**AUDITIONS – *HairStory*: Reclaiming Our Crown,** a chorepoemReclaim Artist Collective

in partnership with theHarrisburg (PA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated

*Maria James Thiaw, Poet-playwright*

Directed by Roe Braddy

Production Manager, Janet Bixler

Stage Manager, Hannah Avcin-Roda

AUDITIONS: February 7, 2023 @ 6:00-9:00 pm (Feb. 8 Inclement Weather date)

Potential Rehearsal period: February 16, 2023 – May 3, 2023.

Public Performances: May 4 – 7, 2023. Fri’s and Sat’s 7:30 PM, Sun’s 2:30 PM.

School Performances: May 9 & 10, 2023 Call time 8:15 AM; Curtain 9:30 AM

**About** *HairStory***:** Reclaiming Our Crown, a chorepoem

*HairStory* follows the journey of a young ambitious Black woman, Aleyah, who is working all the angles to make a name for herself as a hard-hitting journalist. Imagine her surprise when her editor assigns her a “fluff” story about Black-owned beauty salons. Her journey takes her back to ancient stories and rituals woven into African people. Aleyah encounters many deep-rooted stories of how Black and Brown people have been ostracized and objectified for their hair. She is pulled into memories of sisters, mothers, grandmothers, and aunties who lovingly and sternly braided traditions, demands, and power into each other’s hair. Will Aleyah see herself in these stories or will she refuse to look in the mirror?

What is a choreopoem? This is a play written in poetic form. All the words spoken by the actors are the poems created by poet Maria James-Thiaw. And as the word “choreo” suggests, many times the poems are brought to live with many voices. The individual poems were inspired either by Maria’s research, her lived experiences, or her interviews conducted with local Griots.

What is a Griot? This is the West African term for storyteller. Maria interviewed Black and Brown women and men of all ages about their personal hair stories.

**About** Reclaim Artist Collective

We strive to create a world in which all people, regardless of race, religion, gender identity or class can live together in the 'full poetry of existence' empowered to celebrate their own uniqueness and speak their truth.

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Our mission is to raise consciousness about social justice issues impacting marginalized communities through our arts-based, anti-racist curriculum. Learn about our 2018 production of Reclaiming My Time: An American Griot Project at www.reclaimartistcollective.org/about

**CHARACTER LIST – *HairStory* AUDITIONS**

by Maria James-Thiaw

All actors should be comfortable with movement and

bringing the story of the poems to life with full voice and body.

This is an ensemble-based production. Most actors will be on stage much of the show and will contribute their voices and bodies to many of the poems. During the early rehearsal period, the actors will have an opportunity to collaborate with the director and dramaturg on the shape/storytelling of different poems.

6 Black women—one should be able to SING

* Afro Latina or light
* Older
* Thick or full figured
* 1 willing to be bald
* 1 with lox’s
* 1 with a fro

2 Black men

1 older, 1 light skinned younger if possible

1 white man

SETTING

*The Ancient Lands of Africa, A Modern-day Salon, The Memories of the Griots*

**INCLUSIVITY**

All actors regardless of gender, gender identity, race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, and/or disability are encouraged to apply.  Gamut Theatre is an ADA-accessible facility, and we will endeavor to make reasonable accommodations to facilitate access, such as allowing interpreters when necessary and providing audition materials in advance to artists with disabilities.

**Note**: this production focuses specifically on the struggles and triumphs inherent with lives of Black and Brown people, specifically, their hair. Casting will reflect this very specific focus.

**PLAY AND COMPENSATION**  
Actors receive a one-time stipend at the close of the show.  Amount of stipend varies pending size of role.

**AUDITION DATES**February 7, 2023 @ 6:00-9:00 pm (Feb. 8 Inclement Weather date)

*If you have an interest in auditioning but cannot make these audition times, please contact Janet Bixler, production manager at* [*bixlerjanet@gmail.com*](mailto:bixlerjanet@gmail.com) *to discuss other options.*

**AUDITION LOCATION**Auditions will be held at Gamut Theatre Group, 15 N Fourth Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101.  Street parking is free after 5:00 PM.  You can receive free parking on Saturdays in 3-hour increments by using the ParkMobile app and entering the “LUVHBG” code.

**COVID MITIGATION REQUIREMENTS**

For the safety of all parties during the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, we expect all cast and crew members to be up to date on Covid vaccinations and booster shots. We may also require cast members to take a Covid test once per week pending spread in our area.  **Please bring your vaccination card to auditions.**

**AUDITION REQUIREMENTS**

* Bring to life one of the four poems from the links provided. Memorized preferred.

--“My Father is a Retired Magician” by Ntozake Shange at <https://poets.org/poem/my-father-retired-magician>

--“Ego Tripping (there may be a reason why)” by Nikki Giovanni at

<https://poets.org/poem/ego-tripping-there-may-be-reason-why>

--“The Weary Blues”

<https://poets.org/poem/weary-blues>

--“Shafro” by Terrance Hayes

<https://poets.org/poem/shafro>

* Bring a headshot (head and shoulders photo) and a resume.
* Actors audition in groups of up to six in a 30-minute period and may be asked to stay an additional 30-60 minutes to read sides. Actors may be asked to attend callback auditions.
* Plan to arrive 10-15 minutes before scheduled audition time.
* Download the AUDITION FORM, complete, and bring with you to auditions.
* Please schedule an audition appointment to reserve your spot. See scheduling below.

**AUDITION PROCEDURE**

All Auditions take place in the Select Medical Mainstage at Gamut Theatre. You will be auditioning on ¾ thrust stage in a 200-seat theatre. There are potentially 6 audition slots open for each half-hour audition time. Everyone signed up for the same time slot will go into the mainstage together as a group. Each actor will perform their audition.  The group audition should not take longer than 30 minutes.  Actors may then potentially be asked to read scenes with some of the other actors in your audition group, which could be an additional 30-60 minutes.

**AUDITION APPOINTMENT SCHEDULING**

To sign up for an audition, visit [www.gamuttheatre.org/auditions](http://www.gamuttheatre.org/auditions). If you have any questions or require assistance, please contact our Production Manager at 717-379-6278 or [bixlerjanet@gmail.com](mailto:bixlerjanet@gmail.com).

**STUDENT ACTORS**

You must be at least 16 years old to audition for *HairStory*. Student actors must be available for all scheduled performances and a majority of the rehearsal period.  Student actors must present an audition as outlined in the AUDITION REQUIREMENTS above.  Student actors under the age of 18 must have parental approval to audition and must have a parent or guardian sign the audition paperwork.

**REHEARSALS**

*HairStory* rehearsals generally occur weekday evenings and some weekend afternoons or evenings. Rehearsals will be held at Gamut as well as another location. Not everyone will be called for every rehearsal. Please indicate what time you would be able to start rehearsing on weekdays and weekends on your Audition Form.

If you have a pre-existing conflict that prevents you from attending any rehearsals, please indicate this on your audition form. **Please be honest and upfront regarding any conflicts you think you may have. Sometimes (but not always) we can schedule around things if we know the situation in advance.**