

**Playwrights Local &
Powerful Long Ladder Ensemble
Present**

THIZ GIRLZ LYFE

**A PLAY BY
ERNESTA JEFFERSON**

**DIRECTED BY
TERRENCE SPIVEY**



Playwrights Local &
Powerful Long Ladder Ensemble Present

THIZ GIRLZ LYFE

Written by Ernesta Jefferson

Directed by Terrence Spivey

May 3 - 18, 2019

Creative Space at Waterloo Arts

CAST

Lorrainna Worthen.....Nasheema
Michael L May.....Will
Samone L. Cummings.....Quita
Sean Dubois Day.....Rich/Lt. Dan/Jason
Rochelle Jones.....Ms. Getwright/Mrs. Lewis
Irma R. McQueen.....Mrs. Morgan
Arien Hodges.....Sandy/Teresa
Nyrie Stallworth.....Angel/Johnetta
Corin B. Self.....Understudy

CREATIVE TEAM

Harold Crawford.....Costume Designer
Ludie Cummings.....Assistant Stage Manager/Board Operator
Marcus Dana.....Lighting Designer
Geraldine S. Harris.....Stage Manager
Tom Hayes.....Carpenter
Beau Reinker.....Sound Designer
Prophet Seay.....Set Designer
Lisa L. Wiley.....Prop Designer

SETTING

Various locations in Cleveland, Ohio. The present.

NOTES

Thiz Girlz Lyfe runs 2:30 with one fifteen-minute intermission.
Video/audio recording of this performance by any means is prohibited

ABOUT

A previous version of *Thiz Girlz Lyfe* was performed in May 2015 at Garden Valley Neighborhood House in Cleveland. This same version was later presented in May 2016 at Kultivation Theater in Cleveland Heights. The play was further developed in Playwrights Local's 2018-2019 Play Lab.

PLAYWRIGHTS LOCAL

Playwrights Local is dedicated to supporting the dramatists of Northeast Ohio. As a playwrights' development and production center, we foster diverse talents and present locally written works. We strive to increase the impact of original theater on the community and to raise the profile of area playwrights both within Greater Cleveland and beyond.

Artistic Director: David Todd

Managing Director: Tom Hayes

Literary Manager: Greg A. Smith

Company: Jaclyn C Cifranic; Mike Geither; Dale Heinen; Arwen Mitchell

Venue:

Creative Space at Waterloo Arts
397 East 156th Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44110

Office:

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Cleveland Heights, OH 44118
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Special Thanks:

Waterloo Arts; Karamu House; Corin B. Self; the entire the creative team that made this production possible; and all of our patrons and supporters.

POWERFUL LONG LADDER ENSEMBLE

Powerful Long Ladder (Long Ladder Inc.)

3586 Cummings Road

Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

(440) 462-9814 | pllecompany2.0@gmail.com

Artistic Director: Terrence Spivey

Executive Assistant: Sharron Foxx

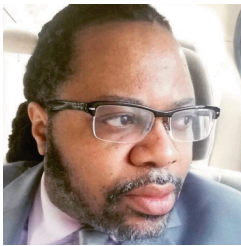
PLAYWRIGHT



Ernesta Chinille Thomas Jefferson was raised in Cleveland and is a mother of five. Ms. Jefferson's play *Thiz Girlz Lyfe* was previously workshopped at Hitchcock Center for Women, the Garden Valley Neighborhood House, and Kultivation Theater. She's currently working on her latest projects, *Beauty's Only Skin Deep* and *The Green Lady*, to name a couple. She would like to thank her family for their support and Mr. Andre Brown and Mrs. Evette France for her beginning as a playwright. Last, but by no means least, she would like to thank Mr. Terrence Spivey and Mr.

David Todd for further developing and bringing *Thiz Girlz Lyfe* back to life at Playwrights Local in collaboration with Powerful Long Ladder. She gives thanks to God for blessing her with the gift of writing. Without him none of this would be possible. Thank you.

DIRECTOR



Former artistic director at Karamu House, Terrence Spivey is a member of The HistoryMakers, a 2018 Alan Schneider Directors Award nominee, and 2017 Best Director and 2005 Best Theatre Honcho by *Cleveland Scene*. He was given a proclamation in 2010 by Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson for his artistic contributions. He garnered multiple awards at Karamu and the institution was given Repertory Company of the Year in 2013 by AUDELCO in NYC. He directed plays such as *Dream on Monkey*

Mountain (2006 Best Production), *The Blacks: A Clown Show* (2008 Best Drama) and *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*. Since leaving Karamu: *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill* (2018 Chandelier Best Drama-Akron), *Boodycandy* (2016 Top 10-Plain Dealer), and the nationally acclaimed *Objectively/Reasonable: A Community Response to the Shooting of Tamir Rice, 11/22/14* at Playwrights Local. Spivey has worked at numerous theatres as director and actor, including Lincoln Center, Cherry Lane Theatre, and Black Girl Ensemble (NYC). He has a B.A. in Theatre from Prairie View A & M University. He served on the board for the Community Partnership for Arts and Culture and is currently a board member for AUDELCO. He is the founding artistic director for Powerful Long Ladder.

PLAYWRIGHTS LOCAL UPCOMING IN 2019-2020

October 2019: **The 5th Annual Cleveland Playwrights Festival**

November 2019: ***Live Bodies for Sale* by Christopher Johnston**

March 2020: ***Hey Siri* by Mary E. Weems, Ph.D.**

April 2020: ***The King of Cage Street* by Michael Oatman**

Plus our annual Roundtable Reading Series, Play Lab, and more!

CAST



Samone L. Cummings (Quita) is extremely proud to return to Playwrights Local where she started her professional career in *Objectively/Reasonable: A Community Response to the Shooting of Tamir Rice, 11/22/14*. Most recently, she was seen as Shante in *The Ma'afa Suite: A Healing Journey*. Samone began acting at the age of four with her church as an angel in *Jesus is Born*. Now twelve and in the eighth grade at Dike School of the Arts,

Samone has been cast in a number of local productions including Helen in *A Christmas Story* (Cleveland Play House); Ensemble in *Maya the Poet* (Station Hope); Annie Moffat in *Little Women* (HBTI); and a variety of school productions. Samone trained with Dike School of the Arts, Hathaway Brown Theater Institute; Tri-C Creative Arts Dance Academy; and Karamu House chorus. When Samone's offstage she studies voice, dance, drums, and piano. She also enjoys making clothes for her doll collection and shoes for friends and ministering at her church.



Sean Dubois Day (Rich/Lt. Dan/Jason) is an actor, singer, and author, who is best known for his award-winning novel, *Tales From The Joint*. In 2018, Sean co-starred in several motion pictures and stage plays. Sean is currently pursuing a Gospel recording career.



Arien Hodges (Sandy/Teresa) is a graduate of Cleveland State University where she majored in Dramatic Arts. She was involved in numerous Karamu House productions including being the lead character in *Steal Away*, stage manager for *The Fire Inside: The Story and Poetry of Nikki Giovanni*, and director of *Babies Having Babies*. She has written and produced her own works including the stage play *Paper Figs* at Kultivation Theater. This year, she was involved in Cleveland Public Theatre's Entry Point and had

her play *June* read for Playwrights Local's Young Playwrights Collective staged reading series. She currently stars in and writes for the YouTube series, *The Trap*.



Rochelle Jones (Ms. Getwright/Mrs. Lewis) is a native of Cleveland and graduate of Case Western Reserve University where she minored in theater. She also received theater training at Cleveland School of the Arts where her focus was on theater and dance. She also participated in 4Real Players, a triple threat troupe at 4Real Empowerment Center, and won a scholarship to attend Cleveland Playhouse's summer theater program. Her theater credits include *Open Admissions*, *Oak and Ivy*, *Inside the*

Mind of a Madman, *From Breast Cancer to Broadway*, *Ruined*, *Six Degrees of Separation*, and *The Miracle Worker*, and she was last seen in *Bootycandy!* She is excited to be part of this dynamic cast!



Michael L May (Will): a member of SAG-AFTRA, Michael was cast in Netflix's *The Last Summer*, Showtime's *House Not Home*, and the upcoming feature film *Still Perfect*. He's worked under Terrence Spivey's direction in the plays *The Color Purple*, *Dreamgirls*, *Cut Flowers*, *Bootycandy*, and August Wilson's *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*.

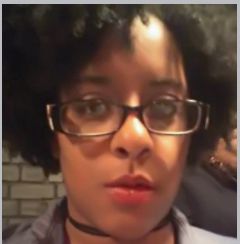


Irma R. McQueen (Mrs. Morgan) has been seen on various stages (Cleveland Playhouse, Playhouse Square, East Cleveland Theater, Karamu, Twinsburg Community Theater, and NoteOrity Show Choir of Solon) in the Northeast Ohio area as an actress and/or singer. In January 2019, she was Patrice in *The Ma'Afa Suite* at Olivet Baptist Church under the direction of Terrence Spivey (*Powerful Long Ladder*). Some of her movie credits include *Antwone Fisher*, *Against the Ropes*, *White Boy Rick*, *All the Bright Places* (Netflix), and *Eat Like a Bird* and *Hey Mr.*

Postman (both locally produced). In addition, Ms. McQueen has volunteered behind the scenes as a stage manager, costumer, usher, board member, and dramaturg.



Corin B. Self (Understudy), a native of Cleveland, has been a lover of the performing arts from a very young age. After studying Theater Arts at Morgan State University, he has been in such productions as *Julius Caesar: Set in Africa*, *Raisin: The Musical*, and *Objectively/Reasonable: A Community Response to the Shooting of Tamir Rice, 11/22/14*, to name a few. He is very happy to be a part of this production.



Nyrie Stallworth (Angel/Johnetta) is very excited to make her first play debut with Playwrights Local and Powerful Long Ladder. She is a 26-year-old teacher who currently attends Cuyahoga Community College and has plans to continue her clinical psychology degree at Cleveland State University. Nyrie has been a part of many performances, onstage and behind the scenes, including *Deliverance*, *Xanadu Jr.*, *Blues In The Night*, and *The Wiz*, in which she understudied as the Kalidah Queen. Nyrie is thrilled to be working with Terrence Spivey and Miss Geri and

would like to thank her family and friends for their love and support.



Lorrainna Worthern (Nasheema) is a rising Cleveland actress and singer. You may recognize her from theaters around the area playing roles such as Emily Webb from *Our Town* in Shaker Heights or even some local films including her work with the CSU Film Department. Lorrainna is so very excited to be working with the amazing Terrence Spivey and making her debut with Playwrights Local. She is very honored to be playing the lead role of Nasheema in *Thiz Girtz Lyfe*. Lorrainna's goal in this production is to bring Ernesta Jefferson's vision of her play to life.

Continue following Lorrainna's story, she has so much more in store this year.

CREATIVE TEAM

Harold Crawford (Costume Designer) began working in the film industry in 1970. As an apprentice, he spent three months each at four of the major studios: 20th Century Fox, Paramount, Warner Brothers, and Universal. He stayed on at Universal for seven years, working on *Alias Smith and Jones* and other shows. He has worked with Muhammad Ali, Ron O'Neal, Rosalind Cash, Keanu Reeves...the list goes on. He worked extensively in the Black Exploitation movies of the '70s such as *Black Belt Jones* and *Hammer*. He enjoys what he does as a costumer, creating characters with clothes with a passion.

Ludie Cummings (Assistant Stage Manager / Board Operator) is a Wife, Mother, and Educator for fifteen years. Words I live by: "When much is given, much is required....Also when something is done in love, it will be received in love....so spread LOVE!"

Marcus Dana (Lighting Designer) is delighted to be working with Playwrights Local lighting *Thiz Girtz Lyfe*. Currently, this is his sixth year as Resident Lighting Designer at Dobama Theatre. Marcus is also on his second year as lighting designer at None Too Fragile. Previous and current lighting includes: LD at Near West Theatre, Canton Players Guild, Verlezza Dance, Beck Center, Karamu House, Tri-C JazzFest, Rabbit Run, Cleveland City Ballet, and Nightingale Opera.

Geraldine S. Harris (Stage Manager) is honored to serve as Stage Manager for the Playwrights Local production of *Thiz Girtz Lyfe*. She is equally honored to reunite with Mr. Terrence Spivey, former Artistic Director of Karamu House, where she served as a resident SM for ten seasons under his artistic direction. With a career that spans over 35 years, she has had the privilege of working with a great many talented individuals. This experience is no exception. Thank you David and Tom. To the playwright, Ernesta Jefferson...Bravo! I hope we have served you well. To a dynamite cast, crew and artistic team...thank you.

Tom Hayes (Carpenter) is an award-winning playwright who received his MFA from Cleveland State University and the NEOMFA program. His play *Lord of the Burgeoning Lumber* was staged at convergence-continuum and was awarded "Best Original Script by a Local Playwright 2008" by *Rave and Pan*. He is the Managing Director of Playwrights Local.

Beau Reinker (Sound Designer) is a Cleveland-based theatre artist. Recent sound designs include *The Pride; Rapture, Blister, Burn; Above & Beyond; The Silence of Dr and Mrs Caligari; The Casual Tree Ward; and And All the Dead Lie Down*. Beau has also performed on stage with convergence-continuum, Cleveland Public Theatre, Maelstrom Collaborative Arts, Theater Ninjas, and Cleveland Shakespeare Festival.

Prophet Seay (Set Designer), a native of Cleveland, attended the Cleveland Schools of the Arts, where he studied acting, and continued his training in Karamu House's Performing Arts Center where he was a member of T.O.P.S. Prophet served as scenic designer for *Two By Tennessee* and *Day of Absence*, and as lighting designer for the 2017 production of *Simply Simone* and the premiere of *Believe in Cleveland*. He has also served as master carpenter for many years and performed in numerous productions at Karamu House.

Lisa L Wiley (Prop Designer) has designed props for several Cleveland-area theaters. Everything from Expressionistic "newspapers," old polaroids, and exotic plants to tricky drink glasses and "Orders from Heaven." Lisa holds a bachelor's degree in Theatre from Ashland University and has years of experience stage managing, designing, and directing. In addition to "gettin' her crafty on," she is a voice-over artist, standardized patient, and also performs with Women in History.

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