

# THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS

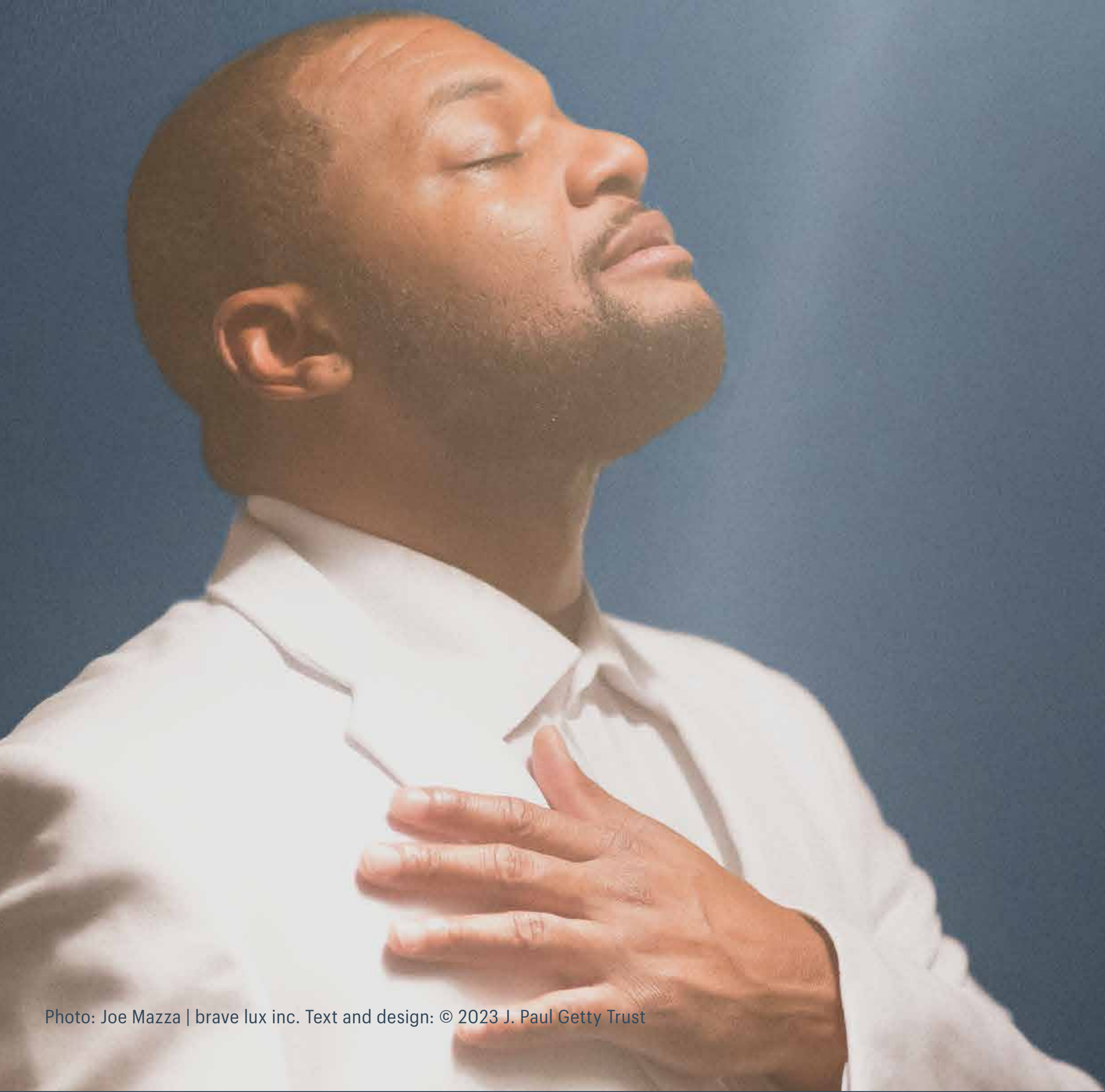


Photo: Joe Mazza | brave lux inc. Text and design: © 2023 J. Paul Getty Trust

Adaptation and original lyrics by Lee Breuer  
Adapted lyrics by Lee Breuer and Bob Telson  
Music by Bob Telson  
Directed by Mark J.P. Hood and Charles Newell  
With Associate Director TaRon Patton  
Co-produced by Court Theatre

Getty Villa Outdoor Theater  
September 7–30, 2023

The performance is approximately 90 minutes long, without intermission.

Getty

**TONY  
AWARD  
WINNING**  
COURT THEATRE

# THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS

Adaptation and original lyrics by Lee Breuer

Adapted lyrics by Lee Breuer and Bob Telson

Music by Bob Telson

Directed by Mark J.P. Hood and Charles Newell

With Associate Director TaRon Patton

Co-produced by Court Theatre

## Cast of Characters

<b>Oedipus</b>	Kelvin Roston Jr.*
<b>Antigone</b>	Aeriel Williams*
<b>Creon</b>	Jason Huysman*
<b>Ismene</b>	Ariana Burks*
<b>Theseus</b>	Mark Spates Smith*
<b>Polyneices</b>	Kai A. Ealy*
<b>Choragos, Soloist</b>	Shari Addison*
<b>Choragos</b>	Eric A. Lewis*
<b>The Friend, Chorus</b>	Juwon Tyrel Perry*
<b>Evangelist, Chorus</b>	Jessica Brooke Seals*
<b>Chorus</b>	Jerica Exum*
<b>Chorus</b>	Shantina Lynet'*
<b>Chorus, Dance Captain</b>	Isaac Ray *
<b>Chorus</b>	Eva Ruwé*
<b>Chorus, Chorus Supervisor</b>	Cherise Thomas*

## Understudies

Oedipus: Eric A. Lewis\*; Antigone: Jerica Exum\*;  
Choragos, Soloist: Cherise Thomas\*; Choragos,  
The Friend: Shantina Lynet\*\*; Creon: Kai A. Ealy\*;  
Polyneices, Chorus: Michael Adkins; Chorus:  
Kristen-ilycia Lowe; Theseus: Juwon Tyrel Perry\*;  
Evangelist, Chorus: Ismene, Chorus: Sharonda Scott

## The Band

**Mahmoud Khan**

Associate Music Director,  
Conductor, Keyboard, Organ

**Joshua Griffin**

Music Programmer, Play-  
back Engineer, Bass Guitar

**Amr Fahmy**

Keyboard

**Oscar Brown, Jr.**

Lead Guitar

**Tatum Flemister**

Drums

## The Creative Team

**Mark J.P. Hood**

Director

**Charles Newell**

Director

**TaRon Patton**

Associate Director

**Hailey Brunson**

Assistant Director

**Mahmoud Khan**

Associate Music Director

**John Culbert\*\***

Scenic Designer

**Lauren Nichols**

Asst. Scenic Designer

**Samantha Bodnar\*\***

Charge Scenic Artist

**Julie Ruscitti\*\***

Scenic Artist

<b>Daniel Carraher, Micah Hofferth, Nicholas Svoboda</b>	Carpenters
<b>Raquel Adorno**</b>	Costume Designer
<b>Jeanette Rodriguez</b>	Assistant Costume Designer
<b>Jessica Donaldson</b>	Costume Shop Assistant
<b>Eric Guy</b>	Stitcher
<b>Keith Parham**</b>	Lighting Designer
<b>Sarah Ramos</b>	Sound Designer
<b>Josh McCammon</b>	Associate Sound Designer
<b>Lexi Berson</b>	A2
<b>Cristin Carole</b>	Movement Consultant
<b>Faunta Lockett</b>	Movement Design Assistant
<b>Charles McGregory</b>	Movement Design Assistant
<b>Wenke (Coco) Huang</b>	Production Dramaturg
<b>Gabrielle Randle-Bent</b>	Oedipus Trilogy Dramaturg
<b>Becca McCracken</b>	C.S.A. Director of Casting and Artist Cultivation
<b>Jennifer Glasse</b>	Casting Associate
<b>Kate Ocker*</b>	Production Stage Manager
<b>Natalie Cohen*</b>	Assistant Stage Manager
<b>Emily Dykstra</b>	Company Manager and COVID Safety Manager

# Court Theatre Staff

**Charles Newell**

Marilyn F. Vitale Artistic Director

**Angel Ysaguirre**

Executive Director

**Gabrielle Randle-Bent**

Associate Artistic Director

**Becca McCracken**

C.S.A. Director of Casting and Artist Cultivation

**Jennifer Gadda**

Director of Production

**Lorenzo Blackett**

Associate Production Manager

**Luke Lemanski**

Technical Director

**Christopher Walls**

Asst. Technical Director

**Kelly Lesniak**

Scene Shop Foreperson

**Tony Cooper**

House Carpenter

**Lara Musard**

Properties Manager

**Erica Friesen**

Costume Shop Manager

**Jody Schmidt**

Wardrobe Supervisor

**Josh McCammon**

Technical Director of Sound and Video

\*The Actors and Stage Managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

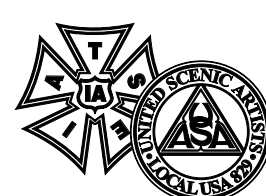
\*\* Members of the United Scenic Artists Union (USA).

This theater operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association.

Charles Newell is a member of SDC, the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, an independent national labor union.



The Director is a member of the STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS SOCIETY, a national theatrical labor union.



The Designers at this Theatre are Represented by United Scenic Artists • Local USA 829 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees

## Museum Director's Note

Welcome to the Getty Villa and our annual outdoor theater production, the centerpiece of our classical theater program. For many of you, this award-winning program has become an annual tradition. If you are joining us for the first time, we hope your experience tonight inspires a newfound passion for the classics.

Adapted from Sophocles's *Oedipus at Colonus*, this year's production of *The Gospel at Colonus* picks up the tale of our 2022 collaboration with Los Angeles' Deaf West Theatre, which presented a groundbreaking, multi-lingual reimaging of Sophocles's classic story of Oedipus. The story now continues when, after years of exile, the blind Oedipus arrives at Colonus seeking redemption. That such deliverance is possible for all of us is the core message of Lee Breuer and Bob Telson's imaginative retelling of the classic.

*The Gospel at Colonus* also resonates with the Pentecostal tradition that has deep roots in Los Angeles, going back to the denomination's origins in the early 1900s. As Dr. Emily D. Crews of the Advanced Study of Religion at the University of Chicago has noted, in 1905, William J. Seymour, a preacher and son of formerly enslaved parents, and pastor Lucy Farrow, a formerly enslaved woman and the niece of Frederick Douglass, founded a multiracial congregation in downtown Los Angeles. Known as the Azusa Street Revival, it became so popular within its first year that people spilled out of the building and into the street during services, with others watching through the windows.

Tonight's *Gospel* offers a window into that experience of a revival. It is a classic tale of sin, disgrace, and redemption told through the lens of a Pentecostal service.

We are pleased to welcome back Chicago's Court Theatre, whose last collaboration with the Getty Villa was 2017's *Iphigenia in Aulis*. I offer my congratulations and appreciation to all those at Court Theatre for their work in bringing *The Gospel at Colonus* to Los Angeles. I also applaud my colleagues at Getty who work so hard to make our annual outdoor theater performances such a success. Presentations of ancient Greek and Roman plays have been integral to the Villa's program since 2006, and tonight's play continues this grand and vibrant tradition.

Enjoy.

—*Timothy Potts*

*Maria Hummer-Tuttle and Robert Tuttle Director  
J. Paul Getty Museum*

## About the Play

*The Gospel at Colonus* is Lee Breuer and Bob Telson's 1983 adaptation of Sophocles's *Oedipus at Colonus*, written at the end of the fifth century BCE. *Gospel* is a symbiotic world blending ancient Greece with Black spiritual practice.

After years of exile away from Thebes, the legendary city he once ruled, the blind Oedipus arrives at Colonus, a town outside of Athens. Pursued by adversaries, Oedipus promises Theseus, king of Athens, that if this sacred spot can be his resting place, he will posthumously protect the city. Theseus agrees. With the help of Theseus and his daughters, Antigone and Ismene, Oedipus thwarts King Creon, ruler of Thebes, and Polyneices, Oedipus's own son. At the end of a life steeped in murder and incest, Oedipus eventually finds rest and redemption. Through his death, he becomes divine and showers blessings upon Colonus and those of us gathered in communion.

—Wenke (Coco) Huang, *Production Dramaturg*



## Directors in Conversation

Directors Mark J.P. Hood and Charles Newell discuss the myth and the music of *The Gospel at Colonus*. Interview by Camille Oswald, Court Theatre's associate director of marketing.

### **Can you share your history with this production?**

**Mark:** I'll never forget when I got that first email in 2018 about doing this project. We spoke on the phone for an hour and, from that first conversation, we were basically sure we were going to work with each other; we just somehow knew.

**Charlie:** I always knew that I wanted to stage *Gospel*, so the next step was finding a music collaborator who could make it happen. You, Mark, were always this mythological figure that everyone wanted to work with and, after that first conversation, I thought, "Man, would this guy ever do this with me?" You just blew me away. You knew the sound, and what you wanted, so precisely and beautifully. It was something I could have never imagined.

### **How has the sound of gospel music changed since this production's inception, and what is the role of modern gospel today?**

**Mark:** The history of gospel music is evolution and, even though gospel has changed, the message is still the same. Now, gospel music not only just shares the Gospel—meaning literally "the good news"—but it's also a form of inspiration and uplifting. You will leave this show uplifted. There are no "gospel songs" in the show, other than "Lift

Him Up,” where they sing “cry hallelujah,” but the way I’ve envisioned the show was to pay tribute to all generations of gospel music. I want some things to sound like they’re from Albertina Walker and The Caravans, which was from the 1950s and 1960s, and then some things to sound like Donald Lawrence and Company in 2023. Gospel music is that expansive. When I think about the music in the original production, and where gospel music started and where we are now, it has only gone up.

**Charlie:** That’s so inspiring because when doing classic texts, the question we ask ourselves most is, “Why now? What’s it got to say about *now*?” So when you talk about that evolution of the sound, “Lift Him Up” and the refrain “cry hallelujah”—what a powerful way of answering that question of “Why now?”. Gospel honors its history, but at the same time, it meets the present moment and, as you say, continues to evolve; that’s what we, at Court, want to do as a classic theatre and that’s why we want to do this production now. Thanks to your understanding about the specific sound of gospel, we see the intersection between the Sophocles story and how the *Gospel* score fuels that story.

**Mark:** Absolutely. Any song in the show has the potential to be a highlight, but when we get to “Cry Hallelujah,” folks are going to be crying hallelujah!

**The passing of knowledge—and in Oedipus’s case, the passing of curses—from generation to generation is a prominent theme in this production. What does this production teach us about legacy and forgiveness?**

**Charlie:** The *Gospel at Colonus*, or Sophocles’s play *Oedipus at Colonus*—the play that *Gospel* is based

on—is this journey of the most accursed man: “I am Oedipus...the accursed” is the line in the text. That legacy of a family curse, that we all have our own versions of, is so hard to change. Here Sophocles is writing this play towards the very end of his life, saying that change is possible. Release from the curse, finding a resting place to be our most pure, authentic, beautiful selves is possible. And the fact that the most accursed person can find that? This is a Greek play that isn't a tragedy.

**Mark:** I'm all about legacy. I love my parents, I love my family. And I'm a firm believer that most families—most people—have good and bad things that have been passed down. But I do believe that we can find a resting place, that we can find solace, and that we can break some of those patterns. Truly, if Oedipus can find it and “cry hallelujah,” surely we can find it in our own lives. Oedipus has been on this journey to get to Colonus, and us waking up every day and living life—that's our journey. That's our walk.

**Charlie:** In my case, that family legacy is four generations of Presbyterian ministers. To put it another way: I'm a Preacher's Kid, a PK.

**Mark:** A PK!

**Charlie:** I'm not a Presbyterian minister myself, but there is a reason why I'm doing this kind of work. I don't know if you have a reflection about that?

**Mark:** I've got no desire to be a minister in that way, either, but this is ministry, what we're doing. That's the thing that people get confused by: if you don't know this show, you just think you're coming to a

gospel concert, and it's gonna be about Jesus, it's gonna be about God. It's not, but you will feel the spirit in the same way that you'd feel if you went to church on Sunday or however you celebrate or worship. That spirit is still there in our show.

**Charlie:** Following the spirit of this piece, finding each other and collaborating, and creating this together—this journey feels like we've been endowed with grace. And this is where I do want to honor Nick Rudall, founding artistic director of Court Theatre. He passed in 2018 and, like people on that journey between life and death—like Oedipus in this story, like Sophocles when he wrote this play—Nick had this rush of creative energy in the last hours of his life, in which he explained the story to me in minute detail. So, Nick's spirit is in the room all the time with us. Honor to him.

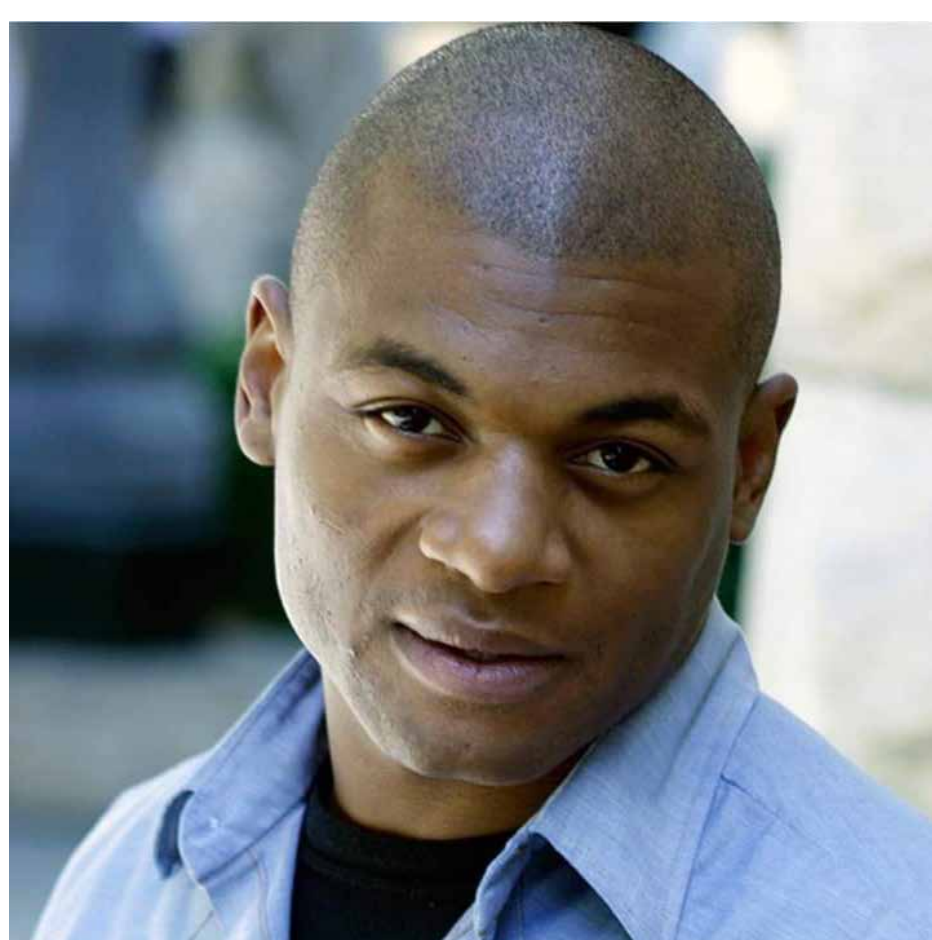
**Describe this production in three words.**

**Mark:** Show of possibilities. It doesn't matter who you worship, or if you worship at all—it's all possible here.

**Charlie:** I'm just going to go right to the lyrics: lift you up.

**Mark:** Hallelujah.

## Actors



**Kelvin Roston Jr. (*Oedipus*)** Court credits: *Oedipus Rex* (Oedipus), *King Hedley II* (King Hedley), *Five Guys Named Moe* (Four-Eyed Moe), and many others. Recent credits include: *Clue* (Mercury Theater), *The Color Purple* (MSMT), *The Wiz* (Fulton Theatre). Chicagoland credits: Congo Square, Paramount, Marriott, Goodman, ITC, eta, Writers, Black Ensemble, TimeLine, Northlight, Steppenwolf. International credits: Orb (Tokyo, Japan), Festival Hall (Osaka, Japan). Television: *Chicago Med*, *Chicago P.D.*, *South Side*. Film: *Get a Job*, *Princess Cyd*, *Breathing Room*. Awards: Jeff Award, three BTAA Awards, two Black Excellence Awards, NAMI Award. AEA, Paonessa Talent.



**Aerial Williams (*Antigone*)** was last seen in Court's production of *Oedipus Rex* as Antigone. National tour: *The Color Purple*. Off-Broadway: *Trevor: The Musical*. Regional credits include: *Million Dollar Quartet*, *Memphis*, *Black Pearl: A Tribute to Josephine Baker*, *Women of Soul*, *Dreamgirls*, *A Winter's Tale*, and *Seven Guitars*. TV Credits: *The Chi* and *Empire*. Aerial was recognized as one of the Hot New Faces of

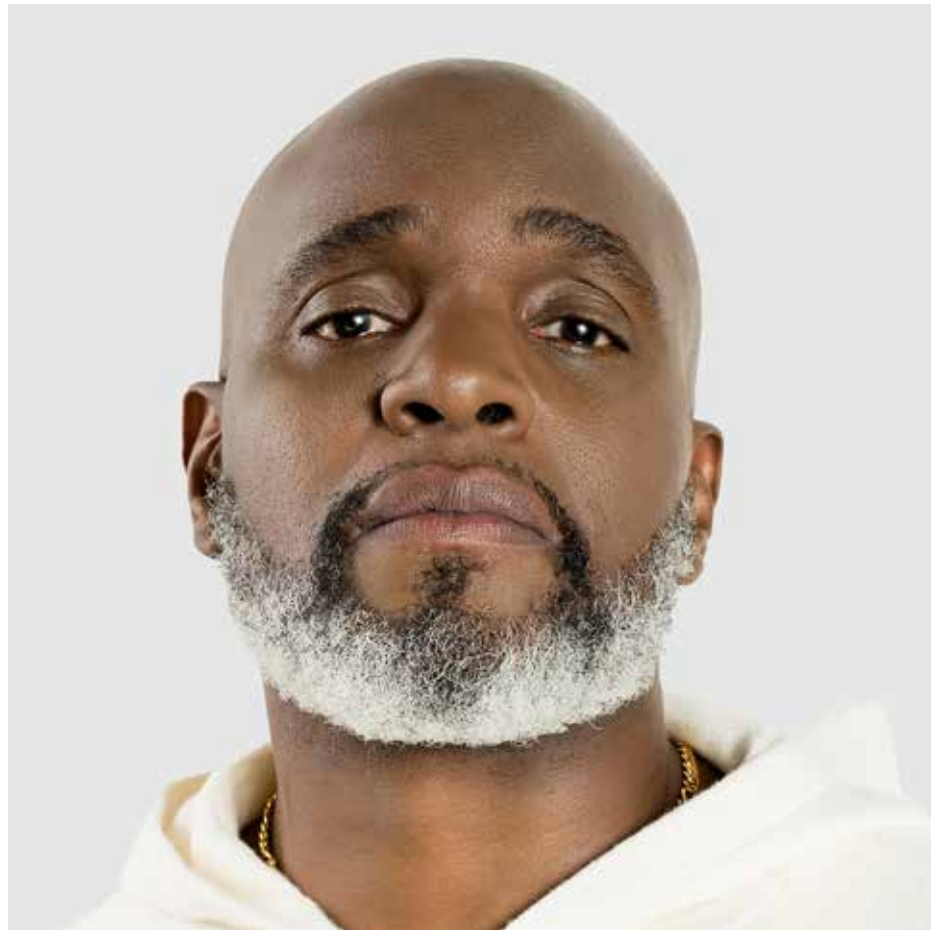
Chicago Theater and Top Performers in 2017 by the *Chicago Tribune*. Music available on all streaming platforms under Mon'Aerie. Aerial would like to thank God for every opportunity, her family and mentors, and her reps at Stewart. Psalms 91. @MonAerie.



**Jason Huysman** (*Creon*) Court credits: *The Tragedy of Othello*, *The Moor of Venice*, *Oedipus Rex*, and *An Iliad*. He would like to thank Nancy, Ava, Griffin, and Vivian for their love and support.



**Ariana Burks** (*Ismene*) Theater credits include *Children of Eden* (Cadillac Palace), *Spring Awakening* (Porchlight), *Urinetown* (BoHo Theatre), *The Nutcracker* (The House Theatre), *Hairspray* (Paramount Theatre), *Wonderland: Alice's Rock & Roll Adventure* (Chicago Children's Theatre), *The Compass*, *Dance Nation* (Steppenwolf), *Trevor: The Musical*, *Next to Normal* (Writers), *Life After*, and *A Christmas Carol* (Goodman). Television/film credits include *Beats*, *South Side*, *Chicago Med*, *Chicago Fire*, *The Jr. Cuisine Cooking Show* (2011 Emmy Award nomination), and *PrankStars*. @arianaburks.



**Mark Spates Smith** (*Theseus*)

Smith's last production at Court was 2019's *Oedipus Rex*, in which he played the Chorus Leader. Assorted theater credits include *How Long Will I Cry?* (Steppenwolf), Katori Hall's *Hoodoo Love* (Collective Theatre), *The Lake Effect* (Silk Road Rising), *Dreamgirls*, *The Color Purple* (Theater 47), and *The Mountaintop* (Court Theatre). Television credits include *The 4400*, *Black Lightning*, *The Chi*, *Chicago P.D.*, *Empire*, and *Shining Girls*.



**Kai A. Ealy** (*Polyneices, u/s*

*Creon*) Ealy's performance credits include *Toni Stone* (Goodman), *Kill Move Paradise* and *Cardboard Piano* (TimeLine), *The Island*, *Oedipus Rex*, and Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright David Auburn's *The Adventures of Augie March* (Court), *A Raisin in the Sun* (UCCS Theatreworks), *Schiller's Mary Stuart* (Chicago Shakespeare), *Franklinland* (Jackalope), *Migration* (eta Creative Arts), and the 30th Annual Young Playwrights Festival (Pegasus Theatre Chicago). Television: *61st Street*, *The 4400*, *Ordinary Joe*, *Chicago P.D.*, and *Chicago Fire*. He is represented by Paonessa Talent Agency, Chicago, and WEG Talent, New York. @kaiealy.



**Shari Addison** (*Choragos, Soloist*) has had a tremendous career that has spanned many genres over five decades, but she especially loves gospel. She was first runner-up on BET's *Sunday Best*, hosted by Kirk Franklin, and appeared on BET's *Celebration of Gospel*, hosted by Steve Harvey. Shari performed at Carnegie Hall for the 1,000th performance of *The Gospel at Colonus*, as well as performing on the world tour. A Stellar Award-winning gospel artist and Jeff Award-winning actress, Shari is thrilled to celebrate her friends, Lee Breuer and Bob Telson, and the rebirth of their masterpiece, and even more grateful to be performing it with her daughter Jessica!



**Eric A. Lewis** (*Choragos, u/s Oedipus*) was last seen in Court's production of *Five Guys Named Moe*. National tour: *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Off-Broadway: *Spamilton*. Other credits include: Jimmy Early in *Dreamgirls* at Porchlight Music Theatre, which earned him a Jeff Award, *Parade* (BoHo Theatre), *Smokey Joe's Cafe*, *All Shook Up* (Fireside Theatre), *Ragtime*, *Sister Act* (Marriott). Eric would like to thank God and his family for their continued love and support.





**Juwon Tyrel Perry** (*The Friend, Chorus, u/s Theseus*) is a genre-bending, multidisciplinary artist who hails from Osceola, Arkansas. Juwon has had the opportunity to perform with North Carolina Theatre, Court Theatre, Paramount Theatre, Geva Theatre Center, Marriott, Chicago Shakespeare, and many more. Juwon owes his love of music to his late father, Joe Charles Perry Jr., who himself was a musician whose musical taste was boundless. Love galore to his family and guardian angels: “Ya’ll are the music in me!” BFA: Columbia College Chicago. Additional Training: Black Box Acting Academy. @juwontyrelperry.



**Jessica Brooke Seals** (*Evangelist, Chorus*) is an actress and singer from Chicago who has been performing since the age of six. A few of Jessica’s theatrical credits include: *The Other Cinderella* (Black Ensemble Theater), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Paramount), *Priscilla Queen of the Desert* and *Women of Soul* (Mercury Theater). Her latest renderings as Associate Hair/Wig Designer were showcased in TimeLine Theatre’s *Boulevard of Bold Dreams*. Jessica is ecstatic to be returning to the stage and

sends a huge thanks to her family and the VB's for their support. @jessicabrooke90.



**Jerica Exum** (*Chorus, u/s Antigone*) was last seen as Middle Allie in the world premiere of *The Notebook* at Chicago Shakespeare Theater. Other select Chicago credits include: *Cinderella, Newsies* (Paramount), *Women of Soul* (Mercury Theater). National tour: Nurse Norma (u/s Becky) in *Waitress*. Regional: Ivoryton Playhouse, Little Theatre on the Square, and Circa '21 Dinner Playhouse. International: Norwegian Cruise Line, Hong Kong Disneyland, and Universal Studios Japan. Represented by DDO Artists Agency.



**Shantina Lynet' Lowe** (*Chorus, u/s Choragos, u/s The Friend*) is a singer, songwriter, performer, arranger, actress, musical director, vocal coach, and public speaking coach. These are just a few roles to describe Miss Shantina Lynet' Lowe's abilities. She has performed with Lizzo, Kanye West, and Carrie Underwood, and has opened for artists like Jeremih and Taylor Bennett. Shantina hopes to inspire creatives everywhere to confi-

dently share their art and leave a unique stamp on the world.



**Isaac Ray** (*Chorus, Dance Captain*) is an artist from Chicago. He prides himself on his work ethic, passion, precision to detail, and ability to adapt to a variety of music genres. He has a background in classical music and vocal techniques and is an alumnus of the Chicago High School for the Arts. Isaac is currently a full-time professional artist, dancer, actor, vocal director, and recording session singer. His theater credits include: *A New Attitude: In Tribute to Patti LaBelle* and *Urban Love Story* (Black Ensemble Theater).



**Eva Ruwé** (*Chorus*) is a multi-talented coloratura soprano with a five-octave vocal range, specializing in jazz, gospel, and R&B. Theater credits: *Little Shop of Horrors* (Theatre at the Center). Eva has toured the country as a comedian and recording artist, is a Stellar Award nominee, and hit the Top 10 Billboard Jazz Charts. Her recent projects include her album, *Dark Love*. Spring of 2023 marks her first television appearance.  
@evaruwe.



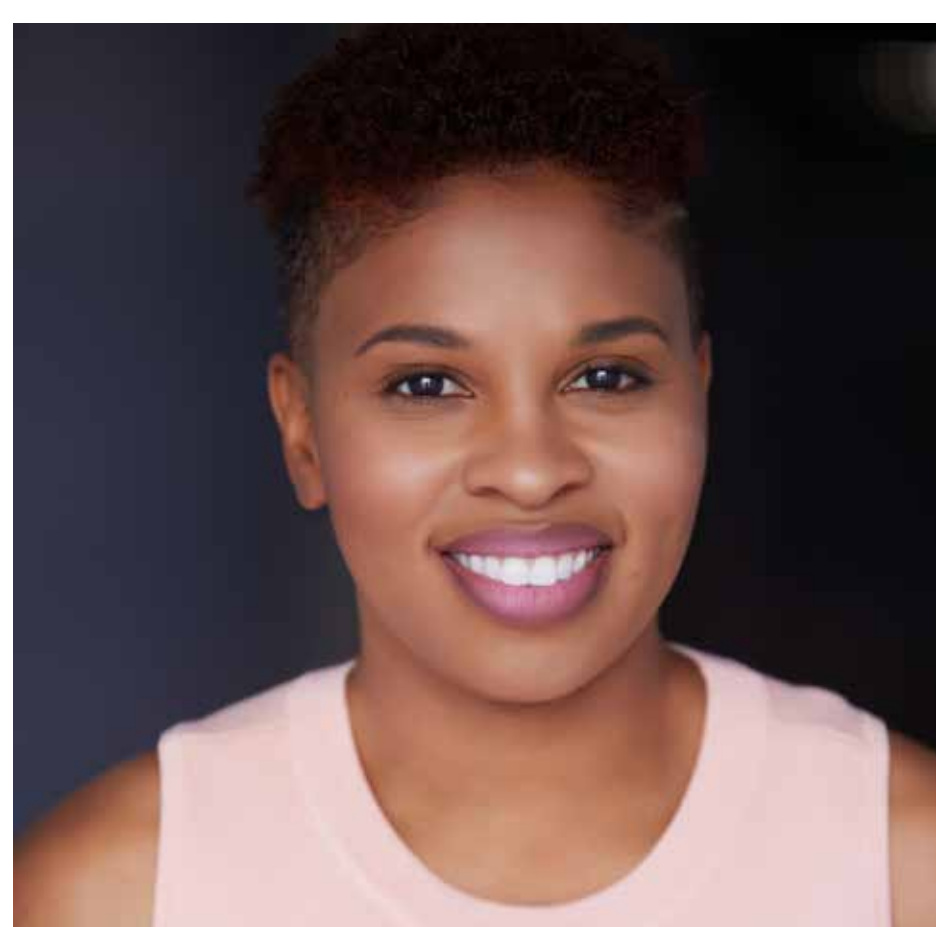
**Cherise Thomas** (*Chorus Supervisor, Chorus, u/s Choragos, u/s Soloist*) Broadway: *Waitress*. Tour: *Disenchanted! A New Musical Comedy*. Regional: *Hair, Dreamgirls, A New Attitude: In Tribute to Patti LaBelle*. TV: *The Chi, Empire*. Film: *Plow, The Talented Tenth*. Music available on all streaming platforms under Cherise Coaches. Thank you to my family and friends, Stewart Talent, the VB's, and most of all, TGBTG! @CheriseCoaches.



**Michael Adkins** (*u/s Polyneices, u/s Chorus*) is a Philadelphia native now based in LA. Michael is a versatile professional, and he excels as an actor, an accomplished singer/songwriter, and a skilled dancer. His musical collaborations include Kanye West, Chloe Bailey, Post Malone, and more. Notably, he recently toured with Jonathan McReynolds. He's showcased his talents in regional theater, Off Broadway, TV (including *Empire, The Chi, Chicago P.D., BET's Twenties*, and *Wutang: An American Saga*), and film. Michael is excited to be part of this esteemed cast. @lammichaeladkins.



**Kristen-ilycia Lowe** (*u/s Chorus*) has been singing her whole life. She is a part of The Lowe Family of Chicago. Since she was a young child, Kristen has loved singing. In 2011 she won Dwyane Wade's *Chicago Has Talent* competition and went on to be a Top 20 finalist on BET's *Sunday Best*. She has toured and sung with artists such as Donald Lawrence, Kirk Franklin, Anita Wilson, Jennifer Hudson, Kanye West, and Ari Lennox.



**Sharonda Scott** (*u/s Ismene, u/s Chorus*) is thrilled to make her stage debut in *The Gospel at Colonus* after years as a stunt performer/actress in film and television. Sharonda is a member of SAG-AFTRA and the Emmy Academy. *Grey's Anatomy*, *Bob Hearts Abishola*, and *Gray Matter* are among her most distinguished TV/Film credits. Her professional music career began as a singer/songwriter in the international music group *New Wine*. She has written music, recorded albums, and performed in various languages including Spanish, Portuguese, and even Russian. She is grateful for her family and reps at Impact Talent Group. @PurpleUnicornVibez.

# Musicians

**Mahmoud Khan** (Associate Music Director, Conductor, Keyboard, Organ) works as a musician, conductor, composer, arranger, and producer. His theatrical credits include: *A Fool Such As I* (eta Creative Arts, BTAA for Sound Design), the touring production of *Crowns, Hitzville: The Show* (Planet Hollywood Las Vegas), *Dreamgirls* (Alhambra Theatre and Dining), *Eyes* (eta Creative Arts), *A Nativity Tribute* (Congo Square), and many others. He currently serves as the Minister of Music at Carter Temple C.M.E. and is owner of Geniuskhan Music LLC. @geniuskhan.

**Joshua Griffin** (Music Programmer, Playback Engineer, Bass Guitar) is a multi-instrumentalist, music producer/director, and a mixing and mastering engineer based in Chicago. Josh found his love for music at the age of six when his parents bought his first bass guitar. He's recorded with artists in the US and abroad, producing, touring, teaching, and inspiring new and upcoming artists. Joshua combined his accreditation, skill, and talent to launch Griffin Music Group LLC, a production company dedicated to assisting recording artists (independent and signed) in songwriting, song arranging, music production, mixing, and mastering. Joshua is a very proud father and husband.

**Oscar Brown, Jr.** (Lead Guitar) is a multi-instrumentalist and music producer from Chicago. Recent theater credits include *Blue Heaven* (Lead Guitar), *Grandma's Jukebox* (Lead Guitar/Vocal Arranger/Band Leader), the Plays With A Purpose series at Black Ensemble Theater, and *Women of Soul* (Guitar, Mercury Theater). @ojoose.

**Amr Fahmy** (Keyboard) studied jazz piano and violin performance at DePaul University. He has performed at the Chicago Jazz Festival, the Hyde Park Jazz Festival, and the Red Sea Jazz Festival. He is currently a keyboardist with artist Marqueal Jordan and the Chicago Soul Jazz Collective.

**Tatum Flemister** (Drums) is a multi-instrumentalist and producer from Columbus, Ohio. He began playing drums at three years old with early influences in gospel, reggae, and R&B. In 2013 Tatum moved to Boston, MA to study at Berklee College of Music, where he honed his skills in performance, musical direction, and production. He graduated with a degree in Professional Music with a double concentration in Music Business and Performance. Now based in Los Angeles, Tatum is gaining success in both the live and studio spaces, having worked with artists like Adekunle Gold, SOFIE, and Dalaun as programmer, producer, and musical director.

## Creatives

**Lee Breuer** (Adaptation, Original Lyrics, Adapted Lyrics, 1937–2021) was a director and writer whose work expanded the boundaries of storytelling in the American theater. Breuer's theatrical presentations spanned performance art, theater, film, video, music, the visual arts, literature, and opera, and have engaged audiences beyond the avant-garde world where his early work originated. His works include *The Lost Ones* (1976), *Sister Suzie Cinema* (1980), *A Prelude to Death in Venice* (1980), *The Gospel at Colonus* (1983), *The Warrior Ant* (1986), *Peter and Wendy* (1997), and *Dollhouse* (2003).

**Bob Telson** (Adapted Lyrics, Composer) is an American composer, singer/songwriter, and pianist best known for his work in musical theater and film, for which he has received Tony, Pulitzer, and Academy Award nominations. Among his best-known works are the score for *Bagdad Café*, and the musical *The Gospel at Colonus*, starring Morgan Freeman and The Five Blind Boys of Alabama. His songs have been recorded by Barbra Streisand, Natalie Cole, Jeff Buckley, George Benson, Joe Cocker, Celine Dion, Etta James, k.d. lang, Shawn Colvin, Caetano Veloso, Gal Costa, George Michael, and The Five Blind Boys of Alabama.

**Mark J.P. Hood** (Director, Music Director) is thrilled to be collaborating with Charlie Newell, Mahmoud Khan, and the entire *Gospel* cast and creative team. Television credits include *House of Payne*, *Grand Crew*, *The Resident*, *Churchy*, and more. He was a fan favorite on *The Voice* and has been seen on stage in *The Scottsboro Boys*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Sister Act: The Musical*, *The Other Cinderella*



(BTAA Award, Best Leading Actor in a Musical), and others. He's performed with Kirk Franklin, Maverick City, Snoop Dogg, Kanye West, Kelly Rowland, H.E.R., and many more. Mark would like to thank Court Theatre, Mahmoud Khan, his family, and the VB's. @MarkJPHood.

**Charles Newell** (Director, 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 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 16 Jeff Award nominations. Charlie is a co-founder of the Civic Actor Studio, a leadership program of the University of Chicago's Office of Civic Engagement.

**TaRon Patton** (Associate Director) is the CEO of GLP PRODUCTIONS, INC. Producer credits: *The Billboard* (Jeff Award recipient, 16th Street Theater), *N* (Greenhouse Theater Center), *Misty Tanner* (Q&A Productions). Directing credits: *The Billboard* (16th Street Theater), *N* (Greenhouse Theater Center), *Saturday Night/Sunday Morning* (Steppenwolf Garage Rep), *Bulrusher* and *A Nativity Tribute* (Congo Square). Acting credits: *Her Honor Jane Byrne* (Lookingglass Theatre), *By the Way*, *Meet Vera Stark* (Goodman), *Hot L Baltimore* (Steppenwolf). Television credits: *The Chi*, *Empire*, *Chicago P.D.*, *Chicago Fire*, and *Chicago Med*.

**John Culbert** (Scenic Designer) designed scenery or lighting for many Court Theatre productions, including *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *The Tragedy of Othello*, *The Moor of Venice*, *Oedipus Rex*, *The Adventures of Augie March*, *All My Sons*, and *Iphigenia in Aulis*, as well as for Goodman Theatre's *Having Our Say*, Lookingglass's *Villette*, and Timeline Theatre's *The Chinese Lady*. He has also designed for Northlight, Writers Theatre, Glimmerglass Opera, Singapore Repertory, Opera National du Rhin, Berkeley Rep, McCarter Theatre, and Shakespeare Theatre Company. He served as the dean of The Theatre School at DePaul University for over 20 years.

**Raquel Adorno** (Costume Designer) Chicago credits include *Intimate Apparel* (Northlight), *Wife of a Salesman* (Writers Theatre), *The Island*, *The Tragedy of Othello*, and *The Moor of Venice* (Court), *I, Banquo* (Chicago Shakespeare), *Mies Julie* (Victory Gardens), *Unelectable You* (Second City), and many others. Regional: *The Tempest*, *Intimate Apparel* (Utah Shakespeare Festival), *A Raisin in the Sun*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Cymbeline*, *A Doll's House*, and *A Doll's House, Part 2* (American Players), *Small Mouth Sounds* (UCCS Theatreworks). Film: *Limerence*. Education: MFA Northwestern University. Visit [raqueladorno.com](http://raqueladorno.com).

**Keith Parham** (Lighting Designer) Court credits include: *Fen*, *The Tragedy of Othello*, *The Moor of Venice*, *Oedipus Rex*, *Photograph 51*, *All My Sons*, *The Hard Problem*, *An Iliad*, *Angels in America*, *Proof*, and many others. Broadway: *Thérèse Raquin* (Roundabout), *Between Riverside and Crazy* (2nd Stage Theater). Off-Broadway: *Wild Goose Dreams* (The Public), *Man from Nebraska* (2second Stage), and *The Purple Lights of Joppa Illinois* (Atlantic

Theater), among others. Awards: Obie, Lortel. Visit [keithparhamlighting.com](http://keithparhamlighting.com), [tutatheatre.org](http://tutatheatre.org).

**Sarah Ramos** (Sound Designer) designed *Arsenic and Old Lace* at Court Theatre last fall and spent nine seasons as Court's Sound and Video Supervisor. Chicago sound credits: Goodman, Steppenwolf, Lookingglass, Drury Lane, Writers, American Blues, Griffin, About Face, The Gift, Congo Square, Bailiwick, Teatro Luna, and Prop Thtr. Regional credits: Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, First Stage, Renaissance Theaterworks, Indiana Repertory, The Gateway, and Piedmont Opera. She is an alumna of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and a mother of two.

**Cristin Carole** (Movement Consultant) most recently created movement and intimacy designs for Goodman Theatre's production of *Toni Stone*. Cristin has worked at Steppenwolf, TimeLine, American Blues, and Writers Theatre in Chicago. At Court Theatre, she was the movement consultant for *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *Seven Guitars*, *Home*, *Porgy and Bess*, and the Jeff Award-winning production of *Blues for an Alabama Sky*. As director of the Shirley Hall Bass Foundation, she advocates for performing arts education in the Bahamas.

**Wenke (Coco) Huang** (Production Dramaturg) graduated from Northwestern University with a BA in Performance Studies and Art History. Born and raised in Beijing, China, she now calls Chicago her second home and will start the joint PhD program in Theater and Performance Studies and East Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago in fall 2023. She was the Assistant Director of *The Island* at Court Theatre. Other credits

include *Villette* at Lookingglass Theatre (Dramaturg), *The Garden of the Phoenix* for Lookingglass's *50 Wards* (Puppeteer), and *Seagull* at Steppenwolf Theatre (Assistant Dramaturg).

**Gabrielle Randle-Bent** (Oedipus Trilogy Dramaturg, 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.

**Kate Ocker** (Production Stage Manager) Regional credits include *It Came From Outer Space*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, and *As You Like It* (Chicago Shakespeare), *Fen*, *The Island*, *An Iliad*, *The Adventures of Augie March*, and *Iphigenia in Aulis* (Court), *Six Corners*, *BUDDY – The Buddy Holly Story*, and *The Spitfire Grill* (American Blues Theater), *Noises Off* (Asolo Rep), *A Christmas Carol*, *The Odd Couple*, and *An Inspector Calls* (Lyric Theatre of Oklahoma), and *Red* (Resident Ensemble Players).

**Natalie Cohen** (Assistant Stage Manager) Recent credits include *Once*, Manual Cinema's *A Christmas Carol*, *Athena* (Writers Theatre), *Clyde's*, *Pequeños Territorios en Reconstrucción* (Goodman Theatre), *Love Actually? The Unauthorized Musical Parody*, *Bachelor: The Unauthorized Parody Musical* (Right Angle Entertainment), and *Kinky Boots* (Paramount). She is a graduate of Truman State University.

**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 the Boeing Company 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.

**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.

## About Court Theatre

Court Theatre is the Tony Award-winning professional theatre of the University of Chicago, dedicated to innovation, inquiry, intellectual engagement, and community engagement.

Court Theatre was founded in 1955 as an amateur outdoor summer theatre at the University of Chicago. In 1971, classics professor Nicholas Rudall assumed the role of director and conceived Court's tradition of translating and adapting classic texts for contemporary audiences; the theatre was then established as a professional company with Actors' Equity Association in 1975. Charles Newell, Marilyn F. Vitale Artistic Director, has led Court since 1994.

Court Theatre endeavors to make a lasting contribution to classic American theatre by expanding the canon of translations, adaptations, and classic texts. We distill stories to their most essential and most exquisitely human themes, shining new light on ideas and experiences that unify, challenge, and inspire. Our sense of intellectual rigor—made possible, in part, by our relationship with the University of Chicago— informs this investigation of emotional depth and makes us distinct as a creative institution. Court is committed to a number of long-term projects, including the *Oedipus Trilogy* (of which *The Gospel at Colonus* is a part) and the complete staging of August Wilson's *Century Cycle*. We are also committed to staging world premiere translations and adaptations that offer fresh interpretations of foundational works; past adaptations include

Richard Wright's *Native Son*, Saul Bellow's *The Adventures of Augie March*, and Ralph Ellison's *The Invisible Man*.

Our artistic projects are enhanced by our robust educational and programming initiatives. With a team of teaching artists and a wealth of dramaturgical, historical, and design information available online, we highlight the educational value of our productions—not just for students, but for audiences more generally. Likewise, our programming efforts allow for a greater depth of engagement and discussion. Both offer a number of different entry points to approach our work and foster meaningful connections to that which is on stage.

In our artistic, educational, and programmatic endeavors, we are dedicated to deepening our relationship with the South Side of Chicago, where we are located. Chicago's South Side is one of the nation's most vibrant cultural and creative centers with a rich artistic history and a storied legacy of activism. We strive to imbue those values into our work and present productions that are relevant, engaging, and ambitious so as to better serve the community and inspire conversation.

## Performance at the Getty Villa

The Getty Villa's public programming enhances the experience of the ancient world by offering a diverse schedule of events anchored by an innovative theater program. Live performances of classical drama offer insight into the social, cultural, and political realities of life in ancient Greece and Rome; the J. Paul Getty Museum's permanent collection of antiquities, alongside its changing exhibitions, strengthens the connection between modern audiences and the stories enacted in the tragedies and comedies onstage.

Classical dramatists explored basic human stories that often parallel our contemporary experiences. Ancient plays are ever powerful and resonant, continuing to inspire reinterpretation. The Villa Theater Lab series, presented throughout the year in the Auditorium, fosters experimental and modern approaches to ancient stories, enabling directors, designers, musicians, playwrights, and actors to freely incorporate advanced stage, sound, and visual elements into productions developed in residence at the Villa.

Each September a major production is commissioned and presented in the Villa Outdoor Theater, a performance space based on ancient prototypes. (A full list is below.) These performances have become a much-anticipated end-of-summer tradition for Museum audiences, and plans are already well underway for *MEMNON* in 2024.

The Villa's public programming also includes performances of music and dance, film screen-



ings, and family festivals. To view our calendar of events, visit Getty's [website](#).

*As a courtesy to our neighbors, we ask that you keep noise to a minimum while enjoying the production. Please refrain from unnecessarily loud or prolonged applause, shouting, whistling, or any other intrusive conduct during the performance. While exiting the theater and the Getty Villa, please do so quietly.*

## Next Year at the Getty Villa

### **MEMNON**

By Will Power

Directed by Carl Cofield

Co-produced by Classical Theatre of Harlem

With bold, colorful language, and gripping dramatic conflict, *MEMNON* tells the tale of an African king who journeys to the city of Troy to engage in battle during the Trojans' darkest hour. This epic tale, an actual chapter in the ancient Greek mythological canon, has been for over a millennium forgotten and shoved aside. Until now.

## Previous Outdoor Theater Productions

- 2006 *Hippoytos* – Euripides.  
Directed by Stephen Sachs
- 2007 *Tug of War* (based on *Rudens*) – Plautus.  
Directed by Meryl Friedman
- 2008 *Agamemnon* – Aeschylus.  
Directed by Stephen Wadsworth
- 2009 *Peace* – Aristophanes.  
Directed by Bill Rauch
- 2010 *Elektra* – Sophocles.  
Directed by Carey Perloff
- 2011 *Trojan Women* (after Euripides) – Euripides.  
Directed by Anne Bogart
- 2012 *Helen* – Euripides.  
Directed by Jon Lawrence Rivera
- 2013 *Prometheus Bound* – attributed to Aeschylus.  
Directed by Travis Preston
- 2014 *Persians* – Aeschylus.  
Directed by Anne Bogart
- 2015 *Mojada: A Medea in Los Angeles* – Euripides.  
Directed by Jessica Kubzansky
- 2016 *Haunted House Party* (based on *Mostellaria*)  
– Plautus.  
Directed by Matt Walker
- 2017 *Iphigenia in Aulis* – Euripides.  
Directed by Charles Newell
- 2018 *Bacchae* – Euripides.  
Directed by Anne Bogart
- 2019 *The Heal* (based on *Philoctetes*) – Sophocles.  
Directed by Aaron Posner

- 2021 *LIZASTRATA* (based on *Lysistrata*) –  
Aristophanes.  
Directed by Matt Walker
- 2022 *Oedipus – Sophocles*. Directed by Jenny  
Koons. Co-produced by Deaf West Theatre

## The Villa Outdoor Theater Staff

<b>Public Programs Head</b>	Laurel Kishi
<b>Sr. Project Specialist</b>	Ralph Flores
<b>Sr. Public Programs Coordinator</b>	Anna Woo
<b>Sr. Education Specialist</b>	Shelby Brown
<b>Technical Coordinator</b>	Adrienne Wohleen, Production and Special Events Services
<b>Technical Production</b>	Chris Jeong, Marvin Jones, and Bill King
<b>Getty Villa Events</b>	Lars Francisco, Samantha Gifford, Aaron Lee Har- vey, and Heather Leisy
<b>Public Programs Intern</b>	Ese Ovbagbedia

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE  
#Villatheater #gettymuseum



Conservation  
Research  
Foundation  
Museum