

The Heritage Ensemble Theatre Company Presents:

BLACK COWBOYS & COWGIRLS

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY MARGARETTE JOYNER

PRODUCED BY THE BLACK SEED GRANT

LOCATION & DATES:

Heritage Gardens Hopewell, VA August 7 & 8

Battersea Park Petersburg, VA August 14 & 15

Children's Home Chesterfield, VA August 21 & 22

All shows will take place at 4pm

Join us as we take a look through the eyes of the African American men and women who helped settle and tame the West. Hear the stories of Bill Pickett, Clara Brown, Willie Kennard, Mary Fields & Nat Love and awaken your inner cowboy and cowgirl!

Crew:

Margarette Joyner – Playwright/Director/Costume Designer

Sharalyn Garrard – Assistant Director

Kevonnie Shelton – Stage Manager/Sound Technician



CAST



Zakiyah Jackson

Zakiyah Jackson



Shalandis Wheeler Smith



Ray Bullock



Chris Showalter



Jeremy Morris



Dorothy Dee-D Miller



Michelle M. Washington



Willie Wright



Margarette Joyner, (Playwright/Director/ Costume Designer/Set Designer/Sound Design) is the Executive Director and Founder of The Heritage Ensemble Theatre Company. Margarette has been blessed with many talents that include: Director, Singer, Playwright, Costume Designer, Set Designer, Collage Artist and Jewelry maker. She graduated from VCU with a Master's Degree in Theatre and for six years was the only full time Instructor of theatre at Virginia Union University. Currently she is a full time Certified Actor Interpreter at Colonial Williamsburg and is thrilled to call herself a full time, working actor. When asked about her many talents Joyner responds, "I am humbled by the fact that God has chosen me to represent His work."

Sharalyn Garrard (Assistant Director) is the Artistic Director of The Heritage Ensemble Theatre Company. She is a native of Richmond, VA and received her B.A. in Speech and Drama from Hampton (Institute) University. She has directed "God's Trombones" with the Ebenezer Baptist Church Drama Ministry, 2 staged readings, "Tellin' Tales" and "Look What We Did With Love", with The Heritage Ensemble Theatre Company, and "TheBlackList: Lorraine Hansberry" with Conciliation Lab.

Kevonnie Shelton has always had a love for the arts. Starting in her career, she was cast as a member of Redemption Productions in the plays, "When A Woman Is Loved Right", and "Lost Boys". Kevonnie has been in The Heritage Ensemble Theatre Company shows such as "Steal Away" and "For Colored Girls". Kevonnie has also received teaching from Margarette Joyner (Heritage Ensemble), Susan Levine-Casting Workshop, and TSAW (Tasha's Smith Acting Workshop).

Zakiyyah Jackson is elated to be sharing LIVE THEATRE once again! Hailing from Hampton, Virginia, she has had a passion for the arts for many years. Past theatre credits include; Ensemble, *The WIZ*; Oracle, *ATLANTIS: A New Musical*; Michelle, *Sister Act* (Virginia Repertory Theatre); Shug Avery, *The Color Purple* (Broadway in the H.O.O.D.); Asaka, *Once On This Island* (PCT); Ensemble Actor, *Plays With A Purpose* (Black Ensemble Theater); Lady in Blue, *For Colored Girls* (TerraVizion Entertainment). Many thanks to everyone who continues to support her artistic endeavors. #BlackLivesMatter

Shalandis Wheeler Smith is a native of Petersburg, VA and currently resides in Richmond, VA. Shalandis received her BA in Theatre from Norfolk State University. Shalandis is happy to be back working with The Heritage Ensemble Theatre Company in this production. She has been seen locally in productions with Jamestown Museum, Swift Creek Mill, Quill Theatre, Whistle Stop Theatre and Firehouse Theatre. Shalandis thanks her family and friends for their continued support and love.

Ray Bullock is extremely honored and thrilled to be a part of Black Cowboys and Cowgirls. Since 1995 Ray has been a nationally touring stand-up comic, actor, and professional wrestler. He has appeared in over 75 films and television Productions, (such as Wonder Woman 1984, Evan Almighty, Legends & Lies and The Walking Dead) along with countless stage and live performances. He would like to thank everyone at The Heritage Ensemble Theater Company for this amazing and wonderful opportunity.

Chris Showalter's interest, admiration, and love for acting started when he was twelve years old in a middle school drama class. Throughout middle and high school, he participated in many skits, monologues, and school plays. Just a few of those were *Charlotte's Web*, *Out of the Frying Pan and The Outsiders*. An old friend of his, Raymond Goode, reached out to him to participate in a short commercial film promoting his new book. A few years later that same friend called him up to perform a monologue for his theatrical production *Through Their Eyes*. A few months after that another old friend of his, Ray Bullock, called him up about this new exciting role. Chris is honored to participate in such a powerful and informational production in *Black Cowboys and Cowgirls*. From comedic to seriousness, his performances are always changing, but the passion for acting has remained the same.

Jeremy Morris is honored to be a part of "Black Cowboys and Cowgirls". He currently works full-time at Colonial Williamsburg as an actor/interpreter, telling the story of free and enslaved Africans/African Americans on the eve of the American revolution. Favorite roles include, Lincoln, "Topdog/Underdog" with Theater Lab (RTCC nomination, Best Actor) Decatur Bronson, "A Civil War Christmas" with Firehouse Theater, Shadow Tom, "Uncle Tom Deconstructed" with The Conciliation Project, and Bert Williams, "The Top of Bravery", with AART, The Conciliation Project, and Quill Theater. (RTCC Winner, Best Actor, Best Original Work.)



Dorothy “Dee-D.” Miller is thrilled to be cast in the production of “Black Cowboys & Cowgirls” with the Heritage Ensemble Theatre. Acting since the age of 5 and writing poetry since the age of 8 in Richmond Va., Dorothy “Dee-D.” Miller began performing personal pieces at local poetry clubs and gatherings in 2010. Dee-D., worked in film, stage and television over the last 6 years, most recently cast as the Va. Lottery Corvette Scratcher winner in June of 2017 as well the Feisty “Tommy” in stage production “Wine in the Wilderness” and “Tanya” in “Ghetto The Series”. Dee-D., is a mother of three and in her spare time, she sings (from time to time) and enjoys painting and sculpting abstract art.

Michelle M. Washington is thrilled to be debuting with The Heritage Ensemble Theatre Company in the production of *Black Cowboys & Cowgirls*. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Ms. Washington continued to pursue her acting career by working in virtual productions and short films. You may have recently seen her in the virtual one woman show produced by Brave New Classics titled *Beyond* (2021) or as Lori in *The Suffrage Flag* (2020) created by The Whistle Stop Theatre Company. Michelle studied Theatre Arts and Visual Art at Virginia Union University, where she received her BFA in 2021. She would like to thank the entire crew and cast *Black Cowboys and Cowgirls*, The Heritage Ensemble Theatre Company, as well as her family and friends for believing in her dreams unconditionally. Their support is unmatched and appreciated.

Willie Wright is excited to be part of the “Black Cowboys & Black Cowgirls” cast. He has been in museum theater for fifteen years. He was an actor at Mount Vernon for three years where he portrayed William Lee. He’s currently employed at Colonial Williamsburg where he portrays several free and enslaved Africans from the 18th century. Although Willie hasn’t received any formal training in the trade of acting, he has had many people that helped him along the way, their names are Hope Wright, Jeremy Morris, Katrinah Lewis, and Jamar Jones, just to name a few.



Special Thank You to Vinnie Gonzalez for assisting with our set pieces.

Please remember to remain socially distanced, at least 6 feet away from others, and wear your mask throughout the duration of the show unless you are eating or drinking. Thank you.

Please join us on Facebook at The Heritage Ensemble Theatre Company, Instagram @the_theatrecompany and visit our website www.theheritageensembletheatre.org. Thank you for your support, be sure to tell a friend!

Heritage Gardens and Battersea Park are outside venues, please feel free to bring chairs/blankets to sit on and snacks/drinks (no alcoholic beverages) to munch on during the show.

