



For Immediate Release:

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**Coin & Ghost in Association with Vs. Theatre Company Present
The World Premiere of Lisa Marie Rollins'
Love Is Another Country
Sophocles' Classic *Antigone*, Black Women's Bodies & Incarceration
At Vs. Theatre in Los Angeles
February 1 – March 2, 2019**

LOS ANGELES, CA – **Coin & Ghost** in association with **Vs. Theatre Company** present the World premiere of *Love Is Another Country*, a radical reimagining of Sophocles's *Antigone* at Vs. Theatre in Los Angeles from Friday, February 1 through Saturday, March 2, 2019. The third production of Coin & Ghost's inaugural season, *Love Is Another Country* is a new play written by the prolific Bay Area theatre artist **Lisa Marie Rollins** and her first full-length work to be produced in Los Angeles. Directed by **Kendall Johnson**, the production brings together the ancient tale of *Antigone* with the deaths of innumerable black men and women at the hands of police. Part ritual, part rage, part collective ask to the audience, the play follows three women of the Chapman family as they navigate living as black women in a country that claims to love them. For more information, please visit <https://coinandghost.org/liac>.

Love Is Another Country opens on Friday, February 1st and runs throughout Black History Month for five weekends with the last performance on Saturday, March 2, 2019. There will usually* be three or four performances depending on the weekend. For the first three weekends (2/1 – 2/17), shows will run most Fridays* and all three Saturdays at 8:00pm and Sundays at 2:30pm. For the last two weekends (2/21 – 3/2), performances will also happen on Thursday nights at 8:00pm. For the final weekend (2/28 – 3/2) there is no Sunday matinee. Vs. Theatre is located at 5453 Pico Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90019 (323-739-4411). There are three tiers of ticket prices: VIP tickets at \$30 (first three rows; includes a drink), \$25 for general admission and Pay-What-You-Can (PWYC) for the back row. As with all Coin & Ghost (C&G) productions, opening weekend will be entirely PWYC.

* The theater will be dark on Friday 2/15 due to two of the producers getting married! Everyone involved will be attending.

The play, written in collaboration with Coin & Ghost, emerged as a radical re-imagining of Sophocles' *Antigone*, in response to two cultural stimuli: the systemic deaths of black people as a result of police terror, and the generational impact of incarceration on black women. In *Love Is Another Country*, a cast of four explores these themes unflinchingly and without apology. Crafted through devised theatre techniques drawn from the lived experiences of the cast, as well as those of Rollins herself, it features an ensemble cast of diasporic black women who bring to life this vital storytelling and hold the space for collective healing for the community. The cast includes **Amaka**

Izuchi (Jordan), **Celia Mandela** (Nene), **Tyree Marshall** (Ethel May), and **Dee Dee Stephens** (Gonee).

In addition to Rollins and Johnson, the production team includes **Britney Campbell** (Costumes), **Spencer Christovale** (Sound Design), and **Derrick McDaniel** (Lighting Design). The ambitious team is made complete with Coin & Ghost's inner circle that includes its Artistic Director **Zachary Reeve Davidson** (Producer), Managing Director **Marguerite French** (Producer), Associate Artistic Director/ Music Director **Elisa Rosin** (Producer), Production Manager and frequent Lighting/Sound Designer **Niki Armato** (Stage Manager) and Director of Community Engagement **Alex Garland** (Producer).

Known for bringing a highly physical aesthetic to his productions, director Kendall Johnson (C&G's Associate Artistic Director) has adapted classics for the stage before, as with the highly popular *Trojan Women*, directed by USC's David Bridel. Johnson uses his collective experience to lean into the urgent message of *Love Is Another Country*, addressing slavery's systemically infected assumptions among other topics. "The generational devaluing of black women has deadly consequences," proclaims Johnson. "It is only a part of the legacy of slavery. Historically, when Black people come into contact with the state, it's like a grenade goes off in the community. We are exploring these stories and giving voice to the people most affected by our broken criminal justice system."

The production will feature an agnostic ritual aspect to bring support and levity to a complex audience experience. As part of this ritual, and to amplify human-to-human connection, Coin & Ghost is employing personalized Yondr bags to create a phone-free experience for the audience.

For this production, Coin & Ghost is partnering with **Johnny Clark** and Vs. Theatre Company, home of award-winning productions such as the West Coast premiere of *Blackbird* by Adam Rapp; the World premiere of Giovanni Adams' *Love Is A Dirty Word*; the Los Angeles premiere of *On An Average Day* by John Kolvenbach; the West Coast premiere of *The Mercy Seat* by Neil Labute; the West Coast premiere of *Completeness* by Itamar Moses and the World premiere of *Cops And Friends Of Cops* by Ron Klier.

ABOUT:

LISA MARIE ROLLINS (Playwright) –

Lisa Marie Rollins is a freelance director, writer and new play developer. She is a Sundance Institute Theatre Lab Fellow (Directing) and a Directors Lab West member. Regional directing and dramaturg work include Crowded Fire Theater, Playwright Foundation, TheatreFirst, Berkeley Repertory Theater, Shotgun Players, Custom Made Theatre, Magic Theatre, San Francisco Playhouse and new plays by Lauren Gunderson, Geetha Reddy, Idris Goodwin, Tarrance Arvelle Chisholm, and creative collaborations with comedic artists W. Kamau Bell and Zahra Noorbakash. She has been a writing fellow with Djerassi, SF Writers Grotto, CALLALOO London, VONA, Just Theater Play Lab and Joshua Tree Highlands Artist Residency. She holds graduate degrees from Claremont Graduate University and University of California, Berkeley and is Distinguished Guest Artist Faculty at St Mary's College in Performance Studies. Her new chapbook of poems, *Other Words for Grief* (2018, winner, Mary Tanenbaum Literary Award) is now available from Finishing Line Press. She is currently a Resident Artist with Crowded Fire Theater and Artist-in-Residence at BRAVA Theater for Women in San Francisco. She is directing the World premiere of Idris Goodwin's new play *America Prom* at TheaterWorks Colorado Springs in Jan 2019.

KENDALL JOHNSON (Director/Producer/C&G Associate Artistic Director) –

Kendall Johnson grew up in Chicago, where he first fell in love with acting. He started out as a junior in college performing in small productions and that love grew as he attended USC's Master of Fine Arts program for acting. Since graduating from USC, he has worked with Black & Sexy TV on its shows *Sexless* and *F'n Your Life Up*, performed in Royal Shakespeare Company's *Dunsinane*, and Not Man Apart Physical Theatre Ensemble's *Ajax*

in Iraq. The past two summers he performed *The Tempest* and *Macbeth* in Off Square Theatre's Thin Air Shakespeare series in Jackson, WY. This is Johnson's directorial debut.

COIN & GHOST –

Coin & Ghost is a Los Angeles-based theatre company known for its imaginative remixing of known mythologies. The company defines mythology as “any set of stories that simultaneously SHAPES and IS SHAPED BY a culture.” So Traditional Greek and Roman myths count, sure, as do any culture's creation myths. But when viewed through this lens, Shakespeare has a clear mythology to it, as do comic books, Tennessee Williams, and other folklore. C&G use these stories as a base, a structure, even as a playground — but not as a rulebook. Each project begins on the well-worn road of a known mythology, and then branches off on its own unique, wild path. For C&G's mission and the Etymology of its name, please visit <https://coinandghost.org/about-us>.

VS. THEATRE COMPANY –

Vs. Theatre Company, a non-profit 501c(3) corporation, is a collection of passionate artists devoted to producing World, West Coast and Los Angeles Premieres by the best contemporary playwrights in America. Vs. was founded in 2004 based on a shared passion for riveting stories and live performance in an intimate setting. Named “one of the top theatre companies of the last decade” by the *LA Weekly*, Vs. productions have won numerous theatre awards, enjoyed long, sold out runs and received widespread critical acclaim. For more info, please visit www.vstheatre.org.

LINKS:

- *Love Is Another Country* - <https://coinandghost.org/liac>
- C&G Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/coinandghost>
- C&G Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/coinandghost>
- C&G Twitter - <https://twitter.com/CoinAndGhost>
- KQED's Bay Brilliance w/ Lisa Marie Rollins - <https://www.kqed.org/arts/13839060/bay-brilliant-lisa-marie-rollins>
- Photos - <https://tinyurl.com/Photos-LIAC>

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For more information, photos, to schedule an interview or request press passes, please contact Green Galactic's Lynn Tejada at 213-840-1201 or lynn@greengalactic.com.