



GEORGE STREET PLAYHOUSE

at the New Brunswick Performing Arts Center • www.GeorgeStreetPlayhouse.org • Patron Service Office: 732.246.7717
9 Livingston Avenue • New Brunswick, NJ 08903 • Admin: 732.846.2895 • David Saint, Artistic Director • Kelly Ryman, Managing Director

MARIE ADAIR *Lead Education Team*

Marie Adair presently serves as a member of the George Street Playhouse Think Tank which focuses on re-imagining and re-designing programs that integrate theatre arts with academics to enrich learning experiences for students and staff. As the former Executive Director of the NJ Affiliate of ASCD (the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development), she led the organization to award-winning status receiving awards for Outstanding Programs, Communications & Publications, and the ASCD Affiliate of Excellence Award in three separate years. Marie served as a member of ASCD Leadership Council, co-chaired the Position Development Committee, and contributed to the Legislative Committee authoring the ASCD Legislative Agenda that was presented to the Senate Education Committee. She also chaired the ASCD Affiliate Study Task Force and was honored to be a member of the Search Committee for a new CEO of ASCD. As the former Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction in the Vineland School District, she was responsible for a well-designed, implemented, and articulated curriculum in academics, athletics, and the arts PreK - 12. She authored the Narratives of Schematic Design, to accompany the architects' renderings, for three new schools. During her tenure, she held the prior positions of Director of Professional Development, Supervisor of Language Arts, and classroom teacher. Marie has presented statewide and nationally on Issues in Leadership, Literacy, Assessment, Instructional Strategies, The Achievement Gap, and Professional Evaluation Systems. She is the recipient of several awards, the most recent of which is the Boyer Outstanding Educator Award in 2000 and again in 2020. She holds BA and MA degrees in Reading/Language Arts from Rowan University in NJ. Advance graduate studies were completed at the Universities of Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Vermont with certifications in Curriculum Development, Supervision, and Administration.

JOANNE KEREKES *Lead Education Team*

During her 43 years in public school education, Joanne Kerekes worked in the East Windsor Regional and South Brunswick Public School Districts where she served as a teacher, unit leader, staff developer, project specialist, principal, and assistant superintendent. Joanne was honored to receive the Rutgers Graduate School of Education Distinguished Alumni Service Award, the NJ Music Educators Administrator of the Year Award, and the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Principal Fellowship. Joanne has extensive presentation experience, including moderating at the AASA/NJASA /NJPSA Leadership Conferences, facilitating at the Rutgers Institute for Improving Student Achievement Equity Conference, keynoting for NJ Association of School Librarians and the Rutgers University School of Information and Communication Ed Camp, and serving as facilitator for the Philadelphia Academy for School Leaders' Summer Institute. She served as co-chair of the Middlesex County Curriculum Council and was a member of the Achieve New Jersey Advisory Committee. Joanne is a consultant for Stronge and Associates, where she served as the NJ Coordinator. Joanne is an Instructor in the NJEXCEL Program which is offered by the NJPSA's Foundation for Educational Administration. Joanne is Vice President, RU Graduate School of Education Alumni Association, and a member of the NJ School Boards Association's Equity Council.

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LAIONA MICHELLE *Lead Creative Team* _____

(Artistic Associate, George Street Playhouse) Laiona Michelle is a playwright, director, and award-winning Broadway actress. Laiona's teaching experiences include Adjunct Professor at Norfolk State University (HBCU) and Director of Shaker's Performing Arts School, which she created in her hometown of Springfield, Massachusetts. Laiona's teaching contracts span over 25+ years of her professional career. In addition to her role at the GSP, Laiona is a writing collaborator on the *Mandela* Musical, the story of South African civil rights activist Nelson Mandela, opening at the Young Vic in London in 2022. Most recently, Laiona wrote and starred in *Little Girl Blue*, the off-Broadway musical about the life and times of Nina Simone, winning her the Off-Broadway Alliance Award and the Lilly Award. While also being nominated for Lucille Lortel, the Outer Critics Circle Awards, and the Tony Awards. To add to her list of awards, Laiona is also the recipient of the Barrymore, Carbonell, and The NAACP Hollywood award. Laiona is thrilled to direct *Her Portmanteau*, the first show of the George Street Playhouse's season. Laiona holds a BFA from Alabama State University and an MFA from Brandeis University.

NADIYAH DORSEY *Lead Creative Team* _____

(Director of Education, George Street Playhouse) is an award-winning actress turned arts administrator with a passion for using the arts to build community and change lives. Prior to joining the team at George Street, she served as a Program Manager for the Creative Catalyst Initiative at The Kenan Institute for the Arts at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. The Kenan Institute is a research arm of the University that encourages and supports the exploration of new knowledge to transform the way artists, organizations, and communities approach their creative challenges. Before joining the Kenan Institute, Nadiyah served as Executive Director for the Delta Fine Arts (DFA) Center, an arts and culture organization in its 50th year of service to the community. DFA's mission is to provide cultural and educational programming through a year-round program of exhibitions, classes, workshops, lectures, films, and special events focusing on African diaspora culture. During her tenure, she founded the organization as a host site for the AmeriCorps pilot ArtistCorps program, in collaboration with the University of North Carolina. Nadiyah holds a BFA in Theatre from UNC School of the Arts with additional studies in African art history and textiles from the University of Ghana, West Africa (Kwame Nkrumah University).

Contact us at Education@GeorgeStPlayhouse.org

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