

Portland Center Stage at

THE **ARMORY**

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M E D I A R E L E A S E

Cherokee performance artist and activist DeLanna Studi
returns to The Armory to perform her powerful memoir play
And So We Walked: An Artist's Journey Along the Trail of Tears

Previews Begin March 31 | Opening Night April 6 | Closes May 13

Tickets start at \$25



February 28, 2018 — PORTLAND, OR. DeLanna Studi's powerful memoir play *And So We Walked: An Artist's Journey Along the Trail of Tears* begins preview performances on March 31, opens on April 6, and runs through May 13 in The Armory's Ellyn Bye Studio. Studi returns to The Armory to perform this solo show after a triumphant run as Marie Dorion, Sarah Astor and other roles in the two-year engagement of *Astoria: Part One* and *Astoria: Part Two*. Corey Madden, the executive director of the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, has been involved in the development of *And So We Walked* since initial

research began in 2014 and comes to Portland to direct the production.

"As a Cherokee citizen and woman," said Studi, "I have always dreamed about retracing my ancestors' footsteps along their forced deportation from their ancestral homelands in North Carolina to our current home in what is now called Oklahoma, collecting stories along the way."

While the Trail of Tears is a defining moment in our Cherokee history, it does not define who we are. *And So We Walked* is a universal story about the complexities of identity, reconciling the past while living in the present, and the importance of keeping our stories alive.”

Studi is one of three Indigenous female playwrights presenting work on Oregon’s top stages at the same time this spring, joined by Mary Kathryn Nagle (*Manhatta* at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, March 28 – October 27) and Larissa FastHorse (*The Thanksgiving Play* at Artists Repertory Theatre, April 1 – April 29). To celebrate this ground breaking convergence, the three playwrights will present a series of [panel discussions](#) in Portland on April 9 and 10.

TICKET INFO

Regular tickets start at \$25. Tickets may be purchased at www.pcs.org, 503.445.3700, or in-person from the box office (128 NW Eleventh Avenue, Portland, OR). Rush tickets are \$20. Students and patrons who are 30 or younger can purchase \$30 premium tickets. \$5 tickets are available for Oregon Trail Card holders through the Arts for All program. Discounts for groups of 10+. Active duty or veteran military personnel and their immediate families get 50% off the price of regular tickets. Performance times are Tuesday through Sunday evenings at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m.; Thursday matinees at noon; certain date exclusions apply, see below for details. Recommended for ages 13 and up. Contains mature language. For more information visit www.pcs.org/walked and www.andsowewalked.com.

ABOUT THE PLAY

And So We Walked: An Artist’s Journey Along the Trail of Tears is a frank, funny and sometimes misguided story of a contemporary Cherokee woman who goes on a six-week, 900-mile journey with her father along the Trail of Tears in search of her heroic self. The journey retraces the path from North Carolina to Oklahoma that her great-great grandparents took in the 1830s during the forced relocation of 17,000 Cherokee from their homelands, during which as many as 6,000 perished along the way. Through this personal odyssey, her sense of identity — both as a Cherokee and as a woman — is tested by the people and places she encounters. This multi-faceted dramatic memoir draws on extraordinary interviews, historical research, and the artist’s personal experiences to convey the complexities and conflicts with which the Cherokee wrestle.

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

In 2014, with support from the [Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts](#), Studi began initial research in North Carolina, Tennessee and Oklahoma, eventually discovering her ancestral homestead in present-day Murphy, North Carolina, on the Hiwassee River. The following year, she conducted interviews and participatory theater workshops as she traveled along the Trail of Tears with her father, Thomas Studie, a Cherokee elder and native speaker. In November of 2015, Studi developed the play while in residency with University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Process Series and with Native Voices at the Autry Museum in Los Angeles. In 2016, *And So We Walked* was chosen for Native Voices at The Autry's 16th Annual Playwrights Retreat and Festival of New Plays and was further developed at Native American Theatre Project with support from the Cherokee Preservation Foundation. The same year, Studi received the Butcher Scholar Award from the Autry Museum of the American West. In 2017, workshops developing *And So We Walked* at the American Indian Center and PlayMakers Repertory Company at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the production at Triad Stage in Greensboro, North Carolina, were supported by funding from the MAP Fund and Kenan Institute for the Arts.

DELANNA STUDI, AUTHOR/PERFORMER

DeLanna Studi is a proud citizen of Cherokee Nation. Her acting credits include the First National Broadway Tour of *August: Osage County*; Off-Broadway's *Informed Consent* at Duke Theater on 42nd Street; and regional theater credits at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Portland Center Stage at The Armory (*Astoria: Part One and Two*), Cornerstone Theater Company, Indiana Repertory Theater, and others. DeLanna has originated roles in more than 18 world premieres, including 14 Native productions. She has done more than 800 performances of the Encompass "Compassion Play" *KICK*, a one-person show written by Peter Howard that explores the power of images, stereotypes and Native American mascots. Her roles in the Hallmark/ABC mini-series *Dreamkeeper* and Chris Eyre's *Edge of America* have won her numerous awards. She is an ensemble member of Native Voices at the Autry; serves as chair of SAG-AFTRA's National Native Committee; and mentors for Mentor Artist Playwright Program, Young Native Playwrights and American Indian Film Institute's Tribal Touring Program.

COREY MADDEN, DIRECTOR

Corey Madden has worked as a creator, director and/or producer on more than 300 new works that have premiered across the country and in Europe. Through her company L'Atelier Arts, Madden develops and directs new plays, creates original programming for museums and arts festivals, and collaborates with dance, visual arts, music and opera artists on interdisciplinary and site-specific projects. Recent original works include *Sol Path* and *Rain After Ash*, commissioned by Fulcrum Arts' AxS Festival; *Tales of the Old West* for the Autry Museum of the American West; and *Rock Paper Scissors* (Best Production, Arizona Theatre Awards) and *Day for Night* (GLOW Festival in Santa Monica; Transatlantyk Festival in Poland). Madden is currently executive director of the Kenan Institute for the Arts at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and has been associate artistic director of Center Theatre Group/Mark Taper Forum, producing director of Performing for Los Angeles Youth, director of Artist Programs for the Pasadena Arts Council, and on the artistic staff of Actors Theatre of Louisville.

THE CREATIVE TEAM

The [University of North Carolina School of the Arts](#)-based creative team comes to The Armory having worked together on the 2017 North Carolina premiere, produced by the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts and Triad Stage. The production design is based on an abstract interpretation of the Cherokee Council House where ceremonies and tribal meetings are held — the council house is seven-sided to represent the seven clans of the Cherokee: Bird, Paint, Deer, Wolf, Blue, Long Hair, and Wild Potato — and inspired by Cherokee craft art, with intricately lit fabric woven between trees against an abstract backdrop that is reminiscent of the mountains that are considered sacred space in Cherokee Nation. The creative team includes Scenic Designer John Coyne, Costume Designer Andja Budincich, Lighting and Projection Designer Norman Coates and Sound Designer/Co-composer Bruno Louchouart (all from UNC School of the Arts); Co-composers John John Grant and Sarah Elizabeth Burkey; Vocal Coach Mary Irwin Furey (also from UNCSCA); Dramaturg Shirley Fishman; Cultural Consultant Randi Byrd; and Props Artisans Eric Hart and Mackenzie Cunningham. Joining them in Portland are Dialect Coach Mary McDonald-Lewis; Stage Manager Mark Tynan; and Production Assistant Logan Starnes.

TICKET AND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

When: **March 31 – May 13, 2018***

*Opening Night/Press Night: Friday, April 6 at 7:30 p.m.

Preview Performances: March 31 and April 1, 3, 4 and 5 at 7:30 p.m.

Where: In the Ellyn Bye Studio at [The Armory](#)
128 NW Eleventh Ave., Portland, Ore., 97209

To Purchase: **Regular tickets range from \$25 to \$57.** Rush tickets are \$20. Students and patrons who are 30 or younger may purchase premium tickets for \$30. \$5 tickets are available for Oregon Trail Card holders through the Arts for All program. Discounts for groups of 10+. Active duty or veteran military personnel and their immediate families get 50% off the price of regular tickets. *Prices vary by date and time, and are subject to change.*

Online: www.pcs.org

By Phone: 503.445.3700, 12–6 p.m.

In Person: The box office is at 128 NW Eleventh Avenue
12 p.m. to 8 p.m. on performance days
12 p.m. to 6 p.m. on non-performance days

Groups: Discounts available for groups of 10+ by calling 503.445.3794.

More Info: www.pcs.org/walked

Showtimes: Tuesday through Sunday evenings at 7:30 p.m. (excluding April 15 and 29); Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. (excluding March 31 and April 1, 7 and 21); and Thursday matinees at noon (excluding April 5).

Please Note: Recommended for ages 13 and up. Contains mature language.

Accessibility: Learn about our accessibility options at www.pcs.org/access.

PORTLAND CENTER STAGE AT THE ARMORY

[Portland Center Stage at The Armory](#) is the largest theater company in Portland and among the top 20 regional theaters in the country. Established in 1988 as a branch of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the company became independent in 1994 and has been under the leadership of Artistic Director Chris Coleman since 2000. Around 150,000 visitors attend The Armory annually to enjoy a mix of classical, contemporary and world premiere productions, along with a variety of high quality education and community programs. Eleven productions are offered each season, in addition to roughly 400 community events created — in partnership with 170+ local organizations and individuals — to serve the diverse populations in the city. As part of its dedication to new play development, the company has produced 26 world premieres and presents an annual new works festival, JAW: A Playwrights Festival. Home to two theaters, The Armory was the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, and the first performing arts venue, to achieve a LEED Platinum rating.

THE 2017-2018 SEASON

The [2017-2018 season](#) is funded in part by Season Superstars Tim and Mary Boyle and Lead Corporate Champion Umpqua Bank. Further support comes from Season Sponsors the Regional Arts and Culture Council, The Wallace Foundation and Oregon Arts Commission, a state agency funded by the state of Oregon and the National Endowment for the Arts. Support for *And So We Walked* is provided in part by The Sheri & Les Biller Family Foundation; Hobbs, Straus, Dean & Walker; KeyBank; NW Natural; The Boeing Company; Siletz Tribal Charitable Contribution Fund; Spirit Mountain Community Fund; and Diana Gerding. Mark Spencer Hotel is the official hotel partner for the company. Portland Center Stage at The Armory was selected as a participant of the Wallace Foundation's [Building Audiences for Sustainability Initiative](#), a four-year effort with a nationwide cohort of 26 performing arts organizations.

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