

WESTCOAST BLACK THEATRE TROUPE

NATE JACOBS
FOUNDER & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
PRESENTS

LANGSTON HUGHES'
Black Nativity

Adapted by
Nate Jacobs

Score inspired by the legendary Broadway performance of *Black Nativity*,
created by conductor-pianist and music historian Aaron Robinson.

Costume Designer

Adrienne Pitts

Wig Designer

Dominique Freeman

Properties Designer

Annette Breazeale

Set Designers

Donna & Mark Buckalter

Production Manager

Kevin White

Production Stage Managers

Juanita Munford*

Kevin White*

Assistant Stage Managers

Victoria Flounders*

Lizzi Nehls*

Lighting Designer

Michael Pasquini

Sound Designer

Patrick Russini

Music Director

Matthew McKinnon

Assistant Director/Choreographer

Donald Frison

Director

Nate Jacobs

November 30–December 23, 2022

Presented by special arrangement with Dramatic Publishing, Woodstock, Illinois

Scenery constructed by
Asolo Rep Scenic Studios.

Paid for in part by Sarasota County
Tourist Development Tax Revenues.
This project is sponsored in part by the
Department of State, Division of Arts &
Culture, the Florida Council of Arts and
Culture, and the State of Florida.



* Member of Actors' Equity
Association (AEA), the Union of
Professional Actors and Stage
Managers in the United States.



CAST

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Lead Vocalist | Syreeta Banks* |
| Elisabeth/Lead Vocalist..... | Ariel Blue |
| Lead Youth Vocalist/Ensemble..... | Jaliyah Campbell |
| Ensemble..... | Miracle Deveaux |
| Principal Dancer/Head Tax Collector | Donald Frison |
| Principal Dancer/Ensemble..... | Derric Gobourne Jr. |
| Lead Vocalist/Ensemble..... | Tianna Harris |
| Ensemble..... | Amaris Holliman |
| Lead Vocalist | Charlie “CJ” Melton |
| Joseph/Lead Vocalist..... | Raleigh Mosely II |
| Lead Vocalist/Ensemble..... | Amber Myers |
| Lead Youth Vocalist/Ensemble..... | Hadara Porter |
| Mary/Lead Vocalist..... | Maicy Powell |
| Zachariah/Innkeeper/Chief Priest/Ensemble..... | Patric Robinson* |
| Ensemble..... | Rickey Tedesco |
| Lead Youth Vocalist/Ensemble..... | Samuel “Sammy” Waite |
| Narrator..... | Donovan Whitney |
| Archangel Gabriel/Lead Vocalist..... | Stephanie Zandra* |

**Member of Actors' Equity Association (AEA), the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States*

MUSICIANS

Our live band plays backstage!

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Music Director/Main Keys | Matthew McKinnon |
| Aux Keys..... | Jamar Camp |
| Guitar | Brad Foutch |
| Bass..... | Marvin Hendon |
| Drums | Caleb Miller |

Dave Wooten will play percussion at some performances

WBTT TEAM

| | |
|--|--|
| Founder & Artistic Director..... | Nate Jacobs |
| Executive Director | Julie Leach |
| Development Associate..... | Regina Belvin |
| Artist Relations Associate & Assistant Box Office Manager..... | Ariel Blue |
| Properties Artisan Manager | Annette Breazeale |
| Stage Hands..... | Andrea Coleman, Kiamani Kanady |
| Resident Seamstress..... | Darci Collins |
| Properties Intern..... | Jayde Dauley |
| Development Director..... | Debra Flynt-Garrett |
| Resident Choreographer..... | Donald Frison |
| Receptionist & Box Office Associate/Stage Hand | Annette German |
| Finance Manager..... | Robert Grant |
| Marketing And Communications Director..... | Beth Graves |
| Sound Assistant..... | Austin Jacobs |
| Resident Sound Engineer | Alexander Judd |
| Custodian | Gerald Law |
| Box Office Associate | Margaret Lindsey |
| Resident Music Director | Matthew McKinnon |
| House Associate..... | Mydra McKinnon |
| House Manager..... | Myllanna McKinnon |
| Box Office Manager..... | Eleanor Miller |
| Production Stage Manager | Juanita Munford |
| Resident Lighting Designer..... | Michael Pasquini |
| Wardrobe Manager..... | Adrienne Pitts |
| Marketing Associate..... | Maicy Powell |
| Associate Managing Director | Travis Ray |
| Resident Sound Designer | Patrick Russini |
| Technical Director | Shane Streight |
| Education Director & Artistic Associate..... | Jim Weaver |
| Production Manager | Kevin White |
| Assistant to the Artistic Director | Donovan Whitney |
| Photography | Sorcha Augustine |
| Marketing Consultant | Scott Ferguson |
| Media Relations..... | Sharon Kunkel, Wordslinger Marketing & PR |
| Graphic Design..... | Paula Murray, Artefact Design |
| Videography..... | James Berry/Captivision Media & Bill Wagy/Bill Wagy Productions |

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

All of us at WBTT are delighted to bring back the holiday favorite, Langston Hughes' *Black Nativity*. I like to call it our Christmas card to the community.

This year I've invited Donald Frison, our talented Resident Choreographer, to be the assistant director, in addition to choreographing the show. Because dance plays an integral part in how the story of *Black Nativity* is told, Donald's artistic vision is a wonderful contribution to the production. I'm thrilled with the amazing job he has done, and I know our audiences will be too.

This year's version of *Black Nativity* features new faces and new voices, including a few of our youth artists from our education program, Stage of Discovery. This is the first year we are presenting *Black Nativity* in our new theatre which makes me very excited. My Christmas wish for you is that *Black Nativity* will inspire hope, joy, and peace this holiday season and throughout the year!

— **Nate Jacobs**

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/CHOREOGRAPHER'S NOTE

I want to thank Nate Jacobs for another opportunity to be the assistant director of this production. We're blessed to be presenting *Black Nativity* in our new theatre.

This is my fourth time working on the show with WBTT. In the past we've had singers and actors do all the dancing. We now have dedicated dancers who bring many styles to the stage: African, ballet, contemporary, jazz and even hip hop. And of course, the singing is very powerful as well. Some of our students from the Stage of Discovery program round out the cast, showing the talents they've developed in our summer musical theatre program.

I hope this retelling of the "greatest story ever told" will touch your heart this Christmas season. I promise that you won't be the same as you were before you came in tonight.

Enjoy this very special show!

— **Donald Frison**

MUSICAL NUMBERS

| | |
|---|--|
| Sing Noel (<i>Various</i>)..... | Ensemble |
| Hail Mary (<i>N. Jacobs</i>)..... | Stephanie Zandra, Ensemble |
| Shout for Joy (<i>Trad.</i>)..... | Ariel, Ensemble |
| You Are Wonderful (<i>Trad.</i>)..... | Maicy Powell, Ensemble |
| Amen, Amen, Amen (<i>Trad.</i>)..... | Patric Robinson, Ensemble |
| My Way Is Cloudy (<i>H.T. Burleigh</i>) | Raleigh Mosely II, Ensemble |
| Somewhere to Lay My Head (<i>J. Cheeks</i>) | Raleigh Mosely II, Ensemble |
| Shame (<i>H. Porter</i>) | Syreeta Banks, Ensemble |
| Conceived by a Spirit (<i>N. Jacobs</i>)..... | Female Ensemble |
| Most Done Traveling (<i>A. Bradford</i>)..... | Stephanie Zandra, Ensemble |
| Breath of Heaven (<i>C. Eaton-A. Grant- O. Olafson</i>) | Maicy Powell, Ensemble |
| Khumbaya (<i>Trad.</i>)..... | Ensemble |
| I'm Just Holding On (<i>D. Love-Coates</i>) | Stephanie Zandra, Ensemble |
| Mary Had a Baby (<i>St. Helena Island Spiritual</i>) | Ensemble |
| Oh What a Pretty Little Baby (<i>I. Barnes</i>) | Miracle Deveaux, Ensemble |
| Wasn't That a Mighty Day (<i>R. Staples</i>) | Ensemble |
| Who Would Imagine a King (<i>M. Warren, H. Will</i>) | Jaliyah Campbell, Hadara Porter |
| I've Found the King Of Kings (<i>N. Jacobs</i>)..... | CJ Melton, Ensemble |
| O Come All Ye Faithful (<i>F. Oakley-J.F. Ward</i>) | Ensemble |
| Rise Up Shepherd and Follow (<i>T. Fenner</i>) | Ariel Blue, CJ Melton, Ensemble |
| Glory Be to God in the Highest (<i>Trad.</i>) | Ensemble |
| Oh Come, Oh Come Emmanuel (<i>J.M. Neal; Trad.</i>) | Amber Myers, Ensemble |
| Children, Go Where I Send Thee (<i>P. Campbell</i>) | CJ Melton, Samuel Waite |
| No Hiding Place (<i>Trad.</i>)..... | Stephanie Zandra, Ensemble |

MUSICAL NUMBERS

- Sweet Little Jesus Boy (*R. MacGimsey*) **Donald Frison**
Joy to the World..... **Syreeta Banks, Ensemble**
(*Trad.; W. Afanasieff-M. Carey-H. Axton*)
Go Tell It on the Mountain (*J.W. Work*) **Stephanie Zandra, Ensemble**

15-MINUTE INTERMISSION

- Meeting Tonight (*R. Dett*) **Stephanie Zandra, Ensemble**
Packing Up (*C. Ward*)..... **Ensemble**
I've Got to Testify (*W.A. Croffut*) **Ensemble**
Up Above My Head (*R. Tharpe-M. Knight*) **Samuel Waite, Ensemble**
Christmas Means Love (*M. Dollison*)..... **Raleigh Mosely II, Maicy Powell,**
Ensemble
Don't Save It All For Christmas Day **Tianna Harris, Ensemble**
(*R. Ware-C. Dion-P. Zizzo*)
My Grown Up Christmas List (*D. Foster-L. Thompson*)..... **Amber Myers,**
Hadara Porter
We Need A Revival (*N. Jacobs*)..... **Stephanie Zandra, CJ Melton,**
Ensemble
Hark the Herald Angels Sing (*F. Mendelssohn-C. Wesley*)..... **Ensemble**

The video and/or audio recording of this performance by any means whatsoever is strictly prohibited.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

James Mercer Langston Hughes (1901–1967) was one of the most important literary figures of the 1920s Harlem Renaissance. Born in Joplin, Missouri, Hughes attended Columbia University in New York and Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. His poems, plays, musicals, operas, essays, films, and adult and children’s books promoted equality and black pride, condemned racism, and celebrated African-American culture, humor and spirituality. He is particularly known for his dignified and insightful portrayal of ordinary black life in America from the 1920s through the 1960s.

Hughes received many awards and honors, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, the NAACP’s Spingarn Medal for distinguished achievements and the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award. His home on E. 127th Street in Harlem, where he lived on the top floor of a rowhouse from 1947 until his death in 1967, was named a landmark by the New York City Preservation Commission. The block that includes his home has been renamed Langston Hughes Place.

In *The Big Sea: An Autobiography* (1945), Hughes wrote that “most people are generally good, in every race and in every country where I have been.” *Black Nativity* (1961) is Langston Hughes’ exuberant celebration of our common humanity and the joy he found in the story of the birth of Christ, told from an Afrocentric perspective.

CAST AND CREATIVE



NATE JACOBS
(Founder/Artistic Director/Adapter/Co-Arranger/Director) is Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe's Founder & Artistic Director. He is a driving force in Florida's theatre

scene. A graduate of Florida A&M University, Nate founded Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe in 1999. He has written, composed, directed and performed in many shows, as an actor, singer, dancer and comedian. He works extensively in the community, training and mentoring youth in the performing arts. As a result of his outstanding contributions to young people, the Sarasota County Branch NAACP Youth Council recognized Nate as one of its 2012 Men of Valor. In the spring of 2013, he was inducted into the Community Video Archives Hall of Fame for his significant contributions to the arts and education. In 2015, Nate was recognized as a Champion of Diversity for the arts during the *Biz(941)* and *La Guia* magazines' Unity Awards Luncheon, and was honored with the prestigious Larry Leon Hamlin Producer Award during the National Black Theatre Festival in Winston-Salem, N.C., "for his contributions to Black theatre specifically and American theatre in general." In 2017, Goodwill Manasota named him a Community Ambassador of the Year. In 2018, the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County honored Nate with the Arts Leadership Award for Artistic Achievement. In August 2022 he brought *Soul Crooners, Featuring Sistas in the Name of Soul* to the National Black Theatre Festival in Winston-Salem, N.C. — WBTT's fifth appearance there. In 2021 Nate received the Perfect Pitch Award from Key Chorale, which recognized him as a driving force in the arts and for his collaborations with other arts organizations, including *American Roots: The Gospel Experience*, a series of concert performances with WBTT performers and Key Chorale presented in three area churches in the fall of 2019. He was recently featured in *The New York Times*, highlighting his mentorship and leadership, as well as WBTT's community outreach.



DONALD FRISON
(Assistant Director/Choreographer/Principal Dancer/Head Tax Collector) An accomplished choreographer, dancer and singer for over 30 years, Donald has

enjoyed great success. He was a dancer for the NBA Memphis Grizzlies Dance Team and a five-time champion on the syndicated talent competition television show *Star Search with Ed McMahon*. His theatre credits as a performer include *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Five Guys Named Moe*, *Cats*, *It Ain't Nothin' But the Blues* and *The Music Man*. For WBTT he choreographed *Your Arms Too Short to Box with God* in 2020, among many other shows throughout several seasons. "As WBTT's Resident Choreographer I strive to keep the vision growing," Donald says. "I've been fortunate to have had my work showcased at the National Black Theatre Festival with three shows, *Soul Crooners featuring Sistas in the Name of Soul*, *How I Got Over* and *Soul Man*. I am so proud and honored to be part of such an amazing company with a wonderful vision. Thank you, Nate, cast and creative and Julie, for trusting me and my gift. Thank you to the staff and trustees for all your love and support. I thank God for blessing me with a gift to give to the world. May God bless all of you!"



MATTHEW MCKINNON
(Music Director) Matthew is proud to be joining the WBTT team as its new resident music director. Being no stranger to the theater scene, Matthew has had the opportunity to music direct several

productions including *Broadway in Black*, Langston Hughes' *Black Nativity*, WBTT's Stage of Discovery production *We Dream, Joyful! Joyful!*, and others. Matthew's love of music started as a child; he began studying the cello at the age of 5. He was accepted into Berklee College of Music and attended Florida A&M University for a B.A. in Music Education with emphasis in choral conducting. Matthew has been a composer, arranger, and director for many solo artists, groups, bands, and gospel choirs. He has performed and shared the stage with such great entertainers

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CAST AND CREATIVE

as Kirk Franklin, James Ingram, Peabo Bryson, and others. Matthew is also an award-nominated recording artist under the name Matt Mykel with his music now being distributed on all digital platforms. He is a proud husband and married to his lovely wife, Nilaja who he calls Sunny.



SYREETA S. BANKS*

(Lead Vocalist) is an accomplished singer/actress from Sarasota who developed her love of performing as a small child singing in her great-grandparents' church choir and

watching her mother perform in many local theatre productions. She was last seen as Sophia in Stageworks Theatre's production of *The Color Purple* in Tampa, Florida and in August 2022 she performed in WBTT's production of *Soul Crooners featuring Sistas in the Name of Soul* at the National Black Theatre Festival. Her other Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe credits include *Broadway in Black*, *Eubie!*, *Love Sung in The Key of Aretha*, *The Amen Corner*, *Black Nativity* and *Girl Groups: The 60's Explosion*. She has been seen in productions at Barter Theatre, Venice Theatre and Theatre Winter Haven and has also been seen singing as Zawadi in the "Festival of the Lion King" show at Disney's Animal Kingdom. Although she earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Florida A&M University, Syreeta chose to pursue her dream of becoming a professional singer/songwriter/actress. Her debut single, "Brand New", is available on all musical streaming platforms under her alias, Syreeta Shontee. www.syreetashontee.com "To God be the glory for all the things he has done!"



ARIELE BLUE (Elisabeth, Lead Vocalist) a well-known member of Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe, was recently featured in *The Know Women* Sarasota chapter magazine and was last seen as Audrey in *Little*

Shop of Horrors. Her many appearances on the WBTT stage include *Sistas in the Name of Soul*, *A Motown Christmas*, *The Amen Corner*, *Marvin Gaye: Prince of Soul*, and *Soul Man*. She has produced

two of her own one-woman shows, most recently, *The Bluelight Special*. Ariele has worked consistently with WBTT since her breakout role in *Ain't Misbehavin'* in 2010. Other memorable shows include *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Dreamgirls*, *Avenue Q*, *The Wiz*, *It Ain't Nothin' But the Blues*, *All Shook Up*, *Disenchanted*, *Love Sung in the Key of Aretha*, and *Beehive: The Musical*. In 2019 Ariele appeared in WBTT's production of *Soul Man* at the National Black Theatre Festival. She has performed as a vocalist in the Connelli Circus in Switzerland and with the Florida Studio Theatre Improv. Ariele was also a contributing performer for the Sarasota-Manatee community's Suffragist Project in 2020. She is a graduate of Stetson University with a major in communications and a minor in theatre. In addition to performing, Ariele is WBTT's Artist Relations Associate and Assistant Box Office Manager. www.simplyarielblue.com / IG: @simplyarielblue.



JALIAH CAMPBELL

(Lead Youth Vocalist/ Ensemble) Jaliyah's on-stage performances started as early as 3 years old. She was and is motivated by her mentor and acting coach, Nate Jacobs, Founder and

Artistic Director of WBTT. Jaliyah has a natural talent for acting, singing and dancing. Her professional debut was in a production of the Sarasota Youth Opera at the age of 7. Jaliyah has performed with Stage of Discovery, WBTT's summer musical theatre intensive program. She is called upon regularly by the Carlton & Adler Agency to audition for roles in Broadway productions in New York. In June 2021, Jaliyah landed her first movie role in *Playing Through*, portraying the young Ann Gregory, a pioneering African American golfer. Jaliyah was a student representative in a commercial for the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, which aired in September 2021 on television and social media. She also appears in the M.A.D. Music Acting Dance video production, *Holidays in Harmony*, available on YouTube. Jaliyah is also a competitive gymnast and is currently preparing for upcoming competitions. At 11 years old, this dynamic performer always strives to give 100 percent; with the talent, dedication and charisma that captivates audiences every time.

CAST AND CREATIVE



MIRACLE DEVEAUX

(Ensemble) is very happy to be in her first professional mainstage show at WBTT! She is a 17 year old junior and a CFES (College For Every Student) Ambassador at Booker High School.

Miracle has been a part of the Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe's summer program Stage of Discovery since 2019 for a total of 4 years. "Within this program, WBTT has taught me how to be performance ready on demand, the fundamentals and key skills of music, and has also helped me in pursuing the career path I desire, which is music production and recording arts. I am extremely grateful to have the opportunity to currently be a part of one of Westcoast's main stage shows, *Black Nativity*. Within this production, I have the chance to showcase everything I have learned within WBTT's summer program and incorporate it all into this wonderful project along with my other talented cast members."



DERRIC GOBOURNE

JR. (Principal Dancer/ Ensemble) has appeared in WBTT's productions of *Broadway in Black*, *Joyful! Joyfull*, *Your Arms Too Short to Box with God*, *Black Nativity*, *Raisin*, *A Motown*

Christmas, *In the Heights*, *Soul Man* and *Rockin' Down Fairytale Lane*, among others. In 2019 he appeared in WBTT's production of *Soul Man* at the National Black Theatre Festival. He has appeared in two WBTT Young Artist Programs, *The Greatest Entertainer* in 2020 and *SH!NE* in 2022. A graduate of Manatee High School and a self-taught musician, Derric made his debut appearance with WBTT as the talented Little Stevie Wonder in *Best of Stevie Wonder* in the summer of 2013. In June 2018, Derric released his debut album, *Supremacy*, which was rereleased in Japan under the P-Vine Record Label. In 2020 he released a holiday album, *Oh, What Fun!* The albums are available on every digital platform, including iTunes, Amazon Music, YouTube, Spotify and Google Play Music.



TIANNA HARRIS

(Lead Vocalist/Ensemble) Tianna is thrilled to be a part of her first main stage show here at WBTT! She made her theatrical debut in 2016 when she performed the role of one of the

Dynamites in *Hairspray* (Sarasota School of Arts and Sciences). She began working with WBTT when they launched the summer camp intensive program Stage of Discovery in 2016. As an alumna of this program, she is no stranger to the stage. Through her volunteerism with the company, Tianna learned the importance of community outreach, the priceless value of mentorships, and the power of walking in your purpose.



AMARIS HOLLIMAN

(Ensemble) is making her debut at WBTT this season, but she's not new to the stage. A Booker High VPA graduate and former Stage of Discovery participant, Amaris is

trained in ballet, jazz, modern, hip hop and African dance. She is completing undergraduate studies with a focus on elementary education.



CHARLIE "CJ" MELTON

(Lead Vocalist) is a 2020 graduate of Manatee High School. He first appeared on WBTT's stage in Sheldon Rhoden's 2014 Young Artist Program. He has also appeared in *Black*

Nativity, *Your Arms Too Short to Box with God*, and *Joyful! Joyfull*! Charlie was the 2013 winner of the Singers & Musicians Arts Conference (SMAC) in Tampa, sponsored by the recording artist Dorinda Clark Cole. Publicly ministering in song since the age of 10, Charlie has traveled throughout Florida singing with various church and nonsectarian groups. He has also won many first-place awards from the 2015 Tampa Bay Gospel Awards and the Greatness Beyond Measure Idol Talent Showcase. He released his first single "All to You" in 2018 and one day hopes to accomplish his dreams of continuing his acting career and becoming a national gospel music recording artist.

CAST AND CREATIVE



RALEIGH MOSELY II (Joseph/Lead Vocalist) was last featured on WBTT's stage in *Broadway in Black* and traveled this summer to North Carolina for WBTT's staging of *Soul Crooners featuring*

Sistas in The Name of Soul at the National Black Theatre Festival. Making his WBTT debut in the summer 2017 production of *Broadway in Black*, Raleigh has appeared in two productions each season since, including *Joyful! Joyfull*, *Marvin Gaye: Prince of Soul*, *In the Heights*, and *A Motown Christmas* among other shows. Born and raised in Miami, he earned his BFA in musical theatre from the University of Central Florida. His other theatre credits include *In the Heights* (Orlando Shakes, Theater West End), *Violet* (Garden Theatre), *Ragtime* (Titusville Playhouse), *Broadbend, Arkansas* (Studio Theatre at TDS), *Oklahoma* (Gulf Coast Symphony) and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. Raleigh has music available for streaming, download, and purchase on all corresponding platforms. "You can win as long as you keep your head to the sky."



AMBER MYERS (Lead Vocalist/Ensemble) is a Sarasota/Bradenton native and no stranger to the stage. The 27-year-old actress/singer was bitten by the stage bug at 5 years old. She received training from

Nate Jacobs, Florida Studio Theater, Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe, and State College of Florida. She has been in productions such as *Joyful! Joyfull!* with WBTT and *West Side Story* as Rosalia at SCF. She was recently one of four featured artists for the Sarasota Pops Orchestra concert, *Spirit of America*. Her passion is musical theater, and one of her goals is to expose children to the joy, freedom and self confidence that theater brings.



HADARA PORTER (Lead Youth Vocalist/Ensemble) is excited to be on WBTT's main stage! No stranger to Westcoast, she follows the footsteps of her father Henry and aunt

Tsadok Porter — founding troupe members — and is also niece to well-known member, Ariel Blue. Hadara has spent the last two summers in WBTT's Stage of Discovery, a musical theatre intensive performing in *Technicolor Musical* (2021) & *We Dream* (2022). A student at Sarasota Arts School, she was seen in *Moana*, and will be in their upcoming show, *North Pole Musical*. Other notable performances include *Holidays in Harmony* and the movie, *Playing Through*.



MAICY POWELL (Mary/Lead Vocalist) is a singer/actress born and raised in Sarasota, FL. She has been a member of the Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe since 2016, when she began

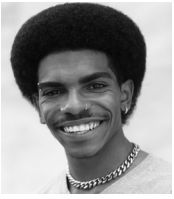
as a student in their Stage of Discovery Program till 2018. She appeared in her own Young Artist Showcase at WBTT in 2019, *The Kid is Alright*. She has performed in a number of productions and events and was recently seen in the movie *Playing Through*. Maicy attended Booker High School where she studied theatre and music in their Visual Performing Arts program. She is trained in a variety of musical genres including opera and classical. Maicy is a recent graduate from Howard University with a Business in Administration Degree in Management and a minor in Film and Television. Her dream is to pursue a career as a producer to make films that celebrate and uplift the culture of African Americans.



PATRIC ROBINSON* (Zachariah/Innkeeper/Chief Priest/Ensemble) a native of Jacksonville, Fla., has been delighting audiences with his creations in various theatres in New York City, Pennsylvania,

Florida, and Georgia. A few of his most notable roles are: Walter Lee (*Raisin In The Sun*), Pseudolus (*A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum*), Bynum (*Joe Turner's Come And Gone*), Gitlow (*Purlie*), and Wining Boy (*The Piano Lesson*). WBTT's audiences may remember Robinson from *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* and *The Piano Lesson*. Patric is thrilled to be back in the house.

CAST AND CREATIVE



RICKEY TEDESCO (Ensemble) is performing in his first musical at Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe. He has had lead roles in musicals through State College of Florida. He is a 22-year-old aspiring entertainer.

Rickey has played trumpet and french horn since high school, continuing french horn through State College of Florida as well as gaining lessons for piano, dance, and singing (done inside and outside of college). After graduating from the State College of Florida, Rickey now plans to pursue cruise ship performing and gigging for quality events. He plans to receive a bachelor's degree in either Musical Theater or Music Production while pursuing a dream to make it to Broadway.



SAMUEL "SAMMY" WAITE (Lead Youth Vocalist/Ensemble) is 14 years old; he is in the 9th grade at Southeast High School. He has been performing at Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe for four years, as well as

singing at special events throughout the community, representing WBTT at many venues. Samuel first appeared at WBTT in *Rockin' Down Fairytale Lane* in 2018. He participated in WBTT's Stage of Discovery Musical Theatre Intensive Program and its culminating productions for the last four years. Musical theater is the love of his life, and he hopes to one day be on Broadway.



DONOVAN WHITNEY (Narrator) Donovan is very happy to be returning to the WBTT stage! In addition to his love for acting, teaching also gives Donovan a lot of joy! He has happily served as a teaching

artist (Acting) for WBTT's summer educational program Stage of Discovery. Recent WBTT credits include: Omari in *Pipeline*; The Narrator in *Joyful! Joyful!*; and Ensemble in *Jazzlinks* (Education Touring). Other Florida theater credits include: *Between Riverside and Crazy*, *Footloose* (American Stage); *The Wind in the Willows* (American Stage School Tour); *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, *A Clockwork*

Orange (Jobsite Theater); *Evil Dead: The Musical* (Stageworks Theater). Other regional credits: *Prowess* (Storefront Theater of Indianapolis); *Taming of the Shrew* (Catalyst Repertory); *Jubilee In The Rearview Mirror* (Indianapolis Fringe Festival). Screen credits include: *Paperline* (film); *Nothing Else Matters* (webseries). He would like to thank his family for their unconditional love and support! He is represented by Level Talent Group.



STEPHANIE ZANDRA* (Archangel Gabriel/Lead Vocalist) is excited to be joining the Westcoast family once again during the holiday season.

You've seen her on the WBTT stage in the 2019 production of *Motown*

Christmas as well as *Caroline, or Change* and *Sistas in the Name of Soul*. Stephanie is an Atlanta native with theatre credits that include: *Hair* (Serenbe Playhouse), *The Color Purple* (Actors Express), *9-5 the Musical* (Georgia Ensemble Theatre), *Footloose* (Theatre Buford), *Once on This Island* and *Caroline, or Change* (Jennie T. Anderson Theatre). Stephanie recently returned from Asia after completing her first cruise contract with Royal Caribbean and will be returning to the seas next year with Celebrity Cruises. "To God be all glory."

ANNETTE BREAZEALE (Resident Property Artisan Manager) is WBTT's Resident Property Artisan Manager. She has designed props for area stages including Banyan Theatre Company and the FSU Conservatory at the Asolo Theatre. In addition, she has worked as art director and production designer for national and international feature films and music videos. She would like to thank Nate Jacobs for the opportunity to work with such a talented and inspirational group of theatre artists.

DONNA & MARK BUCKALTER (Set Designers) are a husband-and-wife creative team. Since moving from New York to Sarasota in 2003, they have been working as set designers/scenic artists at Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe, Venice Theatre, the Players Centre for Performing Arts, Manatee Performing Arts Center and the Sarasota Opera. Their favorite WBTT shows include *Little Shop of Horrors*,

CAST AND CREATIVE

The Cotton Club, *The Wiz* and *The Color Purple*. They look forward to working on more WBTT productions.

VICTORIA FLOUNDERS* (Assistant Stage Manager) is delighted to join WBTT and is honored to work on this inspiring show. Victoria completed an artistic apprenticeship at Urbanite Theatre, where she worked as an ASM and actress in their production of *Athena*. Victoria has been on full scholarship with the SCF Theatre program for the past three semesters and served in their work study program. Her experiences include stage management, assistant directing, set construction, and performance in several shows. Victoria recently graduated with honors from the State College of Florida with her Associate of Arts and is a member of Delta Psi Omega National Theatre Honor Society.

DOMINIQUE FREEMAN (Wig Designer) Creative, versatile, and passionate about her craft, Dominique Freeman has been able to establish herself as a successful stylist over the past 13 years. She received her education from the world-renowned Aveda Institute. Her passion for her craft and clients is what separates her from others. After spending years perfecting her craft, Dominique is now branching into the entertainment world.

JUANITA MUNFORD* (Production Stage Manager) is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association. She has extensive experience as a stage manager. A native of Manchester, N.H., Juanita attended St. Michael's College in Winooski, Vt. After working in St. Michael's Playhouse, she moved to Sarasota in 1983 and became the stage manager for more than 90 shows at the Asolo Repertory Theatre. Juanita's first WBTT show as stage manager was *Marvin Gaye: The Man and His Music* in 2011 and she has served in that role ever since. She loves working with Nate Jacobs and all the amazing people at WBTT.

LIZZI NEHLS* (Assistant Stage Manager) is excited and honored to work on her first production with Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe. In her career, Lizzi has worked on Broadway, Off-Broadway and 10 years at Hippodrome Theatre as their Production Stage Manager. She also toured with 3 Mo' Tenors, created and directed by Marion Caffey. While living in Gainesville, FL

she was the adjunct professor of Stage Management at the University of Florida. Currently she serves as the Production Manager for Booker High School's VPA Program. Lizzi is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association for 22 years.

MICHAEL PASQUINI (Lighting Designer) Recent WBTT designs include *Guys and Dolls*; Stage of Discovery's *We Dream; From Birmingham to Broadway; Float Like a Butterfly; Joyful! Joyful!* and *Eubie!* Other recent area designs include *How to Succeed...* for Manatee Players and the Ukraine Ballet Benefit at Steinmetz Hall in Orlando, FL. This past spring, Michael was the Assistant Lighting Designer for two Asolo Rep productions: *Hood and Knoxville*. In addition to his design work, Michael is the Head Electrician and Assistant Lighting Designer for the Sarasota Opera and serves as Treasurer for Local 412 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees. Michael would like to dedicate this show in memory of Michael Newton-Brown, a colleague, mentor and friend.

ADRIENNE PITTS (Costume Designer) has worked with WBTT as an actress and stage hand for over 17 years. She started out on stage but soon realized she loved working backstage even more. Adrienne has been the Wardrobe Manager and Lead Stage Hand for WBTT since 2017. She was the Assistant Costume Designer for *Raisin*, *Marvin Gaye: Prince of Soul* and *Black Nativity*. Adrienne has costumed for *Joyful! Joyfull*, *A Motown Christmas*, *The Mountaintop*, *Soul Man*, *Your Arms Too Short to Box with God*, *Light Up the Night*, *Technicolor Musical*, and was the Assistant Costume Designer for *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*. Adrienne has also been writing for over 15 years and has been blessed to work with her mentor, Nate Jacobs. Her love of writing stems from an opportunity to write a play for her church youth group. Since the moment the play was performed, Adrienne knew she wanted to be a creative writer and eventually see her plays come to life on stage. She wrote the script for WBTT's 2019 Stage of Discovery summer show, *A Journey to Motown* and was the Costume Designer for that show as well. She is also interested in writing television series. In 2021 she served as the wardrobe assistant to actor Andia Winslow for *Playing Through*, a movie about the struggles

CAST AND CREATIVE

and triumphs of Ann Gregory, a woman of color who was a pioneer in the elite and competitive world of golf. *Playing Through* received the Audience Award for a Feature Film at the 2022 Sarasota Film Festival and also had a special screening at WBTT. Adrienne is grateful for Nate Jacobs and the Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe for allowing her to learn and grow in this amazing company.

PATRICK RUSSINI (Sound Designer) has worked as a professional sound designer, audio technician and sound engineer since 2012. His audio artistry has showcased the signature sound of Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe shows since he joined the staff in 2016 as Sound Engineer; he was recently named Resident Sound Designer for the company. Patrick has traveled three times with WBTT Founder and Artistic Director Nate Jacobs, other troupe performers and production staff to the National Black Theatre Festival in Winston-Salem, N.C., ran sound for WBTT's '70s *Soul Party* at Ed Smith Stadium in Sarasota, and worked with rock legend Alice Cooper, blues/gospel/rock

singer/songwriter guitarist Jonny Lang, and many other artists. Patrick is happy to be part of the WBTT team.

KEVIN WHITE (Production Manager) Prior to moving to Sarasota in May 2021, Kevin was working as a Theatre Artist in the Philadelphia area for over a decade. Due to Covid-19 layoffs, Kevin found himself moving down to Sarasota to work at Florida Studio Theatre as their Company Manager. Kevin has loved the arts scene here in Sarasota and is ecstatic to be back working in Theatre Production at Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe! A graduate of DeSales University (2015) and the Arden Professional Apprenticeship Program (Class of 2023), he has worked on production, education, and artistic projects with a wide range of Philadelphia professional theatre companies. In addition to arts administration and theatrical production experience, Kevin is an actor, director, producer, and comedian. Outside of the theatre you can find him cooking, biking, playing video games, and running the occasional 5k. Much love to Tori, Chloe, and family — chosen and otherwise!



ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION

Actors' Equity Association (AEA) was founded in 1913 as the first of the American actor unions. Equity's mission is to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Today, Equity represents more than 40,000 actors, singers, dancers and stage managers working in hundreds of theatres across the United States. Equity members are dedicated to working in the theatre as a profession, upholding the highest artistic standards.

Equity negotiates wages and working conditions and provides a wide range of benefits including health and pension plans for its members. Through its agreement with Equity, this theatre has committed to the fair treatment of the actors and stage managers employed in this production.

AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. For more information, visit actorsequity.org.

2022-2023 SEASON SPONSORS

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OUR MISSION

Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe was founded in December 1999 as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Our mission is to produce professional theatre that promotes and celebrates African American history and experience, engages a broad base of patrons and audiences, supports the development of a dynamic group of aspiring artists and builds self-esteem in youth of color.

Tax-deductible gifts from generous individuals, businesses, and foundations underwrite WBTT's annual operating budget. Your support helps to keep tickets affordable and provides funds to mentor new local talent and to develop high-quality productions. In addition, your gifts allow us to offer theatre experiences to an underserved population.

Thank you!

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