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Entertainment Industry Professionals Flock to Create Carolina

Winthrop University

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Entertainment Industry Professionals Flock to Create Carolina

Quick Facts

- Charles Randolph-Wright will direct "Medal of Honor Rag" May 25-26 and June 2.
- A staged reading of "Home! Now!!" will be presented May 31 and June 1.

ROCK HILL, S.C. - The two signature events of the [Create Carolina Arts Festival](#) will involve appearances by professionals who work in New York and Los Angeles in theatre, television and film. The inaugural festival is taking place on the campus of **Winthrop University** from May 14 to June 2.

Acclaimed writer, director and producer Charles Randolph-Wright will direct "**Medal of Honor Rag**," Tom Cole's 1976 play about a decorated Vietnam veteran's troubled adjustment to life after a controversial war. Charlotte, N.C., native Chandler Parker whom Randolph-Wright directed in "Preaching to the Choir," will play the black veteran, DJ, while Polly Adkins, Winthrop alumna and local theatre veteran, has been cast as the psychiatrist. Written as a male role, Adkins will be the first female to play this role.

The playwright, Tom Cole of New York, will attend the opening weekend performance on May 25.

Showtimes will be Friday, May 25, Saturday, May 26, and Saturday, June 2, at 8 p.m. and Saturday, June 2, at 2 p.m. in [Johnson Theatre](#). Tickets are \$10 for Winthrop ID/senior (+65)/students and \$15 general admission. The play contains adult content and language.

Randolph-Wright had his directorial film debut with "Preaching to the Choir" which swept the feature film prizes at the American Black Film Festival, as well as many other festivals. He currently is writing and directing the film version of the stage musical "Mama, I Want to Sing."

His television credits include writing and producing the acclaimed Showtime series "Linc's" as well as directing the series "South of Nowhere." His recent theatre projects include writing the plays "Cuttin' Up" and "Blue" (starring Phylicia Rashad) and directing the 50th anniversary tour of "Guys and Dolls" (starring Maurice Hines), "Me and Mrs. Jones," (starring Lou Rawls), and the world premiere of Frank Loesser's last musical "Senor Discretion."

The second event is a staged reading of "**Home! Now!!**," a new commissioned play by New York-based playwright, filmmaker and actor Jonathan Davidson. The play is a musical comedy inspired by a group of elderly woman arrested for attempting to enlist in the Armed Forces as a form of protest against the Iraq War. The play deals not only with issues of war but with youth apathy, the generation gap and the notion that one is never to old, to young or too insignificant to make a difference.

Participating in the readings are actors Lee Thompson Young, Liza Vann and Daphne Reid. Young is a native of Columbia, S.C., who is known by many as "Jett Jackson" from the Disney Channel series "The Famous Jett Jackson." Vann was introduced to New York theatre audiences when she premiered Off-Broadway in VOX HUMANA #3: A LOVE SONG at La Mama and for her performance as Marietta Corsini in Richard Vetere's "Machiavelli." Reid is has appeared in numerous television programs and is best known for taking over the role of Aunt Vivian Banks on the series "The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air."

Showtimes will be Thursday, May 31, and Friday, June 1, at 8 p.m. in Johnson Theatre. Tickets are \$8 for Winthrop ID/senior (+65)/student or \$10 general admission.

The **Create Carolina Arts Festival** is a three-week festival of college classes, master classes, film screenings and performances. Spaces are still available for the master workshops offered. The cost is \$25 each. For registration, contact Jamilyn Larsen at 803/323-2323.

[\[Back to Previous Page\]](#)

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Accessibility	Calendars	Emergency/Safety	Financial Aid	Online Learning (Graduate)	Visit the Campus
Alumni & Friends	Directions	Employment	Library	Records & Registration	Visitors Center
Arts	Directory	Family Programs	Majors & More	Residence Life	Wingspan