

SKELETON CROWTON

BY DOMINIQUE MORISSEAU

DIRECTED BY NICOLE A. WATSON

PART OF THE WOMEN'S VOICES
THEATER FESTIVAL

BALTIMORE
CENTER
STAGE

2017-2018 SEASON



CATALYST

A person who causes action | An agent of change | A stimulus, spark, or incitement

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700 North Calvert Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

EDITOR

Maggie Beetz

DESIGN

Bill Geenen

ADVERTISING

ads@centerstage.org

BOX OFFICE

410.332.0033

ADMINISTRATION

410.986.4000

CENTERSTAGE.ORG

INFO@CENTERSTAGE.ORG

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ABOUT US

Baltimore Center Stage is a professional, nonprofit institution committed to entertaining, engaging, and enriching audiences through bold, innovative, and thought-provoking classical and contemporary theater.

Named the State Theater of Maryland in 1978, Baltimore Center Stage has steadily grown as a leader in the national regional theater scene. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Kwame Kwei-Armah OBE and Managing Director Michael Ross, Baltimore Center Stage is committed to creating and presenting a diverse array of world premieres and exhilarating interpretations of established works.

Baltimore Center Stage believes in access for all—creating a welcoming environment for everyone who enters its doors and, at the same time, striving to meet audiences where they are. In addition to Mainstage and Off Center productions in the historic Mount Vernon neighborhood, Baltimore Center Stage ignites conversations among a global audience through digital initiatives, which explore how technology and the arts intersect. The theater also nurtures the next generation of artists and theatergoers through the Young Playwrights Festival, Student Matinee Series, and many other educational programs for students, families, and educators.

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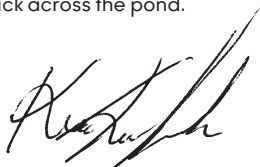
Dear Friends,

When I arrived in America to begin my time at Baltimore Center Stage, Dominique Morisseau was the first US playwright I had the honor of collaborating with. I directed the original production of *Skeleton Crew* at the Lark Play Development Center, as well as the world premiere of *Detroit '67* for the Public Theater in New York. As my time here comes to a close, it seems fitting to circle back to Dominique's words and work.

Some of you may remember our 2015/16 production of Dominique's *Detroit '67*, the second play (chronologically) in her Detroit Project trilogy and a story that spotlights the importance of family against the social unrest of the Detroit riots. *Skeleton Crew* connects us with a different kind of family, working in the long shadow of Detroit's more recent history.

Detroit and Baltimore have a shared history of postindustrial struggle. What *Skeleton Crew* portrays about the city and people behind this struggle I think rings true for our city—and our audiences—as well. As usual, Dominique's portrayal of ordinary people leading their lives while major historical events unfold around them shows us just how powerful theater, and storytelling, can be.

While I may be stepping away as the Artistic Director of this theater, it is not yet goodbye. I will be back to direct the last play of this season, *SOUL The Stax Musical*. And I will always carry this city, and this theater, with me in my heart back across the pond.



Kwame Kwei-Armah
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



KWAME KWEI-ARMAH

SKELETON CREWTON

BY DOMINIQUE MORISSEAU

DIRECTED BY NICOLE A. WATSON

PART OF THE WOMEN'S VOICES
THEATER FESTIVAL

JAN 25 - MAR 4, 2018

THE CAST

in alphabetical order

Brittany Bellizeare
Shanita

Stephanie Berry
Faye

Sekou Laidlow
Reggie

Gabriel Lawrence
Dez

Lori M. Doyle
Stage Manager

Lindsay Eberly
Assistant Stage Manager

THE ARTISTIC TEAM

Nicole A. Watson
Director

Mariana Sanchez
Scenic Designer

Karen Perry
Costume Designer

Burke Brown
Lighting Designer

Darron L. West
Sound Designer

Mari Andrea Travis
Assistant Director

Faetra Chatard Carpenter
Production Dramaturg

Pat McCorkle
Katja Zarolinski
McCorkle Casting, Ltd.
Casting

There will be one intermission.

Please turn off electronic devices.

The Actors and Stage Managers employed in this production are Members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Skeleton Crew is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.

Skeleton Crew was developed at the Lark Play Development Center, New York City and the 2014 Sundance Institute Theatre Lab at the Sundance Resort.

Winner of the 2014 Sky Cooper New American Play Prize at Marin Theatre Company, Mill Valley, CA, Artistic Director, Jasson Minadakis; Managing Director, Michael Barker.

Director Nicole A. Watson is the Season 2017/18 recipient of the Lord Baltimore Capital Corporation Visiting Artist Fund.

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A STAMPING PLANT,
DETROIT, MICHIGAN.
WINTER. SOMEWHERE AROUND 2008.

“Should you ever find yourself near an active press line, you’ll no doubt know it. Like the liftoff of an airliner, the stamping of auto body parts requires inhuman force, producing decibels registered by your internal organs. **The presses sound, unmistakably, as if they could kill you, which they could, without much interrupting their normal functioning.** You’d notice the collision more than they would.”

—Paul Clemens,
Punching Out: One Year in a Closing Auto Plant



MORISSEAU'S MUSICAL NOTATIONS

FAEDRA CHATARD CARPENTER
Production Dramaturg

Many years ago, when penning his 1963 book *Blues People*, the provocateur poet and playwright Amiri Baraka (a.k.a. LeRoi Jones) reflected on the indivisible nature of African American music and history. Musing that you could ostensibly “go from one to the other, actually from the inside to the outside, or reverse, and be talking about the same things” Baraka was struck by the revelation that “the music was explaining the history as the history was explaining the music.”

Many dramatists, past and present, can boast of work that breathes vibrant truth into Baraka’s musical maxim (August Wilson readily comes to mind). However, no one of late has refreshed this notion or bestowed it with quite the same distinctive fervor as Dominique Morisseau does with her unique triumvirate known as *The Detroit Project*. Morisseau designed each play within the trilogy with a specific “soundtrack” in mind; the musical motifs keenly reflecting each play’s time, place, and given circumstances.

The trilogy begins with *Paradise Blue*. Set in 1949 within Detroit’s now-faded Blackbottom neighborhood, *Paradise Blue* dramatizes the story of a nightclub owner who struggles against the gentrifying forces that aim to “renew” his community. As the annals of history reveal, Blackbottom birthed an effervescent jazz scene that was cultivated by legendary artists such

as Duke Ellington, Billy Eckstine, Pearl Bailey, Ella Fitzgerald, and Count Basie. In making *Blackbottom* the setting for her play, Morisseau concurrently acknowledges the history of her native city’s ever-changing landscape while also paying homage to Detroit’s rich musical heritage.

Whereas the backdrop of *Blackbottom* reminds us of Detroit’s musical roots, *Detroit ‘67*, the next play in the sequence, reignites the more popular knowledge that the “Motor City” is also the “Motown City.” At the same time, as the title suggests, *Detroit ‘67* also uses its narrative focus to address the racial tensions that indelibly mark our public memories of July 1967. All of this is strategically supported by the sounds of Berry Gordy’s legendary musical empire, thereby paying tribute to a host of beloved Motown groups and their enduring hits.

And then there is *Skeleton Crew*, the final play within Morisseau’s dramatic triptych. *Skeleton Crew* follows the conceptual refrain set by its antecedents, integrating specific characterizations with the equally present characters of Detroit and its music. In place of the swing of jazz or Motown’s bop, *Skeleton Crew*’s more contemporary setting leads Morisseau to use hip hop as the play’s leitmotif: a fitting pairing, not only because hip hop is the recognized beneficiary of earlier forms of African American music, but



because—as Morisseau indicates—hip hop complements the discernable yet undercover musicality found within the heartbeat of an auto plant.

It was, in fact, a concept-shaping visit to a Ford factory that prompted the playwright to take note of the rhythmic, syncopated, and synchronized sound that pervades such facilities: “I watched them work the line and I thought: ‘Wow. This is just like choreography.’ It was gorgeous and theatrical.” Undoubtedly influenced by this experience, Morisseau infused her script with hip hop, even writing stage directions that describe the hums and rattles of imagined machinery as “hip hop drum beats” that “blend into the rhythm—a cacophony of working class hustle.”

Beyond calling for the harmonious blending of hip hop music and industrial clamor, Morisseau extends the musical motif through her characters as well. Shanita, a young auto plant worker who relishes the mechanical rhythms that surround her, meditates on the sounds of the stamping plant: “Sound like harmony,” she says to a colleague, “like life happening. Production. Good sound.” For Shanita, the sounds of the stamping plant provide audible markers of productivity and employment. Although not conventionally melodic, they are still music to her ears.

Such a seemingly simple notation powerfully reverberates with the scope of Morisseau’s Detroit trilogy. In writing about Detroit—its history and people—through the emotive lens of particular soundtracks, Morisseau designs her plays to be multi-sensory experiences that can be heard, seen, and felt. Tapping into the power of music, born from specific cultural and historical contexts, Morisseau creates a theatrical milieu that invites audiences to understand and experience the fullness of Detroit.

In so doing, she not only encourages us to pay our respects to Detroit’s (faded) glories, but she also invites us to recognize the beauty and power found in the city’s labor, struggles, resilience, and survival. Through Morisseau’s careful orchestration of *The Detroit Project*, the resonance and reverberations of Baraka’s reflection holds true: music *does* explain history and history *does* explain music—not only in terms of a city and its songs, but also through the indivisible histories of Detroit, African American music, and the broader tapestry of American life and culture. 🚗

“WALKING ON THE LINE:”

THE TEETERING VIEW IN SKELETON CREW

FAEDRA CHATARD CARPENTER, Production Dramaturg



It has been a decade since the U.S. stumbled into the aches and pains of the Great Recession. National statistics prove that the financial turmoil that began in December 2007 fell far short of the debilitating trials and traumas suffered by Americans during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Yet and still, talk of a "Great Recession" felt like a delusional understatement for some cities, Detroit, Michigan being a prime example.

For Detroit, the nation's ills were unwelcome complements to the steady decline of the city's once-upon-a-time bustling auto industry. Once known as "The Auto Capital of the World," Detroit was the hub of major automobile makers such as Ford, GM, and Chrysler. Back in the day, business boomed and the city's population proliferated. In fact, from 1920 to 1950 Detroit proudly held the title of being the fourth largest city in the country. For decades the Motor City was on a seemingly unstoppable and aspirational joy ride, and the good times seemed like they would continue to roll on—that is, until they rolled out.

While the auto industry had experienced ups and downs before 2007, the recession marked a monumental shift in gears. Compounded by an influx of industry-specific factors' (collapsing of credit markets, rising oil prices, foreign competition, plummeting auto sales, and the displacing effects of automation), the Great Recession further aggravated the already tenuous condition of automobile companies, steering them—and the people of Detroit—into a course of uncertainty. It is amidst these trying times that we enter the world of *Skeleton Crew*.

The small cadre of workers in *Skeleton Crew*, a makeshift family, are first-hand witnesses to the stripping and shrinking of both their communities, the auto industry (the

source of their livelihood and fellowship) and the city of Detroit. The characters and predicaments offer audiences a vivid portrait of recent, real life drama. In doing so, *Skeleton Crew* prompts us all to recognize how thin the line can be between the haves and have nots—and how easily such lines are crossed, by accident or intention.

In many respects, the specific history dramatized by *Skeleton Crew*—the story of Detroit, the Auto Industry, America—is all about "lines," both literal and metaphoric. Socio-economic lines. Racial lines. City lines. Assembly lines. Picket lines. The lines between the haves and the have nots. And, in the words of *Skeleton Crew's* characters, the affirming or numbing experience of "working the line" and the empowering or paralyzing consequence of "walking on the line."

True to this thematic observation is the fact that in writing the play, Dominique Morisseau "works the lines" by mapping out her characters' journeys so that we, the audience, invariably "walk the line" ourselves. We are encouraged to refrain from judging these characters; to teeter at the brink of indecision and expectation because, well, sometimes there are no easy answers, no clear delineations, no easily-made pronouncements of right or wrong, good or bad.

Likewise, the characters of *Skeleton Crew*—not unlike the city of Detroit—find themselves in circumstances that ask them to be cautious yet hopeful, poised at the precipice of uncertainty. Like the city they call home, they are trying to move forward, while participating in an undesirable balancing act. Weary and wary but still standing, still working, they continue moving forward, heads held high, with daredevil precision, walking on a very thin line. 🚗



NOTHING STOPS DETROIT

FAEDRA CHATARD
CARPENTER
Production Dramaturg

"I definitely think people come in with assumptions about Detroit...Detroiters know that people feel negatively about the city, so they're very particular about who's going to write us. When I tell people from Detroit that I'm writing about the city, the first thing they say is, 'Okay, make us look good now.' And I'm like, 'Why? That's not an interesting play!' I'm not going to do that. But what I promise is: I'm not going to make you look bad. **I'm going to make you look human. Because that's what we are.**"

—Playwright Dominique Morisseau

"[Once] we built war machines for the world...we built everything and put them on ships and shipped 'em to England and everywhere. Y'all know what we did. Keep up with that history. Now we can't even buy an American-made washing machine. Or an iron. So where did all our manufacturing base go? Where'd it all go? **'Cause we built everything. We built everything. Everything. America did.**"

—George McGregor, President of Detroit's United Auto Workers Union, Local 22

"It's amazing that we use all these euphemisms: downsizing, outsourcing, rightsizing. When all it means is you just lost your job and you have no way to pay your house note. Don't know where your kids are going to get the money for clothes or for food. **We've lost the human pathos, the empathy, the drama.**"

—Jon Clark, Founding Editor, *Plant Closing News*

"Listen, like I don't know if y'all understand, but they shutting down schools, they shutting down—futures, basically. And that's not cool, like, it's just not cool. You know, it almost makes me feel like we might be, regressing.... **We've got enough problems, y'all, now let's just come up with some way to solve these problems** 'cause I think we destined for the heavens, Detroit."

—Crystal Starr, Detroit Native and Video Blogger

"We're not going to accept any more downsizing. **We want to hear about upsizing, bigsizing, supersizing Detroit.**"

—Unidentified Detroit Citizen at Town Hall Meeting



Welcome!

I am so happy you are here for this performance. It's a part of the 2018 Women's Voices Theater Festival in the nation's capital region and the new play you are about to see is one of many being produced to bring attention to the abundance of wonderful women playwrights creating exciting, relevant theater today and the amazing array of companies in the area.

I'm very glad to be a part of this project, and proud to be helping the Festival advocate for women writing for the stage, for new plays, and for the sharing of diverse stories. I hope you enjoy the show and see as many of the Women's Voices Theater Festival shows as possible.





A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Allison Janney".

Allison Janney
Honorary Chair



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WOMEN'S VOICES THEATER FESTIVAL FULL SCHEDULE

Queens Girl in Africa

by Caleen Sinnette
Jennings
Mosaic Theater Company
January 4 – February 4

The Way of the World

by Theresa Rebeck
Folger Theatre
January 9 – February 11

Rabbit Summer

by Tracey Conyer Lee
Ally Theatre Company
January 11 – 28

Sovereignty

by Mary Kathryn Nagle
Arena Stage
January 12 – February 18

Imogen

by Charlie Marie McGrath
Pointless Theatre
January 12 – February 11

Love is a Blue Tick Hound

by Audrey Cefaly
Rapid Lemon Productions
January 12 – February 17

4,380 Nights

by Annalisa Dias
Signature Theatre
January 16 – February 18

The Wolves

by Sarah DeLappe
Studio Theatre
January 17 – March 4

This is All Just Temporary

by Olivia Haller
Convergence Theatre
January 19 – February 10

Jefferson's Garden

by Timberlake
Werfenbaker
Ford's Theatre
January 19 – February 11

Waxing West

by Saviana Stanescu
4615 Theatre Company
January 19 – February 10

Skeleton Crew

by Dominique Morisseau
Baltimore Center Stage
January 25 – March 4

Handbagged

by Moira Buffini
Round House Theatre
January 31 – February 25

The Trojan Women Project

by Rachel Hynes &
the cast
Brave Spirits Theatre
January 31 – February 25

Digging Up Dessa

by Laura Schellhardt
The Kennedy Center for
the Performing Arts
February 3 – 18

Familiar

by Danai Gurira
Woolly Mammoth
Theatre Company
February 5 – March 4

Noura

by Heather Raffo
Shakespeare Theatre
Company
February 6 – March 14

Peepshow

by dog & pony dc
dog & pony dc
February 7 – 25

Aubergine

by Julia Cho
Olney Theatre Center
February 7 – March 4

All She Must Possess

by Susan McCully
Rep Stage
February 8 – 25

No Word in Guyanese For Me

by Wendy Graf
Rainbow Theatre Project
February 8 – March 4

Count Down

by Dominique Cieri
Strand Theater Company
February 14 – March 4

The Lathe of Heaven

by Natsu Onoda Power &
Richard Henrich
Spooky Action Theater
February 15 – March 11

The Veils

by Hope Villanueva
Nu Sass Productions
February 15 – March 4

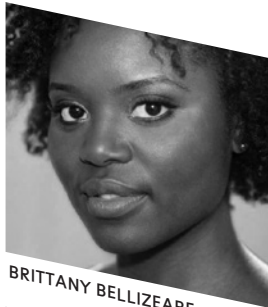
THE CAST

Brittany Bellizeare Shanita

Baltimore Center Stage: debut. **New York**—Gallery Players: *A Raisin in the Sun* (Beneatha). **Regional**—The Guthrie: *The Bluest Eye* (Pecola); TheaterWorks Hartford: *Sunset Baby* (Nina); La Jolla/Berkeley Rep: *The Last Tiger in Haiti* (Rose); Northern Stage: *The Mountaintop* (Camae); Two River Theatre: *Seven Guitars* (Ruby); the Yard: *Archy & Mehitabel* (Ensemble). **Educational Tour**—McCarter: *Sunjata Kamalenya* (Player 3). **Film/TV**—*The Blacklist*, *Eye Candy*, *The Knick*. **Education**—MFA: The New School for Drama; BS: Spelman College. NAACP Theatre for Best Ensemble nomination for *The Last Tiger in Haiti* (2017/18).
brittanybellizeare.com

Stephanie Berry Faye

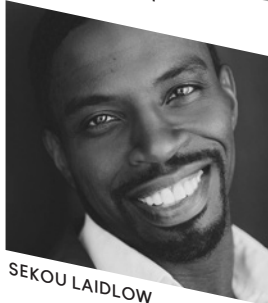
Baltimore Center Stage: *Wild with Happy*, *Gleam*. **Regional**—The Guthrie: *The Bluest Eye*; Yale Repertory Theater: *Seven Guitars*. **TV**—Upcoming: *Luke Cage*, *The Last OG*; she appeared on *Bull*, *Blacklist*, *Blue Bloods*, *Louie*, *Broad City*, and all the *Law and Order* programs. **Film**—*Submission*, *OG*, *The Delivery Man*, *Invasions*, *No Reservations*, *Finding Forrester*. **Awards/Accolades**—She is a recipient of an Obie Award for her one-woman show, *The Shaneequa Chronicles* and the TCG/Fox Fellowship as a Distinguished Artist.



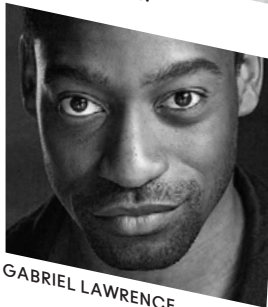
BRITTANY BELLIZEARE



STEPHANIE BERRY



SEKOU LAIDLAW



GABRIEL LAWRENCE

Other—She appears in *Mississippi*, *Sassafras* and *Myrrh* with her storytelling company. She's a founder of Blackberry Productions, a Harlem-based company that develops new works and brings theater to underserved populations. As a playwright, Stephanie's new musical play, *Sarah Sings a Love Story*, was selected as one of the 10 Best New Jersey Theater Productions of 2017. Special thanks to Marshall Jones and Crossroads Theatre.

Sekou Laidlow Reggie

Baltimore Center Stage: *A Civil War Christmas*. **Broadway**—Manhattan Theater Club: *Airline Highway* (various). **Regional**—Huntington Theater Company: *A Doll's House* (Torvald); American Repertory Theater: *Father Comes Home from the Wars* (Homer), *Seven Guitars* (The Juilliard School-Guest Artist, Hedley); Philadelphia: *The Mountain Top* (MLK); Pioneer Theater Co: *Of Mice And Men* (Crooks); Studio Theater DC: *Runaway Home* (Paul); Lime Kiln: *Stonewall Country* (Barefoot); Playwrights: *You Shouldn't Have Told* (Ray-Ray); Lambs Theater: *Midnight Onto Rain* (Samuel); Tower Theater: *Seven Brides For Seven Brothers* (Gideon), *A Raisin in the Sun* (Asagai); Arena Players: *Amen Corner* (David), *An Enemy Of The People* (Nansen), *Something's Afoot* (Geoffrey); Lynchburg Theater: *Rumors* (Officer Welch).

Film/TV—*The Breaks, Good Wife, The Mend, Person of Interest, The Carrie Diaries, Smash, Law and Order, The Wire, Homicide, Pop Foul, Half Pint, Divided We Stand.* **Awards**—Columbia Short Festival Best Performance for Lead Actor: *Pop Foul.* **Education**—The Juilliard School Drama Division.

Gabriel Lawrence
Dez

Baltimore Center Stage: debut. **Off Broadway**—National Black Theatre: *Carnaval* (Audelco Award Best Ensemble). **Tour**—The Acting Company: *Macbeth, Julius Caesar* (title roles) and *X or Betty Shabazz v. The Nation.* **Regional**—Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park: *To Kill a Mockingbird*; Shakespeare Santa Cruz: *Man in the Iron Mask, Henry IV.2*; Human Race Theatre: *Lombardi.* **TV**—*Madam Secretary, The Good Fight, Mysteries of Laura, Shades of Blue, Alpha House, What Would You Do?.* **Education**—MFA: University of California, San Diego (Theater); BA: West Texas A&M University (Mass Communication).

Lori M. Doyle
Stage Manager

Baltimore Center Stage: *The Importance of Being Earnest, Ma Rainey's Black Bottom.* **Broadway**—*The Visit, You Can't Take It With You, The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (revival), *Felafel, Jane Eyre—the Musical, 1776, Say Goodnight Gracie*, and 11 Mainstage productions and numerous Gala events for The Roundabout Theatre Company. **Regional**—most recently, *Cry It Out* at Actors Theatre of Louisville 2017 Humana Festival and *Queens for a Year* at Hartford Stage; other

credits include Contemporary American Theater Festival (nine summer seasons, two plays in rep each season); multiple productions at The La Jolla Playhouse, The Westport Country Playhouse, The Huntington Theatre Company, and Actors Theatre of Louisville. **Off-Broadway**—Second Stage Theatre Company, RTC @ The Laura Pels, The NY Shakespeare Festival, The Lambs Theatre Company, Circle Rep, The American Jewish Theatre. **Other**—80+ corporate and special events with 33 different production companies.

Lindsay Eberly
Assistant Stage Manager

Baltimore Center Stage: *The Secret Garden, Pride & Prejudice, 4000 Miles, After the Revolution, It's a Wonderful Life, Amadeus, Twelfth Night, A Civil War Christmas, Animal Crackers, Beneatha's Place, Clybourne Park, The Mountaintop, The Completely Fictional...Final Strange Tale of E.A. Poe.* **Off-Broadway**—Atlantic: *Tell Hector I Miss Him*; Theater For One at Signature Theatre, Carnegie Hall: *West Side Story.* **Regional**—CATF *The Niceties, The Second Girl, pen/man/ship, WE ARE PUSSY RIOT, The Full Catastrophe, Dead & Breathing, The Ashes Under Gail City, Modern Terrorism, Scott & Hem in the Garden of Allah, The Insurgents, Ages of the Moon, Inana, and The Eelwax Jesus 3-D Pop Music Show*; ATL Humana Festival: *Recent Alien Abductions*; Hartford Stage: *Queens for a Year*; Berkshire Theater Festival: *A Thousand Clowns, Homestead Crossing.*

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The Director and Choreographer are members of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor union.



The scenic, costume, lighting, and sound designers in LORT theaters are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.



Musicians engaged by Baltimore Center Stage perform under the terms of an agreement between Center Stage and Local 40543, American Federation of Musicians.

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THE ARTISTIC TEAM

Dominique Morisseau

Playwright/Actress

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). She is also the book writer on the new musical *Ain't Too Proud - The Life and Times of the Temptations* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre). Dominique is an alumna of The Public Theater Emerging Writer's Group, Women's Project Lab, and Lark Playwrights Workshop and has developed work at Sundance Lab and Eugene O'Neil Playwrights Conference. Her work has been commissioned by the Hip Hop Theater Festival, Steppenwolf Theater Company, Women's Project, South Coast Rep, People's Light and Theatre, and Oregon Shakespeare Festival/Penumra Theatre. She recently served as Co Producer on the Showtime series *Shameless*. Awards include: Stavis Playwriting Award, NAACP Image Award, Spirit of Detroit Award, Weissberger Award, PoNY Fellowship, Sky-Cooper New American Play Prize, TEER Spirit Trailblazer Award, Steinberg Playwright Award, Edward M. Kennedy Prize for Drama (*Detroit '67*), Audelco and OBIE Award (*Skeleton Crew*).

Nicole A. Watson

Director

Baltimore Center Stage: debut. **New York**—The Women's Project: *We Play for the Gods*; NY Fringe: Kevin R. Free's *Night of the Living N-Word* (world premiere). **Regional**—Playmakers Rep: Colman Domingo's *Dot*; Cincinnati Playhouse: *Mr. Joy*; CATF: Kara Lee Corthron's *Welcome to Fear City* (world premiere), *World Builders*; Asolo Repertory Theatre: *The Great Society*; Washington National Opera: *Approaching Ali* (world premiere). **Other**—A.C.T. Conservatory: *Las Meninas*; Two River Theater's Little Shakespeare: *Merry Wives of Windsor*; Smith College: *Our Lady of Kibeho*; North Carolina School of the Arts: *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*; Member of The New Georges Jam; 2015 Artist-in-Residence at the Drama League; 2013 Drama League Directing Fellow; 2011 recipient of the League of Professional Theatre Women's Josephine Abady Award. **Education**—BA: Yale University; MA: NYU Gallatin School. nicoleawatson.com.

Mariana Sanchez

Scenic Designer

Baltimore Center Stage: debut. **Off Broadway/Other New York**—The Public Theater: *Winter's Tale*, *Troy*; The Play Company: *Oh My Sweet Land*; Primary Stages: *Fade*; The Bushwick Starr: *Frontieres Sans Frontieres*; The New School for Drama: *Chained Woman*. **Regional**—TheaterWorks: *The Wolves*, *Fade*; Oregon

Shakespeare Festival:

The River Bride; Amherst College: *Peer Gynt*; Yale Repertory Theater: *WAR*; Yale University Theater: *Pefer Pan*. **Education**—BA: UNAM (architecture); MFA: Yale School of Drama (scenic design). **Awards**—The Donald and Zorca Oenslager Fellowship Award in Design and FONCA Artistic Residency Award.

Karen Perry

Costume Designer

Baltimore Center Stage: debut. **Regional**—Dallas Theater Center: *Miller, Mississippi*, *Hair*, *Dreamgirls*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Clybourne Park*, *The Trinity River Plays*; Guthrie Theater: *The Lion in Winter* (dir. Kevin Moriarty); ETC: *Porgy & Bess*; Hartford Stage: *Ma Rainy Bottom Blues*, *Having Our Say*; Encore New York City Center: *Cabin in the Sky*; The National Black Theatre: *Dead & Breathing*; Two Rivers Theater: *Ma Rainy Bottom Blues*, *Lives of Reason*, *Seven Guitars*, *Sweet Blues*, *Guadalupe in the Guest Room*; Quick Silver Theater Company: *Proof*; Signature Theatre: *stop. reset*, *The Piano Lesson*; PlayMakers Repertory Company: *Trouble in Mind*; Mark Taper Forum: *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*. **Awards**—Best Costume Design for *Dreamgirls* (Dallas Theater Center) from Black Theatre Award of Dallas.

Burke Brown

Lighting Designer

Baltimore Center Stage: *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*. **New York**—New

World Stages: *Church & State*; Mabou Mines: *Imagining the Imaginary Invalid*; Metropolitan Museum: *Celestina*; Rattlestick Playwrights Theater; 52nd Street Project; Ars Nova; NYSF-Public Theater.

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Darron L. West Sound Designer

Baltimore Center Stage: debut. Darron is a Tony Award and Obie Award-winning sound designer whose work for dance and theater has been heard in over 600 productions all over the United States and internationally in 14 countries. His accolades include the Drama Desk, Lortel, Audelco and Princess Grace Foundation Statue Award's.

Mari Andrea Travis Assistant Director

Baltimore Center Stage: *Lookingglass Alice* (assistant director and dance captain). **Broadway**—*Fela! Nigeria* (production assistant). **Choreography**—credits include MSU: *Black Nativity* *The Wiz*; Spotlights Theater: *Ain't Misbehavin*; Arena Players: *Smokey Joe's Café*; guest choreography residencies: Georgetown University, MSU, Duke Ellington School for the Arts, Friends School. **Directing**—credits include Arena Players: *Spell #7*, *Colorblind: The Katrina Monologues*. **Education**—BA: Morgan State University (Theater). **Professional/Other**—co-founder and creative director of Good Stuff On Stage, a performing arts-based institution dedicated to serving Baltimore's underserved communities through innovative programming and community outreach.

Faedra Chatard Carpenter

Production Dramaturg

Baltimore Center Stage: *Pride and Prejudice*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Whipping Man*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *Fabulation*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*. **Regional**—Mosaic Theater Company: *Queens Girl in Africa*; Kennedy Center: *The Wings of Ikarus Jackson*, *Locomotion*, *New Voices/New Visions*; African Continuum: *The Amen Corner*, *Fresh Flavas New*, *Play Development program*; TheatreWorks: *Fences*; Crossroads: Former Resident Dramaturg/Literary Manager, *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*, *Spirit North* (world premiere); Arena Stage: Former Fellow and Literary Associate. *Holiday Heart*, *Long Day's Journey Into*

Night, The Odyssey (American premiere). **Professional**—Associate Professor of Theatre and Performance Studies, University of Maryland, College Park. **Education:** BA: Spelman College; MA; Washington University; PhD Stanford University.

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Baltimore Center Stage:

Lookingglass Alice, *The Christians*, *Jazz*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *Detroit '67*, *As You Like It*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Marley*, *One Night in Miami...*, *Amadeus*, *Wild with Happy*, *Twelfth Night*, *A Civil War Christmas*. **Broadway**—*Amazing Grace*, *On the Town*, *End of the Rainbow*, *The Lieutenant of Inshmore*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Amadeus*, *She Loves Me*, *Blood Brothers*, *A Few Good Men*, etc. **Off-Broadway**—*Clever Little Lies*, *Dr. Ruth*, *Stalking the Bogeyman*, *Freud's Last Session*, *Tribes*, *Our Town*, *Almost Maine* and *Driving Miss Daisy*. **Over 50 regional theaters**—Guthrie (16 seasons), George Street Theatre (14 seasons), Connecticut Rep, Pittsburgh Public, Barrington Stage. **Over 60 films**—*Senior Moment*, *Year by the Sea*, *Child of Grace*, *Premium Rush*, *Ghost Town*, *Secret Window*, *Tony and Tina's Wedding*, *The Thomas Crown Affair*, *The 13th Warrior*, *Madeline*, *Die Hard III*, *School Ties*. **TV/web**—Planned Parenthood series *Talkin' About*, *Twisted*, *Sesame Street*, *Californication* (Emmy nom), *Max Bickford*, *Hack*, *Strangers with Candy*, *Barbershop*, *Chappelle's Show*. mccorklecasting.com

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LEADERSHIP

Artistic Director

KWAME KWEI-ARMAH

Kwame Kwei-Armah OBE is a playwright, director, actor, and broadcaster. At Baltimore Center Stage he has directed *Jazz*, *Marley*, *One Night in Miami...*, *Amadeus*, *dance of the holy ghosts*, *The Mountaintop*, *An Enemy of the People*, *The Whipping Man*, and *Things of Dry Hours*. He was named Best Director in City Paper's Best of Baltimore (2014), and he was a finalist for the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation's Zelda Fichandler Award for Best Theater Director. His works as playwright include *One Love: The Bob Marley Musical*, *Elmina's Kitchen*, *Let There Be Love*, *A Bitter Herb*, *Statement of Regret*, *Seize the Day*, and *Beneatha's Place*, which debuted at Baltimore Center Stage in 2013 as part of The Raisin Cycle. Other directorial credits include *One Love: The Bob Marley Musical* at Birmingham Repertory Theatre; *One Night in Miami...* at London's Donmar Warehouse; *Twelfth Night*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and the world premiere of *Detroit '67* at The Public Theater in New York; Naomi Wallace's *The Liquid Plain* at Signature Theatre; Dominique Morisseau's *Skeleton Crew* at the Lark Play Development Center; and the world premiere of *The Liquid Plain* at Oregon Shakespeare Festival. He has served on the boards of Theatre Communications Group, Steinberg Playwright Awards, The National Theatre, and The Tricycle Theatre (London), and as Artistic Director for the World Arts Festival in Senegal. He was named the Chancellor of the University of the Arts London, and in 2012 was named an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

Managing Director

MICHAEL ROSS

Michael Ross returned to Baltimore Center Stage last season after working for seven seasons as managing director of Westport Country Playhouse. From 2002 to 2008 he was managing director of Center Stage. Previously, Ross was managing director of Long Wharf Theatre (1997–2002) where he was on the producing team for the commercial transfer of the Pulitzer Prize winner *Wif*. He was general manager and business manager at Hartford Stage (1986–1996). Ross served as program officer/project director at National Arts Stabilization, and worked with Baltimore Opera Company and Alley Theater, Houston. Ross has consulted in fundraising, board development, executive search, and strategic planning for theaters nationwide, including Kansas City Repertory Theatre, SITI Company, Wilma Theater, Trinity Repertory Company, Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, and Everyman Theatre. He has been a panelist for programs hosted by the National Endowment for the Arts, Theatre Communications Group, and New England Foundation for the Arts, among others, and was an adjunct professor in The Yale University School of Drama Theater Management Program. He has served on numerous Boards including Theatre Communications Group, The National Women's Hall of Fame, and the Connecticut AIDS Residence Coalition. Ross currently serves on the Board of the Burry Fredrik Foundation.



KWAME KWEI-ARMAH



MICHAEL ROSS



HANA S. SHARIF



GAVIN WITT

ARTISTIC

Associate Artistic Director HANA S. SHARIF

Hana S. Sharif is a director, playwright, and producer. She served as Associate Artistic Director, Director of New Play Development, and Artistic Producer at Hartford Stage; recently as Program Manager of the ArtsEmerson Ambassador Program; and as Developmental Producer/Tour Manager of Progress Theatre’s musical *The Burnin’*. Hana also served as co-founder and Artistic Director of Nasir Productions, which brings theater to underserved communities. Her directing credits include: Baltimore Center Stage: *The Christians*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*; *Pride & Prejudice* (DCArts: Best Director/Best New Play); Regional: *The Whipping Man*, *Gem of the Ocean* (six CCC nominations), *Gee’s Bend* (CCC Award Best Ensemble, two nominations), *Next Stop Africa*, *Cassie*, *The Drum*, and *Identity*. Hana has directed numerous developmental workshops, including Elyzabeth Gregory Wilder’s *The Chat and Chew Supper*

Club, Janine Nabers’ *A Swell in the Ground*, and Marcus Gardley’s *The House That Will Not Stand*. Her plays include *All the Women I Used to Be*, *The Rise and Fall of Day*, and *The Sprott Cycle Trilogy*. Hana is the recipient of the 2009–10 Aetna New Voices Fellowship and Theatre Communications Group (TCG) New Generations Fellowship. She serves on the board of directors for the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance and the Sprott Foundation.

Associate Director, Director of Dramaturgy GAVIN WITT

Gavin Witt came to Baltimore Center Stage in 2003, after nearly 15 years in Chicago as an actor, director, dramaturg, translator, and teacher—and co-founder of the classically based greasy joan & co theater. Among his translations and adaptations are a half-dozen Shakespeare plays; including a Jeff-nominated version of *Pericles*; Jeff-nominated translations of Beaumarchais’ *The Barber of Seville* and Ionesco’s *Macbett*; and Baltimore Center Stage productions of *The Voyage Inheritance* and last season’s *As You Like It*. Baltimore Center Stage directing credits include *Twelfth Night* and a recent short film from a Kenneth Lin script commissioned by Baltimore Center Stage and the Goethe Institut-Washington as part of the international P3M5 project—as well as more than a dozen Young Playwrights Festival entries, many more play readings, and the 50th Anniversary Decade Plays. In addition to working as a dramaturg on scores of productions, readings, and workshops at Baltimore Center Stage, he has also helped develop new work around the country. A graduate of Yale and the University of Chicago, he is currently on the Humanities faculty at Peabody Conservatory, having previously taught at the University of Chicago, DePaul, and Towson; has served on the advisory boards of several theaters; and spent more than a decade as a regional vice president of LMDA, the national association of dramaturgs, before joining its board.

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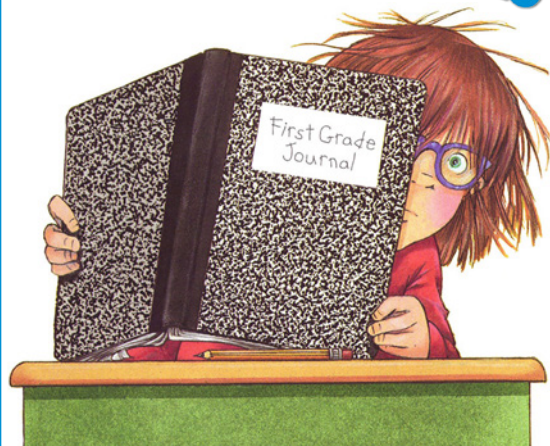
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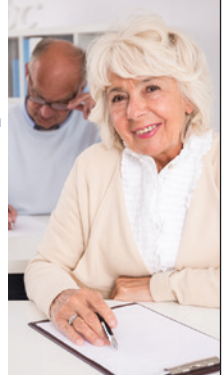
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Wheelchair-accessible seating is available for every performance.



BLIND/LOW VISION

The Audio Description/Touch Tour performances of *Skeleton Crew* take place on Sun, Feb 18 at 2 and 7:30 pm. Touch tours present a pre-show opportunity to feel props and set pieces on stage. Large print and braille programs are available upon request.



DEAF/HEARING LOSS

A Closed Captioned performance of *Skeleton Crew* takes place on Sun, Feb 18 at 7:30 pm. Assistive listening and Closed Captioning devices are available to be borrowed at no cost. An ASL Interpreted performance will take place Fri, Mar 2 at 8 pm.



PARKING

If you are parking in the Baltimore Sun Garage (diagonally across from the theater at Monument & Calvert) you can pay via credit card at the pay station in the garage lobby or at the in-lane pay station as you exit. We do not validate parking tickets.

LATE SEATING

Patrons arriving after curtain will be seated at the house manager's discretion.

FEEDBACK

We hope you have an enjoyable, stress-free experience! Your feedback and suggestions are always welcome: info@centerstage.org or access@centerstage.org

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