

cakeface



“[cakeface] members, for their part, are nothing but talented, and are capable of getting into the minds of their audience with bitterly truthful life stories. Even better, they make you laugh along the way.” -The Village Voice

**2020
Outstanding
Production
Bessie Winner**

PRESS KIT

About the Company

cakeface



“A group of fierce, funny, talented women...think Monica Bill Barnes for the Amy Schumer Generation.”

- CULTUREBOT

cakeface is a contemporary American dance-theatre company that makes darkly humorous work about human existence. Breaking the mold since 2008, the company has become known for its inimitable synthesis of quick-witted text and precision choreography. cakeface works are an expression of hundreds of people's perspectives and experiences, distilled into an original script, that is shaped, delivered and adapted choreographically by five culturally, generationally, and racially diverse womxn. Examining universally relatable themes such as aging, irrational fears, and shattered dreams, cakeface projects deliver a poignant look at our shared experiences.

cakeface has been presented by HERE, Ars Nova, JACK, En Garde Arts, Dance Place (DC), Stony Brook University, and many others. The company has taught master classes at the University of Maryland, University of Tampa, Hillsborough Community College, and Blake School for the Arts, and lectured at the University of South Florida.



FOUNDER ++ ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Amanda Szeglowski is a Bessie-winning New York City-based writer, director, and choreographer. She founded cakeface, an all-womxn contemporary American dance-theatre company that makes darkly humorous works about human existence. Amanda was among six artists awarded the Baryshnikov Arts Center Open Residency (2022), a grantee of the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation's Women Playwrights Commissioning program, the Mental Insight Foundation, and Brooklyn Arts Council, a two-time grantee of National Performance Network, a Marble House Project Artist-in-Residence and a HERE Resident Artist (2014–17). Amanda is an alumna of the University of South Florida, graduating summa cum laude with a degree in Dance and a minor in Business Administration.



THIS IS NOW, AND NOW, AND NOW.

In this incisively humorous ode to aging, a multigenerational ensemble of women confront impermanence and imperfection with striking musicality and movement. Known for infusing bleak themes with sparkling wit, cakeface's newest work merges the subject of aging with a wabi-sabi worldview: nothing lasts, nothing is finished, nothing is perfect.

Work 1: Touring Party

cakeface



THIS IS NOW, AND NOW, AND NOW.

Written and Directed by Amanda Szeglowski

Choreographed by Amanda Szeglowski in collaboration with the company

Performed by Kelly Bartnik, Ali Castro, Jade Daugherty, Christine Farrell,

Ayesha Jordan, & Nola Sporn Smith

Scenic Design by Aviva Novick

Lighting Design by Amanda K. Ringger

Composed by Prism House



60 minutes | 5 performers

+1 local senior actor

2 tech/admin staff



THIS IS NOW, AND NOW, AND NOW.

Amanda Szeglowksi is a 2020 Bessie winner for "Outstanding Production" for this is now, and now, and now.

"For her nuanced and perceptive "ode to aging," performed with crystalline beauty by an intergenerational ensemble of women. For a sharp, humorous work that captures the longing, competition, desires and friendships of growing-up female in 1980's America through precision team-dancing and striking musicality."



STAIRWAY TO STARDOM

With crackling wit and startling honesty, Amanda Szeglowksi and the women of cakeface serve up a silver-sequined dissection of the American Dream. Synthesizing razor-sharp choreography and a poker-faced delivery of original text, the cast shatters the facade of "making it." Featuring sound and visuals from electronic duo Prism House and clips from the 80s cult-favorite New York public access TV show of the same name, "Stairway to Stardom" honors the contributions of the wildly passionate but questionably talented among us.

Work 2: Touring Party

cakeface



STAIRWAY TO STARDOM

Written and Directed by Amanda Szegowski

Choreographed by Amanda Szegowski in collaboration with the company

Performed by Ali Castro, Jade Daugherty, Ayesha Jordan, Nola Sporn Smith,
& Amanda Szegowski

Set Design by Aviva Novick

Lighting Design by Amanda K. Ringger

Music + Video by Prism House // Brian Wenner + Matt O'Hare

Costume Design by Oana Botez

Stage Management by Alex B. West



55 minutes | 5 performers
2 tech/admin staff



STAIRWAY TO STARDOM

CRITICAL ACCLAIM

“The work is truly exciting and hypnotic” – Hi! Drama

“Vastly entertaining and ridiculously clever” – This Week in NY

“Absorbing and suggestive, this droll dance-theater piece is less campy and more disciplined...”

– Time Out New York ★★★★★ & Critics’ Pick

“Crystalline delivery...These performers, speaking from simultaneous narcissism and mediocrity, are unquestionably talented.” – Eye on the Arts

“Szeगlowski’s cast members, for their part, are nothing but talented, and are capable of getting into the minds of their audience with bitterly truthful life stories. Even better, they make you laugh along the way.” – The Village Voice

“The new multi-disciplinary piece from the dignified and talented dance company cakeface led by Amanda Szeगlowski...The brilliance of this piece of dance-theatre...is that the dignity of each of the participants of the original Stairway to Stardom is lovingly maintained, all while the deadpan delivery of the text is flawlessly executed.” – Stage Buddy



HAROLD, I HATE YOU.

I don't know who Harold is, but I'm pretty sure I hate him. Florida, 1985. Chris isn't eating his broccoli. There's a knock at the door. Grams says it's a little boy named Harold who lives upstairs. He has come to eat our dinner. We clean the plates just in time, but he returns again and again. "Harold, I hate you." is an exploration of the many incarnations "the boy from upstairs" took on in my rabid imagination. It's an investigation of omnipresent insecurities, that are, perhaps, imaginary.

Work 3 : Touring Party

cakeface



HAROLD, I HATE YOU.

Written and Directed by Amanda Szeglowski

Choreographed by Amanda Szeglowski in collaboration with the company

Performed by Ayesha Jordan, Jeso O'Neill, Amanda Szeglowski, & Cary Hite

Scenic Design by Amanda Szeglowski

Costumes by Elle Chyun

Lighting Design by Amanda K. Ringger

Sound by Jeso O'Neill



50 minutes | 3 performers

+1 local actor

2 tech/admin staff



HAROLD, I HATE YOU. CRITICAL ACCLAIM

"The piece swirls dance, theater and humor together to truly hypnotizing effect and seduces the audience into considering the nature of their own terrors. 'Harold, I Hate You' packs a punch and entertains every step of the way...think Monica Bill Barnes for the Amy Schumer Generation." — Culturebot

"As disturbing as it is delightful" — Creative Loafing

"Squeaky clean automatons, crisp and uniform in gesture" – InfiniteBody



MEMENTO MORI (new work in development)

Employing sharp wit and the slightest hint of optimism, the womxn of cakeface spin existential angst into something divine. In this new work, “Memento Mori” (Latin for ‘remember you must die’), they pair otherworldly phenomena – psychic mediums, reincarnation, and near-death experiences – with Earth-bound anxieties, from absurd minutia to debilitating paranoia. Precision choreography collides with bohemian flair, while incisive text receives cakeface’s signature crystalline delivery. The pulsating heart of this work, our cultural obsession with the “unknown,” begs to discover the very nature of consciousness, and ultimately, what it means to be fully human.



MEMENTO MORI (new work in development)

Writer and Director Amanda Szeglowski

Choreographer Amanda Szeglowski in collaboration with the company

Performers Kelly Bartnik, Ali Castro, Jade Daugherty, Nola Sporn Smith, & Christina Campanella

Scenic Designer Aviva Novick

Costume Designer Oana Botez

Lighting Designer Amanda K. Ringger

Composer Christina Campanella



Work 4: Partners



MEMENTO MORI (new work in development)

cakeface is seeking producing/presenting partners for the world premiere of “Memento Mori” in 2026–27.

“Memento Mori” was developed in part during a residency at the Baryshnikov Arts Center, New York, NY and through IRT 's Archive Collective Development Series (irttheater.org), and has received support from the Mental Insight Foundation.



INTERDISCIPLINARY WORKSHOPS

cakeface classes can be structured as dance-focused, text-focused, or a combination of both and are suitable for middle school, high school or college level students. Dance students, theatre students, and community members with no previous dance training at all – all are welcome!

A hybrid dance-theatre class would proceed as follows:

After a concise warm up, the first half of the class will focus on repertory, learning phrasework from cakeface's touring productions. Rooted in release technique, cakeface movement features a broken-down articulation combined with quick punctuation. Students will challenge their range, moving minimally and constricted while exploring linear sweeps and jolts off-balance. The fast-paced class will culminate in phrase work from active repertory.

Next the class will move into a text & movement exercise reflective of a section from cakeface repertory. Groups of students will complete a "Mad Libs" style text generation exercise to develop a script together. Company members self-assign to each group and help guide the creative process. The class culminates with the groups embodying their scripts: choreographing their scenes and performing them for each other.





LECTURES ON BECOMING AN ARTS LEADER

Amanda Szeglowksi has spent over 20 years at the forefront of NYC arts. She has made a substantial impact serving both independent artists and cultural institutions throughout New York City. Her expertise spans a variety of areas including artistic programming, producing, marketing/communications, grant writing, international tour management, individual giving campaign strategy, and more. Most recently, Amanda spent 13 years in leadership at HERE Arts Center, one of New York City's most prolific and critically acclaimed multidisciplinary arts organizations, having joined HERE initially as Marketing Director before adding the role of Associate Artistic Director and ultimately being appointed Co-Director of the institution in 2024. She speaks to students about the various aspects of her career as an arts leader, sharing personal experiences along the way navigating the industry in NYC. Students will receive insider's tips on how to find the right entry level position and make the most of it; resume do's and don'ts; valuable skill sets to hone; and will learn to distinguish the various branches of arts administration. The lecture will end with an open Q&A session.

Contact

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CONTACT

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