



PROFILE THEATRE

2019-20: GENERATIONS

Brenden Jacobs-Jenkins/ Lynn Nottage/ Paula Vogel

FOR IMMEDIATE MEDIA RELEASE:

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Women Survivors: Profile Theatre Presents Concert Stagings of Lynn Nottage's *Ruined* and Brecht's *Mother Courage*

Ruined, Winner of the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for Drama

"A powerhouse drama. . . —Linda Winer, Newsday

" . . . the kind of new play we desperately need: well-informed and unafraid of the world's brutalities. —David Cote, Time Out New York

PORTLAND, OREGON. October 29, 2019- PROFILE THEATRE presents concert stagings of two plays in rotating repertory. Lynn Nottage's Pulitzer Prize-winning drama *Ruined* set in the Democratic Republic of Congo was originally inspired by Brecht's infamous anti-war modernist classic, *Mother Courage and Her Children*. **Profile presents the stories side by side and performed by the same eleven powerhouse actors of color.** While wildly different in form and sensibility, both plays feature formidable matriarchs who use their ability to capitalize on wartime desires to survive the brutalities of war.

Directed by LaTevin Alexander (*Ruined*) and Jamie Rea (*Mother Courage*), **the concert stagings will be fully staged, book-in-hand presentations, designed to put the focus on the actors and the text.** All performances will be accompanied by acclaimed percussionist Rob Smith with spare lighting, sound, minimal props and costumes.



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Ruined is set in a bar and brothel on the edge of a rain forest in the war-torn Congo. Managed by Mama Nadi, the bar serves customers from both sides of the war (government and rebel militia alike). The women in the brothel have already been “ruined” by rape and torture when they were pressed into prostitution. Inspired by interviews she conducted in Africa with Congo refugees, Nottage set out to paint a “three-dimensional portrait of the women caught in middle of armed conflicts,” which went “beyond their status as victims.”

Brecht deliberately chose a time period well outside his own to explore the barbarism of war and capitalism, setting ***Mother Courage and Her Children*** in the 17th century European Thirty Years War. His anti-heroine Anna Fierling (nicknamed Mouthier Courage) is determined to make her living from the war through a rolling wagon canteen. Despite the loss of her three children, through the course of the play, Anna’s will to profit and survive persists. Tony Kushner’s 2010 adaptation is fueled by his enduring love of the play and its “complex, anguished contemplation of the dreadful question of whether we make history or are made by history.”

These concert stagings are 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.

Ruined*, by Lynn Nottage** is directed by LaTevin Alexander. ***Mother Courage and Her Children, by Bertolt Brecht, with translation by Tony Kushner, is directed by Jamie Rea. The creative team and cast are the same for each show: with design by Emily Wilkin (set— *Trails* at Broadway Rose), Blanca Forzán (lights— *Jump* at Confrontation), Matt Wiens (sound — *Well* and *Let Me Down Easy* at Profile), Wanda Walden (costumes— *The Wolves* and *Crowns* at Portland Playhouse), Rob Smith (percussion— *Crowns* at Portland Playhouse).

The cast includes **Bobby Bermea** (Drammy for *Fences* at Portland Playhouse), **Doren Elias** (Traveling Lantern Theatre Company), **Wolfie Beachum** (*Romeo and Juliet* at Portland Actors Ensemble), **Quigley Provost-Landrum** (*Hazardous Beauty* at PassinArts), **Andrea White** (*The NO Play* at PassinArts), **D'Vonte Robinson** (*My Best Friend Molly*, web series), **Julet Lindo** (*Art of Aging* at Many Hats Collaborations), **Johnny Crawford**, **Tyharra Cozier** (*The Clark Doll* at Syde-Ide Collabora-



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tions), **Victor Mack** (Drammy for *Brother/Sister Plays* at Portland Playhouse), **Don Kenneth Mason** (db at CoHo Theatre).

WHEN: *Ruined* runs Wednesday, Friday and Sunday, December 4, 6 and 8 @ 7:30 pm and Saturday December 7 @ 2 pm

Mother Courage and Her Children runs Thursday and Saturday, December 5 and 7 at 7:30 pm and Sunday December 8 @ 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 \$25

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

NEXT UP: Lynn Nottage's second Pulitzer Prize-winning play: **Sweat**.

Based on Nottage's extensive research and interviews with residents of a declining manufacturing town in Pennsylvania, *Sweat* is a searing reflection of America's economic decline. Directed by Christopher Acebo, *Sweat* will run January 16-February 2, 2020 at Imago Theatre.

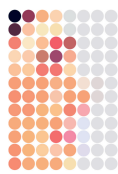
ABOUT Profile Theatre is one of only three theaters in the country to dedicate their season to an in-depth exploration of a playwright's vision, using that unique vision as a lens to broaden perspectives on our shared world. Now, in an innovation that deploys Profile's mission to unique effect, we present **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



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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.

ABOUT LaTevin Alexander— DIRECTOR

Ellis, who grew up in Perry, Florida, and graduated from Florida A&M with a theater degree, came to Portland in 2014, one of many young performers to join the city's acting pool through Portland Playhouse's apprentice program. Alexander is the founder and artistic director of Confrontation Theater, which aims to produce "engaging and challenging theater through the exceptionally unique Black perspective." In Spring 2019 he directed the critically acclaimed *Jump* at Milagro Theatre (produced by Confrontation Theatre). LaTevin has recently appeared in *Topdog* (directed by Bobby Bermea) and *Fences* at Portland Playhouse. In 2018 he played Cassius Clay in the Oregon Children's Theatre *And in this Corner: Cassius Clay*. He has also been seen in *Portlandia* and *Grimm*.

ABOUT Jamie Rea— DIRECTOR

A renaissance woman of the theatre, Jamie has had the pleasure of exploring this powerful tool for connection and change for over 20 years. She has danced at *The Body*, a festival of dance and physical theatre in Christchurch, New Zealand where she trained with the all female Dance Company JAVA & CircoArts. Local favorites include Kristine in *A Doll's House* (Drammy award, Best Supporting Actress), Anna (Drammy Finalist, Best Actress) in *The Snowstorm* (CoHo & Many Hats Productions), Mary Shelley in *Bloody Poetry* (NW Classical Theatre Co), Claire Zachanassian in *The Visit* (Broken Toy Piano), Andromache in *Trojan Women* (Classic Greek Theatre of Oregon), Lucienne in *A Flea In Her Ear* (OTAS Award-Best Supporting Actress) & Hannah in *Arcadia* (OTAS finalist-Best Actress) (Lakewood Theatre Co), Gabriella in *References to Salvador Dali make me hot*, Guard in *Lorca in a Green Dress* (Miracle Theatre) and Elvira in *Blithe Spirit* (Wilcox Stage Co). Jamie is a co-founder (with Bobby Bermea) of Beirut Wedding World Theatre Project. In 2019 she directed Beirut Wedding's production of Pulitzer Prize winning playwright Stephen Adly Guirgis' play *Jesus Hopped the A Train* at CoHo Theatre.

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)Condi-*



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tional 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 ###