

**RIDING IN CARS  
WITH BLACK PEOPLE  
AND OTHER NEWLY DANGEROUS ACTS**

a memoir  
in vanishing whiteness



a solo performance by Chad Goller-Sojourner  
[www.ridingincarswithblackpeople.com](http://www.ridingincarswithblackpeople.com)

*"What I remember most about that first stop was that he asked "Where you headed." Not "license, registration and proof of insurance, please" but "Where you headed." Eighteen years, nine months and sixteen days of riding in cars with nothing but white people and not once had an officer opened with "Where you headed."*

***"Heartbreaking, beautiful and hilarious" – "A powerful, relevant and profoundly educating story" – "Goller-Sojourner is bold, brilliant, brash & sassy, think Whoopi Goldberg, but more fierce!"***

**COMPLIMENTARY "HOW TO HAVE A MEANINGFUL CONVERSATION ON RACE" WORKSHOP WITH EVERY BOOKING**

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## PERFORMANCE SUMMARY:

*Riding in Cars with Black People & Other Newly Dangerous Acts: A Memoir in Vanishing Whiteness* is the groundbreaking and crushingly honest story of what happens when a black boy, raised by white parents, "ages out" of honorary white and suburban privilege and into a world where folklore, statistics, and conjecture deem him dangerous until proven otherwise. At times funny, biting and somber *Riding in Cars...* takes audiences on an intense and insightful journey, along the way unpacking race, privilege and policing like only a transracial adoptee can.

With playful humor and sharp observance *Riding in Cars...* continues to resonate with diverse audiences. Demonstrating how even the most painful experiences can be reclaimed, transformed, and accepted for what they are: the building blocks of our unique identities.

Brenden Kiley of the *Stranger* says "Growing up "white" ... and "becoming black" gives Goller-Sojourner a powerfully unique position to talk about the strange racial ruptures in our culture [as] he has lived on at least two sides of the many-sided divide and can describe its contours more accurately than most anyone."

The production originally debuted in April 2013, under the direction of BROWNBOX African-American Theater artistic director **Tyrone Brown**. Brown explains, "Chad's work is brilliant. He has this remarkable ability to transport the audience to a time and place showered in such vivid detail that you actually become a witness to his life. As a performer, Chad is so engaging that it's like you are the only other person in the room and he has personally invited you into his past to experience his life first hand."

**ARTIST STATEMENT:**

Google “conversation on race” and you’ll get at least 200,000,000 hits. With numbers like this it’s a wonder we don’t already have the answers. Perhaps it’s because, like that Violent Femmes song, when it comes to conversing about race, nothing ends up on our permanent record. Or perhaps it’s like me freshman year, excited about a topic, yet not quite ready to come to class prepared for an informed and productive discussion. Whatever the reason, when it comes to meaningful, necessary and yes, uncomfortable conversations on race, we seem to miss far more opportunities than we catch.

On July 19, 2009, distinguished Harvard Professor Henry Louis Gates was arrested for being rude in his kitchen. And while this event seemed to offer up a near perfect opportunity for such a conversation, in the end, it would best be known for producing America’s First Presidential Racial Beer Summit – a behind closed doors event which culminated with a single collective comment. They’d agreed to move on. And with that we did too.

*Riding in Cars with Black People & Other Newly Dangerous Acts: A Memoir in Vanishing Whiteness* was born out of the belief that moving on for the sake of avoiding difficult and/or uncomfortable conversations is rarely in the country’s best interest. From the unique perspective of someone who has lived on both sides of the divide, this work unabashedly explores the often complex and misunderstood world of race, privilege, and policing.

I am humbled and overjoyed that this work continues to resonate with such diverse audiences, particularly those who find themselves or their loved ones in the bodies and voices presented onstage. I hold fast to the possibility that *Riding in Cars with Black People...* continues to spark meaningful, necessary, and yes, uncomfortable conversations.

**ARTIST BIO:**

**Chad Goller-Sojourner** is a Seattle-based writer, storyteller, solo-performer and recipient of a distinguished Washington State Arts Commission Performing Arts Fellowship. Most recently he served as the 2013 Ohio University Glidden Visiting Professor, where his work focused on the social, political and historical dimensions of multi-identity construction and intersectionality. In 2011 he was awarded both an Artist Trust Grant and Creative Artist Residency to further develop his sophomore solo show: *Riding in Cars with Black People & Other Newly Dangerous Acts: A Memoir in Vanishing Whiteness*, which debuted April 2013. In 2009 he launched a national college tour of his groundbreaking and crushingly honest inaugural solo show entitled: *Sitting in Circles with Rich White Girls: Memoirs of a Bulimic Black Boy*, which debuted July 2008, and was funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts and has most recently been expanded into a written memoir.

## **BOOKING/TECH & VENUE DETAILS:**

*Riding in Cars with Black People...* is a high impact, low tech solo performance running approximately 70 minutes, followed by 20-30 minutes of audience questions and comments. In addition to the aforementioned, all bookings currently include a complimentary workshop (see workshop description page). **\$2,800.00\***

\* Presenter is responsible for:

- Round trip travel (usually from Seattle) for performer.
- Standard hotel accommodations.
- Ground transportation to and from airport, accommodations, technical rehearsals, and performances.

### **Sound Requirements:**

- CD compatible PA system

### **Lighting Requirements:**

- Basic theatrical stage lighting setup

### **Pre-show Tech & Personnel Requirements:**

- One (1) knowledgeable "in-house" tech person capable of operating simple sound and lighting cues based on tech script, which will be provided.
- Minimum of two (2) hour scheduled tech run-through WITH available tech person to commence no less than 4 hours before show time.

### **Performance Space Requirements: \***

- "End stage theater" preferred with a minimum 18'x16' stage
- Performer will require three (3) easels; one (1) music stand; one (1) adult sized armless non-folding chair (i.e. standard campus dining hall chair); two (2) flat surface stools or standard acting cubes

\* **Note while the above is preferred this performance can be adapted to accommodate various venues, situations and settings.**

## **ADDITIONAL WORKSHOPS/CLASS DISCUSSIONS:**

Workshops can be a great addition to the performance and are easily tailored to fit a wide variety of participants, issues and situations. Fees for additional workshops range from \$300 to \$500 and depend on the number of participants and length of workshop, which generally run between ninety minutes and two and a half hours. See below for general descriptions. Time and scheduling permitting, performer is also available to participate in classroom visits/discussions.

**Unpacking Privilege /Backstory:** This workshop is specifically designed to follow a performance of *Riding in Cars with Black People & Other Newly Dangerous Acts...* and will begin by introducing the concepts of "privilege" and "backstory\*" as they relate to themes unearthed in the performance. From there participants will explore how these concepts manifest in both their own day-to-day lives and in the life of others, culminating with an exercise allowing participants to unpack privilege and backstory as it relates to their specific campus.

\*Note backstories are narratives society doles out to individuals based on a perceived group membership, i.e., Black Men are to be considered dangerous until proven otherwise. Girls in short skirts and tight tops are promiscuous and therefore not to be believed in matters involving sexual assault.

**Spoken Word/Monologue:** This workshop focuses on creating and developing monologues and spoken word works that enliven political, social, and identity issues. Participants will explore the art of crafting and presenting stories that matter, inspire, and transform. This workshop is designed for students of all levels of experience, from those who have never explored this form of writing and performance to seasoned writers and performers. Students will leave with a broader and deeper understanding of the spoken word as a whole.

### **Creating A Solo Performance:**

This workshop will focus on how to develop and perform a solo show. Starting with what motivates you, we will then move into creating, crafting, and building upon your character/characters from both a written and physical point of view. Storytelling will figure heavily in the work as you begin to discover and structure your own solo performance material.

Participants are asked to please come in with an idea. It can be anything— a poem, a prop, a gesture, a monologue, a word. Anything!

**The Art Of Memoir Writing:**

Everybody has stories to tell. This workshop will focus on unearthing, harnessing, and crafting those stories into compelling memoirs. Covered topics include: finding your stories and honing your storytelling voice, exploring what moves you to tell them, writing memoir with the finesse of fiction, and giving yourself permission to say what needs to be said. We'll also explore critical techniques such as character development, narrative arcs, and description. Come and explore the power of being your own witness.

**Exploring Identities/ Beyond The Box:**

This exciting and informative workshop invites participants to challenge and explore their worldview, biases, and cultural socialization surrounding their current understanding of identity formation and development. Topics covered include: exploring the relationship between leading and/or perceived identities and secondary and/or non-obvious identities, identity allegiance (such as Black/Gay vs. Gay/Black), shifting/transforming identities (such as Lesbian/Trans Male). In the end participants will leave with a broader and deeper understanding of their own and others' identity stories.

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**SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

\_\_\_\_\_ Presents  
**Chad Goller-Sojourner's Highly Acclaimed Solo Show**

***Riding in Cars with Black People & Other Newly Dangerous Acts:  
 A Memoir in Vanishing Whiteness***

WHEN: \_\_\_\_\_

WHERE: \_\_\_\_\_

TICKETS: \_\_\_\_\_

MEDIA CONTACT: \_\_\_\_\_

Award-winning and highly acclaimed solo performer, Chad Goller-Sojourner brings his groundbreaking and crushingly honest performance to \_\_\_\_ (location) \_\_\_\_\_ for one night only, \_\_\_\_ (Date and Time) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Chad Goller-Sojourner** is a Seattle-based writer, solo-performer and recipient of a distinguished Artist Trust/Washington State Arts Commission Performing Arts Fellowship. His work has been funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and featured on NPR. Most recently he was selected as the 2013 Ohio University Glidden Visiting Professor. In 2008 he premiered his inaugural solo show: *Sitting in Circles with Rich White Girls: Memoirs of a Bulimic*

*Black Boy*, which continues to tour nationally. To learn more about Chad Goller-Sojourner, visit [www.ridingincarswithblackpeople.com](http://www.ridingincarswithblackpeople.com)