

For Immediate Release:

**LA FEMME THEATRE PRODUCTIONS
Inaugurates Two Initiatives:**

**A Woman's Storyland (a script development program)
will debut with
BLACK GIRL JOY
Written by PHANESIA PHAREL
Directed by Golden Globe Winner REGINA TAYLOR**

And

**Women on the Verge:
The Gladys and Mary Dohmen Reading Series
will debut with
GIRL.
Written by MEGAN MOSTYN-BROWN
Directed by KYLA KANTOR**



[La Femme Theatre Productions](#) (Jean Lichty, Executive Director) is proud to announce two initiatives - **Women on the Verge, The Gladys and Mary Dohmen Reading Series**, which will showcase emerging female artists, and **A Woman's Storyland**, a script development program that will develop diverse stories about the universal female experience. The actress **Carmen Berkeley**, the director **Kyla Kantor**, and the playwright **Phanésia Pharel** are the three female artists whose work La Femme is honored to showcase in these two initiatives. And La Femme is thrilled to provide these new developing voices with full professional support and agency.

Women on the Verge: The Gladys and Mary Dohmen Reading Series, created to showcase the work of promising female artists on the verge of national recognition, will debut with **Megan Mostyn-Brown's** play **GIRL.**, directed by **Kyla Kantor** and featuring **Carmen Berkeley**.

Girl. - An inventive, sensitive rendering of the female adolescent experience and its ramifications, **Girl.** reveals how the butterfly effect can reverberate from mother to daughter and beyond.

Girl. will have a public presentation at the Pershing Square at the Signature Center on West 42nd Street on **Monday, April 11 at 7 PM.** The event is FREE. Tickets can be reserved by visiting [Eventbrite.](#)

The cast of **Girl.** includes **Carmen Berkeley** (NY: *Our Dear Dead Drug Lord*), **Erica Camarano** (TV: "The Equalizer"), **Jade Krickstein**, **Sarah Linares** (NY: *Sorry for Your Loss*), and **Marquis Rodriguez** (TV: "Queen Sugar"). The production stage manager is **Skylar Jean**; the technical producer, **Ruby Locknar**; and the video editor, **Seth Walters.**

A Woman's Storyland, established to shepherd female writers and their stories, will launch with the work of **Phanésia Pharel**, a rising Haitian-American playwright. To develop her exciting new play, **Black Girl Joy**, La Femme will hold an Equity workshop under the direction of the award-winning **Regina Taylor.**

Black Girl Joy - At a housing center for vulnerable youth in Miami, Trina, JT, Squeaks, and Donna come together to share their evocative stories. Lyrically moving between memory, choreopoems, and a mystical plot, **Black Girl Joy** is a ritual play for black girls/women to heal from intimate partner violence, a loss of girlhood, and the death of friends.

After two weeks of development, **Black Girl Joy** will culminate in a rehearsal/presentation on April 17 for an invited audience. The cast includes **Jerusha Cavazos** (Broadway: *The Prom*), **Michael Chenevert** (Film: *Eugenia and John*), **Diata Coleman** (Film: *Pretenders*), **Andrea Jones-Sojola** (Broadway: *The Gershwin's Porgy and Bess*), **Esco Jouley** (Sundance TV's "State of the Union"), **Imani Lewis** (TV: "First Kill"), **Lauralie Ashley Mufute** (Tada's *Wide-awake Jake*), **Kimber Elayne Sprawl** (Broadway: *Girl from the North Country*), and Tony winner **Karen Ziemba** (Broadway: *Prince of Broadway, Contact*). Production stage manager is **Gwen Gilliam**; casting director, **Erica Hart**; musical coordinator, **Bill Toles**; and choreographer, **Adesola Osakalumi.** Both initiatives are general managed by **LDK Productions.**

"La Femme Theatre has always embraced plays with strong central female characters and perspectives. Over the past two years, we have expanded our mission not only to embrace up-and-coming female playwrights and directors, helping them develop their work for the stage, but also to showcase promising female artists. We are so fortunate to launch our two new initiatives with the talents of Carmen Berkeley, Kyla Kantor, and Phanésia Pharel."

Jean Lichty, La Femme Executive Director

Bios:

CARMEN BERKELEY (Performer in *Girl.*) is an actor from Washington Heights and currently based in Brooklyn. Recent credits include *Wintertime* (Berkeley Rep), *Our Dear Dead Drug Lord* (WP Theater/Second Stage), and *Our Town* (Barnstormers Theatre). In addition to La Femme, she has worked with New York Theatre Workshop, Manhattan Theatre Club, Shakespeare's Globe, ArsNova, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, Page 73, Normal Ave, and others. TV: *Law and Order: SVU*. BFA: Mason Gross School of the Arts.

KYLA KANTOR (Director of *Girl.*) is elated to be forging her professional directorial debut with La Femme after working as its executive assistant since 2020. She has an adoration of live arts and an affinity for it in numerous facets. After working in casting offices learning from the ingenious casting directors, Stephanie Klapper and Tara Rubin, she transitioned towards stage management. Her professional stage management has included projects such as: *PrideTable*, *We Chose to Go to the Moon* (Carnegie Hall), *Make Believe* (Second Stage), *Then She Fell* (Third Rail Productions), and *The Night of the Iguana* (La Femme Theatre Productions). Recent directorial credits include *True West*, *Fefu and Friends*, *The Elephant*

Man, and *Peter and the Starcatcher*. She now collaborates with the inventive theatrical team at bloc. Kyla is honored and inspired to have been selected to participate in La Femme's Women on the Verge initiative and would like to thank her illustrious mentor and friend, Jean Lichty, for this liberating opportunity.

PHANESIA PHAREL (Playwright of *Black Girl Joy*) is a playwright from the great state of Florida and the even greater city of Miami!! Grounded in poetry and Afrofuturism she often writes about the divine metaphysical dilemma of colored girlhood. Her plays span revolutions, islands, and explores futures built on love by centering women's pleasure, safety, and joy. AKA hopeful and magical survivor stories for the young, poor, women, colored, and those audacious enough to be all of the above. Full lengths; **LUCKY** (New York Stage and Film), **BLACK GIRL JOY** (Frank Moffett Mosier Fellowship for Works in Heightened Finalist Prize, Jane Chambers Finalist, O'Neill Semi-Finalist, Bay Area Playwrights Festival Semi-Finalist). Other Honors include City Theatre National Short Playwriting Finalist and Blank Stage "Future of Playwriting" Semi-Finalist. Phanésia is a member of the Obie award-winning EST/ Youngblood group. Commissions include City Theatre Miami, the Latinx Playwrights Circle & Pregones/PRTT Greater Good Commission and Thrown Stone Theatre. Residencies include New York Stage and Film, Echo Theater Company of Los Angeles, the Playwrights Center Core Apprenticeship, and the Inaugural 068 Magazine Thrown Stone Theatre Fellowship. Publishing: Concord Theatricals, Smith and Kraus Best Plays of 2020, Reset Coalition 2020 Anthology, and the City Theatre Anthology. BA: Urban Studies, Barnard College of Columbia University.

REGINA TAYLOR (Director of *Back Girl Joy*) Actress/director/playwright/educator/activist. Regina Taylor is writing new plays for Audible and for The Old Vic. Taylor is the curator/director of the black album mixtape in collaboration with SMU. The Black Album is an initiative created by Taylor to invite creatives from all fields to think about how we got here and what ways we can create a better future. Students, professionals and all communities are welcome to create in their given fields- technology, science, art, activism. [the black album mixtape](#). Taylor's playwriting credits include *Bread* (Edgerton Award. Water Tower Theater), *Crowns* (four Helen Hayes awards, including Best Director), *Oo-Bladee*, (Steinberg-ATCA award) and *Drowning Crow*, (Broadway, MTC), *The Trinity River Plays* (Edgerton Foundation Award) and *stop.reset* (Signature Theater Residency Five). Ms. Taylor received the Denzel Washington Endowed Chair Fordham University at Lincoln Center. An Artistic Associate of Goodman Theatre, Taylor is its most produced playwright. Regina Taylor is featured in "First Lady" (starring Viola Davis), "Love Craft Country" (Jordan Peele, J J Abrams, Mischa Green), Netflix' *All Day and a Night* starring Jeffrey Wright, Ashton Saunders and directed/written by Joe Robert Cole (writer: *Black Panther*), stars on "Council of Dads" (NBC), "Red Line" (Producer Ava DuVernay CBS), "The Good Fight." Taylor in her TV role as Lily Harper in "I'll Fly Away" received a Golden Globe Award for Best Performance by an Actress, 3 NAACP Image Awards and two Emmy Award nominations. Her other television roles include "The Unit." Taylor was the first African American lead in Masterpiece Theatre's "Cora Unashamed," starred as Anita Hill in HBO's "Strange Justice" (Gracie Award) and "A Good Day to Die," starring Sidney Poitier. She has co-starred in USA Networks' "Dig" and guest starred in "Elementary" and "The Black List." Taylor's film credits include *Saturday Church*, *The Negotiator*, *Courage Under Fire*, *Clockers*, and *Lean on Me*. Taylor was also the first Black woman to play Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* on Broadway. (Belasco Theatre)

MEGAN MOSTYN-BROWN (Playwright of *Girl*.) Megan's plays include *Girl*, *The Secret Lives Of Losers*, *Going After Alice*, *Lizards*, *Objects Are Closer Than They Appear*, *The Bends*, *Nora Gets A Boyfriend*, *Nancy Blue: Girl Detective* and *The Rest Of Your Life*. She's had productions at The Guthrie Theater, The Cherry Lane Theatre, Union Station Theater, Carleton College, NYC International Fringe Festival, MadCat Theater, The 52nd Street Project and The Actor's Theater of Louisville apprentice program. *Girl*. was turned into a sound play by Coyote Rep and is available as a podcast on I-Tunes. *Girl*., *The Secret Lives Of Losers*, and *Lizards* are published by Samuel French. Her short play for teens *The Woods Are For Suckers And Chumps* is published in the 2011 edition *Shorter, Faster, Funnier*. Megan is a member of LABYRINTH Theater Company and the 2010-2011 P73 Writers Lab. Former member of Women's Project Playwrights LAB and a guest playwright at New River Dramatists, The Orchard Project, The Royal Court Theatre, The Rockefeller Foundation, and the 24/7 Lab.

LA FEMME THEATRE PRODUCTIONS is an all-inclusive theater company dedicated to the exploration and celebration of the universal female experience. La Femme launched in 2014 as the associate producer of

William Inge's lost gem, *A Loss of Roses*, featuring Deborah Hedwall and Patricia Hodges, which Terry Teachout called "a triumphant exhumation" and included in the Wall Street Journal's "2014 Best Theater," and in 2015 as the associate producer of Clifford Odets's *Rocket to the Moon*, featuring Katie McClellan, Marilyn Matarrese, Ned Eisenberg, Larry Bull, and Jonathan Hadary – Drama Desk nomination. Then, La Femme co-produced Ingmar Bergman's *Nora* in 2015, followed by the 2017 Off-Broadway hit – Horton Foote's *The Traveling Lady*, directed by Tony nominee Austin Pendleton and featuring Tony Award winner Karen Ziemba and Lynn Cohen. In 2018, La Femme produced Williams's *A Lovely Sunday for Creve Coeur* with Tony Award nominee Kristine Nielsen and Annette O'Toole and, in 2020, streamed a digital presentation of his *The Night of the Iguana*, directed by Tony Award nominee Emily Mann and featuring Dylan McDermott and Tony Award winner Phylicia Rashad.

For more information about the new developmental series and La Femme Theatre Productions, visit LaFemmeTheatreProductions.org.