

DO YOU READ ME?

Written by: Kathryn Funkhouser

Produced by special arrangement with Playscripts, Inc. playscripts.com

Presented by cwACT

Director's Notes

I believe there are none that would argue the past year has been a crazy one. Routines have been up-ended, foundations have been shaken, and lives and norms have been shattered. However, throughout the course of this global pandemic, there is one thing that has remained a constant for many people when all else fails, the Arts are there. Be it a book, a TV show, a video game, a song or album, or any number of other mediums, the arts are there to take us away when we need to reflect, when we need to find a way to understand, or when we simply need an escape.

But while many escape **into** the arts, there are those who prefer to

escape **through** the arts, and for those of us who thrive on getting together to breathe life into the arts and bring them forward within our communities so that we might enrich ourselves and each other, we have felt the ache of longing for the stage, of our home away from home, and of laying ourselves bare before our community for the sake of getting lost in a moment together with our patrons.

That is why after seeing the wonderful actor turnout and community support for cwACT's virtual production of *It's A Wonderful Life*, I knew that while it may not be the return to "the stage" that we wanted, it was what many of us needed and I immediately set out to find another production that could be performed virtually. It was while scouring through radio show scripts and a whole new class of written for video-conference "Stay-At-Home" plays that I came across *Do You Read Me?* By Kathryn Funkhouser. The light-hearted, fast-paced story of unknowingly coming together to find what you really

searching for something else immediately resonated with me and it's my sincere hope that it allows us to bring a little bit of brightness into our community in these dark times, because I know it certainly brightened things up for us to prepare it for you.

-Mick Wheaton

"We don't read and write poetry because it's cute. We read and write poetry because we are members of the human race. And the human race is filled with passion. And medicine, law, business, engineering, these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for."
- *The Dead Poet's Society*



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CAST

DR. WEAVER **Chelsea Bassett**
 COMMANDER **Fritz Menzel**
 FILLION
 SAM **Joseph Vinopal**
 CHARLIE **Katie Eyers**
 JESS **Amber Fait**
 ROBIN **Jason Cueto**
 KAREN/KEN **Stephanie Hardi**
 QUINN **Joshua Panter**
 DR. DENT **Emily Wheaton**

BEHIND THE SCENES

DIRECTOR **Mick Wheaton**
 SCREEN EDITING
 ASST. DIRECTOR **JR Omernik**
 TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
 COSTUMES **Beth Omernik**
 MARKETING **Nicole Congdon**
Tonya Haze
Stephanie Hardi
 BOARD LIASON **Tonya Haze**
 GRAPHIC ASSISTANCE **Fritz Menzel**
 PROGRAM **Martha Bawara**
 SCORING ASSISTANCE **Fritz Menzel**

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ATTORNEYS SINCE 1886



Building Tomorrow Together

Mick Wheaton While not the circumstances he was expecting, Mick is nonetheless thrilled to be making his directorial debut with cwACT at such an interesting time, and through such an atypical medium for the organization. After being away from theatre and people for so long, it has been a joy to work with such a wonderful and talented group of performers who are willing to embrace the unique challenges of a virtual production and so beautifully capture the spirit of the story being told. While directing has been fun, Mick cannot wait for his turn to be back on stage in front of a live audience again!

JR Omernik John is the assistant to the director in Do You Read Me, er, assistant director (that normally works the other way). He is very active at cwACT, and enjoys working with everyone in the organization. He wants to thank his lovely wife Beth who, due to her amazing popularity at cwACT, allows everyone to tolerate her silly husband! Also, a shout out to Gavin and Eli who, although home every day, never cease to bring a smile to this proud father's face.

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MANAGING TODAY FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

cAst BioGraphies

Katie Alexander Having been involved with the organization since 2016, Katie is thrilled to be returning to the cwACT stage. Over the last 5 years Katie has explored characters from a variety of shows, including; Sister Robert Anne (*Nunsense*, 2016), Black Widow (2018 Promotional Event) and "Celia" in Shakespeare's, *As You Like It* (2019). In addition to acting, Katie has directed a number of shows in the community including; *Raggedy Ann & Andy* (cwACT), *The Wizard of Oz* (Pacelli) and *The Vagina Monologues* (WRC). Katie is excited by the possibilities provided by Zoom Theatre and is excited to have the opportunity to experience their first virtual role in tonight's performance.

Chelsea Bassett Chelsea's a big fan of social distancing, nerds, Funyuns, and Oreos, so when she read this script, she felt, you know, this was pretty much meant to be. Thanks to Mick and JR for their more than tolerable director-ing, and extra affection to Joshua, Michael, and Ivabel for giggling at rehearsals and for being such delightful examples of humanity.

Jason Cueto Originally hailing and acting out of the Windy City, Jason Cueto comes to cwACT with a short but solid high school acting career including productions like *Class Dismissed* and *Oliver* and an appearance in *Bye, Bye, Birdie* for Lewis University. This is his first Zoom Production and he is happy to be finding new friends and new opportunities with cwACT.

Amber Fait As current Vice President for the organization, Amber never thought "contactless plays" would be a thing, but here we are. Speaking of doing things outside the norm, she's going to switch into first person language and spend the rest of her bio NOT talking about herself. I would like to thank cwACT for their hard work and problem solving skills which makes shows like this possible. It has been hard having a dark theatre for 8 months, especially with such a lively group. Though we can't meet physically, the shared love and excitement for theater never diminishes across the 1's and 0's, as though we were together. Next, I am thankful for an audience that is incredibly supportive. Having an audience is our alibi to avoid being called crazy... sometimes. But in all seriousness, if not for the support of our members and viewers, we wouldn't have direction. We know 2020 was not easy, but through it all we will overcome. Please consider helping out in anyway you can so we can keep the arts safe and alive. It's projects like this that can help distract the mind and bring back that almost forgotten feeling of community. Thank you everyone for helping cwACT fulfill our mission! *puts away soap box and bows*

Stephanie Hardi A Colorado native, Stephanie moved to the central Wisconsin area from Denver in the fall of 2019 with her husband, toddler, and Australian Shepard. Although sad to leave her beloved Colorado behind, Stephanie has loved exploring Wisconsin and the Midwest. As a passionate participant in the performing arts—both on the stage and in the audience—Stephanie is thrilled to be a part of cwACT's production of *Do You Read Me?* and is excited to get started in the community theater scene in central WI. In addition to theater, Stephanie is an avid reader and loves to explore the outdoors with her family through mountain biking, downhill skiing and hiking. And, she's currently trying to figure out cross-country skiing, so feel free to send her any advice!

Fritz Menzel Fritz is a Stevens Point native who has dabbled or worked in the arts for much of his life. Although his organizational skills led him to a corporate creative executive position, he always favored the handiwork. First and foremost a husband, proud parent and grandparent, retirement has allowed him to more fully slake his thirst for artwork, writing and hours lost in music composition—most of which no one will ever see or hear. It is simply food for his soul. His only previous theatrical experience was in CWact's *The Crucible*.



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Contact cwACT.info@cwACT.org

BIOS cont.

Joshua Panter Chelsea Bassett's husband would like you all to know that he is an American Hero, an Award Winning Actor, and an Award Winning Teacher. He would like to thank Michael and Ivabel for always laughing at his weird voices and his students for inspiring him to lean into his weird hippie tendencies.

Joseph Vinopal Joseph has been involved in acting from an early age and is making his first appearance in a cwACT production. He's always enjoyed opportunities to jump into playing a variety of characters ever since middle school and continued to do so through college. Since Joseph moved to Stevens Point he has helped co-direct shows for the local school systems as well as manage and build sets. Now he is excited to get back into being on the stage himself and hopes to continue performing with cwACT.

Emily Wheaton Emily is an east coast transplant, who may have finally gotten acclimated to the frigid Wisconsin winters. Previous performances include Step Sister #2 from *Red Velvet Cake Wars*, Sister Amnesia from *Nonsense* and Camel from *Raggedy Ann and Andy*. She took a break from performing to try her hand at stage managing. She was the Assistant Stage Manager for *Mary Poppins* and Stage Manager for *The 39 Steps*. Emily is excited to increase her theater repertoire by participating in a virtual performance.



cwACT board

Thank You!

- Amy Schwaab, Amber Fait,
- JR Omernik, Nicole Congdon,
- Scott Fritsche, Emily Wheaton,
- Joe Nowinski, Tonya Haze,
- Lauren Priest
- Maxine Hogan, Martha Bawara

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