

WESTPORT CENTER
★ for the **ARTS** ★

Independent Professional
THEATRE



*Bottle of
Fire*

An original play
by Scott Myers

Directed by
Jacqueline Gafford

Justin
Speer

Paulette
Dawn

Victoria
Barbee

Patrick
Simpson

Just Off Broadway Theater, 3051 Central, KCMO

Bottle of Fire

CHARACTERS:

<i>LUCILLE JOHNSON</i>	Director of the county library in the large town of Roseville.
<i>MONROE PUTNAM</i>	Attorney in Roseville. He is a candidate for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives.
<i>CARMANITA TURNER</i>	Younger sister of Lucille Johnson. A dynamic, creative Pentecostal minister in a city a few hundred miles from Roseville.
<i>BEN PUTNAM</i>	Younger brother of Monroe Putnam. They practice law together, and he is his brother's campaign manager in the Congressional race.

SETTING:

A law office in the large town of Roseville, a county seat. It is July 4th weekend, which marks the beginning of the election season. While the brothers are planning Monroe Putnam's campaign, Lucille Johnson, chairperson of a July 4th picnic event, is having a reunion with her sister, who is traveling to Roseville from out of town.

The play is in TWO ACTS

(There will be a 15 minute intermission between acts)

THANKS FOR COMING!



Partial financial assistance for WCA Theatre has been provided by the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency.

WITH SPECIAL GRATITUDE TO:

Victoria Barbee

Kathy Lafrensen

Marcia Lehrenberg

The Mackey Family and Theatre For Young America

Westport Presbyterian Church Arts and Spirituality initiative

Max Xoca, stage assistant

PRODUCTION TEAM:

Playwright

Scott Myers

Director

Jacqueline Gafford

Stage Manager, Lighting Designer,
Sound and Lighting Operator

Diane Bulan

Production Manager

Frances Farah

Set Designer/Builder

Gavin Merrill

Sound Designer

Dennis Jackson

Graphic Artist

Deanna Capps

Marketing

Mary Jo Draper

Photographer

Amanda Davis

Script/Copy Editor

Chris Arnone

CAST AND CREW:



Victoria Barbee (Lucille Johnson) has been singing and acting for over 24 years professionally. This is Victoria's debut show with Westport Center for the Arts. She is forever grateful for the patience and professionalism of this cast and crew.

Look out for Victoria's one-woman show *UNMASKED: THE REAL BARBEE* to premiere this summer under the sponsorship of the Theater Community Fund of Kansas City.



Paulette Dawn (Carmanita Turner) A native of Kansas City, Paulette Dawn is excited to return to the stage. Some of her theatrical roles include, Jackie Dubois from *Reflections 1,2 & 3*. "The Woman" from *Blues in The Night*, Aunt Em from *the Wiz* and "Polk" from *Gods • Sib Tale Folk Opera*. Paulette owes her success to her wonderful husband Kenneth and loving daughter Madyson. Although grateful for her God given talent. Paulette knows none of this would be possible without the love and support of her family.



Patrick Simpson (Monroe Putnam) has performed at JOB twice before - in the Fringe Fest show *Stackers*, and the reading of *Woke*. He's been involved with local theater for quite a few years, but you may also find him doing stand up at KC's various comedy venues.



Justin Speer (Ben Putnam) is glad that live theatre is possible again. Also with Westport Center for the Arts, Justin appeared in *Stealing Kandinsky*, *Oracle of the Ozarks*, and *The Moon's Language*. Other Kansas City credits include *By the Way*, *Meet Vera Stark* (Unicorn), *Kindertransport* (White Theatre at The J), *An Otherwise Hopeless Evening* (The Jewel Box Kansas City and the Provincetown Tennessee Williams Theater Festival in Massachusetts), and *The Cherry Orchard* (Metropolitan Ensemble Theatre). Justin has also performed with ShawChicago, the Okoboji Summer Theatre in Iowa, and the Colorado Shakespeare Festival.



Diane Bulan (stage manager, lighting designer, lighting and sound operator) is an actor, director, and teaching artist. On stage, Diane has recently performed for: Theater for Young America, The Living Room, Whim Productions, KC Mystery Players, Midtown International Theatre Festival (New York), Musical Theatre Heritage, Black Hills Playhouse, and Great Plains Theatre. She performs in plays and conducts numerous workshops as a teaching artist for Kansas City Young Audiences. She has also done numerous commercials, films, and industrials, and is a member of SAG. Recent directing credits: *Men on Boats* (Bell Road Barn Players), *Superior Donuts* (Olathe Civic Theatre), *Equus* (Barn Players), *Along the Line* (Fishtank Theatre), *Louie, Louie and La Dolce Vita*, *The Gin Game*, and *Circle Mirror Transformation* (Talking Horse Productions), *Don't Talk to the Actors* (Paradise Playhouse).



Dennis Jackson (sound designer) is a Kansas City native. He is grateful for the opportunity to craft the sound design for *Bottle Of Fire*. He has appeared most recently in August Wilson's *King Hedley II* and *Two Trains Running* and Robert O'Hara's *Barbecue*, to name a few, all with KC Melting Pot Theater. He also crafted the sound designs for these productions. Dennis wishes to express special thanks to Scott Myers, Jacqee Gafford, and Fran Farah.



Gavin Merrill (scenic designer) is native to a small town outside of Wichita, KS and graduated in 2020 with his BFA in Theatre from Avila University. He is the full time production manager for Theatre for Young America as well as a teaching artist. You may have seen him onstage in *Sherwood: The Adventures of Robin Hood* at The New Theatre and Restaurant. You can also see him as Prince Charming in Theatre for Young America's production of *Cinderella* coming soon. This is his first time working with Westport Center for the Arts and has learned and loved every minute of it!



Jacqueline Gafford (director) is honored to be working again with Scott Myers and Westport Center for the Arts in collaboration with Inplay Productions. Jacqueline is particularly excited about working with Scott Myers on this important and meaningful play *Bottle Of Fire*. In October 2021 Jacqueline Gafford directed and acted in her original script *Dark Was Their Journey*. Jacqueline has also directed *Stick Fly* with Kansas City Black Rep. Ms. Gafford directed the staged reading of the moving new musical *WOKE* by Keith Andrews. Ms. Gafford has worked closely with Westport Center for the Arts directing *JFK: A Ghostly Evening*, *Bighorn's Secret*, *Stealing Kandinsky*, *Moon's Language*, and *Oracle of the Ozarks*, all written by Scott Myers.

Gafford has been a fixture on the Kansas City theatre scene for over 30 years. Originally from Shreveport LA, Jacqueline attended Grambling State University. Grambling was awarded the first Norman Lear Award for comedy thru the American College Theatre Festival for playwright Judi Ann Mason's *Living Fat* and the first Lorraine Hansberry Award for Judi Ann Mason's *A Star Ain't Nothin' But a Hole in Heaven*. Jacqueline was an original cast member in both productions. As a junior at Grambling State, she was nominated for the Irene Ryan Scholarship as part of the American College Theatre Festival for her portrayal of the chorus in Grambling's production of Jean Anouilh's *Antigone*. She was also a winner of the Barbara Jordan Speech Tournament for Oratory.

Jacqee (as she is known to her theatre friends) worked at Theatre for Young America for four years as an artist in residence. While there she directed, acted, stage managed, taught, and wrote plays in collaboration with Artistic Director Gene Mackey. Jacqee has also acted and directed at other Kansas City area theatres: Unicorn Theatre, The Coterie, UMKC Theatre Dept, Lawrence Community Theatre, Rockhurst University Theatre. At Just Off Broadway Theatre, she has acted and directed with InPlay Theatre Company, for which she is the founding Artistic Director, and with JOB resident company KC Melting Pot Theatre, with Harvey and Linda Williams.

Jacqueline is a member of Actors' Equity, and SAG-AFTRA, professional theatrical and screen professionals unions.

At the Unicorn, Jacqueline performed in *Flyin' West*, *Having Our Say*, *Old Settler*, and *Intimate Apparel*. She also directed *Betrayal of the Black Jesus*, *Crowns*, *The Women of Brewster Place*, and *Her Hair Went with Her*. She directed *Flyin' West* and *Inherit the Wind* at Lawrence Community Theatre. At Rockhurst University Theatre she directed *The Wiz* and *Wedding Band*.

With her company InPlay Theatre Productions, Jacqueline has directed her original scripts such as *Harlem Knights*, *Nothing Comes to Sleepers*, (*Sleepers* was also commissioned and performed at Southeast Missouri State University) and performed the title role of Barbara Jordan in *Journey With Barbara Jordan*, written in collaboration with Gene Mackey. Jacqee also directed the Lorraine Hansberry play *Raisin the Sun*, which is one of her favorites.

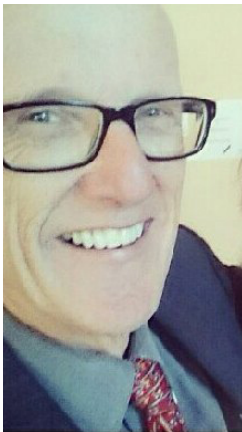
Jacqee is proud to have written and directed the original script, *Dark Was Their Journey*, which is about the lives of the widows Coretta Scott King, Betty Shabazz and Myrlie Evers-Williams after the death of their husbands.

Scott Myers and Jacqueline Gafford are collaborating on a new and exciting script which will be produced at JOB in October and November 2022. It is entitled *ONLY THE WOUNDS AND WEAPONS HAVE CHANGED. DON'T MISS IT. THIS PLAY FIGURATIVELY JUMPS OUT OF THE LIBRARY BOOK STACKS.*



Frances Farah (production manager, costume designer, properties designer) is truly happy to be working with Westport Center for the Arts again, particularly on this exciting new play by Scott Myers, *Bottle of Fire*. Fran worked as Production Stage Manager with Jacqueline Gafford on her original script *Dark Was Their Journey* in October 2021. Fran was the Production Stage Manager on two of Scott's other plays, *Moon's Language* and *Oracle of the Ozarks*. Fran loves a good mystery and also loved working on *Stealing Kandinsky*. It was a real joy.

Fran Farah has been working in Kansas City theatre for about 40 years. Fran received her MFA in Theatrical Direction in the first MFA class for the UMKC Theatre Department under Dr. Patricia McIlrath. Fran went on to found the New Directions Theatre Company in Kansas City with several colleagues from her MFA program, such as Penelope Weiner, Sharon Grossheart, Vickie Little, and Lynn King. With New Directions she either directed or produced such plays as *Tiger at the Gates*, *Toys in the Attic*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, and *Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*. Fran met Jacqee Gafford when she directed *Edward II* by Christopher Marlowe. With other colleagues they founded InPlay Theatre Company in 1999. InPlay Theater Company has produced plays such as *Othello*, *The Rainmaker*, and *A Raisin in the Sun*, as well as the collaborative work, *Booth: Is There a Murder Here* written in collaboration with Penny Weiner. Fran also worked with Jacqee on the original works *Harlem Knights*, *Grape's Vine*, and *Nothing Comes to Sleepers*, which were written by artistic director Gafford.



Scott Myers (playwright) is thrilled to be working again with Jacqueline Gafford. Scott has written ten major stage plays. His first play, *JFK: A Ghostly Evening*, (directed by Jacqueline Gafford and Harvey Williams) was staged at the Just Off Broadway Theater in 2013. Kansas City Star theater critic, Robert Trussell wrote of the play: "When a first-time playwright creates a work that packs a punch, the natural response is to find out what else he has tucked away on his computer. *JFK: A Ghostly Evening*," is impressive. The show is buoyed by serious intent and a provocative view of history. Too many playwrights have only theater as a frame of reference. Myers comes at the art form from the real world."

Since, then Scott Myers has staged "Mo Motley and the Money Gods" at the Just Off Broadway Theater (2016) *The Moon's Language* (2018, directed by Jacqueline Gafford), *Oracle of the Ozarks* (2018, Jacqueline Gafford) and *Stealing Kandinsky* (2019, funded for playwriting by Arts KC Inspiration grant).

Scott Myers is current Board President of Westport Center for the Arts (founded in 2008). He is an ordained Presbyterian minister, is currently senior minister at the historic Westport Presbyterian Church. He received a \$45,000 grant from Lily Endowment in 2005 to study "arts and spirituality". He is a graduate of the University of Michigan (B.A., History, English) University of Dayton (Counseling) and Eden Theological Seminary (M. Div.). He is grateful to his family for their support— Jeanne Reiss, M.D. his spouse, his three adult children, nine grandchildren, one great grandchild, and everyone at Westport Presbyterian Church.



KCMPT Black Playwright Festival

July 8 - 10, 2022



3rd Annual

MASKS REQUIRED



Finalists

Willy Bobo by Layon Gray

Welcome to the Blue Swan by Paris Crayton

Hairy & Sherri by Adrienne Dawe

Donations Encouraged

The Keairnes Stage at Just Off Broadway Theatre
3051 Central, KCMO 64108

UPCOMING WCA THEATRE:

ONLY THE WOUNDS AND WEAPONS HAVE CHANGED **by Jacqueline Gafford and Scott Myers**

Friday, October 21 through Sunday, November 6, 2022

9 Performances at Just Off Broadway Theatre

This original Black History play features many lesser known people who have played key roles in the struggle to completely liberate people who were captured and shipped from Africa to America to be sold as slaves. The play dismantles what author James Baldwin called “the white falsification of history,” showing instead the whole truth by creating dialogues that could have taken place between people who were actual contemporaries. The playwright team has chosen many lesser known, yet significant people, relationships, and events to assure they aren’t erased from history, instead are celebrated and understood.

Examples of scenes that deepen audience understanding are:

A scene about a lynching in Omaha, Nebraska.

A dialogue between jazz singer/pianist/forgotten film super star, *Hazel Scott*, and mystic/writer, *Dr. Howard Thurman*

A scene with *Fannie Lou Hamer & Ida B. Wells*

The deep friendship and artistic collaboration between *James Baldwin*, writer, and *Beauford Delaney*, painter, both LGBTQ arts pioneers. (scene also includes *Robert F. Kennedy* and *J. Edgar Hoover*)

Two Kansas City people are included:

Leon Jordan, pioneering Black politician and police detective (in a scene with *Bayard Rustin*, who organized the March on Washington)

Lucille Bluford, pioneering journalist who put the Kansas City Call newspaper on the map (in a scene with *Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth* of Birmingham, Alabama and *Bull Connor*, Birmingham, Alabama sheriff)

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Fri., Sept. 16

Shortleaf Band
Fri., Oct. 14

Cowtown Country Club
Fri., Nov. 18

Tom Vozzella, organist
Fri., Dec. 9

2023

Doug Talley Quartet: Concert to Honor Dr. MLK, Jr.
Mon., Jan. 16

Possum Trot String Quartet
Fri., Feb. 17

Susie & Bill Goldenberg Duo
Fri., Mar. 24

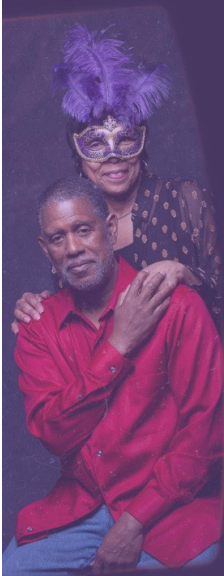
Cass Duo, Jayoung Hong & Gloria Hsu
Fri., Apr. 21

Lyric Arts Trio
Fri., May 19, 2023

KC MELTING POT THEATRE AT JUST OFF BROADWAY

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Westport Center for the Arts is a multi-discipline arts organization providing affordable events with professional actors, musicians, and artists.

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