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ARTSEMERSON AND PARTNERS PROUDLY PRESENT
MR. JOY: THE 2018 NEIGHBORHOOD TOUR

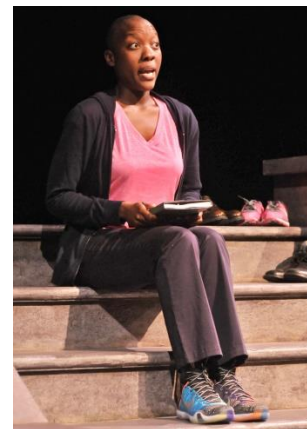
WRITTEN BY DANIEL BEATY | DIRECTED BY DAVID DOWER
FEATURING ADOBUERE EBIAMA

CHARLESTOWN, SCITUATE, ROXBURY, AND ALLSTON

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Email for high resolution images and interviews.

[Boston, MA – April 16, 2018] ArtsEmerson and partners proudly present the return of **Mr. Joy: The Neighborhood Tour**, a series of free theatre performances throughout the Boston area of Daniel Beaty's *Mr. Joy*, a play that explores issues of race and class in America to help us find our common humanity. Directed by David Dower and performed by Adobuere Ebiama, public performances are May 5 and 6 at **Bunker Hill Community College** (Charlestown), May 8 at **Scituate High School** (in collaboration with The Scituate METCO Program), May 15 at **Roxbury Community College** (Roxbury), and May 19 at **BCYF Jackson/Mann Community Center** (Allston). For this, its second iteration, **Mr. Joy** will again tour to four communities as a prompt for new audiences to engage with its themes and each other through facilitated post-performance conversations. Tickets to all performances on the tour are free; however, due to limited space, advance reservations are strongly encouraged. Tickets may be reserved at www.ArtsEmerson.org or by calling 617.824.8400.



Adobuere Ebiama plays 9 characters in *Mr. Joy*. Photo: Craig Bailey.

Mr. Joy was originally produced by ArtsEmerson in the Emerson Paramount Center in October of 2015. The play's themes of 'transforming pain into power' – a signature concept of playwright Daniel Beaty –

strongly resonated with Boston audiences both through sold-out performances and provocative post-show conversations. The experience of the play became a catalyst to begin important discussions on race, class and community, and ArtsEmerson responded by touring the production as part its ongoing commitment to help transform Boston's reputation, and reality, around race.

April 2017 marked the first iteration of the **Mr. Joy: The Neighborhood Tour** and ArtsEmerson joined forces with the Mayor's Office of Resilience and Racial Equity and community partners in the Boston neighborhoods of Hyde Park, Allston, East Boston, and Dorchester. Together with the city, audiences both saw the play in their own neighborhoods and participated in post-performance discussions on its themes.

"When we opened *Mr. Joy* in 2015," shares ArtsEmerson Artistic Director David Dower, "we did not anticipate the demand it would spark as a tool to open minds and hearts in fostering conversation about race, citizenship, and community. We received requests from all over the region asking for local performances of *Mr. Joy* to align with their own community efforts in facing the challenges around difference. We are indebted to both writer Daniel Beaty and performer Adobuere Ebiama for being willing answer the call each time."

May 2018 marks the second iteration of the tour with a return visit to the Boston neighborhood of Allston (in partnership with BCYF Jackson/Mann Community Center), and to three new locations including Bunker Hill Community College in Charlestown, Roxbury Community College's Media Arts Center, and the state-of-the-art Scituate Center for the Performing Arts at Scituate High School (opened 2017). Scituate not only represents the first expansion of the tour into the suburbs, but also was presented as a first-year partnership opportunity by METCO, Inc. (The Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity), the voluntary, inter-district school assignment program dedicated to increasing diversity and reducing racial isolation. Further, this year's tour is also in partnership with the City of Boston's Office of Arts and Culture.

"We're proud to partner with ArtsEmerson on the 2018 *Mr. Joy* tour," shares Julie Burros, Boston's Chief of Arts & Culture. "We support ArtsEmerson's work in Boston's neighborhoods and beyond -- using the universal messages of *Mr. Joy* to help foster progressive and productive discussions in communities."

"Roxbury Community College is thrilled to partner with ArtsEmerson to host this outstanding play," says Vice President of Advancement and Community Engagement Lorita Williams. "*Mr. Joy* shows that race and cultural background don't prevent real integration into a tight knit community. I've seen *Mr. Joy*; and, without giving away the ending, you leave the play realizing the *Mr. Joy* is an integral member of the community he lives in, even though he's quite different from his neighbors. In these troubling times, this message of unity is invaluable."

"The Boston-Scituate partnership has been in existence for 50 years now through the METCO program," shares Heidi Harris-Lemmel, Director-Scituate METCO Program, Scituate Public Schools. "As a collective, we are open to engaging in difficult conversations that challenges us to continually examine our belief systems."

About Mr. Joy

What happened to Mr. Joy? A Harlem community is shaken when Mr. Joy, a Chinese immigrant whose shoe repair shop has been a neighborhood pillar for decades, is the victim of an attack. Through the lens of Mr. Joy's customers, from the bubbly eleven-year-old Clarissa (who captured everyone's heart in Daniel Beaty's *Emergency*) to the sincere and savvy "gangsta granny" Bessie, we learn the profound yet unassuming impact the shop owner has had on each of their lives. Playwright and ArtsEmerson artist-in-residence Daniel Beaty (*Breath & Imagination, Emergency*) returns with another moving reflection on transforming pain into power, this time through the virtuosic performance by actress Adobuere Ebiama. A poignant, funny and stirring solo piece, *Mr. Joy* invites us to consider how we respond to violence as individuals and as a community, and the power of the invisible ties that bind us all. The 2018 tour is funded in part by the Mabel Louise Riley Foundation and the Boston Cultural Council.

Mr. Joy Creative Credits

- Written by Daniel Beaty
- Directed by David Dower
- Performed by Adobuere Ebiama

2018 Mr. Joy: The Neighborhood Tour Performance Schedule

Charlestown/Boston, MA

Saturday, May 5, 2018 6PM

Sunday, May 6, 2018 3PM

Bunker Hill Community College
A300 Auditorium
250 New Rutherford Avenue
Charlestown, MA 02129

Scituate, MA

Tuesday, May 8, 2018 7PM

Scituate High School
Scituate Center for Performing Arts
606 Chief Justice Cushing Highway
Scituate, MA 02066

Boston/Roxbury, MA

Tuesday, May 15, 2018 7PM

Roxbury Community College
Media Arts Center
1234 Columbus Avenue
Roxbury, MA 02120

Boston/Allston, MA

Saturday, May 19, 2018 6PM

BCYF/Jackson Mann Community Center
500 Cambridge Street
Allston, MA 02134

About Playwright Daniel Beaty

Daniel Beaty is an award-winning actor, singer, writer, and community activist. He is the co-writer and lead actor of the upcoming feature film *Chapter & Verse* with Loretta Devine and Omari Hardwick about a man who re-integrates into society after eight years in prison. His critically acclaimed plays *Through the Night*, *Emergency*, *Mr. Joy, Breath & Imagination*, and *The Tallest Tree in the Forest*, have been produced at leading theaters across the nation and venues ranging from Lincoln Center to the White House, garnering numerous awards including an Obie award for writing and performance and three NAACP Theatre Awards. A highly requested keynote speaker, Daniel has spoken throughout the U.S., Europe, and Africa. In 2012, Daniel created *I Dream*, a nationally recognized social justice initiative that uses the tools of the arts, immersive group exercises, and trauma recovery to support young people to rewrite the story of race and class inequity in America, and create social justice projects to make that new story reality. *I Dream* has reached over 2000 young people in three cities across the nation, Watts, CA; Omaha, NE; and Boston, MA. A graduate of Yale University (BA) and American Conservatory Theatre (MFA), Daniel has developed original TV shows for Showtime and Fox/Imagine, and recently completed a documentary about the impact of mass incarceration on children and families called *Behind the Glass*. A child of an incarcerated parent himself, Daniel's poem *Knock Knock* is an Internet sensation receiving millions of views and has been made into a children's book, also titled *Knock Knock*, published by Little Brown Books. Penguin-Random House published his empowerment book *Transforming Pain to Power* in 2014. www.danielbeaty.com

About Director David Dower

In 2015, David Dower became the Vice President, Emerson College Office of the Arts, Artistic Director of ArtsEmerson, and the Stephen G. Langley Chair of Theatre Management and Production in the Department of Performing Arts at Emerson College. Before this he was the Director of Artistic Programs for ArtsEmerson, since 2012. He is a Co-Founder and Contributing Editor for HowlRound. For ArtsEmerson he has directed *Kiss, Mala, Mr. Joy, Breath & Imagination*, *Baritones UnBound*, and *Maurice Hines' Tappin' Through Life*. Prior he served as Associate Artistic Director for Arena Stage (Washington, D.C.) where he created the American Voices New Play Institute and NEA New Play Development Program. He was also a Consulting Researcher for the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (New York) and the Founding Artistic Director of both The Z Space Studio and The Z Collective (San Francisco). His education includes the Graduate Acting Program at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, as well as a BA in Political Science from American University and studies at Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico. He resides in Boston's neighborhood of Dorchester.

About Actor Adobuere Ebiama

Adobuere Ebiama is a Boston, Massachusetts native trained in contemporary and classical theatre. She studied theatre arts at Boston Arts Academy high school and later went to Pace University in New York to continue her theatre training. At age 19, Adobuere began her professional acting career playing Pecola in *The Bluest Eye* by Lydia Diamond (IRNE Award Nomination, Best Actress) She has since done a range of roles from plays by Danai Gurira to Shakespeare. Her recent stage credits include Daniel Beaty's solo performer show *Mr. Joy*, produced by Arts Emerson and her performance in *The Convert* which won an Eliot Norton Award for Outstanding Production. Adobuere can be seen playing the lead role of Maité in *The Pineapple Diaries*, a new comedic web series on its second season on YouTube. The driving force for Adobuere's work outside of performing is an optimistic outlook for the future of social justice and women's empowerment.

About the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture

The Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture's mission is to enhance the quality of life, the economy, and the design of Boston through the arts. The role of the arts in all aspects of life in Boston is reinforced via equitable access to arts and culture in every community, its public institutions, and public places. Key areas of work include support to the cultural sector through grants and programs, as well as the production and permitting of art in public places. www.boston.gov/departments/arts-and-culture

About Bunker Hill Community College

Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC), located in Boston, Massachusetts, is the largest community college in Massachusetts, with more than 13,000 students enrolled per semester. BHCC, founded in 1973, is fully accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). With two main campuses in Charlestown and Chelsea, in addition to three satellite campuses and several instructional centers throughout the Greater Boston Area, BHCC offers a wide range of learning options to suit the diverse needs of our student body. Students can choose from day, afternoon, evening, late-evening, weekend, web-based and distance-learning courses to fit their busy schedules. BHCC is proud to be the most affordable community college in Massachusetts. BHCC offers more than 100 academic programs, including associate degree programs, certificate programs and programs designed to allow students to complete their first two years of a bachelor's degree before transferring to a four-year university. Its dedicated, caring faculty and counselors are here to help students achieve their personal, academic and career goals. www.bhcc.edu

About BCYF Jackson/Mann Community Center

The BCYF (Boston Center for Youth and Families) Jackson/Mann Community Center is a community based nonprofit human service agency incorporated in 1976 to provide educational, cultural, social, recreational and community services to moderate and low-income residents of Allston/Brighton ranging in age of 2.9 years old to older adulthood. The BCYF Jackson/Mann Community Center (JMCC) serves thousands of residents from the Allston Brighton community and Greater Boston each year. Programs provided at JMCC include: full day preschool, before and after school, summer programs; recreation, adult education (ESOL and GED), teen programs; adult enrichment and community resources. BCYF's abiding premise and underlying philosophy is that solutions and responsibilities are with the people who benefit from and are committed to neighborhood preservation, economic self-sufficiency and revitalization.

www.boston.gov/departments/boston-centers-youth-families/bcyf-jacksonmann

About Roxbury Community College

Roxbury Community College is a co-educational public institution of higher education offering Associate Degrees and certificate programs. RCC's primary objective is to provide residents of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, specifically those individuals living in the Greater Boston area, "optimum opportunity for access to a college education consistent with their interests and aptitudes and to reduce to a minimum economic, social, psychological and academic barriers to educational opportunity." The college's goals are the result of ideas generated by and from the college community and reflect a response to the needs of the larger Roxbury community. A community-based Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor works with the College's President to ensure that Roxbury Community College is an effective educational institution providing a strong vehicle for the community to grow and prosper. www.rcc.mass.edu

About Scituate High School

Scituate High School strives to provide an environment conducive to the fullest possible development of each student. Our programs endeavor to meet the needs of students with diverse learning styles and a wide range of abilities and goals. The ongoing renewal of those programs is sustained by the belief that enabling students in the present is helping them build lives as contributing adults. Our graduation requirements encourage students to participate in a program where they are exposed to a variety of courses, activities, and instructional approaches. www.scituate.k12.ma.us

About Scituate METCO Program

The Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO) was established in 1966 as a state funded voluntary desegregation program to reduce racial and ethnic imbalance. The town of Scituate has participated in the program since 1968. The program provides opportunities for all students in the district to learn respect for human differences and promote the principles of tolerance. The district's participation in the program provides reciprocal benefits to both Boston and Scituate residents allowing students to experience racial, cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity in a high performing public school setting. The Scituate METCO Program is committed to providing robust social and educational experiences for all students. The program encourages students to strive and maintain both self-respect and high academic expectations. METCO hopes each student will discover his/her intellectual identity while developing the social capital and opportunities necessary to expand their horizons. Prior to beginning the METCO placement process, parents enter into a mutual agreement committing to beactive participants in various aspects of the program and individual school communities.

www.scituate.k12.ma.us/index.php/metco-home

About ArtsEmerson

ArtsEmerson is Boston's leading presenter of contemporary world theatre and is the professional presenting and producing organization of the Office of the Arts at Emerson College. Founded in 2010, the year the US Census confirmed there was no single cultural majority in Boston, ArtsEmerson committed to building a cultural institution that reflects the diversity of our city by engaging *all* communities through stories that reveal and deepen connections to each other. By cultivating diversity in the art *and* in the audience, ArtsEmerson ignites public conversation around the most vexing societal challenges as a catalyst for overcoming them. ArtsEmerson is committed to welcoming everyone into its landmark venues, located in Boston's downtown Theatre District, for a diverse program of contemporary theatre, film, and music from around the city and around the world. In addition, ArtsEmerson engages in a range of community partnerships and produces a series of initiatives that make visible the rich diversity of cultural activity in the region. ArtsEmerson is led by Artistic Director, David Dower and Executive Director, David Howse. For more information, visit www.ArtsEmerson.org.

About Emerson College

Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theatre District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,780 undergraduates and 670 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups. Emerson is known for its experiential learning programs in Los Angeles, Washington, DC, the Netherlands, London, China, and the Czech Republic. The College has an active network of 39,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communication and the

arts. For more information, visit www.emerson.edu.

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