TEN THOUSAND THINGS

PLAY GUIDE



This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing



PLAY GUIDE

TEN THOUSAND THINGS THEATER PRESENTS

This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing

by **Finegan Kruckemeyer**

February 5-March 16, 2025

Directed by **Markell Kiefer**
Music by **Julie Johnson**

Featuring **Katie Bradley, Maggie Chestovich, Joy Dolo, Tyson Forbes, Marisa B. Tejeda** and **Ashawnti Sakina Ford**

Costumes: **Sarah Bahr**
Set/Props: **Joel Sass**
Dance Choreography: **Jim Lichtscheidl**
Stage Manager: **Jason Clusman**
Play Guide: **Liv Kemp**

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Keep an eye out for question bubbles like these—they're here to deepen your understanding of the play!

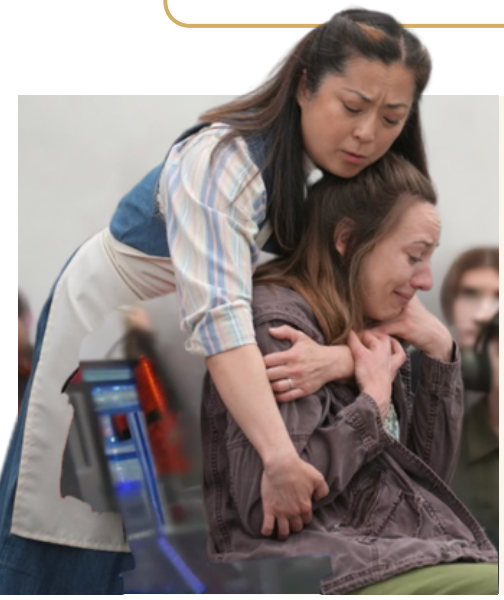


NOTE FROM DIRECTOR MARKELL KIEFER

What is the heart of this play? As we embarked on this delightful journey with This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing, this is the question we've asked ourselves time and time again, and we've found countless answers. At its core, this story is about seeking happiness, fighting for the people you love, and learning to forgive—not just others, but yourself. It's about grace: grace for our mistakes, grace in moving forward, and the grace of returning home. We explore how, even in times of loss and uncertainty, we can find direction, meaning, and the courage to begin again. This play is a testament to life's journey—woven with moments of struggle, hope, discovery, and joy. It reminds us that life is not defined by a single success or failure, but by the "rolling dune" of experiences that shape us. It also celebrates family: the ties that draw us back to the people we love and places we call home. Whether you're laughing, crying, or doing absolutely nothing (all valid life strategies), this play reminds us that we always return to those we love. Working on this production has been a profound gift. The creative process has been always deeply powered by the brilliance and dedication of the ensemble. Together, we've explored the playful, profound, natural, and absurd—bringing to life a story that honors the beauty and complexity of individual expression. This play is for anyone with a heart. It's a reminder that art can heal, joy can surprise, and that the world—messy and strange as it is—needs your unique light.

Thank you for joining us. May you leave with hope in your heart, laughter in your belly, and a renewed appreciation for life's tiny triumphs and the people you hold dear.

TTT's model creates a deeper connection between actors and audiences. How did watching with the lights on and seeing the audience around you impact your experience? How did it differ from your other theatre experiences?



KATIE BRADLEY AND KATHERINE FRIED, *THE SPITFIRE GRILL*, PHOTO BY TOM WALLACE

ABOUT TEN THOUSAND THINGS

Ten Thousand Things awakens the creative spirit by bringing exceptional theater to people from all backgrounds. Performing in the round with minimal sets, live music, and no stage, actors engage audiences up close, distilling each story to its essence. With the lights on and the finest regional talent, performances spark imagination and remind us that theater is essential to life. Through free performances at shelters, correctional facilities, senior centers, and public schools, alongside ticketed shows at venues, Ten Thousand Things ensures theater remains accessible, immediate, and deeply impactful.



PHOTO: FINEGANKRUCKEMEYER.COM

SYNOPSIS

In this moving, modern-day fairy tale, three young sisters are left in a forest by their woodcutter father and forced to find their way in the world.

The sisters each make their own resolution: one walks away to find purpose, one sets off to find adventure, and one stays where she is to create a home.

Years later—having circled the globe, crossed oceans, tamed wilds, and achieved greatness—the three sisters meet again, as women and equals.

Key Themes:

Choice
Sisterhood
Grief
Female Empowerment
Love
Change
Loss
Forgiveness
Perseverance
Self-Discovery
Fate

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

Narrators - Guide the audience through the story.

Albienne - The first sister. Strong and passionate.

Beatrix - The second sister. Energetic and curious.

Carmen - The third sister. Quiet and thoughtful.

Mother - Loving, dies when the sisters are young.

Father - Loving but weak, abandons his daughters.

Policeman - Brings the news of the mother's death.

Baker's Son - Handsome boy, inspires Albienne's love for baking.

Eleanor - Father's new wife, causes the sisters' separation.

Old Woman - Wise, lives in a lighthouse, helps Beatrix.

Villagers - Follow Albienne into battle, later into peace.

Vikings - Fierce warriors, attack villages, challenge Albienne.

Badger - Grumpy animal, keeps Carmen company in the woods.

Woodland Animals - Help Carmen build her house in the forest.

City People - Dull at first, later find joy with Beatrix.

Strangers - Guests at Carmen's house, take way too much.

Peter - Kind, patient man who loves Carmen.

Townspeople - Hungry people, help Albienne find baking again.

In our play, 6 actors play many roles, some inanimate, some living. How could you tell who or what each actor was portraying? What tools did they use to tell the story?

THE RULE OF THREE



Many fairy tales use *the rule of three* to make stories clear, balanced, and easy to remember. In *The Three Little Pigs*, three houses are tested. In *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, Goldilocks tries three options. In *The Three Musketeers*, three heroes stand together.

In *This Girl Laughs*, the rule of three shapes the story. The sisters make three different choices—Albienne travels east, becoming a warrior before rediscovering her love for baking; Beatrix goes west, sailing the seas and eventually bringing joy to a dreary city; and Carmen stays behind, building a life in the woods and eventually finding love. This pattern works well because one choice is too simple, two is not enough, but three creates a full story.

If you were one of the sisters, which path would you have taken and why?

SCENE-BY-SCENE

Prologue: Three sisters, Albienne, Beatrix, and Carmen, are born as triplets and grow up in a loving home in the forest. Their childhood is joyful, filled with stories, exploration, and love from their parents. However, their mother's sudden death changes everything. Their father, heartbroken, eventually remarries, but his new wife convinces him to abandon his daughters in the woods.

Scene 1: The sisters are devastated by their father's choice but react differently. Albienne, always strong-willed, sees it as an opportunity to experience the world. Beatrix, adventurous, wants to follow their father's path. Carmen, quiet and introspective, chooses to stay exactly where they were left. They part ways, each setting off in a different direction.

Scene 2: Albienne heads east, determined to explore the world. Beatrix follows the sun west, eager to meet people. Carmen remains in the forest, building a life alone.

Scene 3: Beatrix reaches the sea and builds a ship from a lighthouse, setting sail with an old woman she meets. They journey together, forming a strong friendship.

Scene 4: Albienne becomes a warrior, leading villagers in battles. She learns the harshness of war but finds a sense of purpose.

Scene 5: Carmen stays in the forest, building a house with the help of animals. People begin seeking her wisdom, turning her home into a refuge.

Scene 6: Beatrix reaches a dull city and, with her energy and charisma, transforms it into a place full of music and joy.

Scene 7: Each sister has found a role in life—Albienne as a warrior, Beatrix as an entertainer, and Carmen as a caretaker—but they begin to long for something more.

Scene 8: Carmen, overwhelmed by people relying on her, finally stands up for herself. She meets Peter, a kind and understanding man, and they fall in love.

Scene 9: Albienne gives up fighting and finds peace in baking, bringing joy to a starving village. The villagers build her a mobile bakery, and she continues her journey, sharing warmth instead of war.

Scene 10: Beatrix, now weary, meets an old man tending three cherry trees. She realizes it is her father, who has also been wandering in search of his daughters. They reconcile and begin their journey home.

Scene 11: All three sisters turn 31 in different places—Albienne with her village, Beatrix with their father, and Carmen with her growing family. Each realizes they miss each other and feel drawn home.

Scene 12: The sisters finally reunite in the forest where they were left years ago. They have grown, changed, and lived full lives, but their bond remains unbreakable. They return to Carmen's house, sharing their stories over tea, completing their journeys together.



JOY DOLO, TYSON FORBES, MAGGIE CHESTOVICH, MARISA B. TEJEDA, AND KATIE BRADLEY, PHOTO BY MARKELL KEIFER

SETTING THE STAGE

We asked our team to share their experiences with this show:

"Rehearsals for this show were a true team effort, where we built the world together from the ground up. Each of us brought unique ideas and energy, helping shape the emotional and physical journey of the three sisters and various characters. It was inspiring to see how we all supported each other in bringing these women's lives to the stage."

- Marisa B. Tejeda. Actor

"It has been such an inspirational process to bring this magical show to life with all of the artists in Ten Thousand Things. It's refreshing to create in such a collaborative way and I'm thrilled to share this show with so many audiences!"

-Julie Johnson, Musician

"The individual and collective creativity has been electric and astounding throughout our creation process. We have formed a lively, comfy, playful, respectful, interesting, curious, diverse family of players to share a delightful journey with our audiences."

-Maggie Chestovich, Actor

THE CAST



Katie Bradley
she/her
CARMEN & OTHERS



Maggie Chestovich
she/her
BEATRIX & OTHERS



Joy Dolo
she/her
ALBIENNE & OTHERS



Tyson Forbes
he/him
NARRATOR & OTHERS



Marisa B. Tejeda
they/she
NARRATOR & OTHERS



DESIGNER SPOTLIGHT

With Costume Designer Sarah Bahr

"The costume design is inspired by the colors and textures of nature, along with the whimsy of childhood dress-up and imaginative play. Each character embodies a season: Albienne is spring with pink cherry blossoms, Beatrix is summer with bright rays of yellow sunshine, Carmen is autumn with a cozy orange and maroon plaid, and the narrators are winter with cool colors and dots of snow.'"

BEATRIX CAPE PROTOTYPE



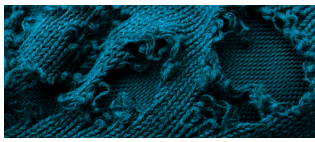
LIGHTHOUSE LADY COSTUME RENDERING



ASH KAUN AND SARAH BAHR CROCHETING COSTUME PIECES













Many of the costumes transform simple, repurposed objects into imaginative storytelling tools. How did their design and versatility impact your understanding of the characters and world of the play?

COSTUME RENDERINGS BY SARAH BAHR

POST-PLAY REFLECTION QUESTIONS
for students and educators

1. Each sister embarks on a very different journey—Albienne through war and baking, Beatrix through adventure and performance, and Carmen through stillness and community. *What do these paths symbolize? How do they reflect different ways people grow and find purpose in real life?*

2. What do you think *This Girl Laughs...* is ultimately trying to say about life, growing up, or human relationships? *How might this play be relevant to today's audiences, especially in light of current events?*

3. In many fairy tales, the woods represent mystery, transformation, or danger. *What do the woods symbolize in this play? How does the meaning of the woods change for each sister?*

"That is what a journey must be – a lot of little successes."

-Narrator, Scene 3

4. Traditional fairy tales often have clear-cut heroes and villains. This play has conflicts, but no clear villain. *How does this affect the way we interpret the story? Is the father a villain for abandoning them, or are his actions more complicated?*

5. Many fairy tales, like *The Wizard of Oz* or *Hansel and Gretel*, involve characters getting lost and finding their way home. *How does this play explore the idea of home? Does "home" change for the sisters over time?*

6. Many fairy tales have a lesson or moral—don't talk to strangers, be kind to others, follow your heart. *What do you think is the central message of This Girl Laughs...? Does it have multiple lessons, or is it open to interpretation?*

7. The sisters are abandoned, which sets them on their journeys, but they ultimately make choices that define their futures. *How does the play explore the balance between fate and personal decision-making?*

8. What does the play say about the different ways people deal with hardship, and *which sister's response do you relate to the most?*