Black Lives, Black Words International Project and Writers Theatre
Announce the filmed premiere of
*Ride Share*
Written by Reginald Edmund
Directed by Simeilia Hodge-Dallaway
Featuring Kamal Angelo Bolden

June 23 - July 25, 2021


Marcus has a new wife, a comfortable job and everything seems to be falling into place – until his honeymoon is interrupted by an email from work, laying him off. To make ends meet, he becomes a ride share driver, shuttling passengers from all walks of life to and from parties, brunches and meetings. The passengers range from silly, to seductive – to downright scary. But as long as Marcus keeps his radio on and his wits about him, there’s nothing he can’t handle…right?

Written and directed by Black Lives, Black Words co-founders Reginald Edmund and Simeilia Hodge-Dallaway respectively, *Ride Share* steps on the gas and takes you along for the dangerous, thrilling ride. Hop in.

The creative team and crew for *Ride Share* also includes Tannie Xin Tang (Director of Photography), Lesley Kubistal (Editor), Kerry Baines (Sound Designer/Composer/Mixer), Alexandra Regazzoni (Scenic Designer), Mbela Endeley (Audio Recordist Operator), Katrina D. RiChard (Line Producer), Brian Gutierrez (1st Camera Assistant), Leland Deming (2nd Camera Assistant), Matteo Martignago (Gaffer), Jim Ritchey (Best Boy Electric), Bryan Coleman (Key Grip), Han Luo (Best Boy Grip), Yaowen Fan (Swing), Todd McGraw (Rigger), Noah Michal (Production Assistant), Juliana Acosta (COVID Compliance Officer), Michael Halberstam (Executive Producer), Chris Greiner (Producer), Bobby Kennedy (Artistic Producer) and Adam Veness (Technical Director/Associate Scenic Designer).
Single tickets will go on sale to the general public on May 19.

Of the production, director Simeilia Hodge-Dallaway says, "As a director, you are constantly looking for a story that thrills, excites and offers creative challenges. *Ride Share* is a rare gem that every director and actor would love to get their hands on. Every turn of the page takes you deeper into the subconsciousness of Marcus and shines a light on America by questioning the obtainment of the American Dream for Black and POC front-line workers. Reginald’s writing is brutally honest, beautifully raw and boldly unapologetic – it has been a dream to direct this important piece of work, our first feature film at Black Lives, Black Words, in partnership with Writers Theatre. I simply cannot wait to share it with the world."

Reginald Edmund, Managing Curating Producer of Black Lives, Black Words and writer of *Ride Share* says, "From an unfunded independent BLBW Zoom play to my first feature film in partnership with Writers Theatre in less than a year - the creation of *Ride Share* has been one of the most awarding moments in my career. Inspired by my experience as an Uber driver and chronicled reality that stirs the soul as it takes us on a journey into the depths of the black male experience in America. Under the direction of Simeilia Hodge-Dallaway, who is one of the most exciting theatrical minds of our generation and a true visionary, *Ride Share* has been elevated with every incarnation of this project and I can't wait for audiences to see the feature film. I hope audiences are ready! Black Lives, Black Words is grateful to the artistic leadership of Michael Halberstam and the brilliant Writers Theatre team for this exciting partnership and unwavering support." Halberstam adds, “This collaboration with Black Lives, Black Words has been a dream. Reggie’s powerful poetic vision for his screenplay and his impressively defined production company stands at the core of this collaboration. Furthermore we were inspired by Simeilia’s remarkable prowess for creating a striking visual vocabulary which employs the engines of theatre and the tools of film to create a truly unique hybrid of the two mediums. Both artists have been perfectly balanced by Kamal Angelo Bolden’s breathtaking performance. It was a true privilege to be in the room with the team Reggie and Sim assembled and we all dream of many further collaborations.”

**Kamal Angelo Bolden (Marcus)** A native of Peoria, IL, Kamal graduated from Bradley University with a degree in Business Administration-Entrepreneurship. After several years of working in corporate America, he took a leap of faith to pursue acting full time, going on to star in dozens of regional theatre productions in Nashville and Chicago, including the lead role ‘Hero’ in the Goodman Theatre’s production of Suzan-Lori Parks’ *Father Comes Home From The Wars Parts 1,2, & 3* and the title role of ‘Chad Deity’ in the world premiere of Kristoffer Diaz’s Pulitzer Prize finalist play *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* at Victory Gardens Theatre. Off-Broadway, he received the AUDELCO Award for Best Actor for his work in *Reparations* at the historic Billie Holiday Theatre and a nomination for his turn in *The Opponent* at 59E59St Theatre. Though he discovered a fondness for the camera in the Big Apple, making his debut on FX’s *Lights Out* and the popular Christmas movie *The Night Before*, still it was his love for theatre that brought him to LA to be directed by legendary actress Phylicia Rashad in *Immediate Family* at the Mark Taper Forum. In just a short time in L.A., Kamal has gone on to create several memorable characters on television including recurring roles on NBC’s *Chicago Fire*, FOX’s *Rosewood*, HBO’s *Insecure* and FOX’s *The Resident*. On film, he spent some time in Wales filming the action-packed horror flick *Ravers* before landing the leading role of ‘Russell Savage’ in the BET film *Keys to the City*. Most recently, Kamal completed filming the Hulu comedy *Vacation Friends* alongside Lil Rel Howery and John Cena and is currently filming AMC’s *61st Street*, executive produced by Michael B. Jordan. His education includes training at the British American Drama Academy in Oxford.
Reginald Edmund (Writer) is the Co-Founder and Managing Curating Producer for Black Lives, Black Words International Project. Inspired by #blacklivesmatter, this project gives voice to some of the most contemporary political black writers from both the U.S., Canada and the U.K., asking them to explore the question, “Do black lives matter today?” In addition, he was a Resident Playwright at Tamasha Theatre in London, England and an Alumni Resident Playwright at Chicago Dramatists Theatre, an Artistic Associate at Pegasus Theatre-Chicago and an Artistic Patriot at Merrimack Repertory Theatre; he was also a 2010-11 Many Voice Fellow with the Playwrights’ Center. His play Southbridge was runner up for the Kennedy Center’s Lorraine Hansberry and Rosa Parks National Playwriting Awards, and most recently named winner of the Southern Playwrights’ Competition, the Black Theatre Alliance Award for Best New Play and the Edgerton Foundation New American Play Award. His nine-play series titled The City of the Bayou Collection, include Southbridge, Juneteenth Street, The Last Cadillac and All the Dying Voices were developed at esteemed theaters including Pegasus Theatre-Chicago, Deluxe Theatre, Actors Theatre of Charlotte, Bush Theatre (U.K.), Theatre @ Boston Court, The Landing Theatre, Playwrights’ Center and The National Theatre (U.K.). Reginald Edmund received his BFA in Theatre-Performance from Texas Southern University and his MFA in Playwriting from Ohio University.

Simeilia Hodge-Dallaway (Director) is an internationally acclaimed arts leader, director, producer, changemaker, black plays specialist and dramaturg. More recently recognised for the commission and direction of The Interrogation of Sandra Bland by Mojisola Adebayo, performed by 100 women of color at Goodman Theatre as part of Black Lives Black Words: I AM Fest. Simeilia is the Co-founder and Creative Director at Black Lives Black Words International Festival, Founder and CEO at Beyond The Canon Limited, Curatorial Consultant at Manchester International Festival and Founder and former CEO at Artistic Directors of the Future. Simeilia Hodge-Dallaway has been listed five consecutive years in the Stage Top 100 Power List (2017-21), selected by Google and TED as one of the five international Emerging Innovators (2019), named in the London Evening Standard The Progress 1000: London's most influential people 2018 - Performance: Theatre, included in the Who Who's 2020 publication, the standard, up-to-date source book of information on people of influence and interest in all fields and recipient of The Stage Innovation Award for her work on diversifying U.K. arts boards in 2020. She is also former researcher, trouble-shooter and Project Manager of the National Theatre's Black Play Archive, Editor of the first monologue anthology inspired by black British Plays: ‘The Oberon Book of Monologues for Black Actors: Classical and Contemporary Speeches from Black British Plays’ which was followed by a second monologue anthology, inspired by the work of international playwrights, published by Bloomsbury Methuen Drama: ‘Audition Speeches for Black, South Asian and Middle Eastern Actors’ and former Trustee at the Directors Guild of Great Britain and Company of Angels Theatre Company. She also works nationally and internationally as a teacher/guest lecture, audience development consultant and leadership consultant.

Schedule: June 23 - July 25, 2021

Tickets: Call the Box Office at 847-242-6000; www.writerstheatre.org

Ride Share is available to WT Classic Subscribers at no additional charge.

Up Front Flex Members who would like to watch Ride Share can use one of their pre-paid Member tickets and book for no additional charge by calling the Box Office at 847-242-6000. Pay As You Go Members can purchase one of their $35 Member tickets by calling the Box Office.
Prices: Ticket prices are based on number of viewers in your household:
    Solo: $40
    Duo: $65
    Trio: $85
    Ensemble (4+): $100

All prices are subject to regular per-ticket fees.

Accessibility: Closed Captioning will be available on all performances. Audio Description will be available on demand during the full run. Patrons will be able to select the AD performance when purchasing their ticket.

Box Office: Call the WT Box Office at 847-242-6000; www.writerstheatre.org

For the safety of our employees and patrons, Writers Theatre will continue to operate all WT Box Office business remotely. Associates will be available to take your call, Monday and Tuesday, 12-5pm CST, and Wednesday – Saturday, 12-7:30pm CST. The Writers Theatre Box Office located in our Theatre Center in downtown Glencoe will remain closed until further notice to encourage social distancing.

Writers Theatre is pleased to welcome back BMO Harris Bank for 2020/21 as the distinguished Season Sponsor, marking the Bank’s tenth consecutive year as season sponsor.

NOTES OF INTEREST:

Ride Share is co-produced by Black Lives, Black Words International Project and Writers Theatre. It was filmed in Los Angeles in April 2021.

Ride Share was originally commissioned and produced by Black Lives, Black Words International Project in July 2020. The piece by Reginald Edmund was also directed by Simeilia Hodge-Dallaway and starred Kamal Angelo Bolden. Bolden performed the show live in his apartment over Zoom, using his laptop as the camera and differentiating locations, time and character by utilizing different rooms, lighting and household objects.

Reginald Edmund acted as the Dramaturg for Writers Theatre’s acclaimed 2017 production of East Texas Hot Links by Eugene Lee, directed by Ron OJ Parson.

Both Reginald Edmund and Simeilia Hodge-Dallaway are award-winning theatre artists and are the co-founders of Black Lives, Black Words International Project.

ABOUT BLACK LIVES, BLACK WORDS INTERNATIONAL PROJECT
Black Lives, Black Words International project is the definition of Activist Theatre. Dedicated to social justice, BLBW commissions, develops and produces bold and unapologetic artistic responses to current social and political issues. Through exciting partnerships with like-minded arts and academia institutions, BLBW commissions new plays and films widening the accessibility to mainstream institutions and increasing the visibility of new and existing POC artists. The ambition of BLBW has led to create a successful pathway to artistic employment opportunities in the arts for POC creatives across the globe.
ABOUT WRITERS THEATRE

For 29 years, Writers Theatre has captivated Chicagoland audiences with inventive interpretations of classic work, a bold approach to contemporary theatre and a dedication to creating the most intimate theatrical experience possible.

Under the artistic leadership of Michael Halberstam and the executive leadership of Kathryn M. Lipuma, Writers Theatre has grown to become a major Chicagoland cultural destination with a national reputation for excellence, being called the top regional theatre in the nation by The Wall Street Journal. The company, which plays to a discerning audience of more than 60,000 patrons each season, has garnered critical praise for the consistent high quality and intimacy of its artistry—providing the finest interpretations of both classic and contemporary theatre in its two intensely intimate venues.

In February 2016, Writers Theatre opened a new, state-of-the-art facility. This established the company's first permanent home—a new theatre center in downtown Glencoe, designed by the award-winning, internationally renowned Studio Gang Architects, led by Founder and Design Principal Jeanne Gang, FAIA, in collaboration with Theatre Consultant Auerbach Pollock Friedlander. The new facility has allowed the Theatre to continue to grow to accommodate its audience, while maintaining its trademark intimacy. The new facility resonates with and complements the Theatre’s neighboring Glencoe community, adding tremendous value to Chicagoland and helping to establish the North Shore as a premier cultural destination.

Find Writers Theatre on Facebook at Facebook.com/WritersTheatre, follow @WritersTheatre on Twitter or @Writers_Theatre on Instagram. For more information, visit www.writerstheatre.org.

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