

# ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

Molly Smith Artistic Director Edgar Dobie Executive Producer Zelda Fichandler Founding Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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June 11, 2020

## ARENA STAGE'S FIRST WORLD PREMIERE FILM OPENS THE SPRING/SUMMER SEASON, *LOOKING FORWARD*

\*\*\* *May 22, 2020* will be available to view on June 13 \*\*\*

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater's docudrama, *May 22, 2020* will be available online on **Saturday, June 13**. The film, which will receive its world premiere on June 12 through Arena's Supper Club, captures a day in the life of actual Washington, D.C.-Maryland-Virginia residents, ages 18-89, from a beekeeper, a climate change activist to a D.C. police detective. Their rich stories, transformed into monologues by 10 area playwrights, are a stunning look at their lives in the age of COVID-19.

"The concept of *May 22, 2020* was to capture a moment in time that will never occur again," said Arena Stage Artistic Director and film director **Molly Smith**. "This was our opportunity to catch the zeitgeist of the moment."

Playwrights interviewed residents on May 22, 2020 and created 10 one-person narratives. Filmed in and around Southwest, D.C., the story of each resident is portrayed by 10 actors well-known to Washington's theater audiences: **Guadalupe Campos, JaBen Early, Edward Gero, Shubhangi Kuchibhotla, Raksa Lim, Nancy Robinette, KenYatta Rogers, Holly Twyford, Dawn Ursula and Rachel Zampelli**.

"It was important that this film included residents from Washington's diverse communities from all walks of life," continued Smith. "Whether it was a 30-something nurse working on the COVID-19 ward, a senior citizen who lives alone or the social justice activist fighting against food poverty and more, we were honored to have their voices in this film."

Featured playwrights include **Randy Baker, Audrey Cefaly, Annalisa Dias, Caleen Sinnette Jennings, Aaron Posner, Psalmayene 24, John Strand, Gregory Keng Strasser, Mary Hall Surface and Karen Zacarías**. Arena's artistic leader **Molly Smith**, Deputy Artistic Director **Seema Sueko** and Director of Community Engagement/Senior Artistic Advisor **Anita Maynard-Losh** directed the monologues.

As of June 13<sup>th</sup>, *May 22, 2020* can be viewed here: <https://www.arenastage.org/May22>.

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*Support for the May 22, 2020 project is provided by The Artistic Director Fund and The Barbara R. Walton Fund for New Playwrights*

Arena Stage extends special thanks to still photographers Suzanne Blue Star Boy, Thomas Cluderay and Molly Smith, to the media production company, Chalkline Productions, LLC, Southwest Business Improvement District and Children's National Hospital.

## **Schedule**

Saturday, June 13

**May 22, 2020**

## **Playwrights**

**Randy Baker** is a playwright, director, and the co-Artistic Director of Rorschach Theatre in Washington D.C. Recent shows he has directed include *Very Still and Hard to See* (Five Helen Nominations including Best Director) with Rorschach and *Hello, My Name Is...* with The Welders (Three Helen Hayes nominations including Best Director). Recent plays he has written include *Forgotten Kingdoms* and *Truth & Beauty Bombs: A Softer World* at Rorschach Theatre. He has had plays produced and workshopped at Arena Stage (Through playwrights Arena), Theater J, American University, Spooky Action Theatre, NCD, Theatre Lab, and George Washington University, among others. His next project is an adaptation of the Malay epic, *The Legend of Hang Tuah* with Pointless Theatre. Randy is an adjunct professor at George Washington University and is faculty at The Theatre Lab School of the Dramatic Arts. He received his MFA in creative writing from Goddard College and is the Washington D.C. regional rep for the Dramatists Guild of America.

**Audrey Cefaly** is a southern writer and Alabama native based in the D.C. region. Her plays include *The Gulf* (Edgerton Award, Lammy Award, Samuel French OOB Fest Winner, Charles MacArthur Award Nominee); *Alabaster* (2019 NNPN RWP, 2018 NNPN Showcase, David Calicchio Prize - Marin Theatre Company); *Maytag Virgin* (Women's Voices Theater Festival); *The Last Wide Open* (Cincinnati Playhouse commission); *The Story of Walter* (adaptation of her podcast by the same name); and *Love is a Blue Tick Hound* (a collection of award-winning one-acts). Cefaly has developed plays with the National New Play Network, Signature Theatre, Serenbe Playhouse (New Territories), Aurora Theatre, Florida Rep, Theater Alliance, Quotidian Theatre Company and Contemporary American Theater Festival. She is published by Samuel French, Smith & Kraus (two volumes of *Best American Short Plays*) and Applause Books. Cefaly was recently named a Traveling Master by the Dramatist Guild Foundation. She is an outspoken proponent of silence in storytelling and has authored numerous articles on the topic of playwriting for HowlRound and Samuel French's *Breaking Character Magazine*. Cefaly is a recipient of grants from the Boomerang Fund for Artists as well as the Alabama and Maryland state arts councils.

**Annalisa Dias** is a citizen artist, community organizer, and award-winning theatre maker working at the intersection of racial justice and care for the earth. She is Director of Artistic Partnerships & Innovation at Baltimore Center Stage. Annalisa is also a Co-Founder of Groundwater Arts. She has formerly been a Producing Playwright and Acting Creative Producer with The Welders, and a Co-Founder of the DC Coalition for Theatre & Social Justice. Annalisa's plays have been produced or developed by The Welders, Theater Alliance, Signature Theatre (DC), the Phillips Collection, The Gulfshore Playhouse, the Mead Theatre Lab, The Hub Theatre, Spooky Action Theater, Tron Theatre (Glasgow), and Theatre 503 (London). Annalisa frequently teaches theatre of the oppressed and decolonization workshops nationally and internationally and speaks about race, identity, and performance. She is a TCG Rising Leader of Color and former Arena Stage Playwrights Arena member. Recent work includes *THE EARTH, THAT IS SUFFICIENT*, a performance project about hope for the future in the face of the climate catastrophe, produced by The Welders throughout 2019 in Washington D.C. and globally.

**Caleen Sinnette Jennings** is an actor, director, playwright, and a founding member of The Welders, a D.C. Playwrights' Collective. Dramatic Publishing Company has published eight of her plays, and her work has appeared in seven play anthologies. In 2015, the Kennedy Center commissioned her to write a stage adaptation of Walter Dean Myers' novel, *Darius & Twig*, which was produced at the Kennedy Center Family Theatre and did a national tour in 2017. Plays in her *Queens Girl Trilogy* have been commissioned and produced at Theatre J, Mosaic and Everyman Theatres. Her most recent commissions have been from two from Roundhouse Theatre, one from South Bend Civic Theatre, and one from Arena Stage Her work has also been produced by The African Continuum Theatre, Imagination Stage, The Folger, and The National Museum of Women in the Arts, Horizons Theatre and The Source Theatre Company. Caleen has received five nominations for outstanding new play from the Helen Hayes Awards and play writing awards from the Kennedy Center and The Actor's Theatre of Louisville. She is Professor of Theatre, Emerita from American University in Washington, D.C. where she joined the faculty in 1989. In 2019, she received A.U.'s inaugural award for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. In 2003, she received A.U.'s Scholar/Teacher of the Year Award and in 1997 she received A.U.'s award for Outstanding Scholarship, Research and other Professional Activities. She has been a faculty member of the Folger Shakespeare Library's Teaching Shakespeare Institute since 1994 and she was Project Manager on a 2016 NEH grant to the Folger entitled *Crosstalk: D.C. Reflects on Identity and Difference*. Jennings graduated from Bennington College with a B.A. in Drama and received her M.F.A. in Acting from NYU Tisch School of the Arts.

**Aaron Posner** is an award-winning playwright, director, teacher and former artistic director of two LORT theaters. His Helen Hayes Award-winning play, *Stupid Fucking Bird*, was one of the 10 most produced plays in the country in 2015. Other plays include *Life Sucks* and *No Sisters* (both re-inventions of Chekhov), *District Merchants* (inspired by *The Merchant of Venice*), *Who Am I This Time? (& Other Conundrums of Love)* (adapted from Kurt Vonnegut), *The Chosen* and *My Name Is Asher Lev* (adapted from Chaim Potok), *Sometimes a Great Notion* (adapted from Ken Kesey) and several more. He has directed more than 150 productions at major regional theaters across the country, including Arena Stage, and currently lives outside of D.C. with his wife, actress Erin Weaver, and his amazing daughter, Maisie.

**Psalmayene 24** is an award-winning playwright, director and actor. Psalm, as his colleagues call him, has received commissions from The African Continuum Theater Company, Arena Stage, Imagination Stage, The Kennedy Center, Solas Nua and Mosaic Theater Company. His play, *The Frederick Douglass Project*, co-written with Deirdre Kinahan, was selected by *The Washington Post* as a Best of Theater pick for 2018. His one-man play, *Free Jujube Brown!*, is published in the first Hip-Hop Theatre anthology, *Plays from the Boom-Box Galaxy: Theater from the Hip-Hop Generation* (TCG). He is the recipient of an Individual Artist Award in Playwriting from the Maryland State Arts Council. He has also received grants from the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities and the Boomerang Fund for Artists Inc. Psalm has received the Imagination Award from Imagination Stage (past recipients include Dr. Jane Goodall, Christopher Reeve and Dennis Haysbert) and his projects have been supported by The National Endowment for the Arts and The Walt Disney Corporation. His directing credits include *Word Becomes Flesh* (Helen Hayes Award, Outstanding Direction, Play), *The Shipment*, *Not Enuf Lifetimes* and *Read: White and Blue*. As an actor, he has appeared on HBO's critically acclaimed series *The Wire*, been nominated for a Helen Hayes Award, and is a member of Actors' Equity Association. Psalm is currently the Master Teaching Artist at Arena Stage and is the Artist-in-Residence at Bowie State University.

**John Strand's** Arena Stage commissions include *The Originalist*, about the late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia; *The Miser*, an adaptation of the Molière play set in Reagan-era America; *Lovers and Executioners*, winner of the Charles MacArthur Award for Outstanding New Play; and *Tom Walker*. Recent work includes the book and lyrics for *Hat! A Vaudeville*, a new musical with a score by composer Dennis McCarthy (South Coast Repertory); *Lincolnesque*, a dark comedy about politics and madness in D.C. (Old Globe); and *Lorenzaccio*, his adaptation of Alfred de Musset's 1834 French classic (Shakespeare Theatre Company). Strand wrote the book for the musical *The Highest Yellow*, with a score by Michael John LaChiusa (Signature Theatre). Additional plays are *The Diaries* (Signature Theatre, MacArthur nomination); *Otabenga* (Signature Theatre, MacArthur nomination); *Three Nights in Tehran*, a comedy about the Iran-Contra affair (Signature Theatre); and *The Cockburn Rituals* (Woolly Mammoth). Strand spent 10 years in Paris, where he worked as a journalist and drama critic, writing in English and French, and directed New York University's Experimental Theater Wing in Paris. His novel *Commieland* was published by Kiwai Media, Paris in 2013. John wrote the script for Arena's 2017 production of *The Originalist* and the 2018 production of *Snow Child*.

**Gregory Keng Strasser** is a director and writer. The Washington Post called the DC premiere of his production of *410[GONE]* by Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig "irreverent, audacious, and ultimately moving." He has made work in Bangkok, Thailand; Bali, Indonesia; Holstebro, Denmark; New York City, Los Angeles; Washington D.C.; and Ann Arbor, Michigan. Credits include *The Infinite Tales* (World Premiere - 4615 Theatre Company) *Doi Nang Non: A Puppet-Dance Drama* (with Makhampom, Splashing Theatre, and InsightPact of Bangkok), *The Odyssey* (World Premiere - adapted from Emily Wilson; Brighton Center for Performing Arts), *410[GONE]* (Rorschach Theatre), *Derangements* (Laboratory for Global Performance and Politics) and more. He is the 2020 Allen Lee Hughes Directing Fellow at Arena Stage where he assisted Seema Sueko on *Right to be Forgotten* by Sharyn Rothstein, Carey Perloff on *A Thousand Splendid Suns* adapted by Ursula R. Sarna; and Molly Smith on *Celia and Fidel* by Eduardo Machado. University of Michigan BFA; Odin Teatret Cohabitation Member 2019. Slide into his instagram DMs @gregory.keng.strasser or visit his website at [www.gregorykengstrasser.com](http://www.gregorykengstrasser.com).

**Mary Hall Surface** is a playwright, director, and teaching artist devoted to intergenerational audiences and multidisciplinary collaborations. Recent DC projects include writing/directing *Color's Garden*, inspired by the art of Henri Matisse (National Gallery of Art) and The National Symphony Orchestra's 2018-19 Young People's Concert, and directing *The Skin of Our Teeth* (Constellation Theatre), *The Second Shepherds' Play* (Folger Shakespeare Theatre), and *Ella Enchanted* (Adventure Theatre MTC). Nominated for nine Helen Hayes Awards, she received the 2002 Outstanding Director of a Musical for her *Perseus Bayou*. As the founding artistic director of Atlas INTERSECTIONS Festival, she curated over 600 all-arts performances and events from 2009–2015. She has had 18 productions presented or produced by the Kennedy Center, where she is a National Teaching Artist. She is the recipient of the Charlotte Chorpenning Prize from the American Alliance for Theatre and Education for her outstanding body of work, three DC Commission for the Arts and Humanities Individual Artists Grants, an Aurand Harris Fellowship, and a Thomas Watson Fellowship. She has been an advisor to American Theatre Magazine and was a member of Arena Stage's 2017 Playwright's Arena.

**Karen Zacarías** was recently hailed by American Theater Magazine as one of the 10 most-produced playwrights in the U.S. Her award-winning plays include *The Copper Children*, *Destiny of Desire*, *Native Gardens*, *The Book Club Play*, *Legacy of Light*, *Mariela in the Desert*, *The Sins of Sor Juana*, the adaptations of *Just Like Us*, *Into the Beautiful North* and *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accent*. She is the author of 10 renowned TYA musicals and the Marvel play *Squirrel Girl Goes to College*, and the librettist of several ballets. She is one of the inaugural resident playwrights at Arena Stage (where she has been produced four times!), a core founder of the Latinx Theatre Commons – a large national organization of artists seeking to update the American narrative with the stories of Latinos – and she is the founder of the award-winning Young Playwrights' Theater (YPT). YPT was cited by the Obama administration as one of the best arts-education programs in the nation. She also was awarded the 2019 Medallion by the Children's Theater Foundation of America for her advocacy for youth and the arts.

## Directors

**Molly Smith** has served as Artistic Director since 1998. Her more than 30 directing credits at Arena Stage include large-scale musicals like *Anything Goes*, *Carousel*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Oklahoma!*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Music Man*, *Cabaret*, *South Pacific*; new plays like *Sovereignty*, *The Originalist*, *Camp David*, *Legacy of Light*, *The Women of Brewster Place*, *How I Learned to Drive*; and classics like *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, *The Great White Hope*, and *All My Sons*. Her directorial work has also been seen Off-Broadway at 59E59 in New York, Portland Center Stage, Canada's Shaw Festival, The Court Theatre, The Old Globe, Asolo Repertory, Berkeley Repertory, Trinity Repertory, Toronto's Tarragon Theatre, Montreal's Centaur Theatre and Perseverance Theater in Juneau, Alaska, which she founded and ran from 1979 – 1998. Molly has been a leader in new play development for over 40 years. She is a great believer in first, second and third productions of new work and has championed projects including *Dear Evan Hansen*; *Next to Normal*; *Passion Play, a cycle*; and *How I Learned to Drive*.

She led the re-invention of Arena Stage, focusing on the architecture and creation of the Mead Center for American Theater and positioning Arena Stage as a national center for American artists through its artistic programming. During her time with the company, Arena Stage has workshopped more than 100 productions, produced 39 world premieres, staged numerous second and third productions and been an important part of nurturing nine projects that went on to have a life on Broadway. In 2014, Molly made her Broadway debut directing *The Velocity of Autumn*, following its critically acclaimed run at Arena Stage. She has been awarded honorary doctorates from American University and Towson University.

**Seema Sueko** currently serves as Deputy Artistic Director where she drives the season planning process, directs plays, and oversees artistic programs. Her R&D work includes developing the Consensus Organizing for Theater methodology, creating the Green Theater Choices Toolkit, and researching the neuroscience of theater. Prior, she was Associate Artistic Director at Pasadena Playhouse and Executive Artistic Director of Mo`olelo Performing Arts Company, which she co-founded in San Diego. She has directed and acted at theaters across the U.S. including Arena Stage, Denver Center, Ford's Theatre, Pasadena Playhouse, People's Light, The Old Globe, Yale Rep, 5th Avenue Theatre, Native Voices, and Mo`olelo, among others.

**Anita Maynard-Losh** is the Director of Community Engagement / Senior Artistic Advisor at Arena Stage. Now in her 16th season at Arena Stage, Anita has been involved in an artistic capacity on 40+ Arena Stage productions: she directed the world premiere of *Our War* as part of the National Civil War Project, and has been an associate director, text director and vocal / dialect coach on multiple other productions. Anita trained and taught at the American Conservatory Theater, was on the faculty at Webster University, headed the theater department at the University of Alaska Southeast and was the associate artistic director of Perseverance Theater in Juneau, Alaska. Vocal / dialect coaching: ACT, Arena Stage, Kennedy Center, Washington National Opera, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Portland Center Stage and the Broadway revival of *Ragtime*.

## Cast

### **Guadalupe Campos**

Was proudly born and raised in El Paso, TX. She earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts from The University of Texas El Paso and a Masters of Fine Arts from the University of Arkansas. She also studied Long-form Comedy in NYC at The Upright Citizens Brigade. Theatrical credits include work with Arena Stage, The Kennedy Center TYA, Olney Theatre Center, Studio Theatre, Theatre Alliance, Theatre Squared, Arkansas Staged, The Border Theatre, Arts on the Horizon, North Dakota Shakespeare, and GALA Hispanic Theatre. Guadalupe is a bilingual teaching artist for Shakespeare Theatre Company and is also the current Director of Paso Nuevo at GALA Hispanic Theatre. Instagram @guadalupecamposm

### **JaBen Early**

His regional credits include *Toni Stone* (A.C.T Theatre); *All The Way* (Lincoln Center); *Piano Lesson* (Olney Theatre); *Julius Caesar* (Folger Shakespeare Theater); *The Convertand Civilization* (Woolly Mammoth Theater); *Fucking A* (Studio Theatre); *All The Way* and *The Great Society and Ruined* (Arena Stage); *We Are Proud ...and Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (Guthrie Theatre); *Macbeth* (Shakespeare Theatre Company). Early's film work includes *Harriet*. He was trained at Morehouse College.

**Edward Gero** has been working in the Washington theatre community since 1983, Gero is a sixteen-time nominee and four-time recipient of the Helen Hayes Award. Recent work includes Pulitzer in *Newsies* at Arena Stage, and Falstaff in *1HenryIV* at The Folger Theatre. He created the role of Antonin Scalia in Molly Smith's acclaimed production of John Strand's play *The Originalist*, touring the country in 2017 and 2018 to Asolo Rep, The Pasadena Playhouse, Court Theatre, and 59E59 Theaters in New York Off-Broadway. Favorite roles include Mark Rothko in Robert Falls' production of *RED*; Richard Nixon in *Nixon's Nixon* at Roundhouse Theater; Gloucester in Robert Falls' landmark production of *King Lear* (with Stacy Keach); King Henry in *Henry IV* at Washington's Shakespeare Theatre Company; John in *Shining City*; Donny in *American Buffalo*; Sweeney in *Sweeney Todd*. He has performed over 75 Shakespeare roles as an affiliated artist of STC, including award-winning performances as Hotspur, Bolingbroke, and Macduff in *Macbeth*. Film and television credits include *House of Cards*, *Turn: Washington's Spies*, *Die Hard II*, *Striking Distance*, and narrations for *The Discovery Channel* and PBS. In 2019, Mr. Gero received the Congressional Gold Medal from the OSS Society for a documentary narration commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day. Named a 2015 Lunt-Fontanne Fellowship recipient, he is Professor of Theatre and Head of Performance for the School of Theater at George Mason University.

**Shubhangi Kuchibhotla** is an Actor/Classical Indian Dancer (Kathak) in the DMV area. She was most recently seen as Gisselle in *The Pigeon Trap* at the WOMXN on Fire festival held by Keegan Theatre. Other recent credits include; Everyman Theatre: *Be Here Now*, Arena Stage: *Right to be Forgotten*, Constellation Theatre: *White Snake*, Chesapeake Shakespeare Company: *Midsummer Night's Dream* (Choreographer). Education: BFA in Acting from University of Maryland Baltimore County '18 Instagram: @Shubhyk. Website: [kshubhangi.com](http://kshubhangi.com)

**Raksa "Rex" Lim** is a recent graduate from UMBC's BFA Acting program. He can be seen in various independent film projects produced around the US. He made his debut in the Baltimore theatre scene at Chesapeake Shakespeare Company's *Romeo and Juliet* in April right before the closures due to COVID-19. Raksa hopes that this Arena Stage production can be a source of comfort in these times of trouble and turmoil throughout the world. We the people are strong. We will rise through this pandemic and this injustice.

**Nancy Robinette** has performed at Arena Stage in *The Heiress*, *The Women*, *Well*, *Death of a Salesman*, *A View From the Bridge*, *Ah, Wilderness!*, *True West*, *The Revenger's Comedies*, *Yerma*, *Lovers and Executioners*, *Christmas Carol 1941*, *Blithe Spirit*, *You Nero!*, and *For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again*. She most recently appeared as Helen in *Nicole Clark Is Having a Baby* at the Louisville Humana Festival this year. She is a recent recipient of the Helen Hayes Tribute, having performed mostly in Washington for more than 35 years, including work at Woolly Mammoth, Round House, Studio, Scena, Signature, Theatre J, Shakespeare Theatre and the Folger. She performed on Broadway in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, and at the New York Theatre Workshop in *Trestle At Pope Lick Creek*. She has also performed at the Old Globe, Williamstown, McCarter, Key West Waterfront, Roundabout and Papermill playhouses. Her film work includes *The Three Christs*, *Serial Mom*, *The Day Lincoln Was Shot*, and *Soldier Jack*. She is currently an Affiliated Artist and instructor at the Shakespeare Theatre.

**KenYatta Rogers** is an actor and director in DC area. Regional theatre credits include *King Hedley II*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (Arena Stage); *Father Comes Home from the Wars*, *Two Trains Running*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Amadeus*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, *Eurydice*, and *A Lesson Before Dying*. Regional credits include *Holly Down in Heaven* (Forum Theatre); *Topdog/Underdog*, *A Raisin in the Sun* (Everyman Theatre); *Fever/Dream* (Woolly Mammoth); *Fences*, *Jitney*(Ford's Theatre); *Colossal* (Olney Theatre Center); *Comedy of Errors* (Folger Theatre); *Spunk* (Signature Theatre); *The Piano Lesson* (Trustus Theatre); *Coriolanus* (Shakespeare & Company); *As You Like It*, *Spunk*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, (African Continuum Theatre). KenYatta has received Helen Hayes nominations and a Theatre Lobby Award for his stage work, has directed over 25 professional and college productions, and has performed over 50 film, television, and voiceover roles. KenYatta received his MFA in Acting from the University of Pittsburgh and is currently a faculty member in Montgomery College's Performing Arts Department.

Actor and director, **Holly Twyford** has performed in close to eighty productions in the Washington Metropolitan area, where she is proud to have worked in the many highly acclaimed theaters in and around Washington, including Arena Stage, Shakespeare Theater, Studio Theatre and Woolly Mammoth Theatre to name a few. Nationally, Ms. Twyford has appeared in various productions and readings in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Milwaukee, Red Bank, NJ and Santa Cruz, CA. She has been nominated for multiple Helena Hayes awards and is a four-time recipient for her portrayal of Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* at the Folger Shakespeare Theatre and her performances in Studio Theatre's *The Shape of Things*, Signature Theater's *Little Dog Laughed* and Folger's production of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. She was honored with Shakespeare Theatre Company's Emery Battis Award for Acting Excellence for her portrayal of Anna in Harold Pinter's *Old Times*. Ms. Twyford is proud to be a Lunt-Fontanne Fellow, a member of the Studio Theatre's Cabinet, and a Ford's Theatre Associate Artist. She has appeared in several independent films, most recently the feature film *Dakota*, and on the small screen. Her credits also include numerous commercials, voiceovers, and educational and training films. Ms. Twyford is proud to be a resident of Washington, D.C.

**Dawn Ursula** last appeared at Arena Stage as Ruth in *A Raisin in the Sun* and Desiree in *Love in Afghanistan*. A Resident Company Member with Everyman Theatre she most recently appeared as Mame in *Radio Golf*. Also a Resident Company Member with Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, she most recently appeared there as Madre Maria in *Botticelli in the Fire*. Other credits include Toni in *Toni Stone* with ACT, the Angel in *Angels in America 1 & 2* with Round House Theatre and Olney Theatre Center, and Grace Kumalo in *Lost in the Stars* for the Washington National Opera. On-camera credits include Isabella in PBS' *Prince Among Slaves* and Mrs. "Bunny" Colvin on HBO's *The Wire*. She/Hers. Private coach: Vera Katz. Instagram: @dawnursula. www.dawnursula.com.

### **Rachel Zampelli**

is a Helen Hayes nominated, professional actor and acting coach based in Washington, D.C. Her versatility onstage has afforded her roles ranging from the Witch in Ford's Theatre's highly acclaimed *Into the Woods* (dir. Peter Flynn) to Elizabeth Proctor in *The Crucible* at Olney Theatre Center (dir. Eleanor Holdridge). Rachel's other notable credits in the DC area include: The Kennedy Center: *Lost in the Stars* (Washington National Opera),



*The Gift of Nothing*. Ford's Theatre: *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Shenandoah*. Folger Shakespeare Theatre: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Orestes: A Tragic Romp*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Olney Theatre Center: *The Amateurs*, *On the Town*, *Annie*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Evita*, *Godspell*, *Avenue Q*. Signature Theatre: *Assassins*, *Heisenberg*, *The Gulf*, *Midwestern Gothic*, *The Fix*, *Dying City*, *Brother Russia*, *Chess*, *See What I Wanna See*, *The Happy Time*, *Saving Aimee*. Imagination Stage: *Beauty and the Beast*. Roundhouse Theatre: *Stage Kiss*. Studio Theatre: *Bloody*, *Bloody Andrew Jackson*, *POP!*, *Jerry Springer: The Opera*, *Reefer Madness*. No Rules Theatre Company: *Stop Kiss*; Adventure Theatre: *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*. Rachel is a proud alum of Santa Clara University's Theatre Department.

***Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater***, under the leadership of Artistic Director Molly Smith and Executive Producer Edgar Dobie, is a national center dedicated to American voices and artists. *Arena Stage produces plays of all that is passionate, profound, deep and dangerous in the American spirit, and presents diverse and ground-breaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Arena Stage is committed to commissioning and developing new plays and impacting the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement. Now in its eighth decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000.* [arenastage.org](http://arenastage.org)

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