

The J.T. & Margaret Talkington College of Visual & Performing Arts
School of Theatre & Dance
presents

BLACK GIRL, INTERRUPTED

by Iyanisha Gonzalez

director
jesse jou

scene design
ian olsen[^]

costume design
emilia richardson[^]

lighting design
taylor alfred

sound design
matthew mosher*

Taking photographs, with or without flash, and using video or audio recording equipment are prohibited during the performance. Eating, drinking, and smoking are not allowed in the event space. Thank you!

cast

riley

sasha

sidney

mr. green

kofi

terri

col. joan moore

masked man/dr. lanham

masked men

masked men

masked men

masked men

understudy

lyanisha gonzalez

laureen karichu*

cy scroggins

christian ruiz#

kietraille sutton*

madelyn robertson

anna ruth aaron-despain*

sean-riley cunningham

gerardo carreón

joshua reddington

tony morrell

hagan paulson

keandra hunt*

special thanks

master sergeant samuel berrios

lieutenant colonel adrain jackson

professor richard rosen

dr. valerie borum, lmsw

dr. debra lavender-bratcher, lcsw

deb buntzen

texas tech university's division of diversity, equity, & inclusion

There will be one 10-minute intermission.

* Member - Alpha Psi Omega, National Theatre Honor Society

^ Member - United States Institute for Theatre Technology

Appears in this Production courtesy of Actors' Equity Association

production team

stage manager	meagan pierce [^]
dramaturg	jennifer ezell
military advisor	master sergeant samuel berrios
assistant director	leah johnson
	delaney o'neal [*]
assistant stage manager	stevan rivera [^]
fight choreographer	cory lawson [#]
fight captain	sean-riley cunningham
	tony morrell
intimacy choreographers	leah johnson
	delaney o'neal
intimacy captain	madelyn robertson
vocal coach	leah johnson
	sadie g. nickerson
vocal captain	laureen karichu
vocal coach assistant	will catalan
assistant costume designer	leyna kennedy
assistant lighting designer	taylor sines
assistant sound designer	chloe pope
audio engineer/live mixer	matthew mosher [*]
assistant technical director	trey tucker [^]
prop master/scenic charge artist	rebecca taylor ^{*^}
set crew	hunter jones
	mariah solis
	marjorie rodriguez
costume crew	taylor sines
	chloe pope
light board operator	elizabeth campbell [^]
sound board operator	hannah machen
deck chief	sara hunter
sound assistant	tiffany viesca
program insert design	surasak namwatsopon

playwright's statement

lyanisha gonzalez | playwright

I first heard the story of Private First Class LaVena Johnson two and a half years ago and she's been on my mind ever since. I was shocked and horrified, not just by the horrendous circumstances surrounding her death, but by the fact that her story failed to garner national attention and outrage. This story rests squarely at the intersections of race, gender, and violence. While violence affects everyone in our society, the picture becomes bleaker when viewed through the prism of race. By this I mean that when women of color, particularly Black women, become victims of violent acts, it is rare that society takes much notice outside of their specific community. I wanted to use the tools I have at my disposal to ensure that one such story finds its way to an audience. How is it that a female soldier can be raped, tortured, and murdered on an American military base during a war and not at the hands of the enemy? Who is the true enemy in a story like this? And how could we, the American people, not know anything about it? What does that say about who we are and the state of racial discourse in our country when even a soldier's story goes unnoticed? It was important for me to tell this story now during these difficult times in our nation as we continue to wrestle with race, identity, patriotism, and misogyny, because theater has always been a safe haven for complex discussions. LaVena Johnson and Sasha Green are one and the same and this play is about letting her be seen. It is about giving her back her voice. And, hopefully, serves as a reckoning for the guilty.

dramaturg's statement

jennifer ezell | dramaturg

LyaNisha Gonzalez's *Black Girl, Interrupted* follows Riley Jones, a *New York Times* reporter, as she chases a story about the brutal murder of Sasha Green and the military cover-up that followed. The play investigates whose story gets lost and who gets to control the narrative when the political is personal and the personal, and intensely private, parts of our lives (and deaths) become political. The events in this play bear striking similarities to the brutal death of Private First Class LaVena Johnson and the sexual assault stories shared by brave soldiers in the 2012 documentary *The Invisible War*. Stories like these have helped raise awareness of military sexual violence and have shaped American policies on the reporting of violence in the military. Gonzalez deftly explores the intersections of race, gender, and political systems in contemporary society through Riley and Sasha's journeys.

In the play, our understanding of military and legal procedure is filtered through the characters' memories, personal knowledge, and emotional responses to military regulations and legal processes. Like Riley Jones, you must ask yourself, in the face of a military cover-up, whose memory do you trust? Whose hunches do you follow? How do you filter out your own emotions to get to the truth? And, does the truth matter if the victim becomes a footnote in her own story?