

FAMU

FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY
**ESSENTIAL
THEATRE**

PRESENTS

THE NEW BLACK FEST'S **HANDS UP:** 7 PLAYWRIGHTS, 7 TESTAMENTS

WRITTEN BY NATHAN JAMES, NATHAN YUNGERBERG, IDRIS GOODWIN,
NAMBI E. KELLEY, NSANGOU NJIKAM, ERIC MICHA HOLMES, DENNIS A. ALLEN II

DIRECTED BY LUTHER D. WELLS

THE COLLECTION INCLUDES:

Superiority Fantasy by Nathan James

Holes in My Identity by Nathan Yungerberg

They Shootin! Or I Ain't Neva Scared... by Idris Goodwin

Dead of Night... The Execution of... by Nambi E. Kelley

Abortion by Nsangou Njikam

Walking Next to Michael Brown by Eric Holmes

How I Feel by Dennis A. Allen II

OCTOBER 14 - 18, 2020

LIVESTREAM VIRTUAL PERFORMANCES

The New Black Fest's HANDS UP: 7 Playwrights, 7 Testaments is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

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COSTUME DESIGN BY
Edith Carnley

SET AND PROJECTION DESIGN BY
Ruben Arana

LIGHTING DESIGN BY
C. Bacote Robinson

SOUND DESIGN BY
Kimberly K. Harding

STAGE MANAGER
Imani Henry

Produced by Special Arrangement with: Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.

[HANDS UP](#) received its world premiere at Flashpoint Theatre Company at the University of the Arts on June 13, 2015, directed by Joanna Settle.

Profanity. Suggested audience. Age 17 and above.

WARNINGS. This production contains profanity.

The Essential Theatre is funded through the activities and services fees, as allocated by the Student Government Association of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The Power of Protest



In the spring, as the world wrestled with COVID-19 and we hunkered down in our homes forced to stop going about our daily lives, as usual, we were thrown another blow from America's historic pandemic of race relations and police brutality with the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery. It was Floyd's murder in particular at the hands of Minneapolis, Minnesota Police; who kneeled on his neck for 8:46 that moved people from all walks of life and countries all over the world to rise up against racial injustice, and reinforce the mantra that Black Lives Matter. I sat at home watching as peaceful protests turned violent and chaotic, and thought about what I could do as an artist to lend my voice to the cause. I recalled being introduced to this play a couple of years ago and thought now is an *Essential* time to speak.

The 2014 shooting death of Michael Brown at the hands of a Ferguson, Missouri white police officer served as the catalyst for ***The New Black Fest's Hands Up: 7 Playwrights, 7 Testaments***. It is **Black Power; Blackness**; out of which - both figuratively and literally - emerges song, word, and voice that speaks TRUTH to POWER. It is a protest drama that speaks TRUTH and recounts the experience of countless black men and women here in the U.S. It's a play of resistance that seeks to reclaim voices silenced and violated by a system that historically sees BLACK as sub-human. Hands Up is HISTORY, it's TRUTH, and it's NOW!

Thank you for joining us and enjoy the show.

HANDS UP! DON'T SHOOT!

Luther D. Wells, Director



SETTING

Present Day, New Millennium/21st Century

CAST | SCENE SELECTIONS

Todd Bellamy II.... Superiority Fantasy by Nathan James

Kyle Hunter.... Holes in My Identity by Nathan Yunkerberg

Chazriq Clarke.... They Shootin! Or I Ain't Neva Scared... by Idris Goodwin

Ilesha Robertson.... Dead of Night... The Execution of... by Nambi E. Kelley

Alex Williams.... Abortion by Nsangou Njikam

Tony Pigford.... Walking Next to Michael Brown by Eric Holmes

Kiate' Green.... How I Feel by Dennis A. Allen II

UNDERSTUDIES

Understudy for Ilesha Robertson - Meleaya Merriman

Understudy for Kyle Hunter and Chazriq Clarke - Darrian Whitehead

This play is performed without an intermission.



— PLAYWRIGHTS



Superiority Fantasy
by **Nathan James**



Holes in My Identity
by **Nathan Yungerberg**



They Shootin! Or I Ain't Neva Scared...
by **Idris Goodwin**



Dead of Night... The Execution of...
by **Nambi E. Kelley**



Abortion
by **Nsangou Njikam**



Walking Next to Michael Brown
by **Eric Holmes**



How I Feel
by **Dennis A. Allen II**



— CAST PROFILES



Todd Bellamy II (Nathan) is a second year Theatre Performance major from Sarasota, Florida. Some of his favorite and recent roles performed have been *Bob Marley's Three Little Birds* (Doctor Bird), *Newsies* (Buttons), *Children of Eden* (Noah), and *Fences* (Cory).



Chazriq Clarke (Idris) is a third year double major in Theatre Performance and Business Administration from Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He has appeared in *Little Shop of Horrors* (Wino & Customer), *A Chorus Line* (Mike), and was assistant stage manager for the Irene C. Edmonds Youth Theatre Camp production of *The House of Jean Rene*. Chazriq also serves as Mister Essential Theatre for the 2020-2021 academic year.



Kiate' Green (Dennis) is an incoming Junior transfer student and double major in Music Industry and Theatre from Miami, Florida. He has played the role of (Corey) in South Broward High's production of *Fences*, and is an critics choice and superior award winner at the Florida Thespian District & State competition.



Kyle Hunter (Nathan) is a Essential Theatre Alumnus (Spr '19), from Tallahassee, Florida. He has appeared in *A Christmas Carol* (Apparition, Dick Wilkins, Mr. Topper), *Matilda the Musical* (Doctor, Adult Ensemble); and the role of Omari in Dominique Morisseau's *Pipeline* for which he was mentioned in the American Theatre Magazine.



Tony Pigford (Eric) is a FAMU Alum who was born and raised in Denver, Colorado where he is a Student Voice and Leadership Coordinator in the Aurora Public Schools District. He has appeared in *Flyin West* (Frank), *Medea* (Jason), and in *Invisible Life* (Raymond) all on the Essential Theatre stage.



— CAST PROFILES



Ilesha Robertson (Nambi) is a graduating Senior Theatre Performance major, Fine Arts minor from Tallahassee, Florida. She has appeared in *Bob Marley's Three Little Birds* (Montego), *Little Shop of Horrors* (Ensemble), and *Sing on Ms. Griot* (Ms. Griot).



Alex Williams Jr. (Nsangou) is a graduating Senior Theatre Performance major from Miami, Florida. He has appeared in FAMU's productions of *Blood At The Root* (Student Male), *King Hedley II* (Mister) and *Invisible Life* (Kelvin).



Imani Henry (Stage Manager) is a first-year Theatre major, from Atlanta, Georgia. She has also been a stage manager for other plays; *The Wiz*, *Once on This Island*, and *Little Shop of Horrors*.



Meleaya Merriman (Assistant Stage Manager/Understudy) is a Senior Theatre Performance major, with a minor in Psychology from Gainesville, Florida. She has appeared in *The Long Goodbye* (Junebug), *Change it Up! This is Me* (Self), *Bob Marley's Three Little Birds* (Tacoamah), and the FAMU Connection (35th, 36th Edition).



Darrian Whitehead (Assistant Stage Manager/Understudy) is a first-year Theatre major from Miami, Florida where he attended Dr. Michael Krop Senior High School for Magnet Theatre. His roles include Curtis in *Krop's Dreamgirls*, Ensemble in *FAME the Musical*, Mayor Henry Lee in *A Day of Absence*, and many others.





The Kennedy Center

*The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, part of the Rubenstein Arts Access Program, is generously funded by **David M. Rubenstein.***

Special thanks to The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust for supporting the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival.

Additional support is provided by The Honorable Stuart Bernstein and Wilma E. Bernstein; and the Dr. Gerald and Paula McNichols Foundation.

Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts.

This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KCACTF representative, and selected students and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year more than 1,500 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.





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2020 - 2021 SEASON

FAMU FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY
ESSENTIAL THEATRE

2020 - 2021 SEASON

THE NEW BLACK FEST'S HANDS UP:
7 PLAYWRIGHTS, 7 TESTAMENTS
Oct 14 - Oct 18

CALMING THE MAN
Feb 26 - Feb 27

PAUL ROBESON: LOYALTY TO CONVICTIONS:
A ONE-MAN SHOW FEATURING FRED D. LEE, JR.
Jan 29 - Jan 30

SCHOOL GIRLS; OR, THE AFRICAN MEAN GIRLS PLAY
Mar 10 - Mar 14

FOR MORE INFORMATION
famuessentialtheatre.com

FAMU ESSENTIAL THEATRE FACULTY AND STAFF

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Valencia E. Matthews..... | Director of Theatre Dean, College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities |
| Ruben Arana..... | Scene Design |
| Edith Carnley..... | Costume Design |
| Jamal Coleman..... | Director of Marketing |
| Kimberly K. Harding..... | Management Theatre History Sound Design |
| C. Bacote Robinson..... | Technical Director Lighting Designer |
| Anedra Small..... | Performance Vocal Coach Criticism Recruitment |
| Evelyn Tyler..... | Management Properties Special Events |
| Luther D. Wells..... | Associate Director of Theatre Performance Recruitment |



PRODUCTION STAFF

| | |
|--|--|
| Productions Manager..... | Luther D. Wells |
| Technical Director..... | C. Bacote Robinson |
| Stage Manager..... | Imani Henry |
| Asst. Stage Managers..... | Meleaya Merriman, Darrian Whitehead |
| Company Manager..... | Percy Pettigrew |
| Light Board Operator..... | Nia Williams |
| Sound Board Operator..... | Cristina Martinez-Saneaux |
| Projector Operator..... | Kenya Williams |
| Properties Supervisor..... | Evelyn Tyler |
| Set & Properties Crew..... | Nicholas Martin |
| Costume Crew..... | Tayla Underwood |
| Director of Ticketing and Patron Services..... | Kimberly K. Harding |
| Ticketing by..... | Etix |
| House Staff..... | Shaunterricka Chambers, Kristine Wallace, Arionte Thelisme |
| Director of Marketing..... | Jamal Coleman |
| Publicity Graphic Artists..... | Jamal Coleman |
| Program Layout..... | Jamal Coleman |
| Videography..... | CTWBC |

CTWBC PRODUCTION STAFF

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| Chief Executive Officer..... | Carlos Wilder |
| Cinematographer..... | Carlos Wilder |
| Camera Operator..... | Vernon Barber II |
| Director/ TD..... | Markeshia Hines |
| Assistant Director..... | Jewelisia Fagg |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cactus Ad Agency of Denver, Colorado and Norm Shearer; COCA Tallahassee Arts Guide; Consuelo Santana; Cumulus Broadcasting; FAMU Student Government Association; FAMUAN; FAMU Army ROTC Tallahassee Democrat; Tanya Tatum, MHA



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