

DuSable Museum of African American History & Chicago Puppet Fest present:



CONTENT WARNING 16+:

The Bluest Eye contains explicit content, including multiple descriptions and depictions of sexual assault, racial violence, alcoholism, and rape. This work is necessary and its confrontation of intergenerational trauma and racism can be challenging to watch. Please take caution and care when viewing the show.

The Bluest Eye

Adapted for the Stage by

Lydia Diamond

Based on the novel by

Toni Morrison

Directed by **Margaret Laurena Kemp** and
Janni Younge



CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL
PUPPET THEATER FESTIVAL

Produced by special arrangement with THE DRAMATIC
PUBLISHING COMPANY of Woodstock, IL

The journey so far...

First produced at the UC Davis Theatre and Dance Department in the Spring of 2018, Professor Margaret Kemp and Janni Younge worked with an ensemble of students to craft a puppet show from Lydia Diamond's adaptation of Toni Morrison's classic novel. A year later, the show was remounted at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, where the show won Best Production and advanced to the national level. Now, the cast and crew of the Bluest Eye is proud to present this newest iteration of their show for the Chicago International Puppet Theatre Festival!

Acknowledgements:

Special thanks to the DuSable Museum and all the staff, security, and theatre crew for being so kind and welcoming our cast and crew to their space. Thank you to the Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival as well for inviting our production.

Company Bios:

Directors:

Margaret Laurena Kemp (she/her/they/them) is an actor, a multidisciplinary performing artist, writer, and teaching artist, and Associate Professor of Theatre & Dance at UC Davis. She trained at The George Washington University at The Shakespeare Theatre and has a B.S. in Interdepartmental Studies from the School of Speech at Northwestern University. She has performed at Arena Stage, Mark Taper Forum, Yale Repertory, South Coast Repertory, La Mama Theatre (Melbourne, Australia), Theatre of Changes (Athens, Greece), Red Pear Theatre (Antibes, France), and The Magnet Theatre (Cape Town, South Africa). She won worldwide praise for her starring role in the film *Children of God*, and her recent film *Ten Cent Daisy* is currently available on all platforms. Recent works *CITE* and *This Land* were shown at the Elaine Jacobs Gallery in Detroit, Michigan in 2019. Her show *Unburning* was shown at the Maine Institute of Contemporary Art, and was awarded the Lucas Artists Residency 2022. She also received the Headlands prize in 2017.

Janni Younge (she/her) is a South African creator of multimedia theatrical works, with an emphasis on puppetry arts. Her work is motivated by a celebration of the beautiful complexity of being human. Janni holds an MFA in theatre, a DMA in puppetry (from ESNAM, France) and an honours degree in Fine Art. She has collaborated and directed productions widely internationally winning multiple awards for design direction. Her work runs in repertory in Poland and Hungary and her productions have been performed in venues across 5 continents.

Crew:

Puppet Master - Joseph Flores (he/him) is an alumnus of UC Davis' Theatre & Dance Dept. He worked under Janni Younge as assistant puppet designer and puppet builder while also building many of the set pieces and props.

Lighting Designer - Gabrielle Strong (she/her/hers) lives up to her name in all things she does. She is an innovator, creator, artist, and designer that will bring strength, determination, intelligence, and creativity to each design. She is a multi-disciplinary queer artist combining lighting, scenic, and management to create intentional and beautiful work. Her work has included but not limited to theatre, dance, opera, art installations, generative work, and film. She has designed domestically and internationally. In 2019, she was awarded the John Woodbridge Award from Northwestern University and was a 2020 Hemsley Award Finalist.

Stage Manager - Jillian Yong (she/her) is the current Theatre Manager at Carmont High School in Belmont, California. She was the ASM for The Bluest Eye in 2018 at UC Davis, then became the Stage Manager in 2019. She was the Production Manager for Studio 301 and Company Manager at UC Davis for several years before graduating in 2021. Jillian is grateful to the cast for their patience and support, and to the countless folks who made this journey possible.

Assistant Stage Manager - Ahash Francis (he/him) is a Sri-Lankan Canadian actor and writer. He graduated from UC Davis in 2018 and is currently attending the Stella Adler Art of Acting Studio in Los Angeles. He's grateful to his directors for allowing him to help retell this important story.

DuSable Security - Van White, Taylor Kamotrice, Kenard Crosby, Derrick Ayers, Robert Carter

DuSable Staff - Al Anderson, Allen Johnson

Theatre Manager - Greg Turnage

Technical Director - Rowan Doe

Props - Lizzie Shafer

Production Manager (CIPTF Festival) - Margaret Nelson

Production Manager (UC Davis) - Susie Owens

Fundraiser Host and Support - Davis Repertory Theatre, Oona Hatton, Lucas Hatton, Karen Ostergard

Lighting Designer - Gabrielle Strong

Transportation Manager - Taylor Bibat

Transportation Drivers - Joe Vonderhaar, Ocie Spruill

Costumes Manager (UC Davis) - Rebecca Valentino

Technical Support - Smaida Amara, Kent Dorsey, Megan Kimura, Myke Kunkel, Cat Kunkel

Audio Support (DuSable) - Ernie Greene

Ensemble Cast:

Rebecca Honkanen Ackroyd (they/them) is a non-binary artist, graduate of the UC Davis Theater and Dance program, who has been performing for 12 years in a variety of venues. They are working towards creating stories in many mediums, to comment on, and impact the current tensions dividing our society.

Sarah Assaad (she/her/hers) is an actor and director who studied at the University of California, Davis. She focuses on work that creates a meaningful dialogue within communities. Over the pandemic, Sarah was an assistant director to the lovely Margaret Kemp while working on the adaptation of [re: CLICK] by Jacqueline Goldfinger at Northwestern University. She has since dabbled in video editing, various directing jobs, and currently works for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Sarah is ready to finally get back on the stage! sarahpetla.com

Myah Daniels (she/her) is a recent graduate student from the Stella Adler Art of Acting Conservatory in Los Angeles. She received her Bachelor of Arts from UC Davis. She is excited to be reuniting with the Bluest Eye again!

Maria Delgadillo (she/her) is a graduate from UC Davis. While at Davis, Maria discovered her love for costuming and makeup in the costume shop. Not only does she love costuming, she has a passion for performance. She is beyond thrilled to be back on stage after being away for sometime playing Frieda and Darlene. She cannot wait to see what the future has in store.

Rose Kim (they/she) is a 26-year-old 1st gen Korean American theatre artist. They are the founder and producing artistic director of Art Rat Theatre. Rose has been independently producing, directing, performing and independently training for 6+ years. The "independent" has been crucial to their development-- away from harmful HWI/PWI institutions that cannot teach both what and how she seeks to learn: sustainable structures, genuinely consensual collaborations, working in mutual drive, restorative production, intercultural approaches to performance and process.

Anna Rita E. Moukarzel (she/her) is an American-Lebanese Mechanical Engineering graduate student at UC Davis. She is working on advanced bionic prosthesis for amputees. Her past works include: UC Davis' *The Bluest Eye* and *re:[CLICK]*; Studio 301's *The Addams Family* and choreographer for *Dogfight* and *Life, Death & 301: A Musical Revue*.

Tiffany Nwogu (she/her) is a UC Davis graduate with a bachelor's in Theatre. Tiffany was awarded best ensemble by KCATF with her role as Pecola in *The Bluest Eye*, other credits include Celebration Art's Maima from *Eclipsed*; UC Davis' Mr. Peachum from *Threepenny Opera*; Ted from *Peter and the Star Catcher*, NINJAZ's Portia from *Julius Caesar*, and Tabard Theatre's REPORTER from *Swift Justice*. Tiffany is extremely excited and honored to once

Dr. Ayo Walker (she/her) is an Assistant Professor of Dance at Austin Peay State University where she continues to develop her practice-based research in the decolonization of the Black dancing body. As an anti-racist educator and social justice choreographer, her artistic praxis invokes the narratives of the voiceless and challenges the viewer's comfort level just enough to ignite a shift in thought from culpable to proactive. Her latest works "Black Phoenix Rising" and "Things Have and Haven't Changed" have been commissioned by the Modern American Dance Company's (MADCO) 2022 Dare to Dance concert and the 2022 Alabama Dance Festival, as well as the 2022 Collegium for African Diaspora Dance (CADD) conference. www.avowalker.com

Angelita Sánchez Estévez (she/her/ella) is an activist in South Central, Los Angeles aiming to raise more social awareness and social change around communities of the global majority, through Arts Education. Original work includes "Me Buscas, Me Encuentras (MBME)" and "Qui Ni Mi Toca?!". In the near future, Sánchez Estévez wants to keep devising, sharing and advocating for the need to have more Arts' representation and accessibility in curriculums of all levels of education.

Jasmine Washington (she/her/hers) is a theatre artist based out of Sacramento, CA. Some of her favorite acting projects include "The Bluest Eye," "Grandpa, Is Everything Black Bad?" and "The (M)Others". As a playwright, her work, *Callus*, was produced by Art Rat Theatre, where she completed her first digital artist residency. She would like to thank Margaret Kemp, Janni Younge, and the festival for the opportunity to perform this moving play again and her loved ones for their continual support. To learn more about Jasmine and her art, please visit jasminetwashington.com

Renata Zacarias (she/her) is very excited to be a part of *The Bluest Eye* once more. Renata studied Theatre Performance at UC Davis, where she received her BA. At the moment, Renata is giving back to her community by being a teacher's aide in the English department. Her education has supported students to express themselves in formal and creative ways. She wants to thank her family, and partner for always supporting her passions.