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July 1st marked the start of my seventh month as Artistic Director of PlayPenn. Two years before I started my work, the board of directors and staff had begun to reimagine the organization. After the Black Lives Matter movement took hold, PlayPenn started on their journey of becoming an anti-racist organization. So much good work was done during that time, including the creation of new values which revolve around Fairness and Belonging, Authenticity and Respect, Empathy and Flexibility, Curiosity and Dialogue, Community and Collaboration and a Sense of Play and Trust. These values are at the core of what PlayPenn strives for and works hard to achieve everyday.

Community and Collaboration has always been a big part of who I am as a leader. When I took on my new role at PlayPenn, I brought the part of me that longs for connection with my community. I started by meeting with Philadelphia artists, grantmakers, donors, artistic leaders and audience members. I listened to their concerns about the harm that had occurred in the past, and asked them to be part of the solution as I began the work of healing and rebuilding.
In Feb of 2022, I formed a Conference Committee comprised of people from the theater community. They advised me every step of the way in planning this year’s conference, including new policies and procedures revolving around the submission process. We modified our blind submission policy to reflect our values of diversity, equity and inclusion. But how can we show the Philadelphia community that we are committed to not only telling them stories, but to telling their stories? This year we decided to ask for submissions exclusively from Philadelphia playwrights. Eighty people from the megalopolis area agreed to be script readers. By having community members read the plays, they became essential voices in choosing the finalists this year. It is my commitment to amplify the stories from these communities which reflect the town in which we live.

The six Conference plays tackle themes of racism, personal identity, sexuality, generational trauma and generational divides, coping with grief, the apocalypse and finding the truth hidden in yourself in the ever-expanding multiverse around you. I hope you enjoy the plays as much as I do.

I want to thank you for supporting new play development today. With the closing of institutions such as The Lark, and the Sundance Theatre Lab among others, the work that PlayPenn does is even more relevant and crucial. The playwrights that come through PlayPenn are the future of the American Theatre and we look forward to serving them for many years to come.

Che’Rae Adams  
Artistic Director
Land Acknowledgment

We at PlayPenn would like to acknowledge that Turtle Island, otherwise known as North America, is occupied territory. PlayPenn (in residence at The Drake Theatre) stands on the land known as “Lenapehoking,” the unceded ancestral land of the Lenape people, colonially referred to as Philadelphia. We hope to honor the indigenous people, their elders past and present, as well as future generations. We also want to acknowledge that, after there was stolen land, there were stolen people. We recognize the generations of displaced and enslaved people that built, and continue to build, the country we occupy today.

Let’s also take a moment to consider the legacy of colonization embedded within the technologies, structures, and ways of thinking we use every day. We are using equipment and high-speed internet not available in many indigenous communities. Even the technologies that are central to much of the art we make leaves significant carbon footprints, contributing to changing climates that disproportionately affect indigenous peoples worldwide. I invite you to join me in acknowledging all this as well as our shared responsibility: to make good of this time, and for each of us to consider our roles in reconciliation, decolonization, and allyship. Thank you.

Thank you for taking that time with us, and thank you to Adrienne Wong who is the author of the second half of that acknowledgment, specifically about the impact of technology on the land we occupy.
PlayPenn is an artist-driven organization dedicated to the development of new plays and playwrights.

**PlayPenn Staff**

Che’Rae Adams, **Artistic Director**
Susan Dalian, **Associate Artistic Director**
Santiago Iacinti, **Associate Artistic Director & Education Associate**
LaShawna Bean, **Director of Operations**
Kari Krein-Silvers, **Production Manager**
Griffin Horn, **Program Associate**
Brenna Geffers, **Casting Director**

**Conference Staff**

Kari Krein-Silvers, **Production Manager**
Brenna Geffers, **Casting Director**
Angeline Larimer, **Lead Dramaturge**
L M Feldman, **Foundry Lead Artist**
R. Eric Thomas, **Foundry Lead Artist**
Richard Quinn, **Consulting Director of Development**
Sabrina Proffitt, **Artistic Advisor**
SAGE Communications, **Public Relations Consultants**
Noelle Diane Johnson, **EDI & HR Consultant**
Cynthia Janzen, **COVID Compliance Officer, House Manager**
Harbour Edney, **Master Electrician**
James Kern, **Photographer**
Daniel Jackson, **Videographer**
Marquis Ewing, **Videographer**
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Emmanuel Wilson
Kevin Vavasseur
Dr. Kimmika L.H. Williams-Witherspoon
Kirsten Bowen
Sabrina Profitt
Griffin Horn
Annalisa Dias

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Thank you to the following organizations who have generously supported our 2022 conference:

DANIEL KONTZ DESIGN
Quaker PRINTING GROUP
INTERACT THEATRE COMPANY
James Kern Photography

POWER STREET THEATRE
THEATRE IN THE X

Estia REVOLUTION SHAKESPEARE EVIL GENIUS ACTORS’ EQUITY

ARTISTS’ HEAL

Back to MAIN MENU
CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

FOUNDRY READINGS

Wednesday, July 6, 2022
7:30pm: Vintage Illustrations of the Devil

Thursday, July 7, 2022
7:30pm: Pase Lo Que Pase (I Will Always Find You)

Saturday, July 9, 2022
7:30pm: Above the Fold

Tuesday, July 12, 2022
7:30pm: Moss and Kay’s Fabulous Adventure

CONFERENCE READINGS

Wednesday, July 13, 2022
7:30pm: Goddess at the Lucky Lady Motel

Thursday, July 14, 2022
7:30pm: Fat Muslim Girls

Friday, July 15, 2022
7:30pm: Whispers of My Sister

Saturday, July 16, 2022
2:00pm: Gente Del Sol
7:30pm: All the Emilies in All the Universes
Sunday, July 17, 2022
2:00pm: The Pigeon

Wednesday, July 20, 2022
7:30pm: Goddess at the Lucky Lady Motel

Thursday, July 21, 2022
7:30pm: Fat Muslim Girls

Friday, July 22, 2022
7:30pm: Whispers of My Sister

Saturday, July 23, 2022
2:00pm: Gente Del Sol
7:30pm: All the Emilies in All the Universes

Sunday, July 24, 2022
5:00pm: The Pigeon

There will be a Q & A following each show. Your input can often be helpful to the playwright so please join us directly after the show for a brief Q & A with the artists. Comment cards are also provided in the lobby if you wish to share your thoughts.
A Letter from Associate Artistic Director and Education Associate Santiago Iacinti

Hola, You can call me Santi. My pronouns are they, them, and theirs. I am both an Associate Artistic Director and the Education Associate. I am a Mexican-born immigrant and gay femme nonbinary director, educator, and generative artist.

Since joining in April, my work in the Education department has been twofold:

1) To offer courses that facilitated the development of craft and encouraged the artist to take back ownership over their artistry.
2) Offer resources to the entire company at PlayPenn that would manifest in a safer and more affirming work environment.

As part of the work, we partnered with The Transgender Training Institute, a local Philadelphia Trans-owned and operated business. They were hired as consultants to provide training to our board and staff on pronouns and language affirming to all regardless of gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or sex assigned at birth (because they are not one and the same).

We also brought on Artists Heal™ to have a resource outside of PlayPenn available to all
conference artists. Artists Heal focuses on creating pathways to holistic wellness through the use of care spaces and mediation.

This summer, we offered a twelve-week guided exploration around the book The Artist’s Way by Julia Cameron. This course focused on process and creative recovery. Programming The Artist’s Way was a full-circle moment for me. The book was first gifted to me in 2010 by an early mentor. In 2020, a second mentor from college began guiding groups of creatives through the book. It took me 10 years and a global pandemic to be ready to unpack my relationship with the industry and the ways it was no longer serving me. It just made sense to me that in this crucial time, I took inventory of my body, spirit, and mind. Lisa Berger, who leads The Artist’s Way has been one of my biggest influences, so to now be able to work alongside her is an honor.

Last, but definitely not least I am excited that this year every graduating member of The Foundry is being highlighted with a reading of one of their plays. This is a change from past years where only one Foundry reading was offered at each conference. In addition, four of the six plays selected this year through the blind open submission process were written by current or past Foundry members. The Foundry is an integral part of our organization. Among them are McNally award winners. Their plays are being produced all around the country. So please join me in celebrating their incredible talent. They truly make Philadelphia proud.

Sincerely,

Santiago Iacinti
Associate Artistic Director
Education Associate
Intern Director
Che’Rae Adams  Che’Rae has been the Producing Artistic Director of the LA Writers Center since 2006 where she develops new work with local writers. She was the Director of Operations and Programming for the Moss Theater in Santa Monica for seven years and has been the Development Executive for Playhouse Pictures Studios, Co-Artistic Director of the Road Theatre Company, and Managing Producer for the LA Women’s Theatre Festival.

She began her career as the Assistant to the Staff Producer at The Mark Taper Forum where she worked on the writing workshop of the Pulitzer Prize winning *Angels in America, Part II: Perestroika*. As you can imagine, this was like a master class in new play development for her. Bitten by the new play bug, she went on to do other projects for the Taper that supported playwrights such as coordinating the Taper Lab Series and Mentor Playwright’s Series. There she worked with writers such as Luis Alfaro, Anthony Clarvoe, Han Ong, Oliver Mayer, Ellen McLaughlin, Alice Tuan and Mac Wellman.

She has a master’s degree from the University of Cincinnati, College Conservatory of Music (CCM) and a Bachelor of Arts Degree from California State University, Northridge. For almost two decades, she has produced the Directors Lab West which takes place at the Pasadena Playhouse annually.

Che’Rae has developed and directed the West Coast premiere productions of several new plays including plays by Lee Blessing, Ken Hanes, Tim Toyoma, Patricia Cardosa, John DiFusco, Jon Bastian, and Abi Morgan. She has
also provided direction and/or dramaturgy for productions with Cincinnati Opera Outreach, Disney/ASCAP Musical Theatre Workshop, Highways Performance Space, and Troupe Vertigo at the John Anson Ford Amphitheatre. She has worked with prominent performers such as Tonya Pinkins, Lynn Redgrave, Kim Fields, and Carlos Alazraqui; as well as award winning directors and choreographers such as Vincent Paterson, Tom Hulce, Jane Jones, Bonnie Story, Kitty McNamee, and Tina Kronis; and distinguished designers such as Sara Clement, Cricket S. Myers, and Ming Cho Lee.

As the Director of Programming for The Moss Theater she worked with numerous musical organizations including Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra (LACO), Duo Del Sol, Jazz Bakery, Musical Theatre Guild, and Musicians At Play Foundation (including Seth McFarlane's Jazz Band). As part of the Moss Theater's Live Talks LA and Writers Bloc series, she has hosted celebrities such as John Irving, Jason Segel, Shepard Fairey, Moby, Kevin Costner, Linda Ronstadt, Diane Keaton, Maria Bello, Camryn Manheim, Eric Bogosian, Herb Alpert, Deborah Voigt, Ann Rice, Nicholas Kristof, Amy Tan, Russell Brand, Mitch Albom, Malcolm Gladwell, and Kristoffer Kristofferson.

As a producer for Directors Lab West she has curated close to two decades of programming (workshops, panels, and master classes) at the Pasadena Playhouse. This annual event hosts fifty international mid-career directors free of charge. Highlights include Vincent Paterson, Moises Kaufman, Jason Alexander, Martin Benson, Marc Masterson, Todd London, Sheldon Epps, George Furth, Anne Cattaneo, Des McAnuff, Jessica Kubzansky, Chay Yew, Jack O'Brien and Bill Rausch.

Che’Rae is also an experienced public speaker and educator, having taught acting and writing workshops at various institutions around the country such as The Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, Catholic University, Miami Dade University, California State University Fullerton, UCLA Extension, Azusa Pacific University and Hussian College. She has also served on panels for Hollins University, USC,
The New Playwrights Festival at the College of the Desert, and the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. Che’Rae is an advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion. She spent the last two years of the pandemic producing diverse online programming with HowlRound TV in response to the social inequity taking place in our society. Recently, she curated Breathe: A BIPOC Reading Series in response to George Floyd’s murder; Home: Asian Voices Reading Series to amplify Asian-American stories; and The Voices of Afghanistan project where monologues were constructed from interviews with Afghan artists in hiding.

Che’Rae has had 22 articles published online at NOHOARTSDISTRICT.COM, and self-published a workbook for writers called Writing is Hard... She is the recipient of a SDC Foundation Observership award where she shadowed James Burrows on the TV show “Will and Grace”. She has been nominated for a Cincinnati Enquirer Entertainment Award and Backstage West Garland Critics Citations Award. Fun fact: In 2009, Che’Rae played Gladys Presley in Cirque du Soleil’s Viva Elvis which opened the Aria Casino in Las Vegas.

Susan Dalian is thrilled to be a part of the PlayPenn 2022 team. She recently directed Venus in Fur at The Pico Theater in Los Angeles starring Malcolm Barrett and Cloie Wyatt Taylor. Susan has an extensive background directing staged readings working closely with playwrights as they develop their work. She recently worked with Ricardo Pérez González directing a virtual reading of his play Mother of God at Echo Theater Company’s Playwrights LAB 2022. In 2021 she directed several virtual staged readings: Iseult et Tristan by Pia Wilson, (La Mama, NY/IAMA, LA), How To Raise a Freeman by Zakiyyah Alexander (AMMO Theatre), Breaking Barriers by Katrina D. RiChard (USC’s New Works Festival), and Villains by Marq Ewing (LA Writer’s Center). Other new work readings she has directed include: for AMMO Theatre Company-Token by Bernardo Cubria, The Honeycomb Theory by Garrett Mercer and A Bag Full
of Stars by Dionna Michelle, for Inkwell Theater Development Lab- Waiting (4,380,00 Hours and Counting) by Aja Houston and Broken by Aaron Braxton and for MACH 33: Cal Tech w/Pasadena Playhouse Lie After Lie After Lie by Stephen Dierkes. She has also directed Troilus and Cressida, Henry VI Part 2 and Richard III for Shakespeare Santa Cruz Undiscovered Shakespeare 2021 & 2020. Other stage directing credits include: Catch a Fly (MeetCute LA), The Narcissist Next Door (Hollywood Fringe Festival), The Importance of Being Earnest (Mammoth Lakes Repertory Theatre). Susan was Resident Director at Sierra Classic Theatre from 2014-2018 directing Macbeth, As You Like It, Outside Mullingar, The Merchant of Venice, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, and A Midsummer Night’s Dream. She has also acted in many plays, films, and tv shows. Susan has been a guest artist for the past four years teaching Storytelling through Improv with Burbank Unified School District. She is an Alumnus of Directors Lab West 2019, holds a BFA from Boston University and is a graduate of Baltimore School for the Arts.

Santiago Iacinti (they/them) is a director, educator, and artistic leader with a decade of experience on a national level. They are a Mexican-born immigrant and identify as gay femme nonbinary. They are bilingual and speak Spanish fluently. Their background is in new work. Prior to being named Associate Artistic Director at PlayPenn, Santi was an inaugural member of the Roundabout Directors Group, the Casting Associate at X Casting NYC, a Sexual Harassment Prevention Trainer at ART/NY, and worked in Arts Engagement at The Old Globe. Their work aims to use identity consciousness to create new futures that allow for self-actualization, both on and off stage, for the communities that they come from. (www.santiagoiacinti.com).
Dawn McCall (they/them) is a sophomore Theatre Major at Rowan University, where they performed in Our Lady of 121st Street (Flip) and Plum Bun (Anthony) in the past year. In Philadelphia, they recently understudied for EgoPo’s Wine in the Wilderness and made their professional debut as Wesley in EgoPo’s Curse of the Starving Class. When they aren’t onstage, they spend their time with playwriting, poetry, and tarot. They are absolutely elated to be given this opportunity to work with everyone!

Harbour Edney (they/he) is a technician, lighting designer and venue manager who has freshly moved here from Pittsburgh, PA. Their most recent credits include holding the Staff Production Assistant position at City Theatre Company, Resident Artist at the Space Upstairs and Resident Lighting Designer at Alumni Theatre Company. They have designed lights for companies such as Pipeline Theatre Company (NYC), The New Hazlett Theatre (PITT), Bearded Ladies Cabaret (PHIL) and INTAR (NYC). Harbour holds a BFA in Lighting Design from Point Park University, has a special love for new work, and they are thrilled to be working with PlayPenn.
Goddess at the Lucky Lady Motel centers around the death of a family member of first generation South Asian immigrant, Mummy-ji who is at odds with her son Ravi over his marriage decisions and the struggling family business. Ladva’s play explores whether the generational divide can ever be broached by the Goddess.

Content Warning: Child Loss, Family Death, Sexual Harassment

Production Credits

**Director:** Edward Sobel  
**Dramaturg:** Gina Pisasale  
**Stage Manager:** Sophie Koester*  
**Production Intern:** Liv Shoup  

**Executive Producers:**  
Linda & David Glickstein  
Isdaner & Company LLC

**MUMMY-JI:** Angel Desai*  
**RAVI:** Tamil Periasamy*  
**SEEMA:** Lynette Rathnam*  
**Stage Directions:** Liv Shoup  

**Associate Producers:**  
Virginia Brown Martin Fund  
of The Philadelphia Foundation

* Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

There will be a Q & A following the show. Your input can often be helpful to the playwright so please join us directly after the show for a brief Q & A with the artists. Comment cards are also provided in the lobby if you wish to share your thoughts.
Nimisha Ladva is a South Asian writer, storyteller, screenwriter and playwright. Whose works have been nationally broadcast on The Moth Radio Hour (NPR) and Stories From the Stage (PBS). She is a 2022 Finalist in the 3 Red Bull Short Play Festival and Finalist at SPACE at Ryder Farm in 2020. Her work has been supported by grants from the Mellon Foundation and the Leeway Foundation.

Edward Sobel (Director) – At PlayPenn: Appetite, Slip/Shot, Heartland, Bobby James, Dimenticar. Other directing credits: world premieres of Moon Man Walk (Orbiter 3), The Most Spectacularly Lamentable Trial of Miz Martha Washington (Flashpoint) and Nimisha Ladva’s Uninvited (First Person Arts and tour); productions of Endgame, Clybourne Park, Superior Donuts, Women in Jep and At the Old Place (all at Arden); The Chosen, Huck Finn, and A Lesson Before Dying (all at Steppenwolf). Credits as dramaturg include Broadway productions of The Minutes (Pulitzer Finalist and Tony nomination) Linda Vista, Superior Donuts, and August: Osage County (Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award). Recipient of the Elliot Hayes Award from Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas for outstanding contribution to the field. Current Associate Professor at Villanova University.

Gina Pisasale (she/her) is a dramaturg, educator, and mother. She recently became the Director of Equity and Organizational Culture at McCarter Theater Center. Previously, she was the Resident Dramaturg at People’s Light, and has committed acts of dramaturgy at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, GoKash Productions, PlayPenn, the Arden, Harrisburg Shakespeare Festival, and A&E Biographies. She has taught courses at the University of the Arts and the University of Maryland, and guest lectured at the University of Puget Sound, Villanova, and Temple. Her areas of research include Asian
American performance, American dramaturgy, and representations of race within the American Theater. As an EDI Facilitator, she has designed and run workshops at People’s Light, OSF, West Chester University, and Drexel University.

**Sophie Koester** (Stage Manager) is a Connecticut native and SUNY Purchase graduate. Selected credits include *JUMP* (Astoria Performing Arts Center); *June is the First Fall* (Yangtze Repertory Theatre); and *Extinct* (Lower Manhattan Cultural Council).

**Lynette Rathnam** is thrilled to be a part of the PlayPenn Conference this year! Previous Washington, D.C. projects include: *The Phlebotomist* (1st Stage); *A Wind in the Door* (Kennedy Center); *Kid Prince and Pablo* (Kennedy Center); *Shame 2.0* (Mosaic Theater Company); *4,380 Nights* (Signature Theatre); *Death of A Salesman* (Ford’s Theatre); *Our War* (Arena Stage); *Mockingbird* (Kennedy Center); *When January Feels Like Summer* (Mosaic Theater Company); *The Trojan Women* (Taffety Punk); *The Fire and The Rain* (Constellation Theatre Company); *The Fantasticks* (Rep Stage); *Glassheart* (Rorschach); *Illyria, Julius Caesar* (Virginia Shakespeare Festival); *The Wings of Ikarus Jackson* (Kennedy Center); *A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Twelfth Night, All’s Well that Ends Well* (Maryland Shakespeare Festival); *In the Blood; Lyme Park* (The Hegira). Additional projects: *It’s Christmas, Carol!* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival 2021) and Lynette will be reprising her role this winter 2022! Also upcoming: *Bars and Measures* at Mosaic Theater Co. in Washington, D.C.
Angel Desai’s most recent work includes guest starring on the *Law and Order* reboot and *Blue Bloods*; starring in the short film *Lady Apsara* for Prospect Theater Company; recurring in ABC’s *For Life*; recording the voices of Dana Singh in Hulu’s 2nd season of *Dicktown*; and Queen Lili’uokalani for PBS’ *Unladylike* series; and a GEICO commercial yet to air. During the pandemic she filmed monologues and plays for Barrington Stage, the Old Globe Theatre, PlayOn!Shakespeare, and Arena Stage, and sang in the American Opera Project’s workshop of the song cycle *Letters You Will Not Get*. Pre-pandemic, Angel's most recent TV credits include recurring roles on *NCIS: NOLA* and *Jessica Jones*; guest spots on *FBI: Most Wanted*, *City On a Hill*, and *Bull*. On Broadway she played Marta in the Tony-Award-winning revival of *Company* (2006). Off-Broadway credits include: MTC, NYTW, CSC, Playwrights Horizons, The Public/ NYSF, Women’s Project, Ma-Yi, MCC. Regional theater credits include: Yale Repertory, George St. Playhouse, Berkshire Theater Festival, Old Globe, McCarter Theater, Cincinnati Playhouse, Long Wharf, Arena Stage, Playmakers Repertory. Films include: *Klutz*, *The Oh-Gees*, *This Time Next Tuesday*, *The Clique*, *The War Within*, *Heights*, *Black Knight*, *Robot Stories*. MFA in Acting from NYU. Co-founder of the 2021 Obie and 2022 Tony-Award Winning Asian American Performers Action Coalition (AAPAC).

Tamil Periasamy (he/him) is a NYC theatre/film/TV actor making his debut at PlayPenn! Thank you to the amazing staff for making his stay in Philly so welcoming! With over 30 professional stage credits in Shakespeare, Renaissance, and Victorian/19th century works, he has been hailed as “one of the most preeminent classically trained South Asian actors” in the US. Select regional: *The Crucible* (Actor’s Express); *Othello*, *The Alchemist* (Resurgens); *Chekhov’s The Bear*, *Outlying Islands*, *Irish Prince* (Aris
Celtic Theatre); *King Lear, Love’s Labour’s Lost* (Atlanta Shakespeare); *Water By the Spoonful* (Pinch n’ Ouch); *Importance of Being Earnest, Indian Ink* (Austin Shakespeare); *Going Up!* (Mixed Blood). Select TV/Film credits: *Dopesick* (Hulu); *Dynasty* (CW); *Covenant* (AMC); *Vendetta*. Upcoming: *Richard III* (off-Broadway debut). www.tamilperiasamy.com
Fat Muslim Girls explores what happens when risqué photos of a college student are found in a professor’s desk and the public becomes less concerned with real justice for one student and more concerned with body shaming and threats of global terrorism.

Content Warning: Adult and Sexually Explicit Language, Discussion of Suicide

Production Credits

**Director:** Amy Kaissar
**Dramaturg:** Walter Bilderback
**Stage Manager:** Bob Bowersox*
**Intern:** Teayra Bowden

**Executive Producers:**
Steve Engelmyer & Lisa Wershaw
Michael & Kellie Zirinsky

**Associate Producers:**
Virginia Brown Martin Fund of The Philadelphia Foundation

**EDGAR:** Damon Bonetti*
**CLARE:** Amanda Schoonover*
**DIANE:** Erika Strasburg*
**TOM:** Robert DaPonte*
**PAT:** Keith Conallen*
**MURRAY:** Kevin Bergen*
**ZAYNA:** Maryam Yourish
**VOICE OF ANCHORWOMAN:** Amanda Schoonover*

**Stage Directions:** Teayra Bowden

* Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

There will be a Q & A following the show. Your input can often be helpful to the playwright so please join us directly after the show for a brief Q & A with the artists. Comment cards are also provided in the lobby if you wish to share your thoughts.
Ken Kaissar (he/him) is an American-Israeli playwright whose plays have been performed and developed by Philadelphia Theatre Company, Passage Theatre, Phoenix Theatre Company and Jewish Repertory Theatre to name just a few. He holds a BFA in directing from Carnegie Mellon University, MFA in Playwriting from Columbia University, and is co-producing director at Bristol Riverside Theatre.

Amy Kaissar is the Co-Producing Director of Bristol Riverside Theatre. BRT Directing Credits: Comedy of Tenors, Driving Miss Daisy, The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, and the upcoming World Premiere of A Leg Up-a sex farce for the 21st century by Ken Kaissar. Producing Credits: The Heidi Chronicles (Bway), Shake and Bake: Love’s Labour’s Lost (Drama Desk Nom), Midsummer: A Banquet (Drama Desk Nom), and the Obie winning Telephone. She was also part of the financing teams for Fun Home (Tony, Best Musical), Shuffle Along (10 Tony Noms), and the Yiddish Fiddler on the Roof. BFA (Directing) Carnegie Mellon University, MFA in Theatre Management and Producing from Columbia University.

Walter Bilderback (they/he) has dramaturged theatrical performance of all sorts for 40 years. From 2004-2020, they were Dramaturg and Literary Manager at the Wilma Theater. Prior to that, they held staff positions at Dallas Theater Center, Atlanta’s Alliance Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, Baltimore Center Stage, and the American Ibsen Theater, and was guest dramaturg at theaters including Seven Stages and the Center for Puppetry Arts. Walter has read scripts for numerous organizations, most recently the Playwrights Center, Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival, and Playwrights Realm (for which they have also been a professional respondent in the Script Share program). These days, most of Walter’s attention has gone to electoral and climate work with Reclaim Philadelphia and Philly DSA.
Bob Bowersox holds a Professional Programs MFA in Screenwriting from UCLA, Certificates in Screenwriting and Playwriting from Gotham Writers in New York, and a BA in Journalism from the University of Delaware. He’s had five plays produced professionally, one internationally, and authored eight screenplays, three of which have been optioned by Hollywood, with one produced and due out in 2022. Bob has directed dozens of plays, and stage managed at least as many. As an actor, he’s appeared in 22 films, and more stage plays than he can remember. Bob lives, writes, and does as much theater as he can in Philadelphia.

Damon Bonetti previously at PlayPenn: Oslo, The Piper. Damon is a Philly-based actor, director, musician, and teacher and has worked at many of the area theaters including the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Delaware Theatre Company, Bristol Riverside Theatre, Lantern Theatre, Horizon, Exile, Montgomery Theater, and Passage (Barrymore Nomination Outstanding Director world premiere of True Story). Damon is the Producing Artistic Director of the Philadelphia Artists’ Collective: www.philartistscollective.org, and professor at Rutgers University - Camden (MFA FSU/Asolo Conservatory). He has a supporting role in the feature Love and Communication, now in film festivals.

Amanda Schoonover is best known as the sassy eavesdropping Waitress on the GLAAD nominated Dispatches From Elsewhere on AMC where she co-starred opposite Jason Segel, Sally Field, and Andre (3000) Benjamin. She is a two-time Barrymore Award recipient and 9-time nominee, as well as being a Jilline Ringle Solo Performance Program Artist in Residence at 1812 Productions.
Robert DaPonte has been an actor and divisor(?) in Philadelphia theater for 15 years. He has performed for Philadelphia Theatre Company (Rizzo), People’s Light (Pride and Prejudice), The Wilma (MacBeth), Theatre Exile (American Buffalo) and EgoPo (Spring Awakening) just to name a few. He has created original works such as The Jaws Project (with MK Tuomanen and Sam Henderson); The Giant Squid (with The Berserker Residents); and The Ballad of Joe Hill (with Swim Pony). Regionally he has performed for Hartford Children’s Theater (Treasure Island) and Playhouse on Park (This Is Our Youth). He studied at The National Theater Institute in Waterford, CT.

Erika Strasburg was born and raised in Bucks County, attended the Carnegie Mellon School of Drama and has since performed Off-Broadway and regionally in over 30 productions. Most recently she was Joanne Galloway in Bristol Riverside Theater’s A Few Good Men. She is most grateful to be a part of PlayPenn this year. IG: @airekuh

Keith J. Conallen is an actor/writer/producer and a Wilma HotHouse company member. He has worked with all of Philadelphia theatres, save a scant few. He’ll be performing in two one-man shows this fall in rep with Irish Heritage Theater.

Robert DaPonte has been an actor and divisor(?) in Philadelphia theater for 15 years. He has performed for Philadelphia Theatre Company (Rizzo), People’s Light (Pride and Prejudice), The Wilma (MacBeth), Theatre Exile (American Buffalo) and EgoPo (Spring Awakening) just to name a few. He has created original works such as The Jaws Project (with MK Tuomanen and Sam Henderson); The Giant Squid (with The Berserker Residents); and The Ballad of Joe Hill (with Swim Pony). Regionally he has performed for Hartford Children’s Theater (Treasure Island) and Playhouse on Park (This Is Our Youth). He studied at The National Theater Institute in Waterford, CT.

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Kevin Bergen (Vlad) is a member of the Resident Ensemble of Artists at People’s Light, where he has performed in over twenty productions, including *Man from Nebraska*, for which he was nominated for a Barrymore Award. He makes his home in Philadelphia and appeared on many of the city’s stages including: The Walnut Street Theatre, The Wilma Theatre, Arden Theatre Company, Bristol Riverside Theatre, Delaware Theatre Company, InterAct, Quintessence Theatre, Simpatico Theatre Project, Tiny Dynamite, Shakespeare In Clark Park, and Revolution Shakespeare. He has performed at numerous Regional Theatres, among them: The Shakespeare Theatre, American Repertory Theatre, The Studio Theatre, Theatre J, and American Stage Theatre Company. Kevin is a graduate of the American Repertory Theatre Institute for Advanced Theatre Training at Harvard.
Something’s not right with Yoon-Ah. The normally indomitable matriarch has been jumping at shadows and blurring memories from Korean burial grounds with her suburban American kitchen. Her daughters are convinced it’s all in Yoon-Ah’s head—until a figure materializes in the light of the refrigerator.

**Production Credits**

**Director:** Cat Ramirez  
**Dramaturg:** Alix Rosenfeld  
**Stage Manager:** Leslie Ann Boyden*  
**Production Intern:** Hallie Malina  

**Executive Producers:**  
Howard T. & M. Jane Rosenfield  
Anonymous

**YOON-AH LEE:** Twoey Truong  
**BONG CHA:** Claris Park  
**KAYA LEE:** Amy Boehly  
**JESSICA LEE:** Dana Liu

**Stage Directions:** Hallie Malina

**Associate Producers:**  
Susan Steinhauser  
Virginia Brown Martin Fund of  
The Philadelphia Foundation

*Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

There will be a Q & A following the show. Your input can often be helpful to the playwright so please join us directly after the show for a brief Q & A with the artists. Comment cards are also provided in the lobby if you wish to share your thoughts.
Stephanie Kyung Sun Walters (she/her) is a Korean-American playwright. She is the Philadelphia Theatre Company Terrence McNally Award Recipient for her play, ACETONE WISHES AND PLEXIGLAS DREAMS. She’s a recent alum of InterAct Theatre Core Playwright, a current American Theatre Group PlayLab artist, and serves as the Lead Artist on the Philly Asian Performing Artists’ Playwrights Project. Her play, ESTHER CHOI AND THE FISH THAT DROWNED will have a world premiere production with Simpatico Theatre Company (postponed due to COVID-19) and has earned her a spot on the 2020 Kilroys List and Table Work Press Recommended list. Her play ACETONE WISHES AND PLEXIGLAS DREAMS was recently workshoped at the UC Santa Barbara Launch Pad BIPOC Reading Series and will be featured at the Great Plains Theatre Conference in June 2022. Her play HALF OF CHOPSTICKS was a finalist for both the 2021 Bay Area Playwrights Festival and Seven Devils New Plays Conference, and received a stage reading at the inaugural Boise Contemporary Theatre BIPOC Playwrights Festival. Stephanie’s K-pop romcom, BE LIKE THE FLOWER, was a finalist for the Austin Film Festival’s Table Read My Screenplay. She is a two-time finalist for Unicorn Theatre’s In-Progress New Play Reading Series as well as a finalist for the Playwrights Center Many Voices Fellow. She was a semi-finalist for Nashville Repertory Theater’s Ingram New Works and received a nomination for the NNPN Smith Prize for Political Theatre. Due to COVID-19, Stephanie received a 3Views Theatre The Bret Adams and Paul Reisch Foundation Grant. Additional plays have been developed with Asian Arts Initiative, Philly Asian American Film Festival, Dragon’s Eye Theatre, Revolution Shakespeare, PlayPenn, Revamp Collective, and Philadelphia Women’s Theatre Festival. Stephanie is a proud graduate of Bucknell University and received her MFA in Playwriting from Point Park University.
Cat Ramirez (they/he/she) is an award-winning Philly-based theater director and performance producer. They love giant logistical puzzles, sharing meals, and bisexual lighting. Recent collaborations include Villanova University, Temple University, Asian Arts Initiative, Philly Young Playwrights, Lxs Primxs, Theatre Exile, and Hedgerow Theatre Company. Cat currently serves as the Creative Director for Philadelphia Asian Performing Artists (PAPA), the Staff Producer for the Bearded Ladies Cabaret, and a board member for the Stockton Rush Bartol Foundation. He is an alumni of the National New Play Network’s Producer-In-Residence Program and her work has been recognized by the Pennsylvania Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs. catramirez.com

Alix Rosenfeld (she/her) is a writer and multi-hyphenate theatre artist specializing in dramaturgy, playwriting, and performance. Theatre includes: Regional and international work with such companies as the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center, and the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, Ireland. Select dramaturgy credits: Hold These Truths, Shakespeare In Love (People’s Light), Box Clever (Inis Nua Theatre Company), and The Merchant of Venice (Delaware Shakespeare). She is a contributing writer to HuffPost, American Theatre, HowlRound, The Flashpaper, and Broad Street Review and is a proud staff member of Theatre Horizon. Training: B.A. in Drama from Vassar College, M.A. in Theatre from Villanova University, M.F.A. in Creative Writing from Antioch University (anticipated graduation 2023). www.alixrosenfeldwriter.com
Twoey Truong (she/they) is a Philadelphia-based theater artist originally from Salina, Kansas with an MFA in Theatre Performance from the University of Southern Mississippi. Recent theatre credits include *Today is My Birthday* (Theatre Exile); *A Queer Christmas Carol* (Hum’n’Bards Theatre Troupe); *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Shakespeare at Stoneleigh); *Phaedra’s Love* (Svaha Theatre Collective); *Marie Antoinette* (Curio Theatre Company); and *Cymbeline* (Revolution Shakespeare). Twoey would like to thank Cat, Stephanie, and PlayPenn for this opportunity.

Claris Park is an actor and writer based in DC/Philadelphia. They are thrilled to be back in Philly after several years away in Korea and DC! Select acting credits include *Man of God* (InterAct Theatre Company); *The Wolves* (Boise Contemporary Theatre); *Among The Dead* (Theatre Exile); and *The Monster In The Hall* (Inis Nua Theatre). She was part of the 2018 inaugural cohort of the Philadelphia Asian Performing Artist (PAPA) and Asian Arts Initiative’s (AAI) Mini-Residency Program. They were also a member of the PAPA Playwright Project’s inaugural cohort in 2019 and is currently completing her final year.

Amy Boehly is an actor/teaching artist who resides in South Jersey and has been working in Philly theater since earning a B.A. in acting. Past credits: Power Street Theatre, SCTC, Theatre Exile, Philly Young Playwrights, and more. Love to Mom and Kevin.
Dana Liu is a young creative originally from Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey. She recognized her passion for the arts at a young age and actively worked to hone her natural storytelling abilities. After moving to Philadelphia to attend Temple University, she realized her calling to leverage her voice and platform to amplify Asian-Americans through performance and visual media. Outside of acting, she loves cooking with her boyfriend, painting her nails and playing with her cat, Mai Tai. Recent credits include u/s in Backing Tack (Arden Theatre Company); Deep Space, Ignite (The Strides Collective). IG: @danaddliu
This world-bending drama takes us on a journey of four Emilies who vow to travel through infinite dimensions, risking permanent erasure from the multiverse, to find the baby boy they thought they’d lost forever.

Content Warning: Language, References to Pregnancy, Stillbirth, and Perinatal Grief.

Production Credits

Director: C. Ryanne Domingues
Dramaturg: Angeline Larimer
Stage Manager: Sophie Koester*
Production Intern: Rose Farrell
Executive Producers:
Philip Hawkins &
Ronnie Kurchner-Hawkins
Dr. Joe Lex

RED: Sabrina Profitt*
YELLOW: Tai Verley*
BLUE: Charlotte Northeast*
BLACK: Bi Jean Ngo*
JEFF: Griffin Stanton-Ameisen*
PRESENTER: Zuhairah*
Stage Directions: Rose Farrell

Associate Producers:
Ivor Clark & Jeffrey Blair
Virginia Brown Martin Fund of The Philadelphia Foundation

* Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

There will be a Q & A following the show. Your input can often be helpful to the playwright so please join us directly after the show for a brief Q & A with the artists. Comment cards are also provided in the lobby if you wish to share your thoughts.
Ian August (he/him) is a queer Caucasian playwright whose play ZERO was a 2020 Winner of Ashland New Plays Festival and Semi-Finalist at the 2020 BAPF. His play BRISÉ was a finalist at Seven Devils Playwrights Conference 2019, and Lark Playwrights Week 2020. In 2019 Ian was PlaywrightinResidenceattheWilliamIngeCenter for the Arts in Kansas and in 2021 was a recipient of an Independent Artist Fellowship from NJ Council for the Arts.

C. Ryanne Domingues is the Artistic Director of Passage Theatre in Trenton, NJ. Prior to her time at Passage, she worked at a variety of theaters on both coasts, with much of her work being for Simpatico Theatre (which she co-founded in 2004) and the Wilma Theater. She received her MFA in Directing from the University of California, Irvine, and has been an adjunct professor at Rider University since 2018. Next up, she will be directing the world premiere of the musical Clean Slate as a co-production between Passage and Rider University.

Sophie Koester (Stage Manager) is a Connecticut native and SUNY Purchase graduate. Selected credits include JUMP (Astoria Performing Arts Center); June is the First Fall (Yangtze Repertory Theatre); and Extinct (Lower Manhattan Cultural Council).

Sabrina Profitt has gained more than 30 years of experience as a performer, theatre maker, and arts educator. Devoted to new plays and playwrights, she has served PlayPenn’s mission throughout the years as an actor, a fundraiser and a consultant. By mid-2020, it was Sabrina’s honor to become...
Tai Verley is a New York-born, Philadelphia-based theater artist (actor, director, educator). She holds a B.A. in Drama from Vassar College and an M.F.A. in Acting from The New School for Drama. As an actor, she has worked with companies like Arden Theatre Co., Delaware Theatre Co, Shakespeare in Clark Park, The Shakespeare Forum, Philadelphia Artists' Collective and many more. As a director, she has helmed various productions and readings at Villanova University, Arcadia University, West Chester University, Eagle Theatre, and Inis Nua Theatre Company. Since the Fall of 2021, Tai has been a professor at the University of Pennsylvania. And she is also a union member of Actor’s Equity Association and SAG-AFRA. More info on TAIVERLEY.com.

Charlotte Northeast is an actor, director, educator, administrator, and writer. She is a two-time Barrymore Award winner for her work at InterAct and Lantern Theater Company. Graduate: Circle in the Square. Credits include Philadelphia Artists’ Collective (PAC), Act II Playhouse, Theatre Exile, Passage Theatre, Azuka, Montgomery Stage, Hedgerow, Tribe of Fools, Orbiter 3 (Barrymore Nomination), Delaware Theatre Company and the Walnut Street Theatre. Her solo show They've All Gone and We'll Go Too (premiere at Hammonton Fringe Festival 2019) will travel to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival this August. Charlotte lives with her husband, son and too many cats in Collingswood, NJ. Visit: www.charlottenortheast.com
Bi Jean Ngo is an Actress & Director, and member of Actor’s Equity Association. She is based in Philadelphia and has appeared at 1812 Productions, InterAct Theatre, Theatre Exile, Arden Theatre, Walnut Street Theatre, Theatre Horizon, Delaware Shakespeare, and more. She most recently created and performed her solo show *In Search of the Kitchen Gods* at 1812 Productions. She holds an MFA from The Actors’ Studio Drama School and a Bachelor’s of Science in Film and Television from Boston University. She also trained at Dell’Arte International, The Suzuki Company of Toga, Shakespeare and Company, and The Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski. She is a recipient of the Fox Foundation Fellowship Award administered through TCG and a recipient of the F. Otto Haas Emerging Artist Barrymore Award.

Griffin Stanton-Ameisen is an NYC based, Philly-area born actor, writer, producer, and teaching artist. He’s stoked to be back at PlayPenn. Select Philly Credits: *The (curious case of the) Watson Intelligence* (Azuka), *Romeo and Juliet* (Commonwealth), *Hamlet and The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Delaware Shakespeare), *Gint* (Egopo), *The Nether* (InterAct), *Penelope* (Inus Nua), *Love’s Labour’s Lost* and *Cymbeline* (Revolution Shakespeare, Founding Artistic Director). Most recently he was performing his one man show *Free Space* at the Tank and playing Alexander Hamilton in the upcoming feature film *Lost Nation*. MFA in Performance from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, BA in Theatre from Temple University. More info at griffinsa.com. Love always to Dae.

Zuhairah originally hails from Brooklyn, New York and is an Off-Broadway and award-winning Actress. She is also the Producing Artistic Director of First World Theatre Ensemble and an upcoming film director. She has trained and worked with Woodie King Jr, Colman Domingo, Steve Broadnax III, Terry Nolan, Ossie Davis, Barbara Ann Teer, Uta
Hagen, and H. German Wilson just to name a few. Some of her theater credits include: Quintessence Theatre (Flyin West - Camille); Theatre in the X (Richard the III); Arden Theatre (Gem of the Ocean, Streetcar Named Desire); Quintessence Theatre (Rachel); Theatre in Prospect Park (The Seagull); Area Stage (Sojourner); Schapiro Theatre (Leaving to be Left); New Federal Theatre (Gutta Beautiful, Most Dangerous Man...WEB Dubious); Robert Moss Theatre (Wallop); Allen’s Lane Theatre (Best of Enemies); Plays & Players Theatre (Marcus and the Secret of Sweet); Wilmington Drama Theatre (Fences); National Black Theatre (Wade in the Water: A Katrina Drama); Nuyorican Poets Café (Julius Caesar- Set in Africa); New Freedom Theatre (Trick the Devil); Theatre of Seventh Sister (’Blues for an Alabama Sky); Bushfire Theatre (Bourbon at the Border, Deep Roots); The Drama Group Theatre (Trouble in Mind); Brian Spuk Theatre (All my Sons). She’s also appeared in several Commercials, National Tours and films. Awards: Actor’s Fund Encore Award; Legacy Trailblazer in Theater; Three-time winner of The DC Excellence in Black Theatre Award; Two-time Barrymore Nomination for Outstanding Leading Actress in a Play (for her one-woman performance in Sojourner and Gem of the Ocean); The Black Arts for Social Change Award; The Most Distinguished Director Award; and the 2015 Image Award. She has directed and completed two documentary films and Sojourner, a theatrical film about Sojourner Truth. She is currently developing a TV series. www.zuhairahmcgill.com
Valeria and Leonardo are at a crossroads. Leonardo, afraid of losing his relationship with Valeria, seeks professional help. Unsatisfied with western medicine, Leonardo seeks a second opinion from someone that can speak to Mexican culture and indigenous practices. Valeria does not feel capable of leaving Leonardo in his time of need but finds herself falling for Fern. *Gente Del Sol* uses magical realism to explore the intricacies of personal identity, sexuality, and transracial relationships.

**Content Warning:** Violence, Mentions of Racism

**Production Credits**

**Director:** Santiago Iacinti  
**Dramaturg:** Gilberto Vega  
**Stage Manager:** Bob Bowersox*  
**Production Intern:** Ray Wrightstone  

**Executive Producer:**  
Willy Holtzman  
Pamela Rainey Lawler  

**Associate Producers:**  
Susan Steinhauser  
DeLanna Studi  
Virginia Brown Martin Fund of The Philadelphia Foundation  

*Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.*

There will be a Q & A following the show. Your input can often be helpful to the playwright so please join us directly after the show for a brief Q & A with the artists. Comment cards are also provided in the lobby if you wish to share your thoughts.
Santiago Tonauac Castro (he/him) is a Latinx-Indigenous maker of plays and sculpture. Santi’s work uplifts the bilingual voices of his community and decolonizes your expectations. Santi’s favorite achievements include being a 2019 Playwriting finalist with YoungArts Foundation, writing for the Kimmel Center’s SONGS WE LEFT BEHIND, and being a published poet with Toho Journal, Tilted House and Queerbook. Currently you can find him working with Mural Arts, and the Philadelphia Art Museum!

Santiago Iacinti (they/them) is a director, educator, and artistic leader with a decade of experience on a national level. They are a Mexican-born immigrant and identify as gay femme nonbinary. They are bilingual and speak Spanish fluently. Their background is in new work. Prior to being named Associate Artistic Director at PlayPenn, Santi was an inaugural member of the Roundabout Directors Group, the Casting Associate at X Casting NYC, a Sexual Harassment Prevention Trainer at ART/NY, and worked in Arts Engagement at The Old Globe. Their work aims to use identity consciousness to create new futures that allow for self-actualization, both on and off stage, for the communities that they come from. (www.santiaigoiacinti.com).

Gilberto Vega is a queer Costa Rican-American creator, educator, and administrator for music and theatre. He currently serves as the Director of External Relations for Theatre Horizon in Norristown. Originally hailing from Lancaster, PA, his recent credits include: Director for Mozart’s The Magic Flute (Penn Singers Light Opera Company); Dramaturg for Twelfth Night, O Lo...
Que Quieras (Del Shakes); The Agitators and Town (Theatre Horizon). Gilberto serves on the Board of Directors of Theatre Philadelphia and the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia. Gilberto is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, where he was a recipient of the Wallace Award through Platt Student Performing Arts Houses. For Beto, Gladys, and Marcus.

Bob Bowersox holds a Professional Programs MFA in Screenwriting from UCLA, Certificates in Screenwriting and Playwriting from Gotham Writers in New York, and a BA in Journalism from the University of Delaware. He’s had five plays produced professionally, one internationally, and authored eight screenplays, three of which have been optioned by Hollywood, with one produced and due out in 2022. Bob has directed dozens of plays, and stage managed at least as many. As an actor, he’s appeared in 22 films, and more stage plays than he can remember. Bob lives, writes, and does as much theater as he can in Philadelphia.

Jessy Gruver (she/her) is so excited to be working with PlayPenn. She was recently seen in Into the Woods at Arden Theatre, Life is a Dream with EgoPo Classic Theatre, and Extreme Home Makeover with Theatre Exile. She has performed with the Walnut Street Theatre in South Pacific; the Arden Theatre’s Candide; Utah Festival Opera and Musical Theatre’s Hunchback of Notre Dame and Seussical; Teatro del Sol’s Oedipus el Rey; PIFA/Kimmel Center’s Crystal Palace; Bristol Riverside Theatre’s Pride and Prejudice, Ragtime, Pirates of Penzance and various Musicales; and the Venetian Macao Resort, among others. Jessy is also a burlesque artist and producer. Endless thanks and love to P and E. As ever, for J. www.JessyGruver.com Direction through IDC Professionals.
Daniela Malavé is a bilingual, Venezuelan/American actress with extensive experience in theater, television, commercials, hosting and voice over. Roles include Tony and Tina’s Wedding, (Proctor’s Theatre), Finnegan’s Farewell (Proctor’s Theatre), and Bollywood Wedding (Nuyorican Poets Cafe). Off-Broadway credits include Ken Davenport’s The Awesome 80’s Prom (Webster Hall), Eli and Jenna at the Strawberry-One-Act Festival (Riant Theatre), Expecting Isabel (The Barrow Group). Philadelphia/NJ Theatre includes Yerma (Teatro Del Sol), Daphne’s Dive (South Camden Theatre Co), and The Motherfucker With The Hat (Theatre Exile). She can be heard in over 30 voice overs, including EA’s Knockout City. Daniela is also the owner of Tres Fiori (TresFiori.com).

Zach Valdez (Leonardo/Stage Directions) is excited to work with PlayPenn for the first time. He was last seen in Fabulation at Lantern Theatre Company. Zach is Chicano and actively reads a book by a Latinx author every month. Texas credits include, The Leopard Play, or sad songs for lost boys, (Leo Ensemble Theatre); Octavio Solis’ Quixote and The Tempest (Shakespeare Dallas). Love to Mom and Dad!

Han Van Sciver is a queer, trans, non-binary actor, musician, maker, and mover. Acting credits include Bryna Turner’s world premiere production At The Wedding at Lincoln Center and the title role in Sarah Ruhl’s Orlando at Williamstown Theatre Festival. Upcoming: Galatea by MJ Kaufman in Prospect Park and Celeste Lecesne’s Poof! in Provincetown. Their solo show, Bicycle Face, has toured off-Broadway, Philadelphia, and New Orleans. Their full-length play Dragon, was recently developed at New York Theatre.
Workshop. They have developed percussion scores with Ars Nova, Storm Thomas, Baltimore Center Stage, University of the Arts, Jaime Jarrett, é boylan, Aileen Wen McGroddy, and many others. MFA: Brown/Trinity. Rep. www.hanvansciver.com @rhymes.with.man
Nina, Constantine, Irina, and Trigorin may all be familiar characters to you. They live eternally dissatisfied with their lives. But in this new dark comedy by Brie Knight, we find the characters in an adjacent universe in the middle of the apocalypse. With the world threatening to break open, will they finally fulfill their desires? Or will happiness once again escape them, when they are sucked into a black hole?

Content Warning: Strong Language, Sexual Content, Themes of Suicide and Death

Production Credits

Director: Susan Dalian
Dramaturg: Dr. Kimmika L.H. Williams-Witherspoon
Stage Manager: Leslie Ann Boydren*
Intern: Aj Maryn

CONSTANTINE: Dawn McCall
NINA: Ciera Gardner
IRINA: Ebony Pullum
TRIGORIN: Steve Wright*
SORIN: Frank X*
MASHA: Kishia Nixon
Stage Directions: Aj Maryn

Executive Producer:
CHG Charitable Trust
Suzanne Roberts Cultural Development Fund

Associate Producers:
Kimberly S. Fairbanks
Virginia Brown Martin Fund of The Philadelphia Foundation

* Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.
Brie Knight (she/her) is an award winning Black playwright whose works have been featured at InterAct Theatre, Eagle Theatre, PlayPenn, The Philadelphia Women’s Theatre Festival and universities and festivals around the country. Her play PANCAKE QUEEN won the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre’s 2018 Playwright Competition and Villanova University’s Sue Winge Playwriting Award. Brie holds an MFA from Villanova University.

Ciera Gardner (they/them) is a local actor, mover, and creator here in the Philadelphia area. They graduated from the University of the Arts in (2016) while also attending the Headlong Performance Institute (2015). Credits include Richard III (Theatre in the X), Peter and the Starcatcher (Theatre Horizon), The Gap (Azuka Theatre), Coriolanus (Shakespeare in Clark Park), LibertytoGotoSee(NationalTrustofCliveden), NoChild...(TheatreintheX).

Ebony Pullum is an actress, singer and teaching artist based in Philadelphia. Some of her regional credits include; Curio Theater Company- Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar and Grill; The Lantern Theater- Fabulation; Theater Horizon- Shug Avery in The Color Purple (Barrymore Award winner); Lantern Theater- Red Velvet (Barrymore Nominated). Follow: @Ebonythestar

Frank X was last seen as “Thomas More” in the Lantern Theater production of A Man For All Seasons. He has performed on stages around the country. Favorite roles have included: Malvolio in Twelfth Night (Seattle Rep); Hector in The History Boys (Arden Theatre); Estragon in Waiting For Godot (Quintessence)...
Theatre); Molina in *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, and Sterling North in *Permanent Collection* (both at InterAct Theater); David Gavin in *After Ashley* (Humana Festival, Actors Theatre Of Louisville); Sam in *Master Harold…and the Boys*, and the title role in *King Lear* (both at Lantern Theater). Mr. X also appeared earlier this season in *Little Women* at Quintessence Theatre.

**Kishia Nixon** This is Kishia Nixon’s third time being a part of PlayPenn’s New Play Development Conference. Past PlayPenn credits: *House of the Negro Insane* By Terrence Anthony and *Cave Canem* by Emmanuel Leadon. Recent theater credits: Stephie/ensemble in *Fabulation or The Reeducation of Undine* with Lantern Theatre; *The Dreamer in Life is a Dream* with EgoPo Classic Theatre; and *Ensemble in Re-entry* with Die-Cast at Drexel University Mandela Theater. Black Lives Matter. I love you, James!
The Foundry is PlayPenn’s professional development and membership program for emerging Philadelphia-area playwrights.
There will be a Q & A following the show. Your input can often be helpful to the playwright so please join us directly after the show for a brief Q & A with the artists. Comment cards are also provided in the lobby if you wish to share your thoughts.

Content Warning: Gunshots, Discussion of Death by Poisoning, Discussion of the Occult, Children and Elderly in Threatening Situations

The play is a collection of five frightening tales, all told from the gift shop/waiting area of a Cracker Barrel restaurant.... during a storm! His play dares us to investigate a cold-hearted murder...to stare into an open grave...and to come face to face with the truest horror of all...what if we’ve been following the wrong story all along?

Production Credits

Director: Shamus McCarty
Dramaturg: Autumn Storm Blalock
Stage Manager: Tess Mathewson

Associate Producers:
Bryna & Andy Scott
Virginia Brown Martin Fund
of The Philadelphia Foundation

ENSEMBLE
Katherine Perry
Sarah Stryker
Kishia Nixon
James Whitfield
Kahlil A. Wyatt

Stage Directions:
Anthony Crosby

* Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.
Kevin Esmond is a playwright, director and educator based in South Jersey. He created and directed the Intern Co., a young adult theatre education program at Burlington County Footlighters. Kevin won the Sue Winge Playwriting Award for his play FONDEST WISH. His play DO-GOODERS received a reading at Philadelphia Plays & Players, and FONDEST WISH will receive a full production at the 2nd Stage in Cinnaminson, NJ this year.

Shamus McCarty (he/him/his) is a Philly-made Theatre Maker finishing up his MFA in Directing at Boston University. Local collabs: Die-Cast, Philadelphia Young Playwrights, Temple, Shakespeare in Clark Park, LoveDrunkLife, Limelight, Arden, Kimmel & others. His original musical, Close Your Legs, Honey, co-created w/ Hannah Parke, premiered at PHIT Comedy and toured to Bootless Stageworks. Recent: National Puppetry Conference at the Eugene O’Neill Theatre Center and Tennessee Williams Festival. Next up: Sam French OOB Festival and Directing Eat Your Young by J.C. Pankratz; Alligator-A-Phobia in 3D! by Jay Eddy, for Boston Playwrights Theatre. Shamus is the Associate Director for two new musicals this season, Driving in Circles premiering in NYC and Make Way for Ducklings at Wheelock Family Theatre in Boston.

Autumn Blalock (she/her) is an interdisciplinary artist and Theater for Health (TfH) researcher originally from Capitol Heights, MD. A published playwright and scholar, her most recent works examine the way that Black people are visually interpreted onstage. Her work in theater scholarship has been recognized by the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE).
Katherine Perry (they/she) is an actor, improviser, and educator based in Philadelphia, occupying unceded Lenape Territory. On stage, Katherine has been seen at Theatre Horizon, Arden Theatre Company, Revolution Shakespeare, Eagle Theatre, and EgoPo Classic Theater, among others. This year Katherine is in classrooms across the city with The Unscripted Project, 1812 Productions, Philadelphia Young Playwrights, and the HMS School for Cerebral Palsy. Katherine is the creator/performer behind Brooke Spitz and SEX TALK (the show), and is currently directing Fitting In: Tales of the Fat Ingenue, set to premiere this August. More info at katherine-perry.com @iamkaypear

Tess Mathewson (she/her) is thrilled to be working with the PlayPenn new play development conference for the first time. Tess’ previous stage management credits include Life is a Dream by Pedro Calderón de la Barca and adapted by Brenna Geffers and Felipe Vergara (EgoPo Classic Theater); Place by Tamara Al Saadi (Goucher College); The Skriker by Caryl Chruchill (Goucher College); and Le Silence des Chauves-Souris by Anaïs Allais Benbouali (Goucher College). Thank you to everyone who made this conference possible!

Katharine Perry (they/she) is an actor, improviser, and educator based in Philadelphia, occupying unceded Lenape Territory. On stage, Katherine has been seen at Theatre Horizon, Arden Theatre Company, Revolution Shakespeare, Eagle Theatre, and EgoPo Classic Theater, among others. This year Katherine is in classrooms across the city with The Unscripted Project, 1812 Productions, Philadelphia Young Playwrights, and the HMS School for Cerebral Palsy. Katherine is the creator/performer behind Brooke Spitz and SEX TALK (the show), and is currently directing Fitting In: Tales of the Fat Ingenue, set to premiere this August. More info at katherine-perry.com @iamkaypear

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Kishia Nixon This is Kishia Nixon’s third time being a part of PlayPenn’s New Play Development Conference. Past PlayPenn credits: House of the Negro Insane By Terrence Anthony and Cave Canem by Emmanuel Leadon. Recent theater credits: Stephie/ensemble in Fabulation or The Reeducation of Undine with
James Whitfield is grateful to be back with PlayPenn’s conference of New Play Development readings. His recent credits include The Beast in the Bayou with Enchantment Theater, Everyman with ShakeSpear in Clark Park, and Savior with Jouska Playworks. James is thankful for his family and friends for their support. A special shout out to his better half, his rock, his love Kishia.
PASE LO QUE PASE
(I WILL ALWAYS FIND YOU)

By Carl(os) Roa

July 7 at 7:30pm

Young Fátima and Guillermo both find two halves of an ancient map that compels them to take a journey to meet each other. But what starts out as a mystic quest turns out to be a horrific nightmare. What does it mean to be terrified of your own culture?

Content Warning: Prominent Themes of Latin-American Trauma, Political Violence, Hate Crimes, Homophobia, and Suicide.

Production Credits

Director: Santi Iacinti
Dramaturg: Alycia Gonzalez
Stage Manager: Elliot Foster

FÁTIMA: Jessica Marvin-Romero
GUILLERMO: Jerrick Medrano
EL MAPA: Richard Johnson*
MADRE: Julia López
PADRE: J Hernandez*

Associate Producers:
Nick Anselmo
Dr. Kimmika L.H. Williams-Witherspoon
Virginia Brown Martin Fund
of The Philadelphia Foundation

Stage Directions: Zach Valdez

* Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

There will be a Q & A following the show. Your input can often be helpful to the playwright so please join us directly after the show for a brief Q & A with the artists. Comment cards are also provided in the lobby if you wish to share your thoughts.
Carlos Roa is a creator, writer, performer, organizer, juicy Colombian bear, and effusive Miami transplant. They've worked with numerous artistic organizations in Philadelphia, including The Wilma Theater, Taller Puertorriqueño, First Person Arts, Philadelphia Artists’ Collective, to name but a few. They were a Finalist for the Latinx Theatre Commons’ Carnaval of New Latinx Work and the 2022 McNally Award. Carl(os) is a proud alumni of the Headlong Performance Institute and Drexel University.

Santiago Iacinti (they/them) is a director, educator, and artistic leader with a decade of experience on a national level. They are a Mexican-born immigrant and identify as gay femme nonbinary. They are bilingual and speak Spanish fluently. Their background is in new work. Prior to being named Associate Artistic Director at PlayPenn, Santi was an inaugural member of the Roundabout Directors Group, the Casting Associate at X Casting NYC, a Sexual Harassment Prevention Trainer at ART/ NY, and worked in Arts Engagement at The Old Globe. Their work aims to use identity consciousness to create new futures that allow for self-actualization, both on and off stage, for the communities that they come from. (www.santiagoiacinti.com).

Elliot Foster is excited to be joining PlayPenn for the first time as the stage manager for Pase Lo Que Pase. Originally from Crystal River, Florida, he earned his BA in Theatre from Florida State University in 2019. His most recent credits include assistant stage managing for the Curtis Institute of Music as part of their spring opera season for Così fan tutte and Dangerous Liaisons.
He has also recently worked with local Philadelphia companies such as The Bearded Ladies Cabaret, 11th Hour Theatre Company, Alter Ego Chamber Opera, and Shakespeare in Clark Park.

**Jessica Marvin-Romero** is a recent graduate from Temple University and is so excited to be making her PlayPenn debut with such a wonderful group of people. Recent roles include Cindy in *Fefu and her Friends* and Will/Leslie in *Sensitive Guys* (Temple University). Offstage, you can find her writing poetry, collaging, and hoarding pink items. Follow her @chilaquilesjes

**Julia López** is a writer and performance artist who advocates strongly for the power of the arts in education and social justice. Julia was born and raised in the South Bronx, NY to Puerto Rican parents. Julia holds a BFA in Theater Arts from Wesleyan University and attended the Eugene O’Neill National Theater Institute in Waterford, CT, as well as the Instituto Internacional in Madrid, Spain. With over 25 years of experience teaching in community settings, she has taught or conducted workshops and trainings at numerous venues, including the National Council of La Raza, the National Association of Latino Arts and Culture, the Pennsylvania Prison Society, and Teachers College at Columbia University. She has performed and read original works at a variety of venues throughout the United States, Mexico City, and in Madrid, Spain. Julia has written, and performed in over 20 plays and performance art pieces including: *New Colony Miss America, Myra Goes to the Welfare Office*, and *Our Fathers Daughters & A Gathered Silence* with Las Gallas Artists Collective. Her play *Graciela*, was part of the Pregones Theater’s “Asuncion” program, professionally read & directed by Jorge Merced, then performed at the Drake Black Box Theater in Philadelphia.
**J Hernandez** has been part of the Philly theatre community for 9 going on 10 years come 2023. This is his first official Play Penn. In his time here, he’s worked for multiple companies including Philadelphia Theatre Co, Arden Theatre Co, InterAct Theatre Co, Lantern Theatre, and Quintessence Theatre. He was last seen this past season as Jackie in *The Motherf*ucker with the Hat* at Theatre Exile and as Billy in *72 Miles to Go* at InterAct. Many thanks to everyone at Play Penn! Siempre resistir!

**Zach Valdez** (Leonardo/Stage Directions) is excited to work with PlayPenn for the first time. He was last seen in Fabulation at Lantern Theatre Company. Zach is Chicano and actively reads a book by a Latinx author every month. Texas credits include, *The Leopard Play, or sad songs for lost boys,* (Leo Ensemble Theatre); Octavio Solis’ *Quixote* and *The Tempest* (Shakespeare Dallas). Love to Mom and Dad!
The play is set during the 1935 grand jury investigation of the death of rising musical theater star Evelyn Hoey. A group of reporters have gathered to cover the story as the grand jury determines if there is sufficient evidence for a trial against her lover, the wealthy Henry Huddleston Rogers III. Reporter Dorothy Walton finds Evelyn’s story especially compelling.

**Content Warning:** Reenactment of Violence, Gun Play, Sexual Assault, Discussion of Murder and Suicide

**Production Credits**

**Director:** KC MacMillan

**Dramaturg:** Heather Helinsky

**Stage Manager:** Leslie Ann Boyden*

**Associate Producers:**
Beth Burrell & David Sorensen
Virginia Brown Martin Fund
of The Philadelphia Foundation
Anonymous

**DOROTHY:** Sophia Barrett

**CARL:** Joe Falcone

**MINNIE:** Merri Rashoyan

**ROY:** Gregory Isaac

**GEORGE:** Tyler Elliott

**MRS. HOEY:** Jennifer Summerfield

**Stage Directions:** Anthony Crosby

* Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

There will be a Q & A following the show. Your input can often be helpful to the playwright so please join us directly after the show for a brief Q & A with the artists. Comment cards are also provided in the lobby if you wish to share your thoughts.
**Julie Zaffarano** (she/her) is a Philadelphia area playwright whose most recent recognitions include Finalist, Terrence McNally Award; Two times Semi Finalist, O’Neill National Playwrights Conference; Finalist, Veterans Repertory Theatre; Best Production, Pittsburgh New Work Festival to name just a few. Julie is a member of Dramatist Guild, Ghost Light Dramatists, Indiana Playwrights Center, and Philadelphia Dramatists Center.

**Kathryn MacMillan** (she/her) is a Philadelphia-based theater director and the Producing Artistic Director of Tiny Dynamite. KC has directed more than 50 productions in our region and beyond. Recent and favorite shows include *Unraveled* (off-Broadway: Theatre Row); *The Complete Works of Jane Austen, Abridged* (Tiny Dynamite; also co-writer); *Grounded* and *The Niceties* (InterAct); *Betrayal, Arcadia, The Beauty Queen of Leenane* and *Mrs. Warren’s Profession* (Lantern Theater Company, where she was the Associate Artistic Director for eight seasons); and *Athena* and *The Revolutionists* (Theatre Horizon, where she served as Guest Artistic Director for the 2017/18 season). KC is a five-time Barrymore nominee for Outstanding Direction and in 2015, she was named one of Billy Penn’s Who’s Next: 16 Young Philadelphians Shaping the Arts Scene.

**Sophia Barrett** is delighted to join PlayPenn this summer. Previous credits: *In the Next Room (or The Vibrator Play); Three Sisters* (Hedgerow Theater); *Pure Medea* (Automatic Arts); *Michael & Edie, Big Love, Red Herring* (Villanova Theatre); *Five Women Wearing the Same Dress* (Cape May Stage); *Some Girl(s)* and *Boeing Boeing* (Lynn University). M.A. from Villanova University. Love to Jake and the pets.
Joe Falcone is thrilled to be a part of PlayPenn for the first time! His recent work includes the feature film 825 Forest Road, a Wawa commercial, and Clue at the Candlelight Theater. Local credits include Click with Simpathico Theatre; The Witch of Edmonton with REV Theatre Company; and Mr. Digger’s Spooky Radio Special with Theatre on the Verge. You can also hear his voice featured in the PC horror game A Date to Keep. A big thank you to everyone involved!

Merri Rashoyan (she/her) is originally from Los Angeles, California and is a first generation Armenian American. In May, Merri graduated with her MFA in Acting from FSU ASOLO Conservatory for Actor Training. Past PlayPenn Credits include Giantess and Cockfight. Most recent theatre credits include: Our Town (Asolo Rep); Much Ado About Nothing (Asolo Rep-Bard Wired Tour); Julius Caesar and Twilight Los Angeles (FSU ASOLO Conservatory).

Gregory Isaac (He/Him) is a Philadelphia-based actor whose recent and favorite appearances include Fabualtion, A Man For All Seasons, Betrayal, The Resistable Rise of Arturo Ui (Lantern Theater Company); My Fair Lady, Doctor Faustus, Mother Courage, Waiting For Godot (Quintessence Theatre Group); The Merchant of Venice and Merry Wives of Windsor (Delaware Shakespeare); Hope & Gravity (1812 Productions); A Christmas Carol (Walnut Street Theatre). He was also a Barrymore Award nominee for his work in Iphigenia At Aulis (Philadelphia Artists’ Collective). He also spent a number of years living and performing in New York City, Atlanta, and Chicago. 2,500 years ago, Aesop told us, “No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.” www.gregory-isaac.com
Jennifer Summerfield is a graduate of Smith College and the Neighborhood Playhouse and most recently appeared in *In the Next Room* at Hedgerow Theatre. She has been Marie Antoinette at Curio; writer and performer of *Mary Shelley* at the Rosenbach; and Eliza Powel at both the Constitution Center and American Historical Theatre. As co-producer, she has performed in site-specific productions of *Hedda Gabler* and *The Yellow Wallpaper*, and the virtual production of *A Doll’s House 2020*—with an updated script by husband Kyle Cassidy—reflecting quarantine during the pandemic. New play development is a passion and she’s grateful to Brenna and all at PlayPenn for this opportunity.
Moss and Kay meet in the audience of a play. As the play begins, the story Moss was expecting is not the story being told. Kay has some ideas about how to fix that, so they take matters into their own hands as they embark on an adventure about memory and relationships, making art and working in restaurants, and letting go.

Content Warning: Drugs and Alcohol, Discussion of Loss

Production Credits

Director: Che’Rae Adams
Dramaturg: Kirsten Bowen
Stage Manager: Jess Merkins

Associate Producers:
David Ingram & Melanye Finister
Heidi Rose & Michael Barnett
Virginia Brown Martin Fund of The Philadelphia Foundation

MOSS: José Raúl
KAY: Cinder Kuss
LICHEN: Zak Rosen
ZERO: Thomas Choinacký
BEV: Colleen Corcoran
V/LUCY: Severin Blake
ELI: Bastion Carboni
Stage Directions: Kelly Duchar

There will be a Q & A following the show. Your input can often be helpful to the playwright so please join us directly after the show for a brief Q & A with the artists. Comment cards are also provided in the lobby if you wish to share your thoughts.
Geo Decas O’Donnell (he/they) is a playwright, theatre-maker, and parent. He has co-run the ensemble-based theatre company CollaborationTown (CTown) since founding it in 2003 and has created devised theatre pieces there, including FAMILY PLAY (1979 TO PRESENT), and RIDDLE OF THE TRILOBITES. In 2017 CTown received an LMCC WorkSpace grant for Geo’s work FROM SKULL TO GHOST. Their work has received a New York Fringe Excellence Award for Outstanding Playwriting and Outstanding Production. Geo holds a BFA from Boston University's School of Theatre Arts.

Kirsten Bowen is a freelance dramaturg and arts writer. Prior to moving to Philadelphia in 2019 she was the Literary Director at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company in Washington, DC and the Literary Associate at Signature Theatre Company in New York. She has also served as a dramaturg at the Kennedy Center’s MFA Playwrights Workshop, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and Columbia Stages. Her writing has been published in Broad Street Review, 3Views, HowlRound, Breaking Character, and Playwrights Canada Press. Kirsten holds a BA in English and Theatre from Smith College and an MFA in Dramaturgy from the Institute for Advanced Theatre Training at American Repertory Theater/ Moscow Art Theatre School at Harvard University.

Jessica Merkins is thrilled to be a part of this year’s Playpenn conference. She is a multi-disciplinary theater artist who has been working in the Philadelphia and surrounding areas for almost 10 years. She has held various backstage positions including automation technician (Other World, Something Wicked This Way Comes- DTC), wardrobe (Murder on the Orient Express, A Flea in Her Ear- UDel Rep), and run crew (Ragtime- Arden, Blackbeard- Signature Theatre, Twelfth Night- PSF). She is also a part-time
house manager at The Wilma, Azuka Theatre, and Theatre Horizon. She is currently pursuing certification in Intimacy Direction through IDC Professionals.

José Raúl (he/they) is an actor, singer, dancer, writer, model, and collaborator. Philadelphia theater credits include Shakespeare in Clark Park (Twelfth Night), On the Rocks (WOLFCRUSH, Fringe 2018), Walnut Street Theatre (Saturday Night Fever), and Arden Theatre Co. (Fun Home, u/s). José won first prize in The American Pops Orchestra’s NextGen competition, 2019. Recent credits include CATS North American tour (Munkustrap, Rum Tum Tugger, Principal Swing, Booth Singer) and American Horror Story (upcoming, undisclosed). Thank you to PlayPenn for this graceful process. Temple University BFA MT. Representation: Hell’s Kitchen Agency. www.jxserauw.com @joserauliii

Cinder Kuss is a non-binary theater maker who grew up in the United States South, Midwest and Northeast. They were raised Jewish, and are racially mixed Asian-American. They are a proud member of PAPA (Philadelphia Asian Performing Artists), and are thrilled to be making their first appearance at PlayPenn.

Zak Rosen is thrilled to be making his Philadelphia debut! Originally from Baltimore, Zak studied theater at Yale, returned to Baltimore during COVID, and just moved to Philly. Regional credits include Romeo and Juliet (Benvolio) at Chesapeake Shakespeare Company and DREAMHOUS$E (Ensemble) at Baltimore Center Stage. At Yale, he was thrilled to work on many School of Drama projects, behind the scenes and as a Radical
Faerie in As U Like It. Other Yale credits include A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Puck); Measure for Measure (The Duke); Mother Courage and Her Children (Swiss Cheese); Julius Caesar (Brutus); and The Pitchfork Disney (Presley Stray). He thanks his friends, family, his wonderful partner Tyler, and everyone at PlayPenn.

**Thomas Choinacky** (he/they) is an interdisciplinary artist with attention to dance. They are excited by textures, tastes, and feeling it deep in their muscles. His/their current practice asks questions about legacy, architecture, and queerness, which has led to experimental performances in stairwells, go-go dances, as well as building kinky mummies from duct tape. Thomas uses vulnerability to expel their demons and tell personal stories that previously felt invaluable or dangerous to share. They offer these parts of themself as opportunities for others to consider their own permissions. Company member of Applied Mechanics, an artist collective based in Philadelphia. Part of the New Philly Aesthetic. Recent: The Operating System, Fierce! Queer Festival, and Pink Noise Projects. thomasistitanic.com

**Severin Blake** (they/all/we) is a writer and interdisciplinary artist. The work they create interrogates language, imagery, and time. They write in response to the world(s) they see around and within them. They facilitate intentional spaces of bravery, vulnerability and joy making. As a performer, Severin has appeared onstage at InterAct, Orbiter 3, Simpatico, PolyGlamourous, Philadelphia Artists Collective, Philadelphia Asian Performing Artists, CCTC, Theatre Exile, StageWest, People’s Productions, Alma’s Engine and in exhibition at the PMA. They’ve created original roles in collaboration with Headlong Dance Theater (incubated artist), Annie Wilson, Swim Pony, The Painted Bride, Perfect Day, Black Best Friend and Applied Mechanics (Company Member.) www.severinblake.com
Bastion Carboni is a playwright, director, actor, and drag performer (Pilar Salt). In Philadelphia he’s produced 4 Fringe shows through his company Poison Apple Initiative as well as the long-running political cabaret AGITATED! In collaboration with Brett Robinson, he’s been in residence with The Bearded Ladies and 1812. Notable roles include: Jonas in Sometimes Callie and Jonas Die, Colton in A Vacation, and Orpheus in Eurycle.

Kelly Duchar This is Kelly Duchar’s first time on stage acting. Previously she spent 4 years role playing life skill scenarios with adult learners. In her free time, Kelly enjoys reading and traveling. She also enjoys getting tickets to Broadway and national tour shows whenever she can. Kelly would like to thank her wife and parents for their encouragement and support.
PlayPenn acknowledges with gratitude the following major donors for their support of the 2022 New Play Development Conference:

Nick Anselmo
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Beth Burrell & David Sorensen
CHG Charitable Trust
Ivor Clark & Jeffrey Blair
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PlayPenn acknowledges with gratitude

CONFERECE PRODUCERS

Nancy Boykin & Dan Kern

Thank you for your leadership and generosity
Meet Noelle Diane Johnson

This year PlayPenn was able to engage Noelle Diane Johnson for the Conference Orientation as artists and staff gathered together as a community for the first time. Noelle is the founder of ARTISTS HEAL™, a consulting company whose “vision is to reimagine a design for creating that supports the holistic wellness and well-being of artists, creators, and art consumers. Through the development of practical and accessible tools, ARTISTS HEAL™ serves artistic communities through programming, workshops, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion consultation, and community development.”

Noelle will lead the full PlayPenn staff and Conference artists in a three hours training session called *Equitable and Inclusive Rehearsal Rooms*. This training provided artists and staff with an understanding of how PlayPenn will operate when it comes to creating a healing and safe space in which to create. Noelle’s work “strives to decolonize artistic practice and process, shift culture, and promote a design for creating in which healing happens.”

PlayPenn has also retained Noelle’s services as an outside HR consultant throughout the Conference. We feel lucky to have the valuable knowledge, insight, and expertise that Noelle brings to her work. At PlayPenn we feel that this work is an important and necessary part of this year’s Conference. It firmly sets the tone for a new path forward for PlayPenn. Noelle’s work was received with gratitude from the artists and staff. It set the tone for a new path forward for PlayPenn.
About Noelle

Noelle has been an Actor/Performer, Director, Choreographer, EDI Consultant, Intimacy Consultant/Director, Stage Manager, and Production Manager in multiple venues. Credits: Wilma Theatre: *Fat Ham, Minor Character, The Cherry Orchard, Fairview* (EDI); Philadelphia Theatre Company: The Garbologist, Choir Boy (EDI, Intimacy); Arden Theatre Company: *School Girls; Or The African Mean Girls Play* (Intimacy); Theatre Horizon: *TJ Loves Sally 4Ever* (Pam) *A New Brain* (ASM), *Grand Concourse* (ASM), *The Agitators* (SM), *Art Houses* (PSM and Director). Simpatico Theatre Company: *Cry It Out* (SM). Theatre in the X: *The Beast of Nubia* (SM); The Bearded Ladies Cabaret: *Late Night Snacks* (SM), *You Really are a Heel* (SM), Lightning Rod Special: *The Underground Railroad Game* (SM). Playbill: *one in two* (SM). Long Wharf Theatre: *Passing Strange* (SM). FringeArts: *DAUGHTERS* (Choreography). Ninth Planet: *High Noon* (Performer/Collaborator). *Black Femme Magic Showcase* (Performer/Collaborator). Noelle is on the Board of Director’s Gathering and is the Founder & Owner of ARTISTS HEAL™, a company designed to create healing and care spaces for collaborative art-making while centering and providing resources for marginalized artists and vulnerable communities. ARTISTS HEAL™ offers arts and education programming as well as Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion services for arts organizations and institutions. She is a graduate of Temple University’s Theatre program and will be pursuing a dual Master’s in Theatre and Certificate in DEI Strategy at Villanova University in the Fall of 2022. Learn more about Noelle and ARTISTS HEAL™ at noelledianejohnson.com and artistsheal.org. IG: @noelledianejohnson/ @artistsheal
On March 13, 2020

I sat staring at my computer screen as I watched one by one in a matter of minutes emails pour into my inbox. The first messages delivered the news of directing jobs I had lined up through the summer being canceled. Mixed in were messages from theaters around the U.S. announcing that whole seasons were being canceled, and doors were closing for the foreseeable future as “we navigate these unprecedented times”. That quote became a catchphrase echoed throughout the world, and I was left wondering if we would ever gather in what I call “The Temple” again. Will I ever direct a play again and what would happen to the theater? But then almost immediately those questions were answered as artists did what they always do- create, re-imagine, connect. We found virtual spaces where we created a new way of presenting a theatrical experience, developed new work specifically for the medium and reached out to each other to check-in, support, and collaborate. During this time a long overdue racial reckoning grew from the tragic and senseless deaths of too many Black people at the hands of a system that had run unchecked for decades. All of America was affected by this reckoning and the American theater was
no exception. Something had to change. And now over three years later we gather in The Temple again working towards fixing the broken system. The PlayPenn leadership team traveled to the TCG Conference this year in Pittsburgh and learned that we were solidly a part of the future of a new American theater. We have built a model that is being reflected to us by other theater companies with our shared artistic leadership. We are three very different people who bring three sets of strengths, ideas, and diverse backgrounds to our jobs. But we do it with one common goal-create a space for a diverse group of artists and voices to come and tell their stories. The American theater must do all it can to reflect the world we live in and start to build towards equity, diversity and inclusion. It’s going to take time to see if this model will become a norm for the future of theater institutions. But I can say with certainty that Che’Rae, Santi and myself are on board for that discovery and believe it holds promise for the mission of PlayPenn and future new play development. I am very excited and proud to present these ten plays to you all this year.

Welcome back!