

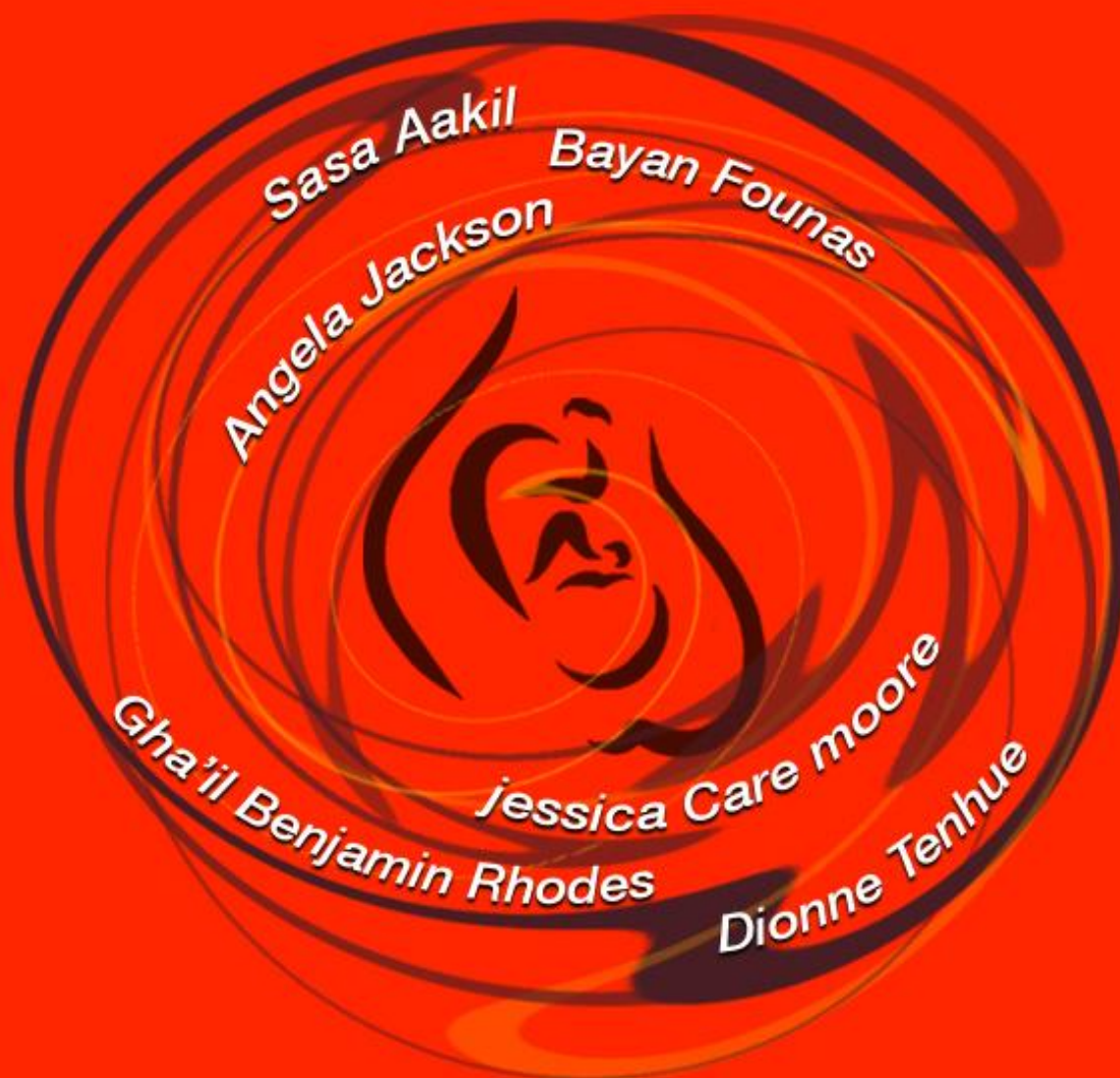
**A POETRY JAM**



Woodie King Jr's  
**NEW FEDERAL  
THEATRE**

# **She Speaks:** Love. Resilience. Revolution.

**Friday Nov. 19th 2021  
7pm (est)**



***Honoring Toi Derricotte***

***Hosted & Curated by Rev. Rhonda "Akanké" McLean-Nur  
Directed by Petronia Paley***

**Special Guests:**

**DK Dyson, RBG Girlz, Cornelius Eady, Yusef  
Komunyakaa, Terrance Hayes, Sharon Olds,  
Hermine Pinson**



Woodie King Jr's  
**NEW FEDERAL  
THEATRE**

*presents*

# **She Speaks: Love. Resilience. Revolution.**

*featuring*

## **A tribute to Toi Derricotte**

*with*

### Poets & Performers

Angela Jackson  
Bayan Founas  
Dionne Tenhue  
DK Dyson  
Gha'il Rhodes Benjamin  
jessica Care moore  
RBG Girlz  
Sasa Aakil

### Tributes

Cornelius Eady  
Hermine Pinson  
Sharon Olds  
Terrance Hayes  
Yusef Komunyakaa

This program is funded in part by The Black Seed; Department of Cultural Affairs DCLA; NY City Council Initiative, James Van Bremer/Chairman; Ford Foundation; Jeffries Financial and support from other foundations and individuals.

# About the Artists



**Angela Jackson** is an award-winning poet, novelist, and playwright who has published three chapbooks and four volumes of poetry. She has received a National Book Award nomination, a Pulitzer Prize nomination, and the PEN/Open Book Award. Jackson received a Pushcart Prize and an American Book Award for her chapbook *Solo* in the *Boxcar Third Floor E*.

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**Bayan Founas**, also known as Bayan the Poet is an educator and poet in metro-Detroit. She published her first book *Diary of a Daughter in Diaspora*— a collection of her poems on diaspora, love, healing, and teaching. She's a founding member of The Guild (@guildpoets) and WISDOM (@wisdompoets). She has performed and led workshops for schools and universities, nonprofits, conferences, art and cultural spaces, and museums across America. Social media: @bayanthepoet



**Dionne Tenhue**, also affectionately known as Luna, has self-published two collections of poetry entitled, *Welcome Me* and *Remember Me*. She has been a featured poet at Busboys & Poets, Spit Dat, Spirit & Lyrics, and various other venues up and down the East Coast. She is also an expert crocheter who released a line of handcrafted Psychosensory Therapy items called TH3F33LZ.

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**DK Dyson** is a vocalist, composer, musician who travels comfortably through music categories such as Jazz, R&B, Pop, Rock and World Music, defying boundaries. Her band EYE & I, known for its vibrant live shows, broke down racial and musical stereotypes with a sound that married heavy Rock and Funk with Jazz smarts. Dyson was nominated by the NY Music Awards as Best New Female Vocalist. Dyson also conducts music and yoga workshops and provides her vocals and recordings to spiritual, healing, community and educational organizations worldwide.



**Gha'il Rhodes Benjamin** is an award winning spoken-word performance-recording artist, Audelco award winning actress, self-empowerment speaker and educator. Her collaboration with Jeff Haynes on "Storm King" with Pete Seeger was Grammy nominated and also the winner of The Audiobook of the Year Award, The Nappa Silver Award and The Audio Files Earphone Award. Website: [www.ghairrhodesbenjamin.com](http://www.ghairrhodesbenjamin.com)

**Jessica Care Moore** is the Executive Producer and Founder of the 17-year old rock & roll concert and empowerment weekend, "Black WOMEN Rock!" Moore created Moore Black Press Publishing and began publishing her peers. She recently joined with Jeff Mills and Eddie Fowlkes to form "The Beneficiaries" and recorded the "The Crystal City is Alive" music project on vinyl. She is currently in pre-production for her first feature film, *He Looked Like A Postcard*.







**The RBG GIRLZ** are an NYC based group formed in 2017 through the Coordinating Efforts of the AnkhsGiving Collective. They had their first performance as a feature at the 3rd Annual AnkhsGiving, which is an annual celebration in honor of ancestors who have suffered colonialism and genocide. The RBG Girlz continued mission is to remain vocal using their lyrics to educate against the social injustices our people are constantly suffering.

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**Sasa Aakil** is an 18 year old multi-media artist, writer, and the 2021 Montgomery County Youth Poet Laureate. She is a co-author of *I Am The Night Sky and Other Reflections by Muslim American Youth* and the artist behind the A Man Was Lynched Yesterday Project. Sasa is also a brown belt in Tung Su Do and a frequent maker of mistakes. Website: [www.sasaaakil.com](http://www.sasaaakil.com)



**Cornelius Eady**, poet and co-founder of Cave Canem, has published more than half a dozen volumes of poetry, among them *Victims of the Latest Dance Craze* winner of the Lamont Poetry Prize from the Academy of American Poets; *The Gathering of My Name*, nominated for a Pulitzer Prize; and *Brutal Imagination*, a National Book Award finalist.

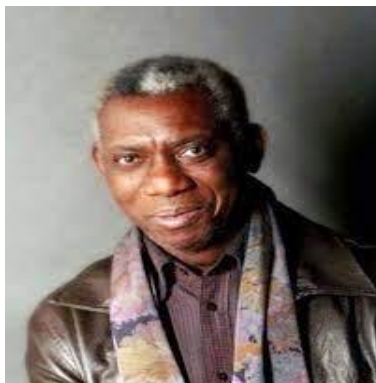
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**Hermine Pinson**, a native of east Texas, she is a poet, fiction writer, and professor at The College of William and Mary. In addition to the CD, “Changing the Changes”, she is the author of two poetry collections, *Ashe* and *Mama Yetta and Other Poems*, both available through Wings Press or Amazon.com.



**Sharon Olds** is an American poet. Olds won the first San Francisco Poetry Center Award, the National Book Critics Circle Award, and the Pulitzer Prize in Poetry. She teaches creative writing at New York University and is a previous director of the Creative Writing Program at NYU.

**Terrance Hayes** is an American poet and educator who has published seven poetry collections. His collection, *Lighthouse*, won the National Book Award for Poetry. He was also a recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship, awarded to individuals who show outstanding creativity in their work.



**Yusef Komunyakaa** is an American poet who teaches at New York University and is a member of the Fellowship of Southern Writers. Komunyakaa is a recipient of the Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award for *Neon Vernacular* and the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry. He also received the Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize and the Louisiana Writer Award for his enduring contribution to the poetry world.



## Toi Derricotte

**Toi Derricotte** is the author of National Book Awards Finalist *I: New & Selected Poems*, *The Undertaker's Daughter*, and four earlier collections of poetry, including *Tender*, winner of the Paterson Poetry Prize. Her literary memoir, *The Black Notebooks* received the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award for Non-Fiction and was a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year. Her honors include, among many others, the Paterson Poetry Prize for Sustained Literary Achievement, the PEN/Voelcker Award for Poetry, the Lucille Medwick Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America, three Pushcart Prizes, and the Distinguished Pioneering of the Arts Award from the United Black Artists. Professor Emerita at the University of Pittsburgh, Derricotte co-founded Cave Canem Foundation (with Cornelius Eady); served on the Academy of American Poets' Board of Chancellors, and currently serves on Cave Canem's Board of Directors, Marsh Hawk Press's Artistic Advisory Board, and the Advisory Board of Alice James Books.



# Artistic Team for *She Speaks*

**Rev. Rhonda "Akanké" McLean-Nur** (Host & Curator) is an actress, arts educator, founder of visionary youth arts programs and an interfaith minister. She is a board member of New Federal Theatre and the Larocque Bey School of Dance.



**Petronia Paley** (Director) is an actor, director, playwright and teacher. She has acted on TV's *Damages*, *Guiding Light*, *Another World*, *One Life to Live*, and *All My Children*. Her solo-performance play *On the Way to Timbuktu* was nominated for the Innovative Theatre Awards and won an Audelco Award. She received a Women of Color directing award for her first directing play *Can We Dance*.

**John Eric Scutchins** (Stage Manager) is a Director & Production Stage Manager who worked off-Broadway and in regional theatre. Besides his work for New Federal Theatre, he worked at Crossroads (2014), Voza Rivers/New Heritage Theatre Group (2011), Hartford Stage (2008, Arena Stage (2007), the National Black Theatre Festival (2001) recently directed Daniel Beatty in *Emergency!* at Crossroads Theatre. In June he directed a virtual presentation of *A Soft Escape* by S. M. Massat for NFT.





**Natalie Morrow** (Editor) is a freelance stage manager and production coordinator in NYC. She has had the pleasure of working with NFT many times as a stage manager, editor, and Zoom manager on multiple virtual productions during the pandemic. She'd like to thank NFT for their support and the encouragement of her family.

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**Anaela Hurt** (Event Coordinator) is an NY based actor and graduate from SUNY Purchase. This is her first time working on an event organized by NFT. She sends her thanks and love to her team along with NFT for this opportunity.



**Chloé LaBorde** is a director and actress from New York City. She is a recent graduate from Purchase College where she studied Theatre & Performance. She is currently the Administrative Associate at New Federal Theatre.



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