

THE MARSH SAN FRANCISCO PRESENTS
AREN'T YOU...?
ONE MAN'S HILARIOUS TRIP THROUGH CALIFORNIA MISSIONS:
WHERE BEING BLACK MAKES YOU A CELEBRITY

Written and Performed by Fred Pitts

Directed by ShawnJ West

Developed by David Ford

April 11 – May 10, 2020

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (13 February 2020) – **The Marsh San Francisco** presents *Aren't You...?*, the newest solo show by actor **Fred Pitts** recounting his hilarious journey to visit all 21 California Mission churches, where he discovers being black makes him an instant celebrity – the question is which one? Set in the Summer of 2012, Pitts finds himself at one Mission after the next, encountering docents and fellow tourists. Some are experts on the Catholic Church, a few are experts on Native American history, others are experts on...everything else. Yet, they have one thing in common: they are all experts on which famous black person he resembles. Full of Pitts' personal experiences and love of history, *Aren't You...?* perfectly blends delightful insights into the Missions, cogent thoughts on early California settlers' interactions with Native Americans, and the experience of walking in the shoes of an African American male. *Aren't You...?* will be presented **April 11 – May 10, 2020** (*press opening: April 11*) with performances at 5:00pm Saturdays and 2:00pm Sundays at **The Marsh San Francisco**, 1062 Valencia St., San Francisco. For tickets (\$20-\$35 sliding scale; \$55 and \$100 reserved) or more information, the public may visit www.themarsh.org or call The Marsh Box office at **415-282-3055** (open Monday through Friday, 1:00pm-4:00pm).

In December 2018, Fred Pitts' first solo show (under an earlier title) had its debut at PlayGround Solo Performance Festival. It went on to be featured at The Marsh as part of its *Marsh Rising Series* (May 2019), Dragon Productions Theatre's Inaugural *Singular Stories* (August 2019), and PianoFight (August 2019). This April, *Aren't You...?* will return to The Marsh San Francisco for a full run.

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San Francisco-based actor **Fred Pitts** (Actor/Writer) has been performing in the Bay Area for 20 years. He is a company member of African-American Shakespeare Company and Custom Made Theatre Company, and has worked with numerous theatres throughout the Bay. Regional credits include *All The Way*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Jitney*, *Julius Caesar*, *Clybourne Park*, *Middletown*, *The Heidi Chronicles*, *Eurydice* (Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle nominee for Best Supporting Actor), *One Man, Two Guvnors*, and *Sweat*. Pitts also has numerous film and commercial credits. He is a member of SAG and has appeared in several films. After being an Emergency Medicine physician for 20 years, Pitts now runs an Occupational Medicine clinic in San Francisco.

ShawnJ West (Director) is an actor and director who works in both stage and film. He directed African-American Shakespeare Company’s 2015 production of *Cinderella*, and recently returned to the company as Assistant Director to L. Peter Callender on *MacBeth*. West also directed four episodes of SIS Productions’ cult hit *Sex in Seattle*, ReAct’s *WELL*, and the West Coast premiere of *Illyria* with Redwood Theatre as well as their productions of *The Seven Year Itch* and *Nunsense*. This spring, he is also set to direct the West Coast premiere of Donja R. Love’s *Sugar in Our Wounds* at the New Conservatory Theatre Company.

David Ford (Developer) has been collaborating on new and unusual theater for three decades and has been associated with The Marsh for most of that time. The San Francisco press has variously called him “the solo performer maven,” “the monologue maestro,” “the dean of solo performance,” and “the solo performer’s best friend.” Collaborators include Geoff Hoyle, Echo Brown, Brian Copeland, Charlie Varon, Marilyn Pittman, Rebecca Fisher, Wayne Harris, and Marga Gomez. As a director, Ford has directed both solo and ensemble work regionally at The Public Theater, Second Stage, Theatre for the New City (NY), Highways (LA) and Woolly Mammoth (Washington, DC) as well as at theaters around the Bay Area including Magic Theatre and Marin Theatre Company. He is also a published playwright.

The Marsh is known as “a breeding ground for new performance.” It was launched in 1989 by Founder and Artistic Director Stephanie Weisman, and now annually hosts more than 600

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performances of 175 shows across the company’s two venues in San Francisco and Berkeley. A leading outlet for solo performers, The Marsh’s specialty has been hailed by the *San Francisco Chronicle* as “solo performances that celebrate the power of storytelling at its simplest and purest.” The *East Bay Times* named The Marsh one of Bay Area’s best intimate theaters, calling it “one of the most thriving solo theaters in the nation. The live theatrical energy is simply irresistible.”

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: **The Marsh San Francisco** presents *Aren’t You...?*, the newest solo show by actor **Fred Pitts** recounting his hilarious journey to visit all 21 California Mission churches, where he discovers being black makes him an instant celebrity – the question is which one? Set in the Summer of 2012, Pitts finds himself at one Mission after the next, encountering docents and fellow tourists. Some are experts on the Catholic Church, a few are experts on Native American history, others are experts on...everything else. Yet, they have one thing in common: they are all experts on which famous black person he resembles. Full of Pitts’ personal experiences and love of history, *Aren’t You...?* perfectly blends delightful insights into the Missions, cogent thoughts on early California settlers’ interactions with Native Americans, and the experience of walking in the shoes of an African American male.

WHEN: April 11 – May 10, 2020
Press opening: April 11

SHOWS: 5:00pm Saturdays
 2:00pm Sundays

WHERE: **The Marsh San Francisco**, 1062 Valencia St., San Francisco
(between 21st & 22nd Streets)
Parking is available at New Mission Bartlett Garage
(21st St between Mission & Valencia)
Bart Station (closest): Mission & 24th Street

TICKETS: \$20-\$35 sliding scale, \$55-\$100 reserved

INFO: For information or to order tickets visit **themarsh.org** or call **(415) 282-3055**
(Monday through Friday, 1:00pm - 4:00pm).

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PRESS: Contact Sydney Albin, Carla Befera & Co.
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PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available here: <http://cbpr.co/press/arentyou>