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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**June 20, 2018**

## **BISHOP ARTS THEATRE CENTER CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF ARTISTRY, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION**

**Dallas, Texas** – Oak Cliff’s premiere multicultural and multidiscipline center for the arts, Bishop Arts Theatre Center (BATC), is celebrating a milestone this year with the announcement of its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary *Silver Threads* Season. Executive Artistic Director Teresa Coleman Wash and Board of Directors President Boderick Hall announced this morning a season that is filled with theatre, jazz, special events, a speaker series, arts education initiatives and the return of Langston Hughes’ *Black Nativity* for its 15<sup>th</sup> year on stage with Bishop Arts Theatre Center. Founder and Executive Artistic Director Teresa Wash was jubilant with the announcement stating, “For twenty-five years, this theatre has been a cornerstone for arts & culture in our community. We’ve been intentional about being more than a theatre, our goal has been to be a neighborhood resource center. We are thrilled to celebrate this milestone anniversary with a community that has helped propelled our success.”

“As Board President of the Bishop Arts Theater Center, I am excited to announce that The Theater is celebrating its Silver Anniversary this season. The Theater has effectively served urban communities in Atlanta and Dallas with outstanding Arts Education, inspirational Speaker Series and world renown Jazz Concerts,” offered Hall.

The theatre season will feature 5 productions including the return of the critically praised Female Playwright Festival, 2 Regional Premieres, a Dallas Premiere by Fort Worth Playwright & Amphibian Productions Artistic Director Kathleen Culebro, and of course Langston Hughes’ *Black Nativity* that has become a holiday tradition for countless people in the Dallas community. “The Bishop Arts Theatre Center has a long and rich legacy of engaging in topical questions of today’s live performances while giving a platform to local and regional artists,” cited Wash.

In its ever-evolving stable of education initiatives, BATC will host a Spring Break production Camp that will culminate in a full-scale production on the Bishop Arts Mainstage. Through the course of the week, students will work with a professional stage director and designers as well as mentor with BATC Staff toward the final goal of a full production. The organization will continue with its Silver Stories program, a new initiative that targets the health of seniors that are negatively affected in our community, by actively engaging them in arts workshops designed to stimulate the body, minds, and souls through creative writing, improvisation, visual art, and storytelling.

With the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, Bishop Arts Theatre Center is celebrating the story of Teresa Coleman’s passion and vision that started as a small Atlanta based dinner theatre and how it evolved and matured into the groundbreaking institution it is today. President Hall concluded, “The driving force behind our award-winning cultural direction is Artistic Director Teresa Wash. Teresa’s dedication to the arts and BATC, specifically guarantees that the 25<sup>th</sup> year of artistry will be one of the most innovative, indulgent, and inspiring in its history. This season’s line up will not disappoint.”

Specifics on the Bishop Arts Jazz Series will be available this September. The Theatre & Speaker Series Season follows.

# THE CHAMPION

By Amy Evans  
**REGIONAL PREMIERE**  
October 11 – 28, 2018

Inspired by untold events in the life of music legend Nina Simone, *The Champion* is set in 1962 North Carolina where she and her band are held up by a snowstorm in a greasy spoon. As tempers flare and secrets surface, it seems the waitress at this small-town diner will soon be the only witness to a historic meltdown. Suddenly, the door swings open, and the famous outsiders discover they're truly in unfriendly territory. A sharply drawn, exciting new play by Amy Evans that intimately portrays a cultural icon in the turbulent era during which she rose to fame.

# BLACK NATIVITY

By Langston Hughes  
December 6 – 23, 2018

This holiday Gospel celebration has captured the hearts of our audience that it returns for its 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as part of our season. Spoken word, song, music, dance, and theatre combine to create this one-of-a-kind Christmas pageant that has become one of the holiday traditions our community revels in. Hughes' retelling of the Nativity Story encourages audiences to find joy and asks us all to look inward and find the wonder in life itself.

# LA LLORONA

*A Love Story*

By Kathleen Anderson Culebro  
February 7 – 24, 2019

Tradition, superstition, & love collide in this story of American executive, Jeffery, and his pregnant wife, who find themselves in Mexico City moving into the home of Carlos and Irma who have been forced to rent it in order to support themselves. Jeffrey loves his wife and is willing to do anything to make her happy. Irma loves her husband so she ignores the warnings of La Llorona, who cautions of dire consequences for her family. La Llorona navigates this haunting love story with humor and suspense that will have you on the edge of your seat! Join us on Valentine's Day for a special "Amor" performance for you and your special someone. Special Couples priced tickets for the evening's event.

# Down for #TheCount

A Female Playwright One Act Play Festival  
March 21, 2019 – April 7, 2019

Back for a fourth year, BATC's *Down for #TheCount* is a one-act play festival featuring six dynamic female playwrights from diverse social and ethnic backgrounds articulating the strong female voice in this #MeToo movement! This staged event breathes life into their compelling, hilarious, and heartbreaking stories. True to BATC's mission, *Down for #The Count* is a vital platform for the perpetuation of innovative theatrical productions where a variety of female voices may be heard. **DOWN FOR #THECOUNT IS SUITABLE FOR AUDIENCES AGES 18 AND ABOVE.**

# THE REAL JAMES BOND

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# WAS DOMINICAN

Written and Performed by Christopher Rivas  
**REGIONAL PREMIERE**  
May 17 – 19, 2019

What happens when a Dominican boy in Queens—with an imagination far beyond his shell, who won't go anywhere without his nerf gun and is obsessed with James Bond—finds out that the *real* James Bond was Dominican? This is a true story about Porfirio Rubirosa, Ian Fleming's inspiration for Bond— and how this discovery set off a whole tragi-comic journey for a young, Dominican actor-to-be. *The Real James Bond Was Dominican* is a young man's guide to love, sex, color, code-switching, white-washing, success, fake-it-till-you-make-it, and the roller coaster of finding one's true self.

## **SPEAKER SERIES SEASON**

### **HECTOR CANTÚ** **An Afternoon with *Baldo* & Friends**

January 26, 2019

Hector Cantú, co-creator of the *Baldo* newspaper comic strip, published by nearly 200 newspapers across the United States, leads a panel of creators to discuss characters that connect with today's audiences. Hector Cantú was a guest earlier this year on National Public Radio's "All Things Considered" to talk about the character Cruz coming out as a "Dreamer," and is among the 21 Latino comic authors & artists featured in the book *Your Brain on Latino Comics*.

### **ROSE COLARASSI & DARLENE ELLISON** **WOMEN'S WORLD: A Practical Guide** **to Success and Happiness**

June 29, 2019

International Business & Life Strategist, Rose Colarossi, with Award-Winning author Darlene Ellison take to the Bishop Arts Theatre Center stage to discuss women's empowerment issues in the new #MeToo era. Join us as these powerful and successful women share their journey and how they found themselves evolving to a new definition of success and happiness in their personal and professional lives

### **SANDERIA FAYE**

August 3, 2019

Sanderia Faye, the author of *Mourner's Bench*, joins us for a very special speaker series event. She serves on the faculty at Southern Methodist University and a professional speaker and activist. Her novel, *Mourner's Bench*, is the winner of the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award in debut fiction and The Philosophical Society of Texas Award of Merit for fiction. She is co-founder and a fellow at Kimbilio Center for Fiction, and her work has appeared in the anthology *Arsnick: The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in Arkansas*. Faye moderated the grassroots panel for the Arkansas Civil Rights Symposium during the Freedom Riders 50th Anniversary and is coordinating the first AWP African Diaspora Caucus.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

# RITUALE

A Day of the Dead Celebration  
*In Partnership with Teatro Flor Candela*

November 1 – 2, 2018

Part ritual, part environmental theatre, RITUALÉ is a celebration of the *Día de Muertos* Mexican holiday. The multi-day celebration focuses on gatherings of family and friends to remember those who have died and help support their spiritual journey. Traditions connected with the holiday include building private altars, or *ofrendas*, honoring the deceased using *calaveras* (skulls), marigolds, favorite foods of the departed, and visiting their graves with these as gifts. Visitors also leave possessions of the deceased at the graves. Join us for this one of a kind artistic endeavor that only develops and grows with the audience.

## COMING HOME

A 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Festival

July 13, 2019

Come home to the Bishop Arts Theatre Center! Mark your calendars for this day-long party bringing to a close the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season and celebrate with us all afternoon long with discussions, performances, and art. This family event will unfold onstage, in our halls, and even spill out on to the street where you'll be able to grab a bite to eat from food trucks. All the hallmarks of what you've come to expect from Bishop Arts Theatre will be on full display as we reflect on how far we've come and ready ourselves for the next 25 years to come!

### Funding Credit

Bishop Arts Theatre Center's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season is made possible by the City of Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs, Embrey Family Foundation, State Fair of Texas, Frost Bank, Dallas Tourism Improvement District, Dallas Chapter of Jack & Jill of America, Mary Kay, & Wells Fargo.

### Ticketing Information

All performances are presented at the Bishop Art Theatre Center located at 215 South Tyler, TX 75208. Show times vary per production, please visit [www.bishopartstheatre.org](http://www.bishopartstheatre.org) to verify dates and times. General Admissions fees are \$18 to \$30. Discount tickets are available for groups of 15 or more and may be purchased by calling (214) 948-0716.

### About Bishop Arts Theatre Center (BATC)

Nestled in the heart of Dallas' Oak Cliff community, the Bishop Arts Theatre Center is an award-winning, multicultural, multi-discipline theatre company. Founded in 1993, the mission of the organization is to cultivate a diverse and vibrant arts community while creating opportunities for local and emerging artists through performances and education. The BATC offers a full season of theatre performances, jazz concerts, a speaker series and year-round arts education programs. Each year, the theatre impacts nearly 30,000 people nationwide.

### Connect with BATC socially at:



[WWW.BISHOPARTSTHEATRE.ORG](http://WWW.BISHOPARTSTHEATRE.ORG)

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