

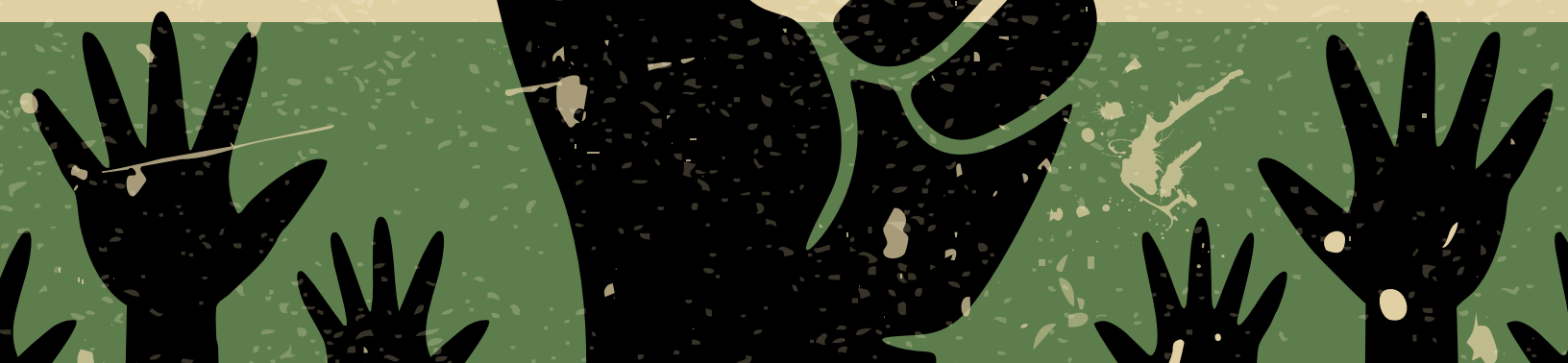
THE POET **DARIAN DAUCHAN**
THE VIOLINIST **CURTIS STEWART**
THE DIRECTOR **DANIEL BANKS**



DNAWORKS
PRODUCTION

WE THE MESSIAH

A HIP HOP REMIX OF HANDEL'S MESSIAH





We The Messiah is a Hip Hop remix and social justice reimagining of Handel's *Messiah* in which three immortal MCs embark on an epic path to social change, facing power, passion, and persecution while holding on to the promise of a better future. A theatrical concert driven by verses, beatboxing, live looping, community voices, and classical music, *We The Messiah* is a melodic ode to activism, a crescendo call for collective action, and an instrumental invitation to awaken the Messiah that lives in us all. The production features Hip Hop Artist Darian Dauchan, violinist Curtis Stewart, and the PUBLIQuartet, and is directed by Daniel Banks.

We The Messiah features a community collaboration and co-creation process as an integral element of the piece. During the first developmental workshop in New York City, we conducted interviews with African American congregants of Harlem's St. James Presbyterian Church and members of the Jewish LAB/Shul congregation. These interviews are woven into the live-mixed soundscape of *We The Messiah*, which also includes the Three MCs, the PubliQuartet live, and recorded or live choral samples from Handel's *Messiah*. Darian Dauchan, as one of the MCs, loops and mixes the MCs journey that spans facing danger and violence to finding community and purpose. In its next iteration, we will expand the interfaith dialogue to include Christian, Jewish, and Muslim community partners for the world premiere in Pittsburgh.





THE POET: Darian Dauchan is an award winning actor, writer, poet, and musician who has appeared on both Broadway (*Twentieth Century* starring Alec Baldwin and Anne Heche) and Off-Broadway theater (Classical Theatre of Harlem's *Cherry Orchard* starring Wendell Pierce). Darian is most known for *The Brobot Johnson Project*, an Afrofuturism, Sci Fi Hip Hop transmedia piece which won for Outstanding Comedy Series at the LA Web Festival and BEST soundtrack at the Escape Velocity Festival sponsored by the Museum of Science Fiction. The show *The Brobot Johnson Experience* is a critically acclaimed Ben Brantley *New York Times* Critics' Pick. More recently Darian was nominated for a Drama League award for Darian's piece *Brobot PSA* in the AFO Solo Short series and is a New Music USA grantee. Darian's music *Doin' it Live* and *Ohm* can be found on all streaming platforms. www.dariandauchan.com www.brobotjohnson.com



THE VIOLINIST: Praised for "combining omnivory and brilliance" (*The New York Times*), six-time GRAMMY® Award-nominated violinist and composer **Curtis Stewart** translates stories of American self-determination to the concert stage. As a solo violinist, composer, Artistic Director of the American Composers Orchestra, professor at The Juilliard School, member of award-winning ensembles PUBLIQuartet and The Mighty Third Rail, and Sphinx Medal of Excellence recipient, he realizes a vision to find personal and powerful connections between styles, cultures and musics. Learn more at www.curtisjstewart.com.



THE DIRECTOR: Daniel Banks is an award-winning director, deviser, dance dramaturg, and community organizer. He has directed, led workshops, and/or instigated projects in 39 states and 23 countries. Daniel is Co-Founder/Co-Curator of DNAWORKS and Founder and Director of the Hip Hop Theatre Initiative founder and director of the Hip Hop Theatre Initiative that engages Hip Hop Theatre to catalyze youth self-expression and leadership. The Hip Hop Theatre Initiative has worked on campuses and in communities across the U.S. and in Azerbaijan, Ghana, Hungary, Israel, Mexico, and South Africa. He is Co-Convener and Board Co-Chair of Transform 1012 N. Main Street, the project to repurpose the former Ku Klux Klan Auditorium in Fort Worth, TX, into The Fred Rouse Center for Arts and Community Healing. Daniel is the 2020 recipient of Theatre Communications Group's Alan Schneider Director Award.



SUPPORT

We The Messiah has received funding from the Arts, Equity, & Education Fund; InHEIRitance Project; the Mac Miller Fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation; New Music USA; Opportunity Fund; and The Pittsburgh Foundation.

TIMELINE

2021—Artists Residency with the InHEIRitance Project

2025—26—Final Developmental Residency, Tech Rehearsals, and Premiere

2025—26—Begin Touring

DNAWORKS

DNAWORKS is an arts and service organization dedicated to dialogue and healing through the arts. Founded in New York City in 2006 by Daniel Banks and Adam W. McKinney, DNAWORKS centers Global Majority and LGBTQQ2SPIAA+ voices and experiences to create more complex representations of identity, culture, class, and heritage through theatre, dance, film, writing, and art installation. DNAWORKS is based in Fort Worth, TX; New York, NY; and Pittsburgh, PA.

DNAWORKS has led its award-winning programming and performances, promoting dialogue-based social justice action and community building, with arts, educational, and community organizations in 39 states and 18 countries. Over the past 19 years, DNAWORKS has reached over 100,000 people worldwide. The organization believes that art = ritual = healing = community and that this philosophy and practice lead to a more peaceful world.

DNAWORKS was founded to create performance works that are liberatory, adhering to the motto: “Slow life, slow art.” By moving mindfully and compassionately, DNAWORKS seeks to create equitable, resilient, healing spaces—for the company, its audiences and partners, and the planet.

DNAWORKS has toured *HaMapah/The Map*, a devised multi-media, genealogical dance journey about McKinney’s African American, Native American, and Jewish heritages nationally and internationally, including Saratoga Springs Arts Festival (NY), Revolutions Theatre Festival/Tricklock Theatre (Albuquerque, NM); Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (Boise, ID); Miteu Festival (Ourense, Spain); Passing the Flame, DAH Teatar’s 20th Anniversary (Belgrade, Serbia); La MaMa’s Spoleto Open Festival (Italy); and numerous college campuses. DNAWORKS also premieres new work, including: the world premiere of *Cascarones* by Irma Mayorga at Teatro Paraguas (Santa Fe, NM); *What Are We Saying?*, a devised

dance-theatre performance with Ethiopian-Israeli Beta Dance Troupe (Haifa); *Breaking Our Silence*, a devised ensemble piece with LGBTQQ2SPIAA+ poets, with Poetic Theatre, the Wild Project (NYC); *At Sunset*, a trio for two dancers and a drone, Dance Canvas (Atlanta, GA); *Hollow Roots* by Christina Anderson; and *The Real James Bond...Was Dominican* by and with Christopher Rivas, currently touring.

DNAWORKS has received funding from Alternate Roots; Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; Arts, Equity, & Education Fund™; Asylum Arts; DuBose Family Foundation; Ford Foundation; Grambrindi Davies Fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation; Hi-ARTS; Ignite/Arts Dallas; Mac Miller Fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation; MAP Fund; the Mary E. Cole Fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation; Mid-America Arts Alliance; National Endowment for the Arts; Network of Ensemble Theaters; New England Foundation for the Arts; North Texas Community Foundation; Opportunity Fund; Rainwater Charitable Foundation; Santa Fe Arts Commission; Stanley and Marion Bergman Family Charitable Fund; Tecovas Foundation; Texas Christian University; The Pittsburgh Foundation; Trust for Mutual Understanding; and US Embassies and Consulates in Azerbaijan, Benin, Ghana, Hungary, Israel, Mexico, Poland, South Africa, and the UK. In 2010 DNAWORKS received Black Theatre Network's Presidential Pathfinder Award.

EXCERPTS (click on image)



TESTIMONIALS

"I cried many many times . . . I was hit in the gut, heart and soul more times than I can count. There were moments I wanted to jump out of my chair and times where I wanted to pass out from the power of the multi-sensory heart surge."

–Naomi Less,
Associate Director and Founding
Ritual Leader Lab/Shul

"I felt so much awe, and so much inspiration from the 3 MC's working together. There was a flow between them. It created dissonance at certain moments and fluidity at other moments. Incredible."

–Joan Beard,
Community Member Lab/Shul

"I was on a journey the entire time. A journey of history, the history of my own activism, but also the activism that's personal. Powerful."

–Rev. Derrick W. McQueen,
Pastor of St. James Presbyterian Church

"The voice overs were fantastic - grounded the struggle in our time...The staging and performances were fantastic. Beautiful. Something that can bridge."

–Audience Member

Technical & Production Information

We The Messiah does not require a specific type of performance venue and can be adapted to different spaces.

Technical Requirements

Theatrical lighting rig (size and scale dependent on the venue)

High quality PA equipped with 7 radio mics and additional inputs for amplified instruments.

The project utilizes video projection which can be adapted for your style of venue.

We The Messiah tours with a total of 12 people - 7 Performers, including a String Quartet, Stage Manager and a 3 person Technical Team (sound, video & lighting supervisors)

Schedule

The load in schedule will depend on the style of venue but a general guideline is as follows:

Day 1 Travel

Day 2 Load in - light, video and sound

Day 3 Technical Work and rehearsals

Day 4 Dress rehearsal & Performance #1

(Other performances to follow)

**For more information contact
andres@dnaworks.org**

