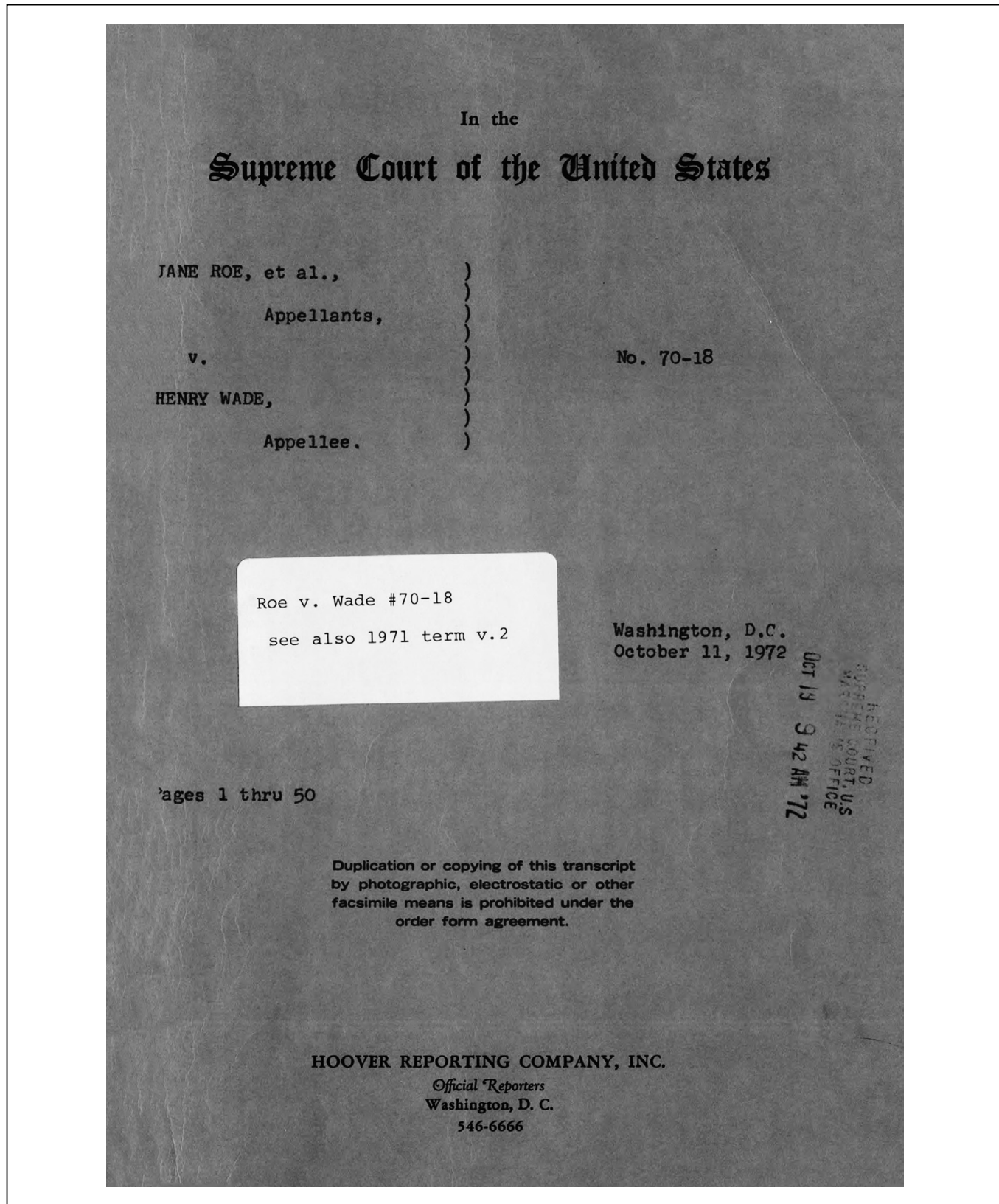


playbill

V ACT VI VII VIII



No piece of cultural expression has been permitted into American public letters that unites us in thinking about American women as flawed, humane heroes engaged in gargantuan tasks towards autonomy and agency.'

Refusing to shy away from the contradictory and controversial, this play is an attempt to stage an Epic—a format of theatre that emphasises the audience's perspective through a variety of techniques aimed at prompting their engagement—that rewrites this theatrical wrong. Such an approach speaks to Schulman's larger body of work, in which she oscillates between playwright, screenwriter, novelist, non-fiction writer, activist and AIDS historian, inhabiting the nuances of the sociopolitical movements she addresses and the interpersonally gritty aspects of her characters lives.

Staged over the course of one night, Act VI takes the form of a performative reading, this time under the dramaturgical direction of theatre and performance maker Szymon Adamczak. Bringing it to life at Torpedo Theatre is a cast of six performers including actor Coen Bril, artist and activist Devika Chotoe, dancer and choreographer Thalia Livingstone, writer and DJ Emma van Meijeren, artist Yulia Ratman and artist Hester Scheurwater. While the American context underpinning the play remains central, this interdisciplinary, intergenerational and international cast of performers locates the struggle for legal abortion firmly in the present—a necessary and destabilising reality, given the fight for reproductive rights currently and continually being waged across the world.

PROGRAMME

8pm
Introduction to Sarah Schulman

8.10pm
Performative reading
A Mirror is Not a Window:
Roe Versus Wade
2013/2023
Approximately 120min

Performed by
Coen Bril, Devika Chotoe,
Thalia Livingstone,
Emma van Meijeren,
Yulia Ratman and Ira Brand

10.10pm—Drinks

IMAGE Cover of the court transcription of Roe v. Wade, Hoover Reporting Company, Washington D.C., 1972

Unfolding hand-in-hand with the plots of their lives, Sarah Schulman's play A Mirror is Not a Window: Roe Versus Wade tells the story of two twenty-seven-year-old women from different sides of the railroad tracks in Texas, who represented the future of all American women before the Supreme Court in 1972, and who won the right to legal abortion in the United States following the ruling in 1973. One person

—a poor lesbian, addict, sex worker—went on to become a born-again Christian and the other—a middle-class married, heterosexual lawyer—went on to spend her life trying to defend her victory against constant attacks and givebacks, paying a personal price. These two women, on their own individual journeys, came to represent a profound division in American life that may never be healed.

In an introductory note to the play, Schulman writes, 'Historically, plays about women are not allowed to be Epic. Rarely are two women on stage together who are not related, nor love rivals. With the exception of queens—and even often for them—women on stage do not change history... There has never been a major theatrical work, novel or film about the struggle for women's rights.

COLOPHON Torpedo Theater is a long-running, thirty-seat theatre in the heart of Amsterdam's city centre. Originally founded by *Het Parool*, a Dutch national newspaper, the theatre has been committed to the spoken, written and performed word from the beginning. playbill is an event-based project invested in the presentation of experimental language and text-based artistic works on the (small) stage. It is curated by Martha Jager and Isabelle Sully, and designed by Maud Vervenne. playbill: ACT VI has been made possible thanks to the Amsterdams Fonds voor de Kunst, Gemeente Amsterdam Stadsdeel Centrum and the Netherland-America Foundation. This playbill has been printed by Terry Bleu, Amsterdam.