**NOT OF THE SOUL**

A Screenplay

by

Monique McCartha

Opens with Music.

Montage of photos, aging progressively of RICHANDRA and Richard. First photo is of a little baby girl sitting on Richard’s lap in front of a drum set. A photo of little holding her Mother’s hand as they watch Richard drum in a band. Then progressive photos of little girl growing up at the drum set.

INT: BEDROOM (Music)

There are posters on the walls of famous drummers, mostly females. Posters range from Cindy Blackman to Terri Lyne Carrington. Pistol Allen to Tommy Lee. There are numerous posters of Sheila E. The largest poster is hanging directly above the bed. It’s a poster of Animal from the Muppets.

Teenage girl is asleep in the bed, curled up with a stuffed Animal. There are dog tags hanging from her neck. The alarm goes off. A hand hits the alarm. The Teen Girl rolls off the bed

INT: Kitchen. Early Morning.

A PITBULL TERRIER comes down the stairs and his followed by the Teenage Girl. They enter the Kitchen. She grabs a Frosted Cherry Pop Tart out of the cabinet. There is an empty Jack Daniels bottle laying on the counter. Some of the contents have spilled on the counter. She cleans the counter and goes to throw the bottle in the trash. She opens the trash lid to find other empty liquor bottles. She wraps up all the trash, grabs a dog leach and she and the Pitbull head out the side door.

EXT: CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL. NIGHT.

The Football Game has ended. People are strewn about the field.

Richandra is packing up her things. AVIANCE approaches Richandra with her Color Guard gear.

AVIANCE

3 ft, why is that so hard. I keep telling these skanks to maintain their 3ft distance. You know how many times I’ve almost gotten brained by someone’s flag. Lack of timing won’t work when we’re qualifying for the WGI Finals. I don’t know why I’m tripping. Those Californian WHITE schools are going to win again this year. Ri? (she snaps her fingers)

RICHANDRA

What’s up?

AVIANCE

Where are you? You’re Dad not hear again, huh?

RICHANDRA

You know that Best Band Show? They’re taping it in Detroit next year.

AVIANCE shrugs her shoulder.

RICHANDRA

Sheilia E is going to be a Judge. I’ve been sitting here trying to figure out a way to get to meet her. I could stand outside all day and get a ticket, but that just puts me in the audience. Then I was thinking, maybe I can talk to the Fox Theatre and ask to be a volunteer. That way I’m sure to at least get up close. I think (Music Store Mr. Sydney) still ushers there during concerts. I know he’s partial to the O’Jays and Patti LaBelle performances, but he could give me the hook up.

AVIANCE

Just start a band?

RICHANDRA

Huh?!

AVIANCE

All the energy you putting into trying to connive your way to meet Sheila E. You may as well get your own band, enter the contest. That way you are sure to meet her. And she’ll get to see you drum.

Richandra stares off into deep contemplation.

AVIANCE

I guess you won’t be thinking about WGI. Come on, let me give you a ride home.

INT: RICHANDRA’S HOUSE. BASEMENT. NIGHT.

Richandra sets up her phone to tape herself playing Tone Loc’s Wild Thing on the drums.

RICHANDRA uploads video onto her Instagram account, titled, “Band Members Needed”

INT: G. BENTLEY SELECT.

The club is filling up. Richandra, Lola and Taji and tuning up. Richandra looks up at the crowd and notices that it’s all women in the venue. She takes a closer look at these women interactions and then panics. She walks up to Aviance, who’s standing on the side playing with her phone.

RICHANDRA  
 What kind of club did Phillip say this was?

AVIANCE  
I don’t know. He said it was one of those swanky exclusive clubs. Why?

RICHANDRA  
 Does anything seem strange to you?

Richandra motions to the patrons. Aviance looks around. It takes her a minute, then she realizes.

AVIANCE

F\*\*k!

RICHANDRA

What the hell Avi!

AVIANCE

It’s going to be fine.

RICHANDRA

No, it’s not going to be fine. We have Lola. Her family will freak if they find out. If I lose Lola over your ineptitude, I’m going to kick your ass!

The G.BENTLEY MANAGER walks over to Aviance.

G.BENTLEY MGR

How are we doing, Ladies?

AVIANCE

Everything’s great. Real hospitable. There is one thing.

G. BENTLEY MRG

Yes?

AVIANCE

Will there be camera’s, live streaming or videography of any type.

G.BENTLEY MRG

No. We normally don’t. Not unless requested for a party or such. It’s a regular night, so we didn’t plan on it.

AVIANCE

Good. We just want to make sure for trademark purposes. Forgive us for being extremely particular about these things. We just want to make sure there are no rogue journalist in the audience with bad lighting and subpar sound pickup.

G. BENTLEY MGR

G. BENTLEY Members are always respectful of patrons’ privacy.

AVIANCE  
Excellent, so If you wouldn’t mind passing the word around, no cell phone snaps of the band at all, okay?

The MANAGER squints her eyes at Aviance and gives a disapproving sigh and walks away.

Aviance turns and smiles at Richandra and gives her a thumbs up.

INT: G. BENTLEY SELECT.

The MGR is at the DJ booth and turns on the microphone. The Patrons turn their attention to the MGR.

G. BENTLEY MGR

How’s everyone doing out there?

There is an unexcited Whoop from the audience.

G. BENTLEY MGR

Some housekeeping items. We still have two GoFundMe campaigns to complete. The first one is Lashanettes’s daughter’s forehead tattoo removal. The second is for Granny Janie’s organic New Zealand honey she takes for her arthritis. If you don’t want to go on the site yourself, I will be taking donations. Ladies. Now, we have a special treat for the Select this evening. 4 Youngins’ came all these way to show us their skills.

RANDOM PATRON

What’s their Name?

G. Bentley MGR

I don’t know.

AVIANCE leans into the DJ booth.

AVIANCE  
 (Whispers)

Not From the Soul.

G. BENTLEY MGR

Introducing, Not From The Soul.

All the girls turn to look at Aviance, who smiles and gives two thumbs up.

Richandra looks at her bandmates. They all nod that they are ready. Richandra taps her Drumsticks three times and they begin to play.

The sound comes out harsh and loud. It takes a minute for Zuri to sing directly in the mike, but she finally notices Aviance making motions for her to place the microphone closer. The stage lights blind the girls, so they do not see the audience. The finish out of breath. There is no response from the audience. Aviance begins to clap and that are sporadic claps from the audience.

G. BENTLEY MGR

They’re a bit loud, don’t you think?

AVIANCE

This what happens when you don’t get the chance to do a proper sound check. Give me a sec.

Aviance walks away from the MGR toward the band.

AVIANCE

Good job. Good Job ladies.

TAJI

The hell you say.

RICHANDRA

We’re not ready. Now we know.

AVIANCE  
 Come on Ri.

RICHANDRA

Shut up Avi. (turns to girls) We’re out of here.

TAJI

What?

ZURI

We’re leaving?

AVIANCE

That’s it? We’re tucking tail?

RICHANDRA  
You’re bullying tactics aren’t going to work Joe Jackson. The sound was off, Zuri needed to be aestheticize, and we’re in a room full of Latifahs. I’m getting them out of here before we embarrass ourselves further.

AVIANCE

Wait, you can’t.

RICHANDRA

Why the hell not?

AVIANCE

I gave my word that we’re do a set, at least 2-3songs. The MGR said she’d throw us some a little something something.

RICHANDRA

I don’t care.

ZURI

But Ri, there may be some Luchini to be got. Let’s do the follow up.

They all turn when they here a guitar sound. Lola playing Nile Rodgers’ beginning riff to Diana Ross’ I’m Coming Out. Taji reaches in her instrument case and pulls out a trumpet. She begins to blow.

INT: G. BENTLEY SELECT

The Patrons stop talking and turn their attention to the Band.

AVIANCE

(to Richandra)

Play them sticks, fool.

Richandra jumps on her drums and plays.

ZURI

(to Aviance)

I don’t know this song.

AVIANCE

How are you from Detroit?

Aviance pulls her phone out, taps on the screen and then hands it to Zuri. Zuri looks at the lyrics. She takes the mic.

ZURI

I’m coming,,,out!

Zuri follows along with the instruments. She begins to loosen up and enjoy herself singing. The audience sing along.

INT: G. BENTLEY SELECT.

The Girls finish the song. The Audience erupts in applauds and cheers. The Girls are shocked and proud of themselves.

INT: FILLMORE DETROIT STAGE.

The girls have instruments in hand and are placed on the stage. Avi is watching from the Wings. The Producers of the Show are sitting in chairs on the main floor typing in computers. Richandra looks and doesn’t see Sheila E. or celebrity judges. Ri turns to Avi. Avi shrugs her shoulders.

PRODUCER #1

Not From The Soul?

WORKER #1

Yup.

RICHANDRA  
 Yes Ma’am. We’re……..

The Producers sigh. Producer #1 makes a circling motion with their hand at the girls.

Zuri looks back at Ri confused. Ri claps her sticks to begin.

The girls perform MANDIKA by Sinead O’Connor for a minute and a half.

PRODUCER #1

Okay.

Their sound is cut. The girls stop playing.

PRODUCER #!

Thank you, Ladies.

AVI

What? That’s it?

The Producers don’t answer. The WORKER comes out to escort them off.

WORKER

Wait on the side.

The WORKER listens in her head piece and nods. She turns to the girls.

WORKER  
First Phase passed. Please wait 1hr for instructions to be sent to the email on file, detailing tomorrow’s Recorded Auditions with show Judges. Please follow those instructions. Thank you.

A large Gentleman comes to escort them out. Behind the curtains we can hear the girls screaming for joy.

Metronome is heard ticking.