

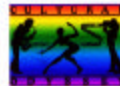


RHODESSA JONES is Co-Artistic Director of the San Francisco acclaimed performance company Cultural Odyssey. She is an actress, teacher, singer, and writer. Ms. Jones is also the Founder and Director of the award winning **Medea Project: Theater for Incarcerated Women**, which is a performance workshop that is designed to achieve personal and social transformation with incarcerated women. Beginning in January of 2009 Rhodessa will embark on Cultural Odyssey's 30th Anniversary tour performing her newest performance piece, **The Love Project**, written in collaboration with noted writer Pearl Cleage and Zaron Burnett, at *La Mama Theater* in New York City, *Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center* in Tampa, Florida, *7 Stages* in Atlanta and many other locations. In November 2008, for the first time in South African history, Rhodessa Jones directed a full-length theater production with female inmates inside the *Johannesburg Correctional Services* (popularly known as "Sun City prison"). This was Rhodessa's second visit to South Africa hosted by the *Urban Voices Festival*. Ms. Jones is currently collaborating with the *Women's HIV Program at University of California, San Francisco Medical Center* conducting workshops and residency activities that will lead to a world premier performance in 2010.

During 2008 Rhodessa performed, **The Love Project** at the *Painted Bride Art Center* in Philadelphia, *Denison University* in Granville, Ohio, the *Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center* at the *University of Maryland*, and the *National Black Theater Festival* in North Carolina. In December of 2007 Rhodessa received a **United States Artist (USA) Fellowship** to support her work. In June 2008 Rhodessa gave the Keynote Address at Chicago's DePaul University for the *Race, Sex, and Power Conference*, and in May she gave the Keynote Address at *New World Theater's Intersections Conference* in Amherst, Massachusetts. During the month of September 2007 Rhodessa was an Adjunct Professor at the *University of Maryland* for the Women's Studies Department. She was also the Artistic Director of the **San Francisco International Theater Festival** that took place in the spring of 2007. During July and April 2007 Rhodessa was Artist-in-Residence at the *University of West Indies*, St. Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago. In June 2006 she directed a public reading for Eve Ensler's, *VDAY: Until the Violence Stops Festival* at Lincoln Center in New York City.

Ms. Jones was honored with an **Honorary Doctorate** from California College of the Arts in 2004. Rhodessa has received many awards for her work including a **GOLDIE Lifetime Achievement Award** presented by the San Francisco Bay Guardian in 2003, an **Otto Rene Castillo Award for Political Theater** in 2002, and a **San Francisco Foundation Community Leadership Award** commending her for developing the Medea Project as "an intersection of art, politics and social rehabilitation." In June 2001, her film collaboration *We Just Telling Stories*, a film profiling Ms. Jones and her work with the Medea Project in the San Francisco County jails, won Best Documentary at the San Francisco Black Film Festival. This award paralleled the 2001 release of a book on Ms. Jones' work entitled *Imagining Medea: Rhodessa Jones and the Theater for Incarcerated Women* by Rena Fraden, Ph.D. with a forward by Professor Angela Davis.

Ms. Jones published works include *Rhodessa Jones: Theater for a New Millennium*; *Extreme Exposure: An Anthology of Solo Performance in the Twentieth Century*, Theater Communications Group, 1999; "Deep In The Night," *Journal of Medical Humanities*, Vol. 19, No. 2/3, Summer 1998 (performance script); and the plays *Big Butt Girls* and *Hard-Headed Women* for the 1996 *Colored Contradictions: An Anthology of Contemporary African-American Plays*.



IDRIS ACKAMOOR is a multi-instrumentalist, composer, actor, tap dancer, director, producer, and videographer. He is the Founder and Co-Artistic Director of the San Francisco performance company **Cultural Odyssey**. Idris' primary instrument is the alto saxophone. An accomplished tap dancer, Idris' signature performance is his uncanny ability to combine tap dancing with playing his saxophone simultaneously. Beginning in January of 2009 Idris will embark on Cultural Odyssey's **30th Anniversary Tour** performing his newest performance piece, **The Love Project**, written in collaboration with noted writer Pearl Cleage and Zaron Burnett, at *La Mama Theater* in New York City, *Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center* in Tampa, Florida, *7 Stages* in Atlanta and many other locations. In November 2008, for the first time in South African history, Idris Ackamoore was the assistant director (working with partner and director Rhodessa Jones) for a full-length theater production with female inmates inside the *Johannesburg Correctional Services* (popularly known as "Sun City prison"). This was Mr. Ackamoore's second visit to South Africa hosted by the *Urban Voices Festival*. In 2005 he performed at the world famous Market Theater of Johannesburg.

During 2008 Idris performed **The Love Project** at the *Painted Bride Art Center* in Philadelphia, *Denison University* in Granville, Ohio, the *Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center* at the *University of Maryland*, and the *National Black Theater Festival* in North Carolina. Mr. Ackamoore is the recipient of a 2007 **Center for Cultural Innovation** Award to support his work.

During July and April 2007 Idris conducted performances and residency activities in Trinidad & Tobago at the *University of the West Indies*. In February and March 2007 he performed the role of musician "Moses Britten" in **Indigo Blues**, a play by Judi Ann Mason that ran at the *M Ensemble Theater* in Miami, Florida and at the *Penumbra Theater* in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1999. He also performed the role of legendary jazz musician **Lester Young** in the Lorraine Hansberry Production of "*The Resurrection of Lady Lester*" by Oyamo. In May 2007 Idris performed at the **San Francisco International Arts Festival** with the "*Underground Jazz Cabaret*" featuring a reunion of his legendary jazz group, "*The Pyramids*". As a tap dancer Idris has performed at the **4th Annual International Tap Dance Human Rhythm Festival** touring to 3 cities in Holland In September 2001. He took his solo simultaneous tap dance and sax act to Japan in the summer of 1996 where he performed six days a week in the Japanese cities of Shimenoseki, Osaka, and Tokyo. Some of the noted artists he has collaborated with include percussionist Don Moye of the Art Ensemble of Chicago, saxophonists Chico Freeman, dancer/choreographer Bill T. Jones, writer/poet Ntozake Shange and many others.

Mr. Ackamoore has received many awards for his work including a **GOLDIE Lifetime Achievement Award** presented by the San Francisco Bay Guardian. Most recently he received a **Meet The Composer** and **American Composers Forum** grant for composing new music, and a San Francisco Arts Commission Individual Artists Commission. Idris achieved a musical milestone with the just-released two-CD retrospective of his recorded output entitled, **Music of Idris Ackamoore 1971-2004** on EM Records of Japan. In 2004 Idris released his third CD entitled, "*Homage to Cuba*". In 1999 Idris released his second jazz CD entitled, "*Centurian*" and in 1998 he recorded and released his first CD entitled "*Portrait*". During 2009 three albums by *The Pyramids* will be re-released as CDs on the Locust Music Label.