

# STRANGE FRUIT

A HIP-HOPERA



A HIP HOP MUSICAL  
HAMILTON MEETS 12 YEARS A SLAVE  
in this gripping tale of racial reconciliation  
"IN ORDER TO GO FORWARD, YOU MUST GO BACK."

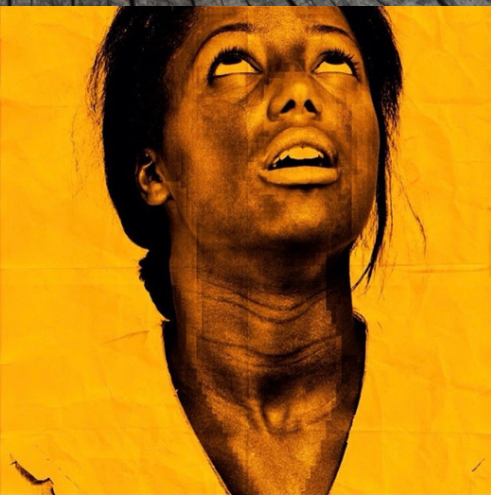




## LOGLINE

Imagine a powerful black woman in the 21st century being thrust back into the 1800s as a slave with only one chance to escape back to her reality.

This is the story of LaShelle Robinson, a spit-fire Wall Street broker, who travels back in time to rescue her ancestor, Inka, from a lynching – all to lift the curse off her white fiancé, Todd, the love of her life.



## OVERVIEW

The story of Lashelle Robinson, a Wall Street executive, who travels back in time to the Antebellum South to confront her disturbing family history is ultimately the story of racial reconciliation. It is a story that explores the impact of slavery on us today. We are in the middle of a social revolution expressed through civil unrest.

Our nation's current racial divide is symbolized by Todd and LaShelle's forbidden marriage. In order for them to make it down the aisle, and for us to progress as a people, we must go back to a past steeped in prejudice. LaShelle's journey back into her haunted history represents America's return to its roots.

A thrilling hip-hop musical told through rap, song and dance, Strange Fruit is a like a marriage between Hamilton and 12 Years a Slave.

"IN ORDER TO GO FORWARD,  
YOU MUST GO BACK."  
Ghanaian Proverb



Strange Fruit: The Hip-opera was originally birthed from an award-winning play written and produced at Stanford University. It springs from the dynamic artform of revolutionary social protest drama and hip-hop theater. Now as a short film, Strange Fruit provides an opportunity to unite all Americans and bring healing through a powerful cinematic voice.

This short film is poised to attract a larger studio investment for a feature film that can reach a global audience.



# LEAD ACTOR & STAR | Zakiya Young



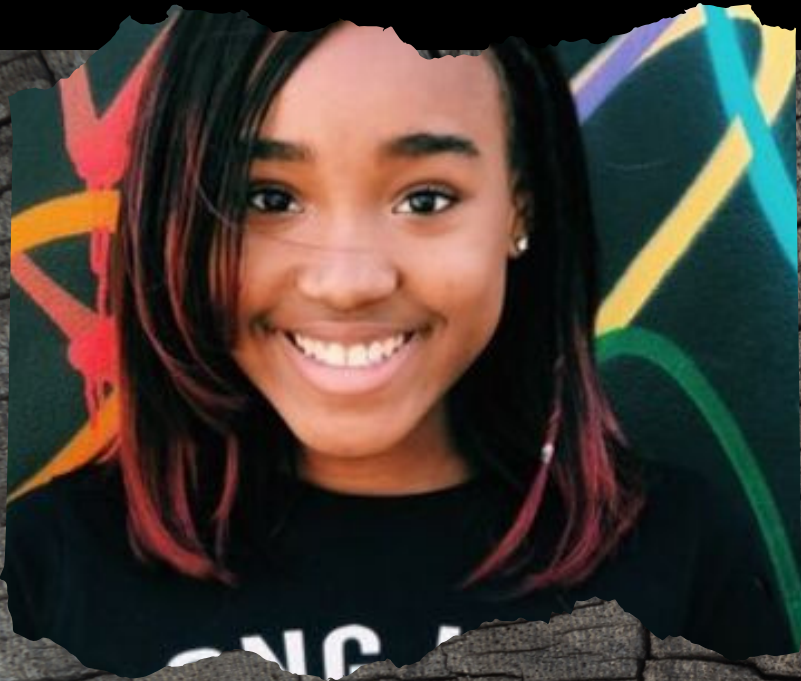
Broadway actress and star hailing from New York City, Zakiya Young is the first African-American to play the iconic role of Lois Lane in *It's A Bird... It's A Plane... It's Superman*. An accomplished mezzo-soprano singer, actress and dancer, she has also starred in Broadway's *Stick Fly*, *The Little Mermaid* (OBC), and *Radio City Christmas Spectacular*.

Most recently her voice was featured in Dolly Parton's Squarespace commercial which aired during the Superbowl LV.

Off-Broadway credits include: *Storyville* (AUDELCO Award Nomination), *The Lightning Thief*, and *Tenderloin*. She has also performed in regional theater: *Aida* (Starlight Theatre), *Little Miss Sunshine* (La Jolla Playhouse), *Spamilton* (Center Theatre Group), *OPC New Works Festival*, *Familiar* (Old Globe), *Disgraced* (Goodman Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre), as well as various Film, TV, VO credits and national commercials. She lives by the Bible verse, Jeremiah 29:II.



# SUPPORTING ACTOR & CO-STAR | McKenzie Mack



Uber talented 16-year-old singer and actress McKenzie Mack is a featured member of the Warner Brothers all-girl pop group L2M. The group released a successful debut single and music video called GIRLZ. They enjoy online success on musical.ly, Facebook and Instagram, where McKenzie has almost 40K followers!

Originally from Canton, Ohio, McKenzie has been singing since she was 4-years-old. After winning many talent contests, she and her mother moved to LA to pursue her dream of becoming an actress/singer in Hollywood.

In addition to music, McKenzie has starred onscreen in Hyperlinked (2017), Somewhere in the Middle (2011) and Old Fashioned (2014).





## Deborah Jane Burke

Executive Producer | Screenwriter

Daughter of Guyanese immigrants, Deborah Jane grew up feeling invisible in an all-white Orange County suburb as a member of the only black family on the block. She escaped the emotional weight of racism through writing, musicals and hip-hop – which sparked her passion for social justice as well as using music to tell dynamic stories. At Stanford University, she wrote and produced an award-winning hip-hop musical (starring Issa Rae) and founded / edited an award-winning black women's magazine, Soul Sistah. There, she earned her Bachelors degree in Creative Writing and African-American Studies.

After teaching English in South Korea, she jump-started her Hollywood career in film and television production, working at FOX, TBS, BET and PBS networks. She launched her production company, House of Deborah Jane Studios to create stories that champion multicultural voices and powerful woman. The company's mission is to make a social and spiritual impact through innovative entertainment.

Under this banner, Deborah Jane has written/produced/directed webseries, music videos and TV pilots -- one which has secured a comic book deal. Deborah Jane is also professionally published as a hip-hop columnist. She has 20 years of writing experience and is a proud alum of University of Southern California, School of Cinematic Arts where she holds her MFA in Screenwriting. Strange Fruit: The Hip-hopera is more than a movie for her, it is a mission.



## Nabila Lester

Director | Head Producer

Founder of NABS International Productions, Nabila Lester is a film and television producer, director and writer with over 15 years of professional experience working in media and theater production in Hollywood and abroad. Born in Harlem, Nabila earned her Bachelors degree in Education and Media Studies from University of California, Berkeley and her MFA in Film/Television Production from University of Southern California, School of Cinematic Arts.

Nabila has created multiple films and theater projects and has performed all over the world including in India, Cuba, Sub-Saharan Africa, Paris, Brazil, Mexico, Barbados and Jamaica. She has won various awards for her films at The New York Film Festival, Toronto Film Festival, Slam Dance and The Pan African Film Festival. She recently was awarded Best TV Pilot by the Caucus of Producers, Directors and Writers for her role as Director on TV Pilot "In Brotherhood". In 2014, Nabila produced and directed her first Nollywood film entitled Ase to great success. In 2016 and 2017 Nabila was producer/director for CNN Nigeria based documentary series African Voices and Africa Marketplace. While in Nigeria, Nabila produced and directed several independent films and documentaries. She has also directed Nigerian commercials for Google, Uber and Coca-Cola. Her original short film, Nkiruka, has been featured in several film festivals.



# CREW



## INDIA ALSTON | CO-PRODUCER, MARKETING

India is founder of Beam Creative Agency, which provides strategy, marketing, talent management, and multimedia production services. She is SVP of 11Eleven Network, a distribution platform for music content and Producer of upcoming tv show, Six Figure Makeover. India received her B.A in African and African-American Studies from Stanford University and her Masters in Leadership from Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business.



## CONNOR LEE | CINEMATOGRAPHER

Connor is an award-winning cinematographer who has served as director of photography on 40 short films including Changing the Tide and The Script. He has also worked on many commercials and documentaries including the award-winning Indigo and Iris. In New Zealand, he has told unique stories through UNICEF, Inspiring Stories, and Film for Change. Connor has a passion for visual storytelling and making beautiful images come to life.



## KAREGA ANI | MUSIC PRODUCER

Founder of Emancipation Avenue, Karega is a music producer, poet and hip-hop artist that has developed quite a unique style. He studied Social Justice at Marygrove College and draws from a wide range of influences, from hip-hop, to jazz, to gospel and funk. He has produced albums and a short film score. From down home blues to hot buttered Soul, Karega makes music that is both timeless and cinematic.



## TAI WHITE | CHOREOGRAPHER

Tai is a high-in-demand professional dancer and choreographer, who expresses his exuberant spirit and love of God through innovative movement. Born in Manhattan, Tai played the lead dancer in John Legend's A Good Night, and has choreographed his own dance showcase, Shadows of the Mind. He has been featured in VoyageLA Magazine and is one to reckon with.



## KIMMIE SMITH | CASTING DIRECTOR

Kimmie is a life-long dancer, choreographer, singer and educator. A devout Christian, she is currently developing a television network in conjunction with The Sound and is Executive Producer of Christian webseries, Church Girls. Kimmie also serves as a tenured educator at a private school, holding her Masters in Education. She brings her joyful spirit wherever she goes and is especially thrilled to direct casting!



## ANDREW JAMES | WRITING CONSULTANT

Andrew Allan James is a screenwriter, dancer, and actor. He graduated from Stanford University with a Bachelors in Economics. Then, he pursued a career in commercial dance, performing alongside Alicia Keys, Deborah Cox, and Dawn Richard. He has performed as a series regular in Issa Rae's webseries, Awkward Black Girl. Andrew's first TV pilot, which he co-wrote, has secured a comic book deal.

# BUDGET

## CATEGORY

## EXPENSE

Above the Line | Producers, Director, Cast

\$16,285

Travel\*

\$5,000

Production

\$42,550

Post-Production

\$7,650

Other

\$4,500

**GRAND TOTAL**

**\$75,985**

*Itemized Budget Provided Upon Request*

*\*Filming on location in Atlanta, Georgia*



# FILM COMPS/AWARDS

HAMILTON

11 TONY AWARDS

BUDGET | \$12.5M

GROSS | \$1B

12 YEARS  
A SLAVE

3 ACADEMY  
AWARDS

GOLDEN GLOBE

BUDGET | \$22M

GROSS | \$187M

LES  
MISERABLES

2 ACADEMY  
AWARDS

BUDGET | \$61M

GROSS | \$293M

ANTEBELLUM

BUDGET | \$10M

GROSS | \$6.9M

EMPIRE

AFI AWARD

EMMY AWARDS

CRITICS CHOICE

LOVE CRAFT  
COUNTRY

AFI AWARD

DJANGO  
UNCHAINED

2 ACADEMY  
AWARDS

2 GOLDEN  
GLOBES

BUDGET | \$100M

GROSS | \$425M

DREAMGIRLS  
GOLDEN GLOBE  
AFI

BUDGET | \$75M

GROSS | \$155M



# BRAND ALIGNMENT

Our time traveling wedding story creates exciting organic and authentic marketing opportunities with the goal of optimum return on investment.

## LUXURY

HERMES  
LOUIS  
VUITTON  
PRADA  
BALENCIAGA  
ROLEX  
CHOPARD  
CHANEL  
LANCOME

## BRIDAL

VERA WANG  
THE KNOT  
KLEINFELD'S  
ELLE NELLE  
MINDY WEISS  
MAYVENN

## MEDIA

ANCESTRY  
23 AND ME  
MATCH  
EHARMONY  
SWIRLR  
MIXY  
MELANGE LOVE  
COFFEE MEETS  
BAGEL

## CUSTOMIZED BRANDING OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE

Co-branded social media mentions

Mention and/or product visibility in the film

Logo inclusion on all marketing material

Exposure to a diverse demographic





# STRANGE FRUIT

## A HIP-HOPERA



### CONTACT US

(562) 661-9140

HOUSEOFDEBORAHJANEINC@GMAIL.COM


### MARKETING & PRODUCT PLACEMENT


INDIA ALSTON

### INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

SPONSORSHIPS & GRANTS

TRACY YASSINI

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 [@strangefruit\\_hipopera](https://www.instagram.com/strangefruit_hipopera)



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