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July/August 2026 **MEDIA**



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Ellis
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**Martin "Bats"
Bradford**



**Edgar
"Dook"
Chase IV**

**Inside:
Roux Rundown**

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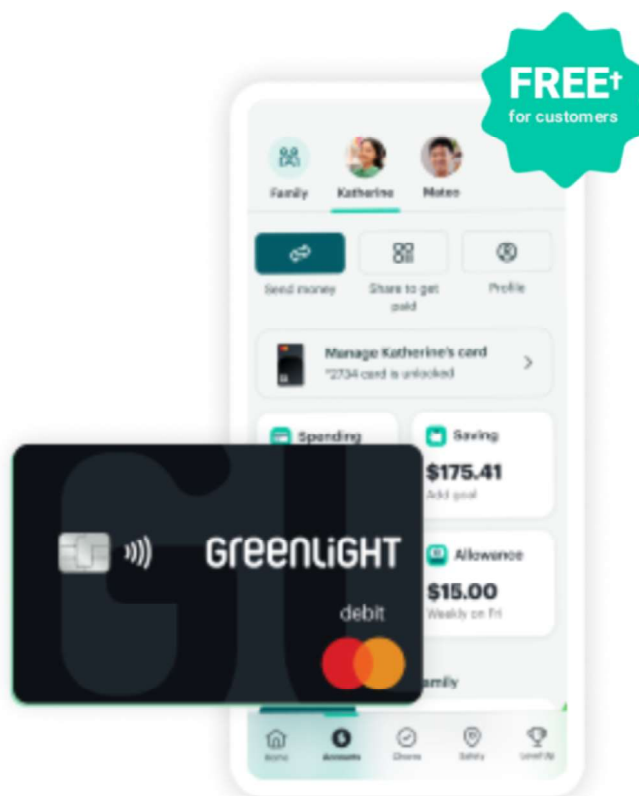
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Tel: 504-292-2421
email: breakthrumediallc@yahoo.com
P.O. Box 872896 New Orleans, La. 70187
www.breakthrumediamagazine.com

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PUBLISHER

Breakthru Media LLC

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Roslyn Nocentelli Flot

SENIOR EDITOR

Dean M. Shapiro

CREATIVE DIRECTORS

Roslyn Nocentelli Flot

Bionca Flot Sykes

Sharon Martin

Macy McField

Wendy Fleetwood

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Dean M. Shapiro

Anita Oubre

Dr. Eric Griggs

Melissa Gallanter

Ronald Dugar

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Roxanne Clapp, RoXC LLC

VIDEOGRAPHER / SOUND

Dustin Fleetwood

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

AB Sykes Photography

Jim Belfon

Margaret Crosby

Bernie Saul

COURTESY PHOTOS

AB Sykes Photography

Margaret Crosby

Eugenia Uhl

Martin “Bats” Bradford

Harold Ellis Clark

Erica Michelle Singleton

COVER PHOTOS

Harold Ellis Clark | Bernie Saul

Edgar “Dook” Chase IV | Margaret Crosby

Martin “Bats” Bradford | Erica Michelle Singleton

MARKETING / PR

Breakthru PR Firm

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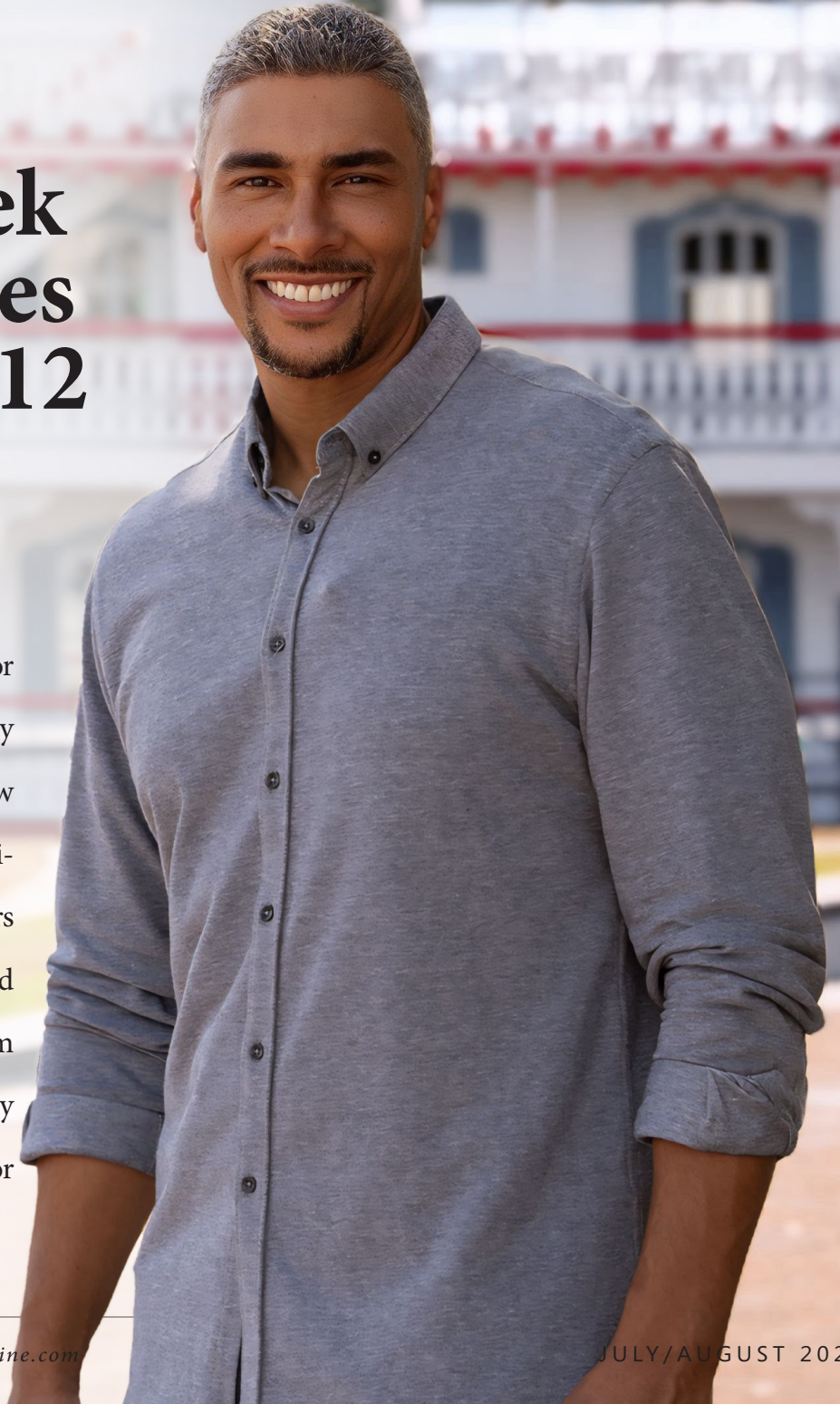
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“A Chef’s Journey”

Dook Chase hosts 26-week cooking series on Channel 12

By Dean M. Shapiro, Senior Editor

World renowned for its wide variety of cuisines, New Orleans is a culinary mecca that draws millions of visitors annually. Legendary restaurants owned and operated by celebrity chefs, some of whom descend from families dating back many generations, add to the city’s reputation for fine dining.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARGARET CROSBY

Family owners of Dooky Chase's Restaurant in the city's historic Sixth Ward – widely renowned as Tremé – have been cooking their 85-year-old dining establishment's renowned Creole recipes since 1941. That tradition spans four generations under the Chase family, headed by its 44-year-old Executive Chef, Edgar Chase IV, who goes by the name Dook Chase.

New Orleans Public Television station WYES Channel 12 recently announced that Chef Dook is hosting a 26-episode series titled "Dook Chase: A Chef's Journey" premiering at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, July 18, 2026.

"The story of New Orleans is a story of diversity," Dook noted during a recent interview. "It's a story of many cultures, many celebrations and many institutions. Many restaurants, many chefs, you name it. We all celebrate who we are and we honor that."

"This celebration of New Orleans culture features local food icons sharing the stories, history and recipes that define our city's rich culinary heritage," Dook continued. "Many of the places featured reflect the ethnic culture of their owners' nationalities representing five continents, including our own."

Descended from three previous chef/owners, all of whom were named Edgar Dooky Chase followed by a Roman numeral, Dook has been working in the restaurant's kitchen since the age of 15, learning his craft from his family predecessors. He also holds a diploma from the world famous Le Cordon Bleu cooking school in Paris.

The series, with each episode running 30 minutes, will follow Chef Dook as he visits 26 individual new Orleans area dining establishments and other businesses with a direct connection to the city's culinary industry.

During the episodes that feature the chef-owners of a restaurant, Dook and his film crew will be recording the owners demonstrating, in their kitchens, the preparation of food items that are a specialty of each establishment. Then toward the end of the episode, Dook will prepare a similar item from the interviewed chef's recipe in the kitchen at the WYES studio.



Softshell Crab PoBoy made by Chef Dook Chase, inspired by his visit to Parkway Bakery and Tavern. PHOTO CREDIT: EUGENIA UHL



Chef Dook with Chef Meg Bickford PHOTO CREDIT: MARGARET CROSBY



Chef Dook with Chef E. J. Lagasse PHOTO CREDIT: MARGARET CROSBY



Chef Dook with Chef Serigne Mbay PHOTO CREDIT: MARGARET CROSBY

This will be the second time in recent years that the New Orleans-based public television station has featured the Chase family in its programming. WYES paid tribute to renowned Chef Leah Chase, Dook's grandmother, shortly after her passing in 2019.

The series opens with Dook interviewing and filming the chef in the kitchen of the riverboat Natchez, discussing the importance of the Mississippi River in the development of New Orleans's cooking traditions.

Among the restaurants being featured in the series include some of New Orleans's most renowned dining venues, including Emeril's, Commander's Palace and Cochon. Also announced in advance of the show's debut are Angelo Brocato's, Chapter IV, Café Reconcile, Dakar NOLA, Dong Phuong Bakery, Lagniappe Bakehouse, NOCHI (New Orleans Culinary and Hospitality Institute), Parkway Bakery and Tavern, Saffron NOLA, Sweet Saint, and Vaucresson Sausage and Creole Deli. Other establishments will be announced and featured as the series moves along toward a January 2027 completion date.

Also being highlighted in the series are those establishments that have been in families for generations, including Dooky Chase's Restaurant. "We started in 1941 as a po' boy shop and bar," Dook said. "Then we added some dining to it. And

then we expanded to the full capacity. The three dining rooms we have today are from 1984.

"So a lot of these stories not only celebrate who and what they are but we also show the importance of those that are passed down from generation to generation," Dook continued. "We touch on businesses that are in their third and fourth generations and even some that are going into their fifth generations.

"Even on the steamboat there's ownership that's generational," he added. "There are captains who are generational. Captains who navigated the steamboats *Natchez* and the *City of New Orleans* are in their fourth generations of a families of river pilots. So, when you start to see all these families and traditions and things that are passed down it's truly amazing."

Dook also referenced the De Carlo Family Farm in Plaquemines Parish. It will be featured on one of the show's episodes as the source for produce that is served at local restaurants or used as ingredients



Chef Dook with his family. PHOTO CREDIT: MARGARET CROSBY

for dishes prepared there. The De Carlo family, Dook noted, is in its third and fourth generations from its Italian roots.

A companion cookbook to the "Dook Chase: A Chef's Journey" series is being published locally by Pelican Publishing Company and will be on sale in early September 2026. The book will contain all the recipes that are featured in the series, as well as a few additions. The same company also published the best-selling "Dooky Chase Cookbook" by the late Chef Leah Chase, along with her two other cookbooks including the companion to the WYES broadcast series that paid tribute to her in 2019.

"What we try to highlight in this new series are all the good things about New Orleans. All of the great things we love about this city. New Orleans is one heck of a city. So fascinating," Dook concluded.

"DOOK CHASE: A CHEF'S JOURNEY" premieres on WYES Channel 12 on Saturday, July 18 from 10:00-10:30 a.m. and runs through Saturday, January 9, 2027. Re-runs are on Sundays at 11:00 a.m. Viewers throughout the WYES broadcast area can also stream the series on wyes.org, PBS.org and the PBS App.



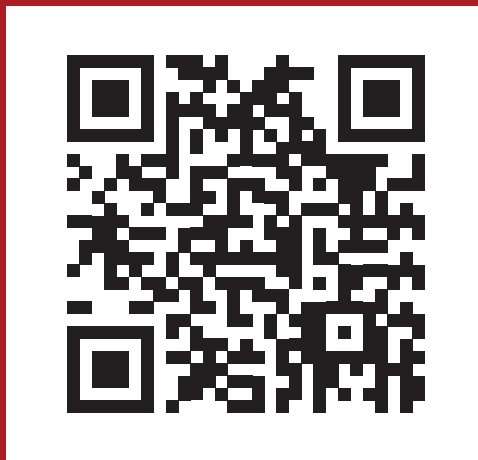
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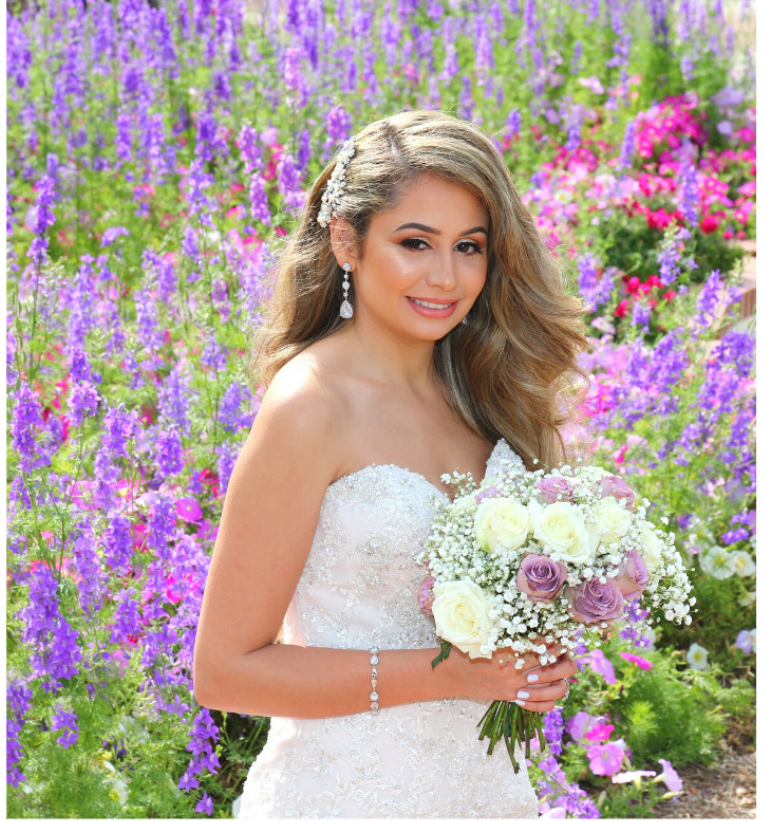
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Orpheum Theater, 129 Roosevelt Way, New Orleans

September 23, 2026, 6:00 p.m.

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Offenbach's "Overture to La Vie Parisienne,"
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New Marigny Theatre, 2301 Marais Street, New Orleans

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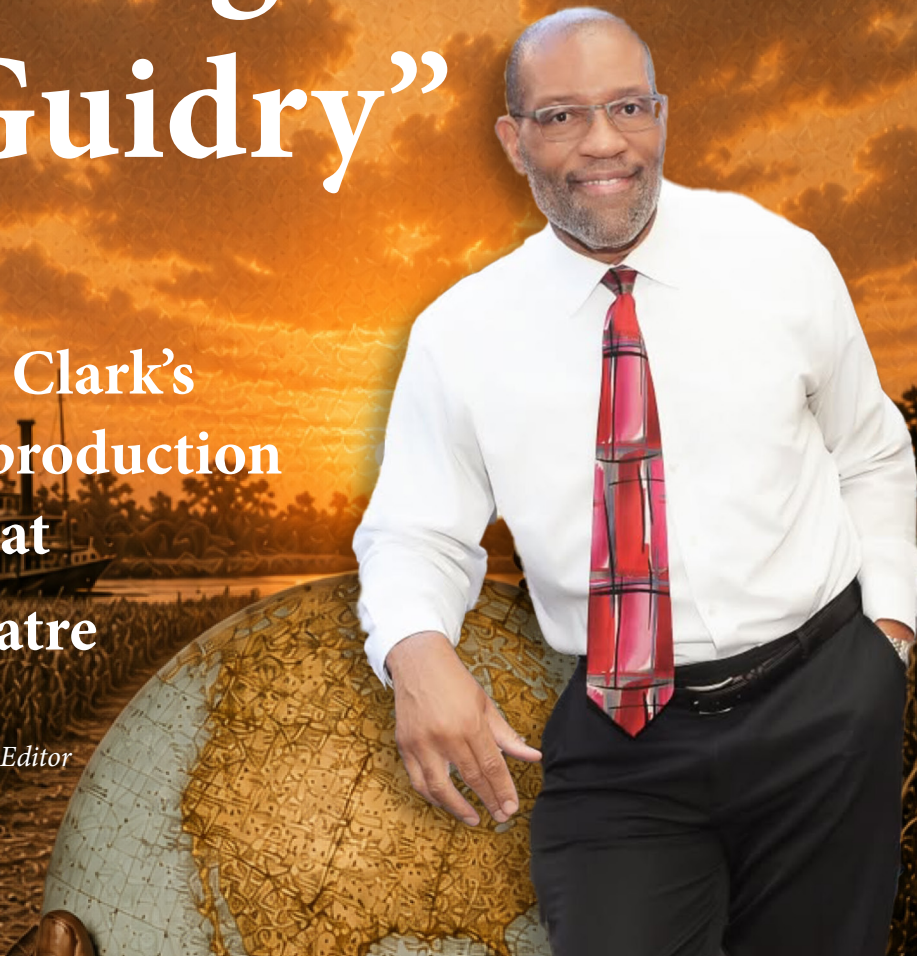
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“Ganking Mr. Guidry”

Harold Ellis Clark’s
latest stage production
to premiere at
Le Petit Theatre

By Dean M. Shapiro, Senior Editor



PHOTOGRAPHY BY BERNIE SAUL

In everyday slang or street jargon, the word “ganking” means to swindle, scam, or deceitfully cheat someone out of something of value that belongs to them. Although the term didn’t exist in the year 1878, New Orleans area playwright, Harold Ellis Clark, has incorporated it into the title of his latest stage play, “Ganking Mr. Guidry.”



Harold with the cast of *Fishers of Men*, including Martin Bats Bradford, Oliver Thomas, Al Aubry, Damien Moses and director/set designer John Grimsley. PHOTO BY JIM BELFON

Set during the Reconstruction Era that followed the American Civil War, the play opens for a five-performance-only world premiere at Le Petit Theatre in the French Quarter on August 13. The production runs through the 16th.

In a recent interview, Harold explained, “The play is set in 1878 Louisiana during the sugarcane harvesting season, and there are five workers at a plantation who decide to stand up against the injustice that they believe they are receiving.

“One of these gentlemen is very proud of the fact that a deceased relative was a woman who participated in the 1811 Louisiana slave rebellion,” Harold continued. “During

that rebellion, she actually took a weapon from the slave owner of the plantation that she and others escaped from. That particular item is at the plantation where the young man is working in 1878, and he is determined to possess it.”

So who is Mr. Guidry? Harold

is asked. “He is the owner of the plantation,” the author replies. “Hopefully, you’ll feel his presence without even seeing him or hearing him talk.”

A native of Algiers on the West Bank of New Orleans, Harold developed an interest in the history of that neighborhood and the slave trade that went on there when enslavement was still legal. Slave ships unloaded their human cargo there, and a historical marker noting this was unveiled on the grounds of the old Algiers Courthouse during the commemoration of Algiers’s 300th birthday in 2018.

“I actually wrote a rough first draft for the play back in 2018, and subsequent to that, I spent all of those years trying to refine and revise it,” Harold explained. “Once I felt it was ready to go, I reached out to the Dillard University Theatre Department about doing a staged reading of the play there, and we did it in March of last year.”

The location of the staged reading was not a random decision on Harold’s part. He had worked at Dillard in the early 2000s as a public relations specialist and speechwriter for the university’s former president, Dr. Michael Lomax. And the timing for the play’s world premiere works out well, he noted. This year marks



A.J. Allegra, Le Petit Theatre’s artistic director, and Harold.

the 215th anniversary of the 1811 slave rebellion, the largest uprising of its kind in the U.S.

“And so I wanted to have the play produced in this important anniversary year,” Harold said. “I’m so happy that we ended up getting it to Le Petit Theatre. A.J. Allegra, their artistic director, read the play, and he really loved it. It was sort of like a spiritual thing where I just felt compelled to have the play staged this particular year because of the historical commemorations.”

Since taking up playwriting in 2010, Harold’s output has been prodigious. It includes thirteen full-length plays and several staged productions throughout the United States and abroad. One of his plays, titled “We Live Here,” was performed in Durban, South Africa, in 2017 with an entire cast of New Orleanians. Other works of his have won and been finalists in several national playwriting competitions.

In October 2025, Harold had what he called “a wonderful experience” at Loyola University in Chicago, during which he oversaw a staged partial reading of one of his best-known plays titled



Sydney, Madison, Harold and Cherie Clark at the recent world premiere of *Last Night at the Rue Bayou*, in which Madison was featured.

"Fishers of Men." He was also a featured speaker for what was termed The Rambler Brotherhood Project.

"I did an 18-minute presentation on the power of storytelling, and then the actors performed the staged reading. After they did their part, we got a rousing standing ovation and numerous questions about both the play and presentation," Harold recalled.

Like most playwrights, Harold aspires to have one or more of his works performed on a Broadway stage. He hasn't attained that goal yet, but he is creating works for the stage with that lofty objective in mind.

"Writing is something I have enjoyed since I was eight years old, and I was so happy to have discovered playwriting in 2010 after writing numerous unpublished novels that three literary agents couldn't sell to the major New York publishing houses and unproduced screenplays," he added.

"Writing dialogue has always been my strength, and I've gotten some positive feedback on it," Harold continued, referencing renowned New Orleans-based actor Lance Nichols. "I was so happy that Lance had been reading my work. He was the one who looked at it and said, 'You really write excellent dialogue, and you'd be an excellent playwright.' I took his comments to heart, and I'm so glad that I did."

Describing his work and what it means to him, Harold said, "Writing is very spiritual for me. I have ambitions about getting my work produced nationally and internationally but I don't lose any

sleep whatsoever about striving to connect with this producer or that producer. This agent or that agent. If I'm going to get to Broadway, it's going to be God who gets me there.

"I have always looked at my work as a ministry," Harold added. "Not because I'm preaching or have a message to impart, but because I'm in it for the long haul. It's not a hobby. It's serious business. That's what keeps me writing. I'm always on a quest to expand the reach of my work."

Referencing a 2023 production of "To Kill a Mockingbird" at the Saenger Theater, Harold said, "I was surprised to see the audience's high level of interest in a drama.



Actors Kenneth Brown, Jr and Harold Sylvester with Diane Mack of WWNO-FM talking about Harold's play, *Tour Detour*.

The performance I attended was sold-out. Musicals are cool, but a good drama can have a long-lasting emotional impact. New Orleans is a great testing ground for my work. If the audience doesn't like it, they will let you know, and if they do like it, they'll let you know that as well."

"Ganking Mr. Guidry" is being co-produced by Le Petit Theatre and HEC Communications, LLC, with generous support by Whitney Plantation in Wallace, Louisiana, and the 2026 Carol Sutton Memorial Grant. John Grimsley is the stage director, and cast members include Nicole Collins, Al Aubry, Martin 'Bats' Bradford, Kenneth Brown, Jr., and Rahim Glaspy.

This special limited engagement runs for only five performances from August 13-16 at Le Petit Theatre, 616 St. Peter Street in the French Quarter. For tickets and information, call the theatre at (504) 522-2081 ext. 1 or email boxoffice@lepetittheatre.com. Box office hours are on weekdays from 12 noon to 5:00 p.m.

Ticket prices range from \$35 to \$55 and are available at www.lepetittheatre.com. Groups of 10 or more receive a discount. Discounted parking is available for ticket-holders.



Harold with veteran actor Lance E. Nichols.

Le Petit Theatre in association with HEC Communications LLC presents

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with generous support provided by Whitney Plantation and the Carol Sutton Memorial Grant

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August 13-16, 2026

Al Aubry

Martin Bats Bradford

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What to Eat for Healthy Skin

By Melissa Gallanter and Eric D. Griggs, M.D.

Skin is the protective layer for our entire bodies. It is the largest organ in the body and it's the first line of defense for our immune systems, meaning it's generally the first point of contact with bacteria and potential disease. We can often be rough on our skin, like walking barefoot outside or having too much exposure to the sun. It is very important to take care of our skin because it will then be able to take care of us!

What does healthy skin look like? The beautiful thing is that we all look different in our own skin, but healthy skin for all of us can be smooth and well-hydrated. It is free of sun damage, minimally wrinkled/aged, and has healthy wound-healing ability to clear up cuts and scrapes easily.

When we think about healthy skin, it makes sense to think first about the creams and moisturizers that come to mind in promoting skin health. It is important to take care of your skin that way as well, but what we eat also has a huge effect on the health of our skin. And the benefit with dietary intake for skin health is that the whole body is receiving those nutrients and compounds in the foods we eat.

Just as an unhealthy diet can damage the organs inside your body such as your liver and heart, what you eat also impacts your skin. So we've got you covered. Here is a breakdown of different foods that have nutrients and compounds that help protect our skin so that it can keep protecting us:



FATTY FISH (i.e. salmon)

Packed with omega-3's, zinc, vitamin E and protein, fatty fish will help keep skin moisturized; reduce inflammation, which is associated with redness and acne; and provide structure for strong and healthy skin.



NUTS/SEEDS (walnuts, almonds, sunflower seeds)

Nuts and seeds have similar skin-protecting nutrients as fatty

fish. Packed with omega-3's, zinc, vitamins E and C and high-quality protein, sprinkling seeds on top of your salad or mixing nuts into your yogurt can have some skin benefits.



AVOCADOS

Avocados are a great skin-healthy food. They contain vitamin E that helps protect skin against damage from the sun, plus omega-3's to keep skin moisturized. Vitamin C helps create structural protein needed for strong and healthy skin.



BROCCOLI, SWEET POTATOES, RED & YELLOW BELL PEPPERS, AND TOMATOES

Each with its own set of skin-healthy nutrients and compounds, these veggies can help with inflammation, sun damage protection and structural strength of skin. They also keep skin moisturized and prevent wrinkles.

WATER

Last but not least, drinking enough water is crucial because not only does it hydrate your whole body, it also includes hydrating the skin. Being well-hydrated makes it easier for skin cells to absorb all those great nutrients.

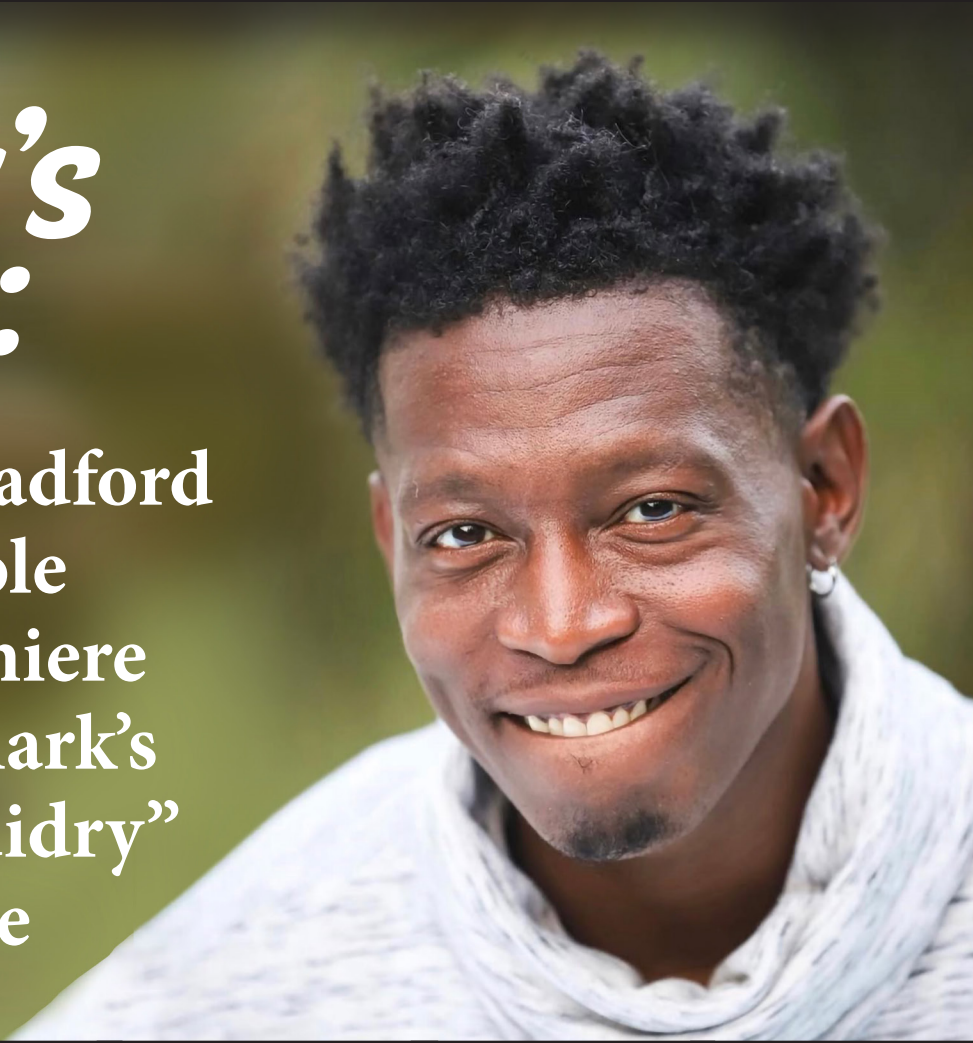
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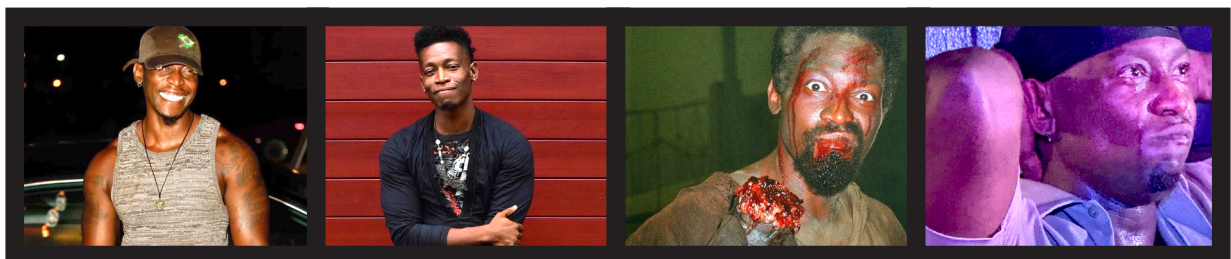
An Actor's Journey:

Martin “Bats” Bradford performs a key role in the world premiere of Harold Ellis Clark’s “Ganking Mr. Guidry” at Le Petit Theatre

By Anita Oubre



“It’s not who I am underneath, but what I do that defines me”
is a quote from the comic book and film superhero we all
know and love as Batman.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARTIN “BATS” BRADFORD

The same description could fit New Orleans-born-and-raised actor, writer, poet, filmmaker, podcaster and teaching artist Martin “Bats” Bradford. Throughout his acting career, he has appeared in more than 60 roles in films and television episodes.

Local audiences will have an opportunity to see Bats perform onstage in a key role at Le Petit Theatre in the world premiere of Harold Ellis Clark’s latest stage play, “Ganking Mr. Guidry.” Five performances of the play will be staged in the historic theatre at 616 St. Peter Street in the French Quarter between August 13-16.

The play is set in 1878 on the site of a sugar plantation where five workers set out to take a stand against injustice. Bats plays the character named Junie.

Explaining the origin of his nickname, Bats said, “It was given to me as a youngster who loved to perform at poetry slams under the ‘Batman’ moniker. Eventually it was shortened and adopted as a stage name for tv/film, because in a sea of names it would catch the eyes of casting directors. Storytelling is what has defined me for decades, and when someone reads the name ‘Bats,’ they look twice, ask questions, and want to know what that story is.”

Born and raised in the Gentilly neighborhood of New Orleans, Bats attributes much of his professional success to his grandmother, the late Joyce Bradford. “My grandmother would always have me doing speeches or speaking in front of people,” he said. “She wanted to make sure she was raising an educated and articulate Black Man, a common saying she’d repeat to me.”

The first audience for Bats was the congregation at St. Mark’s 4th Baptist Church. He was involved in everything

from weekly Bible studies to children’s church and vacation Bible school. “If you want to cultivate an artist, do so in the church because one thing is for sure...the congregation will not boo you,” he advised with a laugh. “...that encouragement early on is priceless.”

Bats attended Bienville Elementary, where one year in particular he wrote and directed the school’s Christmas play. This memory stands out in his mind as he refers to it as “the battery put in my back.” He was encouraged by his teachers, as he wrote and performed skits, which helped him thrive as a young artist.

After attending Eleanor McMain, where Bats attended both middle and high school, he knew he was serious about acting. He started attending auditions in and out of school, which led to learning the fundamentals of being an actor, as well as the art of connecting with audiences.

“Before the legends influenced me, it was the kids on Nickelodeon and Disney. Being a kid and seeing other kids do it pushed me to know this was possible,” said Bats. “There were no other kids around me who dreamed of being an actor.”

Bats looked up to actors like Will Smith, Denzel Washington, Sam Jackson, Don Cheadle, Viola Davis, Angela Bassett and Regina King. His theatre teachers and directors all played crucial roles in his life and inspired him in his journey. And, of course, his greatest influences were his mother and grandmother. His mother, Shari Bradford Capers, in particular being his prime motivator. “Whatever you do baby, DON’T STOP, we have your back” she’d say.

Bats would go on to earn his Bachelor of Arts degree from Dillard University, where he thrived in the theatre department and held positions with WDUB radio as a personality and reporter for the Dillard Courtbouillon student newspaper.

It was during this time that Bats creative juices began to flow as he was acting as well as writing screenplays, poetry, and taking an interest in editing film. He was also one



Joyce Bradford and Martin Bats Bradford



Martin “Bats” Bradford with his mother Shari Bradford Capers

the creators of the GumboMonster504 YouTube page, as well as The FlyWithBats podcast.

The FlyWithBats show thrived for several years, well before the podcast movement became popular. “We were young Black guys talking about it all - social issues, TV and movies and more. It was therapeutic. A process of growth and learning,” Bats recalled.

After graduating, Bats was determined to act full-time. He went on as many auditions as possible. He was hungry for industry knowledge and eventually learned how to secure an agent. His big break came when he was cast in “American Horror Story: Coven.”

Bats worked alongside Oscar- and Emmy Award-winning actor Kathy Bates for the episode. He first met the actress when he was going over his lines, and she asked if he wanted to run lines together.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARTIN “BATS” BRADFORD



"I remember that she was so giving," he recalled. "She told me she could tell I was a trained actor, and the kicker I will always remember is when she asked me if I had any ideas on how she could take me down for this particular scene. It was my first gig ever and she included me as if I were her colleague."

Another colleague came in the form of a childhood hero in Samuel L. Jackson, who he played alongside in the series *The Last Days of Ptolemy Grey*. "Working with Sam was a God send, and gaining him as a friend afterwards was the icing on the king cake." Commenting on his upcoming role in "Ganking Mr. Guidry," Bats said, "I had worked with Hal before as well as the director, John Grimsley. I read the play, fell in love with it, and with the character. My character is basically the crew's restless rebel. He has a mission on his mind at his plantation to claim something that he believes is his, and he's not letting anyone stop him from achieving this goal," said Bats.



To prepare for the role, as with any role, Bats says he studies the story itself, the background, and who the character is before the audience even meets them. "Acting isn't just memorizing some lines. It's story telling. A lot of it is bringing your own experiences, bringing your own imagination, bringing your own perspective to the character that you're portraying," Bats emphasized.

Having visited Whitney Plantation, Bats said the experience was eye-opening. "I am educated, thanks to my grandmother instilling history lessons in me. I'm 'woke,' as they say, so I knew a lot going into the grounds, but then you get there and realize there are so many things that we are not taught. There are so many things we do not know. These human beings were able to find joy even in the thick of dark," said Bats. He suggests that the play is another opportunity to tell a story we do not hear much about today.

"A play like this is a reminder that no matter how far we've gone, we still have more places to go. But just because we're better off today doesn't mean we've reached the finish line or the equity and quality that our communities deserve."

When not perfecting his craft, Bats enjoys roller blading, binging on TV/movies, and



going out with friends. His hobbies include writing, shooting short films, attending plays, and comedy shows. Bats enjoys the arts and supporting other artists. "Artists inspire me; it's a beautiful thing to see people living out their passion. I have such respect for other people's craft and our entire local arts community" said Bats.

Bats stresses that he is "just a regular guy looking for the next gig." He emphasized that folks might think he "has made it" because he is on TV and that he must be rich. "In reality, I'm just a regular guy going from gig to gig and looking for that next one."

And between gigs, this self-proclaimed "comic book head" continues to read and collect them, with *Batman* as his favorite.

For tickets to "Ganking Mr. Guidry" call (504) 522-2081 or visit the Le Petit Theatre box office at 616 St. Peter Street between 12:00 noon and 5:00 p.m. weekdays. The show runs from August 13-16. Bats Bradford can be reached online at @Misterbats and @thefwbnetwork



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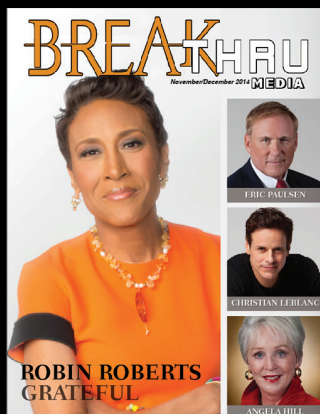
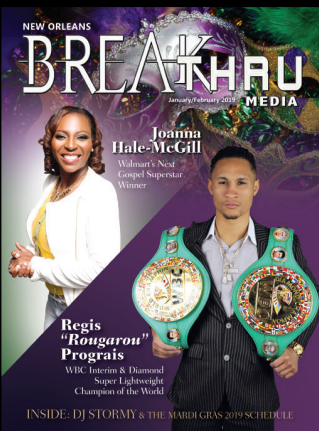
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