



For Immediate Release
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**A “RAW, BLISTERING, HILARIOUS, AND ENGAGING” (CHICAGO SUN-TIMES)
NEW WORK FROM ACCLAIMED POET AZIZA BARNES**

(Washington, DC) **Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company** announces the seventh production of its 2018-2019 season, **BLKS** by Aziza Barnes. Directed by Woolly Mammoth Company Member **Nataki Garrett**, **BLKS** will run from February 4, 2019 to March 3, 2019.

After a bad health scare, Octavia decides to put off her troubles and blow off some serious steam with her friends June and Imani. Will one last epic night on the town—a true test of their friendship full of outrageous, absurd encounters—lead to epiphany or disaster?

BLKS is a “raw, blistering, hilarious, and engaging” (*Chicago Sun-Times*) new work that responds to a number of cultural icons, from Lena Dunham’s *Girls* to *Seinfeld* to August Wilson. Poet and playwright **Aziza Barnes**’ new play celebrates queerness and sisterhood as three twentysomething black women wrestle with love, uncomfortable truths, and the anguish of adulting in New York City.

“Whether you see yourself in these incandescent characters, or simply bear witness to a day in each of their lives, this play is wholeheartedly and unapologetically about being Black and alive,” says **Woolly Mammoth Artistic Director Maria Manuela Goyanes**. “I am thrilled to work with this tremendous company of designers and actors of color, including the brilliant **Nataki Garrett**, who last directed **Branden Jacobs-Jenkins**’ *An Octoroon* at Woolly Mammoth.”

Aziza Barnes (Playwright) premiered **BLKS** at Steppenwolf in 2017. Aziza’s first full length poetry collection *i be but i ain’t*, won the Pamet River Prize in 2016. Aziza is a Cave Canem Fellow and co-host of the podcast *The Poetry Gods*, a graduate of New York University, and participant in the 2016 Ojai Playwrights Conference.

Nataki Garrett (Director) is on the Theater Communications Group Board of Directors. She was the acting Artistic Director of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts during the 17/18 season and their recent leadership transition. Prior to that she was the Associate Artistic Director of CalArts Center for New Performance (CNP) and the former Associate Dean and the Co-Head of Undergraduate Acting for CalArts School of Theater.

She is a Company Member at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, a recipient of the NEA/TCG Career Development Program for Directors, and a member of SDC. **Nataki Garrett** is co-Artistic

Director of BLANK THE DOG PRODUCTIONS. In 2008, Garrett received a NAACP Theatre Award nomination for Best Director for *Black Women State of the Union: An Evening of Plays by Black Women*. Her production of *Neighbors* by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins received several Ovation nominations and was Winner of the Garland Award for Best Ensemble. She has worked internationally in Bellagio, Italy; Edinburgh, Scotland; Paris, France; and in Rwanda and Uganda. Her work can be heard on the radio through L.A. Theatre Works audio theatre collection on Audible.com and for NPR, recorded live.

Nataki's regional productions include: *Is God Is* by Aleshea Harris at Mixed Blood Theater; *Everybody* at CalShakes; *Carolyn Bryant Project* at REDCAT; *Jeffersons Garden* at Ford's Theater in DC, *BLKS* at Steppenwolf Theatre Company; *Smart People* at DCPA; *An Octoroon* at Woolly Mammoth Theater Company and Mixed Blood Theater Company; *Bulrusher* at Skylight Theater; *Pussy Valley* by Katori Hall at Mixed Blood Theater, *Hurt Village* at Ubuntu Theater; *Hoodoo Love* at Mo'Olelo Performing Arts Company, *Neighbors* by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins at the Matrix Theater and Mixed Blood Theater; *Smoke Lillies and Jade* by Carl Hancock Rux at CalArts Center for New Performance with upcoming productions at OSF, Philadelphia Theater Company, Baltimore Center Stage and ACT Seattle.

Cast members in Woolly's production of *BLKS* include Company Member **Shannon Dorsey** (Imani), **Alina Collins Maldonado** (Ry), **Cyndii Johnson** (Octavia), **Tatiana Williams** (June), **Justin Weaks** (Justin), and **Madeline Joey Rose** (That Bitch on the Couch).

The set design for *BLKS* is by **Efren Delgadillo Jr.** The remaining members of the production team include **Lex Liang** (costume design); **Jason Hayes** (wig and hair designer); **Jeanette Oisuk Yew** (lighting designer); **T. Carlis Roberts** (sound design and original music); **Rasean Davonte Johnson** (projection designer); **Lorraine Ressegger-Sloane** (intimacy and fight choreographer); and **Hope Villanueva** (production stage manager).

SCHEDULE

BLKS runs February 4, 2019 to March 3, 2019, with performances: Tuesday-Friday at 8 pm; Saturday at 3 pm and 8 pm (except February 9, which features an 8 pm performance only); and Sunday at 2 pm and 7 pm (except February 10, which features a 7pm performance only); with two Pay What You Will performances on Monday, February 4 and Tuesday, February 5 at 8 pm.

PERFORMANCE CALENDAR

February 4, 2019: Pay What You Will performance at 8 pm

February 5, 2019: Pay What You Will performance at 8 pm

February 6, 2019: Preview performance at 8 pm

February 7, 2019: Preview performance at 8 pm

February 8, 2018: Opening Night Performance at 8 pm

February 9, 2019: Performance at 8 pm

February 10, 2019: Performance at 7 pm

February 13, 2019: Galentine's Day Performance at 8 pm

February 14, 2019: Performance at 8 pm

February 15, 2019: Performance at 8 pm

February 16, 2019: Performance at 3 pm

February 16, 2019: Performance at 8 pm

February 17, 2019: Performance at 2 pm
February 17, 2019: Performance at 7 pm
February 20, 2019: Performance at 8 pm
February 21, 2019: Performance at 8 pm
February 22, 2019: Performance at 8 pm
February 23, 2019: Performance at 3 pm
February 23, 2019: Performance at 8 pm
February 24, 2019: Performance at 2 pm
February 24, 2019: Performance at 7 pm
February 27, 2019: Performance at 8 pm
February 28, 2019: Performance at 8 pm
March 1, 2019: Performance at 8 pm
March 2, 2019: Performance at 3 pm
March 2, 2019: Performance at 8 pm
March 3, 2019: Performance at 2 pm
March 3, 2019: Performance at 7 pm

TICKETS

Tickets to *BLKS* start at \$46. Visit us online at woollymammoth.net, by phone at (202) 393-3939, via email at tickets@woollymammoth.net, or in person at the Box Office, located at 641 D Street NW.

Patrons who are 30-years-old and younger may, at any time, purchase Section C tickets for \$20 to any performance. There are also discounts available for educators, first responder men and women and active US military personnel, spouses, and veterans. More information is available at woollymammoth.net.

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#BLKS

ABOUT WOOLLY

Woolly Mammoth, a national innovator in the development and production of new plays, is one of the best known mid-sized theaters in the country and “the hottest theater company in town” (*Washington Post*). For almost four decades, Woolly has held a unique position at the leading edge of the American theater, earning a reputation for staying “uniquely plugged in to the mad temper of the times” (*New York Times*). We’ve garnered that reputation by holding fast to our unique mission: to create rousing, visceral, enlightening theater experiences that galvanize diverse artists and audiences to engage with our world in unexpected and often challenging ways.