

## **In the Red and Brown Water**

By Tarell Alvin McCraney  
Directed by Caroline S. Clay

UI Theatre Building | David Thayer Theatre

**Please be advised that this play contains explicit language, sexual themes, culturally charged and explicit language.**

San Pere, Louisiana: Oya runs fast, but her collegiate future is placed on hold to care for her mother. Inspired by Federico García Lorca's *Yerma* and Yoruban cosmology, Tarell Alvin McCraney's *In the Red and Brown Water* is a lyrical offering at the intersection of ancestral myth and ritual about a young woman's coming-of-age navigating lovers, community, and her chosen path.

Special thanks to Paul Kalina, Mark Bruckner, Jordan Jones, and Samantha Goblirsch-Paradis for their contributions.

Performances:

Friday, April 12 at 8 p.m.

Saturday, April 13 at 8 p.m.

Sunday, April 14 at 2 p.m.

Wednesday, April 17 at 8 p.m.

Thursday, April 18 at 8 p.m.

Friday, April 19 at 8 p.m.

Saturday, April 20 at 8 p.m.

**Tickets:**

Purchase your tickets in advance through Hancher Box Office by calling 319-335-1160 or online through [their website](#).

The Box Office at the Theatre Building opens one hour prior to the performance, with tickets on an as-available basis, unless the production is sold out.

*Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to attend all University of Iowa–sponsored events. If you are a person with a disability who requires a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in this program, please contact Department of Theatre Arts in advance at [319-335-2700](tel:319-335-2700) or [theatre@uiowa.edu](mailto:theatre@uiowa.edu).*

## In the Red and Brown Water – Director's Note

I am deeply proud to be a part of the team that helped to manifest my vision for *In the Red & Brown Water*, a piece that has lived close to my heart since I first saw the six-hour trilogy of *The Brother/Sister Plays: In the Red & Brown Water*, *The Brother's Size*, and *Marcus, Sticky & Sweet* at the Public Theatre in NYC. To bear witness and stand in community with the power of this play, transformed me. I wish to acknowledge the extraordinary talents of our actors, Stage Management, Scenic, Sound, Properties, Costumes, Lighting, and Marketing teams. Special thanks to our Administrative & Facilities staff, faculty, students, DEO Mary Beth Easley, Savanha Moore, Emma Merkes, U Iowa's Performing Arts Production Unit, Office of Performing Arts & Engagement at Hancher, André Perry, Dr. Venise Berry, Dr. Liz Tovar, Dr. Elizabeth Mendez-Shannon, Dr. Motier Haskins, Dr. Jennifer Buckley, Mayor Bruce Teague, Deb Crierie, Kay Rzasa, Dana James & *Black Iowa News*, Afro House, Kayla Schindler, Virginia Muturi, Briana Maxwell, Becca Weaver, Samantha Paradis, Owen Brightman, Mary Mayo, Paul Kalina, Mark Bruckner, Jason Milsap, Rob Cline, and Suzanne Clay.

I recognize my two-time collaborator, our choreographer, credentialed scholar of *Diasporic Dance Forms & Studies* from Trinidad & Tobago, former Grant Wood Scholar in Dance, and Assistant Professor of Dance at Skidmore College, Kieron Dwayne Sargeant. It was Kieron who educated our young actors about the necessity for cultural competency and proper regard when dealing with a series of sensitive subject matters. Through his guidance, they have learned to honor the Afro-Caribbean practitioners of the diaspora, the Pantheon of Yoruba cosmology, the *orisha*, and their devotees- through an outsider's lens of examining forms of theatricality, while making no attempt to copy, replicate, or claim an

authenticity of practice. Instead, they only strive to show their gratitude through gestural representations of appreciation, reverence, and awe. Thank you, Terigbabde.

Thank you also to our incredible collaborators at the Stanley Museum for their generosity and curatorial leadership: Dr. Lauren Lessing, Dr. Kimberly Datchuck, Derek Nnuro, and Dr. Cory Gundlach. Special thanks go to my colleague, Professor of Design & Director of Theatre for the Department of Theatre Arts, Bryon Winn. Bryon has been my stalwart advocate on this project from the beginning. My initial hour-long PowerPoint Presentation pitch left the Season Selection Committee so confused that Bryon thought I wanted to present the entire six-hours of *The Brother/Sister Plays* in one evening. Thankfully, he has continued to champion and support my vision with gentle humor and blazing focus. Finally, I want to thank my esteemed colleague and friend, Associate Professor of Design, Coordinator of the Certificate in Social Justice & Performing Arts, and the Costume Designer of *In the Red & Brown Water*, Loyce Arthur. Her dedication to this department, the students, and Iowa City's greater community exemplifies a standard of excellence that has inspired all whose lives she has touched. Continued global adventures, Loyce! This production is dedicated to the memory of my mentors, Walter Dallas and Lynda Gravaat, and dear friend, Wayne Bernard Jackson. Ase.

-Caroline S. Clay

# In the Red and Brown Water – Dramaturg Note

## Making Your Mark

“Bringing humanity up to the gods and the gods down to humanity.”

—Caroline Clay, director

“Keep running, always running.” In our world today, we are under the impression that we must always be doing something productive. We have to make a difference in order for our lives to mean something. But what happens when obstacles are thrown in our way? Obstacles that we cannot move and cannot overcome? In Tarell Alvin McCraney’s *In the Red and Brown Water*, this stagnation is what Oyá faces after missing the chance to leave her small community to do what she loves—running. After postponing her life, Oyá finds the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity taken away, leaving her in this small town with the need to find what it means to make a mark.

When writing this play, McCraney was heavily influenced by the Yoruba religion—brought over to North America from Western Africa during the Transatlantic Slave Trade. As slaves were taken in several directions, this religion and culture was most preserved by the south-eastern coastal regions which include Southern U.S., Caribbean, Cuban, and Puerto-Rican Santería traditions which influenced the new growth of this belief and practice as it exists outside of Africa. Within the world of the play, McCraney embodies the mysteries of the divine by taking the deities from Yoruba tradition—the Orisha—and placing them in the human world. From Yoruba creation myth to stories of interactions between these deities, McCraney is able to intertwine myth and reality, story and experience, in a way that both represents a centuries-old tradition and the lives experienced by its descendants today.

Along with the Orisha spirits, McCraney brings in elements of Federico García Lorca's *Yerma*—the story of a young woman who wants nothing more than to be a mother but is married to a man who's only concern is his work. He goes so far as to relegate Yerma to the house and to bring his sister to ensure her behavior. Lorca examines what becomes of us when we are isolated, sectioned off from community, and made to feel as though our existence has no meaning. In combining Yoruba culture with Lorca's *Yerma* in a postmodern approach, McCraney is able to make a new meaning, a new story.

Through this new story, we are brought to question how we create meaning for ourselves. How do we step out of societal, cultural, and religious expectations of what we should do and what meaning we should make? How do we come to know who we are, in our bodies, in our minds, and in our own hearts? These questions permeate the world McCraney has crafted as well as our development of this production. So, as you experience these characters and their world, ask yourself, do you know who you are? How do you make meaning for yourself? How do you exist in both body and spirit? Investigate these questions, because, like Oyá, we are “here, always here,” so how could we not?

—Rebecca Weaver, dramaturg

# In the Red and Brown Water – Scenic Rendering

*Scenic design rendering by Bethany Kasperek*

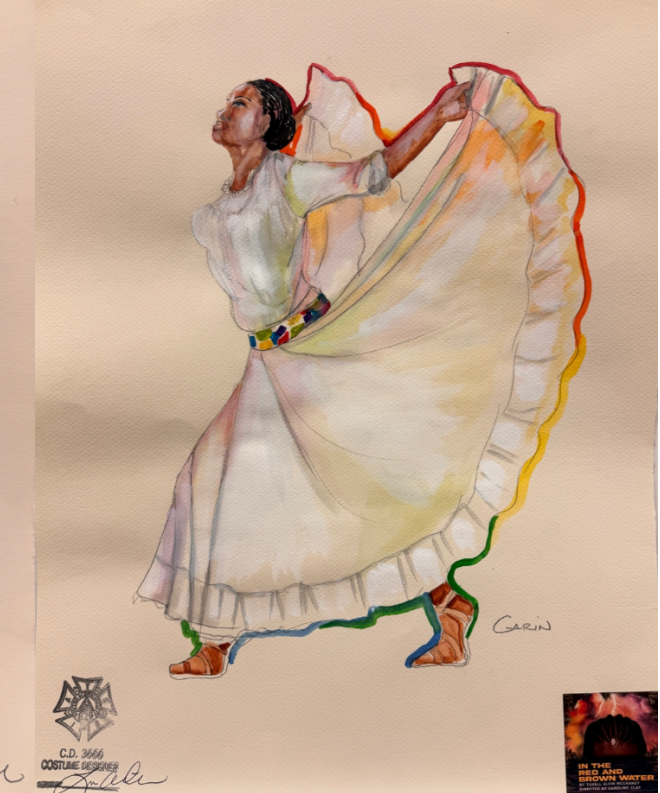
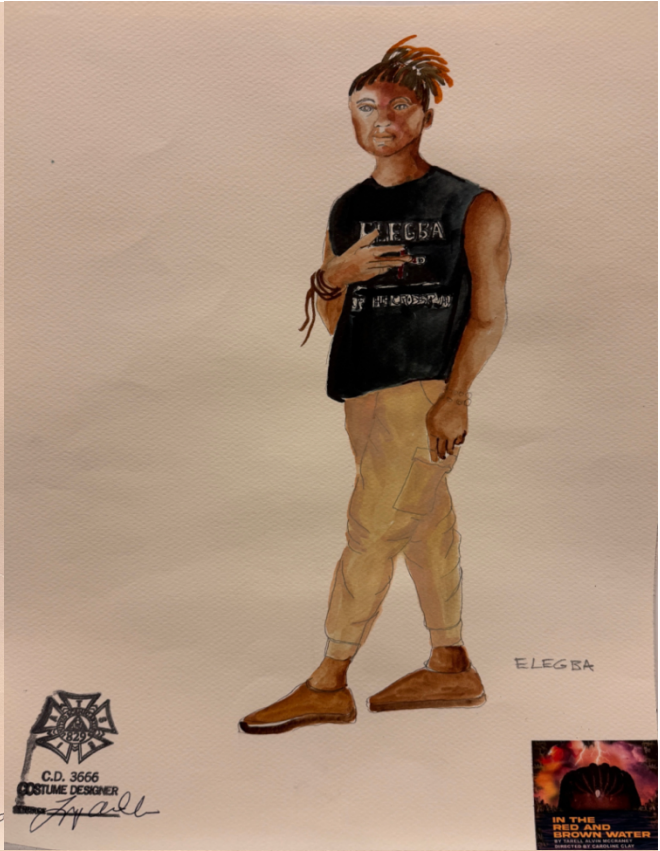


# In the Red and Brown Water – Costume Sketches

*Costume sketches by Loyce Arthur*









# In the Red and Brown Water – Meet the Cast

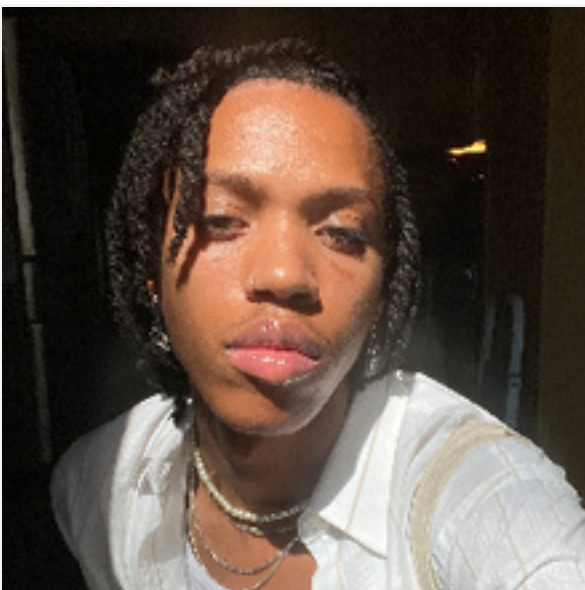
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## Oya | **DAJZANÉ MEADOWS-SANDERLIN**

Dajzané is a third-year MFA actor at the University of Iowa. Her most recent productions include *West Illinois Glass House* and *Brother-Brother*. She was also a part of the premiere of the Iowa New Play Festival production of *Lil G: A Great Gatsby Remix*, *Braided Sorrow*, *The Bacchae: A Tragedy in One Act (from the Kneehigh Theatre)*, *BLKS*, *Gwenevere*, and *Three to Five Days*. All these productions have led her to her final mainstage show: *In the Red and Brown Water*. Dajzané is beyond grateful to

bring this role to life! She would like to thank everyone who helped guide her to this moment, she could not have made it without you all! She is leaving her mark at the University of Iowa... AH!



## Elegba | **KYLEN PHILLIPS\***

Kylen Phillips is a second-year theatre arts & screenwriting arts major at the University of Iowa. He is very excited to be playing the role of Elegba, as this is one of the more important roles he has ever played. He has starred in productions like *Macbeth* and *Something Rotten!*. He cannot wait to show you the beauty of Tarell Alvin McCraney's work.

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**Ogun Size | ISAAC ADDAI**

Isaac Addai is an Artist from The Inland Empire, California. His roots are Ghanaian, African-American, and Indigenous. Telling Afrocentric narratives on stage is his pride and joy. He most recently appeared in *Brother-Brother* as Ndaa Okenta, and in *Macbeth* as Malcolm. Lastly, he would like to thank his Tribe of support both in Iowa City and around the world for walking with him the last 3 years. I love you all dearly.

**IOWA**

**Theatre Arts**

**Mama Moja / Women Who Reminds You |**  
**CIANON JONES**

Cianon is a first-year in the MFA Playwrights Workshop program at the University of Iowa. Earlier in the semester they played The Defendant in *West Illinois Glass House* by Alex Lead. Cianon is enthused to be diving into the world of *In the Red and Brown Water* with the wonderful cast, crew, and team.

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**Aunt Elegua | ASHA KELLER\***

Asha Keller is a fifth-year Theatre and Biology double major at the University of Iowa. She's excited to be a part of her final show at the University of Iowa. Some of the past productions she's starred in include *BLKS* (Spring 2022), *Lil G: A Gatsby Remix* (NPF 2023), *Men On Boats* (Fall 2023), and most recently this semester *West Illinois Glass House*. Asha would like to thank her friends and family for their continued support, and the entire production team for their efforts. She's

thrilled to get to play another role that pushes her outside of her box, and she's sure you'll lose your breath when you see it!



**Nia | DELANEY WATERMAN\***

Delaney Waterman is a third-year Theatre Arts and Cinematic Arts double major at the University of Iowa. She is very excited to be in her second main stage show at the University. You might have seen her other productions through the department, including *The Children's Hour*, *I Saw You/New Person*, *Queer Horror Festival*, and *Symphony*. As well as acting in plays here, she has also written a full-length play that was produced last semester, *Reflections*, and a ten-minute play for the 2023 Ten-Minute Play

Festival, *Secondhand Blues*. She would like to thank her friends and family for all their support, and she hopes you enjoy the show!

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**Shun | E'MMA CAMARA\***

E'mma Camara is a third-year Theatre and Psychology double major at the University of Iowa. E'mma is ecstatic that she gets to be in such an amazing show, and that her character, Shun, is really fun to play. This is her first mainstage at the university, but you might remember her if you saw *BOOTH* during last year's New Play Festival. She hopes that you love the show as much as she does. She would also like to shoutout to her mom, because she's the best.



**Shango | MICHAEL TAYLOR**

Michael Taylor is a third year MFA Actor at the University of Iowa. From the South Side of Chicago, Michael attended Urban Prep Englewood High School and took his talents to Jackson State University afterwards. After graduating from Jackson State in 2021, Michael decided to further his training here at UIowa. He has starred in productions such as *The Bacchae* and *Ugly Lies the Bone*. This will be Michael's last show at the University of Iowa. After graduating, Michael plans to move back

home to Chicago to pursue a professional acting career.

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**The Man From State | JASPER ROOD\***

Jasper is an actor at the University of Iowa. He enjoys listening to music, doing improv with his troupe the tinfoil hat committee, and a good old fashioned uncle sun run. Jasper has previously acted in *Macbeth*, *Fathers and Sons*, and *Something Rotten!* for the University of Iowa. Jasper has also directed for the last two Ten-Minute Play Festivals and wrote one of the Ten-Minute plays this year. He would like to dedicate his performance to his little brother, Atticus.



**Egungun | ANDREW LINDSAY\***

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**Ensemble / Dance Captain | GARIN CLINTON-NELSON\***

Garin Clinton Nelson is a third-year undergraduate pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree in Dance along with a minor in criminology. She has been in previous works *CEMPASUCHIL* choreographed by Eloy Barragan and *All in Response to Another Time Is Now* choreographed by Tony Orrico, performed at Hancher. In this show, she is the dance captain! Working with the cast to create movements that represent the individual and

the characters they are portraying. Garin is ecstatic to be working with fun charismatic individuals and sends love to everyone performing and coming to watch the show.

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# In the Red and Brown Water – Meet the Creative Team

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## Director | CAROLINE STEFANIE CLAY

Caroline Clay (she/her) is a native of Washington, D.C. and an Assistant Professor of Acting here at UIowa's Department of Theatre Arts. Best known for her memorable portrayal of "CeCe the Matchmaker" for an entire season on *Grey's Anatomy*, she is a 30-year career veteran of five Broadway shows, television, film, and a national tour. She is the winner of an *NAACP Award for Best Actress in a Play* for her role in *Skeleton Crew* at The Geffen Playhouse (West Coast.) In addition to directing *In the Red & Brown Water*,

and a staged reading of this play as part of an exciting new collaboration with The Stanley Museum, in conversation with their collections of the African diaspora, she has directed *Gwenevere* (2022) and *Lil' G: A Gatsby Remix* (2023) both by MFA '23 Playwright, Isaiah Reaves. As a playwright, Clay is the author of two solo shows, *Let it Flo!: The Life & Scandals of Florynce Kennedy*, which played Off-Broadway (2016) at the Cherry Lane Theatre, and *Sepia Sculptress: Wildfire, Edmonia Lewis* (2017) at the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage in Washington, D.C. Currently, she is writing a solo show about famed artist and UIowa alum, Elizabeth Catlett. Nominated by her students, Clay will receive the University of Iowa's Office of Undergraduate Research's *Distinguished Mentor Award of 2024*. Later this summer, she will complete her training to become a Designated Linklater Voice Instructor. Caroline is a proud union member of both Actor's Equity Association, and SAG-AFTRA. She is deeply grateful to every colleague, faculty & staff member, student, scholar, collaborator, department, and creative division- without whom, this vision would never have become a reality. She dedicates *In the Red & Brown Water* to beautiful mother, Suzanne.

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**Choreographer | KIERON DWAYNE SARGEANT**

Hailing from Trinidad and Tobago, Kieron Dwayne Sargeant is an embodiment of African-Caribbean Diaspora traditions. An interdisciplinary artist, choreographer, drummer, and astute dance researcher, he currently holds a distinguished position as an Assistant Professor of Dance, Latin America, Caribbean and Latinx Studies at Skidmore College. Over two decades, Kieron has meticulously documented Caribbean and Western African dance traditions. His pedagogical approach

involves the dissemination of dance teachings and workshops that both recognize and reinforce these traditions. His performance pieces often integrate spiritual, cultural, and sacred themes. Notably, his work "He Shall Walk" (2022), presented by Northwestern Black Arts Consortium, offers a profound exploration of his personal journey as a "Mourner". Through choreography, he examines the generational wisdom and history that resonate within the body, manifesting at moments of introspection.

Kieron's contributions to the realm of masterclasses are evident in renowned institutions like Florida State University, Collegium for African Diaspora Dance, Woezo Africa Music and Dance Theatre Inc., the International Association of Blacks in Dance, NYU Steinhardt, the Nigerian Dance Guild, Ecole des Sables, and Simon Fraser University. His choreography has been showcased internationally, from the Universoul Circus and SUNY Brockport in the U.S. to stages worldwide with MSC Cruise Lines. He has also collaborated with eminent dance figures including Thomas Talawa Prestø, Makeda Thomas, and Caroline Copeland.

Academically, Kieron is accomplished, holding an MFA from Florida State University, an MA from Ohio University, and a BA from the University of West Indies. Among his notable recognitions are the 2019 FA Ada Belle Winthrop King Art Endowment Award, 2020 UNESCO Dance Fellowship and a Grant Wood Fellow in Interdisciplinary Performance in 2022 from the University of Iowa.

In 2020, he established the Kieron Sargeant Dance and Dance Education Foundation in Trinidad and Tobago, fostering an environment conducive for artistic growth. Recent accolades include the 2021 International Artist Award from Ayjano Folklore Heritage

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and Performing Arts Institution of Nigeria, an influential mentorship role with the Mojuba Dance Collective Company and one of the highest city awards, the Mayor of the City of San Fernando Citation Award 2023, for his contributions to arts and culture in Trinidad and Tobago

Kieron remains actively engaged in collaborative projects affiliated with Hofstra University and Rutgers University. His collaborations with international scholars and artists further underscore his commitment to understanding and enhancing the global impact of African influences on dance traditions.



**Dramaturg | REBECCA WEAVER**

Rebecca Weaver (She/They) is in their second year as an MFA candidate in the dramaturgy program here at the University of Iowa. Previously, Rebecca obtained two bachelor's degrees in English and Drama (2020) at Jacksonville State University where they then received their master's degree in English (2022). Among their theatre experience, Rebecca has presented their dramaturgical work at several theatre conferences (SETC, PCA/ACA, MATC) and spent time at the Kennedy Center in D.C. as a dramaturgy fellow through KCACTF. Their most

recent theatre credits include dramaturging *Macbeth* (UIowa) *You're Still Here* (NPF, UIowa), *Ugly Lies the Bone* (UIowa), *The Children's Hour* (UIowa), *Emilie: du Châtelet Defends Her Life Tonight* (JSU), co-dramaturging *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (The Shakespeare Project), and directing *The Diary of Anne Frank* by Wendy Kesselman. They are very honored to have worked with the cast and creative team of *In the Red and Brown Water*, especially the director, Caroline Clay, and hope you enjoy the show!

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**Stage Manager | SAVANHA MOORE**

Savanha Moore (She/Her) is a Theatrical Artist and Production Stage Manager from Southern California. She is happy to be continuing her education at the University of Iowa as a second-year Stage Management MFA candidate. Savanha has always wanted to tell stories that serve a greater purpose and that makes way for the change she would like to see in the world. Thank you to the cast and crew and creative team for their incredible work throughout this process, she is incredibly grateful to be a part of this team. She thanks those who have always

supported her on this journey and encouraged her to take that leap of faith; without your support none of this would be possible. Her recent show credits include: *The Heist* (Immersive Experience, NYC), *Macbeth* (UIowa, Mabie Theatre), *NBC Quantum Leap* (Immersive Experience, SDCC 2023), *Title Pending* (Obsidian Theatre Festival), *Lil G: A Gatsby Remix* (UIowa Theatre; Thayer Theatre), *Braided Sorrow* (UIowa Theatre; Thayer Theatre), *Mother:Knife* (UIowa Theatre, MacVey Theatre), *HBO House of the Dragons Activation* (Immersive Experience, SDCC 2022), *Untitled Baby Play* (IAMA Theatre), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Geffen Playhouse). She thanks you for coming and enjoying live theatre; enjoy the show!

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**Scenic Designer | BETHANY KASPEREK**



**Costume Designer | LOYCE ARTHUR**

Loyce L. Arthur, associate professor, University of Iowa, has designed costumes for over 100 productions over the course of her career, including *How I Learned What I Learned*, *The 39 Steps*, and *Peer Gynt*, Portland Stage Company, ME; *Once On This Island* at the Skylight Music Theater, MN; *Brokenville*, and *Nocturnal Wanderer*, Athens, Greece; *Famous Orpheus*, Geva Theater, NY. Her work at the University of Iowa includes *BLKS*, *Welcome to Thebes*, *American Idiot*, *Metamorphosis*, and her very first play here,

*Artifacts*. Arthur is fascinated with costumes, masks, and puppets far beyond a traditional theater stage. She was lead designer for the Iowa City Carnival Community Parade at the Iowa Arts Festival where 400+ Iowans became moving, dancing, works of art. For 16 years she has been a guest artist at award winning Carnival designer Clary Salandy's Mahogany workshop in London UK. June 2022, Arthur and her graduate students worked with Mahogany on their section of the history-making parade for Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee. She has presented research on Carnival in Santiago

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de Cuba, Toronto Canada, Cartagena Columbia, and Trinidad and Tobago and researched the art form in Leeds UK, Rio de Janeiro Brazil, the Netherlands, Grenada WI, the Netherlands, Germany, and Switzerland and the US. She is winner of a 2024-2025 Fulbright US Scholar Award to teach in Indonesia, the 2023 Hubbard-Walder Award For Excellence in Teaching, and the 2019 CLAS Outstanding Outreach and Public Engagement Award. As she retires from the University of Iowa and redirects in June 2024, she would like to thank all of her amazing colleagues and students for their awe-inspiring creativity, humbling generosity, and abiding warmth and for making this part of her journey over the past 25 years, one of the best times of her life.



**Sound Designer | VICTOR MALDONADO**

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**Lighting Designer | BRYON WINN**

Bryon is a professor of design and Director of Theatre for the Department of Theatre Arts. Bryon has designed lighting, media, and/or scenery for theatre, opera, dance, and corporate events throughout the country. This includes over 250 productions and 50 premieres of new plays. His work has been seen at Portland Stage Company, Trinity Rep, Theatre de la Jeune Lune, Florida Studio Theatre, Axis Theatre, Intersection for the Arts, Miranda Theatre Company, and Utah Musical Theatre. Bryon is a member of United

Scenic Artists 829.



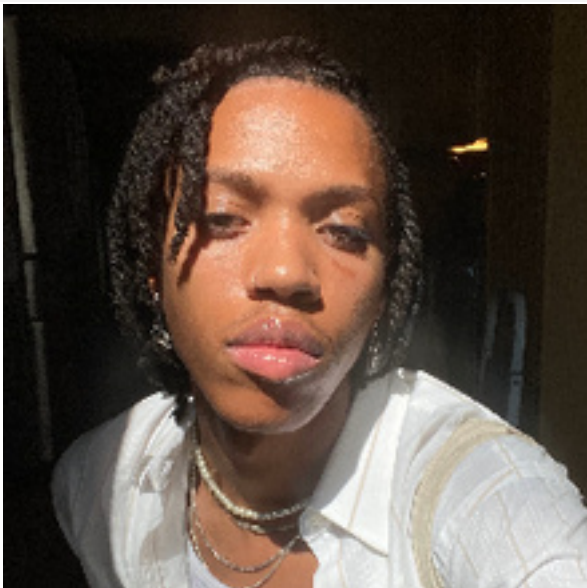
**Vocal & Dialect Coach | MARY MAYO**

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**Intimacy Director | OWEN BRIGHTMAN**



**Composer of Legba's song | KYLEN PHILLIPS\***

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**Assistant Stage Manager | EMMA MERKES\***

Emma (she/her) is a third-year undergrad studying stage management as a double major in Theatre and Art. Her other credits at UIowa include *rockabye*; *Something Rotten!*; *In the Sepulcher*, *We are Fed*; and New Play Festival. She also works as a production assistant at Hancher Auditorium. She is so thankful for the opportunity to work with this production team and cast and she can't wait to show you all their hard work.



**Assistant Costume Designer | CJ JOHNSON**

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# In the Red and Brown Water – Meet the Crew

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**MEET THE CREW**

Deck Crew Captain

Kolton Stremler\*

Wardrobe Crew Captain

Helaina Kalman\*

Light Board Operator

Trinity Christofferson\*

QLab Operator/SBO

Daniel Dickerson\*

Run Crew – Deck/Props

Jade Anderson\*  
Molly Costello\*  
Grace Ziomek\*

Run Crew – Costumes

Hannah Shade\*  
MK Shultz\*  
Abigail Paul\*

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