

ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Artists Rep presents
We Are Proud to Present a Presentation About the Herero of Namibia, Formerly Known as South West Africa, From the German Sudwestafrika, Between the Years 1884-1915

WHO: Artists Repertory Theatre
WHAT: *We Are Proud to Present a Presentation About the Herero of Namibia, Formerly Known as South West Africa, From the German Sudwestafrika, Between the Years 1884-1915* By Jackie Sibblies Drury. Directed by Kevin Jones.
WHEN: March 8– April 3, 2016

- Preview performances: March 8-11
- Opening Night: March 12
- Regular run: through April 3

WHERE: Artists Repertory Theatre, Morrison Stage, 1515 SW Morrison Street, Portland
TICKETS: \$48 regular price; \$25 preview, student, under 25

- Pay-What-You-Can First Preview performance: March 8
- Buy Tickets: 503.241.1278 or www.artistsrep.org

SHOW IMAGE ATTACHED: Photo credit: David Straub
PRODUCTION PHOTOS AVAILABLE: March 9, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Portland, Oregon | January 18, 2016. Artists Repertory Theatre is honored to present *We Are Proud to Present a Presentation About the Herero of Namibia, Formerly Known as South West Africa, From the German Sudwestafrika, Between the Years 1884-1915*, a provocative and highly original play by one of the newest voices on the American theatre scene, Jackie Sibblies Drury. With this sixth production of its 2015/16 season, Artists Rep brings the Portland premiere of this Off-Broadway hit to local audiences.

A multiracial cast of six idealistic actors sets out to improvise a story about the first colonial genocide of the 20th Century in Africa, but get lost in the reality of their undertaking. The unusual presentation, humor and inevitable discomfort of this provocative new play gripped theatre hubs like New York, Chicago, London, Washington D.C. and Seattle with its unique theatrical investigation of prejudice, power and perspective.

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“Boldly funny, insightful, ironic, urgent, unsettling and electrifying,” wrote Artistic Director Dámaso Rodriguez of Sibblies Drury’s play in the production’s playbill. “I propose that it will be difficult to walk away at the finish of *We Are Proud to Present...* without engaging in an immediate conversation about the questions asked and the lines crossed during the course of the play.”

At the helm of this risk-taking and incendiary production is Director Kevin Jones. “Jackie Sibblies Drury poses many questions for us to wrestle with and yet she offers very few answers,” wrote Jones for the production’s playbill. “One of the questions Drury’s provocative play asks is: What is our responsibility as artists to the stories that we tell and to the owners of those stories? Is it actually possible in America, in the 21st Century, to tell a story about a distant genocide, without the story being appropriated by a contemporary conversation about race? In this day and age when we engage with information on a ‘sound byte’ level, what is our role in sifting through the rhetoric and extracting useful meaning?” Read his full essay [here](#).

FROM THE CRITICS:

“*We Are Proud to Present ...* is “a genuine thunderbolt ... devastatingly funny ... dangerous and primal.”
– The Washington Post

“Incendiary ... inventive ... impressively navigat[ing] the tricky boundaries that separate art and life, the haunted present and the haunting historical past ... Drury’s “breakout work.”
– The New York Times

“90 minutes of original, enlightening, pulse-pounding theatre.”
– Backstage Magazine

“Incendiary results...consistently funny but ultimately discomfiting”
– The New York Times

“Stunning, fantastically funny, and emotionally exhausting”
“A brave new voice on the American theatre scene”
– Maryland Theatre Guide

“*We Are Proud...* impressively navigates the tricky boundaries that separate art and life, the haunted present and the haunting historical past.”
– The New York Times

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Jackie Sibblies Drury is a Brooklyn-based playwright. Her plays include *We Are Proud to Present a Presentation About the Herero of Namibia, Formerly Known as South West Africa, From the German Sudwestafrika, Between the Years 1884-1915*, *Social Creatures* and *And now I only dance at weddings*. The presenters of her plays include Soho Rep, Victory Gardens, Trinity Rep, Matrix Theatre, Woolly Mammoth, Undermain Theatre, InterAct Theatre, Actors Theater of Louisville, Available Light, Company One, and The Bush Theatre in London. Sibblies Drury has developed her work at Sundance, The Ground Floor at Berkeley Rep, A.C.T., The Soho Rep Writer/Director Lab, New York Theatre Workshop, PRELUDE.11&14, The Civilians, The Bushwick Starr, The LARK, The Magic Theatre, The Bay Area Playwrights Festival and The MacDowell Colony. She was a dramaturg for Zero Cost House by Pig Iron
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Theatre Company & Toshiki Okada and The Garden by Nichole Canuso Dance Company. She received the 2012-2013 Van Lier Fellowship at New Dramatists and was the inaugural recipient of the 2012-2014 Jerome Fellowship at The LARK. She is a NYTW Usual Suspect and is currently a member of The Writer's Room at Manhattan Theatre Club and Ars Nova.

GALLERY INSTALLATION

Once again, The Geezer Gallery, one of the Resident Companies of Artists Rep's ArtsHub, brings a diverse and talented group of artists together with work that supports and enriches the work being presented on stage. Titled *Cultural Fusion*, this exquisite exhibition provides an intercultural exchange and understanding of a world whose cultural traditions have been diminished and often lost through colonization, gentrification and globalization. The diverse works celebrate the people, customs, traditions and way of life of world nations whose cultural history and contributions are stunning, vibrant and reflect the richness and diversity of Indigenous cultures and the distinct differences between nations, languages and geographic landscapes. Exhibit artists: Paula Benjaminson, Diane Flack, Cheryl Rogers-Tadevich and Leroy Elie. The Geezer Gallery will host an artist reception at 6:30 pm in the Morrison Lobby before the Wednesday, March 16 performance. More information [here](#).

MUSICAL CONNECTION

Artists Repertory Theatre will present *Loveness Wesa and the Bantus* as part of its *Artists Rep In Concert* series. Zimbabwe-born Loveness Wesa, with her band the Bantus, will perform Afro-Pop on the set of *We Are Proud to Present...* The rollicking African sound of Loveness Wesa is driven by the beat of the inspired musicians in the Bantus Band and promises an evening of joyous music.

Tuesday March 22, 7:30pm on the set of *We Are Proud to Present ...*

Tickets are \$20. More information [here](#).

AUDIENCE ENRICHMENT

To create an opportunity for dialogue around the provocative topics this production explores, we planning to offer a variety of conversation opportunities. Another press release will be sent as soon as those plans are solidified.

We Are Proud to Present a Presentation About the Herero of Namibia, Formerly Known as South West Africa, From the German Sudwestafrika, Between the Years 1884-1915

By Jackie Sibblies Drury

Directed by Kevin Jones^

CAST

Chantal DeGroat*

Actor 6/Black Woman

Joshua J. Weinstein*^

Actor 1/White Man

Vin Shambry*^

Actor 2/Black Man

Chris Harder*^

Actor 3/Another White Man

Joseph Gibson

Actor 4/Another Black Man

Rebecca Ridenour*

Actor 5/Sarah

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CREATIVE TEAM

Kristeen Willis Crosser [^]	Scenic Designer
Wanda Walden	Costume Designer
Peter West	Lighting Designer
Matt Tabor	Composer
Jen Raynak	Musical Director
Mary McDonald-Lewis [^]	Dialect Coach
Kemba Shannon	Choreographer
Luan Schooler	Dramaturg
Will Bailey	Props Master
Jonathan Cole	Fight Director

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers

[^] Artists Rep Resident Artist

ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

Portland's premiere mid-size regional theatre company is led by Artistic Director Dámaso Rodriguez and Managing Director Sarah Horton. Founded in 1982, Artists Repertory Theatre is the longest-running professional theatre company in Portland. For the 2015/16 season Artists Rep will offer eight bold and entertaining plays written by internationally acclaimed playwrights and guided by esteemed directors. Artists Rep productions will feature the work of a core group of accomplished Resident Artists, each with a shared history and a shorthand for collaboration, working alongside guest artists from Portland and beyond. Artists Rep is also home to the ArtsHub, a program which offers residencies within Artists Rep's facility to smaller and emerging arts organizations with subsidized administrative, performance and rehearsal space, as well other infrastructural services. The Artists Rep facility serves as a community arts center, where performance venues and other public spaces are continually buzzing with activity.

Artists Rep's mission is to engage diverse audiences in fresh, thought-provoking and intimate theatre. We are committed to world-class acting, directing, design and stagecraft that support new playwriting and aspire to embody great literature, moving audiences to truly feel — to *experience* — storytelling in a way that only the best live theatre can.

The 2015/16 Artists Repertory Theatre season is presented by Ronni Lacroute/WillaKenzie Estate and David and Christine Vernier. *We Are Proud to Present ...* is presented at Artists Rep with support from show co-sponsors Trish & Bennett Garner and Kris Olson & Les Swanson . Our season media sponsors are The Oregonian and KINK. Other season support comes from the Regional Arts Culture Council, Oregon Community Foundation, Collins Foundation, Meyer Memorial Trust, James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation and Work for Art.

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