

The Three Musketeers

Written by *Kirsten Childs*

Inspired by the novel by *Alexander Dumas*

Directed by *Kent Gash*



by Myxolydia Tyler and Kate Pitt

STUDENT GUIDE 2022-23

Artistic Director's *Note*

By Kent Gash



Kirsten Childs' new version of **The Three Musketeers** and Leah Gardiner's **Romeo and Juliet** both engage the unstoppable essential vitality of loving hearts and the soul of youth. Sometimes careless, sometimes reckless, always exhilarating. The lives in these plays are lived at a kind of warp speed that is thrilling! There are moments in life when we feel invincible and throw caution to the winds. Actors, playwrights, and all of us who make theater throw caution to the winds as the lights dim and we dare to imagine, create, and embody a story to share with you, our audiences.

In William Shakespeare and Alexandre Dumas, we have two genius storytellers taking us on unforgettable journeys. If we're lucky, as D'Artagnan and the Musketeers, Romeo, Constance, and Juliet are, we experience this invincibility aligned with love. Romantic love, love of fraternity, love of ideals, and those who are like-minded or who have shared lived experiences, and more importantly, we are Montague or Capulet and we come to love those who are different from us. As we mature this sense of being invincible can lead to some of life's most satisfying and unexpected adventures. These adventures help to forge our identities and our beliefs. In a truly fulfilled life, they enrich and uplift us and we, in turn, enrich and uplift the lives of others.

These classic stories unleashed by this effervescent company of actors are reclaimed to enthrall audiences anew. In every human heart lies courage, loyalty, honor, faith, commitment, and an invincible endless capacity to love. Love flagrantly, with abandon and with joy! As we return to the theater and live performances, THE ACTING COMPANY happily invites you to enjoy these classic, romantic adventures!

WELCOME TO THE ACTING COMPANY! WELCOME TO THE THEATER!

Kent Gash is the Founding Director of The New Studio at New York University and the Artistic Director of The Acting Company.

The Acting Company

SINCE 1972

The Acting Company develops actors by touring professional theater across America.

Founded in 1972 by John Houseman and Margot Harley with the first graduating class of the Drama Division of The Juilliard School, The Company has launched the careers of some 400 actors, including Kevin Kline, Patti LuPone, Mary Lou Rosato, Keith David, Rainn Wilson, Lorraine Toussaint, Frances Conroy, Harriet Harris, Lisa Banes, Jeffrey Wright, Hamish Linklater, Jesse L. Martin, Roslyn Ruff, Jimonn Cole, Kelley Curran, among many others, while bringing sophisticated theater to hundreds of communities from coast to coast.

Among many accolades, The Acting Company won the 2003 Tony Award for Excellence in the Theater, and recently won the 2019 Audelco Award for Best Play for its production of Nambi E. Kelley's **Native Son** directed by Seret Scott.

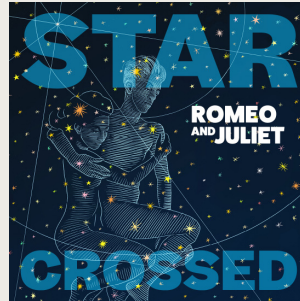
The Acting Company has been seen by over 4 million people in 48 States, 10 foreign countries, on and Off-Broadway, and at leading resident theaters including the Guthrie, the Kennedy Center and New York City Center.

New works commissioned by The Acting Company include plays by William Finn, Marcus Gardley, Rebecca Gilman, John Guare, Beth Henley, Tony Kushner, Lynn Nottage, Meg Miroshnik, Ntozake Shange, Maria Irene Fornés, Spalding Gray, Marsha Norman, and Charles Smith.

2022-23 NATIONAL REPERTORY TOUR

The Acting Company tours two productions each season that feature the same actors in a form called rotating repertory. These two productions are designed to be in conversation with each other.

THIS SEASON:



By William Shakespeare
Directed by Leah C. Gardiner



By Kirsten Childs
Adapted from the novel by
Alexandre Dumas
Directed by Kent Gash

These two productions uphold our mission to reinvigorate the classics of the canon. They present vibrantly diverse perspectives even as we expand the definition of "classic" for audiences around the country.



Playwright's *Note*



I remember reading **The Three Musketeers** when I was a young girl growing up in twentieth-century Civil Rights Era America. The story was a perfect escape from the cares of Black life: full of excitement and derring-do and romance, and wild, wonderful exploits of bold young men. As I reveled in the story's enchantment, it was not lost on me, however, that bold young men I personally knew would have been summarily mowed down by the powers that be, had they exhibited a mere fraction of the boldness of the Musketeers. Because my bold young men were Black men in America (google Emmett Till), and the Musketeers clearly were White, since their story was written by a White man.

Or so I thought.

Imagine my surprise to learn that Alexandre Dumas, the author of this wonderful tale was himself Black, born of a Black man.

Imagine my glee upon hearing a story (possibly apocryphal but definitely awesome) about Dumas where he was confronted with the racist question, "If you are a quarter Black, and your father's half Black and your grandfather's all Black, does that make your great-grandfather a monkey?" to which Dumas replied, "And that's where my ancestry ends and yours begins." Well, damn! How could such a writer and his works not be completely seductive to a young girl who had to watch her Black brethren chafe against the strictures of a society determined to quell their arrogant fabulousness?

And so, this work is my love letter to my supremely confident, arrogantly fabulous hero Alexandre Dumas. Long may he swashbuckle while throwing shade at those who deserve it.

Kirsten Childs is the award-winning writer of the musicals *The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds Her Chameleon Skin* and *Bella: An American Tall Tale*, among many others.

What is a Classic?



A "classic" is an established story that has endured through time and is remembered, referenced, and adapted by people from diverse times, places and cultures.

Although a "classic" story is often thought of as the same as an "old" story, The Acting Company produces plays that are "in dialogue with the world as it exists right now," according to Artistic Director Kent Gash. In an Acting Company production, classic texts are often adapted to mirror the world of today. The Acting Company adapts classics that necessitate a precision of language and physicality and require actors who can breathe and understand every nuance of the meaning of classic words while creating specific characters relevant to our current human experience.

LEGACY OF ADAPTATION:

The first theatrical adaptation of **The Three Musketeers** was written by Alexander Dumas himself and premiered soon after the novel's publication in 1844. It was a great success, and Dumas founded his own theater called the Théâtre Historique in 1846 to produce more theatrical adaptations of his novels, as well as his adaptations and translations of other author's plays, including Shakespeare's **Hamlet**.

Dumas also adapted **The Three Musketeers** into an opera and wrote two sequels to the novel, **Twenty Years After** and **The Vicomte of Bragelonne**. **The Three Musketeers** has been adapted into many forms.

In 1920 it was adapted into a musical with lyrics by P.G. Woodhouse and a ballet in 2018. There are **Three Musketeers** video games and comics as well as dozens of films and miniseries. A 1921 film adaptation starred the swashbuckling movie star Douglas Fairbanks as D'Artagnan and Disney's 1993 version starred Charlie Sheen, Kiefer Sutherland, and Oliver Platt as the three musketeers. A new film adaptation featuring Eva Green as Milady and Vincent Cassel as Athos will be released in April of 2023.



The Three Musketeers, 1921



The Musketeers, 2014



The Three Musketeers: Milady, 2023

The Three Musketeers: *A City Divided*

Author

ALEXANDRE DUMAS (WILLIAM WATKINS)

Author. A dynamic and larger-than-life personality. He is not only writing the story but feeling it and embodying all of it as it unfolds.



Royal Court

KING LOUIS XIII (TY HAWTHORNE)

King of France. The young king is not the fool that many perceive him to be but also not interested in a great deal of the day-to-day nuisances of running a country.



QUEEN ANNE (CARO ZELLER)

Queen of France. A Spanish noble, she is seen as an outsider by the French, and though she is married to King Louis she is in love with the Duke of Buckingham. She is a woman who can keep a secret and hold multiple truths.



THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM (MAX ANTONIO GONZALEZ)

Queen Anne's lover. The second most powerful man in England. While he enjoys title and position he must also compromise and acquiesce. Nothing is more important to him than his love of Anne.



CONSTANCE (TOREE ALEXANDRE)

Queen Anne's maid. A warm, honest, and pure presence with a great and true heart. She is fiercely loyal to the Queen and is desired by D'Artagnan as much for her spirit and loyalty as for her beauty.



Cardinals Circle

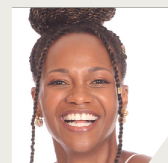
CARDINAL RICHLIEU (WILLIAM OLIVER WATKINS)

Cardinal and Chief Minister to the King. Ruthless, ambitious, and brilliant, the Cardinal is devoted to increasing his power.



MILADY DE WINTER (EUNICE WOODS)

An agent of the Cardinal. Stunningly beautiful, self-knowing and self-possessed, Milady is witty, impossibly attractive, and compelling.



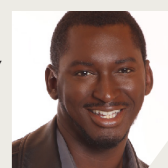
LADY LANNOY (ZOE ANASTASSIOU)

A spy for the Cardinal. A woman who can gain the trust of many and then betray them and bring them to ruin. Lady Lannoy's manipulative talents are for sale to the highest bidder.



ROCHEFORT (EDWIN BROWN, III)

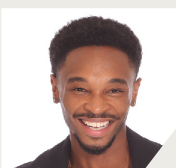
An agent of the Cardinal. Loyal to the Cardinal, he is a cunning, facile, and nimble foil for D'Artagnan.



Musketeers

D'ARTAGNAN (DARIUS DEON)

An aspiring Musketeer. An athletic, attractive, charming, and sincere young man. He is quintessentially honest and loyal and a fearlessly adventurous competitor.



ARAMIS (CHRISTOPHER THEN)

A Musketeer. The most spiritual of the Three Musketeers. His passion runs deep and he can be quick to act, as he feels everything deeply. He leads with his heart, a sense of faith, and a lethal facility with a sword.



PORTHOS (TRAVIS RAEURN)

A Musketeer. A worldly and sophisticated Musketeer who is always on the cutting edge of style. He appreciates all the beautiful things in life and is a deadly and powerful fighter.



ATHOS (SAM ENCARNACION)

A Musketeer. The oldest of the Three Musketeers. He is the most aristocratic and wise of the Three and he becomes a mentor and surrogate father figure to D'Artagnan.



The Ensemble: *Meet the Actors*



TORÉE ALEXANDRE:
Constance, and
others



ZOE ANASTASSIOU:
Lady Lannoy, Monsieur
Bonacieux, Jussac and
others



**EDWIN
BROWN III:**
Rochefort and
others



DARIUS DEON:
D'Artagnan



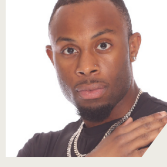
SAM ENCARNACIÓN:
Athos, Thomas-
Alexandre Dumas



**MAX ANTONIO
GONZALEZ:**
The Duke of
Buckingham,
Vittori and others



**TY CAMREN
HAWTHORNE:**
King Louis XIII,
Mirecourt, Treville
and others



TRAVIS RAEURN:
Porthos



**CHRISTOPHER
THEN:**
Aramis



**WILLIAM OLIVER
WATKINS:**
Alexandre Dumas,
Cardinal Richelieu



EUNICE WOODS:
Milady de Winter



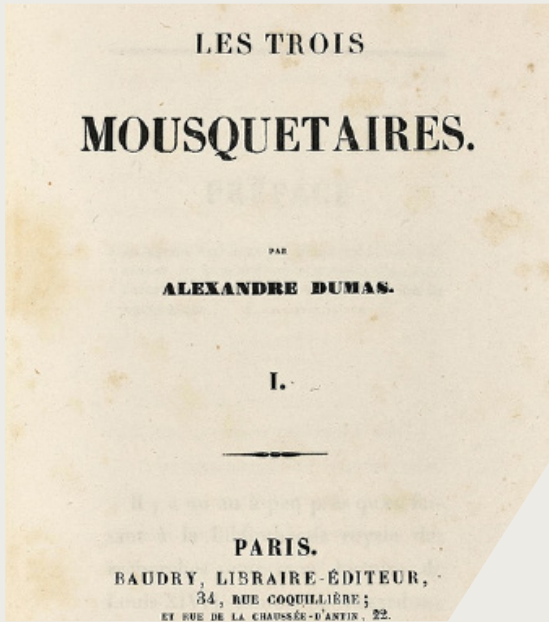
CARO ZELLER:
Queen Anne and
others

One Actor / Many Roles

Our production of **The Three Musketeers** features over 60 characters. Some of them are protagonists with elaborate story arcs and some are servants or soldiers with almost no lines. But hero, villain, or supporting all of them are vividly rendered by our ensemble. Many of our actors play multiple roles over the course of the play. These many transformations are a tribute to the skills of both the performer and the costume designer.



From Page to Stage



An adaptation is a new version of an old story. Adaptations can add, remove, or change elements of existing works. The original work is still visible in an adaptation, however it has been transformed or altered to create a unique and distinct production.

Adaptation can involve translating a story from one form to another, as Kirsten Childs did when she adapted Alexander Dumas' novel of **The Three Musketeers** into her play of **The Three Musketeers**. It can also involve editing the full text of a play into a shorter version and adding original elements.

The Acting Company commissioned Kirsten Childs to adapt Alexander Dumas' novel for the stage in 2021. She took this epic novel and distilled it into a single two hour performance, at the same time she brought her own perspectives on the world, his life, and France to the table. Her adaptation tells both his story and her own.

Plot Synopsis

ACT I –

The famous French writer Alexandre Dumas is struggling with a new story that he hopes will honor the exploits and bravery of his father, Thomas-Alexandre Dumas, the first Black man to be general-in-chief of a French army. Dumas' story starts when a young man named D'Artagnan travels to Paris in hope of joining the Musketeers, a famed military regiment in service of the King of France. D'Artagnan is disappointed when he learns that he must wait to join the regiment but excited by the opportunity to fight with three of the Musketeers – Athos, Porthos and Aramis – who each challenge him to a duel. After the three Musketeers realize that D'Artagnan is willing to face all of them, they decide not to kill him and instead join forces to fight a group of Cardinal's Men, the Musketeers' rivals.

ACT II –

Meanwhile, the ruthless Cardinal Richelieu, chief minister to the King, conspires with his deadly accomplice Milady de Winter to discredit the Queen of France. The Queen is having an affair with an English Lord, the Duke of Buckingham. The Cardinal sends Milady to steal two diamonds from a necklace the Queen gave to Buckingham so that he can reveal this proof of the Queen's infidelity at an upcoming ball. The Queen's confidante, Constance, discovers the Cardinal's plot and enlists D'Artagnan and the Musketeers to journey to England, retrieve the diamonds, and save the Queen.

The Musketeers and D'Artagnan are successful, and the ball ends with the Cardinal and Milady enraged at their failure. Milady murders Constance in revenge, and Athos reveals that Milady is, in fact, his wife, whom he believed was dead. The Musketeers hunt Milady down and execute her in the name of the King. D'Artagnan's adventure ends as he officially joins the Musketeers, but Dumas's continues as he struggles with the story, questioning whether it is what he needs it to be: a tribute to his father and a cry for a more just and honorable world.



Dumas: Father and Son



Alexander Dumas was a 19th century French playwright and author. He was born in the town of Villers-Cotterêts in 1802. Alexander Dumas' father, Thomas-Alexander, was born in Haiti and took the name "Dumas" from his mother, an enslaved woman. The name may indicate that she was "du mas" or "from the farm," or it may be of African origin.

Thomas-Alexander's father was a French nobleman who had enslaved his mother. When he inherited an estate and decided to return to France, he sold Thomas' mother and their two daughters but brought his son with him to France. Thomas-Alexander was enrolled in military school and became a general in Napoleon's army by age 31, the first person of color to reach that rank. He distinguished himself in battle and was given the nom de guerre (war name) "Horatius Cocles of the Tyrol" after successfully defending a bridge during Napoleon's campaign in the Tyrol region of Italy. The name refers to a one-eyed ("cocles") Roman general named Horatius who successfully saved Rome through a similar heroic action.

Thomas-Alexander's military glory did not last. After arguing with Napoleon, he quit the Emperor's Egyptian campaign in 1799 and was captured in Italy on his way back home to France. Napoleon did not work particularly hard to secure his release and by the time Thomas-Alexander was freed two years later, he was a broken man. He died in 1806 after years of fighting and failing to receive his military pension. His son Alexander was three years old.

Despite growing up impoverished, Alexander Dumas moved to Paris in his 20s and quickly became a successful writer with the support of his late father's friends. He wrote over 250 books in his lifetime and serialized many of his novels including **The Three Musketeers** in magazines, writing in an exciting and dynamic style that encouraged readers to buy the next edition.

Dumas' prolific output was made possible by his collaborators who researched and wrote drafts for him to polish. Author Auguste Maquet wrote the first draft of **The Three Musketeers**, completed in 1844, as well as another of Dumas' best known works, **The Count of Monte Cristo**, published the following year. Although he made a fortune as a writer, Alexander Dumas spent more than he earned and was often on the brink of financial ruin. In 1851, he fled France after political turmoil and traveled through Belgium, Russia, and Italy before finally returning home to France in 1864. He died in 1870 and was buried in his hometown of Villers-Cotterêts. In 2002, his body was reinterred in the French Pantheon by four guards costumed as Musketeers.



What is a *Musketeer*?



The Musketeers were a company of soldiers founded by King Louis XIII in 1622. In Dumas' story, they are primarily known for their swordsmanship, however they are named for the type of gun – muskets – that they carried into battle. In addition to serving during wartime, the King's Musketeers also acted as bodyguards for Louis XIII. Louis' father had been assassinated as he drove through Paris in his carriage and so his son took care to avoid the same fate by traveling with a company of armed Musketeers.

Despite this royal assignment, the Musketeers lacked the prestige and rigid entrance requirements of some of the older and more traditional military groups. Younger sons of noble families flocked to the Musketeers and this influx of young men with few family responsibilities, some money, and plenty of weapons training resulted in their reputation for raucous behavior.

Soon after Louis XIII created his company of Musketeers, Cardinal Richelieu created his own company of Musketeers. The Cardinal was afraid of assassination and fond of impressive displays of power. Traveling with a retinue of bodyguards like the king increased both his safety and his prestige.

Richelieu and the royal family were often at odds and their political disputes sometimes resulted in physical fights between their proxy companies of swordsmen.

In this production, neither side are dressed in traditional doublets but they do carry rapiers and wear the colors of their leaders. Richelieu's Musketeers are dressed in red, the traditional color of cardinals' robes, while Louis' Musketeers are dressed in royal French blue.

The World and the Stage

LOUIS XIII'S PARIS

The Three Musketeers is set during the reign of King Louis XIII between the years 1625-1628. Louis unexpectedly became king at the age of nine in 1610 after his father was publicly assassinated by a Catholic extremist. Louis' mother, Marie de Medici, acted as regent and shared power with her son until he turned sixteen.

During her regency, Marie built herself a palace known as the Luxembourg on the then-unpopular left bank of Paris, encouraging its development as a fashionable neighborhood. Louis chafed against his mother's rule and the country was uneasy under a young king who many felt was easily manipulated by unscrupulous advisors. When Louis XIII finally took power in his own name, he banished or executed many of his mother's favorites and moved her to a residence outside of Paris.

Louis and his mother eventually reconciled, but one of her former advisors, Cardinal Richelieu, became the young king's closest confidant. With Richelieu's encouragement, Louis XIII undertook new public and religious works that strengthened Paris' infrastructure. In addition to several new churches, and multiple bridges over the Seine, Richelieu also built himself a new palace.



Louis XIII, King of France



DUMAS' PARIS

Both France and Paris underwent seismic changes during Alexander Dumas' lifetime. Dumas was born in 1802, ten years after the execution of King Louis XVI, the great-great-great-grandfather of Louis XIII. During Dumas' early life, Napoleon Bonaparte concentrated power under a republican form of government before declaring himself Emperor of the French in 1804. After Napoleon was defeated for the last time in 1815, the French restored a form of absolute monarchy which lasted for fifteen years, which was followed by a constitutional monarchy for eighteen years, then a republic with a president who declared himself an emperor after three years and who abdicated three months before Dumas' death. Dumas was born in a republic, lived through the reigns of three kings, two emperors, and one president, and died in a republic.

Alexander Dumas was close to one of France's future kings, Louis-Philippe. Louis-Philippe helped Dumas start his literary career, and Dumas returned the favor when he supported the King during the revolution that brought him to power. However, once Louis-Philippe was deposed in 1851, Dumas fled France and spent many years abroad. The political instability that Dumas lived through during his lifetime contrasts with the relative consistency of government that the Musketeers experience in his novel. While Louis XIII came under the influence of powerful advisors like Richelieu, he stayed on the throne for thirty-three years. By contrast, Dumas experienced the drama of French governments that constantly rose and fell, sometimes on a monthly basis.

Adapting Plot and *Language*

Kirsten Childs' play of **The Three Musketeers** adapts the plot of Alexander Dumas' novel in contemporary language. We can see the techniques that the playwright uses by comparing two passages from both works. In this scene, the leader of the Musketeers, Monsieur de Treville, talks to aspiring Musketeer D'Artagnan.

In the passage to the right, Kirsten Childs compresses D'Artagnan's ask into three words – "to be a Musketeer" – while in Dumas' original, the character takes significantly longer to get to the point – "it was my intention to request of you, in remembrance of the friendship which you have not forgotten, the uniform of a musketeer." Compression is one of the techniques that playwrights must use in adapting work for the stage. Dumas' novel has 67 chapters, Childs' play, only 2 acts, so characters must speak clearly and to the point.

Childs also uses contemporary language – "...in two years, you'll get your very own Musketeer uniform, how's that sound?" – rather than the more elaborate 19th century language of Dumas' novel – "I inform you with regret, that no one becomes a musketeer without the preliminary ordeal of several campaigns, certain brilliant actions, or a service of two years in some regiment of less reputation than ours."



DUMAS' NOVEL

M. de Tréville judged that he had not to deal with a fool, and changing the subject, came straight to the point. "I respected your father very much," said he. "What can I do for the son? Tell me quickly, my time is not my own."

"Monsieur," said D'Artagnan, "on quitting Tarbes, and coming hither, it was my intention to request of you, in remembrance of the friendship which you have not forgotten, the uniform of a musketeer; but after all that I have seen, during the last two hours, I have become aware of the value of such a favor, and I tremble lest I should not merit it."

"Well, young man," replied M. de Tréville, "it is, in fact, a favor, but it may not be so far beyond your hopes as you believe, or rather as you appear to believe; but his majesty's decision is always necessary: and I inform you with regret, that no one becomes a musketeer without the preliminary ordeal of several campaigns, certain brilliant actions, or a service of two years in some regiment of less reputation than ours."

CHILDS' PLAY

TRÉVILLE

Who's that – ah yes, Bertrand de Batz's boy, now what did you want again?

D'ARTAGNAN

To be a Musketeer.

TRÉVILLE

Tell you what I'm gonna do for you, since you're Bertrand's kid. I'm gonna get you into the Bearnaise cadets, you keep checking in with me from time to time and in two years, you'll get your very own Musketeer uniform, how's that sound?

D'ARTAGNAN

Two years? I was hoping I could be on the fast track.

TRÉVILLE

That is the fast track.

Adapting: *Language and Music*



DUMAS' NOVEL

But stepping towards the antechamber, and making a sign to D'Artagnan with his hand, as if to ask his permission to finish with the others before he began with him, he called "Athos! Porthos! Aramis!" The two musketeers with whom we have already made acquaintance, and who answered the last two of these three names, immediately quitted the group of which they formed a part, and advanced towards the cabinet, the door of which closed after them as soon as they had entered. Their appearance, although it was not quite at ease, excited by its carelessness, at once full of dignity and submission, the admiration of D'Artagnan, who had beheld in these two men demi-gods, and in their leader an Olympian Jupiter, armed with all this thunders.

CHILDS' PLAY

TRÉVILLE

(to D'Artagnan:)

A minute, son...

(going to the door; opening it and yelling:)

Athos! Porthos! Aramis! Get in here!

In this scene, Treville stops his interaction with D'Artagnan and turns his focus to the Musketeers. Dumas' novel contains a long description of how the Musketeers appear and D'Artagnan's reaction to them. Onstage, the actors must turn this verbal description into physical action. Childs also transforms Dumas' description of a physical action – "making a sign to D'Artagnan with his hand, as if to ask his permission to finish with the others" – into verbal dialogue – "A minute, son." It is sometimes hard for audiences to see small actions like hand signals onstage and dialogue is often easier to understand.

MUSIC AND ADAPTATION:

Another way to adapt an older story and theatricalize the epic nature of a novel for the stage is music. This production of **The Three Musketeers** contains multiple songs which reveal what is hidden and heighten what is shown. They allow characters to express intense emotions and also to remind them of what is left unsaid. Kirsan Childs has built these songs in a style that fuses the classical and the contemporary.

During the royal ball in Act Two, several characters pursue hidden agendas while simultaneously dancing, smiling and making nice with each other. The lyrics of the song that plays while they dance – "This place is full of intrigue... everyone's treacherous...folks will betray" – reminds the audience of the high stakes of this scene. While at the end of the first act D'Artagnan sings a love song to Constance; and then he and the musketeers sing a revenge rap about Milady. Both scenes are moments of heightened emotion where D'Artagnan uses music to express opposite feelings – love for Constance and hatred for Milady.

The character of Alexander Dumas in this adaptation also uses music to tell his story. He raps the opening lines of the novel – "On the first Monday of the month of April, 1625, the market town of Meung appeared to be in as perfect a state of revolution" – transforming a 19th century text into modern music.

Bringing a Story to the *Stage*

One of the joys of the theater is that every production is new and different. Whether a play is new or old, each group of artists brings them to life in their own way.

For our production, **director Kent Gash** said this:

What excites me about *The Three Musketeers* is that it is a raucous, dynamic, visceral, exciting production about boys growing into men, and how we need to take responsibility for each other. It is about brotherhood and honor and care and is also a great adventure. This is a special adaptation of **The Three Musketeers** because we are centering Alexander Dumas who was Black and of Haitian descent. We're making sure to center Alexander Dumas by putting him on stage as he's writing the story at a time when artists everywhere are questioning who gets to tell the story. This story springs from a Black imagination and I'm excited to bring that additional layer of dynamic and cultural integrity into the story. You should feel as an audience member that you could step up on stage and be a part of the world of this play. So you may see things that you recognize from contemporary life or contemporary culture mixed into this classic tale. **The Three Musketeers** is always a great, joyful, fun, adventurous story to return to. But right now it's also a story that we want to make sure centers and celebrates honor, loyalty, courage, bravery, and really doing the right thing for your brother or for the person next to you or for your neighbor. And that's something that's always worth celebrating.

With that in mind he gathered a company of actors, designers, technicians, and artisans to build a **The Three Musketeers** for today.

ARTISTIC TEAM (SOME OF THEM)

Scenic Design by **Edward E. Haynes, Jr.**

Lighting Design by **Dawn Chiang**

Sound by **Lindsay Jones**

Costumes by **Ann Hoult-Ward**

Fight Direction by **J. David Brimmer**

Choreography by **Byron Easely**

Voice and Speech Coaching by **Xavier Clark**

Intimacy Coordination by **Ann James**

Stage Management by **Melissa Richter**

Assistant Directing by **Kate Pitt**

A VILLAGE

Over 100 people worked to create our production of **The Three Musketeers**, and its partner production **Romeo and Juliet**. They rehearsed for 10 weeks, but they started planning and designing months before rehearsal began.

Each of these artists lent not only their skill but their ideas to the production. Lead by the director, this production is a true collaboration, bringing together artists from a wide range of ages, backgrounds, and cultures to create something new.

Producing a play takes a village, and when one is producing plays in repertory it takes more than a village. These plays are challenging, and in order to reach our audience they must be both cherished and challenged. The artists on this page, and the actors listed earlier, were the ones doing that work.

The People *Behind* the Scenes



THE PLAYWRIGHT

A "wright" is a type of artisan who makes things that people can use. For example, a wheelwright makes wheels. A playwright makes plays and usually completes a draft of the script before rehearsals begin.

THE DIRECTOR

After reading the playwright's script, the director decides on an overall vision for the production and decides which designers to hire to support their ideas. The director meets with the creative team to assemble a unified look for the sets, costumes, lighting, and other elements. The director oversees the actors in rehearsal with the help of the stage manager.

THE ACTORS

The actors perform the play and draw on their own experiences and understanding of life to create believable characters. Actors usually audition for their parts after the play is written and the director is chosen. Actors must memorize their lines and attend many rehearsals before opening night.

THE STAGE MANAGERS

The stage managers facilitate communication across departments, organize rehearsals, and call technical cues during performances as well as maintain the artistic intentions of a production after opening. They are usually hired around the same time as the designers and actors.

DESIGNERS (SETS, PROPS, SOUND, LIGHTS, AND COSTUMES)

All theaters need an environment created on stage for the play to take place and the designers help create that world in collaboration with the director. The set can be a literal world, with many objects ("props") and lots of furniture or it can be a suggestion of reality with minimal actual components. Music and sound effects can make the theatrical experience more real or more fantastical. The lights add to the environment of the play and enhance the mood that the other designers have created. The costume designer and costume staff work within the vision of the director for each character. They choose colors and styles to help the audience better understand the characters and often do historical research to make the world of the play come to life. For The Acting Company touring productions, the set must be easy to assemble and disassemble and the sound and lighting design must be able to be recreated in each venue.

Design Process: *Scenic and Costume*

An important part of the creative process for designers is doing research. They study the historical period, the demands of the script, and contemporary trends and use these all to develop their ideas for a specific show. Once they have done their research, they begin discussing the play with the director and their fellow designers. From those conversations they begin to create drawings to represent their ideas to each other, and then eventually to the artisans who will be responsible for building the designs in real life. This process can take anywhere from 6 months to a few years. For **The Three Musketeers** it took around 6 months.

SCENIC PROCESS:

The scenic designer for **The Three Musketeers**, Edward E. Haynes, Jr, went through over eight drafts of renderings in the process of designing the set. His set had to work for both **The Three Musketeers** and **Romeo and Juliet**.

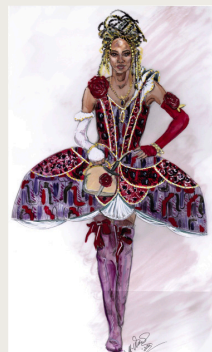
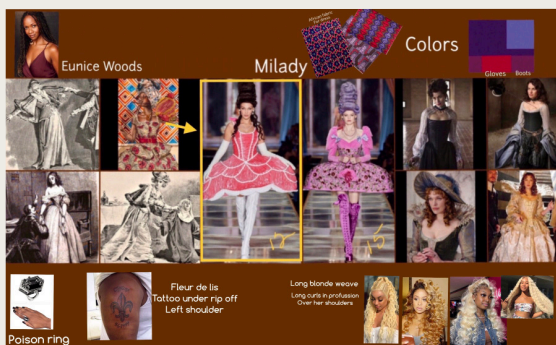
To the right are three images of renderings from the design process: a third draft, an eighth draft, and then the final set onstage.



COSTUME PROCESS:

For costume designers, this process involves finding photos that inspire choices for the characters and assembling them into collages. For example, below are three images: a collage for Milady's costume, a rendering of the costume for the costume shop, and then the finished product onstage.

What do you recognize from the initial research in the final product?



Your *Three Musketeers*

ACTIVITY

Once you have seen The Acting Company's **The Three Musketeers**, you get a chance to Imagine your OWN **Three Musketeers**.

Our **Three Musketeers** is a wild world where contemporary America meets Renaissance France. It is a place where people wear rapiers and jeans, diadems and leather jackets, and where they burst into song when the moment is right.

But what would your **Three Musketeers** look like? Sound like? Where is it set? Who are the actors? How do they fight?

THE PEOPLE

The key to any production is the cast, they are the heart and soul of your show. When you close your eyes, can you see what D'Artagnan looks like to you? How about Milady? Do they look like you?

Go to the front of the guide and look at the cast list. For each role find a picture online of an actor or historical figure that you would choose to play each role. With that you can create your **Three Musketeers** facebook.

THE SET

Now, you have a cast, but where are they? Dumas' story takes place in Paris during the Renaissance, but for your production Paris can look however you want it to look: Downtown NYC, Tokyo at night, or your block. Think about this play, about these characters, what do you think would help an audience see it and understand the story?

Find three images that represent the world of your **The Three Musketeers**.

THE SOUND

What does your play sound like? Are there the harpsichords and cellos, horns and flutes of Dumas' theater? Are there beats and bass like The Acting Company's production? Music can be the heartbeat of a production, shedding light on your world.

Pick three songs from any artist that you think represent the sound of your **The Three Musketeers**.

THE CLOTHES

You've already picked the actors, but what are they wearing? What makes the D'Artagnan different from the other Musketeers? Are they casual or formal? Do they live today or a thousand years ago? Are they carrying swords or machine guns?

Find four images of people in clothes that you think represent your production. Be sure to find one for the Musketeers and one for the Red Guard.

*Think when we talk of horses, that you see them
Printing their proud hoofs i' the receiving earth;
For 'tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings*

- Henry V, Prologue

PARENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Contains adult themes, mature language, stylized violence, and adult situations (drinking, teen suicide, murder). Created for mature audiences.

MORE RESOURCES AVAILABLE ONLINE

www.theactingcompany.org



Council on
the Arts