



RAIN
AND ZOE
SAVE THE WORLD

a new play by

**CRYSTAL
SKILLMAN**

music by **BOBBY CRONIN**



RAIN AND ZOE SAVE THE WORLD IS A UNIQUE PIECE OF THEATRICAL
STORYTELLING.

Two Seattle teenage climate activists embark on an impulsive motorcycle journey to join a group of oil protesters on the East Coast. As they follow a major pipeline across the country, what began as two young environmentalists' longing to belong to something greater than themselves gives way to Rain and Zoe discovering that the true danger in this world might just be growing up. The play is a funny, sincere and profoundly moving adventure about the ethics of standing up for what you believe whatever the cost.

Featuring music by Bobby Cronin, *Rain and Zoe Save the World* is designed to simultaneously speak to older and younger generations of activists alike. The play captures both the idealism of youth and the burnout that befalls all activists with time, experience, and the constant pushing through obstacles. This play has relevance that audiences will expect from impactful theatre.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION . . .

Rain and Zoe Save the World is a piece that doesn't shy away from tough truths. It rides further into them. It examines how we choose to engage with activism through the eyes of two teens, who see the world as gigantic and full of possibilities.

The production reflects this while relying on sustainable theatricality and recycled materials as opposed to large set pieces to bring Rain and Zoe's epic journey to life:

- Our cast of four comes together with individual handlebars, headlights, exhaust pipes, and wheels accompanied by energetic movement to form Rain's motorcycle
- Zoe's mom appears inside a multimedia moon, as she and video-designed stars guide Zoe on her journey
- Sound designed owls, puppet frogs and wild dogs, and LED fireflies become Rain and Zoe's traveling companions.

Our aim is that the sustainable physical manifestation of the play can be a practical depiction of the play's environmentalist message.



WHY NOW?

At present, the world is suffering under a global pandemic that itself was born from environmental violation. There are many struggles we face both as a nation and as a member of the international community. This piece helps the audience establish its place in resolving a global crisis, one so obtuse and existential that it's nearly impossible to humanize, making it underrepresented in the theatre.

"We are the first generation to feel the effect of climate change and the last generation who can do something about it."

- Barack Obama, Former US President

"The world is reaching the tipping point beyond which climate change may become irreversible. If this happens, we risk denying present and future generations the right to a healthy and sustainable planet – the whole of humanity stands to lose."

- Kofi Annan, Former Secretary-General of UN

"We children are doing this to wake the adults up. We children are doing this for you to put your differences aside and start acting as you would in a crisis. We children are doing this because we want our hopes and dreams back."

- Greta Thunberg

"Many semiarid parts of Guatemala will soon be more like a desert. Rainfall is expected to decrease by 60 percent in some parts of the country, and the amount of water replenishing streams and keeping soil moist will drop by as much as 83 percent. Researchers project that by 2070, yields of some staple crops in the state where Jorge lives will decline by nearly a third."

-NYT Magazine 7/23/20 The Great Climate Migration

HOW CAN THEATRE HELP?

While science fiction and action films use climate change as a storytelling device, we believe theatre can go beyond that to move citizens to make a difference.

"Being kind to the environment is a good look throughout the year."

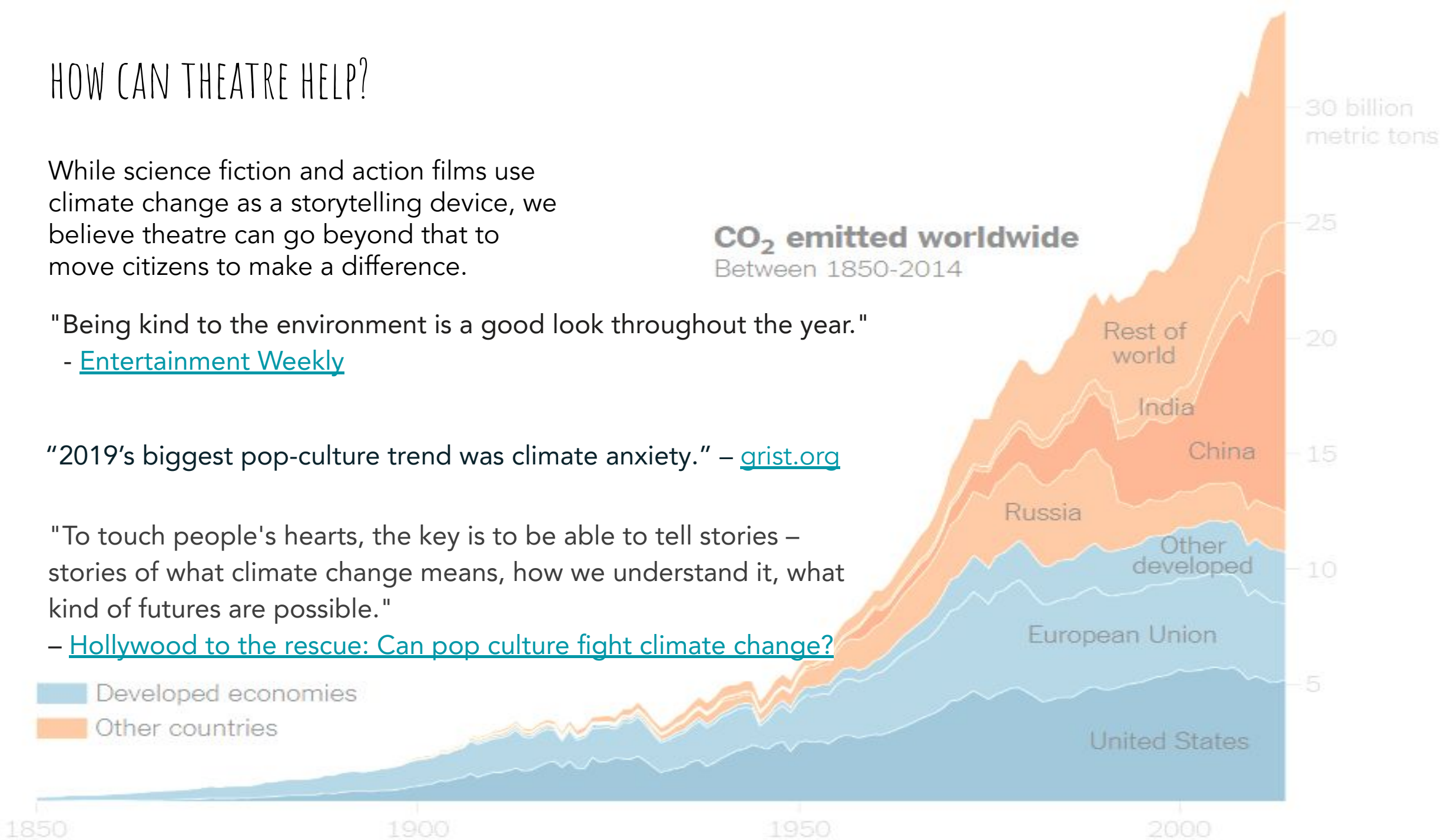
- [Entertainment Weekly](#)

"2019's biggest pop-culture trend was climate anxiety." – [grist.org](#)

"To touch people's hearts, the key is to be able to tell stories – stories of what climate change means, how we understand it, what kind of futures are possible."

– [Hollywood to the rescue: Can pop culture fight climate change?](#)

CO₂ emitted worldwide
Between 1850-2014





PRAISE FOR CRYSTAL SKILLMAN AND *RAIN AND ZOE SAVE THE WORLD*

"A radically charged coming-of-age story as whimsical and fun as it is moving and deep."

- Lori Wolter Hudson, Artistic Director, New Harmony Project

“‘No two people can save the world.’ Not even Greta Thunberg and Martin Luther King. *Rain and Zoe Save the World* is a play for all of us who want to do more, matter more and make a difference; a gentle reminder not to give up, but to work together with others. It’s a call for community.”

- Claire Beckman, Artistic Director Brave New World Rep

“Unflinching, funny and original. The play speaks honestly to Young Audiences about one of the most crucial issues of our time . *Rain and Zoe’s* theatricality invites the audience to fully participate with their imaginations as they experience the power of choice and emerging activism. It breaks your heart...then lifts you up.”

- Daniel Renner, Director of TDF Public Engagement Programs.

"Now Ms. Skillman is ready to dive into the deeper, darker waters of adulthood." - NYTimes Critics Pick

A NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT . . .

As I write this, we are in the middle of a global health crisis, and yet another worldwide disaster is coming. Parts of the world are already flooded, such as Bangladesh. As the NY Times puts it: “Those who are least responsible for polluting Earth’s atmosphere are among those most hurt by its consequences.” And the damage only grows worse.

When I began to develop *Rain and Zoe Save the World* five years ago, I wrote this play to shed a light on this. My goal was to do this in a new and theatrical way in a coming of age story. In a way, I felt I was coming of age. Rain and Zoe is highly personal. It’s my life.

My family has a history of activism, and my cousin-in-law (“The Reluctant Radical”, Amazon), is a pioneer in the environmental activism movement using his peaceful, but direct actions (shutting down plants, stopping coal barges, etc.) to save the planet using “self-defense” as an argument to save the earth. My only-child household was a real hippie unit with my racer “Bike Dad” and my “creative soul” mom. They fled the oppressive household of their own parents and drove cross country together. Outsiders Rain and Zoe’s voices are based on my experience teaching playwriting to teenagers in high schools over the past five years as a guest artist. The relationship Zoe has with her mother, whom she idealizes, is my own relationship with my mother.

Throughout this play’s evolution, I discerned that the story of climate change is truly an intergenerational story. The older generation who created the problem, together with the younger generation who must stop it in order to save their own lives, are united in this cause together.

Climate change is an issue that should unite us, not divide us. Despite the edginess of the play, people 13 and older are welcome. Families can see it together, generations sitting side by side. Over the years of development, I have witnessed firsthand how the piece can actually connect audience members of different mindsets through the strong, spiritual nature that Rain and Zoe develop in the story. Audiences are on the edge of their seats during this play. It’s a real ride, not just a play but an event. The original music Bobby Cronin has written for the piece has contributed to its richness, providing a musical odyssey that leaves the audience with a sense of cinematic action.

As a playwright, I strive to create female-forward work that uses genre to speak to today’s audience. The show is centered around one heck of a strong, female protagonist. The fact that Zoe faces difficult choices as a young woman, while driving the story, is huge for me. Rain’s choices support Zoe, until they challenge her, creating a complex tapestry. What is the most effective use of environmental activism? What WORKS? What has an EFFECT? And how does friendship impact that journey?

Rain and Zoe Save the World speaks to the culture and yet is pop culture. It is moving, real, and dark, but does not shy away from hope, heart, or having fun on the journey. But for me, it’s the ending of this play that will speak to audiences. Of course, I don’t believe in spoilers, but I can say this: I believe plays should prepare an audience to go back into this intense, terrible, beautiful world with hope and clarity of action. It is my intent that this show represents these current, complicated times and provides a clarion call. I believe we are all starting over again. We are growing up together. We are ready for this journey, to change the world. To save it. — Crystal Skillman

RAIN AND ZOE SAVE THE WORLD DEVELOPMENT HISTORY



June 2016: Two-Week Residency at The New Harmony Project

August 2016: Workshop Performance at Oregon Performance Lab

November 2016: Reading at Ensemble Studio Theatre

January 2017: Finalist, Blue Ink Playwriting Award, American Blues Theater

March 2018: Finalist, Artemisia Fall Festival, Chicago

April 2018: Winner, Earth Matters on Stage (EMOS) New Play Competition

June 2018: Reading at Oregon Contemporary Theatre

March 2019: Workshop and Reading at Blank Theatre, Los Angeles

May 2019: Reading at Manhattan Theatre Club Creative Center

February 2020: Brave New Works Reading at Brave New World Theatre Co.

2020: Semi-Finalist, International Thomas Wolfe Playwriting Competition

2020: Drew and Dane Productions signs on as Producer

Fall 2021: Movement Lab in NYC

Winter 2022: London Off-West End Production

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT . . .

CRYSTAL SKILLMAN

Plays include NYTimes Critics' Picks *OPEN* (The Tank Theatre/AFO), *GEEK* (Vampire Cowboys), *CUT* (Theatre Under St. Marks), *KING KIRBY* (The Brick), and *RAIN AND ZOE SAVE THE WORLD* (EMOS Prize). Crystal has recently been selected as one of the eight Playwrights Center Core Members for 2020-23. Her play *PULP VÉRITÉ* was noted on the 2019 Kilroys List and will be announced as a part of the Ruth Easton New Plays Series to be presented by the Playwrights Center in Spring 2021. Her new play with music, *THIS SHOW IS MONEY* (Music/Lyrics Gaby Alter), was just developed in The Civilians R & D Group and presented in their "Findings" series in May. She is the bookwriter of the award-winning musical *MARY AND MAX* (Canadian Premiere 2018, European Premiere 2019), with her frequent collaborator Composer/Lyricist Bobby Cronin.

It will be announced this fall that her musical *POSTCARD AMERICAN TOWN* (Composer/Lyricist Lynne Shankel), was selected for the SDSU New Musical Initiative and will have its first production there in 2022. She has been awarded two Alfred P. Sloan commissions, received a Clifford Odets Ensemble Play commission, and won the NY Innovative Theater Award for Outstanding Play (*THE VIGIL OR THE GUIDED CRADLE*). Her upcoming work in television/audio drama includes *EAT FIGHTER* the animated series (based on her comic book with WebToon), *OVERNIGHT SUCCESS* (Kampfire Films), and *OPEN: THE MAGICIAN'S MAGICIAN*, a seven part audio drama series (inspired by her play, featuring Drama Desk Nominated Megan Hill) with *BOOM* Integrated/John Marshall Media which will be released Fall 2020. The film of her play *OPEN* is scheduled to be released from Broadway HD this fall. Crystal's credits also include "*ADVENTURE TIME*" comics (BOOM! Studios) and work with Marvel Studios. [Crystal Skillman](#) IG: [@crystalskillman](#)



ABOUT THE COMPOSER . . .

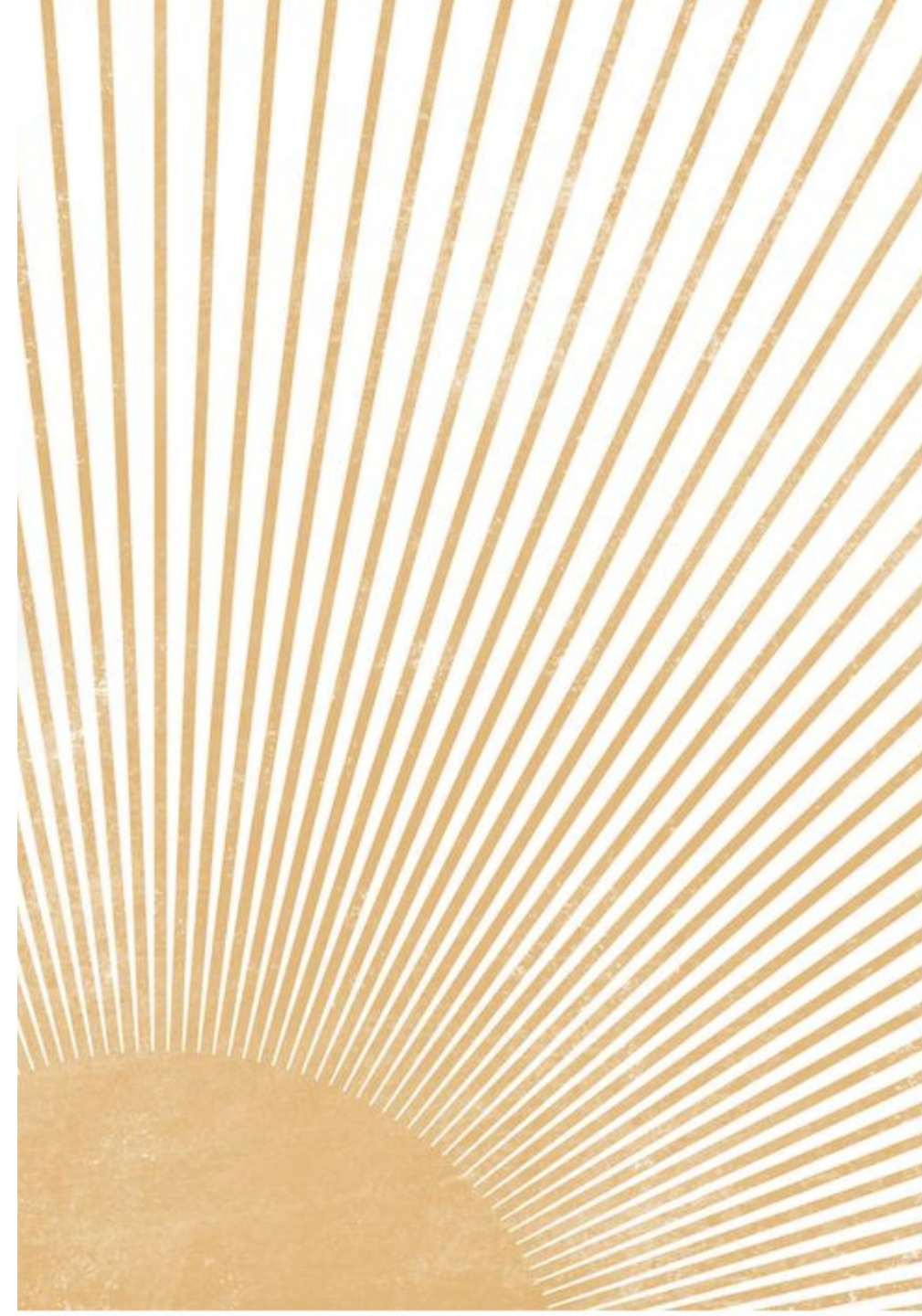
BOBBY CRONIN multi award-winning composer/writer of *Mary & Max* with bookwriter Crystal Skillman (World Premiere Theatre Calgary 2018, European Premiere at Austria's Theatre Linz 2019 [streamed on YouTube during Covid]; Winner of 2018 MUT Critics Award, Pace New Musicals 2018, SigWorks Finalist 2018); *'Til Death Do Us Part* (World Premiere 2020 - Covid Canceled, 2018-2020 SDSU New Works Award; 2017 SigWorks Finalist; 2016 Overtures Series) with bookwriter Caroline Prugh; *Concrete Jungle*, set to play London's Leicester Square Theatre summer 2020 (Covid Canceled); *Till Soon, Anne* with Christine Toy Johnson (O'Neill Writing Residency); *Daybreak* (winner of the 2011 New Jersey Playwrights Contest) premiered in Wayne, NJ & London's Tristan Bates Theatre spring 2012. *PSYKIDZ* was commissioned in 2018 and will be made into a film during Covid quarantine by The Prep NJ. 2014 York NEO. Other: Numerous award winning short musical films, 54 Below, Lincoln Center Songbook Series, Birdland, Symphony Space, London's The Players Theatre & St. James Theatre, etc. "*Reach The Sky: Live*" & "*The Concrete Jungle International Studio Cast Recording*" on all digital platforms.
Bobby Cronin IG: @croninbobby



ABOUT THE DIRECTOR . . .

HERSH ELLIS is a NYC based director and filmmaker. Recent projects include: *Rain and Zoe Save the World* by Crystal Skillman (readings at MTC Creative Center, and Brave New World Rep), *Wanderer: or The Literal Extraterrestrial I Met on Grindr* by Kaleb Tank (workshop, Otherworld Theatre), *Mary and Max: The Musical* by Crystal Skillman and Bobby Cronin (industry reading, Dramatists Guild), and *Disruption* by Andrew Stein at the Sheen Center. He's created work for NY companies such as Dixon Place, The Secret Theatre, The Producers Club, and TheaterLAB, among others. Ellis directed 25+ productions as artistic director of Home Grown Theatre Co. in Kansas City. He's had assistant director and observer positions at Classic Stage's (*Pacific Overtures*, dir. John Doyle), Rattlestick, The Public, Theatre Row, Hypokrit and on the world premiere of *Heathers: The Musical*. His short films "Block" and "Question" will be premiering at festivals in 2021, and he's about to begin production on a third short film *The Empty Room* which he also wrote. He's a Lincoln Center Directors Lab member and an associate member of the SDC. Ellis is a Pace University School of Performing Arts alum.

[Hersh Ellis IG:hersh.ellis](#)





ABOUT THE GENERAL MANAGER . . .

EVAN BERNARDIN PRODUCTIONS was founded by Evan Bernardin seven years ago with an eye towards developing new models under which to produce. Quickly his office grew to be a leader in Off-Broadway production where they developed the shows like *We Are the Tigers*, *The Navigator*, and the long-running *Afterglow*. Internationally, Evan's team has managed a selection of productions including *Million Dollar Quartet*, *Charlie Brown Christmas*, and *Counting Sheep*. Collaborative projects include performances with Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, Lincoln Center, The United Nations, Georgetown's Gaston Hall, The Harvard Club, The Culture Project, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He has had the opportunity to speak about producing and nontraditional development models at New York University (NYU), Marymount Manhattan College (MMC), The Off Broadway Alliance (OBA) and Theatre Resources Unlimited (TRU). [Evan Bernardin Productions](#).

ABOUT DREW AND DANE PRODUCTIONS

Drew Desky and Dane Levens are award-winning producers for theatre and web series. They have produced the award-winning revival of *Little Shop of Horrors* (Drama Desk Award, Drama League Award and Outer Critics Circle Honor for Outstanding Revival of a Musical), *Pageant* (Drama Desk nomination), *Application Pending* (Drama Desk nomination), *Who's Holiday!* (Lortel nomination), *The Other Josh Cohen* (Off Broadway Alliance nomination) *Unexpected Joy*, *Bright Colors* and *Bold Patterns*, and *R.R.R.E.D.* They are currently supporting *Hadestown*, *Dear Evan Hansen* (including the North American Tour and West End), *Come From Away* (Australia/NZ tour), and *The Inheritance*. They have produced and supported developmental presentations of several plays and musicals, including *Passing Through* at Goodspeed Musicals. They earned the Emmy® Award for Best Digital Drama Series as Executive Producers of *After Forever* in 2018. Drew is the Founding Co-Chair of the Leadership Council of Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Drew and Dane are also members of the Artists Circle of the Bucks County Playhouse, where they have the honor of being the only couple married on the stage.

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[DDM Productions](http://www.ddmproductions.com)

YOU START ONE ACTION - REAL ACTION.

YOUR SOUL.

IT GROWS.

- RAIN AND ZOE SAVE THE WORLD

