

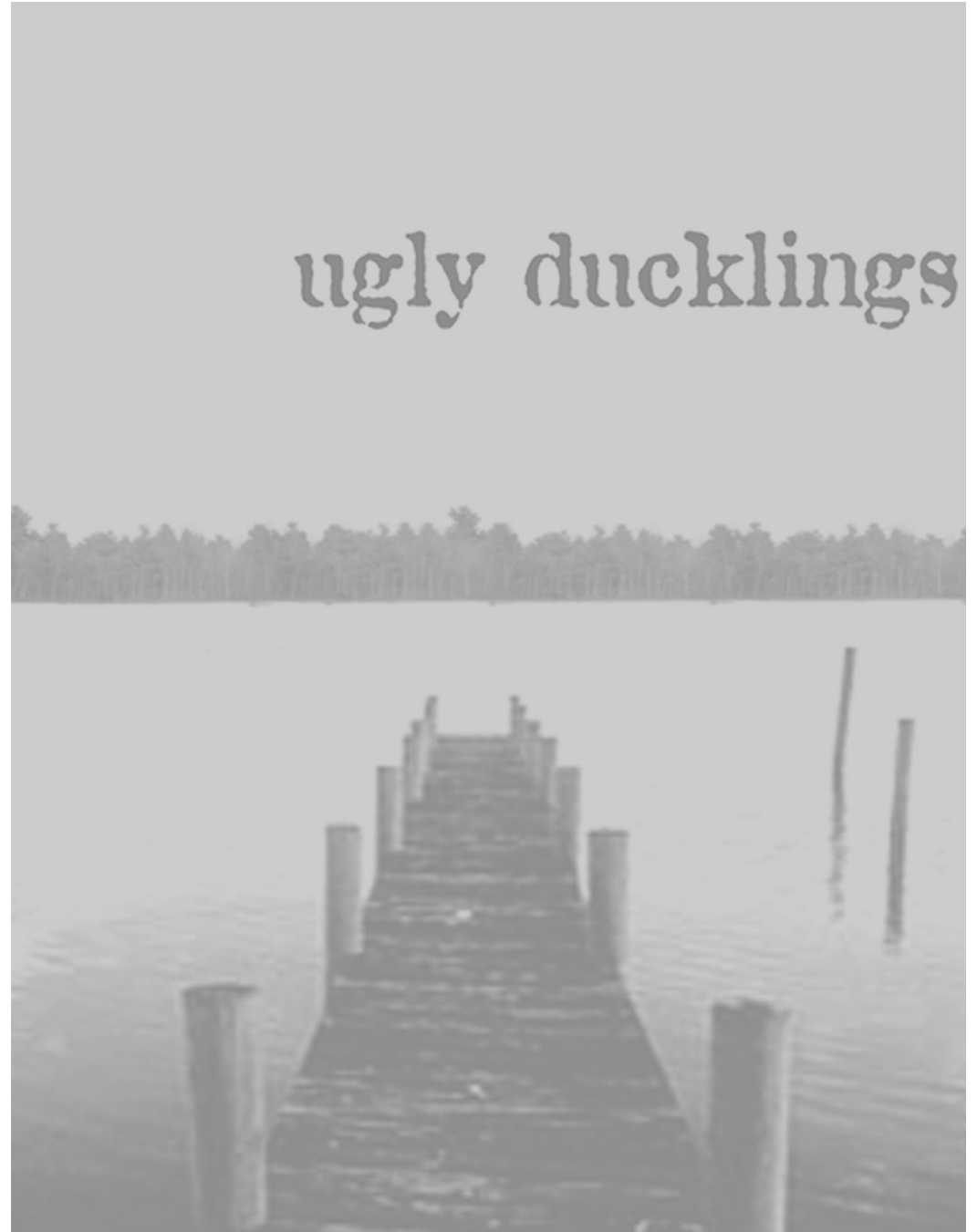
TO SUPPORT UGLY DUCKLINGS >

SEND DONATIONS C/O HARDY GIRLS HEALTHY WOMEN:

P.O. Box 821 • Waterville, ME 04903

TO PAY BY CREDIT CARD: call 207.861.8131 or visit

www.hardygirlshealthywomen.org/supportus.php





“A few years ago, here in Maine, two sixteen-year-old girls committed suicide together, driving their car a hundred miles an hour into a grove of birch trees.

They left a suicide note on the seat of the car. The contents of the note were suppressed by the local police, who claimed ‘the family had suffered enough.’ Let this play speak where lesbian and gay young people, even in death, have found their stories censored and their words erased.”

Carolyn Gage, Playwright

CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

Hardy Girls Healthy Women respectfully requests support of a statewide and national campaign to end bias-based bullying and harassment of gay and lesbian youth. We are proposing, in collaboration with our partner, Greater Waterville’s Communities for Children and Youth, to stage a production of the play *Ugly Ducklings* and to develop an educational documentary film and community action kit for state and national distribution. The play, nominated for an American Theater Critic’s Award, written by Maine playwright Carolyn Gage, deals with bias-based harassment and youth suicide. The film, directed by Academy Award winning cinematographer and director Fawn Yacker, will document the behind-the-scenes conversations between the actors, the playwright, and youth experts, as they become the characters in the play.

Unique to this combined stage and film project is the inclusion of the very youth population we aim to empower and support from start to finish. Woven together through the recording of intimate discussions about homophobia, the evolution of one’s sexual orientation, and bullying and biased-based harassment, the documentary will explore the actors’ own development throughout the rehearsal process. The educational film will focus on the core messages portrayed in *Ugly Ducklings* and will highlight the deeper, more explicit realities of the cast members, who, through their personal stories, provide a voice for others seeking asylum from the oppression of bias-based harassment in our communities and schools.

CAMPAIGN GOALS

- Create an inclusive, intergenerational and diverse creative project that will, in and of itself, offer positive outcomes for both the actors and their families related to improved communication and tolerance about bias based harassment and suicide
- Expand the education of and bring awareness of GLBTQ youth issues to parents, youth, educational institutions, general community, and media
- Reduce youth suicide

DESIRED CAMPAIGN OUTCOMES

- Parents broaden their understanding of GLBTQ realities and seek proactive, positive communication with their teen(s) about the issues facing GLBTQ youth
- Youth advocates identify GLBTQ harassment–bias as an important issue for awareness and policy change. Youth feel honored and valued for who they are and, therefore, safe discussing their orientation with trusted adults and peers
- Policy–makers initiate legislation and local protection through collaboration with and for GLBTQ youth in community and school environments
- Schools, colleges, and youth–serving organizations incorporate the Ugly Ducklings Community Action Kit into their curriculum

THE STRATEGY

- Measure changed attitudes and knowledge of the cast and their families involved in *Ugly Ducklings*
- Engage the audience of each play in discussion with the cast following the performance and ask the audience to complete a brief survey about what they learned from the play
- Submit the Educational Film for airing on HBO as well as for consideration in the Sundance Film Festival, the American Educational Film and Video Festival, Maine International Film Festival and other film and media venues
- Distribute the Community Action Kit, including a DVD with the full documentary film, discussion guides, educational materials, website, and resources for parents, teachers, and youth groups, through educational catalogues and websites

COLLABORATIVE ORGANIZATIONS

Hardy Girls Healthy Women is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the health and well being of girls and women in central Maine by developing programs, providing services and creating opportunities that empower them. Since 1999, HGHW has raised over \$250,000 to support its effective, gender–sensitive program development in local schools and organizations. Greater Waterville’s Communities for Children & Youth, the partner organization, was created in 1997 as a local member of a statewide initiative under the Governor’s Children’s Cabinet. Since 1999 alone, the Coalition has raised over \$1 million in grant funding for child and youth programs. This unique coalition unites many organizations and individuals to fill the gaps in child and youth services left by incomplete resources and incomprehensive research.

the play

Ugly Ducklings picks up where *Tea and Sympathy* and *The Children's Hour* left off. Set in a girls' summer camp, the play explores the dynamics of homophobia in a same-sex environment.

A gothic thriller, *Ugly Ducklings* examines the unhealthy turns that relationships between girls can take when they are not allowed their natural expression. The so-called "Ophelia Syndrome" comes alive as the cabin of younger girls, their self-esteem still reinforced by the primacy of their relationships, comes into contact with the older girls who have begun to turn against themselves and each other in their attempts to conform to the pressures of compulsory heterosexuality.

Angie, a middle-class college student, is falling in love with another counselor at the camp, Renée, who is a working-class "out" lesbian. Against this backdrop of intense homophobia, the young women struggle with their feelings for each other and the problems of defining themselves in a society that insists they be invisible. The camp legend about a monster in the lake parallels the adult phobias about lesbianism, and, confronted with an attempted child suicide, campers and counselors are compelled to face their worst fears in the microcosmic world of the summer camp.

AWARDS & PRESENTATIONS:

2005 >

Nominated by the American Theatre Critics Association for the ATCA/Steinberg New Play Award given annually to best new play of the year produced outside NYC

2004 >

Curve Magazine, National Lesbian Theatre Award

2004 >

World premiere, Venus Theatre, Washington, DC

2004 >

Published in *At Play: An Anthology of Maine Drama*, Levant Heritage Library, Levant, ME

Made in Maine, Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance reading, Bangor, ME

Workshop production, Bates College, Lewiston, ME

the creative team



Lyn Mikel Brown, Cathy Plourde, Lauren Sterling, and Carolyn Gage (front).
Not pictured: Fawn Yacker and Jim Thurston.

CAROLYN GAGE *UGLY DUCKLINGS*' WRITER/CREATOR

Carolyn Gage is an acclaimed lesbian playwright and performer. The author of five books and forty-eight plays, she has been the recipient of numerous grants and fellowships, including the Oregon Book Award, national finalist for the Lambda Literary Award, and the national Women in the Arts Culture Award, whose roster includes Audre Lorde, June Jordan, and Nikki Giovanni. Her work has been endorsed by feminist authors Jewelle Gomez, Andrea Dworkin, and Phyllis Chesler, and she is on the roster of the national speaker's bureau Speak Out! Since moving to Maine in 1998, she has taught at the University of Southern Maine and at Bates College. This year, the American Theatre Critics Association nominated her play *Ugly Ducklings* for their ATCA/Steinberg Award, for the best new play produced outside of New York and it won the National Lesbian Theatre Award of 2004 from Curve Magazine.

FAWN YACKER DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL FILM

Fawn Yacker is a Producer/Director and a Director of Photography for film and video. Among her many cinematography credits are *DEADLY DECEPTION* (Academy Award for best short documentary, 1991); *IN THE SHADOW OF THE STARS*, contributing cinematographer (Academy Award for best feature length documentary, 1991); *CHUCK SOLOMON: COMING OF AGE* "...among the best documentaries dealing with AIDS." Kevin Thomas LA Times; *CONFESSIONS OF A PRETTY LADY* a one hour documentary about actress/ performer Sandra Bernhard produced for the BBC's Arena program. Fawn has also directed award winning dramatic and comedic programs for corporate education and training.

CATHY PLOURDE

***UGLY DUCKLINGS'* STAGE PLAY DIRECTOR**

Cathy Plourde, M.A., Theatre and Social Change, is the founder and executive director of Add Verb Productions (AVP) Arts and Education. Her plays *The Thin Line* and *You the Man* have been to 26 states with AVP, and have been seen by over 75,000 people since 2000. Plourde presents workshops on arts and activism regionally and nationally, and has spoken and presented papers nationally and in Canada. Plourde is a member of the Association of Theatre in Higher Education, the Dramatists Guild of America, a volunteer for the Kennedy Center's American College Theatre Festival, and is an Honorary Artist in Residence at the University of Southern Maine. She was awarded the 2004 Maine Women's Fund Award for her work towards gender justice for women and girls.

LYN MIKEL BROWN

CO-PRODUCER, HARDY GIRLS GENDER AND "GIRL-FIGHTING" SPECIALIST/SCHOLAR

Lyn Mikel Brown is Professor of Education and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Colby College. She received her Ed.D. from Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, and was a founding member of The Harvard Project on Women's Psychology and Girls' Development. She is the author of three books on girls' social and psychological development: *Meeting at the Crossroads: Women's Psychology and Girls' Development* (with Carol Gilligan, 1992; a New York Times Notable Book of the Year); *Raising Their Voices: The Politics of Girls' Anger* (1998) and, most recently, *Girlfighting: Betrayal and Rejection Among Girls* (2003). She is co-creator of Hardy Girls Healthy Women. She has been an American Association

of University Women Educational Foundation Scholar-in-Residence and a winner of a National Academy of Education Spencer Postdoctoral Fellowship for encouraging healthy resistance in girls. Lyn currently serves on the Maine State Department of Education's Task Force on Gender Equity in Education and the Governor's Children's Cabinet's Sub-Committee on Youth Suicide Prevention.

JIM THURSTON

***UGLY DUCKLINGS'* DESIGNER**

Jim Thurston is a free-lance designer and educator. He holds a Masters of Fine Arts from Northwestern University's School of Speech in design for the stage. He has created designs for over 100 plays, musicals, operas and contemporary dances. His specialties are scene design and stage lighting. Jim teaches design and technical production for the Department of Theater and Dance at Colby College in Waterville, Maine. He is very interested in Social Action Theater. Currently Jim serves on the Board of Directors at the Waterville Opera House and works throughout Maine to assist those interested in the importance of live performance.

LAUREN STERLING

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Lauren Sterling has worked in Maine advocating for children and youth as a volunteer and professional for over 10 years and currently manages the Governor's Children's Cabinet in Maine. Sterling returned to Maine after a fifteen-year professional career in theater and television acting in, and producing theatrical projects in Los Angeles and New York City to benefit various charitable organizations.

the facts

- In a study of students in public high schools, 97% report regularly hearing homophobic remarks from their peers.
- In a 14-city study of gay, lesbian and bisexual youth, 80% reported verbal abuse, 44% reported threats of attack, 33% reported having objects thrown at them and 30% reported being chased or followed.
- In a study of 4,159 Massachusetts high school students, 31.2% identifying as gay, lesbian or bisexual were threatened/injured with a weapon at school in the past year compared to 6.9% of their peers.
- In 73 schools in Washington State, 111 incidents of anti-gay harassment and violence have been reported in the past 5 years, with about 1/3 of these incidents serious enough to warrant possible criminal allegations.
- In Seattle, 34% of students identifying as gay, lesbian or bisexual reported being the target of anti-gay harassment or violence at school or on the way to or from school, compared to 6% of heterosexual students.
- In Michigan, 28% of school personnel surveyed determined their school environment emotionally unsafe for sexual minority youth.
- In a national survey, youth described being called lesbian or gay as the most deeply upsetting form of sexual harassment they experienced.

- Studies on youth suicide consistently find that lesbian and gay youth are 2 - 6 times more likely to attempt suicide than other youth and may account for 30% of all completed suicides among teens.
- Service providers estimate that gay, lesbian and bisexual youth make up 20-40% of homeless youth in urban areas.

The typical high school student hears anti-gay slurs 25.5 times a day.

- In a study of 4,159 Massachusetts high school students, 46% who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual had attempted suicide in the past year compared to 8.8% of their peers, and 23.5% required medical attention as a result of a suicide attempt compared to 3.3% of their peers. The same study found 18.4% of the gay, lesbian and bisexual students had been in a physical fight resulting in treatment by a doctor or nurse compared to 4% of their peers, and 22.2% skipped school in the past month because they felt unsafe en route to or at school, compared to 4.2% of their peers.

SOURCE > Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays at www.pflag.org

the reviews

“If it is possible that a piece of theatre can be both gritty and sublime at the same time, then Venus Theatre has achieved it in their world premiere production of Carolyn Gage’s *Ugly Ducklings*.”

— *Metro Review*, Washington, DC

“ . . . DESERVES A
CENTRAL PLACE IN
THE LESBIAN FEMINIST
LITERARY CANON . . . ”

— *off our backs*, Washington, DC

“... refreshingly well told tale that while raising all the issues that this anti-homophobic company and playwright want to raise, does so with an admirable restraint, avoiding the obvious traps of sensationalism and titillation and striking an admirable balance of theatricality and realism.”

— *Potomac Stages*, Washington, DC

“ . . . a play about coming of age and homophobia and how people deal with emerging understandings about sexuality. **It’s a tough, tough, tough topic, and it’s handled here with a great deal of raw energy**, but also with a great deal of subtlety . . . a very, very nice piece . . . definitely worth seeing.”

— Peter Fay for WAMU (NPR affiliate station), Washington, DC

“Radically redefining beauty . . . *Ugly Ducklings* reveals how notions of homosexuality can shatter the souls of girls and women . . . an impressive work . . . **A BRUTALLY HONEST EXAMINATION OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A YOUNG LESBIAN, . . .**”

— *The Washington Blade*, Washington, DC

“Funny, poignant, unpredictable . . . very well-written. Educational without being preachy. Engaging. Absorbing. Sweet.”

— Mariah Burton-Nelson, Athlete, Speaker, *Author of Are We Winning Yet?*

“ . . . like the best drama, Gage’s play is filled to bursting with sharp-edged double meaning and irony . . . **accessible and engaging** format, with the social consciousness of Ibsen and Shaw . . . ”

— Assunta Kent, Phd., from the introduction to *At Play: An Anthology of Maine Drama*

the inner circle : donor benefits

DEUS EX MACHINA > \$10,000 or more

In addition to all of the benefits listed below, Deus Ex Machina's receive the following:

- An invitation to a special "Meet the Playwright and Film Director" event with honorary guests, Carolyn Gage and Fawn Yacker
- An additional 6 tickets to one production of Ugly Ducklings, for a total of 8 of the seats in the house
- Deus Ex Machina Listing in the Ugly Ducklings Playbill

ANGELS > \$5,000 – \$9,999

In addition to all of the benefits listed below, Angels receive the following:

- An additional 4 tickets to one of Ugly Ducklings productions, for a total of 6 of the best seats in the house
- An invitation to the Invited Audience Filmed Performance of Ugly Ducklings on September 14th
- Name placement among Ugly Ducklings Documentary Film credits
- Angel Listing in the Ugly Ducklings stage production program
- Acknowledgement of your contribution via name and logo placement on Hardy Girls Healthy Women's Website

BENEFACTORS > \$1,000 – \$4,999

In addition to all of the benefits listed below, Benefactors receive the following:

- An additional 2 tickets to one of Ugly Ducklings productions, for a total of 4 premier seats
- Complimentary admission to the premier Ugly Ducklings documentary film screening and Q & A reception with documentary producer, Lauren Sterling
- Benefactor Listing in the Ugly Ducklings Playbill
- Acknowledgement of your contribution via name placement on Hardy Girls Healthy Women's website
- One-time acknowledgement of your contribution via name recognition on Hardy Girls Healthy Women's Web site and in Hardy Girls Healthy Women's newsletter

PATRONS > \$500 – \$999

- Two tickets to one of Ugly Ducklings productions
- Patron Listing in the Ugly Ducklings Playbill
- Special advance notice of all future Hardy Girls Healthy Women events
- Acknowledgement of your contribution via name recognition in Hardy Healthy Women's newsletter, *Hardy Girls News*
- Regular receipt of Hardy Girls News, published three times annually
- Hardy Girls Healthy Women's newsletter, Invitations to HGHW annual major donor events, including our golf tournament, luncheons, movies series, and Girls' Unlimited! Conferences
- Complimentary admission to the premier Ugly Ducklings documentary film screening and Q & A reception with documentary producer, Lauren Sterling
- An invitation to the Invited Audience Filmed Performance of Ugly Ducklings on September 14th

SPONSORS > \$250 – \$499

- Complimentary admission to the premier Ugly Ducklings documentary film screening and Q & A reception with documentary producer, Lauren Sterling
- Sponsor Listing in the Ugly Ducklings Playbill
- An invitation to the Invited Audience Filmed Performance of Ugly Ducklings on September 14th
- Hardy Girls Healthy Women's newsletter, Invitations to HGHW annual major donor events, including our golf tournament, luncheons, movies series, and Girls' Unlimited! Conferences

SUPPORTERS > \$100 – \$249

- Supporter Listing in the Ugly Ducklings Playbill

FRIENDS > \$20 – \$99

- Hardy Girls Healthy Women's newsletter, Invitations to HGHW annual major donor events, including our golf tournament, luncheons, movie series, and Girls' Unlimited! Conferences