STUDY GUIDE

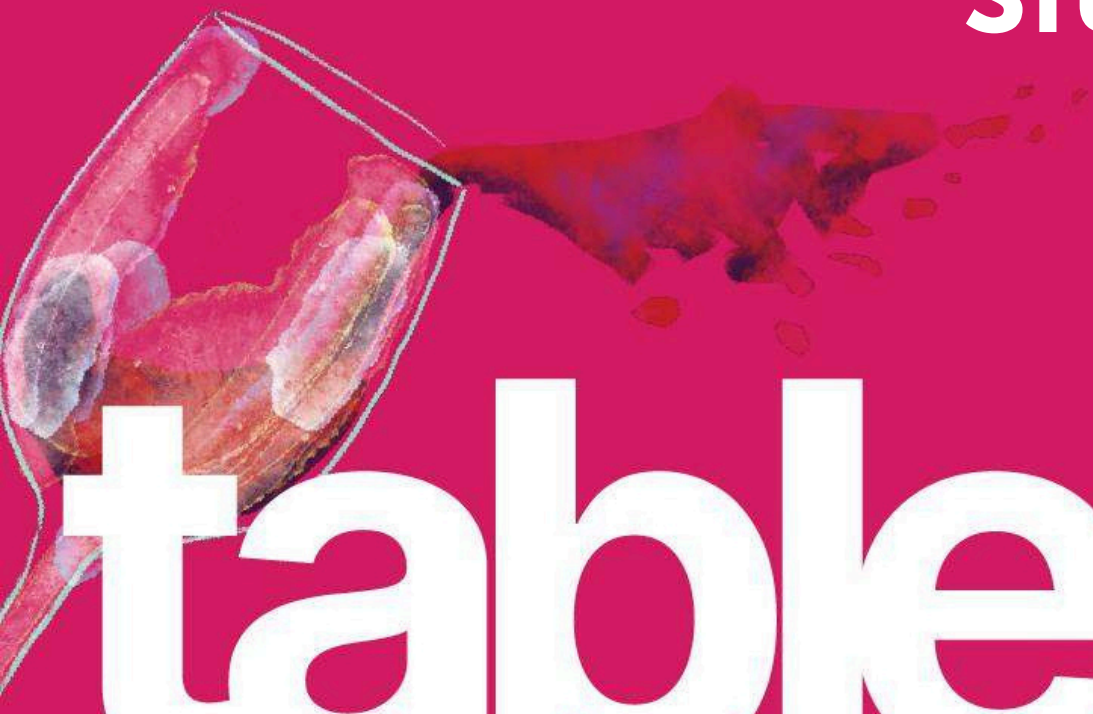
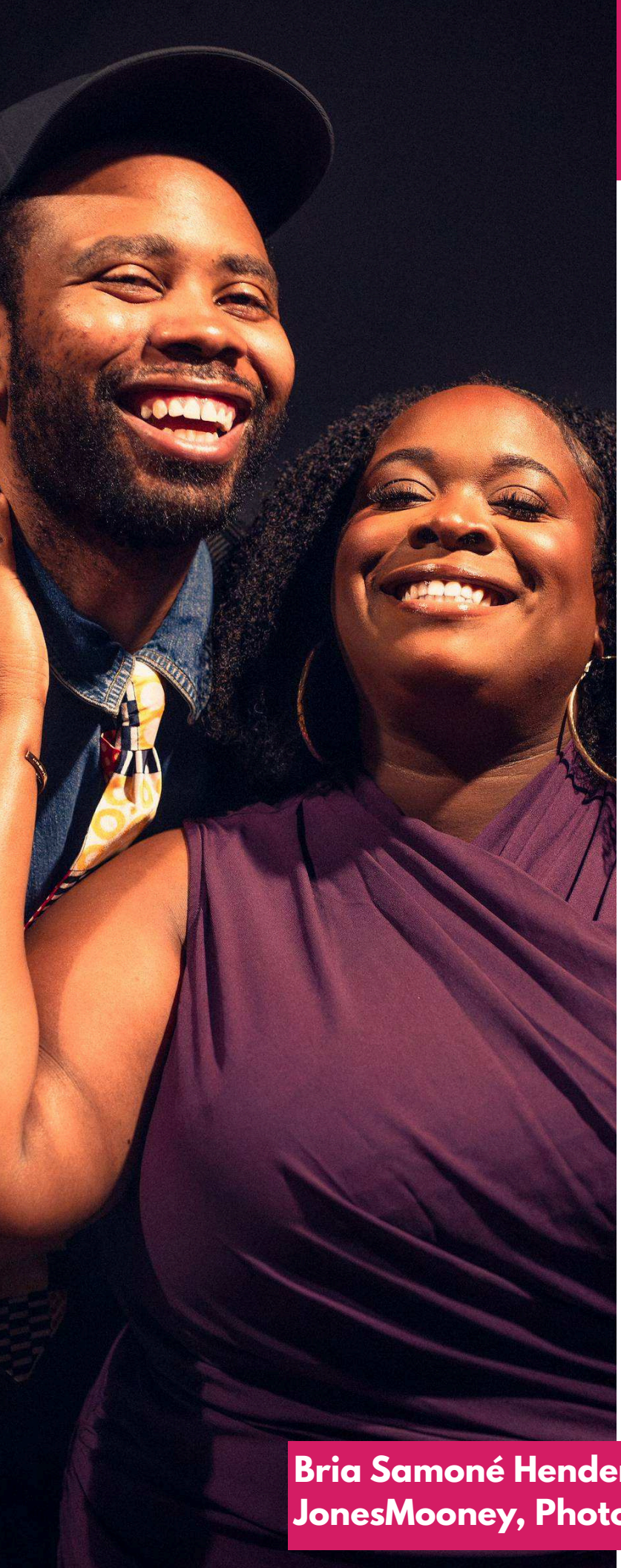


table17

by Douglas Lyons

directed by Shermona Mitchell





Bria Samoné Henderson & Brandon JonesMooney, Photo: Giao Nguyen

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Characters



Jada

Played by: Bria Samoné Henderson

A magnetic and comedic spirit. When she enters a room, heads turn. Though quick-witted and strong, her pride is her downfall.

Dallas

Played by: Bradon JonesMooney

Driven, charming and hardworking. He's smooth with his words and passionate with his love. Sometimes he's so focused, he forgets to take care of home.

River

Played by: Lamar Legend

Queer, fierce, and bitterly single. He's hilarious, both to the audience and himself. Behind his snippy exterior is a huge hopeless romantic.

About the Play

If your ex called, would you answer? Jada and Dallas were once engaged—now, they're meeting for dinner to untangle the past. Between a cheeky waiter, old wounds, and the undeniable spark that still lingers, their "casual" reunion may ignite a bomb neither of them can defuse. This witty play serves up romance, regrets, and the unexpected possibility of second chances.

SETTING/TIME: Yesterday, Today & Forever.

RUNNING TIME: 90 minutes, no intermission.

AGE RECOMMENDATION: 12+

CONTENT ADVISORY: Profanity & Mature Content

Meet the Playwright



Douglas Lyons is a GLAAD, NAACP and Emmy nominated writer, an Audelco award-winning playwright, actor, and composer whose work has spanned Television, Broadway, Off-Broadway, and Film. Douglas served as a writer and composer on Apple TV's *Fraggle Rock*. His Broadway playwriting debut *Chicken and Biscuits* was the 2nd most produced play in the U.S. in 2022-23. His other theatrical works include the Off Broadway hit: *Beau*, the Lucille Lortell award-winning *Table 17*, *Don't Touch My Hair*, *Polkadots*, *Five Points*, *Pure Glitter*, and *Mother. Daughter. Father. Son*. Douglas' Broadway acting credits include *Beautiful*, the Tony award-winning revival of *Parade* and the *Book of Mormon*. He is currently developing television with SkyDance and Ryan Reynolds' Maximum Effort as well as writing the script for the stage adaption of the Warner Brothers animated classic *Happy Feet*.

Anatomy of a RomCom

1. Unfulfilled Desire

All great romantic comedies start with introducing the protagonists and showing the audience that they are missing something important in their lives, often love or happiness, which helps to foreshadowing what is to come.

2. Meet Cute

An iconic scene where the two protagonists meet and instantly clash, helping to contribute to the comedic aspect of the genre.

3. Happy Together

Everything is "coming up roses" the sun shines bright, and the characters have a permanent smile. They spend all their free time with each other and their chemistry is off the charts.

4. Obstacles Arise

Something goes wrong and it feels like the world is against them, causing tension within the relationship.

5. Break Up

The moment of heartbreak, when a character gets too scared of their feelings and sabotages their own happiness, leading to a messy dissolution of the relationship.

6. Epiphany

The realization that they really are in love.

7. The Grand Gesture

A dramatic declaration of love, often made before a large crowd–or during a torrential downpour 😉.

WATCHLIST Popular Tropes

...are familiar conventions, plot devices, character types, or recurring themes that audiences easily recognize

- **Enemies-to-Lovers:** Two people initially loathe, annoy, or compete with each other before their mutual irritation turns into romance. **Watch:** *Poetic Justice* (1993) starring Janet Jackson
- **Fake Relationships:** The characters pretend to date (or marry) to solve a practical problem (i.e. appeasing meddling families or boosting their public image) before catching real feelings. **Watch:** *Love Jacked* (2018) starring Amber Stevens West
- **Forced Proximity:** Circumstances trap the characters into spending lots of time together (i.e. being stranded, sharing an office, or dealing with the classic "only one bed" hotel trope). **Watch:** *Just Wright* (2010) starring Queen Latifah and Common
- **Best Friends-to-Lovers:** Two longtime friends realize that the love of their life has been standing right beside them the whole time. **Watch:** *Brown Sugar* (2002) starring Taye Diggs, Sanaa Lathan, and Queen Latifah
- **Opposites Attract:** The main characters have conflicting personalities or are from different social classes (i.e. a wealthy executive and a quirky independent shop owner, or a city slicker and a small-town resident). **Watch:** *Deliver Us From Eva* (2003) starring Gabrielle Union and LL Cool J
- **The Playboy Falls First:** A notorious commitment-phobe or player unexpectedly meets the one person they can't get out of their head. **Watch:** *Two Can Play that Game* (2001) starring Morris Chestnut and Vivica A. Fox
- **One-Night Stand:** The characters share a single, unplanned sexual encounter expectating to never see each other again. **Watch:** *The Perfect Find* (2023) starring Gabrielle Union and Keith Powers

What is Love?

For millennia, philosophers, prophets, and poets have debated and theorized about love: what it is, how to describe it, how to cultivate it.

Love is...

Kind

"When my life loses direction, you are the arrow always pointing me back to my potential. This love, our love, is the remedy to my every worry."
-Dallas

Forgiving

"All I can do now is tell you that I'm still in love with you. I've never stopped loving you, but I had to get over my own guilt to let myself admit my part."
-Jada

Unselfish

"I fell deeper in love with him cause he wouldn't allow me to love him more than I loved myself."
-Jada

Free of Pride

"I'm still in love with you and I don't know what to do about it. And I know that's messy and wrong"
-Dallas

Resilient

"Yea, their love was complicated, but no matter how hard they tried to escape each other, their souls couldn't give up on one another."
-River

'90s R&B

The 1990s is a golden era for R&B. It is defined by lush slow jams, new jack swing beats, and powerhouse vocal groups.

What is R&B?

R&B stands for Rhythm and Blues, providing insight into the genre's origin and characteristic sounds. R&B combines elements of older styles such as blues, jazz, and gospel. While the term originated in the 1940s as a catch-all phrase for music created by and marketed toward Black Americans, it has come to encompass a much beloved style of music.

Characteristics

Relatable themes and lyrics such as love, friendship, family, and everyday life. Many classic R&B songs also cover themes such as civil rights, social topics, and faith, making them relatable to diverse audiences.

Danceable rhythms that regardless of the speed or tempo there tends to be rhythms or beats that inspire you to get up and move.

Soulful vocals that are strong, resonant, and full of emotion.

Rich, jazz-inspired chord progressions.

TOP 10

Billboard magazine's R&B Singles of 1990

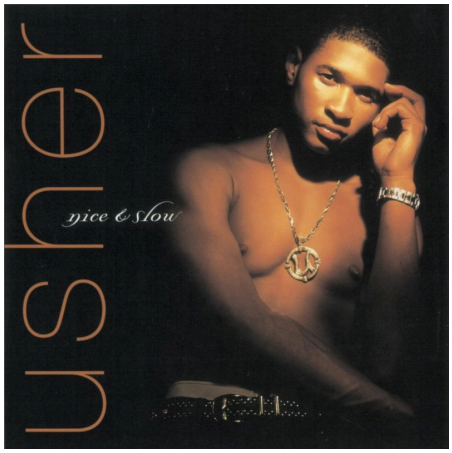
1. "Hold On" - En Vogue
2. "Make it Like it Was" - Regina Belle
3. "Real Love" - Skyy
4. "Feels Good" - Tony! Toni! Toné!
5. "Visions of Love" - Mariah Carey
6. "All Around the World" - Lisa Stansfield
7. "I'll be Good to You" - Quincy Jones, Ray Charles & Chaka Khan
8. "My, My, My" - Johnny Gill
9. "Ready or Not" - After 7
10. "Poison" - Bell Biv DeVoe

WHAT IS YOUR GET READY SONG?

JADA's



"I'm Every Woman" by Chaka Khan was released September 1978 and reached number twenty-one on the Billboard Hot 100, number one on the Hot Soul Singles, and number thirty on the disco chart.



Dallas's

"Nice & Slow" is from Usher's second album, *My Way*. Released on January 6, 1998, the song became Usher's first number-one single on the US Billboard Hot 100 chart in February 1998.

Setting the Stage

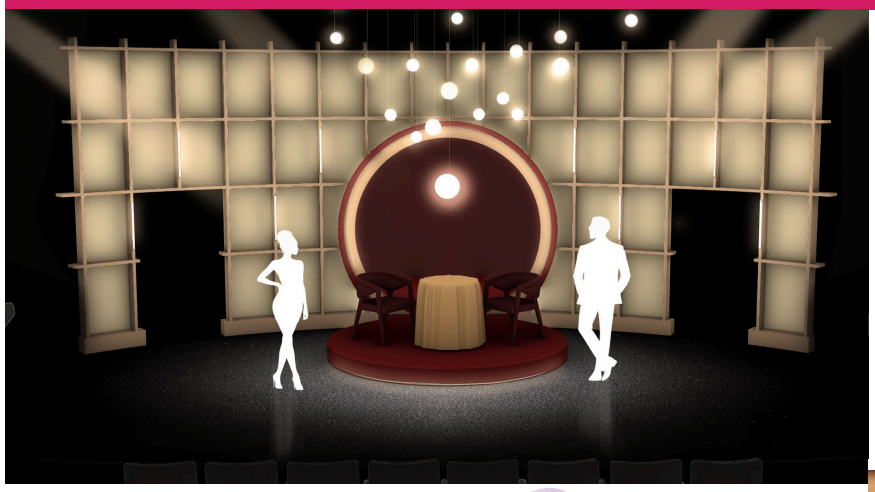
For the time we have together,
pull up a chair.
Think of someone who once sat
across from you.
And ask yourself.
Who did I become because I
sat across from you?
And perhaps more importantly:
Who will you choose to be when
I come to the table again?



-Shermona Mitchell, Director

The Design

Scenic: Parmida Ziaei Costume: Danielle Nieves
Lighting: Andrew D. Smith Sound: Jerik Fernandez



Creating a moody, modern and elegant design, the set sings and comes to life tranforming throughout the play with lighting defining spaces. The sound and costume design ground us in the present but evoke the continuum of the Black romcom genre.

Bianca's Restaurant is designed to feel like it's own bubble, seperate from flashback moments. The characters enter and exit through a circular portal transporting the audience from their intimate dinner to elsewhere... the aisle of an airplane, or the arena of a Clippers game.



Support Local Black-Owned

Pass D Jollof
WEST AFRICAN CUISINE

Pass D Jollof is a family-owned Nigerian restaurant located in Pioneer Square at 209 1st Ave S. We share our love for Nigerian cuisine through traditional dishes prepared with love and care, offering our guests a taste of West African culture. Beyond the food, we're passionate about creating a welcoming space where people can connect, celebrate, and build community.

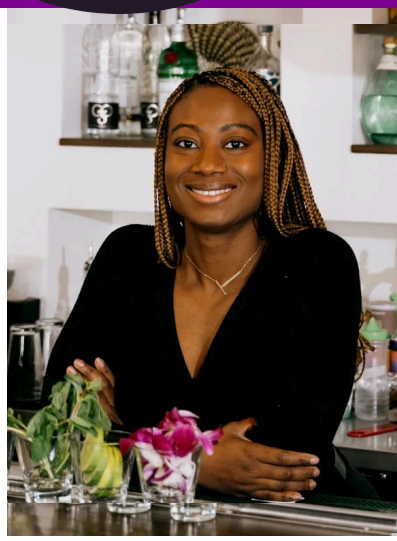




Lenox tells a story that begins in the kitchens of Puerto Rico and Cuba, passes through the stoops and bodegas of Harlem, and now has a home in Seattle's Belltown. It is a story of heritage and migration, of memory and imagination, brought to life by Chef Jhonny Reyes.

GOLD COAST KITCHEN

Gold Coast Kitchen is a West African restaurant in Seattle's First Hill neighborhood, on Boren and Madison, serving dishes inspired by the flavors and food traditions of Liberia and Ghana. Founded by chef and owner Tina Fahnbulleh, Gold Coast began as a series of pop-ups before opening its brick-and-mortar restaurant in 2023. Our menu brings together traditional West African favorites, from jollof rice and suya to Liberian specialties, with a focus on bold flavors, authentic ingredients, and sharing the food and stories of our cultures.

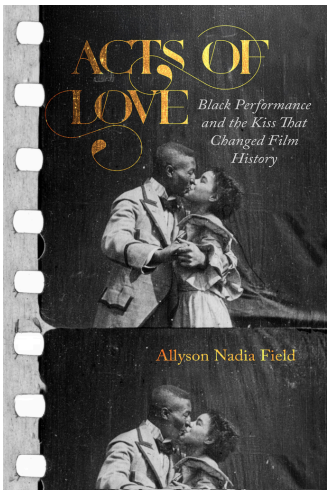


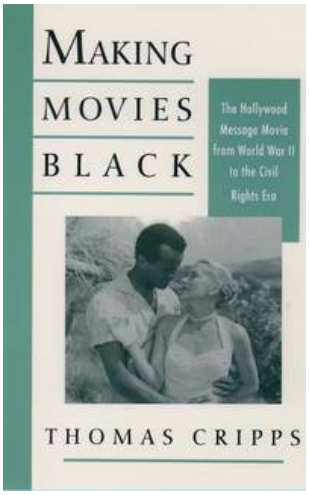


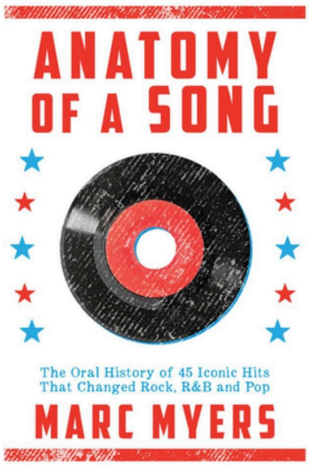
Simply Soulful is a Black, woman-owned soul food restaurant located in the historical Central District. We offer all the southern staples like fried chicken, catfish collard greens and mac and cheese. We are also a rotating Black art gallery that showcases are from local Black artist. We offer other events like open mic and live kids jam sessions.

SIMPLY SOULFUL™ CAFE

To Learn More...







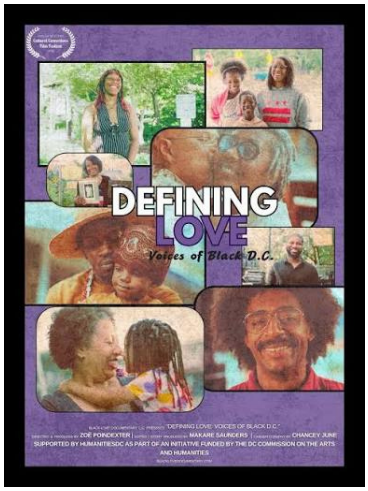
READ

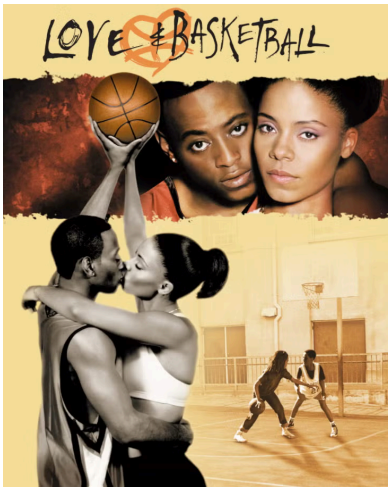


WATCH

LISTEN









union arts center

The names you know. The stages you love. The art that brings us together. ACT and Seattle Shakespeare have come together as Union Arts Center, keeping our community connected, our artists supported, and our stories alive.

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