# Essential Theatre

## 2026-2027 SUBSCRIBERS

### ESSENTIAL BENEFACTOR $1000 - $2,500

Thyria Greene Ansley
Rev. and Mrs. Theodore Houston
Larry and Sharon Robinson
Dr. Gary and Katrina Rolle
Kenneth Williams

### ESSENTIAL ANGEL $550 - $999

Sharon “Shabu” Anderson
Beverly Barber
Mr. Linzie F. Bogan and Dr. Yolanda Bogan
Drs. A.J. and Mildred Brickler
Gretel and Anthony LaRocca
The Family of Mrs. Lucile M. Williams
Dr. Vivian Wright Wilson
Rodner and Clarise Wright

### ESSENTIAL STAR $300 - $ 549

Dr. Na’im Akbar
Dr. Samuel and Pastor Barbara Awoniyi
In Memory of Fred and Sarah Blackshear
Kimberley E. Brown, MSW
In Memory of Queen H. Bruton
Ceseann D. Carroll
Carolyn D. Cummings, Esq.
Tara Y. Davis
Delta Sigma Theta, Tallahassee Alumnae Chapter
Bev DeMello
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In Memory of Ivradell and John R. Haugabrook
Fredrica Jones
Jason and Karen Knight
William and Vernell McCray
Dr. Jennifer Wilder McKinney
In Loving Memory of Betty H. Rivers
Eva Parker and Cheryl Parker Rose
Tonya Session and Jacquelyn Ross
Martha L. Saunders
Darryl and Latricia Scriven
Shauna Y. Smith
Patricia P. Thompson
Jeff and Lynn Bowens Turner
Earl and Annette Washington
Sylvia D. Williams

### ESSENTIAL FRIEND $150 - $299

Cheryl Anderson
Clothelia Calhoun
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Patricia A. Clem
Jimmie and Jennifer Collins
E. Murell Dawson
Dr. Emma Dawson and Darrel T. Dawson
Sylvia DuPont
Bernard and Janis Edwards
Alberta Duffee
Wileen Footman
Dr. Gary Futrell and Mrs. Aldria White-Futrell
Barbara D. Green
Fredia J. Houston
Vera Haugabrook
Dr. Malinda Jackson-James
Brenda G. Johnson
Gloria Jones
In Loving Memory of Curtis and Trudi King
Mira Lowe
Phillip and Abigail Madison
Carla McBride
Doris Maloy
Angela Murphy
Hester O’Rourke, RN
Cedric and Sylvia Petties
Christine and Dennis Reilly
Eunice Rivers
Juanita Robinson
Stephanie Roeser
Dee Rush in Memory of Dr. F. R. Rush
Kia Sanders
Betty Smith
Caretha Thomas
Elton E. Thomas
Frank and Annie Trueblood
John Washington
Dr. Marilyn Weatherspoon
Harris and Mary Wells
Kim and Marvin Williams
Dr. Tamaria Williams
Lorene Wilson
Dr. Dhyana Ziegler

### ESSENTIAL SUBSCRIBER $70 - $149

Akiba Aliyy
Mary Alice Allen
Tina Austin
Sharon Westberry Bradshaw
Sylvia Byrd
Gwendolyn Dixon
Sharon Ford
Blondenia T. Gibson
Mary Lafitte Grayson
Nancy Godette
Wendell E. Kimbrough II
Curlis Knowles
Mavis Labounty
Larry W. Mack
Brigitte H. Marshall
C. Okoro
Alveria Redding
Gwen Roache
Gail Rogers
Valeria Singleton
Gloria Marion Smith
Dr. Ukamaka Smith
Fran Thomas
A. Bowen-Watts
Takisha F. West
Margaret White
Phyllis Wooten

### ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS

T’Keyah Crystal Keymah
John Pryor

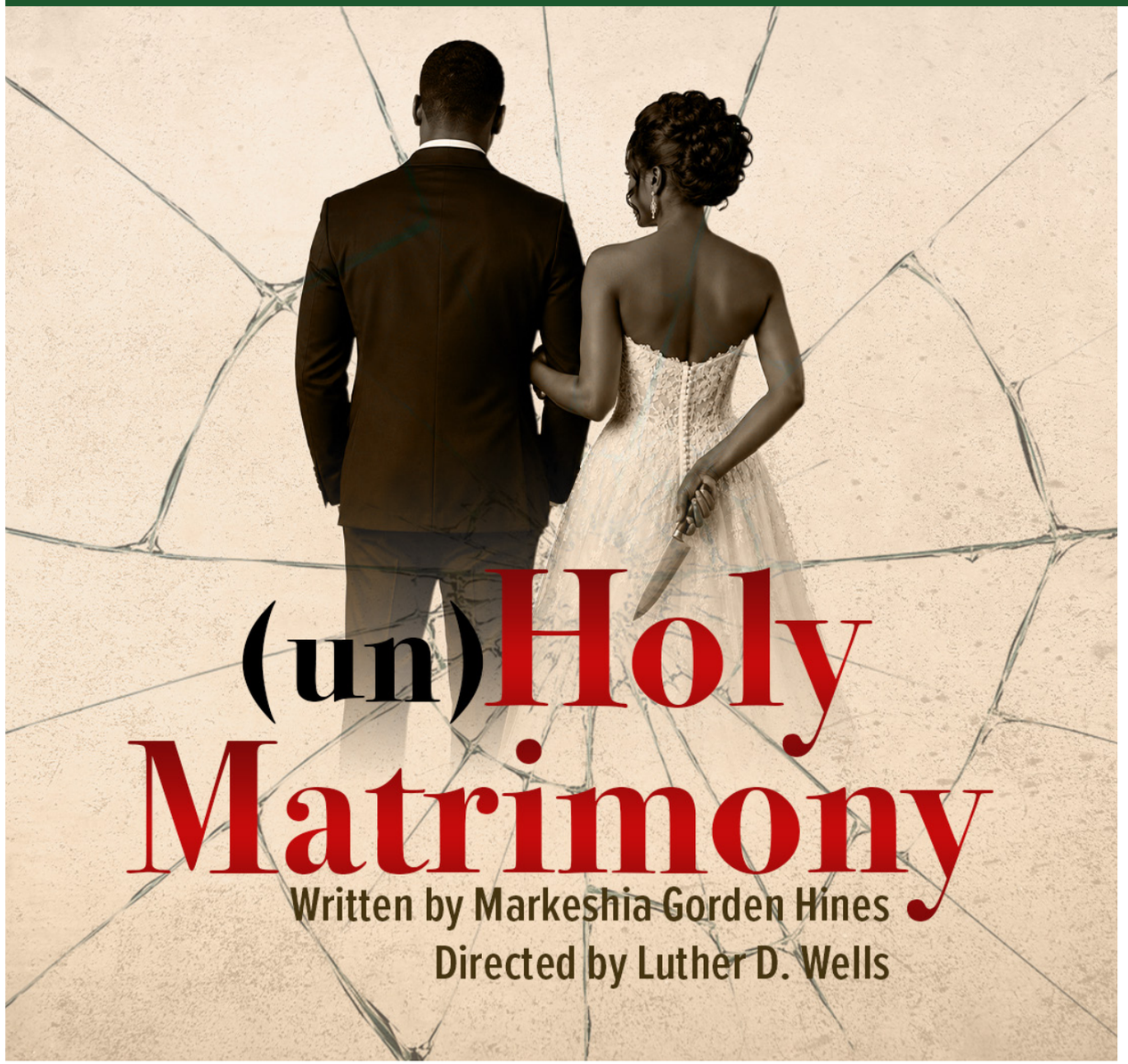
### SPONSORS

Sharon Lettman Hicks | Directors Circle 10,000

FAMU FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY ESSENTIAL THEATRE

2026-2027 SEASON | November 6-8, 2026

Writing for Life Play Reading Series | Ronald O. Davis Acting Studio



# (un)Holy Matrimony

Written by Markeshia Gorden Hines

Directed by Luther D. Wells

# (un)Holy Matrimony

WRITTEN BY **MARKESHIA GORDEN HINES** DIRECTED BY **LUTHER D. WELLS**

**PROJECTIONS DESIGN** Ruben Arana
**LIGHTING DESIGN** C. Bacote Robinson
**SOUND DESIGN** Kimberly K. Harding
**STAGE MANAGER** Desmond Lewis

Produced by Special Arrangement with Markeshia Gorden Hines

**CONTENT WARNINGS:** Adult Themes and Description of Violence

Cameras and recording devices of any kind are absolutely prohibited in the theatre. Please turn off or silence your cell phones, and any alarms before the show begins.



**ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT**

Markeshia Gorden Hines is a multifaceted artist, playwright, actor, director, producer, and educator whose work bridges the worlds of professional entertainment and higher education. A proud alumna of Florida A&M University, she serves as a Visiting Professor of Theater at her alma mater. She's passionate about cultivating the next generation of storytellers and creative professionals. She holds a Master of Fine Arts in Acting for Film from the New York Film Academy Los Angeles and a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre from Florida A&M University. Her experience spans stage, film, commercial productions, directing, and arts education. Beyond the classroom, she remains engaged in the entertainment industry, bringing experience and insight into her work as an educator and mentor. As a playwright, Markeshia is drawn to stories that explore the complexities of human relationships, faith, identity, and the often–unspoken truth. Written in 2013, *(un)Holy Matrimony* was born from Divine inspiration–a story God trusted her to tell. Thirteen years later, she returns to work with renewed perspectives, examining the tension between appearances and private struggles while weaving humor into deep human narratives. Through storytelling, Markeshia seeks to entertain, challenge perspectives, and spark conversations that resonate after the final curtain.

**PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE**

I am a storyteller at heart. For more than two decades, I've brought stories to life through acting, writing, directing, and producing. I believe the most powerful stories often emerge from life's ordinary moments, where faith, love, laughter, and uncomfortable truths collide.

In 2013, God placed *(un)Holy Matrimony* on my heart, and I answered the call to write it. Thirteen years later, revisiting this story and adapting it from screenplay to stage is a full-circle moment. Once written from the perspective of a single woman, I now approach it as a wife and mother, bringing deeper understanding and appreciation for the experiences that shape us.

As a playwright, I find joy in exploring the complexities of life and giving voice to the unspoken. My prayer is that through the laughter, uncomfortable truths, and moments of reflection, you'll recognize something familiar, discover something unexpected, and leave with something worth talking about.




## MORE TO COME!

There's more excitement ahead! Become a FAMU Essential Theatre subscriber and enjoy the unforgettable performances still to come in our 2026–2027 season. Subscribe today and experience the magic of live theatre!




Ready to take the stage? FAMU Essential Theatre invites you to audition for our upcoming productions of *Change It Up! "Speakable Joy"* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Bring your talent, passion, and creativity to the stage!

**A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE**
Self-Tape Auditions, Submit by Saturday, November 28, 2026

**CHANGE IT UP! "SPEAKABLE JOY"**
December 2 and 3, 2026

For additional auditon information, scan the QR code

**SETTING:** Present day.

## CAST

| CHARACTERS | ACTORS |
|---|---|
| CRYSTAL | Oksana Sun |
| JULIAN | Jordan Noland |
| SELENA | Tommye Campbell |
| STEPHANIE | Jaya Knight |
| RHONDA P./NURSE | Jordan James |
| AYANNA | Reshina Heath |
| BOSS/POLICE OFFICER | Kendall Smith |
| NARRATOR | Dana Ladd |
| PASTOR | Francois Louis |

*There will be a 10-minute intermission.*
*The sound of the chime indicates the time to return to your seats*

## PRODUCTION STAFF

**Productions Manager:** Luther D. Wells
**Technical Director:** C. Bacote Robinson
**Stage Manager:** Desmond Lewis
**Company Manager:** Aisah Pope
**Light Board Operator:** Chase Johnson
**Sound Board Operator:** Janiah Jefferson
**Projections Operator:** Jania Sparrow
**Paint and LED Crew:** Jania Sparrow, Ky Estiverne
Kyndal Jones, Layla Brown, Shya Lee
**Properties:** Evelyn Harris

**House Manager:** Justin Troupe
**House Staff:** Students
enrolled in Creative Works
**Director of Ticket Sales**
**and Patron Services:** Kimberly K. Harding
**Box Office Manager:** Monica R. Woods
**Box Office and Will Call Staff:** Layla Holloway,
Tommye Campbell, Taleyah Belcher
**Director of Marketing:** Willis Fedd
**Publicity Graphics & Program Layout:** Willis Fedd

## FACULTY & STAFF

**Valencia E. Matthews:** Director of Theatre | Dean, College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities
**Ruben Arana:** Scene Design
**Edith Carnley:** Costume Design
**Kaye Celeste Evans:** Visiting Professor
**Willis Fedd:** Marketing Director
**Markeshia Gorden Hines:** Visiting Professor
**Kimberly K. Harding:** Management | Sound Design
**C. Bacote Robinson:** Technical Director | Lighting Design
**Anedra Small:** Performance | Vocal Coach Criticism | Recruitment
**Evelyn D. Harris:** Properties | Special Events | Recruitment
**Luther D. Wells:** Associate Director of Theatre Performance | Recruitment

# MEET THE CAST



**TOMMYE CAMPBELL**
**Selena**

Tommye Campbell is a junior Theatre scholar with a concentration in Management from Marietta, GA. She received her theatre and dance training through Young Voices United and has showcased her versatility in productions including *Tin Can Promises* as an autistic teenager, *We Out Here* as Jada, and *Down Center* as a teenage survivor of sexual assault. She also portrayed the title role of Mariah in FAMU Essential Theatre's production of *Ode to Mariah*. In addition to her work on stage, Tommye has gained backstage experience as a stagehand and is passionate about expanding her skills in directing, stage management, scenic design, and lighting and sound design. She is also a member of the FAMU Connection.



**RESHINA HEATH**
**Ayanna**

Reshina Heath is a passionate performer with a love for storytelling and bringing compelling characters to life. She makes her FAMU Essential Theatre debut as Ayanna in *(un)Holy Matrimony*. With dedication to her craft, Reshina embraces opportunities to challenge herself, connect with audiences, and explore the emotional depth of each character she portrays. She continues to develop her artistry through performances that inspire, engage, and leave a lasting impression.



**JORDAN JAMES**
**Rhonda P./Nurse**

Jordan James is a senior Theatre Performance scholar from Maplewood, NJ. She has showcased her talent in a range of productions, including *Poof!* as Loureen, *Blues for an Alabama Sky* as Delia, *Skeleton Crew* as Shanita, and *Flyin' West* as Minnie.



**JAYA KNIGHT**
**Stephanie**

Jaya Knight is a Theatre Performance scholar from Miramar, FL. She has showcased her talent in productions including *Something Rotten! Jr.* as an Ensemble Member and Announcer, and *A Temporary Haven* by Laurie Allen, which she performed at the 2025 District 13 Thespian Festival and the 2026 Florida State Thespian Festival. With a passion for storytelling and the performing arts, Jaya continues to develop her craft while pursuing opportunities in theatre, television, and film.



**DANA LADD**
**Narrator**

Dana Ladd is a third-year Theatre Performance scholar from Broward County, FL. She has showcased her talent in productions including *The Wiz* as Addaperle, *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide / When the Rainbow Is Enuf* as the Lady in Yellow, and *Once on This Island* as Erzulie. In addition to her work on stage, Dana served as Sound Board Operator for the 2026 Senior Showcase. She makes her FAMU Essential Theatre debut in *(un)Holy Matrimony*.



**FRANÇOIS LOUIS**
**Pastor**

François Louis is a recent graduate of the University of Kentucky J. David Rosenberg College of Law and an alumnus of Florida A&M University and Florida State University. His professional background spans law, education, public service, and community engagement, with experience in mental health, guardianship, and program management. He has also worked in public defense and private legal practice and previously served as an adjunct professor of sociology. He makes his FAMU Essential Theatre debut in *(un)Holy Matrimony*.



**JORDAN NOLAND**
**Julian**

Jordan Noland is a senior Theatre Performance scholar at Florida A&M University. An actor, singer, and dancer, he has showcased his talent in FAMU Essential Theatre productions including *Thoughts of a Colored Man* as the understudy for Lust and *Day of Absence* as Clem. He has also appeared in several local short films and is a member of the FAMU Connection. Beyond performing, Jordan enjoys painting and listening to music. He lives by the motto, "You only get one, so live it up!"



**KENDALL SMITH**
**Boss/Police Officer**

Kendall Smith is a second-year Theatre scholar from Jacksonville, FL. He has showcased his talent in FAMU Essential Theatre productions including *Book of Layman* as Shamis Jr., *Sibling Rivalry* as Terrell, Kevin Johnson, and Marcus, and *Ode to Mariah* as Bill. In addition to his work on stage, Kendall has gained backstage experience through his involvement in *Echoes of the Heart: A Musical Revue*.



**OKSANA SUN**
**Crystal**

Oksana Sun is a senior Theatre Performance scholar from Atlanta, GA. Her FAMU Essential Theatre performance credits include *Fat Ham* as Tedra and *Confederates* as understudy for Sara. In addition to her work on stage, Oksana has served as Sound Board Operator for *Book of Layman*, Costume Designer for *Echoes of the Heart: A Musical Revue*, Company Manager for *Fat Ham*, and Special Effects Makeup Technician for *Confederates*. She is also a member of the FAMU Connection and proudly serves as Ms. Essential Theatre for the 2026–2027 academic year.