

little victor productions & ACTING OUT*

present



THIS IS THIS

August 19, 20 & 21, 2022

Conceived, Directed, and Original Scenes by Richard Hoehler
Original Spoken Word Narrative by Damien Walker
with additional scenes by:

Clifford Odets¹, Michael V. Gazzo³, Tom Topor², Stephen Adly Guirgis², Lorraine Hansberry³

(originally produced at Otisville Correctional Facility)


Featuring:

Richie Dang, Lud, Gavrie Elliott, Francesca Ferrara*, Charlie Grosso, John Gutierrez, Duncan Hazard*, Justo Hierro, Richard Hoehler*, Ron Horton, Demetrius James, William King, Luis Moran, José Rodriguez, Louis D. Rodriguez, Elijah Scott, Azusa SheShe Dance, Gilfredo Valentin, Damien Walker, Reginald Wout

**The ACTING OUT Company has been in residence at HB STUDIO since 2019.*

This production is made possible with grants from the India Blake Foundation, the David Rockefeller Fund, NY State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs



 * appearing courtesy of Actors' Equity Association.
1. Paradise Lost scene is presented by special arrangement with Walt Odets.
2. Answers and Jesus Hopped the A Train scenes are presented by special arrangement with Dramatist Play Service.
3. A Hatful of Rain and A Raisin in the Sun scenes are presented by special arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.



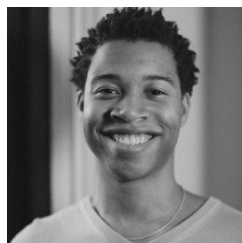
**Azusa 'SHESHE'
Dance**



**Richie
Dang**



Lud



**Gavrie
Elliot**



**Francesca
Ferrara**



**Charlie
Grosso**



**John Maria
Gutierrez**



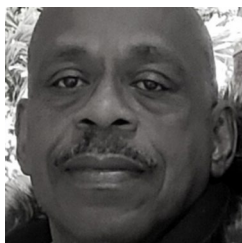
**Duncan
Hazard**



**Justo
Hierro**



**Richard
Hoehler**



**Ron
Horton**



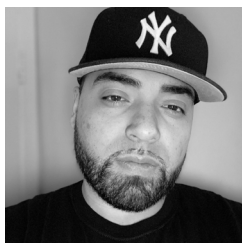
**Demetrius
James**



**William
King**



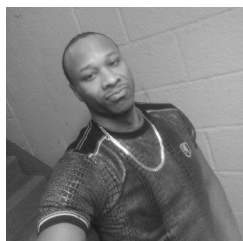
**Luis
Moran**



**José
Rodriguez**



**Louis D.
Rodriguez**



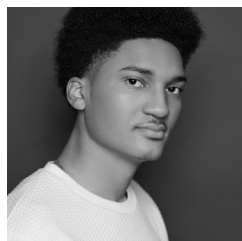
**Elijah 'Esco'
Scott**



**Gilfredo 'Fox'
Valentin, Jr.**



**Damien
Walker**



**Reginald
Wout, Jr.**

THIS IS THIS will be performed without an intermission.

Prologue

Twitter Chat.....Damien Walker

STEPS

by Richard Hoehler
Stepfather.....Ron Horton
Stepson.....Reginald Wout, Jr.

Segue

Passing Through.....Damien Walker

PARADISE LOST

by Clifford Odets
Ben.....José Rodriguez
Kewpie.....Elijah Scott

Segue

Gun Owners.....Damien Walker

A HATFUL OF RAIN

by Michael V. Gazzo
Johnny.....John Maria Gutierrez
Polo.....Richie Dang

Segue

Street Corners to Cell Blocks

ANSWERS

by Tom Topor
Ed.....Charlie Grosso
Suspect.....Gavrie Elliott
Frank.....Duncan Hazard*

Segue

Recourse.....Damien Walker

COMO TU PADRE

by Richard Hoehler
Sobrino.....Justo Hierro
Tio.....Luis Moran

Segue

Tacet

JESUS HOPPED THE A TRAIN

by Stephen Adly Guirgis
Angel.....Lud
Mary Jane.....Francesca Ferrara*

Segue

Crime Waves.....Damien Walker

FATHERS & SONS

by Richard Hoehler
Father.....Louis D. Rodriguez
Son.....Fox Valentin

Segue

Last Stop.....Damien Walker

A RAISIN IN THE SUN

by Lorraine Hansberry
Mama.....Azusa 'SheShe' Dance
Walter.....William King

Segue

Chosen.....Damien Walker

BUT FOR THE GRACE

by Richard Hoehler
Ty.....Demetrius James
Ron.....Richard Hoehler*

Segue

Self Introspection.....Damien Walker

Epilogue

This is This.....Damien Walker

Finale

The Company

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

"I believe our preoccupation with statistics, demographics, and classifications – our inability to identify with and forgive the mistakes of others has fractured and damaged our society to a critical degree. I am not interested in what my actors have done, but in who they are – now. I am interested in the remarkable effect that the arts, specifically theatre, has on those whom many considered irredeemable. I am interested in the life lessons inculcated in theatre exercises and rehearsal and performance processes. I am interested in seeing the best where many are unaccustomed to looking. I am interested in the courage and dignity of those unrecognized artists who lay bare their secrets and step out onto a stage to show us who we are."

–R. Hoehler

Azusa SHESHE Dance (Mama) is a TV/Film/Theater actress and gospel/blues singer originally from Chattanooga, TN. SHESHE is best known for rebirthing classic R&B songs to new musical heights, in elite subway locations with MUSIC UNDER NEW YORK (MUNY). She sings lead vocals with two local NYC blues/jazz bands, and as producer/playwright, SHESHE portrays BIG MAMA THORNTON in her solo bluesical HOUN' DAWG: LIFE & TIME OF BIG MAMA THORNTON. SHESHE has graced the APOLLO stage, performed on HARLEM SUMMER STAGE and been headliner for the HARLEM TREE LIGHTING. As a musical theater actress, her accolades include Big Queen (NATIONAL BLACK THEATRE - 125TH & FREEDOM), Dionne (COLUMBIA - HAIR the Rock Musical), & Evillene (HARLEM BLACKARTS - THE WIZ). She is exhilarated to be an integral part of THIS IS THIS again (2018) under the direction of the great KING RICHARD. SHESHE is in awe & humbled to work with the naturally talented & sincere gentlemen performing in THIS production. www.sheshedance.com

Richie Dang (Johnny) is a 2020 graduate of the Hagen Core Training program at HB Studio and an actor based in New York and Los Angeles.

Lud (Angel) was born in the Dominican Republic. LUD has always been interested in acting and anything to do with the television world. A few years back, a good friend, Mr. Hoehler cast Lud in the original production of THIS IS THIS. Currently, he is fortunate enough to have the opportunity to work in the film industry and be part of it all.

Gavrie Elliott (Suspect) is about to be a junior at Tisch School of the Arts and is incredibly excited to be in his first professional show! Gavrie has worked with the National Black Theatre as a stage reader and hopes to continue to learn, develop and grow as an actor. Gavrie would like to thank his friends and family for such amazing support in order to help him get to this point.

Francesca Ferrara (Mary Jane & Assistant Director) is proud to be faculty member at HB Studio, where she first stepped onto the stage when she was 12 years old. Francesca was in the original production of THIS IS THIS at the Otisville Theatre Workshop, and she and Richard have been working together ever since. Theatre highlights include I NEVER SANG FOR MY FATHER (The Chain), SEDUCED, THE ADDING MACHINE, SISTER CITIES (New American Theatre), and her favorite - ROMEO & JULIET (National Players). Film and television highlights include CHICKENLIVERS, SVEN STROMSON BLUE (LA Shorts Fest), HOW TO CHEAT (LA FILM FEST), GOSSIP GIRL, BULL, THE BLACKLIST, GREY'S ANATOMY and her favorite - the MAD MEN Series Finale.

Charlie Grosso (Ed) was released from prison two years ago, after serving 40 years. Despite being inside for four decades, he can honestly say that he has had a beautiful life. Charlie performed in many plays on the inside, including: OEDIPUS REX, WEST SIDE STORY, BANG THE DRUM SLOWLY, RHINOCEROS, 12 ANGRY MEN, THE EXONERATED, BUFFALO SOLDIERS and FATHERS AND SONS. Through the practice of meditation and the craft of the theater, his life is purposeful. He will share with anyone who is curious or interested in learning why, after 40 years, it was, and is, beautiful!

John Maria Gutierrez (Polo) is a multidisciplinary actor, mover, maker, and educator originally from Washington Heights, NY. As the first person in his family born in the US, John is carving out and balancing their own identity within his family, cultural history, and artistic expression. Their work combines theater, movement, and original music informed by artistic expressions ranging from hip hop to postmodern and often deals with current and historical interpersonal

and systemic, sociopolitical issues. Recent credits. 1001, Focus Features/Warner Bros., Law & Order: SVU NBC Universal, King Lear In The Forest, Center at West Park (presented as part of g² Spring 2022 Residency), New York Live Arts (2021 Fresh Tracks Artist), La Mama ETC. (2020 Artist In Residence). For more info: johnmariaguiterrez.com Insta: @jmg16

Duncan Hazard (Frank) is a New York City based actor. He has appeared in many productions, including DESIGN FOR LIVING, THE CHASE and THE AMERICAN CLOCK at HB Studio; MACBETH, RICHARD II and LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST at Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey; BASKERVILLE at the Hampton Theatre Company and HAPPY DAYS at the Jean Cocteau Repertory, among others. He is pleased to be making his debut with the Acting Out Company.

Justo Hierro (Boy) is an amateur actor who has starred in High School plays such as RUMORS by Neil Simon, and ARSENIC AND OLD LACE by Joseph Kesserling. He currently attends John Jay College of Criminal Justice where he has taken up more interest in the theatre arts in Drama courses.

Richard Hoehler (Director, Writer, Ron) has created four Off Broadway solo shows: I OF THE STORM, NEW JERSEY/NEW YORK, WORKING CLASS (OOBR AWARD-Best Solo Performance), and HUMAN RESOURCES (Best of Fest). His newest solo piece, E, has been featured at The Cornelia Street Café, Delaware Valley Arts Alliance, the Commons, and Hudson View Gardens. Other acting stage work: ROUNDING THIRD, K2, KALIGHAT, TRUE WEST, CRIES FOR PEACE, THE RUBBER ROOM, INADMISSIBLE, DAY OF THE DAD (Best Actor in a Lead Role), SEX TODAY, LOVE TOMORROW, and HAIR (55+). Television: NYPD BLUE, LAW & ORDER, CRIMINAL INTENT, THIRD WATCH (recurring), THE BLACK BOX. Richard is an adjunct professor at John Jay and City College, has run the Theatre Workshop at Otisville State Prison for 12 years, and is the founding director of ACTING OUT, a theatre company for the formerly incarcerated, in residence at HB Studio.

Ron Horton (Stepfather) is one of the original members of the Acting Out Company, and was last seen virtually in WORKING CLASS, KID STUFF, INSIDE OUT, and TALK TO ME. During his 30-year incarceration, Ron discovered acting and directing, which delivered him through some very dark years. Ron became a triple threat after joining Hoehler's Theatre Workshop at Otisville—adding playwriting to the mix, where he wrote THE BOX. THE BOX is a piece which made its debut in Acting Out's presentation of INSIDE OUT, as it was not permitted to be performed inside Otisville. Ron also took a turn Off-Broadway in the ensemble of I NEVER SANG FOR MY FATHER in 2019 at The Chain Theatre.

Demetrius James (Ty) is an educator, writer, and the program coordinator at the Bard Micro-college in Harlem.

William King (Walter) was released from prison one year and 6 months ago, after serving 16 1/2 years. He learned to live through others mistakes, so he won't make none. William performed in many plays on the inside, including FATHERS AND SONS, THIS IS THIS, and WHEN MALCOLM MET MARTIN. William is funny, loving, and has gravitated into a family man and a loving son. He will give his time, as well as the shirt off his back, he represents a King.

Luis Moran (Tio) first began acting with the Otisville Theatre Workshop, led by Richard Hoehler. He performed in the workshop's production of FATHERS AND SONS, and found it so rewarding that he continued studying the craft of acting virtually from Mexico. At HB Studio, he has studied with Maria Fontanals and Craig Dolezel. For the Acting Out company, Luis has performed in the virtual productions of INSIDE OUT, TALK TO ME, KID STUFF and WORKING CLASS.

Lexy M Ramos (Costume Design) is a recent graduate from CCNY with her B.A in Theatre, She has earned a DMT Award from the Kennedy Center for work in Special Effects Make-up Design. This is her first post graduation production as a costume designer. She is very excited to work on this production. Previous credits: PIPELINE (Actor), SOMETHING MACHINE (Costume Designer), LEVELING UP (Actor), SIGNIFICANT OTHER (Costume Designer), MARI-SOL (Make-up Design), TO CATCH A FOX (Make-up Design).

José Rodriguez (Ben) was born in a small town called San Pedro Sula, Honduras. His family migrated to this country when he was only a child. The story goes that he was put on a floating tire to cross the river, and the family all made it safely across. He was raised in the Bronx. He loves baseball, movies, cooking, and spending time with family and friends. José is a first-generation student at John Jay College, and is preparing for law school.

Louis D. Rodriguez (Father) is a core member of the Acting Out company. He believes his theatre work informs all aspects of his life, including his former incarceration and his present position as a member of the clergy. Louis had a devastating accident three years ago that left him paralyzed, then paraplegic, yet he has worked from his hospital bed, learning scenes and monologues, and performing major roles with Acting Out. Leaving the nursing home on October 27, 2021, he still continues to work with Acting Out, and is excited about his first performance on stage since he was paralyzed. He looks forward to the day he can perform on stage without the use of walking aids.

Elijah “Esco” Scott (Kewpie) is proud to be making his stage debut in THIS IS THIS. Esco has always been interested in acting, and joined the Acting Out Company during the very first class. Esco performed in the virtual production of TALK TO ME when everything switched to online performances in the Spring of 2020. He is thrilled to be back in person playing Kewpie.

Gilfredo “Fox” Valentin, Jr. (Son) was born in Yonkers, New York to Puerto Rican parents. He has two sisters and is the proud father of a 14 year old high school student. His theatre credits include ESTOP FABLES, BUFFALO SOLDIER, TWELVE ANGRY MEN, EXONERATED, TALK TO ME, INSIDE OUT, KID STUFF, WORKING CLASS and THE COUCH. He grew up loving animals and has become a certified dog trainer. He has raised and trained dozens of service dogs for veterans who have come home from war suffering from PTSD and physical disabilities.

Damien Walker (Emcee) is one of the three sons born and raised in the Bronx. At the age of 21, he was sent to prison for a crime he did not commit. While in prison, Damien discovered his talent for writing and performing spoken word. Prior to his work in the Acting Out virtual productions of INSIDE OUT and WORKING CLASS, Damien performed the Emcee role in the original production of THIS IS THIS with Otisville Theatre Workshop. Damien also assisted in creating the compilation play, writing all of the spoken word which links the scenes together.

Reginald Wout, Jr. (Stepson) was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. Since Reginald began pursuing acting, he has been in productions such as DOG SEES GOD, GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS, SWEAT, among others. Reginald’s overarching goal is to make meaningful and impactful stories that give the audience something they didn’t enter the theatre with.

SPECIAL THANKS: Edith Meeks, Moshe Henderson, Theresa McElwee, Bruce Hall, Lindsay Timmington, Catherine Coray, Eric Bembenek, Jennifer Tuttle, José Pagan, Vernice Williams, Tom Verchot, Gabriel Robinson, and HB STUDIO.

ACTING OUT COMPANY offers professional training, practice, and performance opportunities for the formerly incarcerated, who experienced the transformative value of a theatre program while in prison and wish to continue their training upon release. Where they may continue to access traits long ignored, mine raw talent, harness misdirected energy, and build self-esteem through exposure to the rigors and rewards of a master arts environment, and in so doing, help reintegrate into their communities.

Actors’ Equity Association (“Equity”), founded in 1913, is the U.S. labor union that represents more than 51,000 professional Actors and Stage Managers. Equity fosters the art of live theatre as an essential component of society and advances the careers of its members by negotiating wages, improving working conditions and providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. Actors’ Equity is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. #EquityWorks

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Company Manager, Edith Meeks
Assistant Director, Francesca Ferrara
Production Stage Manager, Melisa Kucevic

Lighting Designer, Michael Abrams
Costume Designer, Alexis Ramos
Spotlight Operator, Kevin Hobaichan
Music Director, Nancy Chamberlain

Offering
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www.hbstudio.org

Fall Term 2022

Sept 12 – Nov 22, 2022
(no class Oct 10 & Nov 8)

Registration Opens

August 1, 2022

Early Bird Registration Ends

August 31, 2022

Winter Term 2023

Jan 9 – March 20, 2023
(no class Jan 16)

Financial Aid Applications

September 26 – October 16, 2023

Registration Opens

November 1, 2022

Early Bird Registration Ends

November 30, 2022

Spring Term 2023

March 27 – June 5, 2023
(no class May 29)

Financial Aid Applications

January 2 – January 22, 2023

Registration Open

February 5, 2023

Early Bird Registration Ends

March, 5 2023

Summer Term 2023

June 12 – Aug 22, 2023
(no class June 19 & July 4)

Financial Aid Applications

March 27 – April 16, 2023

Registration Opens

May 1, 2023

Early Bird Registration Ends

May 31, 2023

CHECK OUT OUR FULL-TIME IMMERSION PROGRAMS!

Hagen Core Training 2023: September 11, 2022 – June 5, 2023 (3 Terms)

Hagen Summer Intensive 2023: June 26 – August 4, 2023

Hagen Teacher's Lab: TBD



HB Studio, founded in 1945 by Herbert Berghof and Uta Hagen, is an artistic home for actors, playwrights and directors at every level of achievement. We provide a haven for working professionals, free from commercial pressures. Created by theater artists, we believe in a process of training that is essential to all the performing arts. We uphold a standard of performance that can play a significant role in the nurturing, growth and development of artists who can contribute to a theater that expresses the social, moral and political realities of the world in which we live. We offer a rigorous, well-rounded, diverse and inclusive curriculum of study for committed students of all levels where the actor's unique potential is cultivated and encouraged. We are committed to promoting diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion in all aspects of our organization and to eradicate all sources of inequality and discrimination in order to help create a theater community that shares this commitment and makes meaningful contributions to a more equitable and inclusive society.

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