



For Immediate Release

August 8 – September 10, 2023

Bridge Street Theatre presents
The East Coast Premiere of

I AM BARBIE

by Walton Beacham

August 31 – September 10, 2023

For press passes and interview requests, email contact@bridgest.org.



Walton Beacham's I AM BARBIE
Artwork by Julie Chase

Walton Beacham's "I Am Barbie" Comes to Catskill

Looks like it's Barbie's world and all of us are just living in it! Piggybacking on the phenomenal success of Greta Gerwig's blockbuster BARBIE film, Bridge Street Theatre

is proud to present the East Coast premiere of Texas playwright Walton Beacham's "I Am Barbie" from August 31st through September 10th on the theatre's intimate "Priscilla" Mainstage, located at 44 West Bridge Street in Catskill, NY.

It's Barbie's 60th birthday (she still looks absolutely *fabulous*), and she celebrates by reminiscing with us about her innumerable careers, everyone's obsession with her chest, her on-again-off-again relationship with Ken, and with other characters from her life including GI Joe, She-Ra, Skipper, Annette Funicello, Britney Spears, and her creators Ruth Handler and Jack Ryan. Barbie's ascension as a cultural icon, symbol, and statement of feminine status, power, and vulnerability was probably one of the most unlikely developments of the second half of the 20th Century – and she's *still* going strong!

Originally premiered at Houston's Main Street Theatre back in 2011, the play was initially scheduled to be presented at BST during its 2016 Season, but the theatre was unable to find the right actors to fill the roles. Not a problem in 2023! Featured in the cast of *this* production are Olivia Sargent as Barbie, with Natalie Arneson, Amanda Ferguson, and Max Kantor portraying a host of other characters, both real and fictional. Rob Maitner directs, with sets and lighting design by John Sowle, costumes by Michelle Rogers, wigs and styling by Nellie Gamboa of Catskill's GOODHair W&MC, and artwork by Julie Chase. Production Stage Manager is Hannarose Manning.

"This will be only the second time the play has ever been presented, and we've been lucky enough to assemble an absolute dream team to bring it to our stage," says John Sowle, Bridge Street's Artistic and Managing Director. "For the past several years, director Rob Maitner has been producing, assembling, and performing in a massively popular cabaret series at 54 Below in Manhattan called 'Sondheim Unplugged', and he brings an ideal comic sensibility to this fiendishly tricky material. There's an almost John Waters-like combination of campiness, raucous hilarity, social critique, and sincere emotion in Walton's writing, and Rob and this cast absolutely nail it. You should definitely leave the kiddies at home for this one, though – we're recommending it for audiences 12 and over."

The theatre also plans some extra added attractions to go along with the play's presentation. Opening night Friday September 1st will be a Cosplay evening, with audience members encouraged to show up in costume (of course, if you want to show up in costume at ANY of the performances, no one's gonna stop you!). And throughout the run, there'll be a life-sized Barbie box in the theatre's lobby for patrons to step inside for a "Mint-in-Box" photograph of themselves. And keep your eye on the slideshow in the lobby beforehand and the projections onstage during the show. You may catch a glimpse of some of your friend's and neighbor's personal Barbie collections!

"I Am Barbie" will play for eight performances only, August 31st – September 10th. Thursday – Saturday performances begin at 7:30pm, with Sunday matinees at 2:00pm. Discounted advance tickets are available for \$28 online at bridgest.org/i-am-barbie-tickets/. Seats at the door are \$30. All tickets for patrons ages 18 and under are \$15.

Additionally, any remaining seats for the preview performance on Thursday evening August 31st and the Sunday afternoon matinee on September 3rd will be sold at the door on a “Pay What You Will” basis. Just show up before curtain time and pay whatever you feel you can afford for any seat that’s still available. Doors always open one-half hour before curtain time.

This delightful production promises to be an hysterically funny and surprisingly touching look at what it’s like being a Barbie Girl in a not-so-Barbie world. Come for the laughs, leave with a lump in your throat. Want more details? Just visit the theatre’s website at bridgest.org/i-am-barbie/.

Events at Bridge Street Theatre are supported in part by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Governor of New York and the New York State Legislature and by Public Funds from the Greene County Legislature. Bridge Street Theatre’s entire 2023 Season is sponsored by generous donations from Mary E. Barrett and Ted and Mary Neumann in memory of Helmut and Emily Neumann.



Performance Calendar:

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The East Coast Premiere of

I AM BARBIE

by Walton Beacham

with Olivia Sargent, Natalie Arneson, Amanda Ferguson, and Max Kantor

Directed by Rob Maitner

Set and Lighting Design by John Sowle

Costumes by Michelle Rogers

Wig Design and Styling by Nellie Gamboa

Production Stage Manager: Liz Powers

August 31 – September 10, 2023

Bridge Street Theatre’s “Priscilla” Mainstage

44 West Bridge Street, Catskill, NY

Thursday August 31 @ 7:30pm ("Pay What You Will" preview)

Friday September 1 @ 7:30pm (Opening & Cosplay Night)

Saturday September 2 @ 7:30pm

Sunday September 3 @ 2:00pm ("Pay What You Will" performance)

Thursday September 7 @ 7:30pm

Friday September 8 @ 7:30pm

Saturday September 9 @ 7:30pm

Sunday September 10 @ 2:00pm (Closing performance)

Tickets:

Advance tickets available at <https://bridgest.org/i-am-barbie-tickets/>

\$28 General Admission, 18 & under \$15

Tickets can also be purchased at the door prior to each performance (on a space available basis) for \$30, 18 & under \$15