

# Showgram

by On The Stage

DISSONANCE  
The Essential Theatre  
Washington DC  
May 30 - Jun 11 2023



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**The Essential Theatre**

S. Robert Morgan, Founder/Artistic Director

Women's Works Program Presents

**Dissonance****Written by Marci J. Duncan****in Collaboration with Kerry Sandell**

Directed by James Webb

**Set Design**

Ruben Arana

**Lighting Design**

C. Bacote Robinson

**Costume Design**

Evelyn D. Tyler

**Sound Designer**

James Webb

**Dramaturge**

Renee Charlow

**Property Designer**

Evelyn D. Tyler

**Production Photographer, Artist at Play, LLC**

Anthony Nolan

**Production Graphics Layout**

Lynne Menefee

**Stage Management**

Emma M. Sloane

Presented in association with Artists at Play, LLC, Spanish Fort, Alabama.

Made Possible by support from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities,  
Funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

# DISSONANCE

Written by Marci J. Duncan in collaboration with Kerry Sandell  
A Washington, D.C. Premiere

Directed by James Webb

## Synopsis

On the heels of summer 2020, can a black woman and a white woman have an honest, civil, and candid discussion about race? Can a friendship survive the brutal honesty of differing experiences?

## Advisory

This play contains adult themes, including sensitive discussions on race. Content warning: Descriptions of racism. Recommended for audiences over 12 years of age.

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## Cast

(In order of appearance)

Marci J. Duncan – Angela

Kerry Sandell – Lauren

## Setting

**Time:** Fall of 2020

**Place:** A historically Black neighborhood at the corner of Belmont and DeVilliers Street in Pensacola, Florida, affectionally known as The Blocks

**Location:** A coffee café

This play runs 90 minutes

There is no intermission.

This play is presented as part of The Essential Theatre’s Women’s Works Program by special arrangements with Artists at Play, LLC, Spanish Fort, Alabama.

## Scenes

ACT I – Café, early morning – “Friendship”

ACT II – Café, late afternoon – “Fall-out”

ACT III – Café, evening – “Family”

## You Should Know

As a courtesy to your fellow theatre patrons and the actors, please make sure to turn-off or silence prior to the beginning of the performance all cellular phones, PDA's and watch alarms.

We ask that you NOT talk or TEXT on cellular phones or engage in any activity that diminishes enjoyment for other theatre patrons or that might be distracting to the actors on stage.

### Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, please follow the ushers' instructions and directions to the nearest exit.

### It's the Law

The taking of unauthorized photographs or the operation of any recording device in the theatre is strictly prohibited by law.

### Smoking

Smoking is not permitted on the premises.

### Late Arrivals

Theatre patrons arriving late will be seated at the discretion of management and at a time appropriate as not to interrupt the enjoyment of the performance for others.

This production uses the services of members of United Scenic Artists Local 829.



## Director's Note - James Webb

Cross-race conversations amongst strangers can be wrought with fear and distrust, but what about race-based conversations amongst friends? Even then, these difficult conversations can be threatening.

For example, Black people might feel disrespected, dismissed, or depleted by their white friends and colleagues, who may in turn feel anxious about appearing racist or saying the wrong thing. Still, these conversations are race-based necessary because disclosure and vulnerability are important components of emerging friendships, building a sense of intimacy and trust with both parties potentially feeling heard, cared for, and valued.

As an artist, we are interested in creating space and capacity for dialogue, especially around topics that beckon us to dive in for deeper understanding, but we also realize that this type of dialogue demands sensitivity and clear intentions. According to the National Museum of African American History and Culture, an essential first step toward discussing race in cross-race interactions are to identify and establish a set of ground rules or community agreements.

When developing this play, the creative team agreed to **(1)** be honest with each other, **(2)** forgive easily if offended, **(3)** stay committed to the process and conversation, and **(4)** be led by love. Our intention has always been to create a play that brings cross-race communities together rather than divide them further apart. Having these agreements and a clear intention within the rehearsal room allowed us full permission to tell the hard truth, which was sometimes raw and uncomfortable but worth it.

We welcome you to join us in the conversation.



## Cast Members



**Marci J. Duncan**

**Marci J. Duncan**

Marci J. Duncan earned a BA in performance at Florida A&M University and her Masters in Acting at the University of Florida. She studied television and film acting with the late Evonne Suhor at Orlando's Art Sake Acting Studio, where she has starred in three consecutive seasons in their Play De Luna Series. Some of her extensive theatre credits includes Romeo and Juliet, Two Trains Running, Crowns, From the Mississippi Delta, The Mountaintop, the world premiere of Ntozake Shange's Lavender Lizards and Lilac Landmines: Layla's Dream and a one woman show called Florida Girls. Marci's film work includes (Just) Another Day co-starring with Jamie Hector from HBO's The Wire and Life is not a Fairytale: The Fantasia Barrino Story, working alongside Debbie Allen and Fantasia Barrino. Most recently Marci performed in DeWayne the Rock Johnson's new television series Young Rock. Marci is currently teaching acting and directing at the University of West Florida where she is the director of the acting program.



**Kerry Sandell**

**Kerry Sandell**

Kerry Sandell holds a Bachelor's degree in Theatre Performance and a Master's degree in Strategic Communication from the University of West Florida. She is passionate about connecting people through storytelling, which was the genesis for developing Dissonance with Marci. A few of her past theatrical credits include Ruth in Collected Stories, (which she also produced), the titular role in Medea, Kate in Dancing at Lughnasa, Meg in Crimes of the Heart, and Mary in On the Verge. This is her first play collaboration - with more on the way.



**James Webb**

**Director**

James Webb is a New York-based playwright, director, and educator, whose work is centered on the southern Black experience. His plays include THE CONTRACT (Lorraine Hansberry National Playwriting Award); MISSISSIPPI CROSSROAD (O'Neill Semifinalist); WRESTLING WITH ANGELS, a hip-hop children's musical; and SIBLING RIVALRY. His work has been presented at the National Black Theatre Festival, Ensemble Studio Theatre/LA, Kraine Theatre NYC, FAMU Essential Theatre, Confrontation Theatre, and Producer's Club. Webb is an Assistant Professor of Theatre and Communications at Bronx Community College and spends his summers as a resident playwright for the Irene C. Edmonds Youth Theatre.

# Production Team

James Webb | **Director**

Ruben Arana | **Set Designer**

Evelyn D. Tyler | **Costume Designer**

James Webb | **Sound Designer**

C. Bacoste Robinson | **Lighting Designer**

Merianne S. Meadows | **Lighting Maintenance**

Renee Charlow, S. Robert Morgan | **Dramaturgy**

Evelyn D. Tyler | **Props Designer/Master**

Emma Sloane | **Production Stage Manager**

Celine Jones-Cameron | **Assistant Production Stage Manager**

Dejuan Mason | **House Manager**

Mimi Wong | **Public Engagement Consultant**

Anthony Norton | **Production Photography**

Lynne Menefee | **Production Graphics Layout**

Sharon Farmer | **The Essential Theatre Production Photographer**

Anthony Nolan for Artists at Play | **Photo credit for Dissonance**

Aliana Grace Bailey | **Logo Design**



# Acknowledgments

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Thank you! Forever

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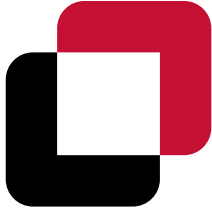
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