



**The World Premiere of *How to Break*, a New Musical, Will Open at Village Theatre in a Kaleidoscope of Music, Poetry, Breakdancing, and Beatboxing**

**Announcing the Cast and Creative Team**

*How to Break*

Music by Jacinth Greywoode, Rebecca Hart, and Yako 440

Book and lyrics by Aaron Jafferis

Conceived by the Mixing Texts Collective:

Aaron Jafferis, Adam Matta, Christopher Edwards, Kwikstep, & Rokafella

**SEATTLE, WA** (March 21, 2023) – Village Theatre is excited to announce the cast and creative team for the world premiere production of *How to Break* opening this month. Part commentary on the American health care system, part moving autobiography, and part profound journey through the joy and pain of growing up, *How to Break* reveals just how resilient the human spirit is in the face of change and transformation.

Developed in part by Village Theatre, *How to Break* has music by composers **Jacinth Greywoode**, **Rebecca Hart**, and **Yako 440**; book and lyrics by playwright **Aaron Jafferis**; and is conceived by the **Mixing Texts Collective: Aaron Jafferis, Adam Matta, Christopher Edwards, Kwikstep, and Rokafella**.

*How to Break* is inspired by Jafferis’s experience as writer-in-residence at Yale New Haven Children’s Hospital. “[The experience] made me start thinking about my own relationship to illness and how we either hide that, or don’t, how we claim that as part of ourselves and talk about it, or not,” said Jafferis.

Village Theatre’s upcoming production is directed by **Logan Vaughn** (*The Light*, MCC Theater) with choreography jointly by **Kevin Boseman** (Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater) and director of breaking **Jerome Aparis**.

The stellar cast includes **Andrés López-Alicea** as Mr. Ramos, **Cheryse Dyllan** as Ana, **Cristian Rodriguez** as Joel, **John Kent Rickenbacker Jr.** as Nurse Bowen, **Olivia Griffin** as Maddy, and **Talia Thiesfield** as Dr. Aden.

Understudies include **Ash Fetherbay** (Ana), **Charles L. Simmons** (Dr. Aden), **Dan Haile** (Joel), **Edward-Vincent Montemayor Bantasan** (Nurse Bowen), **Jasmine Joshua** (Maddy), and **Quetzie Taborga** (Mr. Ramos).

The creative team for this inventive musical is rounded out by scenic designer **Jack Magaw**, lighting designer **Robert J. Aguilar**, sound designer **Andrea Allmond**, costume designer **Pete Rush**, projection designer **Elizabeth Barrett**, projection content creator **Marcy Suarez**, dramaturg **Morgan Smart**, stage managers **Miranda C. Pratt** (through April 9) and **Erin B. Zatloka** (starting April 5), and associate director **Tré Cotton**.



Composer Jacinth Greywoode hopes many people will connect with the show. “The musical elements of hip hop—beatbox, rap, bass, dope grooves—have historically occupied little space within musical theatre,” said Greywoode. “We are excited to center this wonderfully inventive and sophisticated style of musical expression and to connect it to a broader audience who may not be as familiar with it.”

***How to Break*** is performing at Village Theatre in Issaquah March 29–April 30, 2023 and Everett May 5–28, 2023. Tickets are available now through the Village Theatre Box Office at (425) 392-2202 or online at [VillageTheatre.org/Break](http://VillageTheatre.org/Break).

**LOGAN VAUGHN (DIRECTOR)** is a New York-based artist and director of new work. As a director she has worked with The Public Theater, MCC Theater, Sundance, South Coast Repertory Theatre, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, The Apollo Theater, Geva Theatre, The Playwrights Realm, Mosaic Theatre and National Black Theatre. Logan received a 2019 Outer Critics Circle nomination for Best Direction of a Play for the New York premiere of Loy A. Webb’s *The Light* at MCC Theater and won Broadway World’s 2019 Outstanding Play Production for the world premiere of *America V. 2.1: The Sad Demise and Eventual Extinction of the American Negro* by Stacey Rose at Barrington Stage Company. She directed the first North American production of Nicholas Wright’s *A Human Being Died That Night* at Mosaic Theatre and directed the world premieres of Mat Smart’s *The Agitators* at Geva Theatre which became the highest grossing production of Geva Theatre’s history, as well as the world premiere of *Legacy Land* by Stacey Rose at Kansas City Rep Theatre. Logan was the Director in residence at Playwrights Horizon; a Sundance Institute Fellow; Joyce Arts Fellow; and Lincoln Center Director’s Lab Fellow. In 2019, she was named Associate Artistic Director of Ojai Playwrights Conference, and is the Associate Director of the First National Broadway Tour of *Ain’t Too Proud—The Life and Times of The Temptations*.

**AARON JAFFERIS (BOOK AND LYRICS)** is a writer whose works *Smooth Criminal*, *Tell*, *Activist Songbook*, *The Ones*, *(Be)longing*, *Trigger*, *Stuck Elevator* and *Kingdom* have been produced by The Old Globe, American Conservatory Theater, Nashville Opera, Collective Consciousness, and many others. Honors include a Creative Capital Award, Richard Rodgers Award, NEA Art Works Grant, NEFA National Theatre Project Grant, and multiple MacDowell Fellowships. Aaron is also a former Open Rap Slam champion at the National Poetry Slam Championships.

**JACINTH GREYWOODE (COMPOSER/MUSIC DIRECTOR)** is a New York-based composer, arranger, and music director. Recent compositional credits: *Iron John: An American Ghost Story* (2023 Irish Arts Center, 2020 Richard Rodgers Finalist, 2019 O’Neill NMTC Semifinalist, 2019 NAMT Winner, 2019 TheatreWorks Silicon Valley New Works Festival, words by Rebecca Hart) and *Black Girl in Paris* (Joe’s Pub 2022, Civilians 2020 R&D Group; LAMDA 2022; words by AriDy Nox). [www.jacinthgreywoode.com](http://www.jacinthgreywoode.com)

**REBECCA HART (COMPOSER)** is a performer & writer based in NYC. Songwriting credits include *Garlic* (Mercury Store NYC), The Civilians’ *Let Me Ascertain You: Holy Matrimony* (Joe’s Pub), *GLORIA* (Gloucester Stage MA & Woolly Mammoth DC -Helen Hayes Best Sound Nom), Target Margin Theatre’s *Uriel Acosta* (Chocolate Factory NYC), The Civilians’ *Rimbaud in NY* (BAM Fisher), Hard



Sparks' *The Cabaret at the End of the World* (Winner: Best Original Music, NY Innovative Theatre Awards 2017), and *How To Break* (Spkrbox Festival/Natl Theatre of Oslo; NAMT 2014; NY Hip Hop Theatre Festival @HERE 2012). As lyricist/librettist: *IRON JOHN: an american ghost story* (NAMT 2019; Theatreworks Silicon Valley; Irish Arts Center Residency; O'Neill Incubator Residency; Temple U; Manhattan School of Music; NYU NSB/Tisch; Richard Rodgers Finalist; Hon. Mention Relentless Award); *the barren(s)* (Kennedy Center American Opera Initiative; New Opera West); *How To Read Tarot Cards* (The Cell Theatre NYC Commission/Residency, dir. Chloe Treat - upcoming). Extensive professional acting credits on regional & NY stages. Lead singer/songwriter for 'prog-folk' act Rebecca Hart & the Wrong Band. Album: *The Magician's Daughter*, available to stream. Associate Artist, The Civilians. insta @rebeccahartworld

**KIRIAKOS "YAKO 440" PRODIS (COMPOSER)** is a New York City-based multimedia and teaching artist. The grandson of Greek, Russian, & UK immigrants, he is a white anti-racist activist. As a multi-instrumentalist beatmaker / human beatboxer / visual artist, Yako 440 has traveled to six continents as a performer, educator, and cultural ambassador. He has composed music, designed sets and projections for theater performances at Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), HERE Arts Center, BRIC Arts Media, and a variety of international venues. Mr. Prodis holds a Master of Fine Arts Degree from Goddard College's Interdisciplinary Arts program.

**ADAM MATTA (MIXING TEXTS COLLECTIVE)** is a NYC musician, visual artist, performer, and composer. He has performed at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Muslim Voices Festival, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Cornell University, Telfair Museum, and appeared with Bobby McFerrin, The Carolina Chocolate Drops, Rhiannon Giddens, In Transit, Karsh Kale, David Fiuczynski, reg e gaines, Roy Wooten, Hank Roberts, Red Baraat, Rinde Eckert, Ned Rothenberg, Akim Funk Buddha, Tim Lefebvre, Aaron Comess, Lori Cotler, Shara Worden, and Bora Yoon. He has also appeared on BEATNYC, Public Broadcasting Service, Showtime, National Public Radio, and radio station WFMU.

**CHRISTOPHER V. EDWARDS (MIXING TEXTS COLLECTIVE)** is a director, actor, fight choreographer, educator, and consultant. He is currently the Artistic Director of Actors' Shakespeare Project in Boston and Sr. Lecturer at Boston University.

Chris has worked as a director and/or actor in London's West End, Off-Broadway, The National Theatre of Oslo in Norway, John Houseman's The Acting Company in NYC, The Atlantic Theatre Company, HERE Arts Center, Dorset Theatre Festival, Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland, The Helix in Ireland, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Ubu Rep., The Flea Theater, Cleveland Playhouse, The NY Hip-Hop Theatre Festival, Utah Shakespeare Festival, SOHO Rep, Penumbra Theater, Cincinnati Shakespeare Company, PA Shakespeare Festival, Shakespeare and Company and Guthrie Theatre.

He received his MFA from the University of Minnesota in Association with the Guthrie Theatre and is member of the National Arts Strategy, Chief Executive Program 2019-2020 cohort through the Harvard Business School.



**GABRIEL "KWIKSTEP" DIONISIO (MIXING TEXTS COLLECTIVE)** AKA DJ KS 360 started dancing between the ages of 6 and 7 influenced by Soul Train and block parties in NYC. Kwikstep has performed in PBS's Peabody Award-winning *Everybody Dance Now*, the *Great Performances'* 20th Anniversary Special, and Kurt Weill's *September Songs*, which was nominated for an Emmy Award.

In 1991, he had won a Bessie award for choreography and founded the internationally known Full Circle in 1992. In 1996, Kwikstep and his wife Rokafella established Full Circle as a non-profit internationally acclaimed Hip hop collective known as Full Circle Productions Inc and its members are known as Full Circle Souljahs. Today he is an international icon in breaking and is best known for his smooth style, versatility, and signature head spins.

He was also an original founding member and principal dancer in companies such as Rhythm Technicians and GhettoOriginal who were the creators of *Jam on the Groove* which was nominated for a Drama Desk Award in 1996. In 2002 Gabriel "Kwikstep" Dionisio along with his wife wrote, choreographed, and directed A Hip Hop Theater Piece called *Soular Powerd*, which ran to sold out audiences for 3 weeks at the New Victory Theater. Kwikstep along with his wife wrote, choreographed, and directed a new hip hop theater piece commissioned by the Kennedy Center called *Outside The BachX*. In the fall of 2017, Kwikstep was associate director and choreographer for a hip hop theater piece by the name of *Syncing Ink* directed by Niegel Smith at the Flea Theater. In the spring of 2018, Kwikstep choreographed for a full-length dance theater piece at DanSpace Project called *Boxed In*, which was voted one of 7 top shows to see in NYC by *The New York Times*. Kwikstep choreographed a piece for an event on Times Square called *Behind The Groove Times Square Edition* through Time Square Arts and DanSpace Project. Kwikstep is currently working on a new dance theater piece along with his wife Rokafella that has been commissioned by Jacob's Pillow.

**ANA "ROKAFELLA" GARCIA (MIXING TEXTS COLLECTIVE)** is a NYC native who has represented women in hip hop dance professionally over the past three decades. She co-founded Full Circle Prod Inc, NYC's only nonprofit hip hop dance theater company, with her husband Kwikstep generating theater pieces, dance training programs and NYC based dance events. She directed a documentary highlighting the B-girl lifestyle entitled *All The Ladies Say* with support from Third World Newsreel and Bronx Council of the Arts. She is hired internationally to judge breakdance competitions and to offer her unique workshops aimed at evolving and preserving its technique and cultural aspects. She has worked within the NYC public school system and various NYC based community centers setting up programs that help expose young students to the possibility of a career in dance. In May of 2017, she launched "ShiRoka"-- a t-shirt fashion line with Shiro, a Japanese Graffiti artist. She has been featured in pivotal rap music videos, tours, film, fashion shows, and commercials as well as choreographed for diverse festivals / concerts such as The NY Philharmonic Orchestra's *Firebird* in 2022, The Kennedy Center, Momma's Hip-hop Kitchen, and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Branching out of her dance lane, she has also recorded original songs / poetry and performed at NJPAC's Alternate Routes in Newark and Lincoln Center Out of Doors. Presently she is an adjunct professor at The New School and a content creator for Bronx Net TV producing her own TV series entitled "Kwik2Rok". Rokafella is a multi-faceted Afro Latin Hip-hop artist who references Nuyorican culture as her foundation.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**ABOUT VILLAGE THEATRE**

Based in Issaquah, WA, with operations in Everett, WA, Village Theatre is a leading producer of musical theatre in the Pacific Northwest. Producing entertaining, quality productions since 1979, Village Theatre has grown into one of the region’s best-attended theatres. Through its Village Originals program, Village Theatre is nationally recognized for its contribution to the development of new musicals, having supported the creation of over 175 new works to date. Village Theatre also takes pride in nurturing tomorrow’s audiences through its Youth Education programs, serving thousands of young people and their families annually.

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**FOR EDITORS/PRODUCERS**

**WHAT:**

***How to Break***

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An electrifyingly innovative world-debut Mainstage production of new work developed by Village Theatre! Featuring a dynamic kaleidoscope of music, poetry, breakdancing, and beatboxing, *How to Break* follows two hospitalized teenage hip-hop dancers and how they navigate their adolescence in the confines of a hospital room, finding ways to love and learn amidst IV bags and chemotherapy as inspired by real-life events in writer Aaron Jafferis’ time as an artist in residence at a children’s hospital. Part commentary on the American health care system, part moving autobiography, and part profound journey through the joy and pain of growing up, *How to Break* reveals just how resilient the human spirit is in the face of change and transformation.

**WHERE:**

**Village Theatre**

Francis J. Gaudette Theatre  
303 Front Street N, Issaquah

Everett Performing Arts Center (EPAC)  
2710 Wetmore Avenue, Everett

**WHEN:**

**March 29–May 28, 2023**

Issaquah: March 29–April 30, 2023

Everett: May 5–28, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**TICKETS:**

**\$35-\$92 - ON SALE NOW**

For tickets and information >> [VillageTheatre.org/Break](https://VillageTheatre.org/Break)

**CONNECT WITH VILLAGE THEATRE**

***VillageTheatre.org***

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YouTube - [/villagetheatre1](https://villagetheatre1)

**PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO**

For available photography and video, please visit Village Theatre's online [press room here >>](#)

**VILLAGE THEATRE'S COVID SAFETY PLAN**

For Village Theatre's most up-to-date COVID safety protocols, [please visit Village Theatre online here >>](#)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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