



# Ensemble Theatre

Great Scripts. Cleveland Artists

:: Lucia Colombi, Founder :: Celeste Cosentino, Executive Artistic Director ::



## In Our Own Words

Our Stories, Our Voices

Episode Three

**Two Short Plays. BIG Themes ::  
ONE Weekend ONLY!! June 30th- July 2nd, 2023**

This series was started virtually by Nicole Sumlin (**SumMedia Productions**) along with Ensemble Executive Artistic Director Celeste Cosentino during the COVID-19 pandemic. This episode is our first in-person offering, but the heart of the series remains the same: we are lifting Black stories crafted by Black voices, both nationally known and locally grown.

**This year's episode includes:**

### Teena with Two E's

By Jocelyn Bioh

### All The Flowers Have Died

By Johnathon L. Jackson

**Ensemble Theatre :: 2022-2023 Season::**  
In Collaboratoin with **SumMedia Productions**  
Performing Arts Center-Notre Dame College  
4545 College Rd. South Euclid, OH 44121

**216.321.2930 | [www.ensembletheatre.org](http://www.ensembletheatre.org)**

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# Meet The Playwrights & Actors!



**Jocelyn Bioh** (Playwright, 'Teena With Two E's') is an award winning Ghanaian-American writer/performer from New York City. Her written works for theatre include: MERRY WIVES (Public Theater/Shakespeare in the Park, PBS Great Performances), NOLLYWOOD DREAMS (MCC Theater), GODDESS the musical (Berkeley Rep; Upcoming: Shakespeare Theatre Company in D.C. Spring of 2023) and the multi award winning SCHOOL GIRLS; OR THE AFRICAN MEAN GIRLS PLAY which was originally produced at MCC Theater in 2017/2018 and has gone on to have over 50

regional productions in the USA. She will make her Broadway debut as a playwright with the World Premiere of JAJA'S AFRICAN HAIR BRAIDING at Manhattan Theatre Club in the Fall of 2023. She is a former TOW playwrighting fellow (2017) and has been commissioned by MTC, Atlantic Theater Co., Williamstown Theatre Festival and Second Stage. Jocelyn has also written for TV on RUSSIAN DOLL, Spike Lee's SHE'S GOTTA HAVE IT, the upcoming Hulu series TINY BEAUTIFUL THINGS, the upcoming new Star Wars series THE ACOLYTE and is also writing the live screen adaptation of the hit Broadway musical ONCE ON THIS ISLAND for Disney+. She was the 2022 recipient of the Outstanding Adaptation Drama Desk Award.



**Johnathan L. Jackson** (Playwright, 'All The Flowers Have Died') is a proud Cleveland native now living in Los Angeles. He's a multi-hyphenate artist repped by ColorCreative Management and teaching artist with the Tony Award winning Center Theatre Group. Johnathon is currently working on a Netflix series due out next year entitled "Forever", an adaptation of the Judy Blum novel crafted by Mara Brock Akil. He's excited for his work to return to the ensemble stage, where he was last seen in Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman." A graduate of Cleveland

School of the Arts, where he wrote his first play under the tutelage of Dr. Scott Miller. He has continued to hone his voice over the years, most recently as a member of the Writers Colony fellowship with story27 Productions. His last play "The Night in Question" was a part of the Ink-ubator festival in partnership with the Black Creators Collective and the WACO Theatre Center under the direction of Richard and Tina Knowles Lawson. Please follow Johnathon on all socials @TheJohnLJackson or by checking out his website at [www.TheJohnLJackson.com](http://www.TheJohnLJackson.com)



Cleveland Native, **Christina Johnson** (Sylvie, 'Teena with Two E's) is a singer, Stylist, songwriter, visual artist and poet. Since her very first stage performance in "Geminia- a Space age Cinderella" as a child, the arts have become more than the performance but a catalyst for learning, peace and balance. Christina has been a part of several script development groups locally. The love of the arts keeps her connected on stage, as well as working behind the scenes of productions. Recently performing in Karamu House's

social justice series Juneteenth and Freedom after Juneteenth, and many years of "Black Nativity". Christina has also been seen in "The Wiz" (as Evillene), "The Color Purple" (as Sofia), "Crowns", "My brothers keeper", "Sister Act", "And her hair went with her", "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom" (as Ma Rainey), "Stew", & "Can I touch it" to name a few.



**Zyrece Montgomery** (Mina, 'Teena with Two E's) is a performer, director and educator. A Cleveland native, she is a proud graduate of Cleveland School of the Arts. Afterwards, she graduated from Ohio University with her BFA in Theatre Performance. As a performer, Zyrece has performed with Cleveland Shakespeare Festival, Talespinner Children's Theatre, Dobama Theatre's Marilyn Bianchi Kids' Playwrighting Festival, Ensemble Theatre, and Cleveland Public Theatre. Her most work includes the portrayal of Elaine Brown in Panther

Women: An Army for the Liberation, Asha in Candle Hypothesis, and as assistant director of Can I Touch It? at Cleveland Public Theatre. She is excited to work with just incredible artists on this project.



**Drew Pope** (Dominik, Teena with Two E's) is thrilled and overjoyed to perform at Ensemble Theatre. He is a graduate from the B.F.A. Acting and Directing program from Baldwin Wallace University. He has toured with Great Lakes Theatre for Macbeth and he has also portrayed Tom Robinson in TKAM, Claudio in Much Ado About Nothing (Ensemble Theatre), P-Sam in Paradise Blue, Various main characters in "Red Summer", and Jimmy in "Greenwood, An American Dream Destroyed" (all three at Karamu House). Also, he's portrayed Sebastian in "Twelfth

Night", and Bill Wynnfield in "Enemy of the People". He can't wait to help tell the story, and he is thankful for his close family, friends, and God up above. Enjoy the show!



**Andrea Belser** (Janell, *All The Flowers Have Died*) is a Performing and Teaching Artist from Cleveland with a Bachelor's in Theater Studies, emphasizing in Dance and Applied Voice, from Wright State University. Andrea teaches various dance, theater acting, and musical theater to all ages and abilities with theaters around Northeast Ohio. She also continuously works on and off stage as an actor, dancer, singer, choreographer, stage manager, and dresser. Performance credits include *Dog Act (Vera)* at Convergence Continuum, 'The Exonerated' (Georgia/Ensemble) at Beck Center for the Arts, and 'The Girl Who Swallowed a Cactus' (In Your Home!) at Talespinner Children's Theatre. Andrea's awards include 2008 Best Actress in Cleveland for her role as Juliette in 'I Have Before Me a Remarkable Document Given to Me by a Young Lady from Rwanda' at Dobama Theatre, and a nomination for 2012 Best Actress in Cleveland for her role of Pecola in 'The Bluest Eve' at Karamu House.



**Carl Walton** (Malik, *All The Flowers Have Died*) is a Director, Actor, Writer, Filmmaker, and teaching Artist based in Cleveland Ohio. He has multiple accomplishments as a Actor and Filmmaker in Atlanta and Los Angeles as well. Work such as "insecure" on HBO Max, and "Grown-ish" on Hulu. Carl has continue to break barriers as he has his own Tv series "Figure It Out" that has been premiered all over Cleveland and recognized across states, Figure it Out will be released on streaming platforms soon. Also as a graduate of Cleveland school of the arts he teaches Acting for camera technique and also Film production. Carl is also in the works of building his own studio company where they teach acting for camera and Theatre, produce films, and also live performance.

## Meet The Co-Directors!



**Nicole Sumlin** (Co-Producer/Co-Director) is an actor, singer, director, writer, producer and arts educator. As co-founder of Orchard Arts Project and SumMedia Productions with her husband Eugene Sumlin, Nicole has conceived and directed many live concerts, cabarets, musicals, and plays since 2005, in addition other performances broadcast virtually. She and Eugene created 'Beauty for Ashes', a project celebrating several multiple generations of their families, debuted at CPT's Station

Hope in 2016 and was remounted at Station Hope 2020. Her cabaret show, 'Sing It All', debuted at The Bop Stop in 2018. Most recently, during quarantine, she directed 'An Extraordinary Love', a virtual performance of three short plays exploring Black love and relationships for CPT. With SVR Creations, she co-produced and served as chief writer for the virtual series 'Project Amplify: The Women' and 'Project Amplify: The Men' to connect Black artists from across the country and raise support for organizations making positive change for Black youth and families in Cleveland and Northeast Ohio. She currently serves as Director of Education at CPT, supporting four unique programs that give creative space to historically excluded youth and adult voices. She is an active performer and has been seen on stages in New York City and Cleveland (local credits include performances at Beck Center for the Performing Arts, Cain Park, Cleveland Play House, Cleveland Public Theatre, Dobama Theatre, Ensemble Theatre, French Creek Theatre, Lakeland Civic Theatre, Ohio Shakespeare Festival, and Playhouse Square). She was most recently seen as Genesis in Loy A. Webb's 'The Light'. She is a member of the Actor's Equity Association.



**Eugene Sumlin** (Co-Director) is an actor, singer, choreographer, director and educator based in Cleveland. Currently, he is the Associate Director on CARE at Cleveland Play House, in which he has served for 7 1/2 years. He is also a teaching artist for the Dazzle Award Audition Workshops at Cleveland Playhouse Square. As a resident director at Heights Youth Theatre, Eugene has directed, 'You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown', 'Godspell', 'Once Upon A Mattress', 'Little Shop of Horrors' (2019 Ohio Youth Arts Best Musical/Best Director), 'Once On

This Island' (2020 Broadway World Regional Award nominee Director of a Musical) and most recently 'The Drowsy Chaperone'. Eugene has served as a guest director at Baldwin Wallace University and Cleveland State University, where he also played the title role in their production of 'Sweeney Todd' this past fall as a guest artist. Most recently he directed The Who's 'Tommy' at the Fine Arts Association. As an actor, Eugene has performed in such theaters as Cleveland Play House, Playhouse Square, Cain Park, Dobama Theatre, Ensemble Theatre, Lakeland Civic Theatre, The Fine Arts Association, Mercury Theatre Company, French Creek Theatre, Porthouse Theatre and Beachwood Community Theatre. Eugene is a member of Actor's Equity.

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**Celeste Cosentino**, Executive Artistic Director  
In collaboration with **SumMedia Productions**

Presents the third episode of:

## **IN OUR OWN WORDS: OUR STORIES. OUR VOICES**

### **TEENA WITH TWO E's**

By **Jocelyn Bioh**

### **ALL THE FLOWERS HAVE DIED**

By **Johnathan L. Jackson**

#### **:: The Crew ::**

**Co Producers:** Nicole Sumlin & Celeste Cosentino

**Co-Directors** Nicole & Eugene Sumlin

**Prod. Stage Manager** Becca Moseley

**Costume Design** The Company

**Set/Lighting Design** Ian Hinz & Becca Moseley

**Sound** Becca Moseley & Nicole & Eugene Sumlin

#### **:: The Casts ::**

#### **‘Teena with Two E’s’**

**Christina Johnson** (Sylvie Montgomery AKA: Ernestine Crump)

**Zyrece Montgomery** (Ermina ‘Mina’ Crump)

**Drew Pope** (Dominick)

**Setting:** Upper East Side Condo **Time:** Present Day

**Run Time:** Approximately 10 minutes

There will be a 10 minute intermission/change over.

#### **‘All The Flowers Have Died’**

**Andrea Belser** (Janell)

**Carl Walton** (Malik)

**Setting :** A cramped and junky apartment **Time:** Present Day

**Run Time:** Approximately 25 minutes

#### **Please Note:**

These productions contains **strong language** and **themes**

**TEENA WITH TWO E’S** is presented by special arrangement  
with United Talent Agency

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR A TALKBACK WITH  
THE ARTISTS AFTER THE SHOW!**

Please see some questions we have suggested to think on  
and respond to **on the back** of this insert.



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to hear your thoughts!



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**IN OUR OWN WORDS:  
Our Stories. Our Voices.**

**Some Questions to consider:**

**What resonated with you as you  
watched each performance?  
What discoveries did you make?**

**Investing in stories that present  
the Black Experience with  
nuance and authenticity is  
necessary in today's storytelling  
landscape. How do Teena with  
Two E's and All The Flowers  
Have Died seek to present  
authentic Black life and  
relationships?**

**Which stories do you believe we  
should see more of on stage?  
Which stories are missing?**

Please use the QR Code to fill out our  
"Speak Up" online survey if you have a few  
mintues to provide feedback~  
We would love to hear your thoughts!

