

JuVee Productions and American Oasis proudly present

The West Coast Premiere of

# PARADISE

Written by **Laura Maria Censabella**

Directed by **Vicangelo Bulluck**

## STARRING

**Maral Milani and Jeff Marlow\***

Produced by

**Viola Davis and Julius Tennon**

General Manager  
**Racquel Lehrman,**  
Theatre Planners

Set and Lighting Designer  
**Jeff Rowlings\***

Sound Designer  
**Jon Gottlieb\***

Costume Designer  
**Myllette Nora**

Assistant Director  
**Peter J. Kuo**

Casting Director  
**Michael Donovan, CSA**

Assistant General Manager  
**Misha Riley,**  
Theatre Planners

Marketing  
**Leigh Fortier**

Casting Associate  
**Richie Ferris, CSA**

Publicity  
**Lucy Pollak Public Relations**  
**Wolf Kasteler Public Relations**

Graphic Designer  
**Kiff Scholl, AFK Design**

Property Designer and Stage Manager  
**Jenine MacDonald\***

Executive Producers

**Viola Davis, Julius Tennon, and John Cappetta**

PARADISE received its world premiere production at Underground Railway/Central Square Theater in Cambridge, MA in April 2017.

Originally commissioned and developed by The Ensemble Studio Theatre/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Science & Technology Project.

PARADISE is produced by special arrangement with the Author and Elaine Devlin Literary, Inc.,  
411 Lafayette Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10003.



\*Appearing courtesy of Actors' Equity Association

\*Member United Scenic Artists, Local 829



## CAST

MARAL MILANI.....Yasmeen al-Hamadi

JEFF MARLOW\* .....Dr. Guy Royston

## TIME

The present.

## PLACE

The science lab of a large inner-city Bronx high school.

PARADISE WILL BE PERFORMED WITH ONE INTERMISSION

There is no photography or recording allowed during the performance.

## A NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

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I grew up with my family in a tiny apartment along the highway in Queens. Even as a child I noticed that our dreams were in inverse proportion to the amount of space we inhabited. They soared over the rushing traffic, the graffiti, and the barbed wire at the highway overpass. One of those dreams was to become the first in my immigrant family to go to college. My guidance counselor helped by holding seminars about how to fill out the bewildering array of forms. The federal government came through with block grants and low interest loans that allowed me to graduate with limited debt. But today some public schools have only one guidance counselor for every 700 students, and the cost of a college education has long outstripped those government grants. When I began teaching poetry and playwriting in the New York City public schools, I was bowled over by the amount of talent there was in the farthest and poorest reaches of the city. What would happen if this talent was nurtured and harnessed like mine was, and its incredible energy released into the world? What would happen if we created a country where there is room for all of us? Why do we still behave as if it's a zero sum game? This play is for all the Yasmeens who are wrestling with questions way beyond their years, whose hearts and intellects push against the barriers of the tiny spaces—both metaphorical and literal—that enclose them, and who can lead the way to a bigger, brighter nation if only we give them a chance.

– Laura Maria Censabella

## A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

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I am honored to be directing the West Coast Premiere of Laura Maria Censabella's *Paradise*. It is an important piece of American theater that examines many critical cultural issues and explores the meaning of love. At its heart is a beautifully realized portrait of a young Muslim woman.

I hope you find it to be an inspirational, thought-provoking night of theater. Enjoy the show!

– Vicangelo Bulluck

## CAST BIOS



**MARAL MILANI** (Yasmeen al-Hamadi) Maral Milani is an Iranian-American actress, born and raised in Southern California. After graduating high school, she quickly moved to Los Angeles in order to pursue a B.A. in Acting at UCLA's School of Theater, Film and Television. Recently, she has made her theatrical debut on the UCLA stage in shows such as *Trojan Women* as Hecuba, the Queen of Troy, *When We Were Young and Unafraid* as Mary Anne and *Dead Man's Cellphone* as Hermia. Maral's latest collaboration has been with the "Try Guys" from BuzzFeed where they take on the issue of immigration in America. She is also known for her roles in short films such as "Soul Dance", "Whitewash" and the "Vampire Couch Trip." Raised by parents who are both political activists, Maral's passion also lies in fighting for equality and supporting human rights' organizations/ protests such as CODEPINK, Occupy Wall Street and Amnesty International.



**JEFF MARLOW\*** (Dr. Guy Royston) Jeff's recent theatre credits include *Henry IV* with Tom Hanks at the Shakespeare Center of LA; *Junk, Hollywood, Sideways* and *Glengarry Glen Ross* at the La Jolla Playhouse; *Hamlet, All the Way, Yoga Play* and *Nothing Sacred* at South Coast Repertory; and *The Missing Pages of Lewis Carroll* and *Medea* at the Theatre @ Boston Court. TV and film credits include "Reverie," "Criminal Minds," "The Mick," "Pure Genius," "The Player," "Dr. Ken," "Silicon Valley," "Angie Tribeca," "Brooklyn Nine-Nine," "Grey's Anatomy," "Akeelah and the Bee" and "The Hebrew Hammer." As a member of the sketch comedy troupe the Reduced Shakespeare Company, Jeff has toured the U.S., Europe and Asia in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)*, *The Complete History of America (abridged)* and *Completely Hollywood (abridged)*. Jeff is a founding board member of Shakespeare's Birthplace America, the U.S. arm of Stratford-upon-Avon's Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

## PRODUCTION BIOS

**LAURA MARIA CENSABELLA** (Playwright) Laura Maria Censabella has been a three-time participant in the O'Neill Theater's National Playwrights Conference. Her play *Carla Cooks The War* won the \$10,000 ADAA William Saroyan Human Rights/Social Justice Award; and *Paradise* received an IRNE Award for Best New Play, was nominated for an Elliot Norton Award (Outstanding New Script), and was a runner-up for the Saroyan/Paul Award. She has won two grants in Playwriting from the New York Foundation for the Arts, the Geri Ashur Prize in Screenwriting, and two daytime Emmys. She teaches playwriting and new play development at the New School for Drama where she has been honored with the Distinguished University-Wide Teaching Award. Most recently, she received a joint new play commission from Ensemble Studio Theatre NYC (where she directs the Playwrights Unit) and The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation on the work of pioneering scientist Irene Pepperberg of *Alex & Me* fame. She graduated from Yale University, and is currently writing the screenplay for *Paradise*.

**VICANGELO BULLUCK** (Director) Vicangelo Bulluck is a respected entertainment industry thought leader with over 20 years experience creating content and initiatives focused on the multicultural audience. He was an executive producer of the 2016 Democratic National Convention. He executive produced the NAACP Image Awards for ten years, and he is an executive producer on the long-running hit series "The Judge Mathis Show," now in its twentieth season. He recently produced the indie feature film "Windows on the World" starring Edward James Olmos and Ryan Guzman. Now, directing *Paradise*, he is returning to his first love — the theater.

**JUVEE PRODUCTIONS** (Executive Producer) JuVee Productions is an artist-driven entertainment company that develops and produces independent film, television, theater, and VR and digital content across all narrative platforms. JuVee Productions seeks to produce sophisticated and character-driven stories with an emphasis on narratives from a diverse range of emerging and established voices alike.

**AMERICAN OASIS** (Executive Producer) American Oasis is a production company dedicated to telling multicultural stories.

**VIOLA DAVIS (Producer)** Viola Davis is a critically revered actress of film, television, and theater and has won rave reviews for her intriguingly diverse roles. Audiences across the United States and internationally have admired her for her work- including her celebrated, Oscar-nominated performances in “The Help” (2011), “Doubt” (2008), and her Oscar-winning performance in “Fences” (2016). Davis won the Emmy Award for Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Drama Series for her work in ABC’s “How To Get Away With Murder” (2014-2017), making her the first black woman in history to take home the award. In her career, Davis has given her audiences a substantial list of performances, earning a cascade of awards and nominations.

**JULIUS TENNON (Producer)** As a Film/TV actor and producer with over 30 years of experience, Julius Tennon now leads a production company rooted in the impact and world-renowned brand of Viola Davis. Julius and Viola’s combined vision for JuVee has influence that extends to Film, TV, Digital, and Immersive & Interactive media, with focus on creating inclusive content for a global audience. He has a deep respect for the business and creative, and has armed himself with a great team of passionate and innovative creators. His motto for JuVee is “the project is the star” and he stands by this in the company’s creative culture. JuVee is strongly vested in giving opportunity where it might not exist and creating a platform to give a voice to the voiceless. Julius’ experience working with fellow industry leaders has taught him that, when aiming for the highest bar in quality, there are no bad questions and “slow is better than fast.”

**JOHN CAPPETTA (Executive Producer)** Founder and CEO of Planet 9 Productions and the Andesite Holdings Group of Companies. Previous theater credits include: Producer: *Unspeakable, a Dramatic Fantasia*, at the Broadway Playhouse in Chicago (2015). Motion picture credits: Producer: “Day of Days” (2017), “HeadShop” (2019). Executive Producer: “Marshall” (2017), “Tyson’s Run” (in post-production) (2019). The Cappetta family would like to dedicate this production to the loving memory of Dolores Kupiec (Lolita).

**RACQUEL LEHRMAN, THEATRE PLANNERS (General Manager)** Racquel is the founder and managing director of Theatre Planners, her own theatre production firm which has been serving the Los Angeles theatre scene for over fifteen years. She graduated from NYU-Tisch School of the Arts and lived in NY for many years producing theatre. Theatre Planners has since developed into a very busy and successful outlet for actors, writers, producers and theatre companies. Doing

everything from producing, consulting, marketing and more, Racquel loves to make productions a reality and help to keep the theatre scene in LA alive and strong. Racquel is also the owner of The Lounge Theatres and The Lounge Studio and manages The Zephyr Theatre. To learn more about Racquel and Theatre Planners, go to [www.theatreplanners.com](http://www.theatreplanners.com)

**JEFF ROWLINGS** (Set and Lighting Designer) Jeff, along with director, Vic Bulluck, and sound designer, Jon Gottlieb, is a product of the USC School of Dramatic Arts (many, many...many years ago). He is now an award-winning set and lighting designer and production manager in the San Francisco Bay Area. He was Production Manager at American Conservatory Theater; Production Manager/Resident Designer for San Diego Rep; and Production Manager/Resident Designer for the Magic Theatre. Jeff co-founded Foghouse Productions which produced *R. Buckminster Fuller: The History (and Mystery) of the Universe* in San Francisco, Chicago and Seattle and *Culture Clash in America* at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts and Los Angeles Theatre Center. Specializing in new plays, his designs include lights for Aurora Theatre's *Detroit '67*, *Eureka Day*, *Temple* and *The Heir Apparent*; sets & lights for Marin Theatre Company's *Magic Forest Farm* and lights for *The Oldest Boy*; sets & lights for Fogg Theatre's world premiere *The Cable Car Nymphomaniac*; lights for Magic Theatre's *Sister Play* and *Arlington*; and sets & lights for the world premiere of Vic Bulluck's *Virgil* at the Pasadena Center for the Arts and Zephyr Theatre. Jeff will be doing lights for *Pippin* at Berkeley Playhouse and *Jazz* at Marin Theatre Company; as well as sets & lights for *Ideation* and *The Real Thing* for Mendocino Theatre Company later this year. Jeff is a member of United Scenic Artists, Local 829. [www.pmd-sf.com](http://www.pmd-sf.com)

**JON GOTTLIEB** (Sound Designer) Jon Gottlieb is the Head of the Sound Design program at the CalArts School of Theater. He is an internationally recognized sound designer for the legitimate stage whose work has been heard on Broadway, on London's West End, in residence for fifteen years at the Taper and Ahmanson and in many regional theatres across the U.S. He has won numerous awards, including nine Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle awards, a Career Achievement Award from *LA Weekly*, and three Los Angeles Stage Alliance Ovation awards. In his role as an audio design and systems consultant, he has created original sound effects and design for attractions at Pleasure Island in Walt Disney World. He was the principal audio systems consultant for the CalArts performance space REDCAT, the Douglas Theater in Culver City, and the Los Angeles Theatre Center, a former bank building in downtown Los Angeles that was renovated into a nationally recognized four-theatre complex. Jon holds a BFA from the School of Cinema at USC and an MFA from the School of Film, Television and Digital Media at UCLA.

**MYLETTE NORA** (Costume Designer) NAACP Theatre Award for best costumes, listed in the honors edition of The Cambridge Registry of Who's Who Among Executive and Professional Women. Mylette's work worldwide consists of television, film and stage, and was seen nightly on "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno" and now weekly on "Jay Leno's Garage." The famed artist Synthia St. James noted Mylette as being the inspiration for her world-renowned painting *Ensemble*, which graced the cover of the best-selling novel *Waiting To Exhale*, by Terry McMillan. Mylette creates designer doggie wear, [www.FromTheHeartDoggieWear.com](http://www.FromTheHeartDoggieWear.com), and heirloom dolls, My Mind's Eye.

**PETER J. KUO** (Assistant Director) Peter J. Kuo is a director, producer, writer, and educator focused on raising the visibility of marginalized communities. In September, he started his tenure in the newly created Associate Conservatory Director position at A.C.T. Kuo is an alumnus of Williamstown Theatre Festival's Directing Corps, Oregon Shakespeare Festival's FAIR program, and Directors Lab West. He recently finished a First Stage Residency at The Drama League and was named one of Theatre Communication Group's Rising Leaders of Color. He is co-founder of Artists at Play, a Los Angeles-based Asian American theatre collective. He has worked at South Coast Repertory, East West Players, Geffen Playhouse, The Play Company, Playground-LA, and Theatre @ Boston Court. Directing highlights: Lauren Yee's *in a word* and *Ching Chong Chinaman*; Christopher Chen's *Mutt*, Adam Gwon's *Ordinary Days*, and Jason Robert Brown's *Songs for a New World*. MFA: The New School for Drama. [www.peterjkuo.com](http://www.peterjkuo.com)

**MICHAEL DONOVAN, CSA** (Casting Director) Michael is the recipient of 7 Artios awards, presented by the Casting Society of America for Outstanding Achievement in casting. He has cast shows produced at the Ahmanson Theatre, Hollywood Bowl, Pasadena Playhouse, the Kirk Douglas Theatre, Walt Disney Concert Hall, International City Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, the Getty Villa, the Ricardo Montalban Theatre, the Theatre at Boston Court, the 24th St. Theatre, San Francisco Symphony, Arizona Theatre Company, the Palazzo Theatre in Las Vegas, the Kentucky Shakespeare Festival and more. His credits also include numerous films, over 1,000 commercials, and multiple TV series. Michael, who also teaches at UCLA, serves on the Board of Directors for both the Foundation for New American Musicals, and Camp Bravo.



**MISHA RILEY, THEATRE PLANNERS** (Assistant General Manager)

Misha holds a B.A. in Theater from the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television. At UCLA Misha specialized in both Theater Studies and Acting, performing in multiple productions including *Assassins*, *Uncle Vanya*, and *The Revenger's Tragedy* directed by Lisa Wolpe, founder of the LA Women's Shakespeare Company. He was also chosen to participate in UCLA's inaugural Professional Theater Practicum course, hosted in tandem with The Geffen Playhouse. To learn more about Theatre Planners, go to [www.theatreplanners.com](http://www.theatreplanners.com)

**KIFF SCHOLL, AFK DESIGN** (Graphic Designer) Lead by Kiff Scholl,

AFK Design has a long history of designing original and eye-catching graphics for theatre and film productions around the globe. Long time theatre clients include the wonderful folks over at Theatre Planners, Sierra Madre Playhouse, The Athena Cats, Indie Chi, KADM Productions, Sacred Fools, Theatre of NOTE, as well as countless independent companies. In addition to graphics, Kiff is also an award-winning director and actor and recently won Best Director at The Maverick Movie Awards for his film "Scream of the Bikini" (Amazon). Like AFK Design on Facebook and follow Kiff on Twitter @afkiff. [www.KiffScholl.com](http://www.KiffScholl.com)

**ANDREW JOSEPH PEREZ** (Choreographer) Perez is elated to join the Paradise team for his first time at The Odyssey! He's performed all over including LA, San Francisco, Sacramento, San Jose, Milwaukee, St. Petersburg, FL, Memphis, and internationally with Armed Forces Entertainment. He's primarily an actor / singer / fight choreographer but also works as a personal trainer, photographer, whip-maker, stuntman, teacher, writer, and director. He's been seen in the films like "Megalodon" (Syfy) and "You Should Meet My Son 2" (iTunes, Amazon, GooglePlay), and his voice can be heard in projects like "Dynasty Warriors 9" (X-Box, PS4) and "Dragon Pilot" (Netflix). In his spare time he's a staunch advocate for the disabled and a major fundraiser for the men's health organization The Movember Foundation. Follow on Instagram @andrewjosephperez



## ADDITIONAL CREW

Scientific Advisor.....	Colin Cox
Cultural Advisor.....	Roxi-Rabab Muthana
Cultural Consultants.....	Hedab Tarifi, Sue Obeidi/MPAC and Maha Awad
Dialect Consultant.....	Joel Goldes
Digital Producer.....	Anton Smith
Scenic Builder.....	Red Colegrove
Scenic Painters.....	Hillary Bauman, Kristen Martinez
Running Crew.....	Sean Fawaz, Pallavi Srinivasan
Technical Director/Master Electrician.....	Bradley Bentz
Assistant Sound Designer.....	Jacenta Yu
Sound Crew.....	Scott Goldfarb
Choreographer.....	Andrew Joseph Perez
Press Photographer.....	Ed Krieger
Promotional Photography.....	Earl E. Gibson III Darrett Sanders
Box Office Manager.....	Sarah D. Wylie
House Manager.....	Tiffany Parker

## SPECIAL THANKS

The Odyssey Theatre	The Zephyr Theatre
The Ensemble Studio Theatre NYC Playwrights Unit	Robert Mailer Anderson
Rima Begun	Amber Bruegel
Deborah Call-Bulluck	Nathaniel Bulluck
Billy Carden	Jeff Chrzczon
Jeff Colen	Elaine Devlin, Elaine Devlin Literary
Aizzah Fatima	Dr. Stuart Firestein, Columbia University
Graeme Gillis and Lindsay Firman, Ensemble Studio Theatre/The Sloan Project	
Liliana Granados	Rachel Gutnick
Albert Hasson	John Iacovelli
Josh La Cour	Ema Lakovic
Daveda Larson	Liridona Malota
Matt Richter	Butch Robinson
Nica Saidova	Linda Sarsour
Ambassador Shabazz	Kitt Shute
Taryn Smith	Joe Stern
Yasmin Sweets (Hamidi)	Mykelti Williamson
Debra Wise, Underground Railway Theater	

# PARADISE

#AStudyInLove



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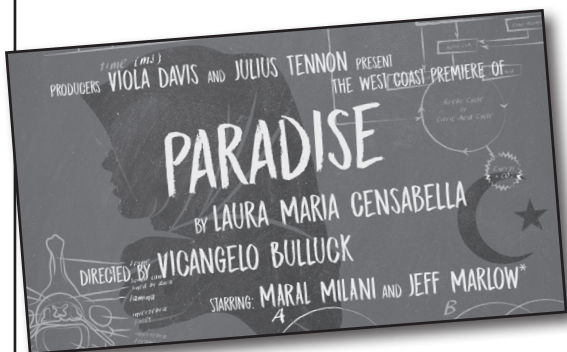


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