

WILMABILL

THE COMEUPPANCE

ON STAGE NOV 19 – DEC 8, 2024



BY BRANDEN JACOBS-JENKINS
DIRECTED BY MORGAN GREEN
A CO-PRODUCTION WITH WOOLLY MAMMOTH THEATRE COMPANY





Co-Artistic Directors Morgan Green Lindsay Smiling Yury Urnov
Managing Director Leigh Goldenberg

THE COMEUPPANCE

BY BRANDEN JACOBS-JENKINS
DIRECTED BY MORGAN GREEN

A CO-PRODUCTION WITH WOOLLY MAMMOTH THEATRE COMPANY

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Jordan Bellow.....Emilio
Alana Raquel Bowers.....Ursula
Taysha Marie Canales.....Kristina
Sarah Gliko.....Katelyn
Jaime Maseda.....Francisco

Set Designer
Jian Jung

Lighting Designer
Minjoo Kim

Sound Designer
Jordan McCree

Costume Designer
Katherine "Kitt" Crescenzo

Fight & Intimacy
Choreographer
Eli Lynn

Assistant Set Designer
Josh Barilla

Dramaturg
Jessica Rizzo

Stage Manager
Melody Wong

Assistant Stage Manager
Matt Melchior

Production Manger
Matthew J. Zumbo

Technical Director
Benny Henry

Thank you to the Woolly Mammoth Production Team

CONTENT TRANSPARENCY

This play includes the use of general profanity and smoking. This play also includes discussion of alcoholism, miscarriage, domestic violence, war, PTSD, sexual themes, and abortion.



This Theatre operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



The scenic, costume, lighting and sound designers in LORT Theatres are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.

A NOTE FROM THE DRAMATURG



BRANDEN JACOBS-JENKINS' DANSE MACABRE

By Jessica Rizzo

The theater is a place where artists and audience gather in one space to die together for a little while, to share the experience of time passing as we collectively drift towards oblivion. Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' The Comeuppance can be seen as concretizing this ritual, with all-knowing Death assuming the form of each character in turn. The play is always operating on at least two levels—that of its naturalistic dialogue and that of this structural confrontation with mortality.

Jacobs-Jenkins has an abiding interest in reworking obsolete theatrical forms. The Comeuppance is a more subtle exercise in genre-bending than his earlier works, but Death ultimately names the play's dramaturgical antecedent—the danse macabre or "dance of death," an allegorical drama that became popular in the wake of the Black Death in the fourteenth century. Emphasizing the power of death as leveler, the danse macabre was performed at village pageants, with figures representing various social classes being led to the grave by death. In the Middle Ages, these dances were often staged in cemeteries.

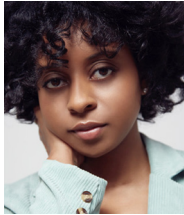
Jacobs-Jenkins transposes the danse macabre to suburban Maryland. His characters have survived their own plague, the COVID-19 pandemic, and are staring down a cemetery of their own—their twenty-year high school reunion, which one character refers to as a "dark ritual of the soul" in which all are "confronted by the specter of their own mortality." If the pandemic enhanced our shared awareness of death as a great equalizer, it has not necessarily left us with any enduring sense of our shared humanity. So close as teenagers, The Comeuppance's characters reunite only to find themselves painfully fractured along various personal and political lines. Yearning for unity, they instead find themselves polarized, reducing each other to the allegorical types trafficked in by high school students and cable news commentators—the "popular" guy, the effeminate "artiste," the "blue lives matter-enthusiast COVID truther." Underneath these labels, of course, are complex human beings who have made uncomfortable compromises and been disappointed by life. In medieval times, the danse macabre stressed the importance of repentance to Christians by reminding them that death could come for them at any moment and that no one would escape judgment. In Jacobs-Jenkins' update, the characters resist such knowledge by judging each other and themselves.

Scholars have puzzled over the emergence of the danse macabre at a moment when audiences had so little need to be "reminded" of their own mortality. Fourteenth-century Europeans faced not only the Black Death, but the Great Famine, and the Hundred Years' War. During the plague years, the average life expectancy was just 45. Some have suggested that, in addition to offering a warning, the danse macabre provided the comfort of laughing at death in the safe context of a performance. The Comeuppance offers a similar kind of comfort along with its warning. The miseries its millennials reflect on enduring before their forties—Columbine, 9/11, the first Trump Administration—are not quite medieval-level, but they have made large swaths of a generation feel powerless in the face of mysterious, malevolent forces. Jacobs-Jenkins' characters' best weapon against their pain and confusion is humor. Like their fourteenth-century forebears, they use levity to protect themselves, but also to connect with each other. The Comeuppance invites its audience to join in the dance and laugh at the things that scare us most.

**JORDAN BELLOW** (he/him) **EMILIO**

Jordan Bellow is a performer of stage and screen. NY credits include *California* at Clubbed Thumb, *Gnit* and *Richard II + Henry IV* at Theatre for a New Audience, *Interior* at 59E59, *The Feels..KMS* at New Ohio Theatre, and *Alkestis* and *Macbeth* at The Connelly. Regionally, he has performed across the country including Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Chester Theatre Company, Fisher Center at Bard, Westport Country Playhouse, Denver Center, Syracuse

Stage, Indiana Repertory Theatre and South Coast Repertory. Film/TV - "Dickinson", "Gotham", and "Orange Is The New Black".

**ALANA RAQUEL BOWERS** (she/her) **URSULA**

Alana Raquel Bowers (Baltimore, MD) is an actor, dancer, singer and producer. Most recently seen in Molière in the Park's production of *The Miser*. Broadway: *Chicken and Biscuits* (Circle in the Square Theater). Off-Broadway: *Bernarda's Daughters* (The New Group and the National Black Theater at the Signature Theater), *What To Send Up When It Goes Down* (A.R.T./New York Theater, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, American Repertory

Theater, the Public Theater, and BAM, respectively) Off-Off Broadway: *SCRAPS* (The Flea Theater), Film/TV credits: "FBI: Most Wanted" (CBS), "Dr. Death" (Peacock). Producer credits: The Transatlantic Residency with Irish Repertory Theater and the Apollo, Anansi Creative Studio's Storytellers Spotlight Series. Proud alum of the Baltimore School for the Arts and NYU Tisch Drama. Thankful to be part of the legacy of this beautiful play. Proverbs 23:18. Always. In all ways.

**TAYSHA MARIE CANALES** (she/her) **KRISTINA**

Regional credits: *Cymbeline*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival); *All My Mothers Dream In Spanish* (Azuka Theatre); *Kiss*, *Fat Ham* (2021 filmed World Premiere), *Dance Nation*, *There*, *Dionysus Was Such A Nice Man*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Passage*, *Passing Strange*, *Blood Wedding*, *When the Rain Stops Falling*, *An Octoroon*, *The Hard Problem* (Wilma Theater); *A Streetcar Named Desire*, NO CHILD...

(2021 Filmed Production), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *La Bête*, *The Jungle Book*, *Wayside Stories From Wayside School* (Arden Theatre); *Shakespeare In Love*, *All My Sons* (People's Light). Taysha is the 2018 F. Otto Haas Emerging Philadelphia Theater Artist Recipient and a three-time Barrymore Award nominee. She is a founding member of the Wilma Theater's resident acting company, the Hot House. BFA in Acting from Arcadia University. Next production: Tonya in *King Hedley II* at the Arden Theatre. Much love to my family, especially to my two AMDs. www.tayshamariyecanales.com

**SARAH GLIKO** (she/her) **KATELYN**

Sarah Gliko is an actor/musician and founding member of the Wilma HotHouse Acting Company, where select productions include: *Hilma*, *The Good Person of Setzuan*, *Eternal Life Part 1* (Barrymore Award-Supporting Performance), *Kiss*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Heroes of the Fourth Turning* (Drama League Award Nomination), *Constellations*, *When The Rain Stops Falling* (Barrymore Award-Ensemble), and the U.S. premiere of Tom

Stoppard's *The Hard Problem*. Other recent credits include: Milwaukee Repertory Theater's *Run Bambi Run*, a new rock musical w/music by Gordon Gano (Violent Femmes); *The Tempest*, *Sense & Sensibility* (Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival);

Mountain Home Christmas (Greenbrier Valley Theatre); *TOWN* (Theatre Horizon); *A Small Fire* w/Bebe Neuwirth and *The Bridges of Madison County* (Barrymore Award-Lead Performance), both at Philadelphia Theater Company. She has worked locally with Arden Theatre Co, Act II Playhouse, Azuka Theatre, Bearded Ladies Cabaret, Delaware Theatre Co, Inis Nua Theatre, Lantern Theater Co, Montgomery Theatre and the Walnut St Theatre. She is also a grateful recipient of the 2019 Independence Foundation Fellowship Award. Abundant love and thanks to our beautiful community!

**JAIME MASEDA** (he/him) **FRANCISCO**

Jaime Maseda is a Barrymore-nominated performer based in Philadelphia. He has worked across disciplines with various artists and companies, including Pig Iron Theatre Company, Miguel Gutierrez, Arden Theatre, Wilma Theater, Azuka Theatre, People's Light, Orbiter 3, Magda & Chelsea, Mel Krodman & Kelly Bond, George & Co.; as well as in collaborative partnership with NYC-based artist Iris McCloughan as No Face Performance Group.

**BRANDEN JACOBS-JENKINS** **PLAYWRIGHT**

Branden Jacobs-Jenkins is a Brooklyn-based playwright, producer, Tony winner, and two-time Pulitzer Prize finalist. Recent theatre credits include *Appropriate* (Tony Award; Broadway, Second Stage), *The Comeuppance* (Signature Theatre), *Girls* (Yale Rep), *Everybody* (Signature Theatre), *War* (Yale Rep; Lincoln Center/LCT3), *Gloria* (Vineyard Theatre), *Appropriate* (Obie Award; Signature Theatre), *An Octoroon* (Obie Award; Soho Rep, Theatre for a New

Audience), and *Neighbors* (The Public Theater). He currently teaches at Yale University and serves as Vice President of the Dramatists Guild council and on the boards of Soho Rep, Park Avenue Armory, the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, and the Dramatists Guild Foundation. Honors include a USA Artists fellowship, a Guggenheim fellowship, the MacArthur fellowship, the Windham-Campbell Prize for Drama, and the inaugural Tennessee Williams Award.

**MORGAN GREEN** (she/her) **DIRECTOR**

Morgan Green is a director of plays, films, and dinnertime. She is currently a Co-Artistic Director at the Wilma Theater in Philadelphia where she recently premiered *Hilma* by Kate Scelsa and Robert M. Johanson, *Eternal Life Part 1* by Nathan Alan Davis, *School Pictures* by Milo Cramer and the Pulitzer Prize winning *Fat Ham* by James Ijames (digital version). She was a co-founder of the award-winning theater company, New

Saloon, best known for *Minor Character: Six Translations of Uncle Vanya* at the Same Time (The Invisible Dog, The Public Theater, Sharon Playhouse). Other credits include: *Staff Meal* by Abe Koogler (Playwrights Horizons), *The Music Man* (The Sharon Playhouse), *The Wolves* by Sarah DeLappe (Marin Theatre Company), and *Cute Activist* by Milo Cramer (The Bushwick Starr). Her short film *One More Time With Feeling* premiered at the Raindance Film Festival in London October 2023. Morgan has developed new work at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, BRIC, Baryshnikov Art Center, Mabou Mines, and Mercury Store. She is a New Georges Affiliated Artist and proud member of SDC. MorganClaireGreen.com



**JIAN JUNG** (she/her) **SET DESIGNER**

Jian Jung is a New York based set designer from Korea. She designed *Kiss* at the Wilma last year and won Barrymore Award for it. Other recent theater credits include *Staff Meal* (Playwrights Horizons, directed by Morgan Green), *The Nosebleed* (Lincoln Center Claire Tow & Woolly Mammoth. Upcoming tour at the New National Theater Tokyo in 2025), *Ocean Filibuster* (A.R.T. Boston), *The Following Evening* (PAC/NYC), *Bodies They Ritual* (Clubbed Thumb), *The Day You Begin* (Kennedy Center), *Suicide Forrest* (Bushwick Starr & ART/NY), and *Ludic Proxy* (Soho Rep). Opera and musical credits include productions in Wolf Trap Opera (VA), Fisher Center in Bard, Huntington Theater (Boston), Juilliard, and Long Beach Opera (CA). She has been working with Latino theater community in NYC closely, and designed Spanish and bi-lingual productions in Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Venezuela. Jung received an MFA in Theater Design from New York University, and an MFA in Environmental Design from Ewha Women's University in Korea. She teaches at NYU Tisch Design and Sarah Lawrence College. www.jianjung.com

**MINJOO KIM** (she/her) **LIGHTING DESIGNER**

Minjoo Kim is an internationally working lighting designer who approaches design from dynamic and diverse visual perspectives. She is thrilled to make her Wilma Theater debut in *The Comeuppance*, a co-production with Woolly Mammoth. Selective DC credits include *Fat Ham* at Studio Theatre, *Ink* at Round House, *King of the Yees* at Signature Theatre, and *The Brothers Paranormal* at Olney Theatre. Off-Broadway credit includes *Demon* at The Bushwick Starr. Regional credits include *The Far Country* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, *American Fast* at City Theatre, *The Chief* at Pittsburgh Public Theater, *The Royale* at Kansas City Rep, *Clue* at Bristol Riverside Theatre, *Violet* at TheatreSquared, *Life Sucks* at Cygnet Theatre, *One in Two* at Diversionary Theatre. International credits include South Korea; *The Two* (Space Owl), *Crimson Girl* (Dongsoong Art Center), *Die or Not* (Seoul Art Space Mulla), *China*; *Mask on/off* (Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre). Her work *The Royale* was selected for the National Exhibit at Prague Quadrennial in 2023. minjoo-design.com

**JORDAN MCCREE** (they/he) **SOUND DESIGNER**

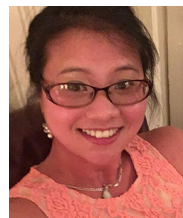
Jordan McCree is an artist based in Philadelphia. Their most recent collaborations include: *The Good Person of Setzuan* (Wilma Theater), *Grief Hotel* (Clubbed Thumb), *Cost of Living* (Philadelphia Theatre Company), *The BFG* (Arden Theater Company), *Sandblasted* (Theatre Horizon), *The World Takes* (short film, Eight Flow Studio), *Eternal Life Part 1* (Wilma Theater), *The Karamazovs* (film, Village Park Productions), *Fat Ham* (2021 World Premiere, Wilma Theater). They were one of the 2022 grant recipients to the 1/52 Project. They are also a member of Philly-based, Barrymore Award winning, hip hop collective, ILL DOOTS. Their music is available everywhere!

**KATHERINE "KIT" CRESCENZO** (she/her) **COSTUME DESIGNER**

Kitt is a Baltimore-based designer and company member of Stillpointe Theatre. Recent projects include Rapid Lemon Variations Project; *The Lights Went out Because of a Problem* (The Acme Corporation); *WITCH* (Stillpointe); *Orlando* (Constellation Theatre); *My Mama and the Full-Scale Invasion* (Associate, Woolly Mammoth and Wilma Theater Co-Production); and *Here There are Blueberries* (Associate, Shakespeare Theatre Company). When not designing costumes, Kitt is a co-founder and cocktail curator at The Club Car, a queer performance venue and lounge in Baltimore, MD.

**ELI LYNN** (they/them) **FIGHT & INTIMACY CHOREOGRAPHER**

Eli is a Barrymore-winning fight director in the greater Philly area. They have studied stage combat for over a decade and are a recognized Advanced Actor Combatant with 5 international stage combat organizations, as well as assistant to Broadway Fight Masters Ian Rose and J. David Brimmer. Recent FD credits: *Shakespeare In Love* (People's Light), *Man of God* (InterAct), *An Iliad*, *Indecent* (Arden Theatre), *The Sea Voyage*, *'Tis Pity She's A Whore* (Barrymore Nomination) (PAC), *Tinker's Wife*, *Oliver* (Quintessence Theatre Group), *Moby Dick* (Hedgerow). They are also a certified Intimacy Director with Intimacy Directors and Coordinators and an actor in the greater Philly area. Love always to Vanessa. Soli Deo Gloria.

**MELODY WONG** (she/her) **PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER**

Melody is excited to return to the Wilma Theater, since her stage management fellowship in 2004/5. A graduate of Temple University (BA, MEd). Recent Credits include: *Camp Siegfried*, *Case for the existence of God*, *Abandon*, *The Light*, *Wolfplay* at Theater Exile, *American Fast* with InterAct, *Dreamgirls* with Theater in the X, *In Search of the Kitchen Gods* with 1812 Productions, *Group!*, *Janet Wide Awake* and *Ok Trenton* with Passage Theatre. *Transworld*, *Publik Private* with Playpenn. Other companies include: Power Street, PAPA, Kimmel Center, Opera Philadelphia, Bearded Ladies Cabaret, BalletX, Modero Dance Co. Asian Arts Initiative. Certified Advanced Actor Combatant with Fight Directors Canada and SAFD. Member of Chinatown Dragon boat team. Philadelphia Suns Volleyball and Lion Dance. Part of the NO ARENA Coalition.

**MATT MELCHIOR** (he/him) **ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER**

Matt is thrilled to be joining the team for his first production at the Wilma Theater! He is a freelance Stage Manager and theater artist based in Philadelphia, and graduated from West Chester University with a B.A. in Theater as well as minors in music, math, and statistics. Most recently, Matt was the Production Stage Manager for *Legally Blonde* at The Media Theater in October, and was the Assistant Stage Manager for *The Comedy of Errors* at The Lantern Theater Company. Much love to his family!

**JESSICA RIZZO** (she/her) **DRAMATRUG**

Jessica Rizzo has worked at venues including the Hungarian Theatre of Cluj, the Yale Repertory Theatre, the American Theatre of Actors in New York City, and FringeArts in Philadelphia. Her writing for the stage has also been presented at the Hong Kong Arts Series and the Louisville Ballet. Favorite collaborators include Robert Woodruff, Doris Mirescu of Dangerous Ground Productions, and Whit MacLaughlin of New Paradise Laboratories. In 2017, she directed the North American premiere of Elfriede Jelinek's *Shadow. Eurydice Says*. Her book *Waste* was published by punctum books in 2020, and her other writing has appeared in publications including Wired; the Los Angeles Review of Books; Vice; Emancipations: A Journal of Critical Social Analysis; Theater; Theater Journal; TDR; PAJ; Austrian Studies. She earned her doctorate in Dramaturgy and Dramatic Criticism from the Yale School of Drama.

THE COMEUPPANCE CREW

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Wardrobe Crew: Lily McClure
Deck Hand/Spot op: Elliot Greer
Light Board Operator : Victoria Sills
Sound Engineer: Eddie Smith

Carpenters: Elliot Greer, Anna Ryabova, Leo Precepić
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Director of Photography: Leslie Rivera

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Special Thanks to Sergeant Brian Finger who shared his expertise and first hand experiences with our cast and dramaturg. Thank you to Brian and all others who have served or are serving in the United States Military.

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