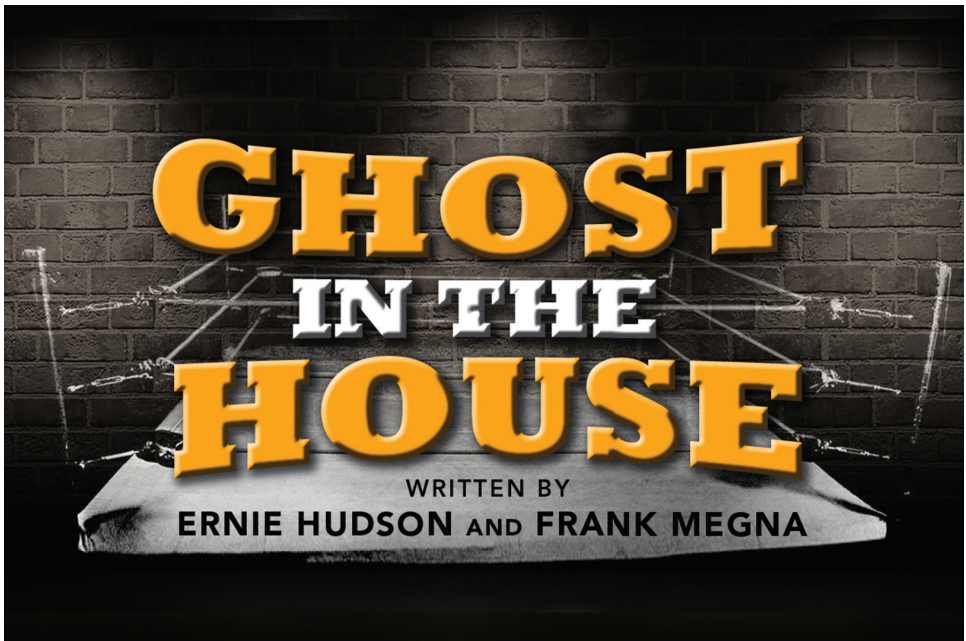


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Opening Minds Productions
in association with the
UCLA Black Alumni Association

Present

GHOST in the **HOUSE**

The Life and Times of Jack Johnson

By

Ernie Hudson and Frank Megna

Directed by

Frank Megna

Starring

Tony Todd

With

Diahnna Nicole Baxter

Eleen Hsu

Kincaid Walker

Technical Director/Original Music

Myles West

Musical Concepts

Eleen Hsu

Costumes

Bo Roses

Produced by

**Raymond Bell, Diana Ljungaeus, Bob Ladendorf,
Dan Lauria, Doc Ogden, Gloria Zuurveen**

CAST

Jack Johnson	Tony Todd
Mama	Diahnna Nicole Baxter
The Siren	Kincaid Walker
The Wraith	Eleen Hsu

Time: 1885 to 1946

Place: All over the world

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Rarely in my 30-plus years in the theater have I encountered a greater spirit of collaboration than in this production of Ghost. Everyone involved in presenting this show—actors, writers, crew and producers—has been possessed with a desire to bring as much life, truth and soul to Jack Johnson's story as our creativity and dedication allows. We have been on a mission. It is a mission that is blessed, especially in this time of racial and economic turbulence in our Nation's history. Whether he chose to be a hero or not, Jack Johnson's courage and defiance is an example of valor that any of us—irrespective of skin color—can aspire to. He taught us that barriers are meant to be broken, oppression to be triumphed over, and life to be "lived on our own terms."

—Frank Megna

WHO IS WHO IN THE CAST

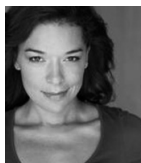


TONY TODD (Jack Johnson) is perhaps best known for his chilling performance as *Candyman*. Todd received scholarships from the renowned Eugene O'Neill National Theatre Institute and Trinity Square Repertory Theatre Conservatory and has appeared in dozens of classical and experimental theater pieces including the world premiere of August Wilson's *King Hedley II* originating the title role in Pittsburgh, Seattle and Boston. According

to *Variety*: "Todd's King Hedley dominates the stage... a mix of rage and resolve, anger and vulnerability..." His performance in Athol Fugard's *The Captain's Tiger* at La Jolla, the Manhattan Theatre Club and the Kennedy Center received a Helen Hayes nomination. He appeared in *Aida* on Broadway and most recently in The Denver Center's world premier of Marcus Gardley's *black odyssey*.

Prominent guest starring roles include *Boston Public*, *NYPD Blue*, *Smallville*, *Law & Order*, *Homocide: Life on the Street* and *X-Files*, all three versions of the *Star Trek* television series and *Black Fox*.

Film credits include *The Rock*, *The Crow*, *Lean on Me*, *Night of the Living Dead*, *Final Destination* and *Platoon*. *Le secret*, was nominated at the Cannes Film Festival. Todd's most recent films include *Sushi Girl*, *Vanish*, *Cowboy's Girl*, the upcoming *Frankenstein*, *Drive Me to Vegas & Mars*, *Cold Descent* and *Requiem*. Watch for him on season two of the hit series *THE FLASH*.



DIAHNNA NICOLE BAXTER (Mama) is an Emmy Award winning actress/writer/producer. She co-created, co-wrote and starred in the interactive sci-fi thriller *SATACRACY 88*, the first web series to win an Emmy Award, and was nominated again the following year.

She has appeared in many hit television shows, (*Scandal*, *True Blood*, *Jane The Virgin*, *American Crime Story*, *The Fosters*). Recently she was nominated twice as Best Actress for the feature *A House is Not a Home* and was also the lead in the award winning short *Doorways*, which screened at Cannes Film Festival and had its television premiere last month. Currently you can catch her short film, *Cowboy's Girl*, also starring Tony Todd, in the festival circuit.

Her love for acting started on stage in NYC where she starred in many Off-Broadway shows, before traveling with the #1 Off-Broadway hit *Pieces* performing her self-written piece, 'Definitions' all over the country. She is honored to be back on stage in *Ghost in the House*. A graduate of Duke University Diahnna is currently developing a feature, *Finding Lady*, about Billie Holiday. imdb.me/diahnnicolebaxter — facebook.com/cowboysgirlmovie — findinglady.com



ELEEN HSU (The Wraith) is an actress, singer and musician. She recently appeared at the Hollywood Fringe Festival playing in *Skanky Me from Kankakee*, a world premiere rock musical. Performances include *The Fellowship of the Rings: Live in Concert*, on tour with the Munich Symphony conducted by Ludwig Wicki, *The Ten Commandments* (by Patrick Leonard), *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (by Frank Wildhorn), and *The Little Match Girl Passion* (by David Lang).

Hsu has also appeared—with twin sister, Jalin—on live Chinese Central Television in Beijing.

Hsu has sung in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, *Into the Woods* and *The King and I* (Lady Thiang) among other performances. She recently was a soloist for Mozart's *Requiem*, and on the critically-acclaimed *American Voices* recording by the John Alexander Singers.

On violin, Hsu has been a symphony and folk band instrumentalist, having toured Eastern Europe and the United States sharing both classical and Chinese folk-pop music. Lastly, her inner pop-lover is elated to have sung with Andrea Bocelli and Reba McEntire, both at the Hollywood Bowl.



KINCAID WALKER (The Siren) graduated from Northwestern University with a degree in theatre. Most recently, she guest-starred on the ABC television show *Castle*, and will also be seen in a supporting role in the upcoming Denise di Novi thriller, *Unforgettable*, opposite Rosario Dawson. She can be seen on-stage in the ongoing sketch comedy show, *The Bulbar Method*, and has also had guest roles on TV shows such as *Parks & Recreation*, *My Name is Earl*, *CSI: New York*, *Cold Case*, *Monk* and *Life* opposite Damian Lewis. Her official website is www.kincaidwalker.com.

WHO IS WHO



FRANK MEGNA (Director and Co-Writer) is a New York-trained actor, writer and director. His first play, *Leather Heart* was produced off-Broadway which led to writing stints for such TV shows as *Crime Story*, *Wiseguy* and *Veronica Claire*. In both New York and Los Angeles, he has worked on numerous theater productions in various capacities. He wrote and directed his first feature film, *The Seekers*, along with Diana Ljungaeus. In addition to writing episodic television, film, news stories and a book, he has conducted many acting and writing workshops and seminars.

With his partners in Opening Minds Productions, Megna has revived Steve Allen's award-winning PBS series *Meeting of Minds* as live theater updating the original scripts and directing such acting luminaries as Ed Asner, Wendie Malick, Jean Smart, Hal Gould, Gary Cole, Robert Forster, Ray Abruzzo, Joe Mantegna, Stana Katic, Maud Adams, Bill Smitrovitch, Bruce Davison and Dan Lauria. OMP is also developing a number of projects aimed at cultural and educational institutions.

In 2013, he directed the critically acclaimed one-woman show *Surfing DNA*, written and performed by *Sullivan and Son* star Jodi Long. Most recently he directed Dan Lauria's black comedy *Dinner with the Boys* for The New Jersey Repertory Company and the show's Off Broadway premier last May.

Megna is also Founder and Artistic Director of the Working Stage Theater which originated in New York and is now located in West Hollywood.

ERNIE HUDSON (Co-Writer) grew up in Benton Harbor, Michigan and always dreamt about acting. Upon leaving the Marine Corps, he moved to Detroit, where he became the resident playwright at Concept East—the oldest black theater in the country. He was awarded a full scholarship to the M.F.A. program at Yale School of Drama. He traded his writing career for that of an actor and has had many leading roles on stage, TV and in movies. His movie credits include *Ghostbusters*, *The Crow*, *Congo*, *Miss Congeniality* and *Oz*.

MYLES WEST (Technical Director/original music) has a wide and varied background studying sound design/audio recording at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). He has also studied acting and been involved in several independent film/theatre productions in various capacities. As an audio engineer at Pacifica Studios in Los Angeles he has worked with many great musicians including Peter Case, The Blasters, William Clarke, Waddy Wachtel (Rolling Stones), Rick Holmstrom (Mavis Staples) and many others. He also works as a live sound engineer, most recently for *Vox Lumiere* written and directed by composer Kevin Saunders Hayes. Myles also writes and produces music. His compositions can be heard on the WB, Extra, and the Tyra Banks Show. His CD, *Dancing Girl*, can be found on iTunes. Most recently he finished producing and co-writing an album, *The Muse*, with singer/songwriter Amiena also on iTunes. As technical director for The Working Stage Theater, he has been involved in a variety of productions, most notably the traveling revival of Steve Allen's *Meeting of Minds*.



BO ROSES (Wardrobe Stylist/Costumes) is the oldest of 7 children. Born in Baja California, Mexico and raised in San Diego, her immigrant dreams of becoming a fashion stylist/designer burned bright in her heart. America is Bo's home but her heritage provides enormous inspiration and pride in her work.

She has styled wardrobe for many commercials, music videos and 2 features: *FMS: False Memory Syndrome*, a sci-fi film, and *Cold*

Descent, a horror-western.

Bo admires her favorite eras of the '60s and '70s when clothing broke the chains of convention and changed fashion history.

Bo is happy to be working again with the great Tony Todd. In the process of being part of *Ghost in the House*, her first theater work, she has discovered much about Jack Johnson who was a flashy dresser ahead of his time and called the "Black Beau Brummell." As a huge boxing fan, making this project is particularly special for her.



JOHN REED-TORRES was born and raised in Los Angeles, CA. The first time John recalled hearing a hint of Ragtime was during school recess in fifth grade.

A self-taught pianist, he worked up performances of Scott Joplin rags as well as classical pieces. In '09, John began studies at Pasadena City College & the Neighborhood Music School in Boyle Heights and has since performed at various venues around Los Angeles including the Old Town Music Hall in El Segundo calling it "a home away from home." He's even staged an annual Young Ragtime Masters concert there every September since 2012. He's also performed at various Ragtime/Early Jazz Festivals such as the West Coast Ragtime Society festival, Blind Boone Ragtime & early Jazz Festival, Scott Joplin International Ragtime Festival, Old Town Music Hall Ragtime Festival, Orange County Ragtime Festival, Sutter Creek Ragtime Festival, the Rose Leaf Club, the Jonathan Club and the Los Angeles Country Club.

John has written eight rags, and is working on several collaborations. He says, "Ragtime music is the delightfully infectious beat that lifted my people from places of disregard to places of notoriety."

PAUL GABRIEL (Stage Manager): Having been trained in various aspects of performance and tech, Paul has developed a well-rounded passion for theatre. Most recently, he has gained ground in both lighting design and stage management. Recent credits include *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Seussical*, and *Mother Courage and Her Children*. He is honored to have been given the opportunity to work on *Ghost In the House*, with such a talented group of individuals.

AL MORRIS (Assistant Stage Manager), a native of Harlem, was born into a showbiz family. He's been friends with Tony Todd for more years than he can count. Al has been part of the *Ghost* journey almost from the beginning.

JOE GROSSO, graphic designer (poster), is a native New Jerseyan. His education and talent led him into the performing arts, where he eventually became a trained, professional actor. While performing as an actor in NYC as a member of a theater company producing original material. (The Working Stage Theater Company of NY,) he would illustrate and design logos, posters, flyers, postcards and playbills—whatever was needed. Text was either drawn by hand or press print was used... exacto knives, rulers, cut and paste, for those who remember that. (This was before computers had graphic design programs). He decided to return to college becoming a skilled computer graphic designer. He also drew portrait-like caricatures for his own business called, "The Character in You." Being trained as a Method actor and born with a fine art talent has inspired his career as a designer. "I have always been a very visual person: observant of nature and humankind," he said.

CANDICE OTA, is a L.A. graphic designer with an extensive background in art directing magazines and other publications.

PRODUCERS



RAYMOND BELL (producer) is leading the charge returning to his alma mater, UCLA, as a co-producer of *Ghost in the House*. After having a stellar football career for the Bruins, Bell graduated from the College of Fine Arts with a Bachelor Arts degree in Motion Picture and Television. His degree was put to good use, having worked over 30 years in the television industry. Bell's accomplishments along the way include being a sports and feature news producer at KTLA, KTTV, and KCBS/KCAL. He also developed and produced a 10-episode sports and entertainment show entitled "Inside Pitch" for Fox Sports International. The two-time Emmy Award winning producer, who recently won a Los Angeles Press Club Award, is also hard at work on two documentary films with filmmaker Doug Harris. The films are entitled *FAIR LEGISLATION: The Byron Rumford Story* and *CALLED UP: The Emmett Ashford Story*.



BOB LADENDORF co-founded Opening Minds Productions and has previously co-produced numerous episodes of Steve Allen's *Meeting of Minds* teleplays as staged readings in L.A. and at several universities around the country. He is currently chief operating officer of the non-profit Center for Inquiry-L.A. in East Hollywood and has been a freelance writer, associate editor of a University of Illinois-Springfield public affairs magazine, and deputy director of an Illinois state government communications department. He studied film for his Master's degree in Communication Arts from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



DAN LAURIA is a well-know starring actor from television (*The Wonder Years*) to Broadway (*Lombardi*) whose first love is the theater. He is a founding partner in Opening Minds Productions and instrumental in resurrecting Steve Allen's award-winning PBS show *Meeting of Minds* as live theater. He is a passionate supporter and promoter of new American drama and has helped many writers and plays find a home. He championed and supported *A Bronx Tale* from its origins as a one-man show to its feature film incarnation. Most recently, he appeared off Broadway in his own play, *Dinner With The Boys*, directed by his old pal Frank Megna.



DIANA LJUNGAEUS is a producer and writer. She is a founding member of Opening Minds Productions and together with her husband, Frank Megna, she owns and runs the small live theater venue Working Stage Theater in West Hollywood. In addition she is the executive director of the Los Angeles Press Club and produces the annual National Arts & Entertainment Journalism Awards as well as the SoCal Journalism Awards Gala. She began her career as a cub reporter in Sweden at the age of fifteen. She has lived and worked in the U.S. since 1996. Her background has run the gamut from researcher to reporter and editor, to story/script writer and finally to theater, film and multimedia producer.

Dr. JAMES R. OGDEN (Doc) is currently CEO of the Consulting Firm The Doctors Ogdan Group, LLC (T-Dog) and a public and motivational speaker, giving



presentations all over the world. In addition, Dr. Ogden is published in leading journals and is the author of nine books on retailing, marketing and integrated marketing communications (IMC). Doc's academic training includes a Ph.D. with concentrations in research and statistical methodology, psychology and business; a Master's in Marketing and a Bachelor's in General Business and Business Education with minors in English, Language and Literature.

Doc has sat/sits on the board of directors for numerous corporations and has worked for an array of corporations including General Motors, Meijer, Martin Guitar and D&B, to name just a few. He has consulted for many others in the areas of advertising and marketing. He is a current board member of Opening Minds Productions.



Dr. GLORIA ZUURVEEN is the Founder/Owner and Publisher of *PACE NEWS* which is a Los Angeles City and County adjudicated newspaper of general circulation since 1995. *PACE NEWS* print, online and mobile newspaper serves as a voice to call attention to many critical issues affecting the African American community in the Greater Los Angeles and surrounding areas.

Dr. Zuurveen is a member of the Board of Directors for the Los Angeles Press Club since 2011. In addition she is a licensed Minister and holds a Bachelor of Biblical Studies, Master of Religious Education and Doctorate of Ministry. She is a graduate of University of Southern California Entrepreneurial Certificated Business Program and holds an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Marketing.

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