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### NEW FEDERAL THEATRE CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH WITH AN ICONIC HISTORICAL READING SERIES!

NEW YORK, January 30 -- On Saturdays from **February 13 to 27, 2021** New York's **New Federal Theatre** (NFT) will present "**New Federal Theatre Celebrates Black History Month,**" a retrospective readings series in which **three plays previously produced by NFT (all critical & public successes)** will be recreated by accomplished actors and directors. These plays illuminate burning issues of their time and are as relevant and fitting for today.

The readings will be free and accessible from NFT's website, <https://www.newfederaltheatre.com>. Donations will be gratefully **accepted to help pay artists and technical fees.**

**"When the Chickens Come Home to Roost" by Laurence Holder, directed by Ralph McCain**  
**Feb. 13 @ 7:00 PM (EST), streaming until Feb. 15 @ midnight.**

Featuring Allie Woods as Elijah Muhammad and Lawrence Winslow as Malcolm X.

The play centers on the relationship between Malcolm X and Elijah Muhammad – the beating heart of the Black Muslim movement. Its title is a reference to X's notorious comment in the wake of JFK's assassination that for white people, "the chickens are coming home to roost." It caused a rift with Muhammad that never really healed. New Federal Theatre's 1981 premiere production starred Kirk Kirksey as Elijah Muhammad and Denzel Washington as Malcolm X.

**"The Meeting" by Jeff Stetson, directed by Ajene Washington**

**Feb. 20 @ 7:00 PM; Feb. 21 @ 7:00 PM and Feb. 22 @ 7:00 PM (EST)**

Featuring: Joseph L. Edwards as Dr. Martin Luther King, Tyler Fauntleroy as the Guard, Beethovan Oden as Malcolm X.

"The Meeting," whose premiere was presented by NFT in 1987, is an imaginary encounter between Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X in 1965 in a hotel in Harlem. Differing in their philosophies but alike in their mutual respect, the two men debate their varying approaches to the same grave social problems. Both are prepared to die for their beliefs but neither is aware of how soon assassins' bullets await them. The play was televised on American Playhouse in 1989.

**"Widows" by Mfundu Vundla, director Clinton Turner Davis**

**Feb. 27 @ 7:00 PM (EST), streaming until March 1 @ midnight (EST)**

**Cast TBA**

"Widows" is about the struggle of three African women to overcome institutional racial segregation, economic and political discrimination in South Africa during apartheid and its effect on them, their children, husbands, and families.

### ABOUT NEW FEDERAL THEATRE

New Federal Theatre's Mission is to integrate artists of color and women into the mainstream of American theatre by training artists for the profession, and by presenting plays by writers of color and women to integrated, multicultural audiences - plays which evoke the truth through beautiful and artistic re-creations of

ourselves. To-date, the company has produced over 450 mainstage plays, an astonishing and influential record of achievement, sending multiple plays to Broadway and launching numerous minority and women playwrights and actors into prominent careers. Its alumni are an honor roll of artists of color from the 1970s through today. For more info, including an expanded list of the company's distinguished alumni, see: [http://www.jsnyc.com/season/about\\_NFT.html](http://www.jsnyc.com/season/about_NFT.html).

The troupe is now in the midst of its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season. In May, 2020 the Off Broadway Alliance named Woodie King, Jr., Founding Director of New Federal Theatre, a "Legend of Off Broadway," recognizing his sustained achievement in Off Broadway theater.

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