



water well

515 W 46<sup>th</sup> Street  
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www.waterwell.org  
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Ensemble

Happy Anderson  
Hanna Cheek  
Lauren Cregor  
Rodney Gardiner  
Brian McMullen  
Arian Moayed  
Joe Morse  
Nicole Parker  
Elizabeth Payne  
Tom Ridgely  
Kevin Townley

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Peter March  
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Mandy Patinkin  
Daniel Stern

## *The/King/Operetta At YOUR Theater*

The last year in the life of Martin Luther King was exactly 40 years ago. Between April 4, 1967 and April 4, 1968 he broke with rank and file civil rights activists and came out strongly against the war in Vietnam. He also began mobilizing his largest and most ambitious act of civil disobedience – the Poor People’s Campaign – aimed at dislocating major American cities, beginning with Washington. And through it all he wrestled constantly with personal demons: extreme exhaustion, doubts about actual progress made over the previous decade and intense feelings of unworthiness. Yet we seldom hear about this rich and important period of King’s life. Every year on his birthday we are reminded of his victories desegregating the South and his untimely end in Memphis, but little time is spent talking about what he did in between. Why? Could it have something to do with the fact he was widening his compass from civil rights to human rights? Could it be because he was shifting his focus from racism to address materialism and militarism – speaking out fearlessly and fighting tirelessly against war and poverty?

This more radical King doesn’t fit into the tidy image of we have of him as a noble Baptist preacher. From where we stand now segregation is so unambiguously wrong, so unimpeachable a cause, that it’s taken for granted to celebrate the man who brought it to an end. But what about the man who demanded a unilateral withdrawal from an unjust war? What about the man who demanded his government devote massive funds toward rehabilitation of its poor? What about the man who demanded a job or an income for all Americans? This is the same man. These facets of King’s ever-evolving philosophy are inextricably bound to the moral courage he showed in Montgomery and Selma. His speeches and his activism from this period are in many ways even more in need of celebration now than his “I Have A Dream” or his “Letter From A Birmingham Jail”, because these questions are still unresolved. These are the words and deeds of King that as of yet have gone unheeded. These are the protests that weren’t written into law. This is the time – in 2008, the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death – that we need to hear from him again. We need him now more than ever. We need him as he was in the last year of his life.



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## THE CREATIVE TEAM

**Waterwell** (creator) Waterwell is a New York-based company of artists dedicated to the collaborative creation of new works for the theatre. It was founded in 2002 and since then has created eight original plays, two cabarets and a staged reading. Its continually evolving body of work encompasses original plays, adaptations of classic texts, solo shows and performance pieces. For each venture the actors, writers, directors, composers, musicians and designers work collectively to build the piece from the ground up. The *Village Voice* has called them, "Dynamic, resourceful and relentlessly entertaining." And *TheaterScene* says, "There's no way a written description can do justice to their blazing energy and inventiveness." Using a combination of research, improvisation and source texts, the ensemble devises each drop over the course of an extended rehearsal period. The resulting mixture of drama and vaudeville uses music and comedy as access points to address larger issues of power, class and race. The *New York Times* hails the work as, "Brilliant, original and inspired. Alive enough to surprise even the performers themselves," and *Theatermania* writes, "Waterwell has artfully staked a claim on our collective conscience."

**Tom Ridgely** (director) is a Waterwell co-founder and has directed *Life In Pink, Sweetness & Light, The Persians...a comedy about war with five songs, Marco Millions (based on lies)* [Drama Desk Nomination, Outstanding Director] and *The/King/Operetta*. Other NYC credits: *The Apple Sisters* (Gatewood, Johnson & Lowe) at the PIT, *The Play About The Coach* (Paden Fallis) at the Tank and *Paradigm* (Rob Reese) at Gotham City. Also for Waterwell: *Choo! Choo!* (actor/writer), *In On It* (actor), *Lost in Yemen; or the Bizarre Bazaar* (actor/writer), *Fuenteovejuna* (actor/writer), and *Stuck* (actor/writer). Regional: *Twelfth Night* (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park); *The Emperor's New Clothes, Li'l Red* and *Oh, Jack!* (Little Apple Theater Co.); and *Those Funny Little People* (Chicago, IL).

**Lauren Cregor** (composer/musical director) is a composer, singer and piano player. As a composer, she works with award-winning SettonSun Productions, SYREN Modern Dance, and has collaborated with Waterwell on *Fuenteovejuna, Stuck, Sweetness & Light, The Persians...a comedy about war with five songs* (NY IT Nomination), *Marco Millions (based on lies)* and *The/King/Operetta*. As a singer/songwriter, she performs regularly with her band at such venues as Joe's Pub, Knitting Factory and Fez. Her music was showcased last year's Midwest Music Summit. Her second album, *No Time For Shy* (Ten Good Records), won rave reviews from many, including New York's own WFUV-FM. [www.laurencregor.com](http://www.laurencregor.com)

**Rodney Gardiner** (Martin Luther King, Jr.) With Waterwell, Rodney Gardiner has devised and performed in *Stuck, Chill & Serve, Sweetness & Light, The Persians...a comedy about war with five songs, Marco Millions (based on lies)* and *The/King/Operetta*. He has performed his "Episodes in Blue", a portion of *Chill & Serve*, at the Lower East Side Festival, The GAWK II Festival and high schools around the tri-state area. Other NYC credits: *Pennsylvtucky* and *Watbanaland* (Epiphany Theatre Company). Regional credits: *Master Harold...and the Boys* (GableStage), *Man of La Mancha* and *Cymbeline* (Utah Shakespearean Festival). He also spent six years with The Colored Boy Crew doing guerilla theatre in Miami's inner city, performing in jailhouses, hospitals, rehab facilities, and street corners.

**Arian Moayed** (Lyndon Johnson, Jesse Jackson and others) NYC: Charles Mee's *Queens Blvd.* (Signature), *Masked*(DR2), *American Pilot*(MTC, dir. Lynne Meadow), Jeff Daniels' *Apartment 3A*, *Kite Runner*(dir. Wynn Handman), *Paradise, Again and Against*(New Georges) and *Homebody/Kabul*(BAM). Regional Credits: *Homebody/Kabul*(Steppenwolf), *As You Like It* and *Othello*(Utah Shakespearean Festival) TV: *MONY*(Series Regular, dir. Spike Lee) , all the *Law & Order's*, *Six Degrees*, and *Late Nite with Conan O'Brien*. Films: *Arranged* (upcoming), *The Christians*(upcoming), *Philiene Says Sorry* and *Church Story*. He also reads for NPR's Selected Shorts. Arian also is a Waterwell co-founder, he has acted/direct/devised *In On It*, *Lost in Yemen*, *Fuenteovejuna*, *Chill & Serve*, *Sweetness & Light*, *The Persians...*, *Marco Millions (based on lies)* and *The/King/Operetta*.

**Kevin Townley** (J. Edgar Hoover, James Bevel and others) With Waterwell, has written/acted in *Marco Millions (based on lies)* and *The/King/Operetta*. He recently played the high school incarnation of Eddie Izzard's character, Prof. Bedlam, in Ivan Reitman's *My Super Ex-Girlfriend*. Recent credits include *Shockheaded Peter*(Playwrights Horizons) and John "Lypsinka" Epperson's *My Deah*(Abingdon). He has performed his one person show, 'Let's Get Lost: Amelia Earhart Sings the Blues' at Joe's Pub and Ars Nova. Kevin also sings in the band Electric Fiction: [www.electricfiction.com](http://www.electricfiction.com)

**Hanna Cheek** (Joan Didion, Coretta Scott King and others) With Waterwell, Hanna has devised and performed in *Chill & Serve*, *Sweetness & Light*, *The Persians...a comedy about war with five songs*, *Marco Millions (based on lies)* and *The/King/Operetta*. With The Pumpkin Pie Show: *Junta High (PS122)*, *Cardiac Shadow*(PS122), *Saint Hanna...* (The Kraine Theater), *Ringside Seats*(Belt Theatre), *Rise Perverts Rise*(Red Room), *Big Top*(Red Room) and *The Birds and the Bees*(Red Room). Other NYC Credits: *The Amulet*(78th Street Lab), *First You're Born*(Playwrights Horizon) and *Broken Boughs*(Blue Heron Arts Center). London credits: *Lady Macbeth*(Bridge Lane Theatre). TV credits: *The West Wing*, *Titus* and MTV's *Undressed*.

**Elizabeth Payne** (costume designer) With Waterwell, Elizabeth costume designed *The Persians*, *Marco Millions (based on lies)* and *The/King/Operetta*. Elizabeth has been designing costumes for over 10 years in 7 different states for theatre, dance, film, haunted houses, and opera. This is Elizabeth 's fourth production with Waterwell. She also enjoys working with Keigwin and Company, a NY-based modern dance company. Past works include *Bushwars*(The Rattlestick Theatre), Larry Keigwin's *Angels of Anxiety*(The Duke at 42nd Street) and *Natural Selection*(American Dance Theatre, NC), *Fortinbras*(Julliard School), *She Loves Me* and *Grand Hotel*(NYU), and *Zombie Prom*(The Circuit Theatre, TN). Elizabeth has worked for The Playhouse on the Square (Memphis, TN), The Santa Fe Opera, The Berkshire Theatre Festival, and The Goodspeed Opera.



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Omar Metwally Nominee, *Tony Award*  
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Daniel Stern Actor, *Breaking Away, Home Alone, etc.*