# BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA by Anna Ouyang Moench DIRECTED BY SERGE SEIDEN



# LIVE AT MOSAIC THEATER OCT 27 - NOV 21

When the Mayor's stay at home order went into effect on March 25, 2020 the Mosaic staff and the creative teams of *The Till Trilogy* and *Inherit the Windbag* left the theater hoping to return in a few weeks.

We have our personal and collective memories of the historic months between then and now.

We also recognize that this is "a moment." We are beginning again.

And we are doing so in a way that is vastly different.

We have committed ourselves to beginning again more equitably and more humanely than we might ever have imagined possible.

Some very brave people put themselves on the line instigating a movement to dismantle and reduce the harms of systemic racism in our industry. We are a part of that. Our renewed joy stems from that opportunity and challenge.

We have strived to make *Birds of North America* in this new way.

Because this is a play at least in part about the struggle to be seen and understood it suits the moment perfectly.

The birds of *Birds of North America* are the Tufted Titmouse, Nuthatch, Cardinal, American Redstart, House Sparrow, Red-tailed Hawk, Mourning Dove, Blue Grosbeak, Chipping Sparrow, Cowbird, and Woodpecker.

If you listen carefully, like a birder, by the time the play is through, you'll be able to check them off your life list.

# THE BIRDS



**Nuthatches** are blue-gray birds with strongly patterned heads: a black cap and stripe through the eye broken up by a white stripe over the eye. The underparts are rich rusty-cinnamon.

**Tufted Titmice** are soft silvery gray above and white below, with a rusty or peach-colored wash down the flanks and a black patch just above the bill.

For more about the birds of North America click here.

# **ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT**



### ANNA OUYANG MOENCH BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA

Anna Ouyang Moench is an award-winning playwright and screenwriter. Her plays include Mothers, Man of God, Birds of North America, and Sin Eaters. Anna has received fellowships and residencies from The

Playwrights Realm, New York Foundation of the Arts, the Jerome Foundation, and the Van Lier Foundation among many others. Her awards include the Paul Stephen Lim Playwriting Award from the Kennedy Center, Boulder Ensemble Theater Company's Generations Award, and East West Players' 2042: See Change Award. She is an alum of UCSD's Playwriting M.F.A. program, the Emerging Writers Group at the Public Theater, Youngblood at Ensemble Studio Theatre, the Jam at New Georges, and writers groups at East West Players and the Echo Theater Company. In television and film, Anna has worked with HBO, Netflix, and Universal, and currently writes for Severance (Apple TV+). Anna has productions this season at the Public Theater and Geffen Playhouse, and she is the recipient of a Gerbode Special Award in the Arts commission for a new play that will be produced at the Magic Theatre in 2023. She lives with her family in Los Angeles.

#### 

# BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA

#### Written By Anna Ouyang Moench

Directed By Serge Seiden

Set Designer	. Alexa Ross
Lighting Designer	. Brittany Shemuga
Costume Designer	Brandee Mathies
Sound Designer	David Lamont Wilson
Properties Designer	Deborah Thomas
Stage Manager	Samantha Wilhelm*

*Birds of North America* is generously underwritten by Joan P. and David O. Maxwell with additional support from Dr. Frances and Tom Wills.

Mosaic's 21/22 Season is also funded in part by Co-Founder Dan Logan, Gloria Logan and The Revada Foundation; The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; D.C. Commission on the Arts & Humanities, an agency supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts; Eugene M. Lang Foundation; The Reva and David Logan Foundation; National Endowment for the Arts; The Share Fund; The Shubert Foundation; Cathy & Bob Solomon; The Steinglass Family.

With gratitude and admiration, Mosaic Theater Company is honored to dedicate the 2021/22 Season in memory of our dear friend and supporter, Marvin Weissberg.

*Birds of North America* was first produced by Boulder Ensemble Theatre Company in 2017.

We honor and respect the diverse Indigenous peoples on whose land Mosaic Theater and the Atlas Performing Arts Center sits, particularly what is defined as the District of Columbia; including the Piscataway tribal nation. This land acknowledgement is to recognize and honor the elders of the Indigenous peoples and the genocide, forceful removal and displacement of the peoples whose lands and territories were stolen from them. As a part of this recognition, we encourage attendees who wish to learn more about injustices and the histories of Indigenous peoples to support or visit the following resources: Native American Rights Fund and National Indian Education Association.







National Endowment for the Arts arts.gov





# **BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA**

## John ...... David Bryan Jackson\*

Birds of North America is a professional production employing members of Actors' Equity Association (AEA), Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC) and United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829 of the IATSE. The video and/or audio recording of these performances by any means whatsoever is strictly prohibited. Please turn off all electronic devices.

\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States. \*Indicates an Equity Membership Candidate.





# BIOS

# CAST



**Regina Aquino** | she/her/hers | (Caitlyn) is a Filipinx actor, creative, and activist. Born and raised in MD, she has performed on many of DC's stages since 2002. She has been

nominated for multiple Helen Hayes Awards and in 2019 she was the

recipient of the Outstanding Lead Performer in a Play Award for her work in *The Events* at Theater Alliance. She is the first Filipino to have earned the distinction. Washingtonian Magazine proclaimed her one of "DC's 10 Biggest Theater Stars." She lives in Arlington with her two children and two dogs, across the street from her mother like a good Filipinx daughter. Regina dedicates all her work to her mother, Rosalinda, and to her two daughters, Riana and Mal. www.reginaaquino.com SELECTED DC CREDITS: Mosaic Theater: *Eureka Day*; Round House Theatre: We're Gonna Die; Theater Alliance: The Events [Helen] Hayes Award for Outstanding Lead Actress], Brownsville Song (B-side for Trey); Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company: Describe The Night, The Arsonists; Studio Theatre: Vietgone, Red Light Winter, Dog Sees God [Helen Hayes Award nomination], *Polaroid Stories*; Folger Theatre: The Merry Wives of Windsor, Nell Gwynn [two Helen Hayes Award nominations]; Olney Theatre Center: Tiger Style! BROADWAY: Lincoln Center & Kennedy Center TYA: Where Words Once Were.



**David Bryan Jackson** | he/him/his | (John) has acted at many Washington, DC, and other theatres over the last 30 years, including at The Shakespeare, Studio, Folger, Signature, Hub, Spooky Action, Scena, and Woolly Mammoth Theatres, as well as Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre, New Repertory Theatre, the Kennedy Center, Washington Shakespeare Company, Rep Stage, Actors' Theatre of Washington, Potomac Theatre Project and Olney Theatre, where he was Literary Manager for many years. He received a Theatre Lobby award for his performances in Intimate Exchanges at Source Theatre and Via Dolorosa at Theater J (the latter of which he reprised in Los Angeles and Boston, as well as more recently as part of Mosaic Theater's Voices From a Changing Middle East tour). He has also directed plays at various area theatres, and worked as a sound designer and composer for several productions (most recently for Mosaic's Inherit the Windbag). His Song for the Earth can be heard on Zoe Ravenwood's album The Problem Might Be Me, and he wrote the title track on her forthcoming Welcome to the World.

# **CREATIVE TEAM**

Serge Seiden |he/him/his| (Director) serves as Managing Director and Producer of Mosaic. He helped found the theater to build a company committed to social justice. For Mosaic he most recently directed *Eureka Day*. Other Mosaic credits include Ulysses on Bottles and Hooded, or Being Black for Dummies, which recieved the Charles MacArthur Award for Outstanding Original New Play in 2017. In 2013, Seiden received the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Director/Resident Musical for Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris... at MetroStage. His production of Bad Jews at Studio Theatre was nominated for four 2015 Helen Hayes Awards including Outstanding Director. Seiden also directed Studio's acclaimed The Apple Family Cycle. From 1990 to 2015, Seiden held many positions at Studio including Stage Manager, Literary Manager, and Producing Director. Seiden was a key player in Studio's 1996 and 2004 expansions—developments crucial to the re-emergence of 14th Street NW as a DC cultural hub. For 25 years, Seiden has been a member of the faculty of the Studio Acting Conservatory, where he trained as an actor and director. More recent directing credits include When January Feels Like Summer at Mosaic Theater, Everett Quinton's A Tale of Two Cities at Synetic Theater, Freud's Last Session at Theater J, and Clifford Odets' Awake and Sing! at Olney Theatre Center. Other Studio Theatre credits include The Motherfucker with the Hat, The Golden Dragon, Superior Donuts, In the Red and Brown Water, Grey Gardens, My Children! My Africa!, Souvenir: A Fantasia on the Life of Florence Foster Jenkins, and Old Wicked Songs. His productions at Adventure Theatre MTC—A Little House Christmas and Charlotte's Web—were both nominated for Helen Hayes Awards for Outstanding Production/ Theatre for Young Audiences.

Alexa Ross (Set Designer) is a set designer, scenic painter and artist. Originally from North Carolina but currently living in New York, she holds a BFA in Design and Production from The University of North Carolina School of the Arts. Previously, she has worked for Mosaic Theater as the resident scenic artist and production assistant. She is excited to finally have a chance to design for a company she loves and to be a part of live theater once more. To see more of her work or to reach out visit, rossalexa.com.

Brittany Shemuga (Lighting Designer) is thrilled to return to Mosaic after designing Pilgrims Musa and Sheri in the New World, Eureka Day, Paper Dolls and Hooded, Or Being Black for Dummies among others. Select recent designs include She the People (Second City), Amazing Grace (Museum of the Bible), Beehive (NextStop), Into the Woods (Ohio Light Opera), Winnie the Pooh (Adventure), and Twist Your Dickens (Second City). Brittany is also the Resident Lighting Designer at the Ohio Light Opera in Wooster, Ohio. She has assisted on numerous productions, including Fish in the Dark (Broadway) and Downstairs (Off Broadway). She received her MFA in lighting from the University of Maryland.

Brandee Mathies (Costume Designer) has been Studio Theatre's Costume Shop Manager since 1994. He has costume designed Passover, MotherStruck, This Is Our Youth, The Year of Magical Thinking, Stoop Stories, Rimers of Eldritch, A Number, The Syringa Tree, and Comic Briefs for Studio Theatre, as well as Moth, Contractions, A Beautiful View, Crestfall, and Polaroid Stories for Studio 2ndStage. For Mosaic Brandee has designed Satchmo at the Waldorf, Hooded, Or Being Black for Dummies, Blood Knot, Eureka Day, Shame, Vicuña, and Inherit the Windbag. Other DC area credits include Black Nativity, and This Bitter Earth at Theater Alliance; Anything Goes (Costume Design) and Spunk (Assistant Designer) at Howard University; The Wiz at Duke Ellington School of the Arts; Blues for an Alabama Sky and Sunday in the Park with George (First Hand) at Arena Stage; and Black *Nativity* (Assistant Designer) at The Kennedy Center.

David Lamont Wilson (Sound Designer) is thrilled to be returning to Mosaic Theater and working with such an awesome team of artists! His previous Mosaic sound designs include Eureka Day, Bloodknot, Milk Like Sugar, and When January Feels Like Summer. Favorite sound designs include the Atlanta Alliance Theatre production of The C.A. Lyons Project (Suzi Bass Award nominated), The Welder's Not Enuf Lifetimes, Charter Theatre's production of Am I Black Enough Yet?, Dead Man Walking at American University, and Titus for the Washington Shakespeare Theatre. His resume also includes designs at the Kennedy Center, Signature Theatre, Arena Stage, Imagination Stage, the National Conservatory of Dramatic Arts, and Georgetown

University to name a few. David would like to thank Sekou for bringing additional 'LIGHT and MUSIC' into his existence!

**Deborah Thomas (Properties Designer)** is a props and set designer for theatre, television, and film. From 2009 to 2019, she was Studio Theatre's Props Director. Her work at Studio includes Pass Over, Fun Home, Love-Valor-Compassion, Sylvia, Suburbia, Slavs! (properties design), and set design for *Terminus*. Freelance work include properties design for Eureka Day and Milk Like Sugar at Mosaic Theater Company, and The Tale of the Allergist's Wife and Freud's Last Session at Theater J; sculptor and sculpture consultant for TLC's DC Cupcakes (2011-2013); Washington Bureau set design for TV Tokyo; and Natty G pilot set design for National Geographic. In addition to working for all national networks, her work includes production design for PBS American Experience Dolley Madison, art direction for **PBS** American Experience Alexander Hamilton, and set and props design for Discovery Channel's Moments in Time Jamestown: Against All Odds.

Samantha Wilhelm (Stage Manager) is thrilled to be joining the team at Mosaic for the first time. She has previously worked at Round House Theatre as the Production Stage Manager on A Doll's House: Part 2, the Assistant Stage Manager on Quixote Nuevo, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time and Gem of the Ocean, and as Production Assistant on Small Mouth Sounds, The Legend of Georgia McBride, Handbagged, The Book of Will, Uncle Vanya, and NSFW. Other area credits include Come From Away (2017 Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Musical Production), Ragtime, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf, A Christmas Carol, and The Glass Menagerie at Ford's Theatre; Me, Jane: The Dreams and Adventures of Young Jane Goodall National Tour with the Kennedy Center; Escaped Alone and Easy Women Smoking Loose Cigarettes at Signature Theatre. She is a graduate of the University of Mary Washington. Love to MJEKA.

Actors' Equity Association (AEA) was founded in 1913 as the first of the American actor unions. Equity's mission is to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Today, Equity represents more than 40,000 actors, singers, dancers and stage managers working in hundreds of theatres across the United States. Equity members are dedicated to working in the theatre as a profession, upholding the highest artistic standards. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions and provides a wide range of benefits including health and pension plans for its members. Through its agreement with Equity, this theatre has committed to the fair treatment of the actors and stage managers employed in this production. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. For more information, visit www.actorsequity.org.



#### STILL TO COME THIS SEASON AT MOSAIC ....

# DEAR MAPEL

#### By Psalmayene 24 | Directed by Natsu Onoda Power JAN 19 - FEB 13, 2022

Told with distinctive heart, musicality, and humor, Psalmayene 24's joyfully energetic story of loss and healing takes us from Park Slope, Brooklyn to Washington, DC, on a journey to connect with an estranged father, Mapel, and all he represents.

# PRIVATE

By Mona Pirnot | Directed by Knud Adams

#### MAR 23 - APR 17, 2022

Georgia's husband, Corbin, has been offered his dream job. But there's a catch. In an all-too-near future where privacy is a commodity, one married couple grapples with which secrets they're willing to reveal especially to each other.

# MARYS SEACOLE

#### By Jackie Sibblies Drury | Directed by Eric Ruffin MAY 4 - MAY 29, 2022

Based in part on the autobiography of Mary Seacole, this play charts one woman's extraordinary journey through space and time: from mid-1800s Jamaica, to the frontlines of the Crimean War, to a modern-day nursing home.

# IN HIS HANDS

#### By Benjamin Benne | Directed by José Carrasquillo JUN 22 - JUL 17, 2022

Daniel is falling for Christian. But as these men explore the potential of their new relationship, Christian's past threatens to overpower their connection. A radically contemporary, queer rom-com that asks provocative questions about faith and desire.

#### ME В ER

## HOW MANY BIRDS ARE THERE IN THE WORLD?

# A dramaturgical note by Aria Velz

Depending on who you ask, there could be as few as 50 billion or as many as 428 billion. That wide range encapsulates the difficulty in capturing the diversity, vastness, and patterns of birds. But no matter the estimates of how many birds there might be, there are undoubtedly fewer now than there were then. Whether "then" is 50 years ago, 100 years ago, or 400 years ago, we know that the bird population has been noticeably declining for centuries. Most estimates average that there are around 7 billion birds in the United States and Canada. That may sound like a lot, but in 1970, North America was home to an estimated 10 billion birds. This means, as the Audubon Society puts it, "North America has lost more than 1 in 4 birds in the last 50 years."

The reasons for the decline in birds are a combination of obvious and surprising effects of human choices: habitat loss due to agriculture and urbanization, collisions with buildings and other human-made structures, and yes, even domestic cats that humans let roam outdoors kill billions of birds a year. But although these factors have caused a sharp decline in the bird population, the acceleration of climate change will manifest in much different but equally devastating ways.

Climate change's effects on birds almost entirely alter their capacity to migrate, feed, and nest. As global temperatures rise, birds' migratory patterns generally shift closer to the poles where heat is more manageable, forcing birds to travel farther and farther from their natural habitats over time. Additionally, many of the plants and insects that migratory birds eat are no longer as abundant, meaning that they have a harder time gauging when food is plentiful enough to start nesting. All of these factors put together mean that most bird species are having difficulties maintaining their populations. As people discover these issues, the initial response is to engage in environmentalist efforts to preserve and propagate bird populations. But these efforts may actually have adverse effects on birds in the long-term.

Like with many environmental issues, the solution of how to help the bird population is a struggle of conservation vs. climate activism. Although on the surface these two are inextricably intertwined, conservation is a short-term solution to the long-term problem of climate change. People can create new habitats, establish breeding programs, and mandate that every cat be an indoor cat in order to maintain the bird population, but if global temperatures alter birds' migratory patterns, nesting times, and food supply, none of these efforts will demonstrably bring the bird population to "normal." Like John and Caitlyn in Birds of North America, we are noticing how many differences there are around us from the effects of climate change and have choices we can make in how to respond. In these actions, we can either imagine a future where we can wonder how many birds there are in the world, or imagine a future where we nostalgically think about how many there used to be.

Cats equipped with a bell return 41% fewer birds than those with a plain collar. Save birds by putting a bell on your cat.



# MOSAIC MISSION

Independent, intercultural, entertaining, and uncensored, Mosaic Theater Company is committed to making transformational, socially-relevant art, producing plays by authors on the front lines of conflict zones, and to building a fusion community to address some of the most pressing issues of our times. Dedicated to making our theater a model of diversity and inclusion at every strata, on stage and off, Mosaic invests in the new as we keep abreast of our changing and challenging times to ensure that our theater is a responsive gathering space, all the while nurturing and producing art of the highest order.

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(Mosaic's current class of apprentices & interns)

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#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to David Grossman, Molly Herrmann, Tykee James, Deborah Thomas, Evan Hoffman, Bill Woodard, Sanchez Welding, and Trent Kugler. Promotional photography by Chris Banks.

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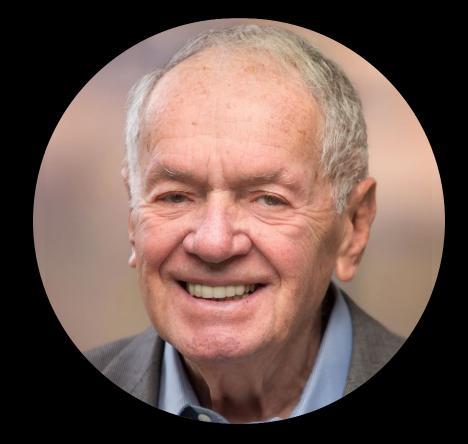
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# **IN MEMORY OF MARVIN WEISSBERG**



With gratitude and admiration, Mosaic Theater Company is honored to dedicate the 21/22 Season in memory of our dear friend and supporter, Marvin Weissberg.

"Towering Mosaic supporter, Marvin Weissberg, died of COVID-related complications on May 17 at the age of 94. For his dedication to Mosaic Theater and justice - in word and deed - we are proud to dedicate the current Season to Marvin's memory.

We will miss him enormously."

Serge Seiden, *Managing Director* Mosaic Theater Company

# Without Marvin Weissberg and the Weissberg Foundation, Mosaic Theater would not be what it has become.

Marvin was the lead underwriter for three productions, most recently *Eureka Day*, just before the pandemic. In prior seasons, he supported the productions *Milk Like Sugar* and *Shooting Gallery*. He also gave generously to Mosaic's Annual Fund.

### THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Thank you to our many loyal donors, who have made it possible for Mosaic Theater Company to produce independent, intercultural, and entertaining theater. We are grateful for the many individuals, foundations, government agencies, and organizations who made generous contributions between July 1, 2019 and September 24, 2021, listed below. We regret any unintentional errors or omissions to this list. Please contact the Development devo@mosaictheater.org with at corrections. Department Thank you for being a part of our mosaic.

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**Cheryl Argrett** Solid State Books Evelyn & Dr William **Braithwaite** Cedar Restaurant Susan Clampitt Kevin Cuddy **Story District** Lee's Flower & Card Shop Nancy Galloway

#### **LEGACY GIFTS**

Anonymous (2) **Dianne & Herbert** Lerner **Rosa Wiener** 

Hernan Gigena Washington Green Grocer Shelley Grossman Knightsbridge **Restaurant Group** Millenium Arts Salon & Juanita & Mel Hardy Myrna Sislen and Middle C Music

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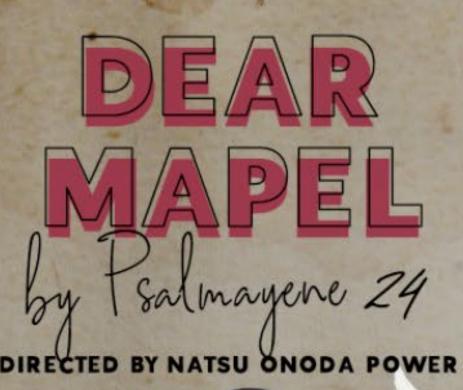
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