



WORLD PREMIERE

Playwrights Local & Dobama Theatre Present

# DOWN BY CONTACT

By Les Hunter | Directed by Dale Heinen

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A World Premiere

# DOWN BY CONTACT

**Written by Les Hunter**  
**Directed by Dale Heinen**

August 17 - September 2, 2018  
Tudor House at Gilmour Academy  
Cleveland, Ohio

## CAST

John Busser -- Carson  
Corin B. Self -- Trypp  
Liam Stilson -- Tommy  
Margi Zitelli -- Kelsey

## CREATIVE TEAM

Inda Blatch-Geib -- Costume Designer  
Walter Boswell -- Set Designer  
Wes Calkin -- Lighting Designer  
Lucas Clark -- Production Manager/House Manager  
Tyler Collins -- Social Media Promotions  
EJ Dahl -- Assistant Director  
Daniel McNamara -- Sound Designer  
Chris Seibert -- Production Support  
Bronwyn Sheptak -- House Intern  
Leigh Tennant -- Stage Manager

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## SETTING

Mid-to-late 2000s, after the real estate bubble has burst;  
the Kaides' mansion in the suburbs of a large, Midwestern city.

## NOTES

The run time is one hour and thirty minutes with no intermission.  
Video/audio recording of this performance by any means is prohibited.

## CONCUSSIVE LEGACY FOUNDATION

A portion of the proceeds from this production will benefit the Concussion Legacy Foundation and its mission to protect athletes and families through research, policy, and education. For more on the CLF, visit <https://concussionfoundation.org>.

## SPECIAL THANKS

*Les Hunter*: Both Gino's Awards and Minotas Trophies and Awards for their contributions to Carson's trophy case. Guy Farish, Stephen Stahl, Susan Oldrieve, and Denise Kohn at Baldwin Wallace University for funding. Brandon Hamm for guidance with research. Gay Janis for her connection, and Rhonda Rickelman, Dan Kohn, and Gilmour Academy for their time and gift of the Tudor House. Elise Kuklinca, Julie Friedman, and Nathan Motta of Dobama Theatre for their time and support. Tom Hayes and David Todd of Playwrights Local for their guidance and support. The amazing crew who overcame great obstacles in turning this space into Carson's home. A talented and dedicated cast who survived the sweatbox of our rehearsal space. Assistant Dir. EJ Dahl for their great spirit. Director Dale Heinen for her leadership and insights. My parents, who have always supported my writerly ambitions. Finally, my lovely wife, who has offered support and feedback throughout, and without whose love and understanding, none of this would be possible.

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## PLAYWRIGHT



Les Hunter's plays have received over 40 productions across the country. He was a finalist for the Jewish Plays Project 2016 international Jewish Playwriting Contest for his play *To the Orchard* (Playwrights Local). He wrote for all three parts of the Off-Broadway hit, *The Jackson Heights Trilogy* (Theatre 167). His play *Weimar* was commissioned and produced by Baldwin Wallace University in 2018. Playscripts, Indie Theatre, and Brooklyn Publishers publish his plays. His articles have appeared in *American Theatre Magazine*, *HowlRound*, and *The Dramatist*, and he has chapters in the books *Performing the Progressive Era* and

*Experimental O'Neill*. He is the Ohio Regional Representative for the Dramatists Guild of America, past Curator of New Plays at LaGuardia Performing Arts Center in NYC, a member of the Playwrights GYM at Dobama Theatre, and on the Board of Directors of Playwrights Local. He's held residences at Millikan U. and Ora Lerman, and was a participant in the Mellon School of Theater and Performance Theory at Harvard. He is an assistant professor of English at Baldwin Wallace. PhD: Stony Brook U., MFA: Boston U.

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## DIRECTOR



Dale Heinen is a director and dramaturge who has worked on new plays in Cleveland, Chicago, Glasgow, London, New York, and Brazil. For several years she was a dramaturge for Soho Theatre in London, and prior to that was co-Artistic Director of an Equity off-Loop theatre in Chicago, during which time critics selected her three times as one of Chicago's "Best Directors" in *PerformInk*. Dale has directed over thirty productions; her work has been recognized by the Jeff Awards and the After Dark Awards (Chicago) and she was the recipient of the Arches Award for Directors (Glasgow). Since returning to her hometown of Cleveland,

she has directed new work at Cleveland Public Theatre, Dobama Theatre, and Playwrights Local, where she is a company member. Dale teaches at John Carroll University and has a BA from Northwestern U. and an MFA from Middlesex U. (London). In 2015, Dale co-founded BorderLight: the Festival of International Theatre, Cleveland. BorderLight ([www.borderlightcle.org](http://www.borderlightcle.org)) will launch in summer 2019.

# CAST



**John Busser (Carson)** is an actor/writer in the Cleveland area. He is a regular cast member of *Flanagan's Wake*, which will celebrate with a tenth season this coming January. Recently, Blank Canvas Theatre presented *Children's Letters to Satan (and Other Horrible Scribbles)*, a collection of seven of his original short plays.

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**Corin B. Self (Trypp)** is no stranger to the stage. After studying Theater at Morgan State University, he moved on to work with a few professional theater companies in the D.C.-Maryland-Virginia area that included productions of *Statements After An Arrest Under the Immorality Act* by Athol Fugard and *Ragtime*, as well as voiceover work. After his return to Cleveland, he has been a part of productions such as *Julius Caesar - Set In Africa*, *Objectively/Reasonable*, and *Sister Act - The Musical*. He just finished the production of *The Panther Dancer* with Playwrights Local and is happy to be a part of this collaboration between Dobama Theatre and Playwrights Local.

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**Liam Stilson (Tommy)** is thrilled to be working in conjunction with Playwrights Local and Dobama Theatre, and to be playing the role of Tommy in this production. Some of his favorite previous roles include Peter Cratchit/Dick Wilkins/Master Richard in Great Lakes' *A Christmas Carol* and Konstantin in *The Seagull*. He would like to thank his stalwart friends for sticking with him when he goes crazy. He's mostly looking at you Julia during the Arts House run, but Lauren, Natalie, Danyel, and Jacob are definitely included. This bio must be 100 words, but all BFam has a place in his heart. Sending love to his little brother, Daniel, who makes the world a better and wittier place. Much love to Mom and Dad.

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**Margi Herwald Zitelli (Kelsey)** is a playwright, actor, and director who prefers to devote her theatrical endeavors to local new works. She has been a part of productions with Talespinner Children's Theatre, Cleveland Public Theatre, Dobama Theatre, Interplay Jewish Theatre, Cain Park, Playhouse Square, Dirty Shakespeare Company, Habitat for Insanity sketch comedy, and other local venues. Her new play, *A Song in the Flame (a tale of Israel)*, was commissioned by Talespinner and will be presented Nov. 24-Dec. 16 as its holiday production. Margi is a marketing copywriter, wife of comedian Matt Zitelli of Last Call Cleveland, and mother of Devin and Alexa.

# CREATIVE TEAM

**Inda Blatch-Geib (Costume Designer):** Inda's work as a costume and production designer for over 1,000 theatrical, commercial, and film releases has spanned 30 years and crossed 4 continents. Set styling, costume, and puppet designs include the Broadway special production of *Kris Kringle The Musical*. Current collaborations include set design for Machine Gun Kelly's European Tour, Wolstein Arena Show, and EST Fest. Current commercial work includes Costume Design for The Cleveland Cavaliers' 1970's and 80's themed videos, national spots for the team, and design for on-court halftime shows. Print designs include set styling for *Harper's Bazaar UK*'s Scarlett Johansson cover and spread and set styling for Foundations and Kilgore Trout. Ms. Blatch-Geib's designs include exhibits at The Smithsonian Institute as well as national commercials including Microsoft, McDonald's, Under Armour, and TroyBuilt. Recent film projects include Production and Costume Design for an upcoming Netflix original series and Ohio Art Direction for *The Signal* starring Laurence Fishburne. Music Video Production and Costume Design includes Machine Gun Kelly's "Alpha Omega" and "Let You Go" releases.

**Walter Boswell (Scenic Design)** is pleased to work with Playwrights Local and to return to Dobama Theatre, having designed in the old Coventry space. He has served as the principle designer for Ensemble Theatre for the last two years. His designs have also been seen at Karamu House, Theatre in the Circle, Baldwin Wallace University, and Lorain County Community College. He spent 18 years as the scenic and lighting designer for Middlebury College's Equity summer program. Walter received the Cleveland Critics Circle Award for Scenic Design of *The Adding Machine* at LCCC in 1984 and *The Hairy Ape* at Ensemble Theatre in 2017.

**Wes Calkin (Lighting Designer):** Wes' previous work for Playwrights Local includes lighting design for *The Panther Dancer*. He has also been a frequent collaborator with Cleveland Public Theatre. Wes was formerly the Lighting Director at Shawnee Summer Theatre in Bloomfield, IN, and the Resident Lighting Designer at Wayside Theatre in Middletown, VA. He holds an MFA from the University of Cincinnati and a BA from Wake Forest University. He works as a Theatre Design Specialist for the Innovative Technology Design Group at DLR Group | Westlake Reed Leskosky.

**Lucas Clark (Production Manager/House Manager)** is glad to be back in Cleveland for *Down by Contact*. Favorite credits in the area include *The Theory of Relativity* at Playhouse Square (Production Stage Manager) and *Hair and Bring It On* at Beck Center (Production Stage Manager). Touring credits include *Waitress* (Production Assistant) and in October *The King & I* (Assistant Stage Manager/Assistant Company Manager). Regional credits include *Hairspray* (Deck Stage Manager), *Newsies*, and *Mamma Mia!* (Assistant Stage Manager) at Music Theatre Wichita. Lucas is a proud graduate of Baldwin Wallace University. All of his gratitude goes to both of the Annas in his life.

**Tyler Collins (Social Media Promotions)** is a Cleveland-based actor, director, and soon-to-be graduate of Baldwin Wallace University. He has acted with Great Lakes Theater Festival in its productions of *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, and *Twelfth Night*. As part of Shakespeare by the Falls' inaugural season, he portrayed Mercutio/Paris/Sampson in *Romeo and Juliet*. Upcoming, he can be seen as Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Shakespeare by the Falls.

**EJ Dahl (Assistant Director)** is a writer, director, and performer based in Cleveland and a member of Playwrights Local's Young Playwrights Collective. Previously at Playwrights Local, EJ has been an assistant director (*To the Orchard*) and a featured playwright at the Cleveland Playwrights Festival (*Make House*).

**Daniel McNamara (Sound Designer)** is a freelance interdisciplinary theater and performance artist who completed a funded Masters Degree at National University of Ireland in August of 2017. Daniel was the Gordon Square Arts District performing artist-in-residence in Spring of 2018. He recently conceived, directed, and performed in a workshop production of his new work *Odysseus Unraveled* at CPT in April 2018. From 2005-2010, Daniel was a resident company member and musical director of Bread and Puppet Theater in Glover, VT, with tours to Italy, Germany, Ireland, Taiwan, Venezuela, New York City, and more. In 2010 he co-founded the Possibilitarian Puppet Theater - also with national and international tours until 2014.

**Chris Seibert (Production Support)** is a creator and educator who develops original performance works in collaboration with professional and community artists. She is the co-creator of the solo performances *Fa(r)ther*, *Split*, *Cut to Pieces* and *The Tranced*, the plays *Ancestra*, *Insomnia*, and *F\*\*\* Me Love Me Aphrodite*, and the dance theatre duet *Reckoning*. Chris' professional work has garnered her recognition and support from the Ohio Arts Council, Chesterfield Writer's Film Project (LA), Chicago C.A.A.P., and DirectorsLabChicago. Chris was an inaugural recipient of the Creative Workforce Fellowship, a program of the Community Partnership for Arts and Culture funded by Cuyahoga Arts and Culture.

**Bronwyn Sheptak (House Intern)** will be attending Baldwin Wallace University in the fall majoring in biology with a minor in dance. She has done theater all her life and wants to continue her theatrical journey throughout college as a hobby. Although most of her time was spent on stage, she's excited to learn about the backstage aspect of the business. She's very grateful to be a part of this production!

**Leigh Tennant (Stage Manager)** is thrilled to be working alongside the *Down by Contact* team! As a recent stage management graduate from Baldwin Wallace University, Leigh has worked on productions at Beck Center, Stages Repertory Theater, The Lorain Palace Theater, Oberlin Summer Theatre Festival, and many others. She is grateful for the trust and support evident in the love of her family and friends.

## **DOWN BY CONTACT** is a co-production of:

**Playwrights Local**  
2624 Idlewood Road  
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118  
<http://playwrightslocal.org/>

**Dobama Theatre**  
2340 Lee Road  
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118  
<http://www.dobama.org/>





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