

# WORD FOR WORD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Word for Word Launches It's 2022 Season With *Boys Go to Jupiter* by Danielle Evans July 6- 21 and Begins a 5 Story Staged Reading Series**

**Word for Word, Z Space & Black Artists Contemporary Cultural Experience (BACCE) Present**

***Boys Go to Jupiter* by Danielle Evans**

Directed by Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe

Cast for *Boys Go to Jupiter* features Tre'Vonne Bell - Ciera Eis - Evan Held - Joel Mullennix - Aidaa Peerzada - Brennan Pickman-Thoon -

Ije Success & Courtney Walsh

**July 6- July 21, 2022**

(Previews: July 6, 7, 7pm, and July 8, 8pm)

**Word for Word's Off the Page Staged Reading Series Begins a 5 Story Staged Reading Series With *Black Box*, by Jennifer Egan Directed by Vanessa Flores on July 25**

**Z Space Steindler Stage**

450 Florida St., SF 94110

Word for Word and Z Space, in collaboration with Black Artists Contemporary Cultural Experience present a performance of the story *Boys Go to Jupiter* by Danielle Evans. Directed by Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe The cast for *Boys Go to Jupiter* features Tre'Vonne Bell, Ciera Eis, Evan Held, Joel Mullennix\*, Aidaa Peerzada, Brennan Pickman-Thoon\*, Ije Success and Courtney Walsh\*. \*AEA. Danielle Evans' *Boys Go to Jupiter* runs July 6- July 21, 2022 (Previews: July 6, 7, 7pm and July 8, 8pm) on the Z Space Steindler Stage in San Francisco.

Word for Word's Off the Page Staged Reading Series 2022 begins on July 25 with *Black Box*, by Jennifer Egan, directed by Vanessa Flores on the Z Space Steindler Stage in San Francisco.

In *Boys Go to Jupiter*, Claire, a white college freshman grieving the recent death of her mother, unwittingly finds herself in the middle of a huge racial controversy. The hashtags and tweets are flying, the hate emails are piling up, and all because of a stupid photo that she didn't even post. Why is she canceled and who's to blame? Grief, friendship, responsibility, and the power of social media, all come together to make one hell of a story that will have you thinking and talking about it for days to come.

*"... Having written a lot about the experience of racism, I wanted to find a different way to inhabit that narrative. I think a lot about the James Baldwin line "It is the innocence*

***which constitutes the crime." I wanted to write a story that invited not just empathy but implication, and explored the relationship between the two."* Danielle Evans - author of *Boys Go To Jupiter***

**Danielle Evans is the author** of the story collections [The Office of Historical Corrections](#) and [Before You Suffocate Your Own Fool Self](#). Her first collection won the PEN American Robert W. Bingham Prize, the Hurston-Wright award for fiction, and the Paterson Prize for fiction; her second won the Janet Heidinger Kafka Prize and The Bridge Book Award and was a finalist for The Aspen Prize, The Story Prize, and The LA Times Book prize for fiction. She is the 2021 winner of The New Literary Project Joyce Carol Oates Prize, a 2020 National Endowment for the Arts fellow, and a 2011 National Book Foundation 5 under 35 honoree. Her stories have appeared in magazines including The Paris Review, A Public Space, American Short Fiction, Callaloo, The Sewanee Review, and Phoebe, and have been anthologized in The Best American Short Stories 2008, 2010, 2017, and 2018, and in New Stories From The South.

**The production team includes:** Production Manager: Jim Cave, Stage Manager: Heather Radovich\* and Asst. Stage Manager: Charis Lam. **The design team for *Boys Go to Jupiter* features:** Scenic Design-Sean Riley, Lighting Design-Jennifer Bachofner, Video Design-Ray Oppenheimer, Sound Design-Elton Bradman, Costume Design-Andre Harrington, Prop Design-William Rudisill, Intimacy Director-Jeunée Simon, Dramaturg-Nancy Tolson, Dialect Coach- Lynne Soffer.

#### **DIRECTOR:**

**Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe** (she/her) is an accomplished actor, director, writer, working in the Bay Area for almost 40 years. The founding artistic director of the award-winning ensemble Black Artists Contemporary Cultural Experience (BACCE), she has directed and produced 10 critically acclaimed productions for the company. She is a former acting and directing member of the San Francisco Mime Troupe and a current Core Company member of Word for Word. She has directed at Trinity Rep, Capital Rep, Southern Rep, Carpetbag Theatre, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, WaterTower Theatre, Curious Theater, SF Playhouse, Magic Theatre, TheatreWorks in Palo Alto, and the Lorraine Hansberry, receiving accolades from Dallas' Rabin Awards and Backstage's Dean Goodman Award for Excellence. Edris has appeared as an actor in productions throughout California, and in Nigeria. She was a core member of Rhodessa Jones' *Medea Project: Theater for Incarcerated Women*. Her plays, *Adventures of A Black Girl In Search of Academic Clarity and Inclusion* and *There are Women Waiting* are published in the anthologies, solo/black/woman and Black Medea. Edris is also a member of Campo Santo, and the National Institute of Directing and Ensemble Creation, She holds an M.F.A. in Directing from the University of Iowa and is an alumna of the NEA/TCG Career Development Program for Directors.

#### **CAST:**

**Aidaa Peerzada** (Carmen; Mrs. Hall; ensemble) her performance credits include Marin Theatre, SFBATCO, Pittsburgh Public Theatre, Illinois Shakespeare, Utah Shakespeare, Steppenwolf, American Players Theatre, Quantum Theatre, the HBO series Girls and the web series Blank My Life. She is a graduate of The Baltimore School for the Arts and Carnegie Mellon University. @mixed.millennial

**Brennan Pickman-Thoon\*** (Jackson; ensemble) His recent credits: Mother of the Maid (Marin Theater Company), The Gentleman Caller (NCTC), Timon of Athens (Cutting Ball Theater), Hamlet (Marin Shakespeare Company), Metamorphoses and The Good Book

(Berkeley Repertory Theatre,u/s). When not performing, Brennan is a teaching artist with SFArtsED and a faculty member with the A.C.T. Young Conservatory. Winner of the 2019 SFBATCC Award for Actor in a Principal Role. Member AEA. For more, please visit [brennanpickmanthoon.com](http://brennanpickmanthoon.com).

**Ciera Eis** (Claire) is a director and producer. Most recent acting credits include: Babes in Holland (Shotgun Players), Visible From Four States (Magic Theatre), Where the Boys Are (FaultLine Theatre) The Daughters (Playwrights Foundation), and Taylor Mac: A 24-Hour Decade (Pomegranate Arts). She is the Co-Artistic Director of FaultLine Theater, Associate Artistic Director of Custom Made, alumni of UC Santa Cruz and SDC Observer. [www.cieraeis.com](http://www.cieraeis.com).

**Courtney Walsh\*** (Puppy; ensemble) has performed Internationally (selected): Paris, Berlin, Amsterdam, Cardiff, Athens, Corfu, Sydney, Auckland. Bay Area (selected): San Francisco Playhouse, Marin Theater Company, The Marsh, Cutting Ball, We Players, 3Girls. TBA Awards: Acting, Directing, Ensemble, Production. Training: Yale University. Courtney is a mother of four, equestrienne, and former lawyer for abused children. [courtneywalsh.net](http://courtneywalsh.net)

**Evan Held** (Robert; ensemble) After graduating from the Pacific Conservatory of Performing Arts (PCPA), Evan has been acting across the bay area. He's involved in the education department of San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, and he's very much excited to be acting again at Word for Word after the long break.

**Ije Success** (Angela; ensemble) is graduating from UC Berkeley with a BA in Theater and is delighted to be at Word for Word. She was recently in sAiNt jOaN (burn/burn/burn) at Oakland Theater Project where she was nominated by the San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Circle for her performance.

**Joel Mullennix\*** (Claire's father / ensemble) is the recipient of multiple Bay Area Theatre Critics & Dramalogue Awards / nominations **Joel** has performed in many Bay Area theatres, as well as in New York, Los Angeles and Europe. H Joel is also a director, and has directed and/or acted in many WFW productions including : Olive Kitteridge, by Elizabeth Stroudt; Stories by Tobias Wolff; The Blues I'm Playing, by Langston Hughes; Stories by Alice Munro; Which is More Than I Can Say about Some People, by, Lorrie Moore; and All Aunt Hagar's Children, by Edward P. Jones.

**Tre'Vonne Bell** (Aaron; ensemble) is an Oakland based actor who is thrilled to make his Word for Word/Z space debut after understudying for the Berkeley Repertory theatre's production of Wintertime. His most recent acting credits include: Exit Strategy (Aurora Theatre company), Kill, Move, Paradise (Shotgun Players), and American Prom (Colorado springs Theatre Works).

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## **Word for Word's Off the Page Staged Reading Series 2022**

**On July 25 Word for Word begins a 5 story staged reading series with *Black Box*, by Jennifer Egan, directed by Vanessa Flores.** Word for Word's Off the Page staged reading series is the public's first look at pieces Word for Word is considering for upcoming productions. With a public staged reading of a short story, they invite audiences to see the

steps of their process of bringing a work from the page to the stage in the Word for Word style. After the reading, the audience is encouraged to engage in a conversation with the company, which gives valuable feedback as they decide on the next steps of a work's development.

**"Black Box" is a science fiction short story published in May 2012 by American writer Jennifer Egan.** It was released in an unusual serialized format: as a series of tweets on The New Yorker's Twitter account over nine days beginning May 25, 2012. The story is in the form of "mental dispatches" from a spy living in the Mediterranean area in the near future.

**Jennifer Egan** is the author of several novels and a short story collection. Her 2017 novel, *Manhattan Beach*, a New York Times bestseller, was awarded the Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Fiction, and was chosen as New York City's One Book One New York read. Her previous novel, *A Visit From the Goon Squad*, won the 2011 Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Critics Circle Award, and the Los Angeles Times book prize, and was recently named one of the best books of the decade by Time Magazine and Entertainment Weekly. Also a journalist, she has written frequently in the New York Times Magazine, and she recently completed a term as President of PEN America. Her new novel, *The Candy House*, a sibling to *A Visit From the Goon Squad*, was published in April, 2022.

**Vanessa Flores (director)** is a playwright, short story writer, screenwriter and performer with an MFA in Writing from California College of the Arts (2016). Her plays have been produced by SF Playground, SF Olympians, Double Backbone, and Aluminous Theater. In August 2018, her full-length play *Where the Boys Are* was produced by Faultline Theater. In 2019, she premiered *Uneasy*, a web series about two women of color trying to maintain their challenging lifestyle as artists in Oakland. In 2020, Vanessa launched Other Hand, a multi-media storytelling company creating on the basis of experimentation, vulnerability, and play. Vanessa is a Word for Word Core Company Member and a writer, singer, and keyboardist for the San Francisco based funny-girl-band, *Lentil*.

### **Word for Word's Off the Page Staged Reading Series 2022**

**July 25: Black Box, by Jennifer Egan,** Directed by Vanessa Flores

**August 8: Children of the Sea, by Edwidge Danticat,** Directed by Margo Hall

**September 4: Eternal Love, by Karen Bender,** Directed by Amy Kossow

**October 3: The Second Bakery Attack and Bakery Attack,** by Haruki Murakami,  
Directed by Keiko Shimosato Carreiro

**November 7: Raymond's Run and Blues Ain't No Mockin Bird,** by Toni Cade Bambara,  
Directed by Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe

**Word for Word Performing Arts Company,** a program of Z Space, is an ensemble whose mission is to tell great stories with elegant theatricality, staging performances of classic and contemporary fiction. Founded in 1993 by Susan Harloe and JoAnne Winter, Word for Word believes in the power of the short story to provide solace, compassion, and insight into our daily lives.

### **Black Artists Contemporary Cultural Experience**

PRODUCING NEW WORK BY, FOR, AND ABOUT BLACK PEOPLE

Black Artists Contemporary Cultural Experience (BACCE) was founded in 1994 by Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe, Shirley Smallwood, and the late Lester Jones, with a rotating company of actors and directors including Bob Devin Jones, June Lomena, Michael Carreiro, Peter Macon,

Rico Anderson and Tanya Mayo, to produce new plays by, for, and about Black people. The company has produced and presented work by Keith Josef Adkins, Pearl Cleage, Robert Alexander, Robert O'Hara, and Andrew Saito.

**COVID Safety Protocol**

For the health, safety and well-being of everyone in our space, Z Space's current COVID-19 policy requires all patrons and staff to be fully vaccinated and to wear masks while in the building. You will be asked to show proof of vaccination with ID before entering. Children under 5 are not currently permitted at Z Space. All tickets must be pre-purchased, we are not currently accepting walk-up sales.

[Click here](#) for more details on Z Space COVID policies.

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**CALANDER EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:**

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Black Artists Contemporary Cultural Experience (BACCE)  
Present**

**Boys Go to Jupiter**

**by Danielle Evans**

**Directed by Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe**

**July 6- July 21, 2022** (Previews: July 6,, 7pm and July 8, 8pm)

**Production Run Dates:** July 9, 8pm -July 31, 3pm. (Previews: July 6 & 7, 7pm and July 8, 8pm)

Thurs. 7pm, Fri.& Sat. 8pm, Sun. 3pm

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