

THEATRE HARRISBURG



SANKOFA

AFRICAN AMERICAN
THEATRE COMPANY

Proudly Present

INTIMATE APPAREL

by

LYNN NOTTAGE

Commissioned and first produced by South Coast Repertory and Center Stage. Originally produced in New York by Roundabout Theatre Company, Todd Haimes, Artistic Director.

LORIEN REESE MAHAY
THEATRE HARRISBURG EXECUTIVE
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SHARIA BENN
SANKOFA ARTSTIC DIRECTOR &
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR

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INTIMACY DIRECTOR

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INTIMATE APPAREL

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THANK YOU to everyone who has assisted with our production, especially if we have failed to mention you by name in our program.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



On behalf of all of us at Theatre Harrisburg, welcome to the final show of Season 98! We are proud to be partnering with Sankofa African American Theatre Company to bring Lynn Nottage's incredible work to the Harrisburg community.

I am especially delighted about this show, as *Intimate Apparel* is a play that has stayed with me long after I read it for the first time. When I was a young dramaturg, I was introduced to the concept of a literary manager's "top drawer play." These are the works that come across your desk, that you instantly resonate with, and that you keep with you until the fated day that the piece finds its home. *Intimate Apparel* has long been one of my own "top drawer plays."

In this piece, Lynn Nottage brilliantly weaves together stories of love and identity and asks us all to consider the question of where our own identities end and begin. What parts of ourselves can bend and adapt to the needs of those we love, and what lines, if crossed, threaten to destroy an essential part of our being? In introducing us to the world of *Intimate Apparel*, Lynn Nottage somehow manages to reach across a century of discrimination and inequality to present a picture of a world that is both a window into the past and a reflection of the present.

I am honored to have a part in sharing this play with the community and hope it will inspire conversation about those who have been erased from our history and the threads of humanity that weave all our stories together.

For a deeper look into the world of *Intimate Apparel* please scan the QR code below!

Sincerely,
Lorien Reese Mahay
Executive Director
Theatre Harrisburg



FROM THE DIRECTOR



Echoing the words of the brilliant playwright Lynn Nottage, theater has the power to open hearts and drive social change. Sankofa African American Theatre Company is committed to amplifying diverse voices and stories on the stage and beyond as a catalyst for transformation.

Our 2023-2024 season has been a testament to this vision, showcasing a rich tapestry of narratives that resonate with diverse audiences. We embarked on this journey with our inaugural production, *Between Heaven and Eartha*, a narrative woven around climate change through the power of collaboration. As the year unfolded, we presented *Black Nativity* by Langston Hughes in December, a poignant reminder of the transformative power of faith, music, and community. In February, we paid tribute to a significant historical landmark with *The Jackson Rooming House: Music's Resting Place*, a play that honors a rooming house sanctuary for Black travelers and entertainers during the era of segregation. Now, we are proud to present our season finale, Lynn Nottage's *Intimate Apparel*, in a groundbreaking partnership with Theatre Harrisburg.

Nottage's masterful and brilliant play, *Intimate Apparel*, set in the backdrop of 1905, explores the timeless desire for a love that touches the soul, a longing that transcends race, class, or gender. The essence of love and connection forms the foundation of our shared humanity. Yet, societal "-isms" often cast a shadow, leading to feelings of disconnection, despair, and at times, complete devastation. It is love, for oneself and for others, that allows us to rise from the ashes.

My soul has yearned to do this play for a decade! I am immensely grateful to have collaborated with Theatre Harrisburg, a remarkable stage manager, cast, dedicated directors, and a passionate production and design team. Your collective efforts have breathed life into Lynn Nottage's masterpiece, infusing it with beauty and vibrancy.

As we invite you to join us on this voyage of discovery, understanding, and healing, we remain steadfast in our mission to foster a truly inclusive community. Together, let's draw lessons from our past to sculpt a more compassionate and inclusive future."

Sincerely,
Sharia Benn
Executive Artistic Director
Sankofa African American Theatre Company

THE CHARACTERS

ESTHER.....	LATRESHIA LILLY
MRS. DICKSON.....	LEAH PAYNE
MRS. VAN BUREN.....	ELIZABETH RICKARD
GEORGE ARMSTRONG.....	KEVIN WILLIS
MR. MARKS.....	JOSÉ SOLIS CORPS
MAYME.....	AMANDINE POPE

THE PLOT

In 1905 New York City, Esther, a Black seamstress, is in great demand for the intimate apparel she creates for clients who range from wealthy white patrons to prostitutes. Though leading a life that provides joy to so many, she remains lonely and longing for a husband and a future. Through a mutual acquaintance, she begins a correspondence with a lonesome Caribbean man named George and soon he persuades her that they should marry, sight unseen. However, Esther's heart is drawn to the Orthodox shopkeeper from whom she buys cloth, and his heart with her. When George arrives in the city, Esther is hit with the reality of the situation and she is forced to face a future that she is truly unprepared for.

CONTENT ADVISORY

This performance of *Intimate Apparel* by Lynn Nottage contains themes of an adult nature including partial nudity, strong language, and charged intimate acts. Discussion around death, sexuality, and discrimination also take place. Special effects include vaporized smoking as well as general lights and sound cues. Viewer discretion is advised.

THE TEAM

SHARIA BENN (DIRECTOR) | Sharia Benn is the founding Executive Artistic Director of Sankofa African American Theatre Company and is excited about this debut partnership with Theatre Harrisburg. She is a Baltimore native and “artist,” using the power of theater to educate, amplify African American history & culture, and to create healing spaces for theater artists and audiences. Sharia is an award-winning actress, living-history interpreter, playwright, producer, and director. She earned a BA in Communications from Towson University. Selected credits: *Jackson House* (co-writer, director), *Between Hevan & Eartha* (Co-writer & director) *Black Nativity* (director), *Crowns* (director), *Voices of the Eighth* (writer, director), *Pretty Fire* (Charlayne Woodard), *Bridge (the gap)* (writer/director); *For Colored Girls who have considered suicide/ when the rainbow is enuf* (director), *Voices of F.E.W.* (writer, director, role of Frances Harper). Sharia thanks her husband, Bill, and her amazing family & friends for the unwavering love & support they give to her and Sankofa!

MAYA CAMILLE (INTIMACY DIRECTOR) | Mayais an intimacy director, actress, and recent graduate from the University of Houston's Professional Actor Training Program (MFA). As a Harrisburg native, she is honored to have shared a glimpse into the world of intimacy direction for theatre arts with Sharia Benn, Sankofa African American Theatre Company, and Theatre Harrisburg. She thanks the actors for their willingness to dive deep into the unknown with vulnerability and a desire for exploration. She wishes an unceasing journey of omniscience for the actors and the rest of the creative team. She thanks Sharia Benn for entrusting her with this offering and dedicates this sacrality to her parents, Sabrina and Jawal. Her recent credits include: *Sanctuary City* (Intimacy), *Marisol* (Intimacy), *Learned Ladies* (Intimacy), *Rumpelstiltskin* (Intimacy), *Circle, Mirror, Transformation* (Intimacy), and *Shakespeare in Love* (Intimacy).

LORIEN REESE MAHAY (DRAMATURG) | Lorien Reese Mahay is the Executive Director of Theatre Harrisburg. She moved from New York in 2021 after five years as the Associate Director for the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science where she oversaw trainings across the globe using improv techniques to teach science communication to researchers at institutions like NASA, IBM, and the Gates Foundation. She is credited for playing a central role in transforming the Alda Center into the nation's leading science communication training organization. Ms. Mahay earned an MFA in Dramaturgy from Stony Brook University and has worked professionally as an actor, dramaturg, and stage manager. In addition to her work at the Alda Center, Lorien has served as Associate Director of Development at Bay Street Theater in Sag Harbor, New York, and Program Director at the Watermill Center, Robert Wilson's interdisciplinary laboratory for the arts. She currently lives in Camp Hill, PA with her husband, mother-in-law, and two rambunctious children, Cedric and Lyra.

KIM DICKERSON (STAGE MANAGER) | This is Kim's second production with Theatre Harrisburg and first with Sankofa! Past stage management experiences include *A Christmas Carol* at Open Stage and *The Crucible* with Capital Area School for the Arts Charter School. Past assistant stage management experiences include *Into the Woods* at Open Stage, and *An Enemy of the People* and *Much Ado about Nothing* at Gamut Theatre. Kim's favorite moments throughout the rehearsal process were getting to know and work with Sharia and Maya. “Thanks to Laura and Jess for so much support, “one more song” to Emma, and love to Brennen for so many delicious and rushed dinners these past 2 months.”

THE CAST



LATRESHIA LILLY (ESTHER) | This is Latreshia's first production with Theatre Harrisburg and her third production with Sankofa African American Theatre Company. Her favorite moment throughout the rehearsal process was laughing with the cast about any and everything! She thanks her family, friends, cast, crew, and you! "Do everything in love" Follow her on IG @latreshialilly and on TikTok @dearlatreshia @latreshiathetherapist



LEAH PAYNE (MRS. DICKSON) | This is Leah's first production with Theatre Harrisburg! Leah's favorite moment from the rehearsal process was getting to know her cast mates and says that they have been very helpful and fun. "I thank Sharia and her team for allowing me to be Mrs. Dickson. Sharia is a gifted, caring soul and It has been my honor."



ELIZABETH RICKARD (MRS. VAN BUREN) | This is Elizabeth's first production with Theatre Harrisburg! Past roles include Ms Scarlet in *Clue* at the Lebanon Community Theatre, Mrs Squires in *The Music Man* with Servant Stage Company, Queen/Ensemble in *My Fair Lady* with Servant Stage Company, Ruth in *Ruth* with Piercing Word, and Grace Bradley in *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* at Indiana Players Inc. Elizabeth's favorite moment throughout the rehearsal process was experiencing the depth that Sharia brought out of the cast to tell this story. Thank you to Sankofa & TH for having me! "Thanks to Josh and other family and friends; and to David, Ashley, and especially Cassie for making me brave."



KEVIN WILLIS (GEORGE ARMSTRONG) | This is Kevin's first production with Theatre Harrisburg! Kevin's favorite moment of the rehearsal process has been getting the change gears and play a grounded, dramatic character. "Thank you to God, my mom, and my dad."



JOSÉ SOLIS CORPS (MR. MARKS) | This is José's first production with Theatre Harrisburg! His first role in public theatre was Mr. Livingston in 1776, with Fort Devens Players in Massachusetts, while he was in the US Army. Mostly in Puerto Rico, Mr. Solis has done local plays including *La Farsa del Amor Compradito* by Luis Rafael Sánchez, where he did the role of Pirulí Pulcinello at the University of Puerto Rico, which was taken to different universities of the island and other venues. In Florida, he played the role of Perón in the musical *Evita* for Wekiva River Players. It is the first time he has done a role in Harrisburg. José's favorite moment from the rehearsal process was, "That time when one of my lines was that I forgot the words, and they really thought I forgot the words. It was hilarious." José would like to thank the producers for believing in him.



AMANDINE POPE (MAYME) | This is Amandine's first production with Theatre Harrisburg! Past roles include Hope in *Between Heaven & Eartha* at Gamut, Narrator in *A Pirate's Life* at FedLive, Aunt Janelle in *Echoes of Emotions* at Narcisse, and The Inner Child in *Cosmic Trash* at the Harrisburg Fringe Festival. Amandine's favorite moment from the rehearsal process was breaking into character. "I am thrilled to perform once again with Sankofa AATC! I want to thank the whole cast and the theater team for making this piece come to life! What an adventure!"

ABOUT THEATRE HARRISBURG

Theatre Harrisburg is the oldest performing arts organization in the Capital Region and one of the oldest community theaters in the country. Founded as Harrisburg Community Theatre in 1926 during the “little theatre” movement, productions were staged in various locations until construction in 1952 of the Theatre’s permanent home uptown at Sixth & Hurlock Streets. The iconic venue became the preeminent home of live theater in Harrisburg. It has since been named the Jay and Nancy Krevsky Production Center in recognition of a generous gift from the Krevskys.

The Theatre’s productions are now staged in two locations – at the Krevsky Center, in an intimate black box space and, for elaborately staged musicals, in the Sunoco Performance Theater at Whitaker Center for Science and the Arts. Theatre Harrisburg is unique among community theaters for its ability to mount large-scale productions in a space as attractive and technically sophisticated as the Sunoco Theater.

Theatre Harrisburg’s acclaimed Mainstage productions are the result of a unique “pro-am” collaboration. Volunteer actors, technicians, and backstage talent, coming from all walks of life, work side-by-side with – and learn from – paid professional staff. It’s a partnership that enhances the quality of life in the Capital Region – providing audiences with high quality, yet affordable, theatre experiences, opportunities for creative expression, and theatre education.

**Theatre Harrisburg is truly a place
where community takes center stage!**

2023-2024

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In the world of theater, an “Angel” is a financial backer who ensures the show will go on. Angels have never been more important than in the past year and a half in allowing us to preserve the past, protect the present, and prepare for the future of Theatre Harrisburg. Our angels help to keep the lights burning bright so that we can continue to provide the high-quality productions you have come to expect from Theatre Harrisburg.

For information on how you or your company can donate to Theatre Harrisburg, please email us at email@theatreharrisburg.com, or call (717) 232-5501 x1

2023-2024

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(This list reflects gifts for our 23-24 campaign year received before June 1, 2024)

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In Honor of Doug and Janis Macut from Keaton Macut

In Honor of Jay Krevsky's Birthday from Marjorie Sherman

In Honor of Laura Dugan from Tim & Jeanie Boucher

In tribute to Jay, Nancy, & Sol Krevsky, Mike Greenwald, Betty Hungerford and all my old friends at Theatre Harrisburg. Your dedication to the community we shared will always take center stage in my heart! - Lisa B. Ramirez

"If the music stops, continue with the dance" -Steve Smith

In Memory of Alan England from Nancy & Jay Krevsky

In Memory of Mel Brownold by Jay & Nancy Krevsky

In Honor of Rowan's First Birthday from Laura Dugan

Happy Birthday, Jay! from Michael Greenwald

In Honor of Jay Miffoluf from Lori Myers

Happy Birthday, Jay! from Bill & Betty Blando

Happy Birthday, Jay! from Don Schell

In Memory of Patsy Bray Mahoney

In Honor of Jay Krevsky by Betty Hungerford

In Memory of Dave Dugan, whose time in concessions was short-lived but well loved

In Memory of Shirley Ross by Neysa & Mark Maisel

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In Honor of Peter Zimmerman by Jay Zimmerman

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About the PENGUIN PROJECT

The Penguin Project was conceived by Dr. Andrew Morgan to give children with disabilities an opportunity to participate in the performing arts. “Dr. Andy” is a developmental pediatrician and the former Head of the Division of Child Development at the University of Illinois in Peoria. He has also directed and performed in many community theater productions in the area. He created The Penguin Project recognizing that theater not only provides children with a valuable recreational experience and an opportunity to display their creative talents, but also enhances social interaction, communication skills, assertiveness, and self-esteem. The Penguin Project strives to demonstrate that individuals with disabilities are fully capable of participating in community activities with the same dedication and enthusiasm as others, if given opportunity and support.



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Sankofa African American Theatre Company celebrates 7 years of increasing representation of African American theatre artists and audience members in the Harrisburg area community.



The official registration and financial information of Sankofa African American Theatre Company may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999.



Mailing Address
P. O. Box 61183
Harrisburg, PA 17106



+1 717-214-3251



sankofa@sankofaaatc.org



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ABOUT SANKOFA AATC

Sankofa is an Akan (Ghana) word that means, "We must go back and reclaim our past so we can move forward;" so that we understand why and how we came to be who we are today, thereby gaining wisdom, power, and hope to make positive progress through the sharing of this knowledge.

MISSION

Sankofa African American Theatre Company exists to engage and enrich the Harrisburg region around the African American perspective on relevant issues through thought-provoking theatre that reflects artistic excellence.

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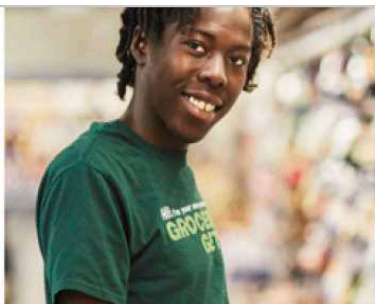
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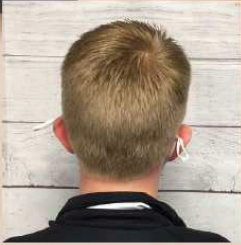
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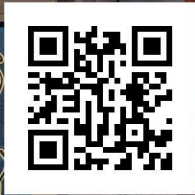
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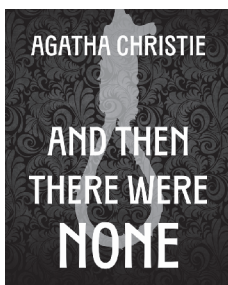


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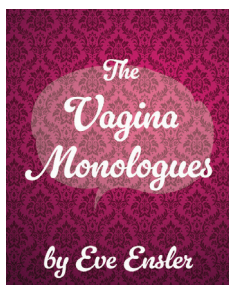


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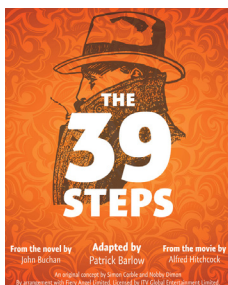
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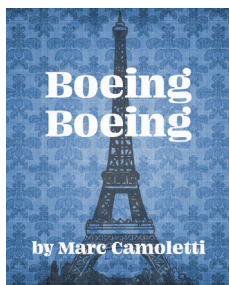
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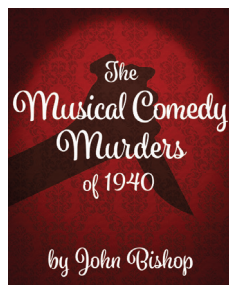
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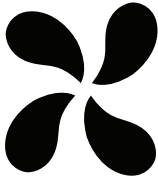
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