TALKIN’ TO THIS CHICK
SIPPIN’ MAGIC POTION

STREAMING FEB 7 - FEB 26, 2021
TALKIN’ TO THIS CHICK SIPPIN’ MAGIC POTION is the second show presented as part of our WORKshop Series. All of these works in development are potent examples of the gifts that present themselves in the midst of extraordinary challenge.

We made the decision last July to shift our programming to a streaming model, plan for a monthly membership, and expand our offerings from our usual six productions to twelve plays this season. It felt like it was the right path to sustaining a connection with our patrons, and they are vibrant, important contributions to our ongoing artistic efforts.

Giving time and space for playwrights like James Anthony Tyler to work with the keen eye of director Awoye Timpo, along with a probing group of actors to continue the development of MAGIC POTION, has been, well, magical. While this “work in progress” is only one stop along the way, we are deeply gratified that we played a role in its development.

Perhaps more importantly, we did not expect the rewards we would get from these WORKshop readings. Adding six shows gave us the opportunity to work with six new playwrights, three new directors (with three more to come) and nine superbly talented actors for the first time. This infusion of new talent, new energy, new voices and new collaborators has been a tremendous gift.

We hope you will join me in recognizing the great gift we have in supporting these new connections, and bringing these artists and stories to you this season.

Rob Ruggiero

The WORKshop Series is produced in partnership with Bank of America and is focused on early development projects, conceived and written primarily by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). The WORKshop series reflects the moment we’re in.
TALKIN’ TO THIS CHICK SIPPIN’ MAGIC POTION

a work in progress by
James Anthony Tyler
directed by Awoye Timpo

THE CAST
(alphabetical order)

Rubén Zorrilla, Jr.  MATEO FERRO
Sheba Bathson  MIRIAM A. HYMAN
Jornay Nelson  SHERIA IRVING
Tiffany Nelson  JULES LATIMER
Steve Nelson  DARIUS MCCALL

Dialect/ASL Coach  MARYSUE OWENS
ASL Consultant/Interpreter  SHANA GIBBS
ASL Interpreter  BRENT TRACY
ASL Interpreter  YAKATA NICHOLS
Casting  ERICA JENSEN, CSA
Stage Manager  KATE J. CUDWORTH
Stage Direction  TANEISHA DUGGAN

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VIRTUAL DESIGN COLLECTIVE

Show art by Michael McKiernan
Actors appear with the permission of SAG/AFTRA

TheaterWorks Hartford is celebrating its 35th season as a non-profit, professional theater company. Founded in 1985.

TALKIN’ TO THIS CHICK SIPPIN’ MAGIC POTION is the 5th production of the 2020-2021 Season.

TheaterWorks Hartford • 233 Pearl Street • Hartford, CT 06103 • 2021
MATEO FERRO (Rubén Zorrilla, Jr.) is making his TheaterWorks Hartford debut. Thank you all for watching this piece of art. May we all continue to sit with our own energy and spread love and truth on this planet while going through these reality changing times.


SHERIA IRVING (Jornay Nelson) is making her TheaterWorks Hartford debut. Broadway: Romeo and Juliet (Richard Rodgers Theater). Off-Broadway and NY Theater: White Noise (The Public Theater); Crowndation: I Will Not Lie To David (NBT & CTG); Fit for a Queen (CTH); While I Yet Live (Primary Stages); A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Masterworks). Regional: The Model American (Williamstown Theatre Festival); Cymbeline, The Winter’s Tale (Yale Rep). TV/Film: Bobcat Moretti; Them: Covenant; Twenties; The Good Wife, and Madam Secretary. Founder of the nonprofit Shaping Her Earth, www.shapingherearth.com. MFA Yale School of Drama.

JULES LATIMER (Tiffany Nelson) is making her TheaterWorks Hartford debut. Off-Broadway: Paris (Atlantic Theatre); Regional: Angela’s Mixtape (Martha’s Vineyard Playhouse); Romeo and Juliet (Chautauqua Theatre Company). A recent graduate from The Juilliard School. Some of her past roles at school have been Prospero in The Tempest, She in The Owl Answers, and Pumpkin in Paradise Blue. Before Juilliard, she was the winner of the August Wilson Monologue Competition in Atlanta. It was documented in the film The Start of Dreams starring Kenny Leon and Denzel Washington.
DARIUS MCCALL (Steve Nelson) is making his TheaterWorks Hartford debut. Nominated for Best Lead Actor in his role as Franco Wicks (Superior Donuts), Darius has performed in both contemporary and classical roles such as Thomas (The Shipment), Wil Parish (Flyin’ West), and Old King (The Bloody Banquet). Darius trained with renowned acting teacher, Wynn Handman in New York, NY. He also trained in voice, classical movement, stage speech, Shakespeare, the Stanislavski method, Meisner and Stella Adler’s techniques at the Studio Theatre Conservatory in Washington, DC.

JAMES ANTHONY TYLER (Playwright) is making his TheaterWorks Hartford debut. He is the recipient of the 3rd Annual Horton Foote Playwriting Award and an inaugural playwright to receive a commission from Audible. His plays include Artney Jackson (World Premiere at Williamstown Theatre Festival, 2018 Edgerton Foundation New Play Award), Some Old Black Man (Berkshire Playwrights Lab at St. James Place and 59E59 Theaters), Dolphins and Sharks (LAByrinth Theater Company and Finborough Theatre in London). He has an MFA in Film from Howard University and an MFA in Dramatic Writing from New York University. He is also a graduate of The Juilliard School’s Lila Acheson Wallace American Playwrights Program, and he recently was the Staff Writer for the new OWN Network show Cherish the Day created by Ava DuVernay.

AWOYE TIMPO (Director) is making her TheaterWorks Hartford debut. She is a Director and Producer based in Brooklyn, NY. Awoye’s work has been seen on stages around the country and in Scotland and South Africa. Her New York directing credits include The Loophole (Public Theater), In Old Age (New York Theatre Workshop), Carnaval (National Black Theatre), Good Grief (Vineyard Theatre and Audible) and The Homecoming Queen (Atlantic Theater Company). Regionally she has directed Pipeline at the Studio Theatre, Paradise Blue at Long Wharf, Everybody Black at Actors Theatre of Louisville and School Girls at Berkeley Rep. Awoye is the Founding Producer of CLASSIX, a series exploring classic plays by Black writers. theclassix.org.

ROB RUGGIERO (Producing Artistic Director) has been part of TheaterWorks Hartford artistic leadership for 27 years. He has directed over 60 shows, including TWH productions of The Legend of Georgia McBride, Constellations, Next to Normal, Relativity (starring Richard Dreyfuss) and Christmas on the Rocks, which he also conceived.
His Broadway credits include *Looped* (starring Valerie Harper in a Tony-nominated performance) and *High* (starring Kathleen Turner) which had its world premiere at TWH. He also conceived and directed the musical revue *Make Me a Song: The Music of William Finn* which moved off-Broadway and was nominated for Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards. Rob conceived and directed *Ella*, a musical about Ella Fitzgerald, which saw sold-out runs in 24 regional theaters and was produced as a National Tour. His work on plays and musicals has received multiple awards in Connecticut and around the United States. In his eleventh collaboration with Goodspeed Musicals, Rob directed *Oliver*, where he also directed many award-winning musical productions. His adaptation of *Show Boat* is now being licensed by the Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization. Internationally he directed *Fiddler on the Roof* in Athens, Greece.

**KATE J. CUDWORTH** (Stage Manager) has enjoyed seven seasons with **TheaterWorks Hartford** including *American Son, The River, Hand to God, The Invisible Hand, The Legend of Georgia McBride, The Wolves, Fade, Next to Normal, Sunset Baby, Relativity, Midsummer, Woody Sez, and Becoming Dr. Ruth*. Off-Broadway: *Freud’s Last Session*, *title of show*. NY/Regional: Barrington Stage Company (8 seasons including *Freud’s Last Session; Dr. Ruth, All The Way; Joe Iconis’ The Black Suits*), Atlantic Stage Company, Hartford Stage, Manhattan School of Music (4 seasons), Yale Opera, York Theatre Company, Bronx Opera Company, Fringe NYC, NYMF.

**SHANNA GIBBS** (ASL Consultant/Interpreter) (she/her/hers) is a native of Upstate New York currently residing in Roslindale, MA. A Gallaudet University alumnus with a degree in English, she also holds two master’s degrees from Boston University in Deaf Education (Ed.M.) and Educational Leadership, Administration and Policy (Ed.L.). She teaches at Northeastern’s American Sign Language and Deaf Studies department as an adjunct faculty for Northeastern University. She is actively involved serving as the President of Massachusetts Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (MassRID) and as VP of Community Relations for Massachusetts State Association for the Deaf (MSAD). As a freelance Deaf Interpreter, her specialty is in Performing Arts consultation and interpreting in theatre as well as interpreting in higher education.

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2020-2021 Season
twhartford.org

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