



# Edgar Arceneaux

- Boney Manilli

Theater

OCT 5 - 7, 2023

8:30 PM

PRESENTED BY

**REDCAT**

Roy and Edna Disney

CalArts Theater

**CaLARTS**

California Institute of the Arts

We gratefully acknowledge that we operate on the traditional lands of the Tongva, Tataviam, and Chumash peoples—including the Gabrieleño, Fernandeño, and Ventureño; members of the Takic and Chumashan language families; and other Indigenous peoples who made their homes in and around the area we now call Los Angeles. We honor their ancestors past, present, and future, and recognize their continued existence and contributions to our society.

# Edgar Arceneaux

## • Boney Manilli

Playwright & Director: EDGAR ARCENEUX

Momma, Makeup Artist: EFÉ

Edgar/Sunny, Rob: ALEX BARLAS

Bro Bro, Fab, Joel Chandler Harris, and Voice Overs: TERRY WAYNE JR.

Frank Farian: FRANK LAWSON

Burt Williams: BEN VEREEN

Southern Man: FRANK ARCENEUX

Lighting Designer: OMAR MADKOUR

Sound Designer: JOHN ZALEWSKI

Sound Effects: JEREMY HORSEMAN

Costume Designer: LOREN WELDON

Scenic Designer: YUKI DING

Puppet Designer: MIGUEL AYALA

Video Designer: KAMYI LEE

Dramaturg: DOUGLAS KEARNEY

Choreographer: D. SABELA GRIMES

Puppeteers: MIGUEL AYALA, FRED KOLOUCH, AYRIN GHARIBPOUR

Assistant Costume Designer: RAVEN O'DONNELL

Assistant Video Designer: SEDONA CRUZ

Props Coordinator: XIAOKE ZHANG

Scenic Fabricators: FELIPE AVALOS, EVE THOMAS

Videography: RAQUEL CHATFIELD-TAYLOR

Photography: RICHARD FFRENCH

Producer: RATRI ANINDYAJATI

Production Manager: XIAOYUE ZHANG

Stage Manager: MACY E. KUNKE

Assistant Production Manager: GEFEI LIU

Merchandise Designers: EVE THOMAS, CHANDLER BULLOCK

Karaoke DJ: TIARA JACKSON

Original Music: “Mommy Chill”, “Go Go Grigori”: Music by NICK GOLDSTON; Lyrics by EDGAR ARCENEAUX; Produced by RIC WHITNEY / “Blackmail, Cheat and Lie”: Music and Lyrics by KIRBY TEPPER / “Church Music”: Music by EVERETT SAUNDERS; Performed by JASMINE GATEWOOD, HENITA TELLO, and MORGAN DANIELLE / “Rocky”: Written by JAY STEVENS; German Adaption by HANS ULRICH WEIGEL; Performed by FRANK FARIAN

*Boney Manilli is dedicated to my parents, Merc and Frank Arceneaux, my brothers and sisters, Zora Emi Arceneaux and my entire extended family.*

*Special thanks to Rob Morvan and Fab Pilatus, Boney M., Ratri Anindyajati, Kurt Forman, Charles Gaines, Sascha Robinett, Susanne and Jost Vielmetter, Michael Smoler, Mary Clare Stevens, Olga Garay and Kerry English, Fred Frumberg, Kristy Edmunds, Edgar Miramontes, Lyndon and Janine Sherman Barrois, Natalie Obadia, Tim Disney, Kevin Krapf, Umar Rashid, Jill Moniz, Rachel Scandling, Victor Sandoval and CalArts Costume Shop, Zarina Rico, Bozzy Karasu, Evelia Magallon, David Bratton, USC Roski School of Art and Design, Wangechi Mutu, Spike Jonze and Charlie Kaufman.*

*Gratitudes to our many collaborators over the years, Kenneth and Brenda Uphopho of the Lagos Theatre Festival 2019, Patrick Diabuah, Etim Effiong, Gabriel Croone, Henita Tello, Morgan Danielle, Jasmine Gatewood, Joana Knezevic, Irina Kruzhilina, Hsuan-Kuang Hsieh, Marissa Osato, Melanie Waingarten, Toran Xavier Moore, Solomon Turner, Daniel Gower, Elizabeth Smith, Ieva Vizgirdaite, Irungu Mutu, John Freeland, Tommy Franklin, Stevie Mack, Linda Michaels, Doña Oxford, Angelo Farone, Sophia McDowell, Marjani Forte, Marissa Osato, X. Hill, Russell Salmon and Hauser and Wirth Los Angeles.*

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*Early Supporters: Colleen Keegan, Ruby Lerner, Mara and Salim Akil, Geoff Hargadon and Patricia La Valley, Paul Ha and Eva Lundsager, Aryn Drakelee, Ravi Rajan, Kirby Tepper, Leslie J. Hedges, Iris Marsden, Joshua Kanter, Noel Kirmon, Jane Schulack, Brooke Kanter, Kathie Foley-Meyer, Amelia Jones and Paul Donald, John Chan, Grace Oh, Lorne Buchman, Susie Allen, Dr. V. Joy Simmons, Alyx Fier, James Bulliard, Stephan Thomas, Brenda Williams, Sean Duffy, Axel and Barbara Haubrok, Larry and Tina Jones, Merc Arceneaux, QD’s Double Barrel BBQ, and all our Kickstarter backers!*

*Boney Manilli is produced by Rarara!, an interdisciplinary, international ensemble of artists, designers, and performers convened by Artist Edgar Arceneaux and Producer Ratri Anindyajati. It is the umbrella project for Edgar Arceneaux’s live performance works, which started with Arceneaux’s first theatrical production, Until, Until, Until... in 2015. An international, majority African American and Asian ensemble, Rarara! pushes the boundaries of visual and performing arts practices by telling stories that explore the blurry lines between past and present, history and fantasy.*

## ABOUT THE WORK

Written and directed by interdisciplinary artist Edgar Arceneaux (CalArts MFA 01), *Boney Manilli* is a dark musical comedy in the shape of a pop music video, a puppet show, and a burial ceremony. Actor Alex Barlas plays “Edgar,” a visual artist overwhelmed by feelings of inadequacy, frustration, and self-loathing, who is unable to complete his play on the infamous pop music duo, Milli Vanilli. His freeloading brother, Bro Bro, decides to adapt Disney’s Song of the South into his own play about Black liberation, while their mother, Momma, a failed pop singer, is slowly fading away with dementia. Their lives spin from pathetic to bizarre, becoming strangely intertwined as each one’s search for truth collides with the other’s.

*The program includes a post-performance talk on October 7 with Edgar Arceneaux and the cast.*

**Runtime: Approx. 120 minutes, with intermission**

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Born in 1972, Los Angeles-based artist **Edgar Arceneaux** received a BFA from the Art Center College of Design and a MFA from the California Institute of the Arts. Arceneaux constructs drawings, installations, video and film works as complex arrangements of association that examine adjacencies and points of contact between implausible relations. Constantly working in new modes, Arceneaux directed his first play at the Performa Biannual in NYC in November 2015, for his first play *Until, Until, Until...* and was awarded the Malcolm McLaren, Best of Show Award. Arceneaux received the prestigious Mike Kelley Foundation Award in 2019 and the COLA Individual Artist Fellowship in 2020.

He has participated in the Rauschenberg Residency in Captiva Island, Florida, Art Pace in San Antonio; Skowhegan: Banff Center in Canada and at the Fachhochschule Aachen, in Germany. Solo exhibitions have been presented at the Vera List Center at MIT in Cambridge, Mass, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; The Studio Museum in Harlem and Museum für Gegenwartskunst in Basel, Switzerland. His work is in major museum collections at the Whitney Museum, MOMA NY, Carnegie Museum, Museum Ludwig in Köln, Germany, the Hammer Museum and LACMA to name a few. He is represented by Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects in Los Angeles and Nathalie Obadia in Paris, and is an Associate Professor of Art for Roski School of Art and Design at the University of Southern California. Recognized as a national leader in the arts, Arceneaux also serves on the Board of Directors at Creative Capital.

**Efé**, affectionately known as MamaE, has brought a 40-year Chicago foundation of professional concert dance, teaching and arts administration to LA where an actor flowed forth. Winning the DC Black Film Festival 2019 Best Actress Award for her role in Tony Scott’s *Together*, Efé is grateful for opportunities extended to continue her deep commitment to a life of enlightenment, illumination and the beauty that lies in telling stories through all media outlets. Grandmother to an actor and musician, she thanks her beautiful talented daughter Mei-Ling for opening this fascinating world to

her. Efé is delighted to be part of Edgar Arceneaux's, *Boney Manilli!* | IG: @grandmaefe  
**Alex Barlas** graduated with a business degree from West Virginia University, later acknowledging his aspirations to become an artist which propelled him to move to California. Alex graduated with his MFA in acting from California Institute of the Arts in 2020. Alex has performed at The Ford Theater, REDCAT, and The Odyssey Theater in his short time in Los Angeles. He is excited and honored to bring Boney Manilli to life with a phenomenal director and cast. Alex is a walking testimony that "you can become anything you aspire to be."

**Terry Wayne Jr.** is a Los Angeles based actor who has a passion to Tell authentic stories in many different capacities. He has been in theater since the age of 8 and has been blessed to perform all over the USA as well as internationally. He hopes to use his GOD given tools as a performer to act as catalyst to incite change and to help many people across the world.

**Frank Lawson** most recently played Andrew Gaines in *Summer: The Donna Summer Musical* and Oro in *Yemandja* with Grammy winner Angeliqe Kidjo. He starred in Edgar Arceneaux's award-winning play *Until, Until...Until* and Charlie in *Marilyn! The New Musical* at Paris Hotel in Las Vegas. His favorite credits include *Porgy and Bess*, *Freeze Frame* with Debbie Allen, *Hair*, *Summer of Love* with Michelle Lee and *The Who's Tommy*. He crooned in the one-man musical *Songs From An Unmade Bed*, performed with Jennifer Nettles in *Mamma Mia!* at LA's Hollywood Bowl and toured Asia in the rock musical *RENT*. He earned NAACP and LA Ovation Awards for his portrayal of Billy Strayhorn in *When Jazz Got The Blues*. He is the voice of the 8-year-old wrestler R Truth in Seth Green's animated TV series *Camp WWE*. Frank is a proud graduate of Southern Methodist University. | IG: @thefranklawson

**Ratri Anindyajati** is an Independent Producer for the arts, managing national and international tours and represents both Indonesian and international artists globally. Ratri currently sits as Director for the Indonesian Dance Festival (IDF), Jakarta's first international contemporary dance festival. Artists she represents include Didik Nini Thowok (Indonesia) and Edgar Arceneaux (USA). Her projects include dance, theater, arts festivals, exhibitions and independent films. She has a Bachelors in Political Science from Parahyangan Catholic University (Bandung-Indonesia) and in 2017 she graduated with a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Producing and Management from the Theater Department from California Institute of the Arts (Los Angeles-USA).

**Xiaoyue Zhang** is a Chinese interdisciplinary artist, Production Manager, and Creative Producer working at the intersection of performance, dance, photography, and film. Her performance, producing, and production management works have been shown at institutions nationally and internationally, including AFROPUNK Festival 2023, Center for Performance Research, The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA, The Getty Villa, LA Performance Practice, REDCAT's New Original Works Festival, CalArts Center for New Performance, Hollywood Fringe Festival, Guangdong Museum of Art (China) and Short Film Corner of the 2018 Cannes International Film Festival. She is currently a Van Lier Fellow in MITU Theater Hybrid Arts Lab and the Director of Performance Lab at the Orchard Project.

**Macy E. Kunke** is originally from Dallas, Texas. She is a graduate of Stephen's College and a current MFA resident at the California Institute of the Arts. In REDCAT's previous season, she was assistant stage manager for *Scene with Cranes*. Recent credits include *Beautiful*, *The Seagull*, *Men on Boats*, and the world premieres of *Nicky and the Angels* and *daughter*. When she is not stage managing, Macy is an award-winning playwright for her one-acts *The Appointment*, *Good Taste in Neighbors*, and *Paper Airplanes*. Her next play, an intimate and immersive horror-comedy titled *Unveiling the Veil*, will be produced in Los Angeles in Spring 2024.

**Gefei Liu** is a creative producer/theater artist originally from Chongqing, China and physically based in LA. One of the founders of HowBang!Club, a virtual-based theater collective, she is interested in exploring the impact of storytelling and in creating unusual theater experiences. She is currently pursuing her MFA in Creative Producing at California Institute of the Arts. | [gefeliu.com](http://gefeliu.com)

**Kirby Tepper** Composer/Lyricist: *Until, Until, Until...*; Lyrics for musical versions of *Gladiator* and *A Room With A View*; "Merry Men" sequence in the first *Shrek* film; songs and special material for Burt Reynolds, Linda Purl, Dyan Cannon, Daytime Emmy Awards; and 14 years providing songs and scripts for the Center Theater Group/Ahmanson (Gala opening script and songs for Kirk Douglas Theatre, Farewell Tribute to Gordon Davidson, Grand Re-Opening of Ahmanson, and more). Performed his songs at Carnegie Hall with Michael Feinstein, Schoenberg Hall with Lucie Arnaz, Pasadena Playhouse in *kirbysomething*. Performed on Broadway in *On Your Toes*, Kennedy Center Honors, *Cheers*, *Wings*, regional theatre, and more.

**Omar Madkour** is a Lighting Designer from Cairo, Egypt and currently located in the United States. His designs have been presented in various countries, festivals and venues such as The Maxim Gorki Theatre (Berlin), BoZar (Brussels), Shubbak Festival (London), D-CAF (Cairo), UNAM (Mexico City) and others. Credits vary from classical theatre to new works and experimental performance. Selected credits in Los Angeles include Young-Jean Lee's *We're Gonna Die* at the Bootleg Theatre; *The Chandelier* at The Wallis Annenberg (Heidi Duckler Dance) and *No Exit* at Lee Strasberg Institute.

**John Zalewski** A Los Angeles based sound designer, his recent work includes *Mayakovsky and Stalin* by Murray Mednick (Cherry Lane Theatre, NY), *Macbeth* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), *The Father* (LADCC Award, Pasadena Playhouse). The original production of *Destiny of Desire* directed by Jose Luis Valenzuela (Arena Stage; SCR; Goodman; OSF; Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park); *Coleman '72* at SCR directed by Chay Yew. Presently, *Tacos LA Brooklyn* with Latino Theater Co. @LATC. Multimedia and immersive work includes Plain Wood Production's *Blood/Sugar* and Wilderness' *The Day Shall Declare It*. His photography can be seen in the book *Reza Abdoh*, published by Hatje Cantz and MOMA PS1. Awards listed @auaural.

**Loren Weldon** is a Costume and Fashion Designer taking inspiration from the visual, tactile, and

auditory to create immersive experiences. Her most recent works include *Etta and Ella on the Upper West Side* at REDCAT (Dir: Monty Cole), *Because You're Worth It* at Sharon Disney Lund Theatre (Choreographer: Tokie Wang), *Summer Junebugs* at CalArts Coffeehouse Theatre (Dir: Hunter Abal-Sadeq), *Birds and The Curiosity* at Hudson Theatre (Dir: Gefei Liu); *Bacchae* at CalArts Butler Building (Dir: Anthony Niklochev), *Pelleas et Melisande* at CalArts Virtual Theatre Festival (Dir: Charles Yee).

**Yuki Shiyu Ding** is a scenic designer based in LA and an MFA candidate for Scenic Design and Art & Technology at CalArts. With a background in painting and printmaking, her understanding of colors, textures, and spatial dynamics enables her designs to narrate stories in immersive and vivid ways. She enjoys listening to the stories of others and helping them visually express their narratives. You can find her at @yuki.shiyu\_ding (Instagram) or yukidingdesign@gmail.com.

**Miguel Ayala** is a multimedia artist from San Bernardino who lives and works in LA. He has been working to develop an art rock band, Cardboard Department, an interdisciplinary performance collective working in performance, song, and visual work mining an interest in the usage of expanded narratives found in the histories of humor, theater, cartoons, children's literature, and broadcast television; to further examine and navigate the interaction of art & life & the formation of narrative via storytelling and communal experience.

**Kam Ying (Kamyi) Lee** is a Los Angeles-based interdisciplinary artist and video designer who is interested in experimental uses of digital media for art installations and live performances. She specializes in architectural projection and has designed both nationally and internationally in theater, dance and concerts. Kamyi's selected video design credits include *Wizard of Oz* (B Street Theater, Sacramento), *The Chandelier* (The Wallis, Los Angeles), *Witkacy/Two-Headed Calf* (Divine Comedy International Theatre Festival, Poland). She is the founder of Macau-based creative design studio Atelier Cocorico and has an MFA in Interactive Media for Performance from the California Institute of the Arts. | [cocorico.mo](http://cocorico.mo)

**Raven O'Donnell** is a BFA 3 Experience Design and Production student at CalArts, specializing in Costume Design. Her previous CalArts productions include *When Five Years Pass*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Men on Boats*, and CalArts Coffeehouse Theater Productions *Apocalypse at the Rainforest Cafe* and *Fishbowl Sonata*. She would like to thank the *Boney Manilli* team for the opportunity to assist her first show at REDCAT.

**Sedona Cruz** is a multidisciplinary artist and BFA4 at the California Institute of The Arts studying in the program of Film/Video—most recently specifying studies to focus in Themed Entertainment and Special Effects. Cruz is actively in the pursuit of researching new ways to create accessible, captivating, and moving experiences and has been the recipient of the Herb Alpert Emerging Young Artist Award, the Donn B Tatum Scholarship, as well as recently named the Harvey Milk Diversity Coalition's Youth of the Year for their mission in creating diverse and accessible work to

tell the stories of those who need it most.

### **REDCAT TECHNICAL STAFF**

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QLab: SCOTT GARNER

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Deck: DONATO KARINGAL

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## **UPCOMING AT REDCAT**

### **Nacera Belaza: *L'Onde (The Wave)***

**October 19 - 21**

Internationally revered for her powerfully abstract work, Nacera Belaza draws a path between shadow and light, seeking to glimpse the infinite. In *L'Onde (The Wave)*, the French Algerian choreographer immerses herself in the spellbinding notions of Algerian ritualistic dances. With a hypnotic sound narrative and mesmerizing movement that blends tradition and modernity, the piece features four dancers who explore the body's capacity for transformation.

### **Dorothee Munyaneza: *Mailles***

**November 2 - 4**

In this symphony for six African and Afro-descendant female voices, Munyaneza seeks to weave the fabric of their stories in collaboration with the designer and visual artist Stéphanie Coudert. The costumes and the material itself become the through line for what happens onstage, raising questions about the feminine and bodily freedom. *Mailles* is a women's show united onstage in order for their different paths to be heard, as well as the violence of their life stories and history itself.



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