

# Theater: AN OCTOROON (Fountain Theatre Live)



by [Jim Allen](#) on [May 11, 2021](#)

in [Theater-Los Angeles](#)

Casting is complete and rehearsals have begun for the **Los Angeles premiere** of a radical, incendiary and subversively funny Obie award-winning play by **Branden Jacobs-Jenkins**. Performances of *An Octoroon* will inaugurate the **new outdoor stage** at **The Fountain Theatre** on **June 18** after four public previews. Performances will continue **through Sept. 19, 2021**.

**Judith Moreland** directs Jacobs-Jenkins's outrageous deconstruction of a moustache-twirling melodrama by 19th century playwright Dion Boucicault. **Matthew Hancock** stars as a modern-day Black playwright struggling to find his voice among a chorus of people telling him what he should and should not be writing. He decides to adapt his favorite play, Boucicault's *The Octoroon*, an 1859 melodrama about illicit interracial love. The Black playwright quickly realizes that getting White, male actors of today to play evil slave owners will not be easy... so, he decides to play the White male roles himself — in whiteface. What ensues is an upside down, topsy-turvy world where race and morality are challenged, mocked and savagely intensified. A highly stylized, theatrical, melodramatic reality is created to tell

the story of an octoroon woman (a person who is one-eighth Black) and her quest for identity and love. The cast includes **Rob Nagle** as Boucicault; **Hazel Lozano** as the production assistant; **Mara Klein** as the octoroon, Zoe; and **Vanessa Claire Stewart** as Dora, a rich Southern belle in love with the plantation owner (who is also played by Hancock). **Leea Ayers**, **Kacie Rogers**, and **Pam Trotter** portray three startlingly modern slave women.

*An Octoroon* brutally satirizes racial stereotypes in a funny and profoundly tragic whirlwind of images and dialogue that forces audiences to look at, laugh at, and be shattered by America's racist history.

"The more you experience this play, the more it turns into something else," says Moreland. "It's an extraordinary piece of theater — hilarious, but also shocking, profound, moving... and designed to provoke and offend. We have a terrific group of actors who are completely game and up for the challenge. It's a celebration of how theater can both move you and change lives."

*An Octoroon*

Fountain Theatre, 5060 Fountain Avenue (at Normandie)  
runs June 18 through Sept. 19

Fri-Mon at 7, (except Saturday, June 19, which will be  
at 5pm

dark July 30 through Aug. 2 and Aug. 27 through Aug.  
30

previews June 11-13 and 16 at 7

for tickets range (\$25-\$45; Pay-What-You-Want seating  
every Monday night,

call (323) 663-1525 or go to [www.FountainTheatre.com](http://www.FountainTheatre.com).