

COMPANY
ONE
THEATRE
» what's next.

OUR CULTURE
OUR PARTY
OUR **SHINE**

HOOPS

**JULY 12 -
AUGUST 10
THE STRAND
THEATRE**

A NEW PLAY BY
ELIANA PIPES

ADAPTED FROM THE HOOPS PROJECT BY
NICOLE ACOSTA

DIRECTED BY
TONASIA JONES

DRAMATURGY BY
AFRIKAH SELAH

CITY of **BOSTON**



MC

CONCRETE

THE STRAND

CLUB

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WELCOME!

Welcome to *Hoops*, a new play by Eliana Pipes, adapted from The HOOPS Project by Nicole Acosta, and produced in partnership with Boston Playwrights Theatre and the City of Boston's Office of Arts and Culture!

And of course, welcome to the historic Strand Theatre! We are so happy to be back here for our fourth summer(!!) in Upham's Corner. If this is your first time here, please take a moment to learn about this 100+ year old gem!

This dynamic event could only happen with the power of creative collaboration. Eliana, Nicole, Tonia, Kimmi, Lois, afrikah, Raqael, the actors, designers, stage management team, technicians, and crew have conjured an active way for all of us to step into our personal power! Told through cultural narrative, *Hoops* is a compelling choreopoem-esque story that urges us to wrestle, dance, cry, and sing together.

That's why we couldn't think of a more perfect way to close out our 25th Anniversary Season. *Hoops* allows us to remember what's possible when we explore our interconnected pasts. Having tough conversations as a community so we can realize a Better Future together has always been core to our mission. That's the heart of Company One Theatre.

On behalf of the staff, board, artists and co-founders of C1, we thank you for being here. We thank you for doing all you can to help us reach that Better Future. Stay tuned for more details on Season 26 because as you know, there's more work to do.

Love and gratitude,



Shawn LaCount
C1 Artistic Director



Summer L. Williams
C1 Associate Artistic Director



CITY of BOSTON

COMPANY ONE THEATRE PRESENTS

HOOPS

A NEW PLAY BY
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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WITH
BOSTON PLAYWRIGHTS' THEATRE AND THE
**CITY OF BOSTON'S OFFICE OF
ARTS AND CULTURE**

Hoops was commissioned by Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, making its world premiere in March 2023 at the Broadway Theatre Center, Studio Theatre in Milwaukee, WI. This is the second production and Boston premiere production of *Hoops*.

CAST

Brandie Blaze
Elijah Brown
Albamarina Nahar
Tiffany Santiago
Kaili Y. Turner
Karimah Williams
Beyoncé Martinez (swing)

PRODUCTION TEAM

Eliana Pipes Playwright
Tonasia Jones..... Director
Lois Roach Artistic Advisor
Kimstelle Merisma..... Assistant Director
Brandie Blaze Composer
afrikah salah Lead Dramaturg
Raquel Duarte Hunt Co-Dramaturg
Sara Gorelkin Performance Stage Manager
Erin Lerch Rehearsal Stage Manager
Kit Verweij Assistant Stage Manager
Eliana Zahalsky Assistant Stage Manager
Paul Rescigno Assistant Stage Manager/A2
Jenny Oliver Choreographer
Elijah Brown Movement Captain
Peyton Tavares Scenic Designer
Grace Kroeger Projections Designer & Engineer
Mikayla Reid Costume Designer
Malory Hartman Lighting Designer
Anna Drummond Sound Designer
Kelly Smith Props Designer
Erica Schoenberg Wardrobe Supervisor
Wesley Scalon..... Technical Director
Thomas Cappelli Assistant Technical Director
Oliver Hawke Master Electrician
Matilda Lee Projections/QLab Operator

Scenery constructed by Wooden Kiwi Productions (Waltham, MA)

COMPANY ONE THEATRE IS PRODUCING HOOPS TO AMPLIFY...

- » **Our fourth year of Public Art for Public Good at The Strand Theatre**, where we continue to premiere new work by BIPOC artists and create unique, dynamic events for all ages.
- » **Unwavering expressions of self as powerful tools** for resistance, ancestral reclamation, and collective and personal liberation.
- » **The intertwined personal and communal histories that have passed between generations** and shape our understanding of culture, status, and evolution.
- » **Community partners and organizations who expand our definitions of beauty**, foster authentic gender expression, and celebrate a subversion of the dominant culture.
- » **Accessible creative development programs like PlayLab** (of which playwright Eliana Pipes is an alum) that create opportunities for emerging theatremakers to hone their craft and become civically-engaged artists.

SPECIAL THANKS

Patrice Amon
Ron Armstead
Kimberly Artez
Anulfo Baez
Sylvie Barjolo
Jaypix Belmer
Savannah Bizaldi
Hannah
Braverman
Andrea
Bresnahan
Johnathan Carr
Rochelle
Christopher
Tory Coleman
Todd Dahn
Ally Doody
DJ WhySham

Fresh From DE
Jane, Gary, and
Sylvia Greenstein
Tracy Guzman
Alec Haklar
Allyse Hamilton
Takumi Hawes
Je'Niya Howard
Conchetta
Jennifer
Siyah Jesura
Lorraine Kanyike
T. Jones
Christelle Latour
Catherine Lema
Celena Lopes
Giovanni Lopez
Melinda Lopez

T.J. Love
Julia Mejia
Estrellita Mendez
Lauren Miller
Yvette Modestin
Johnathan
Morson
Kelechi Njoku
Jazmin Nunez
Amanda Shea
Ja'Hari Ortega
Miriah Payne
Peter Perfect
Jay Pluss
Moe Pope
Nohemi
Rodriguez
Mary Rene

Sabina Rene-
Smith
Anamaria Sabino
Sandra Seoane-
Seri
Hali Smith
Susan & Dan
Smith
Westley & Mary
Ann Smith
Ivanna Solano
Emily Soriano
Justin Springer
Eliyus Tillery
Dasan Turner
Alex Ulrich
Shanelle Villegas
Ken Yotsukura
Jenna Worden

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BPT 24/25

YOUR ALL-ACCESS PASS TO
THE FRESHEST NEW PLAYS

BOSTONPLAYWRIGHTS.ORG



TURNING STORIES EARRESISTIBLE:

ELIANA PIPES MAKES HER DEBUT AT C1

As the Hoops cast and creative team rehearse for the Boston premiere of Hoops, C1 lead dramaturg afrikah selah exchanges emails with playwright Eliana Pipes over the course of the process. Across time zones, juggling multiple projects, and a new play at that, the two artists connect while jumping through hoops of their own.



An award-winning writer, filmmaker, and performer based in her hometown of Los Angeles, Eliana Pipes is a creative channel to be reckoned with, as she conjures stories that explore survival, sacrifice, and culture on both the stage and screen with plays like *BITE ME*, *DREAM HOUSE*, and of course, *HOOPS!* She is also an emerging TV writer, recently having written on season one of *SPARTACUS: HOUSE OF ASHUR* with Starz/Lionsgate TV. While originally from Los Angeles, Eliana considers Boston home, as she is a graduate from Boston University's MFA Playwriting Program and a 2023 Company One Surge Lab alum. You can see Pipes' play in "In Community We Trust" available on C1's website and YouTube channel.

Company One is thrilled to invite Eliana back and bring *Hoops* to the Strand Theatre as we continue our summer residency here in partnership with the City of Boston!

AFRIKAH SELAH: I've had the pleasure of first getting to know of your work back in 2022 at the National New Play Network's National Showcase of New Plays through a reading of *Bite Me*. I remember it being a play that I resonated with and felt seen by, and I was so excited to get to know more and you and your work since then. Fast



Eliana with director Tonasia Jones and the BPT workshop cast of *Hoops* (May '24).

forward to now and having the pleasure of working with you, I continue to be amazed and in awe of you as a writer and peer.

Can you share what inspired you to pursue playwriting? And what has that journey been so far?

ELIANA PIPES: I started writing at a really early age thanks to two major influences. The first is my nerdy parents who were both English majors, met in a book club, and went to an experimental production of *Macbeth* as their first date. Thanks to them, I grew up around poems and plays with a lot of encouragement to express myself in words. The second influence is a group of nonprofit programs that brought a rich arts education to my underserved LA public schools - programs like Young Storytellers, Sony Moviemakers, the Actor's Gang After School Programs and on and on. Thanks to those programs, art and activism have always been linked for me. I wrote my first script in the 4th grade with YoungStorytellers and I was hooked. I kept writing and in

high school I started entering a circuit of young playwrights competitions, eventually moving up to more established theater prizes in college, then I went straight from undergrad to an MFA in Playwriting at Boston University. I've been proud to have three plays premiere and two plays published since graduating in 2021.

AFS: That is so lovely! What influences and inspirations do you draw from when writing new plays?

EP: I've been journaling daily since I was 13 and I know I need to write a new play when there's a question that keeps popping up in my entries and won't go away. I'm influenced and inspired by other writers who I love - many of whom I'm honored to call my friends. I also love drawing inspiration from other mediums like music, dance and visual art. And with *Hoops* of course, I had the great gift of drawing inspiration from the wonderful people I interviewed who lent their stories to the project and made it so much richer than I ever could've on my own.

AFS: What's it like to be back in Boston?

EP: It's been wonderful to be back in Boston! The third year of my MFA was clipped by the pandemic so I wasn't able to close out the program in the city, so it's been wonderful to be back in town, taking the T and grabbing Cane's before rehearsal.

AFS: *Hoops* had its world premiere at the Milwaukee Chamber Theatre last year, and I'm curious if you would be able to share the conception story of

being commissioned to write this play?

EP: The HOOPS Project began as a portrait series by Nicole Acosta, a Milwaukee based artist who was working with a collective called LUNA and photographed members in their hoops to promote the group's upcoming gallery exhibition. The portraits caught on, and she started a photography series visiting cities across the country and recruiting people on social media to be photographed and share their story of what hoops meant to them. Nicole was working in marketing at Milwaukee Chamber Theater when their Artistic Director (and Virgo extraordinaire) Brent Hazelton got the idea that her photography project could become a play - and that's where I came in, and was commissioned to write a play celebrating hoops. Nicole selected the portraits and stories that had left an impact on her, and I personally had long form conversations with each participant that went on to shape the Storyteller monologues that, to me, are the heart of the play. From there, I added the chorus as a way to put the interviews in conversation with each other, and some sketch comedy, song and dance just for a dash of fun. *Hoops* premiered in Milwaukee in February 2023 and I'm so thrilled that it's in Boston with Company One and Boston Playwrights' Theatre.

AFS: What was it like to revisit the play a year later and workshop it back at Boston Playwrights' Theatre? What

new surprises or discoveries did you realize during the workshop process and production process?

EP: BPT was my first real home as a playwright, and being in the BU MFA Playwriting program was one of the most valuable and creatively generative times in my life. It's been a delight to return to that theater to work on this play, and to discover that the theater still has the magic of unlocking new pages. I am so in love with the creative team on this project and it's been incredible to work with the artistic teams at BPT and Company One along with Tonasia, Lois, afrikah, Raquel, Kimmi and all the incredible designers we're working with. To me one of the most exciting things about this production is the opportunity to explore the world of *Hoops* at a bigger scale. The original production



Milwaukee Chamber Theatre's world premiere production of *Hoops* (Mar '23). Photo by Michael Brosilow.

featured three actors, this production has six, and it's been fascinating to see how the energy of the play is amplified with more performers. This production is also going up in the historic space at the Strand, and I'm so excited to experience the play in a grand space with such a rich legacy. I've also been really delighted by the way that each cast of the production has brought their voices into the play - and a lot of the conversations that we had around the table when we were workshopping the play have now ended up in the final piece.

THE POWER OF BEING SEEN: THE HISTORY OF THE HOOPS PROJECT

Written by co-dramaturg Raquel Duarte Hunt

It all began with a circle; a group of friends who saw the need as Latine and female identifying artists to take up more space in their city of Milwaukee, WI. They banded together to advocate for representation of their work, and Latinas Unidas en las Artes, or LUNA Art Collective was born. LUNA held their debut show on a full moon night in the summer of 2018, with paintings, sculpture, and photographs reflecting on Latine identities and experiences; art that evoked their rich cultural heritage and declared to their segregated city that they would not be ignored. They held monthly meetings, their membership numbers swelling to over 30 in just a year, and Nicole Acosta was there from the beginning.



Nicole Acosta

A multidisciplinary artist, photographer, and storyteller who had been working in marketing and communications, Nicole conceived of a way to promote the LUNA collective with a portrait series of her fellow artists, accompanied by a short narrative inspired by the prompt “What do hoop earrings mean to you?” This exploration was a way to fully claim the diversity of Latine identity in a world that doesn’t easily accept racial ambiguity, a cornerstone of Latine ancestry due to the colonial history of Central and South America. LUNA members were photographed in Nicole’s humble home studio, shining in the hoops that carry the history and complexity of their mixed African, Spanish, Indigenous American, and other cultural roots. These artists were standing in the power of their unique intersectionalities and people took notice; on social media, and in the arts world.

A simple invitation to give words to this ubiquitous element of cultural adornment for Black and brown people, which has historically been judged and maligned in white spaces, had struck a heart chord that resonated all over Milwaukee. People wanted to be a part of what was becoming a movement to be witnessed in their own hoops and histories. Through word of mouth, Acosta had received so much public interest that she held open photoshoots in Milwaukee, and the portraits of Latine, Black, Brown, Native, and Muslim women feeling powerful in their hoop earrings began to pile up. By September of 2019, just a few months after that first LUNA photoshoot, there were enough to create an exhibition showcasing The HOOPS Project. And hoops had gone viral.



Marián Gutiérrez, whose interview comprises the “East LA” character. Photo by Nicole Acosta.

Nicole started receiving selfies of people wearing their hoops and telling their personal narratives of what this circle on their ear symbolized to their identities. She was finding her dreams coming true with offers of gallery exhibitions in

major cities (just as she had mapped out on her vision board), and then the pandemic hit. Yet the circle would not stop spinning and expanding. Acosta had a new art residency which would culminate in a show which opened in 2020, with over 100 portraits, now including a wider swath of the global majority. She featured an Afro-Latine professional midwife, a Mexican elder and Muslim in traditional Hijab, and a Native American woman of the Dakota tribe with her feather and fan. And the LUNA Collective also widened their reach, now self-defined as an arts collective that “supports all artists of color by fighting for equitable wages and diversifying who gets opportunities”.

HOOPS

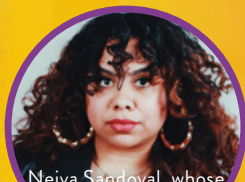
With all of this momentum, Acosta was still working a day job, and had recently signed on as the new Marketing Director for the Milwaukee Chamber Theatre. Artistic Director Brent Hazelton had the idea that this project could be turned into a play, and with Nicole’s input, they found the perfect playwright to craft the piece. Eliana Pipes was commissioned to do in-depth interviews with select portrait participants, and the *Hoops* play had its premiere in Milwaukee in the spring of 2023.

Now Company One has the great honor to welcome the *Hoops* cosmology to Boston, where the reach of these stories can spiral out further into our communities and shine under the spotlights of the historic Strand Theatre stage. From Acosta: “When I began The HOOPS Project, it had no name, and it had no actual goal, except to share personal stories and to document what hoop earrings mean to so many. During this process, I realized that adorning oneself with hoop earrings is something deeply personal, ritualistic and revolutionary. And when we wear hoops, we return home to ourselves. We are reminded that we don’t have to reduce or change who we are in any space we occupy.”



Desiree Shocko, whose interview comprises the “Dakota” character. Photo by Nicole Acosta.

Today, Nicole Acosta is a full time artist, working on a book of The HOOPS Project and living her truest self openly, bravely, and creatively, on her own terms. She made space for herself in art culture, and is a role model to all BIPOC artists who fear being seen in this world.



Neiva Sandoval, whose interview comprises the “Chicago” character. Photo by Nicole Acosta.

Armor up with your hoops and tell your story! You never know who needs to hear it in order to take their own steps towards creating a more just and equitable world for us all.

BREAKING THE MASK

Stage One, C1's educational program, works with Boston Public School students from the 5th grade through high school and beyond, teaching theatre-based tools to connect to inner self and empowering students to give voice to the issues that matter most to them in their worlds. This teaching style is grounded in our Changemaker Framework, which identifies qualities that support people to make change in their communities. These qualities include:

EMPATHY

What do I gain by knowing myself and developing an understanding of others?

BUILD COMMUNITY

What is the value of developing trusting relationships with others?

CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

How do social justice issues impact myself, others, and the world?

AGENCY

What is my responsibility to use my voice to speak up for myself and for others?

SOCIAL JUSTICE

What is my responsibility to use my art and creativity to combat social injustice?

We invite young people to attend our productions, providing a curriculum guide to deepen their understanding of themes in the play. One curricular exercise that we especially love was developed for teens by C1's BAI intern, BPS high school senior Aujanai. The broken mask exercise allows students to see a visual representation of where they stand in relation to the changemaker qualities above.

Hoops creates a world where speaking out about your life experiences, your culture, history, successes and struggles, can be witnessed and validated. Everyone's hoops are seen as beautiful. Everyone can inspire someone else to share out by speaking out, and everyone can feel supported to represent and advocate for their varied communities.

BROKEN MASK WRITING PROMPT:

1. Write about the different identities you inhabit and the different worlds you move within. Consider work, school, hobbies, friend groups, family spaces, and community spaces.
2. What are the rules of each of these social groups? How do these rules affect you? What are the benefits that you enjoy from belonging in these spaces?
3. What are some of the challenges that you face in each of these spaces? What are some things that you would like to see change in each of these spaces? How can the world make changes to accommodate the needs of these communities?
4. How can you take steps to make some changes in these communities or in the larger world? What is one way that you can be brave and step into social justice action to make these changes happen?

ACTIVITY:

Scan the QR code below and print out the image of the neutral mask. Alternatively, you can draw your own version of the mask on a full page. Then rip the page into as few as four and as many as eight pieces.

Write about each of the identity/ world/ social spaces that you named in the above exercise on the side of the paper with the image of the mask. You can write on the blank side a reflection about how they feel inside that space.

Once each part of the mask contains an identity, piece the mask back together with tape (or glue them onto another sheet of paper). Use color to decorate the broken mask. If you want, place the mask onto another sheet of paper and draw your dream pair of hoops for your mask to wear. Write on the hoops the changes that you want to see, or a way that you can be brave to make those changes happen. Now you have your *Hoops* social justice action plan. Go forth and take action!



COMMUNITY PARTNERS

JAYPIX BELMER is a non binary, African American, Boston-based documentary photographer whose work captures the “visual soul of their subjects.” Born in Boston, Jaypix focuses on the unconsidered people and places in our everyday lives. Jaypix’s professional style combines innovative design and artistically bold portraits that shine a light on individuals, enabling confidence towards the pursuit of their own vision. Being able to capture a feeling rather than a moment is a unique aesthetic evident throughout their work. Jaypix has an extreme commitment to storytelling. Through dialogue Jaypix establishes a strong relationship with the people they photograph, which results in creative image-making. When not assisting people with transformation, Jaypix works on local and national commercial projects based around anthropology and amplifying artist identity & environmental assets through archiving and exhibition to build vibrant livable neighborhoods. jaypixworx.com

DESIGN STUDIO FOR SOCIAL INTERVENTION (DS4SI)

is dedicated to changing how social justice is imagined, developed and deployed here in the United States. Situated at the intersections of design thinking and practice, social justice and activism, public art and social practice and civic/popular engagement, we design and test social interventions with and on behalf of marginalized populations, controversies and ways of life. The people behind the Design Studio for Social Intervention make up a constellation of activists, artists, academics, designers, dreamers, tricksters, organizations and foundations. ds4si.org

FOR BLACK GIRLS is dedicated to championing the empowerment of Black women and girls through a multifaceted approach encompassing education, literacy, arts, community, and advocacy. Our mission is to provide holistic services that address their diverse needs, cultivate a lifelong network of support, and dismantle barriers to equity and opportunity. forblackgirls.com

LOVE YOUR MAGIC emerged as a powerful response to the urgent need for unwavering support for Black and Brown girls in Boston. Led by educator and social entrepreneur Ivanna Solano, the inaugural Love Your Magic Conference was born in 2017 through a collaborative effort with Black

and Brown women educators in Boston who were invested in confronting the critical issues of adultification and the criminalization disproportionately faced by Black and Brown girls in their community. loveyourmagic.org

The **MAYOR'S OFFICE OF WOMEN'S ADVANCEMENT**'s mission is to promote gender equity by empowering women and removing systemic barriers to their advancement. boston.gov/departments/womens-advancement

JA'HARI ORTEGA is a Boston-based artist and advocate interested in the idea of visual language vernaculars. She works in a variety of mediums but is primarily drawn to metal. Having attended Boston's only public high school for the visual and performing arts as well as the nation's first and only public independent college of art and design, Ja'Hari has been inspired by her city and the people in it. She quickly became a leader in her community and has worked with several arts organizations and institutions on projects such as Boston's Radical Imagination for Racial Justice Grant that invites Boston-based artists and creatives of color to imagine and co-create justice with their communities.

REROOTED is a creative space that embraces the community of Black hair culture in all its textures, curls, and locs. The initiative is to push the narrative around Black hair and to support Black Hair Liberations' politics through the artistic expression of the spoken word, dance, images, and art. rerooted.space

BE SURE TO **VISIT THE ACTION AND RESOURCE TABLE IN THE LOBBY** FOR MORE INFO FROM OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS, AND **SCAN THIS QR CODE** WITH YOUR PHONE'S CAMERA TO FIND ADDITIONAL LINKS, ACTIONS, AND RESOURCES!



WHO'S WHO?



Eliana Pipes (she/her) • PLAYWRIGHT

Eliana Pipes is a playwright, screenwriter, and filmmaker who's thrilled to be working with Company One and BPT! Her plays include *Bite Me* (world premiere off-Broadway WP Theater & Colt Coeur); *Dream House* (world premiere co-production Alliance Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, and Baltimore Center Stage); *Hoops* (world premiere commission Milwaukee Chamber Theater). Her work has been developed or presented at the New York Theatre Workshop Dartmouth Residency, Playwright's Realm Scratchpad Series, South Coast Repertory PPF, and more. Her writing awards include the Dramatists Guild Foundation Fellowship, Alliance Kendeda Prize, Leah Ryan Prize, KCACTF Harold and Mimi Steinberg Award, National Latine Playwrights Award, and UCSD Gaffney Competition. She's currently a staff writer on *Spartacus: House of Ashur* with Starz/Lionsgate. BA English Literature Columbia University, MFA Playwriting Boston University. More at www.elianapipes.com.



Tonasia Jones (they/she) • DIRECTOR

Regional Credits include *BLKS* (Speakeasy); *3Miles* (Huntington); *The Elephant in The Room* (Central Square); *Proclamation* (A.R.T); *Raza* (Front Porch); *Legends, Statements, and Stars* (The Theater Offensive); *The Tempest* (Wittenberg University); *It's a Wonderful Life* (Greater Boston Stage); *Pay No Worship* (Flat Earth); *Octavia & Kleopatra*. Assistant Director credits include *How I Learned What I Learned* (Huntington); *The Revolutionists* (Central Square); and *Saturday Night/Sunday Morning* (Lyric Stage). Tonasia has a BFA in from Emerson College, and trained at Shakespeare Theatre Company D.C. She is located primarily in Boston and travels for freelance opportunities.



afrikah selah (they/them) • LEAD DRAMATURG

afrikah selah is a Boston-based cultural worker specializing in dramaturgy, new play development, and arts journalism. With a passion for dialogue and a desire to explore new ideas in innovative ways, they value creative collaboration that strives to build community towards a more equitable world. Currently, they hold the position of NNPN New Work Producer in Residence at Company One Theatre, and are also a 2023-24 TCG Rising Leader of Color. You can find out more at itsafrikah.com.



Brandie Blaze (she/her) • ENSEMBLE/COMPOSER

Brandie Blaze is making her Company One Theatre debut! Recent credits include starring in the musical *Come To Pass* and captivating audiences as a 2024 Celtics halftime performer. A Dorchester native, Brandie is a multi-talented force, recognized as a 3x Boston Music Award nominee. Beyond her prowess as a rapper, she is also an accomplished actress, curator, and composer. Brandie's dynamic stage presence has graced venues alongside icons like GZA of Wu Tang, Souls of Mischief, Trina, and JPEGMAFIA. Her artistry has garnered widespread acclaim, earning features in NPR, grammy.com, *Elle Italia*, *Boston Globe*, *Boston Herald*, *Vanyaland* and *Allston Pudding*.



Elijah Brown (they/he) • ENSEMBLE/MOVEMENT CAPTAIN

Elijah Brown is so excited to make his Company One debut! Their most recent credits include: *Orpheus in the Overworld* (Orpheus) with Fresh Ink Theater Company, *Romeo and Juliet* (Lady Montague) and *Macbeth* (Caithness) with Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, *Power Play* (Sarah) with Artist's Theater of Boston, *Antigone* (Creon), and *As You like It* (Duke Senior) with Emerson College. So much love to this beautiful cast who has spread such an immense amount of love throughout this process <3 Enjoy the show!!



Albamarina Nahar (she/her) • ENSEMBLE

Albamarina Nahar is an Afro Latinx actress born and raised in Boston, Massachusetts. Nahar moved to New York City in 2013 to pursue her career in film and television. After returning home from a volunteer gap year program with Global Citizen Year in Brazil, Nahar attended the New York Film Academy to further her acting and film studies. Albamarina's role in the film *250* won the Cultural Perspective-Independent Producer award at the Hometown Media Awards in Philadelphia. Nahar was also nominated for Best Supporting Actress at Jersey City's Golden Door Film Festival playing Toni in the feature film *Bus Stop*. She relocated to Los Angeles, California in 2019 to further her career. Nahar is actively working on her own indie original projects. Her short film *Phases of a Goddess* was selected for The Bitesize Film Festival 2021, Dominican Film Festival in New York 2021, and Halifax Black Film Festival 2022. Nahar is actively building her bicoastal multifaceted career as an actress, writer, filmmaker, dancer, artist, and entrepreneur.



Tiffany Santiago (she/her) • ENSEMBLE

Tiffany Santiago is making her Company One Theatre debut! Recent credits include Natalie in *Dead Dadz Club* with TcSquared, Andy Stark in *John Deserves to Die* with Fresh Ink Theatre, Leanne/Ginny in the N.E. debut of *Puffs*, or *Seven Increasingly Eventful Years at a Certain School of Magic and Magic* with FTLO Theater, and #13 in *The Wolves* at Hovey Players.



Kaili Y. Turner (she/they) • ENSEMBLE

What a dream to be performing at the famous Strand; as a Roxbury girl who cut her teeth in the Boston theater scene, this is a full circle moment. Some of my favorite credits include: *103 Within The Veil* (Company One), *Fires In the Mirror* (ASDS), *The Nosebleed* (Lincoln Center, Woolly Mammoth, Tour), SNL/Second City Showcase (Second City), *My Story is Gluskabe* (Penobscot Theater) to learn more about Kaili and follow her journey go to her website at KailiYTurner.com or [@madamstarlight](https://www.instagram.com/madamstarlight) on IG.



Karimah Williams (she/her) • ENSEMBLE

Karimah Williams is honored and excited to return to the C1 stage! She was last seen in August Wilson's *King Hedley II* as Tonya (Actors' Shakespeare Project). Her past theatrical credits include *Chicken and Biscuits* [u/s] (The Front Porch Arts Collective); *can i touch it?* [u/s], *Black Super Hero Magic Mama* (Company One); *Onward*, *Votes for Women*

(Birch Tree Productions); *Coriolanus* and *For Colored Girls...* (Praxis Stage Company). Past film credits include *Aftershock* (The History Channel), *Ye* (Jagun Fly Productions) and most recently appeared in two seasons of the multi award winning web series *Love Undone* (Joseph Goncalves). Karimah has a BFA in Theatre Performance from Salem State University.



Beyoncé Martinez (she/her) • ENSEMBLE (SWING)

Beyoncé is making their Company One Theater Debut! She would like to shout out her family and friends for their constant support!

Lois Roach (she/her) • ARTISTIC ADVISOR

Lois is pleased to be home again with Company One.

Lois served as one of Resident Artists for the New Rep Theatre through its relaunch in April 2022 to its final season in October of 2023. She most recently directed *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry for the New Rep Theatre. The production was awarded The Critics Pick from the Boston Theater Critics Association and was nominated for 5 Elliot Norton Awards. She produced a series of programs for the Museum of African American History, Boston and Nantucket. The shows looked at the role of women in the 2020 U.S. Election; and the importance of Boston's Black community and its allies in the antislavery movement.

She is currently a Senior Lecturer in the Theatre Studies department of Wellesley College. Here she teaches playwriting, directing and a class called "Speaking Truth to Power."

Kimstelle Merisma (she/her) • ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Kimstelle Merisma is a queer Haitian-American actress and emerging playwright based in both Boston and Providence. Kimmi currently works as the Assistant to the Artistic Director at Company One Theatre. She recently graduated from Emerson College, receiving her BFA in Theatre and Performance with a minor in African American & Africana Studies. Kimmi's heart, mind, and craft exist at the intersection of theatre arts, storytelling, and community-strengthening. As an artist and C1 staff member, Kimmi's focus is bringing under-represented stories to the stage and showcasing faces and bodies American theatre has previously denied. As a lover of humanity, Kimmi is devoted to bringing people together through makeshift art, unapologetic love, and rambunctious joy.

Raqael Duarte Hunt (she/they/ella) • CO-DRAMATURG

Raqael is an Elliot Norton award-winning actor and the Education Program Manager for Company One. After a decade-long hiatus, they have returned to the production space as a dramaturg after joining C1's Season 24 Volt Lab cohort. Melding skills of data integration from their work as an astrological and Ayurvedic consultant with the research and analysis lens they cultivated as a BA in Cultural Anthropology, Raqael brings deep heart empathy to the process of making meaningful theatrical experiences. It is an honor to support others to refine and accentuate their artistic voice. Mother to two amazing small humans, Raqael is deeply invested in caretaking the human relationship with our natural world and sincerely desires liberation for all. Step one: divest from the cop in the heart.

Sara Gorelkin (she/her) • PERFORMANCE STAGE MANAGER

Sara Gorelkin is a theatre artist and administrator from Long Island, NY, who is thrilled to be back at Company One after previously assisting on *Morning, Noon, and Night!* She recently graduated with a BFA from Boston University in Theatre Arts-Design & Production, with concentrations in stage management and dramaturgy, and is currently working as a theatre specialist at JCC Greater Boston. Sara would like to thank the incredible cast and crew of Hoops for welcoming her with open arms mid-process! See more at www.saragorelkin.com.

Erin Lerch (they/them) • REHEARSAL STAGE MANAGER

Erin is a Boston-based playwright and stage manager who can't/won't stop writing deeply queer sci-fi. They appeared on ArtsBoston's July 2020 list of 10 Boston Playwrights You Should Know. Most recently, Erin produced their play *Break, Break* with Legion Theatre Project and Artists' Theatre of Boston in September 2023. Erin's play *Shrike* received its world premiere production with Fresh Ink Theatre in February 2022, directed by Josh Glenn-Kayden. Their first play, *Crossing Flight*, first in the Legion Cycle, received its premiere with TC Squared Theatre Company in January 2018. Erin is also the writer and co-producer of *The Legion Tapes*, a sci-fi podcast/audio drama series. As a stage manager and technician, Erin has worked with many Boston theatres including TC Squared, ART's Institute for Advanced Theatre Training, Emerson College, Company One, Escena Latina Teatro, and more. Follow Erin on NPX or on their website at erinlerch.com.

Kit Verweij (they/them) • ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Kit Verweij is a rising senior stage management major at Syracuse University. They are excited to be making their Company One Theatre debut!

Eliana Zahalsky (she/her) • ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Eliana Zahalsky is making her Company One Theatre debut! She is a rising third year student at Northeastern University majoring in Media and Screen Studies with minors in both Theatre and Music Industry. She is very excited to take on the role of an assistant stage manager for the first time. Break a leg Hoops cast and crew!

Paul Rescigno (he/him) • ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER/AUDIO ENGINEER

Paul is thrilled to be serving as an Assistant Stage Manager and A2 at Company One Theatre. This marks Paul's reentry to the theatre world after a few years apart. During his time at Goffstown Performing Arts, Paul was credited as Usnavi de la Vega (*In The Heights*), Nicely-Nicely Johnson (*Guys and Dolls*), and Charlito "Chip" Tolentino (*The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*), where he discovered his true passions for the technical side of productions. With a background in acting and computer engineering, he strives to bring a unique perspective to his positions and a passion for blending creativity with technical precision.

Jenny Oliver (she/her) • CHOREOGRAPHER

Jenny Oliver, a multifaceted artist based in Greater Boston, serving as an educator, performer, choreographer, and advocate for artistic integrity. Rooted in trauma-informed culturally responsive approaches, she weaves kinetic storytelling at the intersection of dance and collective collaboration, amplifying issues impacting marginalized communities. She has worked with an array of organizations including the City of Boston, MONUM, the Design

Studio for Social Intervention, Museum of Science, Museum of Fine Arts, Peabody Essex Museum, Masary Studios and WBUR CitySpace on a variety of movement based projects. Notably, she was the Creative in Residence with Castle of Our Skins 23/24. In addition to her art making practice she is the Head of Dance Performance at Tufts University and teaches weekly technique classes at the Dance Complex and Deborah Mason Performing Arts Center.

Peyton Tavares (she/her) • SCENIC DESIGNER

Peyton Tavares is a freelance designer located in Boston. She is thrilled to have worked on this show and feels very lucky to be a part of this process. Her recent credits include: *The Book Of Will*. (Hub Theatre Company) *The Mad Ones*. (Boston Conservatory) *Let The Right One In*. (Boston University with Actors Shakespeare project.) *619 Hendricks* (Apollinaire Theatre Company with Teatro Chelsea) *OTP* (Boston Playwrights Theatre). *And Jado Jihad* (Boston Playwrights Theatre). MFA in Scenic Design from Boston University. BA in Scenic Design and Directing from Marymount Manhattan College. Website: peytontavares.com Instagram: @Peyton5656

Grace Kroeger (she/they) • PROJECTIONS DESIGNER & ENGINEER

Grace Kroeger is a Minnesota born, Boston engineer and designer for both audio and video. She earned her BA in German and Theater: Design & Technology at the University of Minnesota: Twin Cities. Their favorite aspects of theater are the puzzle of putting complicated systems together, creating system schematics, and (most importantly) programming within QLab. They are excited to be working again with Company One for *Hoops!*

Recent credits include - VIDEO: *Morning, Noon, and Night*, Company One (Assistant Projections Designer, Projections Technician); *The Interrobangers*, Company One (Projections Technician); *Hometown to the World*, Town Hall (Assistant Video Designer); *A Thousand Acres*, Des Moines Metro Opera (Video Programmer); *La Voix Humaine*, Des Moines Metro Opera (Video Engineer, Video Programmer). SOUND: *Once Upon a Carnival*, Moonbox: New Works Festival (A2); *Love In An Elevator*, BCA Six Corners Entertainment (Sound Designer, Audio Engineer); *The Who's Tommy*, Mosesian Center for the Arts (Audio Engineer).

Mikayla Reid (she/her) • COSTUME DESIGNER

Mikayla is excited to return to Company One, having previously worked on *Black Super Hero Magic Mama*. Other credits include *Yellow Face*, *Thirst* (Lyric Stage), *Footloose* (Theatre By The Sea), *Orpheus in the Overworld*, *Shrike* (Fresh Ink), and Fall Festival's *The Tempest*, *Cymbeline*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Hamlet* (Shakespeare & Company). Guest Artist work has been seen at Merrimack College, Rhode Island College, and the University of Rhode Island. Mikayla's costume design (*Wild Thing* at Umass Amherst) was displayed at the Siglo de Oro Festival in El Paso, TX and her body of work was presented at Design Showcase East. She holds an MFA from The University of Massachusetts Amherst. Website: www.mikaylareid.com

Malory Hartman (she/they) • LIGHTING DESIGNER

Malory Hartman is a DC-based lighting designer who is excited by the musicality of lighting and how lighting can act as an instrument within the rhythm of live theatre. She is making her Company One debut. Malory has previously worked with Prologue Theatre, Annapolis Opera, Synetic Theater, Adventure Theatre MTC, Extra Credit Ensemble, and the Clarice Performing Arts Center. Malory is a graduate of the University of Maryland. For other upcoming projects: maloryhartman.com

Anna Drummond (they/them) • SOUND DESIGNER

Anna Drummond is a Boston-based sound designer specializing in live theatre and SFX curation for professional theatre companies and educational institutions. Credits Include: Front Porch Arts Collective – *Chicken & Biscuits*; The Huntington – *K-I-S-S-I-N-G* (Elliot Norton Award) and *Dream Boston: 3 Miles*; SpeakEasy Stage – *BLKS* and *Pass Over*; Company One (C1) – *Leftovers*, *Black Super Hero Magic Mama, can i touch it?*, *The Interrobangers*; Fresh Ink Theatre – *Shrike* and *Truth or Consequences*; Trinity Repertory Company/Brown University – *Eurydice*, *Prowess*, *soul tapes*, and *The Book of Lucy*; Harvard University – *Married or Made*, *Cells*; Boston Conservatory at Berklee – *Everybody*, *Machinal*, and *As You Like It*; Northeastern University – *Deferred*, *This Is Treatment*, *Problem Play*, and *Sisterhood of the Survivors*; Emerson College – *Paris*. Anna holds a BA with Honors in Sound Design/Audio Post-Production from the Visual & Media Arts Department of Emerson College. Love to Dyl, Eleanor, Jeremy, and the Bad Luck Crew for everything, always.

Kelly Smith • PROPS DESIGNER

Kelly Smith is a multi-hyphenate artist with a focus on fostering new work in Boston. Selected credits include: Props - Company One: *The Interrobangers*, *Greater Good*, *Vietgone*. Fresh Ink: *Shrike*, *That Time The House Burned Down*, *Don't Give Up The Ship*. Legion Theatre Project: *Break Break*, *Shrike*. Commonwealth Shakespeare Company: *Much Ado About Nothing*. Hub Theatre: *Wit*. Brown Box Theatre: *Lab Rats*. Directing - Second Act Productions: *Sister Anonymous*. AKA Theatre: *In the Forest She Grew Fangs*. Various shorts for Playbill Virtual Theatre Festival, Open Theatre Project, and Boston Theatre Marathon. Writing: Flat Earth Theatre: *Reset*, *The White Room*. theatreKapow: *Raining Aluminum*. ShotzBoston, *StoryClub Boston*. In addition to stage managing for ArtsEmerson, Emerson College, Lesley University and more, Kelly produced the raucous Irish backroom bar series Solas Nua at the Burren, the heartwarming Grownup Storytime at Aeronaut Brewery, and founded Also Known As Theatre Theatre. kellysmith.com

Erica Schoenberg (she/they) • WARDROBE SUPERVISOR

This is Erica's first show with Company One! Her previous theater work includes Muhlenberg Summer Music Theater, and in college at Trinity University (San Antonio, TX).

Wesley Scannon (he/him) • TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

A gregarious ginger from Hawaii, Wesley is making their Company One Theater Debut as Technical Director— past TD credits include Chuang Stage, Central Square Theater, ATD w/ BEMF, & local freelance. A fun spirited scenic carpenter & fabricator, he also has a penchant for lighting electrics, rigging lofty elements, themed live events, & geeking out on artistic make-believe as he also plays his part as Assistant Director in film production.

Thomas Cappelli (he/him) • ASSISTANT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Thomas is a theatre freelancer, working primarily as the resident Scenic Designer & TD of the Mel O' Drama School of Acting in Quincy. Other roles include carpentry, paints, rigging, and stagehand-ing for various theaters in and around Boston. *Hoops* is Thomas' 3rd show with Company One, having worked as ATD on *The Interrobangers* and overhire on another. He is especially glad to be on this show with great colleagues in Wes and Peyton. tcappelliarts.weebly.com

Oliver Hawke (he/him) • MASTER ELECTRICIAN

Recent credits include *Natasha, Pierre, and the Great Comet of 1812* at Emerson Stage (Co-Production Electrician), *Bat Boy* at Emerson Stage (Production Electrician), and *Spitfire Grill* at Emerson Stage (Co-Production Electrician)

Matilda Lee (she/her) • PROJECTIONS/QLAB OPERATOR

Matilda is currently a student at Berklee College of Music anticipating to graduate next year, pursuing Music Production and Engineering, and Performance focused in musical theater. With a passion in live sound for musical theater as A1/A2, she envisions a community of inclusivity and collaborative creative arts. Through opportunities to expand her passion with theatre around herself, Matilda hopes to take steps into sharing the depths of technical theatre.

Nicole Acosta (she/her) • HOOPS PROJECT CREATOR

Born and raised in Milwaukee, WI, a first generation Mexican Artist. Whether through visual art, written word, or photography - most of Nicole’s work reflects the exploration of identity, experience, place, culture, and storytelling.

Nicole holds a Bachelor of Arts in Marketing Management from Alverno College and is a proud graduate of the Milwaukee High School of The Arts, and prior to her transfer to Alverno, spent years at Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design and Milwaukee Area Technical College studying photography. Her HOOPS Project is being nationally recognized and her current focus.

In 2023, she became the 14th Artist in Residence at The Pfister Hotel, held a solo HOOPS exhibition featuring sixty-three works at MARN, and launched the world premiere of the *Hoops* stage play written by Eliana Pipes based off the stories told by those photographed for the HOOPS Project. atsocanicole.com

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THE WORD ON C1

Company One Theatre builds community at the intersection of art and social change.

Founded in 1998, Company One has situated itself as a home for social justice and artistic excellence by connecting Boston's diverse communities through live performance, the development of new plays and playwrights, arts education, and public engagement programming. By establishing a dedicated space for marginalized and alternative narratives to thrive and working with partners and collaborators across the city, Company One has become a local leader in the ongoing conversations that continue to define the era of social change in contemporary America.

“COMPANY ONE THEATRE PUSHES THE BOUNDARIES OF NARRATIVE WITH A FOCUS ON MARGINALIZED STORIES, AND HAS PROBABLY DONE MORE THAN ANY OTHER INSTITUTION TO BRING NEW AUDIENCES TO BOSTON THEATER.”

— WBUR'S THE ARTERY

COMPANY
ONE THEATRE
» what's next.

COMPANYONE.ORG

Errol Service Jr. in *The Boy Who Kissed The Sky*. Photography by Erin Crowley

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