



MONTCLAIR
STATE UNIVERSITY

Wiley Hausam, Director

Daniel Gurskis, Dean, College of the Arts

PEAK Performances presents



The Acting Company **ODYSSEY**

Written and Directed by **Lisa Peterson**^o

Based on Homer's *The Odyssey* Translated by **Emily Wilson**

Thu., November 9, 2023 @ 7:30pm

Alexander Kasser Theater

THE ACTING COMPANY

Artistic Director **Kent Gash**

Managing Director **Erik Schroeder**

Producing Director **Devin Brain**

Founder **Margot Harley**

CAST (in alphabetical order)

Anoud **Layla Khoshnoudi**^{*}

Zee **Zamo Mlengana**^{*}

Swing **Abiola Obatolu**^{*}

Hana **Anya Whelan-Smith**^{*}

Béa **Sophie Zmorrod**^{*}

CREATIVE TEAM

Scenic Design **Tanya Orellana**[†]

Costume Design **Sarita Fellowst**

Lighting Design **Russell H. Champat**

Sound Design **Sinan Refik Zafar**[†]

Original Songs **Masi Asare**

Voice and Speech Coach **Xavier Clark**

Dramaturg **Jesse Cameron Alick**

Associate Director, Staff Director **Margaret Lee**

Text and Script Consultant **Janice Paran**

Casting **Laura Schutzel, CSA**

Production Stage Manager **Stephanie Weinzapfel**

The Acting Company's production of *Odyssey* received its world premiere at Marin Theatre Company in September 2023.

^oThe Director is a member of the Stage Directors And Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.

[†]Designers represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees.

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

Running time: One hour 40 minutes, no intermission.

Staff for *Odyssey*

Movement Coordinator **Margaret Lee**
Assistant Stage Manager **Cello Blanks**
Associate Costume Designer **Matthew Lott**
Assistant Scenic Designer **Danielle DeLaFuente**
Assistant Lighting Designer **Charlie Mejia**
Sound Supervisor **Row Walters**
Rehearsal Props Lead **Anna Dorodnykh**
Guitar Coach & Additional Arrangements **Peter Douskalis**
EDI Consultant **Jacqueline Lawton**
Production Assistant **Elisaveta Alekumova**
Hair Consultant **Cody Ainey**
Loudspeaker Voice & Additional Greek **Ifigenia Gonis**
Key Art Illustration **Shirien Damra**

The Acting Company Staff

Artistic Director **Kent Gash**
Managing Director **Erik Schroeder**
Producing Director **Devin Brain**
General Manager **Megan Condit**
Director of Development **Hillary Cohen**
Associate Producer **B. Rafidi**
Office Manager **Maddie Hopfield**
Development Associate **Nayah Ferris**
Tour Production Manager & Audio Supervisor **Row Walters**
Tour Company Manager **Esther Bermann**
Tour Technical Director **Rob White**
Tour Lighting Supervisor **Alissa Shea**
Tour Wardrobe Supervisor **Margarita R. Herrera**

Program Notes

From The Acting Company's Artistic Director

On behalf of The Acting Company, I want to welcome you to Lisa Peterson's adaptation of *Odyssey*. The Acting Company has a deep commitment to timeless storytelling that illuminates the human condition. Since my becoming artistic director in 2021, we have been reaffirming our commitment to this mission with a bilingual English-Spanish-language production of *Romeo and Juliet* directed by Leah C. Gardiner and a newly commissioned adaptation of *The Three Musketeers* by Kirsten Childs that celebrated Alexander Dumas's Blackness.

Our company's deep commitment to celebrating the most exciting and dynamic artists currently working in our country is fully manifest in our commissioning Lisa Peterson to create a new, all-female adaptation of Homer's epic poem. Lisa is a world-class playwright and director, and her adaptation centers on the storytelling impulse and the role it plays in human survival. As we all emerge from the shadows and struggles of the pandemic only to find ourselves in these increasingly turbulent times, there is an urgent need for the connection that storytelling can provide. In a darkened theater, a shared experience has the power to change us as it reminds us of our common humanity.

Lisa Peterson's unique and surprising adaptation and her brilliant direction of our company of Middle Eastern, North African, and Eastern European actors is an ode to our collective need for home, forgiveness, and grace. It is vital and essential storytelling born out of a special collaborative impulse.

So, on behalf of The Acting Company, we welcome you to *Odyssey*! May it help show you the way home.

—**Kent Gash**, Artistic Director
The Acting Company

Notes On *Odyssey* from the Adaptor/Director

There is an important debate happening these days about “the classics,” especially those giant epics that have been taught as the pillars of “Western Literature” for centuries. Homer’s *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* are smack dab in the middle of that argument. Should we keep these two ancient epics on a pedestal, and why—or why not? Whose story are they telling, and should it be told to the exclusion of other stories that have been kept silent? As I ask these questions of myself, I do find the essential humanity coursing through these Greek stories to be bottomless and compelling. And although I cannot help but find myself in awe of the power of *The Iliad*, I have to confess I never thought that I’d find my way to wanting to make an adaptation of *The Odyssey*. So many others have done it, and brilliantly; I didn’t think I could find my personal way into this classic hero’s journey, the story of Odysseus trying to get home. And then I read Emily Wilson’s incredible new translation, back in 2018 when it first came out. It was as if the wax had been pulled from my ears.

Emily’s translation keeps opening windows to many of the less famous but more complicated elements of *The Odyssey*: the focus on the Greek idea of *xenia*, or hospitality. In her hands, the story keeps touching down on the different ways that humans deal with guests and strangers, especially those who find themselves on the shores of a new land and need help. Over and over, Odysseus sets sail, is blown off course by a storm (usually caused by a malicious god), and has to start over on a new island, in an unfamiliar culture. That process in the story—this desperate journey to land somewhere safe—started me thinking about the contemporary odysseys taking place across the Mediterranean Sea in our times. In the EU, they call it a “migrant crisis” and it seems to be a crisis for sure. When I first became aware of this dangerous passage that lands all sorts of people on various small Greek islands and into a kind of limbo, it was 2016 and tens of thousands of Syrian refugees were trying to escape civil war in their country. Over the last seven years that conflict still rages, and now migrants from all over the surrounding continents, from the south, the east, the west, and the north, are braving the dangerous seas to make not just a better life, but a safe one.

I’ve now become attuned to the gorgeous heartbreak in the poetry of *The Odyssey*. This earth is beautiful, full of creatures and lands that take our breath away. Nature can wrap us up, but it can also tear us apart. The stars above are sharp and lovely. We are all voyagers, but some are lucky, and some are not. The ancient storytellers remind us, and then repeat it: we must be good to one another. One day you are the host, then next you are the traveler. Take care.

—Lisa Peterson

Adaptor/Director of *Odyssey*

About the Company

The Acting Company develops actors by touring professional theater across America. Founded in 1972 by John Houseman and Margot Harley with the first graduating class of the Drama Division of the Juilliard School, the Company has launched the careers of two generations actors, including Kevin Kline, Patti LuPone, Mary Lou Rosato, Keith David, Rainn Wilson, Lorraine Toussaint, Frances Conroy, Harriet Harris, Jeffrey Wright, and Jesse L. Martin, among many others. In 2003, the Company was awarded the Tony honor for Excellence in the Theater, and to date their work has been seen by over four million people in 48 states, 10 foreign countries, on and Off-Broadway. New works commissioned by the Company include plays Marcus Gardley, Rebecca Gilman, John Guare, Beth Henley, Tony Kushner, Lynn Nottage, Meg Miroshnik, Ntozake Shange, Maria Irene Fornés, Marsha Norman, Samm-Art Williams, and Wendy Wasserstein. The Company’s education programs bring professional productions, in-school residencies, and teacher training workshops to thousands of students in underserved schools and disadvantaged communities each year.

Acknowledgments

The Acting Company's 2023 National Tour is made possible, in part, by support from the Axe-Houghton Foundation; Booth Ferris Foundation; the Howard Gilman Foundation; The Rona Jaffe Foundation; The Lucille Lortel Foundation; Shakespeare in American Communities, a program of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest; the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature; public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council; The Morris and Alma Shapiro Fund; The Shubert Foundation; and many generous individual donors to whom we are ever grateful. The Acting Company gratefully acknowledges the indelible memories of Anne L. Bernstein (1948–2021), Louanna O. Carlin (1937–2021), Carol Crowley (1930–2023), Jill Edelson (1933–2020), and Elinor Bunin Munroe (1920–2017).

Special Thanks

Marin Theatre Company

(Managing Director Meredith Suttles, Artistic Producer Richard A. Mosqueda, General Manager Nichole Gantshar, Director of Production Jessica Marchesi, Technical Director Jeff Klein, Scenic Artist Stephanie P. Jucker, Costume Shop Manager Daria Perkova, ATD/Props Lead Liam Rudisill, Lighting & A/V Director Krys Swan, and Marketing Partner RachelMedia.org)

Nick Bayer

William L. Fellows

Yorgos Karamalegos

Odyssey rehearsed at Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York's Spaces@520, New York, NY

Additional Technical Production Staff: Hannah Sgambellone and Olivia Fletcher

Audited Financial Statements: Michael Schall, CPA, Sax, LLP

Legal Representation: Jason Baruch, Sendroff & Baruch, LLP

Sound equipment provided by: Bauder Audio Systems

Tour Transit by: Lamoille Valley Transportation, Inc

The Acting Company Board of Directors

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About the Artists

Cast

Layla Khoshnoudi (Anoud) is an Iranian-Texan actress based in New York. She received an MFA in Acting from Brooklyn College. Select theater credits include *Men on Boats* (Clubbed Thumb); *7 Minutes* (Waterwell); *Dance Nation* (Playwrights Horizons); *Bull in a China Shop* (Lincoln Center); *Dido of Idaho* (Ensemble Studio Theatre); *I am Gordafarid* (Noor Theatre); *Gary: A Sequel to Titus Andronicus* (Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theater); *Will You Come With Me?* (Play Company); *Nobody's Girl* (NJ Rep); *Wyoming* (Lesser America). TV: *Instinct* (CBS); *FBI* (CBS); *All Hail Beth* (BricTV), *My Ex Is Trending* (YouTube). Film: *Long Nights, Short Mornings*; *Bad at Birthdays*. Short films: *Nadia Jaan*; *Androgen*; *Bookends*.

Zamo Mlengana (Zee) is thrilled to be making her stage debut in Lisa Peterson's *Odyssey*. Mlengana recently earned a BFA in Fine Arts from New York City's famed Juilliard School, where she was a Shubert Foundation Scholar. Mlengana proudly hails from Johannesburg, South Africa. She would like to thank God, her family and team for always supporting her.

Abiola Obatolu (Swing) is a 2023 graduate of the Carnegie Mellon School of Drama, where she received her bachelor of fine arts in Acting. She is thrilled to make her off-Broadway debut this fall in Lisa Peterson's *Odyssey* with The Acting Company. Additional professional credits include *The Color Purple* at Broadway at Music Circus Sacramento and *This is How You Capture the Light* at the Kennedy Center. During her time at CMU, Obatolu was awarded the Helen Wayne Rauh Award for Excellence in Acting.

Anya Whelan-Smith (Hana) recently completed a run of *Hamlet* at the Guthrie Theater, playing Ophelia. Other theater credits include the 2022 New Works Festival (Gulfshore Playhouse), *His Girl Friday* (Barrington Stage Company), *A Class Act* (Berkshire Theatre Group), *Macbeth* and *The Taming of the Shrew* (MaineStage Shakespeare, repertory), and *Blue Ridge* (Williamstown Theatre Festival, Original Workshop Production). TV: *FBI: International* (CBS), *Law & Order: SVU* (NBC). Film: *Fall to Rise*, *Pizza Party*, *Souvenir Drunk* (upcoming). MFA Acting, The Juilliard School.

Sophie Zmorrod (Béa) is an actor, vocalist, and playwright based in Brooklyn, NY. Theater credits include Beadle Bamford in *Sweeney Todd* (Trinity Repertory Company), *Marjana and the Forty Thieves* (Target Margin Theater), *INVASION!* (Angram Opera House), Miss U in *Promenade* (the María Irene Fornés Marathon at The Public), *Hamlet* in *Machine Learning Hamlet* (MetaPhys Ed), *The Protest* (Cherry Lane Theatre), *Ocean Filibuster* (PearlDamour), and James Joyce's *The Dead* (Hangar Theatre). At Brown/Trinity Rep, she portrayed Robin in *Wolf Play*, Yitzak in *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, Death in *Everybody*, Leontes in *The Winter's Tale*, and Mona in Alexa Derman's *Play House*. Film/TV: *For Life* (ABC/Hulu). MFA in Acting from Brown/Trinity Rep, Stephen Sondheim Fellow, and David Wickham Prize in Playwriting. BA cum laude in Music from Columbia University. www.sophiezmorrod.com

Creative & Production Teams

Lisa Peterson (Adapter/Director) is a two-time OBIE Award-winning writer/director. Her works include *An Iliad*, written with Denis O'Hare (NYTW, OBIE and Lortel Awards); *The Good Book* (co-written with O'Hare, Court Theatre and Berkeley Rep); *The Waves* (adapted from Virginia Woolf with composer David Bucknam, NYTW). Peterson is renowned for directing new plays and classics across the country; recently she directed the world premiere of Doug Wright's *Good Night, Oscar* on Broadway. She was associate director at Berkeley Rep, Center Theatre Group, and La Jolla Playhouse. She is a recent recipient of the Gordon Davidson Award for Lifetime Achievement. Upcoming writing projects include *The Song of Rome* with O'Hare and *The Idea of Order* with composer Todd Almond.

Tanya Orellana (Scenic Designer) (she/her) designs performance spaces for theater and opera. Originally from San Francisco's Mission District, she is a core member of the award-winning ensemble Campo Santo. Previous collaborations with Lisa Peterson include *The Kind Ones* by Miranda Rose Hall at The Magic, *Timon of Athens* and *Coriolanus* at Utah Shakespeare Festival. Recent collaborations include *Poor Yella Rednecks: Vietgone 2* directed by Jaime Castañeda, *Fefu and Her Friends* directed by Pam MacKinnon, *Oedipus* directed by Jenny Koons at the Getty Villa, *The Industry's Sweet Land*, an immersive opera directed by Yuval Sharon and Cannupa Hanska Luger, and *LEAR* by Marcus Gardley, co-directed by Eric Ting and Dawn Monique Williams. Orellana received her MFA in Scenic Design from CalArts and is the 2016 recipient of the Princess Grace Fabergé Theater Award. She is a member of Wingspace Theatrical Design and an organizing member of La Gente: The Latine Production Network. tanyaorellana.com

Sarita Fellows (Costume Designer) was born in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Her more recent works include projects such as *Death of a Salesman*, Broadway; *Drinking in America*, Audible Minetta Lane Theater; *Theater of the Mind*, Denver Center of Performing Arts; *Elyria*, Atlantic Theater Company; *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Portland Center Stage; *Blues for an Alabama Sky* and *Sweat*, Guthrie Theater; *Joy and Pandemic* and *Our Daughters Like Pillars*, Huntington Theatre; *Seize the King*, Alliance Theatre; *A Bright Room Called Day*, Public Theater; and *Fefu and Her Friends*, American Conservatory Theater. In the dance world, Fellows has worked with choreographers such as Liz Lerman and Edisa Weeks. MFA in Design from Tisch School of Design. Fellows also instructs at the University of Connecticut and Princeton. Recent awards include Outstanding Achievement in Costume Design (the National Black Theatre Festival 2022) and the Lily Award (2020).

Russell H. Champa (Lighting Designer) previously designed *Desire* for The Acting Company at 59E59 Theater. Current and recent projects include *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* (the Dallas Opera), *Josephine's Feast* (Magic Theater), *Fefu and Her Friends* (American Conservatory Theater), *Becky Nurse of Salem* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre), *Everest* (Lyric Opera of Kansas City), and *Thresh|Hold* (Pilobolus). Broadway credits include *China Doll* (Gerald Schoenfeld Theatre), *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)* (Lyceum Theatre/Lincoln Center Theater), and Julia Sweeney's *God Said "Ha!"* (Lyceum Theatre). New York work includes Playwrights Horizons, Theatre for a New Audience, the Public Theater, Second Stage Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, and New York Stage and Film. Regional work includes Steppenwolf Theatre Company, the Wilma Theater, Trinity Repertory Company, California Shakespeare Theater, the Mark Taper Forum, and the Kennedy Center. Thanks J&J! PEACE. russellchampa.com

Sinan Refik Zafar (Sound Design) Broadway: *What the Constitution Means to Me* (also NYTW, National Tour). National Tour: *What to Send Up When It Goes Down* (also Playwrights Horizons, BAM, A.R.T.). Off-Broadway includes *Letters from Max* (Signature); *Which Way to the Stage*, *All the Natalie Portmans* (MCC); *To My Girls* (Second Stage); *The Vagrant Trilogy*, *Cullud Wattah* (The Public); *Wish You Were Here*, *What to Send Up When It Goes Down* (Playwrights Horizons); *English* (Obie Award), *Shhhh* (Atlantic); and *Montag* (Soho Rep). Regional includes Kennedy Center, Guthrie, Mark Taper Forum, Berkeley Rep, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and more. SinanZafar.com

Masi Asare (Original Songs) Broadway: *Paradise Square* (lyrics, Tony/Outer Critics Circle nominee). Off-Broadway/International: *Monsoon Wedding* (lyrics), *Notes from Now* (contributed music/lyrics). Commissions: Theatre Royal Stratford East, Barbara Whitman/Grove, Lilly Awards, Concord Theatricals. In development: *Delta Blue* (music/lyrics), *The Family Resemblance* (book/music/lyrics, O'Neill), *Rishvor* (book/music/lyrics), *Marian, or the True Tale of Robin Hood* (music/lyrics). Her spy musical *Sympathy Jones* (music/lyrics) and Marvel super hero play *Mirror of Most Value* have collectively had 100+ productions. Honors: Dramatists Guild Fellow, Billie Burke Ziegfeld Award, Theater Hall of Fame Grant, Women to Watch on Broadway. Degrees: Harvard, NYU Tisch. Asare is on the theater faculty at Northwestern.

Xavier Clark (Voice and Speech) is a bilingual Voice and Speech practitioner who studied voice under Alithea Phillips and Ursula Meyer and apprenticed with Dawn-Elin Fraser. He recently served as the dialect coach for TFANA's *Orpheus Descending* and as the voice and speech coach for The Acting Company's National Tour of *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Three Musketeers*. He is on faculty with the Stella Adler Studio of Acting and Powerhouse Theater at Vassar College. Training: RADA, NYU Tisch (BFA), and UC San Diego (MFA).

Jesse Cameron Alick (Dramaturg) is a dramaturg, producer, poet, playwright, essayist, artistic researcher, and science fiction expert. Alick is the associate artistic director at the Vineyard Theatre in NYC, where he is a dramaturg and producer. Alick is an active freelance dramaturg at various off-Broadway theaters in the city, nationwide, and in the UK. Alick studied writing with Adrienne Kennedy and has taught theater courses, lectured at classes, and mentored students at a myriad of programs, currently teaching at NYU.

Margaret Lee (Associate Director, Staff Director and Movement Coordinator) is a Hawaii-born, NYC-based director/movement director. Current: Install director of *Scarlet Night* (Virgin Voyages' signature immersive show). Past: Director for Moxie Arts NY (3 commissioned world premieres), *From A to Double D* by Mandy Murphy (IRT Theater), *The Golden Spike* by Don Nguyen and *The Lobbyists* (BRIC House Artist Studio), resident director of immersive nightclub-theater Eschaton. While serving as artistic director of Chicago troupe 33rd Street Productions, she focused on fostering cross-disciplinary creativity with artists primarily in STEM, in addition to helming productions of *Ordinary Days* by Adam Gwon, *Venus in Fur* by David Ives, and *Company* by Stephen Sondheim. She has been fortunate to assist Kathleen Marshall, Marcia Milgrom Dodge, and David Mendizabal at theaters such as the Old Globe, MCC Theater, New York Stage and Film, and Long Wharf Theatre. Lee is a Drama League Directors Project alumna, a member of Roundabout Directors Group, a Fled Collective member, and an SDC associate member. LeeMargaret.com

Janice Paran (Text and Script Consultant) (she/her) is an independent dramaturg and consultant supporting new work in theater, opera, and dance. She has worked closely with numerous writers and artists, including Annie Baker, Nilo Cruz, Christopher Durang, Beth Henley, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, Emily Mann, Ife Olujobi, Dael Orlandersmith, Denis O'Hare and Lisa Peterson, Phantom Limb Company, Polly Pen, Sarah Ruhl, Mfoniso Udofia, Stephen Wadsworth, and Tracey Scott Wilson. Formerly the director of play development at McCarter Theatre in Princeton, NJ, she also worked for several years as a dramaturg and program associate for the Sundance Institute Theatre Program, both in the US and internationally.

Laura Schutzel CSA (Casting) is thrilled to cast for The Acting Company. From 2003 to 2020, she worked with Tara Rubin Casting on Broadway, off-, and regional productions. Selected credits, in addition to TAC: NY casting director for *The History Boys* and *The Farnsworth Invention*, and associate director on many others (Broadway), Yale Repertory Theatre (15 seasons), Westport Country Playhouse, Second Stage, 2ST Uptown, La Jolla Playhouse, Berkeley Rep, the Old Globe. BA (Smith College), MFA Directing (OU). Member, CSA; Artios Award for Excellence in Regional Theatre Casting with Tara Rubin and Amy Potozkin, 2019. In her free time, she sees plays and shares audition tips. @Laura_Schutzel

Stephanie Weinzapfel (Production Stage Manager) is thrilled to join the company of *Odyssey* after seven years with the Production Department at Tennessee Performing Arts Center in Nashville. Selected credits include the National Tours of *Rent*, *Hairspray*, and *Cirque Dreams Illumination*; tours with multiple television and film personalities, and numerous local productions across the Midwest.

Cello Blanks (Assistant Stage Manager) (they/them) is a stage manager based in Brooklyn, NY, with a BFA from NYU Tisch School of the Arts. Blanks pursues stage management with an emphasis in theater for social justice, racial trauma, and LGBTQ+ history. Recent projects include *Sleep No More* (Punchdrunk, NYC), *Jagged Little Pill* (RCI Theatricals), *The Shining* (Opera Parallèle), and *The Wanderers* (Roundabout Theatre Company). Big thanks to my friends and community for keeping me grounded!

Matthew Lott (Associate Costume Designer) is an NYC-based costume and set designer for theater, opera, and dance. He received his MFA at NYU Tisch – Design for Stage and Film, and an MA in Theatre – Critical Theory and Dramaturgy from University of Nebraska Omaha. New York credits include the world premiere of the Lucy Thurber play *A Daughter and Some Sons*, director Lisa Rothe; *An Ideal Husband*, director Janet Zarish; *Twelve Ophelias*, director Nemuna Ceesay; *Rhinoceros*, director Alex Moggridge. He was associate costume designer on *Drinking in America*, director Mark Armstong, and *Wicked Bodies*, choreographer Liz Lerman.

Danielle DeLaFuente (Assistant Scenic Designer) (she/her) is a Chinese and Latina scenic designer based in New York and is thrilled to be the assistant scenic designer on this show! Her recent design credits include *The Boy Who Kissed the Sky* (Company One), *While We Wait* (the New School), *The Sitayana* (The Tank), and *Incognito* (Bay Street Theater). Her recent associate design credits include *Twelfth Night* (the Old Globe), *Once Upon a Bridge* (American Players Theatre), *Blues for an Alabama Sky* (McCarter Theatre Center), and *Mr Parent* (Lyric Stage Company). She would like to thank Tanya and the entire team! danielledelafuente.com.

Row Walters (Production Manager and Audio Supervisor) is thrilled to join The Acting Company family again on tour. She is a freelance production manager, sound and lighting designer and technician in Philadelphia, Atlanta, and New York City. Most recently she has been production managing independent films across the country. Favorite shows include *Legally Blonde* (Kidz Theater), *A Hard Time* (FringeArts), *Sunday in the Park with George* (Temple University). Walters has her BFA in Lighting Design from Syracuse University. Much love to Daria and Otto.

Anna Dorodnykh (Rehearsal Props Lead) Off-Broadway: *Love & Science* (Props Designer), *A Sherlock Carol* (Deck/Props), *Romeo & Bernadette* (Deck/Props). Regional: CSTC-Atlanta, *West Side Story* (Associate Director), International Tour: the original Broadway production of *Evita* (Resident Director, China Tour).

Elisaveta Alekumova (Production Assistant) is a recent graduate from Messiah University with a triple emphasis in theater acting, directing, and tech. This summer she worked as an assistant stage manager for *Pride and Prejudice* and *Lear* as well as a stage manager for *Todrick the Not-So-Terrible* with the Texas Shakespeare Festival. She is excited and grateful for the opportunity to work with The Acting Company.

Esther Bermann (Company Manager) is excited to join The Acting Company again after working with them in 2020 on a tour in conjunction with the Juilliard School. As a freelance stage manager, her credits include New York Theatre Workshop, Soho Rep, the Public Theater, New York City Center, NYMF, NYU, and Bushwick Starr. Additionally, she has over 20 years of dance and theater performance experience and has worked in the administrative offices of Dance/NYC and Pentacle. She holds a BA in Dance and Drama from University of California, Irvine.

Rob White (Technical Director) is very excited to be working on The Acting Company's production of *Odyssey*. He has two decades of experience building scenery in professional and academic settings. Some notable national tour builds include *SpongeBob the Musical*, *Frozen*, and the 25th anniversary national tour of *Riverdance*.

Alissa Shea (Lighting Supervisor) is very excited to be working her first contract with The Acting Company. They attended the University of Florida and have previously worked with Pacific Conservatory Theatre, Maine State Music Theatre, Chamber Theatre Productions, and most recently on tour with FELD Entertainment's *Disney on Ice*. She is very excited for each audience member to experience their own *Odyssey* through our production.

Margarita R. Herrera (Wardrobe Supervisor) is thrilled to join The Acting Company on her first national tour! An alumna of NYU Steinhardt's Educational Theatre program, her off-Broadway credits include *The Chinese Lady* (wardrobe supervisor, Ma-Yi Theater at The Public), *Richard III* and *As You Like It* (wardrobe dresser, Shakespeare in the Park), *The Whitney Album* (wardrobe supervisor, Soho Repertory), and various works at the Juilliard School and Manhattan School of Music. She would like to thank her family, friends, and her beloved cats, Gwen and Liza, for their support.

The Acting Company Leadership

Kent Gash (The Acting Company Artistic Director) brings to The Acting Company professional collaborations with stellar living dramatists Tarell Alvin McCraney, Quiara Alegria Hudes, Robert O'Hara, Dominique Morisseau, Suzan-Lori Parks, and Regina Taylor, among many others. He has also directed dynamic modern reconsiderations of Alexander Dumas, Langston Hughes, Noël Coward, Duke Ellington, Frank Loesser, Stephen Sondheim, William Shakespeare, Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, and August Wilson. As a director, Gash's productions have been seen at leading US theaters including the Public Theater, Steppenwolf, the Guthrie, Ford's Theatre, and The Acting Company's newly commissioned production of *The Three Musketeers*, centering Dumas and the Black origins of the classic swashbuckler at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, playing through October 2023. Upcoming: the world premiere musical *Billy Strayhorn: Something to Live For*. Gash was associate artistic director of Alliance Theatre and Alabama Shakespeare Festival. He is the founding director of NYU-Tisch's New Studio on Broadway and he serves on the SDC Foundation's Lloyd Richards New Futures Residency for Black Directors selection committee and the Princess Grace Foundation Arts Advisory Council. Carnegie-Mellon (BFA, Acting) and UCLA (MFA, Directing).

Erik Schroeder (The Acting Company Managing Director) served as managing director of the House Theatre of Chicago and director of marketing at Lookingglass Theatre, worked at the Manhattan Theatre Club, and received the Theatre Communications Group Leadership U Fellowship, funded by the Mellon Foundation. He is a coproducer of *Hadestown* (Broadway, West End and National Tour). Schroeder was an adjunct instructor at Columbia College Chicago, board member of The Hypocrites, and speaker at UChicago, Loyola, NAMP, League of American Orchestras, and INTIX. He has produced or performed at 54 Below, American Repertory Theater, Actors Theatre of Louisville, and Florida Studio Theatre. He is a graduate of St. Olaf College and the Commercial Theater Institute.

Devin Brain (The Acting Company Producing Director) has held increasingly significant roles at The Acting Company since starting as staff repertory director during the 2012–2013 season. In his own artistic practice, Brain is a freelance stage director specializing in contemporary productions of classical texts as well as original work. Select recent productions include *Othello*, *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *You/Emma* by Paz Pardo (an adaptation of *Madame Bovary*), *Exposure* by Laura Zlatos (an exploration of the life and work of Francesca Woodman), *Bones in the Basket* (on original adaptation of Russian fairy tales), *Middletown* by Will Eno, *Breath of Kings* (his adaptation of *Richard II*, *Henry IV*, and *Henry V*), *Blacktop Sky* by Christina Anderson, and *The Droll* {or, a play about the END of theatre} by Meg Miroshnik. Brain holds an MFA in Directing from the Yale School of Drama, where he also served as artistic director of the Yale Cabaret.

Megan Condit (The Acting Company General Manager) is the most recent addition to The Acting Company's leadership. Prior to her current position, she ran the Client Operations team at StepStone Group. Condit has her MFA in Playwriting from Columbia University. Her plays have been performed in New York, Seattle, Oakland, and Los Angeles. She was a participant in the Royal Court Residency and a semifinalist to be part of the Chesterfield Writer's Film Project. In the nonprofit sector, Condit has been part of the Jordan Education Trust, Lookingglass Theatre, Classic Stage Company, and the Geffen Playhouse staffs.

Hillary Cohen (The Acting Company Director of Development)'s arts administration work represents experience at Vox Populi co-operative art gallery, Manhattan Theatre Club, Film Forum, Wave Hill public garden and cultural center, the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Cherry Lane Theatre, and New York Classical Theatre. She has served as a Creative Space Grant panelist for the Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York. Cohen studied Nonprofit Management at NYU's Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and is a graduate of Drexel University with a degree in Corporate Communication and a Theater Production minor. She is a proud IATSE Local One spouse.

B. Rafidi (The Acting Company Associate Producer) comes to The Acting Company after working as a freelancer in stage and production management for seven years. Select stage management credits include *I Wanna F*ck Like Romeo and Juliet* (New Light Theater Productions), *Twelfth Night*, *Romeo and Juliet* (The Acting Company), and *The Medora Musical* (StageWest Entertainment). Rafidi also worked for three years as the production activities manager for the Juilliard School's Center for Innovation in the Arts after finishing a stage management apprenticeship there (2018–19). @rafidi0913

An Invitation to Our Community

We believe that the live performing arts contribute to the building of healthier communities.

We would like to invite you to become a member of our community in any way that's comfortable for you.

Our community is diverse and inclusive: you'll find interesting folks from surrounding towns, Montclair State University students, faculty and staff, and artists and thinkers from the world at large.

If this sounds interesting to you and you'd like more information, please reach out to me.

I'll be back in touch. Thank you so much for your interest in being together in a physical space to experience the live performing arts!

Sincerely,



Wiley Hausam

Director, PEAK Performances

Email: hausamw@montclair.edu



Staff Credits:

PEAK Performances

Wiley Hausam | Director
Taliyah Bethea | Marketing Assistant
Susan Case | Program Book Coordinator
Chrissy D'Aleo Fels | Community Liaison Manager
Patrick Flood | Graphic Designer, Art Director
Martin Halo | Website Development
Michael Landes | Membership Coordinator
Peg Schuler-Armstrong | General Manager
Camille Spaccavento | Marketing and Media Director
Michael Steele | Company Manager
Blake Zidell Associates | Media Representative

College of the Arts

Performance Operations

Andy Dickerson | Production Manager
Colin van Horn | Technical Director
Kevin Johnson | Sr. Production Engineer
Jason Flamos | Lighting Supervisor
Laurel Brolly | Business Manager
Robert Hermida | Audience Services Director
Jeff Lambert Wingfield | Box Office Manager
Reyna Cortes, Shantel Maysonett, Susanne Oyedeji,
Eliezer Ramirez | Box Office Leads
William Collins | House Manager

College of the Arts

Daniel Gurskis | Dean
Ronald L. Sharps | Associate Dean
Christine Lemesianou | Associate Dean
Zacrah S. Battle | College Administrator
Christopher Kaczmarek | Chairperson, Department of Art and Design
Anthony Mazzocchi | Director, John J. Cali School of Music
Keith Strudler | Director, School of Communication and Media
Kathleen Kelley | Chairperson, Department of Theatre and Dance
Wiley Hausam | Director, Arts + Cultural Programming
Hillery Makatura | Director, Performance Operations
Patricia Piroh | Director, Broadcast and Media Operations
Megan C. Austin | Director, University Galleries



Programs in this season were made possible, in part, by the Alexander Kasser Theater Endowment Fund, PEAK Patrons, and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

PEAK Performances develops, presents, and produces a broad range of world-class dance, film, master classes, music, opera and music theater, talks, and theater in the Alexander Kasser Theater on the campus of Montclair State University for students, faculty, staff, and the general public. We are building community through live performance. PEAK Performances is a program of the university's Arts + Cultural Programming Department.

Upcoming Events

The Triplets Of Belleville

Benoît Charest, composer and conductor
Le Terrible Orchestre de Belleville
Film with Live Jazz Orchestra

Thu., November 16 @ 7:30 PM

DAKHABRAKHA

The Unofficial Ambassador of Ukraine to the globe!
Global Music | Kyiv, Ukraine

Sat., November 18 @ 8:00 PM

Cécile McLorin Salvant

Jazz

Sat., December 16 @ 8:00 PM

OPERA IN CONCERT

Blind Injustice

Music by **Scott Davenport Richards**

Libretto by **David Cote**

Based on the book *Blind Injustice* by **Mark Godsey**

Musical Direction by **Ted Sperling**

Stage Direction by **Robin Guarino**

Fri., February 16 @ 7:30 PM

Sun., February 18 @ 3:00 PM

Mandy Patinkin In Concert

Being Alive

With **Adam Ben-David** on Piano

Sat., February 24 @ 8:00 PM

Keigwin + Company

Stage Door

Dance | Variety

Sat., May 11 @ 8:00 PM

Sun., May 12 @ 3:00 PM

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

We respectfully acknowledge that Montclair State University occupies land in Lenapehoking, the traditional and expropriated territory of the Lenape. As a state institution, we recognize and support the sovereignty of New Jersey's three state-recognized tribes: the Ramapough Lenape, Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape, and Powhatan Renape nations. We recognize the sovereign nations of the Lenape diaspora elsewhere in North America, as well as other Indigenous individuals and communities now residing in New Jersey. By offering this land acknowledgement, we commit to addressing the historical legacies of Indigenous dispossession and dismantling practices of erasure that persist today. We recognize the resilience and persistence of contemporary Indigenous communities and their role in educating all of us about justice, equity, and the stewardship of the land throughout the generations.