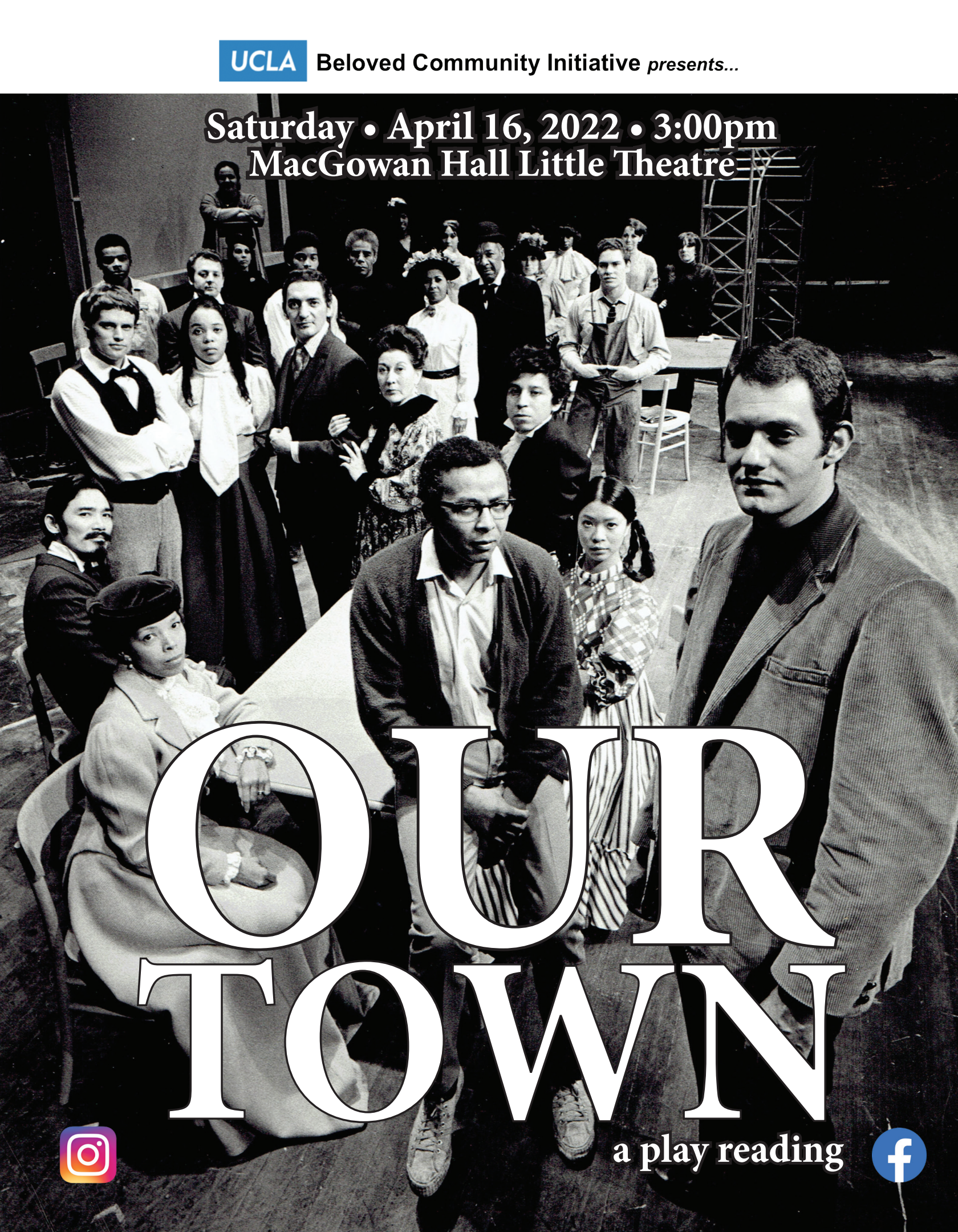


**UCLA**

Beloved Community Initiative *presents...*

**Saturday • April 16, 2022 • 3:00pm**  
**MacGowan Hall Little Theatre**



# OUR TOWN

a play reading





A Beloved Community Awareness Week Event

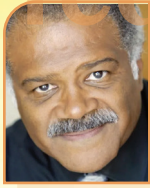


Los Angeles Inner City Cultural Center  
3341 W 43rd Pl • Los Angeles, CA 90008  
(213) 234-1717  
[innercityculturalcenter@gmail.com](mailto:innercityculturalcenter@gmail.com)  
[www.innercityculturalcenter.org](http://www.innercityculturalcenter.org)

Saturday • April 16, 2022 • 3:00pm

## PRODUCTION TEAM

### Ted Lange



#### **Ted Lange** - Director

TED LANGE, Director, Author, and Actor, exemplifies the Renaissance Man Theatre Award that he received from the NAACP in Los Angeles. A graduate of London's Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts, Lange has written twenty-five plays and garnered multiple theatrical awards. As a stage director, Lange received the Oakland Ensemble Theatre's Paul Robeson Award. Highlights from his stage directing include an interracial *Hamlet* starring Glynn Turman; and *Othello*, which he starred in, at the Inner City Cultural Center. He made his Broadway acting debut in the musical hit *Hair* and his theatrical acting career spans over fifty plays including South Coast Repertory's *Piano Lesson*, and a national tour of *Driving Miss Daisy*. As a star of *The Love Boat*, Lange spent ten seasons portraying "Isaac Washington." As a film and television director, his credits are numerous. He earned the James Cagney Directing Fellow Scholarship Award from the American Film Institute.

### Ernest Dillihay



#### **Ernest Dillihay** - Executive Producer

Ernest helps guide The Cultural Legacy Project. He also heads his own company, Arts Culture Entertainment, LLC and is a founding partner in the Diversity Equity Inclusion Group, LLC. He is the former Performing Arts Director and Cultural Facilities Director for the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs supervising operations at five city-owned theaters including the Vision Theatre renovation and property manager for 27 additional cultural facilities. He is a former LA Stage Alliance board member; chaired the California State Chapter for African Grove Institute for the Arts (AGIA), Inc., co-founded by the late playwright August Wilson; and was awarded fellowships to the National Endowment for the Arts and CORO Public Affairs and the Arts Program. He worked with the California Arts-in-Corrections. He is UCLA Ethnic Arts (World Arts & Cultures-B.A.) and Theatre Management (M.F.A.) graduate, an Inner City alumnus and a USMC veteran.

### Carmen Hayward-Stetson



#### **Carmen Hayward-Stetson**, Co-Producer

Ms. Hayward-Stetson is a stage, television and event producer (dba VisuaLife Productions). As a board member at the Ensemble Studio Theater in Hollywood she produced several shows, including West Memphis Mojo starring Larry Riley (A Soldier's Story and Knots Landing) and directed by Michael Peters (Thriller). She gained production and copywriting skills working for ABC-TV, ABC Motion Pictures and Taft Entertainment Television before going on to executive produce Gettin' It Right, a talk show for African American families. Carmen is a current board member for the Los Angeles Inner City Cultural Center.

### Oscar Edwards



#### **Oscar Edwards** (DEIG, LLC) - Panel Discussion Moderator

Oscar Edwards is the Managing Member of Diversity Equity & Inclusion Group, LLC, a firm that designs and facilitates organizational and community change based on storytelling processes. He is also the CEO of Higher Growth Strategies, LLC, a management advisory firm servicing family-run, small and middle-market businesses in strategy, capital structuring, and exit planning. He leads the Finance Faculty for the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses Program Faculty at Los Angeles City College. Oscar is a BRUIN, currently serving as Advisory Committee Chair; UCLA Beloved Community Initiative (BCI); holds a BA in Economics and an MBA in Finance/Marketing from the UCLA Anderson School of Management; was a member of the BRUIN football team, an All-Conference, 1976 Rose Bowl Champion; Team Captain and Co-MVP in 1976 and garnered Kodak (American Football Coaches Association), UPI First Team All-American honors and played professionally with the NFL Los Angeles Rams. He has served on numerous UCLA boards and committees. Oscar is also a True Storytelling Institute (TSI) Level I and II Certified Trainer, specializing in the deconstruction and reconstruction of narratives by together telling sense making and bets on the future.

### Rocky Hood

**Rocky Hood** - Production Stage Manager

### Will Mahood

**Will Mahood** - Sound Designer/Sound Editor



# Message from the Chair

***The past is prologue. C. Bernard Jackson stated that  
“Art may be the only tool we have left to save ourselves from destruction.”***

The late Academy Award-winning actor Gregory Peck, along with others, was instrumental in securing the Inner City Cultural Center as a participant with the National Educational Laboratory Theater Project (ELTP).

In Inner City's second inaugural season, 1968, of the ELTP, Jack decided to direct and produce Thornton Wilder's OUR TOWN. Being true to his philosophy of color-blind and non-traditional casting Jack presented the play in Los Angeles with a multi-cultural, ethnic and racial cast. Since this had never been done, the news of this production reached the New York Times. The review's title read:

***“ ‘Our Town’ is integrated in Los Angeles.***

***In the 30 years since Thornton Wilder's ‘Our Town’ first saw the light of a stage there has been no production with casting so novel and startling...Emily Webb is being played by a Negro, her father by an Apache, her Mother by a Russian-American and her brother by a Mexican-American, her sweetheart and husband by a blond Caucasian, his father by a Japanese-American, his mother by a Negro and his sister by a Chinese-American.”***

***“The concept is right,” said Jeannie Joe, ‘What’s more, multiracial casting will provide a new perspective for producers. I won’t have to wait for the next production of ‘Flower Drum Song’ before I get another chance to act.’***

***- The New York Times  
December 14, 1968***

If past is prologue, the Inner City Cultural Center foreshadowed events to come and established itself unequivocally and unapologetically as the original genesis, i.e., the “O.G.” in the space advocating for diversity, equity and inclusion in the arts, culture, stage, screen and television industries.

Thus, Inner City returns with a redux of OUR TOWN to UCLA, where in the late 1950's and early 60's Jack Jackson, a music student and dance rehearsal pianist working with Dr. Alma Hawkins, doing dance movement classes in the Neuropsychiatric Institute, met Dr. J. Alfred Cannon, a mental health expert. Together Jackson and Cannon mutually agreed that the arts could be used as a bridge for cross-cultural communications among the so-called “minority” groups in the city. Joined by others in the UCLA Theater and Dance department faculty and Hollywood notables, the conversations took shape in the green room and people's homes. In contrast to the formation of the Inner City Cultural Center and its ultimate footprint anchored within the “urban cultural core” of Los Angeles, the Center Theater Group with the assistance and input of then Chancellor Franklin D. Murphy, was taking shape. These two cultural icons, one a student and the other a chancellor, helped shape the cultural landscape in the city of Los Angeles whose impact is still reverberating to this day. This is especially true when we look at the issue of diversity, equity and inclusion. As Jack opined, “Art may be the only tool left we have to save ourselves from destruction”.

So, under the aegis of the ‘Beloved Community’ philosophy of UCLA's Josiah Royce, Namesake of Royce Hall, and the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who adopted Royce's philosophy, Inner City Cultural Center, the “O.G.” of diversity, equity and inclusion, returns to the place of its conception with OUR TOWN to engage in a presentation and a discussion of what we thought was already adjudicated but it seems we have to revisit.

And even as we engage in a communal discussion, we also offer a bridge to the future and invite students, staff and faculty as Jack Jackson, Dr. Cannon, Gregory Peck and others did years ago, and ask you to join with Inner City's Cultural Legacy Project in association with the Performing Arts Legacy Project and our Committee of One Thousand, to move forward with the design and building of the new Los Angeles Inner City Cultural Center/C. Bernard Jackson Memorial Library so that we can preserve this cultural legacy.

The new Center Library is the vision we imagine in our mind's eye and see as a solution to build a better bridge overcoming the diversity, equity and inclusion gap that exists in our society.

The End? Not yet. Our present is prologue to what we are set to achieve.



# Vusiszwe Azania

**Vusiszwe Azania - Co-Founder/Director**

## Message from the Co-Founder/Director of the UCLA Beloved Community Initiative

Founded in 1919, today the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) is the #1 public Research University recognized for its medicine, performing arts & athletics. Since 1929, it is located in the Westwood neighborhood of Los Angeles, California.

A key goal of the UCLA Beloved Community Initiative is for our campus to become recognized as a place where Champions of the Beloved Community Are Made.

### ***Here's why.***

In 1927, a bridge became the first structure erected on the new Westwood campus. A few years earlier UCLA founders had made the decision to Westwood relocate from East Hollywood. The land purchased from the Janss brothers has afforded UCLA the opportunity to expand, becoming a world class institution and the most applied to college of university in the United States.

The UCLA Bridge itself would become known as "The Avenue to the Future."

Born a few days after the UCLA Bridge was inaugurated in 1927, was C. Bernard Jackson, founding director of the Los Angeles Inner City Cultural Center which would also become known as an avenue to the future if you will for aspiring actors, directors, writers, etc. When the new Westwood campus finally opened for academic instruction to begin in the fall of 1929, the founders had expressed that they named the first main classroom building Royce Hall in hopes that the new campus would come to represent the thinking and tradition of Josiah Royce.

It is popular belief that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., gave the world the noble ideal of the Beloved Community. Dr. King has certainly come to be recognized as the Beloved Community's greatest champion, investing the ideal with a deeper meaning and a higher purpose. However, as it turns out, it is actually Josiah Royce, a late 19th, early 20th century philosopher and educator from Grass Valley, California, who first coined the phrase.

Thus, what the UCLA founders were saying in 1929, is that they wanted UCLA to become the place where Champions of the Beloved Community Are Made.

### ***So what does any and all of this have to do with C. Bernard Jackson and the cultural legacy of the Los Angeles Inner City Cultural Center?***

I'll tell you.

C. Bernard Jackson would himself grow up and become a Bruin. And it is on the Westwood campus, in response to Watts exploding, that Jackson gave birth to idea of the Inner City Cultural Center.

As co-founder and director of the UCLA Beloved Community Initiative I am honored to be a part of this worthwhile effort to steward the legacy of C. Bernard Jackson - a true Champion of the Beloved Community if ever there was one.

Since 2020, one of the ways we do this is by presenting the C. Bernard Jackson UCLA Bridge Builders Award on the third Tuesday of April each year, during our annual Beloved Community Luncheon. As we approach his centennial, the UCLA Beloved Community Initiative is committed to finding other ways to help steward the legacy of C. Bernard Jackson. Presenting "Our Town" a play reading by LA Inner City Cultural Center is another example of our commitment. On behalf of the UCLA Beloved Community Initiative, our partners and stakeholders, thank you for joining us.



OUR TOWN CAST



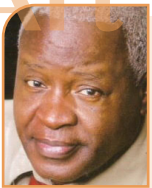
**Acolmixtli (Wolfie) Ortega - Wally Webb**

Acolmixtli “Wolfie” Ortega, is a 12-year-old multifaceted performer from Huntington Beach, California. Wolfie is a performance student at CASA 0101 Theater in Boyle Heights, under the direction of Edward Padilla and Corky Dominguez. He is grateful for the opportunity to work with the Inner City Cultural Center on this project and looks forward to future opportunities to be on stage.



**Antonio D. Charity - Simon Stimson**

Antonio D. Charity is from Surry County, VA. He received a BFA in theatre from Howard University. He has performed in many Off-Broadway, regional and community theatres around the country. Most recently he starred in the title role of “Caesar” in the Griot Theatre’s production of *Julius Caesar*. His TV and film credits include appearances on *Law & Order*, *Bosch*, *All My Children*, *Sons of Anarchy*, *Grey’s Anatomy*, *The Wire*, *Danger Force*, *Bumblebee*, *The Orville*, *The Captain and the Winter Soldier* and many others.



**Art Evans - Mr. Webb**

Theatre, Film, Television and Music credits. For the past few decades Art has taught his mentor, Frank Silvera’s, “Theater of Being” and in the 60’s notably went to Broadway where he originated the role of “David” in James Baldwin’s *The Amen Corner* with Ms. Beah Richards. Mr. Evans has been honored by many notable organizations for acting and his lifetime of achievements. He has appeared in numerous feature films including: *A Soldier’s Story*, *Jojo Dancer*, *Your Life is Calling*, *School Daze*, *Tales From the Hood*, *Die Hard2*, *Trespass*, and *Metro*. His TV adventures continue in 2022 with a guest starring role on Kevin Hart’s “*Black Husbands of Hollywood*.” ‘Pass it Forward’ is Art’s mission.



**Barbara Roberts - Jo Stoddard**

Barbara Roberts is a well-known actor/singer/poet/writer/director and activist who has appeared on stage, film and television. As a jazz and blues vocalist, Barbara has penned and starred in three solo musical productions and is presently working on a fourth. Barbara currently serves as a National Principal Councilor and Western Region Board Member for Actors Equity Association. Barbara holds an MFA from Cal Arts and a MSW from UWM. She is the Founder and Owner of Real Images, LLC, whose mission is to achieve justice for humanity one step at a time.



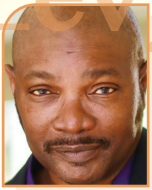
**Charda Jameson - Rebecca Gibbs**

Charda is an actress and model from Detroit, MI. She is a graduate of the University of Michigan (’20) where she obtained her BFA in Acting. Her love of the arts began at a very young age in elementary school. Later, as a member of Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit, Charda decided that her passion for acting was her life’s primary purpose. After producing a pageant for her sorority - Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, incorporated in 2019 - a career in producing is in her sights. Her most recent work can be found on Tubi in the movie *Consequences* where she starred as “Tiffany.”



**Carmen Hayward**, *Narrator*

Carmen Hayward is a SAG/AFTRA actor with many credits in movies, theater, commercials and television. She earned two degrees in theater and began her stage career with a debut at the Mark Taper Forum in *A Song for My People*. Television appearances have included *American Crime Story* and *Rebel*. Other recent appearances include *Insecure* and *Music for the Movement*. Currently she can be seen in a Stand Up to Cancer Promo with Actor/rapper Common. She is an Inner City Cultural Center Alumna and a graduate of the UCLA TFT Department. Carmen is represented by Jerry Pace of Apple Talent.



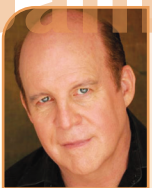
**Levy Lee** – *The Stage Manager*

Multiple award winning writer, actor, director, and producer, Levy Lee Simon is originally from Harlem USA, and a graduate of the University of Iowa Playwright's Workshop, MFA. As an actor Levy Lee, has appeared On Broadway in the Pulitzer Prize winning, Tony Nominated, *The Kentucky Cycle*, and in over 60 plays Off Broadway, Regional Theatres, and the Caribbean. He was in the England production of *Ms. Ever's Boys* at the Barbican Theatre and Bristol Old Vic. Levy Lee is a regular at the National Black Theatre Festival, where he has appeared in his own plays, *Same Train* and *The Last Revolutionary*, to name two. The Last Revolutionary is now a feature film which can be seen on amazonprime.com. He recently acted in the world premiere of Beaufield Berry's, *In the Upper Room*, at Denver Center for the Performing Arts, February/March of 2022.



**Hazel Armenante** - *Emily*

Hazel Armenante's recent theatre credits include *Radium Girls*, *The Wolves*, *The Dining Room* and playing "Wadsworth" in *Clue* all at LACHSA where she also played "Katherine" in the DTASC version of *Newsies*. She portrayed the role of "Titania" in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Chapman University Shakespeare Festival. Her film and TV credits are *Horse Girl* (Sundance selection), *Your Pretty Face is Going to Hell* for Comedy Central, and the feature films *Stuck*, *The List* and *Kittens in a Cage*. She is excited to be performing with Inner City Cultural Center. Hazel lives in Los Angeles and is represented by Framework Entertainment.



**James Schendel** - *Prof. Willard*

James Schendel has been an actor on stage, screen and television, appearing in "Bankrobber", "Too Young to Die", "The West Wing" and "General Hospital." and many others, as well as several commercials. He has also performed in dozens of plays. His favorite roles are Prospero in "The Tempest", Malvolio in "Twelfth Night.", Julius Ceasar in "Julius Ceasar" and Stanley in "The Birthday Party." Most recently, he has been performing Irish music with his band "Banna Beag Mall" which is Irish for "Little Slow Band." ... "Don't let the name fool you." says James. "We actually play very fast."



**Janine Lancaster** - *Mrs. Webb*

Janine Lancaster is a native of Hampton, Virginia where she worked five years as a fulltime 18th Century Historic Actor. She appeared in plays such as *For Colored Girls...* and *Before it Hits Home*; local commercials; TV episodes from *FBI Files*, *The New Detectives* and *Scandal*; and films such as *The Box* and *John Adams*. Since moving to California, she has studied with Actor/Director Ben Guillory and Actress Wendy Davis. Janine has also worked as a fashion and print model and a freelance television News Reporter.





### Judith E – **Constable Warren**

“The Menopause Chronicles” - was written and performed by Judith E. at the Indy Fringe Festival. Judith is a product of The Group Theatre having trained with such pioneers as Lee Strasberg, Herbert Berghof and the acclaimed Broadway actress, Anne Jackson. A veteran New York Stage actress, she performed off-Broadway with Otto Sanchez (HBO series Oz, Bad Boys II, Law and Order, etc.) in John Patrick Shanley’s *The Deep Blue Sea* to rave reviews. **Seeking Rep. 818-309-5972.**



### Miles Clarke – **Si Crowell**

Miles Clarke is a gifted actor and playwright. Since the tender age of 10, he has been in many stage productions such as *Dreamgirls*, *Serafina*, *Hairspray*, etc. As a playwright, he has written and starred in three of his own projects. *Motherless*, *Life*, and *Sadie’s Boys*. During the course of his career, Miles has worked with Marla Gibbs, Wendy Robinson, Chester Whitmore and many others. He is very humbled and extremely grateful to work on this project.



### Renda Pettis – **Woman in the Balcony, Lady in the Box and Woman Among the Dead**

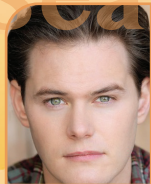
A native of Evanston, Ill., Renda received a B.A. in dance with an emphasis in psychology from Cal State University Long Beach. Renda is a proud Alumna of Inner City Cultural Center. Her stage and television credits include *Fuller House*, *The Muppets*, *Grey’s Anatomy*, *Will and Grace*, and six years on *The Drew Carey Show* among others. As a choreographer she’s worked with the likes of Don B. Welch, Donald McKayle, Adleane Hunter, the late great Ed Cambridge and other greats such as Shirley Caesar, Yolanda Adams, Vickie Winans, Michael Jackson, James Avery, Della Reese, Ben Vereen, and the incomparable Ruby Dee. Renda is a proud parent of two and presently an Adjunct Professor of Dance at Biola University.



### Rogelio Douglas III – **George Gibbs**

Brooklyn native Rogelio Douglas III (RD3) is an actor, spoken-word poet, and teaching artist. He holds a BA in Theater from SUNY New Paltz, and an MFA in Acting from UCLA School of Theatre, Film & Television. In addition to teaching at Theatre of Arts, Hollywood Conservatory, RD3’s recent credits include *Measure for Measure* (Shakespeare by the Sea), *Stranger Things*, *The Drive-Into Experience* (Secret Cinema/Netflix), and *Arcane: Enter the Undercity* (Riot Games/Secret Cinema). RD3 can also be seen in numerous films and TV roles on HBO, NBC, and CBS. Love, Light & Black Therapy.

[www.RogelioDouglasiii.com](http://www.RogelioDouglasiii.com) | [@RogelioDouglas3](https://www.instagram.com/RogelioDouglas3)



### Sean Rose – **Sam Craig**

Sean Rose is from Los Angeles, CA. He attended Circle in the Square, NY and has starred in *CSI:NY*, *Veronica Mars*, and campaigns for McDonalds, American Eagle, Belkin and more. Some of his local performances have been at The Odyssey Theater, The Pacific Resident Theater, The Greenway Court, Studio C, The Morgan-Wixson, and Theatre 40. He opened The Grok Acting Studio which has been featured on ABC7 and KTLA News, and recently founded a non-profit supporting local community artists through The Rose Theater Foundation for the Arts.





**Thyais Walsh - Mrs. Gibbs**

Thyais started her career at the age of 17 as a top model with the Ford Agency in New York. She graced national ads, magazines & album covers. Thyais transitioned into acting, studying in New York, with Negro Ensemble Company & New Federal. Then started doing off-Broadway & regional theater. Thyais appeared on Law & Order & When Love Comes Around. She co-starred in A Day of Trouble, Head Space & Who da Man. Thyais was featured in numerous commercials. Her first love is God, then theater. You can follow her on IG @Thyaisw. Fb Thyais S Walsh, IDMB Thyais Walsh and thyais.com



**Tommy Franklin - Howie Newsome**

Tommy has numerous stage, television, and film credits. His most recent stage appearances include, "Boney Manilli", developed in residency at UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance (CAP), and "Macbeth" at Art Share Los Angeles. Tommy is an alumnus of the Inner City Cultural Center.

**Three Baseball Players - The Cast**



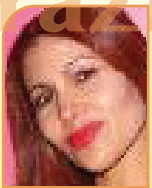
**Tye Hale Johnson - Joe Crowell**

Tye Hale Johnson is a 14 year old actor from Pasadena, and attends LACHSA. Tye plays the drums and wants to learn the bass guitar. He also loves to sign with his cousins or telling jokes with friends. When he is not acting you can catch him playing video games or watching anime.



**Vance Valencia - Dr. Gibbs**

Vance is one of the thousands of Los Angeles inner-city students who, in the late 60's, was bussed down to the original Inner City Cultural City venue on Washington Blvd. and treated to such classics as *The Glass Menagerie*, *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Fantasticks*. Years later he would go on to work at ICCC being cast in *Deadwood Dick*, *Piano Bar* and *Sleep No More* to name a few. Professional credits include supporting roles in films like *Contact* and *Die Hard 2*. Recent TV credits list *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* and *Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* Theater remains his first love and recently he played the title role in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.



**Yazmin Ortiz - Mrs. Soames**

Yazmin, with a Master's degree and a graduate of UCLA and CSUN, is an actress, director, producer and playwright. Starting her career at age 5 in her native San Juan, Puerto Rico. She was classically trained as a dancer in Spanish classical theater. She was chosen by Franco Zeffirelli to perform at the L.A. Opera's "Pagliacci" with Placido Domingo. She has directed over 15 short films and has written and directed 3 One-Act Plays. A play which she is currently preparing is based on one of her short films: Another Dance. Yazmin is a veteran and an officer of the U.S. Army. Today marks a special day for her as she knows her late mentor and adoptive dad, C. Bernard Jackson, is watching her from above!"

## SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS (?)

Vusiszwé **Azania**, Co-Founder/Director - **UCLA Beloved Communitive Initiative**  
Aliscia "DeDe" **Ramsey**, Executive Assistant - **UCLA Beloved Communitive Initiative**  
Dr. Yolanda **Gorman**, Chief of Staff, **UCLA Office of the Chancellor**  
Monroe **Gorden**, **UCLA Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs**  
Jason E. **Sims**, Graphic Artist, **J.E. Sims Associates**  
Dominic **Taylor**, Vice Chair - **The UCLA School Of Theater Film & Television**  
Burt **Harris**, Jr., Learning Centers Director, **UCLA Residential Life Learning Centers**  
Gustavo C. **Tepetla**, Principal Producer, **UCLA Residential Life Learning Centers**  
Student Participants - **UCLA Residential Life Learning Center**  
The **UCLA School of Theater Film & Television Production and Technical Team**  
Burt **Harris**, Sr., Photographer - **Black News Service.Com**

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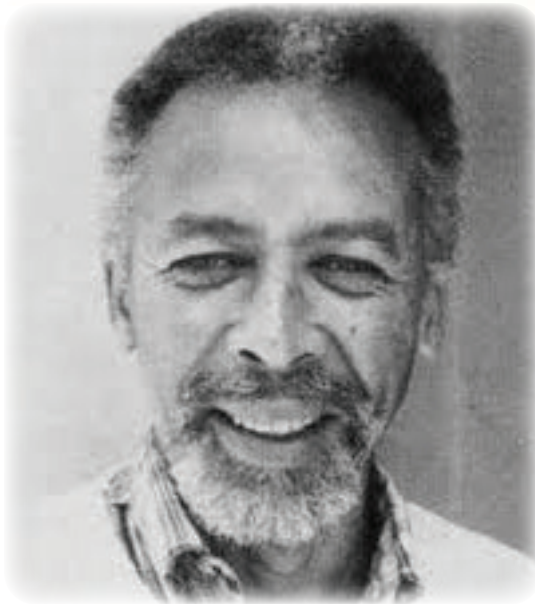
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***“Art may be the only tool we have left to save ourselves from destruction.”***  
***- C. Bernard Jackson***

**JOIN US!**



# BELOVED COMMUNITY AWARENESS WEEK



**"HEARTS ARE THE STRONGEST WHEN  
THEY BEAT IN RESPONSE TO NOBLE  
IDEALS." - RALPH J. BUNCHE, '27**

Since 2015, UCLA Beloved Community Initiative offers immersive, interdisciplinary, multimedia experiences utilizing the legacy of UCLA and the purpose of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s historic 1965 visit to explore contemporary and historical issues through film, panels and more to effect positive change - locally, nationally and globally.

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**19-26**  
2022

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