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PARAMOUNT

THE MOORE

NEPTUNE

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**Seattle Theatre Group Announces  
ELEVATE  
(v) *raise or lift to a higher position*  
A night of performance + community conversation**

# ELEVATE

(V) RAISE OR LIFT TO A HIGHER POSITION

JUNE 16, 2021  
6:30PM(PT)



**Premiering on Wednesday, June 16th at 6:30 pm PT**

(Seattle, WA) – Produced by STG's Education & Community Engagement department, ELEVATE is a showcase of Black and Brown voices uplifting one another through the art of spoken word. This project will share untold and unseen work centered around local and national historical events, the impact of systemic racism and individuals challenging racist ideologies. Most importantly, ELEVATE is the celebration and empowerment of the people. This event is created for the community, by the community.

Join us as this virtual evening of raw, bold, breathtaking performances from poets of all ages, presentations by a historian, and celebrations of unsung heroes who have paved the way will be followed by a community conversation. **All are invited to witness the intricate and creative program for free on Wednesday, June 16, 2021 at 6:30 pm PT.** *RSVP to participate in the community conversation that will follow the program, focusing on the creative process and issues affecting the artists and communities represented.*

The team behind this project is led by Creative Director **Shakiah Danielson**, Project Manager **Den'ea Simone** and Videographer **Rachel McKinney**. ELEVATE mentors include: **Nakeya Isabell**, spoken word artist and Case Manager and Success Coordinator at Cleveland High School; **Tia-Nache Yarbrough**, educator and spoken word artist; **Aaron Reader**, practitioner, poet, activist and educator; and **Kyle Danielson**, spoken word artist. **Stephanie Johnson-Toliver**, historian and President of the Black Heritage Society of Washington State (BHS), provided information and support.

**Young spoken word artists** have worked with our mentors to create pieces based on learned history, current events and issues affecting them and their communities. ELEVATE performers include:

**Anderson Williams**, a 14-year-old honor roll student at Seattle Academy;  
**Deasia Gordon**, an 11-year-old honor roll student at Rainier Valley Leadership Academy;  
**Denasia Gordon**, a 14-year-old honor roll student at Rainier Valley Leadership Academy;  
**Emmanuel Brannon**, an 11th grader at Franklin High with a passion for supporting other BIPOC youth through his non-profit;  
**Estrella Gonzales-Sanders**, a 12-year-old dynamic, well-versed professional dancer and honor roll student at Nelsen Middle School;  
**Gianni Johnson**, a 19-year-old writer, rapper and producer attending Seattle Central Community College;

**Harlem Yarbrough**, an 11-year-old student at SAAS;  
**Harmony Dexheimer**, a 15-year-old from Tahoma High who is passionate about theatre and dance;  
**Jaci Graise**, a 13-year-old Tr3yCity AAU basketball player from Meeker Middle School;  
**Jazzmin Barret**, a 14-year-old honor roll student and poet at Seattle Middle College on the University of Washington campus;  
**Madison Bryant**, a 15-year-old dancer and student at Renton Prep;  
**Maya Michelle Russell**, a 13-year-old actress and student at Lake Washington Girl's Middle School;  
**Nyshae Griffin**, a 14-year-old aspiring entertainer and honor roll scholar at Rainier Valley Leadership Academy; and  
**Rahma Mohammed**, an 18-year-old Iraqi poet and co-president of Youth Activists for Systematic Change, who is also a high school senior at Chief Sealth International High School.

The ELEVATE project also recognizes and uplifts Black and Brown community members that have been paving the way:

**Dr. Mona Lake Jones**, author, educator and community activist. She was named Poet Laureate for the City of Seattle and Martin Luther King County;  
**Larry Gossett**, founder of the Black Student Union on the UW campus. He was instrumental in bringing UW's Educational Opportunity Program and was a member of Black Panthers in Seattle;  
**George Northcroft**, appointed by President Barack Obama to serve as the Regional Administrator of the Northwest Arctic Region of the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA);  
**Stephanie Johnson-Toliver**, President at the Black Heritage Society of Washington State (BHS) where she leads a dedicated Board of Directors who are committed to uphold the Society's mission to preserve and share the history of Black people across the region; and  
**David Allen**, first Chief Operating Officer for Seattle Theatre Group and one of the first Black IATSE Local 15 Stage Journeymen.

STG would like to acknowledge and recognize all of its ELEVATE community partners:

**Atlantic Street Center** is an award-winning agency providing services to children, youth, and their families for over one hundred years.  
**Black Heritage Society of Washington State** is preserving, collecting and sharing

the history of African Americans in Washington State.

**Teen Summer Musical** empowers youth ages 9 -18 with confidence, motivation, and self discipline through performing arts. The 9-week program culminates in 6 shows in a professional venue.

**LANGSTON** is cultivating Black brilliance.

**NAAM** spreads knowledge, understanding, and enjoyment of the histories, arts, and cultures of people of African descent for the enrichment of all.

**NAACP, King County Chapter**, is ensuring the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination.

**Northwest Tap Connection** is providing quality dance and job opportunities to under-served communities and also to raise a generation of socially conscious artists who produce work that fosters change.

**100 BlackParents** is engaging African American Parents in the lives of African American Students and the diaspora that surrounds them.

**CONVERGE Media** believes the Black community deserves authentic representation, a focus on the community's issues, and equitable access to elected officials, leadership, and governmental information.

ELEVATE is sponsored by Boeing, Starbucks and Amazon.

**For additional information, please visit [stgpresents.org/elevate](http://stgpresents.org/elevate).**

## **ABOUT SEATTLE THEATRE GROUP (STG)**

Seattle Theatre Group is a 501(c)(3) non-profit arts organization whose mission is to create enriching experiences in the arts, engage diverse communities, and steward historic theatres. STG presents a range of performances from Broadway, off-Broadway, dance and jazz, to comedy, concerts of all genres, speakers and family shows at its three iconic theatres (The Paramount, Moore, and Neptune Theatre) in Seattle and venues throughout the Puget Sound region and in Portland, Oregon. For more information visit [stgpresents.org](http://stgpresents.org).

STG Education & Community Engagement programs extend beyond the Paramount, Moore and Neptune Theatre stages and into the lives of the greater Seattle community. Each season, STG offers over 960 individual engagements

impacting over 56,000 students and community members from diverse ages and backgrounds. These programs deepen significance to performances through opportunities to engage with artists, inspire youth and local artists through training and performance opportunities, and provide exposure to the arts through access initiatives. For more information visit [stgpresents.org/ece](http://stgpresents.org/ece).

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