



A virtuoso communicator, performer and facilitator, Sonny Kelly embodies over 20 characters, and thoughtfully ushers audiences into a safe space to have the difficult, but necessary, conversations we need to pursue equity and inclusion. This eclectic theatrical experience weaves together interactive theater, a dynamic embodied performance, and a multi-media production with the words of James Baldwin, Langston Hughes, W.E.B. DuBois, Frantz Fanon, Paul Gilroy, Ta-Nehisi Coates and others.

The Talk is about returning to memories, re-examining history, and reckoning with an often confusing contemporary composite truth. At its core, *The Talk* is really about a father's profoundly abiding love for his children and his commitment to equipping them with the faith, hope, and love that he will need to thrive in a divided world.

This work has three objectives:

- To connect to audiences in a visceral way that will bring history to life while celebrating familial relationships, human dignity, and community.
- To challenge and shift audience members' perspectives, inciting more just, equitable, and honest conversations and actions that address our past, understand our present, and pursue our brighter future together.
- To affirm and encourage people who have felt marginalized or silenced to connect, communicate, and collaborate for stronger communities.

With this work, Sonny invites audience members into a complicated, but loving, family where we are all encouraged to imagine new possibilities together!

Presentations are modular and highly flexible. They can be produced on main stages and in smaller venues. To book a performance in your community email sonnykelly2000@yahoo.com, visit www.sonnykelly.com or call (210)793-5241.

A one-man performance that draws on the voices of ancestors, elders, youths, and intellectuals to engage in the difficult conversations that we must have with our children as we prepare them to survive and thrive in a racialized America.

The Talk

THE CAST



Sonny Kelly is a professional performer, storyteller, motivator, speaker, teacher, and scholar. Currently pursuing a PhD in Communication at UNC Chapel Hill, Sonny is a graduate of St. Mary's University (MA, Communication Studies, '08) and Stanford University (BA, International Relations, '98). Sonny has been a professional actor on stage and television for over 25 years. He has

served our nation as a U.S. Air Force officer, and his community as a non-profit organization program director, a youth worker and church minister. Sonny has worked with the United Way of Cumberland County, schools and non-profits across the nation, Beasley Broadcasting, the North Carolina Juvenile Services Association, the National Association of Black Storytellers and the Black Storytellers' Alliance to share his love for others through storytelling. Sonny volunteers as an Artist in Residence with Fayetteville Urban Ministry's Find-A-Friend youth program and Boomerang Youth, Inc's alternative to suspension and youth programs in Chapel Hill, NC. He is a recipient of UNC Chapel Hill's prestigious *Tanner Award* for excellence in teaching undergraduate students. Sonny is the author and star of *The Talk*. Visit www.sonnykelly.com for more



The Talk

A One-Man Theatrical Experience
By Sonny Kelly

What The Talk offers audiences:

- Depth of inquiry, that links un(der)told history, personal narratives, and performance ethnography with our contemporary questions on race and representation in the US.
- Combines interactive theater with vibrant storytelling and exquisite character acting for an overwhelmingly engaging experience.
- Profound emotional and physical resonance as a live performance piece, based in rigorous research, as well as critical autoethnography, that is mindfully, respectfully, and artfully done.
- Exposure to contemporary poetry and narratives by Sonny Kelly, Langston Hughes, Benjamin E. Mayes, W.E.B. DuBois, James Baldwin, Ta-Nehisi Coates, and others.
- Expands our notions of equity, justice, and inclusion through embodied memory, for the sake of conflict resolution and cultural reconciliation.
- Reverent reflection on U.S. history and contemporary race relations, with special attention paid to abiding challenges that disproportionately affect marginalized peoples and diverse communities.



The Talk Web Site: <https://www.sonnykelly.com/the-talk>

References:

- Joseph Megel, Artist in Residence, UNC Chapel Hill Communication Dept.
Phone: (919)843-7067; E-mail: megel@email.unc.edu
- Christie Hinson Norris, Director, Carolina K-12 Outreach,
Phone: 919-843-9387; E-Mail: cnorris@unc.edu
- Dr. Lloyd Kramer, Director of Carolina Public Humanities
Phone: (919) 962-5553; E-mail: lkramer@email.unc.edu
- Chris Blue, Chief, Chapel Hill Police Department
Phone: 919-968-2760; E-Mail: cblue@townofchapelhill.org
- Dr. Patricia Parker, Chair, Department of Communication, UNC Chapel Hill
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The Talk

A One-Man Theatrical Experience
By Sonny Kelly

RIDER

- 1 solid chair with arms
- 1 chair on wheels
- 1 large bookshelf (5ft to 6ft tall)
- 1 sturdy table (at least 3ft X 3ft X 4ft)
- 1 small table (or blocks) (2ft X 2ft X 4ft)
- 1 small chair (or blocks) (2ft X 4ft X 2ft)
- 1 standard lectern
- 1 Large screen (at least 4ft X 4ft)
- 2 projectors capable of projecting a slide shows during the performance
- 1 Large chalk or dry erase board (at least 4ft X 4ft)
- 1 Headset microphone (for larger venues)
- 1 Audio Visual system capable of playing digital sound files on cue
- 3 technicians to run lights, slides and sound
- Minimum of 1 hour set-up and 1 hour break down time
- Stage lighting preferred



TIMING

Run time: 80 minutes without Q & A. Can be adjusted according to needs.

SPACE

Minimum of 10ft X 6ft playing space, preferably on an elevated stage.

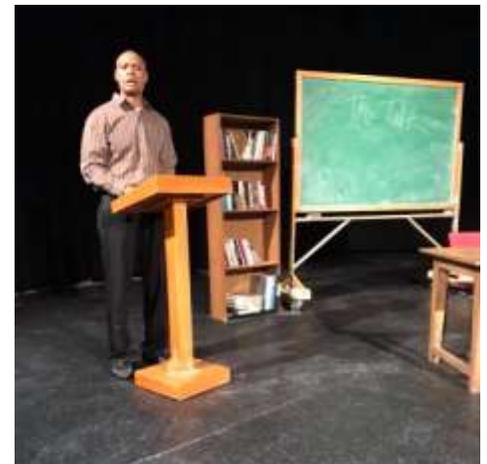
COST

\$6,000 + travel and lodging costs for Sonny and one Technical Director for one performance, followed by 30-60 minute discussion and Q & A.

*Additional \$500/performance + travel per technician, if lighting and video technicians are not provided (technicians require at least 4 hours of preparation and rehearsal)

*Discounts available for non-profit organizations

*Prices for additional performances or extended talkbacks or workshops negotiable.



The Talk is currently available for booking!

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REVIEWS

DO NOT MISS IT.

Kelly is nothing short of amazing!

~ Pamela Vesper and Kurt Benrud for Triangle Arts & Entertainment

Sonny perfectly balances an intellectual understanding of race theory leading to "the talk" with the emotional heartbreak of a parent having to tell his child that world will judge him based solely on the color of his skin. ~ Joseph Megel, Artist in Residence, UNC Chapel Hill Communication Department

I was blown away by your performance. Thank you for creating and performing such an important piece. ~ Christine Hinson Norris, Director of K-12 Outreach, Carolina Public Humanities

It was a pleasure to be with you all. What an amazing performance from Sonny and I though the energy in the room was just perfect for good discussion afterwards. ~ Chris Blue, Chief, Chapel Hill Police Department

Sonny's one-man dramatic interpretation of The Talk is a great exploration of what it means to be a black man in America. This well-staged and technically impressive production explores a remarkable range of complex issues--from personal and family history to the recent murders of black men by the police to the challenges of parenting a black son. Sonny also weaves in a great range of references to important writers from W.E.B. Dubois to Ta-Nehisi Coates; and he shifts among various voices (from his grandmother to Barack Obama) with impressive dramatic versatility. In most general terms, he shows how and why History shapes human lives every day and (by merging the layers of personal experience, black and white history in America, and the perspectives of major writers) he shows how the humanities enable us to engage with and respond to public and personal issues. Sonny gives us the "public humanities" in action... ~ Lloyd Kramer, PhD, Director of Carolina Public Humanities

I have lived all over the world, and many places in the US—The Talk truly inspired me to confront the frontier of my soul, and what my role should look like both through community advocacy, as well as a national level...I do not think that anything or anyone has touched my emotions the way you have through your creation of The Talk. Truly a wonderful experience, that calls to the soul to take action!" ~ Anne Parton, Public Policy Student, UNC Chapel Hill

I really enjoyed the play a lot and so did the others. Afterward, we went out to eat and we talked about the play and what it meant to us and for many of us it seemed that we watched a play that gave us insight on ourselves and the world around us. On a personal note, I was really touched. ~ Jacqui, 16-year-old Church Youth Group Member, Martin Street Baptist Church, Raleigh, NC

We just believe your performance needs to be seen by more and it so well connects to the work we do. ~ Tami Pfeifer, Executive Director, Boomerang Youth, Inc., Chapel Hill, NC