



## DC Black Theatre Fest Presents unFRAMED June 12-14 by BWW News Desk



DOUBLE PLAY CONNECTIONS, DOING LIFE PRODUCTIONS, and [Jane Dubin](#), Executive Producer are pleased to present Iyaba Ibo Mandingo's unFRAMED directed by Brent Buell as a Spotlight Show at the D.C. Black Theatre Festival. unFRAMED will play a limited engagement at the August Wilson Stage at the [Studio Theatre](#) (1501 14th Street, NW, Washington D.C.) Performances are Sunday, June 12 at 7 pm, Monday, June 13 at 7:30 pm, and Tuesday, June 14 at 7:30 pm.

The nation misread him. The prison enraged him. His art expressed him. His woman believed him. His poetry saved him.

"In unFRAMED writer and performer Iyaba Ibo Mandingo tells the story of his journey from Antigua to America. It wasn't without tribulations; navigating treacherous times without a father, Mandingo turned to art. unFRAMED puts the art front and center: Mandingo uses painting, poetry, prose and song to tell a story that echoes the lives of many." - Times Herald Record

Using canvas, paint, poetry, prose and song, Iyaba Ibo Mandingo, formerly

Kenny Athel George DeCruise - painter, poet, husband, father, son, and undocumented immigrant from Antigua - evolves the story of his life transformation. At the age of eleven, Iyaba is plucked from the tropical comfort of his boyhood and taken to life in America where he must navigate his way to manhood without the guidance of a father; from "Mommy Me No Wanna Go Merrica", a prophetic piece that hints at the many trials he will face in a new land, to his powerful political poetry that that would lead to his arrest and attempted deportation in post 9/11 America. Iyaba shares his rage, his determination, and his hope while he paints a self-portrait and successfully struggles to redefine his humanity, rediscover his smile, and truly accept himself for the first time.

unFRAMED plays the following schedule

Sunday, June 12, at 7:00 pm

Monday, June 13, at 7:30 pm

Tuesday, June 14, at 7:30 pm

Tickets are \$15 and are now available online at

<http://bit.ly/unFRAMEDtixatDCBTF>.

Running Time: 85 minutes

## BIOGRAPHIES

IYABA IBO MANDINGO (Playwright, Performer) - painter, poet, writer, and playwright - is a native of Antigua, West Indies, who came to the United States in 1980 as a young boy. His earliest exposures to the arts were through his mother, a professional singer, and his grandparents, a tailor and a seamstress who first introduced him to colors and patterns, paving a path to his many ways of expression: drawing, painting, sculpting, writing and performing. Iyaba studied fine arts at Southern Connecticut State University and today teaches in and around the tri-state area as a Master Teaching Artist. He is a member of the Harlem Arts Alliance.

Iyaba was awarded a national Percent for the Arts Program artist grant, and is a two-time Connecticut Grand Slam champion. In January 2011 he won Yale University's Martin Luther King Birthday Invitational Slam, his third such win. He appears regularly as a performance poet in venues across the United States and abroad, including Nuyorican Poetry Café, Brooklyn Moon, and Next Door Café among others in the NY area. He is the recipient of artists' grants from the Connecticut Commission on the Arts, and multiple commendations from the Nassau County African American Museum. He was recently seen at [59E59 Theaters](#) (NYC) as Henry in Deb Margolin's *The Expenses of Rain* ([Laura Barnett](#), director). He is the author of two chapbooks of poetry, *41 Times* and *Amerikkan*

Exile. His new novel, *Sins of My Fathers*, will be released in 2011. His artwork has been included in over a dozen group and individual shows in the tri-state area.

unFRAMED is Iyaba's first full-length play in poetry and prose, during which he uses a canvas to paint his physical portrait while using words to tell his personal story—a story of an undocumented immigrant boy's journey to manhood through the perils of adolescence, the pitfalls of racism and the struggles of finding identity in his new country. Iyaba has performed his play at Gallery 1212 (CT), Casa Frela Gallery (Harlem), York College-CUNY (NY), Rider College (NJ), Niagara University (NY), Nichols College (MA), Breakthrough Theatre (FL), the University of Baltimore (MD), the Hudson Valley Writers Center (NY), the Railroad Playhouse (NY), and other venues around the country.

BRENT BUELL (Director) has taken the directorial helm on works including *From Sing Sing to Broadway*, which premiered at [Playwrights Horizons](#) in NYC; his comedy *The Gem Exchange*; Rosemary Hester's *You Can't Leave That There*; *Wood Bars*, which he wrote with Miguel Valentin for the opening of [John Buffalo Mailer](#) and Tom Kail's Back House Productions; and his Las Vegas spectacular, *Undone Divas*. He wrote and directed *The Terrors of Teri*, a film for Ohio University's University College; directed the dance film *Figures in Flight 5*; and Goddess Films tapped him to direct its new comedy *Moses* starring Rosie DeSanctis. For ten years, Buell volunteered with the non-profit organization Rehabilitation Through the Arts, directing theater in New York's maximum-security prisons. There his productions of plays ranging from [John Steinbeck](#)'s *Of Mice and Men* to three original works by prisoners, have earned praise from critics, including from *The New York Times*. His *Breakin' the Mummy's Code* premiered at Sing Sing and was the subject of a feature article in *Esquire* by bestselling author, [John Richardson](#). His experiences provided the basis for his chapter "Drama in the Big House" in the book *Performing New Lives: Prison Theater* by Jonathan Shailor.

An accomplished actor, Buell has appeared in classic roles from Shakespeare and Ibsen to Moliere and Strindberg, and on the big screen in both the hit comedy *Grand Opening* and the soon to be released controversial thriller *Al Qarem*. He has written two novels, *Rapturous* (Early 2012) and *Daniel and My Revelation* (Fall 2012). Mr. Buell received his M.A. from Ohio University where he studied with novelist Herbert Gold.

[Jane Dubin](#) (Creative Consultant and Executive Producer) is a TONY Award winning producer and the President of Double Play Connections, a theatrical production and management company committed to supporting emerging artists and playwrights in the creation and development of new works. Jane is a graduate of the Commercial Theatre Institute's 14-week (NYC) and O'Neill Center Intensive (CT) Producing Workshops and Director

of Theater Resources Unlimited's Producer Development Program. Productions: The Umbrellas of Cherbourg (London), The 39 Steps, Norman Conquests (7 TONY nominations, winner - TONY, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards, Best Play Revival), Groundswell ([The New Group](#)), Beebo Brinker Chronicles (2008 GLAAD Media Award for Theatre). National tour: The 39 Steps. Other: OPA! at TBG Theatre (Best Commercial Production, MITF 2008), Take Me America by Nabel and Christianson (Best Musical, MITF 2007), Count Down, by Dominique Cieri, and the one-woman show, MentalPause by Margaret Liston.

Ms. Dubin is on the Board of Directors of the non-profit theater company, Houses on the Moon and a member of the League of Professional Theatre Women. She is consulting producer to the Moving Mantras Performance Group, a company integrating the movement of yoga and modern dance and co-curator of the Hudson Valley Writers' Center New Play Reading Series. She holds an MBA in Finance from NYU's School of Business.