

PLAYBILL®

Theatre 71
Conservatory of Fine Arts
New York/New Jersey

LIVE AT THEATER 71 IN NYC

THE GOSPEL OF OZ "BELIEVE"

KIM YANCEY
JAMES



WRITTEN BY
DOROTHY J
COLON



RICHARD
HARTLEY



"KVON"

DIRECTED BY KAREN STEFANO

152 WEST 71ST ST NEW YORK NY 10023
DECEMBER 5-7 AT 7:00PM

CALVIN
KEYS

TARA
BRAMBLE

WILLIAM
LOWE

MICHELLE
BACON

WILLIAM
CUMMINGS

KWANIA
RAGLER

**COFA
Theatre 71**

PRESENTS

"BELIEVE" THE GOSPEL OF OZ

Music by
Stephon Clay
Dorothy Colon
Richard Hartley
Sandra Huff

Lyrics by
Dorothy Colon
Richard Hartley
Sandra Huff

Book by
Dorothy Colon
Richard Hartley

with

Kimberlyn KVON
Sandra Huff
Kwania Ragler

William Lowe
Richard Hartley
Kim Yancey James

Michelle Bacon
Tara Bramble
William Cummings

Prod'n Credit
Jerome Allen

Prod'n Credit
Leo Colon
Ingrid Fordham

Prod'n Credit
Sandra Huff

Prod'n Credit
Dorothy Colon

Prod'n Credit
Doris Ade'

Choreographed by
Patrisha Gibson

Directed by
Karen Stefano

Musical Director
Stephon Clay

Stage Manager
Maureen Anderson

Set Design
Allan Graham

Costume Design
Victoria Merse

Lighting Design
Diego Hemida

Sound Manager
Matthew London

SONGS

ACT One

Overture	Orchestra
Oh Happy Day	Church Choir & Soloist
Great Is Thy Faithfulness	Sister Anita High-Note
The Bible is Right	Rev. Wisdom
For My Good	Choir Member/ and Singers
Tornado/Save Me	Dorothy & Bad Spirit and Storm Dancers
I Do My Job	Bad Spirit & Dorothy
Wake Up	Munchkins, Dorothy & Glenda the Godly
The Blood	Glenda the Godly & the Glendettes
How	Dorothy
Walk With Me Lord	Dorothy & Scarecrow
Reach Out and Touch Him	Dorothy, Scarecrow, Tin Man & Angel
Somebody Is Watching Me	Dorothy, Scarecrow, Tin Man & Lion
Crying In the Dark/Stand	Lion & Singers
Get Up From Here	Dorothy, Scarecrow, Tin Man & Lion

ACT TWO

IT Betta Be Something Good	Evella
I'm On The Lord's Side	Evella & Bad Spirit
Tappez Les Mains	Oz Soloist, Oz Dancers
On Christ	Rev Wizardo & Congregation
I Don't Believe He Brought Me This Far to Leave Me	Glenda The Godly & Singers
Highway to Heaven	Cast & Curtain Call

CAST

Cast Members

Dorothy	KVON Crawford
Auntie Emma	Kwania Ragler
Lion	W. Richard Hartley
Tin Man	Wil Lowe
Scarecrow	William Cummings
Rev Wisdom/Rev Wizardo	Calvin Keys
First Lady Wisdom/Glenda the Godly	Kim Yancey James
Church Soloist/Bad Spirit	Michelle Bacon
Choir Soloist/Evella	Tara Bramble
Sister Anita High-Note/Announcer	Sandra Huff

Production / Creative

Creative Advisor	Richard Hartley
Playwright	Dorothy Colon
Musical Director	Stephon Clay
Director	Karen Stefano
Stage Manager	Maureen Anderson
Set Designer	Allan Graham
Costume Designer	Victoria Merse
Sound Design	Matthew London
Light Design	Diego Hermida

Understudies

Lion, Scarecrow, Rev Wisdom	Curtis Bogen
Dorothy, Glenda The Godly	Ingrid Fordham

Band

Drummer	Rasheed Woodley
Bass Player	Lyd Edmond
Guitar	Abe Gatling
Music Director/Keyboard	Stephon Clay

CAST

Band (continued)

Background Singers

Sandra Huff
Stephen Pedley
Alicia
Michelle Bacon

WHO'S WHO

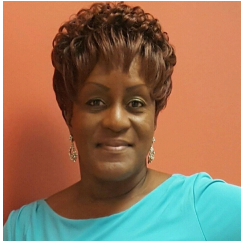


KVON Crawford

as Dorothy

Kimberlyn Avon is a Mezzo-Soprano/Alto and an Actor. She toured with the Original USA Gospel Si

ngers traveling throughout Europe, performing a show encompassing the significance of gospel music. Kimberlyn Avon has been acting for many years in Off-Broadway plays and has been featured in such plays funded by the Negro Ensemble Company. She is an entrepreneur and has her own custom design company known as Kvon Creatives.



Kwania Ragler

as Auntie Emma

Kwania Ragler is enjoying her debut off-Broadway. She has played the role of Auntie Emma for the last three years. She brings her unique talents to this role and enjoys being a part of this cast.



W. Richard Hartley

as Lion

Bishop Richard Hartley is a New York-based pastor, singer, arranger, songwriter, actor and creative collaborator for this project. He's recorded and/or performed with Michael Jackson, Mariah Carey, tv appearances with Ms. Aretha Franklin, and with the legendary Diana Ross and more! He's one of the premier choir directors in America. He has appeared on Broadway in NYC!!

He has taught gospel all over the world and has visited Japan more than any other gospel artist!!

He has starred in his own TV show in America entitled "The Rev." The movie "Double Platinum with Diana Ross and Brandy,"

BET movie "BLOCKPARTY," and has a new movie role "East of Eden"! Soon to be released on Netflix!

WHO'S WHO



Wil Lowe

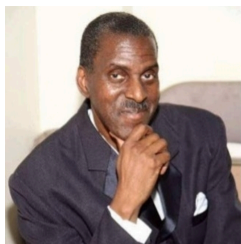
as Tin Man

Wil is a proud graduate of Howard University's Fine Arts Department, where he received his BFA in Theater Arts in 2002. He is also a member of the Screen Actors Guild.

As an active member of the Howard Players, he appeared in productions like George C. Wolfe's *The Colored Museum*, Ed Bullins' *The Taking of Miss Janie*, Cheryl L. West's *Before It Hits Home*, and Clifford Odets' *Golden Boy*.

Prior to his training at Howard, Wil graduated from the Denver School of the Arts, where he enjoyed lead roles such as Othello in William Shakespeare's *Othello* and Shannon in Tennessee Williams' *The Night of the Iguana*.

Wil's most recent credits include the featured role of Lysimachus in *The Public Theater's Public Works* concert experience, *Pericles*. His recent television work includes playing Muhammad Ali's bodyguard in *Godfather of Harlem* and a featured bodyguard role on *Law & Order*.



William Cummings

as Scarecrow

William "Skeedah" Cummings, Jr. is a proud son of Harlem, New York, where his love for music, ministry, and the arts was nurtured from an early age. He began singing in churches across New York City as a child, sharing his God-given gift and passion for praise. In his early twenties, he joined the historic Canaan Baptist Church of Christ under the late Rev. Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker, where he deepened his faith and honed his musical talents. Over the years, he has sung with and directed numerous mass choirs throughout New York City, lifting congregations in worship at services, concerts, and special events.



Calvin Keys

as Rev Wisdom/Rev Wizardo

Medical Professional at Mount Sina,i Writer Actor and Producer, Calvin, a native of Mississippi and Ordained Minister enjoys Playing the Keyboard Tuba and Trombone..

WHO'S WHO



Kim Yancey James

*as First Lady Wisdom/Glenda
the Godly*

Dr. Kim Yancey is a graduate of Howard University, an author of two books, has appeared in *Mama I Want To Sing*, produced her own gospel show and hosts *Fired Up Fridays with Dr. Kim on The Liz Black's Inspired Living TV Network*. She is the president and founder of *Women of Divine Destiny, Inc.* a corporation which seeks to address the needs of women in the church community to nurture and empower them spiritually, physically, emotionally and financially.



Michelle Bacon

as Church Soloist/Bad Spirit

Michelle Bacon makes her stage debut in this stage production. Her career began as a child, growing up in a deeply musical family that nurtured her love for performing from an early age. She has sung in church her entire life, where she developed her soulful voice and heartfelt connection to music. Over the years, Michelle has performed in countless community concerts, charity events and local festivals, earning recognition for her warm tone and expressive presence. She is thrilled to bring her lifelong passion for music to the stage in a new way and would like to thank her family, friends and mentors for their constant love, faith and encouragement.



Tara Bramble

as Choir Soloist/Evella

Tara Bramble (Vocalist) has dedicated over 35 years to sharing her powerful voice in service to God, rooted in a lifelong call to ministry. Her versatile musical foundation is built upon extensive training in both **Classical** and **Jazz** traditions. This training launched her onto international stages, touring across South America and cultural centers in Europe, including Italy, Germany, and Spain. Tara was an acclaimed member of the **Harlem Jubilee Singers** under the direction of Gregory Hopkins. A recent career highlight was portraying the pivotal role of **"Mama"** in the February 2023 anniversary performance of the musical *Mama I Wanna Sing*. Her solo work includes her 2015 debut album, *"In You I Live,"* featuring the title track co-produced by the talented Eric Lorde.

WHO'S WHO



Sandra Huff

*as Sister Anita High-Note/
Announcer*

Sandra Huff is a singer, songwriter, actress, and flutist, born a native New Yorker and now residing in Jersey City NJ. Sandra has performed throughout the United States, Europe, and parts of Africa. Sandra is a worship leader at Agape Family Worship Center in Rahway, New Jersey, and director of music for the international, Women of Divine Destiny, a non-profit organization that helps women in leadership.



Richard Hartley

Creative Advisor

Bishop Richard Hartley is a New York-based pastor, singer, arranger, songwriter and actor.

He has taught gospel all over the world and has visited Japan more than any other gospel artist!!



Dorothy Colon

Playwright

VP of COFA, writer, producer, singer, actress. Dorothy loves the arts and Jesus Christ. She has recorded a solo cd "Jesus Said". Her first production "Up Down & Up Again" opened in 1995 at the Eisner Lubin at NYU. "Chewing the Fat" with Iris Bell, " Reflections". She has performed on stage for Mama I Want to Sing, Diana Ross and Richard Hartley & Soul Resurrection.



Stephon Clay

Musical Director

Stephon Clay was born and raised in Queens, NY. He began his musician career as a drummer in his great-grandmother's church. At the age of 16 he began playing the organ. By the age of 22, he was playing for numerous local churches and local groups throughout NYC. Not only is he known for his prowess as a musician but he is also known for his deep voice and oratorical ability.

WHO'S WHO



Karen Stefano

Director

Karen Stefano is an award-winning actress, writer, director, and producer based in the New York/New Jersey area. She has an extensive background in theater, film, and television, with notable directing and acting credits including the feature film "After The Wait" and the web series "How We Do-Sketches of the Species".



Maureen Anderson

Stage Manager

Maureen Anderson is honored to return as Stage Manager for *The Gospel of Oz*, having guided both the pilot production and its international debut on the Costa Maya stage in 2023.

Her credits include *Mama! I Want to Sing, Ain't Misbehavin', Godspell, The Wounded Soul*, and *Another Chance*. A professional writer and romance author, Maureen penned *November Rain* and will release *Rayz of Hope* in 2026.

As a Creative Director, she wrote *The Road to Aunt Emma's*, a puppet show inspired by the biblical Road to Emmaus, and co-hosted *Savoring the Fruit of the Spirit through Creative Arts*, a virtual workshop uniting poetry, faith, and social justice.



Matthew London

Matthew London – Audio Engineer

Matthew London is a seasoned audio engineer with over 15 years of experience in the music industry. Specializing in audio engineering, e.g., live sound, studio recording, mixing, etc. He has worked with a diverse range of artists across various genres, including Regina Belle, Leon and the Peoples, Le'Andria J



Allan Graham

Set Designer

Allan Graham is the owner and creator of McKenzie Creation Design Studio, plus a fashion and accessories designer, fashion editor, and stylist.

WHO'S WHO



Victoria Merse

Costume Designer

Owner of Rubber Ducky Outfitters. A Costuming and Wardrobe Company established in 2022. Victoria is honored to be assisting this cast and crew with their Theatre Production. She would like to thank all the individuals involved. Her staff who she thanks everyday for showing up for her. And her family for their individual contributions in support of her dreams.



Rasheed Woodley

Drummer

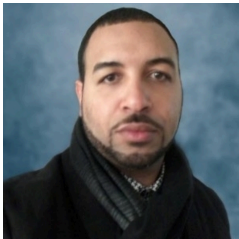
Rasheed Woodley (Drums/Percussion) is a versatile drummer and percussionist whose dynamic playing and solid groove have made him a sought-after musician across genres. He has performed with Gospel Soul Children of New York, Bishop Curtis Douglas, Annette & Friends, and the Chess & Cognac Band. Rasheed also serves in music ministries at Dabar Bethlehem Cathedral and IHP.

Fluent in Gospel, Jazz, Latin, Rock, Funk, Reggae, and more, he brings energy, musicality, and passion to every stage.



Lyd Edmond

Bass Player. The Gospel of Oz appreciates Lyd sharing his gift with this production.



Curtis Bogen *as Lion, Scarecrow, Rev Wisdom*

This retired fireman was the original Scarecrow and serves as the understudy for all in characters in the Gospel of Oz. The cast of Oz is grateful to have him.



Ingrid Fordham

Ingrid is a renowned lead vocalist and background singer known for collaborations with gospel icon Tramaine Hawkins at Madison Square Garden and the Clark Sisters. She has a broad presence in numerous music videos globally. Ingrid made her acting debut in Costa Mujeres, playing the character Tinnie!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the cast and crew of Gospel of Oz "Believe." Your late nights and zooms are so appreciated. To Bishop Hartley for the ask! "Dot I need a gospel version of the Wizard of Oz," and all your creative input! To Dr. James for "Believe." To My Broadway Angel, Mother Ade' a true Woman of Distinction." To My baby sister Sandy for all of our late-night dreaming and early-morning planning always "believing." To Kim L. Jenkins, my personal prophet and BFF! To Brian Dickerson with the "Come on Dot." To my Wing Man and BFF Leo thank you for the rescues! To my IHP Family thank you for all your support! Karen Stefano, what a gem of a director! Maureen Thank you I will never let you go! My little big sister Ingrid Fordham, always there and here keeping me on track!

To the Mississippi Bloodline what! Thank you for always showing up! Stephan Clay, making music come to life for me. Kimberlyn for having my back. Phil for jumping in on the Believe train! To Zhane for your creative eye and willingness to help.

To Our Sponsors "Bonefish Grill!", Geb Hetep! In His Presence! COFA, WODD, HAVEN (HIM) Ministries, Special thanks PS 105! Nurse Doris and her crew! Thank you to my DABAR ladies!

It takes a village to help a Dorothy "Believe!"

Dorothy.

