

PLAYBILL®

Marquette Theater
Crescent City Stage
New Orleans, LA

 CRESCENT CITY STAGE

VANYA &

SONIA &

MASHA

AND SPIKE

BY CHRISTOPHER DURANG



JUNE 15th to JUNE 30th, 2023

MARQUETTE THEATER AT LOYOLA UNIVERSITY

Crescent City Stage
Marquette Theater at Loyola

PRESENTS

**VANYA AND SONIA AND
MASHA AND SPIKE**

by

Christopher Durang

with

Doug Spearman

Jana Mestecky*

Lorene Chesley*

Yvette Bourgeois

Donyae Asante

Cody Evans

Stage Manager

Riley Trahant

Lighting Designer

Liam Gardner

Costume Designer

Tiffani Sheriff

Asst. Stage Manager

Rina Christilles

Sound Designer

Amara Skinner

Properties Designer

Olivia Winter

Production Team

Emma Lovas

Scenic Design/TD

Michael A. Newcomer**

Production Team

Jessica Maroney

Directed by

Elizabeth Newcomer**

VANYA AND SONIA AND MASHA AND SPIKE is presented by special arrangement with
Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States,
appearing under a Special Appearance Contract.

**Member of Actors' Equity Association.

Originally produced on Broadway by:

Joey Parnes, Larry Hirschhorn, Joan Raffae/Jhett Tolentino, Martin Platt & David Elliot,
Pat Flicker Addiss, Catherine Adler, John O'Boyle, Joshua Goodman,
Jamie deRoy/Richard Winkler, Cricket Hooper, Jiranek/Michael Palitz,
Mark S. Golub & David S. Golub, Radio Mouse Entertainment,
Shawdowcatcher Entertainment, Mary Cossette/Barbara Manocherian,
Megan Savage/Meredith Lynsey Schade, Hugh Hysell/Richard Jordan,
Cheryl Wiesenfeld/Ron Simons, S.D. Wagner, John Johnson
in association with McCarter Theatre Center and Lincoln Center Theater

Originally commissioned and produced by McCarter Theatre Center, Princeton, N.J.
Emily Mann, Artistic Director; Timothy J. Shields, Managing Director;
Mara Isaacs, Producing Director;
and produced by Lincoln Center Theater, New York City
under the direction of André Bishop and Bernard Gersten in 2012.

“Here Comes the Sun”

Written by George Harrison

Published by Harrisons, Ltd. (ASCAP)

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This production is generously supported by the following:



NOTCF

— AND CULTURAL FUND —



**NEW ORLEANS
THEATRE ASSOCIATION**

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Crescent City Stage acknowledges and humbly pays tribute to the original inhabitants of the city of New Orleans. The area we create our art is also known as Bulbancha in the Choctaw language. Our ability to be in this space is inextricably linked to those who have lived on this land long before us. Our mission and our work as theatre artists is driven by honoring the land on which we perform.

CREATIVE TEAM

Cast Members

Vanya	Doug Spearman
Sonia	Jana Mestecky*
Cassandra	Donyae Asante
Masha	Lorene Chesley*
Spike	Cody Evans
Nina	Yvette Bourgeois

Production / Creative

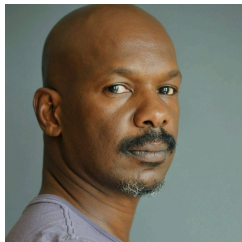
Director	Elizabeth Newcomer**
Lighting Designer	Liam Gardner
Costume Designer	Tiffani Sheriff
Sound Designer	Amara Skinner
Properties Designer	Olivia Winter
Scenic Designer/Technical Director	Michael A. Newcomer**
Stage Manager	Riley Trahant
Assistant Stage Manager	Rina Christilles
Production Team	Jessica Maroney
Production Team	Emma Lovas
Graphic Designer	Reba Joy Billips
Production Photographer	Brittney Werner
Promotional Photographer	Keli Reule
Archival Recording	Bruce France
Scenic Artist	Lianna Mae Smith
Scenic Carpenter	Rickey Kathmann

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CRESCENT CITY STAGE is a professional theatre company committed to sustaining wages and diversity in arts workers.

WHO'S WHO



Doug Spearman

as Vanya

decided to make New Orleans home right before the Pandemic. Since then he's been looking for an opportunity to get up on stage in his adopted home town. He's very pleased to be part of CCS's third production. Doug's passion for acting started at age 6 when he got to play the 3rd shepherd from the left in the Ridgecrest Elementary School Christmas Play. Of course, he wanted to be the Tin Soldier, but Karl Artist got that. Freaking Karl Artist.... Doug majored in Theater Performance and Directing and Television Production and Directing at Indiana University. Over the forty plus years of his career, some of Doug's favorite roles include Bernie in **Screen Test: Take One**. Lance Corporal Dawson in **A Few Good Men**, John the Baptist in **Solome**, Michael in **The Ice Pick**, Raucious in **The Hollow Lands**, and the god Dionysus in **The Bacchae**. On TV, Doug is probably best known for playing Professor Chance Counter on the groundbreaking LGBT series from LOGO TV, **Noah's Arc**.



Jana Mestecky*

as Sonia

recently directed **Cry It Out** for CCS. She has appeared on stage at The New Group, Cherry Lane, The Mint, Gene Frankel Theatre, Lincoln Center, Ernie Martin Studio Theatre, DR2, Astoria Symphonic Choir, Playhouse on Park, Shakespeare and Co (Paris), The Players Club, Little Light Productions, and Bleecker Street Theatre. She was also a resident member of The New Globe Theatre and Rep Theatre of St. Louis' Imaginary Theatre Company. Nationally, she has performed in film, TV, and commercials. With a BA in French & Theatre and an MFA in Acting from the Actors Studio Drama School, Jana trained at The American Conservatory Theatre (San Francisco) Théâtre des Cinquantes (Paris) and The Actors Studio (NYC). Faculty appointments include Chair of Fine Arts at Ben Franklin, NOCCA, Loyola University, Le Petit, Southeastern LA Univ, Spence School (Chair), St. John's Univ., BWL, and The Buckley School. She is a proud member of the professional unions AEA and SAG-AFTRA.

WHO'S WHO



Lorene Chesley*

as Masha

a native of the D.C. Metro area, Lorene grew up studying ballet and tap at The Davis Center, singing lessons with Ms. Dawn Reynolds and Okinawan Karate at the Murray Studio. However, as soon as Lorene played the Evil Stepmother in Cinderella, she knew acting was what she wanted to do with her life. She attended Temple University earning her BA in Theater and Communications, followed by her MFA from UCSD. Regional theater work included: Arena Stage (**Smart People, The Heiress**) St. Louis Rep (world premiere of **Feeding Beatrice**) and Merrimack Repertory Theatre (**The Villains' Supper Club**). Most recently she got to cross off a huge bucket list goal and film multiple episodes on **The Young and The Restless**. She also just wrapped up post production of her pilot, P.I.C. (**Perfectly Imperfect Christian**). Lorene is so grateful to work with *Crescent City Stage* and for her amazing family and friends who support her journey!



Cody Evans

as Spike

is originally from Chicago, directing and producing a number of productions in Chicago's store-front theater scene and toured internationally as a stuntman with Marvel Universe Live! Some of his favorite credits include as an Anvil Chorus member in the Chicago Lyric Opera's **Il Trovatore** and multiple roles in the Chicago premiere of the **Elaborate Entrance of Chad Diety**, produced by Victory Gardens. As a founding member of Roundhouse Productions and Bare Knuckle Productions, Cody co-wrote, co-directed and appeared in their productions of **Macbeth** [Banquo], **A History of Violence** [Tom/Joey], and **TITUS: apokalypse** [Lucius]. Since moving to New Orleans, Cody has been working with and mentoring local alternative theater producers, including appearing as Ash in Aqua Mob New Orleans' water ballet production of **Ripley and the Cat**.



Donyae Asante

as Cassandra

is a singer-songwriter, actor and playwright from Chicago, IL. The R&B and hip-hop artist, who released his first two albums in 2019, is now working on his third album, *HeavenEarth*. His recent credits include **Drapetomania: A Negro Carol** (No Dream Deferred), **Where The Suga Still Sweet** (No Dream Deferred), **The Exorcist Files** (iHeartRadio), **Craigslisted** (The Nola Project) and his directorial debut **Inner Child** (The Actors Apothecary). Asante has one goal in his artistry: to show peace is possible when you step within and focus on your divine power.



Yvette Bourgeois

as Nina

is a New Orleans native and LSU School of Theatre graduate. She has worked locally and regionally with companies such as The NOLA Project, Le Petit Theatre, TWTC, and Swine Palace. She is particularly excited to be working on this show with this group of artists. CCS has done nothing but empower and challenge her to be the best artist she can be.



Elizabeth Newcomer**

Director

is the Co-Artistic Director of Crescent City Stage. She was most recently in **Cry It Out**. Career highlights: SAG Award for **Black Panther**, the Off-Broadway World Premiere of **Sea of Tranquility** (Atlantic Theater Company), playing wife to real-life hubby in **Breaking News in Yuba County** and mom to real-life son in **Life & Beth**. TV/Film credits include: **Sacrifice, Bottoms, The Visitor, Out of Blue, NCIS: New Orleans**. Directing standouts: **Metamorphoses, Noises Off, The Importance of Being Earnest, and Grease**. She taught acting for 8 years at Isidore Newman School, and now offers Professional Scene Study classes. Advisory Board Member: *In Ceremony Productions*. Proud member of AEA/SAG. She is an Enneagram Coach, offering private coaching and team-building workshops. Elizabeth graduated from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts with a BFA with Honors in Theatre and she got her MFA in Theatre from University of California, San Diego. Love to M, V & R.



Liam Gardner

Lighting Designer

is a proud trans & queer artist who holds his B.F.A. in Theatre Production & Design from Northwestern State University. Liam is often immersing himself in his passions such as stage lighting, acting, writing, painting, and hiking. Liam creates because every moment overflows with beauty; he seeks to capture those moments and share them with the world. He believes there is always an opportunity to construct something that highlights stories that have never been shared before, specifically stories about marginalized communities. Liam has had the privilege of expanding on his craft with establishments such as New York Stage and Film and The Rev Theatre Company, and Encore Global. His short-film script **Transcend** was recognized as a Semifinalist in the 2022 Del Shores Foundation Writers Search. Liam is thrilled and full of gratitude to be making his Crescent City Stage debut.



Tiffani Sheriff

Costume Designer

was born into a family with a rich legacy in art, design and aesthetics. Her professional experiences with luxury brands and as owner of a vintage clothing store further developed her eye for detail and laid the foundation for her work in film and theater. Tiffani's current practice through her consulting firm MUSINGS includes wardrobe, production, interior and event design services. Her holistic approach to engaging clients and managing projects has contributed to creative works enjoyed around the world.



Amara Skinner

Sound Designer

is a New Orleans born sound artist. She nurtured her talents at Loyola University of New Orleans by obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in Music Industry Studies in 2019. Since then, Amara built her own recording studio and began freelance sound design with companies such as No Dream Deferred NOLA, New York Stage and Film, KM Dance Project, The Movement Theatre of Harlem, The NOLA Project, The Radical Buffoons, Jefferson Performing Arts Society, and Crescent City Stage. She became production manager for No Dream Deferred NOLA in 2021, where she now manages the biennial *We Will Dream: New Works Festival*. Amara also served as sound designer for all productions of the 2023 Festival, including **Where the Suga Still Sweet**, **Drapetomania: A Negro Carol**, and **Defiance of the Dandelions**. Other credits include: **Raw Fruit** with KM Dance Project and **Cry it Out** with CCS.



Olivia Winter

Properties Designer

is a local artist that has been working in the theatre industry since 2014. She is excited to work with Crescent City Stage for the first time with this show. Olivia has made props on several shows over the past years, most notably **Carmen**, **Maid of Orleans** and **La Boheme** for the New Orleans Opera Association, **Cendrillon** for Southeastern University, **In the Heights** for Jefferson Performing Arts Society, **The Play That Goes Wrong** and **Cat on a Hot Tin Roof** for Le Petit and most recently **Misery** for JPAS. Olivia is also a skilled carpenter and has helped to build several shows for multiple companies throughout the greater New Orleans area. More of her art can be found on instagram [@Olivia.Winter.Creations](#) and you can help support her artistic pursuits by following her. She would also like to thank her wife, Holly, for constant love and support.

WHO'S WHO



Riley Trahant

Stage Manager

is a New Orleans-based theatre chameleon. They are a 2021 Loyola graduate with a double major in Theatre Arts and Latin American Studies with honors. You'll mostly "see" her stage managing, but you won't notice she's there if she's doing her job right! Riley also loves writing, performing, designing, dramaturging, building sets, hanging lights, and more. Riley is proud to make theatre magic with Crescent City Stage and hopes the company can continue to add to the beautiful theatre landscape in New Orleans.



Rina Christilles

Assistant Stage Manager

is excited to return to CCS after Assistant Stage Managing **Cry It Out**. She is a 2021 graduate of Loyola University New Orleans, where she received her BA in Theatre Arts with a focus in technical theatre and business. She is also an AmeriCorps alumna and completed a year of service with Rebuilding Together New Orleans in 2022, where she helped complete essential home repairs to low income residents after disasters such as Hurricane Ida. Rina is delighted to return to the theatre community after her most recent project, **Finding Nemo Jr.** at Rivertown Theatre and **In the Heights** at JPAS. Some of her other favorite credits include **Pygmalion** (stage manager), **Stop Kiss** (sound designer), and **You Can't Take It With You** (sound designer). Rina is honored and thankful to work with such a talented cast and production team.



Michael A. Newcomer**

*Scenic Designer/Technical
Director*

has been a member of Actors' Equity Association for over 25 years, with over 30 regional productions to his credit and an additional five right here in New Orleans. With credits onstage, onscreen and in video games, Michael now sits on the other side of the production table as Executive Director for CCS.

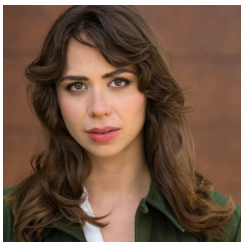
WHO'S WHO



Emma Lovas

Production Team

graduated with a Bachelor in Theatre Arts from Loyola University New Orleans and is determined to make theatre a permanent part of her life. While constantly learning and furthering her education in the art of acting, Emma is also a working artist. She is a commissioned painter who focuses on immortalizing one's furry friends on canvas while dabbling in other art forms as well. With a strong personality and willingness to work hard Emma has a goal of one day using her skills in art and theatre to make the world a more understanding and loving place.



Jessica Maroney

Production Team

was born and raised in the Greater New Orleans area and received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Loyola University in 2016. She has since earned an MBA from the University of New Orleans. For the last few years, she has cultivated her love of theatre at Delgado where she has worked and appeared in several productions at Delgado's Timothy K. Baker Theatre.



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\$20,000+

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Special Thanks...

Loyola Department of Theatre Arts and Dance, C. Patrick Gendusa, Salvatore Mannino, Duncan Becker



Working for free is like paying for work.

We start with a simple premise - without the Artist, there is no Art. We believe that those who offer their time and talent to bring our shows to life, deserve to be compensated fairly. We set a standard that not only doubles the state minimum wage, but also makes us competitive to attract top tier talent.

Most theatre artists work for free or little compensation. Not with Crescent City Stage. Everyone we hire to work on our creative teams are compensated at minimum \$15 an hour.

The **value of paying creatives is clear**: it provides financial stability, professional recognition, economic growth, and theatre that just feels different.

And this is where YOU come in to play...

Every dollar we receive in ticket sales, grants, contributions, and donations goes directly to supporting our mission - sustaining wages for a group of diverse artists. Be a part of the future knowing that when you attend a Crescent City Stage show, not a single creative artist is working for free.

Theatre builds community by telling stories that uplift us, challenge us, reflect our existence, and brings us together in shared experiences.

Help us continue to raise the bar on artist compensation today.



To become a sustaining partner, please email Michael to have a coffee and talk more - michael@crecentcitystage.com.