



**GREENSBORO MASSACRE:
LESSONS FOR TODAY**



October 11, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Renowned National Arts Events Will Help Commemorate Greensboro Massacre's 40th Anniversary

Organizers marking the 40th anniversary of the Greensboro Massacre will use theater, dance, visual arts, and music as a way to create community-wide dialogue and understanding about the massacre's causes and meaning for today, with a focus on healing, solidarity, and persistence in the survivors' continuing struggle for justice. Throughout the weekend (November 1-3), in addition to an educational conference and worship services, several cultural events will highlight remembrances of the five victims, their work, their survivors and their community.

In 1996, nationally acclaimed playwright and stage director Emily Mann wrote a play about the murders, "Greensboro: A Requiem." Mann and her staff from Princeton University, where she is in her final year before retirement as Director of the McCarter Theater, will produce a community reading of the play at NC A&T State University on Friday, November 1. *The New York Times* review of the play's opening at McCarter in 1996 states, "...Mann('s)..canny collage of a script is based on courtroom transcripts, newspaper articles, television coverage and her own interviews with survivors...(it) discovers a situation that is ...complex and melancholy...a mare's-nest of evil, innocence, fury and sometimes fatally misguided impulses to do good. In short, a particularly all-American tragedy."

The production will use local community members and students to read the parts of 30 characters. The reading will be followed by an intergenerational panel discussion about the play's relevance today. Panelists will include Emily Mann and it will be moderated by Ash-Lee Henderson, Co-Director of the Highlander Research and Education Center in Tennessee.

After its opening at McCarter, the play has been produced around the U.S., including in Greensboro in 1997, in Chicago in 2008, and more recently as a community reading in November of last year at Princeton. The American Theater Hall of Fame announced last month that Emily Mann will be inducted as

a member in November 2019. That honor speaks to her status as a great American playwright and director, and elevates the relevance of her works, including *Greensboro: A Requiem*. Additional information about “Greensboro: A Requiem” is available at

<https://planetprinceton.com/2018/10/31/mccarter-theatre-announces-community-reading-of-greensboro-a-requiem/>

On Saturday evening, November 2, internationally acclaimed Los Angeles-based dance company, Contra-Tiempo, will perform at NC A&T State University, where they will present their newest work, “joyUS justUS.” The company’s founder and artistic director, Ana Maria Alvarez, graduated from Grimsley High School in Greensboro in 1994, and danced with the E. Gwynn Dancers at NC A&T. Contra-Tiempo was founded in Los Angeles in 2005 by Alvarez, and tours nationally and internationally.

The company’s website describes “joyUS justUS” as *“an evening length, participatory Urban Latin Dance Theater experience that explores joy as the ultimate expression of resistance. Whenever humans have survived immense hardship and injustice, prevailing with their humanity intact, the presence of joy or, the knowingness and celebration of our true beauty and power has always been at the root. ‘joyUS justUS’ reclaims the dominant, deficit-based narrative of people of color in this country as being underprivileged, voiceless, powerless, and victimized, and flips it on its head by embodying stories of joy collected from communities of color in South Los Angeles. The stories shared in this work are personal truths about the power of hope, faith, and family, the strength of the villages that have raised our children, and the wealth that lives in our collective histories of struggle and resistance.”*

Alvarez says, “I am so honored to be bringing this work to Greensboro. It’s a powerful tribute to the legacy of the five incredible people who were so tragically lost that day, as well as a recognition of the persistence and strength of the people who survived and have continued to struggle for justice and for the truth to be told. We hope this work can help create a deeper community dialogue about some of the hard truths we need to face as Americans around race and violence and injustice.” Additional information about Contra-Tiempo and “joyUS justUS” is available at contra-tiempo.org.

For a full schedule of events and background information, visit www.greensboromassacrelessonstoday.org. For other information, email info@greensboromassacrelessonstoday.org.

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