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Native Artists and Artists of Color Invited to Gather at Mixed Blood Theatre

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Mixed Blood Theatre warmly invites native artists, artists of color and allies from all artistic disciplines to gather at Mixed Blood Theatre in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood of Minneapolis on May 12, 2018 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm to participate in a day of dialogue, performance, demonstrations, and creative workshops called, "Living the Dream: Strategies for Undoing Racism Through the Arts."

This Bush Foundation sponsored community event was conceived as a day to commemorate the assassination of Dr. King, Jr. by recalling his dream of the "Beloved Community," and exploring ways to make this dream a reality through the arts.

The list of participating artists has not yet been finalized, however, nationally known writer/performer/educator, David Mura, will lead a panel discussion on the structural barriers that have, historically, prevented people of color and indigenous (POCI) artists and organizations from thriving, based on an essay he wrote for the Mizna Journal. Mizna, based in the Twin Cities, is devoted to promoting Arab American culture. Mizna's director and Journal editor, Lana Barkawi is slated to take part in the discussion along with Navajo playwright and filmmaker, Rhiana Yazzie.

The afternoon will include art-making workshops lead by multimedia artist Ifrah Mansour, spoken word artist, Sisco Omar, poets Sun Yung Shin and Su Hwang of the newly formed Poetry Asylum, and members of the Million Artist Movement, including gospel and soul singer Jayanthi Kyle, documentary filmmaker Courtney Cochran, and actor/educator Maria Asp, among others.

Featured afternoon speaker is Resmaa Menakem, a noted conflict and violence expert whose recently published book, "My Grandmother's Hands," is a groundbreaking examination of white-body supremacy in America from a trauma perspective. According to Menakem, racism wreaks damage not only on our emotional and psychic wellbeing, but also on our physical bodies and further, the bodies of racists themselves, are not free from injury. In his book he includes exercises based on neuroscience and somatics to help mitigate the body's deep memory of racist acts and attitudes on all human bodies. He will talk about and demonstrate some of these essential healing practices.

Lia Rivamonte, event organizer and a member of Mixed Blood's full-time staff, hopes artists in all stages of their careers will participate in what she anticipates will be a lively, thought-provoking day. "Our intent is that artists take this day as an opportunity to connect, share and garner support for their work, and enjoy an art-focused day together in a safe, non-threatening environment," said Rivamonte.

The creative workshops will be an opportunity to investigate a form of art outside of the artists' usual practice. Poetry, filmmaking, quilting, singing, dancing, spoken word, and more will be offered. "We want the artists to have fun and to explore new ways to make art guided by their peers," she said. Afterwards, artists will be encouraged to "show and tell." Activities will begin with an invocation by Pastor Danny Givens, Jr. with the Reverends Karen Hutt, and Arif Mamdani.

While native artists and artists of color are the focus of the day, white allies are welcome. In addition, Mixed Blood wishes to extend a special invitation to artists with disabilities, queer, genderqueer, and trans artists and writers of color.

Registration for the event includes lunch. Artists will also be asked to select workshops in order of preference. Registration is \$15 before April 27; \$25 after, and available online at mixedblood.com.

About Mixed Blood Theatre: Using theatre as a tool to illustrate and animate, Mixed Blood models pluralism in pursuit of interconnections, shared humanity, and engaged citizenry. Mixed Blood Theatre is located at 1501 S. 4th Street, Minneapolis, MN, 55454.

Visit www.mixedblood.com, email lia@mixedblood.com, or call 612-338-6131 for more information.

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