

Until the Flood

By Dael Orlandersmith

Directed by Neel Keeler

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A Note from the Artistic Director, Robert Falls: A Note About *Until the Flood*

Many plays show their audience the world through other people's eyes. But for writer and performer Dael Orlandersmith, portraying multiple perspectives is unquestionably central to her art. A keen observer of the best and worst of human behavior, Dael transforms herself on stage to inhabit multiple characters of different ages, races and ideologies. She invites us to see an event, place, time period or political situation—from our own vantage point, and also from the perspective of people we may not admire or agree with.

I first encountered Dael's work when I read her play *Yellowman*, which explores the effects of colorism in a relationship between a light-skinned black man and a darker-skinned black woman, and was a finalist for the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Several years later, I was thrilled to present Dael's one-woman show *Stoop Stories* at the Goodman as part of our 2009/2010 Season. In this

piece, Dael painted a picture of her childhood neighborhood—Harlem, New York—by embodying a cross-section of characters who populate the neighborhood. Three years later, in our 2012/2013 Season, I invited Dael back to perform *Black n Blue Boys/Broken Men*, her exploration of male sexual abuse from the viewpoint of both abused and abusers. More recently, Dael joined the Goodman’s Artistic Collective, a group of artists with whom the theater maintains longstanding artistic collaborations.

In *Until the Flood*, Dael examines the aftermath of the 2014 shooting of 18-year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. Brown, who was black and unarmed, was shot by a white police officer, resulting in months of protest and political unrest; Dael created the piece as a commission for the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis after interviewing citizens in Ferguson. I find the work complex, discomfoting and thought-provoking, and Dael’s performance galvanizing.

I hope you will not only enjoy the play, but also draw from it the impetus to discuss some of the most vexing political issues of our day.

NAVIGATING THE WATERS:

A Conversation with *Until the Flood* Playwright Dael Orlandersmith

In *Until the Flood*, Goodman Artistic Associate and Alice Center Resident Artist Dael Orlandersmith explores the social unrest in Ferguson, Missouri, following the shooting of teenager Michael Brown. Drawing from her extensive interviews with Ferguson residents, Orlandersmith crafts an extraordinary theatrical experience in which she embodies eight residents of the town as they try to come to terms with the complex events that shook the nation. Below, Orlandersmith recalls her artistic process for bringing the voices of Ferguson to life on stage.

Sarah Brandt: Why did you want to write this play?

Dael Orlandersmith: Well, actually, the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis first came to me [about writing the piece]. I said yes because I think it's important. I want to tell a story. I want to go beyond what's right, who's right, who's wrong. How does this shooting affect people? In terms of race, how far have we come? Those are the questions that have come to mind. What does it invoke, provoke in you? What kind of thought?

SB: What sort of preparation did you do?

DO: [Repertory Theatre of St. Louis Artistic Director] Seth Gordon and I met with Michael Brown, Sr. and a few other people, a lot of political activists and people who are just generally in town. I wanted to look at that because, you know, race is obviously a very... it's high voltage. It's a high voltage situation. I wanted to see exactly how far we've come, which is interesting to me, in terms of, say, from the 1940s on. And also, what does it mean to the individual? What does race mean to an individual? How does it affect individuals, and how far has St. Louis come? What does it mean to be a part of this? And then again, for

me as a New Yorker. I find that a lot of people in St. Louis feel this is nothing new to them. A lot of them just want to put this down. And a lot of other people have said it's just an everyday occurrence. So it's about showing those perspectives.

SB: The people we meet in the play — are these people you met?

DO: They are composite figures. Because I made it very clear to everyone I spoke with— I don't have a right to invade your life that way. I have a right as a playwright to tell a story. But I don't have a right to dig into someone's life like that. Because that's no longer about theater; that's perverse voyeurism. A word that I use heavily is "boundary." The role of certain types of theater, we are supposed to be mental and emotional travelers, but having said that, if I write about someone's life directly, that makes me responsible for them in certain ways that I don't feel comfortable with. And given where that person is within their life, it can invoke and provoke a lot of stuff that

they just won't be able to deal with. I'm not a therapist. And I actually said that to everyone I spoke with.

SB: You've written in many formats— poetry, plays, solo performance—what made you choose the solo performance piece for this play?

DO: It's an interesting format. I want to look at how one person, not just myself—if the play goes on, I want other people to do it—how one person can embody a kind of humanity. Aspects of humanity. I think that's interesting, because it does start with one person. How does one person take in the world? We always see the collective, but the collective starts with the individual. Individuals form a collective, right? So how does one individual take in the world?

SB: You're the writer and solo performer of this play, but are also working with a director. Tell us how that works. As you're the one who's created the play, what does the director give to you?

DO: Neel Keller is a great director. He can tell me what is overwritten, what we can cut, what we can emphasize. It's

a third eye. I find that very few people can direct themselves. What sound bites do we need? How does a character need to be fleshed out more? Both on the page and on the stage. In terms of technique—how to bring it alive on the stage. And then we combine these ideas. And as an actor, I can overact, so he's there to yank me in. We don't want to beat the audience over the head with this, and I can tend to do that as an actor.

SB: When you've finished a performance and the lights go down, is there anything in particular that you're hoping the audience takes away?

DO: Did I give them permission to feel both comfortable and uncomfortable? That's what interests me, because I don't speak for people, I speak to people. Because when you start speaking for people, you get on a political tirade and I know this situation goes beyond the political. It extends itself into personal stories and the emotional and how we live on a day-to-day basis. What are our personal narratives? And how do we feel about this, knowing this could have happened with these young men?

Presents

UNTIL THE FLOOD

Written and Performed by
DAEL ORLANDERSMITH*

Directed by
NEEL KEELER

Set Design by
TAKESHI KATA

Costume Design by
KAYE VOYCE

Lighting Design by
ML GEIGER

Original Music and Sound Design by
JUSTIN ELLINGTON

Projection Design by

NICHOLAS HUSSONG

Production Stage Manager

ANGELA M. ADAMS*

Artists' Profiles

DAEL ORLANDERSMITH*

(Playwright/Performer) is an Artistic Associate and Alice Center Resident Artist at the Goodman. Orlandersmith has collaborated with the Goodman on *Black n Blue* *Boys/Broken Men* during the 2012/2013 Season and *Stoop Stories* during the 2009/2010 Season. *Black n Blue* *Boys/Broken Men* was developed as a co-commission between the Goodman and Berkeley Repertory Theatre, where it was staged in May 2012. Orlandersmith first performed *Stoop Stories* in 2008 at The Public Theater's Under the Radar Festival and Apollo Theater's Salon Series; Washington, D.C.'s Studio Theatre produced its world premiere in 2009. Her play *Monster* premiered at

New York Theatre Workshop in 1996. *The Gimmick*, commissioned by McCarter Theatre, premiered in their Second Stage OnStage series in 1998 and went on to great acclaim at Long Wharf Theatre and New York Theatre Workshop; Orlandersmith won the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize for *The Gimmick* in 1999. *Yellowman* was commissioned by and premiered at McCarter Theatre in a co-production with The Wilma Theater and Long Wharf Theatre. Orlandersmith was a Pulitzer Prize finalist and Drama Desk Award nominee for Outstanding Play and Outstanding Actress in a Play for *Yellowman* in 2002.

The Blue Album, in collaboration with David Cale, premiered at Long Wharf Theatre in 2007. *Bones* was commissioned by the Mark Taper Forum, where it premiered in 2010. Orlandersmith wrote and performed a solo memoir play called *Forever* at the Kirk Douglas Theatre in Los Angeles in 2014, at the Long Wharf and New York Theatre Workshop in 2015, at Portland Center Stage in 2016 and the Abbey Theatre in Dublin in 2017. In the fall of 2016, Orlandersmith wrote and performed *Until*

the Flood, which was commissioned by St Louis Repertory Theatre. In 2018, it will be produced at Rattlestick Playwrights Theater in New York, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre and ACT Seattle. Orlandersmith has toured extensively with the Nuyorican Poets Café (Real Live Poetry) throughout the United States, Europe and Australia. *Yellowman* and a collection of her earlier works have been published by Vintage Books and Dramatists Play Service. Orlandersmith attended Sundance Institute Theatre Lab for four summers and is the recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts Grant, The Helen Merrill Award for Emerging Playwrights, a Guggenheim and the 2005 PEN/Laura Pels Foundation Award for a playwright in mid-career. She is the recipient of a Lucille Lortel Foundation Playwrights Fellowship and an Obie Award for *Beauty's Daughter*. Orlandersmith is currently working on two commissions.

NEEL KEELER (*Director*) is a Los Angeles-based theater director and an Associate Artistic Director at Center Theatre Group, where he helps develop, direct and

produce productions at their three venues: the Ahmanson, Mark Taper Forum and Kirk Douglas theaters. As a director and collaborator, he has worked extensively on new plays. His recent productions include the world premieres of Julia Cho's *Office Hour*, Jennifer Haley's *The Nether*, Kimber Lee's *different words for the same thing*, Dael Orlandersmith's *Forever* and Lucy Alibar's *Throw Me On the Burnpile and Light Me Up*. He has also directed works by Shelia Callaghan, John Guare, David Greig, Tom Babe, Jessica Goldberg, Nicky Silver and Howard Gould, as well as classic plays by Molière, Tennessee Williams, Moss Hart, Joe Orton and Shakespeare. Keeler's productions have been mounted at theaters across the country, including The Public Theater, New York Theater Workshop, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, South Coast Repertory, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Long Wharf Theatre, Remains Theatre, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Portland Center Stage and Ireland's Abbey Theatre. He has helped develop new plays with many organizations including the Ojai Playwrights Conference, Sundance Theatre Lab,

Hedgebrook and The Playwrights Center. He has served on review panels for several national organizations including the National Endowment for the Arts, the Kilroys, PEN West and Theatre Communications Group. He is an honors graduate of Oberlin College and a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society and the Directors Guild of America.

TAKESHI KATA (*Set Designer*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where he previously designed *Gloria* and *God of Carnage*. Kata's other Chicago credits include *Slowgirl*, *The Seafarer* and *The Tempest* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company). Recent New York credits include *Until the Flood* (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater), *Office Hour* (Public Theater), *Man From Nebraska* (Second Stage Theater), *The Profane* (Playwrights Horizons), *Derren Brown: Secret* (Atlantic Theater Company) and *Forever* (New York Theatre Workshop). Kata's regional work includes designs for American Players Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Dallas Theater Center, Ford's Theatre, Geffen Playhouse, Hartford Stage, La Jolla Playhouse, Long Wharf Theatre, Mark Taper Forum, Nashville Opera,

The Old Globe, Resident Ensemble Players and Yale Repertory Theatre. Kata is the recipient of an Obie Award, and has received nominations for Drama Desk, Barrymore, Connecticut Critics Circle and Ovation Awards. He is an assistant professor at the University of Southern California's School of Dramatic Arts.

KAYE VOYCE (*Costume Designer*) returns to Goodman Theatre, where she previously designed *Shining City*, *Other Desert Cities* and *Luna Gale*. Broadway credits include *Significant Other*, *The Real Thing*, *The Realistic Joneses* and *Shining City*. Additional design credits include *Harry Clarke* (Vineyard Theatre); *Office Hours* and *Hamlet* (The Public Theater), *Measure for Measure* (Elevator Repair Service/The Public Theater); *Queens*, *After the Blast*, *The Mystery of Love and Sex* and *4000 Miles* (Lincoln Center Theater); *War Stories* (Opera Philadelphia); the world premiere of *The Summer King* (Pittsburgh Opera); *A Home at the Zoo*; *The Antipodes*; *Signature Plays*; *The Wayside Motor Inn* (Signature Theatre); *Endgame* (Long Wharf Theatre); *Indian Summer* and *Detroit* (Playwrights Horizons); *Il Turco in Italia*

(Festival d'Aix-en-Provence); Trisha Brown's final two dances, *Rogues* and *Toss*, and many collaborations with Richard Maxwell/New York City Players.

ML GEIGER (*Lighting Design*) Broadway credits include *The Constant Wife* (Roundabout Theatre Company). Off-Broadway credits include *Until the Flood* and *Draw the Circle* (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater); *X, or Betty Shabazz v. The Nation* (The Acting Company and on tour); *Nat Turner in Jerusalem*, *Forever* and *Oedipus at Palm Springs* (New York Theatre Workshop); *My Mother has 4 Noses* (The Duke on 42nd Street); *Three Wise Guys*, *She Stoops to Conquer*, *Natural Affection* and *Beyond Therapy* (The Actors Company Theatre); *This Bitter Earth* and *Les Carillons* (NYCB Theater); *Good Television* and *The New York Idea* (Atlantic Theater Company); *Kindness*, *The Blue Door* and *The Busy World is Hushed* (Playwrights Horizons); *Bauer* (59E59 Theaters); *The Morini Strad* and *Olive and the Bitter Herbs* (Primary Stages); *Dollhouse* and *Red Beads* (Mabou Mines). Regional credits include work with St. Louis Repertory Theatre, ACT Theatre, Center Theatre Group,

Guthrie Theater, Huntington Theatre Company, Studio Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival. She has received Helen Hayes, Independent Reviewers of New England (IRNE) and New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) Awards. She received her training at Yale University and is a faculty member of New York University.

JUSTIN ELLINGTON (*Original Music and Sound Design*) is a composer and sound designer who has also worked as an arranger, music director, producer, educator and pianist. His credits include work with Goodman Theatre, Lincoln Center Theater, Guthrie Theater, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Stratford Festival, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Theatre for a New Audience, New York Theatre Workshop, The Public Theater and Center Theatre Group. In addition, Ellington has collaborated with playwrights such as John Guare, Neil LaBute, Will Power, Marcus Gardley, Dominique Morisseau, Dael Orlandersmith, Jon Robin Baitz and Adrienne Kennedy, including her most recent play *He Brought Her Heart Back in a Box*. Ellington arranged, co-

orchestrated and composed music for the Dallas Theater Center production of *Stagger Lee*, which won a Dallas Theater Award for Best New Musical. His work with Usher (*Raymond vs. Raymond*) and Nicki Minaj (*Pink Friday*) contributed to over 10 million albums sold and earned him a Grammy Award and an ASACP Award, respectively. In 2014, Ellington was commissioned to compose music for the National Center for Civil and Human Rights. The project, titled MOVE ACT FREE, led by George C. Wolfe, was awarded a Cinema in Industry (CINDY) Award for production design. He is a member of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, United Scenic Artist, Local USA 829 and Koblat Music Group. JustinEllington.com

NICHOLAS HUSSONG (*Projection Designer*) Off-Broadway credits include *White Guy on the Bus* (59E59 Theaters, Delaware Theatre Company); *Skeleton Crew* (Atlantic Theater Company); *These Paper Bullets!* (Atlantic Theater Company, Geffen Playhouse, Yale Repertory Theatre) and *Chix 6* (La Mama). Regional credits include *Until the Flood* (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), *Grounded*

(Alley Theatre), *Two Trains Running* (Arden Theatre Company), *The Mountaintop* (PlayMakers Repertory Company) and *Million Dollar Quartet* (Berkshire Theatre Group). He currently designs new works inspired by Appalachian life written by Preston Lane at Triad Stage, where he previously held the position of Artistic Associate. Hussong has received a Drama Desk Award nomination. Additional projection design projects include music, screen and stage productions with Enchantment Theatre Company, Urban Bush Women, Delaware Theatre Company, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Esperanza Spalding, Lantern Theater Company, Abrons Art Center, Tiny Dynamite, Premieres NYC, Ars Nova, Heartbeat Opera, Cantata Profana, Nashville Symphony, Hartford Symphony Orchestra, I Am A Boys Choir, SummerWorks Performance Festival, Joe's Pub and the 70th & 71st Annual Tony Awards. NewNeighborhood.com. NickHussong.com.

ANGELA M. ADAMS* (*Stage Manager*) makes her Goodman Theatre debut. Chicago credits include *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and *Smokey*

Joe's Cafe (Drury Lane Theatre); *Honeymoon in Vegas*, *The Bridges of Madison County*, *Madagascar*, *Spring Awakening*, *Seussical*, *October Sky*, *The Nutcracker* and *Cinderella* (Marriott Theatre); *Julius Caesar*, *Othello: The Remix*, *The Feast: an intimate Tempest*, *Funk It Up About Nothin'*, *Edward II* and *How Can You Run with a Shell on Your Back?* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); *Great Expectations* (Remy Bumppo and Silk Road Rising); *The Grapes of Wrath* (Gift Theater); *A Wonderful Life: The Musical* (Theater at the Center); *The Etiquette of Vigilance* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); and *Million Dollar Quartet* (Apollo Theater). Regional credits include *Inherit the Wind* (Bristol Riverside Theater) and *Daddy's Dying, Clue! The Musical* and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (Ozark Actor's Theater).

ROBERT FALLS (*Goodman Theatre Artistic Director*)

Most recently, Falls directed a new adaptation of *An Enemy of the People* and the world premiere of Rogelio Martinez's *Blind Date* in the Albert Theatre and remounted his Lyric Opera of Chicago production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* for the Dallas Opera. This summer, he will direct

the return engagement of Jim McGrath's *Pamplona*, starring Stacy Keach as Ernest Hemingway, in the Goodman's Owen Theatre. In the 2016/2017 Season, he directed a new production of Annie Baker's adaptation of *Uncle Vanya*. In the 2015/2016 Season, Mr. Falls directed the Chicago premiere of Rebecca Gilman's *Soups, Stews, and Casseroles: 1976*, and partnered with Goodman Playwright-in-Residence Seth Bockley to direct their world premiere adaptation of Roberto Bolaño's *2666* (Jeff Award for Best Adaptation). Recent productions also include *The Iceman Cometh* for the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Rebecca Gilman's *Luna Gale* for the Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles, *Measure for Measure* and the world and off-Broadway premieres of Beth Henley's *The Jacksonian*. Among his other credits are *The Seagull*, *King Lear*, *Desire Under the Elms*, John Logan's *Red*, Jon Robin Baitz's *Three Hotels*, Eric Bogosian's *Talk Radio* and Conor McPherson's *Shining City*; the world premieres of Richard Nelson's *Frank's Home*, Arthur Miller's *Finishing the Picture*, Eric Bogosian's *Griller*, Steve Tesich's *The Speed of Darkness* and *On the Open Road*,

John Logan's *Riverview: A Melodrama with Music* and Rebecca Gilman's *A True History of the Johnstown Flood*, *Blue Surge* and *Dollhouse*; the American premiere of Alan Ayckbourn's *House and Garden*; and the Broadway premiere of Elton John and Tim Rice's *Aida*. Falls' honors for directing include, among others, a Tony Award (*Death of a Salesman*), a Drama Desk Award (*Long Day's Journey into Night*), an Obie Award (*subUrbia*), a Helen Hayes Award (*King Lear*) and multiple Jeff Awards (including a 2012 Jeff Award for *The Iceman Cometh*). For "outstanding contributions to theater," Falls has been recognized with such prestigious honors as the Savva Morozov Diamond Award (Moscow Art Theatre), the O'Neill Medallion (Eugene O'Neill Society), the Distinguished Service to the Arts Award (Lawyers for the Creative Arts), the Illinois Arts Council Governor's Award and induction into the Theater Hall of Fame.

ROCHE EDWARD SCHULFER (*Goodman Theatre Executive Director*) started working in the Goodman Theatre box office and ultimately became executive director in 1980. Since that time he has overseen more

than 350 productions including close to 150 premieres. He initiated the Goodman's annual production of *A Christmas Carol*, which celebrates 40 years as Chicago's leading holiday arts tradition in 2017. In partnership with Artistic Director Robert Falls, Schulfer led the establishment of quality, diversity and community engagement as the core values of Goodman Theatre. During their tenure, the Goodman has received numerous awards for excellence, including the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theater, recognition by *Time* magazine as the "Best Regional Theatre" in the U.S., the Pulitzer Prize for Lynn Nottage's *Ruined* and many Jeff Awards for outstanding achievement in Chicago area theater. Schulfer has negotiated the presentation of numerous Goodman Theatre productions to many national and international venues. He coordinated the 12-year process to relocate the Goodman to the Theatre District in 2000. To mark his 40th anniversary with the Goodman, his name was added to the theater's "Walk of Stars." Schulfer was a founder and twice chair of the League of Chicago Theatres, the trade association of more than 200 Chicago area theaters

and producers. He has been privileged to serve in leadership roles with Arts Alliance Illinois (the statewide advocacy coalition); Theatre Communications Group (the national service organization for more than 450 not-for-profit theaters); the Performing Arts Alliance (the national advocacy consortium of more than 18,000 organizations and individuals); the League of Resident Theatres (the management association of 65 leading U.S. theater companies); Lifeline Theatre in Rogers Park and the Arts & Business Council. Schulfer is honored to have been recognized with the League of Chicago Theater's Lifetime Achievement Award; Theatre Communication Group's Visionary Leadership Award; Actors' Equity Association for promoting diversity and equal opportunity in Chicago theater; the American Arts Alliance and Arts Alliance Illinois for arts advocacy; the Arts & Business Council for distinguished contributions to Chicago's artistic vitality; *Chicago* magazine and the *Chicago Tribune* as a "Chicagoan of the Year"; the City of Chicago; Columbia College Chicago for entrepreneurial leadership; the Joseph Jefferson Awards Committee for his partnership

with Robert Falls; Lawyers for the Creative Arts; Lifeline Theatre's Raymond R. Snyder Award for Commitment to the Arts; Season of Concern for support of direct care for those living with HIV/AIDS; and Vision 2020 for promoting gender equality and diversity in the workplace. Schulfer received an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from North Central College. He taught at DePaul University for 15 years and has lectured annually on strategic planning at Southern Methodist University, as well as being a guest speaker at many academic institutions. In the past year, he has presented a talk on the economics of the performing arts for several local and national theater companies as well as Theater Communications Group. Schulfer is a lifelong Chicago area resident and received a degree in economics from the University of Notre Dame where he managed the cultural arts commission. He will be teaching a theater management seminar at Notre Dame in the fall of 2018.

FERGUSON, MISSOURI: A TIMELINE

Just under four years ago, Ferguson, Missouri, became the focus of national attention following the shooting of teenager Michael Brown. This timeline recounts the tumultuous time period that serves as the backdrop of *Until the Flood*.

AUGUST 9, 2014

Michael Brown, an unarmed, black 18-year-old, is shot dead by an unnamed white police officer on Canfield Drive in Ferguson, Missouri, just outside St. Louis. Witnesses offer varying testimonies of the altercation.

AUGUST 10

At a news conference, St. Louis County Police Chief Joe Belmar says Brown attacked the officer and tried to take his gun. Others, including Darian Johnson, who was on the scene, said no struggle for the gun took place. Belmar states that one shot was fired inside the vehicle and another outside the vehicle. Protests begin, peaceful at first. However, some demonstrators smash car windows

and loot local stores. This is met with heavy response from local police dressed in riot gear.

AUGUST 11

Ferguson police announce they will release the name of the officer the following day. The FBI announces it will join the investigation. Unrest continues into the night, with police using tear gas and rubber bullets against protesters.

AUGUST 12

President Barack Obama addresses the shooting for the first time, calling Brown's death "heartbreaking," but urging Ferguson residents to remain calm. Ferguson police cancel plans to name the officer who killed Brown, citing death threats against the police department and city hall.

AUGUST 13

The fourth night of protests results in protesters throwing Molotov cocktails while heavily-armed police deploy armored vehicles.

AUGUST 14

President Obama addresses the nation, calling for peace and an "open and transparent" investigation into Brown's death. Governor Jay Nixon announces the Missouri

Highway Patrol, led by Captain Ron Johnson, will take over security in Ferguson to ease tensions between protesters and Ferguson police.

AUGUST 15

In a press conference, Ferguson police name Darren Wilson, 28, as the officer who shot Brown. Police also release a surveillance video of Brown and Darian Johnson allegedly robbing a convenience store prior to the shooting. Johnson's lawyer confirms his involvement in the robbery. Brown's family accuses the police of trying to assassinate Brown's character.

AUGUST 16

Governor Nixon declares a state of emergency and establishes a curfew in Ferguson, making it illegal to be on the street after midnight.

AUGUST 17

The Justice Department authorizes a federal autopsy of Brown's body and an independent investigation.

AUGUST 18

Continued protests lead Governor Nixon to deploy the National Guard to the St. Louis suburb. Protests and

demonstrations continue overnight. Seventy-eight people from as far away as California and New York are arrested. Amnesty International deploys human rights teams to Ferguson, the first time the organization has done so in the U.S., as police officers appear to use both Long Range Acoustic Devices (LRADs) and tear gas to suppress protesters.

AUGUST 20

A grand jury begins investigating whether Wilson should be criminally charged for the death of Brown. President Obama sends U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder to Ferguson.

SEPTEMBER 4

The Justice Department announces a civil investigation of the Ferguson police.

SEPTEMBER 16

Wilson testifies before a grand jury.

OCTOBER 10

Four-day peaceful demonstrations known as “Ferguson October” begin.

OCTOBER 21

Governor Nixon announces a special commission to examine the social and economic conditions in Ferguson.

OCTOBER 22

A leaked autopsy in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reveals Brown was shot at close range in the hand and six times total, appearing to support Wilson's claim that there was a struggle in his car. A toxicology report also shows that Brown had marijuana in his system.

NOVEMBER 24

Prosecuting Attorney Robert McCulloch says no indictment will be filed against Wilson. A wave of protests follow. President Obama calls on the nation to accept the decision and protest peacefully. Though the vast majority of protests are peaceful, more than a dozen buildings are burned, as are dozens of vehicles and two police cars.

Local police arrest more than 60 people.

NOVEMBER 29

Wilson, who has been on administrative leave since the shooting, resigns from the Ferguson Police Department.

DECEMBER 1

Hundreds of protesters march through the streets of Berkeley and Oakland, California, to protest grand jury decisions not to indict white police officers in the deaths of two unarmed black men— Brown and Eric Garner of New York, who died in a police choke hold on July 17, 2014.

DECEMBER 13

Thousands of demonstrators, led by Reverend Al Sharpton, call for judicial reform, special prosecutors at the federal level and body cameras on police nationwide during a “Justice for All” march and rally in Washington, D.C.

MARCH 3, 2015

The Justice Department review finds that the Ferguson Police Department engaged in a broad pattern of racially biased law enforcement that permeated the city’s justice system, including the use of unreasonable force against African American suspects.

APRIL 7

Ferguson elects two additional black city council members, transforming racial composition in local politics

after months of protests over racial profiling and police brutality.

APRIL 23

Brown's parents file a wrongful death lawsuit against the city of Ferguson, former Police Chief Thomas Jackson and former officer Wilson.

JULY 22

Ferguson appoints a black interim police chief who said his first goal is "simply to build trust" within the community.

GIVING BIRTH TO YOURSELF:

Dael Orlandersmith Brings a Community to Life through Performance

A middle-aged white school teacher. An elderly Holocaust survivor. An 11 year-old boy in foster care. An Irish-American stockbroker. A daughter grappling with the death of her mother. These are just a handful of the hundreds of characters who have been brought to life by the singularly gifted playwright, poet and performer Dael Orlandersmith.

Goodman audiences first encountered Orlandersmith in 2009, when she brought her explosive solo work *Stoop Stories* to the Owen stage. But she had been creating raw, vivid theater works for over a decade prior – from *Beauty's Daughter*, a 1995 Obie-Award winning tour-de-force about a young woman struggling to come of age in East Harlem, to the 2002 Pulitzer Prize finalist *Yellowman*, a piece for two performers that examined colorism in the black community. With *Stoop Stories*, Orlandersmith returned to the East Harlem neighborhood that raised her to create a “finely focused tale” which wove together the voices of the

wildly different residents of the community, creating an “upfront intimacy reminiscent of beat poetry performance” (*Chicago Reader*.)

That production was the beginning of a long and fruitful relationship between Orlandersmith and the Goodman that led to her being named an Artistic Associate and Resident Artist at the theater. After *Stoop Stories* she wrote and performed *Black n Blue Boys/Broken Men*, a searing exploration of masculinity and abuse, developed through first-person interviews, that was produced at both the Goodman and Berkeley Repertory Theatre in 2012. With her powerful presence and deep empathy, Orlandersmith transformed herself into a series of boys and men — all either victims or perpetrators of violence. With each character’s story, audiences were confronted with the challenge of escaping a cycle of abuse — but also the possibility of finding grace and beauty in the act of creation.

She followed that production with a courageous examination of her own history of abuse titled *Forever*, a memoir about her turbulent relationship with her mother

and the legacy of rape. Set in the famous Père Lachaise Cemetery in Paris, a site where artists like Richard Wright, Oscar Wilde and Jim Morrison are buried, the play derives its sense of hope and redemption from the relationship that Orlandersmith has forged with artists: writers, musicians and poets who gave her the support and solace she didn't receive at home. As she tells us in the play, these artists — and others like them — became her created family and helped her “give birth to herself.”

In her latest solo work, *Until The Flood*, Orlandersmith returns to the project of chronicling a community by capturing the disparate voices and experiences of the people who live there. Unlike her earlier dives into the East Harlem neighborhood of her youth, this time she immersed herself in a community that was both foreign and deeply familiar. Commissioned by the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, the piece was inspired by interviews with residents of Ferguson, Missouri, and the surrounding area in the aftermath of the death of Michael Brown. Orlandersmith embodies a series of characters who react to Brown's murder — and the protests that followed —

from very different perspectives, offering us not just a window into this community, but a prism through which to see the events that unfolded and the history that informed them. From a well-meaning woman in a wine bar to a self-proclaimed racist to a retired schoolteacher, a 17-year-old teenager living in the same apartment complex as Brown, each character's voice gives nuance and urgency to the issues that Brown's death brought to the fore, creating an unforgettable evening that *The New York Times* described as "an urgent moral inquest."

Audiences will have the opportunity to further experience the compelling work of Orlandersmith in the Goodman's 2018/2019 Season when her latest piece, *Lady in Denmark*, makes its world premiere in the Owen Theatre this fall.

About Goodman Theatre

AMERICA'S "BEST REGIONAL THEATRE" (*Time* magazine), Goodman Theatre is a premier not-for-profit organization distinguished by the excellence and scope of its artistic programming and civic engagement. Led by Artistic Director Robert Falls and Executive Director Roche Schulfer, the theater's artistic priorities include new play development (more than 150 world or American premieres in the past three decades), large scale musical theater works and reimagined classics (celebrated revivals include Falls' productions of *Death of a Salesman* and *The Iceman Cometh*). Goodman Theatre artists and productions have earned two Pulitzer Prizes, 22 Tony Awards, over 160 Jeff Awards and many more accolades. In addition, the Goodman is the first theater in the world to produce all 10 plays in August Wilson's "American Century Cycle" and its annual holiday tradition *A Christmas Carol*, which celebrated its 40th anniversary this season, has created a new generation of theatergoers. The Goodman also frequently serves as a production partner with local off-Loop theaters and national and international

companies by providing financial support or physical space for a variety of artistic endeavors.

Committed to three core values of Quality, Diversity and Community, the Goodman proactively makes inclusion the fabric of the institution and develops education and community engagement programs that support arts as education. This practice uses the process of artistic creation to inspire and empower youth, lifelong learners and audiences to find and/or enhance their voices, stories and abilities. The Goodman's Alice Rapoport Center for Education and Engagement is the home of such programming, most offered free of charge, and has vastly expanded the theater's ability to touch the lives of Chicagoland citizens (with 85% of youth participants coming from underserved communities) since its 2016 opening. Goodman Theatre was founded by William O. Goodman and his family in honor of their son Kenneth, an important figure in Chicago's cultural renaissance in the early 1900s. The Goodman family's legacy lives on through the continued work and dedication of Kenneth's family, including Albert Ivar Goodman, who with his late

mother, Edith-Marie Appleton, contributed the necessary funds for the creation of the new Goodman center in 2000. Today, Goodman Theatre leadership also includes the distinguished members of the Artistic Collective: Brian Dennehy, Rebecca Gilman, Henry Godinez, Dael Orlandersmith, Steve Scott, Chuck Smith, Regina Taylor, Henry Wishcamper and Mary Zimmerman. David W. Fox, Jr. is Chair of Goodman Theatre's Board of Trustees, Cynthia K. Scholl is Women's Board President and Justin A. Kulovsek is President of the Scenemakers Board for young professionals.

IN THE ALBERT THEATRE, MAY 5 – JUNE 10

Having Our Say

This spring, Goodman Resident Director Chuck Smith brings the incredible true stories of Bessie and Sadie Delany to the Goodman stage in *Having Our Say: The Delany Sisters' First 100 Years*. Based on the bestselling memoir, *Having Our Say* traces the lives of the Delany sisters—trailblazers, activists, best friends—in a warm and poignant reflection on their family history and triumphs over prejudice in times of social unrest. Shortly before rehearsals began, Smith spoke about the valuable lessons audiences can still learn from the Delany Sisters. Tickets start at just \$25 and are available at GoodmanTheatre.org.

Michael Mellini: It's been nearly 25 years since Bessie and Sadie Delany released their memoir and its stage adaptation enjoyed success on Broadway and in Chicago. Why did you want to bring their story back to the stage?

Chuck Smith: Bessie and Sadie's lives are really interesting to look at from the lens of what African American life was like in the 20th century. They were born

in 1889 and 1891, respectively, and lived pretty much all the way through [the 1990s]. And they lived together their whole lives! These women were very accomplished, but to see the problems they faced as educated black females, you can just imagine what life was like for the average African American female during the same time. Bessie was a school teacher, Sadie was a dentist and they were all-around model citizens. In a time when we're talking about immigration and all the other buzz words in politics now, you've got to look at what it means to be a model citizen. The sisters were really focused on voting. I wanted to direct this play at this time because this is an election year, and I wanted to bring attention to how important voting is in this country. The sisters never missed an opportunity to vote, and our audiences shouldn't either.

MM: Several significant historical events have occurred since this play was first produced, including the election of our country's first African American president, an event the sisters doubted might ever happen. Does that influence how you approach the material?

CS: In terms of the African American experience a lot has changed, but when you dig down deep, not much has changed. Attitudes are the same in many parts of the country and in the hearts of people who harbor dislike for others. If there's anything good about the current [political climate] it's that we can now see clearly how little has changed. A lot of people don't like people of color and that is being amplified. People will often minimize this notion, saying, "Well, we're just divided." But this is in people's hearts! It's ingrained in their upbringing. We might not be able to do much about that, but once you recognize and realize it, you've got a compass to navigate the waters. The Delany sisters were able to navigate the waters, even though everything was against them. I think that's what's going to resonate with our audiences.

MM: Tell us about the two actors you cast to portray the sisters, Ella Joyce and Marie Thomas.

CS: I have worked with both of them before, Ella in the Goodman production of Lynn Nottage's *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*, and Marie Thomas when I directed Charles Smith's *Knock Me a Kiss* in New York and at the National

Black Theatre Festival. They both separately expressed interest in this play when we worked together. Ella is quite feisty just like Bessie and Marie is determined, forceful and a very lovely lady, just like Sadie.

MM: By presenting an oral history of their life stories, the play allows the sisters to reflect on their many achievements. You're celebrating a milestone of your own this season, your 25th with the Goodman. Can you reflect a bit on your time at the theater?

CS: There's no better theater in the country than the Goodman. The staff knows exactly how to do what has to be done, and the process by which a play is put together is one that should be emulated all over. The Goodman is and always has been supportive of the artists. My first experience was as an understudy in 1970 in *The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail*. I was flabbergasted these people were so nice. I said, "One of these days I'm going to work here." It took me 20 years, but I got here and never left. I'm not going anywhere. The big change is of course moving from the old building at the Art Institute to the new complex. I've also enjoyed seeing more people of color in

more important places in the system, such as the Board of Directors. When you've got people like Les Coney and Peter Bynoe on the board, it really adds to who you are as an organization. It shows the Goodman is headed in the right direction and knows what this country is all about.

MM: The plays you direct at the Goodman, and across the country, are often about not just African American experiences but African American history, even if historical fiction. Why is history important to you?

CS: Well, sometimes a good play just happens to have historical context, so I don't necessarily seek plays that are specifically historical. But, yes *The Good Negro* was very much about Martin Luther King, Jr. and *Pullman Porter Blues* about the experiences of the train workers who relayed information from the North to the South. If a good play turns out to be historical, then I'm happy because I don't think history, especially in terms of African American history, is well taught in this country. Kids need to know about their country, so any chance I get, I'll put it out there. By seeing this play you'll come out with a much better perspective of what life is like for individuals of color

in this country. That's the great thing about theater.
Hopefully you leave enriched with just a little bit more
knowledge than you had when you came in.