



JASON MARTIN  
Head of Publicity

T: 213.972.7376 | CTGMedia@CTGLA.org

601 W TEMPLE ST | LOS ANGELES, CA 90012 | [CenterTheatreGroup.org](http://CenterTheatreGroup.org)

For immediate release.

**CENTER THEATRE GROUP'S BLOCK PARTY CONTINUES AT THE KIRK DOUGLAS THEATRE WITH  
OPENING OF THE FOUNTAIN THEATRE'S "CITIZEN: AN AMERICAN LYRIC" THIS SUNDAY, APRIL 30  
Stage Adaptation of Claudia Rankine's Acclaimed Book of Poetry Returns For 11 Performances Only**

Center Theatre Group's Block Party continues with the opening of The Fountain Theatre production of "Citizen: An American Lyric" this Sunday, April 30 at 6:30 p.m. at the Kirk Douglas Theatre. Based on a book of poetry by Claudia Rankine, adapted for the stage by Fountain Co-Artistic Director Stephen Sachs and directed by Shirley Jo Finney, "Citizen: An American Lyric" will begin previews April 28 and continue for 11 performances only through May 7, 2017.

Block Party highlights some of the remarkable work being done in other, more intimate theatres throughout Los Angeles by fully producing three previously staged productions. The three productions receive the full support of Center Theatre Group and its staff in order to fund, stage and market each production. Block Party began with the Coeurage Theatre production of "Failure: A Love Story" April 14 through 23 and will continue with The Echo Theater Company's production of "Dry Land" running May 12 through 21.

"Citizen: An American Lyric" fuses poetry, prose, movement, music and the video image in a provocative stage adaptation of Claudia Rankine's internationally acclaimed book of poetry about everyday acts of racism in America. Of Rankine's "Citizen," The New Yorker wrote that it was "brilliant... [and] explores the kinds of injustice that thrive when the illusion of justice is perfected." The New York Times wrote that "Rankine brilliantly pushes poetry's forms to disarm readers and circumvent our carefully constructed defense mechanisms against the hint of possibly being racist ourselves."

The cast of "Citizen: An American Lyric" includes Bernard K. Addison, Leith Burke, Tony Maggio, Monnae Michael, Simone Missick and Lisa Pescia. Scenic and projection design is by Yee Eun Nam, costume design is by Naila Aladdin-Sanders, lighting design is by Pablo Santiago and original music and sound design is by Peter Bayne. Anastasia Coon is the movement director and Shawna Voragen is the production stage manager.

Audiences are also invited to engage in discussion with the "Citizen" cast and company following each performance during moderated Stage Talks. There will be no Stage Talk held on opening night.

"As we celebrate Center Theatre Group's 50 years of creating theatre in Los Angeles, we want to turn the spotlight on some of the remarkable work being done on other stages," said Center Theatre Group Artistic Director Michael Ritchie in discussing Block Party. "Coeurage Theatre, The Echo Theater and The Fountain Theatre, as well as others throughout L.A., regularly produce excellent, boundary-pushing work and we're so glad they are sharing some of that work with us."

Center Theatre Group received 76 submissions for Block Party from intimate theatre companies from North Hollywood to San Pedro, Topanga to Sierra Madre.

With Block Party, Center Theatre Group hopes to strengthen relationships within the Los Angeles community, create additional avenues for the organization to become familiar with local playwrights, actors, directors and designers, and foster relationships between Center Theatre Group staff and the staff at theatre companies throughout Los Angeles.

Block Party receives major support from Aliza Karney Guren and Marc Guren with generous funding also provided by Joni and Miles Benickes.

Center Theatre Group has a long history of pairing with local theatre companies including the Deaf West production of "Big River" which was produced at the Mark Taper Forum in 2002 and went on to Broadway before returning to the Ahmanson Theatre in 2005 as part of a national tour. More recently, Center Theatre Group partnered with Ebony Repertory Theatre for the remounting of "A Raisin in the Sun" (which played at the Douglas), 24th Street Theatre's "Walking the Tightrope" (also at the Douglas) and with other companies around the city for "The Behavior of Broadus" (Burglars of Hamm and Sacred Fools Theater Company) and "Birder" (The Road Theatre Company).

Center Theatre Group, one of the nation's preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles' leading nonprofit theatre company, programming seasons at the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum and 1600 to 2000-seat Ahmanson Theatre at The Music Center in Downtown Los Angeles, and the 317-seat Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City. In addition to presenting and producing the broadest range of theatrical entertainment in the country, Center Theatre Group is one of the nation's leading producers of ambitious new works through commissions and world premiere productions and a leader in interactive community engagement and education programs that reach across generations, demographics and circumstance to serve Los Angeles.

Tickets for each production are available by calling (213) 628-2772, online at [www.CenterTheatreGroup.org](http://www.CenterTheatreGroup.org), at the Center Theatre Group box office at the Ahmanson Theatre or at the Kirk Douglas Theatre box office two hours prior to performance. Tickets range from \$25 – \$70 (ticket prices are subject to change).

As an homage to Coeurage Theatre's payment structure, the first preview performance of each production will be a pay-what-you-want performance. Pay-what-you-want gives patrons the opportunity to decide what their theatre experience was worth to them before, during or after the performance. The pay-what-you-want performance for "Citizen" will be on April 28 and "Dry Land" will be on May 12.

The Kirk Douglas Theatre is located at 9820 Washington Blvd. in Culver City, CA 90232. Ample free parking and restaurants are adjacent.

# # #

April 27, 2017