



# Kid-Simple

A radio play *in the flesh*

October 18-24  
Center for the Arts  
Studio Theatre, CA 3060  
[tickets.tuboxoffice.com](http://tickets.tuboxoffice.com)  
Proceeds go to the TU Foundation

by Jordan Harrison

Directed by Tavia La Follette

Produced by special arrangement with Playscripts, Inc. ([www.playscripts.com](http://www.playscripts.com))



Theatre Arts

## Honor Native Land

Every community owes its existence and strength to the generations before them, around the world, who contributed their hopes, dreams, and energy into making the history that led to this moment. Some were brought here against their will; some were drawn to migrate from their homes in the hope of a better life, and some have lived on this land for more generations than can be counted. Truth and acknowledgment are critical in building mutual respect and connections across all barriers of heritage and difference.

At Towson University, we believe it is important to create dialogue to honor those that have been historically and systemically disenfranchised. So, we acknowledge the truth that is often buried: We are on the ancestral lands of communities and nations which include the Susquehannock (suh-skwuh-ha-naak), Nanticoke (nan-tuh-kowk) and the Piscataway (puh-ska-tuh-way) people who consider the land that the university currently occupies part of their ancient homeland. These were among the first in the Western Hemisphere. We are on indigenous land that was seized from the tribes and many others by European colonists.

We pay respects to these elders and ancestors. Please take a moment to consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together here today.



In the Spring Semester of 2024, when we needed to finalize our proposed directing projects for the fall, I was feeling rather depressed about the state of the country. Well, the state of our world, for that matter. My work has traditionally been driven by culture and politics. As an artist, I believe it is my job to interpret and analyze cultural behavior. However, I was feeling a bit depressed about our current culture and the behavior in politics and beyond. Glued to the news every day, I knew I needed a break. I needed a space to heal, play, and rejuvenate my faith in humanity. I also knew the presidential election was going to be in high gear come October, which made this quest for a safe space to romp, frolic and swim in our own revelry (the only medicine I could take and share for such a condition) even more essential.

*Kid Simple*, of course, like going to the grocery store, is political. Everything is these days—but the process of creation didn't have to be. And to me, as a director, the process is the most important part. The fact that is this a "radio play in flesh", where we could get silly with sound and movement without worrying about social censorship—seemed like the perfect place to start.

I have been blessed by an imaginative, resourceful and quick-witted cast, who was not afraid to go down a multitude of paths toward exploration. I want to recognize our Foley team, all of whom also hold understudy positions for leading roles. They have worked the hardest on this piece—tampering with bits of deconstructed instruments, tweaking water sounds, and juggling three to four tones at a time. Our ingenious and unconventional cast has given me a renewed faith in humanity. Thank you. I hope they can help you keep the faith too. Onward!

- Tavia La Follette  
Director

# Kid-Simple: a radio play in the flesh

Written by Jordan Harrison  
Directed by Tavia La Follette

October 18-24, 2024  
at Towson University  
Center for the Arts, Studio Theatre  
7:30pm - October 18-19, 21-24  
2pm - October 20

Content Note: This production contains strong language and sexual themes. Theatrical fog and haze will be used in addition to an explosive sound and lighting cue.

*Kid-Simple* had its first workshop in the New Plays Festival at Brown University in March 2002 and received its world premiere at Actors Theatre of Louisville as part of the 2004 Humana Festival of New American Plays

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[www.playscripts.com](http://www.playscripts.com)

## CAST

Camille Alston  
MOLL

Conner Rock  
OLIVER

Jenna Leannarda  
THE NARRATOR

Brennen Peroutka  
THE MERCENARY

Gracie Sciannella  
MISS KENDRICK

Owen Roughton  
MR. WACHTEL

Cecelia Zombro  
METEOROLOGIST/MOLL  
UNDERSTUDY

Madeleine McComb  
BOTANIST/THE NARRATOR  
UNDERSTUDY

Roman Nowak  
CHEMIST/MISS KENDRICK  
UNDERSTUDY

Hua Su  
ENTOMOLOGIST/MR.  
WACHTEL UNDERSTUDY

## THE CREATIVE TEAM

Tavia La Follette  
DIRECTOR

Rowan Gardner  
COSTUME DESIGNER

Daniel Ettinger  
SCENIC DESIGNER

Ace Mikolowsky  
STAGE MANAGER

Layla Smith  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Erica Sweitzer  
LIGHTING DESIGNER

**Eating and drinking are prohibited in the theatre. Towson University is a smoke-free campus. Please turn off all cell phones and electronic devices. If there is an emergency, please WALK TO THE NEAREST EXIT. Photographic, video, or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited by copyright law.**

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For a complete listing of events at Towson University, please visit [events.towson.edu](http://events.towson.edu)

If you would like to share a comment on this production, please e-mail [theatre@towson.edu](mailto:theatre@towson.edu)

## PRODUCTION TEAM

### Technical Director

### Lighting Director/Assistant Technical Director

### Assistant Stage Manager

### Stage Manager Liaison

### Costume Shop Manager

### Assistant Costume Shop Manager

### Lighting Faculty Mentor

### Scene Shop Foreman

### Properties Manager

### Lead Lighting Electricians

### Sound and Image Programmer

### Lighting Programmer

### Sound Board Operator

### Light Board Operator

### Deckhands

### Wardrobe

### Scenic Carpenters

### Costume Shop Staff

### Poster Design

### Production Photography

Garrett Weeda  
Thomas Gardner  
Keely DeGasperis  
Seth Schwartz  
Alizon Santamaria  
Hannah Brill  
Jay Herzog  
Kelly Frazier  
Avery Matsui  
Maxwell "Mack" Leeuwen  
Erica Sweitzer  
Kevin DeWitt  
Maxwell "Mack" Leeuwen  
Kelly Mok  
Rinn Murphy  
Emmanuella Labrousse  
Jada Lane  
Gianna Delorso  
Eva Mendoza  
Sarah Benson  
Darren De Groff  
Wyatt Lieto  
Avery Matsui  
Ace Mikolowsky  
London Brooks  
Alyssa Millward  
Faith Singletary  
Gary Huck  
Katie Simmons-Barth  
Katie Simmons-Barth

## SPECIAL THANKS

Layla Smith, our assistant director who guided us every day with her movement skills and the ritual of opening and closing space each day. Thanks to Lera Lerner and Gary Huck who brought their wit and talent to the aesthetics of the piece. Thanks to Gavin Witt, who steered me to this wild and wonderful work! Lastly, I want to thank the family, friends and partners of our creative team, who put up with our rehearsal schedule and supported the process. We are grateful to you.

## COSTUME CREW

Gregory Bennett  
London Brooks  
Steven Day  
Emma Guzman  
Daquan Harrison  
Kanwulia Iyke-Azubogu  
Emmanuella Labrousse

Avery Matsui  
Brennen Peroutka  
Lola Scannell  
Wilson Seltzer  
Humatabae Smith  
Justine Willard  
Nick Yarnevich

## SCENIC CREW

David Banks-Franklin  
London Brooks  
Amy Clark  
Steven Day  
Jillian Fluharty

Kanwulia Iyke-Azubogu  
Ryan McGaskey  
Colin Pence  
Arlen Ramirez-Uceda

## LIGHTING & SOUND CREW

London Brooks  
Kelly Frazier  
Alisa Hicks

Wyatt Lieto  
Faith Singletary  
Luci Thomas

## THEATRE ARTS FACULTY & STAFF

Hannah Brill.....	Assistant Costume Shop Manager
Christopher Carcione.....	Script Analysis/Directing
Tom Cascella.....	Assistant to the Chairperson/Intro to American Theatre
Ruben Del Valle, Jr. ....	Movement/Acting for Musical Theatre
Danielle Drakes.....	Script Analysis/Community Outreach/TTI/Directing/African American Theatre
Daniel Ettinger .....	Scenic Design
Thomas Gardner.....	Assistant Technical Director
Jay Herzog.....	Lighting & Sound Design
Tavia La Follette.....	Theatre Studies/Cross-disciplinary Works/Theatre for Social Change
Stephen Nunns.....	Theories of Theatre/Theatre History/Directing
Susan Picinich.....	Theatre History/Costume, Dress and Society
Julie Potter.....	Costume Design/Chairperson
Robyn Quick.....	Theatre History/Dramaturgy
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Garrett Weeda.....	Technical Director
David White.....	Script Analysis/Playwriting/Thesis
Peter Wray.....	Acting/Shakespeare/Senior Acting Seminar

## ADJUNCT FACULTY

Donna Fox.....	Acting
Melissa Freilich.....	Acting/Stage Combat
Sha-Nel Henderson.....	Acting/Theatre for Social Change
Corey Hennessey.....	Acting/Intro to Theatre
Shartoya Jn. Baptiste.....	Intro to Theatre Design
Kaitlin Kiddy.....	Acting
Debra McWilliams.....	Acting
Dian Perrin.....	Acting
Kyle Prue.....	Acting
Susan J. Rotkowitz.....	Acting/Theatre Studies/Arts Integration
Seth Schwartz.....	Stage Management
Rohaizad Suaidi .....	Acting/Cultural Diversity in Contemporary Theatre
Yury Urnov.....	Acting/Directing
Gavin Witt.....	Theatre History

## PROFESSOR EMERITI

Tom Casciero.....	Professor Emeritus
Naoko Maeshiba.....	Professor Emerita
John Manlove .....	Professor Emeritus
Juanita Rockwell .....	Professor Emerita
Diane Smith-Sadak.....	Professor Emerita

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Laura Malkus.....	Marketing and Public Relations Manager
Seth Schwartz.....	Facilities & Operations Manager



*The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, part of the Rubenstein Arts Access Program, is generously funded by David M. Rubenstein.*

*Special thanks to The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust for supporting the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival.*

*Additional support is provided by The Honorable Stuart Bernstein and Wilma E. Bernstein; and the Dr. Gerald and Paula McNichols Foundation.*

*Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts.*

This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KCACTF representative, and selected students and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year more than 1,500 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.

## STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Please consider giving a gift to the Department of Theatre Arts Scholarship Fund. The money raised by your generous donations helps students offset the cost of education and sponsors students' travel to conferences, auditions for graduate schools, and special events related to their research and development.

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#### Purchase a Seat:

You can help build our student scholarship funds by purchasing a seat. If you are interested and want further details about seat purchasing, please email the Department of Theatre Arts at [theatre@towson.edu](mailto:theatre@towson.edu).

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# Whitney J. LeBlanc Jr.



LeBlanc with the set he designed for a summer season of Shakespeare plays in the Antioch Amphitheater, where he served as the technical director.

Whitney LeBlanc, born on June 20th, 1931, in Memphis, Tennessee, spent his formative years in Opelousas, Louisiana. He pursued higher education at the University of Iowa, where he earned a Master's in Theater Production in 1958.

In 1960, LeBlanc began teaching at Antioch College. He then held positions as a professor at Howard University, Lincoln University, the University of Texas, and Towson University (then Towson State College).

In 1969, he joined the Maryland Center for Public Broadcasting, directing and producing 86 episodes of *Our Street*. He then moved to Hollywood, where he joined the Norman Lear/Tandem Tat organization as the Associate Director of *Good Times*. He would spend the next two decades as a director and a stage manager for numerous shows.

Aside from his contributions to television, LeBlanc was a prolific author, penning five books, and notably receiving the Amistad award for his novel *Blues in the Wind*, a part of his Blues Trilogy.

In 1996, he retired from the Directors Guild of America and moved to Napa Valley, California, where he began designing stained glass window pieces.

Mr. LeBlanc passed away in February of 2023. He is succeeded by his wife, Diane LeBlanc, and four children, leaving behind a lasting impact on both his family and the countless students and friends he inspired throughout his career.

# LeBlanc Joins TSC

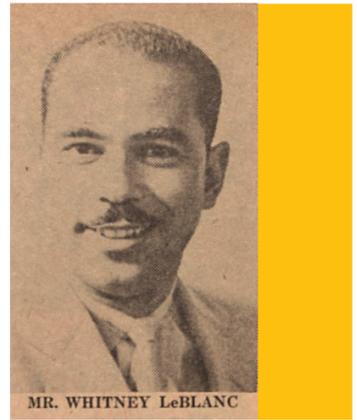
## LeBlanc New Set Designer

Towerlight, October 22, 1965

The Speech and Drama Department was established at Towson State College (TSC) by Richard Gillespie in 1964. Just a decade after the ruling of *Brown v. Board*, Gillespie set out to integrate the department by recruiting Whitney LeBlanc as the assistant professor in Speech and Drama and the first Black faculty member at the school.

Despite his contentment as a professor at Howard University at the time, LeBlanc felt compelled to serve the purpose of integrating Towson's faculty. He joined TSC in 1965.

In an oral history interview conducted through the Unearthing Towson's History Project he recalled his first day on campus. He recounts that only the four faculty members in the Speech and Drama Department spoke to him and he saw less than ten students of color. He likened his experience at TSC to that of Jackie Robinson during this time.



Towerlight, October 22, 1965

# "Well, let 'em come."

Racial tensions at TSC came to a boil with The Glen Player's production of *And People All Around*, directed by Mr. LeBlanc. Written by George Sklar, the play is based on the murders of three civil rights workers, Andrew Goodman, James Chaney and Michael Schwerner, in Philadelphia, Mississippi.

## THEATRE Theatre U-stimulates understanding

Towerlight, April 18, 1969

Theatre U was a non-profit community theater organized by Whitney LeBlanc and his then wife Elizabeth Walton at the Garrison Blvd. Church Center in Baltimore City. LeBlanc's vision for Theatre U was rooted in fostering better understanding among people of all races through the power of theater, the establishment of which was catalyzed by the recent assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The name "Theatre U" was intentionally kept a secret, allowing audiences to interpret its meaning freely. LeBlanc emphasized the importance of community involvement, stating, "no matter how polished our performances, if we do not involve the community we will have failed our goal."

LeBlanc expressed a desire to involve Drama Department students from TSC with the inner city, particularly with Black communities. His goal was to expose TSC students to authentic experiences, challenging them to move beyond pretense and understand the realities of different communities.

**"No matter how polished our performances, if we do not involve the community we will have failed our goal."**

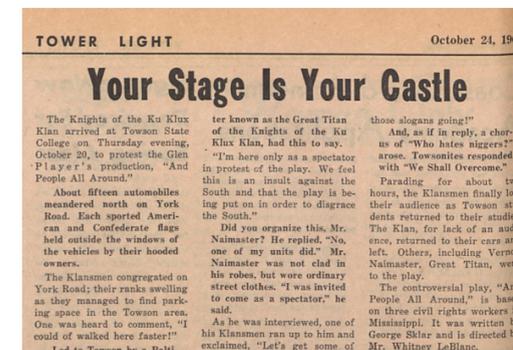
- Whitney LeBlanc

## Unearthing Towson's History Project

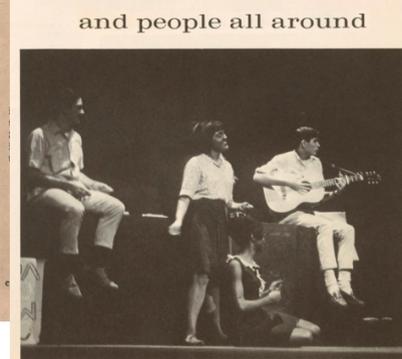
In 2022, Allyn Lawrence, a student researcher with the Unearthing Towson's History Project, conducted an interview with Whitney LeBlanc where he recounts the memories of his experience as the first Black faculty member at the school.

To watch the collection of interviews with members of Towson's history, visit [archives.towson.edu](http://archives.towson.edu)

Towerlight article and images courtesy of the Towson Special Collections and University Archives



Towerlight October 21, 1966



Tower Echoes Yearbook, 1967

In anticipation of the opening night, President Hawkins called LeBlanc and Gillespie to his office where FBI agents informed him of a protest to the play organized by Klansmen, to which LeBlanc responded, "Well, let 'em come." Security measures were put in place, assigning an agent to monitor both the students and LeBlanc during the play.

On the opening night of October 20th, dozens of Klan members dressed in full regalia and George P. Mahoney hats gathered on York Road and marched in front of Newell Hall. The disruptors were met with heckling Towson students and the play was put on as originally intended.

Towerlight articles and yearbook image courtesy of the Towson Special Collections and University Archives



**UPCOMING THIS SEMESTER**

# Scrooge.0

a wintertime ghost story  
adapted by david white

from *A Christmas Carol:*  
*a ghost story of Christmas*  
by Charles Dickens  
directed by Peter Wray

Dec 4-9  
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