

For Immediate Release:
Contact: Robin Conklin
Rconkli1@utk.edu

***Dominique Morisseau's "Blood at the Root"
to Play in the CBT Lab Theatre***

A Black high school student sits under a tree seemingly reserved for whites. The next day, three nooses appear on the tree. A few weeks later, a fight erupts. The Black students are charged with attempted murder. Inspired by the true story of the Jena 6, racial double standards and inequality in the criminal justice system are explored in this contemporary drama from the playwright of "Detroit '67."

"Blood at the Root" will run in the Clarence Brown Theatre's Lab Theatre March 4-13, 2022. The production uses strong language, racial slurs, and symbols of violence to accurately depict the story of the Jena 6. Tickets at: <https://clarencebrowntheatre.com/plays/blood-at-the-root/>

Information on theatre safety protocols are available here: <https://clarencebrowntheatre.com/faq/>

Behind the Scenes Sunday will take place following the Sunday, March 6 matinee. A Talk Back will take place Sunday, March 13 following the matinee. The Open Captioned performance is Sunday, March 13 at 2:00 pm.

Grant and foundation support for this production is provided by the Shubert Foundation Inc., the Tennessee Arts Commission, the Arts & Culture Alliance, and the Knox County Tourism Consortium. The media sponsor for this production is WUTK. Free and convenient parking is available in the Upper Parking of McClung Tower Garage (G2) on Volunteer Boulevard.

Dominique Morisseau is the author of The Detroit Project (A 3-Play Cycle) which includes the following plays: "Skeleton Crew," "Paradise Blue," and "Detroit '67". Additional plays include: "Pipeline," "Sunset Baby," "Blood at the Root," and "Follow Me To Nellie's." She is also the TONY nominated book writer on the new Broadway musical "Ain't Too Proud – The Life and Times of the Temptations." She is alumna of The Public Theater Emerging Writer's Group, Women's Project Lab, and Lark Playwrights Workshop and has developed work at Sundance Lab, Williamstown Theatre Festival and Eugene O'Neil Playwrights Conference. She most recently served as Co-Producer on the Showtime series "Shameless" (3 seasons). Additional awards include: Spirit of Detroit Award, PoNY Fellowship, Sky-Cooper Prize, TEER Trailblazer Award, Steinberg Playwright Award, Audelco Awards, NBFT August Wilson Playwriting Award, Edward M. Kennedy Prize for Drama, OBIE Award (2), Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellowship, Variety's Women of Impact for 2017-18, and a recent MacArthur Genius Grant Fellow.

Tracey Copeland Halter (Director) has a BA in Theatre from the University of Michigan and an MFA in Acting from New York University. She teaches Theatre 100, Acting 220 and 221 and co teaches a special topics class, in diverse acting methods. Her professional acting credits include "Seven Guitars," (Broadway) "Richard III" and "Two Gentlemen of Verona," (New York Shakespeare Festival); "Two Trains Running," (Denver Center); "Once On This Island," "Much Ado About Nothing," and 4 productions of "A Christmas Carol," (The Alliance Theatre); "Cymbeline," "Much Ado About Nothing," "School for Wives," and "Midsummer Night's Dream," (GA Shakespeare Festival.) "The Hot Mikado," (Houston/Pittsburgh tour), and "Spunk and Jar the Floor," (Jomandi Theatre); "Fences," "Intimate Apparel," "Ain't Misbehavin'," "A Christmas Carol," "Black Pearl Sings," "The Miracle Worker," "Violet," and "Candide" (Clarence Brown Theatre). She has directed at Ball State University, The Word Players and Clarence Brown Theatre.

UT Graduate and Undergraduate students include: **Jasmine R. Handy** (Raylynn); **Abigail McCarter** (Toria); **Bethany Moon** (Asha); **Alan Toney** (Justin); **Peter Mayer Klepchick** (Colin); **LoRen Seagrave** (De'Andre); **Guthrie Butler** (Ensemble/Understory); and, **Nevaeh Daniel** (Ensemble/Understudy).

The creative team for this production includes: **Kirsten Jolly** (Scenic Designer); **Christopher Pickart** (Scenic Consultant); **Katie Carrillo** (Costume Designer); **Neno Russell** (Costume Consultant); **Kaylin Gess** (Lighting Designer); **Josh Mullady** (Assistant Lighting Designer); **Amorie Perteet** (Sound Designer); **Danny Leitao** (Choreographer); and **Wil Warring** (Co-Stage Manager) and **Cearan Jax Costello** (Co-Stage Manager).

With a dual mission to train the next generation of theatre artists and to provide top quality professional theatre, the Clarence Brown Theatre at the University of Tennessee Knoxville is one of only 12 academic LORT (League of Resident Theatre) institutions in the nation with a professional theater on campus. Under the leadership of Interim Producing Artistic Director Kate Buckley, Interim Department Head Casey Sams, and Managing Director Thomas Cervone, the CBT season runs from November through May and features five productions ranging from musicals to drama.

The CBT provides a cultural resource for both the University and the larger East Tennessee community and affirms diversity and inclusivity in all their forms.

For more information or tickets, call the CBT Box Office at (865) 974-5161 or visit us online at clarencbrowntheatre.com. Stay connected to the Clarence Brown Theatre on Facebook (Clarence Brown Theatre), follow us on Twitter (@ClarenceBrown) and view Clarence Brown videos on YouTube (Clarence Bro).

###