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McCARTER ANNOUNCES HIGHLY ANTICIPATED 2019-2020 THEATER SERIES

Emily Mann’s final season to showcase powerful themes that have defined the award-winning playwright and director’s trailblazing career

Series features captivating stories from the next generation of artists and bold new takes on classic works

PRINCETON, NJ: March 19, 2019 - Unveiling Emily Mann’s final season as Artistic Director and Resident Playwright, McCarter Theatre Center has announced the full schedule for its upcoming 2019-2020 Theater Series, dubbed “Signature Emily.” The highly anticipated series pays homage to Mann’s trailblazing career, embodying the powerful themes that have cemented her personal legacy and influenced the American theater at large: giving a voice to women and people of color, embracing risk in pursuit of art that inspires social dialogue, discovering and mentoring emerging talent, and championing inventive cross-company collaborations.

“It is by listening that we can change – and change others,” said Mann. “The theater is live; it’s about the connection between the audience and what’s on the stage; it’s a forum to take on big conversations. I never want to play it safe. I want to put on unforgettable theater, real works of art, and that is risky. This season celebrates the rewards of taking risks through a collection of life-affirming stories and experiences that I hope will fill audiences with energy, hope and joy.”

Following is the full 2019-2020 series:

Gloria: A Life (September 6 – October 6, 2019)
The daughter of an American historian, Mann was exposed to the intersection of political consciousness and storytelling at an early age. These formative experiences inspired a “quietly radical” undercurrent in her artistic voice that manifested in documentary plays exposing a host of controversial, politically tinged themes.

It is in that spirit that McCarter opens the 2019-2020 Theater Series with Mann’s Gloria: A Life, which weaves a richly detailed tapestry about one of the most inspiring and remarkable women of our time: Gloria Steinem. The show will be produced in
association with the A.R.T. (American Repertory Theater at Harvard University), directed by Tony Award®-winner Diane Paulus, and restaged for McCarter by Emily Mann.

Five decades after Steinem began raising her voice for equality, her clarion call is as urgent as ever. The first act is Gloria’s story; the second is our own, as a talking circle emerges and the audience joins in conversation.

**Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein** (October 15 – November 3, 2019)
Throughout Mann’s tenure, collaboration in the creation of new stagecraft has brought a wide variety of artists and celebrated theater companies to Princeton, including Steppenwolf, Fiasco, Bedlam, A Red Orchid Theatre, and more.

In 2007, Chicago’s celebrated Lookingglass Theatre Company partnered with McCarter on their groundbreaking production of Lookingglass Alice, a high-flying reinterpretation of Lewis Carroll’s “Alice in Wonderland” stories, written and directed by Lookingglass ensemble member David Catlin.

Twelve years later, Lookingglass returns to McCarter with a galvanic production of Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein. In this new invention—written and directed by Catlin—an eerie evening of ghost stories crackles to life as Shelley unspools her tale of love, horror, power and unholy experimentation.

**Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*** (December 10 – 29, 2019)
The importance of McCarter’s relationship with the local community is synonymous with Mann’s leadership. David Thompson’s adaptation of Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol, directed by Adam Immerwahr, continues the annual tradition of Ebenezer Scrooge’s magical journey through Christmas past, present, and future. With beloved carols and original music, 35 members from the greater Princeton community share the stage with a professional cast, bringing this story to life. This holiday tradition ushers in the community spirit with all the joy, wonder and generosity that Scrooge ultimately discovers.

**Goodnight Nobody** (January 10 – February 9, 2020)
Mann’s early career established one of the few female voices in a male-dominated industry and solidified her commitment to mentor subsequent generations of women artists. Among the scores of playwrights influenced and inspired by Mann is Rachel Bonds, who returns to the main stage with Goodnight Nobody, a McCarter commission directed by Tyne Rafaeli.

Bonds’ deeply moving and funny play about becoming an adult and the complexity of new motherhood involves a group of old friends—once as close as family—who struggle to stay connected as their lives change and their paths diverge.

**Sleuth** (March 10 – 29, 2020)
Across the theater industry, McCarter connections abound thanks to Mann’s support of the next generation of theater artists. Alumni of McCarter’s lauded internship program have risen to the top in every discipline. Adam Immerwahr, McCarter’s former Associate Artistic Director, began his professional journey as a McCarter intern in directing and producing and has since forged a career filled with innovative and community-oriented
projects. Now the Artistic Director of Washington, D.C.’s Theater J, Immerwahr returns for the 2019-2020 season with a new take on Anthony Shaffer’s Sleuth.

A suspenseful game of cat-and-mouse, Sleuth is a wicked parody of the Agatha Christie thriller filled with plotted murders, jealousy, and revenge. McCarter’s Sleuth is the latest in a string of mystery masterpieces that has included Ken Ludwig’s Baskerville (2015), and Agatha Christie’s The Mousetrap (2016) and Murder on the Orient Express (2017).

The Refuge Plays (May 8 – June 7, 2020)
The final production in the “Signature Emily” season features a world premiere from rising star playwright Nathan Alan Davis. Davis’ connections with McCarter and Princeton have included a high-profile work as part of the 2017 Princeton and Slavery Project, along with his role as a lecturer in theater for Princeton University’s Lewis Center for the Arts.

The Refuge Plays follows an eccentric, mysteriously-inclined Black family over four generations, as they carve out an existence in a southern Illinois forest. Davis’ trilogy of plays traverses sixty years of family history with his trademark combination of allegory and plain truth, deftly laying bare the hopes and dreams of his characters. Directed by Patricia McGregor and produced in association with The Public Theater in New York, this final flourish highlights Mann’s role as an ally, collaborator, and champion for African American voices and artists.

In addition to the theater series, other McCarter events over the coming season will honor Mann’s contributions to the American stage, celebrate what makes McCarter a unique destination, and highlight its bright future ahead.

“As we discover in our community and education work, theater can, in fact, save lives,” says Mann. “All our stories have value; when we tell our stories to each other, we can be transformed. Theater is not a luxury—it’s essential to the health of the soul. The work we do helps people find their voices and understand their neighbors. We all become better citizens. In this final season at McCarter, this is a message I want to impart.”

TICKET AND SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION
Subscription packages for the 2019-2020 Theater Series, as well as package options for McCarter’s Dance, Music, and Signature Events - are available now by calling 609-258-5050, visiting mccarter.org, or visiting the McCarter Ticket Office, located at 91 University Place in Princeton.

2019-2020 THEATER SERIES AT A GLANCE

Gloria: A Life
By Emily Mann
Original Direction by Diane Paulus
Restaged for McCarter by Emily Mann
Produced in association with American Repertory Theater
September 6 – October 6, 2019 (opening: Saturday, September 14)
Lookingglass Theatre Company’s production of
Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*
Written and Directed by David Catlin
October 15 – November 3, 2019 (opening: Saturday, October 19)

*A Christmas Carol*
By Charles Dickens
Adapted by David Thompson
Directed by Adam Immerwahr
December 10 – 29, 2019 (opening: Friday, December 13)
Sponsored by Bank of America

*Goodnight Nobody*
By Rachel Bonds
Directed by Tyne Rafaeli
An original McCarter commission
January 10 – February 9, 2020 (opening: Saturday, January 18, 2020)

*Sleuth*
By Anthony Shaffer
Directed by Adam Immerwahr
March 10 – 29, 2020 (opening: Saturday, March 14, 2020)

*The Refuge Plays: A Trilogy*
By Nathan Alan Davis
Directed by Patricia McGregor
Produced in association with The Public Theater
May 8 – June 7, 2020 (opening: Saturday, May 16, 2020)

**ABOUT McCARTER THEATRE CENTER**
McCarter Theatre Center’s mission is to create world-class theater and present the finest performing artists for the engagement, education, and entertainment to the community. Under the artistic leadership of award-winning playwright and director Emily Mann and Managing Director Michael S. Rosenberg, McCarter produces a vibrant six-play Theater Series each season. Winner of the 1994 Tony Award® for Outstanding Regional Theatre, world premieres include Christopher Durang’s *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* (2013 Tony® - Best Play); Tarell Alvin McCraney’s *The Brother/Sister Plays*; Emily Mann’s *Having Our Say*; and Danai Gurira’s *The Convert*. Other works which later moved to Broadway include Brian Friel’s *Translations*, Nilo Cruz’s *Anna in the Tropics* (Pulitzer Prize), and Frank McGuinness’ translation of *Electra*. Through the leadership of Special Programming Director William W. Lockwood, McCarter brings the finest artists from around the world to Princeton, New Jersey, including upcoming visits from Angelique Kidjo, Esperanza Spalding, David Sedaris, and many more. Education and outreach efforts serve tens of thousands through student matinees, in-school residencies, and adult education classes. McCarter is supported by contributions from Princeton University, the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, corporations, foundations, and from over 2,000 individuals. More at [mccarter.org](http://mccarter.org).

All dates and titles are subject to change. For more information, contact: Tom Miller, Director of Public Relations, [tmiller@mccarter.org](mailto:tmiller@mccarter.org) 609.258.6524 | 91 University Place, Princeton, NJ 08540