

Portland Center Stage at

THE **ARMORY**

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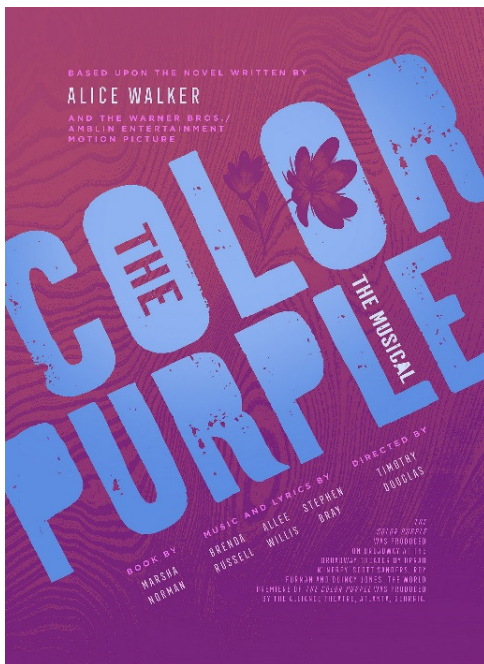
***The Color Purple* to Launch Portland Center Stage at The Armory's**

**2018-2019 Season with Joyful Noise and a Cast that Includes**

**Broadway Star Felicia Boswell as Celie**

**Previews Begin Sept. 15 | Opening Night is Sept. 21 | Closes Oct. 28**

**Tickets start at \$25**



**August 16, 2018 — PORTLAND, OR.** Portland Center Stage at The Armory's 2018-2019 season launches with the Tony Award-winning musical *The Color Purple*, adapted from Alice Walker's classic novel about the sisterhood, resilience and self-empowerment found in a community of black women living in rural Georgia in the early 20th century. *The Color Purple* begins preview performances on September 15, opens on September 21, and runs through October 28 on the U.S. Bank Main Stage. Timothy Douglas directs the production, joined by music director Darius Smith, who will bring the Grammy Award-winning score to life.

The cast includes Felicia Boswell (Broadway: *Shuffle Along*, *Motown*, *Memphis*) as Celie, whose journey toward love and self-worth forms the heart of the play; Lana Gordon (Broadway: *Chicago the Musical*, *The Lion King*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*) as jazz singer Shug Avery; and Danae C. Osseni (Off-Broadway: *Death of a Salesman*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*) as Celie's sister Nettie, all making their debuts at The Armory. Maiesha McQueen (First National Tour of *Waitress*) returns to The Armory after celebrated performances in *His Eye is on the Sparrow* and *Ain't Misbehavin'* to play Celie's

daughter-in-law, the fiercely brave Sofia.

Recalling the powerful impact of his first encounter with Alice Walker's story, director Timothy Douglas said, "It was exactly as though my heart were being carefully, yet assuredly massaged by a spirit-covered hand. Guided by this indelible and visceral memory, I'll strive to massage each moment of Miss Celie's transforming nature and journey. It will surely be through the joyful noise of song — by way of our authentically-inspired ensemble of actors and musicians — that all who come to hear will, too, have their souls gloriously shaken and stirred."

### **TICKET INFO**

**Regular tickets start at \$25 and are on sale now.** Tickets may be purchased at [www.pcs.org](http://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 get 50% off premium tickets. \$5 tickets are available for Oregon Trail Card holders through the Arts for All program. Discounts are available for groups of 10+. Active duty or veteran military personnel and their immediate families get 50% off premium tickets. Performance times (with a few exceptions noted below) are Tuesday through Sunday evenings at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m.; Thursday matinees at noon; see below for more information. Recommended for ages 14 and up. Contains strong language and adult themes. For more information visit [www.pcs.org/purple](http://www.pcs.org/purple).

### **ABOUT THE MUSICAL**

From Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize-winning bestseller comes a powerful, Tony Award-winning musical with a fresh, joyous score of jazz, ragtime, gospel and blues. This stirring family chronicle follows the inspirational Celie from the early to mid-20th century in the American South, as she journeys from childhood to womanhood, through joy and despair, anguish and hope, to discover the true power of love and life. With a soul-rousing, Grammy-winning score, *The Color Purple* is an unforgettable and intensely moving American classic. *The Color Purple*, based on the novel by Alice Walker and the Warner Bros./Amblin Entertainment motion picture, features a book by Marsha Norman; and music and lyrics by Brenda Russell, Allee Willis and Stephen Bray.

### **FROM PAGE TO STAGE**

Published in 1982, Walker's novel won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and the National Book Award. Steven Spielberg's 1985 movie adaptation was a critically acclaimed box office success, receiving 11 Academy Award nominations. Workshops for the musical adaptation began in 2004 at the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta, Georgia. It opened on Broadway in 2005, where the uplifting songs and richly resonant story garnered 11 Tony Award nominations. In 2014, a revival opened in London at the The Menier Chocolate Factory with a tightened script and rustic, stylized design. A Broadway production of the revival followed, winning the 2016 Tony Award for Best Revival of a Musical and the 2017 Grammy Award for Best Musical Theatre Album, along with abundant praise from critics and audiences alike. Portland Center Stage at The Armory's all-new production brings the revival to Portland audiences for the first time.

## **THE CAST**

Felicia Boswell (Broadway: *Shuffle Along*, *Motown*, *Memphis*) will play Alice Walker's iconic heroine Celie. Lana Gordon (Broadway: *Chicago the Musical*, *The Lion King*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*) will take on the role of glamorous jazz singer Shug Avery. Danea C. Osseni (Off-Broadway: *Death of a Salesman*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*) will take on the role of Celie's long lost sister Nettie. Maiesha McQueen (previously at The Armory in *His Eye is on the Sparrow* and *Ain't Misbehavin'*; First National Tour of *Waitress*) will return as Celie's independent daughter-in-law Sofia. Chaz Lamar Shepherd (Broadway: *Chicago*, *The Color Purple*. Television: *Luke Cage*, *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*) will play Celie's husband Mister. Isaiah Tyrelle Boyd (*Jesus Christ Superstar* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, *A Bronx Tale* at Paper Mill Playhouse) will play Celie's adopted son Harpo. C. Mingo Long (National Tours: *Parade*, *Les Misérables*) will play Pa, the abusive man who raised Celie and Nettie. Rounding out the cast are Maritza Bostic, Gregory Brumfield, Nia Marché, Martavius Parrish, Lauren Du Pree, Shalanda Sims, Ithica Tell, Neil Totton and Juson Williams.

## **THE ORCHESTRA**

Darius Smith (Music Director/Conductor/Keys 1) returns to The Armory after music directing and playing piano in *His Eye is on the Sparrow* to lead an orchestra which includes: Jeffrey Childs (Associate Music Director/Keys 2); Marc Grafe (Reed 1); Mieke Bruggeman-Smith (Reed 2); Levis Dragulin (Trumpet); Ross Seligman (Guitar); Will Amend (Bass); and Mitch Wilson (Drums).

## THE CREATIVE TEAM

Director Timothy Douglas (*Anna in the Tropics*, *A Feminine Ending* and *His Eye is on the Sparrow* at The Armory) leads a creative team that includes Choreographer Lady Dane Figueroa Edidi (a D.C.-based, two-time Helen Hayes Award-nominated choreographer), Scenic Designer Tony Cisek (who has collaborated with Douglas on over 30 productions including *Anna in the Tropics* and *A Feminine Ending* at The Armory); Costume Designer Kara Harmon (Television credits include *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, *Daredevil* and *Boardwalk Empire*); Lighting Designer Peter Maradudin (whose recent credits at The Armory include *His Eye is on the Sparrow*, *Great Expectations* and *Threesome*); Sound Designer Matthew M. Nielson (*Astoria* and *The Magic Play* at The Armory); Associate Sound Designer Sharath Patel; Stage Manager Janine Vanderhoff; and Assistant Stage Manager Kristen Mun.

## TICKET AND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

**When:** Sept. 15 – Oct. 28, 2018\*

\*Opening Night/Press Night: Friday, Sept. 21 at 7:30 p.m.

Preview Performances: Sept. 15, 16, 18, 19 and 20 at 7:30 p.m.

**Where:** On the U.S. Bank Main Stage at [The Armory](#)  
128 NW Eleventh Ave., Portland, Ore., 97209

**To Purchase:** Regular tickets range from \$25 to \$87. Rush tickets are \$20. Students and patrons who are 30 or younger get 50% off premium tickets. \$5 tickets are available for Oregon Trail Card holders through the Arts for All program. Discounts available for groups of 10+. Active duty or veteran military personnel and their immediate families get 50% off premium tickets. *Prices vary by date and time, and are subject to change.*

**Online:** [www.pcs.org](http://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:** 503.445.3794

**More Info:** [www.pcs.org/purple](http://www.pcs.org/purple)

**Showtimes:** Tuesday through Sunday evenings at 7:30 p.m. (excluding Oct. 14 and 28); Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. (excluding Sept. 15, 16 and Oct. 6, 22); and Thursday matinees at noon (excluding Sept. 20).

**Please Note:** Recommended for ages 14 and up. Contains strong adult language and adult themes.

**Accessibility:** Learn about our accessibility options at [www.pcs.org/access](http://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. Around 150,000 visitors attend The Armory annually to enjoy a mix of classic, 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, which was originally built in 1891, opened its doors in 2006 as the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, and the first performing arts venue in the country, to achieve a LEED Platinum rating.

## **THE 2018-2019 SEASON**

The [2018-2019 season](#) is funded in part by Season Superstars Tim and Mary Boyle, and Lead Corporate Champion Umpqua Bank. Further support comes from: Women's Series Sponsors Ronni

Lacroute, Brigid Flanigan and Diana Gerding; Studio Season Sponsors Mary and Don Blair; and the Regional Arts and Culture Council and Oregon Arts Commission, a state agency funded by the state of Oregon and the National Endowment for the Arts. Support for *The Color Purple* comes from GBD Architects; The Standard; Helen Stern and Family; Curtis T. Thompson, M.D. and Associates, LLC; Dan Wieden and Pricilla Bernard Wieden; and The Vista. The Mark Spencer Hotel is the official hotel partner. Portland Center Stage at The Armory was selected as a participant of the Wallace Foundation's [Building Audiences for Sustainability Initiative](#), an effort with a nationwide cohort of 26 performing arts organizations.

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