



Fit for a Queen

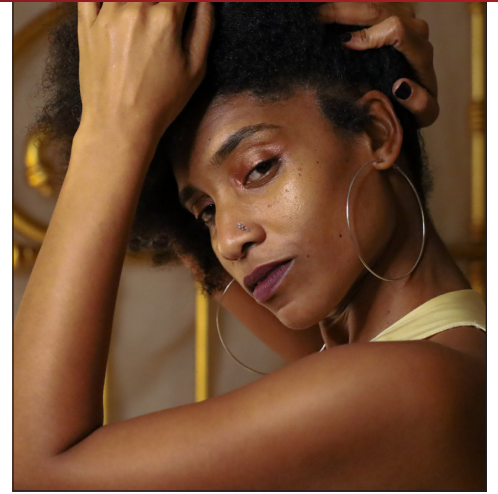
Queen Shereen Macklin to Star in “Le Code Noir” Production in October

By Anita Oubre

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COVER STORY

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When her intuition and spirit spoke to her, Queen Shereen Macklin stopped to listen. She had been molded and prepared for greatness by her tight-knit family in the Queens borough of New York City. As a child, she excelled in academics, enjoyed storytelling, and was delighted to play piano and dance in the community of Laurelton where she grew up.

Those skills, plus others she would later acquire in acting, would come in handy years later, especially after her arrival in New Orleans.

Her most recent acting project has Queen Shereen working tirelessly on the lead role in the upcoming stage production of “Le Code Noir.” Written by Mark R. Sumner and Tommye Myrick, it will be performed outdoors in Congo Square

from October 13th through the 15th. This production, directed by Myrick, is receiving its world premiere as a completed work covering the late 1790s through the pivotal early years of the 1800s when Louisiana became part of the United States.

Queen Shereen will play the role of Santee, an enslaved African taken from Saint-Domingue (Haiti) to New Orleans.

“Santee’s story is one of loss, betrayal, and heartache but also triumph,” Queen Shereen explained. “It is the story and absolute experience of Black women in America, so I connect deeply with it and I pour my heart out.

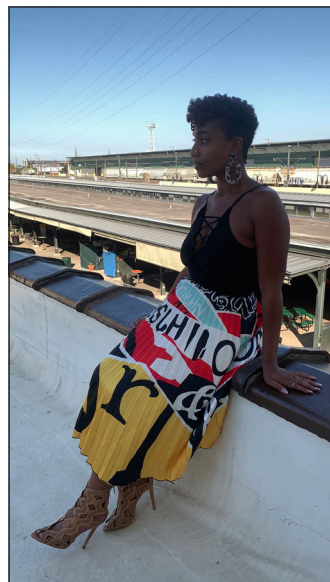
“The story is a lot to relive,” Queen Shereen continued. “There is a scene where we are cargo on the auction block. It’s intense and to do this on the spiritual

ground of Congo Square is so powerful,” she added.

Queen Shereen says she is grateful to be part of the project and she hopes it will become a permanent, ongoing event in New Orleans. “The story is fictional, but it maintains historical accuracy. This is the first time it will be done as a full production. It is healing for us to tell this story. It’s a big deal and it’s Tommye’s life work.”

“Le Code Noir” follows closely on the heels of Queen Shereen’s triumphant appearance in the role of Shug in the Tony- and Grammy-nominated musical, “The Color Purple,” at Le Petit Theatre during the 2022-23 Season.

Reflecting on her earlier years, Queen Shereen said, “I grew up a Black Muslim. My mother was Jamaican. It was a





multicultural experience for me. I worked hard and studied hard. I knew the great responsibility my family placed on me.”

She was on the path to becoming a chemical engineer, studying at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University when she took a step back and decided to explore her life path carefully.

Torn between her family’s expectations and her own desires, she took a semester off to reflect. While working as a process engineer the reality hit her hard. She felt the need to go in a different direction. “I changed my major to chemistry and thought I would go into teaching, which I did eventually, but I also took acting classes for non-theatre majors. The department embraced me, and I loved it,” she excitedly recalled.

After graduation, Queen Shereen booked a gig at a theater in Greensboro, NC, and was thrilled with the possibilities. “This was my first professional paid job, a Motown musical review. I was getting paid to do something I loved, and I thought, ‘I’m supposed to be doing this,’” Queen Shereen said.

From there Queen Shereen applied to graduate school at Actors Studio Drama School at New York’s Pace University where she received her Master of Fine Arts in acting.

Upon graduation, she performed in shows such as “Hairspray,” “Legally Blonde” and “Rip.Tied.” After starring in the play, “Fit for a Queen,” which was praised by the New York Times, she decided that she would go to Los Angeles and pursue her career in film and TV. She appeared in numerous commercials and theatrical productions while also enjoying doing

voiceovers for the TV series “Atlanta” and “Ballers.”

But the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted her plans. She explained, “I was in the midst of my career and then in 2020 the world turned upside-down, and everything stopped. No production was happening, and I felt like I wanted to be home.

“New York hadn’t felt like home to me in a long time and my spirit was calling me to New Orleans. It was saying, ‘You need just to go there.’”

Intending to come to New Orleans for a 30-day trial period, Queen Shereen never left. She became the founder and CEO of Queen Shereen Enterprises LLC. A passionate Intuitive Energy healer, actor, and teaching artist, she is also a dialect, vocal, and acting coach. Her mission is “to create safe spaces for all, especially people of color, to discover, heal and inspire to be the fullest expression of themselves and reveal their true voices to the world.”

With over 20 years of teaching experience under her belt, Queen Shereen enjoys coaching students through the arts under contract with Young Audiences of Louisiana. She says that, through dance, the students can express themselves. “I focus heavily on their social and emotional learning. We build community and self-confidence. Being together in a circle and moving to music is part of the healing. The children learn to be kind to one another. It’s different than being stuck in a room on a computer all day.”

While healing children with dance, Queen Shereen also helps heal adults with Seichim Energy Healing. She says that the energy healing process improves sleep, reduces anxiety, and manages chronic pain. She also believes that it can be helpful in overcoming depression, reducing fatigue, and improving motivation. Queen Shereen has been practicing healing for the last two years.

“It’s an ancient Egyptian practice that helps relieve stress and anxiety, which leads to clarity and joy,” said Queen Shereen. “It is powerful for people with chronic illnesses to experience a full night of rest after a session.”



Another passion of Queen Shereen’s is cooking. She loves concocting plant-based cuisine year-round and has many specialties for the holidays. A special recipe dear to her heart is named for her Jamaican grandmother Shirley. It is a traditional Jamaican drink made with hibiscus and ginger. “I love to share it, not only because it tastes good, but it has healing benefits as well,” said Queen Shereen.

Reflecting on all her roles and talents, Queen Shereen stresses the importance of self-care. “It is all about self-discovery. I look at the characters of Santee and Shug, and Shug is where Santee would want to be. Shug captured that freedom for herself. I don’t have to be put in a box as a woman. I can embrace all the parts of myself.”

For more information visit @iamqueenshereen @shirleysorrelldrink and @queenshereenplantbasedcuisine on Instagram or her website, <https://www.queenshereen.com>. Expression Sessions with Queen Shereen are available worldwide virtually or in person in New Orleans. Call (888)470-3320 or visit <https://www.queenshereen.com> for an appointment.



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