

WHAT: Vivian's Music, 1969 (theater, new writing)
WHERE: SWEET GRASSMARKET, VENUE 18
WHEN: 19:00 (SIXTY MINUTES)
DATES: 2ND of August through the 25th (not 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, 26)
TICKETS: 7 GBP

WHY DO I NEED TO SEE THIS: because...Black Lives Matter...and because it stars two of the best actors in New York City. The playwright behind the unexpected 5-star Free Fringe hit of 2012, the funny and touching gay marriage story of "Made for Each Other", returns to Edinburgh with a gripping fantasia on race, music, and family, before the riot comes. Direct from New York. Adapted from her own award-winning play for a larger cast, "My Occasion of Sin," which won the Emerging Playwright award from New York's Urban Stages, and has been produced Off Broadway, and regionally at Detroit Repertory Theater. The new two-actor version has been workshopped at the Emerging Artist Theater's New Works Series off-off Broadway, and at the East to Edinburgh Festival at 59E59 Theaters in New York., where reviewers called it "magical" (stagebiz.com) and "a stunning piece of work" (WomanAroundTown.com).

Writer: Monica Bauer
Director: Glory Kadigan
Performers: Russell Jordan and Kailah S. King
Produced by Good Works Productions

Inspired by a real event: in 1969, a 14 year old black girl was shot in the head at point blank range by a white policeman, setting off one of the worst American race riots of the 1960's. All that was known about her was her name: Vivian Strong. This adaptation of Monica Bauer's award-winning play for a large cast, "My Occasion of Sin," features two actors bringing to life both black and white characters in a segregated city on the brink of a race riot. Vivian is a 14-year-old black girl just learning about life; Lewis (Luigi) Wells is an aging jazz drummer who may or may not be her father. Luigi returns to his hometown of Omaha, Nebraska, for his Momma's funeral, and begrudgingly takes a job in a music store on the white side of town, desperate to save his mother's legacy: The Dreamland Ballroom. Vivian, a bubbly, bouncy 14 year old girl falls in love with music, falls in and out of love with a Black Panther named Dwayne, and struggles to piece together her link to the great Lewis Wells, while all the ingredients for a race riot simmer in the summer sun.

Making a two-actor play theatrical: the sound design, by veteran off-off Broadway designer Andy Evan Cohen, will bring the audience into the middle of a race riot.

Fun Fact: playwright Monica Bauer was born the same year as Vivian Strong, and grew up in the town where the action takes place. She fashioned the character of Luigi Wells as an homage to the first black man to work in her all white neighborhood, her first music teacher, Lewis (Luigi) Waites.

Strange Fun Fact: playwright Bauer shows her range as a writer by bringing both a play about race, and a solo show about discovering her Jewish DNA, to the same venue. She's also the writer performer of "Brand New Jew: a DNA Comedy."

WEBSITE: viviansmusic69.com FACEBOOK: @VivianFringe
FURTHER INFO AND PHOTOS: Monica Bauer, playwrightmeb@aol.com and Annie Marris at Sweet Venues, annie@sweetvenues.com

VIVIAN'S MUSIC 1969, ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Monica Bauer (playwright) Selected credits: ***My Occasion of Sin***, Urban Stages (Winner, Emerging Playwright Award), ***Made for Each Other***: Edinburgh Fringe, United Solo. ***Chosen Child***, Boston Playwrights' Theatre (nominated, Best New Play, Independent Reviewers of New England), ***Anne Frank in the Gaza Strip***, Planet Connections Theater Festivity (winner, Best New Comedy). Full production history, awards, and publications at www.monocabauer.com

Glory Kadigan (director) Founder and Artistic Director for six seasons, Planet Connections Theatre Festivity. Selected directing credits: world premieres include ReGina Taylor's ***Biting the Bullet***, John Patrick Shanley's ***Doublecross***, ***Pregnitude*** by Lucy Boyle, ***A Play About New Mexico*** by Halley Feiffer, ***St. Anne's Soup*** by Israel Horovitz, and most recently, Erik Ehn's ***Clover*** at La Mama.

Russell Jordan* (LUIGI WELLS) two-time Planet Connections Theatre Festivity outstanding actor award recipient. Recent credits include: TV, ***The Dangerous Book for Boys*** (Amazon Prime), ***The Blacklist***, ***Bluebloods***. Theater, off-off Broadway: ***Doric Wilson's Street Theater*** (The Other Side of Silence Theater), ***HARAM! IRAN!*** (Emerging Artists Theatre), ***A Touch of Cinema*** (The Wild Project), ***Doors of Perception*** (New Perspectives Theater Company). www.russelljordan.com

Kailah S. King (VIVIAN STRONG) Recent graduate, NYU. Staged readings of ***Vivian's Music, 1969*** and ***Chosen Child*** by Monica Bauer (Emerging Artists Theater's New Works Series) and ***Last Night and The Night Before*** (The Labyrinth Theatre), recent roles in The One-Minute Play Festival at The New Ohio Theatre, ***Napping Pods*** for NY Summerfest, EstroGenius Short Play Festival and others. @kaleuhstar

Andy Evan Cohen (Sound Design) Off-Broadway: ***Dear Jane*** and ***In Bed With Roy Cohn*** (Perry St.), ***If Only*** (Cherry Lane), ***Ay Carmela!*** (Repertorio Español). US/Canada Tours: ***Hamlet***, ***Sense and Sensibility***, and ***Our Trojan War*** (Aquila Theatre); ***The Hungry Hungry Games*** (Mills Entertainment). TV and Film: PBS TV documentaries, ***Show & Tell Tango***, ***The Mall***, ***Marty's Shadow***, ***My Dinner With Schwartzey***. @AndyEvanCohen

Benjamin Ehrenreich (Lighting Designer) REGIONAL: ***Beauty and the Beast***, ***Mary Poppins*** (Berkshire Theatre Group) ***Owners*** (Yale Repertory Theatre). NYC: Playwrights for a Cause 2016-2017, ***PharmaBro***, ***Safe*** by Penny Jackson (Planet Connections), ***Clover*** by Erik Ehn (La Mama), ***A Midsummer Night's Dream*** (Gallery Players). Allen Lee Hughes Light Fellow at Arena Stage, MFA in Lighting Design, Yale School of Drama.

Janet Mervin (Costumes) Two-time Planet Connections Outstanding Costume Design Award winner. Selected projects: ***Basement*** by Michael Hugins, ***Whorticulture*** by Emma Sherman-Goldman, ***Committed*** by Natalie Menna. Planet Connections Theater Festivity: ***Horse*** by Janet Bentley, ***The Chaplin Plays*** by Don Nigro. Other off-off Broadway, ***The Troubador Struck by Lightning*** by Ed Malin (Fringe NYC), and ***Lost/Not Found*** by Kirby Fields (UP Theater).

*member, Actors' Equity