Wedding Band
A Love/Hate Story in Black and White
By Alice Childress

Directed by
Cecilie Keenan

Assistant Director
Steven Cooper

Stage Manager
Madeleine Lyons

Assistant Stage Manager
Christian Helem

Scenic Design
Kevin Rolfs

Costume Design
Zach Wagner

Lighting Design
E.J. Jackson

Sound Design
Zack Berinstein

Original Music
Joseph Cerqua

GAYLORD & DOROTHY DONNELLEY FOUNDATION

DRIEHAUS FOUNDATION
CAST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Julia Augustine ................................................................. Raina Lynn
Fanny Johnson ................................................................ Susan Anderson
Mattie ................................................................................ Myesha-Tiara
Lula Green ......................................................................... Lisa McConnell
Teeta .................................................................................. Maya Hooks
Nelson Green ...................................................................... Kevin Patterson
The Bell Man ......................................................................... Reid Coker+
Princess ............................................................................ Madison Murphy
Herman .............................................................................. Scott Westerman+
Annabelle ............................................................................ Laura Coleman+
Herman's Mother ................................................................ Donna McGough

+ denotes Artistic Home ensemble member

Understudies: Anah Ambuchi (Teeta), Lindsey Becker (Annabelle), Christopher Clowers (Bell Man), Cynthia Hines (Lula), Egypt Marie (Fanny), Noah Robinson (Nelson), Molly Southgate (Princess), Nikkia Tyler (Julia), Jamise Wright (Mattie), Todd Wojcik (Herman)

TIME

Summer 1918...Saturday morning. A city by the sea... South Carolina, U.S.A.

There will be one 10 minute intermission

SPECIAL THANKS

Whayne Braswell, Mary Badger, Rick Paul, Weese Langley Weese, Luther Goines, Myesha-Tiara, Iris Sowlat, Destiny Mack, Claire Sangster, Jeanne Oost, Kristen Perry

PRODUCTION STAFF

Director ............................................................................ Cecilie Keenan
Assistant Director ............................................................. Steven Cooper
Stage Manager .................................................................. Madeleine Lyons
Assistant Stage Manager .................................................. Christian Helem
Scenic and Properties Designer ......................................... Kevin Rolfs
Costume Designer ............................................................ Zach Wagner
Lighting Designer ............................................................. Eurell (E.J.) Jackson
Sound Designer ................................................................. Zack Berinstein
Composer ......................................................................... Joseph Cerqua
Technical Director ........................................................... Alex Hutson
Movement Coach ............................................................. Diana Campos
Scenic Painter .................................................................... Bruce Wilson
Master Electrician .............................................................. Darryl Turner
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The Artistic Home’s mission is to create theatre and film that explores and celebrates the truth within us. Through extraordinary acting, we seek to ignite an audience’s imagination, to reach deep into the primal to send tremors through the intellect, to give birth to unforgettable moments by working in an intimate space, to touch audiences who are increasingly distanced from human contact. We readdress the classics and explore new works with passion. We give artists a home where they can shape, develop, and strengthen their artistic voice.

ENSEMBLE

Devon Carson, Reid Coker, Laura Coleman, Kristin Collins, Brookelyn Hebert, Julian Hester, Annie Hogan, John LaFlamboy, John Mossman, Tim Musachio, Frank Nall, Kathy Scambiatterra, David Vogel, Scott Westerman

THE ARTISTIC HOME STAFF

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Dale Calandra, Kristin Collins, John Mossman, Kathy Scambiatterra, Lee Stark, Mary Ann Thebus, Patrick Thornton, Scott Westerman

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CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Susan Anderson
(Fanny Johnson) would like to offer deepest thanks to Artistic Home for the invitation to be a part of this Childress classic. Most recently she reprised the role of Cassandra in Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike at Steel Beam Theater having first performed it with Artists' Ensemble in Rockford. At AE, she also played in Crumbs from The Table of Joy and will appear in Best of Enemies in March 2018. Previous Chicago productions include work with Bailiwick Rep and Chicago Dramatists Workshop with regional credits at Olde Globe Theatre, Syracuse Stage, Cleveland Playhouse, Goodman Theatre and Northlight. To Paul, Miles and Abby - you are my heart. Thanks for letting me play. To those seeing and being seen tonight: May this story of pain, laughter and wounds from so long ago move us toward greater wholeness today.

Reid Coker
+(The Bell Man) is a proud ensemble member of The Artistic Home. AH credits include The Drunkard from The Time of Your Life, Dubois/Basque from The School For Lies, also Rainbow Sprinkles and Greyold from 2015/16’s Cut to the Chase one-act play festivals. Other theater credits include stints at Theater Oobleck, The Annoyance Theater, Second City TC, Trap Door, Azusa Productions, McCleod Theater and The Journeysmen. Also a musician/songwriter, Reid performs under his own name and with Billy Blake and the Vagabonds, and has played with other local groups like The Bitter Tears, Califone, Roommate, The Pillowhammer and Fruit Bats. Film credits include All My Friends Are Funeral Singers, an Official Selection of the Sundance Film Festival (2011). Thanks to Kathy, Cecilie, Anne, Woody and Mary Ann Thebus.

Laura Coleman+
(Annabelle) This is Laura’s first show on the Artistic Home stage since rejoining the ensemble. It’s very exciting! Most recently, she appeared as Frank in Lady/X (Hell in a Handbag Productions) and as Francesca in Nameless Mountains (Accomplice Theater). On the Artistic Home stage she has appeared as Jen in You Being a Ghost (Cut to the Chase 2016), Meredith in Five Women Wearing the Same Dress (Jeff Nominated for Best Ensemble/Equity Wing), Felice in After the Fall, and was understudy and performed as Carol Cutrere in Orpheus Descending. Other favorite roles include Beth in Dinner with Friends (Oil Lamp Theater), Janet in Dan Savage’s Miracle! (Hell in a Handbag Productions) and Linda in Hey! Dancin! Hey! Musical! (The Factory Theater). So much love and thanks to the Artistic Homies, to Kathy and Cecilie for this amazing
CAST BIOGRAPHIES CONT.

opportunity, and to her incomparable husband Brian, and her two gorgeous girls, Peas and Popcorn.

**Maya Hooks** (Teeta), is 10 and is very excited about her first professional appearance in *Wedding Band*. Maya has been actively involved in community theater at the Beverly Arts Center, Salvation Army Kroc Center, and lastly Bam Theater in Hinsdale, Il. She has held narrator, lead, featured dancer, and all forms of ensemble roles in productions such as *Annie*, *Grease*, *Charlie Brown*, *The Help*, and *The Grinch that Stole Christmas* since the age of 6. Maya is continuing to study acting, dance, on camera television and film at Second City, the Green room Chicago, and Premier One Dance Academy. In addition to acting and dance, Maya loves competitive swimming and can be found at her neighborhood gymnastics center tumbling and working on floor exercises. Maya would like to thank her parents and family members for their unconditional love and support. Also, she would like to thank her cast members for taking her under their wing.

**Lisa McConnell** (Lula Green) is a New York transplant and has studied theater at Acting Studio Chicago, improvisation at IO and voice technique at Sherwood Music Academy. She made her stage debut, as Oprah, in A Parody Play: *Orange is the New Comeback* at the Heartland Studio. The Chicago Reader declared Lisa’s performance as Dr. Livingstone in *Agnes of God* “brilliant.” And she has appeared in several independent films, *Chicago P.D.* and a national TV commercial. Lisa is so very honored to be cast as Lula Green in Alice Childress’ still relevant play *Wedding Band: A Love/Hate Story in Black and White*. Lisa lives in Hyde Park with her teenage son. [www.redemptionwaymovie.com](http://www.redemptionwaymovie.com) | [https://www.backstage.com/lisanixonmcconnell](https://www.backstage.com/lisanixonmcconnell) | [https://vimeo.com/lisanmcconnell](https://vimeo.com/lisanmcconnell)

**Donna McGough** (Herman’s Mother) makes her debut with the talented folk at the Artistic Home. She was last seen in Steep Theatre’s *Earthquakes in London*. Other Chicago credits include The Gift Theatre: *David Rabe’s Good for Otto* (world premier), *Thinner Than Water*, and *Absolute Hell*; Steppenwolf: *The Time of Your Life*, *Middletown*; The Hypocrites: *Endgame*, *Coriolanus*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Happy Days*, and many others. She has also worked with Griffin, Eclipse, TimeLine, Raven, and the late lamented Mary Arrchie Theatre where she was seen in *The Freedom of the City*. Donna is a three-time Joseph Jefferson recipient for *Actress in a Principal Role*.

**Madison Murphy** (Princess) is very excited to be joining the talented ensemble at The Artistic Home. Madison is nine years old and lives on the

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**Raina Lynn** (Julia Augustine) is so excited to make her Artistic Home Theatre debut. She has performed in a variety of plays in the Chicagoland area including the Jeff Recommended *Good People* (Buffalo Theatre Ensemble), *Loose Knit* (The Public House Theatre), *Vanya Sonia Masha and Spike* (Triton College), *Rituals* and *Sunday on the Rocks* (Theatre of Color), *Two Rooms* (Pandemonium Theatre) and more. When not on stage, Raina enjoys working on film both in front and behind the camera. As always, she is thankful to God for the gift, and her Mom and Bruce for their loving support. For more information visit [www.rainalynn.com](http://www.rainalynn.com).
south side of Chicago. She enjoys singing, acting and performing in musicals. Madison has attended Broadway classes, takes vocal lessons and is a part of HSA drama club. Madison would like to thank the director Cecile Keenan for her guidance and her mom for her support and chauffeuring.

**Myesha-Tiara** (Mattie) is a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. This is her first production with Artistic Home Theatre and she is beyond grateful for the opportunity! She received her B.S. in Theatre with a concentration in Performance and Directing from Northwestern State University. A few of her credits include: 12 Years a Slave, Doubt (Mrs. Muller), The Trip to Bountiful (Carrie Watts), Indigo Blues (Muriel), The Miracle Worker (Viney), Odd Couple (Florence Unger), A Raisin In The Sun (Beneatha), For Colored Girls (Director) and she is an original cast member of A Work In Progress (Jurnee). She would like to thank God, her agents at NV Talent, and her friends and family for their love and support. To learn more: myesha-tiara.com.

**Kevin Patterson** (Nelson Green) is very excited to be making his first appearance here at The Artistic Home. His previous credits include Not About Nightingales and the Jeff award winning (Best Ensemble) production of Direct from Death Row: The Scottsboro Boys at Raven Theatre. Other credits of his include, Rutherford Travels (Pegasus Theatre) and The Marvin Gaye Story (Black Ensemble Theatre). Kevin is attending UIC, where he is pursuing his BA in acting. He is represented by Big Mouth Talent.

**Scott Westerman +** (Herman) was last seen on this stage playing Joe in The Time Of Your Life. Also for The Artistic Home, he directed Interrogation and A Question Of Valor, both by Scott Woldman, as well as Shakespeare’s Macbeth. Other acting credits include work with Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, The Shakespeare Theatre Company, Ford’s, Everyman, the Warehouse, the Barter, Northlight Theatre, Chicago Dramatists, Strawdog, Lifeline, Stage Left, Apple Tree, A Crew of Patches, Mary Arrchie, Festival Theatre of Oak Park, and Reverie. Film credits include Machine Gun Preacher and Prison Break. Scott has an MFA in Classical Acting from The Shakespeare Theatre Company’s Academy for Classical Acting at The George Washington University. Love to Abby & Milo. ScottWesterman.org
PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

Zack Berinstein (Sound Designer) is a Chicago-based sound designer, audio engineer, and composer who is excited to be back at the Artistic Home! In addition to recording and producing artists in the Midwest, other recent sound design credits include Hot Mikado and La Cage Aux Folles with Skylight Music Theatre, Souvenir with Milwaukee Rep, Forty Two Stories with City Lit Theater, Little Flower of East Orange with Eclipse Theatre, and The Time of Your Life at The Artistic Home. You can find him on the internet at ZackBear.com.

Joe Cerqua (Composition) is a freelance composer, producer, vocalist and sound designer. He is thrilled to be working with Kathy and The Artistic Home again after composing music for The School for Lies and The Time of Our Lives. He has composed music and/or designed sound for over 250 productions in Chicago, nationally, and internationally. Recent Projects include original music and sound design for The Violet Hour at Renaissance Theatre, The Glass Menagerie and The Foreigner at Milwaukee Rep, Tom Jones at Actors Theatre of Louisville, The Unexpected Man at American Players Theatre, The Road to Mullingar at The Clarence Brown Theater and Forward Theater Company. Joe is the Producing Director/Composer in residence for the Cerqua Rivera Dance Theatre, a critically acclaimed 13-piece jazz orchestra and 10-member dance company. He is the Director of Production for the Music Department at Columbia College Chicago. Future projects include concerts with Cerqua Rivera, original music and sound design for One House Over at Milwaukee Rep, The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane at First Stage, Alabama Story at the Clarence Brown Theater, and The I and You at Forward Theatre.

Alice Childress (Playwright), actress, novelist, and playwright, was born in Charleston, South Carolina, on October 12, 1912. Childress moved to Harlem when she was five and was raised by her grandmother, who encouraged her to write. At weekly church events, young Childress heard moving stories of personal and family struggles, which inspired her with a love of storytelling and served as fodder for stories about the plight of urban blacks. Childress became passionately interested in theater and attended the American Negro Theater School of Drama and Stagecraft. In 1944, she made her debut in ANNA LUCASTA, which became the longest running all-black play on Broadway. She wrote, directed, and starred in her first play in 1949, and in 1950, encouraged by actor and activist Paul Robeson, she founded her own theater. She wrote more than a dozen plays, including TROUBLE IN MIND. The play was scheduled to move to Broadway in 1957, but Childress objected to changes requested in the script and canceled the production. Her 1966 play, WEDDING BAND, was produced again in 1972 by Joe Papp’s Public Theatre. Childress also wrote adult and children’s novels. Like her plays, they dealt with the pressures on urban blacks. Her young-adult novel A HERO AIN’T NOTHING BUT A SANDWICH (1973) recounts the rehabilitation of a 13-year-old heroin addict. The book became a bestseller and a movie in 1977. Her 1979 novel, A SHORT WALK, was nominated for a Pulitzer. Childress also collaborated with her husband, composer Nathan Woodard, on musical plays. She died in 1994 at age 81.

Steven Cooper (Assistant Director), born and raised on the west-side of Chicago, attended the Chicago High School for the Arts as a theater major. He’s loved acting all his life, and performed in his first play when he was in kindergarten; a play written by his kindergarten class about a big chain restaurant that had employees with superpowers. He went on to do multiple acting programs including Neurokitchen Arts Collective, where he got his first lead role. He has recently ventured into the medium of directing, by directing a movie called “Bound: A Chicago Story” written by his best friend Justin Gunn and himself. He plans on continuing his career in acting, as well as others forms of art like rapping, writing, directing and etc. Special thanks to “My family, friends, Cecilie, Scott, Kathy, the Artistic Home, and my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!”
**Christian Helem** (Assistant Stage Manager) is a director, actor and teaching artist in Chicago. As a teaching artist, he has worked for Adventure Chicago, Chicago August Wilson Monologue Competition and he’s currently working at ChiArts. Christian has recently been seen as Matthias of Galilee in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* and Mr. Franklin in *Passing Strange*. This spring Christian will be directing at UIC as part of his capstone project. He previously worked with The Artistic Home as an understudy for Willie in *The Time of Your Life*. He is thrilled to be working with such a fun company again!

**Eurel (EJ) Jackson** (Lighting Designer) has played many roles behind the scenes over the last 35 years. A Chicago native, he is currently Production Manager for Deltafiter Productions and recently designed lights for several plays at ETA theater, Theater On The Lake and the Chicago Park District 61st St. Beach House. He was the house Lighting Designer and Director for the New Regal Theater for their first five years and was Boogie Down Productions’ (KRS1) Light Director on their East Coast and European (France) tour just to name a few. EJ also designed/operated lights on Ruffin Production’s *Dream Girls*, *The Color Purple* and *The Ike Tuner Story*.

**Cecilie Keenan** (Director) is a freelance director, producer and writer. She has been working with Artistic Home as Management Consultant since January. Cecilie has been Producing Director at Teatro Vista and at Apple Tree Theater, and Artistic Director at Bailiwick Repertory and Assistant Artistic Director at Northlight and has directed at many theaters in Chicago. Keenan has received many awards for ensemble, directing and international grants for work in Mexico and Soviet Georgia. She is currently co-writing and developing a new script about Langston Hughes with Nicholas Patricca.

**Owen May** (Intern) is a freshman in high school who enjoys music, theatre, and computers. He has been doing theatre for 3 years, and has played violin for 4. He loves to play video games, and wants to be able to make them in the future. He has greatly enjoyed working with the cast and crew and hopes you enjoy the show!

**Kevin Rolfs** (Set Designer) is a recent graduate of Columbia College Chicago and is thrilled to be working at Artistic Home. Many thanks to Cecilie Keenan for this fantastic opportunity and to my family and friends for all their support.

**Zachery Wagner** (Costume Designer) is a Chicago-based designer, artist, and actor. Previous design credits include: *Megastasis, Our Lady of 121st Street, A Perfect Ganesh*, and *Lips Together, Teeth Apart* (Eclipse Theatre Company); *The School for Lies, By the Bog of Cats and The Time of Your Life* (The Artistic Home); *Jeeves at Sea* (First Folio Theatre); *Threesome* (The Other Theatre Company); and Asst. Costume Design for *Travesties* (Remy Bumppo Theatre Company). He is a graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University and ensemble member with Eclipse Theatre Company. He is thrilled to be working with The Artistic Home again.
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