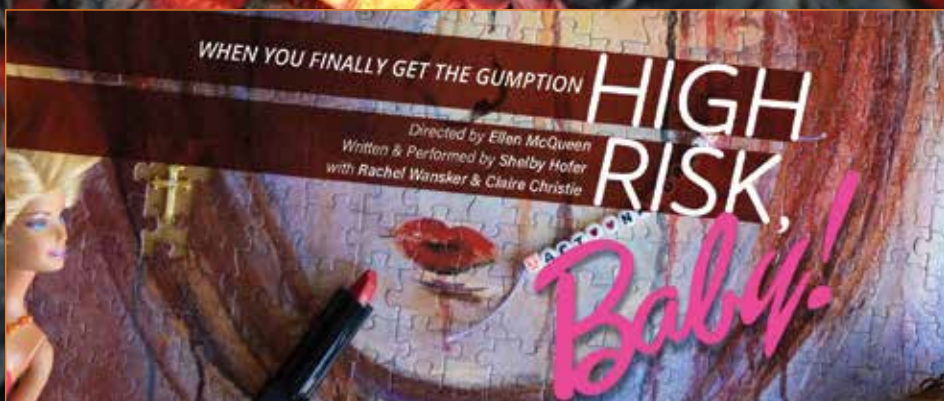


FULTON COUNTY ARTS & CULTURE, WEST END PERFORMING ARTS CENTER AND ESSENTIAL THEATRE PRESENT

2021 ESSENTIAL THEATRE NOVEMBER 5-21 PLAY FESTIVAL



www.essentialtheatre.com

PROGRAM NOTES

The Essential Theatre began producing its annual Festival in 1999, and we continued with it every year after that – up until the world shut down in 2020, and our plans for that summer’s Essential Festival had to be cancelled. We’re thrilled to be returning to live performances with another line-up of new work by Georgia writers!

In 2001 we began to hold the Essential Theatre Playwriting Award competition, exclusively dedicated to the work of Georgia playwrights, and over the years we like to think the variety and breadth of material we’ve produced testifies to our commitment to our mission to support, develop and produce the work of the playwrights who live in this state. There is no “typical” Essential Theatre play, or any themes or subject matters that we gravitate towards. Since the chief criteria for the plays we select is their artistic excellence, we let the playwrights themselves lead the way through the material they submit to us. Not surprisingly, the best plays that come our way often reflect what’s going on in the world around us.

After a year and a half of quarantine and danger and limitations on where we can go, whom we can see and what we can do, it’s fitting that both of this year’s co-winners of the Essential Theatre Playwriting Award are about people trying to escape. Erin Considine’s *Raising the Dead* looks at two women, next door neighbors on a warm New Orleans night, seeking to find connection with each other and find a way to escape their lonely lives and break out into the world. Erin’s play was a Finalist for this year’s National Playwrights Conference at the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center, and we’re proud to be presenting its World Premiere production.

Anthony Lamarr White’s *Calming the Man* also has an impressive pedigree, having been awarded the Reiser Atlanta Artist’s Lab Fellowship and given a workshop by the Alliance Theatre. It’s also been given other readings around the country, including one at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Described by the author as “a play about the violence and anger that cripple us,” it tells the story of two young men trying to escape from the cycle of pain and rage that their father is trapped in. Set in 1976, the year of the American Bicentennial, it feels as though it could be happening today. Another World Premiere that we are proud to present.

Topping off the Festival will be two performances of *High Risk, Baby! A* (mostly) one-woman show written and performed by Atlanta theatre artist Shelby Hofer, it tells the hilarious, heart-expanding true-life tale of a woman’s wild and epic journey to motherhood. (There’s a train involved.)

Welcome back to the theatre!



Peter Hardy,
Artistic Director



Support the *Bill & Martha Nell Hardy Memorial Fund*

*When you make a donation to the Bill & Martha Nell Hardy Memorial Fund,
you contribute to Georgia playwrights’ success this year,
and continue the Essential Theatre’s mission in the future.*





2021 ESSENTIAL PLAY FESTIVAL CALENDAR

WEST END PERFORMING ARTS CENTER • essentialtheatre.com

ESSENTIAL
THEATRE
CALENDAR
LEGEND

 **Raising the Dead**
by Erin Considine

 **Calming the Man**
by Anthony Lamarr White

 **High Risk, Baby!**
by Shelby Hofer

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	November 1	2	3	 Preview 8PM	 Opening Night 8PM	 Neighborhood Night 8PM
7	8	9	 Preview 8PM	 8PM	 Opening Night 8PM	 Neighborhood Night 8PM
  14 2PM 7PM	 15 Industry Night 8PM	 16 Industry Night 8PM	 17 8PM	 18 8PM	 19 8PM	 20 8PM
 21 2PM	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

ABOUT THE ESSENTIAL THEATRE

Essential Theatre is the longest-running theater company exclusively dedicated to producing new work by Georgia playwrights. Since the first Essential Theatre Play Festival in 1999, we've produced or presented 37 new works by 32 different playwrights, with readings of over 40 more.

The Essential Theatre Playwriting Award has been given to:

- Parts They Call Deep* by Lauren Gunderson (2001)
- Warts* by Bill Gibson (2002)
- Speaking Nazi* by Karen Page (2003)
- Background* by Lauren Gunderson (2004)
- Miss Macbeth* by Karen Wurl (2005)
- Charm School* by Larry Larson and Eddie Levi Lee (2006)
- Leaving Limbo* by Valetta Anderson (2006)
- Fix Me So I Can Stand* by Jean Sterrett (2007)
- West of Eden* by Letitia Sweitzer (2008)
- Jim Crow and the Rhythm Darlings* by Vynnie Meli (2009)
- Qualities of Starlight* by Gabriel Jason Dean (2010)
- A Thousand Circlets* by Theroun D'Arcy Patterson (2011)
- Evelyn in Purgatory* by Topher Payne (2012)
- Stray Dogs* by Matthew Myers (2013)
- Ravens & Seagulls* by Karla Jennings (2014)
- That Uganda Play* by Theroun Patterson (2014)
- Lillian Likes It* by Josua Mikel (2015)
- Dispossessed* by Karen Wurl (2016)
- When Things are Lost* by Derek Dixon (2016)
- Another Mother* by G.M. Lupo (2017)
- Built to Float* by Rachel Graf Evans (2018)
- Woke* by Avery Sharpe (2018)
- Slaying Holofernes* by Emily McClain (2019)
- Babyshower for the Antichrist* by Ben Thorpe (2019)
- The Outrage Maching* by Daniel Carter Brown (2020)
- The Wishing Place* by Beverly Trader Austin (2020)
- Raising the Dead* by Erin Considine (2021)
- Calming the Man* by Anthony Lamarr White (2021)



RAISING THE DEAD

By Erin K. Considine

Co-Winner of the 2021 Essential Theatre Playwriting Award

Directed by Peter Hardy and Ellen McQueen

CAST

Myra Laurie Beasley
 Harlowe Ellen McQueen*

SETTING: A humid New Orleans streetscape, the present day
 This performance runs approximately 75 minutes with no intermission

Playwright Erin K. Considine
 Co-Director Peter Hardy
 Co-Director Ellen McQueen
 Music Director Rodney Allen
 Musician Joshua Woods
 Stage Manager Kyra Cohen
 Set Designer Gabrielle Stephenson
 Lighting Designer Harley Gould
 Props Master Chase Weaver
 Sound Designer Josh Campbell
 Costume Designer Erin Magner

**Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers
 in the United States, appearing under a Special Appearance Contract*

MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT: ERIN K. CONSIDINE

Erin K. Considine (Playwright, 2021 Essential Theatre Playwriting Award Winner) is an emerging Southern Playwright from the Atlanta Area. Her first full-length play, *Pete & Wendy*, was included in 2016's Bare Essentials Play Reading Series. This collaboration led to the development of multiple scripts which have gained traction across the country. Highlights include: 2017 & 2020 Ethel Woolson Lab (Atlanta), 2021 New Year, New Works Festival (Palmbeach), 2021 Headwaters Festival (Creede), 2020 Garry Marshall New Works Festival (Burbank), 2021 Unexpected Play Festival (Atlanta), and many more. Erin was named a Finalist for the 2019 and 2021 Eugene O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, a Semi-Finalist for the 2020 BAPF and the 2020 PlayPenn Conferences, and she was the Winner of the 2020 Tennessee Williams Festival One Act Play Competition. Fall of 2020 she was the first Carey Perloff Fellow as part of the Eugene O'Neill Foundation. Erin is grateful and excited to bring *Raising the Dead* to life here at home with the Essential Theatre Festival!



CAST BIOS



Laurie BEASLEY (Myra) is very happy to return to the stage after a decade hiatus. Her previous Essential Theatre appearances include *Night Travels*, *Charm School*, *Cruel Disclosures*, *A Child Shall Lead*, *Lubricant*, and *Cinders*. She has also been seen locally at the Alliance Theatre, Stage Door Players, OnStage Atlanta and others, as well as regionally with *Unto These Hills*, *The Lost Colony* and *Patchwork Players*. TV/Film credits include *The Hunley*, *Patron Saint of Liars*, *Savannah*, *Stolen Babies*, *I'll Fly Away*, *America's Most Wanted*, and *Matlock*.



ELLEN MCQUEEN (Harlowe and Co-Director) has directed many Essential Festival shows (*Ice Glen*, *The Local*, *Sally and Glen at the Palace*, *Woke*, and *Ada and the Memory Engine*, to name a few) but this is her first time participating as an actor. She feels lucky to share the stage with Laurie Beasley, under Peter Hardy's direction. Ellen is also serving in this year's Festival as director of *High Risk, Baby!* written and performed by the hilarious, creative storm that is Shelby Hofer, playing two nights only, on 11/17 and 11/18 (get your tickets!).



PETER HARDY (Co-Director) is the founding Artistic Director of the Essential Theatre. He's been working professionally in the Atlanta area for over 30 years, as an actor, playwright and director. He's a Suzi Bass Award-winning director who has directed over 80 productions in Georgia, North Carolina and New York, and he served as Artistic Director for the Mountainside Theatre in Cherokee, North Carolina for the summers from 1990 through 2005. He's had over thirty productions of his plays done around the country and has received playwriting awards from the National Playwrights' Conference, the Festival of Southern Theatre and the New Southern Theatre Festival. More recently his screenplays have been receiving multiple awards and nominations from film festivals around the world.



RODNEY ALLEN (Music Director) has been active in the Atlanta area as a professional musician for over a decade. In 2017, Rodney earned a Master of Music degree from Georgia State University and a Bachelor of Music Degree from Clayton State University in 2015. Rodney's versatility ranks him high in demand as a working musician and educator.

As a performer, Rodney has had the opportunity to perform alongside notable artists such as Solange Knowles, Wycliffe Gordon, and Norman Brown to name a few.



JOSHUA WOODS (Musician) hails from Stone Mountain, Georgia and began playing alto sax about 12 years ago after hearing jazz music being played in video games. He played throughout middle school and high school in jazz band, wind ensemble, and marching band. Since graduating, he's grown to love all genres of music. His sound and style is influenced with music from all around the world ranging from Blues, R&B, Jazz, Latin-Caribbean styles, and Middle Eastern sounds, and he draws inspiration from several saxophonists including Charlie Parker, Eric Dolphy, and Sonny Stitt. Joshua's plan is to travel the world to perform, play, and record music and one day inspire other Musicians.



CALMING THE MAN

By Anthony Lamarr White

Co-Winner of the 2021 Essential Theatre Playwriting Award

Directed by Brenda Porter

CAST

Daddyo	Sundiata Rush
Killpretty	John Doyle, Jr
Tracey	Anthony Nash
Michael	Kourage Cooper

Setting: 1976, Greenville, Florida
There will be one ten-minute intermission

**performance contains a moment of violence and gunfire*

Developed through the Reiser Atlanta Artists Lab
at the Alliance Theatre, Atlanta, GA.

Playwright	Anthony Lamarr White
Director	Brenda Porter
Dramaturg	Jayla Myers
Fight Choreographer	Mia Kristin Smith
Stage Manager	Kayla Brooke
Set Designer	Gabrielle Stephenson
Lighting Designer	Harley Gould
Props Master	Courtney Loner
Costume Designer	Ladisa Banks
Sound Designer	Kimberly Harding

MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT: ANTHONY LAMARR WHITE

Anthony Lamarr White (Playwright, 2021 Essential Theatre Playwriting Award Winner) is a playwright, novelist, and screenwriter from Crawford, GA. At age nine, a typewriter he received for Christmas and his passion for Bruce Lee films led him to write his first short screenplay, *Two Against the Mob*. Since then, his work has included novels, screenplays, and two full-length plays, *Calming the Man* and *The Long Goodbye*. He's also a Florida Press Association Award-winning columnist for the Perry News Herald and a former journalist for the Gainesville Sun and the Marietta Daily Journal. His television background includes writing and producing the nationally syndicated TV talk show, *Your World with Creffo (Dollar)*. *Calming the Man* was previously chosen as a 2017-18 Alliance Theatre Reiser Lab Fellowship winner.



CAST BIOS



SUNDIATA RUSH (Daddy) is excited to perform with Essential Theatre again, having appeared in two previous Essential shows, *The Old Ship of Zion* and *Darker Face of the Earth*. Other Atlanta theatre credits include *Water By the Spoonful* (Pinch 'N' Ouch Theatre), *The Crucible* (Actor's Express), *What Happened* (New Origins Theatre Company), and *The Hands That Could* (Theater Emory).



JOHN DOYLE, JR (Killpretty) is an actor, storyteller and teaching artist. As an actor, John has had the opportunity to be in many productions over the years and some of his favorites include: *Fly*, *Uprooting*, *The Rerooting*, *The Old Settler*, *Home*, *A Conversation Between: Barack Obama and Malcolm X* and *Darker Face of the Earth*. He is also a member of Kuumba Storytellers of Atlanta and is the former featured resident storyteller at Atlanta's High Museum of Art. John is a teaching artist and works with youth and teachers through his company, Arts Education Integration Agency (AEI). John's passion also includes his work with youth in the community, mentoring and helping them to uncover and share their gifts and their stories.



ANTHONY JEREMIAH NASH (Tracey) is a Georgia native who has worked with such companies as Aurora Theatre, Shakespeare Tavern Playhouse, and Dad's Garage Theatre. You might have seen him this summer as Captain Braidbeard in Destination Theatre's production of *How I Became a Pirate*. He is blessed to be a part of this production and hopes you enjoy.



KOURAGE COOPER (Michael) is a sophomore at Kennesaw State University and is double majoring in Theatre & Performance Studies and Computer Game Design & Development. His role as Michael in *Calming the Man* serves as his professional acting debut as well as his first production with the Essential Theatre. He is very excited to embrace this opportunity. When he's not on stage, Kourage is an aspiring voice actor, and enjoys audiobooks, playing instruments, gaming, and narrative writing.



BRENDA PORTER (Director) is *thrilled* to be working with The Essential Theatre Festival! She is the Artistic Director of Impact Theatre Atlanta. As an actress she has performed on stage and on camera. Her directorial talents have been utilized on local theater productions. Brenda is a Suzi Bass Awards board member and an AEA member



JAYLA MEYERS (Dramaturg) is currently studying to get her BA from Clayton State University. She has studied theatre at Gordon State College and received her Associates degree in theatre from Atlanta Metropolitan College. Jayla is an intern with Impact Theatre's Brenda Porter. Her college theatre credits include *Honky*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, and *Second Shepherd's Play*.



Wed. Nov. 17.....8pm
 Performance + post-show conversation with
 Licensed Professional Counselor
 Shubha Swamy, LPC, CPCS

Thurs. Nov. 188pm
 Performance + post-show conversation with
 Dr. Lauren Berman, founder of the
 Fertility Psychology Center of Atlanta
 Post-show conversations curated with Mark Perloe

Lenora is on a mission, but her not-so-inner child is bursting with irreverent questions about DNA, ADD, quantum physics, boners, and babies — where they come from, how they get here, and mostly, how she can get one. With hilarious and maddening advice from her sex-ed teacher, Elvis, Mr. Rogers, the mysterious Dr. Mark, and a bunch of ill-mannered “dolls,” Lenora and her Honey board a train for a wild adventure that leads to some unexpected destinations. *High Risk, Baby!* is a 70-minute heart-expanding autobiofictional story about one woman’s wild and epic journey into motherhood.

CAST

Shelby Hofer Writer/Performer
 Rachel WanskerPuppeteer, Puppet Assist
 Claire ChristieOffStage Voice, Stage Manager

ARTISTIC TEAM

Ellen McQueen Director/Collaborator
 Dan Bauman Sound Designer
 Nadia Morgan Reichman.....Set Designer
 Chris Tsambis Filmmaker (Prologue), “Son Song” Collaboration
 DJ Hofer Musical Producer, “Son Song” (lyrics by Shelby Hofer)
 Olliver “Ollie” Cook Boy’s Voice
 Eric Goldstein Poster & GRFX Design and Puzzler
 Miriam Robinson Poster Art
 Rob Nixon Prayer Flag Art

High Risk, Baby! is touring in 2022 and beyond.
 We love performing in non-traditional spaces too.
 For booking info, please contact info@pushpusharts.com.

Essential Education.

An extension of Essential's mission to give Georgia playwrights a voice, our educational offerings are created to give all Georgians a voice *through* theatre by providing the support and tools you need to tell your own story on the stage.



Courses for Writers

Introduction to Playwriting Community Courses – offered in partnership with community organizations throughout the state including virtually through our partnership with the West End Performing Arts Center, Essential Theatre's Introduction to Playwriting course is a six-week introduction to the art and form of playwriting in which participants learn about the elements of playwriting by studying examples, hearing from professional Georgia playwrights, and sharing writing exercises of their own.

"Each class was inspiring."

"The perfect catalyst to get me writing again!"



Resources for Teachers

Intro to Playwriting for the Classroom aligns with the Georgia Standards of Excellence for Dramatic Arts/Theatre for grades 9-12. Students will learn about the elements of playwriting by studying examples, hearing from professional Georgia playwrights, and sharing writing exercises of their own. Students receive feedback from instructors and peers in a supportive environment that fosters confidence and growth.



Play Buffet – Join Essential for free, fun nights of conversation and connection as we take a look at some of our favorite plays for high school audiences/students. "So often when you're a middle school or high school theater teacher, you're a team of one for your whole school. The Play Buffet is a chance for theater teachers to connect with other teachers doing the same work and facing the same challenges and rewards.



Groups and Field Trips – Did you know we also offer field trips? Bring a group to the Festival and have your own customized Essential experience! Lots of customizations are available: talk to us about hosting a pre-show reception; post-show talkback with the director, cast, playwright, or a special guests of your choosing; a backstage tour; a group photo onstage; and more!



TO FIND OUT MORE, VISIT
EssentialTheatre.com/Learn
and sign up for our mailing list,
or email us at
education@essentialtheatre.com

FESTIVAL

STAFF

PETER HARDY (Founding Artistic Director) has been working professionally in the Atlanta area for over 30 years, as an actor, playwright and director. He's a Suzi Bass Award-winning director who has directed over 80 productions in Georgia, North Carolina and New York, and he served as Artistic Director for the Mountaineer Theatre in Cherokee, North Carolina for the summers from 1990 through 2005. He's had over thirty productions of his plays done around the country and has received playwrighting awards from the National Playwrights' Conference, the Festival of Southern Theatre and the New Southern Theatre Festival. More recently his screenplays have been receiving multiple awards and nominations from film festivals around the world.

JENNIFER KIMBALL (Managing Director) has been involved with Essential Theatre since 2003. A production and stage manager and general organizer-at-large in the Atlanta area, Jennifer also actively collaborates with Synchronicity Theatre, 7 Stages Theatre, and Théâtre du Rêve among others. She also worked in Student Engagement at Georgia Tech from 2013-2016 and is currently on staff at the Schwartz Center for the Arts at Emory University. Inspired by new creative work and meaningful connection, her goal is to nurture both through her work with Essential.

TOSIN 'TOSINGER' TAIWO (Marketing & Outreach Coordinator) is a Freelance Marketing Consultant for the Arts and Entertainment industry with over 10 years experience specializing in branding, copywriting, social media management and content generation. She is also a Singer, Actress & Event curator, passionate about the administration of all forms of the arts, in-front and behind the scenes. She is a graduate of Savannah College of Art and Design's Master of Arts Administration program which focused on helping arts organizations manage projects and promote productions that make them come alive. She remains active artistically in the Atlanta community and beyond, featuring in theatre and music performances, TV and film productions.

CARTER BEVIS (Box Office Manager) has been either running a box office or ushering at theaters throughout Atlanta for 20 years, so at some point in time there is a good chance she's either sold you a ticket or given you a program. But she always looks forward to her annual home with Essential.

ELISABETH COOPER (Production Manager, Education Associate) has been with Essential Theatre since 2016. She is a Teaching Artist and Educator with over 20 years teaching and mentoring students of all levels. She has worked as a teacher with summer camps through the Ferst Center for the Arts at Georgia Tech, a guest lecturer

at various high schools, was the Education Director for Dad's Garage Theatre Company, was a member of the Education Advisory Committee for the Georgia Shakespeare Festival, and works with Synchronicity Theatre's Playmaking for Girls program.

EMILY MCCLAIN (Education Associate) is a theatre educator and playwright. Her play *Slaying Holofernes* was co-winner of the 2019 Essential Theatre Playwriting Award and received its World Premiere production as part of the 2019 Essential Theatre Play Festival. Her short plays have been staged locally at Out of Box Theatre, Merely Players, Atlanta AppCo Alumni, and Actor's Express, and nationally at Raze The Space (Los Angeles, CA), Theatre Oxford (Oxford, MS), and the Eden Prairie Players (Eden Prairie, MN).

AMINA S. MCINTYRE (Education Associate) is an Atlanta based playwright whose productions and readings include: Actor's Express, Atlanta One Minute Play Festival, Atlanta History Museum, Working Title Playwrights, Lenoir-Rhyne University, Out of Hand Theatre, and The Blues Series (2019 Taurean Award Nominee for Excellence in Theatre). She directed the Marietta New Theatre in the Square production of August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean* (2020 Taurean Award nominated production). Her play, *On the Third Day*, produced by Vanguard Repertory Theatre, earned a Suzi Bass Award. Amina has studied and earned degrees in Anthropology, African American and African Diaspora Studies, Playwriting, and Theological Studies at Colby College, Indiana University, Spalding University and Emory University, respectively. She was a 2014-2015 playwrighting apprentice at Horizon Theatre Company, Managing Director of Karibu Performing Arts, 2014-2016 Atlanta Region Young Ambassador for the Dramatists' Guild and the City of Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs 2014-2015 Emerging Theatre Artist. She is Co-Founder of the Hush Harbor Lab, in Horizon Theatre's Black Women Speak writer cohort and a Ph.D Student at Vanderbilt University.

RACHEL GRAF EVANS (Education Associate) is a writer, theatre artist, and educator. She holds a brand new MFA in Musical Theater Collaboration, along with Graduate Certificates in Gender, Sexuality, & Women's Studies and Teaching in Higher Education, from Temple University, and is a current MFA Playwriting Candidate at the Hollins University Playwright's Lab. Her play *Built to Float* was a co-winner of the 2018 Essential Theatre Playwriting Award and she is thrilled to be returning to Atlanta to join the Essential Theatre Education Team. RGE is a proud member of Ring of Keys, Working Title Playwrights, New Play Exchange, Page by Page, and the Dramatists Guild.

PRODUCTION

HARLEY GOULD (Lighting Designer) designs lights, hangs lights, directs lighting for video, runs lighting equipment, designs sets, builds sets, paints sets, loads the damn things in, loads them out, and works out all kinds of theatrical special effects. He also creates art (of various disciplines), and sometimes acts (if you can call it that). Oh, yes, and sometimes he writes short stories.

GABRIELLE STEPHENSON (Set Designer, Scenic Artist) is thrilled to return to Essential, last designing for the 2019 Festival. She regularly works at various theaters throughout the southeast as a designer, artist and actor. Most recently she has been painting specialty thematic elements for the GA Aquarium. Love and thanks to Isaac always.

JOSHUA CAMPBELL (Sound Designer, *Raising the Dead*) has his BA in audio production from the Art Institute of Atlanta. His previous credits include *The Light in the Piazza*, *Simply Simone* and *The Dancing Handkerchief* (Theatrical Outfit). He is also the co-owner of Trivial Matters, an

Atlanta area trivia company. He'd like to thank his personal heroes Ben Burt, Albert Camus, and Karl Marx.

ERIN MAGNER (Costume Designer, *Raising the Dead*) is new to the design world after four years at Brenau University and designing with the Gainesville Theatre Alliance. She's previously worked in costume technology at The Legacy Theatre and Found Stages Atl. She would like to thank her parents and her bunny Cheesecake for their unwavering support.

LADISA BANKS (Costume Designer, *Calming the Man*) is an interior designer with a fashion background and has a BA from New York's Pratt Institute. While in NY, she worked as an assistant designer for several fashion designers and designed for fashion shows in Europe. Ms. Banks has had the pleasure of working on many Academy Theatre and Impact Theatre productions. Also she has worked with the wonderful Capital City Opera Company.

KYRA COHEN (Stage Manager, *Raising the Dead*) (she/her) is an Atlanta-based theatre artist. Dramaturgical credits include *The Revolutionists* (7 Stages), *Heidi* (Synchronicity Theatre), *Midnight Pillow* (Theater Emory), *Nope, That's Just My First Name* (Horizon Theatre), *Dispossessed* and *When Things Are Lost* (Essential Theatre). Stage Management credits include *Verdict* (OnStage Atlanta), *The Secretaries* (Out Front Theatre Company), *Swell Party* (Process Theatre), *Built to Float* and *Slaying Holofernes* (Essential Theatre). Script Production Assistant credits: *Ever After* and *Maybe Happy Ending* (Alliance Theatre).

CHASE WEAVER (Propsmaster, *Raising the Dead*) is joining Essential for the first time with *Raising the Dead*. Chase has performed, propped and done special effects work for companies like Horizon Theatre, Synchronicity Theatre, and North Georgia Theatre among others.

KAYLA BROOKE (Stage Manager, *Calming the Man*) is an Atlanta-based theater artist. Originally from Albuquerque, New Mexico, Kayla graduated from Emory University in May of this year. She is excited to be working with Essential for the first time!

MIA KRISTIN SMITH (Fight Choreographer, *Calming the Man*) is an actress, producer and director whose work has previously been named one of Atlanta's Best Bets, as well as *Creative Loafing's* Top Ten Things to Do and *Burnaway Magazine's* Top Five Things to Do. Smith, a

native of New Orleans now living in Atlanta, is also the Artistic Director of Songs of Karibu. Mia's most recent Essential engagement was as fight choreographer for our 2017 production of *BeltLine and Beyond!*, produced in partnership with the Wren's Nest Scribes Program as part of Art on the BeltLine.

COURTNEY LONER (Propsmaster, *Calming the Man*) received a Bachelor of Arts in music from Kennesaw State University where she also studied technical theater. She has performed with Centerstage North, Lionheart Theatre, Henry Players, Theatre Arts Guild, Capitol City Opera, Neighborhood Playhouse, Stage Door Players, and Onstage Atlanta. Her backstage credits include work with Stage Door Players, Onstage Atlanta, Horizon Theatre, Aurora Theatre, Santa Fe Opera, Alliance Theater, Georgia Shakespeare Festival and the Atlanta Opera. She is a member of the singing duo, The Reminiscent.

KIMBERLY HARDING (Sound Designer, *Calming the Man*) for several years worked professionally as a stage manager for Jomandi Productions and the National Black Arts Festival in Atlanta. In New York City she worked in administrative and production capacities for The Acting Company, Manhattan Theater Club, Negro Ensemble Company, and Crossroads Theatre in New Jersey. Currently, Harding is employed at Florida A&M University.

SPECIAL THANKS

- Academy Theatre and Legacy Park Decatur for rehearsal space
- Erik Scherb and SageCat Studio for show graphic design
- Thom Stanley and the Stanley Collective for poster and postcard layout and design
- Aaron Gottlieb and Georgia State University Fine Arts Dept, Clarkston Campus
- Graffiti Design for *Raising the Dead*: Devon Champagne
- Matt & Carolyn Cook
- 7Stages Theatre
- Synchronicity Theatre
- Legacy Theater
- Jane B. Kroessig

ESSENTIAL THEATRE STAFF

- Peter Hardy Founding Artistic Director
- Jennifer Kimball Managing Director
- Tosin Taiwo Marketing and Outreach Coordinator
- Carter Bevis Box Office Manager
- Elisabeth Cooper Production Manager
- Emily McClain, Elisabeth Cooper, Amina S. McIntyre, Rachel Graf Evans Education Associates

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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- Audrey Galex, Secretary *Community Engagement Manager, AIB Network (joined 2018)*
- Alissa Scherb, Treasurer *Manager of Corporate and Foundation Relations, Atlanta Ronald McDonald House Charities (joined 2017)*
- Edward Henderson *Atlanta West End Rotary member, Chairman of Sovereignty Realty Group, LLC, Co-Host of Talk-Show Globally U (joined 2019)*
- Kacie Willis *Freelance Marketing Consultant and Sound Designer (joined 2020)*
- Janice Overbeck *CEO, the Janice Overbeck Real Estate Team (joined 2021)*

AFFILIATIONS

Essential Theatre, Inc is a proud member of Theatre Communications Group and Art Currents ATL

THIS PROGRAM IS SUPPORTED IN PART BY



This program is supported in part by the City of Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs.



FULTON COUNTY
arts & culture

Funding for this program is provided by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners.



2021 Playwriting Award Sponsor

2020-2021 DONORS

Over the past year and a half, when so much has been uncertain, we at Essential have been supported, reassured and frankly inspired by so many people who have shown their love and support for Essential through financial contributions.

Since the last Festival in 2019, we thank: Alan and Susan Stiefel, Peter Dakutis, Dr. Mark Perloe, Dona Sauerburger, Tucker Leighty-Phillips, Katie Beck, Tanya Blackwell, Shirlene Holmes, Mira Hirsch, G. M. Lupo, Christine Pearson, Jess Wells, Caitlin White, Irma McClaurin, Brian Valley, Jill Patrick, Maya Caldwell, Mario Falu, Charmain Howington, Lonni Ann Fredman, Eliana Marianes, Matt and Carolyn Cook, Judy Graboyes, Beverly Austin, Cameron Neath, Margaret Hooker, William Miles, Karen Wilson, Erin Prentiss, Isa Williams, Lois Jarman, Chiwuzo Ife Okwumabua, Sarah Cave, Mary Catherine Benedetto, Pamela Hayward, Kacie Willis, Ron Gephart, Artur Muszynski, Aaron Gotlieb, Dr. Barbara Doyle, Karen Ryker, Thomas Brazzle, Inez Singletary, Dan Reichard, Betty Mitchell, Karyn Hodgkinson, Pam Ferguson, Ron Gephart, Susan Pavlin, Henrietta Murphy-Jones, Jon and Chris Carlsten, Lee Buechele, Janice Akers, Alex and Alison Riviere, Mallory Nonemaker, Jerry Harlow, Shawn Watwood, Sherry Durren, Lori, Thom and Sydney Stanley, Bernice Maw, Christine Casey, Jennifer Jenkins, Carl Patten, Colleen Russ, Alissa Scherb, Audrey Galex, Ed Henderson II, James Wicker, Barbara Considine, Charles Palmer, Erin Lavallee, Kathleen Pendleton, Dave Hayward, Nina Tally, Kathy Manning, Charles Palmer, Renee Minton, Jennifer Klein, Kallie Robinson, Janice Wittschiebe, Robert Clark, Charles Carter, Patti Siegel, Jeffrey Watanabe, Gwen Melkonian, Elizabeth Corrie, John Cheng, William Polk, Joseph Bahin, Robert Davis, Anita Farley, Allison Wilker, Kailah Bailey, Leonard Pallats, Skyler Westlake, Lee Nowell, Julann Stephenson, Brian Bonin, Natalie Karp-Allowitz, Daniel Guyton, Melinda Wood, Henry Darby, Parris Sarter, Lauren Morris, Nate Newton, Milton Sams, Frankie Hardin, William Price, and Michael Whitehead for your financial support.

We would particularly like to honor the lives and memories of *Jennifer Jenkins* and *Alan Stiefel*, both long-time supporters of Essential – and many Atlanta theaters – who passed earlier this year and are deeply missed.

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