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**THEATER FOR THE NEW CITY  
PRESENTS  
"WAS IT ME?!?" BY ANDREA J. FULTON**

**Performances Begin September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Through October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021**

Based on actual experiences, **"WAS IT ME?!?"** seeks to underscore the significance of embracing mental health wellness in the Black community, lifting the veil of stigma associated with "getting help".

**SYNOPSIS:** On the eve of her 50th birthday, Margo begins connecting dots regarding an incident she unknowingly suppressed 40 years ago. Will this discovery unlock the doors that have kept her from reaching her goals? Or wreak further havoc on her fragile emotions? She reaches out to Dr. Chang, a therapist from her past, who just might have the answers.

**"WAS IT ME?!?"** will enjoy its world premiere as a "me too" story from the perspective of a Black girl who has grown up in a Chicago suburb and seeks to make her way in life after thriving intellectually but being challenged emotionally. Loosely based on the playwright's actual personal experiences, through both poignancy and humor, it underscores the significance of embracing mental health wellness in the Black community via the character of "Margo" as we follow her from her childhood gifted programs juxtaposed with her teen brother, Young Gabe's more "seasoned" way of life assenting to their middle age where Gabe seeks to shelter her but wonders if he is too late. The therapist she consults in college and revisits later in life, Dr. Chang, may have the answers she needs. Along the way, among dealings with Young and older Gabe's friends, we ponder whose responsibility it is to protect females and whose fault it is when they are disrespected and devalued. How does one stand and recover? Is it internal or external? Physiological, sociological, economic, familial, spiritual or all that?

Playwright Andrea J. Fulton offers lots of philosophical topics in which to marvel and reflect upon including the paradoxes of age old yet brand new challenges among gender and cultural anomalies that manage to prove themselves unique and simultaneously familiar to many in various walks of life who may find ways to connect to elements of this story. Church goers may appreciate its acknowledgment of the historic importance of church in the Black community as a real and viable source of strength and spiritual fortitude.

**RUNNING TIME:** 1 hour 45 minutes including a 10 minute intermission

**WHERE AND WHEN:**

September 16 through October 3, 2021  
Theater for the New City, 155 First Ave. (Between 9th & 10th Streets)

**Thursdays through Saturdays at 8:00 PM, Sundays at 3:00 PM**

## **COSTS:**

\$18 general admission; \$15 for Seniors, Students & Groups of 10 or more for performances September 17<sup>th</sup> to October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Box office: (212) 254 -1109; <https://theaterforthenewcity.net/shows/was-it-me/>

Thanks to a grant from the City Artists Corps, the 9/16 performance will be free. Tickets for the September 16<sup>th</sup> free performance must be reserved via above link or: [www.theaterforthenewcity.net](http://www.theaterforthenewcity.net)

Produced by Theater for the New City & Anderson and Bert Cade Fulton Foundation

Directed by Kymbali Craig

Stage Manager - Melissa Diaz

Set Design - Lytza Colon

Costume Design - Kathy Roberson

Light Design & Sound Design - Ken Coughlin

Talk Backs will occur after the show on Thurs. 9/16, Fri. 9/17, Sat. 9/18, Fri. 10/1 & Sat. 10/2

**ACTORS:** **Lianne Awah** as Young Margo, **Kymbali Craig** as Margo, **Lai Yee Fung** as Dr. Chang, **Matthew C. Harling** as Young Gabe, **Arnold C. Baker II**, as Gabe, **Riyadh Rollins** as Young Eddie and **Antwain N. Lewis** as Eddie.

## **Headshots & Bios:**

### **EXEC / CREATIVE TEAM**



**Andrea J. Fulton** (Playwright), a graduate of Northwestern University, is also a poet, songwriter and investor. Her work has received six AUDELCO Award nominations and two AUDELCO Awards. She has received an Emerging Playwrights Award, Episcopal Actors Guild Thomas Barbour Playwrights Award, New York Council on Suicide I AM HOPE Award, New York Fund for Eldercare Grant and City Artist Corps Grant. Her work has been performed in a wide range of settings: theaters, schools, churches, housing projects, galleries and parks. She is founder of the Anderson & Bert Cade Fulton Foundation, a non-profit arts organization supporting artistic aspirations of older adults.



**Michael Green** (Dramaturge), for the past 14 years, has been a drama instructor for the Artists Collective in Hartford, Ct. and is currently a Teaching Artist for Medgar Evers College. As Producer / Director of Shades of Truth Theatre for 16 years, Michael Green is committed to presenting positive theatre that is both provocative and educational while illuminating the total Black Experience. Shades of Truth Theatre has performed at High schools, Middle Schools, Colleges, and Universities throughout New York and the Tri-State area. He is always on the lookout for new and uncompromising voices and welcomed this opportunity to work with Andrea Fulton and Theater for The New City.



**Kymbali Craig** (Director/Margo), is an Actress, Director and Published Author. She can be seen on networks such as NBC, CBS, HBO, NETFLIX, STARZ, SHOWTIME and others. She has directed various off-Broadway productions, short films and PSA's. In her first book of teen fiction titled "Justice", an African American teen finds love and breaks the stereotypes imposed on teens from urban communities. Published by Rosen Publishing, it can be found on Amazon. For more information Google.com



**Melissa Diaz** (Stage Manager), was born in Brooklyn, New York. She began performing as a dancer at age 5 and in musical theater at 10. Infatuated with TV shows, movies and the processes involved in creating them, by the age of 18, she performed less and got in touch with all aspects of production (lighting, sound, directing, stage management, camera work, writing and acting). She took stock of her commitment and passion and dreamed of owning her own production company for film and theater alike. She is now co-owner of an up and coming production company, Tru Luv Entertainment.



**Lytza R. Colon** (Set Designer), of the South Bronx, is a Visual Artist, Community Leader and Activist. She began in 2008 in TNC's award winning Street Theater Summer Program and is now Special Props Master. She is honored to assist and be mentored by Mark Marcante, TNC's Production Manager of Set Design, Set Building, and Set Dressing. She works magic with cardboard and a noted review by Andrew Martin, nitelifeexchange.com stated, "Lytza R. Colon couldn't have been more creative in allowing the more classical aspects of great theatre to come into play with her puppetry of animals, masks and special props". View her work at [www.lytzacolon.tumblr.com](http://www.lytzacolon.tumblr.com).



**Kathy Roberson** (Costume Designer), began her career in the arts at the age of 14 as a dancer. She has toured the globe with a career lasting several decades as a dancer, actor and wardrobe supervisor, many years of which have been spent with the renowned Woody King and his New Federal Theater. Along the way, she earned an education from NYU and anchored herself with a career in social work.



**Ken Coughlin** (Lighting & Sound Designer), has been called a renaissance man by his wife, feeling equally at home in the control booth, up on a ladder or on stage. He's adept at wielding a hammer or a guitar, and has been in the entertainment world for 50 years. We are thrilled to have his brand of humanity and sensibility and his broad level of interest and expertise.

### **OTHER KEY CREW MEMBERS**



**Mariam Bolkvadze** (Production Assistant & Graphic Artist), designed the flyer and marketing materials for WAS IT ME!?. She has over the last eight years, worked on a myriad of production projects where she has grown her professional skills and experience both in front of and behind the camera. She has shown that a highly motivated, hard-working person can both lead and be a part of collaborative teams to produce high-quality media content and events.



**Kennisha Aliza Williams** (Wardrobe Assistant, Hair Stylist & Make-Up Artist), is a full-time Service Coordinator who works for the Early Intervention Program in Queens, New York. She spends her free time as a makeup artist and costume designer expressing her love for fashion and styles across all eras.

**John David West** (Photographer) (See Moderator headshot and bio below).

## THE ACTORS



**Lianne Awah** (Young Margo), is an actress originally from Chicago. Her recent works include playing Young Muriel in the play "Leaves", playing the lead in an indie feature film, and she is currently shooting a sexy drama short film. Lianne is a mental health advocate and has found acting very therapeutic and healing. Young Margo is a very exciting role for Lianne because she gets to explore deep themes that are close to her heart.



**Lai Yee Fung** (Dr. Chang), has been a long time member of the community theater group, Four Seas Players. She has participated in various performances. Her recent acting credits include "Night without You" and "An old lady who says she knows Kung Fu". She made her directorial debut in "Proof" in 2017. She is thrilled to work with the cast and crew in "Was it Me?!"



**Matthew C. Harling** (Young Gabe), is an actor, writer, model, and director with over ten years in the industry. Studying writing, journalism, and media production, Matt graduated from Buffalo State College in 2015. Upon graduation, he started his own production company, New Vision and continued his education, studying classical acting and stunt choreography. Professional experience includes commercial, film, and theater such as Daddy's Girls Club, the limited series Up State NY. Leaves, and Lone Stars.



**Arnold C. Baker II** (Gabe), has been an actor for over forty years working in Television, Film and Theatre. His most recent work was in Horton-by-the-stream's production of "Trip to Bountiful". He greatly appreciates this opportunity to appear in "Was it Me?" Reach him at 646-456-5806 / [acbij50@gmail.com](mailto:acbij50@gmail.com)



**Riyadh Rollins** (Young Eddie), is a stage and screen actor from Phoenix, Arizona and a graduate of University of Nevada, Las Vegas, who studied Biochemistry and Theatre Arts. He is currently working in New York City in film and theatre. Credits include portrayal of Gaston in Disney's Beauty and the Beast with The Offending Shadows Theatre Co., Papa Shakespeare in The African Company presents Richard III, Cory in August Wilson's Fences with the Nevada Conservatory Theatre and most recently as James/Young Curtis in 'BSou' Repertory Theater Company's Leaves at Theater for the New City. Riyadh is supported by his loving mother, father, brother and partner.



**Antwain N. Lewis** (Eddie), was very excited to play the role of "The Wise Angel Salesman" in Ms. Fulton's play YOU DON'T KNOW, YOU JUST DON'T KNOW featured on TNC's "On the Air" program via Zoom earlier this year. His past credits include "Their Eyes Were Watching God", "That Book Ain't Been Written" and "Lulu Dance."

## **POST-SHOW TALK BACK MODERATOR & PANELISTS**



**John David West** (Moderator), has appeared in the award-winning short film series *The Lessons* by Alberto Ferreras and more recently in *Fig Jam* by Frank J. Avella. John David directed and hosted TNC's "On The Air" online play series. In addition to acting, he is a freelance social media manager and photographer. He received an MFA in Creative Writing from The New School in New York. You can follow him on Instagram [@johndavidwest](https://www.instagram.com/johndavidwest)



**Danielle Fairbairn-Bland, LCSW** (Panelist), is a Licensed Mental Health Therapist with over 15 years of experience in the field of Human Services. As a Psychotherapist, Author and Speaker- she uses her platform to plant seeds of hope in children, families and communities. Danielle is passionate about uplifting Black experiences by preserving cultural traditions, promoting healthy family bonds and prioritizing wellness. Danielle is the owner of Uplifting Hearts Counseling, an online mental health practice supporting individuals in New York and New Jersey.



**Russell Bland, LCSW** (Panelist), is a Social Worker with over 10 years of experience supporting individuals impacted by mental illness, incarceration and trauma. In addition to his social work, Russell is the Pastor of Mount Holiness Christian Church in Brooklyn, New York. He uses his platform to encourage others to have faith in themselves and trust the power of God. His mission is to reconnect the community to the church so all can experience God's love. He uses his personal testimony to normalize dynamic life experiences, promote mental wellness and shatter the stigma associated with mental health support in the Black community.



**James Holmes, LCSW** (Panelist), has over 15 years of experience working with varying populations including children on the Autism spectrum and adults with serious mental health concerns, substance use issues and extensive histories of trauma.



**Lynette Shelborne-Barfield, Licensed Minister** (Panelist), is a lifelong resident of Rockaway, Queens. She is a former NYC Department of Education Mathematics Teacher; Math Coach; Curriculum & Data Specialist. A Graduate of Wilberforce University - the first private Historically Black College & University (HBCU), Lynette is also a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated - Epsilon Pi Omega Chapter - Queens, NY. She has been a Licensed Minister for over 25 years. Currently, she serves as Director of Special Projects in the New York State Senate.



**Senior Pastor Rosemary Bland-Garnett** (Panelist), has been a licensed Christian minister and spiritual guide for 38 years. She is a servant of the people and inspires them to let go and let God move in every situation when it seems all else is failing.

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