PROGRAM NOTES

In response to the recent killings of Trayvon Martin, Jordan Davis, Michael Brown and the seemingly endless killings of black men and boys for unarmed offenses, we have designed *Collidescope* to be a collision-course view of the legacy and psyche behind this history of racial violence, racism and social injustice in America. Taking an “alien” view of this aspect of “human” behavior, the gaze of *Collidescope* places these issues under a microscope. The world is an anthropological space, a vitrine in which to observe a “species” from a seemingly rational, scientific view.

The investigation of this peculiar “nature” moves back and forth in historical time, specifically with a focus on the American psyche represented by contemplations of noted historical and contemporary writers and political figures. Utilizing original source texts, fictional and non-fictional, that represent a reflective voice from specific periods in time, *Collidescope* seeks to open up a discourse, interrogating the motives and justifications behind this history.

The proceedings on stage form an anthropological point of view. All scenes are associative, not linear, connecting thematically — creating an impression of free association, a virtual “space” ride. Traveling from the Civil War to the Civil Rights Movement, exploring the pre-Revolutionary War era when freedmen and slaves were contemplating their rights in a soon-to-be independent nation, then back to present day, the work creates a cubistic frame, revealing different angles from which to observe the often tragic history of black and white race relations in America. The landscape is purposely poetic, a litany of questions, considerations, ponderings in the face of actual events, viewing the past to reflect on the present — the conclusion of which inevitably must lead to a litany of tragedies and triumphs. This kaleidoscopic overview creates a poetic shorthand of the injustices perpetuated against African Americans across time in these United States and the pioneers involved in fighting against them.
Ultimately, *Collidescop*e is a vessel containing an investigation of this legacy of injustice and terror. There is a resonance and a reckoning of historical violence perpetuated on one race by another, the pathological and vitriolic objectification of the other, ending as a memorial to the named and the forgotten. We are left with many questions, but, hopefully, with a deeper, richer collective understanding of what we have witnessed and what we must change.

— Ping Chong and Talvin Wilks

**ORIGINAL TEXT SOURCES**

Slave Petition to the House of Representatives for the State of Massachusetts, January 13, 1774.

The Closing Argument of Clarence Darrow in the case of *People v. Henry Sweet, et. al.*, May 11, 1926.


Paul Robeson Testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee, June 12, 1956.


**UNDERSTUDIES**

Abigail Carroll
Tom Frances
Gabriel Macedo
Marina di Marzo
Maria Ortiz
Mac Schonher
Gabrielle Welsh

**PING CHONG + COMPANY STAFF**

Ping Chong
Bruce Allardice
Sara Zatz
Jane Jung
Kristina Varshavskaya

Artistic Director
Managing Director
Associate Director
General Manager
Associate

James Baldwin, Nero, ensemble
Eva, Flora, ensemble
Mildred, Rebecca, ensemble
Hattie Mae, Avery, ensemble
Scott, Wickham, ensemble
Sam, Prince, ensemble
Manning, Draper, ensemble
Robeson, Carlton, ensemble
Edward, Miss Stowell, ensemble
Bennett, Harry, ensemble
Fannie Lou Hamer, Ella Mae, ensemble
LBJ, Mrs. Carter, ensemble
Darrow, Prescott, ensemble
Alien Voiceover

**SETTING**

Somewhere in space and time, very close to home ...

*This performance will last approximately two hours with one 15-minute intermission.*
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Moriamo Akibu (James Baldwin, Nero, ensemble), senior theatre performance major. Creative and Performing Arts Scholar, Terry Margulis Dunlap Memorial Drama Scholar. UMD productions: Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992 (assistant director), Spring Awakening (elemental), for colored folks… (costume designer), Molière Impromptu (Mlle. Bejart).

Riley Bartlebaugh (Eva, Flora, ensemble), senior theatre and English major. Creative and Performing Arts Scholar. UMD productions: The Matchmaker (Dolly Levi), Dead Man’s Cell Phone (Mrs. Gottlieb), A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Mustardseed), Everything in the Garden (Cynthia u/s).

Olivia Brann (Mildred, Rebecca, ensemble), UMD theatre alumni. UMD productions: Kay Theatre: A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Cobweb), Enchanted April (Costanza); Kogod Theatre: Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992 (Angela King), Gilgamesh (Bird); Cafritz Foundation Theatre: Gretel (Director, Puppeteer). Outside productions: NaHuDaOng (Mrs. Liu).


Abigail Carroll (understudy), theatre major. This is her first TDPS project. She enjoys productions with the UMD Kreativitiy Diversity Troupe (performer, writer, film editor).

Ping Chong (co-creator and director), internationally acclaimed theatre artist and pioneer in the use of media in the theatre. Since 1972, he has created more than 90 works for the stage that have been presented at major festivals and theatres worldwide. He is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, a USA Artist Fellowship, two Bessie Awards, two Obie Awards and the 2013 Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, among many others. In 1992, he created the first work in the Undesirable Elements series of community-based oral history projects of which there have now been more than 50 productions. His puppet theatre work CATHAY Three Tales of China was commissioned by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts for its Festival of China in 2005 and was presented at the Seattle Repertory Theatre, New Victory Theatre, the Vienna Festival and the World Puppetry Festival in Chengdu, PRC. His adaptation of Kurosawa’s Throne of Blood was presented at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and the Brooklyn Academy of Music’s Next Wave Festival in 2010. Theatre Communications Group has published two volumes of his plays, The East West Quartet and Undesirable Elements: Real People, Real Lives, Real Theater. He is currently working on Beyond Sacred, an interview-based work exploring the diverse experiences of Muslim communities in New York, which will premiere at LaGuardia Performing Arts Center in Queens in April 2015, and PUSH, about the experiences of disabled athletes for the 2015 Pan Am Games Festival in Toronto. Member of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor organization.

Max Doolittle (lighting designer), second-year MFA candidate in lighting design. He has collaborated with Ars Nova, Access Theatre NYC, The Juilliard School, Unity Stage Company, The New Ohio Theatre, Kitchen Theatre Company, Cornell University Dance, Minnesota Opera and the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, among others. Doolittle served as lighting director on several large-scale television broadcasts and themed entertainment, including Anderson Cooper 360 and Piers Morgan Tonight.

Jeffrey Dorfman (sound designer/Alien Voiceover) is a freelance sound designer based in Washington DC. He has studied theatre at SUNY Buffalo and University of Maryland, College Park. Dorfman utilizes his background in music, composition and theatre arts in order to immerse the audience in worlds of imagination. He could not function as a theatre artist without his inspiration, Leigh-Ann. Recent work includes Kennedy Center Millennium Stage: Grains; CenterStage: Cyborg Suites: Singular Feminine Possessive; Olney Theatre Center: Ciuderella, Over The Tavern, Sleuth, The Sound of Music, Witness for the Prosecution, Angel Street, The King and I. UMD productions: Sandwalk, MFA in Performance Festival of New Work, "Way In" Dance Thesis; UMBC: OTMA, The Lanamie Project; DC Fringe: Gypsy & The Bully Door, Stopgap. www.jeffreydorfmandesign.com.

Leslie Felbain (movement/character coach), director, performer and teacher working in dance, circus and theatre. After training in France with Jacques Lecoq and Serge Martin she remained in Paris as a core member of le dal Theatre and toured internationally as a solo performer. Felbain is the Co-Director of Infinite Stage, an ensemble-based company working with creative and healing arts toward conflict resolution, mediation and community engagement. In addition to her work in performance, Felbain is a Certified Teacher of the F.M. Alexander Technique, Cranio-Sacral Therapist, Somatic-Experience practitioner and Certified Mediator. She is a faculty member in the School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies.

Tom Frances (understudy), senior biology and kinesiology double major. UMD productions: The Matchmaker (Ambrose Kemper). Outside productions: The Music Man (Charlie Cowell), Guys and Dolls (Gangster).

Lydia Francis (scenic designer), third-year MFA candidate in scenic design. UMD productions: Molière Impromptu and My Tempest. She received her undergraduate degree from Gustavus Adolphus College. Francis has also assisted on several productions in the DC area including The Aliens (Studio Theatre), The Last Five Years (Signature Theatre) and The Personals (No Rules Theatre Company), among others.

Joseph Graf (Scott, Wickham, ensemble), senior theatre major. Creative and Performing Arts Scholar. UMD productions: Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992 (multiple roles u/s), The Matchmaker (Rudolph; Vandergelder u/s), Coffee & Biscuit (Harold), Everything in the Garden (Chuck u/s).

Tyler Gunther (assistant costume designer), second-year MFA costume design. UMD productions: Planted and My Tempest. Upcoming productions: The Lost World (UMD) and The Wizard of Oz (Adventure Theatre).

Philip Kershaw (Sam, Prince, ensemble), senior theatre performance and history double major. Kogod Theatre: Molière Impromptu (Michel/Leandre u/s), Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992 (Charles Duke, Walter Park, Dr. Cornel West, Twilight Bey u/s).

Jocelyn Knazik (stage manager), senior theatre and biology major. Banneker/Key Scholar. Kay Theatre: Dead Man’s Cell Phone (assistant director), Postcard from Morocco (assistant stage manager). Outside productions: Sexual (director). Student groups: UTAS (president), The Weekday Players (executive producer).

Weilong Li (Manning, Draper, ensemble), junior theatre and cell biology double major. This is his first production at the University of Maryland.

Gabriel Macedo (understudy), senior theatre performance major. UMD productions: The Matchmaker (Joe; Cabman; Malachi u/s). Outside productions: Les Misérables (Bamatabois; Grantaire; Enjolras u/s).

Marina di Marzo (understudy), junior double major in broadcast journalism and theatre. UMD Weekday Players productions: Seagirl (Madame), Safe as Houses (Isabel Dalloway). Outside productions: You Can’t Take It With You (Penny Sycamore), Urinetown (Little Sally).
Kara Waala (costume designer), third-year costume design MFA candidate. Costume design: *The Human Capacity* directed by Michael Dove (TDPS); *Collidescope* directed by Ping Chong (TDPS); *Spring Awakening* directed by Brian MacDevitt, Sara Pearson and Patrik Widrig (TDPS); *While Waiting* choreographed by Alvin Mayes (Maryland Dance Ensemble). Mask and makeup design: *Molière Impromptu* directed by Matthew Wilson (TDPS). Assistant costume design: Folger Theatre, Wolf Trap Opera, Ford’s Theatre, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company.


Ian McClain (projection designer), sophomore theatre design major. UMD productions: NextNOW Festival (projection designer), UMoves 2014 (lighting designer), member of Kreativity Diversity Troupe and Weekday Players. Outside productions: *Healing Wars* (assistant video designer, Arena Stage).


Mac Schonher (understudy), senior theatre performance major. *Collidescope* is his first UMD production. Outside productions: DC One-Minute Play Festival 2014.

James Skaggs (Edward, Miss Stowell, ensemble), junior theatre major. UMD productions: *Molière Impromptu* (La Thorillière; The Kings; Molière u/s) and *In Time of Roses* (ensemble; King Henry VI u/s). Outside productions: *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Demetrius); Elton John and Tim Rice’s *Aida* (ensemble).

Kyle Travers (Bennett, Harry, ensemble), second-year theatre major. Member of the College Park Scholars: Arts program. Kogod Theatre: *Twilight: Los Angeles*, 1992 (Maria/Bill Bradley/Chris Oh/Ted Briseno u/s).

Gabrielle Welsh (understudy), sophomore biology and dance double major. Presidential Scholar, National Merit Scholar. UMD productions: Ana Farfan’s *My Tempest* (Botswine). She received training at The Moving Company Dance Center.

Kara Waala (costume designer), third-year costume design MFA candidate. Costume design: *The Human Capacity* directed by Michael Dove (TDPS); *Collidescope* directed by Ping Chong (TDPS); *Spring Awakening* directed by Brian MacDevitt, Sara Pearson and Patrik Widrig (TDPS); *While Waiting* choreographed by Alvin Mayes (Maryland Dance Ensemble). Mask and makeup design: *Molière Impromptu* directed by Matthew Wilson (TDPS). Assistant costume design: Folger Theatre, Wolf Trap Opera, Ford’s Theatre, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company.
CAMPUS RESOURCES

CARE – Campus Advocates Respond and Educate to Stop Violence
http://health.umd.edu/care
University Health Center
Room 2118D 301.314.2222
301.741.3442 (24 hours)
This service is a free and confidential resource to provide support, assistance and advocacy to any member of the University community impacted by sexual misconduct. Its mission is to respond to incidents of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking and sexual harassment.

University of Maryland Counseling Center
http://www.counseling.umd.edu/
301.314.7651
The University of Maryland Counseling Center provides comprehensive psychological and counseling services to meet the mental health and developmental needs of students and others in the campus community. Staffed by counseling and clinical psychologists, the Counseling Service offers a variety of services to help students, faculty, staff and the community deal with issues concerning them.

Walking Escorts/Student Police Auxiliary Foot Patrol
301.405.3333
University Police provide a walking escort service 24 hours a day for anyone who feels unsafe while walking on campus. The escorts are conducted by either the Student Auxiliary Police Aide or by a University Police Officer.

Maryland Network against Domestic Violence 1-800-MD-HELPS
Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Center at Dimensions Healthcare System, Prince George's Hospital Center
301.618.3154 (24 hours)
3001 Hospital Drive, Cheverly, MD 20785
Persons who experience sexual assault can access a Sexual Assault Forensic Exam (SAFE) within 120 hours of an assault. Each Maryland county has a hospital that provides SAFE exams. A SAFE exam is available at Prince George’s Hospital Center. To find a SAFE provider in other counties call 1-800-656-4653. SAFE exams and attention to medical needs are available without having to reveal a person’s identity to the police.

Award-winning The Shaneequa Chronicles by Stephanie Berry (Ensemble Studio Theatre), Relativity by Cassandra Medley (Ensemble Studio Theatre — AUDELCO nomination for Best Director 2006) and The Ballad of Emmett Till by Ifa Bayeza (Penumbra Theatre Company). He has served as co-writer/ co-director/dramaturg for ten productions in Ping Chong’s ongoing series of Undesirable Elements, and dramaturg for five collaborations with the Bebe Miller Company (Going to the Wall, the Bessie Award-winning Verge, Landing/Place for which he received a 2006 Bessie Award, Necessary Beauty and A History). Recent dramaturgical and writing collaborations also include work with Camille Brown and Dancers (Mr. TOL E RaNeE), Carmen DeLavallade (As I Remember It), Darrell Jones (Hoo-Ha), Urban Bush Women (Hep Hep Sweet Sweet, Walking with ‘Trane-Chapter 3), Hartbeat Ensemble (Jimmy and Lorraine) and Ping Chong + Company (Collidescope). He was a researcher/co-curator/dramaturg for the 2013 Sekou Sundiata Retrospective, Blink Your Eyes, and the Aunt Ester Cycle at the August Wilson Center in 2009. He is currently writing a book on black theatre, Testament: 40 Years of Black Theatre History in the Making, 1964-2004. Member of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor organization.

Ping Chong + Company was founded in 1975 to create works of theatre and art that explore the intersections of race, culture, history, art, media and technology in the modern world. Today, Ping Chong + Company produces original works by a close-knit ensemble of affiliated artists. Productions range from intimate oral history projects to grand-scale cinematic multidisciplinary productions featuring puppets, performers and full music and projection scores. Ping Chong + Company is grateful for the support of the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the Nathan Cummings Foundation, the New York Community Trust, The Leon Levy Foundation, the Fan Fox & Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, the Lucille Lortel Foundation, the Arcus Foundation, the Emma Sheaper Charitable Trust, the JPB Foundation, the Surdna Foundation, the Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York and many generous individuals. For further information, visit www.pingchong.org.

Collidescope: Adventures in Pre- and Post-Racial America