

From the Mississippi Delta, by Endesha Ida Mae Holland, PhD

The Essential Theatre Washington, DC Jun 19 - Jul 10 2022



The Essential Theatre S. Robert Morgan, Founder/Artistic Director Women's Works Program

-Presents-

From the Mississippi Delta, by Endesha Ida Mae Holland, PhD

Directed by Luther D. Wells

Featuring

Crystal Henry Arful-Addoh Cynthia Davis Pauline Lamb

Set Designer Lighting Designer Costume Designer
April (AJ) Joy Bastian Hailey LaRoe Luqman Salim

Sound Designer Properties Master Music Direction

Jairous L. Parker, Sr. Christopher W. Gaut James Foster, Jr.

Choreographer Dramaturgy Master Electrician
Sandy Holloway Renee Charlow Kat Darnell

Cover Art Design Production Photography
Lynne Menefee Sharon C. Farmer

Production Stage Management L Bruce



From the Mississippi
Delta photo from left to
right
Actress Pauline Lamb,
Crystal Henry ArfulAddoh, and Cynthia
Davis | Photo by Sharon
Farmer

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About From the Mississippi Delta, by Endesha Ida Mae Holland, PhD

The play is a dramatic work that tells Holland's life story. Born in Greenwood, Mississippi on August 29, 1944, her play takes the audience on a 40-year odyssey; from growing up in a drafty shotgun house with a poor, but resourceful mother in "The Delta"—— to ultimately earning her Ph.D. in American Studies in 1984 from the University of Minnesota. The story examines themes of survival and perseverance, and is symbolic of Holland's adopted name "Endesha"—which is Swahili for "one who drives herself and others forward."

Cast

(In Order of Appearance) Woman One - Cynthia Davis Woman Two - Pauline Lamb Woman Three - Crystal HenryArful-Addoh

Time: 1944 - 1984

Place: Greenwood, Mississippi & Minneapolis, Minnesota

There will be no intermission

The running time for this performance is approximately ninety minutes.

What You Should Know:

Mask must be worn fully covering your nose and mouth at all times while in the theatre and building unless actively eating or drinking in the theatre lobby.

Food and or drink are not allowed in the theatre.

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

We ask that you NOT TEXT 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 in the premises.

Late Arrivals: 5

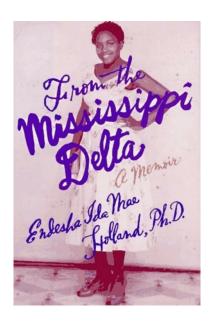
Theatre patrons arriving late will be seated at the discretion of management and at a time appropriate as not to interrupt the enjoyment of the performance for others.

About The Essential Theatre

The Essential Theatre is a non-profit, professional theatre dedicated, but not limited to producing theatre reflective of the African American experience that explores and celebrates America's rich, diverse cultural landscape. Paramount to its mission is the implementation of programs for youth in Washington, DC's metropolitan area that promotes interdisciplinary education.

Founded in 1989, the company hosts a Children's Program in Public Schools-Young Audience Program, a New Play Reading Series and the Women's Works Program. The company also maintains a relationship with community-based organizations to better align programs for community resonance.

Our vision is to enhance the quality of life in the Washington, DC metropolitan region through targeted outreach strategies that are inclusive utilizing institutional comprehensive programming. We believe that live theatre performances should be a regular experience for residents regardless of socioeconomic status. Therefore, addressing economic barriers preventing access to quality professional theatre is partial to our mission-critical work. Providing free and pay what you can tickets as well as offering humanities programming to stimulate transitional thinking and building long-term patron support is chief among our vision strategies



Born in Mississippi where she lived in a shotgun house with her mom two brothers and a sister.

They all lived on one side and some tenants lived on the other.

Ain't Baby raised Ida Mae.

Ain't Baby did a lot of storytelling where she talked about life or experiences in the Delta.

Ain't Baby was a domestic who worked for White people and made money by ironing, and later became a midwife for the Black women.

Was outside of the funeral home playing when Emmitt Till's murdered and mutilated body was brought in.

Ida Mae was sexually assaulted by her mother's employer at 11.

Kicked out of school in 9th grade.

Pregnant and in jail at 16 for shoplifting.

Turned to a life of prostitution at 12 because she did not want to go back to the cotton fields –rates were \$10 for white man \$5 for Black men.

Awards

Endesha has received numerous awards including:

American College Theatre Festival Student Playwriting Award at Univ. of Minnesota.

Nominated for a Pulitzer.

The mayor of Greenwood Mississippi dedicated a day to her in October 1981.

When she returned home to receive her award she found Greenwood to be very different. There were machines replacing the Black labor force and even Black elected officials.

She was the Grand Marshall for her high school parade and stood on the same Greenwood City Hall steps where she had been jailed—a full circle moment. Scenes 8

Scene One

Scene: Memories

Scene Two:

Scene: Aint Baby

Scene Three

Scene: Calm, Balmy Days

Scene Four

Scene: Second Doctor Lady

Scene Five

Scene: The Water Meter

Scene Six

Scene: The Delta Queen

Scene Seven

Scene: The Whole Town's Talking

Scene Eight

Scene: The Funeral

Scene Nine

Scene: From the Mississippi Delta

Scene Ten

Scene: A Permit to Parade

- To find, encourage, and train new theatre talent.
- To present theatre entertainment with unique appeal.
- To provide all people in our community an outlet for creative expression.

Cast Members



Cynthia Davis Woman 1

Cynthia Davis (Woman One) is an actor and singer who graduated Magna Cum Laude with a B.A in Theatre Studies from the University of Maryland Baltimore County. Cynthia is passionate about the stories that theatre and music can tell and is dedicated to using her talents for community service and arts education. Cynthia would like to thank her family for their constant love and support and thank God for the opportunities he has continued to provide her. Catch Cynthia next in Adventure Theatre's Poop the Musical and keep up with her performances @Cadavis516 on Instagram.



Pauline Lamb

Pauline Lamb (Woman Two) (she/her) (she/her) is a DMV based actor who is thrilled to be performing with The Essential Theatre for the first time! You may have seen her choreography and properties design on a stage or ten, but her previous shows as a performer include Xanadu with Workhouse Performing Arts (Euterpe), Time is on our Side with Perisphere Theater (Claudia), The Wolf You Feed with Theatre Prometheus (Pamplemousse), Weep. with Nu Sass (Simone Young), and Blight with Pinky Swear Productions (Sylvia Henson) among others! She sends all her love and good vibes to every creative who made this show possible!



Crystal Henry Arful-Addoh Woman 3

Crystal Henry Arful-Addoh (Woman Three) hails from Southeast Missouri. Her passion for theatre was nurtured and refined at the St. Louis Black Repertory Company where she contributed as a member of several casts and production teams while learning from accomplished directors, playwrights, and actors. Locally she has worked onstage and behind the scenes with Dominion Stage (Arlington, VA) and the Creative and Performing Arts Center (Prince William County, VA). She can be seen next in the Riverside Performing Arts Center's production of, Guess Who's Coming to Dinner. Crystal is grateful for the support of family, friends, and the Mount Olive Baptist Church Family of Centreville, VA. This performance is dedicated to her beloved grandparents—Sugar Mama, Granddaddy, and Big Mama. RIP.

The Essential Theatre Production Team



Luther D. Wells Director

Luther D. Wells (Director) currently serves as Associate Director of Theatre at Florida A&M University (FAMU). He earned his BS in Theatre from FAMU and his MFA in Theatre from The Ohio State University. He has worked as an actor, director and choreographer for the M Ensemble Theatre Company and the African Heritage Cultural Arts Center of Miami. Directing credits include the Off–Broadway production of Sugar Ray; Hands Up!, King Hedley II, Little Shop of Horror, Radio Golf, Gem of the Ocean, The Colored Museum, and The Color Purple; Oedipus, Beyond Therapy, Blue, Home, Jitney, Tartuffe, Antigone, Dreamgirls, and Joe Turner's Come and Gone to name a few.

L Bruce

Production Stage Manager

E. Lynda Bruce (L) (Production Stage Manager) is grateful for zir first time as a professional shadow with The Essential Theatre. You may have failed to see zir last as a spotlight operator during Signature Theatre's production of RENT!, which was one of zir dream performances to work. Other credits include serving as one of two assistant stage managers for Constellation Theatre's production of Moon Man Walk, and as an automation operator for the same theatre's production of The Last Five Years. A la Todopoderosa, toda gloria."

Renee Charlow

Dramaturgy/Program Associate

Renee' Charlow (Program Associate/Dramaturge) is honored to serve on this production. She is an Actress, Director, Theatre Educator and Workshop Facilitator. She most recently appeared on stage virtually in A Pocketful of Stars, Nudnik and White Fire, Black Ash, and her most recent film credit was The Comey Rule and a training video for the American Psychological Association. She was the personal assistant of Ntozake Shange(For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf) from 2014-2018 and wrote the afterword for Ntozake's first posthumous work, Dance We Do: A Poet Explores Black Dance. Keep up with her at www.mycreativespirit.net.

Sandy Holloway

Choreographer

Sandra L. Holloway (Choreographer) is also a director and sometimes she gets to do both. She has enjoyed choreographing for musical theatre, devised theater, and concert dance. She works with artists in the professional theatre, the community of artists/activists and youth development. Some of her choreographic credits include The Transcendence for Macha Theatre Works, Marie and Rosetta for Mosaic Theater Company, Imagination Stage Gala, Collage Dance Company, Hill Dance Academy, For Colored Girls... for Theater Alliance, The Gospel at Colonus for Avant Bard Theater Company, Black Pearl Sings for Metro Stage and more. Sandra is the director of a youth development performing arts program, City at Peace at the Atlas Performing Arts Center, and partners with other programs creating social change using devised performances or formal scripts. She is the recipient of the GAEA Sea Change Award for Arts and Activism, the Paula Giddings Award, has presented at the ROOTS Week Conference, and has been a Fellow of the DC Commission on the Arts.

James Foster, Jr Music Director

April Joy "Aj" Bastian

Set Designer

April Joy Bastian (scenic Designer) is excited to be back with The Essential Theatre for this outstanding production. She was last seen here with her initial project, "People For Whom the World Spins and Turns". Other local credits include "A Snowy Day" and "Alexander and the Terrible... Day" at Adventure Theatre, "The Boy Detective Fails" at American University, "Among the Dead" with Spooky Action Theatre and several productions including "Barber of Seville", "La Traviata", and "Little Women" with Annapolis Opera. As well as designing sets for many amazing theaters and productions throughout the DC area, April is a happy wife and mom to three beautiful girls for whom she is eternally grateful.

Hailey LaRoe

Lighting Designer

Hailey LaRoe (Lighting Designer) is excited to be working with The Essential Theatre, for the first time, on this powerful show. Hailey is a lighting and projection designer, based in the DC area since 2018. Her recent Lighting Design credits include Suddenly Last Summer (Avant Bard), Clue on Stage (Anne Arundel Community College), Nat Turner in Jerusalem (Next Stop Theatre), and Rhinoceros (Pointless theatre co.). Hailey's recent Projection Design work includes; Christmas Eve (ExPats Theatre), assistant projections and content creation for Show Way (Kennedy Center TYA), and associate projections for The Phlebotomist (1st Stage). Enjoy the Show! Haileylaroedesigns.com.

Luqman Salim

Costume Designer

Luqman Salim (Costume Designer) is a native Washingtonian who enjoys working in the Arts as a costume designer. He is based out of Howard University's Department of Theater Arts. Credits includes The Essential Theatre's People for Whom the World Spins and Turns, Dreamgirls (Bowie State University), and Married, But Single Too (Ja'Caryus Johnson), to name a few.

Jairous L. Parker, Sr.

Sound Designer

Jairous L. Parker, Sr. (Sound Designer) is a Sound Designer, Audio Engineer and Creative Sculpture Artist. He has served with a diverse group of performing arts organizations, theater's, theme parks, numerous artist, political leaders, faith-based groups, audio visual service companies and independent film as an audio professional for over three decades. Jairous is honored to serve as Sound Designer in DC for The Essential Theatre's production of From the Mississippi Delta. His most recent work was in Philadelphia as a Sound Designer for Flyin' West by Pearl Cleag for the Quintessence Theatre Group and also designing sound for Sojourner there in 2021. He has had the honor to provide services for the Philadelphia Film Center, New Freedom Theatre, Prince Music Theater, New York's Manhattan Theater Club, Tribeca Performing Arts Center, Woodie King Jr's New Federal Theater, and also The National Black Touring Circuit. He is a two time AUDELCO award nominee for Sound Design, Urban Transition: Loose Blossoms 2002, Diss Diss and Diss Dat 2004 along with mixing more than 1170 performances as Sound Engineer for the hit Philadelphia production, Menopause the Musical from 2004 to 2008. "Everything is possible, if you believe in what you're doing and enjoying the journey while working to accomplish it". - JLP

Christopher W. Gaut

Properties Master

Chris "Topher" Gaut (Properties Master) After years of overhire and fabrication work, as well as making numerous props from film and tv in his spare time, Topher is eager to take on the role of properties designer for the first time in his career

Kat Darnell Master Electrician

Complete Fabrications
Set Construction

Deanna Malloy Streaming Consultant

See the Fruits Videography

Sharon C. Farmer Production Photographer

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Actress Gwendolyn Briley Strand as Harriett Tubman, in Harriett Tubman: The Chosen One at Ann Beers Elementary School, Photo by Michael E. Tucker

Actress Gwendolyn Briley Strand as Harriett Tubman, in Harriett Tubman: The Chosen One at Ann Beers Elementary School, Photo by Michael E. Tucker

Contributions are accepted year-round and tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. The Essential Theatre is a 501 (c) (3) organization. Contributions can be mailed or done online at www.theessentialtheatre.org

Encourage and inspire your company to give. Most corporations have matching gifts programs that match your contribution dollar for dollar. Some even match your volunteer hours with the cash equivalent. Call your Human Resources department today!

You can now donate Stock! Contact our Development Officer for direction at development@theessentialtheatre.org

Support specific programs by joining The Essential Theatre's Playmakers Guild. Your Accessibility tag: Students at Democracy Prep, PCS watch with excitement African Folktales

Photo caption: Photo by Sharon C. Farmer (c) 2016 membership directly supports our new play development program, and you receive:

- Special invitations to closed readings
- Special invitations to selected previews
- Invitations to world premieres during membership year and much more!

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Photo of women poets from women words power, Directed by Cody Jones, Photo by Sharon C. Farmer Photography copyright 2008

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We always need extra sets of hands to usher, serve as hosts at events, etc. Contact us 17 at info@theessentialtheatre.org

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