

Lena Waithe Presents

AUG 14 - SEPT 6, 2026 | WORLD PREMIERE

BOCKING

by Preston Crowder directed by Stevie Walker-Webb



**BALTIMORE
CENTER
STAGE**

**PARENTAL
ADVISORY
EXPLICIT CONTENT**

In Association with The New Group

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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 acknowledgment in each of our programs. Acknowledgment 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 information 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.



**THE
INDIGENOUS
ART GALLERY**

Free to the public,
BCS Deering Lobby,
Tue - Fri 12PM to 5PM

FALL 2026 INSTALLMENT COMING SOON

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BALTIMORE CENTER STAGE

700 North Calvert Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

BOX OFFICE

410.332.0033

ADMINISTRATION

410.986.4000

CENTERSTAGE.ORG

INFO@CENTERSTAGE.ORG

2026/27 SEASON

ARTWORK TEAM

Art Director: Bo Frazier

Photographer: Scott Suchman

BCS Props Designers:

Rachel Erichsen &
Jessie Combest

Editing & Graphic Design:

Theresa Lammon

Assistant Art Director:

Shaquan Pearson

Bocking Variant Cover Art:

Bitu The Artist

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THE CITIZENS OF
BALTIMORE COUNTY



Stevie Walker-Webb
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR,
BALTIMORE CENTER STAGE

Ken-Matt Martin
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
BALTIMORE CENTER STAGE

DEAR FRIENDS,

Welcome to Baltimore Center Stage and to the beginning of our 2026/27 season.

There is something sacred about the first day of rehearsal. Before the lights are focused, before the costumes are stitched, before an audience fills the seats, we gather around a table with nothing more than words, imagination, and one another. It is one of our favorite moments because it reminds us that theater begins not with spectacle, but with trust.

We are thrilled that this journey begins with *Bocking*, Preston Crowder's wildly irreverent, laugh-out-loud world premiere. In its outrageous humor, fearless satire, and wonderfully unexpected turns, *Bocking* asks us to examine the stories we tell ourselves about respectability, belief, family, identity, and the beautifully messy contradictions that make us human. It is exactly the kind of bold new work we believe belongs at Baltimore Center Stage.

This season represents one of the most ambitious artistic undertakings in our recent history. Across world premieres, musical celebrations, family adventures, and reimaged classics, we are continuing our commitment to champion artists who take risks, tell the truth, and invite audiences into conversations that linger long after the curtain falls.

That commitment has already been alive in our halls throughout the summer. Our building has been filled with playwrights developing new work through 410Fest, artists and activists imagining the future through the Trans History Project, and reaching young people behind bars through our Juvenile Justice Drama Program. Those programs remind us that our work extends far beyond a single

production. Every rehearsal, every workshop, every conversation contributes to a larger artistic ecosystem rooted in curiosity, community, and care.

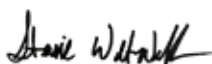
We are especially honored to launch this season with Preston's debut at Baltimore Center Stage, under Stevie's direction, in association with The New Group, and presented by our dear friend Lena Waithe, whose groundbreaking work with trinity helped shape an unforgettable chapter of our last season. Together, these partnerships affirm our belief that Baltimore can be both a home for extraordinary local artistry and a national destination for the creation of new American theater.

Whether this is your first time working at Baltimore Center Stage or you are returning home once again, thank you for bringing your artistry, your generosity, and your whole self into this process. Every person in this room contributes to something irreplaceable, and we are deeply grateful to begin this adventure with you.

We hope you find this to be a place where bold ideas are welcomed, collaboration is celebrated, laughter comes easily, and care for one another remains at the center of everything we create

Thank you for joining us as we kick off what promises to be an extraordinary season. We cannot wait to discover what we will build together.

With gratitude,



Stevie Walker-Webb
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR,
BALTIMORE CENTER STAGE



Ken-Matt Martin
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
BALTIMORE CENTER STAGE

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THE CAST

Kalen Allen*
ERICKSON LEWIS

Marchant Davis*
JAVON WING

Sis Thee Doll*
RITA DAY

Rebecca L. Hargrove*
TIANA WING

Adrienne C. Moore*
STACEY

Christopher Sears*
PEER DAY

Lance Coadie Williams*
REVEREND WHITE

**PARENTAL
ADVISORY**
EXPLICIT CONTENT

WARNING:

Bocking contains **EXPLICIT** language, adult themes, and content. It is **VERY** risqué, bold, absurd, and **UNAPOLOGETICALLY CHEEKY.**

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Preston Crowder
PLAYWRIGHT

Stevie Walker-Webb
DIRECTOR

Bo Frazier
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Studio Bent
SCENIC DESIGNERS

Orla Long
COSTUME DESIGNER

Shannon Clarke
LIGHTING DESIGNER

Taylor J. Williams
SOUND DESIGNER

Kaja Dunn
INTIMACY DIRECTOR

Larry Peterson
HAIR & WIG DESIGNER

Becca Janney
ASSISTANT COSTUME
DESIGNER

Elianna Kruskal
ASSISTANT LIGHTING
DESIGNER

Jeffrey Salerno
ASSOCIATE SOUND
DESIGNER

Rachel Denise April*
PRODUCTION STAGE
MANAGER

Makayla Beckles*
ASSISTANT
STAGE MANAGER

Shaquan Pearson
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Allyn Gardner
DRESSER

Kim Parson
PROGRAMMER

Arden Tierney
LIGHT BOARD OPERATOR

Simon Briggs
AUDIO ENGINEER

Avon Haughton
DRAMATURG

Destiny Lilly, CSA
CASTING

Bridgette C. Burton
PRODUCER

Lena Waithe
PRODUCER

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PLEASE SILENCE AND PUT AWAY YOUR CELL PHONES AND OTHER DEVICES**

OOP!

dramaturgy by Avon Houghton

The word taboo has traveled an impressive distance. It entered the English language in the late eighteenth century after Captain James Cook's voyages through the South Pacific. There, Cook and his crew encountered the Tongan word *tapu* (or *tabu*), which described something set apart—sacred, forbidden, untouchable. A taboo was not simply a rule. It was a social boundary so powerful that its violation threatened the order of the community itself. Over time, the word shed much of its spiritual significance as it migrated into Europe and eventually, America. Today, "taboo" has become shorthand for anything we are discouraged from saying aloud: the desires we suppress, the fantasies we deny, the contradictions we bury beneath politeness.

But taboo has never been about prohibition; it's about performance.

Every society develops an understanding of what belongs in public and what must remain private. We learn these lessons way before we understand them. We rehearse acceptable versions of ourselves through families, schools, faith communities, workplaces, and friendships. We become fluent in the choreography of normalcy. We smile when expected, grieve appropriately, laugh at the right jokes, and conceal the parts of ourselves that threaten the illusion of coherence. Respectability isn't simply a moral category... it's a theatrical one.

Perhaps that is why comedy has always found such fertile ground in taboo. The laugh often arrives at the precise moment the mask slips.

Bocking introduces us to two sets of parents who appear to have almost nothing in common. Their values, personalities, habits, and social identities seem to position them on opposite ends of the cultural spectrum. Yet beneath these carefully constructed exteriors live private longings, secret curiosities, embarrassing fantasies, and complicated fears that neither couple could imagine confessing aloud. The absurdity of the play emerges not because these characters possess hidden desires, but because they spend extraordinary amounts of energy pretending they do not. The French playwright Eugène Ionesco once remarked that absurd theatre reveals "the strange in what is commonplace." *Bocking* follows that tradition, exposing how ordinary people construct elaborate performances to protect themselves from exposure. The comedy is raunchy, outrageous, and delightfully uncomfortable, but its engine roars with something deeply human: the terror of being truly seen.



Taboo is certainty.

In culture, taboo is an expressway to a collective consciousness, as if to say, it doesn't matter who we are in the dark, as long as we don't bring it to the light. Certainty allows communities to function efficiently. We categorize people quickly. Good parent. Bad parent. Conservative. Progressive. Proper. Deviant. We inherit narratives about who belongs where and who desires what. These categories offer comfort because they spare us the labor of curiosity. If someone fits neatly into our understanding of the world, then we are relieved of having to imagine the complicated interior life that exists beneath their surface.

Taboo reinforces this certainty. It teaches us not only what to hide, but what to assume others have hidden. We become convinced that our private contradictions are uniquely ours while everyone else is living with remarkable consistency. The irony, of course, is that nearly everyone believes the same thing.

The result is a profound failure of empathy.

We are often taught to celebrate difference—to recognize distinct identities, experiences, and perspectives. This work is necessary and valuable. But difference alone can become another form of distance when it obscures our capacity to recognize likeness. We grow so practiced at distinguishing ourselves from others that we overlook the strange possibility that the people we find most foreign may secretly wrestle with the same fears, insecurities, desires, and embarrassments that haunt us.

What if our greatest commonality is not our public identity but our private vulnerability?

This is where *Bocking* performs its quiet sleight of hand. The play invites audiences to laugh at its characters' humiliations before gradually recognizing pieces of themselves inside those same humiliations. The laughter becomes less about ridicule than recognition. Every outrageous revelation chips away at the illusion that anyone possesses a perfectly integrated self.

Preston Crowder reaches into the embarrassment of these characters and dares them to contend with who they are at their most vulnerable. Rather than treating shame as something to overcome neatly, the play allows shame to become a meeting place—a space where contradiction, desire, fear, and tenderness coexist. Its absurdity is not an escape from reality but an exaggeration of it, magnifying the invisible negotiations we all conduct between our private selves and our public performances.

The theatre is uniquely equipped for this encounter. An audience gathers in a room full of strangers, each carrying secrets they presume belong only to them. Then, for a few hours, they watch fictional people reveal the very impulses that polite society insists should remain concealed. The room fills with laughter—not because the audience is fundamentally different from the characters, but because they recognize how exhausting it is to keep pretending otherwise.

If taboo asks us to remain hidden in order to belong, *Bocking* asks a more unsettling question: What if belonging begins the moment we admit how gloriously, embarrassingly human we already are?

A note from playwright, **PRESTON CROWDER**

Welcome to Emma, Tennessee!

We're glad you're here.

Bocking is your first visit to Emma, the fictional town at the heart of what I call the "Emma Trilogy". Named after my late grandmother, Emma is home to the beautifully strange people whose lives make up the trilogy. In this town, gay exorcisms and God appearing as a Beyoncé-esque diva are all part of an ordinary Thursday. Through Emma, I explore the complicated Black American South that shaped me, a place filled with churches, hustlers, laughter, contradictions, and communities that continually find ways not only to survive, but to thrive.

Bocking is an outrageously fun entry to this place. It wrestles with questions that haunt every corner of this community. How do we define morality? Who gets to decide innocence? What parts of ourselves do we hide in order to belong? The questions that haunt Emma are the same ones so many of us confront every day. You won't find easy answers here. My hope is that you'll leave with a deeper appreciation for just how complicated faith, family, and community can be.

Absurdity and comedy are cornerstones of this odd place. I believe comedy has the power to open the door to difficult conversations. It lowers our defenses just enough to see ourselves in people we might otherwise dismiss. In this moment, laughter feels like necessary medicine. Around here, folks have always known how to chase down pain with a laugh or two.

So please, take some time to settle in. Meet your neighbors. Laugh loudly. Cringe often.

The further Emma drifts into the outrageous, the more its people reveal who they truly are.

And if, at any point tonight, you find yourself thinking this little town couldn't possibly get any stranger...

Just wait.

Enjoy your stay. *And please, don't touch the chickens.*

— Preston Crowder,
PLAYWRIGHT, *BOCKING*

A note from director, **STEVIE WALKER-WEBB**

***Bocking* is a true satirical farce, and Preston Crowder has come to make fun of us all.**

If you find yourself offended by this play...just know he wrote it especially for you. Yes, you, sitting right there in your seat, uptight and afraid to laugh out loud at the absurdity of what it means to be human.

Because let's be honest, life on this spinning rock in the middle of nowhere gets stranger with every trip around the ever-burning sun. And despite all our technological advances, we have not gotten closer to understanding how to live on this planet together. In fact, we have mucked it up completely. We've complicated the major things, like access to clean water and the future of the planet. We've even complicated the minor things, like loving our neighbors, minding our own business, and letting people live however they choose.

Bocking is about a lot of stuff, but mostly it's about how thoroughly we have confused our own humanness.

Preston lifts up that confusion for us to get a good...hard...look at it. Making fun of us, that's where his genius lies.

Preston Crowder is the greatest satirist I have ever worked with. He understands the human condition so profoundly that he can eviscerate our petty divisions with the turn of a phrase and demolish our sense of propriety with a single stage direction. But Preston doesn't stand outside humanity pointing and laughing at it. He gets down in the mess with us. He sees our contradictions, our appetites, our self-importance, our desperate need to belong, and he makes them hilarious. Then, when we are laughing hardest, he makes us recognize ourselves.

I am enormously proud of this world premiere, of the incredible company of designers, and artists onstage and off (shout out to Starky our scenic painter who painted so much of what you see by hand). I'm continuously grateful for the BCS production staff that worked incredibly hard on this one.

I am so thrilled to be a small part of this momentous occasion for a great American satirist. *Bocking* is the first of what I know will be many hilarious, audacious, and profound plays by Preston Crowder. I hope he will grace Baltimore Center Stage with another world premiere very soon, until then...

Let's face it, life is a farce. We may as well laugh at ourselves.

— Stevie Walker-Webb,
DIRECTOR, *BOCKING*



Preston Crowder
PLAYWRIGHT

Preston Crowder is a playwright-actor-musician originally from Nashville, TN. Preston's work centers Black and Queer characters navigating high-stakes

situations, often pushing humor to absurd and unexpected places. Productions include *Black To Save The Day* (Fire This Time Festival, 2026), *My Dead Boyfriend Is a Robot* (Oberlin College, 2024), and *Don't Look Black* (Tennessee Playwrights Studio, 2022). Preston served as the TOW Foundation Playwright-in-Residence at The New Group from 2024–2025. Preston's work has been recognized through the National Black Theatre's Soul Series, the Obsidian Theatre Festival, and the Del Shores Foundation Writers Search. Preston is a graduate of Oberlin College, where he also served as visiting professor of Theater & Africana Studies from 2022–2024.



Stevie Walker-Webb
DIRECTOR

Stevie Walker-Webb is a Tony Award-nominated, Obie Award-winning director, playwright, and cultural worker who believes in the transformational power of art.

He is the Artistic Director of Baltimore Center Stage, and his work has been produced on and off-Broadway, including *Oh Happy Day!* (The Public Theater), *trinity*, *John Wilkes Booth: One Night Only!* (Baltimore Center Stage), *Ain't No Mo'* (The Public Theatre/Broadway), *One In Two* (The New Group), *Black Odyssey* (Classic Stage), *Fairveiv* (Woolly Mammoth). UPCOMING: *Wanted* (BROADWAY)



Kalen Allen*
ERICKSON LEWIS

Award-winning actor, producer, singer, and television personality Kalen Allen first gained national attention after being discovered by Ellen DeGeneres in 2018, leading to his role as a

correspondent on The Ellen DeGeneres Show. He currently hosts FOX's Reality Check and can be seen as the host of MGM/Amazon's "Pick Your Prize" on Amazon Prime Live. As an actor, Allen made his feature film debut in Seth Rogen's *An American Pickle* and recently appeared in Netflix's *Meet Me Next Christmas* alongside Christina Milian. His television acting credits also include Disney+'s "Sofia the First: Royal Magic", Amazon Prime's "With Love," HBO's "A Black Lady Sketch Show," and Apple TV+'s "BEARBRICK." In 2024, Allen made his Broadway debut as the Store Manager in *Elf the Musical*. A graduate of Temple University and NYU, Allen continues to work across entertainment, journalism, and digital media.



Marchant Davis*
JAVON WING

Marchant Davis is a Brooklyn-based actor, writer, director, and producer originally from Philadelphia, PA. On stage, Marchant has the rare distinction of appearing in two major Broadway

shows in the same season, *Ain't No Mo'*, and *Good Night, Oscar*, starring Sean Hayes. His Lortel Award and Audelco Award-nominated performance as "Passenger Two" in *Ain't No Mo'* saw him portray all of the play's male-identifying characters. Additional stage credits include the original Broadway production of Robert Schenkkan's *The Great Society* starring Brian Cox and *The Antiquities* at Playwrights Horizons and The Goodman Theater. He recently starred in Tina Satter's three-hander HBO feature film, *Reality*, opposite Sydney Sweeney and Love Language, directed by Joey Powers, which made its world premiere at the 2026 SXSW film festival. Previously, Davis starred opposite Anna Kendrick in Chris Morris' black comedy feature, *This Day Shall Come*. Davis won the role shortly after he graduated from NYU's Graduate Acting program. He can also be seen in *A Journal For Jordan*, directed by Denzel Washington and starring Michael B. Jordan. Davis is the author of the children's book *A Boy and His Mirror*, which is available wherever books are sold. Instagram: @marchantdavis



Sis Thee Doll*

RITA DAY

Sis Thee Doll (she/her/sis) is an actress, performer, and creative from Houston, Texas, whose work spans stage, screen, and beyond. Her theater credits include starring as Ado Annie in

the national tour of *Oklahoma!*, appearing as a special guest in *Jonas Brothers on Broadway*, and creating original live shows including her annual holiday production *Sismas*, presented in New York City and her hometown of Houston, Texas. Her screen credits include *American Horror Story*, *Pose*, *The Last O.G.*, *Maximum Pleasure Guaranteed*, and the award-winning short film *Rainbow Girls*, in which she stars as Angel.

Sis is the co-founder of Thee Open House Project, an initiative dedicated to expanding access to live theater for marginalized and low-income communities while creating pathways for more accessible engagement with the arts.

She'd like to thank her sisters, her mothers, and her greater community for holding her, as well as the Lord above, who is the head of her life. This performance is dedicated to Dijah Diva. #DivaGang

Follow Sis Thee Doll on Instagram/Twitter/TikTok @ucancallmesis. Learn more at ucancallmesis.net and explore Thee Open House Project at theeopenhouseproject.org



Rebecca L. Hargrove*

TIANA WING

Rebecca L. Hargrove returns to Baltimore Center Stage after performing the role of Mrs. Webb in *Our Town*, directed by Stevie Walker-Webb. She is a 2x 'Best Opera Album'

Grammy-Award Winner for The Metropolitan Opera's *Porgy & Bess* (Gershwin) and *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* (Blanchard). Previous productions include *The Black Clown* (Opera Philadelphia), *The Fire This Time Festival* (The Wild Project), *B.R.O.K.E.N. Code B.I.R.D.* (Switching (Berkshire Theater Group), *In the ParLOUR* (National Black Theater), *Evita & Cabin in the Sky* (City Center Encores!), *The Counterfeit Opera* (Little Island), *Acquanetta* (Bard Summerscape), and *Trial by Jury & The Mikado* (New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players).

Select TV/Film credits include *They Fight* (Hulu 2026 premiere), "FBI: Most Wanted" (CBS), and "Law & Order" (NBC). Follow on IG/FB @RebeccaLHargrove.



Adrienne C. Moore*

STACEY

New York theater credits include: *The Blood Quilt* (Katori Hall, Lincoln Center), *Black Odyssey* (dir. Stevie Walker-Webb, CSC); the award-winning revival of Ntozake Shange's *for colored girls...* (dir.

Leah Gardiner), *The Taming of the Shrew* (dir. Phyllida Lloyd) and Suzan-Lori Parks' *365 Plays/365 all* at The Public Theater; *Milk Like Sugar* (dir. Rebecca Taichman; La Jolla, Playwrights Horizons). Selected TV, film and animation credits include Black Cindy on "Orange Is the New Black," (Netflix; three SAG awards, NAACP Image Award nomination), "30 Rock," "Homeland," "Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt," "Law and Order SVU," "Pretty Hard Cases," "Search Party," "Poker Face," "Shaft," Etta Candy in *Wonder Woman: Bloodlines* (DC Comics), *Curious George: Royal Monkey* and Clint Eastwood's, *Juror #2*.



Christopher Sears*

PEER DAY

Christopher grew up in a theatre family and still spends summers writing songs for his mom's summer camp: Edie's Fairytale Theatre. *Bocking* marks his 4th collaboration with

Baltimore Center Stage! You may have seen him in *The Folks at Home*, *The Bhakkai*, *Life is a Dream*. NYC credits include: *Dog Day Afternoon* (Broadway); *Cult of Love* (Broadway, Berkeley Rep); *Gently Down the Stream* (The Public); and *Stupid Fucking Bird* (The Pearl). Christopher's frequent and favorite collaborator is his sister, Sienna Sears. He is currently writing a musical adaptation of *What's Eating Gilbert Grape* with Bandits on the Run and Peter Hedges that will debut at MCC theatre in 2027. BFA from Rutgers. @christophersearsart



Lance Coadie Williams* REVEREND WHITE

Lance Coadie Williams Broadway credits include the Pulitzer Prize Play *Sweat and Kiss Me Kate*. His Off-Broadway credits include: *La Cage Aux Folles* (City Center); *Chiaroscuro* (NBT); *The*

Refuge Plays (Roundabout Theatre); *Black Odyssey* (CSC); *War, Shows for Days* (Lincoln Center Theatre); *Sweat* (Public Theater); *Booby Candy* (Playwright's Horizon, Obie Award). His Regional Theatre credits include: Westport Country Playhouse, Baltimore Center Stage, Wilma Theatre, Studio Theatre, Everyman Theatre, and Woolly Mammoth. Film/Television: CBS's "The Good Fight" and "Elementary", HBO's "High Maintenance" and "The Wire". Education: BFA, SUNY Purchase. Baltimore School for the Arts alumni.

Bo Frazier

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Bo Frazier (they/them) is a Jeff Award-Nominated theatre director interested in traditionally excluded narratives told in extremely imaginative ways. Currently the Artist in Residence at Baltimore Center Stage, they created the Trans History Project to commission and develop 10 new plays about the history of trans and gender non-conforming people across all cultures. Bo's international career includes stints in London, NYC, and Chicago, where they have worked with companies such as Goodman Theater, National Theatre London, Signature Theatre, Dixon Place, NAMT, AMTP, Theatre167, Heartbeat Opera, Indiana Repertory Theatre, and London Theatre Workshop which they co-founded. **SELECT DIRECTING & CHOREOGRAPHY:** All-trans production of *tick, tick...BOOM!* (Jeff Award Nom - Best Director), *Botticelli in the Fire* by Jordan Tannahill (Jeff Award Nom - Best Director), *Hit the Wall* by Ike Holter, *Men on Boats* by Jaclyn Backhaus, *Love & Information* by Caryl Churchill, *Curious Incident...* by Simon Stephens, and Associate Director for the London Premiere of *bare: the rock musical*. Bo started their career as a musical theatre performer, most notably appearing in the London Revival of Sondheim's *Assassins*.
www.bofrazier.com

Studio Bent SCENIC DESIGNERS

Studio Bent unites designers Anton Volovsek and Adam Rigg in a collaboration devoted to bold, conceptually driven design. Combined and independent awards: Tony nomination, Lucille Lortel, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, three times Henry Hewes Design Award. Recent and upcoming credits include *The Whoopi Monologues* (LCT), *Bowl EP* (Vineyard Theatre), *The Unknown* (Studio Seaview), *El Niño* and *Lincoln in the Bardo* (Metropolitan Opera) and *Nuit Sans Aube* (Paris Opera Comique/Berlin Staatsoper).
www.studiobentstudio.com

Orla Long

COSTUME DESIGNER

Hailing from Ireland and based in New York City, curious and compassionate storytelling is at the heart of Orla's practice. She was nominated for a Henry Hewes Design Award (*Philadelphia, Here I Come!*, Irish Repertory Theatre) and a Lucille Lortel award for Outstanding Costume Design (*Endgame*, Irish Repertory Theatre). Orla is a proud member of the United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829 and an adjunct professor at NYU Tisch's Undergraduate Drama Program. She holds an MFA in Design from Tisch NYU and a BA in Drama & French Studies from Trinity College Dublin.

CREDITS: *trinity*, *John Wilkes Booth: One Night Only!* (Baltimore Center Stage) *The Loved Ones*, *Ulster American*, *IRISHTOWN*, *Beckett Briefs*, *The Beacon*, *Philadelphia, Here I Come!*, *Endgame*, *The Butcher Boy*, *Made by God* (Irish Repertory Theatre, NY), *Steppe* (Rattlestick Theater), *Beauty and the Beast* (Mill Theatre, Dublin), *Kiss Kiss Slap Slap* (Dublin Fringe Festival), *Cora, Leah & I* (The New Theatre, Dublin), *Bert* (Scene & Heard Festival, Dublin), *The Last Five Years* (Project Arts Centre, Dublin) www.orldalong.com

Shannon Clarke

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Shannon is a New York-based lighting designer. Design credits include *Oh Happy Day!* (The Public Theatre); *The Jonathan Larson Project* (The Orpheum); *The Magnificent Seven* (Theatre Row); *Notes for Now* (Prospect Theatre Company); *Broadway Holiday Spectacular* (Transcendence Theatre Company); *The Ballroom*, *Almost Ritual*, and *Any/Which/Way* (Co•Lab Dance). Associate design credits include *Ragtime*, Jeff Ross: *Take a Banana for the Ride*, *Purlie*

Victorious, Ain't No Mo', Chicken & Biscuits (Broadway). www.shannon-clarke.com
IG: @sclarke.design

Taylor J. Williams
SOUND DESIGNER

Taylor J. Williams is thrilled to be returning to BCS after *(pray)*, *Holes*, *trinity*, and *John Wilkes Booth: One Night Only!*. Other projects include *Ain't No Mo'* (2023 Tony Award-nomination for co-sound design with Jonathan Deans), *Oh Happy Day!* (Public Theater, BCS), *Duke & Roya* (Lortel Theatre), *A Driving Beat* (Flint Rep), *MOZART L'Opéra Rock* (Chinese Tour, co-design with Joshua Millican), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Flint Rep). Composition or arrangement credits include *O Menino* by Daniel J. Watts, *Chriskirkpatrickmas* (Edinburgh Fringe and London's Seven Dials Theatre), *BazDazzled: Barney's Holiday Windows* (Baz Luhrmann), *At Home with Rhinestone Gorilla*, and *Pigeon Food* (web series). He's created unique sounds and performance solutions for *Moulin Rouge*, *King Kong*, *Beetlejuice*, *Be More Chill*, *Prince of Egypt*, and *Lempicka* among others and has had the fortune of working with Lin-Manuel Miranda, Heather Headley, Lebo M., Pentatonix, Gloria Estefan, Sara Bareilles, Sam Smith, Coheed & Cambria, and The Who. www.taylorjwilliams.com

Kaja Dunn
INTIMACY DIRECTOR

Kaja (SDC/SAG-AFTRA) is an intimacy creative, director, activist and educator. Intimacy work includes: Broadway: *A Strange Loop* (Assoc. Intimacy Director). Television and Film: *Ricky* (Sundance Award Winner), *Talbot Pines*, *The Best Man*, *Final Chapters*, *Harlem*, *Mayor of Kingstown*, *The Equalizer*. Two River Theatre: *Wine In The Wilderness*; Folger Theatre: *The Winter's Tale*, *Our Verse In Time To Come*, *Metamorphoses*, *The Reading Room*; Arena Stage: *CRAZYSEXYCOOL*, *American Prophet*; Denver Center for the Arts: *Choir Boy*, *5th Ave*; ACT Theatre (Seattle): *Choir Boy*; St. Louis Rep.: *Private Lives*, *Confederates*; Penumbra Theatre: *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *Sugar In Our Wounds*; Awards: Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival National Award, Region II Award for Innovative Teaching, Playwrights Project Excellence in Arts Education; Publications: *Intimacy Coordinator's Guidebook*, *Applied Theatre and Racial Justice*, *Arden Contemporary Shakespeare*, *Intimacy*

Direction For Theatre, *Theatre Symposium*, *American Theatre Magazine*, *HowlRound*, *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training* (UK). Resident Intimacy and Cultural Consultant for Folger Theatre, and associate professor at Carnegie Mellon School of Drama. Her favorite role is mom to Ian, Zeke and Auggie. @kajadunn

Larry Peterson
HAIR & WIG DESIGNER

Larry Peterson (he/him) studied theatrical hair and makeup at Howard University. Larry has a passion for the arts and he has over 15 years of experience in makeup artistry, hair/wig design, and costuming. He has partnered with Screaming Queens Productions LLC, BlackRock Center for the Arts, and other performance venues as a performer and hair/makeup designer. Larry has worked as the Wig Designer in the productions of *Kinky Boots*, *Lend Me a Soprano*, and *Beautiful* at Olney Theatre Center; *Cinderella*, *Akeelah and the Bee*, *John Wilkes Booth: One Night Only!*, *The Peculiar Patriot*, *trinity*, *Holes*, and *(pray)* at Baltimore Center Stage; and *The World Goes Round* at Everyman Theatre. Larry is excited to bring his wide array of experience and creative skills back to Baltimore Center Stage for *Bocking*. www.Gastonblue.com

Becca Janney
ASSISTANT COSTUME DESIGNER

Professional design credits include: *Next to Normal* (Barrington Stage Company), *Little Women the Musical* (Shenandoah Summer Musical Theatre), *Call Me By Any Other Name* (The Voxel), *Botiquin de Boleros*, *Momia en el Closet* (Gala Theatre), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Chesapeake Shakespeare Company), *Cinderella*, *A Salsa Fairytale* (Imagination Stage), *Everything is Wonderful* (WaterTower Theatre), and *Ada and the Engine* (Stage West Theatre). Educational design credits include: *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, *Stupid Fucking Bird* (UMBC), *Damn Things Will Kill Ya* (American University), *Don Giovanni* (Maryland Opera Studio), *A Bicycle Country*, *Fefu and her Friends* (University of Maryland), and *Rhinoceros*, *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Baylor Theatre). Becca currently teaches costume design and technology at UMBC and got their MFA from UMD. beccajanney.com

BIOGRAPHIES

Elianna Kruskal

ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER

Elianna (they/he) is a queer, Jewish, lighting designer and assistant designer based in Brooklyn. They are so excited to be working on Bocking as a part of this incredible team! Recent credits include: *Ailey II* (Lighting and Production Assistant), *Building the Wall* (Urban Stages, Lighting Designer), *100 Yor Artef* (Target Margin Theatre, Lighting Designer), *You Were Wild Once* (Ballet Hispánico 2, Lighting Designer). BFA in Theatre Design and Production/BA in Social Theory and Practice from the University of Michigan. www.EliannaKruskal.com

Jeffrey Salerno

ASSOCIATE SOUND DESIGNER

Jeffrey Salerno (he/him) Most recently designed *Once* at Capital Repertory Theater and co-designed *The Ford/Hill Project* with Waterwell Theater for the Under The Radar Festival at La MaMa Experimental Theater. Assistant/Associate credits *trinity* (Baltimore Center Stage); *The Disappear* (Minetta Lane Theater/Audible); *Oh Happy Day!* (The Public Theater); *All Nighter and Space Dogs* (MCC); *Godspell 2020* (Berkshire Theater Group); *White Christmas*, and *The Little Mermaid* (Papermill Playhouse) For more information, visit [@SalernoSoundDesign](http://www.jeffreysalerno.com) on Instagram.

Rachel Denise April*

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

Rachel (They/Them) is a Guyanese-American Stage Manager from Brooklyn, currently residing in Newark. They studied Theatrical Design and Stage Management at the City College of New York. Select Credits include: *The Drowsy Chaperone* in Concert (Carnegie Hall), *Indra's Net* (Park Avenue Armory), *Jordans* (Public Theater), *Bernarda's Daughters* (The New Group), *Evanston Salt Costs Climbing* (The New Group), *soft* (MCC) *Chicken and Biscuits* (Queens Theatre), *The Baby Monitor* (Different Translation), *Retreat Workshop* (National Black Theatre), *The Big Green Theater Festival* (SuperHero Playhouse) *The Hole* (Zhailon Levingston), *Neptune* (Timothy DuWhite), *Anais Nin Goes to Hell* (MTWorks), and *The Fire This Time Festival 2015* (The Kraine Theater). They have worked on projects throughout the United States and internationally

Makayla Beckles*

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Regional: (*pray*), *Santa Claus is Comin' A Motown Christmas Revue*, *Akeelah and the Bee*, *The Hot Wing King*, *Pride & Prejudice*, Young Playwrights Festival (Baltimore Center Stage); Olney Outdoors, *The Most Wonderful Time of the Year*, (Olney). Education/Training: BFA in Acting, University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

Shaquan Pearson

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Shaquan Pearson is a multi-hyphenate artist based in Baltimore, MD. He earned his BFA from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and AA from Montgomery College. His credits include: *Macbeth*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Romeo & Juliet* (Chesapeake Shakespeare Company); *The Scottsboro Boys* (ArtsCentric); and *Frankenstein* (The Strand Theater Company). Shaquan most recently appeared in the Baltimore Center Stage's 2026 410Fest, the 40th Anniversary of Young Playwright's Festival, and *Call Me By Any Other Name...Just As Sweet* by Nigel Semaj at The Voxel.

Allyn Gardner

DRESSER

Allyn Gardner (they/them) is a freelance costume stitcher and dresser whose expertise includes millinery and soft-goods prop work. A native New Yorker, Allyn made the transition from hobby sewist to professional craftsperson working in NYC's Fashion District. They moved to Maryland in 2025 and have happily made their way back home to the world of theatre, bringing their skills to local venues such as Round House Theatre (*Sally & Tom* - stitching), Olney Theatre Center (*Little Miss Perfect* - wardrobe; *Hello, Dolly!* - millinery), Everyman Theatre (*Dawn, The Piano Lesson* - wardrobe), and Signature Theatre (*Fiddler on the Roof*, *Play On!* - stitching and props). Outside of work, they enjoy playing video games (especially with friends!), working on their personal costume and craft projects, and hanging out at any Ren Faire that's open.

Kim Parson

PROGRAMMER

Kim is the resident Lead Electrician here at BCS. She recently programmed for Everyman Theatre's season closer *Emma* (LD Juan

Juarez/ALD Malaak McDonald). Through freelance she continues to explore her love of lighting design and theatrical electrician work at The Voxel (T4T4T 24' & 25'), Olney Outdoors (Olney Theatre Center), and her alma mater McDaniel College (9 to 5: *The Musical*). She would like to give a huge shout out to her lighting team for all the amazing work they do!

Arden Tierney

LIGHT BOARD OPERATOR

Arden just joined the BCS team this season! She got her BA at The Lir Academy of Dramatic Arts at Trinity College Dublin in 2024. While freelancing in Dublin she worked as a Venue Technician/Busker at Vicar Street (2025), worked as Head LX for OFFSPRING at Smock Alley and Firkin Crane which won 3 awards in the Dublin Fringe Festival (2025), and worked as a Teacher/Technician for Sofft Productions/NBTU Productions at Rua Red teaching students the basics of event lighting (2025).

Simon Briggs

AUDIO ENGINEER

BCS: *trinity*. Simon is an audio-visual artist born and based in Baltimore, Maryland. Simon has a B.F.A. in sound art & technology from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and works as the sound/video engineer for Baltimore Center Stage. Previous work includes Sound Consultant and Looping Engineer for *Mexodus* (Mosaic Theatre, Berklee Repertory Theatre, Audible's Minetta Lane Theatre), Technical Lead for Slingshot Electronic Music & Arts Festival, Composer for performance artist Mitsu Salmon, video design for Black Rave Culture.

Avon Haughton

DRAMATURG

Avon Haughton is a dramaturg, film/ television writer, and steward of Baltimore Center Stage's new works program. He is of the belief that narrative is integral to the function and preservation of community. Born and raised in Baltimore, Avon grew up attending shows at Baltimore Center Stage and is now thrilled to help shape the stories that are developed and produced here at BCS. Keep an eye out for Lab410, Baltimore Center Stage's playwright's residency that focuses on the works of writers in and of Baltimore.

Destiny Lilly, CSA

CASTING

Destiny Lilly, CSA is a four-time Emmy nominee for her casting work on "Only Murders In

The Building." Her film credits include the Oscar-nominated musical feature film *The Color Purple*. Broadway: *A Strange Loop*, *Purlie Victorious*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Clyde's*, *Every Brilliant Thing* (replacements) Broadway replacements & National tour: *To Kill A Mockingbird*. Off-Broadway: MCC Theater, Atlantic Theater Company, The Shed, New York Theater Workshop, Colt Coeur, WP Theater, Classic Stage Company, Ars Nova, The New Group, PAC NYC, Second Stage, Lincoln Center Theater, The Vineyard, National Black Theatre, City Center: Encores!. Regional: New York Stage & Film, Berkeley Rep, Arena Stage, Baltimore Center Stage, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Chautauqua Theatre Center, Westport Country Playhouse, the MUNY, McCarter Theatre, Center Theatre Group, American Conservatory Theater. Destiny received the 2026 Trailblazer Award from Black Women on Broadway, and she currently serves as the President of Casting Society (CSA).

Bridgette C. Burton

PRODUCER

Bridgette C. Burton is a producer at Baltimore Center Stage and founder and creative director of Oh to Dream. BCS Associate Line Producer credits: *Swindlers*, *Fires in the Mirror*, *Folks at Home*, *Dream House*, *Ain't No Mo'*, *Mexodus*, and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. BCS Producer Credits: *Florence* (BCS Bridge Series), *The Locally Grown Festival*, *Pride & Prejudice*, *Akeelah and the Bee*, *Santa Claus is Comin' A Motown Christmas Revue*, *trinity* and (*pray*). For this season, she will serve as Producer for *Bocking*, *Mama, I'm a Big Girl Now*, *Liberation*, *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!* *The Musical!*; a special engagement with Broadway legend Betty Buckley; and will be serving on the producing team for *XTRAVAGANZA*. Through Oh to Dream, she produced Baltimore's chapter of the Inheritance Theater Project the production of *Charm Pass*, an immersive citywide production engaging hundreds of participants and dozens of community partners. With more than a decade of national arts leadership experience, Bridgette is committed to using theater to build connection, belonging, and civic impact.

Lena Waithe

PRODUCER

Lena Waithe is an Emmy-winning writer, producer, actor, and founder of Hillman Grad.

BIOGRAPHIES

Known for “Master of None,” “The Chi,” and *Queen & Slim*, Waithe’s produtorial credits include the Emmy-nominated documentary *Being Mary Tyler Moore*, the 2023 Sundance Films *A Thousand and One* and *Kokomo City*, as well the Tony-nominated play, *Ain’t No Mo’*. In November 2024, Waithe launched her podcast series, *Legacy Talk*, and most recently made her playwright and stage debut with *trinity* at Baltimore Center Stage.

THE NEW GROUP

Founded in 1995, The New Group is an award-winning, artist-driven company with a commitment to developing and producing powerful, contemporary theater. Now based at their new artistic home at The Theater at St. Clement’s, the constantly evolving company strives to maintain an ensemble approach to all our work and an articulated style of emotional immediacy in our acting and productions. In this way, the company seeks a theater that is adventurous, stimulating, and most importantly, “now” – a true forum for our present culture. The New Group has received over 200 awards and nominations for excellence, including the Tony® Award for

Best Musical for *Avenue Q*, multiple Lortel Awards, two special citation Obie Awards, and a Drama Desk Special Award “for presenting contemporary new voices,” and for “uncompromisingly raw and powerful productions.” The organization’s New Group/ New Works play and musical development program champions original works by emerging and established authors. The New Group also operates a variety of theater education programs including a summer conservatory for teens, college access programs, and a college-level BFA Acting program in collaboration with LIU-Brooklyn.

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



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The Director and/or Choreographer is a member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor union.

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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 Artistic Director Stevie Walker-Webb and Producing Director Ken-Matt Martin. 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 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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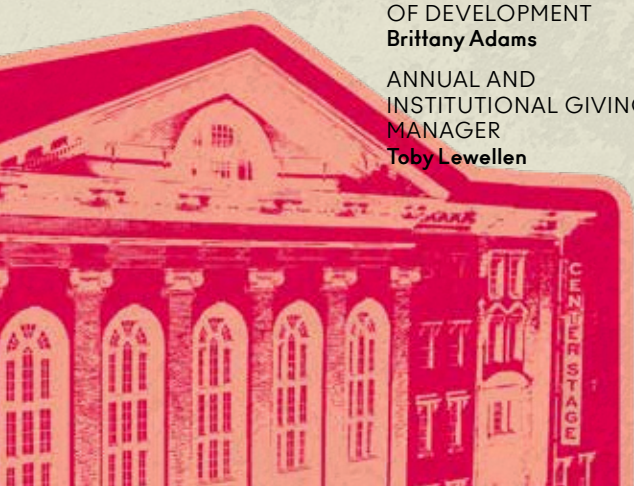
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