

# NINA SIMONE:

## *Four Women*



By Christina Ham

Directed by Tiffany Nichole Greene

**atc**

Arizona Theatre Company

2021/2022



MARCH 24 - APRIL 10, 2022

# ARIZONA THEATRE COMPANY

**SEAN DANIELS** 🌟

THE KASSER FAMILY ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**GERI WRIGHT** 🌟

MANAGING DIRECTOR

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PRESENTS

## NINA SIMONE: FOUR WOMEN

BY

**CHRISTINA HAM**

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PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

**GLENN BRUNER** 🌟\*

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

**MOLLIE HEIL** 🌟

SCENIC DESIGNER

**ARNEL SANCIANCO** 🌟

COSTUME DESIGNER

**RAMONA WARD** 🌟

LIGHTING DESIGNER

**PHILIP S. ROSENBERG** 🌟

SOUND DESIGNER

**DANIEL PERELSTEIN JAQUETTE** 🌟

CASTING

**JUDY BOWMAN, CSA**

DIRECTED BY

**TIFFANY NICHOLE GREENE**

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NINA SIMONE: FOUR WOMEN is produced by special arrangement with Christina Ham, BRET ADAMS, LTD., 448 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036. [www.bretadamsltd.net](http://www.bretadamsltd.net)

*Nina Simone: Four Women* was commissioned by Park Square Theatre, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Richard Cook, Artistic Director, C. Michael-jon Pease, Executive Director, and received its first public performance on March 8, 2016.

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*\*Denotes members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.*

PRODUCTION SPONSOR: **KAY & WALTER OLIVER**

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CAST (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

Table listing cast members: SEPHRONIA, SWEET THING, SARAH, SAM WAYMON, NINA, KATYA COLLAZO\*, KIA DAWN FULTON\*, DEIDRA GRACE, DANTÉ HARRELL, CANDACE THOMAS\*

\*Denotes members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Author's Note: This play includes "I Loves You Porgy" by George and Ira Gershwin; "Old Jim Crow" by Jackie Alper, Nina Simone, and Ron Vander Groef; the traditional "His Eye is on the Sparrow" by Civilia D. Martin and Charles H. Gabriel; the traditional "Sinnerman" author unknown and compositions by Nina Simone; "No Images" by William Waring Cuney; "Brown Baby" by Oscar Brown, Jr.; "To Be Young, Gifted, and Black" by Nina Simone and Weldon, Irvine, Jr.; "Mississippi Goddam" by Nina Simone; and "Four Women" by Nina Simone.

UNDERSTUDY

SWING, SARAH/SEPHRONIA/SWEET THING ..... BROOKE DAVIS

THERE WILL BE NO INTERMISSION.



ARIZONA ARTISTS INITIATIVE ATC is committed to Arizona artists. From our staff who live in Arizona to create the productions you see to the artists who help create readings and other productions, Arizonans take a leading role in everything we do.

On this original Arizona Theatre Company production, the ATC Production Staff is responsible for scenic construction, costume construction, lighting, projections, sound, props, furniture, wigs, scene painting, and special effects.

To learn more about Nina Simone: Four Women, visit atc.org/nina-simone-four-women.

Cell phones and other devices that make a noise can greatly disturb your fellow audience members and the performers. PLEASE TURN THEM OFF before the performance.

Cover: Esser Design

Arizona Theatre Company operates under agreements between the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States; Stage Directors and Choreographers, an independent national labor union; and United Scenic Artists Local USA-829, IATSE.



The Actors and Stage Managers employed in these productions are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



The Director is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, an independent national labor union.



The Scenic, Lighting, and Sound Designers in LORT Theatres are represented by Union Scenic Artists Local USA-829, IATSE.



# LETTER FROM THE KASSER FAMILY ARTISTIC DIRECTOR SEAN DANIELS



We are HALFWAY through our return season, so I just want to take a moment to express some gratitude for all of you.

Not only did we make it here, but tonight we get to celebrate the decades-ahead-of-its-time activism of Nina Simone, and next up we experience the ripped-from-the-headlines feel of the new musical *Justice*. It's clear that not only has ATC made it through the pandemic but is thriving.

Above all, I want to make sure you know that it takes A LOT of people to make this place thrive in such a tough time. You probably already know Geri Wright, our Managing Director, and Paula Taylor, who leads our Marketing and Development work.

But there are so many folks behind the scenes who you probably don't know: Becky Merold, who is this theatre's glue; Chanel Bragg, who is my daily call when I'm down or inspired or need to strategize; Kristi Hess, who is the force that moves everything forward; Chris Moseley, who is building the Education Department I dreamed of when I first came to this theatre as a young lad; Michele Volansky, who is not only hilarious but equally dedicated to how we support playwrights while educating our audience; Elaine Romero, who has been holding down the fort for decades, always pushing for expanding opportunities for all; chris peña, hype man of all things brilliant; Matt DeVore, who is easily the greatest leader of a sound department I have worked with (I didn't get to work with Brian); Josh Quach, who is new but already dedicated to making our artists feel like Arizona is their home; Nick Cianciotto, who connects with artistic like no one's business; Nils Emerson, who is actually not a burnt out technical director and I wish you realized how rare that is; Charlotte Alcorn, who is so good you don't even know what's painted; Tim Smith, who has brought order to the lighting department; Sheldon Lane, who is our production backbone; Sara Pugh, who is the rare combination of talented and delightful; Bitty Rosenberg, who is the Marketing Department's not-so-secret weapon; and Dom/Glenn/Mollie/Olsen, who are Team Stage Management – and let's be honest – without them we're all kids who buried our toys in the sandbox and can't find them.

There are so many many more ... these are just some of the people at ATC who dedicate their days and nights to making theatre for you.

Being an Artistic Director of a theatre during COVID is one of the hardest jobs I've ever had. But don't feel sorry for me – I don't – as I get to work with all the people above, and it's because of them that halfway through a season that we all feared would never start, we're kicking some real butt.

And THANKS TO YOU! If you're a supporter, a donor, or just here for the first time, I'm grateful glad you're here with us.

Sean

Sean Daniels  
The Kasser Family Artistic Director  
Arizona Theatre Company  
ATC.org



# LETTER FROM MANAGING DIRECTOR GERI WRIGHT



Many of you may know that Arizona Theatre Company is a LORT (League of Resident Theatres) theatre – which means that we employ the highest caliber actors/designers to create what you see on stage. Being a LORT theatre enables us to collectively bargain with the unions we work with for each production.

There are only 75 LORT theatres in the United States, and ATC (yes, YOUR theatre) is the *only* one that produces in two cities – Tucson and Phoenix. The life of a producing theatre takes a lot of time, talent, and treasure. And that’s before anyone sees the finished product on stage. ATC’s productions come to life in Tucson, where our talented Production team works to build the

sets, and our exceptional Costume Shop creates the costumes. Casting calls are held nationally and locally to find the right talent. In just four weeks before Opening Night – and three weeks before Previews are on stage for audiences – rehearsals start and the technology, stage, and every little detail are perfected. Yes, it’s ready for stage in just three weeks.

THEN, we pack it all up, drive 113 miles up the highway, rehouse all the actors and staff needed to produce the show, and remount the entire set for another two-and-a-half weeks of performances at the Herberger Center. While the show is live in Phoenix, we start the next production in Tucson. And on it goes for six shows of a season.

At best, this is a complicated logistical process, and it takes a multitude of professionals to pull this off for the season. Under normal circumstances, it is a demanding pace. Throw in trying to keep everyone healthy and well, let’s say it is challenging.

And that is where my comments lead today. We do this because of YOU. We all believe in and enjoy live quality theatre that has the potential to inspire curiosity and creativity, to spark empathy and joy. We at ATC do it because we believe that the power of theatre provides a respite from our daily lives, stretches our thinking, and challenges our assumptions while building stronger communities. Thank you for being part of our community.

We are here today not just *because* of you but *for* you.

We are grateful for your continued interest in and support of ATC and hope you enjoy this production of *Nina Simone: Four Women*.

All My Best. Always.



All photos ninasimone.com

Christina Ham's *Nina Simone: Four Women* gives us a glimpse into the artistry and activism of one of the most powerful voices in American song history, Nina Simone. By looking at her life's work through the lens of three other women – a housekeeper, an activist, and a prostitute on the day of the Birmingham church bombing on September 15, 1963 – we see how the Nina Simone we now know came to be.

## WHO WAS NINA SIMONE?

Born Eunice Kathleen Waymon in the middle of the Great Depression (1933) in Tryon, North Carolina, Simone was the daughter of a handyman and a Methodist minister who recognized early on that she had musical talent; she was playing the piano at age 3 and was taught Bach, Chopin, Brahms, Beethoven, and Schubert soon after. She graduated first in her class and, in an extraordinary expression of their support, Tryon raised money to send her to Allen High School for Girls in Asheville, NC, and then Julliard, where she studied classical piano. Her plan was to study at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, but she was denied admission.

Stung by the rejection but determined to perform, the former Eunice Kathleen Waymon changed her

name to Nina Simone (to avoid embarrassing her family, who had moved to Philadelphia anticipating her enrollment at Curtis) and began playing at clubs in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Because of her training in the classics, and as a student of jazz and blues, Simone soon found success. Her fame was solidified when, in 1958, she charted with her version of George Gershwin's "I Loves You, Porgy."

As a Black woman in the United States during the Civil Rights Era, Simone faced the racism and sexism that permeated the world around her. According to her, it was the murder of Addie Mae Collins, Carol Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Wesley that compelled her to fuse her musical talents with her anger and despair.

The result was “Mississippi Goddam,” a song that was featured on her 1964 album *Nina Simone in Concert*. The rage is palpable:

*I can't stand the pressure much longer  
Somebody say a prayer  
Alabama's gotten me so upset  
Tennessee made me lose my rest  
And everybody knows about Mississippi Goddam  
This is a show tune  
But the show hasn't been written for it, yet  
Hound dogs on my trail  
School children sitting in jail  
Black cat cross my path  
I think every day's gonna be my last  
Lord have mercy on this land of mine  
We all gonna get it in due time  
I don't belong here  
I don't belong there  
I've even stopped believing in prayer*

*Nina Simone: Four Women* introduces this Simone to Sarah (who doesn't sing the blues, but has lived it), Sephronia (a light-skinned Black woman who looks for acceptance in her community through her work with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.), and Sweet Thing (a fighter who uses her looks to get where she wants to go but does not always succeed). The women share their own stories and, by doing so, help shape Simone's determination to keep pushing her voice louder in support of justice for not only the four girls in Birmingham, but for all African Americans, particularly the women. The women tell Simone, “You're still going be singing for some folks that don't want to hear what you have to say.”

Indeed, “Mississippi Goddam” was boycotted across the South, but Simone went on to speak at Civil Rights marches, subscribing to the beliefs of Malcolm X and other Black nationalists, and challenging the laws that prevented her from staying in hotels or performing in Southern venues. Her frustration came

out in her music, from songs like “Old Jim Crow” and “To Be Young, Gifted and Black” (inspired by the Lorraine Hansberry play), but ultimately, Simone found a more receptive audience in first Barbados (where she moved in 1970), the Netherlands, and then Aix-en-Provence, France.

As you listen to the play, pay close attention to the lyrics. Simone's artistry comes from a perfect fusion of words, music, and a voice that is singular – in it you can hear her heart searching, her fists clenched, and her dreams soaring. There has never been another one like her.



CAST (ALPHABETICAL ORDER)



**Katya Collazo (Sephronia)** is making her ATC debut. Her Off-Broadway credits include Mrs. Warren/Vivie Warren (understudy) in *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. Regional Theater roles include Harriet Powell in *Possessing Harriet* (Franklin Stage); Nurse Flinn/Sandra in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (Playhouse on Park); Grace in *The Resolutes* (Wyoming Theater Festival); and Perdita in *The Winter's Tale* (South Dakota Shakespeare). Other theater credits include Lucy in *Dracula* (Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center) and Negro-Sarah in *Funnyhouse of a Negro* (Actors Studio Rep, NYC). Television credits include *The Blacklist* and *Dietland*. Collazo holds an M.F.A. in Acting from The Actors Studio Drama School at Pace University. [katyacollazo.com](http://katyacollazo.com)



**Kia Dawn Fulton (Sweet Thing)** is delighted to make her ATC debut with this production. Fulton was last seen playing Sylvia in the world premiere of *Shoebox Picnic Road Side: Route One* at Alabama Shakespeare Festival. Many thanks to casting as well as our insightful director of expression, Tiffany Nichole Greene. "Step out and be blessed!"



**Deidra Grace (Sarah)** is thrilled to be making her ATC debut. Grace is a graduate of AMDA in Los Angeles. Her show credits include the National Tour of *The Color Purple* (Sofia), National Tour of *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Trix), *God's Trombone* (Minister), *Disaster The Musical* (Levora), *Shrek* (Voice of Dragon), *Chicago* (Mama Morton), *Big River* (Alice), *Spunk* (Blues Speak Woman), *Ain't Misbehavin'* (Nell), *Ragtime* (Ensemble), *Showboat* (Queenie), *Kiss Me Kate* (Hattie), *Smokey Joe's Cafe* (BJ), *Hairspray* (Motormouth), *All Shook Up* (Sylvia), and *Hair* (Dionne). She would like to thank ATC for this opportunity. Grace would also like to thank God and her mother who, although she is no longer with her, is the biggest inspiration.

## // // // // // CAST (ALPHABETICAL ORDER) // // // // //



**Danté Harrell (Sam Waymon)** 🌟 is an American performing artist who grew up in Phoenix and graduated with honors from the Arizona Conservatory for the Arts and Academics. He is making his ATC debut. Harrell's passion for music led him to continue his education at North Carolina Central University in Durham, where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Music with a concentration in Performance. While at NCCU, Harrell studied voice with Richard Banks, composition with Dr. Lance Hulme, opera performance with Elvira Green, and conducting with Maestro William Curry of the Durham Symphony. Harrell also holds a Master's of Music degree from Norfolk State University, where he studied voice with Gregory Gardner. Some of his most recent performance accomplishments include his service as Music Director for The Berkshire Theater Group's production of *Nina Simone: Four Women*, his Carnegie Hall debut as Chorus Master featuring Beethoven's *An Die Freude*, and an intimate cabaret with Abigail Aldridge at Chez Josephine NYC.



**Candace Thomas (Nina)** is honored to be making her Arizona Theatre Company debut. Some of her regional theater credits include Milwaukee Repertory Theater (*Nunsense; Man of La Mancha*), The Wallis Annenberg (*Unmasked*), Forward Theater (*Skeleton Crew*), and Bristol Riverside Theater (*Little Shop of Horrors*; Barymore Award nomination for Best Supporting Actress in a Musical). Television credits include NBC Universal (*Chicago Fire*), Netflix (*Easy*), and Lifetime (*MOW*). Thomas dedicates this performance to Ms. Nina Simone, the incredible black women to whom she owes her life, and every Liberated Little Girl Blue.

THE CREATIVE TEAM

**Tiffany Nichole Greene (Director)** is incredibly thrilled and honored to make her directing debut at Arizona Theatre Company. Tiffany is a freelance director and Resident Director of *Hamilton*. She is a leader, a creator, and an aggressive explorer of the human condition as it relates to relationships and the injustices of this world. Tiffany is an alum of the Lincoln Center Directors Lab and Soho Rep Directors Lab. Her work has also been a *New York Times* Critic's Pick. Greene has directed at theatres such as Goodman Theatre, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Octopus Theatricals, Portland Center Stage, Guthrie Theater, Dallas Theater Center, Trinity Repertory Company, and Barrington Stage. She holds an M.F.A. from Brown University/Trinity Rep and is a proud member of SDC.

**Glenn Bruner (Production Stage Manager)** 🌟 is in his 24th season at ATC, where he has stage managed more than 70 productions including *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*, *Silent Sky*, *Outside Mullingar*, *Chapter Two*, and *Five Presidents*. He has worked at Studio Arena Theatre, Dallas Theater Center, Center Stage, Alley Theatre, and Seattle Rep. He was the assistant stage manager for the world premiere of *On the Waterfront* at the Cleveland Play House, and he stage managed the Off-Broadway premiere of Alan Ayckbourn's *Season's Greetings*. Bruner has voiced many radio and television commercials and worked on-air for Texas Public Radio in his hometown of San Antonio. For the past 21 summers, Bruner has worked on the entertainment production staff for Major League Baseball's All Star FanFest/Play Ball Park. He was the 2012 recipient of the Lucy Jordan Award, presented annually by the Western Region of Actors' Equity Association, and has been a member of AEA since 1981.

**Mollie Heil (Assistant Stage Manager)** 🌟 is so glad to be back at ATC and working in Arizona! Favorite credits include: PSM, *American Idiot* and *The Mountaintop*; ASM, *Kinky Boots* (Weathervane Theatre); PSM, *Bright Star* and *Photograph 51*; ASM, [title of show] (Webster University); and PA, *The Marvelous Wonderettes* (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis). Heil received her B.F.A. in Stage Management from The Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University and is a proud new AEA member. Much love and thanks to her parents, Mimi, her three younger siblings, and her best friends. [mollieheil.com](http://mollieheil.com)

**Arnel Sancianco (Scenic Designer)** 🌟 is an award-winning set designer and currently is a professor of scenic design at Arizona State University. He has designed all around the United States. Credits include *Acoustic Rooster's Barnyard Boogie* (Kennedy Center); *Photograph 51* and *The Belle of Amherst* (Court); *The Lifespan of a Fact* (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis); *A Doll's House* (Writer's Theatre); *The Color Purple* (Drury Lane Theatre); *Twelfth Night* (American Players Theatre); *Put Your House in Order* (La Jolla Playhouse); *Lottery Day* (Goodman Theatre); *Landladies* and *Into the Breeches* (Northlight Theatre); *The Nerd* and *The All Night Strut* (Milwaukee Rep); *Master Class* and *Boy* (Timeline); *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*, *We Are Proud to Present a Presentation ...* and *The Crucible* (Steppenwolf).



////// THE CREATIVE TEAM ////

TV: *Hurricane Bianca*, *One Moment*, *Separation*, *Lost Cat Corona*, *Gold Star*, *Copenhagen*, *Redemption in Cherry Springs* (Hallmark), and *Big Dogs* (Amazon). Artios Award nominee for Best Webseries Casting, PT Barnum Award recipient. judybowmancasting.com\*

**Christina Ham (Playwright)** is a playwright whose works have been developed and produced both nationally and internationally with the Kennedy Center, Arena Stage, Center Theater Group, The Guthrie Theater, Ensemble Studio Theatre, The Goodman Theater, Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, with Tony Award-winning producer Arielle Tepper Madover off-Broadway at Theater Row, and the Tokyo International Arts Festival, among many others. Her theater for young audiences play *Four Little Girls: Birmingham 1963* was directed by Tony Award-winning actress Phylicia Rashad and performed in front of a sold-out audience at the Kennedy Center to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing. Her theater for young audiences musical *Ruby!: The Story of Ruby Bridges* was the best-selling show in the history of St. Paul's SteppingStone Theatre.

Ham is a two-time recipient of a McKnight Fellowship in Playwriting and a Jerome Fellowship from the Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis, the Marianne Murphy Women & Philanthropy Award in Playwriting, a MacDowell Colony Artist Residency, and a previous nominee for Center Theater Group's Richard E. Sherwood Award for Distinguished Emerging Theater Artist. She has received commissions from the Kennedy Center, The Guthrie Theater, and Ensemble Studio Theatre/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, among many others.

Ham is a graduate of the University of Southern California and holds an M.F.A. in Playwriting from The UCLA School of Theater, Film, and Television, where she was a Graduate Opportunity Fellow. She is an Affiliated Writer at the Playwrights' Center, where she is also a member of its Advisory Council and a member of the Playwrights Union in Los Angeles and The Dramatists Guild of America. She is a member of The Kilroys, who have been advocating for the equal representation of woman, trans, and non-binary writers on American stages. Recently, *American Theatre* magazine named her one of the top 20 most-produced playwrights of the 2018-19 season. She holds a Mellon Foundation Playwright in Residence at Pillsbury House Theatre and is a writer on the new Amazon horror Anthology series *THEM: Covenant*.

////// UNDERSTUDY ////

**Brooke Davis (Swing, Sarah/Sephronia/Sweet Thing)** 🌱 Brooke Leigh Davis is a brand new transplant to the Phoenix area from Nashville, TN. Theatre credits include *Caroline, or Change* (Caroline), *A Raisin In The Sun* (Mama), *Nunsense* (Robert Anne and Mary Hubert), *Brooklyn*, *The Musical* (Paradise), and *Ragtime* (Sarah's Friend), among others. With a background in opera, Brooke has appeared in the Nashville Opera productions of *Maria de Buenos Aires*, *Madama Butterfly*, *The Difficulty of Crossing A Field*, *The Cradle Will Rock* (Ella Hammer), and the premiere of *One Vote Won* (Diane Nash).



## EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

**Sean Daniels** 🌟 is honored to be The Kasser Family Artistic Director at ATC, where he first fell in love with theatre.

An internationally known theater director, writer, and Artistic Director, Daniels is known for new work and innovative community-engaged leadership. He's been a *New York Times* Critic's Pick as a director and a writer.

Daniels has directed at ATC (*Women in Jeopardy!*, *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*, *My 80-Year-Old Boyfriend*), at Manhattan Theatre Club (*The Lion*, Drama Desk Award & Theatre World Award, nominated for Lucille Lortel and Outer Critics Circle), 59e59 (NYC, *I and You*, nominated for Outer Critics Circle), the Lynn Redgrave (NYC), The Kennedy Center (Washington, D.C.), the St. James (West End, London - *The Lion*, winner of Best New Musical), and at many wonderful regionals (Old Globe, ACT, Geffen, Cleveland Playhouse, Milwaukee Rep, Long Wharf, Alliance, and the Neo-Futurists in Chicago!).

In addition, Daniels has been an Artistic Director at Merrimack Repertory and Dad's Garage (which he co-founded), and an Associate Artistic Director at California Shakespeare Theatre and Actors Theatre of Louisville.

Daniels has been named "one of the top fifteen up & coming artists in the U.S., whose work will be transforming America's stages for decades to come" & "One Of 7 People Reshaping And Revitalizing The American Musical" by *American Theatre* magazine.

As a playwright, his work has been produced in multiple theaters throughout the country including a commercial Off-Broadway run of his sober dark comedy *The White Chip*, which was produced by Tony Award winner Tom Kirdahy. It is currently being adapted for a book and for TV.

He'd love to hear from you.

[sdaniels@atc.org](mailto:sdaniels@atc.org)

twitter: @seandaniels

**Geri Wright** 🌟 returned to ATC in January 2020 as ATC Managing Director. Her love of theatre started at Radio City Music Hall in New York City on a school field trip and has grown into a passion for the arts today. Having served in leadership roles at the Heard Museum, American Red Cross, Arizona Theatre Company and most recently as CEO of Act One, Wright has been a passionate advocate for the importance that the arts play in creating healthy and prosperous communities.

With more than 25 years in nonprofit management and fundraising experience, she is thrilled to be able to put those skills to use in serving our state theatre. In 2019, Wright was recognized as one of the Outstanding Women in Business by the *Phoenix Business Journal* and has been honored with an assortment of acknowledgments for her work in the charitable community. Wright and her family, along with two horses and an Australian cattle dog, reside at the base of the McDowell Mountains.



Cast of ATC's *American Mariachi*. Costumes by Kish Finnegan. Photo Tim Fuller.

## Meet Kish Finnegan, the talented costume designer for the world premiere of *Justice*.



Chanel Bragg

In each show guide, Associate Artistic Director Chanel Bragg highlights a member of the cast or creative team who is not only local to Arizona but exemplifies excellence within their field. At the top of this year, Bragg interviewed Arizona Theatre Company's very own Kish Finnegan, the

talented costume designer for the world premiere of *Justice*. Finnegan is one of ATC's main costume shop attendants and identifies as a Californian turned Tucsonan more than 30 years ago! Bragg and Finnegan cozied up in the Green Room at the Temple of Music and Art to connect while Kish was on break from helping with the *Women in Jeopardy!* costumes.

**Q: What is your role here at the theatre?**

A: Resident costume designer and design assistant. I am also the costume designer for our fifth show this season, *Justice!*

**Q: How long have you been in this industry?**

A: Oh goodness, in the industry? Well, I kind of sort of started making different costumes and things as a teenager. So that's a couple of years ago (laughing). I've been with ATC for 34 years and before that, I worked in California (Los Angeles) for a couple of years and went to school there. But yes, I started a long time ago.

**Q: Where did you study?**

A: I went to California Institute for the Arts (Cal Arts). I studied production design technology and costume design.

**Q: When did you know you were called to design costumes for theatre specifically?**

A: I was a synchronized swimmer for years and years. Which is now called artistic swimming. I used to live in Santa Clara, and from the



Cast of ATC's *Silent Sky*. Costumes by Kish Finnegan. Photo Tim Fuller.

age of 6, I made costumes for the U.S. Synchronized Swimming team. That was how I really got started. I was making headpieces, costumes, and stuff like that. After I retired, I designed for a couple of aquacades and found myself in a little show in Las Vegas called *Splash*.

**Q: Like the movie? You were in *Splash* the musical?**

**A:** I was in *Splash*! I was performing as one of the synchronized swimmers in the tank! There were two of us, and we swam around on stage alongside showgirls, fireworks,

dancers ... all sorts of things happened. Anyway, my costume fitting was in Los Angeles at Bob Mackie's studio, where I met Pete Menefee. It was Pete who helped me recognize I wanted to be a costume designer for theater. I don't really care what the trendy fashions are; as a kid I always dressed weird ... I never really liked what was popular.

**Q: How did you find yourself in Arizona?**

**A:** In the '80s, I got a scholarship to the University of Arizona to swim for their synchronized swimming team. Half of the [U.S. Synchronized Swimming] team was from Arizona and the other half attended Ohio State. During the year, we would compete against each other, but in the summer, we competed together as the U.S. Synchronized Swimming team. After I graduated from Cal Arts and was contemplating leaving LA, I remembered how much I love Tucson. Visiting for Christmas, I made a cold phone call to ATC that I was in town for a little bit and asked if they needed any help in the costume shop. Dave Nicholson happened to be working at ATC and because of our Cal Arts connection, I was hired on the spot. The rest is history, as I met my husband of 30 years and we had two wonderful boys that grew up in this very Green Room.



Cast of ATC's *The Kite Runner*. Costumes by Kish Finnegan. Photo Tim Fuller.



Cast of ATC's *King Charles III*. Costumes by Kish Finnegan. Photo Tim Fuller.

**Q: What is inspiring your design for *Justice*?**

A: Ruth and Sandra, of course. Sandra was famous for purple, which made a lot of sense because I didn't want to focus on "party colors." I think, symbolically, she loved purple to be "just." You know, I met Sandra Day O'Connor, literally, in the Safeway up the street several years ago after she retired. She taught workshops for the University of Arizona, and I was coming home from work, and I stopped at the Safeway up the street near the University. I was picking up poblano chiles (I'm originally from New Mexico), and when I whipped around the corner, I almost crashed into Sandra Day O'Connor's cart going in the opposite direction. She looked at my chiles and said, "Oh what are you making with those?" I told her, "I grill them!" I suddenly realized, I'm talking to THE Sandra Day O'Connor!!! I was so nervous I started to stammer. She was the nicest woman who shared how much she loved chiles. After she walked away, a grocer and I geeked out over the encounter.

**Q: If you had a theme song following you around, what would it be?**

A: "Livin' La Vida Loca"

**Q: What advice would you impart to a young designer about being your most authentic self?**

A: Trust your instincts and don't be intimidated about what you want. Especially if someone tries to make you feel insecure about it.

**Q: If you had the power to mandate anything in the world, what would it be?**

A: To take more time and really listen to people. It's so easy to get buried in the minutiae of life, especially in this business. We should take the time to really listen to each other.

Max Lawrence, Paige Davis, and James Gleason of ATC's *Act of God*. Costumes by Kish Finnegan. Photo Tim Fuller.





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**Our work is made possible due to the generosity of many corporations, foundations, and government supporters. Through these partnerships, we can maintain a standard of artistic excellence while providing greater access to all.**

List reflects donations made July 1, 2019 – February 16, 2022

## 2021/2022 SEASON SPONSORS: I. MICHAEL AND BETH KASSER

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The Arizona Theatre Company recognizes the rich history of the twenty-two American Indian communities in Arizona.

It is important to understand the cultural history of the land and our place within that history.

We invite you to learn more by visiting local cultural sites like the **Heard Museum: [heard.org/education/arizona-indian-communities](http://heard.org/education/arizona-indian-communities)** or the **Amerind Museum: [amerind.org](http://amerind.org)** among others.

**Our work is made possible due to the generosity of many individual supporters. With the gifts from the following donors, we can maintain a standard of excellence while providing access to all.**

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Special Thanks to Gina Pisasale from People's Light Theatre  
for providing dramaturgical assistance.

**atc**  
Arizona Theatre Company

MAY 5 - 22



# JUSTICE

A MUSICAL

Book by Lauren Gunderson Music by Bree Lowdermilk Lyrics by Kait Kerrigan

Directed by Melissa Crespo

**A world-premiere musical journey with two of the world's most iconic women at the height of their power.**

It is 1993, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg has just joined the United States Supreme Court; the first and only other woman there, Sandra Day O'Connor, is ready to welcome her and get to work. In an intimate, epic three-person new musical built of sweeping songs, urgent conversations about equality, and truly human heroines, we come to know these two iconic justices at the height of their power. Through a third character, Vera, rising through the ranks of the law, we discover how O'Connor and Ginsburg inspire, challenge, and propel the next generation of changemakers and trailblazers in American jurisprudence. Ruth, Sandra and Vera confront each other about equal justice under the law, strategy, civil rights, husbands, kids, dreams, sorrows, and how to set a new course for our country and the world.



Arizona Actor  
**Chanel Bragg**  
(ATC's *Music Man* & *Cabaret*)



Lighting Design  
**William C. Kirkham**  
(Award-winning Lighting Designer and Professor of Lighting Design in the School of Film, Dance & Theatre at ASU)

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The future is made more certain by those who invest in it.



Veronika Duerr and Nardeep Khurmi in ATC's *Silent Sky*. Photo: Tim Fuller.

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Whether you contribute through a bequest in a will or trust, or a beneficiary designation on your retirement account, life insurance, or other estate-planning vehicle, your legacy gift ensures that ATC continues to bring world-class theatrical productions to our stages, reaching generations for years to come.

### LEGACY SOCIETY BENEFITS:

- Recognition in the ATC program book for the entire season.
- Exclusive updates from our Artistic department throughout the season.
- Exclusive invitation to our annual Legacy Society Luncheon event.



To join the Legacy Society, or to learn more about ATC's planned giving program, please contact **Paula Taylor, Chief Development and Marketing Officer**, at [ptaylor@atc.org](mailto:ptaylor@atc.org) or **602-888-7848**.

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**A THRILLING NEW WORK  
HEADING TO OFF-BROADWAY!**

Don't miss this moving new play about the complexities of privilege, citizenship, and the most complex relationship of all: family. A "Model Immigrant" and business mogul, Honduran-born Mando's cleaning empire is bracing for a downturn at the exact same moment when he must rein in his over-privileged American son Orlando. In the wake of a personal crisis, Orlando suddenly finds himself responsible for the fate of a treasured undocumented worker and the future of his father's entire enterprise. What happens when the promise of the American Dream collides with the reality of immigration and family?

Authored by christopher oscar peña, the new Artistic Associate at Arizona Theatre Company, this play, after having its world premiere, will go to Off-Broadway in collaboration with Rattlestick Playwrights Theater. "I wrote this play because immigrants were sold the idea of the American Dream," peña said. "I was thinking of my father and how incredible he is. What he's done, his accomplishments in this country in the face of insurmountable odds to survive. I wrote this because, in many ways, it's a love letter to him."



Director  
**Kimberly Senior**  
(Director of Broadway's  
Pulitzer Prize-winning  
*Disgraced*)



Playwright  
**christopher oscar peña**  
(Writer on television's  
*Insecure* and  
*Jane the Virgin*)

**ATC.ORG / 833-ATC-SEAT**

ARIZONA THEATRE COMPANY AT THE HERBERGER THEATRE CENTER 222 E MONROE ST. PHOENIX



## WE INSPIRE CREATIVITY ACROSS THE STATE

ATC delivers inspiring experiences in a number of ways, both connected to our stage and beyond our walls, in schools, and across the state.

### OUR PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

#### **ATCteen**

ATCteen is a program designed with the student in mind. We are actors, directors, writers, designers, improvisers, and theatregoers. ATCteen brings together a diverse group of teens ages 13-18 from the Tucson area. We write, direct, and perform in our own productions, see plays from local theatre companies, explore different ATC departments through interactive workshops, and get behind-the-scenes looks at what happens at Arizona Theatre Company through workshops and interactions with professional artists.

#### **DAVID IRA GOLDSTEIN ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM**

Residency programs are 10-week intensive in-school workshops available to middle and high school drama departments. Students and teachers learn from professional teaching artists in a content area of their choice. These specialized and unique experiences allow students to deepen their learning and sharpen their skills in theatre arts. Residency topics include acting techniques, improv, stage combat, Shakespeare, devised theatre, and more.

#### **STUDENT MATINEE SERIES**

Student Matinees allow ATC to share the live theatre experience at low or no cost to young people. (For elementary, middle school, high school, and college groups).

#### **SUMMER ON STAGE**

Summer On Stage is a dual track, seven-week intensive theatre training program for high school theatre students.

**Performance Track:** Students will develop performance skills and experience a professional rehearsal process with Summer on Stage. ATC staff and teaching artists support an extraordinary summer learning experience, leading participants through a variety of acting, voice and movement classes, and rehearsals leading to a fully produced performance at the historic Temple of Music and Art, Downtown Tucson.

**Technical Theatre Track:** Participants will develop a technical theatre portfolio and learn from ATC's team of professional designers and technicians. Students will learn sound, lighting, costume, and scenic design, as well as experience the process of mounting and running a fully realized production.

**YOUR SUPPORT MAKES THESE VITAL PROGRAMS POSSIBLE.**

VISIT [ATC.ORG/ATCEDUCATION](http://ATC.ORG/ATCEDUCATION) EMAIL [EDUCATION@ATC.ORG](mailto:EDUCATION@ATC.ORG) OR CALL 520-463-7675



# THE ROADMAP TO AN ATC PRODUCTION

## PLAY IS WRITTEN

Sometimes it takes 2 days, sometimes it takes 20 years. Sometimes it comes in whole, sometimes it comes in pieces or waves. It is written and rewritten over and over. It is hard work creating something out of nothing.



## PUBLICITY, MARKETING, & FUNDRAISING

Plays need audiences, so the publicity and marketing team is hard at work looking for ways to entice both Tucson and Phoenix communities to come and see the show. The development team is also fundraising from individuals, corporations, foundations, and the government to make sure the money is there is pay for the production.



## WEEK OF PREVIEWS IN TUCSON

(1 week before opening Night)  
By this time, the play has transformed itself into a full production, but it needs just a bit more time to make sure that everything is running smoothly. Sometimes there are adjustments to the play itself, occasionally tweaks to design elements. The goal is to put everything together while also seeing how an audience responds to the work.



## DESIGN MEETINGS

(1 year before opening)  
Design meetings are held so the whole team can meet and talk about what the production will look, sound, and feel like, based on how they have interpreted the play. Designs will be workshopped in a manner similar to the play itself, with various drafts of all aspects considered and discussed.

## THE PRODUCTION IS CAST

(6-12 MONTHS before opening)  
Auditions let the director and playwright find actors who are able to fill the needed roles - a cast is selected based on talent, how right they are for the role, and sometimes just because it feels right. At this point, technical workers like lighting crew, stage crew, and others may be assigned or hired.



## TUCSON AND PHOENIX RUN

Arizona Theatre Company is the only LORT theater in the United States that has audiences in two cities, so during the show's run in Tucson, publicity for the show in Phoenix intensifies. The stage manager ensures that the production stays on track and makes adjustments as necessary.

## ARIZONA THEATRE COMPANY AT THE HERBERGER THEATER CENTER

### BOX OFFICE INFORMATION

Monday – Friday: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm  
Evenings: One hour prior to performance

### LOCATION

The Box Office is located on the southeast side of the building, near the corner of 3rd and Monroe Streets.

### PURCHASING TICKETS

Tickets for ATC productions may be purchased in person at the Herberger Theater Center Box Office, by calling 602-256-6995, or through our website [www.atc.org](http://www.atc.org).

### PAYMENT METHODS ACCEPTED

Arizona Theatre Company accepts cash, personal checks, American Express, Discover, MasterCard, and Visa.

### REFUND POLICY

Refunds are offered for canceled performances only.

### GROUP & DISCOUNT INFO

Please contact ATC's Patron Services Manager at [groups@atc.org](mailto:groups@atc.org).

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### FACILITY INFORMATION

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#### CHILDREN

Children under 3 years of age are not permitted in the theaters, unless otherwise specified by the performing company.

#### EMERGENCY EXIT NOTICE

Emergency exits are indicated by the red Exit signs located above certain doors. Please check the location of the nearest exit after you have taken your seat. It may not be the same way you entered.

### RESTROOMS

Restrooms are located in the first- and second-floor lobbies between Center Stage and Stage West.

### SERVICES FOR PATRONS WITH DISABILITIES

The Herberger Theater Center strives to be accessible to all patrons. Request special service when purchasing tickets or arriving at the theater. Infrared assistive listening headsets are available in the lobby. Arizona Theatre Company provides audio-described performances for the visually impaired and ASL interpretation for the hearing impaired. Call the Box Office for dates and performance times.

### LATECOMER SEATING POLICY

Patrons arriving after a performance has begun may be asked to wait in the lobby. At the appropriate time, latecomers will be escorted to available seating near the back of the orchestra or to the balcony, and may proceed to their ticketed seats at intermission.

### CELL PHONES & PAGERS

Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, and watch alarms before entering the theater.

### LOBBY REFRESHMENTS

Conceptually Social Café sells beverages as well as light and delicious food items 60 minutes prior to performances and during intermission. Beverages purchased in the lobby are permitted in the theater. To avoid intermission lines, you can pre-purchase your food and drinks and have them ready when intermission begins.

### SMOKING

Smoking is prohibited in the Herberger Theater Center. In the event of smoking onstage, non-nicotine electric cigarettes or non-nicotine herbal substitutes will be used, and a sign will be posted in the lobby.

### LOST & FOUND

Please call 602-254-7399 x0 regarding items left at the Herberger Theater Center.

### EMERGENCY TELEPHONE CALLS

Please leave your name and seat location with the Herberger's Patron Services Manager if you are expecting emergency calls during the performance, and leave the phone number 602-254-7399 x0 with your telephone service.

### TOURS

The Herberger Theater Center provides free tours of the facility by appointment. Call 602-254-7399.

### PARKING PASSES

Purchase your parking pass online.

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### HTC CONTACT INFORMATION

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222 E. Monroe Street  
Phoenix, AZ 85004

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
602-254-7399

BOX OFFICE  
602-252-8497  
Fax 602-258-9521

[www.HerbergerTheater.org](http://www.HerbergerTheater.org)

THE VIDEO AND/OR RECORDING OF THIS PERFORMANCE BY ANY MEANS WHATSOEVER ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED.



## SPECIAL THANKS

Arizona Theatre Company sends an extended thank you to all of those who have helped to make this production possible.

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A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE VIRGINIA G. PIPER CHARITABLE TRUST FOR AWARDING ATC WITH A TRANSFORMATIONAL GIFT FROM THE 'NOW IS THE MOMENT' GRANT.

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STEMSWAG.CO

A heartfelt thank you to the wonderful artists at Stem Swag who have donated the breathtaking floral arrangements for Opening Night.



# ABOUT ATC

## BOARD OFFICERS

**Char Augenstein**  
Chair

**Pat Engels**  
Chair Elect

**Kay Oliver**  
Secretary

**Nora Hannah**  
Treasurer

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Phil Cowen**

**Jeff Guldner**

**Michael O'Connor**

**Sean Daniels**

The Kasser Family Artistic Director

**Stephen Heitz**

**Karen Peters**

**Troy Hollar**

**Joan Sherwood**

**Deanna Evenchik-Brav**

**Gary Jackson**

**Erica Stutman**

**Joanie Flatt**

**Brian Jorgensen**

**Geri Wright**

**Mary Jo Ghory**

**Adam James Michael**

Managing Director

## EMERITUS TRUSTEES

**Paul Baker**

**Darryl Dobras**

**I. Michael Kasser**

**Katie Dusenberry**

**Shirley Estes**

**Dr. John Schaefer**

**Lynne Wood Dusenberry**

**F. William Sheppard**

## EMERITUS DIRECTORS

**David Ira Goldstein**  
Artistic Director Emeritus

**Jessica L. Andrews**  
Managing Director Emeritus



Arizona Theatre Company puts our artists and audience at the heart of all we do. ATC's performances bring people together on our stages to experience essential stories about what it means to be alive today, from reimagined classics to contemporary plays, original works, and innovative musicals fostering continued conversation beyond the theatre walls.

Founded in 1966 and celebrating its 54th season, ATC is led by The Kasser Family Artistic Director Sean Daniels and Managing Director Geri Wright. ATC operates in two major cities, unlike any other LORT theatre in the country, and is recognized as the official State theatre.

Each season, ATC collaborates with world-class artists to create productions and programs about what it means to be alive today, inspiring curiosity and sparking joy, bringing all Arizonans together.

ATC shares the power of theatre through a variety of outreach programs, educational opportunities, access initiatives, and community events. Including our nationally recognized ATCteen program and National Latinx Playwright Award, ATC focuses on training artists, audiences, and community members about the creative power of theatre reaching far beyond the metropolitan areas of Tucson and Phoenix, enriching the theatre learning experience for all.

**ATC SUPPORTS ITS VITAL MISSION WITH THESE KEY INITIATIVES:**

**ATC Mainstage**

Each season, ATC produces six mainstage productions, bringing together the best talent from across Arizona, the country, and the world. ATC playwrights, directors, designers, actors, and production teams represent the finest artists and technicians working today.

**Engagement in Phoenix and Tucson**

ATC provides a place for communities across Arizona to gather, share, and explore the art-making process.

**New Play Development**

ATC provides playwrights and theater makers, both locally and internationally, a place to develop their work. Through workshops and readings, we give artists a place to incubate and launch productions, both at ATC and beyond. ATC is also proud to support emerging voices with the annual National Latinx Playwright Award.

**Education and Outreach**

ATC delivers inspiring experiences in a number of ways, both connected to our stage and beyond our walls, in schools, and across the state. Core programs of our education efforts include Summer On Stage, ATCteen, Student Matinees, and the Artist-In-Residence program.



# GIVING IS AS EASY AS

1

## GIVE TODAY

Make a gift to ATC and help transform the lives of every Arizonan through the power of theatre.

2

## GIVE MONTHLY

Monthly giving is quick and easy and makes a big impact.

3

## LEAVE A LEGACY

A planned gift ensures ATC's future for countless generations of theatre lovers to come.

**atc**

Arizona Theatre Company

CALL: **520-463-7669**

ONLINE: **ATC.ORG/GIVE**

POST: **PO BOX 619, PHOENIX, AZ 85001**