



TH STREET THEATRE

✱ PROUDLY PRESENTS THE WORLD PREMIERE OF ✱

Winter's Bench

By Mike Kenny
Directed by Debbie Devine

*can trees talk?
¿pueden los árboles hablar?*

24TH STreet Theatre Presents

WINTER'S BENCH

Written by Mike Kenny
Directed by Debbie Devine

STARRING
Anne Gee Byrd
& Shih-Wei Wu

Original Score
BRADLEY BROUGH

Flute
SHIH-WEI WU

Executive Producer
JAY MCADAMS

Assistant Director

JESÚS CASTAÑOS-CHIMA

Producer

TAMARA KOLTES

Set Design
KEITH MITCHELL

Stage Manager
BEJA WOLF

Lighting Design
DAN WEINGARTEN

Costume Design
SHANNON A. KENNEDY

Sound Design
NICK FORAN

Video Design
MATTHEW HILL

Graphic Design
EVE MAZARRA

Publicist
LUCY POLLAK

Photographer
COOPER BATES

Box Office
MARIA ERAZO

Line Producer
DALTON CAUSEY

Time: Present
Place: An Abandoned Park

30 Years and Beyond....

We warmly welcome you to the secular church on the corner of 24th St and Hoover, in our 30th Season! We've been inspiring audiences of all ages with engaging, thought-provoking theatre that speaks to the urgency of these extraordinary times we live in, transforming the genre of children's theatre in Los Angeles for 30 years. In 1997, we found ourselves in a historic community where people still knew each other and had as much character as our old carriage house. In a neighborhood with so much to give, we knew we would need to give back. Since its founding in 1997, the organization has taken on a life of its own. From our After 'Cool theatre education program, to field trips bringing in thousands of students throughout LA County, to being recognized as a leader in Theatre for Young Audiences, and as a known place for community engagement and outreach, you could say a lot of things about the work we do, but quiet is definitely not one of them. Approaching our 30-year anniversary, we have been given an opportunity to secure our place in Los Angeles, and most importantly, in North University Park. This opportunity will bring 24th Street Theatre into property ownership, launching our Capital Campaign over the next 3 years to raise the funds to acquire our charming carriage house, a brand new black box theatre and event space, as well as renovating the space next door into a beautiful place for gathering. Please consider donating to 24th Street Theatre for the next 30 years and beyond.....

A Note from the Director

Who were we a while ago?
If you are 8 years old, can you remember who you were at 5? Or if you are my age (Old..ish), can you remember who you were many years back? Did things happen to you that you can recall, or were you just told that they happened and you simply accept that is what must have occurred? That's what must be true.



Debbie Devine

How much can we trust our own memories?

This is a story about a woman who had a miraculous moment in her life take place. Nobody told her it happened. She experienced it. She's come back decades later to call upon her memory about this abandoned park and this remarkable moment, to unravel the past, and to uncover the truth about herself, her family, and an ancient tree. Maybe we must listen to each other a little more closely... and to the world around us... just to hear and know who we, ourselves, are.

Nota del Director

¿Quiénes éramos hace algún tiempo? ¿Ustedes, niños y jóvenes, pueden recordar quiénes eran hace 7 u 8 años, o incluso el año pasado? ¿Te sucedieron cosas que realmente recuerdas, o simplemente te contaron que ocurrieron y aceptaste que así debió de haber sido? ¿Hasta qué punto podemos confiar en nuestros propios recuerdos?

La historia de Mike Kenny nos presenta a una mujer que vivió un momento milagroso en su infancia. No fue algo que le contaron; ella misma lo experimentó. Ahora, décadas más tarde, regresa para evocar sus recuerdos sobre aquel lugar y aquel momento extraordinario. Ella desentraña el pasado para descubrir la verdad sobre sí misma, su familia y un árbol milenario. Debemos escucharnos más atentamente los unos a los otros, así como al mundo que nos rodea, para saber quiénes somos realmente.

Meet the Cast



ANNE GEE BYRD (Gladys)

last starred in the premiere of Talene Monahon's *Eat Me* at South Coast Repertory. She has performed locally at The Mark Taper Forum, Kirk Douglas, Geffen Playhouse, Pasadena Playhouse, La Mirada, the Ensemble in Santa Barbara as well as across the country, ACT in San Francisco, The American Shakespeare Festival, The Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, The Great Lakes Theater Festival, Indiana Repertory, La Jolla

Playhouse, The McCarter Theatre, The Old Globe in San Diego, Seattle Repertory, and South Coast Repertory. She is a staunch member of the Antaeus Theatre Company. She has received 4 Drama Critics Circle Awards and numerous Ovation nominations. Her television credits include: *Lucky Hank*, *911*, *CSI Los Angeles*, *How to Get Away with Murder*, *Shameless*, *Murder in the First*, and *Rake*. You can see her this summer in movie theaters in *The End of Oak Street*.



SHIH-WEI WU (Flutist/Spirit)

(They/Them) is a Taiwanese-American composer-performer on the Japanese taiko, shakuhachi, and yokobue. Wu was recently in the off-Broadway production of *Sumo* at the Public Theatre, and the Los Angeles revival of *Pacific Overture* at East-West Players. Wu is thrilled to make their debut at 24th Street Theatre.

Production Team

Mike Kenny (Playwright) is one of England's leading playwrights. He specializes in theatre for young audiences. He has won numerous awards for his plays including being the first ever recipient of The Children's Award for playwriting for children in 2000, as well as an Olivier Award for his adaptation of *The Railway Children* in 2011. His plays are still widely performed throughout England and the world. He worked with government and education authorities to provide access to plays for children of all backgrounds. Mike believes that theatre for young audiences should take them seriously as audience members and should present them with situations they may or may not encounter. Previous work with 24th STreet includes: *Rapunzel Alone* and *Walking the Tightrope*.

Debbie Devine (Director) has been an award-winning theatre director and a respected leader in the field of arts education for over three decades. She has been the Chair of the Drama Department of The Colburn School for over 30 years. She is also a theatrical director with the LA Philharmonic. Debbie is the co-founder and Artistic Director 24th STreet Theatre, which has created award-winning professional theatre and model arts education programs for thousands of students and teachers since 1997. Debbie's work as an actor has earned her three Drama-Logue Critics Awards, a Robby Award, an L.A. Weekly Award, LA Parent Magazine's Best Westside Children's Theatre Award, and the Women In Theatre Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Los Angeles Theatre. Debbie earned LA County Arts Commission's Professional Designation in Arts Education, and is the recipient of the USC Rossier School of Education's Innovation and Leadership Award, and won the LA County Music Center's 2001 Bravo Special Mention for her work in Arts Education. She is also the proud recipient of the 2011 Inspiring Women Award, presented by the LA Sparks and Farmers Insurance.

Bradley Brough (Composer) is a Los Angeles based composer and musician who has been writing and playing piano for more than 30 years. He has written music for many stage productions in both Los Angeles and London as well as providing live scoring for arts education classes for 24th STreet Theatre and The Colburn School. His previous work with 24th STreet theatre includes *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, *Enter Stage Right*, *Las Instrucciones*, and *Rapunzel Alone*.

Jesús Castaños-Chima (Assistant Director) is a former member of the Autonomous National University of México (UNAM) Theater Company. He started his acting career in Culiacán, Sinaloa, México with DIFOCUR Theater Group, directed by Jorge Cázares and the Theater Workshop of the Autonomous University of Sinaloa (TATUAS), directed by Oscar Liera. With a career spanning over 40 years, he's appeared in plays, TV and film in Mexico and the United States. He has also participated in many international theater festivals and was an acting workshop coordinator for the International Latino Theater Festival of Los Angeles (FITLA) and Assistant Curator at Meet Me at Metro Fest. He currently works as Associate Artistic Director at 24th STreet Theatre. He has directed *La Infamia*, *El Jardín de los Reyes*, *El Ogrito* (The Ogreling, Los Angeles Times Critic's Choice), and *La Víspera*, among others. Additionally, his work as an actor includes the highly acclaimed stage production of *La Razón Blindada* (LA Weekly's production of the year) and the award-winning film *Quinceañera* (Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award at SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL), as "Ernesto Chávez"

Beja Wolf (Stage Manager) is a Los Angeles-born theatre artist, tutor, and teacher. Since 2021, she has served as producer for the Silver Lake Children's Theatre Group and is currently a stage manager at 24th STreet Theatre. She has collaborated in production work with artists and organizations across LA, including jazz singer Syndee Winters, Nine O'Clock Players, and Grand Performances. A nature lover and amateur naturalist, she is delighted to help bring this premiere—*about a woman and a tree*—to life.

Matthew Hill (Video Designer) is an award-winning multi-disciplinary storyteller working in film, theatre, and new media. He believes in the power of stories and seeks to tell ones that inspire curiosity, hope, and wonder. He is especially interested in the intersection of technology, design, and storytelling, and crafting works that help us find the light in the dark.

Shannon A. Kennedy (Costume Designer) is an interdisciplinary, multi-media performance and installation artist, costume and set designer, sculptor, musician and educator. She has designed costumes, sets and puppets and performed in Los Angeles for over 25 years. She has worked with countless theater groups such as 24th Street Theater, The Actor's Gang, Center Theater Group, and Theater Planners. As a sound and visual artist, Shannon composes sound narrations, performing with handmade, physically activated instrument sculptures and installations. Her most recent solo installation work *Cycles And Saprotrophs* premiered at 2220 Arts And Archives. Shannon performs under the moniker Nephila and as half of the duo Pedestrian Deposit, which has toured extensively, played shows and festivals in both traditional and non-traditional settings, participated in film scores, and released numerous recordings. Shannon is also an educator, teaching design, costume construction, scenic painting and puppetry at numerous schools in the Los Angeles area. Shannon is the current Director at Coaxial Arts Foundation in Downtown Los Angeles, a non profit art space, whose mission is to provide opportunities for a diverse community of emerging and underserved artists to create and present new and experimental work. Shannon holds a Bachelors degree in Theater from the University of Connecticut and an MFA in Scenic Design from UCLA.

Keith Mitchell (Scenic Designer) is a longtime collaborator with 24th Street Theatre since the 1900s, is an Emmy Award-winning art director and Ovation Award-winning scenic designer based in Los Angeles. Sometimes, he is even an interdisciplinary artist who works with a variety of mediums and materials and methods. A graduate of USC Annenberg, he is a prominent creator in the Southern California theater scene and has built a diverse career spanning stage, broadcast television, commercial design, print and immersive events. He has designed hundreds of productions for major LA-area institutions, including the Garry Marshall Theatre, Odyssey, Bootleg, Geffen Playhouse, South Coast Repertory, the Getty Villa, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl. Award winning shows include, *Pascal and Julien*, *The Value of Names* (starring the late Jack Klugman), *Kaidan*, *Walls Grow Thin*. Mitchell has art directed main title design for major networks and many shows, including *Hallmark Channel*, *NBC's Olympiad coverage*, *The Voice*, and *The Tonight Show*, *Golden Globes* and the *Emmy's*. Promotional Campaigns include: *Nobody Wants This*, *Star Search*, *Wednesday*, *NFL*, *MLB*, *Something Bad is Going to Happen*, *Remarkably Bright Creatures*.

Dan Weingarten (Lighting Designer) has designed extensively for theater, dance, opera and theme parks. Credits include shows for 24th Street Theatre, Rogue Machine, East West Players, Bootleg, Ebony Repertory Company, Boston Court, Open Fist, Echo Theater Companies, Long Beach Opera, Chicago Opera Theatre, Ensemble Theatre of Santa Barbara, SBT, Actors Gang, Universal Studios Hollywood. Awards include LADCC, LA Weekly, The Garland and The Dramalogue. He is a Professor at California State University Northridge, MFA in Design and Production from CalArts.

Nick Foran (Sound Designer) is an award-winning lighting and sound designer; working in LA since 2014. Originally from Australia, he is the technical director at a number of theaters in Los Angeles including at 24th Street Theatre and has been the resident lighting and sound designer for Theater of Arts Hollywood, Theater 40 as well as the Stella Adler Academy of Acting since 2018. He's proud of his work on this production and hopes you enjoy it!

Lucy Pollak (Publicist) has been providing publicity services for intimate and mid-size theater companies in L.A. for over 30 years, as well as for independent theater, music and dance productions and large events such as the annual Emmy Award-winning L.A. County Holiday Celebration at The Music Center. In New York, she publicized off-Broadway premieres of *Mayakovsky and Stalin* at the Cherry Lane; *Latina Christmas Special* at the Soho Playhouse; and *Our Man in Santiago* at the AMT Theatre. Previously, she was production manager and staff producer at the Odyssey Theatre, where she co-produced over 100 productions with artistic director Ron Sossi. www.lucypr.com.



"24th ST Theatre delivers the evocative, cathartic goods."
— Los Angeles Times



<https://www.24thstreet.org/da-de-los-muertos>

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A black and white photograph of a man in a suit and hat, holding a lit lightbulb in his right hand. He is looking towards the lightbulb. The background is dark.

<https://www.24thstreet.org/field-trip-program>

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24TH STREET THEATRE... FOR THE NEXT 30 YEARS!



It has been nearly **30 years** since we opened our carriage doors in North University Park. Since then, the theatre has become an important part of the community and the region. At a time when theatres are closing all over the country, 24th Street Theatre is **doubling down** on our 30 year-old commitment to this neighborhood.

We are launching **24th Street Theatre's 30th Anniversary \$5Million Capital Campaign**, not only to purchase our historic carriage house after decades of leasing, but to expand with a new Black Box Theatre across the street.

And we're happy to share that we're already halfway there, with the first **\$3Million raised!**

But we need your help to reach our \$5Million goal.

Please use the link below to make a tax-deductible donation to our Capital Campaign to make sure we're here inspiring people of all ages for another 30 glorious years.

<https://givebutter.com/24th-street-theatre-9iwzkl>