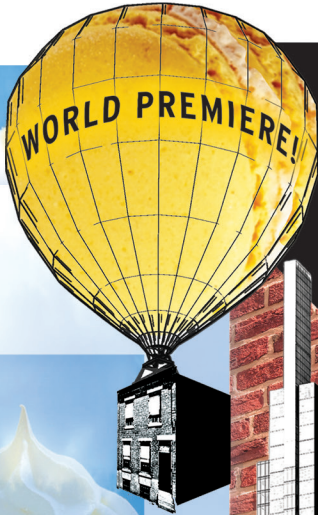


theatre exile

25  
YEARS



# THE EVER PRESENT



by R. Eric Thomas

Directed by Brett Ashley Robinson



SEPTEMBER 11 - 19 | LIVE OUTDOORS IN SOUTH PHILLY

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# 2021-22 SEASON

## theatre exile

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### 3-SHOW PACKAGES STARTING AT \$45

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★ THE EVER ★ PRESENT ★

Written by R. Eric Thomas

SHOW DATES, TIMES, & LOCATIONS:

Saturday, September 11 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. at Columbus Square (1200 Wharton St.)

Sunday, September 12 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. at Dickinson Square (1600 E. Moyamensing Ave.)

Wednesday, September 15 5:30 p.m. at Wharton Square (2300 Wharton St.)

Friday, September 17 5:30 p.m. at Stephen Girard Park (2101 Shunk St.)

Saturday, September 18 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. - Columbus Square (1200 Wharton St.)

Sunday, September 19 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. - Hawthorne Park (750 S. 12th St.)

CAST

Kimie Muroya ..... Character 1: Pashmina, Josefina, Aster, and Bach-Yen  
Nathan Alford-Tate ..... Character 2: Investigator, Salvador, Lady Incandessa,  
Coriander, and Bähn Mi  
Pax Ressler ..... Character 3: Vernal Belch  
Eleni Delopoulos ..... Character 4: Assistant, Neighbor and Macaron  
Cathy Simpson\* ..... Character 5: PPA Attendant, Bunny, Babish and Éclair  
Cynda Purnell ..... Understudy

CREW

Stage Manager  
Rafi Levavy\*  
Costume Designer  
Keyonna Butler  
Puppetry  
J. Bean Schwab

Director  
Brett Ashley Robinson  
Assistant Director  
Angela Bey  
Props & Set Designer  
Avista Custom Theatrical Services

ASM/COVID Safety Monitor  
Lian Brody  
Sound Designer  
Elizabeth Atkinson  
Audio Engineer  
Mark Valenzuela

Run Crew

Nat Merrill and Mary R. Williams

FUNDED BY



\*Member of Actors' Equity Association,  
the Union of Professional Actors and  
Stage Managers in the United States.

## A NOTE FROM PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR DEBORAH BLOCK

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Welcome to the world premiere of *The Ever Present* by R. Eric Thomas directed by Brett Ashley Robinson. This production is a culmination of a dream.

A few years ago Theatre Exile was entering a transitional period. We asked ourselves what would the next steps for Theatre Exile look like? Through conversations with staff, artists and the board we decided that evolution did not necessarily mean bigger. We did not want to change the intimate and daring nature of our subscription

series. At this time, we had also started to build a new home at 13th and Reed streets. So we kept the theater itself intimate and flexible. We also wanted to reach more people that may not always walk through our doors. We knew that no matter how wide you open the doors, sometimes being a good neighbor means leaving your home and meeting people halfway.

So we decided to experiment. We would create a new program that would bring the best of our major programmatic pillars deeper into South Philly. The program was called Out of Exile and it took our love of nurturing new scripts, combined it with our dedication to artistic excellence and married it to our commitment to the community.

In our first year, we worked with MJ Kauffman, who had written an all-ages script called *Whisper's Gone*. It went through a final development process through our New Play Development program called Studio X-hibition. The fun, buoyant show about time travel and saving the planet, told through the eyes of a fourth grader, had its world premiere directed by Rebecca Wright with us in the summer of 2019. In order for it to be a shared experience among the different residents of South Philly, we performed it in four parks throughout the area.

After that success, we wanted to take that vision to the next level. We reached out to the very talented R. Eric Thomas and commissioned him to create a work that uplifted the South Philly voice. Soon afterwards, we brought in Brett Ashley Robinson to realize his world, with equal parts creativity, joy and goofiness.

*The Ever Present* highlights our beautiful diversity and our love of food. It tackles the challenging issue of what to do when people have a different vision of what their neighborhood needs. The play reminds us that understanding is the key to acceptance and visa-versa.

We are proud to launch our 25th Anniversary season with R. Eric Thomas' lighthearted love letter to South Philly to be performed in five parks south of South Street.

Thank you for coming to live theater.

Thank you for joining us in Exile.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deborah Block', written in a cursive style.

Deborah Block, Producing Artistic Director

## CAST & CREW

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**Kimie Muroya** (She/Her) (Pashmina, Josefina, Aster, and Macaron) is thrilled to be returning to Theatre Exile! She is a graduate of Temple University, a Philadelphia-based actor, and a founding member of Philadelphia Asian Performing Artists, a collective focused on making known the work and presence of Asian artists in the Philadelphia Area. She has performed regionally with such theatres as InterAct Theatre Company, Philadelphia Artists'

Collective, Shakespeare in Clark Park, Quintessence Theatre Group, and more. When theatres closed, she pivoted to online/virtual theatre, performing with Philadelphia Young Playwrights, Hollins University, and Elephant Room Productions. Her feature film debut, *Antarctica*, premiered at the 2020 Raindance Film Festival in London and is now available on Amazon Prime.

Thanks to Mom, Otosan, Mikito and Kayla for all their love and support!

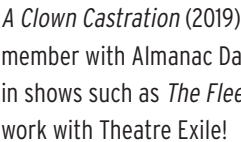
Upcoming: Winnifred in Witch at Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble.

Check out more: [kimiemuroya.com](http://kimiemuroya.com) and [@kimie.muroya](https://www.instagram.com/kimie.muroya) on Instagram.

As always, BLACK LIVES MATTER



**Nathan Alford-Tate** (He/Him) (Investigator, Salvador, Lady Incandessa, Coriander, and Bähn Mi) is an actor, and devising artist from Detroit, MI. Receiving his BFA in Acting from Western Michigan University and an MFA in Devised Performance from UARTS/ Pig Iron. Credits include performances with the South Camden Theatre Company, Pipeline (2021) Quintessence Theatre Group, *Rachel* (2020) the National Constitution Center, *FOURTEEN* (2019), *Male Tears: A Clown Castration* (2019), and *Tribe of Fools: Fly Eagles Fly!* (2018). Currently, he is a company member with Almanac Dance Circus Theatre, where he has assisted in creating and performing in shows such as *The Fleecing* (2021), *Grounds that Shout* (2018), and *Wild!* (2017). He is excited to work with Theatre Exile!



**Pax Ressler** (They/Them) (Vernal Belch) is a non-binary performer, music director, and composer working at the intersections of theatre and music as well as arts and advocacy. They are a passionate advocate and organizer of the non-binary and trans community in Philly and a gardener of the Genderfunk Philly Instagram ([@genderfunkphilly](https://www.instagram.com/genderfunkphilly)), featuring Philly's trans and non-binary theatre



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## CAST & CREW

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talent. Pax has worked for theatre companies including Arden Theatre Company, Bearded Ladies Cabaret, FringeArts, People's Light, Theatre Horizon, Wilma Theater, 1812 Productions, and more. Pax recently wrote an album of non-binary love songs entitled "Change" ([paxressler.bandcamp.com](http://paxressler.bandcamp.com)) and has written choral music for ensembles across the country. Their work as a composer has been seen in The Bearded Ladies' Barrymore Award-winning *Contradict This! A Birthday Funeral for Heroes* (Cherry Street Pier, Philadelphia and La Mama Experimental Theatre, NYC) and *Rose: You Are Who You Eat* (The Guggenheim Museum, NYC). [Paxressler.com](http://Paxressler.com)



**Eleni Delopoulos** (She/Her) (Assistant, Neighbor, Macaron) Theatre Exile debut! BC theater: *Cafe Puttanessa* at Act 11, *Oliver* at Quintessence, three Barrymore Nominations at Inis Nua in *Monster in the Hall*, and *Radiant Vermin*, *Christmas Carol* at DTC. Selected Credits: *Much Ado* (Beatrice) and *Othello* (Emilia) - Philadelphia Shakespeare Theater; *Into the Woods* (Westport Playhouse and Centerstage). Off-Broadway; *A Stoop on Orchard Street*, Tours: *Hair* in Italy, *Mame* in USA. *Rona Spelling Bee* (Alabama Shakespeare Theater), Hannigan u/s *Annie* (Fulton Theater), Speed in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Shakespeare & Company), and the Nurse in the film *Creed II*. She also is a costume designer & runs an educational non-profit. Thanks to her hearts - Ehren & Peter; Brett, the cast and crew, and R. Eric Thomas for his awesome script! Thank you SO much to Deb and Theater Exile for keeping theater alive in this insane time.



**Cathy Simpson\*** (She/Her) (PPA Attendant, Bunny, Babish and Éclair) has been a company member of the People's Light & Theatre Co. for more than 20 years, and a member of the "Freedom Rising" Company at the National Constitution Center for over 15 years. Her work in local theatres includes InterAct, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Philly Shakes, Hedgerow Theatre, the Arden, The Wilma, Flashpoint Theatre Juniper, Orbiter 3, and

Theatre Horizon, Revolution Shakespeare, Theatre Exile, and Ego Po. Her regional credits include Arena Stage, The Kennedy Center, Studio Theatre, Source Theatre, Woolly Mammoth, Olney Theatre Center, Theatre of the First Amendment, St. Louis Black Rep, St. Louis Rep, Indiana Repertory. Cathy is a two-time Helen Hayes Nominee, a three-time Barrymore nominee and a Barrymore winner for the Freedom Theatre production of *The Old Settler*, a Kevin Kline winner for the St. Louis Black Rep production of *A Song for Coretta*, and the Excellent Performer Award for World Competition in Toyama Japan. Cathy also has numerous film, television, and radio credits.

## CAST & CREW

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**R. Eric Thomas** (He/Him) (Playwright) is a national bestselling author and playwright, winner of the 2016 Barrymore Award for Best New Play, and the 2018 Dramatist Guild Lanford Wilson Award. He was a finalist for the 2017 Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award and two 2021 Lambda Literary Awards. Thomas has written for the Peabody Award-winning series *Dickinson* (AppleTV+) and *Better Things* (FX) and has been commissioned or produced on stage by Theatre Exile, Baltimore Center Stage, Everyman Theater, Arden Theatre Company, Simpatico Theatre, Azuka Theatre, Single Carrot Theatre, About Face Theatre, City Theatre Miami, Act II Playhouse and more. He is also the long-running host of *The Moth* in Philadelphia and D.C. and for four years was a Senior Staff Writer for *Elle.com* where he wrote “*Eric Reads the News*,” a daily current events and culture column with hundreds of thousands of monthly readers. His memoir *HERE FOR IT, OR HOW TO SAVE YOUR SOUL IN AMERICA*, is newly out in paperback and was a *Read with Jenna Book Club* pick featured on Today.

Website: [Rericthomas.com](http://Rericthomas.com)



**Brett Ashley Robinson** (She/Her) (Director) is a Barrymore award-winning theatre-maker in Philadelphia. She has worked with New York Theatre Workshop, The Under the Radar Festival, The Wilma, 1812 Productions, Lightning Rod Special, Pig Iron Theater Company, Ars Nova Ant Fest, The Arden Theatre Company, InterAct Theatre Company, The Flea Theatre, Theatre Horizon, Geva Theatre, and Actors Theatre of Louisville.

She is a company member of Applied Mechanics and a member of the HotHouse - the Wilma Theater resident company.

**Angela Bey** (They/Them) (Assistant Director) is a multidisciplinary artist from Philadelphia. Their art favors complex, difficult inquiries about society – centering the lives of Black folk. They create to inspire decolonization, joy, radical honesty, and healing – believing it is our divine duty to build a utopia we may not live to see. Ang is co-artistic director of Wings of Paper Theatre Co. and Shoe Box Theatre Collective. Selected credits – Acting: *Fabulation* (Lantern Theater), *The Niceties* (InterAct), *D-Pad* (Theatre Exile), *Code Black Planet* (Wilma Theatre), *Days of Re-Creation* (Philadelphia Theatre Company), *Candles* (Philadelphia Young Playwrights), *Twelfth Night* (Shakespeare in Clark Park), and the *Actors Ensemble* at Sundance Directors Lab. Playwriting: *Germantown Plays Pericles* (Shakespeare in Clark Park), *Every Everyman* (SCP), and *The Medusa Play* (SBTC).

## CAST & CREW

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Current commissions include Elevate Theatre Company and Lupine Performance Cooperative. Directing: *Whisper* (SBTC), *Every Everyman* (co-director), *The Medusa Play* (co-director), and *The White Feather Project* (self-produced). [angelabey.com](http://angelabey.com)

**Rafi Levavy\*** (He/Him) (Stage Manager) Off-Broadway credits include *The Velveteen Rabbit*, *The JAP Show*, *Confessions of an Irish Rebel* (Irish Arts Center), *Young Playwrights Festival*, *Lifegame*, *Tony n' Tina's Wedding*, *Stop Kiss* (Public), *Mizlansky/Zilinsky or 'Shmucks'*, *Psychopathia Sexualis* (both Manhattan Theatre Club), *Life Is A Dream* (Pearl), *Lonely Planet*, *The Professional*, *The Truth Teller* (all Circle Rep), and *Das Barbecü*. Regionally, Rafi has worked at Lincoln Center Theatre, Bagaduce Theater, Casa Manaña, Virginia Stage Company, Actors' Shakespeare Festival, Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theater, Stoneham Theatre, Depot Theatre, Lyric Stage Company of Boston, Foothills Theatre Company, New Repertory Theatre, The Miniature Theatre of Chester, Centenary Stage Company, Barter Theater, Northern Stage, PCPA Theaterfest, Helen Hayes Performing Arts Center, Maine State Music Theatre and Paper Mill Playhouse. Additionally, Rafi has worked for Jim Henson Productions, Walt Disney Theatrical Productions, and has stage managed clown school and shows for the NY Musical Theater Festival. A proud member of Equity, Rafi holds a degree in computer science from Brandeis University.

**Lian Brody** (They/He) (ASM/COVID Safety Monitor) is very excited to work on their first production with Theatre Exile! They have stage-managed for Philadelphia Young Playwrights, Temple University Theaters, and Philadelphia Theatre Company's now-disbanded ActOut Summer Camp program where they got their start in theatre working on devised projects with Philadelphia teens in 2013. Lian is interested in new plays, devised work, queer theatre, and drag artistry. When not working in performing arts, they can be found at local drag shows or drawing up tattoo designs and spending quality time with their cat, Kimba, who they thank for always being there to support them.

**Avista Custom Theatrical Services, LLC** (Props and Set Designer), owned by Jennifer Burkhart and Amanda Hatch, was founded in 2007. Avista specializes in prop construction, upholstery, drapery, and other soft goods construction, and maintains a 10,000 square foot rental warehouse in Norristown. Avista's prop master and design work has been seen locally at Opera Philadelphia, Azuka Theatre, Drexel and Temple Universities, Maukingbird Theatre, EgoPo Classic Theater, Theatre Exile, Inis Nua Theater, and Kimmel Center Education Department. Avista is especially grateful to be back in the theater scene this year, after 18 months of sewing face masks and dog accessories! Welcome back, Philly theater! [www.avistacustom.com](http://www.avistacustom.com).



## CAST & CREW

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**Keyonna Butler** (She/Her) (Costume Designer) is a designer and visual storyteller based in Philadelphia, PA. Since 2017, Keyonna has been passionate about the power of storytelling through cloth and wardrobe. As a designer, she loves bringing out the small details one may not notice. From the colors one wears that may symbolize their personality or showcasing their character evolution through their garments. The role to tell a character's journey through each stitch is what entices Keyonna to be a designer and create contemporary costumes for every type of story to tell. Keyonna has made many strides in the Philadelphia theater community with credits as a costume designer for Theater in the X *The Wiz*, Ursinus College *The Medusa Play*, Power Street Theater *Minority Land* as well as Theatre Exile *On the Exhale*. Most recently she served as the costume designer for Curio Theatre Company's *A SYMPHONY FOR SAINT-GEORGES* and Theatre Exile's *Sin Eaters*.

**Elizabeth Atkinson** (She/Her) (Sound Designer) is delighted to be working with Theatre Exile again. Liz is currently based in Philadelphia, after many years in Pittsburgh where she was Resident Sound Designer at the City Theatre Company. Her freelance career includes regional theatre credits at The Wilma, Arden Theatre Company, Inis Nua Theatre, Walnut Street Theatre, Yale Repertory Theatre, and Hartford Stage. She is a faculty member at Swarthmore College, and previously at Point Park University and Carnegie Mellon University. Liz has also had the honor of exhibiting at 2007, 2011, and 2015 Prague Quadrennials.

**J. Bean Schwab** (They/Them) (Puppetry) is a Philly-based performance maker and designer of puppetry and prop-ery. They've worked with various Philly theatre companies and individual artist collectives such as Theatre Exile, Curio Theatre, New Paradise Laboratories, Tribe of Fools, IKantKoan Play(s), and more. Their deepest imaginings live in physical theatre, object manipulation performance, circus arts, immersive design, and devising. J.Bean has their BFA from Arcadia University and is a Graduate Assistant at Villanova University, class of '22. Follow @beansplain on Instagram.

**Deborah Block** (She/They) (Producing Artistic Director) has been a consistent figure in the Philadelphia arts community for over 30 years as a director, dramaturg, producer, curator, choreographer, and educator. Deborah has been with Theatre Exile since 2006 and assumed the position of Producing Artistic Director in 2013. Prior to that, she was one of the founding organizers of Philadelphia Live Arts Festival and Philly Fringe (now FringeArts) and was program director for ten years. She received her MFA at Temple University where she taught for nine years. Prior to that, she taught at Rowan University, University of the Arts, and was a teaching artist in

## CAST & CREW

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many K-12 programs. She has received much recognition for her professional and educational work including receiving the Independence Fellowship in the Arts and the Albert Benzwie Award for playwrighting. She has sat on many local and national panels. A sampling of her previous affiliations includes Brat Productions, Theatre Ariel, Philadelphia Young Playwrights Festival, The Wilma Theatre, and the CEC. She has worked on over 50 professional productions. For Theatre Exile, she has directed *Babel*, *Among the Dead*, *Sing the Body Electric*, *Guards at the Taj*, *Smoke*, *Red Speedo*, *Cock*, *The English Bride*, *Gruesome Playground Injuries*, *Iron*, *Hunter Gatherers*, *dark play or stories for boys*, *Roosters* and collaborated on *Heart & Soles*.

**Theatre Exile** is dedicated to enhancing the cultural experiences of Philadelphians through the staging of works that engage the imagination. Founded in 1996 by Joe Canuso and Trish Kelly, Theatre Exile was created by a group of artists that explore the complexities of the human condition packed with Philadelphia grit and passion. Exile is the first Philadelphia organization to produce such powerhouse playwrights as Tracy Letts, Lucas Hnath, Annie Baker, Rajiv Joseph, Rona Munro, and Hansol Jung among others. In 2016, Exile was named most fearless theatre by *Philly Currents* and Best Theatre Company by *Philadelphia Magazine*. Exile has received 92 Barrymore nominations, with 19 awards. In 2017, Theatre Exile left their home to begin a new phase in Exile's life. Following her idea to create a new home in their old location in South Philadelphia, Deborah Block with the Board of Directors collaborated with Center City Development and Cecil Baker + Partners, and created a vision for a new theater that honors the art and maintains Exiles goals of working in an intimate and flexible environment. They produced their first play in the new theater in February 2019 and moved their office to the new space in April 2019.

**Actors' Equity Association (AEA)** was founded in 1913 as the first of the American actor unions. Equity's mission is to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Today, Equity represents more than 40,000 actors, singers, dancers, and stage managers working in hundreds of theatres across the United States. Equity members are dedicated to working in theatre as a profession, upholding the highest artistic standards. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions and provides a wide range of benefits including health and pension plans for its members. Through its agreement with Equity, this theatre has committed to the fair treatment of actors and stage managers employed in this production. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. For more information, visit [www.actorsequity.org](http://www.actorsequity.org).

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Adrena Williams  
Sisi Wright  
Karen Wrigley-Haak  
Sarah Yeung  
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Anita Zippert

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Anne Marie Cammarato .....	Grant Writer
Denise Cavaliere .....	Director of Individual Giving
Edgimo.com .....	Web Design
En Route .....	Marketing
Kyleen Goode .....	External Relations Associate
Nikki Hagedorn .....	Graphic Designer
TS Hawkins .....	Education Director
Randi Alexis Hickey .....	Administrative Assistant and House Manager
Nat Merrill .....	Run Crew
Sebastienne Mundheim .....	Producer and Project Manager, Out of Exile Program Director
Andrew Nelson .....	IT Specialist
Matt Pfeiffer .....	Artist-In-Residence
Carolyn Schlecker .....	Operations Consultant
Cynda Purnell .....	Front of House
Autumn Valdez .....	General Manager
Mary R. Williams .....	Run Crew

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