

PRESS RELEASE

The Studio Theatre
The Studio Theatre 2ndStage
The Studio Theatre Acting Conservatory
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STUDIO THEATRE

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PRESS RELEASE

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DATE: December 15, 2010

THE STUDIO THEATRE BRINGS TOGETHER AN ALL-STAR ENSEMBLE FOR *MARCUS; OR THE SECRET OF SWEET!*

“Mr. McCraney’s plays...are pumped full of a senses-heightening oxygen that leaves you tingling.”
– *The New York Times*

MARCUS; OR THE SECRET OF SWEET

by **Tarell Alvin McCraney**

Directed by **Timothy Douglas**

Featuring Stephanie Berry, Shannon A.L. Dorsey, Rachael Holmes, Bianca LaVerne Jones, J. Mal McCree, Montae Russell, Nickolas Vaughn, and Lance Coadie Williams

Opening January 5, 2011

In the Mead Theatre

After thrilling audiences with *The Brothers Size* (2008) and *In the Red and Brown Water* (2010), The Studio Theatre brings *The Brother/Sister Plays* trilogy to a close with *Marcus; Or the Secret of Sweet*. In this provocative and luminous play, Marcus risks alienating his friends and family in his search for love. Past and present, obligation and desire, and lust and friendship collide in the sultry Louisiana heat.

Stephanie Berry (Shun/Elegua) is a veteran of stage, television, and film. She has appeared on Broadway in *Drowning Crow*, Off Broadway in *Tillers* at New York Theatre Workshop, and in her OBIE Award-Winning one-woman show *The Shaneequa Chronicles: The Making of a Black Woman in New York*. Regionally, she has appeared in *Distracted* at Mark Taper Forum; *Trouble in Mind* and *Intimate Apparel* at Milwaukee Repertory Theatre; and *Flying West* at La Jolla Playhouse. Her television credits include *Law & Order: SVU*, *Third Watch*, and *Louie*. Her film appearances include *No Reservations*, *Finding Forrester*, and *Jacob’s Ladder*.

Shannon A. L. Dorsey (Shaunta Iyun) returns to *The Brother/Sister Plays* after appearing in last season’s *In the Red and Brown Water* at The Studio Theatre. Recent credits include the Off Broadway production of *The Man Who Ate Michael Rockefeller* (New York Times Critics’ Picks); Synetic Theater’s *Carmen* (Helen Hayes Award nomination for Outstanding Ensemble) and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Helen Hayes Award recipient for Outstanding Ensemble) at The Kennedy Center; and *Breath, Boom* at The Studio 2ndStage.

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Rachael Holmes (Osha) appeared in last season's Leadership Repertory at The Shakespeare Theatre Company as Queen Isabel and Princess Katherine in *Richard II* and *Henry V*. Prior stage credits include *Ruined* at Manhattan Theatre Club; *No Child...* at The Hangar and Capital Repertory Theatres; and the international production of *SEVEN* and *Widowers' Houses* with Epic Theatre Ensemble (AUDELCO nomination for best lead actress). Her television credits include *The Good Wife*, *Dirt*, *Guiding Light*, and *All My Children*.

Bianca LaVerne Jones (Oba) has appeared Off Broadway in *McReele* with Roundabout Theatre Company; *Trojan Women* (AUDELCO nomination) and *Macbeth* at the Classical Theatre of Harlem; and *Virgin of the Vieux Carré* with Primary Stages. Other credits include the world premiere of *A Civil War Christmas* at Long Wharf Theatre; *The Threepenny Opera* at Williamstown Theatre; and *Breath Boom* and *Medea/Macbeth/Cinderella* at Yale Repertory Theatre.

J. Mal McCree (Marcus) recently appeared Off Broadway in *Zooman & the Sign* at Signature Theatre Company (New York); *The Fabulous Miss Marie* at the Cherry Lane Theatre; *Subway Love* at The

Actor's Playhouse; and *The Etymology of Bird* at Summerstage. His film credits include *The Art of Love*, *We Need to Talk About Kevin*, *Recreator*, *White Sugar in a Blackpot*, and *Real Talk*. He has appeared on television in *Law & Order*. He is a member of the historic Negro Ensemble Company.

Montae Russell (Ogun) returns to Washington after appearing in *King Hedley II* and the *August Wilson 20th Century Staged Readings*, both at The Kennedy Center. He has performed at numerous Off Broadway, Los Angeles, and regional theatres, and is one production away from having performed in all 10 plays in the August Wilson cycle. His recent television appearances include *Detroit 187* and *Cold Case*. Mr. Russell spent 15 seasons on *ER* as Paramedic Zadro White.

Nickolas Vaughan (Oshoosi/Terrell) recently appeared in The Kennedy Center's world premiere production of *Locomotion*. He was also seen in *Fucking A* at The Studio 2ndStage; *The Piano Lesson* at the Hangar Theatre; *Tamar on the River (21/24 Workshop Series)* at Signature Theatre; and *Barrio Grrrl!* and *Don't Tell Me I Can't Fly* (part of the *New Visions/New Voices Festival*) at The Kennedy Center.

Lance Coadie Williams (Shua) has appeared in *The Oedipus Plays* with The Shakespeare Theatre at Athens; *Fences* with Roundhouse Theatre; *The Children's Hour* (2005 Greater Baltimore Theatre Award for Outstanding Actor) at Everyman Theatre and Repstage; *My Children! My Africa!*, *Blues for an Alabama Sky*, and *Fences* with Everyman Theatre; and the title role in *Hamlet* at The Baltimore Shakespeare Festival. He has also appeared on television in HBO's *The Wire*.

Marcus; Or the Secret of Sweet is directed by **Timothy Douglas** in his Studio Theatre directorial debut. Recently named Artistic Director of Chicago's Remy Bumppo Theatre Company, Mr. Douglas has directed nearly 100 stage productions, with recent credits including his acclaimed Caribbean-inspired *Much Ado About Nothing* for The Folger Theatre, *Permanent Collection* for Round House Theatre, the world premiere of August Wilson's *Radio Golf* for Yale Repertory Theatre, *Insurrection* for Theatre Alliance (two Helen Hayes Award nominations), the world premiere of *The Night is a Child*, *Trouble in Mind* and *Radio Golf* with Milwaukee Repertory Theatre; the west coast premiere of *A Feminine Ending* at South Coast Repertory Theatre and Portland Center Stage; and *In the Blood* at the Guthrie Theater, among many others.

The inaugural 2010-2011 season of new Artistic Director David Muse is generously underwritten by Jaylee Mead and Robert and Arlene Kogod, with additional underwriting from Susan and Dixon Butler, The Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation, Stanley and Rosemary Marcuss, and Vicki and Roger Sant.

This production of Marcus; Or the Secret of Sweet is generously underwritten by Peter Bieger.

Featuring: **Stephanie Berry** (Shun/Elegua), **Shannon A.L. Dorsey** (Shaunta Iyun), **Rachael Holmes** (Osha), **Bianca LaVerne Jones** (Oba), **J. Mal McCree** (Marcus Eshu), **Montae Russell** (Ogun Size), **Nickolas Vaughn** (Oshoosi Size/Terrell), and **Lance Coadie Williams** (Shua).

Director and Designers: **Timothy Douglas** (Director), **Dan Conway** (Set Design), **Michael Giannitti** (Lighting Design), **Reggie Ray** (Costume Design), and **Erik Trester** (Sound Design).

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MARCUS; OR THE SECRET OF SWEET INFORMATION

Where: The Mead Theatre

Dates: January 5–February 13, 2011

Performances: Wednesday–Saturday: 8:00pm, Sunday: 7:00pm

Matinees: Saturday and Sunday: 2:00pm

Select Tuesdays: January 18, 25, February 1, 8: 8:00pm

Signed Interpreted Performance: February 4: 8:00pm

Ticket Prices: \$35–\$65

Press Opening: Sunday, January 9

THE STUDIO THEATRE INFORMATION:

The Studio Theatre is Washington's premiere venue for contemporary theatre, "**where local audiences will find today's edgiest playwrights**" (*Variety*). Its restless, innovative spirit makes it a leader both in Washington DC and in the nation. Artist-founded and artist-driven, The Studio Theatre demands the highest quality production values, bringing audiences provocative writing along with exceptional artistry in performance, directing, and design.

Founded in 1978 by Joy Zinoman, The Studio Theatre is now led by Artistic Director David Muse. He is joined by the leadership team of Keith Alan Baker, Managing Director/Artistic Director, 2ndStage; Serge Seiden, Associate Producing Artistic Director; and Morey B. Epstein, Executive Director of Institutional Development. The Studio Theatre is comprised of a four-theatre complex, a major landmark that anchors the 14th Street Arts District. The Studio Theatre has three distinct programming series – The Studio Theatre Season, Special Events and The Studio 2ndStage. Special Events produces and presents one-of-a-kind performances that would not otherwise be seen in Washington. The Studio 2ndStage creates edgy, explosive, and electrifying productions. The Studio Theatre also provides opportunities for developing theatre artists as year-long apprentices. The Studio Theatre Acting Conservatory, now in its 36th year, offers rigorous professional theatre training in close partnership with the working artists at The Studio Theatre. The Conservatory has trained over 10,000 actors and directors, now performing on Broadway, Off Broadway, and in theatre and film across the country. The theatre is deeply invested in the eclectic vitality of its community.

DISCOUNTS

Student, senior citizen (62+) and military discount: \$5.00 off (except Saturday evenings).

Student Rush: \$15 tickets for full-time students are available one-half hour before curtain on a seating available basis (except Saturday evenings).

Student Matinee: Thursday, January 13, 11:00am. Call the Group Sales Manager at 202-232-7267.

Groups: for parties of 10 or more. Call the Group Sales Manager at 202-232-7267.

Pay What You Can: Saturday, January 8, 2:00pm.

Studio District Night: Wednesday, January 5, 8:00pm. Ticket Price: \$10 for residents of the Studio District, with proof of address.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Accessibility: All performances are fully accessible to accommodate patrons with special needs. FM listening assistive system available. Call for schedule of sign-interpreted performances. Accessible seats available by reservation. Call the Box Office at 202-332-3300 or V/TTY 202-667-8436.

Location: 1501 14th Street, NW (Northeast corner of 14th and P Streets).

Parking: Please call the Box Office for parking information.

Metro Stops: Red Line: Dupont Circle, Orange/Blue Lines: McPherson Square, and Green Line: U Street/Cardozo.

Contact Information: Tickets: 202-332-3300 V/TTY: 202-667-8436 Fax: 202-332-1187

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