



Leadership Biographies

MCC Theater is one of the only theaters in the country led continuously by its founders, Artistic Directors Robert LuPone, Bernard Telsey, and William Cantler. The three were members of a collective of theater artists who led peer-based classes to support their own artistic development outside the academic or professional framework available to them at the time. Those classes, begun in 1984, led to the founding of the company as a nonprofit entity in 1986, which allowed the company to begin producing the plays the collective had been developing. The tenants of collaboration, education, and community remain at the core of MCC Theater's programming today.

Robert LuPone – Artistic Director and Co-Founder

Robert LuPone is recognized for his work as an actor in film, television, and theater. LuPone has performed on Broadway in *A Thousand Clowns*, *True West*, *A View from the Bridge*, *Zoya's Apartment*, *Saint Joan*, *The Magic Show*, *Late Nite Comic*, *West Side Story*, and *Jesus Christ Superstar*. His numerous film and television appearances include roles in *Billions*, *The Affair*, *Smash*, *Gossip Girl*, *A Gifted Man*, *Gravity*, *Breaking Point*, *Funny Games*, *Royal Pains*, *Then She Found Me*, *Law & Order*, *The Door in the Floor*, and a recurring role as Dr. Cusamano in *The Sopranos*. He won a Joseph Jefferson Award for his role as Crow in *Tooth of the Crime*, an Emmy nomination for his work on *All My Children*, and a Tony nomination for his role as Zach in the original cast of *A Chorus Line*. From 2005 to 2011 he was the Director of the New School for Drama's MFA program at the New School University. LuPone has a BFA in dance with a music minor from Juilliard where he studied under Antony Tudor, José Limón, and Martha Graham.

Bernard Telsey – Artistic Director and Co-Founder

Bernard Telsey is a distinguished casting director who opened his own casting office in 1988. Since then, he—along with his staff of 22 casting directors, associates, and assistants—have cast such Broadway shows as *Rent*, *Wicked*, *Hairspray*, *In the Heights*, *Kinky Boots*, *Hamilton*, and many more, as well as countless national tours, Off-Broadway productions, and regional theater productions across the country. Telsey is currently casting the upcoming Showtime drama *I'm Dying Up Here* and Netflix's reboot of *One Day at a Time*. On television, Telsey has worked on *The Family* (ABC), *Grease! Live* (Fox), *The Wiz Live!* (NBC), *Masters of Sex* (Showtime), *Smash* (NBC), and *The Big C* (Showtime). Telsey won an Emmy Award for casting the pilot of *Ugly Betty* and was nominated for another for *The Big C*. He won an Independent Spirit Award for his work on *Margin Call* and was the 2016 recipient of the Casting Society of America's Hoyt Bowers Award. Telsey serves as the New York Vice President of the Casting Society of America and on the Board of Governors for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Film credits include *Whiskey Tango Foxtrot*, *Into the Woods*, *A Most Violent Year*, *Rachel Getting Married*, *Across the Universe*, and *Pieces of April*. Telsey graduated from New York University with a degree in theater administration and acting.

William Cantler – Artistic Director and Co-Founder

William Cantler began at MCC directing productions including *Just Horrible* by Nicholas Kazan starring Bridget Fonda, and Alan Bowne's *Sharon and Billy* starring Marisa Tomei. He has been involved in the selection and production of every show in MCC's history, joining Bernard Telsey and Robert LuPone as an Artistic Director after a number of years serving as Associate Artistic Director. Cantler is also a Partner in Telsey + Company Casting, where he heads the Play Department. Broadway casting credits include *Hand to God* (also MCC), *Misery*, *Sylvia*, *China Doll*, *This Is Our Youth*, *All The Way*, *The Other Place* (also MCC), *The Normal Heart*, *The Goat*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Anna in the Tropics*, *Enchanted April*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, *A Moon for the*

Misbegotten, *Frozen* (also MCC), *Reasons to Be Pretty*, and many more. Along with his associates, Cantler casts all of MCC's productions, in addition to managing the casting for Atlantic Theater, Classic Stage Company, La Jolla Playhouse, New York Stage & Film, Signature Theater, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and various theaters around the country. He is the recipient of seven Artios Awards for Excellence in Casting, and has been a Lucille Lortel Awards Nominator for the past four seasons. Before moving to New York, Cantler was a drama major at Washington and Lee University.

Blake West - Executive Director

Blake West has served as Executive Director since 2007, after one year as MCC Theater's Director of Development. Prior to that he spent four years as Director of Planning and Projects at Manhattan Theatre Club, where he oversaw all event-based fundraising initiatives during MTC's capital campaign and Broadway expansion. Before his non-profit work, he was an Account Executive at The Karpel Group, where he worked on marketing campaigns for numerous Broadway and Off-Broadway productions, including *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *The Donkey Show*, *De La Guarda*, *The Laramie Project*, and others, as well as for television and film clients including Showtime, HBO, and Miramax Films. West graduated from Southern Connecticut State University, where he majored in English and minored in journalism.