Artists Rep’s 2018/19 Season Kicks Off with Obie Award-Winning Drama

SKELETON CREW
by Dominique Morisseau

WHO: Artists Repertory Theatre
WHAT: SKELETON CREW
By Dominique Morisseau
Directed by William (Bill) Earl Ray
WHEN: September 2-30, 2018
Preview Performances: September 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
Opening Night/Press Night: Saturday, September 8 @ 7:30pm
Regular run September 9 through September 30: Wednesdays-Sundays @ 7:30pm, Saturdays @ 2pm, Sundays @ 2pm
Additional Performances:
  Tuesday: September 11 and 25 @ 7:30pm
  Wednesday: September 19 @ noon
Post-Matinee Talkbacks:
  September 9, 16, 23, 30* – post 2pm performance
  September 19 – post noon performance
  *Oregon Psychoanalytic Center
Post-Show Discussion “Tech Talk”: Wednesday, September 5
Open Captioned Performance: September 29 @ 2pm
Closing Performance: September 30 @ 7:30pm
WHERE: Artists Repertory Theatre, Morrison Stage, 1515 SW Morrison St., Portland
TICKETS: $60 regular price; $30 preview/student/under 35
Artists Rep participates in Arts for All and the Multnomah County Library’s Discovery Pass Program.
Buy Tickets: 503.241.1278 or www.artistsrep.org
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PREVIEW PERFORMANCE SPECIALS:
- Sept. 2: Sunday Sounday – Pay-What-You-Will + Live Motown music with pianist Mark Steele at 6:30pm
- Sept. 4: Ten Buck Tuesday – $10 ticket
- Sept. 5: Wine Down Wednesday – $30 ticket + a glass of Dark Horse wine
- Sept. 6: Thirsty Thursday – $30 ticket + Lagunitas beer
- Sept. 7: Foodie Friday – $30 ticket + discounted bar food

SHOW IMAGE ATTACHED: Design credit – Jeff Hayes, Kisha Jarrett, Mary Beth Leavens

PRODUCTION PHOTOS AVAILABLE: September 5, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE. Portland, Oregon | August 16, 2018. Artists Repertory Theatre kicks off its 2018/19 season with Skeleton Crew by Dominique Morisseau, directed by William (Bill) Earl Ray. Skeleton Crew is the third play in Morisseau’s The Detroit Project (A 3-Play Cycle) following Detroit ‘67 and Paradise Blue. For Skeleton Crew, Morisseau received a 2016 Obie Award and the play was selected for the 2014 Kilroy List. Skeleton Crew runs from September 2 through September 30 on the Morrison Stage.

It’s 2008, and one of the last auto plants in Detroit is dying on the vine. The factory workers that remain are living paycheck-to-paycheck but amidst the backbreaking work and brutally long shifts, they have somehow shaped themselves into a makeshift family. Faye, a factory lifer, is the glue that holds everything together. But with less than six months before she can retire with a full pension, Faye learns that management has a plan that could threaten her whole existence, leaving her torn between loyalty to her coworkers or her own survival. Heartbreakingly tense with moments of ethereal beauty, Skeleton Crew reveals the struggle to stay relevant in a society that constantly changes.

“A deeply moral and deeply American play, with a loving compassion for those trapped in a system that makes sins, spiritual or societal, and self-betrayal almost inevitable.”
– Ben Brantley, The New York Times

“A deeply vulnerable blend of frustration, conversation and denial.”
– Chris Jones, Chicago Tribune

“What’s most relevant in Skeleton Crew is the play’s four characters, it’s not just about Detroit,” said play Director William (Bill) Earl Ray, during the play’s first rehearsal. “This group of people is a family, they struggle together, spend most of their lives together, and together they try to figure out what’s next. What will happen? How will they survive? What happened to these characters in Skeleton Crew, set in 2008 Detroit, is a sad occasion—but it is still going on. It is my hope that audiences will identify with these characters and find their own connections to these four people who represent the working-class peoples of America.”

“It’s a privilege for Artists Rep to introduce the work of the extraordinary Dominique Morisseau to Portland theatre audiences,” said Artistic Director Dámaso Rodríguez at the first rehearsal of Skeleton Crew. “Morisseau’s rapidly growing body of work includes a string of finely crafted plays that are being seen by audiences across the country. In Skeleton Crew, I expect audiences will make an immediate connection with her intricately drawn characters and find themselves transported by this timely, powerful play.”

Skeleton Crew is co-sponsored by Trish & Bennett Garner and Kris Olson & Les Swanson.

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ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Dominique Morisseau is the author of The Detroit Project (A 3-Play Cycle), which includes the following plays: Skeleton Crew (Atlantic Theater Company), Paradise Blue (Signature Theatre), and Detroit ’67 (Public Theater, Classical Theatre of Harlem and NBT). Additional plays include: Pipeline (Lincoln Center Theatre), Sunset Baby (LAByrinth Theatre), Blood at the Root (National Black Theatre), and Follow Me To Nellie’s (Premiere Stages). Dominique is an alumna of The Public Theater Emerging Writer’s Group, Women’s Project Lab, and The Lark’s Rita Goldberg Playwrights’ Workshop; has developed work at Sundance Lab, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and the Eugene O’Neil Playwrights Conference. Her work has been commissioned by Steppenwolf Theatre, Women’s Project, South Coast Rep, People’s Light and Theatre, and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival/Penumbra Theatre. She most recently served as Co-Producer on the Showtime series Shameless. Following its record-breaking run at Berkeley Repertory Theatre last summer, her new musical Ain’t Too Proud — The Life and Times of The Temptations opened at The Kennedy Center (Washington DC) and The Ahmanson (Los Angeles) this season, and is set to open at The Princess of Whales Theater (Toronto) in October. Awards include: Spirit of Detroit Award, PoNY Fellowship, Sky-Cooper Prize, TEER Trailblazer Award, Steinberg Playwright Award, Audelco Awards, NBFT August Wilson Playwriting Award, Edward M. Kennedy Prize for Drama, Obie Award, Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellowship, and being named one of Variety’s Women of Impact for 2017-18.

- Dominique Morisseau: An American Classic by Luan Schooler, Artists Rep Director of New Play Development and Dramaturgy.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

William (Bill) Earl Ray is a director and actor with 40 years of experience in the business. William is pleased to be back at Artists Rep after such a long absence. His last direction at Artists Rep was Ain’t Misbehavin’ and he acted in Artists Rep’s A Raisin in the Sun as Walter Lee Younger. Some of William’s other directing credits include A Raisin in the Sun and Having Our Say, starring Ms. Irma P. Hall (Big Mama of Soul Food movie fame, and A Family Thing), Beehive, The 60’s Musical, The Gin Game, The Gospel at Colonus, Fires in the Mirror, A Song for Coretta, The Gifts of the Magi, Seven Guitars, A Soldier’s Play, The Glass Menagerie, A Lovesong for Miss Lydia, Annie Get Your Gun, Jerry’s Girls, Two Trains Running, Agnes of God, The Heiress, Sea Marks, Ceremonies in Dark Old Men, Lilies of the Field, and many more. Some of William’s acting credits include The Whipping Man, Master Harold and the Boys, The Meeting, Blues for an Alabama Sky, Driving Miss Daisy, Misery, God’s Favorite, Two Trains Running, Joe Turner’s Come and Gone, Dirty Work, Cobb, Miss Evers’ Boys, The Sunset Limited, The Piano Lesson, Audience, Of Mice and Men, A Streetcar Named Desire, Simply Heavenly, Bank Job, Amen Corner, and many more. TV and film credits include The Tuskegee Airmen, The Gas Café, Cadillac Ranch, The Temp, Dr. Giggles, Terror in the Towers, Better Off Dead, Walker Texas Ranger, and more. William is a member of Actors’ Equity Association and the Screen Actors Guild and is a graduate of Evergreen State College with a Bachelor of Arts in the performing arts.

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CAST
Shelley B. Shelley as Faye | Black Nativity, Gospel of Lovingkindness, Smoldering Fires, A Sunbeam (PassinArt Theatre); American Night: The Ballad of Juan Jose (Milagro); My Walk Has Never Been Average (August Wilson Red Door Project)

Vin Shambry as Dez | Magellanica, A Civil War Christmas, Intimate Apparel, Superior Donuts (Artists Rep); The Gun Show (CoHo Theatre, international tour); Rent, Miss Saigon, Honk and Big River (national tours)

Tamera Lyn as Shanita | Wilted Flowers (Sunflower Creations); Angie Tribeca (TBS); American Vandal (Woodhead Entertainment), Here and Now (Weirdo Productions); Citizen: an american lyric (Reed College); Ruined (The Reading Parlor)

Bobby Bermea as Reggie | Between Riverside and Crazy, Exiles, Topdog/Underdog, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Blue/Orange, A Raisin in the Sun (Artists Rep); Fences, The Brother/Sister Plays (Portland Playhouse)

CREATIVE TEAM
Director | William (Bill) Earl Ray
Scenic Designer | Megan Wilkerson
Costume Designer | Wanda Walden
Lighting Designer | Miranda K. Hardy
Sound Designer | Sharath Patel
Dramaturg | Luan Schooler
Stage Manager | Carol Ann Wohlmut
Props Master | Robert Amico
Choreographer | Kemba Shannon
Intimacy Director | Amanda K. Cole

PRODUCTION TEAM
Producing Director | Shawn Lee
Associate Producer & Production Manager | Kristeen Willis Crosser
Casting Director | Vonessa Martin
Production Assistant | Karen Hill
Board Op | Jason Coffey
Wardrobe/Costumer | Clare Hungate-Hawk
Technical Director | Nathan Crone
Scene Shop Foreman | Eddie Rivera
Master Carpenter | Charlie Capps
Scenic Charge | Sarah Kindler
Master Electrician | Ronan Kilkelly
Sound Technician | David Petersen

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ABOUT ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

Artists Repertory Theatre’s mission is to produce intimate, provocative theatre and provide a home for artists and audiences to take creative risks. Artists Rep is Portland’s premiere mid-size regional theatre company, and is led by Artistic Director/Interim Managing Director Dámaso Rodríguez. Founded in 1982, Artists Repertory Theatre is the longest-running professional theatre company in Portland. Artists Rep became the 72nd member of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) in 2016 and is an Associate Member of the National New Play Network (NNPN).

Artists Rep’s 2018/19 season can be found [here](#).

Artists Rep has become a significant presence in American regional theatre with a legacy of world, national, and regional premieres of provocative new work with the highest standards of stagecraft. The organization is committed to local artists and features a company of Resident Artists, professionals of varied theatre disciplines, who are a driving force behind Artists Rep’s creative output and identity.

**RESIDENT ARTISTS**—Artists Rep productions feature the work of a core group of over two dozen multidisciplinary theatre professionals. Hailing from around the country, the Resident Artists are nationally renowned and award-winning actors, directors, writers, designers, and educators who have chosen to make Portland and Artists Rep their artistic home. Working together and independently, they create inventive and theatrically rich experiences for audiences while playing a major role in defining Portland’s cultural landscape.

**TABLE|ROOM|STAGE**—Established in 2015, Table|Room|Stage (T|R|S) is Artists Rep’s new play program that offers development opportunities for local and national playwrights, and ensures that underrepresented voices are heard on stage. This program strives to make a meaningful impact on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the theatre field by mandating opportunities for women writers and writers of color, and cultivating the next generation of theatre-goers. Artists Rep is committed to bringing the exciting work of women, transgender, and non-binary writers and writers of color to its stages with this program. Artists Rep’s first completed T|R|S commission was *The Talented Ones*, by Yussef El Guindi (premiered April, 2017). The second T|R|S commission was *The Thanksgiving Play*, by Larissa FastHorse (Sicangu Lakota) (premiered April, 2018). The third T|R|S commission will be *Wolf Play* by Hansol Jung (to premiere March, 2019). Current playwright commissions include: Linda Alper, Dael Orlandersmith, Steve Rathje, and Andrea Stolowitz. T|R|S is also developing work with playwrights Anthony Hudson and Susannah Mars. To learn more about all the projects, playwrights, and programs of T|R|S visit [here](#).

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ARTSHUB—Artists Rep is also home to the ArtsHub, where a diverse range of artists and arts organizations find a home and thrive with access to affordable administrative, performance, and rehearsal space, as well as myriad support services. The ArtsHub serves as a community arts center, where performance venues and lobbies buzz with creative energy and Portland’s arts-loving audiences gather. Over the past year, Artists Rep hosted 324 rehearsals and more than 600 performances, events, and other happenings by 51 groups. To learn about the arts organizations of Artists Rep’s ArtsHub visit here.


artistsrep.org

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