



Obsidian Theatre Announces 2019-2020 Season

OTC ventures into its 20th Anniversary Season with ambitious programming headlined by the re-imagining of *Caroline or Change* at the Winter Garden Theatre.

July 2019: Coming off of the largest and most successful season in Obsidian's history, the company is not looking to slow down anytime soon. The 2018-2019 season included several critically acclaimed and box office successes including the *Darktown* presentation of Leighton Alexander Williams's adaptation ***Judas Noir*** (BDB Productions INC) and ***School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play*** by Jocelyn Bioh in Association with Nightwood Theatre. *School Girls* went on to win the Dora Awards and The Toronto Theatre Critics Awards for both Outstanding Production and for Outstanding Direction by Nina Lee Aquino. The momentum continues now through 2020, Philip Akin's last season as Artistic Director.

Obsidian opens the season in September by reuniting with the **Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company** for a production of ***Actually by Anna Ziegler***. This partnership dates back to, 2013 which saw *The Whipping Man* by Matthew Lopez hit the stage in North York. Ziegler's piece challenges the role that gender and the politics of race play into environmental stresses and consent. Philip Akin will be directing Tony Ofori and Claire Renaud in their Obsidian mainstage debuts.

In October Obsidian will be back at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre for ***Pass Over by Antoinette Nwandu***. This is the Canadian Premier of Nwandu's work, which premiered in New York a year ago. The piece is a provocative riff on *Waiting for Godot*, politically charged and perfectly suited for Philip's last show directing as the company's Artistic Director. The production's cast will feature two familiar faces to Obsidian, Kaleb Alexander and Alex McCooye who both appeared in the 2015-2016 season.

The popular **Black Ties** event returns for a third straight year in November. The evening's goal is to bring together young-in-craft and professional Black theatre artists from across the nation to network, chat, and engage with each other about their current and upcoming projects.

Announced in May, a re-imagined ***Caroline or Change*** co-production with **The Musical Stage Company** will take the stage at the historic Winter Garden Theatre February 2020. With book and lyrics by Pulitzer Prize-winner **Tony Kushner** (*Angels in America*) and music by Tony Award-winner and Pulitzer Prize finalist **Jeanine Tesori** (*Fun Home*), *Caroline or Change* is one of the most celebrated musicals of the 21st century. The 2012 production was momentous for selling-out, breaking both companies' box office records, and winning four Dora Awards including Outstanding Production of a Musical and three Toronto Theatre Critics' Awards including Best Musical.

The 2020 production reunites many members of the original 2012 creative team led by director Robert McQueen and music director Reza Jacobs with choreographer Tim French. *Caroline or Change* will star multiple Juno Award-Winner and "Canada's Queen of R&B" **Jully Black** in her musical theatre debut as Caroline – widely acknowledged as one of the most powerful female roles in the musical theatre canon. Also joining the cast is internationally renowned Canadian soprano **Measha Brueggergosman** as The

Moon. A full cast of Canadian theatre veterans will be accompanying Black and Brueggerosman (listed below).

With a musical score that blends blues, soul, gospel, classical and traditional Jewish melodies, *Caroline, or Change* is a timely story for a world that is becoming more socially-conscious by the day. **Read the full press release [HERE](#)**

Obsidian's *Darktown* Director's Initiative returns for its second year in April 2020, this time in association with **Crow's Theatre**. Emerging director Jay Northcott will take the reins of **Christina Anderson's *Blacktop Sky***. Inspired by the Greek myth Leda and the Swan, *Blacktop Sky* examines the intersection of love, violence and community. Christopher Allen and Makambe Simamba will make their Obsidian debuts with the production.

The season will wrap up in June 2020 with the **Playwrights Unit: First Look** event, celebrating the hard work of our Playwrights Unit. We are now accepting submissions for the 2019-2020 unit [here](#).

Obsidian Theatre is Canada's leading culturally specific theatre company. Our threefold mission is to produce plays, to develop playwrights and to train emerging theatre professionals. Obsidian is passionately dedicated to the exploration, development, and production of the Black voice.

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Obsidian Theatre 2019-2020 Season

Actually by Anna Ziegler

Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company in Association with Obsidian Theatre

Directed by Philip Akin

September 14th – 29th 2019 - *The Greenwin Theatre, Toronto Centre of the Arts, 5040 Yonge Street*

Click [HERE](#) for tickets or call 416.932.9995 x224

Starring Tony Ofori and Claire Renaud

Set Design - Sean Mulcahy

Lighting Design - Steve Lucas

Costume Design - Alex Amini

Sound Design - Christopher Stanton

Stage Manager - Laura Baxter

Apprentice Stage Manager - Maya Bowers

Production Manager - Crystal Salverda

Assistant Director - Kanika Ambrose

Pass Over by Antoinette Nwandu

Directed by Philip Akin

October 22nd – November 10th 2019 – *Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, 12 Alexander St. Toronto*

Click [HERE](#) for tickets, or call 416.975.8555

Starring Kaleb Alexander, Mazin Elsadig & Alex McCooeye

Set Design - Julia Kim

Lighting Design - Chris Malkowski

Costume Design - Vanessa Fischer

Sound Design - Miquelon Rodriguez

Head of Props - David Hoekstra

Stage Manager - Emilie Aubin

Production Manager - Crystal Lee

Assistant Director - Jay Northcott

Black Ties

November 25th, 2019

7:00pm

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre Cabaret, 12 Alexander Street, Toronto

Caroline, or Change, Book and Lyrics by Tony Kushner, & Music by Jeanine Tesori

An Obsidian Theatre and Musical Stage Company Co-production

Directed by Robert McQueen

Musical Direction by Reza Jacobs

Choreography by Tim French

January 31st – February 16th, 2020 – Winter Garden Theatre

Click [HERE](#) for tickets, or call 647- 438-5559

Cast

Starring Jully Black as Caroline

with Damien Atkins, Oliver Dennis, Keisha T. Fraser, Deborah Hay, Alana Hibbert, Linda Kash, Stewart Adam McKensy, Sam Rosenthal, Vanessa Sears, Camille Eanga-Selenge, Samantha Walkes

and featuring Measha Brueggergosman as The Moon

Creative

Set Design - Michael Gianfrancesco

Costume Design - Alex Amini

Lighting Design - Kimberly Purtell

Sound Design - Peter McBoyle

Stage Manager - AJ Laflamme

Assistant Stage Manager - Kate Sandeson

Apprentice Music Director - Jonathan Corkal

Assistant Director - Tsholo Khalema

Blacktop Sky by Christina Anderson

Directed by Jay Northcott

Obsidian Theatre in association with Crow's Theatre and Shipwreck Collective

March 24th- April 12th, 2020 - Crow's Scotiabank Community Studio, 345 Carlaw Avenue, Toronto

Click [HERE](#) for tickets, or call 647.341.7390

Starring Christopher Allen and Makambe Simamba

Set and Prop Design - Julia Kim

Lighting Design - Sharmylae Taffe-Fletcher

Costume Design - Ace Falkner

Sound Design - Stephen Surlin

Production Manager - Crystal Lee

Playwrights Unit: First Look

June 2020, Location TBA