

PRIMARY STAGES

AT 59E59 THEATERS



SOIL BENEATH: AN EMPIRICAL

DECAY

Created by and starring Chesney Snow
Directed by Kimille Howard

WELCOME TO OUR VIRTUAL SEASON!

Primary Stages is excited to present its Fall 2020 Virtual Season!

In response to this uncertain and ever-changing landscape, we have reimagined our programming to bring Off-Broadway to your home and create community in the current theatrical climate. Starting this Fall, we return to our roots with the Foundation Series, including ***The Tribute Artist*** by **Charles Busch** and ***The Night Watcher*** by **Charlayne Woodard**. In our Living Room Commissions, artists who are reimagining the art form create new work in this time of evolution, including **Inda Craig-Galván**, **Kate Hamill**, **Chesney Snow**, and **Susan Soon He Stanton**.

This Virtual Season will break the fourth wall of how and why we create, renewing our commitment to developing new works and breaking down both financial and physical barriers to attending the theater for audiences worldwide. Through building on our strong foundation of artists and fostering new growth by amplifying essential voices who will push the boundaries of what theater can be, we are building this virtual home – and you, our audience, are the final brick in our wall.

We're thrilled to kick off our Living Room Commissions Series with Chesney Snow's ***Soil Beneath: An Empirical Decay***. This series brings theater into your living room with new and innovative works written for the virtual world. These essential voices reinvent the form, ensuring we can still share stories while socially distant. ***Soil Beneath: An Empirical Decay*** is a visceral, timely, and nuanced exploration of race, class, and American political culture told through the mediums of poetry, storytelling, dance, and music. Chesney first performed at Primary Stages 10 years ago as Boxman in *In Transit*, and has remained an incredibly important member of this family ever since. We couldn't be more excited to share his work and proud to amplify his voice.



Andrew Leynse
Artistic Director



Shane D. Hudson
Executive Director



Artistic Director Executive Director
Andrew Leynse **Shane D. Hudson**
Founder **Casey Childs**

presents

SOIL BENEATH: AN EMPIRICAL DECAY

created by and starring **Chesney Snow**

with **Winston Dynamite Brown, Kevis Hillocks,
Rachael Holmes, Latra Ann Wilson**

Composer **Diedre Murray**
Choreographers **Winston Dynamite Brown & Latra Ann Wilson**
Sound Designer **Chesney Snow**

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Directed by **Kimille Howard**

*Living Room Commissions are made possible, in part, thanks to the generous support of the
Primary Stages Board Commissioning Fund for BIPOC Artists.*

CAST (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

ENSEMBLE	WINSTON DYNAMITE BROWN
HOMEREL	KEVIS HILLOCKS
DORI	RACHAEL HOLMES
PROFESSOR LAURENCE	CHESNEY SNOW
ENSEMBLE	LATRA ANN WILSON



WINSTON
DYNAMITE
BROWN



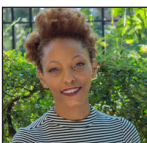
KEVIS
HILLOCKS



RACHAEL
HOLMES



CHESNEY
SNOW



LATRA ANN
WILSON

Soil Beneath: An Empirical Decay is approximately 40 minutes, with no intermission.

PLAYWRIGHT



CHESNEY SNOW is a Drama Desk winner and 3x Artist in Residence at Harvard University. Most recently, he appeared in Two River Theater’s production of *Oo Bla Dee* written by Regina Taylor and directed by Ruben Santiago Hudson. Composer/lyricist for the McCarter Theatre and Long Wharf Theater’s 2018 *Crowns*. He also appeared in McCarter Theatre’s *Princeton* and *Slavery Plays* directed by Carl Cofield. His critically acclaimed choreopoem *The Unwritten Law* premiered at Dixon Place in 2017. A pioneering figure in American beatbox culture, he originated the role of Boxman at Primary Stages and on Broadway in *In Transit* at Circle in the Square. The Primary Stages production of

In Transit received more nominations than any other Off-Broadway musical of the 2010/2011 season. Snow headlined Carnegie Hall twice. He produced and starred in the music documentary *American Beatboxer*, which was placed in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and numerous other archives throughout the United States. ChesneySnow.com

WHO'S WHO

WINSTON DYNAMITE BROWN (*Ensemble/Choreographer*) is a Kansas City, MO native dancer, teacher, choreographer, and BFA recipient from The University of Missouri Kansas City. Dynamite is currently with Camille A. Brown & Dancers (New experiment 2020). Dynamite has been fortunate to Teach, Perform, and Create work with major dance companies and institutions both locally and abroad. TheDynamitExperience.com

KEVIS HILLOCKS (*Homere!*) is a Brooklyn, New York native. Off-Broadway: *X or Betty Shabazz v. the Nation* (The Acting Company). Regional/touring: *Julius Caesar* (The Acting Company). International theater: *Ruined* (Greek Festival '16). Other New York and regional theater: *Pass Over* (Luna Stage), *Pirira* (Luna Stage), *College Colors* (Crossroads Theatre), *Morning Sun* (Theatre 167), *Thoughts of a Colored Man* (Noisy Tenants), *King Lear* (The Public). TV: "Blue Bloods." Film: *Pebble Beach* (Theeobc). Training: Ted Sluberski Studios - Scene Study; Acting Conservatory (BFA), SUNY Purchase College.

RACHAEL HOLMES (*Dori*) Credits include: Maureen in *Marvel's Wolverine: The Lost Trail*, Antonia in final season of "Elementary" (CBS), Erica in Amazon's "Mad Dogs", "NCIS: LA" (CBS), "Chasing Life" (ABC). Theater: World premiere of *War* (Yale Rep), *Bright Half Life* (WTP/MTC), *Ruined* (MTC), and *Ruined* (Arena Stage). MFA: NYU. @attagirlrach

LATRA ANN WILSON (*Ensemble/Choreographer*) is a TX Native dancer, actor, and choreographer. Dance credits: Paul Taylor 2 (NY), Opera

Theater St. Louis (MO). Teaching artist at Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey (MO) and Ailey Arts in Education (NY). Assistant credits: *Eve's Song* with Stephanie Batten Bland, Dance Lab New York with Josh Prince. Co-founder of TheDynamitExperience dance project. BFA: University of Missouri at Kansas City.

KIMILLE HOWARD (*Director*). Recent directing credits include *In The Open* by Mona Monsour (upcoming - WCSU), *The Fellowship Plays* (Lucille Lortel Theatre Foundation), *Low Power* by Jon Kern (EST), *Skeleton Crew* by Dominique Morisseau (TheatreSquared), and *TRIGGERED* by Gabriel Jason Dean (Cherry Lane Theatre). Recent Fellowships: NYTW 2050 Fellowship, MTC Jonathan Alper Directing Fellowship. Resident Director (Flea Theater).

A.J. KHAW (*Music Director*) is a Brooklyn-based pianist, organist, composer, accompanist, and instructor. He has collaborated with Chesney Snow (*The Unwritten Law*), Gian-Carla Tisera (*Luminosa Project*), Lucas Kane Hall, Dylan Charles, We are Warriors, and Hollow Engine. He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Music from Emory University and Medical Doctorate from Morehouse School of Medicine. ajkhaw.com

DIEDRE MURRAY (*Composer*) is a Pulitzer Prize Finalist for the chamber opera *Running Man*, and a two-time Obie winner for creating the original story and music for *Running Man* and arrangements for *Eli's Comin'*. In addition, she wrote the arrangements for the Tony Award-winning Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, among other works.

PRIMARY STAGES

PRIMARY STAGES is an Off-Broadway not-for-profit theater company dedicated to inspiring, supporting, and sharing the art of playwriting. We operate on the strongly held belief that the future of American theater relies on nurturing playwrights and giving them the artistic support needed to create new work. Since our founding in 1984, we have produced more than 135 new plays. Our productions and artists have received critical acclaim, including numerous Tony, Obie, Lortel, Off-Broadway Alliance, AUDELCO, Outer Critics' Circle, Drama League, and Drama Desk awards and nominations. Primary Stages supports playwrights and develops new works through commissions, workshops, readings, and our education and engagement programs: the Dorothy Strelsin New American Writers Group, Marvin and Anne Einhorn School of Performing Arts (ESPA), Teenwrights, Primary Plus Developmental Reading Series, our Free Student Matinee Program, TixTeen, and the Primary Stages Off-Broadway Oral History Project. Through these programs, Primary Stages advocates for our artists, helping them make important—and often transformative—connections within the theater community. For more information on Primary Stages and our various programs, please visit us at primarystages.org.

ANDREW LEYNSE (Artistic Director) is currently in his 17th season as Artistic Director of Primary Stages. Andrew is a director and founding member of the Primary Stages Dorothy Strelsin New

American Writers Group (now in its 25th year), teaches for Primary Stages ESPA (Einhorn School of Performing Arts) and The Tepper Semester for Syracuse University, and is the Artistic Director of the Colorado New Play Festival in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. Andrew is a proud Board Member of A.R.T./New York and is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon's Directing Program.

SHANE D. HUDSON (Executive Director) is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama and Emerson College. Shane has served as Director of Development at Elevator Repair Service, Managing Director of the Yale Cabaret, Associate Director of Development at PlayMakers Repertory Company, General Manager/Marketing Director for Blue Man Group, Theater Manager of the Charles Playhouse, and Executive Director of StageSource. He is an adjunct professor at Marymount Manhattan College.

CASEY CHILDS (Founder) founded Primary Stages in 1984 and has directed many productions for the company. He served as the Artistic Program Director for the New Dramatists from 1981-1985 and was the recipient of the Carnegie Mellon Commitment to New Playwrights Award, as well as two Emmy Awards and many nominations for his extensive work in television. He is a past Vice President of the Directors' Guild of America and a past trustee of The National Association of Television Arts and Sciences. Casey has a BFA in acting and an MFA in directing from Carnegie Mellon University.



"Legends of Texas"
by
Nilsa Reyna
Monday September 21st, 2020
@ 7pm ET



"Derecho"
by
Noelle Viñas
Thursday September 24th, 2020
@ 7pm ET



"Hostel Play"
by
Andres Osorio
Monday November 30th, 2020
@ 7pm ET



"The Lonely"
by
Andrew Rincón
Thursday December 3rd, 2020
@ 7pm ET

PRIMARY STAGES

**INTENSIVE MENTORSHIP
DIGITAL SERIES
2019-2020**

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COMING UP NEXT...



The Night Watcher

Written and performed by
Charlayne Woodard
November 18 – 22

PRIMARY STAGES

ESPA



ACT · WRITE · DIRECT



COLLABORATE

**Join Primary Stages
Einhorn School of Performing Arts!**

Interested in honing your craft and creating new artistic relationships? Primary Stages ESPA offers classes in Acting, Writing, and Directing for all artists, in all stages of their careers. Our focus is on nurturing, honoring, and advocating for emerging artists by providing them countless developmental opportunities, space to write and rehearse, and a family of collaborators.

Spring Online Classes Announced Soon!
TO ENROLL, VISIT PRIMARYSTAGES.ORG/ESPA

A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a red cardigan over a light-colored shirt and dark pants, is sitting on a wooden bookshelf. The bookshelf is filled with books and has several small drawers on the right side. The background is a dark wall with colorful, square panels.

WHY SUPPORT PLAYWRITING AT PRIMARY STAGES?

It's simple. You love theater. You want to see new work and new perspectives on stage. You think training the next generation of theater artists is important. You believe all New Yorkers should have access to art regardless of financial means. You know that experiencing a diverse range of plays that represent all voices is significant in the creation of empathy and understanding in the world. You understand that producing theater is expensive, but definitely worth the investment. You are eager to help.

As a **PRIMARY PARTNER**, you are guaranteed the best seats in the house. You receive concierge ticketing services with our patron hotline. You are granted access to private readings, rehearsals, Opening Nights, and other intimate events with our artists. You meet others who value and share the same love for theater as you do. You become a true collaborator in our mission to inspire, support, and share the art of playwriting.

TOGETHER WE...

SERVE

Over 20,000 theater-goers, artists, and students each season through our mainstage productions

NURTURE

600 early-career and established artists through the artistic home provided by ESPA, which offers more than 100 courses and workshops each year

DEVELOP

20 new works annually through Primary Plus, playwright residencies, commissions, readings and workshops, and The Dorothy Strelsin New American Writers Group

TEACH

40 public high school students how to write their first script and find their voice in Teenwrights, our free after-school playwriting program

YOUR SUPPORT MAKES IT HAPPEN.

Join our family of partners, playwrights, directors, and performers.
Membership starts at \$500.

To join, and for benefits levels, visit primarystages.org/partners, call 212.594.2125, or email kendra@primarystages.org.

OUR 2020 FALL VIRTUAL SEASON

Written by and starring
Charles Busch
Directed by Carl Andress



the Tribute ARTist

Sept 30 – Oct 4



**The Night
Watcher**

Written and performed by
Charlayne Woodard

November 18 – 22

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FEATURING

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The Primary Stages Season is supported, in part, with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson; and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.



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