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Black Artists Contemporary Cultural Experience presents
the Northern California premiere of

Bootycandy

Robert O'Hara's hit comedy about being black & queer



Directed by Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe

starring :

AeJay Mitchell, Rotimi Agbabiaka, Kehinde Koyejo, India Wilmott & Aaron Wilton

Brava Theater

February 15-March 5, 2017

"...funny, poignant and totally unexpected throughout..." - Scott Baker

Black Artists Contemporary Cultural Experience is excited to bring Robert O'Hara's hit comedy *Bootycandy* to Northern California for the first time! *Bootycandy* has wowed audiences in extended performances at Woolly Mammoth in Washington, D.C and Playwrights Horizon, off-Broadway, in New York. For two years, BACCE actively sought to obtain the rights to *Bootycandy*, and are now poised and ready to rock the Bay Area with this important play.

With more than a passing homage to George C. Wolfe's, *Colored Museum*, *Bootycandy* is a series of short pieces – plays, sermons, and sketches – that follow the story of Sutter as he embarks on an outrageous odyssey of his boyhood home, his church, dive bars, motel rooms and even nursing homes in a

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kaleidoscope of meta-theatrics that weave a portrait of growing up black and gay. The play's interrogation of the intersection of blackness, queerness, and artistry is extremely relevant to the Bay Area community, and its style of satirical and thoughtful comedy is key to understanding black theatricality.

Leading the very capable BACCE ensemble is local Bay Area favorite, AeJay Mitchell as Sutter. Rounding out the cast is Mime Troupe veteran and BACCE member Rotimi Agbabiaka (*Type/Caste*), BACCE veteran Kehinde Koyejo (*Sweet Maladies*), and new ensemble members and veteran actors India Wilmott and Aaron Wilton. Directed by Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe.

Robert O'Hara is an accomplished playwright and director. His play *Antebellum*, won the 2010 Helen Hayes for Outstanding Play and is published in two anthologies. His play, *Insurrection: Holding History*, had its World Premiere (directed by O'Hara) at the New York Shakespeare Festival and a West Coast Premiere at American Conservatory Theatre. The piece received the Oppenheimer Award for Best New American Play and was subsequently published by both TCG and Dramatist Play Service. His play *Etiquette of Vigilance* was produced in the Steppenwolf First Look Festival and ACT/Zeum recently produced his play, *Good Breeding*. As a director, O'Hara received an OBIE Award for his direction of the World Premiere of the critically acclaimed *In The Continuum* at Primary Stages. He directed the World Premiere of *Brother/Sister Plays (Part 2)*, co-production at McCarter Theater/ New York Shakespeare Festival and has directed at the Magic Theater CTG/Kirk Douglas Theater, Alliance Theater, and City Theater and directed the critically acclaimed World Premiere of *Bootycandy* at Woolly Mammoth. He wrote and directed the Black horror movie, *The Inheritance* (available on Netflix) and is currently an Adjunct Professor at NYU/TISCH School of the Arts.

Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe (Director) is an award winning actor, director and writer and is the founding artistic director of Black Artists Contemporary Cultural Experience, a resident company at Brava. She is the creator of several solo pieces including *Traveling While Black*, which premiered in the Brava Studio in 2014, and the published *Adventures of a Black Girl In Search of Academic Clarity and Inclusion* (Northwestern University Press). As a director, Cooper-Anifowoshe has worked nationally at Trinity Repertory Company, Capital Repertory, Southern Rep in New Orleans, Mark Taper Forum, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Woolly Mammoth, Curious Theatre in Denver, and Arts Theatre, Ibadan, Nigeria. Cooper-Anifowoshe's Bay Area directing credits include the West Coast premieres of *Relativity* at the Magic Theatre, *The Old Settler* at TheaterWorks in Palo Alto; *Crying Holy* at Theatre Rhinoceros, and *Urban Zulu Mambo* and *Blue/Orange* at Lorraine Hansberry Theatre. At Brava with BACCE, Cooper-Anifowoshe directed West Coast premieres of *Sweet Maladies* by Zakiyyah Alexander (winner of TBA Award for Best Ensemble and *In a Daughter's Eyes* by Oakland native, A. Zell Williams. She holds an M.F.A. in Directing from the University of Iowa.

Cast:

AeJay Mitchell (Sutter) is making his stage debut with BACCE with this incredibly talented cast and creative team! Bay Area Theatre Credits Include: Actor 4/Another Black Man in *We Are Proud To Present...* (San Jose Stage Company); Kemi in *Rose in America* (Alter Theatre Ensemble); Miss Roj / Kid / Narrator in *Colored Museum*, E-Mem in *X-Tigone*, and Borraccio in *Much Ado About Nothing* (African American Shakespeare Theatre Company); Gary Coleman in *Avenue Q* (NCTC); Gibbs in *Dogfight* (SF Playhouse); Tobias Twitch in *Something for the Boys* (42nd Street Moon); C.C. White in *Dreamgirls*

(Broadway by the Bay); Scarecrow in *The Wiz*, Mayor Shinn in *The Music Man* and Rusty Charlie in *Guys and Dolls* (Berkeley Playhouse); and Jonathan Harker in *Dracula* (Inferno Theatre).

Rotimi Agbabiaka (Ensemble) is an actor, singer, writer, director, and teaching artist. He most recently appeared in *Sojourners* (Disciple Ufot) and *runboyrun* (boy) at Magic Theatre, in *Hair* (Hud) with Bay Area Musicals, *Holiday High Jinx* (Dancing Dan) with Word for Word, *Choir Boy* (Junior) at Marin Theatre Company, *The Amen Corner* (David) with Alter Theater, *We Are Proud To Present ...* (Another Black Man) at Just Theater, and *Raisin in The Sun* (Asagai) at Cal Shakes. He is a collective member of the San Francisco Mime Troupe, a former cast member at Beach Blanket Babylon, and his solo play, *Homeless*, won Best Solo Performance at the SF Fringe Festival. He has done drag at Club Something and Hard French and has presented his writing at the Radar Reading Series and Queer Autonomous Zone. He also teaches youth theatre with Each One Reach One, SF Shakespeare, and the SF Mime Troupe Youth Theatre Project, and writes articles for Theatre Bay Area magazine. He studied at Moscow Art Theatre and earned his MFA from Northern Illinois University. For more info, visit: <http://www.rotimionline.com/>.

Kehinde Koyejo (Ensemble) is honored to be a part of this amazing group of artists assembled together for the Northern California debut of Robert O'Hara's *Booty Candy*. Some of Kehinde's recent/favorite local theater credits include: *All Aunt Hagar's Children* (Word for Word), *We Are Proud To Present...* (Just Theater), *Sweet Maladies* (BACCE), *For Colored Girls* (Project 1Voice & LHT), *The Firefly Project* (Magic Theater), Philip Kan Gotanda's *The Jamaican Wash Project* (Lorraine Hansberry Theater,) and *Bat Boy, The Musical* (Ray of Light Theater). National credits include: *Serenade* (LaMama Theater, NY), *In The Wine Time* (The National Black Theater, NY), *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* and *The Wiz* (Crystal Image Theater, NY). Kehinde Koyejo is an associate artist with the Black Artists Contemporary Cultural Experience (BACCE) and holds a B.F.A. in Acting from Pace University, NY and a M.A. in Performance Studies from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.

Indiia Wilmott (Ensemble) is very excited to be working alongside this incredible cast and crew! She was last seen in San Francisco Playhouse's production of *all of what you love you and none of what you hate* and African-American Shakespeare Company's production of *Antony and Cleopatra*. Her other Bay Area credits include; Natalie in Bay Area Musical's production of *Hair*; various roles in New Conservatory Theatre Center's YouthAware production of *Cooties*, and the role of E in *The Horse's Ass and Friends* at Repurposed Theatre. When not on stage, Indiia works as the Artistic Learning Programs Manager at California Shakespeare Theater bringing theatre education to students in Oakland and other parts of the East Bay. Lots of love, hugs and kisses to my love and biggest fan (and new husband!), Fujio.

Aaron Wilton (Ensemble) is elated to be working with BACCE! Local Credits: San Jose Rep, Aurora Theatre Company, San Jose Stage Company, Pacific Repertory Theatre, Theatre Rhinoceros, Sacramento Theatre Company, B Street, Capital Stage, Shakespeare Napa Valley and PlayGround SF. Regional: George Street Playhouse (w/ Oscar nom. Amy Irving & Emmy nom. Peter Scolari), Hudson Stage Company, Shakespeare in the Wild, The Beckmann Theater, Curan Repertory Company and Greenwich Street Theatre, where his co-created show *Happy Mundanes* performed at the New York City Fringe Festival. He has numerous Film, TV and video game credits (including voices on the recently released *Watch Dogs 2*) and has done commercials with Blue Shield, Chase, Taco Bell, Adobe and Xfinity. He has won a Shellie and been nominated for a Perry and two BroadwayWorld SF awards.

Black Artists Contemporary Cultural Experience (BACCE) is an artist-run theater company dedicated to presenting plays by, for and about Black people and developing the talent of people of color in the performing arts. We offer opportunities for living playwrights and for those playwrights whose work is considered too risky for mainstream states and are dedicated to creating more opportunities for African American actors directors and designers in the San Francisco Bay Area. We do work that stretches the boundaries of form and presents a complicated view of the Black experience. We are a multi-national, multi-ethnic company in recognition of the complex nature of identity in the 1st Century. We are the New Black - uninhibited, uncompromised, unafraid and unbound BACCE became a resident company of Brava Theatre Center in 2014. At Brava, BACCE has produced three solo productions, Edris Cooper Anifowoshe's *Traveling While Black*, *Lottie's Ghost*, written and performed by Bay Area choreographer, Shakiri and Rotimi Agbabiaka's *Type/Caste: A Solo Show About Acting While Black (& Queer)*; two So Soul San Francisco Art Salons - *Blackbirds Boogie*, a celebration of the life and work of Queer poet and artistic icon, Wayne Corbitt curated and hosted by Marvin K. White and featuring performances and participation by Marvin K. White, Avotcja, Rhodessa Jones, Emerald O'Leary, Blackberri and Thomas K. Simpson and *Passing The Torch*, featuring new work by Black Queer poets, Dazié Grego-Sykes, Sevan Kelee Boulton & Ramona Webb; and two full length plays, A. Zell Williams' *In A Daughter's Eyes* and *Sweet Maladies* by Zakiyyah Alexander (winner of Best Ensemble, TBA Awards) In addition, we have staged readings of new plays in development – our most recent two, Nick Mwaluko's, *Waafrica* about being transgender in Kenya and Robert O'Hara's a preview reading of *BooTycandy*.

Brava! for Women in the Arts celebrates over 30 years as a professional arts organization dedicated to cultivating the artistic expression of women, youth, LGBTQ, people of color, and other underrepresented voices. Brava's producing history includes award-winning new work by Artists in Residence Rhodessa Jones & Cultural Odyssey, Marga Gomez, Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe, and Lisa Mezzacappa; the Bay Area premieres of *Solitude* by Evelina Fernandez & Latino Theatre Company, and the Off-Broadway hit *Mighty Real: A Fabulous Sylvester Musical*, as well as the annual events *Baile en la Calle: The Mural Dances*, and year-end fundraiser *Brava's New Year's Eve Comedy Fiesta*. Brava's current artistic programming includes traditional and contemporary music festivals, a variety of film festivals, contemporary and experimental theatrical productions, international comedy shows, lectures and professional dance productions—making Brava one of the most eclectic and multifaceted arts venues in the Bay Area. Brava's resident youth programs include the long-standing SF Running Crew, pairing youth with professional mentors and hands-on opportunities for technical theater training; Cuicacalli Escuela de Danza, traditional and contemporary dance training for youth; and SF Youth Theatre, offering high quality instruction integrating drama, dance, music, and stagecraft. Brava is committed to providing affordable space for artistic development and presentation and quality professional arts training for underserved youth in the San Francisco community.