

A.C.T. AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

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AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER KICKS OFF 2022 SEASON WITH THE WEST COAST PREMIERE OF



Direct from its return Broadway engagement,
Freestyle Love Supreme is the highly-acclaimed improv sensation
created by Thomas Kail, Lin-Manuel Miranda, and Anthony Veneziale

A.C.T.'s Geary Theater
January 21–February 13, 2022

SAN FRANCISCO (December 14, 2021)—Direct from its successful return Broadway engagement, **American Conservatory Theater** kicks off the 2022 season with the highly-acclaimed sensation, **FREESTYLE LOVE SUPREME (January 21–February 13, 2022)**. Before *Hamilton*, before *In the Heights*, there was *Freestyle Love Supreme*, the joyful, improvised musical comedy Broadway hit conceived by Bay Area artist **Anthony Veneziale** and created by longtime friends **Thomas Kail**, **Lin-Manuel Miranda**, and **Anthony Veneziale**. Launching its American tour at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater, FREESTYLE LOVE SUPREME takes audiences on a freestyle, never-before-seen-and-never-to-be-seen-again hip-hop comedy ride. Press night for FREESTYLE LOVE SUPREME will take place on Wednesday, January 26, 2022.

Hailed as “a hugely entertaining dream of a show” (*Time Out*), FREESTYLE LOVE SUPREME features talented performers providing non-stop action throughout this fast-paced evening, spinning suggestions from the audience into humorous bits, instantaneous songs and riffs, and fully realized musical numbers. The electrifying vocals of the performers—from singing and rapping to beat-boxing with harmonies and freestyle flow—are

backed by tight tunes from keyboards and human percussion. The intermission-less show is created live every night with the audience contributing words, ideas, and inspiration. No two shows are ever the same.

“We’re looking forward to welcoming people back to A.C.T.’s Geary Theater,” said A.C.T. Artistic Director **Pam MacKinnon**. “It will have been nearly two years since we gathered in person in this beautiful space to be part of a story. *Freestyle Love Supreme* is quintessentially a reunion of artists, friends, and family building together a unique event each performance, full of love, compassion, attention, rhyme, song, humor, and a lot of special guests with deep Bay Area roots. This is your theater, San Francisco. The curtain is going up!”

In name and beyond, FREESTYLE LOVE SUPREME pays homage to John Coltrane's "A Love Supreme," with a nod to musical roots in jazz, soul, blues, and hip-hop. FREESTYLE LOVE SUPREME was originally developed and produced in 2004 by Ars Nova, in association with Jill Furman and Back House Productions. The show has played in all five boroughs and many states, as well as the U.S. Comedy Festival, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Melbourne Comedy Festival, and the Montreal Just for Laughs Festival. Hulu premiered the documentary, “We Are Freestyle Love Supreme,” at the Sundance Film Festival in 2020 and the acclaimed film was nominated for a Grammy Award. FREESTYLE LOVE SUPREME is the recipient of a special 2020 Tony Award.

With this production, A.C.T. is throwing open the doors of the Geary Theater as a gift to the San Francisco Bay Area to welcome the community back to live theater. Ensuring everyone is welcome and able to attend, A.C.T. is offering 15,000 tickets to FREESTYLE LOVE SUPREME for as little as \$5. A.C.T. is able to remove the financial barrier thanks to the generosity of **Salesforce** through a lead sponsorship contribution and additional matching funds inspiring others to support this initiative—including a generous grant from **Koret Foundation**. Additional supporters include **Jill Cowan and Stephen Davis; The Sakurako and William Fisher Family; Celeste and Kevin Ford; The Marymor Family Fund; Gerine Ongkeko; Perkins Coie LLP; Robina Riccitiello; Steven and Mary Swig; and three (3) anonymous supporters**—to underwrite the cost of these tickets. To purchase tickets, visit act-sf.org or call the A.C.T. Box Office at 415-749-2228.

FREESTYLE LOVE SUPREME will feature a core company including **Andrew Bancroft** AKA “Jelly Donut,” **Jay C. Ellis** AKA “Jellis,” **Aneesa Folds** AKA “Young Nees,” **Kaila Mullady** AKA “Kaiser Rözé,” **Morgan Reilly** AKA “Hummingbird,” **Chris Sullivan** AKA “Shockwave,” and **Anthony Venezia** AKA “Two-Touch.”

Special spontaneous and unannounced guests are planned for select performances and may include *Freestyle Love Supreme* members **Lin-Manuel Miranda, Christopher Jackson, Daveed Diggs, James Monroe Iglehart, Wayne Brady, Ashley Pérez Flanagan, Arthur Lewis, Bill Sherman, Utkarsh Ambudkar, Alex Lacamoire**, and many more.

Directed by **Thomas Kail**, FREESTYLE LOVE SUPREME is produced by **Kail, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Jenny and Jon Steingart**, and **Jill Furman**. It features set design by **Beowulf Boritt**; costume design by **Lisa Zinni**; lighting design by **Jeff Croiter**; and sound design by **Nevin Steinberg**. **Andy Jones** and **James Hickey** are Executive Producers. General Management provided by **Baseline Theatrical**.

In connection with FREESTYLE LOVE SUPREME, A.C.T. will offer numerous **InterACT events**—many of which are presented free of charge—that will give patrons opportunities to get closer to the action while having an entire night out at the theater. Visit act-sf.org/interact to learn more about subscribing to these events throughout the season:

- **Drinks & Drama Friday:**
Friday, January 21 6, 6 p.m.
Join us for a party before the show with a local DJ, drink specials, and more!
- **Prologue:**
Tuesday, January 25, 5 p.m.
Before the curtain goes up, get a sneak peek at the artistic process at this fascinating preshow discussion with the director and artistic staff.
- **Audience Exchanges:**
Tuesday, February 1, 7 p.m. | Sunday, February 6, 2 p.m. | Wednesday, February 9, 2 p.m.
After the show, stick around for a lively Q&A session with the actors and artists who create the work onstage.
- **Pride Night:**
Wednesday, February 2, before and following the 7:30 p.m. performance
A revamped pre- and postshow party celebrating LGBTQ+ pride within the theater community
- **Wine Night:**
Tuesday, February 8, 6:30 p.m.
Before the show, raise a glass at this wine-tasting event featuring the Bay Area's hottest local wineries.
- **PlayTime:**
Saturday, February 12, 12:45 p.m.
Before this matinee performance, get hands-on with the artists who make it happen at this interactive theater workshop.



Lead Sponsor

With additional support from the Koret Foundation

A.C.T. would like to thank **Jill Cowan and Stephen Davis; the Sakurako and William Fisher Family; Celeste and Kevin Ford; The Marymor Family Fund; Gerine Ongkeko and Jorge Del Calvo; Robina Riccitiello; Steven and Mary Swig; and two anonymous supporters** for their generous gifts to underwrite the cost of *Freestyle Love Supreme* tickets.

A.C.T. would like to acknowledge its Season Presenters **Mrs. Barbara Bakar; Jerome L. and Thao N. Dodson; Kathleen Donohue and David Sze; Priscilla and Keith Geeslin; Michael P. N. A. Hormel in loving memory of James C. Hormel; Kenneth and Gisele Miller; Barbara Ravizza and John S. Osterweis; Toni Rembe and Arthur Rock; Robina Riccitiello; Kay Yun and Andre Neumann-Loreck;** and Company Sponsors **Frannie Fleishhacker; Kevin and Celeste Ford; Fred M. Levin in honor of Nancy Livingston Levin, The Shenson Foundation; The Marymor Family Fund; Deedee McMurtry; Gerine Ongkeko; David and Carla Riemer; Patti and Rusty Rueff; Abby and Gene Schnair.** Additional support provided by **The Bernard Osher Foundation, The Shubert Foundation,** and **San Francisco Grants for the Arts.**

A.C.T. is joining with Theatre Bay Area and performing arts groups across the Bay Area to adopt a shared set of safety protocols to protect audiences, performers, staff members, and volunteers during live, indoor performances in accordance with applicable health orders and guidelines. Those protocols are:

- Proof of full vaccination required for all in-person ticket holders.
- All ticket holders entering the theater will be required to show an ID with photo and full name and proof of vaccination. A physical vaccination card, picture of your vaccination card, or digital vaccination record will suffice. California residents may obtain a digital vaccination card at cdph.ca.gov. A.C.T. will not store this data; the patron is only required to present the documentation for inspection.
- Proof of vaccination must indicate that it has been at least 14 days since the patron's last vaccination dose (two doses are required for the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, one for the Johnson & Johnson vaccine).
- Patrons who are legally exempted from vaccines (those with medical or religious exemptions) may request an exemption to view a recording of the production following the process detailed on A.C.T.'s website.
- All ticket holders are required to wear face masks inside the venue.

For more information about A.C.T.'s audience safety policies, visit act-sf.org/covid19.

ANDREW BANCROFT (*Jelly Donut/Standby*) is a writer and performer in New York. He made his Broadway debut with Freestyle Love Supreme in 2019. Bancroft is a co-founder of FLS Academy and a member of the band Moondrunk. As rapper Jelly Donut, he has been featured in MTV's "TRL," Rolling Stone and Time. Bancroft writes musicals and is an award-winning ad writer/creative director. He loves whales. He is grateful to FLS, his family and his friends for their love and support. IG: @mcjellyd

JAY C. ELLIS (*Jellis*) is honored to join FLS, repping LGBTQ+ perspectives in hip-hop! Off-Broadway: "Black Hole Wedding"(Signature), "Saturday Night Fever" (TRW). Regional: "Passing Strange", "Chess" (Playhouse Square). Film: "Wormwood Falling"(Shriek Theatre),"Poncho"(Corin Michalski), "Interrogation"(Stephen Caple Jr.). Created/Directed "BARS", hip-hop musical; Playhouse Square & Baldwin Wallace University Conservatory of Music (Alma Mater). Instructor @FLSAcademy. Gratitude@ Vicky, Scott, Greg, Dr. Weagraff #BWMT! Love@ Kyle, Woof@ Bagley. Mama&Pops forever. Instagram: @Jellis14; Twitter: @Too_Jellis; Website: jayellis.net.

ANEESA FOLDS (*Young Nees*). Credits include Broadway: Freestyle Love Supreme. Off-Broadway/ NYC: Sistas the Musical. Regional: North Shore Music Theatre, Goodspeed Opera House, Arrow Rock Lyceum. National tour: Ragtime. Film/VO: Vivo, tick, tick...BOOM! Features include Disney Channel, "Sesame Street," and Rolling Stone. Instructor at FLS Academy. Much love to my team, family and friends. Follow Aneesa's journey @aneesafolds and aneesafolds.com. Yeeerrrr!

KAILA MULLADY (*Kaiser Rösé/Standby*) is the 2015 and 2018 World Beatbox Champion. She travels the world incorporating singing, beatboxing, and theatre to push the boundaries of storytelling and show just what the human instrument is capable of. She is passionate about teaching others how to beatbox through her Beatbox Education Platform, The Academy of Noise.

MORGAN REILLY (*Hummingbird*) is thrilled to be joining the FLS family! A singer/songwriter & multi-instrumentalist from Allentown, PA, her original music can be found on all streaming platforms. A world of gratitude to Mom, Dad, Ian, Peter, Marianne, German, and her incredible team. Every show is for you, Grandpop. Instagram/TikTok/Voisey: iammorganreilly

CHRIS SULLIVAN (*Shockwave*) has appeared on "The Electric Company," "The Daily Show," "The Real Housewives of NYC," "SportsNation," The Hamilton Mixtape and various programming for MTV and College Humor. Shockwave has trained and performed with The UCB Theatre, The PIT, Annoyance Theatre and Beatboxer Entertainment and is a co-creator of the FLS Academy. Love and gratefulness to the Ars Nova family, Foxboro High School Music Program, Angus MacGyver, Britt and Yoda. @offbookbeatbox

ANTHONY VENEZIALE (*Two-Touch*) is conceiver and co-creator of FLS and FLS Academy. Founding member of American Immigrants (San Francisco). He has used improv techniques to create endeavors for television (Cartoon Network, Sesame Workshop, Boardwalk Pictures), for theatre (FLS, The Freeze, American Immigrants) and for business (TED, Google, Adobe, Salesforce and many more). He is a co-founder of speechlessinc.com, an improv thinking company that helps humans create, collaborate and find their authentic voice, as well as co-founder of the FLS Academy where we use equitable play to foster diverse communities of creative voices. Stage: Freestyle Love Supreme, Servicemen. TV: "Sex and the City," "Looking," "Kid of the Year." Special thanks to all my teachers including Caricia, Jett and Oci—the loves of my life.