Skeleton CREW

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Dear Friends,

Detroit, 2008. *Skeleton Crew* drops us into a place and time when the future seems uncertain and even the present feels unstable — especially for the characters at the center of this moving story. Yet they each feel inextricably connected to the auto plant where they work, with Faye commenting, “I’m in the vents. I’m in the bulletin boards. I’m in the chipped paint.” Beneath the looming rumors of the factory’s demise, Faye, Shanita, Dez and Reggie maintain enduring pride in their work, community and ability to survive.

Playwright Dominique Morisseau was born and raised in Detroit, and her deep love for its people and culture shines in her acclaimed Detroit trilogy. With *Skeleton Crew*, Morisseau gives us a raw glimpse into the lives of auto factory workers, showcasing their strength and perseverance. The language drives the play forward with such familiarity that we can’t help but feel the impact when communication breaks down and things are left unspoken.

I’m grateful that Austene Van is at the helm of this production, returning to the Guthrie after directing *A Raisin in the Sun* during our 2021–2022 Season. She and her creative team, along with a terrifically strong acting company, have created something thrilling and powerful that will captivate you.

Thank you for joining us, and I hope you enjoy the show.

From Artistic Director
Joseph Haj
Skeleton Crew
by Dominique Morisseau
directed by Austene Van

CREATIVE TEAM

SCENIC DESIGNER Regina García
COSTUME DESIGNER Samantha Fromm Haddow
LIGHTING DESIGNER Nic Vincent
SOUND DESIGNER/COMPOSER Jeff Lowe Bailey
DRAMATURG Faye M. Price
VOCAL COACH Keely Wolter
MOVEMENT DIRECTOR Austene Van
FIGHT DIRECTOR/INTIMACY Annie Enneking
RESIDENT CASTING DIRECTOR Jennifer Liestman
STAGE MANAGER Laura Topham*
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER Kathryn Sam Houkom*
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Brandon Raghu
NYC CASTING CONSULTANT McCorkle Casting, Ltd.
DANCE CAPTAIN Stephanie Everett*

Acknowledgments
Original music by James Keys.

Skeleton Crew was developed at the Lark Play Development Center, New York City, and the 2014 Sundance Institute Theatre Lab at the Sundance Resort.

Winner of the 2014 Sky Cooper New American Play Prize at the Marin Theatre Company, Mill Valley, CA (Artistic Director, Jasson Minadakis; Managing Director, Michael Barker).


SPONSORED BY

TRAVELERS
CAST
in alphabetical order

REGGIE  Darius Dotch*
SHANITA  Stephanie Everett*
FAYE  Jennifer Fouché*
DEZ  Mikell Sapp*

Understudies
Understudies never substitute for performers unless announced prior to the performance.
Charla Marie Bailey* (Faye)
Domino D’Lorion (Reggie/Dez)
Ashembaga (Ashe) Jaafaru* (Shanita)

*Member of Actors’ Equity Association

SETTING
Somewhere around 2008.
This production will be performed with one intermission.

SPECIAL THANKS
The Guthrie gratefully recognizes W. Thomas & Christine B. McEnery as Leading Producers; Tyrone & Delia Bujold and Bob Rosenbaum & Maggie Gilbert as Producers; and Ellen Archibald and Ann Rainhart & Jason Digman as Associate Producers.

Special thanks to Darius Dotch.
BIOGRAPHIES

Cast

Darius Dotch (Reggie) GUTHRIE Sweat, A Raisin in the Sun. THEATER Dark & Stormy Productions: Jacuzzi; History Theatre: Diesel Heart, Parks by Harrison David Rivers, Not in Our Neighborhood; Yellow Tree Theatre: Skeleton Crew; Penumbra Theatre: Pipeline, Detroit ‘67; Park Square Theatre: A Raisin in the Sun, The Color Purple; Ten Thousand Things: Intimate Apparel; Jungle Theater: Bars and Measures; Children's Theatre Company: Akeelah and the Bee; Mixed Blood Theatre: ...Miz Martha, Colossal; Pillsbury House Theatre: Marcus; or the Secret of Sweet (Ivey Award for Best Ensemble); The Road Weeps, the Well Runs Dry; Broke-ology. FILM/TELEVISION Influencer; “Black Star,” ESPN Final Four commercial. OTHER Hip-hop artist. TRAINING B.A., St. Cloud State University. @dariusdotch (IG)

Stephanie Everett (Shanita) GUTHRIE Debut. THEATER Off-Broadway: Flex (Lincoln Center Theater); Suffs (The Public Theater); Regional: The Wolves (McCarter Theatre Center); The Niceties (Chester Theatre Company); Citrus, The Little Mermaid (Northern Stage); Grease, Catch Me If You Can (New London Barn). OTHER “It’s Fine, I’m Fine” (United Solo Festival). AWARDS Best Festival Debut, United Solo Festival 2019. TRAINING B.A., Black Studies & Theater, Dartmouth College. @stepheve24 (IG), www.stephanie-everett.com

Jennifer Fouché (Faye) GUTHRIE Debut. THEATER Broadway: Chicago (Ambassador); POTUS (Schubert); Chicken & Biscuits (Circle in the Square); Off-Broadway: White Girl in Danger (Second Stage); Babes in Toyland (Lincoln Center); SISTAS: The Musical (St. Luke’s Theatre); Richard III (The Flea); National Tour: Chicago; Regional: Ain’t Misbehavin’ (Syracuse Stage); Hairspray (Florida Studio Theatre); Rock of Ages (Palace Theatre). FILM/TELEVISION Crown Heights, B-Boy Blues, In Fear for My Life, The Lady and the Watches; “Wu-Tang: An American Saga,” “Jessica Jones,” “Quantico,” “Smash,” “Person of Interest,” “The Mysteries of Laura,” “Pinkalicious & Peterrific,” “Fairly OddParents: A New Wish.” TRAINING American Academy of Dramatic Arts (New York City). @jkfouche (IG), www.jenniferfouche.com

Mikell Sapp (Dez) GUTHRIE Shane. THEATER Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park: Shane; Penumbra Theatre: The Ballad of Emmett Till; Mixed Blood Theatre: The Most Spectacularly Lamentable Trial of Miz Martha Washington, Pillsbury House Theatre: Charlie Brown: Black, Broke-ology; Yellow Tree Theatre: Skeleton Crew; Children’s Theatre Company: The Snowy Day; Park Square Theatre: The Agitators; Pillsbury House Theatre/Mount Curve Company: Marcus; or the Secret of Sweet (Dowling Studio). TRAINING Alabama State University. @mikellsapp (IG)
Charla Marie Bailey (US: Faye) GUTHRIE Debut. THEATER Anon(ymous) (Full Circle Theater Company); Diesel Heart (History Theatre); Locomotion (Children’s Theatre Company); Intimate Apparel (St. Croix Festival Theatre); A Raisin in the Sun (Lyric Arts); Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry; Ruby Bridges (SteppingStone Theatre); Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again., Here We Go (Frank Theatre); The Roommate (PRIME Productions). FILM/TELEVISION Black in Minneapolis, Miles Between Us. UPCOMING Out of Time (Mona Cress). OTHER Model (ShopHQ), host, voiceover artist and filmmaker. AWARDS Best Actress Award (CONNECTION); Strong Female Filmmaker Award (What Did You Do?!). @charlamariebailey (IG)

Domino D’Lorion (US: Reggie/Dez) GUTHRIE Blackness Is... Arts Festival. THEATER Queer, Afro-Boriqua actor, playwright, teaching artist and local drag queen (Lady Cummeal) in the Twin Cities, originally from Chicago; Mixed Precipitation: Hit the Wall; Transatlantic Love Affair: After the Fires; Minnesota Fringe Festival/Guthrie Theater: STOOPIDITY (Playwright). OTHER Represented by Wehmann Models & Talent and Moore Creative Talent. TEACHING Northwestern University’s National High School Institute; Guthrie Theater Teaching Artist. TRAINING University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theater B.F.A. Acting Program; Business Management, Carlson School of Management

Ashembaga (Ashe) Jaafaru (US: Shanita) GUTHRIE Debut. THEATER Regional: Mlima’s Tale (Ten Thousand Things, Assistant Director); A Raisin in the Sun (South Coast Repertory); School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play (Arkansas Repertory Theatre/Jungle Theater); For Colored Girls... (KCPrep/ Penumbra Theatre); The Convert (Frank Theatre); Weathering (Penumbra Theatre); JOY ON ME (Pillsbury House Theatre); Impact Theory of Mass Extinction (In the Heart of the Beast); A Midsummer Night’s Dream (The Black Ensemble Players). FILM/TELEVISION Keon, Zuri’s Tree, All My Niggas Surround Me... with Jai Stephenson (Creative Direction/Acting Coach). TEACHING History Theatre Teaching Artist. AWARDS Holt Acting Award. TRAINING B.A., Theatre Arts, Hamline University; GRSF Apprentice Program. @ashejaafaru (IG)

Creative Team

Dominique Morisseau (Playwright) GUTHRIE Debut. THEATER The Detroit Project (A Three-Play Cycle): Skeleton Crew (Atlantic Theater Company/Broadway, Tony nomination for Best Play); Paradise Blue (Signature Theatre); and Detroit ’67 (The Public Theater/The Classical Theatre of Harlem/National Black Theatre); Additional plays include Confederates (Signature Theatre), Pipeline (Lincoln Center Theater), Sunset Baby (LAByrinth Theater/Signature Theatre), Blood at the Root (National Black Theatre) and Follow Me to Nellie’s (Premiere Stages); Tony-nominated book writer on the Broadway musical Ain’t Too Proud (Imperial Theatre); Currently working on Hippest Trip – The Soul Train Musical (A.C.T.). FILM/TELEVISION Co-Producer on “Shameless” (Showtime); Step (FOX Searchlight); Consultant on Tunga (Netflix). AWARDS PONY Fellowship; TEER Trailblazer Award; Steinberg Playwright Award; AUDELCO Awards; NBFT August Wilson Playwriting Award; Edward M. Kennedy Prize; Obie Awards (two); Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellowship; Variety’s 2018 Women of Impact; MacArthur “Genius Grant” Fellow; Awarded the key to the city by the Mayor of Detroit in 2022
Austene Van (Director/Movement Director) **GUTHRIE** Director: *A Raisin in the Sun*; Actor: *Steel Magnolias, Familiar, Disgraced, Trouble in Mind, Crowns, The Darker Face of the Earth*. **THEATER DIRECTION** Asolo Rep: *Intimate Apparel*; Yellow Tree Theatre: *Rule of Thumb, Lady Day…, In the Next Room, Passing Strange, The Royale*; New Dawn Theatre: *Crowns*; Ordway: *Annie, Blues in the Night*; Park Square Theatre: *Gee’s Bend*; History Theatre: *Lonely Soldiers*. **THEATER** Penumbra Theatre: *Wedding Band, The Owl Answers, Detroit ’67, Spunk, The Amen Corner, Ain’t Misbehavin’, Dinah Was, Blues…, Seven Guitars*; Theater Latté Da: *Aida*; Ten Thousand Things: *A Streetcar Named Desire, Henry IV, Into the Woods*; Jungle Theater: *In the Next Room*; Children’s Theatre Company: *Once on This Island*; Ordway: *Singin’ in the Rain*

Regina García (Scenic Designer) **GUTHRIE** *A Raisin in the Sun*. **THEATER** Longstanding relationships with Puerto Rican Traveling Theater, Teatro Vista and Pregones Theater; Oregon Shakespeare Festival; American Players Theatre; Steppenwolf; Company member with Rivendell Theatre Ensemble (Chicago) and Boundless Theatre Company (San Juan/New York City); Regional associate member of the League of Professional Theatre Women; Founding member of La Gente: The Latinx/é Theatre Production Network. **UPCOMING** American Players Theatre (WI); Marriott Theatre (IL). **AWARDS** Fellowships with the NEA/TCG Career Development Program for Theatre Designers and the Princess Grace Awards. **TEACHING** The Theatre School, DePaul University. www.garciaportfolio.com

Samantha Fromm Haddow (Costume Designer) **GUTHRIE** *A Raisin in the Sun*. **THEATER** Crafts Artisan and Painter/Dyer at the Guthrie Theater from 2009 to 2019; Costume design for MN Opera/Project Opera, Minnesota Orchestra, Skylark Opera Theatre, Theater Latté Da, Theater Mu, Stages Theatre Company, Yellow Tree Theatre, New Dawn Theatre, Lyric Arts (Anoka), Honolulu Theatre for Youth and Gallery Players (Brooklyn). **TRAINING** M.F.A., Costume Design, Rutgers University

Nic Vincent (Lighting Designer) **GUTHRIE** Debut. **THEATER** Off-Broadway: *Fish* (Theatre Row/Keen Company); *Next* (Lincoln Center Theater LCT3); *the bandaged place* (Roundabout); *Heart Strings* (Atlantic); *Jane Anger* (New Ohio); *The Renaissance Mixtape* (Apollo); *Fragments, Lists & Lacunae* (New York Live Arts); *The Greatest Hits Down Route 66* (S9E59); *Where Are You?* (Mabou Mines); *All the Lonely Women, DirectorJam* (Rattlestick); Regional: *The Salvagers, El Huracán* (Yale Repertory Theatre); *Bonez, Thurgood* (People’s Light); *Wolf Play, Everybody, Constellations* (Brown/Trinity Rep); *The Barber of Seville* (Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera). **FILM/TELEVISION** “Nightgowns” featuring Sasha Velour (Quibi). **OTHER** Member, Associated Designers of Canada (IATSE Local ADC659). **TRAINING** M.F.A., Yale School of Drama. www.nicvincent.com

OTHER Professional bassist who has performed with Jonatha Brooke, Mike Stern, Geoffrey Keezer, Fareed Haque, Charles Lazarus, Minnesota Orchestra, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Andrés Prado, Charley Drayton, Doc Martin, Eric Gravatt, James Moody and Joey McIntyre. TRAINING M.M., Bass Performance, McNally Smith College of Music; University of Minnesota (James Clute)

Faye M. Price (Dramaturg) GUTHRIE Dramaturg: Blues for an Alabama Sky; Resident Dramaturg for over 30 productions from 1996 to 2000; One acting season under Artistic Director Liviu Ciulei. THEATER Founding company member of Penumbra Theatre, Mixed Blood Theatre and New Dawn Theatre; Guthrie Theater; McCarter; Berkeley Rep. THEATER DIRECTION Former Co-Artistic Producing Director of Pillsbury House Theatre; Ten Thousand Things; The Kennedy Center; History Theatre; Park Square Theatre. UPCOMING Broadway-bound A Wonderful World: The Louis Armstrong Musical (fall 2024). OTHER Board member, Tofte Lake Center. AWARDS August Wilson Fellowship in Dramaturgy and Literary Criticism; 2021 McKnight Distinguished Artist Award. TRAINING M.A., University of Minnesota; B.A., Macalester College


Annie Enneking (Fight Director/Intimacy) GUTHRIE History Plays, A Raisin in the Sun, To Kill a Mockingbird. THEATER Fight Direction: She Kills Monsters, Troilus and Cressida (UMN); Man of La Mancha, Cabaret (Theater Latté Da); Hand to God, Noises Off (Jungle Theater); Of Mice and Men, Cyrano (Park Square Theatre); Cambodian Rock Band, Man of God (Theater Mu); Antigoni, Anon(y)ymous (Full Circle Theater); Hamlet, Macbeth (Shakespearean Youth Theatre); Intimacy Direction: Extremities, Fool for Love (Dark & Stormy Productions); Bernhardt/Hamlet (Theatre Pro Rata); Life Sucks (Girl Friday). MUSIC Annie and the Big Bang. TEACHING University of Minnesota. AWARDS MSAB; MRAC; Jerome Foundation; McKnight Theater Artist Fellowship
Jennifer Liestman (Resident Casting Director) GUTHRIE Artistic Team member since 2003; More than 70 productions, workshops and readings since 2015, including the History Plays, Dial M for Murder, ‘Art’, For the People, The Importance of Being Earnest, Shane, Into the Woods, Hamlet, The Little Prince, Sally & Tom, Vietgone, Sweat, A Raisin in the Sun, The Tempest, A Christmas Carol, Dickens’ Holiday Classic, Noura, Floyd’s, West Side Story, Familiar, Watch on the Rhine, Native Gardens and Disgraced.

FILM/TELEVISION Casting Consultant: Master Servant. TEACHING University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theater B.F.A. Acting Program; Other universities in MN and the U.S. TRAINING B.A., Theatre, MSU Moorhead

Laura Topham (Stage Manager) GUTHRIE Stage Manager: A Raisin in the Sun; Assistant Stage Manager: A Christmas Carol, Murder on the Orient Express, The Little Prince. THEATER Park Square Theatre (selected): Holmes and Watson, The Rocky Horror Show, Jefferson Township Sparkling Junior Talent Pageant, Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery, The Diary of Anne Frank; Yellow Tree Theatre: A Streetcar Named Desire, Another Miracle on Christmas Lake; History Theatre: Handprints, The Boy Wonder, Diesel Heart, Parks; Collide Theatrical Dance Company: C.L.U.E., Romeo and Juliet; Theater Latté Da: Candide, Beautiful Thing; Artistry: Godspell, Follies.

TRAINING B.A., Theatre Arts, University of Minnesota

Kathryn Sam Houkom (Assistant Stage Manager) GUTHRIE Dial M for Murder, Vietgone, The Tempest, The Glass Menagerie. THEATER Ordway: Beauty and the Beast, In the Heights, Annie, White Christmas; Ten Thousand Things: Twelfth Night; Virginia Stage Company: The Bluest Eye; Children’s Theatre Company (selected): Annie, Last Stop on Market Street, A Year With Frog and Toad, The Snowy Day, Cinderella, The Wizard of Oz, Peter Pan the Musical, Busytown the Musical, Alice in Wonderland, The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins; Artistry: Memphis; PRIME Productions: The Roommate; Minnesota Orchestra: Salome; MN Opera: Tosca; Lookingglass: Metamorphoses; Steppenwolf; The Kennedy Center; The Pearl Theatre Company (Off-Broadway); Contemporary American Theater Festival; Park Square Theatre; Mixed Blood Theatre


FILM/TELEVISION Currently casting six feature films for theatrical release; Previously, over 75 films, including three recent films for Hallmark, Premium Rush, Ghost Town, The Thomas Crown Affair, Die Hard With a Vengeance and Thirteenth Warrior; Select TV credits include “Twisted” (ABC), Humans for “Sesame Street,” “Californication” (Emmy Award nomination) and “Chappelle’s Show.” www.mccorklecasting.com
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“Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain’t I a woman? I could work and eat as much as a man — when I could get it — and bear the lash as well! And ain’t I a woman? I have borne 13 children and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother’s grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain’t I a woman?”

– Sojourner Truth, delivered at the 1851 Woman’s Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio

As I reflect on this powerful speech from Sojourner Truth and the story of *Skeleton Crew*, I am thoughtful about the continued dehumanization of our working class, in particular people of color. In the name of industry and capitalism, people within certain cultures are categorized as “beasts of burden” or machines, impervious to pain and free of emotion or emotional intelligence, in order to guiltlessly build wealth and guarantee a comfortable class existence for the dominant culture. I am also thoughtful about the toughness, resilience and vitality of people of color, specifically the African Americans of Detroit as depicted in *Skeleton Crew*.

Playwright Dominique Morisseau fiercely and poetically captures the necessary steel that many Detroitors don to arm themselves, perhaps to protect the beauty, sensitivity and poetry of their inner lives. She offers this duality in colorful, edgy language within the scenes while painting a rich world for us through the rhythmic poetry of her thoughtfully fleshed-out stage directions — almost as a love song, a love language. I’m struck by her poetry, by what she sees and what she feels. Minnesota is a beautiful state, but what I want to bring to comfortable Minnesota audiences is an urgency that prevents them from sitting back, relaxing and not being moved or touched or feeling prompted to do something after experiencing this play.

Each character in *Skeleton Crew* is as tough as nails to guard their soft underbelly. The depth of their big love, the passion each one feels, is unfathomable and worthy of ferocious...
protection. What seems to go before each one is impenetrable pride in their work, community and family, plus the ability to survive and “rise up” under seemingly insurmountable circumstances. Most of us understand masks of protection for the sake of survival. But as we see in Sojourner Truth’s proclamation, not everyone is privy to the true grit, strength and intestinal fortitude it takes to dodge and leap over manmade constructs designed to suppress and destroy the human spirit, body and life. Through the vehicle of this play, I am interested in inciting visceral reactions to human circumstances. I invite the audience to examine the toll that capitalism, racism and classism take on individuals and communities alike — specifically people of color.

In that regard, we designed the set so the audience will be as close as possible, both physically and emotionally, to the story and action onstage. It is important to experience the coldness, danger and mechanical power of the “factory” and the encroaching shadow and invasive eye of upper management while experiencing the color, care and abundance of the Skeleton Crew break room, which may even be deemed a shelter and safe haven for community and family. I picture the break room as a thorny rose growing and thriving in the cold, hard dirt during a long winter — a place bursting with vibrant hues of life and culture. The scenic and lighting designs reflect the differences and disparity of two worlds and classes within one structure. The music reflects not only the urban hits of the era (unique to Detroit) but also the driving beats, rhythms and vibrations within the haunting songs of the machines.

While the transitions have a ghostly, ethereal quality, the scenes within the play are as real as the Earth with an equally strong gravitational pull. Ultimately, I hope the audience feels this world and sees themselves in the carefully created characters so they may, if provoked, posit, “What would I do in these situations and circumstances?”
Dominique Morisseau in Conversation With Lynn Nottage

In October 2020, playwright Lynn Nottage — best known to Guthrie audiences for *Floyd’s* (now *Clyde’s*) in 2019 and *Sweat* in 2022 — virtually interviewed Dominique Morisseau about her acclaimed play *Skeleton Crew*. Below are some excerpts from the insightful conversation between these two extraordinary artistic minds. Thanks to Atlantic Theater Company, Dominique and Lynn for allowing us to share this content and to Dramaturg Faye M. Price for bringing it to our attention.

LYNN NOTTAGE: I loved *Skeleton Crew* from the first reading I saw at The Lark. What can you share about the play’s origins?

DOMINIQUE MORISSEAU: I’m realizing that what I thought was my entry point to *Skeleton Crew* was actually something else. I was trying to learn the DNA of Detroit and study its history as well as the history of my family. That was my original entry point, but I recently lost my father in February [2020]. He once wrote an article for our local union titled “The Workers Are the Power in This Country” about how political parties were ignoring working people. My father wrote this back in 1983, and it sounds like it could be written right now. The activism that guides me has been instilled in me since I was a kid.

LN: When I was re-reading *Skeleton Crew*, I was thinking about how you focus on the female workers. Why did you choose a woman at the sunset of her career [Faye] and a woman in the midst of giving birth [Shanita]?

DM: Faye is loosely inspired by my aunt who worked in a factory. She carries the fatigue and the years women put into the workforce that are often undermined and underacknowledged. I don’t often see this woman in narratives. I know she’s in Detroit, I know she exists and I want to make space for her. I want to imagine her journey.

With Shanita, there are women who work that line until they’re about to pop. That is some real labor. To find hope in the story, I couldn’t predict the future, but the dreams of pregnant women are where the future can be imagined. I wanted Shanita to represent what could come after this and who we’re leaving this world and this city to.

LN: The other thing I find fascinating is the class dynamics within the play, [especially] the management-versus-worker dynamic.
DM: When you were working on Sweat at The Lark, you told me, “I’m working on something in middle management.” Until you said that term — middle management — I didn’t realize that’s what I was dealing with in Skeleton Crew. The people in middle management are the people with no power and yet perceived power. They have to do the dirty work of the company without having any of the power.

LN: Absolutely. In Sweat, I have a character named Cynthia who’s an African American woman finally able to get a tiny bit of power. She finds herself grappling with trying to rescue the people she works with but also having to answer to management.

DM: And they treat you as a betrayer of the workforce. I do always parallel Cynthia and Reggie, and I think it’s interesting that they are two Black characters who have to talk to their co-workers or former co-workers on behalf of a company that does not reflect them. The upper management of the company — you never see them.

LN: When you took the play back to your community, what was the response? When I took [Sweat] to Reading, PA, people felt catharsis in ways that audiences in New York did not. So I’m curious about your experience with [Detroit] audiences.

DM: There was a similar catharsis, and it’s been affirming. I found that people from Detroit feel proud to be Detroiter. I am speaking to my city’s resiliency. I’m speaking to the humanity, the heart, the toughness of the people that I know and love, and they feel that. And they feel seen.

My plays are at Detroit Public Theatre every season, and my entire family buys a house. Skeleton Crew’s family night was the most terrifying night of my life. Because this is their story.
LN: I love how poetic your work is. You beautifully incorporate music into all aspects of the storytelling, and it becomes part of the play’s architecture. How did the soundscape and movement become part of your narrative [in Skeleton Crew]?

DM: I know it feels like you could do it without that stuff, but it’s there for a reason. I’m trying to tell a story about the larger impact on Detroit and what automation is doing — has done — to working people. That’s not all being captured in that little break room. I’m isolating it in four voices, but I don’t want to leave it on them. The movement of the story is used to invoke the legends of all auto workers.

The [original] music for Skeleton Crew was done by my husband, J. Keys. His ear for our city is one that I feel very grounded in. In our house, we play a lot of J Dilla, who was a hip-hop producer from Detroit. On his album *Donuts*, he has a beat called “The Factory.” Many of his beats sound factory-induced. That, to me, was the soundtrack of the play.

LN: We’re in this difficult moment where we’re trying to make theater more inclusive and representative of our lived reality. How can artists press the powers that be to make shifts and create environments that are more diverse and welcoming?

DM: I firmly believe that workers are the power in this country. I’d like to see us have conversations about what we collectively want to build. My hope for all my characters and for us as real-life workers is that we find power in our trade, that what we bring to the table makes us valuable and not expendable. I would like to see leadership acknowledge that we’re all here on the backs of essential workers, on the people that we put most at risk. Those are the people we need to listen to because they are the ones who have been out front. I would like to see us accept our debt to the working people and pay it forward.

These excerpts are from a virtual interview originally recorded by Atlantic Theater Company on October 25, 2020, for their “Live With Atlantic: Remix” video series. They have been reprinted with permission from all parties and edited for length, clarity and style. To listen to the full interview, visit www.youtube.com/atlantictheatervids.
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book and lyrics by HOWARD ASHMAN
music by ALAN MENKEN
based on the film by ROGER CORMAN, screenplay by CHARLES GRIFFITH
directed and choreographed by MARCIA MILGROM DODGE

June 22 – August 18

June 22 – August 18

PHOTO: JIM GALLOP
Playwright’s Rules of Engagement

During the off-Broadway run of her play *Pipeline*, playwright Dominique Morisseau developed the list of guidelines below to help every audience member feel at home in a theater space. They are an encouragement and entreaty for you — the audience — to foster a positive theatergoing experience for all that is communal and fully engaged. We invite you to take Morisseau’s words to heart as you watch *Skeleton Crew* at the Guthrie.

- You are allowed to laugh audibly.
- You are allowed to have audible moments of reaction and response.
- My work requires a few “um hmms” and “uhn uhnns” should you need to use them. Just maybe in moderation. Only when you really need to vocalize.
- This can be church for some of us, and testifying is allowed.
- This is also live theater and the actors need you to engage with them, not distract them or thwart their performance.
- Please be an audience member who joins with others and allows a bit of breathing room. Exhale together. Laugh together. Say “amen” should you need to.
- This is community. Let’s go. ✝️
We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of our donors whose annual support enables the Guthrie to remain a vibrant center for theater performance, education and training in our community. To join this group in ensuring the Guthrie continues to thrive, contact the Development Team at 612.225.6200 or give@guthrietheater.org.
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*In remembrance

AS OF APRIL 4, 2024
We do our best to ensure that all donor listings are current and correct. To update your listing, please contact us at 612.225.6200 or give@guthrietheater.org.

GUTHRIE THEATER \ 23
Corporate, Foundation and Public Support

Vital support from our corporate, foundation and government partners allows community members of all ages and abilities to access internationally renowned theater and celebrated artists. Grants from state and federal agencies and local and national foundations provide crucial operating support as well as key funding for new and ongoing programs. To learn more, contact the Development Team at 612.225.6165. For information about sponsorship opportunities and corporate benefits, contact us at corporatecircle@guthrietheater.org.

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This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support grant, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.
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You’re invited to drink, dine and raise funds for the Guthrie Theater Foundation at our annual benefit event. The evening includes your choice of dinner or an exclusive happy hour before enjoying the Opening Night performance of *Little Shop of Horrors*.

Tickets range from $50 to $1,000 and are on sale now! [www.guthrietheater.org/vineanddine](http://www.guthrietheater.org/vineanddine)
You’re invited to drink, dine and raise funds for the Guthrie Theater Foundation at our annual benefit event. The evening includes your choice of dinner or an exclusive happy hour before enjoying the Opening Night performance of *Little Shop of Horrors*. Tickets range from $50 to $1,000 and are on sale now! [www.guthrietheater.org/vineanddine](http://www.guthrietheater.org/vineanddine)

Friday, June 28

It’s also a way to embrace and celebrate the world around us so we can build a more vibrant society.
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OUR MISSION
The Guthrie Theater engages exceptional theater artists in the exploration of both classic and contemporary plays connecting the community we serve to one another and to the world. Through its extraordinary artists, staff and facility, the Guthrie is committed to the people of Minnesota and, from its place rooted deeply in the Twin Cities, influences the field as a leading 21st-century arts organization.

OUR VISION
The Guthrie creates transformative theater experiences that ignite the imagination, stir the heart, open the mind and build community through the illumination of our common humanity.

OUR CORE VALUES

- Artistic Excellence
- Community
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility
- Fiscal Responsibility

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
Many volunteers give their time and talents in support of the Guthrie’s activities. If you’d like to support the Guthrie by becoming a volunteer, apply at guthrietheater.org or email volunteers@guthrietheater.org.

The Guthrie is a member of the League of Resident Theatres.

The Guthrie is a member of the American Arts Alliance and Minnesota Citizens for the Arts, government advocacy groups at the federal and state levels, respectively.

The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the U.S.

Directors and choreographers are members of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.

The scenic, costume, lighting, sound and projection designers in LORT theaters are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees.

Guthrie scenic artists are also represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829.

Guthrie costume and wardrobe employees, stagehands and craftspersons are represented by IATSE Local 13.

All scenery, props and costumes are designed specifically for Guthrie productions and built in the theater’s shops.
ENGLISH
by SANAZ TOSSI
directed by HAMID DEHGHANI
July 13 – August 18

“Stories like English are able to connect nations, connect people and help us see people as humans. That’s the magic of theater.”
– Director Hamid Dehghani
The Lehman Trilogy
An epic portrayal of the American dream
September 14 – October 13, 2024

All the Devils Are Here
How Shakespeare Invented the Villain
An artful exploration of evil
October 12 – November 17, 2024

Priority Ordering Opportunity for Subscribers

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A celebration of 50 years
November 9 – December 29, 2024

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December 14, 2024 – January 25, 2025

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An enchanting comedic delight
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An iconic murder mystery
March 15 – May 18, 2025

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A clever Southern comedy
April 19 – May 25, 2025

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A provocative musical masterpiece
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