



2024 SILVER ANNIVERSARY ESSENTIAL THEATRE PLAY FESTIVAL

7 STAGES BLACK BOX THEATRE
1105 Euclid Ave NE, Atlanta GA 30307

The Other Part of the Picture
by Peter Hardy

WINNER
BEST STAGE PLAY
New York Script Awards
2023

WINNER
BEST STAGE PLAY
London Best Script Awards
2023

WINNER
ESSENTIAL THEATRE
PLAYWRITING AWARD
2024

THE ROCK & THE HARD PLACE
WRITTEN BY EMILY MCCLAIN

Hush Harbor Lab

AFRICAN ROSCIUS:
a black in the box play
by Marlon Andrew Burnley

FAT JULIET
by Bridges McGarthy

bare essentials
play reading series

All readings in the Bare Essentials series are free and open to the public.

essential theatre

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Peter Hardy, Founding Artistic Director
www.essentialtheatre.com

PROGRAM NOTES

The very first Essential Theatre Play Festival happened in 1999, 25 years ago. My plan was to put together a repertory of plays that hadn't yet been seen in the Atlanta area. The idea of having one of them be written by a local playwright was almost an afterthought, but within a few years it had become an important part of our identity, which led to the establishment of the Essential Theatre Playwriting Award competition in 2001. To this day it remains the only competition of its kind, with the winning play or plays getting both a cash prize and a full production.

In those early days, the Georgia playwrights told us how much it meant to them to have their work presented alongside such world-famous writers as Sam Shepard, Christopher Durang, Paula Vogel and Lanford Wilson. But as time went on, we were receiving so many strong submissions from around the state that, in 2012, we made Georgia writers the sole focus of our mission and that has continued to this day, with the Playwriting Award, the World Premiere productions in our annual Festival, staged readings and with our educational programming, which is helping to create a new generation of Georgia playwrights.

Emily McClain's *The Rock & The Hard Place*, winner of the 2024 Essential Theatre Playwriting Award, is a prime example of the kind of strong dramatic writing that is coming to us from writers in our state. Moving relentlessly, like an express train, it powerfully tells the story of a modern day tragedy as a young woman fights to save the life of her father, condemned to death for a crime she knows he did not commit.

As a playwright myself, I've always wanted the Essential Theatre to give writers the kind of support and opportunities that I'd like to find for myself and this year, for the fourth time in 25 years, we will be presenting one of my own plays, *The Other Part of the Picture*, which was chosen for the Lanford Wilson New American Play Festival (where it was given a staged reading) and has won playwriting awards from the New York Script Awards, the Best Script Awards – London, the Colossus Film Festival and the Berlin International Screenwriting Festival. It's a comic drama that tells the story of two students who find a mysterious batch of old letters in the house where they live and the group of friends who gather around them to try and uncover the secret of the letters' origin.

But that's only the plot -- what it's really about is the way that friendships grow and the central importance of storytelling in how we come to know other people and understand the world. "We're all of us spinning yarns and telling tales, and our stories keep growing, feeding on each other and taking off in new directions, a universe of storytelling that never ends until we die, when the windows open wide and doorways disappear, and all our stories merge into one."

Rounding out the Festival we are presenting our Bare Essentials Play Reading series (four staged readings of new plays by Georgia writers); another staged reading from Hush Harbor Lab, Atlanta's Black Play Development Company; the 10 Minute Play Bootcamp Showcase; and a special performance of *Fat Juliet*, a hopeful and painfully comic solo piece by Atlanta's Bridget McCarthy.

If you see one part of our 25th Silver Anniversary Festival, we hope you'll want to see them all. We think you'll find it was well worth the journey!



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.



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 43 new works by 38 different playwrights, with readings of over 50 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)
The Rock & The Hard Place by Emily McClain (2024)

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.

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 – 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



2024 ESSENTIAL THEATRE SILVER ANNIVERSARY PLAY FESTIVAL CALENDAR

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

ESSENTIAL THEATRE CALENDAR LEGEND						
The Other Part of the Picture by Peter Hardy	The Rock & The Hard Place by Emily McClain	10-Minute Play Bootcamp Showcase	Bare Essentials Reading Series	African Roscius: a black in the box play by Marlon Andrew Burnley	Fat Juliet by Bridget McCarthy	

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat									
AUGUST 4	5	6	7	8	9	10									
				Preview 8PM	Opening Night 8PM	2PM 8PM									
11	FALSE AWAKENING by Jacob Ryan Martinez 7:30PM	12	13	14	Preview 8PM	15	Opening Night 8PM	16	8PM	17					
2PM 7PM	Industry Night 8PM	18	LIZ FRANK by Keely Herrick and FULL TERM by Jazzé A. Lewis 7:30PM	19	7:30PM	20	7:30PM	21	8PM	22	8PM	23	8PM	24	8PM
2PM 7PM	Industry Night 8PM	25	THE FANTABULOUS SHOWCASE OF LAURIE AND KACEY by Sydni Symone 7:30PM	26	8PM	27	8PM	28	7:30PM	29	8PM	30	8PM	31	8PM
2PM	SEPT 1														



ESSENTIAL THEATRE STAFF

Peter Hardy	Founding Artistic Director
Jennifer Kimball	Managing Director
Emily McClain, Elisabeth Cooper, Amina S. McIntyre	Education Associates
Tosin Taiwo	Social Media Coordinator
Carter Bevis	Box Office Manager
Thom Stanley	Graphic Designer
Keri Atkins	Bookkeeper

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jane Zoellick, President	Retired from Georgia Concervancy (joined 2022)
Ryan Daniels, Treasurer	Vice President, AmerisBank (joined 2023)
Cynthia Webb, Secretary	Process Expert for Operations Implementation and Readiness Team, Anthem (joined 2022)
Oliver tum Sudan, Assistant Secretary	Complex Litigation Attorney, Johnson Fistel, LLP (joined 2024)
Audrey Gale, Social Chair	Community Engagement Manager, AIB Network (joined 2018)
C.E. Patten II	Managing Director, Excel8 Advisory Services LLC (joined 2020)
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)
Jeanine Botwe-Brown	Attorney, Edible Arrangement (joined 2023)
Michael Stoots	CFO, Dixie Diamond Manufacturing (joined 2023)

AFFILIATIONS

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



The Other Part of the Picture

or, Letters from the House of Fate

By Peter Hardy

Winner of playwriting prizes from the Best Script Awards – London and the New York Script Awards

Directed by Ellen McQueen

CAST

Matt	Caleb Wilkinson
Maddie	Ash Anderson
Cynthia, New Female Tenant	Iniki Roberts
Roger, Various Guys	Brock Kercher
Taylor, Various Guys	Tommy Sullivan-Lovett
Glenda	Rebecca Van Kirk
Liz	Ellie Styron
Voice of Unknown Woman	Carolyn Cook
Voice of Radio D.J.	Matt Cook

SETTING: The play is set over the course of a school year, from September of 1978 to May of 1979, in an old residential home, now divided up into apartments.

There will be one ten-minute intermission.

Audience Advisory: Adult language and sexual situations.

Playwright	Peter Hardy
Director	Ellen McQueen
Stage Manager	Amanda Taylor Brooks
Assistant Stage Manager	Cassandra Dudley
Intimacy Director	Kristin Storla
Scenic Designer	Adam Pagdon
Lighting Designer	Harley Gould
Sound Designer	Joshua Campbell
Composer	George Kotler-Wallace
Costume Designer	Savannah Cobb
Props Designer	Victoria Nation
Production Manager	Lilly Baxley
Technical Director	Travis Ronis

MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT: PETER HARDY

Meet the Playwright: Peter Hardy won awards from the New Southern Theatre Festival for his plays *A Lovely Undertow* and *Sally and Glen at the Palace*, both of which went on to be produced by the Essential Theatre. *Mysterious Connections* was chosen for the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Playwrights Conference and was also produced by Essential. *Long Dark Night* won an award from the Festival of Southern Theater and *Kissing Jennifer in the Moonlight* was named as a Finalist by the Tennessee Williams One-Act Competition and given an Honorable Mention by the William Faulkner Literary Competition. It was produced by the Pittsburgh New Works Festival, as was *Couples Therapy*. *The Other Part of the Picture* was one of five scripts chosen for the Lanford Wilson New American Play Festival, where it was given a staged reading, and it has also won playwrighting awards from New York Script Awards, the Best Script Awards – London, the Colossus Film Festival and the Berlin International Screenwriting Festival. His screenplay version of *Sally and Glen at the Palace* has won nine film festival awards, and his two other feature screenplays, *Nocturnal* and *The Woman Called Thursday* have between them won thirty-seven awards from film festivals around the world. His newest screenplay is the short *Your Husband's Password* and his most recent play is called *This Story Starts Now*.



CAST BIOS

ELLEN MCQUEEN (Director) feels especially blessed to be directing a Peter Hardy play for the Essential Theatre Festival's Silver Anniversary Season. In an artistic collaboration that has extended over decades (in various combinations and forms) this is the fourth of Hardy's plays that she has directed. Each time is a joy.

CALEB WILKINSON (Matt) is pleased to return to Essential Theatre's Play Festival and work with such an amazing company of artists. Theatre Credits: *The Wishing Place*, *She Kills Monster*. Recent TV/Film Credits: Lifetime's *A Professor's Vengeance*, *A House Among the Trees*, HBO's *Low Country: The Murdaugh Dynasty*.

ASH ANDERSON (Maddie) You know nothing about Ash unless I tell you. If I give you their professional resume, would you think differently about them? If I said who they have worked with, who they have met, what works they have in process—internationally, would they be more worthy of your esteem while watching this show? Would they be "cool"? If I told you their traumas, would you give them more grace? "The other part of the picture is what you don't see." Can you take them, as them?

INIKI ROBERTS (she/her/hers) (Cynthia, New Female Tenant) is excited to be working with Essential Theatre for the first time! Past credits include *Amarachi in The Red Telephone* with Aris Theatre at 7 Stages Curious Holiday Encounters, *Calonice in Lysistrata* and *Grumio/Vincenzo in Taming of the Shrew* with Impulse Rep. If she wasn't an actor she would work on a big cat wildlife sanctuary. She loves themes of community and friendship and she hopes you love them too after seeing the show!

BROCK KERCHER (Roger, Various Guys) is ecstatic to make his Essential Theatre debut with such an incredibly talented group of collaborators. Recent theatre credits include *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* and *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Stagedoor Theatre) and *Macbeth 60* (Atlanta Shakes Company).

TOMMY SULLIVAN-LOVETT (Taylor, Various Guys) is a transmasculine playwright, actor, and clown. Recent credits include *Romeo and Juliet* for the Atlanta Shakespeare Company, *Women in Jeopardy* for Georgia Ensemble Theater, and *The Red Nose of Courage* with their company Clown Corp LLC. Their play *Henry Darger Takes a Walk* was performed at the Bare Essentials Series in 2019, their first professional staged reading, and they are very pleased to be working with Essential Theatre again.

REBECCA VAN KIRK (Glenda) is proud to be making her Essential Theatre debut! Her other credits include *4000 Miles with Authenticity Theater*, *25th...Spelling Bee* with Marietta Theatre Company, and *I and You* with Rome Little Theatre. Offstage, you can likely find her hyper-fixating on the newest season of *Survivor* or playing Roblox at an unorthodox hour. Rebecca gives thanks to Jessica Crowell for her career direction, and to her therapist... for obvious reasons.

ELLIE STYRON (Liz) is a Georgia native last seen in the 2022 Essential Theatre Festival as Ellie in *The Outrage Machine*. Previous Atlanta credits include Emily Imbrie in *Third* at Out of Box Theatre and Jane in *The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told* at Out Front Theatre Company, as well as various staged readings. Enjoy the show, and thank you for supporting live theatre!

CAROLYN COOK (Voice of Unknown Woman) performed her original play *Walk With Me* as part of last year's Essential Theatre Festival, and she's delighted to be back! Her other projects have included *Mercury* by Steve Yockey and *Prayer for the French Republic* by Joshua Harmon (Actor's Express), *August: Osage County* (Alliance Theater), *Time Stands Still*, *Citizens' Market*, and *Project Dawn* (Horizon Theater) and *Silent Sky* (Theatrical Outfit). Carolyn proudly serves as an associate artist with Théâtre du Rêve (Theater of the Dream), Atlanta's unique French-language theater company.

MATT COOK (Voice of Radio D.J.) spent more than 40 years on the airwaves, primarily in radio news. He started his career as an AM radio DJ in the late 1970s and retired as News Director of the Georgia News Network in 2019. He's delighted to be back behind the microphone this summer with Essential Theatre!

AMANDA TAYLOR BROOKS (Stage Manager) is very happy to be back at the ETF, having stage managed *The Old Ship of Zion* back in 2015. In the intervening years she's been busy producing, directing, stage managing, and acting for Aris Theatre. She says thanks to Jennifer Kimball and Peter Hardy for inviting her back. Enjoy the show!

CASSANDRA DUDLEY (Assistant Stage Manager) can typically be found splitting her time between animal welfare and behind-the-scenes work in fashion and entertainment media. She made her professional theater debut early last year working with 7Stages, The Object Group, and Sky Creature Productions on an immersive production of Pinocchio that spanned this entire building. Cassie is starting her journey as a writer and can't wait to show the world her beautiful mind.



The Rock & The Hard Place

By Emily McClain

2024 Essential Theatre Playwriting Award Winner

Directed by Kyle Brumley

CAST

Alan Tully	Roger Payano
Elsie Tully	Indya Bussey
Russell Wyatt	Chase Steven Anderson
Jeremy Hollingbrook	Durell Brown
Lauren Jacobson	Jennifer Brown
Rashida Mahmoud	Mala Bhattacharya
Lance Matthews/Guard	Alishah Bhamani

SETTING: Various locations in Georgia, 2019.

This play is 90 minutes long with no intermission.

Audience Advisories: This play deals with serious issues regarding injustice and the death penalty. There will be physical violence and a gunshot onstage.

Playwright	Emily McClain
Director	Kyle Brumley
Stage Manager	Moira Dean
Assistant Stage Manager	Terry Kiser
Intimacy Director	Kristin Storla
Scenic Designer	Adam Pagdon
Lighting Designer	Harley Gould
Projections Designer	Victoria Nation
Sound Designer	Fred Philp
Costume Designer	D'Mya Tabron
Props Designer	Kyle Brumley
Production Manager	Lilly Baxley
Technical Director	Travis Ronis

MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT: EMILY MCCLAIN

Emily McClain is thrilled to see her work back at Essential Theatre this year! 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 also named the winner of the 2024 Essential Theatre Playwriting Award and is playing 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*. She was a finalist in the Del Shores New Play Competition and received a reading at Out Front Theatre for her play *The Poet, The Spy, and the Dark Lady*. Emily is looking forward to presenting her play *PLAN B* as part of the SheATL Festival at 7 Stages in September. More of her work can be found on New Play Exchange.

Thank you to Peter, Kyle, and the incredible cast and crew of *The Rock & The Hard Place*! Big love to B, G, and both Es. Thank you, dear audience, for being here supporting live theatre and new plays!



CAST BIOS

KYLE BRUMLEY (Director) is an Atlanta based actor/director. Directing: *4,000 Miles*, *The Diviners*, and *A New Brain* (Dramatech), *Cabaret* (Oglethorpe University), and *Dogfight: The Musical* (Woodstock Arts). Acting includes *Equus*, *The Whale*, and *An Octoroon* (Actor's Express), *Camelot* (Georgia Ensemble), *The Navigator* (7 Stages), *The Book of Will* (Theatrical Outfit), and *The Curious Incident...*(The Hippodrome). Kyle received his BA in theatre from Oglethorpe University, became an Actor's Express intern and later spent three years with the Cincinnati Shakespeare Company. Highlights there included Octavius Caesar in *Antony & Cleopatra* and Dr. Seward in *Dracula*. Kyle is a member of Actor's Equity and is supported in all he does by his wonderful wife, Hannah. Visit www.kylebrumley.com.

ROGER PAYANO (Alan Tully) is a proud Afro-Latino of Dominican descent, studied at The National Conservatory of Dramatic Arts and Actors Repertory Theatre in Washington DC. Roger has graced local stages like The Alliance, Theater Emory, Marietta's New Theater in the Square & Stage Door Theater. His TV/Film credits include *Manhunt*, *P-Valley*, *Samaritan* and *Celia*.

INDYA BUSSEY (Elsie Tully) is excited to be working with Essential Theatre for the first time! Her past theatre credits include *Seven Guitars*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Jitney*, and *Clybourne Park*. Her recent film credits include *All the Queen's Men*, *The Falcon* and *The Winter Soldier*, and *P-Valley*. Indya thanks God for blessing her with the gift of storytelling. Also, she thanks Peter, Kyle and Essential Theatre for welcoming her with open arms.

CHASE STEVEN ANDERSON (Russell Wyatt) Selected TV/Film credits: *Cobra Kai S6* (Netflix), *The Color Purple* (WB), *George & Tammy* (Showtime), *Leverage: Redemption* (Amazon), *The Gifted* (Marvel), *Ride Along* (Universal). Upcoming: *The Naked Gun* (2025; starring Liam Neeson), and a top secret TV movie for Adult Swim this December! EDU: Columbus State University, BFA Acting. Chase is a Teaching Artist with Alliance Theatre and is represented by Houghton Talent. @1ChaseAnd

DURELL BROWN (Jeremy Hollingbrook) began his performance journey at the Orlando Shakespeare Theatre in Florida. His FL work includes *The Games' Afoot* as Felix/Moriarty, *A Raisin in the Sun* as Walter Lee Younger and various roles at Sleuths Mystery Dining Theatre in Orlando.

JENNIFER BROWN (Lauren Jacobson) is thrilled to be making her Atlanta Theatre debut with Essential Theatre! Favorite credits include *Death of a Streetcar Named Virginia Woolf*, *Doubt*, *Barefoot in the Park* (Lean Ensemble Theatre), *God of Carnage*, *The Crucible*, *Bloody Andrew Jackson* (Warehouse Theatre). BFA Acting – University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

MALA BHATTACHARYA (Rashida Mahmoud) is thrilled to appear with Essential Theatre for the first time! Her past theatre credits include work at Synchronicity, Aurora, Resurgens, Alliance, and more. Active in Atlanta's film and TV scene, she has appeared on *The Walking Dead*, *The Resident* and others. Follow her on Instagram: @malabhattacharya_atl.

ALISHAH BHAMANI (Lance Matthews/Guard) Atlanta: *Everybody's Talking About Jamie* (Actor's Express), *Tamburlaine Part 2* (Resurgens Theatre), *It's A Wonderful Life*, *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Stage Door Theatre). Regional: *Dragonsoul Offline* (South Carolina New Play Festival), *Unto These Hills* (Mountainside Theatre), *Majnun* (Playshare Evolution). Film/TV: Atlanta. Represented by Alexander White Agency.

MOIRA DEAN (Stage Manager) is thrilled to be working with Essential Theatre for the first time. She is excited to be back at 7Stages after stage managing *America's Most Haunted* with Some Bodies Theatre Collective last summer. She is going into her senior year of high school at School of the Arts at Central Gwinnett, and theatre is pretty much her life.

TERRY KISER (Assistant Stage Manager) attended Clark Atlanta University and is an Alumni of The Youth Ensemble of Atlanta, performing in shows around Atlanta and internationally. His theatre experience includes *The Nativity* at Kenny Leon's True Color Theatre; *Purlie* at Orange Box Theatre; *Yeah I Said It* at Urban Holiday Soup and *Colors of Love* with Youth Ensemble of Atlanta. He appeared in the independent film *When We Were Kids* alongside Atlanta based singer "Bobby V." Terry is happy to be back with Essential Theatre, where he had an amazing time acting in last year's festival performing in *The Wishing Place* by Beverly Austin.



Hush Harbor Lab:

African Roscius: a black in the box play

ONE NIGHT ONLY!
Thursday, August 22 at 7:30pm

Take a journey into a liminal realm where an enigmatic Maker conjures masks that unveil the told and untold narratives of Black history. Centered on the life and impact of Ira Aldridge, this one-man show transcends time and space to celebrate a legacy of resilience and artistic innovation.

MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT: MARLON ANDREW BURNLEY



Marlon Andrew Burnley has a passion for community engagement. He believes, very strongly, that theatre can be used as a catalyst for change and community building. He worked as the Director of Shakespeare in Fremont Park, a community outreach program developed by the Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival that was used to provide theatrical entertainment and education to marginalized communities in South Bend, Indiana, his home town, where he earned his BFA. He made his way to Georgia to pursue a MFA in Performance at the University of Georgia. Finding that his passions extended past acting and directing, he immersed himself into teaching, developing and producing new works, and community engagement. His creative work has received numerous awards such as “Most Innovative Research” for his one-man show *Black in the Box*. Marlon currently serves as an Assistant Professor of Directing at Kennesaw State University.

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

For centuries, Black theatre artists have performed Shakespearean Theatre, often reimagining characters, themes, and plot or their context. In *The African Roscius*, Marlon explores an experimental and complex new one man show around the world of one of these artists, Ira Aldridge. Hush Harbor is excited to partner again with Essential Theatre to create space for plays to be born.

www.hushharborlab.com



Essential Theatre presents

Fat Juliet by Bridget McCarthy

ONE NIGHT ONLY!
Thursday, August 29 at 7:30pm

A hopeful and painfully comic journey through love, loss, loneliness, purity culture, religious trauma, eating disorders and the death of a parent.

The performance runs approximately 70 minutes with no intermission.

***Audience Advisories:** contains references to many challenging themes, including racism, loss of a parent, purity culture, and sexual assault. Scan QR code for a complete and specific content note.*



MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT: BRIDGET MCCARTHY

Bridget McCarthy is a multi-hyphenate theatre maker and currently serves as the Engagement and Education Director at Stage Door Theatre. Previous favorite credits include: *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Circle Mirror Transformation*, *Midsummer...Dream* (Stage Door Theatre), *Henry V*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Hamlet* (Atlanta Shakespeare Company), *The Little Prince* (Synchronicity Theatre), *Matilda* (OnStage Atlanta). As a therapist and trauma informed theatre maker, Bridget has worked at the intersection of theatre and mental health with dozens of institutions and universities, including Shakespeare and Company, Alliance Theatre, Geva Theatre, Ensemble Theatre, Shakespeare Behind Bars, and many more. She has also worked with transformative justice focused nonprofits like Recovery Rising, Justice Arts Coalition, Connecticut Department of Corrections, Georgia Department of Corrections, and



New Haven Housing Authority as an applied theatre facilitator creating original pieces of community engagement theatre. Finally, her solo show, *Fat Juliet*, has toured nationally and features Bridget's love of stand up comedy, Shakespeare, and AC/DC.

In 2021, Bridget partnered with trauma therapist Amanda Edwards to pioneer the role of Mental Health Coordinator, co-founding the Association of Mental Health Coordinators. MHC is a new helping profession within the performing arts supporting responsible and compelling portrayal of mental health and challenging or traumatic themes. This includes individualized training, dramaturgy, assessment, cultural intervention, choreography, and crisis management. Within this role, Bridget has worked with Netflix, PassionFlix, Discovery, and many independent and student film projects as their inaugural Mental Health Coordinator.

Bridget holds a BA in Theatre and Spanish from Hope College, an MS in Clinical Counseling from New England College, and (as of summer 20204) is a candidate in Doctor of Behavioral Health program at Arizona State University. Additionally, Bridget holds certifications as a Trauma and Resilience Trainer (CTRT), a Certified Clinical Trauma Specialist (CCTS), and is a Certified Mental Health First Aid instructor with the National Council for Behavioural Health. In 2020, they were recognized by Young Nonprofit Professionals of Atlanta as a member of their "30 Under 30" Cohort, and in 2024 named one of American Theatre Magazine's "Theatre Workers to Watch".

Outside of work, Bridget fills her life with hiking, stand up comedy, competitive powerlifting, farmers markets, and as a part-time personal assistant to her rescue pittie (Oberon). Connect at BridgetMcCarthy.net or @bridgetmccarthyshere on Instagram.

bare essentials play reading series

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

The 2024 Bare Essentials Play Reading series will feature
four new plays by Georgia playwrights:

August 12, 7:30 pm

FALSE AWAKENING

by Jacob Ryan Martinez, directed by Lilliangina Quiñones

In shards of glass like the pieces of a shattered mirror, we see a man running away from his feelings of failure as a husband and father and from the fear of his own sexuality.

August 20, 7:30 pm

LIZ FRANK

by Keely Herrick, directed by Kati Grace Kirby

Elizabeth, the heroine of Mary Shelley's classic novel FRANKENSTEIN encourages the author to find a more satisfying ending to the wedding night of Victor Frankenstein and his wife – one where she doesn't get murdered by a monster. Can you blame her?

FULL TERM

by Jazzë A. Lewis, directed by Brenda Porter

Three black women tell us of their very different experiences going through life and pregnancy.

August 27, 7:30 pm

THE FANTABULOUS SHOWCASE OF LAURIE AND KACEY

by Sydni Symone, directed by Charis Sellick

While Mom and Dad are arguing, two kids ease their fears and express their anxiety by making up a puppet show with stuffed animals as their audience.

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.



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 Katherine Brokaw, Annaliese Grace, Tracey Buot, Irette Patterson, Sarah Michelson, John Holleman and Maria Liatis.

PRODUCTION & STAFF BIOS

PRODUCTION

LILLY BAXLEY (Production Manager) is a Georgia native and stage manager at heart. She was the resident ASM with Shakespeare Tavern Playhouse for six years and worked as a freelance stage manager with the Aurora before joining Stage Door Theatre as their production manager and technical director.

TRAVIS RONIS (Technical Director) is a professional artist and carpenter here in Atlanta. He's worked at Stage Door, Actors Express, and the Aurora theaters. He sells his artwork and 3-D prints at pop ups around Georgia. Check him out @overall_designs.

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*, *The Manuscript*. 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.

ADAM PAGDON (Scenic Designer) is an actor, puppeteer, and theatre artist relocated to Atlanta from Brooklyn last year. Performance credits include: *Orange Is The New Black*, *Person of Interest*, *The Pee Wee Herman Show on Broadway*, *Crunk Yankers*, and *Lazytown*. He holds an M.F.A. in Theatre Design from UNC-Greensboro.

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.

JOSHUIA CAMPBELL (Sound Designer, *The Other Part of the Picture*) has a BA in audio production. *Raising the Dead*, *A Complicated Hope*, *The Manuscript*, and *The Wishing Place* are his previous Essential Theatre designs. He's been a live sound engineer for 20 years this year. He recommends keeping spaghetti in your left back pocket in case you get hungry later.

FREDERICK PHILP (Sound Designer, *The Rock & The Hard Place*) is a TONY Award assistant sound designer. Philp is a sound artist and is the owner of Philp Since '92', a company specializing in music production, audio engineering, and artist development. His credits include Broadway's *Sweeney Todd*, and *Hell's Kitchen*.

GEORGE KOTLER-WALLACE (Composer) 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 second show with Essential Theatre, and he is excited to help weave the story.

VICTORIA NATION (Props, *The Other Part of the Picture* | Projections, *The Rock & The Hard Place*) is excited to work with Essential again, this time as props designer for *The Other Part of the Picture* and projection designer for *The Rock & The Hard Place*. A playwright, director, and performer, she's on a mission to wear every hat in the business to become the ultimate theatre menace.

SAVANNAH COBB (Costume Designer, *The Other Part of the Picture*) is a local costume designer with recent credits, including *The Little Prince*, *Holmes & Watson - Apt 2b* at Synchronicity. She is grateful to be back designing for the festival for a third time.

D'MYA TABRON (Costume Designer, *The Rock & The Hard Place*) 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. D'Mya is also the set designer for Atlanta Sustainable Fashion Week

STAFF

PETER HARDY (Founding Artistic Director) has been working professionally in the Atlanta theatre scene since 1986, as a writer, director, producer and actor. He's a Suzi Bass Award winning director who has directed over 100 productions and has been seen onstage at Horizon Theatre, Actor's Express, Georgia Ensemble Theatre, the Aurora Theatre, Theatre in the Square and the Shakespeare Tavern, as well as Virginia's Barter Theatre. In the summers from 1990-2005 he served as Artistic Director of the outdoor drama *Unto These Hills* in Cherokee, North Carolina and he founded the Essential Theatre Festival (then called the Festival of New American Theatre) in 1999. More recently he has begun to make his own films. He wrote, directed, shot, edited and created music for his first short, *Late Sleeper*, which has won twenty-seven international film festival awards.

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.

CARTER BEVIS (Box Office Manager) has been either running a box office or ushering at theaters throughout Atlanta for more than 25 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, theatre, music, TV and film productions.

THOM STANLEY (Graphic Designer) is an art director, graphic designer, puppeteer and lover of theater. He has created graphics for clients such as Amazon, Google, Adobe and Warner Brothers. His puppetry credits include Muppets from Space for The Jim Henson Company and a series pilot, *Freestyle Love Supreme* starring Lin Manuel Miranda.

ELISABETH COOPER (Education Associate) 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.

EMILY MCCLAIN (Education Associate) is a theatre educator and playwright. This summer she was fortunate enough to co-teach both Introduction to Playwriting and 10 Minute Play Bootcamp again with Amina McIntyre. She is a proud member of the Dramatist Guild and WriteStuffATL. Emily is one of the theatre faculty at School of the Arts @ Central Gwinnett and holds an M.Ed in Arts Integration in the Curriculum from Lesley University. 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 a Suzi Bass and Taurean Award Winning playwright, director and producer who has worked with: Actor's Express, Horizon Theatre, Marietta New Theatre in the Square, Oakland Cemetery, Out of Hand Theatre, and Vanguard Repertory Theatre. She is a Ph.D Candidate at Vanderbilt University and Co-Founder of the Hush Harbor Lab.

SPECIAL THANKS

Could Be Pretty Cool for sponsoring the Essential Theatre Playwriting Award, AmerisBank for rehearsal space, Thom Stanley for graphic design, Apple Pie Printing for playbill printing support, David Ruszczynski for playbill layout and design, DPMPProps, Seven Stages, Stage Door Theatre, Synchronicity Theatre, Dad's Garage Theatre Company, The Academy Theatre, Onstage Atlanta, Out Front Theatre, Scraplanta, Bill and Martha Nell Hardy and the League of Extraordinary Ladies and Gentlemen, Kitt Lavoie and all the folks as the Lanford Wilson New American Play Festival.

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THIS PROGRAM IS SUPPORTED IN PART BY



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



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