ANGELS IN AMERICA, 
PART ONE: MILLENNIUM APPROACHES
BY TONY KUSHNER
DIRECTED BY JÁNOS SZÁSZ

2022/23 SEASON
SEASON 2023/24
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ANGELS IN AMERICA, PART ONE: MILLENNIUM APPROACHES

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Photo of Moses Villarama in Cambodian Rock Band by Joan Marcus.
In the world of theater, a show is never truly finished. Especially a masterwork like *Angels in America*.

As a show ages, new productions and companies take on the story and characters, causing the art itself to evolve. *Angels in America* is over 30 years old and has seen many evolutions over the years. The America that the show was written about is different than the one we live in now, but the rhymes of that era’s history can still be felt today. We have traded the AIDS epidemic for the coronavirus pandemic, and a crisis with ozone for a crisis with nature itself. We live in a world where marriage is legal for all, and yet, the LGBTQ+ community still faces discrimination every single day. With this production of *Angels in America*, we will feel the emotions of today and 30 years ago riding together side by side in one play.

The director for this production, János Szász, is the perfect Director to take on such a monumental task.

I first met him over 23 years ago while on a trip to Budapest when Philip Arnoult and the Center for International Theatre Development took a group of intrepid artistic directors to create relationships with great Hungarian directors. I found János Szász, a brilliant theatermaker and filmmaker. When we first met, the world still looked remarkably similar to the one depicted in the play. As the world has evolved in the decades since, the way we create art has evolved with it. Szász’s approach to *Angels in America* is unusual and clarifying. Although you may think you know this play, he investigates it through his very different perspective.

I always love it when artists from other countries interpret our American classics. They see our stories through a different point of view and that’s good for all of us.

Enjoy this new vision of *Angels in America*,

*Molly Smith*
Artistic Director

Arena Stage offers this production in memory of Marva Hicks and Eugene Lee, wonderful artists who have graced our stages and are now angels.
“Anything is possible.”

This wisdom is engraved on a cherished pewter box gifted to my family from Brooke and Eugene Lee at a time when not everything seemed possible in our family’s life. We find resilience in our friendships. Eugene died on February 6, 2023.

Our leadership office manager, Alison Irvin, ever sensitive to the emotional atmosphere around us (a superpower she possesses) sensed my heavy heart and repeated to me my own advice to keep our dear friends’ memories— in Eugene’s case, a blessing— alive.

One way we remember artists is through their work. So many of you reading this will likely have enjoyed the worlds on our stages that Eugene imagined and, with his collaborators, made real. Eugene and I worked together on two Broadway productions, Show Boat and The Pirate Queen. So I was happy to introduce Molly to Eugene, as my guess was they’d hit it off, especially on a wonderful assignment like Molly’s reinvented Oklahoma!— not unlike the re-examined Angels in America you’re seeing today, directed by the brilliant János Szász.

As fellow Canadian Lorne Michaels observed (and I paraphrase) of Eugene’s design over decades of SNL, as an artist Eugene created worlds where artists were free to play.

A funny moment with Eugene during that call to see if he was interested and available to do Oklahoma! he said, “Are you sure about this? There was an ‘issue’ at Arena when I designed a production of Mother Courage years ago.” I heard that word “issue” fondly in many subsequent conversations over dinner with Brooke and our family at our favorite Providence eatery. He went on to recount that he wanted to use a Model T chassis he found as the cart Mother Courage pulls throughout the war. Well, it wouldn’t fit through the door (too wide and too tall). Eugene went back to the shop to get a sledgehammer to make the door bigger. Instead, he was strongly encouraged to find a cart that would fit. But I love that story as Eugene’s vision and default move was always to try to make the proverbial door bigger.

One of those ideas was to build the schoolhouse referenced in Oklahoma! in the East seating area (in the theater where you are now seated) so the band could be in the same room as the audience and actors. Both the technical director and marketing director rushed into my office to kill the idea. They’d just reinstalled the reupholstered seats and the removal of 60 seats would make our ambitious sales goals even tougher to achieve than they already were.

If you saw the show, you will know Molly and I let that “door” be made wider. Having the band in the room gave the production a signature sound and feel. As for the seats, we sold 96,939!

Eugene went on to collaborate equally joyfully with Molly on The Music Man and The Velocity of Autumn.

I will say that I see in János, as he developed with his collaborators his vision for the production you are about to encounter, the same iconoclast and builder that I knew my friend Eugene to be.

Tutto è Possibile.

Edgar Dobie
Executive Producer
President of the Corporation
At Camp Arena Stage, campers ages 8 to 15 spend the full day learning by doing. Guided by our teaching corps of professional artists and educators, they explore, discover, and create to their heart’s content! Registration is now open for all three sessions.

2023 DATES: June 26 – July 7 // July 10 – July 21 // July 24 – August 4

MEMORIES WITH MOLLY

A POEM FOR MOLLY AT 25
By Tazewell Thompson

Tony Kushner’s two-part epic Angels in America deals with and is defined by time. Everything about how we experience the plays, the circumstances of their creation, and the existential quandaries of the characters are all highly charged by time. In important ways, plays routinely operate within dual, or more, timeframes. The time and place of viewing characterizes one timeframe. Another is marked by when and where plays are set. Additionally, time and circumstances around the creation of works offers yet another timeframe within which works function. Angels in America premiered at San Francisco’s Eureka Theatre Company in 1991 and the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles in 1992. For a rewarding analysis of the creation and subsequent productions of the play, I enthusiastically recommend the book The World Only Spins Forward by Isaac Butler and Dan Kois, which presents a keenly curated oral history. In these two pages, let’s look briefly at the world in which the play is set and how ideas of time are manifest in our production’s set design.


Part One: Millennium Approaches takes place in October-December 1985. This setting is just four years after the earliest official reports of what would later become known as AIDS began circulating. On June 5, 1981, the CDC (U.S. Centers for Disease Control) published an account of a rare pneumonia in five young, previously healthy gay men in Los Angeles and received a separate report from a New York dermatologist detailing a rare and aggressive cluster of cancer called Kaposi’s Sarcoma, or KS. Within days, the Associated Press and other media outlets ran reports of similar cases around the nation.

On September 24, 1982, the CDC introduced the term “AIDS” (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). Prior to that, the illness was variously described as “Gay Men’s Pneumonia,” “gay cancer,” “mysterious fever,” and “GRID” (Gay-Related Immune Deficiency). While the first commercially available blood tests to detect HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus, a retrovirus which causes AIDS) were rolled out in 1985, there was no cure nor workplace antidiscrimination protections for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Most initial labels and early media reports emphasized that outbreaks were happening exclusively within gay male communities, which facilitated indifference and silence in the wider public.

The Reagan Administration was alarmingly silent on the AIDS epidemic. In July 1985, Hollywood leading man Rock Hudson became the first major U.S. public figure to announce that he had AIDS. In the six months following his acknowledgment, AIDS stories in major print media more than tripled. President Reagan and Hudson were known to be close friends; yet Reagan did not publicly utter the word AIDS until asked about it in a September 17, 1985, news conference during which he embellished his administration’s support and the scale of government programs’ commitment to AIDS research. Hudson died of AIDS-related illness less than three months later. Days later, in an October 15, 1985 White House press briefing, Press Secretary Larry Speakes made repeated jokes about AIDS. Responding to a reporter’s questions about the CDC’s recent designation of AIDS as an epidemic, Speakes retorted, “What’s AIDS?” and “I don’t have it. Do you?” followed by “I don’t know anything about it.” Transcripts indicate that there was laughter throughout the press conference as Speakes continued to play off reporters’ questions for laughs.

While Speakes and others laughed, HIV and AIDS were decimating communities. In late October 1985, New York State authorized local health officials to close gay bathhouses, bars, clubs, and other places where “high-risk sexual activity takes place.” The closure of these establishments energized late night Central Park as a cruising ground for gay men to meet, as shown in Millennium Approaches.

Figures from 1985 showed an 89% increase in new AIDS cases compared with 1984, and public health experts predicted twice as many new AIDS cases in 1986. Between June 1, 1981, and January 13, 1986, the CDC recorded 16,458 AIDS patients (16,227 adults and 231 children), who, on average, died about 15 months after diagnosis. By fall and winter of 1985, documented AIDS cases stretched outside gay male communities to include hemophiliacs, women, and children, as experts confirmed that spread could occur by sexual transmission and carried via blood, including passing from birth parent to newborn. Earlier in the year, an Indiana teenager who contracted HIV during treatment for his hemophilia was refused entry to his middle school. By year’s end, a Los Angeles Times poll showed that most Americans favored quarantining people with AIDS.

Pt. 2. Set (Time in Play). Ashes and Ashes.

I imagine what it would be like if each time a lover, friend or stranger died of this disease, their friends, lovers or neighbors would take the dead body and drive with it in a car a hundred miles an hour to Washington DC and blast through the gates of the White House and come to a screeching halt before the entrance and dump their lifeless form on the front steps. It would be comforting to see those friends, neighbors, lovers and strangers mark time and place and history in such a public way.

—David Wojnarowicz, Close to the Knives: A Memoir of Disintegration

We began by discussing time and its counterpart mortality. Time is such a constant throughout the piece. You are almost always aware of a clock ticking constantly in the background. We used a physical manifestation of the clock, inspiration from ACT UP scattering ashes into the White House Rose Garden, and the art of David Wojnarowicz, who created images where he’d bury himself alive in anticipation of own demise due to AIDS.

—Maruti Evans, Set Designer

In 1992 and 1996, members of ACT UP organized political funerals and protests in which they called for people to bring cremated remains of loved ones lost to AIDS for a funeral procession culminating in depositing ashes on the White House lawn. Both Ashes Actions were timed for October when the AIDS Memorial Quilt was on display on the National Mall and weeks before presidential elections.
THE GREAT WORK BEGINS.

Before the performance, please scan the QR code below with your mobile device to watch a short video.

Video edited by János Szász.
Content from Now This News and ACT UP.

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ANGELS IN AMERICA, PART ONE: MILLENNIUM APPROACHES

BY TONY KUSHNER
DIRECTED BY JÁNOS SZÁSZ

SET DESIGNER MARUTI EVANS
COSTUME DESIGNER OANA BOTEZ
LIGHTING DESIGNER CHRISTOPHER AKERLIND
ORIGINAL MUSIC AND SOUND DESIGNER FABIAN OBISPO

WIG AND MAKEUP DESIGNER THE WIG ASSOCIATES
DRAMATURG OTIS RAMSEY-ZÖE
DRAMATURG ZOË ELIZABETH LILLIS

CASTING DIRECTOR JOSEPH PINZON
NEW YORK CASTING JZ CASTING/GEOFF JOSSELSON, C.S.A.
AND KATJA ZAROLINSKI, C.S.A.

STAGE MANAGER CHRIS DE CAMILLIS
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER DAYNE SUNDMAN
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER LEIGH ROBINETTE

Angels in America, Part One: Millennium Approaches is sponsored by with additional support by Patricia and David Fisher and Andrew R. Ammerman.

MILLENNIUM APPROACHES was first performed in a workshop production presented by Center Theatre Group/Mark Taper Forum, May 1990
The world premiere was presented by The Eureka Theatre Company, May 1991
Opened in London at the Royal National Theatre of Great Britain, January 1992
Opened in New York at the Walter Kerr Theatre in April 1993
The first production of ANGELS IN AMERICA, Parts One and Two was presented at the Mark Taper Forum

ANGELS IN AMERICA, PART ONE: MILLENNIUM APPROACHES is produced by special arrangement with Broadway Play Publishing Inc, NYC www.broadwayplaypub.com
SETTING
New York City, between October 1985 and January 1986.

CAST (in alphabetical order)

Joe Pitt/Prior I/Eskimo ........................................................................................................... JOHN AUSTIN
u/s Roy Cohn/Belize ................................................................................................................. FRANK BRITTON
Louis Ironson ............................................................................................................................ MICHAEL KEVIN DARNALL
u/s Hannah Pitt/Harper Pitt/The Angel .................................................................................... VERONICA DEL CERRO
Roy Cohn/Prior II ....................................................................................................................... EDWARD GERO
u/s Joe Pitt/Louis Ironson/Prior Walter ..................................................................................... BRANDON HAEGENSON
The Angel/Emily/Sister Ella/Homeless Woman ........................................................................... BILLIE KRISHAWN
Hannah Pitt/Rabbi/Henry/Ethel Rosenberg ............................................................................... SUSAN ROME
Belize/Mr. Lies ............................................................................................................................ JUSTIN WEEKS
Prior Walter/Man in Park ............................................................................................................. NICK WESTRATE
Harper Pitt/Martin Heller ............................................................................................................. DEBORAH ANN WOLL

FOR THIS PRODUCTION

Movement Coach .......................................................................................................................... JOSEPH PINZON
Voice and Dialect Coach ............................................................................................................ ZACH CAMPION
Assistant Costume Designer .......................................................................................................... CALAB KRIEG
COVID-19 Compliance Officer ..................................................................................................... TREVOR COMEAU
Stage Carpenters .......................................................................................................................... HANNAH MARTIN, SARAH SCHLEHELIN
Props .............................................................................................................................................. ERIKA FEIDESELIT, ALEX SHINES
Light Board Operator ...................................................................................................................... KELSEY SWANSON
Lighting Assistant .......................................................................................................................... HAYLEY GARCIA PARNELL
Audio Engineer ............................................................................................................................... LEX ALLENBAUGH
Wardrobe Supervisor ..................................................................................................................... ALICE HAWFIELD
Wardrobe ......................................................................................................................................... GRACE FITZPATRICK, ELE KERN, LILLIAN KOMAROW, SINCLAIR ALEXICION SHINES
Wigs, Hair, and Makeup Supervisor ............................................................................................. JAIME BAGLEY

The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.
Please turn off all electronic devices, unless using specifically for GalaPro closed captioning service.

Angels in America, Part One: Millennium Approaches cast from left to right — Back Row: Edward Gero, Susan Rome, Billie Krishawn, Nick Westrate, Justin Weak; Front Row: Deborah Ann Woll, John Austin, Michael Kevin Darnall. Photo by Tony Powell.
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WHO'S WHO

CAST

JOHN AUSTIN (Joe Pitt / Prior I / Eskimo) appeared at Arena earlier this season as Ned Seton in Holiday. Previous Arena credits are Derrill Lark in Right to Be Forgotten and Valentín in Kleptocracy. Other D.C. area credits include Oslo (Round House), Easy Women Smoking Loose Cigarettes (Signature), and Melancholy Play (Constellation, Helen Award, Outstanding Production). John toured the U.S. with Me, Myself, & Shirley starring the late Cindy Williams of the hit television show Laverne & Shirley. In his hometown of Austin, Texas, John won a B. Iden Payne Award for his portrayal of Young Zeus in Zeus in Therapy. He holds a BFA from Boston University (summa cum laude, Dean's Award, Bette Davis Prize) as well as a Certificate in Classical Acting from Lamda. Thank you for everything you have given to American theater, Molly Smith! johnaustinactor.com

FRANK BRITTON (u/s Roy Cohn / Belize) last appeared at Arena Stage nineteen years ago as a performing understudy in Orpheus Descending, directed by Molly Smith. Most recent credits include Our Town (Washington Center Stage), Major Barbara (Washington Stage Guild), and P’Nokio: A Hip-Hop Musical (Imagination Stage). Other D.C. area appearances include productions at Studio Theatre, Round House Theatre, Avant Bard Theatre, Adventure Theatre, 1st Stage, The Krieger Alliance, among many others. Regionally, Mr. Britton has appeared with Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, and La MaMa ETC. In 2018, he earned the Helen Hayes Award (Robert Prosky Award for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Play — Helen). www.frankbrittonactor.com IG: @frankbrittonactor


MICHAEL KEVIN DARNALL (Louis Ironson) is making his Arena Stage debut. Local credits include Much Ado About Nothing at Shakespeare Theatre Company; Animal, Wig Out!, and The Hot Wing King at Studio Theatre; Jefferson’s Garden and A Christmas Carol at Ford’s Theatre; Father Comes Home From the Wars at Round House Theatre; Ulysses on Bottles at Mosaic Theater Company; and Yentl at Theater J. Michael has performed at Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Chautauqua Theatre Company, and RhinoLeap Productions. He frequently collaborates with MetroStage and Constellation Theatre Company, and is a company member at The Hub Theatre, and Spooky Action Theater. On television, he recurred in HBO’s The Wire. Michael is a seven-time Helen Hayes Award nominee and received his BFA in Acting at SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Theatre Arts.

BIOGRAPHY

JOHN AUSTIN

John Austin has performed Regionally, Across the Country and Internationally. In Austin, he has performed with All in the Timing (Off Broadway Alliance), the Austin-based ensemble troupe of The 20th Century Theatre, and the Communications Theatre. Regionally, John has performed at Arena Stage nineteen years ago as a performing understudy in Orpheus Descending, directed by Molly Smith. Other D.C. area credits include Oslo (Round House), Easy Women Smoking Loose Cigarettes (Signature), and Melancholy Play (Constellation, Helen Award, Outstanding Production). John toured the U.S. with Me, Myself, & Shirley starring the late Cindy Williams of the hit television show Laverne & Shirley. In his hometown of Austin, Texas, John won a B. Iden Payne Award for his portrayal of Young Zeus in Zeus in Therapy. He holds a BFA from Boston University (summa cum laude, Dean’s Award, Bette Davis Prize) as well as a Certificate in Classical Acting from Lamda. Thank you for everything you have given to American theater, Molly Smith! johnaustinactor.com

FRANK BRITTON

Frank Britton is an actor and director whose credits include Our Town (Washington Center Stage), Major Barbara (Washington Stage Guild), and P’Nokio: A Hip-Hop Musical (Imagination Stage). Other D.C. area appearances include productions at Studio Theatre, Round House Theatre, Avant Bard Theatre, Adventure Theatre, 1st Stage, The Krieger Alliance, among many others. Regionally, Mr. Britton has appeared with Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, and La MaMa ETC. In 2018, he earned the Helen Hayes Award (Robert Prosky Award for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Play — Helen). www.frankbrittonactor.com IG: @frankbrittonactor

VERONICA DEL CERRÓ

Veronica Del Cerro is an actor who has performed Regionally and Internationally. In D.C., she has appeared at Ford’s Theatre: Trip to Bountiful (u/s); Shakespeare Theatre: Othello; Constellation Theatre: Arabian Nights; GALA Theatre: El Paso Blue, Ana en el Trópico: Everyman Theatre: August: Osage County; Kennedy Center: Adventures of Homer; MetroStage: Savage in Limbo; Theater J: Andy and the Shadows, The Seguill on 16th Street; Studio Theatre: My Children! My Africa!: Rock ’n’ Roll; Round House Theatre: How the García Girls Lost Their Accents. Veronica has been working internationally with groups such as Café de las Artes, Movimiento en Red (Spain), and Proyecto Bicéfalo, Teatro del Mundo (Mexico). Training: BS from Virginia Tech (Psychology and Theatre Arts), Graduate of Studio Theatre Conservatory, MA in Theatre from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in London. Upcoming Film: See You on Venus (SUR FILMS) (2023) IG: @miamoca
Edward Gero (Roy Cohn / Prior II)’s Arena Stage credits include Thomas Everson, Jr. in Junk, Antonin Scalia in The Originalist, Benjamin Hubbard in The Little Foxes, and Mark Rothko in Red. He is a four-time Helen Hayes Award winner and 16-time nominee. New York credits include The Originalist (59E59). Regional credits include The Originalist (Asolo Repertory, Pasadena Playhouse, and Court Theatre, Joseph Jefferson Award nomination); Red and Gloucester in King Lear (Goodman); Nixon’s Nixon and Night Alive (Round House); Sweeney Todd (Signature Theatre); Scrooge in A Christmas Carol (Ford’s Theatre); and American Buffalo, Shining City, and Skylight (Studio Theatre). In 39 seasons with Shakespeare Theatre Company, his over 80 roles include Helen Hayes turns in Henry IV, Richard II, and Macbeth. Film/TV credits include House of Cards, TURN: Washington’s Spies, Die Hard 2, Striking Distance, and narrations for Discovery Channel and PBS.

Brandon Haagenson (u/s Joe Pitt/Louis Ironson/Prior Walter) is ecstatic to be making his Arena Stage debut! Last season, he appeared in Shakespeare Theatre Company’s Our Town and The Merchant of Venice. He has performed off-Broadway in Afterglow (original cast) and My Big Gay Italian Wedding. National tours include Beauty and the Beast (Lumière) and A Christmas Carol. Regional credits include Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Stages St. Louis, Riverside Theatre, North Carolina Theatre, and North Shore Music Theatre. Television appearances include The Other Two (HBO Max) and The Food That Built America (History Channel). He earned his MFA in Classical Acting at STC’s Academy at The George Washington University, and has a BFA in Musical Theater from Millikin University. Love to his family and friends for their unending support. www.brandonhaagenson.com. IG: @brandonhaagenson

Billie Krishawn (The Angel/Emily/Sister Ella/Homeless Woman) makes her Arena Stage debut. Her most recent D.C. credits include JUMP at Everyman Theatre, The Till Trilogy at Mosaic Theater Company (Helen Hayes Award nomination for Best Supporting Performer), Joy That Carries You at Olney Theatre Center, Until the Flood at Studio Theatre, HERstory at The Kennedy Center, Blood at the Root at Theater Alliance (Helen Hayes Award recipient for Outstanding Lead Performer, Outstanding Ensemble, and Outstanding Production), Melancholy Play at Constellation Theatre Company (Helen Hayes Award nomination for Best Lead Actress, Helen Hayes Award recipient for Outstanding Production), Airness at 1st Stage and Keegan Theatre. Major film credits include Amazon Prime’s Water in a Broken Glass. Education: Drew University and Duke Ellington School of the Arts. www.billiekrishawn.com IG: @absolutereality

Susan Rome (Hannah Pitt/Rabbi/Henry/Ethel Rosenberg)’s Arena Stage credits include Indecent (Helen Hayes ensemble nomination), The Great Society, and All the Way. Baltimore/Washington: Baltimore Center Stage: Our Town, Folks at Home, Indecent, After the Revolution, Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike, Mud Blue Sky, An Enemy of the People; Signature: Easy Women Smoking Loose Cigarettes; Folger: Love’s Labor’s Lost; Studio Theatre: If I Forget (Helen Hayes nominations), Hand to God (Helen Hayes ensemble nomination); Olney Theatre Center: The Diary of Anne Frank, The Joy We Carry (Helen Hayes ensemble nomination); Theater J: Edward Albee’s The Zoo Project, The House of Blue Leaves, The Great Society, An Enemy of the People, and other plays. Regional: Kansas City Repertory Theatre: Indecent; Mark Taper Forum: The Substance of Fire; many more. Film: Fishbowl, My One and Only, A Dirty Shame. Television: The Wire, We Own This City (HBO), House of Cards (Netflix). www.susanrome.com
WHO’S WHO

JUSTIN WEAKS (Belize / Mr. Lies) makes their in-person Arena Stage debut with Angels in America, Part One: Millennium Approaches after collaborating virtually with Arena on The 51st State and The Freewheelin’ Insurgents during the COVID-19 pandemic. He is a company member at Woolly Mammoth Theatre, where he has appeared in There’s Always the Hudson, BLKS, Gloria, and Describe the Night. D.C. area credits include: Long Way Down (Kennedy Center), Fences (Ford’s Theatre), Gem of the Ocean (Round House Theatre), Pipeline (Studio Theatre), Word Becomes Flesh (Theater Alliance). Off-Broadway: i need space (The New Group). Regional credits include work with Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Shakespeare & Company, and Barter Theatre. Justin holds two Helen Hayes Awards and five nominations for his work. Education: Greensboro College. #HIVIsNotACrime

DEBORAH ANN WOLL (Harper Pitt / Martin Heller) will be making her debut at Arena Stage this season. Most recently she appeared as the titular shrew, Katherine, in The Taming of the Shrew (The Old Globe, San Diego), and as Amalia Balash in Parfumerie (Wallis Annenberg, Los Angeles). She is best known for her work on television and film as Jessica Hamby on HBO’s True Blood, Karen Page on Marvel’s Daredevil, and Amanda in Sony’s Escape Room. She is the voice and performance capture for Faye in PlayStation’s God of War franchise. And you can also catch her online, creating and performing in the TTRPG space, most notably as creator and game master for Relics and Rarities and Children of Éarte.

CREDITIVE TEAM

TONY KUSHNER (Playwright)’s plays include Angels in America; Hydriotaphia, or the Death of Dr. Brown; The Illusion, adapted from the play by Pierre Cornelle; Slavs!; A Bright Room Called Day; Homebody/Kabul; Caroline, or Change, a musical with composer Jeanine Tesori; and The Intelligent Homosexual’s Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures. He wrote the screenplays for Mike Nichols’ film of Angels in America and for Steven Spielberg’s Munich, Lincoln, West Side Story, and The Fabelmans. His books include The Art of Maurice Sendak; and Wrestling with Zion: Progressive Jewish-American Responses to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, co-edited with Alisa Solomon. Among many honors, Kushner is the recipient of a Pulitzer Prize, two Tony Awards, three Obie Awards, two Evening Standard Awards, an Olivier Award, an Emmy Award, four Oscar nominations, and the Steinberg Distinguished Playwright Award. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 2012, he was awarded a National Medal of Arts by President Barack Obama. He lives in Manhattan with his husband, Mark Harris.
JÁNOS SZÁSZ (Director) is an international film and theater director, academic, and professor. He returns to Arena Stage having previously directed A Streetcar Named Desire in 2001. Theater work in his native Hungary includes works by Brecht, Chekhov, and Shakespeare, among others. János has directed at the Royal Swedish Theatre (Stockholm), Det Norske Teatret (Oslo), Moscow Art Theatre, Bard SummerScape, and numerous productions at the American Repertory Theater, including The Seagull, Desire Under the Elms, Uncle Vanya, Marat/Sade, and Mother Courage and Her Children. His many film credits include Opium (presented at various festivals in Europe and winner of several prizes, Woyzeck (Hungarian nominee for the Oscars), The Wilman Boys (official selection of the Cannes Film Festival and winner of several awards), and Eyes of the Holocaust, a documentary film about the Hungarian holocaust produced by Steven Spielberg for the Shoah Foundation. János was the Director of the Institute for Advanced Theater Training at Harvard, and at the Academy of Drama and Film in Budapest for 23 years, as a faculty member and head of the film department. He is a member of the European Film Academy and the Hungarian Academy of Science’s Department of Arts.

MARUTI EVANS (Set Designer)’s credits include Fat Ham (Public Theater), At the Wedding (Lincoln Center Theater), In Our Daughter’s Eyes (LA Opera), Kill Move Paradise (National Black Theater), The Ring Cycle (Opera Australia), Angel’s Bone (Hong Kong Music Festival, Beijing Music Festival), and Real Enemies (BAM). Drama Desk Awards: Tiny Dynamite and Piló Family Circus. Drama Desk nominations: Peculiar Patriot, Kill Move Paradise, Deliverance, In the Heat of the Night, Slaughterhouse-Five, and Blindness.

OANA BOTEZ (Costume Designer) is an international set/costume designer for film, theater, opera, and dance. She is a Princess Grace Award recipient, NEA/TCG Career Development Program recipient, and Barrymore Award recipient, as well as a Henry Hewes Design Award nominee and Lucille Lortel Award nominee. New York: BAM Next Wave, Bard SummerScape; Richard B. Fisher Center, Playwrights Horizons, Baryshnikov Arts Center, David H. Koch Theater/Lincoln Center, Big Apple Circus/Lincoln Center, Classic Stage Company. Regional: Ain’t Misbehavin’ (Barrington Stage Company); Macbeth (Old Globe); Angels in America (Wilma); Man in a Case (Hartford). Opera: Song of the Ambassadors (Alice Tully Hall/Lincoln Center); Carmen (Minneapolis Opera); Glimmerglass Festival, Portland Opera; In a Grove (Pittsburgh Opera); Persona (National Sawdust, REDCAT); A House in Bali (BAM). Internationally: Bucharest National Theatre (Romania), Château de Versailles, Théâtre National de Chailloit, Les Subsistances, The Old Vic, Budapest National Theatre, Cluj Hungarian National Theatre (Romania), Le Quartz (Brest, France), La Filature (Mulhouse, France), Exit Festival/Maison des arts de Créteil, Tanz im August Festival Hebbel am Ufer – HAUI (Berlin, Germany), Edinburgh International Festival, Singapore Arts Festival. She teaches at David Geffen School of Drama at Yale in the Design Department.

CHRISTOPHER AKERLIND (Lighting Designer) has designed lighting for over 650 productions at theater, opera, and dance companies around the world. He returns to Arena Stage where he designed Imitations for Saxophone and Equivocation. Work with János Szász includes productions of The Seagull, Desire Under the Elms, and Uncle Vanya at the American Repertory Theater. Recent work includes Martha Clarke’s God’s Fool at La MaMa ETC, Lynn Nottage’s new play Clyde’s on Broadway and at the Mark Taper Forum, and the world premiere of Huang Ro and David Henry Hwang’s opera M. Butterfly at the Santa Fe Opera. Mr. Akerlind is the recipient of an Obie, two Tonys, and four Drama Desk Awards, among many others, and is on the faculty of the CalArts School of Theater.

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**WHO’S WHO**

**FABIAN OBISPO** (Original Music and Sound Designer) returns to Arena Stage where his credits include Seven Guitars, Agamemnon and His Daughters (Helen Hayes nomination), and Caucasian Chalk Circle, among others. D.C.-area credits include Shakespeare Theatre Company's Comedy of Errors, Henry V, Two Gentlemen of Verona, and Folger Theatre's Romeo and Juliet. He has designed extensively for off-Broadway and regional theaters. Recent off-Broadway credits include The Chinese Lady (Lucille Lortel nomination), Out of Time, Once Upon a Korean Time, and his musical Felix Starro. He is a recipient of the Berkshires Theatre Critics Award and the Barrymore Award. His music score for the movie Vancouver won International Motion Picture Award, LA Film Festival's Indie Short Fest Award, and South Film and Arts Academy Festival Award.

**THE WIG ASSOCIATES** (Wig and Makeup Designer) are making their Arena Stage debut. Opera: Opera Theatre Saint Louis 2023 Season. Off-Broadway: At The Wedding (Lincoln Center); Americano! (New World Stages); Mrs. Warren's Profession, Candida (Gingold Group). Regional: Mojada: A Medea in Los Angeles (Yale Rep); the ripple, the wave that carried me home (Yale Rep); Ain't Misbehavin' (Barrington). Krystal and Will hold BFA’s in Wig and Makeup Design from Webster Conservatory. See wigassociates.com for more.

**OTIS RAMSEY-ZÖE** (Dramaturg) is a care worker, dramaturg, director, theatre arts educator, Literary Manager at Arena Stage, and Lecturer in Dramaturgy at the David Geffen School of Drama at Yale. He has developed new works at such institutions as Sundance Institute, Kennedy Center, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Playwrights Center, and National New Play Network. He has held posts in Theatre at Northeastern University, Dramaturgy at Carnegie Mellon University, Women’s Studies and Honors Humanities at University of Maryland, Performing Arts at American University, and Theatre Arts at Howard University. He was Associate Artistic Director at banished? productions, Future Classics Program Coordinator at The Classical Theatre of Harlem, Literary Manager at Center Stage, and an Allen Lee Hughes Senior Fellow at Arena Stage.

**ZOË ELIZABETH LILLIS** (Dramaturg) is a director, producer, playwright, and dramaturg. While typically based in New York, Zoë is thrilled to have joined Arena Stage’s 2022/23 Season as an Allen Lee Hughes Fellow. She had the honor of assistant directing Arena’s world premiere of My Body No Choice. Zoë has worked on Broadway with Manhattan Theatre Club and Second Stage, Off-Broadway with The Public Theater, the cell, and Theatre Row, and regionally with Arena Stage, The Huntington Theatre Company, and Hawaii Performing Arts Festival. She earned her BA in Directing and Dramatizing History at NYU Gallatin, where she focused on the relationship between narrative and the process of production. zoelillis.com

**JOSEPH PINZON** (Casting Director) is the founder and creative producer of the contemporary circus company Short Round Productions and its award-winning show Filament. With over 25 years of performing experience, he has worked internationally with renowned companies such as Cirque Éloize, Compagnia Finzi Pasca, Cirque du Soleil, and The 7 Fingers. He holds an MS in Arts Leadership from USC, a BA in Psychology from UCLA, and graduated from the National Circus School in Montreal with a specialization in aerial techniques. He was the casting and resident director for Chamäleon Productions (Berlin) and Constellation Immersive (CAA’s experiential affiliate). He is also a member of the Creative & Independent Producer Alliance and a founding board member of the American Circus Alliance. You can see him causing chaos on season 6 of Nailed It! on Netflix, where (spoiler alert) he is a part of the series’ first three-way tie.
2022/23 SEASON

Anger

Anything Goes. Other shows include

Jane

Newsies

Road

Own Words

Catch Me If You Can,

American Prophet: Frederick Douglass in His

Some past shows at Arena include

served as an Allen Lee Hughes Fellow and

ASM debut at Arena Stage after having

) is thrilled to be making his

Parable of the Sower

Octavia E. Butler’s

is the PSM for the touring production of

Porgy and Bess

Pippin

No More

stage-managed over 30 productions and

Stage Manager at the A.R.T. where he

Marat/Sade,

Uncle

. Further collaborations included

production of

Mother Courage and Her

Children. Other collaborations included

Marat/Sade, Desire Under the Elms, Uncle

Vanya, and The Seagull. From 1998-2013,

Chris was the Line Producer/Resident

Stage Manager at the A.R.T. where he

stage-managed over 30 productions and

line produced the world premiere of Sleep

No More, Porgy and Bess, and Pippin. Chris

is the PSM for the touring production of

Octavia E. Butler’s Parable of the Sower

with Toshi Reagon.

DAYNE SUNDMAN (Assistant Stage

Manager) is thrilled to be making his

ASM debut at Arena Stage after having

served as an Allen Lee Hughes Fellow and

Production Assistant for several seasons. Some past shows at Arena include

American Prophet: Frederick Douglass in His

Own Words, Catch Me If You Can, Mother

Road, Newsies, Junk, The Heiress, and

Anything Goes. Other shows include Jane

Anger, The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci

(StC); The Great Society, Born Yesterday,


LEIGH ROBINETTE (Assistant Stage

Manager)'s Arena Stage credits include

Holiday, Change Agent, The Originalist,

Dear Evan Hansen, Fiddler on the Roof, and

Mother Courage and Her Children. Other

D.C. credits include The Second City’s

Love, Factually at the Kennedy Center,

Love Sick and The Jewish Queen Lear with

Theater J, and There’s Always the Hudson,

Describe the Night, Gloria, Botticelli in the

Fire, Familiar, The Arsonists, and An

Octopus with Woolly Mammoth Theatre

Company. She has worked Off-Broadway at

Second Stage, with the Huntington Theatre

Company in Boston, and the Hangar

Theatre in Ithaca, NY. She is a graduate of

Boston University.

AREN A STAGE LEADERSHIP

MOLLY SMITH (Artistic Director) has

served as artistic director since 1998. Her

40 directing credits at Arena Stage

include large-scale musicals, like Catch

Me If You Can, Anything Goes, Disney’s

Newsies, Carousel, Fiddler on the Roof,

Oklahoma!, My Fair Lady, The Music

Man, Cabaret, South Pacific, new plays,

like Celia and Fidel, Sovereignty, The

Originalist, Camp David, Legacy of Light,

The Women of Brewer Place, How I

Learned to Drive; and classics like Mother

Courage and Her Children, A Moon for

the Misbegotten, The Great White Hope, and

All My Sons. Her directorial work has also

been seen Off-Broadway at 59E59 in New

York, Portland Center Stage, Canada’s

Shaw Festival, The Court Theatre, The

Old Globe, Asolo Repertory, Berkeley

Repertory, Trinity Repertory, Toronto’s

Tarragon Theatre, Montreal’s Centaur

Theatre and Perseverance Theater in

Juneau, Alaska, which she founded and

ran from 1979-1998. Molly has been a

leader in new play development for

over 40 years. She is a great believer

in first, second, and third productions of

new work and has championed projects, including Dear Evan Hansen; Next to Normal; Passion Play, a cycle; and How I Learned to Drive. She led the

re-invention of Arena Stage, focusing on

the architecture and creation of the

Mead Center for American Theater and

positioning Arena Stage as a national

center for American artists through its

artistic programming. During her time

with the company, Arena Stage has

workshopped more than 100 productions,

produced 39 world premieres, staged

numerous second and third productions,

and been an important part of nurturing

nine projects that went on to have a life

on Broadway. In 2014, Molly made her

Broadway debut directing The Velocity of

Autumn, following its critically acclaimed

run at Arena Stage. She was awarded

honorary doctorates from American

University and Towson University. In

2018, she was honored as Person of the

Year by the National Theatre Conference

and inducted into the Washington DC

Hall of Fame. In 2020, she was awarded

the Director of Distinction in Cairo,

Egypt, from the Academy of Arts. During

the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, she

developed the concept for two online

films, May 22, 2020 and The 51st State,

overseeing the production direction as

well as directing pieces within the films.

She also spearheaded a variety of other

new online content, including a weekly

talk show Molly’s Salon, during the live

performance hiatus.

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

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This theater operates under an agreement

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2022/23 SEASON 29
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For more information, contact Maya Weil, CAP*, Arena’s Gift Planning Specialist at 202-600-4158 or mwfell@arenastage.org

THE Cast of The Pajama Game. Photo by Margot Schulman.

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The Arena Stage Costume Shop is generously supported by, and named for, Lola C. Reinsch and the Reinsch Pierce Family Foundation.
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Dramaturg ......................................................Jocelyn Clarke
Literary Manager ..........................................Otis C. Ramsey-Zoe
Artistic Associate, Casting ..............................Joseph Pinzon
Artistic Development Coordinator ....................Melissa Singson
Artistic Development Fellow .............................Zoe Lillis*
Current Commissioned Writers .......................The Bengsions, Lee Cataluna, Kia Corthron, Nathan Alan Davis, Emily Feldman, Idris Goodwin, David Henry Hwang, Caleen Sinnette Jennings, Kenneth Lin, Octavio Solis, Vera Starbard, Lauren Yee, Karen Zacarias, Zack Zadek

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School Programs Manager ..............................Rebecca Campana
Community Programs Manager .........................Mauricio Pita
Training Programs Manager ............................Mari Andrea Travis

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Director of Community Engagement/Senior Artistic Advisor ...............Anita Maynard-Losh
Director of Education .....................................Ashley Forman
School Programs Manager ..............................Rebecca Campana
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Lead Manager, Audience Services .......................Andrew Rampy
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Assistant Production Manager ............................Rachel Crawford
STAGE MANAGEMENT
Resident Production Manager ..........................Christi B. Spann