

CAST



Jimi Ray Malary* is very happy to be back at MetroStage. He is a classically trained singer and has sung in some of the leading opera houses of the world including those of Venice, Glyndebourne, Leipzig and Berlin and has worked with conductors Michael Tilson Thomas and Sir Simon Rattle. He has appeared in numerous productions directed by Hal Prince, Trevor Nunn, Jack O'Brien & Gotz Friedrich. Jimi has also collaborated with David Scully and David Hunter Koch on *Jazz Royalty* and *Ellington* which have been performed at Milwaukee Rep. He last appeared at MetroStage in *King of Cool: The Life and Music of*

Nat King Cole and *Ellington*. In 2006, Jimi also returned to perform with the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra.



Lori Williams is the lead vocalist for two Washington-based jazz ensembles (*Collaboration* and *Lori Williams & Friends*). A graduate of Hampton Institute University, Lori is the wife of professional jazz bassist, Yusef Chisholm and the proud mother of two children, Lauren Vanessa and Yusef Khalil. She is the Music Department Chairperson at Wilson Senior High School and has directed several choirs in the US and abroad. Lori has performed with many nationally known recording artists such as Will Downing, Sherry Winston, Maysa, Lloyd Price, Jerry Butler and Tony Terry. She also has done extensive studio recording

and commercial work in the Metropolitan area and Japan. Lori last performed at MetroStage in *All Night Strut* in 2005 and in Arts United of Washington's *Meet Me at the Cafe*.

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BAND

William Knowles (Piano/ Conductor) is a graduate of Howard University and the University of Massachusetts. He hails from Milwaukee Wisconsin. He was awarded the 2001 Helen Hayes Award for Best Musical Direction for *Dinah Was* (Arena Stage). Mr. Knowles was also the Musical Director for *All Night Strut*, *Ellington: The Life and Music of the Duke*, *King of Cool* and *Bricktop* at MetroStage. Mr. Knowles was nominated for the 2005 Helen Hayes Award for his work on *Tambourines to Glory*. He has recorded with poet Sonya Sanchez (*Full Moon of Sonya*) and Jimmy Jackson (*On My Way Home*, Blue Canoe records).

Yusef Chisholm (Bass) is a native Washingtonian and is one of the most innovative and stylistic bassists in both traditional and contemporary music. He formed Common Knowledge, a contemporary jazz ensemble and recording studio in 1995. Yusef has performed at numerous venues across the world and jazz festivals such as the Ghana Jazz Festival and Clifford Brown Jazz Festival. He played for Tom Jones' *Slam!* and for *Three Sistahs*, *All Night Strut*, *Two Queens – One Castle*, *Ellington*, *Bricktop* and *Cookin' at the Cookery* here at MetroStage. Other theatre performance credits are *Pippin*, *Tambourines to Glory*, *Once on This Island*, *Dinah Was*, *All Around the World*, and *A Mark Twain Murder Mystery*. Yusef released his debut CD, *Well Kept Secret*, this year. He is also the 2008 Agnes Meyers Outstanding Teacher of the Year.

Greg Holloway (Drums) is a native of Washington, D.C. where he received an undergraduate degree in Music Education and Percussion Performance from Howard University (1980). He also participated in the Jazz Studies summer program at Eastman School of Music. Greg later pursued Masters in Education with an emphasis in Jazz Drumming/Percussion Methodology and Masters in Science (Counseling Psychology) from University of LaVerne in Southern California. While in the Air Force, Greg advanced to percussion section leader, Musical Director and leader of Jazz Ensembles, Rock Bands and various trios.

Greg produced the CD "Midnight Sun" which features Ellington alumnus Freda Payne. Greg has performed with Hank Jones, Carl Fontanna, Rob McConnell, Chuck Israel, Jim Pugh, Gene Bertincinni, Maguire Sisters, Sheri Lewis, Bruce Conti, Rich Little, sista Monica Parker, Aretha Franklin and Jimmy Heath. He has also played various shows in Palm Springs and served as Tympanist with the Anchorage Symphony 1995 season. His latest recording is "Turns" on G-Bop label. He is also a member of the Pearl Concert Percussion and Vic Firth Education Team. Greg is currently the Director of Percussion at Flint High School and he has recently joined the adjunct jazz faculty at American University.

PRODUCTION & DESIGN

David Hunter Koch** (*Director/ Playwright*) makes his home in Seattle, Washington and has been performing and directing theatre, video and film for over 25 years around the country. As a performer, he has worked with such notable performers as: Kevin Spacey, Kate Mulgrew, Reid Shelton, Terrance Mann and comedian Steve Martin. He has narrated symphonies for the Seattle Symphony and directed concert videos for performers David Byrne and guitarist Pat Metheny. In 1989, he created the Cabaret de Paris, Seattle's preeminent Cabaret theatre, producing and directing over 65 musical productions. He's garnered 26 critics awards as well as being named Seattle's Theatrical Entrepreneur of the Year. As a playwright, he created scripts for new musicals, cabarets and performance works such as: *Musica Vitae* and *Music By Gershwin*; as well as composing over 30 scores and sound designs for plays including: *Marvin's Room* and *The Illusion*. Since 2004, David has been a free-lance director and producer as well as a corporate event consultant and emcee with his new company, *HunterKoch Productions*, based in Seattle. *Isn't It Romantic* marks the third production Mr. Koch has directed for MetroStage, with previous hits: *King of Cool- Nat King Cole* and *Ellington*, both starring Jimi Ray Malary.

William Knowles (*Music Director/ Arrangements*) *see under Band*

Steve Baena (*Sound Engineer*) is the owner/ head engineer of Funkymonkeyboymusic LLC, a Maryland-based sound company. After many years of doing this for fun, he finally got an education. Since graduating from Omega Studios engineering and recording school, Steve has managed to make a living out of this business. His work scopes UK nightclubs to the US capitol building and most things in between. This is his tenth production at MetroStage and is happy to be back again.

Jessica Lee Winfield* (*Stage Manager/ Lighting Designer*) Credits include *The Stephen Schwartz Project*, *Three Sistahs*, *tick, tick...BOOM!*, *Cookin' at the Cookery* (MetroStage), *Raisin the musical* and *Ragtime* (Morgan State University). She is also a freelance lighting designer and theatre electrician. She currently works at Arena Stage as an electrician and received Honorable mention in Broadwayworld.com for her design for Run of The Mill's production of *Blood Wedding*. Other design credits include *Man of La Mancha* (Spotlighters Theatre) *Miss Evers Boys*, *Black Nativity*, *Story Train* (Morgan State University), *Night of January 6*, *Dreamgirls*- Assistant Lighting Designer (ARTSCENTRIC). She would like to thank her mother and sister for being supportive, Dannielle and Tonisha Keyinta for always coming through for her and Shirley Basfield Dunlap and Cheryl Williams for being great teachers and mentors.

Dannielle Hutchinson+ (*Assistant Stage Manager*) is pleased to return to MetroStage for a second season. Her previous assistant stage management credits include MetroStage: *Three Sistahs*, *tick, tick...BOOM!*, *Cookin' at the Cookery* and *The Stephen Schwartz Project*; Morgan: *Ragtime* and *Raisin the musical*. She graduated from Morgan State University in 2006 with BA in Theatre Arts. She would like to thank Jessica and Carolyn for this wonderful opportunity.

Brandon Guilliams (*Technical Director*) has built sets for Washington Shakespeare

Company, JourneymanTheatre, Actors Theatre of Washington, Imagination Stage, Theatre J, Kennedy Center, as well as MetroStage. He also designed MetroStage's Nat King Cole and Duke Ellington shows. He got his start at the West End Dinner Theatre where he did it all from Kitchen Manager to tech to actor. Brandon's roots are in cooking as he has an Associates degree in culinary arts from Johnson and Wales University. He also currently works at the Kennedy Center answering the information line. Enjoy!

Kevin Laughon (*Production Manager*) has worn many hats at MetroStage for four years. He works on the technical teams at many DC area theatres. A graduate of Syracuse University, he is also an actor/singer/dancer and an accomplished choreographer/teacher who has worked at local theatres, schools and dance studios for over 15 years. Kevin just finished performing in *The Producers* at Toby's. Films he worked on recently include *Burn After Reading* (with George Clooney), *State of Play* (with Ben Affleck) and *Night at the Museum 2*. This show is dedicated to Mom.

Carolyn Griffin (*Producing Artistic Director*) has been with MetroStage since its founding in 1984 and has produced over sixty mainstage productions, including four plays and three musicals that were world premieres. She is committed to producing the best contemporary writing and showcasing the best regional artists for a broad-based audience from the Washington metropolitan area. She is the co-founder of the Alexandria Arts Forum, which she chaired for five years, and has served on many regional panels for area arts commissions. Awards include the Actors' Center Award of Distinction, the Cultural Affairs Award from the Alexandria Commission for Women, the Award of Harmony from the Alexandria Harmonizers and the 2005 ALEX Award. She is on the Board of The Playwrights Forum and was chosen by the Canadian Embassy and the Helen Hayes Awards to travel to Canada in 2004 as part of the Canadian/Washington Theatre Partnership. She holds a Masters degree in Psychology from Catholic University and an MBA from Georgetown University. Her four children live in Washington DC, New York City, Savannah, Georgia, and Alexandria.

*Member of Actors Equity Association (AEA). Founded in 1913, AEA represents more than 45,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theater as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions.

**Member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc. (SSDC), an independent national labor union.

+Equity Membership Candidate (EMC.)