

Show Guide for ***speaking of sneaking***



Sept 19 – Oct 1, 2023
Buddies in Bad Times Theatre
12 Alexander St., Toronto, ON

A groundwork redux and Buddies production in association with Obsidian Theatre

For more information about getting to Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, you can find the venue guide for our theatre here:

<https://buddiesinbadtimes.com/wp-content/uploads/Buddies-in-Bad-Times-Venue-Guide.docx-1.pdf>

The performance on **Sunday, Sept 24 at 2:00pm** will be a **Relaxed Performance**. Relaxed Performances are designed to welcome audience members who will benefit from a more relaxed performance environment, including house lights being left on at a low level, more freedom to come and go from the space, and an alternate space to take a break from the show if needed.

The performance on **Saturday, Sept 23 at 7:30pm** will be a **Black Out Night**: an intentional invitation to Black community members to experience *speaking of sneaking* together, followed by a talkback. Advance tickets can be booked online (use promo code BLACKOUT to access \$5 tickets), with PWYC tickets available at the door.

The performance on **Saturday, Sept 30 at 2:00pm** will feature **ASL interpretation** by Deaf interpreters Natasha “Courage” Bacchus and Juan Jaramillo. Use promo code ASL5 at checkout to access \$5 tickets. For further assistance, please contact Box Office & Front of House Manager, **Julia Weiland** julia@buddiesinbadtimes.com or call the box office at 416-975-8555

About the Show Guide

This show guide is for anyone to use, but was specifically designed with our neurodivergent and autistic patrons in mind, so folks can know what to expect when attending *speaking of sneaking* at Buddies.

About the Show

The show is approximately 90 minutes long, with no intermission. Audience members may leave and re-enter the space during the show if they so choose to. Outside of this show guide, you can find information about the show on the [Buddies website](#).

COVID-19 Safety

Patrons, staff, and visitors are asked to mask inside our facilities at all times, unless eating or drinking. You may eat or drink in the Cabaret or Ante-Chamber, but not in the Chamber space.

For more information regarding Buddies' COVID-19 safety policy, visit <https://buddiesinbadtimes.com/covid-safety/>

Your Path

When you enter through the box office doors on the side of the building, a front of house staff member will greet you. Staff members will be wearing name tags. The show takes place in the Chamber theatre space, to the right of the box office entrance.



Pictured: the box office entrance through the ramp on the side of the building, and the box office.

Here in the lobby is where you may wait for the show to begin. There are two screens above where you may view the bios and headshots of the creative team of the show.

The lobby may have people talking and walking around. If that is too noisy for you, you may also wait in the ante-chamber, which is straight ahead of you. It is a quieter space with seating for you to use.

You can always ask a Buddies staff member to help you find somewhere to wait, find the washrooms, or find a seat in the theatre.



This is the Antechamber space.

Preshow

There is no assigned seating in the Chamber theatre space. You may sit in any unoccupied seat, unless it has a reserved sign on it. All seats will be a minimum of 6 feet away from the performer on stage for audience safety, as the performer will be unmasked for the duration of the show. For your safety, you should not go onto the performing space at any time.



This is the audience seating in the Chamber.

What to Expect

The Story

Ginnal is sure like never before: he must make it to Foreign. When he meets a Spider who sets him on the journey, Ginnal faces the cost of freedom. Inspired by experiences of growing up queer in Jamaica and finding home in Canada, *speaking of sneaking* is a multidisciplinary mash-up of dance, poetry, and pantomime, where the archetypal Jamaican Ginnal and the mythical African Anansi meet.

Content

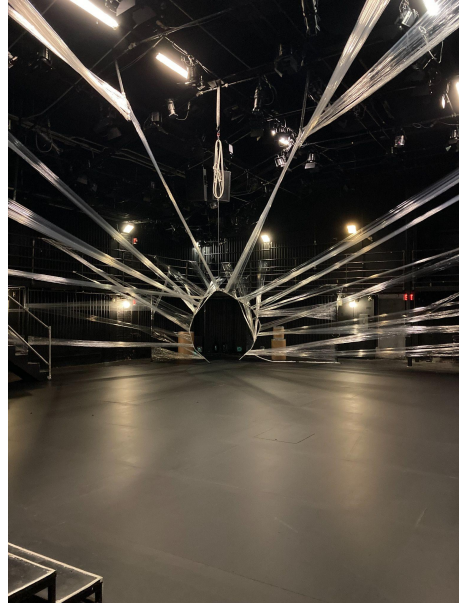
The character of Uncle Shem uses homophobic language.

At times the actor will look right at you/make prolonged eye contact, talk at you, but not necessarily want interaction.

Set

The set of the show consists of a giant 'spider web' made of plastic. There is a staircase on one side of the stage that the performer will go up and down. The set stays the same throughout the show, except for three barrels which will move around the stage over the course of the show. Sometimes the characters might bang on the barrels.

There is a bungee in the middle of the stage. At three moments the performer will clip themselves into it. As part of the bungee work, the performer will be suspended in the air, bouncing up and down, or spinning around in a circle. All of these are pre-choreographed movements that have been checked for safety of both the performer and the audience.



This is the set.

Music and sound

There are loud, thunderous sounds at the start of the show. There are five music pieces that are louder than the sound in most other parts of the show, lasting 1-2 minutes each. Throughout the show, there will also be spider sounds coming from every direction.

A general note: this show is ideal for sensory seekers, and may be hard for folks with more sensory sensitivity.

Lighting

At certain parts of the show there is haze, and strobing/flashng lights.

Meet the Cast



daniel jelani ellis

daniel plays several characters in the play. The two main characters are **Anansi**: Deity of storytelling. Sometimes spider, sometimes man, sometimes both/neither. And **Ginnal**: Jamaican born, the central character/protagonist of the play.

Other characters include...

Asafa: Ginnal's childhood friend and teenage lover

Briana: Ginnal's friend and colleague in Toronto

Edwin: Ginnal's manager in Toronto

Granny Luna: Ginnal's maternal grandmother, Jamaican born.

Nana Earth: Deity of the earth. Married to Nana Sky.

Nana Sky: Deity of the sky. Married to Nana Earth.

TJ: Ginnal's cousin. Uncle Shem's daughter. Jamaican born.

Uncle Shem: Ginnal's uncle and caretaker. Jamaican born.

*A note about the performer's portrayal of these characters: Several characters are seen onstage: Anansi, Ginnal, Granny, Asafa, Uncle Shem, Edwin, and a grocery store lady. Other characters are talked about or talked to, but they never appear physically on stage: Briana, nana Earth, nana Sky, and TJ.

In the playing of these characters, daniel will change his posture, voice, and physical orientation. Most of the time there will be no costume changes - with one exception, the performer wears the same thing throughout the show.

When daniel is playing the character of Anansi, he will sometimes put on a very big costume piece. This represents Anansi in his full God form.

Credits

These people created the show:

daniel jelani ellis // creator, performer + producer

d'bi.young anitafrika // dramaturg + director

Fairy J // choreographer

Lexi Sproule // stage manager

Rachel Forbes // set + costume designer

Andre du Toit // lighting designer

Stephon Smith // sound designer

Chanti Laliberte // head of wardrobe

Crew:

Rebecca Vandavelde // production manager

Conrad McLaren // technical director

Kit Norman, Darry Shaen, Van Ward,

Amber Pattison // head technicians

Diamond Srey // audio technician & Qlab programmer

El Patey, Matt Armour, Mike Dowdall, Zev Shoag,

Nate Gurarie, Katherine Teed-Arthur // install & strike crew