

# Schedule Announced for Vision Theatre Festival of Staged Readings 2017

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[PRESS RELEASE] The Leimert Park Vision Theatre Consortium (LPVTC) and the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) announce the 4th Annual Vision Theatre Festival of Staged Readings. The Festival runs from Thursday, August 24 through Sunday, September 3 (Labor Day weekend), and features a wide range of performance events including staged readings, receptions, panel discussions, artist talk-backs, and educational events. All productions feature the finest talent on stage and behind the scenes that Los Angeles has to offer.

The festival is produced by LPVTC, a group of cultural agencies based in South Los Angeles devoted to supporting culture and art-making in Leimert Park and South LA with an eye towards the African American experience and legacy. These institutions include DCA's Vision Theatre, the Barbara Morrison Performing Arts Center, Fernando Pullum Community Arts Center, KAOS Network, Regency West Los Angeles, Los Angeles Inner City Cultural Center, Theatre Perception Consortium, and the Bilingual Foundation.

The Festival theme is "The State of Black Theater in Los Angeles" and several forums will be devoted to discussing the challenges and opportunities for LA's Black community as it pertains to theater-making in the City. As part of this larger context, the Festival will be held at DCA's historic Vision Theatre, currently under renovation and scheduled to re-open in 2020. The newly re-imagined Vision Theatre is designed to be the anchor organization for Leimert Park and the Black cultural community, and will be a resource for all Angelenos.

See below for a complete listing of the Vision Theatre Festival of Staged Reading events.

Tickets are on sale daily at the Vision Theatre Festival Box Office Monday to Saturday from noon to 6 p.m. at 3341 West 43rd Street, Los Angeles, CA, 90008. Cash or checks preferred, but credit cards accepted for advance sales only. For more information about ticket purchases, please call 323.290.2386 or visit: [dca.visiontheatre@lacity.org](mailto:dca.visiontheatre@lacity.org)

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## ***Opening and Closing Night Events***

### **Opening Night Gala**

#### **SOUL HERITAGE SAM COOKE REVUE**

#### **ICCC MUSICAL JUBILEE**

#### **A MEDLEY OF THE BEST MUSICAL PRODUCTIONS FROM ICCC**

Thursday, August 24, 8 pm

The Regency West Entertainment Center

Written and Directed by Chester Whitmore

Produced by The Los Angeles Inner City Cultural Center

Featuring Magnificent Seven Jazz Band, Vel Omarr, Bobby Womack Sisters, The Olympics, Chester Whitmore, and The Central Avenue Dance Ensemble

Tickets \$25.00; to RSVP email [dca.visiontheatre@lacity.org](mailto:dca.visiontheatre@lacity.org) or call 323.290.2386

### **Closing Night Gala**

#### **GET READY**

Sunday, September 3, 7 pm

Regency West Los Angeles

Written by Jaye Stewart, Joe Plummer and Debi Stewart

Directed by Joe Plummer

Presented by Tri-Coastal Entertainment

An R&B musical with, "Catchy Tunes in the Motown mode, climaxing with a smart-stepping, hand clapping finale that had the house jumping." *Chicago Tribune*

Tickets \$25.00; to RSVP email [dca.visiontheatre@lacity.org](mailto:dca.visiontheatre@lacity.org) or call 323.290.2386

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### ***Vision Theatre Festival of Staged Readings 2017***

***[Additional artist and programs to be announced]***

#### **Events In Chronological Order**

##### ***FROG EYES***

Friday, August 25, 8 pm

The Vision Theatre

Written by James Bronson

Directed by Hawthorne James

Produce by Bronson Productions

Featuring Andre Henry and Larry Mandley

On his last evening in New York, James Baldwin eagerly awaits a handsome lover while examining a painful journey through an America that rejects his color, looks, and intelligence.

##### ***THE MEETING***

Friday, August 25, 8 pm

Barbara Morrison Performing Arts Center

Written by Jeff Stetson

Directed by Judyann Elder

Produced by Los Angeles Inner City Cultural Center

Featuring Dejuan Christopher as Malcolm X and Lamont Young as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. – a conversation between two civil rights giants of the 60's.

##### ***VOICES OF THE UNHEARD***

Sunday, August 27, 3 pm

The Vision Theatre

Produced by Spirit Awakening Foundation – Akuyoe Graham, Founder/Director

Directed by BT Taylor

Spirit Awakening Foundation presents an evening of spoken word written by incarcerated and formerly incarcerated children and young adults, with music and performances by formerly detained teens and young adults Spirit Awakening Foundation.

##### ***HOPERA: CHRONICALS OF A FALLEN HERO***

Sunday, August 27, 3 pm

Regency West Los Angeles

Written & Composed by: Adrian L. Dunn

Produced by: Byron Johns in partnership with HoperaWorld Entertainment

In Partnership with the Fernando Pullum Performing Arts Center (FPPAC)

Featuring: Adrian L. Dunn, Cristina Fentress, Darshea Odom and members of the FPPAC

*Hopera: Chronicles a Fallen Hero* is a story of a young man, Obadiah King, growing up on the south side of Chicago in a single-parent household and his encounters with love, drugs, sex, heartbreak, and violence as he comes of

age.

## **A QUARTET OF ONE-ACT PLAYS**

Thursday, August 31, 7 pm

The Vision Theatre

### **Part 1**

#### **CALAFIA**

Written by Ursaline Bryant

Directed by Ursaline Bryant

Produced by Theatre Perception Consortium

Calafia is a warrior queen who ruled over a kingdom of Black women living on the mythical Island of California. A definitive article by Diane Bailey Blackmon is the basis of this one-woman show that sheds light upon and uncovers what is known as the 'Spirit of California' through words, movement and sound. This Performance Art also honors the original founders and first people of the West.

### **Part 2**

#### **HORSE HAIR AND THE FROG**

Written by Preston J. Arrow-weed

Produced by Preston J. Arrow-weed and Helena Q. Arrow-weed

Read by Preston J. Arrow-weed and Helena Q. Arrow-weed

This Kanya-Quechan playwright writes about his native culture as if he was there at that time long, long ago. Horse Hair was an actual person in history.

He was a noted warrior, one of the last two warriors in the Quechan camp with whom the United States Army had to negotiate peace. History tells us that Horse Hair was not the chosen leader by the Army and died in obscurity because others betrayed him. In this play, Arrow-weed has brought Horse Hair back to life at the end of that heroic life. The play is a conversation he has with Frog, the daughter, and Kumat, the Creator.

### **Part 3**

#### **ABIKA, SHE RUNS**

Written by James Bronson

Directed by Ursaline Bryant

Produced by Bronson Productions

Featuring C.J. Williams and Tu'Nook Alexander

Music by S.H.I.N.E Muwasi and Rene' Mims

*Abika, She Runs* is a lyrical story written. The poetry tells of a young Bantu woman named Abika who has discovered that her king is scheming with Europeans to sell her village into slavery. Although Abika is eight months pregnant she takes it upon herself to warn her people and nearby villages what is taking place within the king's palace. Running with two heartbeats, Abika races against time to save generations that are destined to be sold away across the sea. Original poetry, movement and music is also presented making it an exciting and adventurous performance art presentation.

### **Part 4**

#### **WHAT DEFINES YOUR BLACKNESS?**

Written by Tu'Nook Alexander

Directed by Tu'Nook Alexander

Produced by Theatre Perception Consortium

Featuring Melanie Haymon, Larney Johnson, Keturah McClendon, Katherine Parker, Andrea Ross, and Adrian Zeigler

A one act play that will keep you on the edge of your seat. Each character takes you on a journey of laughter, drama, tragedy, and historical fact to reveal their feelings as to what Blackness means to them. Have you ever thought about "What Defines Your Blackness?" THINK ABOUT IT!

***AARP... SILVER SNEAKERS... AND WE***

Friday, September 1, 6 pm

Barbara Morrison Performing Arts Center

Scenes Written and Presented by the Vision Theatre Elders Acting Workshop

Directed by Ursaline Bryant

Featuring Lonnie Calvin, Melvin Hampton, Louise Knapper, Charlene Limenih, Francine Lyles and Gloria Vinson

Based on the idea of the 1970 Broadway musical, "The Me Nobody Knows," which gave voice to the lives, hopes, loves, and frustrations of inner-city youth, this version is told from the perspective of the silver sneakers....our Elders.

From observation of self and recollection of stories that stood out in their memory they committed them to the written word and the art of storytelling to share their experiences encountered over a lifetime, paying homage to the Age of Wisdom.

***PAPA'S BATHTUB GIN***

Friday, September 1, 8 pm

The Vision Theatre

Written by Teddy Hayes

Directed by Buddy Butler

Presented by Buddy Butler & Foxx Follies

This is a story about 1931 bootleggers hiding in plain sight in an African American community in Cleveland Ohio. It was inspired by true events that took place during the time of prohibition and the great depression in the USA.

***THE TRIAL OF ONE SHORT-SIGHTED BLACK WOMAN VS. MAMMY LOUISE AND SAFREETA MAE***

Friday, September 1, 8 pm

Barbara Morrison Performing Arts Center

Written by Karani Marcia Leslie

Directed by Wendy Barnes-Farrell

Produced by Karani Marcia Leslie

A courtroom drama about racial stereotypes and their history, speaks to a neglected audience: black women. A struggling black businesswoman is suing the all-giving, malleable Mammy Louise and her sex-kitten daughter Safreeta Mae because their stereotypes hobble her progress.

***CALMING THE MAN***

Saturday, September 2, 8 pm

Barbara Morrison Performing Arts Center

Written by Anthony Lamarr

Directed by Anthony Lamarr

Produced by Anthony Lamarr

Calming The Man is the story of two young men who are determined not to let their father's anger break them, regardless of the cost.

***WILD IN WICHITA/ LOCURAS EN WICHITA***

Saturday, September 2, 8 pm

The Vision Theatre

Written and Directed by Lina Gallegos

Spanish Translation by Denise Blasor

Produced by Bilingual Foundation for the Arts

Featuring Denise Blasor\* and Sal Lopez\*

A bilingual romantic comedy that explores nursing homes, loneliness, mortality, cultural differences, Latin music and love at any age. \*Actors appear courtesy of Actors Equity Association.

***WHISKEY & POETRY***

Sunday, September 3, 3 pm

The Vision Theatre

Directed by Billie King

Produced by King Films

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***Industry Panels and Community Tours***

***THE STATE OF CULTURAL ENTERPRISES IN SOUTH LA***

Saturday, August 26, 10 am

The Vision Theatre

Admission: Free

This panel is aimed at creatively minded planners and producers concerned with changing economic dynamics of the urban environment in South Los Angeles with the goal of aligning with concerns about urban planning, event planning and production, public engagement, and branding Leimert Park Village as the hub of African American cultures in Los Angeles. Our ultimate success will be rooted in our willingness to partner with neighborhoods, nonprofits, foundations, adjacent cities, cultural institutions, developers and designers to create public programs and events that highlight the unique character and untapped potential of the South Los Angeles and the surrounding community to activate and create unique experiences where arts, culture, economics, community and civic life collide.

***THE STATE OF BLACK THEATRE IN LOS ANGELES***

Saturday, August 26, 12 noon

The Vision Theatre

Admission: Free

Theater within the Black community has been on the demise. This panel will examine the important legacy of Black theater making in LA, and discuss appropriate ways to build for its future. What began four years ago with a program that represented shows from a diverse collection of former South Los Angeles Theater companies has taken on new life as we raise our ambition of launching the fully restored Vision Theatre. Panelists will include educators, historians and social scientists.

***CULTURAL WALKING TOUR: THE VISION THEATRE AND LEIMERT PARK VILLAGE***

Sunday, August 27, 2pm

Sunday, September 3, 2pm

Meeting Point: Vision Theatre Lobby by 1:45pm

Admission: Free

Curated and hosted by James Burks, Manager the Vision Theatre, enjoy a historic tour of the Vision Theatre (soon closing for renovations), and surrounding Leimert Park Village theatres and businesses.

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***General Information***

**Festival Box Office:** The Festival Box office is located at the Vision Theatre, 3341 West 43rd Place Los Angeles, CA 90008 (located between Leimert and Degnan Boulevards)

The box office is open Monday through Saturday from 12 noon until 6 p.m.

**Tickets:** \$10 per ticket single admission; \$35 Multiple Plan (4 individual tickets); \$75 All Access Pass; \$25 tickets for the August 24th opening and September 3rd closing followed by receptions. Advance tickets are available on [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com).

**Payment:** Tickets are available at the Vision Theatre Box Office from 12 noon to 6 p.m. Cash or check preferred. Festival venues will accept walk-ups for cash only. Credit cards will be accepted for advance sales only.

**Seating:** All seating is general admission, seating to capacity.

**Start Times:** For each event, tickets will be available at the venue door 30 minutes prior. Cash preferred. Seating will occur 15 minute before the play begins.

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**Contact Information for the Festival:**

Vision Theatre

323-290-2386 or [dca.visiontheatre@lacity.org](mailto:dca.visiontheatre@lacity.org)

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