

The Robey Theatre Company
in association with The Latino Theater Company

presents

ANNA LUCASTA

By
Philip Yordan

Set & Lighting Design
Tom Meleck

Costume Design
Nalia Aladdin Sanders

Original Music & Sound Design
Eric Butler

Properties Design
Alejandra Cisneros

Fight Choreography
Nick Gillie

Dance Choreography
Kellie Dantzler

Production Stage Manager
Anthony Aguilar

Assistant Stage Manager
Shanae Sharon

Graphic Designer
Kathie Foley-Meyer

Production Photographer
Tim Alexander

Video Documentarian
Douglas Allen

Development Director
Judith Bowman

Technical Director
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Erin DeVine

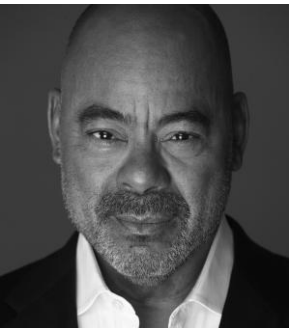
Directed by

A message from the Artistic Director of The Los Angeles Theatre Center and The Latino Theater Company



Welcome to our 6th Annual Face of The World Fall Season! This season in addition to our Cultural Roundtable, which includes Playwrights' Arena, The Robey Theatre Company and the American Indian Dance Theater, we are collaborating with Kulunka Teatro, PAE! Live and Antics Performance to present a series of performances that are not only diverse in their representation of the communities that make up Los Angeles, but also in their exciting aesthetics and form. I am very proud to include *Anna Lucasta* in our fall season. Philip Yordan's powerful exploration of one woman's fight for survival speaks to us today, despite having been written in the 1940s. I hope that our season will rejuvenate your belief in the human spirit, and that it will challenge your perception of the role we all play as citizens of our city and the world. -- José Luis Valenzuela

A note from the Artistic Director of The Robey Theatre Company and the Director of Anna Lucasta



Anna Lucasta... In spite of the odds against her moral survival, Anna finds a way to endure and the purity of her spirit thrives over hostile and seemingly insurmountable forces. The struggle of a woman child forced to understand the way of the world before she is ready, is a fascinating study in any culture. Anna Lucasta's ups & downs and the apparent desperation of how her life will play out offers insight into the tenacity of a spirit and the stuff of drama. --Ben Guillory

Cast of Characters

Joe Lucasta	Robert Clements
Stella Lucasta Lynch	Alvina Carroll
Noah	Carl Crudup*
Theresa Lucasta	Cydney Wayne Davis
Danny	Nick Gillie
Katie Lucasta	Tanya Lane
Anna Lucasta.....	Ashlee Olivia
Blanche.....	Jennifer Sammons*
Rudolf Slocum	Dwain A. Perry
Eddie.....	Talmadge Talib
Lester.....	Kaylon Hunt
Frank.....	Sammie Wayne IV
Stanley Lucasta.....	Kem Saunders

* *Actors appear courtesy of Actor's Equity Association*

Anna Lucasta will be performed with one 15-minute intermission

Act I

Scene 1. Lucasta living room Pennsylvania, early 1941

Scene 2. Interior of Noah's Bar, in Brooklyn.

Act II

Scene 1. Same as Act I.

Four days after the preceding Scene, early evening

Act III

Scene 1. Lucasta living room. Three days later.

Scene 2. Same as Scene 1.

Scene 3. Noah's Bar, later at night. Eight days later.



Robert Clements (*Joe Lucasta*) Born and raised in Hartford Connecticut and seasoned in NYC, Robert now calls LA his home. This is his fifth Robey Theatre Company Production including all three of the acclaimed trilogy *For the Love of Freedom* by Levy Lee Simon about the Haitian Revolution. Thanks Ben for your Brilliance in Casting. "Striving for excellence is tantamount for success" is Robert's motto.



Alvina Carroll Saunders (*Stella Lucasta*) is a native of Norfolk, Virginia. She has been performing on the Regional Theatre scene for years, some of her credits include: "Listen to Your Women", "What A Woman Will Do For Love", and "A Mother's Prayer". After falling in love with performing, she decided to see what Hollywood had to offer. After only a few months in LA, she was blessed to land the role as Rose in August Wilson, *Fences*. That was just the beginning of her journey, other LA credits include: *For Colored Girls...*, Chicago Club "Rumboogie", and *Butterflies of Uganda* to name a few. Alvina is honored to be in the company of such talented actors and believes she can do all things through Christ, which strengthens her.



Carl Crudup (*Noah*) has been seen on television and in movies for years. Iconic film roles include "J.D.'s Revenge" and TV roles in *The \$6 Million Dollar Man*; *The Rockford Files*; *The White Shadow*; and *T.J. Hooker*. In April 2006, Carl appeared as Prospero in LA MET's production of *The Tempest* and was recently seen in URBAN THEATRE MOVEMENT's production of *Short Eyes* by Miguel Pinero at the LATC. Carl attended Pace University and is a member of the Screen Actors Guild.



Cydney Wayne Davis (*Theresa Lucasta*) is a professional singer, actress, songwriter, vocal coach and playwright. She has toured the world singing background for artists: Marvin Gaye, Ray Charles, Barry White, Joe Cocker and continues to work with Marilyn McCoo and Billy Davis Jr. from the 5th Dimension. Her original music is heard in films "Heaven Is A Playground" and "Black Magic Woman". Motown recording artist Diana Ross recorded one of Cydney's original songs: "You're Gonna Love It". Cydney continues to study acting with

Ben Guillory through the Robey Theatre's Advanced Scene Study Workshop; she's appeared in two Robey plays, *The River Niger* as Grandma Whilimena Brown and Kellie Roberts' *Transitions* as Verlie, for which she and the cast won the 2010 NAACP Theatre Award (Small Theatres) for "Best Ensemble Cast". Her debut as playwright and director also (?) came in 2010 when her one-act play *United Front*", dealing with a family facing the threat of AIDS, was selected by NAACP Theatre Festival Committee for their "Salute to 10-Minute Plays". Her film and TV credits include "Crossroads", "La Bamba", "Moon



Nick Gillie (*Danny*) last appeared on stage in *The Shelter* at the Odyssey Theater and *Orlando* at The Actor's Gang. He is also proud to have done plays with Zoo District Theater Company, including the title role in *Nosferatu*. Recently he played "Poins" in brother Harry Lennix's "H4", a soon to be released film. Nick is a produced screenwriter of "Never Get Outta The Boat", a film that premiered at the 2002 Toronto International Film Festival and won awards at five other festivals including Best Feature at the Hollywood Black Film Festival. Currently Nick is developing three projects, on SNCC; on social justice courts; and on LA gang intervention. He serves as a consultant to the National

Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) and also serves on the Board of Directors of The Peace Alliance (TPA). Nick also serves as Fight Choreographer for *Anna Lucasta*. Nick is very proud to be one small part of this amazing cast of *Anna Lucasta* and very proud to be working with Ben Guillory.



Kaylon Hunt (*Lester*) A graduate of University Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts, Kaylon has been recognized for his body of work in both acting and filmmaking. Hunt has made numerous appearances in independent film; his stage credits include *The Colored Museum* and *Camp Logan*. *Anna Lucasta* is Kaylon's second stage production with the Robey Theatre Company.



Tanya Lane (*Katie Lucasta*) is delighted to be working with the Robey family again. She was last seen in Robey's *The Reckoning* as Helene Metoyer. Previous to LA, she worked with various theatre companies in Chicago including Congo Square's *King of Coons* directed by Harry Lennix, Eclipse's *Hospice* directed by Chuck Smith, MPAACT's *Bus Boyz* and *Relevant Hearsay* at Victory Gardens Greenhouse and *Amistad* *Voices* written and produced by Ifa Bayeza, performed at the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. Some of her other credits include

a short film "Blue in Joy" and a brief appearance on "ER" as Stephanie Burke. Thank you to the wonderful cast & crew, and Ben for creating an open and loving space to play in. To My Goose: a snow angel a day will keep the winter blues away.



Ashlee Olivia (*Anna Lucasta*) Ashlee was born raised here in Los Angeles. After discovering her passion for performing arts at an early age, she persuaded her parents to enroll her into programs such as All About Kids and Amazing Grace Conservatory, while keeping abreast of every school casting! Ashlee decided that acting was what she wanted to do with her life. She was accepted to The Theatre School at DePaul University in Chicago and quickly made a splash amongst her peers with her engaging performance qualities. Shortly after graduating she was cast in *Milk* directed by Chuck Smith and soon, went on to do many other productions with MPAACT Theatre Co. Ashlee has

Robey Theatre Company-Sparkling City Entertainment and JuVee Productions production of *Camp Logan*, by Celeste Bedford Walker. Other productions with Robey include *Bronzeville*, by Tim Toyama and Aaron Woolfolk, directed by Ben Guillory, that traveled to Manzanar for a special week of performances. Also: Melvin Ishmael Johnson's *The Emperors Last Performance* directed by Ben Guillory and *The Last Season* by Christopher Moore, directed by Chuck Smith. Directing credits for Robey include *Transitions* by Kellie Dantzer, which was selected for the National Black Theatre Festival in North Carolina and also won a NAACP Theatre Award for Best Ensemble. *The River Niger*, by Joseph A. Walker and *Permanent Collection*, by Thomas Gibbons, that was co-directed with Harry Lennix for Robey and Greenway Court Theatre. That production was moved, by the request of Michael Ritchie of the Center Theatre Group (CTG), to the Kirk Douglas Theatre where it was nominated for an LA Weekly Award for Best Revival.



Jennifer Sammons (*Blanche*) is a native of Clinton, North Carolina and graduate of North Carolina Central University (B.A. & M.A.). She produced/hosted the TV talk show, "Focus on the Triangle" (Durham, NC) and interviewed celebrities such as Danny Glover, Joe Theismann and covered the National Black Theatre Festival. Jennifer was featured as JET Magazine "Beauty of the Week". In LA, Jennifer landed roles on TV sitcoms *Moesha* and *The Parker's*. She appeared in the Tony-nominated play, *The First Breeze of Summer*, which earned her an NAACP Theatre Award nomination for *Best Supporting*

Actress. She most recently played the role of Zora Neale Hurston in Gil Faison's *Eagle Pride*. Other performances include a previous production of *Anna Lucasta* (playing Katie), *Raisin In The Sun* (Ruth), *Eubie Waller's Last Rites*, *The Awakening*, *The Power of Black Love*, *Smile-n-Faces*, *Oasis*, and *Pathway to Freedom*. Giving all glory to God, Jennifer extends special thanks to Ben Guillory for the opportunity to experience "Blanche" along with this wonderful cast, to her mentor Anthony Chisholm for his wisdom & encouragement, and to her mother Patricia and family for their unconditional love and support. Jennifer dedicates this stage performance in loving memory of her father Darius Sammons, Jr. and to Lenny Mayes.



Kem Saunders (*Stanley Lucasta*) is a graduate of Kent State University with a Masters of Education M.Ed. He attended The British American Drama Academy at Oxford University and studied under the tutelage of such notable instructors as Fiona Shaw, Henry Goodman and the legendary John Barton. His Regional Theatre credits include: *Touch The Names/Ensemble Theatre*, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, *A Soldiers Play/Boarshead Theatre*, *Let Me Live/ The Goodman Theatre*, *My Children My Africa/Barberton Playhouse*, *Pill Hill*, *The Piano Lesson* and *IAM A MAN* at the Karamu Theatre. His Los Angeles Theatre appearances include the critically acclaimed *Butterflies of Uganda*

- *Greenway Court Theatre*, *For the Love Freedom Trilogy* - Robey Theatre, and *Mine Eyes Have Seen* - Theatre Banshee. Recent television appearances include *Love Bites* (NBC) *The Shield* (FX), *Everybody Hates Chris* (The CW), and *Chocolate News* (Comedy Central). His only thoughts related to this production are "What a blessing to be working with such talented people, who have such passion for the craft".

negative images and stereotypes of African-Americans around the world, chose to move into the media & entertainment industry. A graduate of Studio IV Acting Conservatory in San Diego and a student of Robey Theatre Company, Talib has training and experience in radio, stage productions, TV and Film. Nominated for an Aubrey Award in 2001 in San Diego, he has since made Los Angeles his home and is very active in the community here.



Sammie Wayne (*Frank*) played Gweely Brown and served as Lighting Designer for the Robey Theatre Company's last production—Celeste Walker Bedford's play *Camp Logan*. Wayne can deliver as a director, actor, stage manager, lighting designer and producer. He pursued a degree and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science from DePaul University. The Beverly Hills-Hollywood NAACP awarded him 2010 Best Supporting Male Actor and the 2011 NAACP Theatre Award for Best Lighting Design. Other stage credits include *The Blacks*, *Salome*, *Sisterella*, and *One Woman Two Lives*. Some of his TV and film credits include "Judging Amy", "Ask Harriet" "Diagnosis Murder", "Danger in Paradise" and "Soulmates". Sammie has stage managed and designed lighting for one-person shows: Emmy Award Winning Actor, Glynn Turman's *Movin' Man*; Loretta Devine's, *Pieces of Me*; Kim Wayans', *A Handsome Woman Retreats*; Ella Joyce's *A Rose Among Thorns*; and Helie Lee's, *Macho Like Me*. Sammie also directed *Macho Man Like Me*, which received an LA Weekly Theatre nomination for Best One-Person Show. Sammie also co-produces, stage manages, and designs the lights for Giving Back Corporations Annual Toast/Roast, a fundraiser to help provide book scholarships for H.S. seniors entering their freshman year in college while honoring living legends who paved the way for our youth. Prior to his career in entertainment, Sammie spent more than 11 years in corporate America as a software engineer for General Motors; Electronic Data Systems and Northrop Grumman.

Philip Yordan (*Playwright*) 1914-2003 wrote *Anna Lucasta* for a Polish family in 1944. The script found no producer so, Yordan gave his drama to the American Negro Theatre, then based in the basement of a Harlem church. A.N.T.'s resident playwright Abram Hill transformed the script to the play we have today. Yordan's drama of a daughter who becomes a prostitute was the first play, since *The Green Pastures* (1930), performed by an all-Black cast to run for more than five hundred performances (a record 957 performances on Broadway-the Mansfield Theatre) and the first all-Black non-musical cast that did not use race as an issue. Yordan, a Chicago-born writer who often was credited for work perhaps actually penned by those targeted by the HUAC during the "Red Scare" days in Hollywood, would later achieve success as a Hollywood scriptwriter and producer.

Ben Guillory (*Producer/Director*) has worked extensively in theatre, film and TV for over thirty years. He co-founded the Robey Theatre Company with long-time friend, Danny Glover in 1994, where he remains as the Producing Artistic Director overseeing the work of the Company's Playwrights Program, and serving as instructor for an Advanced Scene Actors' Workshop. His training was at the American Conservatory Theatre (the A.C.T.) in San Francisco. While there, Mr. Guillory appeared in a number of classic and contemporary plays including "*Julius Caesar*"; "*The Taming of the Shrew*"; "*Peer Gynt*"; "*Desire Under the Elms*"; "*Misanthrope*"; "*The Cherry Orchard*"; and

his productions and co-productions have netted fifteen NAACP Theatre Award Nominations and eight Awards. Productions include: co-productions of “*Bee-Luther-Hatchee*” with Elephant Industries, Inc; “*Yohen*” with East/West Players; “*For the Love of Freedom Part I: Toussaint*”; and “*Permanent Collection*” with Greenway Arts Alliance; “*The Last Season*” with Legacy Productions; “*For the Love of Freedom Part III: Christophe*” with the City of Los Angeles/ Department of Cultural Affairs, and *A House With No Walls* with the New Los Angeles Theatre Center. *Permanent Collection* was invited by the CTG in 2006 to launch their season at the Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City. As an actor, Ben has been seen in the Arizona Theatre Company’s production of Athol Fugard’s “*Sizwe Banzi Is Dead*”; The Will Geer Theatrical Botanicum’s production of Lillian Hellman’s “*Toys in the Attic*”; the LATC’s production of “*Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*”; and the Mark Taper Forum’s 1991 production of “*Miss Ever’s Boys*”. He received an Ovation nomination as featured actor for *The Piano Lesson* and an NAACP Theatre Award presented to him for Best Producer of Joseph A. Walker’s *The River Niger* for Robey. The honors, nominations and varied awards received Ben shares with the tremendous array of talented artists, designers and staff he’s worked with and who recognized the Robey mission. To the Robey audience THANK YOU for your inspiration and continuous support.

Anthony Aguilar (*Production Stage Manager*): Anthony Aguilar's previous work with the Robey includes *Pity the Proud Ones* and *Camp Logan*. He also works as a writer, most recently writing for the “Meet Me @ Metro” Festival and as an assistant for the upcoming series East Los High. Other notable works include: *Little Red The Musical* and the superhero series *El Verde*. Anthony would like to thank everyone in the production for all of their hard work and dedication.

Shanae Sharon (*Asst Stage Mgr*) has a BA in Theater Arts from the University of Pittsburgh. She has performed onstage as an actress and has also handled a variety of backstage duties including props, costume dressing, set construction, stage managing and directing. She is an alumni of the prestigious Lincoln Center Director’s Lab, and also a Founding Member of the River View Players, a community theater group in Harlem, NY led by Laurence Holder and a member of the RedEye Theater Project, a 24 hour play festival group in Pittsburgh, PA.

Tom Meleck (*Set Designer & Lighting Design*) attended NYU for his Master’s Degree in theatrical Stage Design. He designed Arrabal’s *The Architect and the Emperor of Assyria* while in New York and assisted on the Broadway productions of *Lenny*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Candide* at the opening of the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. He also designed the Rolling Thunder Revue for Bob Dylan; Aerosmith; The Blue Oyster Cult Tour; and Richie Blackmore’s Rainbow Tour. Tom’s LA credits include sets and lighting for the musical, *Paquito’s Christmas*; *Just Men*; *Parental Discretion*; *Sacrificial Lamb*; *Tight Quarters*, and *Love Is Always the Matter*. He was nominated as Best Set Designer by the LA Weekly for his work on *The Imposter*, and twice by the NAACP for, *Toussaint: For the Love Of Freedom* and *Section 8*. He won the L.A. Weekly Theater Award for his lighting of *They Shoot Horses, Don’t They?* at the Greenway Court Theater. Last year, he designed sets and lighting for *Women in Shorts* at the Working Stage Theater and *Bronzeville* for the Robey Theater Company on location in Manzanar.

Other design credits include *Clueless*, and *The Larry Sanders Show*, the pilot season of *Dennis Miller Live*, *Quantum Leap*, and *East Times* at Ridgely High, the final season

Naila Aladdin Sanders (*Costume Designer*) has been a part of the Robey Family for well over a decade. Beginning with her costumes designed for *Bronzeville*, *The River Niger*, *Transitions*, *A House With No Walls*, *The Reckoning* and *Permanent Collection*, her designs for *For the Love of Freedom: The Haitian Trilogy Pt 1* won her an NAACP Theatre Award. Other LA credits include for The Fountain Theatre: *Darker Face of the Earth*, and most recently *The Blue Iris*, *The Ballad of Emmett Till*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *And Joe Turner's Come and Gone*. Other recent credits include *Justin Love* (currently running), *The Color Purple* (2012 Ovation Nomination), *The Women Of Brewster Place: The Musical*, (2010 Ovation Award for Best Musical), and *Haram! Iran!* (nominated for a 2010 GLADD Award). *Neighbors*, (2010 LADCC Award & Garland Award winner, Ovation Nomination) for the Matrix Theatre. Naila designed costumes for *Good Bobby* for both the Greenway Court Alliance and the 59th Street Theatre in New York.

Eric "Cayenne" Butler (*Original Music & Sound Design*) brings a wealth of musical diversity and experience to every project. He attended prestigious Berklee College of Music with composition, arranging, and orchestration as his majors and has received recognition in the world renowned jazz magazine "Down Beat" for his exciting performances. While still in college he gigged on trumpet with Gladys Knight and The Pips, Lou Rawls, The Dells, and Stevie Wonder. His compositions, arrangements, and orchestrations have contributed to "The Tonight Show", hosted by Johnny Carson; Lou Rawls *UNCF Parade of Stars*; Fox's "The 1992 U.S. Olympic Festival" with a 1000 Voice Choir, and the TV series "Fame". In the Recording Industry Eric's songs have been recorded by Robert Guillaume, Leslie Drayton, Vivian Reed, Patrice Rushen, and Nancy Wilson. Commissioned arrangements and orchestration include CD/Album productions for Debarge ("The Debarges"); Phyllis Hyman ("To Sleep On It"); and The Temptations reunion album ("Power"). In the Musical Theatre world he set the tone and pace as Musical Conductor for the world premiere of "Ray Charles Live...The Musical", for the Pasadena Playhouse. He composed, orchestrated and produced an original score and sound design for the 2012 West Coast Premiere of the riveting dramatic stage production of the historical story, *Camp Logan*, produced by the Robey Theatre Company, Sparkling City Productions, and JuVee Productions. He is the recipient of the 2011 **Beverly Hills/Hollywood NAACP Theatre Award** for 'Best Sound Design' in a Robey's dramatic play: *The Emperor's Last Performance*. Eric is a member of the American Federation of Musicians, AFTRA, SAG, and the American Society of Composers & Authors (ASCAP), and resides in Los Angeles, CA.

Alejandra Cisneros (*Property Design*) is a graduate from the University of California, Irvine. She directs/produces Los Angeles-based theater including the cult-classic superhero series *El Verde!* that has toured throughout Southern California. Recent credits include: *The Way of Water* by Caridad Svich for East LA Rep, *Rosa Out of Control* for the 2012 LA Times Festival of Books and *For One Mariachi* for the 3rd Annual "Meet Me at Metro". She is a member of Individual Artist Collective and alum of Director's Lab West. She was awarded a Directing FAIR Fellowship for the 2012 Oregon Shakespeare Festival season, assisting on *Animal Crackers* and is a 2012 Nathan Cummings Young Leaders of Color Award Recipient.

Kathie Foley-Meyer (*Graphic Designer*) is a graphic designer and mixed-media artist based in Los Angeles and the owner of createstudio design. Her clients include individual artists, arts-related nonprofits such as The Robey Theatre Company, the

(LACE). She is currently working on a multi-disciplinary exhibition inspired by the Bronzeville period in Los Angeles history.

Philip Sokoloff (*Press Representative*) is L.A.'s most active theatre publicist, representing over 100 live attractions annually. He is the producer and host of the television series "Santa Monica On Stage" on City TV Channel 16. Also an actor, he recently appeared in *California Dreamin'* at the MET Theatre.

Kellie Dantzer (*Dance Choreography*)

John Freeland, Jr. (*Production Consultant*) Robey Theatre Company productions of *Camp Logan* by Celeste Bedford Walker, *Pity The Proud Ones* by Kurt Maxey, *The Reckoning* by Kimba Henderson, Levy Lee Simon's Haitian trilogy *For The Love of Freedom*, *The River Niger* with Margaret Avery; Ojai Playwrights Conference, Padric Lillis' play *Lights Up On The Fade Out* directed by Ron Canada (Hollywood Fringe Festival), Kristina Wong's *Cat Lady* (DiverseWorks Art Space – Houston, TX), *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare Centre of Los Angles), *The America Play* (Theatre @ Boston Court), *Yield of Long Bond* with Ian McShane and Gregory Itzin (Matrix Theatre). Festivals: Stage Manager/Actor/Director in the International Blind and Visually Impaired Theatre Festival (Zagreb, Croatia). Directed two plays in the 10 minute play fest – (NAACP Theatre Festival), Lynn Manning *Weights* (Edinburgh Festival Fringe – Edinburgh, Scotland), The National Black Theatre Festival (Winston – Salem, NC). Also a teaching artist with The Unusual Suspect Theatre Company and (Out) Laws & Justice, assisting youth in juvenile probation camps and middle schools to perform plays they've written. John is from Middleton, CT., and attended Wesleyan University. Members of Actors Equity Association.

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