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McCARTER THEATRE CENTER and NEW YORK’S PUBLIC THEATER
ANNOUNCE 2018 LAB SPOTLIGHT PRESENTATION:
NATHAN ALAN DAVIS’ PROTECT THE BEAUTIFUL PLACE

A unique partnership is piloted to support the development of this new play. Patricia McGregor directs, with public showings on Feb. 2-3, 2018 at McCarter.

Princeton, NJ: From award-winning playwright and Princeton University Lecturer in Theatre Nathan Alan Davis (The Princeton and Slavery Plays, Nat Turner in Jerusalem) comes the first in a trilogy of new plays about a multi-generational African-American family. After the recent death of her husband, Gail works hard to keep her rural Illinois household running and to ensure her daughter, mother-in-law, and grandson are happy and healthy while coming to terms with her own mortality. Protect the Beautiful Place is a poignant exploration of how we define the idea of home and the choices we make to protect the ones we love.

This Spotlight presentation, under the umbrella of McCarter’s LAB and in a partnership with New York’s Public Theater, takes place in the intimate rehearsal-room-turned-performance-Studio within the Roger S. Berlind Theatre, 91 University Place, Princeton, NJ.

Workshop presentations are Feb. 2-3 at 7 p.m. Tickets are $25 and available online at mccarter.org, by phone 609-258-2787, or in person at the Ticket Office. Limited availability.

About the McCarter/Public Theater Partnership
McCarter Theatre Center and The Public Theater in New York City are thrilled to pilot a new collaboration in support of Nathan Alan Davis’ play. This unique partnership offers artistic guidance and resources from both major artistic institutions at the earliest stage in the playwright’s process. The collaboration provides both infrastructure and creative input. The work is hosted at the McCarter with the dramaturgically aligned input coming from both theaters.

McCarter and the Public are excited to engage in this new framework for authentically collaborative original play development—one that is dedicated first and foremost to the artist and the work, and poised to deepen his/her artistic relationships.
About Spotlight
The annual Spotlight presentation is a signature feature of McCarter’s LAB, a creative incubator for artistic development. In a laboratory environment, supported by the theatre’s artistic and production staff, artists rehearse and explore the dramaturgical and aesthetic world of a project over 2 to 4 weeks. The Spotlight is a mid-phase workshop affording playwrights and directors the opportunity to deepen their experience of working collaboratively to explore an original play or musical, over an extended rehearsal period. Often incorporating basic design elements, artists are able to see the work “on its feet” in front of a live audience, solicit feedback, and incorporate changes and adjustments.

About the Playwright

Nathan Alan Davis’ plays include Nat Turner in Jerusalem (New York Theatre Workshop, 2016), Dontrell Who Kissed the Sea (NNPN Rolling World Premiere; Steinberg/ATCA New Play Citation, 2015) and The Wind and the Breeze (New Harmony Project residency; premiering at Cygnet Theatre, 2018). He is currently under commission from The Public Theater, Arena Stage and Williamstown Theatre Festival. Nathan is a Lecturer in Theatre at Princeton University, a Usual Suspect at NYT W and a 2016 graduate of Juilliard’s Lila Acheson Wallace American Playwrights Program. He received his MFA from Indiana University and his BFA from the University of Illinois.
About the Director

Patricia McGregor is a director and writer from St. Croix, US Virgin Islands. She has twice been profiled by The New York Times for her direction of world premieres. Recent credits include the world premiere of Lights Out: Nat “King” Cole (People’s Light), Skeleton Crew (Studio Theater), the world premiere of Good Grief (Center Theater Group), Measure for Measure (The Old Globe), The Parchman Hour (Guthrie Theater), Hamlet (The Public Theater), Ugly Lies the Bone (Roundabout Theatre Company), brownsville song (b-side for tray) (Lincoln Center Theater), the world premiere of Stagger Lee (Dallas Theater Center), and the world premiere of Hurt Village (Signature Theatre Company). Her other credits include A Raisin in the Sun, The Winter’s Tale, Spunk, Becky Shaw, Adoration of the Old Woman, Blood Dazzler, Holding It Down, Four Electric Ghosts, Nothing Personal, and The House That Will Not Stand. For several years she has directed the 24 Hour Plays on Broadway. She is a Usual Suspect at New York Theatre Workshop, a co-founder of Angela’s Pulse, and a Paul & Daisy Soros Fellow at Yale School of Drama, where she also served as Artistic Director of the Yale Cabaret.

About The Public Theater

THE PUBLIC is theater of, by, and for the people. Artist-driven, radically inclusive, and fundamentally democratic, The Public continues the work of its visionary founder Joe Papp as a civic institution engaging, both on-stage and off, with some of the most important ideas and social issues of today. Conceived over 60 years ago as one of the nation’s first nonprofit theaters, The Public has long operated on the principles that theater is an essential cultural force and that art and culture belong to everyone. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Oskar Eustis and Executive
Director Patrick Willingham, The Public’s wide breadth of programming includes an annual season of new work at its landmark home at Astor Place, Free Shakespeare in the Park at the Delacorte Theater in Central Park, The Mobile Unit touring throughout New York City’s five boroughs, Public Forum, Under the Radar, Public Studio, Public Works, Public Shakespeare Initiative, and Joe’s Pub. Since premiering HAIR in 1967, The Public continues to create the canon of American Theater and is currently represented on Broadway by the Tony Award-winning musical Hamilton by Lin-Manuel Miranda and John Leguizamo’s Latin History for Morons. Their programs and productions can also be seen regionally across the country and around the world. The Public has received 59 Tony Awards, 169 Obie Awards, 53 Drama Desk Awards, 54 Lortel Awards, 32 Outer Critic Circle Awards, 13 NY Drama Desk Awards, and 6 Pulitzer Prizes. publictheater.org

About the McCarter LAB
The McCarter LAB is a year-round creative incubator that provides key support to writers at all stages of their careers - cultivating meaningful artistic relationships and original works for McCarter’s main stages and future co-productions. Fostering the development of new plays, adaptations, musicals and investigations into the classics, the LAB consists of: readings, workshops, the Sallie B. Goodman Artist Retreat, commissions, and the annual Spotlight presentation. It also provides McCarter’s audiences with an exclusive window into the creative process. The LAB allows McCarter to take artistic risks, whether giving a first production to an emerging script, or allowing an experienced playwright to return to his/her creative roots. Each LAB project receives financial and artistic support, tailored to the specific needs of the collaborating writers, composers, directors, designers, and performers. Most LAB programs take place in the intimate and flexible 70-90 seat performance studio/rehearsal room located within the Roger S. Berlind Theatre.

The McCarter LAB is supported by a generous grant from The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust. McCarter Theatre Center thanks the following funders for their meaningful support of McCarter’s New Play Development Program: The Thomas and Agnes Carvel Foundation, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Dramatists Guild Fund, The Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, The Shubert Foundation and The Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation.

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