

|Soulpepper|

The Comeuppance

Branden Jacobs-Jenkins

Directed by Frank Cox-O'Connell



Pictured: Bahia Watson, Mazin Elsadig, Carlos Gonzalez-Vio, Ghazal Azarbad, Nicole Power. Photo by Dahlia Katz.



There are these rare playwrights who can capture, as Chekhov called it, **the form and pressure of our time**.

I read this play on my 40th birthday. Coming out of the pandemic I had been connecting with old friends, and my American family. The play started like one of these chats - fun, familiar, but skirting around something bigger - the reckoning of what it is to live through something historical, with being at the

precipice of something, a crossroads.

Then I sat with the play and realized the depth of what Branden Jacobs-Jenkins is asking us to do, here, in the theatre tonight. To take this liminal space of the porch and to fill it with *truth*: With real desire, and ugliness, and humour and the messy human need for meaning and connection and to change and to stay the same. It takes a formidable cast. And the performers here tonight are just that: a group of Soulpepper actors, at the top of their game, who are just aging into these complicated roles.

The way that *time* operates in this play is fascinating. Time is a theatrical force, the ticking clock on the evening; time is a unifier, the siren song of nostalgia; and time is a destroyer of worlds, for all of the historical violence that's touched on in the story, the characters are really being chased down by the great, humble, panoptic violence: that we all grow old.

I think we are in the hands of a generational playwright.

With gratitude to Weyni Mengesha and in memory of Daniel Brooks...

Thank you for being with us,

Frank Cox-O'Connell
Director, *The Comeuppance*

CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

Cast

Ghazal Azarbad Ursula	Carlos Gonzalez-Vio** Francisco	Bahia Watson Kristina
Mazin Elsadig Emilio	Nicole Power Caitlin	Araya Mengesha Simon (Voice & Likeness)
		<i>**Fight Captain</i>

Creative Team

Branden Jacobs-Jenkins Playwright	Jason Hand* Lighting Designer	Anita Nittoly Intimacy & Fight Director
Frank Cox-O’Connell Director	Olivia Wheeler* Sound Designer	Diane Pitblado Dialect Coach
Shannon Lea Doyle* Set Designer	Nazerah Carlisle Stage Manager	
Ming Wong 黄慧明* Costume Designer	Kayla Thomas Assistant Stage Manager	

Production Team

Andy DeVries Head Carpenter	Greg Chambers Props Builder	Irene Ly Dresser
Bill Stahl 1st Carpenter	Ellie Koffman Head of Wardrobe	David Mallette Lighting Operator
Paul Boddum Head Scenic Artist	Claudia Matas Assistant Head of Wardrobe	Javonne Samuels Audio Operator
Arielle White Scenic Painter	Erin Halls Stitcher	Matthew Condotta Deck Hand
Lisa Nighswander Head of Props	Rachael Authors SFX Makeup Consultant	

Content Warning: *THE COMEUPPANCE* contains mature language and themes, including references to sex, alcoholism, miscarriage, abortion, war and PTSD. The production uses haze effects and partial nudity.

The Comeuppance is presented by special arrangement with Broadway Licensing, LLC, servicing the Dramatists Play Service imprint. (www.dramatists.com)

World Premiere produced by Signature Theatre, New York City
Paige Evans, Artistic Director / Timothy J. McClimon, Executive Director

PRODUCTION SUPPORTERS:
Dave Friesema and Sanyo Lue-Kim

SPECIAL THANKS:
Tracy Whitfield



*Indicated designers on this production are represented by the Associated Designers of Canada, Local ADC659.



Soulpepper Theatre is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres and engages professional artists who are members of Canadian Actors' Equity Association under the terms of the jointly negotiated Canadian Theatre Agreement

Running time: 2 hours, 10 mins.
No intermission



BRANDEN JACOBS-JENKINS is a Brooklyn-based playwright, producer, Tony Award® winner, and two-time Pulitzer Prize for Drama finalist. Recent theatre credits include *Appropriate* (2024 Tony Award® winner for Best Revival of a Play; 2014 Obie Award, Best New American Play, Signature Theatre), *The Comeuppance* (Signature Theatre), *Girls* (Yale Rep), *Everybody* (Signature Theatre), *War* (Yale Rep; Lincoln Center/LCT3), *Gloria* (Vineyard Theatre), *An Octoroon* (2014 Obie Award, Best New American Play; Soho Rep, Theatre for a New Audience), and *Neighbors* (The Public Theater). He currently teaches at Yale University and serves as Vice President of the Dramatists Guild council and on the boards of Soho Rep, Park Avenue Armory, the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, and the Dramatists Guild Foundation. Honors include a USA Artists fellowship, a Guggenheim fellowship, the MacArthur fellowship, the Windham-Campbell Prize for Drama, and the inaugural Tennessee Williams Award.



FRANK COX-O'CONNELL Born and raised in Toronto, ON. SOULPEPPER 2024: Slaughter Family Director of Music. Director & Co-Creator: *The Big Easy: Music of New Orleans*. Director & Co-Creator: *The Secret Chord: A Leonard Cohen Experience* (on tour). FOR SOULPEPPER, *Baillie Fellow* (2023). Associate Director. *The Seagull*. Director & Co-Creator: *The Secret Chord: A Leonard Cohen Experience*; Detroit: *Music of the Motor City*. Director: *Fool For Love*, *The Just*, *Riverboat Coffee House*, *A Moveable Feast*, *The Secret Chord*, *True North* (NYC), *The Big Easy*. Actor: *Rose*, *Wedding at Aulis*, *Idomeneus*, *Picture This*, *Tartuffe*, *The Crucible*, *Spoon River*, *Marat/Sade*, *Thirst of Hearts*. OTHER THEATRE: Director: *Romeo and Juliet* (Canadian Stage); *Other Jesus* (Public Recordings); *Ajax & Little Iliad* (EW&FCO). Actor: *Hamlet* (Canadian Stage); *Hedda Gabler* (Necessary Angel); *The Mill* (TheatreFront); *The Drawer Boy* (Passe Muraille/UK tour); *Sanctuary Song* (Luminato). OTHER: Dora Award, Jessica Fraser Award, SummerWorks Spotlight Award, Graduate of National Theatre School and the Soulpepper Academy.



GHAZAL AZARBAD Ghazal Azarbad (دب‌آرزاد) was born in Mashhad, Iran and raised in Vancouver, BC. SOULPEPPER 2025: *THE WELKIN*, *THE COMEUPPANCE* SOULPEPPER: *English* (2023), *The Seagull* (2020), *Wedding at Aulis* (2019), *La Bête and Innocence Lost* (2018). OTHER THEATRE: East Van Panto: *Little Mermaid* and *Alice in Wonderland* (Theatre Replacement); *Romeo and Juliet* (Bard); *Bunny* (Search Party); *Being Here: The Refugee Story* (Belfry); *Shakespeare in Love* (Bard); and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (Arts Club). FILM & TELEVISION: *Float* (Lionsgate), *Charmed* (CW), *Kim's Convenience*, *The Slowest Show* (CBC) OTHER: Writer and creator of *Tārof* (فراغت): *a Persian Comedy*, *Dear Konstantin* (Audiobook on Spotify), and *REAL* (script). Two-time Jessie Awards nominee, recipient of the Hnatyshyn Foundation Award for Acting.



NAZERAH CARLISLE Nazerah Carlisle was born and raised in Toronto. Graduate from Toronto Metropolitan University. SOULPEPPER 2025: *The Comeuppance*. FOR SOULPEPPER: *Debut*. OTHER THEATRE: *Interior Design* (Tarragon); *The Tempest*, *She Stoops to Conquer* (St. Lawrence Shakespeare); *David and Jonathan*, *All is Love*, *The Resurrection* (Opera Atelier); *Magic of Assembly*, *FaceRider/Oddsensual* (Toronto Dance Theatre); *Hamlet* (The Rose); OTHER: When not stage managing, Naz is either working at her family shop, Courage My Love, or djing events around Toronto.



SHANNON LEA DOYLE was born in Toronto. SOULPEPPER 2025: *The Comeuppance*, *Narnia*, *Tiger Bride* FOR SOULPEPPER: *The Seagull*, *Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train*, *Fool For Love*, *Little Menace: The Pinter Plays*, *La Bête*, *Vimy*, *The Just, I'm Doing This For You*, *The Anger of Ernest and Ernestine*, *The Heidi Chronicles*, *Soulpepper Concert Series*, *The Dybbuk*. OTHER THEATRE: *There is Violence* (buddies in bad times) *Oliver*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* (YES Theatre) *Things I Know To Be True* (Company Theatre / Mirvish Productions), *Interior Design*, *Three Women from Swatow*, *ORESTES ONLINE* (Tarragon Theatre) OTHER: Shannon is a graduate of the 2013-2015 Soulpepper Academy and is a founder of Triga Creative. Her work has received a Dora Award and multiple Toronto Theatre Critics Awards. She is an emerging production designer for film.



MAZIN ELSADIG Mazin Elsadig has been writing and acting professionally for two decades. He's performed in multiple critically-acclaimed theatre productions such as *Topdog/Underdog* (CanStage), *Pass Over* (Obsidian Theatre Company), *A Case for the Existence of God* (Coal Mine), and the Dora Award-Winning *The Brothers Size* (Soulpepper). His film/tv credits include *Brother*, *Four In The Morning*, and *Degrassi: The Next Generation*. Mazin is an alumnus of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts (New York), and the Canadian Film Centre.



CARLOS GONZALEZ-VIO Carlos was born in Toronto, and is the proud child of Uruguayan immigrants. This is his Soulpepper debut. THEATRE- As a member of ARC: *POMONA*; *KISS*; *HUMAN ANIMALS*; *DISSIDENTS*, and as his final show with the collective, he played 'Lorin' in Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' *GLORIA*, at Crow's Theatre in 2022. He also played Canadian poet, Milton Acorn, in David Yee's *AMONG MEN* at the Factory Theatre. He most recently appeared in Aluna Theatre's two-hander, *ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SEA*. FILM - This past spring he played a lead role in director Glen Wood's feature film, *I COME HOME*. TV - Carlos was a series regular on NatGeo's critically acclaimed series *THE HOT ZONE: ANTHRAX*, as well as recurring roles on: *THE EXPANSE* for Syfy; *ENDLINGS* for BBC/Hulu; and *ORPHAN BLACK* for CTV Sci-Fi.



JASON HAND Recent projects: *Identity* (Against the Grain), *Bright Star* (Mirvish/GTP), *Playing Shylock* (Mirvish/Starvox). Theatrical designs for Tarragon Theatre, Grand Theatre, Canadian Stage, Stratford, Shaw, Charlottetown Festival, and Soulpepper. Selected opera credits: Canadian Opera Company, Vancouver Opera, Edmonton Opera, Minnesota Opera, Against the Grain, Banff Centre, and Tapestry Opera. Immersive experiences: *Immersive Disney Animation Experience* (Rome, Singapore, Las Vegas, Toronto and 26 more cities worldwide), *Original Immersive Van Gogh* (Toronto, Las Vegas, New York, and 14 worldwide), and the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum. He is a proud member of IATSE ADC659.



ARAYA MENGESHA is a Toronto-born, Ethiopian-Eritrean award-winning actor and filmmaker. On stage, Mengesha has led productions of *Breath of Kings* (Prince Hal/ Henry V) and *Rice Boy* for the Stratford Festival, and performed in acclaimed productions *War Horse* and *The Lion King* for Mirvish. For his on-screen performances, Mengesha won a Gemini Award for his work in *Mystery Hunters*, 2009 and was a Canadian Screen Award nominee for Best Lead Performer, Digital Series for *Revenge of the Black Best Friend*, 2023 and a multi-ACTRA Award. For RBBF, 2023 and *Anne with an E*, 2020. Other select film and television credits include a series regular role on the smash hit and multi-award winning, *Law and Order Toronto: Criminal Intent*, *Nobody*, *Tiny Pretty Things*, and *Shoot The Messenger*.



NICOLE POWER was born in Middle Cove, NL. SOULPEPPER 2025: *The Comeuppance*. FOR SOULPEPPER: *Wedding at Aulis, Sisters, Chasse Gallerie*. Film & Television: *Kim's Convenience, Strays, Something Undone* (CBC), *Glamorous* (Netflix). Nicole is a graduate of the Soulpepper Academy.



KAYLA THOMAS (she/her) is from Vancouver, British Columbia, the unceded traditional territories of the Coast Salish Peoples, xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. SOULPEPPER 2025: *The Comeuppance*. FOR SOULPEPPER: *Alligator Pie* (2024), *The Walk-Up* (2023) OTHER THEATRE: *Sexy Laundry* (Victoria Playhouse Petrolia), *Roberto Zucco* (Buddies in Bad Times), *Dream in High Park: Hamlet* (Canadian Stage), *The Waltz, Armadillos* (Factory Theatre), *Behind the Moon, Three Women of Swatow* (Tarragon Theatre), *Heartless* (Favour the Brave Collective).



BAHIA WATSON was born in Manitoba. SOULPEPPER 2025: *The Welkin, The Comeuppance, Summer and Smoke*. FOR SOULPEPPER: *A Raisin in the Sun, The Virgin Trial, The Last Wife* (Stratford/Soulpepper). OTHER THEATRE: *Uncle Vanya, The Seagull, Someone Else* (Crow's); *shaniqua in abstraction* (Crow's/paul watson), *MASHUP PON DI ROAD* (Why Not/paul watson), *pomme is french for apple* (paul watson), *MASHUP ting* (Public Theatre/Joe's Pub), *Bakkhai, Diary of Anne Frank* (Stratford); Film and Television: *The Handmaid's Tale, Star Trek: Discovery, The Expanse*, Various Animation.



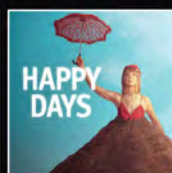
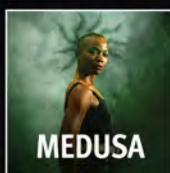
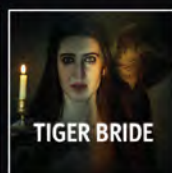
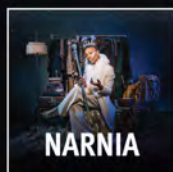
OLIVIA WHEELER is a mixed-race Chinese Canadian sound designer and composer. SOULPEPPER 2025: *The Comeuppance, Witch*. FOR SOULPEPPER: *Alligator Pie, De Profundis: Oscar Wilde in Jail* (2024), *The Walk-Up* (Academy 2023), Associate Sound Designer for *Bad Parent* (2022). OTHER THEATRE: *Forgiveness, Cymbeline* (Stratford), *The Secret to Good Tea* (Grand/NAC), *Romeo and Juliet, Playing Shylock* (Canadian Stage), *Octet, The Bidding War* (Crow's), *Here Lies Henry, Armadillos* (Factory Theatre), *Mad Madge* (Nightwood), *The Fixing Girl* (Young People's Theatre), *Infinite Life* (Coal Mine), *Between a Wok and a Hot Pot* (Cahoots), *ECHO* (Next Stage).



MING WONG 黃慧明 is an award-winning Toronto costume designer working in theatre, dance, opera, and film & television for over 15 years. She is a graduate from the Ontario College of Art & Design. Soulpepper 2024/25: *The Master Plan, Kim's Convenience, A Strange Loop*. For Soulpepper: *Three Sisters, De Profundis, Sizwe Banzi is Dead, Pipeline*. Other Theatre: *Octet, Trident Moon, Flex, Wights, Rosmersholm, The Wrong Bashir, Natasha, Pierre, & The Great Comet of 1812, The Master Plan, Red Velvet, Uncle Vanya, The Wedding Party*, (Crow's); *Charlie & The Chocolate Factory*, (YPT); *Salesman in China, Rent, Hamlet 911*, (Stratford Festival); *Once*, (TIP), *Things I Know to be True*, (Company Theatre/Mirvish); *Peter's Final Flight*, (Ross Petty Productions); *Robin Hood, The Wizard of Oz Panto, The Inheritance, Public Enemy*, (Canadian Stage); *Is God Is*, (Canadian Stage/Obsidian/Necessary Angel); *Wait Until Dark, Candida, Just to Get Married, Trouble in Mind*, (Shaw Festival); *Hansel und Gretel*, (Canadian Opera Company); *The Color Purple*, (Citadel Theatre/RMTC). Upcoming: *Summer & Smoke* (Crow's), *Piaf/Dietrich, Come From Away* (The Grand), *Medusa* (Soulpepper/Outside the March). Other: 2021 Virginia & Myrtle Cooper Award recipient, 3 time Dora Award Winner.

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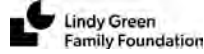
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All front of house staff – floor captains, patron service representatives, baristas and ushers - working for the Young Centre for the Performing Arts are represented by Local B-173 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees.

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The artists and staff of Soulpepper and the Young Centre for the Performing Arts acknowledge the original caretakers and storytellers of this land —the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Haudenosaunee, the Anishinaabe, and the Wendat First Nations. In recognition of the caretakers of this land, Soulpepper has made a donation to Anishnawbe Health Foundation to support their services for Indigenous Peoples in Toronto. If you'd like to join us in supporting this organization, please scan the following QR code:

