

For Immediate Release:



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“National Black Theatre Takes Us Higher” The 46th Season Dedicated To Women Playwrights

August 19, 2014 (New York, NY) **Dr. Barbara Ann Teer’s National Black Theatre [NBT]** is excited to announce our 46th Season entitled **“NBT Takes Us Higher.”** National Black Theatre, is the oldest continually run black theatre in New York will premiere three productions showcasing Black women playwrights from the Diaspora: the NEW YORK PREMIERE of **Carnaval written by Obie Award winner Nikkole Salter**, a Workshop Production of **Her Portmanteau written by Mfoniso Udofia** and the NEW YORK PREMIERE of **The Burnin’ written/directed by 2014 DORIS DUKE IMPACT AWARDEE Cristal Chanelle Truscott**. National Black Theatre has been presenting groundbreaking, award-winning, original plays, workshops, courses, community events and symposiums in the heart of Harlem. The 46th Season Passes are available now for \$99 and \$149 at www.nationalblacktheatre.org

"This season at NBT is particularly special for me as we have chosen to focus our lens on the Diaspora’s voices of the African American woman playwright. These powerful contemporary female voices both shape and hold the promise of our past, regale our present and dream the magnificent possibilities of what our future can be." said **Sade Lythcott - CEO, National Black Theatre**. "This is so exciting because when my mother, Dr. Barbara Ann Teer created the technology that would be the foundation for NBT, the Divine Feminine principle was at its core. Now, 46 years later, we honor our founder and the cadre of powerful women both alive and in the ancestral realm, who have graced our stage, shaped our community and held this fierce loving sacred space for the 46th season to be possible."

"When thinking of curating a season that would elevate the consciousness of our community, NBT could not think of any other voices to focus on than the Diaspora’s voices of Black female playwrights and artists. This season is the celebration of women’s integral articulation of Black lifestyle." said **Jonathan McCrory - Director of Theatre Arts Program**. "I am personally excited to see such a diverse representation of our culture present on our stage. As a complex community, this Season taps into the rich narratives that explore 21st Century Black Lifestyle."

Running October 21 - November 16, 2014, with an Opening Night Oct 25th, the **NEW YORK PREMIERE of Carnaval** written by Nikkole Salter and directed by Awoye Timpo. A year ago in Brooklyn, two young men mourned the untimely loss of their best friend. In his honor they decided then and there that, despite their differences, no matter where life took them, they would take care of his younger brother, and get together on the anniversary of his death to celebrate the life he should have had. So, on a cold day in the winter of 1996, these three twenty-something’s board a plane for Rio De Janeiro for a taste of the good life: sun, fun, and, of course, women - what better way to pay homage to a fallen friend? But what starts out as a joyride takes an unexpected turn and the three sex tourists find themselves in a situation that will change their friendships and their lives forever.

Running February 26 - March 1, 2015 with the Workshop Production of **Her Portmanteau** written by Mfoniso Udofia and directed by Victor Maog. **Her Portmanteau** was developed during the inaugural **I Am SoulPlaywright Residency** program and tells the story of legacy and forgiveness. Trapped within a small New York

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apartment, matriarch Abasiama Ufot and her two eldest children must construct a new definition for their family. Assaults are opened and old pains are re-lived, three women from three different generations, attempt to build the bridge across very different worlds.

Running in May 2015 the **NEW YORK PREMIERE of The Burnin'** written/directed by Cristal Chanelle Truscott an A capella Musical by Progress Theatre Company. Inspired by the historic 1940 Rhythm Club Fire and a tragic 2003 event where patrons of a popular urban nightclub were killed, *The Burnin'* is an a capella musical that straddles time between two clubs to offer an imaginative exploration of the night of the fires and the ensuing media coverage. Trapped inside, patrons' club personas melt away, changing their destinations, intertwining their lives, and exposing their struggles and desires for life once survival becomes hypothetical. *The Burnin'* is not a staged, historical reenactment of these tragedies, rather it re-imagines and re-interprets the events as they unfold onstage simultaneously. The piece follows a group of club-goers through the before and after (even if "after" is death for some) of the fire to examine the complexities of race, gender and community during times of survival. *The Burnin'* traces how African Americans receive and redefine legacies of Black identity and freedom to accommodate their contemporary realities.

In celebration of almost a half a century of nurturing Black playwrights, National Black Theatre is proud to announce the 2014 -2015 **I Am Soul - Playwright Resident**, Aurin Squire. Through the program Squire will be supported to develop a new play during the residency, which will culminate in a Workshop Production in NBT's 47th Season. To learn more information, please visit our website.

The **Keep Soul Alive Mondays - Reading Series** is a monthly reading series that will showcase the works of twenty three (23) Black Playwrights kicking off our 46th Season on September 15, 2014. The readings take place on Mondays at 7:30 pm at National Black Theatre. Each reading is free with a suggested donation of \$10. To learn more information, please visit our website.

In order to enjoy the 2014-2015 Season, National Black Theatre is thrilled to offer **46th Season Passes at the affordable prices of \$99 and \$149**. With each pass you will save money and have guaranteed seats to: NEW YORK PREMIERE of *Carnaval*, Workshop Production of *Her Portmanteau*, and the NEW YORK PREMIERE of *The Burnin'* and other special events happening within the 46th Season. Visit our website to learn more at www.nationalblacktheatre.org

NATIONAL BLACK THEATRE:

Founded by visionary Dr. Barbara Ann Teer in 1968, **National Black Theatre [NBT]** is a nationally recognized cultural and educational institution. Dr. Teer pioneered "the healing art of black theatre as an instrument for wholeness in urban communities where entrepreneurial artists of African descent live and work." NBT is partially supported by grants from the City Council of New York, Councilmember Inez Dickens, City of New York Department of Cultural Affairs, New York State Council on the Arts, Columbia Service Society, Theatre Communications Group, Met-Life and private donations. Visit www.nationalblacktheatre.org or follow NBT on Facebook (www.facebook.com/NationalBlackTheatre) and Twitter/Instagram (@NatBlackTheatre).

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