

# WE ARE HERE

## ABOUT THE SHOW



In South Africa, Antonio discovers a country ripe with the promise of a young democracy, but plagued by Apartheid legacies and endemic violence. News headlines and social media campaigns are a constant reminder of the violence visited on women, children and community at the hands of men. Troubled by the violence in the air, he traverses the territories of land and soul in search of the humanity in himself and others. Who will he discover on the other side?

### *Along the way he meets:*

**Uncle:** Who is saddled with raising two little girls after a sister friend's long history with domestic violence sees her imprisoned and the father of her children dead.

**Father:** Who grapples with sanity, rage and grief after the hunt for his missing daughter ends in tragedy

**Boy:** Who wanders rural soccer pitches balanced on the divide between boyhood and manhood. Searching for guidance in the weak eyes of nomad men, while he hungers for independence and a hopeful moment in his absent fathers gaze.

**Himself:** A grown man discovering that the ties to the past are stronger than he knows, but salvation can come in the eyes of a teddy bear even if it's the warmup talk for a heart to heart between father and son.

*Each story shared pushes him ever closer to discovering an answer to his troubled soul's questions.*

### *Brief Production History*

- 2020 - Oregon Shakespeare Festival (Ashland, OR)
- 2020 - We Are Here Digital Engagement (Dallas Edition)
- 2017 South African Tour - US Department of State - U.S. Speaker Program
- 2017 American Men's Studies Association Conference (Ann Arbor, MI)
- 2015 Twamanguluka/ P.A.Y (Okahanja, Namibia)
- 2015 MPAACT Theatre (Chicago);dir. Daniel Bryant
- 2015 Scholars in Residence at the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor, MI)
- 2014 The Soweto Theatre (Johannesburg,SA)
- 2014 National Black Theatre (New York);dir. Rodney Gardiner
- 2014 University of the Witwatersrand/Drama For Life (Johannesburg,SA)
- 2013 The Midnight Projects at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (Ashland, Oregon)
- 2012 The Performing the World Conference ( New York);dir. Kelly Thomas
- 2011 The Impact HUB (Johannesburg, SA)
- 2010 Space.com/Joburg Theatre (Johannesburg,SA) ;dir. Warona Seane
- 2009 Tour - Kwa Zulu Natal, South Africa.(Fulbright Awardee); dir. Lindiwe Matshikiza
- 2020 BLACK VOICES FESTIVAL - Whitefire Theatre (Los Angeles, CA)



*Audience, National Black Theater,  
Harlem, New York*

**\*\*Performance Note** Each performance of We Are Here is followed by a post-show facilitated dialogue. The discussion provides an opportunity for the audience-community to reflect on their collective experiences and the themes in the show. In past performances the audience-community honed in on the key issues within the performance and connected them with universal themes present in their own lives. We Are Here utilizes innovative theatre practices to assist communities in examining the role of men in ending gender based violence.



## ABOUT THE PROJECT

WE ARE HERE (WAH) has grown into a social activism initiative that has implemented programming in South Africa and the USA. The project is designed to foster an environment where the arts can impact social conditions, attitudes, perceptions and structures amongst men and boys. Along with the show, the initiative is also comprised of the following:



*We Are Here performance  
by community partners TX Theater Productions  
Soweto Theater, Johannesburg, South Africa*

### Community Workshops

These workshops are directed at men and boys with the aim of facilitating interactive and congenial learning, healing and growth.

Through these intimate workshops We Are Here creates sacred space where male bodied and identified individuals can come apart and collectively piece themselves back together again.

In 2015 We Are Here conducted workshops in collaboration with TX Theatre Productions in Tembisa, a township of Johannesburg, South Africa. The workshops took place over 9 months and culminated in the hand over and reimagining of the We Are Here script to reflect local community concerns.

From 2016-2017 We Are Here was a organizational partner of SisterLove International South Africa (SLISA). We Are Here provided services to men and boys as part of their new iSTARSHIPP Program. iSTARSHIPP (Innovative Strategies for Those At Risk Seeking High Impact Prevention and PrEP) was a grant recipient of the DREAMS Innovation Challenge initiative, funded by the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

### WAH Ambassadors

Leaders and role models within communities who embody the WAH philosophy and share our message with their respective constituencies and areas of influence.



## COMMUNITY REFLECTIONS

"So often we as women always hear about the black man's plight. It's so refreshing to hear a black man talk about the black woman's plight. I commend you for that. That's totally refreshing. I appreciate it very much. To hear a man say I see you...I hear you...I understand you. I really appreciate that."  
(New York)

"Where I thought you did a brilliant job Antonio in terms of capturing the nuances of language in such a way that an American audience can understand. You caught the words. You caught the inflections. Gave a sense of that authentic experience of what people, not what an American says a South African is experiencing." (Chicago)

"Thank you. The range of characters. The range of depth. Something that came to mind. It was wonderful having a man speak to where women are... From your point of view, but also getting inside the head of a woman and projecting out. I love the range of it." (Johannesburg)

## ABOUT

### *Antonio David Lyons*

Antonio David Lyons's has one foot firmly planted in both South Africa and the USA. He holds an MA in Applied Theatre from the City University of New York (CUNY). He is a professional artist, activist and scholar. Some of his Film and Television credits include: Star Trek: Picard, Bosch, The Unseen, Person of Interest, The Book of Negroes, Generation Kill, Hotel Rwanda, Masked and Anonymous, American History X, and The Sum of All Fears, New York Undercover, The District, The Agency, 24 and The Practice, In South Africa: Generations, Jacob's Cross, Fourplay: Sex tips for girls, Scandal, Ubizo: The Calling, Jozi-H, Snitch, Night Drive and Home Affairs. He has also been a Fulbright Awardee, an Oregon Shakespeare Festival Producing Fellow and a Scholar in Residence at the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor).



### *Media*

Antonio Lyons: [ActorSpaces](#)

WeAreHere: [Trailer](#)

[Mail & Guardian Profile](#)

[Workshops in South Africa](#)

[Cape Argus Article](#)

[Benoni Times](#)

[HowlRound](#)

### Information

When making a booking please indicate the level of programming you are interested in securing. You can book the show, request that it be accompanied by a series of individually designed workshops, or partner with We Are Here for a more sustained community engagement.

Contact:

Email: [antoniodavidlyons@gmail.com](mailto:antoniodavidlyons@gmail.com)

Phone: +1 347 979 7435

For additional information:

[www.antoniodavidlyons.com](http://www.antoniodavidlyons.com)

or

[www.wearehereworld.weebly.com](http://www.wearehereworld.weebly.com)