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# PURE NATIVE

**APRIL 15 - MAY 11, 2025**

By **Vickie Ramirez (Tuscarora)**

Directed by  
**Randy Reinholz (Choctaw)**

In Association with  
**Friends of Ganondagan**  
and **Native Voices**

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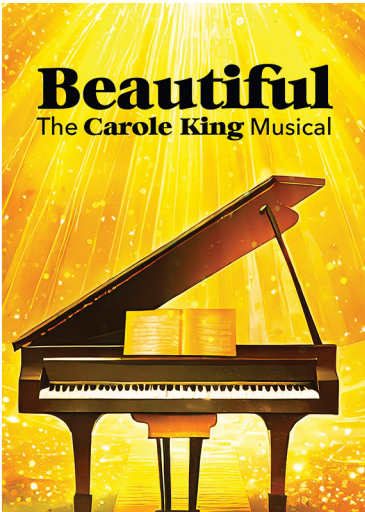




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## MESSAGE FROM GEVA'S LEADERSHIP

Welcome, and thank you so much for joining us for *Pure Native*!

When I joined Geva, one of the first emails I got was from a colleague saying I had to meet Vickie Ramirez, not only because she's a brilliant artist but also because she's a Tuscarora playwright, whose work speaks intimately and beautifully to our region.

We were lucky enough my first season to work with DeLanna Studi, who had just become the Artistic Director of Native Voices, the nationally renowned theatre company dedicated to producing new work by Indigenous playwrights. Native Voices had recently premiered Vickie's play *Pure Native* in LA, and DeLanna shared it with the team here and at Friends of Ganondagan, as we were talking about how our three organizations could partner on programming. We all immediately fell in love with the play, and with the idea of bringing it to the East Coast, and especially back home to Haudenosaunee land.

I've been very grateful since I got here to get to collaborate with Jeanette Jemison, Meg Joseph, and everyone at Friends of Ganondagan. I'm especially grateful to Ansley Jemison for also taking on the role of Cultural Consultant on *Pure Native*, and for all the conversations he's opened up around the production. It also feels very full circle to have Randy Reinholz, who directed the premiere of *Pure Native* as Artistic Director of Native Voices, directing their new Artistic Director DeLanna Studi as an actor in the East Coast Premiere of the show, especially here at Geva, where DeLanna is now an Artist in Residence.

We held the first read-through at the Stanley "Sully" Huff Heritage Center at Seneca Nation, and we got to hear this deeply human, rooted, funny, and moving story where it's set. The questions Vickie raises about our responsibilities to the land, to each other, and to the future are deeply resonant today - and one of my favorite things about Vickie as a playwright is how she leaves us still pondering those questions as we leave the theatre.

I'd like to thank our 24/25 Season Sponsor ESL Federal Credit Union, Honorary Season Producer Dr. Dawn Lipson, Lead Producer Buckingham Properties, Media Sponsors iHeart Media and WXXI, and all of you!



Elizabeth Williamson  
Artistic Director

## PRODUCTION CREDITS

**ELIZABETH WILLIAMSON**  
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*Executive Director*

Presents  
In Association with Friends of Ganondagan and Native Voices

# PURE NATIVE

By **VICKIE RAMIREZ**  
Directed by **RANDY REINHOLZ**†

*Scenic Design*  
**TROY HOURIE**†

*Costume Design*  
**ASA BENALLY**†

*Lighting Design*  
**EMMA DEANE**†

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**ED LITTLEFIELD/  
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

World Premiere  
March 2019  
Native Voices at the Autry  
Randy Reinholz, Producing Artistic Director  
Jean Bruce Scott, Producing Executive Director



Geva is a proud partner of  in the Geva-Brockport Alliance.

A Spanish-language version of this program is available at the Box Office and online at  
[GevaTheatre.org](http://GevaTheatre.org). Translator: Marisol Galarza-Ruiz

# PRODUCTION CREDITS

## THE CAST

(In order of appearance)

Gary.....	Jake Waid*
Connie.....	Tanis Parenteau*
Art.....	Derek Garza*
Brewster.....	Kalani Queypo*
Karen.....	DeLanna Studi*

## ADDITIONAL CREDITS

Production Assistant/Substitute Stage Manager.....	Kate Duprey
Stage Management Intern.....	Isabella Smith
Open Captioner.....	Samantha Geffen
Sign Interpretation Coordinator.....	Luane Davis Haggerty
Director of Artistic Sign Language.....	Fred Beam
Sign Interpreters.....	Christopher Coles, Nancy Kirkendall, and Natanael Escalante
Audio Description Program Coordinator and Consultant.....	Rene Latorre
Audio Descriptor.....	Shawnda Urie

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*There will be one 15-minute intermission.*

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## SONG CREDITS

"Peyote Healing"

Written by Robertson, Robbie (ASCAP)

Pub. by Medicine Hat Music (ASCAP)

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\*Members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



†Indicates members of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, an independent national labor union.



†The scenic, costume, lighting and sound designers in LORT Theatres are represented by the United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.



Geva Theatre operates under agreements between the League of Resident Theatres (LORT), a consortium of regional theatres throughout the nation; Actors Equity Association (AEA), the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States; the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC), an independent national labor union; and United Scenic Artists (USA), a union of scenic, costume, lighting and sound designers.



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## INTERVIEW WITH THE PLAYWRIGHT

### An Interview with Vickie Ramirez (Tuscarora)

Dramaturg Courtney Elkin Mohler (Santa Barbara Chumash) sat down to chat with the playwright Vickie Ramirez (Tuscarora, Six Nations of the Grand River) about *Pure Native*, playwriting, and the business of bottled water.

**Courtney Elkin Mohler:** I love how *Pure Native* brings this specific area in Upstate New York on the Haudenosaunee Reservation alive. What does the audience need to know about this homeplace and the nations that live there now?

**Vickie Ramirez:** *Pure Native* is very much an East Coast play and a Haudenosaunee play. We have Six distinct Nations within The Confederacy. The Mohawk, the Seneca, the Cayuga, the Oneida, the Onondaga, and the Tuscarora. Each Nation operates independently within the Confederacy, but we come together for decisions that affect us all. (Or at least we are supposed to!) Each Nation has its distinct personality.

I'm Tuscarora, and in this play, Connie and her brother, Art are too. The other characters are Mohawk. I make that distinction for a reason – Mohawks are confident in their identity and traditions – like the Seneca, which makes sense since both are our warrior nations. Tuscaroras came into the Confederacy later, and we've always been known as farmers, which gives us a different vibe. Fellow Haudenosaunee understand this. I am hoping folks in the audience who are not Haudenosaunee will pick up on the distinction, even if they don't quite understand why.

**CEM:** How would you characterize the climate in Six Nations and the rhythm of the place?

**VR:** The land is a huge part of who we are – it's in our bones. The rivers? They're our blood. Everything revolves around the rivers and the trees. That's why, when I see that a bunch of trees have been clear-cut, I'm like, *what the hell?* Going out to play in the woods, and goofing around on the river was an essential part of my childhood. One of the signifiers that tells me I'm back home are trees standing like sentinels everywhere, guarding our territory. It's always jarring when you come back and see them gone and replaced by new developments.

Regarding our climate, we get the extremes. We get real winter and we get real summer. And our humidity – well sometimes it feels like you're swimming when you're walking down the sidewalk. We are a water people!

**CEM:** What inspired this play?

**VR:** I am offended that bottled water has become a necessity for many Native communities. On Six Nations, where my mother is from, there used to be clean rivers, natural wells, and plenty of creeks. But now so many people on the Rez have to drink bottled water because the natural water sources are no longer safe. Corporations

## INTERVIEW WITH THE PLAYWRIGHT

did that. And now those same corporations are coming back to sell bottled water to our people.

When I was in California for a play, I learned that some reservations actually had their own water-bottling plants – even though the whole region was in a drought. That blew my mind. How does that even happen? That's where *Pure Native* started. Later, I found out that Nestlé had been illegally tapping into the water table on Six Nations. Funny how that works.

**CEM:** How do you go about creating your characters? Are there real life corollaries?

**VR:** There are real-life inspirations but, often I will combine personality traits from several people into one character. For instance, there are elements of my brother, my best friend growing up, and even myself that inform the character of Brewster. This is how my mind works. Everything becomes jumbled together into one idea.

**CEM:** *Pure Native* has a lot of strong-willed characters. But let's face it – the women really seem to run the show here, so to speak. I know that the Haudenosaunee are matriarchal and that traditional folks adhere to the advice of the Clan Mothers. Can you explain a bit more about the Haudenosaunee Clan System?

**VR:** For us, everything is decided by your Clan, and Clan membership is dependent on your mother's line. This goes back generations to the first Clan Mother, who was the first to accept the Great Law of Peace. Each Clan has a chief which is hereditary, but it is also dependent on the candidate. The Clan mothers decide if the chief will step into the office or not.

**CEM:** Something that is really interesting about *Pure Native* and the world it reflects is the way the characters consider Longhouse Teachings such as the seventh generation principle as they work through important community decisions. Can you share a little bit about the Longhouse Teachings that are most relevant to understanding this play?

**VR:** The Longhouse is not only a spiritual hub, but it is also a governing hub. These teachings are the practical steps that you need to live and learn and be in Good Mind. The Seventh Generation principle is a good way to live in spirit, but also, it's practical. It makes sense to think of the impact on seven generations of people when you make decisions that affect the community. It's more conducive to living within your means within the environment; and ensuring that there is enough for the next generation. When you find the first berry you don't take it, you take the second. You take enough to sustain your family, but you don't drain the resources.



## INTERVIEW WITH THE PLAYWRIGHT

**CEM:** A few Haudenosaunee myths are mentioned in this story. What should we know about Onyareknowa, The Great Snake? And Thunder Boy?

**VR:** Onyareknowa, The Great Snake is in the Niagara River. The story goes: the Great Snake was killing villagers and food and fish. So, Hino, the leader of the Thunderers, killed him and left his body in the river; and it became Niagara Falls.

Thunder Boy is Hino's son and is half human and half Thunderer. He had the power of his father and the empathy of his human mother, but he couldn't live amongst people because of his temper. When he got upset, he could burn a village down because his emotions caused lightning and thunder to erupt from him. But he is a great protector of the people.

**CEM:** And in *Pure Native*, Connie relates to Thunder Boy because even though she may technically be outside of the Longhouse Clan system – she aspires to be a strong protector of her community too! Which actually, is a great segue into my final question. The conflict in this play surrounds what to do with the resource that the river provides the Haudenosaunee people. On one hand, Connie fiercely defends the river for purely traditional use and is suspect of how a bottling factory would change it. On the other hand, Brewster argues that the water should be shared and that controlling how it's shared enacts tribal sovereignty. But I think what is different about your play is that the river is not only talked about as an inanimate resource, instead it sort of becomes a character. How do the Six Nations regard the water ways, and what can others learn from this relationship?

**VR:** The river is the heart of the community. If you look at our settlements, we settle on the water. The kids are on the water, fishing, as soon as they can stand. The water is central in so many of our stories. If you want to show a bunch of happy Haudenosaunee, bring them to the river.

**CEM:** Thanks so much Vickie for sharing this story with us, and giving the audience some a glimpse into the play's themes and inspiration. Is there anything that audience members can do to help Indigenous people protect their waterways or enforce environmental protections?

For audience members wanting to learn more about the issues and themes present in *Pure Native* check out the *Haudenosaunee Environmental Task Force* webpage at: <http://hetf.org/>





### *Dramaturg's Note*

**By Courtney Elkin Mohler (Santa Barbara Chumash)**

I was delighted when director Randy Reinholz asked me to serve as dramaturg for Vickie Ramirez's play *Pure Native*. I have had the pleasure of working with both Randy and Vickie before, and knew this was going to be an inspiring and important project that would center Indigenous perspectives and community values. Vickie brings years of experience writing plays that are inspired by the political and spiritual needs of the Six Nations Confederacy to which she belongs. Randy's lifetime of creative work and advocacy has led to the development of dozens of new Native American, Native Hawaiian, Alaskan Native and First Nations plays and has launched the careers of countless Indigenous theatre artists.

#### **In other words, this was gonna be fun!**

Much of my work in Native American theatre has been in the role of play development dramaturg. In this capacity, I work closely with the playwright to support their process in making the script the best possible version of itself that it can be. I read draft after draft of the script, and deeply analyze all of the dramatic elements (such as the plot line, settings, language and characters) to see what changes might be made to get what's on the page ready to be put on the stage. As a professor of theatre and as a director, I find my dramaturgy work rewarding because it allows me to lovingly interrogate a text for the purpose of clarifying its themes and aesthetics for its audience.

Vickie, Randy and I had many exciting discussions about *Pure Native's* themes, tone, characters and politics. The characters in this play are complex, funny, and tough. A feature of Native theatre that can sometimes confuse non-Native folks is that often our plays do not have a singular protagonist, or "good guys" or "bad guys" in the traditional sense. This is a Haudenosaunee Confederacy play, and all of the characters in it want to do what is best for their community. The conflict here is familiar across Indigenous communities in North America:

**How do we best protect our natural resources for the future generations of all our relations? How do we provide opportunities for our youth to thrive, while keeping traditional wisdom and values alive? And when is compromising with the settlers a necessary evil, and when is compromising just a bad idea?**

As corporations and lax environmental protection policies continue to inflict devastation, it is critical that Indigenous peoples do whatever they can to protect our waterways, forests, and ecosystems. Indigenous peoples have experienced radical changes to their homelands, flora, fauna, and climate patterns due to settler colonialism and the resulting extractivist capitalism. What do such pressures do to a community? *Pure Native* offers a window into some of the most urgent debates happening in Indigenous nations today. Ramirez does not propose a single correct answer to the question of how to best serve the nation and protect its resources. But *Pure Native* demonstrates that the decision-making must lie within the community itself.

## Community Collaborators

Geva Theatre, in partnership with Friends of Ganondagan and Native Voices, is thrilled to share the work of local Indigenous artists both in our lobby turned gallery and as part of the design for this production of *Pure Native*. We will be celebrating all their work at *Mondays at Geva* on **Monday, April 28 from 6-8pm** right in Geva's lobby. It is a free event and all are welcome to attend!

### Stage Design

Faye Lone  
<https://longhausoflone.com/>

Tami Watt (Seneca)  
<https://tamiwattdesigns.com>

### Gallery Works

Tsioianii Galban (Mohawk)

Lauren Jimerson

Brennen Johns (Onöndowa'ga',  
Genyahdë:h)

Faye Lone  
<https://longhausoflone.com/>

You can find out more about these artists, and several more artists, by scanning the QR code or checking out the Scene-in-Context screen next to the Geva Theatre Box Office!



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Friends of Ganondagan and Native Voices



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Connectivity at Geva Theatre's overarching objective is to connect more people and organizations with the art presented on its stages. To build more connected relationships with existing patrons and partners. To build new and meaningful relationships with people and organizations with whom we have traditionally had no or little connectivity, the sticky kind of connectivity that endures.

**Connectivity at Geva programs are sponsored, in part, by Volvo Cars Rochester.**

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## Mondays at Geva

### **Mondays at Geva Event for Pure Native:**

**MONDAY, APRIL 28** 6pm-8pm

The stages are dark on Monday evenings at Geva, so the art and action shift to the lobby and café where brilliant local visual artists, performers, musicians, and speakers broaden our consideration of the onstage productions. Join us for an evening of culture, community, and celebrating Indigenous excellence, featuring traditional foods, tabling from community organizations, and artwork from local Indigenous makers on display and for sale.

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## Geva *Insights*

### **Geva Insights Event for Pure Native:**

**TUESDAY, APRIL 22** Post-6pm Performance



**DeLanna  
Studi**

2024-2026 Artist in Residence and actor in *Pure Native*, DeLanna Studi (Cherokee Nation) will speak with Literary Manager & Artistic Associate, Fiona Kyle, about the production, her time as a Geva Resident, and her artistic work that has impact throughout the country for *Geva Insights*.

### **Haudenosaunee Performance:**

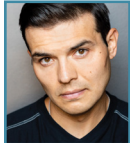
**SUNDAY, MAY 11** Post-2pm Performance (*Tickets Required*)

Following the performance there will be a Sunday Salon discussion with several members of the cast led by Ansley Jemison (Seneca Nation, Wolf Clan), *Pure Native*'s Cultural Consultant and the Cultural Liaison at Ganondagan State Historic Site through the National Heritage Trust of New York State; Jemison also hosts "The Original Peoples Podcast Ongwehonwe." Celebrate the closing performance of this production with an afternoon of community and connection for Indigenous audience members and performers to enjoy together. Non-Indigenous patrons are also welcome to attend.

## WHO'S WHO

### CAST

**DEREK GARZA (Art)** (he/him) is a Native American (Wichita/Comanche) /Latino DC-based actor. Recent theater credits include *The Other Children of the Sun* at The Kennedy Center, *Midsummer Night's Dream* at ISF, Nancy at Mosaic Theater, *Something Moving* at Ford's Theatre, *People, Places & Things* at Studio Theater, *The Swindlers and Our Town* at Baltimore Center Stage, *Between Two Knees* at PAC-NYC, and *Mother Road* at Arena Stage. Other theaters include OSF, Seattle Rep, McCarter Theater, Yale Rep, Native Earth, A.R.T., TimeLine Theatre, Victory Gardens, Chicago Dramatist, Video Cabaret and Steppenwolf to name a few. Derek can also be seen in TV/Films like ABC's *Betrayal*; NBC's *Chicago Fire*, *Jimortal* (Pilot), *PowerBook II: Ghost Untold Valor*, and *Canal Street*. [derekgarza.com](http://derekgarza.com)



**KALANI QUEYPO (Brewster)** Kalani is an award-winning screenwriter and is currently developing his episodic comedy, *When You Miss Aloha*, as well as his feature length drama, *Stored and Safe*, and a brand new musical, *The Mainlanders*, all showcasing his birthplace and culture as the backdrop in his character driven projects. For his musical, *Missing Peace*, Kalani is the recipient of the 2019 Native Voices Playwrights Retreat, 2020 Rhinebeck Writers Retreat, 2021 & 2022 Johnny Mercer Writers Grove at Goodspeed Musicals, 2021 NAMT Festival of New Plays, and the 2022 Rhinebeck Writers Retreat Triple R. Kalani can be seen in the Oscar-nominated, Terrence Malick film, *The New World*, Steven Spielberg's Emmy winning *Into the West* and *Slow West* (Sundance GRAND JURY PRIZE). Television credits include three seasons on *Jamestown*, *Fear the Walking Dead*, *Mad Men*, *Hawaii Five-0*, *Nurse Jackie*, *Saints & Strangers*, and *Trickster*. [kalaniqueypo.com](http://kalaniqueypo.com)



**TANIS PARENTEAU (Connie)** (she/her) is an actor/producer and member of the Métis Nation of Alberta. TV: *Billions*, *FBI: Most Wanted*, *Gossip Girl*, *Designated Survivor*, *House of Cards*, *Tribal*. Film: *ReEntry*, *Sweet Summer Pow Wow*, *Rehab*. NYC: The Public Theater, Signature Theater, 59E59 Theaters. Regional: Oregon Shakespeare Festival. As a producer, her films and series have been broadcast on ARTÉ, APTN lumi, and soon to be PBS. She was funded by



Vision Maker Media for their Short Film Fellowship and she is currently developing multiple features and series. Tanis is on the SAG-AFTRA National Native Americans Committee and is a casting associate at tbd casting co in NYC. She holds a Master of Fine Arts in Acting from The New School for Drama. [tanisparenteau.com](http://tanisparenteau.com).

**DELANNA STUDI (Karen)** (Cherokee Nation) (she/her) Theater credits: the First National Broadway Tour of Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize-winning play *August: Osage County*, Off-Broadway's *Gloria: A Life, Informed Consent*, and Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Portland Center Stage, Indiana Repertory Theatre, and Geva. Her first play, *And So We Walked: Along the Trail of Tears*, retells her journey retracing her family's footsteps along the Trail of Tears with her father. Its Off-Broadway debut at Minetta Lane was recorded for Audible. Film/Television credits: the Peabody Award-winning *Edge of America*, *Dreamkeeper*, *Goliath*, *Shameless*, *General Hospital*, *Reservation Dogs*, and Disney's *The Roof*. She is the Artistic Director of Native Voices. Delanna is a 2022 United States Artists Fellow, an Advance Gender Equality in the Arts Legacy Playwright Grant Recipient, and a Playwright in Residence at Geva Theatre.



**JAKE WAID (Gary)** (he/him) is pleased to be making his Geva Theatre debut in *Pure Native*. Recent roles: Torvald in *A Doll's House Part 2* at Theater Alaska, John in *Where the Summit Meets the Stars* at Perseverance Theatre, Don Pedro in *Much Ado About Nothing* at Shakespeare and Company. Other theatres: Fairbanks Shakespeare Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Arena Stage, Pillsbury House, Mixed Blood, History Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Book-It Repertory Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Kennedy Center, Native Voices at the Autry, The Playwright's Realm. Film: *Cortez*, *Feels Good*. He trained at Cornish College and Freehold Theatre Lab/Studio.



## CREATIVE & ARTISTIC TEAM

**VICKIE RAMIREZ (Playwright)** (Tuscarora) is a resident at New Dramatists and a founding member of Chukalokoli and Amerinda Theater.



Her work has been developed and/or produced at Native Voices at the Autry, Alter Theater, The Public Theater, The Roundabout Theatre Company, Labyrinth Theater Company. Honors: Resident-New Dramatists through 2027, Winner-2020 Smith Prize for Political Theater (NNPN), The Kilroys-Honorary Mention 2019 for *Pure Native* and 2014 for *Standoff At Hwy#37*, Semi-finalist-Bay Area Playwrights Festival 2019, Semi-finalist Eugene O'Neill National Playwright's Conference 2018, Alumna-Public Theater's Emerging Writers Group (2009). Productions: *Pure Native* - Alter Theater (Summer 2022) and Native Voices at the Autry; *Standoff at Hwy#37* - NV Autry and the University of South Dakota; *Glenbum 12 WP* - Summer Shorts at 59E59; *Smoke* - Mixed Phoenix Theatre Group at Pershing Square Signature Center. Published: *Monologues for Actors of Color: Women, Monologues for Actors of Color: Men and Contemporary Plays by Women of Color Edition 2* (Routledge Press). Member: Dramatists Guild, PEN America. Consultant: *Outer Range* for Amazon TV.

**RANDY REINHOLTZ (Director)** (he/him) Plays Written by Randy Reinholz: *The Unexpected Indian, Desire, Love by the Horns, A New Story From Rabbit And Frog, Under A Big Sky, Off The Rails*. Randy Reinholz, enrolled citizen of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Founding Artistic Director Emeritus of Native Voices. Produced over 35 new scripts and directed over 75 productions in the United States, Australia, Mexico, Great Britain, and Canada. Under his tenure, Native Voices has presented 300 workshops and presentations with artists from more than 100 tribal nations. Reinholz's productions were at La Jolla Playhouse, Perseverance Theatre, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, New York and Washington D.C., Arena Stage, New York's Public Theater, and the Autry, Los Angeles. Institutional and University credits include 30th International Theatre Institute World Congress, Tamaulipas, Mexico; Brisbane Library, Australia; American Indian Community House, New York; Native Earth Performing Arts, Toronto, Canada; International Third World Conference, Chicago, IL; The Playwrights' Center Minneapolis; Alaska Native Heritage Center, Anchorage, AK; San Diego State University; Theatre Cornell; Illinois State University; Duke University; University of Massachusetts; University of Arizona; University of Miami, Ohio; Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia; Harlaxton College, Grantham, UK; First Nations House of Learning; University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada; Idyllwild Arts, Idyllwild California; The Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, OK; The Cherokee Casino, Cherokee, NC; and The Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Reinholz is a tenured Professor at San Diego State

University, where he also served as Director of the School of Theatre, Television, and Film. He has also appeared as an actor on many stages across the country as well as on NBC, ABC, and CBS Television. He has several new scripts and media projects in development. [RandyReinholz.com](http://RandyReinholz.com).

**TROY HOURIE (Scenic Design)** (he/him) is a scenographer and installation artist. Scenographer for 300+ productions for various off-Broadway, regional and opera companies across the USA, Canada and internationally; including Glimmerglass Festival, The New Victory, New York Theatre Workshop, Cherry Lane Theatre, Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Guthrie, Classical Theatre of Harlem and American Vicarious. Art installations include: Apparitions Attic, Arteles Finland, and Static Apnea, Performance Arcade, NZ, The Wisdom Tree, Glimmerglass Festival and Espreitar Tondela, ARTerra, Portugal. Highlights: *Odditorio Ei! Marionetas*, Portugal, World Stage Design, and FIAMS. Director/scenographer: *Glass' The Fall of the House of Usher*, Mannes, NYC and Nanatasis, Musique 3 Femmes. Troy is an Associate Professor in Theatre at the University of Guelph. [troyhourie.com](http://troyhourie.com)

**ASA BENALLY (Costume Design)** Citizen of the Navajo and Cherokee Nations. *The Rez Sisters, 1939* (Stratford Festival); *Tal - The Wild Man of the Woods* (The Royal Winnipeg Ballet); *The Clearing* (The Shaw Festival); *Whale Song, Devilfish, Cold Case* (Perseverance Theater); *The Winter's Tale* (HERE Arts Center); *Seven Minutes* (Waterwell); *Where We Belong* (Woolly Mammoth Theater, Baltimore Center Stage, The Goodman Theater, The Public); *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (The Gingold Group); *Blues for an Alabama Sky* (Keen Company, Drama Desk Nomination); *Somewhere Over the Border* (Syracuse Stage); *Too Heavy For Your Pocket* (George Street Playhouse); *Skeleton Crew* (Westport Country Playhouse); *Father Comes Home...* (Juilliard); *Measure for Measure* (The Public Theater Mobile Unit); *Cymbeline* (Yale Repertory Theater); *The Taming of the Shrew, Measure for Measure* (Frog and Peach Theater Co.); *The Brobot Johnson Experience* (The Bushwick Starr); *Tricks the Devil Taught Me* (Minetta Lane Theater); *Coriolanus, The Seagull* (Yale School of Drama); *Roberto Zucco* (Yale Cabaret). Training: M.F.A Yale School of Drama. B.F.A. Parsons School of Design. Online: [asabenally.com](http://asabenally.com), Instagram: [Asa\\_Benally\\_Design](https://www.instagram.com/Asa_Benally_Design).

**EMMA DEANE (Lighting Design)** (she/her) is an Indigenous lighting designer based out of NYC, and a citizen of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation. Recent credits include *Confederates* (Signature Theatre NYC); *Three Sisters, Much*

## WHO'S WHO

*Ado About Nothing* (Two River Theater); *BAKKHAI* (Baltimore Center Stage); *In the Southern Breeze* (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater); *Manahatta* (Yale Repertory Theater); *Legally Blonde: The Musical* (NYU Tisch); and *Tiny Beautiful Things* (TheatreSquared). Other credits include *YELL: A "DOCUMENTARY" OF MY TIME HERE*, Reykjavik, *Trouble in Mind*, *Shakespeare's as u like it* and *Romeo and Juliet* (Yale School of Drama); *Little Boy/Little Man*, *Burn Book*, *The Light Fantastic*, *Mud*, *The Guadalupes* (Yale Cabaret); *Pinocchio: A Folk Musical*, *Fog Island* (Filament Theatre); *The Amish Project*, *Still* (Interrobang Theatre Project); *Hitler on the Roof*, *Hand in Hand*, *Nothing of Me* (Akvavit Theatre); *The Woman in Black* (Wildclaw); *Buddy Cop 2* (Pavement Group) and associate lighting design on *Dreaming Zenzile* (NYTW, St. Louis Rep) and assistant lighting design on Broadway's *The Skin of Our Teeth*. Additional credits include work with The Fisher Center at Bard, Court Theatre, The Goodman, Albany Park Theater Project, Steppenwolf Theater Company, Northlight Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Victory Gardens, and Shakespeare Academy at Stratford. MFA - Yale School of Drama. USA 829.

**ED LITTLEFIELD/SHAAKINDUSTÓOW - LINGÍT (Sound Design)** (he/him) Ed is a freelance percussionist, educator, and composer based out of Seattle, WA. He is Lingít from Sitka, Alaska and has released four albums featuring traditional indigenous melodies, which he arranged into the jazz idiom with the Native Jazz Quartet. This quartet also represented the United States in South America as "Jazz Ambassadors." He has also done sound design and composition at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Arena Stage, and Perseverance Theater as well as other theaters around the country. Currently he is working on a three-year project to create the first ever Lingít opera which will combine traditional contemporary Lingít melodies inside the western opera genre.

**COURTNEY ELKIN MOHLER (Dramaturg)** (she/her) As a stage director and dramaturg, Mohler concentrates on new works that push aesthetic and political boundaries and is dedicated to supporting new work by Native American playwrights. Recent professional dramaturgy credits: *Antikoni* by Beth Piatote at Native Voices, *Desert Stories for Lost Girls* by Lily Rushing at Latino Theatre Company/Native Voices, and *The Thanksgiving Play* by Larissa FastHorse at the Virginia Stage Company. In addition to her professional theatre work, Dr. Mohler is Associate Professor of Theatre at Boston College where she teaches directing, dramaturgy, and BIPOC

theatre. Mohler has published numerous peer-reviewed articles and book chapters in Indigenous theatre, and co-authored *Critical Companion to Native American and First Nations Theatre and Performance: Indigenous Spaces* was published in 2020 by Bloomsbury-Metheun Press.

**ANSLEY JEMISON (Cultural Consultant)** (Seneca Nation, Wolf Clan) serves as the Cultural Liaison at Ganondagan State Historic Site through the Natural Heritage Trust of New York State. Ansley is a member of the Seneca Nation and is originally from the Seneca Allegany Territory of Western New York. Ansley was an Academic Advisor with the New York State Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) at Cornell University. He served as the Residence Hall Director of Akwe:kón, the American Indian and Indigenous Studies Program (AIISP) Program House at Cornell University. He is a graduate of Syracuse University, where he earned a degree in Communications and competed for the nationally ranked men's lacrosse team. Ansley enjoys traveling and spending time with his family, he is married to Amanda Jemison and has three children, Selena, Elsie and Toran. Ansley's interests include videography and short documentary production, Indigenous studies, Indigenous foodways and cooking. He is the host and producer of the *Original Peoples Podcast Ongwehonwe*.

**KEVIN GREGORY DWYER (Production Stage Manager)** (he/him) Previously at Geva: *Nina Simone: Four Women*, *August Wilson's How I Learned What I Learned*, *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, *A Christmas Carol* 2023, and *FRIDA...A Self Portrait*. Regional: *Bandstand*, *Jersey Boys*, *A Chorus Line*, *EVITA* (The REV Theatre Co). National Tours: *The Book of Mormon*. Chicago: *An American in Paris*, Disney and Cameron Macintosh's *Mary Poppins*, *The Color Purple*, *Matilda*, *Mamma Mia!*, Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, and *Little Shop of Horrors* (Drury Lane Theatre); *Macbeth*, *Q Brothers Christmas Carol*, *Madagascar*, *King Charles III*, and *Othello* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); *This Is Our Youth* and *Lord of the Flies* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company). Boston: *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Coriolanus* (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company); *Betrayal*, *Private Lives*, *Captors* (Huntington Theatre Company). Proud AEA Member and Emerson College Alum.

**JULIA BREGY (Assistant Stage Manager)** (she/her) is thrilled to return back for her third season here at Geva. She would like to thank her family and friends for all of their support. New York: *DiscOasis NYC* (Constellation Immersive), *Proud*

*Ladies* (James Williams Productions.) Regional: *Little Women* (Geva Theatre), *Young Frankenstein* (Geva Theatre), *Frida...A Self Portrait* (Geva Theatre), *Dial M for Murder* (Geva Theatre), *Russian Troll Farm* (Geva Theatre), *Measure for Measure* (Fiasco Theatre/Actors Theatre of Louisville), *Fun Home* (Speakeasy Boston), *Little Women* (Perseverance Theatre). International: *Little Mermaid* (Metta Theatre London/Underbelly Fringe Festival), *I Do Need Me & I'm Not a Bit Like a Clown* (Metta Theatre London). For her parents.

Oxford University; B.A., Bennington College; trained at the École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq.

**JAMES HASKINS (Executive Director)** (he/him) is honored to serve as Geva Theatre's Executive



Director alongside Artistic Director Elizabeth Williamson, and Geva's Board and staff. Prior to coming to Geva, James served as Managing Director of the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis after having completed a

twelve-year tenure as Managing Director of The Wilma Theater in Philadelphia in partnership with Artistic Director Blanka Zizka. James began his work in theater administration at Circle Repertory Company and went on to work with a variety of theaters in New York and Seattle, most notably the Seattle Group Theatre. Upon moving to Philadelphia, he first worked as Managing Director of InterAct Theatre Company, while also serving on the Board of the Theatre Alliance of Greater Philadelphia as Chair of the Barrymore Awards Oversight Committee. He subsequently moved into the Executive Director position of the Theatre Alliance before joining the Wilma. As a theater artist, James acted in many productions before turning to theater administration and is most proud of his directorial and dramaturgical work on the plays of his husband Michael Whistler. James holds an MFA from the University of Washington and a BA from The College of Wooster in Ohio, where he previously served on the alumni board. Following the pandemic shutdown, James joined committees of the Minnesota Arts and Culture Coalition and the Professional Non-profit Theatre Coalition to help build support and funding for arts and culture. In Philadelphia, he served on the Cultural Advisory Committee under former Mayor Michael Nutter, who officiated his wedding ceremony.

## STAFF LEADERSHIP

**ELIZABETH WILLIAMSON (Artistic Director)**



(she/her) joined Geva as Artistic Director in 2022, to launch the theatre's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season. An Obie Award-winning director, Williamson is known internationally for her work as a dramaturg, director, adapter, and producer.

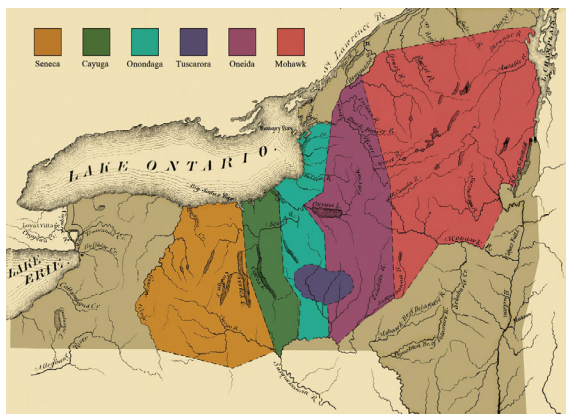
Broadway: Matthew López' *The Inheritance* (Tony, Olivier, Critics Circle, Evening Standard, GLAAD, and Drama Desk Awards for Best Play, Outer Critics Circle Honoree), *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* (Tony Award for Best Musical), *Anastasia*. West End: *The Inheritance*. Off-Broadway: Sarah Gancher's *Russian Troll Farm*, Dan O'Brien's *The Body of an American*. Regional: About Face Theatre, ACT, the Alley, Cal Shakes, Court, Hartford Stage, the La Jolla Playhouse, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Pioneer Theatre, Steppenwolf, Theatre de La Jeune Lune, TheaterWorks Hartford, TheatreSquared, the Westport Country Playhouse, Williamstown Theatre Festival. Williamson previously served as Associate Artistic Director and Literary Manager at Pioneer Theatre Company in Salt Lake City and as Associate Artistic Director and Director of New Play Development at Hartford Stage. She received a 2007 NEA Fellowship in Literary Translation and is a member of SDC and LMDA. Education: M.St.,

## ACKNOWLEDGING THE LAND

A land acknowledgement creates a more accurate picture of the history of the lands and waterways we call home and pays respect to the Indigenous People who have stewarded them from time immemorial. At Geva, we offer this statement as part of our anti-racist values and to help us all unlearn and relearn the history that has brought us here to the land we call the United States. With this understanding, we can envision a new path forward, led by the principles of equity and justice.

American society as it exists today owes its identity and vitality to generations from around the world who contributed their hopes, dreams and resources to making the history that led to this moment. Some were stolen and enslaved here against their will, some were drawn to leave their distant homes in search of a better life, and some have stewarded this land for more generations than can be counted. Acknowledging the hardships and atrocities that many peoples have suffered on American soil is critical to building mutual respect and connection across all barriers of heritage and difference. By honoring this truth, we begin this effort to acknowledge what has been purposefully buried.

There are 567 federally recognized Indian Nations (variously called tribes, nations, bands, pueblos, communities and Native villages) in the United States. Additionally, there are tribes located throughout the United States who are recognized by their respective state governments.



Graphic by Eric E. Doxtator

### **Geva's Acknowledgment**

We are gathered in the ancestral and unceded territory of the Onöndowa'ga, or "the people of the Great Hill." In English, they are known as Seneca people, "the keeper of the western door." Together, with the Mohawk, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and Tuscarora, the Seneca make up the sovereign Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We pay respects to their elders, past and present. Please take a moment to consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, genocide and migration that bring us together here today. And please join us in uncovering such truths at any and all public events.

To learn more about the Native people in our region and the Canandaigua Treaty of 1794, visit [ganondagan.org](http://ganondagan.org).



## ABOUT GEVA THEATRE

Geva Theatre is a not-for-profit theatre company dedicated to creating and producing singular theatre productions and programs that serve the Rochester region and beyond, by illuminating the fullness of our many human experiences.

Founded in 1972 by William Selden and Cynthia Mason Selden, Geva was originally housed in the Rochester Business Institute building on South Clinton Avenue. In 1982, Geva purchased and converted its current space - formerly a NYS Arsenal designed by noted Rochester architect Andrew J Warner and built in 1868 - and opened its new home at the Richard Pine Theatre in March 1985. Geva operates two venues - the 516-seat Elaine P. Wilson Stage and the 180-seat Ron & Donna Fielding Stage.

As one of the country's leading theatre companies and a member of the national League of Resident Theatres, Geva produces a varied contemporary repertoire from musicals to world premieres celebrating the rich tapestry of our diverse community. We draw upon the talents of some of the country's top actors, directors, designers, and writers who are shaping the American Theatre scene.

Geva's Education Department serves thousands of students annually through student matinees, in-school workshops, the acclaimed Summer Academy training program, and other programs. Geva's New Play Development Programming offers new and established writers a nurturing environment from which to take their work to the next level. Geva has presented approximately 400 play readings and workshops since its inception. Nearly 70 Geva-developed plays have had subsequent productions around the country. Geva's Connectivity Department produces multifaceted programs such as *Geva Insights* that deepen the appreciation of the work on our stages, provide opportunities for regional dialogues, and help fulfill Geva's anti-racism commitments through collaborative programming.

An active member of the Rochester community, Geva offers a multitude of opportunities for our audience and community members to engage with live theatre and the country's best artists. Since the breadth of Geva's programming cannot be sustained on ticket sales alone, this contribution to the region's cultural, social and economic vitality is recognized by grants and charitable contributions from federal, state and local government agencies, national and local foundations, and businesses and individuals from throughout the region.

For more information: [GevaTheatre.org](http://GevaTheatre.org).



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Join us for exciting performances from the 24/25 Season  
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JAMES HASKINS (he/him)  
*Executive Director*

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ERON DAMERCY (he/him)  
*Director of Connectivity*

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*2024/2026 Artist in Residence*

BARON VAUGHN (he/him)  
*2025/2025 Artist in Residence*

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NICOLE STEIN (she/her)  
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*Interim Costume Shop Supervisor*

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REBEKAH CLOW (she/her)  
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PAIGE WALDRON (she/her)  
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JULIA BREGY (she/her)  
*Resident Stage Manager*

KEVIN GREGORY DWYER (he/him)  
*Resident Stage Manager*

NATE KELLY-DUMONT (he/they)  
*Crew Swing/Follow Spot Op*

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GREY WARRICK (they/them)  
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ELIAS KOCH (he/him)  
*Lead Carpenter*

SAM BURKOVICH (they/them)  
*Carpenter*

V. MILLER (they/them)  
*Carpenter*

HAZEL PENROSE (she/her)  
*Carpenter*

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*Sound Supervisor*

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*Overhire Run Crew*

EMJAY MULLIN (they/them)  
*Overhire Sound Engineer*

MADDIE WINTER (she/her)  
*Overhire Wardrobe Crew*

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MARK CUDDY  
*Artistic Director Emeritus*

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*Geva Theatre gratefully acknowledges the following corporations, foundations and government agencies for their generous support.  
(Donations listed are for the time period 3/1/24 to 3/1/25.)*

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