

THE  
**THEATRE  
SCHOOL**  
.....  
AT DePaul University

presents

# V.I.P.

by Molly Rosen

Director – Joanie Schultz  
Stage Manager – Kristina Heiden-Lundberg  
Scenic Designer – Kathryn Healy  
Lighting Designer – Maday Favela  
Sound Designer – Forrest Gregor  
Projection Designer – Grant Palmer  
Costume Designer – Grace Onofrey  
Dramaturg – Dylan Cohen  
Production Manager – Sam Leapley  
Technical Director – Scott Cavallo

**May 19-23, 2021**

**The Theatre School at DePaul University**  
2350 N. Racine Ave, Chicago, IL 60614

Email: [theatreboxoffice@depaul.edu](mailto:theatreboxoffice@depaul.edu)

Phone: (773) 325-7900

## CAST

Ryan Adams ..... Josh  
Emilie Hanson ..... Olivia  
Amelia Hernandez ..... Jennifer  
Kaitlyn Piotroski ..... Emerson  
Annie Reznik ..... Angelica

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Assistant Director ..... Maday Favela  
Assistant Production Manager ..... Michaela Marcotte  
Assistant Projection Designer ..... Ana Fiz  
Assistant Scenic Designer ..... Olivia Volk  
Assistant Sound Designer ..... Felix Schauz  
Assistant Stage Managers ..... Casey Fort, Sarah Matthews  
Assistant Technical Director ..... Xavier Kwong  
Carpenter ..... Noah Abrams  
Props Master ..... Amy Peter  
Sound Technician ..... Ethan Foss

## PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

Confession: I love pop culture, even though I know it's bad for me. I know that so much of what we are led to believe is true isn't, and that it's all too common for women especially to hold ourselves to impossible standards based on what we see in the media. And yet, I find something irresistible about following celebrity fall outs, "train wrecks", and moments where private and public merge. I grew up tracking Taylor Swift's exes, the early ideas that became this play stemmed from my fascination with Instagram influencer Caroline Calloway, and I now know far too much about up-and-coming pop star Olivia Rodrigo's interpersonal drama.

It's not just celebrities who have differing public and private personas, but celebrity brands are the ones with the power to influence the rest of us, whether we choose to engage with them or not. What would it mean for a pop star to tell the truth? How would this change the way we consume them? How could our society be kinder to women in the public eye, and to us, those who idolize them?

I feel lucky to be living in an age where it's becoming more common to see the humanity in everyone and consume media with a grain of salt. But the truth will always be a fleeting and enigmatic piece of the story.

-Molly Rosen

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

"I traded fame for love without a second thought, it all became a silly game, some things cannot be bought. I got exactly what I asked for, wanted it so badly. Running, rushing back for more, I suffered fools so gladly. But now I find I've changed my mind." – Madonna, "Substitute for Love," Ray of Light, 1996.

Who in America hasn't, at some point, fantasized about what it would be like to be rich and famous?

I have. I was 12 years old in 1990 with a ponytail on the side of my head interviewing myself on videotape "at 30." According to the interview, in that year I had won the Oscar and Tony, had a best-selling novel, and won the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. All in the same year! But my hero, Madonna, was unabashedly ambitious, and taught me that regardless of the fact that I was poor, weird, and female I could conquer the world. My tenacity, talent, and hard work would pave the way. I wanted to be more than a regular person. I wanted to be a very important person.

Looking back at my young self, I see an American optimism and excitement about my future. But I also see a girl that didn't understand that Madonna was the exception, not the rule. We can't all be Madonna. And far fewer people were famous back then. However, over the past 30 years with the advent of reality television and the internet, more avenues have opened up for people to become "famous for fifteen minutes" as Andy Warhol prophesized. This has made becoming a celebrity in some ways more attainable, but also harder to hang on to. As this opportunity has been normalized, the "American Dream", which used to mean homeownership, education, and a good life for your family, has been replaced with the new American Dream of fame and fortune.

What 12-year-old me, or 16-year-old Olivia don't realize is that it comes at a cost. That the system doesn't just reward the values of tenacity, talent, and hard work. That the values of the machine that creates celebrity often reward those with connections, manipulators, and bullies, while it upholds the sexism, racism, and ableism that permeate our entire culture.

Is it possible to go through this system and not uphold it? To not adopt the values, it's asking of you? Can one become a celebrity and still be themselves? Can a celebrity be truly happy? What does it mean to be "very important", and who decides?

Molly Rosen's *V.I.P.* asks some very poignant questions about our contemporary culture in this world premiere. I am two generations older than the artists I've been lucky to collaborate with on this production, and they have taught me so much. From them I have deepened my understanding of how celebrity culture has changed in both good and bad ways from the time that I was a Madonna fangirl, due in large part to the ever-increasing pressure from the feedback machine of the internet. Our pivot to create this play on this virtual platform provided an opportunity to amplify that part of the predicament, allowing us to frame our story within the ever-present paparazzi, fans, and haters of the internet.

Thank you for sharing this virtual space with these very important people.

-Joanie Schultz

## DRAMATURGY NOTE

Identity is often crafted in the eyes of the public, and no public is easier to manipulate than Instagram followers. Celebrities and regular people alike can Facetune the shape of their bodies, spin stories in the captions, and offer a massive platform to products they may not have even tried themselves. When Instagram users scroll past a photo, they don't see the set, the lights, the makeup artist, and they certainly won't see the publicist.

Everyone who uses social media manipulates their *image*—I'm certainly guilty of curating virtual glimpses into my life that best reflect my "aesthetic" or (ugh) "brand." The difference between me and TikTok's most popular creator Charli D'Amelio is that, through a unique combination of luck and circumstances, D'Amelio has learned how to capitalize off of her online presence.

When Gen Z watches D'Amelio do a 60-second dance while sporting a hoodie she co-created with Hollister, they don't perceive her as a master of digital advertising. They see her as a friend from their 8 a.m. Zoom class. You've likely experienced this sensation this year, but "looking" at your audience (be it your peers, coworkers, family) is merely focusing attention on a lens. D'Amelio has influenced her followers to purchase overpriced sweatshirts, and they flood her comments with responses to her riveting pseudo-eye contact.

D'Amelio is a celebrity, just like Barack Obama, Kim Kardashian, and Michael Jordan. But when it comes down to it, their merit—or how they attain their power—vastly differs for each one of these celebrities. Call it clout chasing, being a sellout, or an industry plant, but the transition from normie to celebrity is dependent on people buying what they sell, their "brand." Themselves. To Chris Rojeck, the grandfather of celebrity studies, the importance fans place on celebrities not only sheds light on their individual construction of self, but also their desire to control the object of their affection.

In the world of Molly Rosen's *V.I.P.*, bubblegum pop icon Angelica has been perceived as every young girl's best friend for 10 years. Angelica's self-made manager Emerson, the fans (deemed "the Angels"), and the music industry all invented Angelica. But now they control her. The collective maintenance of their good 26-year-old girl satisfies their innate desire to influence a celebrity who has power over them—remember how D'Amelio is a friend? So is Angelica. She "smiles her pretty smiles and sings her pretty songs," and, in exchange, she gets to live the life her fans all secretly wish they had.

And if it's not all real—who cares? That's what pop culture is all about.

—Dylan Cohen

## SPECIAL THANKS

Alex Patterson, Antonio L. Rodriguez, Bridget Harris, Jesi Mullins, Parker Molacek, Rocco Disanti

## BIOGRAPHIES

**Ryan Adams (he/him)** (*Josh*) BFA3/Acting. Ryan is an actor and musician from Naperville, Illinois. His Theatre School credits include *Suicide, Incorporated* (Tommy), *A Dream Play* (Ensemble), and *You On the Moors Now* (Darcy). This lovely, virtual show marks Ryan's mainstage debut at The Theatre School.

**Emilie Hanson (she/her)** (*Olivia*) BFA3/Acting. Emilie, an actor, musician, and avid pop culture enthusiast from Tacoma, Washington is absolutely thrilled to be involved in Molly Rosen's *V.I.P.*! Her credits include: Monty Cole's *American Teenager*, *The Wolves* (#14, ACT Theatre), and *Sweeney Todd* (Joanna, Arts West). She would like to thank her family, her roommates, and the cast and crew for their constant kindness and support.

**Amelia Hernandez (she/her)** (*Jennifer*) BFA4/Acting. Amelia is an actor from Houston, Texas. Some of her past Theatre School credits include *Blood Wedding* (Bride), *Luchadora!* (Lupita), *The Model Play* (Paola), and the Chicago premiere of *Maz and Bricks* (Maz). Amelia is currently based in Chicago and is represented by Stewart Talent.

**Kaitlyn Piotroski (she/her)** (*Emerson*) BFA3/Acting. Kaitlyn is an actress, singer, dancer, and poet from New Canaan, Connecticut. Her Theatre School credits include *The Moors* (Agatha), *Rumors* (Cookie Cusack), and *American Teenager* (Kaitlyn Maroney). Most recently, Kaitlyn was a Voiceover artist for TTS Escape Room, performed in a CDM Short Film Project, "Rem" (Jess), and "Stood Up Guy" (Cindy). Kaitlyn is thrilled to be a part of *V.I.P.* and hopes everyone watching has a rockin' time! Love you Mom, Dad, Eddie, and all my supporters through this crazy time.

**Annie Reznik (she/her)** (*Angelica*) BFA3/Acting. Annie is an actor, singer, director and writer from Los Angeles. Educational credits include: *Polaroid Stories* (Philomel) directed by Stephanie LeBolt, *The Fantasticks* (El Gallo) directed by Rob Adler, *The Old No. 4* (Tessie) directed by Steve Pickering, *Dis/Ease* directed by Dado, and *Bachelorette* (Gena) directed by Kristina Fluty. Annie was honored to portray Sue-icide in the Los Angeles workshop of new musical *Home Street Home* at Center Theatre Group. She'd like to give special thanks to Molly, the whole cast and crew, and her acting coach and mentor Lea Floden.

**Joanie Schultz (she/her)** (*Director*) Joanie is a Chicago-based director of theater and opera. *V.I.P.* is her Theatre School debut. Recent credits include *2.5 Minute Ride* (Studio Theatre, DC), *Frankenstein: A Ghost Story* (Kansas City Repertory Theatre), *A Doll's House Part 2* (Jungle Theatre, Minneapolis), and *A Small Fire* (Philadelphia Theatre Company). Joanie has also served as Artistic Director of WaterTower Theater in Dallas, Texas and Associate Artistic Producer of Victory Gardens Theater in Chicago. She holds her MFA in Directing from Northwestern University and BA in Directing from Columbia College. [www.joanieschultz.com](http://www.joanieschultz.com)

**Molly Rosen (she/her)** (*Playwright*) BFA4/Playwriting. Molly is a Chicago based playwright, hailing from Cleveland, Ohio. Her plays *12.5%* and *V.I.P.* have received developmental readings at The Theatre School's Wrights of Spring festival, and her audio play *Friends From Camp* will be presented this spring. She has interned for the Alliance for Jewish Theatre and Victory Gardens Theatre in literary management and public programs.

**Kristina Heiden-Lundberg (she/her)** (*Stage Manager*) BFA3/Stage Management. Kristina is a stage manager and preschool teacher from Seattle, Washington. She has minors in Education & Social Justice, American Politics, and Public Policy. Recent Theatre School credits include *The Tomorrow Show* (Stage Manager), *A Wrinkle in Time* (Asst. Stage Manager), and *Come Back, Little Sheba* (Stage Manager).

**Casey Fort (he/him)** (*Asst. Stage Manager*) BFA1/Stage Management. Casey is a stage manager and designer from Anaheim, California. This is his second production during his first year at The Theatre School. His most recent credits include *The Thanksgiving Play* (Stage Manager), *13 the Musical* (Stage Manager), and *The Addams Family* (Lighting Designer) as well as working as a Lighting Intern at the OC-Centric New Play Festival in Orange County, California.

**Sarah Matthews (she/her)** (*Asst. Stage Manager*) BFA2/Stage Management. Sarah is from Yadkinville, North Carolina. She was a crew member for The Theatre School's production of *Luchadora!* and an Assistant Stage Manager for *Come Back, Little Sheba*. This past quarter, Sarah interned as a stage management mentor at a local theatre in her hometown.

**Kathryn Healy (she/her)** (*Scenic Designer*) BFA4/Scenic Design. Kat is a scenic designer from Atlanta, Georgia. She's been held responsible for *Twelfth Night* (Scenic Designer), *Brooklyn Bridge* (Assoc. Scenic Designer), and *Marie Antoinette* (Scenic Designer/Guillotine Enthusiast). Her plans for post-graduation include working closely with artist Dame Darcy in Savannah, Georgia to design and develop Meat Cake Manor, a "haunted" hotel in a restored Victorian mansion.

**Olivia Volk (she/her)** (*Asst. Scenic Designer*) BFA1/Scenic Design. Olivia is from Hermosa Beach, California. She is looking forward to working on future Theatre School productions and raiding the prop closet. This will be her sixth theatre production and first at The Theatre School.

**Maday Favela (she/her)** (*Lighting Designer/Asst. Director*) BFA3/Theatre Arts. Maday is a designer, director, and writer from Tepihuanes, Durango, Mexico.

**Forrest Gregor (he/him)** (*Sound Designer*) BFA2/Sound Design. Forrest is a sound designer originally from Portland, Oregon. Theatre School credits include: *Barbecue*, *God of Carnage*, *Love and Information*, and *Marisol*. Forrest is very excited to be designing *Peerless* in the fall.

**Grant Palmer (Projection Designer)** BFA2/Projection Design. Grant is a Video Designer and Network Engineering student from Madison, Wisconsin. His interests include augmented/virtual reality, real time generated content, and video installation based work. He has interned for the past two years with VYV-US Corporation in Chicago.

**Ana Fiz (she/her)** (*Asst. Projection Designer*) BFA1/Projection Design. Ana is a projection designer from Denver, Colorado. Her Theatre School credits include *Building The Wall* (Video Design and Editing). Outside credits include *King Charles III* (Asst. Projection Designer) at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival and various productions at Denver School of the Arts as projection designer, lighting designer and costume designer.

**Grace Onofrey (she/they)** (*Costume Designer*) BFA3/Costume Design. Grace is from Gary, Indiana. Her Theatre School credits include *The Tomorrow Show* (Costume Designer), *Brooklyn Bridge*, and *Luchadora!* (Asst. Costume Designer). In Fall 2019, Grace served as the costume designer on a short film called "The Inner Rooms," set to premiere in late 2021.

**Dylan Cohen (they/she)** (*Dramaturg*) BFA4/Theatre Arts, Communications and Media. Mediated-storyteller. Ethnographer. Monster (complimentary). Previous credits range from *Polaroid Stories* (Asst. Director) to coaching improv to making original TikToks for Encyclopedia Britannica. Dylan will be premiering *Empathy Labs*, an immersive theatre experience, this June. [dylantcohen.com](http://dylantcohen.com)

**Sam Leapley (he/him)** (*Production Manager*) BFA4/Theatre Technology. Sam is a Production Manager and Technical Director from Edwardsville, Illinois. Theatre School credits include: *King Oedipus*, *Brooklyn Bridge* (Technical Director); *Honey Girls*, *Polaroid Stories* (Assistant Technical Director); and *She Kills Monsters*, *Satyagraha: Ghandi/King* (Master Carpenter).. Recent professional credits include: Production Management Apprentice & Staged Reading Coordinator (Dorset Theatre Festival), Asst. Technical Director (Christmas at DePaul), and Scenic Carpenter & Deck Crew (Muhlenberg Music Theatre).

**Ethan Foss (he/him)** (*Sound Technician*) BFA4/Sound Design. Ethan's Theatre School credits include: Sound Design- *Jeff & the Dead Girl*; Sound Technician- *Neighborhood 3: Requisition of Doom*, *A Dybuk or Two Worlds* and *Polaroid Stories*; and Sound Associate- *The Wong Kids...* He previously worked for a non-profit in Arizona for a number of years.

## THEATRE SCHOOL FACULTY/STAFF

Jason Beck ..... Assistant Dean  
Dean Corrin ..... Associate Dean  
John Culbert ..... Dean  
Victoria DeIorio ..... Chair, Design and Technical Theatre  
Damon Kiely ..... Chair, Performance  
Michelle Lopez-Rios ..... Artistic Director, Chicago Playworks  
Coya Paz-Brownrigg ..... Associate Dean for Instruction  
Chair, Theatre Studies  
Jeanne Williams ..... Associate Director of Academic Advising

### ADMINISTRATION

Anna Ables ..... Director of Marketing and PR  
Mitsu Beck ..... Business Operations Manager  
Sheleene Bell ..... Executive Assistant  
Tracee Duerson ..... Director of Admissions  
Kayla Raelle Holder ..... Director of the High School  
Summer Training Program  
Azar Kazemi ..... Associate Diversity Advisor  
Joshua Maniglia ..... Technical Operations Manager  
David Marden ..... Marketing Assistant/Group Sales  
Ashley Meczywor ..... Assistant Director of Admissions  
Mechelle Moe ..... Director of Creative Root  
Kristin Morris ..... Manager of Special Events and PR  
William Nalley ..... Director of Development  
Dexter Zollicoffer ..... Diversity Advisor

### ACTING AND DIRECTING

Dexter Bullard ..... Head of Graduate Acting  
Jeff Mills ..... Head of Undergraduate Acting  
Lisa Portes ..... Head of MFA Directing  
Rob Adler ..... Linda Gillum  
Chris Anthony ..... Damon Kiely  
Sommer Austin ..... Kathy Logelin  
McKenzie Chinn ..... Nicole Ricciardi  
Charles Gardner ..... Krissy Vanderwarker

### MOVEMENT

Patrice Egleston ..... Head of Movement  
Kristina Fluty ..... Nick Sandys Pullin  
George Keating

### VOICE AND SPEECH

Phil Timberlake ..... Head of Voice and Speech  
Deb Doetzer ..... Phyllis E. Griffin  
Mark Elliott ..... Michelle Lopez-Rios

### COMEDY ARTS

Liz Joynt Sandberg ..... Head of Comedy Arts  
Jake Noll

### DESIGN

Christine Binder ..... Head of Lighting Design  
Victoria DeIorio ..... Head of Sound Design  
Regina Garcia ..... Head of Scene Design  
Sally Dolemba ..... Head of Costume Design  
Jeff Bauer ..... Jack Magaw  
Stephanie Farina ..... Noelle Thomas  
Davonte Johnson ..... Mike Tutaj  
Eleanor Kahn ..... Anna Wooden

### TECHNICAL THEATRE

Deanna Aliosius ..... Head of Costume Technology  
Sue Fenty Studham ..... Head of Stage Management  
Shane Kelly ..... Head of Theatre Technology  
Miguel Armstrong ..... Izumi Inaba  
Richard Bynum ..... Ed Leahy  
John Coleman ..... David Nauton  
Rebecca Curl ..... Michael Rourke  
Laura Dieli ..... Laura Whitlock  
Christine Freeburg

### THEATRE STUDIES

Diane Claussen ..... Head of Theatre Management  
Carlos Murillo ..... Head of Playwriting  
Coya Paz Brownrigg ..... Head of Theatre Studies  
Alan Saltzenstein ..... Head of Arts Leadership  
Rachel Shteir ..... Head of Dramaturgy  
David Chack ..... Azar Kazemi  
Dean Corrin ..... Reza Mirsajadi  
Isaac Gomez ..... Shade Murray  
Sarah Hecht ..... William O'Connor  
Criss Henderson ..... Maren Robinson  
Kristin Idaszak ..... James Sherman  
Jan Kallish ..... Willa Taylor

### LIBERAL STUDIES

Colette Gregory ..... Ryan Kitley  
Carolyn Hoerdemann ..... Rachel Slavick  
Lin Kahn

### TECHNICAL STAFF

Bryan Back ..... Lighting Technologist  
Tim Combs ..... Technical Director  
Dominic DiGiovanni ..... Scene Shop Foreperson  
Jessie Gowens ..... Wardrobe Supervisor  
Randy Handley ..... Costume Shop Supervisor  
Chris Hofmann ..... Director of Production  
So Hui Nye ..... Draper  
Sheila Hunter ..... Draper

Kelsey Lamm ..... Production Coordinator  
Jennifer Lightfoot ..... Wig and Makeup Supervisor  
Jen Leahy ..... Theatre Technical Director  
Erin Paige ..... Sound Technologist  
Amy Peter ..... Properties Supervisor  
Jim Keith ..... Assistant Theatre Technical Director  
Scott Slemmons ..... Carpenter  
Joanna White ..... Scenic Artist

### AUDIENCE SERVICES

Collin Jones ..... Manager of Audience Services  
Preston Choi ..... House Manager  
Margaret Howe ..... House Manager  
Mo Shipley ..... House Manager

### THE THEATRE SCHOOL BOARD

#### SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Michael Faron ..... Chair  
Sondra A. Healy ..... Chair Emeritus  
Joseph M. Antunovich ..... Brian Montgomery  
Monika Black ..... Marcello Navarro  
Paul Chiaravalle ..... Vonita Reescer  
Lorraine Evanoff ..... Linda Sieracki  
Whitney A. Lasky ..... Richard Sieracki  
Tamara Meyer ..... The Reverend Msgr. Kenneth Velo  
Irene Michaels ..... Tomer Yogev

#### PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES

Glenn Davis ..... Paul Konrad  
Scott Ellis ..... Paula Cale Lisbe  
Samantha Falbe ..... Amy K. Pietz  
Scott Falbe ..... John C. Reilly  
Zach Helm ..... Charlayne Woodard  
Criss Henderson ..... Dennis Zacek

#### HONORARY MEMBERS

Dr. John Ransford Watts  
Merle Reskin