

# INTIMATE APPAREL



School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies  
Leigh Wilson Smiley, Producing Director

## **INTIMATE APPAREL**

by Lynn Nottage

October 9 – 17, 2015

KAY THEATRE

Director

Scenic Designer

Assistant Scenic Designer

Costume Designer

Lighting Designer

Sound Designer

Dramaturg

Stage Manager

Jennifer L. Nelson

Lydia Francis

Halea J. Coulter

Marci Rodgers

Max Doolittle

Mark Anduss

Khalid Yaya Long

Jack Riley

*Intimate Apparel* is produced by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc.

## PROGRAM NOTES

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I love this play!

Nottage has made it her personal artistic charge to write about women's lives at particular change points in history. Her plays illuminate the specific challenges women face as political forces change the world around them. As a woman and a lover of the study of history, I am endlessly fascinated by the way in which events and cultural trends shape the lives of individuals.

Situating Esther in downtown Manhattan in 1905 is the metaphorical equivalent of putting her in a blender. The city was undergoing previously unseen levels of immigration from all corners and classes of the world. The polyglot community offered the dream of "making it" to all comers. Concurrently, venture capitalists were giddy at the prospect of producing new goods for new markets. Esther, our heroine, has come to this intoxicating urban stewpot on the wings of her dream to build a self-sustaining career sewing for the moneyed class. Perhaps inevitably her giddy dreams collide with the dreams of others seeking their own happy endings, and we are left heartbroken on her behalf. Yet the final tableau leads us to believe that she has not given up; that the dream although battered and scarred, persists.

— Jennifer L. Nelson, director

### AN UNTAPPED STORY: LYNN NOTTAGE'S *INTIMATE APPAREL*

Describing herself as having a "nomadic imagination" and labeled by critics as an "intrepid traveler," Lynn Nottage journeys across time, space and cultures in order to examine untapped stories lost in the crevices of history. Whether stepping into a Lower Manhattan Jewish tenement with *Intimate Apparel*, or looking through the windows of a Congolese brothel affected by the civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with *Ruined*,<sup>1</sup> Nottage unabashedly finds herself crossing racial, ethnic and geographic borders. Whereas border crossing is a major trope within Nottage's body of work, *Intimate Apparel* ironically sheds light on its protagonist's *inability* to cross boundaries, particularly those related to race and class.

*Intimate Apparel* is inspired by Nottage's great-grandmother. Nottage's great-grandmother was a black seamstress at the turn of the century who corresponded through letters with a gentleman on the Panama Canal. As someone long fascinated with history, Nottage yearned to know more about her own family's story, yet her inquiries were always met with silence. However, through happenstance, Nottage discovered a passport photograph of her great-grandmother. With the sepia photograph in hand and a passion for research, Nottage set out to pay homage to her family's history through the intimate story of her play's protagonist, Esther, and how she wrestles with the restricted lines of race, class and culture.

With *Intimate Apparel* Lynn Nottage joins a host of other playwrights — namely, August Wilson, Pearl Cleage and Suzan-Lori Parks — as she travels back in time to catch a glimpse of early black life. Similar to the aforementioned playwrights, Nottage's dramaturgy avoids simple historical summaries of African American history, but rather resuscitates lost or silenced narratives by "transforming select moments in black history into dramatic reenactments."<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, Nottage lays claim to a past that is too often forgotten, thus filling the gaps of historical records by using her artistic license to mesh facts with a fictional imagination. In doing so, she creates plays that are both entertaining and enlightening.

— Khalid Yaya Long, dramaturg

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<sup>1</sup> *Ruined* (2007) was the winner of the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

<sup>2</sup> Shannon, Sandra G. *The Dramatic Vision of August Wilson*. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1995. Print.

## INTIMATE APPAREL: CAST LISTING

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Esther	Summer Brown
Mrs. Dickson	Korinn Walfall
Mrs. Van Buren	Rachel Grandizio
Mr. Marks	Noah Israel
Mayme	Agyeiwaa Asante
George	Philip Kershaw

### UNDERSTUDIES

Esther	Nabreyia Scott
Mrs. Dickson	Amber Chaney
Mrs. Van Buren	Molly Boyle
Mr. Marks	Yari Jamali
Mayme	April Monu
George	Hassan Juma

### Lower Manhattan, 1905

The performance will last approximately **2 hours and 15 minutes with a 15-minute intermission.**

Video and/or audio recording of the production is strictly prohibited.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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**Mark Anduss** (sound designer), *Tiny Alice* (Helen Hayes Award), Washington Shakespeare Company; *You Can't Scare Me*, *Bee-Luther-Hatchee*, *Dream of a Common Language* (Helen Hayes Nomination), Theater of the First Amendment; *Starving*, *Our Lady of 121<sup>st</sup> Street*, Woolly Mammoth Theatre; *Lazarus Syndrome*, *¾ of a Mass for St. Vivian*, Theater Alliance; *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, Signature Theatre; *Filthy Rich*, Everyman Theatre; *VSA Arts Playwrights Discovery Series*, The Kennedy Center. Producer: The DC Weirdo Show (dcweirdoshow.com).

**Agyeiwaa Asante** (Mayme), junior, first-year theatre major.

**Matt Balfour** (assistant stage manager), junior, Stamps Family Banneker/Key Scholar pursuing theatre/business dual degree. UMD credits: *The Human Capacity* (ASM), *Dance Rhythm/Sound & Space* (ASM). Outside credits: *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (SM). Upcoming: TDPS Second Season's *My Devil Dance* and *Tom in the Machine*. www.MattBalfour.com.

**Molly Boyle** (Mrs. Van Buren u/s), first-year theatre performance major. University Honors (Honors College) member. Outside credits: *Hairspray* (Tracy), *Soap Opera* (Washing Machine), *West Side Story* (Maria), *Les Misérables* (Mme. Thenardier), *Showboat* (Julie u/s, ensemble), *Our Town* (Mrs. Webb), *Crazy for You* (Polly). Film: *Geographically Desirable* (Stacy).

**Summer Brown** (Esther), junior theatre major. Creative and Performing Arts Scholar. UMD credits: *The Lost World* (Ms. Bolduc/Chief), *Collidescope* (ensemble), *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* (Maxine Waters/Daryl Gates u/s, ensemble). Upcoming: *Baltimore* (Shelby).

**Claudia Brownlee** (assistant costume designer), junior theatre major. Creative and

Performing Arts Scholar, member of Phi Theta Kappa, Alumna of Duke Ellington School of Arts, WDC (2011); Fashion Institute of Technology, NYC – Associate's Degree: Fashion Design (2014).

**Amber Chaney** (Mrs. Dickson u/s), junior theatre performance major. Member of the Multi-Ethnic Student Education Academic Excellence Society, Honors Student and Charlotte W. Newcombe Foundation Scholarship recipient. This is her first UMD production.

**Halea J. Coulter** (assistant scenic designer), second-year MFA candidate in scenic design. UMD credits: *Tartuffe*. Outside credits: *Soon* (Signature Theatre) (assistant); *Blithe Spirit*, *Circle Mirror Transformation* (Okoboji Summer Theatre).

**Max Doolittle** (lighting designer), third-year MFA candidate in lighting design. UMD credits: *Collidescope*, *Pleated*, *Grains*. Other theatres: Ars Nova, Juilliard School, John F. Kennedy Center, NextStop, Adventure Theatre, New Ohio Theatre, Kitchen Theatre Company, Fulton Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Ford's Theatre and Folger Theatre, among others. Lighting direction for television includes *Anderson Cooper 360*. *Wine Lovers the Musical* aboard cruise ships. BFA: Ithaca College. Member: USA-829.

**Lydia Francis** (scenic designer), recent UMD scenic design graduate. UMD credits: *Molière Impromptu*, *My Tempest*, *Collidescope* and *The Lost World*. Francis is currently working as a freelance designer in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

**Rachel Grandizio** (Mrs. Van Buren), senior theatre and civil engineering double major. UMD credits: *The Matchmaker* (Miss VanHuysen/Gertrude), *The Me Nobody Knows* (Clorox u/s). Outside credits: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Nick Bottom), *All's Well*

## INTIMATE APPAREL: ABOUT THE ARTISTS (cont'd)

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*That Ends Well* (Countess Rousillon).

**Noah Israel** (Mr. Marks), senior theatre performance and neurobiology/physiology double major. Berman Masters Scholar, Nancy Law Theatre Scholar. UMD credits: *The Me Nobody Knows* (Lloyd), *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* (Stanley Sheinbaum, Jin Ho Lee, Elaine Brown, Horn Player). Upcoming UMD credits: *Troilus and Cressida* (Troilus).

**Heather C. Jackson** (assistant costume designer), first-year MFA candidate in costume design. Prior to joining the program, she spent several years freelancing while working in theatre PR and communications. She has designed for companies including Single Carrot Theatre (associate company member/resident designer), Chesapeake Shakespeare Company (company member), Loyola University, Baltimore Shakespeare Festival, Stillpointe Theatre, Pumpkin Children's Theatre, SilverSpringStage, DanceExchange and University of Baltimore. [heathercjackson.com](http://heathercjackson.com).

**Yari Jamali** (Mr. Marks u/s), junior prospective communications major. This is his first production with UMD. Outside credits: *Blithe Spirit* (Charles).

**Jameelah Johnson** (assistant costume designer), junior theatre design major. UMD credits: *The Lost World*, *Good Kids*, *MFA Dance Thesis*, *UMoves*, *The Human Capacity*.

**Hassan Juma** (George u/s), senior theatre and English double major. Outside credits: *Much Ado About Nothing* (Don Pedro), *Book of Job* (Messenger). He is excited to be a part of his first UMD production.

**Jessica Kerns** (assistant stage manager), fourth-year graduating theatre major. UMD credits: Spring

Dance Thesis (assistant stage manager) and *Lost World* (costume shop assistant).

**Philip Kershaw** (George), senior theatre performance and history double major. UMD credits: *Good Kids* (Tanner), *Collidescope: Adventures in Pre- and Post-Racial America* (Prince/Sam/Clement), *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* (Sgt. Charles Duke/Cornel West/Walter Park, Twilight Bey u/s).

**Moyenda Kulemeka** (assistant director), senior theatre major. UMD credits: *Macbeth*, *Bored of Education*, *Untitled* (costume designer). Outside credits: *L'elisir d'amore* (assistant costume designer), *The Marriage of Figaro* (chorus costume designer).

**Khalid Yaya Long** (dramaturg), PhD candidate in theatre and performance studies. Long served as the dramaturg for UMD's production of *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* (spring 2014) by Anna Deavere Smith and also served as production dramaturg for Rep Stage's (Baltimore) premiere of Dominique Morisseau's *Sunset Baby* (spring 2015). Long's dissertation examines black feminist aesthetics through the life and works of Glenda Dickerson.

**April Monu** (Mayme u/s), sophomore theatre performance and English double major. This is her first UMD production.

**Jennifer L. Nelson** (director) has been a theatre professional for more than 40 years. She currently serves as senior advisor at Ford's Theatre and resident director at Mosaic Theater Company. Directing credits include productions at Ford's Theatre, Round House, Theatre J, Forum, Imagination Stage, Adventure Theatre, Washington Shakespeare, Rep Stage, Everyman Theatre, the Hangar Theatre, Penumbra Theatre, the Fulton Theatre, Manhattan Class Company and The Kennedy Center Youth and Family Programs; also University of Maryland at College Park, University of Maryland Baltimore

County, George Washington University, Virginia Commonwealth University and University of South Carolina. She is also a working playwright.

**Maria Ortiz** (assistant director), UMD theatre alum. UMD credits: *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* (Elvira Evers/Shelby Coffey III/Katie Miller), *In the Red and Brown Water* (Mama Moja u/s), *Collidescope* (u/s). Outside credits: Capital Fringe Festival: *21 King* (dramaturg).

**Jack Riley** (stage manager), fourth-year theatre major. University Honors program. UMD credits: *The Lost World*, *Collidescope* and *UMoves*. Outside credits: *Silence! The Musical* (Studio Theatre). Upcoming: *Don Giovanni* (Maryland Opera Studio). Equity Membership Candidate.

**Marci Rodgers** (costume designer), third-year MFA candidate in costume design. UMD credits: *Good Kids*, *Wake Up!* (Second Season). Outside credits: costume design team member: *Chi-Raq* (film), *Fires in the Mirror* (Howard University), *Rapunzel*, *Rapunzel Let Down Your Locks* (Camden Rep.), *Fish in the Dark* (Cort Theatre, Broadway); assistant to costume designer: *Driving Miss Daisy* (Ford's Theatre), *Marie Antoinette* (Woolly Mammoth Theatre), *Two Trains Running* (Round House Theatre).

**Nabreyia Scott** (Esther u/s), theatre and hearing and speech double degree. She would like to thank her family and friends for their continued love and support.

**Rachel Spires** (assistant lighting designer), senior theatre major. Creative and Performing Arts Scholar. TDPS design credits: *UMoves* (2014 & 2015). Asst. designs/programmer credits - *The Lost World*, *The Me Nobody Knows*. UMD Opera Studio credits: *Crime and Punishment*, *Die Fledermaus*.

**Korinn Walfall** (Mrs. Dickson), senior theatre performance major. Creative and Performing Arts Scholar. UMD credits: *Dead Man's Cell Phone* (Hermia), *Molière Impromptu* (Mlle DeBrie u/s), *Spring Awakening* (Thea), *Collidescope* (Fannie Lou Hamer & ensemble).