



TRIAL AND ERROR PRODUCTIONS

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***Don't Call it a Riot!* Explores Seattle Activism Through the Lens of the 1960s Black Panther Party**

March 30 - June 23, 2018 at 12th Avenue Arts

*"[The] stresses and personal costs of sustaining long-term social activism is honestly revealed as **Don't Call it a Riot!** transports us across two generations of resistance and struggle for change."*

*- Beverly Aarons of **South Seattle Emerald***

SEATTLE February 26, 2019 – In her upcoming play, *Don't Call it a Riot!*, local playwright – and 2019 Emerald Prize finalist - Amontaine Aurore explores the history of Seattle activism from the height of the city's 1960s Black Panther Party to the 1999 WTO protests while uncovering the toll that a commitment to social justice can take on the day-to-day lives of activists. The play's limited-run debut led R. Barron of *Seattle Gay Scene* to write, "As playwright, Aurore deftly wove activism and values playing both in the streets and in living rooms."

Following positive reviews and repeated requests for an expanded run, Aurore will again mount the production at 12th Avenue Arts theaters from May 30th to June 23rd.

Written and directed by Aurore, *Don't Call it a Riot!* focuses on Reed, a 20-year-old college student who is expecting her first baby while also being an active member of Black Panther Party. The story explores the effect that fighting for liberation has on the foundations of her home life and follows the character's 31-year journey to discovering the forces responsible for the turmoil that challenged the Black Panther party and at the root of a dream deferred.

As an African-American who grew up in Seattle and Burien during the civil rights era, Aurore has an intimate understanding of the differences between the sensationalized image of the Black Panthers and the realities of their contributions and ties within the black community. She sees in today's new generation of activists the same passion and commitment – and issues – that drove the Black Panthers.

In the process of developing the play, Aurore spoke with **Aaron Dixon**, co-founder of the Seattle chapter of the Black Panther party, and **Norm Stamper**, Seattle's Chief of Police during the 1999 WTO protests who is now a staunch police reform advocate. She wove their observations and perspectives into the narrative to ensure that *Don't Call it a Riot!* accurately conveys the historical elements of the story as well as the emotional weight that this period carried for all involved. Aurore hopes that hearing these voices in the background of the work will leave the audience with a greater understanding of the sacrifices that people make at the frontlines of the fight

for social justice. The playwright also seeks to share historical lessons to help the current generation of activists avoid harmful pitfalls of the past.

“I am fascinated by Seattle’s rich and radical history that rarely gets discussed,” states Aurore. “Although this story portrays a past era, I am still struck by how the social and political issues that plagued our country in the ‘60s and ‘70s are still just as salient and relevant to today’s world.”

Don’t Call it a Riot! is directed by **Amontaine Aurore**. The cast includes **Meysa Harville** as Reed, **Lillian Afful-Straton** as Marti, **Skylar Wilkerson** as Falala, **Mic Montgomery** as Sam, and **Robert Lovett** as Paris.

Don’t Call it a Riot! – co-produced by Ten Auras Productions and Trial and Error Productions – will run from May 30th - June 23rd at the 12th Avenue Arts theater (1620 12th Avenue). Tickets can be purchased through Brown Paper Tickets. For a full show schedule and additional information, please visit www.TenAuras.com or call 206-999-9293.