

BIO

rev dr candi dugas is a NYT award-winning playwright, dramaturg, cultural architect, and civic theatre producer whose theatrical work explores intimacy (relationship(s)), power, lineage, and the unfinished business of American history. Her plays are research-driven + character-centered, often excavating the emotional + ethical complexities that emerge at the intersection of race, gender, spirituality, and belonging. With a deep interest that her plays authentically reflect our people's experiences, she often devises compilation characters + situations from real people who trust her with their stories.

dr candi's storytelling catalogue moves across ancestry, embodied medicine, grief, faith, fatherhood, civil rights memory, and the familial weight carried inside Black communities. Her plays address collective healing after violence, the intersection of sexuality + spirituality, and the quiet historical moments that precede seismic social shifts. Whether devising work from actual lived experiences or writing inspired scripts for stage + screen, she builds theatrical events designed to hold audiences thru difficult truths + toward genuine transformation.

The inspiration dr candi gleans from our individual + collective needs has produced her most poignant work. While in a seminary class on the bible's least preached-on book, "Song of Songs," discussing its aspects of feminine sexual pleasure, candi was bothered that such sexual freedom is not available for Black women who are *also* faithful churchgoers. From there she decided to contribute to the full liberation of Black women's sexuality with her dissertation, which she also expanded + published: Who Told You That You Were Naked? Black Women Reclaiming Sexual & Spiritual Goodness.



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And from that research – which included stories from actual, faithful Black women churchgoers who expressed their questions + quandaries about staying true to G~d while honoring their bodies, preferences, and urges – she wrote her first epic work, *Desire's Kiss (DK)*. *DK* is inspired by “Song of Songs,” following Desire Mathis as she comes of age in the hands of an older lover. In play + screenplay forms, *Desire's Kiss* won Best Feature Screenplay at the 2013 Urban Mediamakers Film Festival.

Her next epic work, also award-winning, is *Wild & Free*, the story of Creole Shop Owner Sydney Augustin who is slow to calculate the ancestral economics of her lifelong proximity to whiteness. When that proximity butts up against her brilliance – and when she does begin to add it all up – she could lose much more than her business.

Working on both of these emerging trilogies has been part of dr candi's development of practicing a syncretic spirituality that blends her Black church background with an awakening of her Creole/hoodoo roots. Such a practice tends to put her in the progressive camp ... or beyond. Unapologetically Black, she's most concerned about helping to achieve full freedom for all people. She was initially ordained by The Church Within A Church Movement, and recently moved her credentials to a brand new organization she's founding for others called to ministry, but no longer fitting within traditional boxes: The Temple of the Black Atlantic Diaspora.

Currently focused on getting *Desire's Kiss* + *Wild & Free*, on their feet – dr candi is also researching embodied practices to help us Black people heal from our intergenerational mental + emotional traumas that manifest in chronic physical conditions like diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure. The following links may be helpful to learn more about her + her work:

YouTube

- [Desire's Kiss Playlist](#)
- [Wild & Free](#)
- [the Chat Playlist](#) (not-a-podcast podcast 😊)
- [candi dugas collective channel](#)

Substack

- [when the Bough Breaks](#) (select “not right now” to bypass the subscription page)

Instagram

- [@candigirlfreedom](#)

Website

- [Books](#)
- [candi dugas collective home page](#)