

OLD BLACK AND WHITE HOLLYWOOD

October 25 – 27
Studio 208



UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

KATHRINE G. McGOVERN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS
School of Theatre & Dance



UP NEXT

HAROUN AND THE SEA OF STORIES

November 15 – 24
Quintero Theatre



Showtimes

15	8 p.m.
16	8 p.m.
17	2 p.m.
17	8 p.m.
18	8 p.m.
20	8 p.m.
21	8 p.m.
22	8 p.m.
23	2 p.m.
23	8 p.m.
24	2 p.m.

Written by
Salman Rushdie

Adapted by
Tim Supple and David Tushingham

Directed by
Adam Noble

BOX OFFICE INFO

Tickets Tickets can be purchased online at uh.edu/artstickets, by calling the Box Office at 713-743-3388 or by emailing kgmcaboxoffice@uh.edu. You may pay by cash, check, Visa, Mastercard, Discover or American Express. All sales are final. No exchanges or refunds once a performance begins.

Subscriptions Subscriptions are up to 25% off the regular ticket price. Call our Box Office for more information about how you can start saving today!

Late Seating Late admittance is only permitted during the intermission for performances in Lyndall Finley Wortham Theatre, Moores Opera House and Dudley Recital Hall. If you arrive after the performance has begun, you will be asked to wait in the lobby until intermission. There is no late seating or re-entry to the Quintero Theatre or Studio 208.

Accessibility Seating If you require assistance or are in need of wheelchair seating, please call to notify our Box Office at least 24 hours before the performance. Our venues are accessible to all.

Group Discounts Special discounts are available to groups of 10 or more. Call our Box Office for more information.

Restrictions Children under the age of 6 are not permitted into the theaters. Any taping, filming, recording or broadcasting of this production is strictly prohibited. Please turn off all phones and other electronic devices as a courtesy to other patrons and to the performers. Food and beverages are not permitted in the theaters.

Cover Design/Priska Zegarra

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

KATHRINE G. McGOVERN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

School of Theatre & Dance

Dr. Robert Shimko, Director

presents

OLD BLACK AND WHITE HOLLYWOOD

Written by ShaWanna Goffney

Directed by Laura Moreno

October 25, 26 at 8 p.m.

October 26, 27 at 2 p.m.

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

Any taping, filming, recording or broadcasting of this performance is strictly prohibited. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices as a courtesy to other patrons and to the actors.

Scenic Designer

Lighting Designer

Costume Designer

Sound Designer

Dramaturg

Stage Manager

Alli Nauret

Matthew Geschke

Lisa Longoria

Jade Chang

Patrina Randolph-McGuire

Meghan Spear

CAST

Eva Rose

Dynamite

Doris

Samuel

Ken

Louis

Ensemble

Olivia Swasey

Philip Kershaw

ShaWanna Goffney

Jeremy Gretzer

Tony Shortt

Christian Klepac

**David Carpenter, Cade Coligan,
Matthew DeBerardinis, Luke Evans,
Abella Knott, Brenda Palestina,
Michael Sifuentes, Sarah Specksgoor**

ARTISTIC STAFF

Vocal Coach
Production Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Managers
Associate Dramaturgs
Fight Captain
Fight/Intimacy Coordinator

Christian Klepac
Rachel R. Bush
Jack Gray, Emily Mordecai
Comfort Katchy, Audrey Morabito
Philip Kershaw
Rachel Cendrick

ABOUT OLD BLACK AND WHITE HOLLYWOOD

Hollywood, 1954. A black and white female comedy duo run the risks of satirizing Jim Crow America with their racy, edgy and racially progressive sketch comedy show. Eva Rose and Doris Jean long to become more than just television stars. Doris is determined to break out of playing only servant roles. Eva Rose is starving for proper A-list stardom and financial freedom at last. But when they are both invited to audition for the titular role in the epic film *Cleopatra*, their rare friendship is put to the ultimate test.

This exciting world premiere from UH senior ShaWanna Goffney explores the fragility of genuine friendship and the painful nuances of “classic” Hollywood.

DRAMATURGY NOTE

A Long Way to Grow

Old Black and White Hollywood, written by playwright ShaWanna Goffney, transports its audience to 1954, a time when Jim Crow laws were still enforced. Doris Jean, a black female comic, is a rising star in the black community. She is a regular performer at The Black Flamingo, a comedy/nightclub owned by “Dynamite” Jackson. Eva Rose, a white female B-list actress in Hollywood, is struggling to keep her career afloat. Her comedy show, *The Eva Rose Show*, is tanking badly and in need of a savior. Doris and Eva’s worlds collide when Samuel Stahr, the producer of Eva’s show, introduces the pair at Maze-Singer-Blum Studios. Both women have aspirations to be superstars, but there is only room for one of them at the top. Eva Rose has no desire to work with a black actress, and Doris Jean is eager to do most anything to make her dreams come true. These characters invite the audience to take an unyielding look at Hollywood then and now.

In a nation that declared that all men were created equal, equality still escaped its black citizens in the 1950s, even though they were declared freemen nearly 100 years prior in 1863. The 1950s were a time of great racial unrest in the United States of America. Policemen openly brutalized black men and women. Black men and women were lynched by mobs of angry white people for the perceived crime of being black. Cities were plagued by the separation of the races. “Whites-only” signs were posted on the doors of businesses, buses, restrooms, near water fountains and at theaters. In the eyes of white America, black people were not good enough to rub elbows with, but they were good enough to cook, clean, serve and, most importantly, entertain.

Hollywood films were and still are a reflection of the racial divide in the United States. In 1954, the silver screen mirrored the cancerous reality of racism for the world to see. Black actors

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were limited to playing subservient roles, and at times their scenes were filmed separately from their white counterparts. Hattie McDaniel was the first black woman to win an Academy Award and did so in 1940 for playing a maid named Mammy in *Gone with the Wind*. Black men had to wait another 23 years to receive the golden nod. In 1963, Sidney Poitier was the first black man to win an Academy Award for his role as Homer Smith in *Lilies of Fields*. After McDaniel's win, it would take 50 years for another black woman to win an Academy Award. In 1990, Whoopi Goldberg won Best Supporting Actress as a con artist psychic named Oda Mae Brown in *Ghost*. In 2001, 61 years after Hattie McDaniel's win, Halle Berry won Best Actress for *Monster's Ball* for playing Leticia Musgrove, a waitress. These moments of so-called victories are, however, tainted by several factors. First, the roles for which black actors have won are still inferior characters much like McDaniel's role as a maid. Second, the wins are too few and far between. Finally, black actors are not seen as equally qualified to fulfill superstar roles in mainstream films, unless the cast is majority black or it is a period piece.

The controversy about the biases of Hollywood still continues. In 2016, Will and Jada Smith boycotted the Academy Awards for a lack of representation of black people amongst the nominees. In response to the outcry, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences invited 683 new voters to join, 41% of whom were people of color and 46% of whom were women. This was a long-awaited attempt at correcting biases. It took the Academy 87 years to start making a change. We still have a long way to grow, however, both in Hollywood and in America.

An Interview with Playwright ShaWanna Goffney

How did you become a playwright?

Oh, that's a good story. I was in Los Angeles working on the show *Strawberry Shortcake*, but then it was canceled, and I had nothing going on. I had an agent and a manager who kept sending me out on the Disney and Nickelodeon lot because of how I looked. I was not booking because I was too mature for those parts. It was shows like *Good Luck Charlie* — kiddie shows — I was going, but I couldn't book. I was trying to organize my career, and I was praying and being quiet, just listening, and something told me to start writing. When growing up, I would see Shelly Garrett's plays like *Beauty Shop* and stuff like that. I thought about my mentor, Je'Caryous, and I thought about Tyler Perry, and I realized that all these men were writing *for* women. The urban market needed a female's voice. It was like an epiphany. I wrote a play called *Cheaper to Keep Her* that October, and in March it opened at the Hobby Center with Vivica Fox and Brian McKnight. That play opened on my birthday and traveled around the country for a year. When people saw that play, production companies started calling me to write. I hope this inspires someone.

This story originated as a 10-minute play. What was the journey to evolving it into a two-hour full-length play?

Something was haunting me. In class, I wanted to see a black woman and white woman compete in 1954, but they had to compete with something they both could be equal in. That's how I came up with *Cleopatra*. I am a lover of comedy, and a full-length play allowed me to open up and look at sketches. It opened me up to look at *Dean and Martin*,

DRAMATURGY NOTE

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Amos 'n' Andy and *I Love Lucy*. Then it evolved into *Moms Mabley*, Redd Foxx, Richard Pryor and that kind of stuff I had already been doing. I learned more about old black and white Hollywood. I was able to get into certain actresses' lives. I wanted to be as true to the time as I could.

Where did you draw strength from to make it through the writing process of *Old Black and White*?

Before I wrote, I would always pray, and it worked — because I woke up one morning and God literally dropped that opening standup dialogue in to my heart. When Suzan-Lori Parks visited the University of Houston, I told her about it, and she said, “The ancestors are speaking to you.” That’s exactly what was happening, and for some reason I just couldn’t shake it. I needed to tell this story of a no-name actress from the 1950s. Something inside me was pushing me, and once the script was in a good place, I was able to rest.

Is there anything you would like the audience to know about the parallels of this story to our social/cultural lives today?

Yes — the scary thing is that 2019 doesn’t look much different from 1954. That’s why I wanted to tell the story — to show a black actress trying to make it and see the obstacles that are ahead stopping her. My end goal is to fix it, so we won’t have these same obstacles any more.

Can you give me a present-day example that reflects those times?

A few years ago, when Shonda Rhimes produced *Scandal*, Gabrielle Union said every black actress was in there fighting for that part because they had nothing else on television, no prime time, nothing good for them to audition for other than the typical stuff that is given to black actresses. She said she was happy for the part to go to Kerry Washington, but she left there saying, “Wow! I’ve never been presented with such an amazing opportunity like this.” That happens every day for a white actress, but our top black movie stars like Sanaa Lathan, Gabrielle Union, Nia Long and Kerry Washington are in there fighting for a television show because they had never seen anything like *Scandal*.

What is one thing you want your audience to walk away with?

I want them to walk away thinking about what they can do to make things better. If they see themselves in one of these characters, they can see how can they change. This play takes place in 1954, but I could easily change the dialogue, and it would fit in 2019. The only thing is we’ve had a few people nominated for Oscars and movie stars, but we still don’t have real movie stars. Okay, we have Halle Berry and Angela Bassett. For black America they are stars, but for white America maybe not. We haven’t had a real crossover. What can you do to make things better? Support black films and actors.

— Patrina Randolph-McGuire, dramaturg

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Jeremy Gretzer (Samuel) is a senior acting major at the University of Houston's School of Theatre & Dance. He has appeared in several UH productions throughout his time here, like *Mr. Marmalade*, *A Flea in Her Ear* and the **10-Minute Play Festival**. Outside UH, he is represented by BEAZ Talent Agency and occasionally spends his time in film. He is appreciative of the support from his family and friends.



Philip Kershaw (Dynamite) is a second-year graduate student in the University of Houston's Professional Actor Training Program. He earned a B.A. in theatre and a B.A. in history from the University of Maryland, College Park. He recently appeared in the Houston Shakespeare Festival's productions of *Julius Caesar* and *As You Like It*. He has also appeared in UH's productions of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and *A Flea in Her Ear* and has worked regionally with The Wheel Theatre Company, Adventure Theatre MTC and Round House Theatre.



Christian Klepac (Louis) is a second-year graduate student in the UH PATP. He has a B.F.A. in musical theatre from Western Michigan University. He most recently was seen as Action in *West Side Story*, Matheson in *The Old Man and the Old Moon* and Ned Alleyn/Shakespeare (understudy) in *Shakespeare in Love*. He has also been seen as Kenickie in *Grease*, Jim in *Glass Menagerie* and Hans and Ernst (understudy) in *Cabaret*. Christian also was the lead rock vocalist at Cedar Point Red Garter Saloon for a summer. If you would like to follow his artistic career, follow him [@Chrisklepac8848](#) on Instagram.



Anthony Shortt (Ken) is a junior acting major at the UH School of Theatre & Dance. He has appeared in the **10-Minute Play Festival**, *Mr. Marmalade* and *A Flea in Her Ear* at the school. He has also worked in the city, with Main Street Theater, Houston Shakespeare Festival and Classical Theatre Company. He is excited to graduate with his class in 2021.



ShaWanna Goffney (Doris) is an NAACP-nominated playwright for her first stage play, *Deal Breakers*, which premiered in Los Angeles, California. Following *Deal Breakers*, ShaWanna went on to write two national touring plays, *Cheaper to Keep Her* starring Vivica Fox and Brian McKnight and *Marriage Material* starring Allen Payne and R&B singers Tank and Tionne "T-Boz" Watkins, from the group TLC. She was also a series regular on three cartoon shows, *Strawberry Shortcake* (as Raspberry Torte), *The Bratz* (as Sasha) and *The Care Bears* (as Cheer Bear). At University of Houston, ShaWanna was the assistant director for *Topdog/Underdog* in the fall of 2017. She is a playwriting/dramaturgy major.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Olivia Swasey (Eva Rose) is a sophomore in the University of Houston theatre program and is beyond grateful for all the opportunities that have come with it! Most recently, she has been seen on stage in such shows as *White Guy on the Bus* as Molly at Dirt Dog Theatre Co.; *The Fairytale Lives of Russian Girls* as Baba Yega and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* at the University of Houston; Mildred's Umbrella Theater Company's *Museum of Dysfunction X* as Quinn; as

Abigail Williams in *The Crucible*; and as Beatrice in *The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds*. In addition to anime voice work, she makes a mean pan of brownies. She is incredibly grateful to her family for supporting her as much as they do.

Laura Moreno (Director) is a master's student with University of Houston School of Theatre & Dance. She is currently studying theatre scholarship and directing. She received her B.F.A. in acting from UH in 2016. She has appeared in numerous productions both through the University as well as within the Houston theatre community. She is also a costume, makeup and wig designer, and her designs can be seen around Houston from middle school productions all the way to the Houston Shakespeare Festival. Laura continues to wear many hats in the theatre. Beyond her passion for acting and theatre aesthetics, she has been known to work behind the scenes, as a theatre administrator and as a teaching artist for the Alley Theatre. She is also on the advisory board of the Sin Muros LatinX Reading Festival where she is part of the selection process. She also works with Stages staff and crew to help plan and execute the festival. She has started a number of community outreach programs and organizations, including Bard in a Box, a traveling Shakespeare puppet show, and Women in Theatre — Houston, where professional women in the local theatre scene connect, celebrate and collaborate. In addition to being a new momma to 10-month old Izzy and a sweet pup named Molly, Laura is a tired, stressed wife, grad student, a revolutionist to LatinX theatre and wouldn't have it any other way!

Alli Nauert (Scenic Designer) is so thrilled to be working on this incredible show. She is a theatre production major here at the University of Houston and scenic design is one of her biggest passions! Her previous credits at UH include scenic design for *The Debasers*, and assistant scenic design for *The Fairytale Lives of Russian Girls* and *The Nest*.

Matthew Geschke (Lighting Designer) is excited to be working on his first lighting design at the University of Houston and his second time working with a brand new piece! He previously designed the sound for the new student show, *The Debasers*. He most recently was a master carpenter for Houston Shakespeare Festival's *Julius Caesar* and *As You Like It*. Last season at the University of Houston, he was the master carpenter for *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and *Dear Charlotte* as well as the assistant technical director for *A Flea in Her Ear*.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Lisa Longoria (Costume Designer) is a senior in the theatre production B.F.A. program at the University of Houston with a concentration in costumes. Most recently she assisted the marvelous Barbara Niederer in designing costumes for UH's *Ring Round the Moon* and styled wigs for *A Flea in Her Ear*. A few of the shows she has designed costumes for include *The Debasers* by Eric Moore and four short plays for the UH's sixth annual **10-Minute Play Festival**, as well as *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea*, *Neos Showcase* and *The Castle* for Theatre 66, which she and her friends co-founded in 2017. Lisa made her professional debut summer of 2018 as assistant costume designer for *Hamlet* and *The Comedy of Errors* with the Houston Shakespeare Festival. When she's not working or meal prepping, she enjoys making playlists on Spotify and doodling flowers.

Jade Chang (Sound Designer) is a sophomore studying theatre production with an emphasis in lighting and sound. This past summer, she joined the Weathervane Theatre Players, Inc. in New Hampshire as their master electrician and assistant lighting designer. In addition, she worked as the light board programmer for *Ring Round the Moon*. She hopes you enjoy the show!

Patrina "Mz. Ann" Randolph-McGuire (Dramaturg) has written, produced and directed stage plays since 2002. She is the proud mother of three: Kemen, Kalia and Kanen. In 2016, she started a new production company, The Fierce Arts & Entertainment Group. She is earning a B.F.A. in playwriting/dramaturgy. She served as assistant dramaturg for *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* in fall 2018 and the **10-Minute Play Festival** in spring 2019. Patrina's UH acting debut as Olympe in *A Flea in Her Ear*, directed by Gus Kaikkonen, was in spring 2019. Also that spring, her 10-minute play *Black Card*, directed by Matthieu Chapman, was produced in the **10-Minute Play Festival**. Patrina is grateful for the continued support of her parents, children, extended family, church and friends, as she continues to pursue her dream of writing and producing successful stage plays. She gives God all the credit.

Meghan Spear (Stage Manager) is a sophomore at the University of Houston earning a B.F.A. in stage management. Her previous UH credits include *The Debasers* and *The Fairytale Lives of Russian Girls*. She wants to thank her family and friends for their continued love and support.

Emily Mordecai (Assistant Stage Manager) is a first-year freshman in the B.F.A. stage management program at UH and is delighted to participate in her first college production in the School of Theatre & Dance. Originally from North Texas, Mordecai served as the lead stage manager of her high school for three years in productions such as *The Women of Lockerbie*, *Seussical the Musical* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. She also appeared as the production manager for *The Trojan Women* and the assistant technical director for *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Mordecai qualified for Nationals with her Superior rating stage management piece at the Texas Thespian Festival last fall.

Jack Gray (Assistant Stage Manager) worked on two shows his freshman year at UH: *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, where he worked on the set, and *Three Sisters*, where he was the student technical director. He worked this past summer teaching and building the set for a Katy Independent School District summer theatre camp. Jack looks forward to working with the cast and crews on this year's shows and watching the actors bring his sets to life.

ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Kathrine G. McGovern College of the Arts

The Kathrine G. McGovern College of the Arts at the University of Houston is a dynamic home of creativity and collaboration in one of America's most artistically vibrant and culturally diverse cities. Bringing together the performing and visual arts entities at the University of Houston, the college has the ability to harness the power of the arts to ultimately impact our world. Our award-winning, internationally distinguished faculty provides top-quality instruction to the talented, emerging student artists from more than 30 programs of study. The Kathrine G. McGovern College of the Arts seeks to positively impact the community and to empower our students to use their talents to change the world.

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Dr. Robert Shimko Director of the School of Theatre & Dance

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Moore Professor, Scenic and Lighting Design

Rachel R. Bush (Head of Stage Management)
Associate Professor, Stage Management

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Charles Gary Cooper
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Professor, Acting

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Lighting Sound Supervisor

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Moore's Opera House

Music by Jacques Offenbach
Original French libretto by
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English version by Buck Ross



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AMELIA GOES TO THE BALL

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January 23, 25, 27 at 7:30 p.m.

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Moore's Opera House

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte



April 3, 4, 6 at 7:30 p.m.

April 5 at 2 p.m.

Moore's Opera House

Music by Kevin Puts

Libretto by Mark Campbell

Based on the novel *The Trial of Elizabeth Cree* by Peter Ackroyd

ELIZABETH CREE

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