



# The Second City®

DANCE LIKE  
THERE'S BLACK  
PEOPLE WATCHING

DIRECTED BY ROB WILSON

NOVEMBER 6 - DECEMBER 22, 2024

WOOLLY  
HONEY

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Filming, recording, or taking photographs of this performance by any means whatsoever is strictly prohibited. Please silence your cell phones and any other noisemaking devices.

## A NOTE FROM MARIA



**I don't know about you,  
but I need a laugh!**

Seriously, though, I'm writing this note to you before knowing the outcome of the 2024 election, and I can feel the whole world is on pins and needles, especially here in DC. It is the elephant (or mammoth!) in every room that I walk into these days. Whatever the outcome may be, whenever we may know it, I

know that *Dance Like There's Black People Watching* is the respite you have been looking for.

That's because the world-famous comedy troupe The Second City is back on the Woolly stage! For the first time since the pandemic, Woolly and The Second City pick up our 15-year collaboration in pursuit of the most outrageous, hilarious, and provocative work we can create together. And that's what's so fantastic about this partnership...it is a true artistic relationship where we roll up our sleeves together and learn to speak each other's language every time. We are indebted to so many folks at The Second City: to Kelly Leonard, who met with Howard Shalwitz so many moons ago and championed this collaboration and method of working; to Jeremy Smith, whose tireless producing prowess is the reason this show (and so many other shows) came to be in the first place; to Jen Ellison, who is a rock star Artistic Director overseeing one of the most valuable and beloved visions boldly into this new century.

The greatest joy for me is working with The Second City directors, and it has been an absolute honor to work with the brilliant Rob Wilson! There is always some translation from plays to sketch comedy and vice versa that happens in a process with The Second City...where I start talking

about “scenes” and they keep calling them “sketches” and I’m talking about character arcs and journeys, and they are looking at me like “Oh, wow, she thinks this is like, a REAL play!” Because for me, to be worthy of the Woolly stage, we must strive for our work to flourish to virtuosic heights...and Rob, at EVERY turn, answered the call with a resounding YES. Always.

It’s such a privilege to present this all-Black cast on our stage in our beautiful Historically Black city. This is not the first time we have celebrated Black excellence, and it will not be the last.

Have the best time! And come again! Let’s laugh and find fellowship together inside this theatre...and let whatever is happening outside stay outside for a bit longer.

Te veo en el teatro,

Maria Manuela Goyanes

**Maria Manuela Goyanes**

Artistic Director

Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company



The Second City's *Black Side of the Moon*, 2016. Photo by Teresa Castracane.

**WOOLLY MAMMOTH THEATRE COMPANY**

**MARIA MANUELA GOYANES**  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**KIMBERLY E. DOUGLAS**  
MANAGING DIRECTOR

**PRESENTS**

***The Second City®***  
**DANCE LIKE THERE'S  
BLACK PEOPLE WATCHING**

DIRECTED BY **ROB WILSON**

**ENSEMBLE**

**BREON ARZELL\***  
**TAMIEKA CHAVIS\***  
**JILLIAN EBANKS**

**ARLIETA HALL**  
**MAX THOMAS\***  
**JULIUS SHANKS II**

VP OF CREATIVE  
**JEN ELLISON**

PRODUCER  
**JEREMY SMITH**

STAGE MANAGER  
**DEVONTE E. WASHINGTON\***

SCENIC & LIGHTING DESIGNER  
**COLIN K. BILLS<sup>+</sup>**

SOUND DESIGNER  
**TONY BELSITO**

WARDROBE STYLIST  
**CHELSEY CARTER-SANDERS**

# CAST

## UNDERSTUDIES

Cynthia Davis  
Joseph Griffin II

Raymond J.  
Pauline Lamb

# CREW & PRODUCTION TEAM

Technical Director, The Second City.....John Kelly  
Assistant to the Director.....Nayanna Simone  
Production Assistant.....Fe Miranda  
Associate Lighting Designer.....Ian Claar  
Lighting Programmer.....Susannah Cai  
Sound Programmer.....Sayf Turkomani  
Scenic Charge.....Megan Holden, Yaritza Pacheco  
Carpenters...Lily Anglin, Mickey Cappiello, Ben French, Alex Lopez  
Painters.....Rey Walker, Mrinali Thanwani  
Electricians.....Isa Pelegero, Ainsley Priest,  
Mardelle Singleton, Chris Muska, Troy Johnson, Susannah Cai,  
Courtney Naughton, Max Abramovitz  
Board Technician.....Sydney Bronaugh  
Key Art Design.....Alexis LeBlanc (collage) + Piama Habibullah



[~] Recognizes representation by the Stage Directors & Choreographers Society (SDC), a national theatrical labor union.



[+] Recognizes representation by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE. [^] Recognizes representation by Make-up Artists & Hair Stylists, Local 798 of the IATSE.



[\*] Appearing through an Agreement between this theatre, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

# HISTORY OF THE SECOND CITY AT WOOLLY MAMMOTH

## *JUST WHAT WASHINGTON NEEDED* A CONVERSATION WITH HOWARD SHALWITZ

*Our New Work Department sat down with Woolly's Founding Artistic Director Howard Shalwitz to talk about the history of comedy at Woolly, highlights from 45 seasons, and The Second City.*

### How did Woolly's relationship with The Second City start?

When we moved to this space in 2005, we suddenly had more time to fill because we had our own venue. We weren't prepared to produce a lot more plays than we had before, at least not right away. So, what were we going to do with the extra time?



*She the People: The Resistance Continues! / 2019 / Photo by Timmy Metzner*

Shortly after we moved into the space, I ran into BJ Jones, the longtime artistic director of Northlight Theatre in Chicago. He said there were two specific companies in Chicago I had to get to know. One was The Second City – I was not unfamiliar, of course, but

hadn't seen their work – and the other was the Neo-Futurists. So I arranged a trip to Chicago and spent time with both companies. And I just loved them both. With producer Kelly Leonard at The Second City I got into a dialogue about what the opportunity to perform in Washington might mean for them and what they could bring specifically to Woolly Mammoth. What would it allow them to do that they weren't doing in Chicago? I think this great relationship is still going because we said to them, right from the beginning, "We are only interested in your most outrageous material." And they loved that. I think it's fair to say that The Second City has done some of their most original and most provocative work here at Woolly.

## What is one of the most memorable experiences you've had working with The Second City?

There were so many memorable shows, but *Black Side of the Moon* stands out for me emotionally. The cast did two weeks of rehearsals in Chicago, and then flew here for a final week of rehearsals in DC. They arrived the day after the 2016 election, so it was like a morgue around here – at Woolly and throughout the city. They had put together some great material in Chicago, but now it seemed like the whole world had changed, and everyone was asking, “What do we do now?”

The day they got here we had planned a meet-and-greet in the lobby. We gathered all of The Second City's actors and artists and all of Woolly's staff, and we just went around the room and gave everyone a chance to speak. I can still remember the feeling of it. People were processing their shock, their horror, their grief. And there was a feeling from The Second City folks that it wouldn't be right just to do the show as they had planned it before the election. And everyone from Woolly said, “You do what you have to do, and we'll support you in every way we can.”

In one week they re-wrote more than a third of the show. They came up with new material out of the seat of their pants. Normally, The Second City develops stuff by improv in front of an audience, but this time, they just wrote new sketches to meet the moment. We scheduled more dress rehearsals than usual and more



*Black Side of the Moon* / 2016 / Photo by Teresa Castracane

feedback sessions. That was a great thing about The Second City. They loved having our feedback. It was this great relationship where they trusted us, we trusted them. And everyone just rose to the challenge and worked together. I'm grateful to The Second City – that they created that show at that time, and that they had the tools to respond quickly. The show was a complete sellout. And it was certainly very funny. But what was moving about the show was that it was just what Washington needed. It created a zone of solidarity at a moment where this city needed that.

I've heard about the impact of *Black Side of the Moon*. There's a lore about it in Woolly's history, about how funny and powerful it was. It also connects to a history of comedy centered around the Black experience at Woolly.

Yes, I think of playwrights like Robert O'Hara. His play *Bootycandy*, for example, was a series of short comic sketches that related in many ways to a Second City event. It was written from a specifically Black, gay perspective, mostly meant to make you laugh, but usually subverting stereotypes, turning around liberal expectations in shocking ways – all the stuff that Robert does so brilliantly. Jordan Cooper's *Ain't No Mo'* is a more recent example – a collection of surprising sketches around a set of interrelated themes.



*Ain't No Mo' / 2022 / Photo by DJ Corey*

There is a focus on comedy in Woolly's history that seems to have been an original impulse. Comedy enables a certain kind of provocation and risk-taking that feels integral to Woolly.

I went through Woolly's play history to remind myself how prevalent comedies are here. It really was our thing from the beginning – from absurdist works in the early years, to outrageous writers like Nicky Silver and Amy Freed and Robert O'Hara and Sheila Callaghan, and so many others up to today. And I was trying to ask myself, "Why? Was it just our taste?" But no, it's that comedy gives you license to be provocative without lecturing to an audience. If you're making an audience laugh, the material can be very grim, very provocative, and yet the laughter is convincing you that they're with you. As an actor, and also as a director, you crave the presence and energy of the audience during the event. So that may be why comedy was always at the center of our identity.

And that continues today. We just announced the second half of our season which includes a couple comedies in line with what you've described.

Comedy was a major feature of my tenure and has continued into Maria's – comic plays, comedy troupes like The Second City, and solo comedians like the incredible Alex Edelman or Julia Masli, whose *ha ha ha ha ha ha ha* just knocked me over this season.

And the *outrageous* thread, of course, always continues. It seems to be the thing that sets Woolly apart.

## CAST BIOS



**BREON ARZELL\*** (*Ensemble, Choreographer, he*), Detroit native, is an actor, choreographer, writer, and teaching artist. While choreographing for regional and local theaters and universities, acting credits include: *Incendiary & Ain't No Mo* (Woolly Mammoth Theatre, DC); *Hot Wing King* (Writers Theatre), *Blues for an Alabama*

*Sky* (Remy Bumpo Theatre); *The Comedy of Errors, DREAM* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre); *Little Shop of Horrors, Baskerville* (Metropolis PAC); *The Total Bent* (Haven w/ About Face); *A Christmas Carol, Objects in the Mirror* (Goodman Theatre) and more. TOURS: Theater Unspeakable, USA; White Horse Theatre, Germany; ACLE Theatrino, Italy. In the world of television, he is a recurring character on "South Side" (HBO Max), and choreographed for "The 4400" (CW). The recipient of 7 Joseph Jefferson Awards and 2 Black Theatre Alliance Awards, he has also been recognized as one of New City Magazine's 50 Players of Chicago in 2018, 2020 and 2023. Along with other original works (both theater and screenplays), he is the co-creator and playwright of the revival and resurrection of the historical black musical, *In Dahomey*.

[@breonarzell](https://breonarzell.com) // [breonarzell.com](https://breonarzell.com)



**TAMIEKA CHAVIS\*** (*Ensemble; she/her*) is an actor, teaching artist, and producer. She is beyond excited to be joining the ensemble in The Second City's *Dance Like There's Black People Watching*, following her debut as an understudy in *The Revolution Will Be Improvised* at the Kennedy Center! Tamieka is a graduate of the

British American Drama Academy MIO (UK) and the National Conservatory of Dramatic Arts (DC). She is a company member of the Chesapeake Shakespeare Company and the Black Classical Acting Ensemble in Baltimore, MD. Her recent theatre credits include Chesapeake Shakespeare Company: *Romeo and Juliet, A Raisin in the Sun, Macbeth* (BroadwayWorld Best Actress in Play), *Henry IV Parts 1 & 2, The Tempest*; Mosaic Theatre: *Confederates*,

*Charm, Inherit the Windbag*; 1st Stage: *The Rainmaker* (Helen Hayes Nominated Outstanding Lead Performer), *The Mamalokes*; Imagination Stage: *The Hula Hoopin' Queen*; BADA: *Measure for Measure, Hedda Gabler*. TELEVISION: "Anacostia" (Daytime Emmy nominated and recipient of the Indie Series Award for Best Lead Actress), "The Wire", "Psychic Detectives". FILM: "A Family Matters Christmas", "Raven", "Liam White", "Torn". As a proud member of Actors' Equity Association, Tamieka's commitment to her craft is evident in every role she takes on, and her passion for storytelling shines through her work. When not performing, you can usually find Tamieka teaching Shakespeare to middle and high schoolers with Chesapeake Shakespeare Company, teaching theatre and film acting as a faculty member at the National Conservatory of Dramatic Arts, baking different kinds of focaccia bread, or hiking with her dog Bluey. Follow her on social media [@tamiekachavis](https://twitter.com/tamiekachavis) | [tamiekachavis.com](http://tamiekachavis.com)



**JILLIAN EBANKS** (*Ensemble*) originally from New Jersey, is now a Chicago based comedian, actor, writer, and producer. She is thrilled to be back performing in D.C.! Past performances include *America; It's Complicated!* at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and The Second City National Touring Company.

#BloodCo. She is the co-creator and co-producer of the variety show [@BapsComedy](https://twitter.com/BapsComedy). As a standup comedian, she's performed at top comedy clubs and showcases in Chicago. With a degree in sociology she refuses to use, she hopes all her hard work pays off one day, and Ben & Jerry's asks her to create her very own ice cream flavor. She'd like to thank her family and friends for all their support. She is currently repped by Grossman & Jack Talent.



**ARLIETA HALL** (*Ensemble*) is a host, actress, improviser, stand-up comedian, writer, Certified Dementia Communication specialist, and a first-time filmmaker from Chicago. Arlieta also co-starred as Sadie on Showtime's "The CHI episodic". She is also a co-producer of the popular comedy variety show *My Best Friend is Black*.

Arlieta was a caregiver for her father who died from Alzheimer's disease. She took the power of "Yes, and..." to communicate with him and used their story to make her first feature documentary "Finding Your Laughter." Prior to caregiving for her father Arlieta was an Human Services Caseworker for the State Of Illinois Department of Human Services. She also obtained her Bachelor of Arts in Communications and has over a decade of experience in the educational and social services field. She recently wrote and performed in The Second City's sold-out 2023 & 2024 *Black Excellence Revue* and is now a 2023-24 Sisters in Cinema Documentary Fellow. She is currently performing comedy all around while she continues to work on the completion of "Finding Your Laughter" and other projects.



**MAX THOMAS\*** (*Ensemble*) is a multi-disciplinary artist & community organizer born & raised on the Southside of Chicago. Chicago Theater: *1919* (The Steppenwolf Theatre) *Othello* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); *In The Blood* (Red Tape Theater); *Jitney* (Congo Square Theater); *Dutchmasters* (Jackalope Theater). Comedy:

Comedy Central Featuring Kenan Thompson Presents *The Ultimate Comedy Experience*; NBC Break Out Comedy Festival 2017-2019. Max also is a proud Second City Touring Company member. Television: "Chicago P.D.", "Hot Date". Education: British American Drama Academy (B.A.D.A.), The School at Steppenwolf Theatre, The Second City Chicago Conservatory Grad. When he is not acting he is performing stand-up across the country. He thanks family, friends, & James Baldwin for reminding him he is not alone. Follow Max on all socials [@thatsmaxthomas](https://www.instagram.com/thatsmaxthomas)



**JULIUS SHANKS II** (*Ensemble*) is a twenty-one year-old senior acting major, film production minor at Howard University. He has a passion for uplifting and putting a smile on the faces around him through his acting. He has been in several acting clubs, student councils, and mentoring programs. His most recent work includes the

Kennedy Center's production of *The Revolution will be Improvised* by Second City Theatre, August Wilson *Seven Guitars* at Howard

University, as well as the stage reading of both *In the Blood* and *Brown Girl BrownStone* at Shakespeare Theatre Company. While at Howard University, Julius served as the President of the Howard University Chadwick A. Boseman College of Fine Arts for the 2023-2024 school year. At the age of fifteen, Julius became ordained as a minister. Now every week he splits his time between teaching and concentrating on theater. His dream is to not only act but also write, direct, and produce films that will give encouragement and inspire the youth in a positive light.

## CREATIVE TEAM BIOS

**COLIN K BILLS<sup>+</sup>** (*Scenic & Lighting Designer; he/him*) is a Woolly Company Member and Board Member. He has lit over fifty productions at Woolly, including *Ain't No Mo'*, *Gloria*, *An Octoroon*, *Black Side of the Moon* (with The Second City), *Stupid Fucking Bird*, *The Convert*, *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*, *Oedipus el Rey*, *Clybourne Park*, and *Dead Man's Cell Phone*. He has designed sets and lighting with The Second City for several productions, including those at Woolly as well as *Love*, *Factually* and *The Revolution Will be Improvised* at The Kennedy Center. As a Conspirator with the devised theater company dog & pony dc, he collaborated in the writing, direction and design of *A Killing Game* and *Beertown*, and designed the sets and lighting for numerous others. His designs have been seen at every theater of note in the DMV including the recent production of *Prayer for the French Republic* at Theater J and *Covenant* at Theatre Alliance. He has won three Helen Hayes Awards and is a recipient of a Princess Grace Fellowship in Theater. He has taught design at Howard University and is a graduate of Dartmouth College.

**TONY BELSITO** (*Sound Design*) is a Chicago-based musician and performer originally from Duluth, Minnesota. Tony is currently music directing for The Second City's Touring Company (RedCo), and plays guitar in supergroup *Kid Copter*, signed to Ersatz Records. For business inquiries, email [belsitotony@gmail.com](mailto:belsitotony@gmail.com)

**CHELSEY CARTER-SANDERS** (*Wardrobe Stylist*) is the founder and CEO of Alex Carter brand. After graduating from The Art Institute - Chicago, she launched the Alex Carter brand in 2015

where she caters to customers who are risk-taking but appreciate edgy classics. Sanders has been featured in *Vogue Italia*, *Elle*, *Chicago SunTimes*, *Modern Luxury*, *Covergirl of SPLASH* and *The Chicago Tribune*. She was also a contestant on Bravo's Season 18 of "Project Runway". In addition to these press opportunities, Chelsey has also partnered with brands such as Lexus RX, Lululemon, Converse and HBO Max, to name a few. Chelsey is set on building a legacy of Classic American designs that stand the test of time and hopes to encourage all aspiring designers to do the same. Today, the Alex Carter brand is known for creating everyday clothes for not so everyday people—bridging the gap between simplicity and edge.

**JEN ELLISON** (*VP of Creative*) As a resident director for The Second City, Jen has overseen all three Touring Companies and directed *Apes of Wrath* (e.t.c.) and the Jeff Nominated *Do the Right Thing, No Worries, If Not* (Mainstage). In April of 2024, she directed the very first Mainstage Revue, *Ruthless Acts of Kindness*, at the Second City's brand-new location in New York City. Other Chicago directing credits include Collaboraction, Emerald City, Trap Door Theatre, and The Neo-Futurists, where she is an artistic associate. Dave's #1 fan-crush. Follow [@jenjen1138](#) pretty much everywhere.

**JEREMY SMITH** (*Producer*) is thrilled to be working with this amazing cast and crew on his sixth show in collaboration with Woolly Mammoth Theater Company! Jeremy is currently the AGM & Managing Producer of The Second City Chicago and has produced a multitude of The Second City collaborations such as *Let Them Eat Chaos*, *Black Side of The Moon*, *Nothing to Lose but Our Chains*, and *She The People* (Woolly Mammoth); *The Second City 65th Anniversary Show* (Cincinnati Playhouse); *The Almost Accurate Guide to America* (Kennedy Center), *The Art of Falling* (Hubbard Street Dance Chicago); *The Good, The Bad, and The I-5* (La Jolla Playhouse); *Chicago Live!* (Chicago Tribune), and *Rod Blagojevich Superstar!* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater). He has also served as Producer for numerous revues at The Second City as well as countless other productions in Chicago and around the world.

**DEVONTE E. WASHINGTON\*** (*Stage Manager*) is excited to work on this show. He started his time with Second City on this black excellence show in 2023. He comes from a theater background

and learned all that he knows from trial and error and many guiding hands along the way. His talents have been used with many events, venues and shows throughout the states. Getting better with every show he wants to continue to get better at what he does while continuously learning more and more. Enjoy the show.

**ROB WILSON** (*Director, Associate Artistic Director The Second City, he/him/his*) a native of the DMV he has made the most of his time in Chicago, recently directing the 112th Main Stage Revue, The Second City Touring Company, *SuperAfroWavyDrippy-ExtraBrilliantDopeShow*, *Black By Popular Demand*, and the first production of *Dance Like There's Black People Watching*. When he is not directing he performs as well most recently playing JD in the Feature Film "Penitencia" and Joel on the first season of FOX's "The Big Leap". He has also appeared on FOX's "Empire", SHOWTIME's "Shameless", both NBC's "Chicago Med" and "Chicago Fire" and MAX's "Southside". Rob has toured the nation with both The Second City's Touring Company and The Westside Theater's Mission Improvable. Not one to be idle, Rob created and executive produced the digital series "Lil Monsters", "Midnight Showing", and "The Basement". Rob is repped by Stewart Talent and you can see all that and what else he's working on at his IG [@Rob\\_Willsun](#)

## UNDERSTUDY BIOS



**CYNTHIA DAVIS** (*Understudy Tamiaka Chavis & Jillian Ebanks*) is excited to be returning to Woolly Mammoth, where she formerly served as a Connectivity Fellow. Cynthia is an actor and singer who is dedicated to using the arts as a form of social justice and education. Past performance credits include: *The Transatlantic Time Traveling Company* (Ruth), *Mouse on the Move* (Nellie), *Look Both Ways* (Understudy), *Nate the Great* (Understudy), *Audrey: The New Musical* (Ella Fitzgerald), *Sistas The Musical* (Tamika), *Roll On The Musical* (Shirlie Mae), *From the Mississippi Delta* (Woman 1), *Fairy Tales in the Sun* (Understudy). See Cynthia next on the *Look Both Ways* tour with the Kennedy Center TYA and follow her work on insta [@cadavis516](#)



**JOSEPH GRIFFIN II** (*Understudy Breon Arzell*) is thrilled to make his debut at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company. HOWARD UNIVERSITY: *Sonnets and Soul*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Heathers: The Musical*. EDUCATION: Howard University, BFA Musical Theatre, Class of 2025. Joseph is eternally grateful to his family, friends, and professors for their unwavering love and support! [josephsgriffin.com](http://josephsgriffin.com) | [@josephsgriffin](https://www.instagram.com/josephsgriffin) on IG.



**RAYMOND J.** (*Understudy Julius Shanks II and Max Thomas*) (*He/Him*) is a senior at the oldest HBCU in the state of Maryland, Bowie State University. At Bowie, he is pursuing a Bachelors of Science in Theatre Arts with a concentration in Acting/Directing while also accomplishing his dream of being a playwright. Raymond would

like to thank The Second City & Woolly Mammoth Theatre Co. for this opportunity. He would also like to thank his friends, family & girlfriend for their non-stop support throughout his artistic journey. He can't wait to knock your socks off and dance like there's black people watching!



**PAULINE LAMB** (*Understudy Arlieta Hall*) designs props, sets, and costumes throughout the DMV area while also performing, choreographing, and teaching. She has a BA in Performance Studies from UNC Chapel Hill. Previous acting credits include *Alonsa in The Tempest Musical* (Devil's Isle Shakespeare Co.), *Postcards from*

*Ihatov* (1st Stage), Eloise in *School Girls or the African Mean Girls Play* (Nextstop Theater), Mama in *The Bluest Eye* (Theatre Alliance), Tatiana in *Chicks in Heaven* + Daisy in *Diagnosed* (Creative Cauldron) Woman 2 in *From the Mississippi Delta* (The Essential Theater), Claudia in *Time is on Our Side* (Perisphere Theatre), Simone in *Weep* (Nu Sass), and Sylvia in *Blight* (Pinky Swear Productions). Her choreography and design has been featured at Imagination Stage, 1st Stage, Pallas Theatre Collective, Adventure Theater, Chesapeake Shakespeare Company, GALA Hispanic Theatre, and varying schools throughout the DMV.

# GUAC

WRITTEN & PERFORMED BY MANUEL OLIVER  
CO-WRITTEN BY JAMES CLEMENTS  
DIRECTED BY MICHAEL COTÉY

# GUAC

JANUARY 25 - FEBRUARY 16

WOOLLY  
HLOWWW

## IT'S A MOTHERF\*\*KING PLEASURE

WRITTEN BY AARIAN MEHRABANI, CHLOE  
PALMER, SAMUEL BREWER, WITH JOSH ROCHE  
DIRECTED BY JOSH ROCHE

MARCH 6 - 30

WOOLLY  
HLOWWW

## AKIRA KUROSAWA EXPLAINS HIS MOVIES AND YOGURT (WITH LIVE & ACTIVE CULTURES!)

BY JULIA IZUMI  
DIRECTED BY AILEEN WEN MCGRODDY

WOOLLY  
HLOWWW

MAY 4 - JUNE 1

THE PARTY CONTINUES!

ALL-SEASON PASS

# GOLDEN TICKET

WOOLLY  
HLOWWW

# UPCOMING PROGRAMMING

## IN THE LOBBY: BLACKHAIR BY MARVIN BOWSER

Created in 2023, "BlackHair" is Marvin Bowser's love letter to Black people and culture. From over 3,000 images, Bowser has curated 41 for this exhibition, which you will see around Woolly's lobby. The collection speaks to Black joy, love, beauty, strength, resilience, expression, and fantasy. Find out more about the collection on [Bowser's website](#).



*The Court* by Marvin Bowser

## ART TALK: MARVIN BOWSER

Join us in the rehearsal hall for a special pre-show artist talk with Marvin Bowser on December 10th! We'll be discussing the impetus for his collection, BlackHair, as well as how his work connects with our

production of *Dance Like There's Black People Watching*. Learn more and sign up on Woolly's website.

LEARN  
MORE

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INFO

## ARTIST TALKBACKS

Join us after the show on select dates to hear from the cast and discuss the themes of *Dance Like There's Black People Watching*!

- Sunday, November 24 (matinee)
- Sunday, December 8 (matinee)

## HERD HAPPY HOUR

**Herd Happy Hour is back!** Join us on Thursdays at 7pm to relax, mingle, and discover the behind-the-scenes magic with special Woolly guests before you see the show.

- November 7, 14
- December 5, 12, 19



## DANCE CYPHER & FIT SWAP: BEHIND THE GROOVE - DC EDITION

Join Core Connectivity Partner Miss Chief Rocka and Hip-Hop legend Rokafella for **Behind the Groove—DC Edition**. This popular NYC dance party event will debut in DC on **November 23rd**, and invites street and club-style dancers to freestyle and share in an exchange of moves. This electric evening includes a Fresh Fit clothing swap. All ages welcome.

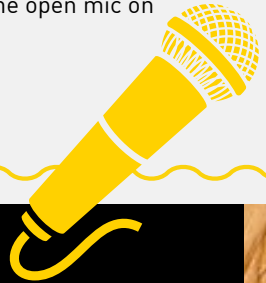


SIGN  
UP

## SPIT DAT IN RESIDENCE

**Spit Dat is the longest-running open mic in the nation's capital and is hosted at Woolly on the third Monday of every month.** A profoundly intimate artistic and spiritual experience which has fought to remain a safe space through nearly two decades of societal changes, Spit Dat combines world-class talent with a living room vibe. Spit Dat in Residence is hosted by Drew Anderson and Miko Reed and spotlights two artists every month. Learn more about how to sign up for the open mic on Woolly's website!

- **November 18 at 8PM**
- **December 16 at 8PM**



# ABOUT WOOLLY MAMMOTH

The Tony Award®-winning Woolly Mammoth creates badass theatre that highlights the stunning, challenging, and tremendous complexity of our world. Woolly is proud to be considered “a national champion of the new—and frequently provocative—American play” (*Washington Post*).

For over 40 years, Woolly has maintained a high standard of artistic rigor while simultaneously daring to take risks, innovate, and push beyond perceived boundaries. Woolly Mammoth was co-founded in 1980 by Roger M. Brady, Linda Reinisch, and Howard Shalwitz and is now co-led by Artistic Director Maria Manuela Goyanes and Managing Director Kimberly E. Douglas. Located in Washington, DC, equidistant from the Capitol Building and the White House, this unique location influences Woolly’s investment in actively working our mission: To produce courageous and invigorating new work to radically redefine theatre as a catalyst for an equitable, creative, and engaged society.

One of the few remaining theatres in the country to maintain a company of artists, Woolly serves as an essential research and development role within the American theatre.

**PLAYS PREMIERED HERE HAVE GONE ON TO PRODUCTIONS AT HUNDREDS OF THEATRES ALL OVER THE WORLD AND HAVE HAD LASTING IMPACTS ON THE FIELD.**

*A Strange Loop* was produced at Woolly in 2021, ran on Broadway from April 2022 through January 2023, and won the Tony Award® for Best Musical in 2022. Other notable highlights include the world premiere productions of Danai Gurira’s *Eclipsed* in 2009 that later went on to be the first Broadway play with a cast & creative team of all Black women; Bruce Norris’ Pulitzer Prize-winner *Clybourne Park* in 2010; and Anne Washburn’s *Mr. Burns: a post-electric play* in 2012. Woolly produces theatre beyond our building by sending productions like Aaron Posner’s *Stupid F\*cking Bird* across the nation, bringing Aleshea Harris’ *What to Send Up When It Goes Down*

to neighborhoods throughout DC, and launching a national tour of Madeline Sayet's *Where We Belong*.

Woolly has built a reputation for innovation off the stage as well. Woolly values building relationships with its local community and resident artists in the DMV area. Our nationally-acclaimed Connectivity Department is one of the ways we accomplish this by linking Woolly to like-minded community organizations in order to generate mutually beneficial, impact and power-aware partnerships.

## **WE'VE EARNED OUR REPUTATION BY HOLDING FAST TO OUR CORE VALUES.**

We are an anti-racist and radically inclusive community—across race, ethnicity, nationality, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical ability, socioeconomic background, and political viewpoint—in which all are encouraged to exchange ideas freely and reach for new understanding. We are a supportive home for creative risk-taking by our company and guest artists, staff, board, volunteers, audiences, donors, and colleagues. Through relentless inquiry and experimentation, we strive for world-class excellence and innovation in every aspect of our work.

## **OUR AUDIENCE COMPLETES OUR MISSION.**

Woolly attracts one of the youngest and most diverse theatre audiences in DC, and we're committed to making our work widely accessible. Woolly was the first to pioneer Pay-What-You-Will tickets in the DMV, which are now available at every single performance. We also offer \$25 day-of-show Stampede Seats, \$25 tickets for all patrons 30 and Under, and a variety of discounts for educators, members of the military, and artists.

**THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR DONORS, SUBSCRIBERS, AND AUDIENCE MEMBERS. WITH YOUR SUPPORT, WE WILL CONTINUE TO FIND AND PRODUCE THE MOST INNOVATIVE NEW PLAYS IN AMERICA.**

## WOOLLY MAMMOTH LEADERSHIP



### MARIA MANUELA GOYANES

(she/her) is the **Artistic Director** of Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company. Prior to joining Woolly, she served as the Director of Producing and Artistic Planning at The Public Theater, where she oversaw the day-to-day execution of a full slate of plays and musicals at the Public's five-theatre venue at Astor Place and the Delacorte Theater for Shakespeare in the Park.

Earlier in her career at The Public, she managed some of the theatre's most celebrated productions, including *Hamilton* by Lin-Manuel Miranda, *Josephine and I* by Cush Jumbo, *Straight White Men* by Young Jean Lee, *Barbecue* by Robert O'Hara, and *Here Lies Love* by David Byrne and Fatboy Slim.



Pictured in *A Strange Loop*: Jason Veasy, John-Michael Lyles, Jaquel Spivey, John-Andrew Morrison, James Jackson, Jr., Antwayn Hopper.

While at The Public, Maria also held a position on the adjunct faculty of Juilliard and curated the junior year curriculum of the Playwrights Horizons Theater School at NYU. She has guest lectured at Bard College, Barnard College, Brown University, Columbia University, Juilliard, the National Theater Institute at The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, UCSD, the University of Texas-Austin, and Yale University, among others.

Since 2015, Maria has also served as a member of the board of the National Alliance for Musical Theatre. From 2006 to 2008, she co-chaired the Soho Rep Writer/Director Lab with Jason Grote, and from 2004 to 2012, Maria was the Executive Producer of 13P, one of her proudest achievements. Maria is a first-generation Latinx-American, born to parents who emigrated from the Dominican Republic and Spain. She was raised in Jamaica, Queens, and has a collection of hoop earrings to prove it. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in 2001 from Brown University.



**KIMBERLY E. DOUGLAS** [*she/her*] is the **Managing Director** of Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company. She has 20+ years of experience in event production management, program development, strategic partnerships, arts education, and the performing arts.

Graduating from Duke Ellington School of the Arts, Kimberly then continued her studies at Howard University College of Fine Arts graduating with a

B.A. in Music Business and a minor in Jazz Voice.

Kimberly served as the Managing Artistic Director for THEARC Theater, a program of Building Bridges Across the River. For 15 years she led the theater operations for a 365-seat theater and a Black Box, led the development and fundraising for theater initiatives such as facilities and buildings enhancements and upgrades, curated

seasonal programming on THEARC Theater stage and Black Box, and expanded relationships and funding for the iCAN Technical Theater internship. Through her leadership, THEARC Theater is widely recognized as a cultural staple for artists, arts organizations, and community East of the River. Kimberly served as a board member for Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company from April 2021–March 2023 after establishing a long-standing partnership as Woolly Mammoth’s Core Connectivity partner.

Kimberly launched her company KD ARTS Consulting in March 2022, providing program curation and production services, talent and operations management, and arts administration. Through KD ARTS Consulting, she worked with organizations like Demaskus Theatre Collective in residency at the August Wilson African American Cultural Center and The Musicianship’s 2023 Wammie Awards. Currently, Kimberly is co-chair of the D.C. Co-lab Equity and Justice Committee advocating for arts education. She was born and raised in D.C. and presently resides in Upper Marlboro, MD.

## **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Woolly Mammoth acknowledges that our theatre stands upon occupied, unceded territory: the ancestral homeland of the Nacotchtank whose descendants belong to the Piscataway peoples. Furthermore, the foundation of this city, and most of the original buildings in Washington, DC, were funded by the sale of enslaved people of African descent and built by their hands.

*Language developed in consultation  
with Dr. Gabrielle Tayac*

# WOOLLY MAMMOTH STAFF

## LEADERSHIP

Artistic Director.....Maria Manuela Goyanes  
 Managing Director.....Kimberly E. Douglas  
 Artistic Director Emeritus.....Howard Shalwitz

## ADMINISTRATION

General Manager.....J.P. McLaurin  
 Company Manager.....Maura O'Reilly  
 Rentals and Operations Manager.....Kristen Temple

## FINANCE

Director of Finance.....Casey Hayes-Deats  
 Staff Accountant.....Emily Falkenstein

## ARTISTIC

Resident Intimacy Consultant.....Chelsea Pace

## NEW WORK

Director of New Work.....Sonia Fernandez  
 Miranda Family New Work & Artistic Producing Fellow.....Aysha Zackria

## PRODUCTION

Director of Production.....Ben Levine  
 Technical Director.....Teddy Mueller  
 Scene Shop Supervisor.....Sunny Cushing-Spiller  
 Costume Supervisor.....Andrew Landon Cutler  
 Lighting Supervisor.....Elliot Peterson  
 A/V Supervisor.....Levi Manners  
 Production Coordinator.....Ynika Pocopio Yuag  
 Miranda Family Production Fellow.....Fe Miranda

## DEVELOPMENT

Director of Development .....KellyAnn Nelson  
 Grants Manager.....Olivia Yamamoto  
 Individual Giving Manager.....Ngozia Hunter  
 Special Events Manager.....Daniel Young

## CONNECTIVITY

Assoc. Artistic Dir./Connectivity Director.....Kristen Jackson  
 Assoc. Dir. of Connectivity.....Emily Lathrop  
 Miranda Family Connectivity Fellow.....Annie Nguyen

## MARKETING & AUDIENCE SERVICES

Director of Marketing.....Josh Feldman  
 Associate Director of Marketing.....Melissa Sturges  
 Creative Content Designer.....Piama Habibullah  
 Miranda Family Marketing Fellow.....Gisela Estrada  
 Interim Audience Services Manager.....Fletcher Lowe  
 Audience Services Associates.....Che Arrington and Terrence Griffin  
 Public Relations Consultant.....Amy Killion, Bucklesweet Media  
 Box Office Supervisors.....Miranda McDermott, Chelsea Foster,  
 Michael Meyerson, Hannah Donoghue, Kara Harrison, Che Arrington  
 Box Office Associates.....Chelsea Foster,  
 Hannah Donoghue, Kara Harrison, Cynthia Perdue, William Maedel, Che  
 Arrington, Layla Nabavi, Zoie Collins  
 Concessionaires.....Alfonso Morales-  
 Escobar, Zoie Collins, William Maedel III, Andrea Bellamore, Rakell Foye,  
 Kara Harrison, Wallace Ash Hewchuck  
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Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company is proud to be supported by an active and engaged 26-member Board of Directors.

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**Kaiti Saunders**  
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**Ivania Stack**

**Sari Hornstein**

**Michael E. Ramirez**

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**Gerardo Luna**

## COMPANY OF ARTISTS

**Colin K. Bills**

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**Robert O'Hara**

**Shana Cooper**

**Misha Kachman**

**Tosin Olufolabi**

**Shannon Dorsey**

**Sarah Marshall**

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**Yury Urnov**

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# CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDERS

Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company remains more dedicated than ever to the evolution of the American theatre, and we could not produce ground-breaking new plays and world class artistry without our fearless family of donors. We would like to thank the following contributors who made gifts of \$300 or more between July 1, 2023 and September 20, 2024. Thank you!

*Dance Like There's Black People Watching* is made possible thanks to the special Mammoth support of Nancy Hartsock.

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# WHY GIVE?

Unlike the woolly mammoth, which went extinct more than 10,000 years ago, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company isn't going anywhere anytime soon. The reason? People like you! Over our 40+ year history, contributions from patrons continue to provide the bedrock of support that makes everything we do possible.

## YOUR GIFT TO WOOLLY MAMMOTH ALLOWS US TO:

**Produce innovative theatrical productions** you cannot see anywhere else.

**Offer ticket accessibility programs** such as Pay-What-You-Will seats for every performance, ensuring our work remains accessible to all.

**Pilot radical care programs** like our Company Pool Fund, which offers grants to our Company members to invest in their personal and professional growth.

**Provide transformational career development opportunities** through the Miranda Family Fellowship program to train and compensate the next generation of theatre makers.

**Establish innovative collaborative partnerships** with local organizations like SPIT DAT, DC's longest running open mic, THEARC Theater, and Howard University.

**And so, so much more!**

## SUPPORT WOOLLY TODAY!

To learn more about making a gift to Woolly Mammoth or to take advantage of our NEW benefits, please contact our Development Department by calling **202-312-5276** or email us at **[development@woollymammoth.net](mailto:development@woollymammoth.net)**.

Thank you for making our work possible!





## BECOME A MAMMOTH FOREVER:

Arranging a planned gift to Woolly Mammoth today is a special way to ensure your legacy and have a long-term impact on the theatre even after your lifetime. We are here to provide resources and ensure that making a planned gift to Woolly Mammoth is as seamless as possible.

### WOOLLY MAMMOTH CAN ACCEPT PLANNED GIFTS IN THE FORM OF:

#### **Bequests:**

A bequest is made by adding a codicil to an existing will or preparing a new will.

#### **Retirement Plan:**

Make Woolly a beneficiary of a retirement plan such as a 401(k); IRA; 403(b).

#### **Life Insurance Name:**

Woolly Mammoth as a beneficiary to receive proceeds at the end of a lifetime.

#### **Charitable Trust Gifts:**

A charitable trust is an irrevocable trust established for charitable purposes.

## LET US KNOW YOUR PLANS—AND DEEPEN YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH WOOLLY.

For a confidential conversation or to share your intentions, please contact Woolly's Development Department at **202-312-5276** or email **[development@woollymammoth.net](mailto:development@woollymammoth.net)**.

*"In my view, theatre arts endure as one of humanity's greatest achievements—speaking across centuries and civilizations. I want Woolly's bold voice to continue these critical conversations across cultures and between generations. So...through my estate I've planned for the future, mine and Woolly's."*

*—Donna Ari, Mammoth Forever*



# **MAMMOTH FOREVER: A PLANNED GIVING INITIATIVE**

We would like to thank the farsighted group of donors who have included Woolly Mammoth in their estate plans:

Donna Ari

Jim Asp & Perry Streidel

J. Chris Babb & James Martin

Susan Barrett

Nan Beckley

Elizabeth & Paul L. Friedman

Renee Gier

David Gorsline

Nancy A. Hartsock

Linette S. Hwu

Gene & Dale Kenney

Thomas M. Leahey

Karen Lefkowitz & Allen Neyman

Jean E. Osburn

Amy Phillips

Julie F. Rios

Evelyn & Scott Schreiber

Howard Shalwitz

Linda W. Sorkin

Marvin F. Weissberg

To learn more about how to make a planned gift, please contact our Development Department by calling 202-312-5276 or email us at [development@woollymammoth.net](mailto:development@woollymammoth.net)

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## **CONNECTIVITY AMBASSADORS**

The Ambassadors are a network of volunteers who help advocate for Woolly Mammoth, deepen our ties to a range of DC communities, and support resourcing the work of the theatre. They work closely with the Connectivity, Marketing, and Development Departments to offer insights on the plays from an audience perspective, mobilize their circles, organize events, coordinate groups, support special events, and more.

If you are interested in becoming an ambassador, please contact Associate Director of Connectivity Emily Lathrop at [emily.lathrop@woollymammoth.net](mailto:emily.lathrop@woollymammoth.net)



The Second City®

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