



AFRIDIZIAK

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release: 26 July 2013

Cambridge students bring groundbreaking play to London

FOR COLORED GIRLS
Written by Ntozake Shange,
directed by Justina Kehinde - Canada Water Culture Space

One night only: 13 September 2013, 7.30pm + Q&A hosted by Hannah Pool

After five star reviews and breaking history in Cambridge, Justina Kehinde and Ifeyinwa Frederick are bringing **Ntozake Shange's** *For Colored Girls [Who Have Considered Suicide When The Rainbow is Enuf]* to London for one night only.

The play, a choreopoem originally written by **Ntozake Shange**, will be staged at **the Canada Water Culture Space** on **Friday, September 13, 7.30pm** - followed by a Q&A with the cast and crew hosted by **Hannah Pool**.

The original Cambridge run of the play directed and produced by Kehinde challenged the local theatrical norms by having the first all-black, all female cast ever on a Cambridge stage. The power and creativity of the performance resulted in standing ovations, a sell-out performance and five stars reviews. After such a successful run, Kehinde and Frederick are bringing the play to London.

Justina Kehinde, director and co-producer, said: "The first time I put on *For Colored Girls* [...], the intention of making history was not on my radar; I simply wanted to have my voice heard. After directing, co-producing and acting in a play, which uses poetry and dance to stare the grotesque nature of rape, abortion, AIDS, domestic violence and infanticide squarely in the face, you realise the play is more than you. People kept asking me, will you do it again and I realised there was still a need tell the story of the marginalised, to challenge conceptions of theatre, race, women, love and art. I had the creative know-how but the Cambridge production taught me that that finance was not my strong point. Teaming up with Ifeyinwa who has the commercial acumen meant a weight was lifted from my shoulders."

Ifeyinwa Frederick, who was a member of the original cast and is now also co-producer for the London show, comments: "As a dancer, I am used to being on stage but the original Cambridge production of the play tested me. It was the first proper play I had been involved in outside of school and it was a challenging one for me to have started with. After the final night, I was emotionally exhausted. But when Justina mentioned doing the play again I couldn't say no. This time round though, I wanted to be more involved and saw coming on board as co-producer as a perfect opportunity. The content of the play will resound with a number of people and the uniqueness of the production will attract an atypical audience to the theatre."

The cast includes **JUSTINA KEHINDE OGUNSEITAN** (lady in blue), **IFEYINWA FREDERICK** (lady in orange), **LOLIA ETOMI** (lady in purple), **NAOMI MAXWELL** (lady in green), **STEPHANIE GOULEI** (lady in brown), **TASILA BANDA** (lady in red) and **ISABEL ADOMAKOH YOUNG** (lady in yellow).

Acknowledgements: **Natalie Keeney** - photography and documentaries/film | **Jeaniq Amihyia** – photography | **Geoffrey Pasong** - programme design

Listings information:

For Colored Girls London

Date: 13 September 2013 | 7.30pm

Venue: Canada Water Culture Space, 21 Surrey Quays Road, London, SE16 7AR (nearest tube Canada Water) **Tickets:** £15 [on sale from early August 2013] Tickets: www.canadawaterculturespace.org.uk

Twitter: @FCGLondon | **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/FCGLondon

For Press enquiries – interviews with director, Justina Kehinde and producer, Ifeyinwa Frederick, press ticket requests and images, please contact **Sophia A Jackson** on sophia@afridiziak.com or call 07855 86 77 78

NOTES TO EDITORS

- **For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow Is Enuf** [For Colored Girls] is a 1975 experimental choreopoem by Ntozake Shange. A film adaptation by Tyler Perry was released in 2010 starring Thandie Newton.

CAST

JUSTINA KEHINDE OGUNSEITAN: (lady in blue, director, co-producer, lighting designer, musical coordinator) directed and co-produced the original Cambridge production of 'For Colored Girls [who have considered suicide when the rainbow is Enuf]' (Cambridge 2012). She has performed in 'For Colored Girls [...]', 'A Streetcar Named Desire' and took a lead in the first amateur production of Naomi Wallace's 'And I and Silence' (Cambridge 2012, 2013). Winner of the 2013 Reinstein Jazz Prize, Ogunseitán has performed at the Ealing Jazz Festival and for the likes of Desmond Tutu. An up and coming poet, Ogunseitán was the winner of the Benjamin Zephaniah Poetry Competition, University Category, and the Hammer & Tongue Slam Poetry Competition (Cambridge 2012, 2013). She performed at the first Brainchild Festival 2012 and was recently a featured poet at two Lyric Theater Live Lounge Events, London 2013. In 2013 Ogunseitán released two poetry videos on her identity as a British Nigerian and the Sex Trafficking Industry. Creative Editor and contributor of women's magazine MAGNIFY, she is currently writing her own play on the experiences of being a British Nigerian. Justina Kehinde Ogunseitán is doing a combined honours in English and Social Anthropology at St. John's College, Cambridge University.

IFEYINWA FREDERICK (lady in orange/co-producer) has been dancing since the age of 11. At 16 Frederick founded her own dance school, iCan Perform. In 2011 she produced 'The P Word', a performing arts showcase, in support of Barnardo's, providing an artistic platform for young people. She has also worked as choreographer on several shows in London and Cambridge. She has performed in 'The Vagina Monologues' and 'For Colored Girls [who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf]' (Cambridge 2013, 2012). Frederick was the assistant director for the first amateur production of Naomi Wallace's 'And I And Silence', (Cambridge 2013). Currently studying Classics at Robinson College, Cambridge University, Ifeyinwa Frederick is in the process of producing her own play on mental health issues for 2014.

LOLIA ETOMI (lady in purple) performed in the Cambridge production of 'For Colored Girls [who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf]' (Cambridge, 2012). She has performed in various amateur plays in Nigeria, England and Kenya; most notably 'The Death of a President'. A dancer, Etomi produced and choreographed the 2013 Cambridge University Contemporary Dance Workshop's show 'Enigma'. Lolita Etomi recently graduated from Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge University with a degree in Theology and Religious Studies.

NAOMI MAXWELL (lady in green) has been singing since the age of 11. Classically trained, she later took up soul and gospel, and is part of Cambridge based gospel quartet Campus Vibes. She performed in the Cambridge production of 'For Colored Girls [who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf]' (2012). Since the age of five, Maxwell has written short stories, articles, and two plays, of which The Land of Milk and Honey was performed at Hampstead Theater in 2008/9. She is currently studying Politics, Philosophy and Sociology at Girton College, Cambridge University.

STEPHANIE GOULEI (lady in brown) performed in the Cambridge production of 'For Colored Girls [who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf]' (Cambridge 2012). She has previously acted in amateur productions of 'The Taming of the Shrew' and 'What is Time'. Stephanie Goulei is currently studying Politics, Psychology and Sociology at Homerton College, Cambridge University.

TASILA BANDA (lady in red) performed in the Cambridge production of 'For Colored Girls [who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf]' (Cambridge 2012), having read and fallen in love with the play at the age of 15. She is currently studying Law at King's College, Cambridge University.

ISABEL ADOMAKOH YOUNG (lady in yellow) has performed in 'For Colored Girls [who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf]', 'A Streetcar Named Desire' and the lead in the first amateur production of Naomi Wallace's 'And I And Silence' (Cambridge 2012, 2013). She has also performed in 'You Me Bum Bum Train' (2011, 2012), 'The Importance of Being Ernest', Channel 4's 'Misfits' (Series 3) and Adam Ant's 'Cool Zombie' music video. She co-writes children's books as Zizou Corder - her first novel 'Lionboy' is currently a stage show by Complicite. She is in the London Youth Circus and is one of the London Leisure Pirates. A co-founding director of Brainchild Festival, 2014 will see the launch of her solo project 'Six Degrees', starting with Six Degrees of Berlin. Isabel Adomakoh Young is currently studying English Literature at Trinity College, Cambridge University.

CREATIVES

HANNAH POOL (q&a host) Journalists, author and commentator Hannah Pool writes regularly in the national and international media. Hannah has written features, interviews and comment for the Guardian for over a decade. Hannah's work also appears in The Times, Grazia, ARISE magazine and others. Hannah is also curator of talks and debates at Africa Utopia and WOW festivals at the Southbank Centre. Hannah's book, My Fathers' Daughter: A story of family and belonging is a memoir of her journey back to Eritrea to find her birth family. Published in the UK (Penguin), the US (Free Press), France, and Holland to critical acclaim, My Fathers' Daughter was described by the Washington Post as "a significant and moving book." A regular contributor to BBC Radio, a speaker at TedXEuston, Africa Writes and Africa Gathering, Hannah was recently the subject of CNN's African Voices, a half hour interview looking at her writing career to date.

GWENNI HAWKINS (assistant director) has performed with the Welsh National Opera and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (YAS). Whilst at Cambridge University, she assisted in directing and producing wildly different productions, the most recent of which was 'For Colored Girls [who have considered suicide when the rainbow is Enuf]'. Left a little cold by whitewashed and pedestrian student theatre, 'For Colored Girls [...]' appealed to her because of the truth of the script and the integrity of the cast and crew. A recent graduate in English Literature from Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Gwenni Hawkins is currently pursuing her interests in writing and film.

NICOLE BRYAN-QUAMINA (choreographer) is an aspiring barrister from South East London. She trained at D&B Theatre School and continued with performing arts alongside her undergraduate degree. She has performed in both London and Cambridge as a dancer and vocal artist but this will be her first time choreographing for a production. Left in awe and amazement following the Cambridge run of For Colored Girls [...], Bryan-Quamina is honoured to be a part of such an inspiring production. Nicole Bryan-Quamina recently graduated from Jesus College, Cambridge with a degree in Law.

THOMAS MOODIE (keyboard) is a writer and musician. He has previously composed music for 'No Exit', and 'Richard II' (Cambridge 2011, 2012) and wrote 'The Macedonian Tragedy' (Cambridge 2012). Moodie's upcoming projects include 'The Gate of the Hundred Sorrows' (screenwriter). Thomas Moodie is a recent graduate of King's College, Cambridge University.

JOEY FRANCES (percussion) has been playing drums professionally for 12 years. He played drums for the 2012 production of 'Richard II' and the Cambridge production of 'For Colored Girls [who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf]' (2012). He has directed plays by Jean-Paul Sartre and Sarah Kane. Joey Francis has recently graduated from King's College, Cambridge University with a degree in English Literature.

BRENDAN DORAN (bass) has played the bass guitar for over six years performing in a variety of bands and shows including the Cambridge production of Ntozake Shange's 'For Colored Girls [who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf]', November 2012. From Lurgan, Ireland, Doran recently graduated from Kings College, Cambridge University, with a degree in Experimental Psychology.

VICTORIA TAIWO OGUNSEITAN (saxophone) has been playing the alto sax for 13 years. Classically trained, she is one of the founding members of the Ealing Youth Jazz Orchestra and played first chair up until University. She now plays as a solo artists and occasionally features in public performances. Looking to go into post-graduate Medicine, Victoria Taiwo Ogunseitán is currently studying Anatomical Sciences at the University of Manchester.

-Ends-