

7 STAGES



YEAR IN REVIEW

**2024/2025
SEASON**

A letter from Heidi S Howard, 7 Stages Artistic Director

Greetings loves,

As Summer nears its end, I reflect on the resilience, courage, and breath of all those who share 7 Stages as a home. I am filled with gratitude for our artists, students, patrons, renters, board and staff who remain committed to representing a multilayered global community through fierce and brave storytelling.

This past season, Youth Creates led us into a season full of celebration, shared methods, vital conversations, and courage to continue to find light in the shadows of these dark times. The long-term commitment of supporting new work, and new methods of producing resulted in the innovative world première of What Are You? which we have been creating for over 5 years with Nicolette Emanuelle. Stay tuned for our most recent new work we began with our dear friend Dorothy Victoria Bell during our Home Brew Series presentation of Incarceration Plantation: The Musical! Both Dorothy and Nicolette are fiercely weird in the most beautiful and courageous ways with their truths and artistry. Further, our colleagues and partners with First Voices Festival celebrations, Service Saturdays and Art of Activism programs have grounded our work in the community, beyond the stage, with grace.

These relationships, dreamings, gatherings and work remind me every day that we must always strive to be stewards of culture. We must keep collaborating, keep creating, keep taking risks and keep loving loud. By imagining new ways to bring light to the darkness, we continue to forge the way for the future.

Sending big love, may we all hold onto creative hope, breath and the courage to persevere. Onward we roll.

~ Heidi & the 7 Stages family

7 Stages Productions

Dream Theory – Where dreams and nightmares collide
July 2024

An original production by the Youth Creates 2024 Ensemble.

From the young minds of Youth Creates comes a world of gods, mortals, and monsters. As two sibling gods start to drift apart, their realms are placed on the verge of a devastating war. Will these realms break apart, or will this story have a happily ever after?

Youth Creates is 7 Stages' training program providing experiential learning and performance opportunities for teenagers. Through playwriting, design, and performance, students collaborate to create an original production. We will explore various techniques and skills, support your visions and ultimately celebrate by welcoming audiences to our world premiere!



7 Stages Productions

Third Annual First Voices Festival November 2024

7 Stages joined forces with Turtle Island Trading, Zintkala Zi PowWow, the L5P Business Association and Plaza Theatre in producing the third annual First Voices Festival, A Celebration of Indigenous Cultures.

Activities included the world premiere of *What Are You?* by Nicolette Emanuelle, an outdoor *Powwow* with Native American performers and vendors, an *Art of Activism* dialogue with Muscogee (Creek) elder William Harjo, and a special screening of the documentary *Bad River* at Plaza Theatre.

FIRST VOICES FESTIVAL

Art of Activism

FRIDAY - NOV 15, 2024

7 Stages Theatre • 5:30 pm

Special Guest - William Harjo



What Are You?

THROUGH NOV 24, 2024

7 Stages Theatre

TICKETS at 7Stages.org

POWWOW

SATURDAY & SUNDAY

November 16 & 17, 2024

10 am - 5 pm FREE

1136 Austin Ave, NE • Atlanta, GA



7 Stages Productions

What Are You?

November 2024

An exploration of what it means to be multi-racial in America. Created by Nicolette Emanuelle, who has roots in the Lumbee tribe of North Carolina, this original production delves into the complexities of racial identity through a blend of movement, music, and personal testimonies.

Creator Nicolette Emanuelle, with Meredith Gordon, Monica Martell, Jacque Pritz and Arthur McDaniel, confronts the relentless question “what are you?”, weaving together striking and moving commonalities found in interviews with other multi-racial individuals, highlighting their unique struggles and the beauty of their identities.



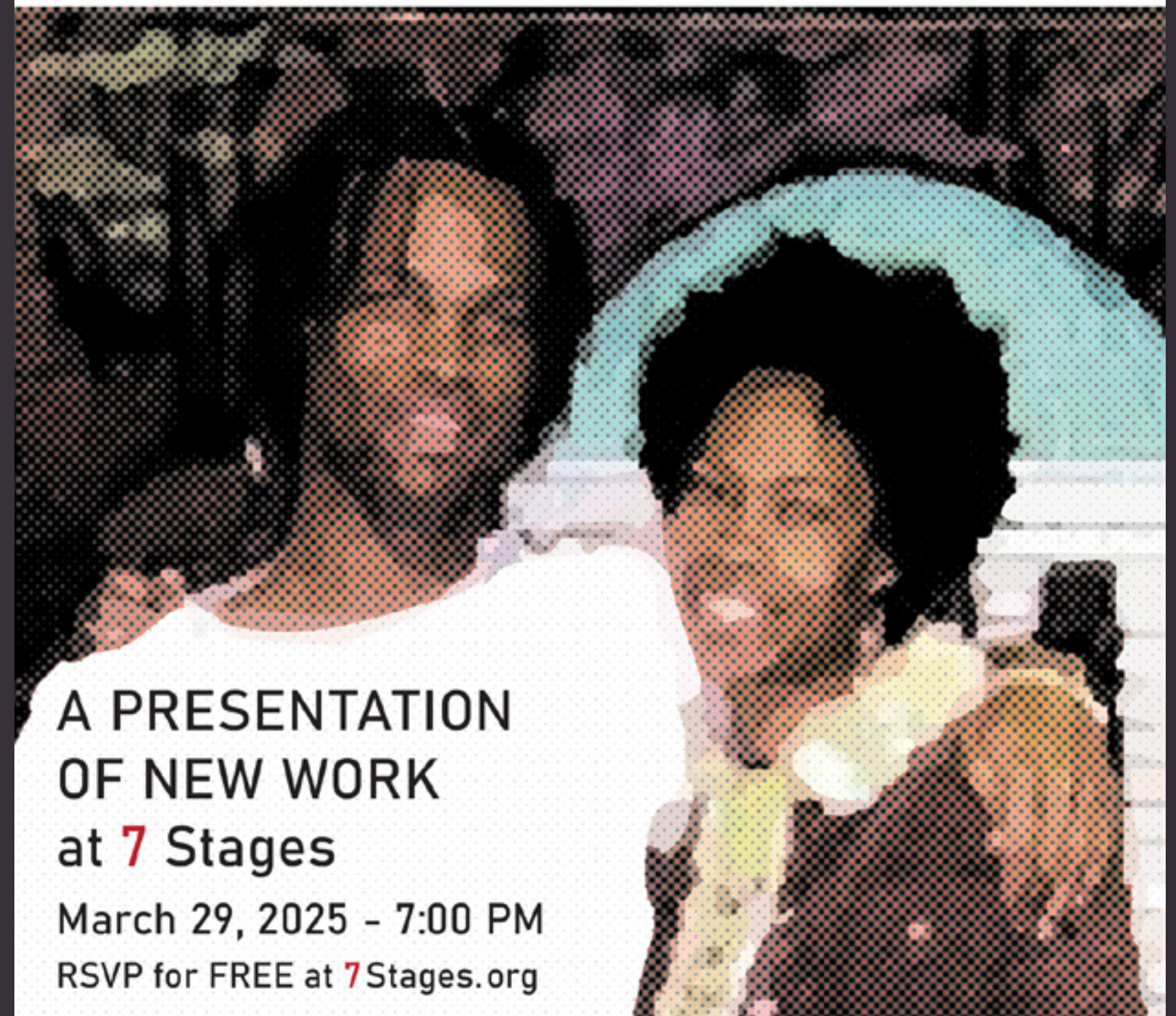
7 Stages Productions

Incarceration Plantation - A Home Brew Series work in development March 2025

A sister and brother's creative journey, despite the walls that keep them apart. They reflect on more than 30 years of dealing with America's prison system, its impact, and how systemic racism and the disproportionate sentencing of Black people perpetuates a form of modern slavery.

7 Stages' Home Brew Series, a program that provides a platform and resources for works in development. While Home Brews offer support at any stage in the development process, this production was in the seedling stage. This public sharing offered audiences select new musical and movement compositions, letters between Dorothy and Roger, original poetry created behind bars and a sneak peak into the overall storyline.

Incarceration Plantation: The Musical



7 Stages Collaborations

Yallmark

An improvised parody of made-for-tv holiday movies received a full run at 7 Stages with Topher Payne, Amber Nash, and Kevin Gillese. Every night they took audience suggestions and used them to weave together a holiday romance that was equal parts homage and satire.

Southern Fried Bake-Off - Essential Theatre

In its second year, the Southern Fried Bake-Off was an exhilarating 24 hour play festival where participants wrote, rehearsed, and performed brand new plays based on a Bake-Off theme and a list of “ingredients,” then performed in front of a live audience. Playwrights and performers submitted and were selected randomly in a lottery.

7 Stages Collaborations

Atlanta Fringe Festival

The Atlanta Fringe Festival is an annual multidisciplinary performing arts event of galactic proportions. With more than 375 showtimes in 11 venues featuring everything from comedy and drama to dance, circus, magic, puppetry, and more, plus free Kids Fringe shows, free Street Fringe busking performances, and free Fringe Audio shows streaming online, there is truly something for everyone at the Fringe!



Vital Conversations

Art of Activism at First Voices Festival - November 2024

An evening of conversation and a shared meal, kicking off a full weekend of festivities with special guest Muscogee (Creek) elder William Harjo and loaded Fry Bread dishes from Three Sisters Soulfood!

William is a storyteller and flute maker who has been a part of Powwows all over the country, including First Voices Festival for the last two years. This was a great opportunity to talk with someone with lots of knowledge about Powwows, traditional arts, and history.

Flip the Dirt - January 2025

With an open stage and an open mic, we welcomed the public to gather in dance, story, music, poetry, and performance; to sketch the future of our beloved community.

Artists Theresa Davis, Dana Lupton, Celeste Miller, Shannon Turner, and Charné Furcron guided artistic responses, and the event culminated in a dance party for healing, ritual, and release.



Vital Conversations

Art of Activism - Responses and Dialogue inspired by Charles Yu's Interior Chinatown

March 2025

7 Stages brought together community experts, artists and patrons for a powerful conversation inspired by the book Interior Chinatown. By diving into this work, we could address representation and the reduction of the identities of people of color to stereotypes.

The conversation was supported by the sharing of artistic responses from guest artists Dorothy Bell and Theresa Davis.

Writing Between the Frames - Poetry and prose in screenplay form

April 2025

This writing workshop hosted by Theresa Davis at ArtsXchange was inspired by the book Interior Chinatown by Charles Yu. The event was a celebration of National Poetry Month, promoting literacy and storytelling with the Big Read.



Service Saturdays

7 Stages regularly hosts Service Saturdays with the aim to help our community thrive by providing vital resources while bringing together local community-driven organizations under one roof. These free events also feature art pop-ups, open mics, and other creative activities.

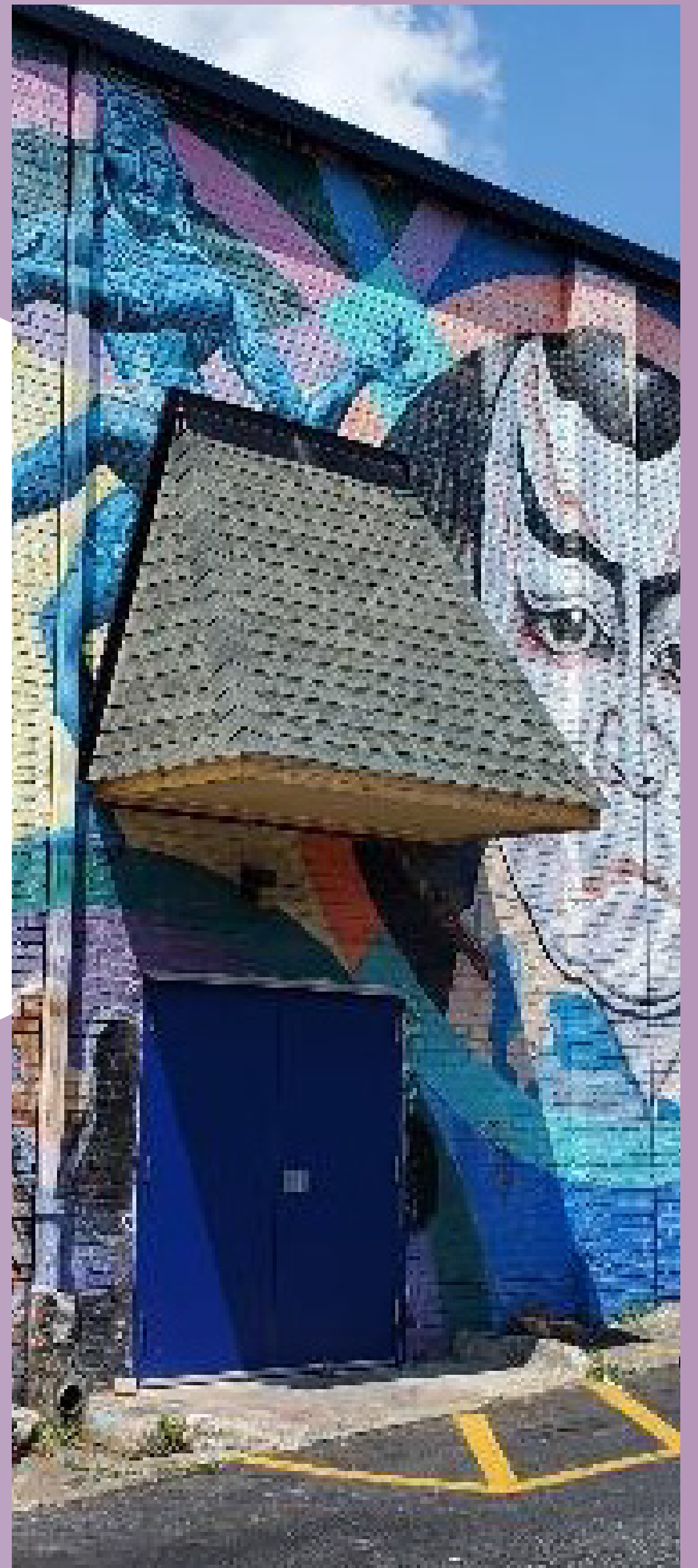
Among the organizations we work with are Little Free Contentious Library, Just a Touch Ministries, Fulton County Board of Health, and LifeSouth Community Blood Centers.



Renovations

Thanks to a Capital Improvement Grant from Georgia Council for the Arts, 7 Stages was able to make significant repairs to several areas of our theater.

- Back entrance canopy & loading door
- Second story canopy
- Bathroom wall panels
- Box office entrance



Thanks to our sponsors, partners, and many individual donors
for making our 2024-2025 programming possible!



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