



BLACK:

- FACE
- LOVE
- FREEDOM-ISH

A Night of One-Acts

Dream of Passion | Post-Its | In the Tank

Sept. 16 - Oct. 2, 2022

For ticket prices and advance purchase information visit
www.actorswarehouse.org



DREAM OF PASSION

Written by Philip Hayes Dean
Directed by Steven H. Butler
Starring: Lynda Harris & Kevin O. Mack

POST-ITS (NOTES ON A MARRIAGE)

Written by Paul Dooley & Winnie Holzman
Directed by Kevin O Mack
Starring: Steven H. Butler & Lynda Harris

IN THE TANK

Written by Rosemary Frisino Toohey
Directed by Steven Butler
Starring: Kevin O. Mack & Lynda Harris



Lynda Harris



Kevin O. Mack



Steven H. Butler

The Crew

Siri Blumberg	Sound & Follow Spot
Paul Kardasz	Lights Board & Follow Spot

Artistic Director's Notes



Dream of Passion

American minstrel shows sought to entertain white audiences based on how they perceived Black people. White men donned black face, big eyes, and big lips – portraying Black people as *sub-human, [...] lacking in moral personality, [...] lazy, shiftless, watermelon-eating, chicken-stealing, oversexed, loud, menacing appendages [...].

Once Black people were allowed to entertain to white audiences, the stereotypes and comedic standard had to be upheld...Black men in black face, etc. Philip Hayes Dean's *Dream of Passion* (formally titled *Minstrel Boy*) invites audiences to the world of Rainbow and Cayella, his wife. Rainbow is a comedian who some might see as “a bat boy for team White Supremacy”. Social norms are changing and Black audiences, Black organizations, as well as Cayella are trying to convey that message to Rainbow.

Cayella believes that Rainbow's white business partner (Kingsley) is somewhat of a Svengali. We discover that her hatred for Kingsley is much deeper than what appears on the surface. Cayella goes to great lengths to get Rainbow to see the error of his ways and break ties with the man who clearly does not have Rainbow's best interest at heart.

**August Wilson's How I Learned What I Learned* – Co-conceived by Todd Kreidler

Artistic Director's Notes

Continued

Post-its (Notes on a Marriage)

As I hunkered down to plan the 2022-2023 season, one of our prospective directors (Jay Nixon) pitched this play. His idea was to present it using three different couples telling the same story. Curiosity prompted him to ask, “how would the same story come across if there was a heterosexual couple, a homosexual couple and an interracial couple (hetero or homo).” Even though it did not come to fruition for Jay to work on this project, it was still a story I believed needed to be told but using only one couple.

Over the years film, television, and the American stage, fell short on allowing stories of Black love to be told. In private, Black bodies had been and in some instances continue to be fetishized. However, the powers-that-be struggled with the idea of Black beauty for fear of normalizing their sexuality and making them desirable to the public. Therefore, it stands to reason that if the Black body is taboo then the stories of Black love are too.

Playwrights Dooly & Holzman give us a parody on *Love Letters*, where we see the evolution of a couple’s relationship through post-it notes they’ve written to each other. We all want to be loved and while on the journey relationships evolve. All love stories deserved to be told: Black love stories, Black queer love stories, ALL LOVE STORIES. Actors’ Warehouse is a platform for marginalized stories to be told, so here it goes!

Artistic Director's Notes

Continued

In the Tank

Upon the signing of the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation and the 1865 ratification of the 13th Amendment, enslaved bLACK people were declared free-ish. The physical chains may have been broken; however, the mental chains remain. Today these unconscious mental chains are not exclusive to bLACK people. They are also owned and embedded within Amerikkkan society.

On face value, we can say that playwright Rosemary Frisino Toohey wrote this as a critique of misguided human superiority and using two lobsters as a vehicle to express it. However, as I read her entertaining, humorous, and poignant words I could not ignore the similarities of her musings and the reality of so many bLACK people in the Amerikkkan tank with their claws bound/hands up. Their thoughts of having to deal with implicit biases that impact:

- interactions with law enforcement
- the federal government
- the judicial system
- representation
- medical care
- economics
- education
- etc.

The biggest issue that resonates with me most is corporate Amerikkka's obsession of capitalizing off bLACK bodies and talent. Toohey's lobsters are on the menu and so is everything that is bLACKness in Amerikkka. To avoid such gross gluttony, seats must be filled with true representation and honored input in "the rooms where it happens". IF YOU DON'T HAVE A SEAT AT THE TABLE THEN YOU'RE ON MENU.

2020 revealed the disparities in Amerikkka. Therefore, it is important to lessen the gap and reduce the LACK in bLACK. When this happens then we can say that "America truly is the land of the Free".

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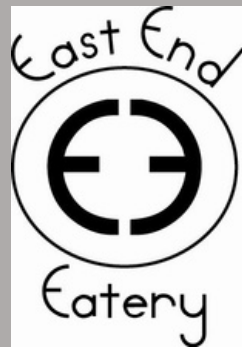
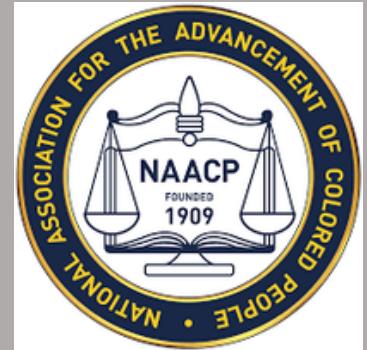
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