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2018/19 SEASON

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PART OF THE AUGUST WILSON FESTIVAL

AUGUST WILSON'S JITNEY

BY **AUGUST WILSON** | DIRECTED BY **RUBEN SANTIAGO-HUDSON**
KREEGER THEATER | **SEPTEMBER 13 - OCTOBER 20, 2019**

August Wilson's *Jitney*, the 2017 Tony Award-winning production directed by Ruben Santiago-Hudson, opens Arena Stage's season with the dramatic story of a Pittsburgh jitney station, a symbol of stability, struggling against an oppressive lack of opportunity and unnerving neighborhood gentrification that threatens the way they live and work. The drivers resist powerful forces while coming to grips with their pasts to fulfill their own hopes and dreams for the future.

TONY AWARD-WINNING MUSICAL

DISNEY'S NEWSIES

A MUSICAL BASED ON THE DISNEY FILM WRITTEN BY **BOB TZUDIKER** AND **NONI WHITE**
MUSIC BY **ALAN MENKEN** | LYRICS BY **JACK FELDMAN** | BOOK BY **HARVEY FIERSTEIN**
ORIGINALLY PRODUCED ON BROADWAY BY **DISNEY THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS**
DIRECTED BY **MOLLY SMITH** | CHOREOGRAPHED BY **PARKER ESSE**
MUSIC DIRECTION BY **LAURA BERGQUIST**
FICHANDLER STAGE | **NOVEMBER 1 - DECEMBER 22, 2019**

In the summer of 1899, the newsboys of New York City took on two of the most powerful men in the country — Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst — and won. Inspired by true events, the Broadway smash hit is a testament to the power of standing up and speaking out. *Newsies* is “a winning, high-energy musical” (*Entertainment Weekly*) just in time for the holidays and perfect for the whole family.

WORLD-PREMIERE LOVE STORY

KEN LUDWIG'S DEAR JACK, DEAR LOUISE

BY **KEN LUDWIG** | DIRECTED BY **JACKIE MAXWELL**
KREEGER THEATER | **NOVEMBER 21 - DECEMBER 29, 2019**

When two strangers meet by letter during World War II, a love story begins. But as the war continues, it threatens to end their relationship before it even starts. Tony Award-winning playwright Ken Ludwig (*Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery*, *Lend Me a Tenor*) tells the joyous, heart-warming story of his parents' courtship during World War II and the results are anything but expected.

COURAGEOUS VOICES

A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS

ADAPTED BY **URSULA RANI SARMA** | BASED ON THE NOVEL BY **KHALED HOSSEINI**
DIRECTED BY **CAREY PERLOFF**
KREEGER THEATER | **JANUARY 17 - MARCH 1, 2020**

Adapted from the *New York Times* bestselling novel by Khaled Hosseini (*Kite Runner*), the lives of two Afghan women are inextricably bound together. In the war-ravaged Kabul, Miriam and Laila become unlikely allies in the face of the insurmountable odds of a brutal and oppressive way of life. Called “emotionally stirring” (*Los Angeles Times*), this gripping and heart-rending fight for survival will keep you on the edge of your seat from start to finish.

THE OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL
PRODUCTION OF

MOTHER ROAD

BY **OCTAVIO SOLIS** | DIRECTED BY **BILL RAUCH**
IN ASSOCIATION WITH **OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL**
FICHANDLER STAGE | **FEBRUARY 7 - MARCH 8, 2020**

As William Joad sets out on an epic journey to pass down his family farm, he is humiliated to find that the only surviving descendant of his family is a Mexican-American named Martin Jodes, an ex-migrant worker. Inspired by John Steinbeck's classic, *The Grapes of Wrath*, the two men forge an unlikely bond and come to terms with their brutal past. This powerful new play examines the crossroads of family, immigration and the American dream.

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2019/20 SEASON

PLAYS FOR THE PRICE OF 6!

WORLD-PREMIERE POWER PLAY

CELIA AND FIDEL

BY EDUARDO MACHADO | DIRECTED BY MOLLY SMITH

ARLENE AND ROBERT KOGOD CRADLE | FEBRUARY 28 - APRIL 12, 2020

Can one woman change the mind of a man and the fate of a nation? Fidel Castro's most trusted confidant and political partner, Celia Sánchez, is never far from his side as he grapples with how to move his country forward. Imbued with magical realism, Arena Stage's seventh Power Play imagines a conversation between Cuba's most influential female revolutionary and its most notorious political leader in a contest between morality and power.

PART OF THE AUGUST WILSON FESTIVAL

AUGUST WILSON'S SEVEN GUITARS

BY AUGUST WILSON

RICHANDLER STAGE | APRIL 3 - MAY 3, 2020

Seven lives are interconnected in 1940s Pittsburg when old friend and blues singer Floyd Barton vows to turn his life around after a surprise windfall leaves him hopeful for a second chance. Infused with deep and soaring blues rhythms, this "rich and exceptionally vivid" (*Variety*) play pits the desire for a better future against the harsh realities ultimately leading to heartbreaking and inescapable circumstances.

A TRAILBLAZING SPIRIT

TONI STONE

BY LYDIA R. DIAMOND | DIRECTED BY PAM MACKINNON

IN ASSOCIATION WITH AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

KREEGER THEATER | APRIL 23 - MAY 31, 2020

Considered a pioneer, Toni Stone is the first woman to play baseball in the Negro Leagues, also making her the first woman to play professionally in a men's league in the 1950s. Based on Martha Ackmann's book *Curveball, The Remarkable Story of Toni Stone*, this uplifting story follows Stone as she blazes a path in the male-dominated sports world against all odds, shattering expectations and creating her own set of rules.

SPECIAL ADD-ON PRODUCTIONS

AN INDOMITABLE ICON

ANN

BY HOLLAND TAYLOR | DIRECTED BY KRISTEN VAN GINHOVEN

IN ASSOCIATION WITH DALLAS THEATER CENTER

KREEGER THEATER | JULY 11 - AUGUST 11, 2019

Punchline-packed speeches reveal the feisty and unadulterated life of legendary Texas Governor Ann Richards. *Ann* is a comical and inspiring production based on the colorful and complex woman whose sense of humor was bigger than the state which she represented. "Frank, funny and warm" (*New York Times*), *Ann* is a captivating tribute to Richards' life as an activist, politician and feminist champion.

WORLD-PREMIERE DRAMA

RIGHT TO BE FORGOTTEN

BY SHARYN ROTHSTEIN | DIRECTED BY SEEMA SUEKO

ARLENE AND ROBERT KOGOD CRADLE | OCTOBER 11 - NOVEMBER 10, 2019

The internet never forgets. A young man's mistake at 17 haunts him online a decade later. Desperate for a normal life, he goes to extraordinary lengths to erase his indiscretion. But freedom of information is big business, and the tech companies aren't going down without a fight. Secrets, lies and political backstabbing abound in this riveting new drama about one man's fierce battle to reclaim his right to privacy.



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Photo of DeWitt Fleming, Jr. by Christopher Mueller

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Jubilee Program Book
Published April 26, 2019

Cover Illustration
by Bruce Hutchinson

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Tazewell Thompson has a booming voice. It's so crisp and clear and is always a joy to hear Tazewell speak.

He has a special talent for exploring seldom-heard voices from our American history through plays he has written, such as *Constant Star* and *Mary T & Lizzy K*. Although we think of him as a man of the theater, he also has a broad range of credits in opera and television. Now he brings us *Jubilee*, giving center stage to the creation of the Fisk Jubilee Singers and their efforts to support Fisk University while sharing their African-American musical heritage.

Tazewell first came to Arena in 1987. Zelda Fichandler recognized that Arena was not reflecting the community through her artistic staff. Tazewell was an important part of the artistic staff as advisor to Zelda, who was a mentor to him and a deep friend. He has directed over 20 plays at Arena and is a valued artistic friend to each of us.

Tazewell has directed all over the country and abroad and he has a great eye and a gifted ear. He brings out wonderful performances from each cast and has an uncanny sense of who will be the right members for each company.

While Tazewell's role on the artistic team may have been one of the first steps toward Arena's diversity, Arena has built and expanded this part of our mission. One of our core values is to champion diversity throughout the organization and within the community, and we do this through the work on stage and programs like the Allen Lee Hughes Fellows Program, which brings young people (of all backgrounds but with a particular recruiting focus on people of color) to Arena for a year-long opportunity to learn and work beside many great artists and savvy administrators.

We rigorously select works in our season of women and people of color, and over the past decade more than half of the writers and directors have been women and people of color. Our audience is over a third people of color and it's always exciting to see the diversity in our robust audiences. Arena is constantly moving forward towards greater inclusion. As we face our 70th season, it's exciting to feel our theater constantly tilling the soil and growing our garden.

Tazewell has led the way in so many regards throughout his distinguished career and it is always wonderful to have him at Arena breathing life into a new story for the stage.

Molly Smith
Artistic Director



Arena Stage is built on the land of the 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.



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FROM THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER



The story of the Fisk Jubilee Singers is an uplifting and inspirational testament to the power of finding one's unique voice in the world and sharing that voice. I say unique in the sense that it belongs to you, the person—but also a unique quality that others may share, as with the Fisk Singers and a shared history of Negro Spirituals. Each individual singer has a unique take on their shared history, so it is the bringing together of these collections of voices, whether in song or other art form, that is uniting while at the same time allowing the individual to soar.

Voices of Now, a keystone of Arena Stage's community engagement programs, has a similar impact. Reaching out to young people of various backgrounds and challenges, Voice of Now artists work with them to devise and build a theater piece based on their personal experiences, individually and as a group. The ensembles find a group voice but also enhance the individual voices among them.

There are 10 Voices of Now ensembles from around the greater Washington area, including Southwest neighbors to Arena through Jefferson Middle School all the way out to Fairfax County Public Schools. Many of these organizations have been working with Arena for years, however the students and ensembles change annually. Each year their work culminates in May with a multi-day festival where they perform their pieces for family, friends and the general public in the Kogod Cradle. This year, the festival takes place from May 15 through May 19. Please take a look at our website to see specific performances—it will be well worth your while to see the passionate, exuberant, deep and dangerous American spirits represented there.

Arena's Voices of Now artists have also gone abroad six times. Most recently, Director of Community Engagement Anita Maynard-Losh, Director of Education Ashley Forman, Teaching Artist Psalmayene 24 and School Programs Manager Rebecca Campana traveled to Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina to work with three ensembles. From still war-torn neighborhoods to the countryside, they worked with young people to tackle issues with which adults still struggle.

It is truly inspiring to hear the stories these young people create—confronting issues of grief, fear, anger—many times delivering a combined story that focuses on a way forward. May the Fisk Jubilee Singers and Voices of Now inspire all of us to support the many different voices we encounter every day.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Edgar'.

Edgar Dobie

Executive Producer

President of the Corporation

AN INTERVIEW WITH PLAYWRIGHT & DIRECTOR, TAZEWELL THOMPSON

What was the spark for *Jubilee*? How did you encounter the story of the Fisk Singers, and what made you look at that story and say “this should be a play?”

Over 20 years ago, I saw a documentary on public television, during Black History Month, about the Fisk Jubilee Singers. I was immediately intrigued by the story of these extraordinarily courageous and gifted human beings, who in 1871, six years after the Civil War and the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, set off from Nashville, Tennessee to save a failing university that meant everything to them.

Now, I grew up as a Roman Catholic, completely immersed in the catechism and teachings of the Church. Starting when I was six years old, I lived for seven years in a convent home. I was an altar boy and a boy soprano in the choir. I could read music and I could read and write in Latin. I sang hymns and Gregorian chants. I knew nothing of Negro Spirituals.

Of course, I knew the more familiar songs: *Swing Low Sweet Chariot*, *Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen*, *Deep River*, *Wade in the Water*, *Balm in Gilead*, *Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel*, *Steal Away*, *Go Down Moses*... But I did not know the history, the root or the connection of these beautiful songs to my people or my culture—their connection to me. After viewing the documentary, I was obsessed and wanted to know more. I read what was available and I began to collect Negro Spirituals. I had hundreds: books, sheet music, CDs, vinyl... I was thinking of creating a book of my own on Negro Spirituals from all I had collected. However, when a commission to write a play was offered, I knew I wanted to tell the story of the Jubilee Singers.



Tazewell Thompson. Photo by Fabian Obispo.

Why was this a story you wanted to bring to Arena?

Arena Stage is my artistic home. I first came to Arena Stage in 1987. I've worked all over the world in opera and theater. Arena is home: *Jubilee* will be my 22nd production at Arena Stage. *Jubilee* will be the third play that I wrote and my second to have its world premiere here. Arena Stage has been a world-class flagship theater as long as I have known it; under Molly Smith, it has become the preeminent theater dedicated to American stories, in particular. Further, Arena Stage is a multicultural artistic oasis in a city of demographic diversity, history, law, politics and celebration of the arts.

The story of the Fisk Singers is very much the story of the Negro Spiritual. Why do these songs matter, and why do they endure?

The earliest songs sung in America are those songs sung by slaves—as early as the beginning of the 17th century—known as field songs, folk hymns, cabin songs, secret songs, plantation melodies, hand-me-down songs, shouts, spirituals or jubilees. The songs matter because the men and women who sang and composed them expressed through these songs their faith, pain, anguish, hope, loss, love and joy, as they struggled to survive from day to day—even as they helped shape and build this country and planted the roots of blues, jazz, R&B and hip-hop. Negro Spirituals are still sung all over the world, in dozens of languages, in churches, concert halls and opera houses.

The story of the Fisk Singers is also the story of Fisk University. Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCUs) like Fisk have changed much in recent years, with many of

them facing falling levels of African American enrollment as well as chronic administrative and financial struggles. Is there still value in preserving and supporting these institutions?

Yes, absolutely! Most especially, now. And forever! Times change everything, but we look back (nostalgically, perhaps) on why these institutions were necessary to begin with. In our present political climate, split by lightning divisiveness, we need these educational ports in the storm to continue to tell the story of who black Americans are as a people; to provide encouragement, succor and complete enlightenment and not just half of the story. They need to remain as a choice and a living, functioning beacon of hope and history.

When the audience leaves the theater after the show, with what do you want them to leave?

An expansion of the mind, a connection to the heart and a curiosity into the kingdom of Negro Spirituals.



The Jubilee Singers from Fisk University, 1882.



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TAZEWELL THOMPSON

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DONALD EASTMAN

COSTUME DESIGNER
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LIGHTING DESIGNER
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Jubilee was originally commissioned by South Coast Repertory.



TIME AND PLACE

Nineteenth century and the present.

CAST (in alphabetical order)

Mabel Lewis.....	SHALEAH ADKISSON*
Ella Sheppard.....	LISA ARRINDELL*
Jennie Jackson	JOY JONES*
Georgia Gordon	ZONYA LOVE*
Frederick Loudin.....	SEAN-MAURICE LYNCH*
Thomas Rutling.....	V. SAVOY MCILWAIN*
Maggie Porter	AUNDI MARIE MOORE*
America Robinson.....	SIMONE PAULWELL*
Isaac Dickerson.....	TRAVIS PRATT*
Minnie Tate.....	KATHERINE ALEXIS THOMAS*
Greene Evans/Fight Captain	BUEKA UWEMEDIMO*
Benjamin Holmes	GREG WATKINS
Edmund Watkins.....	JAYSEN WRIGHT*

*Member of Actors' Equity Association



FOR THIS PRODUCTION

Technical Director	NATALIE BELL
Properties Director	JENN SHEETZ
Costume Director	JOSEPH P. SALASOVICH
Master Electrician	CHRISTOPHER V. LEWTON
Sound & Video Supervisor.....	BRIAN BURCHETT
Assistant Lighting Designer.....	TED BOYCE-SMITH
Assistant Projections Designer/Watchout Programmer	JOHN ERICKSON
Production Assistant.....	PAULA FRITZ
Directing Fellow	DALIA ASHURINA
Senior Literary Fellow/Script Supervisor.....	ANNA'LE HORNAK
Production Dramaturg.....	NAYSAN MOJGANI
Show Carpenter	HANNAH MARTIN
Props.....	MARION HAMPTON DUBE
Light Board Operator.....	KELSEY SWANSON
Followspot Operators.....	STEFANIE DEHART, NORAH MATTHEWS
Assistant to the Lighting Designer	VENUS GULBRANSON
Sound Engineer.....	DREW MOBERLEY
Second Sound Technician (A2).....	ALEXANDER CLOUD
Sound Support Technician	YAW OWUSU
Projections Programmer (Swing).....	AIDAN MARSHALL
Wardrobe Supervisor	ALICE HAWFIELD
Wardrobe	ADELLE GRESOCK, CATON HAMRICK
Wigs, Hair and Makeup Supervisor.....	LASHAWN MELTON
Costume Design Assistants.....	MICHELLE BUSH, KITT CRESCENZO
Additional Drapers	KITTY KNAPP, SEAMS UNLIMITED
Additional Millinery	ADELLE GRESOCK
Additional Stitchers	RAYNA C. RICHARDSON, ELIZABETH SPILSBURY
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CAST (in alphabetical order)



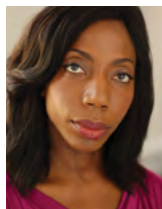
SHALEAH ADKISSON (Mabel Lewis) has been seen on Broadway and on tour in *Hair: The American Tribal Love-Rock Musical* and Off-Broadway in *Rent*. Regional: *Clybourne Park*, *Avenue Q*, *The Hot Mikado*, *Beehive: The 60's Musical*, *Ain't*

Misbehavin', *Grease*, *Nunsense* and *Children of Eden*. When not working in the theater she works as an administrator and teaching artist with Bridge Arts Ensemble, an organization of freelance musicians catering to school districts in upstate New York. Additionally, she performs in NYC and on tour with Soul Picnic Productions (*Back to the Garden* and *August 1969: A Tribute to the Women of Woodstock*). Instagram: @shal252k; www.shaleahadkisson.com



LISA ARRINDELL (Ella Sheppard) will be making her Arena Stage debut in *Jubilee*. She appeared on Broadway in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and Off-Broadway in *HooDoo Love* and *Heliotrope Bouquet* at Playwrights Horizons; *Mixed*

Babies at Manhattan Class Company; and *Richard III* at The Delacorte. Film credits include *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, Tyler Perry's *Madea's Family Reunion*, *Christmas Wedding Baby*, *A Christmas Blessing*, *The Sin Seer*, *The Wronged Man*, *A Lesson Before Dying*, *Disappearing Acts*, *Having Our Say: The Delaney Sisters' First One Hundred Years* and *Clockers*. Guest appearances include *Madam Secretary*, *Elementary*, *Saints and Sinners*, *Law & Order: SVU*, *The Quad* and *Notorious*. Lisa graduated from LaGuardia High School of Performing Arts and she received her B.F.A. in Theater from The Juilliard School. IG: @lisaarrindell



JOY JONES (Jennie Jackson) was previously seen in Arena Stage's *A Raisin in the Sun* and *Mary T & Lizzy K*. Off-Broadway, she appeared in workshops at the Lincoln Center Festival, The Public and Playwrights Horizons. In London, Joy

performed in *Tantalus* (Royal Shakespeare Company). Selected D.C.-area credits include *The Hard Problem*, *Cloud 9*, *Belleville*, *Invisible*

Man (Studio Theatre) and *The Call* (Theater J). Her selected regional credits include *Disgraced* (Virginia Stage); *Invisible Man* (Huntington Theatre); *Ruined* and *Tantalus* (Denver Center); *The Champion* (TheatreSquared); and *Pericles* (PlayMakers Repertory). Her recent on-camera appearances are *Little America* (Apple TV) and *DC Noir* (Pictureshow Productions). Joy has an Acting MFA from UNC-Chapel Hill and a Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Ensemble for *Invisible Man* at the Studio Theatre. Web: thejojones.com



ZONYA LOVE (Georgia Gordon) is honored to be making her Arena Stage Debut in *Jubilee*. She was seen in the original production of *The Color Purple* on Broadway as Celie, Off-Broadway's *Avenue Q* as Gary Coleman, The Flea Theater's

Emma and Maxx, and various regional productions. Zonya was most recently seen in the Geffen Playhouse's record-breaking *Lights Out*. Some of her favorite roles include Effie in TUTS' *Dreamgirls*, Deloris Van Cartier in Broadway Sacramento's *Sister Act*, Bessie Smith in Milwaukee Repertory's *The Devil's Music* and Mayme in Nevada Conservatory's *Intimate Apparel*. She has appeared on *Smash*, *The Late Show with David Letterman*, *Blacklist* and *Blue Bloods*. Twitter: @lovezonya, Instagram: @lovezonya Website: www.zonyalove.com. Proud member of Broadway Inspirational Voices. Psalms 139:14



SEAN-MAURICE LYNCH (Frederick Loudin) is delighted to be making his Arena Stage debut in *Jubilee*. D.C.-area credits include *Twelve Angry Men*, *Ragtime* and *Parade* at Ford's; *Ruined* at Everyman Theatre; *Lost in the Stars* at

Washington Opera; *Passing Strange* and *Pop!* at Studio Theatre; *Show Boat*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Hairspray* and *Dreamgirls* at Signature Theatre; and *A Year with Frog and Toad* at Adventure Theatre. Sean-Maurice is currently on staff at Arena Stage as the Training Programs Manager.





V. SAVOY McILWAIN (*Thomas Rutling*) is a baritone, a native of Washington, D.C. and is thrilled to make his debut at Arena Stage. Favorite credits include *Sweeney Todd* (Repstage); *Show Boat* (Signature Theatre); *Jelly's Last*

Jam (Signature Theatre); *Caroline or Change* (Roundhouse Theatre); *Strega Nona* (Adventure Theatre); *Christmas Gift* (NEWorks Productions); *Camera Obscura* (Urban Arias); *Fortune's Bones* (C. Smith Performing Arts Center, World Premiere); *Porgy and Bess* (Grand Theatre de Geneve); *Transformations* (Maryland Opera Studio); *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (Ashlawn Opera); *La Boheme* (West Edge Opera) and many others. Savoy is a graduate of the famed Duke Ellington School of the Arts, holds a BM from the University of Northern Iowa and MM from the University of Maryland at College Park. www.vsavoymcilwain.com



AUNDI MARIE MOORE (*Maggie Porter*) American Soprano, hailed by *The Washington Post* for possessing a voice of "Clarion Beauty" has captured the hearts of many audiences and critics alike with her rich,

warm, expressive tones. Career highlights include Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* with L'Opéra de Monte Carlo; Nedda in *Pagliacci* with Sarasota Opera; Soprano 2 in *Facing Goya* with the Spoleto Festival USA; Serena in *Porgy and Bess* with Atlanta Opera; Young African American Soprano in the world premiere of Ricky Ian Gordon's *Rappahannock County* with Virginia Opera; and Odessa Clay in the world premiere of *Approaching Ali* with Washington National Opera. Upcoming 19/20 season, Strawberry Woman in *Porgy and Bess* with the Metropolitan Opera in New York City. #Livingmydreams @Aundimariemoore www.aundimariemoore.com



SIMONE PAULWELL (*America Robinson*) has garnered international attention for her innate ability to capture audiences with her strikingly powerful and agile voice. A Washington, D.C. native, Ms. Paulwell has performed for

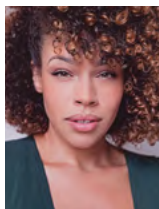
audiences of all ages and cultures and has

graced such prestigious stages as The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, D.C., Carnegie Hall, the Reichold Center for the Arts in the U.S. Virgin Islands, The Washington National Opera Company and The San Francisco Opera Company. In 2015 Ms. Paulwell made her European debut as Serena in *Porgy and Bess* at the Rai Centre in Amsterdam and at Theatre Odyssud in Blagnac, France. Education: Morgan State University, in Baltimore, MD, and Wilberforce University, in Wilberforce, OH, where she obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Music degree.



TRAVIS PRATT (*Isaac Dickerson*) is a multitalented tenor, who has a passion for music and a gift of connecting with audiences across genres. A graduate of The University of Michigan with a MM in Vocal Performance, the Georgia

native received his first taste of stardom on the NBC hit reality show *America's Got Talent*. This set the stage for several partnerships with MAC Cosmetics, the American Cancer Society, FOX and NBC television networks. Travis' prodigious combination of talents and authenticity has earned him the moniker of a "Renaissance Man" with features in *Rolling Stone* and *Huffington Post*. His multidisciplinary experiences have taken him from the cabarets of New York to televised performances in Europe and Africa. Travis is currently performing on stages across the country and recording his debut solo project.



KATHERINE ALEXIS THOMAS (*Minnie Tate*) is making her Arena Stage debut in *Jubilee* and is excited to be here! Some of her regional theater credits include *Ragtime* (Marriott Theatre & Griffin Theatre, recipient of a Joseph

Jefferson Award). She was also recently seen in *The All Night Strut!* (Milwaukee Repertory Theatre) and *Dreamgirls* (Porchlight Musical Theatre). Many thanks to her family, friends, mentors and Stewart Talent Chicago! GO BLUE!



BUEKA UWEMEDIMO (*Greene Evans/Fight Captain*) is excited to be back at Arena Stage. Regional credits include: Ford's: *Twelve Angry Men*; Arena: *A Raisin in the Sun*; D.C.-area: 1st Stage:

The Good Counselor (Helen Hayes nom). Other: West End: *Lion King*, *Magic of Motown*; Everyman: *Intimate Apparel*, *Ruined*. TV and Film: *Madam Secretary*, *FBI*. Website: www.BuekaUwemedimo.com Instagram: @Bueka.IG



GREG WATKINS (*Benjamin Holmes*) is delighted to make his Arena Stage debut. Credits include Constellation Theatre Company: *Aida*; Olney Theatre: *Finian's Rainbow*; Workhouse Theatre: *Rock of Ages*; Arts

Centeric: *Sister Act*; Toby's Dinner Theater: *Dreamgirls*; WSC Avant Bard: *King Lear* and *The Gospel at Colonus* (Helen Hayes Award nomination, Best Ensemble); Creative Cauldron: *Thunder Knocking on the Door*. Greg is a two-time Quincy Jones Award recipient. Opera credits include Washington National Opera: Marc Blitzstein's *Regina*; Opera North: Steven M. Allen's *The Lyrics of Sunshine and Shadows*, garnering media attention in the PBS Documentary, *Beyond the Mask*. Greg has musically directed numerous productions including the nationally acclaimed staged-reading of Christina Ham's *Four Little Girls* under the direction of Tony Award-winner Phylicia Rashad. EDUCATION: Howard University (B.M. Music Education). Instagram: @gregwatkinsmusic Website: www.gregwatkinsmusic.com



JAYSEN WRIGHT (*Edmund Watkins*) is thrilled to return to Arena Stage after previously appearing in *Smart People*. Theater credits include *Davy Copperfield*, *Anatole*, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* and *Looking for Roberto*

Clemente at Imagination Stage; *The Importance of Being Earnest* at Everyman Theatre; *Actually and Sons of the Prophet* at Theater J; *Macbeth* at Folger Theatre; *The Wiz* and *A Christmas Carol* at Ford's Theatre; *Wig Out*, *Choir Boy* and *The Rocky Horror Show* at Studio Theatre; *Now Comes the Night* and *Take Me Out* at 1st Stage; *Pinkalicious* and *12 Days of Christmas* at Adventure Theatre; *The Carolina Layaway Grail* with The Welders; and *Measure for Measure*, *Coriolanus* and *Wallenstein* at Shakespeare Theatre. Jaysen holds an MFA in Acting from Indiana University. Instagram @thejayceface www.jaysenwright.com

CREATIVE

TAZEWELL THOMPSON (*Playwright and Director*)

is an international theater and opera director, award-winning playwright, teacher and actor. He has directing credits (more than 125, many world and American premieres) in major opera houses and theaters across Europe, Africa, Asia, Canada and the USA. *Jubilee* represents his 22nd production for Arena Stage, where he served as associate artistic director under Zelda Fichandler. His award-winning play, *Constant Star*, has had 16 productions in major theaters across the country; *Mary T & Lizzy K*, commissioned by Molly Smith and produced at Arena Stage, is the recipient of The Edgerton Foundation New American Play Award; author of *Jam & Spice*; an adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*; and a contributing writer to *Our War*. He has play commissions from Lincoln Center Theatre and People's Light & Theatre Company. His production of *Porgy and Bess* was broadcasted live from Lincoln Center and received EMMY Award nominations for Best Director and Best Production. He holds the record of directing three productions: *Appomattox*/Philip Glass, *Lost in the Stars*/Kurt Weill and *Cato in Utica*/Vivaldi, all in the same season in three different theaters at The Kennedy Center. Future: his opera, *Blue*, with composer Jeanine Tesori, commissioned by Francesca Zambello, has its world premiere in July at Glimmerglass Festival, followed by productions at Lyric Opera of Chicago and Washington National Opera; world premiere of *Freedom Ride*/Dan Shore for Chicago Opera Theatre.

DIANNE ADAMS McDOWELL (*Vocal*

Arrangements and Music Direction) had the pleasure of working at Arena Stage on Tazewell Thompson's *Constant Star*, for which she received a Helen Hayes Award nomination. Dianne served as Vocal Arranger for Broadway's *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, which was the recipient of numerous Drama Desk Awards, four 2014 Tony Awards including Best Musical and a 2015 Grammy Award nomination. Composer/lyricist credits include the New Victory Theater production of *The Wind in the Willows* with husband/collaborator James McDowell, as well as their musical *Bookends*. Other credits include Radio City Music Hall's *Magnificent Christmas Spectacular*, Broadway's Tony Award-nominated *Starmites* and Disney productions. She is the recipient



of the Barrymore Award and the Beverly Hills/ Hollywood NAACP Award. Dianne is thrilled to be collaborating, once again, with her dear friend Tazewell.

DONALD EASTMAN (Set Designer) is thrilled to return to Arena Stage with *Jubilee* by his constant collaborator, Tazewell Thompson. He designed the premieres of Thompson's *Constant Star* and *Mary T & Lizzy K*, as well as *M Butterfly*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *Black No More*, *Yellowman* and *The Heidi Chronicles* at Arena Stage and Molly Smith's productions of *The Book Club Play* and *My Fair Lady*. Recent productions include *Intimate Apparel* and *Dinner With Friends* for Baltimore's Everyman Theatre; *Possessing Harriet* at Syracuse Stage; and *Chasing the New White Whale* at La MaMa ETC. Upcoming productions include *BLUE*, a new American Opera by composer Jeanine Tesori with libretto and direction by Tazewell Thompson for the Glimmerglass Festival and The Washington National Opera. Donald has received numerous awards including a Village Voice OBIE for Sustained Excellence of Design and is a NEA/National Opera Institute grantee.

MERRILY MURRAY-WALSH (Costume Designer) *Jubilee* is her fifth show at Arena, others include *Constant Star*, *Ma Rainey*, *Heidi Chronicles* and *Mary T & Lizzy K* Film /TV credits include: *Kingfish: A Story of Huey P. Long* (Ace nomination); *In Search of Dr. Seuss* (Emmy nomination); *The Murder of Mary Phagan* (Emmy, best mini-series); *The Glass Menagerie*, MGM; *When the Lion Roared*, War Story: Vietnam and *Miss Lonelyhearts*. Opera designs include: *Appomattox* at WNO, Kennedy Center; *The Pearl Fishers*, *Carmen* (Virginia Opera); and *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, *Patience* and *Margaret Garner* at Glimmerglass Opera/New York City Opera. Theater credits include: *The Speed of Darkness* and *Brothers* on Broadway and *The Iceman Cometh* at The Abbey Theatre, Dublin, the Goodman Theatre and at BAM. Regional theatres: Old Globe Theatre, South Coast Repertory, Berkeley Repertory, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Denver Center, Children's Theatre of Minneapolis, Actor's Theatre of Louisville, Hartford Stage, Goodman Theatre and Williamstown Festival. 2014 Helen Hayes award: *Mary T & Lizzy K*. Training: Mills College, Carnegie-Mellon University. www.merrilymurray-walsh.com

ROBERT WIERZEL (Lighting Designer) has designed the lighting for Arena's productions of *Sovereignty*, *The Pajama Game*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Mary T & Lizzy K*, *The Heidi Chronicles*, *On*

The Verge, *M Butterfly*, *Yellowman*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* and *Black No More*. Broadway productions include *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*, the musical *FELA!* (Tony Award nomination) and David Copperfield's Broadway debut of *Dreams and Nightmares*. Robert has designed productions with opera companies throughout the country and abroad, as well as numerous productions (30 seasons) with Glimmerglass Festival. Robert's dance work includes 33 years with the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company. Furthermore, Robert has worked at most regional theaters across the country, including the Shakespeare Theatre Company. Currently, Robert is a creative partner at Spark Design Collaborative and is on the faculty of NYU Tisch School of the Arts.

FABIAN OBISPO (Sound Designer) returns to Arena Stage where his credits are *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Mary T & Lizzy K*, *Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *M Butterfly*, *Agamemnon* and *His Daughters* (Helen Hayes nomination), *Heidi's Chronicle*, *Constant Star*, *Yerma*, *Yellowman*, *On the Verge* and *Black No More*. Recent off-Broadway credits include Public Theater's *Sea Wall/A Life*, *Oedipus El Rey*, *Teenage Dick*, *The Flea's Emma* and *Max* and MaYi's *The Chinese Lady*. D.C.-area credits include Shakespeare Theatre Company's *Comedy of Errors*, *Henry V*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Folger Theatre's *Romeo and Juliet* and Everyman Theatre's *Intimate Apparel*. He has composed and sound designed extensively for regional theaters including the Goodman Theatre, Guthrie Theater, OSF and ACT just to name a few. He is a recipient of the Berkshires Theatre Critics Award and the Barrymore.

SHAWN DUAN (Projection Designer) is a New York-based projection and video designer. Arena Stage: *Snow Child*. Broadway: *Chinglish*. NYC: MET Museum, The Public Theater, Abrons Art Center, Riverside Theater, Wild Project. Regional: Berkeley Rep, Dallas Theater Center, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, The Guthrie, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Pittsburgh Public Theater, Seattle Repertory Theatre, South Coast Rep, Trinity Rep, Virginia Stage Company. Opera: New York City Opera, Symphony Space New York. Tours: *An Evening with Pacino* (US/International), *PJ Masks Live!*, *Alvin and the Chipmunks Live!*, *Super Why! Live!*, *Yo Gabba Gabba! Live!* (US), Hong Kong Arts Festival. Las Vegas: *Frankie Moreno: Under the Influence*; *Paul Zerdin: Mouthing Off*; *Puppet Up: Uncensored*.

ANNE NESMITH (*Wig Designer*) is pleased to return to Arena Stage following this season's *Indecent* and *The Heiress*. Her designs have been seen locally at Kennedy Center, Ford's Theatre, Signature Theatre, Wolftrap Opera, Shakespeare Theatre and Washington Ballet. Regional work includes designs with Opera Philadelphia, Opera Boston, Annapolis Opera and Kansas City Rep and internationally at Saito Kinen Festival and Hyogo Performing Arts Center in Japan. Anne was the resident wig/makeup designer for the Baltimore Opera and has constructed wigs for *Scooby Doo! Live* and *42nd Street* (Asian tour). You can see her work in Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery programs, *Ice Cold Killers* for Investigation Discovery, the Military Channel's *Great Planes*, MD Public Television and the U.S. Army's tour *Spirit of America*.

N. THOMAS PEDERSEN (*Assistant Music Director*) recently retired as Head of the Music Theatre Division of The Catholic University of America (Artistic Director of Theatre Ten Ten NYC, The Washington Savoyards, assoc. Summer Dinner Theatre). Off-Broadway credits include *Beggars Opera*, *Pirates of Penzance* and *Cowardy Custard*. Regional credits include Long Beach Civic Light Opera: *Man of La Mancha* and *Night Club Confidential*; Library Theatre: *Gypsy*, *A Little Night Music*, *Most Happy Fella* and *She Loves Me*; Michigan Opera Theatre: *A Little Night Music*, *Mikado*, *Die Fledermaus* and *Marriage of Figaro*. Baritone soloist with conductors, Bernstein, Abravanel, Dorati and Shaw with the Detroit Symphony, June Opera Festival and Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. Musical Supervisor/Conductor for Barbara Eden, Shari Lewis, Gary Sandy, David Canary, John McCook, Rebecca Luker, Jana Robinson, Mel Tillis and Pam Tillis.

RON PIRETTI (*Fight Director*) directed the fights for *The Last Ship*, *West Side Story*, *In the Heights*, *The Miracle Worker*, *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* (add'l Fight Direction) and *The Performers* On Broadway. Off-Broadway, his work has been seen at Cherry Lane Theatre among many others. Ron has worked at Goodspeed Opera, Dallas Theatre Center and Hartford Theatreworks. Ron appeared as Officer Krupke in the Broadway production of *West Side Story* and regionally as one of the Clowns in *39 Steps*. Ron has acted in film and TV. He has taught at the Actors Studio Drama School, Wagner College and Marymount Manhattan College. He currently teaches acting at The Barrow

Group (NYC). He attended Trinity University (San Antonio) and received his MFA from the Goodman School of Drama.

JOCELYN CLARKE (*Dramaturg*) is currently Theatre Adviser to the Arts Council of Ireland and Dramaturg at American Voices New Play Institute at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. He has taught dramaturgy at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Columbia University and Trinity College Dublin. He was the Commissioning and Literary Manager of the Abbey Theatre for four years, and lead theater critic with *The Sunday Tribune* for nine years. He is an associate artist with The Civilians and Theatre Mitu in New York. He has written six plays for Anne Bogart and the SIT! Company—*Bob*, *Alice's Adventures Underground*, *Room*, *Score*, *Antigone*, *Trojan Women* (After Euripides) and *Chess Game No. 5*.

GEOFF JOSSELSO, C.S.A. (*New York Casting*) is pleased to continue his association with Arena Stage. Broadway and Off-Broadway productions include *The Velocity of Autumn* starring Estelle Parsons; *Southern Comfort*; *Yank!*; *Enter Laughing*; *Pretty Filthy*; *John and Jen*, *Himself and Nora*; and *Altar Boyz*. He has also cast productions for Actors Theatre of Louisville, Arizona Theatre Company, Bay Street Theatre, Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Civilians, Cleveland Play House, Bucks County Playhouse, Cape Playhouse, Denver Center, Marriott Theatre, North Shore Music Theatre, Old Globe, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Public Theatre and the York Theatre Company. For more information: www.geoffjosselson.com.

KURT HALL (*Stage Manager*)'s Arena Stage credits include *Indecent*, *The Great Society*, *The Pajama Game*, *Smart People*, *Watch on the Rhine*, *Carousel*, *Born for This*, *All the Way*, *Sweat*, *The Blood Quilt*, *Our War*, *Smokey Joe's Café*, *Mother Courage and Her Children* starring Kathleen Turner, *Maurice Hines is Tappin' Thru Life*, *Good People*, *Red Hot Patriot* starring Kathleen Turner, *The Normal Heart*, *Red, Ruined*, *every tongue confess* starring Phylicia Rashad, *Duke Ellington's Sophisticated Ladies*, *Looped* starring Valerie Harper, *Next to Normal* starring Alice Ripley, *Awake and Sing!* and *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia*. Additional regional credits at the Kennedy Center, Roundabout Theatre Company, McCarter Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Baltimore Center Stage and Signature Theatre. Thanks to his family for all their support.

MARNE ANDERSON (Assistant Stage Manager) is thrilled for her 10th season at Arena Stage after starting as an Allen Lee Hughes Fellow in 2009. Some highlights include *The Heiress*, *Indecent*, *Dave*, *Two Trains Running*, *The Great Society*, *Nina Simone: Four Women*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Moby Dick*, *All the Way*, *Erma Bombeck: At Wit's End*, *King Hedley II*, *Five Guys Named Moe*, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *The Mountaintop*, *Metamorphoses*, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, *Arabian Nights* and *Duke Ellington's Sophisticated Ladies*. She is a graduate of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and a proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

ARENA STAGE LEADERSHIP

MOLLY SMITH (Artistic Director) has served as Artistic Director since 1998. Her more than 30 directing credits at Arena Stage include *Anything Goes*, *Sovereignty*, *Carousel*, *The Originalist*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Camp David*, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *Oklahoma!*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Great White Hope*, *The Music Man*, *Legacy of Light*, *The Women of Brewster Place*, *Cabaret*, *South Pacific*, *All My Sons* and *How I Learned to Drive*. Her directorial work has also been seen Off-Broadway at 59E59 in New York, 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 *How I Learned to Drive*; *Passion Play*, a cycle; *Next to Normal*; and *Dear Evan Hansen*. 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. 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 D.C. Hall of Fame.

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 sell-out audience for the full season of plays we had to 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 at Arena in 2009 makes me feel like I am well-equipped for the best job in the world.

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



The actors and stage managers are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



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— Beth Newburger Schwartz and the late Richard Schwartz



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THURSDAY, MAY 10, 2018

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JUBILEE

**BRITTANI MCNEILL, BEN TOOMER*,
MARY MILLBEN* AND CHRIS WHITE*
HAVE JOINED THE COMPANY**



BRITTANI MCNEILL

(*Understudy*) is excited to be making her Arena Stage debut in *Jubilee*. D.C. area credits include *Faust* with Washington National Opera, the U.S. premiere of the opera *Mansfield Park* at The Baltimore Theater Project, celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Jane Austen novel, as well as *The Medium* and *Dream Lovers* with Baltimore Summer Opera Workshop. Other past performances include *Cendrillon*, *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and *The Consul*. Brittani graduated from East Carolina University, Morgan State University and the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University.



MARY MILLBEN* (*Understudy*)

is thrilled to return to Arena Stage! Mary previously appeared at Arena in *Sophisticated Ladies* and in *Crowns* (Helen Hayes Award nomination). Mary is no stranger to Washington, D.C. having performed for three consecutive U.S. presidents (Bush, Obama and Trump), and for the 58th Presidential Inauguration Victory Celebration of President Trump. Additional appearances include The White House, Kennedy Center, NFL, MLB, NBA and concert halls globally. New York credits include *S' Wonderful* (Westchester Broadway Theatre), and solo concerts at The Cutting Room, The City Winery and Joe's Pub at the Public Theater. Mary's commercial single "Grace Will Lead Me Home" is the closing song in the new feature film *The Meanest Man in Texas* — releasing in theaters May 20th. marymillben.ihubapp.org.



BEN TOOMER* (*Understudy*)

is grateful to make his Arena Stage debut. Ben recently graduated with a BFA in Musical Theatre from Texas State University. Favorite credits include *Ragtime* and *A Chorus Line* at Texas State University, *Les Misérables* at The Alliance Theater, *A Chorus Line* at Lexington Theater Company and South Pacific at Finger Lakes Theater Festival (Summer'19). Huge thanks to his agents at CGF and the creatives for the opportunity. Instagram: B_toomer



CHRIS WHITE* (*Understudy*)

is delighted to join the *Jubilee* company; this marks his debut with Arena Stage. National tour credits include *Of Ebony Embers* and the title role in *The Mikado*. Regional highlights include leading roles in *Julius Caesar*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *A Christmas Carol*, *...Forum* and *Little Shop of Horrors*. Chris is also a former cast member with Hong Kong Disneyland (Festival of the Lion King) and Walt Disney World (Voices of Liberty Candlelight Processional). Outside of theatre, Chris has sung two seasons with Essential Voices USA and three seasons with Songful Artists. Chris is a proud graduate of Webster Conservatory; you can follow his creative adventures on IG @chrishwhiteonstage.

**Member of Actors' Equity Association*