



**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MEDIA CONTACT**  
Dayna Kalakau  
510.843.4042 x311  
dkalakau@auroratheatre.org

**AURORA THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS  
THE LOCAL PREMIERE OF  
*STOOP STORIES*  
BY DAEL ORLANDERSMITH**

**BERKELEY, CA (August 5, 2021)** Aurora Theatre Company kicks off its 30th season with **Dael Orlandersmith's STOOP STORIES**. **Elizabeth Carter** (*Eureka Day, The Heir Apparent, Wittenberg, Trouble In Mind*) directs **Jeunée Simon** (*The Bluest Eye*) in this poetic one-hander comprised of stories drawn from Orlandersmith's personal life and limitless imagination.

**STOOP STORIES** will be presented as a filmed production for audiences to enjoy in their homes, and will run September 3 - October 3 (**Opens: September 9**).

Said Artistic Director Josh Costello: "We're opening the season with Stoop Stories because this play gets at the magic of storytelling, and it does it in a way that works gorgeously on stage and that will translate beautifully onto film. It's an opportunity for a virtuosic performance from Jeunée Simon, one of the most exciting young actors in the Bay Area today. And its themes of a neighborhood changing and its people striving to define themselves anew resonate powerfully right here in this moment. We can't invite folks back into our building just yet, but Stoop Stories will be a powerful theatrical experience in its own right."

Combining heightened prose, poetry, and music playwright and Pulitzer Prize finalist Dael Orlandersmith crafts a solo show with the rhythm and punch of big band jazz. From a stoop in Harlem, audiences meet the diversity of voices that populate the narrator's NYC neighborhood.

The variety of characters are drawn from Orlandersmith's personal life and limitless imagination. She introduces us to an elderly Polish Holocaust survivor who has a chance meeting with Billie Holiday, a young poet struggling with addiction, a teenage Puerto Rican immersed in counter culture, a washed-up rock star, and a seventy-year-old New Yorker on a pilgrimage to the West Village to see Nina Simone. Aurora presents a new production of this compelling play with a local actor and team.

The *Los Angeles Times* said "Orlandersmith is one of a generation of gifted solo performers — among them Anna Deavere Smith, Danny Hoch, Sarah Jones and Heather Raffo — who demolished the fourth wall of American middle-class theater."

**Dael Orlandersmith** is a Pulitzer Prize finalist and Drama Desk Award nominee for Outstanding Play and Outstanding Actress in a Play for *Yellowman*, and Obie Award winner for *Beauty's Daughter*. Other works include: *Liar, Liar* (1994); *Beauty's Daughter* (1995); *Monster* (1996); *The Gimmick* (1999); *Raw Boys* (2005); *Stoop Stories* (2008); *Bones* (2010); *Horsedreams* (2011); *Black n Blue Boys/Broken Men* (2012); *Forever* (2014-2015). Orlandersmith is the recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts Grant, The Helen Merrill Award for Emerging Playwrights, a Guggenheim Fellowship and the 2005 PEN/Laura Pels Foundation Award for a playwright in mid-career. Orlandersmith is the recipient of a Lucille Lortel Foundation Playwrights Fellowship, and she won the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize for *The Gimmick* in 1999.

**Elizabeth Carter** returns to Aurora as a director after appearing in 2018's *Eureka Day* and 2016's *The Heir Apparent*. Directing credits include *Bondage* (Alter Theatre), *King Lear* (SF Shakespeare Festival), *Feel the Spirit* (Shotgun Players/Colt Couer), *Every 28 Hours Plays and A Place To Belong* (A.C.T), *for colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf* (African American Shakespeare Company), *From the Ground Up*, *Participants* and *Just One Day* (TheatreFirst). She has directed for the California Shakespeare Theater Conservatory for nearly 20 years . Elizabeth is the inaugural SDCF Lloyed Richards New Futures Resident Artist at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

Carter directs Jeunée Simon in this poignant one-hander.

**Jeunée Simon** is an actor, director, and intimacy coordinator in the Bay Area. She was last heard in Aurora's 2021 audio production of Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* adapted by Lydia R. Diamond. Recent credits include *La Ronde* (Cutting Ball Theater), *Men On Boats u/s* (American Conservatory Theater), *HeLa* (TheatreFIRST), and *When My Mama Was A Hittite* (Magic Theatre). Simon is a recipient of the 2017 RHE Artistic Fellowship and a 2019 Directing Apprentice with PlayGround.

The creative team for **STOOP STORIES** includes **Alicia Lerner**--Stage Manager; **Randy Wong-Westbrooke**--Scenic; **Jon Tracy**--Lighting; **Regina Evans**--Costume; **Ariella Cooley**--Sound.

### **CALENDAR EDITORS**

Aurora Theatre Company kicks off its 30th season with **Dael Orlandersmith's STOOP STORIES**. **Elizabeth Carter** (*Eureka Day, The Heir Apparent, Wittenberg, Trouble In Mind*) directs **Jeunée Simon** in this poetic one-hander comprised of stories drawn from Orlandersmith's personal life and limitless imagination.

**STOOP STORIES** will be presented as a filmed production for audiences to enjoy in their homes, and will run September 3 - October 3 (**Opens: September 9**).

### **DATES**

**Previews: Friday 9/3** (available from 8 p.m. to midnight of the following day)

**Saturday 9/4; Sunday, 9/5; Tuesday, 9/7; Wednesday, 9/8** (available from 12 p.m to midnight the following day)

**Open: Thursday, September 9** (available from 8 p.m. to midnight the following day)

**Close: Sunday, October 3**

**Shows:** Each performance is presented as a filmed production for audiences to enjoy in their homes.

Each performance (except 9/3 and 9/9) is available for 36 hours, from 12 p.m. on the performance date to midnight the following day.

Performances on 9/3 and 9/9 will begin at 8 p.m. and be available to midnight the following day.

### **TICKETS**

For single tickets (\$25-\$30) or subscriptions (\$200-\$385), the public can call **(510) 843-4822** or visit [www.auroratheatre.org](http://www.auroratheatre.org).

### **PHOTOS**

<https://bit.ly/AuroraSTOOPPress>

**PRESS**

**Please do not reply to this media advisory for review tickets. Press review invites will be sent to selected media.**

**ABOUT AURORA THEATRE COMPANY**

As the storyteller for our community, Aurora Theatre Company inspires new audiences and longtime theatre lovers alike with the visceral power of live theatre. Our venues, the most intimate professional stages in the Bay Area, highlight great acting, nuanced language, and an immediacy that makes for exhilarating theatre. By telling profoundly relevant stories, we're building a new culture of theatregoing in the Bay Area and contributing to a revitalization of theatre nationwide, challenging all of us to think deeper, laugh louder, and engage more purposefully and profoundly with our neighbors and our world. It has an operating budget of \$2.2 million.

Aurora Theatre Company gratefully acknowledges Executive Season Sponsors: Craig & Kathy Moody. Associate Sponsors: Ellen & Barry Levine.

Aurora Theatre Company gratefully acknowledges the following foundations and government agencies for their support: Alameda County Arts Commission ARTSFUND, City of Berkeley Civic Arts Program, Bernard Osher Foundation, California Office of the Small Business Advocate, Edgerton Foundation, Fleishhacker Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, the Shuttered Venues Operator Grant/American Rescue Plan, the Tournesol Project, and The Wattis Foundation.

# # #