

THE MARSH PRESENTS THE GREAT AMERICAN SH*T SHOW

Written/Performed by Brian Copeland

Directed by David Ford

September 26 & October 3 in Berkeley

October 10 & 24 in San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (19 September 2024) – **The Marsh** presents the return of **Brian Copeland’s *The Great American Sh*t Show*** (creator of *Not a Genuine Black Man*, *Waiting Period*, *The Scion*, and *The Jewelry Box*). Originally created by Brian Copeland in collaboration with Charlie Varon as a duet, the show is now performed solo by Copeland. This collection of monologues on life in the Age of Trump explores a range of topics, including navigating family dynamics with a Trump supporter, the idea of when America was last “great,” #MeToo, and more. *The Great American Sh*t Show* will be presented 7:00pm, Thursdays, September 26, and October 3 at **The Marsh Berkeley**, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley, and **October 10 and 24** at **The Marsh San Francisco**, 1062 Valencia St., San Francisco. For tickets (\$25-\$35 sliding scale, \$50 and \$100 reserved) or more information, the public may visit themarsh.org.

*The Great American Sh*t Show* originated with Brian Copeland performing a 15-minute monologue at The Marsh San Francisco, describing the day after the 2016 presidential election. While Copeland was driving on the Bay Bridge, a bearded white man driving a Prius pulled up next to Copeland and yelled, “N****r!”

“I haven’t been called that word in years,” Copeland noted. “Years actually. But on that day, the day after Donald Trump is elected president, it’s almost like the Prius driver was granted permission.” Collaborator Charlie Varon said, “Brian’s monologue was equal parts truth, pain, and comedy. I left the theater disturbed and invigorated. A few days later, I called Brian and suggested we do a show together. He said yes, and we got busy writing.”

As a duet, Copeland and Varon performed *The Great American Sh*t Show* to sold-out audiences at The Marsh, with the material evolving in response to unfolding political events. The audience reaction was electrifying, with one member describing the show as “much-needed

catharsis. Finally, someone saying all the things we have been feeling during the sh*t show.” The *San Francisco Chronicle* praised the show as “smart, funny, provocative, and at times, unexpectedly deeply moving,” while *Marinscope Newspapers* lauded Copeland and Varon as “incredible storytellers.”

ABOUT THE CAST AND CREATIVES

Brian Copeland (Writer/Performer) has been in show business since he first stepped on the comedy stage at age 18. Soon, he was headlining clubs and concerts across the country and opening for such artists as Smokey Robinson, The Temptations, Ringo Starr, and Aretha Franklin, in venues from The Universal Amphitheater to Constitution Hall in Washington DC. Copeland then branched off into television, appearing on comedy programs on NBC, A&E, and MTV. Copeland was recently seen on the big screen in the SMASH Marvel film, *Venom: Let There Be Carnage*. He spent five years as co-host of San Francisco FOX affiliate KTVU breakfast program *Mornings on 2* and two years hosting San Francisco ABC affiliate KGO’s Emmy Award-winning afternoon talk show *7Live*. His first network special, *Now Brian Copeland*, premiered on NBC after *Saturday Night Live* for West Coast audiences in January 2015. In 1995, KGO Radio premiered *The Brian Copeland Show*. With his unique blend of humor and riveting talk, the program was the most listened to program in its time slot, reaching more than 100,000 listeners. Copeland’s other theatrical works include *Not a Genuine Black Man*, the longest-running one-man show in San Francisco history; his acclaimed play *The Waiting Period*, a story of combatting depression; *The Scion*, a taken-from-the-headlines tale of privilege, murder, and sausage; the critically-acclaimed Christmas classic, *The Jewelry Box*; and *The Great American Sh*t Show*, a collaboration with Charlie Varon featuring monologues on life in the Age of Trump. Copeland’s first crime fiction novel, *OUTRAGED*, published by Black Odyssey Media will be released nationwide April 2024. He can soon be seen in *This Is Spinal Tap 2*, the sequel to Rob Reiner’s classic film *This Is Spinal Tap*.

David Ford has been collaborating on new and unusual theatre 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.” A week rarely goes by when residents of the Bay Area cannot enjoy one of his productions. Collaborators include Geoff Hoyle, Brian Copeland, Charlie Varon, Echo Brown, Marilyn Pittman, Rebecca Fisher, Wayne Harris, Jill Vice, and Marga Gomez. Ford’s work has been seen regionally at The Public Theater, Second Stage Theater, Theatre at St. Clement’s, Dixon Place, Theatre for the New City (New York), Highways Performance Space (Los Angeles), and Woolly Mammoth Theatre Co. (Washington, D.C.). His work has also been featured in most of the fringe festivals in North America, as well as at theaters around the Bay Area including Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Magic Theatre, and Marin Theatre Company. Ford’s directing has garnered several “Best of Fringe” Awards and a Goldie Award.

ABOUT THE MARSH

The Marsh is known as “a breeding ground for new performance.” Launched in 1989 by Founder and Artistic Director Stephanie Weisman, it annually hosts more than 500 performances 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 the 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.” In April 2020, The Marsh launched its digital platform MarshStream and hosted more than 700 live streams which provided 300 performers and its youth class participants a platform to continue discovering, developing, and producing art during the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown. Today, The Marsh presents both in-person live performances and content on its MarshStream, continuing to expand its reach to audiences onsite and around the world. The Marsh believes in the power of people’s storytelling and has several classes for the public to create their own works as well as through its developing work performance series: Monday Night Marsh, Tell It on Tuesday, and Marsh Risings. The theater company also collaborates with over 25 San Francisco public schools providing a year-round youth program serving students at its theater and in the classrooms.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: The Marsh presents the return of **Brian Copeland’s *The Great American Sh*t Show*** (creator of *Not a Genuine Black Man*, *Waiting Period*, *The Scion*, and *The Jewelry Box*). Originally created by Brian Copeland in collaboration with Charlie Varon as a duet, the show is now performed solo by Copeland. This collection of monologues on life in the Age of Trump explores a range of topics, including navigating family dynamics with a Trump supporter, efforts to turn red congressional seats blue in the Central Valley, #MeToo, and more.

WHEN: **September 26 and October 3 at The Marsh Berkeley**
October 10 and 24 at The Marsh San Francisco

SHOWS: **7:00pm Thursdays**

WHERE: **The Marsh Berkeley, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley**
Parking: Allston Way Garage, 2061 Allston Way between Milvia & Shattuck.
BART station (closest): Downtown Berkeley BART

The Marsh San Francisco, 1062 Valencia St., San Francisco
Parking: New Mission Bartlett Garage, 3255 21st St.
(21st St between Mission & Valencia)
BART station (closest): Mission & 24th Street

TICKETS: \$25-\$35 sliding scale, \$50 and \$100 reserved

INFO: For information, the public may visit themarsh.org.

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PRESS: Contact Paige D'Encarnacao, CBCO Public Relations & Marketing
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PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available here: <https://cbpr.co/press/gass/>