“When I was a little chitlin’ my mother told me, my brother and my sister that “we could be any color flower we wanted to be. And that one day we were gonna to grow big, strong and beautiful.” And my sister said, “I want to be a yellow flower, or maybe a blue flower or maybe a red flower. Like the ones growing in our garden.” I knew this conversation was in a dream because we didn’t have a garden at my childhood home in New Jersey - only dirt with scatterings of cinderblocks, wood and steel on top of it. And my brother cried out, “Gurl! Make up your damn mind already. Listen, I’m content being a rotten brown flower.” And when it came to me I said “I want to all the colors. I want to be a rainbow of colors. I want to be everything.”

Stacy Klein - who I asked to direct SUGA - recently said to me that “I was a caretaker of my ancestral memory.” I loved that! It gave me a new lens to look at this work and continue journeying through this history with a deep care. To not be afraid to revive, reanimate and ultimately remix these memories and turn them into the alchemical materials to unlock much necessary healing. To provide the ingredients for me and my future family to live our lives in an ever-changing and growing garden of freedom. There are so many people who I celebrate and thank in this work from James Baldwin to Beyoncé, Héctor Lavoe to Andy Palacio & The Garifuna Collective, Robert Mapplethorpe to Zdzislaw Beksiński, Double Edge Theatre and to the many freedom seekers whose handprints are on SUGA. But I want to most importantly thank Stacy Klein for going on this journey with me for over 2 years and providing me the space to fall and rise daily. To generously give me the courage to spread my wings, fly and each day get a little bit closer to my dream of that colorful garden of freedom.

Travis Coe, January 2019

Set Design by Michal Kuriata
Costume Design by Tadea Klein
Sound Design and Operation by John Peitso
Lighting by John Peitso and Zoe Batson

Collaborators:
Creative Consultant- Morgan Jenness and Dramaturg- Nina Mankin
Production Assistant - Dylan Young (DE intern)

Produced by Double Edge Theatre Company
Adam Bright (producing & rigging) Cariel Klein (producing & aerial) Andrew Todd (production management)
Amanda Miller (costumiere) Michael Fitzgeral (ladder) Jennifer Johnson (acting) Milena Dabova (movement)
Carlos Uriona (acting) and support by the ensemble/company, Matthew Glassman, Jeremy Louise Eaton,
Hannah Jarrell, Bob Carlton, Travis Riemer and interns Lily Hargis, Kim Chin-Gibbons

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It is, at this point in a process, difficult to share with an audience, and at the same time completely necessary. Open rehearsals and previews would not be possible for this type of intimate work without the support of our community, who help us build and see and guide our creation toward its performance fruition. A solo performance, and particularly Travis Coe’s process, reaches into the depths of himself and his acting exploration-- to celebrate and sometimes to cry, as he undertakes to break down the personal walls that inhibit the imagery of his imagination and allow the full breath of his body, mind, soul. Thank you for sharing this moment in a journey.

Stacy Klein
Double Edge Theatre to preview new solo performance
SUGA March 6-10

(Ashfield, MA) On March 6-10, Double Edge Theatre will preview its original solo performance SUGA, with the premiere slated for the Fall. The performance is conceived, created, and performed by Travis Coe and directed by Stacy Klein. Travis, a DE Associate Ensemble Artist, began working on SUGA in 2016 as he explored the Afro-Caribbean/Latinx history of his family, and their native lands spanning Belize, Nicaragua, and Puerto Rico. Klein, DE’s founder and Artistic Director, watched some of Travis’ early creative process and began working in dialogue together with Travis to develop the material and create this performance. It is an investigation of freedom, and the bounds—personal, artistic, societal, and political—one must break through to achieve that end. As a caretaker of a museum of memory, Coe touches/reveals/remixes all the aspects of himself—as Queer, Black, Latino, and American, to find the path to sing, fly, run • toward Freedom.

Joining the team of SUGA are DE’s longtime design collaborator Michal Kuriata and company artists Tadea Klein (costume designer) and John Peitso (music director). The performance is inspired by the photographs of Robert Mapplethorpe, the paintings and sculptures of Zdzisław Beksiński, and the life and work of James Baldwin.