

THEATRE OF ARTS

HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA

THE ORIGINAL HOLLYWOOD ACTING SCHOOL

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In small, intensive classes, our world-class faculty of working Hollywood professionals guide students through a process of professional and personal development to render highly skilled performers who contribute original, creative and effective voices to the entertainment industry. Learn more @ toa.edu.

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TAYLOR HOLDER • DANNY PAUL PETT • AARON RIFE • JULIE WIESENBERG

FRIENDS WITH GUNS

WRITTEN BY STEPHANIE ALISON WALKER • DIRECTED BY AMIR ABDULLAH



THE DORIE THEATRE • 6476 SANTA MONICA BLVD. • HOLLYWOOD, CA

SEPTEMBER 9th - 18th, 2022

THEATRE
OF ARTS
HOLLYWOOD
ACTING COLLEGE

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Welcome to *FRIENDS WITH GUNS*.

I first read Stephanie Walker's *Friends With Guns* at a VS Theatre Company workshop, and immediately took to the show as a fascinating piece of art. It contains a certain amount of ambiguity, an exploration of a little-known topic to many theatregoers, and has a million things to say about this moment in our nation – all qualities I similarly strive to achieve in my art. It felt like the perfect piece for me to make my TOA directorial debut. As pre-production began, I traveled to Philadelphia and Chicago, both cities that had mass shootings during the 2022 July 4th weekend, which sadly made *Friends With Guns* feel especially timely in its probe of the complex issues plaguing our country: from gun rights, to domestic violence, to the demands of our political affiliations. This is a uniquely American play with an urgent need to be seen. Though you may think you're one side or the other, the theatre is a space for challenging our views and looking for solutions, as the best of this sacred artistic tradition has been throughout history. I look forward to continuing the tradition with you.



– Amir Abdullah

Amir Abdullah is an award-winning actor, narrator and playwright who has appeared on stage and screen nationally and internationally. He teaches Voice Acting at TOA. To learn more, visit www.amir-abdullah.com.

He would like to thank Karen Gutierrez and VS Theatre Company for introducing him to this piece, and Stephanie Walker and David Conolly for making this happen. Additionally, he would like to thank Victoria Hoffman, Stephanie Schwartz, his fiancé Shaina Curtis, Tyrell Buckner, and every talented cast member, designer, and crew member that has given their time, energy, talent and effort to bring the work to life, and most of all – YOU, THE AUDIENCE for supporting live theatre.

THE CAST



Taylor Holder – Leah

Born in Boston and raised in Burbank, Taylor is a 5th term student at Theatre Of Arts. This is her third TOA play. She is very excited to perform for you tonight and hopes you enjoy the show!



Danny Paul Pett – Josh

Danny is originally from LaGrange, Illinois. A veteran of the US Marines Corps, he began his TOA training in 2020 via Zoom during COVID lockdown. This is his second TOA play. After graduating he intends to remain in LA to pursue theatre and film work.



Aaron Rife – Danny

Aaron is excited to perform in his third TOA show, after playing Narcissus in last summer's production of *Polaroid Stories*. He would like to thank his extraordinarily talented fellow cast members, and his parents for supporting his journey. Enjoy the show!



Julie Wiesenberg – Shannon

Born and raised in northern Germany, Julie performed in four plays before moving to Los Angeles in 2022 to pursue her dream to study acting. She is also a drummer and dancer. This is her first TOA production and she is excited to work with everyone!

Written by Stephanie Alison Walker

Director: Amir Abdullah

Executive Producer: David Conolly

Associate Producer: David Boller

Assistant Director: Tyrell Buckner

Production Mgr.: Juan De La Rosa

Lighting/Sound Designer: Nick Foran

Costume Designer: Sara Nitikman Parks

Set Designer: Beau Van Donkelaar

Stage Manager: Dora Zulin

Asst. Stage Manager: Dustin Bowen

Intimacy Coordinator: Lea Madda

Weapons & Combat: Henry Layton

Creative Director: John A. Wooden

