

LA MAMA
EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE CLUB

as part of the
La MaMa Puppet Festival
presents
The Scarecrow

By Anthony Michael Stokes



Ellen Stewart Theatre
66 East 4th Street, NYC, 10003
Nov 1-3, 2024

The Scarecrow

Director/Playwright/Lyricist/Composer/Creator:
Anthony Michael Stokes

Assistant Director: Amber Snyder

Dramaturg: Helena Pennington

Projections Designer: Don Cieslik

Light Designer: Bakari Prigg

Scenic Artist: Eileen Brennan

Scenic Carpenter: Nicholas Hodge

Production Stage Manager: David Jackson

Puppet Design and Creation by
Anthony Michael Stokes and Kessto Kreatures,
additional puppet construction by Zachery Garner

Cast

The Scarecrow: Anthony Michael Stokes

Professor H.M. Wogglebug: Zachery Garner

Winkie One / Man 2 / Dream 7: Antonio Romero

Winkie Two: Amanda Vasquez

Winkie Three / Lily: Amber Snyder

Golden Crow / Ida: Mia Sterbini

Angeline the Patchwork Girl: Leigh Marie

Seesaw the Sawhorse/ Dream 5/ Ozian 5: Tau Bennett

Man 1 / Dream 4 / Ozian 4: Tom Foran

The performance runs 50 minutes with no intermission

Anthony-Michael Stokes (The Scarecrow/Stepney Fisher) a Chicago based multidisciplinary teaching artist and award-winning educator. Originally from El Paso TX, he holds B.F.A's in music theatre and dance and a Master's in Education. He has trained as a puppeteer with the Jim Henson Company and the Sesame Street Puppeteer workshop. He was awarded a 2023 Production Grant, a 2022 Workshop Grant, and the 2023 O'Neill Residency from The Jim Henson Foundation for his work *The Scarecrow*. He is also currently a 23-24 La MaMa Resident Artist and 2024-2025 Chicago Puppet Lab Artist. What fuels him as a creative is finding a clear perspective and cause to tell a story that will inspire, educate, and allow for self-reflection. He loves to package a thoroughly entertaining story that when you least expect it, hits you with a deep moment that can change your entire perspective. He wants his work to enlighten, empower and entertain while using puppetry, music and theatre to connect everything. I am so grateful to God for this ever-evolving journey of life and opportunity, for my family (Mom and Grams) and to the artists and individuals who have joined me on this journey, supported each other and held me up so that we could share this story.

Tau Bennett (Sawhorse) is a puppeteer, writer, director, and teaching artist from Brooklyn, New York. He's been building his own puppets since the age of ten and appeared in the documentary, *Being Elmo: a Puppeteer's Journey* (2011). His professional puppetry career started in 2015. Some of his TV credits include *Sesame Street* (HBO), *Donkey Hodie* (PBS), and *Helpsters* (Apple TV). He has appeared on stage in Jessica Simon's production of *Ruby and Charlie* at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center (2018), Spencer Lott's *9000 Paper Balloons* at HERE Arts (2019), and Concrete Temple's production of *Ernie's Secret Life* (2024). In further collaboration with Concrete Temple, Tau wrote the script for *The Spirit of the Sea*, directed by Fatima Sambo Shoenfelder (2024) and performed in a presentation of it as a work in progress at Dixon Place. Tau is a marionettist with the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theater in Central Park since 2023, and has been a virtual and in-person teaching artist with Puppetry in Practice and Little Shadow Productions since 2022. Tau continues to develop his own projects – most notably, the surreal sketch comedy show, *Cold Sober*, which aired on BRIC TV in the autumn of 2023, and can now be viewed on YouTube, where much of his independent work resides. He occasionally performs live with *Cold Sober* at various venues around New York City.

Tom Foran (Man 1) is an actor, burlesque performer, carpenter, clown, puppeteer, and very rarely, a writer. He gained his BFA from the University of Connecticut in 2011 and is the co-founder of Blunt Objects Theatre, an anarchist theatrical punk troupe. He is honored and excited to be working on *The Scarecrow!*

Zachery Garner (Professor H.M Wogglebug.T.E) is a Puppeteer and Actor, who has worked with Mesner Puppet Theater for over 10 years on productions such as, *The Dinosaur Show*, *Anansi the Spider*, *The Shipwreck Show* and a web series called *In the Workshop*. As well as a performer Zachery is also a talented puppet builder and designer, in some cases Zachery could be designing, building and performing all for the same show. In addition to his work with Mesner Puppets now called *What If*

Puppets, he was also a member of the Kansas City Improv Company where he was one of the youngest people to join the team at 19 years old. In 2021 he had the privilege to be a part of The Henson Company's puppeteering training workshop, learning from Donna Kimball, Kevin Clash, Daniele Gaither, and Patrick Brestow. Since 2022 Zach has been part of a web series called *KikaBou* in which he plays an imaginative Prairie Dog named Bouba, teaching kids about the wonders of nature and earth stewardship. He recently ended a run of *Little Shop Of Horrors* where he puppeteered the larger than life Audrey II at the Kansas City Repertory Theater. Last year Zachery was honored to be a part of the original workshoping of *The Scarecrow* in Connecticut at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, and is very happy to be back in the land of Oz.

Leigh Marie (Angeline the Patchwork Girl), 34, a seasoned performer since age 13, boasts classical vocal training and a repertoire featuring productions like *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Monty Python Spamalot*, and *The 25th Anniversary Sir Tim Rice Concert*. Introduced to puppeteering last March at the Eugene O'Neill Conservatory with *The Scarecrow* production, she finds honor in collaborating with Anthony and strives to make the entire cast and crew proud.

Antonio Romero Jr (Winkie -Ojo the Loco/Man 2), 33, is so honored to be a part of *The Scarecrow's* journey! Born and raised in El Paso, Tx. Antonio is an eccentric Actor and Drag performer who received their BFA in Theater Performance at The University of Texas at El Paso. Past roles and Productions include Jason/ Tyrone (*Hand to God*), Frog (*A year with Frog and Toad*), C.B. (*Dog Sees God*) and Misha (*Lydia*) Which Earned him the National award for Outstanding Performance by an Actor in a play at the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival 2018. Antonio would like to extend a huge thank you to Anthony Michael Stokes for trusting them with the role and bringing them along for the Adventure! Cheers to heading back down the road!

Amber Snyder (Winkie 3/Lily White/Mombi) is a Chicago based creative that has been practicing the art of storytelling for many years through multiple mediums including stage, screen, audio and puppetry. Her creative evolution would not be possible though without training from places like Rough House Theater Co, LAMDA and Second City. If you're still curious about this Amber person, you can find her short film *Evermore Nevermore* (awarded Best Adapted Film in the 2021 Poe Film Festival of Richmond, Virginia) on Vimeo. Or perhaps you would enjoy Amber's original audio storytelling adventures of Star Stuff Stories on Spotify or Apple Podcasts? But enough about her, please enjoy the magical ride that is *The Scarecrow*.

Mia Sterbini (Gold Crow/Ida Bells/Locasta) is an artist & cultural worker based in Harlem. As an actor, they have worked Off-Broadway (Breaking the Binary Theatre, the cell theatre, INTAR, Daryll Roth II, The Brick, Playwrights Horizons Labs...), regionally & on a number of developing new works. Recent film: George C. Wolfe/Netflix's *Rustin*, Dola Rashad's *Gemini + Gemelli* & Netflix's *Ladies First*. Graduate of Point Park University's BFA Acting.

Amanda Vasquez (Winkie 2-Nunkie Unc), has been a member of El Paso theatre companies: Shakespeare on the Rocks, and Los Actores, since 2012. She has also performed in several productions with The El Paso Playhouse, The Jewel Box Series, and EPCC. Amanda is also a singer, as well as a film and television actor. She has featured in the local independent films *Where One Stands, Save Me*, and is currently In-Production for the film *22 Weeks*, and can be seen on ChicanoHollywoodTV's *Aim For The Heart*, as recurring character, Jackie Corrales.

David Jackson (Production Stage Manager) is thankful & privileged to be a part of this amazing team of artists. Holding a BFA in Stage Management from Syracuse University, David has been a Stage Manager for numerous Off-Broadway productions, workshops, and development residencies. Currently a Stage Manager for *Sleep No More* (Punchdrunk/Emursive Productions, The Mckittrick Hotel), other recent credits include: *National Puppetry Conference '23* (Stage Coordinator, Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center), *The Scarecrow* (PSM - La MaMa Residency, PSM - Jim Henson Residency @ the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center), & *Dialogue of the Carmelites* (PSM, Bronx Opera). Love to Mum, Dad, & Eileen.

Eileen Brennan (Scenic Artist) is so grateful for an opportunity to be a part of such a talented team! Holding a BFA in Theatre Design and Technology from Oakland University in Michigan Eileen's Off-Broadway credits include *The Play That Goes Wrong* (New World Stages), *Little Shop of Horrors* (New World Stages) and *Sandra* (Vineyard Theatre). Eileen primarily works as a Second Scenic Artist at Pink Sparrow to fabricate and install interactive marketing experiences for clients both in and out of New York City. Opportunities to work on creative works like *The Scarecrow* are the types of fulfilling experiences that she lives for! Thanks to her brother, Clay, and her fiancé, David, for their endless support.

Bakari Prigg (Lighting Designer) is a professional puppeteer with a career spanning 20 years. He's trained by puppeteers from *Sesame Street*, The Jim Henson Company, and *Disney's The Muppets*. In 2017, he created an Alabama-based puppet troupe, Under His Strings. In 2019, he performed at Sesame Place as a puppeteer for the inaugural year of their first puppet-based show *Our Street is Sesame Street*. In addition to his puppetry career, Bakari is a concert and theatre light designer in the IATSE union. He's been a professional designer since 2015. People will see most of his work in Huntsville, Alabama where he collaborates with local community theatre companies such as Theatre Huntsville, Fantasy Playhouse, and Lyrique Music Production. Other venues and organizations he's worked with include places such as The Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center, Oakwood University and its affiliates, University of Alabama in Huntsville, The Von Braun Center, and Dream Theatre.

Don Cieslik (Projections Designer) is an NYC based video designer and programmer. Originally from El Paso, Texas, where he and Anthony first met and worked together at the UTEP Dinner Theater. Don has worked as a video programmer for multiple Broadway shows including, *The Sound Inside*, *The Lehman Trilogy*, *The Great Gatsby*, *The Wiz*, among others. Additionally he has served as the associate video content designer for Disney Cruise Line's stage productions of *The Little Mermaid* and *The Tale of Moana*.

The Scarecrow is made possible with support from Cheryl Henson and the Jim Henson Foundation, the Eugene O'Neill Arts Center, and individual donors.

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The 11th La MaMa Puppet Festival Fall 2024 is made possible by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature, the Acción Cultural Española (AC/E), the Cultural Office of the Spanish Embassy in Washington DC and the Cultural Office of the Consulate General of Spain in New York, the Howard Gilman Foundation, The Jim Henson Foundation, the Québec Government Office in New York, Puppet Slam Network, Radio Drama Network, The Shubert Foundation. Additional support from Cheryl Henson is gratefully acknowledged.

**A full program with information on this
production can be found on the
The Scarecrow
page of the La MaMa website.**

**In addition you can scan the
QR code Poster located in the theatre
lobby for access to the digital program.**

LA MAMA



RESTORE A BUILDING REMAKE A WORLD



Rendering: 74 East 4th St.

La MaMa's historic, landmark building at 74 East 4th Street underwent 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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