

Learning Places Fall 2016
Chin/Swift

SITE REPORT 3

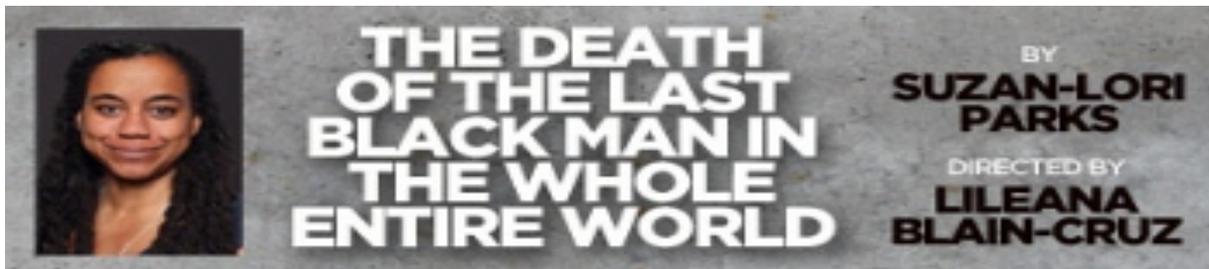
SIGNATURE THEATRE



Amalia Beckett
November 9, 2016

INTRODUCTION

On October 26th, I was assigned to visit Signature Theatre. Signature Theatre is located in Time Square. The address is 480 W 42nd St, New York, NY 10036. This performing arts venue has 3 theaters, a cafe and a bookstore. The purpose of visiting the theatre was to watch a performance called “The Death Of The Last Black Man In The Entire World” by Suzan-Lori Parks, directed by Lileana Blain-Cruz.



PRE-VISIT INFORMATION

Before arriving to the theatre, I expected a small business that was low budget. I wasn't upset because sometimes, I can actually appreciate a low budget performance because they are more intimate and the actors don't make you feel like they are totally untouchable. I didn't have high expectations because I never heard of this place and plus, I paid \$30 for my ticket. I purchased my ticket over the phone. The lady who helped me seemed really friendly. She made me feel really excited about seeing the play. And the title of the play seemed extremely enticing. I felt like I was going to see something that opened my mind. I was literally anticipating a performance of what it be like if there were to ever be "the death of the last black man in the entire world". This title was very unusual yet inviting. Below is a photo cover of the performance.



SITE DOCUMENTATION (photos/sketches)



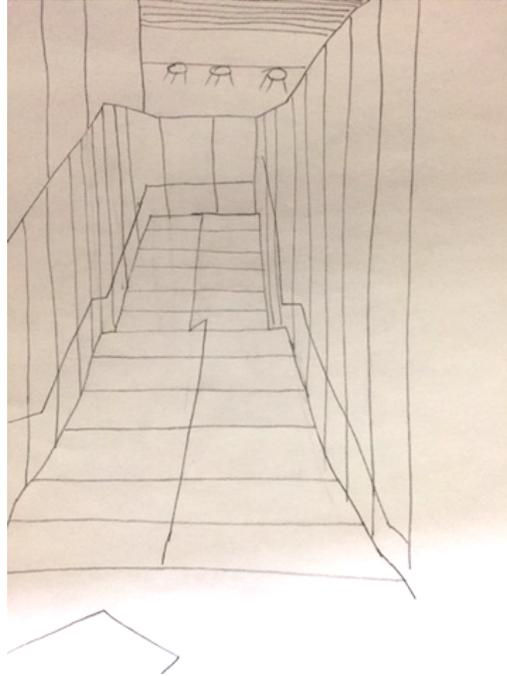
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https://www.google.com/search?q=signature+theatre+griffin&biw=1173&bih=564&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&sqi=2&ved=0ahUKEwiT7Kq7pp_QAhUE2oMKHe2XDawQ_AUIBygC#imgc=8ESchSYpYbuxM%3A



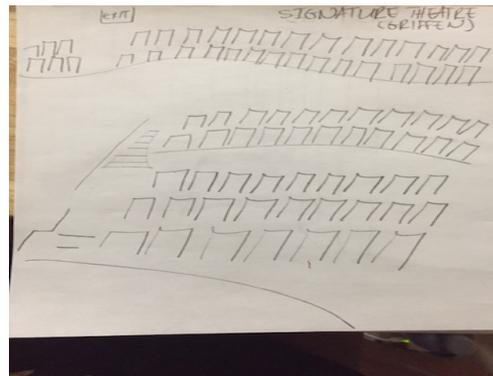
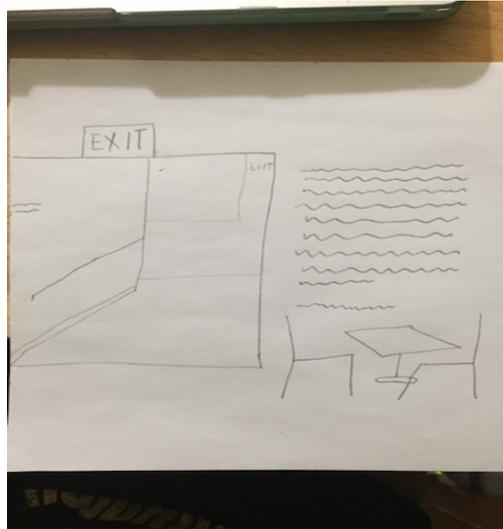
This intimate and welcoming theater is absolutely beautiful. Small tables are in the front of the theaters, as well as seats on the upper and lower levels. Although food isn't allowed inside of the theatre, they have a small café where you can purchase food and eat in the lobby area. A small bookstore is located outside of the theater where you can sit and read. The bookstore also has a gift shop where you can purchase items related to the performance. This is definitely one of the best small theatres I've ever visited, plus the location is perfect. Directly in the middle of several restaurants and shops. It's cozy and very clean, with a classy vibe. This particular performance was in the Griffen theatre. There were other performances going on at the same time.

According to the signature theatres website “Its miniature opera house, the **191-seat** Griffen Theatre provides intimacy and engagement between performers and audience. It features a 36' x 25'-5” stage and fly system with 18 line sets.” Also “The Alice Griffen Jewel Box Theatre was named for Dr. Griffen by her son and daughter-in-law John and Amy Griffen. Dr. Griffen was a prolific scholar and noted educator who was the author of Shakespeare’s *Women in Love*, among many other books, including one featuring former Signature Playwright-in-Residence Arthur Miller.”



There is a beauty and a difference in recognizing our conflicts in common reality, even where it persists. These moments of recognition are available to anyone who is alive. They are simple and wide and broad and swept with fresh air. They hold the essential thing about them is the difference between our understanding and our judgment, never better seen than on a stage.

Romulus Linney



QUALITATIVE SITE OBSERVATIONS

1. Description of architectural elements of the auditorium where the performance was held

The theater was small but intimate. The Death Of The Last Black Man In The World was situated in the Griffen theatre, which seated 191 people. The seats were close together, but that just means better business for the place. The more the merrier! There were no bad seats in the house. The seating is set up like a system that is similar to stadium bleachers. There's a balcony, which is where I sat. The theatre was also modernized. It didn't seem like the construction was too overwhelming like normal theatres where everything is exaggerating a theatrical appearance.

2. Description of the physical element on the stage (set pieces, technologies, lighting,)

According to the website, the stage was 36 feet by 25 feet. It was not that big, but it was suitable for intimate performances. I liked that the stage was small because it allowed me to have better focus. Also, the sound projected through out the entire room. These people did not have to use a microphone to have their voice heard. The actors also used minimal props. From my memory, the only props I remember the actors using a chair, a rope, a watermelon, eggs, and a piece of a tree for the background. The lighting was not bright. It was ok because the audience was really close to the stage so we didn't need enhanced light to see the actors.

3. Description of audience (socio-economic, community identity)

The audience seemed like they were middle class. They also seemed like older adults. From my perspective, I would say they average age of the audience was 40-70 years of age. They all seemed the same. The community was in Time Square, which has a wide range population. I'm not sure what targeting such an older age population. I'm guessing because the atmosphere was very calm and had everything you need at the location like elevators, food and souvenirs.

QUANTITATIVE DATA for Area of Study

Subject	Data
Size of performance space	According to Signature Theatre's website, the Griffen is 36' x 25'-5" stage
Size of spectator space	Two floors including a balcony. The first floor seemed to be approximately 50' x 85' and the second floor seemed to be 45' x 15'. It wasn't
Number of spectators (range)	According to Signature Theatres website, the Griffen seats 191 people.
Length (in time) of performance	75 minutes – no intermission
Cost of performance (if any)	\$30 plus
Other data	There were elevators to accommodate anyone who could not take the stairs. They have shows running at the same time. Every one who works there is friendly.

QUESTIONS TO RESEARCH FURTHER

QUESTIONS:

1. What trains, buses go to signature theatre?
2. How long is the Death Of The Last Black Man In The Entire World playing for?
3. How many actors were apart of the performance all together?

RESEARCH METHOD/SOURCE FOR EACH QUESTION ABOVE: (Answers from website)

1. Question 1

Trains: 1,2,3, A,C,E, N,Q,R, W, S (Shuttle)

NYCT Bus: M7, M20, M42, M104, X17J, X22, X30, X31 MTA Bus: BxM2

2. Question 2

The show will be playing from October 25 - December 18, 2016

3. Question 3

11 actos were involved in the show all together.