, and *I'm Not Rappaport*. She graduated with a B.A in Theatre from Southwestern University in May 2017.

**Robert S. Fisher** (Sound Designer) is an artist, musician, and collaborator in Austin with Rude Mechs, Austin Playhouse, and Hyde Park Theatre. Robert has co-created, designed and/or performed in Rude productions since 2000, including most recently *Field Guide*, *Requiem for Tesla*, *Fixing Timon of Athens*, and *Now Now Oh Now*. He designed sound for the Austin Playhouse productions of *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, *Tiny Beautiful Things*, *Holmes and Watson*, *The Book of Will*, *Summer and Bird*, *Monroe* and *Lucky Stiff*. For Hyde Park Theatre, Robert recently designed the regional premiers of *A Doll's House Pt. 2*, *The Antipodes*, *Wakey Wakey*, *The Wolves*, and last appeared in *The Night Alive*.

**Buffy Manners** (Costume Designer) designed over one hundred productions for Austin Playhouse and Don Toner. She has also designed *Three Sisters*, *Eurydice*, and *Measure For Measure* for Mary Moody Northen Theatre at St Edward's University; *Cherry Orchard* and *Ghosts* for Breaking String Theatre; and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, *Henry V*, *Richard III*, *The Rivals*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, for Austin Shakespeare Festival. A few years ago, she was fortunate enough to be invited to design a production of *Hamlet* for Prague Shakespeare Festival at the National Theatre in Prague, Czech Republic, directed by Tina Packer. She has been nominated for several B. Iden Payne and Austin Critics' Table Awards for her past work, and last season won a Critic's Table award for *Shakespeare In Love* at Austin Playhouse.

**Taji Senior** (Dramaturg) is an actor, writer and theater maker. Her most recent solo project, *amendment: the making of an american myth, or the slowing sipping of a peacock tea*, is the recipient of three 2020 B. Iden Payne Awards for Outstanding Original Script, Outstanding Digital Production, and Outstanding Direction. Her solo performance, *A' (What the Black Girl Found While Searching for God)* was produced as a radio play by The Parsnip Ship (NY) and her solo performance, *devour.*, was an official selection of LadyFest 2019 produced by The Tank NYC. She made her Austin Playhouse debut in the 2018 production of *Monroe*. She holds an MFA in Acting from UCLA (March 2021) and a BA in Journalism from Texas Tech University.

**Laura Huffman Powell** (Clara Prime) has had the joy of performing on many of Austin's stages over the past 30 years. Credits include *How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying* (Mrs. Jones), *Company* (Joanne), *Disney's Beauty and the Beast* (Mrs. Potts), *The Thing About Men* (Lucy), and *Annie Get Your Gun* (Annie). She is actively involved with Zilker Theater Productions as a performer, former Board of Directors President, Communications Coordinator and head "cheerleader". By day, she is a Realtor with All City Real Estate. She is grateful for the opportunity to bring Clara Barton to life in this exciting production.

**Isabella "Bella" Ouellette** (Clara 1/Child) lives in Chicago, IL and will be going into Illinois. Bella has appeared as Ivana in *Once* at the Paramount Theatre in Aurora 6th Illinois. Molly in The Performer's School production of *Annie Jr* at Ravinia Theater among other roles in various community theater productions. Other credits include a guest starring role in NBC's *Chicago Fire*, the lead role of Girl in the upcoming short film, *My Summer Vacation*, as well as several commercials and voice over roles. Isabella began singing at the young age of 2, beginning voice lessons at 5 and started her professional acting career at the age of 6. Bella is represented by Carole Dibo Talent Management and CESD LA & New York. Bella is inspired by strong women and has many in her life, this is why this is a dream project for her to be involved in. "I am inspired by my mom, Stephanie, because she is a very strong and independent woman, like Clara Barton. She is her own woman, not who other people want her to be."

**Sarah Zeringue** (Clara 2/Grand Duchess) appeared in the Austin Playhouse productions of *She Loves Me* (Amalia), *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *Triumph of Love*, and *Chess*. Other credits include *The Little Mermaid* (Ariel) with Zilker Theatre Productions, *Side Show* (Violet) with Trinity Street Players, *Seminar* (Kate) with Jarrott Productions, *The Rocky Horror Show* (Columbia) with Doctuh Mistuh, *Into the Woods* (Cinderella) and *Fiddler on the Roof* (Chava) both with TSP/AJRT collaboration, as well as productions with ATP, City Theatre, Different Stages, ZACH, Casa Manana, and other companies throughout Oklahoma and New York. Sarah would like to thank two women who inspire her every day: her sister Amelia and her mother Debbie (both healthcare professionals who would have made Clara proud).

**Sarah Fleming Walker** (Clara 3/Mabel Boardman) appeared in the Austin Playhouse productions of *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *A Little Night Music*, and *Guys and Dolls*. Other recent credits include the Tex-Arts production of *Wait Until Dark*, LOLA (Local Opera Local Artists) production of *La Femme Boheme*, and Zilker Theatre Productions' *Footloose* and *The Man*. Originally attaining a BFA in Musical Theatre from the University of Arizona, Sarah went on to work towards a Masters in Vocal Performance at Texas State University. She has performed roles and been a soloist with Austin Lyric Opera in *The Marriage of Figaro* and the World Premiere of *Waiting for the Barbarians*. Favorite productions include *Into the Woods*, *Kiss me, Kate*, and *Crimes of the Heart*.

**Michelle Alexander** (Clara 4/Susan B. Anthony) is thrilled to be performing with Austin Playhouse for the first time. This will be a returning opportunity to perform in *The Battlefields of Clara Barton*. Other Theatre credits include *Notes From The Field* (multiple characters), *Christmas Carol* (Mrs. Fezziwig/Cratchit), *Mary Poppins* (Ms. Andrew), *Xanadu the Musical* (Melpomene), *All the Way/Great Society* (Coretta Scott King) with Zach Theatre. *Saul Pawns Alien Adventure* (Gigi), RAPPUnzel (Mama) with Austin Scotts Rite Theatre, *Acorn and Robin* (Robin) with Pollyanna Theatre, *Single Black Female* (SBF1) with Ground Floor Theatre and a company/board member for TILT performance group. This performance is dedicated to WOMEN. All women!

**Espy Biehle** (Choria) appeared in the Austin Playhouse production of *Damn Yankees*. Other credits include *Big River*, *Guys and Dolls*, *West Side Story*, *Will Rogers Follies* and *Crazy for You* with Zilker Theater Productions. Favorite productions include *Hair* and *Evita* with Zachary Scott and *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Music Man*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Gypsy* and *The Wizard of Oz* with Austin Musical Theater/Broadway Texas. Behind the scenes, she can be seen choreographing and staging local productions in Austin.

**Charlita Brooks** (Choria) is a singer and songwriter and is making her debut with the Austin Playhouse production. With degrees in Developing Musicianship and Songwriting, she's had two recording contracts with music released and on streaming platforms. She's been invited to open and perform for known artists, and honor the late tejano singer, Selena, by the family. Much of her theater work has been with King Productions since 2005. Her most notable roles were the first production of *For the Love of Mahailia* (Bessie Smith), the second production of *For the Love of Mahailia* (Young Mahailia), *Cinderella the Hip Hopera* (Stepsister and Music Director), and her favorite, the adaptation of *The Preacher's Wife* where she starred as Whitney Houston's Character (Julia Biggs).

**Sarah-Marie Curry** (Choria) is making her Austin Playhouse Debut. Regional credits include: *Fun Home* (Alison), *The Last Five Years* (Jaimie), *Reefer Madness* (Mary Lane), *Company* (Jenny), *Into the Woods* (Cinderella), *Ordinary Days* (Deb). On stage she has been called "hilarious" "fierce" "truly exceptional" and is a local Austin, Texas award winner for both Outstanding Lead Actress as well as Best Improv Troupe multiple times over. When not performing, she is a passionate coach, director and producer of improvisational theater and teaches acting with Carole Hickey Acting Studio. For show updates and more go to [www.sarahmariecurry.com](http://www.sarahmariecurry.com).

**Claire Grasso** (Dolly) is an Acting Company member of Austin Playhouse. She has appeared in their productions of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Rosa Bud), *Shakespeare in Love* (Viola), *Bloomsday* (Caithleen), *Silent Sky* (Margaret), *The Explorers Club* (Phyllida), *The Norwegians* (Olive), *Chicago* (Go-to-Hell Kitty), *She Stoops to Conquer* (Kate Hardcastle), *Roaring* (Riley), *The Liar* (Isabelle/Sabine), *Man of La Mancha* (Antonia), *Lady Windermere's Fan* (Lady Windermere), and *A Room with a View* (Lucy Honeychurch). Other credits include *The Letters* (Anna), *Skylight* (Kyra), and *Waiting for Lefty* (Florence) with Street Corner Arts, *Marie Antoinette* (Therese Lamballe) with Capital T Theatre, and *It's A Wonderful Life: Radio Play* with Penfold Theatre. She holds a BA in Musical Theatre from The University of Tulsa.

**Richard Huntley** (Percussion) has performed in over 30 countries worldwide, including major jazz, blues and world music festivals. He has performed and/or recorded with jazz greats George Coleman, Harold Mabern, Jerry Gonzalez, Mulgrew Miller, Esperanza Spaulding and Dom Salvador. Other musical associations include singer-songwriter Natalie Merchant, Hazmat Modine, and collaborations with the Gangbe Brass Band from Benin and the Toureg guitarist Bombino. Recent recordings include a piano trio with pianist Nikolaj Hess and bassist Cameron Brown *The Art of The Hang*, and a cast recording of the musical *This Beautiful City* by the late Michael Friedman. He is the music director for the world premiere of the musical *Your Love--the Little Willie John Story* at the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park in November 2021. Richard is on the faculty at the Butler School of Music at UT, Austin. He holds an M.M. from The Manhattan School of Music, where he was on the faculty for 12 years.

**Gary Calhoun James** (Bass) has been a part of The Long Center's Summer Stock Austin for the past five seasons including productions of *The Music Man*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Sister Act* and many more. He also recently appeared in Ammon Taylor's *Rites of Warming* at the Boyd Vance Theater. In addition to regular theatre performances, Gary is an active studio and live sound engineer and a performing musician with many groups including Charlie Faye and the Fayettes and Atlas Maior. Gary studied String Bass at The DePaul School of Music in his hometown of Chicago.

**Adam Sultan** (Guitar) has worked as an actor, composer, and musician with Andrea Ariel Dance Theater, Fusebox Festival, Graham Reynolds, and Physical Plant Theater. He was the guitarist for *Gretel! The Musical* at the Paramount Theatre.

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