

upstage SPOTLIGHT

CAROLINE, OR CHANGE

Book and Lyrics by Tony Kushner

Music by Jeanine Tesori

Choreographed by Ann Yee

Directed by Michael Longhurst

Starring Sharon D Clarke in an exhilarating, Olivier Award-winning performance, Tony Kushner and Jeanine Tesori's explosive musical launches to "the titanic dimensions of greatness" (Ben Brantley, *The New York Times*). With boundless imagination and transcendent songs, *Caroline, or Change* brings to life the changing world of 1963 Louisiana, where even the simplest acts shake the earth.

WHERE: Lake Charles, Louisiana

WHEN: November – December 1963

WHO:

THE THIBODEAUXS

CAROLINE THIBODEAUX

39 years old. Works as a maid for the Gellman family. A divorcee with four children who is resistant to change in the world. Bitter, tired, devoted.

EMMIE THIBODEAUX

16-17 years old. Caroline's only daughter. Observant, rebellious, and outspoken.

JACKIE THIBODEAUX

10 years old. Caroline's son. Sweet and naïve.

JOE THIBODEAUX

Eight years old. Caroline's youngest son. Outspoken and skeptical.

THE GELLMANS

NOAH GELLMAN

Eight years old. The son of Stuart Gellman. Shy, forgetful, and often looks to Caroline for comfort.

GRANDMA GELLMAN

Noah's grandmother and Stuart's mother. Concerned about her son's melancholy and admiring of his new wife.

GRANDPA GELLMAN

Noah's grandfather and Stuart's father. He is unconcerned with the social changes occurring in the South.

ROSE STOPNICK GELLMAN

Mid-to-late 30s. Recently married to Stuart and moved to the South. Very concerned for Noah's well-being.

STUART GELLMAN

Mid-to-late 30s. A clarinetist, recently widowed and remarried to Rose. Still mourning the loss of his first wife and struggling to connect with his son and new wife.

MR. STOPNICK

70s. Rose Stopnick Gellman's father. A politically progressive man who has no qualms about sharing his dissenting opinions.

A NOTE FROM ARTISTIC DIRECTOR TODD HAIMES

When we announced *Caroline, or Change*'s first Broadway revival as part of our season, the response was overwhelming. *Caroline, or Change* premiered on Broadway in 2004 among a landscape of musicals that included smash hits *Wicked* and *Avenue Q*. Although it had a different path to success than some of its companions, it is a testament to the musical's prescience and originality—not to mention the genius of its creators, Tony Kushner and Jeanine Tesori—that its reputation has only grown among critics and fans in the years since its debut.

Originally seen at the Chichester Festival in the UK in 2017, director Michael Longhurst's production received such acclaim that it transferred twice, eventually ending up on the West End, where it was nominated for multiple Olivier Awards. *Caroline, or Change* is one of those rare pieces of art that increases in importance and relevance as time goes by. In Michael's words, "The show is about how we all exist together—how we should share and acknowledge our privilege, not avoid it, in order to exist in greater peace." What could be more timely than that?

CAROLINE'S FRIENDS

DOTTY MOFFETT Early 30s. Caroline's high-spirited friend and a fellow maid. Recently started back at college and is embracing the progressive times.

THE WASHING MACHINE

THE DRYER

THE RADIO

THE MOON

THE BUS

Embodiments of the objects in Caroline's life, these figures serve as her confidants, reflect her opinions, and give her someone to talk to in her lonely life working for the Gellmans.