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Sept 18-30, 2018

By Karen Zacarías
DIRECTED BY JAMES IJAMES

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VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY

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Since 1842, Villanova University's Augustinian Catholic intellectual tradition has been the cornerstone of an academic community in which students learn to think critically, act compassionately and succeed while serving others. There are more than 10,000 undergraduate, graduate and law students in the University's six colleges – the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Villanova School of Business, the College of Engineering, the M. Louise Fitzpatrick College of Nursing, the College of Professional Studies and the Villanova University School of Law. As students grow intellectually, Villanova prepares them to become ethical leaders who create positive change everywhere life takes them.

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SPEAKER'S NIGHT WITH HEZEKIAH L. LEWIS III

Thursday, September 27, 2018



Hezekiah L. Lewis III (Writer/Director/Producer) is an Assistant Professor of Communication at Villanova University which he attended as an undergraduate on a football scholarship. As a Communication major, he co-founded and served as artistic director for the Villanova Television Station along with directing numerous documentaries and short narratives. He was offered a Presidential Fellowship to attend Villanova's graduate school where he completed a Master's degree in Theatre. At UCLA where Lewis earned his MFA in film directing, he completed various short films and documentaries promoting social change and awareness. He received numerous awards for his outstanding efforts, which commemorate and recognize Hezekiah for his dedication and passion for filmmaking.

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Villanova Theatre Presents

THE BOOK CLUB PLAY

by KAREN ZACARÍAS

Scenic Designer
PARRIS BRADLEY

Costume Designer
COURTNEY BOCHES

Lighting Designer
JEROLD R. FORSYTH

Sound Designer
JOHN STOVICEK

Dramaturg
CJ MILLER

Directed by
JAMES IJAMES

SEPTEMBER 18-30, 2018
Vasey Hall, Villanova Theatre

THE BOOK CLUB PLAY runs approximately 2 hours with one intermission. Please silence all cell phones and electronic devices.

The video and/or audio recording of this performance by any means whatsoever is strictly prohibited.

SETTING

A living room in the United States circa now.

CAST

Ana Smith.....	Amy Abrigo*
Robert Novum Smith Jr.....	Ethan Mitchell
William Lee Nothnagel.....	Kale A. Thompson
Jennifer McClintock.....	Mary Lyon
Lily Louise Jackson.....	Kishia Nixon
Alex.....	Jerald Bennett
Pundits.....	Shawneen Rowe*

PRODUCTION CREW

Stage Manager.....	Josh McIlvain
Assistant Stage Managers.....	Jaried Kimberley, Asaki Kuruma
Stage Management Consultant.....	Amanda Coffin
Scenic Construction and Lighting.....	Amanda Coffin
Sound Board Operator.....	Gabriel Henninger
Light Board Operator.....	Megan Jones
Master Electrician.....	Michael Hamlet

** denotes member, Actors' Equity Association*

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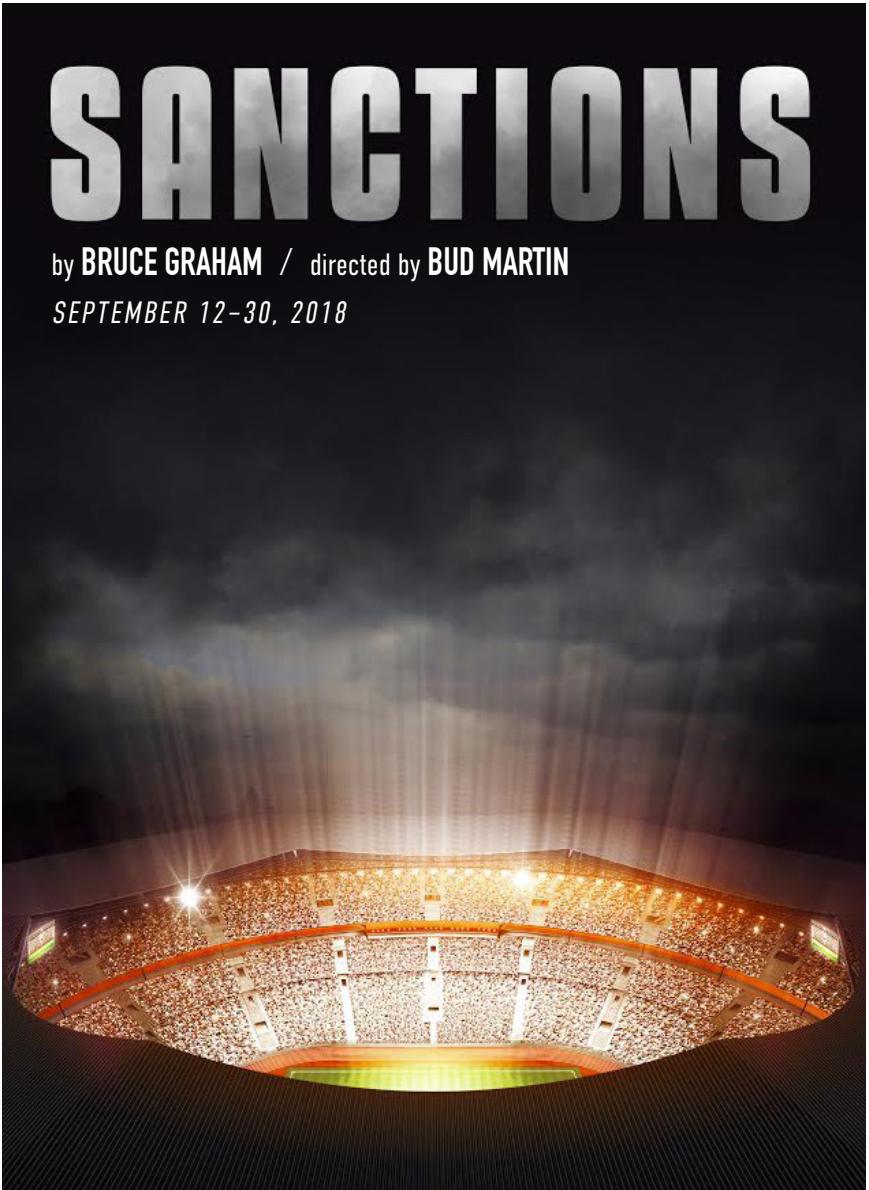


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The Loud Family (1973).



An American Phenomenon

by CJ Miller, Dramaturg

What is it about watching the lives of others that fascinates us so? In a world where many of us spend our day surrounded by real people in real situations, why do we then go home to entertain ourselves by watching the lives of others through documentaries and reality television? In the last twenty years, viewers have seen a steep increase in documentary-based programming.

While many attribute this boom to programs such as *The Real World* in 1992, documentary-based programming got its beginning two decades earlier - in 1973, when *An American Family* debuted on PBS.

Considered to be the first reality show, this reality documentary followed the Loud family and their middle-class lives in Santa Barbara, California. The series came to an end after two seasons when the husband and wife separated and divorced. The real-life turmoil and drama provided controversy as well as intrigue as it led viewers to discuss and debate issues from privacy to sexual orientation.

Another topic of debate that arose from the program was the honesty of the actions of the family. Are you really being yourself if you know there is a camera filming you? How accurate is a documentary program if the

subjects, even in their natural habitat, are having their choices influenced by the fact that they are being watched?

Alice Lovejoy, a professor of documentary history at the University of Minnesota, said this of the people who are the subjects of documentary-styled programs: “They’re not a mirror of the world, they’re a representation of the world.” In that regard, are the people in documentaries accurately portrayed as their truest and best selves, or are they subjected to the discretion of the documentary maker and, furthermore, its viewers?

Many of the members of the Loud family took great exception with *An American Family*. Some members of the family complained that the show was edited to make them appear worse than they really were. Are the people in documentaries being portrayed honestly? Or are moments edited to be more intriguing?



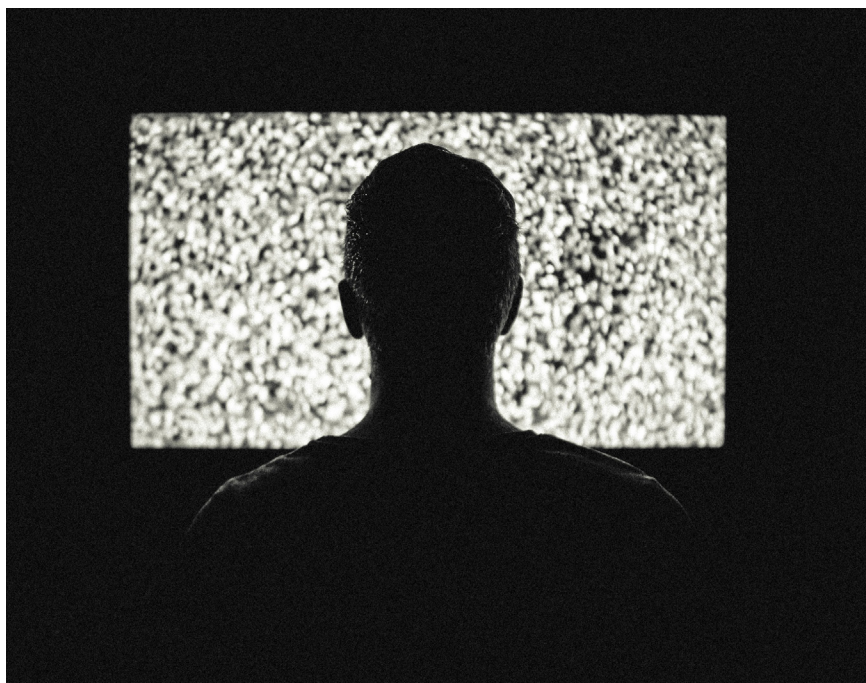
The original cast of MTV's
The Real World (1995)

Peter Gregg, a professor of Communication and Journalism at the University of St. Thomas said of making documentaries,

“Just like any film or television show there’s a process of selection, a need to tell a story and a need to engage the audience.”



The Kardashian Family (2017).



The power and influence of documentaries and reality-based shows is clear. One of the more impactful moments of *An American Family* was the coming-out of the oldest child, Lance. This marked the first time in television history that a continuing character was openly gay, nearly four years before the openly gay character, Jodie, debuted on the sitcom *Soap* in 1977. Lance's coming-out still holds great significance in American television history, and the in LGBTQ community in particular. *An American Family* also led to the eventual creation of *The Real*

World on MTV in 1992, *Survivor* in 2000, and *Keeping Up with the Kardashians* in 2007.

Since the debut of *An American Family*, over 300 reality and documentary-based series have aired on American television. The public's fascination with the lives of others is prominent and does not appear to be slowing down any time soon. Be it our fascination with those who are unlike us, identifying with those in whom we see ourselves, or purely an escape from our own personal realities, we continue to be riveted by documentary-based programming.

From Anne to Ana:

A TIMELINE OF GREAT MOMENTS IN BOOK CLUB HISTORY

Anne Hutchinson organizes a group of women in Massachusetts Bay to study Bible passages to more deeply examine sermons given in church. They find many discrepancies, leading them to speak out against the oppression of women.

...1634

1773

The Society of Young Ladies in Lynn, Massachusetts establishes a study of African-American women's literary societies

...that studying literature and science is better for women than the activities society has deemed as "suitable behavior," such as cooking, cleaning, etc.

...1827

c. 1900

Progressive groups such as the National Council of Jewish Women and the American Association of University Women grow out of book clubs

Helen Hoover Santmyer publishes “...And Ladies of the Club,” about a group of women who form a book club. The novel becomes a national best seller and leads to the formation of book clubs throughout the country.

1984

Oprah Winfrey begins the most famous book club of all time on her nationally televised talk show. The first book chosen is *The Deep End of the Ocean*, a novel by Jacquelyn Mitchard.

1996

Villanova University begins its “One Book” program, intended to stimulate dialog among all members of the campus community.

2004

The Library of Congress begins its Young Readers Program, devoted to the reading interests of children and teens. This same year, the read.org section is added to the organization’s website.

2009

Bryan Stevenson visits the Villanova campus through its “One Book” program to discuss his book *Just Mercy*, based on his experience as a legal advocate for marginalized people who have been wrongly convicted and/or harshly punished. Meanwhile, at Villanova Theatre, the fictitious Ana Smith invites a Danish documentarian to film her book club in action...

September
2013

CAST AND CREW

AMY ABRIGO* (Ana Smith) is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association. Amy is a first-year Presidential Scholar attending Villanova University for an MA in Theatre with a Certification in Nonprofit Management. She earned her BA in Theatre from Concordia University, St. Paul, where she appeared in *Taming of the Shrew* (Tranio), *Stone Hearts* (Camila), *The Crucible* (Elizabeth Proctor), and *Germinal* (Ensemble).

JERALD BENNETT (Alex) is a first-year graduate acting scholar making his Villanova Theatre debut. He earned his BA in Theatre and Communications from Temple University, where he appeared in *Dutchman* (Clay Evans), *Seven Guitars* (Canewell) and *Purlie Victorious* (Purlie). Jerald has performed at Steel River Playhouse, The Ritz Theatre, The Prince Music Theater, Freedom Theatre and The Media Theatre. Favorite roles include Phil in *White Christmas*, James Thunder Early in *Dreamgirls* and Hysterium in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. Currently, he serves as Music and Drama Teacher at the AIM Academy in Conshohocken, PA. During the summer, he teaches Music Production for ESF Summer Camps, where he was awarded the Master Teacher Award in 2009, 2010 and 2013. Jerald is also a member of and serves as Worship Council Leader and Youth Choir director at the Freedom Christian Bible Fellowship Church.

MARY LYON (Jennifer McClintock) is a second-year graduate set assistant. Originally from Massachusetts, Mary has had the opportunity to work with the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco and the Lir Academy in Dublin. Some of Mary's favorite roles include Eliante in *School For Lies*, Lucienne in *A Flea in Her Ear* and Hero in Villanova's recent production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. Mary has a BA in Theatre and a minor in Education Studies from Allegheny College, where she was awarded for her outstanding achievement in the field of dramatics.

ETHAN MITCHELL (Robert Novum Smith Jr) is a first-year graduate set assistant. He earned his BA in English with a Theatre minor at Grove City College, where he appeared in *Measure for Measure* (Pompey), *Les Misérables* (Thernardier), *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Michael), *Guys and Dolls* (Nathan Detroit), *Honk* (Ugly) and *The Tempest* (Ariel).

KISHIA NIXON (Lily Louise Jackson) is a Philadelphia-based actress. Recent stage credits include *The Italian Market Project* (Marie) with Bicycle Thief productions; *Sing the Body Electric* (Jesse) with Theatre Exile; *Ready Steady Yeti Go* (Carly) and *How We Got On* (Luann) with Azuka Theatre; and *Through the Gates* (Azori) with Dragon Eye Theatre. Other credits include readings of *Zen and The Art of Mourning a Mother* (Lois) with Philadelphia

Women's Theatre; *Trouble Kind* (I'm a Nother Other) with Simpatico Theatre; and *House of the Negro Insane* (Effie) with PlayPenn. She recently earned her BFA in Acting from Arcadia University. She was nominated for an Irene Ryan Award and awarded with outstanding ensemble work for the Region II Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival.

SHAWNEEN ROWE* (Pundits) is a second-year graduate theatre student and acting scholar. Previous Villanova Theatre roles include Colleen/Lisa Simpson in *Mr. Burns*, a post electric-play and Leonato in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Other favorite credits are *August: Osage County* (Barbara), *Accomplice* (Janet/Erika), *Lost in Yonkers* (Bella), *Macbeth* (Lady Macbeth), *The Yellow Wallpaper* (Woman), *A Woman of No Importance* (Mrs. Allonby), *Clothes for a Summer Hotel* (Mrs. Patrick Campbell), *House of Blue Leaves* (Bunny Flingus), *Betrayal* (Emma), *Romeo and Juliet* (Nurse) and *The Imaginary Invalid* (Beline).

KALE A. THOMPSON (William Lee Nothnagel) is a first-year acting scholar making his debut at Villanova Theatre. Kale earned his BM in Music Education at Westminster Choir College for whom he performed at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. He has spent the last six years teaching vocal music at Terrill Middle School. Past productions include *Mamma Mia!* (Sky) and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (featured dancer).

KAREN ZACARÍAS (Playwright) is the first playwright-in-residence at Arena Stage in Washington, DC and has taught playwriting at Georgetown University. She is the founder of Young Playwrights' Theater, an award-winning theater company that teaches playwriting in local public schools in Washington, DC. Zacarías's award-winning plays include the sold-out/extended comedy *The Book Club Play*, the sold-out world premiere drama *Just Like Us* (adapted from the book by Helen Thorpe) at Denver Theater Center, the Steinberg/ATCA-cited play *Legacy of Light*, the Francesca Primus Award-winning play *Mariela in the Desert*, the Helen Hayes Award-winning play *The Sins of Sor Juana*, and the adaptation of Julia Alvarez's *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*. Zacarías also has a piece in the Arena Stage premiere of *Our War*. Her TYA musicals with composer Debbie Wicks la Puma include *Jane of the Jungle*, *Einstein is a Dummy*, *Looking for Roberto Clemente*, *Cinderella Eats Rice and Beans*, *Ferdinand the Bull*, and *Frida Libre*. Her musical *Chasing George Washington* premiered at The Kennedy Center for Performing Arts and went on a National Tour. Her script was then adapted into a book by Scholastic with a foreword by First Lady Michelle Obama. Zacarías's awards include: 2010 Steinberg/ATCA Citation for Best New Play, Paul Aneillo Award, National Francesca Primus Prize, New Voices Award, National Latino Play Award, Finalist Susan Blackburn, Helen Hayes for Outstanding New Play.

JAMES IJAMES, MFA (Director) is an Assistant Professor of Theatre and a Philadelphia-based actor, director and playwright. He has appeared regionally

at Arden Theatre Company, Philadelphia Theatre Company, The Wilma Theater, Baltimore Center Stage and InterAct Theatre Company, among others. His own produced plays include *WHITE*, *The Most Spectacularly Lamentable Trial of Miz Martha Washington*, *Moon Man Walk*, *The Threshing Floor* and *Osiris: Redux*, and *Kill Move Paradise* (running concurrently with *The Book Club Play* at The Wilma). In 2017, he received the prestigious Whiting Award for Drama and was granted a Pew Fellow Residency at the Headlands Center for the Arts in California. In 2015, he was awarded a Pew Fellowship and the Kesselring Honorable Mention Prize. In 2011, he received an Independence Foundation Fellowship in Performing Arts to train and create a new solo piece called *FRONTIN* with Emmanuelle Delpech and Shavon Norris. His Barrymore Awards include the 2011 F. Otto Haas Award for an Emerging Theatre Artist, awards for Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Play (for *Superior Donuts* and *Angels in America*), and, most recently, the 2014 Barrymore for Outstanding Direction of a Play for his work on *The Brothers Size*. James is a member of the InterAct Core Writers Group and a mentor for The Foundry. He received a BA in Drama from Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA and an MFA in Acting from Temple University in Philadelphia, PA; at Villanova, he teaches Acting and Collaborative Theatre Making.

PARRIS BRADLEY (Scenic Designer) is the Production Manager for Villanova Theatre Department and teaches Set Design at Villanova and Arcadia University. Selected design credits include *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Marisol*, *Eurydice*, *Salomé*, and *Metamorphoses* at Villanova Theatre; *Speech and Debate*, *The MotherF**ker with the Hat* (Arcadia University); *Persistent Memory*, *Pressing Matters* (MBL Productions - Beckett Theatre, NYC); *I Ought to be in Pictures*, *Tomfoolery* (Act II Playhouse), *The Ballad of Trayvon Martin* (Freedom Theatre). Tyler Arboretum designs include *The Troll Bridge* with John Stovicek, *Nature's Wave Bench* and *Tulip Treehouse* with Michael Rhile. Upcoming designs include *As You Like It* (Arcadia University), *Same Time Next Year* (Act II Playhouse).

COURTNEY BOCHES (Costume Designer) is a 2014 alumna of the Villanova MA in Theatre program, where she was a costume assistant and designed *Everyman* as her thesis project. Costume design credits include the New York Musical Festival (costume design and performance), Azuka Theatre, Simpatico Theatre Project, Wolf Performing Arts Center, Arcadia University, Ursinus College, and various high school and middle-school programs. She is an adjunct faculty member at Arcadia University and assists Janus Stefanowicz on projects around Philadelphia. Courtney teaches a summer workshop program directing teen actors in the performance of a full-scale musical, and appears on stage when time permits. Favorite productions and roles include *Annie Get Your Gun* (Annie Oakley), *The Children's Hour* (Karen Wright), and *Gypsy* (Mazepa). www.courtneyboches.com

JEROLD R. FORSYTH (Lighting Designer) is a theatre lighting designer and consultant. In regards to theatre lighting, Mr. Forsyth has designed over 350

productions to date. Philadelphia area credits include designs for: The Wilma Theatre, Villanova University Theatre, Walnut Street Theatre, Arden Theatre Company, Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre, Interact Theatre Company, Simpatico Theatre, Orbiter 3, Fringe Arts, Amaryllis Theatre Company, The American Music Theatre Festival, People's Light & Theatre Company, Philadelphia Festival Theatre for New Plays, Venture Theatre, and The Philadelphia Drama Guild. Additional east coast credits include: The Kennedy Center, The New York Shakespeare Festival, Lincoln Center Theatre, The York Theatre Company, The Village Theatre Company, The Vineyard Playhouse, Opera Ebony--New York, and Palm Beach Dramaworks. Design awards include thirteen nominations and two Barrymore Awards for Outstanding Lighting Design. Mr. Forsyth has also twice received "Most Notable Lighting Design" citations from The Philadelphia Inquirer. Mr. Forsyth has consulted on theatrical lighting systems for: The Wilma Theatre, Delaware County Community College, The Playground at the Adrienne, and Pennsylvania Institute of Technology. In addition, Mr. Forsyth designed a unique art gallery lighting system for the Bethlehem House Contemporary Art Gallery.

JOHN STOVICEK (Sound Designer) has designed 32 shows for Villanova Theatre since 2005, the most recent being last season's *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play*. Since then, he has been busy with *Biloxi Blues*, *Tuesdays with Morrie*, and *Camelot* for Act II Playhouse, *ELLA*, *First Lady of Song* for Delaware Theatre Company, as well as doing live production work for musicians MGMT (Firefly Festival) and Amos Lee (solo and with the St. Louis Orchestra). Additionally, his music for Villanova Professor Valerie Joyce (PhD)'s piece *I Will Speak For Myself* was heard in performance at the Eugene O'Neill Foundation in Danville, CA in July.

CJ MILLER (Dramaturg) is a second-year costume assistant in Villanova's MA in Theatre program. Originally a standup comedian, CJ has spent the last five years teaching elementary school theatre in South Carolina and Syracuse, New York. He has served as dramaturg in the past on productions of *The Foreigner* (South Carolina) and *Miss Saigon* (Missouri). CJ is also a former member of the United States Air Force.

JOSH MCILVAIN (Stage Manager) is a Philadelphia-based playwright, director and producer, currently pursuing his Masters in Theatre at Villanova. He is the artistic director of Automatic Arts (automaticartsco.com), which he founded with Deborah Crocker in 2008. He created the Nice and Fresh presentation series of new works of theater and dance, which has presented new short works of theater, dance, and other performance and company-produced shows written and directed by Josh, as well as collaborations with other artists. Additionally, he has had his plays (shorts, one acts, and full lengths) produced throughout the U.S., including more than 30 New York City productions. He lives in the Mount Airy neighborhood of Philadelphia with his wife, Deborah Crocker, and children Jasper and Ginger.

VILLANOVA THEATRE FACULTY AND STAFF

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Michael Hollinger, MA.....Artistic Director; Solo Performance; Playwriting; Songwriting
James Ijames, MFA.....Principles of Acting; Collaborative Theatre; Creativity
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Kale A. Thompson, Jerald Bennett
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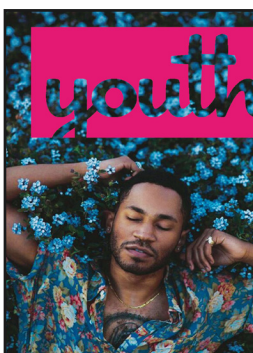
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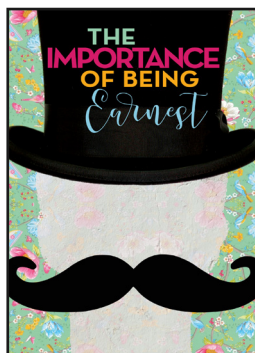
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