



[THE GEORGIA INCARCERATION PERFORMANCE PROJECT] PRESENTS:

BY OUR HANDS

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND FILM STUDIES
UGA Theatre



An Original Devised Archives-to-Performance Production

Co-created by students, faculty, and alumni at Spelman College and the University of Georgia with professional artists.

Developed in collaboration with:

- instructors and students from Common Good Atlanta,
- archivists from Spelman College, the AUC Woodruff Library, and UGA Special Collections Libraries: Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies, Walter J. Brown Media Archives & Peabody Awards Collection, and
- the Spelman College Social Justice Program.

University of Georgia: Fine Arts Theatre

Friday, November 8, 2019, 8:00 pm
Sunday, November 10, 2019, 2:30 pm
Saturday, November 16, 2019, 8:00 pm
Sunday, November 17, 2019, 2:30 pm

Spelman College: Baldwin Burroughs Theatre

Saturday, February 8, 2020, 7:30 pm
Sunday, February 9, 2020, 2:30 pm
Saturday, February 15, 2020, 7:30 pm
Sunday, February 16, 2020, 2:30 pm

Funders and Sponsors

This project is generously supported, from the University of Georgia, by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation through the Global Georgia Initiative of the Willson Center for Humanities and Arts, a Faculty Research Grant from the Office of Research, by the Department of Theatre and Film Studies, the Institute for African American Studies, the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies, the Walter J. Brown Media Archives & Peabody Awards Collection, the Ferman Fund, the McCay Fund, and the Franklin Excellence Fund. From Spelman College, it is supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Department of Dance Performance & Choreography, and the Department of Theatre & Performance. Additional sponsors of this production include: the Atlanta Film Festival.

Project Description

Just a five-minute walk from where this performance takes place stands the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library's *The New South and the New Slavery: Convict Labor in Georgia*, a new exhibit chronicling a gripping piece of Georgia's history: "the forced labor of prisoners in Georgia from the start of the convict lease system in 1868 until the abolition of the chain gang in 1945."

The timeliness and urgency of this exhibit are palpable. From films like Ava DuVernay's *13th* to the 2018 nationwide 20-day protest by incarcerated peoples about prison work conditions, there has been a national call to look at the historical set of events, peoples, and personalities that contributed to what some have called 'modern-day slavery' or "the New Jim Crow." Items on display in the Hargrett Library's exhibition, as well as other collections focused on Georgia's carceral history located in the Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies and the Walter J. Brown Media Archives & Peabody Awards Collection, afford us—students, faculty, incarcerated people, prison employees, historians, archivists, artists, residents, and the State of Georgia—the opportunity to have this serious, much-needed conversation.

But how do we gather a community of Georgia residents to openly look at and discuss this difficult past (and present)? How do we honestly negotiate our own relationship to incarceration, issues of

race, and the impact of forced labor on our everyday experiences as Georgians? How can we explore the cultural memories of this history that live and move in our bodies? Encountering the archival material in the exhibit's display cases, how can we make a human connection to the inanimate archival objects of this felt history?

We turn to performance.

[The Georgia Incarceration Performance Project] is a first-of-its-kind, cross-institutional collaboration between faculty, students, and alumni at Spelman College and the University of Georgia. Inspired by the Hargrett Library's exhibition, the collections of the Russell Library and the Brown Media Archives & Peabody Awards Collection, and other archives including embodied memory, Spelman and UGA students (along with students from Morehouse College and North Carolina A&T State University participating under the auspices of Spelman College) have created together from scratch a performance piece exploring this history and legacy. They have collaborated with their faculty, professional artists, and incarcerated students in Common Good Atlanta courses to explore the question: "What does incarcerated labor do to us?"

This performance has been developed as part of several courses in university curricula (Spring, Maymester, and Fall 2019) and in the production seasons of three departments. Spelman, UGA, and

Common Good Atlanta incarcerated students have researched; generated original writing, essays, scripts, and songs; co-devised and co-choreographed scenes; and engaged in rigorous, critical reflection on this history and legacy. The project brings together a diverse constellation of people and entities around the Georgia incarceration story to have a conversation, engage ethically, and learn from this history and its impact on our everyday lives. This transformative process: (1) positions every collaborator as a co-facilitator of this urgent discussion and co-curator of Georgia's history; (2) fosters cross-institutional, synergistic

collaboration; (3) enhances our curricular offerings with experiential learning; and (4) showcases professional, scholarly-artistic endeavors at their best.

We invite audiences to visit the exhibit and explore other archival materials in UGA's Special Collections Libraries. *The New South and the New Slavery* exhibit will remain on display at the Richard B. Russell Building Special Collections Libraries Building through Dec. 13, 2019. The Hargrett Library Gallery is free and open to the public Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Saturdays from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Co-Directors' Note

This performance was developed from archival encounters and deep collaborations. Rather than beginning with a script, devised theatre is built on improvisations with the performing ensemble—in our case, surrounding the historical archive. When encountering archival materials, we played with them: singing them, dancing them, acting them out, curating them through performance, and expressing them with our bodies, voices, media, music, design elements, and artistry. Through community-based theatre techniques, we worked to explore our own relationships to the stories and voices held in the archives, and aimed to break the "fourth wall" between the audience and performances, in order to invite audiences to make the story with us. We hope that the audience will leave with a deeper understanding of histories and contemporary realities of incarcerated labor, and what this inheritance does and means to us all, as Georgia residents.

Production Notes

The dialogue and scenes in this production have been directly appropriated from historical materials in the University of Georgia's Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies, Walter J. Brown Media Archives & Peabody Awards Collection, and other archives. The views they express do not necessarily reflect those of the project's participants, contributors, community partners, Spelman College, the University of Georgia, or the University System of Georgia. As this production uses verbatim text and imagery from archival material, please be aware that this performance contains language and imagery which may be offensive to some audiences.

¹ Text from *The New South and the New Slavery* exhibit.

² See: "Prisoners Nationwide Go on Strike to Protest 'Modern-Day Slavery'," *USAToday* (accessed online August 29, 2018): <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2018/08/21/prisoners-strike-protest-attica-lee-correctional/1045008002/>; Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Color Blindness* (New York: The New Press, 2010). Also, see: Sam Pollard's *Slavery By Another Name* (2012; based on Douglas Blackmon's 2008 book of the same title) which also brought this history to recent public consciousness.



The Team

Co-Directors:

Keith Arthur Bolden, Amma Y. Gharthey-Tagoe Kootin, Julie B. Johnson, and Emily Sahakian

Scenic Design: Kellie Murphy

Costume Design: Daniel Carter and Debörah Hughes

Lighting Design: Erwin Greene (EGreene Designs)

Choreography: Julie B. Johnson and Kathleen Wessel

Sound Design: Erwin Greene (EGreene Designs) and Diana Norton-Bagwell

Sound Engineer: Erwin Greene (EGreene Designs) and Diana Norton-Bagwell

Media Design: Charmaine Minniefeld and Jason Woodworth-Hou

Original Music Composed and Performed by: Colette “CC” Coward, Okorie “OkCello” Johnson, and Munir Zakee

Script Supervisors: Philip Brankin and Angela Hall

Co-Executive Producer/Creative Producer: Barbara McCaskill

Production Manager: Andre Allen (Blacklight Productions)

Stage Manager: Kristen Cole and Genesis Fortner

Project Manager(s): Vivian Lee-Boulton and Kacey King

Additional Creatives

Guest Artist: Kimberly Binns

Student Assistant Choreographer: Aquilah Ohemeng

Archival Collaboration

Archivist Collaborators:

- UGA Special Collections Libraries:
 - Chuck Barber (Hargrett Rare Book & Manuscript Library)
 - Jan Levinson Hebbard (Hargrett Rare Book & Manuscript Library)
 - Mary Miller (Walter J. Brown Media Archives & Peabody Awards Collection)
 - Jill Severn (Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies)

With Special Thanks to:

- Spelman College Archives
 - Holly Smith
 - Kassandra Ware
- Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library & Archives Research Center
 - Tiffany Alwater
 - Martina Dodd
 - Jordan Moore
 - Sarah Tanner

Cast - Performing Ensemble

From Spelman College

Cymiah Alexander
 Rimothy Bennet
 LaMonica Moody
 Egypt Noboa
 Aquilah Ohemeng
 Joshua Paine (Morehouse College)
 Robert Rucker (Morehouse College)
 Issiah Simas (Morehouse College)
 Treasure Tannock
 Sydney Terry
 Summer Kai Thomas
 Jarron Williams (Morehouse College)

Guest Performer: Pedro Alvarado

From the University of Georgia

Olivia Bell (Swing/Understudy)
 Marika Carlson (Swing/Understudy)
 Jack Dugan
 Madeline Franz
 Brett Green
 Claire Holman
 Jonathan Matthews
 Nosayaba Okungbowa
 Sydney Patton
 Mira Ratchev
 Cydney Seigerman (Swing/Understudy)
 Morgan Watkins
 Breanna Wheeler

Production Crew

Run Crew: Tabitha Clara, Paris Johnson, Justin Hall, Ella Anderson, Lea Merritt, Margaurite Kalmuk, Bryson Parker, Mollie Schilling, Hannah Fordham, Rachael Simpson, Abigail Smithwick, Collin Hendley, and Gerald Stacks

Note: All bios for [the Georgia Incarceration Performance Project] *By Our Hands* are redacted in honor of our incarcerated collaborators who cannot be named in this show's credits.

List of Collaborators, Ensemble Members, and Contributors to [The Georgia Incarceration Performance Project]

In addition to named participants listed above, the following collaborators contributed to the following phases of [the Georgia Incarceration Performance Project]:

PHASE I (SPRING SEMESTER 2019): DEFINING/CHOREOGRAPHING/SCRIPTING/WRITING THE ARCHIVE IN CONCURRENT COURSES

Overview: Concurrent classes at Spelman and UGA delved into defining, curating, choreographing, and scripting the archive. Spelman collaborators focused on embodied memory choreographic research, while UGA collaborators began working on the script by searching the archival collections of UGA Special Collection Libraries for revelatory dramatic stories related to Georgia's carceral history.



Spelman College

Course Title: Choreographic Process II

Instructor: Julie B. Johnson

Student Collaborators: Kaela Lawrence, Aquilah Ohemeng, Veronica Ramsey, Kaylah Smith, Abeni Teal, Summer Kai Thomas, and Imani Watts

Course Title: Spelman Dance Theatre

Instructor/Director: Kathleen Wessel

Guest Choreographer: Julie B. Johnson

Student Collaborators: Maya Clark, Kaela Lawrence, Brittany Mathis, Aquilah Ohemeng, Veronica Ramsey, Kaylah Smith, and Summer Kai Thomas

Social Justice Fellows: Sophia Howard and Tierra McClain

Key Outcomes: Centering the body as an archive, we conducted embodied memory choreographic research in collaboration with students enrolled in courses through Common Good Atlanta. We extracted and worked with several themes, including: time, transformation, the insider/outsider experience, and names as a practice of freedom. This process, and the material generated, was passed along to participants of Phase II.

University of Georgia

Course Title: AFAM 4250/6250 and THEA 4800/6800: "Scripting the Archive: Finding Our Story in Georgia's Carceral History"

Archivist Co-Instructors: Chuck Barber, Mary Lynn Miller, Jill Severn

Professional Artist and Substitute Instructor / UGA Alumnus: Taylor Wood

Student and Auditor Collaborators: Vanessa Attah, Amy Bonnaffons, Caroline Caden, Gabrielle Compton, Kimarah Laurent, Destin Mizelle, Rachael Simpson, Geraldine Williams, and Jason Woodworth-Hou

Key Outcomes: Laid the foundation for collaboration. Created "digital archival script packets" which included: 800-pages of original/curated script text; a video bank documenting their weekly performances; research notes with copies of key archival documents; and a final curated presentation consisting of 16 performative scenes (run-time approximately 55 minutes).

Course Title: HIST 3775: "Crime and Punishment"

Instructor: Dr. Steven Soper

Student Contributors of *Guthrie v. Evans* Scripts and Research: Olivia Adams, Matt Aldridge, Ivana Barac, Ben Barrett, Alia Chovanic, Brighten Donner, Lacey Ewers, Adam Gallagher, Connor Green, Hunter Green, Emma Hale, Sarah Harrold, Dana Hayes, Hannah Herlitz, Haley Higingbotham, William McCloskey, Abbie McWhorter, Jacob Pair, Brayden Price, Tom L. Russell, Salina Sanders, Ricky Sipra, Walker Stephens, Madison Voyles, Noah Weinstein, Sam Won, and Vered Yudanin

Key Outcome: Generated 26 short scenes related to the *Guthrie v. Evans* case

Course Title: THEA 4700/6700: "Dramaturgy"

Instructor: Dr. Fran Teague

Student Contributors: Ana Gonzalez, Savannah Jensen, and Matthew Suwalski

Key Outcome: Created a dramaturgical production book for the project.

Common Good Atlanta

Overview: Incarcerated students in Common Good Atlanta taking classes in creative writing, literature, and critical thinking and writing, created "archival packets" featuring original writing and analytical essays on themes of citizenship, the literary outsider, and sound and voice in literature. Students had the option of sharing their course work with the project.

Course Title: "Powerful Sounds, The Sounds of Power"

Instructor: Dr. Lauren Neefe

Student Collaborators: Due to confidentiality, the names of our incarcerated student collaborators cannot appear in this program.

Course Title: "Composing Citizenship: Critical Thinking and Writing"

Instructor: Dr. Ruthie Yow

Student Collaborators: Due to confidentiality, the names of our incarcerated student collaborators cannot appear in this program.

Course Title: Cultural Catalysts: "The Literary Outsider"

Instructor: Dr. Caroline Young

Student Collaborators: Due to confidentiality, the names of our incarcerated student collaborators cannot appear in this program.

Project Leadership Team

Project Manager: Pedro Alvarado

PHASE II (MAYMESTER 2019): CREATIVE DEVISING WORKSHOP

Overview: Spelman collaborators were in residence with UGA collaborators in Athens, GA to co-devise a performance draft out of (1) the archival packets created in Phase I by UGA, Spelman, and Common Good Atlanta participants and (2) the UGA Hargrett Library exhibit materials.

Collaborators (under the auspices of Spelman College)

Kristen Cole, Asha Basha Duniani (North Carolina A&T State University), Maxine Ford, Raiyon Hunter, Christiana McLeod Horn, Kacey King, Kaela Lawrence, Tierra McClain, Aquilah Ohemeng, Carlos (Ekio) Pedraza, Jr. (Morehouse College), Aaliyah Simms, Kaylah Smith, Summer Kai Thomas, Shelby Woolridge, and Casey Wortham

Collaborators (UGA)

Pedro Alvarado, Philip Brankin, Angela Hall, Kellie Murphy, and Jason Woodworth-Hou

Project Leadership Team

Project Manager: Pedro Alvarado

Additional Supporters

Makeba Hill-Dixon, Curator of Education Programs, and Spelman College Museum of Fine Art

PHASE III (FALL SEMESTER 2019 - FEBRUARY 2020): REHEARSAL AND PRODUCTION PROCESS

Overview: With a draft of a “heartbeat” (script) developed over the summer from the Maymester, Phase III collaborators continued devising in simultaneous and combined rehearsals at Spelman and UGA and finalized the production.

Spelman Production Season Ensemble Members & Collaborators

Cymiah Alexander
Rimothy Bennet
LaMonica Moody
Egypt Noboa
Aquilah Ohemeng
Joshua Paine (Morehouse College)
Robert Rucker (Morehouse College)
Issiah Simas (Morehouse College)
Treasure Tannock
Sydney Terry
Summer Kai Thomas
Jarron Williams (Morehouse College)

University of Georgia Production Season Ensemble Members & Collaborators

Course Title: THEA 5710S/7710S: Community-Based Theatre and **Theatre Production**
Season Ensemble Members

2019-2020 Visiting Fulbright Scholar: Dr. Nouhr-Dine Dyfaizi Akondo
Olivia Bell
Philip Brankin
Marika Carlson
Jack Dugan
Genesis Fortner
Madeline Franz
Brett Green
Claire Holman
Jonathan Matthews
Nosayaba Okungbowa
Sydney Patton
Mira Ratchev
Cydney Seigerman
Morgan Watkins
Breanna Wheeler
Geraldine “Geri” Williams
Asher Zatuchny

THANK YOU

[The Georgia Incarceration Performance Project] is indebted to the following for enabling us to do this production and project:

- Sidonia Serafini (Curator of Hargrett Library exhibition: “The New South and The New Slavery”)
- Dr. Sarah Shannon (UGA – Sociology - Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program)
- Spelman College Social Justice Program: Dr. Cynthia Neal Spence (Director), Pamela Stegall (Program Coordinator), Sophia Howard (Fellow), and Tierra McClain (Fellow)
- Funders and Sponsors for [the Georgia Incarceration Performance Project]
- Kenneth Kootin (Guest filmmaker)
- Dean Alan Dorsey, Franklin College of Arts & Sciences (UGA)
- Dr. David Saltz, Theatre Season Selection Committee, Costume and Scene Shops, and TFS faculty and staff for supporting this devised production as part of the Department’s season (UGA)
- Dr. Carolyn Medine, Kendra Freeman, and the Institute for African American Studies Colleagues and Staff (UGA)
- Dr. Richard Neupert and the FILM Fund (UGA)
- Willson Center for Humanities and Arts, UGA: Dr. Nicholas Allen, Dr. Lloyd Winstead, Winnie Smith, and Dave Marr
- Budget and Accounting Support: Steven Carroll, Jared Peden, and Winnie Smith (UGA)
- Our Source(s) of Faith and Strength, Families, Friends, and Loved Ones
- You, the audience
- Please see the enclosed insert for a full list of acknowledgements to other contributors, consultants, experts, guest presenters, and supporters who facilitated the work of [the Georgia Incarceration Performance Project].



**Willson Center for
Humanities & Arts**
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



Department of Theatre and Film Studies

Franklin College of Arts and Sciences

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

The University of Georgia Department of Theatre and Film Studies has roots that reach back to 1893 when the Thalias Dramatic Club was founded at UGA. When the Thalias and its rival club the Blackfriars merged in 1931, University Theatre emerged and began its first season ticket campaign for the 1932-1933 season. The Department of Dramatic Art was created in 1939, became the Department of Speech and Theatre in 1951, the Department of Drama and Theatre in 1969, and the Department of Theatre and Film Studies in 2004. It offers B.A. degrees in theatre and film studies, M.F.A. degrees in performance, design/technology, and dramatic media, and the Ph.D. in theatre and performance theory and history.



UGA Theatre Staff

Head of Department: Dr. David Z. Saltz

Director of UGA Theatre: Kristin Kundert

Production Coordinator: Julie Ray

Business Manager: W. Steven Carroll

Facilities Manager: Erwin Greene

Student Support & Outreach Coordinator:
Dina Canup

Costume Shop Manager: Tina Hantula

Technical Director: Michael O'Connell

Publicity Coordinator: Clay Chastain

Publicity Staff: Caroline Caden and
Emma Mathews

UGA Theatre Production Staff

Graduate Production Staff: Travis
Blansit, Karen Dauenhauer, Liz Gubler,
Samantha Kuchta, Kellie Murphy, Matt
Oliner, and Jacob Salgado

Undergrad Production Staff: Georgia
Gooding, Savannah Hudson, and
Madalyn Walsh

Production Assistants: Avery Bufkin,
Montana Dean

Costume Shop Staff: Daniel Carter,
Corrine Bottelsen, Caitlin Eldred, Rachel
Karas, and Haley Brown

Costume Production Assistants: Alexa
Adcock, Olivia Bell, Hannah Hardin,
Olivia Babuka Black, and Sophie Miller

COMING SOON

Wed Jan 15

7:30 pm

Ramsey Concert Hall

DASOL KIM
PIANO

This rising star pianist is a sought-after soloist who has appeared with the New York Philharmonic in Seoul, the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, the Berlin Konzerthaus Orchestra, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and the Belgium National Orchestra, among others.

UGA Presents

pac.uga.edu

Christian Steiner