

## PRESS RELEASE

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## Stages Theatre Company announces cast for ONCE ON THIS ISLAND, JR. *On stage March 3 – 19, 2023*

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HOPKINS, MN – Stages Theatre Company (STC) is beyond thrilled to announce the cast and creative team for [ONCE ON THIS ISLAND, JR.](#) A journey of love and life, [ONCE ON THIS ISLAND, JR.](#) tells the story of Ti Moune, a young girl with a big heart. A Calypso-flavored score weaves through this heart filled tale that tests the strength of love. A 60-minute, young-audience adaption of the Tony-nominated Broadway musical packed with catchy songs and non-stop dance.

Meet the director **KELLI FOSTER WARDER**: Kelli Foster Warder is a director and choreographer based in the Twin Cities and is the Associate Artistic Director and Director of Impact at Theater Latte Da. Kelli has been a teacher and arts administrator for over 25 years. Her work as a choreographer and director has been seen on stages in the Twin Cities and the country including Hennepin Theatre Trust, Children’s Theatre Company, The Ordway, Artistry, The 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Theater in Seattle, Asolo Repertory Theatre in Florida, and the ZACH Theater in Texas. Kelli has produced and created productions internationally in La Paz, Bolivia and Panama City, Panama.

*“I love this show! The music is rich, the story is universal and so right for students as they seek to discover who they are and what kind of life they want to live. The story also addresses the complexities of race and economic disparities while focusing on the heart of each of us. I have always wanted to do a show at Stages Theatre Company, and this is the perfect show at the perfect time.”*

*– Kelli Foster Warder (Director)*

[ONCE ON THIS ISLAND, JR](#) is recommended for everyone ages 7+. This makes it the perfect show for families, date night (with or without the kids), or groups such as schools, community centers, assisted living centers, college students, and more.

Stages Theatre Company is honored to say there is an extremely powerful and talented cast of young people on our stage to portray these complex and meaningful characters.

The cast of [ONCE ON THIS ISLAND, JR](#) include: **Dallas Downey** (Tonton Julian), **Ray Drewes** (Storyteller & Ensemble), **LuziAnah Feldmann** (Storyteller & Ensemble) **Arriana Foster** (Storyteller & Ensemble), **Silas Good** (Storyteller & Ensemble), **Henry Grogan** (Daniel's Father), **Feven Harder** (Storyteller & Ensemble), **Aniya Hollie** (Ti Moune), **Aliyah Irmiter** (Storyteller & Ensemble), **Jordan Kueng** (Daniel), **Kennedy Lucas** (Asaka), **Amy Lukasik** (Storyteller & Ensemble), **Vivian Nielson** (Storyteller & Ensemble), **Kyla Ashlee Plair** (Agwa), **Livv Rankin** (Erzulie), **Daija Scott** (Mama Euralie), **Josephine Spaulding** (Storyteller & Gatekeeper), **Layla Traufler** (Andrea), **Tiahna Wolfe-Shields** (Papa Ge).

Aniya Hollie of Maple Grove plays the lead character of Ti Moune.

*"From the moment I found out STC was planning to do Once On This Island, JR., I knew that I wanted to be a part of it. I didn't care what role I received just as long as I was able to tell this beautiful story to audiences. Every time I listen to the soundtrack it somehow puts a smile on my face because of the colorfulness that shines through the story. Words can't describe how excited I am to be playing Ti Moune here at Stages Theatre Company. She exhibits such love, drive, and determination, something that we all can sit back and admire. I think everyone should come see this show because it reminds you how precious life is and how much can come out of it just by taking chances."*

*-Aniya Hollie (Ti Moune)*

The creative team of [ONCE ON THIS ISLAND, JR](#) include: **Sandy Boren-Barrett** (Artistic Director), **Kelli Foster Warder** (Director & Choreographer), **Jason James Hansen** (Music Director), **Ajah Williams** (Stage Manager), **Melanie Salmon-Peterson** (Production Manager), **Marc Berg** (Props Designer), **Samantha Fromm Haddow** (Costume & Make Up Designer), **Grant Merges** (Lighting Designer), **Gretchen Katt** (Technical Director), **Christa Ludwig** (Wardrobe Supervisor), **Yuki Rogers** (BIPOC Youth Mentee Lighting), **Joe Stanley** (Set Designer).

Performances run from March 3 -19 2023. Ticket pricing is as follows: Adults \$16, Child \$14, Senior \$14. Subject to fees. Group ticket pricing for groups 10+ is as follows: \$8 per ticket for school performances, \$10.50 per ticket for public performances. Subject to fees. Tickets can be purchased online at [stagestheatre.org](http://stagestheatre.org), over the phone at 952-979-1111, or in person at the STC box office at 1111 Mainstreet, Hopkins MN 55343.

Accessible performances are as follows. For more information visit <https://www.stagestheatre.org/tickets/#accessibility> or call 952-979-1111.

- Pay What You Can (PWYC): Sun 3/3/2023 4:00PM
- ASL Interpreted (ASL): Sat 3/11/2023 1:00PM
- Audio Described (AD): Sat 3/11/2023 1:00PM
- Sensory Friendly (SF): Sat 3/18/2023 10:00AM

ONCE ON THIS ISLAND JR is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. [www.mtishows.com](http://www.mtishows.com)

ONCE ON THIS ISLAND JR is based on the book by Lynn Ahrens, Lyrics by Lynn Aherns, Music by Stephen Flaherty, Based on "My Love, My Love" by Rosa Guy

Stages Theatre Company's 2022-2023 Season of Possibility sponsored by UnitedHealthcare.

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*Stages Theatre Company* was founded in 1984 and since then has grown to become one of the largest professional theatres for young audiences in the country. We engage young artists with themes relevant to their lives and involve them in creating magical works featuring young people in meaningful roles. Through on-stage productions, education programs and other outreach opportunities, Stages Theatre Company annually serves more than 150,000 young people and their families. For more information visit [www.stagestheatre.org](http://www.stagestheatre.org)

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*Photo by Amy Rondeau Photography*