



NEGRO ENSEMBLE COMPANY

OUR VOICES, OUR TIME: ONE-ACT PLAY FESTIVAL

WORLD PREMIERES | PHILADELPHIA DEBUT

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Karen Brown

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER & PROJECT DIRECTOR Jessica Prince

CLIPPER CUT NATION

PLAYWRIGHT Cris Eli Blak

DIRECTOR Ralph McCain

I DON'T DO THAT

PLAYWRIGHT Mona R. Washington

DIRECTOR Petronia Paley

WHAT IF...?

PLAYWRIGHT Cynthia Grace Robinson

DIRECTOR Daniel Carlton

SATURDAY, **OCTOBER 8** @ 2 PM

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Annenberg Center, Harold Prince Theatre

There will be two intermissions.



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PROGRAM NOTES

OUR VOICES, OUR TIME CAST

CLIPPER CUT NATION

MOE Benjamin Rowe

PRENTICE LEROI Alton Ray

JACKIE RUTH Abel Santiago

SANFORD Steven Peacock Jacoby

I DON'T DO THAT

ADE Bernard Scudder

NORAH Alyssa Carter

MARY CATHERINE Khadija Bangoura

SIMON Alleyne Owen

WHAT IF...?

MOMMY Sandra Fay

KIANDRA Alyssa Carter

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The mission of the Negro Ensemble Company, Inc. (NEC) is to provide African-American, African and Caribbean professional artists with an opportunity to learn, to work, to grow and to be nurtured in the performing arts. The NEC presents live theatre performances by and about Black people to a culturally diverse audience that is often under-served by the theatrical community.

Cris Eli Blak (Playwright)

Blak's work has been performed off-Broadway, in London, Canada and Ireland. He's currently the recipient of the Emerging Playwrights Fellowship from The Scoundrel & Scamp Theatre and a selected participant of the Kennedy Center Playwrights Intensive. He strives to create work that reflects the world we live in.

Cynthia Grace Robinson (Playwright)

Robinson is an award-winning playwright, recently awarded the "Not a Moment, But a Movement" commission with Center Theater Group. Works include *Freedom Summer* (NCBlackRep); *Dancing on Eggshells* (Billie Holiday Theatre); *Passing* (New Perspectives Theatre); *Gold Star Mother* (EstroGenius); *Ascension* (NYCFringe); and *Thunder: A Musical Memoir* (NYCFringe). CynthiaGraceRobinson.com

Mona R. Washington (Playwright)

Washington is an award-winning playwright, librettist and activist. A 2021 New Jersey Artist Individual Fellowship recipient, her plays have been performed in Italy and France, as well as the United States.

Daniel Carlton (Director)

Carlton is an award-winning Harlem-based actor, storyteller, playwright, poet, director and teaching artist who has appeared on New York, national and international stages. His work has also been presented in schools, jails, homeless shelters, libraries and every imaginable place there is to perform. Recent projects include: writer/director of *March On* (Apollo Theater, National Black Theater Festival, York College, Playhouse Square Wilmington, Community Tour) and *Pigfoot Mary Says Goodbye To The Harlem Renaissance* (Metropolitan Playhouse, Negro Ensemble Company Tour Showing, Community Works School Tour, Kumble Theater and more).

Carlton is currently directing the national tour of *Jabari Dreams of Freedom* by Nambi E Kelley and its recent run at the New Victory Theater in NYC. He also directed the national tour of *Freedom Riders* (Mad River Theater Company), performed multiple characters in the national tour of *Finding North* by David Gonzalez, is developing a commissioned work with co-writer Nambi E Kelley, and is directing a new hybrid, digital and live play entitled *This Ability* for Chicago Children's Theater. *The Eagle in Harlem*, one of his storytelling shows for younger audiences, has been seen by thousands of school-age children. His roots as an actor with NEC include performing in *Day of Absence* (50th anniversary season), *Perry's Mission*, and many years back, receiving his Equity card for his role in *Anchorman* by NEC alum Paul Cater Harrison.

Ralph McCain (Director)

McCain recently directed the play *Thurgood*, whose star, Doug Wade, won a 2020 AUDELCO Award for Best Solo Performance as well as *The Chickens Come Home to Roost* by Laurence Holder for New Federal Theatre and *A Raisin in the Sun* at the American Theatre of Actors in New York City. His acting roles have included the role of Jim Bono and Gabe in *Fences*, Boyd Henry in *Sundown Names Night Gone Things* and Sunday in New Federal Theater's production of *The Most Dangerous Man in America*. Other stage credits include the portrayal of A. Phillip Randolph in the play *The Good Fights*, Elijah Muhammad in The H.A.D.L.E.Y. Players production of *The Devil* (AUDELCO nominee Best Lead Actor), Rev. Charles Dupree in The Billie Holiday Theatre's production of *The Right Reverend Dupree in Exile* (AUDELCO nominee Best Lead Actor), Sweets Crane in *No Place To Be Somebody*, Wining Boy in *The Piano Lesson* for The Tennessee Repertory Theatre and Black Spectrum Theatre, and Frank in *Flyin' West*. Television credits include *One Life to Live*, *Another World* and *The Sopranos*; and independent film *Flowers* (SXSW Film Festival), and a soon-to-be-released short film, *un•bind*.

Petronia Paley (Director)

Paley is an award-winning actress, director, playwright and teacher. Some of her recent directing credits include *Henry IV, Part 1*, *Purchase College 2022*; *Three Mothers* (staged reading) Capital Repertory Theatre 2022; and *Looking for Leroy*, New Federal Theatre 2021.

Benjamin Rowe (Moe)

Rowe is a New York-born and based actor. He is honored and thrilled to be joining this production, and even more so to be part of an institution that has done and is doing such meaningful work. As always, Rowe must thank his wife, Dawn, and their children, Julian, Da'Wren, Jahanna and Indirabelle, for sharing him with the creative world and for their support.

Alton Ray (Prentice Leroi)

Ray is a northern California native who moved to New York to get his BFA from the Acting Conservatory at SUNY Purchase. He was last seen onstage in August at 48 Hours in Harlem Inc. in the play *The Chosen Ones*. In May 2022, he portrayed Wayne Miner at The American Theater of Actors in the play *The Buffalo Hero of World War I*. He is also the creator of the web series, *Day One*, about a self-taught Black coder who came from the inner city and wants to leave his mark on Silicon Valley. Additional theatre credits: Neil Simon's *Rumors* at The Blank Stage, Los Angeles; Sam Shepard's *Cowboy Mouth* at The New Collective Theater, Hollywood; amongst others. Instagram: @royalityshow

Abel Santiago (Jackie Ruth)

Santiago is an actor, poet, playwright and composer from Harlem. In 2016, he won the NYC branch and ended up a Top 10 finalist in the ESU National Shakespeare Competition. He has BA in theatre and performance from SUNY Purchase. He was recently seen in the off-broadway premiere of *For Colored Boyz*.

Steven Peacock Jacoby (Sanford)

Jacoby is a born and raised NYC actor and is in SAG-AFTRA and AEA. He trained at The Lee Strasberg Theatre Institute and has various professional credits in theatre, film, commercial and print. Jacoby is proud to be a part of this One-Act Play Festival.

Bernard Scudder (Ade)

Scudder is a native New Yorker and graduate of SUNY Purchase's Theatre and Performance program. Scudder is beyond thankful and thrilled for this opportunity! Credits include *The Comedy of Errors*, *What To Send Up When It Goes Down*, *The Rundown* with Robin Thede on BET and *Trunk Show*.

Alyssa Carter (Norah, Kiandra)

Carter is a recent graduate from SUNY Purchase BFA Acting Conservatory, and this production will be her Off-Broadway debut! Recent credits include *Henry IV, Part I* (Lady Percy), *Life Is a Dream* (King Basilio) and *Passage* (H/F), all at Purchase Repertory Theater. She is grateful to be here, with these actors, at this time. Thanks to her friends, family and conservatory members whom she keeps in her heart. Instagram: @asapalycat

Khadija Bangoura (Mary Catherine)

Bangoura greatly welcomes the opportunity to be with Negro Ensemble Company to premiere Mona R. Washington's *I Don't Do That*. Previous theatre credits include directing *Mad Little Reefers* by Michael Valladares for Fresh Fruit Festival and acting in *The Lathe of Heaven*, *Runaways* (Boston University), *Midsummer Night's Dream* (Stowe Theatre Guild), and also with Very Merry Theatre and Flynn Theatre in Burlington, VT. Bangoura is a graduate of Boston University, where she received a BFA in theatre arts. She is a lover of stories that speak truths without shame. Bangoura hopes you enjoy the show!

Alleyne Owen (Simon)

Owen was born in Antigua and Barbuda and raised in Queens, NY. His love for acting began in a youth program at Stella Adler Studio of Acting. Credits at Stella Adler include: Oberon and Theseus in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Cominus in *Coriolanus*, and Angel in *Jesus Hopped the A Train*. Owen is a recent graduate of Brooklyn College, where he earned his BFA.

Sandra Fay Williams (Mommy)

Williams has appeared in Brave New World Repertory Theatre's *Street Scene* and *Long Christmas Dinner*. Some of her other credits include performances in *Intimate Apparel*, *Vagina Monologues*, *May Violet Springs*, *Holes*, *The Little Prince* and in the world premieres of *This is Why I Whisper* and *Joan 3:16*. Her movie and TV credits include *Bull*, *Weekend Killer* and *I Love You...* She has also appeared in the web series *Blacker*.