



**THE ENGLISH THEATRE
OF HAMBURG**

presents

LIZARD BOY

**Book, Music and Lyrics
by
Justin Huertas**

Directed by Paul Glaser

STUDY GUIDE

Premiere on 25th April 2024

Preview performances at reduced prices on 22nd, 23rd, and 24th April 2024

Tuesday – Saturday 19:30

selected Sundays 14:30

Wednesday/Friday 11:30 (Matinee performances weekly alternating)

THE ENGLISH THEATRE OF HAMBURG

Lerchenfeld 14
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TICKETS

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The English Theatre will premiere **LIZARD BOY** on 25 April 2024, with the usual preview performances at reduced prices on 22, 23 and 24 April. You can use the cover of this publication to advertise the play in your school or workplace. Bookings have already started. Teachers who wish to preview the play before bringing a group of students to the theatre should contact marketing@englishtheatre.de

About the Playwright

Justin Huertas is a Seattle-based, award-winning playwright, composer, lyricist, actor, and musician best known for his original musical **LIZARD BOY**. The author describes the musical as “a quirky and emotional comic book superhero journey told by a three-person folk-rock band.” Other fantasy musicals he has written include **THE LAST WORLD OCTOPUS WRESTLING CHAMPION**, **WE’VE BATTLED MONSTERS BEFORE** and **LYDIA AT THE TROLL**. Justin says that his “mission is to create hero stories that put historically marginalized humans at the center of the narrative. I want to show young Queer BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) that they are heroes and that their stories are worthy. I want to dismantle and decolonize American mythos one musical fairy tale at a time. I want to break up the noise of white supremacy with affirmations of Black, Brown, and Queer strength, love, and joy.”

About the Play

LIZARD BOY is a rock musical fantasy full of melodic and witty songs. Inspired by works such as X-Men and Spider-Man, it is very timely with a theme that counteracts bigotry and racism, and promotes self-acceptance and self-realization. The musical was recently a big hit at the Edinburgh Festival and in the US and UK. It follows the story of Trevor, an insecure young gay man looking for love who has lizard-like scales for skin due to a freak childhood incident. Because of his odd appearance he only ventures outside during the annual festival where everyone is dressed up as lizards. On the internet he meets Cary, a young man who accepts him as he is. The two friends encounter a mysterious female singer named Siren and are propelled into a mythological conflict in which a dragon-filled apocalypse threatens them and the entire world. Along the way, Trevor learns to accept himself as he is, discovers that he is actually beautiful and has supernatural powers. This empowering tale is told by just three actors who not only sing but play all the musical instruments themselves.



SUMMARY

The setting of the musical is today, in and around the Belltown neighborhood of Seattle, Washington.

The story centers around Trevor, an insecure young gay man looking for love. Unfortunately, he has lizard-like scales for skin due to a fateful event during childhood when Mount St. Helen's volcano erupted spewing out ash and a dragon. The dragon was killed by soldiers, but its blood splattered on Trevor causing his skin to turn green and scaly. As a result of looking different from everyone else, he has become a recluse, rarely venturing outside except for the annual festival occurring today where everyone is dressed up as lizards to celebrate the killing of the dragon. He spends most of his time in his apartment writing the lyrics for songs which he sings and plays on various instruments.

Trevor talks himself into signing up on a dating app in the hopes of finding a relationship. He is surprised to be immediately messaged by Cary, a young man who has just recently moved to Seattle and, like Trevor, is a song writer. When Cary enthusiastically invites Trevor to his apartment, Trevor panics, perplexed as to what to do. He puts down his phone and paces back and forth singing to himself.

TREVOR

WHAT DO YOU SAY? WHAT DO YOU WANT?
YOU WANNA LET SOMETHING HAPPEN TODAY---
BUT THEN NOT
YOU WANNA STAY INSIDE THIS ROOM WHERE
YOU'VE BEEN
YOU WANNA BEGIN

WHAT DO YOU SAY? YOU WANNA GO
THEN YOU SHOULD SAY OKAY YES AND THEN
SEND---BUT NO
IF ONLY ALL THESE OTHER PEOPLE COULD LIVE
ONE DAY IN YOUR SKIN...

YOU MIGHT MAKE ONE NEW FRIEND
OR THIS MIGHT BE THE BEGINNING OF THE END

He finally picks up his phone and texts the word "Yes" but immediately gets cold feet after sending the message. "Holy crap, what did I just do," he says.

He nevertheless pulls himself together and heads for Cary's apartment. Once there, Trevor is embarrassed by Cary aggressively flirting with him. Then, when Cary mistakenly assumes that Trevor's lizard-like scales are a part of his costume for the festival that day, Trevor is insulted and leaves the apartment, stopping just outside the door to check the bus schedule on his phone. Cary looks through the peephole in the door and sees that Trevor is still there. He grabs his guitar and improvises an amusing song which makes Trevor laugh and entices him back into the apartment.

CARY

Hey

TREVOR

(smiles) Hey.

CARY

Sorry about...all that.

TREVOR

Do you do that with a lot of guys?

CARY

Yeah... Let's start over. I'm your new friend Cary. You want a beer?

TREVOR

I would love a beer...friend.

In Cary's apartment, Trevor sees a magazine with the face of Siren (advertised as "The Girl of Your Dreams")



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on the cover. Reading further, he discovers that she is a rock singer and is playing a show in a couple of hours at a club called The Crocodile to celebrate the lizard festival going on in the city. Both Trevor and Cary are intrigued and decide to go to the show. A couple of hours later they are at The Crocodile watching Siren perform. They find her singing and piano playing mysterious, ferocious, mesmerizing.

SIREN

NOT MANY SEE WHAT WILL BECOME OF THEM
NOT MANY KNOW WHAT'S AT STAKE
TOO MANY STAY CONTENT INSIDE THEIR WALLS
AND THEN THE EARTH STARTS TO QUAKE
I USED TO BE CALM
BUT NOW THIS TICKING BOMB IS GONNA GO
OFF

Trevor is so impressed by Siren that he leaves Cary alone and follows her backstage after the show. She yells at him to get out, but after looking at him closely she kisses him hard, twice. "You're a terrible kisser," she says, and offers him a gummy worm. They discover that they have something in common in addition to writing songs. They were both involved in the dragon incident as children. She therefore believes that they both have supernatural powers. She is convinced that hundreds of dragons will soon destroy the city as payback for the single dragon that was killed years ago. She tries to persuade Trevor to help her defeat them. Trevor cannot accept her end-of-world theory and believes he would be powerless anyway against such great odds. He refuses to help Siren and starts to leave. She is furious and tries to stop him with her Siren Song. When that doesn't work, she becomes violent. He fights back and finally manages to break away from her.

Trevor finds Cary and apologizes for deserting him earlier. Cary complains that he felt abandoned by Trevor who simply left with no explanation. Trevor explains that, having lived a reclusive life for so long, he is not used to considering other people. Despite this, he claims he really likes Cary and sincerely wants to be his friend. Cary accepts Trevor's apology and they decide to continue their first date by walking in the park. During their

walk, the two young men sing the Woah Song in which they express the conflicting emotions they are feeling about each other. Should they continue with the relationship or put the brakes on?

TREVOR

THERE'S SOME INDICATION THAT I MIGHT BE LOS-
ING MYSELF
YOU'RE STRAPPING EXPLOSIVES TO ALL OF THE
WALLS THAT I BUILT
IMAGINING BACON AND WAFFLES IN TEN HOURS
TIME
AND I LIKE IT AND I DON'T MIND

WOAH, OH, UH OH, WOAH, OH
WOAH, OH, UH OH, WOAH, OH

CARY

THERE'S SOME INDICATION THAT YOU MIGHT BE
FALLING FOR ME
AND MAYBE I'M NUTS BUT I'M ALSO NOT TRYING
TO FLEE
I'M STEPPING A LITTLE BIT TOO CLOSE FOR COM-
FORT THIS TIME
AND I LIKE IT
AND I DON'T MIND

CARY and TREVOR

WOAH, OH
WOAH, OH, UH OH, WOAH, OH

Trevor kisses Cary. When Cary puts his hand on Trevor's spikey, lizard-like back, he scratches the tip of his finger which bleeds a bit. He almost faints at the sight of the blood. Trevor wrongly assumes that Cary must be disgusted by his physical appearance. Ashamed and angry, he accuses Cary of not really being serious about him. Cary replies that Trevor is mistaken and is simply projecting his own fears and insecurity on others. Trevor takes off for home determined never to venture outside again.



Cary, deflated, is left alone. When he turns to leave the park, he bumps into Siren. She immediately points an open palm at Cary, using her supernatural powers to control his movements and capture him. Cary panics. "How are you doing this? What are you?" he asks. "I'm the Girl of your Dreams," she replies.

On his way home, Trevor thinks over what has just happened. As he walks, he sings "Lizard Boy."

TREVOR

WOAH

I LET MYSELF BELIEVE THAT SOMETHING HAD BEGUN

WOAH

I LET MAYSELF BE TAKEN BY A DREAM BUT NOW IT'S TIME TO KISS THIS DREAM GOODBYE

IT ALWAYS ENDS THE SAME

I HAVE ALL THIS TO BLAME

BECAUSE I'M JUST A BOY WHO LOOKS LIKE A LIZARD...

But then he stops for a moment and reflects. He fears that he may lose Cary, the only person who accepts him as he is. He realizes that his own negative thoughts are handicapping him and resolves to change his behavior.

TREVOR

THE TRUTH IS I'M WHAT'S WRONG

I HAVE BEEN ALONG

BUT I AM WORTHY, I AM STRONG

AND I'LL CHANGE HOW THIS STORY GOES

IN THIS REFLECTION, I COULD CRY

BUT I WOULD NO LONGER KNOW WHY

COS THIS IS HOW I LOOK AND

I CAN'T HAVE ANOTHER NOSE--!

The acceptance of himself as he is, transforms Trevor. He suddenly discovers that he can move objects around with his mind without ever physically touching them. He feels powerful, like a superhero with supernatural powers.

In the meantime, Siren continues to maintain her control

over Cary in the park. She makes him text Trevor and lure him back into the park. She demands that Trevor use his supernatural powers to help her fight off the dragon apocalypse which she is convinced is imminent. But Trevor refuses again to assist her, still insisting that her dragon theory is nonsense. She is furious with Trevor. She becomes violent and threatens to kill Trevor if he doesn't help her. The two get into a deadly fight. Siren uses her supernatural control over Cary to make him fight Trevor as well. During their combat, however, Cary turns his knife on himself. Siren then grabs the knife and stabs Trevor who collapses. As he rises from the ground, a pair of giant wings sprout from Trevor's back. He employs his own supernatural power to knock Siren unconscious.

Trevor goes to the lifeless Cary. He kisses Cary's hand and then sings "I Was Gonna Call You Tomorrow."

TREVOR

I WAS GONNA WALK YOU BACK AND KISS YOU AT THE DOOR,

LINGER FOR A BIT TOO LONG AND GO

AND I WAS GONNA CALL YOU TOMORROW

I WAS GONNA TELL YOU HOW ALIVE YOU MADE ME FEEL

HOW YOU'RE THE FIRST TO SEE ME LIKE YOU DO

AND I WAS GONNA CALL YOU...

AND YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN SO SURE THAT I WAS THE ONE

TO DO ALL OF THE THINGS A BOYFRIEND DOES

BUT I WAS...

I WAS...

I WAS GONNA CALL YOU TOMORROW---

Cary shocks Trevor by bursting back to life. His wound has magically healed. Their joy, however, is shattered by Siren who has regained consciousness and is determined to continue the fight. Trevor realizes that she will never stop fighting until she gets what she wants from him. So, he stops her by lifting his open palm toward her, thereby sharing his supernatural power with her. She is confused.



SIREN

What are you doing?

TREVOR

What I should have. (he brings his palm down) There.
You have what you want.

SIREN

How do you know I won't use this Power to kill you?

TREVOR

Hope.

Trevor looks to Cary and takes his hand. They start to leave but then stop when they hear a faint rumble in the distance. When they hear growls and the flapping of wings, they know that Siren was right. The dragons are arriving. One of them lands in front of them breathing heavily. Cary wants to flee. Siren pleads with Trevor to use his powers to kill the dragon before it kills them. But Trevor is not so sure that is the dragon's intention. He slowly raises the palm of one hand toward the dragon. The sound of the dragon's heavy breathing gradually subsides.

BLACKOUT

Study Questions

1. Why does Trevor feel insecure about his appearance?
2. How does Trevor spend most of his time?
3. When does Trevor venture outside his apartment?
4. Whom does Trevor meet on the internet?
5. Why does Trevor leave Cary's apartment so soon after meeting him?
6. How does Cary entice Trevor back into his apartment?
7. Where do Trevor and Cary meet the rock singer Siren?
8. Why does Trevor follow Siren backstage after the show?
9. What do Siren and Trevor have in common?
10. Why is Siren so angry with Trevor?
11. Why does Trevor like Cary and want a relationship with him?
12. With what does Trevor overcome a dragon at the end of the musical?

Answer Key

1. Because he has lizard-like scales for skin. 2. Composing songs that he sings and plays on various instruments. 3. Only during the annual lizard festival in the city. 4. Cary. 5. Because Cary aggressively flirts with him and assumes that his lizard-like scales are part of his costume for the day. 6. He improvises a song that makes Trevor laugh. 7. They meet her at a club called The Crocodile. 8. Because he is very impressed with her performance. 9. They were both involved in the dragon incident in childhood. 10. Because he will not help her fight the dragons that she believes are coming to destroy the city. 11. Because Cary accepts him as he is. 12. With his supernatural power.