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**ArtsEmerson Presents the World Premiere of
American Repertory Theater's Production of
THE WHITE CARD
By Claudia Rankine
Directed by Diane Paulus**

**Emerson Paramount Center's Robert J. Orchard Stage
February 24 through April 1, 2018**

SINGLE TICKETS NOW ON SALE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC

*Images available for download from the MEDIA tab of
americanrepertorytheater.org/thewhitecard*

BOSTON, MA—**ArtsEmerson**, Boston's leading presenter of contemporary world theatre, proudly presents the world premiere of **American Repertory Theater's (A.R.T.)** production of ***The White Card***, written by acclaimed author, poet, and MacArthur Fellow Claudia Rankine. Directed by A.R.T. Artistic Director Diane Paulus, ***The White Card*** performs February 24 through April 1, 2018 at the Emerson Paramount Center's Robert J. Orchard Stage, located at 559 Washington Street in downtown Boston.

In ***The White Card***, a conversation at a dinner party thrown by an influential Manhattan couple for an up-and-coming artist raises questions about what—and who—is actually on display. **Claudia Rankine's** 2014 *New York Times* best-selling *Citizen: An American Lyric* unpacked the insidious ways in which racism manifests itself in everyday situations. Now, this world-premiere play poses the question, "Can American society progress if whiteness stays invisible?"

The White Card is commissioned by ArtsEmerson, Boston, MA, in association with American Repertory Theater, Cambridge, MA.

The White Card creative team includes dramaturgy by Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellow **P. Carl**; scenic design by **Riccardo Hernandez** (*Arrabal* and *Notes from the Field: Doing Time in Education* at A.R.T.); costume design by **ESosa** (*O.P.C.* and *Father Comes Home from the War (Parts 1, 2 & 3)* at A.R.T.); lighting design by **Stephen Strawbridge** (*Richard II* at A.R.T.); sound design by **Will Pickens** (*M. Butterfly* on Broadway); and projection design by **Peter Nigrini** (*Arrabal* and *Witness Uganda* at A.R.T.).

“It has been a great privilege to collaborate with Claudia on the creation of this world premiere production, which endeavors to move forward the conversation begun in *Citizen: An American Lyric* and her earlier works,” says director Diane Paulus. “**The White Card** urges us to look beyond instances of violence, toward the too-often unnamed legacy that is their source.”

“At ArtsEmerson,” shares Artistic Director David Dower, “we believe that the arts have a central role to play in transforming the city’s reputation and reality around race. This production is the culminating event of our two-year journey with Claudia—we commissioned the play as the result of her first visit after the release of *Citizen*. It was clear then that Claudia’s insights on race, and on whiteness, in particular, were both electrifying and edifying in support of our commitment to advance racial equity in our city.”

Dower continues, “ArtsEmerson’s partnership with A.R.T. has been a particularly powerful development in the process of bringing **The White Card** to life. Our organizations share a commitment to community engagement and impact, and have been working on the questions of equity and access for some time. The collaborative set of activities around the play, including **Citizen Read** and post-show **Act II** programming, are intrinsic to the hopes we had in commissioning the work in the first place. Together, we are reaching wider and deeper than we could have on our own.”

Citizen Read is a series of dynamic events activating a public dialogue on race and identity in America. Over 900 participants have enrolled to read Rankine’s *Citizen* individually or with a book club, after which they will engage in one of more than eighty group conversations around the issues raised in the provocative meditation on race either with trained facilitators or independently, using curricula developed for the program. **Act II** events will engage **The White Card** audiences in facilitated discussions after each of the forty-two performances of the play.

By using Rankine’s work as inspiration for reflection on race and identity and providing a framework and tools for conversation, audiences may, as Rankine puts it, “keep probing the stereotypes and expectations.” **Citizen Read** and **Act II conversations** will utilize training developed by **Dr. Stacy Blake-Beard**, Deloitte Ellen Gabriel Professor of Women and Leadership and Sr. Faculty Affiliate, Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons College.

***The White Card* Performance Dates and Times**

Tuesdays – Sundays at 7:30PM

February 24, 25, 27, 28

March 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31

Wednesdays, Saturdays, Sundays at 2PM

March 3, 4, 10, 11, 14, 17, 18, 21, 24, 25, 31

April 1

Press Performances

Wednesday, February 28 at 7:30PM (limited availability) and Thursday, March 1, at 7:30PM. Invitation to follow.

ASL Interpreted Performance: Saturday, March 17 at 2PM

Audio Described Performance: Sunday, March 18 at 2PM

Student Matinee Performances: Wednesdays, March 7 and 28 at 11AM

Tickets from \$25 are now on sale: by phone at 617.824.8400, in person at the Emerson Paramount Center Box Office (559 Washington Street, Boston), and online at artsemerson.org.

Claudia Rankine is the author of five collections of poetry including *Citizen: An American Lyric* and *Don't Let Me Be Lonely*; two plays including *Provenance of Beauty: A South Bronx Travelogue*; numerous video collaborations, and is the editor of several anthologies including *The Racial Imaginary: Writers on Race in the Life of the Mind*. For her book *Citizen*, Rankine won both the PEN Open Book Award and the PEN Literary Award, the NAACP Award, and the National Book Critics Circle Award for Poetry (*Citizen* was the first book ever to be named a finalist in both the poetry and criticism categories); and was a finalist for the National Book Award. *Citizen* also holds the distinction of being the only poetry book to be a *New York Times* bestseller in the nonfiction category. Among her numerous awards and honors, Rankine is the recipient of the *Poets & Writers'* Jackson Poetry Prize and fellowships from the Lannan Foundation and the National Endowment of the Arts. She lives in California and teaches at Yale University as the Frederick Iseman Professor of Poetry.

Diane Paulus is the Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director of the American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) at Harvard University, and was selected for the 2014 TIME 100, TIME Magazine's annual list of the 100 most influential people in the world. Paulus is the 2013 recipient of the Tony Award for Best Director of a Musical (*Pippin*). At A.R.T., she has directed Eve Ensler's *In the Body of the World*, *Waitress* (currently on Broadway at the Brooks Atkinson Theater and on US National Tour), *Crossing* (a new American opera with music and libretto by Matt Aucoin, recently also at BAM), *Finding Neverland* (currently on US National Tour), *Witness Uganda*, *Pippin* (Tony Award, Best Revival and Best Director), *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess* (Tony Award, Best Revival, NAACP Award, Best Direction), *Prometheus Bound*, *Death and the Powers: The Robots' Opera*, *Best of Both Worlds*, *Johnny Baseball*, and *The Donkey Show*. Her other recent work includes Cirque du Soleil's *Amaluna*, currently on tour in Europe, *Invisible Thread* at Second Stage, The Public Theater's Tony Award-winning revival of *HAIR* on Broadway and London's West End. As an opera director, her credits include *The Magic Flute*, the complete Monteverdi cycle, and the trio of Mozart-Da Ponte operas, among others. Diane is Professor of the Practice of Theater in Harvard University's English Department. She was selected as one of *Variety's* "Trailblazing Women in Entertainment for 2014" and *Boston Magazine's* "50 Thought Leaders of 2014."

P. Carl is a distinguished artist in residence at Emerson College in Boston. He is also a writer and lecturer on theatre, gender, inclusive practices, and innovative models for building community and organizations. He is an accomplished theatre artist who most recently served as a key creative collaborator (dramaturg and producer) on a range of diverse projects including Claudia Rankine's new play, *The White Card*, Melinda Lopez's *Mala* (2017 Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding New Script), Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen's *How to Be a Rock Critic*, and Deborah Stein and Suli Holum's *The Wholehearted*. Dr. Carl is the founder of the journal *HowlRound* and co-founder of the subsequent online platform *HowlRound Theatre Commons*. In 2017, Dr. Carl was given a prestigious Art of Change Fellowship from the Ford Foundation, was named Theatre Person of the Year in 2015 (National Theater Conference), and was named an alumnus of notable distinction from the University of Minnesota. His former positions include director of *HowlRound Theatre Commons*, co-artistic director of *ArtsEmerson* (Emerson College), director of artistic development at *Steppenwolf Theatre Company*, and producing artistic director at *The Playwrights' Center*, Minneapolis. Dr. Carl holds a PhD in comparative studies in discourse and society from the University of Minnesota, and is currently working on his memoir, *Becoming a White Man*.

ABOUT ARTSEMERSON

ArtsEmerson is Boston's leading presenter of contemporary world theatre. It is dedicated to engaging *all* communities through stories that reveal and deepen connections to each other. By cultivating diversity in the art *and* in the audience, ArtsEmerson ignites public conversation around the most vexing societal challenges as a catalyst for overcoming them. ArtsEmerson is committed to welcoming everyone into its landmark venues, located in Boston's downtown Theatre District, for a diverse program of contemporary theatre, film, and music from around the city and around the world. In addition, ArtsEmerson engages in a range of community partnerships and produces a series of initiatives that make visible the rich diversity of cultural activity in the region. These programs are core to ArtsEmerson's mission and expresses commitment to civic responsibility to create a more cohesive society. ArtsEmerson is the professional presenting and producing organization of the Office of the Arts at Emerson College and is led by Artistic Director David Dower and Executive Director David Howse. For more information, visit ArtsEmerson.org.

Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theatre District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,780 undergraduates and 670 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups. Emerson is known for its experiential learning programs in Los Angeles, Washington, DC, the Netherlands, London, China, and the Czech Republic. The College has an active network of 39,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communication and the arts. For more information, visit Emerson.edu.

ABOUT THE AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER

The **American Repertory Theater** (A.R.T.) at Harvard University is a leading force in the American theater, producing groundbreaking work in Cambridge and beyond. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Diane Paulus and Executive Producer Diane Borger, the A.R.T. seeks to expand the boundaries of theater by programming events that immerse audiences in transformative theatrical experiences. Since 2012, A.R.T.'s productions of *Natasha*, *Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*, *All the Way*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Pippin*, *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*, and *Once* have garnered thirteen Tony Awards. The A.R.T. collaborates with artists around the world to develop and create work in new ways, including a collaboration with Harvard's Center for the Environment that will result in the development of new work over several years. Under Paulus's leadership, the A.R.T.'s club theater, OBERON, has been an incubator for local and emerging artists and has attracted national attention for its innovative programming and business models.

As the professional theater on the campus of Harvard University, the A.R.T. catalyzes discourse, interdisciplinary collaboration and creative exchange, acting as a conduit between its community of artists and the university. The A.R.T. Institute for Advanced Theater Training at Harvard University, run in association with the Moscow Art Theatre School and the Harvard Extension School, offers graduate training in acting, dramaturgy, and voice. A.R.T. also plays a central role in Harvard's newly launched undergraduate Theater, Dance, and Media concentration, teaching courses in directing, dramatic literature, acting, voice, design, and dramaturgy. The A.R.T. actively engages more than 5,000 community members and local students annually in project-based partnerships, workshops, conversations with artists, and other enrichment activities both at the theater and across the Greater Boston area.

Through all of these initiatives, the A.R.T. is dedicated to producing world-class performances in which the audience is central to the theatrical experience.

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#TheWhiteCard**

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