Welcome to American Blues Theater’s Chicago premiere of Roan @ the Gates written by Artistic Affiliate Christina Telesca Gorman and directed by Lexi Saunders. We’re proud to share this relevant and timely story.

You’ll find hundreds of news articles about data collection breaches, whistleblower protections, and surveillance of U.S. citizens by our own Democratic and Republican-led administrations. Open a newspaper or search your browser. Ask Alexa. Or Siri. Or Echo. Heck, even On-Star will respond if they’re feeling cheeky.

Do you read the privacy statements before using a new app? What about reading the ever-changing notices from your credit card companies? Ever receive a pop-up ad about a subject in which you’ve had a conversation only to suspect your phone or computer was “listening”?

Christina Telesca Gorman’s title character Roan says, “What’s being collected and stored is not information; it’s leverage.”

There are five U.S. federal laws that include a right of access to personal data: Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts (FERPA), Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA), and Privacy Act of 1974. In addition, California’s privacy act for residents began January 1, 2020. The most comprehensive data protection legislation is the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the European Union. Even the United Nations created an aspirational Sustainable Development Goal 16, target 9, which calls for the provision of legal identity for all human beings.

This play’s drama teeters on the balance between marriage vows and the required oath to the Constitution by some federal employees. Christina Telesca Gorman made this topic personal, intimate, and poignant. As you weigh Roan’s decisions in this perilous situation, try not to think about all the data points collected on you today: point-of-sale purchases, web addresses visited, social media posts, cell-phone tower pings, and municipal and private businesses’ video and audio recording devices.

If you haven’t heard this battle cry yet, you will: data rights are human rights.

— Gwendolyn Whiteside
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presents
the Chicago premiere

ROAN@ THE GATES

by Christina Telesca Gorman*
directed by Lexi Saunders*

Scenic Design .............................................................. Sarah E. Ross*, USA
Lighting Design ............................................................ Jared Gooding*
Costume Design .......................................................... Lily Walls*
Composer/Sound Design ............................................. Eric Backus*
Properties Design ....................................................... Amanda Barth
Intimacy Design ......................................................... Charlie Baker
Production Stage Manager ........................................... Shandee Vaughan*^

* Ensemble member or Artistic Affiliate of American Blues Theater
^ Member of Actors’ Equity Association

FEBRUARY 6 - 29, 2020 (previews 1/31 – 2/5)

Roan @ the Gates received its World Premiere at Luna Stage
in West Orange, New Jersey; Ari Laura Keith, Artistic Director

Roan @ the Gates received a developmental workshop at the Alley Theatre
in Houston, Texas; Gregory Boyd, Artistic Director, Dean R. Gladden, Managing Director.

American Blues Theater
4809 N. Ravenswood Ave., Suite 221, Chicago, IL 60640
Phone: (773) 654-3103   AmericanBluesTheater.com

American Blues Theater is a constituent of the Theatre Communications Group, Inc – the national organization for nonprofit professional theaters, the League of Chicago Theaters, Arts Alliance Illinois, and Lakeview Chamber of Commerce.

American Blues Theater operates under agreements between Producers’ Association of Chicago Area Theatres, Actors’ Equity Association – Stage Directors & Choreographers Society, and United Scenic Artists of America, Local 829 – AFL-CIO.
CAST (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

Roan ......................................................................................................................................... Brenda Barrie^  
Nat ......................................................................................................................................... Jasmine Bracey^  
Voiceovers ............................................................................................... Dana Black*^ & James Joseph*

* Ensemble member or Artistic Affiliate of American Blues Theater  
^ Member of Actors’ Equity Association

As a courtesy to the actors and your fellow patrons, please turn off your phone before the performance. The taking of photographs and the use of any type of recording device are not allowed in the theater during the performance and is a violation of state and federal copyright laws. Digital media will be deleted and tape or film will be confiscated.

SETTING

Alexandria, Virginia & Moscow, Russia.

Present. The action takes place over six weeks.

This production is performed without an intermission.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Artistic Director .................................................................................................... Gwendolyn Whiteside*  
Associate Producer ............................................................................................................. Elyse Dolan*  
Production Manager / Stage Manager .................................................................... Shandee Vaughan*^  
Assistant Stage Manager .................................................................................. Julie Jachym  
Assistant Director ........................................................................................ Vic Wynter  
Assistant Scenic Design .................................................................................. Olivia Bastien  
Assistant Intimacy Design ............................................................................... Kyra Jones  
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COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR ROAN @ THE GATES

American Blues Theater believes it is an honor and duty to serve our community. We raise awareness of other non-profit organizations’ great causes through creative collaborations. We partner with Northwestern University’s The Family Institute, Chicago Public Schools, University of Chicago’s Computer Science Graduate students, and Center on Halsted. We continue our “Pediatric Previews” that donate proceeds of preview performances to St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital. To enrich your experience, visit AmericanBluesTheater.com.
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Our ushers are provided by the Saints—Volunteers for the Performing Arts.

For more information visit Saintschicago.org or call (773) 529-5510.

BIOGRAPHIES

BRENDA BARRIE (Roan)
is thrilled to return to American Blues Theater where she last performed in Six Corners. Select Chicago credits include United Flight 232 (House Theatre); The Downpour (Route 66); Mother Road (Goodman Theatre); Middletown, Sex with Strangers, and Okay Bye (Steppenwolf Theatre); Julius Caesar and Elizabeth Rex (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); Memory, Aunt Dan and Lemon, How I Learned to Drive, and Waiting for Lefty (Backstage Theatre); The Ruby Sunrise (Gift Theatre); Mrs. Caliban and Mariette in Ecstasy (Lifeline Theatre); A Streetcar Named Desire (Metropolis); and Caravaggio (Silk Road Rising). Brenda is a company member with the House Theatre, where she's excited to perform the title role in Henry V later this spring. She's received four Joseph Jefferson Award Nominations for Principal Actress and two Nominations for Ensemble. Television credits include Chicago Code, Chicago P.D., Chicago Med, and Chicago Fire. She received her BFA in Theatre from the University of Indianapolis and studied theatre at the University of Ulster, Northern Ireland. Love and thanks to Andy and Corinne.

JASMINE BRACEY (Nat)
is thrilled to be making her American Blues Theater debut. CHICAGO: A Christmas Carol, How to Catch Creation, Lottery Day (u/s performed) (Goodman Theatre); A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Shakespeare’s Greatest Hits (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); and Animal Farm (Steppenwolf Theatre). REGIONAL: Shakespeare In Love, Truth: The Testimonial of Sojourner Truth (Hope Summer Rep); An Octoroon (Berkeley Repertory Theatre); You Can’t Take It with You (Alley Theatre); As You Like It (The Acting Company); Clybourne Park, To Kill a Mockingbird, Wit, The Little Foxes, O Beautiful, Our Town, A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Resident Ensemble Players); Macando (Guthrie Theater); and Antony and Cleopatra (Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival). EDUCATION: MFA, University of Delaware.
DANA BLACK (voiceover) is a Chicago based actor and American Blues Artistic Affiliate, whose recent credits include understudying Dance Nation at Steppenwolf Theatre, The Undeniable Sound of Right Now (Raven Theatre); Book of Will (Northlight Theatre); The Few (Steep Theatre); Rolling (Jackalope Theatre); Abraham Lincoln Was a F@gg@t (About Face Theatre/Jeff Award nomination for Best Supporting Actress); Hank Williams: Lost Highway (American Blues Theatre); Miss Marx (Strawdog Theatre); The Count of Monte Cristo (Lifeline Theatre); This Happy Breed (Timeline Theatre). Regional credits include: Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley (TheatreSquared); Heisenberg (The Studios of Key West). TV credits include Empire, Chicago Med, Proven Innocent and Hot Date. Dana is a graduate of The School at Steppenwolf, Skidmore College and is represented by Grossman & Jack Talent Agency.

JAMES JOSEPH (voiceover) is a proud Artistic Affiliate of American Blues Theater. He completed his tenth season of It’s a Wonderful Life: Live in Chicago! Also at American Blues he appeared in Tobacco Road, performed voiceovers for Hank Williams: Lost Highway and American Myth, and has written for the Ripped festival. He has performed on Chicago stages for twenty years, including at Steppenwolf Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Victory Gardens Theater, and TimeLine Theatre. He is your audio guide for the permanent Chicago Authored exhibition at the Chicago History Museum, and was nominated for a Non-Equity Jeff Award (Supporting Actor) for his role in Faith Healer with UMA Productions.

CHRISTINA TELESCA GORMAN (Playwright) is a proud Artistic Affiliate of American Blues Theater. Her plays include Fidelis (The Public Theater); American Myth (American Blues Theater, Theatre Artists Studio); Roan @ the Gates (Alley Theatre’s Alley All New Festival); On the Outs (Ensemble Studio Theater); Split Wide Open (NYC Summer Play Festival); Sorin: A Notre Dame Story (University of Notre Dame, national tour); Just Knots (national and international theatres, winner of Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Festival Plays 34th Series); Sacred Ground (Stella Adler Studio); and DNA (Prospect Theatre Company, Hangar Theatre). Her plays have been produced and/or developed at Geva Theatre Center, Capital Repertory Theatre, New Harmony Project, Lark Play Development Center, Troy Foundry Theatre, Stageworks/Hudson, Playwrights Foundation, and Berkshire Playwrights Lab. Christina is an inaugural member of The Public Theater Emerging Writers Group and a WP Theatre Playwrights Lab alumna. She is published by Samuel French and Smith & Kraus.

LEXI SAUNDERS (Director) is a queer director, performer, and teaching artist originally from Los Angeles. Recent Chicago directing credits include Power in Pride (About Face Theatre); The Departure (Haven Theatre); Eurydice (Jedlicka Performing Arts Center); Missed Opportunities (Cuckoo’s Theatre Project); Grounded (Theater of Thought); Fifty Shades of Shakespeare (re)discover theatre); Super (Mudlark Theater); and various other works and staged readings at Victory Gardens, Gift Theatre, Chicago Dramatists, 2nd Story, Something Marvelous, and Pride Films & Plays. She has assistant directed for Steppenwolf Theatre, Victory Gardens, Steep Theatre, Jackalope Theatre, and La Jolla Playhouse; and was honored to be selected for Victory Gardens’ 2016 Directors Inclusion Initiative and Haven Theatre’s 2017 Directors Haven. Lexi is an Artistic Associate with About Face Theatre, where she currently directs the Outreach Ensemble touring a queer devised show to schools and events throughout the Midwest. Upcoming: Laced by Sam Mueller (About Face Theatre). BA Theatre, UC San Diego. www.lexisaunders.com

SARAH E. ROSS (Scenic Design) is a proud Ensemble member of American Blues Theater. Sarah returns to Chicago from Stevens Point, Wisconsin where she teaches scenic and properties design.
BIOGRAPHIES cont.

at UWSP. Past American Blues Theater productions include *The Spitfire Grill* (scenic), *Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story* (scenic), *Little Shop of Horrors* (puppets, Jeff Nomination), *Dutchman/TRANSit* (scenic), *The Rainmaker* (scenic, Jeff Award), *Side Man* (scenic), *Grounded* (scenic), *Hank Williams: Lost Highway* (costumes), *Collected Stories* (Scenic, Jeff Nomination), and *Tobacco Road* (costumes, Jeff Award).

Her work has also been seen at Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Marriott Theatre, Paramount Theatre, Shattered Globe Theatre, The Joffrey Ballet, The Second City, Theater Wit, BoHo Theatre, Writers Theatre, Theatre at the Center, Peninsula Players Theater, and others. Sarah is a proud member of USA Local 826 and the Society of Properties Artisans Managers.

**JARED GOODING** *(Lighting Design)* is a proud Ensemble member of American Blues Theater. Jared's design credits include designs for Writers Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Remy Bumpo, Victory Gardens Theater, Griffin Theatre, TimeLine Theatre, Madison Children's Theater, UIC Theatre, Indiana University, Strawdog Theatre, The Hypocrites, Definition Theatre, Windy City Playhouse, Sideshow Theatre, Jackalope Theatre, First Floor Theater, About Face Theatre, MPAACT, Pegasus Theatre, Next Theatre, Congo Square, Citadel Theatre, ETA, Fleetwood Jourdain Theatre, and serving as the Lighting Assistant for *The Wiz Live* on NBC along with Associate Designing for Lookingglass Theatre. To hear more of his music, please visit [ericbackus.com](http://ericbackus.com).

**AMANDA BARTH** *(Properties Design)* is a Chicago based artist and a recent graduate of Millikin University. Her work can be found in the show *Thirst* at Strawdog Theatre, at Pride Films & Plays in *America's Best Outcast*, *Toy*, and she also works as an apprentice for Steppenwolf Theatre. She is very excited to work with this talented group of artists, and would like to thank her family and friends for their endless support.

**CHARLIE BAKER** *(Intimacy Design)* is ecstatic to be working for the first time with American Blues Theater! Charlie is an apprentice with Intimacy Directors International, and has been personally mentored in violence and intimacy direction for the past 7 years. Their previous work in the city includes Red Tape Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre, TimeLine Theatre, and First Floor Theater. Special thank you to Kyra Jones for her incredible work and insight, Rachel Flesher for her continual guidance, Lexi Saunders for this wonderful opportunity, and the theatre artists that dedicate themselves to the safety of artists in the creation of beautiful art.

**SHANDEE VAUGHAN** *(Production Stage Manager/Production Manager)* is a proud Artistic Affiliate of American Blues Theater. Her work was most recently heard in *The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelkey* (Jeff Award nomination) and *Beauty's Daughter*, and he previously worked on Blues’ award winning productions of *Hank Williams: Lost Highway* and *Grounded*.

Off-Broadway: *Hollow/Wave* (United Solo Festival), *Churchill* (SoloChicago Theatre); Regional: *Mark Twain’s River of Song, The All Night Strut* (Milwaukee Rep.), *Shakespeare in Love, Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* (TheatreSquared), *Legally Blonde* (Northern Stage), *Working: A Musical, Murder for Two* (Merry Go Round Playhouse), and *Rock of Ages* (Lake Dillon Theatre Company).

Recent Chicago credits include *Short Shakes: Comedy of Errors* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater) and *Every Brilliant Thing* (Windy City Playhouse). To hear more of his music, please visit [ericbackus.com](http://ericbackus.com).

**ERIC BACKUS** *(Composer/Sound Design)* is a proud Artistic Affiliate of American Blues Theater. His work was most recently heard in *The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelkey* (Jeff Award nomination) and *Beauty's Daughter*, and he previously worked on Blues’ award winning productions of *Hank Williams: Lost Highway* and *Grounded*.

Off-Broadway: *Hollow/Wave* (United Solo Festival), *Churchill* (SoloChicago Theatre); Regional: *Mark Twain’s River of Song, The All Night Strut* (Milwaukee Rep.), *Shakespeare in Love, Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* (TheatreSquared), *Legally Blonde* (Northern Stage), *Working: A Musical, Murder for Two* (Merry Go Round Playhouse), and *Rock of Ages* (Lake Dillon Theatre Company).

Eric’s previous work in the city includes *Red Tape Theatre*, *Steppenwolf Theatre*, *TimeLine Theatre*, and *First Floor Theater*. Special thank you to Kyra Jones for her incredible work and insight, Rachel Flesher for her continual guidance, Lexi Saunders for this wonderful opportunity, and the theatre artists that dedicate themselves to the safety of artists in the creation of beautiful art.
and is excited to be working with such a stellar team for Roan @ the Gates! Blues credits: Five Presidents, The Spitfire Grill, The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelkey, On Clover Road, It’s a Wonderful Life: Live in Chicago (2016 & 2018-2019), Flyin’ West, Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story, The Columnist, and Little Shop of Horrors. Other recent Chicago credits include: Time Is On Our Side (About Face Theatre), Deathtscribe X (WildClaw Theatre), Night in Alachua County (WildClaw Theatre), and The Woman in Black (WildClaw Theatre). Shandee is a freelance stage manager & production manager from Arizona. shandeevaughan.com

JULIE JACHYM (Assistant Stage Manager) is happy to be working with American Blues Theater for the second time. Julie’s previous Chicago credits include A Christmas Carol (Goodman Theatre), The Luck of the Irish, Rome Sweet Rome, Electricidad (University of Illinois at Chicago), The Spitfire Grill (American Blues Theater), Bloomsday (Remy Bumppo Theatre Company), and Tilikum (Sideshow Theatre Company). Julie received their BA in Theatre at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

MANUEL ORTIZ (Technical Director) is a Chicago native actor, carpenter, designer and photographer. He received his BFA in Acting at DePaul University. When he is not building and/or performing on stage, you can find him at home joyfully playing with all 15 of his animal friends (yes, he has pictures). As an artist, he has devoted himself to many artistic mediums such as puppeteering, makeup, lighting, and more. Working in such a prodigiously diverse community of captivating artists, Manny has grown and hopes to continue to collaborate and cultivate communities of inclusion and equity filled with ardent passion of theater.

OLIVIA BESTIEN (Assistant Scenic Design) is excited to work on her first show at the American Blues Theater! She is currently a student at University Of Wisconsin – Stevens Point working towards a BFA in Theatre Design and Technology. Olivia has most recently been a Scenic Artist for Clown Bar and Properties Master for The Spitfire Grill at UW - Stevens Point. Previously she has worked as Assistant Stage Crew Advisor at Arrowhead High School for the 2018-2019 school year. She would like to thank Sarah Ross for the opportunity to work on this show.

GWENDOLYN WHITESIDE (Artistic Director) is a proud Ensemble member of American Blues Theater and has served as Artistic Director since 2010, overseeing and producing nearly 40 productions (28 unique mainstage shows and 11 years of It’s a Wonderful Life: Live in Chicago!) In 10 seasons, 14 productions received Jeff Awards or nominations for outstanding play, musical, or solo performance. She created the nationally-recognized Blue Ink Playwriting Award, implemented community service into the company’s mission, and adapted the arts education program The Lincoln Project for Chicago Public Schools serving nearly 4,000 students annually. Whiteside served numerous panels for the National Endowment for the Arts and served on the Board of Directors for Network of Ensemble Theaters and League of Chicago Theatres. She’s a graduate of Northwestern University, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (MFA), and a Kellogg Executive Scholar in Nonprofit management (Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University). As an actress, she’s received 5 Joseph Jefferson Awards, Citations, and nominations; 2 After Dark Awards; 1 Broadway World Chicago Award.
ABOUT AMERICAN BLUES THEATER

Winner of American Theatre Wing’s prestigious National Theatre Company Award, AMERICAN BLUES THEATER is a premier arts organization with an intimate environment that patrons, artists, and all Chicagoans call home. American Blues Theater explores the American identity through the plays it produces and communities it serves. American Blues Theater follows three guiding values both on and off its stages—to be accessible, responsible, and true.

Our diverse and multi-generational artists have established the second oldest professional Equity Ensemble theater in Chicago. Our 32-member Ensemble has nearly 600 combined years of collaboration on stage. As of today, our theater and artists received 213 Joseph Jefferson Awards and nominations that celebrate excellence in Chicago theater and 38 Black Theatre Alliance Awards. Our artists are honored with Pulitzer Prize nominations, Academy Awards, Golden Globe Awards, Emmy Awards, and numerous other accolades. Our artists work throughout the nation—including Broadway and regional theaters—and loyally return to our stage.

For over thirty years, American Blues has created essential productions for Chicago. Our performances of It’s a Wonderful Life: Live in Chicago! have entertained nearly 60,000 patrons since 2002! We produce 4-5 mainstage productions annually. We choose classic American plays and musicals, as well as world and Chicago premieres from internationally-renowned writers that explore the American identity. We provide a free, integrated arts education program, The Lincoln Project, to Chicago Public Schools and the surrounding communities. We serve 4,000 students annually. Our teaching artists provide mentorship throughout the students’ academic careers.

We are committed to developing new work for the American canon. Our Blueprint Development program includes commissions, workshops, and staged-readings. Our world premieres receive multiple productions across the nation. We present the nationally-recognized Blue Ink Playwriting Award and produce the annual Ripped: The Living Newspaper Festival of 10-minute plays.

We believe it is an honor and duty to serve our community. We raise awareness of other non-profit organizations’ commendable causes through creative collaborations. We hold food drives, distribute promotional materials, offer free post-show discussions, provide complimentary tickets, honor military personnel, hold exclusive performances for underserved communities, and raise awareness for children’s surgeries. We donate proceeds from “Pediatric Previews” to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.

American Blues Theater is your Chicago home for bold, exceptional, relevant performances. Your ticket purchases and donations help us make Chicago the first city in all our hearts.

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Based on the classic film 8½ by Federico Fellini, Nine tells the story of a visionary film director and the frustrations of the many women in his life. Maury Yeston’s seductive score will transport audiences to Italy in the 1960s.
GREEN DAY’S American Idiot

directed by ZACHARY STEVENSON
music directed by HALENA KAYS

On Clover Road "Buddy" in The Buddy Holly Story

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