

Ghetto Alchemy: A Lunchroom Survival Guide

Created by Maleek Rae & amani meliyah
Written & Performed by Maleek Rae
Directed by amani meliyah
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Director's Note

When we began the process of crafting this offering, Maleek and I were both in heavy stages of grief. "*How can I mourn someone that's not even gone yet?*" reverberated through our spirits and the walls of the rehearsal room as we both faced the difficulty of witnessing our grandmothers' aging, the versions of the women who raised us ceased to exist. I felt 10 years older than I did during our last Tank collaboration "Nyad's Dream" that premiered in August 2023. But with that spiritual aging came a creative need to look back on the joyful innocence of adolescence.

Ghetto Alchemy: A lunchroom survival guide is a journey of self discovery.

How does healing childhood wounds inform self actualization?

How does the embodiment of the inner child and the Ancestral reveal the higher self?

*a.k.a how a n*gga get free?*

Freedom is the essence of Ghetto Alchemy. It is how black people create liberation for themselves by making magic from nothing. Ghetto Alchemy is ginger ale as the cure for everything, ghetto alchemy is throwing salt over your shoulder, it's my great great grandfather starting the first black funeral home in my hometown of Georgetown, SC with handmade wooden box caskets because no one else would funeralize black bodies, it is creative black kids finding their way onto the stages of NYC with no roadmap.

This work breathes life into the fluidity of coming of age through passed down generational scars and nurturing from grandmothers and uncles, Saturday morning cartoons, Rap Queens, and the school lunchrooms that raised us.

What lessons can your inner child teach you? How can looking back at some of the darkest moments of your youth open a portal to transforming your destiny?

I hope you leave the theatre feeling a little lighter and more curious about the magic that is within you.

Lavender and honey,

amani meliyah