



# Taffety Punk Theatre Company

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For Immediate Release:

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**Taffety Punk celebrates ten-year anniversary of the Great Recession. Rejoice!**  
*Absurdist play by new playwright finds comedy in the tragedy.*

***She Rode Horses Like the Stock Exchange* by Amelia Roper**

Directed by **Kelsey Mesa**

Featuring company members Tonya Beckman, Dan Crane, Marcus Kyd, with Jen Rabbitt Ring

**Where:** Capitol Hill Arts Workshop (545 7th Street SE, Washington, DC 20003)

**When:** September 29-October 14, Wed-Sat at 8:00pm with Saturday Matinees at 2:30pm  
with a special industry night performance Monday, October 9 at 8:00pm  
and two pay-what-you-can previews on September 27 and 28 at 7:30pm

**Price:** \$15. Tickets available at [www.taffetypunk.com](http://www.taffetypunk.com).

It is 2007, and the United States does not know the largest economic crisis since the Great Depression looms on the horizon. Given the weight of the matter, it may come as a surprise how much comedy is packed into the script.

With a gleeful twist of the absurd, Amelia Roper's incisive and scathing play, *She Rode Horses Like the Stock Exchange*, captures two couples in a swift descent as their expectations collapse around them. A successful investment banker, Amy, confronts her former colleague, Max, in a game of dominance on the limited confines of a single picnic blanket. Their reluctant partners are dragged with them into the fray.

Playwright **Amelia Roper**, an immigrant from Australia, is a promising voice in American Theatre. Taffety Punk actor **Tonya Beckman** says, "I love Amelia's voice—offbeat, honest, always bordering on the absurd, and at the same time poetic and compassionate. The tension between beauty and despair is my favorite thing about the writing in this piece." Beckman has been involved with the creation of the script, having worked on an early draft in 2012 during the Kennedy Center's MFA Playwrights Workshop.

Director, and Taffety Punk company member, **Kelsey Mesa**, embraces the play's style, balancing the realistic against the illogical. "It's exciting and challenging that the characters often do not think or behave linearly," Mesa says. "It's challenging to dissect their dodging, weaving, treading water, and manipulating. At first, many choices and statements are absurd, until you start to dig and unwind them and discover they make sense in a perfect, human way."

Beckman adds, "I think the thing all these characters have in common is contradiction. And that is so real to me. People are complicated—we do one thing, then turn around and do the opposite. We destroy the possibility of having what we claim we want. We accept and embrace what we insist is a deal-breaker."

It is easy to look back now and decry how inevitable the banking collapse was, or perhaps how avoidable it was. Yet, the housing bubble popped and brought all too many to a new low. Roper exploits the bare invectives of personality, laying the blame for an economic crisis squarely where it belongs: not on the intangible market, but the people who drive that market.

*She Rode Horses Like the Stock Exchange* opens September 29th at the Capitol Hill Arts Workshop (545 7th Street SE, Washington, DC 20003). The show runs through October 14, at 8:00pm Wednesday through Saturday evenings with Saturday Matinees at 2:30pm and a special industry night performance Monday, October 9 at 8:00pm featuring discount tickets for performing arts industry professionals. There are two pay-what-you-can previews on September 27 and 28 at 7:30pm. Tickets are available for \$15 at [www.taffetypunk.com](http://www.taffetypunk.com) or 1-800-838-3006.

Set and props by Crista Noel Smith. Lights by Chris Curtis. Costumes by Jen Gillette. Music and sound by Marcus Kyd.

For hi-res photos, go to: <http://www.taffetypunk.com/press>

**Taffety Punk Theatre Company's** mission is to establish a dynamic ensemble of actors, dancers and musicians who ignite a public passion for theatre by making the classical and the contemporary exciting, meaningful, and affordable. The company was recently nominated for Helen Hayes Awards in choreography for 2016's productions of *Phaeton* and *An Iliad*. Past awards include the **very first John Aniello Award for Outstanding Emerging Theatre Company** at the 2008 Helen Hayes Awards. The company was also a 2010 finalist for the D.C. Mayor's Arts Award for Innovation in the Arts.

**Amelia Roper** is a queer immigrant, now writing comedies for Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Marin Theatre Company, The Rose and an adaptation of Jane Bowles' *Two Serious Ladies* for Yale Repertory Theatre. Her new play, *The Big and the Small*, will soon be produced by Colt Coeur at New York Theatre Workshop. Previous productions include the Humana Festival of New American Plays at ATL, Moscow's Playwright and Director Center in Russian translation, Square Product in Boulder, Prelude Festival NYC, Crowded Fire in SF, Kings Cross Theatre in Sydney and the Melbourne Arts Centre. Showcase and developments include the Old Vic in London, Soho Rep Writer/Director Lab, Black Swan Lab at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor, NNPN at the Kennedy Center, Playwrights Realm in NYC, New Group NYC, Melbourne Theatre Company, RADA in London, The MacDowell Colony and Boston Court in LA. Ms. Roper's published plays include *Big Sky Town* and *Camberwell House* (Dramatists Play Service), *Lottie in the Late Afternoon* (The Kilroys List, v.1). *She Rode Horses Like the Stock Exchange* will soon be published with an introduction by Sarah Ruhl. New plays include *Everything is Nice*, an absurdist three hander about climate change and refugees, *Aliya in Americaland*, and *A Duck on a Bike*. She has an MFA in playwriting from the Yale School of Drama.

**Kelsey Mesa's** directing credits include *The Trojan Women*, by Euripides, *Charm* by Kathleen Cahill, *dREAMtRIPPIN'* by Thomas Campbell, and staged readings of *The Poker Night* by Justin Moyer and *First Citizen* by Anna Lathrop and Katherine Clair, all at Taffety Punk Theatre Company; as well as *The Magi* and *Wish List* at the Hub Theatre. She has also directed for The Inkwell, The Source Festival, Rorschach Theatre Company's Klecksography, Young Playwrights' Theatre, the American College Theatre Festival, Theater Alliance's Hothouse New Play Development Series, and The Hub's Emerging Writers Festival. Kelsey is a native of Miami, FL and a graduate of Northwestern University.

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