

PITTSBURGH PLAYWRIGHTS PRESENTS

Miss Julie, Clarissa and John

Issue (1)

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COST: 5 CENTS



Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company was founded by Mark Clayton Southers in 2003. We began as the resident company of Garfield's Penn Theater, and moved to a 75-seat space at 542 Penn Avenue in the downtown Cultural District in January 2005. In October 2011 we moved again, into the penthouse at 937 Liberty Avenue. Thanks to the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust for finding this exciting new space for us! This space has an elevator and is wheelchair-accessible. Our Mission: Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company is committed to developing and showcasing the



works of local playwrights; from accomplished masters like August Wilson and

George S. Kaufman to promising new talents. We seek to nurture a racially and culturally diverse community of playwrights, directors, actors and technical specialists to hone their craft and to network creative opportunities. Finally, we support a racially and culturally diverse management staff and board of directors who, together, promote audiences that reflect the rich variety of our Pittsburgh community. Through such sharing of talents, resources, perspectives and experiences we aspire to provide artistic enlightenment that will strengthen our civic community.

CAST



Tami Dixon*
(Miss Julie)

is a theatre-maker and social justice advocate entering her 11th season as Producing Artistic Director of Bricolage Production Company. She is proud to make her Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company debut as Miss Julie. Ms. Dixon is a recipient of the TCG/Fox Foundation Resident Actor Fellowship, The Frankel Award from City Theatre Company and was named Performer of the Year by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. Most recently, Ms. Dixon received the Carol R. Brown Creative Achievement Emerging Artist Award from The Heinz Endowments and The Pittsburgh Foundation. Her first play, South Side Stories, received its world premiere and subsequent remount at City Theatre Company to critical and box office acclaim. As an actress she's been seen in A Streetcar Named Desire with barebones productions. The Clockmaker, Marriage Minuet, The Missionary Position, and The Muckle Man with City Theatre. The Hothouse, Celebration, and Rock n Roll with PICT. The Task and El Paso Blue with Quantum Theatre. The Chicken Snake



Chrystal Bates
(Clarissa)

Chrystal has the distinction of being a three time consecutive winner of the Onyx Award for Best Actress and the first recipient of Pittsburgh's Donna Award for Best Actress. She is also part of the only mother-daughter winners (with Cheryl Bates-White) of the Donna Award. Prior to her recent appearance at Short North Stage in Columbus, Ohio, where she recreated her powerful performance of Aunt Ester from August Wilson's Gem of the Ocean, she debuted at the American Stage Theater as Mame Wilks in August Wilson's Radio Golf for which she received a nomination for Best Featured Actress in a Play. Some of her favorite roles have been Big Momma (Livin' Fat), Ruby (King Hedley II), Rebecca Pratt (Ma Noah), Mother-Sister (Every Tongue Confess) and Sophie (Flyin' West). Chry-

stal is also a playwright, poet, director and drama coach. She is currently working on producing her play For Us By Us and writing its sequel. Her play Jesus the Light of the World toured ten years, the proceeds helping to establish several water wells and churches in Kenya, Africa. Chrystal is also the program director for Learning Connections, Melting Pot Ministries. Her performances are dedicated to the memory of her mother the late Rev. Dr. Shirley A. Brown.



Kevin Brown (John)

is a native of August Wilson's Hill District and is over the moon to be a part of this cast. Brown has appeared in seven of August Wilson's 10-play Century Cycle. Brown appeared in New Horizon Theater's world premiere Queens of The Blues as Thomas Dorsey, the father of gospel music. He recently filmed a remake of the classic "crying Indian" commercial for PRC's anti-littering campaign. Brown's additional theater credits include Jitney, King Hedley II, Gem of The Ocean, Radio Golf, Comfort Zone, Romance, Do Lord Remember Me, Driving Miss Daisy, Gospel at Colonus, Beautiful Dream-

er, Last of the Line, Livin' Fat, Bubbling Brown Sugar, Flight, Jelly's Last Jam, Mahalia Jackson: Standing on Holy Ground, Get Ready, Blue, Sophisticated Ladies and The Billie Holiday Story at the Grahamstown Theater Festival (South Africa).

George Spelvin
(Captain Hodge)

is excited to make his first appearance on the Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company stage. He has extensive regional and community theatre credits in shows like Strike Up the Band and The Actor's Nightmare.



Favorite roles include Big Daddy in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Willy Loman in Death

Playwright's Notes

(Written prior to his May 11th auto accident)

My first exposure to this August Strindberg classic play was in Dublin in the fall of 2008. It was a version written by the playwright Frank McGuinness. I asked my traveling companion Dr. Michael Ramsay, "Why did this playwright rewrite this man's play?" I knew what adaptations were but up until this point only associated them with books to film or plays to film.

So now this whole new segment of playwriting was opening up before my eyes. It gave me a greater sense of the importance of story-telling of the common man, and not only that, but a vehicle to transport really great stories into other cultures.

With this new knowledge I watched this performance with all of my senses on full alert.

Being an African American abroad, already your senses are far from being numb. I'm now in a part of the world where I can fully enjoy life without the ghost and distractions of racism. The "What if?" has now come into play. During the performance I couldn't help but to think "What if?" How this play could



be even more impactful to myself and other African Americans if told from a perspective that was inclusive to their being.

Now having the liberty of this thinking via understanding of adaptation as it relates to playwriting, my imagination transported this scenario across the Atlantic to the tobacco fields of Virginia during the Reconstruction period. Primarily because in order to approach the same issues of class, servitude and identity, the African in America has to be seen in a new light at this time, or at the very least, a promise of a new life, so that he or she can speak a different language as far as future aspirations that now can become a reality.

In other words, speak more freely.

I envisioned how the dynamics that run so deep in Strindberg's Miss Julie could be fully fleshed out in my version.

My initial hope was to touch on the topics that are Willie Lynchish and still run rampant in today's so-called modern society. I must admit that once I began to tell this story in its new environment, it immediately took off on its own path and language. I was pleasantly surprised at how the shocking parts found their way into this play.

This play had been ruminating in my head ever since I took in the Project Theatre's production in Dublin. However I can honestly say that I have been distracted, although by choice, with running a theatre company, working full time and raising two small boys. I'm now in full appreciation of my mentor August Wilson's dedication to the craft of playwriting. I've recently made the decision to embark on a journey of being a full-time artist and totally embracing and dedicating my third trimester of life to my playwriting career.

Mark Clayton Southers

Director's Notes

John. Each name holds the same weight, power and responsibility in this retelling; it's just a matter of who is willing to surrender



and who is holding on with a frozen grip until it's too late. This play is bold, rough, hard to watch but most of all familiar. Within each of the characters lives me and you, human nature, and not in its finest hour. I get no reprieve from displaying perfect people for we are all flawed and we all use our ways to mask those flaws long enough to get what we want which has manifested into need. Each character has a

want that is worth going to that forbidden place to obtain it expecting to simply walk back to stasis as if their actions do not carry heavy consequences. Setting this play against the backdrop of a new America, one that is trying to walk again after a crippling war, is not only a perfect storm but it infuses the play with the desperation that lived in the soil of a land trying to recapture its prior essence. America had to learn new ways to breathe and thrive. While methods and innovation changed, the heart remained the same. And that beating heart of classism, racism and sexism has been passed down accordingly. Manipulation is the tool used to unearth these dark feelings and Miss Julie, Clarissa and John is the catalyst that exposes this country's sordid past that looks very much like its present.

Monteze Freeland

Mark Southers (Playwright) is an award winning playwright, photographer, scenic designer, theatrical producer, and stage director. He and his family reside in Pittsburgh's historic Hill District. He is the founder and Producing Artistic Director of the Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company, where he has produced over 140 full length and one-act plays, including August Wilson's entire ten-play Pittsburgh Century Cycle. Mr. Southers is a published poet and playwright as well. His play, Ma Noah, was the recipient of the 2004 Theodore Ward prize at Columbia College, Chicago. His poem play, End Angered Species AKA Angry Black Man Poetry, had a successful run at Teatr Slaski in Katowice, Poland in 2009. Some of his favorite directing credits include Paul Robeson for the Griot Ensemble Theatre Company; Pill Hill and Freeman for New Horizon Theatre; Almost Maine for South Park Theatre; the August in February Series for the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust; Dutchman for Bricolage Production Company; Angry Black Men Poetry for TeatrSlaski; Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, The Piano Lesson, and Radio Golf for American Stage Theatre in St. Petersburg, Florida; Gem of the Ocean for Human Race Theatre in Dayton, Ohio; Passing Strange for North Short Stage in Columbus, Ohio; Papa Doc and Paul Robeson for Trilogy: An Opera Company in Newark, New Jersey; The Sty of the Blind Pig for the Banyan Theatre Company in Sarasota, FL; Dorothy Six, The Piano Lesson, Two Trains Running, Seven Guitars, VALUMART, Jitney, and Gem of the Ocean for the Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company. He is a four-time recipient of the AACTA Onyx award for Best Director. His directed production of Two Trains Running was voted one of the top ten plays of the decade by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and his directed production of Jitney broke all house attendance records at the Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre, and was voted one of the top ten best plays for 2010 by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. The Dayton Metro News named him best director for his work on Dayton's Human Race Theatre's production of Gem of the Ocean. For more info please visit: www.mark-claytonsouthers.com

Kyle Bostian (Dramaturg) has helped develop works by nationally and internationally known playwrights Arthur Kopit (Tony nominee and Pulitzer finalist) and Lucy Alibar (Oscar nominee), as well as by local writers Mary Lipple (for NEW stAGE) and Philip Real (for 12 Peers), and many others. He's participating – as dramaturg and performer – alongside Monteze Freeland) – in the creation of Hiawatha Project's JH: Mechanics of a Legend, a devised piece inspired by the ballad and speculative real-life history of John Henry, which will run at the August Wilson Center in February 2017. Kyle's own plays have been honored in national and regional contests and read or produced

at various professional and university theatres. His short work Irony of the Second Degree is published in 24 Gun Control Plays and has been performed across the country and around the world. His screenplays have been finalists or semifinalists in numerous industry contests. He's currently writing his second novel while shopping the first one to publishers. Kyle holds a PhD in Dramaturgy from Florida State University.

Monteze Freeland (Director) is a Baltimore native with a B.A. in Theatre from Point Park University's Conservatory of Performing Arts. Past directing credits include: Reservations Cancelled for the Pittsburgh New Works Festival, Harriet Tubman Loved Somebody with Kuntu Rep, Is That a Gun in Your Pocket? for the Pride Theater Festival, Sold co-directed with Mark Clayton Southers at Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company. Other credits in the PPTCO ever-changing black box include Poe's Last Night starring David Crawford and Ray Werner's Christmas Star. Mr. Freeland is the founder and artistic director of the LAB Project where he directed the original musical The Gospel Singer. The LAB began the Robert Chew Outreach Project dedicated to bringing theater to youth in underserved communities where he directed Caps for Sale and The Wiz in conjunction with ACH Clear Pathways in 2015. In his third season as Artistic Associate of PPTCO he has had the pleasure of working with many dedicated artists, including this all-star cast, and is ever grateful for the talents of Nik, Adrienne, Diane, Lonzo, Alex, Tony, Cheryl, Joy, Marti, Kyle, Ashley, Mark W., Madeleine, and of course our fearless leader Mark Southers. You all make the magic happen with care and diligence. Thank you.

Adrianne Knapp (Assistant Director) is delighted to be given the opportunity to work on “Miss Julie, Clarissa, and John” with Pittsburgh Playwrights Theater! She is a senior Acting Major at Point Park University. Her directing credits at Point Park include “The Fool That Applied for Apple” by Trevor Butler a part of the Fall 2014 Half- Act Festival and “American Tropical” by Richard Ford for the Fall 2015 Raymond Laine Memorial One-Act Festival as a part of the Advanced Directing class. She was fortunate enough to assistant direct last year with Richard Keitel on Samuel Hazo's piece “Tell it To the Marines” in February 2015. In addition to directing, Adrienne has also been seen on the stage. Recently she was Abigail Williams in Prime Stage Theater's production of “The Crucible”. Adrianne would like to thank Monteze for giving her this opportunity to work with such a talented cast and creative team!

Nik Nemec (Stage Manager) A graduate of Point Park University, Nik now works for Pittsburgh CLO and is a freelance stage manager throughout the region. He also is a playwright and comedian. Nik's plays have been

produced in Pittsburgh at Point Park and the Pittsburgh Pride Theatre Festival, in Atlanta, Georgia with the Horizon Theatre's Young Playwrights Festival, and at Westminster College. He is a frequent guest on the comedy podcast 2 Gays, No Girls, at a Pizza Place (available on iTunes). Some favorites include: August: Osage County(The REP), Angels in America: Millennium Approaches/ Perestroika (Throughline Theatre), The Rocky Horror Show (Stage 62), Hecuba (Point Park), Annie (Pittsburgh CLO), and four seasons of The Nutcracker with Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre. Up Next: Assassins at Stage 62. @NikNemec

Mark Whitehead (Sound Design) is the founder of Saints & Poets Theater, for which he produced and directed the world premiere of Christiane D's Saffronia, and the local premieres of Sam Shepard's The Late Henry Moss and Donald Freed's Secret Honor: The Last Testament of Richard M. Nixon. He was a member of timespace, for which he produced hamletmachine, and directed 4-H Club and Insignificance. Additional directing credits include Comfort Zone and The Revenants for PPTCO, Cry Havoc, Taking Sides, and Fool for Love. Mark is Resident Sound Designer for PPTCO and The Unseam'd Shakespeare Company, and has designed for numerous local theaters. Mark has won Onyx awards for best sound design three years in a row for his work on PPTCO's annual August Wilson productions. He was named best sound designer and listed among the best directors in City Paper's 2001 theater roundup, and was named best sound designer of 2000 by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. Mark was a founding producer of The Dark Night Cabaret performance series. He has also produced and directed music videos for several local bands.

Marti Williams (Lighting Technician) most recently acted as stage manager for Pittsburgh Playwright's production of The Piano Lesson at the AWC. She also stage-managed a show for the Chrystal Bates Production of For Us by Us. She has stage-managed for New Horizon Theatre, Kuntu Repertory Theatre, Pittsburgh New Works Festival, National Black Theater Festival, the D. C. Theater Festival in 2014 and the Langston Hughes Poetry Society of Pittsburgh. She has provided technical & volunteer support for the August Wilson Center for the Performing Arts, Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre, and the DC Theater Festival in 2015. She was the Secretary for the Wilksburg Arts Council, Location Manager for NOMMO Productions, Administrative Assistant for Black Theater Network, and a member of Urban Playwrights United. She was awarded an AACT A ONYX Award for Best Lighting Technician in a Play for Good Black Don't Crack, performed by Kuntu Repertory Theatre. She has had her poetic works published in several volumes of The National Library of Poetry, Cavalcade by Point Park College, and

The Phoenix by Community College of Allegheny County. She is very active in her church and enjoys the theater, bowling, reading, traveling, and writing poetry. She thanks GOD for all the talents He has bestowed upon her and for His many blessings. “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”. She thanks her family & friends for their love and support. She dedicates her work to her ancestors and to her Mid-night Angel.

Madeline Steineck (Lighting Design) graduated from Temple University in 2011 with a degree in Theatre: Lighting Design. This is her eighth show with Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company as she designed lights for PPTCO's productions of Sold: Renn Woods in Concert, Poe's Last Night, Book of Ezra, A Christmas Star, Ubuntu Holiday, Dinah!, and most recently, Fences. She has also designed lights for various high school and middle school musicals, including and Curtains; Hello, Dolly!; Lucky Stiff; Seussical; Man of La Mancha; and The Mystery of Edwin Drood. She is the resident lighting designer for Mercyhurst University's Theatre Program, having designed Urinetown: The Musical; The Laramie Project; You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown; Cabaret; The Tempest; and Clothes for a Summer Hotel. She has designed for Morgantown Dance Studio. She worked as a Master Electrician for Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre (2013) and was the Master Electrician for Opera Theatre of Pittsburgh's Summerfest in 2014.

Tony Ferrieri (Scenic Design) is excited to be returning to Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company. Tony has designed over 530 productions, in addition receiving many awards for his designs and achievements over a nearly 37-year career, including New Works Festival Lifetime Achievement Award, “Designer of the Year” by Pittsburgh City Paper and Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, “Frankel Award,” “Fred Kelly Award for Outstanding Achievement,” “Harry Schwalb Excellence in the Arts Award,” and features in Live Design and Stage Directions. Recent designs include The Piano Lesson, Dulcy and Fences (PPTCO); Sex With Strangers, Sister's Easter Catechism, Sunset Baby, The Night Alive, Elemeno Pea, and the world premieres of Mr. Joy and Smart Blonde (City Theatre Company); First Date, Girls Only and Boeing Boeing (CLO Cabaret); The Master Builder and The Winter's Tale (Quantum Theatre); One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest and A Streetcar Named Desire (barebones); Scared of Sarah and A Feminine Ending (Off the Wall); The Little Mermaid (Lincoln Park Performing Arts Center); Tell it to the Marines (The International Poetry Forum); and You Say Tomato I Say Shut Up! (Dana Phil Playhouse Productions). Other credits include designs for Jewish Theatre of Pittsburgh, Carrnivale Theatrics, Pittsburgh Irish & Classi-

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cal Theatre, Emelin Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Madison Rep, TheatreWorks, 1812 Productions, Playhouse Rep, Playhouse Conservatory, Tuesday Musical Club, and Unseam'd. Tony wishes to express his appreciation to all those who make our productions possible.

Cheryl El-Walker (Costume and Makeup) is an award-winning costume designer and makeup artist who is also a veteran stage actor from Pittsburgh. Her creative theatre work has earned her several Onyx awards from the African American Council for the Arts (AACTA): Best Makeup Artist (2007); Christmas Is Coming Uptown (Best Costume for a Musical 2008); New Horizon Theatre, Freeman (Best Leading Actress 2008); Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company (Best Costume Design for a Play 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012) and the PPTCO 2012 Legacy Award. In 2013, she received PPTCO's Theater Festival in Black and White Award for Best Director. Most recently, Cheryl was seen on the PPTCO stage as “LaRue” in Dinah! The Musical.

Joy Southers (Managing Director) is in her first season as managing direc-

tor with Pittsburgh Playwrights, Joy has worked behind the scenes to build the Playwrights' organization through organizational management practices. She has worked on productions of Dulcy, The Piano Lesson and now Miss Julie, Clarissa and John. Joy is no stranger to theater as she has been a theatre participant off and on from Rogers CAPA to Schenley high school musical theatre performances at the Gene Kelly Awards. She also appeared in a Playwrights production of Hoodwinked. Joy holds a B.A. in Media Communications from the University of Pittsburgh and an M.A. in Organizational Leadership & Development from Point Park University.

Angela Spears (Marketing/PR Director) For the past 15 years Angela has worked with nonprofit organizations nationwide that address social and public policy issues at the grassroots level through community-based programs. She strategically partners with like-minded organizations, foundations and nonprofits that strive to create equal opportunities for underserved communities. She also provides online content management services and writes on health issues affecting children and families.

Production Staff

Artistic Director: Mark Southers
Artistic Associate: Monteze Freeland
Assistant Director: Adrianne Knapp
Dramaturg: Kyle Bostian
Stage Manager: Nik Nemec
Set Design/Prop master: Tony Ferrieri
Assistant Set Designer: Hank Bullington
Scenic Artist: Alicia Diaz
Resident Technical Director: Alex Barnhart

Sound Design: Mark Whitehead
Lighting Design: Madeleine Steineck
Light Technician: Marti Williams
Costume and Makeup: Cheryl El-Walker
Graphic Design: Eric S. Donaldson
Set Builder: Diane Melchitzky
Prop handler/Light Tech/Box Office Assistant: Ashley Southers
Set Build Crew: Lonzo Green, Ron Black

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