



Department of Theatre & Dance presents the 18<sup>th</sup> annual  
**Black and Latino Playwright Celebration**



# AGENDA

Monday, August 31, 2020

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**5:30 PM - 6:30 PM** | Company meeting for all playwrights, cast, crew and guest artists via ZOOM

**6:30 PM - 10:30 PM**  
WORKSHOP | Rehearsal for New Play Development via ZOOM

Tuesday, September 1, 2020

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**6:30 PM - 10:30 PM**  
WORKSHOP | Rehearsal for New Play Development via ZOOM

Wednesday, September 2, 2020

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**6:30 PM - 10:30 PM**  
WORKSHOP | Rehearsal for New Play Development via ZOOM

Thursday, September 3, 2020

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**6:30 PM - 10:30 PM**  
WORKSHOP | Rehearsal for New Play Development via ZOOM

Friday, September 4, 2020

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**11:00 AM - 12:30 PM**  
PRESENTATION | "Brown Bag" gathering via ZOOM

**7:30 PM**  
PRESENTATION | Tribute to distinguished guest group, Gus Edwards

Saturday, September 5, 2020

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**12:00 PM - 3:00 PM**  
WORKSHOP | Playwriting Workshop with Judy Tate via ZOOM

**7:30 PM**  
READING | New Play Development Reading of *Stoop Pigeons* by Christin Eve Cato

Sunday, September 6, 2020

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**12:00 PM**  
READING | New Play Development Reading of *Greenwood: American Dream Destroyed* by Celeste Bedford Walker

# WELCOME

On behalf of Texas State University and the Department of Theatre and Dance, welcome and bienvenidos to the 2020 Texas State Black and Latino Playwrights Celebration! We are glad you're here. Every year for 18 years now during one week in the fall, we bring two playwrights to work alongside guest professional directors, actors, and dramaturgical support and Texas State Theatre students in a week long intense rehearsal process to develop their two new plays. BLPC aids the playwrights to find truth and clarity in their storytelling. The week culminates with public reading presentations of the plays, followed by feedback from the audience for the writers. The week's work has consistently had a positive impact on all who were involved.

This year's workshop plays are:

*Stoop Pigeons* by Christin Eve Cato

*Stoop Pigeons* takes place in the early-mid 2000s when the Bushwick area of Brooklyn was rapidly consumed by gentrification. We witness a span of a decade that illuminates the culture of the neighborhood and the people who inhabit it. As the block changes, so do their lives.

*Greenwood: An American Dream Destroyed* by Celeste Bedford Walker

*Greenwood: American Dream Destroyed* examines the tragedy that took place on May 30-June 1, 1921 in the Greenwood District of Tulsa Oklahoma, an African American community known as the "Negro Wall Street" when disaster and devastation struck.

We pay special tribute this year to a pioneer from Black Theatre history, Gus Edwards. We have Mr. Edwards with us virtually to share some insight into his work and experiences and the inspirations and his creative process, as we celebrate his contributions to the ever-evolving American Theatre.

And finally, our mission: The Texas State Black and Latino Playwrights Celebration is to be a moment in a place where playwrights, students and veteran professional theatre artists converge "to study the craft, to nurture the craftsmen and to celebrate the work".

-Eugene Lee

Artistic Director: Eugene Lee

Associate Artistic Directors: Nadine Mozon, Joe Luis Cedillo

Celebration Coordinators and Stage Managers: Olivia Fletcher, Shannon Richey

## **Funding provided by:**

**The National Endowment for the Humanities  
Humanities Texas  
College of Fine Arts and Communication  
Department of Theatre and Dance**

## New Play Development Readings

### *Stoop Pigeons*

Written by Christin Eve Cato

Directed by Lou Moreno

Dramaturg: Joe Luis Cedillo

Mario.....Marcus Brooks  
Tanya.....Jonae' Davis  
Lexi.....Yasha Alaniz  
Bridgit.....Ellena Martinez  
Amanda.....Ava Dominichell  
Mista Petie.....Jordan Gregson  
Big Mary.....Jasmine Shands  
Stage Directions.....Rachel Arguello

### *Greenwood: American Dream Destroyed*

Written by Celeste Bedford Walker

Directed by Lynn Godfrey

Dramaturg: Martine Kei Green-Rogers

Grandmother Boley.....Brenda Denmark  
Frank Boley.....Don Kennedy  
Molly Boley.....Anyae Reed  
Solene Boley.....Elizabeth Belfast, Mariah Epps, Vivian Noble, Aliyah Ward  
Bill Boley.....E. Roger Mitchell  
Della.....Jasmine Richards  
Jimmy Jones.....Kent Willaims  
Peg Leg.....Carl Brooks  
Dr. Jackson.....Jay Aubrey Jones  
Leviticus Solomon/Pritchard.....Javaun Butler  
Maria Bonilla.....Sierra Salazar  
Stage Directions.....Amber Gipson  
Alternate Voicing.....Nallyyah Jenkins

### **Tribute to Gus Edwards**

Director - Nadine Mozon

Sound Designer - Andre Dinh

Film editing - Johnny McAllister

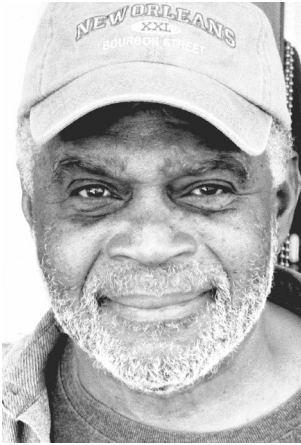
Stage Manager - Shannon Richey

### Tribute Ensemble

Elizabeth Belfast, JaVaun Bulter, Jonae' Davis, Mariah Epps, Jordan Gregson, Vivian Noble  
Jasmin Richards, and Matt Vo

\*Keyboard and Vocals for "Go Tell it on the Mountain" Excerpt: Matt Vo and JaVaun Butler

# 2020 Black & Latino Playwrights Celebration Distinguished Achievement Award



**GUS EDWARDS** is an Afro-Caribbean writer and dramatist whose plays and writings have been showcased by the prominent Negro Ensemble Company, as well various theatre companies throughout the United States. He is acknowledged as an intense author who explores unconventional topics in his plays, and one who has been a central figure in the African American theatrical world, receiving praise and acclaim from critics and audiences alike.

Edwards was born in Antigua, and grew up in the U.S. Virgin Islands, on the island of St. Thomas. His early days in acting go back to his work in repertory theater in St. Thomas and the Caribbean, where he met actor Sidney Poitier, who suggested that he move to the United States to expand his theatrical opportunities.

Edwards moved to New York in 1959, where he received dramatic training in theater from Stella Adler and William Hickey at the Herbert Berghof Studio in New York. He eventually became one of Adler's protégés. He also studied film at the New York Institute of Photography. Although he landed minor acting roles in film ("The Pazvnbroker", 1965 and "Stiletto", 1969), as well as many roles in plays, the limited access to the theatre as black actor motivated Edwards to start writing plays. As a dramatic writer, Edwards is mostly self-taught, admittedly in part due to his concern that his creativity might be restricted by expectations based on the dominant canon taught in schools.

For much of his early career in the United States, Edwards worked as a bartender, store manager, and waiter in order to make ends meet. His community of relationships became an inroad toward his plays being read, which led to his being introduced to Douglas Turner Ward, one of the co-founders of the Negro Ensemble Company (NEC). Several years later, the NEC produced his play *The Offering*, which was met with excellent reviews.

Edwards has written more than 12 plays, most of which were first produced by the Negro Ensemble Company. Among his most important works are: *The Offering* (1977), *Black Body Blues* (1978), *Old Phantoms* (1979), *These Fallen Angels* (1980), *Weep Not for Me* (1981), *Tenement* (1983), *Manhattan Made Me* (1983), *Ramona* (1986), and *Louie and Ophelia* (1986).

He has also written several works for television including "Aftermath" (1979) and the TV adaptation for James Baldwin novel "Go Tell It on the Mountain" (1985). Considered one of the foremost historians of the Negro Ensemble Company, he wrote the narration for a documentary on its history for PBS.

In addition to his substantive work as a playwright, Edwards has built a respectable career as a drama scholar. He has taught theatrical writing at Lehman College of the City University of New York, Iona College, Bloomfield College and the North Carolina School of the Arts. He is now retired from his post as associate professor of theater at Arizona State University in Tempe, where he directed the very successful Multi-Ethnic Theatre, and taught in the film studies program. Edwards has been active in many theatrical organizations, literary boards and committees including The New Dramatists, New York State Council of the Arts, The National Endowment for the Arts, and the Arizona Commission on the Arts. He has received grants and awards from many of these organizations as well as from the Rockefeller Foundation. Gus Edwards is one of the first Caribbean writers to contribute to American theater.

# GUEST ARTISTS



**CHRISTIN EVE CATO** is a NYC based playwright and performer. She is currently pursuing an MFA in Playwriting at Indiana University. She completed her BA degree from Fordham University, and is also a graduate from Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School for Music and Art and the Performing Arts. Cato is affiliated with NYC theater companies, Pregones/PRTT, INTAR Theatre, and Hip-Hop Theatre Company, Rhymes Over Beats. With a Puerto Rican and Jamaican heritage, Cato's artistic style is heavily influenced by Caribbean culture and the Afrolatinx diaspora. Plays include: *Stoop Pigeons* (2020 O'Neill NPC Semi-Finalist); *jelly beans* (Indiana University); *What's Up With Marjorie?* (Teatro Vivo); *From Hunts Point To Whitlock* (Pregones Theater/Harlem9); *Smacked-Up Love* (Indiana University); and *Just A Visit* ("More Than Maria" Festival @ Play Your Part Seattle). Check out more of her work: [www.christinevecato.com](http://www.christinevecato.com) "I grew up artistically quenched: the sounds of the city, the smells of arroz con guandules and jerk chicken, family drama, neighborhood tragedies, adolescent curiosity, first love joys, triumphs and struggle. However, any time I watched television or was lucky enough to see theater, I longed to see myself portrayed. I longed to see stories that I was like mine- broken, jaded, with beams of hope found amongst lurking shadows. Stories about the street. Stories about the conflicting things I felt- being AfroLatina in a white world, being

financially poor with a rich imagination, being underprivileged in opportunities but privileged with a good education, knowing my parents but never having their full parental support... This is why I write. This is why I create. Because somewhere out there, there's another brown kid who is bright and impressionable, who grew up way before they needed to. This kid wants to be recognized and doesn't want to feel alone, they fantasize about a world that sees them. They don't want to be silenced."- Christin Eve Cato



**CELESTE BEDFORD WALKER'S** eclectic award-winning canon includes over forty plays, videos, documentaries and films that have been performed and viewed in major venues across the country. She has received numerous commissions to write dramas, comedies, and musicals for theaters, schools, museums, and organizations. Recognized by the U.S. Congress for her historical contribution as producer and author of works that bring to light lost stories of African American history, her self-produced military drama *Camp Logan* has toured over 400 colleges/universities, military installations and commercial venues, including The Texas Festival at the Kennedy Center. Walker has received several honors and awards in theatre, including The Beverly Hills/Hollywood NAACP Theatre Awards for Best Playwright/Best Play for positive portrayal of Blacks in the media; the National Black Theatre's August Wilson Playwriting Award for significant contributions to Black and American Theatre; finalist in the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize for outstanding work by a female playwright; finalist in 38th Annual Samuel French OOB Short Play Festival; BroadwayWorld.com Best Play Award; AUDELCO's Best Revival of a Play, The Ensemble Theatre's Salute to Texas Playwrights and others. She was commissioned to write a holiday musical as part of the BOLD Theater Women's Leadership Circle grant for Houston's

Ensemble Theatre. Recently, her historical drama *The Red Blood of War* was selected to participate in the 39th Annual William Inge Theatre Festival New Play Lab in Independence Kansas. Due to COVID-19 it was postponed to spring 2021. Currently, as a member of Honor Roll! a theater advocacy and action group of women+ playwrights over forty, she and the other playwrights are joining forces to produce the readings of more than a dozen plays and monologues about Black, Indigenous and other women of color who have died at the hands of police. The readings will be performed virtually on October 22-23 and will include two keynote speakers. Walker's work is also featured in the anthology *Acting Up and Getting Down* published by the University of Texas Press. A monologue from her play *The Wreckin' Ball* about gentrification, was accepted for 100 Monologues From New Plays – Men, fall 2021, publisher Applause Theatre & Cinema Books. In addition to being a proud council member of San Marcos' own Texas Institute of Letters, she's a member of the Dramatists Guild of America. Her plays, universal in theme, come out of the Black experience, embracing the sacred and the mundane, the serious and the comic, with an awesome delight in the wisdom and the witlessness of the human condition.

# GUEST ARTISTS



**LOU MONROE** is the Artistic Director of INTAR Theater in NYC as well as a freelance director. In 2005 he won the Princess Grace Award which provided him the opportunity to become a producer and has now produced over 25 new plays with INTAR, Rattlestick and Twilight theater companies.



**LYNNIE GODFREY** Studied Directing with Lloyd Richards. She is the recipient of the TYRONE GUTHRIE Award for Excellence in Directing, the NAACP Award for Producing among others. Directing credits include: the off-Broadway presentations of *Unentitled* by Charles White at the Hudson Guild Theatre. Thornton Wilder's *Infancy*, Lorraine Hansberry's *To Be Young, Gifted and Black*, Athol Fugard's *Boseman and Lena*, Charles Fuller's *All's Fair* and Ossie Davis' *Purlie!* Readings include Charles White's *Legacy* and Celeste Bedford Walker's *Greenwood: An American Dream Destroyed*. Ms. Godfrey is the Founder and Artistic and Producing Director of Essence of Acting. An invitational only member ensemble dedicated to providing the actors with creative opportunities and challenges their training and experiences. Essence of Acting is comprised with actors from Broadway, Television and film and new graduated acting students.



**MARTINE KEI GREEN-ROGERS** is an Associate Professor at SUNY New Paltz and Past-President of the Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas. Her dramaturgical credits include: *Sweat* at the Goodman; *King Hedley II*, *Radio Golf*, *Five Guys Named Moe*, *Blues for An Alabama Sky*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Iphigenia at Aulis*, *Seven Guitars*, *The Mountaintop*, and *Home* at Court Theatre; *Hairspray*, *The Book of Will*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *UniSon*, *Hannah and the Dread Gazebo*, *Comedy of Errors*, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, *The African Company Presents Richard III*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; and *Fences* at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.



**ARLENE CHICO-LUGO** Arlene is an actor, educator, and producer with over 20 years experience film, television, and the stage. Favorite theater performances: *Native Gardens*- Arizona Theatre Company (nominated best comedic actress), *Evensong*- Astoria Performing Arts Center (nominated outstanding actress in a lead role). Arlene is co-founder of Liberation Arts Collective and produced the award-winning play *Where You From? What You Be About?*. Film: "What is Was" (Amazon). TV: "Gotham", "The Blacklist", "Royal Pains", "Law & Order".  
[www.arlenechicolugo.com](http://www.arlenechicolugo.com)



**BRENDA THOMAS DENMARK** has appeared on numerous stages including the Broadway productions of Neil Simon's *Proposals*, and August Wilson's *Joe Turner's Come And Gone*. Other stages include Lincoln Center Theatre: (*God's Heart*); Negro Ensemble Company: (*From The Mississippi Delta*); NFT (*Trial of One Short Sighted Black Woman...*); Circle Repertory Theatre: (*Keepin' An Eye On Louie*; *Borderlines*; and *Raft of The Medusa*); Long Warf Theatre: (*The Day The Bronx Died* and *Amen Corner*). Films include: "In Too Deep," "Mixing Nia," "Hurricane," and "Center Stage", to name a few. Her career includes multiple episodes of "Law and Order" "SVU" and "CI" along with commercials and voice overs. She is an AUDELCO Award Winner and a member of Essence of Acting (EOA).



**JUDY TATE** was an actor for 25 years until she realized she couldn't continue to drag her daughter across the country. So she started writing because the goal is to live a creative life. Now she is a four-time Emmy Award winning writer and WGA award recipient. She's written scripts and story for several TV shows and her plays have been produced and presented in theatres around the country. She's a co-founder and Producing Artistic Director of The American Slavery Project, [www.americanslaveryproject.org](http://www.americanslaveryproject.org), a theatrical response to revisionism in American discourse around enslavement and its aftermath. She is also Founding Artistic Director of Stargate Theatre, [www.manhattantheatreclub.com/education/stargate/](http://www.manhattantheatreclub.com/education/stargate/) a work-readiness program developed at Manhattan Theatre Club in which justice involved young men, write, rehearse and perform an original work on one of MTC's stages to develop their voices and pro-social skills. She teaches at NYU, Drew University, MTC, TDF and Harlem Dramatic Writers Workshop.

## PRODUCTION



**EUGENE LEE (Artistic Director)** Eugene Lee's career offers a singular combination of on- and off-screen expertise. He began working as an actor in the early 1970s and continues to appear on stage, in movies and on television. In 1972, Lee was a cast member in a command performance of *A Raisin in the Sun* for President Lyndon B. Johnson by the Ebony Players, a college theatrical group formed with his college roommate. He went on to appear and work in over 200 television movies and series, including *The Women of Brewster Place* with Oprah Winfrey, *Dallas*, *Good Times*, *The White Shadow*, *The District*, *NYPD Blue*, *The Guiding Light*, *Quantum Leap*, *American Crime*, *The Lying Game*, *MacGyver* and the title character in *Wolf*, an award winning independent film.

On stage, Lee's credits are even more extensive. He has appeared on stage across the country and across the globe. He traveled with the renowned Negro Theatre Ensemble, performing in the Pulitzer Prize winning *A Soldier's Play* and numerous other works. He is considered a "Wilsonian Warrior" for his many appearances in the works of August Wilson, including the Broadway production of *Gem of the Ocean*. He performed in five of Wilson's 10 plays at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and recently in August Wilson's final autobiographical one-man piece, *How I Learned What I Learned*. His credits include works at stages such as The Negro Ensemble Company of New York, True Colors in Atlanta, the Huntington Theater in Boston, Pittsburgh Playwrights' Theatre, Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles, Chicago's Goodman Theatre, Pittsburgh Public Theatre and Crossroads Theatre in New Jersey.

His television writing credits include episodes of *Homicide: Life on the Streets*, (Emmy nominated), *Walker, Texas Ranger*, *Michael Hayes*, *The Journey of Allen Strange*, *The Turks* and the Morgan Freeman produced television movie, *Port Chicago*.

His own characters come to life through his plays, including, *East Texas Hot Links*, which has been produced on stages from Los Angeles to New York and London's Royal Court Theatre and is published by Samuel French play publishers. His other plays include *Fear Itself*, *Somebody Called: A Tale of Two Preachers*, *Killingsworth*, *Lyn' Ass* and the musical, *Twist*.

Lee is Artist in Residence and Artistic Director of the Black and Latino Playwrights Celebration at TXST where he is also a designated Distinguished Alumnus. The conference will celebrate its 18<sup>th</sup> year in 2020 and has received national recognition in the form of three National Endowment for the Arts Grants. Through this venue, Lee has worked with hundreds of young playwrights and students, coupling veteran professional directors and performers with those aspiring to develop and have their voices heard.



**NADINE MOZON (Director for the Tribute, Co-Artistic Director)** is an actor, writer, theatre artist/educator. Mozon's actor/writer work includes *Blue Spiral*, *Delta Rhapsody*, *I.D. Please*, *Confirming the Search...*, and *Ms. Middle*, a new work in development, featured via Joining the Dots Theatre, Sydney Australia Spring 2020; and playwright for Harlem 9's 48 Hours in Harlem Play Festival, Summer 2020. Theatre roles include: *hang*, *Mother's Day*, *The Book of Grace*, *Intimate Apparel*, *Fences*, *For Colored Girls...*, *Home*, *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*; TV/Film: "The Leftovers", "American Crime", "Friday Night Lights", "Law & Order", "Katrina's Son", "Wolf", "Dawn", "Two Weeks Notice", "Shaft". Mozon is an associate professor teaching acting, movement and writing at Texas State University. She is a co-artistic director of the Black & Latino Playwrights Celebration.



# PRODUCTION



**JOE LUIS CEDILLO (Dramaturg for *Stoop Pigeons* Co-Artistic Director)** Left-handed Chicano Playwright-Director-Dramaturg and Actor. Recent credits: El Teatro Campesino & Center Theater Group's *Valley of the Heart* (Original Sound Design); Casa 0101's *Remembering Boyle Heights* (Actor/Deviser); *Awakening* (Actor) at Frida Kahlo Theater, and actor/deviser for Playwright's Arena three site-specific pieces for Grand Park's "Our LA Voices." He is currently in the Hollywood Fringe production YA BASTA: TIME'S BEEN UP, a devised work created by Janitors from the SEIU union devised, written, and performed by Janitors and will be portraying Cassius for Santa Clarita Valley Shakespeare's production of JULIUS CESAR. Other theater credits include: = Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Houston's Alley Theater, Rattlestick Theater (NYC), Playwright's Center (Minneapolis) and MET Theatre. His plays: 69 PORTRAITS OF CHE; ON PAINTED SKIN; 7, 8IGHT, 9... and NOCHE Y MOURNING to name a few. Former Literary Manager/Production Dramaturg for the Alley Theatre's 50th anniversary, former Associate Artistic Director for El Teatro Campesino and current Associate Artistic Director at Texas State's Black and Latino Playwright's

Celebration. Iowa Playwrights' Workshop, Cancer survivor, former Marine Paratrooper, and sometimes teaches 4th grade. Two-time Runner up Kennedy Center's National Latino Playwriting Award. Twitter @JoeLuisCedillo, Instagram joeluiscedillo