

THEATER WORKS HARTFORD

PROXIMITY

by **Harrison David Rivers**

directed by **David Mendizábal**

September 10-29

**THEATER
WORKS
HARTFORD**

WHAT IS THE WORKSHOP SERIES

Focused on early development projects, conceived and written primarily by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), The WORKshop series reflects the moment we're in. Featuring five compelling stories that offer opportunities for critical thinking, thoughtfulness, humor and uplift.



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THEATERWORKS HARTFORD COMMISSION

TheaterWorks Hartford launches its inaugural play commission program with this new work by playwright Harrison David Rivers. The commission was intended to support a writer whose work provides a catalyst for dialogue. TheaterWorks will develop the work through workshops leading to a public reading of the play. Commissioned writers will be provided with the resources to access collaborators both local to Hartford and beyond, as they craft new work for the theater of tomorrow.

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#Proximity



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PROXIMITY

by **Harrison David Rivers**

directed by **David Mendizábal**

Cast

Ezra Sampson-Burks

MARINDA ANDERSON

Irie Witter-Pryce

ANASTACIA MCCLESKEY

Elliot Witter-Pryce

STACEY SARGEANT

Ulises Brana

LUIS VEGA

Dramaturg **ARMINDA THOMAS**

Set Advisor **WILSON CHIN**

Artistic Producer **taneisha duggan**

Stage Manager **KATE J. CUDWORTH**

Casting

Erica Jensen/Calleri Jensen Davis Casting

Video/Multimedia Production & Editing by
Katerina Vitaly/Virtual Design Collective

PROXIMITY is a part of **The WORKshop Series**
and was commissioned by TheaterWorks Hartford, 2021

The actors in this recording appear with the permission of SAG/AFTRA

TheaterWorks Hartford is celebrating its 35th season as a non-profit,
professional theater company. Founded in 1985.

TheaterWorks Hartford • 233 Pearl Street • Hartford, CT 06103 • 2021

WHO



MARINDA ANDERSON (Ezra Sampson-Burks) is making her **TheaterWorks Hartford** debut.

Off-Broadway: *The Cake* (MTC), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Mobile Unit), *Teenage Dick*, *Miss You Like Hell* (The Public); *The Treasurer*, *Bella: An American Tall Tale*, *A Life, Far from Heaven* (Playwrights Horizons); *Sex of the Baby* (Access Theatre); *Obama-ology* (The Juilliard School). Regional: *Airness* (Humana); *A Doll's House* (Huntington); *Three Sisters* (Playmaker's Rep); *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, *Intimate Apparel* (Dorset Theatre Festival); *Fairfield* (Cleveland Play House). TV: *New Amsterdam*, *High Maintenance*, *Madam Secretary*, *Gotham*. BFA: Howard University. MFA: NYU Graduate Acting Program. marindaanderson.com



ANASTACIA MCCLESKEY (Irie Witter-Pryce) is making her **TheaterWorks Hartford** debut.

Seven Broadway shows, tons of NY & regional theater, recurring on a few TV shows, done some films and has sung with & back-up for many artists. Nominated for a Helen Hayes Award, Off-Broadway Alliance Award & an AUDELCO Award. Thank you God. @anastaciamccoffical & @naughtynorma Tik Tok: @anastacia_flower & @jestinyschild anastaciamccleskey.com



STACEY SARGEANT (Elliot Witter-Pryce) is making her **TheaterWorks Hartford** debut.

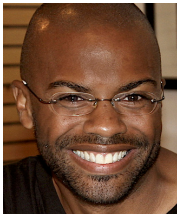
Theater credits include: *Nantucket Sleigh Ride* (Lincoln Center Theater), *Homos*, *Or Everyone in America* (Labyrinth), *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and the all-female *The Taming of the Shrew* (Delacorte Theatre), *Eclipsed* (Public Theater, Curran, Yale Rep, McCarter Theatre [workshop]), *Our Lady of Kibeho* and *Big Love* (Signature Theatre), *Legally Blonde* (1st Nat'l Tour). Stacey can be seen in the Netflix film *The Forty Year Old Version*, and in the latest season of Nat Geo's *Genius: Aretha* as Dinah Washington. Sargeant received Drama Desk, Drama League and Lucille Lortel nominations for her work in the NYTimes Critic's Pick, *Rags Parkland Sings the Songs of the Future* at Ars Nova. She is the recipient of the South Korea Daegu International Musical Festival's Best Supporting Actress Award, as well as New York Musical Theatre Festival's Outstanding Individual Performance Award. Film: *Come Sunday*, *Top Five*, *Obvious Child*. TV: *Blue Bloods*, *Bull*, *Elementary*, *The Blacklist*, *Gossip Girl*, *Glee*, *Law & Order: SVU*. Education: BFA in musical theater from Syracuse University.



LUIS VEGA (Ulises Brana) is making his

TheaterWorks Hartford debut. *Hindsight* (Fault Line Theatre), *The Underlying Chris* (Second Stage), *The Humans* (Broadway National Tour), *Tell Hector I Miss Him* (Atlantic Theater Company), *Where Storms Are Born* (Williamstown), *The Underpants* (Old Globe), *Seize the King* (La Jolla Playhouse), *As You Like It* (The Guthrie), *i thought i would die but i didn't* (New

Georges/The Tank), *Romeo and Juliet* (Back Room Shakespeare Project). Film/TV: *The Good Fight* (Paramount+), *Madam Secretary* (CBS), *Another Earth* (Fox Searchlight), *Chinese Puzzle* (dir. Cédric Klapisch), *Thorp* (Independent Feature). Education: MFA from UCSD. @sinverguenzaluisvega



HARRISON DAVID RIVERS (Playwright) is an award-winning playwright, librettist and screenwriter. His plays include *The Bandaged Place* (Relentless Award), *When We Last Flew* (GLAAD Award), *Sweet* (AUDELCO nominee), *Where Storms Are Born* (Berkshire Theatre Award nominee), *This Bitter Earth* (Jeff nominee, MN Theatre Award) and the musicals *Five Points* with Douglas Lyons and Ethan Pakchar (MN Theatre Award) and *Broadbend, Arkansas* with Ellen Fitzhugh and Ted Shen (Antonyo and AUDELO noms). Harrison was named a Runner-up for the 2018 Artist of the Year by the Star Tribune and a 2017 Artist of the Year by City Pages. He is the recipient of McKnight, Jerome and Van Lier Fellowships, and residencies with the Bogliasco Foundation, Siena Art Institute, the Hermitage, Duke University, NYTW, New York Stage & Film and the Williamstown Theater Festival. Harrison is a member of the Board of Directors of the Playwright Center and The Movement Theatre Company. He lives in St. Paul, Minnesota. harrisondavidrivers.com



DAVID MENDIZÁBAL (Director | he/they) is a director, designer, one of the Producing Artistic Leaders of the OBIE Award-winning The Movement Theatre Company, and Associate Artistic Director of The Sol Project. Select directing credits include: *Don't Eat the Mangos* (Magic Theatre/Sundance), *On The Grounds of Belonging* (Long Wharf), *The Bandaged Place* (NYSAF), *Then They Forgot About The Rest* (INTAR), *And She Would Stand Like This* (w/ choreographer Kia LaBeija) and *Look Upon Our Lowliness* (The Movement), and *Tell Hector I Miss Him* (Atlantic). David is a 2021 Princess Grace Award Honoraria Recipient in Theater. They were part of the inaugural Soho Rep Project Number One Residency, where they created and directed the short film, *eat me!*. Alumnus of Ars Nova Vision Residency, Drama League Directors Project, Labyrinth Intensive Ensemble, artEquity, NALAC, and LCT Directors Lab. David was a participant in the TCG Leadership U: One-on-One program, where they were the Artistic Associate at Atlantic Theater Company. BFA - NYU/Tisch

WILSON CHIN (Scenic Advisor) previously designed *Next to Normal* for **TheaterWorks Hartford**. Broadway: *Pass Over* (Lortel Award nomination), *Next Fall*. Off Broadway: *Cost of Living* (Manhattan Theatre Club), *Wild Goose Dreams* (The Public Theater, La Jolla Playhouse), *The Thanksgiving Play* (Playwrights Horizons), *Teenage Dick* (Ma-Yi Theatre/Public Theater), *My Mañana Comes* (The Playwrights Realm). Opera: *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Lyric Opera of Chicago), *Eine Florentinische Tragödie/Gianni Schicchi* (Canadian Opera Company; Dora Mavor Moore Award). Film/Television: *Pass Over* (dir. Spike Lee), *Blindspot* (NBC). @wilsonchindesign

WHO



ARMINDA THOMAS (Dramaturg) is co-producer and resident dramaturg for CLASSIX. Selected dramaturgy credits include *Black Picture Show* (Artists Space), *Mirrors* (Next Door at New York Theatre Workshop); *A Harlem Triptych of Eulalie Spence*, *Wine in the Wilderness*, and *Soul Struggle: The Works of Georgia Douglass Johnson* (New Perspectives); *Black History Museum...According to the United States of America* (HERE Arts Center); *Jazz* (Marin Theatre Company); *Zora Neale Hurston* (New Federal Theatre); and *The First Noel* (Classical Theatre of Harlem). She has also served as associate artistic director and resident dramaturg for the Going to the River Festival and Writer's Unit.



ROB RUGGIERO (Producing Artistic Director) has been part of **TheaterWorks Hartford** artistic leadership for 26 years. He has directed over 60 shows, including TWH productions of *The Sound Inside*, *American Son*, *The Legend of Georgia McBride*, *Constellations*, *Next to Normal*, *Relativity* (starring Richard Dreyfuss) and *Christmas on the Rocks*, which he also conceived. His Broadway credits include *Looped* (starring Valerie Harper in a Tony-nominated performance) and *High* (starring Kathleen Turner) which had its world premiere at TWH. He also conceived and directed the musical revue *Make Me a Song: The Music of William Finn* which moved off-Broadway and was nominated for Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards. Rob conceived and directed *Ella*, a musical about Ella Fitzgerald, which saw sold-out runs in 24 regional theaters and was produced as a National Tour. His work on plays and musicals has received multiple awards in Connecticut and around the United States. In his eleventh collaboration with Goodspeed Musicals, Rob directed *Oliver* where he has also directed many award-winning musical productions. His adaptation of *Show Boat* is now being licensed by the Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization. Internationally he directed *Fiddler on the Roof* in Athens, Greece.

ERICA JENSEN (CSA)/CALLERI CASTING: Erica holds an MFA in acting from Illinois State University, but after moving to NYC 17 years ago her love for acting was replaced by a love for casting. With James Calleri and Paul Davis she casts for Berkeley Rep, The Humana Festival, Cleveland Play House, Long Wharf Theater, McCarter Theatre, and more. Broadway credits include *Of Mice and Men*, *Fool For Love*, and *A Raisin In the Sun*. Past television credits include *Hope & Faith*, *Lipstick Jungle*, *Army Wives*, *Ed* and *The Path* (Hulu). Erica previously cast *Walden*, *Actually* and *The Wolves* for **TheaterWorks Hartford**.

KATE J. CUDWORTH (Stage Manager) has enjoyed seven seasons with **TheaterWorks Hartford** including *American Son*, *The River*, *Hand to God*, *The Invisible Hand*, *The Legend of Georgia McBride*, *The Wolves*, *Fade*, *Next to Normal*, *Sunset Baby*, *Relativity*, *Midsummer*, *Woody Sez*, and *Becoming Dr. Ruth*. Off-Broadway: *Freud's Last Session*, [title of show]. NY/Regional: Barrington Stage Company (8 seasons including *Freud's Last Session*; *Dr. Ruth*, *All The Way*; Joe Iconis' *The Black Suits*), Atlantic Stage Company, Hartford Stage, Manhattan School of Music (4 seasons), Yale Opera, York Theatre Company, Bronx Opera Company, Fringe NYC, NYMF.

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