

Outside In Theatre Presents "In Honor of Jean-Michel Basquiat" by Roger Guenveur Smith

See this powerful live performance this March. Performances March 13 - 30, 2025 Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays at 8pm

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, February 26, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Outside In Theatre is thrilled to announce the first production in our new main theatre space in the Highland Park neighborhood of Los Angeles: Roger Guenveur Smith's In Honor Of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Design

team includes Marc Anthony

Thompson on Sound, which he will be running live during performances, Anne Militello of Vortex Lighting on Lighting and James Cowan of Rewarding, LLC on Scenic.

Native son Roger Guenveur Smith returns to Los Angeles after a tour of three nationally acclaimed performances: his signature Frederick Douglass Now; Otto Frank, distinguished as Bay Area Solo of the Year at the Magic Theatre; and In Honor of Jean-Michel Basquiat, called by the Minnesota Star Tribune "spellbinding...a storytelling master class."

In Honor of Jean-Michel Basquiat was initially improvised for Basquiat retrospectives at the Brooklyn Museum and the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, as well as commemorative events at Bootleg Theater. Smith recently engaged in conversation with filmmaker Sophia Heriveaux, Basquiat's niece, for the Gagosian Gallery's comprehensive survey of the New York artist's West Coast work.

In Honor of Jean-Michel Basquiat is scripted by Smith and scored by Marc Anthony Thompson. Their frequent collaborations include A Huey P. Newton Story, adapted from the Obie Award-winning stage play into a Peabody Award-winning telefilm, as well as the Bessie Award-winning Rodney King, currently streaming on Netflix. Both Newton and King were directed for the screen by Smith's longtime colleague Spike Lee.



Roger and Jean-Michel befriended each other in Los Angeles, with Basquiat painting in a Venice studio and Smith rapping in the fertile 1980s club scene as “Hollywatts.” Throughout the decade, Smith’s politically charged soliloquies frequently found their way onto Basquiat’s canvas, and Smith eventually created “Smiley,” a Basquiat-inspired character for Lee’s classic DO THE RIGHT THING. Tragically, as Roger was improvising the artist/arsonist Smiley in Jean-Michel’s Brooklyn, Basquiat expired in Manhattan.

Smith and Thompson have also devised work inspired by Christopher Columbus, Jimi Hendrix, and Bob Marley, artists Simon Rodia and Charles White, and baseball greats Juan Marichal and John Roseboro, while staging travelogues of Philadelphia, Iceland, San Francisco, and Panama, as well as revivals of Katori Hall’s The Mountaintop and Steven Berkoff’s Agamemnon. Smith directed the Ovation and Bessie Award-winning Radio Mambo: Culture Clash Invades Miami, and, with Mark Broyard, created and performed Inside The Creole Mafia, a “not-too-dark comedy.” Roger studied at Yale University and Occidental College, and has taught at both institutions, as well as Cal Arts, directing his Performing History Workshop.

Jessica Hanna, Producing Artistic Director of Outside In Theatre, says, “It is one of the joys of my career to have produced a number of Roger’s solo shows since 2007, including RODNEY KING which toured the world and continues to resonate on NETFLIX. I am honored to have him anoint our new theatre space with his artistry. It is a fortuitous beginning.”

Details:

In Honor Of Jean-Michel Basquiat

Created & Performed by Roger Guenveur Smith

Produced by Outside In Theatre

March 13 - 30, 2025

Thursdays at 8:00pm

Fridays at 8:00pm

Saturdays at 8:00pm

Sundays at 8:00pm

Tickets & Info:

General Admission: \$25

Students: \$15

Seniors: \$15

<https://outsideintheatre.org/basquiat/>

Outside In Theatre

5317 York Blvd.

Los Angeles 90042

Street Parking available in the area

Instagram: @outsideinthtr

Outside In Theatre is a new non-profit theatre in the Highland Park neighborhood of Los Angeles. An evolving force in equitable and transformative storytelling. Through multi-platform theatrical experiences, we create art that speaks to our intersectional communities. We have a focus on new work, both Scripted and Unscripted, developing new plays as well as creating improvised stories that will lift up the voices of the Global Majority (a collective term for people of Indigenous, African, Asian, and Latin American descent), Queer, Disabled and other traditionally marginalized groups and their allies. Outside In lives at the intersection of Live & Digital performance, with infrastructure for cameras and streaming that will create greater access to the work of local artists. We believe in making Brave Spaces for All, by creating & supporting daring, dynamic, and authentic untold stories by unheard voices.

www.outsideintheatre.org

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