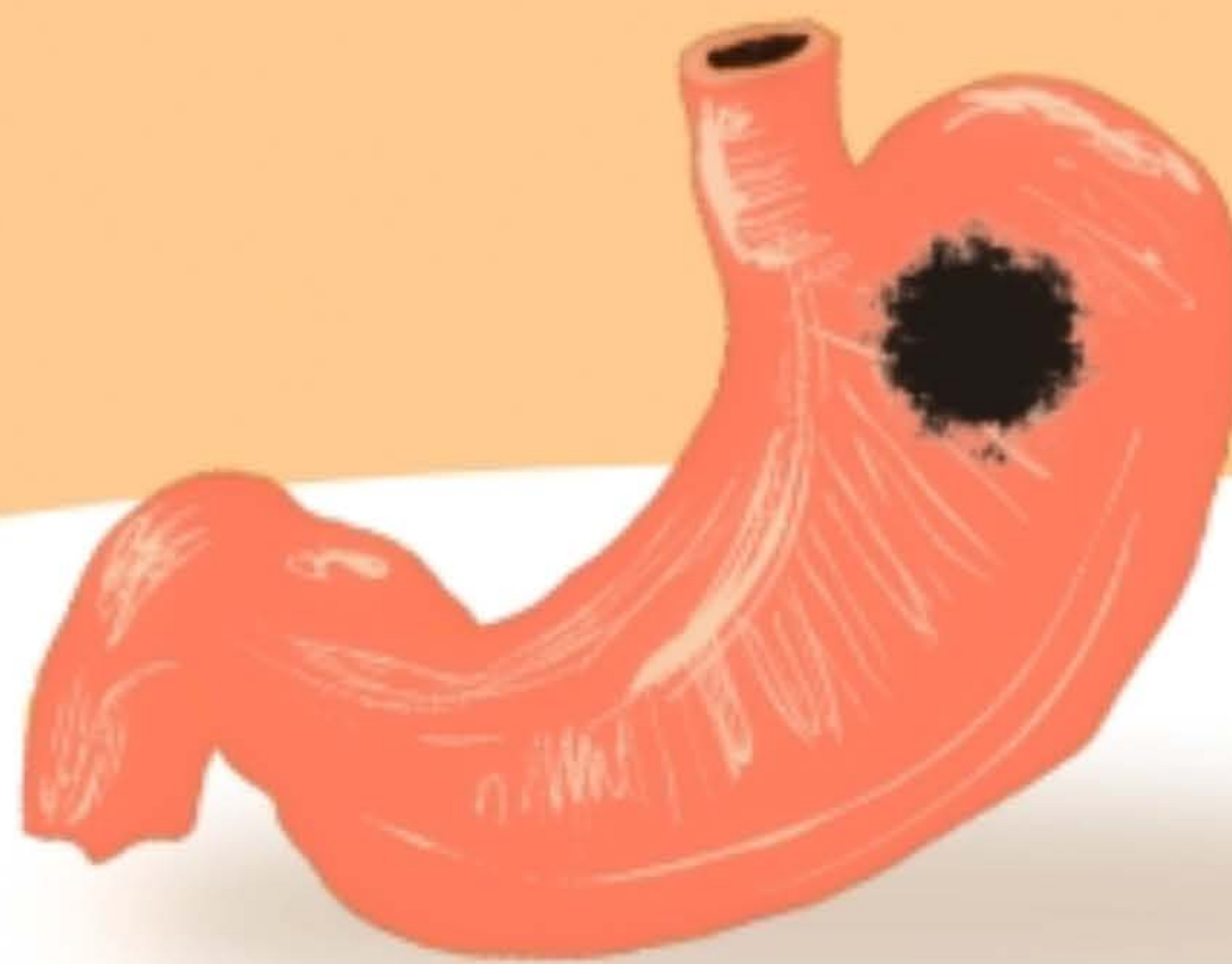


Platform  
(a production company)  
presents:

# GUT

A new play by  
Alexander Utz



in collaboration with  
Avalanche Theatre

September 23 – October 15

# GUT

## *A note from the playwright...*

Thank you for coming to see Gut! When I wrote this play, I was interested in the narrative possibilities of having different groups of people tell the story of Beaumont and Alexis (the first public reading last year, at the International Museum of Surgical Science, was performed through the lens of a group of fur traders telling each other the story).

Platform has embraced the script's flexibility and created an exciting meta-narrative about a theatre company performing the story, which adds more layers exploring power, manipulation, and ambition to the piece.

I'm proud to share this play with you, and myself and the entire Avalanche Theatre team are excited to welcome Platform to the Chicago theatre community.

- Alexander Utz,

*Playwright and Artistic Director of Avalanche Theatre*

## *What is Platform?*

Platform (a production company), is dually committed to producing original platform-specific art and sharing the work of unconventional creators with unconventional audiences.

We push the boundaries of platform-specific performance art in an ever-changing world: we explore non-traditional spaces, whether physical or not. To facilitate this exploration, we are dedicated to creating environments that give creative agency to all artists.

Guiding us towards this goal are our three core values:

*Connect artists from diverse backgrounds*

*Discover and explore new and unconventional media  
for new work*

*Share stories that would otherwise go untold*

@platformprodco

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## *How can I support this art?*

In addition to their base pay, each dollar of profit is shared among all the incredible artists who have contributed to the success of the project!

**You can donate cash as you exit the performance, or to our Venmo ([@platformprodco](#)) right from your phone!**

you can click this how crazy is that!

Platform also proudly offers an **Open-Door Policy** to all artists. This policy guarantees that one board member will listen to a pitch from *anyone* about a new idea or platform to explore, a new way to approach art, or anything else the creator may wish to discuss.

Past Open-Door projects include a new play workshop, original podcast series, and the first ever interactive live streamed drama.

Email [opendoor@platformprodco.com](mailto:opendoor@platformprodco.com) to talk!

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## Who are we?

### Cast:

Natalie Welber - *"The Director"*

Ryan J. Hurdle - *"The Understudy"*

Julia Cicero - *"The Improvisor"*

Dani Pike - *"The Veteran"*

Yvette McCaskill - *"The Writer"*

Grace Fay Brooks - *Swing for Understudy/Veteran/Writer*

Hannah Eisendrath - *Swing for Director/Improvisor*

### Production:

Patrick Starner - *Director*

Tessa Huber - *Stage Manager*

Cate Cappelmann - *Associate Director/Dramaturg*

Alexander Utz - *Playwright*

Zoe Sjogerman - *Producer*

James Cullinane - *Fight Choreographer*

Rachel Thomas - *Marketing Coordinator*

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But who are we  
REALLY?



## Natalie Welber - “*The Director*”

Natalie Welber is a Maryland-raised, Chicago-based actor, playwright, and educator. Recent Chicago credits include *Twelfth Night* (Midsommer Flight), *Antigone* (Redtwist Theatre), and *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe* (Improv Playhouse).

Natalie holds a BA in both Theatre and Religious Studies from Northwestern University. Her proudest accomplishment is her multi-year Yiddish streak on Duolingo.

For more, visit [nataliewelber.com](http://nataliewelber.com)

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## Ryan J. Hurdle - *"The Understudy"*

Ryan J. Hurdle is a writer, composer, actor, improviser, and musician from Romeoville, Illinois. He graduated with a degree in Theatre from Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois.

He was seen at The Annoyance Theatre as Robert Herjavec in *Shark Tank the Musical: a Parody*. He is a student at The Second City and a performer at the iO Theatre.

Follow him @ryanjhurdle on social media, Spotify, and Apple Music!



## Dani Pike - *"The Veteran"*

Dani Pike (*she/her*) was born and raised in Houston, Texas, and graduated from Oklahoma City University in 2019. Chicago credits include Audrey in *Little Shop of Horrors* (Citadel Theatre), *The Kelly Girls* (The Factory Theatre), *The Gala* (The Annoyance), and *Almost, Maine* (Wandering Roots). She can also be seen in the upcoming web-series *The Anti-Bullying Defense League* and the feature film *American Schemers*.

Dani is an avid reader, enthusiastic dog owner and a proud cancer survivor. Thanks to to Lucas, Yogurt and the whole family for their support. ([danipike.com](http://danipike.com))

Instagram/Twitter: @danipike77

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## Yvette McCaskill - “*The Writer*”

Yvette Corrine McCaskill (*shelher*) is an artist, activist, educator and urban farmer residing on the south side of Chicago.

She practices interdisciplinary artistic expression to create meaningful change in society through performance, community organizing and youth development. Corrine recently starred in *A Raisin in the Sun* and the *Vagina Monologues* at the Beverly Arts Center and is developing projects for transformative arts education.

Instagram: @its\_ms\_yvette



## Julia Cicero - “*The Improvisor*”

Julia is an actor, musician, and pie-enthusiast who has lived in Chicagoland all her life.

She holds a BFA in Musical Theater from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, and her recent credits include: *Arabia, Arabia!* (The Plagiarists), *Valhalla* (The Plagiarists), and *A Town Called Progress* (Promethean Theatre Ensemble).

You can see more of her work at [juliacicero.com](http://juliacicero.com). Julia would like to thank her family, Jeremy, and - most importantly - her cat, Mac, for their love and support.

Instagram: @julia.r\_cicero



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## **Hannah Eisendrath - *Swing for Director/Improvisor***

Hannah Eisendrath (*they/she*) is excited to be working with this killer team! Former credits include *Measure for Measure* (Forest Park Theatre), *Jack Off the Beanstalk* (PrideArts), *HAIR* (Parallel 45 Theatre), and *A Doll's House, Part 2* (IAA Arts Festival). Film and television credits include *The Blacklist* and various independent film projects.

Their recent pilot project, *One of the Boys*, is now streaming on YouTube!

@hannah.eisendrath



## **Grace Fay Brooks - *Swing for Understudy/Veteran/Writer***

Grace Fay Brooks (*She/Her*) moved to Chicago two years ago after graduating from Plymouth State University with degrees in Acting and Psychology and minors in Dance and Standardized Patient Training.

Her favorite recent roles include Amelia in *The Bog Witch Variety Hour* (Corn Productions) and her work in a devising Shakespeare ensemble (Fowl Play). Thanks to all the friends, family, and cats who have supported her artistry over the years!

Instagram: @gracefaybrooks

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## Patrick Starner - *Director*



Patrick Starner is a Chicago-based director, producer, and production manager. Gut is Patrick's full-length Chicago debut after directing several shift festivals for Chicago Dramatists. Previous directing credits include: *Eleven Months of Nuclear Summer* (Platform), *Coats, Winsor & Gertie*, & *Urinetown* (University of Notre Dame), and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (South Bend Civic Theatre).

He currently serves as the production manager for A Red Orchid Theatre and Oak Park Festival Theatre's Seagulls and will direct *As You Are* by Rachel Lynett at the University of Notre Dame in 2023.

## Cate Cappelmann - *Dramaturg/Associate Director*



Cate Cappelmann is a theatremaker new to Chicago, and originally from Long Island, New York. She graduated from the University of Notre Dame where she read a lot of books and produced a lot of Shakespeare. She has worked as a member of the administrative team with the Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival and as a Stage Manager for Actors from the London Stage. She recently completed a year of service with the Robinson Shakespeare Company as an educator teaching youth in the South Bend area. She is a lover of all things literary and is currently seeking recommendations for good bagels in Chicago.

## **Tessa Huber - *Stage Manager***



Tessa Huber is a stage manager who is still a little new to the Chicago area. Having graduated with a BA in Theatre from Indiana University right at the start of the pandemic, Tessa is glad to finally be doing theatre again! Past credits include *Water by the Spoonful* (ASM, Indiana University), *jelly beans* (SM, Indiana University), *Indoor Cats* (ASM, Red Theater) and *Is God Is* (ASM, A Red Orchid Theatre). Tessa would like to thank everyone in the Chicago theatre community who has helped welcome her to the city, as well as her family for their support. Tessa would like to give a special shoutout to her papaw, for always being her champion and biggest cheerleader. Enjoy the show!

## **Alexander Utz - *Playwright***



Alexander Utz is a playwright, actor, and Artistic Director of Avalanche Theatre, a company which develops new plays. His plays have been performed with The Plagiarists, Bower Theatre Ensemble, Three Brothers Theatre, Benchmark Theatre, Eclectic Full Contact Theatre, the International Museum of Surgical Science, and more. Most recently, he was a member of the Spring 2023 cohort of Jackalope Theatre's Playwrights Lab, and he participated in the Mackinac State Parks' 2022 Artist-in-Residence program.

Find more about his work at [alexanderutz.com](http://alexanderutz.com)

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## **James Cullinane -** *Fight Choreographer*

James Cullinane is a Chicago-based actor, fight-choreographer, and Platform Co-Founder who is thrilled to see this production come to life! He loves new, devised work and has just finished the premiere of *Hamlet 50/50*, a new twist on the classic tragedy, and is currently working on a production of *The Mousetrap* with Citadel Theatre. He is a physical artist and creative problem-solver at heart. Anything that gets the blood pumping and the brain racing is right up his alley.

You can learn more about him at  
[jamescullinane.com](http://jamescullinane.com)



## **Rachel Thomas -** *Marketing Coordinator*

Rachel Thomas is an actress, singer, dancer, choreographer and content creator who has a passion for new work and loves collaborating with other creatives. She holds a BA in Musical Theatre and Communication Studies from Saint Mary's College and is a graduate of the Open Jar Institute in New York City. As Marketing Director, Rachel promotes all events, performances, and other artistic endeavors that Platform takes on including strategizing marketing tactics for each event, posting for social media, and more! Outside of Platform, Rachel enjoys teaching dance, writing songs, being a content creator on Instagram and TikTok, and playing her ukulele.

[rachelannthomas.com](http://rachelannthomas.com)

## *The Teams*

### **Platform:**

Patrick Starner - *Artistic Director*

James Cullinane - *Director of Design*

Rachel Thomas - *Marketing Director*

Gabriel Krut - *Artistic Producer*

### **Avalanche Theatre:**

Alexander Utz - *Artistic Director*

Zoe Sjogerman - *Executive Director*

Nathaniel Viets-VanLier - *Vice President*

Sam Siner - *Treasurer*

### **Special Thanks:**

Ken Cole  
University of Notre Dame  
A Red Orchid Theatre  
Fine Arts Building

Owen Hickle-Edwards  
Studio Momentum  
Mary Townsend Cahoon

*and You!*