

Merely Players
Presents
Swing State
by Rebecca Gilman

Directed by
Zachary Chiero+

Note: Center each of these within themselves.

Tech Director/Scenic Designer
Charles Ford +

Stage Manager
Deborah Heath+

February 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 2025
at
Merely Underground in Durango, Colorado

Put on these Logos on the cover:
Psyche Digital, Ballantine Family Fund, Train

Presented by special arrangement with The Dramatic Publishing Company, Inc., of
Woodstock, Illinois.

Swing State

CAST

Peg Smith

Mona Wood-Patterson+

Ryan Severson

Adam Fontana+

Sheriff Kris Callahan Wisnefski

Cindy Laudadio-Hill+

Deputy Dani Wisnefski

Erika Vetter+

TIME: Summer, 2021. The world is struggling to emerge from the pandemic.

PLACE: Peg's home, somewhere in the driftless area of Wisconsin.

Scene One: *A summer night in July, around eleven p.m.*

Scene Two: *A week later, afternoon*

Scene Three: *The following morning, around 7:30 a.m.*

Scene Four: *The following day, midmorning*

Scene Five: *Several days later, early morning*

Scene Six: *That night, darkness is setting in*

Scene Seven: *Weeks later, midmorning*

PRODUCTION TEAM

Sound and Light Technician	Charles Ford+	
Props Co-Manager/Box Office Manager	Diane Panelli+	
Props Co-Manager	Mary Lynn Clark+	
Costume Design	Katy Hutchinson+	
Ticket Manager	Greta Richter+	
Photographer	Kara Cavalca+	
Lead Carpenter	Charles Ford+	
Poster Design	Kate Ishay+	
Set/Props Construction/Scenic Painting		
Brin DeVore+	Genevieve Thompson	Geoff Johnson+
Gyana Gomar+	Hallie Bullock+	James Thompson+
Jenny Mason+	Joy Kilpatrick+	Lynda Thompson
Mary Young	Matt Bodo+	Melanie McLean+
Michael Lee+	Mick Souder+	Melissa Mossinghoff+
Michael Chapman+	Mohriah James+	Randy Hertzman
Zachary Chiero+		

+ Merely Players Artistic Company

There is no intermission. Concessions from Gabe's Goodies will be on sale before the show.

No real weapons are used in this production. All guns are non-firing replicas.

Please silence your cell phones.

The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited. We know that, for many of you, taking performance photos or video of your loved ones is a huge temptation. Please respect this rule of theatre etiquette and resist. We want everyone to get to enjoy the show without distractions. Live theatre is meant to be temporal – let it be just that. Thank you!

*That said, we welcome you to take photos/video in the theatre before and after, **but not during**, the performance. If you post photos of the stage, please be sure to credit and tag Merely Players. @merely_players_durango*

WHO'S WHO

Zachary Chiero (*Director*) is thrilled to work with this stunning cast on this incredible play. This is Zachary's second year on the staff of Merely Players as their Artistic Associate. Zachary was last seen as Billy Flynn in Merely's production of *Chicago*, which he also choreographed with the brilliant Dallas Padoven. Up next, Zachary will be choreographing *Guys and Dolls* at Merely, reprising his role as Clown in *Clown Sex Ed* at The Sunflower Theatre in Cortez, performing in *A Grand Night for Singing* at Act 2 Playhouse in Philadelphia, and performing in a production of *Scheherazade* with the Cleveland Orchestra in collaboration with Enchantment Theatre Company of Philadelphia, where he serves as the Artistic Director. Love to Mona, Erika, Adam and Cindy for their beautiful work. Love always to Dallas.

Mary Lynn Clark (*Props Co-Manager/Company Manager*) is in her *third* season as Company Manager, her *second* time working with Adam, Erika, and Cindy, and the *first* time she has seen Mona Wood-Patterson perform on stage! She is always thrilled to be a part of any Merely Players production. When Mary Lynn is not in the theatre, she enjoys spending time with her family, traveling around the world, and giving warm hugs.

Adam Fontana (*Ryan*) first performed with Merely Players over 15 years ago in *Forever Plaid*. He's since played in *As You Like It*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Mary Poppins*, *The Shape of Things*, and *Dames at Sea*. He's also been on stage in Seattle, NYC, on tour and even rained on by tater tots while underscored by Enya for a commercial. Film/TV: *Elsbeth*, *How to Live Your Best Death* and *Into The Wild Frontier*. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife and pup. Member Actors' Equity Association. "Those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything." - George Bernard Shaw

Charles Ford (*Scenic Designer/Technical Director*) is a master backstage technician and the Technical Director of Merely Players. An avid puppeteer, mask-maker, make-up artist, robotics engineer, and special effects designer, he has designed dozens of sets for a variety of theatrical genres. During his career as Durango High School's tech director and resident designer, Charles was the recipient of several awards, including the Durango Foundation of Educational Excellence's Outstanding Teacher Award and the Rocky Mountain Theatre Association Technical Theatre Award. Charles' world travels have seen him climbing to the top of Machu Picchu, swimming with sea turtles, and riding a camel. He has tried to bring the joy and exhilaration of travel back and use the inspiration to create theatre magic.

Rebecca Gilman (*Author*) received her MFA in playwriting from the University of Iowa, and she is an artistic associate at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago. Her plays have been widely produced in the United States and abroad. Among her many awards are a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Harold and Mimi Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award, the Harper Lee Award, the Scott McPherson Award, the Prince Prize for Commissioning New Work, the Roger L. Stevens Award, the Evening Standard Award for Most

Promising Playwright and the George Devine Award. She was a finalist for the 2001 Pulitzer Prize for *The Glory of Living*.

Deborah Heath (*Stage Manager*) moved to Durango in 2001 with her husband, Bern, and their three children. She has been part of the Merely Players community since 2013 and joined the Board of Directors in 2021. Deborah enjoys both on stage and backstage work. This is the sixth time she has staged managed for the company, the most recent being *Small Mouth Sounds* and the Studio Series show *Tiny Beautiful Things*. She was seen on stage as Queen Alonsa in the *The Tempest* and as Princess Dragomiroff in *Murder On The Orient Express*. As always, she is grateful to be part of this dynamic, creative, organization and the talent and kindness that it encompasses.

Katy Hutchinson (*Costumes*) is excited to be a part of this show. She has been sewing since she was a kid, and costuming is what first drew her to the wonderful world of theater. Her previous shows with Merely Players include *The Tempest* and *Bright Star* as stage manager and *Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol* as light board operator.

Cindy Laudadio-Hill (*Kris*) is happy to be back at Merely Players for another wonderful adventure working with this talented cast and crew. Cindy was last seen (*but not heard much*) as a member of the exquisite ensemble of *Small Mouth Sounds* and as O.G in *Men on Boats*. Before making this slice of heaven home, she was seen on Denver stages in *Bull in a China Shop* (Benchmark Theatre), *The Diary of Anne Frank* (Arvada Center) and *Broadway Bound* (Miner's Alley Playhouse). Cindy is a Henry Award recipient for Outstanding Improvisational Theatre as the creator, producer, and performer of *SCRIPTprov*TM and has received *Westword's* Best and the Out of the Box Award for her work as co-founder of the Denver Improv Festival and the GroupMind Foundation.

Diane Panelli (*Props Co-Manager/Box Office Manager*) co-founded a theatre production company at Sarah Lawrence College, then went on to attending a cooking school in NYC and owning a restaurant in Telluride before moving to Durango in 2004. She serves on the Merely Players board and truly loves the hunt for all the props that make a show special.

Greta Richter (*Ticket Manager*) was born and raised in Sierra Madre, not far from Hollywood and Burbank. She grew up enjoying musicals and was excited when her children became involved in theatre when they moved to Durango in 1994. Greta loves her work as Merely Players' Ticket Manager, and has been working with Mona and Charles for over two decades. She is grateful to God for bringing amazing theatre people into her life.

Erika Vetter (*Dani*) loves coming back to the Merely fam. This will be her third production with Merely and first non-Shakespearean (*Midsummer & As You Like It*). Other favorite credits include: Elizabeth in *Teenage Dick* (Seattle Repertory), W in *Lungs* (Really-Really Theatre Group), Soubrette in *Émilie* (The Flea), & Rose in *The Flick* (Mendocino Theatre Co.). Film/TV: *Only Murders In The*

Building (Hulu), *Somebody I Used To Know* (Prime Video), & *Found Footage: The Making of the Patterson Project* (Coming Soon!). Gratitude to the Durango community for the always warm welcome back, the Swing State-rs for this tender work, and Mr. F for the love. Member Actors' Equity Association. erika-vetter.com

Mona Wood-Patterson (*Peg*) is the Artistic Director of Merely Players. She got distracted by directing shows and running a theatre company, so she has not appeared onstage in quite some time. She is grateful to be back, working on this fantastic script with some of her favorite humans, including her incredible husband, Charles Ford.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We offer our sincere gratitude to those who donated items or helped us with this show. Many hands and kind hearts help us to do our work:

Community Foundation Serving SW Colorado
Durango Herald
Habitat for Humanity
Southwest Appliance

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Mere words cannot describe how honoured we are by your support. We encourage our audience members to solicit these businesses and to tell the individuals that they are grand!

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Dianne Andrews
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Anne Bartlett and Jeroen van Tyn
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Rochelle Mann
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Maureen May
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Virginia Miller Cavanagh
Donna Middleton
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Rene Nash
Grace Morledge
Lindsey Nicholson
Barbara Noseworthy
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Diane Panelli

MERELY PLAYERS began work in 1994 and was officially founded in 1997 and has been bringing theatre to our community ever since. Our vision is to consistently provide quality theatre in this region, while broadening the range of types of experiences available to local theatergoers through relevant, exciting productions. Merely Players is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, and we assure you that any money donated will go toward making quality theatre in Durango both now and in the future.

Our 2024-2025 MERELY PLAYERS THEATRE SEASON continues:

A Musical Theatre Classic
Guys and Dolls

May 2025

Tickets are on sale on our website now.

CONNECT WITH US:

For more information on Merely Players, to buy tickets, to get involved, or to be added to our mailing list:

Website: <http://www.merelyplayers.org/>

Telephone: 970.749.8585

Email: merelydirectors@gmail.com

Like us on Facebook: Merely Players -Durango

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GABE – PUT QR CODES IN

MERELY PLAYERS ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Artistic Director	Mona Wood-Patterson+
Technical Director	Charles Ford+
Artistic Associate	Zachary Chiero+
Company Manager	Mary Lynn Clark+

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Thank you for spending your time with us. We would love to know what you thought about the play. Drop us an email at merelydirectors@gmail.com or share with us on Facebook at Merely Players – Durango.

Swing State received its world premiere at Goodman Theatre, Chicago, on Oct. 17, 2022. The Goodman production of *Swing State* was subsequently produced by Audible Theatre in New York City, opening on Sept. 17, 2023. Merely Players is one of the first companies in the world to be granted rights to present this compelling play.

GABE – ADD MERELY LOGO somewhere.

“All the world’s a stage,
And all the men and women Merely Players” – William Shakespeare

GABE – THESE POEMS DON’T HAVE TO BE RIGHT TOGETHER

“Whatever happens, stay alive. Don't die before you're dead. Don't lose yourself, don't lose hope, don't lose direction.
Stay alive, with yourself, with every cell of your body, with every fiber of your skin.

Stay alive, learn, study, think, read, build, invent, create, speak, write, dream, design.
Stay alive, stay alive inside you, stay alive also outside, fill yourself with colors of the
world, fill yourself with peace, fill yourself with hope.
Stay alive with joy.

There is only one thing you should not waste in life, and that's life itself." - Unknown

“A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits.”

-John Keats, from “Endymion”

DIRECTOR’S NOTE

Let Zach how much you need