

Nina Simone: Four Women



**Pre-Visit Story
Relaxed Performance**

An artist's responsibility is to reflect the times - Nina Simone



Bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church

The play begins with Nina Simone playing the piano but very soon after she begins singing, a sudden loud sound of a bomb is heard. The noise is a surprise.

There will also be fog on the stage to show a bombing.

The bombing was a real historical event in which four young girls were killed.

You may want to cover your ears, wear headphones, or stand near the doorway at the beginning of the show. There are no other loud surprising sounds in the show.



Four Women

As the show continues, you are introduced to four women: Nina Simone, Sarah, Sefronia, and Sweet Thing.

The play is about how each of these women respond to the assassination of Medgar Evers and the killing of four girls from the bombing at the church.

Nina Simone is the only character in the play who is based on a real person.



Music

Music is used in different ways during the play.

Sometimes songs Nina Simone wrote or performed are sung during the play.

Sometimes parts of a song are played only on the piano

These parts of the song will become the song “Mississippi Goddam” that you will hear.



Violence

Violence against other people is talked about or shown in the play. The play shows violence but it is not real.

During the play, Sweet Thing threatens Sefhronia with an attempted knife attack.

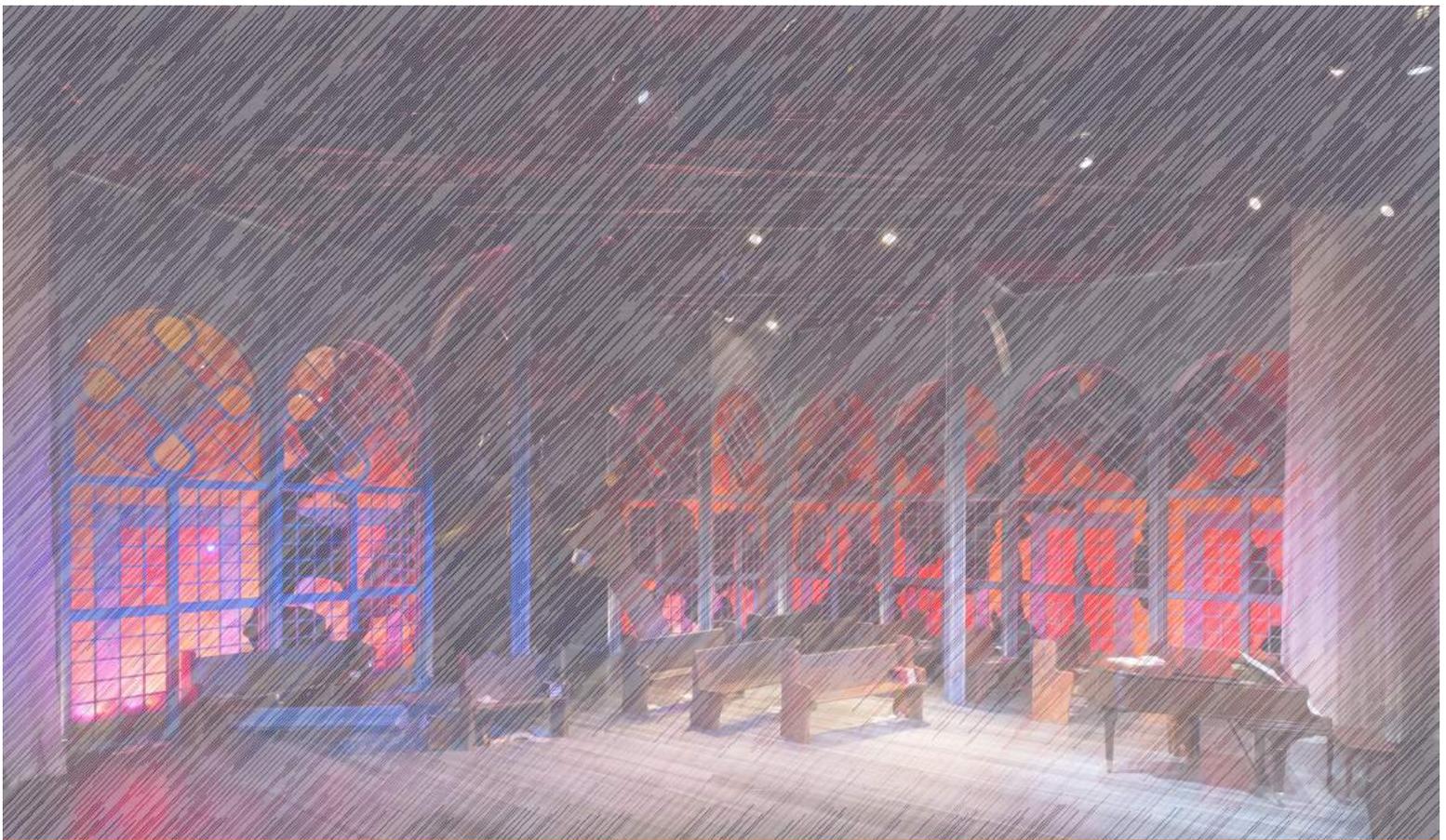
The bombing, using a gun, and a rape are talked about in the play.



Knife

Sweet Thing shows a knife during the play.

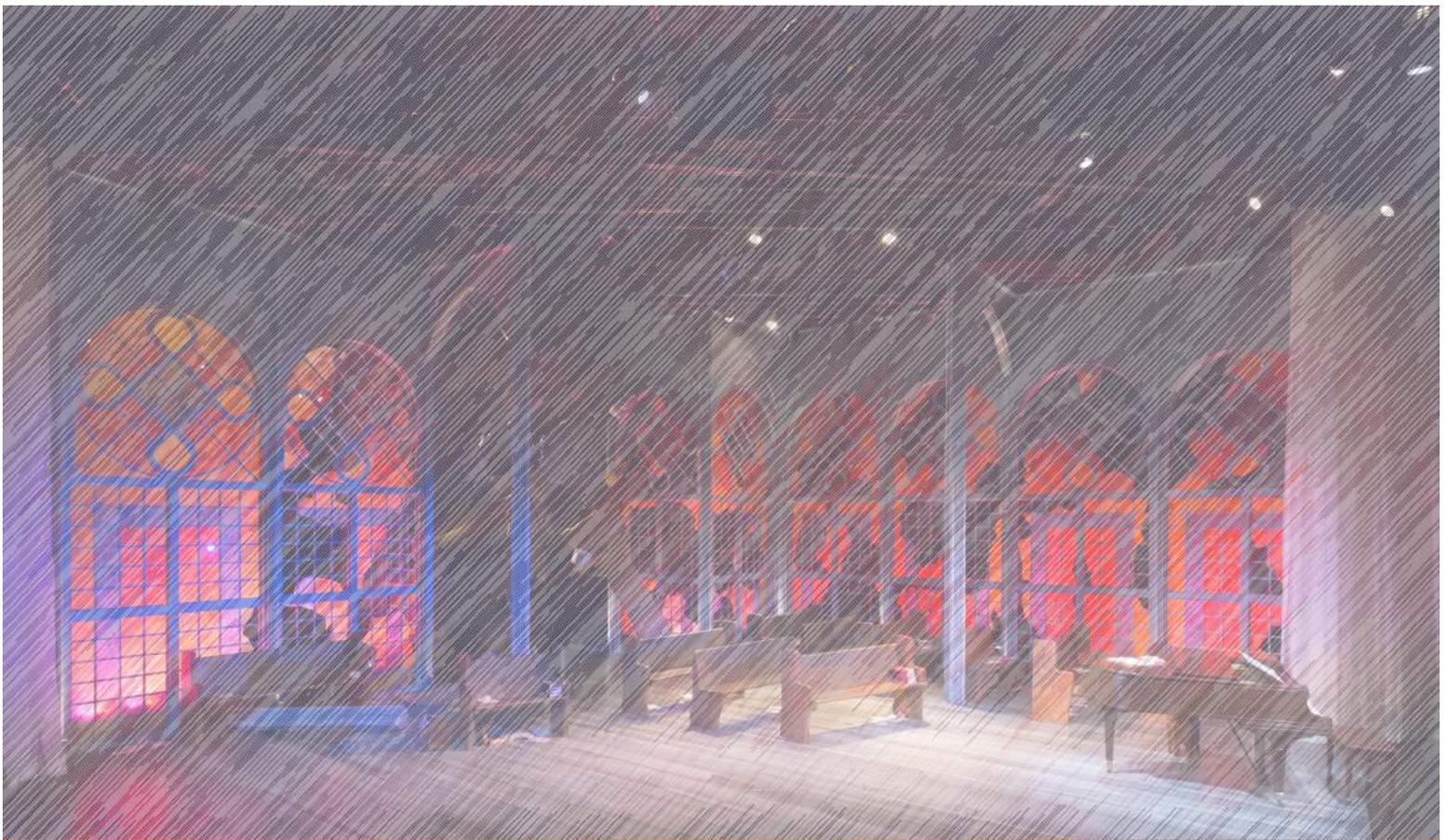
Sweet Thing is angry at Sephronia when she finds out they are dating the same person.



Sounds: gunshots and crowds

During the show, you will hear sounds of gunshots or crowds.

These sounds are only for a short time.



Death and beliefs

In the play, many of the characters are sad and frightened that four young girls have been killed by a bomb.

Some people believe after someone dies, they are still around in an invisible way, like a ghost, spirit, or soul.

In the play one of the characters holds a shoe that used to belong to one of the little girls who has died and she feels the little girl's "spirits" are in the church with them.



Anger

Angry feelings occur when someone is not happy or disagree with a situation.

The characters display anger during the play.

Sometimes, people yell when they are angry.

Sometimes, people talk about their unhappiness or disagreement.

Sometimes, people express their anger through songs like Nina Simone.



Peaches

During the play there are references to "peaches".

A peach has a soft and fuzzy on the outside but a hard pit in the middle.

Nina refers to herself as "peaches" in the play and in a song for being soft on the outside but strong on the inside.

Music can't just be about the art, but it has to be an expression of the good, bad, and ugly in life. - Nina Simone.

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