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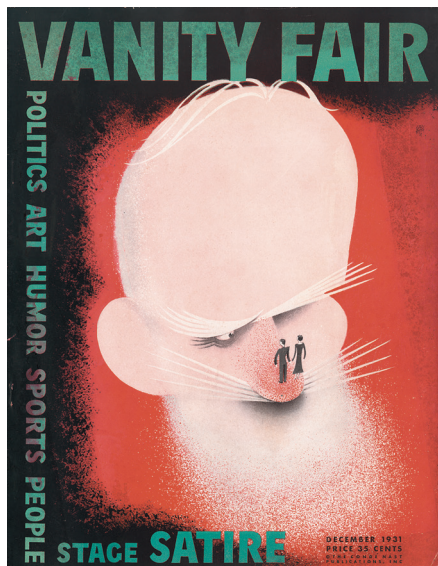
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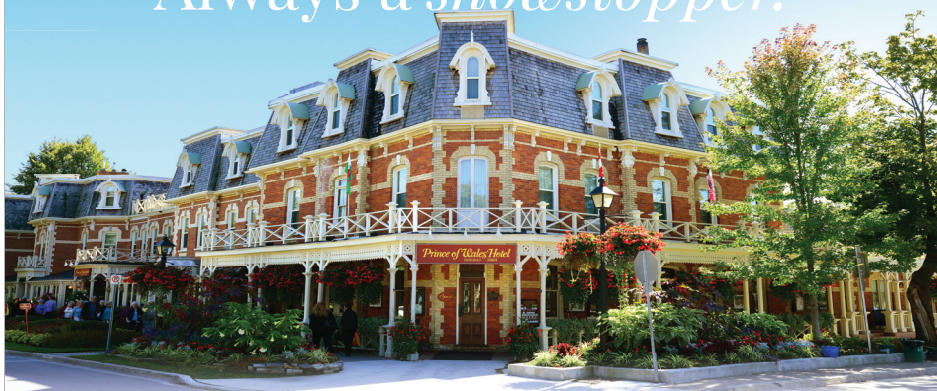
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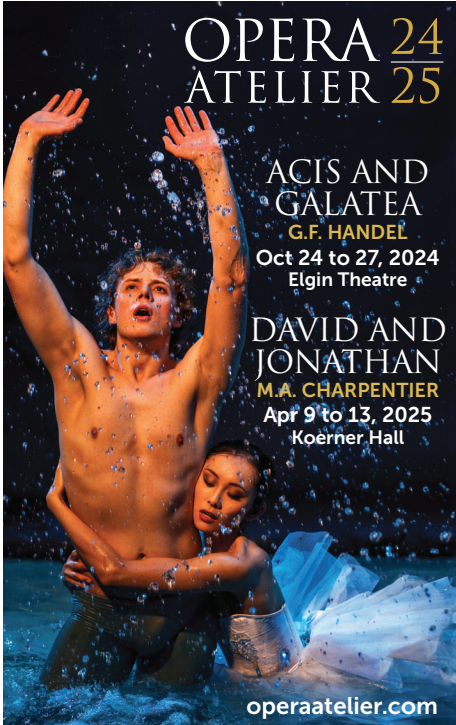
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THE HOUSE THAT WILL NOT STAND

A drama about the free women of colour in New Orleans, 1813
by MARCUS GARDLEY

with DEBORAH CASTRILLI, RAIS CLARKE-MENDES,
NEHASSAIU deGANNES, CHERYL MULLINGS,
RYANN MYERS, MONICA PARKS and SOPHIA WALKER

Directed by PHILIP AKIN

Set and costumes designed by SEAN MULCAHY

Lighting designed by KEVIN LAMOTTE

Original music and sound designed by JACOB LIN

Movement direction by ALEXIS MILLIGAN

The House That Will Not Stand had its New York City premiere at New York Theatre Workshop
(Jim Nicola, Artistic Director; Jeremy Blocker, Managing Director) in 2018.

Originally presented by New York Stage and Film Company and the Powerhouse Theatre at Vassar in July, 2012.

Originally commissioned and produced by Berkeley Repertory Theatre (Tony Taccone, Artistic Director;
Susan Medak, Managing Director), Berkeley, CA, and Yale Repertory Theatre
(James Bundy, Artistic Director; Victoria Nolan, Managing Director), New Haven, CT.

First performed in the UK by the Tricycle Theatre, London.

The House That Will Not Stand is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.

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MONICA PARKS AS
BEARTRICE ALBANS
AND RYANN MYERS
AS ODETTE ALBANS.



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Deborah Castrilli, Rais
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The Cast

IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Agnès Albans	DEBORAH CASTRILLI
Maude Lynn Albans	RAIS CLARKE-MENDES
La Veuve	NEHASSAIU deGANNES
Marie Josephine	CHERYL MULLINGS
Odette Albans	RYANN MYERS
Beartrice Albans	MONICA PARKS
Makeda / Lazare	SOPHIA WALKER

Faubourg Tremé, New Orleans, Louisiana.
One Sunday (24 hours) in the summer of 1813.

Stage Manager	DORA TOMASSI
Assistant Stage Manager	BECCA JORGENSEN
Production Stage Manager	KIM CHARLEEN SMITH
PSM Consultant	MEREDITH MACDONALD

Assistant Set Designer	SARAH YUEN
Assistant Costume Designer	ARIANNA MOODIE
Assistant Lighting Designer	NATHAN BRUCE
Fight Director	JOHN STEAD
Movement Captain	DEBORAH CASTRILLI
Voice and Dialect Coaches	AUSAR STEWART JEFFREY SIMLETT

Special thanks to Specialty Costume Builder, Carole McDonald;
Cheryl Mullings for the waltz vocal composition.

UNDERSTUDIES

TAT AUSTRIE, Marie Josephine, Odette Albans; ALANA BRIDGEWATER, Makeda/Lazare;
RUTHIE NKUT, Agnès Albans, Maude Lynn Albans; KIERA SANGSTER, La Veuve, Beartrice Albans;
JANE VANSTONE OSBORN, Stage Manager, Assistant Stage Manager

Running time is approximately 2 hours and 25 minutes
including one intermission



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: RAIS CLARKE-MENDES AS MAUDE LYNN, RYANN MYERS AS ODETTE AND DEBORAH CASTRILLI AS AGNÈS; MONICA PARKS AS BEARTRICE; NEHASSAIU deGANNES AS LA VEUVE; CHERYL MULLINGS AS MARIE JOSEPHINE; RYANN MYERS AS ODETTE AND SOPHIA WALKER AS MAKEDA.



Director's Note

BY PHILIP AKIN

The very name of the play *The House That Will Not Stand* implies the inevitability of its fall. But that is not where the dramatic tension resides. That necessary tension comes from the struggle, the fight, to keep that House upright, no matter the costs.

In many ways I think that this play is more of an allegory for the expulsion out of the Garden of Eden. So that even if this House, this Garden, is lost we know that we are living downstream in a changed landscape. We continue to endure its memory. We keep what we have lost and what we have learned, resonant in our imagination and history.

So that is one philosophical approach. For me, however, I couch my vision more directly. How do these very human people strive to get what they need? What urges them on? And how do they collide off each other and thus find themselves spiraling off in unexpected directions?




"The only way for a woman to provide for herself decently is for her to be good to some man that can afford to be good to her."

BERNARD SHAW, MRS WARREN'S PROFESSION

FREE PEOPLE OF COLOUR
WITH A SERVANT, 1770,
BY AGOSTINO BRUNIAS
(BRIDGEMAN IMAGES).





Contestation of Fates: Notes on *The House that Will Not Stand*

BY FEMI EUBA

Intentionally or not, the title *The House That Will Not Stand* straddles two famous utterances it seems to reference. One occurred long before the site and date of the play — in the gospels according to Saints Matthew and Mark — as one of the insightful proverbs pronounced by Jesus: “The house divided against itself will not stand.” The other, perhaps the more relevant here, postdated an event in American history, which was inspired, however, by the biblical reference. This was Abraham Lincoln’s speech referencing the divided situation among the states in terms of, directly the American Civil War, and indirectly the commitment and non-commitment to the freedom of the slaves.

It is the latter issue of commitment that Marcus Gardley seems to be wrestling with in his drama of free women of colour in New Orleans just before the Louisiana Purchase, and rightly so, given the Americanization laws that would soon beset Louisiana after its acquisition; the laws that would promote the continuous situations of racism that have divided America to the present day. For, while in terms of unity and stability, the “house” needs the unequivocal support of all that constitutes it, such support has often been superficial; it needs persistent reconstructing, through candid confrontation with its negative forces. To be more specific, while the Lincoln statement may serve the unity of the whole federation of states to comply with freedom from slavery, it has only disingenuously done so; for the structure has continued to crack under, because it has not provided the freedom it pretends to oblige all its constituents, especially the survival of the black component.

The question is how best can it serve the plight of African Americans? The play’s focus bears heavily and paradoxically on the challenge posed by the desired stability — the stability of freedom necessary for African Americans to exist equitably within the American structure.

The play’s central character, Beartrice, is a free woman of colour. The sudden death of her white husband has made her assume, more insistently than ever before, the control of the stability of the house, albeit with religious superfluity and its attendant factors of assimilation and syncretic values. A product of the *plaçage* system herself, a legal practice that allowed a wealthy French-white husband’s concubinage or marriage of a free woman of colour, she has been persistent in her efforts, against her dead husband’s wishes, to protect all the women of her household from becoming thus trapped. Ironically, her protection maintains the very imposition she has fought and is fighting to oppose — “slavery” of the free women of colour under the seemingly accommodating Napoleonic Code. While one may applaud her confrontation with and challenge of the status quo, one must question the detrimental hold that has kept the women (her three daughters, a sister, and a slave woman) under her strict and vigilant guard.

If the spiritual dimensions that pervade the play have some significance, that of the African slave woman, Makeda, would seem to pose a major conflict to Beartrice’s objective. The play is set at a culture-rich site where

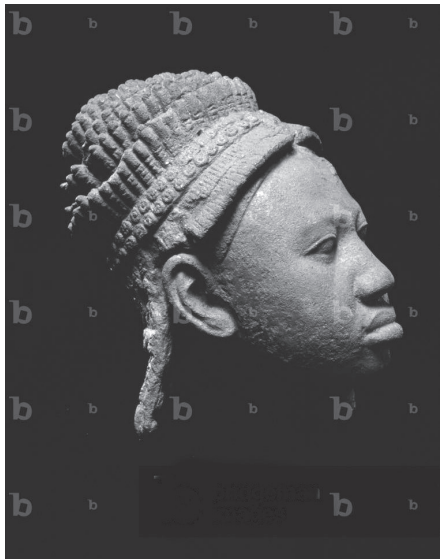


syncretic values (cultural and religious), are given free accommodation — at Faubourg Tremé in New Orleans, the ritual arena, so to speak, that the playwright chose to dramatize his characters' conflicting fates. Supposedly a thriving settlement of mixed and fluid race relationships among whites, persons of colour and blacks, it is steeped in the rich interrelating myths and mores of its French, Spanish, and African communities. Here, the free women of colour hold sway as concubines or wives, whether in commerce or by the secrets and power of the African religion, which they and their black slaves or servants have maintained and exploited, sometimes ludicrously so.

Creoles of French descent and African slaves indulge in the practices of both Catholicism and Voodoo or its corruption, Hoodoo, a religion that originated from West Africa among the Fons, whose beliefs align with their Yoruba ancestors.

Hence, the belief in the same trickster-god of fate Legba or Esu-Elegba, or his New World moniker, Papa Legba. As a descendant of Fon/Yoruba diviners, this is the god that Makeda acknowledges and invokes to access information from the metaphysical to the living world.

If one were to be very specific, Makeda, as a conjur-woman/diviner, would be a devotee of the divination god, Orunmila; but then that god divines in consonance with Esu-Legba.





For that matter, no god (or human) can do without him, be it Ogun, the warrior-metal god and principle of creativity, or Oshun, the principle of femininity and womanhood, both of whom Makeda also invokes. In her Fon/Yoruba culture of origins, all individuals have their own fates, each with its good and evil complementarity. It is the Essen(tial) god-head and metaphysical counterpart, the Esu-Legba of everyone, that each individual must constantly try to reconnect with to seek the original balance — through prayer, meditation or divination — in the metaphysical world or the psyche. For, to maintain that balance is a difficult endeavour, given the complex, conflicting fateful/fatal interactions encountered in the living world among other individuals, leading one astray from one's original fate balance.

Called "Song" in August Wilson's great play *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, fate describes one's character, will, vocation, etc., that is, all that constitutes one's identity. In *Joe Turner*, Loomis, enslaved in Joe Turner's chain-gang mission strives to reclaim that "song" (his African identity) when he got free, in opposition to the false acculturation of the Christian and slave-master values that his wife has imbibed. It is the niche he, as a representative African American, must find to consider himself a significant part of the whole.

Such an idea seems implicit in *The House That Will Not Stand*. Like Bynum, the conjur-man in *Joe Turner*, Makeda divines the fates of the women of colour who support Maître Lazare Albans' complex, which the false syncretic values of Beartrice and Lazare have corrupted. First, she reveals the truth of the falsity, until then fuzzy. Then, with her psychic eyes focused on the drum-tray of divination, she discerns the present and the future of the stormed and fractured structure as it involves the women trying to break free to reclaim their fates from the enslaving chains of Beartrice, who herself must come to terms with the well-meaning but flawed conditions of her fate.

One may argue that the house, hitherto standing free, albeit delicately so under the indulgence of the Napoleonic Code, is now crumbling against the encroaching laws of the Louisiana Purchase that threaten the Creole and black community in New Orleans, indeed the whole of America. But, in anticipation of confronting those laws, the women of the House must break free of its assimilated contaminants to be able to redefine or reclaim their fates and individuality, so they could become relevant parts of the whole, if possible. And perhaps Beartrice, for all her angst and disorientation about the crumbling structures of the House, is in her right mind when she helplessly imagines a future restructuring and reclamation, when her daughters would return and come begging her for shelter.

FEMI EUBA IS THE KINNEY PROFESSOR OF THEATRE AT LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY WHERE HE TEACHES PLAY-WRITING, DRAMATIC LITERATURE, AND BLACK DRAMA, AND DIRECTS FOR LSU THEATRE AND THE SWINE PALACE PRODUCTIONS. AS A PLAYWRIGHT HIS WORK INCLUDES *THE EYE OF GABRIEL*, *DIONYSUS OF THE HOLOCAUST*, *CRATERS* (HIS LATEST PLAY), AND NUMEROUS RADIO PLAYS FOR THE BBC. HIS MEMOIR, *EXPERIENCING WS*, CELEBRATES HIS ARTISTIC RELATIONSHIP WITH THE 1986 NOBEL LAUREATE, WOLE SOYINKA.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: *FREE WOMEN OF COLOUR WITH THEIR CHILDREN AND SERVANTS*, C.1790, BY AGOSTINO BRUNIAS (BROOKLYN MUSEUM); YORUBA HEAD OF A QUEEN, FROM ITA YEMOO, IFE, NIGERIA, 13TH CENTURY (BOTH BRIDGEMAN IMAGES).

The House That Will Not Stand, 2024



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: SOPHIA WALKER AS MAKEDA; RAIS CLARKE-MENDES AS MAUDE LYNN; RYANN MYERS AS ODETTE; NEHASSAIU deGANNES AS LA VEUVE AND DEBORAH CASTRILLI AS AGNÈS; CHERYL MULLINGS AS MARIE JOSEPHINE; RAIS CLARKE-MENDES AS MAUDE LYNN; DEBORAH CASTRILLI AS AGNÈS; SOPHIA WALKER AS MAKEDA; MONICA PARKS AS BEARTRICE; NEHASSAIU deGANNES AS LA VEUVE.



The Free Women of Colour in New Orleans and the Forgotten Story of *Plaçage*

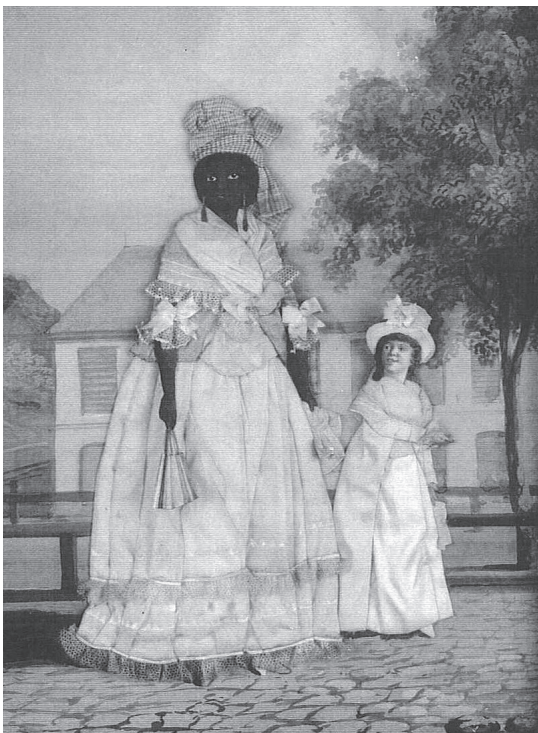
BY BOB HETHERINGTON

The term *plaçage* came from the French word *placer*, or “to place,” and described formal arrangements between white men and free women of colour, since the law at the time forbade interracial marriages. Fundamentally, a quadroon (the literal definition means a woman who was one-quarter black and three-quarters white, but as generations intermingled, it relaxed to refer to a free woman of mixed race) was “placed” with a white man arranged by her mother. The mother received a sum of money for this transaction, much like a traditional dowry. Compared to the free man of colour, a woman’s choices in life were severely limited. A few did marry men of mixed race, but this was not common. One of them — Henriette Delille — founded an order of nuns, but most of these women became mistresses to the white Creole men of New Orleans.

These men would choose their mistresses at the Quadroon Balls — lavish affairs where girls would dress opulently and affluent white men footed the bill. Quadroons earned a reputation of being beautiful, exotic, and seductive, which drew society’s curiosity as well as its scorn. They occupied a singular place in the collective imagination, which created a very complex set of feelings among the public. On the one hand, they were recognized for their impeccable grace, manners and intelligence; on the other, they were condemned for their manipulative and seductive behaviour.

If a man wanted to talk to one of them, he asked her mother’s permission to pay court to her. The young woman did not have to accept just any man, but if she met someone she liked, he would meet with her mother to make arrangements to give the woman a home (a small cottage), and a financial arrangement for her and any children. He was obligated to provide for her and any children they might have for as long as the relationship lasted.

How long was that? In some cases, only a short time, in others many years, and in a few — for life. Some men broke off the relationship when they married, but others continued it. As was common in the Faubourg Tremé area, the man would live with his *placée*, at other times he would live with his white wife and family. Occasionally one could see a man’s two families at the Opera, the white one in the boxes and the quadroon one in the balcony. If a man did break the relationship, the woman kept her financial settlement. Often, she would go into business as a dressmaker, milliner or hairdresser. And the *femmes de couleur* had almost a complete monopoly on the boarding house business. This system was certainly



odd, and only in New Orleans was there an institution that allowed men to choose and keep mistresses with the tacit approval of society. The Quadroon Balls died out before the Civil War and the building where they were held was taken over Henriette Delille's nuns.

Perhaps society initially tolerated *plaçage* because it arose largely out of demographic circumstances. As New Orleans was being settled, the population of white men greatly outnumbered the population of white women.

Free people of colour had more rights than slaves, but far fewer than whites, and their lives were by no means full of the choice that the word "free" implies. Laws and attitudes regarding race at the time sent a very clear message that all people were not created equal. *Plaçage* did give some women a chance to make the best of a bad situation — one where she had little hope of family or comfort within her own class. But it is also simply another form of slavery — though a quadroon wasn't toiling on a plantation, she still belonged to a white master.

The unique history of New Orleans also allowed *plaçage* to flourish. New Orleans was first a French and then a Spanish colony, so Louisiana's pre-statehood laws regarding slavery most resembled those of Europe rather than the United States. They had a more complicated racial hierarchy and allowed room for slaves to work to buy their own freedom, and this helped to create a burgeoning population of free people of colour — by 1820, 63 percent of the city's population. New Orleans was already a wealthy city by the 1830s due to both the legal and illegal goods trafficked through its ports,

and her fortunes continued to rise with the invention of the river steamboat. By 1840, New Orleans was the third largest city in the US, after New York and Baltimore.

The black community in New Orleans achieved unprecedented political victories during the Reconstruction period after the Civil War, including integrated public transportation, a mostly black legislature, and integrated school systems. These gains, sadly, began slipping away in the late 1870s, and did not reappear until the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. Despite technological advances in flood prevention, Hurricane Katrina devastated the city in 2005. In addition to the catastrophic property damage the storm wreaked, New Orleans suffered perhaps the sharper blow of having its people and their stories scattered across the country. One tribute we can offer to this city of streetcars and jazz, of *bamboula* and gumbo, is to seek out her forgotten stories, like the strange and troubling history of *plaçage*. And remember.



Production History

Marcus Gardley's play was commissioned by the Berkeley Rep in California who staged the world premiere in 2014 before transferring to the Yale Rep in New Haven, Connecticut. Subsequent productions followed at the Tricycle Theatre in London, the Victory Gardens Theater in Chicago in 2016, and off-Broadway for The New York Theatre Workshop in 2018. Marcus Gardley received a 2019 Obie Award for the NYTW production. The play also earned him the 2014 Will Glickman Playwright Award and was a finalist for London's Kennedy Prize in 2015.

"For me, the play is really an homage to my mother and grandmothers," Gardley says. "My mother's side of the family is from New Orleans and I really wanted to talk about the strength of these women and how that was passed down to me through my mother, grandmothers and aunts. It was the notion of ancestry and my own family that really inspired me to continue with the project."

This is the first professional production of the play in Canada.



JULIANA CANFIELD, NEDRA McClyde, LYNDIA GRAVÁTT AND HARRIETT D. FOY IN THE NEW YORK THEATRE WORKSHOP PRODUCTION, 2018 (SARA KRULWICH); TIFFANY RACHELLE STEWART, JONIECE ABBOTT-PRATT, AND FLOR DE LIZ PEREZ IN THE WORLD PREMIERE PRODUCTION, 2014 (CAROL ROSEGG/YALE REP).



OPPOSITE: LYNN CORMACK, CHARLOTTE MOORE, NADIA HOVAN, NORA McLELLAN, FIONA BYRNE, SUSIE BURNETT, JANE PERRY, HELEN TAYLOR, JILLIAN COOK AND BRIGITTE ROBINSON IN THE SHAW FESTIVAL'S 2002 PRODUCTION OF *THE HOUSE OF BERNARDA ALBA*.



Foundations of *The House*

BY BOB HETHERINGTON

If Marcus Gardley's play seems familiar to longtime patrons of The Shaw, they just might be recalling a 2002 Court House production of Federico Garcia Lorca's Spanish masterpiece, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, directed by Tadeusz Bradecki. One of the best-known poets and dramatists of the 20th century, Lorca's writing frequently revealed complex human emotions while addressing social traditions and political issues and focusing on the idea of honor, the suppression of women, and the complicated interactions inside a family. Gardley, whose family came from New Orleans, takes the bones of Bernarda Alba and relocates them to a home filled with free women of colour in New Orleans, post-Louisiana Purchase and pre-Civil War.

Both plays are set in historical moments known to the author and inspired by real events. Both playwrights are committed to representing and speaking for voiceless communities. Both create tension between the mythic and the real and the historical and the present. Lorca's play begins with the funeral of Bernarda's second husband, father to four of her daughters. Gardley's Beartrice is determined to prevent her daughters from becoming *placées* themselves and implements a six-month period of mourning similar to Alba's edict in Lorca's play. The influence of Lorca's play is clear – "This world got all kinds of chains," is a line Lorca could certainly have written.

There is death throughout both plays. *The House of Bernarda Alba* is stark and dark and tragic. But *The House That Will Not Stand* is a rococo creation – a simmering and flavourful dramatic *jambalaya* set in old New Orleans, steaming with voodoo and rivalries and possibly murder, complete with a madwoman dancing in the attic and a corpse laid out in the parlor.

"A play is a poem standing up," wrote Lorca. Marcus Gardley's play is indeed a poem – much of its dialogue is in sinewy verse – and it doesn't just stand up. It dances, hollers, stomps and sings.

The Author

MARCUS GARDLEY, born and raised in Oakland, California, is an acclaimed poet, playwright, and screenwriter whom *The New Yorker* describes as “the heir to Garcia Lorca, Pirandello and Tennessee Williams.” He is an ensemble member playwright at Victory Gardens Theater where his play *The Gospel of Lovingkindness* was produced in March 2014 and where he won the 2015 BTA Award for best play. In 2014, his saga *The Road Weeps*, *The Well Runs Dry* about the migration of Black Seminoles (a tribe of African American and First Nations People) from Florida to Oklahoma had a national tour. Other productions include *Every Tongue Confesses* at Arena Stage starring Phylicia Rashad, and *On The Levee*, which premiered in 2010 at Lincoln Center Theater 3.

Gardley's work for television includes *Maid* (Netflix), for which he won the 2022 Writers Guild of America Award for best adapted longform series; *Boo's Riley's I'm A Virgo* (Amazon), *The Chi* (Showtime), *Foundation* (Apple), *NOS4A2* (AMC), *Tales of the City* (Netflix), and *Mindhunter* (Netflix). His feature adaptation of the musical *The Color Purple* was released in theatres last Christmas, and *What's Going On*, his Marvin Gaye biopic, is in pre-production. Currently, Gardley is writing a musical about Jean-Michel Basquiat with music composed by Jon Batiste.

Gardley is a summa cum laude graduate of San Francisco State University and Yale's David Geffen School of Drama, where he received his MFA in Playwriting and is currently the co-chair of the playwriting program. He taught previously at Brown University, Columbia University, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, University of San Francisco, and the National Theatre Institute. He is a member of The Dramatists Guild.



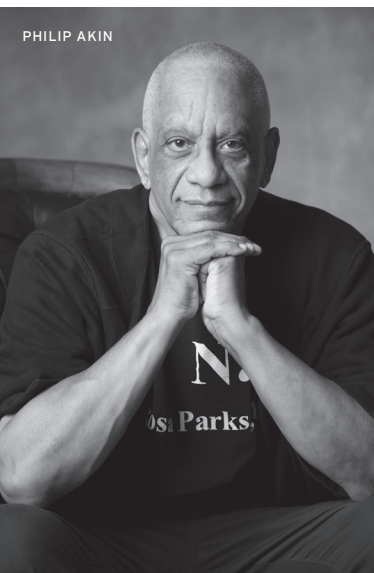
KEVIN LAMOTTE

Good taste was out of place in the company of death, death itself was the essence of bad taste. And there must be much rage and saliva in its presence. The body must move and throw itself about, the eyes must roll, the hands should have no peace, and the throat should release all the yearning, despair and outrage that accompany the stupidity of loss. TONI MORRISON, *SULA*

A house divided against itself cannot stand. MARK 3:25

He who cannot dance will say the drum is bad. AFRICAN PROVERB

PHILIP AKIN



For full biographical information about our cast and creative team, please visit shawfest.com/ensemble.

PHILIP AKIN Director

SHAW 2024: Director for *The House That Will Not Stand*. "Where are you from?" What a seemingly simple yet complicated question that comes complete with dog-whistle overtones. On one side, I am a Canadian citizen born abroad in Kingston, Jamaica. So I was never Jamaican and, after coming to Oshawa in the early '50s, I never felt like I was truly a Canadian either. Even though I am a third-generation Canadian, "where are you from?" has always been the question asked to deny my right to be here. So I am from the heart of my friends, partners and family. I am from the artists who excite and inspire me. I am from the camaraderie of fellow travellers, and I am from the world inside my imagination.

SEAN MULCAHY Set and Costume Designer

SHAW 2024: Set and Costume Designer for *The House That Will Not Stand*; 1st season. Hailing from the Greater Toronto area, raised in parts by British nannies, farmers, and artists, my roots in craft and design were homed in rural Ontario and then through specialized study and mentorship by some of North America and Britain's leading contemporary artists. Some of my key mentors include Santo Loquasto,

Phillip Silver, Desmond Heeley, Alix Dolgoy and John Pennoyer. A Queer latchkey boy, my solace was in personal expression through craft. I fell into Design as a career, blending my love of live performance with art, history and the unique canvas presented by the stage. I am excited to join the creative team at The Shaw this season and look forward to the collaborative nature of storytelling through visual design and live performance.

SEAN MULCAHY



JACOB LIN



KEVIN LAMOTTE Lighting Designer

SHAW 2024: Lighting designer for *The House That Will Not Stand* and *The Secret Garden*. One of my earliest experiences in theatre was watching *Cyrano de Bergerac* here at the Shaw Festival in 1982. The set and costumes by Cameron Porteous, as well as the lighting design by Robert Thomson, were so inspiring to me at the time. The design of that show

has remained with me. In 1988, I returned to the Shaw Festival as an assistant lighting designer and had the great opportunity to work with Artistic Director, Christopher Newton. He said, "I put creative people together and point them in the right direction." He did a great deal more. Christopher's passion and respect for all aspects of theatre and the arts continue to inspire. Memories of him and his work keep me pointed in the right direction!

JACOB LIN Composer / Sound Designer

SHAW 2024: Composer and Sound Designer for *The House That Will Not Stand*; 1st season. I am so excited and honoured to be a part of this season's Shaw Festival. I was born and raised in Toronto, more specifically North York. I was first introduced to theatre when my mother enrolled me in a youth theatre company; that coupled with a performance of *Wicked* which



I reluctantly went to while missing my school's Christmas concert. It opened my eyes and set me on my path. Throughout my career, I have had the privilege of learning from so many great mentors including Nina Lee-Aquino, David Yee and John Gzowski just to name a few. You may have heard my work in *Withrow Park* at Tarragon Theatre or more recently in *The Wrong Bashir* at Crow's Theatre. I am honoured to be working with everyone here at the Shaw. Enjoy the show!

ALEXIS MILLIGAN Movement Director

SHAW 2024: Movement director for *The House That Will Not Stand*, *Witness for the Prosecution* and *One Man, Two Guvnors*. One of the greatest discoveries I've had as a parent is learning to shrug my shoulders when my children say, "I'm bored." Always within minutes they start a project or make up a game, far more interesting and fun than any "proactive activity" I could ever come up with. From my daughter defying physics by attempting to climb up the stairs while sitting inside a cardboard box, to my son reinventing the microwave in a post-apocalyptic Lego world, I witness advancements in science and technology that extend far beyond logic and reason and into the worlds of dreams and possibilities... and how delightful that my work as an artist is also just that. Follow me at alexismilligan.com or transitus.ca.

DEBORAH CASTRILLI Agnès Albans

SHAW 2024: *The House That Will Not Stand* and *Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of the Human Heart*; 2nd season. My first memory of being in a theatre was when I was around five years old, seeing my parents perform at a community event. Both of my parents are multi-instrumentalists, and my mother happily shared her favourite musicals with me from a young age. I am continually inspired by the community that is fostered through storytelling: the learning and loving, the healing, the collective joy! But also, I am brought back to the little girl in me who loved to dance through the grocery store aisles and would get lost in her make-believe worlds for hours. I do this for her, ultimately.

RAIS CLARKE-MENDES Maude Lynn Albans

SHAW 2024: *The House That Will Not Stand* and *Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of the Human Heart*; 2nd season. I grew up in both Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados, where my dearest friends and family live. In Trinidad we celebrate Carnival, a tradition that is inherently theatrical in its cultural expression. This is where I embody my full authentic self and I bring this inner Carnival fire within me to classical theatre. From a young age, I've been fortunate to understand the importance of reading, and much of my time this season has been spent at the NOTL public library, where I've immersed myself in countless literary adventures. Reading has profoundly shaped my self-awareness and guided me through my artistic journey. To better understand where my heart is, I invite you to read: *The Island of Forgetting* by Jasmine Sealy, *Open Water* by Caleb Azumah Nelson and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini.

NEHASSAIU deGANNES La Veuve

SHAW 2024: *The House That Will Not Stand* and *Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of the Human Heart*; 1st season. Growing up in Kincardine (Lake Huron,) live theatre was abundant thanks to family treks to Toronto and New York. My first visit to The Shaw was a BSS Upper School trip to see *Major Barbara*. I was riveted. Still, mine was a spiral path from poetry to acting in new plays at Brown University to Trinity Rep's Conservatory and Resident Company and beyond to now call Brooklyn home. You may recognize me from the DC world premieres of *The High Ground* and *Incendiary*, TC's *R&J* at Stratford,

DEBORAH CASTRILLI



CHERYL MULLINGS



NEHASSAIU deGANNES



or my treasured role playing the late Diana Sands Off-Broadway. Of Caribbean descent, Ms. Sands was a 1960's lodestar, originating Hansberry and Baldwin plays on Broadway and playing G.B. Shaw's *St. Joan* at Lincoln Center. Debuting here brings it all home. What joy!

RAIS CLARKE-MENDES



CHERYL MULLINGS Marie Josephine

SHAW 2024: *The House That Will Not Stand and Witness for the Prosecution*; 1st season. I'm overwhelmingly thrilled to join the Shaw Festival Ensemble this season! Born and raised in Mississauga, ON, I graduated from the Regional Arts Program at Cawthra Park SS (Drama & Music) and later graduated with a BFA from the University of Windsor. Eventually, with hopes of furthering my career, I moved to New York City, where I live now (for better or worse!) and consider that a great accomplishment within itself! If you know — you know! I've worked at theatres throughout Canada and the US, more recently spending several summers at The Barnstormers Theatre in New Hampshire. I'm grateful for the many opportunities, lessons and perhaps most of all, the friendships forged. Excited for this new adventure, I'm thankful to be home and I feel extremely privileged to be part of this renowned theatre company.

RYANN MYERS Odette Albans

SHAW 2024: *The House That Will Not Stand and Witness for the Prosecution*; 2nd season. I am an American actor from Princeton, New Jersey. My first time in the theatre was at the age of seven, playing Amaryllis in *The Music Man* at my local community theatre. What inspired me to take on acting was simply the playfulness I would see when watching actors on tv. From action movies, to comedies, to dramas; acting always felt like something that kept people being expansive, playful, and creative. I really got to live out those qualities last year playing Killaine in The Shaw's production of *The Clearing*.

RYANN MYERS



MONICA PARKS Beartrice Albans

SHAW 2024: *The House That Will Not Stand and Witness for the Prosecution*; 3rd season. You might have seen me in *Gem of the Ocean* or *Just to Get Married*. I am from University City, Missouri, in St Louis County, centred in the middle of the USA. As a kid, I was inspired by movies. My first film was inspired by *The Wizard of*

Oz, made with my playmates (I played a witch). Later, I was drawn to dramatic and political classics — from Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, and so on. High school interests were archaeology, law and theatre; but I was taught that I could be anything I wanted to be, do anything I wanted to do ... my mother had begun taking me to the theatre. I was hooked. I chose theatre, receiving my BA in Performing Arts and MFA in Classical Acting from the Shakespeare Theatre Company's ACA, in collaboration with the George Washington University.

MONICA PARKS



SOPHIA WALKER

Makeda / Lazare

SHAW 2024: *The House That Will Not Stand* and *Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of the Human Heart*; 2nd season. I am a Toronto-based actor. My first theatre experience was a class trip in elementary school to see a touring performance of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, which I never forgot. For high school, I attended Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts to take my imagination and dream of acting to a real profession. Ms O'Brien, my high school drama teacher, helped me apply to Ryerson University; and upon graduation from Ryerson, going straight into the Birmingham Conservatory at Stratford Festival harnessed my craft and catapulted me into years of amazing work and opportunities. I still think of Djanet Sears and our production of *Harlem Duet* as one of my favourite shows of my career. I feel so blessed to have worked so much and to have had all of these amazing experiences that have brought me here.



SOPHIA WALKER

DORA TOMASSI

Stage Manager

SHAW 2024: Stage manager for *The House That Will Not Stand* and *Witness for the Prosecution*; 23rd season. As a little girl growing up in Toronto, theatre companies would perform at my school. I loved it so much that I would beg my teacher to let my friends and me put on a play we had "made up" during recess. I knew from a young age that I wanted to work in the world of make-believe. Now I'm thrilled to share my work with my children. Seeing their reactions is priceless. My first show working at Shaw was *The Man Who Came to Dinner*. *Floyd Collins* and *When the Rain Stops Falling* are still my two favourites.



BECCA JORGENSEN



DORA TOMASSI

BECCA JORGENSEN Assistant Stage Manager

SHAW 2024: Assistant Stage Manager for *The House That Will Not Stand* and *Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of the Human Heart*; 2nd season. The heart of theatre, for me, is constant curiosity. My nieces, Clara Jane and Audrey Nora, are perfect examples of it. At four and seven, respectively, they are in a continuous state of exploration, play, and inquisitiveness. Curiosity creates some of the most moving and engaging theatre, and some of the most delightful afternoons in the park. It is my greatest honour in life, as their Auntie and as an Assistant Stage Manager, to facilitate the endless creation that happens around me. It is my greatest challenge in life, as their Auntie and as an Assistant Stage Manager, to make sure everyone has the right pants on before they're seen in public. I hope for all of us that I succeeded today.

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Executive Director
TIM JENNINGS

Executive Assistant
(from April)
PETRICE CUSTANCE

Interim Executive Assistant
(to April)
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Planning Director
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Engagement and Outreach
PRAGNA DESAI

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Music Director
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RYAN deSOUZA

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MAC HILLIER
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JASON BENDIG

Associate Head of Wardrobe
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Wardrobe Co-ordinator
KENDRA COOPER

Wardrobe Apprentice/Dyer
and Fabric Arts Apprentice
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PILLING
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Electrics
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Assistant Head of Audio
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Head of Wardrobe Running
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Assistant Controller
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GREG McARTHUR

Payroll and Project
Co-ordinator
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WILL CROTHERS

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Security
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and Beverage Staff
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VIKTOR STREMLER

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Receptionists
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THEATRE SUBSCRIPTION SEASON

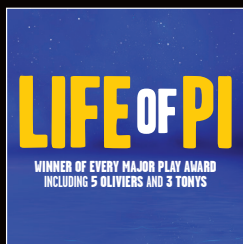
HURRY
MANY
PRICE LEVELS
SOLD OUT!

7 UNMISSABLE SHOWS

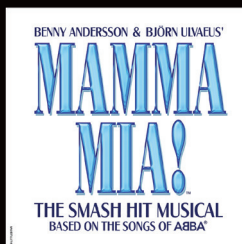
INCLUDING



BEGINS NOV 2024 Princess of Wales Theatre



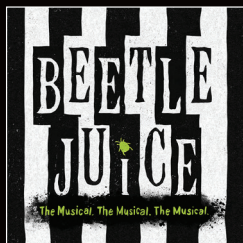
SEP – OCT 2024
CAA Ed Mirvish Theatre



OCT – NOV 2024
CAA Ed Mirvish Theatre



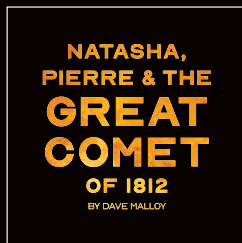
NOV 2024 – JAN 2025
CAA Ed Mirvish Theatre



MAY – JUL 2025
CAA Ed Mirvish Theatre



JUL – AUG 2025
CAA Ed Mirvish Theatre



JUL – AUG 2025
Royal Alexandra Theatre

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