



IN THE WEST END



## PRESS RELEASE - Thursday 19 January 2023

Images can be downloaded [here](#)

#ForBlackBoys

Royal Court Theatre, Nica Burns, Hackney Empire

Jane Featherstone, Elisabeth Murdoch, Sarah Verghese

Present

The Royal Court Theatre, Nouveau Riche and New Diorama Theatre production

# FOR BLACK BOYS WHO HAVE CONSIDERED SUICIDE WHEN THE HUE GETS TOO HEAVY

Written and Directed by Ryan Calais Cameron

For Black Boys... is inspired by Ntozake Shange's seminal work *For Coloured Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When The Rainbow Is Enuf*.

Originally commissioned by New Diorama Theatre, co-commissioned by Boundless Theatre.

- RYAN CALAIS CAMERON'S AWARD-WINNING PRODUCTION OF *FOR BLACK BOYS WHO HAVE CONSIDERED SUICIDE WHEN THE HUE GETS TOO HEAVY* WILL RUN FOR SIX WEEKS ONLY AT THE APOLLO THEATRE FROM 25 MARCH - 7 MAY 2023
- THE FULL CAST - MARK AKINTIMEHIN, EMMANUEL AKWAFO, NNABIKO EJIMOFOR, DARRAGH HAND, ARUNA JALLOH AND KAINE LAWRENCE - RETURN TO MAKE THEIR WEST END DEBUTS IN THE PRODUCTION
- TICKETS GO ON GENERAL SALE FROM 10AM ON FRIDAY 20 JANUARY
- TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM £15 FOR EACH PERFORMANCE

The Royal Court Theatre and Nica Burns have today announced that *For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When The Hue Gets Too Heavy* by Ryan Calais Cameron will transfer to the Apollo Theatre in London's West End for a limited run of six weeks only. The sold-out hit transfers from the Royal Court Jerwood Theatre Downstairs where it was on last spring, having originally opened at the New Diorama Theatre in association with Nouveau Riche. The production runs 25 March - 7 May with tickets on sale tomorrow, 20 January, at 10am [here](#). Press Night will be Friday 31 March.

Inspired by Ntozake Shange's seminal work *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide / When the Rainbow Is Enuf*. *For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When The Hue Gets Too Heavy* is located on the threshold of joyful fantasy and brutal reality: a world of music, movement, storytelling and verse – where six men clash and connect in a desperate bid for survival. Father figures and fashion tips. Lost loves and jollof rice. African empires and illicit sex. Good days and bad days. Six young Black men meet for group therapy, and let their hearts – and imaginations – run wild.

The play was originally conceived by Ryan Calais Cameron in the wake of the killing of Trayvon Martin in 2013 and has been developed over the course of the last decade with young black men and mental health groups. Over 100 men auditioned for the production in 2021 which sold out both its initial run and subsequent transfer to the Royal Court Theatre, with returns queues at both venues every night.

The full original cast return for this new production, directed by Ryan Calais Cameron. The cast, who collectively won the best performer in a play category at The Stage Debut Awards in 2022 and will be making their West End debuts, includes: Mark Akintimehin, Emmanuel Akwafo, Nnabiko Ejimofor, Darragh Hand, Aruna Jalloh and Kaine Lawrence.

**Ryan Calais Cameron, playwright and Nouveau Riche Artistic Director, said:** "A West End transfer of *For Black Boys*, will be a momentous occasion for my community and those who have taken the show into their hearts. We really hope this show will drastically change the commercial theatre landscape by ensuring theatre is for everyone and reflects our society; we could not have gotten this far without the immense support of our advocates and audiences."

**Nica Burns said:** "For Black Boys is an utterly original, compelling and illuminating play, beautifully written by the outstanding talent that is Ryan Calais Cameron and performed by an exciting cast who collectively won the best performance category in The Stage Debut Awards. Whilst dealing with important and serious issues the play is also funny, joyful and exuberant. This is a terrific evening for both new audiences and regular playgoers and is a fantastic must-see addition to the landscape of the West End. We are very proud to be presenting it at the Apollo theatre."

Set and costume design by Anna Reid, lighting design by Rory Beaton, Additional Music and sound design by Nicola T Chang, movement direction by Theophilus O. Bailey and musical direction by John Pfumojena. Tristan Fynn-Aiduenu directed the show's original run at New Diorama Theatre.

*For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When The Hue Gets Too Heavy* was originally commissioned by New Diorama Theatre, co-commissioned by Boundless Theatre. The West

End production is presented by the Royal Court Theatre, Nica Burns, New Diorama Theatre and Nouveau Riche.

Tickets will go on general sale on Friday 20th at 10am with priority booking from Thursday 19th January with tickets available to buy from £15.

### **Outreach and Community Tickets**

As part of their work to engage new audiences, the producers are offering 100 tickets for £15 or less for every performance to youth groups, community groups and charities who would like to experience the show. To register your interest in booking some of these tickets, please fill out the form [here](#) For more information, email **FBB@[royalcourttheatre.com](mailto:FBB@royalcourttheatre.com)** and follow **@the.opencourt** via instagram for updates.

**ENDS**

**For further information please contact**

**Kate Hassell [kate@breadandbutterpr.uk](mailto:kate@breadandbutterpr.uk) | 07921 264564**

**Maisie Lawrence [maisie@breadandbutterpr.uk](mailto:maisie@breadandbutterpr.uk) | 07786 075979  
[@breadandbutterpr](#)**

### **IMAGES**

For images see [here](#).

### **LISTINGS**

FOR BLACK BOYS WHO HAVE CONSIDERED SUICIDE WHEN THE HUE GETS TOO HEAVY  
Apollo Theatre  
Shaftesbury Avenue  
London  
W1D 7EZ

First performance on 25 March 2023

Press Night on 31 March 2023

<http://nimaxtheatres.com/>

Box Office

Booking Line: 0330 333 4809

Group Bookings: 0330 333 4817 | [groups@nimaxtheatres.com](mailto:groups@nimaxtheatres.com)

Access Bookings: 0330 333 4815 | [access@nimaxtheatres.com](mailto:access@nimaxtheatres.com)

Tickets from £15 and under available for community groups

Standard Tickets: £15, £20, £35, £49.50, £69.50 (Premium)

### **BIOGRAPHIES**

**Ryan Calais Cameron** (Writer/Director)

For the Royal Court: **Living Newspaper, My White Best Friend (and Other Letters Left Unsaid)**.

As writer, other theatre includes: **Human Nurture** (Theatre Centre/Sheffield Crucible/UK tour); **For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Hue Gets Too Heavy** (Nouveau Riche/Boundless/New Diorama); **Queens of Sheba** [co-writer] (Nouveau Riche/Edinburgh Festival Fringe/New Diorama/UK tour); **Typical** (Nouveau Riche/Edinburgh Festival

**Fringe/Soho); Rhapsody (Arcola); Timbuktu (Black Lives Black Words Festival, Bush/Theatre Royal, Stratford East).**

Awards include: **Edinburgh Untapped Award, The Stage Edinburgh Award, Offie Award for Best Performance Piece (Queens of Sheba), Off West End Adopt A Playwright Award (Rhapsody).**  
**Ryan is the co-founder of Nouveau Riche Theatre Company.**

**Tristan Fynn-Aiduenu (Original Director)**

As director, theatre includes: **For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Hue Gets Too Heavy (Nouveau Riche/Boundless/New Diorama); Little Baby Jesus (Orange Tree); Twilight (St. Mary's University); The Spalding Suite (LAMDA); Gone Too Far! (Guildhall); Bootycandy (Gate Theatre)**

As writer/director, theatre includes: **Sweet Like Chocolate Boy (Jack Studio/BAC/Tobacco Factory/Theatre Peckham); Sundown Kiki (Young Vic); Divine (Arts Ed), Hyde and Seek (Guildhall)** As assistant director, theatre includes: **The Brothers Size (Young Vic).**

Awards include: **2019 JMK Young Director Award, 2022 Black British Theatre Award for Best Director**

### Cast

**Mark Akintimehin (Onyx)**

Theatre includes: **For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Hue Gets Too Heavy (Nouveau Riche/Boundless/New Diorama/Royal Court); Excluded (Intermission Youth Theatre);**

**Shakespeare Within The Abbey (Globe); Tribal (2far Media).**

Media includes: **Somewhere in London [web series].**

Film includes: **Little Monster [short].**

**Emmanuel Akwafo (Pitch)**

Theatre includes: **Jack and the beanstalk (Lyric Hammersmith Theatre); For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When The Hue Gets Too Heavy (Royal Court Theatre/ New Diorama); Whisper Me (Dugdale Theatre); The Bald Soprano (Leicester Square Theatre); The Spalding Suite (Southbank Centre); The Ecstatic Bible (Melton Theatre)**

Television includes: **Sex Education, Eastenders, The Crown, 24: Live Another Day, M.I High, Grange Hill.**

Film includes: **Now You See Me 2, Tarzan.**

**Nnabiko Ejimofor (Jet)**

Theatre includes: **Jitney (Old Vic Theatre & National Tour); For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Hue Gets Too Heavy (Nouveau Riche/Boundless/New Diorama).**

Radio includes: **Sarah Walker's Sunday Morning Show.**

Film includes: **Attercoppe [short], Tingles [short], Figure [short].**

**Nnabiko has previously been a dancer for Boy Blue Entertainment.**

**Darragh Hand (Sable)**

Theatre includes: **The Land Of Lost Content (Pleasance); For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Hue Gets Too Heavy (Nouveau Riche/Boundless/New Diorama); Bangers (Soho Theatre)**

Radio includes: **Georges**

TV includes: **Silent Witness, Grace.**

**Aruna Jalloh (Obsidian)**

Theatre includes: **Much Ado About Nothing (RSC); For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Hue Gets Too Heavy (Nouveau Riche/Boundless/New Diorama); Impact, Could Never Be Me (Little Fish); Glockenspiel (Old Sole).**

Media includes: **C Biz: Obsession [music video].**

**Kaine Lawrence (Midnight)**

Theatre includes: **For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Hue Gets Too Heavy (Nouveau Riche/Boundless/New Diorama); Man Enough (Theatre Peckham).**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **About The Royal Court**

The Royal Court Theatre is the writers' theatre. It is a leading force in world theatre for cultivating and supporting writers - undiscovered, emerging and established.

Since 1956, we have commissioned and produced hundreds of writers, from John Osborne to Jasmine Lee-Jones. Royal Court plays from every decade are now performed on stages and taught in classrooms and universities across the globe.

Through the writers, the Royal Court is at the forefront of creating restless, alert, provocative theatre about now. We open our doors to the unheard voices and free thinkers that, through their writing, change our way of seeing.

We strive to create an environment in which differing voices and opinions can co-exist. In current times it is becoming increasingly difficult for writers to write what they want or need to write without fear, and we will do everything we can to rise above a narrowing of viewpoints.

Through all our work we strive to inspire audiences and influence future writers with radical thinking and provocative discussion.

### **About Nica Burns**

**Nica Burns OBE** is a multi-award winning producer of over a hundred shows. She is Chief Executive and Co-Owner of Nimax Theatres Limited which owns six West End theatres. On October 15 2022 she celebrated the end of a 12 year journey when she opened the first new West End theatre in 50 years, @sohoplac. She is a Fellow of University College London, was President of the Society of London Theatre and won 2013 Private Business Woman of the Year when she also received an OBE. Most recently, Nica was awarded Producer of the Year at the 2021 The Stage awards, a Commendation for Exceptional Theatre Making During Lockdown at the 2022 Critics Circle Awards, and a 2022 Evening Standard Special Award in recognition of her support of London theatre during the pandemic. She was recently placed at number 3 of The Stage 100 most influential people in theatre. She is particularly proud of her ground-breaking Rising Stars Festival which reopened her theatres post-Covid debuting 23 young producers in the West End. One of the productions, *Cruise*, written and starring Jack Holden, went on to win an Olivier nomination for Best New Play.

### **About New Diorama**

New Diorama Theatre is a pioneering London studio theatre, home for the country's best independent theatre companies and ensembles. Since opening in 2010, New Diorama's work has received three prestigious Peter Brook Awards, seven OffWestEnd Awards, been named The Stage Fringe Theatre of The Year, OffWestEnd Artistic Director of the Year, won The Stage Innovation Prize and appeared in the Stage 100. Work commissioned and produced at NDT frequently tours nationally and internationally, including regular transfers Off-Broadway.

In 2021, New Diorama opened the revolutionary NDT Broadgate, a brand new 20,000 square foot rehearsal and development complex offered entirely free to thousands of independent artists to support post-Covid recovery. In 2022, NDT's premiere production of *For Black Boys Who Considered Suicide When The Hue Gets Too Heavy* transferred to the Royal Court Theatre Downstairs for an extended, sold-out run; while previous NDT commission *Operation Mincemeat* also announced a West End transfer, playing at the Fortune Theatre from March 2023.

Last year, New Diorama also won The Stage's 2022 Fringe Theatre of the Year Award, for the second time in the venue's short history; and in 2023, New Diorama is again nominated for The Stage's Innovation Prize.

### **About Nouveau Riche**

Nouveau Riche is a multi award-winning creative movement, making art that has the power and potential to change lives. Our objective is to discover, nurture and produce unique stories with a keen scope on work that is both educational and entertaining. We have set out to create and nurture new writing that is thought provoking, challenging and culturally inclusive. The most common theme in our work is that we tend to depart from traditional Western storytelling, experimenting with fresh, contemporary, and unconventional methods.

We are breaking down barriers for the Black and Global Majority community by forming long-term relationships with game-changing theatre venues, establishing safe and welcoming spaces for our community and supporting our associate artists to develop their own work in the Nouveau Riche style.

Our mission is to programme shows and events of the highest possible quality and to develop new ways of engaging audiences and artists. We aim to entertain, to challenge and to delight; to create lasting memories and to inspire other artistic journeys.

Queens of Sheba received the Off West End Award, 2020 for Best Performance Piece and both the Edinburgh Untapped Award plus The Stage Edinburgh Festival Award in 2018.

### **About Boundless Theatre**

Boundless Theatre, founded in 2001 supports a community of young adults to be creative. Productions, projects and diverse experiences promote meaningful social engagement around culture. From a home base in Croydon the company's work is always in dialogue with a vibrant and diverse youth culture. Boundless invests in and is inspired by early career artists who we support and connect to a diverse global community of 15-25-year-olds. Under the Artistic Direction of Rob Drummer since 2016, Boundless makes work across the UK and internationally, pioneering new ways to connect teenagers to theatre.

[boundlesstheatre.org.uk](http://boundlesstheatre.org.uk)

@boundlessabound