

# Lost Secrets of the Iron Triangle



Photo by Michelle Flynn

A play based on Summer Brenner's book, *Richmond Tales*.

Produced by Richmond Rotary and East Bay Center for the  
Performing Arts



**EAST BAY CENTER FOR  
THE PERFORMING ARTS**

Developing Young Artists  
Re-imagining the World

## **A Message from Jim Young, President, Richmond Rotary**

Richmond Rotary and the East Bay Center for the Performing Arts have partnered to produce a youth focused play based on the children's fiction book, *Richmond Tales, Lost Secrets of the Iron Triangle*, by Summer Brenner. The story is set in Richmond circa 1980 and connects the local young community to Richmond's colorful history and the possibility of their own futures. We believe the live theater production will reach a much wider audience and will be able to project the book's positive message of self worth and self empowerment into the Iron Triangle community, Richmond and beyond.

This Rotary year, 2012-13, Rotary International President Sakuji Tanaka established the global theme of "Peace Through Service" as a way of encouraging all Rotary Clubs to consider "peace" as Rotary service. Community peace has been a Richmond Rotary focus for years, at the Nevin Center, which Rotary reopened on Saturdays and now with the Lively Arts, the name of Rotary's theater production at the Iron Triangle Theatre.

We hope that as characters of the story come to life on stage, that they will remain living examples regarding the future of all young people in Richmond who are like Mario and Maisha in their own way. It is their future.

## **About East Bay Center for Performing Arts**

Founded in 1968, East Bay Center for Performing Arts engages youth and young adults in imagining and creating new worlds for themselves and new visions for their communities through the inspiration and discipline of rigorous training in world performance traditions.

**Producer's Note:** With the commissioning and producing of "**Lost Secrets of the Iron Triangle**" East Bay Center's *Iron Triangle Theater company* continues its work of telling the rich and complex story of Richmond with particular attention to the perspective of under heard voices and our youth. We affirm the importance of connecting the creative and uplifting powers of the arts with children and youth who in their daily lives must contend with systemic poverty, violence, and other barriers to peace, justice, and prosperity. We welcome all who find resonance with and are committed to these beliefs.

## Lost Secrets of the Iron Triangle

### Artistic Team

Producer .....	Jordan Simmons
Author (Original Text) .....	Summer Brenner
Dramaturg .....	Ellen Sebastian Chang
Associate Producer .....	Ruthie Dineen
Director .....	Britney Frazier
Scenic Designer .....	Gerard Howland
Lighting Designer .....	Stephanie Johnson
Costume and Props Designer ..	Brisso
Sound Designer .....	Ali Foomani
Sound Effects and Engineering..	Alvin Moore

### Cast

Maisha 1 .....	Sayidah Woods
Maisha 2 .....	Shania Richardson
Mario .....	Donavin Scott
Misty Horn .....	Maurice Choncy Nunn
Auntie Yates .....	Reshanya Williams
Sammy .....	Edwin Guerra
Shannon .....	Troy Richardson
Etta Jefferson/ Linda Yates .....	Makai Collier
Yazmine .....	Anikka Richardson
Montoya Boy .....	Dexter Allen
Carolina/ Ohlone Girl .....	Vanessa Lopez
Tommy Lee Yates/ Maisha's Dad ...	Faron Griffin
Señor Montoya .....	Christopher Carter
Ensemble .....	Liz (Beth) Sanchez
Ensemble .....	Kevon Franklin

### Production Staff

Production Manager .....	Kristin Leimkuhler
Stage Manager .....	Lori Caldwell
Asst Stage Mgr/ Rehearsal Mgr .....	Sydney Howe
Property Manager .....	Solas Lalgee
Master Electrician .....	Noah Lange
Audio Engineer .....	Alvin Moore
Rigging .....	Sean Riley, Gravity Design
Set Construction .....	Hot Rod Shop, Inc.
Stage Carpenter .....	Neil Minihane
Scenic Projection Operator .....	Tiana Vallen
Costume/ Wardrobe Staff .....	Shara, Shaba and Balint
Costume Appropriation.....	Linda Young

## Cast

### **Sayidah Woods, *Maisha***



Sayidah is, “8 ¾ years old,” as she likes to say. Presently a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader she is especially proud that her birthday is on the last day of school, June 7. She loves to read, write in her journal, and edit videos using iMovie. Sayidah also loves to sing and speak at her church, Easter Hill United Methodist. Her favorite things are her brother and sister, chocolate, sushi and beignets...not necessarily in that order!

### **Shania Richardson, *Maisha***



Shania is 11 years old and is presently in elementary school. She enjoys performing and dance. Shania started with African dance and hip hop in an afterschool program in 2009. Since then she has been the MC for the last two talent shows at her school and has performed either a skit or dance in the last 3. She attended Pinole Young Actors Summer Drama Workshop in 2011, and did “Camp Rock: The Musical”. Shania attended Ailey Camp 2012 in Berkeley, and will be entering the Young Artist Diploma Program at East Bay Center for the Performing Arts.

### **Donavin Scott, *Mario***



Donavin is 10 years old and loves performing. He also takes trumpet lessons at his elementary School. He has been the MC for the last two annual talent shows and sang in the talent show as well. Donavin has been performing and singing in class plays since the first grade. He attended the Pinole Young Actors Summer Drama workshop in 2011, and is looking forward to attending Ailey Camp next summer.

### **Maurice Choncy Nunn, *Misty Horn***



A Richmond local of the last 12 years, Maurice has come to appreciate the monumental role the City of Richmond has played in history. Aware of the more recent reputation the city has contended with regarding violence, Mister Nunn says, “if ever there was a path towards a solution, [the message] of this play is the first step in making a difference.”

### **ReShanya Williams, *Auntie Yates***



ReShanya is 14 years old and in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Her interests include fashion design, rapping and dancing. She is a first year Young Artist Diploma student at East Bay Center with an emphasis on theater and dance.

### **Vanessa Lopez, *Ohlone Girl, Yasmine***



Vanessa is 9 years old and is on the 4<sup>th</sup> Grade at Peres Elementary. She enjoys acting, reading, dancing and spending time with her family. She is also an active student in the following classes at East Bay Center: Children’s Chorus, Children’s Theater, Steel Pan Drums, and Hip Hop Dance.

**Edwin Guerra, *Sammy***



Edwin Guerra is a 9<sup>th</sup> Grade student at Kennedy High School. He is presently a first year Young Artist Diploma student at East Bay Center where he studies a wide variety of disciplines, including Jazz, Drama, Saxophone, Trumpet, and Stage Combat.

**Troy Richardson, *Shannon***



Troy is 13 years old and a first year student in the Young Artist Diploma Program at East Bay Center for the Performing Arts. His main emphasis is dance of all kinds. Highlights of his performance experience include singing with his cousin in a talent show in 2012, and a history of class performances in grammar school. He has also attended Ailey Camp 2011.

**Makai Collier, *Linda Yates /Etta Jefferson***



Makai is 13 years old, and in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. "I love to sing and act. I have a little sister named Malia. I am going to play softball." Makai is also a first year Young Artist Diploma Program student at East Bay Center for the Performing Arts.

**Faron Griffin, *Tommy Lee Yates/ Maisha's Dad***



A Point Richmond native, Faron now resides in Berkeley CA. He attended El Cerrito High School for 3 years, and is now in his senior year at San Leandro High School. In the early 2000's he took vocal lessons with John Patton Sr. and participated in the Voices of Reason Choral Ensemble and the Iron Triangle Theater at East Bay Center for the Performing Arts. Faron was the lead actor in the 2007 musical "Time Take Me Back" directed by Karen Bassey in Richmond.

He enjoys writing and performing original songs throughout the Bay Area and beyond at clubs such as Disco Volante, Layover, and Geisha.

**Annika Richardson, *Yazmine***



Annika is 12 years old and attends Pinole Valley Middle School in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. She has a love for dance since attending an afterschool ballet class in Kindergarten. Annika is currently taking ballet at the East Bay Center for the Performing Arts. She sang Adele's "Rolling in the Deep" in the talent show in 2009. I had the privilege to attend Ailey Camp 2011 in Berkeley. This is her first time participating in a production of this kind.

**Dexter Allen, *Montoya Boy***



Dexter Allen is a 11 year old fifth grader. He goes to school at Head-Royce and lives in Oakland. He is talented in the performing arts, especially hip-hop dance. He takes dance and steel pans at the East Bay Center. In his spare time he builds legos, draws, and plays video games. He likes to pet his two cats, Groovy and Flaca, and has another pet who is a tortoise named Toby. It is his first time in a big production and he loves the stage.

**Christopher Carter, *Señor Montoya***



Christopher Prescott Carter has appeared in shows such as: Big River at Theatre Works, Viva Cristo Rey at Quo Vadis Theatre, A Christmas Carol at Northside Theatre, Wintertime at Revolutionary Theatre, and Mary Mcleod Bethune at Tabia Theatre, amongst many others. He won the Hal Todd Award for Excellence in Acting from San Jose State University, where he also graduated with a degree in Theatre.

**Kevon Franklin, *Ensemble***



Kevon is 8 years old and attends Ellerhorst Elementary School. He is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Kevon has performed in annual school performances since the first grade. He also plays baseball, having done so now for 4 years, and is becoming quite skilled in catcher, pitcher and first base positions!

**Liz (Beth) Sanchez, *Ensemble***



Beth is 16 years old and a High School Junior. She is presently a 2nd Year Young Artist Diploma Program student at East Bay Center. Her primary interests are Theater and Voice, and she studies privately with vocal instructor, Solas Burke-Lalgee. Of particular note is that she has an opportunity to go to Peru on Scholarship this summer.

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**Creative Team**

**Jordan Simmons, Producer**



A native of Richmond, CA, Jordan has been Artistic Director of East Bay Center for the Performing Arts since 1985. He has written, produced and directed a number of original works for both theatre and film, with many dramatic works focused on the lives and concerns of Iron Triangle residents. As with "Lost Secrets of the Iron Triangle", he has been able to involve Richmond youth and neighborhood residents in the creation and presentation of these stories.

**Summer Brenner, Author**



Summer Brenner is the author of a dozen works of fiction and poetry for youth and adults. **Richmond Tales, Lost Secrets of the Iron Triangle** won a 2010 Historic Preservation award from the City of Richmond and was proclaimed by the Mayor as Richmond's first All City-All Read selection. **Ivy, Homeless in San Francisco** won the Moonbeam and Children's Literary Classics awards. She is currently writing **Oakland Tales, Lost Secrets Up, Down, Around**.  
*Photo credit: Vicki Topaz.*

### **Ellen Sebastian Chang, Dramaturg**



Ellen is a director, creative consultant, and General Manager of FuseBOX Restaurant.

### **Britney Frazier, Director**



Britney Frazier has performed with: Shotgun Players, Intersection for the Arts, Campo Santo, and Lorraine Hansberry Theatre. She assistant directed *Jip; His Story*, with Ellen Sebastian Chang at the SF Marsh Theatre, she became an Artistic Associate at the San Francisco Playhouse and produced a new works staged reading festival in February and March of 2013 called “*Our Voices, Our Stories*” celebrating African Americans and women in theatre.

### **Gerard Howland, Scenic Designer**



Gerard Howland’s accomplishments as a theatrical and entertainment designer have generated more than 200 stage productions, 50 operas, dozens of television and film projects and numerous theme park concepts and attractions. He also was responsible for the design of the new stage and theatrical environment at San Francisco’s recently renovated War Memorial Opera House, where he has designed 14 new productions. His design work has also been seen at the major theaters globally. He is the recipient of five major awards, including two Drama-Logue Awards and the Los Angeles Drama Critics Award. He studied at the English National Opera Design School and then served as Associate Designer for The Royal Academy and The Royal Shakespeare Company.

### **Stephanie Johnson, Lighting Designer**



Stephanie Anne Johnson has been a lighting designer for more than three decades, working locally for companies such as Cultural Odyssey, Dimensions Dance Theater, Anne Bluethenthal & Dancers and Afro Solo. Her national design work includes: The Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Arizona Repertory Theater, Brooklyn Academy of Music, and La Mama Theater - N.Y. Internationally, her design work has been seen in India, The Netherlands, Italy, France, Canada, and Belgium. She is currently collaborating with Jovelyn Richards as scenographer on her solo performances. As a visual artist, Stephanie Anne Johnson has presented her mixed media sculptures nationally. She has had one-person exhibitions at The African American Historical Society, S.F. and The Sargent Johnson Gallery, S.F. She dedicates her work to the memory of theater colleagues Rufus Collins, Danitra Vance, Ken Dixon, and her beloved mother Virginia E. Johnson who worked with The American Negro Theater. Her work can be seen online at [www.lightessencedesign.com](http://www.lightessencedesign.com).

### **Ali Foomani, Sound Designer**

### **Danaé (Brisso) Brissonnet, Costume Design and Projected Scenic Illustrations**



A Quebecois multidisciplinary artist, Danae has worked as a muralist, illustrator, puppeteer, seamstress, storyteller, adventurer, and woman-of-all-trades. The charismatic and insatiable interpreter of local cultures and folklore is currently in the thick of a tireless string of residencies around the globe. Having left brilliantly realized murals, prints, and puppets in the streets of Mexico, Nicaragua, Quebec, Vermont, and California, she is currently en route to upcoming projects in British Columbia, Nepal, and France.

Music Credits  
**"You've Been a Good Ole Wagon"**  
Roberta Donnay & the Prohibition Mob Band  
Motema Music [www.motema.com](http://www.motema.com)  
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Photo by Natalie Leinkuhler

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