



AMERICAN STAGE



THE
SCARLET
LETTER

JAN 21 - FEB 15, 2026

BY KATE HAMILL

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

DIRECTED BY ARPITA MUKHERJEE

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The Scarlet Letter
By Kate Hamill
Based on the novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne
Directed by Arpita Mukherjee

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American Stage would like to thank all our volunteers for their support.

CAST

Anula Navlekar* (she/her)	Hester
Michael Hisamoto* (he/him)	Dimmesdale
Gerrard Lobo (he/him)	Chillingworth
Noa Friedman (she/her)	Pearl
Karen Sternberg* (she/her)	Goody Hibbins
David Warner (he/him)	Governor Hibbins
Stephen Riordan (he/him)	Male Swing
Mackenzie Aaryn (she/her)	Female Swing

CREATIVE TEAM

Arpita Mukherjee (any)	Director
Syona Varty (they/them)	Assistant Director
Yoon Bae# (she/her)	Scenic Designer
Carolina Ortiz Herrera# (she/her)	Lighting Designer
Dina El-Aziz (she/her)	Costume Designer
Joyce Ciesil (she/her)	Sound Designer
Michael Horn (he/him)	Puppet Designer
Marcus Wehby (he/him)	Props Master

PRODUCTION TEAM

Chloe Dipaola* (she/her)	Resident Stage Manager & Fight Captain
Helen R. Murray (she/they)	Producer, Fight/Intimacy Choreographer
Kevin Commander (he/him)	Stage Management Fellow
Ayla Albright (she/her)	Stagecraft Fellow
Kylie Knickerbocker (she/her)	Costume & Wardrobe Fellow

Members of the AEA are denoted with an asterisk (*)

Members of the United Scenic Artists Union are denoted with a pound sign (#)

Members of the The Stage Directors and Choreographers Society are denoted with a minus sign (-)



ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION

American Stage operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Mangers in the United States.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne is a staple of American literature, taught in schools and universities around the country. But it is often treated as a relic from the past, with no connection to our current lives. Kate Hamill's adaptation shatters that distance, bringing a story from the 17th century into contemporary relief. By focusing on the lives of six characters, whose lives are interconnected, the play becomes an intimate study of a society in crisis, trying to define itself.

Through this refocused lens, Hester Prynne ceases to be a mere victim to be pitied. She emerges as a complex character, actively reckoning with the consequences of her own choices and grappling with the world she has brought her child into. That child, Pearl, is one of the play's most striking creations—a creature both of this world and completely outside of it, mirroring its absurdities and cruelties. The play never settles for easy answers by imposing contemporary judgment on the characters. Instead, it forces us to sit with the difficult moral choices of people trapped inside a rigid societal system.

In our current moment—a time of overgeneralization and algorithms, of complex ideas being forced into easy binaries of didactic thought—the play's refusal to put people in boxes is a radical act. Kate offers every character difficult circumstances, suspicious actions, and the chance at redemption. By doing so, she forces us to look at *villains* as *people*. And these people are just like us. This empathetic intimacy is the play's great power, and one that could be the guiding light of our divided present.

Arpita Mukherjee
Director

CAST



Anula Navlekar* she/her

Hester

Anula Navlekar is a film and theatre actor from India based in New York. Select theatre credits include *Twelfth Night* (TheatreSquared), *All the Lonely Women* (Rattlestick Theatre). Film & Television credits include *Killer Soup* (Netflix), *Prodigal Son* (Fox). MFA Acting; Yale School of Drama '20.

CAST



Michael Hisamoto* he/him

Dimmesdale

Michael Hisamoto (he/him/his) is an interdisciplinary theatre artist making his American Stage debut. He has worked with The Public Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, Ma-Yi Theater Company, Huntington Theatre Company, Trinity Rep, South Coast Repertory, Lyric Stage Company Boston, New Rep, Hope Rep, SpeakEasy Stage, Wheelock Family Theatre, Williamstown Theater Festival, the Kennedy Center, HowlRound/ArtsEmerson, Boston Court Pasadena, The Yale Prize for Drama, Gloucester Stage, CompanyOne, The Watertown Children's Theatre, Flat Earth Theatre, Fresh Ink Theatre, MIT, Harvard, Boston University, Brown University, Merrimack Rep, East West Players, Central Square Theater, The Boston Playwright's Theatre, Plays in Place, Ojai Playwright's Conference, The Seven Devils Playwrights' Conference, Palm Beach Dramaworks, and more. A champion of new work, Michael has helped develop hundreds of new plays from first time playwrights to Tony winners and Pulitzer Prize finalists. Michael holds a commission by Central Square Theater to adapt *Our Town* for the city of Cambridge. Education: Orange County School of the Arts. BFA: Boston University. MFA: Brown/Trinity Rep. AEA. Former Co-Artistic Director of New Repertory Theatre. Board member of Seven Devils Playwrights' Conference, former faculty at Boston University, current faculty at Bridgewater State University. michaelhisamoto.com | sevendevis.org



GERARD LOBO he/him

Chillingworth

Gerrard Lobo (SAG-AFTRA) is a NYC-based stage, TV, and film actor. He recently played Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Lord Capulet in *Romeo & Juliet* with the Ensemble Shakespeare Company. Gerrard has had Guest Star and recurring roles on various shows for Netflix, Hulu, CBS, NBC, and Comedy Central. Some credits include *Master Of None*, *Orange Is The New Black*, and *Only Murders In The Building*. He is thrilled to be playing Chillingworth in American Stage's production of *The Scarlet Letter*. Gerrard would like to thank his fellow cast mates, the entire production team, his lovely wife, Alice, and their two cats, Sloopy and Mamma Ross. @gerrardobo www.gerrardlobo.com



Noa Friedman she/her

Pearl

Noa Friedman is incredibly excited to be a part of this cast and production. Recent credits include *This Girl Laughs...* (American Stage), *Ghost Brothers of Darkland County* (Jobsite Theater), *Puffs* (Jobsite Theater), *Bad Jews* (Sarasota Jewish Theatre), *POTUS* (Jobsite Theater), *The Rocky Horror Show* (Jobsite Theater), *The Immigrant* (Sarasota Jewish Theatre), *The Immigrant* (Stageworks Theatre), *Twelfth Night* (Jobsite Theater), *All My Sons* (Tampa Rep), *Dracula* (Jobsite Theater), *The Crucible* (Tampa Rep & ThinkTank), and *The Wolves* (ThinkTank). Special shoutout to Mom, Dad, Abigail, David, and Emma for all their love and support. @noamichelefriedman @noamichelephotography

CAST



Karen Sternberg* she/her

Goody Hibbins

Karen Sternberg (Goody Hibbins) is delighted to join this team for her first show at American Stage. Previous work includes *POTUS* and *Sense and Sensibility* (Nebraska Repertory Theatre); *The Book of Will*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *The Tempest* (Illinois Shakespeare Festival);

A Streetcar Named Desire (Nashville Rep); *Elephant Man* and *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (Studio Tenn); *Henry V* (Nashville Shakespeare Festival); and *Last of the Red Hot Lovers* (Lake Theatre). In Nashville, she co-led the theatre company Pipeline-Collective, including its Salon program that supported the development of hundreds of new plays. Also for Pipeline, she co-produced and starred in a 12-hour live theatrical broadcast event that nabbed a regional Emmy nomination for technical achievement. An Orlando-based performer, Karen is a proud AEA and SAG-AFTRA member who most loves adventures with her husband and son.



David Warner he/him

Governor Hibbins

David Warner recently played Tampa Mayor Julian Lane in Stageworks' *When the Righteous Triumph*, which toured to Washington, D.C. for the national conference of the American College of Trial Lawyers and whose audience included U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson. Other

credits include George in *Courting* and Art the Tortoise in *Don't Feed the Animals!* for American Stage's Beyond the Stage series; Claudius in *Hamlet* (Studio@620); *Nurse/Escalus* in *Romeo & Juliet* (Jobsite Theater); the world premiere of Doug DeVita's *Goddess of the Hunt* at LAB Theater Project; and St. Petersburg City Theatre's WWII radio-play adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*. He is a graduate of Harvard and Villanova and writes about the arts for *Creative Loafing*.



Stephen Riordan he/him

Male Swing

Stephen's work as an actor, director, and playwright has been seen on several stages throughout Tampa Bay. He was last seen as Peter Demens in *Weird in St. Pete* for American Stage. Stephen is the Artistic Director of Dead Canary Theatre, the resident theatre company of The Studio @ 620

in DTSP. He is also the voice of Broadway for Radio St. Pete and Sunshine 96.7FM. His show, *Big Broadway Energy*, airs every Sunday at 5 pm, as well as an accompanying podcast of the same name, where he welcomes artists from across Florida and beyond. Next up, *The Drawer Boy* at The Off-Central Players. Graduate of The American Academy of Dramatic Arts (NYC).



MacKenzie Aaryn she/her

Female Swing

MacKenzie Aaryn is extremely excited and grateful to be on the mainstage with American Stage! Originally from Ohio, she studied Acting at Wright State University. Previous Tampa Bay credits include *Blackbird*, *Into The Night*, and *Ghost Stories from Yellowstone* at The Off Central,

Cordelia in *King Lear*, and Cora in *Weird in St. Pete* at American Stage.

CREATIVE TEAM



Arpita Mukherjee any

Director

Arpita Mukherjee is the co-founder and Artistic Director of Hypokrit, a company committed to fostering diverse voices in the entertainment industry and the performing arts. She is a NYC-based director and writer who works in theatre, film, and television. She made her Broadway debut in 2022 as the resident director of *The Kite Runner*. She is the book writer, Associate Director, and Associate Producer on *Monsoon Wedding Musical*, which had its NY premiere at St. Ann's Warehouse in 2023. Additional directing credits include *How I Met Your Masi* (Dynasty Typewriter), *Bollywood Kitchen* (Geffen Playhouse), *House of Joy* (San Diego Rep), and *Eh Dah: Questions for My Father* (Next Door @ NYTW). Upcoming directing credits include *Wives* (East West Players). She has developed work at The Public Theater, WP Theater, The New Group, and Rattlestick Playwrights Theater. Arpita was a 2021 Drama League Resident Director, a 2018-2020 Women's Project Lab Member, a 2018 Eugene O'Neill National Directing Fellow and a 2019-2020 Mabou Mines Resident Artist. She is also an alumna of the Lincoln Center Directors Lab. Arpita's latest short film "The Cycle" premiered at the New York Indian Film Festival, and is currently playing in film festivals around the world. Arpita directed "Running," a short film written by and starring Danny Pudi, which won Best Short Film at the Chicago South Asian Film Festival and has been featured in New Filmmakers LA, The Indian Film Festival of LA, CAAMFest and many others. Arpita is the co-writer of the National Award winning film *Gulmohar* which was released on Hulu and Disney+ Hotstar in March 2023. She also won the Filmfare Best Screenplay Award for the film in 2023. She has developed projects for WIIP, AMC, Sony, and Netflix.



Syona Varty they/them

Assistant Director

Syona Varty (they/them) is a director, actor, and producer based in LA and NYC. Born in the USA to Indian parents and raised in Belgium, they love exploring various cultures and seeing how theatre ties them together. In 2019, Syona founded Imaginarium Theatre Company, a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating diverse, inclusive, and expressive new works while upholding social and environmental ethics. As the Artistic Director, they have produced over 40 plays, short plays, reading series, and festivals featuring new artists, simultaneously raising awareness and funds for various causes and organizations. Syona's directing credits include productions such as *I'm Still Here* at The Tank, *Back When We Felt Clean*, and *judy, or i think sophomore year is trying to eat me* during the Women's March Fest. Their multicultural background and dedication to inclusivity inform their artistic vision, fostering a creative environment that champions diverse narratives and equitable representation in the performing arts.

CREATIVE TEAM



Yoon Bae[#] she/her

Scenic Designer

Yoon is thrilled to present her design to the audience at American Stage. International highlights: *Don Giovanni* (Welsh National Opera), *Candide* (Tokyo), *Three Thousand Troubled Threads* (Edinburgh International Festival), *Picasso's Women* (Ambassador Theatre Group), Caridad Svich's *Archipelago* (Premiere), *Running the Silk Road* (Barbican Theatre), *The Full Monty*, *Closer* (Seoul Arts Center). Associate designer: *Gone with the Wind* (Gillian Lynne Theatre, West End, directed by Trevor Nunn), *Equus* (The Gielgud Theatre, West End, featuring Daniel Radcliffe), *Birdsong* (Harold Pinter Theatre, West End), and *Skellig* (Young Vic, West End). USA highlights: *A Little Night Music* (Barrington Stage Company, Winner: BTCAA Outstanding Scenic Design), *Disconnect* (San Jose Rep, Winner: Bay Area Theatre Critics Award: Best Set Design), *The Messenger*, *Once*, *Scapin*, *Once On This Island*, and *The Lehman Trilogy* (inaugural production of the Meldrum Theatre at the Einar Nielsen Fieldhouse), *Two Piano Four Hands* at Pioneer Theatre Company. *The Wolves* (Actors Theatre of Louisville, KY), Cambodian Rock Band (TheatreSquared), *Ode to Shoes* (La Mama, NYC), *Oedipus El Rey*, and *House Of Joy* (San Diego Rep, CA), *The Great Gatsby*, *Emma*, *The Sunshine Boys*, and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Arizona Theatre Company, winner AriZoni: Best Set and Costume), *The Magic Flute*, *As You Like It*, *Evita*, *Anything Goes* and *Ain't Misbehavin'*, (Phoenix Theatre, AZ). Yoon is Associate Professor at UNCSA, and Costume and Scenic Design member of United Scenic Artists Local USA 829, Wingspace Theatrical Design, Society of British Theatre Designers, and British Equity. yoonbae.com



Carolina Ortiz Herrera[#] she/her

Lighting Designer

Carolina Ortiz Herrera is a Mexican-born and New York-based Lighting Designer for theater, opera, and dance. Broadway: *Good Night, Oscar* (Goodman Theatre & UK); Regional: *Private Lives*, *December*, *American Mariachi* (Alley Theatre); VOS! (Two Riverside Theatre); *La Tempestad* (Trinity Rep); *Death of A Salesman* (Playmakers Repertory); *American Mariachi* (Arizona Theatre Company); *Born with Teeth* (Guthrie, OSF & Alley Theatre); *Native Gardens* (Dallas Theatre Center); *Everything Rises* (BAM & Royce Hall); *4000 Miles*, *Doubt*, *A Parable* (Westport Country Playhouse); *I & You* (Bristol Riverside Theatre); *Macbeth, Until the Flood* (Merrimack Theatre Repertory); *All's Well That Ends Well* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *The Railroad Children* (Northern Stage); *Seven Guitars* (Yale Repertory Theatre). Off-Broadway: *Amerikin* (Primary Stages); *La Paloma Prisoner* (Chelsea Factory); *Hedda Gabler & Winter's Tale* (Bedlam Theatre Company); *Yellowman*, an Audelco Awards Best Lighting Design Nominee (Billie Holiday Theatre); *Sweeney Todd* (Yale Dramat); *Titus Andronicus*, and *The Skin of Our Teeth* (Yale University Theatre). Dance & Opera: *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna* (Minneapolis Opera); *Super Nothing* (NY Live Arts & US Tour); *I as Another* (BAC); *Florencia en el Amazonas* (Shubert Theatre); *The Silent Lyre* (Lighten Theatre); and *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Opera Theatre of Yale). Carolina is the Lighting Director for Calpulli Mexican Dance Company. Education: MFA, Yale School of Drama. www.carolinaortiz.com

CREATIVE TEAM



Dina El-Aziz she/her
Costumer Designer

Regional: *English* (TheaterWorks, Hartford); *School for Lies* (Dartmouth College); *Forgiveness* (Barrington Stage); *Selling Kabul* (Northern Stage); *English* (Barrington Stage); *Layalina* (The Goodman); *Selling Kabul* (Seattle Rep); *Unseen* (OSF); *When Monica Met Hillary* (Miami New Drama); *9 Parts of Desire* (Portland Center Stage); *King Lear* (Northern Stage); *Noura* (The Guthrie); *Noura* (The Old Globe); *Selling Kabul* (Williamstown Theatre Festival). Off-Broadway: *Show/Boat: A River* (Target Margin Theater); *We Live In Cairo* (NYTW); *The Mulberry Tree* (La Ma Ma); *Munich Medea*, *Weightless* (WP Theater), *The Vagrant Trilogy* (The Public Theater); *Heartland* (Geva Theater/59E59); *First Down* (Noor Theater/59E59); *Hindsight* (Fault Line Theater); *One Night* (Target Margin Theater); Dina is a Target Margin Associate Artist and Princess Grace Honorarium recipient.



Joyce Ciesil she/her
Sound Designer

Originally from the suburbs of Chicago, Joyce is a regional sound designer and composer. Recent sound design credits include: *Hurricane Diane* (Hartford Stage); *Notes on Killing Seven Oversight Management and Economic Stability Board Members* (Yale Rep); *The Seagull* (Quinnipiac University); *Falcon Girls* (Yale Rep). Joyce served as the 2024 and 2025 resident sound designer at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Playwrights Conference. She is a guest artist at the National Theater Institute, a member of the TSDCA, and a 2022 Jeff nominee for best midsize sound design.



Michael Horn he/him
Puppet Designer

Michael Horn's creative pursuits ignite at the intersection of Art and Technology. A builder, sculptor, skilled software developer, and electrical engineer, Horn is best known for his work with animated lighting, puppets, props, sets, and theatrical special effects. His most recent work for American Stage was the Peregrine Falcon puppet for *Tales by Twilight* at Boyd Hill Nature Preserve.

A Theater Tampa Bay 2024 awards winner for "Outstanding Scenic Design," Horn's smaller theatrical creations include the light-up boat for Jobsite's *Frankenstein*, immersive animated chromosome lighting for The Off-Central's *A Number*, Bottom's "Sea-Bottom" head (Think Tank TYA's beach-themed *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), the puppets, weapons, 5-headed dragon and animated props for Think Tank TYA's *She Kills Monsters*, among many others.

Michael is grateful for the many artists who collaborate to bring these technical visions to life, giving him the chance to swim the rip current between the schematic and the spectator.

CREATIVE TEAM



Marcus Wehby he/him

Props Master

Marcus Wehby is thrilled to return as Props Master for *The Scarlet Letter* this season and to collaborate with a cast and crew he truly values. With over 25 years of professional experience, Marcus brings a steady hand, clear communication, and deep organizational expertise to every production. His background includes works ranging from *Hamlet* to large-scale dance and musical productions, and he is passionate about supporting artists.

PRODUCTION TEAM



Chloe Dipaola* she/her

Resident Stage Manager & Fight Captain

Chloe Dipaola has been an active part of American Stage since the 2022 season. As a Production Stage Manager, her credits here include shows such as *American Idiot*, *Ragtime in the Park*, *Indecent*, *Beauty and the Beast in the Park*, *The Figs*, *Ring of Fire*, *This Girl Laughs*, *This Girl Cries*, *This Girl Does Nothing*, *The Mountaintop*, *Hair in the Park*, *Fat Ham*, and *The Good Peaches*. Based in the vibrant theater communities of Tampa, St. Petersburg, and Sarasota, Chloe is known for her dedication and the heart she brings to every production. To continue American Stage's 48th season, she hopes you enjoy *The Scarlet Letter*. Email: chloedipaola@gmail.com



Helen R. Murray she/her

Producer, Fight/Intimacy Choreographer

Helen R. Murray is an award-winning director, playwright, the Producing Artistic Director of American Stage, former Executive Producer of the Aurora Fox Arts Center in Colorado and Artistic Director of the Hub Theatre in Virginia. Her original plays have been produced by the Hub Theatre, Theatre Alliance, ArtsWest, Malibu Playhouse, the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia and have been seen at the Kennedy Center's Page to Stage Festival. She has directed across the country and mentored writers through the Writer's Guild Initiative NYC. In addition to her roles offstage, Helen has worked as an actor in many Washington, D.C. area theaters, including Folger Theatre, Woolly Mammoth, Theatre J, Forum Theatre, Theatre Alliance, Rorschach Theatre, and Keegan Theatre. Helen has also appeared in numerous independent films and commercials. Her co-adaptation of *Wonderful Life* earned her a Helen Hayes Award nomination for Outstanding New Play, and her original play, *Abominable*, was nominated for the national Steinberg New Play Award. She is also the recipient of the Puffin Foundation Award for Outstanding Emerging Artist, the Washington Canadian Partnership Award for Leadership in the Arts, and her play *Redder Blood* won the 2016 Jewish Playwriting Contest.



December 5 - 23, 2025



Jan 30 - Feb 15, 2026



July 4 - 19, 2026



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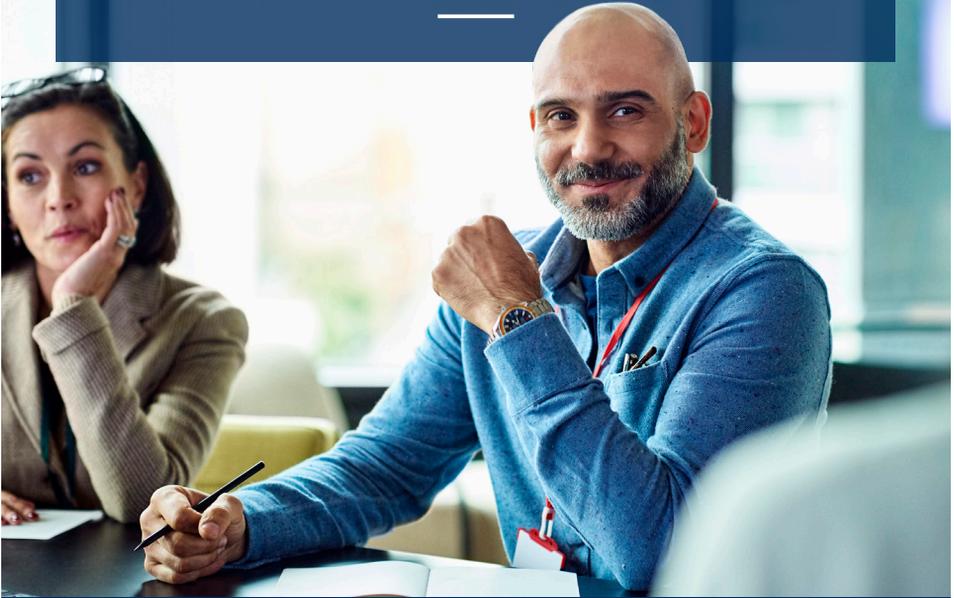


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