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Baltimore Center Stage Announces *Skeleton Crew* Cast and Artistic Team

Center Stage's State-of-the-Nation Play also Part of the Women's Voices Theater Festival

Baltimore, MD—Baltimore Center Stage is pleased to announce the cast and artistic team for *Skeleton Crew*, the fourth play of the 2017/18 season.

Equally thought-provoking and relevant, *Skeleton Crew* is the story of four factory workers at the last exporting automobile factory in Detroit and their struggle to survive as the industry and their way of life disappears. Written by acclaimed playwright and author, Dominique Morisseau, *Skeleton Crew* is the third play in her Detroit trilogy. The first play of the trilogy, *Detroit '67* was featured at Baltimore Center Stage in the 2015/16 season.

"Both then and now, Dominique's portrayal of the human beings who live their lives as major historical events unfold around them, show us just how powerful theater, and storytelling, can really be," said Artistic Director Kwame Kwei-Armah.

Skeleton Crew is presented as a part of the Women's Voices Theater Festival, whose mission is to highlight plays written by women, and the range of professional theaters that works by women are being produced in and around the Baltimore/Washington region.

"When I was new to this country, Dominique Morisseau was the first US playwright I collaborated with—and she is still one of the strongest and most brilliant writers I have ever had the pleasure to know," said Kwei-Armah. "The fact that my last play as Artistic Director at Baltimore Center Stage is one of hers, makes me feel like my entire tenure in Baltimore—my second artistic home—has come full circle."

Nicole A. Watson directs this compelling and riveting look inside of the struggle of a changing American way of life during a pivotal time in our country. Set amid the collapse of the auto industry around 2008, *Skeleton Crew* resonates with themes of survival, strength and resilience, and also touches upon racial

and economic disparities in American culture. Baltimore Center Stage, in its continuation of its “Season of Community” has partnered with local labor unions to share the working-class viewpoint in Talk Backs during the production.

The *Skeleton Crew* cast includes **Brittany Bellizeare*** (Shanita), **Stephanie Berry*** (Faye), **Sekou Laidlow*** (Reggie) and **Gabriel Lawrence*** (Dez). The artistic team includes director **Watson, Mariana Sanchez** (Scenic Designer), **Karen Perry** (Costume Designer), **Burke Brown** (Lighting Designer), **Darron L. West** (Sound Designer), and **Faedra Chatard Carpenter** (Production Dramaturg).

**Member of Actors' Equity Association*

Skeleton Crew begins Thursday, January 25, with previews through January 31, and closes Sunday, March 4. **Press night is Opening Night, Thursday, February 1.** For more information, visit www.centerstage.org or call the box office at 410.332.0033.

Skeleton Crew is made possible by the William L. and Victorine Q. Adams foundation and the Rodgers Family Fund. This performance is supported in part by a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC). Center Stage's Season Sponsor is M&T Bank and the season is also made possible by The Shubert Foundation and the Baltimore County Commission on Arts and Sciences.

About Baltimore Center Stage

Baltimore Center Stage is a professional, nonprofit institution committed to entertaining, engaging and enriching audiences through bold, innovative and thought-provoking classical and contemporary theater. Named the State Theater of Maryland in 1978, Baltimore Center Stage has steadily grown as a leader in the national regional theater scene. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Kwame Kwei-Armah OBE and Managing Director Michael Ross, Baltimore Center Stage is committed to creating and presenting a diverse array of world premieres and exhilarating interpretations of established works.

Baltimore Center Stage believes in access for all—creating a welcoming environment for everyone who enters its theater doors and, at the same time, striving to meet audiences where they are. In addition to its Mainstage and Off Center productions in the historic Mount Vernon neighborhood, Baltimore Center Stage ignites conversations among a global audience through digital initiatives, which explore how technology and the arts intersect. The theater also nurtures the next generation of artists and theater-goers through the Young Playwrights Festival, Student Matinee Series and many other educational programs for students, families and educators.