



33 Variations

by Moisés Kaufman

Jeff Clapp, Director

STUDIO THEATRE
KAREN HILLE PHILLIPS CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

PLU | SCHOOL OF
MUSIC, THEATRE & DANCE

plu.edu/theatre-dance

Production Team

Director.....	Jeff Clapp
Assistant Director.....	Oscar Oberg
Intimacy Coordinator.....	Ahmira Elyard-Jaeger*
Choreographer.....	Jessica Wallenfels
Scenic Designer.....	Richard MacKenzie
Assistant Scenic Designer.....	Alexander MacKenzie*
Technical Director.....	Caleb Seiler
Co-Costume Designers.....	Kathy Anderson* and Beno Sher*
Lighting Designer.....	Cordelia Seil*
Assistant Lighting Designer.....	Cassandra Vega*
Lighting Mentor.....	Jacob "Monty" Viramontes
Sound Designer.....	Quin Lautz
Pianist.....	Lark Powers
Projections.....	Jeremy McCarter
Stage Manager.....	Nix (Phoenix) Leiseth*
Assistant Stage Manager.....	Lucas Lucero*

Production Crew

Light Board Operator.....	Michelle Jangard
Sound Board Operator.....	Prince Jamerson
Projections Operator.....	Jeremy McCarter
Stage Crew/Ushers.....	Raine Anderson and Ashley Midlo*
Costume Crew.....	Miranda Manning and Emry Newton
Assistant House Manager.....	Kiana Kendall*

Props Crew.....Cooper Perez*
Electrics Crew.....Brandon Cantu, Vanessa Bassi*,
Kyra McCloud*, Cooper Perez*, and Ashley Midlo*

Cast

Dr. Katherine Brandt.....Chelsea Hesselbach*
Clara Brandt.....Vanessa Bassi*
Dr. Gertrude Ladenburger.....Belle Bodley
Mike Clark.....Andrew Overstreet
Ludwig Van Beethoven.....Jordan "Odie" Hymas
Anton Diabelli.....Brandon Cantu
Anton Schindler.....Will Morgan
Announcer.....Ashley Midlo

*Denotes membership in Alpha Psi Omega (ΑΨΩ), National Theatre Honor Society

Special Thanks

Cameron Bennett, Dean of the College of Professional Studies; Associate Dean Brian Galante of the School of Music, Theatre and Dance

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Cast Biographies



Vanessa Bassi (Clara Brandt) is a third-year transfer musical theatre major from Everett, Washington whose recent credits include Deloris Van Cartier in *Sister Act*, Hermione Granger in *A Very Potter Musical*, and Ronette in *Little Shop of Horrors*. She would like to thank her mom, her sisters, and her best friends Windsor and Maggie.



Belle Bodley (Dr. Gertrude Ladenburger) is a second year environmental studies major from Seattle Washington. Her recent credits include Claire in *Proof with Young American Theatre Compony*, Deorwynn in *Ken Ludwigs Sherwood: the Adventures of Robin Hood* and Louise Overbee in *Love/Sick with PLU APO*. She would like to thank everyone who worked on *33 Variations* for creating a beautiful show.



Brandon Cantu (Anton Diabelli) is a sophomore BFA Acting/Directing Major whose recent credits include Much/Ensemble in *Sherwood: Adventures of Robin Hood*, Impulsive Man in *Love/Sick*, and Willy and Phoenix in *APO One Acts 2026*, all shows which were done here at PLU. He would like to thank his parents and twin brother for their endless support and director Jeff Clapp for this opportunity.

Cast Biographies



Chelsea Hesselbach (Dr. Katherine Brandt) is a Sophomore Musical Theatre major and Dance minor from Puyallup, WA whose recent credits include Sarah in *Love/Sick*, Virginia in *Native Gardens*, and Ensemble in *Sherwood: The Adventures of Robin Hood* all here at PLU. They would like to thank Jack, Ella, Avery, their wonderful cast, and their parents for supporting them, and Jeff Clapp for the opportunity and believing in them.



Jordan "Odie" Hymas (Ludwig Van Beethoven) is a fourth year Strategic Communications major from Granite Falls, WA whose recent credits include Basilius in *Head Over Heels* (Coronado Playhouse), Billy Cane in *Bright Star* (Lamplighter's Theatre), and Nigel Bottom in *Something Rotten!* (Ocean Beach Playhouse), earning 2024 BroadwayWorld San Diego nominations for Best Performer in a Musical and Best Ensemble. He is excited to join the PLU theatre family!



Ashley Midlo (Announcer) is a third year at PLU majoring in Musical Theatre. She is a member of the Clay Crows and can be seen in PLU's upcoming production of *Light in the Piazza*. Thanks for coming!

Cast Biographies



Will Morgan (Anton Schindler) is a sophomore BFA Acting/Directing major from Olympia whose recent credits include Referee in Rocky the Musical at Tacoma Little Theatre, Avery Masters in the 2025 APO One Acts, and Harry Bright in Mamma Mia at Capital High School. He would like to thank his family and friends for making his dream accomplishable.



Andrew Overstreet (Mike Clark) is a Freshman Business major and Theatre whose recent credits include Creature in Frankenstein at PLU, Oberon in Midsummer Nights Dream at VHS, and Jeff in Curious Savage at VHS. He would like to thank Mr and Ms.Gunn, his amazing friends and cast, and Jeff Clapp for this opportunity.

Coming Soon...

Alpha Psi Omega Presents: WROL, Without Rule of Law

by Michaela Jeffery

April 24-25 @ 7:30 & April 26 @ 1:30; the CAVE

Director: Ahmira Elyard-Jaeger

The Light in the Piazza: the Musical

May 8-9 @ 7:30pm, and May 10 @ 2pm; Eastvold Auditorium

Director: Jim Brown

Music Director: Amy Boers

Production Biographies

Kathleen Anderson (Co-Costume Designer) has an MFA in Costume and Set Design from Northwestern University. Her favorite designs for PLU Theatre include costume and set designs for Twelfth Night and the Spitfire Grill, costume design for Cabaret, A Dream Play, and The Fantasticks, and puppet and costume design for The Floating World. She has also designed extensively for Tacoma Opera and Harlequin Productions in Olympia.

Jeff Clapp (Director) Jeffrey Clapp (Director) is an Associate Professor of Theatre and Dance at Pacific Lutheran University whose recent directing credits include The Prom, Macbeth, Pippin, The Matchmaker, Master Harold...and the boys, and Medea. Jeff has also served as Technical Director and Stage Director for Tacoma Opera, most recently for the production of The Tacoma Method. Some of the production work Jeff is most proud of while at Tacoma Opera include Madame Butterfly, Tosca, La Boheme, Barber of Seville, and An Evening with Kurt Weill. Jeff has served as a faculty member at PLU since 1995. While not working in theatre, Jeff enjoys exploring and fly fishing northwest rivers with his wife and son, and playing in a garage band.

Ahmira Elygard-Jaeger (Intimacy Coordinator) from the Columbia River Gorge area, is a senior Elementary Education major with theatre and writing minors. Her credits as an intimacy coordinator include Frankenstein and The Prom here at PLU. Ahmira is directing WROL: Without Rule of Law (opening April 24!) through Alpha Psi Omega here at PLU. She would like to thank Nix for their dedication as a stage manager and Jeff for one last opportunity to collaborate on a show at PLU.

Production Biographies

Quin Lautz (Sound Designer) is a first year Design/Tech & Accounting Major from Auburn Washington whose recent credits include Sound Designer for APO's Student Written One Acts, as well as for APO's Love/Sick. She would like to thank all of her friends whom she has made this year, and specifically Cordelia Seil for their help during the production process.

Nix (Phoenix) Leiseth (Stage Manager) is a junior BFA tech/theatre major from Moorhead, Minnesota whose recent credits include stage managing Fall Dance 2025 and Lovesick as well as working as part of costume shop paid crew. He would like to thank everyone who worked on the show, as well as his friends and family.

Lucas Lucero (Assistant Stage Manager) is a 2nd-year Musical Theatre BFA with a double minor in dance and music from Puyallup, Washington whose recent credits include Assistant Director for Light in the Piazza Robbie/Austin in the One-Acts, and Wickersham/Ensemble in Suessical at Lakewood Playhouse. He would like to thank his family and friends for their love and support and Jeff for this opportunity.

Richard MacKenzie (Scenic Designer) For Rick MacKenzie, theater is often a challenge to solve complex problems with limited resources. A BFA from Cornish College of the Arts, Rick has worked in a variety of technical and educational capacities and is most currently a teacher at Eastside Preparatory School, teaching stagecraft to middle and high school students, as well as overseeing productions and events on campus. Rick is passionate about the relationship between the visual world and the written word, and he feels most fulfilled when the individual imagination exceeds its limitations and a vision is achieved with a team. For this production, he is excited this team includes his son Alex MacKenzie working with him as assistant scenic designer. Rick and his wife Bryn love their two cats and their beautiful West Seattle home.

Production Biographies

Alexander MacKenzie (Assistant Scenic Designer) is a third year Chinese Studies and Individualized Arts double major from Seattle, Washington. Alex grew up around theatre, with their father being a technical director and doing ballet. Recent credits include Lead Set Designer for *Frankenstein* (PLU 2025), Ensemble in *Spring Dance 2025* (PLU), and SBO for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Bainbridge Performing Arts 2024). He enjoyed this opportunity to work with his dad and would like to thank all friends and family who supported them during this process.

Jeremy McCarter (Projections) is a junior Theatre Design/Tech major and Communication: Film & Media minor from Santa Barbara, California. His recent work includes sound designing for PLU's *Frankenstein*, and serving as the Mic Tech/SFX Operator for both *The Prom* and *The Great American Songbook*. He thanks his family, peers, and professors for their support.

Oscar Oberg (Assistant Director) is a Senior Theater Major with a BFA in Acting and Directing and criminal justice minor from Stockholm, Sweden whose recent credits include *Smurder he typo'd* in 2025 and *Macbeth* in 2023. I would like to thank Jeffrey Clapp and Amanda Sweager so much for giving me this amazing opportunity for my directing debut.

Lark Powers (Pianist) Dr. Lark Powers has taught at PLU for 9 years, and is Associate Professor of Piano. She instructs applied piano lessons, collaborative piano, and coordinates the Keyboard Musicianship Program. In demand as a pianist and harpsichordist, as well as an adjudicator and presenter, she has performed across the US, in Europe, and in Latin America, as a soloist, a chamber musician, and a collaborative pianist. A speciality is the duo piano repertoire by living Latin American composers.

Production Biographies

Caleb Seiler (Technical Director) is a PLU alumni from 2013 who graduated with a Theatre major and Religion minor. He currently works in the live entertainment industry as a labor project manager and site operations manager for concerts, sporting events, and corporate parties. He would like to thank Jeff Clapp and Art Giddings for giving him an opportunity to return to his roots in this field.

Cordelia Seil (Lighting Designer) is a 3rd year Musical Theatre & Design/Tech double major from Kent, WA. Recent credits include Assistant Director for Frankenstein (PLU), Costume Coordinator for Fall Dance 2025 (PLU), and Lighting Designer for Chicago: Teen Edition (Village Theatre KIDSTAGE). They would like to thank their partner Lauren, family, and amazing friends for the support through all their antics, and hope you enjoy the show!

Beno Sher (Co-Costume Designer) is a junior design/tech BFA from Parkland Washington whose recent costuming credits include Student Written One Acts at PLU, Love/Sick at PLU, and Frankenstein at PLU. He would like to thank his family and friends for pushing them to take on this show as well as Kathleen Anderson for this opportunity.

Cassandra Vega (Assistant Lighting Designer) is a Design/Tech BFA student at PLU also majoring in Environmental Studies and Native American and Indigenous Studies. This is their second show with PLU. Recent credits include lighting design for Frankenstein at PLU, Matilda at Tacoma Little Theater, and Clue at Columbia Junior High School. They would like to thank Cordelia Seil for their fearless leadership and Edan Reitan for her emotional support through the gauntlet of bio-writing.

Production Biographies

Jacob “Monty” Viramontes (Lighting Mentor) graduated from PLU in 2017 with a BFA in Acting & Directing. Now living in Seattle, he works mostly as a lighting designer. Recent lighting design credits include: Dracula, Little Women, and I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change (Renton Civic Theatre), The Roommate (Arts-West), Here & Their (12th Ave Arts), House of Joy - Gregory Award nominee (Seattle Public Theatre/Pratidhwani), Miss Holmes (Centerstage Theatre), The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime and The Mousetrap (Tacoma Little Theatre), GOLD (Annex Theatre), The Hatmaker’s Wife (Drama Dock), Love’s Labors Lost (Seattle Shakespeare Company), Damn Yankees - Sound On Stage award winner (Re-boot Theatre Company), and Come On Get Tappy! (Outrage Onstage/SecondStory Repertory).
Ig: @jacobviramontestheatre

Jessica Wallenfels (Choreographer) creates new work that is music and movement-driven with her company, Many Hats Collaboration, in Portland, Oregon. Wallenfels also works as a freelance director/choreographer, and her work has been seen at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Portland Center Stage, Portland Playhouse, Artists Repertory Theatre, Oregon Children’s Theater and other venues. Wallenfels has created devised works in Los Angeles and New York City, where her work was seen at ps122, HERE, Joe’s Pub, Culture Project, Williamsburg Art Nexus, and La MaMa. Her work in opera has been seen at the Tanglewood Music Center and the Walt Disney Concert Hall. She holds a BFA from California Institute of the Arts, attended Dell’Arte International and earned an MFA in directing from the University of Portland. Wallenfels has taught in the Theatre departments at Portland State University, Mt Hood Community College, Western Oregon University, Portland Community College, Clackamas Community College and been a guest artist at Willamette University, Pacific University, and Lewis & Clark College.

Playwrights Note

Although this play is based on a historical event, namely the birth of the “Diabelli Variations,” I have chosen to explore this story from a fictional perspective. Thus, this play is not a reconstruction of a historic event; rather, it’s a series of variations on a moment in a life. - Moisés Kaufman

Dear Reader,

Just a few thoughts before we begin... What is the play about? That is probably the most often asked question I receive from my friends and family when the discussion turns to what project I am currently working on, or what future projects may be. On the surface, it seems a simple question. The reality is, that in most cases it is difficult to answer. And in the case of this play, I find it almost impossible. From a structural point of view, it is fairly straight forward. It is the story of two people, from different time periods, living out parallel lives. They are connected through space and time by each other’s obsession over a commonplace 15 second waltz written by a successful music publisher who was a less than stellar composer... this play is much more than that.

Both Dr. Katherine Brandt, a musicologist, and Beethoven the composer, suffer the effects of a degenerative disease, and are fully aware that time is running out. Each character lives out the pain, fear, loneliness, anger, jealousy and the why of it all, as they race against the clock to finish what they have started. The playwright delves deep into themes of passion, obsession, family relationship, empathy, love and loss, and how does one “let go” when confronted by their own mortality.

Yes, this play contains all that, and more. For me, however, this play is at its core, a mystery. And any good mystery contains an intense curiosity. Humans are naturally doused in curiosity. We’ve discovered the depths of Earth’s oceans while making our way to parts of outer space we probably were not intended for. Beethoven becomes obsessed with this “curious little waltz, and is driven to discover all that it might contain. Katherine is obsessively interested in why Beethoven would go to such lengths. Their fascination; these combined mysteries are driven into sharp focus as we realize that their time is almost at an end. And with any good mystery, what we think we are looking for may not be what we find. In the end, while Katherine investigates the true nature of Beethoven’s work, she begins to gain insight into her other great mystery of her life – her daughter. It is this discovery that offers us all a moment of grace.

Enjoy