

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## CONTACT:

**Arena Stage**Anastasia St. Hilaire, [asthilaire@arenastage.org](mailto:asthilaire@arenastage.org)**Print Shop PR**Nicole Capatasto, [nicole@printshoppr.com](mailto:nicole@printshoppr.com)ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES FULL CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR  
NEW TARELL ALVIN McCRANEY WEDDING PLAY**WE ARE GATHERED**

BY TARELL ALVIN McCRANEY

DIRECTED BY KENT GASH

(Washington, DC) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater announced today the full cast and creative team for Academy Award winner **Tarell Alvin McCraney**'s new play ***We Are Gathered***. Queer love shines in this contemporary twist on Shakespearean wedding plays from the screenwriter of *Moonlight*. Directed by **Kent Gash**, *We Are Gathered* will run **May 16 – June 15, 2025**, on Arena Stage's **in-the-round Fichandler Stage**. Press Night will be held on May 22. For more information and tickets, visit [arenastage.org/gathered](https://arenastage.org/gathered).

"The celebration and honoring of love, sexual expression, freedom, and Black excellence in *We Are Gathered* is a wedding invitation and another collaboration with this genius that I am thrilled to accept," shared **Gash**. "Do Free and W. Tre, our protagonists, make it to the altar? For the answer, you'll have to see Tarell's *We Are Gathered*. SAVE THE DATE!"

A wildly funny and irresistibly steamy romance, *We Are Gathered* follows the relationship of Free and W. Tre. Who knew when they met in a shadowy park looking for a good time—they'd stumble into love, laughter, and a whole lot more heat than they bargained for? As they approach a milestone anniversary, they wonder if they've met Mr. Right or had a long one-night stand with a lovely Mr. Maybe. With a little support and a lot of confusion from family, friends, and a stranger in the dark, the question remains: will Free and W. Tre find their way together, or will they let fear and a secret lead them apart?

"Tarell Alvin McCraney has crafted a magical and deeply human story that invites us to reflect on what it means to love bravely," said Arena Stage Artistic Director **Hana S. Sharif**. "*We Are Gathered* dissects the beauty and vulnerability of commitment. It asks us to be seen fully, to give fully, and to trust that love, in all its forms, is worth the leap."

At the culmination of each performance, audience members are invited to participate in **Love Takes Center Stage**—a one-of-a-kind immersive experience where real couples will get the chance to step into the spotlight and honor their love. Whether planning to say "I do," renew vows, or surprise a loved one with the declaration of all declarations, this theatrical celebration embraces it all. Every love story is welcome. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. For more information or to sign up, please visit [arenastage.org/lovestory](https://arenastage.org/lovestory).

Joining the previously-announced **Kyle Beltran** (Netflix's *Inventing Anna*) as W. Tre; **Nic Ashe** (Ava DuVernay's *Queen Sugar*) as Free; and **Nikkole Salter** (Arena's *Stick Fly*) as MS MS/Punkin, the cast of *We Are Gathered* will include **Jade Jones** (The Muny's *Les Misérables*), **Kevin Mambo** (Broadway's *The Color Purple*), **Craig Wallace** (Arena's *The Great Society*), **Prince Bajon** (Studio Theatre's *The Scenarios*), **Jason B. McIntosh** (Studio Theatre's *Clyde's*), and **Jasmine Joy** (Arena's *Tempestuous Elements*).

**Gash** leads a world-class team of creatives that includes set designer **Jason Sherwood** (Off-Broadway's *Drag: The Musical*), costume designer **Kara Harmon** (Arena's *John Leguizamo's The Other Americans*), lighting designer **Adam Honoré** (Broadway's *Purlie Victorious*), two-time Tony-nominated sound designer **Lindsay Jones** (Broadway's *Slave Play*), composer **Tre'Von Griffith** (The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis's *Side by Side by Sondheim*), and wig, hair, and makeup designer **J. Jared Janas** (Broadway's *John Proctor is the Villain*). Dramaturgy is by **Avon Houghton**, New York casting is by **The TRC Company/Tara Rubin, CSA**, and DC casting is by **Raiyon Hunter**. The stage manager for *We Are Gathered* is **Christi B. Spann** and the assistant stage manager is **Jamie Berry**.

## **CAST BIOGRAPHIES**

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

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

**Jade Jones** *they/them* (*Xi/Nana Jae*), most recently seen as Madame Thénardier in *Les Misérables* at The Muny in St. Louis, is known for their portrayal of Belle in Olney Theatre's internationally-acclaimed production of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*. Jade made their New York debut in 2023 as Mary in the off-Broadway revival of *Vanities*, and made their television debut as Stevie on the primetime network series *Chicago P.D.* As a DC native, they have also been seen at Shakespeare Theatre Company (*The Amen Corner*), Round House Theatre (*School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play*), and Ford's Theatre (*Into the Woods*). They were spotlighted on ABC 20/20's 25th Anniversary *Cinderella* reunion special alongside Billy Porter and Todrick Hall, and have been featured in Playbill, MSNBC, and *People* magazine. Their music can be found on Spotify, Apple Music, and SoundCloud, under the moniker "Litty Official".

**Kevin Mambo** (*Dad/Chauncey*) Broadway, Off-Broadway, and tour credits include *Fela!*, *The Color Purple*, and *The Book of Mormon* National Tour (Helen Hayes nomination); *The History of Empires* at La MaMa; *Fortress of Solitude* at Dallas Theater Center and The Public Theater (Lortel nomination); *Mlima's Tale* at The Public Theater; *Ruined* at Goodman Theatre and Manhattan Theatre Club; *The Convert* at Kirk Douglas Theatre, Goodman Theatre, and McCarter Theatre Center; *Venus and Painted Rocks* at Revolver

Creek at Signature Theatre; *Seven Guitars* and *Pericles* at Two River Theater; *The Last Detail* at Lucille Lortel Theatre; and *Once Around the Sun* at Zipper Factory Theater. Film credits include *Rustin*, *Nina*, *Cadillac Records*, *Rebel in the Rye*, *Payback*, *One of Us Tripped*, *Firing Squad*, *Selah and the Spades*, *The Southside*, *Henchman of Notre Dame* (Best Actor), *Trooper*, and *Man in the Mirror*. Television credits include *Guiding Light* (two Emmys, three nominations), *Hit & Run*, *Luke Cage*, *Saint X*, *High Maintenance*, *The Good Doctor*, *Blacklist*, *Happyish*, *Soul Food*, *One Life to Live*, *Law & Order* (Original/Deadline/SVU/Trial by Jury/Criminal Intent/Reboot), *Spin City*, *Elementary*, *Any Day Now*, *Mistresses*, *Family Matters*, *Freshman Dorm*, and *Great Performances*.

**Nikkole Salter** (*MS MS/Punkin*) is an award winning actress, playwright, educator, and arts advocate. For her work, she has received an OBIE, a Helen Hayes Award, an Outer Critics Circle Award, a Global Tolerance Award from the Friends of the United Nations (a Selfdes-Kanin fellowship from the Theatre Hall of Fame), and most recently, a Lily Award for her contributions to the betterment of the theatre field. Next up, she can be seen on stage at Arena Stage in their world premiere production of Tarell Alvin McCraney's *We Are Gathered*. She is a graduate of Howard University and NYU. She is the current Chair of the Department of Theatre Arts at the Chadwick A. Boseman College of Fine Arts at Howard University. [www.nikkolesalter.com](http://www.nikkolesalter.com)

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

**Prince Bajon** (*u/s Free, W. Tre*) is a first-generation Cameroonian-American actor making his Arena Stage debut as an understudy in *We Are Gathered*. He recently understudied at Studio Theatre, while prepping and performing for the Howard University Senior Showcase. In the past year, he has also performed at The Kennedy Center, Shakespeare Theatre Company, and YPT DC. On screen, he starred in *WEA Vol. 3* (A Howard x Disney Storytellers Collaboration), and *Film School*. A recent graduate of Howard University's BFA Acting program, Prince is passionate about bringing dynamic, heartfelt storytelling to the stage and screen.

**Jason B. McIntosh** (*u/s Dad/Chauncey, Pop Pop/Cedric*) was most recently seen in Studio Theatre's *Clyde's*. Select regional credits include *Radio Golf*, *Sweat*, *Fences* (Everyman Theatre); *Twelve Angry Men* (Ford's Theatre); *Robin Hood* (Imagination Stage); *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (1<sup>st</sup> Stage); *A Human Being Died That Night*, *When January Feels Like Summer* (Mosaic Theatre Company); *Othello* (Chesapeake Shakespeare Company); and many others. Select TV/Film credits include *Kennedy*, *Moving Day*, and *The 51<sup>st</sup> State*.

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

## **PRODUCTION INFORMATION**

### **WE ARE GATHERED**

**By Tarell Alvin McCraney**

**Directed by Kent Gash**

**In the Fichandler Stage | May 16 – June 15, 2025**

**ABOUT:** W. Tre and Free met in a dark park searching for fun not expecting to find love, light, and each other. Now a milestone anniversary has got them wondering if they have met Mr. Right or a long one-night stand with a lovely Mr. Maybe? With a little support and a lot of confusion from family, friends, and a stranger in the dark, the question remains: will Free and W. Tre find their way together or will they let fear, and a secret lead them asunder?

### **CAST**

Free: Nicholas L. Ashe\*

W. Tre: Kyle Beltran\*

Xi/Nana Jae: Jade Jones\*

Dad/Chauncey: Kevin Mambo\*

MS MS/Punkin: Nikkole Salter\*

Pop Pop/Cedric: Craig Wallace\*

u/s Free, W. Tre: Prince Bajon

u/s Dad/Chauncey, Pop Pop/Cedric: Jason B. McIntosh\*

u/s MS MS/Punkin, Xi/Nana Jae: Jasmine Joy

### **CREATIVE**

Playwright: Tarell Alvin McCraney

Director: Kent Gash

Set Designer: Jason Sherwood

Costume Designer: Kara Harmon

Lighting Designer: Adam Honoré

Sound Designer: Lindsay Jones

Original Music: Tre'Von Griffith

Wig, Hair, and Makeup Designer: J. Jared Janas

Dramaturg: Avon Haughton

New York Casting: The TRC Company/Tara Rubin, CSA

DC Casting: Raiyon Hunter

Stage Manager: Christi B. Spann\*

Assistant Stage Manager: Jamie Berry\*

\*Members of Actors' Equity Association

Support for *We Are Gathered* is provided by **Anonymous, Deborah Bowles and Derik Burgess, Kristen Donoghue and Jon Hacker, and Nicholas Goad.**

### **PLAN YOUR VISIT**

**TICKETS:** Tickets start at \$59 plus applicable fees. Ticket prices and availability are subject to change.

Tickets are available at [arenastage.org](https://arenastage.org). Tickets may also be purchased through the Sales Office by phone at 202-488-3300, Tuesday-Sunday, 12-8 p.m., or in person at 1101 Sixth Street, SW, D.C., Tuesday-Sunday, 2 hours prior to a performance.

Groups of 10+ may purchase tickets by phone at 202-488-4380.

Arena Stage's many savings programs include "pay your age" tickets for those aged 35 and under; military, first responder, and educator discounts; student discounts; and "Southwest Nights" for those

living and working in the District's Southwest neighborhood. To learn more, visit [arenastage.org/savings-programs](https://arenastage.org/savings-programs).

**PERFORMANCE DATES:**

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Sunday at 7:30pm  
Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 8pm  
Saturday and Sunday at 2pm  
Weekday matinees at 12pm on May 28, June 5, and June 11

**Early Curtain:** Sunday, June 1 at 6pm

**Southwest Nights:** Sunday, May 25 at 2pm and Tuesday, June 3 at 7:30pm

**Audio-Described Performance:** Saturday, May 31 at 2pm

**ASL-Interpreted Performance:** Saturday, June 14 at 8pm

**Mask-Required Performances:** Tuesday, May 27 at 7:30pm and Tuesday, June 14 at 8pm

**Closed Captioning:** GalaPro begins Friday, May 23

**Industry Night:** Sunday, May 18 at 7:30pm

**Pride Night:** Saturday, May 24 at 8pm

**HBCU/Divine Nine Night:** Thursday, May 29 at 8pm

**Post-Show Conversations**

Connect with the show beyond the performance at a post-show conversation on May 28, June 5, and June 11 following the 12pm matinees, June 3 following the 7:30pm, and June 12 following the 8pm performance.

**TRAVEL:** Limited parking is available in Arena Stage's on-site garage for \$18 to \$35, including drive-up valet parking for \$30. Call 202-488-3300 to purchase in advance. For more information on transportation and other parking options around the Mead Center, visit [arenastage.org/parking](https://arenastage.org/parking).

**DINING:** Enjoy sumptuous Beijing-style cuisine at Philippe Chow, the official Restaurant Partner of Arena Stage, located directly across Maine Avenue from the theater. Whether it's a casual dinner or a special occasion, enjoy the Arena Stage dining experience that will get you to the show on time! Ask for one of the Arena Stage menus starting at \$59 per person. [Learn more about Philippe Chow here.](#)

For all upcoming Arena Stage programming, visit [arenastage.org/season](https://arenastage.org/season).

*The first racially integrated theater in our nation's capital and a pioneer of the regional theater movement, Arena Stage was founded in 1950 in Washington, D.C. Today, under the leadership of Artistic Director Hana S. Sharif and Executive Producer Edgar Dobie, Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater is a national center dedicated to American voices and artists. We produce plays of all that is passionate, profound, deep, and dangerous in the American spirit, and present diverse and groundbreaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Consistently contributing to the American theatrical lexicon by commissioning and developing new plays, Arena Stage impacts the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement and serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. [arenastage.org](https://arenastage.org)*

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