



ALLEGIANCE: A Creative Response

DIRECTED BY JAZZY MILLER

Produced by the McCoy Theatre at Rhodes College

*A creative collaborative of poets, actors, orators, & music artists
come together to examine & respond to racial injustice in America.*



MCCOY THEATRE



Rhodes College

Director's Notes

I pledge allegiance to our ancestors who endured lashes, water hoses, hunger, sleepless nights, and death for our freedoms in the United States of America.

We honor their memory and sacrifice as we continue marching onward toward a future that is abundant with peace, love, and justice.

One community under God.

Indivisible.

For liberty.

For justice.

For all.

-- jazzy

ALLEGIANCE: A Creative Response

DIRECTED BY JAZZY MILLER

This is the McCoy Theatre's first all-digital production.

*Live performances have been suspended
as a precaution against the spread of COVID-19.*

Production Crew

Eliana MabeAssistant Director/Writer
Laura PerkinsStage Manager
Caitlin Evans.....Assistant Stage Manager
James Oliver.....Video and Music Production
Eliza Lieberman.....Public Relations

Cast

Benjamin InmanActor
Beverley SylvesterPoet/Writer
Christopher Smith.....Actor
David CaddleActor
Elijah TylerPoet/Writer
Grayson Walker.....Vocal Artist/Actor/Writer
Justice ClaybornVocal Artist/Writer
Mya HardeeActor
Nicholas Allen.....Actor
William O'Neal, II.....Poet/Writer

ALLEGIANCE: A Creative Response

includes the following segments

Weeping Willow

written and performed by William O'Neal II

I Hold This

written and performed by Beverly Sylvester

Disillusion

poem written and performed by Elijah Tyler

Announcer

written and performed by Grayson Walker

Power

song written and performed by Grayson Walker

Cognitive Dissonance is a Beast

by James Baldwin

performed by David Caddle, Benjamin Inman, and Nicholas Allem

Ballot or the Bullet

by Malcolm X

performed by David Caddle

Emancipation Proclamation

performed by Elijah Tyler

The Last Words of Elijah McClain

performed by Benjamin Inman

Elie Wiesel's Acceptance Speech

performed by Mya Hardee

Blackbird

by Nina Simone

performed by Justice Clayborn

Special Thanks

Kirk Whalum, Dorimar Ferrer, Dr. Kristie Lipford

Leslie "Sticky" Reddick, Roosevelt Singleton.

The Artists

David Caddle (Actor) is a sophomore from Jackson, Mississippi. This is David's first McCoy on-stage credit. He is a member of Rhodes Student Government, Rhodes College Mock Trial team, loves reading, hanging out with friends, and helping his community.

Justice Clayborn (Actor) is a senior at Hollis F. Price Middle College High School from Memphis, Tennessee. She has a previous stage credit for Into the Hoods. She has served as an actress and singer in Crosstown Youth Center Programs. She is a member in the Distinctive Scholars Club, Crosstown Youth Theater Program, and National Beta Club. She enjoys singing and helping others.

Caitlin Evans (Assistant Stage Manager) is a junior English major from Memphis. Her previous McCoy on-stage credits include Rose and the Rime, and backstage credits include assistant stage manager for Hand to God and stage manager for last year's COVID-cancelled Firebringer. She loves reading, her sweet dogs Nixon and Winston, and stickers.

Mya Hardee (Actor) is a first-year student currently intending to major in theatre and education from Plano, Texas. This is her first McCoy project. Prior to college, she performed in 10 productions at her local community theatre. She is a member of the Rhodes Theatre Guild and loves acting, singing, and hanging out with friends and family.

Benjamin Inman (Actor) is a senior at Hollis F. Price High School. He has been working in the Crosstown Arts Theatre Program for seven years. Aside from participating in many additional plays, he was a part of Crosstown's first theatre production, Rapunzel in New York. He also enjoys playing basketball and baseball.

Eliza Lieberman (Public Relations) is a senior theatre major from Charlotte, North Carolina. Raised on social justice work, she spent the summer protesting in Atlanta and is honored to be a part of Allegiance. Eliza is currently applying to graduate programs to pursue a Master of Fine Arts in acting and musical theatre.

Eliana Mabe (Assistant Director/Writer) is a sophomore theatre and biochemistry & molecular biology double major at Rhodes and is currently creating safely from her hometown of Colorado Springs, Colorado. Since her debut on the McCoy stage in Hissifit, she has assistant directed the COVID-cancelled Firebringer, been accepted to the New South Young Playwrights Festival, become a member of the Dramatists Guild, and elected secretary of Rhodes Theatre Guild. She hopes this piece will awaken the privileged and stand with the silenced.

Jazzy Miller is a director, actor, and playwright residing in Memphis, where she currently serves as the Director of the Crosstown Theater and was the founder of its youth theatre program. Jazzy holds an MFA in Theatre Direction from the University of Memphis and a BA in Theatre from Rhodes College. She has conducted extensive biographical research on Sojourner Truth and wrote a one-woman play on her life, Journey of Truth, which has been performed across the United States, Latin America, Africa, and Asia. She is a lover of all things historical, fiction, coffee, and travel.

William O'Neal II (Writer) began his college career at Florida State College of Motion Picture Arts and is currently a junior playwriting and film studies major at Emory University. With two self-published books of poetry, a few short films, and a couple of plays under his belt, he continues to remain in a position of learning and growth. Attributing his talents and successes to his faith in God's love for him and his love for others, Will works to make people feel seen in every project he writes or produces. Will is Black, and currently resides in America.

James Oliver (Video and Music Production) After graduating from Rhodes College with a BA in music, James went to Valencia where he received an MA in Music Production, Technology, and Innovation from Berklee College of Music. He returned to Memphis in 2019 to open his studio, Triple I Audio. He has worked on music and video production for Rhodes College and other local clients, sound design and Foley for film in L.A., and is currently producing a ballet, working with the Memphis Youth Symphony Orchestra, and co-producing work for the Juilliard School.

Laura Perkins (Stage Manager) holds an MFA in Theatre with an emphasis in costume design and makeup design from the University of Memphis, an MA in Communication Studies and Theatre from Arkansas State University, and a BFA in Theatre Design/Technology from Arkansas State University. Currently she is the costume shop manager at Rhodes College, and next summer she will be the Head of Costuming and Wardrobe at the Texas Shakespeare Festival in Kilgore, Texas.

Beverly Sylvester (Poet) is a junior at Emory University double majoring in music composition and playwriting. She grew up near Atlanta, Georgia, in a house full of flowers, loud music, and warm hugs. She performs, teaches, and writes plays, poetry, and music. She hopes that this and all of her projects encourage people to love and find magic in each other and themselves.

Elijah Tyler (Actor/Poet) is a senior theatre major and religious studies minor from Memphis. Elijah's previous McCoy credits include Theophilus North, Fabulation, Hissifit, and Harlem to Hamilton. He is a member of RUF and a Bonner Scholar. He loves reading, writing, drawing, and playing video games.

Grayson Walker (Vocal Artist) is a senior business major and Africana studies minor from Louisville, Colorado. This will be his first on-stage credit with the McCoy Theatre. The grandson of George Walker, the first Black composer to win the Pulitzer Prize, Walker is an up-and-coming hip-hop artist under the pseudonym Lightskin Legend, with four albums in global release and 30,000 listeners since 2018. He is on the Rhodes Men’s Basketball team, is an assistant coach for the Rhodes Women’s Basketball team, a member of the Black Students Association, a Turley Scholar, and a Curb Fellow in the Mike Curb Institute for Music.

McCoy Theatre Staff

- Chair of Music and Theatre.....Carole Blankenship
- Managing Director.....Kevin Collier
- Associate Professor.....Dave Mason
- Assistant Professor.....Joy Brooke Fairfield
- Technical Director.....Keenan Minogue
- Adjunct Professor and
Costume Shop SupervisorLaura Perkins
- InstructorBradley Harris
- Student Associate for TheatreOlivia Fox

*The McCoy Theatre is a member of
The Association for Theatre in Higher Education
and Theatre Communications Group.*

Benefactors

- Norfleet Turner
- Frank Wilbourn

