

THIS MAMMOTH MOMENT

SATURDAY, MAY 6, 2023

CELEBRATING

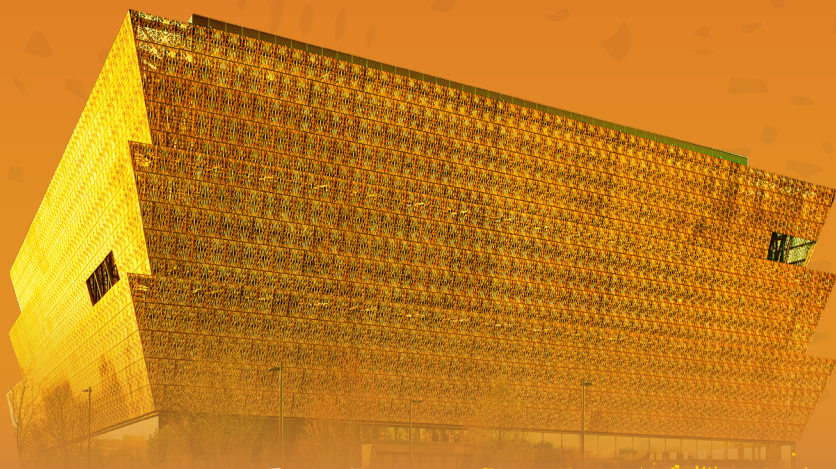
THE TONY AWARD AND PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING MUSICAL

A STRANGE LOOP

AND

D.C. ACTIVIST, PIONEER, AND LEGENDARY ICON

RAYCEEN PENDARVIS



**WOOLLY
MAMMOTH**

THIS MAMMOTH MOMENT

**SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM
OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY
AND CULTURE**

SATURDAY, MAY 6, 2023

2023 GALA CO-CHAIRS

Kathleen Buhle

Aki Carpenter

Denielle Pemberton-Heard

ORDER OF EVENTS

7:00 PM

COCKTAIL HOUR

Lower Concourse



8:00 PM

SEATED DINNER & PROGRAM

Heritage Hall

A STRANGE LOOP

Tribute Concert

9:15 PM

DESSERTS & DANCING

Lower Concourse

After Party Curated

by BLACK IN SPACE



Dear friends,

Welcome to our spring gala, **THIS MAMMOTH MOMENT!** It is an honor to celebrate with you to recognize innovators who have shaped our cultural landscape and the storytellers who create bold artistry that makes history.

Today, we are proud to recognize the work of **MICHAEL R. JACKSON**, creator of the Pulitzer Prize and Tony-winning musical **A STRANGE LOOP**, and **RAYCEEN PENDARVIS**, who has been a brilliant champion for LGBTQ+ people of color in Washington, DC. Their contributions are deeply felt in the arts community and in our society as a whole.

We would also like to highlight the significance of the venue we're in tonight, the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture. Both of our organizations believe in the power of narrative change and how in particular Black stories are shared, preserved, and valued. To have these hallowed halls open for us is a dream come true.

At Woolly Mammoth, we believe theatre can be a catalyst for an equitable, creative, and engaged society. Thank you for your support in helping us center courageous storytelling as we dream forward into our future.

Thank you, and we look forward to seeing you at Woolly!

Xx,



Maria Manuela Goyanes, Artistic Director
Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company



Kimberly E. Douglas, Managing Director
Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company

HONORARY GALA COMMITTEE

Louise Bernard

Kristin Ehrgood & Vadim Nikitine

**The Singapore Ambassador to the United States,
His Excellency Ashok Mirpuri & Gouri Mirpuri**

Michele Norris

Estuardo Rodriguez

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Representative Lois Frankel

Representative Pramila Jayapal

Representative Andy Kim

Senator Edward Markey

Senator Chris Murphy

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Representative Nikema Williams

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

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David Frederick & Sophia Lynn
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Charitable Foundation

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Arnold & Porter
Kristin Ehrgood & Vadim
Nikitine
Sari Hornstein
Total Wine & More

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Tina Johnson-Marcel
 Meta
Rebecca & Stephen Milliken
Morgan Stanley
Private Wealth Management
Verizon
Beverly & Christopher With
Mary Zients

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Anonymous
Sue Henry & Carter Phillips
Amy Weinberg
& Norbert Hornstein

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J. Chris Babb & James Martin
DLR Group
Jane & Nathan Fishkin
Elizabeth & Paul L. Friedman
Nancy A. Hartsock
Linette S. Hwu
Liz Norton
S&R Evermay
Kaiti Saunders & Rob Colenso
Barbara L. Strack

BEVERAGE SPONSORSHIP

Total  Wine
& MORE

THE TONY AWARD AND PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING MUSICAL

A STRANGE LOOP

OUR BIG, BLACK, & QUEER-ASS AMERICAN BROADWAY SHOW

From workshop to Woolly to Broadway to Tony-winner — and now headed to London's Barbican Centre —

A STRANGE LOOP has had an immense and irrevocable impact on theatre. For “a scalding story about a gay, Black theater artist confronting self-doubt and societal disapproval,” (*The New York Times*) to win a Pulitzer Prize and Best Musical at the Tony Awards, it opens a new realm of what stories are possible to tell on the world's most visible stages.

With its Pulitzer win, it is the first musical since the creation of the Pulitzer Prize in 1917 to have a book, music, and lyrics written by an openly Queer, Black writer.



PICTURED IN A STRANGE LOOP: James Jackson, Jr., L. Morgan Lee, Antwayn Hopper, Jaquel Spivey, John-Andrew Morrison, Jason Veasey. **PHOTO CREDIT:** Teresa Castracane.

A STRANGE LOOP's incomparable creator, **MICHAEL R. JACKSON**, was also the winner of the Tony Award for Best Book of a Musical for this show, the second-ever Black winner in this category. Jackson's new musical ***WHITE GIRL IN DANGER*** is playing now at the Tony Kiser Theater in New York City, in a co-production by Vineyard Theatre and Second Stage Theater — further cementing Jackson's place as a central voice in American theatre today.

“...A SHOW THAT ALLOWS A BLACK GAY MAN TO BE VULNERABLE ONSTAGE WITHOUT DISMISSING OR FETISHIZING HIS TRAUMA, DESIRES AND CREATIVE AMBITIONS. NOW THAT’S SOME RADICAL THEATER.”

—The New York Times

Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company's big chance in producing a Broadway-bound musical paid off, winning the organization its first Tony Award (which is now housed in the theatre's upper lobby). Now tonight, Woolly is proud to honor both **MICHAEL R. JACKSON** and ***A STRANGE LOOP*** for achieving something core to Woolly's mission: forever changing and radically redefining the world of theatre.



PICTURED IN *A STRANGE LOOP*: John-Michael Lyles, John-Andrew Morrison, Jaquel Spivey, Jason Veasey, Antwayn Hopper.
PHOTO CREDIT: Teresa Castracane.

Below is an excerpt from Artistic Director **MARIA MANUELA GOYANES'** note from the playbill for ***A STRANGE LOOP*** during its Woolly Mammoth run from November 2021–January 2022, detailing some of her history with the piece and the importance of its message.

A NOTE FROM MARIA, NOVEMBER 2021

EDITED AND EXCERPTED

What's the most transgressive thing that a cutting edge, provocative, and alternative theatre like Woolly Mammoth could do?

A BROADWAY-BOUND MUSICAL!

There is nothing more mainstream than the Great White Way, a nickname for Broadway that was inspired by all the electric white lights on the theatre marquees at the turn of the 20th century. The fact that *A STRANGE LOOP* has commercial aspirations is transgressive, not only because of its themes, but also because, by my research, Broadway earns its nickname when it comes to musicals written by Black artists.

***A STRANGE LOOP* is courageous, urgent, and radically re-defines what musicals are and who they can be for. It is explicit and unapologetic in ways that are rarely seen, let alone with a young Black queer body as its centripetal force, exploring the intersections of race, sexuality, and religion. Funny, brutal, and heartbreaking, this musical has had a long gestation period, in part because it needed the world to catch up.**

When I was 25 years old, the wonderful artist and teacher Donna DiNovelli introduced me to a student of hers in the Graduate Musical Theatre Writing program at NYU. His name was Michael R. Jackson, and he was working on a new musical splicing his own songs together with the songs of indie rock star Liz Phair. Michael was ushering for *THE LION KING* as a side gig to help pay his way through grad school and he knew every Joni Mitchell song by heart. We hit it off and I jumped onboard as director. That musical was the early draft of *A STRANGE LOOP*.

And to now be working on it as a producer... what a strange loop indeed!



PICTURED: Michael R. Jackson and Maria Manuela Goyanes at NYU.

THE AWARD-WINNING PLAYWRIGHT OF *A STRANGE LOOP*

MICHAEL R. JACKSON

Photo Credit: Beowulf Sheehan



MICHAEL R. JACKSON's *A STRANGE LOOP* won the 2022 Tony Award for Best Musical and Best Book of a Musical. It was also the recipient of the 2020 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. His next musical *WHITE GIRL IN DANGER* is currently having its world premiere as a co-production between 2nd Stage Theatre and the Vineyard Theatre. Michael is the recipient of the Jonathan Larson Grant, Lincoln Center Emerging

Artist Award, ASCAP Foundation Harold Adamson Award, Whiting Award, the Helen Merrill Award for Playwriting and a Dramatist Guild Fellowship. Jackson holds a BFA and MFA in playwriting and Musical Theatre Writing from the NYU Tisch School of the Arts.



PICTURED IN *A STRANGE LOOP*: Jaquel Spivey.
PHOTO CREDIT: Teresa Castracane.

PICTURED IN A STRANGE LOOP: Jason Veasy, John-Michael Lyles, Jaquel Spivey, John-Andrew Morrison, James Jackson, Jr., Antwayn Hopper. PHOTO CREDIT: Teresa Castracane.



PICTURED IN A STRANGE LOOP: James Jackson, Jr., Jason Veasy, John-Michael Lyles, Jaquel Spivey, L. Morgan Lee, John-Andrew Morrison. PHOTO CREDIT: Marc J. Franklin.

D.C. ACTIVIST, PIONEER, AND LEGENDARY ICON

RAYCEEN PENDARVIS



For decades, **RAYCEEN PENDARVIS** has been a force in Washington, D.C., and has been at the forefront of almost every modern social and civil rights movement in our Nation's Capital. In partnership with our Connectivity Core Partner Black in Space, we uplift Rayceen's incredible achievements and dedication to creating spaces which champion inclusion, diversity, and celebrating LGBTQ people of color.

Rayceen Pendarvis, known as the High Priestess of Love, the Queen of the Shameless Plug, the Empress of Pride, and the Goddess of DC, is an event host, community advocate, and lifelong Washingtonian. Active on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, please connect with Rayceen on social media by visiting rayceen.com.



Rayceen.com



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ARTISTIC PROGRAMMING

A STRANGE LOOP TRIBUTE CONCERT

HERITAGE HALL

A STRANGE LOOP by Michael R. Jackson, Directed by Stephen Brackett, Music Directed by Nathan Beary Blustein, Performed by Solomon Parker, Christopher Richardson, and Chafik Waddy. Casting by Jorge Acevedo.

STEPHEN BRACKETT Broadway: *A Strange Loop* (Lyceum, Tony nomination), *Be More Chill* (Lyceum) and *The Lightning Thief* (Longacre). Off-Broadway: *To My Girls* (Second Stage), *A Strange Loop* (Playwrights Horizons/Page 73/Woolly Mammoth [Obie and Drama Desk Awards]), *Be More Chill* (Signature/Two River/London's Other Palace & Shaftsbury Theater), *The Lightning Thief* (Theaterworks USA/National Tour), *Buyer & Cellar* (Rattlestick/Barrow Street/National Tour/Menier Chocolate Factory), *Ultimate Beauty Bible* (Page 73), *Carnival Kids* (Lesser America), and *Be A Good Little Widow* (Ars Nova). Regional: *AD 16* (Olney Theater), *Fall Springs* (Barrington Stage), *Significant Other* (Geffen Playhouse), *I Now Pronounce* (Humana Festival), *Le Switch* (About Face), and *The Great Pretender* (TheatreWorks).

NATHAN BEARY BLUSTEIN (*he/him*) is a Professorial Lecturer in the Theatre/Musical Theatre Program at American University. His research focuses on the drama of musical form in Broadway songs, particularly in the musicals of Stephen Sondheim. He has published in *Studies of Musical Theatre* and the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy*, and his public scholarship can be found on TikTok @rhapsodyinblu. Throughout the DC area, Nathan has been on the music teams for *Into the Woods* (Signature Theatre), *Our Town* (Shakespeare Theatre), *Grace* (Ford's Theatre), and *A Strange Loop* (Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company).

SOLOMON PARKER III DC Credits: Olney Theatre Center: *Kinky Boots* (Lola). Signature Theater: *The Color Purple* (Harpo), *Hotter Than July: Stevie Wonder Cabaret*, *RENT*, *Ain't Misbehavin'* (Andre), *Grand Hotel*, *Billy Elliot*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Ford's Theatre: *A Christmas Carol*, *Grace the Musical* (Lawrence), *The Wiz*. Monumental Theatre Co: *Pippin* (Leading Player) [Helen Hayes nomination for Best Lead Actor in a Musical], *Sunday Funday* (Host), *Montgomery*, *Bashful*. Keegan Theatre: *Legally Blonde*, *Halloween Gala '21*. Toby's Dinner Theatre: *Kinky Boots*, *Dreamgirls*, *Hairspray*; Red Branch Theatre Company: *Dogfight*. Film: *After Midnight* dir. Jared Grimes, *Signature Vinyl*. EDUCATION: AA in Theatre Performance Montgomery College. Instagram @thesolomonexperience @echinaceamonroe.

CHRISTOPHER RICHARDSON is an actor, director, and teaching artist in the Washington D.C. area. He is the creator/composer of *Everyday Magic*, an interactive digital series with Arts on the Horizon, and has appeared in *Sweeney Todd*, *Assassins*, and *Gun & Powder* at Signature Theatre; *The Mortification of Fovea Munson* and *Don't Let The Pigeon Drive the Bus! (The Musical)* at The John F. Kennedy Center TYA; *Our Town* and *Macbeth* at The Shakespeare Theatre; *Matilda* at Olney Theatre Center; *You're A Good Man Charlie Brown* at Imagination Stage; *The Wiz* at Ford's Theatre (Helen Hayes Nomination, Supporting Actor); and *The Book of Will* at Round House Theatre. He holds a B.A. in English and Theatre from The College of William & Mary. www.cmrich.me @chrismichrich.

CHAFIK J. WADDY (*he/they*) hails from Philadelphia, PA. He graduated in May of 2022 in the inaugural class of The Chadwick A. Boseman College of Fine Arts at the illustrious Howard University where he earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre Arts, concentrating in Musical Theatre. A few of his credits at Howard University included the first all black production of *Urinetown*, *Lysistrata* by Howard Players & *Hues: A Student Choreography Showcase*. They currently are working as the production assistant & wardrobe supervisor on the Off Broadway production *Millennials Are Killing Musicals*.

AFTER PARTY CURATED BY BLACK IN SPACE LOWER CONCOURSE

BLACK IN SPACE is a collective of creatives, curators, and storytellers committed to Black joy and liberation. Our work celebrates the artistry, diversity, and resilience of Black LGBTQ+ communities through media, storytelling, and technology. We launched in May 2020 with our inaugural journey *Black in Space: A Virtual Black Pride Experience*. The five-day virtual festival featured 33 unique experiences, including music, film, and art. Since lifting off, we have collaborated with local and national organizations to produce virtual and in-person events and a variety of digital content. Meet us on The Muvaship at blknspace.com.

LEE LEVINGSTON PERINE is a multidisciplinary artist, ambassador of joy and the founder of Black in Space. His work builds community while celebrating the artistry, diversity and resilience of Black LGBTQ+ people. As a lover of history, he is committed to documenting and sharing the stories of Black queer and trans elders and ancestors for present and future generations.

BARONHAWK POITIER is a Washington, DC based DJ and producer. Poitier signed his first EP "*Temperado Tornado*" to Honey Soundsystem Records with releases on record labels Nervous Records, Future Times, Cool Ranch Records, Majorettes, BlackTechnoMatters, TraxOnly, Get Up Recordings and Lagasta. With deep experience studying Black American vernacular dance and managing at a local DC record store, Baronhawk's sets ignite dance floors into a frenzy.

PATIENCE is a creative, curator and educator from Washington, DC; a creative with a passion for education, the spoken word, and sound healing. She is most recently recognized as the "Scat" of the Peace & Bodyroll Duo B00Mscat and as an artistic and administrative member of Black in Space (formerly Makers Lab). If she must be classified by genre, Patience is an artist who creates collages for your listening pleasure. If you listen closely you may feel her heart between your ears.

SAMANTHA G is a scribe, a voice, and an entertainer who lends her penchant for jazz and magic to poetry, music, voice acting, theater, and revelry. She was born on a Friday night in Washington, DC and raised in the faith traditions of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Such origins have served her well in the pulpits of juke joints and concert halls where she considers herself a “worship leader” of the arts. Samantha G is Director of Sway for Black In Space - an arts collective that centers world-building and Black Queer art through an Afrofuturist lens. She has moderated countless panels and conducted numerous interviews and her ability to connect with people from varied backgrounds always results in robust, life-changing exchanges. Whether you find her delivering a keynote or streaming video games on Twitch, you’ll find her openly Black, openly Lesbian, and with an open heart and mind.



PICTURED IN *THE JOOKJOYNT*, A COLLABORATION BETWEEN WOOLLY AND BLACK IN SPACE: Charity Blackwell. PHOTO CREDIT: Makers Lab (Black In Space), Androfemm Productions, Rich Rocket Media.

WELCOMING WOOLLY'S NEW MANAGING DIRECTOR



Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company is proud to announce that its new Managing Director is **KIMBERLY E. DOUGLAS**. In this role, Douglas is a chief executive alongside Artistic Director Maria Manuela Goyanes, and oversees the organization's operations, finance, and administration. Douglas is one of few Black women managing leaders in the history of major D.C. theatres, and joins Goyanes at the

helm of one of very few major U.S. theatres co-led by two BIPOC women.

Born and raised in D.C., Douglas graduated from Duke Ellington School of the Arts and Howard University. She most recently worked for THEARC Theater (a program of Building Bridges Across the River) for 14 years, serving as the Managing Artistic Director after starting as Production Manager and later Director of Theater Operations and Programming. THEARC was part of the Woolly Mammoth Connectivity Core Partner program, with Woolly and THEARC collaborating on productions and projects such as *What to Send Up When it Goes Down*, *Homegrown*, and *19*.

Through a seat reserved for Connectivity Core Partners, Douglas joined Woolly Mammoth's Board of Directors in 2021 and has been a champion of Woolly's mission and guiding principles.

"My journey within the D.C. arts community has been an extraordinary experience of growth, perseverance, and authentic dedication to uplifting the arts," says Douglas. **"I'm overjoyed for this new role, and I look forward to contributing my gifts to Woolly Mammoth as we make bold, audacious theatre; make an impact in the arts community and society; and tell the important and necessary stories, onstage and beyond."**

“KIMBERLY DOUGLAS IS AS WOOLLY AS THEY COME!”

— Maria Manuela Goyanes, Woolly Mammoth Artistic Director

“She is an out-of-the box thinker with incredible integrity who cares deeply about the role of theatre to ignite conversation in the DMV. I met Kimberly in my first month on the job, and from that moment, we started planning collaborative projects together for Woolly Mammoth and THEARC. It’s been a privilege to work alongside her through Connectivity and then on our Board of Directors, and I cannot wait to see what we cook up for D.C. as she steps into this role.”

“We invited her to a community seat on our board in 2021 because of how much she impressed us as we toured Aleshea Harris’s powerful What to Send Up... to different Washington communities.,” share Linette S. Hwu and Scott Schreiber, Woolly Mammoth board members and search committee co-chairs. “Her experience over two decades in the D.C. arts community, her tremendous heart, and her perfect combination of grace and grit make her a terrific partner for Maria and the board as we all continue to make Woolly mean more to more people.”

“Woolly is entering a thrilling next chapter in its history with Kimberly and Maria at the helm,” says J. Chris Babb, Woolly Mammoth’s Board President. “Kimberly’s roots in the DMV will help us in our Connectivity efforts, as we strive to be responsive and build deep connections with our community. I also know she is up to the task of helping us continue to build Woolly as a national industry leader. It’s been a joy collaborating with Kimberly in these past few years on the Board, and I look forward to years to come in this new partnership with her as Managing Director.”

ABOUT WOOLLY

For over 43 years, **WOOLLY MAMMOTH THEATRE COMPANY** has maintained a high standard of artistic rigor while simultaneously daring to take risks, innovate, and push beyond perceived boundaries. Woolly's unique location in the Nation's Capital influences our investment in actively working our mission: To produce courageous and invigorating new work to radically redefine theatre as a catalyst for an equitable, creative, and engaged society.



**PICTURED IN JORDAN E. COOPER'S *AIN'T NO MO'*:
Jon Hudson Odom. PHOTO CREDIT: J. Fannon Photography.**

PICTURED IN JASMINE LEE-JONES' *SEVEN METHODS OF KILLING KYLIE JENNER*: Leanne Henlon, Tia Bannon.
PHOTO CREDIT: DJ Corey Photography.



PICTURED IN AYA OGAWA'S *THE NOSEBLEED*: Kaili Y. Turner, Saori Tsukada, Aya Ogawa, Ashil Lee.
PHOTO CREDIT: DJ Corey Photography.

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