

THEATER  
WORKS  
HARTFORD

# PRIMARY TRUST

by EBONI BOOTH



APRIL 10 – MAY 11



## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

PRIMARY TRUST is a remarkable work, a credit to the imaginative and well-crafted writing, profound in its recognition of friendship, creating a radical space of possibility for Black and brown joy. It demonstrates the vital need for *play* - critical if your environment leads you to believe that you do not matter. Being human is full of challenges, yet our protagonist, in spite of his own loneliness (or perhaps because of), creates a means of meeting his own emotional needs, a conduit, if you will, for *play*.

Research proves that joy boosts our immune systems, fights stress and pain, and improves our chances of living a longer life. Joy builds resiliency to difficult situations. Studies show that play is essential to human development, contributing to cognitive, physical, social and emotional well-being. Is it not essential then for us to create community? To dare to find our playmates?

– Jennifer Chang

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TheaterWorks Hartford is celebrating its 39th season as a non-profit,  
professional theater company. Founded in 1985.

PRIMARY TRUST is the 3rd show of the 2024-2025 Season.

APRIL 10 – MAY 11, 2025



# PRIMARY TRUST

by **EBONI BOOTH**

directed by **JENNIFER CHANG**

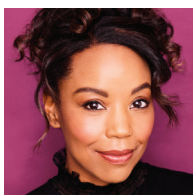
## THE CAST



**RICARDO CHAVIRA\***



**SAMUEL STRICKLEN\***



**HILARY WARD\***



**JUSTIN WEAKS\***

**Cranberry, New York. A medium-sized suburb of Rochester.  
Before smartphones.**

Set Design

Costume Design

Lighting Design

Sound Design

Wig Design

Associate Director

Dialect Coach

Stage Manager

**NICHOLAS PONTING**

**DANIELLE PRESTON**

**BRYAN EALEY**

**FREDERICK KENNEDY**

**EARON CHEW NEALEY**

**MOIRA O'SULLIVAN**

**JENNIFER SCAPETIS-TYCER**

**TOM KOSIS\***

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IN MEMORY OF  
FRANK LORD**

PRIMARY TRUST was developed at the 2021 Ojai Playwrights Conference:  
Robert Egan, Artistic Director/Producer

Developed by Victory Gardens Theater, Chicago, Illinois, Ken-Matt Martin, Artistic Director, Roxanna Conner, Acting Managing Director, as part of IGNITE CHICAGO Festival of New Plays 2021.

Originally Produced in New York City by Roundabout Theatre Company  
at the Harold and Miriam Steinberg Center for Theatre/Laura Pels Theatre on May 4th, 2023.

PRIMARY TRUST is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on  
behalf of Samuel French, Inc. [www.concordtheatricals.com](http://www.concordtheatricals.com)





## WHO

**RICARDO CHAVIRA** (Clay/Sam/Le Pousselet Bartender) is making his **TWH** debut. A South Texas native, his stage highlights include *The Motherf\*\*ker with the Hat* (National Theatre in London) and *Jesus Hopped the A Train* (Off-Broadway). Regional theater credits include *Shane*, *An Enemy of the People* and *A Streetcar Named Desire* at the Guthrie Theater; also *Living Out*, *Tracers*, *Three Sisters*, *Dogeaters*, *¡Bandido!*, and *Macbeth*. TV credits include the upcoming Amazon Prime series *Ballard*, *Selena* and *Glamorous* for Netflix, and Apple TV+'s *Truth Be Told*. Past TV credits include *Scandal*, *Jane the Virgin*, *Santa Clarita Diet*, *Hawaii 5-0*, *Castle*, *Burn Notice*, *Welcome to the Family*, *Desperate Housewives* (two SAG Awards), *George Lopez*, *24*, *JAG*, *NYPD Blue*, and *Six Feet Under*. Film credits include *Being Charlie*, *Powder and Gold*, *Don't Let Me Drown*, *The Alamo*, *Piranha 3-D* and *Saving God*. Ricardo holds an MFA in Acting from the University of California, San Diego. For T and B, always.

**SAMUEL STRICKLEN** (Bert) is making his **TWH** debut. Select theater credits: *Superior Donuts* (Bway); *Six Degrees of Separation* (The Old Globe); *Clybourne Park* (Premiere Stages); *Current Nobody* (La Jolla Playhouse). Samuel is an Emeritus Artist of SIT Company. Select credits: *The Bacchae* (Getty Villa/BAM); *bobrauschenbergamerica* (Dublin Theatre Festival); *Under Construction* (Actors Theatre of Louisville). TV/Film: *Marlon*, *Six Degrees*, *The Mysteries of Laura*, *Law & Order*, *The Good Wife*, *Bosch*, *Mozart in the Jungle*, *High Maintenance*, and *The Visit*. Samuel holds an MFA in Acting from the University of California, San Diego, and is an Asst. Professor of Acting and Movement at the University of Cincinnati (CCM).

**HILARY WARD** (Corrina/Bank Customer/Wally's Waiter | she/hers) is making her **TWH** debut. Theater: *Primary Trust* (Barrington Stage), *American Fast* (City Theatre), *Those Days Are Over* (Ashland New Play Festival), *Sense and Sensibility* (South Coast Rep), *Ripe Frenzy* (Ojai Playwrights Conference), *Mother Courage* (La Jolla Playhouse), *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *Madea* (Classical Theatre of Harlem). TV/Film: *Station 19*, *Law & Order*, *Bull*, *Sharp Objects*, *All the Way*, *NCIS*, *The Fosters*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Modern Family*, *Other People*, *Like You Mean It*. Hilary's image and voice have been featured in over 45 national commercials. She co-founded the award-winning Chalk Repertory Theatre and is the CEO of Apian, Inc., specializing in audition preparation and career coaching for professional actors. Proud member of SAG-AFTRA, AEA and the Television Academy. MFA - UCSD.

**JUSTIN WEAKS** (Kenneth) is making his **TWH** debut. Off Broadway: *i need space* (The New Group). Regional: *Primary Trust* (Barrington Stage); *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* (Arena Stage); *There's Always the Hudson*, *BLKS*, *Describe the Night*, *Gloria* (Woolly Mammoth Theater, Company Member); *Long Way Down*, *Watsons Go To Birmingham - 1964*, *Bud, Not Buddy* (The Kennedy Center); *Pipeline*, *Curve of Departure* (Studio Theater). Education: Greensboro College. @keithweaks

**EBONI BOOTH** (Playwright) is a writer and actor from New York City. Her plays include *Primary Trust* (Roundabout Theatre, Pulitzer Prize for Drama, Outer Critics Circle Award) and *Paris* (Atlantic Theater). For TV, she has written for Hulu's *We Were the Lucky Ones* and HBO Max's *Julia*. As an actor, Eboni has appeared in productions at Playwrights Horizons, LCT3, Manhattan Theater Club, Ars Nova, WP Theater, Page 73, Soho Rep, Clubbed Thumb, and more. Eboni is a resident playwright at New Dramatists, and the recipient of a Dramatists Guild Horton Foote Award, a Steinberg Playwright Award, a Helen Merrill Award for Playwriting, and a John Gassner Award. She is a graduate of Juilliard's playwriting program and the University of Vermont.





**JENNIFER CHANG** (Director) Select credits: *A Doll's House, Part 2* (Pasadena Playhouse, upcoming); *Primary Trust* (Barrington Stage – Berkshire Theatre Critics Circle Outstanding Direction Award); *What Became Of Us* (World Premiere, Atlantic Theater Company); *The Far Country* (Berkeley Rep, Excellence in Direction nomination); *King of the Yeas* (Signature Theatre DC, Helen Hayes nom Best Production); *On Gold Mountain* (LA Opera); *The Heart Sellers* (World Premiere, Milwaukee Rep); *Vietgone* (LADCC AWARD Best Direction). Select Development: Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor, The Mercury Store, Geffen Playhouse, Williamstown Theatre Festival, O'Neill Playwrights Conference, Center Theatre Group, Theatre Mu, Boston Court, Circle X, Artists at Play. Associate Professor UCLA. Member: SDC, AGMA, SAG-AFTRA, AEA. Drama League New York Fellow, Classical Directing Fellow at The Old Globe. BFA – NYU, MFA – UCSD. [changinator.com](http://changinator.com)

**NICHOLAS PONTING** (Set Design) is a set designer, installation and stained glass artist based in San Diego, CA. His work has been seen at La Jolla Playhouse/WoW, The 5th Ave, IAMA Theatre Co., Boston Court, LA Opera, Chautauqua Theatre Co, Antaeus Theatre Co, Detroit Public Theatre and others. Nick is the associate scenic designer for Optika Moderna, an immersive theatrical company in San Diego. Adjunct Faculty at San Diego State University. BA -WWU, MFA - UCSD. IG: @nicholasponting [nicholasponting.com](http://nicholasponting.com)

**DANIELLE PRESTON** (Costume Design) is pleased to return to **TWH** after designing *King James*. Recent regional credits: *Topdog/Underdog* (Round House); *Primary Trust*, *Blues for an Alabama Sky* (Barrington Stage); *The Sensational Sea Minkettes* (Woolly Mammoth Theatre); *Queens Girl: Black in the Green Mountains* (Everyman Theatre); *Primary Trust*, *Passing Strange*, *Penelope* (Signature Theatre); *Sleepova*, *Long Way Down*, *A Nice Indian Boy* (Olney Theatre Center); *At The Wedding*, *Fat Ham*, *Clyde's* (Studio Theatre). Danielle received the 2025 SETC Distinguished Costume Design Award, 2024 Helen Hayes Nomination in Costume Design, 2022 OPERA America Tobin Director-Designer Prize, William R. Kenan Jr. Fellowship in Costume Design with The Kennedy Center, and the A.J. Fletcher Opera Institute Fellowship in Costume Design. MFA in Costume Design from the UNC School of the Arts. IG @daniellepreston [daniellepreston.com](http://daniellepreston.com)

**BRYAN EALEY** (Lighting Design) Off-Broadway: *The Fires* (Soho Rep), Regional: *The Royale* (Creede Rep), *The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe*, *The Lightning Thief* (Main Street), *Everybody* (Antaeus Theatre), *Fefu & Her Friends* (Catastrophic Theatre), *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Xanadu*, *Big Fish*, *Plumshuga: The Rise of Lauren Anderson*, *We Are Proud To Present...*, and *the ripple, the wave that carried me home* (Stages Theatre), *Topdog/Underdog* (4th Wall), *Primary Trust* (Barrington Stage). MFA - UCSD (Lighting Design). [bryanealey.com](http://bryanealey.com)

**FREDERICK KENNEDY** (Sound Design): **TWH**: *This Bitter Earth*, *American Son*, *Fully Committed*, *The River*. Off-Broadway: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Malvolio*, *Seize the King* (Classical Theatre of Harlem); *Native Son* (Acting Company); *Caesar & Cleopatra* (Gingold Theatrical Group). Regional: *Seared* (Alley Theatre); *Richard & Jane & Dick & Sally* (Baltimore Center Stage); *Doubt*, *Flyin' West* (Westport Country Playhouse); *Twelfth Night*, *Native Son* (Yale Rep); *It's a Wonderful Life* (Hartford Stage); *Father Comes Home from the Wars* (A.C.T.). Local USA 829. MFA Yale School of Drama. [fredkennedy.org](http://fredkennedy.org)

**EARON CHEW NEALEY** (Wig Design) is an Obie Award-winning and Drama Desk-nominated Hair, Wig, and Makeup Designer. Broadway: *Fat Ham*; Goodspeed Musicals: *Dreamgirls*, *Little Girl Blue: The Nina Simone Musical*; The Public Theater: *Hamlet*, *shadow/land*, *The Harder They Come*, *Baldwin and Buckley at Cambridge*, *Fat Ham*, *cullud wattah*, *Mojada*. Other



# WHO

Designs: *Dames at Sea, Kinky Boots, The Last Supper, Twelfth Night, Notes on Killing Seven Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Board Members, By the Way, Meet Vera Stark, Matilda, On Sugarland, Nina Simone: Four Women, Little Women, Cadillac Crew.* IG: @earonnealey

**MOIRA O’SULLIVAN** (Assoc. Director) is a director and dramaturg currently serving as the Literary & Artistic Coordinator at Barrington Stage. Directing: *The Amazing Adventures of Dr. Wonderful, Snow White, Shakespeare 4 Kids* (Playhouse on Park); *Fortune’s Children, Changing Fortunes, A Womb with A View* (Hartford Opera Theatre). BFA - NYU Tisch. moiraosullivan.com

**TOM KOSIS** (Stage Manager) *Primary Trust* marks Tom’s 14th production with **TWH**. Broadway: *Mary Poppins, Side Show, The Scarlet Pimpernel, Flower Drum Song, Bye Bye Birdie, A Chorus Line, Ann, My Fair Lady, Grand Hotel, Nice Work If You Can Get It.* National and International Tours: *Irving Berlin’s White Christmas, A Chorus Line, Song & Dance, West Side Story, Dreamgirls.* Tom was the Associate Director/Choreographer for *The Radio City Music Hall Christmas Spectacular.* tomkosis.com

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