

court THEATRE

Henrik Ibsen's
**THE LADY
FROM THE
SEA**

ADAPTED FROM A
NEW TRANSLATION BY
RICHARD NELSON

Directed by
SHANA COOPER



2021/22
SEASON



THE UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO | Arts

ABOUT COURT THEATRE

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

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Dear Court Theatre Family,

We are overjoyed that director Shana Cooper is making her debut at Court Theatre with Ibsen's *The Lady from the Sea*, adapting a world premiere translation by Tony Award-winning playwright Richard Nelson. We have long admired Ms. Cooper's signature approach as director, and we have followed the rising arc of her national career with keen interest. She is an artist who uses movement to excavate new meanings and possibilities in the texts of classic dramas. Her presence at Court with this long-awaited production of Ibsen is cause for celebration.

Ms. Cooper and the company of *The Lady from the Sea* intended to open this work to Court's audiences in March 2020. While the pandemic deferred that plan for two years, the delay resulted in an unexpected opportunity: it allowed Court to commission from the great Richard Nelson a new translation of this rarely produced play. Mr. Nelson's 2021 creation arrived at Court like a beautiful gift. He gave us a new version of this classic text that cleaves faithfully to Ibsen's original intentions, and brims with what Mr. Nelson calls "the poetry of everyday language," the clear, direct speech Ibsen relied upon to bring his characters into full life.

We are thrilled to unveil this production to you now, deepened and enriched as it has been by a new collaboration between a director and a translator. These unique artistic partners have created a play that speaks to our ambiguous times. In a remote, isolated village on Norway's northernmost coast, the characters in *The Lady from the Sea*—though hemmed in by sea ice and closed off from the world by the approach of winter—challenge one another to change and evolve and discover themselves anew, even within the confines of ocean-bound isolation.

Thank you for joining us as *The Lady from the Sea* makes its triumphant return to Court's stage.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles".

Charles Newell
Marilyn F. Vitale Artistic Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angel Ysaguirre".

Angel Ysaguirre
Executive Director



CHARLES NEWELL
Marilyn F. Vitale Artistic Director

ANGEL YSAGUIRRE
Executive Director

Henrik Ibsen's THE LADY FROM THE SEA

Feb 25 - Mar 27, 2022

ADAPTED FROM A NEW TRANSLATION BY RICHARD NELSON
DIRECTED BY SHANA COOPER

Choreography by Erika Chong Shuch
Scenic Design by Andrew Boyce U.S.A.
Costume Design by Linda Roethke U.S.A.
Lighting & Projections Co-Design by Paul Toben U.S.A.
Lighting Co-Design by Keith Parham U.S.A.
Projections Co-Design by Erin Pleake
Sound Design by Andre Pluess U.S.A.
Casting by Becca McCracken C.S.A.
Nora Titone, Resident Dramaturg
Erin Albrecht,* Production Stage Manager
Gabriella Welsh,* Assistant Stage Manager

Be advised, this production contains water-based haze.

Sponsored by



Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation

Designers identified by U.S.A. are members of United Scenic Artists, I.A.T.S.E. Local USA829, AFL-CIO, CLC.
*Denotes a member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

CAST

Chaon Cross* Ellida
Gregory Linington* Dr. Wangel
Tanya Thai McBride* Bolette
Will Mobley* Lyngstrand
Angela Morris* Hilda
Kelli Simpkins* The Stranger
Samuel Taylor* Arnholm
Dexter Zollicoffer* Ballested

Understudies: Tarina J. Bradshaw, Tim Kidwell, Laura Rook*, Preeti Thaker, Bobby Wilhelmson
*Denotes a member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Assistant Director Laura Rook
Associate Movement Artist Jacinda Ratcliffe
Scenic Artists Scott Gerwitz U.S.A., Julie Ruscitti U.S.A.
Carpenters Kelly Lesniak, Tony Cooper, Mia Heron, Robert Thomas
Assistant Costume Designer Caitlin McLeod
Draper/Stitchers Steppenwolf Costume Shop
Draper Sierra Hughes
Stitcher Tina Stasny
Tailor Fox Brothers
Assistant Lighting Supervisor Maggie Hart
Electricians Maggie Hart, Sean Ihnat, Elizabeth Gomez,
Chloe Schweizer, Arianna Brown, Billy Borst
Assistant Audio Engineer Daniel Etti-Williams
Sound Operator Stefanie Senior
Floor Manager Danny Fender
Deck Crew Veronica Bustoz
Scenic Artists identified by U.S.A. are members of United Scenic Artists, I.A.T.S.E. Local USA829, AFL-CIO, CLC.

Cover photo of Chaon Cross by Michael Brosilow.

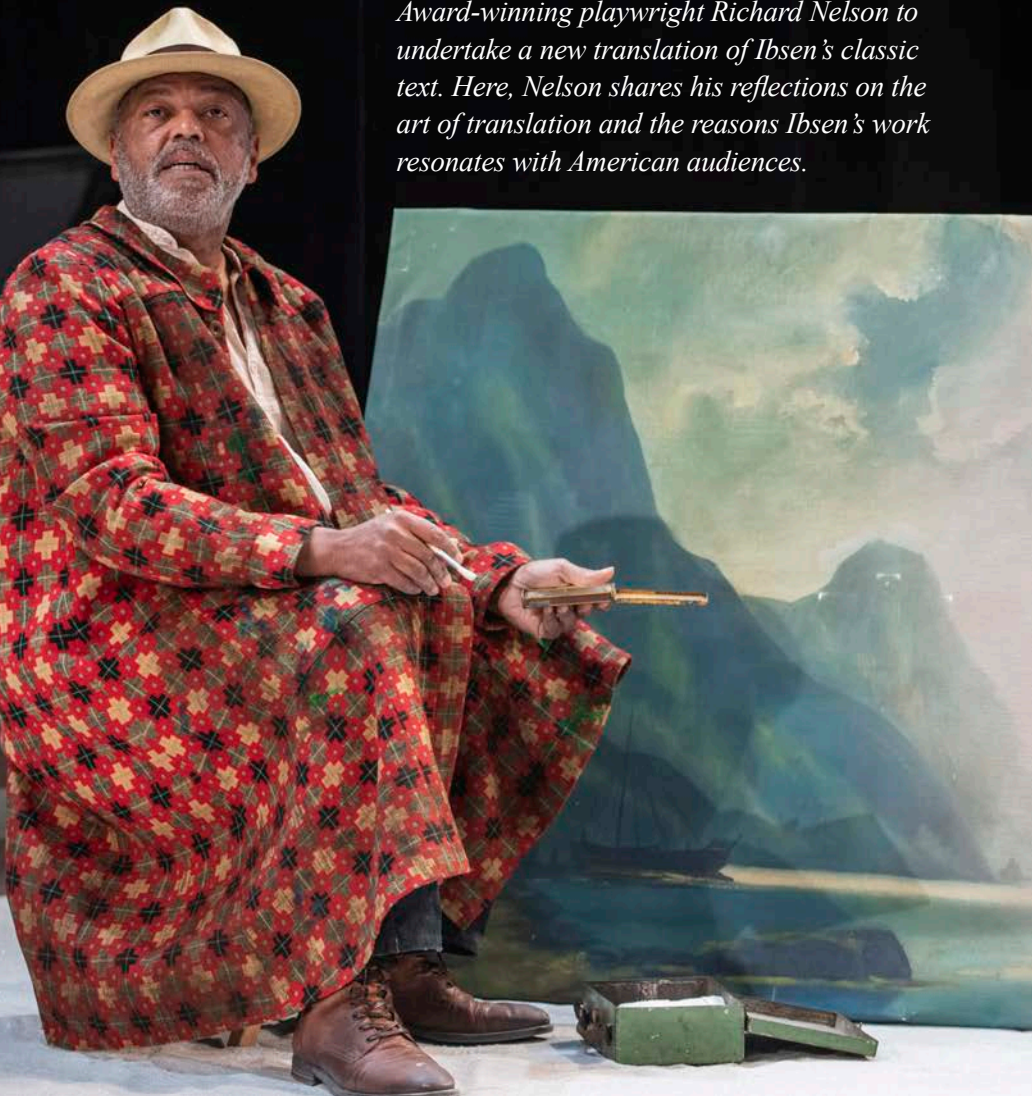
Court Theatre operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States. Productions are made possible, in part, by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency. Court Theatre is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the American Theatre, the League of Resident Theatres, the Illinois Humanities Council, and the League of Chicago Theatres.



IN CONVERSATION

PLAYWRIGHT RICHARD NELSON

*In March 2020, when the pandemic shuttered Court's production of *The Lady from the Sea* on the eve of its first preview performance, Artistic Director Charles Newell made a virtue out of the necessity of delay. He invited Tony Award-winning playwright Richard Nelson to undertake a new translation of Ibsen's classic text. Here, Nelson shares his reflections on the art of translation and the reasons Ibsen's work resonates with American audiences.*



You were writing this translation during the pandemic. Did anything about the play resonate artistically while you were living in quarantine?

I don't think so, and I'll tell you why. For whatever reason, the time from March 2020 through the next sixteen months were probably the most productive writing time of my life. The amount I produced that I'm very proud of is huge. Part of that was *Lady from the Sea*, but there are many, many other things I did. I found myself happily, just happily focused on just my desk, and not on any other thing, during that time. I didn't feel anything but the pleasure of just spending my time with my own work, and, in this case, which is the real value for me of these translations, the pleasure I felt was to spend time really close to a writer I greatly admire, Mr. Ibsen.

You have called Ibsen "the poet of everyday language." Could you talk about what you aimed to achieve with this new translation?

First of all, Ibsen is a great humanist, and so always at the heart of his plays are not ideas, but characters. It is the human complexity that motivates him, and he is a great psychological thinker and writer. So that means, when doing a translation, you want to put people on the stage. You don't want to put characters on the stage, you don't want to put ideas on stage, you need to put people on the stage. An audience must feel comfortable that what's in front of them are people behaving in a way that they, the audience, know people actually to behave. The translator's goal is to have that comfort of people saying things on stage that seem like reasonably right, obvious, clear things to say, as opposed to saying things that are more arch or more formal. That's where I begin. You want to feel that real people are in front of you.

Now on top of that, Ibsen is a poet. He uses imagery. So as a translator you want to find a way for that poetry to exist within the normal life, real life, or verisimilitude of life that is on the stage. It's important to figure that out. I greatly admire Ibsen because he can make that leap—a leap which, as a writer, I try all the time to make in my own work but I don't think without anything like his success—that leap of somehow thrusting a poetic situation, or a poetic character, into a story. Not just a poetic landscape—which he does in this play with the sea—but in terms of the Stranger. Bringing on a character like that who is so inexplicable—who forces an audience to wonder how much is real and how much is psychological—that's a real gamble. That's the exciting challenge of translating Ibsen—not just to recreate life, not just to make an audience feel that they are seeing *life* in front of themselves, but then to have that life be articulated or nuanced in a way to have a kind of poetry evolve and rise up as well. That's the challenge.

Left: Dexter Zollicoffer in *The Lady from the Sea* (Brosilow).

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Court Theatre 7

Do you see translation as separate from playwriting, or is it the same act?

Well, it is not the same act, but it is not separate either. No, the two are very connected. Translating is a great way to learn playwriting, or a great way to continue to evolve your craft, because you are constantly—if you are translating Ibsen or Chekhov—dealing with extraordinary writers. And seeing how those writers do things is really helpful, I find, for my own work. When I did teach playwriting, I would always tell my students, when they were writing something, “Have you read this play, this play or this play? Because that would be helpful to you.” And also, it puts you as a playwright in a much greater tradition than just what’s happened in the last three years, but in a tradition going back three hundred years, or more. Translating is very useful, and it’s a fun change of pace, because unlike with a play, you are not faced with a blank page. The first draft of a play, every day you come to it, you don’t know what’s going to happen. You might have an outline, you might have lots of notes, but you just don’t know for sure where it will go. Whereas with translating, you might get a phone call in the middle of working on sentence, but you can take the call because the sentence will still be there when you get back. It’s all part of the writer’s life. There is craft involved in both playwriting and translating, but that craft is very, very similar.

Are your goals the same when translating and when writing a new play?

Absolutely. The goals for me in playwriting and in the plays I translate are character-based, character-centered, humanistic goals. Theatre is inherently made and built to put a live person in front of another live person. That’s the basis of all theatre. Theatre is the only artistic form that uses the entire live human being as its expression. It’s the only one that does this. We speak, we move, we are alive, and so the human being is the very heart and center of what a play is, what a theatre event is. And those plays that embrace the complexity of what it means to be a person, to be a human being on earth, are the plays that I think are the most interesting to me, and in the end, that are the greatest.

Why do Ibsen’s plays resonate so powerfully today?

We live in very ambiguous times right now, and Ibsen very much speaks to that. He is always trying to find the clashes between ideas, because for him no one idea is correct, it always has to be in conflict with another idea. He sets his plays within a societal framework, raising issues of how does one live in the society that we live in. In this play, he asks “What does it mean to be free?” Ellida wonders, “Do I matter? Is there a purpose to

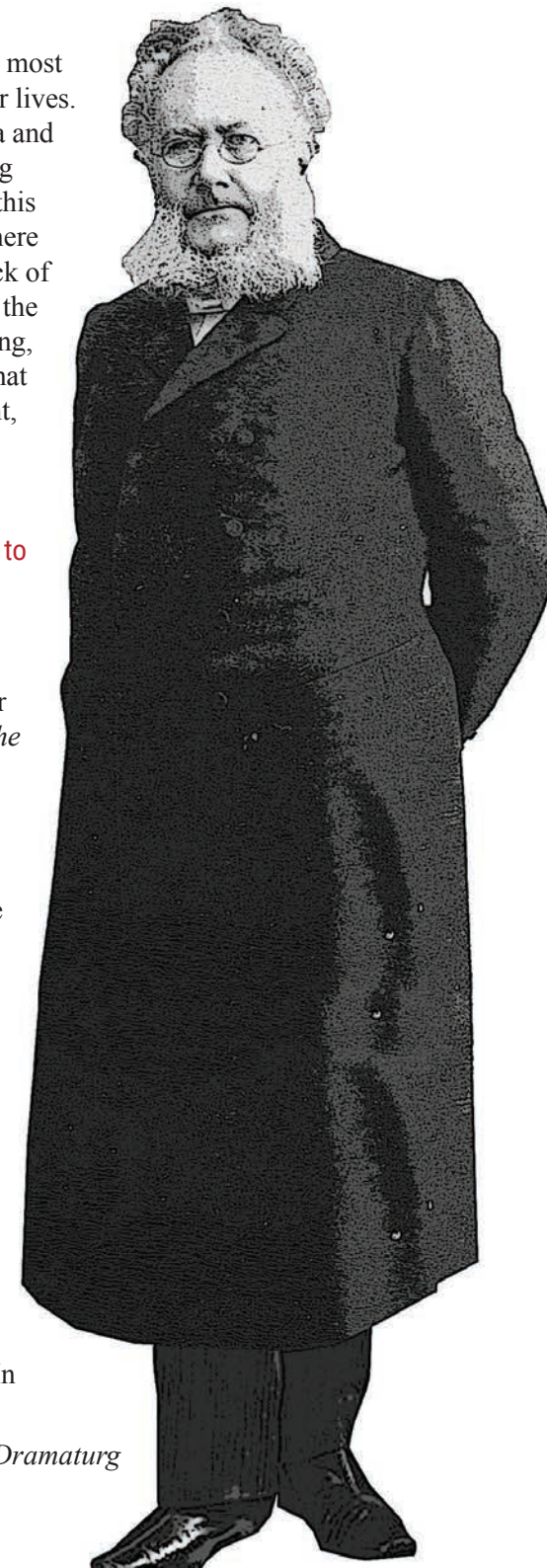
my life? Who am I?” These are the most existential questions we have in our lives. The struggle we see between Ellida and Wangel is an essential state of being for Ibsen. He makes the point that this is the world we are in—a world where people feel a lack of meaning, a lack of freedom, a lack of purpose. This is the way the world functions, he is saying, unless we fight it. And it’s a fight that has to keep continuing being fought, over and over and over again.

Is there a moment, a scene, or an element in this play that is precious to you as a writer?

If you look at how Chekhov and Ibsen, and Shakespeare too, how they begin their plays, you see their mastery of opening moments. In *The Lady from the Sea*, it’s like Ibsen had a little joke to himself. We see a guy untying something knotted in his hands, it’s a mess. He has a problem: “How am I going to untie this thing?”

What a wonderful, witty little way of saying, basically, we are going to be untying a problem in the next two hours. And then you have that flag that goes up. And you see how the putting up of the flag carries so much exposition—explaining who the characters are, who’s feeling what, what’s going on, how things are misunderstood. That flag is pretty brilliant. Just pretty darn brilliant. In terms of pure craft, my hat’s off. ■

-Nora Titone, *Resident Dramaturg*



DRAWN TO THE SEA

Director Shana Cooper discusses the play that has “haunted her” for more than a decade.



Photograph from March 11, 2020 dress rehearsal of *The Lady from the Sea* (Michael Brosilow).

*Director Shana Cooper is known for her visceral takes on classic plays. Her work with frequent collaborator and choreographer Erika Chong Shuch on Shakespeare’s plays utilizes movement to inject each production with a physical muscularity that matches their use of language. We chatted with Cooper to discuss *The Lady from the Sea* and returning to the Court stage.*

What drew you to Ibsen’s *The Lady from the Sea*?

This is a play that’s been with me for about ten years. I first directed a staged reading of it in 2009 at Oregon Shakespeare Festival and I haven’t been able to shake it since. It’s haunted me. The thing that’s really remained with me about it is the visceral way Ibsen captures the nature of struggling with who you are and discovering a different sense of self over the course of your life. That idea of self-discovery and exploration is terrifying and exhilarating, and in this play, Ibsen carves a vivid expression of the dramatic storm of what it feels like to wrestle with your identity, and the role that free will can play in us authentically embracing our truest self, as well as the complexity and contradictions of desires and needs that exist within us.

How are those ideas informing your approach to his work?

One of my goals with Shakespeare is an interest in how to make these plays as muscular physically and emotionally as they are linguistically, and that’s one of my goals with this production, too. I have an extraordinary choreographer, Erika Chung Shuch, who’s a longtime collaborator with me.

My hope is that as a company we can come up with a physicality to express these ineffable urges that the play deals with. My dream is that it’s a marriage of Ibsen’s brilliant dramaturgy, character, and language as well as a physical life that gets at the deeper yearnings buckling under the text that are hard to express. I hope it feels like we are expressing something new.

What was the inspiration for this new translation by Richard Nelson, and how is it different than previous versions of this play?

The Lady from the Sea is one of Ibsen’s least known works, which is part of why it’s so thrilling that Court originally programmed it, and the gift they are giving us by continuing with that journey after our pandemic shutdown. Because it is rarely produced, there are very few translations, and as far as I know there hasn’t been a contemporary American translation that expresses the hearts and souls of these characters with the clarity and humanity that Richard Nelson has uncovered. Through Richard Nelson’s luminous translation, we can not only understand but feel deeply the drama that pulses underneath these characters as they wrestle with their identities as individuals and within the most important relationships in their lives. Beyond transforming our experience of working on *The Lady from the Sea*, Richard’s translation is making a vital contribution to the American canon of Ibsen translations and finally making one of Ibsen’s more mysterious journeys, accessible to us all.

continued

What do you hope that audiences take away from *The Lady from the Sea*?

My hope is that this play is an invitation to look at our own lives and life choices and identity and maybe view this idea of cracking open questions about our spirituality and our identity as a real possibility. The thing that's brilliant about this play is that it's quite true-to-life to me. The play is an invitation for us to reflect back on our lives in terms of how the small and large choices we make are at play with and against our free will. I want to tell a story that young, modern women in particular can connect to and be thrilled by and learn from and have exciting conversations inspired by it. They're on my mind.

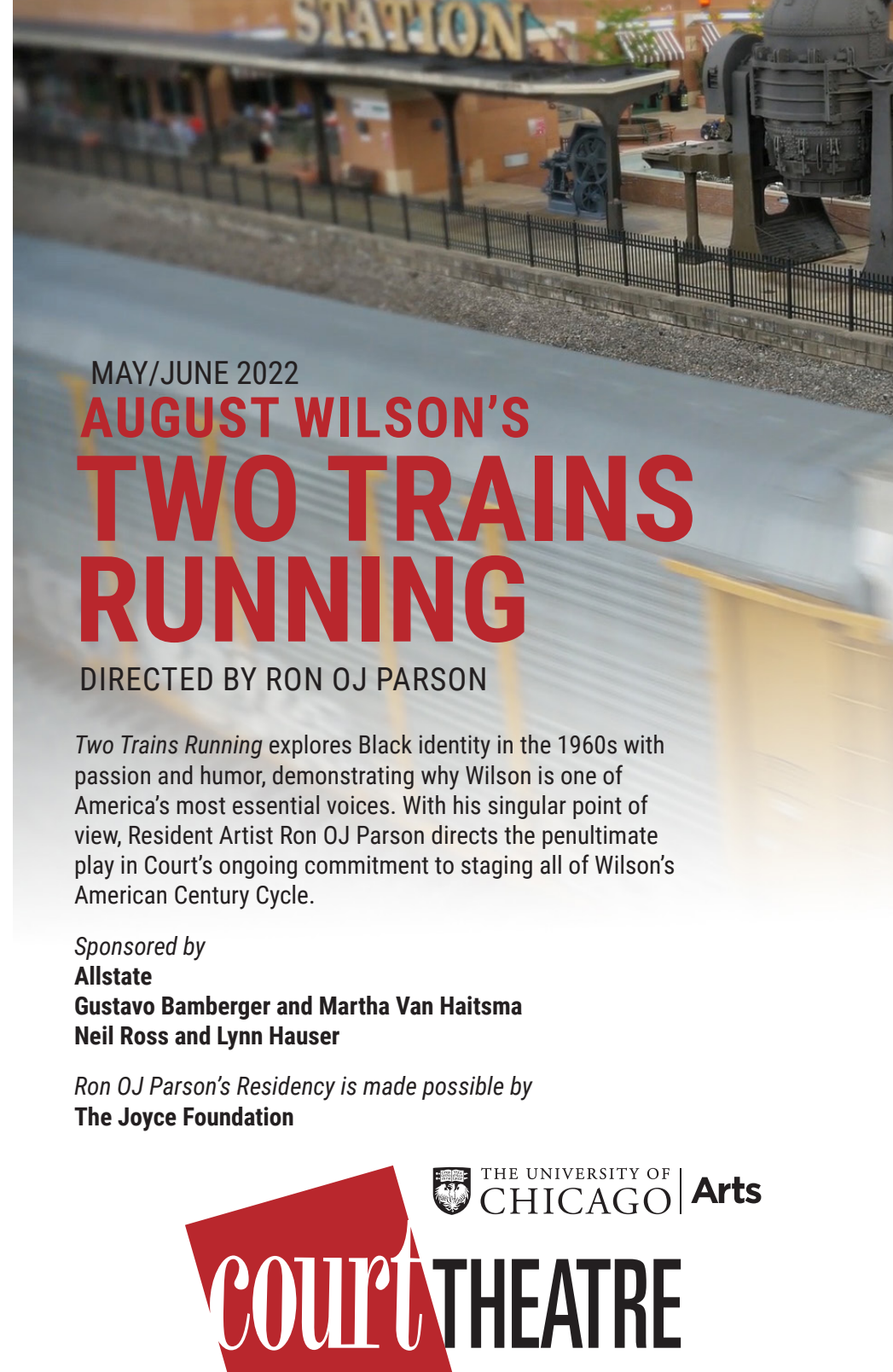
***The Lady from the Sea* was cancelled following the final dress rehearsal on March 11, 2020 due to the global pandemic. What does it mean to you to be (re)mounting this show now?**

Ibsen, like all great writers, is a dreamer. And the man dreams big. This quote is from a letter Ibsen wrote early in his career, an ambitious vision for humanity, "People want only special revolutions, in externals, in politics, and so on. But that's just tinkering. What really is called for is a revolution of the human mind..."

The remarkable thing about *The Lady from the Sea* is that you can actually see that revolution beginning. In small but profound ways in the actions and choices of many of the characters, who begin the play in a crisis of their own making, and then actually manage to change, not only how they think, but their choices and actions in life and in love. As we return to this project after almost two years of essential reckonings within ourselves and our society, I think the question of what we do with this tremendous force of "free-will" that is central to Ibsen's work is going to have fresh and more urgent meaning to artists and audiences who have learned by living through a pandemic just how harrowing it can be to feel lost in a storm of questions about who we are and what our role in the world can or should be. And perhaps most importantly what we can do "of our own free will" to find the lighthouse that will guide us home.

I believe, as Ibsen seems to suggest in *The Lady from the Sea*, that by living in that place of the deep and raw discomfort of not knowing and wrestling with the mysteries of free-will and how that can help us to access our truest selves, we may discover a rare capacity for change. And thus begins the revolution of the human mind... ■

-Melissa Schmitz, *Marketing Associate*



MAY/JUNE 2022

AUGUST WILSON'S TWO TRAINS RUNNING

DIRECTED BY RON OJ PARSON

Two Trains Running explores Black identity in the 1960s with passion and humor, demonstrating why Wilson is one of America's most essential voices. With his singular point of view, Resident Artist Ron OJ Parson directs the penultimate play in Court's ongoing commitment to staging all of Wilson's American Century Cycle.

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Ron OJ Parson's Residency is made possible by

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COURT THEATRE

HER CHOICE

by Ruth Schor

“My consolation in moments of spiritual anguish is *The Lady from the Sea*,” famed actress Eleonora Duse writes to a friend, “she is beautiful and comforting—ever-changing, like the sea itself.” In her production notebooks for *The Lady from the Sea* from 1907, Duse tries to capture the character of Ellida in whom she finds infinite solace. After a celebrated success playing and producing Ibsen’s *Rosmersholm*, Duse embarks on another journey to seek an understanding of Ellida’s “freedom of the soul.” But the translation she has does not suffice and therefore she crosses out the word “choice” and replaces it with the word “decision.”

With this small alteration, Duse was getting to grips with a central question that dominates discussions about *The Lady from the Sea* to the present day: How can Ellida find her freedom? Does the freedom to decide make her reconciliation possible, and not the choice of a partner or a lifestyle? After all, the play’s seemingly “happy ending” comes as a rarity amongst Ibsen’s plays. Precluded by *Rosmersholm* and succeeded by none other than *Hedda Gabler*, people have struggled with the play’s appeasing tone since it was first performed: another woman with “a past” who—in contrast to *Rosmersholm*’s Rebecca Gamvik—experiences a transformation.

Lou Andreas-Salomé, one of Ibsen’s contemporaries who had just published a book about Ibsen’s heroines from Nora to Hedda, finds an explanation in Ellida and Dr. Wangel’s mutual ability to “consider the other’s needs” and attributes an equally healing quality to the reconnection between Ellida and Hilda. And yet, does Ellida’s story suggest there was ever hope for Rebecca? Why did *Hedda Gabler* have to crush that same hope? Are we meant to reconsider Nora’s exit in *A Doll’s House* after all? These are only some of the unresolved questions Andreas-Salomé is left with.

continued

The Lady from the Sea presents its audience with an outcome which seems to conclude, and yet, leaves just enough inconclusive openings to fuel the imagination.



Chaon Cross and Kelli Simpkins (Michael Brosilow).



Similar to *A Doll's House*, *The Lady from the Sea* presents its audience with an outcome which seems to decisively conclude the play, and yet, leaves just enough inconclusive openings to fuel the imagination. In *The Lady from the Sea*, this question mark is brought to the next generation through Bolette's subplot, a marriage of convenience in exchange for an education. And most decisively, in *The Master Builder*, a play Ibsen published four years after *The Lady from the Sea*, Hilda Wangel appears again as a young temptress in her twenties who escaped her father's "cage"—with no mention of a stepmother.

At this point, even Lou Andreas-Salomé needed to reconsider. A few months after her book came out in 1892, *The Master Builder* was published. She hastily wrote an article in the *Freie Bühne* magazine admitting that the re-appearance of Hilda Wangel sheds a new light on the play's ending. A century later, Susan Sontag took the significance of Hilda Wangel's return even further. Her adaptation for Robert Wilson's infamous production concluded with a sense of unease about the domestication of this sea creature. Ibsen, she claims, made Hilda Wangel reappear in *The Master Builder* when he developed second thoughts about *The Lady from the Sea*. Originally titled *The Mermaid*, Sontag contended, the play draws on a folkloric theme about untamable sea creatures that do not belong on dry land—but does not follow through.

Whichever interpretation one might be drawn to, it is evident that *The Lady from the Sea*, and moreover, Ibsen's plays in general, continue to generate a sense of mystery and curiosity by remaining in constant conversation with each other. It is arguably one of Ibsen's most distinct talents to ensure that an audience never gets too comfortable.

As Ibsen expressed it himself, his works can only be understood when read in their entirety, when read as part of an ongoing series. Ibsen perfectly timed this "series" by publishing a new play every two years—just in time for the Christmas season. By the time he wrote *The Lady from the Sea*, the much-anticipated arrival of such plays had become a national sensation in his native Norway.

Living in Munich at the time, amidst a milieu of theatre-makers, cultural innovators, and thinkers—many women amongst them—Ibsen's plays fueled discussions at coffee houses and literary salons like no other. It is therefore a continuation of this Ibsenian journey to ask ourselves where this play could be taking us today, and how it makes us reconsider our own "ghosts sliding between the lines," in the words of Helene Alving. And yet again, Ibsen's first draft for *The Lady from the Sea* might lead us in a completely different direction when he writes, "Has the path of human development taken the wrong direction? How did we come to belong on dry earth? Why not the air? Why not the ocean." ■

It is arguably one of Ibsen's most distinct talents to ensure that an audience never gets too comfortable.

Left: Anna Bloch as Hilda in *The Lady from the Sea* at The Royal Danish Theatre, Copenhagen, Denmark, 1889 (Ibsen.net).

RUTH SCHOR completed her PhD at the University of Oxford and subsequently worked as Associate Professor at the Centre for Ibsen Studies, University of Oslo. Her research focuses on modern drama, theatre, and cultural history with particular emphasis on Ibsen and the German-speaking avant-garde. She is currently completing a monograph on the significance of Ibsen's work in creating an avant-garde culture in Munich and Berlin for which she received a Martin Buber Fellowship. Her chapter on the German Ibsen reception will shortly be published in the volume *Ibsen in Context* by Cambridge University Press. She is also a theatre practitioner and has worked with a number of international theatre companies.

The Civic Actor Studio at the University of Chicago

Joseph Williams isn't your typical actor. The Englewood resident and founder of literacy and mentoring nonprofit Mr. Dad's Fathers Club had never set foot on a stage before he found himself among other South Side civic leaders studying *Antigone* and acting out dramatic scenes. Williams didn't know what to expect when he was nominated to participate in the Civic Actor Studio leadership retreat at the University of Chicago. But he found the four-day experience's theatrical lens and unique approach to strengthening South Side civic leaders gave him more confidence as a leader—and allowed him to deepen his work's community impact.

"I took a chance with it and after going into the Civic Actor Studio, man, it changed my life," Williams said. "It made me look at things from a different perspective. Something that's always been hard for me is telling my story, and it helped me not only relax and relieve stress but also create my own narrative."

Launched in 2019 and led by Court Theatre in partnership with the University's Office of Civic Engagement, the Civic Actor Studio invites established and emerging civic leaders like Williams to examine the various leadership roles they play through theater-based discussions, exercises, and performances. Williams was among the 21 local leaders to participate in the retreat's third cohort, which consisted entirely of education professionals. Fellow cohort members included Chicago Public Schools administrators, arts educators, and education nonprofit leaders, among others.

"What's thrilling is we can bring some of those characters from Greek classic texts or an August Wilson play or a Tennessee Williams play and in the private, safe environs of the Civic

continued



Gabrielle Randle-Bent and Pastor Will Grandberry.
Photography by Chris Andrew Stoptime341

Actor’s rehearsal space you can practice being Oedipus in *Oedipus Rex* to see if that character is one that is authentic to you,” says Court Theatre Artistic Director Charles Newell, who founded the program with Booth Creative Management Professor Harry Davis, Court Artistic Fellow Gabrielle Randle-Bent, and the Office of Civic Engagement’s Executive Director of Civic Leadership Joanie Friedman.

Mr. Dad’s Fathers Club, which Williams started in 2017, encourages fathers to take more active roles in their children’s lives through volunteering to read to classrooms and mentoring programs. Williams says the Civic Actor Studio empowered him to advocate for his cause more thoughtfully. An exercise originated from Augustine Boal’s the Theater of the Oppressed in which some participants had to follow Randle-Bent’s instructions blindfolded, for instance, emphasized the importance of building trust and vulnerability—areas that Williams says had previously been challenging in his work.

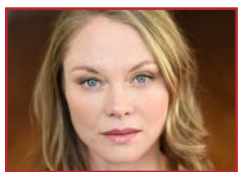
A few weeks after their initial retreat, Williams’ Civic Actor Studio cohort gathered at the Court to take in a production of *The Tragedy of Othello, The Moor of Venice*, which the group would later discuss in relation to their Civic Actor Studio experience. Seeing the words on a page come to life on stage was especially striking for Williams, who says he’s now eager to ensure his children are exposed to theater earlier in life than he was. The experience additionally highlighted the power of theater for cultivating stronger relationships, particularly between members of the University and local communities.

“You brought all of these folks in one room together and we all learned from each other,” Williams said. “We all grew with each other.” ■

To find out more about the Civic Actor Studio, visit civicengagement.uchicago.edu/news/civic-actor-studio.com or email the Office of Civic Engagement’s Executive Director of Civic Leadership Joanie Friedman at joaniefriedman@uchicago.edu.



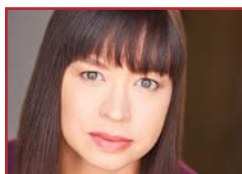
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CHAON CROSS (*Ellida*) Chicago credits include: *The Adventures of Augie March*, *Photograph 51*, *The Hard Problem*, *One Man Two Guvnors*, *Proof*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Scapin*, *The Romance Cycle*, and *Phèdre* (Court Theatre); *Midsummer* (Greenhouse); *Sweat* (Goodman Theatre); *Macbeth*, *Red Velvet*, *As You Like It*, *Private Lives*, *Cymbeline*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and *The Taming of the Shrew* (Chicago Shakespeare); *Macbeth* (Lyric Opera); *Life Sucks*, *Brothers Karamazov* (Lookingglass Theatre); *Cyrano* (Court and Redmoon); *Grace* (Northlight); *The Wheel*, *The Cherry Orchard* (Steppenwolf). Regional credits include Lady Windermere in *Lady Windermere's Fan* (Milwaukee Rep) and Elizabeth Bennett in *Pride and Prejudice* (Cleveland Playhouse). She has also appeared in productions with Frump Tucker, Shattered Globe, TimeLine, Theatre at the Center, First Folio and Theatre Hikes. TV credits: *neXt* (FOX), *The Exorcist* (FOX), *Chicago Fire* (NBC), *Boss* (Starz), and *Detroit 1-8-7* (ABC). Film: *Widows*, *My Dog Skip* (Warner Bros). Before moving to Chicago, Ms. Cross toured the US and Canada for two years with American Shakespeare Center.

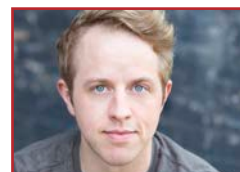


GREGORY LININGTON (*Wangel*) is very happy to actually be making his Court debut. Chicago: Goodman, Northlight. New York: BAM & Joe's Pub. Regional: Milwaukee Rep, Berkeley Rep, Seattle Rep, Yale Rep, Ford's Theatre, Arena Stage, Shakespeare Theatre DC, Theater J, Kennedy Center, Shakespeare Center LA, CTG & PCPA. He is a 12-year company member of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (roles in 22 productions & 5 world premieres) and 5-year company member of Misery Loves Company in Prague, CZ. Television: *Station Eleven*, *Fargo*, *Chicago P.D.*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Shameless*, *Major Crimes*, *The West Wing*, and the upcoming *Ripple Effects*. He has taught at OSF, Southern Oregon University, Shakespeare Theatre DC, Georgetown & DePaul. More at gregorylinington.com.



TANYA THAI MCBRIDE (*Bolette*) is pleased to make her debut at Court Theatre. Chicago theater credits: *Stop. Reset.* and *The White Snake* (Goodman); *Twilight: Los Angeles 1992* (The Other Theatre Co.); *Yellow Face* (Silk Road Rising); and *punkplay* (Pavement Group at Steppenwolf Garage). Regional: *The White Snake* (The Old Globe, Guthrie, McCarter, Berkeley Repertory, Wuzhen Theatre Festival, Oregon Shakespeare); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Heart of Robin Hood* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival). Television: *Chicago P.D.*, *Chicago Fire*, *61st Street*. MFA: The Ohio State University. Tanya would like to dedicate this one to her father.

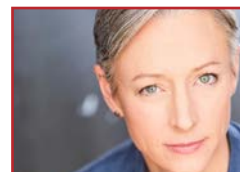
PROFILES



WILL MOBLEY (*Lyngstrand*) is pleased to make his Court debut. Chicago credits include: *The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley* (Northlight); *The Winter's Tale U/S* (Goodman); *Ragtime* (Marriott); *My Fair Lady* (Lyric Opera); *SS! Twelfth Night* (Chicago Shakespeare); *Days Like Today*, *Julius Caesar* understudy (Writers). Regional credits include: *Miss Bennett: Christmas at Pemberley* (Theatre Squared); *The Legend of Georgia McBride* (Cardinal Stage); *The Book Club Play*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Other Desert Cities* (Indiana Rep); *Other Desert Cities* (Arizona Theatre Company); *A View From the Bridge*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Hamlet*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Twelfth Night*, *Richard III*, *The Admirable Crichton*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Critic*, and *Of Mice and Men* (American Players Theatre); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (tour), *Macbeth*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Great Expectations* (Utah Shakespeare Festival); and *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* (Artists Repertory Theatre). Television: *Chicago Med*, *Chicago Fire*. Will is also a member of the Chicago band The Winchesters (thewinchestersband.com).



ANGELA MORRIS (*Hilda*) is thrilled to be back and make her Court debut. Favorite Chicago credits include Rebecca Gilman's *Twilight Bowl* (Goodman Theatre); *Hang Man* (The Gift Theatre); *The Hamlet Project* (The Collective); and *Horatio* (A Beautiful Fight). Regional credits include *The Comedy of Errors* (JFK Center for the Performing Arts). Television/Film credits include *Chicago Fire*; *Ripple Effects*; *Two in the Bush: A Love Story*; and the award-winning shorts "SPACEMAN.," "Trash," and "My Best Girl," which she also co-wrote. She voices the main character (and others) in the video game Perception and has been heard on numerous commercials.



KELLI SIMPKINS (*The Stranger*) Off Broadway: *Charm* (MCC Theater), *The Laramie Project* (Union Square Theater). Regional: *Everybody* (Shakespeare Theatre Company); *The Gulf*, *Bull in a China Shop*, *The Secretaries*, *The Kid Thing* (Jeff Award nomination), *Pony* (About Face); *We're Gonna Be Okay*, *Men on Boats*, *T. Celebrity Row* (American Theater Company); *Cocked* (Victory Gardens); *Teddy Ferrara* (Goodman); *Good Boys and True*, *Fair Use*, *One Arm* (Steppenwolf); *In Darfur* (TimeLine); *The People's Temple*, *The Laramie Project* (Berkeley Rep); *I Think Like Girls*, *The Laramie Project* (La Jolla Playhouse). Film: *Slice*, *Chasing Amy*, *A League of Their Own*. Television: *Work in Progress*, *61st Street*, *Chicago P.D.*, *Proven Innocent*, *Chicago Fire*, *Patriot*, *Betrayal*, *The Laramie Project* (Emmy nomination—Ensemble Writing), *Law & Order: CI*. Awards: 3ARTS Award (2013). Other: Tectonic Theater Project company member, teaching artist, and original creator/performer for *The Laramie Project*.

PROFILES



SAMUEL TAYLOR (*Arnholm*) is co-founder of the Back Room Shakespeare Project and teaches Shakespeare at the University of Chicago. Samuel is also owner & operator of Long Table Pancakes. Chicago credits include *Mr. & Mrs. Pennyworth*, *Thaddeus & Slocum*, *Lookingglass Alice*, and *Peter Pan* (Lookingglass); *The Hot L Baltimore*

(*Steppenwolf*); *Marnie & Phil* (The Actors Gymnasium); *Hunchback* (Redmoon); and 9 shows at Chicago Shakespeare. Regional credits include work at American Players Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Syracuse Stage, and the Guthrie Theater. On Camera credits include recurring roles on *Boardwalk Empire* and *Crisis*.



DEXTER ZOLLICOFFER (*Ballested*) appeared at Court in *King Hedley II*, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*, *Electra*, *Water by the Spoonful*, and *The Mystery Cycle: Creation and Passion*. Other credits include: *Charm* (Northlight, Jeff Award), *The Little Foxes*, *Dartmoor Prison*, *The Odyssey*, *Blues for an Alabama Sky*, and *A Christmas Carol*

(*Goodman*); *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *A Lesson Before Dying*, and *Pudd'nhead Wilson* (*Steppenwolf*); *Relatively Close*, *Knock Me a Kiss*, and *The Sutherland* (*Victory Gardens*); and *The Overwhelming* (*Next*). Regional: *Blues for an Alabama Sky* (Alabama Shakespeare), *The Odyssey* (McCarter and Seattle Repertory Theatre), *Our Country's Good* (Berkeley Rep), *The Recruiting Officer* and *Our Country's Good* (Madison Rep), *Voice of Good Hope* (BoarsHead Theater), and *Permanent Collection* (Indiana University Northwest). Television: *South Side*, *Joe Pera Talks to you*, *Chicago Fire*, *Chicago Med*, *Detroit 1-8-7*, and the features, *The Killing of Kenneth Chamberlain* and *Who Gets the Dog*. He is an administrator at The Theatre School at DePaul University where he received best director, best ensemble, and special jury prize nominations for his original work, *Ma Fille*, *Ma Naturelle* at the 6th annual International Theatre Festival of University Theatre in Tangier, Morocco. He is a 2011-12 recipient of the Spirit of DePaul award given by DePaul's Office of Mission and Values.

TARINA J. BRADSHAW (*Understudy Ballested/The Stranger*) is thrilled to work with Court Theatre again. Tarina has earned her BA in acting in New York and is now a proud Chicago actor. She was previously seen in Raven Theatre's fall production of *The Last Pair of Earlies*, recognized by *Newcity Stage* as the number one production of 2021. Tarina's work includes *Too Heavy for your Pocket* (TimeLine), *Twelfth Night* (Midsommer), *Titus Andronicus* (Haven) and various other shows in Chicago. Tarina dedicates this process to her partner for all of their love and support. More at www.Linktr.ee/TarinaBradshaw.

TIM KIDWELL (*Understudy Dr. Wangel*) is delighted to be back at Court Theatre. Previously, he understudied in Court's production of *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* and has also understudied at *Steppenwolf* and *Northlight* theatres. Most

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recent theatre credits: *Dante 360* (Athenaeum Center), *I'm Gonna Pray for You So Hard* (First Floor Theater), *A Long Trip* (Sketchy - London Int'l Arts Festival), and this summer he'll be appearing in St. Louis Shakespeare Festival's production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. TV/Film: *Chicago P.D.*, *Sirens*, *Crisis*, *Passage and Amelia 2.0*. He is represented by DDO-Chicago. More at TimKidwell.com.

LAURA ROOK (*Assistant Director/Understudy Ellida*) has directed *The How and the Why* with Two Crows Theatre and assistant directed *A Doll's House* at American Players Theatre. As an actor she was last seen here at the Court in *Skylight*. Other selected Chicago credits include work at Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Writers Theatre, Boho Theatre, and XIII Pocket. She has worked for 10 years as an actor and teaching artist at American Players Theatre in Spring Green, Wisconsin. Other regional credits include Asolo Repertory Theater, The Illinois Shakespeare Festival, and Montana Shakespeare in the Parks. Love and gratitude always to my husband and family. More at Laurarook.com.

PREETI THAKER (*Understudy Bolette/Hilda*) is an actor based in Chicago. She is thrilled to be making her Court Theatre debut in *The Lady From The Sea*. After leaving medical school in 2017, she decided to brave the world of acting and went on to do the School at *Steppenwolf* in 2018. She has since worked with *Steppenwolf Theatre*, *Jackalope Theatre*, and *A Red Orchid Theatre*. Preeti is proudly represented by *Shirley Hamilton Talent*.

BOBBY WILHELMSON (*Understudy Lyngstrand/Arnholm*) is excited to be making his Court debut. Bobby received his MFA in Acting from Western Illinois University. When not acting, Bobby loves trying new restaurants and finding hidden donut shops. Chicago theatre credits include: *Steppenwolf*, *Victory Gardens*, *Remy Bumpo*, *Rivendell Theatre*, *Interrobang*, and *Nothing Without a Company*.

RICHARD NELSON (*Translator*) His plays include *The Gabriel Plays* (*Women Of A Certain Age*, *What Did You Expect?*, *Hungry*), *Oblivion*, *Nikolai And The Others*, *The Apple Family Plays* (*That Hopey Changey Thing*, *Sweet And Sad*, *Regular Singing*), *Farewell To The Theatre*, *Conversations In Tusculum*, *Frank's Home*, *How Shakespeare Won The West*, *Rodney's Wife*, *Franny's Way*, *Madame Melville*, *Goodnight Children Everywhere* (Olivier Award Best Play), *The General From America*, *New England*, *Two Shakespearean Actors* (Tony Nomination, Best Play), *Some Americans Abroad* (Olivier Nomination, Best Comedy), and others. His musicals include *James Joyce's The Dead* (with Shaun Davey, Tony Award Best Book of a Musical), and *My Life With Albertine* (with Ricky Ian Gordon). He has adapted and/or translated numerous classical and contemporary plays; his films include *Hyde Park On Hudson* (Roger Michell, director, Focus Features), *Ethan Frome* (Miramax Films), and *Sensibility And Sense* (American Playhouse). He is an honorary associate artist of the Royal Shakespeare Company, a recipient of the Academy Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the PEN/Laura Pels "Master Playwright" Award.

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SHANA COOPER (*Director*) is a company member at Woolly Mammoth in Washington, D.C., where her directing credits include *The Nether* and *HIR* by Taylor Mac. Other directing credits: *The Taming of the Shrew* (American Players); *The Unfortunates* (A.C.T.); *American Night*, *Romeo and Juliet* (Yale Rep); *Straight White Men* (Studio Theater); *The Unfortunates* (World Premiere), *Julius Caesar*, *Love's Labor's Lost* (Oregon Shakespeare); *Venus In Fur* (Seattle Rep, Arizona Theatre Company), *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (California Shakespeare); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Playmakers Rep); *Camino Real* (NYU MFA Program); *Three Sisters* (The Studio/New York); and *The Whale Play, Twelfth Night Parking Lot Project* (New Theater House). Shana was the Associate Artistic Director of the California Shakespeare Theater (2000-2004), and also a Cofounder of New Theater House with Yale School of Drama alumni (2008-present). Awards include: 2014 TCG Leadership U grant, 2010 Princess Grace Award, Julian Milton Kaufman Memorial Prize in Directing (Yale School of Drama), Drama League Directing Fellow, TCG Observership Grant, OSF Phil Killian Directing Fellow, and G. Herbert Smith Presidential Scholarship. She is an Assistant Professor in the Theatre Department at Northwestern University. More at www.shanacooper.com

ERIKA CHONG SHUCH (*Choreographer*) is a performance maker, choreographer and director interested in expanding ideas around how performance is created and shared. Shuch co-founded For You, a performance collective that brings diverse strangers together and makes performances as gifts. For You has been commissioned to create work by Court Theatre, The Momentary, Oregon Shakespeare, Guthrie, and Theater Mu with support from Creative Capital, NEFA, and Berkeley Rep's Groundfloor. Erika has worked as a choreographer for theaters including The Arena, OSF, Theater for a New Audience, Pittsburg Public, Portland Center Stage, American Conservatory Theater, and The Kennedy Center. Directing credits include *Iron Shoes* with Kitka, and *Lily's Revenge*, *Love Act* by Taylor Mac at the Magic Theatre. Erika is a Bay Area Fellow at the Headlands Center for the Arts.

ANDREW BOYCE (*Scenic Designer*) Chicago credits include: *Dana H* (Goodman); *Dhaba on Devon*, *If I Forget* (Victory Gardens); and *And Then There Were None* (Drury Lane). NYC credits: Lincoln Center Theater, Roundabout Theatre Company, Atlantic Theater Company, New York Theatre Workshop, Vineyard, Play Company, Playwrights Realm, etc. Regional: Actors Theatre of Louisville, A.C.T., Alliance, Baltimore Center Stage, Berkeley Rep, Dallas Theater Center, Geffen, Huntington, Longwharf, Milwaukee Rep, Old Globe, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and Yale Rep, among many others. Andrew is a graduate of Yale School of Drama and is currently on the faculty in the Northwestern University Theatre Department. Visit www.andrewboycedesign.com.

LINDA ROETHKE (*Costume Designer*) Nationally: *Indecent* (Arena, Baltimore Center Stage), *Oklahoma*, *Richard II*, *Into the Woods*, *King Lear*, *Julius Caesar*

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(Oregon Shakespeare); *Indecent*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Sunday in the Park with George* (Kansas City Rep); *The Gods of Comedy* (McCarter, Old Globe); *Hand to God*, *Shadowlands* (Alliance); *Miss Saigon* (Paramount); *Richard III* (Public); *The Game's Afoot* (Cleveland Play House); *Stage Kiss*, *The Clean House* (Goodman); *Visiting Edna*, *Mary Page Marlowe*, *Motherf**ker with the Hat*, *Intimate Apparel* (Steppenwolf); and *Gem of the Ocean* (Court). Regional: Cincinnati Playhouse, The Rep, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Chicago Shakespeare, Utah Shakespeare, Connecticut Rep, Arden, and American Players. Linda is a professor at Northwestern, where she teaches costume design. MFA: University of Iowa.

PAUL TOBEN (*Lighting Co-Designer and Projections Co-Designer*) Chicago credits include *Electra*, *For Colored Girls* (Court); *Macbeth* (Chicago Shakes); *Dana H*. (Goodman); *Cry it Out*, *The Book of Will*, *Daddy Long Legs* (Northlight); *The Mystery of Love and Sex*, *Witch* (Writers); *How To Defend Yourself* (Victory Gardens); *The Firebirds Take the Field* (Rivendell). Broadway: *The Story of My Life*. Regional: *Noises Off* (Guthrie); *The Wolves* (Studio Theatre); *Angels in America Parts 1 and 2*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *4000 Miles*, *Evocation to Visible Appearance*, *Airness*, *Wondrous Strange*, *The Grown-Up*, and *The Roommate* (Actors Theatre of Louisville); *Medea* (Dallas Theater Center). Visit www.paultoben.com.

KEITH PARHAM (*Lighting Co-Designer*) Court credits: *The Tragedy of Othello*, *The Moor of Venice*; *Oedipus Rex*; *Photograph 51*; *All My Sons*; *The Hard Problem*; *An Iliad*; *Angels in America*; *Proof*; *The Misanthrope*; *Tartuffe*; *M. Butterfly*; *The Good Book*; *Satchmo at the Waldorf*; *One Man, Two Guvnors*; *Man in the Ring*; and *Blues for an Alabama Sky*. Broadway: *Thérèse Raquin* (Roundabout Theatre). Off-Broadway: *Wild Goose Dreams* (Public); *Man from Nebraska* (2nd Stage); *The Purple Lights of Joppa Illinois* (Atlantic Theater); *Between Riverside and Crazy* (2nd Stage/Atlantic Theater); *Tribes, Mistakes Were Made*, and *Red Light Winter* (Barrow Street); *Stop the Virgins* (Karen O at St. Ann's Warehouse/Sydney Opera); *Ivanov*, *Three Sisters* (CSC); *A Minister's Wife* (Lincoln Center); *Adding Machine* (Minetta Lane). Awards: Obie, Lortel.

ERIN PLEAKE (*Projections Co-Designer*) is a projection designer, programmer, and content creator based in Chicago. Erin's credits include projection design for *Heathers the Musical* (Moraine Valley Theatre), *Elevator Girl* (Vanguard Arts Collective), and *Speech and Debate* (Brown Paper Box Co.). Assistant projection design includes *Gem of the Ocean* (Goodman); *Holiday Inn* (Drury Lane); *The Christians* (Steppenwolf); *Kinky Boots*, *The Secret of My Success*, and the Jeff Award-winning *Elf the Musical* (Paramount).

ANDRE PLUESS (*Sound Designer*) has designed over 30 productions at Court, including *An Iliad*, *Man in the Ring*, *Oedipus Rex*, and *Iphigenia*. Broadway credits include *Metamorphoses*, *I Am My Own Wife*, *33 Variations*, *The Minutes*, and *The Clean House* (Lincoln Center). Chicago credits include composition and sound design for numerous productions at Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre

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Company, Northlight Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare, About Face Theatre, and many others. Regional credits include multiple projects at Center Theatre Group, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, California Shakespeare Theater, American Conservatory Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, Guthrie, and Arena Stage. Andre is an ensemble member of Lookingglass Theatre Company.

JACINDA RATCLIFFE (*Associate Movement Artist*) is a dancer, actor, and choreographer who has been working in Chicago since graduating from Northwestern University. She is a company dancer with Winifred Haun & Dancers as well as an ensemble member with Lucky Plush Productions, where she originated roles in *Curb Candy* and *Rink Life*. Her recent choreographic credits include *The Ode at Pint's End* (Birch House Immersive Theater), as well as the Jeff nominated production of *Mlima's Tale* (Griffin Theatre). She is currently on faculty at the Actor's Gymnasium and sits on the Board of Directors of Chicago Movement Collective.

ERIN ALBRECHT (*Stage Manager*) has worked on 24 mainstage productions and many virtual projects at Court having most recently worked on *The Tragedy of Othello, The Moor of Venice*. Off-Broadway: The Pearl, New York Classical Theatre, Westside Theatre, Jazz at Lincoln Center and Town Hall. Regional: Arena Stage, Arkansas Rep, American Players Theatre, Blue Man Group, Phoenix Theatre, Utah Shakespeare Festival and others. She holds a Bachelor of Music from The Catholic University of America and a Master of Fine Arts from Virginia Tech. Erin is a proud member of Actor's Equity Association and is an adjunct instructor of Stage Management at The Theatre School at DePaul University.

GABRIELLA WELSH (*Assistant Stage Manager*) Previously at Court: *The Mousetrap, King Hedley II, For Colored Girls, Frankenstein, Radio Golf, The Belle of Amherst, Five Guys Named Moe, Blues For An Alabama Sky, Electra, and Man in the Ring*. Around Chicago Gabriella has worked for The Hypocrites and TimeLine Theatre Company, among others, as well as Actors Theatre of Louisville in Kentucky. Gabriella is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association.



CHARLES NEWELL (*Marilyn F. Vitale Artistic Director*) has been Artistic Director of Court Theatre since 1994, where he's directed over 50 productions. Recent Court highlights include *Oedipus Rex; The Adventures of Augie March; All My Sons; The Hard Problem; Man in the Ring*; and *Satchmo at the Waldorf*. Charlie has directed at

Goodman, Guthrie Theater, Arena Stage, John Houseman's The Acting Company, Lyric Opera, Chicago Opera Theatre, Glimmerglass, and Opera Theatre of St. Louis. Awards received include the SDCF Zelda Fichandler Award, the TCG Alan Schneider Award, and the League of Chicago Theatres' Artistic Achievement Award. Charlie has been nominated for 16 Jeff Awards, winning four times.

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ANGEL YSAGUIRRE (*Executive Director*) most recently 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.



NORA TITONE (*Resident Dramaturg*) is the author of the 19th-century theater history *My Thoughts Be Bloody: The Bitter Rivalry of Edwin and John Wilkes Booth* (Simon & Schuster, 2010). As a dramaturg and historical researcher, Titone has collaborated with a range of artists and scholars, including playwright Anna Deavere Smith and historian

Doris Kearns Goodwin. She also contributed to projects at Arena Stage and DreamWorks Studios. Titone studied history at Harvard University and the University of California, Berkeley, and is represented by ICM Partners.



BECCA McCracken (*Casting Director*), is honored to be on staff at Court Theatre. She also freelances, most recently with Lyric Opera, The Rep, and the HBO series *Somebody Somewhere*. She worked at Simon Casting for 8 years. Favorite projects include: *Million Dollar Quartet* (Apollo and Tour); *1776* (Asolo); *Rock 'n Roll Christmas*

Tale and *Working* (Broadway In Chicago), *The Sound of Music, Showboat, and Carousel* (Lyric); national tours of *Sister Act* and *How to Train Your Dragon; Divergent; Contagion; The Watchmen; Justice League; Empire; Chicago Fire; Chicago PD*; and *Prison Break*. Becca is committed to creating casting space that empowers the artist and focuses on inclusivity, diversity, and humanity. ■

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