



Blake Vision Entertainment
and Thandi&Co
present



natural **Woman**

**Written and directed by
Thandiwe DeShazor**

Lorenzo Sanford, *music director*

Thomas Blake, Lateefa Mosley,
and Thandiwe DeShazor
Co-Executive Producers



Natural Woman is an intimate tribute piece in which the Queen of Soul reflects on her journey of love and life with the younger version of herself, Young Ree. From her childhood surrounded by civil rights leaders and gospel music luminaries to her illustrious career trials and tribulations, this hit show sold out each night at the 2019 and 2022 National Black Theatre Festival in Winston-Salem, North Carolina and centers the love that gave her music so much soul.



L'Tanya Sugarlips Shields (The Queen of Soul) has been humming hymns and singing songs since childhood. L'Tanya has been blessed to share the stage with B.B. King, Wynton Marsalis, Stevie Wonder, Little Richard, and a host of other veterans in the music industry. Along with the Voice of Atlanta (VOA) Choir, she recorded with the legendary Sir Elton John. Eight members of the choir—which included L'Tanya's melodious voice—joined Sir Elton on his US and European tours to promote the "Peachtree Road" album project. In addition to her singing career, she has theatrical credits under her belt. She has had major roles in local productions of "WORK", "Delayed but Not Denied" and "Tambourines to Glory" by Langston Hughes. She was also featured in the major motion picture "Dirty Laundry", starring Loretta Devine and Rockmond Dunbar. As a soloist with the VOA Choir and now the leader of her own R&B and jazz band, you may hear L'Tanya's voice anywhere. You can listen to and purchase her first solo project, *Finally It's Love*, on all platforms. When asked why she sings? L'Tanya replied, "I sing because I believe it's what GOD sent me here to do, it's my purpose!"



Natasha Brown (Young Ree) is an actress, vocalist, musician, vocal arranger, coach, and Billboard Top 5 charting songwriter who is based in Atlanta. A Fort Smith, Arkansas native, her professional resume includes song placements and appearances in television and film, as well as service as musical director, coach, and producer for theater. She attributes her love for and any success in performance arts to her supportive family and church upbringing.

Carla "Carletta" Allen (Background Vocalist) is a singer and songwriter who has worked as lead vocalist and background vocalist. A multi-talent artist, she is also a dancer and a videographer.

Andre "DreDay" Barkley (Background Vocalist) is a singer, composer, and musical arranger. He's been singing since he was six years old. He's always had a love for the arts and he's really passionate about what he does. Now actively pursuing his dreams and aspirations with the help of BlakeVision Entertainment and many others, whether it's singing, acting, hosting or playing the local DJ, he has found ways to use his many different talents and bring joy to other people's lives. Entertainment is a natural form of happiness for him and will continue to grow in any aspect of his career.

Cynthia Price Spears (Background Vocalist) holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Theatre from Emerson College/Boston. She has performed across the country in numerous singing and theatre productions including "227" with the Marla Gibbs Theatre Co., "No Shells" Jackie Boatwright Entertainment, "The Roots of Gospel" & "WIZ The Return" Blake Vision Entertainment, "Situationships" & "Diamond In The Rough" Kameelah Productions Ink and more. She is a Member and Judge for the Suzi Bass Awards, Play Director, Acting Instructor, Choral, Praise Team member, and an R&B Singer.

Lorenzo Sanford (Music Director and Drummer) is one of the most eclectic musicians on the music scene today. He has performed with many celebrated artists including Stevie Wonder, Abbey Lincoln, Peabo Bryson, Melba Moore, Jennifer Holliday, and Lizz Wright. His work in musical theater includes working with acclaimed director Kenny Leon in Langston Hughes' *Tambourines to Glory*; under the direction of Kent Gash, in *Five Guys Named Moe*; in the Tony Award winning Alliance Theatre's production of *Tick, Tick, Boom!*, and in the workshop production of *Motown: The Musical*, the Broadway hit written and produced by Berry Gordy, Jr. Most recently he performed as drummer and assistant musical director in The Fifth Avenue Theatre's production of *The Wiz* (Seattle); in The Denver Center for the Performing Arts production of *The Color Purple*; and in Olney Theatre's production of *Fela!* (Maryland). He was a pivotal player in *Ain't Misbehavin*, which won three regional theater awards; and *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*. His Carnegie Hall debut featured him as part of the Gary Motley Quartet, in an innovative concert with the Vega String Quartet, combining jazz and classical music. While playing with the Mosier Brothers Band, he was squarely in the mix of progressive blue grass music. In addition to his work with other artists, he wrote and produced a CD of original music that features an eclectic mix of his contemporary songs and vocals. He currently resides in Atlanta where he also sings with a variety of groups. The Lorenzo Sanford Band is under the musical direction of its namesake, Lorenzo Sanford (drums and vocals), and includes Arthur Turner (keyboards and vocals) and Ray McMurtry (bass).

Ray McMurtry (bassist) is an accomplished bass player who has performed with Aretha Franklin and Atlanta's Second Line Band to name a few. His LinkedIn profile simply reads, "Just A Bass Player who pulls 4, 5 and 6 strings." He lets his instrument do the talking!

Arthur D. Turner (keyboard) is a pianist-accompanist for local stalwarts Deborah Bowman, L'Tanya "Sugalips" Shields, Rita Graham, Ruby Reds Dixieland Band, Linda Ransom, Reggie Boone, A Sharp Quartet, and the singing groups JUST THREE, REIGN, and SURREAL. A native of Pittsburgh who has lived in Atlanta since 1990, he earned music degrees from Carnegie Mellon University (BFA) and the New England Conservatory (MMus). He has accompanied performers at the Atlanta Jazz Festival, Music Midtown, Sweet Auburn Festival and the Lawrence Awards at Naylor Hall. He is Co-Minister of Music at Connections @ Metropolitan United Methodist Church, staff pianist for the Magnet Chorus Department at Tri-Cities High School/Fulton County Schools and former staff pianist at the Velvet Note Acoustic Living Room and the Atlanta Music Project. His Theater credits include Natural Woman, An Aretha Story (Black National Theater Festival); All I Want Is My Name: The Ike and Tina Turner Story (Black Spectrum Theater); Sam Cooke, Nat King/Natalie Cole, Marvin Gaye, Bobby Womack, and Al Jarreau tribute shows (Nat George/Windsong Music Group); Sam-Jackie-Otis, Aretha Franklin, and Spinners tribute shows (Randy Weathersby Productions); Etta James, Gospel, Sam Cooke, and Billie Holiday tribute shows (Blakevision Entertainment).



Lateefa Mosley (Co-Producer and Stage Manager) Lateefa Mosley, a dynamic force in theater, holds a Theatre Arts associate's degree from Northampton Community College in Allentown PA, and a bachelor's from Georgia State University In Atlanta GA. With credits as an assistant director in films like "Bad Intentions" 2016 "Fatima's Revenge" 2018 and "It's Major," 2019 she's proven her talent behind the camera. As a director and writer for Blake Vision Entertainment, she's brought iconic figures like Tina Turner and Etta James to life on stage. Her passion for gospel music shines through productions like "Gospel Healed My Heart," she constantly embodies her motto: dream, believe, and achieve!



Thomas Blake, (Founder of Blake Vision Entertainment/East Mountain Studios & Co-Producer) has produced or directed nearly 400 theatrical stage

plays through his company Blake Vision Entertainment. His film works include "It's Major" (2019), "MidLife" (2018), "Bad Intentions" (2016), "The Gospel" (2005), and over 9 short films and 3 documentaries. In 2008 Blake opened The Porter Sanford III Performing Arts & Community Center as its Technical Director. 2012 he opened East Mountain Studios. Blake is currently working on "The Wiz Return" series and he has 3 major films in the works. With three decades of experience in pre-production and post-production. Blake is an experienced producer, director, and technical director with the ability to multitask and provide leadership on large and small projects. Throughout his career Blake has mastered the ability to guide creative technical decisions and strategies for productions. A trained film technician and production expert Blake validates functional requirements, shapes technical requirements, and defines the approach to project development, logistics and implementation. After spending almost a decade in sound design and staging, where he managed multiple crews and oversaw the installation and breakdown of countless productions, Blake opened Blake Vision Entertainment in 2006. BVE specialize in staging, filming and production design and installation. As a consultant, Blake was instrumental in the design and developmental planning of Dekalb County's \$18 million dollar state-of-the-art Porter Sanford Performing Arts & Community Center, where he ultimately functioned as the technical director coordinating and arranging all aspects of productions by maintaining asset pipeline to ensure the timely delivery of assets as required to promote and publish the finished product and facilitate communication with internal and external developers on key production aspects as determined by the producer. Blake is now the 2nd African American male to own and operate his own film studio. East Mountain Studios is Rockdale County's Premiere Film, Television, Commercial, & Video Production Studio. The facility has hosted such productions such as Fast Five, Joyful Noise & American Reunion to name a few.



Thandiwe "Thandi" DeShazor (Writer/Director/Co-Producer) is an Atlanta-based artist. His theater credits include, "The Legend Of Georgia McBride" (Actor's Express), "Angels in America" (Actor's Express) and "Code Noir: The Adventures of the First Count of Monte Cristo (Théâtre du Rêve). His television credits include Homicide Hunter, Swamp Murders, Fatal Attraction, the ID Channel's "Murder Calls", Murder Chose Me, and in a recurring role in AMC's Lodge 49. He is the writer/director of "Natural Woman: Unofficial Aretha" and "Never Too Much: A Luther Story".



Jul

7

**7:30
PM**

**Adrian Crutchfield & L'Tanya
"Sugarlips" Shields**

City Winery Atlanta

6PM Doors

7:30PM Show

Jazz

R&B



L I F E S T O R Y

OBITUARIES

SINCE 1987

Writing obituaries fit for a QUEEN (of Soul) for over three decades!
We create *just-in-time* obituaries and *pre-need* biographies for you and yours.

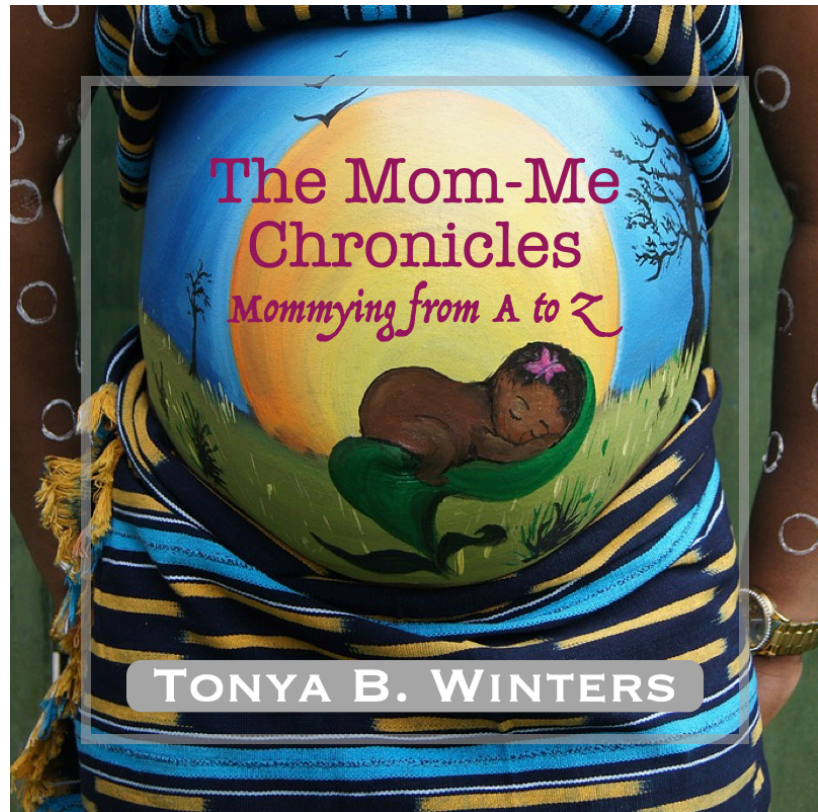
Tony Lamair Burks II
Member, The Society of Professional Obituary Writers
obit@leadrighttoday.com | www.leadrighttoday.com/obit

Hot off the Press from **LEADright**

Available at
amazon



Published April 2024



Published May 2024