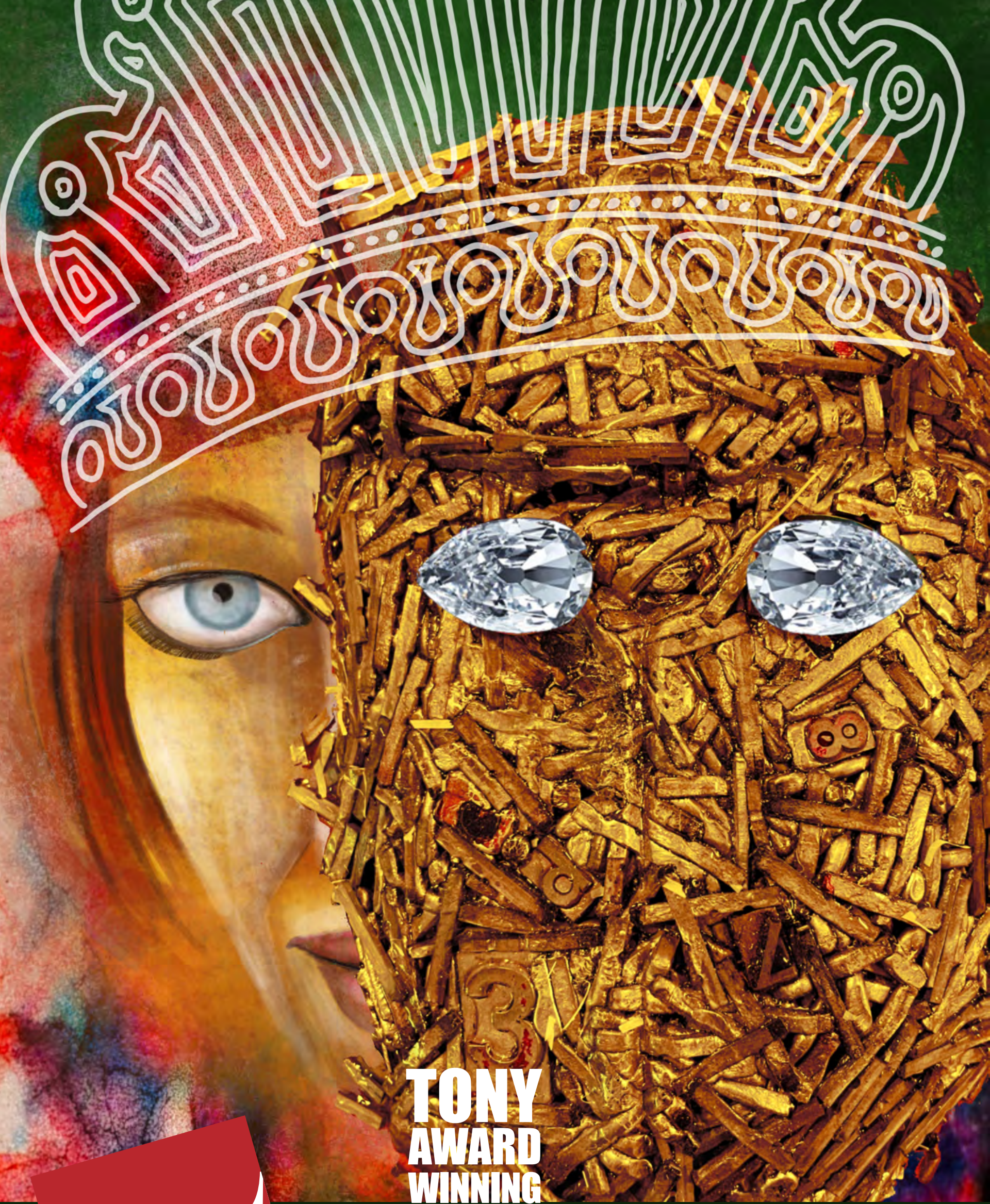


By James Goldman
Directed by
Ron OJ Parson

THE ELIOT IN WINTER



TONY
AWARD
WINNING

COURT THEATRE



THE UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO

Arts

WELCOME

Dear Court Theatre Family,

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to the first production of the 2023/24 season, James Goldman's *The Lion in Winter*, directed by Ron OJ Parson.

In this production, we meet a family that is tearing itself apart at the seams. Wracked by brutal infighting, political machinations, and deception, each character is dead set on protecting their own interests at any cost. Both this family and the English monarchy are on the precipice of great change and—in turn—fathers, mothers, children, and lovers respond in the most manipulative and (luckily for us) humorous ways.

That humor is of particular interest to Resident Artist and Director Ron OJ Parson. Ron is an exceptionally skilled director—that's no secret. His distinct style, his love of language, and his ability to lead actors to unexpected choices make him a perfect fit for this tale. He sees the humor in it, he sees the simultaneous joy and frustration of family dynamics, and he appreciates the intrigue surrounding a major power struggle. In our own time of great upheaval and very real political maneuverings, the dark comedy of *The Lion in Winter* is a welcome salve and a wonderful start to the 2023/24 season.

A new season is an ideal time to try new things. With that in mind, we'd like to acknowledge a new facet of the Court experience: digital show programs. Switching from print to digital programs allows us to include more information, reduce our environmental impact, and redirect funds—quite literally—from the page to the stage.

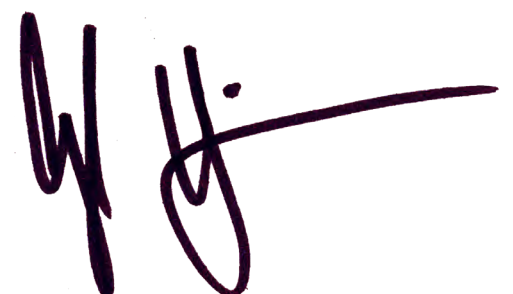
And so, we find ourselves watching a play about change while we're in the midst of change ourselves. One of the many beautiful things about *The Lion in Winter* is its reminder that growing pains aren't exclusively painful. They are also rife with potential.

We look forward to the potential this 69th season holds. Thank you for joining us and thank you for continuing to support live theatre.

With gratitude,



Charles Newell
Marilyn F. Vitale Artistic Director



Angel Ysaguirre
Executive Director

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COURT THEATRE

CHARLES NEWELL
Marilyn F. Vitale
Artistic Director

ANGEL YSAGUIRRE
Executive Director

NOVEMBER 3 - DECEMBER 3, 2023

THE LION IN WINTER

BY
JAMES GOLDMAN

DIRECTED BY
**RESIDENT ARTIST
RON OJ PARSON**

Scenic Design by Linda Buchanan U.S.A.

Costume Design by Christine Pascual U.S.A.

Lighting Design by Jared Gooding U.S.A.

Sound Design/Composition by Christopher Kriz U.S.A.

Nick Sandys, Violence and Intimacy Consultant

Martine Kei Green-Rogers, Production Dramaturg

Casting by Becca McCracken C.S.A.

Jaclynn Joslin,* Production Stage Manager

Katrina Herrmann,* Assistant Stage Manager

Setting: Christmas 1183, King Henry II's castle in Chinon, France.

There will be a 15-minute intermission.

Please note: This production contains the use of water-based haze; actors will be using the aisles.

Sponsored by



Ron OJ Parson's residency
is made possible by



The Lion in Winter is presented in arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com.

Designers identified by U.S.A. are members of United Scenic Artists, I.A.T.S.E. Local USA829, AFL-CIO,CLC.

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

Cover art by Daniel Minter.

Court Theatre operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States. Court Theatre is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the American Theatre, the League of Resident Theatres, the Illinois Humanities Council, and the League of Chicago Theatres.

This project is partially supported by a CityArts Grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events. Court Theatre acknowledges support from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.



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CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Henry II, King of England.....	John Hoogenakker*
Alais Capet, a French princess.....	Netta Walker
John, the youngest son	Kenneth La’Ron Hamilton**
Geoffrey, the middle son.....	Brandon Miller*
Richard Lionheart, the oldest son.....	Shane Kenyon*
Eleanor of Aquitaine, Queen of England ...	Rebecca Spence*
Philip Capet, King of France.....	Anthony Baldasare

Understudies:

Danny Breslin (Richard Lionheart, Philip Capet)

David Dowd (John, Geoffrey)

Michael McCracken (Henry II)

Marlene Slaughter (Alais Capet)

Genevieve Thiers (Eleanor of Aquitaine)

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

**Fight Captain

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PRODUCTION CREW

Assistant Director	Geno Walker
Associate Casting Director	Celeste M. Cooper
Assistant Scenic Designer	Kristen Martino
Scenic Artists	Scott Gerwitz U.S.A, Julie Ruscitti U.S.A.
Assistant Costume Designer	Ophena De La Rosa
Associate Wig Designer	Rueben D. Echoles
Cutter/Draper	Eric Guy
Stitchers.....	Jess Donaldson, Jody Schmidt
Costume Shop Assistant	Jessica Donaldson
Wardrobe Technician	Sebastian Van Horn
Properties Artisan	Persephone Lawrence
Associate Lighting Designer	Brenden Marble
Assistant Lighting Supervisor	Emily Brown
Electricians	Aljoya Hall, Sibyl Ashcraft-Holt, Emily Brown, Ann Huerta, Kenneth Martin, Nell Morrissey, Ish Peterson, Travis Triplett
Assistant Sound Designer	Daniel Etti-Williams
Audio Engineer	Ian C. Weber
Floor Manager	Lauren Peters

Scenic Artists identified by U.S.A. are members of United Scenic Artists, I.A.T.S.E. Local USA829, AFL-CIO,CLC.

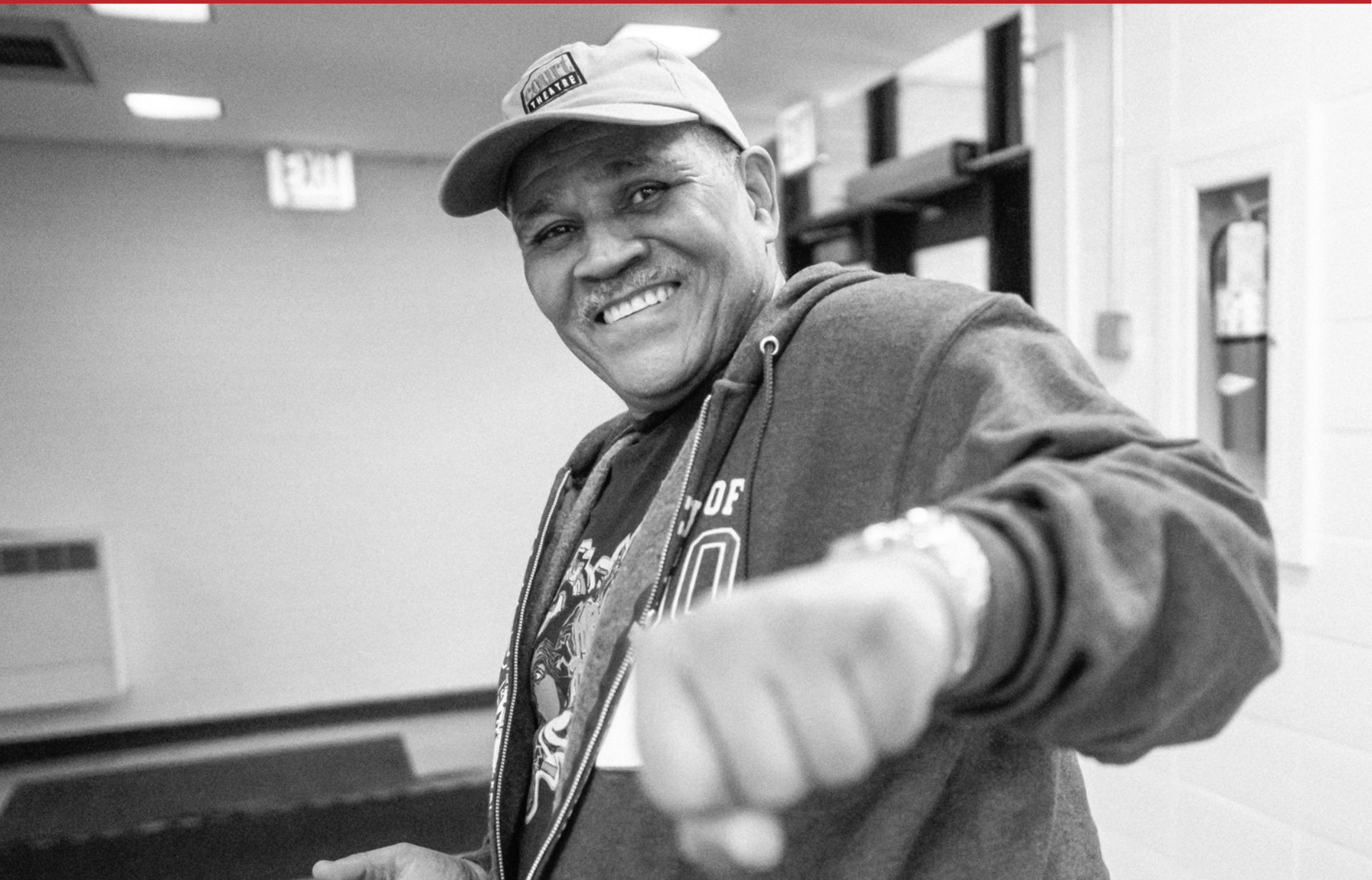
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[cel·e·brate]: acknowledge
a happy day or event with
a social gathering

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE



Many people have asked me, *Why The Lion in Winter? Why now?* For me, the real question is: *Why **not** now?* As I celebrate 18 years as Resident Artist at Court, I wanted to take a play from my own past as an actor and bring it to now, when it is probably more relevant than I ever could have imagined. After all, Court is a classic theatre and, for me, *Lion* is one of those classics that we all remember.

I remember a quote from a movie about riding a rollercoaster and the thrill of moving forward on a track, versus riding a ferris wheel that just goes around and around. I'd rather ride a rollercoaster. I hope to move this story forward, and I hope this production opens some doors and windows into our world today.

Thanks to Angel and Court Theatre, with a special thanks to Charlie, and thanks to all of you for going on this ride with me. I appreciate you all.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron OJ Parson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ron OJ Parson
Director and Resident Artist

Photo of Ron OJ Parson (Joe Mazza).

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IN CONVERSATION

RON OJ PARSON, REBECCA SPENCE,
AND JOHN HOOGENAKKER



Director Ron Oj Parson discusses The Lion in Winter with Court's King Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine—John Hoogenakker and Rebecca Spence, respectively. Touching on major themes of power, legacy, relevance, and love, their conversation illuminates the staying power of this script and how there is a little Plantagenet in all of us.

JOHN: I was thinking about this line from the play, “We are the world in small.” Essentially, a nation is a human thing and rulers, especially autocrats, have the ability to make peace or make war. Now, this play is about the House of Plantagenet—so, effectively, a family—which means that they’re dealing with interpersonal relationships, relationships on a smaller scale. But, because of who this family is, the consequences of that family’s decisions could be very far-reaching.

REBECCA: Exactly, and there are so many different forms of power in each scene informing those decisions. There are the people that think that their power has been ordained by God, there are people that have never had power that are willing to fight to get it. The other thing to consider is the different ways characters use their power: some rely on their age, some rely on beauty, strategy, brawn, what have you. That’s the really delicate balance of each of these scenes: *What is each character using to their benefit to gain advantage?*

RON: That’s what you get for hiring really smart actors—those answers are great! Everyone’s told me about the television show *Succession*. I didn’t watch it *[laughs]*, but people said that family goes through the same thing. I can’t imagine what’s going on behind the scenes with some of these major power brokers that are in politics today—we get to see the outside, but who knows what’s going on behind those closed doors! We’re making the audience a fly on the wall to see how a family operates in the midst of a power struggle.

JOHN: An interesting fact I’d like to add: *The Lion in Winter* came out before *Succession*!

RON: Yes, it came out way before! In fact, we’ve talked about how—when this came out in the 60s—this play was groundbreaking.

JOHN: In the play, there’s an intimate relationship between two men and that was groundbreaking to see on stage at that time. We also have these characters screaming and yelling at each other, threatening to kill one another, and this is just after the era of *Leave It to Beaver* and *Father Knows Best*! This play might seem tame in comparison to where we are in this moment, but at the time, these sorts of interactions just weren’t portrayed on stage.

RON: Even though people are yelling and screaming at each other, as John said, there is actually a lot of love here! I try to stress the love in any production, and this production is no different.

To truly love someone is to be vulnerable, right? That adds something to the mix of power, and succession, and relevance.

REBECCA: Which speaks to how love and power are really tricky bedfellows. To truly love someone is to be vulnerable, right? That adds something to the mix of power, and succession, and relevance. That love creates a soft spot where you can really get hurt. These vulnerabilities become weapons, so love is yet another tool in that power equation.

RON: It’s a thin line between love and hate. You can love somebody to death, so to speak, and they can still test you, so it’s that conflict that creates humor. You have to have humor in this production—even if it’s dark, or ironic—to deal with the pressure and the angst of everything else that’s going on.

REBECCA: As artists, it’s so much fun to play, too! The human condition is to defend yourself by any means possible, but we’ve been conditioned to curb all of those immediate thoughts and impulses. This kind of production allows us, as artists, to say things that we’ve been taught to suppress and we get to say them without actual consequence. It’s delightful when you’re given the opportunity to do it onstage dramatically in a really sarcastic, or intellectual, or pithy way, because it’s another form of release.

JOHN: That’s part of what people get out of a play like this: they get to see aspects of their psyche that—thankfully—lie dormant. They’re reminded, *Oh, that’s why I don’t make that choice every day.* This is a very current play. It’s written with a lot of fun anachronisms that give you license to play around and build. As a personal goal, I want to make Henry’s journey of raging against the sunset accessible, for it’s a very human place to find oneself: trying to stay relevant, trying to stay alive and in the conversation, and trying to maintain control.

REBECCA: In terms of the role of Eleanor, the two women that played her on film—Katharine Hepburn and Glenn Close—are titans in the industry, remarkable powerhouses, so these are very large shoes to fill *[laughs]*. Even the roles themselves are based on titans in history, so the challenge is to bring honor to the role and put your own humanity into it. Legacy is the handing down of what you know, and then what you can add to it, so the challenge is finding the moments within scenes, moments between characters, that ring true to me, as a woman; as someone who wants to stay relevant; who wants to be considered; to be seen. We all just want to be seen.

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Smart Museum of Art The University of Chicago Sep 21, 2023–Feb 04, 2024

Ruth

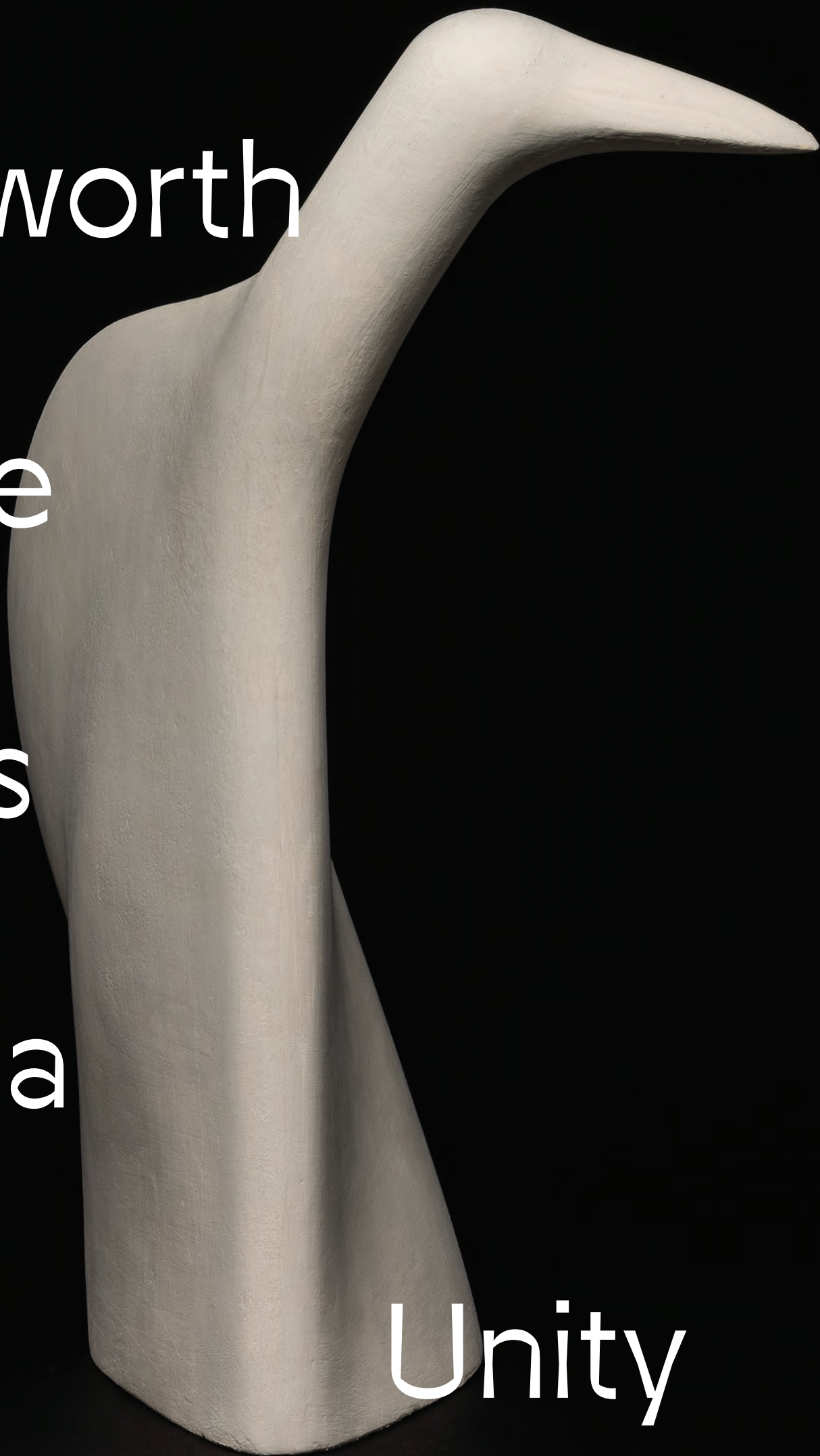
Duckworth

Life

as

a

Unity



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This exhibition is funded by the Terra Foundation for American Art. Major support has been provided by Cboe Global Markets. Ruth Duckworth, *Spirit of Survival (Study)*, 1996, Stoneware. Collection of the Illinois State Museum. Art © Estate of Ruth Duckworth.

A DYNASTY TO REMEMBER

BY MARTINE KEI GREEN-ROGERS, PHD

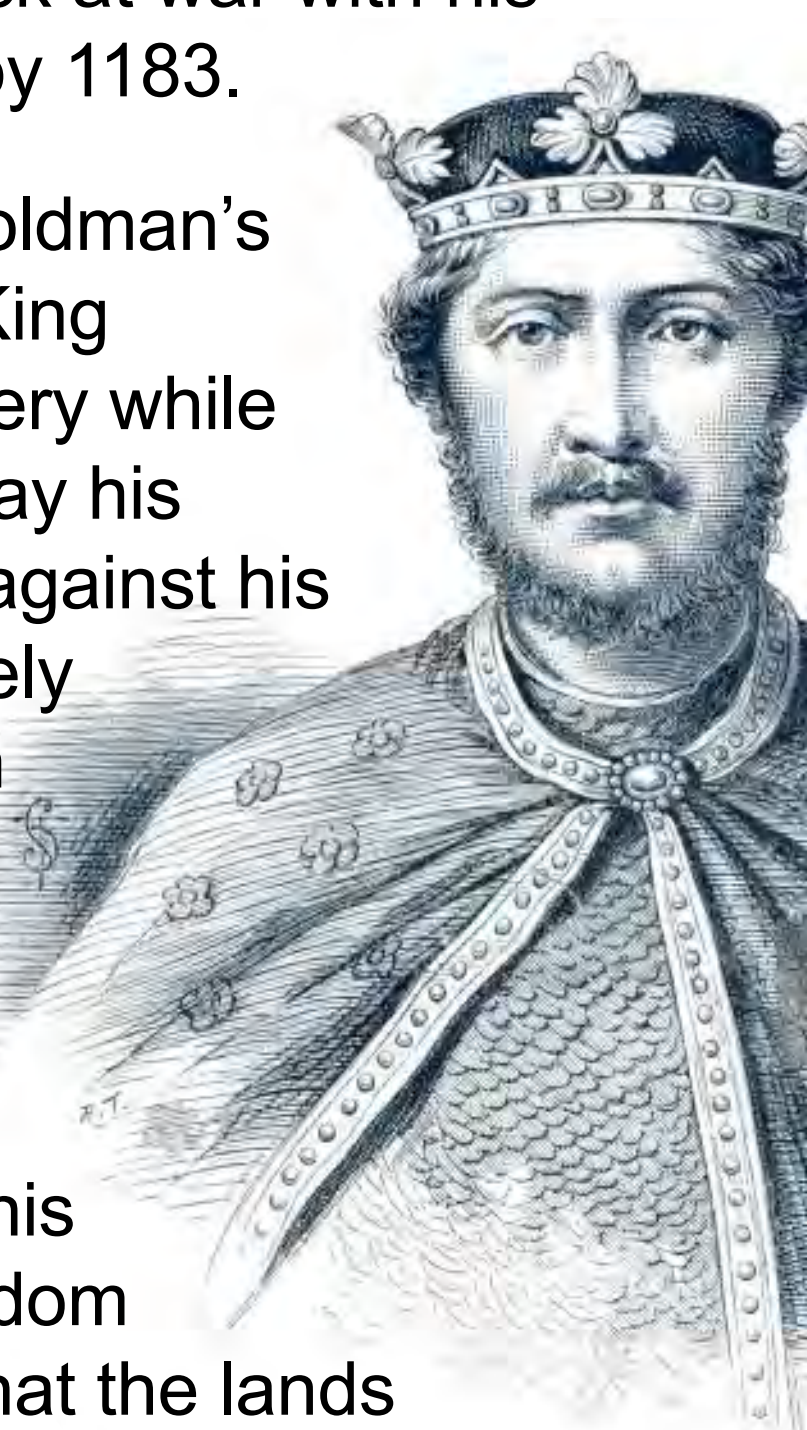


The Lion in Winter is a fictionalized version of how the playwright, James Goldman, imagined the conflicts that created one of the most important English monarchical dynasties—the Plantagenets. The easiest and quickest way to sum up the importance of this line would be to conjure the name of the 2014 best-selling book by Dan Jones that explains their history: *The Plantagenets: The Warrior Kings and Queens Who Made England*.

Although this play is fictional, most of the events surrounding the events are historical. To separate the fact from the fiction, there was no Christmas court in Chinon in 1183. In addition, there are many more mistresses and children attached to Henry II than seen or mentioned in this play. Despite those small things, the facts that become the historical backdrop of the play are just as interesting as the fiction. For example, just ten years prior to the events found in this play, was a revolt—the Revolt of 1173—that changed the family dynamics and led to the fruitful historical playground Goldman used to create this story.

The Revolt of 1173 was a rebellion against King Henry II of England by his sons Henry the Young King (King Henry II's eldest legitimate son); Richard, Duke of Aquitaine; Geoffrey, Duke of Brittany; and his wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine. The revolt began because of King Henry II's decision to bequeath three castles, which were part of Henry the Young King's inheritance, to his youngest son, John, as part of the agreement for John's marriage. The brothers banded together, along with their mother, in an attempt to keep the Young King's inheritance intact. The revolt went on for 18 months, caused massive amounts of damage, and ultimately failed. The lasting legacy of this revolt was the "imprisonment" of Henry II's wife, Eleanor, and the need for reconciliation between the three sons and Henry II. This reconciliation did occur. However, it was short-lived and King Henry II was back at war with his father and one of his brothers by 1183.

By Christmas of 1183, when Goldman's play begins, Henry the Young King has died; he contracted dysentery while pillaging local monasteries to pay his mercenaries for the campaign against his father. The Young King's untimely death and the lack of resolution (since Henry II thought that the aforementioned reconciliation was a trick) left a void that now exists in the family. The eldest legitimate son is no longer on this earthly plane to inherit the kingdom and Henry II is not convinced that the lands must go to Richard, his second eldest legitimate son. In the end, this play gives a fictionalized account to the historical eventuality that we know—that Richard the Lionheart will succeed this father.



This play is a small snippet of a longer historical legacy: the Magna Carta was signed under King John (the aforementioned youngest son), and both the War of the Roses (which Shakespeare spent many of his history plays documenting) and the Hundred Years War (which was the defeat of this line) all occurred during the reign of this house. This history has inspired many plays and movies, and will probably continue to do so. We invite you to find your own inspiration here, either in King Henry II's fictional Christmas court or the very real Court Theatre.

Header: 13th-century depiction of Henry II and his legitimate children (Anonymous, *Genealogical roll of the kings of England* (British Library, Royal 14 B VI).
Above right: Richard Lionheart (Unknown, Wood engraving c1880).

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ANNOUNCEMENT FROM CHARLES NEWELL



After a thirty-year tenure at Court Theatre, the professional theatre of the University of Chicago, Charles Newell will transition out of his role as Marilyn F. Vitale Artistic Director in June 2024. Newell will program the 2024/25 season, in which he will direct the premiere of an original work, and he will then assume the role of Senior Artistic Consultant through June 2025. As Senior Artistic Consultant, Newell will bolster fundraising initiatives, foster creative innovation, empower developing leaders, and cultivate relationships across the University.

Statement from Charlie

“Court Theatre and the University of Chicago have been my artistic home, a sanctuary of creativity, and a well of inspiration for more than three decades. I will be forever grateful to Founding Artistic Director Nicholas Rudall for generously welcoming me to Court in 1993 and providing me with what would be the opportunity of a lifetime.

Court has irrevocably changed me, while affirming my core belief in collaboration. The unwavering commitment of the staff, the boundless creativity of the artists, the intellectual passion of University scholars, and the remarkable relationship with our audiences have confirmed my faith in theatre’s power to confront humanity and connect us as people.

I have put considerable thought into this transition and its timing. There is almost never an ideal moment for a change like this. However, as we build back from the pandemic, we find ourselves at a unique inflection point. We are emerging stronger and more resilient with the addition of talented new staff members, the establishment of a new Engagement division, and a closer relationship to Chicago’s South Side. It has been my life’s honor to lead Court Theatre to this point and I eagerly anticipate welcoming a new Artistic Director who will lead us into the future.

In the meantime—much like Court—I, too, am at an inflection point. I am thrilled to be planning Court’s 2024/25 season with my colleagues, and I look forward to supporting the theatre and the University of Chicago as Senior Artistic Consultant. Additionally, I’ll be able to pursue artistic projects that were previously impossible, given my steadfast devotion to Court. I look forward to new opportunities as I look back on the past thirty years with deep gratitude.

Thank you, Court Theatre, for being my home to explore, create, and contribute for most of my career. Thank you to our audiences for your support throughout this journey. Thank you to the South Side community; thank you to the Board, our donors, and our partners; thank you to the vibrant Chicago theatre community; and thank you to the University of Chicago.

I have no doubt that Court will continue to flourish and impact the lives of many, just as it has done for me.”

Please join us in celebrating Charlie, his illustrious career, and all that he has done for Court Theatre and the Chicago theatre community at large. He has left an indelible impact on this institution, and we cannot wait to see what the future has in store for such an accomplished artist, distinguished leader, and cherished friend.

Read more about Charlie’s 30 years at Court here >>

Photo of Charles Newell (Joe Mazza).

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COURT THEATRE

2023/24 SEASON

Centering timeless themes in strikingly rich interpretations, the 2023/24 Season finds the fresh in the familiar with a carefully curated blend of beloved texts and new voices.

We invite you to join us.

ANTIGONE

By Sophocles

Translated by Nicholas Rudall

Directed by Gabrielle Randle-Bent

Feb 2 - Feb 25, 2024

Gabrielle Randle-Bent's take on Sophocles's masterwork interrogates our understanding of justice.

Featuring Aerial Williams as Antigone and Timothy Edward Kane as King Creon.

ROSENCRANTZ & GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD

By Tom Stoppard

Directed by Charles Newell

Mar 29 - Apr 21, 2024

Charles Newell's deconstructed interpretation propels Stoppard's story forward, unveiling the emotional in the existential, and urging us to reconsider what we know about *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Hamlet*, and perhaps even Stoppard himself.

STOKELY: THE UNFINISHED REVOLUTION

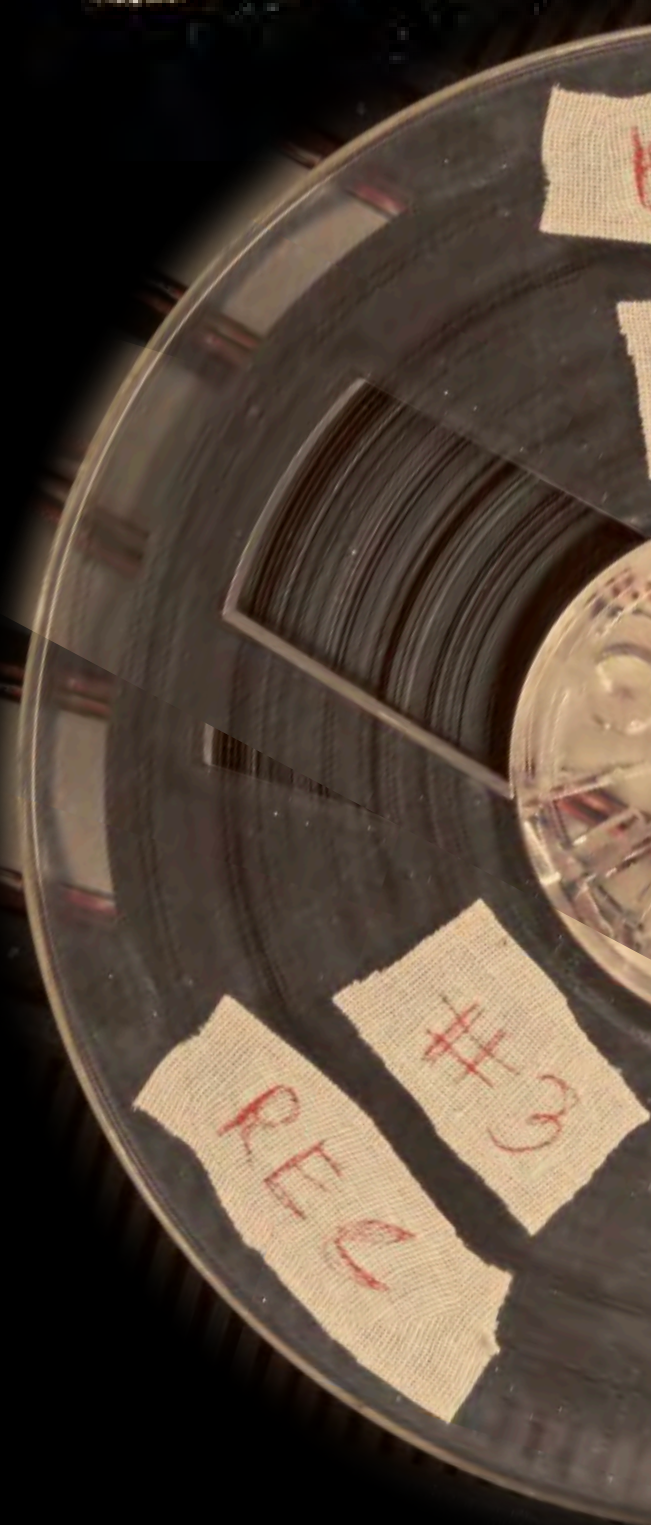
By Nambi E. Kelley

Directed by Tasia A. Jones

May 24 - Jun 16, 2024

Tasia A. Jones makes her Court directorial debut with playwright and Prince Prize winner Nambi E. Kelley's evocative world premiere about civil rights activist Kwame Ture, born Stokely Carmichael.

If you can't choose between productions, consider becoming a Court subscriber. Subscribing saves you up to 44% and guarantees that you'll see the plays you want, when you want. It's the most cost-effective and flexible way to see the season—**subscribe now and save >>**



NO PROGRESS WITHOUT STRUGGLE



*Director of Engagement Kamilah Rashied assesses the role of power in *The Lion in Winter* and our post-pandemic lives, setting the stage for this season's Engagement programming. Learn what Court's Engagement department is dreaming up, why it's relevant, how it connects to the season, and how you can participate.*

Following the distancing period of the pandemic and a national uprising that forced us to reckon with our unjust past and present, we now find ourselves back to a not-so-normal proximity. After several years in isolation, we have a new and unavoidable closeness with who we really are. A closeness that exposed revelations about how our actions impact the well-being of both our neighbors and our nation. Coming together means something different now, even if we're still trying to decipher its meaning.

As we open our season with a play about a dysfunctional family squabbling for power, I can't help but notice the parallels between this plot and the present moment. There is discord everywhere and a palpable feeling of overwhelm as we try to make sense of it all, both on the stage and off. The reality remains: post-pandemic, we did not return to the world we knew before. We did not return to the stage as we knew it, either. What does that mean for Court Theatre at a time when so many theaters, including our own, are in a space of tumultuous change? How do we chart a course forward in the midst of our own seismic succession?

We get to work dreaming. We tap into the radical imagination to discover new possibilities for our future. Frederick Douglass famously said, "If there is no struggle, there is no progress." Wise counsel from one of the most visionary thinkers in American history. This clarion call invites us to roll up our sleeves, despite the uncertainty, to build the world we want and restore the things we believe are worth keeping. I remain encouraged as we at Court Theatre continue to test what our storytelling can be and do in this moment.

As I embark on our first season of Engagement programs in earnest, I do so mindful of these shifting paradigms—in our world, in our industry, and at our very own theater. How we hold, build, and share power is a seminal theme throughout the season and a constant consideration for me personally. I ask myself daily, *How do we include more voices in our creative process? How do we foster the making of meaning, together, with the community?* I think the best way to approach big questions like these is the same way ambitious thinkers always have: through a forum for meaningful dialogue.

In that vein, we'll be launching a few programs this year, beginning with the Agora Conversation series, to connect the ideas on our stage with current civic and social events. The Agora series invites thinkers, creatives, and activists to share bold ideas that shed light on the lived experiences of Chicagoans today.

I hope you will join us at the Agora series—and other upcoming programs—to participate in our collective dreaming.

agora /'a-gə-rə/

1. a gathering place, a marketplace or public square.
2. a popular political assembly, especially in ancient Greece.

FEB
12

Agora Conversation—*Antigone*

"Justice is what love looks like in public." – Cornel West

Systems of oppression configure our daily lives through an omnipresent, inconspicuous architecture. When we pause to interrogate the design of our world, we inevitably find incongruencies between who has power and who does not, who has mobility and who is restricted. The central crisis at the heart of *Antigone's* plot is the heroine's choice to openly perform a defiant act of love, which in turn, challenges the legitimacy of an entire empire.

In this inaugural Agora Conversation, we will be in dialogue with civic thinkers and activists whose advocacy initiates a kind of hypervisibility—a real-world theater of refusal—that centers histories and lived experiences that have been pushed to the margins and suppressed.

This program will take place on **Monday, February 12 at Experimental Station**. Founded in 2002 on the South Side of Chicago, **Experimental Station** provides essential resources that respond to local needs.

More information about this event—and future Engagement programming and events—will be available soon; [sign up for our email newsletter](#), follow our social media channels, and [visit our website](#) for updates. We can't wait to share what we've been working on.

Kamilah Rashied is the Director of Engagement at Court Theatre. Rashied is an arts administrator, producer, educator, and artist with 20 years of experience in cultural production, education, and community outreach. Cultivating a broad range of programs for the public, Rashied has contributed to the development of new and ongoing programs at venerable arts and culture organizations across Chicago.

Photo of Kamilah Rashied by Ollie Photography.

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UP NEXT: ANTIGONE



*Last season, Associate Artistic Director Gabrielle Randle-Bent directed *The Island*, a South African protest play rooted in *Antigone*. This season, she is returning to those roots and directing Sophocles’s masterpiece.*

Antigone’s brothers have murdered each other in a civil war and she is in the depths of mourning. Her victorious brother is posthumously exalted; her treasonous brother is left unburied by order of King Creon, Antigone’s uncle and adversary. Antigone deliberately defies the king’s edict and buries her traitorous brother, igniting a devastating chain of events and imploring citizens of Thebes (and theatergoers alike) to reckon with the true meaning of justice.

*With *Antigone*, Randle-Bent brings Court’s Oedipus Trilogy—Oedipus Rex, The Gospel at Colonus, and *Antigone*—to an exhilarating conclusion. Her interpretation of Founding Artistic Director Nicholas Rudall’s translation not only completes this theatrical odyssey, but renders Sophocles’s classic tale electrifyingly alive.*

*Below is a brief excerpt from a conversation between Randle-Bent and Camille Oswald, Court’s Associate Director of Marketing, in which Randle-Bent shares what excites her and why there is an *Antigone* for every era.*

“First of all, I’m incredibly excited about the language of *Antigone*. You might know that we’re using [Founding Artistic Director] Nicholas Rudall’s translation, but what you may not know is that Nick—a brilliant writer and adapter—was deeply influenced by his grandfather, who was a working-class Welsh poet. Nick’s daughter, Clare, described to me how he recognized the poetry of his grandfather’s Welsh brogue in the lyricism and cadence he heard in Bronzeville. We see that in the translation: the choral odes are pure poetry. This language just lends itself really well to Chicago ears and voices. So the language, of course, is a huge draw, but I’m also deeply moved by the prospect of creating this piece grounded in Black feminist praxis; to explore what it means, for the younger Black women working on this piece, to be surrounded by the powerful Black women icons who will be in this production with them. To dive into that concept of legacy.

Of course, this play is itself about legacy, but it also has a special place in Court’s legacy as an institution. The Oedipus Trilogy has been a years-long undertaking building on Nick’s passion, Charlie’s stewardship, my own discovery, and the work of generations of talented artists, designers, crew, and Court Theatre staff. Inevitably, by virtue of the sheer magnitude of the investment in ancient Greek narrative, we’re left with a story that’s incredibly rich and powerfully fertile. We’ve all been able to contribute and build out the world of this trilogy, but each play is grounded in its own artistic vision in support of that theatrical whole.

For me, the thing that’s so interesting about *Antigone*, the thing that people are most interested in, isn’t the legacy of the play. It’s how this play comes back over, and over, and over again and manifests in different ways. People are interested in the enduring legacy of this story, and why it keeps coming back, and *when* it keeps coming back. We rarely choose *Antigone*—it chooses its moment—so the question then becomes, *What is it about now that means that we need Antigone?* The play just... shows up! *[laughs]* Even now, even this production—even though we chose to produce it four years ago—feels really right for right now.”

Antigone has chosen this moment, and we hope you will too. We invite you to join us.

Antigone is on stage from February 2–25, 2024 and [tickets](#) are available now. Subscriptions including this production are also available and can be purchased [online](#) or by calling the Box Office at (773) 753-4472.

Photo of Aerial Williams as Antigone in The Gospel at Colonus (Michael Brosilow).

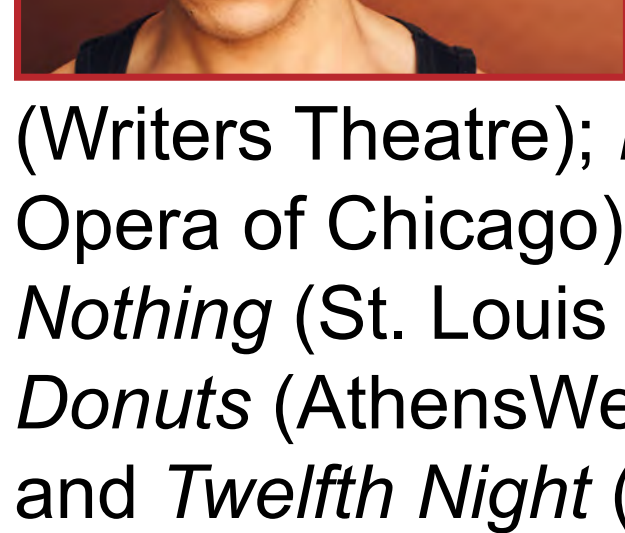
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CAST PROFILES



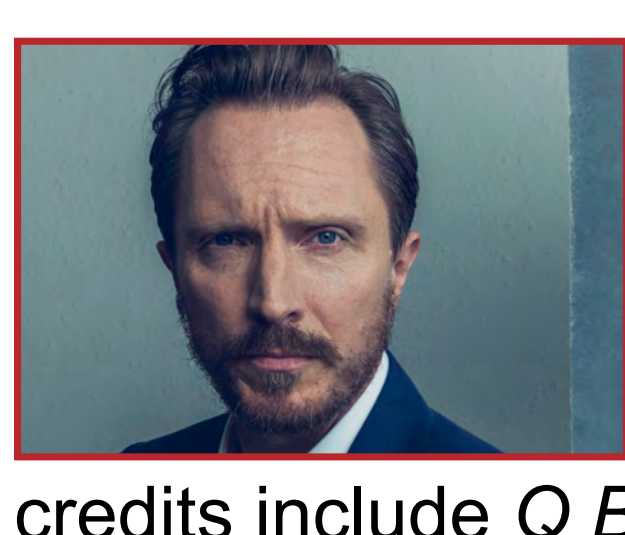
ANTHONY BALDASARE

(*Philip Capet*) is thrilled to be making his Court Theatre debut. Most recently, he played Toby Darling in the Ohio premiere of *The Inheritance - Parts 1 and 2*. He has acted professionally in Chicago in shows such as *Letters Home* (Griffin Theatre); *Spay* (u/s, Rivendell Theatre Ensemble); *Le Comte Ory* and *Hansel and Gretel* (Lyric Opera of Chicago). He is a graduate of Ohio University and Milwaukee Repertory Theater's Emerging Professional Residency Program for Acting. Regionally, he has acted with theaters in Wisconsin, Cape Cod, and Wyoming. Principal on-screen credits include *Chicago Fire* and *Shelby Oaks*. He is happily represented by Grossman & Jack Talent.



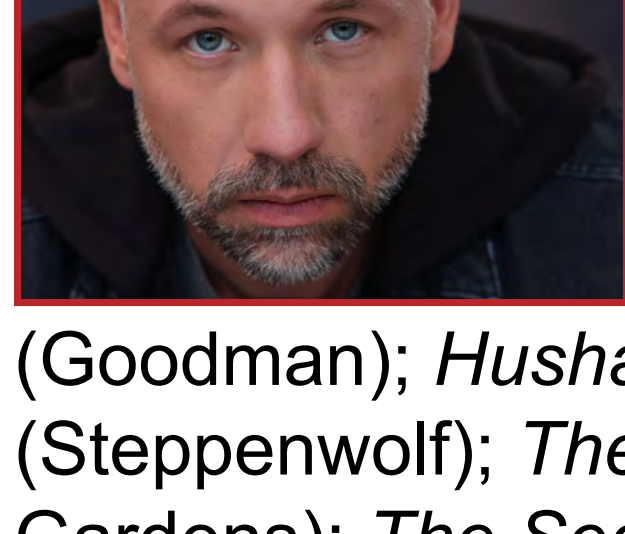
KENNETH LA'RON HAMILTON

(*John*) is delighted to return to Court Theatre, having previously understudied *Arsenic and Old Lace*. Chicago credits: *Eurydice* (Writers Theatre); *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* (Lyric Opera of Chicago). Regional: *Much Ado About Nothing* (St. Louis Shakespeare Festival); *Superior Donuts* (AthensWest Theatre Company); *Macbeth* and *Twelfth Night* (American Players Theatre); *A Christmas Carol* (American Shakespeare Center); *Twelfth Night* (Nashville Shakespeare Festival); *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Cincinnati Shakespeare Company). For Jordan always.



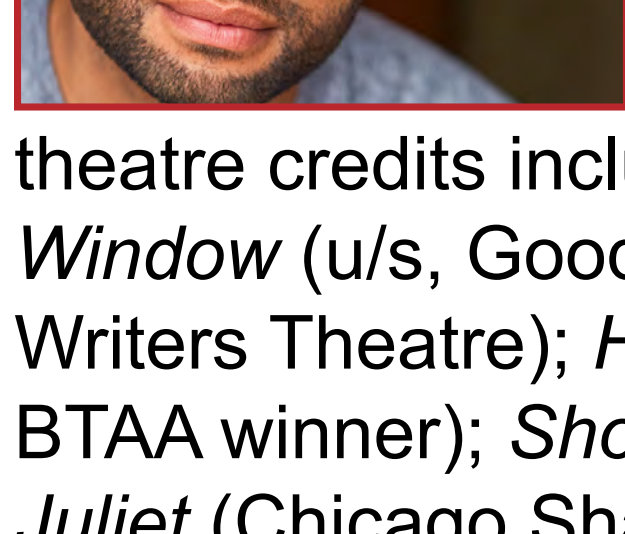
JOHN HOOGENAKKER

(*Henry II*) is honored to be back at Court Theatre, where he last appeared in Ron OJ Parson's production of *Wait Until Dark*. Other theatre credits include *Q Brothers Christmas Carol* (Chicago Shakespeare); *Port Authority* (Writers); the role of Hamlet in *Hamlet* (Illinois Shakespeare Festival); and *The Iceman Cometh* with Nathan Lane and Brian Dennehy (Goodman and BAM). Screen work includes *Jack Ryan*, *Waco: The Aftermath*, *Dopesick*, *Flags Of Our Fathers* (directed by Clint Eastwood), *Public Enemies* (directed by Michael Mann), and the forthcoming film *Knox Goes Away*, directed by Michael Keaton.



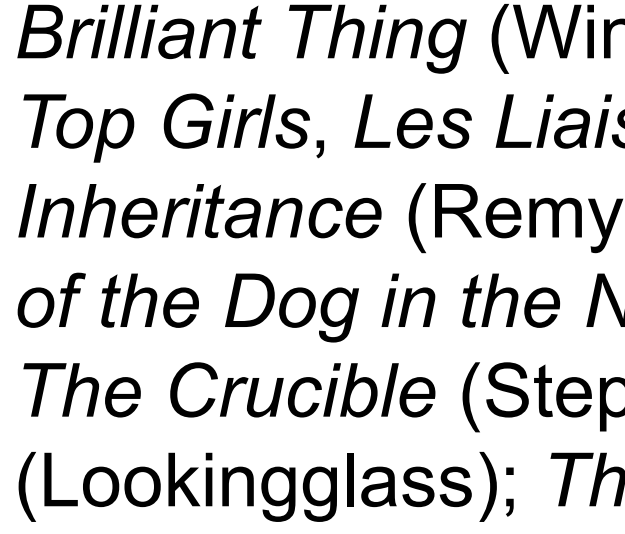
SHANE KENYON

(*Richard Lionheart*) is making his Court debut. Select Chicago credits: *Buried Child* (Writers); *Ohio State Murders*, *Buzzer* (Goodman); *Hushabye*, *Where We're Born* (Steppenwolf); *The Who & The What* (Victory Gardens); *The Seafarer*, *Shining City* (Irish Theatre of Chicago); *Dada Woof Papa Hot* (About Face); *Season On the Line* (House Theatre); *If There Is...* (Steep Theatre). Select regional credits: *Sweat* (Huntington Theatre); *Hypeman* (Actors Theatre of Louisville); *Romeo and Juliet*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *As You Like It* (Utah Shakespeare Festival); *Hedda Gabler* (Studio Theatre). TV/Film: *Chicago Med*, *Chicago Justice*, *Chicago P.D.*, *Empire*, *Mind Games*, *Olympia*, *Jessica*, *Survivor Soldier Sinner Savior*. Agency: Stewart Talent.



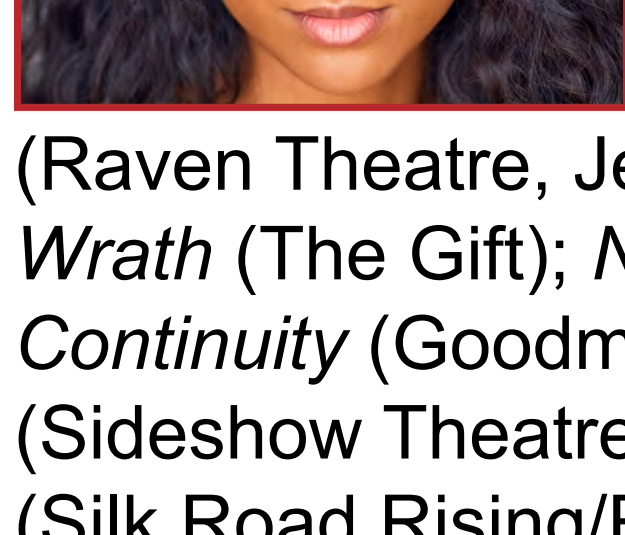
BRANDON MILLER

(*Geoffrey*) is overjoyed and honored to return to Court Theatre, where they were last seen in Pearl Cleage's *Flyin' West*. Chicago theatre credits include *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window* (u/s, Goodman Theatre); *Caretaker* (u/s, Writers Theatre); *HOPERA* (DuSable Museum, BTAA winner); *Short Shakespeare! Romeo and Juliet* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); *Layla's Dream* (Congo Square Theatre); *The Siddhartha Project* (Collaboration). Regional credits include *Romeo and Juliet* (Indiana Repertory Theatre) and *Magnolia* (Eugene O'Neill Playwrights Conference). Brandon's film and television credits include *The Chicago Code*, *Chicago Fire*, and the short film *The Reception*.



REBECCA SPENCE

(*Eleanor of Aquitaine*) is making her Court Theatre debut. Assorted theatre credits include: *Intimate Apparel* (Northlight Theatre); *Every Brilliant Thing* (Windy City Playhouse, Jeff Award); *Top Girls*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *The Voyage Inheritance* (Remy Bumppo); *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *Mary Page Marlowe*, *The Crucible* (Steppenwolf); *In The Garden* (Lookingglass); *This* (Theater Wit); *The Firebirds Take the Field*, *How the World Began*, *These Shining Lives*, *WRENS* (Rivendell). Film: *Heist 88*, *Candyman*, *Rounding*, *Princess Cyd*, *Man of Steel*, *Contagion*, *The Dilemma*, and others. Select television credits include: *61st Street*, *Paper Girls*, *The Big Leap*, *Utopia*, *Empire*, *Easy*, *Boss*, *Crisis*, and *Chicago Fire*.



NETTA WALKER

(*Alais Capet*) is excited to be making her Court Theatre debut! Chicago credits include: *How to Defend Yourself* (Victory Gardens); *Yen* (Raven Theatre, Jeff Award); *Hamlet*, *The Grapes of Wrath* (The Gift); *No Child* (Definition Theatre); *Continuity* (Goodman); *truth and reconciliation* (Sideshow Theatre Company); *Great Expectations* (Silk Road Rising/Remy Bumppo); *The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley* (Northlight). Regional: *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* (Milwaukee Rep). Film: *Come As You Are* (SXSW/Cannes), *Whole* (Holly Shorts Festival Oscar Contender). TV: *All American*, *All American: Homecoming*, *The Big Leap*, *Chicago Fire*. Proudly represented by Paonessa Talent. Love you, pops.

DANNY BRESLIN

(*u/s Richard Lionheart, Philip Capet*) is excited to be making his Court Theatre debut in *The Lion in Winter*. He is a graduate of The School at Steppenwolf and a proud ensemble member at Bramble Theatre Company. Theatre: *Marabella* (A Noise Within Theatre). TV: *Chicago P.D.* Education: University of Southern California (BFA). Thank you so much God, Mom, Dad, and Madelyn!

DAVID DOWD

(*u/s John, Geoffrey*) makes a glad return to Court Theatre for *The Lion in Winter*. Recent theatre credits include: *How Blood Go* (Congo Square); *Two Trains Running* (u/s, Court Theatre). A visual artist and animator, his recent animation credits include: *God's Mouth* (Walkabout Theater) and a host of still and animated works shared to his artist's Instagram, @sockhead_the_raptor.

MICHAEL MCCRACKEN

(*u/s Henry II*) is honored to be working on *The Lion in Winter* with Court Theatre. He has previously worked at Northlight, Route 66, and Silk Road Rising. Before moving to Chicago, Michael spent four years as a company member at the State Theatre of North Carolina (Flat Rock Playhouse). His TV credits include: *Somebody Somewhere*, *Chicago P.D.*, and a recurring role on *Chicago Med*. Michael is the Artistic Director/ Founder of Vagabond School of the Arts, a professional training studio for Chicago actors, which is ten years old as of October 2023! Much love to Becca, James, and Hayes for their unending support.

MARLENE SLAUGHTER

(*u/s Alais Capet*) is a Houston native who began her career in the arts by winning gold at the NAACP ACT-SO competition for Drama in 2015. She earned her BFA in Acting and Media Entertainment at UIUC. Before graduation, she secured representation with Gray Talent and booked her first two credits: a commercial for Blue Cross Blue Shield and a tour with Montana Shakespeare in the Parks. Since then, she has appeared in *61st Street*, *American Greed*, and numerous commercials for Project Makeover, Glassdoor, Red Robin, and more. She is so inspired and grateful to be a part of this cast!

GENEVIEVE THIERS

(*u/s Eleanor of Aquitaine*) has performed principal roles at Lyric Opera of Chicago (*Praskovia*, *The Merry Widow*); Goodman (*Dinah*, *Trouble in Tahiti*); Porchlight (*Older Belle*, *Little Me*); and understudied for Lookingglass, Court Theatre, and more. She is a full crossover artist in opera, musical theater, and acting. She has a Master of Music degree in Performance from Northwestern University and has won multiple awards for her work. On TV, you can see her in *RUN* on Amazon Prime (as the Tech Trainer); as a featured extra in multiple films, including *The Layover* and the web series *VC*; and in various commercials. See more at www.genevieveethiers.com.

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ARTIST PROFILES

JAMES GOLDMAN (*Playwright, 1927–1998*) was an American playwright and screenwriter. Goldman grew up primarily in Highland Park, Illinois. In addition to writing the script for *The Lion in Winter*, he is the author of the screenplay for the 1968 film adaptation, for which he received an Academy Award. He also wrote the book for the Broadway musical *Follies* (1971), which was nominated for a Tony Award. He attended the University of Chicago and Columbia University, earning a master's degree and studying music criticism.



RON OJ PARSON (*Resident Artist, Director*) hails from Buffalo, New York, and graduated from the University of Michigan's professional theatre program. Ron is Resident Artist at Court Theatre, co-founder and former Artistic Director of Onyx Theatre Ensemble, a company member of TimeLine, and an Associate Artist at both Writers Theatre and Teatro Vista. Chicagoland: Black Ensemble, eta Creative Arts, Dramatists, Congo Square, Oak Park Theatre Festival, Goodman, Victory Gardens, Northlight, Steppenwolf, and others. Regional: American Players, Roundabout, Studio Theatre (DC), Baltimore Center Stage, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Milwaukee Rep, The Black Rep, Geva, Signature (NY), Alliance, South Coast Rep, Kansas City Rep, Pasadena Playhouse, and more. Ron is a proud member of SAG-AFTRA, SDC, and Actors' Equity.

LINDA BUCHANAN (*Scenic Designer*) has designed hundreds of productions at theatres throughout the country and abroad. Her work has been seen in Chicago at Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf, Court, Paramount, and others. Buchanan has designed regionally for Arena Stage, Alley Theatre, Indiana Rep, Cleveland Playhouse, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Kansas City Rep, and others. Buchanan has received the Merritt Award for Excellence in Design and Collaboration; Joseph Jefferson Awards for *House* and *Black Snow* (Goodman), and *I Hate Hamlet* (Royal George); a Helen Hayes Award for *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Arena Stage); and a Syracuse Area League of Theatre Award for *Peter Pan*. Upcoming work includes *The Folks at Home* (Indiana Rep) and *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* (Goodman). Buchanan is a professor emeritus at DePaul University, where she taught in The Theatre School.

CHRISTINE PASCUAL (*Costume Designer*) previously designed costumes for *Two Trains Running*, *Seven Guitars*, *The Piano Lesson*, and *Flyin' West* at Court. Select recent credits include *Boulevard of Bold Dreams* (world premiere), *Trouble in Mind*, *Relentless* (world premiere), and *Oslo* at TimeLine; *I, Cinna* at Chicago Shakespeare Theater; *How To Defend Yourself* and *The First Deep Breath* (world premiere) at Victory Gardens; *Dance Nation* and *La Ruta* (world premiere) at Steppenwolf; *The Total Bent* and *The Displaced* (world premiere) at Haven Chicago; *Lady in Denmark* (world premiere) and *Feathers and Teeth* (world premiere) at Goodman Theatre; and *The Light Fantastic* (world premiere) at Jackalope Theatre. In 2018, Christine received a 3Arts Award. She holds an MFA from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and is a member of United Scenic Artist Local 829. Her portfolio website is at christinepascual.carbonmade.com.

JARED GOODING (*Lighting Designer*) is happy to return to Court. Design credits include Goodman Theatre, Marriott Theatre, Writers Theatre, Asolo Repertory Theatre, Syracuse Stage, Pittsburgh Public Theater, Florentine Opera, Indiana Rep, First Stage, DePaul, Milwaukee Rep, Victory Gardens, TimeLine, University of Illinois Chicago, Indiana University Northwest, Remy Bumppo, Strawdog, The Hypocrites, Definition, Windy City Playhouse, Sideshow, Jackalope, About Face, MPAACT, and Pegasus. He served as the lighting assistant for *The Wiz Live!* on NBC, along with associate designing for THE OFFICE's touring production of *Yemandja* in Berkeley and at the Kennedy Center. He is also a professional DJ and his work is featured at goodingdesigns.com.

CHRISTOPHER KRIZ (*Sound Designer and Composer*) is an award-winning composer and sound designer based in Chicago. He is pleased to return to Court, having previously designed August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean*. Design credits in Chicago include: Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf, Chicago Shakespeare, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, TimeLine Theatre, Victory Gardens, Northlight, Remy Bumppo, and many others. Regional: Seattle Rep, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Indiana Rep, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Peninsula Players, American Stage Theatre, Crossroads Theatre, TheatreSquared, Montana Shakespeare Festival, Nebraska Repertory Theatre, Michigan Shakespeare Festival, and others. A winner of five Joseph Jefferson Awards, Kriz is a proud member of United Scenic Artists 829.

NICK SANDYS (*Violence and Intimacy Consultant*) is delighted to be working with Court Theatre. Recent movement choreography includes: *The Cherry Orchard*, *Swing State* (also Off-Broadway), *Clyde's*, *Gem of the Ocean* (Goodman); *Carmen*, *Macbeth*, *Pagliacci*, *West Side Story* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Macbeth* (Canadian Opera Company); *Saint-George's Sword and Bow* (Classical Kids LIVE!); *Red Summer* (MPAACT); *The Producers*, *Zorro* (Music Theater Works); *Good Grief*, *Henry IV* (The Theatre School at DePaul—adjunct professor). His combat designs have also appeared in NYC at the Metropolitan Opera, and on and Off-Broadway. Nick is a certified teacher/fight director with the Society of American Fight Directors, and his fight direction has received four Joseph Jefferson nominations and one award. Visit nicksandys.com.

MARTINE KEI GREEN-ROGERS (*Production Dramaturg*) is the dean of The Theatre School at DePaul University, a freelance dramaturg, and president-elect of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education. Her dramaturgical credits include *The Greatest* with the Louisville Orchestra; *Radio Golf*, *Blues for an Alabama Sky*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Iphigenia in Aulis*, *Seven Guitars*, *The Mountaintop*, *Home*, and *Porgy and Bess* (Court Theatre); and *Twelfth Night*, *The Book of Will*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *UniSon*, *Hannah and the Dread Gazebo*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, *The African Company Presents Richard III*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Fences* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival).

JACLYNN JOSLIN (*Production Stage Manager*) is thrilled to return to Court, where her credits include: *Arsenic and Old Lace*; *Two Trains Running*; *The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice*; *Oedipus Rex*; *The Adventures of Augie March*; *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf*; *Photograph 51*; *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*; *All My Sons*; *Harvey*; *The Hard Problem*; and *Blues for an Alabama Sky*. Assorted additional theatre credits include: *No Man's Land*, *Last Night and the Night Before*, *Bald Sisters*, *King James*, *Bug*, *True West*, *Familiar*, *Guards at the Taj* (Steppenwolf); *Linda Vista* (Center Theatre Group); *Continuity* and *The King of Hell's Palace* (Goodman); *Hard Times* (Lookingglass); and *Roz and Ray* (Victory Gardens). Touring: *Oklahoma!*

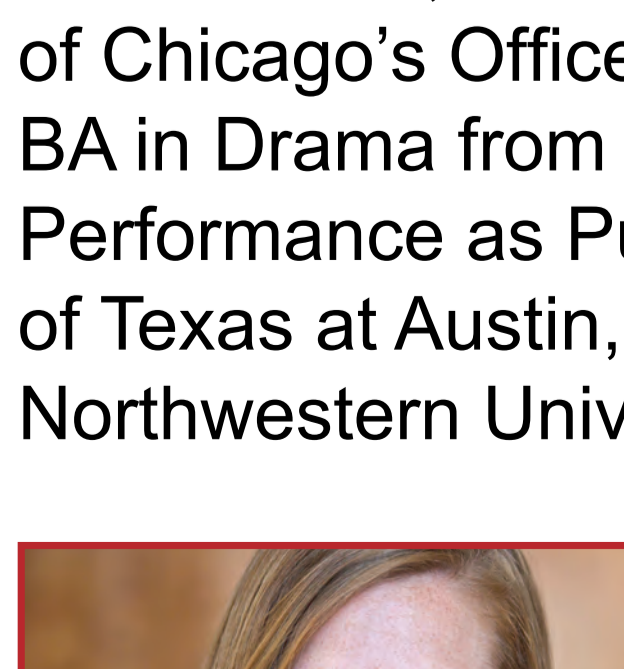
KATRINA HERRMANN (*Assistant Stage Manager*) is so excited to be working on *The Lion in Winter*. Court: *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *Radio Golf*. Chicago: *The Comedy of Errors*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *As You Like It* (Chicago Shakespeare); *Lucy & Charlie's Honeymoon*, *The Steadfast Tin Soldier* (Lookingglass); *Seussical: The Musical*, *Rock of Ages* (Drury Lane); *Mary Page Marlowe* (Steppenwolf); *The Hundred Dresses*, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* (Chicago Children's Theatre); *Kill Floor*, *The Royale*, *Sons of the Prophet* (American Theater Company); *Juno* (TimeLine). Regional: *The King's Speech* (national tour); *Diana: The Musical*, *Queens*, *The Cake*, *At the Old Place* (La Jolla Playhouse); *The Garden*, *Twisted Melodies* (Baltimore Center Stage). Education: BFA in Stage Management, DePaul University; MBA, Adams State University.



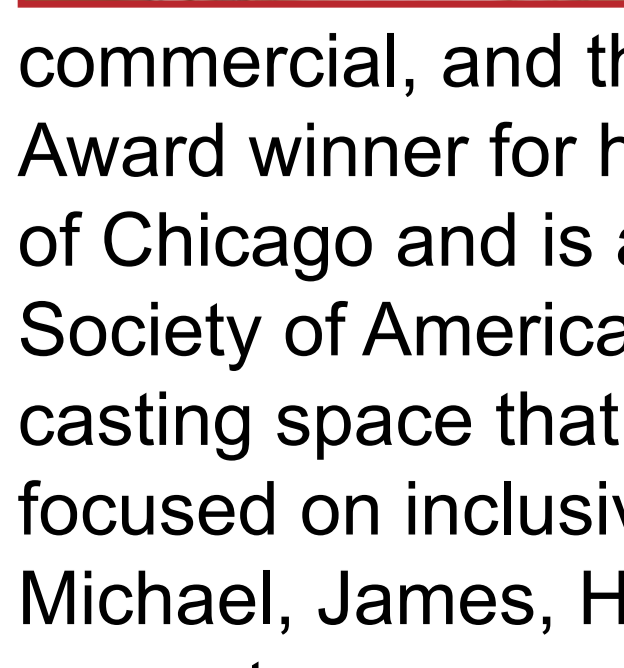
CHARLES NEWELL (*Marilyn F. Vitale Artistic Director*), together with Angel Ysaguirre, accepted the 2022 Regional Theatre Tony Award on behalf of Court staff and artists. Recent directorial credits include *The Gospel at Colonus*, co-directed with Mark J.P. Hood; *The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice*, co-directed with Gabrielle Randle-Bent; *Oedipus Rex*; and *The Adventures of Augie March*. Charlie has directed at Goodman, Guthrie, Arena Stage, Long Wharf, and many others. Awards received include the SDCF Zelda Fichandler Award, four Jeff Awards, and seventeen Jeff nominations. Charlie is a co-founder of the Civic Actor Studio, a leadership program of the University of Chicago's Office of Civic Engagement.



ANGEL YSAGUIRRE (*Executive Director*) has been Court's Executive Director since 2018. Prior to this role, he served as Executive Director of Illinois Humanities. During his tenure there, the organization established a number of new programs demonstrating the contribution that the humanities can make in addressing today's most pressing challenges. Previously, he was the Director of Global Community Investing at Boeing and a program officer at the McCormick Tribune Foundation. He has served on the boards of the Theatre Communications Group, Donors Forum of Chicago, the Illinois Center for the Book, Horizons Community Services, Blair Thomas and Company, and Next Theatre.



GABRIELLE RANDLE-BENT (*Associate Artistic Director*) is a mother, director, dramaturg, and scholar. Her directorial highlights include *The Island* and *The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice* (co-directed with Charles Newell) at Court Theatre; *1919* (Steppenwolf); and *The Year of Magical Thinking* (Remy Bumppo). She is a co-founder of the Civic Actor Studio, a leadership program of the University of Chicago's Office of Civic Engagement. She has a BA in Drama from Stanford University, an MA in Performance as Public Practice from the University of Texas at Austin, and is a PhD candidate at Northwestern University.



BECCA MCCRACKEN (*Director of Casting and Artist Cultivation*) has spent 19 years casting in Chicago, covering the Midwest market working on TV/film, commercial, and theatre projects. Becca is an Artios Award winner for her casting work at the Lyric Opera of Chicago and is a proud member of the Casting Society of America. She is committed to creating a casting space that empowers the artist and is focused on inclusivity and humanity. Thank you to Michael, James, Hayes, and Luna for their love and support.

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Court Theatre is the Tony Award-winning professional theatre of the University of Chicago, dedicated to innovation, inquiry, intellectual engagement, and community service. Court endeavors to make a lasting contribution to classic American theatre by expanding the canon of translations, adaptations, and classic texts. The theatre revives lost masterpieces; illuminates familiar texts; explores the African American theatrical canon; and discovers fresh, modern classics. Court engages and inspires its audience by providing artistically distinguished productions, audience enrichment activities, and student educational experiences. In all of this work, we are committed to recognizing, addressing, and eradicating racism, as we strive to better serve our South Side community.

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COURT THEATRE STAFF

<i>Marilyn F. Vitale</i>	<i>Artistic Director</i>	Charles Newell
	<i>Executive Director</i>	Angel Ysaguirre
	<i>Associate Artistic Director</i>	Gabrielle Randle-Bent
	<i>Resident Artist</i>	Ron OJ Parson
	<i>Director of Casting and Artist Cultivation</i>	Becca McCracken C.S.A.
	<i>Managing Director</i>	Heidi Thompson Saunders
	<i>Executive Assistant</i>	Tyler Calhoun
	<i>Director of Engagement</i>	Kamilah Rashied
	<i>Director of Education</i>	Jarrett King
	<i>Engagement Programs Manager</i>	Kelcie Beene
	<i>Education Programs Manager</i>	Kate Wiseman
	<i>Education Coordinator</i>	Sade' May
	<i>Teaching Artists</i>	India Nicole Burton Monet Felton Sonia Goldberg Willow James Jamaque Newberry
	<i>Director of Production</i>	Jennifer Gadda
	<i>Associate Production Manager and Company Manager</i>	Lorenzo Blackett
	<i>Technical Director</i>	Luke Lemanski
	<i>Assistant Technical Director</i>	Christopher Walls
	<i>Scene Shop Foreperson</i>	Kelly Lesniak
	<i>House Carpenter</i>	Tony Cooper
	<i>Properties Manager</i>	Lara Musard
	<i>Costume Shop Manager</i>	Erica Friesen
	<i>Wardrobe Supervisor</i>	Jody Schmidt
	<i>Lighting Supervisor</i>	Andrei Borges
	<i>Technical Director of Sound and Video</i>	Josh McCammon
	<i>Director of Development</i>	William Nalley
	<i>Associate Director of Major Gifts</i>	Dakota Williams
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	<i>Director of Marketing</i>	Traci Brant
	<i>Associate Director of Marketing for Content Creation</i>	Camille Oswald
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	<i>Associate and House Manager</i>	
	<i>Box Office and Ticketing</i>	Heather Dumdei
	<i>Software Manager</i>	
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	<i>Marketing and Content Creation Intern</i>	Eleni Lefakis
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