



**Steel City Shakespeare Center
and the West View Hub Present**

Emma
by Jane Austen

**Adapted by
Dylan Mahaffey**

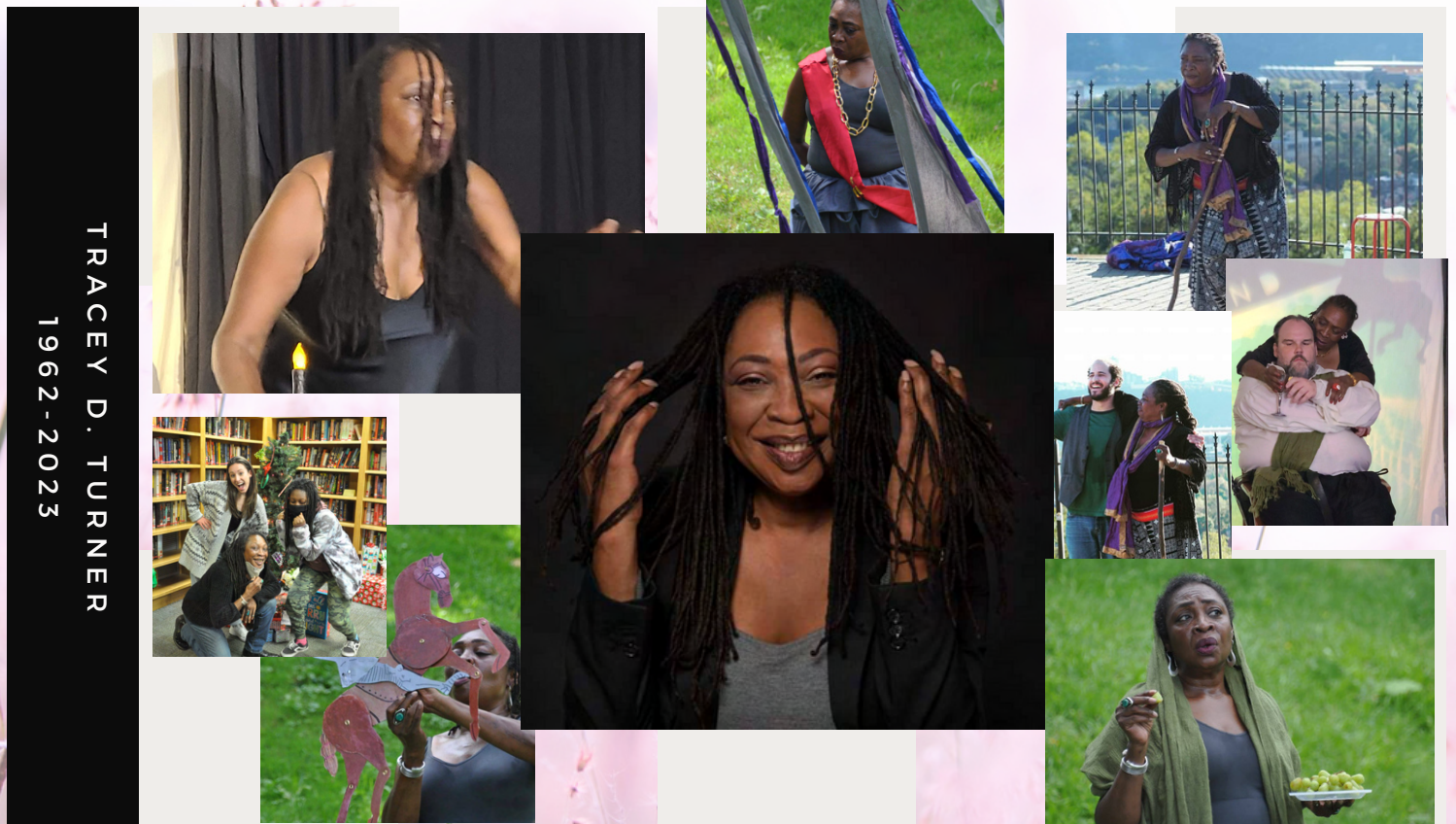
**Directed by
Hannah Ruth Moss**

**West View Hub
435 Perry Highway
Pittsburgh, PA 15229**

May 19 at 7:00 pm
May 20 at 7:00 pm
May 21 at 2:00 pm

May 26 at 7:00 pm
May 27 at 7:00 pm
May 28 at 2:00 pm

*Steel City Shakespeare Center's
10th Anniversary Season is
dedicated in loving memory
to our dear friend
Tracey D. Turner*



As Performer

- *Old Sinbad in The Seven Voyages of Sinbad (2017)*
- *Duke Frederick/Duke Senior in As You Like It (2020)*
- *Scrooge in A Christmas Carol: A Radio Drama (2020)*
- *Cerimon/Dionyza/Bawd in Pericles (2021)*
- *Lady Macbeth in Macbeth (2022)*

As Director

- *Martin Luther King Jr.'s Letter From the Birmingham Jail (2018)*
- *The Twelve Dates of Christmas (2021)*
- *Dracula (2022)*

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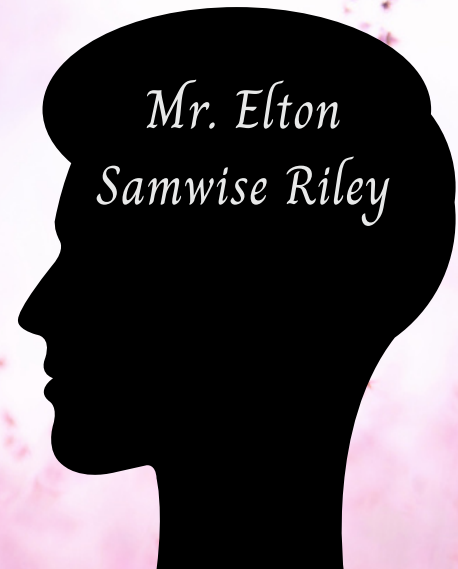
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Cast



Note From the Playwright

Based on the Jane Austen novel, "Emma" tells the story of a young socialite in England who plays at becoming her town's matchmaker. When attempting to match up her friend Harriet Smith with various eligible suitors, Emma starts to run into complications, which multiply amongst themselves with cases of mistaken intentions of love and a cast of supporting characters who each love someone else. Emma doesn't know who loves who, and realizes that she may even be unsure of her own feelings until it may be too late to act upon them. Though set long ago this tale still connects with problems that we still face today, chief among them figuring out who we are and our place in the world.

-Dylan Mahaffey
Playwright

Note From the Director

When Jeff first approached me about directing this production of Emma, my mind flashed back to high school literature class and how I wrote an entire paper about how much I loathed Jane Austen. So, of course, I said yes! But not before reading the script adapted by Dylan Mahaffey, which piqued my interest in diving into the Austen world. Much to my surprise, the classic novels I despised in adolescence had simply been misunderstood entirely. Rather than glorifying these shallow, superficial characters, I learned that Austen highlights the very real anxiety, heartbreak, joy and discovery that her characters experience all while complying with rigid societal standards and customs.

This cast of six has breathed such life into each of these characters in a way that jumps right out of the novel and into West View, with us today.

My hope for you is to find a way to relate to the unrelatable. To empathize with unsympathetic and to laugh at the all-too-serious. More importantly, I ask that you find joy in being here in this moment, with these artists and your fellow audience members.

We would like to dedicate this production to the memory of one of our own Tracey Turner, who departed this stage earlier this year but whose spirit and light dances within each of us today. We are here for so brief a moment, and Tracey (and Austen) remind us to live fully, truthfully, joyfully in the time we have.



The cast would like to thank Jeff Chips for this opportunity and for bringing us together time and again to enjoy live theatre within our community. Scott for providing us with the beautiful space we have here, and for the work he does to improve and enrich West View with art, education, literature, and community. Northmont Church for housing our rehearsals. Cat Baird for her support and guidance and Cat Aceto for her beautiful photography. And of course, Dylan Mahaffey for the script that we have the privilege to premier.

On a personal note I would like to thank Jeff for believing in me enough to hand over such a challenging project, and for answering a million texts and emails. Lauren Scheller-Wolf for her outstanding stage management - Lauren, there is absolutely no way this show would be what it is without you. Brianne, Ella, Michael, Samwise, Parker and Nick for being brave, reliable, and such a joy to work with. My children, Henry and EJ, for lending their mama to the theatre and understanding that the stage was my first love but they are my heart. Jamie and Brandon for their support, encouragement, and for feeding countless dinners to the aforementioned hungry teenagers while I was at rehearsal. Carl, for being my soft place to land, my coffee companion, and the unexpected breath of air I never knew I needed. And finally, to Jane Austen herself. I apologize, Jane, for loathing your very existence before I fell in love with your story.

-Hannah Ruth Moss
Director





Brianne Kessel (she/her) is happy to return to the stage for the first time in...a while. She is so happy to be a part of this production. She'd like to thank the cast and crew, especially Hannah for the opportunity to play this beloved character.

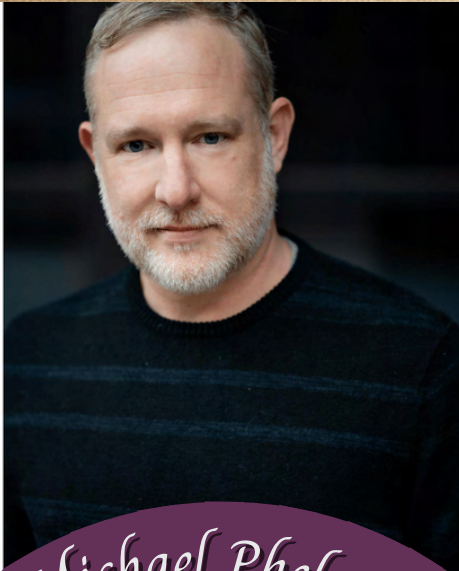
Brianne Kessel
Emma Woodhouse



Ella Mizera (she/her) is excited to bring you the world premiere of Emma! She is a senior at the University of Pittsburgh studying theater and nonprofit management. Emma marks her fourth production with Steel City after *Macbeth*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *The Heavy Gait of Night*. She is also the co-founder of a local youth-led Shakespeare company, the Youth Shakespeare Society of Pittsburgh, and will serve as fight choreographer for their summer show, *Much Ado About Nothing*. Ella hopes you enjoy the show!



Ella Mizera
Harriet Smith



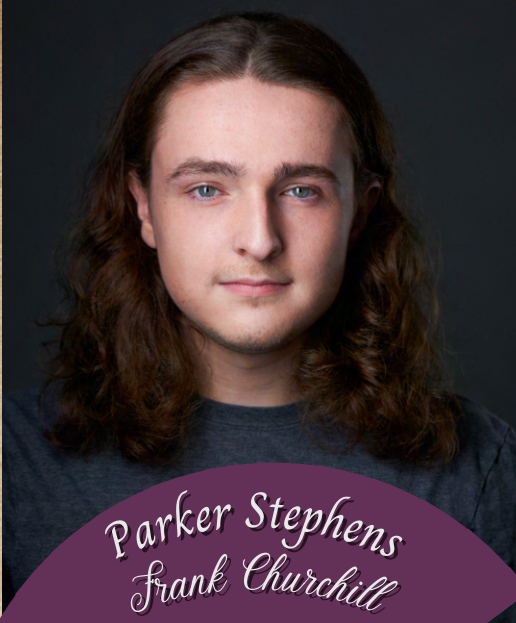
Michael Phelps
Mr. Knightley

Michael Phelps (he/him) is delighted to be making his debut with Steel City Shakespeare Center. Recent credits include *Serial Dater* with Iron Horse Theater Company, *Kissing Jennifer in the Moonlight* with Ashcat Theater Company, *Nik of T.I.M.E.* and *Who's Afraid*, both with R-ACT Theater Productions. Mike holds a B.S in biochemistry from the University of Houston, and an M.S. in physiology and biophysics from Georgetown University. More recently, he has studied at the Donna Belajac Actors Studio in Pittsburgh and under Jaime Slavinsky. A transplant from Houston, he lives in Beaver, PA, with his wife, Samantha, and their monster, Theo.

Samwise Riley (he/they) is thrilled to be performing their second show with Steel City Shakespeare. Previously seen as Johnathan Harker in the SCS's staged reading of *Dracula*. Some of Samwise's other credits include Dobchinsky in Throughline Theatre Company's production of *The Inspector General*, Annabale and Sir Geoffrey Transom in The Pittsburgh Savoyards productions of *The Gondoliers* and *The Open Door* respectively, and as a member of Arcade Comedy Theater's award winning family improv team Penny Arcade.



Samwise Riley
Mr. Elton



Parker Stephens
Frank Churchill

Parker Stephens (he/him) is excited to be working with Steel City Shakespeare's production of *Emma*! His recent credits include *Romeo and Juliet* (Lord Capulet) with Youth Shakespeare Society of Pittsburgh and *The Drag Seed* (Carson Lingus) with University of Pittsburgh Stages. Parker graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in the spring of 2022 with a degree in Theatre Arts. When not on stage, you can find him working as a lighting and scenic technician with Kelly Strayhorn Theatre, Flyspace Production Company, and Hughie's Event Production company. He hopes you enjoy the show!

Nick Ryan (he/him) is excited to return to the stage for the first time in eight years with the Steel City Shakespeare Company! Previously, Nick had previously been seen in SCSC's virtual production of *As You Like It*, and had been seen on stage at West Virginia University in productions such as William Ives' *The Liar*, Shakespeare's *Henry IV Part 1 and 2*, and Theresa Rebeck's *Seminar*. It has been a joy to return to period comedy with this cast, and I appreciate Jeffrey Chips for his dogged determination to get me back on stage. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank my loving wife, Kati, for her unwavering support and affection and our two cat children, Faraday and Selina, for begrudgingly agreeing to let me out to play during lap time.



Nick Ryan
Mr. Woodhouse



Hannah Ruth Moss
Director/Mrs. Ellen

Hannah Ruth Moss (she/her) is a Pittsburgh transplant, thrilled to be working in theatre after a long hiatus. Hannah enjoyed coaching in the Winter Showcase and performing in *The Heavy Gait of Night* for Steel City Shakespeare. She is a graduate of Indiana University Bloomington where she studied Theatre with an emphasis on acting and costume design. After college, Hannah co-founded and managed Theatre of the People, a nonprofit inclusive community theatre, where she honed her Directing, Acting, Design, and nonprofit administration. Her prior directing credits include *A Doll's House* (Ibsen), *Salome* (Wilde), *Antigone* (Sophocles), *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (Pirandello), *Through the Looking Glass* (Carroll) and *Little Red* (R.A. Grove).



Lauren Scheller-Wolf
Stage Manager/Jane Fairfax

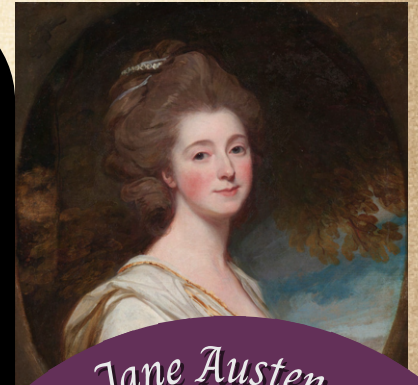
Lauren Scheller-Wolf (she/her) is thrilled to be working with Steel City Shakespeare Center again after appearing in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* last summer. Lauren is a University of Pittsburgh graduate, where she earned a BPhil in Theatre Arts and English Writing with a minor in History. Pitt Stages credits include *Emilia* (Susan Bertie/Flora), *Spark* (Jude), and *She Kills Monsters: Virtual Realms* (Lily/Lilith). Lauren has also acted with several Pittsburgh theatre companies, including Prime Stage Theatre, Pittsburgh Shakespeare in the Parks, and Gemini Children's Theater. Much love and gratitude to her friends and family. She hopes you enjoy the show!



Dylan Mahaffey
Playwright

Dylan Mahaffey (he/him) grew up in Detroit Michigan. He moved to Pittsburgh in college, and just never left. He has been involved in multiple troupes in the area including Brawling Bard and the Miracle Elixir Sideshow. He has won awards for his work in the 48 hr film festival and has written screenplays for a number of short films. *Emma* is his first play, so be easy on him.

Jane Austen was born December 16, 1775, in Steventon, Hampshire, England, as the seventh of eight children of George Austen and Cassandra Leigh. She developed a love of reading and writing as a young girl studying briefly at Oxford. She wrote her first novel, *Elinor and Marianne*, in 1795 at age 20. This novel would go on to be published as *Sense & Sensibility* in 1811. In her all-too-brief life, she wrote six novels that went into publication (two posthumously), including *Pride & Prejudice* (1813), *Mansfield Park* (1814), *Emma* (1815), *Northanger Abbey* (1817), and *Persuasion* (1817). She died on July 18, 1817, at the age of 41 after an unknown illness, believed today to be Addison's disease. Despite her short life and relatively brief bibliography, her works have been celebrated around the world for over two centuries and hailed as some of the greatest feminist literature ever written.



Jane Austen
Author



Characters in the Play

Emma Woodhouse: The central protagonist and titular character of the story, described as, "handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition." She cares for her father and takes a keen interest in the local gossip of Highbury, appointing herself as the unofficial local matchmaker.

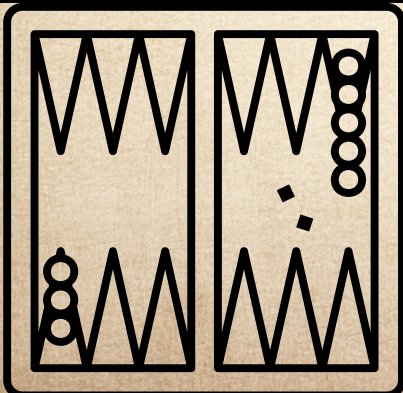
Mr. George Knightley: Emma's wealthy brother-in-law who lives at Donwell Abbey and leases land to the Martins. He is often openly critical of Emma's meddling antics.

Harriet Smith: A 17-year-old resident at the local boarding school with romantic ambitions. She sees Emma as a sort of mentor, as Emma makes her the object of her romantic machinations.

Mr. Elton: The village vicar who is held in high esteem by seemingly everyone. Emma's attempts to match him with Harriet backfire when he professes his desire to marry Emma, only to marry someone else altogether soon after.

Frank Churchill: Mr. Weston's son and Mrs. Weston's stepson. He enjoys a brief courtship with Emma before she determines they are ultimately unsuited for one another.

Mr. Woodhouse: Emma's affable and loving father. Often nervous and prone to hypochondria, he resists change but shares a deep love and affection for his daughter and her care for him.



Other Characters in the Story

Ms Taylor/Mrs Weston: Emma's friend and former governess, newly married to Mr Weston

Mr Weston: A friendly and well-to-do-landowner, newly married to Ms Taylor. Father of Frank Churchill with his late wife.

Mr Robert Martin: Farmer who rents property from Mr Knightly. He is of a lower social class, not considered gentlemanly.

Jane Fairfax: Another young woman living in Highbury. Orphaned as a young child, she was raised predominantly by Colonel and Mrs Campbell and served as companion to their daughter. Now lives with her aunt, Miss Bates.

Miss Bates: Jane's previously wealthy aunt. Very talkative and generally laughed at by citizens of Highbury.

Colonel and Mrs Campbell: Adoptive parented of Jane Fairfax. Jane lived with them and their daughter in Weymouth for most of her childhood/adolescence.

Mr and Mrs Dixon: Newly married couple. Mrs Dixon (Campbell) is the childhood companion of Jane Fairfax.

Mr and Mrs Churchill: Frank Churchill's wealthy aunt and uncle who adopted and raised him after his mother's death. Mrs Churchill is very opinionated and always gets her own way.

Mrs Elton: Married to Mr Elton. Wealthy, snooty, and stuck up.





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Congratulations to the entire cast and crew of the Steel City Shakespeare Center

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Ella Mizera

Bob Colbert

Hannah Ruth Moss

Will Guffey

Lauren Scheller-Wolf

Lexie Hellinger

Tracey D. Turner

Acknowledgements

Scott Pavlot

Jamie Thomas

Jean Mientus

Catherine Aceto

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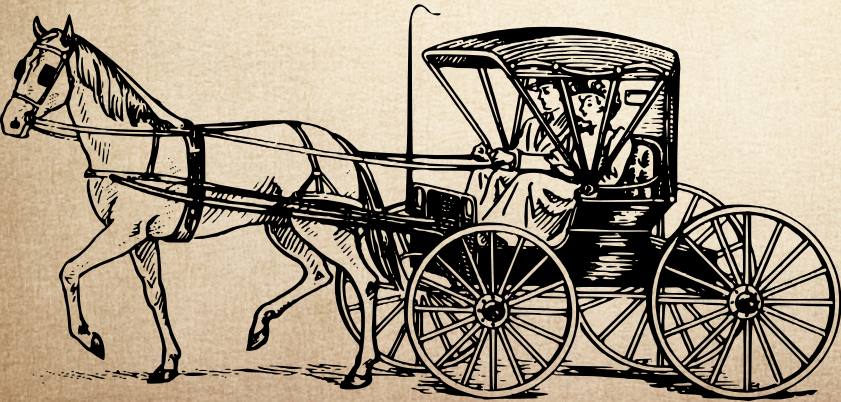
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