

BRONZEVILLE ARTS ENSEMBLE AND RAISING THE BAR, INC.

PRESENT

KHLOE'S BEAUTIFUL BLUES

BY LA'KETTA CALDWELL

Director and Choreographer
CEDRIC GARDNER

Scenic Design
Design Cassie Sipple

Costume Design
Sheri Williams Pannell

Lighting and Sound
Amaya Rockett

Music by
Cedric Gardner and Jerome Weitzer

Production Stage Manager
Aminah Rockett

Saturday, February 24, 2024 at 1:00 PM

Martin Luther King Community Center
1531 W. Vliet Street
Milwaukee, WI

Welcome from the Producing Artistic Director

Founded in 2013, Bronzeville Arts Ensemble (BAE) is a professional theatre company committed to the expansion and cultivation of Milwaukee's African American theatre community. BAE illuminates the Black experience in America by developing and creating theatre while also providing artistic and educational programming opportunities, collaborating with the local and national community, and inspiring healing through positive social change.

The 2023 - 2024 Theatre Season marks the tenth anniversary of Bronzeville Arts Ensemble! Ten years ago, I joined six African American professional theatre artists in creating a company which we agreed would illuminate the Black experience in America! Let us celebrate the founders of Bronzeville Arts Ensemble: Allen Edge, Azeeza Islam, Bill Jackson, Chike Johnson, Malkia Stampley Johnson, Marvette Knight, Don E. Pannell, and Sheri Williams Pannell.

For ten years Bronzeville Arts Ensemble has remained true to our mission by offering playwrighting workshops for adults, new play readings, collaborations with theatre companies locally and nationally, producing original work by local playwrights, and participating as a founding company of the Milwaukee Black Theatre Festival which is in its fifth year and under the direction of Black Arts MKE!

In 2023 Bronzeville Arts Ensemble aka BAE with Black Arts MKE participated in World Premier Wisconsin with an original musical, *Zuri's Crown* by Cynthia Cobb, Parrish Collier and Sheri Williams Pannell. This was a humorous hair-story which sisters of all backgrounds could relate. Articles about the musical were published locally and nationally, including in the electronic edition of EBONY Magazine.

BAE produced a reading of Jeff Stetson's play *The Meeting* and followed up with a co-production with Black Arts MKE for the Milwaukee Black Theatre Festival during the summer of 2023.

For our tenth anniversary year, we are proud to announce we are in residence at the Martin Luther King Community Center on 15th and Vliet Street in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and continue as an affiliate of Black Arts MKE. Our Tenth Anniversary Season productions include:

#Enough, an national theatre event with readings of anti-gun violence plays by youth from across country. The performance was offered free to the community on November 6, 2023. The cast featured Tony Austin, Selena McKnight, Leonardt Horàk, Jeannine Rivers-Colbourn, and the percussion troupe Drums Up, Guns Down.

Words Seldom Heard, the Lesser-Known Speeches of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a collaboration with King Community Center in celebration of the King Holiday on Monday, January 15, 2024. The Milwaukee community celebrated Dr. King with spoken word, music, and honoring local heroes.

February 2024, Bronzeville Arts Ensemble celebrates Black History Month by producing a new work by La’Ketta Caldwell, ***Khloe’s Beautiful Blues***. The memory play punctuated with poetry and song, tells the story of a woman who recalls the kindness of a mentor who helped her thrive despite bullying received by classmates because of her dark skin.

We will end our Tenth Anniversary Season with a special celebration whose details are soon to come!

For those who have traveled the journey with Bronzeville Arts Ensemble these ten years, we are truly appreciative of your love and support. If you are new to us, we welcome you. To all, Bronzeville Arts Ensemble invites you to join us as we walk into the next decade of theatre making in Milwaukee!

See you in the theatre,



Sheri Williams Pannell
Co-founder and Producing Artistic Director
Bronzeville Arts Ensemble

Synopsis: *Khloe's Beautiful Blues*

Khloe's Beautiful Blues is a one-act play which takes audiences on a poignant and inspiring journey of self-discovery, resilience, and the healing power of music. Through Khloe's story, we are reminded of the importance of embracing one's identity, confronting adversity with courage, and finding strength in the support of mentors and community.

Scene 1: Reflections of Childhood Torment

The one-act play opens with Khloe, a successful adult, haunted by the memories of her childhood taunts and bullying. Despite her achievements, the scars of her past threaten to overshadow her present. Through her soliloquy, the audience witnesses the names she was called and the pain she endured during her school days.

Scene 2: Finding Solace and Encountering Mr. Clark

In a classroom setting, Khloe faces continued torment from her peers, with the teacher failing to intervene effectively. Outside the classroom, Khloe discovers solace through poetry and music, where she encounters Mr. Clark, her music teacher. Despite initial resistance, Khloe begins to realize that Mr. Clark might be the mentor she desperately needs.

Scene 3: Embracing the Blues and Self-Discovery

As Khloe navigates her tumultuous emotions, Mr. Clark introduces her to the Blues, a transformative experience that connects her to her ancestors' struggles and resilience. Through writing assignments and musical exploration, Khloe begins to find her voice and identity, shedding light on the power of self-expression and acceptance.

Scene 4: Triumph and Transformation

Despite facing additional challenges at school and home, Khloe finds strength and support in Mr. Clark, who becomes a father figure and mentor. Together, they confront adversity, heal past wounds, and celebrate moments of triumph, including Khloe's powerful rendition of the National Black Anthem at a talent showcase.

Scene 5: Gratitude and New Beginnings

As Khloe receives her college acceptance letter, she reflects on her journey of self-discovery and the profound impact Mr. Clark has had on her life. With newfound courage and resilience, Khloe embraces her future with hope and gratitude, symbolizing the transformative power of mentorship, resilience, and the Blues.

KHLOE'S BEAUTIFUL BLUES

Meet the Company of Khloe's Beautiful Blues!



La'Ketta D. Caldwell (Playwright and Lyricist) currently serves as the Executive Director of Raising The Bar. With over a decade of dedicated service to the largest youth-serving organization, she has progressed through various roles, ascending from Program Manager to Club Manager and Senior Program Manager overseeing diverse initiatives. La'Ketta has been instrumental in elevating programs like the empowering "Youth of the Year" and leadership initiatives addressing critical social issues such as sexual violence and trauma coping for youth. La'Ketta earned her Bachelor of Arts in Speech Communication with a minor in Theatre from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. A distinguished leader, she participated in the 2015 African American Leadership Program and was recognized in the 2015 Milwaukee Business Journal's 40 Under 40 class. Ms. Caldwell was also a nominee for the 2015 MANDI awards. In 2016, she delivered a thought-provoking TEDx Talk titled "Say Something," further showcasing her commitment to impactful communication and community engagement.

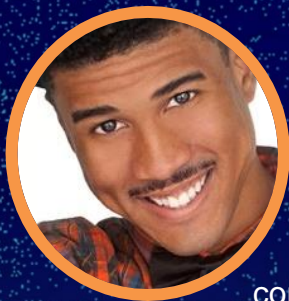


Tommy Canvas (Mr. Clark) is pleased to make his Bronzeville Arts Ensemble debut with *Khloe's Beautiful Blues*. He sends love to his beautiful wife, Erica Cherie, and wonderful beautiful children.



George W. Boswell aka George The Technologist (Technical Assistant) is a Wisconsin based composer, producer, and audio engineer who creates music in different genres that can be used for TV, Film, Video Games, Media, and more. His music writing skills range from Orchestral, Afrobeats, Funk, Soul, Jazz, Hip Hop, UK Jungle, RnB, IDM, EDM, Electro, House Music, and more. George The Technologist is creating high-quality music to achieve long-lasting partnerships within the industry.

KHLOE'S BEAUTIFUL BLUES



Cedric Gardner (Director/Choreographer/Composer/Lyricist)

Cedric Gardner is a passionate and accomplished dance artist with over two decades of experience in the field. He currently serves as a Youth Artist Mentor at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee, where he finds joy in helping young dancers achieve their dreams. His talent and dedication eventually led him to become a top 14 finalist on the third season of the American dance contest series, "So You Think You Can Dance." Since then, Cedric has continued to make an impact in the dance community as coach of the NBA Milwaukee Bucks youth dance team, "The Young Bucks," and the Boys and Girls Club dance team, "Davis Dancers," who are three-time national champions. The Davis Dancers have even been featured in national commercials for brands such as Versiti, Pepsi, and Old Navy, and have performed with notable artists like Daya, Doja Cat, and the Milwaukee Bucks. Cedric's talent has allowed him to work with some of the most elite choreographers in the industry, privilege of performing with several celebrities, including Black Eyed Peas, Gloria Estefan, Herbie Hancock, Neil Young, NE-YO, Stevie Wonder, Debbie Allen, Miranda Cosgrove, and Sheila E. Cedric's unique and innovative dance technique blends multiple dance styles, and he describes it as "freestyle" and "emotion-driven." He has even contributed choreography to popular TV shows such as Fox's "Empire" and the Nick Jr. series "Yo Gabba Gabba." Cedric made his film debut in a Wayans Brothers Production, "The Dance Flick," and was featured in Disney's "Step Up 3D." In all his endeavors, Cedric strives to inspire and uplift others through the power of dance, guided by the words of Helen Keller: "The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart."



Carolyn Coleman Harper (Costume Supervisor) is the

owner of the business, *The Only One: Unique Creations and Alterations*. She loves the performing arts and is so pleased to make her debut as a theatre artisan with Bronzeville Arts Ensemble. She sends love to her husband Ron Harper and their two daughters.

KHLOE'S BEAUTIFUL BLUES



Ciara Hart (Khloe) is very excited to return to Bronzeville Art Ensemble, where in 2023 she was featured in as Bergamont in the musical *Zuri's Crown*. You may have seen her in the adult ensemble of *School of Rock* (Skylight Music Theatre) and Ella Fitzgerald in *Harlem Renaissance* (Black Arts MKE). Ciara studied Musical Theatre Performance at UW Stevens Point. She is new to the Milwaukee area and thrilled to continue to pursue her career in theater! She wants to thank her Mom, Friends, Tay, her partner Davin, and their Cat Solana for always supporting her passions. BAE appreciates Ciara's graciously sharing a song she composed with this production.



Robert Jackson (Producer) was in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and his early life was marked by exposure to a challenging environment. It was the game of basketball that served as a transformative force, shaping him into the resilient leader he has become. Robert earned his Bachelor of Arts in Speech Communication from Marquette University, laying the foundation for a professional basketball career that took him overseas, where he played in Spain, Germany, and South Korea. Returning to Milwaukee, he felt a deep-rooted desire to give back to the community that played a pivotal role in shaping the man he is today. Dedicating 16 years to the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee, Robert Jackson has been a catalyst for positive change. His work with various community-based organizations reflects his commitment to inspiring others to discover and walk in their purpose. For Robert, the choice of a career aligned seamlessly with his passion to contribute to a community that mirrors the support system that helped mold him into the person he is today.



Amaya Rockett (Lighting/Sound Design) Amaya Rockett is a graduate of University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, Peck School of the Arts with a BFA in Theatre. Her previous post grad projects include being scenic designer *The Forgotten Girl* (First Stage), properties manager *Mud Row* (Black Arts MKE) and scenic design/props *Zuri's Crown* (Bronzeville Arts Ensemble).

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Aminah Rockett (Stage Manager) is a graduate of University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, Peck School of the Arts with a BFA in Theatre. Her previous post grad projects include scenic designer *The Forgotten Girl* (First Stage), properties manager *MudRow* (Black Arts MKE), and stage manager *Zuri's Crown* (Bronzeville Arts Ensemble).



Cassie Sippel is a graduate of Cardinal Stritch University where she studied Photography and Creative Writing. She worked on CSU's scenic design crew building and painting sets and props for numerous shows including: *The Little Mermaid*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *Rumpelstiltskin*, and *Little Women*. After graduating she worked for the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee and their productions of *The Lion King* and *Madagascar*. Cassie owns her own small business and enjoys adventures with her family. *Khloe's Beautiful Blues* is Cassie's BAE debut.



Ethan Sippel (Scenic) a graduate of Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE) where he studied Construction Management and Structural Engineering. Ethan is just beginning his journey into the theater world. He loves spending time outdoors with his family and dog. *Khloe's Beautiful Blues* is Ethan's Bronzeville Arts Ensemble debut.



Don E. Pannell (Managing Director) is a founding member of Bronzeville Arts Ensemble. A retired firefighter/paramedic and Vietnam Veteran, Pannell is fulfilling his dream of being a writer. He has participated in the Bronzeville Arts Ensemble's Playwriting Workshop and Showcase. His articles have been published in the Milwaukee Times Newspaper. Don is a member of Calvary Baptist Church, where he is known for his pit-master skills at church picnics.

KHLOE'S BEAUTIFUL BLUES



Sheri Williams Pannell (Costume Design) a native

Milwaukeean who has performed, directed, or written for Milwaukee's theater and arts organizations including First Stage, Florentine Opera, Milwaukee Rep, and Skylight Music Theatre. Beyond Milwaukee, Pannell has worked at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Utah's Old Lyric Theatre, Children's Theater of Madison, University Opera, and University Theater at UW Madison. Pannell was honored to direct a production as part a United Nations Symposium, "Disaster in Darfur: Sudan's Defiance of International Human Rights," hosted at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 2017, Pannell was honored as an Artist of the Year by the City of Milwaukee. A founding member and producing artistic director at Bronzeville Arts Ensemble, Pannell is an artistic associate at Black Arts MKE and First Stage, and co-director of the drama ministry at Calvary Baptist Church. Summer of 2020, Pannell served as one of the founders of the Milwaukee Black Theatre Festival. A graduate of Spelman College, Pannell also holds an MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Pannell is an assistant professor in the Theatre Department at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee where she is head of the Musical Theatre Program.



Jerry Weitzer (Composer *Khloe's Song*) is a pianist, music

director, composer who is at home in the various genre of music including: classical, jazz, Broadway. He has served as music director, accompanist, and arranger for *West Side Story* (Pius High School), *Carnival* (St. Mary's Academy), *Mame* (Thomas Moore), *South Pacific* (West Allis Central High School). He can most often be found delivering jazz as the leader of a jazz trio at Sam's Jazz Café and as a sideman at the Pfister Hotel's Mason Street Grill and Blu Jazz Club. Mr. Weizer studied piano, classical composition, and jazz theory/workshop at the Wisconsin College Conservatory of Music. His next production is *Once Upon A Mattress* at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Peck School of the Arts.

KHLOE'S BEAUTIFUL BLUES

THANK YOU!

Bronzeville Arts Ensemble and Raising the Bar would not be able to offer school performances at no cost to students, teachers, and staff; or offer reasonably priced tickets to the community without the support of the following sponsors:

American Endowment Foundation
Bader Foundation
Brewers Community Foundation
Greater Milwaukee Foundation
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center
Ms. Ida Jones
Lafayette and Venora McKinney
Milwaukee County Parks Foundation
Raising the Bar, Inc.
Kelban Foundation



AFTER THE SHOW

Post Show Questions

1. Mr. Clark helped Khloe learn to use poetry to express her feelings. How do you express your feelings?
2. Do you have someone like Mr. Clark in your life? Who is this person? How have they helped you?
3. If you have a mentor who has helped you, write them a thank you letter.

KHLOE'S BEAUTIFUL BLUES

Positive Affirmation Poem Activity

Mr. Clark encouraged Khloe to write poetry which uses positive words. You can do this, too! Use the positive words below to create a poem about yourself or someone you know.

Lovely
Admired
Kind
Excellent
Tall
Totally Cool
Awesome
Smart
Brave
Super
Dazzling

Fun
Loyal
Ambitious
Adventurous
Friendly
Likable
Wonderful
Faithful
Considerate

Loving
Witty
Helpful
Dynamic
Funny
Hardworking
Polite
Unique
Courageous

KHLOE'S BEAUTIFUL BLUES

Writing Blues Lyrics

A connection to literacy in the General Music Classroom By Natalie Wilson*
General Music/Vocal Jazz Chair, Ages 6-12 - Jazz Education Network

With a little understanding of the 12-bar blues form, all students K-8 are capable of writing blues lyrics. Along the lines of poetry, blues lyrics are written with rhyming words and rhythm.

The process:

1. Give a background of the 12-bar blues form, indicating three lines of equal length.
2. Lyrics require three (3) lines only, that need to fill the space of the musical form. The lyrics may be short, however there will be many 'rests' to fill the time.
3. Begin with two rhyming words i.e. "frog" and "log"
4. Write simple sentences. The first two lines may repeat.

*I saw a frog.
I saw a frog.
It sat on a log.*

5. Embellish the lyrics. Add descriptors to the lines for length in the musical phrase. When? Where? How? What did it look like? Make sure the rhyming word still is at the end of the phrase.

*I was walking on a trail and I saw a little green frog. I said...
I was walking on a trail and I saw a cute, little green frog.
It was hard to find because it sat on a really big log.*

6. Play with more sets of rhyming words.
7. Speak the words in time while playing the 12-bar blues form. Each lyrical line must begin with the matching musical line. Note how the longer the lyric is, the easier it is to place within the rhythm of the musical line.
8. Create/improvise a melody to the lyric over the 12-bar blues form.
9. Perform the lyrics with 12-bar blues accompaniment.
10. Write additional verses to create a musical story and/or incorporate into other musical forms.

*Natalie Wilson teaches at the Grass Valley Elementary School in Camas, Washington, and serves as the K-8 General Music/Vocal Jazz Chair for the Jazz Education Network (JEN). For more information email Nataliejwilson.njw@gmail.com
<https://jazzday.com/media/JEN-WritingBluesLyrics.pdf>

Impacts of Bullying

Children who are bullied can experience negative physical, social, emotional, academic, and mental health issues, says stopbullying.org. They also shared that media reports often link bullying with suicide, and a small number of bullied children might retaliate through extremely violent measures.

The experience of being bullied can cause lasting emotional damage to victims and shape them as adults. Physical wounds heal, but the lasting impact of words damages the ability to view yourself as a desirable, capable, and effective human being.

Sticks and stones can break my bones, but your words can break my heart.
- Jaki-terry, actress and director