



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Artists Rep's 2018/19 Season Kicks Off with
Obie Award-Winning Drama
SKELETON CREW
by Dominique Morisseau**

WHO: Artists Repertory Theatre

WHAT: [SKELETON CREW](#)

By Dominique Morisseau

Directed by William (Bill) Earl Ray

WHEN: September 2-30, 2018

Preview Performances: September 2, 4, 5, 6, 7

Opening Night/Press Night: Saturday, September 8 @ 7:30pm

Regular run September 9 through September 30: Wednesdays-Sundays @ 7:30pm,

Saturdays @ 2pm, Sundays @ 2pm

Additional Performances:

Tuesday: September 11 and 25 @ 7:30pm

Wednesday: September 19 @ noon

Post-Matinee Talkbacks:

September 9, 16, 23, 30* – post 2pm performance

September 19 – post noon performance

**Oregon Psychoanalytic Center*

Post-Show Discussion "Tech Talk": Wednesday, September 5

Open Captioned Performance: September 29 @ 2pm

Closing Performance: September 30 @ 7:30pm

WHERE: Artists Repertory Theatre, Morrison Stage, 1515 SW Morrison St., Portland

TICKETS: \$60 regular price; \$30 preview/student/under 35

Artists Rep participates in [Arts for All](#) and the [Multnomah County Library's Discovery Pass Program](#).

Buy Tickets: 503.241.1278 or www.artistsrep.org

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PREVIEW PERFORMANCE SPECIALS:

Sept. 2: Sunday Souday – Pay-What-You-Will + Live Motown music with pianist Mark Steele at 6:30pm

Sept. 4: Ten Buck Tuesday – \$10 ticket

Sept. 5: Wine Down Wednesday – \$30 ticket + a glass of Dark Horse wine

Sept. 6: Thirsty Thursday – \$30 ticket + Lagunitas beer

Sept.7 : Foodie Friday – \$30 ticket + discounted bar food

SHOW IMAGE ATTACHED: Design credit – Jeff Hayes, Kisha Jarrett, Mary Beth Leavens

PRODUCTION PHOTOS AVAILABLE: September 5, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE. Portland, Oregon | August 16, 2018. Artists Repertory Theatre kicks off its 2018/19 season with *Skeleton Crew* by Dominique Morisseau, directed by William (Bill) Earl Ray. *Skeleton Crew* is the third play in Morisseau's *The Detroit Project (A 3-Play Cycle)* following *Detroit '67* and *Paradise Blue*. For *Skeleton Crew*, Morisseau received a [2016 Obie Award](#) and the play was selected for the [2014 Kilroy List](#). *Skeleton Crew* runs from September 2 through September 30 on the Morrison Stage.

It's 2008, and one of the last auto plants in Detroit is dying on the vine. The factory workers that remain are living paycheck-to-paycheck but amidst the backbreaking work and brutally long shifts, they have somehow shaped themselves into a makeshift family. Faye, a factory lifer, is the glue that holds everything together. But with less than six months before she can retire with a full pension, Faye learns that management has a plan that could threaten her whole existence, leaving her torn between loyalty to her coworkers or her own survival. Heartbreakingly tense with moments of ethereal beauty, *Skeleton Crew* reveals the struggle to stay relevant in a society that constantly changes.

"A deeply moral and deeply American play, with a loving compassion for those trapped in a system that makes sins, spiritual or societal, and self-betrayal almost inevitable."

– Ben Brantley, *The New York Times*

"A deeply vulnerable blend of frustration, conversation and denial."

– Chris Jones, *Chicago Tribune*

"What's most relevant in *Skeleton Crew* is the play's four characters, it's not just about Detroit," said play Director William (Bill) Earl Ray, during the play's first rehearsal. "This group of people is a family, they struggle together, spend most of their lives together, and together they try to figure out what's next. What will happen? How will they survive? What happened to these characters in *Skeleton Crew*, set in 2008 Detroit, is a sad occasion—but it is still going on. It is my hope that audiences will identify with these characters and find their own connections to these four people who represent the working-class peoples of America."

"It's a privilege for Artists Rep to introduce the work of the extraordinary Dominique Morisseau to Portland theatre audiences," said Artistic Director Dámaso Rodríguez at the first rehearsal of *Skeleton Crew*. "Morisseau's rapidly growing body of work includes a string of finely crafted plays that are being seen by audiences across the country. In *Skeleton Crew*, I expect audiences will make an immediate connection with her intricately drawn characters and find themselves transported by this timely, powerful play."

Skeleton Crew is co-sponsored by Trish & Bennett Garner and Kris Olson & Les Swanson.

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ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

[Dominique Morisseau](#) is the author of *The Detroit Project (A 3-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). Additional plays include: *Pipeline* (Lincoln Center Theatre), *Sunset Baby* (LAByrinth Theatre), *Blood at the Root* (National Black Theatre), and *Follow Me To Nellie's* (Premiere Stages). Dominique is an alumna of The Public Theater Emerging Writer's Group, Women's Project Lab, and The Lark's Rita Goldberg Playwrights' Workshop; has developed work at Sundance Lab, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and the Eugene O'Neil Playwrights Conference. Her work has been commissioned by Steppenwolf Theatre, Women's Project, South Coast Rep, People's Light and Theatre, and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival/Penumbra Theatre. She most recently served as Co-Producer on the Showtime series *Shameless*. Following its record-breaking run at Berkeley Repertory Theatre last summer, her new musical *Ain't Too Proud — The Life and Times of The Temptations* opened at The Kennedy Center (Washington DC) and The Ahmanson (Los Angeles) this season, and is set to open at The Princess of Whales Theater (Toronto) in October. 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, Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellowship, and being named one of Variety's Women of Impact for 2017-18.

- [American Theatre Magazine](#) (2016) feature article about Dominique Morisseau.
- [Dominique Morisseau: An American Classic](#) by Luan Schooler, Artists Rep Director of New Play Development and Dramaturgy.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

[William \(Bill\) Earl Ray](#) is a director and actor with 40 years of experience in the business. William is pleased to be back at Artists Rep after such a long absence. His last direction at Artists Rep was *Ain't Misbehavin'* and he acted in Artists Rep's *A Raisin in the Sun* as Walter Lee Younger. Some of William's other directing credits include *A Raisin in the Sun* and *Having Our Say*, starring Ms. Irma P. Hall (Big Mama of *Soul Food* movie fame, and *A Family Thing*), *Beehive*, *The 60's Musical*, *The Gin Game*, *The Gospel at Colonus*, *Fires in the Mirror*, *A Song for Coretta*, *The Gifts of the Magi*, *Seven Guitars*, *A Soldier's Play*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *A Lovesong for Miss Lydia*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Jerry's Girls*, *Two Trains Running*, *Agnes of God*, *The Heiress*, *Sea Marks*, *Ceremonies in Dark Old Men*, *Lilies of the Field*, and many more. Some of William's acting credits include *The Whipping Man*, *Master Harold and the Boys*, *The Meeting*, *Blues for an Alabama Sky*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Misery*, *God's Favorite*, *Two Trains Running*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *Dirty Work*, *Cobb*, *Miss Evers' Boys*, *The Sunset Limited*, *The Piano Lesson*, *Audience*, *Of Mice and Men*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Simply Heavenly*, *Bank Job*, *Amen Corner*, and many more. TV and film credits include *The Tuskegee Airmen*, *The Gas Café*, *Cadillac Ranch*, *The Temp*, *Dr. Giggles*, *Terror in the Towers*, *Better Off Dead*, *Walker Texas Ranger*, and more. William is a member of Actors' Equity Association and the Screen Actors Guild and is a graduate of Evergreen State College with a Bachelor of Arts in the performing arts.

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SKELETON CREW

By Dominique Morisseau

Directed by William (Bill) Earl Ray

CAST

[Shelley B. Shelley](#)⁺ as Faye | *Black Nativity*, *Gospel of Lovingkindness*, *Smoldering Fires*, *A Sunbeam* (PassinArt Theatre); *American Night: The Ballad of Juan Jose* (Milagro); *My Walk Has Never Been Average* (August Wilson Red Door Project)

[Vin Shambry](#)^{*^} as Dez | *Magellanica*, *A Civil War Christmas*, *Intimate Apparel*, *Superior Donuts* (Artists Rep); *The Gun Show* (CoHo Theatre, international tour); *Rent*, *Miss Saigon*, *Honk and Big River* (national tours)

[Tamera Lyn](#)⁺ as Shanita | *Wilted Flowers* (Sunflower Creations); *Angie Tribeca* (TBS); *American Vandal* (Woodhead Entertainment), *Here and Now* (Weirdo Productions); *Citizen:an american lyric* (Reed College); *Ruined* (The Reading Parlor)

[Bobby Bermea](#)^{*^} as Reggie | *Between Riverside and Crazy*, *Exiles*, *Topdog/Underdog*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Blue/Orange*, *A Raisin in the Sun* (Artists Rep); *Fences*, *The Brother/Sister Plays* (Portland Playhouse)

CREATIVE TEAM

Director | [William \(Bill\) Earl Ray](#)^{*}

Scenic Designer | [Megan Wilkerson](#)^{#^}

Costume Designer | [Wanda Walden](#)

Lighting Designer | [Miranda K. Hardy](#)

Sound Designer | [Sharath Patel](#)[^]

Dramaturg | [Luan Schooler](#)

Stage Manager | [Carol Ann Wohlmut](#)^{*^}

Props Master | [Robert Amico](#)

Choreographer | [Kemba Shannon](#)

Fight Choreographer | [Jonathan Cole](#)

Intimacy Director | [Amanda K. Cole](#)

PRODUCTION TEAM

Producing Director | Shawn Lee

Associate Producer & Production Manager | Kristeen Willis Crosser

Casting Director | Vonessa Martin

Production Assistant | Karen Hill

Board Op | Jason Coffey

Wardrobe/Costumer | Clare Hungate-Hawk

Technical Director | Nathan Crone

Scene Shop Foreman | Eddie Rivera

Master Carpenter | Charlie Capps

Scenic Charge | Sarah Kindler

Master Electrician | Ronan Kilkelly

Sound Technician | David Petersen

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* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers
+Equity Membership Candidate
The scenic, costume, lighting, projection & sound designers are represented by United Scenic Artists
^ Artists Rep Resident Artist

ABOUT ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

[Artists Repertory Theatre's](#) mission is to produce intimate, provocative theatre and provide a home for artists and audiences to take creative risks. Artists Rep is Portland's premiere mid-size regional theatre company, and is led by Artistic Director/Interim Managing Director Dámaso Rodríguez. Founded in 1982, Artists Repertory Theatre is the longest-running professional theatre company in Portland. Artists Rep became the 72nd member of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) in 2016 and is an Associate Member of the National New Play Network (NNPN).

Artists Rep's 2018/19 season can be found [here](#).

Artists Rep has become a significant presence in American regional theatre with a legacy of world, national, and regional premieres of provocative new work with the highest standards of stagecraft. The organization is committed to local artists and features a company of Resident Artists, professionals of varied theatre disciplines, who are a driving force behind Artists Rep's creative output and identity.

[RESIDENT ARTISTS](#)—Artists Rep productions feature the work of a core group of over two dozen multidisciplinary theatre professionals. Hailing from around the country, the Resident Artists are nationally renowned and award-winning actors, directors, writers, designers, and educators who have chosen to make Portland and Artists Rep their artistic home. Working together and independently, they create inventive and theatrically rich experiences for audiences while playing a major role in defining Portland's cultural landscape.

[TABLE|ROOM|STAGE](#)—Established in 2015, Table|Room|Stage (T|R|S) is Artists Rep's new play program that offers development opportunities for local and national playwrights, and ensures that underrepresented voices are heard on stage. This program strives to make a meaningful impact on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the theatre field by mandating opportunities for women writers and writers of color, and cultivating the next generation of theatre-goers. Artists Rep is committed to bringing the exciting work of women, transgender, and non-binary writers and writers of color to its stages with this program. Artists Rep's first completed T|R|S commission was *The Talented Ones*, by Yusef El Guindi (premiered April, 2017). The second T|R|S commission was *The Thanksgiving Play*, by Larissa FastHorse (Sicangu Lakota) (premiered April, 2018). The third T|R|S commission will be *Wolf Play* by Hansol Jung (to premiere March, 2019). Current playwright commissions include: Linda Alper, Dael Orlandersmith, Steve Rathje, and Andrea Stolowitz. T|R|S is also developing work with playwrights Anthony Hudson and Susannah Mars. To learn more about all the projects, playwrights, and programs of T|R|S [visit here](#).

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[ARTSHUB](#)—Artists Rep is also home to the ArtsHub, where a diverse range of artists and arts organizations find a home and thrive with access to affordable administrative, performance, and rehearsal space, as well as myriad support services. The ArtsHub serves as a community arts center, where performance venues and lobbies buzz with creative energy and Portland’s arts-loving audiences gather. Over the past year, Artists Rep hosted 324 rehearsals and more than 600 performances, events, and other happenings by 51 groups. To learn about the arts organizations of Artists Rep’s ArtsHub [visit here](#).

Artists Repertory Theatre receives generous support from our community of patrons, including significant leadership gifts from: Anonymous, The Collins Foundation, The Robert & Mercedes Eichholz Foundation, Ronni Lacroute, The James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation, Regional Arts & Culture Council, The Shubert Foundation, and David & Christine Vernier. Additional Corporate and Foundation support comes from: Advance Gender Equity in the Arts (AGE), Hotel deLuxe, Jackson Foundation, Kinsman Foundation, Oregon Arts Commission, Oregon Cultural Trust, The Oregonian/OregonLive (media sponsor), Rafati’s Catering, and US Bank.

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