

**PRESS RELEASE****For Immediate Release: December 19, 2022****PRESS RELEASE****Media Contact:**

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**CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR *LOCOMOTION*  
BY MACARTHUR "GENIUS" GRANT WINNER JACQUELINE WOODSON**

"Sometimes I sit counting the stars. Maybe one is my mamma and one is my daddy. And maybe that's why sometimes they flicker a bit." – Lonnie, *Locomotion*

Experience this heartfelt and hopeful story of family, friendship, and the power of finding your voice  
**January 24 - March 5, 2023**

**Minneapolis— December 19, 2022** — Children's Theatre Company (CTC) has announced the cast and creative team for Jacqueline Woodson's *Locomotion*, adapted from Ms. Woodson's own book. The production will be directed by Talvin Wilks.

*Locomotion* takes the audience into the life of 11-year-old Lonnie Motion, as he finds new tools - the result of a school poetry assignment – which help him to process the tumult of life in foster care. As Lonnie discovers the power of poetry, he experiences deeper connections to his new foster mother, his school friend Enrique, his teacher Ms. Marcus, and his beloved younger sister Lili.

Uprooted from his family,  
surrounded by the unfamiliar,  
Lonnie couldn't feel more alone.

But this year, his class is learning to write poetry.

Lonnie's verses take him  
from his foster home  
to the classroom,  
into the streets,  
and back to a time when  
his family was all together.

As Lonnie finds his voice,  
you'll discover how poetry can bring you  
closer to others and to yourself.

*Locomotion* was a finalist for the National Book Award, and author **Jacqueline Woodson** has adapted her acclaimed work for the stage. CTC's production is directed by **Talvin Wilks**, an award-winning playwright, director, and dramaturg.

*Locomotion* is proudly supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional support from the James B. Linsmayer Foundation and Best Buy.

*Locomotion* plays from January 24 – March 5, 2023 at CTC’s Cargill Stage (2400 Third Avenue South Minneapolis MN 55404). Opening Night is Saturday, January 28 at 7pm. Tickets may be purchase online at [childrenstheatre.org/locomotion](https://childrenstheatre.org/locomotion) or by calling the ticket office at 612.874.0400. Ticket prices start at \$15.

"I am so excited to see *Locomotion*'s story on stage again," says Playwright Jacqueline Woodson. "The story is one that is timely and timeless and speaks to all people, young and old."

"*Locomotion* is a very important work in our current era of more diverse storytelling," says Director Talvin Wilks. "The opportunity to see a young Black male's journey as a universal story of overcoming hardships and the challenges of adolescence is vital and revelatory. That CTC is making a commitment to diversifying the canon of young protagonists is an important and vibrant investment, not only for youths of color to see themselves and their experiences on stage, but for all youth to begin to broaden their understanding of universality, the act of seeing oneself through the lives of others. This opportunity is a great gift for our new era of awareness, and Jacqueline Woodson has created a story for everyone, a story that I am very excited to realize on stage."

"We are thrilled to bring Jacqueline Woodson's *Locomotion* to our community," says Artistic Director Peter C. Brosius. "This brilliant book which was a National Book Award Finalist and a Coretta Scott King Honor book was adapted by Jacqueline herself and she has created a play filled with friendship, poetry, and the struggle to hold onto your family. These are characters who you cannot forget and who will absolutely fill you with joy. We are also hugely excited to welcome Talvin Wilks to CTC as the director. Talvin's work has been seen across the nation and here in town at Penumbra and it is a delight to have Jacqueline's words and images being brought to the stage with Talvin's vision and heart."

### **Ticket Information**

Tickets to *Locomotion* may be purchased online at [childrenstheatre.org/locomotion](https://childrenstheatre.org/locomotion) or by calling the ticket office at 612.874.0400. Ticket prices start at \$15.

School groups interested in attending *Locomotion* can contact [schools@childrenstheatre.org](mailto:schools@childrenstheatre.org) for more information.

This production is best enjoyed by everyone age 9 and up. Due to the age recommendation, lap passes will not be available for this production.

### **About Jacqueline Woodson**

Jacqueline Woodson is a renowned and best-selling author of works for children, middle-grade readers, young adults, and adults. In 2020, she received a MacArthur Fellowship "Genius" grant. Woodson, best known for her National Book Award-Winning memoir *Brown Girl Dreaming* and her Newbery Honor-winning titles *After Tupac and D Foster*; *Feathers*; and *Show Way*, served as the Young People's Poet Laureate from 2015 to 2017. In 2018- 2019, she was named the National Ambassador for Young People's Literature by the Library of Congress. She was awarded the Hans Christian Andersen Medal in 2020.

### ***Locomotion***

Written and Adapted for the Stage by Jacqueline Woodson

Directed by Talvin Wilks

January 24 - March 5, 2023

Cargill Stage

This production is best enjoyed by everyone age 9 and up.

Lap passes will not be available for this production.

Runtime: 1 hour (no intermission).

### **Creative Team & Production Staff**

Playwright | Jaqueline Woodson  
 Director | Talvin Wilks  
 Costume Designer | Danielle Preston  
 Lighting Designer | Marcus Dilliard  
 Scenic Designer | Maruti Evans  
 Assistant Lighting Designer | Ellie Simonette  
 Projection Designer | Kathy Maxwell  
 Sound Designer & Composer | Queen Drea  
 Sound Designer & Composer | Peter Morrow  
 Stage Manager | Chris Schweiger  
 Assistant Stage Manager | Cortney Gilliam  
 Stage Management Fellow | Jiccarra N. Hollman

### **Adult Cast**

Charla Marie Bailey | “Mama/Ms. Edna/Ms. Marcus”  
 Darrick Mosley\* | “Daddy/Agency Man”

### **Student Cast**

Mollie Allen | “Lili”  
 Ellis Dossavi | “Enrique”  
 Junie Edwards | “Lonnie”

### **Understudies**

Amir Byrd | “U/S Lonnie”  
 De’Anthony Jackson | “U/S Enrique”  
 Rue Norman | “U/S Mama/Ms. Edna/Ms. Marcus”  
 Mari Peterson-Hilleque | “U/S Lili”  
 Glenn E. Williams II | “U/S Daddy/Agency Man”

*\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers.*

## **ADULT CAST**

### **Darrick Mosley\* (“Daddy/Agency Man”)**

This is Darrick's CTC debut. Credits: *The Humans* (Park Square Theatre); *What to Send Up When it Goes Down* (Pillsbury Theatre); *The Ballad of Emmett Till* (Penumbra Theatre); *A Raisin in the Sun* (Guthrie Theater); *The Great Society* (History Theatre); Darrick dedicates his performances to the memory of his grandmother, Pearlie Brown.

### **Charla Marie Bailey (“Mama/Ms. Edna/Ms. Marcus”)**

Charla Marie Bailey has always wanted to act ever since she saw *Grease* on TV and *West Side Story* on stage. She has been acting for over 20 years. *Raisin in the Sun* (Lyric Arts); *Intimate Apparel* (St. Croix Festival Theater); *Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry*; *The Story of Ruby Bridges* (SteppingStone).

## STUDENT CAST

### **Mollie Allen (“Lili”)**

Mollie (she/her) is very excited for her first debut performance at the Children's Theatre. Before this she performed at the Guthrie Theatre in *A Christmas Carol*. She has also performed with Ashland Productions, Lakeshore Players, Homeward Bound Theater Company, and Missoula Traveling Theaters.

### **Ellis Dossavi (“Enrique”)**

Ellis Dossavi (he/him) has enjoyed the role of Ziggy Marley in *Three Little Birds* at Children’s Theatre Company. He has performed with Stages as well in shows like *Aladdin*, *Edward Tulane*, and *Hairspray*.

### **Junie Edwards (“Lonnie”)**

Junie Edwards (they/them) is an actor and emerging playwright. Recent acting credits: *Sophisticated Ladies*; *Merrily We Roll Along* (SPCPA); *Buddy, The Buddy Holly Story* (History Theatre); *Marie Antoinette* (Emerging Professional Ensemble); *Something Happened In Our Town* (Children's Theatre Company). Recent writing credits: Published play titled “*Afroyo*” under DramaNotebook. This is Junie’s first lead role ever!

## UNDERSTUDIES

### **Amir Byrd (“U/S Lonnie”)**

Amir is very happy to be a part of this amazing production of *Locomotion* and playing the role of Lonnie (understudy). He is an ambitious 15 year old and has had numerous roles at his local community theater, this is his 2nd year in the arts. He is currently a freshman at North High School and he is very passionate and excited to be apart in sharing this story.

### **De’Anthony Jackson (“U/S Enrique”)**

De’Anthony Jackson appeared in his first professional production at Children’s Theate Company, as “Josh” in *Something Happened in Our Town*. De'Anthony was recently seen as Travis in *A Raisin in the Sun*, at American Players Theatre in Spring Green, WI. De’Anthony attends Stonebridge World School and is a native Minnesotan, born and raised in South Minneapolis.

### **Rue Norman (“U/S Mama/Ms. Marcus/Ms. Edna”)**

Rue Norman is honored to be returning to CTC as a Performing Apprentice! She was seen last in *Dr. Seuss’s How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, *Something Happened in our Town*, and *Annie*. As a proud Minneapolis native and University of Northwestern graduate, Rue has performed on numerous Twin Cities stages and is a recipient of the 2019 Kennedy Center National Award for “Outstanding Performance in a Play” for her role as Alice in *Alice in Wonderland*. [rue-norman.com](http://rue-norman.com)

### **Mari Peterson-Hilleque (“U/S Lili”)**

Mari Peterson-Hilleque is thrilled to be back at Children’s Theatre! Her other shows at Children’s Theatre Company include *Dr. Seuss’s How the Grinch Stole Christmas*; *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*; and *Annie*. She has also performed at The Zephyr Theater, Youth Performance Company, SteppingStone Theatre, The Ordway, and Fidgety Fairy Tales. Mari is a junior at Minnetonka High School.

### **Glenn E. Williams II (“U/S Daddy/Agency Man”)**

Glenn E. Williams II (him/him) is honored to be a Performing Apprentice at the CTC. He was last seen in *Dr. Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (Children's Theatre Company). Recent theater credits include *Choir Boy* (Le Petit Theatre), *My Fair Lady*, and *Ragtime* (Tulane Summer Lyric). He holds a B.F.A in Acting and a B.A in Film and Directing from Ball State University and Dillard University. He is a New Orleans Native, content creator, photographer, director, choreographer and the occasional youtuber. 1906!

## CREATIVE TEAM

### **Talvin Wilks (Director)**

Talvin Wilks, Director. *The Ballad of Emmett Till; Benevolence; The White Card; This Bitter Earth* at Penumbra; *Parks* (History Theatre); *Cannabis: A Viper Vaudeville* (HERE Arts/La Mama, NYC); *The Till Trilogy* (Mosaic Theatre, DC). He is an Associate Professor, Theatre Arts and Dance Department, University of Minnesota/Twin Cities and a 2020 McKnight Theater Artist Fellow.

### **Marcus Dilliard (Lighting Designer)**

Marcus has designed for theatre and opera across North America. Previous designs for Children's Theatre Company include *Pinocchio, Alice in Wonderland, Iqbal, The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins* and *Bert and Ernie, Goodnight!* Here at home, his work was most recently seen at the Jungle Theater and Theatre Latte Da.

### **Queen Drea (Sound Designer & Composer)**

Queen Drea, a 2022 McKnight Composers Fellow, is a sound alchemist, mixing sonic potions laced with looped vocals, jagged rhythms, and found sounds. Queen has designed for Pillsbury House & Penumbra Theaters, Black Label Movement, and Ananya Dance Theater, and is excited for her first CTC design.

### **Maruti Evans (Scenic Designer)**

*Fat Ham* (Public Theater), *At the Wedding* (Lincoln Center Theatre), *In Our Daughter's Eyes* (LA Opera), *Kill Move Paradise* (National Black Theater), *Peculiar Patriot* (National Black Theater), *The Ring Cycle* (Opera Australia), *Angles Bone* (Hong Kong Music Festival, Beijing Music Festival), *Real Enemies* (BAM), *Epiphany* (BAM), *Else Where* (BAM), *Ogresse* (Kennedy Center, Jazz at Lincoln Center). Drama Desk Awards: *Tiny Dynamite* and *Pilo Family Circus*. Drama Desk nominations: *Peculiar Patriot, Kill Move Paradise, Deliverance, In the Heat of the Night, Slaughterhouse 5, and Blindness*.

### **Cortney Gilliam (Assistant Stage Manager)**

Cortney Gilliam (she/her) is a Stage Manager and performing/visual Artist from Dallas, Texas. She was the '21-'22 CTC Stage Management Fellow and now celebrates her third production as an ASM. She was an inaugural musical theatre GreenRoom Fellow at The Ordway. Cortney is a proud alumna of Howard University!

### **Jicarra N. Hollman (Stage Management Fellow)**

Jicarra N. Hollman has enjoyed roles in *Kumbyah: The Juneteenth Story* (Breck/Denfeld; Duluth, MN); *Secrets* (Capri Theater); and *The Energized Guyz*, a traveling show with the National Theatre for Children. Her love for theater has also brought her into stage management. She is a Captain in the Air Force and founder of News On Purpose, a platform for Black and Brown Stories to be shared by Black and Brown bodies.

### **Kathy Maxwell (Projection Designer)**

Kathy Maxwell has designed video and lights for Penumbra Theatre, Mixed Blood Theatre, Open Eye Figure Theatre, the History Theatre, the Jungle Theatre, the Ordway and the Guthrie Theatre. Design credits include *The White Card; This Bitter Earth; Benevolence; Mamma Mia* and *Ride the Cyclone*.

**Peter Morrow (Composer / Sound Designer)** moved to the Twin Cities from Dublin, Ireland in 2012. Since then, he has worked extensively throughout the Twin Cities area. In 2022 his collaborations have included work with Pillsbury House, Red Eye Theatre, Ten Thousand Things, Ifrah Mansour, Leslie Parker, zAmya, Threads Dance Company, The Playwright Centre, DalekoArts, Six Points and Wonderlust.

**Danielle Preston (Costume Designer)**

Danielle Preston (she/her) is a costume designer based in Washington. Recent regional credits include: *The Till Trilogy* at Mosaic Theater Company; *The Joy That Carries You* at Olney Theatre; *Quamino's Map* at Chicago Opera Theater, and *B.R.O.K.E.N. Code B.I.R.D. Switching* at Berkshire Theatre Group. Off-Broadway credits include *Where Words Once Were* at Lincoln Center. Education: M.F.A. in Costume Design is from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. Proud member of United Scenic Artists Local 829. [daniellepreston.com](http://daniellepreston.com)

**Chris Schweiger (Stage Manager)**

Chris Schweiger has stage managed at CTC for 20 years and most recently worked on *Bina's Six Apples* and *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*. Chris has also worked at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Perseverance Theatre, Arena Stage, Seattle Children's Theatre, The New Victory Theater, The Old Globe, Alpine Theatre Project and locally at Mixed Blood, The Ordway and Guthrie Theater. She graduated from Northwestern University and was a Peace Corps volunteer in Mongolia.

**Ellie Simonette (Assistant Lighting Designer)**

Ellie Simonette (she/her) worked on *Dr. Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas* ('22); *Bina's Six Apples*; and *Diary of A Wimpy Kid* at Children's Theatre Company and is excited to return. Her other credits include *Anonymous Lover*; and *Edward Tulane* (Minnesota Opera) and *Beauty and the Beast* (The Ordway).

**About Children's Theatre Company**

**Children's Theatre Company (CTC)** is the nation's largest and most acclaimed theatre for young people and serves a multigenerational audience. It creates theatre experiences that educate, challenge, and inspire for more than 250,000 people annually. CTC is the only theatre focused on young audiences to win the coveted Tony Award® for regional theatre and is the only theatre in Minnesota to receive three Tony® nominations (for its production of *A Year with Frog and Toad*). CTC is committed to creating world-class productions at the highest level and to developing new works, more than 200 to date, dramatically changing the canon of work for young audiences.

CTC's engagement and learning programs annually serve more than 93,000 young people and their communities through Theatre Arts Training, student matinees, Neighborhood Bridges, and early childhood arts education programs. ACT One is CTC's comprehensive platform for access, diversity, and inclusion in our audiences, programs, staff, and board that strives to ensure the theatre is a home for all people, all families, reflective of our community. [childrenstheatre.org](http://childrenstheatre.org)

**FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:**

WHAT: Children's Theatre Company (CTC) presents *Locomotion*

WHEN: January 24 – March 5, 2023 (Opening Night is Saturday, January 28 at 7pm)

WHERE: CTC's Cargill Stage (2400 Third Avenue South Minneapolis MN 55404)

RUNNING TIME: 1 hour (no intermission)

AGE RECOMMENDATION: This production is best enjoyed by everyone age 9 and up. Due to the age

Due to the age recommendation, lap passes will not be available for this production.

TICKETS: Starting at \$15 and available at [childrenstheatre.org/locomotion](http://childrenstheatre.org/locomotion) or by calling the ticket office at 612.874.0400.

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