



For Immediate Release: February 16, 2018

Contacts: Ami Bennett, Motor Media for ArtsEmerson: 617.797.8267 | ami@motormmm.com
Rebecca Curtiss, A.R.T.: 617.496.2000 x8841 | 617.872.8254 rebecca_curtiss@harvard.edu

**ArtsEmerson and American Repertory Theater
Announce Casting for the World Premiere of
THE WHITE CARD
By Claudia Rankine
Directed by Diane Paulus**

**Emerson Paramount Center's Robert J. Orchard Stage
February 24 through April 1, 2018**

BOSTON, MA—**ArtsEmerson** and **American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.)** announce casting for the world premiere production of *The White Card*. Written by acclaimed author, poet, and MacArthur Fellow **Claudia Rankine** and directed by A.R.T.'s Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director **Diane Paulus**, *The White Card* performs February 24 through April 1, 2018 at the Emerson Paramount Center's Robert J. Orchard Stage, located at 559 Washington Street in downtown Boston. **ArtsEmerson** presents the **American Repertory Theater** production.

The cast includes **Karen Pittman** (Broadway's *Good People* and *Passing Strange*) as Charlotte, **Daniel Gerroll** (Broadway's *Enchanted April* and *Shadowlands* at Off-Broadway's Acorn Theater) as Charles, **Patricia Kalember** (Broadway's *Don't Dress for Dinner* and *Losing Louie*) as Virginia, **Jim Poulos** (Broadway's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *RENT*) as Eric, and **Colton Ryan** (*Dear Evan Hansen*) as Alex.

In *The White Card*, a conversation at a dinner party thrown by Virginia and Charles, an influential Manhattan couple, for up-and-coming artist Charlotte raises questions about what—and who—is actually on display. **Claudia Rankine's** 2014 *New York Times* best-selling *Citizen: An American Lyric* unpacked the insidious ways in which racism manifests itself in everyday situations. Now, this world-premiere play poses the question, "Can American society progress if whiteness stays invisible?"

The White Card is commissioned by ArtsEmerson, Boston, MA, and American Repertory Theater, Cambridge, MA.

As previously announced, *The White Card* creative team includes dramaturgy by Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellow **P. Carl**; scenic design by **Riccardo Hernandez** (*Arrabal* and *Notes from the Field: Doing Time in Education* at A.R.T.); costume design by **ESosa** (*O.P.C.* and *Father Comes Home from the War (Parts 1, 2 & 3)* at A.R.T.); lighting design by **Stephen Strawbridge** (*Richard II* at

A.R.T.); sound design by **Will Pickens** (*M. Butterfly* on Broadway); and projection design by **Peter Nigrini** (*Arrabal* and *Witness Uganda* at A.R.T.).

More than 1,300 area residents will deepen their engagement with the themes raised in both *Citizen* and *The White Card* through **Citizen Read**, a series of dynamic events co-produced by **ArtsEmerson** and **A.R.T.** to activate a public dialogue on race and identity in America. Participants will read Rankine's *Citizen* individually or with a book club, after which they will engage in one of more than eighty group conversations around the issues raised in the provocative meditation on race either with trained facilitators or independently, using curricula developed for the program. **Act II** events will engage all who attend *The White Card* in facilitated discussions after each of the play's forty-two performances.

By using Rankine's work as inspiration for reflection on race and identity and providing a framework and tools for conversation, audiences may, as Rankine puts it, "keep probing the stereotypes and expectations." **Citizen Read** and **Act II conversations** will utilize training developed by **Dr. Stacy Blake-Beard**, Deloitte Ellen Gabriel Professor of Women and Leadership and Sr. Faculty Affiliate, Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons College.

Tickets available now online at artsemerson.org, by phone at 617.824.8400, and in person at the Emerson Paramount Center Box Office (559 Washington Street, Boston). Discounts are available for groups, students, seniors, Blue Star families, EBT card holders, and others.

***The White Card* Performance Dates and Times**

Tuesdays – Sundays at 7:30PM

February 24, 25, 27, 28

March 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31

Wednesdays, Saturdays, Sundays at 2PM

March 3, 4, 10, 11, 14, 17, 18, 21, 24, 25, 31

April 1

Student Matinee Performances: Wednesdays, March 7 and 28 at 11AM

ASL Interpreted Performance: Saturday, March 17 at 2PM

Audio Described Performance: Sunday, March 18 at 2PM

ABOUT CLAUDIA RANKINE

Claudia Rankine is the author of five collections of poetry including *Citizen: An American Lyric* and *Don't Let Me Be Lonely*, two plays including *Provenance of Beauty: A South Bronx Travelogue*, and numerous video collaborations. She is the editor of several anthologies including *The Racial Imaginary: Writers on Race in the Life of the Mind*. For her book *Citizen*, Rankine won both the PEN Open Book Award and the PEN Literary Award, the NAACP Award, and the National Book Critics Circle Award for Poetry (*Citizen* was the first book ever to be named a finalist in both the poetry and criticism categories), and was a finalist for the National Book Award. *Citizen* also holds the distinction of being the only poetry book to be a *New York Times* bestseller in the nonfiction category. Among her numerous awards and honors, Rankine is the recipient of the *Poets & Writers'* Jackson Poetry Prize

and fellowships from the Lannan Foundation and the National Endowment of the Arts. She lives in California and teaches at Yale University as the Frederick Iseman Professor of Poetry.

ABOUT ARTSEMERSON

ArtsEmerson is Boston's leading presenter of contemporary world theatre. It is dedicated to engaging *all* communities through stories that reveal and deepen connections to each other. By cultivating diversity in the art *and* in the audience, ArtsEmerson ignites public conversation around the most vexing societal challenges as a catalyst for overcoming them. ArtsEmerson is committed to welcoming everyone into its landmark venues, located in Boston's downtown Theatre District, for a diverse program of contemporary theatre, film, and music from around the city and around the world. In addition, ArtsEmerson engages in a range of community partnerships and produces a series of initiatives that make visible the rich diversity of cultural activity in the region. These programs are core to ArtsEmerson's mission and expresses commitment to civic responsibility to create a more cohesive society. ArtsEmerson is the professional presenting and producing organization of the Office of the Arts at Emerson College and is led by Artistic Director David Dower and Executive Director David Howse. For more information, visit ArtsEmerson.org.

Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theatre District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,780 undergraduates and 670 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups. Emerson is known for its experiential learning programs in Los Angeles, Washington, DC, the Netherlands, London, China, and the Czech Republic. The College has an active network of 39,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communication and the arts. For more information, visit Emerson.edu.

ABOUT THE AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER

The **American Repertory Theater** (A.R.T.) at Harvard University is a leading force in the American theater, producing groundbreaking work in Cambridge and beyond. Under the leadership of Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director Diane Paulus and Executive Producer Diane Borger, the A.R.T. seeks to expand the boundaries of theater by programming events that immerse audiences in transformative theatrical experiences. Since 2012, A.R.T.'s productions of *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*, *All the Way*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Pippin*, *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*, and *Once* have garnered nineteen Tony Awards. The A.R.T. collaborates with artists around the world to develop and create work in new ways, including a collaboration with Harvard's Center for the Environment that will result in the development of new work over several years. Under Paulus's leadership, the A.R.T.'s club theater, OBERON, has been an incubator for local and emerging artists and has attracted national attention for its innovative programming and business models.

As the professional theater on the campus of Harvard University, the A.R.T. catalyzes discourse, interdisciplinary collaboration and creative exchange, acting as a conduit between its community of artists and the university. The A.R.T. Institute for Advanced Theater Training at Harvard University, run in association with the Moscow Art Theatre School and the Harvard Extension School, offers graduate training in acting, dramaturgy, and voice. A.R.T. also plays a central role in Harvard's newly launched undergraduate Theater, Dance, and Media concentration, teaching courses in directing, dramatic

literature, acting, voice, design, and dramaturgy. The A.R.T. actively engages more than 5,000 community members and local students annually in project-based partnerships, workshops, conversations with artists, and other enrichment activities both at the theater and across the Greater Boston area.

Through all of these initiatives, the A.R.T. is dedicated to producing world-class performances in which the audience is central to the theatrical experience.

**@artsemerson @americanrep
#TheWhiteCard**

###