

Immediate release:
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Brava presents
Manifesto
A film by Rotimi Agbabiaka



Streaming on Demand
April 22 – 25 & April 29 – May 3, 2021
brava.org

Written and performed by **Rotimi Agbabiaka**
Directed by **Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe**

It's a new day in America! There's a vaccine for the virus, democracy has been saved, and now, more than ever, Black Lives Matter. After a year under lockdown, a queer, black actor decides to create a manifesto for theatre in our brave new world. But just when a revolutionary artist thinks they know all the answers, that's when they need to start asking some new questions.

Using drag, dance, music, and “an endless parade of captivating characters and scenes” (KQED), Rotimi Agbabiaka takes on the entertainment industry and a young actor's quest for revolutionary art in a time when diversity is on trend. Hailed as a “lightening bolt of insight and delightful bitterness” (Mission Local), *Manifesto* shines a comedic light on the triumphs, failings, and absurdities of our current moment.

"This past year has been dramatic, to say the least, and as we contemplate returning to public gatherings and live theatre, I wanted to revisit the characters from *Manifesto*—the would-be stars, the gatekeepers, and the creative ancestors. What would they have to say about theatre's recent past and what guidance could they give for its future?," says writer/performer Rotimi Agbabiaka.

“In keeping with the times, director Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe and I decided to turn *Manifesto* into a film. We used green screens and homages to zoom chats and the original staging to create a cinematic journey that reflects our current moment. The satire is sharper, the characters are more outrageous, and they're asking some new questions.

STREAMING ON DEMAND

First Weekend:

Thursday, April 22 at 8pm PST through Sunday, April 25 at 11:59pm PST

Second Weekend:

Thursday, April 29 at 8pm PST through Monday, May 3 at 9am PST

TICKETS

\$15

Tickets available in advance at brava.org.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

ROTIMI AGBABIAKA / WRITER & PERFORMER

Rotimi Agbabiaka is an actor, writer, director, and teacher who uses humor, glamor, and drama to upset the status quo. Most recently, Rotimi originated the role of Salima in *House of Joy* (California Shakespeare Theatre) and the role of Cellphone in *If Pretty Hurts Ugly Must Be a Muhfucka* (Playwrights Horizons, NYC). Other acting credits include Tom Waits' *Black Rider* (Shotgun Players), *Bootycandy* (Brava Theater, Theatre Bay Area award), originating the role of Boy in *runboyrun* (Magic Theatre), and several shows with the Tony Award-winning San Francisco Mime Troupe. As a playwright, Rotimi penned the solo shows *Homeless*, *Type/Caste* (Theatre Bay Area award), and *MANIFESTO*, and the musical, *Seeing Red*—co-written with Joan Holden and Ira Marlowe. Rotimi teaches acting, movement, and play creation to students from pre-school through college and has presented work at museums (the deYoung), in parks (with We Players), on street corners (with Jess Curtis' GRAVITY), and on nightlife stages around the world (as alter ego Miss Cleo Patois). www.rotimionline.com

EDRIS COOPER-ANIFOWOSHE / DIRECTOR

Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe is an accomplished local and national director and founder of Black Artists Contemporary Cultural Experience, a resident company at Brava. As a director, Edris has worked nationally and internationally at Trinity Repertory Company, Capital Repertory, Southern Rep, Mark Taper Forum, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Woolly Mammoth, Curious Theatre, and Arts Theatre, Ibadan, Nigeria. Edris's Bay Area directing credits include the West Coast premieres of *Relativity* at the Magic Theatre, *The Old Settler* at TheaterWorks in Palo Alto, *Crying Holy* at Theatre Rhinoceros, and *Urban Zulu Mambo* and *Blue/Orange* at Lorraine Hansberry Theatre. At Brava with BACCE, Edris directed the West Coast premieres of *Sweet Maladies* by Zakiyyah Alexander (winner of TBA Award for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble), *In a Daughter's Eyes* by Oakland native A. Zell Williams, and *Bootycandy* and *An American Ma(u)l* by Robert O'Hara, and *El Río* by Andrew Saito. She holds an M.F.A. in Directing from the University of Iowa.

FUNDERS

Manifesto was originally commissioned by the Queer Cultural Center and received additional support from the San Francisco Arts Commission. The film version of *Manifesto* was supported by Brava! for Women in the Arts Artist in Residence program.