

2024/25 SEASON



WE ARE GATHERED

A NEW PLAY BY

TARELL ALVIN
McCRANEY

MAY 16 – JUNE 15

STARTS JUNE 12

A WRINKLE IN TIME

A NEW MUSICAL



BOOK BY LAUREN YEE
MUSIC AND LYRICS BY HEATHER CHRISTIAN
BASED ON THE NOVEL WRITTEN BY MADELEINE L'ENGLE
DIRECTED BY LEE SUNDAY EVANS
CHOREOGRAPHED BY ANI TAJ

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ARENA STAGE

1101 Sixth Street SW
Washington, DC 20024-2461
ADMINISTRATION 202-554-9066
SALES OFFICE 202-488-3300
arenastage.org

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PROGRAM BOOK STAFF

Ashton Beck,
Director of Marketing &
Communications

Ryan Impagliazzo,
Associate Director of Marketing &
Communications

Jenny Hwang,
Senior Graphic Designer

Kristopher Ingle,
Graphic Designer

Jane Gerrard,
Multimedia Design Fellow



Nic Ashe and Kyle Beltran for *We Are Gathered*. Photo by Tony Powell.



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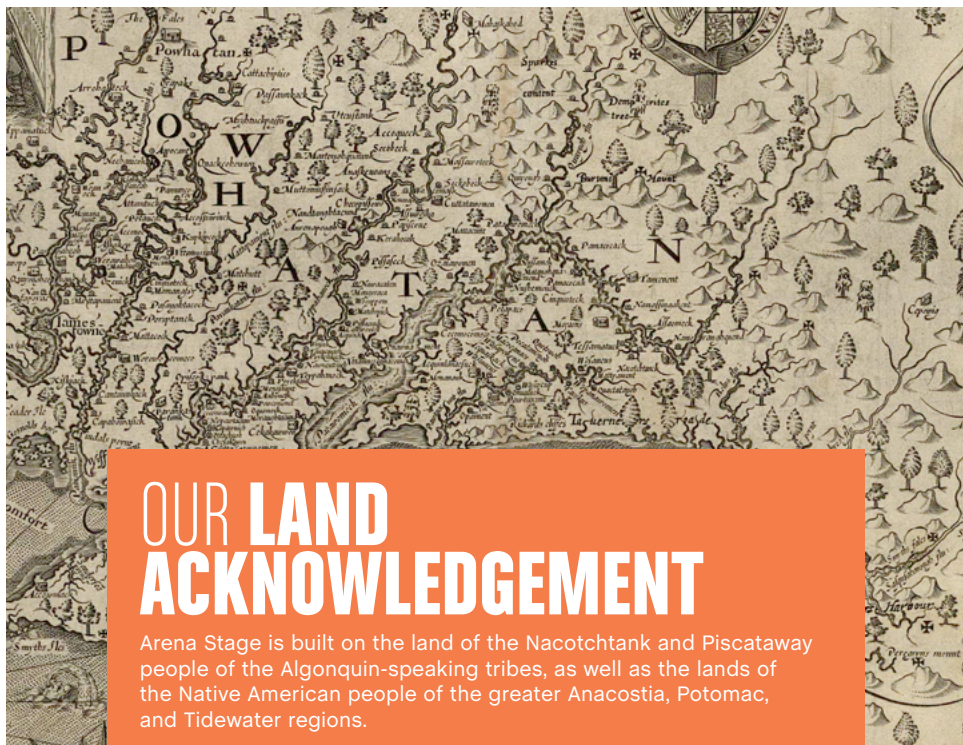


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ARENA STAGE'S MISSION

Arena Stage is the voice of American theater resident in our nation's capital. Focused on American artists, our productions are innovative and representative of stories from across the country. We nurture new plays and reimagine classics. We celebrate our democracy and diversity through a multitude of voices in our productions and community engagement programs to inspire people to action. We produce all that is passionate, exuberant, profound, entertaining, deep and dangerous in the American spirit.



OUR LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Arena Stage is built on the land of the Nacotchtank and Piscataway people of the Algonquin-speaking tribes, as well as the lands of the Native American people of the greater Anacostia, Potomac, and Tidewater regions.



ARTISTICALLY SPEAKING

“Love him and let him love you. Do you think anything else under heaven really matters?”

— James Baldwin, *Giovanni's Room*

As World Pride and the 50th anniversary of DC's Pride unfold in our nation's capital, we are witnessing a moment of celebration, remembrance, and reflection. These milestones remind us of how far the fight for equality has come, and how far we still must go. Just a decade ago, the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges* affirmed marriage equality in this country—recognizing, at last, that love between same-sex partners is valid, sacred, and deserving of legal protection.

And as we honor these sweeping victories, I invite us to turn our gaze inward—to the beating hearts at the center of every love story. To the sacred act of two people standing before their chosen family and saying, “I choose you.” Again and again.

Welcome to *We Are Gathered*!

But make no mistake—this is no ordinary love story. It is a beautiful celebration of Black queer love—tender, triumphant, and fiercely radiant. It is healing. It is necessary. And it is absolutely worth every moment of exultation.

In a world where so many wrestle quietly with the question of whether we are worthy of love—where the heaviest barriers are often the ones we build within—there lies a sacred struggle to break the cycles we've inherited and reclaim the fullness of who we are. It is here, through the power of story, that we gather to confront our truths, to unearth joy, and to illuminate the path toward healing.

We are privileged to receive this luminous new work by the Oscar winner Tarell Alvin McCraney, whose voice continues to shape the soul of American theater. With grace, wit, and piercing emotional clarity, Tarell invites us into a world where time bends, traditions unravel, and love becomes both the compass and the destination. He beckons us to bear witness to the quiet power and radical vulnerability of choosing love—boldly, fiercely, and without apology.

We Are Gathered is more than a title—it is an invitation. To witness. To celebrate. To believe. Here, gathering is a radical act of communion. Witnessing becomes an act of solidarity. And marriage—whether legal, spiritual, or symbolic—is reclaimed as a ritual of joy and affirmation.

At Arena Stage, we believe that theater is an act of collective becoming—a space where you are welcome exactly as you are. This production is a tribute to chosen family, to the courage it takes to love boldly, and to the belief that even amidst uncertainty, celebration can be the most powerful form of resistance.

Thank you for joining us.

With love and gratitude,

Hana S. Sharif
Artistic Director

Arena Stage
Washington, DC

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

From its inception, Tarell Alvin McCraney's vision for *We Are Gathered* included fully breaking the fourth wall and offering an opportunity for couples to get married or renew vows on stage at the end of the play. If you are able to witness one of these unique experiences today, I hope you have a memory to cherish!

One of Arena's superpowers is gathering people. Arena is a physical communing place, and theater is an art form that celebrates the marriage of freedom of thought and debate of contrary opinions. What you may not realize is that, in addition to the 40-odd performances per production that Arena produces, we are also host to as many as 100 other events annually. From large and complex gatherings like The Atlantic Festival to small monthly meetings with our local Southwest Neighborhood Assembly. Family dinners with local folks hosted by the SWBID and career fairs for thousands of jobseekers hosted by the DC Department of Employment Services. Inauguration balls for political types, and for a few years now, a great late-night end-of-conference party with the Congressional Black Caucus. A crowning achievement for Arena was to be a major vaccination center with MedStar Health at the height of the pandemic.

We knew when we opened the Mead Center there was potential for all sorts of ways to gather people and ideas. Today's gathering is to witness a dramatic story well told and to celebrate in a union of souls, in sickness and in health. We have been home to many a first date and even some formal wedding proposals. Another fun fact you may not realize is that Arena is a unique destination for weddings and receptions. A highlight was in the 2014/15 Season when we launched a "Win a Wedding" contest in conjunction with our production of *Fiddler on the Roof*. Google it!

As we begin to anticipate Arena's 75th Anniversary Season, creating memories is top of mind. We have recently celebrated one of our most cherished memories with a fantastic anniversary present: there are now beautiful signs on our 1100 block of 6th Street SW declaring Zelda Fichandler Way. Now we can all say, "Take Zelda's way to arrive at Arena Stage."

Let me not miss tapping our memory for the legendary Tom Fichandler as well. Seventy-five years is only possible because of a collective effort, a community, a gathering. Most definitely, our audience is a critical part of this equation. I am delighted to conspire together today (meaning "breathe as one"). May your memories and anniversaries inspire joy for you today and every day.

Edgar Dobie
Executive Producer
President of the Corporation



Meeting Outside

By Otis Ramsey-Zöe, Literary Manager

Illustrations by Jane Gerrard

“Some will say that all we have are the pleasures of this moment, but we must never settle for that minimal transport; we must dream and enact new and better pleasures, other ways of being in the world, and ultimately new worlds. Queerness is a longing that propels us onward, beyond romances of the negative and toiling in the present.

Queerness is that thing that lets us feel that this world is not enough, that indeed something is missing.”

—José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia:
The Then and There of Queer Futurity*

At one point, I playfully suggested an alternate title for this article as, “How I Learned to Cruise and Everything That Followed.” Such a title hints at the impossibility of laying out the myriad layers within this work. Tarell Alvin McCraney’s *We Are Gathered* is an onion, an ephemeral onion at a crossroads of queer pasts, dangers, futurity, hope, and potential utopia. Maybe all that simply means is *possibility*. Set between what has been and what might be, *We Are Gathered* centers on queer families and reflects on how LGBTQIA+ people create family and make lives for themselves in a world that

often does not even intend for them to exist. History does not exist in a straight line, but it is mostly accurate to suggest that LGBTQIA+ people have always existed on the margins, and sometimes explicitly outside, of society.

We Are Gathered invites us into the outside and open-air spaces where a type of liberation is found in pleasures plundered in such places as municipal parks. There’s a name for this game of exchanging communications towards potential sexual gratification; it’s called cruising. According to the OED

to cruise is “to walk or drive about (the streets) in search of a casual sexual (esp. homosexual) partner; to solicit (a person), entice.” Our English word ‘cruise’ is etymologically related to a Dutch word *kruisen* (to cross), which means “to sail crossing to and fro, to traverse and cross the seas.” This sense of crossing a line is apt because cruising, according to some, violates decency and such social norms. There is a long history of parks and green spaces as places that allows for freedom and excess, including the enjoyment of various transgressions not readily available in the day-to-day world. Sources as varied as classical Greek texts and accounts of medieval feast celebrations detail how parks and public squares, at designated times, function as spaces where the traditional order is

suspended and a type of topsy-turvy reversal of norms is permitted. In

We Are Gathered,

the park exists “in

the mode of the festival” (Foucault) that enables nontraditional ideas and power structures to thrive. However, cruising is not just about sex. José Esteban Muñoz in *Cruising Utopia* invites an expansive understanding of “cruising” as enabling varied, creative potentialities for imagining and mapping a queer utopia. “What We Want, What We Believe,” a manifesto featured in a 1971 issue of the gay liberation journal *Gay Flames*, expressed such a vision by saying, “We want a new society [...] We want liberation of humanity.” LGBTQIA+ rights movements continue to work vehemently towards realizing that assertion. Decades of organizing and fighting culminated in a 2015 US Supreme Court victory legalizing same-sex unions nationwide.

As the ten-year anniversary of that ruling approaches, McCraney’s play reimagines the traditional marriage plot, the earliest form of which date to 2nd century AD Greek Romance novels, through a Black queer lens. A requisite of the marriage plot is a meeting scene in which two young people of marriageable age encounter one another for the first time, or are introduced to the audience, in an inappropriate context and under conditions that would make uniting in marriage impossible. In *Romeo & Juliet*, the two families are mortal enemies in an active feud. In Sondheim and Wheeler’s *A Little Night Music*, inspired by Bergman’s 1955 film *Smiles of a Summer Night*, a romance between Anne and Henrik is made impossible because Anne is married to Henrik’s father.

We Are Gathered

presents a classic boy-meets-boy story in which more than one meeting story

circulates as a

way of highlighting

tensions between public and private, honorable and shameful, and appropriate and verboten. It is a play about wrestling with extremes in attempts to bring about order, which is perfectly exemplified by Wallace Tre II’s unveiling of his tortured interiority in contrast to a bracing exterior world. With relief, W. Tre welcomes, “you made it.” Love, lives, and utopias are all made through great effort by individuals and communities. What happens next, we make it.

“When the sun met the moon,
It was for the very first time.
Said the moon to the sun,
Where have you been all my life?”

—Des’ree, “Cool Morning”





Kyle Beltran and Nic Ashe for *We Are Gathered*. Photo by Tony Powell.

ARENA STAGE

HANA S. SHARIF, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | **EDGAR DOBIE**, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

PRESENTS

WE ARE GATHERED

A NEW PLAY BY

**TARELL ALVIN
McCRANEY**

DIRECTED BY KENT GASH

SET DESIGNER
JASON SHERWOOD

COSTUME DESIGNER
KARA HARMON

LIGHTING DESIGNER
ADAM HONORÉ

SOUND DESIGNER
LINDSAY JONES

ORIGINAL MUSIC
TRE'VON GRIFFITH

WIG, HAIR, AND MAKEUP DESIGNER
J. JARED JANAS

CHOREOGRAPHER
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CHRISTI B. SPANN*

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
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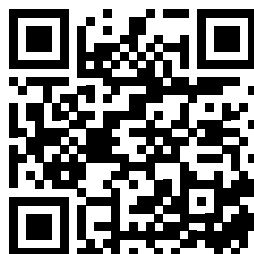
Support for *We Are Gathered* is provided by
**Deborah Bowles and Derik Burgess, Anthony Coley,
Kristen Donoghue and Jon Hacker, and Nicholas Goad.**

Additional support provided by **David Insinga and Robert McDonald and Ryan E. Merkel.**

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SETTING

A park.

CAST

(in alphabetical order)

Free	NIC ASHE*
Wallace Tre	KYLE BELTRAN*
Xi/Nana Jae	JADE JONES*
Wallace Tre Sr./Chauncey	KEVIN MAMBO*
Ms. Ms/Punkin/Dance Captain	NIKKOLE SALTER*
Pop Pop/Cedric	CRAIG WALLACE*

UNDERSTUDIES

Free, Wallace Tre — PRINCE BAJON
Xi/Nana Jae, Ms. Ms/Punkin — JASMINE JOY

SUPPLEMENTAL EXTRAS

Prince Bajon, Christian Harris

*Members of Actors' Equity Association

FOR THIS PRODUCTION

Intimacy Consultant	DANE FIGUEROA EDIDI
Vocal Consultant	LISA NATHANS
Associate Sound Designer	IAN VESPERMANN
Assistant Director	ABIGAIL THOMAS
Production Assistant	FIOR TAT
Script Production Assistant	ALIA SHAHID
Stage Carpenters	CATHERINE COONEY, MAX MARSHALL
Props	KAYLA PROUGH
Light Board Operator	NICOLE TRANTUM
Lighting Assistant	CHRISTIAN HENRRIQUEZ
Audio Engineer	LIV FARLEY
Wardrobe Supervisor	ALICE HAWFIELD
Wardrobe	TYQURIA FOUNTAIN, CAITLIN O'BRIEN
Wigs, Hair, and Makeup Supervisor	DAPHNE EPPS

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CAST



NIC ASHE (*Free*)

Theater credits include the Broadway production of Tarell Alvin McCraney's *Choir Boy* (Manhattan Theatre Club), Matthew López's *The Inheritance* (Geffen Playhouse), Brandon Jacobs-Jenkins' *Girls* (Yale Repertory Theatre), and most recently, Gage Tarlton's *Pretty Perfect Lives*. Nic got his start as Young Simba in the national tour of *The Lion King*. He is best known for his seven-year run on Ava DuVernay's critically acclaimed series *Queen Sugar* on the Oprah Winfrey Network.



KYLE BELTRAN (*Wallace Tre*)

Broadway: *The Cherry Orchard*, *In the Heights* (& First National Tour). Off-Broadway: *A Case for the Existence of God* (Signature, Drama Desk & Lortel Award nominations); *Curse of the Starving Class* (The New Group); *Find Me Here*, *Tin Cat Shoes* (Clubbed Thumb); *Lessons in Survival*, *The Amateurs*, *Gloria* (Vineyard); *Blue Ridge* (Atlantic); *Fire In Dreamland*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Head of Passes*, *The Fortress of Solitude* (Public); *The Flick* (Barrow Street); *Choir Boy* (MTC, AUDELCO Award); *10 Things to Do Before I Die* (2ST). Regional: Williamstown, Goodman, Dallas Theater Center, Steppenwolf, Yale Rep, The Old Globe. TV/Film: Ramon Fisher on *American Rust: Broken Justice* (Prime), *American Horror Story* (FX), *Inventing Anna* (Netflix), *Olga Dies Dreaming* (Hulu, pilot), *American Rust* (Showtime), *David Makes Man* (OWN/Max), *The Shivering Truth* (Adult Swim), *Horace and Pete* (Pig Newton), *The Big C* (Showtime), *Unforgettable* (CBS). BFA in Drama, Carnegie Mellon. Instagram: [@kyperbole](#)



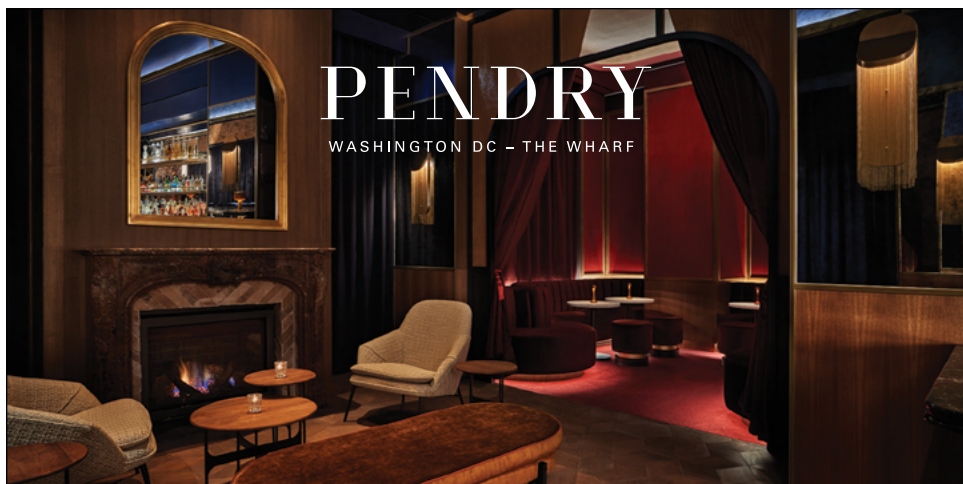
JADE JONES *THEY/THEM*

(*Xi/Nana Jae*), most recently seen as Madame Thénardier in *Les Misérables* at The Muny in St. Louis, is known for their portrayal of Belle in Olney Theatre Center's internationally acclaimed production of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*. Jade made their New York debut as Mary in the off-Broadway revival of *Vanities*, and made their television debut as Stevie on the primetime network series *Chicago P.D.* As a DC native, they have also been seen at Shakespeare Theatre Company (*The Amen Corner*), Round House Theatre (*School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play*) and Ford's Theatre (*Into the Woods*). They were spotlit on ABC 20/20's 25th Anniversary *Cinderella* reunion special alongside Billy Porter and Todrick Hall, and have been featured in Playbill, MSNBC, and *People* magazine. Their music can be found on Spotify, Apple Music, and SoundCloud, under the moniker "Litty Official".



KEVIN MAMBO (*Wallace Tre Sr./Chauncey*)

Broadway, Off-Broadway, and tour credits include *Fela!*, *The Color Purple*, and *The Book of Mormon* National Tour (Helen Hayes nomination); *The History of Empires* at La MaMa; *Fortress of Solitude* at Dallas Theater Center and The Public Theater (Lortel nomination); *Mlima's Tale* at The Public Theater; *Ruined* at Goodman Theatre and Manhattan Theatre Club; *The Convert* at Kirk Douglas Theatre, Goodman Theatre, and McCarter Theatre Center; *Venus and Painted Rocks* at Revolver Creek at Signature Theatre; *Seven Guitars and Pericles* at Two River Theater; *The Last Detail* at Lucille Lortel Theatre; and *Once Around the Sun* at Zipper Factory Theater. Film credits include *Rustin*, *Nina*, *Cadillac Records*, *Rebel in the Rye*, *Payback*, *One of Us Tripped*, *Firing Squad*, *Selah and the Spades*, *The Southside*, *Henchman of Notre Dame* (Best Actor), *Trooper*, and *Man in the Mirror*. Television credits include *Guiding Light* (two Emmys, three nominations), *Hit & Run*, *Luke Cage*, *Saint X*, *High Maintenance*, *The Good Doctor*, *Blacklist*, *Happyish*, *Soul Food*, *One Life to Live*, *Law & Order* (Original/Deadline/SVU/Trial by Jury/Criminal Intent/Reboot), *Spin City*, *Elementary*, *Any Day Now*, *Mistresses*, *Family Matters*, *Freshman Dorm*, and *Great Performances*.



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A promotional photograph for the Folger Theatre production of Twelfth Night. Three actors are posed against a light blue background. A woman with long, dark, wavy hair sits in the foreground on a black stool, wearing a dark blue velvet jacket over a white blouse and dark trousers. Behind her, two other women stand. One has dark, curly hair and wears a red jacket, while the other has dark hair and wears a white blouse with a dark skirt. The text on the right side of the image provides details about the production.

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CAST



NIKKOLE SALTER

(*Ms. Ms/Punkin/Dance Captain*) is an Obie Award-winning actor, playwright, educator, and advocate. As an actress, she co-created and starred in the Pulitzer Prize-nominated *In the Continuum* alongside Danai Gurira. On stage, Salter has performed on Broadway, Off-Broadway, and in major regional theaters, originating roles in acclaimed plays such as Robert Schenkkan's *The Great Society*, Zora Howard's *Stew*, Dominique Morisseau's *Mud Row*, and Kirsten Greenidge's *Luck of the Irish*. On the small screen, she has recently appeared on NBC's *New Amsterdam* and starred in *Godfather of Harlem* on Epix. On the big screen, she starred in Harold Jackson III's *Last Night*, winner of the American Black Film Festival Audience Award. She is also the recipient of the NY Outer Critics Circle's John Gassner Award and a Lilly Award for her contributions to the American theatre. Salter is thrilled to return to Arena Stage for the world premiere of *We Are Gathered*. She holds an MFA from NYU, where she studied under Zelda Fichandler and Ron Van Lieu. She currently serves as Chair of the Department of Theatre Arts at her alma mater, Howard University. www.nikkolesalter.com



CRAIG WALLACE (Pop Pop/ Cedric)

is excited to return to Arena Stage having performed in numerous productions including *K2*, *All the Way*, and *The Great Society*. For 30 years, Craig has played a variety of roles across the DMV. Favorite roles include Sam in *"Master Harold"...and the Boys* at Round House Theatre, Gloucester in *King Lear* at Shakespeare Theatre Company, Louis Armstrong in *Satchmo at the Waldorf* at Mosaic Theater, Ebenezer Scrooge (recurring) in *A Christmas Carol* at Ford's Theatre, and many others. Craig received his BFA from Howard University, his MFA from Penn State University; and has studied with the Royal National Theatre in London. Instagram: [@funkfaze](https://www.instagram.com/funkfaze)



PRINCE BAJON (u/s Free, Wallace Tre)

is a first-generation Cameroonian-American actor making his Arena Stage debut. He recently understudied at Studio Theatre, while prepping for and performing in the Howard University Senior Showcase. In the past year, he has also performed at The Kennedy Center, Shakespeare Theatre Company, and YPT-DC. On screen, he starred in *WEA Vol. 3* (a Howard x Disney Storytellers collaboration), and *Film School*. A recent graduate of Howard University's BFA Acting program, Prince is passionate about bringing dynamic, heartfelt storytelling to the stage and screen. princebajon.com Instagram: [@princebajon](https://www.instagram.com/princebajon)



JASMINE JOY (u/s Xi/Nana Jae, Ms. Ms/Punkin)

is delighted to return to Arena Stage for this compelling celebration of love! Local credits include *Tempestuous Elements*, *POTUS* (Arena Stage); *Is God Is*, *Moon Man Walk* (Constellation Theatre Company); *Shear Madness*, *A Wind in the Door* (The Kennedy Center); *The Hula-Hoopin' Queen*, *Corduroy*, *The Snow Queen* (Imagination Stage); *Dance Nation* (Olney Theatre Center); *The Mamalogues* (1st Stage); *A Chorus Within Her* (Theater Alliance); *WOMXN on Fire Festival* (Keegan Theatre); *The Gulf* (Peter's Alley); *The Powers That Be* and *#solestories* (Venus Theatre). Jasmine would love to thank her daughter, Calypso, for being her inspiration. You can visit Jasmine's website at www.jasminejoybrooks.com.



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MUSIC AND LYRICS BY JASON ROBERT BROWN
CO-CONCEIVED BY HAROLD PRINCE
DIRECTED BY MICHAEL ARDEN

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CREATIVE

TARELL ALVIN McCRANEY (Playwright)

is Artistic Director of Geffen Playhouse. In this role, he is responsible for identifying, developing, and programming new works and re-envisioned classics. He sets the strategic artistic course for the Geffen's Gil Cates and Audrey Skirball Kenis Theaters. McCraney is an award-winning writer, producer, and educator, best known for his acclaimed trilogy, *The Brother/Sister Plays*. His script *In Moonlight Black Boys Look Blue* is the basis for the Oscar-winning film *Moonlight* directed by Barry Jenkins, for which McCraney and Jenkins also won a Best Adapted Screenplay Oscar. He is an ensemble member at Steppenwolf Theatre and a member of Teo Castellanos D-Projects in Miami, a graduate of New World School of the Arts, The Theatre School at DePaul University, and the David Geffen School of Drama at Yale. He received an honorary doctorate from the University of Warwick. He was recently Co-Chair of Playwriting at the David Geffen School of Drama, where he remains on faculty. He is an associate at the Royal Shakespeare Company, London, and a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (Writers Branch).

KENT GASH (Director) most recently directed the acclaimed Pasadena Playhouse production of *Jelly's Last Jam*; co-authored and directed *Something to Live For* at Pittsburgh Public (BroadwayWorld Best New Musical); *The Three Musketeers* at Oregon Shakespeare and The Acting Company; Tarell Alvin McCraney's *Choir Boy* at Steppenwolf and Studio Theatre (Jeff Award & Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award). LA: August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean* at South Coast Rep, *Harriet's Return* at Geffen Playhouse. NYC: *Barbecue* at The Public, *Lockdown* at Rattlestick, *Miss Evers' Boys* (NYC premiere) at Melting Pot. Select from 100+ award-winning regional: *Guys and Dolls* at the Guthrie; *The Wiz* at Ford's Theatre; "*Master Harold*"...and the *Boys* at Arizona Theatre Company; Tarell Alvin McCraney's *Wig Out!* at Studio Theatre and Sundance; *Jelly's Last Jam*, *Pacific Overtures*, *Topdog/Underdog* (Norton Award), *God of Carnage*, *Five Guys Named Moe*, *Quiara Alegria Hudes' Elliot*, *a Soldier's Fugue*, and *26 Miles*, as the Associate Artistic Director at Alliance Theatre (2001-2009); *Troilus and Cressida*, *Godspell*, *Twelfth Night*, *Guys and Dolls*, and *Beehive*, as Associate Artistic Director at Alabama Shakespeare Festival (1999-2001). Kent is the current Artistic Director at The Acting Company (2021-present) and Founding Director of New Studio on Broadway, Tisch, NYU. BFA: Carnegie Mellon. MFA: UCLA.

JASON SHERWOOD (Set Designer) is a two-time Emmy Award-winning designer. He has designed world-premiere plays and musicals at New York Theatre Workshop, the Atlantic, Playwrights Realm, Signature Theatre, ART, The Old Globe, the Alliance, the Denver Center, and more. His TV production design work includes the Oscars, *Rent: Live*, the Kennedy Center Honors, the Grammy Awards, and performances for Elton John, Eminem, Billie Eilish, Camila Cabello, Cynthia Erivo, and Janelle

Monae. Sherwood also designed world tours for Sam Smith, the Spice Girls, and Sara Bareilles. He is the recipient of Drama Desk, Lucille Lortel, and Henry Hewes Design Award nominations. NYU grad. Instagram: [@jasonsherwooddesign](https://www.instagram.com/jasonsherwooddesign)

KARA HARMON (Costume Designer) is delighted to return to DC. Previous productions at Arena Stage include *The Other Americans*, *Native Gardens*, and *Nina Simone: Four Women*. Other projects in the DC area include *The Color Purple* at Signature Theatre and *The Wiz* at Ford's Theatre, for which she received a Helen Hayes Award. Select Off-Broadway productions include *The Great Privation* with Soho Rep, *Cullud Wattah* at The Public Theater, *The Niceties* at Manhattan Theatre Club, and the inaugural production at the Perelman Performing Arts Center in New York City of *Watch Night*. Regionally, Kara's work has been seen at Santa Fe Opera, Goodspeed Musicals, Goodman Theatre, Alliance Theatre, Guthrie Theater, The Old Globe, and many others. Please enjoy her work at karaharmondesign.com.

ADAM HONORÉ (Lighting Designer) is a Harlem-based designer for the stage. Recent designs include *Purlie Victorious* (Broadway), *Ain't No Mo'* (Broadway), *Ragtime* (City Center), *Cats: The Jellicle Ball* (PAC NYC), *The Lonely Few* (MCC), *Jelly's Last Jam* (Encores!), *I Can Get It For You Wholesale* (Classic Stage), *Empire Records* (McCarter), *Gun & Powder* (Paper Mill), and *Trading Places* (Alliance). Adam is a Drama Desk nominee and a recent recipient of the Obie Award for Sustained Excellence in Lighting Design. Instagram: [@itsadamhonore](https://www.instagram.com/itsadamhonore)

LINDSAY JONES (Sound Designer) Broadway: *Slave Play* (Tony nominations for Best Score and Best Sound Design of a Play), *The Nap*, *Bronx Bombers*, and *A Time to Kill*. Off-Broadway: *Privacy* (Public), *Bootycandy* (Playwrights Horizons), *Feeding the Dragon* (Primary Stages), and many others. Regional: Guthrie Theater, Center Stage, American Conservatory Theater, Hartford Stage, Alliance Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Arena Stage, Old Globe Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Steppenwolf Theatre, and many others. International: Noël Coward (London West End), Royal Shakespeare Company (England), Stratford Festival (Canada), and many others. Audio dramas: Disney, Marvel, DC, Penguin/Random House, Audible, Next Chapter Podcasts. Film/TV scoring: HBO Films' *A Note of Triumph* (2006 Academy Award for Best Documentary, Short Subject) and over 30 other films. He is the co-chair of the Theatrical Sound Designers and Composers Association (TSDCA). www.lindsayjones.com

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CREATIVE

TRE'VON GRIFFITH (TRE G) (*Original Music*) is an artist, composer, and creative architect shaping sound and spectacle across music and theater. Named one of "The Most Influential People in LGBTQ+ St. Louis in 2024" by *Out in STL* and a Business of Pride honoree by the *St. Louis Business Journal*, his work spans continents, with creative contributions in the U.S., Europe, and China. As a composer and director, his mini-opera *Madison Lodge* premiered at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and his directing and music direction credits include *Twelfth Night* (The Acting Company, NYC), *A Christmas Carol* (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare Festival St. Louis), among many others. He is the Co-Founder/CEO of WerQfest, St. Louis' first festival dedicated to celebrating Black queer creativity. Master's degree: Berklee College of Music (Valencia, Spain). Instagram: [@treg_music](#)

J. JARED JANAS (*Wig, Hair, and Makeup Designer*) At Arena Stage: *Unknown Soldier*, *Ride the Cyclone*. Select Broadway: *Dead Outlaw*, *John Proctor* is the Villain, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Buena Vista Social Club*, *Our Town*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, *Mary Jane*, *Prayer for the French Republic*, *Purlie Victorious*, *Good Night, Oscar*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Ohio State Murders*, & *Juliet*, *Kimberly Akimbo*, *Indecent*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *The Visit*, *The Real Thing*, *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*, *Motown*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Porgy and Bess*. Select Off-Broadway: *Sally & Tom* (Drama Desk nomination), *Yours Unfaithfully* (Drama Desk nomination).

BYRON EASLEY (*Choreographer*)'s choreography credits include Broadway productions of *Camelot* (Lincoln Center Theater) and *Slave Play* (Antonyo Award nomination). Other New York projects include *Dorothy Dandridge The Musical* (New York Theater Festival, Best Choreography Award); *Richard III* (The Public Theater); *The Bedwetter* (Atlantic Theater); *Slave Play* (New York Theatre Workshop); *X: Or Betty Shabazz V. The Nation* (Lucille Lortel Award nomination); *Twelfth Night* (Classical Theatre of Harlem, AUDELCO nomination); *The Bubbly Black Girl* (City Center Encores!); *Langston in Harlem* (SDC's Joe A. Callaway Award and an AUDELCO Award). Regionally, he has choreographed *Ballad of Johnny and June* (La Jolla Playhouse); *Choir Boy* (Steppenwolf); *Matilda* (Olney Theatre, Helen Hayes nomination); *Gun & Powder* (Signature Theatre); *Twelfth Night* (Yale Rep); *The Wiz* (TUTS); *The Three Musketeers*, *Unison*, *The Wiz*, *The Comedy of Errors* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Five Guys Named Moe* (Arena Stage, Helen Hayes nomination); *Jelly's Last Jam*, *Sophisticated Ladies* (Alliance Theatre, Suzi Bass Awards).

AVON HAUGHTON (*Dramaturg*) is a film/television writer, dramaturg, and current steward of Baltimore Center Stage's new works program. He is of the belief that narrative is integral to the function and preservation of community. Having recently worked alongside Lena Waithe, Jordan E. Cooper, and now, Tarell Alvin McCraney, Avon is delighted to be making his Arena Stage debut.

THE TRC COMPANY/TARA RUBIN, CSA

(*New York Casting*) Broadway: *Dead Outlaw*, *BOOP! The Musical*, *Buena Vista Social Club*, *Death Becomes Her*, *Left on Tenth*, *The Outsiders*, *SIX*, *Aladdin*. National tours: *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Water for Elephants*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Wiz*, *Back to the Future*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Les Misérables*. The TRC Company is proud to continue the casting legacy of Tara Rubin Casting and Johnson-Liff Casting.

RAIYON HUNTER (*DC Casting*) is a casting director, producer, and arts administrator from New Orleans, Louisiana. She currently works as the Casting Director/Line Producer of Arena Stage. Previously, she worked as the Casting Director of Children's Theatre Company and the Spelman Leadership Fellow at the Alliance Theatre (Atlanta, GA) where she has contributed to a multitude of shows in varying capacities ranging from casting associate to director on productions such as *Do You Love the Dark?*, *Darlin' Cory*, *Bina's Six Apples*, *Good Bad People*, *Confederates*, and more. Additionally, she has been in residency at Oregon Shakespeare Festival under Natakai Garrett and The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis under Hana S. Sharif.

CHRIST B. SPANN (*Stage Manager*) has been working as a stage manager in DC since 2011. Recent Arena Stage productions include *Holiday*, *The High Ground*, *Exclusion*, *POTUS*, *Tempestuous Elements*, *Agatha Christie's Death on the Nile*, and *The Age of Innocence*. She previously spent 12 seasons on the stage management staff at the Denver Center Theatre Company and has also worked with The Great River Shakespeare Festival in Winona, MN, and Virginia Repertory Theatre in Richmond, VA.

JAMIE BERRY SHE/HER (*Assistant Stage Manager*) is thrilled to be back at Arena and honored to be part of the team for this beautiful production! She prides herself on ensuring spaces are safe, equitable, and joy-filled for casts and crew. Her most recent/selected work includes *Jaja's African Hair Braiding* (ASM, Arena Stage), the First National Tour of *Back to the Future* (Sub SM), *Dreamgirls* (PSM, McCarter Theatre 2024 and Goodspeed Opera House 2023), and the five-time 2024 Helen Hayes Award recipient, *Fela!* (PSM, Olney Theatre Center/Round House Theatre). Instagram: [@jamiedreamsbig](#)



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ARENA LEADERSHIP

HANA S. SHARIF (*Artistic Director*) has enjoyed a multi-faceted theater career, including roles as an artistic leader, director, playwright, and producer with a specialty in strategic and cross-functional leadership. Hana began her professional career as an undergraduate student at Spelman College. From 1997 to 2003, Hana served as the co-founder and Artistic Director of Nasir Productions, a theater dedicated to underrepresented voices challenging traditional structure. Hana joined the Tony® Award-winning regional theater, Hartford Stage, in 2003. During her decade-long tenure at Hartford Stage, Hana served as the Associate Artistic Director, Director of New Play Development, and Artistic Producer. Hana launched the new play development program, expanded the community engagement and civic discourse initiatives, and developed and produced Tony®, Grammy, Pulitzer, and Obie Award-winning shows. Starting in 2012, she served as Program Manager at ArtsEmerson, a leading world theater company based at Boston's Emerson College. During her tenure at ArtsEmerson, Hana launched an Artists in Residency program, led a research program assessing barriers to inclusion across the region, and leveraged her regional theater experience to freelance produce for smaller theater companies looking to expand and restructure their administrative teams. Hana was Baltimore Center Stage's Associate Artistic Director from 2014 to 2019 and was the architect of the innovative CS Digital program: a platform that pushes the boundaries of traditional theater and looks at the nexus point between art and technology. Her other achievements at Baltimore Center Stage included prototyping the Mobile Unit focused on historically underserved audiences, strengthening community engagement, producing multiple world and regional premieres, and helping to guide the theater through a multi-million dollar building renovation and rebranding effort. Hana became the first Black woman to lead a major regional theater in 2018 when she was named the Augustin Family Artistic Director of The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis. During her tenure at The Rep, Hana guided the organization through a strategic alignment, revolutionized the New Works program, expanding access to underserved communities, and centering equity and anti-racism as the organization's foundational values. Hana holds a BA from Spelman College and an MFA from the University of Houston. Hana is the recipient of USITT's 2023 Distinguished Achievement Award, Spelman's 2022 National Community Service Award, the 2009-10 Aetna New Voices Fellowship, EMC Arts Working Open Fellowship, and Theatre Communications Group (TCG) New Generations Fellowship. Hana is a founding member of The Black Theatre Commons (BTC). She serves on the board of directors for the TCG, BTC, and the Sprott Family Foundation.

EDGAR DOBIE (*Executive Producer*) Born in Vernon, British Columbia, a village next to the Rocky Mountains (three years after Arena had its first performance in 1950), I am one of five brothers raised by my Dad Edgar, a mechanic and small businessman, and Mom Connie, a telephone operator and union organizer. I am the only Dobie to make a career in theater. Luckily for me, drama was an arts elective I was offered at the tender age of 12 so I hung up my hockey skates and joined the drama class, led by teacher Paddy Malcolm and her fledgling Powerhouse Community Theater after school. By the time I graduated from high school, we volunteers had built ourselves a 200-seat, fully equipped theater on its own piece of land in the center of town and found a sold-out audience for the full season of plays we had on offer. That experience taught me so many lessons about the power of theater to foster collaboration and share meaningful stories, as well as the public values that attach themselves to building a safe place where everyone is welcome. All those lessons served me well as a managing leader and producer both sides of the border and both sides of the commercial and non-profit theater divide. Arriving here in Southwest with my good wife Tracy and our daughter Greta Lee in 2009 makes me feel like I am well-equipped to do a good job for you all. I am honored to have been recognized for my service to, and leadership of, the Washington, D.C.-area theater community as a recipient of Theatre Washington's inaugural Victor Shargai Leadership Award in 2022.

This theater operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association.



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Arena Stage 2025/26 Season



September 9 – November 9, 2025

Music and Lyrics by **Richard Adler** and **Jerry Ross**
Book by **George Abbott** and **Douglass Wallop**
Based on the Novel *The Year the Yankees Lost the Pennant* by Douglass Wallop
New Adaptation by **Will Power** and **Doug Wright**
Additional Lyrics by **Lynn Ahrens**
Directed and Choreographed by **Sergio Trujillo**

Fremont Ave.

October 8 – November 23, 2025

By **Reggie D. White**
Directed By **Lili-Anne Brown**
A Co-Production with South Coast Repertory

STEPAFRIKA!!'s MAGICAL MUSICAL HOLIDAY STEP SHOW

December 5 – December 21, 2025

PAL JOEY

January 30 – March 15, 2026

Music by **Richard Rodgers**
Lyrics by **Lorenz Hart**
New Book by **Richard LaGravenese**
Based on the Original Book by **John O'Hara**
Co-Directed by **Tony Goldwyn**
Co-Directed and Choreographed by **Savion Glover**

INHERIT THE WIND

February 27 – April 5, 2026

By **Jerome Lawrence** and **Robert E. Lee**
Directed by **Ryan Guzzo Purcell**
Produced in Association with The Feast



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The Waterwell Production of **A GOOD DAY TO ME NOT TO YOU**

March 27 – May 3, 2026

By **Lameece Issaq**
Directed by **Lee Sunday Evans**

THE MOTION

May 6 – June 14, 2026

By **Christopher Chen**
Directed By **Hana S. Sharif**



June 12 – August 9, 2026

Based on the Music Performed and Recorded by **TLC**
Written and Directed by **Kwame Kwei-Armah**
Choreographed by **Chloe O. Davis**

my joy is heavy

Summer 2026

By **The Bengsons**
Directed by **Rachel Chavkin**

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