

OCTAVIA E. BUTLER'S  
**PARABLE OF THE SOWER**

WED—SAT, JUNE 28—JULY 1



CHAPTER ONE

All that you touch

changes you.

You Change.

The only lasting truth

All that you

is Change.

Change

Is Change.

Is Change.

CREATED BY

**TOSHI REAGON AND  
BERNICE JOHNSON REAGON**

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY

**TOSHI REAGON AND  
BERNICE JOHNSON REAGON**

CO-DIRECTED BY **SIGNE V. HARRIDAY & ERIC TING**

**STRATHMORE**

Artwork by Justine Swindell





# OCTAVIA E. BUTLER'S ***PARABLE OF THE SOWER***

*Wednesday, June 28; Thursday, June 29; and Friday, June 30, 2023, 8pm*  
*Saturday, July 1, 2023, 4pm*

Created by Toshi Reagon & Bernice Johnson Reagon  
Music and Lyrics by Toshi Reagon & Bernice Johnson Reagon  
Co-Directed by Signe V. Harriday & Eric Ting

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## CAST

Abby Dobson, Afi Bijou, Alex Koi, Alina Carson, Be Steadwell, Evie Schuckman, Isaiah Stanley, Josette Newsam, Marie Tattie Aqeel, Neil Dawson, Noah Virgile, Shelley Nicole, and Toussaint Jeanlouis

## ORCHESTRA

Chogyi, Fred Cash, Jr., Bobbie Bird, Monique Brooks Roberts, and Zach Brown

### Music Direction

Toshi Reagon

### Choreography

Millicent Johnnie

### Scenic Designer

Arnulfo Maldonado

### Costume Designer

Dede M. Ayite

### Lighting Designer

Christopher Kuhl

### Audio Systems

John Kemp

### Art Installation

Abigail Deville

### Movement Director

Yasmine Lee

### Production Manager/ Lighting Director

Jojo Franjoine

### Assistant Production

Manager  
Henry Muller

### Production Stage Manager

Chris De Camillis

### Assistant Stage Manager

Caroline Pastore

### Lead Engineer/Sound Coordinator

Alex Dakoglou

### 2nd Audio Technician

Laura Brauner

### Booking Manager/Co-Tour Producer

ArKtype / Thomas O. Kriegsmann

### Associate Tour Producer

Sami Pyne

### Company Manager

Shannon Molly Flynn

*The Pre-Show Soundscape includes the music of Bernice Johnson Reagon, Jason Moran, Meshell Ndegeocello, Arooj Aftab, Climbing PoeTree, Alicia Hall Moran. News Reporter- J. Bob Alotta.*

### Produced by Wise Reagon Arts

Consultant Shanta Thake

Based on the novels *Parable of the Sower* and *Parable of the Talents* by Octavia E. Butler.

Courtesy of the estate of Octavia E. Butler.

*Originally commissioned by The Public Theater, and Co-commissioned by The Arts Center at NYU Abu Dhabi. World Premiere at The Arts Center at NYU Abu Dhabi November 9, 2017. It is made possible with funding by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Theater Project, with lead funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Octavia E. Butler's Parable of the Sower was developed with support by The Public Theater and during a residency at the Baryshnikov Arts Center, New York, NY. Additional support provided by the Apollo's Salon Series Program.*

*Fiscally sponsored by Cal Shakes.*



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

Learn more about the *Parable of the Sower* collaborators and journey at [www.parableopera.com](http://www.parableopera.com).

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# ABOUT THE PROGRAM

## SETTING

**Part 1:** The walled community of Robledo, a suburb of Los Angeles, California, in the near future.

**Part 2:** Later, on the road north.

## PERFORMERS

### Talents

Abby Dobson, Shelley Nicole, Toshi Reagon

### Part 1

Lauren Olamina.....Marie Tatti Aqeel  
Rev. Olamina.....Neil Dawson  
Cory Olamina.....Isaiah Stanley  
Keith Olamina.....Afi Bijou  
Harry Balter.....Noah Virgile  
Mrs. Hsu.....Evie Schuckman  
Richard Moss.....Toussaint Jeanlouis  
Zahra Moss.....Alina Carson  
Joanne Garfield.....Be Steadwell  
Tracy Dunn.....Alex Koi  
Mrs. Sims.....Josette Newsam  
Mrs. Hsu.....Evie Schuckman

### Part 2

The Ancestors.....Josette Newsam  
Grayson Mora.....Isaiah Stanley  
Lauren Olamina.....Marie Tatti Aqeel  
Harry Balter.....Noah Virgile  
Zahra Moss.....Alina Carson  
Travis Douglas.....Neil Dawson  
Gloria Natividad Douglas.....Afi Bijou  
Jillian Gilchrist.....Alex Koi  
Allison Gilchrist.....Be Steadwell  
Emery Tanaka Solis.....Evie Schuckman  
Taylor Franklin Bankole.....Toussaint Jeanlouis

## ORCHESTRA

**Percussion**  
Bobbie Bird

**Bass**  
Fred Cash, Jr.

**Cello**  
Zach Brown

**Violin**  
Monique Brooks Roberts

**Guitar & Keyboard**  
Chogyi

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## PROGRAM NOTE

Tonight we are in exploration of family. The one you are born into—the one you choose—the one you find—the one that finds you.

Sometime in the future, we meet Lauren Olamina, a 15-year-old girl living inside the remnants of a walled community kept secure by a locked gate. This is a community being held together by her father's will and vision. A community that did not choose to be together, but is forced to work together because of the massive deterioration of the world around them: a widening economic gap, privatization of what were once public resources, rampant corporate take-over, 21st century sharecropping, drugs, violence, and an overwhelming disregard for life. All these things chip away at what little sense of security Lauren feels. She comes to know that she is not safe behind that wall. She comes to know that the God of her father is not her God. And so, even as she prepares to leave, she begins to create her own religion: Earthseed—The Books of the Living.

When the wall comes down, Lauren loses her family. She leaves home with a few old maps, and starts out on an unknown journey north out of the suburbs of Los Angeles, passing as a man with two wounded friends at her side, gathering more along the way. Finding love, finding comrades. Teaching Earthseed.

*All that you touch  
you Change.  
All that you Change  
Changes you.  
The only lasting truth  
is Change.  
God  
is Change.*

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## BIOGRAPHIES

**TOSHI REAGON | she/her** (*Librettist, Composer, Music Director*) is a talented and versatile singer, composer, musician, curator, and producer with a profound ear for sonic Americana—from folk to funk, from blues to rock. While her expansive career has landed her at Carnegie Hall, the Paris Opera House, and Madison Square Garden, you can just as easily find Reagon turning out at a music festival, intimate venue, or local club. She has collaborated with many artists including Carl Hancock Rux, Ani DiFranco, Lenny Kravitz, Elvis Costello, and Nona Hendryx. As a composer, she has worked with Katori Hall, Urban Bush Women, and The Jane Comfort Dance Co., among others. She is currently touring Bessie Award-winning *The Blues Project* with tap dancer Michelle Dorrance and Dorrance Dance. She founded WORD\*ROCK\*&SWORD, a community festival that takes place throughout New York City every September. Together with her mother Bernice Johnson Reagon, she has created two operas with director Robert Wilson, *The Temptation of St. Anthony* and *Zinnias, The Life of Clementine Hunter*. Reagon co-composed music for two Peabody Award-winning films and received a NYFA Award for Music Composition, the 2010 OutMusic Heritage Award, and The Black Lily Music and Film Festival Award for Outstanding Performance. She is a National Women's History Month honoree and was named a 2015 Art of Change Fellow by the Ford Foundation.

**BERNICE JOHNSON REAGON | she/her** (*Librettist, Composer*) is a scholar, singer/songleader, and activist. For over half a century she has been a profound contributor to African American and American culture. Born in Southwest Georgia, her singing style and traditional repertoire is grounded in her experiences in church, school, and political activism. As a composer, she has created a narrative of her social and political activism through her songs and larger compositions. She performed as a member of the SNCC Freedom Singers during the sixties; she founded an all-women a cappella ensemble, The Harambee Singers, during the Black Cultural Movement; she founded and led the internationally acclaimed Sweet Honey in the Rock for 30 years until retirement. Paralleling her work in music, Reagon is one of the leading authorities in African American cultural history. She is a recipient of the Heinz Award for Arts and Humanities, a MacArthur Fellowship, the Presidential Medal, and Charles E. Frankel Prize for Contributions to the Public Understanding of Humanities.

**OCTAVIA ESTELLE BUTLER | she/her** (*Author, June 22, 1947–February 24, 2006*) was a renowned African American author, recipient of a MacArthur Genius Grant and a PEN Lifetime Achievement Award for her body of work. Born in Pasadena, California, in 1947, she was raised by her mother (a housemaid) and her grandmother. The author of many award-winning novels, including *Parable of the Sower* (1993), a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year, and *Parable of the Talents* (1995) winner of the Nebula Award for the best science fiction novel published that year, she was way ahead of her time. Though the MacArthur Grant made life easier in later years, she struggled for decades when her dystopian novels exploring themes of Black injustice, global warming, women's rights, and political disparity were, to say the least, not in commercial demand. During these years of obscurity, Butler, always an early riser, woke at 2 a.m.

every day to write, and then went to work as a telemarketer, potato chip inspector, and dishwasher, among other things. At the time of her death in 2006, interest in her books was beginning to rise, and in recent years, her work has become timely and hugely popular among all kinds of readers. Sales have increased worldwide, her work is taught in more than 200 colleges and universities nationwide, and a graphic novel adaptation of her book *Kindred* was No. 1 on the *New York Times* bestseller list in 2017. Her novel *Dawn* is being developed for television by Ava DuVernay (*Selma, A Wrinkle In Time*) and other projects based on her works are also in production.

**ERIC TING | he/they** (*Co-Director*) is an Obie Award-winning director. Recent directing credits include the world premieres of Lloyd Suh's *The Far Country* (Atlantic Theater Co) and *Bina's Six Apples* by Lloyd Suh (world premier, CTC, and Alliance); *The 1491s' Between Two Knees* (world premier, OSF). New York: Manhattan Theatre Club, Public Theater Under the Radar, BAM Next Wave, Soho Rep. Regional: Long Wharf Theatre, Hartford Stage, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Philadelphia Theatre Co, Cincinnati Playhouse, Goodman, Victory Gardens, Denver Center, CTG, ACT, Berkeley Rep, Seattle Rep, Oregon Shakespeare Festival. International: Singapore, France, UAE, Holland, Canada, Romania, Czech Republic, Hungary, Bali. Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' *The Comeuppance* (Signature Theater).

**SIGNE V. HARRIDAY | she/her** (*Co-Director*) is the Artistic Producing Director at Pillsbury House + Theatre in Minneapolis. Signe is a community organizer, fierce visionary, and powerful storyteller who crafts theatre that awakens our individual and collective humanity. As an artist engaged deeply in cooperative development, community centered program creation, and leadership consulting, Signe fosters social justice in action across sectors. As a director, multidisciplinary artist, activist, and facilitator, she uses theatre as a catalyst to ask questions about who we are and who we are in relation to each other. She is the co-founder of Million Artist Movement, a collective of artists committed to Black liberation; the co-founder of the award-winning synchronized swimming team, The Subversive Sirens; and the founder of Rootsprings Coop, a retreat center for BIPOC artists/activists/healers in MN. Harriday is also a core team member of REP Community Partners. Signe earned her MFA in Acting at the Institute for Advanced Theatre Training at the American Repertory Theatre at Harvard and Moscow Art Theatre.

**MILLCENT JOHNNIE | she/her** (*Choreographer*) served as an Associate Artistic Director of the Brooklyn-based dance company Urban Bush Women and choreographed the original *Parable of the Sower* workshop (New York City Opera). Off-Broadway: *Ameriville, Party People* (The Public Theater). Other theater credits include *Zinnias: The Life of Clementine Hunter* (Montclair Peak Performances); *Symphony for the Dance Floor* (Brooklyn Academy of Music); *The Love Project* (National Black Theater Festival); *The Hip Hop Project* (Krannert Performing Arts Center); *The Shipment; We Are Proud to Present a Presentation About the Herero of Namibia, Formerly Known as Southwest Africa, From the German Südwestafrika, Between the Years 1884–1915* (UnderMain Theater); *The Burning* (Contemporary Arts Center); and immersive/site responsive theater: *Cry You One* (Mondo Bizarro and Art Spot

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Productions). Johnnie directed and choreographed *RENT* (Ferndale Repertory Theater), *West Side Story* (University Kwazulu Natal, South Africa), *Bamaboula: Musician's Brew* (Cleo Parker Robinson 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tour), and *Cubamor The Musical* (Village Theater). She has received numerous awards and nominations for her work including a United States Artist nomination for dance, the Prague International Dance Festival Award, Times-Standard Beti's Choice Award, Theatre Bay Area Award, and Vivian Robinson/Avdelco nomination for outstanding choreography. She choreographed the feature film *Scary Movie 5*, served as a choreographer for Disney's *Frozen: Live at the Hyperion*, and more recently performed in the Opening Ceremonies of the Olympic Games in Brazil. Johnnie is a visiting assistant professor in dance at Florida State University.

**YASMINE LEE | she/her** (*Movement Director*) is a dance and movement-centered artist who has worked across concert dance, theater, film, television, ceremonies, and music videos in more than 40 countries. She is Georgie's mama 24/7. Select credits include Upcoming: *Megalopolis* (Francis Ford Coppola), *Maggie: A New Musical* (Theater Aquarius), *Let The Right One In* (Berkeley Rep), and *Disco Show* (Caesar's Palace). Now Playing: *A Beautiful Noise* (Broadway), *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* (Broadway and Toronto). Past: *Made For Love* (HBOMax), *Social! with David Byrne* (Park Ave Armory), *Sweeney Todd* (Barrow Street Theater), *Wild Goose Dreams* (The Public Theater), *Katy Perry for SNL* (NBC), *The Crucible* (dir: Ivo van Hove), *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime* (dir: Marianne Eliot), *Once* (dir: John Tiffany), and *RENT* (dir: Michael Greif). Opening and closing Ceremonies for World Expo 2020 (Dubai), Opening Ceremonies XXII Winter Olympic Games (Sochi), *Knives In Hens* (59E59), *Tender Napalm* (59E59), *PEARL* (Lincoln Center), *My Name's Not Indian Joe* (Davenport Theater), Issey Miyake product launch (Louvre Museum), *AMICI Di Maria Di Felipe* (Canale 5 Italia), *Across The Universe* (dir: Julie Taymor), Dunham Technique Video (Commissioned by US Library of Congress/Archived at Smithsonian Institute), Joan Peter's Dance Company, MOMIX, Earl Mosely's Diversity of Dance (Founding Member).

## PERFORMERS

**ABBY DOBSON | she/her** A sonic conceptualist performing artist and composer, activist, and scholar, Dobson is an Artist-in-Residence with the African American Policy Forum (AAPF). She has performed at the Apollo Theater, Blue Note Jazz Club, Hammer Museum, Kennedy Center, and on *The Tonight Show*. Featured on Talib Kweli's album *Gravitas* on "State of Grace," she was nominated for a 2014 BET Hip Hop Award for Best Impact Song. She was a Create Change Fellow with The Laundromat Project and performed with Black Women Artists for Black Lives Matter. Abby is also a member of the Resistance Revival Chorus, a women's chorus and Burnt Sugar, an improvisational ensemble. Abby's song #SayHerName, inspired by AAPF's campaign of the same name, is featured on The Resistance Revival's album, *This Joy*, released in 2020 on Righteous Babe Records. Passionate about using music as a tool for empathy cultivation, Abby creates music to inspire audiences to engage in action to promote transformative social change. Abby's essay *From Baldwin to Beyoncé: Exploring the Responsibility of*

*the Artist in Society: Re-envisioning the Black Female Sonic Artist as Citizen*" was published in *African American Arts: Activism, Aesthetics, and Futurity* in December 2019.

**AFI BIJOU | she/her** can be seen on her third season in her role as Sister Marny on *Godfather of Harlem* (MGM+). Her credits include *Law & Order* (NBC), *The Night of* (HBO), and *Insecure* (HBO). Broadway: *Fela!*, *Holler If You Hear Me*, *Once On This Island*, and many off-Broadway and regional productions such as *Blood Quilt* (Arena Stage), *An Octoroon* (Berkeley Rep), and *Good Goods* (Yale Rep). It's been a few seasons and so it feels good to be back live.

**ALEX KOI | she/her** is a Brooklyn-based vocalist, composer/producer, and improvising musician. She heads her eponymous solo project and is the vocalist and co-composer for the art rock band Saajtak. She has performed with musicians, visual artists, and dancers alike including Shara Nova, Theo Bleckmann, Chris Bruce, Morley Kamen, Nathan Thatcher, Joo Won Park, Eleonore Oppenheim, Nicole Mannarino, and Ragnar Kjartansson. Notable performances have included those at the Guggenheim Museum, Joe's Pub, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, Toronto Jazz Festival, Detroit Institute of Arts, and more. She has dedicated her artistic practice to exploring rainbows of musical possibilities as influenced by her interest in improvisation, electronic music, theater, and experimentalism.

**ALINA CARSON | she/they** is a musical theater trained performance artist and actor from Baltimore, Maryland. She attended Baltimore's Arena Players before relocating to New York where she spent three years as a company member of the Harlem Repertory Theatre. Some of her past productions include *Midsummer Moon* with the Virginia Stage Company, *Raisin in the Sun* with Harlem Rep, and *The Disco Oasis* Central Park. Alina is based in Brooklyn and is currently finishing her debut recorded album *Get a Little Lost*. She has also appeared in many film projects such as *Nanny* by Nikyatu Jusu, *Class* by Enzo Cellucci and Hank Azaria, and *@DatingZoe* by Adi Riesenbergs and Jess Dunn. She feels extremely fortunate to be a vessel for Octavia Butler's prophetic storytelling, and would like to give a special thanks to her beloved Aunt and acting mentor Lisa Carson.

**BE STEADWELL | she/they/he** is a queer pop composer and storyteller from Washington, DC. She composes her songs on stage using looping, vocal layering, and beat boxing. Her original music features earnest lyricism and affirming queer content. Steadwell's goal as a musician is to make other black girls, queers, introverts, and weirdos feel seen and loved. Steadwell earned a B.A. in Black Studies from Oberlin College and an M.F.A. in film from Howard University. Her 2014 film *Vow of Silence* screened in film festivals around the world, including Black Star, HBO's OutFest, The Schomburg Center, and Inside Out Toronto. In 2019, she composed the music for The Alvin Ailey Dance Company's production of *The Gone*. Later that year, she wrote and directed *A Letter to My Ex*, the musical, which imagines a queer black woman's experience through the year of a big breakup. In 2021, Steadwell released her latest album, *Succulent*.



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**EVIE SCHUCKMAN | they/them** is an actor, playwright, and visual storyteller with roots in South Florida; Chengdu, China; and now New York City. They hold a B.F.A. in Musical Theatre from Boston Conservatory at Berklee, with an emphasis in devising/solo performance. They are fascinated by the art of transformation. A resident company member at theatre incubator Mercury Store in Gowanus, Brooklyn, they spend most of their time building innovative devised theatre and new plays within a collaborative ensemble setting. (Recent related duties include: feeding miniature bread loaves to puppets, performing an exorcism, disappearing behind a door, and sapphic witchcraft in recitative.) Evie has developed works with companies across New York City, including Ars Nova and MCC Theater, where they were most recently seen in a workshop production of a new musical directed by Whitney White. Their pride is in their history, and the legacy of those who have come before them—trans, disabled, immigrant, neurodiverse elders... and those who have just joined us. Welcome. Love to Andrew and Lisa. To Mom and Dad: it really is all for you.

**ISAIAH STANLEY | he/him** is an actor based in Brooklyn, New York. Most recently seen as Hamlet as part of Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival's Willpower tour, Isaiah is so grateful to be back with the *Parable* family to tell this story. Biggest thanks to his family and friends who support him daily, and to this most incredible company. Thank you for being here!

**JOSETTE NEWSAM | she/her** is a New York native who has performed solo and background on the *Today Show*, *Live with Regis and Kelly*, and *Live with Kelly and Michael*. She has performed voice-overs for NBC Universal. She has also been the lead performer and provided background vocals with amazing artists such as Dr. Bernice Johnson Reagon, Toshi Reagon, Melba Moore, Lou Reed, Macy Gray, Angélique Kidjo, Nona Hendricks, Billy Bragg, Taina Asili, Norm Lewis, and the incomparable Ben E. King. She's played in renowned musicals such as *Ain't Misbehavin'* (Nell), *Ragtime* (Sarah), Gustave Flaubert's *The Temptation of St. Anthony* (Chorus), *Zinnias* (Mama), and Reagon's musical adaptation of Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower* (Mrs. Simms). She is currently a vocalist with Reagon's *Big Lovely*.

**MARIE TATTIANA AQEEL | she/her** or Marie Tatti is a performance artist and nature enthusiast originally from Washington, D.C. She is an alumnus of the Duke Ellington School of the Arts in D.C. and the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University in New Jersey. Her performance credits include Octavia E. Butler's *Parable of the Sower: the Opera* created by Toshi Reagon and Bernice Johnson Reagon; on the Millennium Stage at the John F. Kennedy Center; and *A Letter to My Ex the Musical* by Be Steadwell. Tatti currently resides in the mountains of Central Virginia where she enjoys working on her premiere studio recording album, being outdoors, and engaging in circle singing and ceremonial arts.

**NEIL DAWSON | he/him** is a New York City-based actor originally from Bronx, New York. Acting credits include *The Mountaintop* (Weston Playhouse), *Parable of the Sower* (LA Tour), *Waiting for Giovanni* (The Flea Theater), *Fires in the Mirror* (Cincinnati Playhouse), *Stick Fly* (Majestic Theater), *The Blacks* (Classic Stage Company), *Ain't Supposed to Die...* (Classical Theatre of Harlem), *Intimate Apparel* (Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theater), *365 Days/365 Plays* (Public Theater), *AmericanBlackout* (NY Fringe Festival), *Macbeth* (Bonn International Theater Festival), *Brooklyn Bridge* (Children's Theatre of Minneapolis), *Black Man Rising* (Audelco Award Winner, National Black Theatre Festival), *Flambeaux* (Theater for the New City) TV: *Godfather of Harlem*, *New Amsterdam*, *Law & Order*, *The Today Show*, numerous national commercials, voice-overs, and industrials. Education: M.F.A., University of Washington Professional Actor Training Program.

**NOAH VIRGILE | they/them** is an artist and performer based in New York City. Favorite theatrical credits include: Sam in *The Day You Begin* (Kennedy Center), Harry Balter in Octavia E. Butler's *Parable of the Sower* (CAP UCLA), *The Royal Family of Broadway* (Barrington Stage Company), Tweedle Dum in *Alice* (Wheelock Family Theatre), Jason Willette in *Rabbit Hole* (The Umbrella Stage Company), and *Follies* (Astoria Performing Arts Center).

**SHELLEY NICOLE | she/her** is a transformational healer using the power of love and the energetic magic of music to shift the world. She is songwriter, vocalist, composer, actress, and founder of Shelley Nicole's blaKbüshe which has released three albums, *she who bleeds...*, *The Quick & Dirty EP*, and *I Am American* produced by Grammy winning Living Colour guitarist, Vernon Reid. Her music, forged from rock, funk, and soul's connective tissue, empowers women to reclaim their cultural identity, and personal agency. As a featured member of the Burnt Sugar Arkestra, Shelley has performed around the globe and graced a multitude of stages including Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, The Apollo Theater, Afropunk, Son d'hiver, SFJAZZ, and the Hammer Museum. In February 2020, Shelley presented *Punanny Politixxx: Hindsight is 2020* at the Tribeca Performing Arts Center to critical acclaim. She continues to play a key role in Nia O. Witherspoon's *Priestess of Twerk* and is excited to return to Octavia E. Butler's *Parable of the Sower Opera*.

**TOUSSAINT JEANLOUIS | he/him** is an actor and teaching artist. Originally from Houston, Texas, he attended Arizona State University, earning a Bachelor of Arts in theater with a concentration in acting and continued at the California Institute of the Arts, earning a Master of Fine Arts in acting. He currently lives in New York City where his last performance was in the Pulitzer Prize winning *Hot Wing King* by Katori Hall at the Signature Theatre.



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## ORCHESTRA

**BOBBIE BIRD | he/him** (*Percussion*) is a multi-instrumentalist/producer, and singer-songwriter. His last self-produced internationally critically-acclaimed record entitled *Long Live the Duke & The King* landed him a hit song “Shine on You” in Ireland. He has been an active member of BIGLovely for over a decade and has produced Toshi Reagon’s record, *There and Back Again*. Alongside Loik Dury, he scored the film *Paris* by Cedric Klapisch; the soundtrack went on to be the number one selling record for two weeks in France. His early songwriting and production can be heard in the Band Drugs’ *The Prescription for Mis-America*, featuring Parliament/Funkadelic’s George Clinton, Garry Shider, and Clip Payne. He has spent the past year composing for Microsoft and X-Box and has co-written the theme song for Cedric Klapisch’s latest film *Back to Burgundy*. He will be touring with his band Lazlo Bane in 2023. Lazlo Bane’s song “I’m no Superman” is the theme song for the hit show, *Scrubs*. Bobby is also currently developing ground breaking behavioral products for his dog training Business — Lew Burke’s Dog Training (a family tradition of excellence) which was established in 1967. He’s also working on a documentary about his father Lew Burke, whose training of wonder dogs was featured on Johnny Carson’s *Tonight Show*, Merv Griffen, and Mike Douglas to name a few. Look out for songs soon to be released from his brand new band: Bobby Wrong & The Spare Change Orchestra.

**FRED CASH JR. | he/him** (*Bass*) is a native of Chicago. Fred has been touring with Toshi Reagon’s BIGLovely since 1998. Cash attended the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago and has worked with such artists as Jean-Paul Bourelly, India Arie, and Jerry Butler.

**MONIQUE BROOKS ROBERTS | she/her** (*Violin*) is a violinist hailing from Louisville, Kentucky. Roberts has had a busy and fulfilling career, having performed and recorded for many notable artists including Alicia Keys, Common, Aretha Franklin, and Jill Scott, just to name a few. She has played at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the John F. Kennedy Center, Radio City Music Hall, The Kimmel Center, Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center, Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia, the world famous Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow (Russia), the Theater at Madison Square Garden, The Newport Jazz Festival, The Willingboro Jazz Festival, and many other venues. She’s appeared on TV programs such as the MTV Music Video Awards, NPR’s *Tiny Desk*, *The David Letterman Show*, *The Stephen Colbert Show*, the BET Honors and others. She currently performs and tours with Rootstock Republic, Camille A. Brown and Dancers, Toshi Reagan, and as a solo artist.

**KARMA (CHOGYI) MARCO | he/him** (*Guitar*) is a multi-instrumentalist, songwriter, and producer from Woodstock, New York. When not working on his own music, he is a member of both 420 Funk Mob, and Omar Hakim and Rachel Z’s band, Ozmosys. Karma is also the only second guitar player in history to play with Bad Brains, supporting legendary Doctor Know. This is his third tour with *Parable*, a rather appropriate carriage forward of his lineage, as the grandson of Richie Havens.

**ZACH BROWN | he/him** (*Cello*) is a New York City-based cellist, born in Far Rockaway, Queens. Brown is a classically and jazz trained cellist. Using the training and experience from both styles, Brown focuses on pushing the boundaries of progressive cello playing in his writing and collaborations. He has been a guest artist and instructor at The Savannah Music Festival, New Directions Cello Festival, Ithaca Summer Music Academy, and Owens College. Performing at classical venues like Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, he has also performed with The Turtle Island String Quartet, Terence Blanchard, Queen Latifah, Ashanti, Jadakiss, and numerous Gospel artists such as Tye Tribbet, Hezekiah Walker, Donald Lawrence, and more. He has also appeared on *The Tonight Show* with Doechii.

## CREATIVE TEAM

**ARUNULFO MALDONADO | he/him** (*Scenic Designer*) Broadway: *A Strange Loop* (Tony nominee); *Topdog/Underdog*; *Trouble In Mind*. Off-Broadway: *Shhhh* (Atlantic); *The Coast Starlight* (Lincoln Center Theater); *Nollywood Dreams*, *School Girls...* (MCC); *The New Englanders*, *Sugar in Our Wounds* [Lucille Lortel Award] (MTC); *Dance Nation*, *Wish You Were Here* (Playwrights Horizons); *To My Girls* (Second Stage); *A Case for the Existence of God*, *Fires in the Mirror*, *My Broken Language* (Signature). Regional: Alley Theatre, Berkeley Rep, CTG, Guthrie, Steppenwolf, Woolly Mammoth, among others. International Tour: *The Magnetic Fields: 50 Song Memoir*. 2020 Obie Sustained Excellence in Set Design, Princess Grace Fabergé Theater Award, Henry Hewes Design Award nominee.

**DEDE M. AYITE | she/her** (*Costume Designer*) is a two-time Tony Award-nominated costume designer working in theater, opera, and film. She recently designed *X*, *The Life and Times of Malcolm X* for Detroit Opera. Her most recent Broadway credits include *Topdog Underdog*, *American Buffalo*, *A Soldier’s Play*, *Slave Play*, and *American Son*. Her select Off-Broadway credits include *Richard III*, *Merry Wives* (The Public Theater); *Seven Deadly Sins* (Tectonic); *By The Way, Meet Vera Stark* (Signature); *Nollywood Dreams*, *School Girls...* (MCC); *Bella: An American Tall Tale* (Playwrights Horizons); *Toni Stone* (Roundabout). Regionally, Ayite’s work has appeared at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Steppenwolf, Arena Stage, and more. She has worked in television with Netflix, Comedy Central, and FOX Shortcoms. Ayite earned her MFA at the Yale School of Drama and has received a TDF/Kitty Leech Young Master Award, Obie, Drama Desk, Henry Hewes, Lucille Lortel, Helen Hayes, Theatre Bay Area, and Jeff Awards.

**CHRISTOPHER KUHL | he/him** (*Lighting Design*) Recent work includes: *Dog Days* (Los Angeles Opera), *The Object Lesson* (BAM, Edinburgh Festival, Sydney Festival), *The Source* (San Francisco Opera, REDCAT, BAM), *The Institute of Memory* (The Public Theater, T:BA Festival), *Straight White Men* (Young Jean Lee’s Theatre Company, The Public Theatre, Kaai Theater, Centre Pompidou), *The Elephant Room* (St. Ann’s Warehouse) *ABACUS* (BAM, Sundance Film Festival, EMPAC). He has received two Bessie Awards, two Ovation Awards, as well as a Sherwood, Drammy, and Horton Award. He is originally from New Mexico and a graduate of CalArts.

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**JOHN KEMP | he/him** (*Audio Systems Designer*) is a sound designer, audio engineer, and musician. Productions include *Straight White Men* (2018 Helen Hayes/Assoc.) and *Oh, Hello On Broadway* (2016 The Lyceum/Assoc.). Engineering credits include Shakespeare in The Park's *Julius Caesar* (2017), *Here Lies Love* (2014), and *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* (2009). He also co-wrote music for the movie, *One Angry Man* (2010), which enjoyed a (thankfully) limited release and is the holder of his single IMDB credit. He currently serves as the Audio and Media Director at NYU Tisch Undergraduate Drama.

**ABIGAIL DEVILLE | she/her** (*Art Installation*) (b. 1981, New York, New York) received her Master in Fine Arts from Yale University (2011) and her Bachelors of Fine Arts from the Fashion Institute of Technology (2007). DeVille has exhibited a constellation of site-specific installations in the United States and Europe. Her most recent exhibitions include *No Space Hidden* (Shelter); *ICA LA*, Los Angeles, CA (2017); *20/20: The Studio Museum* in Harlem and Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA (2017), *A Picture of the Universe in Clock Time, Momentum 9, Moss*, Norway (2017); *Magnetic Fields: Expanding American Abstraction, 1960s to Today*, Kemper Museum, Kansas City, MO (2017); *Harlem: Found Ways*, Cooper Gallery at Hutchins Center, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (2017); *Urban Planning: Contemporary Art and the City 1967-2017*, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, MO (2017); *Chaos or Community?* Michel Rein, Brussels, BE (2017); *The Intersectional Self*, The Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation, New York, NY (2017). DeVille has designed sets for theatrical productions—at venues such as the Stratford Festival (2014), directed by Peter Sellers, *Harlem Stage* (2016), *La MaMa* (2015), *JACK* (2014-2016), and *Joe's Pub* (2014) directed by Charlotte Brathwaite. She has received honors—2014–2015 fellowship at The Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard, 2015 Creative Capital grantee and received a 2015 OBIE Award for design. DeVille is the 2017–2018 Chuck Close Henry W. and Marion T. Mitchell Rome Prize Fellow.

**JOJO A. FRANJOINE | they/them** (*Production Manager/Lighting Director*) served synchronizes energy to create visual landscapes. Jojo founded *elektralite.space*, a collective of queer artists, designers, and problem solvers striving to discover potent truth of expression. Jojo believes in finding punctum — the unexpected extra. Jojo is sensitive, asking questions, researching, rethinking, and re-designing. Through a unique collaborative process, Jojo ensures simple yet aerobic visual synthesis. *elektralite.space* works in a wide range of project flavours. From theatre, dance, opera, music, fashion, tv/broadcast, architecture, and light installations, Jojo creates a style and visual identity unique to each story.

**HENRY MULLER | he/him** (*Assistant Production Manager*) is a Chicago-based freelance lighting designer, programmer, and technician. He received his bachelor's from Northwestern University in 2022, where he studied theatrical design and psychology. While his focus is in lighting, he has also worked as a stage manager, production manager, sound designer, and musician. He would like to thank his friends, family, and dogs.

**CHRIS DE CAMILLIS | he/him** (*Stage Management*) Broadway: *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *Misery*, *It's Only a Play*, *The Glass Menagerie*. Off- Broadway: *The Rape of the Sabine Women* by Grace B. Mathias (Playwrights Realm), *Building the Wall* (New World Stages), *The Total Bent* (Public), *Much Ado About Nothing* (NYSF/DEACORTE); *Pride's Crossing* (Lincoln Center), *SLAVS!* (NYTW), *Oliver Twist* (TFANA), *Raised in Captivity* (The Vineyard). Regional: American Repertory Theater; Artistic Coordinator and Resident Stage Manager 1998–2013.

**CAROLINE PASTORE | she/her** (*Assistant Stage Manager/Wardrobe*) is a NYC-based stage manager who graduated from SUNY Purchase's Theatre/Design Technology program where she studied stage management. Past credits include: The Cape Playhouse's productions of *The Fantasticks* (production stage manager), *An American in Paris* (assistant stage manager), *Lady Day...* (assistant production manager), *Once* (ASM), *Little Shop of Horrors* (ASM), Kaneza Studio's *Cartography* (Sub Stage Manager), and VT Stage's *MAYTAG Virgin*. Caroline would like to dedicate her work to her dear friend, Ari Bourke, for continuously inspiring her work as an artist.

**SHANNON MOLLY FLYNN | she/her** (*Company Manager*) is a director, producer, and writer based in New York City. Shannon's passion and empathy for the human spirit are what inspired her wild love affair with the theatre. She splits her time between the non-profit sector, currently sitting as the Founding Artistic Director of Normal Ave, and the NYC nightlife, producing concerts and shows at 54 Below, The Cutting Room, Green Room, and The Duplex. Director of *Sons of the Prophet* and *The Dream of the Burning Boy* at Normal Ave, as well as numerous readings and workshops of new plays. Producer of the world premiere of *Lily Houghton's of the woman came the beginning of sin and through her we all die* and Kayla Martine's *Indoor Person*. Shannon believes good humans make good artists and fiercely defends a human-first approach to every aspect of her work. Flynn is book half of writing duo Pearlstein and Flynn. Check out their new musical, *WAKE YOU UP*.

**SAMI PYNE | she/her** (*Associate Producer, ArKtype*) is the associate producer at ArKtype, one of the world's leading supporters of new, experimental work. She is also a New York City-based independent producer passionate about decluttering and demystifying the production process for creators. Sami's had the pleasure of working with companies such as 600 Highwaymen, The Arts & Climate Initiative, The Exponential Festival, Clubbed Thumb, New York Theatre Workshop, Aeon's Sophia Club, The Martin E. Segal Center, Signature Theatre, Park Avenue Armory, The Play Company (PlayCo), The Tank, The New Ohio, Theatre Development Fund (TDF), and HERE Arts Center. She received a B.F.A. from Shenandoah Conservatory in 2017 and was a graduate of the Columbia University Theatre Management and Producing M.F.A. program in 2020. Operations Committee Leader of the Creative and Independent Producers Alliance. Fellow of WP Theater's 2022–2024 Producers Lab.

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**ArKtype / Thomas O. Kriegsmann | he/him** (Producer) specializes in new work development and touring worldwide. His past work includes projects with Kaneza Schaal, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Peter Brook, Daniel Fish, Victoria Thiérrée-Chaplin, Yael Farber, Anna Deavere Smith, Annie-B Parson and Paul Lazar, Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen, Peter Sellars, Julie Taymor, John Cameron Mitchell, and Tony Taccone. Recent premieres include 600 Highwaymen's *A Thousand Ways*, Nora Chipaumire's *Nehanda*, Sam Green's *32 Sounds* with JD Samson, Bryce Dessner's *Triptych (Eyes Of One On Another)* directed by Kaneza Schaal, John Cameron Mitchell's *The Origin Of Love*, Kaneza Schaal and Christopher Myers' *Cartography*, Sam Green and Kronos Quartet's *A Thousand Thoughts*, Big Dance Theater/ Mikhail Baryshnikov's *Man In A Case*, and Nalagáat Deaf-Blind Theater's *Not By Bread Alone*. Ongoing collaborations include 600 Highwaymen, Sam Green, Timothy White Eagle, Andrew Schneider, Big Dance Theater, Toshi Reagon, and Compagnia T.P.O. Upcoming premieres include Justin Peck and Sufjan Stevens' *Illinois* and Scott Shepherd's *This Ignorant Present*. He is a founding member of CIPA (The Creative & Independent Producer Alliance).

**WISE REAGON ARTS** is an independent production company engaged in creating and cultivating art/work/life/song/action-centering congregational gatherings. Founded in 2018 by Toshi Reagon to produce the opera Octavia E. Butler's *Parable of the Sower* (co-produced with Meying Wang), Toshi created the Parable Path to move with and beyond the experience of the ritual singing of Octavia's story. The Parable Path is inspired by the journeys in the *Parable* novels that very much reflect the state of our current world. So, we work together on the issues that we are facing, seeing the unique expertise that each of us has to problem solve. Being in collaboration and facing our right now and future together. Realigning ourselves with the planet's resources. Wise Reagon Arts' newest work titled, *You're Having Too Much Fun So We're Gonna Have To Kill You* looks at the era of disco and the journey to its global dominance. The death ritual to shut it down and the relentlessness of a beat that would not die. We would like to thank Indigo Arts Alliance, Maine Humanities Council, Bowdoin College, The McKeen Center, and all the mighty individuals and organizations that we have been in action and conversation with.



**STRATHMORE**