



Lorraine Hansberry Theatre
presents
a rolling world premiere

*The
Black Feminist
Guide to the
Human Body*

a new play by
Lisa B. Thompson
directed by **Margo Hall**

**September 19 -
October 6, 2024**

at **Magic Theatre**
in **Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture**



illustrations by **Jennifer McNeal**

LORRAINE HANSBERRY THEATRE

presents

The Black Feminist Guide to the Human Body

THE BLACK FEMINIST GUIDE TO THE HUMAN BODY marks playwright Lisa B. Thompson's triumphant return to the Bay Area in a rolling world premiere celebrating the life and the resilience of Black women. Directed by Lorraine Hansberry Theatre Artistic Director Margo Hall, this acclaimed new work follows a Black professor as she moves through time and memory to explore and honor the uniqueness of Black womanhood. Thompson's new play is not only a joyous, spiritual event, but is also a heartfelt love letter to Black women and their families.

WARNING

This production includes references and descriptions of violence against Black bodies.

PLEASE NOTE

the location of all exits and turn off your electronic devices. Photographing, videotaping, or recording this production is strictly prohibited.

COVID SAFETY

Magic Theatre adheres to all guidelines issued by Fort Mason Center for Arts and Culture, the City and County of San Francisco, and the State of California in regard to reopening facilities to patrons and ongoing operations. Masks are not required, but strongly encouraged.

CAST

Jacinta Kaumbulu as **Dr. Beatrice "Bea" Free**

Paige Mayes* as **Cee Cee**

Phaedra Tillery-Boughton* as **Dee**

Jan Hunter as **Dr. Beatrice "Bea" Free (Understudy)**

Asia Jackson as **Cee Cee & Dee (Understudy)**

CREATIVE & PRODUCTION TEAM

Playwright & Lyricist | Lisa B. Thompson

Director | Margo Hall*

Choreographer | Kendra Barnes

Scenic & Props Designer | Brittany Mellerson

Lighting Designer | Michael Combs

Sound Designer | Alex Fakayode

Costume Designer | Jasmine Milan Williams

Projections & Video Designer | Tajianna Okechukwu

Original Music Composition | Guthrie P. Ramsey, Jr.

Stage Manager & Board Operator | Vanessa Hill

Dramaturg | Amissa Miller

Panelist Coordinator | Kehinde Koyejo

Production Manager & Scenic Design Associate | Julius Rea

PERFORMANCES

September 19 to October 6, 2024

MAGIC THEATRE, Fort Mason Center

2 Marina Boulevard, Building D, San Francisco, CA 94123

Performance runtime: 90 minutes, no intermission

* Member of Actors' Equity Association. This theater operates under an agreement with Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

I'm thrilled to return home to San Francisco for The Lorraine Hansberry Theatre's production of *The Black Feminist Guide to the Human Body*. Bringing this new show to the stage has been a beautiful journey. I wrote this choreopoem during my MacDowell artist residency while living in the same cabin that once housed James Baldwin. The moment that I walked in I felt the power of that sacred space. In that room I let the ancestors speak through me and did my best to honor the lives and stories of Black women.



As many of you know, theatre making is a collaborative process. Mounting a new play involves a host of talented and devoted people working together to bring it to life. I love seeing what other artists—actors, designers, choreographers, directors—contribute to the worlds I've created. For *The Black Feminist Guide to the Human Body*, I was also fortunate to collaborate with fellow artist/scholar and friend, Guthrie P. Ramsey, Jr. & Musicology Media Group to co-write original music. I hope you hear our souls in these songs.

The Black Feminist Guide to the Human Body benefitted from generous developmental support from Black Art Matters ATX, the Department of African & African Diaspora Studies, and the Warfield Center for African & African American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. As a Presidential Visiting Scholar at The New School, and during my Texas Performing Arts/Fusebox Festival Artist Residency I had wonderful opportunities to workshop the play.

I'm deeply grateful to the National Performance Network for their strategic support of this project that brought together four commissioning theaters from across the US to present the piece this year. I'm happy that the final show of 2024 is helmed by my sister in art and life, Lorraine Hansberry Theatre Artistic Director Margo Hall. She and her mighty team have my profound gratitude for bringing my new work to The City.

~Lisa B. Thompson | **Playwright & Lyricist**

LORRAINE HANSBERRY THEATRE MISSION

The mission of Lorraine Hansberry Theatre is to create performances by, for, and about the Black experience, and provide employment and career-building career opportunities for actors, directors, designers, and technicians from the BIPOC community. LHT prioritizes the work of Black female and femme-identifying playwrights by bringing their stories to the community. LHT draws from the cultural and economic resources of the San Francisco Bay Area to enrich and strengthen the performing arts; actively seeking and participating in collaboration with Bay Area Arts institutions and other related organizations.



Margo Hall
Artistic Director

LHT Administrative Offices

762 Fulton Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
415.474.8800
information@lhtsf.org
lhtsf.org



THE BLACK FEMINIST GUIDE TO THE HUMAN BODY READING LIST

Selected Articles & Books for the Mind, Body & Soul

Compiled by Lisa B. Thompson, Ph.D.
September 2024

The Black Feminist Guide to the Human Body

is a National Performance Network (NPN) Creation & Development Fund Project co-commissioned by SEW PRODUCTIONS INC, VORTEX Repertory Company, FUSE BOX AUSTIN, Pyramid Theatre Company, and NPN. The Creation & Development Fund is supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency). For more information: www.npnweb.org

MUSICAL CREDITS

“What are You Doing?”

Written and Published by Lisa B. Thompson and Guthrie P. Ramsey Jr.
Sound Recording Produced by Guthrie P. Ramsey Jr.
Courtesy of Lisa B. Thompson and Guthrie P. Ramsey Jr.

“Survive and Reign”

Written and Published by Lisa B. Thompson and Guthrie P. Ramsey Jr.
Sound Recording Produced by Guthrie P. Ramsey Jr.
Courtesy of Lisa B. Thompson and Guthrie P. Ramsey Jr.

“Second Line, Second Life”

Written and Published by Lisa B. Thompson and Guthrie P. Ramsey Jr.
Sound Recording Produced by Guthrie P. Ramsey Jr.
Courtesy of Lisa B. Thompson and Guthrie P. Ramsey Jr.

ARTICLES

1. Omisade Burney-Scott, “Not Your Mother’s Menopause.” *Ms. Magazine*, October 6, 2022.
2. Erica L. Green et. Al., “A Battle for the Souls of Black Girls: Discipline Disparities between Black and White Boys Have Driven Reform Efforts for Years. But Black Girls are Arguably the Most at-risk Student Group in the United States.” *The New York Times*, October 1, 2020.
3. Rachel E. Gross, “Half the World Has a Clitoris: Why Don’t Doctors Study It?” *The New York Times*. October 17, 2022.
4. Alexis Pauline Gumbs, “Heat is Not a Metaphor.” *Harpers Bazaar*, August 16, 2023.
5. Saidiya Hartman. “Venus in to Acts.” *Small Axe*. No. 26, Vol. 12.2, June 2008.
6. Janell Hobson, “The ‘Batty’ Politic: Toward an Aesthetic of the Black Female Body.” *Hypatia*. Vol. 18, No. 4, Women, Art, and Aesthetics (Autumn - Winter, 2003), pp. 87-105.
7. Esther O. Ohito, “Some of us die: a Black Feminist Researcher’s Survival Method for Creatively Refusing Death and Decay in the Neoliberal Academy.” *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 2021, Vol. 34, No. 6 515-533.

BOOKS

1. Oludara Adeeyo, *Self-Care for Black Women: 150 Ways to Radically Accept & Prioritize Your Mind, Body, & Soul* (2022)
2. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *We Should All Be Feminists* (2015)
3. Katherine Barber, *The Black Woman’s Guide to Breastfeeding: The Definitive Guide to Nursing for African American Mothers* (2005)
4. Candice Marie Benbow, *Red Lip Theology* (2022)

5. Ruha Benjamin, *Viral Justice: How We Grow the World We Want* (2022)
6. Bill Bryson, *The Body: A Guide for Occupants* (2021)
7. Boston Women's Health Book Collective, *Our Bodies, Ourselves* (2002)
8. adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy* (2017)
9. Patricia Hill-Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: 30th Anniversary Ed.: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (2022)
10. Brittney Cooper, *Eloquent Rage: A Black Feminist Discovers Her Superpower* (2018)
11. Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Abolition Geography: Essays Toward Liberation* (2023)
12. Marita Golden, *The Strong Black Woman: How a Myth Endangers the Physical and Mental Health of Black Women* (2021)
13. Virginia Grise, *Your Healing is Killing Me* (2017)
14. Alexis Pauline Gumbs, *Undrowned: Black Feminist Lessons from Marine Mammals* (2020)
15. Nicole Fleetwood, *Troubling Vision: Performance, Visuality and Blackness* (2011)
16. Tricia Hershey, *Rest Is Resistance: A Manifesto* (2022)
17. bell hooks, *All About Love: New Visions* (2018)
18. bell hooks, *Sisters of the Yam: Black Women and Self-recovery* (2014)
19. Cheryl D. Holloway, *The Black Women's Cancer Survival Guide* (2017)
20. Shanita Hubbard, *Ride or Die: A Feminist Manifesto for the Well-Being of Black Women* (2024)
21. Mikki Kendall, *Hood Feminism: Notes from the Women that a Movement Forgot* (2021)
22. Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, *Growing Each Other Up: When our Children Become Our Teachers* (2016)
23. Robin Coste Lewis, *To the Realization of Perfect Helplessness* (2022)
24. Audre Lorde, *A Burst of Light and Other Essays* (1988)
25. Audre Lorde, *The Cancer Journals* (2020)
26. Resmaa Menakem, *My Grandmothers Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies* (2017)
27. Janet Mock, *Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love, & So Much More* (2014)
28. Julia Oparah and Alicia Bonaparte, *Birthing Justice: Black Women, Pregnancy, Childbirth* (2016)
29. Nell Painter, *Old in Art School: A Memoir of Starting Over* (2018)
30. Sonya Reese-Taylor, *The Body is Not an Apology: The Power of Radical Self-Love, 2nd Edition* (2021)
31. Sonya Reese-Taylor, *The Body is Not an Apology Workbook: Tools for Living Radical Self-Love* (2021)
32. Cole Arthur Riley, *Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems, and Meditations for Staying Human* (2024)
33. Dorothy Roberts, *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty* (1998)
34. Christina Sharpe, *Ordinary Notes* (2023)
35. Barbara Smith, *The Truth that Never Hurts: Writings on Race, Gender, and Freedom* (1998)
36. Tracy K. Smith, *To Free the Captives: A Plea for the American Soul* (2023)
37. Linda Villarosa, *Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on the Health of Our Nation* (2022)
38. Linda Villarosa, *Body and Soul: The Black Women's Guide to Physical Health and Emotional Well-being* (1994)
39. Deborah Willis and Carla Williams, *The Black Female Body: A Photographic History* (2002)
40. Mary-Francis Winters, *Black Fatigue: How Racism Erodes the Mind, Body, and Spirit* (2020)

BIOGRAPHIES

Jacinta Kaumbulu (“DR. BEATRICE ‘BEA’ FREE”

| she/her) is a Bay Area actor. She is thrilled to be making her first debut with The Lorraine Hansberry Theater at Magic Theater; in the role of Dr. Beatrice Free (Bea). Black Women’s health, and wellness is not talked about enough. Selfcare and love of self which are crucial to living a good life. Jacinta hopes to give life to Dr. Beatrice Free and to our community guide as black women in this marvelous play. Jacinta has worked with several theater companies in the Bay Area over the years. Most recently, 3 Girls Theater, Crowded Fire, Playground SF, The Lower Bottom Playaz, Rhythmix Cultural Center, and The Valley Center for Performing Arts.



She continues to expand her artistic range as an Associate Producer/Casting Manager at SFBATCO, Co-Host of Creatively Shaded and a Teaching Artist for SFArtsEd. Her past theater productions include *Sleeping Beauty* as Mission Burrito/Queen Understudy (Presidio Theatre), *Crowns* as Mable (CenterRep), *Clybourne Park* (Director), *Aint Misbehavin’* as Armelia McQueen, *The Color Purple* (Hillbarn Theatre), *Caroline or Change*, *Little Shop of Horrors* (Ray Of Light Theatre). She consistently challenges the concept of traditional theatre and finds new ways to push the boundaries of creativity and inclusion in the theatre community.

Jan Hunter (ASSISTANT DIRECTOR & “DR. BEATRICE ‘BEA’ FREE” UNDERSTUDY | she/

her) is an Actress, Director and retired Theatre Educator of 40 years, she was the Performing



Arts Director at Skyline High school for 24 years, directing and Producing four productions a year. She recently starred in NCTC’s production of *Interlude* and African American Theatre’s productions of *Cinderella* (2018-2019), *Streetcar Named Desire* (2018) and *For Colored Girls* (2018), nominated for Outstanding Ensemble performance By Theatre Bay Area (2019). She’s performed in *Oedipus*, *School for Scandal* and *Pygmalion*, directed *The Vagina Monologues* for BAWAR 2018. Born and raised in Los Angeles, and one of the Original Soul Train Dancers, modeled for Johnson and Johnson Hair Care products. Jan is a Board of Directors member of the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre. Hunter holds a B.A. in Drama, M.A. in Education and M.A. in Teacher of the Arts.

Paige Mayes* (“CEE CEE” | she/her) is a proud

Aurora, Colorado native. She is elated to return to Lorraine Hansberry Theater after *Single Black Female* in 2019! Mayes works as a triple threat actress, choreographer, heels class instructor, model, recording artist & yoga teacher. In fall 2023, Paige was the assistant choreographer for *CROWNS* at Centre Rep Company. Mayes has worked with African American Shakespeare Company, Alliance Theater, A.C.T., Berkeley Rep, Marin Theater Company, Milwaukee Rep & more. She is an Arizona State University and American Conservatory Theater alum. Paige sends much love to her family, her husband and their late son. All glory to GOD and to our ancestors! @iam_paigemayes



Asia Jackson (“CEE CEE” & “DEE”

UNDERSTUDY | she/her) is honored to return to Lorraine Hansberry Theatre after performing the staged reading of *The Black Feminist Guide*



to the Human Body at MoAD. She most recently performed in *Forest Rituals* at UC Berkeley’s Botanical Gardens and the Sawtooth building for the Save The Redwoods League donor event. Some of her credits include *SistahFriend* (staged

Phaedra Tillery-Boughton* (“Dee”

| she/her) is a multi-hyphenate creative artist. Phaedra was awarded the 2022-23 Theatre Bay Area Arts Leadership residency award in Residency at SFBATCO.



reading) at 3Girls Theatre Company, *Bulrushes* at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre, *Nollywood Dreams* at SF Playhouse, *Crumbs From the Table of Joy* at Town Hall Theatre Company, and *The Cake* at the New Conservatory Theatre Center. I hope you all feel as blessed as I do to partake in this incredible piece written for, by and about black women. Asia thanks God and her amazing family and friends for their unwavering love and support.

Lisa B. Thompson (PLAYWRIGHT | she/her)

is an award-winning artist/scholar whose satirical comedies, poignant dramas, and insightful criticism question stereotypes about Black life in the US, particularly the experiences of the Black middle class. *The Black Feminist Guide to the Human Body* is a finalist for the American Theatre in Higher Education's 2024 Judith Royer Excellence in Playwriting Award. Her plays have been produced Off-Broadway, throughout the US, and internationally by Crossroads Theatre, Theatre Rhinoceros, the Vortex, The Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, 1st Stage Theatre, Austin Playhouse, Soul Rep Theatre Company, The Ensemble Theatre, New Professional Theatre, Pyramid Theatre Company, The Billie Holiday Theatre, Chiswick Playhouse, and The National Black Theatre Festival among others.

Thompson is the author of *Beyond the Black Lady: Sexuality and the New African American Middle Class* (University of Illinois Press, 2009), *Single Black Female* (Samuel French, 2012), *Underground, Monroe, and The Mamalogues: Three Plays* (Northwestern University Press, 2020), and *The Mamalogues* (Samuel French, 2021). She has also published articles and reviews in Theatre Journal, Journal of American Drama, Theatre Survey, NPR, Criterion Collection, Huffington Post and The Washington Post. Her creative and scholarly work has received support from a number of institutions including the American Council of Learned Societies, Hedgebrook, MacDowell, Millay Arts, National Performance Network, Center for the Study of Race and Democracy, Clayman Institute for Gender Research, W. E. B. DuBois Research Institute at the Hutchins Center, The Fusebox International Festival, and Texas Performing Arts.

This fall Thompson will begin the third season as co-host and co-producer of Black Austin Matters, a podcast and radio segment on KUT: Austin's NPR station that explores Black life, culture, and politics in

Central Texas. She is currently the Bobby and Sherril Patton Professor of African and African Diaspora Studies and affiliate faculty in the Department of Theatre and Dance at the University of Texas at Austin. Thompson also serves as the College of Liberal Arts' Advisor to the Dean for Faculty Mentoring and Support.

Learn more about this nationally acclaimed playwright at <https://lisabthompson.com/>

Margo Hall* (DIRECTOR & ARTISTIC

DIRECTOR | she/her) is an award-winning actor, director, playwright, educator, Artistic Director of Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, and a founding member of Campo Santo. She has graced Bay Area stages for over 35 years. She is thrilled to work with Lisa B. Thompson on this essential play.

She was last seen in *Josephine's Feast* by Star Finch for Campo Santo and Magic Theatre. Other acting highlights include *Black Odyssey*, *Skeleton Crew*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *Marcus or the Secret of Sweet*, *Trouble in Mind*, *Barbecue* (also directed), and *A Winter's Tale*.

Film credits include *Bottled Spirits*, *All Day and a Night*, *Blindspotting*, and the voice of Melba in Pixar's *SOUL*. TV credits include *Blindspotting*, *Chances*, and *Nash Bridges*. Directing highlights include *How I Learned What I Learned*, *Nollywood Dreams*, *Barbecue*, *Red Velvet*, and *Ragtime*.

She recently co-created and directed the world premiere production of *In The Evening by The Moonlight*, a play by Traci Tolmaire about Lorraine Hansberry with Nina Simone and James Baldwin for Lorraine Hansberry Theatre.

Kendra Kimbrough Barnes

(CHOREOGRAPHER | she/her) is an Oakland native and Director of Contemporary & African Diasporic dance works. She is founder of K*STAR*PRODUCTIONS, the presenting organization for the Kendra Kimbrough Dance Ensemble (KKDE), & co-presenter of the Black Choreographers Festival: Here & Now. Barnes is a Lecturer of Dance at UC Berkeley and an Adjunct Professor at St. Mary's College of CA's LEAP Program. Her theater credits as choreographer include Cal Shakes, the African-American Shakespeare Company, Crowded Fire Theater, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley and Center REP Theater. She was a 2023 teaching artist for The

Guthrie Theater's Guthrie Experience summer program for MFA students in Minneapolis, MN and is a 2024 Artist in Residence at Shawl Anderson Dance Center. Kendra is thrilled to be working with the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre and grateful to the BFG Cast & Production Team! Thanks you family, YM, and Margo for holding me! IG: @kreateinlove / www.kstarproductions.org

M.D. Combs (LIGHTING DESIGNER | any/all pronouns) is a Bay Area native growing up in the south bay who found a love for lighting design while studying theater at San Francisco State University. They are fascinated by the way that light can establish worlds and transport audiences to a different place. After spending time working in New York City. M.D. Combs is elated to be back in the bay lighting up various bay area venues and productions.

Alexandria Fakayode (SOUND DESIGNER | she/her) is an artistic collaborator & theatrical sound designer from the Bay Area. Focusing in on sound design, Alex has worked/assisted with different theaters around the Bay, including: Shotgun Players, Berkeley Repertory Theater & Cutting Ball Theater. Her professional career started in July 2022, as the Shotgun Players' Sound Fellow/Apprentice, and then designing a few projects in their Champagne Staged Reading Series. This year, her debut as a Bay Area Theatrical Sound Designer culminated with Shotgun Players' *Babes in Ho-lland* in January 2024. She has a B.A. in Drama from the University of California, Irvine.

Brittany Mellerson (SCENIC & PROP DESIGNER | b/she/they) is delighted to be designing for the first time with Lorraine Hansberry Theatre. With a BFA in Theatrical Lighting and Sound Design from Point Park University's Conservatory Program, Brittany is a multi hyphenate designer/director with a focus in sharing black stories and cathartic experiences. Some of their most noticeable professional credits include current residencies with PlayGround SF and Lamplighters Music Theatre for Lighting Design and Production Management, while also utilizing an extensive concentration in Sound Design and Intimacy Coordination as a freelance professional and consultant. When they are not bringing scripts to life on stage, Brittany is steadily curating their own visions, acting as the Director and Visual Designer/

Consultant of published content, archival footage, and live performances for their own entertainment collective.

Tajianna Okechukwu (VIDEO & PROJECTIONS DESIGNER | she/her) is an actor, filmmaker, and stage manager based in the Bay Area. She obtained a double degree, a BFA in Theatre Arts and a BA in Film & TV Studies, from Azusa Pacific University. After graduating, she has worked on local films as a Production Assistant & Coordinator for different well-renowned studios and platforms such as Amazon Studios, Marvel, A24, and PBS. Her 1st award-winning Co-Director & Producer short film credit for *Cracks in the Foundation* won an Official Selection in the SF Indie Film Festival, an official selection in the UCLAxFilm Festival, and more. The film explores healing generational trauma through the lens of a young Black woman starting from childhood. In her creative work, she likes to explore narratives through the lens of the Black experience with an Afro-surrealist approach. She always seeks to tell avant-garde stories that will shift paradigms and shake culture in our society. Tajianna's credits as a Stage Manager include: *EDIT ANNIE* (Crowded Fire Theater), *HALIE! The Mahalia Jackson Musical* (Lorraine Hansberry Theatre), and *CROWNS* (Contra Costa Civic Theatre). Tajianna's credits as an actor include: *Lady in Brown in For Colored Girls*, *Spark in SHINING* (SFBATCO's New Works Theatre Festival), *Tanya in HER*, *Messenger/Apothecary in Romeo & Juliet* (African American Shakespeare Company), and *Taryn (u/s) in BABES IN HO-LLAND* (Shotgun Players). She is honored to be the Video Designer for this production! Tajianna wants to thank the cast and crew for inspiring her and her loved ones for supporting her dreams. Exodus 35:31-33.

Jasmine Milan Williams (Costumes Designer | she/her) is a Multidisciplinary Artist who uses art as a vessel for change, collaborating with BIPOC artists and organizations to tell bold stories and shine a light on Black and Queer Liberations. She is so excited to be styling these beautiful, intelligent, hilarious, and in-depth characters in *Lisa B. Thompson's* masterpiece; and collaborating with some of her favorite artists. You can also see her costume styling in *Choir Boy* at Shotgun Players "Nobody's free until everybody's free." - Fannie Lou Hammer

Vanessa Hill (STAGE MANAGER & BOARD OPERATOR | she/her) is a Bay Area based Stage Manager and has joined Tomorrow Youth Rep as their Production Manager. She has had the pleasure to work with many companies in the Bay, frequently found at Shotgun Players, LHT, and Bread & Butter Theatre Company. She is forever grateful for all her friends and family who constantly support her throughout every endeavor she chooses and for everyone who continues to support the arts in our communities.

Amissa Miller (DRAMATURG | she/her) is a dramaturg, playwright, director, educator, and facilitator. Her recent dramaturgy credits include Jacqueline Woodson's *The Day You Begin* at The Kennedy Center, and Mary Glen Frederick's *Edit Annie*, A-Ian Holt's *The Bottom of Heaven*, and Christina Anderson's *Inked Baby*, all at Crowded Fire Theater. Her play *Her Own Things* was published in the Fall 2019 African Voices Magazine tribute issue honoring Ntozake Shange. Other plays include *Breaths* (Playwrights' Center of San Francisco Best Plays of 2019), *Refusal of the Call* (PlayGround SF 2020 Reading Series), and *Heart Like an Ocean* (Pear Theatre's 2021 Fresh Baked Pears Festival). Directing credits include staged readings for Crowded Fire Theater's Matchbox Series, SFBATCO's Creators Lab, and 3GirlsTheatre's LezWritesBTQ Cohort.

Empress **Kehinde Kojeyjo (PANELIST COORDINATOR | she/her)**, a Nigerian-American creative powerhouse rooted in Oakland, proudly owns both Kalm Korner, a luxury gifting destination, and Choc'late Mama Cookie Co., a cherished bakery specializing in vegan, gluten-free, and grain-free classic cookie treats. Her brands epitomize quality, taste, and sustainability, reflecting her commitment to offering treats that cater to both exquisite taste buds and conscientious lifestyles. Her influence transcends entrepreneurship as she spearheads The Goddess Commune, a transformative initiative devoted to harmonizing the emotional, spiritual, and physical well-being of Black Womyn and Womyn of Color in the Bay Area and beyond.

Stephanie Shoffner (MANAGING DIRECTOR | she/her) took the administrative management helm of Lorraine Hansberry Theatre in 2017 after

serving on its board of directors for two years. Prior to joining LHT, she was the operations manager for HVS International and has a long history in the banking industry. Stephanie is committed to financially reinvigorating LHT as it continues to transition, grow and evolve as the only Actors Equity Association member African-American theatre company on the West Coast.

Julius Rea (PRODUCTION DIRECTOR & SCENIC DESIGN ASSOCIATE | he/they) is a Bay Area playwright, curator and performer. In 2018, he co-founded The Forum Collective, an arts organization that focuses on journalism theatre and gallery curation. Rea was a part of Crowded Fire Theatre's 2020-21 Resilience and Development Lab and has been a finalist for the Bay Area Playwrights Festival. He has worked is currently the playwright for *The Day the Sky Turned Orange*, heading to full production in 2025. He began working at Lorraine Hansberry Theatre as a 2021-22 Theatre Bay Are Arts Leadership Residency recipient. More at juliusernestorea.com

Ian Fullmer (COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT MANAGER | he/him) is a passionate advocate for the performing arts, dedicated to fostering meaningful connections between audiences and artists. Focused on uplifting and amplifying diverse voices from throughout the community, Ian's work explores the intersection of theater, social justice, and the transformative power of live performance to heal and inspire.

Dr. Yvonne Cobbs (COVID COMPLIANCE OFFICER | she/her) is a distinguished artist and music director, known for her dynamic performances. She has worked with the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre for over 20 years and her decade-long role as music director in Lorraine Hansberry's *Soulful Christmas*. Dr. Cobbs was one of the top 20 contestant on BET's "Sunday Best, and now host "Ask Dr. Cobbs" on KBLX, KDYA, and Believe radio, offering mental and physical health tips. She is the Minister of Music at Harmony Missionary Baptist Church and for the Gospel Music Workshop of America Northern California Chapter and the COVID-19 Compliance Officer for Lorraine Hansberry Theatre.

** Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers*

NEW BLACK VOICES MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Our previous productions *In The Evening by the Moonlight* & *(NO MORE) Adjustments* were supported by LHT's **New Black Voices Mentorship Program**, which provides developmental and production opportunities for emerging Black female and femme-identifying playwrights to receive support and mentorship while creating socially impactful pieces relevant to their communities.

NEW BLACK VOICES ADVISORY BOARD

Lydia Diamond, Nambi E. Kelly, Dominique Morisseau & Lisa B. Thompson



From left to right, Ryan Nicole Austin, Rotimi Agbabiaka, and playwright Traci Tolmaire in "In the Evening by the Moonlight" (2023).



2023-24 New Black Voices Mentee Champagne Hughes, left, and performer Sam Jackon, above, in "(NO MORE) Adjustments" (2024).

Photos by Alejandro Ramos

THE BLACK FEMINIST GUIDE TO THE HUMAN BODY | SPECIAL THANKS

Magic Theatre

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Theatre & Dance

Museum of the African
Diaspora

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Betsy Jasny

Lori Zorr

Jack Codd

Christopher J. Donnelly

Anonymous

Lorraine Hansberry Theatre has established itself as a pillar of the local community while providing career-building opportunities for BIPOC theatre makers, technicians and administrators as the oldest Black theatre company in San Francisco. With over 40 years of creating theatrical works by, for, and about the Black experience, the company now prioritizes Black female & femme playwrights as well as stories showcasing Black history, perspectives, and joy.

**To invest in the work of Lorraine Hansberry Theatre,
visit [LHTSF.org](https://www.lhtsf.org) today!**

LORRAINE HANSBERRY THEATRE STAFF

Margo Hall

artistic director

Stephanie Shoffner
managing director

Julius Rea
**production
director**

Ian Fullmer
**communications
& engagement
manager**

Yvonne Cobbs
**COVID
compliance officer**

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Christmas is coming...

Soulful Christmas

December 19 - 22, 2024

at Magic Theatre in SF's Fort Mason

