

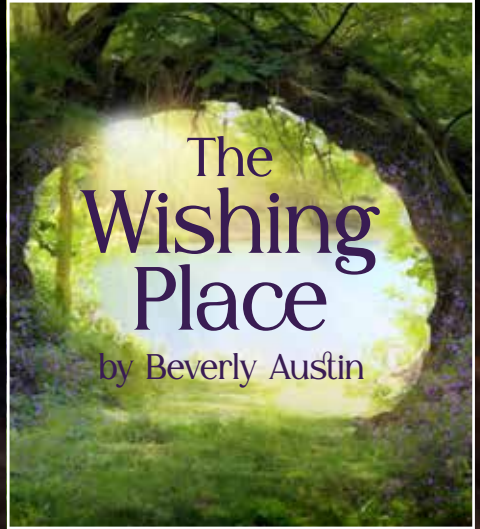
# 2023 ESSENTIAL THEATRE PLAY FESTIVAL

7 STAGES BLACK BOX THEATRE 1105 EUCLID AVE NE, ATLANTA GA 30307

## The Manuscript by Matthew Hoffman



## The Wishing Place by Beverly Austin



## Yanni Stone & The Honey Pot Trap

Written by  
Anterior Leverett



## Walk With Me: Loving Steps on the Dementia Journey by Carolyn Cook



essential  
theatre  
e.

Peter Hardy, *Founding Artistic Director*

**bare**  
essentials  
play reading series

All readings in the Bare Essentials series are free and open to the public thanks to support from:

[WWW.ESENTIALTHEATRE.COM](http://WWW.ESENTIALTHEATRE.COM)

## PROGRAM NOTES

When we first began producing our annual theatre festival in 1999, we called it the Festival of New American Theatre. The idea was that we'd do at least one new script by a Georgia playwright every year, with the other offerings being recent plays from around the country that had not yet been produced in the Atlanta area.

In 2001 we held our first Essential Theatre Playwriting Award competition, with the prize going to eighteen-year-old Lauren Gunderson for her play *Parts They Call Deep*, which shortly thereafter went on to be produced Off Broadway in the Young Playwrights Festival. Lauren's career has continued to thrive and she is now the most produced living American playwright. Other Essential playwrights have gone on to success around the country and, since 2012, our Festival has focused exclusively on the work of Georgia writers. This year we'll be presenting four staged readings of new Georgia plays in our Bare Essentials series, along with a workshop



reading of Anterior Leverett's *Yanni Stone and the Honey-pot Trap* by Hush Harbor Lab. And beloved Atlanta actress Carolyn Cook will give two performances of a piece she's created and written called *Walk With Me*.

But, as always, the main focus of the Essential Festival will be the two fully staged World Premieres we'll be presenting. Over the years, it's often been the case that, once we've chosen the plays we'll be producing, we become aware of connecting themes or threads between them that we hadn't always recognized when we were making our selections. This year, both of the plays center around families that are haunted by the loss of one of their own, someone who died in questionable circumstances. They also look at the question of who does and does not belong in those families, a theme going back to the ancient Greeks, with their tragedies about children that have been abandoned or banished and parents who refuse to accept or even recognize them.

Who are we to each other? What love and loyalty, acceptance and forgiveness do we owe one another? These are age-old themes which are still all too relevant to our world today.

Beverly Austin's *The Wishing Place* is a poetic memory play set in the rural Georgia of the 1960s, while Matthew Hoffman's *The Manuscript* takes place in the more recent times of 2015, when matters of who could and could not be legally married had finally been decided by the courts (though it was not yet settled in the minds and hearts of all the people). Both of these plays look deeply into the souls of their characters and hold up a mirror to ourselves. They continue the proud Essential Theatre tradition of bringing new work by Georgia writers to the world stage.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peter Hardy".

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.*





# 2023 ESSENTIAL PLAY FESTIVAL CALENDAR

7 Stages Black Box Theatre • 1105 Euclid Ave NE, Atlanta GA 30307 • essentialtheatre.com

## ESSENTIAL THEATRE CALENDAR LEGEND

<b>The Manuscript</b> by Matthew Hoffman	<b>The Wishing Place</b> by Beverly Austin	Hush Harbor Lab: <b>Yanni Stone &amp; the Honeyrot Trap</b> by Antenor Loverett	<b>Bare Essentials</b> Reading Series	<b>10-Minute Play Bootcamp</b> Showcase	<b>Walk With Me</b> Loving Steps on the Dementia Journey by Carolyn Cook
---	---	---	--	--	--

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
AUGUST 6	7	8	9	10	11	12
				Preview 8PM	Opening Night 8PM	2PM  8PM
13	<b>Water Boyz</b> by Kwik Jones 7:30PM	14	15	16	17	18
				Preview 8PM	Opening Night 8PM	8PM
2PM  7PM	Industry Night 8PM	<b>The Rock and the Hard Place</b> by Emily McClain 7:30PM	22	23	24	25
				7:30PM	8PM	8PM
2PM  7PM	Industry Night 8PM	<b>Pasde Deux</b> 29 by Sarah Swiderski and <b>The Other Bones</b> by Beverly Sylvester 7:30PM	7:30PM	30	31	SEPTEMBER 1
				7:30PM	8PM	8PM
2PM						



## ESSENTIAL THEATRE STAFF

Peter Hardy	Founding Artistic Director
Jennifer Kimball	Managing Director
Keri Atkins	Bookkeeper
Tosin Taiwo	Social Media 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

Audrey Gale, President	Community Engagement Manager, AIB Network (joined 2018)
Jane Zoellick, Vice President & Secretary	Retired from Georgia Concervancy (joined 2022)
C.E. Patten II, Treasurer	Managing Director, Excel8 Advisory Services LLC (joined 2020)
Edward Henderson II	Atlanta West End Rotary member, Chairman of Sovereignty Realty Group, LLC, Co-Host of Talk Show Globally U (joined 2019)
Cynthia Webb	Process Expert for Operations Implementation and Readiness Team, Anthem (joined 2022)
Dr. Kelli Spencer	Chief Curator of Experiences and Memories, Inkwell Properties, LLC & The Rolling Peach, LLC (joined 2023)
Marcie Dickson	President, National Arbitration & Mediation (joined 2023)
Vanessa Mazabane	CEO, Founder of Syrupe Media (joined 2023)
Ryan Daniels	Vice President, AmerisBank (joined 2023)

## AFFILIATIONS

Essential Theatre, Inc is a proud member of Theatre Communications Group and supporter of the Atlanta Green Theatre Alliance.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Essential Theatre resides on historically Creek and Cherokee land. We honor the generations of stewardship the Creek and Cherokee peoples have given to the water, air, and land and pay respect to the Creek and Cherokee peoples, past, present, and future, here in their homeland and throughout the Creek and Cherokee diaspora.

## THIS PROGRAM IS SUPPORTED IN PART BY



FULTON COUNTY  
ARTS & CULTURE

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



This program is supported in part by the City  
of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs



Playwriting Award Sponsor, 2021-present



## SPECIAL THANKS

7Stages Theatre

Decatur Arts Alliance

Synchronicity Theatre

Thom Stanley and the Stanley Collective

Casy Ford

Crazy Legs Productions

Oakhurst Presbyterian Church

Georgia State University Fine Arts Dept, Clarkston Campus

Theatre Emory

## 2022 DONORS

Bradley and Barbara Rudy, Lori Evans Stanley, Vynnie Meli, Randy Hyman, Jennifer Skura Boutell, Lenny Pallats, Randy Hyman, Brent Brewer, Melissa Hardy Trevenna, Carl Patten II, Susan Stiefel, Timothy McDonough, Cara Haycak, Adam Weisman, Brenda Niforth, Lauren Thomas, Jane Zoellick, Thom and Lori Stanley, Vanessa Mazabane, Bernice Maw, Audrey Galex, Joe Winter, Carolyn Cook, Chris Soucy, Vicki McMorrough, Randy Bampfield, Charmain Howington, Mary Wellington, Richard Perera, Bryan Davis, Matt Hoffman, Jamyee C. Pleasant, Patti Siegel, Frankie Hardin, Constance Wooden-Smith, Sarah Bartlett, Kyle Brumley, Vanessa Brown, Deborah Brown, Akbar Imhotep, Amy Weisman, Amanda Kucher, Dwight Harriman, Victor Palmas, Kristen magann, Sarah Cave, Cheryl Booker, Donna Harper, Evan Cole, Doyle Rreynolds, Alexander Durham, Cynthia Frigon, Thomas Brazzle, Kathleen Newton, Daniel Guyton, Bree Sharper, Julia Murphy, Jan Williams, Bryan Watts, Lewis Satterwhite



casey ford

ENTERTAINMENT PHOTOGRAPHER

@caseygardnerford

caseygford.com

casey.g.ford@gmail.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 each summer in partnership with Fulton County Arts & Culture, 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!"*

**10 Minute Play Bootcamp** – Bootcamp participants create a 10 minute play over the course of four weeks. The class concludes with a public showcase performed by professional actors!



**Southern Fried Bake-Off** – New in 2024: an exhilarating 24 hours where participants write, rehearse, and perform a brand new play based on a Bake-Off theme and a list of "ingredients."

## Resources for Teachers



**Introduction 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](mailto:education@essentialtheatre.com)



# THE MANUSCRIPT

By Matthew Hoffman

*Winner of the 2023 Essential Theatre Playwriting Award*

Directed by Peter Hardy

## CAST

Anna.....	Hannah Morris
Susan.....	Laurie Beasley
UPS delivery person.....	Luke Lew
Holly (Adult).....	Charis Sellick
Holly (Child).....	Eleanor McClain

**Setting:** Anna and Holly's apartment in Portland, OR.

**Time:** Between Obergefell and Trump  
There will be one ten-minute intermission.

**Advisory:** Reference to suicide and self-harm

Playwright.....	Matthew Hoffman
Director.....	Peter Hardy
Stage Manager.....	Victoria Nation
Assistant Stage Manager.....	Luke Lew
Intimacy Coordinator, Fight Choreographer.....	Kristin Storla
Set Designer.....	Dustin Pettegrew
Lighting Designer.....	Harley Gould
Sound Designer.....	Josh Cambell
Costume Designer.....	D'Mya Tabron
Props Designer.....	Maggie Whittemore
Videographer.....	Valeriia Luhovska
Video Editor.....	Brittney Fontus

# MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT: MATTHEW HOFFMAN

**Matthew Hoffman** is a writer and a critical care physician working in ICUs across Georgia. Originally from the Midwest, Matt settled in Georgia in the late nineties and has also worked as a freelance journalist, writer and editor for WebMD, intern for CNN, professional blogger, and frontman for a cover band. He was chosen by his classmates to be the speaker for their medical school graduation. He played a bit part in an independent film, performed improv comedy at Highwire Comedy Company, and contributes to a writing room developing screenplays for independent films. He writes and records music under the pseudonym Will Shook.



The *Manuscript* is his first full-length play, which had a staged reading at Essential Theatre in 2022. This will be the play's first full production

## CAST BIOS

**PETER HARDY** (Director) see staff bios on page 13.

**HANNAH MORRIS** (Anna) is glad to be back with the Essential Festival this summer. She was seen last year in Dan Brown's *The Outrage Machine*. Credits include *The Wrath of Con II* (Dad's Garage), *Secrets of a Soccer Mom* (Stage Door Players), and *The Thanksgiving Play* (The Warehouse Theatre). B.F.A. Acting - Point Park Conservatory.

**Laurie Beasley** (Susan) is thrilled to return to Essential Theatre, where she was last seen in *Raising The Dead*. Other Essential Theatre appearances include *Night Travels*, *Charm School*, *Cruel Disclosures*, *A Child Shall Lead and Cinders*. She has also performed locally at the Alliance Theatre, Stage Door Players and OnStage Atlanta, as well as regionally with *Unto These Hills* and *The Lost Colony*. TV Film credits include *The Hunley*, *Patron Saint of Liars*, *Stolen Babies*, *I'll Fly Away*, *America's Most Wanted*, and *Matlock*. Laurie dedicates this performance to the memories of her father, nephew and cousin, and encourages anyone who is struggling to seek treatment for Suicide Prevention.

**CHARIS SELICK** (Adult Holly) is so excited to be working with Essential Theatre for the first time! Some past Atlanta credits include: *Peter and The Starcatcher* at Stage Door, *To Serve the Hive* with SheATLarts, *Macbeth 60* at Atlanta

Shakespeare Company, as well as playing Teenagers on TV and reacting to Metal Music on YouTube.

**ELEANOR MCCLAIN** (Child Holly) is so proud to be included in the cast of *The Manuscript*. She was Little Cosette in *Les Miserables* at School of the Arts @ Central Gwinnett in April and Nigel in *Finding Nemo Jr* at Aurora Theatre's Summer Camp in June. She loves performing, drawing, and swimming and she's looking forward to starting the 4th grade this year.

**VICTORIA NATION** (Stage Manager) is excited to work with Essential Theatre for the first time! She has previously worked with Actor's Express, Georgia Ensemble Theatre, Aris Theatre, and the Academy Theatre, among others. Apart from her stage management work, she's a playwright whose produced works include *Frankenstein*, *Miss American Dream*, and the short play *The Automaton*.

**LUKE LEW** (Assistant Stage Manager/UPS Guy) is a recent Graduate of Georgia State University's MBA program, and a third generation artist. When he is not doing Digital Communications he can be found hiking and painting with his dog. A kid at heart, he has always loved anime and has a kinship with the underdogs and outcasts.

## FESTIVAL - PRODUCTION

**KRISTIN STORLA** (she/her) (Intimacy Director, Fight Choreographer) is an Atlanta-based Intimacy and Fight Director, Actor, & Puppeteer. Essential Credits: *The Outrage Machine*, *Slaying Holofernes*. Her work has been seen at Actor's Express, Synchronicity Theatre, The Shakespeare Tavern, Havoc Movement Company, Capitol City Opera, Oglethorpe University, Out of Box, Center for Puppetry Arts, and more. Keep up at [www.KristinStorla.com](http://www.KristinStorla.com)

**DUSTIN PETTIGREW** (Set Designer) is a native of Florida who recently returned to the south after thirteen years away. Having worked primarily in film and television the last two years, he is pleased to again put his work in front of a live audience to make his Atlanta stage debut with Essential.

**HARLEY GOULD** (Lighting Designer) designs, hangs, directs and runs lights, designs, builds, paints, loads in and then strikes sets, 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.

**JOSHUA CAMPBELL** (Sound Designer) has a BA in audio production from the Art Institute of Atlanta. His previous credits include *A Complicated Hope* and *Raising the Dead* (Essential Theatre), *The Light in the Piazza*, *Simply Simone*, and *The Dancing Handkerchief* (Theatrical Outfit). He's rumored to be a simulacrum piloted by a family of squirrels.

**COURTNEY LONER** (Props Designer, *The Wishing Place*) received a Bachelor of Arts in music from Kennesaw State University where she also studied technical theater. She has performed with Merely Players, Lionheart Theatre, Theatre

Arts Guild, Capitol City Opera, Stage Door Players, and Onstage Atlanta. Her backstage credits include work with Synchronicity Theatre, Onstage Atlanta, Horizon Theatre, Aurora Theatre and The Alliance Theatre.

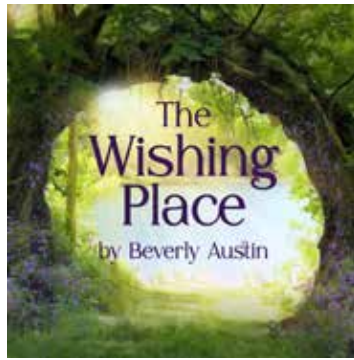
**SAVANNAH COBB** (Costume Designer, *The Wishing Place*) is a local costume designer with recent credits, including *Holmes & Watson - Apt 2b* at Synchronicity. She is grateful to be back designing for the festival for a second time.

**MAGGIE WHITEMORE** (Props Designer, *The Manuscript*) - see staff bios on page 13.

**D'MYA TABRON** (Costume Designer, *The Manuscript*) is originally from Detroit Michigan. D'Mya received her degree in Theatre Design and Technology from Columbia College Chicago in 2021. D'Mya is the Costume Shop Coordinator for Emory University's Theatre department. D'Mya is passionate about making all theater inclusive and disability friendly. Outside of theatre D'Mya is the set designer for Atlanta Sustainable Fashion Week.

**VALERIA LUHOVSKA** (Videographer, *The Manuscript*) is a 24 year old cinematographer born and raised in Ukraine. She started pursuing photography from a young age which led to a love of filmmaking. She is currently working out of Atlanta GA.

**BRITNEY FONTUS** (Video Editor, *The Manuscript*) is a recent graduate from Georgia State, and has worked with 7 Stages, Daffodil Studios, Rockstar Brothers, Morehouse Film Festival, and Crazy Legs Productions as an editor, colorist, assistant editor, and intern. She's extremely excited to be working with this team and hopes you enjoy the show!



# THE WISHING PLACE

By Beverly Austin

*Co-Winner of the 2020 Essential Theatre Playwriting Award*

Directed by Ellen McQueen

## CAST

Henry.....	David Rucker III
Vincent.....	Terry Kiser
Jo.....	Sheri Wilson
Richard.....	Caleb Wilkinson
Diane.....	Aliya Kraar
Libby.....	Nancy Powell
Musician.....	George Kotler-Wallace

**SETTING:** Middle Georgia, the early 1960's  
There will be one ten-minute intermission

Playwright.....	Beverly Austin
Director.....	Ellen McQueen
Stage Manager.....	Lee Fowler
Assistant Stage Manager.....	Cassandra Dudley
Intimacy Coordinator.....	Kristin Storla
Dialect Coach.....	Galen York
Set Designer.....	Dustin Pettigrew
Lighting Designer.....	Harley Gould
Sound Designer.....	Josh Campbell
Costume Designer.....	Savannah Cobb
Props Designer.....	Courtney Loner



# MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT: BEVERLY AUSTIN

**Beverly Austin** is a native Atlantan for generations back on her mother's side. Her great-grandfather had a yard full of chickens on Peachtree Street where the Bank of America building now stands, and her Uncle Glenn had his professorship threatened and crosses burned in his yard for attempting voter registration in the 1940s. Her first two scripts were produced in London in 1974. Since then, she's enjoyed over three dozen professional productions in New York, Los Angeles, Palm Beach, and around the Southeast—along with a collection of grants and residencies. One current project is her musical *Cakewalk*, recipient of a Yip Harburg Foundation grant. Finally, Austin has worked for over 40 years as a journalist, high-school teacher, and mother to seven children and step-children. Love to all the essential people. Read more at [beverlyaustin.net](http://beverlyaustin.net).



## CAST BIOS

**ELLEN MCQUEEN** (Director) One of Ellen's favorite things is working with living writers on their new plays, so she's always interested in directing for Essential. Some personal past favorites she's directed for the Festival are *Ice Glen*, *Sally and Glen at the Palace*, and *Ada and the Memory Engine*. She's particularly pleased to be doing Beverly Austin's *The Wishing Place* (after all!) since it was originally scheduled for the 2020 Festival and suspended due to the pandemic.

**DAVID RUCKER III** (Henry) is honored to work with Essential Theatre. He has worked most recently with the Atlanta Shakespeare Company productions of *The Tempest*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and soon *Troilus and Cressida*. David's past credits include performances at the Atlanta, Washington, and National Black Arts Festivals.

**TERRY KISER** (Vincent) attended Clark Atlanta University, majoring in Musical Theatre and a minor in Music. He is an Alumni of The Youth Ensemble of Atlanta and his theatre experience includes *The Nativity* at Kenny Leon's True Colors Theatre, *Purlie* at Orange Box Theatre, *Out of the Box* and *Love Does Cost a Thing* for Magby Productions, and *Little Black Girls Blues* for Nikki Wade Writer/Producer. He's appeared in the independent films *When We Were Kids*, *The Beautiful Danger in Her Eyes* and *Love the American Way*. Thanks be to God and to all others for your support!

**SHERI WILSON** (Jo) is thrilled to perform with the Essential Theatre. Her onstage lay credits span 35 years in 6 states. Sheri recently earned her MFA in Classical Acting from George Washington University/Shakespeare Theatre Co. (Washington, D.C.). She's blessed to be a wife, mama, nana, actor, adjunct professor, and a little troublemaker

**CALEB WILKINSON** (Richard) is excited to make his stage debut in *The Wishing Place* after having done mostly on-camera work. He received his BS in Biochemistry at The University of Tennessee but took an impromptu theatre class in college and chose to pursue a career in the arts after graduating.

**ALIYA ROSE KRAAR** (Diane) is excited to be making her Essential Theatre debut. Previous credits include *Oh to be Pure Again*, *Prayer for the French Republic*, and *Intimate Apparel* (Actor's Express), *August: Osage County* (Theater Tallahassee), and *As You Like It* (Florida State University). She would like to thank her family and friends for their endless support.

**NANCY LOWERY POWELL** (Libby) is pleased to be back performing with The Essential Theatre. Previously she appeared in *The Local* and *Mysterious Connections*. She has also performed with The Alliance Theater, Dunwoody Stagedoor Players, OnStage Atlanta, and most recently, with Merely Players Presents. She is grateful to be a part of *The Wishing Place*.

**GEORGE KOTLER-WALLACE** (Musician) is a Georgia native and has been a mainstay of the Atlanta music scene since the early 2000s as a composer and multi-instrumentalist. Returning to the theatrical stage, this is George's first show with Essential Theatre, and he is excited to help weave the story.

**LEE FOWLER** (they/them) (Stage Manager) is honored to make their Essential Theatre stage manager debut with *The Wishing Place*. They have stage managed other successful shows such as *Malicious Compliance* (Burning Bones Physical Theatre) and *Always A Bridesmaid* (OnStage Atlanta). When not crouched in the booth or taking notes at rehearsal, they can be found at a local library or park. Enjoy the show!

**CASSANDRA DUDLEY** (Assistant Stage Manager) is pleased to be making her Essential Theatre debut! Relatively new to live theater work, Cassie can typically be found splitting her time between animal welfare and behind-the-scenes work in entertainment media. She made her professional theater debut earlier this year working with 7Stages, The Object Group, and Sky Creature Productions on an immersive production of *Pinocchio* that spanned this entire building.

ONE NIGHT ONLY

AUGUST 24, 2023



## Hush Harbor Lab: Yanni Stone and the Honeytrap by Anterior Leverett

A comedy following writer Lena and her titular character Yanni Stone as Lena completes the daunting task of writing her first play all while navigating dating, sex, and virginity in modern day Atlanta, audiences had the chance to experience an earlier draft of during Synchronicity Theatre's Stripped Bare Arts Incubator Series in April.

### MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT: ANTERIOR LEVERETT



Anterior Leverett is an actor, writer, and sketch artist based out of Atlanta. Hailing from Savannah, GA, she received her B.A. in Theatre and Performance Studies from Kennesaw State University in 2015. During her studies, Anterior was fortunate to hone her craft as a performer (*Ruined*, *In the Red and Brown Water*), director (*In the Blood*, *365 Days 365 Plays*, *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*), and writer (*A Work of Art*, *Hearts on the Sidewalk*, *Eyes on the Street*). After receiving her degree, she began working as a performer and writer for the Atlanta History Center. She continued to hone her writing as a member of the 2018/2019 Horizon Theatre AppCo (*Sinking Further*, *Paula's Playground*, *I Never Dreamed You'd Leave in Summer*). She's now a writer and performer for Black AF Comedy in Atlanta. She is also a recent participant of Synchronicity Theatre's 2022/2023 Stripped Bare company. This is Anterior's sixth project with Hush Harbor Lab and she is thrilled to join them and Essential Theatre as a writer.

### ABOUT HUSH HARBOR LAB

Founded by playwrights Addae Moon and Amina S. McIntyre, Hush Harbor Lab is a brave space for the development and production of new and innovative digital, live, and multi-media performance work by Black Atlanta based artists. Hush Harbor strives to be a space that promotes wellness, self-care and the sacred within the Black arts community with the recognition that caring for the full person (body, mind, spirit) encourages better art.

### FROM THE FOUNDERS: ABOUT THIS READING

Witty, experiential, and thought provoking, Anterior crafts a modern coming of age story that makes way for conversations around female sexuality and exploration...for adults! With Hush Harbor Lab's interest in supporting Black stories from new cultural and theatrical perspectives, Yanni Stone is a natural selection for our partnership with the Essential Theatre Festival.

[www.hushharborlab.com](http://www.hushharborlab.com)



Written and performed by Carolyn Cook

*Two nights only:  
August 30 and 31, 2023 at 7:30pm*

In this autobiographical play, a woman sets out to meet her loved ones with dementia where they are — and returns with a guidebook for fellow travelers.

Covering fifty years in twenty minutes, *Walk With Me* leads into a discussion about positive caregiving with social worker Anne McSweeney, owner of CEU Creations. Join us for evening of warmth and discovery for families, health care professionals, and anyone whose life may be touched by dementia



**Carolyn Cook** has spent the last twelve years learning about dementia as she and her siblings navigated their mother's dementia care. She participated in the 2015 Memory Bridge Training Retreat, a five-day intensive program leading to positive, meaningful dementia relationships. Carolyn co-developed and performed *Blackberry Winter*, a play by Steve Yockey about a woman whose mother has Alzheimer's disease, co-produced by Out of Hand Theater and Actor's Express, and has chronicled her experiences with dementia care in her blog, *Lifelong Metamorphoses*. An Atlanta theater veteran, Carolyn has worked with Seven Stages, Horizon Theatre, Actor's Express, Theatrical Outfit, the Alliance Theatre, Georgia Shakespeare, and Theater Emory, and is the founder and artistic director of Atlanta-based Théâtre du Rêve (Theater of the Dream), a professional theater company that brings French language and Francophone culture to life on the American stage. She is honored to team with Ann McSweeney, CEU Creations, and Essential Theatre to bring you this production of *Walk With Me*.



**Anne McSweeney** is a licensed clinical social worker and owner of CEU Creations – a company providing educational trainings for helping professionals. She has a diverse background in medical social work, education, and community relations. With a social work career that spans over two decades, Anne has been planning educational trainings for over 17 years. One of her biggest passions is incorporating the arts into education – using music, plays, films and other forms of multi-media to better engage learners and immerse them in unique, educational experiences.

Prior to founding CEU Creations in 2010, she practiced medical social work for over 8 years – working primarily with the geriatric population in home health, hospice, and dialysis. In 2015, she was appointed to the Fulton County Commission on Elderly Affairs where she served for 5 years as an advocate for seniors in Fulton County. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her family – including her husband and 2 adult daughters, reading and college football!



# bare essentials play reading series

All readings in the Bare Essentials series are free and open to the public. Be sure to stay after for exciting conversation with the director, cast and playwright.

**Festival readings take place in the 7Stages Black Box Theatre.**

The 2023 Bare Essentials Play Reading series will feature four new plays by Georgia playwrights:

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>August 14, 7:30 pm</b> | <b>WATER BOYZ</b> by Kwik Jones,<br>directed by Damian Lockhart                  |
| <b>August 22, 7:30 pm</b> | <b>THE ROCK AND THE HARD PLACE</b> by Emily McClain,<br>directed by Kyle Brumley |
| <b>August 29, 7:30 pm</b> | <b>PAS DE DEUX</b> by Sarah Swiderski,<br>directed by Kati Grace Kirby           |
|                           | <b>THE OTHER BONES</b> by Beverly Sylvester,<br>directed by Julia Barton         |



The graphic features a green background with large, stylized white text. '10M' is at the top left, '13C' is below it, and '10-Minute Play Bootcamp Showcase' is at the bottom. The 'essential theatre' logo is in the top right, with 'essential' in a sans-serif font and 'theatre' in a script font, next to an orange circle with a white 'e'. The word 'Showcase' is in a yellow, italicized font.

**essential theatre**

**Essential's 10-Minute Play Bootcamp** dramatically concludes with a public showcase of brand new 10-Minute Plays sure to delight and entertain!

Featuring brand new 10-Minute Plays by Bootcamp playwrights Amanda Vick, Annaliese Grace, Erin Moore, Katherine Brokaw, Linda Green, Rosalyn Grimes, and Thom Stanley.

## STAFF

**PETER HARDY** (Founding Artistic Director, *The Manuscript* Director) is an award-winning playwright and director who has been working professionally in the Atlanta area since 1986. He has directed more than 100 productions and has won multiple screenwriting awards from film festivals around the world, as well as several playwrighting awards. For the summers from 1990 to 2005 he served as Artistic Director of the outdoor drama *Unto These Hills* in North Carolina. There have been around 30 productions of his plays done around the country, and *Mysterious Connections* was chosen for the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Playwrights Conference. Last year his play *The Other Part of the Picture* was chosen for the Lanford Wilson New American Play Festival. Earlier this year he wrote, directed and shot his first film, *Late Sleeper*, which has won awards from the Dreamachine International Film Festival, Northwood Film Festival and Cult Movies International Film Festival.

**JENNIFER KIMBALL** (Managing Director) has been with Essential 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 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, she enjoys nurturing both through her work with Essential.

**ELISABETH COOPER** (Production Manager) is a veteran in the Atlanta Theatre community. She has worked as a director, designer, and technician with many companies, such as Actors Express, Synchronicity, Georgia Ensemble Theatre, 7 Stages, Aris, Dad's Garage, and Horizon Theatre to name a few. Elisabeth is an Education Associate with Essential. When she is not behind the scenes she can be found standing in front of students all over the place.

**MAGGIE WHITTEMORE** (Assistant Production Manager, and Props Designer, *The Manuscript*) is a brand-new Emory graduate (August 2023) who joined Essential's company for the first time in 2022. She has been involved with multiple shows, in a variety of roles, at Synchronicity Theatre as well and is glad to return for her second summer with Essential.

**JOSEPH WATTS** (Technical Director) is proud to be serving as Essential's Technical Director this year. Joseph is a graduate of the Professional Actor's Training Program of Chattanooga State, and has acted, directed, designed, and built shows in the Chattanooga area. He is grateful for the opportunities he has been given, and is looking forward to the future.

**CARTER BEVIS** (Box Office Manager) has been either running a box office or ushering at theaters throughout Atlanta for more than 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.

**TOSIN "TOSINGER" TAIWO** (Social Media 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 and 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.

**EMILY MCCLAIN** (Education Associate) is a theatre educator and playwright. She is a proud member of the Dramatist Guild, Working Title Playwrights, New Play Exchange, and WriteStuffATL. Additionally, Emily is an associate artist with the Some Bodies Theatre Collective, a group dedicated to new play development in Atlanta. She is one of the theatre faculty at the new School of the Arts @ Central Gwinnett and holds an M.Ed in Arts Integration in the Curriculum from Lesley University. Her play *Slaying Holofernes* was co-winner of the 2019 Essential Theatre Playwriting Award. She is a two-time finalist for the Risk Theatre Tragedy competition with her plays *Children of Combs* and *Watch Chains* (2020) and *The Rock & The Hard Place* (2021), which was selected for a Bare Essentials reading in this year's festival. Recently she won the William Faulkner Literary Award for her play *What the Water Gave Me* and the Texas Nonprofit Theatre Best New Play for her play *Copper Angel*. Her plays have been performed all around the country and internationally and she is so proud to be a member of the artistic community at Essential Theatre!

**AMINA 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.

**REAL  
WOMEN**

Have  
*Curves*

by **Josefina López**  
directed by **Brenda Porter**

a humorous and heartwarming coming-of-age story of a Mexican-American teenage girl that celebrates the power of women, their bodies and the incredible bond they share

**Thursday - Sunday**  
**Aug 17 – Aug 27, 2023**

**Hapeville Performing Arts Center**  
599 N. Central Avenue. Hapeville, GA 30354

**SENIOR  
MATINEE**  
Thursday  
8/24/23

Tickets:  
<https://www.impacttheatreatlanta.org/current-season>  
404-474-8332



## Have you got a play to share?

The deadline for the 2025 Essential Theatre Playwriting Competition is April 23, 2024.

Now in its 25th year, this is the only contest exclusively dedicated to the work of Georgia playwrights. The winning play will receive both a full production and a \$750 cash prize.

Playwrights must be Georgia residents, and the plays must be previously unproduced.

There are no restrictions as to style or subject matter.

Email your play to [peter@essentialtheatre.com](mailto:peter@essentialtheatre.com) or submit it online at [EssentialTheatre.com/Create/Submit-a-Play](https://EssentialTheatre.com/Create/Submit-a-Play)

ESSENTIAL THEATRE'S ANNUAL  
**PLAYWRITING  
COMPETITION**



**For over 40 years,**  
7 Stages has worked with under-represented communities  
in Atlanta, bringing outstanding artists into the spotlight.  
Join us at the theatre and we can all shine brighter,  
together.



# 7 STAGES



**Sean Dorsey Dance's**  
***The Lost Art of Dreaming***  
Gender nonconforming artists  
September 2023

**The Second Annual**  
***First Voices Festival***  
Indigenous artists  
November 2023

Learn more  
at [7Stages.org](https://7Stages.org)

# 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 39 new works by 34 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 D'Arcy 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 Machine* 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)  
*A Complicated Hope* by John Mabey (2022)  
*The Manuscript* by Matthew Hoffman (2023)

**YOUR SUPPORT  
IS ESSENTIAL**



Please help us to support new work by Georgia playwrights by visiting our website at [EssentialTheatre.com/support](https://EssentialTheatre.com/support).

Learn about sponsorship opportunities at [EssentialTheatre.com/support/sponsorship/](https://EssentialTheatre.com/support/sponsorship/) or make a donation straight from your phone with this **QR code**.

Thank you!

Essential Theatre is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization—your donations are tax deductible!

 PayPal



Scan. Pay. Go.