



Columbia School of Arts  
MFA Acting Class of 2024  
presents

# METAMORPHOSES

A new play inspired by Ovid  
By Sami Ibrahim, Laura Lomas, Sabrina Mahfouz

Wednesday, March 1st @ 8 pm

Thursday, March 2nd @ 8 pm

Friday, March 3rd @ 8 pm

Saturday, March 4th @ 3:30 pm & 8 pm

The Theatre @ Schapiro

**160 Minutes, With Intermission**

## CONTENT WARNING

Adult themes in this show include explicit language and/or images of violence, sexual violence, drug use, suicide, and death.

The subject matter of this production may be difficult to receive at times. We encourage you to take care of yourself and honor your health, mentally and physically. We want to offer you the space to step out of the theater if necessary. Please step out in between pieces to respect the space and our performers.

## Myth Members

*ACHILLES* - Sarah, Veda

*ARACHNE* - Evan, Alecsys, Will, Aaron, Mollee, Zack, Emily

*ACTAEON* - Roberto, Sabrina, Sahil, Julian, Sarah, Revon, Tiffany, Veda

*ORPHEUS* - Zack

*CEPHALUS and PROCRIS* - Sahil, Revon

*MYRRAH* - Sabrina, Tiffany, Veda, Roberto

*The MINOTAUR, ARIADNE, THESEUS, and SCYLLA* - Veda, Roberto

*CAESAR* - Aaron

*JUNO and JUPITER* - Charles, Mollee

*EURYDICE* - Emily

*IO* - Aaron, Evan, Zack, Will, Mollee, Charles

*PHAETON and PHOEBUS* - Tiffany, Sabrina, Veda, Zack, Will

*HECUBA, POLYXENA, and POLYDOROUS* - Sarah, Mollee, Charles

*MIDAS and the Judgement of APOLLO* - Julian

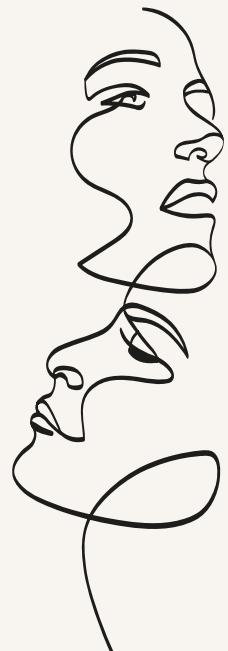
*MEDEA* - Emily

*PHILEMON and BAUCIS* - Mollee, Charles

*PROCNE and PHILOMELA* - Revon, Sahil, Sarah, Julian

*PENTHEUS and BACCHUS* - Will

*Orpheus and the CICONIAN WOMEN* - Alecsys, Emily, Sabrina, Mollee, Sahil, Veda, Tiffany, Sarah, Evan





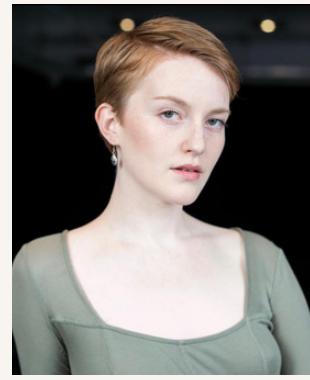
**AARON ANDERSON**  
(he/him) "I'm from Houston like Beyoncé and nem"..."  
thank you so much for coming hope you enjoy our play.



**WILLIAM APPIAH**  
(he/him) is an LA native and artist that strives to create and develop work that illuminates the black experience in all its shades and colors.



**VEDA BALDOTA**  
(she/hers) Theatre credits include *Halfway Bitches Go Straight To Heaven*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The House of the Spirits*.  
Thank you Mom!  
IG: @vedabaldota



**MOLLEE BARSE**  
(she/hers) "(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud and the sky of the sky of a tree called life;which grows higher than soul can hope or mind can hide)" - E.E Cummings



**EVAN BILLUPS**  
(she/hers) Recent:  
FRIENDSHIP in *Everybody* (Schapiro). BA Yale University '20, Columbia MFA Acting Candidate '24.  
IG: @evanbillups  
www.evanbillups.com



**SARAH CHALFIE**  
(she/hers) Most recent Columbia credits include *Halfway Bitches Go Straight to Heaven* and *MoscowX6*.  
[www.sarahchalfie.com](http://www.sarahchalfie.com)



**CHARLES DENTON**  
(he/they) Grateful above all for the loving support from mentors, friends and family. Proud of my classmates whose creativity and endurance inspire me daily. Thanks to Bridget.



**SAHIL KAUR** (she/hers) is in her 2nd year of Columbia's MFA Acting program. Recent credits: *Everybody*, *Two Noble Kinsmen*, *Richard III*. Thanks for all your support!  
IG: @sahilkaur



**EMILY KLEYPAS**  
(she/hers) Recent: DEATH in *Everybody* (Schapiro). Alumni of Fiasco Theater's 6WK Cons., and Actors Theatre of Louisville apprentice program.  
IG: @ekleypa  
www.emilykleypas.com



**TIFFANY McLARTY**  
(she/hers) God bless the women of Iran.



### ROBERTO PEREZ

**(he/him)** I really hope you enjoy this exploration of life, death and everything in between. Good luck!



**ALECSYS PROCTOR - TURNER** (she/hers) is a Miami gyal! She thanks this amazing cast for their openness to create, and her momma for reminding her everyday that her voice truly matters.

[www.alecsyslyrix.com](http://www.alecsyslyrix.com)



### ZACK LOPEZ ROA

**(He/Him)** is a U.S. Air Force Veteran, a descendant of Cuban Immigrants, and a proud dog dad and husband.

IG: @zacklopezroa



### JULIAN SHAHEEN

**(he/him)** is originally from Los Angeles. He's been in other plays and even a television show. He's a second-year at Columbia.



### SABRINA VICTOR

**(she/hers)** is a performance activist of proud Haitian heritage. *"Honored to tell the stories of those who go unheard. We lift up their voices. For you, Ardlley."*

[www.sabrinavictor.com](http://www.sabrinavictor.com)



### REVON YOUSIF

**(he/him)** Born in Detroit, Revon is of Chaldean descent. Before coming to Columbia, Revon lived in Chicago working in film, theatre, and television.

Socials: @revonyousif



### GILLIAN ABBOTT (she/hers)

**Director** - is making her directorial debut! Perf. credits: "Baby" in National Broadway tour of *Dirty Dancing*; HBO's *Boardwalk Empire*; Cirque du Soleil's *Beatles LOVE*; The Metropolitan Opera's *Prince Igor* and *Macbeth*; "Masha" in *Three Sisters* at Columbia University. BFA in Dance, The Juilliard School; MFA in Acting, Columbia University.



### JULIAN ABELSKAMP

**(he/him) Assistant Director** - is an actor and creative based in Los Angeles. He's thrilled to have had the chance to return to Columbia and play around with this wonderful group of artists for a few weeks.

[www.julianabelskamp.com](http://www.julianabelskamp.com)

# A Note on Translation

-By Sami Ibrahim, Laura Lomas, Sabrina Mahfouz

Skin

23 mentions of skin  
where to begin  
begin with a cow  
black and white  
or brown

Io

a woman turned into a cow.

The Latin word for skin is pellis

or cutis or tergium or corium  
or tunica or paellis or tergus  
or pellicula or mastruca or  
corius or tegmentum or  
membrana or tegus or  
folliculus or excuviae or  
mastruga or paellicula or  
scortum or deglubo or decorio

all with other meanings  
such as armour or leather  
or back or bark or peel or hide  
so you begin to see that the beginning  
is never that,  
translation choosing the end point  
but in the end  
there are 22 more mentions of skin.

Next most seen in English as  
'her native whiteness'  
describing Io as she returns to human  
form. Latin word for white here is albus,  
also meaning bright and clear ,  
so she could have been 'native bright'  
meaning,  
the glow of returning to her original form  
after being chased around the world  
for decades as a cow, by a mosquito.

Another word for white is candidus,  
which also means bright and shining,  
brown yellow beige black skin can be  
bright and shining,  
someone chose for it to not mean this.

Whiteness was decided  
where it wasn't  
so the translators of the time  
could please their prejudice,  
ancient texts to prove a racism invented.

The myths themselves came from  
Libya, Ethiopia, Turkey, Syria  
Greece

let's just always say Greece/Italy  
and it will become the end we want  
another word for white is increto  
which also means chalk -  
or whitewash.



# CREATIVE

**DIRECTOR** Gillian Abbott

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR** Julian Abelskamp

**PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER** Eden Mullins

**ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER** Miranda Soledad Tejada

**SOUND DESIGNER** Sam Kim

**LIGHTING DESIGNER** Mikaela Baird

**MUSIC COMPOSITION** Alecsys Proctor-Turner

**MUSIC ORCHESTRATION** Deandre Sevon

**PRODUCER** Sabrina Victor

# SPECIAL THANKS

James Calleri Peter Jay Fernandez Scott Whitehurst Liz Hayes Ron Van Lieu  
Sita Mani Shanga Parker Ralf Jean-Pierre Jean McClelland Thomas Gimore  
Julia Martin Linda Marvel

# RESOURCES

## SUPPORT GROUPS

### **Weekends of Recovery**

Taking Back Ourselves  
Men Healing

### **Columbia University Support Groups**

Visit [www.health.columbia.edu](http://www.health.columbia.edu) for sexual  
trauma survivor groups day/time

### **National Sexual Violence Resource Center**

Serves as the nation's  
principle information and  
resource center regarding all  
aspects of sexual violence.

### **The Anti-Violence Project**

The New York City Anti-Violence  
Project provides free and  
confidential assistance to LGBTQ  
and HIV-affected individuals in  
New York City through direct  
client services, community  
organizing and public advocacy.

### **Darkness to Light**

Empowering people  
to prevent sexual  
abuse.

### **SUICIDE & CRISIS PREVENTION RESOURCES**

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, available 24 hours in  
English and Spanish: dial 988  
If you're under 21, you can call Teen Link at 866-  
TEENLINK (866-833-6546) and ask to talk to a peer  
Text "HEAL" to the Crisis Text Line at 741741 or contact  
Lifeline Crisis Chat

# A Note from the Directors,

This show came as an absolute surprise and delight for us. Although we've dreamed of directing a project together, we didn't expect the opportunity would arise quite so soon! We stepped into the role of directors mid-process – and out of the necessity of time, found a way of collaborating with the actors and other creative team members that ultimately speaks to what this play is all about. We've traditionally known the role of director to imply an artistic hierarchy when it comes to the vision of the play. Our rehearsal rooms (yes, multiple at once) in contrast have seen a leveling of the power-over structure, in an attempt to truly embrace each actor's voice and point of view. We began by meeting with the actors individually to envision a score for each myth that synced with what we believe to be the intention behind this adaptation – and from there, we've given them the support they needed to bring it to life.

Ovid himself was dealing with the question of "who holds power?", while he wrote *Metamorphoses*. He was interested in retelling well-known Greek myths from the perspective of those without agency inside of them. The three writers of this new imagining of his epic have continued to be interested in similar things. When they came together to write this adaptation, they viewed Ovid's stories through the lens of the Summer of 2020 – as the world reckoned with the pandemic, the murder of George Floyd, and the expanding resonance of the Me Too movement.

The last word of Ovid's epic is *vivam*—which means, "I will live." This is believed to be Ovid telling us, "My body might die, but my words will live." It could be said that he has created a living text, one for us to continue to develop as a collective. Even a few short years after this version of the play was written, these stories may hold a different resonance for some than they would have during their conception. As these writers kept the integrity of Ovid's original text, we invite you to notice where these stories provoke you and where they resonate with your own experience of humanity.

From campfires to theatres, may we continue to gather and tell stories in order that we may truly know ourselves.

Enjoy the show!  
G & J

