

# The Defense

A podcast about women with unique powers to defend themselves



## Press Kit

MESSENGER THEATRE COMPANY

# The Defense

In **The Defense**, five women get together to support each other and bond over their shared powers to defend themselves. Are these powers magic or an evolutionary development to keep women safe from harm?

With *The Defense*, a hybrid of Theatre and Podcasting intermingle in a new audio drama from the creators of *The Dragoning*.

Recorded live with an audience at Jalopy Theatre in Brooklyn, *The Defense* will offer a glimpse behind the curtain of podcast creation. Audiences in the house will see all the re-dos and adjustments live and podcast audiences will hear the smooth edit.

In the World Premiere of *The Defense*, five women, with a unique ability to defend against predators, meet once a week to support each other. In this dramedy, each woman has a different power, some deadly, some comic, to keep her safe. Bria's defense stops hearts. Leila's defense drops objects on heads. Mari's defense turns predators to ash. Lori's defense makes men doll sized. Kacey keeps the group together. Episodes 1-4 will be recorded on January 21. Episodes 5 – 8 will be recorded on February 11. Episodes 9-12 will be recorded on March 10 and Episodes 13-16 will be recorded April 14.

This is Messenger Theatre Company's second audio drama podcast series and while it shares some themes with their first, it takes place in a whole different universe.

The podcast will launch on February 8<sup>th</sup>. New episodes will be uploaded on Thursdays. You'll be able to listen on [Apple](#), [Anchor](#), [Spotify](#), [Pocketcasts](#), [RadioPublic](#), [Overcast](#), [iHeartRadio](#), [Amazon Music](#), [fyd](#), [JioSavaan](#), [iVoox](#), [Bullhorn](#), [Tunein](#) and [Pandora](#). Or you can listen on our webpage.

The previous audio drama, *The Dragoning*, charted in the drama and fiction charts of Russia (#21), Sweden (#27), Germany (#36), Australia (#52), Denmark (#71), Canada (#74), New Zealand (#85), United States of America (#85), India (#111) and Great Britain (#127).

Transcripts of episodes will be available on our website.

## Creative Team

Emily Rainbow Davis  
Writer, Director



Emily Rainbow Davis is the Artistic Director of Messenger Theatre Company, for which she writes and directs. Some plays include: *Seeing Inside* (St. Ann's Warehouse), *Persephone*, *The Great God Money*, *Daphne* (Carnegie Mellon's radio series), *fig. a: The Heart*, *Mythellaneous*, *For the Fairest*, and *Daughters of Memory*. Emily completed her MFA in Dramatic Art at University of California, Davis and her BA at Sarah Lawrence College. *The Door Was Open*, was developed through a space grant at Flushing Town Hall. Emily blogs at *Songs for the Struggling Artist* (over 81,000 views) and *The Hamlet Project* (over 257,000 views) linked to by the New York Times. *Songs for the Struggling Artist* is also a podcast. *Ochre Park* was a semi-finalist and *Errors Before Errors* a finalist for Shakespeare's New Contemporaries. Emily wrote and directed our previous audio dramas, *The Dragoning* and *The Chip*.

Scott Ethier  
Composer



Scott Ethier is a composer, pianist, and musical omnivore. **Composer:** Commissions/premieres/workshops by Macon Symphony Orchestra, VocalEssence, Berklee College of Music, Playwrights Horizons, Two River Theatre, TheatreworksUSA, Queens Theatre, Theatreworks Silicon Valley, Kaufman Music Center, and La Mama E.T.C. among others. Music published by Boosey & Hawkes. **Fellowships/Awards:** Richard Rodgers Award - American Academy of Arts and Letters, Dramatists Guild Fellow, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, New Dramatists Composer-Librettist Workshop Studio, BMI Musical Theater Workshop, American Composers Forum's Continental Harmony Commission. **Pianist/accompanist/orchestrator:** Lincoln Center Theater, Kaufman Music Center, Mark Morris Dance Group, American Opera Project, and many others. **Member:** Dramatists Guild, A.F.M. Local 802. **Latest:** music for Messenger Theatre Company's [The Dragoning](#) and [The Chip](#), and for the documentary [The Arc of Oblivion](#) (Werner Herzog, Exec. Prod.). [www.scottethier.com](http://www.scottethier.com)



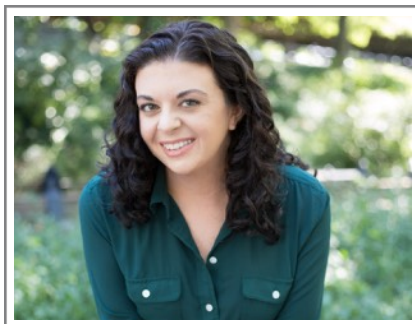
Matt Powell  
Sound Designer

Matt Powell is a podcast editor/audio engineer living in New Haven, CT. He holds a BM in Music-Business from the University of Nebraska at Kearney and a MFA in Theatrical Sound Design from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Matt has worked with Messenger Theatre Company on both seasons of *The Dragoning*, *The Chip*, and is looking forward to collaborating with everyone on *The Defense*.



Daniel Massey  
Sound Engineer

Daniel Massey is a New York based Sound Designer from Southern Illinois. Recently he has been working all across off-broadway. The last show he worked on was *Night of the Iguana* at the Signature Theatre Company in New York as the Associate Sound Designer. His upcoming project is working on *The Seven Year Disappear* with the New Group as Production Audio.



Angela Santillo  
Sound Assistant

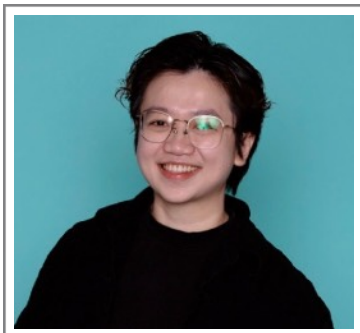
Angela Santillo's plays have been produced in New York City, San Francisco, Chicago, and Asheville. Recently her play *A Stupendous Illusion of Reality* was listed as a finalist for the Henley Rose Playwright Competition for Women and Athena Project's Play in Progress Series. Her work has been published by Smith and Krause and her nonfiction essays have appeared in *Exposition Review* and *Burningword Journal*. She produces, edits, and hosts the *And Then Suddenly* podcast and has taught documentary theater at Saint Mary's College. MFA: Sarah Lawrence College. [www.angelasantillo.com](http://www.angelasantillo.com)





Ella Lieberman  
Stage Manager

Ella Lieberman (she/they) originally hails from Portland, Oregon and received her BA in Theatre Production from Sarah Lawrence College, where she also received the Greta Minsky Prize for Stage Management. Favorite credits include *Much Ado About Nothing* (SPARC Theater) *Hilma* (The Tank), and *Almost Equal To* (Sarah Lawrence College). Instagram: @ella.lieberman



Melvin Yen  
Producer

Melvin Ningyao Yen (all pronouns!), a theater producer/director/writer/administrator, is renowned for her original production *AWAKE*, a testament to her diverse talents in the theater world. She holds an M.A. in Performing Arts Administration from NYU and has enriched various theatrical projects. Her rich experience includes stints at Playwrights Horizons, Broadway's TBD Theatricals, and Taiwan's U Theatre. Notable credits include “A Christmas Carol” (Broadway, 2022), “Regretfully, So the Birds Are” (Off-Broadway, 2023), and Taiwan's “River Journey” Melvin is the creative force behind A Stage Theatre, bringing innovative Mandarin stories to life. Discover her journey and creations on Instagram: @melvinfgood.

# Cast



**Marcella Adams**  
(Leila)

Marcella Adams is a New York City based actress and creative. Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Marcella has been featured onstage in many shows at the Cleveland Playhouse and locally throughout New York. She is currently a private educator and acting coach serving K-8 students and families and in her spare time, she also is an intuitive tarot reader. Marcella's most recent credits include "The Nobodies Who Were Everybody" with Theater in Asylum, "If Women Rose Rooted at the Tank", and various staged readings and educational theater shows. Instagram: @marcellaaa.xo



**Amber Jessie**  
(Mari)

Amber Jessie, a NYC-based actress, studied the Meisner technique at the William Esper Studio. Recently captivating audiences as Assata in *Anytown USofA*, she eagerly embraces the role of Mari in *The Defense*. Look forward to her upcoming performance as Serafina in the play *Rubber* at Theater for the New City this April. Amber brings dedication and versatility to each role, she is grateful for each and every opportunity.



**Cosmic Kitty**  
(Bria)

Born in New Zealand and raised in Singapore, Cosmic Kitty (C.K) is a hybrid multidisciplinary artist who creates music, filmic narratives, theatrical comedic absurdist plays, interactive games and performance art that challenges the inter-connectivity between lineage, knowledge and creation. Her work confronts capitalism and its hold on the subconscious in relation to building intimacy and vulnerability between people. Her chapbook *ATOA: A Meditative Poem Through the Alphabet* won the Southeast Review Editors Choice Chapbook Competition. She received an MFA in Writing from Pratt Institute and an MA in Community Development and Planning from Clark University where she also completed her B.A in Theatre Arts and Women and Gender Studies. Her folk synth album "Everything is Pencil" that critiques the fast-food-pharmaceutical-prison-plastic slave driven war machine is now available on Spotify under her folk music persona "Ana Not Ana" To engage with more of her work, please visit <https://linktr.ee/cosmickittyinspace>



**Kristen Vaughan**  
**(Kacey)**

Kristen is a three-time New York Innovative Theatre Awards nominee for Lead Actress, winning for Jane in *Benefactors* (Retro Productions). Among Kristen's other favorite roles; Brenda in *Alexandria* (Sanguine), Amelia Cooke in *The Honeycomb Trilogy* and Victoria Frankenstein in *Frankenstein Upstairs* (Gideon Productions), and Blanche DuBois in *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Bleecker Company). Film work includes *The Moosehead Over the Mantel* and *The Horror* at Gallery Kay. [www.kristenvaughan.com](http://www.kristenvaughan.com)



**Toni Watterson**  
**(Lori)**

Toni Watterson (Lori) graduated from Sarah Lawrence College in 2022 where she received a BA in Theater Arts and spent a semester abroad at the British American Drama Academy. Originally from Shaker Heights, Ohio, Toni moved to NYC in 2022. She is currently studying at The Barrow Group and is represented by Citizen Talent. Most recently, she has performed at The Secret Theatre in a production of Steve Martin's *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*.



**Jacki Jing**  
**(Credits)**

Now on two Netflix shows (*The Circle* and *Is She The Wolf?*) — Jacki Jing has become a popular influencer, content creator, actor and host with more than 500,000 followers

# Recording/Performance Schedule

January 21

Episodes 1-4

February 11

Episodes 5 – 8

March 10

Episodes 9-12

April 14

Episodes 13-16

## **Jalopy Theatre**

315 Columbia Street

Brooklyn, NY 11231

**New Episodes of The Defense appear on Thursdays**

For interview requests or more information, feel free to email Melvin Yen at [nyao.yen@gmail.com](mailto:nyao.yen@gmail.com)



# Press for our previous audio drama series

## The Dragoning

*The Dragoning* was featured on [The First Episode Of](#), a podcast about audio drama, hosted by W Keith Tims. Emily Rainbow Davis discusses the origins of the show, the Kavanaugh hearings and setting the table for art.

“It’s walking an interesting line between satire and speculative fiction. A lot of, indeed almost all of the new male fears in this world are women’s fears in our world. (Can you go home with this girl? What if she’s a dragon? How do you get away if it goes bad?)”

“All of which is to say, go listen to it. It’s a thinker.”

Read more of The Cambridge Geek’s review [here](#).

### The Dragoning

#### Customer Reviews

**5.0**

out of 5

25 Ratings



Seabeast171, 12/01/2020

**Yes! Hilarious!**

This is brilliant! I'm only on the first episode and I'm loving it! On point. Great concept!



nunnery man, 08/22/2020

**Love this!**

An amazing podcast!! Poignant and original



Pinklyrique, 05/19/2020

**Yes, just yes**

Do yourselves a favor and listen to this amazing thingamagic.



Link\_to\_Future, 05/17/2020

**Great Concept**

I started laughing out loud when my mom recommended this to me. Great concept and great performances. Can't wait to hear more!



UWS 191, 05/15/2020

**Very entertaining**

and yet incredibly timely and thought provoking! Can't wait for the next episodes!



Furious Snowcat, 05/14/2020

**The Dragoning is on fire!**

For all those women (and cool men) out there who have long fantasized about roasting the worlds' dude bro's, this series is for you!