

Project: The “Unrealized Dream”: The James Baldwin Project

Producing Organization: Hub Theatre Group, a non-profit theatre organization

Director: Bob Chanda, Executive Director of Hub Theatre Group

Casting/Project Director: Paula Chanda

Dates: Project will take place in July and work around cast members’ schedules

“James Baldwin Monologue” Background:

James Baldwin, novelist, playwright, essayist and activist, was a singular, powerful and eloquent voice that spoke to the ongoing struggles for equality and justice in the divided America of his time. On February 18, 1965, James Baldwin faced conservative William F. Buckley in a debate on race relations on the campus of the University of Cambridge. Baldwin’s thesis was “the American Dream is at the expense of the American Negro.” During the debate Baldwin made a passionate and poignant argument for the plight of those whose experiences of the American dream were those of exclusion and repression. Sadly, even though Baldwin was expressing his thoughts nearly 55 years ago, the argument continues to resonate today in the experiences of young African Americans that wrestle with a legacy that has only changed cosmetically and not institutionally.

Hub Theatre Group introduces the “Dream Unrealized” Project: the “James Baldwin Monologue,” a video project utilizing the text of Baldwin’s arguments and the experiences of young African Americans in today’s society to underline the fact that there has not been enough meaningful change. Young African American actors will have a chance to perform the words of the great James Baldwin while also adding videos that speak to their own experiences. Our project is designed to highlight the ongoing need for meaningful change and to put a human face on continuing injustice that must be addressed for the American Dream to be meaningful.

“James Baldwin Monologue” Details:

Casting and Outline of Project: Seeking 6-7 African American actors of any gender to perform sections of Baldwin’s arguments and speeches as monologues, plus a short account of their own experience as a person of color in America. Actors selected and additional actors found during the audition process will be asked to film a 3-minute piece that speaks to their own experiences or of those close to them as they relate to the issues found in the Baldwin monologue. These pieces should be original work (stories, poetry, song, or dance), public domain work or if taken from work of others, come with appropriate permission to use the work. The final product will weave these 3-minute pieces into the performance of the monologue itself.

Audition Details: Audition process will begin immediately and video auditions will be accepted through July 20.

Project Date: Will be determined based on the schedules of actors cast in the project.

Time Commitment: After casting completed, we will set a start date during the week of Monday July 20th for video meetings which will take place through Zoom and with all aspects of the digital submissions to become final by early August and ready for editing into the final product.

There will be one short company meeting to be scheduled with the cast on Zoom. Those actors selected to read portions of the monologue will each meet with the Director once and work on the section they have been selected to perform. These meetings , also on Zoom will be approximately 30 minutes. Actors who create

3 minute pieces can do so on video and send to casting director when finished. All submissions should be in by early August.

Final Product: The final edited video will be streamed on Broadway on Demand. Streamed production will be donation-based tickets with all proceeds going to **THE NEXT WAVE INITIATIVE**.

Materials: Sample Portion of Monologues:

It is a terrible thing for an entire people to surrender to the notion that one-ninth of its population is beneath them. And until that moment, until the moment comes when we, the Americans, we, the American people, are able to accept the fact, that I have to accept, for example, that my ancestors are both white and Black. That on that continent we are trying to forge a new identity for which we need each other and that I am not a ward of America. I am not an object of missionary charity. I am one of the people who built the country—until this moment there is scarcely any hope for the American dream, because the people who are denied participation in it, by their very presence, will wreck it. And if that happens it is a very grave moment for the West.

Submit audition videos and any questions to: info@hubtheatregroup.org.