THEATRE UNI PRESENTS

BLOOD AT THE ROOT

By Dominique Morisseau

Bertha Martin Theatre

March 2-5: 7:30 pm
March 6: 2:00 pm
March 9-11: 7:30 pm
ARTISTIC TEAM

Director ................................................................................................................................. Margaret Laurena Kemp+
Choreographer ...................................................................................................................... Destiny (Tru) Cyrus+
Scenic Designer ..................................................................................................................... Katrina Sandvik*
Lighting Designer .............................................................................................................. Eric Lange
Assistant Lighting Designer ................................................................................................. Edward Kivlahan
Costume Designer ............................................................................................................. Karlė Meyers+
Sound Designer .................................................................................................................. Margaret Laurena Kemp+
Archival Sound Composer ................................................................................................. Richard Chowenhill+
Projections Designers ........................................................................................................ Margaret Laurena Kemp+, Katrina Sandvik*, Eric Lange
Stage Manager ...................................................................................................................... Bonnie Ruble+
Dialect Coach ........................................................................................................................ Adriano Cabral+
Intimacy Director ................................................................................................................. Adriano Cabral+
Hip Hop Consultant ............................................................................................................. Dahlak Brathwaite+
Beats Composer .................................................................................................................... @LYRIKALTMG+

CAST LIST

Colin ....................................................................................................................................... Hudson Kalter
Justin....................................................................................................................................... Spaz Eigenheer
Raylynn................................................................................................................................... Kyah Sneed*
Asha....................................................................................................................................... Allie Klinsky*
Toria....................................................................................................................................... Claire Thoma
De’Andre ................................................................................................................................. Caleb Rainey+

Ensemble: Taylor Mast, Andrew Oleson*, Natalie Bauer, Brody Kivett

*Denotes member of Alpha Psi Omega
+Denotes a Guest Artist
PRODUCTION TEAM

Dean, College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences.................................................. John Fritch
Head, Dept. of Theatre/Theatre UNI Artistic Director.............................................. Eric Lange
Production Manager .............................................................................................. Katy McGlaughlin*
Assistant Stage Manager ....................................................................................... Bailey Fah
A/V Supervisor ........................................................................................................ Shawn Poellet
Sound and Projections Programmer ........................................................................ Katy McGlaughlin*
Scenery Studio Technical Director .......................................................................... David Harnois
Scenery Studio Supervisor ....................................................................................... Katrina Sandvik*
Paint Charge .......................................................................................................... Katrina Sandvik*
Paint Crew ............................................................................................................... Isabelle Beekman, Josie Clark, Kaleb Dufel
Properties Coordinator ......................................................................................... Lindy Rublaitus*
Properties TA .......................................................................................................... Daulton Rokes*
Deck Crew ............................................................................................................. Gavik Kuruppu
Head Electrician .................................................................................................... Hayley Damitz
Light Board Operator ............................................................................................. Kaleb Dufel
Electrics Crew ......................................................................................................... Rishem Bhogal, Lillian Hernandez, Lizzie Hill, Aidan Smith
Costume Studio Technical Director/Supervisor ....................................................... Katrina Sandvik*
Costume Construction Crew ................................................................................... Lydia Burg, Hayden Comstock, Gabriella DePrizio, Megan Gilchrist, Max Jeffries, Zhenya Loughney, Liz McRae, Steph Nees, Peyton Robbins, Claire Thoma, Taylor Mast
Sound Board Operator/Audio Mixer ........................................................................ Audrey Hau
Wardrobe Crew Head ............................................................................................... Steph Nees
Wardrobe Crew ...................................................................................................... Emily Thedens
Hair & Makeup Crew Head .................................................................................... Julie Matta*
Hair & Makeup Crew ............................................................................................. Emily Thedens
Marketing Manager ............................................................................................... Eric Lange
House Manager ...................................................................................................... Emily Gillman
Asst. House Managers ......................................................................................... A.J. Bleskacek, Alissa Dengler
Guest Director Liason ............................................................................................. Jim Bray
Blood at the Root was commissioned by the Penn State School of Theatre, and was first produced by Penn State Centre Stage, Dan Carter, Producing Artistic Director.

The New York Premiere of Blood at the Root was produced by Penn State Centre Stage and presented by Hi-ARTS and the National Black Theatre, Inc.

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“Blood at the Root” is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

Content Warning: This play contains topics related to the marginalization of specific groups and the use of language and images that may be disturbing to some. There will also be flashing and moving lights.
Artistic Director’s Note

TheatreUNI is happy to welcome you back into our theater! This is the first fully-staged indoor show we have produced since the beginning of the pandemic - and we are absolutely thrilled!

This project has allowed us to work with a fabulous guest director. Margaret Kemp is a Professor of Theatre at UC Davis, and was chosen from a wide range of applicants to become our first Visiting Artist-in-Residence. The goal of the Artist-in-Residence program is to provide opportunity for theatre artists from BIPOC and underrepresented groups to interact with students through a single 8-week teaching assignment, involvement on a production team, and direct mentoring of students. In partnership with UNI’s College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences, we hope to bring in a new artist every other year. It has been great having Margaret’s expertise and passion as we have developed this project.

I hope you are planning to come to Cinderella, which opens on April 7! This show will have two ability-inclusive performances which will be tailored to audience members with exceptionalities. AND - it will be the first show in Strayer-Wood Theatre with new seats installed in the auditorium!

And please consider joining us in Gallagher Bluedorn on March 8 (7:00 pm) when we host world-renowned playwright Lynn Nottage. Ms. Nottage is the first - and remains the only - woman to have won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama twice. She is coming as part of the Hearst Lecture Series, and I am sure you will want to hear her thoughts on the arts, education, and the power of theatre to enhance our culture and effect change.

Eric Lange
Artistic Director, TheatreUNI

Director’s Note

“It all got roots. Way somebody choose not to sit next to somebody in the lunchroom—got roots. Way somebody got problems with the flag somebody else wearon they T-shirt—got roots. Way some people talk the way they talk, or hang out with who they hang out with, or love who they love, or hate who they hate—all got roots.”
- Blood at the Root by Dominique Morrisseau

I think the one thing I can say I’ve learned to embrace, that I didn’t always, is the idea of being a political writer. I did not look at myself as a political writer for a very long time because I’m not trying to push a political agenda, per se, or tell people what politics to embrace, but I am looking at how politics, in a certain light, impact people. I’ve learned to embrace that I have a very strong social justice call to my work
- Dominique Morrisseau

Dominique Morrisseau’s play, Blood at the Root is a theatrical invitation to confront the past while laying the groundwork for the reckoning that is needed to build a shared future. As such, it is uniquely suited to the work of university theatre because the text provides student actors opportunities to learn different approaches to storytelling, acting, and given the nature of this work, how theatrical practices can be applied to daily life. This is a challenging play on all fronts. During the four weeks of the process-based rehearsal, we went through a lot of truth, tears, and discussion. Watching each cast member create a communal brave place where they mined the reality of our shared national history while removing their personal armor to reveal their character’s humanity was a sight to behold. Yes, I hoped that they through my work, would come away from this experience as better actors but most importantly, as better human beings. I call this root work. My aim was to impart to the cast tools that can be activated in the real world to hold civil conversations and unravel the roots of shared national history. This cast has met the challenge of transforming “language of incrimination, of privilege, and prejudice”, that is at the heart of Dominique Morrisseau’s text and transform it into a theatrical event “that does not obscure the underlying sociopolitical messages (that are part of the text) but rather highlights and recontextualizes them, steering them away from the straightforward black and white of the issue to instead probe the grey areas of politics and social culpability.” My hope is that you take this experience with you and do root work in your community.

Margaret Laurena Kemp
2021-2022 FRIENDS OF THEATRE UNI BOARD MEMBERS

Sherri Achen, President
Katrina Sandvik, Vice President
Jim Altenbaumer
Russell Campbell
Sue and Kurt Kuhn
Eric Lange
Gordon Lauterbach

Chris and Dan Lorenz
Sherry and Larry Millang
Melissa Oleson
Steven Palmquist
Deb and Dave Skold
Fayeth Walton

Angel ($325+)
Sherri Jirak Achen and Thomas Achen
Anita and James Altenbaumer
Larry and Jackie Betts
Steve and Gerry Chamberlin
Caroline and Eric Lange
Gordon and Beth Lauterbach*
Kathryn Nuss and Steven Palmquist
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Greg and Rena’ Raecker
Fayeth Walton and Thomas R. Furneaux

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Nate and Nicole Skaar
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Friend ($35+)

Believer ($20+)

*Indicates Charter Member
We would like to acknowledge that the land we are gathered on the unceded land of the Ioway, Sauk and Meskwaki, Wahpeton, and Sioux People, who were forcibly exiled because of aggressive and consistent colonialism. Please take a moment to honor these people, their ancestors and descendants, as well as the land.

Additionally, TheatreUNI is invested in the dismantling of systemic racism and oppression to equitably serve our students, audiences, community members, teachers and guest artists. The faculty and staff of TheatreUNI condemns racism of all types. The faculty and staff of TheatreUNI unconditionally commit to the work of removing racist actions, language, curriculum, and content from our programs, classes, activities, and productions.
This is not your mother’s Cinderella. The story needs no introduction, as it is based on the popular folk tale told for centuries with music and lyrics by Rodgers and Hammerstein. This fresh new version features many of the well-known songs, “Ten Minutes Ago”, “The Stepsisters Lament”, “Impossible”, and “In My Own Little Corner”, but has a reworked book by Douglas Carter Beane. This up to date new version pulls at the seams of the classic fairy tale, evoking humor for children and adults alike. With thrilling visual effects, this retelling of the classic tale is exciting, touching and funny! We will focus on making this production available for all families, including those that include youth and young adults with exceptionalities. Two public performances will include numerous production adjustments in order to better support individuals with autism and other developmental delays.

Cinderella
APRIL 7, 9 – 7:30 PM
APRIL 10 – 2 PM
APRIL 13-14 – 7:30 PM
APRIL 16 – 2 PM

The Department of Theatre is accredited through the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST). NAST is the national accrediting agency for theatre and theatre-related disciplines and is made up of approximately 200 schools of theatre. The granting of accredited membership is a sign that an institution has met an external set of basic criteria for its programs. It also indicates an ability to provide a base of academic strength and operational integrity.