

**2023 WAGNER
NEW PLAY FESTIVAL**

UC San Diego

ARTS AND HUMANITIES
Theatre and Dance



THICKER THAN...

by Agyeiwaa Asante

directed by Lamar Perry

Theodore & Adele Shank Theater

May 11th, 12th & June 8th, 9th @ 7:30pm

May 13th @ 2:00pm

Thicker Than...

by Agyeiwaa Asante
directed by Lamar Perry

CAST

Eugene/Elliot
Spencer/River/Travel Agent
Marco/Gregory/Cedro
Nurse/Colette/Marisol
T.S.
Carla/Shawna
Kelly/Marie/Stephanie
Tom
Jillian

Victor Flores
Rachel Halili
Vincent Del Rio
Gabriella Marie Johnson
Noah Keyishian
Kya Lee
Ben McLaren
Morgan Scott
Taiwo Sokan

CREATIVE TEAM

Assistant Director
Dramaturg
Scenic Designer
Costume Designer
Lighting Designer
Sound Designer
Assistant Lighting Designer
Assistant Costume Designer
Assistant Costume Designer

Kali Boston
Jazmine Logan
Eleanor Williams
Elise Wesley
Russell Chow
Caleb Foley
Melody Vilitchai
Lex Verdayes
Lauren Agans-Dominguez

THE STAGE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Production Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Manager
Script Production Assistant

Alina Novotny
Georgia Horton
Lula Britos
Robert Remedios

CONTENT & SENSORY WARNINGS

strobe effects used

SUMMARY

Jillian is ready for a change. Her adult son, Tom, is not. Set in a not-too-distant future where a new kind of technology exists that allows anyone to emotionally “uncouple” from anyone in their lives, *Thicker Than...* asks what it means to cut off ties with a loved one and move on with your life. Can you ever truly walk away? And what are the ethical and emotional

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Welcome, welcome to the world of *Thicker Than*, a world where in the not to distant future you can choose who your people are and to what degree they remain your people. Is blood truly thicker than water even if it comes at the cost of self? I come to theater by way of the Black church where the audience is a lively part of every experience. I invite you to live fully in this space so If you feel so moved please laugh, cry, exclaim, bear witness, etc. Be in community with us fully as you see fit while also being protective of our actors. This gift they're offering us is sacred and costs them so much so let's all take care of each other through this.

THE DIRECTOR

Lamar Perry (He/Him/His) is the Assistant Professor of Directing, UCSD. Recent directing credits: *Animals Out of Paper* (Chautauqua), *Mud Row* (Detroit Public Theatre), *What The End Will Be* (Roundabout - Associate Director). Perry has until Nikko developed work at The Old Globe, Penumbra Theatre Company, The Classical Theatre of Harlem, The Eugene O'Neill Center, Chautauqua, and Diversionary. For more please visit lamarperry.com

THE CAST

Victor Flores (Eugene, Elliot, Marco) is a second-year MFA Acting candidate at UC San Diego, from Houston, TX. Victor recently graduated with his BFA from Sam Houston State University. Audiences may or may not recognise him from other UC San Diego shows, such as: *A Flea in Her Rear* (Victor Emmanuel Chandebise/Loche), *Machinal* (Husband), *Fifty Boxes of Earth* (Jon), and *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* (Mace). Other credits include: *Richard III* (King Richard), *Cloud Tectonics* (Annibal De La Luna), and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime and Godspell*.

Rachel Halili (Spencer, River, Travel Agent) is a third-year undergraduate theatre major and business minor from the Bay Area. UC San Diego credits: *Flea in Her Rear*, *Machinal*, *Fifty Boxes of Earth* (AD, WNPF'22), *Napoli!*, *peerless*, *Uncle Vanya*. She is also the Managing Director of Company 157 and Muir Musical.

THE CAST *cont.*

Vincent Del Rio (Gregory, Cedro) is a first-year transfer theater major. He is originally from Riverside, CA, and is a Meisner-trained actor. This is his first production at UC San Diego.

Gabriella Marie Johnson (Nurse, Colette, Marisol)

Noah Keyishian (T.S.) is a third-year MFA acting candidate at UC San Diego. La Jolla Playhouse credits: *Here There Are Blueberries*. UC San Diego credits: *The Winter's Tale; Dance Nation; Hells Canyon; The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity; Twelfth Night; Prepared; A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Theater credits: *Are You There?* (Humana Festival of New American Plays); *Tell the Truth; A Christmas Carol; Dracula; The Brief History of Francois Le Chou Chou* (Actors Theatre of Louisville); and *Favors* (Manhattan Repertory Theater). Film credits: *Happy Yummy Chicken; That Thing I Had That One Time; Status-Driven; Wax Lover's Playlist*.

Kya Lee (Carla, Shawna) is a second-year MFA student who hails from Brooklyn, New York. She holds a BA in Theatre and a BA in Psychology from Pomona College. UC San Diego credits: *Limp Wrist on the Lever, In the Red and Brown Water*. Regional credits: *From Out Beyond My Shame* (Gary Marshall Theater); Pomona College credits: *Red Velvet, Crumbs From the Table of Joy, The Tempest, House of Spirits, Cabaret*.

Ben McLaren (Kelly, Marie, Stephanie) is a fifth-year theatre major graduating this spring. They're originally from the Bay Area, but have since fallen in love with San Diego beaches and found their new home. They love storytelling in all shapes and forms. Hit them up if you want to play Dungeons & Dragons. Select UCSD Acting Credits: *Balm in Gilead* (David), *The Nether* (Woodnut), *Sonnets of an Old Century* (Yusef), *Our Town* (ensemble), *Twelfth Night* (Captain), *Transmogrify, Weirdo* (Zealand), *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (Narrator). UCSD Directing Credits: *Circle Mirror Transformation, Neighborhood 3: Requisition of Doom, Get Goin', Cutthroat*. Other Credits: NVA 10 Minute Play Festival, NVA Final Draft New Play Festival, *The Music Man* (Dr. Harold Hill), *Sweeney Todd* (Sweeney Todd), *The Ferryman* (Michael Carney).

Morgan Scott (Tom) is a third-year MFA candidate. He is from Chicago, IL, but grew up in Montgomery County Maryland, a suburb of Washington, D.C. He holds a B.A. in Theatre from The University of Maryland. UC San Diego Credits: *Bach at Leipzig, Limp Wrist on the Lever, Everybody, Twelfth Night, End Days* (animated), *Uncle Vanya* (virtual). Regional Credits: *Bonnie & Clyde The Musical* (Monumental Theatre Company); *Amazing Grace The Musical* (Museum of the Bible); PYG, or *The Misedumacation of Dorian Bell* (Studio Theatre); *Little Shop of Horrors* (Constellation Theatre Company); *The Snowy Day* (Adventure Theatre). National Tour: *Amazing Grace The Musical* 1st National Tour.

THE CAST *cont.*

Taiwo Sokan (Jillian) is a third-year MFA candidate. She holds a BA in Theatre Arts from the University of Pennsylvania. She has worked extensively in Philadelphia as an actor, stage manager, and theatre technician. UC San Diego credits: *Limp Wrist on the Lever*, *In the Red and Brown Water*, *Twelfth Night*, *Farside* (audio play), *Town Hall* (virtual). Regional: *Marry, Marry, Quite Contrary* (Paper Dolls Ensemble), *Operation Wawa Road Trip*, *Fly Eagles Fly* (Tribe of Fools), *The Bluest Eye* (u/s, Arden Theatre Company), *All's Well That Ends Well* (UPenn), *No Exit* (Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble), *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Limelight Theatre Company) Tour: *Peter Rabbit Tales* (Enchantment Theatre Company), Devised: *Naked Knotted Neurons* (UPenn Players). An experienced deviser, she has also premiered works with *Tribe of Fools*, *Paper Doll Ensemble*, and the *UPenn Players*, the latter of which premiered at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Agyeiwaa Asante (Playwright) is a Ghanaian-American playwright. Her plays include, *Swirl* (Kennedy Center's Page-to-Stage Festival 2017, Watermelon One-Act Festival-Best Production 2019), *Help Wanted* (Silver Spring One Act Festival, Elemental Women Productions), *Wildest Dreams* (Fire This Time Festival), *By Grace Pt. 2* (2021 Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Festival), *Promithes*, *Promithes* (Tennessee Williams & New Orleans Literary Festival) and *Dainty* (BOLD NYC's 2020 Festival, Mosaic Theatre, Playwrights Realms Scratchpad series). She has been commissioned by University of Maryland's Next Now Festival and Round House Theatre. Agyeiwaa is the 2020 recipient of The Bret Adams and Paul Reisch Foundation's Ollie Award. She has a B.A. in Theatre from the University of Maryland, College Park and is a 2nd-year Playwriting MFA candidate at UC San Diego. Representation: Scott Halle, Gramercy Entertainment.

Kali Boston (Assistant Director) is a fourth-year theater major originally from Boston, Massachusetts. Recent credits include *Heathers* (Zorina Productions, Executive Producer and Director), *Jewish Arts Festival* (Production Manager). UCSD credits include FallWorks (ASM), *Hells Canyon* (ASM), *In the Red and Brown Water* (Assistant Director and Shun), *1LIFE* (ensemble) and *A Chorus Line* (Richie "Rickie" Walters). Other credits include *In Every Generation* (San Diego Repertory Theatre, PA) and *We Were Kids* (Sparks Theatre, Director).

Jazmine Logan (Dramaturg) is a second-year PhD student in Theatre and Drama at UC San Diego from San Diego, California. She holds a BA in Theatre Arts and a BA in Politics from University of California, Santa Cruz, and a MA in Theatre Arts from San Francisco State University. Her UCSD credits includes *In the Red and Brown Water* (Dramaturg) and *Dance Nation* (Dramaturg). Her additional credits include *Spring Awakening: The Musical* (Assistant Director/Dramaturg) at San Francisco State University; *Crowns* (Mabel/Assistant Director), *The Children's Hour* (Peggy Rogers), *Romeo and Juliet* (Juliet), *Hands Up: 7 Playwrights, 7 Testimonies* (Co-Director), *A Raisin in the Sun* (Ruth Younger), *Zoot Suit* (Guera/Ensemble), *Detroit '67* (Bunny "Bonita"), *The Odyssey* (Trojan/Hecuba/Suitor), *A Dream Play* (Victoria/Ensemble), and *The Waiting Room* (Brenda) at UC Santa Cruz.

THE CREATIVE TEAM *cont.*

Eleanor Williams (Scenic Designer) is a first year MFA Scenic Design student from southern California. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering and Bachelor of Arts in Theater from Lafayette College in Easton, PA. Her selected design credits include *The Winter's Tale* (UCSD), *Shakespeare's R&J* (Lafayette College Theater Department), and *Legally Blonde* (The Marquis Players).

Elise Wesley (Costume Designer) is a second-year MFA Costume Design candidate. Born and raised in Columbus, Ohio, she holds a BFA in Theatre Design and Technology from Otterbein University. UC San Diego credits: *Bunny Bunny*; *Promithes, Promithes*; *Nonna Kills the President*; *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*; *51BARRIO*; *In The Red and Brown Water* (assistant). Select regional credits: *Newsies* (Columbus Children's Theatre, BroadwayWorld Award), *Ariodante* (Opera Neo), and *Carry On* (Eleventh Hour Theatre Co.).

Russell Chow (Lighting Designer) is a senior theatre BA. My main focus in theatre is lighting design, and tech in general. Please reach out to me if you have any questions about design classes, or about getting involved with any of the many student theatre organizations on campus.

Caleb Foley (Sound Designer) is a fourth-year undergraduate theatre major. UC San Diego credits: *Winter's Tale* (ASD), *Bach at Leipzig* (SD), *Promithes, Promithes* (SD), *Nonna Kills the President* (SD), *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* (ASD). Other credits: *By the Throat* (SD), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (ASD, The Old Globe), *Rot* (SD, Company 157).

Melody Vilitchai (Assistant Lighting Designer)

Lex Verdayes (Assistant Costume Designer)

Lauren Agans-Dominguez (Assistant Costume Designer)

THE STAGE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Alina Novontny (Production Stage Manager) is a first year MFA student originally from San Jose, CA. She earned her BA from Chapman University in Technical Theatre as well as two minors in Dance and Integrated Education Studies. After graduating in 2016, she started her career freelancing as a Stage Manager and ASM in both the Bay Area and Southern California while also teaching stage management and theatre tech to high schoolers. Alina has had the unique opportunity to work in a wide range of performance mediums including immersive theatre, musical theatre, aerial arts, dance competitions and opera. Selected credits include the world premier of *Jake Heggie's If I Were You* (Merola Opera Program), *The Goddess Project* (Peter Sellers, UCLA), *Meet Us Quickly With Your Mercy* (Flyaway Productions), and *The Speakeasy SF* (Boxcar Theatre Co.)

Lula Britos (Assistant Stage Manager)

Georgia Horton (Assistant Stage Manager)

Robert Remedios (Script Production Assistant) Robert, also known as Bobby, is thrilled to be a part of *Thicker Than...* in his last quarter at UCSD. This marks his 25th show, and he has previously worked in stage management for productions such as *Heathers*, *Into the Woods*, *American Idiot*, and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. Bobby is also a premed student graduating with honors. He hails from Redlands, CA, and would like to thank Alina, Lula, and Georgia for being a top-notch stage management team. Bobby looks forward to working with the rest of the creative team/cast to bring the show to life.



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