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# Trouble in Mind

BY

**ALICE CHILDRESS**

DIRECTOR

**DAWN M. SIMMONS**

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# A NOTE FROM THE PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Dear Lyric Stage family,  
Happy 50th Birthday!

In 1974, when Polly Hogan and Ron Ritchell staged their first production in the Community Church of Boston, do you think they could have imagined that half a century later, the Lyric Stage Company of Boston would not only be surviving but thriving? Or when they moved from Charles Street, above the hardware store? Maybe Spiro Veloudos entertained the idea when the company reached its silver birthday in 1999, during his second season as Artistic Director.

Whether they did or not, here we are — ALL of us. Your presence makes our 50th birthday truly special. Over the years, your laughter, gasps, tears, shouts (some of anger, some of joy) and applause have been the heartbeat of Lyric Stage. You have supported and celebrated the talents of Boston's finest theatre artists — and you continue doing so by being here tonight. Whether you're seeing your first Lyric Stage production or your 317th (yes, I counted), you are an invaluable part of our history, our present, and our future.

With the added challenges the past few years have brought, it feels more important than ever to come together and celebrate. So over the next 12 months, we hope to surprise and delight you all year long, both on and off the stage, as we celebrate this milestone birthday. And please join me in giving a special thank you to Brookline Bank, one of our good neighbors and our Celebrating 50 Years Corporate Sponsor, for helping make our celebrations possible.

Cheers to 50 years — and cheers to the next 50 ahead. Join us, won't you? We're just getting started.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Courtney O'Connor".

Courtney O'Connor | Producing Artistic Director

PHOTO: NILE HAWVER

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# The Lyric Stage Company of Boston

Courtney O'Connor Producing Artistic Director

presents

# Trouble in Mind

BY

ALICE CHILDRESS

DIRECTED BY

DAWN M. SIMMONS

Scenic Design, **Shelley Barish**

Lighting Design, **Deb Sullivan**

Costume Design, **Rachel Padula-Shufelt**

Sound Design, **Aubrey Dube**

Props Artisan, **Jennifer Butler**

Production Stage Manager, **Polly Feliciano\***

Assistant Stage Manager, **Olivia Tellier\***

FEATURING

**Barlow Adamson\*, Patrice Jean-Baptiste\*,**

**Allison Beauregard, Kadahj Bennett,**

**MaConnia Chesser\*, Davron S. Monroe\*,**

**Bill Mootos\*, James Turner, Robert Walsh\***

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Production Sponsors: **Joseph Richard & René Morrissette**

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Produced on Broadway by Roundabout Theatre Company

(Todd Haimes, Artistic Director/CEO; Julia C. Levy, Executive Director; Sydney Beers, Executive Producer)

*Trouble in Mind* is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. | [concordtheatricals.com](http://concordtheatricals.com)

The Lyric Stage Company of Boston operates under the NEAT Agreement with Actors' Equity Association and is a member of NEAT (The Producers' Association of New England Area Theaters).

The Lyric Stage Company of Boston is supported in part by a grant from The Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, and The Boston Cultural Council, a local agency which is funded by The Massachusetts Cultural Council, administered by the Mayor's Office of Arts, Tourism, and Special Events.



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



## A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF *TROUBLE IN MIND*



Hello to the wonderful Lyric Stage audience!

I'm thrilled to be back and grateful to you all for welcoming me into your home once again.

Have you ever read something so relevant, so fresh that you wondered who's been reading your texts? That's how I felt when I first read *Trouble in Mind*. It's funny, "on time", smart, and so maddeningly current I knew it had to be written by someone working in the theater today. But *Trouble in Mind* first premiered in 1955.

Friends, I'm not gonna tell you that the issues raised are easy, I will tell you they're still here and still need addressing. Now, I know what you're thinking, "Dawn, we always have homework when you come to Lyric Stage". Not true! Remember *The Wiz*? That was a riot and I can't think of a better group of people to lean into these issues with, than you.

I've put together a cracking team of Boston's finest artists, and we're gonna put on one heck of a show for you. Tonight is a spoonful of sugar that packs a big wallop. Laugh, cry, and be outraged with us, but most importantly, be in community with us as we hold the mirror up to nature and take you back to 1950s New York, which *sometimes* doesn't feel all that long ago.

– Dawn M. Simmons | Director

CAST

Barlow Adamson*	Al Manners
Patrice Jean-Baptiste*	Wiletta
Allison Beauregard	Judy Sears
Kadahj Bennett	John Nevins
MaConnia Chesser*	Millie Davis
Davron S. Monroe*	Sheldon Forrester
Bill Mootos*	Bill O'Wray
James Turner	Eddie Fenton
Robert Walsh*	Henry

*\*Denotes member of Actors' Equity Association*

**CONTENT WARNING:**

*Trouble In Mind*, set in 1957, addresses racism, sexism, identity, class, and contains strong profanity.

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The cast of Ken Ludwig's  
*The Game's Afoot: Holmes  
 for the Holidays* (2023)

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MARK S. HOWARD



**Barlow Adamson\* (Al Manners)** – Lyric Stage: *The Great Leap, Fabulation or, The Re-Education of Undine, Be Here Now, The Thanksgiving Play, Chinglish, Time Stands Still, Private Lives, Red Herring, Noises Off, Arms and the Man.*

Merrimack Repertory Theatre: *The Villains' Supper Club.* The Huntington: *The Maiden's Prayer, A Month in the Country.* Central Square Theater: *Angels In America, Paradise, Yesterday Happened: Remembering H.M., Photograph 51, Marjorie Prime, Operation Epsilon, On the Verge.* SpeakEasy Stage Company: *Small Mouth Sounds* (Elliot Norton Award, Outstanding Ensemble), *Kurt Vonnegut's Make Up Your Mind, Reckless, Almost Maine, Fuddy Meers.* Greater Boston Stage Company: *Incident at Our Lady of Perpetual Help.* Boston Playwrights' Theatre: *Elemenopea* (Elliot Norton Award, Outstanding Actor), *The Honey Trap.* Bridge Rep: *Sixty Miles to Silver Lake.* Gloucester Stage Company: *The Norman Conquests, Dinner with Friends.*



**Patrice Jean-Baptiste\* (Wiletta)** – Lyric Stage: *Broke-ology.* Actors' Shakespeare Project: *Taming of the Shrew, Coriolanus, Hamlet.* Plays in Place Suffrage in Black and White Series: *A New Era.* Front Porch Arts Collective: *Black Odyssey.*

Central Square Theater: *Building the Wall.* A.R.T Institute: *Tough Titty.* Commonwealth Shakespeare Company: *Henry V.* Centastage: *Boy x Man.* Coyote Theatre: *The Monogamist.* Directed Speech and Debate Program/ Taught Performing Arts (Milton Academy). Education: BA in Philosophy and French (Boston University); MA in Performing Arts (Trinity Rep/Rhode Island College).



**Allison Beauregard (Judy Sears)** – Lyric Stage: *Preludes* (u/s Natalya/Dahl). Commonwealth Shakespeare Company: *Henry VI Part III* (Warwick). Pittsburgh Playhouse: *Uncle Vanya* (Yelena), *Cabaret* (Fraulein Kost), *Sunday in the*

*Park with George* (Mrs.; directed by Tony Award-Winner Michael Rupert). 54 Below: *Sing the Rainbow* (Soloist). Joe's Pub NYC: *Queering the Canon* (Jesus/Sarah). Third Rail Repertory: *Detroit '67* (Caroline). Guild Hall: *Sometime Child* (Teen Chorus). East Broadway Theatre Company: *Audrey the Musical* (Edith Head). Allison received her BFA in Acting at Point Park University and is currently pursuing her MFA in Theatre Education + Applied Theatre at Emerson College, where she is researching gender-affirming Linklater voice work. Endless love and gratitude to Mom and Dad. | allisonbeauregard.com



**Kadahj Bennett (John Nevins)** – Lyric Stage: Debut. New Repertory Theatre: *A Raisin in The Sun, The Charles Lennox Experience.* The Huntington: *The Lehman Trilogy, Joe Turner's Come and Gone, Common Ground Revisited, Dream Boston,*

*Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead.* Front Porch Arts Collective: *Brown & Boozy, X:Or, Betty Shabazz v. The Nation.* SpeakEasy Stage Company: *People, Places & Things, Pass Over.* Company One/A.R.T.: *Quotables, Hype Man, Leftovers.* Broadway Podcast Network: *Isolated Incidents.* Actors' Theater Boston: *This Place Displaced.* Bennett is an Elliot Norton Award winner and a WBUR ARTery 25 Changemaker. Currently, Bennett is a teaching artist at both Zumix & Harvard University.



**MaConnia Chesser\* (Millie Davis)** – Lyric Stage: Debut. New York Theatre: Ensemble Studio Theatre, York Shakespeare Company. Regional Theatre: Shakespeare & Company (Company Member), Actors' Shakespeare Project, WAM Theatre, Ancram Opera House, Berkshire Playwrights Lab, Chester Theatre, Kennedy Center, Theater Alliance (*Insurrection: Holding History*, Helen Hayes nomination), Tennessee Shakespeare, African Continuum Theatre, Totem Pole Playhouse, and Folger Theatre. Film and TV: *The Shape of Destiny* (Official selection, 2018 Women in Comedy Festival), *Nothing But the Truth, Ghosts of Hamilton Street, Diseasels*, HBO's *The Wire.* Education: Shakespeare & Company, National Conservatory of Dramatic Arts, Alcorn State University. For my mom Dorothy D. Scott Chesser, and my friend Dennis Krausnick. | @kurlymac.



**Davron S. Monroe\* (Sheldon Forrester)** – Lyric Stage: *Sister Act, Agatha Christie's Murder on The Orient Express, Breath & Imagination* (Elliot Norton Award Winner), *The Wiz, Camelot, Company, My Fair Lady, City of Angels,*

*Sweeney Todd, One Man, Two Guvnors, The Mikado, Avenue Q, and Ain't Misbehavin'.* North Shore Music Theatre: *A Christmas Carol.* Moonbox Productions: *Sweeney Todd, Passing Strange, Caroline or Change, Godspell.* SpeakEasy Stage Company: *Once On This Island, Songs for a New World, The View Upstairs.* Reagle Music Theater: *The Little Mermaid, Pippin.* Company Theatre: *Ragtime.* Other appearances: Boston Landmarks Orchestra, South Florida Symphony, Houston Ebony Opera Guild. Davron is a Professor of Voice at Berklee College of Music.



**Bill Mootos\* (Bill O'Wray)** – Lyric Stage: *The Little Foxes*, *Never the Sinner*, *Over the River and Through the Woods*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Miser*, *Judas Kiss*, *The Lisbon Traviata*. Recent credits include Greater Boston Stage Company:

*Clue*. Wheelock Family Theatre: *Bud Not Buddy*. Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theatre: *Race*. Shakespeare & Company: *Mothers and Sons*. Ivoryton Playhouse: *Shear Madness*. The Barnstormers: *Baskerville*. Other credits include productions with Boston Playwrights Theatre, SpeakEasy Stage Company, New Repertory Theatre, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, Gloucester Stage Company, The Huntington, and many others. Film: *The Holdovers*, *Boston Strangler*, *Don't Look Up*, *Castle Rock*, *Little Women*, *Daddy's Home 2*, and others. Proud AEA & SAG-AFTRA member and recipient of two IRNE Awards. Bill can next be seen in *Beyond Words* at Central Square Theater.



**James Turner (Eddie Fenton)** – Lyric Stage: *Sister Act* (Joey). Seacoast Repertory Theatre: *A Christmas Carol* (Christmas Present), *Billy Elliot* (George). The Firehouse Center for the Arts: *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Judas), *Shrek The Musical* (Shrek), *The Last 5 Years* (Jamie), *Avenue Q* (Nicky/Trekkie), *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Chip). James runs a small studio for voice and acting students, and teaches Improv at North Shore Music Theatre. Endless thanks to my family for their love, patience, and support.



**Robert Walsh\* (Henry)** – Lyric Stage: *The Liar* (Director) Off-Broadway: *Gloucester Blue* (Cherry Lane), *Big Maggie* (Douglas Fairbanks), *Penelope* (Perry St. Theatre), Theater of the Open Eye and Riverside Shakespeare Company. The Huntington: *Ah, Wilderness!*, *Hamlet*. Merrimack Repertory Theatre: *Our Town*, *Mass Appeal*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Gloucester Stage Company: *Sins of the Mother*, *The Subject Was Roses*. New Repertory Theatre: *Art*, *The Cocktail Hour*. SpeakEasy Stage Company: *Next Fall*. Commonwealth Shakespeare Company: *Coriolanus*, *Macbeth*, and *Henry V*. Actors' Shakespeare Project, (founding company member): *King Lear*, *Henry IV*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Hamlet*. Film/TV: *Fourth of July*, *Black Mass*, *Dead Reckoning*, *The Spirit of Christmas*, *Evening*, *State and Main*, *Amistad*, *Eight Men Out*, *Body of Proof* (ABC). Former Artistic Director of Gloucester Stage Company and teaches at Brandeis University.

**Alice Childress (Playwright)** – In 1955 *Childress' play Trouble in Mind* opened at the Greenwich Mews Theatre, Off Broadway, to critical and popular success. The play immediately drew interest from producers for a Broadway transfer. In an ironic twist echoing the tribulations of the characters in the play itself, the producers wanted changes to the script to make it more palatable to a commercial audience. Childress refused to compromise her artistic vision. *Trouble in Mind* received well-reviewed Off-Broadway revival in 1998 by the Negro Ensemble Company and has since been produced by many regional theatres throughout the United States. Throughout Alice's career, she worked diligently to reveal the true experiences of black people in America; especially those of black women. As Childress herself once said "I concentrate on portraying have-nots in a have society."

**Dawn M. Simmons (Director)** – is pleased to be back at Lyric Stage. Regional credits include: Alliance Theatre (upcoming), The Huntington, JAG Productions, Play On Shakespeare, The Hangar Theatre, WAM Theater, Local credits include: Wheelock Family Theatre, Central Square Theater, New Repertory Theatre, Gloucester Stage Company, Greater Boston Stage Company, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, SpeakEasy Stage Company, Actors' Shakespeare Project, Bad Habit Productions, New Exhibition Room, Boston Public Works, Fresh Ink Theatre, and Our Place Theatre Project. Dawn is a Co-Producing Artistic Director of The Front Porch Arts Collective. She serves on the Boards of Arts Connect International and ArtsBoston, and is Co-Founder of New Exhibition Room.

**Shelley Barish (Scenic Design)** – Lyric Stage: *Preludes*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love & Murder*, *The Wolves*, *Hold These Truths*, *Camelot*, *Becky's New Car*, *Dear Elizabeth*, and *Murder for Two*. Off-Broadway: Theatre Row: *Gideon's Knot*. Regional: Merrimack Repertory Theatre: *A Christmas Carol*. Wheelock Family Theatre: *Matilda*. Greater Boston Stage Company: *Beehive*, *The Irish... and How They Got That Way*, *The 39 Steps*, *Incident at Our Lady of Perpetual Help*, *Little Women*. Central Square Theatre: *Pipeline*, *Young Nerds of Color*. Peterborough Players: *Tell Me on a Sunday*. Cortland Repertory Theatre: *The Addams Family*, *Newsies*, *Legally Blonde*, *Cards on the Table*. Bristol Valley Theatre: *Boom!*, *Barefoot In The Park*, *Private Lives*, *Next Fall*. Shelley is a Professor and Coordinator of the Theatre Arts Program at UMASS Lowell. She received her MFA from Michigan State University. | shelleybarish.com

**Rachel Padula-Shufelt (Costume Design)** – Lyric Stage: *Assassins*, *Fabulation or*, *The Re-Education of Undine*, *Preludes*, *Be Here Now*, *The Thanksgiving Play*. Greater Boston Stage Company: *The 39 Steps*. SpeakEasy Stage

Company: *Heroes of the Fourth Turning, The Children, Choir Boy, Shakespeare in Love, Men on Boats*. Central Square Theatre: *Young Nerds of Color, Frankenstein*. New Repertory Theatre: *Oliver, 1776*. Actors' Shakespeare Project: *Macbeth, Edward II* (Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding Design). American Repertory Theatre: *Charlotte's Web*. Gloucester Stage Company: *Gloria, Barefoot in the Park, Trad, and Crimes of the Heart*. A graduate of Emerson College, Rachel's work as a hair and makeup designer has been seen at Boston Ballet, American Repertory Theatre, The Huntington, North Shore Music Theatre, and Broadway.

**Deb Sullivan\*\* (Lighting Design)** – Lyric Stage: *Twelfth Night* (a co-production with Actors' Shakespeare Project). Deb is a Boston-based lighting designer with Off-Broadway, regional, local and educational credits. Design work has been seen on stages with Actors' Theatre of Louisville, Actors' Shakespeare Project, Alliance Theatre, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Boston Conservatory at Berkeley, Brandeis University, Cleveland Playhouse, Dorset Playhouse, Gloucester Stage Company, Greater Boston Stage Company, Harbor Stage Company, The Huntington, New Repertory Theatre, The Public Theater/NYSF, Shakespeare and Company, SpeakEasy Stage Company, Trinity

Repertory Company, Two River Theatre, WP Theatre and many others. Member IATSE United Scenic Artists Local 829. | [dlsullivanld.com](http://dlsullivanld.com)

**Aubrey Dube (Sound Design)** – Lyric Stage: Lyric Back Stage: *Made You Look* and *Party Bots*. The Huntington: *Clyde's, The Bluest Eye, Joe Turner's Come and Gone, Fat Ham*. Gloucester Stage Company: *Paradise Blue, The Thin Place*. New Repertory Theatre: *Trayf, Good*. Moonbox Productions: *Queens, Torch Song*. PTP/NYC: *Vinegar Tom, Monster, Serious Money, Pentecost*. Boston Playwrights' Theatre: *Winter People*. Umbrella Theatre: *Fences*. SpeakEasy Stage Company: *POTUS*. Company One: *Downtown Crossing, Vietgone*. Boston Center for American Performance: *A Taste of Honey*. Suffolk University: *Cymbeline, Pilgrims of the Night*. Brandeis University: *Orlando*. Northeastern University: *Antipodes, Love and Information, As You Like It, Sensitive Guys*. Boston University: *Delirium, Daddy Issues, The Hothouse*. Aubrey hosts a soccer show on youtube called [@footballpowerhour](https://www.youtube.com/@footballpowerhour) and he lives in Boston.

**Jennifer Butler (Props Artisan)** – Lyric Stage: *Ken Ludwig's The Game's Afoot, The Thanksgiving Play*. Wheelock Family Theatre: *The Addams Family, Bud, Not Buddy*.





Central Square Theater: *Alma, The Half Life of Marie Curie*. Moonbox Productions: *Jonathan, Parade*. Speak-Easy Stage Company: *Fun Home, Between Riverside and Crazy*. Edinburgh Fringe Festival: *See Rock City and Other Destinations*. When she is not working on a show, Jenn can either be found managing events, in a dance studio with tap shoes on or at home covered in paint. Special thanks and love to Rich Morris for all his support. | [jenniferbutlerdesigns.com](http://jenniferbutlerdesigns.com)

**Polly Feliciano\* (Production Stage Manager)** – Lyric Stage: *Sister Act* (Assistant Stage Manager). The Gamm Theatre: *Sweat* (Assistant Stage Manager). Trinity Repertory Company: *The Prince of Providence, A Christmas Carol* (2019), *Radio Golf, A Christmas Carol* (2021), *Gem of the Ocean* (Production Assistant), *Fairview, The Inheritance Parts 1 & 2* (Assistant Stage Manager), *Becky Nurse of Salem* (Production Stage Manager). Theater Alaska: *Theater Alaska Writers Workshop 2021* (Stage Manager). Polly is from Providence, Rhode Island and graduated from Rhode Island College with a BA in Theater. She had the privilege of being the Production Manager at Mixed Magic Theater in Pawtucket, RI from July 2020 until August 2021 and is currently on the Board of Directors for Burbage Theatre Company. Polly does it all for Bucky, Bernie, Gus, and Emmy. And also, Hayley. | [@bollyrocket24](https://www.bollyrocket24.com)

**Olivia Tellier\* (Assistant Stage Manager)** – Lyric Stage: Lyric Back Stage: *Made You Look*. Trinity Repertory Company: *Sweeney Todd, Becky Nurse of Salem, The Good John Proctor* (Assistant Stage Manager), *The Inferior Sex, A Christmas Carol 2022, Sueño, Tiny Beautiful Things* (Production Assistant). Jean's Playhouse: *Forever Plaid, Evita, Clue: The Musical, The Sound of Music* (Assistant Stage Manager). Wilbury Theatre Group: Providence Fringe Festival 2019, *#ENOUGH: Plays to End Gun Violence* (Stage Manager). Portland Stage Company: *Native Gardens, It's A Wonderful Life, The Clean House* (Production Assistant). The National Women's Theatre Festival: *Occupy the Stage 2020* (Stage Manager). Barn Summer Playhouse: *The Freedom of Air, Down the Mountain and Across the Stream* (Stage Manager).

**Joseph Pisano (Wardrobe Supervisor)** – Lyric Stage: numerous productions. Joey began his career at North Shore Music Theater and has been on crew there for 9 years. Other credits include SpeakEasy Stage Company, Greater Boston Stage Company, Moonbox Productions, NEC, Theater by the Sea, Baroque Boston, Merry Go Round Playhouse and Norwegian Cruise Line. He holds an associate's degree in Costume Design from the Art Institute of New York City.

**Gabriel Goldman (Master Electrician)** – Lyric Stage: *Ken Ludwig's The Game's Afoot, Assassins, Rooted, Sister Act, The Great Leap, The Play That Goes Wrong, A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder, The Book of Will, Mr. Parent*. Reagle Music Theatre: *Pippin, West Side Story*. Lowell House Opera: *Nighttown*. Wheelock Family Theatre: *The Wizard of Oz*. Brandeis University: *Orlando*. Moonbox Productions: *New Works Festival, Passing Strange*. Seacoast Repertory: *Peter Pan*. Boston Midsummer Opera: *Mélange Operatique*. Harvard TDM: *Truth Hurts*. Boston Children's Theatre: *Grease, Carrie*. Chautauqua Theatre Company: *Noises Off*. Chester Theatre Company: *The Mountaintop, Sister Play, Oh God, My Jane*. Special thanks to his parents and to his girlfriend, Shelby, for their constant love and support.

**Sean Doyle (Audio Supervisor)** – Lyric Stage: *Ken Ludwig's The Game's Afoot, Sister Act, The Great Leap, The Play That Goes Wrong*. Barrington Stage Company (Sound Supervisor): *Cabaret, Blues for an Alabama Sky, A New Brain, English, a tiny father, Happiest Man on Earth, Faith Healer, Andy Warhol in Iran, ABCD, Waiting for Godot, Ain't Misbehavin', Anna in the Tropics, A Little Night Music, All of Me, and Supadupa Kid*. Boston Playwrights Theatre (Sound Designer): *Jado Jihad, OTP, Eat Your Young, and Lorena: A Tabloid Epic*. The Atlantic Theatre (Sound Designer) *Lunch, Hot Fudge, Dog Play, Reverse Transcription*. Film (Production Assistant): *Spirited*. Master of Fine Arts in Sound Design Boston University.

**\*Actors' Equity Association (AEA)** founded in 1913, represents more than 51,000 professional Actors and Stage Managers nationwide. Equity seeks to foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of society and advances the careers of its members by negotiating wages, improving working conditions and providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. Actors' Equity is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. | [actorsequity.org](http://actorsequity.org)

#### ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION STAFF

Music Consultant, **David F. Coleman**  
Audio Supervisor, **Sean Doyle**  
Head Electrician, **Gabriel Goldman**  
Wardrobe Supervisor, **Joseph Pisano**

#### SPECIAL THANKS

**UMass Lowell Theatre Arts**  
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**Danica Wiles at Brandeis University**



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THE CAST AND ARTISTIC TEAM OF ASSASSINS | PHOTO: MARK S. HOWARD

# ALICE CHILDRESS

## A BROADWAY DEBUT 67 YEARS IN THE MAKING



**“Childress wouldn’t say she was writing for white audiences or Black audiences; she only wrote for herself, and she concerned herself first and foremost with the truth, whatever form that would take.”**

– MAYA PHILLIPS, *NEW YORK TIMES*

of *Anna Lucasta*, a long-running Broadway production with an all-Black cast. Burke would purportedly complain to her castmates about the way she was being treated by the white director, producers, etc., but kept these grievances private for the sake of keeping her job.

– By Michelle Garcia, Marketing Assistant and Maddie Thorpe, 2023 Summer Intern

Raised in a climate of Southern racism and segregation, African-American playwright, actor, director, and dramatist Alice Childress pursued her dream of becoming a playwright despite the obstacles she faced.

In 1955, *Trouble in Mind* was a critical and popular success from the beginning of its run off-Broadway at the Greenwich Mews Theatre in a production directed by Childress herself. The production drew interest from producers for a Broadway transfer, but first they requested changes to the script to make it more “suitable” for a commercial and non-Black audience.

After some attempted rewrites, Childress refused to compromise her artistic vision, and the play never opened, ending her chances of being the first African-American woman playwright to have a play on Broadway. Alice Childress passed away in 1994 at the age of 77.

In 2021, *Trouble in Mind* finally made its long-awaited Broadway debut posthumously, produced by Roundabout Theatre Company. The production received four Tony Award nominations.

*Trouble in Mind* feels timely today, despite having been written decades ago. Childress based the play on her experiences as a Black woman in theatre, as well as her experiences with fellow actress Georgia Burke. Burke and Childress were both in the cast

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ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE KITCHEN  
WALL THERE'S A WHOLE OTHER STORY.

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# Thirst

BY  
**RONÁN NOONE**  
DIRECTOR  
**COURTNEY O'CONNOR**

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THE LIFE AND ADVENTURE OF NICHOLAS WICKLEBY; HERRY DOOMING; LARRY COHN; THE BOOK OF WILL; ED HOOPMAN; WILL MCGARRAHAN; GRACE EXPERIENCE; JOSHUS VOLTCOLEMAN; BREATH & IMAGINATION; DAWGONS; MONROE; YEWANDE ODEYINBO; A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS; WALKS; BOB DOLLY; RENEE MILLER; THE CAST OF AVENUE Q

# Cheers to 50 Years!

Lyric Stage is proud to celebrate this incredible milestone with you. We are here for Boston. Artists and audiences like you have made magic in our theatre, from our early home on Charles Street to our recently spruced up space here in the Back Bay.

The best part, we're just getting started.

**Our legacy** gives us confidence to be bold.

**Our focus** is on the future.

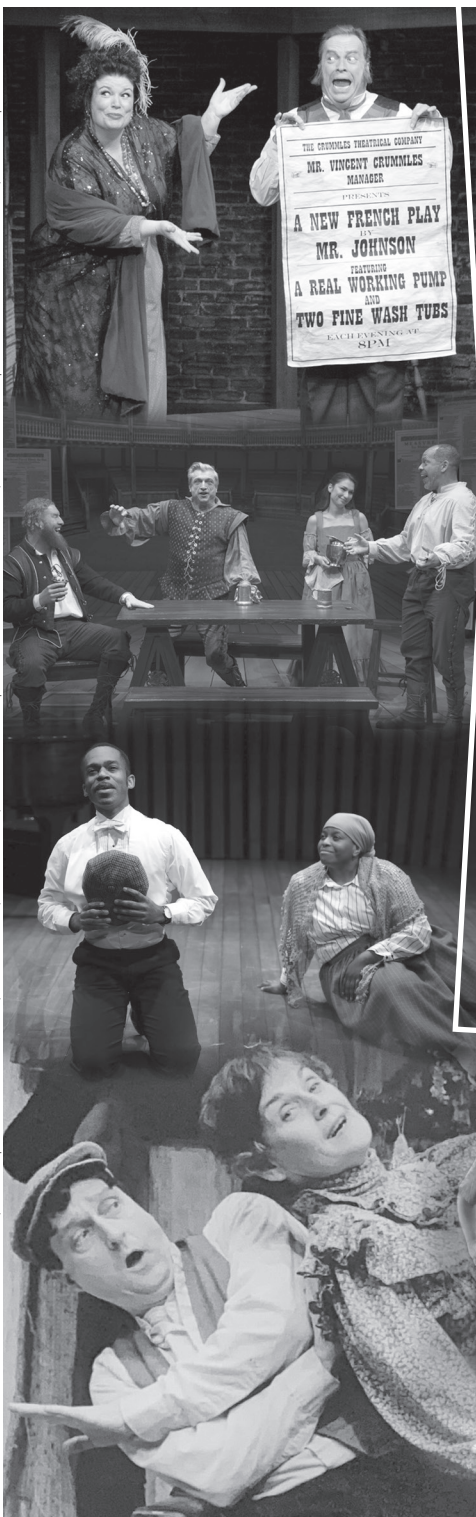
**Our priority** is to create great theatre.

**Our goal** is 100 years of strength and magic.

Celebrate with us and donate to support the dramas, comedies, musicals, and educational programs we've yet to experience. Together.

Thank you for being here!

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ALL PHOTOS EXCEPT FOR A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS WALKS BY MARK S. HOWARD


**LYRIC** **BOSTON**  
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Lyric Stage promotes inclusivity & connection in an effort to integrate live theatre into the lives of all residents of Greater Boston.

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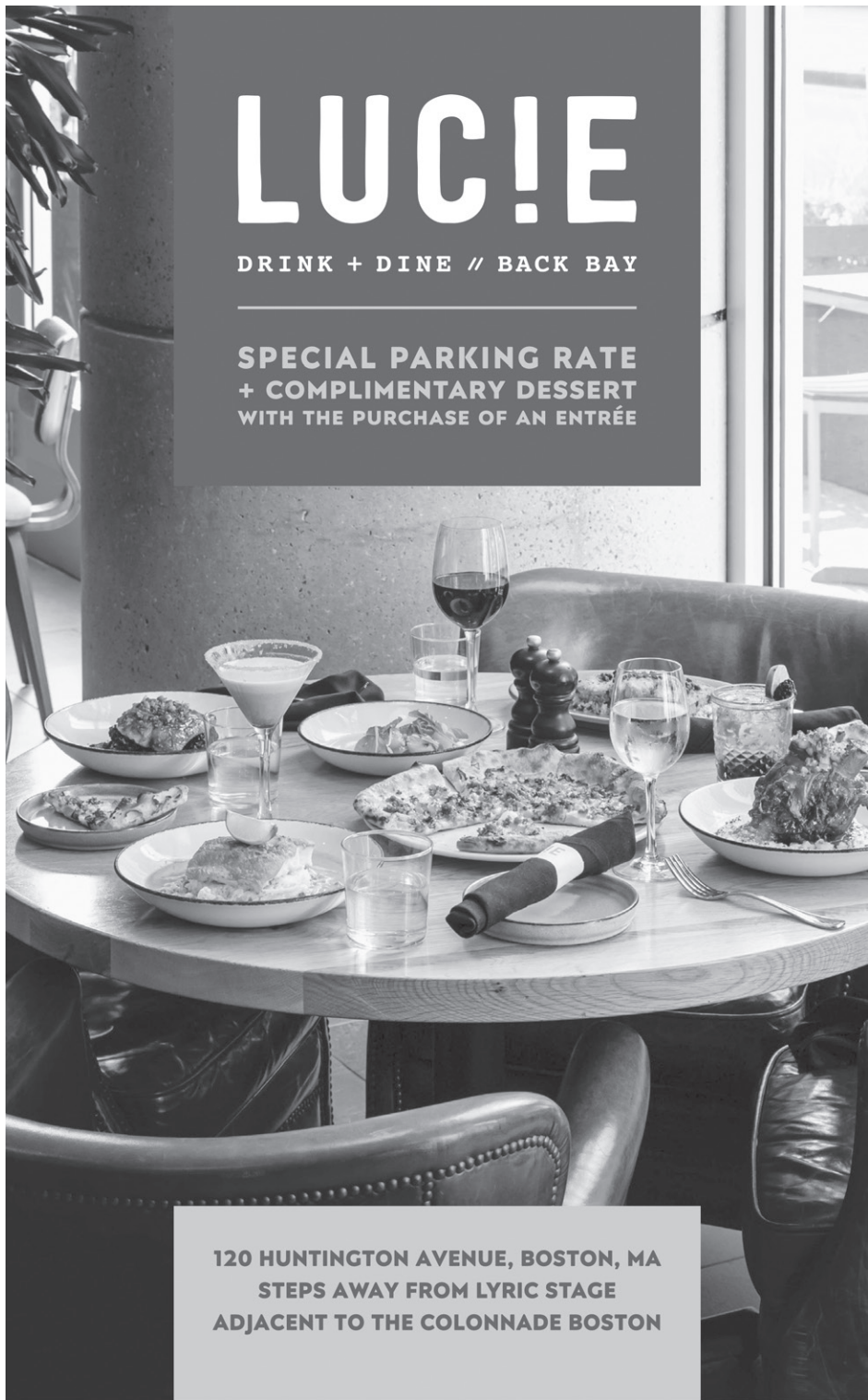
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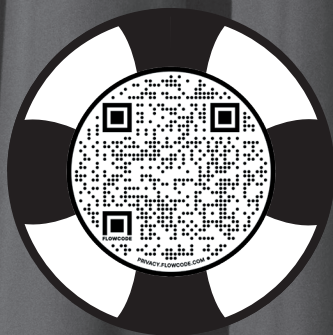
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 Haig Shahverdian  
 Eleanor Shannon
- Joel Shapiro  
 Frederick & Mary Shaver  
 Deborah K. Shea  
 Linda Shea  
 Pam Shea  
 John Sheehan  
 David Sheena  
 Bree Shernan & Howard Levine  
 Anthony Shufflebotham  
 Stephen Shulman-Laniel  
 James Shuman  
 Katie Sibley  
 Martha Sieniewicz  
 Linda & Peter Silverstein  
 Anna Simanowski  
 Lucy Skeldon  
 Miranda Slingluff  
 Lauren Sloat & Charles Golya  
 Christopher Smith  
 Stan Smith  
 Victoria Solomon  
 James Spall  
 Shelby Spaulding  
 Kenneth & Catherine Moon  
 Stalberg  
 Stephen Stasevich  
 Sean Stearley  
 Judith Stein  
 Felix Steiny  
 Jeff Stevens  
 James Stewart  
 Wendy Stewart  
 Gavin Steyn  
 Barbara Stier  
 Robert Stinson  
 Robert Stone  
 Barbara Stowe  
 Derek Strachan  
 Eugene & Madeline Strausberg  
 Richard C. Strickland  
 Ethan Strominger  
 James Sullivan  
 Suzanne Summerfield  
 Chris Swan  
 Christina Szoka  
 Geoffrey Talvola & Jason Webb  
 Mary Tamer  
 Elizabeth Tango  
 Regina Tate  
 Santiago Taveras  
 Hannah Taytslin, *in honor of*  
*Steve Wasser*  
 Tracey Tebrow  
 Roland Tec  
 Karen & Karl Thompson  
 John & Kathleen Tierney  
 Brian Toussaint  
 Soozen Tribuna  
 Maura B. Troiano  
 Gwen Trueblood
- Ayaka Tsuchiya  
 Katrina Tuck  
 Dawn Tucker  
 Carol Tully  
 Kaitlyn Tully  
 Adam Turner  
 Anita P. Turner  
 Cindy Turner  
 Corinne Valentine  
 Nancy Van Dam  
 Frank Vegan  
 Irene Vicente  
 Alexander Vinitzky  
 Anthony Visconti  
 Regine Vital  
 Susan & Devin Waldman  
 Sarah Wall-Randell  
 Judith Wallace  
 Charles Walsh  
 Laura Waltes  
 Hazel & Jordan Warnick  
 Brenda Flavin-Warshaw  
 Kellie Lynne Waterman  
 David W. Watt  
 Matthew Webber  
 Ellen Welty  
 William Werner  
 Ann Weststein  
 Richard Wherry  
 Sandra White  
 Heather Whittington  
 Alexandria Wilkie  
 Eric Wilson  
 Jason Wilson  
 Kathleen Williams  
 Nancy Wimberg  
 Penny Wingate  
 Sara G. Withington  
 Susan Wolfthal  
 John Woolsey  
 Barry Wong  
 Maddie Wright  
 Meng Wu  
 Deborah Young  
 David Zamojski  
 Roderick Zamora  
 Sasha Zbitnoff  
 Alex Zeigler  
 Audrius Zibaitis  
 Jeff Zinsmeyer  
 Milo Zurn-Galinsky

# WANT TO SUPPORT ARTISTS IN NEED? DONATE TO TCBF.



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**The Boston theatre community is resilient,** but more importantly, it supports its members. Since 1997, TCBF has provided financial support to artists experiencing catastrophic hardship. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation today to help artists in need—all donations go directly back to the community you love.

**For more information (and to APPLY for funding relief), visit [tcbf.org](http://tcbf.org).**

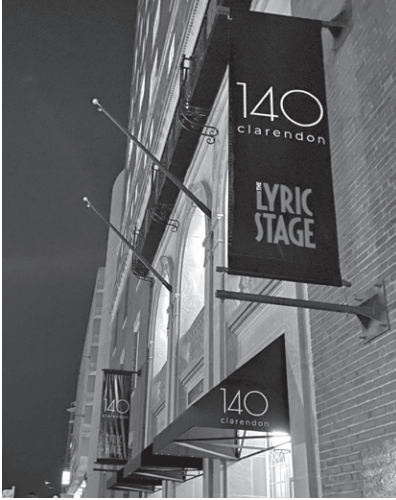


**Theatre Community Benevolent Fund**

*Serving theatre artists since 1997 and needed now more than ever.*

## ABOUT YOUR THEATRICAL HOME:

# 140 CLARENDON STREET



The Lyric Stage Company of Boston produces the majority of its work at 140 Clarendon Street, the historic YWCA Building, which resides on the land of the Massachusetts and Pawtucket Peoples.

The Massachusetts Peoples are the descendants of the original people that the English first encountered in what is now the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Pennacook tribe, sometimes called Pawtucket and Merrimack Indians, lived in northeastern Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire. The Nipmuc Peoples occupied the interior portion of what is now Massachusetts and parts of Rhode Island and Connecticut. The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe has inhabited present day Massachusetts and Eastern Rhode Island for more than 12,000 years.

140 Clarendon Street is also the home of YW Boston, formerly known as the YWCA Boston, an organization that was at the forefront of many social movements throughout the history of the city of Boston. YWCA Boston was first established in 1866, and began operating out of 140 Clarendon Street in 1927. YWCA helped propel many programs and initiatives for young women across the country, such as sex education, women's suffrage advocacy, bilingual instruction for immigrant women, the International Conference of Women Physicians, and the Interracial Seminar. Today, YW Boston's work focuses on addressing racial and gender inequities through a variety of diversity, equity, and inclusion services, youth programming, advocacy, and more.

In 1991, the Lyric Stage moved to 140 Clarendon Street from its former home on Charles Street. The current theater and adjacent offices were constructed on the second floor of the building, and a fourth floor rehearsal hall was added in 2016.

In 2021, YW Boston and its investment partners sold the building to Beacon Communities, who began the process of rehabilitating approximately 50,000 square feet of existing hotel and residential spaces into affordable housing units, health and wellness amenities, and offices for building management staff which will be operated in partnership with the Pine Street Inn. The building will contain approximately 210 apartments (an increase of 92 housing units) all of which will be income-restricted to households with incomes at or below 60% of the Area Median Income.

As a part of the sale, Beacon Communities and Lyric Stage negotiated a new 19-year lease, ensuring that 140 Clarendon Street will be the Lyric Stage's forever home.

For more on your visit and how to contact us, box office hours, ticketing & performance policies, and other FAQs go to [lyricstage.com](https://lyricstage.com) & click on YOUR VISIT.



The Lyric Stage Company of Boston produces and presents live theatre in Greater Boston with an intimate approach that promotes inclusivity and connection. The Lyric Stage leads an effort to integrate

live theater and theater education into the lives of all residents of Greater Boston.

Founded in 1974 by **Ron Ritchell** and **Polly Hogan**, the Lyric Stage is Boston's oldest resident theatre company. After establishing a loyal following on Charles Street, Ron and Polly led a successful 1991 campaign to create the Lyric Stage's current home on Clarendon Street. Polly was the chief negotiator for the NEAT (New England Area Theatres) contract, which made it easier for local producers to hire members of Actors Equity Association, the union for actors and stage managers.

In 1998, **Spiro Veloudos** was appointed Producing Artistic Director. During his tenure, he continued Ron and Polly's commitment to local artists; with few exceptions, the theatrical artists that work at the Lyric Stage live in the Greater Boston area. Spiro also established a reputation for staging large musicals in the Lyric Stage's modest playing space, including a signature Sondheim Initiative, which covered ten musicals over twenty years.

In 2016, the Lyric Stage opened Clarendon Hall, a year-round rehearsal space. Clarendon Hall is available at a subsidized rate to members of the Boston Dance Alliance and other arts organizations and individuals.

Theatre-based education has been a core of the Lyric Stage's mission since its founding. In 2019, the Lyric Stage merged with City Stage Co. and its expanded education programs include Lyric City Stage, teaching artists working in classrooms in the Boston Public Schools, the Lyric First Page playwriting festival for students, and the new Lyric Back Stage.

Following Spiro's retirement in 2019, the board appointed **Matt Chapuran** as Executive Director, and shortly after, **Courtney O'Connor** was named Artistic Director. In the fall of 2023, Courtney was appointed Producing Artistic Director, continuing the work centering Lyric Stage in Boston's theatrical community, introducing live theatre to new audiences, and promoting new theatrical voices in Boston and nationwide.

## LYRIC STAGE COMPANY OF BOSTON STAFF

**Courtney O'Connor**, Producing Artistic Director

**Elizabeth Carsley**, Development Associate

**Alex Chisholm**, Director of Philanthropy

**David D'Agostino**, Production Manager

**Heather Darrow**, Director of Marketing

**Justin Huff**, General Manager

**Chandra Pieragostini**, Associate Director of Education

**Katherine C. Shaver**, Operations Manager

**Alexandra Smith**, Community & Artistic Programs Manager

**Kandycy Whittingham**, Marketing & Development Associate

**Yvonne Murphy, Eva Murray, Michele Proude**,

Lyric City Stage Teaching Artists

### Box Office & Front of House:

**Maia Cataldo**, Box Office Manager

**Jacob Less**, Senior House Manager

**Layne Alexandra, Sid Jepsen, Mitch Kiliulis, Caleb Palmer,**

**Connor Spring, Lindsey Weaver**, Box Office & Front of House Managers

**Anaïs Crespín, Nora Dexter, Meagan Dobyne,**

**Shell Garcia, Therese Hennedy, Alyssa Monteiro,**

**Afton Myers, Reid Perry, Hailey Madison Sebastian,**

**Braelyn Spittler**, Box Office & Front of House Assistants

**Samantha Boutoureira, Michelle Garcia, Amanda Li,**

Community Engagement/Marketing Assistants

### Stage Managers 2023/24 Season:

**Charlie Berry\*, Tom Blushi\*, Polly Feliciano\*,**

**Emma Hunt, Thomas M. Kauffman\*, Hazel J. Peters\*,**

**Nerys Powell\*, Pat-rice Rooney\*, Olivia Tellier\***

### Set Construction:

The scenery for this production was constructed by

**Wooden Kiwi Productions, LLC.**

### Additional Staff:

**Melissa Wagner-O'Malley**, Graphic Design

**Belinda Thresher**, Abella Publishing Services

**Leslie Holmquist**, Bookkeeping

\*Denotes member of Actors' Equity Association

Follow us!



# Field Guide → Boston

Go on. Get out there.



## A NEW WAY TO EXPERIENCE THIS PLACE WE CALL HOME

We've put together tips, tricks and information from people who live here: our reporters, your neighbors and the occasional historian, economist or expert. With our guides, you'll be exploring in no time.

wbur

[wbur.org/fieldguide](http://wbur.org/fieldguide)

