

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Arena StageAnastasia St. Hilaire, asthilaire@arenastage.org**Print Shop PR**Nicole Capatasto, nicole@printshoppr.com**ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM
FOR DC RUN OF UPROARIOUS NEW COMEDY*****FAKE IT UNTIL YOU MAKE IT***By **LARISSA FASTHORSE**Directed by **MICHAEL JOHN GARCÉS**Produced in Association with **CENTER THEATRE GROUP**

(Washington, DC) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater announced today the cast and creative team for ***Fake It Until You Make It***. A whirlwind of competition, chaos, and comedic revelation, the uproarious satire by **Larissa FastHorse** (*The Thanksgiving Play*) will make its East Coast premiere **April 3 – May 4, 2025**, in Arena Stage's **Kreeger Theater**, directed by **Michael John Garcés** (Guthrie Theater's *For the People*). Press Night will be held on April 10. For information and tickets, visit arenastage.org/fake.

"Our team is grateful to continue to develop this new farce with Arena Stage," shared **FastHorse**. "The DMV audiences are going to get to help us shape this new play with their laughter and questions. This is my first time creating a new work in the area, I'm thrilled to be doing it in Hana's first full season at Arena."

Fake It Until You Make It follows the escalating rivalry between Wynona, the Native American proprietor of N.O.B.U.S.H., and River, her white counterpart at Indigenous Nations Soaring. As their collision ensnares colleagues and bystanders, secrets highlighting the absurdities of ambition and authenticity become unraveled. *Fake It Until You Make It* is about being whoever you want to be, even when it's not who you are.

"I am incredibly happy to be developing and premiering *Fake It Until You Make It* at Arena Stage in co-production with Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles," said **Garcés**. "Both cities have been artistic homes for me, and both are places which, in very different ways, epitomize what is the best and worst about the American experiment. They are also places where people can, and often do, for better and definitely for worse, fake it until they make it—or go bust. Washington has always had incredibly smart, sophisticated, and sharp audiences, and I'm eager for it to play here and to learn from how folks react. I think Arena Stage is the perfect place for this satire in these volatile, uncertain, and contentious times. I can't wait to get started."

The Arena production will star **Noah Bean** (Public Theater's *Yellowface*) as Theo, **Eric Stanton Betts** (Hollywood Bowl's *Kinky Boots*) as Mark, five-time Emmy nominee **Amy Brenneman** (ABC's *NYPD Blue*, CBS's *Judging Amy*) as River, **Brandon Delsid** (Amazon Prime's *This Is Me...Now*) as Kryz, **Shyla Lefner** (Broadway's *Our Town*) as Wynona, and **Burgandi Trejo Phoenix** (Netflix's *Spirit Rangers*) as Grace. They will be joined by understudies **Josh Bywater** (HBO's *Somebody Somewhere*), **Aleisha Force** (Virginia

Shakes' *Antony and Cleopatra*), and **Kenny Ramos** (*Peter Pan* National Tour). Lefner and Trejo Phoenix step into the roles previously announced to be played by Tonantzin Carmelo and Dakota Ray Hebert, respectively.

Joining **Garcés**, the creative team for *Fake It Until You Make It* includes set designer **Sara Ryung Clement** (Manhattan Theatre Club's *Golden Shield*), costume designer **E.B. Brooks** (Oregon Shakespeare Festival's *Manhatta*), lighting designer **Tom Ontiveros** (Center Theatre Group's *Fetch Clay, Make Man*), sound designer **John Nobori** (Geffen Playhouse's *The Ants*), and fight director **Edgar Landa** (Geffen Playhouse's *The Thanksgiving Play*). Casting is by **Kim Williams**. The stage manager is **David S. Franklin** and assistant stage managers are **Miriam Mendoza** and **Samantha Wilhelm**.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES (in alphabetical order)

Noah Bean (*Theo*) has performed in many New York and regional theaters; most notably, originating roles in David Henry Hwang's Pulitzer Prize-nominated *Yellowface* at The Public Theater, as well as Jordan Harrison's Pulitzer finalist *Marjorie Prime* at Playwrights Horizons. He has worked at such theaters as The New Group, Vineyard Theatre, SoHo Playhouse, Mark Taper Forum, The Old Globe, Geffen Playhouse, South Coast Rep, Bay Street Theater, Huntington Theatre (where he was nominated for both Elliot Norton and IRNE awards for his portrayal of Bo in William Inge's *Bus Stop*), among many others. He has extensive film and television credits, including series regular roles in the Emmy-nominated *Damages*, *Nikita*, *12 Monkeys*, *The Endgame*, and Amazon's upcoming series *Ballard*.

Eric Stanton Betts (*Mark*) is a mixed BIPOC performer. He originated the role of Mark at the Mark Taper Forum/Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles. His work extends across commercial, fashion, theater, and film. He is also a writer, having finished his first full-length feature film, a romcom called *Holiday Down Under*. Eric stars in the upcoming Tyler Perry film *Joy Ridge*, as well as the queer horror *Martinez, Margaritas and Murder!*. Eric got to work alongside Sarah Drew (*Grey's Anatomy*) in the western feature by Sony, *Birthright Outlaw*. He's also graced the stage of the Hollywood Bowl in *Kinky Boots*, a show that he also performed nationwide and internationally in parts of Asia. Eric is most excited to connect to his native community through theater. Love to Gabe, Dexter, Astro, and the rest of his family. Thanks for being in my corner. Follow him [@standstootall21](#)

Amy Brenneman (*River*) can most recently be seen in *The Old Man* opposite Jeff Bridges and John Lithgow and in *Shining Girls* with Elisabeth Moss. Her large body of film work includes *Casper*, *Fear*, *Daylight*, *Heat*, *Friends and Neighbors*, *The Jane Austen Book Club*, *Peel*, *The Face of Love*, *Words and Pictures*, *Nine Lives*, *Things You Can Tell Just by Looking at Her*, and *Mother and Child*. Amy created, executive produced, and starred in *Judging Amy*, earning two *TV Guide Awards*, three Golden Globe nominations, a Producers Guild nomination, three Emmy nominations, a People's Choice nomination, and a SAG nomination. Amy starred in *The Sound Inside* at Pasadena Playhouse, as well as in the world premiere of the Pulitzer Prize-nominated *Rapture, Blister, Burn* (Playwrights Horizons, Geffen Playhouse) and in the world premiere of *Rules of Seconds* directed by Jo Bonney. Amy was a founding member of the award-winning Cornerstone Theater Company, which specializes in site-specific community-based theater on themes of social justice. Favorite Cornerstone roles include Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Natasha in *Three Sisters*, Clytemnestra in *The Oresteia*, and Solveig in *Peer Gynt*. Other Theater: CSC Rep, Lincoln Center Theater, L.A. Theatre Works, LATC, Williamstown Theatre Festival, En Garde Arts, American Repertory Theater, and Yale Rep.

Brandon Delsid (*Krys*) is an actor originally from Fresno, CA. He can currently be seen starring in Amazon Prime's *This is Me...Now* musical alongside Jennifer Lopez and Ben Affleck. A student of the Stella Adler Studio of Acting NYC and The Groundlings, this spring he'll be a recurring guest star on the second season of the hit HBO series *The Rehearsal* with Nathan Felder. Later this year he'll appear in the action fantasy film *June and John* by director Luc Besson (*The Fifth Element*, *Taken 1, 2, and 3*).

Previous TV credits include the final season of NBC's *New Amsterdam* as Dove and Peacock's *The Date Whisperer*. He can be seen in commercial campaigns for Amazon, CeraVe, Fidelity, White Claw, HBO, Toyota, and Netflix. Follow [@brandondelsid](#) for more fun.

Shyla Lefner (*Wynona*) Arena Stage debut! Shyla was most recently seen in the Broadway revival production of *Our Town* at the Barrymore Theatre. She is part of the original cast and garnered a 2024 Obie Award for her work in the production of The 1491s' *Between Two Knees*, following a run at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Yale Rep, McCarter Theatre, Seattle Rep, and culminating at NYC's Perelman Performing Arts Center. Selected regional credits include *Bulrusher* (McCarter & Berkeley Rep); *The Cymbeline Project*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Henry V*, *The Way the Mountain Moved* (OSF); *Manhatta* (OSF & Yale Rep); *Bernhardt/Hamlet*, *The Door You Never Saw Before* (Geffen); *Fairly Traceable*, *Off the Rails*, and *The Frybread Queen* (Native Voices). Some film and television credits include *Polar Sun*, *Point of Origin*, *Grace*, *Whatever It Takes*, and *Fashion House*. Proud graduate of the University of Southern California. [@shylalefner](#)

Burgandi Trejo Phoenix (*Grace*) is an accomplished storyteller of Yaqui/Yoeme heritage, deeply committed to advancing authentic representation and greater inclusion of the BIPOC community in entertainment. Her work spans film, television, video games, and stage, with notable credits including Emmy-nominated series such as *Spirit Rangers* (Netflix) and *The Loud House* (Nickelodeon). Burgandi has also lent her voice to popular games like *Cookie Run: Kingdom* and *Merlin* (Devsisters); and recently appeared as a top-of-show guest star on *NCIS*. In addition to her acting roles, Burgandi is a member of the Television Academy, the brand ambassador for Talentboom, and a former host of *The Curve*, a Casting Frontier YouTube series where she provided insights into the industry and empowered aspiring talent. Instagram: [@burgandiphoenix](#)

Josh Bywater (*u/s Theo*) is thrilled to be making his Arena Stage debut with such a lovely group of artists. LA theater includes *Smile* and *Cult of Love* at IAMA Theatre. Regional credits include *Fat Pig*, *One Arm* (Steppenwolf); *Cicada* (Route 66); *All My Sons* (Hubbard Hall); *The Story* (Goodman); *The Crucible* (OAT); *Nocturne*, *The Aliens* (Opera House Arts); among many others. Television credits include *Betrayal*, *Crisis*, *Chicago Med*, *Chicago Fire*, *Utopia* (Amazon), *61st Street* (AMC/CW), and *Somebody Somewhere* (HBO). Films include *The View from Tall*, *Our Father*, *Never Not Yours*, and *Widows*. He is an ensemble member with IAMA Theatre. He studied at The School at Steppenwolf.

Aleisha Force (*u/s River*) is a Texas native and former high school speech teacher (Go Cats!). Favorite roles: *Antony and Cleopatra* (Virginia Shakes); *Normalcy* (Theatre East); *Fat Pig* (Dallas Theater Center); *Hand to God* (Coachella Valley); *ROE*, *Human Interest Story* (Fountain Theatre); and, most recently, *Summer, 1976* (Lean Ensemble). TV: *This is Us* (NBC), *For All Mankind* (Apple TV+), *In The Cut* (Bounce TV), and *Monster Season 3* (Netflix). Education: MFA/SMU, The Groundlings, and UCB (NYC).

Kenny Ramos (*u/s Mark*, *u/s Kryss*) is from the Barona Band of Mission Indians and grew up on the Barona Indian Reservation. They are an ensemble member at Cornerstone Theatre Company where their favorite work includes *The Native Nation Trilogy*. Regional credits include work with Native Voices, Perseverance Theatre, Woolly Mammoth, Denver Center, Seattle Rep, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and The Kennedy Center, where they assistant directed and performed in *We the Peoples Before*, an interdisciplinary stage production that featured Native artists from across the country. Most recently, Kenny appeared in the *Peter Pan* National Tour. TV: *Spirit Rangers* (Netflix). Awards: TCG Fox Fellowship, First Peoples Fund Fellowship, Yale Mellon Arts Fellowship, La Jolla Playhouse Artist Residency, LA City Council NAHM Honoree. Education: BA in American Indian Studies, UCLA. [@krayramos](#) <3mom

PRODUCTION INFORMATION

FAKE IT UNTIL YOU MAKE IT

By Larissa FastHorse
Directed by Michael John Garcés
Produced in Association with Center Theatre Group
In the Kreeger Theater | April 3 – May 4, 2025

ABOUT: In Larissa FastHorse's uproarious comedy, a collision of friends and foes within the non-profit sector sets the stage for a whirlwind of competition, chaos, and comedic revelation. Meet Wynona, the Native American proprietor of N.O.B.U.S.H., and River, her white counterpart at Indigenous Nations Soaring. Their escalating rivalry ensnares colleagues and bystanders, leading to the unraveling of secrets that highlight the absurdities of ambition and authenticity. Amidst the laughter, genuine connections form, emphasizing the value of unexpected paths to success. *Fake It Until You Make It* takes an absurd look at what defines who we are, and the lengths some people will go through to change it.

CAST

Theo: Noah Bean*
Mark: Eric Stanton Betts*
River: Amy Brenneman*
Krys: Brandon Delsid*
Wynona: Shyla Lefner*
Grace: Burgandi Trejo Phoenix*
u/s Theo: Josh Bywater*
u/s River: Aleisha Force*
u/s Mark, u/s Krys: Kenny Ramos*

CREATIVE

Playwright: Larissa FastHorse
Director: Michael John Garcés
Set Designer: Sara Ryung Clement
Costume Designer: E.B. Brooks
Lighting Designer: Tom Ontiveros
Sound Designer: John Nobori
Fight Director: Edgar Landa
Casting Director: Kim Williams
Stage Manager: David S. Franklin*
Assistant Stage Manager: Miriam Mendoza*
Assistant Stage Manager: Samantha Wilhelm*

*Members of Actors' Equity Association

Support for *Fake It Until You Make It* is provided by **AARP**, **Daniel W. Hamilton**, and **The Molly Smith Fund for New Work**. Special thanks to **Boston Consulting Group**.

Fake It Until You Make It is an Edgerton Foundation Commission that was awarded by Center Theatre Group.

PLAN YOUR VISIT

TICKETS: Tickets start at \$59 plus applicable fees. Ticket prices and availability are subject to change.

Tickets are available at arenastage.org. Tickets may also be purchased through the Sales Office by phone at 202-488-3300, Tuesday-Sunday, 12-8pm, or in person at 1101 Sixth Street, SW, DC, Tuesday-Sunday, 2 hours prior to a performance.

Groups of 10+ may purchase tickets by phone at 202-488-4380.

Arena Stage's many savings programs include "pay your age" tickets for those aged 35 and under; military, first responder, and educator discounts; student discounts; and "Southwest Nights" for those living and working in the District's Southwest neighborhood. To learn more, visit arenastage.org/savings-programs.

PERFORMANCE DATES:

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Sunday at 7:30pm
Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 8pm
Saturday and Sunday at 2pm
Weekday matinees at 12pm on April 16, 17, and 30
No performance on April 20

Early Curtain: Sunday, May 4 at 6pm

Southwest Nights: Wednesday, April 9 at 7:30pm and Saturday, April 19 at 2pm

Audio-Described Performance: Saturday, April 12 at 2pm

ASL-Interpreted Performance: Saturday, April 26 at 8pm

Mask-Required Performances: Saturday, April 5 at 2pm and Tuesday, April 29 at 7:30pm

Closed Captioning: GalaPro begins Friday, April 11

Industry Night: Sunday, April 6 at 7:30pm

Pride Night: Wednesday, April 9 at 7:30pm

Native American Affinity Night: Saturday, April 12 at 8pm

HBCU/Divine Nine Night: Thursday, April 17 at 8pm

Post-Show Conversations

Connect with the show beyond the performance at a post-show conversation on April 16, 17, and 30 following the 12pm matinees, April 22 following the 7:30pm performance, and April 24 following the 8pm performance.

TRAVEL: Limited parking is available in Arena Stage's on-site garage for \$18 to \$35, including drive-up valet parking for \$35. Call 202-488-3300 to purchase in advance. For more information on transportation and other parking options around the Mead Center, visit arenastage.org/parking.

DINING: Enjoy sumptuous Beijing-style cuisine at Philippe Chow, the official Restaurant Partner of Arena Stage, located directly across Maine Avenue from the theater. Whether it's a casual dinner or a special occasion, enjoy the Arena Stage dining experience that will get you to the show on time! Ask for one of the Arena Stage menus starting at \$59 per person. [Learn more about Philippe Chow here.](#)

For all upcoming Arena Stage programming, visit arenastage.org/season.

The first racially integrated theater in our nation's capital and a pioneer of the regional theater movement, Arena Stage was founded in 1950 in Washington, D.C. Today, under the leadership of Artistic Director Hana S. Sharif and Executive Producer Edgar Dobie, Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater is a national center dedicated to American voices and artists. We produce plays of all that is passionate, profound, deep, and dangerous in the American spirit, and present diverse and groundbreaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Consistently contributing to the American theatrical lexicon by commissioning and developing new plays, Arena Stage impacts the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement and serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. arenastage.org

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