

BAM

Next Wave 2019

BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC PETER JAY SHARP BUILDING 30 LAFAYETTE AVENUE BROOKLYN, NY 11217—1486

Playwright/poet Inua Ellams' internationally acclaimed production *Barber Shop Chronicles* makes its New York and BAM debut in Next Wave 2019—a season of all new artists, Dec 3—8

The groundbreaking work lifts the curtain on a universal meeting space for Black men: the barber shop

Bloomberg Philanthropies is the Season Sponsor

Barber Shop Chronicles

Fuel/National Theatre/Leeds Playhouse

By Inua Ellams

Directed by Bijan Sheibani

Design by Rae Smith

Lighting design by Jack Knowles

Movement direction by Aline David

Sound design by Gareth Fry

Casting direction by Louis Hammond CDG

Harvey Theater at BAM Strong (651 Fulton St)

Dec 3—7 at 7:30pm; Dec 7 at 2pm; Dec 8 at 3pm

Tickets start at \$35

Accessible Performances:

Dec 5 at 7:30pm—open captioning provided by c2

Dec 7 at 2pm—ASL by Hands On. Learn more at HandsOn.org.

Contact BAM ticket services at info@BAM.org or 718.636.4100 for more information

“...an impromptu jam session or block party that’s moved indoors because of rain.”

— *Los Angeles Times*

“...a joyous, surprising, moving play...” — *The Times* (UK)

“It’s funny, fast, laced with music and dance, and performed with irresistible good humour and style...” — *Financial Times*

Nov 5, 2019/ Brooklyn, NY— Following two sold out runs at the National Theatre in London, a successful run at London’s Roundhouse, and a world tour, Nigerian-born playwright **Inua Ellams’** acclaimed ***Barber Shop Chronicles*** makes its New York and **BAM** debut December 3—8. The sold-out sensation explores the diversity of Black male identity via the intimate community of the barber shop, where men across the African diaspora have gathered for

generations to discuss the world and their lives. Filled with passion, humor, and honesty, the celebrated work is inspired by Ellams' own experiences as an immigrant.

Directed by **Bijan Sheibani**, *Barber Shop Chronicles* follows the conversations and concerns of a group of African men as they interact in six different barber shops in London, Lagos, Johannesburg, Accra, Kampala, and Harare. The all-male, 12-person cast riffs on topics both personal and political—from sports to race relations to views about fatherhood, identity, immigration, and masculinity. Music and dance knit together the individual episodes in this fast-paced production. A mastery of humor, pace, and wit, the story takes place over a single day as characters, jokes, and plotlines traverse continents and cultures.

Barber Shop Chronicles is presented in its New York premiere at **Next Wave 2019**—the first season under Artistic Director **David Binder**, in which all artists are making BAM debuts. The season runs through December 2019 and includes theater, dance, music, film, site-specific, and multi-genre work across BAM's venues and off-site, as well as Holiday programming.

www.bam.org/barbershopchronicles

Additional Event

A Ballad for Harlem Conversation: Making Community

Co-presented by the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

In conjunction with *Barber Shop Chronicles*

At the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (515 Malcolm X Blvd.)

Dec 2 at 6:30pm

A conversation about the convening power of the barber shop and beauty salons in Black communities around the world. Panelists include **Kamal Nuru** (Levels Barbershop and *Barber World TV*), **Quincy Mills** (*Cutting Along the Color Line: Black Barbers and Barber Shops in America*), **Polo Greene** (Harlem Masters), and more.

For more information visit www.nypl.org/events/programs/2019/12/02/ballad-harlem-conversation-making-community

About the Artists

Born in Nigeria in 1984, **Inua Ellams** is an internationally touring poet, playwright, performer, graphic artist, and designer. He is an ambassador for the Ministry of Stories and has published four books of poetry: *Candy Coated Unicorns and Converse All Stars*, *Thirteen Fairy Negro Tales*, *The Wire-Headed Heathen*, and *#Afterhours*. His first play, *The 14th Tale*, was awarded a Fringe First at the Edinburgh International Theatre Festival and his fourth, *Barber Shop Chronicles*, sold out its run at England's National Theatre. He is currently touring *An Evening with an Immigrant* and recently premiered *The Half God of Rainfall*, a new play in verse at Birmingham Repertory Theatre and Kiln Theatre, London. In graphic art and design, online, and in print, he tries to mix the old with the new, juxtaposing texture and pigment with flat shades of color and vector images. Ellams lives and works from London, where he founded the Midnight Run, a nocturnal urban excursion. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

Bijan Sheibani was artistic director of the Actors Touring Company (2007–10) and associate director of the National Theatre (2010–15), where he directed *A Taste of Honey*, *Emil and the Detectives*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Damned by Despair*, *The Kitchen*, *War Horse* (US tour), *Greenland*, and *Our Class*. His other theater credits include: *Dance Nation* (Almeida); *Circle Mirror Transformation* (Home, Manchester); *The Brothers Size* and *Eurydice* (Young Vic/Actors Touring Company); *Barber Shop Chronicles* (National Theatre/Fuel/West Yorkshire Playhouse); and *Romeo and Juliet* (National Theatre). Opera credits include *Nothing* (Glyndebourne) and *Tell Me the Truth About Love* (Streetwise Opera).

Fuel produces an adventurous, playful, and significant program of work—live, digital, and across art forms—for a large and representative audience across the UK and beyond. Director Kate McGrath met playwright Inua Ellams in 2008, after McGrath saw the beginnings of his first play, *The 14th Tale*, at BAC. Fuel helped Ellams develop and produce the production, premiering it at the Edinburgh Festival, winning a Fringe First, touring it in the UK and internationally, and presenting it at the National Theatre. Since that first meeting Fuel has worked closely with Ellams, producing *Untitled*, *Knight Watch*, *The Long Song Goodbye*, *Black T-shirt Collection*, *The Spalding Suite*, and *Barber Shop Chronicles* since its inception. Fuel is also currently touring Ellams' *An Evening with an Immigrant*, using poems, stories, and extracts from his plays to tell his life story and immigration experience. Other Fuel works include: David Greig's adaptation of *Touching the Void*, Inua Ellams' *The Half God of Rainfall* and the ambitious human rights project, *Fly the Flag* with Ai Weiwei.

For press information, contact Cynthia Tate, ctate@BAM.org or 718.724.8022

Presented with support from the British Council

Co-commissioned by Fuel and the National Theatre

Development funded by Arts Council England with the support of Fuel, National Theatre Studio, Leeds Playhouse, The Binks Trust, British Council ZA, Oran Morand A Play, a Pie and a Pint.

Credits

Bloomberg Philanthropies is the Season Sponsor

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General Information

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, BAM Rose Cinemas, and BAMcafé are located in the Peter Jay Sharp building at 30 Lafayette Avenue (between St Felix Street and Ashland Place) in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn. Harvey Theater at BAM Strong is located two blocks from the main building at 651 Fulton Street (between Ashland and Rockwell Places). Both locations house Greenlight Bookstore at BAM kiosks. BAM Fisher, located at 321 Ashland Place, houses the Judith and Alan Fishman Space and Rita K. Hillman Studio. BAM Rose Cinemas features first-run independent and foreign film and repertory programming. BAMcafé, operated by Great Performances, offers varied light fare and bar service prior to BAM Howard Gilman Opera House evening performances.

Subway: 2, 3, 4, 5, Q, B to Atlantic Avenue – Barclays Center (2, 3, 4, 5 to Nevins St. for Harvey Theater) D, N, R to Pacific Street; G to Fulton Street; C to Lafayette Avenue
Train: Long Island Railroad to Atlantic Terminal – Barclays Center
Bus: B25, B26, B41, B45, B52, B63, B67 all stop within three blocks of BAM

For ticket information, call BAM Ticket Services at 718.636.4100, or visit BAM.org.

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