June 19, 2018

Greetings and welcome to the 66th season of Theater on the Lake!

We are excited to return for our first summer season in our newly renovated lakeside venue. This summer’s performances represent an eclectic collection of productions curated by Isaac Gomez: playwright, literary manager and denizen of Chicago’s thriving theatre scene. His selection of shows exemplify the breadth, intensity and excellence in Chicago Theater, a group that we are thrilled to invite on our stage.

In addition to our exciting line-up of programming here at Theater on the Lake, this summer, the festival will also host productions at neighborhood parks, including *Felons y Familias* written by actress and playwright Sandra Delgado. *Felons y Familias* is the first play commissioned through Theater on the Lake: In the Works, an initiative designed to support new play development by a Chicago playwright. Performances will take place at Hamlin Park, July 24th-28th. Also, Red’s Theater *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* will take the stage at South Shore Cultural Theater August 7th-10th.

Theater on the Lake performances are just a few of many cultural opportunities offered as part of Mayor Emanuel’s Night Out in the Parks series. More than 1200 performances, movies, concerts and more are offered citywide this summer, making community parks a hub of arts and cultural activity. Most events are free. We invite you to view the complete schedule of performances on our My Chi Parks® mobile application or at www.nightoutintheparks.com.

The Chicago Park District is dedicated to celebrating this city’s rich cultural heritage by providing high quality, affordable cultural programming to patrons throughout neighborhood parks no matter where they live. We invite you to enjoy all the wonderful performances throughout Chicago this summer.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Kelly

General Superintendent & CEO
Chicago Park District
A lot has happened in one year.

Politically, socially, artistically, personally. In this one year, the art that was front and center in Chicago’s beloved storefront theater community, actively engaged in the hurt, anger, and confusion from this year’s most painful and challenging national events. But it is somewhere amidst reflection of our past that we gain a better understanding of where we are now and, perhaps more importantly, where we can go from here. It is in this place of transition that the inaugural season of Theater on the Lake in its return to the Lakefront lives.

Do we have the right to claim the pain and trauma of our ancestors? When does an act of violence go too far? What does the American Dream look like for you? How do we find each other amidst our darkest, most isolated moments? What would you be forced to confront if your afterlife was endless? Who carries the burden of sexual trauma and why?

Be it an all-teen ensemble or some of Chicago’s most recognizable faces and talents, there is something here for everybody. In the wake of great political unease, it was important to me to highlight work that truly represents the best of the breadth Chicago Theater has to offer. I say breadth because, unfortunately, due to a largely segregated city that prioritizes institutional validation as affirmation of what “good art” is supposed to look like, many shows in this city go unseen. Well… now is the chance to see these shows for all their colors, their shapes, their sizes, their boundaries pushed beyond imagination.

This year is a particularly exciting year for two reasons: the first is a culmination of the newest Chicago Parks District new play commission program where Chicago-based playwright & actor Sandra Delgado (La Havana Madrid) will be presenting a workshop production of her newest play Felons & Familias. Experience this new play in process on its feet for the first time in front of a live audience – ever.

Secondly, and perhaps more obviously, this is the first season in the newly renovated Lakefront space, where Theater on the Lake was born. It has been an absolute honor to serve as artistic curator for the first season in this space, knowing that there will be much more to come throughout the year and next summer as well. It is an exciting time in Chicago Theater, and what better place to experience its intensity than beside our great Lake Michigan.

It is always an absolute pleasure (an honor, really) to sit in the houses of the hundreds of shows the Chicago theater community pumps out each year. As a playwright myself, I am constantly pushing my own artistic abilities because of what my friends and colleagues are churning out each year; it is inspirational. And for Chicago audiences to live the life as audience, as consumer, as critical thinker – you are the most important piece of the puzzle when working on a play, old or new. And I hope this year’s Theater on the Lake inspires you to follow these companies as they’ve inspired me.
Managing Director...........................................................................................................Angelique Grandone
Managing Director Emeritus..........................................................................................Krista Bryski Richard
Artistic Curator..............................................................................................................Isaac Gomez
Production Manager......................................................................................................Sara Beaman
Assistant Production Manager.....................................................................................Manny Ortiz
Technical Director.........................................................................................................Samantha Rausch
Assistant Technical Director........................................................................................Harrison Ornelas
Sound .............................................................................................................................Red Line Event Services
Master Electrician...........................................................................................................Becs Bartle
Lighting Crew................................................................................................................Lee Delehoy, Dan Watts, Fred Williams
Riser Crew.....................................................................................................................Project Fire, Brian Kulaga, Jacob Mulkahy
Box Office Manager.......................................................................................................Paulina Wysocka
Box Office Staff............................................................................................................Justin Butler, Matt Pierce

This season would not have been possible without the hard work, thoughtful insights and generous support of many individuals. The following people have given generously of themselves in support of Theater on the Lake Summer Theater Festival this year:

Mike Kelly, Cathy Breitenbach, Michael Brown, Neil Gilbert, Peggy Stewart, Gelanda Wash, Lance Thrower, SheShe Taylor, Jon Ravenscroft, Jessica Pappalardo, Oulayvone Anoudeth, Nikki Jolly, Cynthia Wren, Michael Lange, Deb Groh, Rachel Abajian, JD Ostergaard, Andrea Adams, Rich Blake, Patsy Diaz, Annette Dodaja, Rohemat Omowabi and Matt Bodett of the Chicago Park District.

John Wrenn, Susan Nicholl, Connor Kelly, Jesse Ewan, Mike Yerkman, Ryan Gallagher and the staff of Lakefront Hospitality.

Chris Storjohann and the Wenger Corporation, Marc Chevalier and Columbia College, Jim Moore and The Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, Dean John Culbert and DePaul University, Noah Craft and Craft Lighting for design and production consultation and support around the making of a theater.

William and Nanci Grandone for the donation of green room hospitality items.

And a very special acknowledgement to Samantha Rio, whose vision, dedication and hard work as Managing Director from 2011 to 2016 helped steer this festival through a time of great transition and into a time of new growth. Her support and guidance has been invaluable this season.

Thank you!
While our mission of presenting Chicago’s best storefront productions of the previous season remains our touchstone, there are many companies considered in the process of curation that deserve recognition for their work beyond the few chosen to remount on our stage. Below is a list of the companies considered for the 2018 season at Theater on the Lake.

**Hookman, Steep Theatre.**
Written by Lauren Yee. Directed by Vanessa Stalling

**Lela & Co, Steep Theatre.**
Written by Cordelia Lynn. Directed by Robyn Witt

**Lizzie, Firebrand Theatre.**
Music by Steven Cheslik-deMeyer and Alan Stevens Hewitt, Lyrics by Steven Cheslik-deMeyer and Tim Maner, Book by Tim Maner, Additional Music by Tim Maner, Additional Lyrics by Alan Stevens Hewitt. Based on an original concept by Steven Cheslik-deMeyer and Tim Maner. Directed by Victoria Bussert

**Machinal, Greenhouse Theater Center.**
Written by Sophie Treadwell. Directed by Jacob Harvey

**No Blues Memories: The Life of Gwendolyn Brooks, Manual Cinema.**
Written by Eve Ewing and Nate Marshall; shadow puppetry and sound design by Manual Cinema; with music by Jamila Woods and Ayanna Woods

**Picnic, American Theater Company.**
Written by William Inge. Directed by Will Davis

**Significant Other, About Face Theatre.**
Written by Joshua Harom. Directed by Keira Fromm

**The Cake, Rivendell Theatre Ensemble.**
Written by Bekah Brunstetter. Directed by Lauren Shouse

**The Wiz, Kokandy Productions.**
Written by Charlie Smalls & William F Brown. Directed by Lili-Anne Brown

**Truth & Reconciliation, Sideshow Theatre.**
Written by debbie tucker green. Directed by Jonathan Green

**Welcome to Jesus, American Theater Company.**
Written by Janine Nabers. Directed by Will Davis

**We’re Gonna Die, Haven Theatre.**
Written by Young Jean Lee. Directed by Josh Sobel

**You for Me for You, Sideshow Theatre Company.**
Written by Mia Chung. Directed by Elly Green

We encourage you to keep an eye out for these companies, writers and directors, and support their future work!
Blood at the Root

Written by Dominique Morisseau
Directed by Joel Ewing & Will Kiley

Produced in artistic alliance by The Yard & Jackalope Theatre

featuring

Raylynn.......................................................... Ireon Roach
Asha.......................................................... Danielle Chmielewski
De’Andre ........................................................ Victor Musoni
Toria.......................................................... Jenna Makkawy
Justin ........................................................ Tevion Lanier
Colin ........................................................ Justin Burns

DESIGNERS & PRODUCTION TEAM

Poetry & Movement Coaching .......................................................... Mykele Deville and Kiki Layne
Producers .......................................................... Mechelle Moe & Kaiser Ahmed
Dramaturg.......................................................... Jared Bellot
Lighting Designer .......................................................... Claire Sangster
Sound Designer .......................................................... Aaron Stephenson
Stage Manager .......................................................... Cleo Shine
Set Design and Scenic Painting .......................................................... John Wilson
Technical Director .......................................................... Andrew Burden Swanson

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CAST AND STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

Ireon Roach (Raylynn) is a Yard company member, an alumni of Senn Arts, and just completed her Freshman year at Boston University. She was most recently seen in Blood at the Root (The Yard & Jackalope), Snack Break (The Yard & Victory Gardens), How We Got On (Haven Theatre), and Dry Land (Rivendell). She was the 2017 Louder Than a Bomb Indy Poet Champion and National Winner of the August Wilson Monologue Competition. During her time at Senn Arts she served on the Young Adult Council at Writer’s Theatre and the Youth Ensemble at American Theatre Company. Ireon is represented by Paonessa Talent.

Danielle Chmielewski (Asha) is a Yard company member, and alumni of Lincoln Park High School, and will be attending the Theatre School at DePaul this fall. She was most recently seen in Columbinus (The Yard & Steppenwolf), Snack Break (The Yard & Victory Gardens) and Blood at the Root (The Yard & Jackalope).

Victor Musoni (D’Andre) is a Yard company member, an alumni of Senn Arts, and will be attending the University of Illinois Chicago in the fall. Victor was last seen in Columbinus (The Yard & Steppenwolf), Snack Break (The Yard & Victory Gardens) and Blood at the Root (The Yard & Jackalope). Victor is is represented by Paonessa Talent.

Jenna Makkawy (Toria) is a Yard company member, and alumni of Lincoln Park High School, and just completed her Freshman year at Cornell College. Jenna was last seen in Blood at the Root (The Yard & Jackalope) and Snack Break (The Yard & Victory Gardens). While at Lincoln Park, she was a member of the Youth Ensembles at Lookingglass Theatre and American Theatre Company.

Tevion Lanier (Justin) is a Yard company member and alumni of Senn Arts. He last appeared in Monster (Steppenwolf), How We Got On (Haven Theatre), Blood at the Root (The Yard & Jackalope Theatre), I & You (The Yard & Jackalope Theatre 2016 Theatre on the Lake) and Milk Like Sugar (The Yard & Raven Theatre). Tevion is represented by Paonessa Talent.

Justin Burns (Colin) is a Yard company member, an alumni of Senn Arts, and just finished his sophomore year at Columbia College. He was last seen in The 4th Graders Present an Unnamed Love Suicide (The Hypocrites & The Yard) and Snack Break (The Yard & Victory Gardens).

Will Kiley (Co-Director & Resident Artist and Mentor) Will Kiley is a 2nd year M.F.A. candidate at the University of Texas at Austin. He is a Yard Theatre Company Artistic Mentor (I & You, Snack Break) and a Jackalope Theatre Company Member (Octagon, Lunacy!, Prowess, Living Newspapers). In Chicago he has also worked for The Raven, Northlight, About Face, Collaboraction, First Floor, and others. As a teaching artists Will has worked for The National High School Institute (Cherubs), The Beverly Arts Center, Play-In-A-Book, Northlight, Jackalope, and Youth Guidance. In 2013 he traveled with the Lost Compass Collective to the Edinburgh Fringe to perform in Who Rowed Across Oceans. In 2011 he traveled with The Great Globe Foundation to Nairobi, Kenya to perform in The Collapsible Space Between Us. He is a graduate of CCM Acting. Samantha Beach is the love of his life.

Joel Ewing (Co-Director and Co-Artistic Director) is the Lead Theatre Teacher at Senn Arts and co-Artistic Director of The Yard. Joel has directed numerous productions including The 4th Graders Present an Unnamed Love Suicide with The Hypocrites and The Yard (2016 Illinois High School Theatre Festival) and Milk Like Sugar (The Yard & Raven Theatre).
Sugar with Raven Theatre and The Yard and producer of I & You with The Yard and Jackalope Theatre. At Senn Arts, he has directed many productions including Our America: Ghetto Life 101: Remorse and Mary Zimmerman’s Metamorphoses, both of which were selected for the 2014 and 2015 Illinois High School Theatre Festivals. Joel serves as the Director of Education at the Rocky Mountain Repertory Theatre and is a company member with The Hypocrites. As an actor, Joel was last seen in Columbinus (The Yard & Steppenwolf), The Snare (Jackalope Theatre), In The Next Room or The Vibrator Play (TimeLine Theatre) and Three Sisters and Into the Woods (The Hypocrites).

Mechelle Moe (Co-Artistic Director) is a Chicago theatre-maker, working as a director, actor and teaching artist. She most recently directed Columbinus with The Yard and Steppenwolf Theatre Company’s LookOut Series and In the Next Room: The Vibrator Play with TimeLine Theatre. She is co-Artistic Director of The Yard, with whom she co-directed The 4th Graders Present an Unnamed Love Suicide in alliance with The Hypocrites and Milk Like Sugar in alliance with Raven Theatre. Moe is also a company member with TimeLine Theatre, and founding member of The Hypocrites. Mechelle is the Director of Education at Raven Theatre, overseeing their school touring productions, in-class residency programs, and summer camp offerings. As an actor, Mechelle has appeared in over forty Chicago productions, most recently in The Apple Family Plays with TimeLine, Pocatello with Griffin Theatre, and Boy with TimeLineTheatre.

Andrew Burden Swanson (Tech Director) is a Resident Artist and Mentor with The Yard. He is the founder and lead designer of Cygneture Woodworks, where he makes customized furniture from recycled lumber. Come visit the shop, located just west of the Thorndale EL Station. Andrew is also the Director of Community Engagement for Jackalope Theatre, where he acts, writes and generally works very hard. He studied theatre arts at Columbia College Chicago and the School at Steppenwolf. He’s worked in various capacities with Griffin Theatre, Steep Theatre, American Blues, Writers Theatre, and Steppenwolf Theatre. Andrew can currently been seen in Ike Holter’s The Light Fantastic with Jackalope Theatre Company.

Claire Sangster (Lighting Design) is delighted to be working with The Yard again, having designed the lights for I & You and Blood at the Root with The Yard and Jackalope Theatre. Claire is a Lighting Designer and Master Electrician. Other recent design work includes Octagon, The Raid, Lunancy!, and Exit Strategy (all with Jackalope Theatre). She has also designed for The Apollo Theater, Artistic Home, Tympanic Theater, Mary-Arrchie, and Broken Nose Theater. She is a company member at Jackalpe and holds a BA in Theatre Design from Columbia College.

Aaron Stephenson (Sound Design) is a theatre artist from the Midwest and is a Resident Artist and Mentor at The Yard. Aaron last played in The Yard with his sound design for Columbinus with The Yard and Steppenwolf. Other Yard design credits include Blood at the Root, I & You, both with Jackalope, Snack Break with Victory Gardens, and Milk Like Sugar with The Yard and Raven Theatre. Recent work includes The Lisbon Traviata for Eclipse Theatre Company and designs for Red Tape Theatre, Strawdog Theatre Company, Trap Door Theatre, Redmoon, ATC, Polarity Theatre Ensemble, Definition Theatre Company, and Odradek Theatre Company. He works as an audio engineer
for Steppenwolf Theatre Company, The Hypocrites, and the Utah Shakespeare Festival. He is an ensemble member with Underscore Theatre Company and a freelance actor/writer/director.

John Wilson (Set Design and Scenic Painting) is a Resident Artist and Mentor at The Yard. John hustles as an artist, actor, scenic designer and educator in Chicago. His paintings can be seen throughout the Chicago land area and he has scenic designed over 80 productions in the city. As a teaching artist, he has worked with Lifeline Theater, American Theater Company, Red Kite, YAP, Raven Theater, and Steppenwolf. He is a company member with collaboration as well as Artistic Associate of WildClaw Theater. For The Yard he has designed The 4th Graders Present an Unnamed Love Suicide with The Hypocrites, Blood at the Root with Jackalope Theater, and Columbinus with Steppenwolf.

Mykele DeVille (Poetry and Movement Coach) is a Resident Artist and Mentor in The Yard. He is a actor, curator, and rapper from the West Side of Chicago. He most recently appeared in Octagon with Jackalope Theater. He performs poetry all over Chicago. He indulges in lo-fi liberation raps, the personal, and storytelling as his method on his two previously released mixtapes Super Predator and Each One, Teach One. His latest album, Peace, Fam is available for purchase, download, and streaming. He is also a member of Growing Concerns, a music based poetry collective and were recently selected to perform on NPR’s Tiny Desk Concert Series Tour.

Kiki Layne (Poetry and Movement Coach) is a Resident Artist and Mentor in The Yard. She was last seen in the US premiere of Octagon at Jackalope Theatre. Other Chicago include Genesis at Definition Theatre, Good People with Redtwist Theatre, and Definition Theatre and The New Colony’s co-production of Byhalia, Mississippi; for which she received a Black Theatre Alliance Award nomination. She received her BFA from The Theatre School at DePaul and is a company member at Definition Theatre Company. Kiki is represented by Grossman and Jack Talent and can next be seen in the upcoming film, Native Son directed by Rashid Johnson and Barry Jenkins film If Beale Street Could Talk.

Cleo Shine (Stage Manager) is a Yard company member and recent graduate of Senn Arts. She has been an ensemble member with The Yard Theatre Company since their premiere season in 2015. She has most recently appeared in Columbinus with The Yard and Steppenwolf, Snack Break in alliance with Victory Gardens Theater and The 4th Graders Present An Unnamed Love Suicide in alliance with The Hypocrites and The Yard. She also worked on stage management for The Yard and Jackalope Theatre’s presentation of Blood At The Root. Throughout her years with The Yard she has worked as the Digital Assets Manager for The Yard as well. Cleo will be attending the Maryland Institute College of Art for Film and Production this fall.

The Yard. Theatre relevant to young people; performed by young people. The Yard is a collective of theatre students who have formed artistic alliances with professional theatre companies throughout Chicago. Through these partnerships, the theatrical institutions will provide a professional environment and mentorship to the developing theatre artists. For more information, check out our website at www.the-yard.org or Like us on Facebook or Follow us on Instagram.

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Columbinus

“Nothing has changed, but everything is changing... Now it’s back, courtesy of Steppenwolf’s LookOut Series and The Yard, a fearless and febrile youth ensemble that infuses this show with urgency and existential rage.”
— Chicago Tribune, Kerry Reid

“The Yard, in collaboration with some of our city’s most generous theatrical institutions, has made it their mission to demonstrably address the biases and barriers toward youth-oriented theater. In “columbinus” they have located a work that cries out for their artistic daring and social commitment... and is The Yard’s most audacious work to date, a statement of some significance given the company’s record of excellence.”
— NewCity Stage, Kevin Greene

“Columbinus is brutal and brilliant! A must-see production...The Yard's work here is so good, so muscular and immediate that it demands to be not only seen but experienced. This is a limited run at Steppenwolf’s 1700 Theatre, which is a true shame”
— Third Coast Review, Matthew Nerber

“This show is definitely a must see for everyone. Whatever your stance on the matter, this is a solid production that should be discussed and will hopefully create some important dialogue.”
— Picture This Post, Sharai Bohannon

Blood at the Root

“Blood at the Root is the most socially complex work The Yard has yet to do. And that’s saying something for a company that has tackled suicide, pregnancy, death, illness, polygamy and genocide as well as religious, racial and sexual intolerance all through the lens of adolescence and young adulthood...Where other working actors have day jobs, these performers have homework and yet they are no less qualified because of it. The energy, enthusiasm and understanding they bring to this work is of a grade beyond measure.”
— NewCity Stage, Kevin Greene

“Blood at the Root is one of the most important pieces of theatre in Chicago right now. Beyond theatrical skill, the act of teen characters being performed by teen actors – most of whom are still in high school – is potent...There are many strong moments and performances...This play, this production, and these performers present a timely and necessary edict to connect with each other and to challenge the rules we don't talk about.”
— Performink, Bec Willett
“A furious and urgent staging by the Yard...From the moment the audience enters through a metal detector to take their seats the tension is palpable, and it doesn’t let up until the show’s end...a passion impossible to ignore...It’s a necessary and evocative production all-around.”
— Chicago Reader, Dmitry Samarov

**The 4th Graders Present an Unnamed Love Suicide**

“as well as the remarkable youth ensembles of Senn Arts Magnet School High School’s The Yard, in conjunction with The Hypocrites (in “The Fourth Graders Present an Unnamed Love Suicide”), who turned in uncannily brilliant performances in roles that required them to dominate the stage.”
— Chicago Sun Times, Hedy Weiss The Best Theatre of 2015

“the students of The Yard do a magnificent job carrying the play’s humor and heft. The value of their work is simple though its execution is anything but. This is work for the young, by the young. It is only a matter of how we decide to define that term.”
— NewCity, Kevin Greene

**Milk Like Sugar**

“Pop quiz: Where will you find some of the most honest, moving, skillful acting on any Chicago stage at the moment? Answer: You might be surprised to hear this, but it is at Raven Theatre, where a remarkable company of (mostly) teenage actors...are performing Kirsten Greenidge’s play...a company that brilliantly bridges the worlds of arts education and professional theater — the show is authentic in a way that it can only be when adolescents play themselves. But without reading the program bios you would never guess these young actors were not stage veterans...“Milk Like Sugar” is just further proof that something extraordinary is at play here.”
— Chicago Sun Times, Hedy Weiss

“a truly remarkable production at Raven Theatre), audiences will be treated to a play of uncommon empathy and honesty that is one of the richest portrayals of inner-city life that I’ve yet seen on a Chicago stage...I used the adjective “remarkable” to describe the production of “Milk Like Sugar” as no mere hyperbole.”
— Chicago Theatre Review

**I & You**

“The existence of The Yard is an acknowledgement that the absence of positive models for teens on stage is a problem not unlike the lack of racial and sexual representation in theater...Beyond the mature performances they bring out, The Yard offers a sense of camaraderie and mentorship that is lovingly etched into every moment on stage...An ode to art both new and old, “I & You” is the perfect distillation of The Yard’s inspiring inaugural season.”
— Kevin Greene, NewCity Stage
TO SEE OR NOT TO SEE?

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Hitler on the Roof

by Rhea Leman

CAST
Dr. Joseph Goebbels.................................................................................................................. Amy Gorelow
Leni Reifenstahl .................................................................................................................... Jay Torrence
Dr. Joseph Goebbels U/S ........................................................................................................ Kristi Forsch
Leni Reifenstahl U/S ........................................................................................................... Andrew Marchetti

PRODUCTION TEAM
Directors .......................................................................................................................... Amber Robinson*, Kirstin Franklin*
Stage Manager .................................................................................................................... Hannah Harper Smith
Technical Director ........................................................................................................... Harrison Ornelas
Scenic Design ..................................................................................................................... Chad Eric Bergman*
Lighting Design ................................................................................................................ David Goodman Edberg
Sound Design ..................................................................................................................... Baldur Kampmann, Nigel Harsch*
Costume Designer ............................................................................................................. Piper Hubbel
Properties Designer ........................................................................................................... Letitia Guillaud
Projections Technician ....................................................................................................... Bernadette Hagen
Production Manager ......................................................................................................... Breahan Pautsch*
Associate Production Manager ........................................................................................ Madelyn Loehr*
Violence Design ................................................................................................................ R&D Choreography*
Dance Choreography ......................................................................................................... Susan Fay*
Dialect Coach ...................................................................................................................... Sammi Grant
Production Crew ............................................................................................................... John Nichols, Michael Joseph
Graphic Design .................................................................................................................. Liv Anderson

*Denotes Akvavit Theatre company members

Full list of biographies is available at www.chicagonordic.org
propaganda and enlightenment

THE PLAYERS

Joseph Goebbels was a German politician and Reich Minister of Propaganda of Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945. He was one of Adolf Hitler’s close associates and most devoted followers, and was known for his skills in public speaking and his deep, virulent antisemitism, which was evident in his publicly voiced views. He advocated progressively harsher discrimination, including the extermination of the Jews in the Holocaust.

As the war drew to a close and Nazi Germany faced defeat, Magda Goebbels and the Goebbels children joined him in Berlin. They moved into the underground Vorbunker, part of Hitler’s underground bunker complex, on 22 April 1945. Hitler committed suicide on 30 April. In accordance with Hitler’s will, Goebbels succeeded him as Chancellor of Germany; he served one day in this post. The following day, Goebbels and his wife committed suicide, after poisoning their six children with cyanide.

Leni Riefenstahl (Helene Riefenstahl) was a German dancer, actress, and film director best known for her imposing propaganda films in support of the National Socialist (Nazi) Party. In 1933, Hitler asked Riefenstahl to direct a short film, Der Sieg des Glaubens (The Victory of Faith), shot at that year’s Nuremberg Nazi Party Rally. The film was a template for her more famous work, Triumph des Willens (Triumph of the Will), shot at the Nuremberg Rally the following year, in 1934. Triumph of the Will won several awards, but forever linked the film’s subject, National Socialism, with its artist, Riefenstahl. By her own account, the advent of World War II and the rapid escalation of violence under the Nazi regime had an unfavorable effect on both Riefenstahl and her career.

After the war Riefenstahl attempted to separate herself from the criminal nature of the Nazi regime, suggesting her duty was to her craft and not necessarily to the Nazi authorities who commissioned her films.

Although never a member of the Nazi Party, Riefenstahl found it difficult to overcome her association with the propaganda films she had made during the early Nazi period. She died of cancer in Pocking, Germany, on September 8, 2003, a few weeks after her 101st birthday.
GOEBBEL'S RULES OF PROPAGANDA

1. Propagandist must have access to intelligence concerning events and public opinion.

2. Propaganda must be planned and executed by only one authority.
   a. It must issue all the propaganda directives.
   b. It must explain propaganda directives to important officials and maintain their morale.
   c. It must oversee other agencies' activities which have propaganda consequences.

3. Propaganda must affect the enemy's policy and action.
   a. By suppressing propagandistically desirable material which can provide the enemy with useful intelligence.
   b. By openly disseminating propaganda whose content or tone causes the enemy to draw the desired conclusions.
   c. By goading the enemy into revealing vital information about himself.
   d. By making no reference to a desired enemy activity when any reference would discredit that activity.

4. Declassified, operational information must be available to implement a propaganda campaign.

5. To be perceived, propaganda must evoke the interest of an audience and must be transmitted through an attention-getting communications medium.

6. Credibility alone must determine whether propaganda output should be true or false.

7. The purpose, content and effectiveness of enemy propaganda; the strength and effects of an expose; and the nature of current propaganda campaigns determine whether enemy propaganda should be ignored or refuted.

8. Credibility, intelligence, and the possible effects of communicating determine whether propaganda materials should be censored.

9. Material from enemy propaganda may be utilized in operations when it helps diminish that enemy's prestige or lends support to the propagandist's own objective.

10. Propaganda may be facilitated by leaders with prestige.

11. Propaganda must be carefully timed.
    a. The communication must reach the audience ahead of competing propaganda.
    b. A propaganda campaign must begin at the optimum moment.
    c. A propaganda theme must be repeated, but not beyond some point of diminishing effectiveness.

12. Propaganda must label events and people with distinctive phrases or slogans.

13. Propaganda to the home front must create an optimum anxiety level.
    a. Propaganda must reinforce anxiety concerning the consequences of defeat.
    b. Propaganda must diminish anxiety (other than concerning the consequences of defeat) which is too high and which cannot be reduced by people themselves.

14. Propaganda must facilitate the displacement of aggression by specifying the targets for hatred.

15. Propaganda cannot immediately affect strong counter-tendencies; instead it must offer some form of action or diversion, or both.
    a. They must evoke desired responses which the audience previously possesses.
    b. They must be capable of being easily learned.
    c. They must be utilized again and again, but only in appropriate situations.
    d. They must be boomerang-proof.
ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Rhea Leman (Playwright) was born and raised in New York City where she studied dance and theater before moving to Denmark in 1981. There, she formed and directed her theater company, Teater Tango until 1998. Since then, she has been working as an independent playwright, screenwriter as well as theater, radio and TV director. Her most recent awards include; The Rosenbergs, chosen as best opera of 2015 by CphCulture, in 2014 the Danish Committee for the Performing Arts awarded her for her direction of Tomas Lagermand’s play, *The Story Behind the Wall* and in 2013 she received the Allen Prize from the Danish Screen and Stage writers Guild for “excellent dramatic writing.” The Reumert Committee nominated Leman for best playwright of 2013 for her play about the global financial crisis, *Gorilla*. In 2003, for a four-year period, Leman was appointed by the Danish Cultural Minister as the chairwoman of The Danish Theater Council and as a member of The Danish Arts Council. In 2009, Leman formed Dramafronten, a platform for new play development and presentation and since then she has worked as artistic director towards promoting and producing new Danish plays in new ways and new places. Her own dramatic writings concentrate on very serious subjects presented in humoristic ways.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Kirstin Franklin* (Co-Director) has collaborated with many theaters across the country including: The Guthrie, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Asolo Rep, Pangea World Theatre, NY Fringe, Northlight, Urbanite and Raven Theatre, among others. Joining Akvavit in 2011, Kirstin’s credits with the company include: *Red and Green, Kokkola, Autumn Dream, Mishap!, Blue Planet* and *Nothing of Me*, along with many staged readings. In her spare time Kirstin teaches theatre and acting at various colleges across Chicago. Originally from Colorado, Kirstin holds a BA from St. Olaf College and an MFA in acting from the FSU Asolo/Conservatory.

Amber Robinson* (Co-Director) is a Chicago-based director and performer with a focus on international theatre practices. In addition to Akvavit, Amber is a member of TUTA Theatre, where she is currently developing a performance piece based on a contemporary Belorussian text. Amber has worked with many storefront companies including Strange Tree, Forks & Hope, Strawdog, Collaboration, Redmoon and Emerald City, and Grey Ghost Theatre. Amber is a graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University and the Moscow Art Theatre’s American Studio.

Jay Torrence (Leni Reifenstahl) is a writer/performer/director and a founding member of The Ruffians. His playwriting and performance credits include *Ivywild, Burning Bluebeard* and *Roustabout: The Great Circus Train Wreck* (Awarded the John W. Schmid After Dark Award for Outstanding New Work and the After Dark Award for Outstanding Production). Jay has had the privilege to perform with 500 Clown, The Hypocrites, Redmoon, Theater Oobleck and The Neo-Futurists. where he was an ensemble member for twelve years and the former Artistic Director. He was a recipient of an Orgie Award for artistic direction and was named one of the “Top 50 Players in Chicago Theatre” by *Newcity*. He has an
MFA in Creative Writing from The University of British Columbia and studied under master clown Philippe Gaulier

Based in Chicago for over ten years, **Amy Gorelow**’s (Dr. Joseph Goebbels) credits here include *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern*… (Gertrude) *The Cherry Orchard* (Ranevskaya); *Play Dates* (Stacey), *Crashing With Flamingos* (Peg); *Midsummer* (Bottom); *Parallel Lives* (various), *All My Sons* (Lydia); *Six Dead Queens & an Inflatable Henry* (Katherine of Aragon); *When Angels Wept* (Eileen), *Low Pay? Don’t Pay!* (Margherita); *Lust, Lies, & Marriage* (Dottore); *1512 W Studebaker* (Mim); *An Adult Evening of Shel Silverstein* (Various); *Parallel Lives* (various); *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead* (Tragedian); *Out Of Order* (Gladys); *Earl the Vampire* (Gretchen); *Ambition Facing West* (Marija/Alma), and several pantos at Piccolo Theatre, where she is a company member. She is a third of the writing team of this year’s panto, *Hansel and Gretel*. She has studied theatre in North Carolina, Atlanta, Russia, Cambridge, and Chicago. Amy is also a musician and has played upright bass, melodica, and many other instruments in numerous productions. All the love and appreciation to this amazing production team. Sate your curiosity at amygorelow.com.

**Full list of artist bios is available at www.chicagonordic.org**

**PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES**

**Harrison Ornelas (Technical Director)**
Harrison was born and raised in Chicago and graduated from Columbia College in 2015. Harrison has served as Technical Director for theater all over the city including Strawdog Theater Co, A Red Orchid, and Silk Road Rising to name a few. This is also Harrison’s second season with Theater on the Lake as Assistant Technical Director. He is very excited to be working with Akvavit again having Technical Directed their productions of *Ghosts & Zombies*, *Bad Girls: The Stylists* and this touring production of *Hitler on the Roof*. Harrison is always searching for new creative ventures and challenges.

**Madelyn Leohr (Assistant Production Manager)**
A recent transplant to Chicago, Madelyn graduated with a BFA in acting from Otterbein University and is originally from Colorado. She can be found teaching yoga at CorePower Yoga and Green Shirt Acting Studio, and is a proud company member of Akvavit Theatre as well as The Agency Theatre’s collective ensemble.

Madelyn was recently seen in Akvavit’s productions of *Bad Girls: The Stylists* and *Ghosts & zombies*, Actor’s Theatre of Columbus’s production of *The Winter’s Tale*, Season 1 Episode 9 of *Chicago Justice*, and the SOLO Chicago Festival where she debuted her first solo performance piece. Madelyn gives all the love thanks and gratitude to Mom, Dad, and Vassil.

**Hannah Harper-Smith (Stage Manager)**
Hannah is a 5th grade fine arts teacher in Glenview, where she teaches drama, music, and visual art. She most recently stage managed Akvavit’s *Bad Girls: The Stylists* and *Ghosts and Zombies* as well as Mudlark Theater Company’s *Twelfth Night*, and was most recently seen as Claire in *Proof* with North Park Theatre. Hannah holds a BA in Elementary Education and Theatre from North Park University here in Chicago and currently resides in Portage Park with her three cats and exceptional boyfriend Tyler whom she would like to thank immensely.
**Michael Joseph (Crew)** is a New York based Lighting Designer/Master Electrician who moved to Chicago to attend Columbia College (16’). Previous shows are Birthday Suit (Chicago Children’s Theater)(LD), Marie Christine (BoHo Theatre)(ME), and CCC TEDx Talk (Columbia College)(LD). He is a company member with Cuckoo’s Theatre Project as well as a member of IASTE Local 125. To know more about Michael, visit Majlighting.com.

**Piper Hubbell Robinson (Costume Design)** Theatre costuming for the last 20 years include Steppenwolf, Goodman, House theatre, Drury Lane, DePaul theatre school and Grey Ghost company. Design education: School of the Art Institute Chicago. Hitler On The Roof is the first time working with Akvavit Theatre company.

**Chad Eric Bergman (Scenic Design)** actively collaborates in the Chicago Storefront scene having worked with Stage Left, Live Bait, Chicago Dramatists, MPAACT, parker, Plasticene and Akvavit in various artistic ways. He has been an artist in residence at the Ragdale Foundation and the University of Chicago’s Summer Incubator. He spent a year in Finland on a Fulbright exploring bilingual theatre. At North Park University, he has been developing a theatre curriculum that is based on the Chicago Storefront Theatre model.

**Breahan Eve Pautsch (Production Manager)** is originally from Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. She earned her BA in Theatre and English at UW-Madison and has been working in Chicago as an actor and director since 2003. She has been a company member with Akvavit Theatre since 2011, where she served as Literary Manager and Director of Development for several years before taking the position of co-Artistic Director at the beginning of 2017. She is also a company member with Indie Boots Theatre.

**Bernadette Hagen (Projection Technician)** is a stage manager, sound designer/technician, and performer. She is a North Park University graduate with a BA in Theatre and Performance Studies and Music: Arts Administration. Bernadette is thrilled to be working with Akvavit again on this tour of *Hitler on the Roof*. Her professional credits include Akvavit’s 2017 run of *Hitler on the Roof* as their Sound and Projection Technician, Sound Technician and Stage Manager for *Hand in Hand* with Akvavit, Stage Manager for CenterStage’s *Fiddler on the Roof*, as well as Assistant Stage Manager for *PopWaits* at the Neo-Futurists.

**Nigel Harsch* (Sound Design)** Nigel Harsch has been making strange sounds and unsettling textures for Akvavit since their debut Red and Green, where he found an artistic home amongst the restless and daring company young company. Working with Akvavit continues to stretch his abilities and has given him a place to try new techniques, from cacophonous found-sound collages in Red and Green to minimal. Nigel has a profound understanding about the vast textures and qualities of Nordic sounds, which makes him a wonderful addition to the Akvavit company.impressionist tone sketches in Gjenganger.

**David Goodman-Edberg (Lighting Design)** is delighted to be working with Akvavit Theatre again after *Ghosts and Zombies*. He has also designed with such companies as The Factory Theater, North Park University, Wildclaw Theatre, Redtwist Theatre, Otherworld Theatre, Prop Thtr, Pop Magic Productions, The Syndicate, First Floor Theater, Thodos Dance, Marlene Skog & Dancers, Chicago Danztheatre Ensemble, RE|dance group, Innervation Dance Co., and Chicago Repertory Ballet, and has toured with Visceral Dance, Eisenhower Dance, and Adventure Stage. By day he works for architectural lighting firm Point of Light and has assisted on projects at Universal Studios Orlando and Disney Resort Shanghai. daviddesignstthings.com
ABOUT AKVAVIT THEATRE

MISSION

Akvavit Theatre is haunted by Nordic visions: deep forests and ice-blue seas, the patience of the glacier, the sudden fury of the volcano, the arctic light and silence. Seeking the universal through the voices of contemporary Nordic playwrights, Akvavit Theatre is a kind of homecoming, a connecting back to the lands whose people and cultures have for generations been a part of the great prairies of North America that we call home. And like our namesake beverage, Akvavit brings a “strong spirit” to the work that we produce. Skål, Skål, Kippis!

ABOUT

Since its beginning, Akvavit has been busy commissioning translations of contemporary Nordic works, staging readings of Nordic plays, and launching fully-staged productions. Akvavit Theatre originated as part of the four-year Nordic Spaces project that commenced in January 2008 funded by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (the Bank of Sweden’s Tercentenary Foundation).

Akvavit Theatre embraces inclusivity and diversity -- the diversity of our home in the US and the diversity of the Nordic world (and if the image you have of that region is all blue-eyed blondes, an image update is in order).

Akvavit Theatre is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation.

SPECIAL THANKS

John Hammergren, Karl Clifton Soderstrom, Rick Gilbert, Susan Fay, David Rosenberg, Celia Bergman, Ward Eight, North Park University, Jedlicka Performing Arts Center, Joshua Harris, John Robinson, and Frida Nygår

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Urban Theater Company presents

Ashes of Light

by Marco Antonio Rodríguez

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Marco Antonio Rodríguez Born and raised in New York City, with roots from the Dominican Republic, Marco Antonio holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from Southern Methodist University. His acclaimed play, La Luz De Un Cigarrillo (Ashes Of Light), has received productions in theaters across the nation and internationally such as Off-Broadway’s LATEA theater, Lehman Stages, Dominican Republic’s Teatro Las Máscaras and Buenos Aires, Argentina’s Teatro La Mueca. It is the recipient of 5 HOLA and 4 ACE awards, including Outstanding Achievement In Playwriting. La Luz De Un Cigarrillo (Ashes Of Light) has been published in both Spanish and English editions by NoPassport Press and studied at universities nationwide and internationally. Marco Antonio is the recipient of a Banff International Writing Residency in Alberta, Canada and a CUNY Dominican Studies Fellowship. He was recently given an honorary award by the Dominican Ministry Of Culture. His play, Barceló Con Hielo (Barceló On The Rocks), was an O’Neill Theater Conference semi-finalist, won the national MetLife Nuestras Voces Playwriting competition as well as 4 HOLA awards which include outstanding achievement in playwriting. NoPassport Press has published Barceló On The Rocks in a dual English/Spanish edition available on Amazon.com. Marco Antonio was recently commissioned to adapt Julia Alvarez’ best-selling novel, In The Name Of Salomé, into a stage play. It has won 4 HOLA and 5 Latin ACE awards including best play and best production and is enjoying a critically acclaimed, extended run at New York’s Spanish Repertory Theater. Next, Ashes Of Light will receive its Atlanta area premiere by Atlanta Metropolitan College. Marco Antonio is a proud member of the Dramatists Guild. As an actor, Marco Antonio has been seen in numerous television, films and theater productions. Next, Marco Antonio will co-star in the workshop production of Michelle J Rodriguez and Tatiana Suárez Pico’s musical, ROKERA.

SETTING

Place: Chicago

Play runs 90 mins with a 15 minute intermission
CAST

*Nydia Castillo ................................................................. Luz
Sipriano Cahue ................................................................. Julio Cesar
Karla Galvan ................................................................. Lydia
Maritza Nazario ............................................................... Divina

PRODUCTION TEAM

Melony Aponte .............................................................. Assistant Stage Manager
*Antonio Bruno ............................................................. Production Manager/Sound Designer
Amy Couey ................................................................. Scenic Designer
*Miranda Gonzalez ........................................................ Director
*Andrew Lehmkuhl ...................................................... Lighting Designer
*Fredy Rocha ................................................................. Costume Designer
Hillarie Shockley ........................................................... Props Designer
*Ivan Vega ................................................................. Producer

*Denotes UTC collective member

MISSION

UrbanTheater Company (UTC) fosters a pipeline of diverse and culturally specific actors, designers, and producers who embrace the responsibility of creating an environment full of honesty, integrity, representation, and acceptance in order to cultivate innovative and accessible theater. Through mentorship our productions act as launchpads for deepening UTC’s history of community engagement taking our stories “from the streets to the stage.”

Get with the program.

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**HISTORY**

**Highlights: The Last 13 Years**

**2005** – UTC founded by Ivan Vega, Marilyn Camacho, and Madrid St. Angelo - opens with “Short Eyes” by Miguel Pinero directed by Ron OJ Parson

**2006 -2009** – Guest directors such as Joel Moorman and Nikkielei DeMone

**2010** – Marti Lyons directs Brain People and UTC gains recognition and performs and partners with the Goodman for the Latino Theater Festival

**2011** – Steppenwolf invites UTC to the Garage Rep, we present Midwest premier “Sonnets For an Old Century”

**2013** – UTC makes Humboldt Park its permanent home!

**2014** – the launch of Teatro Thursdays and Teatro Sunday’s Brunch and Play by partnering with Humboldt Park restaurants to give the community exposure and increase revenue for local businesses

**2015** – receive $25,000 from Chicago Community Trust for Culture and Diversity

**2016** – begin Mikey O partnership and present a sold out production of Carmen Rivera’s “La Gringa”

**2017** – Implementation of Board of Directors - invited to be a part of CLATA’s inaugural International Latino Festival and are awarded $12,500

**CAST BIOGRAPHIES**

**Sipriano Cahue** (*Julio Ceaser*) is very excited for his UrbanTheater Company debut in *Ashes of Light*. Some of his favorite past credits include: *You, Me & Tuno* (Teatro Luna), *Luz Estrada* (Mercy Street Theatre Company), *Gator Bait & A Piece of My Heart* (A Reasonable Facsimile Theatre Company), and he recently came off a nine month run as a part of the long running Chicago classic, *Tony n’ Tina’s Wedding*. Sipriano would like to take this time to thank all his family, friends, and loved ones, who have supported him in his dreams. Lastly, he would also like to Thank You, the audience, for attending this show and helping keep Latino(a) works and stories a continued cornerstone of the Chicago Theatre community. Puro pa’lante, Raza!

**Nydia Castillo** (*Luz*) joined UrbanTheater Company ensemble in 2015. Her acting credits with UTC include *Julia de Burgos: Child of Water, Adoration of the Old Woman, La Gringa, Ashes of Light*. She has been also an Aguijón Theater ensemble member since 2001, where her acting credits include: *Monday Falls on León Rodríguez, The Virtuous Burglar, The House of Bernarda Alba, Yerma, Eréndira, Las Soldaderas, Antígona, Within, Querido Voyeur, Blowout!, and Adverses - an adaptation of Electra the Greek tragedy*. Other stage credits in Chicago include *Lorca Alma Presente, Lorca Forever* with Water People company, *Blood Wedding* with La Molécula Artística, and the staged reading of “La Carreta” with Court Theater and in her natal Puerto Rico, where she worked as a runway model and radio personality, her acting credits include:
**Puerto Rico Fuà, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof** and, **Fela, the musical!** Nydia is a former Chicago Public School administrator. She holds masters degrees in the area of education and leadership.

**Karla Galvan (Lydia)** is a Mexican/Peruvian actress, director and teaching artists. She graduated from Columbia College Chicago with a B.A. in fine arts. Karla has also received extensive theater training in the city of Mexico. In 2003, she founded Teatro Tariakuri a Chicago Latino theater co. based in the south side of Chicago making her one of the first Mexican American theater co. to produce a full Spanish spoken production. In 2004 she opened with *En otoño los gatos tienen colita* at Village Player Theater in Oak Park IL. Now Madison street Theater. Karla has directed many productions, catering to both adult comedy and children’s production, Karla has also worked on stage creating many characters like Doña Remedios in *The secrets of Santa Monica* with Family bridges. She is currently a teaching artist working with the youth in the south side of Chicago and is also working on her next productions which will open in the summer and late fall of 2018.

**Maritza Nazario (Divina)** was born in the countryside of a small town in Puerto Rico, surrounded by trees, streams and mountains. She was always regarded as the “Drama Queen” of the family. Not satisfied with her artistic...
accomplishments in Puerto Rico she came to Chicago to pursue her dreams. She holds a B.A. and M.A. in theater and has extensive experience as a playwright, poet, actress and theatrical director. Maritza has been working in the field of arts education for many years. Currently she works as the Executive Director and Acting instructor of En Las Tablas Performing Arts, a not-for-profit, performing arts community organization in Chicago, which she co-founded 10 years ago. Maritza has a passion for working with community members to develop “untapped” talent. Some of her latest projects include: *La Gringa, Con Maleta en Mano, Rumpope, Coquito and Eggnog, The Science of Women, Gracias, Rafael and Face to Face with the Bolita Complex*. Maritza has also participated in a few local films and documentaries, was a member of Latino Chicago Theater Co and has done performance training with Augusto Boal and La Pocha Nostra.
PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

Melony Aponte (Assistant Stage Manager)

Antonio Bruno (Production Manager/Sound Designer) is the Company Manager for UrbanTheater Company and the resident Sound Designer. He has worked as a sound designer for UTC’s Cuba and his Teddy Bear, First Class, Devil Land, Julia De Burgos: Child of Water, Lolita de Lares and La Gringa. He recently designed sound on The New Colony’s production of The Light by Loy Webb. He is grateful to work with UTC in producing a highly relevant and important play for the community. Dassit.

Amy Couey (Scenic Design) studied Theater, Scenic Painting and Design at The University of Southern Mississippi. Amy is an international muralist who designed and painted health-education and water sanitation murals on a boarding house and orphanage in the small jungle village of Las Brisas, Guatemala. She received a Red Award in hospitality in 2017 (in part with Aria Group Architects) from the International Interior Design Association for her artistic work at 151 Kitchen + Bar in Elmhurst, IL. Recognized for her mural, painting and upcycled life-size animal bust sculptures, she was also featured in Restaurant Development and Design Magazine. She designs and sells jewelry at Esquina Chicago on Western, a small collection of her paintings are currently on display at Pressure Billiards on Clark and #100portraits100days is on display at Dollop Coffee on Dearborn. Amy was born in Pascagoula, Mississippi and grew up in the Bay Area of California. She found herself in Chicago after finishing college in the midst of Hurricane Katrina. Presently she teaches Portfolio Building through Drawing and Painting at Jones College Prep via Columbia College’s after-school community arts program. She is also a freelance artist, the coach of Columbia’s award winning improv team droppin’ $cience, and starting this fall she will be the new Scenic Art Apprentice at Steppenwolf Theatre.

Miranda Gonzalez (Director) the Artistic Director of Urban Theater Company. She also was a founding ensemble member of Chicago’s Only All Latina Theater company Teatro Luna and has devised and developed plays since 2000. After performing as an actress for 10 years she decided to turn her artistic endeavors towards directing. Previous directing and development credits include: La Gringa, GL 2010, Of Princes and Princessas at the 2010 Goodman Latino Theatre Festival; 10x10 Festival, Lullaby, The North/South Plays workshop at the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs; Crossed, Crime Scene Chicago with Collaboraction; and Melissa DuPrey’s Sushi-Frito at Free Street Theater.

Andrew Lehmkuhl (Lighting Design) is thrilled to be working again with UTC! Andrew had the privilege to work on La Gringa over the last two years with UTC. Other designs include: Coriolanus(Commission Theatre) A Hedda Gable(Red Tape Theatre) Goddamn Geniuses(Runaways Lab Theatre) Andrew is currently the Master Electrician/Sound Tech for the CCPA at Roosevelt University and Teen Tech Director for Chicago Opera Theater at Senn High School. Proud alum of Loyola University Chicago. Andrewmlehmkuhl.com

Fredy Rocha (Costume Designer) is a native of Chicago’s Logan Square –Humboldt Park Neighborhood of Colombian parents. UTC Costume Design credits include BrainPeople, First Class, Sonnets for an Old Century, Beauty of the Father, Fucking A, Devil Land, Adoration of the Old Woman, and Lolita de Lares. Other design credits include Side Project Theatre’s 2012 - Joan’s Laughter, Ensemble Español Spanish Dance Theater’s 2013- Bolero & 2014 Mil Clavos, Colectivo El Pozo 2014 - El Incas.
Film Costume Design credits include 2015 *Buckle Up Punk* and 2017 *En Algun Lugar*. Fredy holds a Bachelor’s of Fine Arts from the Illinois Institute of Art and a Master’s of Business Administration from Keller Graduate School of Management. He is also an advocate of the LGBTQ health care community and serves on the Community Advisory Board for Howard Brown Health Center.

**Hillarie M Shockley (Props/Set Dressing)** is delighted to be working with UrbanTheater Company on *Ashes of Light*. Hailing from Virginia originally, Hillarie became involved in theater as an 8th grader, working as an actor from that year throughout the rest of High School. It wasn’t until she attended Christopher Newport University in Virginia that she became entranced with technical theatre. She loved working in the Scene shop as a Carpenter and a Painter, as well as working in the Costume Shop as a Sticher, building and creating different elements for their shows. But it wasn’t until her Junior year that she discovered Props and has never looked back. She graduated in 2012 with a degree in Technical Theater. Since then she has done Props work in theaters across the country: from The Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia; to the Shakespeare Theater Company in Washington, D.C; to Geva Theater Center in Rochester, New York; and Chicago Shakespeare Theater here in Chicago. She has been the Props Designer for Northwestern University’s *Don Giovanni*, Akvavit Theater’s *Bad Girls: The Stylists*, and Teatro Vista’s upcoming production of *The Madres*.

**Ivan Vega (Producer)** is an actor, producer and co-founding Artistic Director of UrbanTheater Company (UTC) and current Executive Director since 2010. He serves as a proud board member of The League of Chicago Theatres. His recent credits include: *Water & Power*/UTC; *Julia de Burgos: Child of Water*/UTC; *First Class*/UTC & Theater on the Lake; *Cuba and His Teddy Bear*/UTC; *Broken Thread*/UTC; *Eulogy for a Small Time Thief* at Batey Urbano/UTC (2007 After Dark Award for Outstanding Performance as ‘David Dancer’) & *Hortensia and the Museum of Dreams* at Victory Gardens. TV credits include: *The Line* (CBS pilot) and *Chicago P.D.* (NBC). Ivan holds his Bachelor’s in Fine Arts in acting from the Theatre Conservatory at Roosevelt University.
LA TRIBU

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Madrid St. Angelo
Ivan Vega

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SEASON 13

Fall 2018 - World Premiere
Not For Sale - UTC Commission
Written by Guadalís Del Carmen
Directed by Sara Carranza

September 20 - October 20, 2018

“With the Puerto Rican Festival less than two weeks away, Humboldt Park prepares for the big event. With new neighbors looking to make changes, those that have lived in the community have to work together to either brace for change or let go of the legacies laid out by those that are long gone. A story about community, family, and politics, the question persists, who gets to lay claims to a neighborhood?”

For more information visit - UrbanTheaterChicago.org
Chicago Dramatists and Theatre on the Lake
Presents the Developmental Production of

Felons and Familias

Written by Sandra Delgado
Directed by Marcela Muñoz

CAST in order of appearance

Clara .......................................................................................................................... Sandra Delgado*
Stella ............................................................................................................................ Stella Moseley
Rueben ..................................................................................................................... Donovan Diaz
David ....................................................................................................................... Vega

CREATIVE TEAM

Playwright .................................................................................................................. Sandra Delgado
Director ..................................................................................................................... Marcela Muñoz
Stage Manager ........................................................................................................ Jennifer J. Thusing
Dramaturg ................................................................................................................ Lucas Garcia
Assistant Director .................................................................................................... Kris Tori
Costume Designer .................................................................................................. Christine Pascual
Scenic Designer ........................................................................................................ Yeaji Kim
Projection Designer ................................................................................................ Liviu Pasare
Lighting Designer .................................................................................................... Heather Sparling
Production Manager/Sound Designer ..................................................................... Antonio Bruno

A NOTE FROM THE TEAM AT CHICAGO DRAMATISTS,

Welcome to our developmental production of Sandra Delgado’s Felons and Familias. This production is the culmination of a partnership between Chicago Park District and Chicago Dramatists called “In the Works”. The Chicago Park District commissioned this play and it has been developed through four public reading throughout the city’s parks over the last year. Today you are seeing the final step of “In the Works”, where we add technical elements of a full production so Sandra can use that knowledge in her next draft.
In 1979 a group of playwrights met in a basement to read their works aloud and found something magical: each other. They found that by meeting regularly, workshopping each other’s plays, and creating developmental opportunities as well as advocating for each other in the field of theatre, they filled a gap in new play development. In 1981 they incorporated themselves as Chicago Dramatists, one of the first new play development facilities in America. Fast-forward to 2018, and that basement has become two large rehearsal spaces, two large conference rooms, office spaces, and a 77-seat intimate theater. These halls have made way for national and international productions, countless Jeff recommendations, awards for “Best New Work,” and regional and Broadway premieres. With television’s recent boom in long-form dramatic narratives, CD playwrights are in the writer’s rooms as well as running the shows.

Superstars that have been Residents include Keith Huff (Broadway: A Steady Rain, AMC: Mad Men), Lydia R. Diamond (Broadway: Stickfly, Showtime: The Affair) Sarah Gubbins (Jeff Award for Best New Work: The Kid Thing, Amazon Video: I Love Dick) Tanya Saracho (Lifetime: Devious Maids, HBO: Girls, ABC: How to get Away with Murder, Starz: Vida) Laura Jacqmin (Humana Festival: Residence, Netflix: Grace and Frankie, Epix: Get Shorty) Andrew Hinderaker (Goodman Theatre, The Helen Hayes Award: The Magic Show, Netflix: Penny Dreadful, CBS: Pure Genius, and Hulu: The Path). These successes prove that writers need an incubatory period in order to flourish, and CD provides that.

Little did those first playwrights reading work aloud in a basement know that almost forty years later CD would have cemented itself as a vital hub for Chicago’s playwrights to not only find their voices as writers, but to shape national culture through impacting the American theatrical canon. Their legacy is continued through adherence to a visionary mission: to nurture playwrights of all levels with the space, resources, and collaborators needed to realize new work and thrive as artists.

Thank you for being part of the writing process,

- Vanessa Bamber, Executive Director
- Dana Lynn Formby, Interim Artistic Director
- Tanuja Jagernauth, Operations Manager
- Tara Branham, Casting Director, Producing and Marketing Associate

SPECIAL THANKS

**ARTISTIC TEAM**

**Sandra Delgado**  
(Playwright, Clara) is an award-winning actor, writer, and producer born and raised in Chicago. *Felons and Familias* is the inaugural “In the Works” commission for Theatre on the Lake. "La Havana Madrid," her first full-length play, developed as part of the Goodman’s 2015/2016 Playwrights Unit, played to sold out houses at both Steppenwolf and The Goodman Theatre and received recognition as one of the best plays of 2017 by Time Out Chicago (including the audience award for best new work) and New City Chicago. Recent stage credits include Jocasta in Oedipus El Rey at The Public Theater in association with The Sol Project, 2666 at The Goodman Theatre, *Motherf**ker with the Hat* at The Steppenwolf Theatre and Mojada at Victory Gardens Theatre, for which she earned distinction as one of the Top Ten performances of the year by the Chicago Tribune. Television credits include Chicago PD, Law and Order:SVU, Chicago Justice, Empire, The Exorcist, Chicago Fire and Mind Games. She produced Teatro Vista’s and Collaboration’s Yo Solo Festival of Latino Solo Shows and Collaboration’s Sketchbook Festival from 2005-2008. She is a founding ensemble member of Collaboration and an ensemble member of Teatro Vista (Associate Artistic Director from 2006-2008). She is the recipient of the Joyce Award, The Theater Communications Group (TCG) Fox Foundation Resident Actor Fellowship, is a two-time Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events grantee, and a 3Arts 3AP Project Grantee. Ms. Delgado is a resident playwright at Chicago Dramatists, a current member of ALTA’s Semillero Playwright’s Circle and MC-10 Playwrights Group, and is on the Advisory Committee of the Latinx Theatre Commons, a national advocacy group for Latinx theatre artists. Her new storytelling series, Saints and Sinners, has been seen at Collaboration and Steppenwolf. She is one of the twenty women of Chicago arts and culture honored in Kerry James Marsall’s mural RUSH MORE on the facade of the Chicago Cultural Center. Sandra is a proud member of SAG-AFTRA and AEA.  
www.sandradelgado.net

**Stella G. Moseley Delgado**  
(Stella) is an actor, writer and visual artist. Her credits include Connected and This is not a Cure for Cancer at Collaboration and Anatomy of Fear from Finland’s Teatteri Metamorfoosi as part of the Physical Festival. She has been a part of Zephy Dance Camp for three years and is a junior counselor. She likes unicorns and the color blue.

**Donovan Diaz**  
(Rueben) Chicago credits include The Little Flower of East Orange (Eclipse Theatre), PROWESS (Jackalope Theatre Company); Short Shakespeare! Twelfth Night and Shakespeare in the Park: Twelfth Night (Chicago Shakespeare Theater) and The Burials (Steppenwolf Theatre Company). Regional credit include Pride and Prejudice, Othello and The Merry Wives of Windsor(American Players Theatre). Television credits include Empire and Chicago Justice. Mr. Diaz received his training at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
**Scot West** (David) has recently appeared as Trigorin in *The Seagull* at the Artistic Home, John Morrison in *Men Should Weep* (Griffin Theatre, Jeff Award-Best Production) and Donald Rumsfeld in Lunacy (Jackalope Theatre). Since coming to Chicago in 2012, he has appeared in productions and readings with Buzz22, Victory Gardens, Rasaka Theatre, Oak Park Festival Theatre, 16th Street Theatre, Vintage Theatre Collective, Prop Thtr, Chicago Dramatists, Teatro Vista, Raven Theatre and Sideshow Theatre, among others. He has an MFA in Acting from Ohio University.


**Marcela Muñoz** (Director) is the Co-Artistic Director and Managing Director of Aguijón Theater, Chicago’s longestrunning Latinx theater. Marcela is a director, actress, teaching artist and translator (Spanish/English) of dramatic works. Besides regular gigs at Aguijón, her acting credits include works with other Chicago companies such as Teatro Luna, Teatro Vista, Victory Gardens Theatre, and Goodman Theatre. Her directing credits at Aguijón include Yerma, The House of Bernarda Alba, Blood Wedding, Johnny Tenorio, Perversions, Even a Sparrow Leaves its Nest, Monday Falls on Leon Rodriguez, Antigone, The Passion of Antigona Perez, Dear Voyeur, Blowout La Chunga, and Nocturnal Creatures among others; Kita y Fernanda for Teatro Luna; Ferdinand the Bull for the Goodman Theatre; La Posada Mágica for Teatro Vista; Lolita de Lares for Urban Theater; and the US and English language premiere of Victor Salinas’ LOVEknots performed at Second City’s Beat Lounge; among others. She recently collaborated with Writers Theatre as Associate Director of Quixote: On the Conquest of Self, directed by Claudio Valdés Kuri, starring Henry Godinez. As an actress and director she has participated in international theatre festivals in Peru, Argentina and Colombia. Marcela developed and, for the last ten years, has conducted the Nuestra Cultura Theater Program at Aguijón Theater with After School Matters. Recent translation credits include Abel Gonzalez Melo’s Adentro|Within and Epopeya. She is a graduate of The School at Steppenwolf and a 2017 3Arts Award winner.
Yeaji Kim (Scenic Designer) is a scenic designer who believes a space is completed by the people who live in it. Her works have been seen in Chicago and New York. Recent Chicago credits include scenic and projection designs for Ziryab, The Songbird of Andalusia and Yellow Dress (Silk Road Rising Theatre), Ordinary People (Citadel Theatre) and A Walk in the Woods (The Den Theatre). Yeaji also worked on the operas El Retablo de Maese Pedro (Bard College, NY) as a set designer and Gloria – A Pig Tale (Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY) as an assistant. Her love of combining drawing, hand craft and video projections has brought her frequent collaborations with a variety of artists. She received her MFA from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Heather Sparling (Lighting Design) is grateful to be working with Chicago Dramatists for the first time. Recent design credits include Labapalooza! (St. Ann's Warehouse, Brooklyn); The Burn (Steppenwolf); The Fly Honey Show (The Inconvenience); Twelfth Night, The Heart of Robin Hood (Door Shakespeare); Yardbird (Hackney Empire, London); La Havana Madrid (Teatro Vista); Longer! Louder! Wagner! (Lyric Opera of Chicago); and The Way She Spoke (Greenhouse Theatre). Additionally, Heather works as an Assistant Lighting Designer at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Heather is a proud alum of Boston University. She’d like to thank John, for everything. For more information on her work, please visit www.sparlingdesigns.com

Antonio Bruno (Production Manager/ Sound Designer) Super excited for this opportunity to work with Chicago Dramatists and Sandra Delgado, he is also grateful to get to work with Marcela again. Antonio has worked as a sound designer for UrbanTheater Company’s productions of La Gringa, Cuba and his Teddy Bear and Ashes of Light, he also serves as Company Manager for UTC. He worked on The New Colony’s production of The Light by Loy Webb. He is thankful to have the opportunity to tell the stories that reflect the communities they speak to.

Angela McIlvain (Properties Master) is thrilled to join Chicago Dramatists for this production. Recent credits include scenic and puppet design for Knuffle Bunny (Emerald City Theatre); props, paint and puppet design for Another Jungle (Cloudgate Theatre); props and puppet design for Meet Juan(ito) Doe and scenic design for 100 Hauntings (Free Street Theatre); scenic design for Cinderella the Remix and the world premiere of The Women Eat Chocolate, and puppet design for the world premiere of Prospero’s Storm (The Theatre School). Angela graduated from the Scenic Design program at The Theatre School at DePaul University.

Lucas Garcia (Dramaturg) is a Chicago based writer and dramaturg from Albuquerque, NM. They are also Co-Director of Marketing and
ARTISTIC TEAM CONT.

Communications for the Alliance of Latinx Theatre Artists, and are a member of El Semillero, ALTA’s Latinx playwriting circle. Lucas has worked as a dramaturg with The Yard (columbinus), TimeLine Theatre Company (In the Next Room), Steppenwolf Theatre Company (La Ruta, Pass Over), The Hypocrites (W;t), Chicago Dramatists (Lorca in New York, Felons and Familias). Lucas also writes as a theatre critic for Rescripted: An artist-led platform for critique, discussion, and writing. Their creative work can be found most recently on the blog of The Brillantina Project, plainchina, VCU’s anthology of undergraduate work, and in Re: Visions, the literary journal of the University of Notre Dame’s Creative Writing department.

**Kris Tori** (Assistant Director) born in Pogradec, Albania and raised in Chicago, she graduated from Columbia College Chicago and is currently attending University of Chicago in Illinois (UIC) with a Masters in the Latin American and Latino Studies program. She is currently an ensemble member with Aguijon Theatre and Theatre Y. Her theater credits include Macbeth with Theatre Y; Cervantes and Shakespeare: Mano A Mano, Tren Al Sur, The House of Bernarda Alba, Blowout, Yerma and Las Soldaderas with Aguijon Theatre; Delirium, Hecuba and Marisol with Columbia College Chicago.

**Liviu Pasare** (Projection Designer) has a Chicago-based practice creating works and visual experiences using new media and technology. He works as a video designer, cinematographer, editor, animator and has produced, directed and performed for live multimedia experiences. He has been affiliated with theaters and artists such as Luftwerk, Bob Faust, The Seldoms, Nick Cave, Claudia Hart, Chicago Children’s Theatre, Adventure Stage, Victory Gardens, Blue Man Group, Lucky Plush, For more info visit Liviu.stoptime.live

**Christine Pascual** (Costume Designer) based in Chicago since 1994. She was born in New York City and grew up on Long Island. She is the oldest of seven children. Her parents are both doctors who immigrated to New York from the Philippines. She graduated from SUNY at Stony Brook with a Bachelor of Arts degree and then earned an MFA in costume design from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She started designing for daring, innovative storefront theaters like Defiant and Onyx. Since then she has been working with storefront, mid-size, and large theater on new plays. She is drawn to and passionate about new works that deal with real life human experiences and the human condition. She is an advocate for a theater community that tells the stories of all Americans and will continue to work towards that goal. In 2010 she was a nominee for the Henry Hewes Design Awards for notable effects in costumes for *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*. She most recently designed for *Simpatico* at the McCarter Theatre Center in 2017.

**Jenniffer J. Thusing** (Stage Manager) is so happy to be working with Chicago Dramatists, again. She previously stage managed American Beauty Shop, Blizzard of ’67, Beautiful Autistic and many other productions for Dramatists. Jenniffer is also an associate artist. She has stage managed for Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, SoloChicago, Chicago Commercial Collective, Noble Fool, Nuns for Fun, Emerald City and Light Opera Works. Her work as a set designer with her partner Robert Groth has been seen at Irish Theatre of Chicago, Mary Arrchie, The Royal George, Metropolis Performing Arts, The Broadway Playhouse, The Apollo Theater, and Emerald City’s Little Theater. Jenniffer is a proud member of Actors Equity Association.
RED THEATER presents

The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity

Written by Kristoffer Diaz

MACE ......................................................................................................................... Alejandro Tey
CHAD DEITY ........................................................................................................... TBD...
EKO ......................................................................................................................... Frank Stasio
VP ............................................................................................................................ Harsh Gagoomal
THE BAD GUY ......................................................................................................... Will Snyder
REFEREE .............................................................................................................. Dave Honigman

DIRECTOR ............................................................................................................. Jeremy Aluma*
SCENIC DESIGNER ................................................................................................ Becca Venable*
LIGHTING DESIGNER ............................................................................................ Charles Blunt*
SOUND DESIGNER ................................................................................................ Sarah D. Espinoza*
COSTUME DESIGNER .............................................................................................. Hailey Rakowiecki
DRAMATURG ......................................................................................................... Joseph Galizia
STAGE MANAGER .................................................................................................. Jamie Crothers
FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER ..................................................................................... Kyle Encinas
FIGHT CAPTAIN ...................................................................................................... Will Snyder
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR .......................................................................................... Nathan Speckman
PRODUCERS ......................................................................................................... Marisa Lerman*, Joey Lubelfeld*, Rory Jobst

*Red Theater Chicago Company Member
Alejandro Tey (Mace) is a Chicago-based actor, director, writer, and teaching artist. He has worked nationally as an artistic associate with Sojourn Theatre and Theater Unspeakable and teaches with Actors Gymnasium, Mudlark Theater Company, Northlight On Campus, and For Youth Inquiry. When he's not taking powerbombs and cussing a lot, you'll find Tey performing for young people with Filament, Adventure Stage, and Emerald City. Thanks to everyone who made this dream come true (again).

Frank Stasio (EKO) is an actor, writer, and director. Some of his favorite parts include Joe Cooper in Killer Joe and Lenny in In Arabia, We'd All be Kings. His short film, “Tilting at Skyscrapers”, can be seen on funnyordie.com. Frank would like to thank Aaron Williams for his ‘Big Break’.

Harsh Gagoomal (VP) is excited to be back in-action helping to create something dope. Previous acting credits include Guards at the Taj, Hellcab, An Octoroon, Journey to the West, Arcadia, and A Disappearing Number. Harsh received his B.A. in Theatre Studies from Emerson College as well as invaluable lessons from Green Shirt Studio. Performing aside, he has dedicated his time to working with the homeless via various classes and workshops. Harsh is represented by Shirley Hamilton Talent.

Will Snyder (Bad Guy) is an actor and former pro wrestler. He also serves as Artistic Director of Evil Kitten Productions which produces the audio drama Neon Nights: The Arcane Files of Jack Tracer. Please visit us online at evilkittenproductions.com. Will would like to thank Kyle Encinas for his wonderful fight choreography and his wife Rachel for her neverending support.

Dave Honigman (Referee) was one of the last Ringling Bros and Barnum & Bailey circus clowns in Out of This World, the closing tour. In association with The Clown School of Los Angeles, Dave held membership in the theater company Four Clowns performing in such shows as Pinocchio (South Coast Repertory), The Halfwits’ Last Hurrah (Hollywood Fringe Festival, Best Physical Theatre 2015), and That Beautiful Laugh (HFF, Best Physical Theatre 2012). He is on the iO Comedy Network team Proper Clown and can be found on social media @HonigClown. We get it, he’s a clown. Special thanks to Dave’s family, Madeline Baird, Jeremy Aluma, Red Theater Chicago, and Gray Talent Group.

Kristoffer Diaz (Playwright) is a New Dramatists resident playwright, speaker, and educator. His play The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Drama, and has gone on to more than thirty productions nationwide. Other full-length titles include Welcome to Arroyo’s, #therevolution, The Upstairs Concierge, and The Unfortunates. HIs work has been produced, commissioned, and developed at The Public Theater, Dallas Theater Center, Geffen Playhouse, ACT, Center Theatre Group, The Goodman,
Second Stage, Victory Gardens, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Actors Theatre of Louisville, American Theater Company, The Atlantic, InterAct, Mixed Blood, The Orchard Project, Hip-Hop Theater Festival, The Lark, Summer Play Festival, Donmar Warehouse, and South Coast Repertory, among many others. Awards include the Guggenheim, Jerome, Van Lier, NYFA, and Gail Merrifield Papp Fellowships; New York Times Outstanding Playwright Award; Lucille Lortel, Equity Jeff, and OBIE Awards; and the Future Aesthetics Artist Grant, among others. As a screenwriter, he has developed original television pilots for HBO and FX, and written for Netflix. Kristoffer holds a BA from New York University’s Gallatin School of Individualized Study, an MFA from NYU’s Department of Dramatic Writing, and an MFA from Brooklyn College’s Performing Arts Management program. He teaches playwriting at New York University.

Jeremy Aluma (Director) is an award-winning, Jewish-American theatre director of Iraqi descent. He founded the internationally touring clown troupe, Four Clowns and served as Artistic Director during their first seven years. Directing credits include: Abraham & Isaac (MuBe Cultural Theatre, São Paulo, Brazil); Pinocchio and Robin Hood (South Coast Repertory, CA); Sublimity (Theatre Row, NYC); The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity (Red Theater, Chicago); Crumble, Lay Me Down Justin Timberlake (Sacred Fools, LA); The Last Days of Judas Iscariot (Urban Theatre Movement, LA); Henry’s Potato (REDCAT, LA); Beyond Dark (Odyssey Theater, LA); In Arabia We’d All Be Kings (Alive Theatre, Long Beach); Jonah (Annenberg, Santa Monica) and Hamlet (American Coast Theater, CA). His original show, Four Clowns toured nationally to La MaMa (NYC); Chopin Theatre (Chicago); Gremlin Theatre (St. Paul, MN); Exit Theatre (San Francisco); and Insurgo Theater Movement (Las Vegas). Company member at Red Theater and member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Union (SDC). He continues to teach and take classes at The Clown School and is currently pursuing his MFA in Directing at The Theatre School at DePaul University. Upcoming: An Oak Tree by Tim Crouch with Red Theater and A Dybbuk or Between Two Worlds by S. Anksy adapted by Tony Kushner, February 2019. Jeremyaluma.com

Becca Venable (Scenic Designer/Technical Director) is a Texas native living in Chicago where she is the assistant technical director at the University of Illinois at Chicago, the technical director for Chicago Children’s Theatre and Red Theater Chicago, and a company member with Red Theater Chicago and The Comrades. Becca also works as a technical director, lighting designer, and sound designer around the city. Some of Becca’s credits include The Nutcracker (Ballet Lubbock), A Year with Frog and Toad (Chicago Children’s Theatre), Dying City (The Comrades), Beauty and the Beast (Lubbock Moonlight Musicals), American Hero (First Floor Theater), and The Good Fight (Babes with Blades).

Charles Blunt (Lighting Designer) is a graduate of Rose Bruford College of Theatre & Performance in England where he got his undergraduate degree in Lighting Design. Having lit shows in both London & Oxford, he moved to Chicago where he has continued his design work, including most recently, WildClaw’s Future Echoes. Check out his work at: www.charlesbluntlighting.com

Sarah D. Espinoza (Sound Designer) is so excited to be remounting The Elaborate Enterance of Chad Diety. She has recently sound designed Damascus (Strawdog), Another Jungle (Cloudgate Theatre), Future Echoes (Wildclaw) Little Red Cyrano (Red Theatre), Night in Alachua County (WildClaw)
Hailey Rakowiecki (Costume Designer) is a Chicago-based Costume designer and technician. Previous Red Theatre credits include The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity and Sickle. Recent Chicago design credits include: How To Use A Knife, Five Mile Lake, The Heavens Are Hung in Black (Shattered Globe), How I Learned To Drive (Artistic Home), Hellcab (Agency Theatre), Macbeth (Oak Park Festival Theatre), Merry Wives, Taming of the Shrew (the Arc Theatre). Hailey holds a BFA in Costume Design and Technology from The Theatre School. She is also a Wigmaker, having earned both Wigs and Hair Chicago program certificates.

Kyle Encinas (Fight Director) is a fight director/actor/writer, with credits in Chicago and Washington, D.C. Favorite past violence credits include: From these Fatal Loins, Barbecue Apocalypse (The Ruckus), Maul Santa (weARE Productions), Fight Quest (Otherworld Theatre), Macbeth, Hamlet (Transcendent Theatre Ensemble).

Joseph Galizia (Dramaturg) is ecstatic to be a part of the Chad Deity Creative team! He has been working consistently in Chicago as an actor, circus performer, and performance artist. His theatre credits include work with Lookingglass Theatre, The House, Black Ensemble Theatre, Collaboraction, Urban Theatre, Red Theater, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and numerous others! Joseph also works as a writer/journalist for RingSide News and PW Torch, two of the most popular wrestling newsletter/websites in existence. A big thank you to the cast for their phenomenal work, and for inviting me in to be apart of the mayhem. Love to friends, family, Marissa, Mr. Philip, and to the greatest wrestler in the world...Sasha Banks.

Jamie Crothers (Stage Manager) is excited to be back with her Boys for Chad Deity! Since the wrestling mat she has been working with The Actors Gymnasium as SM for The Magnificent Wonder, Journey to the Sun and The Odyssey. For the past four years she has mostly been busy working with A Red Orchid Theatre where credits include: The Nether (ASM), The Haven Place (ASM), The Room (ASM), Sender (PM/ASM), The Mutilated (ASM), Accidentally Like a Martyr (ASM), Mud Blue Sky (ASM), Pins and Withers (ASM), Incubator Series (SM), and Trevor (ASM). Other Chicago credits include: The Portrait with The Greenhouse and The Neapolitans (SM), Scream! Queen, Scream! with Hell in a Handbag (SM), Miracles in the Fall and Never the Bridesmaid with Polarity Ensemble Theatre (SM). She is also a founder and Co-Director of the Bethel College Theatre Alumni Chapter which seeks to prepare students for theatre careers after graduation. Jamie would like to thank friends and family for their continual support and Her Savior for unending joy, love and grace. With love to Robert.

Nathan Speckman (Assistant Director) a Chicago-based director, actor and sound designer, is thrilled to return to this incredible project. Past East Coast directing credits include: Vigils, Mr. Marmalade, Uncle

The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity (Red Theatre), The Woman in Black (WildClaw), Megastasis (Eclipse), I Am My Own Wife (About Face Theatre), Thumbelina (Lifeline), You On the Moors Now (The Hypocrites), Farewell My Friend ((re)-discover), Douglass (American Vicarious), Dating and Dragons (The Factory), Midnight Cowboy (Lifeline), Mr. Popper’s Penguins (Lifeline), The Revel (The House), Motel 666 (Lifeline), Midsummer Night’s Dream (Two Pence), fml: How Carson McCullers saved my life (Loyola University Chicago), Deathscribe 2014 (WildClaw), co-sound designed The Last Defender (The House), and won the non-equity Jeff award for her sound design for The Arsonists (Strawdog).
Bob, *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*, and *SEX aka Wiener and Boobs* which he co-directed with his brother. Nathan currently works for the wrestling promotion AAW as an assistant to the producers and has begun training with the OI4K Academy in Dayton, Ohio to become a referee. Please, enjoy.

**Marisa Lerman (Producer)** serves as Red Theater’s Executive Director. She has previously served as the Red Theater’s Managing Director as well as the Assistant Executive Director for Oil Lamp Theater. She has worked on and off the stage for the past 10 years for companies such as The Philadelphia Shakespeare Theater, the Prince Music Theatre, Oklahoma Shakespeare in the Park, The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, Chicago Folks Operetta, and the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

**Joey Lubelfeld (Producer)** is the Managing Director for Red Theater Chicago. He is a freelance producer and director with a focus in devised work. Chicago: work with The Whiskey Rebellion, Skokie Theatre, Headline Theater, Israel Horovitz’s *Beirut Rocks* and Paula Vogel’s *The Baltimore Waltz*. London: *Stop, And…* (a devised documentary piece in collaboration with Anna Herman of Clean Break) and *Queervolution* (a devised piece produced as a part of the ZU-UK’s House of Healing). Assistant directing: Grant James Varjas’ *Accidentally, Like a Martyr* (A Red Orchid Theatre; dir. Shade Murray) and Tom Weber’s *Genomenon* (Piven Theatre; dir. Benno Nelson) among others. NYC: work with the Brooklyn Actor’s Troupe. Administratively, Joey has worked with A Red Orchid Theatre and Northlight Theatre (Chicago) as well as The TEAM (NYC). www.joeylubelfeld.com

**Rory Jobst (Producer)** Yes! Yes! Yes! Rory is a giant wrestling fan. It’s true, it’s damn true! So naturally he is excited to be working behind the scenes in true Vince Russo/Eric Bischoff form for this amazing productions. Rory was an ensemble member of Oracle Productions for four years, where he appeared in their productions of The Return of Radio Goggles, Accidental Death of an Anarchist, Romulus, and The America Play. Other credits include Grapes of Wrath (understudy) at The Gift Theatre, Drumming in the Night at Prop Thtr, In the Jungle of Cities at Ka-Tet, and Hunger and Thirst (directed by Michael Shannon) at A Red Orchid Theatre. As a playwright, his produced work includes The Rorsky Plays, Samuel Beckett, Andre the Giant, and the Crickets, Daniel Day Lewis and the Big Potatas, Super-Wellesian, and Disney Pixar’s Beers. He also wrote his own play about professional wrestling called Foreign Objects which had a reading at the Church of the New Play Series at the 27th Annual Rhino Fest. Favorite wrestlers include: Low-Ki, Luke Harper, AJ Styles, Teddy Hart, and of course Daniel Bryan. Thanks to Aaron and Jeremy for the opportunity, and mom for everything else. And that’s the bottom line because Stonecold said so!

Red Theater Chicago would like to thank Theatre on the Lake and the city of Chicago for this wonderful opportunity!
RED THEATER

RED THEATER CHICAGO IS

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR .......................................................................................... Aaron Sawyer +
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR .................................................................................. Marisa Lerman
MANAGING DIRECTOR ..................................................................................... Joey Lubelfeld
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR ..................................................................................... Becca Venable
LITERARY MANAGER ......................................................................................... Giulianna Marchese
MARKETING MANAGER .................................................................................... Neil O'Callaghan
DIRECTOR OF ACCESSIBILITY ......................................................................... Cheryl Renee Farney

COMPANY MEMBERS: Gage Wallace +, Elizabeth Lovelady, Jeff Kurysz, J.W. Basilo, Scott Dickens, Christopher Paul Mueller, Liam Fitzgerald, Erin Haddock, McKenna Liesman, Jeremy Aluma, Sarah D. Espinoza, Charles Blunt, Cara Beth Heath

+ Founding Collective Member, Red Theater Lincoln, 2008
^ Former Red Theater Omaha Member

ABOUT RED THEATER

Red Theater is a Jeff Award-winning company that asks dangerous questions theatrically, striving to deliver productions that go beyond entertainment, challenging an audience to interpret the themes and ideas presented on a personal level. Since 2008, our commitment to accessibility through every stage of the creative process also lowers the barriers of access, allowing all audiences to see new and reimagined works that broaden perspectives and inspire dialogue.

COMING SOON FROM RED THEATER CHICAGO...

An Oak Tree
By: Tim Crouch
Directed by: Jeremy Aluma
Featuring: Company Member Gage Wallace
Fall 2018

True West
By Sam Shepard
Directed by: Aaron Sawyer
Featuring: Company Member Jeff Kurysz
Winter 2019

Non-Player Character
By Walt McGuff
Directed by: Midsommer Flight Artistic Director, Beth Wolf
Spring 2019

For more information, visit www.redtheater.org
proudly presents

THE LIGHT

Written by Loy A. Webb
Directed by Toma Tavares Langston

Starring

Jeffery Owen Freelon, Jr* .................................................................................. Rashad
Tiffany Oglesby ................................................................................................... Genesis

Production Team

Daryl Ritchie .............................................. Stage Manager/Associate Scenic Designer
Cassandra Kendall ................................................................. Lighting Designer
Antonio Bruno ................................................................................. Sound Designer
Raymond K. Cleveland .............................................. Original Production Scenic Designer
John Wilson ................................................................ Production Manager
Sarah Collonge* ........................................................ Production Manager
Noelle Simone ........................................................................ Assistant Director
Regina Victor ........................................................................ Dramaturg

*Denotes The New Colony Ensemble Member
The New Colony develops NEW ART and NEW ARTISTS in order to educate and build NEW AUDIENCES. Founded in 2008, The New Colony has established itself as “one of Chicago’s essential off-Loop companies” (Chicago Tribune) having developed and produced over 25 world-premiere plays and musicals garnering four Joseph Jefferson Awards, the 2011 Broadway in Chicago Emerging Theatre Award, and Best Overall Production at the 2012 New York International Fringe Festival. The New Colony is a resident company of The Den Theatre located in Wicker Park. To learn more, please visit thenewcolony.org.

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR...

When I first read Loy Webb’s *The Light* last year, I was immediately captured by its humor and display of an intimate love story. I am a hopeless romantic and thirst to see more acts of love and romance onstage and in modern media. The play touches on a rarely told narrative in the theater world; in the beginning, the play joyously and playfully opens to a young Black couple, Rashad and Genesis, who are lusciously in love. As I continued to read, the topical threads of sexism, misogyny, rape culture, male supremacism, intersectionality of race and gender thicken throughout the play; these concepts and issues that we currently see in our news feed tell us that our nation is undergoing a socio-cultural transformation.

In *The Light*, which takes place in a condo in Hyde Park, Chicago, during a time “where we need to do better”, Rashad - a firefighter, former college football star, plans the perfect anniversary evening for his beloved Genesis - a highly respected and awarded principal. Gift 1 is a really, really “cool” proposal meanwhile Gift 2 conjures up a tragic past event. The couple delves deeply into a close, revealing conversation about their fears and past heartaches. Loy is asking us to consider what we are willing to grapple with in order to give and receive love.

I asked Loy what she thought were the main takeaways from *The Light*. What stuck with me was an essay she shared by Pearl Cleage entitled, “Mad at Miles”. Cleage writes about the abusive behavior of Miles Davis towards the Black women in his life, more specifically, his wife. She writes, “So the question is: How can they hit us and still be our leaders? Our husbands? Our lovers? Our geniuses? Our friends? And the answer is they can’t” The play speaks to this question but also Loy’s moving words make us wonder how radical love can be a beacon of light. Loy and I have worked together in the past on some of her other short plays. I am a huge advocate for her style; she has a poetic, naturalistic way about the language of her healing plays. Loy’s work demands that moving forward from our past wounds requires each of us to reconnect with our inner guiding light.

Enjoy Loy A. Webb’s *The Light*.

Peace,

Toma Tavares Langston
**Loy A. Webb** (Playwright) is a Chicago born playwright and theatre journalist. Her debut play *The Light* premiered in January of 2018 at The New Colony, and will have its Off-Broadway Premiere in January of 2019 at MCC Theater. Her newest play, *His Shadow* is currently in development at Chicago Dramatists, where she is also an inaugural Tutterow Fellow. Her one-act plays have been featured at Black Ensemble Theatre, American Theater Company, 20 Percent Theatre Company Chicago, University of North Dakota, GI60 International One Minute Play Festival, Modern-Day Griot Theatre Company New York, and the Black Lives, Black Words International Project, in which she is an associate artist. As a theatre journalist she is a member of the Association of Women of Journalist-Chicago, a past mentor with the AWJ-Chicago/Goodman Theatre's Cindy Bandle Young Critics Program, and a contributing theater critic for Newcity. Loy holds a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a J.D. from The John Marshall Law School. She is represented by The Robert A. Freedman Dramatic Agency.

**Jeffery Owen Freelon Jr.** (Rashad) is a proud south side Chicagohan, excited to work on a play by black people and for black people. He is proud the hard work of everyone on this project is being acknowledged by Theater On The Lake and can’t wait to tell this story to more people. He has worked with an array of theatre companies such as Theatre Unspeakable, Definition Theatre, and Victory Hardens and has made an appearance on “Chicago PD.” He is represented by Paonessa Talent Agency.

**Tiffany Oglesby** (Genesis) is originally from Atlanta, GA. and is happy to return to New Colony where she was an understudy for *Byhalia Mississippi* last year. She recently appeared as “Grace” in Definition Theatre’s production of *An Octoroon* and as “Vanessa” in About Face Theatre’s *Significant Other*. Other theatre credits include *truth and reconciliation* (Sideshow), *East Texas Hot Links* (u/s Writers), and *A Small Oak Tree Runs Red* (u/s Congo Square). She also had the pleasure of working with other theatre companies including Raven, and Lifeline. TV credits include recurring roles on NBC’s “Chicago Med” and Showtime’s “The Chi.” She received her BFA in Performing Arts from Savannah College of Art and Design and her MFA in Acting from The Theatre School at DePaul University. Happily exclusive with Grossman and Jack Talent. Love you Mom and Marc!

**Toma Tavares Langston** (Director) is a freelance theater director. Victory Gardens: Directors Inclusion Initiative Director 2015 Fellowship. (Assistant Director) *Sucker Punch*. New Colony: (Director) *The Light* (Joseph Jefferson Nomination for Director – Play). Jackalope Theatre: (Assistant Director) *1980 (or Why I’m Voting for John Anderson)*. Sideshow Theatre: (Assistant Director) *Truth and Reconciliation* and *Give It All Back*. Toma is a proud steering committee member of DirectorsLab Chicago and an associate artist with Black Lives, Black Words International Project. Directorial credits include *The Last Five Years*, *The Shadow Box*, *For Colored Girls Who Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow Is Enuf*.
STEPHENWOLF
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Directed by Phylicia Rashad

A comical mismatch of two roommates leads to a surprising and touching friendship.

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Cassandra Kendall (Lighting Designer) is a freelance lighting designer and special effects make-up artist. She is a Theatre Arts graduate from the Theatre School at DePaul University. Recent Chicago credits include: Brujos webseries (sfx makeup), The Runaways’ Doing Drugs and Dying in Space Ritual (light design) and The Blind Owl’s Dirty Butterfly (sfx makeup effects). For more info, check out Cassanovaart.com.

Antonio Bruno (Sound Designer) is thrilled to work on this production from the first look at the pages of the script, Antonio is grateful to have worked with an amazing production team and to Toma for reaching out and Loy for creating this opportunity with her wonderful words. Antonio has worked as a sound designer for UrbanTheater Company’s productions of La Gringa, Cuba and his Teddy Bear and Ashes of Light, he also serves as Company Manager for UTC. You can look forward to seeing his name on a number of world premiers coming your way soon.

Raymond K. Cleveland (Costume Designer) is happy to assist in the creation of this great show. Past favorite roles include, Chris in The Barback Daddies (pop magic), Ben “Stone Jaw” in Iron Irene and Cecil B. DeMille in Ayn Rand in Love (both with MCL), Titania in Bite (pride films and plays), Choreographer for Some Enchanted Evening (fox valley repertory); Thanks to the cast and crew for always bringing the magic!

John Wilson (Original Production Scenic Designer, Painter) is excited to be back with The New Colony after previously designing Scapegoat, Kin Folk, Merge, Byhalia, Mississippi, Kate and Sam Are Not Breaking Up, and B-Side Studio. He won the 2016 Non-Equity Jeff Award for Best Scenic Design for Byhalia, Mississippi with New Colony and Definition Theater. The production was remounted at Steppenwolf later that summer of 2016 as the first scenic design at the Steppenwolf’s new 1700 space where he recently designed Columbinus with The Yard. Recently, he has also designed Pillars of The Community (Strawdog) and The Enchanted Castle (Mudlark). He is a company member with Collaboraction, an artistic associate with WildClaw Theater, as well as an artistic associate and mentor of The Yard. He wishes to thank this wonderful group of artists, Evan, Slim and Heather for all their love and support. Please visit his website to see additional artwork and design at southernrdrawn.com.

Noelle Simone (Assistant Director) has been performing for over fifteen years. She has received all her dance training at the Joel Hall Dancers Center, Northside Dance Theatre, and Gus Giordano Jazz Dance School. She has worked with multiple dance companies and youth dance companies throughout the Chicagoland area, and loves teaching. She has performed with Janet Jackson and Paula Abdul, and has started a promising career in theatre after receiving her B.F.A. in Theatre arts with a concentration in Theatre Management and a Minor in Educational studies from the Theatre School at Depaul University. This is Noelle's second time choreographing since undergrad, and was nominated for a Broadway World Award for her first production, A Little Princess with Windy City Performs. Her next steps after The Light includes Tilikum with Sideshow Theatre. She is so excited to be working with Toma Langston for a second time and can’t wait to continue her luscious career as a choreographer.

Regina Victor (Dramaturg) (they/them/theiris) is a producer, dramaturg, director, writer, performer and critic. They are incredibly excited to return to the creative team of Loy Webb’s The Light. Hailing
from Oakland, California, Victor is a member of the Victory Gardens Directors Inclusion Initiative 17/18, and the SDCF Observership 17/18 Class, and recently finished serving as the Steppenwolf Artistic Apprentice and Multicultural Fellow. In 2017 they founded the online theatre journal Rescripted (www.rescripted.org) and is a freelance critic for the Windy City Times. Recent credits include BLKS at Steppenwolf Theatre, The Light at The New Colony, Breach at Victory Gardens, and To Catch a Fish at Timeline Theatre. www.reginavictor.com.

Sarah Collonge (Production Manager) is a designer and theater manager based in Chicago. Previous credits with The New Colony include Kinfolk, Even Longer and Farther Away, Byhalia, Mississippi, Plastic Revolution, and reWILDing Genius. She has also worked with First Floor Theater, Nothing Without a Company, Thompson Street Opera, Third Eye Theatre Ensemble, and American Theater Company. She is a graduate of the University of Chicago with a degree in Theater and Performance Studies.
presents

INSURRECTION:

HOLDING HISTORY

Written by Robert O’Hara
Directed by Wardell Julius Clark

Stage Manager
JC Widman

Costume Design
Uriel Gomez

Choreography
Breon Arzell

Dramaturg
Jared Bellot

Production Manager
Rose Hamill

Scenic Design
Katherine Arfken*

Props Design
Jesse Gaffney

Violence Design
Brian Plocharczyk

Assistant Director
Kanomé Jones*

Producers
Jason A. Fleece &
Amy Szerlong

Lighting Design
Kaili Story

Sound Design
Matthew Bonham
Lockdall

Intimacy Design
Rachel Flesher

Logo Design
Tony Churchill

*Stage Left Ensemble Member
CAST

Ron .................................................................................................................................................. Breon Arzell
TJ .................................................................................................................................................. Ian Martin
Mutha/Mutha Wit .................................................................................................................. Shariba Rivers
Gertha/Mistress Mo’tel/Clerk Wife .................................................................................. Sydney Charles
Octavia/Katie Lynn .......................................................................................................... Anna Dauzvardis
Ova Sea Jones/Nat Turner .......................................................................................... Christopher W. Jones
Hammet .......................................................................................................................... Nathaniel Andrew
Reporter/Cop/Buck Naked/Clerk Husband .................................................................. Sam Boeck
Izzie Mae/Clerk Son ........................................................................................................ Ayanna Bria Bakari

Time: Now and Then
Place: Here and There
Running Time: Approximately two hours

There will be one ten-minute intermission
CAST

Nathaniel Andrew  Breon Arzell  Ayanna Bria Bakari

Sam Boeck  Sydney Charles  Anna Dauzvardis

Christopher W. Jones  Ian Martin  Shariba Rivers
BIOGRAPHIES

Robert O’Hara
(Playwright) has recently released his Film Writing and Directing debut, *The Inheritance*. He received the 2010 NAACP Best Director Award for his direction of *Eclipsed* by Danai Guiria. He received 2010 Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding New Play for *Antebellum* and an OBIE Award for his Direction of the World Premiere of the critically acclaimed *In The Continuum* at Primary Stages. He wrote and directed the World Premiere of *Insurrection: Holding History* at the New York Shakespeare Festival, the piece received the Oppenheimer Award for Best New American Play and was subsequently published by both TCG and Dramatist Play Service. He Directed the World Premiere of *Brother/Sister Plays (Part 2)*, Co-Production at McCarter Theater/ New York Shakespeare Festival. His recent Stage Directing: *Tough Titty*, Magic Theater. *Eclipsed*, CTG/Kirk Douglas Theater. *A Life In The Theater*, Alliance Theater. *Brother Size*, City Theater. His new play *Etiquette of Vigilance* was produced in the Steppenwolf First Look Festival 2010. ACT/ZeuM recently produced his play, *Good Breeding*. His play, *Bootycandy*, under his direction, was presented at the Woolly Mammoth Theater. He is currently an Adjunct Professor at NYU/TISCH School of the Arts.

Wardell Julius Clark
(Director) hails from Fairfield, Alabama. Chicago Directing Credits include Associate Director for *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner* (Court Theatre) - Spring 2018, The One Minute Play Festival, *Shola’s Game* (Black Lives, Black Words Chicago 2), Assistant Director for *The Scottsboro Boys* (Porchlight Music Theatre); *Satchmo At The Waldorf* and *Gem Of The Ocean* (Court Theatre). Chicago Acting Credits include *Silent Sky* (First Folio Theatre); *Apartment 3a* (Windy City Playhouse); *Gem Of The Ocean* (Court Theatre); *A Raisin In The Sun* (TimeLine Theatre); *The Whipping Man* (Northlight Theatre); *We Are Proud To Present... and The Gospel According To James* (Victory Gardens Theatre); *Invisible Man* (Court Theatre); *The Beats* (16th Street Theater); *Ghosts Of Atwood* (MPAACT), for which he received the Black Theater Alliance Denzel Washington Award for Most Promising Actor; and *Topdog/Underdog* (American Theater Company/ Congo Square Theater). Regional credits include *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *The Learned Ladies* (Theater at Monmouth); *The Whipping Man* (Cardinal Stage); *Cymbeline* (Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival); *Fences* (Carver Theatre). TV/Film: Shameless, *Chicago Fire* Seasons 1 and 4, *Transformers: Dark the Moon*. He holds a BFA in Acting from The Theatre School, at DePaul University. He has studied at Lincoln Center in NYC with directors, actors, and visual artists in a summer intensive at the Artist Development Lab. Wardell is the Casting and Producing Associate with TimeLine Theatre Company, where he is also an Associate Artist, and serves as a teaching artist in the Living History Program, as well as a teaching artist for Victory Gardens Theatre. He is also an Associate Artist with the Black Lives, Black Words theatre collective.
A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Working on the Insurrection: Why it’s important to take the ride

I first encountered *Insurrection: Holding History* in the early 2000s as a first-year acting student in college. I was totally wrapped in the fantastic voyage that playwright Robert O’Hara had created. The play seemed to have a spirit, an energy, a vitality, and a breaking of theatrical convention I had never experienced. I found myself showing up daily to rehearsals, even when I wasn’t called, to soak up the words and the work of the artists working on the piece. I had the pleasure of meeting Robert, just before tech, and obtained even more clarity on what was intended. This was beyond spellbinding. I’m not even sure I fully processed what he was actually saying at the time. One of his notes to the company was something to the effect of, “Y’all are just doing Roots, and I wrote In Living Color.” Talk about an “A-HA” moment. Not sure we got it exactly right but we were all game to find the dualities in the script and give it our all.

Thirteen years later, I’m making my directorial debut on this very same play. I was surprised that there had not been one professional production of this masterpiece ever done in Chicago. Why not? Because it’s edgy? Abrasive? Unapologetically Black? Irreverent? Plays fast and loose with actual history? Well, surely there have been many plays like that over the past two decades, why hadn’t anyone bothered to touch *Insurrection: Holding History*? The answer to those questions are varied, and I wouldn’t necessarily find out the answer but what I did know is: I had to direct this play somewhere. Enter Stage Left Theatre.

As we began rehearsals, the magic that is inherently in the play immediately started to bounce off the pages, out of the actors mouths, and into the various rehearsal halls. The language of the play rang like a battle hymn, in a moment of confrontation between characters Ron and his grandfather TJ. O’Hara’s poetry fired on all cylinders. The entire rehearsal room is rapt and silent, speaking to the power of this play. There was never any doubt, I had chosen the right project. Also, having an embarrassment of riches in the fiercely talented ensemble of actors I was able to cast has proved to be one of the most enjoyable working experiences to date. There is a great benefit of having established friendships, a shared history and experience in the room, especially regarding this story. We have a shorthand, a common language, that makes the creation process that much more rich. We laugh, we cry, we cut up, we have a black a** good time, and we get lots of work done very quickly. (This cast can take a note, like nobody’s business!)

While working on a play, any play, moments in real life and society seem to resonate in a special way depending on what you are working on. I can’t think of a better time for this show to be seen by our community and city at large, given where we are in America right now. A few weeks into rehearsal, the pedophile, racist and senatorial candidate, Roy Moore, responded to a question asked by a black individual “When was the last time you thought America was great” answering back “I think it was great at the time when families were united — even though we had slavery — they cared for one another…. Our families were strong, our country had a direction.” I was quite appalled at the notion that anyone, of any race, was better off during slavery, or that it was a great time for our country. The country was quite directionless, in fact… which, you know, led to the Civil War. To know that there are people who actually hold the same beliefs as he does was a certain kind of continuous fuel for me to go back in the rehearsal room, dig even deeper, to highlight more specifically true moments about how horrible and heinous America was during slavery.

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In post-Obama America, we find ourselves surrounded by unabashedly bigoted, misogynistic, homophobic, racists in the top positions of our government. The supposed leader of the free world being one. The Attorney General, also known as the top cop in America, is a known racist for most of his career, as well. The White supremacist DNA structure, that underlies the fabric of our country, had their fill after the past eight years of growth on every level because a black man succeeded where it could not. And so, they have set out to destroy our country as we know it. Everything that we hold dear, all the progress we have made, is on the line everyday of our current lives.

Therefore, we as artists have a collective responsibility to reflect, to actively recall, to vividly express the horrific truths that up to this point have shaped our country. *Insurrection: Holding History* is a far-from-literal account of the Nat Turner slave rebellion and a hilarious fantasy ride, but more than anything else I have found it to be a warning and a call to action. At its very core, it shows what happens when you disregard one’s humanity and force people into uncompromising positions.

America has always been a melting pot, constantly boiling, and every so often when the pressures of white supremacy become, in every way imaginable, just too much to bear, the lid pops off. We are on the verge of that happening yet again, and so we must look, listen, and remember our history. It is the only way forward. When Jason Fleece and I started discussing this play, I was adamant this show needed to be done because it is American history, not just black history, and our history is important. We must know it, study it, learn it and grow from it—or else we, the people of color who built this land, will certainly be doomed to repeat it. It is vital to America, the shallow home of democracy and morality we pretend to be. It is vital to the very existence for people of color. It is so important. It cannot be ignored.

I invite you all to come see this play. Laugh, cry, get angry, be offended—and then use those emotions to make the world a better place.

Peace and Love,

Wardell Julius Clark

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**SPECIAL THANKS**

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