



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 7, 2019

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**Embodying All Sides of America's Abortion Debate,
Mixed Blood Produces Pre-Broadway Run of Lisa Loomer's
ROE
opening March 15th**

(*Minneapolis/St. Paul*) – Mixed Blood Theatre Company is the only regional theatre in the country that has been given permission to produce *ROE* before it goes to Broadway.

ROE

By Lisa Loomer, Directed by Mark Valdez
March 15 – March 31, 2019

ROE, a theatrical survey of the complicated and fiery underpinnings of *Roe v. Wade*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that established a woman's right to an abortion, precisely illustrates the fractured and fracturing history of one of the most polarizing social issues of the modern era.

Mixed Blood has, with rare exception, done contemporary plays. The fabled *Roe v Wade* decision was made in early 1973, yet this is very much a contemporary tale. In the script, Wade's lawyer asks, "History ain't over yet, is it?" As Justice Kennedy stepped down and his replacement joins the Bench, those words echo loudly 46 years later.

"I can't say I want to bridge the divide," says playwright Lisa Loomer. "I want to look at it, humanize it, understand it—and the first step is having people tell their story, and having the ability to listen to someone else's story."

The story is of Sarah Weddington and Norma McCorvey. Sarah Weddington was a 26-year-old lawyer when she argued *Roe v. Wade*. Norma McCorvey was a 22-year-old poor, hard-living lesbian bartender seeking to end her third pregnancy when she first agreed to be the plaintiff under the pseudonym "Jane Roe," decades before she renounced her involvement in the case and became an anti-abortion advocate. *ROE* is an historically sweeping rare play that takes this inflammatory American issue head-on. Lawyer's and plaintiff's subsequent journeys mirrored the American divide.

ROE was commissioned by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in 2012 as part of its American Revolutions Cycle. It was developed at the University of Texas and The Kennedy Center (as part of DC's Women's Voices Festival) as well as at OSF's Black Swan Lab before it played for 70

performances in Ashland and then had runs in Washington, DC (Arena Stage), Berkeley (Berkeley Rep), and Sarasota (Asolo Rep).

“Mixed Blood is the perfect home for Lisa Loomer's ROE,” says Bill Rauch, Artistic Director OSF. “It is a play that brings people together with multiple and conflicting viewpoints both onstage and in the audience, an ambitious and entertaining play with a big heart-- the exact type of work that this most vital theater company has always done throughout its existence.”

Laura Zabel plays attorney Sarah Weddington, and Tracey Maloney portrays Norma McCorvey. A veteran actress and improviser, Laura is well known as Executive Director of Springboard for the Arts, a community economic development organization that is run by and for artists. She has received the Visionary Leader award from the Minnesota Council of Non-Profits. Tracey Maloney, making her Mixed Blood debut, is a stalwart of the Twin Cities talent pool, anchoring productions at The Guthrie, Children's Theatre, Pillsbury House Theatre, Ten Thousand Things, The Jungle, and Park Square Theater.

“Lisa Loomer's style, form, aesthetic, structure, and substance is in the DNA of Mixed Blood,” says Artistic Director Jack Reuler. “Her ability to reveal humor and irony in subjects of great gravity and human consequence and then twist the knife to provoke honest tears, moral awakening, and a call to action is unparalleled. If I could pick one playwright to produce, it would be Lisa Loomer.”

Lisa Loomer is a playwright/screenwriter who has written for stage, film, and television. ROE is the fourth play Mixed Blood has produced penned by Lisa, preceded by *Maria!MariaMariaMaria*, *Living Out*, and *Distracted*. Her plays have been produced at The Roundabout, Second Stage, The Vineyard, INTAR, The Public, Mark Taper Forum, South Coast Rep, Seattle Rep, Denver Center, Cornerstone, Trinity Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, and Missouri Rep. Lisa wrote the screenplay for *Girl, Interrupted* and has written comedies, dramas, and pilots for HBO, CBS, Fox and Showtime. Her awards include the American Theater Critics Award, Kennedy Center Fund for New American Plays Award, Lurie Foundation Award, Edgerton Foundation New American Plays Award, Imagen Foundation Award, Jane Chambers Playwriting Award, and the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize.

Mixed Blood aspires to be the destination for people with disabilities. Patrons with disabilities are eligible for free advanced reservations and free transportation to and from the theatre. All performances are captioned in English with projected supertitles for patrons with hearing loss. For people with vision loss, audio description is also available for most performances. Lobby, auditorium, and restrooms are fully accessible.

Tickets can be obtained in three ways: 1) Through Radical Hospitality, admission is FREE on a first come/first served basis starting two hours before every show, 2) Advanced reservations are available online or by phone for \$35 per person, or 3) through a Mixed Blood Membership. **Visit www.mixedblood.com, call 612- 338-6131, or boxoffice@mixedblood.com for more information. All Performances in Mixed Blood's Alan Page Auditorium, 1501 S. 4th St., Minneapolis, MN 55454**

About Mixed Blood Theatre:

Mixed Blood Theatre has invited the global village into its audience and onto its stage for its unique brand of provocative, inclusive, and predictably unpredictable theater since 1976. Using theater to illustrate and animate, Mixed Blood models pluralism in pursuit of interconnections, shared humanity, and engaged citizenry.

ROE Performance Schedule

March 14th - 10:00am Preview Matinee
March 15th - 7:30pm Opening Night
March 16th - 4:00pm
March 16th - 7:30pm Access Performance
March 17th - 2:00pm
March 20 - 7:30pm Sensory Friendly Performance
March 21 - 10:00am Matinee
March 21 - 7:30pm
March 22 - 7:30pm
March 23 - 2:00pm DeafBlind Performance
March 23 - 7:30pm
March 24 - 2:00pm
March 27th - 10:00am Matinee
March 27th - 7:30pm
March 28th - 7:30pm
March 29 - 7:30pm
March 30th - 4:00pm
March 30th - 7:30pm
March 31st - 2:00pm Closing Performance