

2024, [CURRENT FESTIVAL](#) FESTIVAL

The Rock & The Hard Place

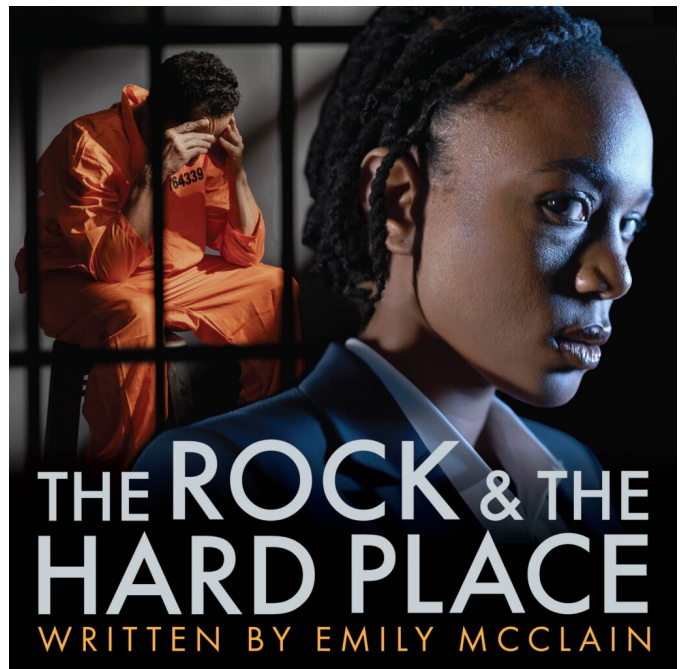
Directed By [Kyle Brumley](#)

Written By [Emily McClain](#)

Entering the repertory on August 16 will be Emily McClain's *The Rock & The Hard Place*, a powerful drama about a young woman's desperate efforts to free her innocent father from Death Row. Emily's play is the winner of the 2024 Essential Theatre Playwriting Award, the competition that is exclusively dedicated to the work of Georgia writers, with the winner getting both a full production and a cash prize of \$1,000.

Audience Advisories: This play deals with serious issues regarding injustice and the death penalty. There will be physical violence and a gunshot onstage.

[Buy Tickets!](#)



Performance Schedule

Thursday August 15 (8pm Preview)

Friday August 16 (8pm Opening)

Sunday August 18 (7pm)

Monday August 19 (8pm Industry Night)

Saturday August 24 (8pm)

**6:30pm preshow panel with the [Georgia Innocence Project](#)*

Sunday August 25 (2pm)

Saturday August 31 (8pm)

**post-show talkback with Mary Catherine Johnson of [New Hope House](#) and Cathy Harmon-Christian with [Georgians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty](#).*

Sunday September 1 (2pm)

In The Press

[ArtsATL Review: 'The Rock & the Hard Place' is a harrowing look at race and our justice system](#)

What Audiences Are Saying

"thought-provoking and heartbreaking"

"I was left speechless. The reality of injustices within our legal system especially with work related to the Georgia Innocence Project."

"It was stunning. A compelling play about an important subject."

"Everyone needs to see this play."

Cast:

Alan Tully: Roger Payano
Elsie Tully: Indya Bussey
Russell Wyatt: Chase Steven Anderson
Jeremy Hollingbrook: Durell Brown
Lauren Jacobson: Jennifer Brown
Rashida Mahmoud: Mala Bhattacharya
Lance Matthews/Guard: Ali Bhamani

Artistic Team:

Playwright: Emily McClain
Director: Kyle Brumley
Stage Manager: Moira Dean
Assistant Stage Manager: Terry Kiser
Intimacy Director: Kristin Storla
Scenic Designer: Adam Pagdon
Lighting Designer: Harley Gould
Projections Designer: Victoria Nation
Sound Designer: Fred Philp
Costume Designer: D'Mya Tabron
Props Designer: Kyle Brumley

Meet the Playwright: Emily McClain

Emily is thrilled to see her work back at Essential Theatre this year! Her play *Slaying Holofernes* was co-winner of the 2019 Essential Theatre Playwriting Award. She is a two-time finalist for the Risk Theatre Tragedy competition with her plays *Children of Combs* and *Watch Chains* (2020) and *The Rock & The Hard Place* (2021), which was also named the winner of the 2024 Essential Theatre Playwriting Award and is playing in this year's festival! Recently, she won the William Faulkner Literary Award for her play *What the Water Gave Me* and the Texas Nonprofit Theatre Best New Play for her play *Copper Angel*. She was a finalist in the Del Shores New Play Competition and received a reading at Out Front Theatre for her play *The Poet, The Spy, and the Dark Lady*. Emily is looking forward to presenting her play *PLAN B* as part of the SheATL Festival at 7 Stages in September. More of her work can be found on New Play Exchange. Thank you to Peter, Kyle, and the incredible cast and crew of *The Rock & The Hard Place*! Big love to B, G, and both Es. Thank you, dear audience, for being here supporting live theatre and new plays!

