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## **UNUSUAL SUSPECTS THEATRE CO APPOINTS NEW BOARD OFFICERS WITH ENTERTAINMENT EXECUTIVE, LYNNETTE RAMIREZ, AS CHAIR**

**Los Angeles, CA** - The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company (USTC), now in their 32nd year serving Los Angeles youth, has appointed new executive board officers as of July 2025. **Lynnette Ramirez, President of Bassett Vance Productions, has stepped into the leadership role as Board Chair** and joining her will be **Vice Chair—Chris Quintos Cathcart, Treasurer—Grace Del Val, and Secretary—Melissa Srbnovich**. The changeover is poised to help The Unusual Suspects conclude their five-year strategic plan of building capacity and enhancing programs.

Since its founding, The Unusual Suspects has been intertwined with supporters and board members inside the entertainment industry, but the executive team is excited about the growth potential of the board to include insights from other industries. When discussing **her vision, Lynnette Ramirez said**, “As Board Chair, I see tremendous opportunity in **building a dynamic board that reflects the diversity and innovation of Los Angeles**. My goal is not only to sustain the transformative work The Unusual Suspects does with youth, but to amplify it—by engaging business, civic, and cultural leaders who share our vision of impact through arts education.”

With a mission to mentor, educate and enrich youth in under-resourced communities through the creation of collaborative original theatre, The Unusual Suspects’ Staff and Board of Directors are committed to increasing arts access and using theatre as a platform for youth to discover the power of their voices. “This influx of new, passionate leadership on the Executive Board is bringing a great deal of energy and momentum to the organization,” stated **Nick Williams, Chief Advancement Officer** at The Unusual Suspects.

**Executive Board Bios:**

**Lynnette Ramirez** is President of Bassett Vance Productions, the company she runs alongside Angela Bassett and Courtney B. Vance. With more than 25 years of experience, she has built a reputation as a visionary producer and trusted creative partner. She most recently executive produced the NAACP Award-nominated HEIST 88 for Showtime, starring Courtney B. Vance. Her career spans senior posts at Fuse Media, CBS Television Studios' 20K, and Very Tall Productions, where she contributed to groundbreaking series such as BIG FREEDIA: QUEEN OF BOUNCE, FLUFFY BREAKS EVEN, TRANSCENDENT, and the award-winning RED TABLE TALK.

Beyond producing, Lynnette is committed to mentorship and education. She teaches in the graduate program at Loyola Marymount University's School of Film and Television and leads workshops on personal storytelling for aspiring professionals. Besides serving as Board Chair of The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company, she also sits on the boards of Color Entertainment and the Center for Scholars & Storytellers.

**Chris Quintos Cathcart** is an independent film financier who works to bring access to underrepresented filmmakers. Her career in finance grew out of a deep frustration with being a Filipina-American actor who could never find interesting roles for her "type." She believes there are plenty of BIPOC, LGBT+ and disabled filmmakers who are not only ready, but undeniably bankable. Her credits include Sean Wang's DIDI, Elegance Bratton's THE INSPECTION, and most recently John Early's MADDIE'S SECRET - debuting at TIFF 2025.

She is proud of her partnerships with Antigravity Academy on their Screenwriters Camp for first-time filmmakers, and A Bunch of Savages for their Savage 23 short narrative filmmaking competition for Filipino-Americans. She is a board member of The Los Angeles Regional Food Bank, as well as Vice Chair on The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company's board, and a former board member at Killing My Lobster in San Francisco.

**Grace Del Val** is a senior executive serving as Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel at Bad Robot Productions. Since joining Bad Robot in 2020, she has shaped the company's legal, financial, and strategic operations. Grace also held key roles in entertainment law and business affairs at Alcon Entertainment, A+E Television, and Sony Pictures Entertainment. Grace started her career in corporate law at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP.

Variety magazine named Grace as one of the top 20 in-house entertainment attorneys in 2023, citing that they were "some of the most influential, unsung heroes in entertainment." She was also on their 2025 Legal Impact List. Grace is excited to serve on her first nonprofit board as treasurer, and act as a key strategist on the Finance and Advancement Committees, for The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company.

**Melissa Srbnovich** is Executive Vice President of Development at PRX, a leading public media company. She directs the organization's fundraising strategy and partnerships, advancing PRX's mission to strengthen public media through storytelling, technology, and collaboration. Previously, Melissa was Director of Institutional Giving at Sundance Institute, where she built strategic relationships with foundations and government agencies

in support of the Institute's year-round programs. She has also held development positions at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, New York University, and the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM).

Beyond her work in fundraising, Melissa has produced theater and podcast projects and served as a strategic consultant for media and arts organizations including McSweeney's and Trusty Sidekick Theater Company. Besides serving on the executive board of The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company, she volunteers with Texas A&M University's College of Performance, Visualization & Fine Arts as a member of their Professional Partners in the Performing Arts advisory committee. She holds degrees from the University of Michigan and New York University.

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**About The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company:**

The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company (USTC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to mentor, educate, and enrich youth in under-resourced communities through the creation of collaborative original theatre. Founded in 1993 as a volunteer-run intervention program, The Unusual Suspects has grown into an award-winning theatre-arts education organization and is recognized as a leader in the fields of youth development, mentorship, and community building. All programs are free-of-charge for participants and are facilitated in K-12 Title I schools, community centers, continuation schools, and juvenile justice facilities with the goals of helping a new generation share their stories and closing the gap in arts education access for thousands of youth in Los Angeles County.

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