

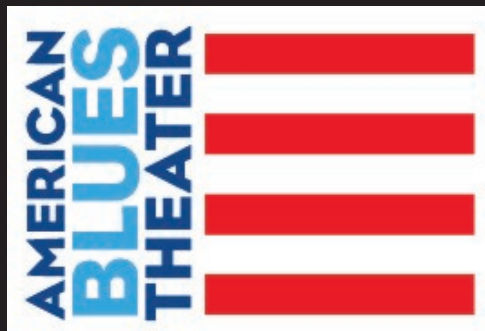


DUTCHMAN/TRANSIT

by Amiri Baraka

by Darren Canady

2 Plays **1** Ride



BACKSTAGE GUIDE

A publication of **COMMUNITY SERVICE** at
AMERICAN BLUES THEATER

BACKSTAGE CALLBOARD

DUTCHMAN

by Amiri Baraka
Directed by Chuck Smith

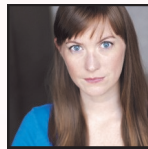
TRANSIT

by Darren Canady*
Directed by Lisa Portes

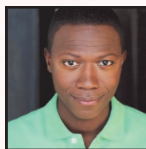
FEATURING



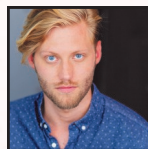
Michael Pogue



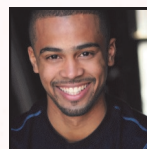
Amanda Drinkall



Manny Buckley*



Jake Szczepaniak



Edgar Sanchez

Experience two explosive plays in one event. First see *Dutchman*—one of the most important plays in 20th-century culture to take on race relations. Then, inspired by Baraka's pivotal work, watch the world-premiere commission *TRANSit*. New York City Transit: humanity's great collision place. One hot summer night, Veronica finds herself drawn to a sensitive, unpredictable street performer aboard a subway train. The rhythms of their encounter reveal more than either had planned, and soon an explosive mix of identity, sex, and betrayal is unleashed.

* Ensemble member or Artistic Affiliate of American Blues Theater

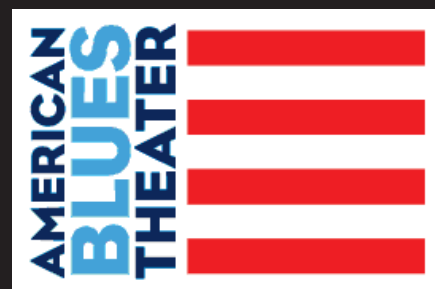
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BACKSTAGE Contributors

Elyse Dolan
Assistant Producer
American Blues Theater

with Lisa Portes, Chuck Smith, Darren Canady,
Manny Buckley, and Gwendolyn Whiteside



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NOTE FROM PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR GWENDOLYN WHITESIDE

Welcome to American Blues Theater's 31st season. Lauded American poet Robert Frost wrote, "Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one's definition of your life; define yourself."

The unforgettable characters of our 2016/17 "Define Yourself" productions heed this advice. They boldly claim their space in our imaginations and place on our stages. In our first offering of the season, you'll meet Amiri Baraka's iconic "Clay" in *Dutchman* and a fierce woman named "Veronica" in our world-premiere commission *TRANSit*. We've worked on this explicit pairing for years through our Blueprint Development program.

American Blues Theater's Blueprint program was conceived in 2010 when we originally commissioned Ensemble member Nambi E. Kelley to adapt Richard Wright's *Native Son*. We developed the piece over four years, resulting in a stunning co-production with Court Theatre in 2014. Kelley's adaptation was recently published by Samuel French and will receive productions across the nation.

Now we proudly bring the next American Blues commission to our audiences. Several years ago we challenged acclaimed playwright and Artistic Affiliate Darren Canady to write a contemporary "response" to Amiri Baraka's "call" made over fifty years ago. Canady's *Dutchman*-inspired play complements Baraka's powerful classic and serves as a stand-alone work for the next generation. His achievement is nothing short of remarkable. We've already received interest in *TRANSit* from theaters nationwide and look forward to its subsequent productions.

Finally, every artist asks – why must I make this work now? What are the external and internal pressures motivating my passion? For this double-bill, look no further than out your window, your tv, newspaper and social media feeds. The current political and cultural landscape in America necessitates we speak of identity. That we – united as people – demand freedom, equality, and opportunity for all. We believe in this work; it is our mission. ●



Producing Artistic Director
Gwendolyn Whiteside



Playwright
Darren Canady

DARREN CANADY is a proud Artistic Affiliate of American Blues Theater. His work has been produced at the Alliance Theatre, Congo Square Theater, Horizon Theatre, London's the Old Vic Theatre, M Ensemble, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Edinburgh Festival Fringe, American Blues Theater, and others. His awards include the Alliance Theater's Kendeda Graduate Playwriting Award, Chicago's Black Excellence Award, the Black Theatre Alliance Award, and the American Theatre Critics Association's Osborn Award. His play *You're Invited* appeared in *The Best American Short Plays 2010-2011*. His work has been developed at the Fremont Centre Theatre, Premiere Stages, and Penumbra Theatre. He is an alum of Carnegie Mellon University, New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, The Juilliard School, and is a former member of Primary Stages' Dorothy Strelsin New American Writers Group. He is also an artistic affiliate of Congo Square Theatre. He currently teaches playwriting at the University of Kansas. ●

ABOUT THE WRITERS



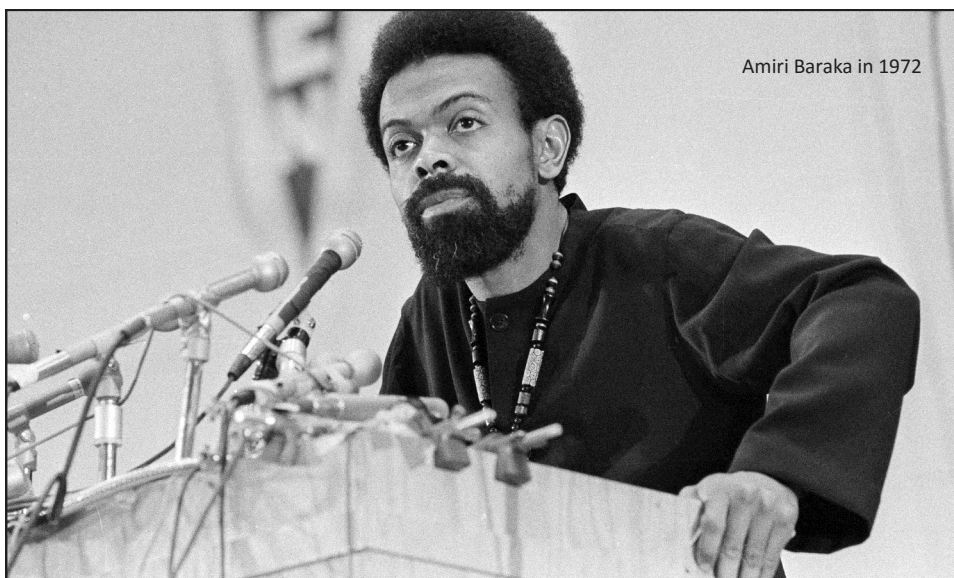
AMIRI BARAKA was born Everett LeRoi Jones in Newark, New Jersey on October 7, 1934. He attended Rutgers University for two years before he transferred to Howard University, where in 1954 he earned his BA in English. He served in the Air Force from 1954 until 1957, then moved to the Lower East Side of Manhattan. He founded Totem Press, which first published works by Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, and others. He published his first volume of poetry, *Preface to a Twenty-Volume Suicide Note*, in 1961. His reputation as a playwright was established with the production of *Dutchman* at the Cherry Lane Theatre in New York on March 24, 1964. The controversial play subsequently won an Obie Award (for Best Off-Broadway Play) and was made into a film.

In 1965, following the assassination of Malcolm X, Jones repudiated his former life and ended his marriage. He moved to Harlem, where he founded the Black Arts Repertory Theatre/School. In 1967 he married poet Sylvia Robinson. That year he also founded the Spirit House Players, which produced, among other works, two of Baraka's plays against police brutality: *Police* and *Arm Yrself or Harm Yrself*. In 1968, he co-edited *Black Fire: An Anthology of Afro-American Writing* with Larry Neal and his play *Home on the Range* was performed as a benefit for the Black Panther party. That same year he became a

Muslim, changing his name to Imamu Amiri Baraka ("Imamu" means "spiritual leader"). Baraka was a founder and chairman of the Congress of African People, a national Pan-Africanist organization with chapters in 15 cities, and he was one of the chief organizers of the National Black Political Convention, which convened in Gary, Indiana, in 1972 to organize a more unified political stance for African-Americans. In 1974 Baraka adopted a Marxist Leninist philosophy and dropped the spiritual title "Imamu."

The *Autobiography of LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka* was published in 1984.

Amiri Baraka's numerous literary prizes and honors include fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, the PEN/Faulkner Award, the Rockefeller Foundation Award for Drama, the Langston Hughes Award from the City College of New York, and a lifetime achievement award from the Before Columbus Foundation. He taught poetry at the New School for Social Research in New York, literature at the University of Buffalo, and drama at Columbia University. He also taught at San Francisco State University, Yale University, George Washington University, and the State University of New York in Stony Brook. He was co-director, with his wife, of Kimako's Blues People, a community arts space. Amiri Baraka died on January 9, 2014. ●



INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTORS **CHUCK SMITH & LISA PORTES**

Assistant Producer Elyse Dolan discusses *Dutchman*/*TRANSit* with *Dutchman* Director Chuck Smith and *TRANSit* Director Lisa Portes.

What excites you about this project?

Chuck Smith: I played the role of “Clay Williams” in college. It was my very first major role for the long gone Loop College Theatre located at 64 East Lake and was a big plus in getting my college acting career off to a fine start. Working on the play now almost fifty years later is like visiting your best friend in college who you haven’t seen since graduation.

Lisa Portes: I look for revelation in the theatre. The thing that inspires me to work on a project is the opportunity to encounter a character or group of characters whose story or stories I've never witnessed onstage before. I chose to work on *TRANSit*, because the play revealed Veronica, a black trans woman whose story I have never seen told in the American theatre. The other thing that really moves me about the play is the relationship—in all its nuances, complexities, and conflict, between Veronica and her gay, white friend Luke. Finally the play is the embodiment of intersectionality. None of the three characters who we come to know are one thing. Each lives on the crossroads



Director
Chuck Smith




Director
Lisa Portes

of neither here nor there, neither one thing or another. This to me is the world we are moving into and the play reveals the challenges, joys and confusions of this brave new world.

What do you admire about Amiri Baraka's work? About Darren Canady's work?

Lisa Portes: Both Baraka and Canady are insanely courageous writers who have the vision, insight, and bravery to put out into the world the things about ourselves we don't want to look at—specifically in relation to race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. By revealing our own underbelly to us, both writers open up the opportunity for us to see and hopefully transcend ourselves.

Chuck Smith: Crossing racial and gender lines, both writers



have a great ear for urban dialogue which perfectly fits their characters. In both plays I enjoy listening to these characters talk.

Why tell this story now?

Chuck Smith: *Dutchman* and *TRANSit* are both dangerous plays that are literally on the edge of violence throughout. Today's major news topics are very much the same with the exact same victims.

Lisa Portes: If you google "black trans woman" the first thing you will see are links to articles about the number of black trans women who have been murdered this year (17 as of August 4, 2016). That seems to me a pretty strong argument for doing what theatre is meant to do: create bridges of empathy. The theatre has the power to humanize and give dimension to people who you might not encounter and who can easily become a statistic, at best or, at worst, invisible. This story brings Veronica to us in all her humanity. It's a crucial story to tell.

What will you be working on next?

Lisa Portes: I'm very excited about my two upcoming projects: *Disgraced* by Ayad Akhtar at Cincinnati Playhouse and *Night Runner* by Ike Holter at Chicago Playworks for Families and Young Audiences. *Disgraced* is the story of Amir Kapoor, a successful lawyer of Pakistani descent navigating a deck that is ultimately stacked against him. *Night Runner* is the epic tale of a runaway enslaved girl who encounters a Harriet Tubman-esque superhero who shows her the way to freedom.

Chuck Smith: This season is one of my most exciting to date which next includes staging my first professional opera *Harriet Tubman – When I Crossed That Line to Freedom* for the South Shore Opera Company, after that I'll direct *Master Harold and the Boys* for Definition Theatre, then I am off to Sarasota, FL to direct the Pulitzer Prize winning *The Piano Lesson* for the Westcoast Black Theatre Troup. I then return home to the Goodman to direct Charles Smith's new drama *Objects in the Mirror*. ●



Directors Chuck Smith & Lisa Portes with
Producing Artistic Director Gwendolyn Whiteside
(center) at first rehearsal for *Dutchman*/*TRANSit*.

INTERVIEW WITH *TRANSIT* PLAYWRIGHT DARREN CANADY

Assistant Producer Elyse Dolan discusses *TRANSit* with Playwright Darren Canady.

What was your initial reaction when Wendy suggested this commission: a response piece to *Dutchman*?

I thought Wendy was crazy. Or maybe I was crazy for so immediately saying "YES!" *Dutchman* is a wrenching play - it's vital, it's immediate, it's angry, it's incisive; that play is a lot of adjectives that I wouldn't necessarily use to describe my own writing. Amiri Baraka created from a very different well-spring than I normally draw from for my own writing, so my initial reaction was one of great fear but also excitement. The idea of trying to create an artistic conversation with this man whom I greatly admired but also occasionally disagreed with made me think there could be something really powerful about this particular commission.

How has your development experience been with American Blues Theater?

The development experience with Blues has been amazing. Every step of the way has felt like working on a daunting, scary, invigorating project with the best possible friends. Obviously, professionalism goes a super long way to putting an artist at ease, but beyond that, the American Blues team has been so good at just being artistically and socially aware. This play is asking a lot of everyone that comes to its table, and American Blues keeps rising to each new challenge because they believe in what *Dutchman* and *TRANSit* are trying to do and say.

What inspired you to center this play around a transgender character?

Really, I was trying to locate something that made me as angry and frustrated with American society as Baraka was in 1964. I felt if I was going to be in conversation with him, I needed to locate the emotions that were fueling his play. I thought and I meditated for awhile on it, and it became very clear to me that the sustained silence around violence against transgender women of color was troubling me at a down-in-my-soul level. As I looked at so many of the narratives of these women I saw so many related explosions around race, gender, and class, that it seemed that centering a play around "Veronica" would really be centering a play around a uniquely American character who captures so much of what's broiling our society right now.

What do you hope audiences talk about on the way out of the theater?

I was just talking about this with Edgar Sanchez ("Lalo") last week. As I've gotten older, I've let go of the idea that art is this



Darren Canady at first rehearsal for *Dutchman*/*TRANSit*

super proactive thing that changes the world. I think there's some naiveté (and perhaps arrogance) in that idea of which I've become a little suspicious. What art—and specifically, theatre—*can* do is ignite a conversation. It can present a narrative or idea or reality that causes audiences to reconsider their own perspectives and realities.

On the way out of the Greenhouse space, I would love for *all* of us (I include myself here) to ask "Whose lives and deaths am I ignoring? Whose lives am I allowing the prejudices and blinkered thinking of our society to silence and constrict so that I can feel good about myself?" Ultimately, like all my writing, I want us to walk out of that theatre talking about how we can be more human to each other.

What projects will you be working on next?

In the immediate, I'm working with a group of colleagues at the University of Kansas on a documentary on the life of Langston Hughes which I'm excited and—here we go again —terrified about (I mean, c'mon, it's LANGSTON HUGHES!). I'm also working on a one-performer piece that I started writing in the wake of the Pulse massacre and the continued activism of Black Lives Matter. And, I'm trying to pull together pages for a play about whitewashing in theatre. That said, as I look these over, part of me thinks maybe I need to just write a screwball comedy for the sake of my own psyche. ●

THE BACKSTORY

MANNY BUCKLEY

American Blues Theater Ensemble member Manny Buckley ("Veronica" in *TRANSit*) shares lesser-known facts about himself.

Name: Manny Buckley

If I weren't an actor: I'd be a writer.

Childhood nickname: Motor Mouth

Best career advice I've received: I picked up from reading a book. It said something to the extent that "living a life as an artist is living a life of uncertainty." When I came to this realization and embraced it, I understood that so much of my career is out of my control. The only thing I can do is the work, and hope for the best.

Favorite part of the job: I like the research and analysis part of being an actor. I enjoy picking the character apart, and in this case, putting her back together and seeing how she ticks.

Worst part of the job: Thankless auditions. By that, I mean the many times every year that I go in for a theater audition, in particular, and the producers don't bother to tell you either way whether you've got the part. Actors invest a lot of time training and preparing; money to get headshots taken & resumes printed; and who knows how many hours reading the script and going over lines to prepare for the audition. The least the theater that called you in for an audition could do is send a polite email to tell you that you didn't get the job.

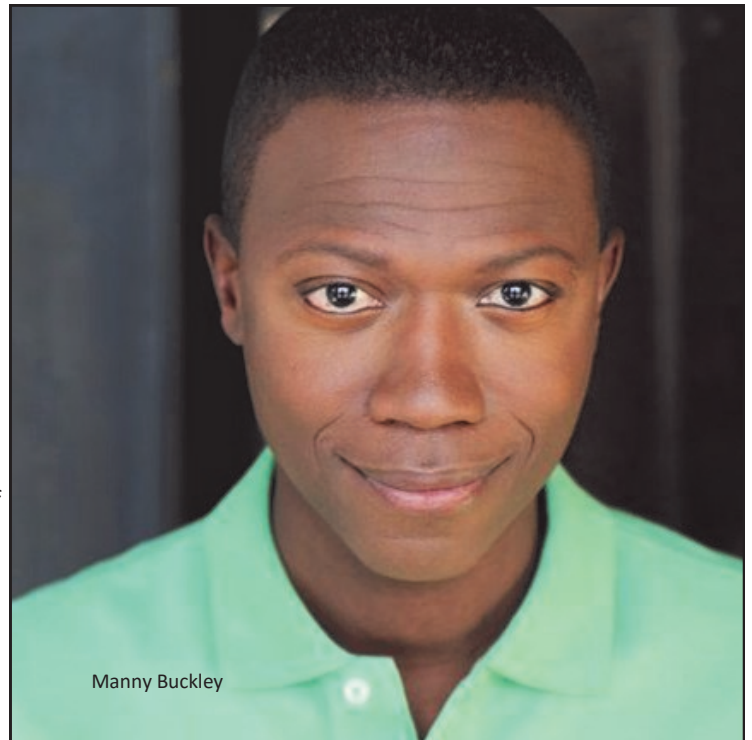
How I made my first dollar: Before I was of legal working age, I suppose I earned my first dollar babysitting. As an actor, it was playing Frank Hawkins, an American expatriate writer living in Europe, in an independent film shot in Columbus, Ohio.

Last meal you'd want: Lobster

Favorite item of clothing: I love my cowboy boots.

If you could invent one thing: An app of some sort

One of my hidden talents: I'm an excellent whistler. I can whistle the entire theme songs to *Lassie* and *The Andy Griffith Show*.

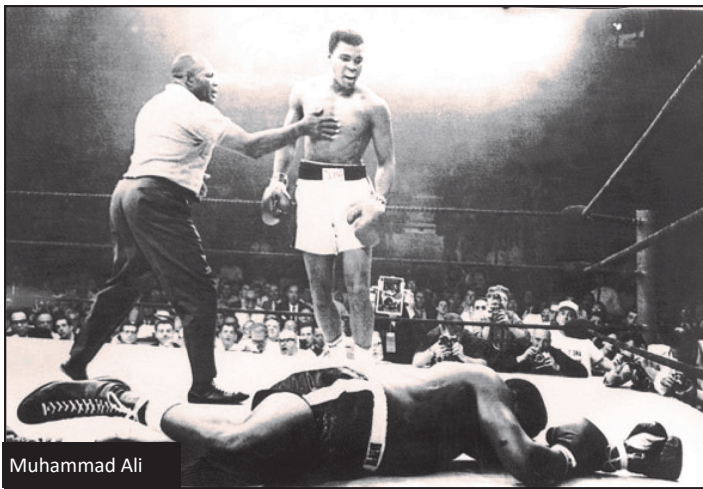


A LOOK AT 1964 IN AMERICA

In January of 1964 Americans were still reeling from the assassination of President John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963. Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson was sworn in as President of the United States, and, in his first year as president, he would enact a series of radical reforms that would fundamentally alter American life.

January 3 — Arizona's two-term Republican senator Barry Goldwater announces his candidacy for president of the United States. Nicknamed "Mr. Conservative," Goldwater and his campaign spark a conservative revolution within the Republican Party that will define the GOP and American politics for generations.

February — Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* is released as a paperback, with its first printing selling 1.4 million copies. Friedan's book ushers in a transformative feminist movement as housewives across America come to identify with the "problem that has no name" and acknowledge dissatisfaction with their domestic roles.



Muhammad Ali

February 9 — The Beatles perform "Till There Was You" live on *The Ed Sullivan Show* to an audience full of screaming teenagers and a record-breaking 73 million television viewers. Though the group had been rapidly gaining popularity in America since the December 1963 release of "I Want to Hold Your Hand," their Ed Sullivan appearance confirms that Beatlemania is sweeping the country.

February 25 — In a surprise upset, Olympic gold medalist Cassius Clay beats Sonny Liston in Miami Beach, Florida, and is crowned heavyweight champion of the world. Just one day later, he announces that he has joined the Nation of Islam and is changing his name. For the remainder of the decade, Muhammad Ali becomes known outside the boxing ring for his socio-political beliefs — specifically on racial equality and the Vietnam War.

March 8 — Malcolm X, suspended from the Nation of Islam, says in New York City that he is forming a black nationalist party.

March 16 — President Johnson submits a plan for his "War on Poverty" initiatives to Congress. The proposal helps establish federal programs still in use today, including food stamps, Head Start, Medicare and Medicaid.

March 24 — *Dutchman* plays its first performance at the Cherry Lane Theatre in Greenwich Village, New York City. The play went on to win an Obie award for Best Off-Broadway Play and was made into a film in 1967. *Dutchman* was the last play produced by Amiri Baraka under his birth name, LeRoi Jones. At the time, Baraka was in the process of divorcing his Jewish wife and embracing Black Nationalism.



A still from the *Dutchman* film

April 13 — At the 36th Annual Academy Awards ceremony, Sidney Poitier becomes the first black man to win a Best Actor Oscar for his role in *Lilies of the Field*.

May 12 — In one of the first publicized instances of this kind of protest, 12 students burn their Vietnam draft cards and declare, "We won't go!" This will become a common act of defiance against the war.

May 22 — President Johnson delivers his “Great Society” speech at the University of Michigan. His speech calls for an end to racial injustice and poverty in the United States, and outlines his presidential agenda for the next four years.

June 21 — A day after the first group of Freedom Summer volunteers arrives in Mississippi, three civil rights workers, Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman, and James Chaney set out to investigate a church bombing. The three activists are arrested for a traffic violation and held for several hours. When they are released at 10:30pm, it is the last time they are seen alive.

July 2 — President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law. The act prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin in employment, ends segregation in public places, and outlaws segregation practices common amongst many southern businesses for decades.

July 16 — Black teenager James Powell is shot and killed by a white off-duty police officer in Harlem, NY. Two days later, peaceful demonstrations erupt into violence. For six days, more than 8,000 people take to the streets, smashing windows, setting fires, and looting local businesses. They cause over \$1 million worth of damage.

August 4 — After a six-week search, the FBI finds the bodies of the three Freedom Summer volunteers, Schwerner, Goodman, and Chaney, buried in a Mississippi earthen dam. Local officials refuse to prosecute the case, so federal investigators step in.

October 1 — Student activists at the University of California at Berkeley distribute information on racial discrimination at a row of tables set up at the corner of Bancroft and Telegraph Streets, a location which had traditionally been a place to share information about a variety of campus activities and events. Berkeley administrators tell the students they must keep all political activities off campus. Students see this as a violation of their First Amendment rights, and begin a protest that lasts for two days, involves thousands of students, and results in eight suspensions. One activist, Jack Weinberg, is held in police custody.

October 14 — Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his nonviolent civil rights activism. At 35 years old, King is the youngest person ever to receive the prize.

November 3 — Sitting President Johnson wins a landslide victory over Republican challenger Barry Goldwater in the 1964 presidential election, which breathes new life into his “Great Society” ambitions.

December 2-3 — After the University of California Berkeley’s chancellor refuses to drop charges against suspended free speech protesters, over 1,000 students stage an overnight sit-in at Sproul Hall. Over the next 12 hours, 814 students are arrested. The Berkeley Free Speech Movement inspires similar protests across the country and helps define modern American student activism.

December 4 — The U.S. Justice Department charges 21 Mississippi men with conspiring to deprive Freedom Summer workers Chaney, Schwerner, and Goodman of their civil rights, since murder is not a federal crime. In December 1967, seven of the conspirators are found guilty, though none of the will serve more than six years in jail. ●

(from PBS.org and Wikipedia.org)



Berkeley Free Speech Movement

ABOUT THE **BYSTANDER EFFECT**

“The more eyewitnesses present, the less likely people will help a victim.”

by Melissa Burkley, PhD

On October 24th, 2009, as many as 20 witnesses watched as a 15 year old girl was brutally assaulted and raped outside a homecoming dance in Richmond, CA. The viciousness of the attack was shocking, but what was even more shocking was the fact that so many people witnessed the attack and yet failed to intervene or call police. As one of the police officers involved in the case states, "what makes it even more disturbing is the presence of others. People came by, saw what was happening and failed to report it." Some of the bystanders reportedly even laughed and took photos of the assault with their cell phones.

How could people just stand by and watch something this horrible happen to a young, innocent girl? Some have suggested that the eyewitnesses' failure to report the incident likely resulted from a concern over being labeled as a snitch. Although this is possible, social psychological research on the bystander effect suggests a different cause: there were too many eyewitnesses present. The “bystander effect” refers to the fact that people are less likely to offer help when they are in a group than when they are alone. Research on this effect was inspired by a real-world account that seems hauntingly similar to the recent event in Richmond.

In 1964, 28 year old Kitty Genovese was raped and stabbed to death in front of her apartment complex. The attack lasted over 30 minutes and was witnessed by several dozen people who failed to report the incident. Some failed to realize that an actual crime was going on, claiming they thought it was a "lover's quarrel," whereas others realized they were witnessing a crime, but failed to report it because they assumed that someone else had already called the police.

To determine the underlying reasons why these witnesses failed to help, John Darley and Bibb Latane conducted a series of lab experiments to examine how the presence of others influences people's helping behavior in an emergency situation. The results of these studies suggest there are two clear reasons why the eyewitnesses in the Richmond case may have failed to help.

Pluralistic Ignorance

One of the first steps in anyone's decision to help another is the recognition that someone is actually in need of help. To do this, the bystander must realize that they are witnessing an emergency situation and that a victim is in need of assistance. Consequently, a major reason why eyewitnesses fail to intervene is that they do not even realize they are witnessing a crime. When we are in an ambiguous situation and we are not sure whether there is an emergency or not, we often look to others to see how they are reacting. We assume that others may know something that we don't, so we gauge their reactions before we decide how we will respond. If those around us are acting as if it is an emergency, then we will treat it like an emergency and act accordingly. But if those around us are acting calm, then we may fail to recognize the immediacy of the situation and therefore fail to intervene.



For example, imagine you are at the community pool and you see a child splashing wildly in the water. Your first instinct would probably be to look around you and see how others are responding. If others appear shocked and are yelling for help, you may conclude that the child is drowning and dive in to help. But, if those around you are ignoring the child or laughing, you may conclude that the child is just playing around. To avoid looking foolish, you would probably just continue watching and would fail to dive in and help. This seems like a reasonable approach and for the most part, it prevents us from making a fool out of ourselves. But the problem is that this tendency to look to others in order to determine how to respond can be biased by a phenomenon known as pluralistic ignorance. Pluralistic ignorance describes a situation where a majority of group members privately believe one thing, but assume (incorrectly) that most others believe the opposite.

In one of Darley and Latane's classic studies, they tried to recreate this phenomenon in the lab. For their study, they had participants complete a questionnaire and after a few minutes, smoke started to pour into the room underneath a door in the back. Some participants were the only one in the room when this happened, but for others, there were two other students completing questionnaires in the room as well. In actuality, these two "students" were working for the researchers and were instructed to keep calm no matter what happens. The key question in this study was would the participant notice the smoke and go get help or would they simply write it off as nothing concerning and continue working on their questionnaire. The result showed that when the participant was alone, 75% of them left to report the smoke. But when there were two other people in the room who remained calm, only 10% left to get help. In some cases, the smoke got so thick the participant could barely read the questionnaire in front of them! Yet, as long as their fellow bystanders remained in calm, they did as well. Thus, when we are alone, we are more likely to assume an ambiguous situation represents an emergency and act accordingly. When we are in the presence of other bystanders, we are likely to look to those others for guidance and if they are not responding or are laughing or are taking photos of the event, we will mistakenly conclude it is not an emergency and will fail to help.

Diffusion of Responsibility

Even if people recognize that they are witnessing a crime, they may still fail to intervene if they do not take personal responsibility for helping the victim. The problem is that the more bystanders there are, the less responsible each individual feels. When you are the only eyewitness present, 100% of the responsibility for providing help rests on your shoulders. But if there are five eyewitnesses, only 20% of the responsibility is yours. The responsibility becomes defused or dispersed among the group members. In these situations, people may assume that someone else will help or that someone else is better qualified to provide assistance. But if everyone assumes this, then no one will intervene. Darley and Latane also investigated this phenomenon in a lab study.

Specifically, they had participants take part in a group discussion over an intercom system. Some participants talked one-on-one over the intercom with another person and some talked over the intercom with a group of 5 other people. During the discussion, one of the voices on the intercom stated they were having a seizure and called out for help. In actuality, this was a prerecorded voice. For those who were led to believe they were the only person who overheard the seizure, 85% sought help. But for those who thought they were one of six people who overheard the seizure, only 31% sought help. So even when we are aware that an emergency is occurring, we are still less likely to help if other bystanders are present. So what about these people who overheard the seizure and didn't help? Were they just indifferent? Follow up interviews at the end of the study suggested that they were in fact concerned. Most mentioned overhearing the seizure, many had trembling hands and were clearly shaken from the experience and several inquired as to whether the victim finally received help. This tells us that they were not indifferent or heartless; they were concerned but simply didn't feel responsible enough to do anything about it. Interestingly, the researchers also asked if the participants thought that the presence of other bystanders affected their decision to get help or not and the most said it did not. So even though the presence of others clearly affects our helping behavior, we are unaware of this influence.

If you find yourself in an emergency situation with several fellow bystanders, realize that your first instinct (and the first instinct of those around you) will be to deny responsibility for helping the victim. By simply being aware of the diffusion of responsibility process, it may snap you out of the biased way of thinking and cause you to realize that you and everyone present is each 100% responsible for helping the victim. Second, if you find yourself in need of help, it is up to you to actively make one of your eyewitnesses feel personally responsible for your well-being. Self-defense instructors advise that you instead pick one person out of the crowd, look them dead in the eye, and tell that one person you need help. By pleading to a specific individual, you suddenly make that person feel completely responsible for your safety and this increases the odds that they will help. ●

(from PsychologyToday.com)

POEMS BY AMIRI BARAKA

Masked Angel Costume

by Amiri Baraka, 1989

The Sayings of Mantan Moreland

1. Never let a ghost

Ketch you

Never!

2. Avoid Death

Ghosts

Always

be

there!

3. Dead People

& Live People

Should not

Mix!

4. Ghosts think they

good lookin

Never stay to find out!

5. I am mentioned in the credits

but the ghost

got the

dough!

6. Cemeteries

Funeral Parlors

Morgues

Do not need

You while

You

alive

7. Never let Mr. Chan

send you into

a dark

room

by

your self

8. If the dark get

Noisy

Seek

light

at

Once!

9. Few people know

my whole

name.

Nor

if the name

they call me

is

real.



Amiri Baraka in 1964

10. Wait until
the shooting
stops
then
wait
for
witnesses

Leave as soon
as it is
safe.

11. I am a chauffeur
when you see
me
But that is
only
in the
movies.

12. I am never really
laughing
except
off
camera.

13. I made a lot of money
& made people happy
It was
a job
I accepted rather
than
preach
or
steal!

14. Birmingham
Birmingham
was where
4 of my daughters
were killed
John Coltrane
composed
Alabama
It was the music
that moved
my feet
they never
failed. ●

(from Black American Literature Forum, Vol. 23)

WHOOSH!

by Amiri Baraka, 2003

(AFTER THE RAIN)
I used to be simple
When the world
Was

"When was that?"
An LP after the '45
After the '78

When the sky was far away
When humans had faces
When the world minded
Its own business
& poetry was a dream
that left no footprints

I used to be ignorant
& thought I cd live
without killing

I used to be quiet
I used to look at things
& wonder
That was before
the war
before the other
war & the war
before
that

I used to be a child
I got outta that
I used to be excited
By what I didn't
Understand

I was still a child then
Not yet a man

I used to think I cd do anything
But stuff I didn't wanna
Do

I thought everybody
Had a heart, a soul,
A brain, was sane

I don't mean some of what
I saw & knew, & passed,
Wasn't mean. But
It didn't mean
What Monk mean
When he thought up
"I Mean You!"

I never wanted to be anything
But everything good. I thought
I understood good. Like an
appetite

I might have, a beautiful feeling,
A sound, a little girl her hair
In a little curl, rolled
Like an instant on her
Forehead

I used to think
Dead people
wd always
be dead

And you saw them
If you had to

just a moment
at funerals

I stopped that
I won't look at
The funeral dead
But instead I find the
Dead, behind, to the left
the right,
& Straight ahead

There's a Dead thing
With a pretzel
Stuck in his cheek
A ghost w/o a Sheet
A murderer with an Ant Eater's
Beak. An ex-cartoon character
In Muhammad Speaks
w/ pointy ears, 2 Lugosi teefs
stick out his anteater mouf
you lookin' for that
cute little tail
he had

When Gerald 2X
Created him like Jacob
& Malcolm kept him
jailed inside
The Black Muslim
Newspaper

I used to laugh at that
Little devil, years after
One told me
Harlem smelled like
The Elephant House

at Bronx Zoo
and I knew
like he knew
that he was
tryin' to hurt
me

I used to cry
If I had
to lie

I used to think
Everything was its own
Solution. That people
Who put Colored People down
Were just crazy. I don't think
I understood their power

I thought that Negroes
Who "cut the fool"
Were like a mysterious odor
From a garbage can

I don't think I ever really
Believed in God
I got baptized
& nothing happened
except I got wet
& blinked my eyes
at a preacher whiter
than white people
so I guess I thought
he cd protect us
from evil

All this time
In my zig zag
Growing

All this looking & feeling
& eventually
knowing

Both me and the
World
Dig changing

I used to be
& so forth
me & the
world
says
cd say
did say
will say
I used to, used to
How did that word
Come to mean that? ●



Amiri Baraka in 2003

(from *African American Review*, Vol. 37)

What does transgender mean?

Transgender is a term used to describe people whose gender identity differs from the sex the doctor marked on their birth certificate. Gender identity is a person's internal, personal sense of being a man or a woman (or someone outside of that gender binary). For transgender people, the sex they were assigned at birth and their own internal gender identity do not match.

People in the transgender community may describe themselves using one (or more) of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, transsexual, and genderqueer. Always use the term preferred by the individual.

Trying to change a person's gender identity is no more successful than trying to change a person's sexual orientation — it doesn't work. Many transgender people are prescribed hormones by their doctors to change their bodies. Some undergo surgeries as well. But not all transgender people can or will take those steps, and it's important to know that being transgender is not dependent upon medical procedures.

How is sexual orientation different from gender identity?

Sexual orientation describes a person's enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction to another person (for example: straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual), while gender identity describes a person's, internal, personal sense of being a man or a woman (or someone outside of that gender binary). Simply put: sexual orientation is about who you are attracted to and fall in love with; gender identity is about your own sense of yourself.

Transgender people have a sexual orientation, just like everyone else. Transgender people may be straight, lesbian, gay, or bisexual. For example, a person who transitions from male to female and is attracted solely to men would typically identify as a straight woman. A person who transitions from female to male and is attracted solely to men would typically identify as a gay man.

Why is transgender equality important?

Transgender people face staggering levels of discrimination and violence. In 2013, **72% of anti-LGBT homicide victims were transgender women**. According to a report by the National Center for Transgender Equality and The Task Force:

- Transgender people are **four times more likely to live in poverty**.
- Transgender people **experience unemployment at twice the rate of the general population**, with rates for people of color up to four times the national unemployment rate.
- 90% of transgender people report experiencing **harassment, mistreatment or discrimination on the job**.
- 22% of respondents who have interacted with police reported **harassment by police**, with much **higher rates reported by people of color**. Almost half of the respondents (46%) reported being uncomfortable seeking police assistance.
- 41% of respondents reported **attempting suicide**, compared to 1.6% of the general population.

Transgender people, particularly **transgender women of color, face shockingly high rates of murder, homelessness, and incarceration**. Most states and countries offer no legal protections in housing, employment, health care, and other areas where individuals experience discrimination based on their gender identity or expression.



be you. be proud. be glad.



How do I treat a transgender person with respect?

When you become an ally of transgender people, your actions will help change the culture, making society a better, safer place for transgender people - and for all people (trans or not) who do not conform to gender expectations.

- **You can't tell if someone is transgender just by looking.** It's not possible to look around a room and "see" if there are any transgender people. You should assume that there may be transgender people at any gathering.
- **Don't make assumptions about a transgender person's sexual orientation.** Gender identity is different than sexual orientation. Transgender people can be gay, lesbian, bisexual or straight.
- **If you're unsure which pronoun a person prefers, listen first** to the pronoun other people use when referring to that person. Someone who knows the person well will probably use the correct pronoun. If you must ask which pronoun the person prefers, start with your own. For example, "Hi, I'm Dani and I prefer the pronouns she and her. What about you?" Then use that person's preferred pronoun and encourage others to do so. If you accidentally use the wrong pronoun, apologize quickly and sincerely, then move on.
- **Don't ask a transgender person what their "real name" is.** For some transgender people, being associated with their birth name is a tremendous source of anxiety, or it is simply a part of their life they wish to leave behind. Respect the name a transgender person is currently using. If you happen to know the name someone was given at birth but no longer uses, don't share it without the person's explicit permission.
- **Be careful about confidentiality, disclosure, and "outing."** Some transgender people feel comfortable disclosing their transgender status to others, and some do not. Do not casually share this information, or "gossip" about a person you know or think is transgender. Not only is this an invasion of privacy, it also can have negative consequences in a world that is very intolerant of gender difference.
- **Respect the terminology a transgender person uses to describe their identity.** The transgender community uses many different terms to describe their experiences. Respect the term (transgender, transsexual, genderqueer, etc.) a person uses to describe themselves. A person who is questioning or exploring their gender identity may take some time to find out what identity and/or gender expression is best for them. They might, for example, choose a new name or pronoun, and then decide at a later time to change the name or pronoun again. Be respectful and use the name and/or pronoun requested.
- **Understand there is no "right" or "wrong" way to transition.** Some transgender people access medical care like hormones and surgery as part of their transition. Some transgender people want their authentic gender identity to be recognized without hormones or surgery. A transgender identity is not dependent on medical procedures.
- **Don't ask about a transgender person's genitals, surgical status, or sex life.** It would be inappropriate to ask a non-transgender person about the appearance or status of their genitals, and it's equally inappropriate to ask a transgender person those questions. Don't ask if a transgender person has had "the surgery" or if they are "pre-op" or "post-op." If a transgender person wants to talk to you about such matters, they will bring it up. Similarly, it wouldn't be appropriate to ask a non-transgender person about how they have sex, so the same courtesy should be extended to transgender people.
- **Avoid backhanded compliments or "helpful" tips.** While you may intend to be supportive, comments such as "I would have never known you were transgender. You look so pretty;" "You look just like a real woman;" or "You'd pass so much better if you wore less/more make-up, had a better wig, etc." can be hurtful or even insulting.
- **Challenge anti-transgender remarks or jokes in public spaces.** It's important to challenge anti-transgender remarks or jokes whenever they're said and no matter who says them.
- **Support gender neutral public restrooms.** Make it clear that transgender and gender non-conforming people are welcome to use whichever restroom they feel comfortable using.
- **At meetings and events, set an inclusive tone.** At a meeting where not everyone is known, consider asking everyone to introduce themselves with their name and preferred pronouns.
- **Listen to transgender people.** The best way to be an ally is to listen with an open mind.
- **Know your own limits as an ally.** It is better to admit you don't know something than to make assumptions or say something that may be incorrect or hurtful. Then seek out the appropriate resources that will help you learn more. ●

(from GLAAD.org)

"EVERY BREATH A BLACK TRANS WOMAN TAKES IS AN ACT OF REVOLUTION"



by **Lourdes Ashley Hunter**

National Director of The Trans Women of Color Collective; Leadership Team of Black Lives Matter

Black History Month was my favorite time of year from elementary to high school. Growing up in the 80's and 90's in Detroit, Michigan, a city rich with Black heritage from Motown to middle class families who thrived from — and then lost — almost everything with the mass exodus of the auto industry, Black History Month was the most exciting time for me and not just because my birthday is also this month. Throughout the years and my life, my mom has always taught me to have pride in my African and Indigenous heritage. Black History Month was the time we could openly celebrate all of who we are as a culture. It was a time that we as a people came together to reflect on all we had overcome navigating a system designed to erase us off the face of the earth. It was a time that we could unapologetically acknowledge the bloody truth of this nation.

We were indoctrinated to believe America (stolen land) was discovered (invaded) by colonist (murderers, rapists, thieves) exploring the free world. We are still denied our history to this day. But we knew it then and we know it now. Our parents reminded us of our rich ancestry. Our grand and great grand parents told us their personal stories of revival and survival. I knew the blood of revolutionary freedom fighters flowed deep in my veins.

As a child and even now, I am inspired by the lives of Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Josephine Baker, and my (s)hero Shirley Chisholm. The images of these powerful women gave/give me great hope that one day I could be as great as well.

It wasn't until I was a young adult that I realized that my life would be very different from what I had imagined. I had no idea that I would face brutal violence and structural oppression simply for existing. I had no idea I could be legally denied access to medical care, housing and employment. I never imagined that I would have to fight for basic human rights. These experiences are similar to the ones my mom told me she experienced growing up in the 50's. Similar to the ones the history books re-written for the glorification and commodification of white supremacy. I thought the fight for Black folk to obtain civil rights in this country happened over 45 years ago. What I realized is that fight was not for the liberation of the Black Trans Woman.

Trans and gender non-conforming people of color are disproportionately impacted by physical and structural violence. According to The National LGBTQ Task Force, Black trans people have a household income of less than 10k a year and almost 50% have attempted suicide. What is equally disturbing is the silence from mainstream media, the Black social justice and LGBT organizations. The same systems that are designed to protect us is actively engaging in erasure. When looking at the mainstream Black and LGBT organizations leadership teams and Board of Directors, they lack diversity and representation. How can their work be informed if they don't even hire us? Denying a Black Trans woman a job is an act of violence. Denying Black trans folk access to healthcare is an act of violence.

Denying Black trans people platforms to speak and represent themselves is erasure. Actively engaging in erasure is an act of violence.

Every 28 hours a Black person is murdered. I also know that every 32 hours a transgender person is murdered. The average age of the 12 transgender women of color brutally murdered last year in this country (in less than 6 months) is less than 35 years old. What I do know is that Islan Nettles was pummeled to her death outside a NYC police station and none of the 12 cameras in the surrounding area that should've recorded her attack were operating



ABOUT BLACK LIVES MATTER

properly — and even though the police pulled her murderer off her body, he still walks the streets today.

This inhumane treatment of our lives has taken its toll. In January, there were reports of four brutal murders of Black trans and gender non-conforming people of color. There has been no national outrage over our lives. The lack of response regarding the physical and structural violence we face sends a resounding message that our lives are disposable, that our lives don't matter.

It was because of the brutal violence and discrimination we face everyday that Trans Women of Color Collective (TWOCC) was formed in September 2013. TWOCC is an organizing movement that elevates the lived narratives, experiences and leadership of trans people of color. We have worked intently with Black Lives Matter Movement to ensure that the lives of those most disproportionately impacted by structural oppression are at the forefront of our social justice movement.

My vision is for our collective liberation. We are not free until we all GET FREE. ●

(from HuffingtonPost.com)



Black Lives Matter is a national organization working for the validity of Black life.

#BlackLivesMatter was created in 2012 after Trayvon Martin's murderer, George Zimmerman, was acquitted for his crime, and dead 17-year old Trayvon was posthumously placed on trial for his own murder. Rooted in the experiences of Black people in this country who actively resist our dehumanization, #BlackLivesMatter is a call to action and a response to the virulent anti-Black racism that permeates our society. Black Lives Matter is a unique contribution that goes beyond extrajudicial killings of Black people by police and vigilantes.

It goes beyond the narrow nationalism that can be prevalent within Black communities, which merely call on Black people to love Black, live Black and buy Black, keeping straight cis Black men in the front of the movement while our sisters, queer and trans and disabled folk take up roles in the background or not at all.

What does #BlackLivesMatter mean?

When we say Black Lives Matter, we are broadening the conversation around state violence to include all of the ways in which Black people are intentionally left powerless at the hands of the state. We are talking about the ways in which Black lives are deprived of our basic human rights and dignity.

#BlackLivesMatter is working for a world where Black lives are no longer systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. We affirm our contributions to this society, our humanity, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression. We have put our sweat equity and love for Black people into creating a political project—taking the hashtag off of social media and into the streets. The call for Black lives to matter is a rallying cry for ALL Black lives striving for liberation. ●

(from BlackLivesMatter.com)

MILESTONES IN THE AMERICAN TRANSGENDER MOVEMENT

1952 — Christine Jorgensen Becomes First American to Have a Sex Change

A former Army private from the Bronx became the first American to undergo a sex change operation after traveling to Denmark for surgery and hormone treatments. Upon her return, she publicly announced her transition, and became an advocate and a celebrity.

May 1959 — Clashes at Cooper's Donuts

Police officers tried to arrest individuals at Cooper's Donuts in Los Angeles, a popular hangout for transgender people, drag queens and others in the LGBT community. The patrons clashed with the officers over the treatment, throwing coffee, doughnuts, and utensils.

August 1966 — Riots at Compton's Cafeteria

Like Cooper's Donuts, Compton's Cafeteria in San Francisco was one of the few places in the area where transgender people could congregate publicly. Riots broke out there after police officers tried to kick out a transgender woman.

1966 — *The Transsexual Phenomenon*

The physician Harry Benjamin published *The Transsexual Phenomenon*, a groundbreaking book that outlined how transgender people could transition medically.

June 1969 — The Stonewall Riots

Police officers raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay club in New York City. The crowd, weary of the raids on gay clubs, rioted. Many in the LGBT community, including transgender people, joined in several days of demonstrations. The Stonewall Riots are widely considered to have sparked the LGBT rights movement.

1970 — The Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries

Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson started Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries, or STAR House, an advocacy group and shelter in New York.

1975 — Transgender Protections in Minneapolis

Minneapolis became the first city to pass a law prohibiting discrimination against transgender people.

August 1977 — Renée Richards

The New York Supreme Court ruled that Renée Richards, a transgender woman who played professional tennis, was eligible to play at the United States Open as a woman.

1987 — Gender Identity Disorder

In the 1987 revision of *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, the American Psychiatric Association added "gender identity disorder" as a classification for transgender people.



Christine Jorgenson



2002 Transgender Day of Remembrance

August 1992 — First International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy

The conference in Houston was the first of six gatherings where activists, especially lawyers, from around the country met and laid the groundwork for the transgender movement.

1993 — First State Protections

Minnesota became the first state to extend protections against discrimination to transgender people.

1995 — Transgender Lobbying

Phyllis Frye and Riki Anne Wilchins held the first transgender lobbying day in Washington.

1999 — The Transgender Day of Remembrance

The advocate Gwendolyn Ann Smith organized the first Transgender Day of Remembrance, to honor the memory of Rita Hester and other transgender people like her who were lost to bigotry and anti-transgender violence.

May 29, 2003 — First Transgender Person Officially Visits White House

George W. Bush became the first president to officially welcome an openly transgender person, Petra Leilani Akwai, into the White House as part of a Yale 1968 class reunion. Most of the big transgender advocacy organizations started up during the Bush years – the equality center, the Transgender Law Center, the Sylvia Rivera Law Project, the Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund, and the Center of Excellence for Transgender Health.

2005 — California Bans Insurance Discrimination Against Transgender Patients

California became the first state to mandate transgender health care coverage with the Insurance Gender Nondiscrimination Act.

April 2009 — Murder of Transgender Woman Labeled a Hate Crime

A jury in Colorado found Allen Andrade guilty of first-degree murder in the killing of Angie Zapata. The case was among the first in which a hate crime law was applied in a murder trial where the victim was transgender.

2009 — Presidential Appointees

President Obama nominated the first openly transgender federal appointees: Dylan Orr as an attorney at the Department of Labor in December and Amanda Simpson as a senior technical adviser in the Commerce Department's Bureau of Industry and Security.

November 2010 — College Sports

Kye Allums, who played basketball at George Washington University, came out as a transgender man. He is believed to be the first Division I athlete to compete publicly as a transgender person.

2012 — The Girl Scouts of Colorado Take a Stand

The Girl Scouts of Colorado welcomed all children who identify as girls. In a statement to CNN, the group said, "If a child identifies as a girl and the child's family presents her as a girl, Girl Scouts of Colorado welcomes her as a Girl Scout."

2012 — Title VII Applies to Transgender Employees

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ruled that Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which made it illegal to discriminate based on sex, also protected transgender employees.

2013 — A Change at the American Psychiatric Association

The American Psychiatric Association updated its manual, *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, replacing the term "gender identity disorder" with one that was less stigmatizing, "gender dysphoria."

April 2014 — Transgender Studies Quarterly

Duke University Press began *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, the first academic publication of its kind.

May 2014 — A Medicare Exclusion Reversed

The Department of Health and Human Services reversed a Medicare policy in place since 1981. Medicare must now cover sex reassignment surgery.

June and July 2014 — Laverne Cox

Laverne Cox, an actress in *Orange Is the New Black*, became the first transgender person to appear on the cover of *Time* magazine. In July, she became the first transgender person to be nominated for an Emmy.

Jan. 20, 2015 — Obama on Transgender

President Obama mentioned transgender people in his State of the Union address, a presidential first.

June 1, 2015 — Caitlyn Jenner Introduces Herself

Caitlyn Jenner discussed her transition to a woman in an article in *Vanity Fair*.

July 13, 2015 — A Pentagon Shift

The Pentagon announced plans to lift a ban on military service by transgender people.

Aug. 18, 2015 — White House Hires an Openly Transgender Staff Member

Raffi Freedman-Gurspan, who was a policy adviser at the National Center for Transgender Equality, serves as an outreach and recruitment director on President Obama's staff. ●



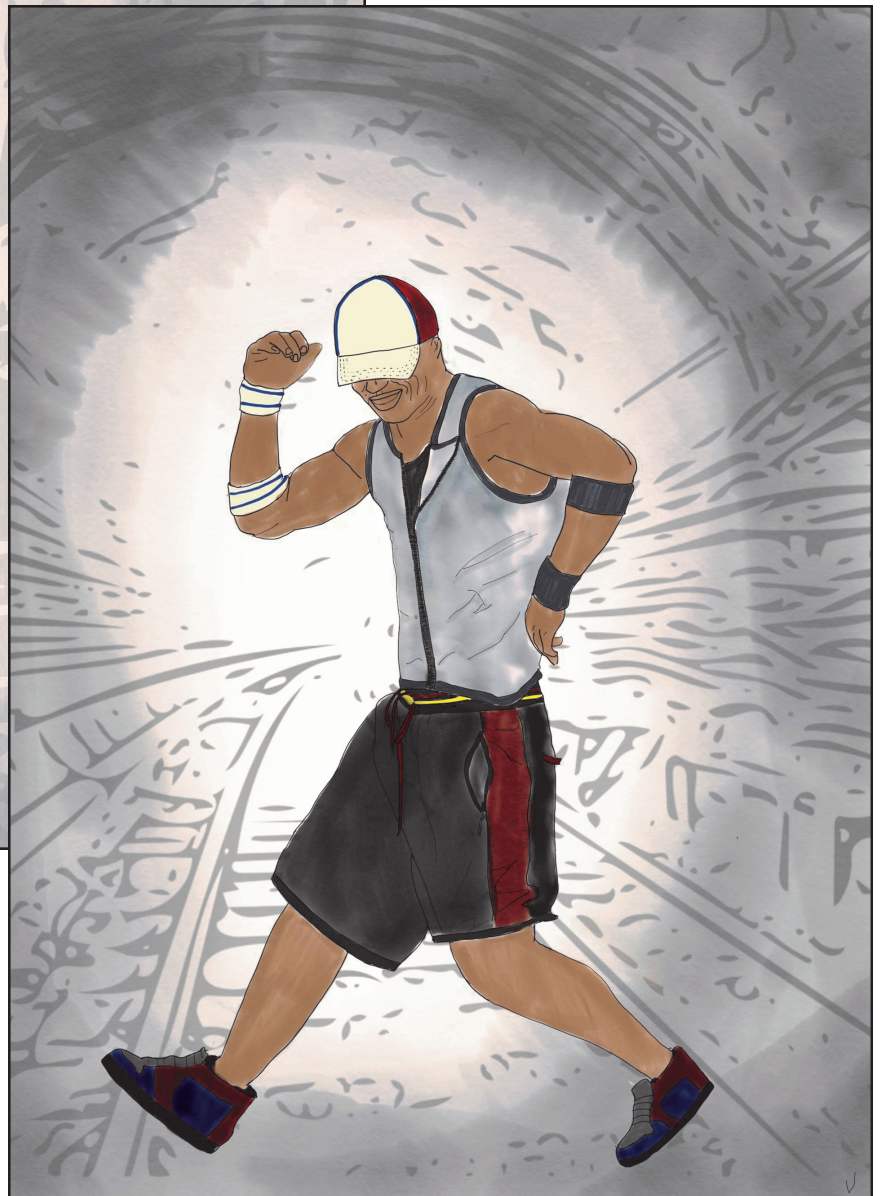
President Obama delivering 2015 State of the Union address

(from NYTimes.com)

SKETCHES FROM OUR COSTUME DESIGNER



Left: Costume Designer and American Blues Theater Ensemble member Christopher J. Neville's sketch of "Lula" for *Dutchman*.



Right: Costume Designer and American Blues Theater Ensemble member Christopher J. Neville's sketch of "Lalo" for *TRANSit*.

ABOUT SPECIAL EVENTS



COMMUNITY SERVICE & TOWN HALLS



We believe it is an honor and duty
to serve our community.

AMERICAN
BLUES
THEATER

AUGUST 26 –
SEPTEMBER 25

2 Plays 1 Ride

DUTCHMAN/TRANSit

by Amiri Baraka by Darren Canady

We offer free Town Halls & special events:

August 26-31	Proceeds of "Pink Previews" to The Lynn Sage Foundation for breast cancer research
August 28	Q & A with Playwright Darren Canady & Producing Artistic Director Gwendolyn Whiteside
September 8	College Night—pizza & meet the creative team
September 11	Q & A with Gender Development Services, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago
September 12	Industry Night—meet the creative team
September 15	Information about Chicago Gender Society
September 17	History of LGBTQ community with Center on Halsted; Season of Concern performances
September 18	Identity discussion with Dr. Michele Kerulis; touch tour & audio described performance
September 23	Discussion about Amiri Baraka with Professor Kenneth Warren, University of Chicago
September 25	Meet the cast of <i>Dutchman</i> & <i>TRANSit</i>

Visit AmericanBluesTheater.com to explore more.

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Children's Hospital of Chicago™



THE FAMILY INSTITUTE
at Northwestern University

ABOUT **AMERICAN BLUES THEATER**

AMERICAN BLUES THEATER

American Blues Theater is the premier American theater producing visceral theatrical works while engaging its audience in missions of local service agencies. American Blues Theater illuminates the American ideas of freedom, equality, and opportunity in the plays produced and communities served.

The multi-generational and interdisciplined artists have established the second-oldest professional Equity Ensemble theater in Chicago. The 36-member Ensemble has over 530 combined years of collaboration on stage. As of 2016, the theater and artists received 172 Joseph Jefferson Awards and nominations that celebrate excellence in Chicago theater and over 28 Black Theatre Alliance Awards. The artists are honored with Pulitzer Prize nominations, Academy Awards, Golden Globe Awards, Emmy Awards and numerous other accolades.

For over thirty years, American Blues has created essential productions and live theatrical experiences for Chicagoland. Their best known production is Chicago's holiday tradition *It's a Wonderful Life: Live in Chicago!* that has entertained over 50,000 patrons since 2002! Terry Teachout of *The Wall Street Journal* wrote American Blues is "exceptional" and the company "feels like home." Chris Jones of *Chicago Tribune* claimed Blues is "strikingly honest [with] deep emotional souls."

In addition to first-class theater, American Blues Theater believes it is an honor and duty to serve the community. They provide an integrated arts education program to Chicago Public Schools that serves over 1,500 students annually. They hold "Pink Previews" which donates a portion of box office sales to breast cancer research. They donate thousands of complimentary tickets to underserved communities. They provide community engagement events called "Town Halls" for patrons following Sunday matinee performance, including curated discussions with Northwestern University psychologists. As a Blue Star Theater, they honor military service and first-responders through various initiatives. Former President of Illinois Labor History Society, Larry Spivak wrote, "American Blues is a dynamic force in Chicago – connecting culture, art, history, and politics into a holistic, aesthetic experience." •

SEASON 31 "Define Yourself"



Dutchman by Amiri Baraka
TRANSit by Darren Canady

Dutchman Directed by
Chuck Smith

TRANSit Directed by
Lisa Portes

Aug 26—Sept 25, 2016

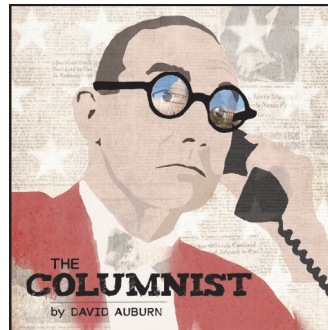


from Frank Capra's film

Directed by
Gwendolyn Whiteside*

Music direction by
Michael Mahler*

Nov 18—Dec 31, 2016



by David Auburn

Chicago premiere

Directed by
Keira Fromm

Feb 17—April 9, 2017



by Dael Orlandersmith

Chicago premiere

Directed by
Ron OJ Parson

June 2—July 2, 2017

*Ensemble member or Artistic Affiliate of American Blues Theater

ABOUT **AMERICAN BLUES THEATER**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE THEATER

PERFORMANCE VENUE

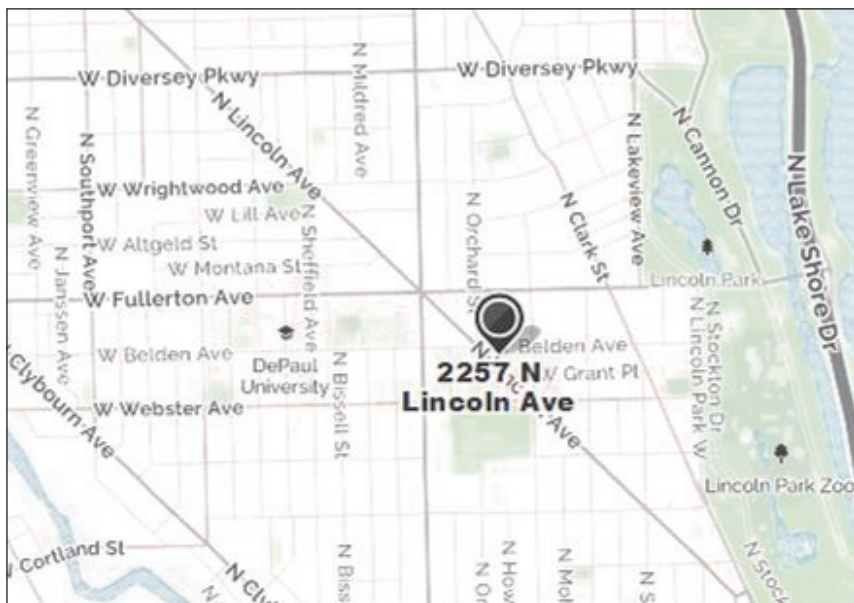
Greenhouse Theater Center
2257 N. Lincoln Avenue
Chicago, IL 60614

BOX OFFICE

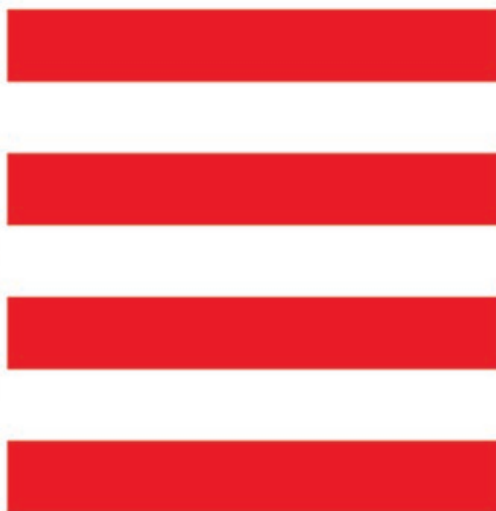
(773) 404-7336

FOR MORE INFORMATION

AmericanBluesTheater.com



**AMERICAN
BLUES
THEATER**



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