

THE **FOUNTAIN** Theatre
INTIMATE. EXCELLENT.

THE FOUNTAIN THEATRE PRESENTS A WEST COAST PREMIERE

J. ALPHONSE NICHOLSON

FREIGHT

BY **HOWARD L. CRAFT**

THE FIVE
INCARNATIONS
OF **ABEL GREEN**

West Coast Premiere



Now in its 33rd year, The Fountain Theatre is one of the most highly regarded theatres in Los Angeles. Founded in 1990 by Co-Artistic Directors Deborah Lawlor Culver and Stephen Sachs, the Fountain is dedicated to creating, developing, and producing plays that dramatize urgent issues and matters of the heart, reflecting the diversity of Los Angeles and the nation.

Leading the way out of the pandemic with the installation of its Outdoor Stage in 2021, the Fountain produces full seasons of plays on two stages year-round. Fountain Theatre productions have won hundreds of awards for all areas of production, performance, and design. The Fountain is the recipient of the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle's Margaret Harford Award for sustained excellence in theater, presented for "outstanding productions of meaningful new plays and first-class performances spanning three decades." Los Angeles Times theater critic Charles McNulty called the Fountain "L.A.'s most enterprising intimate theater [that] continues to punch far above its weight... No L.A. theater has done a better job of asking us to reexamine our lives through the lens of acute contemporary drama this year than the Fountain." The L.A. City Council honored the Fountain for "achieving a position of leadership in the Los Angeles theater community... producing meaningful new plays of social and political importance that enrich the lives of the citizens of Los Angeles."

Fountain projects have been seen in regional theaters around the country, Off-Broadway, on the West End, and around the world. Fountain plays have been made into movies, radio dramas, podcasts, and have been the subject of documentary films. Two recent Pulitzer Prize winners (Martyna Majok's *Cost of Living* and *Between Riverside and Crazy* by Stephen Adly Guirgis) were premiered in Los Angeles at the Fountain.

The Fountain was instrumental in the founding of Deaf West Theatre in 1991. It became the Los Angeles artistic home of internationally renowned playwright Athol Fugard, introduced L.A. to the work of Tarell Alvin McCraney, and debuted the world premiere of a new play by Tony-winner Robert Schenkkan about U.S. immigration policy. Last season, once again giving voice to the urgency of the moment, the Fountain mounted a hyper-staged reading of Lisa Loomer's *Roe* in response to the Supreme Court ruling overturning *Roe v Wade*.

Two groundbreaking arts education programs launched by the Fountain serve students and young people throughout Los Angeles. *Fountain Voices* brings theatre professionals into high school classrooms, and *Walking the Beat* joins inner-city youth with police officers to create a theatre piece that they perform together.

The Fountain Theatre

Stephen Sachs *Artistic Director, Co-Founder*

Simon Levy *Producing Director* · **James Bennett** *Producer*

Scott Tuomey *Technical Director* · **Barbara Goodhill** *Director of Development*

Lucy Pollak *Public Relations* · **Nathan James** *Arts Education Manager*

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Presents

J. ALPHONSE NICHOLSON

in

FREIGHT

THE FIVE INCARNATIONS OF ABEL GREEN

Written by **Howard L. Craft**

with

Sidney Edwards

Scenic Design

Joel Daavid

Costume Design

Danyele Thomas

Graphic Design

Loyd Visuals

Lighting Design

Alison Brummer

Props Design

Rebecca Carr

Production Stage Manager

Kaitlyn Cramer

Video Design

Eamonn Farrell

Sound Design

Marc Antonio Pritchett

Technical Director

Scott Tuomey

Produced by

Stephen Sachs Simon Levy James Bennett

Executive Producer

J. Alphonse Nicholson

Directed by

Joseph Megel

West Coast Premiere

Freight: The Five Incarnations of Abel Green was first produced at StreetSigns Center for Literature and Performance in North Carolina. It premiered Off-Broadway at Woodie King Jr.'s New Federal Theatre, in association with Castillo Theatre.

CAST

Abel Green
The Universal Flow

J. Alphonse Nicholson*
Sidney Edwards*

**Member of Actors' Equity Association,
the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.*

Time: 1910s-2010s.

Place: Rural and urban America.

Incarnation 1: The Minstrel – early 1910s.

Incarnation 2: The Instrument of God – mid 1930s.

Incarnation 3: The Snitch – late 1960s.

Incarnation 4: The Last Great Black Actor – 1980s.

Incarnation 5: The Saturn-Bound Man – 2010s.

*Freight is approximately 90 minutes.
It is performed with no intermission.*

WHO'S WHO



J. ALPHONSE NICHOLSON (Abel Green) is an American-born actor/percussionist. Notable TV/Film credits include: series regular on *P-Valley* (STARZ), *Just Mercy* (Warner Bros. Pictures), *Self-Made: Inspired by the Life of Madam C.J. Walker* (Netflix), *Blue Bloods* (CBS), *Mr. Robot* (USA), *Shots Fired* (FOX), *Marvel's Luke Cage* (Netflix), *Tales* (BET), *The Blacklist* (NBC), and *Chicago PD* (NBC).

Notable Theater credits include: Tony Award for Best Revival for *A Soldier's Play* on Broadway (Roundabout), Signature Theatre's off-Broadway production *Paradise Blue*, *FREIGHT* (NFT), and *Days of Rage* (Second Stage Theater). Next up for J. Alphonse are *The Sterling Affairs* (FX), *Black Spartans* (Buffalo 8 Productions), and *Albany Road*. Recently seen in the remake of *White Men Can't Jump* (Disney/20th Century Studios) and *They Cloned Tyrone* (Macro/Netflix). Love to my boy, my girl, and my Nafeesha.



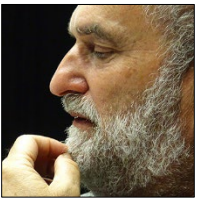
SIDNEY EDWARDS (The Universal Flow) is an AEA actress, singer, dancer, and director currently based in Los Angeles, California. She has a BFA in Musical Theater from William Peace University and an MFA in Theatre Arts from the University of Louisville. She received the Distinguished Actor award at KCACTF for her performance in *Miss Ida B. Wells*, performed at the National Black Theatre Festival in Kirsten

Greenidge's *Baltimore*, and toured with Missoula Children's Theater. Favorite credits include Amneris in *Aida* (Karamu House Theatre), Sally Bowles in *Cabaret* (Leggett Theatre) and Squeak in *The Color Purple* (Justice Theatre Project). Sidney was a teaching artist at The Cleveland Playhouse and now does similar work at Geffen Playhouse. She has served as theater faculty at Baldwin Wallace University, and The University of Louisville, where she was the Director of the African American Theater Program. Sidney would like to thank God (for EVERYTHING), her family, and Byron for their continued support. "I am because you are!" www.sidneyedwards.com.



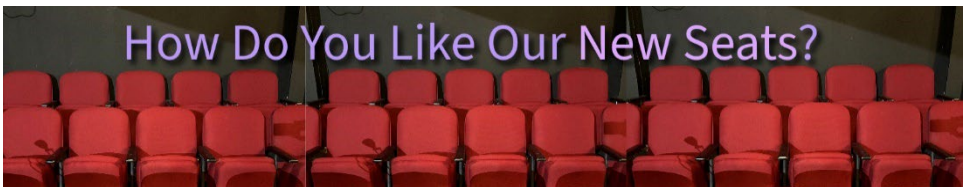
HOWARD L. CRAFT (Playwright) is a father, husband, playwright, poet, essayist, and arts educator. He is the author of more than ten plays including *Freight: The Five Incarnations of Abel Green*, which was chosen as a New York Times Critic's Pick during its' March 2015 Off-Broadway run; *The House of George*, *Stealing Clouds*, *Caleb Calypso* and *the Midnight Marauders*, *Orange Light*, *Fire of Freedom*, *No Fear* and *Blues Long Gone: Nina Simone*, *The Christmas Case Of Hezekiah*

Jones, *Indigo Blue*, and *The Jade City Chronicles Volume 1: The Super Spectacular Badass Herald M. F. Jones*. Following the successful stage production of *The Jade City Chronicles Volume 1*, Craft and former WUNC "The State of Things" host Frank Stasio created the first African American Superhero Radio Serial entitled *The Jade City Pharaoh*, which aired for three seasons. Craft is a recipient of a North Carolina Arts Council Playwriting Fellowship, a two-time winner of the NCCU New Play Project, and the Ann Atwater Award for Theatre. He is the author of two books of poems, *Across the Blue Chasm* (Big Drum Press 2000) and *Raising the Sky* (Jacar Press 2016). His poetry also appears in *Home is Where: An Anthology of African American Poets from the Carolinas*, edited by Kwame Dawes. His essays have appeared in *The Paris Review*, Sam Stephenson's *Bull City Summer: A Season at The Ballpark*, Thomas Sayre's *White Gold*, and *The Routledge Companion to African American Theatre* (Routledge Press 2019). Craft is currently the Pillar Professor of the Practice at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He lives in Durham, "THE BULL CITY," with his wife, son, and beagle, Shazam.



JOSEPH MEGEL (Director) Off-Broadway and New York: Howard L. Craft's *Freight: The Five Incarnations of Abel Green* (New York Times Critic's Pick), Guillermo Reyes's *Men on the Verge of a Hispanic Breakdown* (Outer Critics Circle Award), Dean Gray's *The Pattern at Pendarvis*, Jim Grimsley's *The Lizard of Tarsus*, *The Working Project* for The Working Theater. Regional: Howard Craft's *Orange Light* (Bulldog Ensemble Theater), Kane Smego's *Temples of Lung and Air*

(Detroit Public Theatre), Jennifer Maisel's *The Last Seder* (EST West, Theatre J, The Organic Theatre); Elisabeth Lewis Corley's adaptation of *The Miser* (Duke University); Derek Goldman's adaptation of *Will the Circle be Unbroken* (Chapel Hill); *A Public Reading of an Unproduced Screenplay About the Death of Walt Disney*, *Best of Enemies*, *The Brothers Size*, *The Goat*, and *Nixon's Nixon* (Man Bites Dog Theater). Joseph Megel is an artist in residence in Performance Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Department of Communication, where he runs the Process Series: New Works in Development. He is the Artistic Director of StreetSigns and Co-Executive Director of Harland's Creek Productions, a producer of new plays, screenplays, and short films. Recent direction for StreetSigns includes *Cascade*, *Temples of Lung and Air*, *The Talk*, *Closer Than They Appear*, *Freight: The Five Incarnations of Abel Green*, *Trojan Barbie*, *Blood Knot*, *Poetic Portraits of a Revolution*, *Dream Boy*, and *White People*.



PRODUCTION TEAM

ALISON BRUMMER (Lighting Design) Previous work with the Fountain Theatre includes *Lifespan of a Fact*, *ROE*, the Walking The Beat productions of *Flicker* and *C.H.I.N. Up!*, and *CITIZEN* produced with Grand Performances at INNER-CITY ARTS. Alison is currently a Theater Planner with the architecture firm DLR Group.



REBECCA CARR (Props Design) is a prop and costume designer for theatre, television, and film. Theatre: *Last Summer at Bluefish Cove* (The Fountain), *See You at the Funeral* (LAX Fest), *Blood/Sugar* (Plainwood Productions); *I Decided I'm Fine*, *The Last Croissant*, *What Happened to Where I've Been*, *Dead Dog's Bone* (Attic Collective). Design for Film: *Tread*. IATSE Local 705 Costumer: *The Afterparty*, *Loot*, *Rutherford Falls*, *The Valet*, *Our Flag Means Death*, *King Richard*, *9-1-1*, *The Prom*, *Ratched*, *American Crime Story: Versace*, *The Politician*, *American Horror Story 6, 8, & 9*. BFA in Costume Design from Emerson College.



KAITLYN CRAMER (Production Stage Manager) is thrilled to be joining the Fountain Theatre team for the west coast premiere of *Freight*. Before recently returning to Los Angeles, Kaitlyn spent the last year and a half bouncing across the country as the Tour Stage Manager for Netflix's immersive theatrical production of *Stranger Things: The Experience*. Other previous credits include *Arcane: Enter the Undercity*, stage management at AMDA Conservatory, and serving as Resident Stage Manager at The Great American Melodrama on the Central Coast.



JOEL DAAVID (Scenic Design) Texan/LA resident since 1993. Joel has become an award-winning director/set designer since attending the American Film Institute for Cinematography. His career accomplishments also include cinematography for film and video projects. Joel's most notable awards include the Ovation, LA Weekly, NAACP and LADCC Theater Awards. He directed/designed the award-winning production of *The Miracle Worker* at the Matrix and Edgemar Theatres and the new production of Tennessee Williams' *Baby Doll* at the Lillian Theatre. Joel directed/designed the multi-award-winning *Frankenstein* for Theatre Tallahassee, the epic story of *Camille* (Claudel) at the Greenway Arts Alliance, and most recently the world premiere musical *Caligari's Cabinet of Curiosities* written by Vanessa Stewart. www.joeldaavid-director.com



We honor the loving spirit of

SHIRLEY JO FINNEY

Inspirational Director
Beloved Member of
Our Fountain Family





EAMONN FARRELL (Video Design) is a New Jersey-based video designer whose work focuses on investigations of how innovative technologies can support and elevate the work of live performers to create unforgettable experiences. Eamonn has collaborated with director Joseph Megel on several productions, and this will be his fourth time designing a presentation of *Freight: The Five Incarnations of Abel Green*. Eamonn is excited to work with the Fountain Theater for the first time. Eamonn has collaborated with and designed video extensively for the late Lee Breuer of Mabou Mines, including: *Pataphysics Pennyeach*, *La Divina Caricatura*, *Opera Antigone*, and *Medea*. Eamonn also frequently collaborates with artist Sarah Michelson in the creation of performances and installations, with Paul Lazar of Big Dance Theater, and with Rosalba Ralón of Pregones/PRTT. Other design credits include National Sawdust, The Flea, HERE, TFANA, Beth Morrison Productions, B3 Dance (Bessie Nomination), Bridge Rep (Irne Nomination), The LA Phil, Redcat, The Zwirner, Parsons Dance, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and Portland Center Stage. Eamonn has taught projection design at Princeton, City College, JMU, and UVA. www.eamonnsgarden.com



KHALEEL LOYD (Graphic Design) is a forward-thinking entrepreneur, results-driven strategist, and compassionate leader. He serves as the CEO and Executive Producer of Loyd Visuals, a family-owned agency specializing in commercials, documentaries, and short films based in Charlotte, NC. As co-founder of the award-winning agency, Khaleel is credited with advancing the marketing initiatives of Fortune 100-500 brands, including Honeywell, Airbnb, and the NFL. As the CEO of an organization founded in family and rooted in community, Khaleel intentionally balances Loyd Visuals' support of global corporations with its support of local non-profit agencies. Khaleel was named top 30 under 30 in 2017 by the Charlotte Mecklenburg Black Chamber of Commerce, received the Excellence in Leadership Award for Entrepreneurship through UNC Charlotte's Black Alumni Chapter in 2019, is a Graduate of the City of Charlotte's Amped Up program, and the Entrepreneur's Organization Accelerator Program. Khaleel strives to change the way business is done and is passionate about creating a new model with a stance on centering people over profit. With a deep desire to see fellow dreamers and visionaries succeed, Khaleel diligently empowers entrepreneurs by sharing his insights on business best practices and the creation of generational wealth— opportunities he believes should be accessible to all.



MARC ANTONIO PRITCHETT (Sound Design) is a working actor, director, fight coordinator, and session singer in the Los Angeles area. He is a former Artistic Director at Sacred Fools Theatre Company. Recent sound/music credits include *The Mousetrap* at Theatre Palisades, *The Latrell Show* at IAMA Theatre, *The Play You Want* at the Road Theatre, *Sweat and Cry It Out* at the Chance Theatre, *The Lifespan of a Fact*, *An Octoroon*, *The Children* and *Detained* at the Fountain Theatre. He is represented by Nucleus Talent Management. For additional info, visit www.marcantoniopritchett.com



DANYEAL THOMAS (Costume Design) Danyeale is thrilled to officially be a part of the Fountain Theatre family. She is an accomplished Los Angeles-based Costume Designer, Assistant Costume Designer, Wardrobe Stylist, and Jewelry Designer with design credits and collaborations with the Pasadena Playhouse, Los Angeles Opera, Kirk Douglas Theatre, Robey Theatre Company, and others.

FOUNTAIN THEATRE STAFF



JAMES BENNETT (Producer) joined the Fountain team in 2009 and has smiled and whistled, much to the irritation of everyone else, every day ever since. James enjoys chatting, hobnobbing, and wine-sipping with all the theatre's many fine friends, family, and patrons. For work, he can be found running the whole stack of theatre activities, whether that's toiling on a pile of paperwork, coiled into a pretzel in the tech booth, or producing fabulous Flamenco shows. He's enjoyed co-producing the Fountain's Rapid Development Series for 4 seasons so far and is looking forward to many more scrumptious seasons to come. If you see him bouncing, skipping, or galloping about it's safe to assume he's having a blast. He's compelled to the theatre by its immediacy, its intimacy – the visceral impact of being so close to real humans with real sweat and real spit. In a world that's increasingly disjointed, behind glass, and far away – theatre has become more powerful than ever.



PETER CARRISOZA (Accountant) obtained his business degree from CSU Northridge and has worked as an accountant/financial analyst in a variety of industries ranging from entertainment to defense contracting. He is currently enjoying his third year at the Fountain Theatre.



DEBORAH LAWLOR CULVER (Co-Founder) grew up in Riverside, California. Her career began in the '60s as a dancer, choreographer, and actor in New York. She moved to South India in 1968. There, she pioneered Auroville, a utopian international community created for human unity. Returning to the U.S., she and Stephen Sachs co-founded The Fountain Theatre in 1990. Dubbed the "Fountain Theatre's godmother of flamenco" by the L.A. Times, she guided the company's renowned "Forever Flamenco" series. Other dance projects at the Fountain include *The Women of Guernica*, Lawlor's flamenco-based adaptation of Euripides' *The Trojan Women*, which she also directed; *Love Letters of the Great Romantics*; *The Path of Love*, and *The Song of Songs*, with music by Al Carmines. In 2006, she directed the West Coast premiere of *Taxi to Jannah*. In 2017, the Fountain premiered Lawlor's play *Freddy*. In 2010, Actors' Equity Association honored Deborah with its Diversity Award for her dedication to presenting work at the Fountain that is culturally diverse. She received special commendations from the City of Los Angeles and the Spanish Consulate for her contributions to the art of flamenco. Deborah passed away in May 2023. Her legacy lives on at the Fountain Theatre and in the many people whose lives she changed.



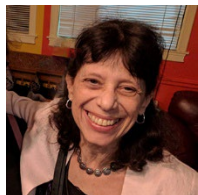
BARBARA GOODHILL (Director of Development) has been Director of Development at The Fountain Theatre since 2013. Barbara's wealth of experience, innovative thinking, and dedication have resulted in significant growth in The Fountain's donor community and strengthened relationships with the funding community. A passionate believer in the power of live theatre to open hearts and encourage empathy, Barbara is deeply committed to The Fountain, its vision, mission, and future goals. "Institutions like The Fountain Theatre are vital to the health of a diverse, compassionate society." Barbara loves the opportunity to meet the many wonderful patrons who form The Fountain Theatre's family and is always happy to receive your calls and greet you at the theatre. Barbara received her B.A. from UC Berkeley and her Masters from UCLA.



NATHAN JAMES (Theatre Education Manager) is a proud native of Pittsburgh, where he began his career with Kuntu Repertory Theater. He received a B.A. from the University of Pittsburgh and an M.F.A from Penn State University, where he also served as an instructor in the Fundamentals of Acting. With over twenty years in arts education, he started out as a teaching artist for the Pittsburgh C.L.O. While living in New York, he taught stage combat for the McCarter Theater at Princeton University, and screenwriting for Urban Arts Partnership and HBO (MAX). Nathan is one of the seven playwrights who contributed to the New Black Festival's 'Hands Up: Seven Playwrights, Seven Testaments,' which was featured in American Theater Magazine and on BBC Radio, with his specific piece chosen as BBC Radio's Play of the Week. Theater Credits: Off-Broadway: *Travisville* (Ensemble Studio Theatre), *Playing with Fire* (Gene Frankel Theatre), *Black Angels Over Tuskegee* (St. Luke's Theatre). NY: *Maid's Door* (Billy Holiday Theatre). Film/TV credits: *Standing Up, Falling Down* (Tilted Windmill Productions), *Madam Secretary* (CBS), *Shades of Blue* (NBC), *Quantico* (ABC), *Blindspot* (NBC), *VINYL* (HBO), *Person of Interest* (CBS), *Blue Bloods* (CBS), *The Path* (Hulu), *Service to Man* (STARZ).



SIMON LEVY (Producing Director) has been Producing Director of the Fountain Theatre since 1993. The Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle honored him with the Milton Katselas Award for Lifetime Achievement in Directing. Recent shows he's directed at the Fountain include *The Lifespan of a Fact* (reprised at the Rubicon Theatre in Ventura), *The Children*, *Daniel's Husband*, and *The Chosen*, among the 25 shows he's directed here. His stage adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (Finalist for the PEN Literary Award in Drama) is produced widely throughout the world. It is the only stage adaptation authorized by the Fitzgerald Estate, and is published by Dramatists Play Service, along with his adaptations of *Tender is the Night* (winner of the PEN Literary Award in Drama) and *The Last Tycoon*. He has produced dozens of shows at the Fountain over the past 30 years. Prior to coming to Los Angeles, he lived in San Francisco, where he was the General Manager of *Beach Blanket Babylon*, Artistic Director of The One Act Theatre Company, and Executive Director of Theatre Bay Area. He belongs to many theatre, human rights, and political advocacy groups. www.simonlevy.com.



LUCY POLLAK (Publicist) has been providing publicity services to the Los Angeles performing arts community for the past 30 years and is honored to have represented the Fountain Theatre since 2008. Prior to becoming a publicist, Lucy spent ten years as the production manager/staff producer at the Odyssey Theatre, earning an L.A. Drama Critics' Circle Award, an L.A. Weekly Award, 4 Drama-Logue Awards, and a Women in Theatre Recognition Award.



TERRI ROBERTS* (Café Manager/Costume Maintenance) has made the Fountain Theatre her artistic home for nearly 14 years. She wears many hats, including the care of costumes, props, and costumes, and serving Fountain patrons as manager of the charming indoor/outdoor Fountain Theatre café. Terri also works in stage management (production/assistant stage manager on 20 fabulous Fountain shows), and she loves every opportunity to also serve as a casting assistant, props designer/set dresser, and coach for actors. Terri spent over 25 years as a theatre/entertainment writer. Her works have appeared in *Variety*, *Performances*, *Back Stage West*, *Ross Reports*, *The Sondheim Review*, *LA Weekly*, *LA Parent*, *ShowMag.com*, and *TheaterMania.com*. She is currently focused on fiction writing. Deep gratitude, as always, to Stephen and Simon. Member of Actors' Equity Association.



STEPHEN SACHS (Artistic Director, Co-Founder, Producer) is an award-winning playwright, director, producer, and the Artistic Director of the Fountain Theatre, which he co-founded in 1990. He is the author of eighteen plays that have been produced across the country, in New York, on the West End, and worldwide. He wrote the screenplay for the film version of his play *Sweet Nothing in my Ear* for CBS starring Marlee Matlin and Jeff Daniels. Sachs was instrumental in the launching of Deaf West Theatre at the Fountain in 1991. He directed the inaugural production of the Outdoor Classical Theater at the Getty Villa in Malibu in 2006 and directed several premieres of new plays by Athol Fugard in Los Angeles, New York, and the UK. Sachs has received every theatre award in Los Angeles. He was recently honored by the Los Angeles City Council for "his visionary contributions to the cultural life of Los Angeles." www.stephensachs.com



SCOTT TUOMEY (Technical Director) has been Technical Director at the Fountain since its inaugural production of *Winter Crane* in 1990. He has overseen virtually every Fountain production, on and off-site, including their numerous flamenco shows, and has appeared here on our stage in *Declarations: Love Letters of the Great Romantics*, and the Fountain's hit productions of *Master Class* and *Joe Turners' Come and Gone*. Scott's talents as actor-singer-guitarist were also seen in the Shakespeare Festival L.A. productions of *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night* at the Globe Theatre in West Hollywood and in the film *A Day in the Life of Sunny Paradise*.

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