

In Memory of Terrence McNally

MetroStage, The Board of Trustees and
Carolyn Griffin, Producing Artistic Director
Present

MOTHERS & SONS by **Terrence McNally**

Stefan Sittig
Director

Wendy Roome
Video Editor

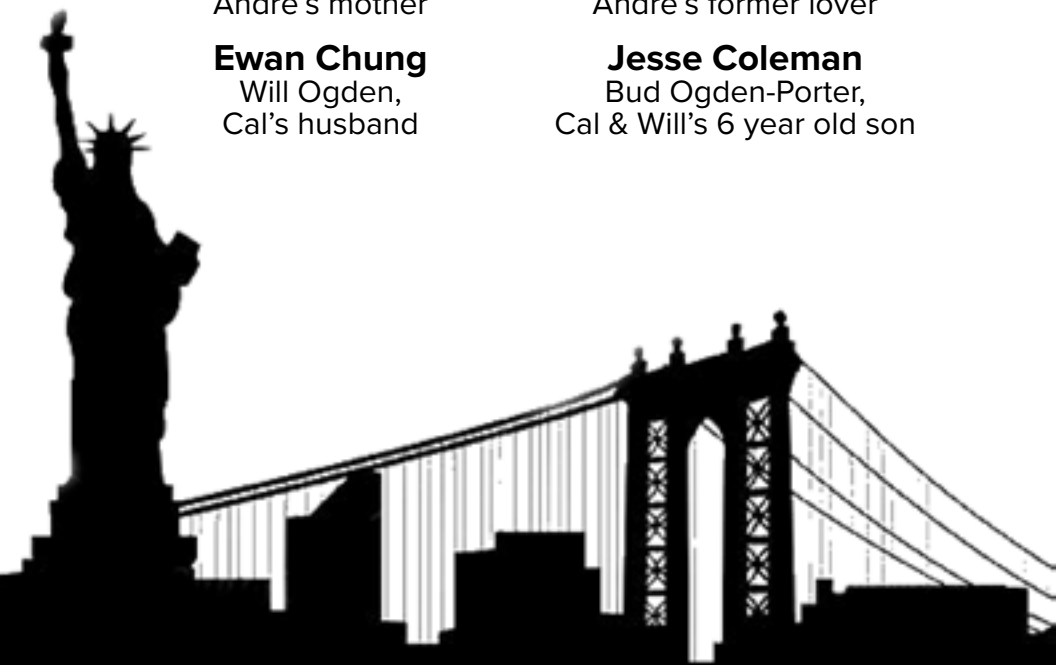
CAST

Ilona Dulaski
Katharine Gerard,
Andre's mother

Tom Story
Cal Porter,
Andre's former lover

Ewan Chung
Will Ogden,
Cal's husband

Jesse Coleman
Bud Ogden-Porter,
Cal & Will's 6 year old son



Terrence McNally wrote a teleplay entitled **Andre's Mother** back in 1990, and **Mother's and Sons** is the sequel, which premiered in 2013. Andre has died of AIDS and more than a decade later his mother makes an unexpected, unannounced visit to his former lover, who is now married with a 6 year old child. The progression from the closeted early years and lack of acceptance to the era post the *Overgefell v. Hodges* gay marriage ruling by the Supreme Court creates a striking historic arc in this play. Andre's lover is now legally married, they have a child, and domesticity reins. A lot has happened in our culture since Andre died, and his mother must come to terms with these changes and the recognition of her rejection of Andre's sexuality and relationships before he died. The play establishes a fascinating, poignant dialogue between these competing forces. McNally addressed the issues of gay relationships early on and wrote many groundbreaking plays that appeared on Broadway telling gay stories, dramatically portraying the social changes as they were occurring in our culture.

MetroStage is pleased to be presenting this particular play at this time both in honor of McNally, considered one of our most important contemporary playwrights, and also launching our entrance into virtual theatre. When my colleague **Stefan Sittig** approached me about doing some readings of McNally plays, I was immediately interested. He wanted to direct **Mothers and Sons** with the mother played by **Ilona Dulaski**, who had been seen as Maria Callas in our production of McNally's **Master Class** in 2017. I don't know at the time if he realized that we had also produced McNally's hilarious spoof **It's Only a Play** back in 1995. So a MetroStage reading honoring the legacy of McNally, who had died of complications from Covid in March, seemed particularly appropriate. And when the cast included **Tom Story**, who had performed the one man show **Fully Committed** at MetroStage in 2016, it seemed to be falling into a wonderful recognition of both McNally's work and MetroStage's history as well. And then there was the 6 year old to be cast. Who better than the son of **Marni Penning**, who had appeared in two MetroStage productions, Carlyle Brown's **Are You Now or Have You Ever Been** and Athol Fugard's **Painted Rocks at Revolver Creek**? Young **Jesse Coleman**, really 8, plays a brilliant 6 year old with a little coaching from his mom. Rounding out the cast is **Ewan Chung**, an LA actor who Stefan knew from his days in Charlottesville at UVA. With virtual theatre geography and distance no longer matter. Only different time zones have to be taken into consideration. And child actor's bedtimes! So MetroStage's first foray into streaming, since there is nothing except virtual theatre these days, seemed like it was meant to be. A play with four characters, lots of two person dialogue, all taking place in one location, their apartment on the Upper West Side of New York City, was perfect for this format. We used Streamyard to rehearse, tape and edit, thanks to our video editor **Wendy Roome**. What our audiences will see is a live taping of the play with sound cues, etc edited in later. After the first viewing on Jan 13 at 7:30, there will be a live Talk Back with the actors and the director. Streaming will then continue through Sunday the 17th at 7:30, which is the new contractual standard for these readings. We are now looking forward to presenting more readings and performances throughout the year while theatres are still closed, and our new theatre is being built.

As an update to the new theatre, the design has been completed by our architect in collaboration with the condo architects. There are many interconnected pieces to this puzzle (since this is a hotel being converted into condos AND a theatre). It is an exciting prospect for MetroStage to have a beautiful new theatre, still small and intimate, but with state of the art technology including an advanced air filtration system that is now necessary as a result of Covid-19. Our Capital Campaign to raise \$1,000,000 to outfit and complete the theatre has officially begun so donations are being gratefully accepted. Our website has a secure DONATE button and a mailing address if one prefers to send a check. All are tax deductible contributions to a very good cause, helping to continue MetroStage's 35 year history of producing intriguing work in an intimate setting with tremendous talent on stage and off.



**NOTES FROM
THE PRODUCER**

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Ilona Dulaski (Katharine Gerard) METROSTAGE: *Master Class*; SIGNATURE: *Silver Belles*, *Shooting In Madrid*, *A Little Night Music*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Follies*, *110 In the Shade*, *Witches of Eastwick*; REGIONAL: KENNEDY CENTER: *Turandot* (Washington Opera), *Sweeney Todd*, *A Little Night Music*, *Shear Madness*, *Dahlia*; CATCO (Columbus OH): *Master Class*; SHENANDOAH: *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Show Boat*; TOTEM POLE: *Nonsense*, *Ten Little Indians*, *My Three Angels*; CUMBERLAND: *Pippin*; MILL MOUNTAIN: *The Spitfire Grill*; WAYSIDE THEATRE: *On Golden Pond*, *Steel Magnolias*, *The Spitfire Grill*. DC AREA: STUDIO THEATRE: *Caroline, or Change*; ROUND HOUSE: *Wintertime*, *A Prayer for Owen Meany*; OLNEY THEATRE CENTER: *Man of La Mancha*; *She Loves Me*. TELEVISION: *Homicide: Life on the Streets*; *Unsolved Mysteries*; *House of Cards*, *Spokeswoman*: AARP and MEDICARE; many national and regional voiceovers in Spanish, as well as in English. Ilona also sings Opera, Broadway, and art songs in nine different languages with her trio, THE CANTANTI ENSEMBLE. Proud member of Actors Equity Association. www.ilonaDulaski.com

Tom Story (Cal Porter) is an actor and director based in Washington DC. He has appeared as an actor in over 70 productions in DC, New York City, and in many cities throughout the country. He last appeared at MetroStage in the one person show *Fully Committed* where he played over 40 characters. He is an Affiliated Artist at The Shakespeare Theatre Company where he has starred in works by Shakespeare, Noel Coward, Stephen Sondheim, David Ives and others. He is a Cabinet Member at The Studio Theatre where he has been featured in many contemporary works and where he made his directorial debut with *Moth*. He directed *Terminus* by Mark O'Rowe at Studio Theatre which garnered three Helen Hayes nominations. At The Berkshire Theatre Group he has acted in sixteen productions, served as Assistant Director on the world premiere musical *A Saint She Ain't* and taught in the apprentice program. He recently directed the critically acclaimed *Design For Living* at BTG. At Adventure Theater he directed a two person *The Lion*, *The Witch and the Wardrobe* which received a Helen Hayes nomination for Best TYA Production. He has directed at American University, Solas Nua, and he helmed the box office hit *The Legend of Georgia McBride* at Round House Theatre. Tom is a graduate of Duke University and The Juilliard School. He has received seven Helen Hayes nominations for acting and a Fox Foundation Fellowship.

Ewan Chung (Will Ogden) Originally from Falls Church, VA, now based in Los Angeles. FILM: Firefly fan short *The Verse*, *OJ: The Musical*, *Leland Orser's Morning*, *Undiscovered*. TV: *Monday Mornings*, *Bones*, *Torchwood*, *Boston Legal*, *Chuck*, *Heroes*, *How I Met Your Mother*, *Stephen King's Desperation*, *Las Vegas*, *Sucker Free City*. THEATRE: Award-winning sketch comedy troupe OPM, *Lost: The Musical*, David Henry Hwang's *Chinglish*, *Washer/Dryer*. He's often writing, singing, speaking Chinese and French, recording audiobooks, and in various projects (*Shangri-La: Near Extinction*, sci-fi web series *Atropa*) and podcasts (*The White Vault: Imperial* and *Vast Horizon*). Graduate of the University of Virginia. [@ewanchung](https://www.instagram.com/ewanchung)

Jesse Coleman (Bud Ogden-Porter) is a third grader from Falls Church, VA who loves to play Minecraft, Animal Crossing, or any of the Super Mario Brothers games and is working on his own YouTube channel and backyard plays of all the *Wizard of Oz* books. STAGE: Max in *Where the Wild Things Are*, FILM: *Elijah* in *Night Waking*.

Stefan Sittig (Director/Choreographer) has directed/choreographed/fight directed nearly 100 productions, including work Off-Broadway, internationally in Canada and Uruguay, The Kennedy Center, Studio Theatre, MetroStage, The Atlas Performing Arts Center, Washington Savoyards, Open Circle Theatre, 1st Stage, Adventure Theatre, Workhouse Arts Center, The American Century Theatre and various regional theatres across the country. He is a member of the Virginia Theatre Association (VTA) Board, and is on the faculty at George Mason University's School of Theater. He holds an M.F.A. in Theatre from Virginia Commonwealth University and a B.A. in Drama and English Lit from the University of Virginia. stefansittig.com



**CAST &
DIRECTOR**

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Terrence McNally was awarded the Dramatists Guild Lifetime Achievement Award in 2011. He is the winner of Tony Awards for his plays LOVE! VALOUR! COMPASSION! and MASTER CLASS and his books for the musicals RAGTIME and KISS OF THE SPIDERWOMAN. In 2010 the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts presented TERRENCE McNALLY'S NIGHTS AT THE OPERA, a three-play festival of his work. His other plays include FRANKIE AND JOHNNY IN THE CLAIR DE LUNE; LIPS TOGETHER, TEETH APART; CORPUS CHRISTI; A PERFECT GANESH; THE RITZ; IT'S ONLY A PLAY; SOME MEN; GOLDEN AGE; DEUCE; THE LISBON TRAVIATA; BAD HABITS; THE STENDHAL SYNDROME; DEDICATION OR THE STUFF OF DREAMS; NEXT; UNUSUAL ACTS OF DEVOTION; SWEET EROS; WITNESS; WHERE HAS TOMMY FLOWERS GONE?; and his first Broadway production AND THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT (1965). His other books for musicals are THE FULL MONTY, A MAN OF NO IMPORTANCE, THE VISIT, THE RINK, CATCH ME IF YOU CAN and ANASTASIA. He won an Emmy Award for Best Drama with his teleplay ANDRE'S MOTHER (1990), which he followed with the stage sequel MOTHERS AND SONS (2014). He wrote the screenplays for FRANKIE AND JOHNNY, LOVE! VALOUR! COMPASSION! and THE RITZ. He wrote the libretto for the opera DEAD MAN WALKING with music by Jake Heggie. Among his many awards are a Citation from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Best New Play, four Drama Desk Awards, three Hull-Warriner Best Play Awards from the Dramatists Guild, two Obies, two Lortel Awards and two Guggenheim Fellowships. Mr. McNally has been a member of the Dramatists Guild since 1965 and served as its Vice-President from 1985 to 2001. He married Tom Kirdahy in 2015 having been joined in a civil union since 2003. He received the Tony Award for lifetime achievement in 2019. McNally died of coronavirus complications March, 2020.

For more information:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/24/theater/terrence-mcnally-dead-coronavirus.html>

<https://www.amny.com/entertainment/theater/terrence-mcnally-master-playwright-and-gay-pioneer-81-falls-to-coronavirus/>

Tom Viola, longtime director of Broadway Cares/ Equity Fights AIDS, posted that McNally was one of the group's "founding fathers" because he "believed that the most important function of theatre is to create community." He wrote that McNally "gave voice to both the voiceless and those who can stand tall, not only through his art but also his actions. He was a steadfast champion for civil and LGBTQ rights onstage and off. He gave us unforgettable characters who told delicate, brilliant, courageous, and unforgettable stories that reflected the lives and dreams, joys and heartbreak of us all."



**THE
PLAYWRIGHT**

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