

LA MAMA

EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE CLUB

2018 Regional Theatre Tony Award Recipient

in association with

Talking Band

presents

CITY OF NO ILLUSIONS

Written and Directed by Paul Zimet

Music composed by Ellen Maddow



The Downstairs
66 East 4th Street, NYC, 10003
February 8 - 24, 2019

CITY OF NO ILLUSIONS

Written and Directed by Paul Zimet

Music composed by Ellen Maddow

Sets and Video by Anna Kiraly

Costumes by Kiki Smith

Lights by Mary Ellen Stebbins

Production Stage Manager: Kristin Rose Kelly

Assistant Stage Manager/Sound Design: Michelle Navis

Costume Design Assistant: Jill St. Coeur

With

**Will Badgett*, Annie Henk*, Sam Khazai, Ellen Maddow*,
Colleen O'Neill*, Veraalba Santa*, Tina Shepard*,
Jack Wetherall*, Eden Zane**

THE BAND: Goussy Célestin, Dawn Drake, Marija Kovacevic

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***appearing courtesy of Actors Equity Association**



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CAST BIOS

Will Badgett (Agent Benson) recently performed as Two Snakes in *Separate and Equal* by Seth Panitch at 59E59 Theaters. Last year as Donovan in Talking Band's *Fusiform Gyros: A Septet for Two Scientists* and *Five Horns* by Ellen Maddow. And in the dual role of Jimmy Moore / Ojore in *Caged* at Passage Theatre Company in Trenton, NJ by The New Jersey Prison Coalition. He has appeared in film and television, *The Shield*, *24*, *Just Another Girl On The I.R.T.* and is a graduate of NYU's Theatre Program.

Goussy Célestin (Shadow Band - keyboard/vocals) Brooklyn born Haitian-American artist Goussy Célestin is a pianist, composer, vocalist, and dancer. Goussy is faculty at Jazz at Lincoln Center and mother to two young boys, ages 5yrs and 8yrs - her "greatest creative compositions". Recent awards include, Laundromat Project: Create Change Fellow, Queens Council on the Arts: NEW WORKS GRANT, Gardarev Resident Fellow, Field Leadership Artist Fellow. Goussy recently lead workshops for both Bobby McFerrin's Circle Songs retreat at The Omega Institute, and with The Mile Long Opera. Goussy's current work integrates all of her disciplines incorporating elements of traditional Haitian folklore and Jazz. Follow Goussy at www.goussycelestin.com

Dawn Drake (Shadow Band - bass/percussion/vocals) is a percussionist, bassist, singer-songwriter and educator. She is also the bandleader for her ensemble *ZapOte*, which breaks down cultural barriers by incorporating everything from Afro-Cuban *timba* to hip-hop to *samba* into a soul-shaking mix. Her deep bass grooves combined with swinging horn lines provide a danceable backdrop for Drake's lyrics, which impart messages of universal consciousness, empowerment, and compassion. She and her group *ZapOte* perform globally and you can find her original music on Spotify, iTunes www.youtube.com/thedawndrake, and her website <http://www.dawndrake.com>. You can also follow her on Facebook and Instagram @thedawndrake.

Annie Henk (Mother) NYC Theater: *Triggered: The Amoralists*; *Cute Activist: New Saloon*; *The Rafa Play: Pool Plays*; *To The Bone: Cherry Lane Theatre*; *Pinkolandia*; *Lucy Loves Me* INTAR, *La Ruta: Working Theater*; *The Play About my Dad: Collaboration Town*; *Enfrascada: Clubbed Thumb*; Frank Dwyer, *Sadly Missed: Ensemble Studio Theatre Regional: Ritu Comes Home*; InterAct Theatre; *Pinkolandia* Two River Theater; *Enfrascada: Renaissance Theaterworks*; *Taking Flight*; *The Cook: Stages Repertory Theatre*. Film/TV: *Friendly Neighborhood Coven*, *Longmire*, *Red Oaks*, *High Maintenance*, *That's What She Said*; *East Willy B*; *White*; *Entre Nos* Member: *The Actors Center*.

Sam Khazai (Agent Ramirez) is a NYC-based actor who transitioned into theater following a career in counterterrorism and US National Security. Trained at Stella Adler and HB Studios, Sam seeks to create art that is transcendent, messy, and real; art that brings audiences - and himself - closer to truth. Recent work includes *Cracked* at the Broadway Bound Festival, *Quiet Car* at Manhattan Rep, and *Sokonaizu* as part of the Japanese Playwright Project at CUNY. You can follow him on Instagram @skhazai.

Marija Kovacevic (Shadow Band - violin/bass/vocals) is a classically trained experimental violinist, a violist, (as of recent a bassist) and an educator from Serbia, based in Brooklyn. Past projects with The Talking Band include *The Golden Toad*. Marija is also a part of The Million Underscores (TELE-VISION: on spiritual displacement, Chic Unique, *Four Fours* presented at MoMa). Their upcoming production of 1001SUR is coming up in June at Target Margin theater. Marija can be found performing all over NY, from artist run places in Brooklyn to the Lincoln Center.

Ellen Maddow (Angie/ Composer) is a founding member of Talking Band. Plays she has written and composed music for include, *Fusiform Gyrus - a Septet for Two Scientists and Five Horns*, *Fat Skirt Big Nozzle* (with Louise Smith), *Burnished by Grief*, *The Golden Toad* (with Paul Zimet), *The Peripherals*, *Panic! Euphoria! Blackout*, *Flip Side*, *Delicious Rivers*, *Painted Snake In A Painted Chair* and five pieces about the avant-garde housewife, Betty Suffer. She also composed the music for for Talking Band's production of *The Room Sings* and *Marcellus Shale*, Taylor Mac's *Walk Across America for Mother Earth*, and Liz Duffy Adam's *Buccaneers* (Children's Theatre of Minneapolis) among others. Ellen recently performed in Clare Barron's *Dance Nation* at Playwrights Horizons. Member of the Open Theatre, OBIE Award, Frederick Loewe Award in Musical Theatre, McKnight and NYFA Playwriting Fellowships, NEA/TCG Award for Playwrights, alumnus of New Dramatists.

Colleen O'Neill (Trina) founding member of TWEED TheaterWorks, appeared in several Tweed Fractured Classics including *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, *A Glass Menagerie*, and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* as George, a Gentleman Caller and Big Daddy, respectively. She was recently seen as Amelia Earhart in Buran Theatre's *T.B. Sheets*. O'Neill tours nationally as Sister in *Late Nite Catechism*, a one-person, interactive comedy. Dr. Julia Wonder, a celebrity psychic who has graced NYC's venues from Lincoln Center to Barracuda, is O'Neill's creation with collaborators Kevin Malony, Steven Pell, Grady Hendrix and her Tissue Fairy, Judith Greentree. Thank you Talking Band!

Veraalba Santa (Gabriela) Graduated from The Neighborhood Playhouse School of the Theatre (NYC) Studied Theatre and Dance at The University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras. Recent work: Sally Silvers & Dancers *ALONG* at Brooklyn Roulette, *The Washing Society* Dir. Lynne Sachs and Lizzie Olesker; *BAM Cinemafest* (2018), *Hamlet* (Ophelia) Dir. Javier Antonio González; Jersey City Theatre Center. Member of CABORCA. veraalbasanta.com

Tina Shepard (Vera) is an actor, director & teacher based in NYC. She worked with director Joseph Chaikin in The Open Theater, The Winter Project, and The Other Theater. Also in productions of *The Seagull*, *A Fable* and *Electra*. In 1974, with fellow Open Theater members Paul Zimet and Ellen Maddow, she formed The Talking Band. She was awarded an OBIE for her performance in The Talking Band's 1987 production *The Three Lives of Lucie Cabrol*. She has also worked with Via Theater, SITl Company, Theater of a Two-headed Calf, Target Margin Theater, Burran Theater. Tina teaches acting and aikido at NYU/ETW.

Jack Wetherall (Daryl) Most recent: Elliot Isaac in *Skintight*, Roundabout Theatre; Angus in *Morning After Grace* and Henslowe in *Shakespeare in Love*, Asolo Repertory Theatre. He began at Canada's Stratford Festival Theatre and rose to become a leading member of the company under Robin Phillips' Artistic Direction. Roles there included: title role, *Henry V*; Orlando in *As You Like It* and Konstantin in *The Seagull*, both opposite Dame Maggie Smith. The Talking Band: *Hot Lunch Apostles*, *The Room Sings* and *Walk Across America for Mother Earth*. Title role in *The Elephant Man* on Broadway plus major roles in Regional theatres over his 45 year career. Television: role of Vic on Showtime's hit series *Queer As Folk*. He teaches at the Stella Adler Studio and leads The Shakespeare Lab.

Eden Zane (Saad) a Syrian-born actor and singer, who was raised between New York and Damascus. His passion for Arabic music gave rise to performances at Lincoln Center, Joe's Pub, Le Poisson Rouge, and more. He studied acting at the William Esper Studio and Shakespeare & Company, thanks to Bill Esper's and Dennis Krausnick's magnificent lifework and endless generosity.

CREATIVE/PRODUCTION

Kristin Rose Kelly (Production Stage Manager) current artist in residence at University Settlement with her company, Creative Traffic Flow. Original work includes *Duets of Difference*: a dance-theatre piece exploring disparate community identities and *Voices from the Roanoke River*: an original documentary play about the community members who want to protect it. Her original documentary play about women in Engineering, *A Chip On Her Shoulder* has performed at NYU, City College, Queens College, and Brooklyn College. She has worked with Talking Band on *The Room Sings* (La MaMa) and *Fusiform Gyrus* (HERE) MFA Directing and Public Dialogue, Virginia Tech www.kristinrosekelly.org

Anna Kiraly (Set/Video Designer) Recent and past projects include set for Time's *Journey Through a Room* (Dan Rothenberg for the Play Co.), *The Garden of Forking Paths* (Nichole Canuso Dance Co.), set and video for *Burnished by Grief*, *The Golden Toad*, *Marcellus Shale* and *Flip Side* with the Talking Band, set design for *Walk Across America* (with Taylor Mac/The Talking Band). Anna created set design for The Pig Iron Company for Chekhov *Lizardbrain*, *Isabella*, and *Pay Up*. She is a recipient of the Arts Link Grant for designers and an adjunct lecturer teaching media and production design at Barnard/Columbia. www.annakiraly.com

Michelle Navis (Assistant Stage Manager/Sound Design) makes theater and art. Recent credits include Honors Students at Wild Project, Ashley Fure's *Filament* at Lincoln Center, *Sehnsucht* at JACK, *Uncommon Women* and *Others* as Leilah at Princeton Summer Theatre, Rady&Bloom's *Ding Dong It's the Ocean* at JACK, *The Woman's Party* at Clubbed Thumb, *Pete Rex* at 59E59 Theaters, and Alex Borinsky's *Weird Classrooms* at University Settlement. She is the venue manager at the West End Theatre (86th and West End). She earned a BA in French and a certificate in theater from Princeton University. michellejoynavis.com

Kiki Smith (Costume Designer) Other Talking Band productions include *Burnished by Grief*, *Marcellus Shale*, *Hot Lunch Apostles*, *Panic! Euphoria! Blackout!*, *Bitterroot*, *Star Messengers*, *The Parrot*, *Belize*, *Imminence*, *Flipside*, *Radnevsky's Real Magic*, and *Painted Snake in a Painted Chair*, for which she received an Obie Award with the rest of the company. Founding member of Shakespeare & Co. in Lenox, MA, where she has designed for over 25 years. Other companies include Sandglass Theatre, Ko Theatre, Company of Women. Professor of design at Smith College.

Mary Ellen Stebbins (Lighting Designer) returns to Talking Band after *Fusiform Gyros*. Other recent collaborations include Shakespeare Theatre Company, Opera Philadelphia, Adrienne Truscott, HERE Arts, University of San Diego, LiveSource, the Peabody Essex Museum, Pipeline Theater, Princeton University. She is a member of Sightline Arts and the resident Designer for HOWL ensemble and Third Space. She is a 2019 Opera American Tobin Finalist, a 2016 Henry Hewes Award nominee, a 2014 Live Design Young Designer to Watch, and the 2011 Barbizon Lighting Design Award winner. Proud member USA 829. MFA, Boston University; AB, Harvard College. www.maryellenstebbinsdesign.com

Paul Zimet (Writer/Director) is Artistic Director of Talking Band. Wrote and directed, *The Room Sings*, *The Golden Toad* (with Ellen Maddow), *Marcellus Shale*, *New Islands Archipelago*, *Imminence*, *Belize*, *The Parrot*, *Star Messengers*, *Bitterroot*, *Party Time*, *Black Milk Quartet* and *New Cities*. Directed many new works for Talking Band including, *Burnished by Grief* (Ellen Maddow) and *The Walk Across America for Mother Earth* (Taylor Mac) and Part I of *The Lily's Revenge* (Taylor Mac). Recently performed in Mallory Catlett's *This Was The End* and Talking Band's *Fusiform Gyros*. OBIE award for direction, and three OBIE awards for work with the Open Theater and Winter Project directed by Joseph Chaikin; The Frederick Loewe Award in Musical Theater; and a Playwrights' Center National McKnight Fellowship; playwright alumnus of New Dramatists; Associate Professor Emeritus in Theatre, Smith College.

Talking Band's original interdisciplinary performance work has been a cornerstone of New York City's avant-garde theater community for 44 years. Founded in 1974 by Ellen Maddow, Tina Shepard and Paul Zimet, the company has produced over fifty new works illuminating the extraordinary dimensions of ordinary life, combining richly textured music-theater with striking visual imagery. Collectively, the company and founders have earned 15 OBIE Awards and numerous other honors. Notable productions include *The Room Sings*, *Burnished by Grief*, *Marcellus Shale*, *The Walk Across America For Mother Earth*, *Bitterroot*, *Painted Snake in a Painted Chair*, *Black Milk Quartet* and *The Three Lives of Lucie Cabrol*. Talking Band has performed at nearly all of New York City's celebrated downtown venues and its original productions have toured throughout the U.S. and internationally to 14 countries.

Talking Band is a non-profit organization: all donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law and are deeply appreciated.

The Talking Band, Inc.

PO Box 293 Prince Street Station New York, NY 10012

<https://talkingband.org>

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Talking Band receives administrative service and support from Pentacle/Dance Works, a leading voice and resource for some of today's most exciting contemporary dance and performance artists. To learn more about Pentacle's artist services please visit: www.pentacle.org/artistservices_fiscal.asp

This project is supported in part by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, and public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council . Talking Band is also supported by the Mental Insight Foundation.



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Rendering: 74 East 4th St.

La MaMa's historic, landmark building at 74 East 4th Street is undergoing an urgently needed complete renovation and restoration to preserve the historic façade, create building-wide ADA accessibility, and provide much needed performance, exhibition and community space for decades to come.

La MaMa, founded by Ellen Stewart in 1961, has been on east 4th Street since 1967. La MaMa embraces every person in its community and is legendary as the place where new artists of all nations, cultures, races, and identities are given opportunities. It is the place where art begins.

To learn more about the renovation, or to make a donation please visit www.lamama.org/remakeaworld

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The Downstairs

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The Downstairs

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