

## Notes from the Playwright

*Play is conceived for performance by a Negro cast, a reverse minstrel show done in White-face. Logically, it might also be performed by whites—at their own risk. If any producer is faced with choosing between opposite hues, author strongly suggests: “Go ‘long wit’ the blacks—besides all else, they need the work more.”*

*If acted by the latter, race members are urged to go for broke, yet cautioned not to ham it up too broadly. In fact—it just might be more effective if they aspire for serious tragedy. Only qualification needed for Caucasian casting is that the company fit a uniform pattern—insipid white; also play in white face.*

*Before any horrifying discrimination doubt arise, I hasten to add that a bonfide white actor should be cast as the Announcer in all productions, like wise a Negro thespian in pure native black as Rastus. This will truly subvert any charge that the production is unintergrated.*

—Douglas Turner Ward, Playwright and Co-Founder of the Negro Ensemble Company, excerpt from *Day of Absence*,  
“Notes on Production”

### Special Thanks

Dr. Deborah McDowell and the Carter G. Woodson Institute,  
Todd S. McFadden, Drama 307, Office of African-American Affairs,  
Brittani Wade

## Who's Who In Day of Absence

**Alisa “Ali” Adkins** (4th Year Drama/Music): This is Ali's UVA Drama debut.

**Nana Amoah** (2nd Year Drama): *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (FYP); *Beast of No Nation*, *Jitney* (National Forensic League); *Lil Abner*, *The Pajama Game*, *Pippin* (Edison Drama).

**Kate Burke** is on the U.Va. Drama faculty and has coached and acted at regional theatres across the county. A Past President of the Voice and Speech Trainers Association, Inc., she also serves on the advisory committee of the U.Va. St. Anselm Institute for Catholic Thought.

**Alex Campbell** (4th Year Drama): *Hedda Gabler*, *Iphigenia and Other Daughters* (U.Va. Drama); *The Homicide Blog*, *The Chairs* (U.Va. Lab Series); *Fall of the House of Usher* (U.Va Drama Independent Production); *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (SotL).

**Amy Desjaton**: ASM: *So Careless* (U.Va. Drama); *City of Angels*, *The Light in the Piazza* (Heritage).

**Evva Gandy** (4th Year Drama): ASM: *The Voysey Inheritance* (U.Va. Drama). PSM: *City of Angels*, *The Light in the Piazza* (Heritage). Stage Management Apprentice Albert Herring (Lorin Maazel's Chateauville Foundation).

**Brooke Howard** (3rd Year Drama, American Politics): *Ceremonies in Dark Old Men* (Paul Robeson Players); *The Vagina Monologues* (Spectrum Theatre); *Inside the Box* (U.Va. Drama).

**Myrick Lapointe** (4th Year Drama): This is Myrick's U.Va. Drama debut.

**Lance Lemon** (2nd Year Drama, Philosophy ): *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (FYP); *Whoopin' Mama and Dookie Braids* (Paul Robeson Players); *A Collage of Wright: Words As Weapons*, (AAT); *Tonight, Loveseat* (FMS).

**J. Lytel**: This is J. Lytel's U.Va. Drama debut.

**Jeff Luppino-Esposito** (2nd Year English): *Damn Yankees*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (FYP).

**Libby Majette** (4th Year Drama, Math): *A...My Name Will Always Be Alice* (U.Va. Drama).

**Dale Marshall** (1st Year M.F.A.Lighting Design): *Virgo/Hebrew Rising*, *Vivien*, *Resting Place*, *Magdalene* (Sacramento Theatre Company); *I Love You... Now Change*, *Joseph... Dreamcoat*, *The Full Monty*, *Leading Ladies* (Arundel Barn Playhouse); *Albert's Bridge*, *The Brides*, *Farther West*, *Le Bergoious Avant-Garde* (Illinois Wesleyan University).

**Keiana Mayfield** (2nd Year Drama/Biology): *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Damn Yankees* (FYP).

**Yadel T. Mulugeta** (Cognitive Science/Foreign Affairs ): This is Yadel's U.Va. Drama debut.

**Jimmy Norton** (3rd Year Drama): *So Careless* (U.Va. Drama); *Fall of the House of Usher*, *Ghost Machine* (U.Va. Drama Independent Productions).

**Telma Sheppard** (4th Year Drama): *Ceremonies in Dark Old Men* (Paul Robeson Players).

**Brittany Terrell** (2nd Year Drama): *Whoopin' Mama and Dookie Braids* (Paul Robeson Players); *Vagina Monologues 2008* (Spectrum Theater); *Tonight, The Write Note* (FMS).

**Aithne Thomas** (4th year Sociology): This is Aithne's costuming debut.

**Steven L. Warner** (Lecturer, Tech. Director): Cirque du Soleil *O*, *KA*, '02 Academy Awards performance (Asst. Tech. Director/ Depart. Manager/Project Manager); Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus (Operations Manager); Utah Shakespeare Festival (Asst. Tech. Director).

**Mark Washington** (3rd Year): *Guys and Dolls* (Play On); *In The Blood*, *The Pillowman* (Live Arts).

**Folami Williams** (4rd Year Drama): *For Colored Girls...*, *HAIR* (U.Va. Drama); *Vagina Monologues* (Spectrum Theatre); *Ain't Misbehavin'* (Live Arts).

# DAY OF ABSENCE



by Douglas Turner Ward  
Directed by Theresa M. Davis

HELMS THEATRE  
8 p.m.  
October 23-25, 28-31  
& November 1, 2008



DEPARTMENT OF  
**DRAMA**  
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA  
**DAY OF  
ABSENCE**  
*A Satirical Fantasy*

By **Douglas Turner Ward**

and

*Consider the Negro*

By **Doug Grissom**

Directed by **Theresa M. Davis**

Scenic Design by **Libby Majette**

Costume Design by **Aithne Thomas**

Lighting Design by **Dale Marshall**

Sound Design by **Jimmy Norton**

Technical Direction by **Steven Warner**

Voice and Dialect Coaching by **Kate Burke**

Production Stage Management by

**Amy Desjadon, Evva Gandy**

# Consider the Negro

Performed by Alex Campbell

## DAY OF ABSENCE

### The Ensemble

*(in order of appearance)*

Lance Lemon . . . . . Clem, First Citizen, Businessman  
Nana Amoah . . . . . Luke, Second Citizen, Mop Man  
Mark Washington . . . . . John, Brush Man  
Folami Williams . . . . . Mary  
Brooke Howard . . . . . First Operator, Assistant to Aide and Mayor  
Brittany Terrell . . . . . Second Operator, Aide Assistant  
Keiana Mayfield . . . . . Third Operator, Mrs. Pious  
Alisa “Ali” Adkins . . . . . Supervisor, Mrs. Aide  
J. Lytel . . . . . Jackson  
Jeff Luppino-Esposito . . . . . Mayor, Clan  
Myrick Lapointe . . . . . Third Citizen, Industrialist, Rev. Pious, Rastus  
Juliana Barton . . . . . Clubwoman  
Yadel T. Mulugeta . . . . . Courier  
Alex Campbell . . . . . Announcer  
Telma Sheppard . . . . . Doll Woman

“The time is now. Play opens in unnamed Southern town of medium population on a somnolent cracker morning—meaning no matter the early temperature, it’s gonna get hot. The hamlet is just beginning to rouse itself from the sleepy lassitude of night.”

—Douglas Turner Ward

*This production is presented in cooperation with Paul Robeson Players.*

## Production Staff

Dramaturg . . . . . Randall C. Wilkerson  
Movement Consultant . . . . . Nana Amoah  
Associate Director . . . . . Lauren Jenkins  
Assistant Stage Managers . . . . . Allison DeBlois, Bjorn Falk  
Assistant Technical Director . . . . . Alan Perez  
Departmental Technical Director . . . . . Steven Warner  
Master Carpenters . . . . . Jessica Cloutier, Justin Smith  
Carpenters . . . . . Bjorn Falk, James Villarrubia,  
Rachel Lau, Michelle Miller  
Scenic Supervisor . . . . . Tom Bloom  
Scenic Shop Manager . . . . . David P. Hale  
Scenic Charge . . . . . Libby Majette  
Scenic Paint Shop Staff . . . . . Erica Atzl, Olga Zeveleva  
Props Master . . . . . Jeremy Weing  
Props Artisans . . . . . Olga Zeveleva, Sandra Tzvetkova  
Run Crew . . . . . Laura L. Muschelli, Blaine Eichner  
Faculty Mentor, Costume Design . . . . . Gweneth West  
Costume Shop Manager . . . . . Joshua Bond  
Costume Shop Assistants . . . . . Ruth Isenstadt  
Drapers . . . . . Lee Kelly, Construction 231  
Faculty Mentor, Lighting Design . . . . . R. Lee Kennedy  
Master Electrician . . . . . Justin Freshwater  
Light Board Operator . . . . . Mary Beth Johnson  
Sound Advisor . . . . . Michael Rasbury  
Sound Engineer . . . . . Mike Benonis  
Sound Board Operator . . . . . Robert Winston  
Business Manager . . . . . James Scales  
Asst. Business Manager/Publicity . . . . . Jenny Mays  
Box Office Manager . . . . . Julia Debo  
Box Office Staff . . . . . Suzanne Casey, Sarah Edwards,  
Harrison Gibbons, Russ Hicks, Becca Thompson,  
Colleen Trentham, Will Rucker, Yasminca Wilson  
House Manager . . . . . Portia Henry  
Front of House Staff . . . . . Ashley Boney, Tanzima Chowdhury,  
Vashti Harrison, Claire Hart, Zoe Ortiz,  
Leatrice Woods, Chong Zhang  
Publicity Assistant . . . . . Myrick H. Lapointe  
Production Manager . . . . . Caitlin McLeod

*Day of Absence* was first presented by Robert Hooks, Inc. at the St. Marks Playhouse, in New York City, on November 15, 1965 under the direction of Philip Meister.

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