

## Jonathan Slaff & Associates

Press Representative - 55 Perry Street, #1M - New York, NY 10014  
Tel. (212) 924-0496 - js@jsnyc.com - www.jsnyc.com

### NEW FEDERAL THEATRE SETS "OCTOBERFEST," A RETROSPECTIVE VIRTUAL READING SERIES WITH HISTORIC PLAYS AND ACCOMPLISHED ACTORS.

NEW YORK, September 11 -- On Fridays from October 2 to 20, **New Federal Theatre** (NFT) will present "**Octoberfest**," a retrospective readings series in which five rarely-done yet historic plays, all previously produced by NFT, will be read by accomplished actors. These plays raise topics, issues and personal stories that are newly relevant in these times of pandemic and social inequality. The series is **dedicated to the late Chadwick Boseman**, whose acting career was launched at NFT, who served on NFT's Board of Directors and who was a lifelong supporter of NFT.

These readings are free and accessible from NFT's website, <https://www.newfederaltheatre.com>. Donations will be gratefully accepted.

#### SCHEDULE

*OCTOBER 2 AT 7:00 PM:*

**"Do Lord Remember Me"** by **Jim De Jongh**, directed by **Regge Life** (NFT production 1996-97)

This play dramatizes WPA recordings, collected in the 1930s, of remembrances by former slaves in Virginia. Black men and women in their eighties and nineties relate the experience of the "peculiar institution," recalling what happened to them nearly a lifetime ago, adopting different personalities and sharing the stories/histories of other slaves. Although they endured horrors, faith sustained them and instilled their desire for survival, always holding the promise that in the future they will be free: 'On my way to heaven, Lord remember me do Lord, do Lord, do Lord remember me.'

WITH: **Ebony JoAnn, Barbara Montgomery, Roscoe Orman, Kim Sullivan, Glynn Turman**

*OCTOBER 9 AT 7:00 PM*

**"Dr. Du Bois and Miss Ovington"** by **Clare Coss**, directed by **Gabrielle Kurlander** (NFT production 2014)

This two-character play captures a moment of crisis between a black man and a white woman, co-founders of the NAACP, friends and activist allies, at the time of increasing violence against the African-American community as World War I unfolds.

WITH: **Kathleen Chalfant and Peter Jay Fernandez**

*OCTOBER 16 AT 7:00 PM*

**"From the Mississippi Delta"** by **Endesha Ida Mae Holland**, directed by **Ed Smith** (NFT production 1987-88)

After being raped by a white employer at the age of 11, Endesha Ida Holland became a rebel, turning to prostitution and delinquency. But when she stumbled across the civil rights movement she found herself developing in to a leader-only to encounter the cruel retribution by white bigots. This play uses three actresses in 11 anecdotal scenes to relate the story of Holland's impoverished upbringing in segregated Greenwood, Miss. It is also a story of success against all odds as she tells of her struggle to earn a doctorate and become a playwright.

WITH: **Brenda Denmark, Elain Graham, Vernice Turner**

*OCTOBER 23 AT 7:00 PM*

**"Medal of Honor Rag"** by **Tom Cole**, directed by **Dean A. Irby** (NFT at Theater De Lys, 1976)

A play about survivor guilt set in an army hospital. D.J., a black Congressional Medal of Honor recipient, and his psychiatrist--both Vietnam vets--verbally spar until the doctor draws out the horror and disgust that has traumatized the young man. His barriers crumbling, D.J. turns on the psychiatrist and exposes the man behind the professional facade. Yet D.J. desperately hopes and the psychiatrist believes he can be helped.

WITH: **Royce Johnson, Micah Stock, Beethovan Oden**

*OCTOBER 30 AT 7:00 PM*

**"Stories of the Old Days"** by **Bill Harris**, directed by **La Tanya Richardson Jackson**, Associate Producer  
**Linda Herring** (NFT production 1986)

A former blues singer living in a decaying church in Detroit never ventures out into the world that rejected him. While playing checkers he and Ivy, one the last members of the congregation, move from animosity to friendship. Both have secrets from the old days: he conceals his struggle of faith and despair and she withholds a searing loss as they rescue each other from emotional numbness and terminal loneliness.

WITH: **Pauletta Washington, Michael Potts**

### **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. More info: <https://www.newfederaltheatre.com/about1>

In May, 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.

# # #