



PROFILE THEATRE

2019-20: GENERATIONS

Brenden Jacobs-Jenkins/ Lynn Nottage/ Paula Vogel

FOR IMMEDIATE MEDIA RELEASE:

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Profile Theatre Presents Lynn Nottage's Drama About the Devastating Impacts of the Decline of American Manufacturing

Winner of the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for Drama

Keenly observed and often surprisingly funny — but ultimately heartbreaking — the work traces the roots of a tragedy with both forensic psychological detail and embracing compassion. —Charles Isherwood, New York Times

Passionate and necessary...a masterful depiction of the forces that divide and conquer us. —TimeOutNY

The first theatrical landmark of the Trump era. — The New Yorker

PORTLAND, OREGON. December 17, 2019- PROFILE THEATRE presents Playwright Lynn Nottage's story of capitalist decline set in one of American's poorest cities. Based on Nottage's extensive interviews with factory workers in Reading, Pennsylvania, the play chronicles the impacts of a manufacturing plant closure on a group of friends. Alternating between 2000 and 2008, *Sweat* captures the inevitable tragedy of global capitalism, and its impacts on the lives of American workers through a wincing story of people losing their livelihood, becoming desperate and lashing out at themselves and each other.



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In the years since its premiere in 2015, the play has been heralded as a premonition of Trump's rise to power and an illustration of the ways that racism and white nationalism take hold in the face of economic precariousness. *Sweat* premiered at Oregon Shakespeare Festival in 2015 and went on to the Public Theatre for a run before touring via the Public's mobile theatre unit to eastern states and the Midwest. Five years on (and after its Pulitzer award) the play will have its Portland premiere under the direction of former Oregon Shakespeare Festival Associate Artistic Director, Christopher Acebo. The production marks the launch of the post-Oregon Shakespeare Festival chapter of this multi-talented producer, designer and director with his first production as director in Portland.

Sweat is part of **Generations**, which explores Lynn Nottage, Paula Vogel, Brendan Jacobs-Jenkins. Spread over two years, **Generations** will present three full productions from each writer, plus an array of concert stagings, panel discussions, community engagement activities and playwright residencies, allowing patrons to go in depth into each writers' body of work while also drawing out the connections that emerge from holding up these master artists in an extended conversation. The first year of this double season will focus largely on Vogel and Nottage, with two full productions of each. The second year will focus on Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, with three productions of his, alongside one production each of Vogel and Nottage. This clustering is designed to enhance the experience of going in-depth in a playwrights' body of work.

Sweat, by Lynn Nottage is directed by **Christopher Acebo** with design by **Peter Ksander** (set and projection— *In the Wake* at Profile), **Kristeen Willis** (lights— *Tiny Beautiful Things* at Portland Center Stage), **Rodolfo Ortega** (sound — *Magellanica* at Artists Repertory Theatre), and **Alex Pletcher** (costumes— *Let Me Down Easy* at Profile). The cast includes **Duffy Epstein** (*True West* at Profile), **Victor Mack** (Drammy for *Brother/Sister Plays* at Portland Playhouse), **Alissa Jessup** (*The Wake* at Profile), **La'Tevin Alexander** (*Jump* with Confrontation Theater and Milagro), **Linda Hayden** (*Bakersfield Mist* at The Chapel Theatre Collective), **Cyrcerli Ash** (*Christmas Carol* at Portland Playhouse), **Jim Vadala** (*The Flick* at Third Rail Repertory), **Chris Ramirez**, and **Bobby Bermea** (Drammy for *Fences* at Portland Playhouse).

WHEN: *Sweat* runs January 16-February 2, 2020 at Imago Theatre.

Thursday and Friday (January 16-17 @ 7:30 pm) are preview performances. *Sweat* opens on Saturday (January 18). The show runs through February 2, Thursday, Friday, Saturday @ 7 pm and Sunday at 2 pm.

TICKETS: Now available online at www.profiletheatre.org

Contact box office at (503)-242-0080 or boxoffice@profiletheatre.org

Season Subscriptions on sale now for \$160-\$220

Single Tickets on sale now for \$20-52



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*Discounts offered for groups, students, teachers, ASL, 30-and-under, Arts for All and previews.

NEXT UP: *Indecent* by Paula Vogel, directed by Josh Hecht (a co-production with Artists Repertory Theatre). February 19-March 8, 2020.

Nominated for a Tony Award for Best Play of 2017. Sholem Asch's play *The God of Vengeance* made a splash on Broadway in 1923, when it was shut down and all of the actors were arrested on charges of obscenity for portraying a lesbian romance between a brothel-owner's daughter and one of the prostitutes. Pulitzer-prize winning playwright Paula Vogel weaves scenes of Asch's incendiary play with the imagined conversations with the risk-taking company that brought the script to the stage. *Indecent* is a riveting backstage drama filled with music, groundbreaking Yiddish theatre, and stage magic.

ABOUT Profile Theatre is one of only three theaters in the country to dedicate their season to an in-depth exploration of a playwright's vision, using that unique vision as a lens to broaden perspectives on our shared world. Now, in an innovation that deploys Profile's mission to unique effect, we present ***Generations***: two seasons of plays from three of America's most beloved playwrights whose plays dramatize life, labor and death in the United States and beyond from three different generational vantage points. These visionaries are all connected through the prizes and programs that have shaped them.

A gifted playwright, Vogel mentored a generation of playwrights, including Lynn Nottage, who studied with Vogel at Brown. Jacobs-Jenkins was the Paula Vogel Playwright-in-Residence at the Vineyard Theatre, and was on the Susan Smith Blackburn committee that awarded the prize to Nottage for *Sweat*. All Pulitzer Prize nominated (or winning), all heralded for the beauty of their writing,, their innovative theatricality and deep humanity, Vogel, Nottage and Jacobs-Jenkins' work stands as a testament to the brilliance of American theatre. Artistic Director Josh Hecht notes: "I have loved all three of these playwrights for some time. Paula Vogel helped shape my theatrical aesthetic; Lynn Nottage opened my heart with her fierce portraits; Branden Jacobs-Jenkins continues to explode my sense of what plays can look like and speak to. I'm thrilled to share their work with a Portland audience in an extended two-year artistic conversation."

ABOUT Lynn Nottage— PLAYWRIGHT

A student of Vogel's at Brown University, Nottage has gone on to be the only woman to win the Pulitzer Prize twice, for 2008's *Ruined* and 2016's *Sweat*, both of which will appear in the 2019-20 Profile season. Nottage's deft handling of story reveals new depth of human emotion and experience, and the breadth of her incisive lens will take you from Africa, to Pennsylvania, to the golden age of Hollywood. One of the most honored mid-career writers working today, with more than a dozen full-length works to her name, Nottage is one of the treasures of the American Theatre.



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ABOUT Christopher Acebo— DIRECTOR

Christopher's previous Portland productions as a designer include *La Ruta & Cuba Libre* for Artist Rep and *Mojada* for PCS. Recently he directed *American Mariachi* in Arizona and California. His work has been seen from coast to coast including Broadway, Center Theatre Group, Arena Stage, Lincoln Center, Yale Rep, Brooklyn Academy of Music, American Repertory Theater, Berkeley Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, Goodman Theater, Guthrie, Yale Rep, Denver Center, and the Kennedy Center. Christopher was an ensemble member of Cornerstone Theater Company and served as Associate Artistic Director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. He holds an MFA and serves with the Oregon State Arts Commission.

ABOUT Profile Theatre

Founded in 1997, Profile Theatre quickly established itself as a leading voice in Portland's cultural scene. In 2010, Profile was awarded the inaugural New National Theatre Company Award from the American Theatre Wing, designed to bring national attention to "the most inspiring and innovative theatre companies on our national landscape." More recently, Profile has twice been recognized by Advance Gender Equity in the Arts for its leadership in the field, and its Diversity and Inclusion Initiative has been profiled in [Howlround](#). 2018-2019, Hecht's first fully programmed season as Artistic Director, included the commission and world premiere of *(Un)Conditional* by National Medal of Arts Awardee Ping Chong + Company, a community-invested work amplifying the themes of the Lisa Kron / Anna Deavere Smith season, and brought Lisa Kron to Portland for a week-long Playwright's Residency.

*For additional bios or to arrange interviews with artists, please contact Marketing Consultant Jen Mitas. For more information, visit Profiletheatre.org or call 503.242.0080 ###