

EISA DAVIS

PIECES / PLAYS / PERFORMANCE

Active Ingredients (2011)

Narratives around alternative, holistic healthcare performed by healing practitioners and their clients. Commissioned and produced by the Foundry Theatre, remounted in the BMW Guggenheim Lab. Created in collaboration with Third Root Community Health Center in Brooklyn and singer-songwriter Morley Kamen.

Ramp (2010-)

Isis / Osiris myth set at an airport during a global shift in ecological paradigm. Ruby Prize winner. Commissioned by San Francisco's American Conservatory Theatre. Development support from New York Stage and Film, LAByrinth Theater Company, Hip Hop Theater Festival, New Dramatists, and Southern Rep.

The History of Light (2009)

The intertwining fates of two interracial couples a generation apart. Lots of classical piano and some singing. Commissioned by the Geva Theatre; developed there and at New Dramatists. Productions at the Contemporary American Theater Festival and Passage Theatre.

Angela's Mixtape (joint premiere 2008-2009)

Memoir about a radical upbringing. Nominated for an AUDELCO award for best ensemble; Best of Off Broadway 2009 in *The New Yorker*. Developed by the Hip-Hop Theater Festival and New York Theater Workshop. Produced by Synchronicity Performance Group, New Georges and the Hip-Hop Theater Festival.

Warriors Don't Cry (2007)

An adaptation of the memoir by Melba Pattillo Beals of the Little Rock Nine. Commissioned and premiered by Cornerstone Theatre. Presentations include Urban Stages, Tennessee Women's Project, the Culture Project.

Bulrushes (2006)

Clairvoyant black orphan comes of age in the redwoods. Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 2007. Premiered at Urban Stages with subsequent productions at Shotgun Players, Pillsbury House, and New Village Arts, among many others. Published and licensed by Samuel French.

Hip Hop Anansi (2006)

A West African Anansi tale adapted for hearing and deaf hip hop artists. Commissioned and produced by Imagination Stage, in collaboration with the cast. Published by Playscripts.com.

Six Minutes (2004-)

A couple takes literary criticism too literally. Written in the Soho Rep Writer/Director Lab. Developed at the Public Theater/LAByrinth Theater Company, Seattle Rep's Women Playwrights Festival/Hedgebrook, the New Group, New York Stage and Film, and Aaron Davis Hall/Hip Hop Theater Festival.

Umkovu (2001-)

A hip hop label tries to kill its own artist to boost record sales. Presentations at PS 122/Hip Hop Theater Festival, The Flea, and the Schomburg Center for Black Research.

Paper Armor (1999-)

Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston write the play that destroyed their friendship. Developed at the Roundabout Theatre, Geva Theatre, Cleveland Playhouse's Next Stage Festival, Women's Project, the Langston Hughes Centenary Conference at Yale, and Nuyorican Poets Café, among others.

SELECT SHORT PLAYS / TEXTS

Curator/dramaturg/text for *Fire + Fire, Black and Gypsy* at Symphony Space (2009).

York/New York, an exhibit at Writing Encounters, York St. John University in England (2008).

The 24 Hour Plays on Broadway (2007), "Secretary of Shake" in *Point of Revue*, Mixed Blood Theater (2006).

SELECT ESSAYS, ARTICLES, PUBLICATIONS

“Found in Translation,” in *American Theatre*, July/August 2004 and in *Total Chaos*, Basic Civitas Books (2006).

Scenes from *Umkovu*, in *Everything But The Burden*, Random House (2003).

Scenes from *Paper Armor*, in *Role Call*, Third World Press (2002).

“Hip-Hop Theatre: The New Underground,” in *The Source* (March 2000).

“...will poetry be enuf?” Letter to Ntozake Shange anthologized in *Step Into A World*, Wiley and Sons, 2000, and *Letters of Intent*, Free Press (1999).

“Sexism and the Art of Feminist Hip Hop Maintenance.” in *To Be Real*, Doubleday (1995).

MUSIC WORKS

Flowers Are Sleeping, a music-theatre work in progress (2012-). Commissioned by Symphony Space.

Something Else, an album of original music (2007). Live performances include Joe’s Pub, BAMCafé, the Whitney Museum @ Altria, Galapagos, Makor, the Jazz Gallery, Tonic, the Temple Bar in Santa Monica, CA, Yale Cabaret, University of Wisconsin, and Symphony Space.

Sweetwash, a collaboration with nicholasleichterdance at the Duncan Theater and DNA (2006-2007).

Tinctures, a performance collaboration and album with composer Daniel T. Denver (1999-2002). Performances at CB’s Gallery, Pyramid Club, Manhattan Theatre Source, and on Showtime’s *Soul Food*.

SELECT INTERPRETIVE PERFORMANCE

Theatre: *This, Passing Strange, Intimate Apparel, June and Jean in Concert* by Adrienne Kennedy. Film: *Passing Strange* (directed by Spike Lee), *Welcome to the Rileys, In The Family, The Stare, Pretty Bird, Happenstance, The Architect, Confess, Robot Stories, Brass Tacks*. Television: *Hart of Dixie, Smash, Damages, The Wire, Soul Food*. Concerts: Nat Stookey’s *Zipperz* with the Oakland Symphony; Lincoln Center and BAM with Stew and Heidi Rodewald.

EDUCATION

Actors Studio Drama School, New School, New York, NY September 1994-May 1997
MFA in Acting and Playwriting, Actors Studio lifetime member

Harvard University, Cambridge, MA September 1988-June 1992
AB in Social Studies, *magna cum laude* (thesis in cultural theory / African-American aesthetics)

Young Musicians Program, UC Berkeley June 1981-August 1988
studies in classical piano, voice, music theory and composition, happiness

AWARDS, RESIDENCIES AND FELLOWSHIPS

Symphony Space artist-in-residence	2011-2013
Ruby Prize	January 2011
New Dramatists resident playwright	September 2002-October 2009
Barbara Barondess MacLean In The Spirit of America Award	September 2009
Obie Award for Performance in <i>Passing Strange</i>	May 2008
Pulitzer Prize Finalist	April 2007
Whitfield Cook Award	July 2006
Helen Merrill Emerging Playwright Award	May 2004
Van Lier Fellowship at New Dramatists	February 2001-May 2002
The MacDowell Colony’s Thornton Wilder Fellow	1999-2000
Cave Canem Fellow	June 1999-July 2001