

ALLEY THEATRE

FOR RELEASE:

SKELETON CREW by Dominique Morisseau Breaks Down the American Dream

The thought-provoking drama, which opens the Alley's 72nd season, follows a group of co-workers during the 2008 Recession in Detroit.

HOUSTON, TX – The Alley Theatre and Interim Artistic Director James Black announce the cast and crew of the 2018-19 Neuhaus Season opener, ***Skeleton Crew*** by Dominique Morisseau, directed by Taibi Magar. *Skeleton Crew* is the story of four factory workers at the last automobile stamping plant in Detroit and their struggle to survive as the industry and their way of life is dramatically changed. The play runs September 7 – October 7, 2018. Tickets are available at alleytheatre.org or by calling the Box Office at 713.220.5700.

Skeleton Crew is set in 2008 - the start of the Great Recession. In the breakroom of one of Detroit's last auto stamping plants, a makeshift family of co-workers swap stories, share dreams, and take pride in their work. When confronted with the life-altering choices they must face if the factory closes, dynamics shift and each is pushed to the limits of survival. Loyalties are tested and boundaries are crossed in this "deeply American play" (*The New York Times*).

"We open the 2018-19 Season with award-winning author Dominique Morisseau's *Skeleton Crew* - a powerful drama about morality and survival in Detroit during the recession. Along with the artistic staff, I chose this production for its universal themes and emotional connectivity. I hope audiences will feel the power of this extraordinary play and humanity of its characters," said Black.

The *Skeleton Crew* cast includes Alley Resident Company member David Rainey (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *A Christmas Carol*) as Reggie, Lizan Mitchell (Arena Stage's *A Raisin the Sun*, The Old Globe's *The Tempest*) as Faye, Candice D'Meza (Alley's *The Cake*, Main Street Theater's *Men on Boats*) as Shanita, and Brandon J. Morgan (Alley's *The Great Society*, Stages Repertory Theatre's *My Mañana Comes*) as Dez.

The *Skeleton Crew* creative team includes Director Taibi Magar, Scenic Designer Kevin Rigdon, Costume Designer Samantha C. Jones, Lighting Designer Jason Lynch, Sound Designer Mikael Sulaiman, and Stage Manager Emily Bohannon.

Named one of *Variety's* Women of Impact for 2017-18, Obie award-winning playwright Dominique Morisseau is the author of *The Detroit Project* (A Three-Play Cycle) which includes the following plays: *Skeleton Crew* (Atlantic Theater Company), *Paradise Blue* (Signature Theatre), and *Detroit '67* (Public Theater, Classical Theatre of Harlem, and NBT). Dominique is an 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."

Performances of *Skeleton Crew* are Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday at 7:30 p.m., Friday at 8:00 p.m., Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., and Sunday at 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. *Skeleton Crew* is recommended for ages 15 and up.

SPONSORS: The Alley Theatre is supported by the 2018-19 season sponsor United Airlines, the official airline of the Alley Theatre; Four Seasons Hotel Houston, the official hotel of the Alley Theatre; and Lynn Wyatt.

TICKETS: Tickets to *Skeleton Crew* are now on sale and start at \$45. Discounted tickets are available for military, seniors, and any student, regardless of age, with a valid student ID for designated performances. Tickets can be ordered online (alleytheatre.org) or by phone (713.220.5700).

ALLEY IN CONTEXT: The Alley Theatre will present a post-show discussion following the Saturday, September 15 (2:30 p.m.) performance, which will feature civic leaders, distinguished academics, and area professionals discussing the themes of the play and how they are reflected in our lives today.

The *Skeleton Crew* cast will be featured during a post-show discussion following the Tuesday, September 18 (7:30 p.m.) performance.

DESIGNER TALK: An hour before the Sunday, September 9 matinee preview performance (2:30 p.m.), a member of the artistic staff will lead a discussion with the production's creative team to give audiences a behind-the-scenes look at the design process. These pre-show talks will offer audiences an exclusive opportunity to ask questions about the designer's work and learn how they brought the script to life. Designer Talks will take place in the Texas Room.

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ABOUT THE ALLEY THEATRE

The Alley Theatre, one of America's leading nonprofit theatres, is a nationally recognized performing arts company led by Interim Artistic Director James Black and Managing Director Dean R. Gladden. The Alley produces up to 16 plays each year in its newly renovated Theatre, ranging from the best current work, to re-invigorated classic plays, to new plays by contemporary writers. The Alley is home to a Resident Company of actors. In addition, the Alley engages theatre artists of every discipline – actors, designers, composers, playwrights – who work on individual productions throughout each season as Visiting Artists.

The renovation of the Hubbard Theatre at the Alley was completed in October 2015 – and created a new 774-seat state-of-the-art performance venue. Matched with the newly renovated 296-seat Neuhaus Theatre, the Alley offers nearly 500 performances each season. The Company reaches over 200,000 people each year through its performance and education programs. Its audience enrichment programs include pre-show and post-performance talks, events, and workshops for audience members of all ages.