

Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit
presents its

2019 Story Night Experience

Be Your Own Hero



Saturday, March 23, 2019

**Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History
315 E Warren Ave, Detroit, MI 48201**

4-10 p.m.

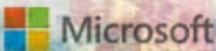
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HOUR
DETROIT



EXPECT SOMETHING MORE™



The character they develop most is their own.

AAA salutes the continuing impact Mosaic Youth Theater has on so many young lives in Detroit. Congratulations to the Theater on another stellar year.

Bravo!

Welcome to Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit's Signature Fundraising Event

2019 Story Night Experience

Saturday, March 23, 2019

Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History

315 E Warren Ave, Detroit, MI 48201

4-10 p.m.

ORDER OF THE EVENING

Prologue 4-6 p.m., Orientation Theatre

Facilitator Chris Campbell, *NPR/WDET Air Personality & Host of The Progressive Underground*

Panelists Bobby Sessions, *Def Jam Recording Artist*
Chip Miller, *Artistic Associate, Resident Director, Kansas City Repertory Theatre*
Courtney Smith, *Mosaic Youth Theatre Alum & Executive Director, Detroit Phoenix Center*

VIP Reception 6-7 p.m., Contemporary Gallery

A transition tribute honoring Founding Artistic Director Rick Sperling as he retires, and welcoming Artistic Director DeLashea Strawder and Executive Director Stefanie Worth

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Story Night Experience 7-10 p.m., Rotunda

Emcee Tati Amare, *Co-Host, Live In the D - WDIV*

With performances by Bobby Sessions, *Def Jam Recording Artist*
Mosaic Main Stage Acting Ensemble
Mosaic Singers

The Prologue to tonight's story

Prologue 4-6 p.m.
Orientation Theatre



FACILITATOR

Chris Campbell
*NPR/WDET Air Personality & Host of
The Progressive Underground*

Chris Campbell is a DJ/music journalist and nationally-renowned tastemaker who has written for publications such as Upscale, Smooth Jazz News, Soul Interviews and Examiner. His books *The Essential Neo Soul* and *Neo Soul 2.0* spotlight the progressive soul music movement and are the only publications to cover its history. Campbell is also a correspondent for NPR (National Public Radio) curating global underground music for segments such as “Heavy Rotation” and “Songs We Love.”



PANELIST

Chip Miller
*Artistic Associate, Resident Director,
Kansas City Repertory Theatre*

CHIP MILLER is the Artistic Associate, Resident Director at Kansas City Repertory Theatre. *Directing: School Girls, or; The African Mean Girls Play, Welcome to Fear City, Sex With Strangers, A Raisin in the Sun, (KCRep); Becoming Martin by Kevin Willmott (world premiere, The Coterie); 4:48 Psychosis (The Buffalo Room); David George's Christmas Ain't A Drag (The Madrid).*

Performing: The Fantasticks (KCRep).

Education: BFA: New York University, Tisch School of the Arts.

Chip will be relocating to Portland, OR in the spring 2019 to become the Associate Producer for Portland Center Stage at the Armory.



PANELIST

Courtney Smith
*Mosaic Youth Theatre Alum & Executive Director,
Detroit Phoenix Center*

Courtney is no stranger to doing the boots on the ground work. She has spent many years as a coordinator, educator, and mentor with national and local nonprofit organizations; distinguishing herself as an industry leader and champion for youth.

She is the Founder & Executive Director of Detroit Phoenix Center (DPC). Detroit Phoenix Center is a high impact nonprofit organization that provides critical resources and a safe, nurturing environment for youth experiencing homelessness. Under her visionary leadership, Detroit Phoenix Center opened the first and only drop in facility meeting the emergent needs of teens and young adults in crisis in Detroit, launched a scholarship fund, and tripled their operating budget to expand their programs and services to get more youth off the street.

Courtney is a sought after speaker and facilitator on topics related to: youth and community development, advocacy and servant leadership. Her commitment to professional excellence, advocacy and service has led her to be featured in USA Today, Michigan Chronicle, Rolling Out Magazine, Mic, NPR and many other media outlets. She has appeared on the Katie Couric Show and Michigan Entrepreneur TV. She is a double-time recipient of the Spirit of Detroit Award from the Detroit City Council, a recipient of the Women of Excellence Award from the Women's Resource Center and Trailblazer Award from Alternative for Girls. She was recently dubbed an “All-Star in Detroit” by award winning journalist, Ann Marie LaFlamme.



Bobby Sessions
Def Jam Recording Artist



BOBBY SESSIONS
IS THE LEGEND
FROM DALLAS, TX.



BOBBY SESSIONS was born and raised in Pleasant Grove, Dallas Texas, a predominantly Black, low-to-lower middle income neighborhood southeast of the metroplex — a place that prepares better for survival than stardom. Midway through his formative years, Bobby and his family relocated to Rowlett, a suburb 20 miles northeast, and it can be argued that Bobby's proximity to both realities are essential to the development of the perspectives illustrated in his music. The absence of police sirens and helicopters allowed a young Bobby Sessions to develop a passion for learning and an imagination bordered only by the limits of language. Poetry became his preferred and most celebrated medium but a few years of college in Denton, TX would repurpose Bobby's creative strengths into what would bring him more personal fulfillment than he ever imagined. It was at the University of North Texas in 2010 that Bobby first penned a poem over a beat, and he hasn't looked back since.

A growing profile in the pre-pubescent, area rap scene swelled Bobby's confidence and proficiency, but bills and basic necessities don't accept lyrics or clout for payment. Bobby spent 2010 through 2014 bouncing between jobs he hated, preparing for a destiny in which he was confident but not always certain. In 2013, he stumbled across *The Secret*, a documentary that is a collection of testimonials to the law of attraction. Moved and inspired by this ideology, Bobby Sessions wasted no time making the first of his many self-fulfilled promises - there is no Plan B. "What you think you become," a quote pulled from the documentary, became Sessions' mantra. Everything he desired, he spoke and wrote, including the words "DEF JAM" on his refrigerator in 2014.

With \$50 in his bank account, Bobby set forth on a journey of self-realization, agonizing honesty and ritual denial in a life-changing effort that would ultimately produce results in the form of signing to HIGH STANDARDz, under the guidance of industry veterans VINCE CHAPA and JEREMY "J DOT" JONES; and his first label-backed project: LOA (Law Of Attraction) in late 2015. The project was applauded widely as thought-provoking, bar-raising and a proper introduction for a still little-known Dallas act whose lead single *Black America* contorted necks at the Source, XXL and other media outlets that summer.

Just a little over a year after LOA, Bobby's sophomore project *Grateful*, debuted and revealed an even more musically-inclined, confident and vulnerable

master of ceremonies than its predecessor. Out the gate, he released "First World Problems," a single that seeks to remind listeners of the blessings in simply being alive. Following that, Bobby released the visual component to the album's title track, "Grateful," premiered on platforms such as REVOLT and Mass Appeal for his lyrics, visuals provided by German Torres and music production from Sikwitit and PICNICTYME - all Dallas-based creatives. If *Grateful* was anything more than an exceptional follow-up, it was a demonstration of Bobby and his community's dedication to quality content - whether musical, visual or cultural.

Over the course of a year, Bobby attracted the attention of DEF JAM RECORDINGS, and most notably, their then-recently appointed CEO, PAUL ROSENBERG. And after a listen and meaningful exchange, Rosenberg signed Bobby Sessions to Def Jam Recordings through HIGH STANDARDz, fulfilling a prophecy Sessions made four years prior.

Bobby's ongoing story is a testament to the tenacity necessary to pursue and actualize one's desires. From a city where creatives of color often suffer from what is mutually considered a cultural glass ceiling; where artists of every discipline are often lured by the promises and confidences of places like New York or Los Angeles or Atlanta where the blueprint has long been established and therefore more certain than these native but untested waters; where there are no satellites, outposts or industry insiders to report on the cultural richness breaking through cracks in the concrete, only scavengers with the scent of our sauce seeping from screen doors, filling heads and inspiring hooks, songs and dance moves FROM here, everywhere BUT here. Bobby Sessions fought against it. He fought against the sanitation of increasing gentrification that downsized stage time for Black arts and Black artists in Deep Ellum. He fought against the devaluation of local music coverage that deemed support of independent musicians disposable.

Before any of these accomplishments and accolades existed, Bobby Sessions willed it. He told himself, his loved ones and supporters: this day will come, this moment will arrive - a practice he'd come upon during some of his lowest moments. And through affirmation, diligence and a refusal of anything outside the lines of his dreams - everything he told us would happen, happened.

Bobby Sessions is the legend from Dallas, Texas.



The Scene Stealer

VIP Reception 6-7 p.m.
Contemporary Gallery

After 27 performance seasons, Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit's Founding Artistic Director Rick Sperling officially retires on August 31, 2019. Tonight we offer a prequel to tributes and fetes that will take place later this summer. As Rick steps down, Stefanie Worth stepped in as Executive Director on May 14, 2018, with DeLashea Strawder taking on the role as Artistic Director as of December 1, 2018. Under a new co-leadership model, DeLashea and Stefanie look forward to an exciting future that upholds and expands the legacy of the internationally-acclaimed creative youth development organization.



Rick Sperling
Founding Artistic Director



DeLashea Strawder
Artistic Director



Stefanie Worth
Executive Director

The Story Night Experience

Story Night Experience 7-10 p.m.
Rotunda



EMCEE
Tati Amare
Co-host, *Live In the D* - WDIV

Tati Amare is an Emmy nominated producer and award-winning journalist who currently hosts WDIV-Local 4's entertainment and lifestyle morning show, *Live in the D*. With strong experience both in front of and behind the camera, Tati brings a wealth of knowledge and passion to any project or assignment she tackles.

Constantly striving to be deeply connected to the community where she lives and works, Amare takes chapters of her own life to relate to those around her. It was an organic transition to turn a natural curiosity into a career as responsible and resourceful host and producer. The storyteller continues to be fascinated seeing life through someone else's lens, and taking in experiences through another perspective.

The inspiration of being raised in both Los Angeles and New York, as well as being a first-generation immigrant from Ethiopia, have sharpened Amare's eye for creating context and relatable storytelling. Coupled with her approachable, down-to-earth personality gives her the unique ability to connect with her audience and the diverse communities she serves. Throughout her diverse and rich career, she has hosted and produced a wide range of news, lifestyle, food and travel programs. Her creativity has been applauded for taking simple ideas and turning them into strong stories.

As a self-described life-long learner, Amare considers her career to be an ever-evolving learning process. She is always looking to keep her finger on the pulse of the city, and to scope out the next up-and-coming community event.

When she's not on a quest for her next story or interview, you'll find her planning her next dinner party for loved ones, volunteering in her community, binge watching documentaries and seeking out new indie coffee spots.

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Director, Signature Events
Detroit Regional Chamber



Mosaic Team

DeLashea Strawder, Artistic Director & Stefanie Worth, Executive Director
Rick Sperling - Founding Artistic Director

Joe Bailey - Executive Administrative Assistant

Darius Buckley - Community & Alumni Relations Coordinator

Jessica Byrd - Communications Manager

MiVida Burrus - Director of Development

Kristen Clauder - Development Administrator

El Chen - Intern, University of Michigan-School of Social Work

Maurice Draughn - Music Assistant and Accompanist

Amber Griffin - Assistant Director of Acting

Andrew Huff - Associate Director of Acting

Kelly Komlen - Senior Acting Coach

Alreda Liles - Program Coordinator

Annette Madias - Grant Writer

Charlene McNary - Finance & Operations Manager

Alexandria Miller - Second Stage Chorus Conductor

Lumumba Reynolds - Audio & Video Coordinator

Dennis Ryans II - Second Stage Music Assistant and Accompanist

Aleesa Searcy - Senior Programs Administrator

Keir Ward - Music Assistant and Accompanist





2018-2019 SEASON



- **FRANKENSTEIN**
October 26-28, 2018
- **WOODWARD WONDERLAND**
December 7-9, 2018
- **THE LARAMIE PROJECT**
February 22-24, 2019
- **THIS IS ME**
March 8-10, 2019
- **DETROIT TO DAKAR**
May 10-19, 2019

mosaicdetroit.org/tickets



2018-19 Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit Company

Second Stage Actors

Amara Middlebrooks
Ayden Diomande
Barrington Strozier
Celia Hughes
Dauclau Diallo
DeAhna Brown
Gabrielle Dial
Hazel Griffin
Jayla Taylor
Katelyn Myers
Kayla Pickett
Lucia Putnam
Moryah Young
Sage Berg
Tamara Armstrong
Taylana Bolden

Second Stage Singers

Alaya Martin
Amber White
April Dixon
Cyra Chamberlain
Dea'onne Reynolds
Gregory Strayhorn
Heiress Vick
Joshua Mulei
Kaitlyn Canady
Kendall McDaniels
Kennedi Flaniken
Keziah Kudowor
Madison Reeves
Makiah Quinn
Miriam Toure
Olivia Johnson
Rhyann Ramsey
Sonia Singh
Sydney Flaniken
Tyler Ward

Main Stage Actors

Carlyn Brown
Chauncy Sutton
Cierra Hedgespeth
Deia Williams
Delisle Leslie
Greg Miller
Ife Martin
James Sawyer
Janaé Dyas
Jayla Dyas
Jimmie Comer III
John Sanford
Kalifa Reynolds
Kivon Reeves
Laila Jackson
Lyndsey Pollock
Madyson Pierce
Maya McEntyre
Mikaela Johnson
Myles Dungey
Nayanna Hollins
Paris Allen
Ryan Stapleton
Shaila Jackson
Shanice Davis
Sierra McCants
Simone Clotile
Tiara Mansfield
Timia Davis
Tyleah Tyner

Main Stage Singers

Alesia Adams
Alise Sellers
Aniya Sellers
Antoinio Fields
Aria Wells
Arionna Pittman
Arym Ward
Ciara Edmond
Chase Williams

Cherish Young
Crystal Tigney
Damon Pierson
De'Aunna Dalton
De'Onna Edwards
Devin White
Donovan Rogers
Emerson Jeffries
Genae Williams
Jacqueline Whitfield
Jasonn Parnell
Joya Bailey
Kaliq White
Kamryn Ragland
Kristianna Marks
LaRyn Ridgeway
Meleah Acuff
Nadia Johnson
Nakayla Morgan
Naomi Sharp
Olivia Washington
Rayven Davis
Samuel Fairley
Shammah Sharp
Timothy Ward
Tre'Vion Sellers
Victoria Grace
Xayvion Duncan
Zoe Frazier

Back Stage

Daniel Sharp
DuJuan Calderin
Jalise Little
John Garrett
Joshua Stephens
Katie Cherven
Kanya Carter
Lynayah Roberts
Nya Johnson
Ryenne Tracey
Tyler Copeland



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THE EFFORTS
OF THOSE WHO
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**We don't see it as caring
for our community**

We see it as caring for our family



Ascension

Ascension Michigan
ascension.org/michigan

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For Your Support!**



Microsoft salutes the
students, parents,
staff, and volunteers
of Mosaic Youth
Theatre.

Thank you for all
that you do.

