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A Woman on Fire: A Character Study of Hedda Gabler

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A Woman on Fire: A Character Study of Hedda Gabler

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts in Theatre

by

Leah Smith
Saint Louis University
Bachelor of Arts in Communications, 2013

May 2023
University of Arkansas

This thesis is approved for recommendation to the Graduate Council.

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis I will be discussing my process in preparing and performing my thesis role of Hedda Gabler, and how it is relevant to modern struggles of women surrounding pregnancy, motherhood, and body autonomy. This is paralleled with the topic of my one-person show, titled *6 Weeks*. I will include the events of both plays, the script of *6 Weeks*, my character analysis of Hedda, the rehearsal process, production photos, resume, headshot, program, and a link to my website.

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Thank you to my dear family for your unending love and support. You made me into the empathizing person I am today, and your encouragement has carried me through this journey. My gratitude will never end for being blessed with such an amazing family.

To my dearest GDB: you are my backbone. You give me the stars and the moon, and without your love, support, and respect, I wouldn't be where I am today. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for being my partner.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the women in the world who are fighting for their rights. I believe that we will never stop the fight to be fully acknowledged human beings with equal rights as men. You are supported, loved, and your story deserves to be told.

This thesis is also dedicated to a challenged and insecure woman, who had a dream and decided to change her fate. Through perseverance, support, and the art of storytelling, you have come to a new chapter and a better you. Surrender to the flow, and let it guide you where it may.

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STATEMENT OF ARTISTRY

“Hear the story. Lend your heart. Speak the truth. Spread the joy. I believe in making deep and honest connections to life and individual's human experiences through storytelling. I want to evoke compassion, joy, pain and love from audiences in order to enact a change for better in our society.” – Leah Paige Smith

INTRODUCTION

Throughout my theatrical career, I have become known as a ‘character actor.’ I love, and want to believe, that I excel at playing characters that are larger than life, tend to be the comedic relief, and bring levity to the script. It was told to me by my professor, Mr. Steven Marzolf, that there was no doubt that I could play a character role, but what I needed to be tested on was my ability to play a character with some weight.

When the season announcement was made, it was a clear goal of mine to aim for the role of Hedda Gabler. As the ‘female Hamlet,’ she is a character that has no clear-cut approach to her or her decision-making. I wanted the chance to attack this character head on, with all four years of my training behind me, and blend my character acting with that of genuine, heartfelt gravitas.

It wasn’t until I was in the rehearsal process that I made the connection between Hedda and my character from my one person show, *6 Weeks*. It was never my intention to create two characters with paralleled storylines and struggles, but I unintentionally found myself working on Hedda from a 2023 lens; the same one that caused me to write *6 Weeks* in the first place.

In this thesis, I will talk about the character of Hedda and my approach to playing her. I will then discuss the writing of my one person show, *6 Weeks*, and my approach to playing the character of Woman. Finally, I will draw comparisons between the two roles and talk about the relevancy of Ibsen’s work for today’s audiences.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT OF HEDDA GABLER

I had never read Henrik Ibsen's classic, *Hedda Gabler*, prior to the University of Arkansas' 2022-23 season announcement. I had heard of this infamous female antihero, and of some of the great actresses who had tackled the character before me: Ingrid Bergman, Dame Maggie Smith, Jane Fonda, Annette Bening, Fiona Shaw, Cate Blanchett, Mary-Louise Parker, Rosmund Pike and Ruth Wilson, just to name a few. Despite its lofty reputation and long list of pedigreed renditions, I did not know the depth of what this role would ask of me when I went into my initial audition. It wasn't until about the third time I read the play that I realized the magnitude of ambiguity, turmoil, and modernity Hedda holds, not to mention the extreme similarities I found with her to myself. Though it was a long road of building imaginary circumstances, with the constant help of the show's director, MFA Directing candidate Lacy Post, I was able to create a character and world that I could move seamlessly through every night.

On my initial read of Christopher Shinn's adaptation of the script, I found Hedda to be a snide and malicious woman. The most challenging part of understanding this character was relating to the blatant monetary and status privilege she wielded in her daily life. Not being granted her own servant or horse were lofty concepts beyond my grasp in contemporary life. Additionally, I found it extremely challenging finding justification for Hedda's actions in the latter half of the play: pushing Ejlert Løvborg towards suicide, burning his and Thea's manuscript, and confessing the existence of a pregnancy to Jörgen Tesman. This was a woman who seemed to lash out at the people in her life because she couldn't find satisfaction in her own circumstances. (Shinn, 2009)

This initial read of the character presented me with the wonderful difficulty of playing a character that I cannot judge. I needed to build a history for this woman and a world that I walked through that explained my behaviors and made sense to my ‘actor’s brain.’ This began with Hedda’s history, her privileged upbringing, high level of education, and relationships with the other characters.

Although this production was set in a more modern time, director Lacy Post wanted this world to coexist between now and then; to be set in a contemporary year, while still having the societal framework of the 1890’s of Norway. The world I created for Hedda was rooted in the upper echelon of New York City’s society, laden with Park Avenue class and old money traditions. This world still has structures such as full-time servants, arranged marriages, and familial name recognition that helped bridge the gap for me and my own personal understanding of privilege. Hedda was raised by a man in a man’s world. General Gabler provided education, experience in high society, adult conversations and other opportunities that many young women wouldn’t be privy to. This makes the reality of having no real purpose as an adult woman, except to play the roles of hostess, wife, and mother all the harder for Hedda to come to terms with.

This memory creation was essential to “birthing of values,” which is the actor’s process of finding the root cause of why a character holds personal values. In this case, Hedda had very strong values in independence and strength, spontaneity and fun, and decorum and personal appearance. This also contributed to her lack of financial literacy with frivolous spending, and challenges she faced stepping into the role of wife with a man she did not love.

This leads me to the other major character building process, which was developing a history with the other characters in the play. For the majority of the characters, it was a rather simple process, and much of the information was provided in the script. With Thea Elvsted we

had gone to school together and Hedda was a grade above her. Hedda was annoyed by her simplicity, naivety, and beauty as a young girl. That irritation carries through into adulthood, especially in regards to her having a past relationship with Jørgen Tesman, Hedda's current husband. Jørgen Tesman was a man that Hedda knew from town and the university, and was the suitor who loved Hedda the most and had the highest prospects for his future. Hedda's relationship with Judge Brack took more history building between myself and the actor who played him, Jordan Williams. We agreed that the Judge was close associates with General Gabler and had known Hedda throughout her upbringing. He had a reputation of being a philanderer, and although he was attractive and a true flirt, was never an actual prospect for marriage.

The most important relationship I, as Hedda, needed to build was with Ejlert Løvborg, played by actor Edwin Green. Green and I worked throughout the rehearsal process to derive how deep our characters' history was, and what caused our rift that pushed Hedda to pull a gun on him before his exile to the backwater. We decided that Ejlert was close with General Gabler, which is how he was able to come visit Hedda and have their talks. Hedda was about 5-8 years younger than Ejlert, so was still impressionable, yet fun, exciting and attractive company to be around. Together, Ejlert exposed Hedda to the ways of womanhood with confessions of his sexual escapades and details of how these acts would take place. The two characters had a love and lust for one another that was kindled with sexual tension, as well as romanticism of life, death, and freedom. Green and I decided that Ejlert and Hedda had spent years talking about the beauty in living freely, and that we would rather die gloriously than live a life without freedom. This romanticism of death as an act of courage and beauty that Hedda expresses during Acts 3 and 4, when she pushes Løvborg to kill himself and then rejoices when she believes he has, is built in

these conversations the two had had years prior. The history of love, trust, and ultimately betrayal that we created together was essential to understand my motivations for this behavior.

Another key moment of “birthing a memory” between the two of us was the moment when Ejlert forced himself on Hedda some five years before the mention of it in Act 2 (Shinn, 2009, p50). This memory played a key role in much of Hedda’s relationship with Ejlert Løvborg, and defined how she was able to push him towards suicide. Green and I decided that Hedda and Ejlert both wanted their relationship to be more than a friendship, but because of age, status, and Ejlert’s well-known promiscuity, it had not progressed to something substantial. Hedda wanted marriage, and Ejlert wanted Hedda. Together, Green and I created the memory that one night, Hedda argued about Ejlert sobering up and becoming a respectable marriage prospect, while Ejlert argued that his love was enough to sustain them. This argument crossed a boundary that had previously been respected, where Ejlert sexually forced himself on Hedda, threatening her marriage prospects and betraying her trust in him. This caused her to pull the gun on him and force him from her life.

In this moment in Act 2, when Hedda confronts Ejlert about this past altercation, Ejlert remembers the encounter differently, claiming “I didn’t force anything! I gave myself to you” (Shinn, 2009, p50). This is a key element to fueling the rage she felt towards Ejlert. A man that she trusted and loved attacked her, and then, years later, sees himself as the victim of violence. Hedda’s feelings of betrayal and hurt are only compounded when, in Act 3, Ejlert breaks down in tears over the loss of his and Thea’s “child:” the manuscript the two wrote together (Shinn, 2009, p70). Hedda had loved Ejlert, encouraged him to clean up his reputation in exchange for her hand, and was met with sexual violation. After all this, and him re-entering her life, Ejlert still rejects her and chooses the innocent and beautiful Thea. To me as an actor,

this was the final straw that broke Hedda's spirit and caused her to push Ejlert towards suicide. It was an act of revenge for hurting her and not realizing the pain he caused. This was the most challenging moment in the script to justify for me, and I found it through pinning all my hopes on Ejlert Løvborg returning to me as a lover, and instead was passed over for someone lesser than myself.

In order to play Hedda, I needed to humanize her. She was not some monster or sociopath that simply enjoyed seeing other people in pain, but was a woman in need of control of her own destiny. She was a product of the time and society she was raised in. She married a man she did not love because she needed financial security for her future, and ends up pregnant with a baby she doesn't want. These are feelings I can relate to as a modern woman, even though the circumstances might not be the same. Therefore, the "dropping in" process, which is when an actor emotionally steps into the shoes of the character and the emotional circumstances they are in, was much easier than expected. It required me to tap into the feelings of lacking autonomy in my decision-making, uncertainty and dread for the future, fear of my inability to be a capable mother, and wishing ill on someone who hurt me. These are all very real human experiences that, whatever the time period may be, are relatable.

Last in the process of character development was the actual performance of Hedda. During my four years of graduate school, one of the greatest hurdles I've encountered is releasing tension in my body during performances. There is a visceral connection I have with acting out a character and tension in my body, particularly my neck and shoulders, and my voice. I wish I could say that by the time I reached opening night for *Hedda Gabler*, that connection had been broken and I was able to proceed with full release and freedom. But of course, that wasn't the

case. This is an unending battle I will have throughout my career, and is a request I will constantly have to make of my body with every role I play.

Hedda is a character that appears cool, calm and collected on the outside, with the confidence of a privileged woman moving gaily throughout her daily routine. However, underneath the exterior is a woman in turmoil, angry at settling for the sub-par circumstances she is now in and having no control over her future. If tension enters into the body, it is only when she is alone on stage and letting her guard down, but never around others. It was a major challenge to remind myself that in order to release the tension from my body, I had to give myself permission to do so. I had to allow myself to fully step into Hedda's shoes and lend my heart and body to her, which in turn allowed me to ground myself in her physicality and move freely throughout the play.

Playing Hedda Gabler has changed me as a performer and was extremely fulfilling as a thesis role. It allowed me to attack a classic text with a huge reputation and make the role my own. I was able to apply my technique of birthing memories, birthing values, playing action and objective, and script event analysis to define my performance. It was a performance that felt far from my typical 'character actor' roles, and pushed me to stand in a central spotlight that I'm often uncomfortable with. However, with a trusting path of communication with my director, openness with my fellow actors, and thorough research and homework of the role, I was able to live freely and truthfully under the imaginary circumstance, and bring Hedda Gabler to life.

ONE PERSON SHOW: *6 WEEKS*

When I set out to write my one person show, I did not plan on having there be a political message or motivation behind my script. However in the spring of 2022, I, as many other Americans, saw the writing the wall. I knew that the passing of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg meant that the likelihood of *Roe v. Wade* being overturned was imminent (*ROE V. WADE*, 1973). During this time, only one state away from us, Texas' six week abortion ban had been passed. I was bracing myself for the announcement to come that I no longer had the right to full and complete healthcare or control over my reproductive health.

The story I told is of a nameless woman who meets a man and begins a romantic relationship. Their romance moves both tentatively and fast at the same time, and includes all the highs and lows that come with learning more about a new partner. At the end of the play, the woman discovers that she is in her sixth week of gestation, after getting pregnant from her first sexual encounter with this new partner. We learn that she lives in the state of Texas, and in the same breath of her learning about her pregnancy, she also learns that she has no choice as to whether or not she will have the baby. Because she is past the sixth week, she must have the baby, or face criminal charges for attempting otherwise.

I wrote *6 Weeks* as a commentary on the six week abortion ban in Texas, as well as other states' laws that were rapidly eliminating women's rights to reproductive choice. The play was not meant to be a blatant statement supporting either the pro-life or pro-choice arguments, but merely to show one woman's story on how she might unknowingly be six weeks pregnant, and be unsure of what decision to make in terms of keeping the child or terminating the pregnancy. At the beginning of a relationship, there are so many uncertainties and possibilities for what the

future will hold with this new person. But what happens when, along with your new relationship growing, an unexpected pregnancy is also growing?

I wrote the first draft of this play mid-spring of 2022. It was pure happenstance, and an unfortunate coincidence, that the leaked draft opinion of the Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade* was published on May 2, 2022, which was the same week as my performance of my one person show. Because of this breaking news, my performance gained a whole new level of relevancy, potency, and pain. The day I performed this show, I had fewer rights as a female in America than I did when I was born thirty years prior. (THOMAS E. DOBBS, STATE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, ET AL, PETITIONERS v. JACKSON WOMEN'S HEALTH ORGANIZATION, 2022)

Before this process, I had never considered myself a playwright, and frankly, not much of a theatre 'creator.' I have always been an actor who took a role that was already written for me and performed it based on the vision outlined by the director. However, in the experience of writing a one person show, I was now the playwright, director, designer, and actor. Given my first real opportunity to create an original piece of theatre, I wanted to emulate the theatre that I love the most: plays that trigger a visceral reaction to the experiences I am seeing on stage, whether that be positive or negative. I wrote *6 Weeks* because I wanted to write a story that I was genuinely passionate about. As it turned out, I managed to create a story that both enraged me, saddened me, and provoked my fire to enact change; all the end results of, what I believe, good theatre should be.

COMPARISON OF *HEDDA GABLER* TO *6 WEEKS*

When I wrote *6 Weeks*, I had no idea that I would be playing Hedda Gabler in the following school year. On a cursory level, there might not seem much of a comparison between the two works. However, I feel that, viewed through a contemporary lens, Hedda's situation is quite similar to that of Woman in *6 Weeks*, regardless of the time period *Hedda Gabler* is set in.

Both plays end with a woman who is pregnant, is uncertain of how to proceed with this pregnancy, and a lack of control over her choices on how to proceed. Hedda is woman who does not wish to be a mother, and pregnant with a baby to a man she does not love. Woman learns she's pregnant with a baby of a man she has been dating for only two months, and is unable to change these circumstances due to state laws. Both women know that their lives are about to change forever, and they have no say in the outcome.

To me, this is a timeless story. It's one that women from all cultures, religions, time periods, and social status' have endured and is a question that has plagued society since the dawn of time. Is motherhood a requirement? Of course this question is, pun intended, impregnated with so much religious, political, and moral strife, that it makes it impossible to answer and will never have one clear right or wrong way to proceed. However, it does, in terms of approaching a character from classical text, make a clear connection to the heart of the dilemma. It is a fact that, to some women, a pregnancy can be unwanted. It is also a fact that in many situations, the woman has no choice in whether or not she is going to be a mother: just as Judge Brack says at the end of the play, "we must accept the inevitable."

When I wrote *6 Weeks*, I wanted to show a story that was not a clear stump speech for one political party's argument versus the other's. What I wanted to show was the reality: a commonplace story of a woman falling in love and into a situation bigger than she expected, and

in the end, not having a choice on how to proceed. It's also ironic that I wrote and performed *6 Weeks* with a train motif, where there were train references throughout the dialogue and sound design, when Hedda also refers to her relationship as a "trip that never ends," and how she will never step off the train.

I think this shows the shared experience of women, when it comes to motherhood. It is a journey that, once you are on, you can never step off. It is mentally, emotionally, and physically taxing, and often times, seems too large to be able to stop. There is an inevitability in being swept away, or some may view it as being hit by the train. Every woman may look at this journey differently, but the fact that many women throughout history have not had any control over this journey is where these two stories intersect. Lacking autonomy of a person's future is a story that we've seen and heard throughout history, often in the darker corners. Unfortunately it's a story that is still very contemporary to the women of the world in 2023.

ONE PERSON SHOW SCRIPT

6 Weeks

By: Leah Paige Smith

Sc. 1 – Week 1 (Conception)

[SOUND – PRESHOW]

[SOUND]

[LIGHTS up when woman is standing at door]

*[Woman is standing in the doorway, saying goodbye to someone
unseen.]*

WOMAN: *(laughing)* yeah, it was a little crazy. In a good way! Crazy in the best of ways.

You should come and make me dinner more often!

Yeeah should've told you about the mushroom thing, but it was delicious! – No really amazing! And I got lots of leftovers - hella portabella! *(cringe)*

(laughing, remembering) oh, that, yeah that was also moderately embarrassing...

oh yeah?

(leaning in, then pulling away) ---

No, I shouldn't. I have a lot of work to get done today. I can't...

You should, and I'll let you know when I'm free.

Okay...

[WOMAN leans into the doorway to kiss the invisible man.]

You too. Bye.

[SOUND – cue when she falls on the bed, final time.]

[LIGHTS shift when she falls on bed]

Sc. 2 – Week 2 (Non-committal)

WOMAN: (Sound fades out, Lights fade up – when laptop is open and I'm holding wine glasses)

[Woman is on her laptop, zooming with a friend.]

Weeeeeelllllll?

No, I do, I do... it's just... Let's just say that I haven't deleted Hinge just yet

No it was great. He was great. It's just *(sigh)*

Gah! I don't know. He's so... I said I wouldn't do this!

Start something! Like this! I wanted to really focus on my work, I've got four projects going right now and I really need the money.

Oh no. No no no no my friend, not bad at all - it was fucking phenomenal. I mean really, really, *phenomenal*.

HA! Not like this! Or at least not since I was like 20. Like a marinated steak, this man is a *seasoned professional*. Knows how to tenderize.

But that's just it! It was too good! He was too good! Something is bound to go wrong! And I don't want to get carried away.

No, it was nice, it was really really nice, but I don't want to start something up again so soon. I mean, you know – with Chris it was six years and then nothing. I want to be in the drivers seat right now - make all the decisions for where my life goes.

And right now, I need to focus on the task at hand, which is finishing out this quarter's projects really strong. I mean this is 5 years in the making and....

And if this dude wants to come along for the ride, that's fine by me, but this train is not stopping! All aboard or get the fuck off my train tracks!

--- Well, I never said I wouldn't consider allowing for passenger rides on select occasions...

But I'm serious, I don't think I can get caught up in something right now. I'm on a path.

[SOUND – GO after “I’m on a path”, fade into silence]

[LIGHTS shift]

SC. 3 – WEEK 3 (Re-assessing)

[SOUND – GO after a moment of Leah behind the door.]

[LIGHTS fade up after a moment of Leah behind the door.]

[The door bursts open and the woman is seen making out with the invisible man. A raucous romp happens all over the apartment, invisible clothes being strewn about in their wake. The moment builds until...]

WOMAN: WOOOT WOOOT! All aboard! Ride that train!

---- (*SOUND – UNDERSCORE from here*)

What? Oh, um, nothing, nothing. Just forget... disregard that last ... outburst of
... hahaaa

No, I would rather not repeat it, lets keep... ----

Wait, can we not. (*LIGHT – LAMP turns on*) It was a moment of weakness,
that I would rather not relive. ... I don't remember!

---- (*pause*)

(*quietly, sullen*) "Woot Woot. All aboard. Ride that train."

.... Me. I am the train....

---- (*surprising response that prompts laughter*)

Yeah? Haha Yeehaw cowboy....!

(rompt continues, and then...)

Man, you're amazing

[LIGHTS fade and shift]

[SOUND rises and fades out before line, standing by bed.]

SC. 4 – WEEK 4 (One month)

[LIGHTS up]

[Woman is on the phone with her mother.]

WOMAN: (Sound fades) It's only been a month, Mom.

Yes, he's very nice. .. I don't know, soon, okay? It's ... we're still new, okay. It's still fresh and we're still mapping things out.

No, Ma, I am not bringing him home!

Seriously? There is nothing that will end a relationship faster than a 10 hour car ride with a brand new boyfriend. We haven't even gone away for a weekend, let alone on a trip across Texas to meet the folks.

No, that is not what I said. I like him, a lot. But I have other things going on that also require some of my attention. I'm not going to turn my life upside because of this guy. I'm... We're... I'm taking things slow.

You know, funny enough, I actually am aware of what my age is, thank you!

HA! Yep, I am also aware that you do not have any grandchildren.

Yes, I'm am! ... I'm happy.

Yes, he's very handsome. --- No you may not see a picture. You'll meet him soon enough. [*SOUND – GO after "soon enough"*]

[LIGHTS shift]

SC. 5 – WEEK 5 (Struggle and fight)

[LIGHTS up]

[Woman is in bed with invisible man.]

WOMAN: *(Sound fades)* I know it's on the weekend, but my deadline's next Wednesday. Look, I would love to get away, but I have work I need to do. And frankly, that work was here long before you were and it will be long after.

I didn't mean it that way. I was just trying to - reiterate that I have priorities – I've been working on this A1 contract for 3 months, and another two projects for way longer. I can't just let up because your came mozying into the picture.

You *do* mozy. In the most charming way! But you mozy! And want me to take off three days off work to mozy with you into the woods, and I can't afford that right now, time or money. Thank you, it was a super sweet surprise, but I can't commit to that.

That seemed uncalled for? --- No, what's that supposed to mean?

Woah woah, wait a second. I am here and want to be with you. But me needing to work and me not committing to this are two different things. I care about you but I also love my work.

I mean we've only been seeing each other a month. What kind of commitment are you looking for?

I'm sorry? My priorities? Who are you to say what my priorities should be? My work is not just a job to me, it's my passion. And I'm not going throw away the path that I have built just because you tell me that I should? For your vacation time? You do not get to make decisions for me.

It's not that I'm unaccommodating. What I am asking for is for my voice to be heard instead of future plans being made for me.

Look, I've been in plenty of relationships where I haven't had a say in things, and I don't want this to be the same way. There's nothing worse than investing you

time and love and energy into something that turns out to be a measly excuse for a partnership, and instead is someone guiltning you into doing what they want, changing who you into who they want you to be. And you're left loving someone who actually gives you no voice or autonomy or control.

And what's worse is then you're still made the fool, because they even get to decide when the relationship ends. Your life is turned upside down because the future you planned is no longer on the table, so you're left with you heart bleeding out in your hands and your pride dead in the corner of the room.

So yes, I am here and willing to commit, but not if it's with someone that wants to define what my priorities should be.

Alright?

Thank you. I appreciate that

Alright.... Me too.

Wait, really? Right now? I thought we were eating breakfast --- okay, well when will I see you next? --- okay then, have fun.

Wait. [**SOUND** – GO after “Wait”]

[**LIGHTS shift**]

SC. 6 – WEEK 6

*[Lights snap up. We are in a doctor’s office
with a medical professional speaking.]*

DOCTOR: Miss? Miss.

[**SOUND – OFF on second “Miss”**] [**LIGHTS GO**]

Are you following?

You're in your fifth week, but you're only about three days away from reaching six weeks of gestation. After that, you won't have any other options in this state of Texas.

That's idealistic, but in all honesty, at this point nothing can be done, even with three days to spare.

To start, you are required to go through state-directed counseling, as well as a mandatory ultrasound with descriptions of the images. Then, there is a mandatory 24 hour waiting period before undergoing the procedure, which is highly unlikely that you'd even be able to get an appointment before Friday.

No, telemedicine is no longer an option, hasn't been for quite some time. And since it's not a life threatening condition, your insurance wouldn't cover that.

I'm also required to say, now that your condition is confirmed, the confidentiality of this matter has been ... compromised. -- you're aware of the \$10,000 fine for

anyone involved in enabling this procedure after Friday. – No, as of April 28th, Oklahoma also has a ban after six weeks of pregnancy.

Where is the father? Why isn't he here?

--- ***

Well it's fortunate to know that you're in a steady, stable relationship that now has a future ahead of it. Congratulations.

Certain lifestyle choices can bring about unexpected obstacles, but you chose this path. Which means you're well equipped to handle the outcome.

Miss, I don't know how else to say this, but you're not at a starting point. This journey of yours began six weeks ago, and it is too late to turn this train around. You made this decision, your voice has already been heard. Now is the time to let nature take its course, and for you to sit back and enjoy the ride.

[SOUND GO after moment of silence.]

[LIGHTS FADE TO BLACKOUT.]

END OF PLAY

ONE PERSON SHOW FLYER

UARK DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE PRESENTS

ONE PERSON SHOWS

9 ORIGINAL WORKS IN PROGRESS
SPRING 2022
GRADS

TUESDAY, MAY 3RD

RILES NEWSOME

LACY POST

GABRIEL FRANCO-KULL

JORDAN WILLIAMS

HUAN BUI

THURSDAY MAY 5TH

GRACE TAYLOR

EDWIN GREEN

LEAH SMITH

ANA MIRAMONTES



MAY 3RD AND 5TH 2022 AT 7:30PM
NADINE BAUM STUDIOS
505 W SPRING ST, FAYETTEVILLE, AR 72701

FREE EVENT

Flyer for Spring 2022 One Person Show Showcase, Courtesy of University of Arkansas
Department of Theatre

6 WEEKS SHOW PHOTOS



Photos Courtesy of Austin Bomcamp

HEDDA GABLER FLYER



HEDDA GABLER

**FEBRUARY 17 - 26, 2023 | BY HENRIK IBSEN,
TRANSL. CHRISTOPHER SHINN**

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE
FULBRIGHT COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

TICKETS: 479-575-5387 or uarkartstickets.com

PERFORMANCE DATES:
Feb 17-18, 22-25 at 7:30 PM
Feb 19, 26 at 2:00 PM

LOCATION:
UNIVERSITY THEATRE
Fine Arts Center
340 Garland Avenue
Fayetteville, AR 72701

CinScapes MAGAZINE

KUAF
Arkansas Theatre Alliance

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

Democrat & **Gazette**

Flyer for *Hedda Gabler*, Courtesy of University of Arkansas Department of Theatre

LINK TO DIGITAL *HEDDA GABLER* PROGRAM

<https://mailchi.mp/41bbfe98865d/heddagabler>

HEDDA GABLER SHOW PHOTOS



Photos Courtesy of Xavier Smith



Photos Courtesy of Xavier Smith

HEADSHOTS



Leah Paige Smith Headshot. Photo ©Anna Hope Colley

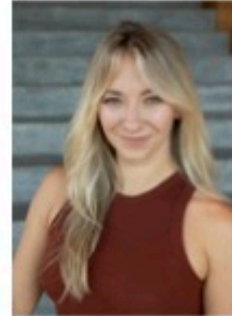


Leah Paige Smith Headshot. Photo ©Anna Hope Colley

THEATRE RESUME

Leah Paige Smith

LeahPSmith.com
1-440-708-3813
LeahPSmith.actor@gmail.com



EMC Phase II

Vocal Range: Mezzo Soprano

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Actors Casting Agency

Height: 5'2"

Professional Theater

<i>The Tempest</i>	Trinculo	Arkansas Shakespeare Th.	Morgan Hicks
<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Margaret	Arkansas Shakespeare Th.	Stacy Pendergraft
<i>Detroit '67</i>	u/s: Caroline	TheatreSquared	Dexter Singleton
<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Lydia, Mrs. Fezziwig, Charwoman, Ensemble	TheatreSquared	Amy Herzberg
<i>Matilda, the Musical</i>	Ensemble	TheatreSquared	Aimée Hayes
<i>At the Wedding</i>	u/s: Leigh	TheatreSquared	Keira Fromm
<i>Gypsy</i>	Tessie Tura	Beck Center for the Arts	Scott Spence
<i>City of Angels</i>	Donna/Oolie u/s, Ensemble	Beck Center for the Arts	Scott Spence
<i>Avenue Q</i>	Kate Monster	Blank Canvas Theater	Patrick Ciamacco
<i>East of Eden</i>	Abra Bacon	Ensemble Theatre	Ian Hinz
<i>Jerusalem</i>	Tanya	Ensemble Theatre	Ian Hinz
<i>Last Call Cleveland's Michael</i>	Leah	Playhouse Square	Mike Polk
<i>Stanley Superstar</i>			
<i>Slow Dance on the Killing Ground</i>	Rosie	Ensemble Theatre	Greg White

Educational Theater

<i>Hedda Gabler</i>	Hedda Gabler	University of Arkansas	Lacy Post
<i>THIS BITCH: Este Sangre Quiero</i>	Coco Wawa	University of Arkansas	Estefanía Fadul
<i>Ride the Cyclone, the Musical</i>	Ocean	University of Arkansas	Morgan Hicks
<i>The Moors</i>	Huldey	University of Arkansas	Lacy Post
<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	Catherine	University of Arkansas	Paul Barnes
<i>The Laramie Project</i>	Ensemble	University of Arkansas	Huan Bui
<i>In the Book Of</i>	Gail Portman	University of Arkansas	Michael Landman
<i>Tartuffe</i>	Dorine	University of Arkansas	Steven Marzolf

Education

University of Arkansas, Master of Fine Arts in Acting
Saint Louis University, Bachelor of Arts in Communications

Training

Acting	Amy Herzberg, Steven Marzolf, Michael Landman, Crystal Dickenson and Brandon Dirden, Jaime Koeth
Workshops	Carmen Cusak, Idris Goodwin & Kevin Coval, Filipe Bombonato, Sabin Epstein
Great Lakes Michael Chekhov Consortium - Module 1 Certification	Mark Monday, Cathy Albers, Lionel Walsh, Jaime Koeth
Voice and Singing	Jason Burrow, Betsy Jilka, Leslie Varnick
Dance	Ballet, Jazz, Modern, Latin Rhythms, Musical Theatre

Special Skills

Gymnastics (Handsprings, Handstands, Splits, Jumps, Turns), Dance (Ballet, Hip Hop, Jazz, Latin Rhythms, Modern), Cheerleading, Proficient in Spanish, Dialect work (Irish, RP, Cockney, Various Southern, Various New England), Stage Combat (Rapier, Broadsword, Hand-to-Hand), Puppetry, Running, Cycling, Mountain Biking, Swimming, Rock Climbing, Rifle Safety Training.

WORK CITED PAGE

Ibsen, Henrik. *Hedda Gabler*. First Published, 1890. Adapted by Christopher Shinn, 2009.

Print.

ROE ET AL. v. WADE, DISTRICT ATTORNEY OF DALLAS COUNTY, No. 70-18; U.S.; (1973)

<https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/l1/usrep/usrep410/usrep410113/usrep410113.pdf>

THOMAS E. DOBBS, STATE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, ET AL, PETITIONERS v. JACKSON WOMEN'S HEALTH ORGANIZATION, FT AL; No. 19-1392; U.S.; (2022)

https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/21pdf/19-1392_6j37.pdf

Colley, Anna Hope. Headshot of Leah Paige Smith. Photograph 2022. Personal Collection.

Smith, Xavier. *Hedda Gabler* Photos. 2023. Personal Collection.

Bomkamp, Austin. *6 Weeks* Photos, 2022. Personal Collection.

University of Arkansas Department of Theatre. *Hedda Gabler* Program. 2023. Theatre Department Collection.

PROOF OF PERMISSION



Xavier Smith <xsmith@uark.edu>

Today at 2:27 PM

To: Leah Smith

Yes, you have my permission. I'm honored to grace your portfolio!

With Gratitude,



Xavier Smith, M.S.
Career Counselor - College of Arts & Sciences
University Career Development Center | Division of Student Affairs
SCGS 333 | University of Arkansas | Fayetteville, AR 72701
479.575.2805 xsmith@uark.edu career.uark.edu

From: Leah Smith <lps004@uark.edu>
Sent: Thursday, March 30, 2023 2:23 PM
To: Xavier Smith <xsmith@uark.edu>
Subject: Permission to use Photos

Hey Xavier!

I would love to use your photographs from Hedda in my Thesis. I need to provide written (email) permission to use your photos in my paper.

Could you respond to let me know if I have permission?

Thank you!
Leah Smith



Leah P. Smith <lpaiges99@gmail.com>

Sat, Apr 1, 5:00 PM (2 days ago) ☆ ↶ ⋮

to Anna ▾

Hey Anna!

Just checking to see if you got my last email about photo permission? Please let me know!

Thank you,

LS

NEXT ON STAGE!!!

- Trinculo in *The Tempest*: 6/15 - 7/2, Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre

www.leahpsmith.com

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/pub/leah-p-smith/6a/573/a5a>



Anna Hope Colley

Sat, Apr 1, 7:01 PM (2 days ago) ☆ ↶ ⋮

to me ▾

Hi Leah!

I give you permission to use the photos we created however needed to fulfill your thesis!

Warmly,

Anna

--

Hope & Co Photography

www.hopeandcophotography.com

479-644-5562

Re: Permission to use Photos?



👤 Austin Bomkamp <abomkamp@uark.edu>

To: 👤 Leah Smith

Today at 10:10 AM

Hi Leah,

You have my permission to use my photographs from the one person shows for your thesis.

best,

Austin Bomkamp

MFA candidate at University of Arkansas

Lighting Designer, Projection Designer, Photographer.

Website: Austinbomkamp.com

Email: Abomkamp@uark.edu

Cell: (608) 929-1045

From: Leah Smith <lbs004@uark.edu>

Sent: Saturday, April 1, 2023 4:59 PM

To: Austin Bomkamp <abomkamp@uark.edu>

Subject: Permission to use Photos?

Hey Austin!

I would love to use your photographs from my one person show in my Thesis. I need to provide written (email) permission to use your photos in my paper.

Could you respond to let me know if I have permission?

Thank you!

Leah Smith

APPENDIX/LINK TO WEBSITE

<https://www.leahpsmith.com/>