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Victory Gardens Theater announces a Chicago tour of its production of *Pipeline*, written by 2018 MacArthur Fellow **Dominique Morisseau** and directed by **Cheryl Lynn Bruce**. As a leader in developing and producing new theater work and cultivating an inclusive Chicago theater community, Victory Gardens will tour the production this spring with free performances at six locations on the South and West sides of Chicago, bringing this highly praised work into local communities, **March 16 - 21, 2020**.

Pipeline played to critical acclaim at Victory Gardens in the spring of 2019. The tour to Chicago neighborhoods is free and open to the public, and sponsored by the Robert R. McCormick Foundation, the Poetry Foundation, the William M. Weiss Foundation, and Illinois Humanities.



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Nya, an inner-city public high school teacher, is committed to her students but desperate to give her only son, Omari, opportunities her students will never have. When a controversial incident at his private school threatens to get him expelled, Nya must confront his rage and her own choices as a parent. But will she be able to reach him before a world beyond her control pulls him away? With profound compassion and poetry, Dominique Morisseau's (*Skeleton Crew*, *Detroit '67*, and the Broadway-bound *Ain't Too Proud*) *Pipeline* brings to light a powerful and important conversation about parenthood, the state of our public school system, and the prison pipeline that claims so many of our inner city youth.

"In the United States, the school-to-prison pipeline is the disproportionate tendency of minors and young adults from disadvantaged backgrounds to become incarcerated, because of harsh school and municipal policies," says **Chay Yew**, Artistic Director of Victory Gardens Theater. "In Dominique Morisseau's timely and powerful *Pipeline*, she explores an important conversation about the state of our public school system, parenthood, and the pipeline that claims so many of our youths of color. Speaking truth to power and using theater to create meaningful civic dialogue, Dominique tells stories of communities grappling with the ever-evolving social, political, and economic shifts that define them."

Pipeline received an overwhelming response from both youth and adult audiences. Many requested the show be extended to give them the opportunity to attend with friends, family, and student groups. The tour is a direct response to those requests, and furthers the theater's commitment to its Education and Community Engagement initiatives. *Pipeline* Director **Cheryl Lynn Bruce**, speaking on the importance of this public tour, says "*Pipeline* is a complicated and compelling tale of real lives facing real life. A story that kick-starts passionate discussion in every direction, *Pipeline* raises hard questions that demand answers."

The *Pipeline* tour schedule is as follows:

- **The Poetry Foundation**, 61 W Superior St., Monday, March 16 at 7pm
- **OPEN Center for the Arts**, 2214 S. Sacramento Ave., Tuesday, March 17 at 8pm
- **eta Creative Arts Foundation**, 7558 S. South Chicago Ave., Wednesday, March 18 at 7pm
- **Douglass Park**, 1401 S. Sacramento Dr., Thursday, March 19 at 6pm
- **Austin Town Hall Cultural Center**, 5610 W. Lake St, Friday, March 20th at 6:30pm
- **Hamilton Park Cultural Center/Fieldhouse**, 513 W. 72nd St, Saturday, March 21 at 3pm

The cast of *Pipeline* includes **Ginne Thomas (Nya)**, **Patrick Ogada (Omari)**, **Joseph Primes (Dun)**, **Aurora Real de Asua (Jasmine)**, **Kelvin Roston, Jr. (Xavier)**, and **Barbara Figgins (Laurie)**.

The team for the *Pipeline* tour includes **Tyra Bullock** (line producer), **Roxanna Conner** (director of education), **Garrett Steinke** (production manager), **Kanomé Jones** (casting director), **Angela E. Adams** (stage manager), and **Erica L. Sandvig** (director of production).

About the Artists

Dominique Morisseau (playwright) 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 Lark Playwrights Workshop and has developed work at Sundance Lab, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and Eugene O'Neil Playwrights Conference. Her work has been commissioned by Steppenwolf Theater, Women's Project, South Coast Rep, People's Light and Theatre, and 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, D.C.), The Ahmanson (Los Angeles), and The Princess of Whales Theater (Toronto) before going to Broadway in Spring 2019. 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), and the Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellowship. She was named one of Variety's Women of Impact for 2017–18 and was a recipient of the 2018 MacArthur Genius Grant.

Cheryl Lynn Bruce (director) is a Chicago-born veteran performer, director and educator; she has performed on stages across the country, Europe, and Mexico. She created the role of Elizabeth Sandry for Steppenwolf's historic Tony Award-winning production *The Grapes of Wrath*; most recently performed as Anne Mwarimba in Danaï Gurira's *Familiar* at both Steppenwolf Theatre Company and Woolly Mammoth Theatre in Washington, D.C., and as Hillary in Lucas Hnath's *Hillary and Clinton* premiere at Victory Gardens. As Victory Garden's 2016 Gala Guest Co-Playwright, she penned *The Billboard* with husband Kerry James Marshall, directed their short play, and developed its video component. Last season, she directed Sandra Delgado's *La Havana Madrid* for Teatro Vista, which debuted at Steppenwolf's 1700 Theatre; traveled to the Miracle Center, then Goodman's Owen Theatre, and closed on Navy Pier's Lake Stage. She developed and directed Sandra Delgado's *Para Graciela* and *Milkweed* by Misty DeBerry, both solo works. From 1995 to 2007, she wrote, adapted, and directed a dozen plays for Youth Drama Workshop, Goodman Theatre's summer enrichment program, which she co-founded and developed for 'tween-age and teenage residents of Bronzeville's Dearborn Homes. She has mounted productions for Columbia College; University of Illinois-Chicago; Indiana University; and DePaul University. She has received the Congo Square Spotlight Award (2018); League of Chicago Theatres Lifetime Achievement Award (2017); Robert Rauschenberg Residency (2015); 3Arts Award (2010); Yale Art Gallery residency (2013); Jane Addams Hull House Association's Woman of Valor Award (2010); is an Inaugural Fellow of the Institute for the Study of Women in the Arts and Media - Columbia College; and is included in *Rushmore*, the majestic Chicago Cultural Center mural by Kerry James Marshall (2017).

About Victory Gardens Theater

Under the leadership of Artistic Director Chay Yew and Executive Director Erica Daniels, Victory Gardens is dedicated to artistic excellence while creating a vital, contemporary American Theater that is accessible and relevant to all people through productions of challenging new plays and musicals. Victory Gardens Theater is committed to the development, production, and support of new plays that has been the mission of the theater since its founding, set forth by Dennis Začek, Marcelle McVay, and the original founders of Victory Gardens Theater.

Victory Gardens Theater is a leader in developing and producing new theater work and cultivating an inclusive Chicago theater community. Victory Gardens' core strengths are nurturing and producing dynamic and inspiring new plays, reflecting the diversity of our city's and nation's culture through engaging diverse communities, and in partnership with Chicago Public Schools, bringing art and culture to our city's active student population.

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Since its founding in 1974, the company has produced more world premieres than any other Chicago theater, a commitment recognized nationally when Victory Gardens received the 2001 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. Located in the Lincoln Park neighborhood, Victory Gardens Biograph Theater includes the Začek-McVay Theater, a state-of-the-art 259-seat mainstage, and the 109-seat studio theater on the second floor, named the Richard Christiansen Theater.

Victory Gardens Ensemble Playwrights include Luis Alfaro, Philip Dawkins, Marcus Gardley, Ike Holter, Samuel D. Hunter, Naomi Iizuka, Tanya Saracho, and Laura Schellhardt. Each playwright has a seven-year residency at Victory Gardens Theater.

Victory Gardens Theater receives major funding from Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Joyce Foundation, Ralla Klepak Trust for the Performing Arts, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The REAM Foundation, Shubert Foundation, Venturous Theater Fund of the Tides Foundation, and the Wallace Foundation.

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For more information about Victory Gardens, visit www.victorygardens.org (https://u7061146.ct.sendgrid.net/ls/click?upn=TeZUXWpUv-2B6TCY38pVL0r9rINILLtgPg-2B3K8ofYC6sHnkvR-2BqVRkk-2FIDO2-2BJlcmhiQlW_u1K9DbE-2BX63W9tRQJAYWjrci0umndQAU4zd3pINTn66hSWw0GodgBcokGOWgXgNT6sfn-2FE2Hh2HWMOI0tQvd3hKxgkWX-2F-2FaE7dg7KNUr6a64lDcHofx8KhX9nxdDCd7pqzXawMF0xflyJaZyBdRx-2Bs1h195N7KWf9-2F4ZCfOtX1mj81LP8E5bTXgikjBmrcCCtv-2F-2BaxNgiFEINaqQsV1YVjGX-2F4dewOY8-2BupJwmHwEmkv3bhZru7RVxo6nY9siPgj-2FDhUsgTKmMpBapqQk6DLjJampqqtQow3StiRqwuMn0Do5KW-2BCctjCuKfnUgNCCo-2B3zmG3kOXFo2CVtd2A0BfA0toXV0txt3os6NA6ZVQk-3D). Follow us on Facebook at [Facebook.com/victorygardens](https://www.facebook.com/victorygardens), Twitter @VictoryGardens, and Instagram @victorygardenstheater.

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