For the PEOPLE

by TY DEFOE and LARISSA FASTHORSE

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Who is writing the new classics that the next generation will enjoy?

You can help us answer that question and give thearmermakers the resources they need to develop the future of theater — right here at the Guthrie. To learn how you can be part of bringing more new plays like *For the People* to life, contact the Development Team at 612.225.6200 or give@guthrietheater.org.
From Artistic Director
Joseph Haj

Dear Friends,

Whenever we gather at the Guthrie, we are on the traditional land of the Dakota People who stewarded it for generations along with the Ojibwe and other Indigenous nations. In recent years, we’ve worked closely with the Guthrie’s Native Advisory Council and Ty Defoe and Larissa FastHorse (Co-Founders of Indigenous Direction) to better acknowledge this truth and build authentic relationships with the local Native community.

Ty and Larissa have generously led the way on several Guthrie projects, including Water Is Sacred in 2017 and Stories From the Drum in 2019. So I’m honored and humbled that we are producing the world premiere of their heartfelt comedy For the People — the Guthrie’s first mainstage production written by Native playwrights about Native people.

For the People was born from the experiences of the Twin Cities Native community, many of whom shared stories at talking circles and helped hone the play at workshops over the past several years. To see Ty and Larissa’s script, Michael John Garcés’ keen direction and the artistry of this talented company come together has been joyous to watch. It required collaboration across the Guthrie and beyond, and I’m grateful to everyone who put their heart and soul into this beautiful project.

On the first day of rehearsal, Dakota elder Juanita Espinosa invited all of us to make this play a daily gift. May For the People be as much of a gift to you as it has been to the Guthrie.

Yours,
For the People
by Ty Defoe and Larissa FastHorse
directed by Michael John Garcés

CREATIVE TEAM

SCENIC DESIGNER: Tanya Orellana
COSTUME DESIGNER: Lux Haac
LIGHTING DESIGNER: Emma Deane
SOUND DESIGNER: Victor Zupanc
RESIDENT DRAMATURG: Carla Steen
VOCAi COACH: Keely Wolter
FIGHT DIRECTOR: Aaron Preusse
DAKOTA LANGUAGE CONSULTANT: Sara Pillatzki-Warzeha
INDIGENOUS MUSIC CONSULTANT: Talon Bazille Ducheneaux
RESIDENT CASTING DIRECTOR: Jennifer Liestman
STAGE MANAGER: Lori Lundquist*
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER: Anna Baranski*
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: Sara Pillatzki-Warzeha
NYC CASTING CONSULTANT: McCorkle Casting, Ltd.
FIGHT CAPTAIN: Nathaniel TwoBears

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Generously supported by The Joyce Foundation

The Guthrie gratefully recognizes Dr. Tadashi & Susan Allen as Associate Producers.
Understudies
Understudies never substitute for performers unless announced prior to the performance.

Ernest Briggs* (Robert Dakota)
Becca Hart* (Esme Williams)
Brian P. Joyce (Levi Mitchell/Herb O’Geezhik)
George Keller* (Daisy Childs/Commissioner Bobbie Grey)
Burgandi Trejo Phoenix* (April Dakota/Sage Piewannakwat)

*Member of Actors’ Equity Association

SETTING
A little in the future. Locations on and around Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis.
Some are real; some are fictional.
SPECIAL THANKS
The Guthrie wishes to thank the many Native partners, artists, businesses and organizations for their contributions to For the People, including, but not limited to, the following:

Native Advisory Council
This rotating group of Minnesota-based Native artists advises the Guthrie on a variety of projects and initiatives.
Ernest Briggs
Thomas Draskovic
Sequoia Hauck
Sara Pillatzki-Warzeha
Isabella Star LaBlanc
Mike Swan
Adrienne Zimiga-January
Marcie Rendon (past member)
Roya Taylor (past member)

Elders
Carrie Day Aspinwall
Juanita Espinosa

Scenic Muralists
Marlena Myles
Thomasina TopBear

Featured Artist
Courtney Cochran

Pre-Show and Post-Show Music
Jada Brown
Pretendians Band
Tall Paul
Thomas X
Anthony White

Additional Dakota Language Consultants
Tasinagiwin Gill
Eric Pillatzki
Brenda Toscano

Vendors and Partners

The Guthrie would also like to thank Rebecca Noon for shepherding this project from the beginning and the many members of the Twin Cities Native community who participated in story circles with the playwrights.
BIOGRAPHIES

Cast

Ernest Briggs  White Earth Nation (Levi Mitchell/US Robert Dakota)  

**FILM/TELEVISION**  

**AWARDS**  
2022 Warner Bros. Discovery Access Fellow.

**TRAINING**  
M.F.A., University of Florida; B.A., University of St. Thomas. www.ernestbriggs.com

Sheri Foster Blake  Cherokee Nation (Daisy Childs)  
**GUTHRIE** Debut. **THEATER** Urban Rez by Larissa FastHorse (world premiere), *Wild Indian, God of Vengeance, Mädchen in Uniform*; Tour: *Mystic Voices* (Native American Theater Group). **FILM/TELEVISION** Selected: *Allies*, *Shouting Secrets*, *Oliver Stone’s U Turn*, *Naturally Native*, *Secondhand Hearts*, *Crazy Horse, Coyote Waits*; “Rutherford Falls” (with Native writer/producer Sierra Teller Ornelas), “Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt” (Netflix), “House” (Fox).

**VOICEOVER**  
Narration for the Emmy-nominated “Great Performances” PBS special featuring American Indian Dance Theatre; Several characters in “Spirit Rangers” (Netflix). **OTHER** Board Member, American Indian Registry; Founding Trustee, First Americans in the Arts. **AWARDS**  
Emmy Award consideration (“Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt”); First Americans in the Arts Award for Best Supporting Actress (*U Turn*)

Kendall Kent (Esme Williams)  
**GUTHRIE** Debut. **THEATER** Yellow Tree Theatre: *A Streetcar Named Desire*; Mixed Blood Theatre: *Hooded, Or Being Black for Dummies*; University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theater B.F.A. Acting Program: *The American Clock* (Dowling Studio); Old Log Theatre: *Charlotte’s Web*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*; Minnesota Centennial Showboat: *Under the Gaslight*. **TRAINING**  
University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theater B.F.A. Acting Program; British American Drama Academy. www.kendallkent.com

Kalani Queypo  Native Hawaiian and Blackfeet Descent (Robert Dakota)  
**GUTHRIE** Debut. **THEATER** Goodspeed Musicals; Arena Stage; Trinity Rep; Mark Taper Forum; Wilma; Ordway. **FILM/TELEVISION**  
Oscar-nominated *The New World, Slow West* (Sundance Grand Jury Prize); Emmy-winning “Into the West,” “Trickster,” “Jamestown,” “Fear the Walking Dead,” “Mad Men,” “Hawaii Five-0,” “Nurse Jackie,” “Saints & Strangers,” “Bones.” **AWARDS**  
Ancestor Eyes (writer/director) played at 40 festivals and won 14 awards; His musical *Missing Peace* is the recipient of the Native Voices Playwrights Retreat, Rhinebeck Writers Retreat, Johnny Mercer Writers Grove, NAMT Festival and Rhinebeck Writers Retreat’s Triple R. **UPCOMING**  

Wes Studi Cherokee Nation (Herb O’Geezhik) GUTHRIE Debut. THEATER More than 30 years in countless theater roles. FILM/TELEVISION Selected: Dances With Wolves, The Last of the Mohicans, Geronimo: An American Legend, Heat, Avatar, Hostiles, Mystery Men, A Love Song, Mending the Line, The Only Good Indian (producer); “Penny Dreadful” (SHOWTIME), “Reservation Dogs” (FX), Tony Hillerman mysteries on PBS. AWARDS First Native American actor to receive an Academy Award (2019); First Americans in the Arts Awards; Santa Fe International Film Festival Lifetime Achievement Award; Golden Boot Award. TRAINING Northeastern State University. www.wesleystudi.com

Nathaniel TwoBears Ho-Chunk Nation (Sage Piewannakwat) GUTHRIE Debut. THEATER Guthrie Theater: Essential roles in A Christmas Carol (2022) and The Tempest; New Play Exchange at the Playwrights’ Center: K’é by Blossom Johnson

Adrienne Zimiga-January Citizen of the Oglala Lakota Nation (Commissioner Bobbie Grey) GUTHRIE Debut. THEATER Turtle Theater Collective: This Way Yonder, Our Town; History Theatre: Say Their Names; Guthrie Theater: Stories From the Drum; Oyaté Hotanin: Indigenous Peoples’ Day Celebration; Raving Native Productions: Bring the Children Home; Bedlam Theatre: You Are My Sunshine; New Native Theatre: 2012: The Musical! FILM/TELEVISION An Opera Theatre: Mináǧi Kiŋ Dowáŋ: A Zitkála-Šá Opera. UPCOMING Continuing work with Mináŋi Kiŋ Dowáŋ: A Zitkála-Šá Opera as it moves from film to stage. @adrienne.zimiga (FB, IG)

Becca Hart (US Esme Williams) GUTHRIE Debut. THEATER Regional: An American Tail, Annie, The Hobbit (Children’s Theatre Company); Merrily We Roll Along (Theater Latté Da); Georgiana & Kitty: Christmas at Pemberley, Ride the Cyclone, The Wolves, Is Edward Snowden Single?, Small Mouth Sounds (Jungle Theater); Mary Poppins, The Bridges of Madison County, Candide, The Music Man, Carousel (Artistry); Idiot’s Delight (Girl Friday Productions). UPCOMING Theater Mu: Hells Canyon; Children’s Theatre Company: A Year With Frog and Toad. www.beccahart.org
Brian P. Joyce  White Earth Nation (US Levi Mitchell/Herb O’Geezhik)  

George Keller  (US Daisy Childs/Commissioner Bobbie Grey)  
**GUTHRIE** Dollhouse. **THEATER** Yellow Tree Theatre: *Misery*; Ten Thousand Things: *Emilia*; Rough Magic Performance Company: *Hurricane Diane*; Park Square Theatre: *Pride and Prejudice*; History Theatre: *Gloria: A Life*; Penumbra Theatre: *Wedding Band*; Jungle Theater: *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. **FILM/TELEVISION** Clear (Runing Water Media), Into Temptation (Farnum St. Ltd.), Halloweentown (Disney Films), Change of Heart (Lifetime); “Lady Dynamite” (Netflix). **UPCOMING** Ten Thousand Things: Spitfire Grill. **AWARDS** Ivey Award for Messy Utopia (Mixed Blood Theatre)

Burgandi Trejo Phoenix  Yaqui Descent (US April Dakota/Sage Piewannakwat)  
**GUTHRIE** Debut. **THEATER** Los Angeles-based actor, dancer, voiceover artist, singer and writer; Brand Ambassador of the entertainment one-page Talentboom; Founder of The Actor Toolkit on Clubhouse; Strong public voice regarding the accurate and authentic representation and portrayal of female, Mexican American and Indigenous perspectives on and off the screen. **VOICEOVER** Numerous characters on Nickelodeon and Disney+, “The Royals of Malibu” podcast and more. **FILM/TELEVISION** “Spirit Rangers” (Netflix), “Relationship Goals” (Snapchat), “Love in the Time of Corona” (YouTube), YouTube’s “Labeled” (Atlantic Records). @burgandiphoenix

Creative Team

Ty Defoe  Citizen of Anishinaabe and Oneida Nations (Playwright)  
Larissa FastHorse Sicangu Lakota Nation (Playwright) GUTHRIE Water Is Sacred, Stories From the Drum. THEATER The Thanksgiving Play, which made her the first known female Native American playwright on Broadway; Selected Plays: The Democracy Project, Peter Pan (national tour), What Would Crazy Horse Do?, Landless, Cow Pie Bingo, Average Family, Teaching Disco Squaredancing to Our Elders: A Class Presentation; Numerous productions of The Thanksgiving Play, making it one of the most-produced plays in America; Trilogy with Michael John Garcés and Cornerstone Theater Company: Urban Rez, Native Nation and Wicoun; Co-Founder of Indigenous Direction. FILM/TELEVISION Creator for NBC, Disney Channel, DreamWorks, Muse, Netflix and others. TEACHING Arizona State University. AWARDS 2020 MacArthur Fellow. www.hoganhorsestudio.com

Michael John Garcés (Director) GUTHRIE Wrestling Jerusalem, The Falls. THEATER Playwright, director and former Artistic Director of Cornerstone Theater Company in Los Angeles where he served for the past 17 years; Plays by Larissa FastHorse, including Urban Rez, Native Nation and Wicoun; Regional (selected): The Rivers Don’t Know (City Theatre); The Play You Want (The Road Theatre Company); The Royale (Arizona Theatre Company); The Just and the Blind (Carnegie Hall/The Kennedy Center); Epic (Great Plains Theatre Commons); What Happens Next (La Jolla Playhouse); The Arsonists (Woolly Mammoth); Executive Vice President for the SDC. AWARDS Doris Duke Artist Award; Princess Grace Statue Award; Alan Schneider Director Award

Tanya Orellana (Scenic Designer) GUTHRIE Debut. THEATER International: Angels in America (Mexico premiere); Regional: King of the Yees (Signature Theatre); American Mariachi (Alley Theatre); The Heart Sellers (Milwaukee Rep); Stew (Pasadena Playhouse); Fefu and Her Friends, Poor Yella Rednecks (A.C.T.); We the Peoples Before (The Kennedy Center); Somewhere Over the Border (Syracuse Stage); Where Did We Sit on the Bus? (Marin Theatre Company); Justice, Private Lives (Arizona Theatre Company); The Heath (Merrimack Repertory Theatre). AWARDS Princess Grace Fabergé Theater Award and Special Project Grant. OTHER Member, Wingspace Theatrical Design; Organizing Member, La Gente: The Latinx Theatre Production Network. TRAINING M.F.A., CalArts. @tanya-orellana (IG), www.tanyaorellana.com

Lux Haac Pequot and Choctaw Descent (Costume Designer) GUTHRIE Debut. THEATER Broadway: The Thanksgiving Play; Off-Broadway/New York: The Comedy of Errors (The Public Theater’s Mobile Unit); On That Day in Amsterdam (Primary Stages); 53% Of (Second Stage Uptown); Songs About Trains (Radical Evolution/Working Theater/New Ohio Theatre); Eureka Day (Colt Coeur); Aji Jaak on Turtle Island (IBEX Puppetry/The New Victory Theater); Regional: The Wizard of Oz (Geva Theatre); Between Two Knees (OSF/Yale Repertory Theatre/McCarter Theatre Center/Seattle Rep); Espejos: Clean (Hartford Stage/Syracuse Stage); Lear (Cal Shakes); Kim’s Convenience (Westport Country Playhouse/TheatreSquared); Yoga Play, Ragtime (PlayMakers Repertory Company); I and You, Annapurna (Syracuse Stage). TRAINING M.F.A., NYU Tisch School of the Arts. @luxhaac (IG), www.luxhaac.com
Emma Deane  Citizen of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation  
(Lighting Designer)  GUTHRIE Debut. THEATER  Off-Broadway: Confederates (Signature Theatre); In the Southern Breeze (Rattlestick Theater); Regional: Dial M for Murder (Westport Country Playhouse); Trouble in Mind (Hartford Stage); Peter Pan and Wendy (KCRep); On the Far End, Jennifer Who Is Leaving (Round House Theatre); Jane Eyre (Geva Theatre); BAKKHAI (Baltimore Center Stage); Three Sisters (Two River Theater); Manahatta (Yale Repertory Theatre); Repertory Theatre of St. Louis; The Fisher Center; Court Theatre; Goodman Theatre; Steppenwolf; Northlight Theatre; Chicago Shakespeare Theater; Member, USA 829. TRAINING  M.F.A., Yale School of Drama. @emma.e.deane (IG), www.emmadeane.com

Victor Zupanc  (Sound Designer)  GUTHRIE  25 productions since 1996.  
THEATER  Over 300 productions; Children’s Theatre Company: Resident Music Director/Composer, 130 productions since 1989; Regional (selected): BAM; SITI Company; Playwrights Horizons; The Joyce Theater; The Acting Company; The New Victory Theater; South Coast Repertory; Mixed Blood Theatre; San Diego Rep; La Jolla Playhouse; Missouri Rep; Berkeley Rep; The Kennedy Center. INTERNATIONAL Productions in China, Japan, Europe, South America, Australia, New Zealand and England. OTHER Original theme music on NPR; Numerous choral and orchestra compositions. AWARDS Two Drama-Logue Awards; Two Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Awards; Three-time McKnight Fellow; Bush Fellow; Ivey Award. TRAINING  Master’s degree, Music Composition, University of California, San Diego. www.victorzupanc.com

Carla Steen  (Resident Dramaturg)  GUTHRIE  More than 80 productions since 1996, including The Importance of Being Earnest, Into the Woods, Hamlet, The Little Prince, A Christmas Carol, Sally & Tom, Sweat, The Tempest, Noura, As You Like It, Frankenstein, West Side Story, Familiar, Sunday in the Park With George, Disgraced, The 39 Steps, Peer Gynt, His Girl Friday and Sweeney Todd. THEATER Dramaturgy for The Acting Company; University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theater B.F.A. Acting Program; Hammerstein Center; NYU Tisch School of the Arts; Augsburg University. PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS Member of Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas (LMDA). TRAINING  M.F.A., Columbia University; B.A., Augsburg University

Keely Wolter  (Vocal Coach)  GUTHRIE  The Importance of Being Earnest, Shane, Blues for an Alabama Sky, Sally & Tom, Vietgone, Sweat, Noura, The Great Leap. THEATER Theater Latté Da: Chicago, Hedwig and the Angry Inch, Five Points, Assassins, Man of La Mancha, Six Degrees of Separation, Peter and the Starcatcher, Ragtime, Lullaby, Sweeney Todd, All Is Calm; Jungle Theater: Georgiana & Kitty: Christmas at Pemberley, Is Edward Snowden Single?, Small Mouth Sounds, Ride the Cyclone, The Wickhams, Miss Bennet, Lone Star Spirits, Le Switch, Constellations; Penumbra Theatre: benevolence, Wedding Band; Minnesota Opera: The Fix. TRAINING Royal Central School of Speech and Drama; Viterbo University
Aaron Preusse (Fight Director) GUTHRIE Over 20 productions, recently including Into the Woods, Murder on the Orient Express, Vietgone and Sweat. THEATER Ordway: Jesus Christ Superstar, The Pirates of Penzance; Minnesota Opera: Carmen; Park Square Theatre: Hamlet; Commonweal Theatre Company: The Three Musketeers; Red Bird Theatre: Buried Child; Gremlin Theatre: Dial M for Murder; Theatre Pro Rata: The Illusion; Lyric Arts: Superior Donuts; Exposed Brick Theatre: Muyehpen; Theatre in the Round: The Three Musketeers; Old Log Theatre: The Play That Goes Wrong. FILM/TELEVISION Stunt Coordinator: Bitcon, Profile of a Killer, Utility Stunts: Marmalade, Body Language, Christmas Break-In, Thin Ice. www.fakefighting.com

Sara Pillatzki-Warzeha Enrolled Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, Dakota/German Descent (Dakota Language Consultant/Assistant Director) GUTHRIE Debut. THEATER Director: Hands on a Hardbody, Be More Chill, High Fidelity (Minneapolis Musical Theatre); The Three Snow Bears (Stages Theatre Company/New Native Theatre); Men on Boats (University of Minnesota); Company (Lakeshore Players Theatre); Songs for a New World (St. Olaf College); Assistant Director: The Unplugging (New Native Theatre). OTHER Native Advisory Council Member (Guthrie Theater); Consulting Scholar: Women of the Fur Trade (Stratford Festival). TEACHING University of Minnesota, Morris; St. Olaf College. TRAINING Ph.D. Candidate, Theatre Historiography, University of Minnesota; M.F.A., Theatre, Minnesota State Mankato

Talon Bazille Ducheneaux Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Lakota, and Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, Dakota (Indigenous Music Consultant) GUTHRIE Debut. THEATER Rap artist, producer and sound designer; Cornerstone Theater Company: Wicoun (written by Larissa FastHorse and directed by Michael John Garcés). MUSIC Soundscapes for the Oscar Howe exhibition at the University of South Dakota and the “RELATIVE” exhibition with Dyani White Hawk and Leya Hale at Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts; Manager of Wicahpi Olowan Music Program/Recording Studio that provides free access at the Oglala Lakota Artspace in Kyle, South Dakota; Hip-Hop Albums: DOPA, WCWW. www.baztk.com

Jennifer Liestman (Resident Casting Director) GUTHRIE Artistic Team member since 2003; More than 70 productions, workshops and readings since 2015, including The Importance of Being Earnest, Shane, Into the Woods, Murder on the Orient Express, Hamlet, The Little Prince, Sally & Tom, Vietgone, Sweat, A Raisin in the Sun, The Tempest, A Christmas Carol, Dickens’ Holiday Classic, Noura, Floyd’s, West Side Story, Familiar, Watch on the Rhine, Native Gardens and Disgraced. FILM/TELEVISION Master Servant (Casting Consultant). TEACHING Audition master classes for the University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theater B.F.A. Acting Program; Macalester College; SMU; Other universities in MN and the U.S. TRAINING B.A., Theatre, MSU Moorhead
Lori Lundquist (Stage Manager) GUTHRIE Stage Manager: Into the Woods, The Little Prince, Vietgone, Guys and Dolls; Assistant Stage Manager: A Raisin in the Sun. THEATER Broadway: Fosse, The Best Man, Holiday; Off-Broadway: Head of Passes with Phylicia Rashad (The Public Theater); Julie Taymor’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream (TFANA); MCC Theater; Vineyard Theatre; Signature Theatre; Shakespeare in the Park; Roundabout Theatre Company; Playwrights Horizons; Second Stage Theater; Minetta Lane Theatre; NYTW; NYSAF; Regional: Ford’s Theatre; Ordway; Hartford Stage; Long Wharf Theatre; McCarter Theatre Center; Alley Theatre; Trinity Rep; KCRep. OPERA Minnesota Opera; Indianapolis Opera; Opera Memphis; New York City Opera. TRAINING B.A./B.S., Bemidji State University

Anna Baranski (Assistant Stage Manager) GUTHRIE Debut. THEATER Dallas Theater Center; Alliance Theatre; Hartford Stage; Children’s Theatre Company; Arena Stage; Triad Stage; Musical Theatre West; Circle Theatre; Casa Mañana Theatre; Theatre Arlington; Kids Who Care Performing Arts; Trinity Shakespeare Festival; Texas Shakespeare Festival; Second Thought Theatre; Proud AEA member. TRAINING M.F.A., Stage Management, University of California, Irvine. @dinosaur.stage.manager (IG), www.annabaranski.com

McCorkle Casting, Ltd. Pat McCorkle, C.S.A., and Rebecca Weiss, C.S.A. (NYC Casting Consultant for 2023-2024 Season) GUTHRIE 100+ productions since 1998. THEATER Broadway: 50+ productions, including On the Town, Amazing Grace, End of the Rainbow and A Few Good Men; Off-Broadway: 60+ productions, including Tribes, Our Town and Driving Miss Daisy; Regional: Hundreds of regional theaters, including Barrington Stage Company, George Street Playhouse and Connecticut Repertory Theatre. FILM/TELEVISION Currently casting six feature films for theatrical release; Previously, over 75 films, including three recent films for Hallmark, Premium Rush, Ghost Town, The Thomas Crown Affair, Die Hard With a Vengeance and Thirteenth Warrior; Select TV credits include “Twisted” (ABC), Humans for “Sesame Street,” “Californication” (Emmy Award nomination) and “Chappelle’s Show.” www.mccorklecasting.com
For the People, by the People

Unlike many new plays, For the People didn’t begin with written words on a page. It began with stories spoken in community circles. Over several years, those conversations became the source material for a script, which became the world premiere play onstage now. See how the playwrights, the director, the Twin Cities Native community and the Guthrie came together to make For the People possible.

NOVEMBER 2019
The Guthrie commissions Ty Defoe and Larissa FastHorse to create a theater project that centers stories and experiences from the Twin Cities Native community. The project is made possible by a generous grant from The Joyce Foundation.

DECEMBER 2021
To test out script ideas, Defoe holds a two-day workshop at the Guthrie with an ensemble of local actors, including members of the Guthrie’s Native Advisory Council. Defoe and FastHorse incorporate the collective learnings.

2019/2020
Defoe and FastHorse hold story circles with members of the local Native community and write the first draft of a play based on these conversations.

MAY/JUNE 2022
Director Michael John Garcés joins the creative team and leads a five-day workshop of the now-titled For the People, culminating in a reading at the Minneapolis American Indian Center. The week of theatermaking includes a story circle with Little Earth community members, a tour of Franklin Avenue and a dinner at Owamni restaurant.

PHOTO: THOMAS DRASKOVIC, OOGIE PUSH, INEZ D’ECOTEAU, ROYA TAYLOR, ADRIENNE ZIMIGA-JANUARY, ERNEST BRIGGS, NATHANIEL TWOBEARS, ISABELLA STAR LABLANC (ADDIE GORLIN-HAN)
FALL/WINTER 2022
Defoe, FastHorse and Garcés gather in the Dowling Studio for a three-day workshop to further refine the play. The Guthrie receives a second grant from The Joyce Foundation to support a mainstage production of *For the People*.

SPRING/SUMMER 2023
The Guthrie announces *For the People* as part of its upcoming 2023–2024 Season. The Joyce Foundation awards the Guthrie a third grant to support the hiring of two Native muralists for the scenic design and an Indigenous Music Consultant.

OCTOBER 2023
*For the People* begins performances on the McGuire Proscenium Stage.

SEPTEMBER 2023
The company of *For the People* begins rehearsals at the Guthrie, with the entire cast (featuring seven Native actors and one non-Native actor) making their Guthrie mainstage debuts.
On Franklin: Memories From the Cast and Community

From its vivid murals to its beloved gathering places, every inch of Franklin Avenue’s cultural corridor carries pieces of the past while reflecting the Native community of today. We invited folks to tell us what this neighborhood means to them.

A few years after I moved to Minneapolis, I wanted to find a way to get involved with and give back to the Native community here. I saw an ad on Craigslist for a theater production, and I offered my services as a graphic designer. I met with theaetmakers Andrea Fairbanks and Rhiana Yazzie at Pow Wow Grounds on Franklin Avenue. After we got to know each other, they wrote me three parts in 2012: The Musical! That was pretty special.

Ernest Briggs
(White Earth Nation)
Levi Mitchell in For the People

Adrienne Zimiga-January
(Citizen of the Oglala Lakota Nation)
Commissioner Bobbie Grey in For the People

I have so many memories on Franklin Avenue, including going to the Ginew/Golden Eagle Program at the Minneapolis American Indian Center as a young kid. I also went to Four Winds American Indian Magnet School where I first learned Dakota and Ojibwe languages. I think all the teachers, faculty and students who went there will feel well-represented when they see For the People on the Guthrie stage.
Back in the 1980s, I loved the Chef Cafe — a greasy-spoon diner that served good, hearty comfort food like fried chicken and meatloaf at moderate prices. You’d see lots of Native families eating dinner together on Friday evenings. It was open late on weekends, so it was also the place where folks who had been kicked out of the bars would come to sober up over burgers, fries and milkshakes. I miss it!

Roya Taylor  
(Enrolled Pawnee and Choctaw, Oklahoma)

Last year, we did a workshop of For the People at the Minneapolis American Indian Center on Franklin Avenue. Seeing all the local elders and community members come out and share with us while we were working on the play was incredibly cool to experience.

Nathaniel TwoBears  
(Ho-Chunk Nation)

Sage Piewannakwat in For the People

In 2018, I brought my 10-year-old son, Max, to Indigenous Peoples’ Day on Franklin Avenue. We traveled from San Diego where I was living at the time, and we didn’t pack enough warm clothes. As we walked around in the chilly fall weather, we were shivering. Thankfully, Robert Rice gave us some fluffy sweatshirts to keep warm. Some of my neighborhood Native friends from Franklin Avenue were shouting, “Sam, what are you doing here?” The next day, Max was my “teaching assistant” for an embodied drawing class I taught at the Minneapolis American Indian Center. It was a wonderful weekend. I felt like I was more at home than my actual home.

Sam Aros-Mitchell (Yaqui)

I love biking from Seward Community Co-op to Sebastian Joe’s. I’m my own Metro Transit 2 bus. I also love the Aldi on Franklin Avenue. It has the nicest community members and a great staff.

Wesley Hortenbach

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Stories From the Avenue:  
An Interview  
With Roya Taylor

Franklin Avenue has such a strong presence in For the People that it could almost be considered a character. This vibrant cultural hub in the heart of Minneapolis carries decades of Native history, so we called on artist, storyteller and KFAI radio host Roya Taylor (Enrolled Pawnee and Choctaw, Oklahoma) to share her stories with us. For the past 40 years, Roya has called the Twin Cites home and poured her time and talents into the local Native community. Read on to discover why Franklin Avenue holds a special — and sacred — place in her heart.

JOHANNA BUCH: According to historical records, the American Indian Movement started in Minneapolis in 1968 when Native people were displaced by U.S. government programs. How and why did the Twin Cities become a gathering place for the Native community?

ROYA TAYLOR: Contrary to the popular narrative of relocation, there were many Ojibwe and Dakota already making their way to the Twin Cities region as early as the 1930s. Native women married Eastern European immigrants up on the range and eventually moved their families to the city. The Dakota reservations were located near the Twin Cities, and many people organically migrated in that direction. In the 1940s, World War II accelerated that migration, as many Indigenous folks joined the Armed Forces and received their military training in Minnesota, sometimes bringing their families with them. What I’ve heard from my elders is that Washington Avenue near the Guthrie was the first gateway for Native folks to enter the Twin Cities back then. The prominence of Franklin Avenue came later.

The passing of Public Law 280 in 1953 further accelerated the migration of Native people, as it terminated government support for Native tribes and led to urban relocation programs that moved Native people into cities to help assimilate them into American culture. And some people came here from other states like Oklahoma, which is where my family lived. When people ask how I ended up in Minnesota, I joke that I started driving north on I-35 until it snowed and I got marooned here. [laughs] That was the fall of 1981, and I’ve been here ever since.
When the American Indian Movement began to assist and advocate for Native people after decades of discrimination and displacement, Franklin Avenue began to revitalize. My ancestors lived together in villages made up of many families, and the emergence of service organizations and businesses in the 1980s and 1990s reminded me of those villages. Places like the Minneapolis American Indian Center (MAIC), Indian Health Board and Native American Community Clinic run by the wonderful Dr. Antony Stately created an urban renewal for the Avenue.

**JB:** How have you seen Franklin Avenue evolve over the decades?

**RT:** In the 1980s, Franklin Avenue was one of the largest concentrations of Native Americans in the lower 48 states, with approximately 135,000 people in the Phillips neighborhood. Storefronts were empty, things had fallen into disrepair and there was a strong police presence, so it had the reputation of being an unsafe area. But I saw Franklin Avenue begin to change as various redevelopment projects were put in place. The Native American Community Development Institute, which started in 2007, was hugely instrumental. They had a vision to create gathering spaces, restaurants, shops and art galleries along Franklin Avenue, and they helped launch businesses like All My Relations Arts and Four Sisters Farmers Market that continue to thrive. As individual lives, families and organizations came together, it morphed into the community and gathering place for Native people it is today.

**JB:** You’ve been involved in the creation of *For the People* for several years. Why was it important to make Franklin Avenue so prominent in the play?

**RT:** I participated in various *For the People* workshops with [Playwrights] Ty Defoe and Larissa FastHorse as well as a stage reading. Early on, we talked about where to set the story, as the Frogtown neighborhood in St. Paul also has a prominent Native community. But Franklin Avenue has always been and continues to be an anchor point. It’s reinvigorated and reimagined itself many different times. I’m so glad Ty and Larissa tapped into that.

I also have some great connections to the Native folks working on the show. As an actor, I’ve performed with Turtle Theater Collective run by [cast member] Ernest Briggs. Brian P. Joyce, who is an understudy in the show, was my...
first director. And [Dakota Language Consultant/Assistant Director] Sara Pillatzki-Warzeha directed me in a short play. It’s wonderful to see so many of us involved.

**JB:** The characters in *For the People* span different generations. How do you see the elders and younger Native community engaging together on Franklin Avenue?

**RT:** What April Dakota experiences in the play is common for many Native young people. Maybe they didn’t grow up with their culture, or maybe they did, but they weren’t paying attention. So they come back to places like Franklin Avenue to find their identity. I’ve watched my son and daughter have similar experiences. My daughter just told me that my grandson wants to learn how to drum, and I’m looking forward to teaching him to sing and play our family songs. I’m so proud of our young people — they are so much further ahead than I was at their age. I was just trying to work and survive. I love seeing them come to Franklin Avenue to work, socialize, learn and engage with us.

**JB:** What does Franklin Avenue mean to you personally?

**RT:** I have great memories of gathering, eating and celebrating as a community. My dad and I have watched my daughter and grandchildren dance at pow wows at the MAIC. I’ve supported my son in running lacrosse camps at East Phillips Park. My wife and I love going to Maria’s Cafe on weekends with our family. Franklin Avenue has become a prominent place not only geographically but also in our psyche as Native people. I’ve met and worked with so many incredible people over the years. Many of them are no longer with us, but their impact lives on, and I carry them with me.

**JB:** How would you suggest non-Native folks engage with and support Franklin Avenue?

**RT:** Frequent the local businesses and follow Franklin Avenue organizations on social media. It’s a great way to learn about events and make connections. I believe it’s essential for Native and non-Native people to meet face-to-face. And when you do, I encourage non-Native folks to let the Native people lead the conversation, especially the women who are at the center of the community.

**JB:** What do you hope for the future of Franklin Avenue and the people who call it home?

**RT:** I often think about what it means to be a post-modern Native American. Some say that we have our traditions and that’s enough. But life is happening and things are changing. If we believe what we say — that we are all related, including non-Native people — the challenge going forward isn’t just about survival anymore. It’s about resiliency. If we can hold to our traditional values while remaining open to change, I think the future is incredibly bright. 

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**Want to hear more from Roya?**

She’ll be a featured storyteller at our BIPOC Community Night on Friday, October 20. Visit guthrietheater.org for tickets and details.
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The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the U.S.

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The scenery, props, costumes and other creative elements featured in For the People were made at the Guthrie specifically for this production or curated in close collaboration with local and regional Native artists.

OUR MISSION

The Guthrie Theater engages exceptional theater artists in the exploration of both classic and contemporary plays connecting the community we serve to one another and to the world. Through its extraordinary artists, staff and facility, the Guthrie is committed to the people of Minnesota and, from its place rooted deeply in the Twin Cities, influences the field as a leading 21st-century arts organization.

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The Guthrie creates transformative theater experiences that ignite the imagination, stir the heart, open the mind and build community through the illumination of our common humanity.

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Join us for these community events during the run of *For the People*.

**BIPOC COMMUNITY NIGHT: STORIES FROM FRANKLIN AVENUE**
October 20 at 5:30 p.m.
BIPOC professionals and community members are invited to an evening of sharing and reflection led by Native storytellers Trish Cook, Juanita Espinosa and Roya Taylor. Tickets start at $20 and include admission to the 7:30 p.m. performance of *For the People*. Visit our website for a free Metro Transit pass to this event.

**NATIVE POP-UP MARKETS**
October 21 and November 4, 2–7 p.m.
Shop a curated collection of jewelry, art, photography and crafts designed by Native artists and creators from the Twin Cities community. This event is free and open to all.

**TWIN CITIES EATSS**
November 8 at 5:30 p.m.
The American Indian College Fund kicks off a new year of Epicurean Award to Support Scholars (EATSS) events with an evening of learning and an exclusive concert by the Indigo Girls. All proceeds benefit the American Indian College Fund.

For tickets, details and a complete list of events, visit guthrietheater.org.