

**First Woman Productions**

presents

# Jabari Dreams



# Of Freedom

Written by

**Nambi E. Kelley**

Directed by

**Daniel Carlton**

**First Woman Productions**  
Nambi E. Kelley, Producer  
Whitney Stone, Production Coordinator

# Jabari Dreams Of Freedom

**A New Digital Play  
for Ages 8 & Up**

By

**Nambi E. Kelley**

Featuring

**Cameron Goode  
Octavius Lanier  
Lori Sinclair Minor  
Otis McDaniel**

**Jes Aguilar-Smucker  
Olivia Leslie**  
Stage Management

**Leo Lei**  
Sound and Media Designer/Editor

**Joe Plummer**  
Musical Director

**Daniel Carlton**  
Director

"Jabari Dreams of Freedom"  
received it's World Premiere Production at  
Chicago Children's Theatre, April 2016  
Jacqueline Russell, Artistic Director

"Jabari Dreams of Freedom" was developed as part of New Victory Labworks  
at The New Victory Theatre in New York City



# CAST

*(in order of of appearance)*

Jabari Jackson.....CAMERON GOODE  
Dad, Obama, James Stewart, Young Obama.....OCTAVIUS LANIER  
Mom, Claudette Colvin, Arnetta Streeter,  
Ruby Bridges, Barack's Mom.....LORI SINCLAIR MINOR  
Emmett, Understudy.....OTIS MCDANIEL

# PRODUCTION

Director.....DANIEL CARLTON  
Playwright, Producer.....NAMBI E. KELLEY  
Musical Director.....JOE PLUMMER  
Sound and Media Designer, Editor.....LEO LEI  
Stage Manager.....JES AGUILAR-SMUCKER  
Assistant Stage Manager.....OLIVIA LESLIE  
Production Coordinator.....WHITNEY STONE



# SYNOPSIS

JABARI DREAMS OF FREEDOM is a play to save Black youth from living through fear. It tells the story of Jabari, a young Black boy from the South Side of Chicago who loves to paint. Through painting, he can escape the turbulent world around him. When a friend is hurt by police, Jabari is afraid to leave the house. With his Forever President Barack Obama as a guide, he dreams he meets children from the Civil Rights Era including Ruby Bridges, Claudette Colvin, and a 7-year-old Barack Obama on the eve of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Can Jabari use the lessons he's learned to instill in young Barack the ideas he'll need to become president? Will Jabari take these lessons back into his own life and heal his community? Using history, rap, freedom songs, and humor, this play explores what it means to have courage in a world where Black children—Black boys—are not safe.

For more info, please visit [www.jabari-dreams-of-freedom.com](http://www.jabari-dreams-of-freedom.com)! You can also contact Jabari directly at [Jabari@jabari-dreams-of-freedom.com](mailto:Jabari@jabari-dreams-of-freedom.com), and be sure to check out Jabari Jackson's YouTube Channel!

# SCENES

- Scene 1: JABARI MAKES AN ANNOUNCEMENT
- Scene 2: JABARI MEETS OBAMA
- Scene 3: JABARI MEETS CLAUDETTE COLVIN
- Scene 4: JABARI MARCHES IN THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE
- Scene 5: JABARI MEETS RUBY BRIDGES
- Scene 6: JABARI ADMITS HE'S AFRAID
- Scene 7: JABARI HAS AN IDEA

# SONGS

- "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" ..... Jabari
- "Woke Up This Morning" ..... Jabari's Dad
- "The Hip and Yae Yae" ..... Jabari's Dad
- "Oh Freedom" ..... Jabari's Mom
- "The Hip and Yae Yae" (reprise) ..... Obama & Company
- "We Shall Not Be Moved" ..... Claudette Colvin & Jabari
- "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around" ..... Arnetta Streeter,  
James Steward, Jabari
- "This Little Light of Mine" ..... Ruby Bridges & Jabari
- "Woke Up This Morning" (reprise) ..... Jabari & Jabari's Mom
- "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" (reprise) ..... Jabari

# CAST



## **CAMERON GOODE (Jabari):**

Chicago: “Orphan” in *Oliver!* (Drury Lane Theatre), “Jabari” in *Jabari Dreams of Freedom* (Chicago Children’s Theatre), “Eugene Williams” in *The Scottsboro Boys*, 2017 Jeff Award Winner (Porchlight Theatre) “Boy Scrooge” in *A Christmas Carol* (Goodman Theatre), and “John Darling” in *Peter Pan – A Musical Adventure* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre). TV: “2019 Top 40” on *American Idol* ABC. National Anthem: Chicago Bulls, Windy City Bulls, and Chicago White Sox. Fun Fact: TikTok has been Cameron’s favorite platform during this Pandemic. Follow me on TikTok and Instagram @Cameron.Goode or at [www.CameronGoode.com](http://www.CameronGoode.com)!



## **OCTAVIUS LANIER (Dad, Obama & Others):**

Octavius Lanier is a class of 2021 MFA acting candidate at the University of Iowa. His acting credits include *Three Sisters*, *Sweat*, and *Seven Spots on the Sun*. Octavius has recently worked on various zoom productions including *Breath Behind the Mask*, *6 by 6*, and the upcoming *The People Before the Park* directed by Jade King Carroll running March 19 - March 28, 2021. [www.octaviuslanier.com/](http://www.octaviuslanier.com/)



## **LORI SINCLAIR MINOR (Mom, Claudette, Ruby & Others):**

Lori Sinclair Minor is an actor/singer/playwright/fingerpainter based in NY originally from SC. She has performed regionally and in NY in theater and with the Braata Folks Singers, a NY-based Caribbean folk group. Her work includes STM - *Skinfolk: An American Show*, (SC) Emmie - *Caroline or Change*, Liasia - *Guardian of The Field*, Various - *Jabari Dreams of Freedom* (workshop). Her written work has been featured at NBTF - new works, with Blackboard Plays, The Bechdel Group and Vintage Soul Productions and with Major Minor productions. Lori thanks her family for their love and support and is blessed to work with this show and these wonderful artists.



## **OTIS MCDANIEL (Emmett & Understudy):**

Otis McDaniel is an undergraduate student at Brenau University in Gainesville, GA. In October of 2020, he appeared in a virtual reading of Nambi E. Kelley’s play *Blood* directed by Daniel Carlton. This reading was presented as part of the Gainesville Theatre Alliance New Play Festival.



# PRODUCTION



## **DANIEL CARLTON (Director):**

Daniel Carlton is a versatile storyteller and award-winning teaching artist. His work has been presented nationally and internationally in schools, jails, homeless shelters, libraries, and every imaginable place to perform (except for outer space). Playwright credits include: *March On*, based on interviews with attendees of the 1963 March on Washington; *Timeless Journeys*, a monologue series based on the history of free African Americans in Brooklyn, NY (commissioned by The Weeksville Heritage Society). Daniel's verse play *Pigfoot Mary Says Goodbye to the Harlem Renaissance* was produced by Metropolitan Playhouse and is one of the touring shows of The Negro Ensemble Company. Daniel directed the workshop production of *Night Train 57* at the Kennedy Center in D.C., and *Saying Something* at Columbia University's Miller Theater for "The While We Are Still Here" project. [www.danielcarlton.com](http://www.danielcarlton.com)



## **NAMBI E. KELLEY (Playwright/Producer):**

Award-winning playwright and actress Nambi E. Kelley was chosen by literary legend Toni Morrison to adapt her novel *Jazz* for the stage (Baltimore Center Stage, Marin Theatre Company). Nambi's adaptation of Richard Wright's *Native Son* has been seen across the country and premiered off-Broadway in 2019 at The Duke on 42nd Street (The Acting Company; AUDELCO Award for "Best Play"). Several others of Nambi's plays have had multiple regional productions including *Xtigone* (African-American Shakespeare Co.) and *Hands Up: Seven Playwrights Seven Testaments: Dead of Night...* (Alliance Theatre 2020). She has penned plays for Steppenwolf, Goodman Theatre, Lincoln Center (Director's Fest), and internationally. Nambi is a former playwright-in-residence at the National Black Theatre in New York and the Goodman Theatre in Chicago, and she recently served in residence at New Victory Theatre. She is the winner of this year's NNPN annual commission, the Prince Prize 2019, and a Dramatists Guild Foundation Writers Alliance Grant 2018-19. Nambi is a season three staff writer on Showtime's *The Chi* and for a new show on Fox. [www.nambikelley.com](http://www.nambikelley.com)



## **JOE PLUMMER (Musical Director):**

Joe Plummer is a true renaissance man and has found a successful niche as a musical playwright. *Get Ready*, his premier production along with Jaye Stewart, has been produced by Victory Gardens Theatre (BTA award for "Best New Writing of a Play"; Jeff Award nomination), ETA Theatre (Jeff Award nomination for choreography), The Ensemble Theatre, and Penumbra Theatre. His musical *I Got'cha: The Story Of Joe Tex And The Soul Clan* at The Black Ensemble Theatre in Chicago garnered Joe and his co-writer David Barr III two Black Excellence Awards, and the New Horizon Theatre production in Pittsburgh took 11 Onyx Awards. Joe's third musical *Nothing but the Blues* was presented at the Black Ensemble Theatre (Jeff Award nomination; 10 Black Theatre Alliance Awards), New Horizon Theatre, and onboard Celebrity Cruise ship's Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise. Joe's next musical *Vee Jay Records*, co-written with Sanetta Gipson, had its first reading at The Chicago Dramatists. A film version is being produced by and stars Oscar nominee Viola Davis. [www.tri-coastalentertainment.com](http://www.tri-coastalentertainment.com)



### **LEO LEI (Sound and Media Designer/Editor):**

Leo holds a B.A. in Theatre Arts from the University of Essex, and an M.F.A. in Lighting Design from Kent State University. He taught Lighting Design and Technology at Santa Fe University of Art and Design and currently teaches in the School of Stage and Screen, Western Carolina University as the Assistant Professor of Lighting and Sound. Leo worked as the Season Master Electrician at Porthouse Theatre from 2014 to 2016. Professional lighting design credits include *Into the Woods*, *Beauty and The Beast*, *Twelfth Night*, *Noises Off*, *Cabaret*, *Company*, *Footloose*, and *Grease*. In China, Leo did lighting for corporate events, concerts, and festivals. [www.leoleiyu.com](http://www.leoleiyu.com)

### **JES AGUILAR-SMUCKER (Stage Manager):**

Select works: Off-Broadway: *God Said This* (Primary Stages); National Tour: *A Night with Janis Joplin*; Regional: *Jazz*, *Straight White Men*, *Fences*, *In Red and Brown Water* (Marin Theatre Company); *Miracle on 34th Street*, *Our Town*, *Shout Sister Shout!*, *The Originalist*, *Fly*, *12 Angry Men* (Pasadena Playhouse); *Significant Other*, *reasons to be pretty*, *Death of the Author* (Geffen Playhouse); *Dementia* (LATC); *Evita*, *Children of Eden* (Cabrillo Music Theatre); *Man of La Mancha*, *Hedwig & the Angry Inch* (Cygnet Theatre). She is a proud member of AEA and an avid SF Giants fan. Many thanks to SA2HW-PA-HV-QH-ML-MA-JK2-F&F y mi corazón a Chris.

### **OLIVIA LESLIE (Assistant Stage Manager):**

Olivia Leslie is a recent graduate of the University of Iowa with a theatre arts major and a GWSS minor. Recent credits include UI: *Breath Behind the Mask* (SM), *Orlando* (SM), *Blackberry: A Burial* (SM), *Found* (SM), *Agnes in Green* (SM), *Sunday in the Park with George* (ASM), *The Age of Innocence* (ASM). Riverside Theatre: *Stages* (SM), *Straight White Men* (SM), *Henry IV* (ASM). Thank you to her incredibly supportive friends and family, and to this incredible team.

### **WHITNEY STONE (Production Coordinator):**

Whitney is a director and arts administrator currently based in Boston. Her recent directing credits include *Every Single Sunday* by Chris Karmiol (Gallery Players 2021 Black Box Festival of New Plays), *The Hunger & The Thirst* by Paul Mancini (Snapshot; Denizens Theatre Company), and *Vacancies* by Scott C. Sickles (Gallery Players 2020 Black Box Festival of New Plays). She is a graduate of Hofstra University and an alum of the One-Year Directing Program at The Barrow Group. Proud associate member of SDC! [www.whitneystone.org](http://www.whitneystone.org).

### **FIRST WOMAN PRODUCTIONS (FWP):**

Named for the East African creation story from which playwright Nambi E. Kelley's first name comes, First Woman Productions is proud to present the digital incarnate of *Jabari Dreams of Freedom* as its inaugural production. Previous work for young audiences penned by Nambi E. Kelley include: *So Journey To The Truth* (co-written with Daniel Carlton, Syracuse Stage, Regional Tour), *Ain't No Black In A Rainbow* (TheatreWorks USA, national tour 2021-22), *Hero: The Boy From Troy* (Pittsburgh CLO, music by Joe Plummer, regional tour 2022), *Jabari Dreams of Freedom* (Chicago Children's Theatre) *The Blue Shadow* (Lifeline Theatre, music by Joe Plummer) *Peace To The Fourth Power* (HealthWorks Theatre, National Tour), and *The Tale of Nambi and Kintu* (St. Louis Black Repertory Theatre, Regional Tour). Current young audience commissions include: *Hero: The Boy From Troy* (Pittsburgh CLO, music by Joe Plummer) and *This Ability* (co-written with Daniel Carlton, Chicago Children's Theatre). FWP's Founder Nambi E. Kelley served as curriculum director and actor for LATT Children's Theatre in South Korea where she toured singing in Korean and English while creating interactive English immersion theatrical lessons for family audiences. She is currently in residence at The New Victory Theatre in New York City as a member of the LabWorks BIPOC Cohort, and is the recipient of Ben & Jerry's Peacemaker of the Year Award for her work on *Peace To The Fourth Power*, a violence prevention play for teens.

## **CHICAGO CHILDREN'S THEATRE:**

Founded in 2005, the critically acclaimed Chicago Children's Theatre focuses on the production of first-rate children's theatre, with top writing, performing, and directorial talent and high-quality design and production expertise. In 2017, Chicago Children's Theatre became the first theater for young audiences in the nation to win a National Theatre Award from the American Theatre Wing, creators of the Tony Awards. Led by Artistic Director Jacqueline Russell, Chicago Children's Theatre has built its national reputation due to its focus on diverse, new work, producing 20 world premieres in the last 15 years. These productions enjoyed successful inaugural runs in Chicago, many followed by productions at theaters across the U.S. CCT opened its first permanent home in the West Loop in 2017 in a former police station. Chicago Children's Theatre also produces The Red Kite Project, a multi-sensory interactive theatre program tailored specifically to the needs of children on the autism spectrum. [www.chicagochildrenstheatre.org/](http://www.chicagochildrenstheatre.org/)

## **NEW VICTORY LABWORKS:**

Established in 2012, New Victory® LabWorks explores, devises and reimagines what theater for families can be by supporting New York-based artists of all disciplines in making works that challenge preconceptions commonly held about theater for young audiences. In an effort to diversify the field of performing arts for young audiences and the productions seen on stages across the nation, New Victory LabWorks supports adventurous performing arts for family audiences that amplify a multitude of voices. We commit to welcoming and uplifting BIPOC artists who identify as LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC artists who identify as disabled. New Victory LabWorks artists receive funding, professional development, networking and community support. By connecting artists with New Victory Member families and education partners to garner invaluable responses and feedback from kids, New Victory LabWorks invites artists to hone their craft, expand their skills, make contacts in the field, take artistic risks and make bold choices with their work. [www.newvictory.org/about/labworks/](http://www.newvictory.org/about/labworks/)

## **SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

Chicago Children's Theatre  
Western Carolina University  
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Alison Scaramella  
Debbie Stone  
Xavier Kelley  
Dr. Don Quinn Kelley  
Ida Miles

**and all the fearless children  
of The Civil Rights Movement  
past and present**