

**19/20 SEASON**

Wallis Annenberg  
Center for the  
Performing Arts

Press Release

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**The Wallis Studio Ensemble Production of  
*LUCID***

**An Original Physical Theatre Work Inspired by  
Caryl Churchill's Adaptation of August Strindberg's *A Dream Play*  
and the Poems of Anne Sexton**

**February 20–23; February 28–March 1, 2020  
Hudson Theatre - Mainstage**

(Beverly Hills, CA, January 16, 2020) – The Wallis Studio Ensemble presents *LUCID*, an original physical theatre work inspired by August Strindberg's *A Dream Play*, Caryl Churchill's adaptation and the poems of Anne Sexton, from February 20 to 23 and February 28 to March 1, 2020 at the Hudson Theatre – Mainstage in Los Angeles. Created by the ensemble, and directed and choreographed by Madeleine Dahm, *Lucid* tells the story of a group of individuals who join a sleep study, hoping to cure their insomnia. But when an unexpected woman shows up, they find themselves trapped in a bizarre collective dream state that forces them to confront dark secrets and hidden truths. Striking, surrealistic and full of unexpected juxtapositions, the devised physical theater work incorporates movement, imagery, soundscape, live and recorded music, as it asks us to look more closely at the waking lies we tell ourselves, the quiet prejudices we carry, and the role fear has in inflating human ego. *LUCID* is performed by Kendell Byrd, Marlena Becker, Ella M. Joseph, Kelvin Morales, Ashley Victoria Robinson, Alexander Sheldon, Lucia Towers, Siera Williams and Tiana Randall- Quant.

Dahm notes, "The Ensemble is committed to exploring ways that theater can be more sustainable and environmentally friendly. All costumes and set pieces for this production are recycled from other shows, with a handful being bought from charity shops. We are limiting the amount of printed materials, but any printed material will be on recycled paper. In addition, we are exploring ways to reduce our energy footprint with a reduction in the number of theatrical lights we are using. As part of the production we

will be highlighting the work of a different local activist group at each performance, through an insert in our playbill, social media and possibly some talk-backs."

Ticket prices are \$20. To purchase tickets visit EventBrite.com at: <http://bit.ly/2TrZrCD>

### **About the Artists**

**Madeleine Dahm** (Director/ Choreographer), Founding Director of The Studio Ensemble, is an award winning physical theater director, choreographer, dramaturg and arts activist. Originally from London, her work has been presented in the UK, Europe and U.S. Recent credits include: Co-Director and Choreographer *Salt*, in Milan for Italian theatre company Bämsemble; Rehearsal Supervisor of *Panorama* for The Martha Graham Dance Company; Associate Director and Choreographer for the seminal work on Iranian activist Forough Farrokhzad *The House is Black*, created by Sussan Deyhim (*Argo*), Co-Director Robert Egan (*Angels in America*), recently at The Metropolitan Museum in New York. She is working on the dramaturg and direction of the stage play *Isn't it Rich* from the feminist novella by journalist Victoria Looseleaf. She regularly collaborates with director Jon Kellam, formerly of The Actors Gang, and they are currently working on an adaptation of the play *No Exit* in Turin; she has worked with Emmy Award winning composer Harold Faltermeyer (*Beverly Hills Cop*), and renowned Disney writer Philip LaZebnik. She hails from the UK and trained at the Old Vic and Royal Court, as well as with the legendary Martha Graham. She holds a post-graduate from Trinity Laban Conservatory and has coached and trained actors and dancers internationally for over twenty five years, developing her own comprehensive movement training program called *Bodyology*.

**Bosco Flanagan** (Lighting Designer) is a multi-award winning lighting designer who has worked across the UK, Ireland, Europe, Asia and the US. He is the resident lighting designer for Tim Robbin's company *The Actors Gang*, and the critically acclaimed *Independent Shakespeare Company*, and he has worked with Dahm on various theatre and dance productions in Los Angeles for the past twelve years. Flanagan is the recipient of six Ovation Awards for Lighting Design. His other lighting credits include The Royal Shakespeare Company, The Grand Opera House (Dublin), The Royal Court Theatre (London), The New York and Edinburgh Fringe Festivals and touring with the late *David Bowie*, *U2* and *The Rolling Stones*.

**Marlena Becker** recently graduated from the Ray Bolger Musical Theater program at UCLA (Summa Cum Laude). At UCLA, her credits include *Rebel Genius* (Celestial Body), *Steel Pier* (Dora Foster), *Cabaret* (Sally Bowles), *As You Like It* (Phoebe), *Trojan Women* (Greek Chorus), and *The Bear* (Popova). She also performed at The Laguna Playhouse in *Hairspray* (Shelley). Other credits include *Guys and Dolls* (Sarah Brown), *The Shadowbox* (Beverly), *The Crucible* (Abigail Williams), and *Grease* (Sandy). This is her first year with The Studio Ensemble.

**Kendell Byrd**, a new member of the Wallis Studio Ensemble, hails from Chicago, Illinois. Her passions have always included theater, technology, people and storytelling. She graduated from the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy in 2013 and from Swarthmore College in 2017, where she studied Computer Science and Economics. She moved to LA after graduation to work for *Buzzfeed* as a pre-production and software engineering specialist and now works at DreamWorks as a production coordinator, telling stories through digital and animation mediums. She trained at The Second City in Chicago and with the Upright Citizens Brigade. She was most recently seen on stage as Lord Dumaine/Mariana in *Alls Well That Ends Well* and Lucius/Artimedorus/ in *Julius Caesar* with Independent Shakespeare Company in LA. Other favorite credits include Duke Senior/Duke Fredrick in *As You Like It*, Masha in *The Seagull*, Claire in *A Delicate Balance*, and Mae in *Mud*.

**Ella M. Joseph**, from Savannah, Georgia, immigrated from Panama with her family when she was just a baby. As a teen, she began her training in performance with All Walks of Life Inc. Later, she trained at Northern Arizona University as a Performance Emphasis Theatre Major. Her recent credits include Esther in *Intimate Apparel* (Northern Arizona University), Maya Angelo and Radcliff Hall in *S.O.S.* (Hollywood Fringe Festival), Eddie The Computer in *The Hitchhiker's Guide to The Galaxy* (Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts).

**Kelvin Morales**, the younger of two immigrant parents from El Salvador, grew up hearing stories of his parents' home country, so at an early age he fell in love with the power of storytelling, and has been telling his own stories ever since. Morales works as an actor in contemporary theatre, for cultural events, commercials and musicals, specializing in Shakespeare. This is his fourth year with the Wallis Studio Ensemble. Company credits include the Crisis Art Festival Tuscany, Rise Up LA, The San Diego International Fringe Festival, and The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, Atwater Village Theatre, and The Hollywood Fringe Festival. Additional acting credits include Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*, Salerio in *The Merchant of Venice*, Snug in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as a member of Will Geer's Theatricum Botanicum, Cinna the Poet/Decius in *Julius Caesar*, Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Chiron in *Titus Andronicus* with Independent Shakespeare Company, Conrad in *Much Ado About Nothing* with Project Nongenu. Dumain in *Love's Labour's Lost* with Chase What Flies theatre company. This summer he was seen as Sebastian in *Twelfth Night* and Thaliard/Cerimon in *Pericles* with Independent Shakespeare Company.

**Lucia Towers**, who always had a passion for storytelling and more importantly, listening to the stories of others, started acting at ten years old in a small community theatre and went on to study at the Pacific Conservatory of Performing Arts. Recent credits include Marina in Shakespeare's *Pericles*, *Much Ado About Nothing* with Project Nongenu, starring in the LGBT Web series *Twenty and The Leslie* and the short film *Sanctuary*.

**Alexander Sheldon** is one of the founding members of the Wallis Studio Ensemble, now in his fourth year. He was raised as an artist at Will Geer's Theatricum Botanicum, steeped in classical theatre throughout his life and training, and has since performed over a decade of Shakespeare as a company member at Theatricum and elsewhere. In the Studio Ensemble, he is not only an actor, but a designer as well, serving as the company's resident fight choreographer and mask/puppet maker. He built the entire alien puppet/mask characters for *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, sold out shows. His favorite acting credits include: The Trickster (*Word of Mouth*, Studio Ensemble performed in Arezzo, Italy), Creon (*Thebes*, Studio Ensemble), The Cat (*Animal Farm*, Theatricum Botanicum), Paris (*Romeo and Juliet*, Theatricum Botanicum), Borachio (*Much Ado About Nothing*, Project Nongenu), Slartibartfast (*The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, *the Studio Ensemble*), Alvie (*House of Spirits*, Meyer2Meyer).

**Ashley Victoria Robinson** has been seen on stage all over the world. Some of her favorite roles include creating Darla for the world premiere of *The Man Who Saved Everything* (Theatre West), Weird Sister (*MacBeth*, 134 West), consecutive years in *Cupcake Theatre's* production of *The Vagina Monologues*. She is the host of the *Geek History Lesson* podcast (alongside Jason Inman) and any number of shows for youtube channels including Jawiin, Collider, DC All-Access, Comicbook.com, Geek Bomb, Geek & Sundry, Hyper RPG, Major Spoilers, Ora.TV and many more. She is the co-creator of *The Red Shirt Diaries*. She co-starred in the short film *ExRoommate* which placed at the Hollywood Blood Horror Festival and played at the TCL Chinese Theater's Indie Night Film Festival. Her award winning comic book writings have been published through DC Comics/IDW, Top Cow, Action Lab Comics, Bedside Press, Not Forgotten Comics, and Colonial Comics.

**Tiana Randall-Quant**, a Los Angeles nativ, is an alum of both Santa Monica College and UC Berkeley, where she received a well-rounded education in Theatre and Performance Studies, Literature, and Gender Studies. Her recent credits include "What You Will, or Twelfth Night" with Project Nongenu and "Men on Boats" with Son of Semele.

**Siera Williams** is a 24 year old African American woman from Huntsville, Alabama. Credits include Velma in *Birdbath*, Rowena in *Biloxi Blues*, Peyton's Spirit Guide in *He Calls Me Rib*, Rebecca in *Social Life*, Other in *Disposable*, and Arthur (Martha) Dent in *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. She was recently featured in the sci-fi short film *Galactic Fantastic* as a dancer.

### **About The Wallis Studio Ensemble**

The Wallis Studio Ensemble crosses boundaries and with an ethos of collaboration, creates thoughtful and provocative work that is rooted in examining our humanity. According to Director Madeleine Dahm, "Our mission as an ensemble is to create innovative and visceral movement-based theatre that serves as a galvanizing force for social change. We are passionate about developing new works, as well as reimagining and adapting existing plays to create artistic platforms for underrepresented artists and marginalized identities." The Ensemble's work has been described by the San Diego Tribune as "*hauntingly beautiful*" and by critic Victoria Looseleaf of ArtNowLA as "*Mesmerizing*,

*harrowing and provocative*” In 2019 the company's received a Pick of The Fringe at the Hollywood Fringe Festival, the Ensemble received an *LA Times* theatre pick of the week in June 2018, was featured in a [broadwayworld.com](#) article in 2018, an NPR radio article in 2016, and was invited to perform in Italy at The Crisis Art Festival (2016). The company was launched in the 2016-17 season when GRoW @ The Wallis (the outreach and education arm of the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts) joined with theatre director Madeleine Dahm to create this dynamic, groundbreaking theatre ensemble for early career actors. In 2016/17 The Ensemble premiered *Thebes* at The Wallis, a contemporary feminist adaptation of the Greek classic by British playwright Gareth Jandrell and its first original devised play *Word of Mouth*, (an examination of Post-Truth in response to the 2016 election rhetoric). *Word of Mouth* was also seen at Rise Up LA and at The Crisis Art Festival in Tuscany, Italy, where The Ensemble spent a week in residence in July 2017. 2018 and 2019 saw the popular mounting of a gender bending version of Douglas Adams environmental satire *The Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy* at The Wallis. The Ensemble's original devised work about loneliness and contemporary alienation called *S.O.S.* was seen at Circle X, and the LGBT Center in Hollywood. *Disposable*, an original devised work that examined the intersection between environmental destruction and human displacement was presented at The Wallis and seen at The San Diego International Fringe Festival in June 2018.

#### **About the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts:**

The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is a dynamic cultural hub and community resource where local, national and international artists share their artistry with ever-expanding audiences. The campus, located in the heart of Beverly Hills, CA, is committed to robust and distinctive presentations and education programs curated with both creativity and social impact in mind. Distinguished by its eclectic programming that mirrors the diverse landscape of Los Angeles and its location in the entertainment capital of the world, The Wallis has produced and presented more than 275 dance, theater, opera, classical music, cinema and family programs since its doors opened in October 2013. Hailed as “au courant” (*LaLa Magazine*), The Wallis was lauded by *Culture Vulture*, which proclaims, “If you love expecting the unexpected in the performing arts, you have to love The Wallis.” Its programming has been nominated for 57 Ovation Awards and seven L.A. Drama Critic's Circle Awards. The campus itself, a breathtaking 70,000-square-foot facility, celebrating the classic and the modern, has garnered six architectural awards. Designed by acclaimed architect Zoltan E. Pali (SPF:architects), the restored building features the original 1933 Beverly Hills Post Office (on the National Register of Historic Places), which serves as the theater's dramatic yet welcoming lobby, and includes the contemporary 500-seat, state-of-the-art Bram Goldsmith Theater; the 150-seat Lovelace Studio Theater; an inviting open-air plaza for family, community and other performances; and GRoW @ The Wallis: A Space for Arts Education, where learning opportunities for all ages and backgrounds abound. Together, these elements embrace the city's history and its future, creating a performing arts destination for L.A.-area visitors and residents alike. The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is led by Chairman of the Board Michael Nemeroff, Executive Director & Chief Executive Officer Rachel Fine and Artistic Director Paul Crewes.

#### **EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:**

##### **WHAT:**

**The Wallis Studio Ensemble Presents**

***LUCID***

**Inspired by Caryl Churchill's Adaptation of August Strindberg's *A Dream Play* and the Poems of Anne Sexton**

##### **CAST**

**Agnes** Tiana Randall-Quant

**Activist** Kendell Byrd

**Hitchhiker** Kelvin Morales

**Actress** Marlena Becker

**Lawyer** Ashley Victoria Robinson

**Psychiatrist** Alexander Sheldon

**EMT** Lucia Towers

**Politician** Ella M. Joseph

**Caregiver** Sierra Williams

**CREDITS**

**Conceived by** The Ensemble

**Direction and Choreography** Madeleine Dahm

**Lighting Design** Bosco Flanagan

**Production Designer** Madeleine Dahm

**Production Assistant/Company Apprentice** Wes Lucia

**Production Support** Valerie Sanchez, Tiana Randall- Quant, Ashley Victoria Robinson, Alexander Sheldon, Kendell Byrd, Kelvin Morales.

**Movement Coaches** Trecey Dory, Valerie Sanchez.

**Live Accordion** Alexander Sheldon

**Recorded Music** Jóhann Jóhannsson

**Social Media (The Ensemble)** Ashley Victoria Robinson

**C2A (Call to Action) Coordinator** Ella M. Joseph

**WHEN:**

February 20–23; February 28–March 1, 2020

Weeknights and Saturdays: 8 pm; Sundays: 3 pm

**RUN TIME:**

Running time is 90 minutes with no intermission

**WHERE:**

Hudson Theatre - Main Stage

6539 Santa Monica Blvd.

Los Angeles, CA 90038

**TICKET PRICES AND INFORMATION:**

\$20 (prices subject to change)

Eventbrite: <http://bit.ly/2TrZrCD>

TheWallis.org/Lucid

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