



THE BOOK OF ME

A NEW PLAY
BY LEONARD HOUSE

DIRECTED BY CARLA STILLWELL



SEASON 33

DEVELOPED BY
MPAACT'S PLAYWRIGHT'S LABORATORY



MPAACT has been producing live theater for 33 seasons.

It's an amazing achievement considering our modest beginnings. We have endured economic downturns, funding cycle armageddons, a pandemic, and so much more.

Still, we treasure producing a full season of new work alongside extensive live and digital programming.

One of the things we think about a fair bit, is how to get more of you to invest in our work here. Our industry is struggling more than usual - with theaters of all shapes and sizes closing their doors forever. We know that you value our work because you come to the theater, you read our newsletters, and you subscribe to our podcast plays and *Listen Magazine*. Your support is vital to our sustainability.

We have doubled down on our investment in artists - crafting art. From live production to digital audio, from touring programs to arts education - MPAACT continues to support a diverse community of artists and stakeholders with a unique voice, grounded in our cultures and our collective experiences.

Consider telling a friend, bringing them to a show, gifting them an audio subscription or donating to MPAACT below. In doing so, you'll help us continue to provide quality cultural art. Your contributions will help to ensure another spectacular season of world premiere work.



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23 ARTISTS

4 PUBLISHED ANTHOLOGIES

2 BROADWAY PRODUCED WRITERS



is...

1 AMAZING CULTURAL INSTITUTION



CAST

Tamarus Harvell*Charlie*
Rita Wicks*Wanda*
Alexandria Crawford*Abby*
Heather-Grace Bach*Milly*
Ayleah Johnson.....*U/S*

SETTING

Present day Chicago.
The affluent suburbs of the North Shore.

ABOUT THE PLAY

As the old adage goes, “the road to Hell is paved with good intentions.” *The Book of Me* is a story about that road. It is the story of a mother who holds on too tightly, a daughter who is suffering from the emotional pains of being squeezed and the painful secrets, used like a vice grip, to hold this family together.

This play asks the audience to examine what makes someone a parent, and once that responsibility is taken on, what are the personal sacrifices required. Is love enough, or can love do as much harm as neglect?

The Book of Me is a powerful conversation about the definition of family.

WRITER’S NOTE

We are a global society. The choices that we make in our daily lives have ripple effects across the globe. It’s more than the cars we drive, the technology we use, or the foods that we eat - our most intimate, most sacred relationships can also have an international context.

Leonard House began this process drawn to the headlines about child trafficking for international adoption. Next came the process of exploring the often messy “business” of international adoption, and it’s poorly regulated patchwork of laws and covenants. In the end, Leonard settled on the things that were closest to home and closest to his heart - there is a family here - with a vulnerable child in crisis.

Sometimes the levers of drama are simple – what are the choices available to our characters? What are the repercussions of those choices? How do they live with the aftermath?

In our story, everything begins with love and need... Everything that follows - flows from a place deep inside us all. We all need... and from this comes the drama of our lives.

DIRECTOR’S NOTE

It has been my personal observation (for some time) that what we consider love, can do just as much damage to a child as any behavior we consider toxic in our society.

Out of love, we often make choices that rob children of their identity. We keep secrets with the intention to protect, without considering that children are observant and can often feel that something is missing from their story.

The Book of Me is a beautiful exploration of a family struggling with the tension between protective love and the difficult truth.

- *Carla Stillwell*

PROFILES



Tamarus Harvell (*Charlie*) is a proud MPAACT company member. He was last seen in *Native Son* (Lifeline) in the role of Bigger. He has been a part of numerous MPAACT productions including, *Tad in 5th City*, *Ezekiel's Wheel* (nominated for a Black Excellence Award for best production), and *By Association*. His voice work is also featured on numerous Podcast play titles including *Moon Women eat Pecan Pie*, *Project Uplift*, *Ezekiel's Wheel*, and *By Association*. Tamarus has worked with several theatre companies in Chicago including Black Ensemble, Raven and The Gift Theatre. He has starred in several short films that have premiered in different festivals across the United States, including Chicago's Black Harvest Film Festival. He is currently represented by Big Mouth Talent Inc. He would like to thank his wife and parents for their love and support.



Alexandria Crawford (*Abby*) is an actor, teaching artist, and arts activist. Originally from St. Petersburg, Florida, she's now based in Chicago. Alexandria's training includes a B.A. in Theatre Arts and English from Rollins College, and an M.F.A. in Acting from Northwestern University, where she was a member of the inaugural cohort.

Recent credits include *Pro-Am (u/s)* (First Floor), *Dance Nation*, and *Jump* (Northwestern), *Much Ado About Nothing* (St. Petersburg Shakespeare Festival), and *Joe Turners come and Gone* (American Stage). Alexandria is also an Equity Membership Candidate in Actor's Equity. For more about Alexandria visit: www.alexandriacrawford.com.



Rita Wicks (*Wanda*) is a classically trained actress who recently performed as Prison Mica in *Some Sort of Saint* (Bridge to Freedom). She is a ten year veteran of the stage and screen with 15 theatrical, film, and short film credits. Rita received her training from Illinois State Univ. and Columbia College (Chicago). She received her B.A. in 2022.

Rita's credits include *Is God Is* (Red Orchid) *The Blackside* (Congo Square), *Perdido*, and *Jane: Abortion and the Underground* (Cats Cradle). Ms. Wicks has also worked with Perceptions, Shattered Globe, The Gift, and Ghostlight Ensemble. Offstage, Rita is a Speech Coach at Home-wood Flossmore H.S., a content creator (TikTok) and a collaborator with American Immersion Theater crafting *Murder Mystery* improv shows. Rita is represented by Lori Lins Ltd. and is eternally grateful to God, her family, and friends for supporting her!



Heather-Grace Bach (*Milly*) is excited to make her debut on the MPAACT mainstage. A Montana transplant, her previous projects with the company include the post-production workshop of *Red Summer*, and a reading of Shepsu Aakhu's *The Companion*. Credits include: *Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins* (Strawdog), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Masque Alfresco), *Chicago* (Cutler Bro. Theatre), *Elf* (Lakewood Theatre), *West Side Story* and *Mamma Mia* (Stumptown Stages), *Into the Woods* and *Much Ado About Nothing* (Tom Miles Theatre).

Ms. Bach's choreography credits include *Cinderella*, *Annie*, *A Christmas Story*, *Chicago*, *Shrek: The Musical*, and *25th... Spelling Bee*. Vocal credits include *Ireland Choral Tour*, *Faure Requiem* (Carnegie Hall). Self-produced credits include: *Our First Time Concert* (Davenport's) and the short film *Examining* (From the Ground Up - Portland, OR).

www.heathergracebach.com Instagram @gracedbyyou



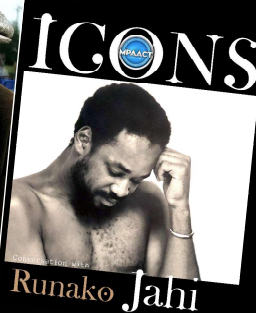
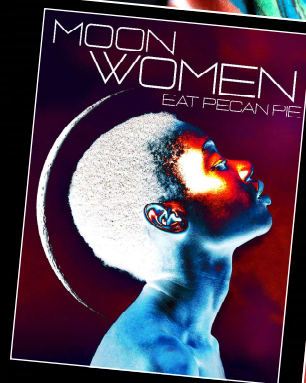
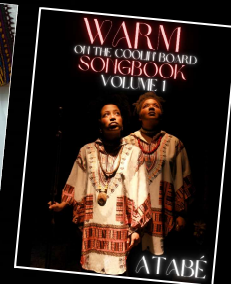
Ayleah Johnson (*U/S* and *voice over*) is a Chicago-based actor and voiceover artist, originally from Fayetteville, North Carolina. Ayleah has a background in public speaking and improv, having competed in National Speech & Debate and the varsity division of the Peaslee Debate Society at Swarthmore College. She has experience hosting corporate team-building improv workshops and performing in social media campaigns. Ayleah enjoys cosplay and competes in the Midwest's Grand Cosplay Competition for Craftsmanship and Performance.



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AN AUDIO MULTIVERSE

PRODUCTION



Carla Stillwell (*Director*) is an award-winning actor, playwright, producer, artistic director and has been an arts-in-education teacher for three decades.

She began her professional career as an actor in Chicago's storefront theatre community and quickly became inundated with the anti-black sentiments of the scene. She found herself cast in a show with an Afrikan Centered theatre company that was new to Chicago called MPAACT, which she made her artistic home for 22 seasons. In that time, she became a resident playwright and went on to spend my last 10 years with the company as the artistic director until 2018.

In 2019 Ms. Stillwell founded The Stillwell Institute for Contemporary Black Arts. This organization moves with a mission to recruit, develop and support contemporary Black artists and to teach art making in the Black community as a healing practice, a vehicle for social change and a viable career opportunity.

Carla spent 20 years working with Victory Gardens Theatre, Steppenwolf, MPAACT Theatre, C.A.P.E and eta Creative Arts Foundation in grades k-12 teaching all aspects of the making, performance and production of the theatrical discipline. In 2021 she joined the adjunct staff at The Theatre School at DePaul University.

Most recently, she was the Managing Director of Collaboracion Theatre for Social Change where a mission of working to engage people in empathy, thought, dialogue and action on critical social issues where she recently won 2022 and 2023 Regional Emmys for her work as the producer on *The Lost Story of Emmett Till: Trial in the Delta*, a collaboration between Collaboracion and NBC Universal/Chicago.

Ms. Stillwell is also pleased to announce her return to MPAACT as a full company member for the 2024-2025 production season.



Leonard House (*Playwright*) *The Book of Me* is the sophomore follow –up to Leonard's award winning debut work *One for the Road*. While this may be his second play, Leonard is no stranger to the theatre. He has been an actor in Chicago performing for a variety of companies, including Congo Square, American Theatre Co., ETA, and MPAACT where he is also a company member. Leonard has earned degrees from the Univ. of Louisville (MFA), Columbia College Chicago (MFA), and Dillard Univ. (BA).

Thanks to Carla Stillwell, my official partner in crime and personal dramaturg. Thank you for lending your critical eye and being able to help me tell the story that I wanted to tell. I will forever be grateful for your support and guidance. And to my MPAACT family - I'm down for y'all like four flat tires! Love y'all!



Lauren "LL" Lundy (*Production Stage Manager/Voice Over*) is MPAACT's Managing Producer, Director of Development, resident Director, and sometimes stage manager. Her favorite SM shows are always her most challenging. She reveled in the joys of *Red Summer*, our Broadway-sized new musical, complete with a live band, flying set pieces, and multimedia, along with the intimate multi-media production of *Ride or Die* by Shepsu Aakhu.

LL will be back in the director's chair for the world premiere of *The Promotion* by Joeseph Giovannetti this coming winter. In the meantime check out her expanded catalogue in audio media, where she helped launch MPAACT into the digital marketplace with PODCAST PLAYS. She had the joy of reimagining some of her favorite titles in "the Audio Multiverse" - *Warm on the Coolin' Board*, *Ezekiel's Wheel*, *Spoken Word*, *Swamp Baby* and *Starting Over*.



Shepsu Aakhu (*Set Design/Tech Director*) has been a designer and T.D. with MPAACT for more than three decades. His most recent work was *Tad in 5th City* (2024 revival) *Blackademics* (2023 revival) *Dandelions*, *Ezekiel's Wheel*, *Ride or Die*, *Pulled Punches*, *Spoken Word*, *One 4 the Road*, and *Swamp Baby*. His favorite designs for MPAACT include *Never the Milk and Honey*, *Swamp Baby*, *Tad in 5th City*, *Beneath A Dark Sky* (2008 revival), and *Kosi Dasa*.

MiLK (2008 revival), and *Notes from the Bottletree*.

Aidan Lynn Smith (*Lighting Design*) is grateful to be back designing for MPAACT. His selected lighting credits include: *[Title of Show]*(PrideArts), *Warm on the Coolin' Board*, *Blackademics*, *Ezekiel's Wheel*, *Ride or Die* (MPAACT), *The Birds*, *Escanaba in da Moonlight* (The Playhouse at White Lake), *A Happy Life*, *Medea* (Underground Theatre), and *Junie B. Jones The Musical* (ACWL). When Aidan isn't perched on a ladder deep in thought you can find him cooking or making ceramics. Aidan gives all his love to his partner, family, and friends. Check out more of his work at aidanlynnsmith.com

Evelyn Danner (*Costume Design*) is happy to be back with her MPAACT family having collaborated on more than a dozen previous productions. Other recent credits include August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean* (*Goodman*). Regional credit, 2022 production of *The Rainmaker* with Peninsula Players of Door County, Wisconsin. Chicago credits include *Don't Make Me Over-In Tribute to Dionne Warwick* (Black Ensemble Theater), *Red Summer*, *Crowns*, *Swamp Baby*, *Quark*, *Divine Order of Becoming*, *Bodies*, *Warm on the Cooling Board*, *When Good Broccoli Goes Bad*, *Blackademics*, *Sweet Home*, *Ten Square*, *Relative Hearsay*, *Milk*, *Trouble The Water*, *Bus Boyz* (Artist in Residence MPAACT) and film credit *The Gilded Six-Bits* (West Side Theater Guild).

Desta Sound (*Sound Design*) returns to MPAACT on the heels of a fabulous run with designs for the post-pandemic premieres of, *Pulled Punches*, *Red Summer*, *Ride or Die*, *Ezekiel's Wheel*, *Dandelions*, *Tad in 5th City* (revival). Anchored by Shepsu Aakhu, this design team continues to make MPAACT's "sound" the most distinctive in the city. Most recently, Desta Sound has had the privilege of designing sound for many of the audio titles in MPAACT's catalog of podcast plays. Sign-up and take a listen to the worlds that can be built entirely with sound and your imagination.

Caro Arana (*Props*) is excited to be working with MPAACT again following *Ezekiel's Wheel* and *Warm on the Coolin' Board*. Her selected credits are: *Always...Patsy Cline* (stage management at Raue Center for the Arts), *Seussical Kids and Jr.* (Charge Painter and Props Artisan), with experience Production Managing for both The Playhouse at White Lake and Western Michigan Univ. She would like to thank her friends, family, and partner for supporting her artistic endeavors.

Hilal Taddesse Tamrat (*Language Coach, Cultural Consultant and Voice Over*) last worked with MPAACT on the podcast play *SOST*. Over two decades Hilal has collaborated with MPAACT as a language coach, voice talent and cultural consultant. Her contributions can be seen in *The Abesha Conspiracy*, *By Association*, *SOST* and *Trouble the Water*, *Kivi Black* and *Kosi Dasa*.

Red Clay (*Original Live Music*) An ensemble of award winning multi-instrumentalists *Red Clay* has been creating/performing original works for MPAACT since 1992. Over the years *Red Clay* has performed under many monikers including: *Poh'ro*, *Slight Return*, *VLPK*, and *Obaki*. Awards include multiple Joseph Jefferson Citations and BTAA Awards. Our members continue to work in the Chicago music scene and can be seen in various local bands.

THE SOUNDSCAPE

Live Music, Samples & Effects

Red Clay and *Desta Sound* endeavor to create a lush soundscape textured with live and electronic elements. Improvisational in nature, our collaboration generates a versatile blend of sophisticated accompaniment which grows and changes with each performance. This approach to "sound" liberates the medium from its more traditional role of selected songs, buzzers and whistles, thereby allowing the soundscape too exist as both character and thematic carrier. Often this is an exercise in subtlety. The soundscape does not beg to be noticed, but rather exists as a catalyst, harnessing the director's interpretation, the playwright's intent, and the actor's urgency, planting the emotional content deep within the core of the viewer. In the end we do not wish to heard, we wish to be felt.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Director	Carla Stillwell
Playwright.....	Leonard House Jr.
Production Stage Manager	Lauren "LL" Lundy
Set Design.....	Shepsu Aakhu
Lighting Design.....	Aidan Lynn Smith
Sound Design.....	Desta Sound
Costume Design.....	Evelyn Danner
Properties.....	Caro Arana
Cultural Consultant.....	Hilal Tamrat
Technical Director.....	Shepsu Aakhu
Live Music.....	Red Clay
Production Photographers.....	Abboyé Lawrence and Shepsu Aakhu
Production Manager.....	Lauren "LL" Lundy

LISTEN

MAGAZINE

ARTFUL CONVERSATION

PODCAST PLAYS

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CARICE

Birth of a Dream

by Marissa Rubin

Shouldn't a daughter be able to dream in 10,000 languages? Not just in her mother's language, but in every language she can learn. It's a question that's been asked many times over the years, but only recently has it been asked in a way that is both poignant and powerful. In this new play, Carice is asked to 'bring the dream back to the dream' in a way that is both poignant and powerful.

ARPILE

THE COMPLEXITY OF SHARIBA RIBERS

by Amel Chabane

It's hard to believe that there are still people who don't know Shariba Ribers. She's been on TV, in movies, and in our hearts. She's been a role model for so many of us. But why? What makes her so special? It's not just her looks, or her talent, or her success. It's her heart. It's her soul. It's her story.

FEATURE ARTICLE

THE MPAACT SOUND

BOOK REVIEW BY PHIL FRIEDMAN

The MPAACT Sound is a collection of stories and experiences that have shaped the lives of many of us. It's a collection of voices that have been silenced, and a collection of voices that have been heard. It's a collection of stories that have been told, and a collection of stories that have not.

POINTER

Hubris

or how to build an arts legacy

by Harper Adkins

Hubris is a story about a group of people who have built a legacy for themselves. It's a story about a group of people who have worked hard and sacrificed a lot. It's a story about a group of people who have achieved something that many of us can only dream of. It's a story about a group of people who have made a difference in the world.

TRIPLE THREATS OF RED SUMMER

by Shariba Ribers

Triple Threats of Red Summer is a collection of stories and experiences that have shaped the lives of many of us. It's a collection of voices that have been silenced, and a collection of voices that have been heard. It's a collection of stories that have been told, and a collection of stories that have not.

Habana Cuba INSIGHTS FROM AN OUTSIDER

Insights from an Outsider is a collection of stories and experiences that have shaped the lives of many of us. It's a collection of voices that have been silenced, and a collection of voices that have been heard. It's a collection of stories that have been told, and a collection of stories that have not.

TIMELESS Andre Teamer

by Melinda Cole

Andre Teamer is a man who has lived a life of struggle and triumph. He is a man who has overcome all odds and emerged as a winner. He is a man who has shown us that anything is possible. He is a man who has inspired us to dream big and to reach for the stars.

ANDREA J. DYMOND AT THE HELM

by Melinda Cole

Andrea J. Dymond is a woman who has led a life of adventure and discovery. She is a woman who has explored the world and returned with stories and wisdom. She is a woman who has shown us that there is so much more to life than what we see. She is a woman who has inspired us to follow our dreams and to live our lives to the fullest.

Bronzeville NATIVE

by Melissa Goff

Bronzeville Native is a collection of stories and experiences that have shaped the lives of many of us. It's a collection of voices that have been silenced, and a collection of voices that have been heard. It's a collection of stories that have been told, and a collection of stories that have not.



MISSION

The Ma'at Production Association of Afrikan Centered Theater (MPAACT) is a professional, not-for-profit theater association founded in 1990 at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Our mission is to develop, nurture, and sustain original Afrikan Centered Theater (ACT) as a multi-disciplinary art form of American Theater. ACT is a genre of artistic expression grounded in the many cultures and traditions of the Afrikan continent and its Diaspora. With a vision focused upon new works and collaborative art, MPAACT shall produce and educate with the goal of bringing forth an understanding and appreciation of Afrikan Centered Theater and its inter-related disciplines.

THE COMPANY

Shepsu Aakhu*	Jared Gooding	Joshua X. Miller	Shariba Rivers
Ashley Coney	Tamarus Harvell	Sean R. Neron*	Carla Stillwell
Brittany Davis	Leonard House	Michaelyn Oby	André Teamer
Tina Fakhrid-Deen	Eddie Jordan III	Nadia Pillay	Shawn Wallace*
Mark Franklin	Lauren "LL" Lundy	Jelani Pitcher	Lauren Wells-Mann
Joseph Giovannetti	Melanie McCullough	Aum Mu Ra	

EMERITUS

Georges Blaise*	Carl Barnett*	William S. Carroll*
Daryl Charisse	Nambi E. Kelley	

ARTISTIC ASSOCIATES

Chuck Smith	Razor Wintercastle	Casey Diers	Lisa J. Willingham
Andrea J. Dymond	Jessica Wardell	Runako Jahi	Evelyn Danner
Deidre Searcy	Abboyé Lawrence		

ANGELS

Lennal "Sati" Word	Sharlet Webb	Ron White	Larry Nance	Terry Cullers
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MPAACT ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Executive Director/Producer.....	Reginald Lawrence
Managing Producer.....	Lauren "LL" Lundy
Literary Manager.....	Tina Fakhrid-Deen
Casting Director.....	Nadia Pillay
Graphic Design.....	Shepsu Aakhu
Information Technology.....	Jelani Pitcher
Web Design.....	Clutch Lundy
Marketing.....	Joshua X. Miller & Tamarus Harvell
Group Sales.....	Ael Diem

SUPPORT MPAACT

From live production to digital audio, from touring programs to arts education... MPAACT continues to support a diverse community of artists and stakeholders with a unique voice, grounded in our culture and our collective experiences. Your contributions will help to ensure another spectacular season of world premiere work. Thank you for making another season possible.



**DONATE
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FOUNDATION SUPPORT

MPAACT is supported in part by the generous support



INDIVIDUAL GIVING

Tiffany Trent, Sean Neron, Miriam Ex, J. Shayne, Hiwoté Tamrat, Hilal Tamrat, Shirley Carney, Efé McWorter, Chuck Smith, Dennis & Piedad Lundy, Julia Van Vliet, Shariba Rivers, Reginald Lawrence, Yocab Abdi & Hillina Tamrat, Tina Fakhrid-Deen, Lauren Lundy, Marcus Lawrence, Yvonne and Jason Lee, Lana Rogachevskaya, Charls S. Hall & Henry Bachofer, Phil Kohlmetz, Nic Dimond, Jenny Ricciardi,

SPECIAL THANKS

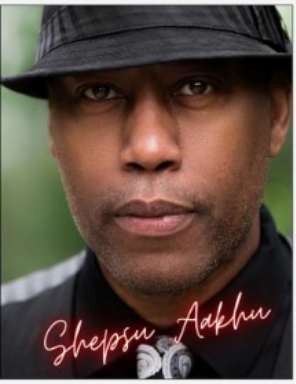


Hiwoté Tamrat, Hilal Tamrat, Shirley Carney, Efé McWorter, Dennis & Piedad Lundy, Razor Wintercastle, GBG INC, Julia Van Vliet, J. David Shanks, The Theater School at DePaul, Ael Diem, Ayla Donchin, the Ancestors

Antonio Lyons, Bradley Harbaugh, Bubba Figueroa, Danielle Aquiline, Khari Yasmeen, Amy Blumenthal, Sandi Davenport Belushi, Shawn Kennedy, Tracy Fulce, Megan Klein, Lullit Getachew, Anthony Brown, Temple Payne, Kristen Hren, Monica Backmon, Tim Elliott, Jeffrey Gural, Alejandro Lugo, Rosy Lugo, Jacqueline Bischoff, Dennis Adams, Tom Shea, Lynn Dieter, Robert Watts, Rebecca Feiler, Keith Adkins, Bert Suarez, Robert Frankel, Chad Eric Bergman, Lori Arter, Fin Coe, Lindsey Hewitt, Marla Muse, Randy James, Billie Hearrell, David Goodloe, Mel Lundy-Day, Michael Russell, Marina Franklin, Sara Henderson, Penelope Walker, Felischa Marye, Sheril Tyre, Ruth Johnston, Jennifer Mubarak, David Mauroner, Elizabeth Betty Biza, Barbara Netchert, Carlita Lowe, Michelle Goodman, Eleanor Seaton, Michelle Campbell, Kimberly Evans Killion, Marcia Thompkins, Kofi Lomotey & Aama Nahuja, Stenovia Jordan & Stephanie Gold.



WHO'S WRITING LISTSTEEN MAGAZINE



AMIRI BARAKA'S *Dutchman*

(LEROI JONES)

FEATURE ARTICLE

In 1963, LeRoi Jones, a 28 year-old poet from Newark, New Jersey, sat down and wrote a play, Jones's one-act work was more or less finished 24 hours after its inception. In his 1984 autobiography, the author (who, in 1967, abandoned his "slave name" to become Amiri Baraka, or Blessed Prince) wrote, "I can see now that the dramatic form began to interest me because I wanted to go beyond" poetry. I wanted some kind of action literature."

Whether she's eating an apple, taunting Clay or mocking his aspirations with bile and knowing... (You're an escaped nigger... You crawled through the wire and made tracks to my side)," Lula tears into Baraka's blight, into the poetry he finds in the nightmare of being. She embodies his ideas so utterly that one begins to think of *Dutchman* as a monologue.

Bill Cosby
HE DIDN'T MAKE THIS MESS, ALL BY HIMSELF

FEATURE ARTICLE

Such was our introduction to the "GREAT AND POWERFUL ONE" that know him? Was that even possible? Such revelations would have to wait until the final moments of the third reel - or the James Franco prequel of 2013.

You think you know someone. I certainly did. When I began the films interviews, I was sitting down with artists that I have known for decades. Frequent collaborators that have shared spaces with shared challenges and triumphs - and still barely knew them.

Why? Because the business of living is dense, as is the business of art-making. There is just so much going on. And the time to share all of that depth and density is fleeting.

For me, our time in the interviews space was a relief from the basic assumption -

J. Nicole Brooks
Writer/Director/Actor

IN CONVERSATION

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Brave Space
THE ART OF STAGED VIOLENCE

FEATURE ARTICLE

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REMEMBERING ERICA FAYE WATSON

FEATURE ARTICLE

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Dutchman opened in New York City on March 24, 1964, to perhaps the most excited acclaim ever accorded an off-Broadway production and shortly thereafter received the Village Voice's Obie Award.

In the 59 years since its opening, *Dutchman* has remained a mainstay of the American theater - An "angry little play" for some, a "muddle of conflicting motivations" for others, and an "indictment of America itself" for still others.

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Of Water and Moon
WATER SPIRITS AND BLACK CULTURE

FEATURE ARTICLE

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THE DEFIANT DORIS PAYNE

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Deep
INSIDE THE BLUES

FEATURE ARTICLE

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EFE MCWORTER MORE THAN FLAME

FEATURE ARTICLE

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The legend of the *Flying Dutchman*, an ghostly slave ship doomed for eternity, to sail the oceans and never make port inspired Jones, who then took the legend, ripped it from the nautical origins and transported it to a New York City subway. On this subway sit two individuals - a black man in a suit and tie, and a hyper-sexualized white woman, the latter who symbolizes white society and ultimately becomes the Black man's doom.

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The black man's name is Clay (not accidental). He's like actual clay in your hands, unformed, easily molded by the white world. He's trying to assimilate himself into white society - he's a black man losing himself, his identity, his race.

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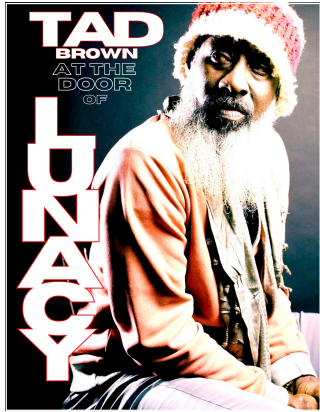
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PODCAST PLAYS

MPAACTPLAYS.COM



PODCAST PLAYS

PRODUCTION STAFF

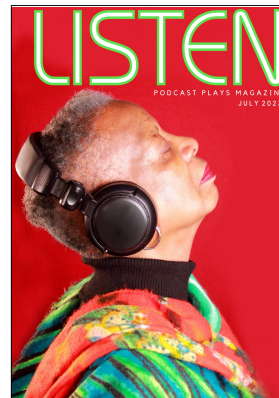
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 Sound Engineer.....Sean Neron
 Sound Engineer.....Mark Franklin
 Sound Editor.....Shepsu Aakhu
 Sound Design.....Desta Sound
 Subscription Services.....Lauren “LL” Lundy
 Platform Management.....Jelani Pitcher
 Voice Talent.....The Company
 Content Producer.....Shepsu Aakhu



LISTEN

MAGAZINE STAFF

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 Copy Editor.....Tina Fakhrid-Deen
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 Contributor.....Tina Fakhrid-Deen
 Contributor.....Lauren Wells-Mann
 Contributor.....Joseph Giovanetti
 Contributor.....Carla Stillwell
 Contributor.....Joshua X. Miller
 Contributor.....Brittany Davis
 Contributor.....Shawn Wallace
 Contributor.....Addae Moon
 Contributor.....Lauren “LL” Lundy
 Contributor.....Hiwoté T. Tamrat



33 SEASONS

<i>Warm on the Coolin' Board</i>	Revival	2024
<i>Tad in 5th City</i>	Revival	2024
<i>Blackademics</i>	Revival	2023
<i>Dandelions</i>	World Premiere	2023
<i>Ezekiel's Wheel</i>	World Premiere	2023
<i>Ride or Die</i>	World Premiere	2022
<i>Red Summer</i>	Premiere Staging	2022
<i>Pulled Punches</i>	World Premiere	2022
<i>Podcast Plays</i>	Established	2021
<i>Spoken Word</i>	World Premiere	2020
<i>The Master Comic</i>	World Premiere	2019
<i>One 4 the Road</i>	World Premiere	2019
<i>Swamp Baby</i>	World Premiere	2019
<i>Black and Blue</i>	World Premiere	2018
<i>Blood Mural</i>	World Premiere	2018
<i>Mother of the Dark Water</i>	World Premiere	2018
<i>100 Acts of Resistance</i>	Established	2018
<i>Burf of a Nation</i>	World Premiere	2017
<i>Never the Milk & Honey</i>	World Premiere	2017
<i>By Association</i>	World Premiere	2017
<i>Starting Over</i>	World Premiere	2016
<i>Feral</i>	World Premiere	2016
<i>Upstate</i>	World Premiere	2016
<i>Lawd The CVS is Burnin'</i>	World Premiere	2015
<i>Divine Order of Becoming</i>	Revival	2015
<i>Softly Blue</i>	Revival	2015
<i>The Inside</i>	Revival	2014
<i>Without Trace</i>	World Premiere	2014
<i>Quark</i>	World Premiere	2014
<i>Signature Showcase Series</i>	Established	2014
<i>Summer Jams</i>	Established	2014
<i>Warm on the Coolin' Board</i>	World Premiere	2013
<i>When Good Broccoli Goes Bad</i>	World Premiere	2013
<i>Reality Check</i>	World Premiere	2013
<i>Leaves Trees Forest</i>	World Premiere	2013
<i>Blackademics</i>	World Premiere	2012
<i>Bodies</i>	World Premiere	2012

<i>Sweet Home</i>	World Premiere	2012
<i>Speaking in Tongues/ Babel</i>	World Premiere	2011
<i>A Brown Tale (Da-da Re...)</i>	World Premiere	2011
<i>The Last St on Sugar Hill</i>	World Premiere	2011
<i>Ghosts of Atwood</i>	World Premiere	2011
<i>Solo Jams</i>	Established	2011
<i>Dance Jam</i>	Established	2011
<i>Zulu Fits</i>	World Premiere	2010
<i>Film Jam</i>	Established	2010
<i>Sketch Jam</i>	Established	2010
<i>Tad in 5th City</i>	World Premiere	2010
<i>First Words</i>	World Premiere	2010
<i>Ten Square (w/Pegasus)</i>	World Premiere	2009
<i>Radical Hearsay...</i>	World Premiere	2009
<i>Stage Black</i>	World Premiere	2009
<i>No Experience Necessary</i>	World Premiere	2008
<i>BlaQ Market Monologues</i>	Established	2008
<i>She Calls Up The Sun</i>	Revival	2008
<i>Beneath A Dark Sky</i>	Revival	2008
<i>MiLK</i>	Revival	2007
<i>Trouble the Water</i>	World Premiere	2007
<i>Blaxploitation 2...</i>	World Premiere	2007
<i>Panther Burn</i>	World Premiere	2006
<i>Softly Blue</i>	World Premiere	2006
<i>Blaxploitation: The Remix</i>	World Premiere	2005
<i>Bus Boyz (w/Prop Thr)</i>	World Premiere	2005
<i>The Divine Order of Becoming</i>	World Premiere	2005
<i>Relevant Hearsay...</i>	World Premiere	2004
<i>Notes from the Bottletree</i>	World Premiere	2004
<i>SOST</i>	World Premiere	2003
<i>Scorched Earth: Fertile Ground</i>	World Premiere	2003
<i>Kiwi Black</i>	World Premiere	2003
<i>Ekomo Akyede</i>	Established	2003
<i>She Calls up the Sun</i>	World Premiere	2002
<i>Defending Myself</i>	World Premiere	2002
<i>Mahalia & ME</i>	B-cast Premiere	2002
<i>Kosi Dasa</i>	World Premiere	2002
<i>Fascia</i>	World Premiere	2001
<i>The Alibi Transcripts</i>	Established	2001
<i>Urban Griot Project</i>	World Premiere	2001

<i>Tere-tocha-chew:</i>	World Premiere	2000
<i>Exoskeletal Blues</i>	World Premiere	2000
<i>The Glow of Reflected Light</i>	World Premiere	2000
<i>Within the Dream</i>	World Premiere	1999
<i>The Abesha Conspiracy</i>	World Premiere	1999
<i>Beneath A Dark Sky</i>	World Premiere	1998
<i>The Inside</i>	World Premiere	1998
<i>The Empire Festival</i>	World Premiere	1998
<i>The Scott Joplin Story</i>	B-cast Premiere	1998
<i>Piece-Meal Clan</i>	World Premiere	1997
<i>Tales from an Urban Empire</i>	World Premiere	1997
<i>The Underground Poetry Jam</i>	Established	1997
<i>Afrosynthesis</i>	World Premiere	1997
<i>Screams w/out Consciousness</i>	Wkshop Prod.	1997
<i>A Kwanzaa Carol</i>	World Premiere	1996
<i>Short Orders: One Acts Fest.</i>	Established	1996
<i>Girl to be Named Later</i>	World Premiere	1996
<i>Otherworld Lovers</i>	World Premiere	1996
<i>From Funk 2 Fusion</i>	World Premiere	1996
<i>MiLK</i>	World Premiere	1995
<i>Slices</i>	Established	1995
<i>A Night of Jazz Fusion</i>	World Premiere	1995
<i>Tales of the Kitalogo</i>	World Premiere	1994
<i>Vital Signs</i>	World Premiere	1994
<i>Continuum: Visions/Yetunde</i>	World Premiere	1993
<i>Restore the Rhythm</i>	World Premiere	1992

SUBMISSIONS

MPAACT is committed to the development of original works.

Unsolicited scripts are encouraged.

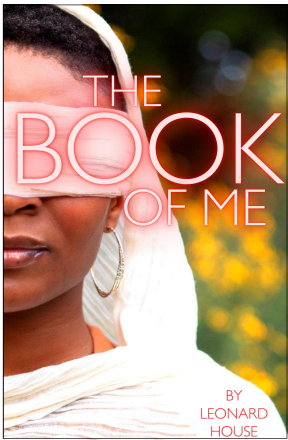
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SEASON 33

3 WORLD PREMIERES

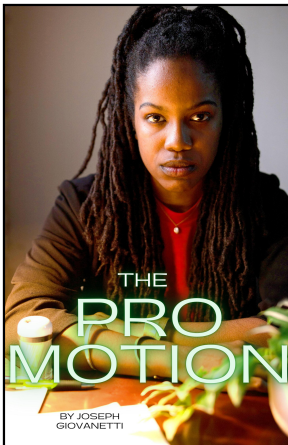


OCT. 11 – NOV. 24, 2024

THE BOOK OF ME

BY LEONARD HOUSE / DIRECTED BY CARLA STILLWELL

Wanda stands on the cusp of womanhood. Educated in the finest schools by successful Black parents she appears to be a well adjusted child of international adoption, but for Wanda the questions around her adoption have reached a tipping point. There are two mothers here... aching for the space that can only be filled by one child. On the eve of their daughter's 18th birthday, two families collide over their choices, and the consequences that follow.



JAN. 17 – MAR. 2, 2025

THE PROMOTION

BY JOSEPH GIOVANNETTI/ DIRECTED BY LAUREN "LL" LUNDY

Trish and Josh are friends. They're also the top two salespeople in their small insurance agency. When they find out they've each been offered a shot at the same big promotion, their friendly workplace rivalry implodes. Now they'll have to figure out what they really want.. and how badly they really want it. A dark comedy about race, gender, and upward mobility in the 21st century.



APRIL 18 – JUNE 1, 2025

MACHINE MADE

**WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY SHEPSU AAKHU ADAPTED FROM INTERVIEWS WITH CHUCK BOWEN/
MEDIA BY ABOYE LAWRENCE**

In this tour de force, Shepsu Aakhu explores the memories of Chuck Bowen, a “machine made” public servant who rose to prominence in the Democratic Party of the 1950's and who now in his mid-90's continues to have the ear of the powerful. Covering his entrance into the party during the same period as Harold Washington, Chuck's story covers the intersection of policing, organized crime, the policy racket, housing and urban development, the patronage system and the uneasy bargains that helped to define a century of life in this city. Through his unique perspective we glimpse the epic moments of his life and that of Chicago with humor, warmth, wisdom, and an honesty that only a political insider can provide.