# **PAST PLAYS**

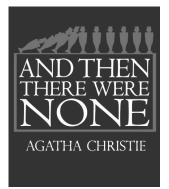


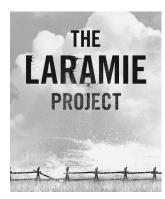






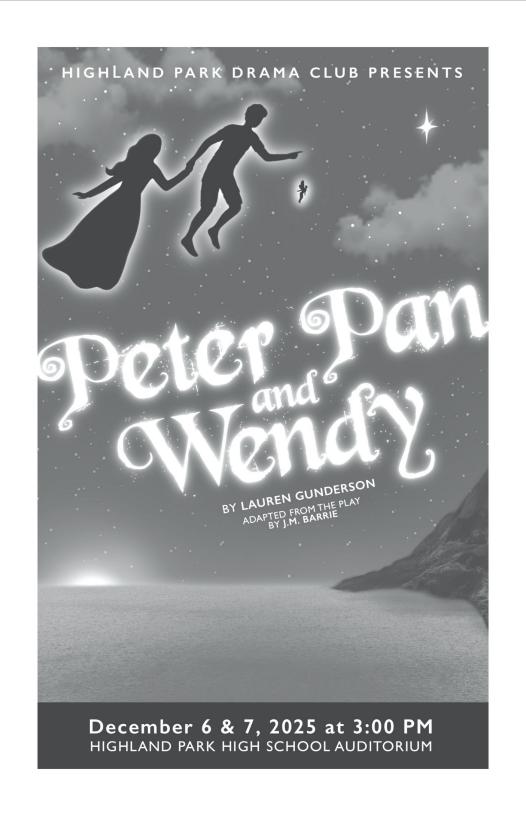












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HIGHLAND PARK EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

# PROUD SUPPORTERS

OF THE THEATRICAL ARTS

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Highland Park Schools'
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## HIGHLAND PARK DRAMA CLUB PRESENTS



## **AUDITIONS**

Tuesday, December 9, 2025 3:30 PM HPHS Auditorium

## **PERFORMANCES**

Friday-Sunday, April 24-26, 2026

### **WANT TO LEARN MORE?**

Contact drama club advisor Tova Halpern. thalpern@hpschools.net



Hunter,

We are incredibly proud of you! Your confidence and joy on stage are truly inspiring, and your dedication, creativity, and passion for performing shine in everything you do.

Congratulations — fly high and enjoy every moment of this exciting adventure!

Love, Mom and Dad

Hunter, Keep on flying high. We are so proud of you!

Love, T, Dan, James, and Shannon

Hunter,

Seeing you perform is one of our happy thoughts! Keep flying!

Love, Nana and Poppi The Cast and Crew of **Peter Pan and Wendy** 

would like to give our heartfelt thanks to the following people for helping to make this show possible:

THE HIGHLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION
DR. KRISTINA SUSCA, Superintendent
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JULIA DEWHIRST, Administrative Assistant Guidance
MR. KEITH PRESTY, Technical Supervisor
THE CUSTODIAL STAFF
THE DRAMA PARENTS

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### **HIGHLAND PARK DRAMA CLUB PRESENTS**



Written by Lauren M. Gunderson

With

AYAH AWARI AVRIL ESPINAL CALDERON LILA GRANTZ
MONTSERRAT GUERRA HUNTER HO ANNA KOLODZEI
EVAN LEIZ JOVAN LINDSEY ISABELLA LIVINGSTON
SURYA PATEL LIBBY PECKMAN NINA SHAW JULIA STEVENS
PARKER TAPPEN EMILY TAWIL LEILA WEINBERG

Set Design
MARIA SAAVA

Costume Design
JULIUS MCKENNA

Lighting Design
JASON ORBE

Sound Design
JEREMIAH MOUSSA

Property Design

MERAV PETTER-LIPSTEIN

Stage Manager LEILA WEINBERG

Technical Director/Producer
TOVA HALPERN

Directed by LUKE FERRELL

DECEMBER 6 AT 3:00 PM DECEMBER 7 AT 3:00 PM R.W. STEVENS AUDITORIUM

# **Congratulations** to the cast and crew!

from: Law Office of Jay Weinberg 732.247.4770 jayweinberg.com

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**CAST** 

Wendy Darling	JULIA STEVENS
Mrs. Darling	LIBBY PECKMAN
John Darling	MONTSERRAT GUERRA
Michael Darling	HUNTER HO
Mr. Darling	EVAN LEIZ
Nana	
Peter Pan	NINA SHAW
Tinkerbell	PARKER TAPPEN
Tiger Lily	
Tootles	ANNA KOLODZEI
Curly	SURYA PATEL
Slightly	EMILY TAWIL
Shadow	PARKER TAPPEN
Jerome the Crocodile	PARKER TAPPEN
Captain Hook	JOVAN LINDSEY
Smee	EVAN LEIZ
Starkey	
Jukes	ISABELLA LIVINGSTON
Noodler	AVRIL ESPINAL CALDERON

SETTING: Edwardian London, The Sky, Neverland

THERE WILL BE ONE 15-MINUTE INTERMISSION.



The video and/or audio recording of this performance are strictly prohibited. Please turn off all cell phones, watches, and other sound-emitting devices prior to the start of the show.

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# **PRODUCTION STAFF**

Technical Director
Technical Director
Drama Club Advisor/Producer
Music Director
Stage Manager LEILA WEINBERG
Assistant Stage Manager
Fight Choreographer
Fight CaptainLEILA WEINBERG
Head of Set Design
Assistant Set Design TESSA HUTTNER, KYRA SEVARACZ,
CECILIA TANNER-RICCARDI
SOPHIE WANG
Carpenter/Lighting Design
Light Board OperatorLUKE FERRELL
Assistant Lighting Design
Head of Sound DesignJEREMIAH MOUSSA
Assistant Sound Design
Prop Master MERAV PETTER- LIPSTEIN
Assistant Property Design
CORAL DISTEFANO, YAKIR FILHART
AYANNA ROCKMAN
Head of Costume Design
Assistant Costume Design
CORAL DISTEFANC
Playbill
Graphic Design
Ticketing Services HOMETOWN TICKETING





Whether you dye it, blow it, shave it, cut it short, grow it long, wave it back and forth, use it to head bang, jump rope, tickle your friends, or capture your enemies, we are here to take care of your every hair need.

Our group of innovative hairstylists is a vibrant collective, each member bringing their unique vision to their craft. We thrive on creativity and aggressively celebrate individuality. Everyone is welcome here.









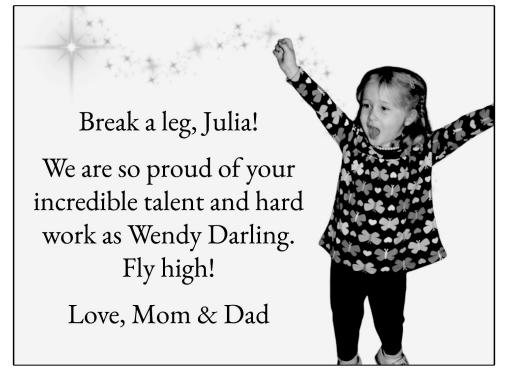
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# Congratulations to the drama club seniors!

Shamilla Awari
Avril Espinal Calderon
Evan Leiz
Jovan Lindsey
Julius Mckenna

Jeremiah Moussa Ayanna Rockman Maria Saava Julia Stevens Emily Tawil

# Good luck! We'll miss you!



# WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

AYAH AWARI (Pirate) is a sophomore at Highland Park High School. This is her second year in the HP Drama Club, having been a member since freshman year. This is her third production in this club. Her first role was *She Kills Monsters* (Ensemble), and her second role was in *The Prom* (Ensemble). She hopes to improve her skills as an actor in this club and land even greater roles. She enjoys all forms of art, especially music. She'd like to thank her sister for encouraging her participation in this club, and all of you, for showing up and giving us your support.

AVRIL ESPINAL CALDERON

(Noodler) is a senior at Highland Park High School. She's been part of HP Drama Club since junior year. Her first experience doing tech was during *She Kills Monsters*. Her first time acting was in The *Prom* (Ensemble). She continued her love for acting with One Acts. During her free time, she likes to dance, sing, and do any kind of stuff that includes the arts. She would like to thank everyone in this production, as well as her family and friends, for all the support they give her every day.

LILA GRANTZ (Tiger Lily) is a junior at Highland Park High School. This is her sixth production with the HP Drama Club, with previous credits including The Prom (Emma Nolan), She Kills Monsters (Evil Gabbi), and Newsies (Albert). She has also done 13 previous theater productions and 12 years of dance. In her free time, Lila enjoys dancing, singing, and hanging out with her friends. She would like to thank the whole cast and

crew of Peter Pan and Wendy, and most of all, her parents, who support her no matter what.

MONTSERRAT GUERRA (John Darling) is a junior at Highland Park High School. This is her tenth production with the HP drama club, previously having been in *The Prom* (Ensemble), *She Kills Monsters* (Evil Tina), *Footloose* (Cop/Ensemble), *Puffs* (Leanne), three One Acts productions, and more. She has also participated in HPTC's *Rock of Ages*, *Mean Girls*, and *Heathers*. In her free time, Montse enjoys hanging out with her friends and listening to music. She would like to thank the cast and crew for making this show possible.

HUNTER HO (Michael Darling) is a 6th grader at HPMS and is thrilled to join the HP Drama Club's production of *Peter Pan and Wendy*. This is his 10th show, having appeared in HPYTC's *Willy Wonka*, *Kids* (Willy Wonka), *Moana Jr*. (Tamatoa), *High School Musical Jr*. (Moderator), *Beauty and the Beast Jr*. (Baker), *The Lion King Jr*. (Zazu), and more. He also enjoys dancing and golf. Hunter thanks his family, friends, cast and crew, Tova, Luke and Jess for their unwavering support and an amazing experience.

ANNA KOLODZEI (Tootles) is an 8th grader at HPMS, and this is her first show with the HP Drama club. This is her 6th production, having participated in Peter Pan Jr. (Ensemble), Matilda Jr. (Ensemble), Seussical Jr. (Ensemble), Beauty and the Beast Jr. (Aristocratic Lady), and The Dave Soldier Orchestra's

# WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

'The People's Choice' (Child #2/Ranter) at Le Poisson Rouge, NYC and Zimmerli Art Museum, NJ. She enjoys singing. She thanks her family for encouraging her, and the cast, Tova, Luke, and Jess for making this possible.

EVAN LEIZ (Smee/Mr Darling) is a senior at Highland Park High School. This is his tenth production with the HP Drama Club, previously having participated in *The Prom* (Barry Glickman), *She Kills Monsters* (Steve), and more. Evan has also been in HPTC's *Rock of Ages* (Lonny) and *Mean Girls* (Glen Coco). In his free time, he enjoys playing guitar or piano and hanging out with his friends. He would like to thank Tova, Luke, and all the cast and crew for creating a wonderful experience.

JOVAN LINDSEY (Captain Hook) is a senior at Highland Park High School. He has been in six shows since joining the Drama Club. His theater debut was *Puffs* (Blondo/Professor Lanny/Anthony/Death Buddy/SS Security). He's also been in *The Prom* (Mr. Hawkins) and HPTC's edition of *Mean Girls* (Damian Hubbard). He enjoys music of all kinds, fashion, pop culture, and many different genres of TV shows and movies. He would like to thank himself for building up the courage to take part in this great experience before it was too late!

**ISABELLA LIVINGSTON** (Jukes) is a junior at Highland Park High School. This is her second production with the HP Drama Club, previously having participated in *The Prom* (Angie Dickinson). In her free time, she enjoys

playing the violin, the piano, soccer, singing, and hanging out with friends. She would like to thank her friends and family for always supporting her and making this such a fun experience!

SURYA PATEL (Curly) is a sophomore at Highland Park High School. Previously, she has participated in *She Kills Monsters* (Props), *The Prom* (Olivia Keating), and *Sea of Dreams* (Writer/Actor). She has also participated in productions with the HPTC and HPYTC, including *Beauty and the Beast* (Mrs. Potts), *The Lion King* (Nala), *Seussical* (Gertrude), *Rock of Ages* (Ja'Keith Gill), and more. She would like to thank all the amazing people in the cast of *Peter Pan and Wendy*.

LIBBY PECKMAN (Mrs. Darling) is a junior at Highland Park High School. This is her third production with the HP Drama Club, having previously performed in *She Kills Monsters* (Orcue/Ronnie) and *Puffs* (J. Finch Fletchley/Viktor). She loves performing, writing, and creating art in her free time. Libby would like to thank the cast and crew of Peter Pan and Wendy for their creativity and dedication, and her family for always supporting her love of theatre.

NINA SHAW (Peter Pan) is a sophomore at HPHS. She is thrilled to be performing in her first show with the HPHS Drama Club. She has previously appeared in two shows with the HPTC including *Mean Girls* (Sonja Aquino/Dancer) and *Rock of Ages* (Sherrie's Mom/Waitress #3). She has also formerly performed in many shows with Villagers

## **DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

Welcome to Neverland! I am pleased to welcome you to Highland Park High School's production of *Peter Pan and Wendy*, J.M. Barrie's classic tale adapted by Lauren Gunderson.

For more than a century, *Peter Pan* has been a paramount story rooted in the freedom, imagination, and fragility of childhood. Central to the tale is the conflict between wonder and melancholy, the desire to stay young forever, and the truth that time moves forward. Lauren Gunderson honors this duality while bringing to the surface that growing up is not a tragedy but a transformation and that responsibility and imagination are not opposing forces. The magic we fear losing can become the strength that guides us into who we are meant to be. Our Highland Park Drama Club community can not be a better representation of these sentiments. I am so proud of our student actors for balancing the responsibility and imagination that it takes to put on a production. Watching them discover this story together has been a reminder that growing up is not about outgrowing wonder, but learning how to carry it with us.

Central to this adaptation for today's audiences, Lauren Gunderson reimagined Tiger Lily as a strong, complex character, one rooted in resistance to environmental harm and injustice. In Gunderson's retelling, the character is no longer a one-dimensional stereotype, but a fully-fledged individual whose voice, agency, and moral clarity are central to the story. We recognize that Tiger Lily's history, both in the original work by J.M. Barrie and in many subsequent adaptations, carries with it painful legacies of stereotyped portrayals of indigenous peoples. Gunderson has explicitly cited her desire to "confront, but not erase" these problematic elements, reshaping the story through an anti-colonial and anti-racist lens. We approach this work as an opportunity to emphasize the character's symbolic role, an advocate for justice, empathy, and ecological awareness. We hope this production invites dialogue about the responsibility of artists to engage with cultural, literary, and artistic legacy with care and awareness.

Lauren Gunderson, one of the most produced playwrights in the United States, has built a career on reframing familiar narratives through empathy and respect for young people's inner lives. She asks us to reconsider the stories we inherit and the roles we are expected to play within them. In this adaptation, she holds onto the adventure and wonder of the Neverland we know and love while gently reshaping the edges. Neverland becomes less a place to escape to and more a place to understand who we are becoming.

I hope that you find this production to honor the magic of Neverland while encouraging a dialogue around having courage to imagine a better world, questioning the stories we've been told, and facing fear with curiosity.

Thank you for supporting these students in their telling of this timeless tale in a new light.

Luke Ferrell, Director

# WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

**LUKE FERRELL** (Director) is a New Jersey-based stage director and teaching artist. He holds a degree in Theater Arts from Rutgers University where he continues to work in academic coaching and first-year career engagement. Some of his recent production credits include Songs for a New World (Director), 9 to 5 (Music Director), The Drowsv Chaperone (Technical Director). Puffs (Director), The Last Five Years (Director). Newsies (Technical Director). Into the Woods (Music Director), 9 to 5 (Technical Director), Spring Awakening (Music Director), Sweet Charity (Director), and The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (Director). He is thrilled to be in his fourth season with Highland Park High School and would like to thank the tech crew, cast, and staff for all of their hard work!

TOVA HALPERN (Producer/Technical Director) has been a professional director and Theatre Arts educator for the past 15 years. Tova graduated with her B.A. in Theatre Arts from Rutgers University. After graduating from Rutgers, Tova went to work on Broadway at Richard Frankel Productions, producers of Hairspray, Stomp and Young Frankenstein. After gaining a true Broadway experience, Tova went back to school and received her master's in Educational Theater from NYU. With her enthusiasm and love for theater and education, Tova founded Fresh Theatre Arts, an educational theatre company whose mission is to introduce, educate and encourage youth to participate in performing arts programming while strengthening their creativity,

self-esteem, and social skills. This is Tova's 10th year as HP Drama's advisor. She is so proud of the cast, crew and staff of *She Kills Monsters*. Break legs! @freshtheatrearts

JASON ORBE (Technical Director/ Lighting Designer) is a graduate of The College of New Jersey where he holds a BA in Technology & Engineering Education. Jason is a high school technology education teacher in Central New Jersey and teaches wood shop, theater tech, architecture and graphic arts. He has worked on numerous productions through his education and also professionally. Some of his recent production credits include The Little Mermaid (Production Manager), A Christmas Carol (Production Manager), Puffs (Technical Director), The Addams Family (Technical Director), and Mean Girls(Technical Director). Jason is thrilled to be partaking in his first production at Highland Park High School.

# WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

Theatre, including Bye Bye Birdie (Penelope Ann), Beauty and the Beast (Dancer), Peter Pan (Tiger Lily), and more. She is also a dancer at Washington Rock Dance. She would like to thank the amazing cast and crew of Peter Pan and Wendy.

JULIA STEVENS (Wendy Darling) is a senior at HPHS. This is her fourth year in the drama club. Some of her previous roles include *The Prom* (Alyssa Greene), *She Kills Monsters* (Tilly Evans), *Footloose* (Urleen), *Heathers* (Ms. Fleming), *Puffs* (Narrator), and *Newsies* (Mush). Outside of theater, she enjoys dancing and writing newspaper articles. She wants to thank her friends, family, and everyone who made this magical production possible. Enjoy the show!!

PARKER TAPPEN (Tinkerbell) is a junior at HPHS. This is her 8th show with the Highland Park Drama Club. Her past shows have been *Newsies*, *Footloose*, *Puffs*, and many more. When she isn't at theater she enjoys listening to music and watching Yellowjackets. She would like to thank all of her friends and family for supporting.

EMILY TAWIL (Slightly) is a senior at HPHS. She has previously been in 17 shows that have each given her something new to learn and grow from. With this show Emily has learned that even the finite details count on stage, in the green room, and even out of rehearsal. Emily will like to thank everyone on the cast and crew for such an amazing experience.

**LEILA WEINBERG** (Starkey/Stage Manager) is a junior at Highland Park High School. Previously, she has participated in *Rock of Ages, Sea of Dreams, The Prom, She Kills Monsters,* and more. She has also done multiple of the *HPYTC* shows. She enjoys listening to music and loudly singing along. She would like to thank the entire cast and crew for making this an amazing experience.

SHAMILLA AWARI (Props/Costumes) is a senior at HPHS. Previously, she has participated in 5 shows, including *The Prom* (Pit Orchestra) and *She Kills Monsters*. She enjoys spending time with others, working on projects, exploring true crime stories, studying this year's Mock Trial case, or practicing her violin, Clarence, for this year's Winter Concert on December 11, which she'd love to see you at ;)!! She would like to thank the crew and cast for their hard work and her parents for everything.

#### CORAL DISTEFANO (Costumes/

Props) is a junior at HPHS. She has previously participated 10 shows at HPHS, including *Alice in Wonderland, Newsies, Channel Surfing, Heathers,* and *Footloose*. She wants to mention Coral Reefs have reached the point of no return due to global warming. She loves to sew, make jewelry, sing, dance, and swim on University swim team. She would like to tell this year's seniors NOT TO LEAVE YET. This show, "It's gonna be legend...Wait for it..." (go find it).

YAKIR FILHART (Props) is a junior at HPHS. This is his second year in tech

# WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

and his second show. In his free time, he enjoys playing video games, reading books, and listening to music. He would like to thank his parents for always supporting him.

TESSA HUTTNER (Stagehand) is a junior at Highland Park High School. This is her eighth production, previously participating in HP Drama Club's A Midsummer Night's Dream (Egeus/Lion), The Prom (Sheldon). Newsies (Elmer/Hannah), HPTC's Heathers (Young Republicanette), Footloose (Ensemble), One Acts 2024, and One Acts 2025. Outside of performing arts, Tessa likes to play soccer and listen to music. She would like to thank her family and friends for always supporting her and everyone in the cast and crew for making this show happen!

JULIUS MCKENNA (Head of Costumes) is a senior at HPHS. This is his 18th show at HPHS, previously having participated in *Sea of Dreams*, *The Prom*, *She Kills Monsters*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Chicago*, and others. In his free time Julius enjoys sewing and playing *Hollow Knight*. He does not like doing college applications, even though it's the only thing he's done for the last month. Julius would like to thank Kaya, for getting him into costumes.

JEREMIAH MOUSSA (Head of Sound) is a senior at HPHS. He has previously participated in shows in the pit orchestra including *Footloose* (Clarinet/Tenor Sax/Bari Sax), and *Newsies* (Clarinet), as well as

participating in One Acts as head of sound. Jeremiah likes playing his instruments, participating in robotics, and rubix cubing in his free time. He would like to thank the Highland Park Drama Club for being so welcoming and kind to him.

MERAV PETTER-LIPSTEIN (Head of Props) is a junior at Highland Park High School. This is her seventh show with the drama club. In her free time, she loves to read and hang out with friends. She would like to thank the board for putting in so much work and her family for their support.

#### AYANNA ROCKMAN (Costumes/

Props) is a senior at HPHS. She has previously participated in 4 shows, including *Alice in Wonderland, Footloose, She Kills Monsters,* and *The Prom.* In her free time, she enjoys dancing, singing, and making beaded fish for her friends. She would like to thank her friends for making her senior play so wonderful, and she knows this will be a great year! Also.. you found it "...Dary"

MARIA SAVVA (Head of Set Design) is a senior at Highland Park High School. She has previously participated in *Alice in Wonderland*, *One Acts 2023, Newsies, Heathers, Puffs, Footloose, One Acts 2024, Mean Girls, She Kills Monsters,* and *The Prom*. When she isn't at theater, Maria likes to spend her time listening to music and google slides about random things. She would like to thank her mom for her guidance, and her friends for their support.

# WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

KYRA SEVARACZ (Set Design) is a freshman at HPHS. She has no past production experience with the drama club so this is her first. She loves dancing and music on her off time. She would like to thank herself for pushing through hard times and building up courage to put herself out there. She would also like to thank everyone in this club for not making her feel like an outcast.

CHARLI SMULEWITZ (Assistant Stage Manager) is a freshman at HPHS. This is her first production with the drama club. She enjoys hanging out with her friends. She would like to thank everyone for being so welcoming.

#### CECILIA TANNER-RICCARDI

(Head of Stage Left) is a junior at HPHS. This is her fourth year in the drama club, previously participating in *Newsies*, *Footloose*, *The Prom*, and the 2024 and 2025 *One Acts*. In her free time, Cecilia can be found doing homework, walking her dog, or listening to Clairo. She would like to thank her friends and family for supporting her, and her dog Phoebe for (reluctantly) sleeping on her lap.

**SOPHIE WANG** (Set Design) is a freshman at HPHS. She has previously participated in *The Prom* and this is her second production with the drama club. In her free time, she enjoys dancing and painting. Sophie would like to thank her family for supporting her.

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