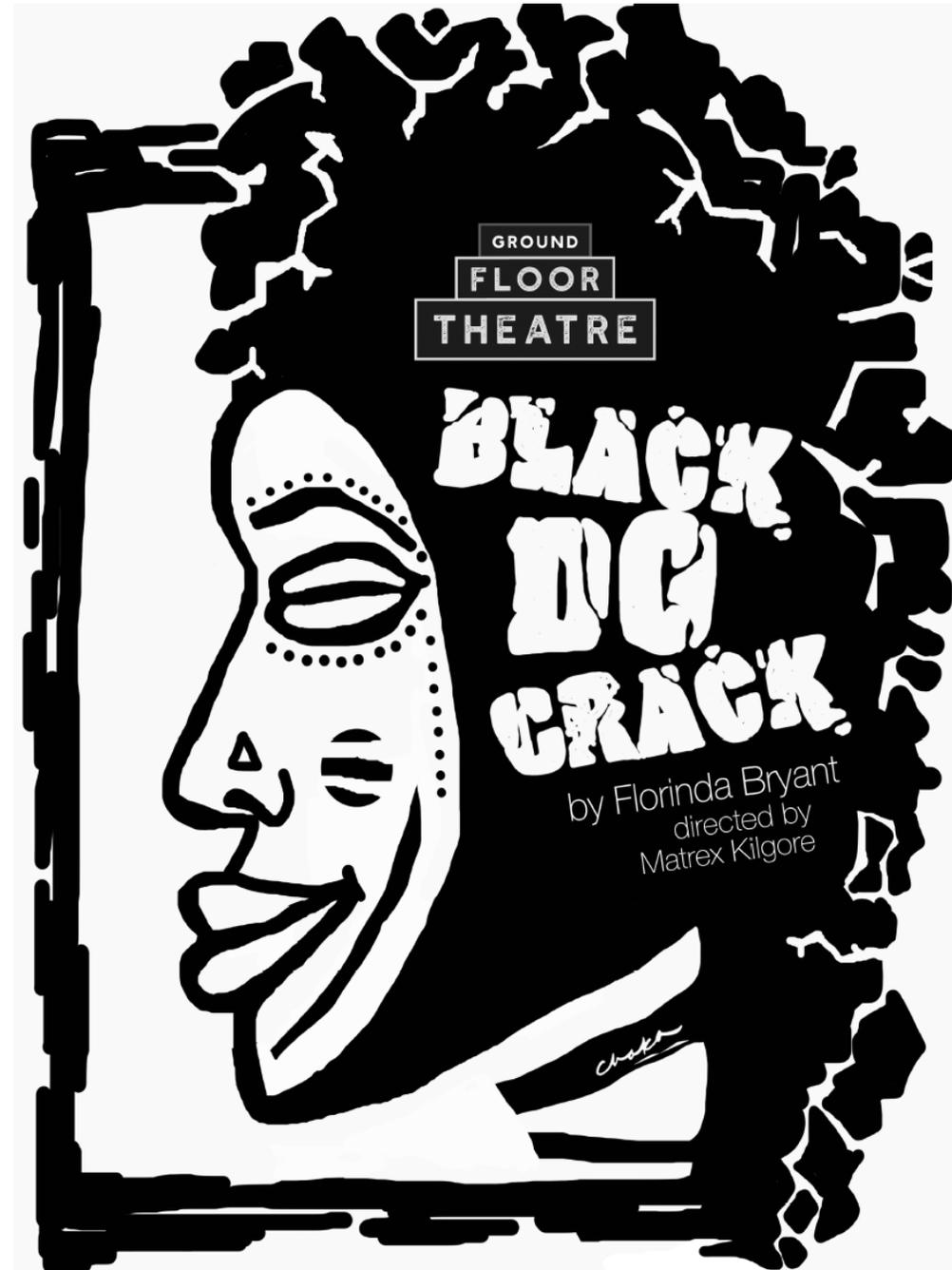


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DEVELOPMENT

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Credits

Written & Performed by Florinda Bryant

Director ----- Matrex Kilgore
Dramaturg ----- Sharon Bridgforth
Sound Design ----- Priestess Qi
Lighting Design ---- Amber Whitley
Graphic Design --- Chaka
Stage Manager ---- Angelica Chesney

A Word From Florinda

My art is how I pray... this piece was born in an attempt to process to heal myself and my community. I had hit a wall, after a life time of working two jobs, management positions in the nonprofit world and it was post Sandra Bland and I have a Black son... and I just couldn't pretend to not see the dysfunction in my 'just keep pushing' mentality. So I started writing. After 17 years of using art as vehicle for social justice I realized I needed to shift from holding space for others' work to holding space for my own.

The war against Black bodies is real, the war against Black women is real. I represent a specific class, I tell our story to save us. Inspiration for this piece came from a deep love, admiration and respect for the women around me. We talking Black girls, women you see around the way. I thought about some of my mentors, strong black women and how most of them have passed in part because they were strong black women.

The lessons of this piece didn't stop when I stopped writing. Life kept coming and I will be eternally grateful to my director, Matrex Kilgore, Ground Floor Theatre, Lisa and Patti for holding space for me to take care. I would like to thank Sharon Bridgforth and Omi Jones, for ALL of it. I would also like to thank The Ladies (y'all better get you some homegirls!). None of this would be possible without the love and support of Isaac, Wesley and AJ!

Taking care of myself is a revolutionary act! I would like to thanks Tonya Lyles with Gbeda Acupuncture and Sound Therapy. They offer exceptional acupuncture, sound therapy, acupressure, cupping, herbal prescriptions (patent, raw or powder), gemstone therapy, REIKI, Medical Qi Gong, rebozo scarf therapy, and Asian food therapy to acheive health goals for all ages. Y'all betta go see Tonya, get your life!!

Bios

Florinda Bryant (Playwright/Performer)

Florinda is an interdisciplinary artist and arts educator who calls Austin home. As a performer and director, she is no stranger to many stages in Austin, having worked with Salvage Vanguard Theater, the Rude Mechs, the Vortex, Paper Chairs and Teatro Vivo. Florinda enjoys engaging audiences in explorations around identity, body and community. Her award-winning one-woman show *Half-Breed Southern Fried* was produced as part of the Performing Blackness Series at UT and was directed by Laurie Carlos. As a facilitator and arts educator, Florinda has worked with at risk communities, young men and women, and adults – using performance as a social justice tool for empowerment and change for over 18 years. Named Best Power Forward in the Arts by the Austin Chronicle 2018, Florinda is a poet singer, actor, dancer whose work exists in demand of community healing and social justice. Having recently retired from arts administration with Creative Action and Salvage Vanguard Theater, Bryant is focusing on performance, so get ready!

Matrex Kilgore (Director)

Matrex Kilgore is an international theatre performer, director, teaching artist, and arts administrator based in Austin, Texas. He has taught theatre for social change to students ranging in age from elementary to senior citizens. Several of his acting students have been selected into the programs at: New York University, University of Michigan, Liverpool School of the Arts, Oklahoma City University, and Julliard. He has worked internationally performing and creating bilingual performances based on classical pieces of theatre including the works of Chekhov and Shakespeare. Matrex is currently on the Board of Directors for Ground Floor Theatre. He is a Company Member of The Vortex Rep Theatre, En Route Productions, and Spectrum Theatre Company.

Sharon Bridgforth (Dramaturg)

Sharon Bridgforth, a Doris Duke Performing Artist, is a writer that creates ritual/jazz theatre. A New Dramatists alumnae, Sharon has received support from the Whitman Institute, Creative Capital, MAP Fund, and the National Performance Network. *dat Black Mermaid Man Lady/The Show* premiered at Pillsbury House Theatre in Minneapolis, MN in June 2018, and *dat Black Mermaid Man Lady/Performance Installation* premiered at allgo in Austin, TX in August 2018. Sharon is author of *love conjure/blues* and Lambda Literary Award winning the *bull-jean stories*. Sharon is co-editor, with Omi Osun Joni L. Jones and Lisa Lynn Moore, of *Experiments in a Jazz Aesthetic: Art, Activism, Academia, and the Austin Project*. Her *River See Theatrical Jazz Performance Installation* script is published in *Obsidian Literature & Arts in the African Diaspora*, Issue 43.1. More at <http://sharonbridgforth.com>.

Priestess Qi (Sound Designer)

DJ Priestess Qi a performing artist, curator, and orator. She has performed around the world as one half of Riders Against the Storm, an award winning Hip Hop duo. Her work exist to bring the dissolve of boundaries with honesty and the preservation of individuality..

Amber Whitley (Lighting Designer)

Amber Whitley is excited to be joining the Ground Floor Theater company. She currently holds her BFA in Production Design with a concentration in lighting from Savannah College of Art and Design in Savannah, GA in 2018. She is pursuing an MFA in Lighting Design at The University of Texas at Austin, where she is honing her skills in designing, drafting and programing. Her most recent designs included Silver Screen Serenade and Blast Force Turbo for which she received a SCAD Ovation award for best media design.

Jonathan "Chaka" Mahone (Graphic Designer)

Jonathan 'Chaka' Mahone, considers himself more of a 'visualist' than a traditional painter, primarily using his creative output as a tool for social change and/or empowerment. His style and work is influenced by the most powerful art form of the twentieth century: graffiti. As a young child, Chaka was captivated by the bold letter styles, colors, and imagery of graffiti writers in his hometown of Pittsburgh. Surrounded by the sounds of hip hop, the Graffiti murals were like cinema to the imaginative youth. Mahone takes secondary influence from the art of ancient civilizations and cultures. Indigenous art and design contain a complex code of symbols with sometimes 'hidden' layers of meaning. As an artist, Chaka includes spiritual, social, and/or political coding in much of his work. Something familiar, but with a twist that represents a combination of the native/indigenous and the modern/urban energy: together.