

SEPT 14 - OCT 8

BALTIMORE
CENTER
STAGE



BALTIMORE CENTER STAGE
PRESENTS

Lady Day *at*
EMERSON'S
BAR AND GRILL

BY LANIE ROBERTSON

MUSICAL ARRANGEMENTS BY DANNY HOLGATE

DIRECTED BY NIKKOLE SALTER

MUSIC DIRECTED BY NOLAN WILLIAMS, JR.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Honor Native Land

Responding to a call from our Indigenous colleagues, collaborators, and neighbors, Baltimore Center Stage is working toward building meaningful and accountable relationships with the land we occupy. As a first step on this path, you'll see a land acknowledgement in each of our programs. Acknowledgement is itself a small gesture, and we look forward to continuing our efforts toward decolonization in a meaningful way. If you're interested in more feel free to visit the US Department of Arts and Culture's "Honor Native Land" guide.

Baltimore Center Stage acknowledges that the land beneath us, this place, this community, owes its vitality to generations who have come before. Some were brought forcibly to this land, some came here in search of ownership or simply a better life, and some have lived and stewarded this land for countless generations. In a spirit of making erased histories visible, we acknowledge that we are standing on the ancestral and occupied lands of the Piscataway peoples. The Susquehannock, Lenape, and Lumbee peoples have also cared for this land. These peoples are not relics of the past. They continue to steward this land today with care, vitality, and tradition. Their relations are numerous throughout Turtle Island, and they continue to grow. We pay respects to their elders: past, present, and future. Please take a moment to consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together here today. And please join us in uncovering such truths at any and all public events.

Additionally, in the spirit of reconciliation, you can honor the Indigenous peoples of this land by donating to Native American Lifelines, donating to or visiting the Baltimore American Indian Center & Heritage Museum, and supporting local Indigenous artists. These are only a few suggestions of the many ways we can move towards reconciliation.



BALTIMORE AMERICAN
INDIAN CENTER

THE INDIGENOUS ART GALLERY

Free to the public,
open during regular
BCS box office hours,
Tue - Fri 12PM to 6PM



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Brandon J. Wallace

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THE CITIZENS OF
BALTIMORE COUNTY

DEAR BCS COMMUNITY,

Welcome to Baltimore Center Stage and our 61st season of capturing collective imagination and building community! We are proud to enter this season with enthusiasm as it features an engaging schedule of joy-filled theatrical activities and civic programming. We have the highest of hopes that, through our upcoming calendar, we can grow towards a greater understanding of ourselves and one another.

We are so excited to kick this season off with *Lady Day At Emerson's Bar and Grill*. This show first graced the BCS stage in 1993 where we first transformed the Head theater into the titular cabaret venue, and we're both delighted and honored to present it again exactly 30 years later. Under the brilliant direction of **Nikkole Salter**, this new production is a fresh look at the life and times of Billie Holiday, an iconic and incredibly talented Baltimorean who changed the course of music history with her unique phrasing, heady and articulate vocal style, and her one-of-a-kind approach to jazz. We are thrilled to have Tanea Renee, a fellow Baltimore girl, step into this role and represent this compelling era of the singer's life.

Lady Day challenged her audiences to think deeply and to effect change in the world around them by shedding light on many of the atrocities plaguing the American south during segregation. With her performances of songs like *Strange Fruit*, she wielded her unique and powerful ability to directly interact with people from all backgrounds, and put the dark but honest truths of the country right on their dinner platters. Her combination of natural talent and an honest desire to show up as an amplifier of the injustices in our world is a true example of the kind of stories we always strive to tell at Baltimore Center Stage.

We hope you will join us for the rest of our season which immediately continues with the **ArtsCentric** production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Cinderella* directed by **Kevin McAllister**. After that, we are featuring *Mexodus*, a history meets hip-hop theatrical experience written and performed by **Brian Quijada & Nygel D. Robinson**, followed by **Katori Hall's** Pulitzer Prize winning *The Hot Wing King*, which will be produced in association with Hartford Stage. The season will end with a new adaptation of **Oscar Wilde's** *The Importance of Being Earnest* directed and adapted by **Jenny Koons**.

Thank you for choosing to spend time with us, this incredible cast, and Lady Day as we revisit and retell the end of her storied and complex life.



Ken-Matt Martin
INTERIM ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Adam Frank
MANAGING DIRECTOR

LADY DAY AT EMERSON'S BAR AND GRILL

BY LANIE ROBERTSON

MUSICAL ARRANGEMENTS BY DANNY HOLGATE

CAST

Tanea Renee*
BILLIE HOLIDAY

Terry Brewer
JIMMY

Brittani Arlandis Green
BILLIE HOLIDAY U/S

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Lanie Robertson
PLAYWRIGHT

Nikkole Salter
DIRECTOR

Nolan Williams, Jr.
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Danny Holgate
MUSICAL ARRANGEMENTS

Sydney Lynne
SCENIC DESIGNER

Moyenda Kulemeka
COSTUME DESIGNER

Jorge Arroyo
LIGHTING DESIGNER

UptownWorks
SOUND DESIGNER

Cherelle D. Guyton, MBA
HAIR/WIG AND
MAKEUP DESIGNER

MUSICIANS

Francis Carroll
DRUMS

Eliot Seppa
BASS AND GUITAR

Jeff Kirkman III
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Terry Brewer
MUSIC CONSULTANT

Alyssa Moon Thompson
ASSISTANT SCENIC
DESIGNER

William Brown
ASSISTANT LIGHTING
DESIGNER

Kacey Bradshaw*
PRODUCTION STAGE
MANAGER

Alexis E. Davis
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Shaquan Pearson
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

JZ CASTING:

Geoff Josselson, CSA
Katja Zarolinski, CSA
CASTING

LADY DAY AT EMERSON'S BAR AND GRILL is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals.
www.concordtheatricals.com

LADY DAY AT EMERSON'S BAR & GRILL was first produced in New York by the Vineyard Theatre.

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

In every culture there are stories that get told over and over again. Some are origin stories, some myths. Most are the exalted tales of extraordinary people - the people who triumphed greatly, the people who failed massively, and the people who encountered so many of life's possibilities that it would behoove us all to examine and learn from their lives.

Eleanora Fagan Gough Holiday (aka Billie Holiday) is a woman who walked this earth whose exalted story has captured the imagination of the American - and, dare I say, the world's - psyche. Artists from Billie Eilish and Erykah Badu have drawn directly from her interpretive swagger. And we all have, for generations now, listened to her voice and told her story over and over again.

Why?

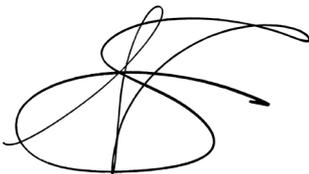
Is it the rags-to-riches-to-rags journey that fascinates us? Is it the interesting way she literally and metaphorically stretches the meter and subverts the chord progression? Is it her seeming embodiment of a stereotype mashup - the strong-black-sapphire and the damsel in distress - that turns us on? Is it the audacious fight against state authority for individual freedom we like so? Or is it the disproportionate pain she managed to turn into immeasurable beauty that we have been trying to understand since she first opened her mouth to sing?

What is it about the suffering of others that is so entertaining? Is it "entertaining"?

If you accept that stories are technology that make humanity possible - that they are the software to the body's hardware; that they are how we construct identity, create meaning out of life's events, and participate in the creation of our own experience and circumstances in life - then it stands to reason that there must be something about Ms. Holiday's story that engages our humanity. There is something about her journey that resonates as who we are. There is something that helps us understand, and be better able to participate in, the creation of our experience and circumstances in life.

Much of context of Ms. Holiday's 1915 to 1959 America is still present today. War, poverty, racism, caste, addiction, misogyny, domestic abuse, homophobia, corruption, gangsters (both street and political), the criminalization of human frailty and the twisted commodification of protest - all of these things are still alive and well. And perhaps that's why we keep telling her story - 'cause we haven't evolved passed the madness yet. Or perhaps it's just the strange way we seem to get a kick out of witnessing an impending train wreck.

It's too simple to call Ms. Holiday's story a hero's journey or a cautionary tale. ***Maybe the fact that she not only lived to be 44 given the odds stacked against her, but thrived, and sacrificed what comfort she managed to find to advance Black freedom in America is a friggin' marvel worthy of narrative veneration.*** So, as you watch this show, I hope you are not entertained. Instead, I hope you are captured by her journey because you realize it reflects who we are, shows us how far we have to go, and reminds us all that even amid all of the ways we have lost control - amid all of the things we cannot control - we still get to decide who we will be.



Nikkole Salter

DIRECTOR,
LADY DAY AT EMERSON'S BAR AND GRILL

LADY DAY

by Lawrence Jackson



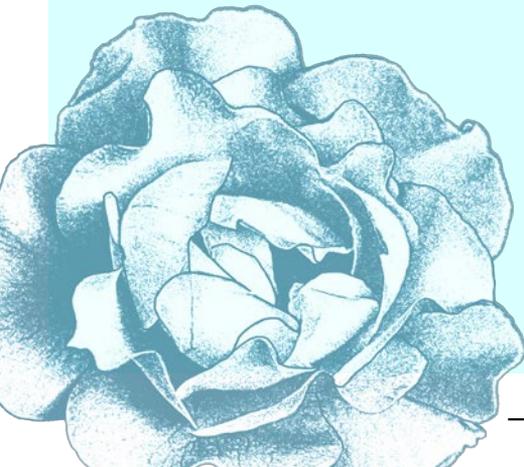
William P. Gottlieb/Ira and Leonore S. Gershwin Fund Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress.

BILLIE HOLIDAY (1915-1959) entered the world on April 7, 1915 as Eleanora Fagan. Although born in Philadelphia, Billie Holiday was Baltimore's own. Her mother Sadie Harris and father Clarence Holiday brought their daughter back, to Old Town, shortly after her birth. Billie Holiday was not formally trained. She claimed a unique identity as a singer: her signature phrasing, timing, and rhythm, and her unstoppable blend of urban hip and southern soulfulness. She seasoned those attributes with the raw edges of her Baltimore childhood journey, an itinerant course from Old Town to West Baltimore to the Good Shepherd Home

for Colored Girls to Fells Point. She could be equally coarse and maudlin, personality knots that stemmed from the dire **"pretty baby"**¹ life she knew here in Baltimore. More than once, she had needed to claw with viciousness or sweet talk an adversary for survival. Her experience included being sexually trafficked and sexually assaulted, landing her on the front page of the *Afro American* newspaper in 1927. Billie found solace from the assaults and being abandoned by her parents by listening to popular recorded music, like Louis Armstrong's "West End Blues" and Bessie Smith's "T'Ain't Nobody's Biz-ness If I Do." She is believed to have started

singing at speakeasies on Pratt Street and Caroline Street in 1928, and to have frequented a house at 211 S. Dallas Street, the world of the **demimonde**².

By the time she was twenty-five, Holiday had triumphed in New York and become the greatest living jazz singer. She had toured with the best swinging band, Count Basie's, and had made records with Bennie Goodman and Teddy Wilson, Buck Clayton and Ben Webster. In terms of our national history, she had ripped up the color line in two important ways. She had performed with Artie Shaw's white jazz orchestra and begun the difficult work of desegregating southern theaters and public accommodations, not by legislation, but on the basis of case-by-case, place-by-place, manager-and-owner after manager-and-owner. And she was headlining Café Society, a nightclub in Greenwich Village that actively opposed racism (euphemistically referred to as "segregation" and "Jim Crow" in the United States). At Café Society she took lyrics from a schoolteacher who belonged to the communist party and turned them into



her signature song, “Strange Fruit.” It became the most important anthem fighting racial injustice of the twentieth century. While she is endlessly praised today, she was far ahead of the time in 1940, and she was targeted for her courageous stand.

Like a true **Race Woman**³, she took stardom uncompromisingly and insisted on serving as a bellwether for freedom of choice of association throughout the 1940s. Embarrassed by her flaunting the bigoted regime, the Treasury Department hunted her, hounded her common-law husband until he betrayed her, and railroaded her into federal prison for heroin possession by the end of that decade. Though fans still loved her increasingly deep, nuanced, and mature voice, her conviction stripped her of a performance license in New York City. The big bands playing dancehalls had declined after World War II, giving way to the small combos of musicians playing complex arrangements of bebop and cool jazz. Her embargo was a hard blow for a nightclub singer.

“*Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar and Grill*,” originally produced in 1986, features Billie Holiday in her final days. Her combination of misfortune and high visibility deepened her sense of isolation and persecution. Baltimorean and Douglass High School graduate Walter Chiles, who collaborated for many years with Quincy Jones, would recall stumbling into Billie Holiday in a bar in Manhattan in the later 1950s when he was a conservatory student. Chiles accepted an invitation to go to her apartment and play piano for her over drinks in the early morning. Louis McKay, Holiday’s second husband and a man whose temper and capacity for violence was not inconsiderable, surprised the pianist playing for his idol. As the argument began, Chiles

carefully eased himself out of the apartment. The wounded woman he serenaded that evening, like the performer from the famous 1957 CBS broadcast “*The Sound of Jazz*,” carried the raw lacerations of her life beside her core of luminous brilliance. This siren who chanted in the twang of our city takes her place as one of the consummate American artists of the twentieth century: vernacular, blues epitome, intimate, profane, intense, assailing and unassailable—classic.

1- Film directed by Louis Malle in 1978. Starring Brooke Shields as a preteen girl living as a sex worker in New Orleans.

2- a group of people considered to be on the fringes of respectable society.

3- “A **Race man** or **Race woman** is a loyal member of the Black Race who dedicate their life to directly contributing to the betterment of Black people. 2. Race men and Race women remain consistently confrontational with the ideas, people, institutions, and/or nations that threaten the well-being of the Black (Afrikan) Race.” October 14, 2011 From: **Definition of a race man and race woman - Assata Shakur**

BILLIE HOLIDAY

by Philip J. Merrill

IN THE 64 YEARS SINCE HER DEATH, Billie Holiday’s influence on jazz music, her distinct fashion, and her signature gardenia has captivated generations of music lovers, historians, and everyday people. Born Eleanora Fagan in 1915, she spent part of her childhood in the historic Baltimore neighborhood of Fells Point. She lived with her mother Sadie at 217 and 219 South Durham Street and at the age of ten, she began performing in theaters, whiskey houses, and storefront churches in the area. As a teenager, she renamed herself Billie Holiday after white silent film star Billie Dove, whom she had been



fascinated with since childhood.

She received her famous nickname, “Lady Day”, in 1937 from close friend and saxophonist, Lester “Prez” Young. Being referred to as Lady Day added an air of sophistication to Holiday, even when she was forced to urinate in a bucket onstage during performances or use the back door of a whites only nightclub.

In the 1930s, Billie set out to make her distinctive mark in the world of jazz. When a *Baltimore Afro American* newspaper reporter interviewed Holiday in her dressing room before her October 1937 performance at Baltimore’s famed Royal Theatre on Pennsylvania Avenue, Billie was sporting three gardenias in her hair and on her gown. She admitted to doing her own hair, makeup, and nails and her preference for “ugly men”, because they weren’t as conceited as attractive men. The article ended with, “looking at Billie Holiday, one does know that her present success is only the

beginning.”

Holiday’s popularity was on the rise in the 1940s and she remained in constant demand. In January 1944, she was easily elected the best jazz vocalist by jazz critics in the first *Esquire* magazine poll. She also ranked fifth in *Billboard Magazine’s* annual poll of “girl singers,” thrilling crowds at various nightclubs in New York and Washington, D.C. In August 1948 when she appeared at Baltimore’s Club Astoria on Edmondson Avenue, billed as “New York’s Harlem Brought to Baltimore,” she broke numerous records, attracting the largest mixed race audience in the club’s history. Extra police officers were hired to handle the overwhelming crowds who just wanted a peek at Billie.

One of Holiday’s close friends was Laura Livingstone, a singer, dancer, drag king who often performed in men’s clothing. Their careers often crossed paths in several venues across the country, particularly in Baltimore’s Club Astoria and Royal Theatre and in Harlem. In 1959, during the end of Billie’s life, Detroit visited with her. Although there is a dispute about where Holiday was born, Baltimore has claimed her as their native daughter and continues to uplift her legacy. The Billie

Holiday Statue on Baltimore’s famed Pennsylvania Avenue was designed by Black sculptor James Early Reid in 1985. It was re-dedicated in 2009 to include the lyrics of Holiday’s haunting song, “Strange Fruit”, about the lynching of Black men. For over two decades, aspiring singers have competed in the city’s annual Billie Holiday Vocal Competition.

In the words of one of Holiday’s hit songs, “God bless the child that’s got his own”, God bless Baltimore for recognizing the musical legacy and impact of Lady Day.



Gottlieb, William P. Portrait of Billie Holiday and Mister, Downbeat, New York, N.Y., ca. Feb. United States, 1947., Monographic. Photograph.



TANEA RENEE*

BILLIE HOLIDAY

NYC: *We Got Issues* (Ima) TOUR: *Smokey Joe's Café* (Bj/Pattie swing) TV: *The Dave Chappelle Show*/Comedy Central; *The Ultimate Coyote Ugly Season 3*/CMT REGIONAL: Media Theater: *Aida* (Nehebka); Allenberry Playhouse: *Smokey Joe's Café* (Brenda); Naples Dinner Theater: *The Beat Goes On 70's Review*; *Weathervane Playhouse: Little Shop of Horrors* (Crystal); *A Night of Shakespeare* (Cordelia), Dir. Charles S. Dutton EDUCATION: Towson University BS. Theatre Arts. @tanearenee



TERRY BREWER (he/him)

JIMMY

Terry Brewer is a gifted pianist and arranger who hails from Baltimore, MD. He began his formal musical studies at the Peabody Preparatory of Johns Hopkins University. He received a full scholarship to the Manhattan School of Music, where he studied under the late, great Jaki Byard. He is the recipient of several awards, including Downbeat Magazine, NAACP ACT-SO, and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Terry has composed, arranged, and recorded music for artists such as Adam Blackstone, The Baylor Project, Marvin Sapp, Jason Nelson, Shirley Caesar, and The Potter's House of Denver. He is a proud husband and the father of 6 children. Together with his wife, they operate MOD Music, a production company that provides an array of musical services across multiple platforms and genres.



BRITTANI ARLANDIS GREEN (she/her)

BILLIE HOLIDAY U/S

Brittani is beyond excited to be joining a Baltimore Center Stage production for the first time! It has been a dream of hers since seeing her first BCS production in high school and has been continually inspired by BCS productions. After graduating from Baltimore School for the Arts, Brittani decided to continue her education in Theatre by attending and graduating from The Theatre School at DePaul University where she received her B.F.A. in Acting. Brittani made Chicago her second home, where she performed in several productions, working with theatre companies such as Steppenwolf Theatre, Porchlight Music Theatre, Rivendell

Theatre Ensemble & Chicago Children's Theatre. Recently, she took on a new role by directing her first play, *Miss Beth* by Don Zolidis at Western High School where she formally taught. She currently works as an independent Teaching Artist, collaborating with theater companies and arts programs all around the greater Baltimore area, hoping to inspire the next generations of thespians through performance, instruction and coaching. Outside of theatre making, Brittani enjoys spending time with her son, dissecting true crime cases and watching stand-up comedy.

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

**FRANCIS CARROLL
DRUMS**

Francis “Frank” Carroll is native of Washington, DC, and a 27-year retired Veteran of The US Army Band, “Pershing’s Own” in Washington, DC. Throughout his career, he performed thousands of missions at the White House, Pentagon, Department of State, and various venues across the US and abroad. Countries he’s visited and performed in include Australia, Norway, Korea, and China. Prior to his Army career, Frank was a music major at the Philadelphia College of Performing Arts and the University of MD, College Park. During that time, he worked as a percussionist at Kings Dominion theme park, Commodore Cruise Lines Caribe I Orchestra, Barksdale Dinner Theatre and Touring Company of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and most recently *Miss You Like Hell* at the Baltimore Center Stage & Show Way at the Kennedy Center Education Theater. He’s also performed with entertainment icons such as Lloyd Price, Fred Wesley, Clark Terry, Tom “Bones” Malone, Craig Morgan and Mark Wills. Frank currently resides in the

Tampa, Florida area and enjoys teaching percussion, golfing with his brother, and relaxing poolside and at the beach.

**ELIOT SEPPA
BASS and GUITAR**

Eliot is a bassist, arranger, composer, and bandleader from Washington, DC. He began playing the upright bass at nine years old and the electric bass at 14. Eliot graduated from Howard University with his Bachelor’s Degree in Music in 2013 and his Master’s Degree in Music in 2018, both in Jazz Studies. He has performed all over the United States with artists such as Christie Dashiell, Braxton Cook, Deborah Bond, and Warren Wolf, as well as the opportunity to tour internationally with artists such as The Impressions, Raul Midon, Hailu Mergia, Cecily, Elijah Balbed, and Cheik Hamala Diabate. Eliot was chosen as one of six Artists in Residence at the Strathmore Music Center in Maryland for the 2019 season. Eliot currently teaches bass at Howard University and George Washington University.



**LANIE ROBERTSON
PLAYWRIGHT**

His first plays *THE INSANITY OF MARY GIRARD* and *BACK COUNTY CRIMES* are frequently performed by schools and community theatres. His play about Billie Holiday *LADY DAY AT EMERSON’S BAR & GRILL* was produced on Broadway and in London’s West End with Audra McDonald.

Many of his works are about iconic artists and the societal issues they faced: *NASTY LITTLE SECRETS* (Joe Orton); *WOMAN BEFORE A GLASS* (Peggy Guggenheim); *ALFRED STEIGLITZ LOVES O’KEEFFE* (Georgia O’Keeffe); *NOBODY LONESOME FOR ME* (Hank Williams) *THE GARDENER* (Claude Monet); and *BLYTHE COWARD* (Noel Coward).

His works have been produced at the Alley Theatre, the Alliance Theatre; Annenberg Center. Arena Stage, Barrington Stage, the Edinburgh Festival, Festival d’Avignon, George St. Playhouse, Kennedy Center, Old Globe, Primary Stages, Playwrights Horizons, Theatre de la Huchette, Theatre Petit Montparnasse, Theatre Silvia Montfort, Westside Arts Theatre, Vineyard Theatre, Virginia Stage, the Walnut Street Theatre, West Side Arts Theater, and Williamstown Theatre Festival.

His first novel is to be published in 2024. He is a member of the Dramatist Guild, the Society des Auteurs et Compositeurs Dramatiques, and the Writers Guild, East.



NIKKOLE SALTER (*she/her*)

DIRECTOR

Nikkole Salter makes her directorial debut at the helm of the Baltimore Center Stage production of *LADY DAY AT EMERSON'S BAR AND GRILL*. She is an OBIE Award-winning actress and writer who arrived onto the professional scene with her co-authorship and co-performance (with Danaï Gurira) of the Pulitzer Prize nominated play, *IN THE CONTINUUM*. For its Off-Broadway run at Primary Stages and the Perry Street Theatre, Nikkole received an OBIE Award, and the NY Outer Critics Circle's John Gassner Award for Best New American Play.

In theatre, Nikkole has received an Independent Reviewers of New England (IRNE) award nomination for Best Actress for her performance in Kenny Leon's production of *STICK FLY* co-produced by Arena Stage and the Huntington Theatre, starred as 'Cookie' in the West Coast Premiere of Tarell Alvin McCraney's play *HEAD OF PASSES* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre (dir. Tina Landau), and starred as 'Lady Macbeth' in Liesl Tommy's controversial production of *MACBETH* at the Shakespeare Theatre Company. She was most recently seen in Dominique Morisseau's new play *MUD ROW*, and the Broadway production of Robert Schenkkan's play *THE GREAT SOCIETY*. Nikkole will star in the regional premiere of *THE CONFEDERATES* by Dominique Morisseau at Mosaic Theater Company this coming fall. On film and television, Nikkole was featured in Harold Jackson, III's independent film *Last Night*, (winner of the Audience Award for Best Film and the Grand Jury Prize for best Screenplay in the 2015 American Black Film Festival), and can be seen in the feature film *Pride & Glory* and on television, starred as ISABEL SARASA on the third season of *New Amsterdam* and in a recurring role on *Godfather of Harlem*.

As a dramatist, Ms. Salter has written 8 full-length plays, been commissioned for full-length work by 6 institutions, been produced on 3 continents in 5 countries, and been published in 12 international publications. Her work has appeared in Off-Broadway, regional and international theatres, and the Crossroads Theatre production of her play *REPAIRING A NATION* (directed by Marshall Jones, III) was regionally aired during the second season of the WNET program "Theatre Close-Up" on NYC's Channel 13, WLIC, NJTV. The National Black Theatre production of her play *CARNAVAL* was nominated for 7 AUDELCO awards including Best Playwright and Best Production and won for Best Ensemble Performance. She is also the co-librettist with composer/lyricist Nolan Williams, Jr. of the new musical *GRACE*.

Nikkole Salter currently teaches and serves as the Chair of the Department of Theatre Arts within Howard University's Chadwick A. Boseman College of Fine Arts. She co-founded THE CONTINUUM PROJECT, INC. with NSangou Njikam, and serves as Executive Artistic Director of the 501(c)3 non-profit organization that creates innovative artistic programming for community empowerment and enrichment. She is an active member of the AEA, SAG-AFTRA, and the Actors Center; and sits on the Council of the Dramatists Guild. She has served on the Board of the Theatre Communications Group, and was Board Chair from 2020-2023, chairman of the Dramatists Guild Foundation Fellowship program, and a founding board member of the NJ Play Lab. Nikkole received her BFA in theatre from Howard University under the instruction of Al Freeman, Jr. and Sybil Roberts, in part; and her MFA from New York University's Graduate Acting Program under the tutelage of Zelda Fichandler and Ron Van Lieu, to name a few.



NOLAN WILLIAMS, JR.
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Baltimore Center Stage debut. Producer, composer/lyricist, playwright, filmmaker, creative. Regional: Actors Theatre of Louisville: Grace Workshop, 44th Humana Festival of New American Plays; Langford: Stirring the Waters Across America; Cleveland Play House: The Nolan Williams Project (2017, 2018); DMV: Ford’s: Grace (2022, Best Musical and Best New Musical, BroadwayWorld DC); Kennedy Center: Stirring the Waters Across America (2019), Philadelphia Community Mass (2018); Lincoln: Go, Tell It! (2014); Clarice: Christmas Giff (2012, 2013). Documentary: “Becoming Douglass

Commonwealth” (2021, Telly Award Gold Prize, Davey Award Gold Prize, Communicator Award of Excellence, Anthem Award Silver Prize). Web Series: #ByGrace Live Chat (2020, Telly Award Bronze Prizes). Viral Videos: “I Have a Right To Vote” (2020, Davey Award Gold Prize, Telly Award Bronze Prize, over two million global views); ‘America’ Song Project (2020, 2021, 1.3 million global views); Publication: African American Heritage Hymnal (1991, 500,000+ copies sold worldwide). Training: Oberlin College, Howard University.

SYDNEY LYNNE
SCENIC DESIGNER

Sydney Lynne is a Chicago-based scenic designer and artist, specializing in scenic design and visual arts/installations. Some design credits include: Long Wharf Theater, Milwaukee Rep, Shattered Globe, Congo Square Theater, Lookingglass Theater, Timeline Theater, Victory Gardens Theater, Pyramid Theater, Black Ensemble Theater, Malz Jupiter Theater, and Geva Theater Center. Sydney Lynne was nominated for a 2020 Jeff Award, won a 2020 3Arts Award in Theatre, and a 2022 Black Theater Alliance Award for Best Scenic Design. Sydneylynnedesign.com -To those who got me here, thank you. sL

MOYENDA KULEMEKA (she/her)
COSTUME DESIGNER

Moyenda is thrilled to be returning to Baltimore Center Stage after designing *Tiny Beautiful Things* last season. Other recent credits include: *Jump* at Everyman Theatre; *Radio Golf* at Round House Theatre; *Good Bones* and *John Proctor is the Villain* at Studio Theatre; *Selling Kabul*, *Daphne’s Dive*, and *Detroit ‘67* at Signature Theatre; *Monumental Travesties*, *In His Hands*, *Bars and Measures*, *Marys Seacole*,

and *Fabulation: Or, The Re-Education of Undine* at Mosaic Theater; *Gloria: A Life and Intimate Apparel* at Theater J; *Mlima’s Tale* and *The Brothers Size* at 1st Stage; *La Tia Julia Y El Escribidor*, *Exquisita Agonia*, and *En el Tiempo de las Mariposas* at GALA Hispanic Theatre among others. Moyenda holds a B.A. from the University of Maryland and is a proud member of United Scenic Artists, Local 829, IATSE.

JORGE ARROYO
LIGHTING DESIGNER

Jorge is a freelance Lighting Designer based in Boston and New York with over 25 years of experience in theater, dance, concerts, corporate events, opera, and television. Born and raised in Puerto Rico, he is one of only a handful of professional lighting designers to hail from the island. REGIONAL: *K-I-S-S-I-N-G* (Huntington. Elliot Norton Award), *Lend Me A Soprano* (Alley), *Party People* (Actors Theatre of Louisville), *Into The Woods*, *25th Annual... Spelling Bee* (Arden), *Unspeakable* (The Apollo Theater), *A Christmas Carol* (Westport Country Playhouse), *The Fantasticks* (People’s Light and Theatre Company) OFF BROADWAY: *Whisper House* (Civilians), *Southern Promises*

(Flea), *Sawbones*, *The Diamond Eater* (HERE Arts Center) OTHER: *Alicia Keys* (Jazz @ Lincoln Center), *Gabriel Iglesias*, *The Wayans Brothers*, *The Winans*, *Jackie Mason* (NJPAC), *Moments Defined* (Stacey Tookey Dance). UPCOMING: *Eurydice* (Boston Lyric Opera). Assistant Professor and Co-Chair of Design and Production at Boston University. Member of USA829. [http:// www.jorgearroyo.com](http://www.jorgearroyo.com)

UPTOWNWORKS SOUND DESIGNER

UptownWorks Sound is a dynamic team of designers that creates collaboratively for theatre, film, podcasts, music production and other media. Select sound design highlights include *Tiny Father* (Barrington Stage/Chautauqua); BMLD (NBT); *Avaaz* (South Coast Rep); *Singularity Play* (HarvardTDM); *Black Odyssey* (Classic Stage); *Chicken & Biscuits* (Asolo Rep); *Espejos:Clean* (Hartford Stage/Syracuse Stage); *Which Way To The Stage* (Signature DC); *the ripple, the wave...* (Berkeley Rep/Goodman); *Complicity Island* (Audible); *Blues Clues & You!* (Round Room Live); *Queen* (Long Wharf Theater/A.R.T.NY); *Choir Boy* and *Today is my Birthday* (Yale Rep); *Fires in the Mirror* (Baltimore Center Stage/Long Wharf Theatre), *already there* (The REACH at the Kennedy Center) *First Down* (59E59). This design was led by Daniela Hart (uptownworksnyc.com), Bailey Trierweiler (btsounddesign.com) and Noel Nichols (noelnicholsdesign.com). Daniela, Noel & Bailey received their MFAs in Sound Design from the Yale School of Drama.

CHERELLE D. GUYTON, MBA HAIR/WIG AND MAKEUP DESIGNER

Regional: *Lydia and the Troll* (Seattle Rep); *Sweeney Todd* (The 5th Avenue Theatre); *Party People* (Actors Theatre of Louisville); *Lear* (California Shakespeare Theatre); *Mamma Mia* (Village Theatre); *Gem of the Ocean* (TheatreWorks); *Disney's Beauty and the Beast* (The 5th Avenue Theatre);

Mother Road, *Alice in Wonderland*, *How to Catch Creation*, *Romeo and Juliet* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Citrus* (Northern Stage); *In the Heights*, *Penny Candy* (Dallas Theatre Center); *School Girls...* (Kansas City Repertory); *A Wonder in My Soul* (Baltimore Center Stage); *Twelfth Night* (Shakespeare in Detroit); ED&I Hair Master Class: Hair/Wig and Makeup Inclusive Design Training (Carnegie Mellon University); ED&I Hair/Wig and Makeup Consultant: *Lion King*, *Aladdin*, *Frozen* (Disney Theatrical Group) www.cstylezu.com

JEFF KIRKMAN III ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Jeff Kirkman III is a Theatre Practitioner specializing in Acting, Directing and Producing. He currently serves as a member of the Artistic Producing team at Baltimore Center Stage, where he received his professional debut as Assistant Director for The Raisin Cycle, a rotating rep of *Clybourne Park* and *Beneath's Place* and was an ensemble member for the World Premiere of *Marley*. He received a Helen Hayes nom. (Outstanding Ensemble in Play) for his work as an actor in *Colossal* at Olney Theatre Center. Directing: *Seven Guitars* at Howard University, the Global Citizen Festival, *The Every 28 Hours Plays* (The TCG Conference Session: *Black Lives Matter*, *Civil Engagement and the Responsibility of Theatre* and the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival), WSC Avant Bard Scripts in Play Festival, and the inaugural Women's Voices Theater Festival. Jeff was a member LORT EDI Mentorship program for the 21-22 season, a program for Rising Leaders on the path to senior or executive leadership who currently work for a LORT member theatre. Education: BFA, Theatre Arts, Acting, Howard University.

KACEY BRADSHAW* (*she/her*)
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

Kacey Bradshaw is delighted to be working on her first production with BCS. While originally from Ohio, she has had the pleasure of living and working in theatres all across the country. Recent credits include *I'm Gonna Marry You*, *Tobey Maguire* (The Cell Theatre), *The Polar Express* (Rail Events Inc.), *Taking Up Serpents/Holy Ground* and *The Sound of Music* (The Glimmerglass Festival), *Air Play* (The Acrobuffos), and *Gianni Schicchi* (On Site Opera). Kacey is a proud Equity member and holds a B.A. in Theatre Technology with a minor in Live and Performing Arts Management from Columbia College Chicago. She would like to thank her friends and family for all of their support.

ALEXIS E. DAVIS
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Alexis E. Davis is a native of Baltimore City and she has stage managed several events with BCS. Recently she has worked with Chesapeake Shakespeare Company stage managing several plays including *Twelfth Night*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare [Abridged] [Revised] (again)* and *Red Velvet*. With Single Carrot Theater she stage managed *A Beginner's Guide to Deicide* and *Drunk Enough to Say I Love You*. Additional credits include: Assistant Stage Manager for *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*; stage crew for *TopDog/Underdog*; and Stage Management Intern for *God of Carnage* with Everyman Theatre. She also was a Stage Management intern for *Wild! With Happy!* at BCS. Alexis holds a BA in Theater Production from McDaniel College. Alexis is a member of the Stage Managers' Association.

JZ CASTING
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Geoff Josselson, CSA and Katja Zarolinski, CSA are New York-based

casting directors, handling productions for theatre, film, and television. Recent work includes productions for Arena Stage, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Baltimore Center Stage, Cape Playhouse, Denver Center, The Irish Repertory Theatre, Merrimack Rep, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Paper Mill Playhouse, Pittsburgh CLO, Pittsburgh Public Theater, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Round House Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, TheaterWorks Hartford, Weston Playhouse. For more information, please visit www.jz-casting.com

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



The scenic, costume, lighting and sound designers in LORT Theatres are

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Metropolitan Baltimore, Local 40-543 of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada.

MEET BRANDON

Our BCS 2023/24 season artist



BRANDON J. WALLACE is a Baltimore-based cartoonist and illustrator. He was born in Houston, Texas, and raised in the DC metropolitan area.

Wallace holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Illustration from the Maryland Institute College of Art and a Master in Fine Arts in Illustration from Syracuse University.

Wallace's work is created using the digital drawing application, Clip Studio Paint. He is inspired by history, nature, comic books, film, and animation.

In addition to his creative practice, Wallace has taught as an adjunct art professor at multiple universities.

See more of Brandon's work and learn more about him at brandonjwallace.com or follow him on instagram @bwallart.



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The Virtual Student Matinee Library is a **FREE** online repository of filmed versions of some of Baltimore Center Stage's plays and programs with corresponding program material such as curricula and program guides to prompt questioning and classroom discussion.

Students can view productions in the classroom environment and collaborate with their peers to further their artistic learning in a creative way. Our curriculum is aligned with MSDE common core standards to support learning goals meaningfully while uplifting aspects of the creative artforms and social emotional skills inherent in theater.

PROGRAM GOALS

DEEPEN and **GROW** relationships with Maryland Schools.

EXPAND and **ENRICH** student experience with high quality academic work.

Keep students **ENGAGED** in the performing arts by **REMOVING BARRIERS** to help address the access gap in Baltimore and throughout Maryland.

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ALLIANCE

Founded in 1963 and designated the State Theater of Maryland in 1978, Baltimore Center Stage provides the highest quality theater and programming for all members of our communities, including youth and families, under the leadership of Interim Artistic Director Ken-Matt Martin, Artistic Director Stevie Walker-Webb, and Managing Director Adam Frank. Baltimore Center Stage ignites conversations and imaginations by producing an eclectic season of professional productions across two mainstages and an intimate 99-seat theater, through engaging community programs, and with inspiring education programs. Everything we do at Baltimore Center Stage is led by our core values—chief among them being Access For All. Our mission is heavily rooted in providing active and open accessibility for everyone, regardless of any and all barriers, to our Mainstage performances, education initiatives, and community programming.

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the Importance of Being Earnest

BY OSCAR WILDE
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WORLD PREMIERE ADAPTATION
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
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