

USC School of Dramatic Arts

AN OCTOROON

BY BRANDEN JACOBS-JENKINS

DIRECTED BY ANITA DASHIELL-SPARKS

McCLINTOCK THEATRE SEPT 28—OCT 1, 2017



USC School of Dramatic Arts

PRESENTS

AN OCTOROON

By Branden Jacobs-Jenkins

WITH *(in alphabetical order)*

Carol Antoinette Cherie Carter Brandon Courture
Chevaughan St. Clare Cattien Le Julissa Merius
Justin Newell Dominic Piccinini Bianca Pompa
Gabrielle Rosser Analia Tamariz Rahjul Young

SCENIC DESIGN

Leah Ramillano

COSTUME DESIGN

Wendell Carmichael

LIGHTING DESIGN

Jeff Flowers

SOUND DESIGN

Briana Billups

STAGE MANAGER

Megan Burns

DIRECTED BY

Anita Dashiell-Sparks

McClintock Theatre

September 28–October 1, 2017

CAST OF CHARACTERS *(in alphabetical order)*

Dido

Carol Antoinette

Br'er Rabbit

Justin Newell

Zoe

Cherie Carter

Playwright

Dominic Piccinini

Ratts

Brandon Courture

Dora

Bianca Pompa

Paul

Chevaughan St. Clare

Grace

Gabrielle Rosser

Assistant

Cattien Le

Mrs. Peyton

Analia Tamariz

Minnie

Julissa Merius

BJJ

Rahjul Young

TIME

Present

1859

PLACE

An abandoned theatre

Terrebonne Plantation, Louisiana

There will be no intermission.

WARNING Please be advised that this production contains mature language and themes.

PRODUCTION STAFF

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR Harold Kast | DIALECT COACH Anne Burk

FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHY Edgar Landa | ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Sidne Phillips

DRAMATURG Sabrina Sawyer | ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER Mona Kubota-Johnson

LEAD SCENIC Abby Light | COSTUME DESIGN PA Samantha Ramirez

LIGHTING DESIGN PA Tyler Maegawa-Goese | CREW Uluwehi Baldemor, Alices Kim, Carey Ohlemeyer, Lurie Poston, Yazzmyn Shelby, Chelsea Sik, Lauren Welch

SPECIAL THANKS

Pamela Marsden, Properties Supervisor, Claire Trevor School of the Arts, UCI

An Octoroon is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.

An Octoroon had its World Premiere at Soho Rep

Sarah Benson, Artistic Director / Cynthia Flowers, Executive Director

Subsequently produced by Theatre for a New Audience

Jeffrey Horowitz, Founding Artistic Director / Henry Christensen III, Chairman / Dorothy Ryan, Managing Director, at the Polonsky Shakespeare Center, Brooklyn, NY in 2015

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

An Octoroon by Branden Jacob Jenkins (BJJ) is a provocative play that challenges our collective perceptions and bias around constructions of race, gender, class and ethnicity. It asks us to interrogate the external masks of performance that we sometimes put on or are projected onto us in order to see the internal core of our humanity. The play constantly asks the audience to imagine themselves in the role of 'the other' in order to deconstruct the destruction that is racial and ethnic stereotypes. The backdrop of the play is situated within the historical, cultural and theatrical context of slavery, minstrelsy and melodrama.

BJJ wrote this contemporary adaptation of Dion Boucicault's *The Octoroon*, which was first presented in 1859. Through humor, intellect and empathy, he asks us to consider who has the power to write certain stories and who is included and excluded in certain stories and in history. How does the story change when told from a completely different perspective? And what legacy of identity do we pass on from one generation to the next? Recently, I was moved to see the relevancy of this core conflict reflected in a powerful poem written by a 13-year-old poet who just happens to be my daughter. Like BJJ, the poem pushes against something that she feels the world is telling her. It is further proof, as Sondheim writes, that Children Will Listen. *An Octoroon* asks us to take seriously what we are saying and who gets to say it...

HELLO MY NAME IS...

by Olivia Sparks

Standing up in front of a sea of new faces

Hello My Name Is:

Angry black woman, loves watermelon

Speaks with slang-like accent

I prefer colloquialism

People assume so they don't approach

I do not speak in uneducated ways

I do not live in the South or "unsafe" side of anything

*I do not let people take advantage of the fact that I have dark skin
and use it against me*

I flourish, build my way up and support myself. me.

When others don't

I do not let the fear of the color of my skin of others get to me

I am strong willed

I survive. thrive.

I create peace from the olive branch

Hello My Name is Olivia.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Anita Dashiell-Sparks is an associate professor of theatre practice at USC and has taught acting, movement, performance and critical studies courses in interdisciplinary and multi-cultural theatre for 15 years at the USC School of Dramatic Arts. She also serves as the school's associate dean of equity, diversity and inclusion. For over 20 years, Dashiell-Sparks has centered diversity, equity and inclusion issues and initiatives in her career in professional theatre and higher education. As an actor, she has performed on Broadway, off-Broadway and in regional theatre such as the Mark Taper Forum and the Geffen Playhouse. As a director of shows such as *Letters from Zora* and as a producer, her creative work and scholarship have been seen in theatres across the country, including The Pasadena Playhouse and the Tony Award-winning Crossroads Theater. As an equity and diversity advocate in the arts, she has received numerous grants and awards (Fox Foundation, U.S. Dept. of Justice) for creating theatre for social change programs for at-risk youth in New York and Los Angeles. Dashiell-Sparks is also the founding director of the "Building Bridges" leadership and empowerment theatre program through USC's Neighborhood Outreach. She has directed the following theatre productions at the USC School of Dramatic Arts: *Antigone X*, *Breath Boom*, *Venus*, *The Bluest Eye* and *Intimate Apparel*.

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Located in Los Angeles, a city synonymous with artistic innovation and excellence, the top-ranked **USC School of Dramatic Arts** is a leader in dramatic arts education. The School uniquely blends artistic training in a conservatory environment with world-class faculty artists and the full academic experience found only within a major research university. This close-knit, supportive environment offers students the freedom to explore their artistic passions. Through programs of the highest caliber, as well as initiatives that provide access to professional experience, students are prepared for leadership in every facet of dramatic arts. For more information, please visit dramaticarts.usc.edu.

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SDA17/18 SEASON OF PLAYS

An Octoroon

By Branden Jacobs-Jenkins
Directed by Anita Dashiell-Sparks
MT Sept 28–Oct 1, 2017

Twelfth Night

By William Shakespeare
Directed by Kate Burton
BT Oct 5–8, 2017

BFA SENIOR ACTING REPERTORY

SDT Oct 12–22, 2017

Passion Play

By Sarah Ruhl
Directed by Christopher Shaw

Punk Rock

By Simon Stephens
Directed by Lisa James

Trojan Barbie

By Christine Evans
Directed by Ken Sawyer
MT Oct 26–29, 2017

Wild Honey

By Michael Frayn
Adapted from an original play by Anton Chekhov
Directed by Guillermo Cienfuegos
BT Nov 2–5, 2017

The Wild Party

Book, Music, and Lyrics
by Andrew Lipa
Directed by Vicki Lewis
MT Nov 16–19, 2017

MFA YEAR 2 ACTING REPERTORY

SDT Nov 16–19, 2017

Circle Mirror Transformation

By Annie Baker
Directed by Jonathan Muñoz-Proulx

Eurydice

By Sarah Ruhl
Directed by Stephanie Shroyer

MFA YEAR 3 ACTING REPERTORY

SDT Feb 2–Mar 4, 2018

The Matchmaker

By Thornton Wilder
Directed by Drew Barr

Buenaza/Cabrón

By David Bridel and the MFA Acting Class of 2018
Music and Lyrics by Caitlyn Conlin
Directed by David Bridel

A Bright Room Called Day

By Tony Kushner
Directed by David Warshofsky

Macbeth

By William Shakespeare
Directed by Natsuko Ohama
BT Feb 22–25, 2018

Great Expectations

By Barbara Field,
From the novel by Charles Dickens
Directed by Stephanie Shroyer
MT Mar 1–4, 2018

The Labyrinth of Desire

By Caridad Svich
Adapted and translated from Lope de Vega's *La prueba de los ingenios*
Directed by Denise Blasor
SDT Mar 29–Apr 1, 2018

West Side Story

Based on a conception of Jerome Robbins
Book by Arthur Laurents
Music by Leonard Bernstein
Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim
Directed by Ken Cazan
Choreographed by Danny Pelzig
BT Mar 29–Apr 8, 2018

Don't Go

Created in association with Sojourn Theatre
SDT Apr 19–22, 2018

BFA Sophomore Show

Directed by Kathleen Dunn-Muzingo
MT Apr 19–22, 2018

New Works Festivals

YEAR 1

New Play Readings

Apr 30, 2018

YEAR 2

Playwrights Workshop

Massman Theatre
Apr 6–22, 2018

YEAR 3

Play Project

Carrie Hamilton Theatre at The Pasadena Playhouse
May 25 & 26, 2018

KEY:

SDT = Scene Dock Theatre

BT = Bing Theatre

MT = McClintock Theatre

TICKET PRICES

Plays: General \$15, Seniors \$10, USC Students/Faculty/Staff with ID \$8

Musicals: General \$20, Seniors \$12, USC Students/Faculty/Staff with ID \$10

PERFORMANCES

Thurs & Fri at 7:30 p.m., Sat at 2:30 & 8 p.m. and Sun at 2:30 p.m.

(Except where noted)

For more information about our shows, visit
dramaticarts.usc.edu



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