

canadianstage studio 180 theatre

PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING PLAY MAKES ITS TORONTO DEBUT

SWEAT

By Lynn Nottage

January 14-February 2 at the Berkeley Street Theatre



“A must-see! Scorching. Superb. Vital... From the first moments to the last, this compassionate but clear-eyed play throbs with heartfelt life.” – *The New York Times*

“A breathtaking drama about life in the American rustbelt.” – *The Guardian*

“Passionate and necessary... A masterful depiction of the forces that divide and conquer us.” – *Time Out NY*

Canadian Stage and Studio 180 Theatre are thrilled to co-produce the Toronto debut of the Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Sweat*. Written by two-time Pulitzer Prize-winner Lynn Nottage, *Sweat* runs from January 14 to February 2, 2020 at the Berkeley Street Theatre.

FOR CANADIAN STAGE: BRENDAN HEALY, Artistic Director MONICA ESTEVES, Executive Director
ALEXANDRA BAILLIE Board Chair

FOR STUDIO 180: JOEL GREENBERG, Artistic Director LAURA POMEROY, General Manager
ELLEN TERRY COLE, Chair of the Board of Directors

canadianstage

studio 180 theatre

A searing examination of industrial decline, race, politics and friendship, *Sweat* won the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. It is a gritty, heartfelt portrayal of the fear, anger and resentment felt by middle class workers and the unintended consequences communities face when opportunities diminish. The play chronicles the lives of a group of friends working in a steel mill who spend their days on the factory floor and their nights sharing drinks, secrets, and laughs. When rumours surface that the company is considering layoffs and recruiting non-union workers for less money, the war between community and capitalism begins and tensions start to destroy not only jobs, but friendships.

Based on two years of extensive research and interviews with residents of Reading, Pennsylvania, the poorest city of its size in America, and a microcosm of what was happening to small cities across North America. Nottage dug deep into the forgotten heart of middle America, finding a city divided by racial tension and the collapse of industry.

“Lynn Nottage’s extraordinary play is a powerful reflection on our current political and economic times,” says Canadian Stage Artistic Director Brendan Healy. “*Sweat* vividly explores how economic insecurities not only affect a group of friends, but an entire community. Although situated within an American context, *Sweat* could not be more relevant to us. The upcoming closure of the GM plant in Oshawa is but one example of factory closures across Ontario that are leaving thousands without work. *Sweat* gives a voice to those who often feel invisible and suffer in isolation at this time of economic upheaval.”

“With *Sweat*, Nottage’s establishes a wholly credible onstage world, populated with women and men we accept immediately as the collateral damage of a system long in need of change,” says Studio 180 Artistic Director, Joel Greenberg.

Directed by award-winning actor, director and educator David Storch, the stellar cast includes veteran Shaw and Stratford award-winning actor **Kelli Fox** (*Penelopiad*, Nightwood Theatre), award-winning stage and screen actor **Allegra Fulton** (CTV’s *Cardinal*, CBC’s *Schitt’s Creek*, Oscar winning film *The Shape of Water*), major theatre and TV actor **Ordena Stephens-Thompson** (*Fences* at Grand Theatre, Bravo’s *The Handmaid’s Tale*, CTV’s *Designated Survivor*) and Dora Award-winning, Gemini Award-nominated actor **Maurice Dean Wint**. The cast also includes Christopher Allen, Jhonattan Ardila, Peter N. Bailey, Timothy Dowler-Coltman and Ron Lea, with Sabryn Rock as Assistant Director.

FOR CANADIAN STAGE: BRENDAN HEALY, Artistic Director MONICA ESTEVES, Executive Director
ALEXANDRA BAILLIE Board Chair

FOR STUDIO 180: JOEL GREENBERG, Artistic Director LAURA POMEROY, General Manager
ELLEN TERRY COLE, Chair of the Board of Directors

canadianstage

studio 180 theatre

ABOUT LYNN NOTTAGE

Lynn Nottage is a Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and screenwriter. Her plays have been produced widely in the United States and throughout the world. Her most recent play, *Mlima's Tale*, premiered at the Public Theatre in May 2018. In the spring of 2017, *Sweat* (Pulitzer Prize, OBIE Award, Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, Tony Nomination, Drama Desk Nomination) moved to Broadway after a sold out run at the Public Theatre. Other plays include *By The Way*, *Meet Vera Stark* (Lilly Award, Drama Desk Nomination), *Ruined* (Pulitzer Prize, OBIE, Lucille Lortel, New York Drama Critic's Circle, Audelco, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Award), *Intimate Apparel* (American Theatre Critics and New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards for Best Play), *Fabulation, or the Re-Education of Undine* (OBIE Award), *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*, *Las Meninas*, *Mud*, *River*, *Stone*, *Por'knockers* and *POOF!*. Nottage is the recipient of a MacArthur "Genius Grant" Fellowship, Steinberg "Mimi" Distinguished Playwright Award, PEN/Laura Pels Master Playwright Award, Merit and Literature Award from the Academy of Arts and Letters, Columbia University Provost Grant, Doris Duke Artist Award, The Joyce Foundation Commission Project & Grant, Madge Evans-Sidney Kingsley Award, Nelson A. Rockefeller Award for Creativity, The Dramatics Guild Hull-Warriner Award, the inaugural Horton Foote Prize, Helen Hayes Award, the Lee Reynolds Award, and the Jewish World Watch iWitness Award. Her other honours include the National Black Theatre Fest's August Wilson Playwright Award, a Guggenheim Grant, Lucille Lortel Fellowship and Visiting Research Fellowship at Princeton University. She is a graduate of Brown University and the Yale School of Drama. Nottage is also an Associate Professor in the Theatre Department at Columbia School of the Arts.

ABOUT CANADIAN STAGE

Canadian Stage's mission is to be the leading contemporary performing arts organization in the country. A collision of disciplines and cultures, Canadian Stage reflects the dynamism and complexity of Canada and is a vital artistic force locally, nationally, and internationally. In its over thirty-year history, Canadian Stage has employed thousands of artists and developed and produced hundreds of new productions. Many of the plays developed by Canadian Stage have been awarded and nominated for Canada's most prestigious literary and performing arts honours, including Governor General's, Chalmers and Dora Mavor Moore Awards. Throughout the theatre season, nearly 100,000 patrons attend performances and workshops in our three Toronto venues. Throughout our history, Canadian Stage has provided outstanding education and outreach programs cultivating a diverse audience demographic.

FOR CANADIAN STAGE: BRENDAN HEALY, Artistic Director MONICA ESTEVES, Executive Director
ALEXANDRA BAILLIE Board Chair

FOR STUDIO 180: JOEL GREENBERG, Artistic Director LAURA POMEROY, General Manager
ELLEN TERRY COLE, Chair of the Board of Directors

canadianstage studio 180 theatre

ABOUT STUDIO 180 THEATRE

Studio 180 Theatre is a Toronto-based company with a mission to produce socially relevant theatre that provokes public discourse and promotes community engagement. Since launching in 2003 with the acclaimed Canadian premiere of *The Laramie Project*, a string of popular and critical successes has helped Studio 180 evolve from an informal artistic collective into a not-for-profit charitable organization with significant producing partnerships, a growing base of financial support, and a clear and distinctive mission to stage compelling, unique and socially significant drama. We produce two MAINSTAGE shows per season, as well as a STUDIO series of productions, including a new play initiative called Studio 180 IN DEVELOPMENT and 180 READS, which invites audiences to attend readings of plays that we are contemplating for future production. Other programming our innovative education program, Studio 180 IN CLASS and BEYOND THE STAGE with activities that enhance each production. Visit studiotheatre180.com for more about the organization.

FOR CANADIAN STAGE: BRENDAN HEALY, Artistic Director MONICA ESTEVES, Executive Director
ALEXANDRA BAILLIE Board Chair

FOR STUDIO 180: JOEL GREENBERG, Artistic Director LAURA POMEROY, General Manager
ELLEN TERRY COLE, Chair of the Board of Directors