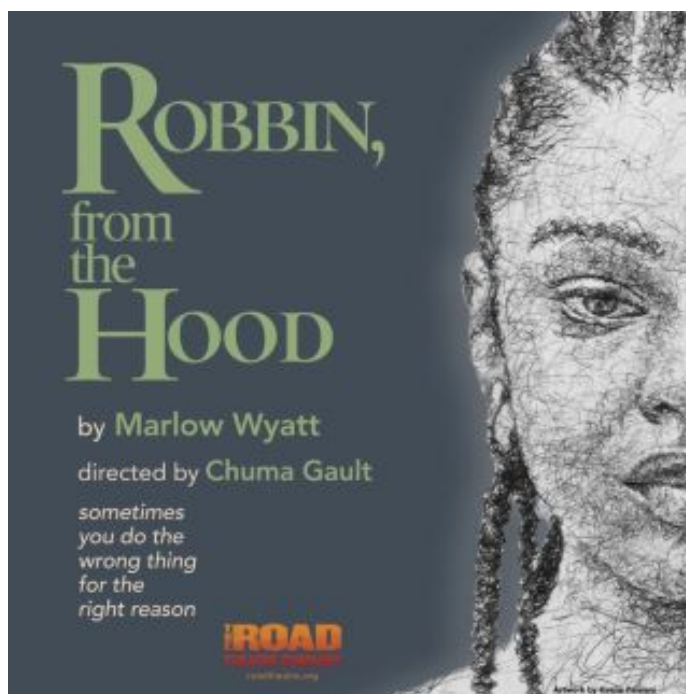


Theater Review: ROBBIN, FROM THE HOOD (Road Theatre)

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Shari Barrett

October 17, 2024



A rich man is nothing but a poor man with money.
— W. C. Fields

I highly recommend the World Premiere of ***Robbin, From the Hood***, which opened last Friday at **Road Theatre**. It is playwright **Marlow Wyatt**'s creative protest to American capitalism. It's entertaining and timely with surprising plot twists. In Wyatt's re-imagined tale, corporate greed dominates the deceptive game of capitalism when Robbin Woods, a loud-mouthed, 17-year-old math genius "from the hood" is given the opportunity to move from street-smart kid to clever, well-dressed corporate assistant.



William L. Warren and Enrike Llamas

But once she and her best friend Juan get inside the massive Kennedy Global corporate offices, selected from under-served inner city high school students by Kennedy Global whiz Margaret Brown, Robbin recognizes the massive inequities that exist when it comes to reaping corporate funds to improve the hood, especially for inner-city people like her grandfather Percy, facing medical issues due to aging, and uncle Charlie, dealing with the ramifications of being incarcerated.



iesha m. daniels and Enrike Llamas

With access to the firm's accounting office, Robbin learns where the money comes from and where it gets distributed, often not matching the PR machine image created to sell the corporation to the world. Gathering data during her downtime, which is almost ongoing, she sets her plan in place to level the playing field, without really considering what the ramifications may be for doing the wrong thing for the right reason. How can such a young urban survivor possibly know how to weave around the ropes holding the corporation in place?



Joshua R. Lamont and William L. Warren

Kyle Mayhew, a Kennedy Global upper-level executive well-versed in playing the game in business — as well as his personal life — always gets what he thinks he wants. And what he wants most is to get promoted to the corner office, until, that is, Robbin's machinations get in his way. Separated from his wife, Kyle is having an affair with Margaret, his subordinate, who keeps bringing up the subject of his promise to get a divorce and marry her. And what happens when the truth comes out surprises Kyle, throwing a wrench into his plans to get ahead. Then again, he also has a big secret to reveal ... one which may shake his life to its very core.



Joshua R. Lamont and William L. Warren

Director **Chuma Gault** elicits credibility from her actors, who portray characters on all sides of the issue. Recent Howard University grad **iesha m. daniels** gives a tour-de-force performance as Robbin, authentically playing the game to get what she wants – and making sure her voice always gets heard. Making his professional theatrical debut, **Enrike Llamas** has a natural stage presence as Juan. Percy is vulnerably brought to life by **William L. Warren**, and **Joshua R. Lamont** as Charlie allows us to see the softer side of his inmate life — both actors are fabulous as they plumb the depths of their characters. The statuesque **Geri-Nikole Love** is commanding as Margaret Brown, and **Rob Nagle** plays Kyle Mayhew; as always, Nagle is immensely watchable.



Geri-Nikole-Love and Iesha M. Daniels

Each of these characters proves the notion that we all do the wrong thing for the right reason in our lives. The trick is being able to deal with the aftermath in a responsible way, accepting whatever punishment is required of you, to succeed in doing what you think is best. Sure, we may regret the outcome personally, but hopefully the positive energy created in our souls makes the experience all worthwhile.



Rob Nagle and Geri Nikole-Love

Presented on an open floor plan with movable panels and set pieces designed by **Amanda Knehans**, the lights (**Derrick McDaniel**), sound (**John Zalewski**) and projections (**Nicholas Santiago**) reflect each location for the many scenes, both at home, in public, on the bus, and the office. The costumes (Wendell Carmichael) and props (**Scottie Nevil**) are terrifically realistic.



Enrike Llamas, iesha m. daniels and William L. Warren

Hoping she can speed up the process with her pen, the playwright states that “any system that does not benefit the greater good of the majority must be demolished.” It is worth noting that this work began as part of Road Theatre’s Summer Playwright’s Festival in 2023. The annual festival takes place each July, during which 20-40 staged readings of new plays are performed over 12 exciting days, submitted by new playwrights. Due to its popularity and quality of the scripts, the staged reading festival is now the largest in the nation, fueled by The Road’s commitment to developing and nurturing new works for their audiences.



Enrike Llamas and William L. Warren

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Robbin, From the Hood

The Road Theatre Company

NoHo Senior Arts Colony, 10747 Magnolia Blvd. in North Hollywood

Fri and Sat at 8; Sun at 2

ends on November 17, 2024

for tickets, call 818.761.8838 or visit [Road Theatre](#)