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ArtsEmerson and the Mayor's Office of Resilience and Racial Equity Present

MR. JOY: THE NEIGHBORHOOD TOUR

WRITTEN BY DANIEL BEATY | DIRECTED BY DAVID DOWER

FEATURING ADOBUERE EBIAMA

HYDE PARK, ALLSTON, EAST BOSTON, AND DORCHESTER

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Email for high resolution images, press tickets, and interviews.

[Boston, MA – February 14, 2017] ArtsEmerson and the Mayor's Office of Resilience and Racial Equity present **Mr. Joy: the Neighborhood Tour**, a series of free theatre performances throughout the city of Boston 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, performances start April 1, 2017 in the Boston neighborhood of Hyde Park (in partnership with **Riverside Theatre Works**), before traveling to Allston (in partnership with the **BCYF Jackson/Mann Community Center**), East Boston (in partnership with **ZUMIX**), and Dorchester (in partnership with **The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative** and **Fairmount Cultural Corridor**). 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 felt an urgency to continue them by touring the production throughout the neighborhoods of Boston.

“We bring Mr. Joy back this spring,” says ArtsEmerson Co-Artistic Director P. Carl, “to give more of Boston a chance to experience this transformative work by our artist in residence, Daniel Beaty. We are delighted to partner with the Mayor’s Office of Resilience and Racial Equity and our neighborhood presenting partners to make this tour both accessible and far-reaching as we visit four Boston neighborhoods to create a community-wide conversation about race and deeper human connection in our city.”

“The City of Boston's resilience initiative includes a unique focus on social and economic resilience in a city affected by historic and persistent divisions of race and class, says Atiya Martin, Chief Resilience Officer for the City of Boston. The story of Mr. Joy is one example of how these challenges can manifest into opportunity and we are proud to support its tour in Boston neighborhoods that will start new conversations to propel our work forward.”

ArtsEmerson has enjoyed an ongoing relationship with Daniel Beaty, producing his *Breath and Imagination* in January 2015 (featuring Elijah Rock and directed by David Dower), and presenting his *Emergency*, in which the playwright also starred, in May 2013.

“Having Daniel Beaty in residence here, says ArtsEmerson Co-Artistic Director David Dower, “has really been very significant for ArtsEmerson, our audiences, and for the hundreds of people who have participated in his *I Dream: Boston* workshops so far. Daniel has been both a mentor and a champion for our values and this neighborhood tour of *Mr. Joy* adds one more dimension to his impact on our city.”

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 tour is funded in part by the Mabel Louise Riley Foundation.

Mr. Joy Neighborhood Tour Performance Schedule

Hyde Park

Riverside Theatre Works

45 Fairmont Avenue, Hyde Park, MA 02136

Saturday, April 1 8PM

Sunday, April 2 3PM

Allston

BCYF Jackson/Mann Community Center
500 Cambridge Street, Allston, MA 02134
Friday, April 7 7PM
Saturday, April 8 7PM

East Boston

ZUMIX Firehouse
260 Sumner Street, East Boston, MA 02128
Saturday, April 15 8PM
Sunday, April 16 3PM

Dorchester

The Strand Theatre
543 Columbia Road, Dorchester, MA 02125
Thursday, April 20 7:30PM
Friday, April 21 8PM

Creative Credits

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

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*, *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.

<https://www.danielbeaty.com/>

About Director David Dower

In 2015, David Dower became the Vice President, Emerson College Office of the Arts, Co-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 *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 Resilience and Racial Equity

The Mayor's Office of Resilience and Racial Equity leads efforts to help Boston plan for and deal with catastrophes and slow-moving disasters — like persistent racial and economic inequality — that have become part of 21st century life. The department works to develop and implement Boston's Resilience Strategy. The strategy is a transformative, healing journey to ensure all of us have access and support to thrive from childhood to retirement in our daily lives and during major emergencies. We maintain a unique focus on social and economic resilience in a City affected by historic and persistent divisions of race and class. Our department also keeps an eye toward potential shocks the City may be exposed to. The department is led by Boston's Chief Resilience Officer, Dr. Atyia Martin. www.Boston.gov/Resilience

About BCYF Jackson/Mann Community Center

We support children, youth, individuals and families through a wide range of programs and services. We manage 36 facilities, including community centers and pools. Our mission is to enhance the quality of life for Boston residents by partnering with community center councils, agencies and businesses to support neighborhood needs. <https://www.boston.gov/departments/boston-centers-youth-families>

About Riverside Theatre Works

Riverside strives to build a diverse community, nurture local talent, and inspire a lifelong love for the performing arts. It takes pride in its affordable ticket prices, its broad range of programming for children and adults, and its outreach to local schools and families. In addition to being a cultural mainstay, Riverside serves as a key economic driver for Hyde Park. Its shows and classes draw families from across the city and suburbs, increasing street traffic along Fairmount Avenue and leading patrons to nearby businesses. Economic studies show that the presence of arts and entertainment increases an urban neighborhood's desirability and vitality. That's why the City of Boston, in conjunction with community groups, has a plan to turn Fairmount Avenue into an Avenue of the Arts, with Riverside Theatre Works as its anchor. <http://www.rtwboston.org>

About the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative's (DSNI) mission is to empower Dudley residents to organize, plan for, create and control a vibrant, diverse and high-quality neighborhood in collaboration with community partners.

<http://www.dsni.org/>

About the Fairmont Cultural Corridor

The Fairmont Cultural Corridor is a creative placemaking initiative that combines collaborative efforts of residents, artists, community organizations and businesses to support vibrant, livable neighborhoods along the Fairmount Commuter Line, made stronger through an active local creative economy. The Fairmont Cultural Corridor is designed to advance a vision that draws upon the local cultural assets and ethnic traditions of the Corridor's residents. The effort started with an Upham's Corner pilot that encouraged vibrant cultural economic activity through placemaking interventions such as interactive public art installations, outdoor markets, and complementary business activity around the Upham's Corner Fairmount train stop and anchored by the historic Strand Theatre. With support from Artplace America and other local and national funders, the initiative has recently expanded to include the Four Corners neighborhood, with plans to connect with creative placemaking efforts all along the Corridor. Dudley Square Neighborhood Initiative serves as the lead partner for the initiative.

<http://www.fairmountculturalcorridor.org/>

About ZUMIX

Since 1991, ZUMIX has provided free after-school music and creative technology programs for low-income youth in Greater Boston. Founded in response to a year of record-breaking youth violence, the goal of ZUMIX's nationally-recognized programs is to provide a safe space for youth to build productive futures and expand their skills in a supportive and nurturing environment. For more information, visit <http://zumix.org>.

About I Dream: Boston

I Dream: Boston is a partnership of Emerson College and ArtsEmerson; it is one of the sites for the I Dream project, founded by Emerson College Artist in Residence Daniel Beaty. I Dream is a nationally recognized youth leadership and social justice initiative that uses the tools of 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. Over the past three years, I Dream: Boston has engaged more than 700 individuals in inspiring performances, conversations, and

workshops based in the I Dream curriculum.

About ArtsEmerson

ArtsEmerson is the professional presenting and producing organization of the Office of the Arts at Emerson College, and aims to address gaps in Boston's cultural landscape by putting the world on stage and inviting diverse audiences from across the region into its historic downtown venues. Founded in 2010 by Robert J. Orchard under the auspices of Emerson College, ArtsEmerson quickly established a reputation for putting great work from diverse cultures on its stages — work that emanates from the language of theater, yet pushes the boundaries into dance, music, and opera. The organization is committed to building a cultural institution that embraces and reflects the changing demographics of the City of Boston. ArtsEmerson operates from the core belief that the arts are for everyone. In 2015, Orchard moved into the role of Creative Consultant. Currently ArtsEmerson is led by Co-Artistic Directors, David Dower and P. Carl, and Executive Director, David Howse. This shared leadership model reflects the organization's values — that multiple voices are essential to leading a 21st century arts organization. Click [here](#) for more information.

About Emerson College

Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theatre District, with sites in the Netherlands and Los Angeles, 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 3,750 undergraduates and 750 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 study and internship programs in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., the Netherlands, London, China and the Czech Republic. The College has an active network of 32,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communications and the arts. Click [here](#) for information.

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