

ATLANTIC THEATER COMPANY

THE JUDITH CHAMPION MIXFEST

(WRIT)UAL MIX:

Traditions of the Diaspora

A FREE READING SERIES
PLAY FESTIVAL

AUGUST 7 – 16, 2023

CO-CURATED BY

Daaimah Mubashshir, NSangou Njikam & Awoye Timpo

Artistic Director
Neil Pepe

Associate Artistic Director
Annie MacRae

Associate Producer
Abigail Katz

We acknowledge that the Atlantic Theater & School buildings were built on the occupied traditional lands of the Lenape people. We are grateful to the Indigenous caretakers of these lands and honor the Lenape Tribes who continue to thrive today.

(WRIT)UAL MIX

ROOTS, RHYME, AND REASON:

Traditions of Black Storytelling

Moderated by **Dr. Sybil R. Williams**

Featuring **Chief Ayanda Clarke,**

NSangou Njikam & Awoye Timpo

Monday, August 7 | 7pm

BIOGRAPHIES

CHIEF AYANDA CLARKE is an artist, musician, teacher, public speaker, and creative consultant. Over the decades, the Brooklyn native has emerged as a thought leader and inspiring voice for his generation. He is also a Babalawo and Egungun priest in the Yoruba tradition. Chief Ayanda frequently mentors artists and lends his authentic insights on creative content development as well as consults organizations that wish to bridge the gap between spirit and artistry. A Grammy® Award-winning musician, Chief Ayanda has performed or shared the stage with many greats ranging from Randy Weston to Doug E. Fresh. He founded THE FADARA GROUP to house his performances, public programs, and community initiatives. A motivational and dynamic leader, the Dalton School and Wesleyan University graduate is regularly commissioned to speak, perform, or curate programs at venues ranging from the Apollo Theater to Yale University.

NSANGOU NJIKAM is an actor, playwright and Hip Hop Theatre artist originally from Baltimore, MD. His writing credits include *Syncing Ink*, *Re:Definition*, *When We Left parts 1 & 2, I.D.*, *21 STRINGS* and he is one of seven writers of *Hands Up: Seven Plays; Seven Testimonials*. Acting credits include *Syncing Ink* (Alley Theatre/ Flea Theater), *Re:Definition* (LaMama), *Henry V* (Classical Theatre of Harlem), *Deep Azure* (Congo Square Theatre). NSangou's play *Re:Definition* (Hip Hop Theatre Festival reading) was developed and directed by Chadwick Boseman. NSangou has also written for and collaborated with Grammy Award winner Common, specifically on his Audible.com project "BlueBird Memories", the 2020 NBA All Star Game and the Audible interview series *Mindpower Mixtape. Freaky Dee, Baby*, premiered at the Williamstown Theatre Festival in 2021. His Hip Hop Theatre play, *I.D.* (commission by Penn State University) premiered at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, South Africa. NSangou is a member of the 2015 Emerging Writers Group at the Public Theater as well as a member of UNIVERSES, a theatre company fusing jazz, blues, hip hop, Spoken Word and Spanish boleros. He received his BFA in Acting from Howard University. After tracing his African ancestry, he received his name from the Bamum King in Cameroon. He is represented by A3 Agency. He currently resides in New York City.

AWOYE TIMPO is a Brooklyn-based Director and Producer. Her New York credits include *Elyria* by Deepa Purohit (Atlantic Theater), *Wedding Band* by Alice Childress (Theatre for a New Audience), *In Old Age* by Mfoniso Udofia (New York Theatre Workshop), *The Loophole* by Jay Adana and Zeniba Britt (Public Theater), *Carnaval* by Nikkole Salter (National Black Theatre), *Good Grief* by Ngozi Anyanwu (Vineyard Theatre and Audible) and *The Homecoming Queen* by Ngozi Anyanwu (Atlantic Theater Company). Regionally she has directed *The Bluest Eye* (Huntington), *Pipeline* (Studio Theatre), *Paradise Blue* (Long Wharf), *Everybody Black* (Actors Theatre of Louisville), *School Girls* (Berkeley Rep), *Jazz* (Marin Theatre Company). Other projects include concert performances for independent artists and for the NBA, *Ndebele Funeral* (59E59, Edinburgh, South African Tour), "Black Picture Show" (Artists Space/Metrograph), and *Bluebird Memories* (Audible). Awoye is a Creative Arts Consultant for the African American Policy Forum and a Founding Member of CLASSIX.

DR. SYBIL R. WILLIAMS is a playwright and dramaturge who currently teaches in both the Theatre/Musical Theatre Program and the Critical Race and Gender Studies Collaborative where she serves as Program Director for African American and African Disapora Studies. Her play *From U. Street to the Cotton Club* was produced by the In-Series January 2019. An additional play, *Gloria and Rwanda* was produced by FRESHH Theatre as part of their new works development series in July 2019. Her play *Stormy Weather*, an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Tempest* recently premiered at the Atlas Theatre in October 2019. She completed an adaptation of Mozart's *Magic Flute* titled *Black Flute* with the IN-SERIES which premiered in Spring 2021. She also co-authored an adaptation of *Alceste* which will premiere at the IN-SERIES in Fall of 2023. She is currently working as a dramaturge on two New York City premieres, the off-Broadway production of hip-hop musical *Syncing Ink* in New York City in Fall 2023 and *The Winter Circus* written by Joe Calarco and Ben Clark which is still in development. Professor Sybil R. Williams is the first recipient of the American University's Antiracist Research & Policy Center's Jacqueline Cirillo Meisenberg and Richard Meisenberg Faculty Fellowship to create a premiere performance work on the women of Rastafari.

Monday, August 7 | 7pm

PANEL DISCUSSION - ROOTS, RHYME, AND REASON:

Traditions of Black Storytelling

moderated by **Dr. Sybil R. Williams**

Tuesday, August 8 | 7pm

BURNBABYBURN: an american dream

by **a.k. payne**

directed by **Awoye Timpo**

Wednesday, August 9 | 7pm

GOOD BLOOD

by **Diane Exavier**

directed by **Cristina Angeles**

Monday, August 14 | 7pm

SHORT PLAYS

by **Dennis A. Allen II, Keelay Gipson, Amina Henry,**

Goldie E. Patrick & Liza Jessie Peterson

directed by **Raelle Myrick-Hodges & Derrick Sanders**

Tuesday, August 15 | 7pm

A FREEKY INTRODUCTION

by **NSangou Njikam**

directed by **Dennis A. Allen II**

Wednesday, August 16 | 7pm

THE IMMEASURABLE WANT OF LIGHT

by **Daaimah Mubashshir**

directed by **Colette Robert**

SPECIAL THANKS

David Callahan, Braley Degenhardt, Dylan Gervais, Julianne Graffeo, John Lagucki, Clare McCormick, Melissa Rocha, Bailey Sawyer, Sarah Shapiro, Jared Solomon, Barbara Toy

Judith Champion, who also underwrote Atlantic's Launch commissioning program, sadly passed away in July of 2022. She was a fierce advocate for theater, and wanted to leave a legacy of support for new voices so that American theater will thrive for generations to come.

(Writ)ual Mix and all of Atlantic's new play and musical development activities are made possible through the support of The Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation and the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation.

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