PLAYBILL

braata productions

THE BLACK THAT I AM

PG-13 For Strong Language & Adult Themes
The Black That I Am was first staged in 2005 at The Philip Sherlock Center for the Creative Arts at the University of the West Indies under the direction of Brian Heap, produced by The University Players. This staging won 4 International Theatre Institute - Jamaica Chapter Actor Boy Awards: Best New Jamaican Play, Best Supporting Actress (Monique Caesar), Best Director & Best Drama. Since then it has been staged in Scotland, Trinidad, and one of the pieces adapted for the screenplay for the award-winning independent short film Winston.

Support for The Black That I Am is provided by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature. This program is also supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, New York City Council Member James Gennaro with additional support from the Howard Gilman Foundation and the Coalition for Theatres of Color.
SHOP NOW

For all Braata Productions merchandise, please visit our website
WWW.BRAATAPRODUCTIONS.ORG/SHOP
ENSEMBLE

(In alphabetical order in)

YINKA ADE
SADI BIMWALA
DAN’YELLE WILLIAMSON-BROWN
NYANDA CAMMOCK
HECTOR LINCOLN
ANSI A. RODRIGUEZ

... THERE WILL BE NO INTERMISSION ...
Welcome!

Thank you for coming to Braata’s production of *The Black That I Am* a SubletSeries presentation. This program provides artists with discounted space and equipment, as well as technical support.

HERE also supports the work of artists at all stages in their careers through our HERE Artist Residency Program (HARP), which develops and produces the work of our 10 resident artists, and Visiting Artist presentations for adult and family audiences. Please check out our other performances and events at HERE.org.

Like all the work at HERE, this SubletSeries presentation was curated based on the strength and uniqueness of the artist’s vision.

We hope to see you HERE again soon.

Best,

KRISTIN MARTING
Founding Artistic Director

---

**Also at HERE**

- Dream Music Puppetry: PUPPETOPIA
- HEREart: CARRY
- HEREart: ARTFUL POST

---

**HERE Support**

HERE is extremely grateful for the support and encouragement of an important group of Foundations, Corporations, Government Agencies, Elected Officials, and dedicated individuals. We would not be HERE without them.

**Government Support**

HERE’s programming is made possible with Public Funds from: National Endowment for the Arts; New York State Council on the Arts, with the support of the New York State Legislature; New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, Office of the Mayor of New York, and Speaker Corey Johnson; The Office of Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer; and New York State Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick. We are extremely grateful for the support and advocacy of all of our dedicated elected officials: Senator Charles E. Schumer, Senator Kirsten R. Gillibrand, Representative Jerrold L. Nadler, Mayor Eric Adams, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer and the Cultural Affairs Committee of the City Council, and State Senator Brad M. Hoylman.

**Private and Corporate Support Provided by**

- Alliance of Resident Theatres/ New York
- Axe-Houghton Foundation
- Booth Ferris Foundation
- Edison Properties
- Fund for the City of New York
- Howard Gilman Foundation
- Jerome Foundation, Inc.
- Jim Henson Foundation
- Joseph and Joan Cullman Foundation
- Leon Levy Foundation
- Media Foundation for the Arts
- Mertz Gilmore Foundation
- New York Foundation for the Arts
- Select Equity Group, Inc.
- The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
- The Barbara Bell Cumming Charitable Trust
- The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation
- The Scherman Foundation
- The Shubert Foundation
- Venturous Theater Fund of the Tides Foundation
- The Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation

HERE, in partnership with Resident Playwright Taylor Mac, is a participant in the Mellon Foundation’s National Playwright Residency Program administered in partnership with HowlRound. HERE is a proud member of the Hudson Sq Connection & Lower Manhattan Arts League & The National Opera America Center & TCG.
SPECIAL NOTE FROM PLAYWRIGHT

*The Black That I Am* is the first piece of writing I ever did that was staged and produced. It started as a poem, and just kept evolving the more it was read, received, and realized. After several stagings (Jamaica, Trinidad, NYC, Scotland) since 2004, the work is finding new audiences and still evolving. I am thrilled I get to collaborate with such beautiful souls whose artistry has helped to shape so much of the version you are about to experience. Identity politics is nothing new, it has always been with us. Humans continue to question, re-shape, re-define and re-imagine themselves and their place in the world. The Black that I am is no different, but must continue to understand and embrace what also makes me unique. Enjoy the show!

SPECIAL NOTE FROM DIRECTOR

To my parents Ann & Dennis your love and endless support throughout my life & career is my foundation. To Mr. Karl O'Brian Williams thank you for trusting me with your work, I am honored. To the brilliant Jermaine Rowe, thank you for aligning me with Karl and his beautiful story telling. To my wonderful production team and actors, it has been an honor to share space with you and watch you work. Thank you for your honesty and artistry.

GET SOCIAL

Follow us for exclusive insider content

LinkedIn  Facebook  Instagram  YouTube  braataproductions  Twitter  @BraataProd
WHO’S WHO OF THE CAST

YINKA ADE (Nigeria, Another Man, Chorus, Children's Game) is excited and honored to be a part of this wonderful project! He is an Actor, Director, Musician and Teaching Artist with a dual bachelor's degree in Multimedia and Performing arts. He performs with "Something Positive" and is the founder of "Monologue Roulette" a creative Network, workshop and showcase series that brings the best of nyc's writers directors and actors to collaborate under one roof. Adey is Currently training at the Stella Adler Studio of Acting. Recent credits include The African Company presents Richard III (GRSF) Twelfth Night (GRSF) and Sons of Johnny Johnson (Davenport Theater).

SADI BIMWALA (Congo, Children's Game, African American Guy, 1st Dreamer), born and raised in New York. He is an Actor, Writer, Rapper, and Director. He began his acting journey at sixteen through the Lola Louis Performing Arts Center in the Bronx. Once he graduated from high school. He got accepted at the William Esper Studio for acting. While at the studio he obtained his AA degree in Acting at the Borough Manhattan Community College. He is currently attending the American Musical and Dramatic Academy for his BFA.

DAN'YELLE WILLIAMSON BROWN (Black Nat'I Anthem, Sister Kenya, Woman in Love, Piece of Ground, Black Reasoning I), a Broadway Veteran with a passion for storytelling, is honored to be a part of this important conversation through the vehicle of art. She is delighted to join The Black That I Am cast giving this piece a voice. Dan’yelle was last seen in the Australian Touring Company, Come From Away as Hannah. Career highlights include, The First National Tour of Summer the Donna Summer Musical as Diva Donna, The American Premier of Life After. Broadway: Memphis, Scandalous and Rocky. More credits: The Hunchback of Notre Dame, Sister Act, Disgraced, Mamma Mia, National Lion King Tour, and Wicked Chicago. Film Soundtrack: 12 Years A Slave. Dan’yelle owns a Wellness Company, Zen Flow Fitness LLC with her hubby and shares the practice of yoga regularly. Thank you to my parents for creating me. To Karl for this opportunity to do something meaningful and artistically fulfilling. Gratitude to my husband Will Brown for his unconditional love and support. Thank you to the HERE Arts Center for providing a space for this work. To the cast, your bravery is astounding. To the crew, we could not do this show without you. To the patrons, thank you for being here! @dubbzlove @zenflowfitnessllc

NYANDA CAMMOCK (USA, Children's Game, Elder Mam, Woman in Questioning, Second dreamer), actor, model, playwright, dramaturg, stage manager, dialect coach, and production assistant. Off-Off Broadway: Not About Eve, and The Black That I Am. International: Man Better Man (Best Supporting Actress Nomination International Theatre Institute Jamaica Chapter, Actor Boy Award.) Film & Television: Me and Me Crew, Production Coordinator for Gema (HBO). Nyanda completed her studies in Theatre Arts at BMCC/CUNY, where she wrote and performed her one-woman play Flawed. She is happy to again be a part of this project.
HECTOR LINCOLN (UK, Calypso Monarch, Brown, More Chorus), born in Jamaica from a Cuban/Jamaican background and raised between families in Lakeworth Florida & Kingston Jamaica, Hector Lincoln is a graduate of the Actor's Institute in New York City and studied Piano with The Royal School Of Music (London) for eight years. Acting & Music has always been his first love, he became one of the first Hosts on MTV Network’s channel Tempo (Caribbean MTV), and now works widely in Film and Television. Working on popular shows such as Law & Order SVU, Friends From College and Orange Is The New Black to name a few. An avid Sports Lover, he stays athletic by frequently Cycling, Running, Gym Workouts and playing Tennis.

ANSI RODRIGUEZ (DR, Children's Game, A Young Man, Black Fear, Black Reasoning II) is a recent graduate from the City College of New York, taking home a B.A in Theatre! Born and raised in the Bronx, New York, this ball of energy graduated from Renaissance High school For Musical Theater and the arts. Ansi has performed in productions such as The 25th annual Putnam county spelling bee (Mitch Mahoney), In the Heights (Sonny), Urinetown (Hot Blades Harry), Significant Other (Jordan) and many others! He has done many collaborations with The York Theatre and been a part of the New York Madness festival to which he's been exposed to many new works such as Red Sky (Young man)! Since recently graduating, Ansi has signed onto Core Talent agency and is trailblazing his way through the game. He is eternally grateful for the experiences he's had throughout his journey especially those who he's encountered that has pushed him, serving as a constant reminder to why he hopped on the performance wagon in the first place, and that's family.

WILL BROWN (Director) B.F.A from the University Of Massachusetts danced with Garth Fagan Dance, Forces of Nature Dance Theater, Carbon Dance Theater and Company SBB. His teaching experience includes the Alvin Alley School in the Professional Division, Adjunct Professorship at Drexel University and Florida International University. As a Movement Director he has worked with Karl O'Brian Williams on a previous project entitled, “Sankofa Project” which premiered at Brooklyn Manhattan Community College and he is honored to work again with Mr. Williams on this current production of "The Black I am" HERE Arts Center, NYC. He’s honored to work with such a diverse & talented group of actors and a gifted production team.

ANDY EVAN COHEN (Projections Designer) is a New York-based composer and media designer. Credits include off-Broadway’s The Orchard, (A)Loft Modulation (Audelco Award Nomination for Sound Design), God Shows Up, My Parsifal Conductor, and Pushkin. Andy’s film credits include documentary features “Less Than or Equal To” (Fair Housing Justice Center) and “Stig Dagerman: Making of a Man” for Danish TV. His previous work with Karl O’Brien Williams includes projections design for Project Sankofa at BMCC. Andy teaches in the theatre departments of CUNY’s Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) and Kingsborough Community College. www.rolyphyproductions.com
DEVYN CASSIUS MACKEY (Cassius Fresh) (Costume Designer) is an American celebrity wardrobe stylist/consumer working in New York City since 2011. While in fashion school and working in luxury retail he was offered to work on a popular television show. While working on a television show as an assistant stylist he built a celebrity clientele and was able to quickly start working for himself styling various stars for red carpets, award shows, music videos, commercials, galas, other events and now theater.

HARLAN D. PENN (Scenic Design) is a proud graduate of Florida A&M University and the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. The South Florida native has designed for off-Broadway, Off Off Broadway, cable television, regional theatre, and educational theatre. In addition, Penn has served as an Art Director and Assistant Art Director for film & television productions for NETLIX, HULU, ABC, NBC, HALLMARK MOVIE CHANNEL, CBS and TURNER BROADCASTING. Mr. Penn has served as assistant scenic designer to Scenic Designer Felix E. Cochren on productions at The McCarter Theatre, Geva Theatre, Syracuse Stage, The Goodman Theatre, Virginia Stage Company, and The Cleveland Playhouse. After a 20 plus career as a set designer, Harlan founded the American-Caribbean Theatre Alliance, Inc. during the summer of 2014. Mr. Penn is also a proud member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and IASTE/United Scenic Artist Local 829 in the scenic design and Scenic Art category. Mr. Penn is currently a professor of Scenic Design at the Howard University Department of Theatre Arts/Chadwick Boseman College of Fine Arts in Washington D.C.

JOEL EDWARDS (Sound Designer) is a proficient pianist, singer, songwriter, composer and producer. He was born in Jamaica W.I. where he trained and produced some of Jamaica’s top artists and choirs. He has worked on several New York based productions, the most recent being Welcome to America, Will We Make It (RadioPlay) and Project Sankofa. Joel is also the Musical Director for the Braata Folk Singers, and a few churches in New York. Additionally, he runs a production company and music studio where he produces and arranges music for many upcoming artists in New York, and films music videos and corporate events.

MONEÉ STAMP (Lighting Designer) designed God’s Way (Braata Productions), 25th annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, (Epic Players NYC), The Liberation of Panther Women, (Cleveland Public Theatre). She received her BFA from Savannah College of Art and Design and her MFA from Ohio University. Moneé is a 3rd generation Caribbean immigrant born and raised in Long Island, New York. She has managed juggling being a full time mom, owning her own business, freelancing, and using her art to help other BIPOC feel represented.

JENNA ARKONTAKY (Stage Manager) is a freelance stage manager based in New York. Jenna has recently received her M.A. in Arts, Festival and Cultural Management from Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh Scotland and also has her B.A. in Theatre Studies from Roger Williams University. Some of her recent work includes: This is Mark (SM), Gundog (SM), StoopKids LIVE! (SM), Pippin (ASM) and Treasure Island (ASM). Jenna would like to thank her family and friends for their endless support.
EMANI B. SIMPSON (Assistant Stage Manager) is an actor, producer, stage manager, director, and the founder of the talent agency, The Real Artists (TRA). The mission of TRA is to create an inspirational environment where artists can hone their crafts, thrive and network to build a career out of their passions. Emani is passionate about collaborating on new works that make the audience think. Recent projects include Stage Managing for 'Dust of Egypt' in the New York Theater Festival, directing for SERIALS with the Fled Collective, Associate Producing PEA Fest ‘22 with Breaking and Entering and House Managing at the New Brunswick Performing Arts Center. She began her theater career by fully producing an original staged play called, Love is Respect, primarily themed around domestic violence awareness in 2017. These experiences have made her a passionate, well-rounded artist that works in a collaborative style to create a safe space and allows for effective problem solving when needed.

KIM M. JONES (COVID Compliance Officer), Member League of Professional Theatre Women (Co EVP/Board), AEA, SDC, TRU, Workshop Theatre Company, Dramatic Question Theatre, Planet Connections Theatre Festivity (Former Associate Artistic Director), and The Actors Studio Playwrights and Directors Unit (PDU). Alumni: St. John’s University and American Academy of Dramatic Arts.

SANTOS XAVIER COLLADO (Production Manager) is a Latinx theatre practitioner from the Caribbean has worked with, stage managed and/or sound designed for The New School, Creative Arts Team Youth Theater, Borough of Manhattan Community College, Theater for the New City, City College, Braata Productions, and Conch Shell Productions. Thank you to all that inspire me every day to get up and do this wonderful work we do.

JOHNELI DaCOSTA (Graphic Designer) is a Fashion Designer and Graphic Designer. In 2007, he won the logo design competition for the Overseas Examination Commission. In 2012, he completed his BA in Architectural Studies at The University of Technology, Jamaica. After graduation, JohnEli worked as a freelance graphic and events designer, while teaching himself how to sew through books and online tutorials. His eponymous label was conceived on March 17, 2014, with one goal, to change the perception, form and shape of menswear and its idea of masculinity. JohnEli showcased his first collection in Kingston at the 2016 Fashion Block hosted by SAINT International. The collection was well received, hailed as "[showcasing] a higher level of thought and creativity" (Richard Johnson - Daily Observer) and as "expertly tailored ...challenging how we think about men's wear" (Kara Kia - Susumba).

KARL O’BRIAN WILLIAMS (Artistic Director) is a Jamaican-born actor, playwright, producer, and educator. His acting career has taken him from stages in the Caribbean to those in New York, Toronto, and the United Kingdom. His play, ‘The Black That I Am' has been staged in Glasgow and Galloway for the National Theatre of Scotland, and at the Edinburgh International Fringe Festival. ‘Not About Eve' had a successful run Off-Off Broadway and at the National Black Theatre Festival in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. In 2013 the play
received 3 AUDELCO nominations for Excellence in Black Theatre including Outstanding Ensemble Cast, Best Dramatic Production, and Best Playwright. ‘The Boys on the Hill’ was a selection in The Culture Project’s 2015 Summer Play Reading series at the Lynn Redgrave Theatre, and for Long Island University’s Kumble Theatre 2016 Pride Month Celebrations. The play is now being developed along with another one act called ‘Gully Queen’ as part of a trilogy on LGBTQ+ lives in Jamaica. Williams’ passion for theatre and education has propelled his work with students of all ages and abilities. He is currently Deputy Chair and Theatre Coordinator in the Speech, Communication and Theatre Arts Department at The Borough of Manhattan Community College (CUNY). For New York University and the Center for Multipurpose Education & Programs, Williams continues to direct the Martin Luther King Jr. Signature event since 2011, and has produced shows for the Skirball Performing Arts Center, and the Jamaica Performing Arts Center. As Artistic Director for Braata Productions, Karl curates the organization’s bi-annual Caribbean Play Reading Series, creates educational theatre curriculum for after school and senior center programs, and was the brainchild of Braata’s annual events, Bankra Caribbean Folk Festival, and Old Time Grand Market. He has shared the stage with Harry Belafonte, and the late historian and activist Howard Zinn, and pursues artistic projects that interrogate socio-political issues, especially those intersecting with Caribbean culture, queerness, and immigration.

**ANDREW CLARKE** (Executive Producer) is the Founder and Executive Director of Braata Productions, a nonprofit artistic company that comprises the Braata Folk Singers, Braata Education & Outreach and Braata Theater Workshop. A graduate of The Edna Manley College School of Drama in Kingston, Jamaica and Brooklyn College in New York City, Clarke is an award-winning thespian and vocalist and is a past recipient of the Prime Minister of Jamaica’s Youth Award for Excellence in Arts and Culture. After appearing in several theatrical productions in Jamaica and internationally, he emigrated to New York City in 2009 to further pursue his theatrical and producing ambitions. Since founding Braata Productions, he has produced over two dozen productions including staged readings, fully mounted shows and regional tours of new and established works including The Black That I Am, Hortensia’s Recession, Demerara Gold, Welcome to America: A Caribbean Musical and Single Entry as well as three consecutive seasons of the Braata Folk Singers biennial concert series. Under his guidance as Producer and Artistic Director, the Braata Folk Singers has acquired an impressive resume over the past eleven years that includes performances throughout the New York Tri state area and regionally, from Toronto Canada to Atlanta Georgia. In 2015 he experienced one of his greatest career triumphs to date, when the Off Broadway musical Flambeaux, on which he was a Co-producer, swept the 2015 AUDELCO Awards, winning in six categories including

Information in the “Who’s Who in the Cast” is provided by the production. Where opinions are expressed, they are those of the players, not necessarily those of Braata Productions.
FIRE NOTICE: The exit is indicated by the red light and sign nearest to the seat you occupy is the shortest route to the street. In the event of a fire or other emergency please do not run...WALK TO THAT EXIT.

Thoughtless persons annoy patrons and endanger the safety of others by lighting matches or smoking in prohibited areas during the performances and intermissions. This violates a city ordinance and it's punishable by law.

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE

Please share your experience of The Black That I Am with us on Social Media. Share your thoughts on the production and photos of yourself before and after the show; photography is not permitted during the show, with us on Instagram.
Tag @braataproductions or use hashtag #TBITA.

This program is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature. This program is also supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, New York City Council Member James Gennaro with additional support from the Howard Gilman Foundation and the Coalition for Theatres of Color.
ABOUT BRAATA PRODUCTIONS

Braata Productions Inc. is New York State, 501(c) 3 Professional Performing Arts Company.

Braata is a Jamaican colloquial term meaning ‘more,’ which is what this company aspires to do -- give its supporters and audiences something more at all times. Started by actor/singer Andrew Clarke in May 2009, the goal for Braata has always been to provide entertainment and education to our patrons and give voice to diverse experiences, performers, writers and directors. We aim to authentically represent the culture of the Caribbean islands and to prioritize cultivating and re-telling Caribbean stories and legends for generations to come.

Braata is dedicated to giving Caribbean and Caribbean-American artistes a platform through which to showcase their work and talents. Braata seeks to define its position as one of the leading performing arts organizations in New York City. We maintain strong ties to the community and have a reputation for artistic excellence, educational innovation, and fiscal responsibility.

Allowing immigrants’ voices a chance for creative expression, our principle activities include theatre, music, and folk arts, in addition to education and community outreach. These activities take us on engagements outside of the 5 boroughs of NYC to Connecticut, Rochester, and Boston to name a few. Braata’s goal is to rekindle an appreciation for Caribbean culture & heritage amongst Caribbeans and non-Caribbeans alike by engaging community members in New York and surrounding areas.

BRAATA PRODUCTIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS
2022 - 2023

BOARD
GLORIA MESSAM - Chair         DONDRA BENJAMIN - Vice-Chair
CHRISTOPHER LIU - Treasurer    ANDREW MORRIS - Secretary
Andrew Clarke

ADVISORY BOARD
Rose October-Edun        Jeffrey Anderson Gunter        Michael Flanigan        Paula Ohaus
The Braata Folk Singers in Concert

June 3, 4 & 11, 2023

Jamaica Performing Arts Center
153-10 Jamaica Ave Queens NY, 11432

Lamad Academy Charter School Auditorium
1060 Clarkson Ave Brooklyn NY 11212

Harry S Truman High School
750 Baychester Ave, The Bronx, NY 10475

Tickets and information at
www.braatatproductions.org
Good Food, Music & Vibez

CariBites 2023

- Queens, NY -

Performing Live
Braata Folk Singers
And Many Others!

Tickets and information at
WWW.BRAATAPRODUCTIONS.ORG