



# The Female Role Model Project

The Female Role Model Project is a scientifically enhanced multimedia devised theatre piece created by an ensemble of female-identified artists of varying ages, races, ethnicities and sexualities. We are exploring representations of female role models and their evolution in a world confronting us with cataclysmic environmental change, cataclysmic political change, and the possibility of transforming our brains.



*"It's like a field trip through the inner workings of the female psyche. You Can Hear What She's Thinking – Literally"*

- TDF Stages

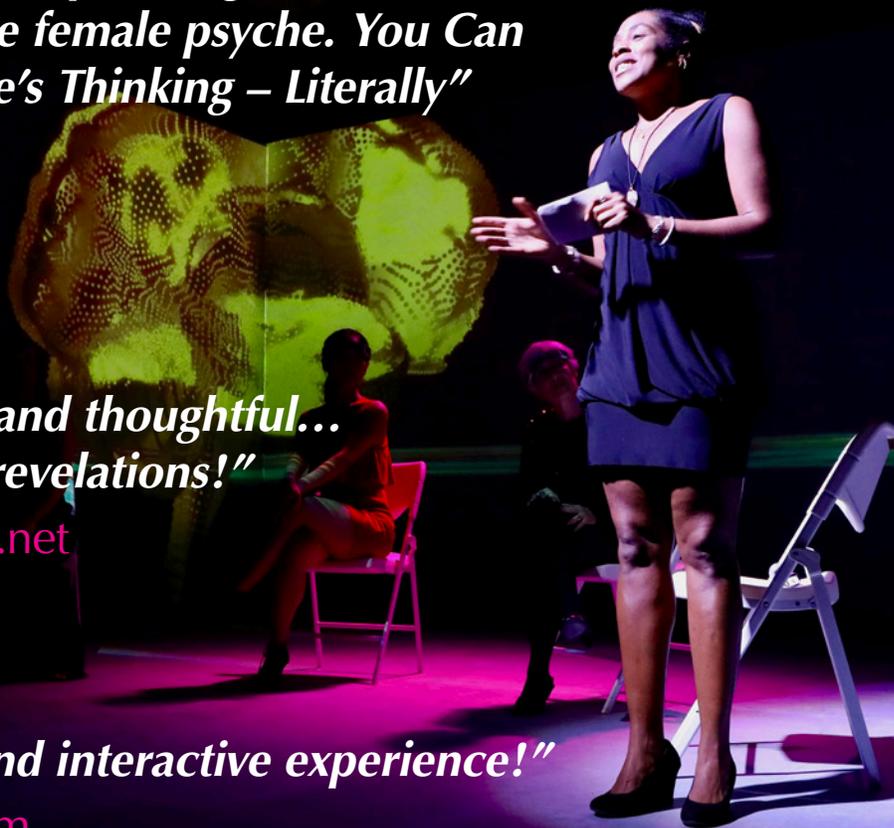
*"Lighthearted and thoughtful... some striking revelations!"*

- TheaterScene.net

★★★★

*"A one-of-a-kind interactive experience!"*

- Playstosee.com



*"Gender-and generation-transcending"*

- Lavender After Dark



*"Engaging, entertaining, and just plain cool"*

- NewYorkTheater

# Breasts Legs Beach Body



How to be an empowered woman today and succeed in love and work in spite of and/or while embracing female stereotypes? Who are our role models and how can we create new ones? We live in an exquisite age, full of challenges and possibilities, where everything is being remodeled and reinvented. New technologies have opened up new possibilities, which we want to welcome into our creative process. We want to observe the effect of gender stereotyping on neural functioning of performers and audience members through displays of live EEG brain activity. We would like to see how our actresses and audience members respond to different female stereotypes on the one hand, and to strong women braving new yet unpaved paths on the other. What is the impact on the brain and behavior when we watch and internalize such content? How can we venture into new territory, possibly create new neural pathways, and explore new gender possibilities in the brain? If we transform these patterns can they be transmitted to our daughters and successive generations of women? We have been collaborating with cognitive neuroscientists and a sound engineer/composer to create programs converting the brain activity into visual and audio design elements of the piece.



# Structure

What does replacing Michelle Obama in the White House with Melania Trump mean for millions of teenagers? A white woman is still only paid 79¢ to every dollar a man gets paid, debate to make abortion illegal is active again, not a single woman was on the senate committee to rewrite the health care law - and the bill they proposed would severely limit women's access to contraception and maternity care. The role of women in today's world and in tomorrow's America is more fascinating than ever. To what extent are women themselves party to creating these disturbing realities, and who are the role models that inspire us - that's what we seek to unveil.



## contact

**The Female Role Model Project**

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[femalerolemodelproject.com](http://femalerolemodelproject.com)

[facebook.com/femRoleModel/](https://facebook.com/femRoleModel/)

**read these articles online:**

**interview in ClydeFitch Report**

**Female Role Models: From the Stage to the Brain**

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## PRODUCTION HISTORY:

**The Female Role Model Project** was initially developed over a two-month period with producer/actor Tjaša Ferme, director Ana Margineanu and an ensemble of five female-identified artists. The group created the piece via improvisation, personal stories, physical and vocal exploration first with Pioneer Works's Lauren Silbert and Suzanne Dikker (NYU) and then CUNY's professor and cognitive neuroscientist Natalie Kacinik providing live scientific insights and running the neuroscientific demonstrations.

We completed an off Broadway run at 3LD-3-Legged Dog, the New York's prime Art and Technology Center and a month long run at Bedlam Theatre, as part of the Edinburgh Fringe 2019, the largest theatre festival in the world.

We performed at the first annual LGBTQ positive festival *Fearless* (NYC), created an immersive four hour journey at *Hotel New Work* (Theaterlab, NYC) and presented at *Intersections Symposium*, Biennial of Art and Technology (New London, CT).



# Creative Team:

Produced by **Transforma Theatre Inc.**

Founded by **Jacob Sebag, Natalie Kacinik, Tjaša Ferme**

Created by: **Tjaša Ferme**

Developed with and Directed by: **Ana Margineanu**

Devisers/Performers: **Meggan Dodd, Tjaša Ferme, Gina Simone Pemberton, Yiqing Zhao**

Composer and Sound Engineer: **Justin Mathews**

Video Design by **John J.A. Jannone**

Video Design Assistant: **Alexandria Grajales**

Light Design by **Ayumu Poe Saegusa (CMsl)**

Movement Designer **Joya Powell**

Cognitive Neuroscientist and Psychologist: **Natalie Kacinik**

Live Neuroscientific Interpretation by **Phoebe Chen**

Stage Manager: **Mariah Plante**

On-stage Techies: **Stephen Bryson, Maryam Choudhary**

Managing Director: **Jacob Sebag**

Director of Sciences: **Natalie Kacinik**

Artistic Director, President: **Tjaša Ferme**

Company Manager: **Jeremy Goren**

Marketing/Business Development Assistant: **Andrew Farina**

Casting Director: **Carly J. Bauer**

Brain Synchrony Visualization: **Suzanne Dikker & Matthias Oostrik** (Mutual Brainwaves Lab)

Photography by **Jaka Vinsek**

Web design by **Doug Barron**

Postcard design by **Yasmin Chavez**

Initial Science Adviser: **Lauren Silbert** (Pioneer Works)

TECH SPONSOR:

**EMOTIV**

**BRAINBIT**

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# The Company

**TJAŠA FERME** - **Creator-Producer-Performer** (SI, USA) Tjaša Ferme is a Slovenian National Film Award and Stane Sever classical stage award recipient. She is the creator of a short film *Ophelia's Flip* (Cannes Film Festival, 2012), a farce hit *Cocktales-Confessions* of a Nymphomaniac (Abingdon Theatre, Art Basel Miami), an interactive solo show, *Wild Child in the City*, and a new play "My Marlene". "Wild Child In The City" marks Ferme and Margineanu's first collaboration, it premiered in NYC (TheaterLab), filled houses on three European Tours (Italy, Austria, Bulgaria, Slovenia) and received an Audience Choice Award at 46th TSD-Week of Slovenian Drama. "Wild Child" won a grant from Trust for Mutual Understanding for a tour at ITI-UNESCO MonoAkt festival in Kosovo, winning a Special Jury Prize, and "Northern Meetings" in Siberia. In Dec 2016 Ferme created a devised theatre piece about migrations "West to West" through the lens of the current refugee crisis in coproduction of Sweden and Slovenia. Interview on Huffington Post Arts & Culture [huff.to/1DgoZ1Q](http://huff.to/1DgoZ1Q) New York Times review: [nyti.ms/1J9yBEh](http://nyti.ms/1J9yBEh) more on her website [tjasaferme.com](http://tjasaferme.com).

**ANA MARGINEANU** - **Director** - Called "one of the reigning queens of New York's highly intimate, one-shot-only, conceptual-based theater" by the NYC critic Randy Gener, Ana Margineanu is a Romanian-born theatre director based in New York and a co-founder of PopUP Theatrics, an acclaimed group developing and presenting site-specific and immersive work throughout the world. The trademarks of her directorial approach are close cooperation with the local communities who are audiences for her work, highly metaphoric visual style, and ability to draw raw, visceral performances from her actors. Ana's shows received numerous international awards, including: New York Innovation Theatre Award (The Window), Best Play Relationship Drama at London Fringe Awards (The Sunshine Play), Best Show at Romanian Drama Festival (Eighty nine), The Jury Award for Innovation at the Contemporary Drama Festival (Eighty Nine, Our Daily Hunger, Inside). She is a founding member of DramAcum (directors collective that supports young Romanian playwrights), an alumna of Lincoln Centers Directors Lab and founding member of PopUP Theatrics.

**NATALIE KACINIK** - **Cognitive Neuroscientist, Science Director of Transforma Theatre Inc.** Kacinik is an Associate Professor in Psychology at Brooklyn College and CUNY Graduate Center. She has Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the University of Western Ontario, and completed her Ph.D. at the University of California, Riverside. Prior to her position at Brooklyn College, she also worked as a postdoctoral researcher and lecturer at the University of California, Davis. Her research examines how the mind and brain process language, ranging from individual words, to sentences, discourse, and figurative expressions like metaphors, idioms, and irony. She is also particularly interested in studying how our conceptual representations and processes are grounded in perceptual, motor, and cultural experiences (i.e., embodied cognition). Her work has been published in the *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, *Neuropsychologia*, *Brain and Language*, *Psychological Science*, *Emotion*, *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, in addition to coverage by the media (New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, Scientific American, Huffington Post, Psychology Today).

**JUSTIN MATHEWS** - **Composer, Sound Engineer** - Justin Mathews is a guitarist, composer and engineer. His work straddles the pop, avant-garde and soul worlds, with a penchant for the fantastic, fabricated realities of science fiction, "street goth," Bill Laswell's "collision music" and Brian Eno's cerebral novelty. He attended New School University and resides in Manhattan. 5 highlight performances or tours: "Shake The Stars With Your Song" @ Whitney Museum, Tour with Jarina De Marco & Wyclef Jean, Tour with Sevyn Streeter,

Tour with Ravaughn. U.S. State Dept tour with Mariami in Tbilisi/Batumi, Georgia. Honor/Awards: NPR "Best Songs of 2013" for Jarina De Marco's "El Venao"

**MEGGAN DODD** - **Collaborator/Cast** - Having recently retired after 30 years working as a prosecutor with the Manhattan DA's Office, Meggan has now turned her full attention to her first love, theatre. She is actively using her CUNY MA in Applied Theatre to create theatre for social change. She first worked with Ana and Tjaša when she performed in PopUP Theatrics' "Broken City: Wall Street," and then again when she played the part of "Ms. Thing" in PopUP's "Inside." Meggan is also an ensemble member of and community liaison for Honest Accomplice Theatre, a company dedicated to creating and performing work on topics that are often silenced, through the lens of women and trans people. In addition, she writes, directs and devises with EPIC Players, a theatre company whose participants are primarily individuals with developmental disabilities.

**GINA SIMONE PEMBERTON** - **Collaborator/Cast** - NYC by way of St. Kitts/Nevis, has a degree in music education, and vocal performance, from Clarke University, in Dubuque Iowa. Her theater credits include; Off Broadway: *Users* ([imsoshot@gmail.com](mailto:imsoshot@gmail.com)), *Treasure Island the Musical* (Meg, pirate). Regional: *Priscilla Queen Of The Desert* (Diva), *Henry Box Brown* (Nancy), *Queen Kunka Bunka and the Rotten Royal Rascals* (Chatterina), *The Nun Before Christmas* (Sr. Wendy), *The Full Monty* (Estelle), *Little Shop Of Horrors* (Crystal), *High School Musical* (Taylor McKessie) *Oklahoma* (Vivian/ensemble), *Why Do Fools Fall In Love?* (Sally), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (ensemble), and *Grease* (ensemble). Gina is delighted to be a part of this amazing project, and honored to work with such an inspiring group of women. Thanks so much to MCS theater, and to my family, and close friends for their constant encouragement, and support.

**YIQING ZHAO** - **Collaborator/Cast** - is an actress/singer/writer who hails from Shanghai by way of Baltimore. She has performed with Single Carrot Theatre, Theatre for the New City, Rising Sun Performance Company, Merkin Concert Hall, Hudson Guild Theatre, Manhattan Repertory Theatre, etc. She recently played the female lead and sang the soundtrack for an award-winning film "The Collector," wrote and produced two shows, and is co-writing a musical. Yiqing is thrilled to be a part of this project and play her role models! Thanks a bunch to our amazing team, my parents, and my cat Dori. [www.yiqingzhao.com](http://www.yiqingzhao.com) Ins: @yiqingzhao1222

**JACQUES SEBAG** - **Managing Director** - is a one of the founding members of Transforma Theatre and the managing director. Jacob has been practicing law for thirty years. Prior to forming Jacob Sebag & Associates, P.C., Jacob was the founding partner of the Law Firm of Ochoa & Sebag, P.C. (1983-2005). He brings his entrepreneurial skills and business perspective to his U.S. based and international clients' real estate and corporate ventures. His fluency in five languages greatly enhances his ability to help his culturally diverse clients realize their goals. Jacob counsels his clients on all legal aspects of building and growing a business. In corporate matters, Jacob specializes in acquisitions and business development. In addition, Jacob is a licensed Real Estate Broker in New York and Florida. In 2005, Jacob portrayed the French Ambassador in Sidney Pollack's worldwide film release *The Interpreter*. He is also a proud member of SAG and AFTRA

## **The Female Role Model Project on the top 23 shows not to miss this Edinburgh Fringe**

***“We pick the best shows from the thousands taking place over next 25 days”***

- inews

***“Original, thought-provoking, ambitious, funny, absorbing, interactive -  
GROUND BREAKING WORK...”***

Kate Saffin, Fringe Review

***“Exceptional... skilled, engaging, experimental and scientific...”***

- Archanaa Seker, F Word Magazine

***“The most conceptually interesting and out there idea of this year’s Fringe.”***

- Esme Leitch, The Feminist Fringe

***“Each element was filled with intrigue and delight.”***

- Carmina Masoliver, Norwich Radical

***“What Transforma Theatre are doing is the vanguard of performing arts.”***

- Marianna Meloni, Everything Theatre

***“...energetic, tightly knit and highly enjoyable ensemble performance.”***

Jane Prinsley, Broadway Baby

***“...profound and delicate—the audience can’t help but become involved.”***

- Josephine Balfour-Oatts, A Younger Theatre

# The Female Role Model Project receives an Honorable mention in Creativity Category next to Bill Gates Foundation



FASTCOMPANY  
WORLD  
CHANGING  
IDEAS 2019

## AUDIENCE INTERVIEWS after the first phase of performances

Some interviews can be seen here:

1. <https://youtu.be/qlullK52SP8>
2. <https://youtu.be/cOH1HGCjAEM>
3. <https://youtu.be/mhlKnn6L0Zc>
4. <https://youtu.be/Ceohj485k5U>
5. <https://youtu.be/i1JTmP9uY8l>

# Transforma Theatre:



## Science. Consciousness. Ritual

Transforma Theatre Inc. is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to creating interactive theatre experiences at the convergence of science, consciousness and ritual.



## Who are we?

Transforma Theatre is a center where art tackles how scientific ideas and metaphysical knowledge about consciousness overlap. We explore the nature of existence and consciousness through science and shamanic rituals and express them through the creation of multimedia performances. We are pioneering a new form of theatrical expression and developing a close community of artists and scientists instilled with the freedom of thinking and creating in alternative ways. We engage in practices such as yoga, mindfulness, meditation, ceremonies and shamanic journeying and live one with nature to elevate our perception and knowledge about humans, universe and how it all works.

## Why are we here?

Our way of living, communicating, and computing has changed drastically in the last decade with possibilities to transform one's brain and modify our senses. Our goal is to align forms of theater with current scientific research in neuroscience, artificial intelligence, epigenetics, and communicate this knowledge of technological possibilities to our audiences in a new pioneering way of storytelling. We are seeking to expand the understanding of consciousness and share this enlightenment through art.

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