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PRESENTS



JUNE 9TH THROUGH JUNE 25TH

Directed By ALICIA HAYMER

Scenic Design CATHERINE MANTOOTH Costume Design LIO MERCEDES SOSA Stage Manager KIMBERLY REYNOLDS

Scenic Painting ANNIE COLLINS Lighting Design

Assistant Stage Manager TALOR RUSSELL

TECHNICAL DIRECTION ADAM MIECIELICA & JASON DUPEE

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Piano provided by Gary C. Hoff and Nashville Repertory Theatre Photograhy provided by Cansler Photography and Jeremy Campbell

> **THE PIANO LESSON** is presented through special arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

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Founded in 1923, the Chattanooga Theatre Centre is dedicated to enriching the cultural, intellectual, and emotional development of people of all ages by providing high-quality theatrical experiences and creating opportunities to engage in them. To join us in this mission, call 423.267.8534 or visit us at TheatreCentre.com to find out how you can take part.

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Boy Willie	Que Howard
Doaker	LAFREDERICK THIRKILL
Lymon	Donel Solomon
Berniece	Cortney Warner
Maretha	Tasonjia Colvin
Avery	Octavius Lanier
Wining Boy	CHRIS MATHIS
Grace	JASMINE ROBINSON

SETTING

The Charles Family House in

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 1936

THE PIANO LESSON will be presented in two acts with one 15-minute intermission.

BLACK ARTS AND IDEAS FESTIVAL OF CHATTANOOGA

Chattanooga Theatre Centre is a proud partner of the Black Arts and Ideas Festival. *The Piano Lesson* is just one of the featured events in this celebration of Black art and culture.

Visit www.blackartsandideasfest.com to learn more and see the full line up of festivities and events.



CHATTANOGA

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MEET THE CAST



TASONJIA COLVIN (Maretha) is 10-years-old. Her birthday is March 5th, and this is her CTC debut. Tasonjia says "I'm very charismatic. I enjoy dancing, singing, and making Tiktoks." She attends Orchard Knob Elementary School where she runs track, plays soccer and is a star role student. Tasonjia says she plans on being a part of more plays here at The Chattanooga Theatre Center.



QUE HOWARD (Boy Willie) is making his CTC debut in *The Piano Lesson*. His previous theatrical experience includes acting in a stage play called *Millennials Rising* and a few high school plays for Fulton High School's Drama Club. Que currently works as a Tech Supervisor for Staples. He says "I enjoy creating entertaining content for TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram. I also enjoy gaming, listening to music and reading James Patterson books." Que's goal is to become

a solid actor and eventually hit Broadway and the big screens. Que says he would like to give a heavenly thanks to his grandma Rita Finch for pushing him and giving him all the motivation that she did. He also wants to thank everybody that has been supportive and in his corner.



OCTAVIUS LANIER (Avery) is an artist from Brownsville, TN with a drive for bringing stories to fruition that are diverse and highlight underrepresented facets of life. Upon completion of his B.A. in legal studies and theatre from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, he pursued further training and experience in the arts. Octavius graduated from the University of Iowa with his MFA in Acting in 2021. His acting credits include *Into the Night, Three Sisters, Sweat, Seven Spots on the*

Sun, Eurydice, and *Arms and the Man.* Octavius had his directorial debut in the Spring of 2020 with directing *The Honey War.* His goals as an artist are to use his passion for creating and embodying work that will move the culture forward for the betterment and success of the Black American.



CHRIS MATHIS (Wining Boy) is very excited to be a part of *The Piano Lesson* at The Chattanooga Theatre Centre. He has previously worked on *A Woman Called Truth* as Peter with ETC, and *St. Scarlett* as Vinny with Chattanooga State Repertory Theatre. Chris studied at Chattanooga State where he graduated from the Professional Actors Training Program. Currently, Chris works in healthcare as a Community Outreach Coordinator. He is excited about re-entering the

world of performing arts and is extremely grateful for his large support system.



JASMINE ROBINSON (Grace) is from Newark, New Jersey with a Bachelors' degree from Rutgers University. She is a recent transplant in Chattanooga, TN (since June 2022). She is elated to join the Chattanooga Theater community in pursuits to keep her creative passions alive. In her early theater experience, she has been in musicals such as *The Children of Eden* and *The Music Man*. She has also traveled as a singer in numerous competitions as well as having the honor of performing at

the world's famous, Carnegie Hall in New York City. She has also volunteered as a stage assistant at CTC for *The Color Purple*. Jasmine takes great pride in her creative experience as a singer and writer.

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DONEL SOLOMON (Lymon) is a graduate of ETSU, where he served as the Gospel Choir Director and graduated with his B.S. in Criminal Justice and Criminology. A graduate of Chattanooga High Center for Creative Arts, Donel has been acting, singing, and dancing for as long as he can remember. His acting credits have included such shows as *The Wiz, Beauty* and the Beast, Little Shop of Horrors, Mary Poppins, as well as August Wilson's

Gem of the Ocean and Joe Turner's Come and Gone. This will be Donel's fifth show with the Chattanooga Theatre Centre, and he couldn't be more grateful. Donel is incredibly thankful for the opportunity to be on the Theater Centre stage once again and dedicates this performance to his family and friends.



LaFREDERICK THIRKILL (Doaker), a veteran CTC actor, is excited to return to the stage in this production. He has appeared in many plays during his 34 years volunteering. He has appeared in *Joe Tuirner's Come and Gone, A Civil War Christmas, Dividing the Estate, Little Shop of Horrors, A Lesson Before Dying, Dreamgirls, Five Guys Named Moe, Blues for an Alabama Sky,* and *Of Mice and Men.* He wrote, directed and produced *Dead Innocent: The Ed*

Johnson Story and Changed. He directed a local production of Miss Evers Boys and appeared in Driving Miss Daisy and many other plays locally. He is employed as an administrator with Hamilton County Schools and serves as Chairman of the CTC Board. He has been featured in several documentaries, newspapers, and magazines nationally for his community service and work in education. He is the proud father of Maya and wishes to dedicate this performance to his mother.



CORTNEY WARNER (Berniece) is beyond grateful to be starring in her third performance here on the Chattanooga Theatre Centre stage, previously starring in *The Color Purple: The Musical, The Amen Corner* at CTC, various productions at New Monumental Baptist Church as well as numerous shows in both college and high school. When she's not on stage she's somewhere singing, chasing after her children or spending time with her

family and friends. She would like to send a HUGE THANK YOU to her family for allowing her to take the time away from them to pursue one of her greatest passions.



KIMBERLY REYNOLDS (Stage Manager) This is Kim's first time stage managing, but she is not new to CTC. Kim has volunteered regularly for the past 8 years. Her CTC production credits include *The Color Purple* (Costume Designer), *A Civil War Christmas* (Winning the Debut Actress award), *Gem* of Ocean (Winning the Outstanding Leading Actress and Audience Favorite Actress awards), *Having Our Say: The Delaney Sisters' First 100 Years*

(Winning the MVP Award), and she also appeared in the one woman production of the original stage play *Peeing In a Soda Bottle* by playwright E. Claudette Freeman. She is very excited to be working with the talented cast and crew of *The Piano Lesson* and would like to thank Alicia, Rodney, and Annie for giving her this opportunity.



TALOR RUSSELL (Assistant Stage Manager) An entrepreneur, author, poet, songwriter, performer and content creator of a couple online businesses, Talor Imán was born and raised in Chattanooga, Tennessee. She earned her bachelor's degree in Music Business and Marketing from MTSU. Talor has always been interested in how to creatively reach and motivate people. Also, she is a member of Rhyme N Chatt Interactive Poetry Group where

she shares her poetry, sings, and volunteers for creative community events. This is her first time working with a theatre production, and she is so excited to learn new skills and knowledge within the arts community!

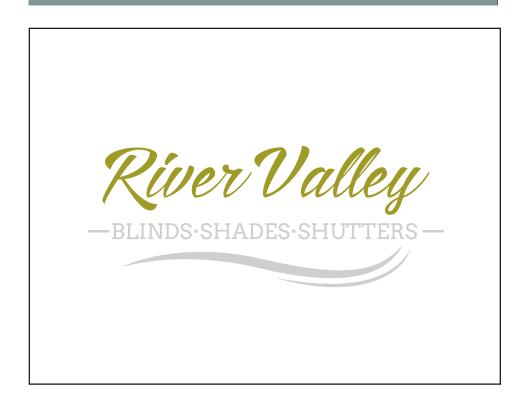


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MEET THE CREATIVE TEAM



ALICIA HAYMER (Director) is a Nashville native and Fisk alum, has been a part of the Nashville arts scene for 20+ years. In the many years that Alicia has been on stage in Nashville, she's worked with Nashville Children's Theater, The Amun Ra Theater, SistaStyle Productions, Tennessee Women's Theater Project, Destiny Theater Experience, and the Nashville Repertory Theater, among other wonderful play houses in Nashville. Alicia began writing in

2016, with her short play, Power to the People, making its debut in New York, New York in the fall of 2017, as part of the My America plays workshop. Her first full length play, Heavy was developed in the Nashville Rep's Writing Room, and her latest full-length play Free and Public Citizen was written in 2019, as part of the Tennessee Playwright's Studio. She's also written commissioned work for the Nashville Children's Theatre, and the University of Maryland's School of Music in partnership with the Annapolis Opera. Alicia's had the pleasure of directing with Actor's Bridge Ensemble (Detroit '67), as well as Street Theatre (Eclipsed, Sweat), Infinity Center Presents (The Colored Museum), Nashville Repertory Theater (School Girls; or, The African Mean Girls Play), Chattanooga Theatre Centre (Joe Turner's Come and Gone), and Tennessee Playwright's Studio (Don't Look Black). She's also directed developmental works with Tennessee Playwright's Studio, Destiny Theatre Experience, and MTSU's In Process: A Creative Writing Series. In addition to directing, Alicia is also a mentor for the Young Voices Competition, a monologue competition using the work of contemporary Black writers. In 2020, she became Co Artistic Director of Verge Theater Company. With them, she has developed The Black Future Project, which provides opportunity for young artists to receive professional development in writing, producing, and performing. Alicia is always grateful for any opportunity to express herself with creative authenticity. Keep up with Alicia on her website www.aliciahaymer.com, and follow her on Instagram @alicia.haymer.



LIOMAR MERCEDES SOSA (Costume Designer) is an Afro-Latino designer with passions across the whole creative spectrum. He currently studies scenic and costume design as a rising Senior in the theater department at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. *The Piano Lesson* is his first production with the Theatre Centre and he loved the process of working with the design team.



JULIUS JAN MICHAEL JOHNSON (Lighting Designer) was born in Louisville, KY. After learning to play the violin at age three, his family moved to Tuskegee where his love for music continued to grow. While there he also found his love for the technical side of theatre production. After graduating from the Alabama School of Fine Arts in Lighting Design, Julius earned his B.A. in Audio Engineering & Recording from The Art Institute. Julius has been doing technical theater and

sound for many years. This is Julius's second time designing for a CTC performance.



CATHERINE MANTOOTH (Scenic Designer) is a scenic and lighting designer based out of Abingdon VA. She holds an MFA in Theatrical Design from University of Idaho, and is currently an Associate Professor of Theatre at Emory and Henry College. You can find more of her work at: catherinemantooth.com



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Payne, and Laura Trinidad

CONCESSIONS: Evangeline Carter, Becki Jordan, Diane McCluskey, Kathleen Monnig, Pat Radel, Emma Veneron, and Madelyn Woods

If you would like to volunteer for our final show of the 99th season or ask about opportunities to help with our 100th season coming up this fall, email our Production Manager, Annie Collins at Annie@theatrecentre.com.



MEET THE STAFF



RODNEY VAN VALKENBURG (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR) started his career at The Little Theatre in 1983 as the first full-time Youth Theatre director. He served for more than 18 years as Director of Programs and as Director of Education. Before coming back to the CTC in 2020, he was Vice President of ArtsBuild. Highlights at the CTC include the Youth Theatre representing the U.S. at the International Theatre Camp in Zelenograd, Russia. Rodney also served as Artistic Director of the camp in Narva, Estonia. He has directed over 80 plays at the

CTC, including many Youth Theatre productions, *Vintage Hitchcock, Boeing, Boeing*, and *Annie*. He has also been seen onstage in *It's a Wonderful Life, Newsies, A Room with a View, Les Misérables, The Producers*, and *Anything Goes*. Rodney has been a participant in the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Partners in Education program since 2003 and served on the program's Advisory Committee. He served as the coordinator for the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Ensuring the Arts for Any Given Child site, also through the Kennedy Center. Rodney has also served as a grant panelist with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Tennessee Arts Commission. He serves as Tennessee State Captain for the Americans for the Arts' National Arts Action Summit in Washington, D.C. He is a past president of the Tennessee Theatre Association and served on the executive committee of the Southeastern Theatre Conference. He received his MFA in Acting and Directing from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Rodney shares his passion for theatre with his son, Jake, who lives in Atlanta.



RACHEL CARROLL (MARKETING MANAGER) Joined Chattanooga Theatre Centre in early March. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre from Lee University and a Master of Public Administration from UTC. After moving to Chattanooga six years ago, she has been an advocate for local arts and participated in the Holmberg Arts Leadership Academy in 2019. Her work in fundraising, communications, and marketing as well as her love for theatre makes her particularly excited to join the CTC team as they prepare for the Centennial Season. In her free time,

Rachel enjoys spending time with her two Australian Shepherds, Godzilla and Nessie, and her husband Zachary.



ANNIE COLLINS (PRODUCTION MANAGER) has been found on stage and backstage at CTC for over a decade. Growing up, she was an active member of the Youth Theatre and TheatreQuest. In recent years, she's been a Scenic Assistant at CTC and the Scenic Designer for our production of Alabama Story. Annie last appeared on the CTC stage as Henrietta Angkatell in *The Hollow*. Some of her favorite roles include Beatrice (A Servant of Two Masters), Gretchen (Boeing, Boeing), Bad Idea Bear (Avenue Q), Emily (Our Town), and all the fun roles she's played with the

Muse of Fire Project. She is a graduate of UTC with a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre. When she's not at the theatre, she enjoys reading, theme parks, and the outdoors with her dogs and husband.

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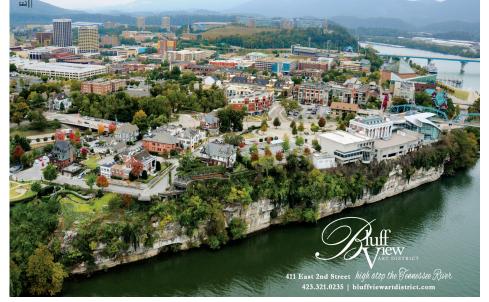
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JASON DUPEE (SCENE SHOP MANAGER) is a recent addition to the CTC team and brings experience as the technical director at both Ringgold High School and Berean Academy. At Ringgold High, he worked with two other educators to create a successful theatre program that has received multiple accolades from the Georgia High School Association. In the past four years the program has won, for the first time in the school's history, three overall state championships in theatre-related competitions. He previously worked as lead carpenter at Southeastern

Theatrical Supply. Jason has a Master of Fine Arts in Dramatic Productions from the Academy of Arts and a Master of Arts in Theatre Studies from Regent University. He has a passion for the arts and the impact of the arts on the lives of the community.



JUSTIN GASS (FRONT OF HOUSE/EVENT MANAGER) started working last May in the Box Office, and recently became our Front of House/Event Manager. Justin was born and raised here in Chattanooga, TN. He participated in several of our youth theatre productions on and off stage growing up. Justin studied theatre at Depaul University and was certified in Event Planning at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte. He has over twenty years of experience in the service industry including management and events. Recently moving back home,

Justin is thrilled to be back at the theatre which he always has considered a second home.



JEFF HILL (BUSINESS MANAGER) as a long-time volunteer, Jeff has been involved at the Chattanooga Theatre Centre for nearly four decades. He has appeared in numerous productions. In addition to his on-stage performance experience, he has also volunteered backstage, stage managed shows, coordinated special events, run sound and lights, and worked in the scene shop, costume shop and front of house. Jeff attended Mercer University, where he studied music theatre performance and accounting. He also has a freelance event planning

company and produces unique cakes, food, and floral designs. He is very delighted to become part of the staff here at the Theatre Centre, a place so near and dear to his heart.



MARY ELIZA HENDRICKS (EDUCATION & INNOVATION ASSISTANT) is a Chattanooga native who graduated with a B.A. Theatre Degree from Emory and Henry College in 2021, and has been working as a theatre artist in the Chattanooga area ever since. Her directing credits include: Love Letters and Tin Cat Shoes with the Mountain Arts Theatre, A Stroll Down Holiday Lane at the MACC, and The Y Play at the Chattanooga Theatre Centre. Mary Eliza choreographed Mamma Mia and Newsies at Signal Mountain Middle High School and was previously a teaching

artist intern at the Atlanta Shakespeare Company, teaching theatre to all ages. She also fancies herself on stage from time to time. She is excited to continue exploring new and exciting ways to tell stories with you!

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FIRST HORIZON.





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CRIS KING (COSTUME SHOP MANAGER) is thrilled to be CTC's Costume Shop Manager! Cris joined the CTC family performing in the 2021 production of *Vintage Hitchcock* and later volunteered in the costume shop. She joined the team officially just in time to help with *Aladdin Jr.* Cris hails from Birmingham, AL, and moved to Chattanooga with her beautiful girlfriend Ramsay in 2019. Together they raise two rowdy black cats, Finn and Poe.



KITTY MURAKAMI (BOX OFFICE ASSISTANT) moved here from Ocala, Florida, in 2015. She was raised in upstate New York, graduated from the University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy, and has lived in great places like Denver and Maui. Her first and only experience with theatre (other than high school plays) started as a costume shop volunteer at Ocala Civic Theatre for two years. After retiring as a pharmacist and moving to Chattanooga, she continued volunteering at CTC in the costume shop and is currently the Box Office

Assistant. "It has been an honor and a privilege as well as a wonderful learning experience to be involved with this organization. CTC is blessed to have such an amazing facility, talented dedicated staff and volunteers, and such supportive patrons."



ADAM MIECIELICA (*TECHNICAL DIRECTOR*) joined the CTC team this month. He received his MFA in Scenic Design and Technical Production from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, Arkansas. He has worked professionally designing and working on tech for many theatres across the country including The Santa Fe Opera in Santa Fe, New Mexico, Northern Stage in White River Junction, Vermont, and The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey in Madison, New Jersey.

Adam was Visiting Professor of Scenic Design at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas before teaching at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.



CHUCK TUTTLE (DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & INNOVATION) holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in Children's Theatre and Creative Drama from the University of Texas at Austin and has over 30 years of experience doing theatre with and for young people. His professional background includes serving as Director of Education at Austin Theatre for Youth in Austin, Texas, and Children's Theatre Workshop in Pleasanton, California. Chuck has taught theatre classes to all ages in acting, playwriting, technical theatre, Shakespeare, voice, movement, improvisation, and comedy, among

others. As an actor, he has taken on the roles of Scrooge in A Christmas Carol, Joaquin in El Californio, Simon in The Caucasian Chalk Circle, and Billy Crocker in Anything Goes (which he performed in Hokkaido, Japan.) Directing credits include Waiting for Godot, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, The Nightingale, The Crucible, Once on This Island, God of Carnage, A Year With Frog and Toad, and Go, Dog, Go! Chuck has written several stage adaptations, including Plant, Grow, Pick for CTC's Theatre for the Very Young program. He has collaborated with composer Michael Huseman to create short musicals for our Summer Musical Performance

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December 8th - December 31th



March 22nd - April 7th



June 7th - June 23rd



October 20th - November 5th



February 2nd - February 18th



April 19th - May 5th



July 19th - August 4th



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Because of dedicated supporters like you, the Chattanooga Theatre Centre is now preparing for our 100th season of shows that *enlighten*, *engage*, and *entertain*, but we need your help to make this special community space ready for the future!

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The Centennial CakeOver allows you choose between contributing at one of three levels to celebrate our Centennial Anniversary:

A "Slice of Cake" - (\$1 - \$499) A "Half a Cake" - (\$500 - \$999) A "Whole Cake" - (\$1,000 or above)

Your gift will support a much-needed facility renovation or "*CakeOver*" as we get ready for our big year.

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Because of your generosity, we are beginning renovations to help prepare CTC's community spaces for the future.

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