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# Alone, Together

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“Commissioned and originally presented in June 2020 as part of the  
University of California, Santa Barbara, Department of Theater and Dance LAUNCH PAD Zoom  
Festival *Alone, Together*; Risa Brainin, Artistic Director.”

Thank you to all the playwrights; directors; actors; designers; dramaturgs; artistic, production and administrative folks; donors; and audiences who have contributed to making LAUNCH PAD a vibrant home for new plays.

## Foreword

On March 10, 2020, one week before the end of winter quarter, everyone in the University of California, Santa Barbara community received an email from Chancellor Henry Yang instructing us to move to online teaching as soon as possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The theatre/dance faculty immediately came together to figure out what to do to best serve the needs of our students. Final projects and upcoming productions had to be canceled, and students were heading home for the foreseeable future to take classes on Zoom from their childhood bedrooms! We were all thrown into a bit of chaos: how could we create a remote curriculum for all of our aspiring young artists?

It was at that point that my dear friend, festival co-director and head of the B.F.A. acting program, Annie Torsiglieri, had the vision to say: “Let’s commission playwrights to write monologues and plays that are meant to be performed on Zoom.” Well, I went a little crazy and invited every writer who has ever worked with our new play development program, LAUNCH PAD, over the past 15 years to participate. That was around 30 writers, and 24 answered the call! We gave the writers this prompt: *Alone, Together*. A total of 39 plays were written, 23 directors engaged, 61 actors cast, 5 stage managers, 3 designers, 3 dramaturgs and 10 staff assembled virtually, and, together, we created an all-day, live Zoom festival in four chapters on Saturday, June 6, 2020.

What we couldn’t anticipate is that not only would we be rehearsing during a global health pandemic but also in the midst of a revolution. George Floyd was murdered on Monday, May 25, and it reignited the cry against racism in our country. Our company was composed of students, faculty, staff and professional guest artists from across the country. Many were protesting by day and rehearsing by night. Even today, as I write this, the protests continue. It was important to both Annie and me that all of the artists involved in *Alone, Together* knew (and still know) that UCSB Department of Theater and Dance and LAUNCH PAD stand with our Black communities across the country on this day and every day. BLACK LIVES MATTER. We are with you.

As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote in a famous letter from the Birmingham jail in 1963: “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.” We, as artists, are committed to speaking out against injustice.

Xochitl Clare, one of our actors, announced *Alone, Together* on her Facebook page by quoting performance and installation artist Ester Hernandez who said, “We must continue to use our creative skills to give strength to our political, cultural and spiritual struggle.”

Xochitl then continued with her own thoughts: “‘Is making theatre really important now?’ my heart asks. As a young Black artist, struggling to grapple with our world, channeling my energy towards my craft has provided me some solace. Support me as I move forward in virtual solidarity with fellow theatre artists across the nation to do a very simple, yet important thing—to *come together*.” And that’s exactly what we did on 6/6/20. With an audience of 800 people over the course of the day, we all came together.

As theatre-makers, we communicate through the art we create. The 39 plays in this collection reflect many perspectives on life during the early days of the quarantine. They brilliantly offer moments of joy, pathos, insight, hope and comfort knowing we are never really alone.

—Risa Brainin  
Artistic Director, LAUNCH PAD

# Here Comes the Sun

By

ALISON TATLOCK

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(HERE COMES THE SUN)

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*Here Comes the Sun* was commissioned and originally presented in June 2020 as part of the University of California, Santa Barbara, Department of Theater and Dance LAUNCH PAD Zoom Festival *Alone, Together*; Risa Brainin, Artistic Director. It was directed by Irwin Appel.

CAST:

LAURAL ..... Annie Torsiglieri  
RICARDO.....Michael Bernard  
STEVEN ..... Jeff Mills  
DAN.....Daniel Stein  
DINA.....Jenna Scanlon  
DARRY ..... Brian Harwell  
EVIE ..... Catherine Ballantyne  
MYLA..... Hailey Turner  
TEDDY ..... Johnathan Buhrer  
ROBIN ..... Sabra Weber

AUTHOR’S NOTE

When the shelter-in-place first took effect, I was moved, delighted and sometimes irritated by the many earnest and uplifting musical collaborations shared around the globe via Zoom. What if my own well-meaning, talented, complicated circle came together to attempt such a heartfelt project? *Here Comes the Sun* offers one answer to that early quarantine question.

—Alison Tatlock

# Here Comes the Sun

## CHARACTERS

LAURAL (w): 40s-50s.

RICARDO (m): 40s-50s.

STEVEN (m), 30s-50s.

DAN (m): Older.

DINA (w): 30s-50s.

DARRY (e): 30s-50s.

TEDDY & MYLA (e): Teenage twins.

ROBIN (e): 30s-50s.

EVIE (w): Any age.

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*(A dark screen. Silence. Then, one square pops to life with a woman's face. She stares into the camera with a knowing smile. Her lips part, and she starts to sing, a cappella. Her voice is wonderful.)*

LAURAL. Little darlin', it's been a long, cold, lonely winter  
Little darlin', it feels like years since it's been here ...

*(A second square pops to life featuring a man playing a ukulele. LAURAL stops singing as RICARDO takes over.)*

RICARDO. Here comes the sun  
Here comes the sun

*(A third square pops on: STEVEN sits at a piano. He takes over for RICARDO.)*

STEVEN. And I say, It's all right ...

*(A fourth square appears. It's dark. It says the word: DAN. But no face appears.)*

*The others wait, deer in headlights. Silence. Then ... )*

DAN (*off screen*). Hello?

*(Beat.)* I'm having technical difficulties.

*(LAURAL looks into the camera, miffed.)*

LAURAL. Really? We've been through this—

STEVEN. You have to press “start video”—

DAN (*off screen*). I did!

RICARDO. No, you didn't—

DAN (*off screen*). Yes, I di—!

*(DAN's face pops to life on the screen.)*

DAN. Sorry.

LAURAL. Should we start again?

*(A fifth square pops on. A couple appears, singing.)*

DINA & DARRY. Sun, sun, sun ... here it comes!

*(DINA realizes no one else is singing.)*

DINA. What's happening?

DARRY. Sun, sun, sun—

*(Loud giggles. Then a sixth frame opens. Two teenagers appear—upside down. They sing poorly, through laughter.)*

TEDDY & MYLA. Sun, sun, sun, sun, sun ...

TEDDY. That's too many suns—

MYLA. Here they come!

TEDDY. You're high.

MYLA. Shut up—

TEDDY (*to camera*). She is.

MYLA. You're dead.

*(They tussle, still upside down.)*

LAURAL. Turn the computer around. Ricardo—?

*(RICARDO gets up and moves away from the screen. Chaos as the twins push/pull their laptop. RICARDO shouts.)*

RICARDO. Cut it out!

LAURAL. Guys, come on.

*(The twins' frame goes dark.)*