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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The award-winning Actors Co-op Theatre Company proudly presents William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, directed by Michael T. Kachingwe and produced by Lorinda Hawkins Smith. Stranded on the South Pacific coast of Illyria, the quick-witted Viola assumes the disguise of a page boy for Duke Orsino and finds herself at the center of an explosive love triangle in which identity, passion and gender all threaten to come undone. Bursting with vitality and romance, *Twelfth Night* gives us one of Shakespeare's most remarkable heroines matching wits with a host of captivating characters—from the love-struck Olivia to the puritanical Malvolio.

The cast features the talents of Chloe Babbes (Feste), Freedom (Sebastian Understudy performs April 19, 20, 21, 26, 27 & 28), Gavin Michael Harris (Valentine/Officer/Priest), Britny Horton (Maria), Isaac W. Jay (Toby), Ben Kientz (Captain), Howard Leder (Andrew), Mary Leeholland (Viola), Antwon Mason Jr. (Orsino), Nneka Nnebe (Curio), Victor H. Rodriguez (Sebastian), Kevin Shewey (Fabian), William Viriato (Malvolio), and Jessica Woehler (Olivia).

The production team includes Michael T. Kachingwe (Director), Lorinda Hawkins Smith (Producer), Royce Correa (Choreographer), Hanalei Vasquez (Set Designer), Kelly Tsan (Costume Designer), Jesse Rodriguez (Lighting Designer), Shelia Dorn (Hair/Make-up Designer), Thulani Kachingwe (Composer/Sound Designer), Crystal Jackson (Production Manager), Kassy Menke (Stage Manager), Emmett Lee Merrit (Assistant Stage Manager), Kellianne Rae Jordan (PR Director/Social Media Manager) and Jessica Woehler (PR Show Manager). Elizabeth Mae Alan (Graphic Arts Design), and Chris Winfield (Set Construction).

### **About the CAST**

CHLOE BABBES (Feste) is thrilled to be back at the Co-op as an official member. She was last seen as Mildred in *Ah, Wilderness!*, Helen Keller in the *The Miracle Worker*, and Betty in *The Crucible*. Other favorite credits include Anne Frank in *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Young Richard Duke of York in *Richard III*, and Jessica in *The Merchant of Venice*. Chloe can be seen as Gigi in the short film *Gigi and the Giants*. She is also a touring musician, playing bass and singing with Jason Hawk Harris and the Eagle Rock Gospel Singers.

FREEDOM (Sebastian U/S performs April 19, 20, 21, 26, 27 & 28) Actor. Creator. Fitness Enthusiast. Born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, FREEDOM moved to Los Angeles to pursue a career in acting. Acting has pushed him towards content creation, music, and fitness. His other talents include but are not limited to, singing, dancing, and voice over. He is also a motivational speaker that uses his voice to uplift and inspire those around him. FREEDOM focuses on prioritizing a healthy mind, body, and spirit to use his talents as best as possible.

GAVIN MICHAEL HARRIS (Valentine/Second Officer/Priest) is excited to be in his first show at the Actors Co-op. He has been in LA working in the film/TV world and is excited to come back to the stage. Some of his favorite projects include *Anything Goes*, *Peter and the Star-catcher* and *Godspell*. Gavin has a BA in Theatre Arts from Grand Canyon University.

BRITNY HORTON (Maria) is excited to be making her Actors Co-Op debut! Recent credits include *Little America*, *Bel-Air*, *Genius: MLK/X*, and *The Resident*. She has also excelled in theater productions such as *Hit the Wall* and *SWEAT*. She is a recent MFA graduate from the University of Iowa. In 2020, she launched her production company, Geraldine Pictures, to champion body positivity and representation, particularly for black women.

ISAAC W. JAY (Sir Toby) Latest film/TV credits include *Lessons in Chemistry* (Apple TV+), *The Last Thing He Told Me* (Apple TV+), *Glue Trap* (Hellzapoppin Pictures), *American Crime Story: Impeachment (FX)*, *Headcount* (Defiant Studios), and *Flock of Four* (Bristol Pictures). Recent theatre credits include *Downtown Reps Fangs! and Witch!*, *Back Porch* (Bluesteam Productions), *Copenhagen* (Interact), *Death of a Salesman*(Interact), *Rope* (Actors Co-op), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Shakespeare by the Sea), *A Man for All Seasons* (Actors Co-op), *Twelfth Night* (West Valley Playhouse), *This is Our Youth* (Raven Theatre), *Yesterday Again* (World Premiere/SFBATCC Nom for best actor), and *The Bacchae* (World Premiere London). Isaac is a member of SAG-AFTRA.

BEN KIENTZ (Antonio/Captain) is an Actors Co-op member making his second stage appearance in their production of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. He is just coming off FPCH's run of *A Christmas Carol*. Before that, he debuted in his first Actors Co-op's production, *The Human Comedy*. His most recent appearance on screen was in *Heaven: The Adventure Begins*. He also does voice-over work for Beyond Trek Productions. Ben is from Cincinnati.

HOWARD LEDER (Sir Andrew Aguecheek) is a Los Angeles-based actor as well as one of TV's most respected editors. In 2021, he appeared at the Utah Shakespeare Festival in *The Comedy of Errors* and *Cymbeline*. LA theater credits include *The Nether* (Veil Theatre), *And if I don't behave then what* (Open Fist) and *Duet For One* (Beverly Hills Playhouse). He made his TV debut in the acclaimed final season of NBC's *This Is Us*. As an editor, his credits include *This Is Us* (NBC), *The Newsroom*, *Big Love* and *Perry Mason* (HBO). He is a graduate of Oberlin College and Conservatory and the USC School of Cinematic Arts.

MARY LEEHOLLAND (Viola) is excited to make her Actors Co-op debut as a new member! Mary is an actress and writer from the Mississippi Delta. She earned her MA in Acting from Drama Centre London. While in London, she debuted in her first written work, *Snowbird*, at Rosemary Branch Theatre, starred in the award-winning short film, *Supper for Civilized Girls*, and also wrote and acted in the short film, *Blue Rosée*. Mary now continues her passion for telling stories of vulnerability, redemption, and joy in Los Angeles with film credits such as *Manifest West*, *The Apology*, and *Violet*.

ANTWON MASON JR. (Orsino) is excited to return to the Actors Co-op Stage in the role of Orsino. Antwon is a multi-talented actor having credits in Film, Theater and Music Production. He is a graduate of the Pacific Conservatory of Performing Arts, where he honed vocal and dance styles including Jazz, ballet and contemporary. His favorite roles include Issac Jaggard in Lauren Gunderson's *The Book of Will*, Daryl in Steve Martin's *Bright Star*, and the role of Soldier in Stravinsky's *A Soldier's Tale*.

NNEKA (Curio/Officer) is a SAG-AFTRA actress and member of Actors Co-op. She has a BA in Theatre Performance and has been both on stage, screen, and even VR. Her recent credits include *Plan B*, *Twelfth Night*, *America's Next Top Immigrant*, *Clybourne Park*, and other titles. She is excited to be making her Co-op debut.

VICTOR H. RODRIGUEZ (Sebastian) With a background in vibrant theater plays such as *Spinning Into Butter* and *Macbeth* with Southern California Shakespeare Festival as well as *Dangerous Liaisons* and *Richard III*, Victor brings his talent and passion to the Co-op stage after having wowed audiences in TV and film, including CBS's *Tommy*, MTV's *Faking It*, and Amazon Prime's *Hunters*.

KEVIN SHEWEY (Fabian) is grateful to be back onstage at the Co-op. Former Co-op credits include *She Loves Me* and *The 39 Steps*. Off-Broadway: *Cymbeline* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at New York Classical Theatre. Regional: *Henry V* and *Our Town* at Chautauqua Theatre Company, *The Odd Couple* and *Present Laughter* at Summer Repertory Theater, and *Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol* at Sierra Repertory Theater. Kevin has an MFA from UC Irvine and a BA from Azusa Pacific University.

WILLIAM VIRIATO (Malvolio) was born and raised in São Paulo, Brazil. He is a member of SAG-AFTRA and AEA. He has a BA from Liberty University and MFA from Regent University. His repertoire includes notable roles in productions such as *Rhinoceros*, *Onésimo*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Ragtime*, *She Stoops to Conquer*, *Peter Pan*, *Macbeth*, and *The Phantom of the Opera*, among many others.

JESSICA WOEHLER (Olivia) is absolutely thrilled to be a part of this production. As a longtime lover of Shakespeare, this role is a dream come true. She was last seen on the Co-op stage earlier this season as Mrs. Macauley in *The Human Comedy*. Other credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *August Osage County*, *Steel Magnolias*, and *The Game's Afoot*. Jessica has her MA from the University of Denver and BA from George Fox University.

### **About the Production Team**

MICHAEL T. KACHINGWE (Director) most recently was a guest artist at Cal Poly Pomona University in *The Whipping Man* in the role of Simon. He has appeared in Southern California Shakespeare Festival in *The Tempest* as Prospero, as well as in *Richard III* as Queen Margaret. He has performed in over 40 productions including theatrical engagements at the Kennedy Center (Washington DC), La Mama (Off-Broadway), Steppenwolf (Chicago), Goodman (Chicago), Victory Gardens (Chicago), Shubert (Boston), Southern California Shakespeare Festival, Hayworth (LA), Robey (LA) and Unicorn (Kansas City). Theatre roles include Claudius in *Hamlet*, Caius in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Michael Cassio in *Othello*, Claudius in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, Charlie in *Bourbon at the Border*, Wil in *Flyin' West*, Slow Drag in *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, Bynum in *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, and Keo in *Nomathemba* (featuring Ladysmith Black Mambazo). Currently he can be seen in the web series *Just Jackie* as Marcus. In addition to his theatrical performing credits, Michael has appeared in film and TV including roles in *West Wing*, *The Bold and the Beautiful*, and several national commercials. He has directed over 50 theatrical productions, vocal coached over 40 productions, and fight choreographed over 30 productions. Proud member of SAG/AFTRA and AEA.

LORINDA HAWKINS SMITH (Producer) is a bestselling author, acclaimed actor, advocate, musician, comedian, and award-winning filmmaker from Altadena. Her one woman show *Justice? Or... Just Me? The Bite*, which she first produced at the Hudson Theatre, was a recipient of the Hollywood Fringe Festival Diversity Scholarship awarded to productions with powerful community impact. The solo play went on to be part of Black Voices Theater Festival and Solofest. Her self-produced short film, *The Virus* has 9 wins in the film festival circuit. She produced *Cries from the Heart* and *Bringing the Gospel to the Streets* for the Skid Row community which brought awareness to domestic violence and healing through music. When Lorinda isn't portraying her shero Bridget Bidy Mason at the Los Angeles Public Library or a couch potato for Pluto TV, you can catch her leading workshops and classes. Lorinda's first adventure with Actor's Co-op was playing Madame Voskaya in *The Gift of the Magi* in 2021.

CRYSTAL JACKSON (Production Manager) has produced several shows for Actors Co-op. She is pleased to step into the role of Production Manager. It's beautiful to see how live theater taps

into the hearts of so many. Crystal has also performed in several shows and was last seen at ANW as Mama in *The Bluest Eye*.

KASSY MENKE (Stage Manager) is excited to be back! She studied at SJDC before receiving her B.A. in Theater Arts from CSUN. She works in live theater and the entertainment field exploring different avenues including photography (Kasandra Faith Photography), writing and acting. Stage management include *Miracle on 34th Street*, *A Live Radio Musical Play*, *The Forgotten Fort taken to Desert Hearts Music Festival* and *LiB Festival*, *A Lie of the Mind*, *Marvin's Room*, *The Human Comedy* and *An Evening with C.S Lewis*.

THULANI KACHINGWE\* (Composer/Sound Design) is an artist from Los Angeles with a background in curated musical experience. Having composed soundtrack for Netflix's *The Curse of Bridge Hollow* and multiple indie-short films, this is his debut in sound design for live theater. He has music available on all streaming platforms including albums .THU and Cloud 9 where he produced, wrote, and performed all songs. He currently works in global touring for Live Nation Entertainment.

KELLY TSAN (Costume Designer) is very excited to work her first production with the Actors Co-op. She currently works as a costume dresser at Universal Studios. Her recent projects include *The Purge: Dangerous Waters* at USH HHN and *Spark* at Cal Poly Pomona. Kelly has a BA from Cal Poly Pomona.

ROYCE CORREA (Choreographer) is a Colombian American dancer, artist, and performer. His very first introduction to dancing came from his family, through the Latin rhythms of salsa music. Growing up in Los Angeles, he then experimented with other styles, including Hip-Hop, R&B, and Afro Beats. His hard work and dedication earned him a scholarship to University of California-Santa Barbara, where he earned a BFA in Theater and Dance where he developed his artistry in contemporary dance, performance art, and musicals. Royce has performed in numerous productions throughout his career, and now hopes to leave a fresh new style of choreography to *Twelfth Night*.

HANALEI VASQUEZ (Set Designer) Hanalei Vasquez is a scenic artist and designer majorly working in the themed and commercial entertainment business. However, her love of the theatre brings her back to the stage. She does her best to use her visual eye in both worlds. She hopes you enjoy your stay on the island.

SHELIA DORN (Wig/Makeup Designer) THEATRE: *King Hedley II*, *The Bluest Eye*, *The Book of Will*; *Radio Golf*; *Anna in the Tropics*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Seven Guitars*; *Gem of the Ocean*, "THREE" *Sisters*, *Black Cyprus Bayou*, *Mountaintop*, *The Wiz*, *Open Fist*, *Picnic*, *The*

*Great Jheri Curl Debate, Mommie and Clyde, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Lion King, The Direction Home, The Producers, Lady Day, Our West Side Story, Shooting Star, Two Trains Running, Beauty and the Beast, Drama Queens, Letters from Zora, King Hedley II, I Go Somewhere, Heartbreak Hotel, Siamese Sex Show, The Story of Alice, Hattie: What I Need You to Know, Painting in Red, Dunbar Hotel. FILM/TV: Something About Mother, Dragon Fly, Remember Me (The Mahalia Jackson Story).* Shelia's Passion project is donating her services as the resident hair and makeup designer for Amazing Grace Conservatory, a non-profit Performing Arts organization for aspiring artists ages 7-18.

CHRIS WINFIELD (Set Construction) Chris has designed and built many sets in the Los Angeles Theatre Community, most notably at the Group Repertory Theatre in North Hollywood, where he has been a member since 1986. He also served as Co-Artistic Director at the GRT from 2010 to 2020. He is primarily an actor appearing on stage, film, and television.

***Twelfth Night*** will run from April 5<sup>th</sup> through May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30pm, Sundays at 2:30pm. Additional Saturday Matinees April 13<sup>th</sup> and May 4<sup>th</sup> at 2:30pm.

Ticket prices: Adults \$35. Seniors (60+) \$30. Students and Veterans w/ID: \$25. Group rates and special offers available. Free Lot Parking. Tickets/Info: [www.actorsco-op.org](http://www.actorsco-op.org) or (323) 462-8460. The David Schall Theater, 1760 N. Gower St., Hollywood, CA 90028.

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