

Double-Billed!

Dutchman & The Last Revolutionary

Gaines Ballroom
in Lower Level of
Embassy Suites

Thurs. Aug. 6	3 p.m.
Fri. Aug. 7	3 p.m.
Sat. Aug. 8	3 p.m.
Sat. Aug. 8	8 p.m.

\$41



Siaka Massaquoi as Clay and Tanna Frederick as LuLu in "Dutchman."

Award-winning playwright/director/actor Levy Lee Simon is everywhere at this year's National Black Theatre Festival. He wrote the sweeping period production "The Magnificent Dunbar Hotel," stars in "The Last Revolutionary," which he also wrote; and directs "Dutchman," a jewel of a play written by the incomparable Amiri Baraka.

The two-character "Dutchman" centers around Clay, a middle class black man, and a Bohemian white woman, LuLu, who has suspect intentions toward him. They encounter each other on a New York City subway bound for an unknown destination. Their interaction is tense, and their flirtation, intellectual discourse and "sexual dance" lead to a struggle for life and death.

Primarily known for his poetry, Baraka set the theater world ablaze in the 1960s when "Dutchman" made its debut, forcing many to examine relationships between whites and blacks. Simon's North Hollywood, Calif.-based Jazz Lion Productions is presenting the drama, in conjunction with the Kilpatrick/Cambridge Theatre Company, which is also based in Southern California.

Siaka Massaquoi plays Clay. He discovered acting while at the University of Iowa, where his drama teacher was Simon. He moved to Los Angeles after earning his degree and has won roles in films like "Consensual," "Sadie's Song" and "Written By." His television credits include "Wingmen" and "The Adventures of J.A.B." He is currently a student in the acclaimed Beverly Hills Workshop Master Class.

The role of LuLu is played by Tanna Frederick, who is also a producer. Her collaborations with indie filmmaker Henry Jaglom have led to starring roles in six films, including "The 'M' Word" and the soon-to-be released "Ovation." Her stage credits include A.R. Gurney's "Sylvia," Richard Nash's "The Rainmaker" and Claire Chafee's "Why We Have a Body," which also marked Frederick's directing debut.

Erik Kilpatrick, who is best known for his role as Curtis Jackson on the television series "The White Shadow," is the play's producer. The son of acclaimed actor Lincoln Kilpatrick, he has built quite the reputation as a stage producer, writer and director over the last 30 years. One of his proudest achievements is the documentary "Homer G. Phillips, The Lost Leader," which he wrote, produced and directed.

Simon's work is regularly featured at the NBTF. At the very first festival in 1989, he appeared in Carl DeJung's "Do Lord Remember Me," a performance that led Dr. Maya Angelou to proclaim him a "Young Lion." (Note the name of Simon's production company.) He was back at the NBTF in 2002, starring in "Before It Hits Home." He made his festival debut as a writer in 2007 with "The Bow Wow Club." In 2011, his play "Same Train" was featured, and "The Last Revolutionary," debuted in 2013. ■