

Northwestern WIRTZ CENTER

MFA WORKSHOP

**THE
PHANTOM
TOLLBOOTH**

JULY 24-25 2021

WIRTZ.NORTHWESTERN.EDU

Northwestern University's
Virginia Wadsworth Wirtz Center for the Performing Arts &
RIVES COLLINS AL HEARTLEY RAMÓN RIVERA-SERVERA
Theatre Department Chair Managing Director Performance Studies
Department Chair
proudly present

THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH

PRODUCTION

DIRECTED BY
DAVID CATLIN
JERRELL L. HENDERSON

LIGHTING DESIGNER
DAPHNE AGOSIN

STAGE MANAGER
REBECCA J. LISTER

**ASSOCIATE PRODUCER/
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**
HAMID DEGHANI

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
VIA GREENE

CAST

MICKEY JORDAN
ALEXANDRIA CRAWFORD
MAYA ABRAM
ALJALEEL MCGHEE-BEY
MI KANG
JAZZLYN LUCKETT
MATT MARTAIN
SAVANNAH SOUTHERN-SMITH
KEVIN AOUSSOU
KATE COMPTON
ELLIOT SIMS
CONCETTA RUSSO
EMILEY KISER

July 24-25
Ethel M. Barber Theater

The running time for this production is 70 minutes.

COVID-19 GUIDELINES: The Wirtz Center complies with COVID-19 guidelines by Northwestern University, as well as local, state and federal governments. For more information, [please visit Northwestern University's Covid-19 site.](#)

The Virginia Wadsworth Wirtz Center for the Performing Arts is a member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American Theatre.

Program Editor: Chris Wych

Northwestern University
Virginia Wadsworth Wirtz Center for the Performing Arts
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Box Office Phone: 847-491-7282
wirtz.northwestern.edu



DIRECTORS' NOTE

A CONVERSATION IN CREATION

"Always be on the lookout for the presence of wonder."
E.B. White

"...you got tuh go there tuh know there."
Zora Neale Hurston, Their Eyes Were Watching God

Jerrell: Sometimes the world can feel like Rhyme & Reason are missing...

David: It's easy to get caught in the doldrums,

Jerrell: To succumb to apathy, To waste time,

David: To get lost in the Mountains of Ignorance...

Jerrell: What does it take to engage our curiosity?

David: To re-ignite our imaginations? To take action?

Jerrell: To change the world?

David & Jerrell: We asked ourselves these questions (and others!) during an exploratory workshop to investigate and embody the imaginative world and characters of Norton Juster's *The Phantom Tollbooth*.

Tonight, we share a few selected scenes and moments from our workshop.

DAVID CATLIN
JERRELL L. HENDERSON

SPECIAL THANKS

Stan Brown, NU's MFA Acting Program, David Catlin

COMPANY BIOS

DAVID CATLIN (Director) is a founding Ensemble Member of Lookingglass. Writing/Directing Credits include: *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*, *Moby Dick* (Joseph Jefferson Best Production), and *Lookingglass Alice* (including a return engagement at Lookingglass summer 2022). He will direct Michael Hollinger's *Mr. Dickens' Hat* late fall 2021 for Northlight. David is an Artistic Associate with Actors Gymnasium and serves as Head of Undergraduate Acting at Northwestern University.

JERRELL L. HENDERSON (Director) is a Theatre Director, Puppeteer, and Professor of Performance Studies at Chicago State University. His *Juneteenth Puppet Protest: The Welcome Table* was featured in the New York Times (June 2020) and his Fall 2020 puppetry celebration of the lives of John Lewis and C.T. Vivian titled *Black Butterfly* was later expanded into an educational performance piece with Tria Smith of Guild Row and a student collective working with Urban Growers Collective also on Chicago's South Side.

HAMID DEHGHANI (Associate Producer, Assistant Director) Hamid Dehghani (Director): A second-year MFA directing candidate at Northwestern University, Hamid graduated from Tehran University of Art in Iran with a bachelor's degree in Theatre Directing. Hamid has received several awards as an actor, playwright, and director from International Festivals in Iran. In Tehran, he worked professionally in the theatre for more than 10 years until he moved to the United States in 2018 to continue his education. Most recently, he directed *A Moment of Silence* by Mohammad Yaghoubi at Northwestern in 2019.

REBECCA J. LISTER (Stage Manager) is a Stage Manager and Teaching Artist based in Chicago, IL. She is overjoyed to be back with Northwestern University, where she previously managed *Hedda Gabler*, *The Exonerated*, *Eurydice*, and *A Mother's Song*. Her other credits include *Cleopatra Boy* with A Host of People (Stage Manager) and *Why Torture is Wrong...* with Eclipse Theatre (Assistant Stage Manager). She graduated from Oakland University in 2019.

VIA GREENE (Assistant Stage Manager) is a rising junior studying theatre management and global health. Her last Wirtz Center appearance was *Tomas and The Library Lady* (SM). Other credits include: *Joni: Busy Being Free* (SM), *The Fig and the Wasp* (SM), *Legally Blonde* (ASM), and Chicago Immersive's *WANDER: Lincoln Square* (ASM). When she isn't stage managing, you can find her being Executive Director of Lovers & Madmen or practicing running in heels. Thanks y'all!

DAPHNE AGOSIN (Lighting Designer, Puppeteer) (she, hers) is a third-year MFA Stage Design Candidate at Northwestern University. Originally from Santiago, Chile, she received her BArch in Architecture. She completed a Master of Environmental Design in 2017 at the Yale School of Architecture, with a thesis on the transformation of urban public spaces through performance arts. She has worked in urban design, theater and dance. During the 2020 pandemic summer, she co-founded the performance group *Grass Studio Theatre* with Hamid Dehghani and students of NU.

MICKEY JORDAN is a recent transplant from Portland, Oregon, where he appeared in productions with Profile Theatre, Shaking the Tree, Defunkt Theatre, Portland Actors Ensemble and Northwest Classical Theatre Collaborative among many others. He is preparing to be the first ever graduate of Northwestern University's new MFA in Acting Program at the end of Summer 2021. What a time to reenter the industry, eh?

ALEXANDRIA CRAWFORD is an upcoming third-year MFA acting candidate from St. Petersburg, Florida. Her training includes a B.A. in English and Theatre Arts from Rollins College and the American Stage Acting/Production Apprenticeship Program. Some past credits include Queen-then-Pharaoh Hatshepsut (*DEATH OF THE LAST BLACK MAN IN THE WHOLE ENTIRE WORLD*), Hero (*MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING*), Rebel (*COLUMBINUS*), and Martha Loomis Pentecost (*JOE TURNER'S COME AND GONE*). Alexandria is an Equity Membership Candidate.

MAYA ABRAM is a second year MFA candidate from Nashville, TN. NU credits include *Romeo + Juliet*, *Death of the Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World*, and the MFA new play series. Maya is represented by The Rock Talent Agency. For more information about Abram's work, please visit her site at www.mayajahanabram.com

ALJALEE MCGHEE-BEY is a Chicago-based actor represented by Gray Talent Group. His theatre credits include: *Hamlet* (Chicago Shakes), *Wolf Play* (The Gift), *Graveyard Shift* (Goodman Theatre- New Stages), *To Catch a Fish*, *Paradise Blue* (BTAA Award- Lead Actor in a Play, TimeLine Theatre Company), *Breach* (Victory Gardens), *Blues for an Alabama Sky* (Court). TV Credits include: *The Red Line* (CBS), *Chicago Med*, *Chicago PD* (NBC), *Empire*, *APB* (FOX), *The Chi* (Showtime), and he is currently filming projects for AMC and AppleTV.

MI KANG is thrilled to be part of the workshop for *The Phantom Tollbooth*. Mi is a 2nd year MFA acting student who has worked on *Hedda Gabler* and *The Lover* in school. She was previously based in Seattle where credits include: *John* (ArtsWest Playhouse), *The Journal of Ben Uchida* (Seattle Children's Theatre), and *A Tale for Time Being* (Book-It Repertory Theatre). Mi received her BBA from UT Austin and is represented by Stewart Talent.

JAZZLYN LUCKETT is a MFA Acting candidate here at Northwestern University. Some previous credits include *The Death of the Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World*, *Wine in the Wilderness*, *Piano Lesson*, *The Bluest Eye*, and *The Time of Your Life*. LA credits include *Tragic Ecstasy of Girlhood* (premiere), *Diana of Dobson's*, *Metamorphoses*, and *Twelfth Night*. Jazzlyn has appeared at the Hollywood Fringe Festival in *Shakespeare&Chill*, and in her one-woman show *Signed Lola*. Jazzlyn holds a BA in Theatre Performance from the University of Illinois at Chicago and has trained at Art of Acting Studio (LA), Antaeus Academy (LA), and Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (UK). | JER 29:11

MATT MARTAIN is an actor and singer living in Chicago and NYC. He is a 1st Year MFA Acting Candidate and recipient of the Marsha P. Johnson Award at Northwestern University. NYC: new/immersive work with Accomplice, Pigeonholed, New Light Theater Project, and Founding Member of Lalabala Collective. Favorite Regional Credits: *Romance/Romance*; *The 25th Annual...Spelling Bee*. Training: Upright Citizens Brigade; American Conservatory Theatre; Indiana University. @matt_mart

SAVANNAH SOUTHERN-SMITH 2nd year in the Northwestern MFA Acting Program. NU credits: *Revenger's Tragedy*. Theatre Highlights: *Measure for Measure*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Rose Cottages* (Theatricum Botanicum), *Caught* (Zephyr Theatre), *The Threepenny Opera* (USC, Director: Andrew Robinson), *Hecabe* (BADA, Director: Mark Wing-Davey). Screen Highlights: *Magic Mike XXL*, "Escape the Night" (YouTube Originals). Voiceover: Various Regional Commercials. Training: USC, BADA, Groundlings, The Village Acting Studio, Debi Derryberry, Donna Grillo, Don LaFontaine Voiceover Lab.

KEVIN AOUSSOU is a first year MFA Actor at Northwestern University. An alumnus of Winthrop University (2018) and the National Theater Institutes Moscow Art Theatre Semester (Fall '16). From Charlotte, NC he's performed with Children's Theatre of Charlotte (*Akeelah and the Bee*), Actors Theatre of Charlotte (*Bootycandy* by Robert O'Hara), Donna School Productions (*Eat the Runt*) and Shakespeare Carolina (*Portrait of Dorian Gray*). Past credits also include Hedgerow Theater's *Moby Dick*, and *Game of Love and Chance*, Theater at Monmouth's productions of *Measure for Measure*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Sense and Sensibility*.

KATE COMPTON is heading into her second year in the MFA Acting Program at Northwestern. Before coming to Chicago for the program, she lived and worked in Los Angeles doing Film, TV, and Commercial work. She is also an improviser who has studied with The Second City and Groundlings. She is a founding member of the creative collective, Tuesday Night Films, where she gets to work with some of her favorite people on the planet. She also holds a BFA in Acting from Michigan State University.

ELLIOT SIMS is a first year MFA Acting student born and raised in Dallas, Texas where his love for the stage originated as early as ten years old, he would later gain a rare acceptance by his Junior year to attend and graduate from the prestigious school that churned the likes of Erykah Badu and Nora Jones at Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts. Elliot's most acclaimed performance was the lead character in a World Premiere Play written by Regina Taylor called *Bread* at the Water Tower Theatre in Dallas, Texas. This work garnered Elliot's first theatre award; an 2018 Irma P. Hall Black Theater Award for Best Leading Actor in a Play.

CONCETTA RUSSO is a 2nd Year MFA Acting candidate, is excited for the opportunity to be part of a newly realized take on an old classic. After earning her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Massachusetts, Concetta has worked as an actor, singer, and teaching artist in the United States and abroad. Her career has included working with the Italian touring children's theater Theatrino and as a company member with Shakespeare & Company in Lenox, Mass. She has worked regionally throughout New England. Russo gives many thanks to those around who keep pushing her to grow.

EMILEY KISER is in her second year at the graduate acting program at Northwestern. Off-Broadway: *The Winter's Tale* (New York Classical). Regional Theater: *Charley's Aunt* (Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey), *All's Well That Ends Well* (Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival), *Pericles* (Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival), *Our Town* (Palm Beach Dramaworks), *Romeo and Juliet* (Quintessence Theatre), *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Quintessence Theatre), and *Pride and Prejudice* (People's Light). She is a proud member of Actors' Equity.

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...A NIGHT OF
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JULY 29-31 2021

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With fond memory of our colleague Dawn A. Mora.

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