



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CARMEN CASTILLO STEPS INTO LEAD ROLE OF
Z SPACE'S WORLD PREMIERE OF
THE RED SHADES:
*A TRANS SUPERHERO ROCK OPERA***

October 19–November 5, 2022

SAN FRANCISCO (September 27, 2022) – **Z Space**, one of the nation's leading laboratories for the development of new works, announced today that New York-based actress **Carmen Castillo*** will step into the role of "Ida" in the world premiere of *The Red Shades: A Trans Superhero Rock Opera*. *The Red Shades: A Trans Superhero Rock Opera* will premiere on Z Space's Steindler Stage, beginning **Wednesday, October 19 through Saturday, November 5, 2022**. Written by **Adrienne Price** with music by **Adrienne Price, Matt Fukui Grandy, and Jeanine Adkisson**, *The Red Shades* mixes elements of rock concerts and musical theater, to tell the story of Ida, a teenage trans girl, who runs away from her small-town life to join a gang of trans superheroes squatting in the Tenderloin.

Castillo's credits include *New Golden Age* by Karen Hartman (59E59), *The Big Mix*, conceived & directed by Tina Landau (Little Island), the 3rd National Tour of *Once* (Olney Theatre Center, Arden Theatre), and *Soon* by Nick Blaemire (Prima, 11th Hour).

Castillo says, "As a transfemme whose original avenue into performance was rock and roll, I dream of getting to work on projects like *The Red Shades*! The material is so rich and close to my heart, and I can't wait to see what this amazing team of queer artist puts together."

Castillo joins a cast of talented San Francisco Bay Area actors. The other trans superheroes will be played by **Ezra Reaves** (Tommy), **Chris Steele** (Genevieve), and **B Noel Thomas*** (Sherry). **Adam KuveNiemann** plays the villains (Sheriff Lear, Ida's Dad, and Doctor Smile). The ensemble includes the multi-talented **Julio Chavez**, **May Ramos**, and **Romelo Urbi** who all play a variety of roles. The band features **KB Boyce** (bass), **Fureigh** (guitar), **Blair Switch** (drums), and **Sid Quinsaats** (keys).

Z Space has been developing *The Red Shades* since 2018, and extends deep gratitude to Tommy Clifford-Carlos whose artistry and passion was pivotal to the development of the role of Ida during Z Space's July 2019 workshop and January 2020 reading.

Tickets (available on a sliding scale of \$0-\$50) are now available online at zspace.org/redshades. Opening night/press night will take place on Saturday, October 22.

The Red Shades is co-directed by **Rotimi Agbabiaka** and **Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe**, with musical direction by **Matt Fukui Grandy** and **Sid Quinsaats**, and choreography by **Stacey Printz**.

*member, Actors' Equity Association

THE RED SHADES

A TRANS SUPERHERO ROCK OPERA



About Z Space

Z Space, based in the Mission District of San Francisco, is one of the nation's leading laboratories for the development of new works. Founded in 1993, Z Space celebrates its 29th anniversary in 2022, continuing its mission to empower artistic risk, collaboration, and camaraderie amongst artists, audience, and community in the service of creating, developing, and presenting new work. Operating two venues, an 83-seat black box and a 244-seat main stage, Z Space fills an essential role in the Bay Area's arts ecology. Keystone initiatives include New Work, a development, production, and presentation program that supports artists and ensembles from conception to realization of unique works; Word for Word, a resident theatre company that transforms works of literature verbatim to the stage; Youth Arts, an arts education program promoting literacy and creativity; and the curated rental and residency programs which open our venues for use by a variety of other artists and arts groups.

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

WHAT: *The Red Shades*

WHEN: October 19–November 5, 2022 Thurs, Fri, Sat at 7pm; plus Wed Oct 19

WHERE: Steindler Stage, Z Space, 450 Florida Street, San Francisco, CA 94110

TICKETS: Tickets on sliding scale for \$0, \$15, \$30, \$50 at www.zspace.org.

FOR REFERENCE:

Fureigh		they/them	Band (Guitar)
Genesis	Fermin	they/them	Band (Guitar Sub)
KB	Boyce	they/them	Band (Bass)
Blair	Switch	she/her	Band (Drums)
Sid	Quinsaat	they/them	Band (Keyboard)
Carmen	Castillo	she/they	Cast (Ida)
B Noel	Thomas	they/them	Cast (Sherry)
Adam	KuveNiemann	he/him	Cast (Villain)
Ezra	Reaves	he/they	Cast (Tommy)
Chris	Steele	she/they	Cast (Genevieve)
Julio	Chavez	he/him	Cast (Ensemble)
May	Ramos	they/them/isuna	Cast (Ensemble)
Romelo	Urbi	he/him	Cast (Ensemble)
Nic	Sommerfeld	they/them	Cast (Understudy)

PRESS PHOTOS:



Carmen Castillo makes her West Coast debut here at Z Space with *The Red Shades*. Previous Credits include—New York: *New Golden Age* by Karen Hartman (59E59); *The Big Mix*, conceived & directed by Tina Landau (Little Island)—National Tour: *Once*—Regional: *Soon* by Nick Blaemire (Prima, 11th Hour); *Once* (Arden, Olney). Many thanks to Brian at Hell’s Kitchen Agency, Mom, and the dolls of New York. IG: [@carmenesperanza_](https://www.instagram.com/carmenesperanza_)

Photo by Leah James



B Noel Thomas is a multi-talented, award-winning performing artist and teacher, currently based in the Bay Area. With her versatile baritone-to-soprano voice it has allowed her to be able to play roles that run the gamut of gender and vocal range. A selection of their credits includes ABC's *American Idol* Season 3, *Theatre Forward 2021 Virtual Gala* (Featuring Jason Robert Brown, Kate Baldwin, George Salazar, Anika Noni Rose & More), *The Toxic Avenger* (Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award winner, Theatre Bay Area Award nominee), *Sister Act* (Deloris; Theatre Bay Area Award nominee) (She/Her) @BNoelThomas

Photo by Allison Paraiso Photography



Ezra Reaves (they/he) is a professional actor, comedian, experimental theater writer and performer, and ensemble member of the Neo-Futurists. They have recently joined the cast of the GLAAD-nominated television show *4400* on the CW in the role of "Farraday". They've toured nationally and internationally with The Neo-Futurists, performed over 150 shows as the lead character in the immersive show *The Speakeasy* and performed locally at SF Playhouse, Shotgun, ACT, NCTC, and Magic Theater. In NYC they performed at LaMama Experimental Theater and PS122 as well as studied at Atlantic Acting Conservatory. As a comedian, Ezra has opened for Janeane Garofalo, Bob Odenkirk, John Hodgman, Paul F. Tompkins and even shared the stage with Michael Ian Black at SF Sketchfest. Last year, Ezra Reaves and writing partner Amy Langer co-founded Tarot & Palm Theatre and wrote and produced a sold-out extended-run of the critically-acclaimed immersive show *The Program*. In 2023, Tarot & Palm will be taking on the classic YA novel, *The Outsiders*, and adapting it for the stage through a trans lens, commissioned and funded by The San Francisco Playhouse. More at www.ezrareaves.com.

Photo by Leah Huebner



Chris Steele (they/them) is a queer trans nonbinary performance artist, writer, and activist. Their work centers on highlighting queer narratives throughout history and combating bigotry and white supremacy. As an actor, they have performed with companies across the Bay including We Players, NCTC, Cutting Ball, SF Shakespeare Festival, and SF Playwrights Festival. As a writer they premiered adaptations of *Miss Julie*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Dracula* with queer collective Poltergeist Theatre Project; had short plays produced by The Pear, PlayGround, and Cutting Ball; debuted their solo drag show *The Bride* with PlayGround Solofest; and were commissioned by Custom Made to adapt *The Tempest*. Their award-winning drag personas Polly Amber Ross and Peter Pansexual can be found on instagram @pollyandpeter.

Photo credit Nic Candito.



Adam KuveNiemann (he/him) is making his Z Space debut with *The Red Shades*. Other credits include *Exit Strategy* (Aurora Theatre Company), *The Great Khan* (SF Playhouse), *The Gentleman Caller* (New Conservatory Theatre Center), *Big: The Musical* (Berkeley Playhouse), *Reefer Madness* (Ray of Light Theatre), *Arcadia* (Shotgun Players), and understudying *Angels in America* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre). Adam is also co-host of the podcast *Green Eggs...and Man?* a wild, improvisatory ride through the pages of Dr. Seuss' breakfast-themed classic—close-reading just one page per episode. Learn more on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or coolwebsite.pizza (a real website that Adam actually pays for). www.AdamKuveNiemann.com

Photo by Ben Krantz



Julio Chavez (he/him) is excited to make his Z Space debut with *The Red Shades*! Favorite credits include Usnavi in *In the Heights* (Custom Made Theatre Co.), Brad in a fully immersive production of *The Rocky Horror Show* (Ray of Light Theatre, SF OASIS), the West Coast premiere of *American Psycho* (Ray of Light Theatre), and *Wolf in Into the Woods* (Woodminster Summer Musicals).

Photo by Andy Strong ([A Strong Photo](#))



Romelo Urbi (he/him) is a Bay Area artist and recent graduate of Cal Poly SLO. He is delighted to be making his Z Space debut in *The Red Shades*. Favorite credits include Seymour in *Little Shop of Horrors* (Berkeley Playhouse), Jack in *Into the Woods* (Berkeley Playhouse), Jamie in *The Last Five Years* (Cal Poly SLO), and Melchior in *Spring Awakening* (Ghostlight Theatricals).

@romelourbi

Photo by Carla Pangan



May Ramos (they/them) is a queer, Ilokano actor and educator. They have been seen in theaters all around the Bay Area, including Shotgun Players, Killing My Lobster, Custom Made, Feinstein's, Inferno Theatre, and more. They are also a burlesque performer! This is their first main stage show with Z Space, and they feel honored to be telling this story. They dedicate this show to all the trans Black and brown people of history who have made it possible to be our authentic selves today.