



VIOLA FORD FLETCHER
FOUNDATION

8700 Stonebrook Parkway #1695
Frisco, Texas 75034

THE VIOLA FORD FLETCHER FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES THE DEVELOPMENT OF BLACK WALL STREET THE MUSICAL AND THE COMMISSIONING OF PLAYWRIGHT J.P. HAYNES. THE WORK IS SET TO DEBUT MAY 2024 IN TULSA, OK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH IC THEATRE CO. & TB3

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BLACK WALL STREET THE MUSICAL

The Viola Ford Fletcher Foundation announces the development of a new Broadway bound production, **Black Wall Street the Musical** to make its debut in Tulsa, OK. The Viola Ford Fletcher Foundation has commissioned playwright **J.P. Haynes**, the creator of *Selma the Musical: The Untold Stories* to write and develop *Black Wall Street the Musical* alongside **Mother Viola Ford Fletcher** and her grandson **Ike Howard**. Haynes will work closely with Mother Fletcher & Howard to write and produce the brand-new musical set to debut May 2024.

Viola Ford Fletcher is the oldest living survivor of the **Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921**, recorded as the deadliest race massacre in U.S History. In a recent interview, the 109-year-old Fletcher stated, "I will not be dismissed." It is Fletcher's desire to experience this story on a Broadway stage. "They never tell the real story. They never let us in those places like Broadway. Well, I want this story to be on Broadway, and I want us to be the ones to tell it." On the heels of a newly released book "**Don't Let Them Bury My Story**," masterfully penned by Mother Fletcher and her grandson, Ike Howard and published by **Mocha Media, Inc.**, Mother Fletcher, The Viola Ford Fletcher Foundation & Howard is determined to keep the story of Black Wall Street alive.

Haynes is an accomplished writer & producer who states, "What a privilege it was to receive this call to tell this story. I am excited, nervous, and honored that I've been commissioned for this project. The years of work we've put in with *Selma the Musical: The Untold Stories* has no doubt laid the groundwork for this tremendous opportunity. I intend to do Mother Fletcher and Black Wall Street justice in my world of storytelling. It's a tremendous honor to be able to sit with Mother Fletcher and gain a first-hand account of the depredation that occurred on May 31, 1921. Actually, May 31 is my birthday, so it feels quite serendipitous if you ask me. This story seems to have chosen me even before I was born, and I graciously accept the charge. Broadway deserves these stories, and quite frankly, these stories deserve Broadway."



Ike Howard, a co-creator, and co-producer of this show says, “My grandmother and I have always enjoyed the arts so developing this musical was a natural progression for our foundation. In recent years, the Viola Ford Fletcher Foundation has sought out various ways in which to shine a light on the story of Black Wall Street and new avenues to tell the story. When I met and spoke with J.P., her passion instantly captured me. When I heard the music in her current show, Selma, I was overcome with emotion and immediately moved by the music. And when we asked her to take this journey with us, she agreed. With the support of multiple families who have personal recollections of such a critical moment in American history, and the Viola Ford Fletcher Foundation, this production will be commanding, powerful and transcendent. My grandmother is Black royalty and if she wants the story of Black Wall Street on Broadway, then we’re taking Black Wall Street to Broadway. Who better to tell it than us?”

The board of the Viola Ford Fletcher Foundation is currently building the remaining members of the creative team. Casting is set to begin in early September with an industry presentation soon after.

If you would like more information about Black Wall Street the Musical, casting information and more please contact us at info@blackwallstreetmusical.com

www.blackwallstreetmusical.com | www.violafordfletcherfoundation.org



IKE HOWARD
CHIEF FOUNDATION OFFICER
+1 619 253 9098

WWW.VIOLAFORDFLETCHERFOUNDATION.ORG