

purplecrayonplayers



The
Transition of
Doodle
Pequeño



Backstage
Guide



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ABOUT PURPLE CRAYON PLAYERS

The Purple Crayon Players is a student-run theatre company on the Northwestern University campus committed to creating high quality productions, events, and educational materials regarding all aspects of theatre for young audiences. Purple Crayon Players believes that audience of all ages can appreciate, be inspired by, and grow through exposure to this unique art form. *To learn more, please visit us online at purplecrayonplayers.com*



A NOTE FROM PURPLE CRAYON PLAYERS' *ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: Alison Mahoney*

Hello from Purple Crayon Players!

As Purple Crayon's artistic director, it is my honor to welcome you to our winter production of Gabriel Jason Dean's award-winning play *The Transition of Doodle Pequeño*.



Our 2013-2014 season aims to offer our audiences new perspectives, both by giving voice to new work and by presenting plays that challenge audiences to question their assumptions. *The Transition of Doodle Pequeño* urges us to question what it means to be "normal" in the hopes that we will find room in our hearts to embrace a much broader spectrum of people, particularly those who differ from us. Although this play asks a lot of its audiences, it gives them just as much in return. We have the privilege to witness the development of Doodle's friendship with Reno through a journey filled with trilingual goats, boys in dresses, and oranges the size of pumpkins. I hope you'll see some of yourself or your friends in these incredible characters, and enjoy laughing and learning with them on the wild ride that is *The Transition of Doodle Pequeño*.

Purple Crayon Players believes that theatre can expand minds and inspire change, and we'd be honored to have you join us for the rest of our season to continue this exciting conversation.

Warmly,

Alison Mahoney

Artistic Director, Purple Crayon Players



PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE: Gabriel Jason Dean

It delights my goaty-heart (and my human heart) so much that Purple Crayon and Northwestern University are bringing *The Transition of Doodle Pequeño* to life once again. And it delights me just as much that YOU are sitting in your seat about to go along for the ride they've prepared! The first time I experienced a production of this play was with a group of eight to twelve year olds in Austin, Texas. I was a big bundle of nerves. That November night, in the back row of the Oscar Brockett Theatre, as the lights went down, I'm sure a few more gray hairs blossomed on my temples. But when the peals of infectious laughter began, I relaxed and, I too, went along for the ride.

At the end of the play, we held a discussion and asked, "What is this play about?" Many eager hands shot up. *Friendship* was the popular answer. And I couldn't agree more. But, the friendship that blossoms between Doodle and Reno is sadly not always the reality for kids (or adults) with gender-identity questions. I don't want to oversimplify things and convey that everything "gets better" when gender-questioning kids find a friend. At the end of this play, I don't know what the future holds for Reno and Doodle, only that they are at the beginning of something new, something hopeful and promising. A transition.

In addition to being a celebration of the power of friendship, I hope *Doodle Pequeño* is a story that causes us to examine labels, to question the words we use so casually. Some words have the power to hurt and wound, but when examined with open hearts, those same words possess the ability to free us, to restore us, to make us the best versions of ourselves. The play is also about actions—how simple kindnesses bring us together—sharing an orange, teaching a song, attempting a new language, trying to understand someone instead of mocking him because he's different than you.

I hope the play will be as meaningful to you as it is to me. I'd like to dedicate it to the memory of my friend, Mark Edwards, my own Reno-like-the city-in-Nevada.

Gabriel Jason Dean

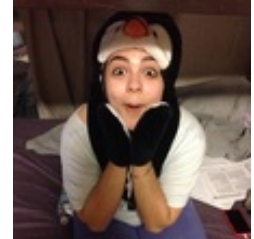


MEET THE CAST



Courtney Doyle (Marjoram) is a freshman Theatre Major from Louisville Kentucky. She is honored that a play as magical and important as Doodle is her first at NU. Many thanks to her whole family for making the trek up here from various parts of the country to support her, and the biggest thank you of all to the cast, stage management team, and especially Lindsay for giving her this opportunity and making her first performance experience at NU a truly unforgettable one. BAHFOOOGEEEE.

Isabella Gerasole (Valencia) feels like the luckiest girl in the world to be playing Valencia in *The Transition of Doodle Pequeño*. She is a freshman theatre major, and this is her Northwestern University debut! Izzy would like to thank her family and friends, the wonderful cast and crew of *Doodle*, and Valencia herself, who taught her about acceptance, friendship, and the beautiful language of Goat. Bahfoogee!



Weston Jacoby (Doodle) is excited to be performing in his debut role at Northwestern University as "Doodle" in *The Transition of Doodle Pequeño*. His eyebrows are his most prominent facial characteristic, and they help other people to remember who he is. Weston grew up in Wellesley, Massachusetts, and some of his favorite past roles include "Jack" in *Into the Woods* and "Billy Einhorn" in *The House of Blue Leaves*. Weston would like to thank all of his family and friends for being so supportive.

Quinn Ratan (Baumgartner) Quinn Rattan, a Junior studying Theatre and Political Science at Northwestern, is thrilled to be in this wonderful production of *Doodle Pequeño*. Previous credits include Man of La Mancha, A Midsummer Nights Dream, Othello, The Arabian Nights, and Wiley and the Hairy Man. He can be found performing stand up in Chicago and on campus. In addition to touring with Doodle in the Spring, he will be playing the Earl of Douglas in Shakespeare's Henry IV Part 1.



Clayton Shuttleworth (Toph) loves to tell stories. He is so excited to be a part of such an incredible team with a valuable message. He is a sophomore performance studies major, and his favorite color is orange.

Treyvon Thomas (Reno) is a freshman at Northwestern majoring in Theatre with a certificate in Musical Theatre. He is very excited to be making his theatrical debut in the Northwestern Community with Purple Crayon Players. Thanks to Lindsay and the rest of the team for this wonderful opportunity! "Be brave!"



REAL WORLD CONNECTION: *Bilingualism and Immigration*

Doodle Pequeño speaks both English and Spanish, because although the play takes place in the United States, Doodle's family is originally from Mexico. Immigration has played a large role in the formation of the United States and has been a political and social issue from the nation's founding. Conflict between Mexico and the United States regarding immigration is the most recent concern in US immigration history and culture. *The Transition of Doodle Pequeño* discusses the topic of immigration, especially when Doodle tells us that his father was sent back to Mexico because he didn't have the right papers. Some reasons for undocumented immigration into the US are economic factors, better educational opportunities, or to escape violence. Migrating to the US is difficult due to the long and complicated processes to attain citizenship. Nonetheless, immigrants make up a huge part of the United States, and many children grow up in households that speak languages other than just English.

Here are some Spanish Words in the Play:

Pagar los Gastos	Pay the Bills	Lo siento	I'm Sorry
Naranja Dulce	Sweet Orange	Ayudar	To Help
Cierre los ojos	Close your eyes	Trabajar	To Work
No, gracias	No, thank you	Cuernos	Horns
Cabra	Goat	Extraño	Weird

YOUR TURN: *Word Search*

Even though Doodle and Valencia speak both English and Spanish, sometimes they can't find a word in either language to describe what they mean, so Valencia speaks in Goat! Valencia uses the curse word *Bahfoogee* when something is lost or wrong. Find words in the word search that you have never seen before, like *Bahfoogee*, and give them a definition:

New Word:
What does it mean?

New Word:
What does it mean?

New Word:
What does it mean?



REAL WORLD CONNECTION: *Using the word “Gay”*

In the state of Illinois it is legal for a man and a woman to get married, it is legal for a woman and a woman to get married, and it is legal for a man and a man to get married. People who choose to marry someone of their same gender, usually identify as gay. However, this is not how the word is being used in the play. Let's take a look at how it is used in *The Transition of Doodle Pequeño at the end of the play*:

TOPH: How come you're so mean *all the time*?

MARJORAM: Keep talking and I'll show you mean!

TOPH: You're so gay!

MARJORAM: Toph, that's not...you shouldn't...

TOPH: Marj—wait. Marj—I didn't mean it! I don't even know what gay is.

MARJORAM: Toph...just don't say that word, OK?

TOPH: Is it a swear word or something?

MARJORAM: It's not a swear. It just hurts like one.

RENO: It doesn't have to hurt, Marj.

In this example Marjoram recognizes that Toph should not be using the word gay, but she doesn't know how to explain why not. A lot of times, when people use the word gay they are not trying to use it in a negative or hurtful way, but they simply don't know what it means. It is important to understand what you're saying, before you say it because you never know what the consequences of your words will be. The word gay is not a swear word, but when it is used in a disrespectful and unkind way it has the power to really hurt someone. In *The Transition of Doodle Pequeño* we really only see the word gay in a hurtful context, but as Reno reminds us – it doesn't have to hurt. When used in a respectful way, the word gay is something that can create a sense of pride or community. One of the challenges of growing up is learning how to find ways to treat the people around us with kindness and respect. Creating a safe environment begins with one simple act: thinking before you speak.



YOUR TURN! “Let’s Rephrase That” Activity

Below you will find four playful conversations between friends. This activity will help us explore alternatives to the word “gay”, because as we saw in the play, it is oftentimes used in inappropriate ways. Use the **SAY SOMETHING ORIGINAL** word-bank to help you!

1. Randy and Chris are window shopping at their favorite store. Randy points out a pair of sneakers that are orange with bright pink stripes and announces, “those sneakers are so...” **[SAY SOMETHING ORIGINAL]**

2. Karen’s 10th grade English teacher assigns the class to write an essay entitled “If I were a barnyard animal I’d be a...” During lunch Karen jokes with her friends that the assignment is so...” **[SAY SOMETHING ORIGINAL]**

3. During science class a bee flies through the window and startles Manuel, who swats at it in a flustered way and sidesteps away from it awkwardly. Manuel’s best friend kids, “that was so...” **[SAY SOMETHING ORIGINAL]**

4. While unpacking in their hotel room on the youth group overnight, Dawn’s friends observe that she has packed each and every one of her toiletry items in a separate Ziploc bag. The girls giggle and one teases good naturedly, “You are so...” **[SAY SOMETHING ORIGINAL]**

SAY SOMETHING ORIGINAL.

Instead of “that’s so gay”, try...

Ludicrous
Ridiculous
Foolish
Silly
Goofy
Laughable
Childish
Senseless
Pointless
Useless
Meaningless
Tired
Weak

Pathetic
Sad
Wretched
Feeble
Mindless
Tedious
Dull
Boring
Monotonous
Unfashionable
Outdated
Frustrating

Behind the
times
Outmoded
Passé
Weird
Wacky
Odd
Bizarre
Strange
Curious
Peculiar
Unusual

Unconventional
Outlandish
Eccentric
Quirky
Wild
Original
Annoying
maddening
Irritating
Grating
Bothersome
Way out



THEME: IMAGINARY FRIENDS

Valencia, Doodle Pequeño's imaginary goat, helps Doodle work through hard times. Doodle is shocked that Reno can also see his imaginary goat! At the end of the play Valencia leaves Doodle to help another kid in need of a friend. It is actually very common for children to have imaginary friends.

YOUR TURN: DOODLING WITH DOODLE

Have you ever had an imaginary friend? What did your imaginary friend look like? Use the space below to draw a picture of your imaginary friend:



YOUR TURN: CREATIVE WRITING ACTIVITY

Imaginary friends can be very helpful in solving problems. Write a letter to your imaginary friend, and then write a letter from the point of view of your imaginary friend back to yourself.

From: You *[explain a problem you are having]*

To: Imaginary Friend

From: Imaginary Friend *[give yourself advice on how to solve the problem]*

To: You



BLOOD ORANGE SORBET RECIPE

In the play, Baumgartner grows oranges as big as pumpkins. At the beginning Doodle thinks that these blood pumpkins belong to the troll. He cannot believe that they are oranges, because they are *rojo* and oranges are not red – they're called oranges, because they're orange. But Baumgartner introduces him to a new type of delicious orange. When in season, blood oranges can be bought at your local grocery store or farmers market. Baumgartner is right, they are delicious – eat them as a snack, or try making this delicious sorbet *at home!*

Blood Orange Sorbet

Ingredients

1/4 cup **cold water**

1 cup **granulated sugar**

2 cups **blood orange juice** (preferably freshly squeezed, from about 10 blood oranges)

1 tbsp **lemon juice**

DIRECTIONS

1. To make the blood orange sorbet, combine the water and sugar in a small heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat. Bring just to a boil, whisking to dissolve the sugar. Remove the pan from the heat and whisk in the blood orange juice and lemon juice. Pour the mixture into a shallow pan or bowl and refrigerate until completely chilled, 1 to 2 hours.

2. When the mixture is cold, pour it into an ice-cream maker and process according to the manufacturer's instructions. If a soft sorbet is desired, serve immediately. If a firmer sorbet is desired, transfer the sorbet to an airtight glass or plastic freezer container, cover tightly, and freeze until firm, at least 4 hours.



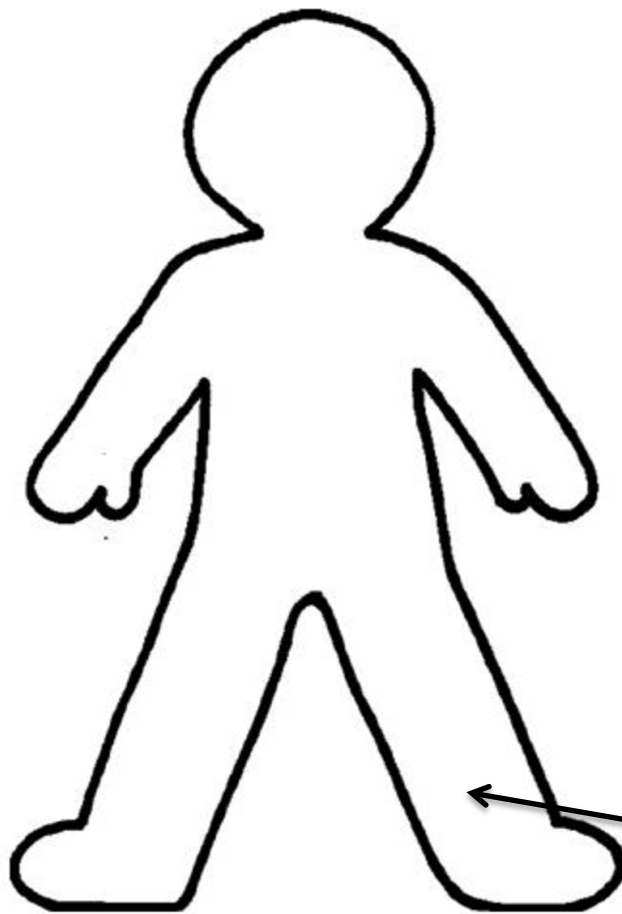
Character Development

Our Clothes Don't Say It All

The first time we meet Reno he is wearing a dress, which Doodle thinks is pretty weird because boys don't normally wear dresses. Clothes, and other external factors are often how we make our first impressions. But, as the play goes on we learn more about all the characters that we would have never known from our first impression of them. Choose one character to analyze closely from the play. In the box write what you knew about them at the beginning of the play, and then write what you know about them at the end of the play inside the outline of their body. Have even more fun by add colors, faces & clothing to the outline!

Character:

What we
know about
them at the
beginning of
the play



What we
know about
them at the
end of the
play



Interview with the Director: Lindsay Amer

What made you choose to direct this play?

Something I am interested in as an artist and a storyteller is the untold story and the characters who are rarely seen. This play is unlike any I have ever read for children. It tackles huge ideas like gender and immigration, but ultimately it is an incredibly fun and hilarious play about friendship. It's about two outcasts finding each other and discovering that their differences are what connect them.



What kinds of decisions do you have to make as a director?

My job as a director is to bring the words on the page to life. Because of this, a big part of my job is creating the visual picture of the play and crafting the story, helping the actors find their characters and their journeys as they encounter different obstacles. I make the artistic decisions that lead to the final production.

What does a typical day of rehearsal look like?

We will start with the actors leading warm ups, stretching, getting their voices ready, doing some tongue twisters. Then we will play a game or two and recite the Spanish alphabet, to get the bilingual aspect of the play in the actors heads. Then we jump straight into blocking, intimate scene work, or even a full run of the show.

What kind of work do you do outside of rehearsals?

My process is actually not very preparation-heavy. I really just look at the scenes that need work, decide how much time it will take to work through it in rehearsal, and divide up the time I have to focus on different scenes. Most of my preparation is figuring out how to schedule our time in a productive way. But before the rehearsal process started, my preparation was reading the script over and over, getting really familiar with the story and how it is structured so I know what I want to get out of the actors when we are in rehearsals.

What important thoughts/ideas do you want your audience to come away with?

That it is okay to be different. That it is okay for boys to wear dresses. Not everything is as it seems. Be brave and stand up for people who deserve it. I would love audience members to go to school and say hi to someone they've never talked to before, maybe they will make an unlikely friend.

What was the biggest challenge in directing this play?

Because of the issues discussed in the play and the particular problems these kids deal with, it is easy to get distracted by those issues instead of focusing on the comedy and friendships that keep the play centered and accessible.



Recommendations from Lucy Ahlborn to Further Explore the Themes of the Play

Hi! My name is Lucy, and I am both a member of Purple Crayon Players and a Sexual Health and Peer Educator at Northwestern! Here are some definitions of words that will be useful to know when exploring Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) themes.

Ally: a straight person who supports and stand up for the rights of gay people
Cross-dressing: wearing clothing that goes against what is "normally" thought of as "boy" or "girl" clothing, such as a boy wearing a dress.

Gay: a term used to describe men who like other men, and sometimes to describe women who like other women. Gay people work and live in our communities and many people have family members, neighbors, or friend who are gay.

Gender Identity: a term to describe whether a person feels like they are male or female (ie boy or girl) inside

Homophobia: fear, anger, and discomfort towards gay and queer people. People who are homophobic will sometimes say mean and hurtful things about gay people.

Queer: a broad term used to describe people who fall outside of gender "norms", including both gay and transgender people

Transgender: a term used to describe people whose "gender identity", or whether you think of yourself as male or female (i.e. boy or girl), is different than the way they look. Sometimes people who are born as boys feel like they should be girls, and sometime people born as girls feel like they should be boys.

If you'd like to learn more, check out our suggested reading list below or ask your parent or guardian visit your local library with you to find more books featuring LGBTQ themes!

And Tango Make Three by Peter Parnel and Justin Richardson
Pre-Kindergarten to 3rd Grade

King and King by Stern Nijland and Linda de Hann
Pre-Kindergarten to 3rd Grade

The Misfits by James Howe
5th Grade and Up

10,000 Dresses by Mark Ewert
Kindergarten – 2nd grade

Freakboy by Kristin Elizabeth Clark
7th Grade and Up

The Bermudez Triangle by Maureen Johnson
9th Grade and Up

My Princess Boy by Cheryl Kilodavis
Pre-Kindergarten – 4th grade



