

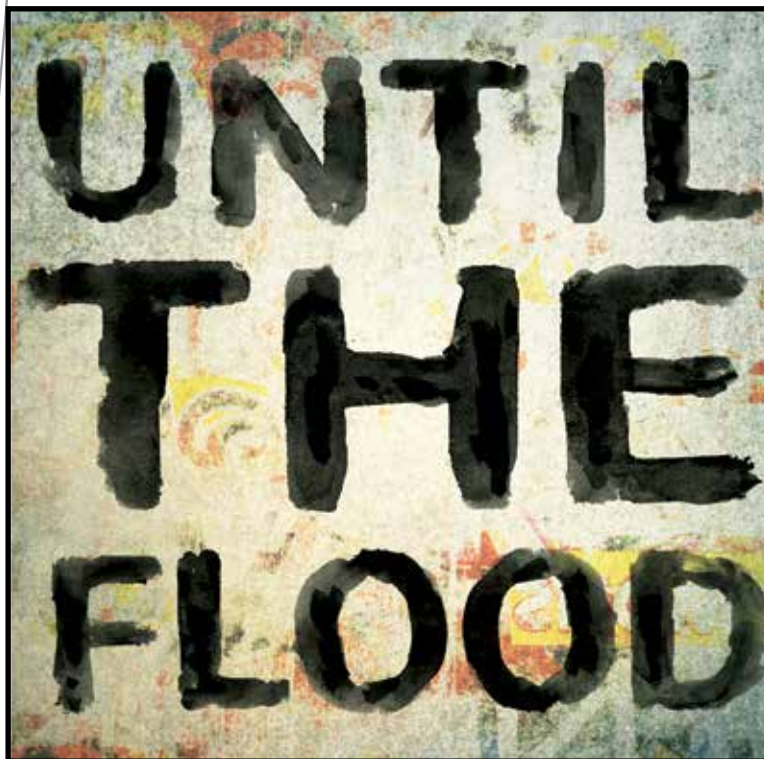
WU?@therep

UNTIL THE FLOOD

by Dael Orlandersmith
Directed by Neel Keller

CONTENTS

- 2 The 411
- 3 A/S/L & FYI
- 4 HTH & RBTL
- 5 F2F
- 6 B4U
- 8 IRL



Shaping a Vibrant Arts Community For All
KeepArtHappening.org



The State of the Arts



the 11

At The Rep, we know that life moves fast—okay, really fast. But we also know that some things are worth slowing

down for. We believe that live theatre is one of those pit stops worth making and are excited that you are going to stop by for a show. To help you get the most bang for your buck, we have put together WU? @ THE REP—an IM guide that will give you everything you need to know to get at the top of your theatergoing game—fast. You'll find character descriptions (A/S/L), a plot summary (FYI), biographical information (F2F), historical context (B4U), and other bits and pieces (HTH). Most importantly, we'll have some ideas about what this all means IRL, anyway.

CU@therep!



The Teacher's Lounge

In an effort to make our educational materials accessible to students and easy for educators to incorporate into the classroom, our study guide is written in a student-oriented format. We hope that you will circulate this guide among your students in the weeks preceding your visit to The Rep, encouraging them to browse it before and after class and as time allows, using it as a launch point for both pre- and post-performance discussions. You may also want to visit our website, www.repstl.org, for additional information including activity suggestions and behind-the-scenes information. Any materials, either from this guide or from our website may be reproduced for use in the classroom.

NEATO!

As always, we appreciate your making live theatre a part of your classroom experience and welcome your feedback and questions.

The desire to learn, insatiable when awakened, can sometimes lie dormant until touched by the right teacher or the right experience. We at The Rep are grateful to have the opportunity to play a role supporting you as you awaken the desire for learning in your students.

Your students live in a world of social unrest and changing expectations. Meeting the eight composite characters created by Pulitzer Prize finalist Dael Orlandersmith will help them explore the complexity of the situation around them and to define their own voice and viewpoint.

It would be a good idea to take a minute to give your students these quick theatre etiquette reminders:

- This show has no intermission; there will be time for bathroom breaks before and after the performance.
- The actors can hear the audience and appreciate the laughter, gasps and quiet attention to action. However, talking, moving around and eating is very distracting to others and can dampen the energy on stage.
- Pictures, phone calls and texting are not allowed at any time during the performance.

Live theatre won't allow your students to take a passive role—they must work with us to create the experience which takes the learning deeper. Our unique ability to fuse words and images onstage allows your students to explore new ideas as well as excites their imaginations. We will do our part so your students will be stirred to understandings and self-awareness while delving into new and familiar worlds. You are doing your part by using The Rep to extend your intellectual and aesthetic curriculum. Thank you!

Marsha Coplon
Director of Education

REP EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Director of Education	Marsha Coplon
Associate Director of Education	Sarah Brandt
Education Programs Manager	Suki Peters
Study Guide Writer	Alyssa Peterson

A/S/L

In *Until the Flood*, playwright and performer Dael Orlandersmith represents eight distinct characters. Though they are inspired by interviews held with real St. Louis citizens, these characters are the playwright's creations, not actual people.

LOUISA HEMPHILL: A retired teacher who grew up near Ferguson.

RUSTY HARDEN: A retired policeman who patrolled Ferguson in the 1960s and 70s.

HASSAN: A high school student who wants nothing more than to escape his current situation.

CONNIE: A high school teacher who lives and teaches in University City.

REUBEN LITTLE: An elderly barber who is not afraid to voice his opinions.

DOUGRAY SMITH: An electrician from Tower Grove who rents out two houses in Ferguson.

PAUL: A high school student who dreams of getting out of St. Louis and earning a college degree in California.

EDNA LEWIS: A Universalist minister who is married to another minister.

FX

After conducting a series of interviews addressing the social unrest here in St. Louis after the death of Michael Brown in 2014, Dael Orlandersmith pieced together *Until the Flood* from the voices of the diverse individuals she interviewed.

First we meet Louisa Hemphill, an African American woman who grew up near Ferguson and is now a retired school teacher. Louisa, who attended the City College of New York, shares the unpleasant reactions of both blacks and whites to her big city education. Louisa also reflects on the self-hate that racism can induce in individuals and how different individuals cope with tragedy and adversity.

Next Orlandersmith introduces us to Rusty Harden, a retired policeman who patrolled Ferguson and watched the neighborhood change from the 1960s to today. Rusty voices his support of other policemen, who he refers to as his "brothers," but ultimately admits that he was not there that day with Darren Wilson and Michael Brown and simply does not know the truth of the situation.

Following Rusty we meet Hassan, a high school student who likes to cruise with his friends and hates his mom's string of boyfriends. Hassan expresses his rage, fear, loneliness and desire for escape.

Up next comes Connie, a high school teacher from University City. Connie conveys her disappointment

and regret over losing a friend due to differing opinions on Michael Brown and Darren Wilson.

Reuben follows Connie. Reuben is a barber working in North City who firmly believes that appearances do not matter and fairness should rule. Reuben shares a story about two young women, one black and one white, who visit his barbershop to interview people about their feelings and perceptions about the Michael Brown case.

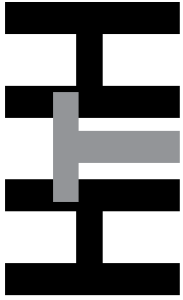
Next we meet Dougray Smith, a white man who grew up in poverty with alcoholic, abusive parents. Now a successful electrician and landowner, Dougray has a wife and children of his own. Dougray tells us how he overcame the adversity in his life, and we watch as he passes on a lesson to his own son.

Paul, another young man is up next. Seventeen-year-old Paul has big dreams of graduating high school and pursuing a degree in art history at Berkeley. While some of his friends looted and destroyed during the riots, Paul was out protesting, hoping to make a difference, not make trouble.

Finally, we meet Edna, a Universalist minister. Edna shares her philosophy of religion with us and tells her story of praying instead of protesting.

The play concludes with a reflection on how many boys, both white and black, are lost and misunderstood in this world.

SPOILER ALERT!



BIGOTRY: Intolerance of other people's beliefs; strongly disliking and refusing to accept members of a particular group

BLUE BLOOD: A term for a member of a socially important family

CODDLE: To treat in an overprotective, indulgent way

COLLAR: To seize, grasp or apprehend

CRACKER: Derogatory slang for caucasian people

GENTRIFICATION: A process of renovation and revival of deteriorated urban neighborhoods by means of influx of more affluent residents, which results in increased property values and the displacing of lower-income families and small businesses

HONKY: Derogatory slang for caucasian people

IN REF: Shorthand for in reference

INFANTILIZED: Treated as an infant

LIBERALISM: Favoring maximum individual liberty in political and social reform, sometimes to the opposition of more traditional views

PUNK: To trick someone

SHADE: Acting in a casual or disrespectful manner

SKUNK: Slang for cannabis

TOM: A derogatory term for a black person who will do whatever it takes to have good standing with white people

READ BETWEEN THE LINES

FRIENDSHIP

When faced with adversity, it is important to remember that we are not alone—we have family and friends to support us. Take Hassan for example: when things were rough at home, Hassan found comfort with his buddies. Can you remember a time when a friend helped cheer you up? But what happens when friends no longer see eye to eye, like what happened when Connie and her friend Margaret disagreed? Connie wanted to have an open, honest discussion with her friend, but all Margaret did was shout her own opinions and ignore Connie's. If you were Margaret in this situation, what could you have done instead of ending your friendship with Connie? Perhaps Margaret needed the reminder that you should respect other people's opinions even when they differ from your own. How can you show your friends that you respect their opinions although your beliefs may differ from theirs?

JUDGMENT

Louisa's father once told her that "racism causes self-hate" and Reuben states that "it's a given that you're judged on race." From the stories that the characters share in *Until the Flood*, it is clear that other people's perceptions can shape our beliefs about ourselves, and that our own judgments alter the way we view others. Characters in *Until the Flood* are judged for their skin color, their level of education, the place they live, and their religious beliefs. While judgment can affect our day to day lives, it can also cause long-term effects, or as Louisa calls it "the legacy of self-hate." Can you remember a time when somebody made you feel bad about yourself? Or maybe a time when you made someone else feel bad? How could you have improved the situation?

LEGACY

In the musical *Into the Woods*, Stephen Sondheim warns "Careful the things you say, children will listen; careful the things you do, children will see and learn." His words should be taken literally, especially when it comes to passing down violence and hatred. Take Dougray for example, he passes on his biases and his penchant for violence to his son. Louisa tells the story of the black maid who judges her and the maid's granddaughter who was filled with the same self-hatred and pain as her grandmother. As witnessed in *Until the Flood*, other people's actions and emotions have a huge affect on those around them, even the ability to alter one's path in life—running from abuse, striving to reach the heights others have, or perpetuating bias and discrimination. Can you think of something that your parents passed onto you? Or something you've passed onto a younger sibling or friend?



DAEL ORLANDERSMITH

Dael Orlandersmith is an award-winning playwright, solo-performance artist and actress who grew up in Harlem. In order to escape the violence and drugs of her neighborhood, Orlandersmith read, wrote, went to concerts and attended acting classes. Upon graduating from a parochial school, Orlandersmith attended Hunter College before returning to acting and writing.

In 1994, Orlandersmith wrote her first play, *Liar Liar*. She then honed her playwriting skills at Sundance Theatre Laboratory in Salt Lake City, Utah. Her studies paid off, as her next play, *Beauty's Daughter*, won an Obie Award. The play centers on a young woman from Harlem as she grows up and faces life's challenges. Orlandersmith's next two plays, *The Gimmick* (which she also starred in) and *Monster*, also focus on characters from Harlem.

After writing several plays about her hometown, in 2002 Orlandersmith wrote a play set in South

Carolina, the Pulitzer Prize-nominated *Yellowman* about a black couple, one light-skinned and one dark-skinned. Orlandersmith again took to the stage in *Yellowman*, acting as the female lead. She continued writing about different areas and subjects over the next ten years. In 2014, she wrote an autobiographical play, *Forever*, dealing with the adversity she has faced throughout her life.

Recently, following social unrest in our region, The Rep commissioned Orlandersmith to write *Until the Flood*. She traveled to St. Louis and interviewed a wide range of residents about the events in their city to create a story that tells "many truths."

Orlandersmith has dedicated her career to telling stories guided by the truth of her imagination. Her poignant and timely plays both exert impact and are impacted by the world around her.



DOCUMENTING REAL LIFE

As Shakespeare wrote in *Hamlet*, the purpose of theatre is to hold a mirror up to nature. Documentary theatre (like *Until the Flood*) takes Shakespeare's suggestion literally. This fact-based theatre uses archival materials such as official documents, visual images, videos, newspaper articles and interviews to address current issues and events.

In the past century, there have been three major waves of documentary theatre in the United States. The first wave occurred between 1935 and 1939 during the Federal Theatre Project. During this project, which worked to make theatre popular outside of New York City, theatre artists created a series called "Living Newspaper," which dramatized current events like rising unemployment and politics.

The second wave of documentary theatre occurred during the tumultuous 1960s. Social unrest caused by the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War inspired theatre artists to use the theatrical form to push the boundaries of traditional theatre while also challenging mainstream media narratives.

Beginning in the late 1980s, the third wave of documentary theatre was born with Anna Deavere Smith's solo performances centered around social issues and crafted from interviews conducted with people across all walks of life. Her one-woman shows *Fires in the Mirror* and *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* address the Crown Heights riot of 1991 and the Rodney King riots. The major trends in documentary theatre today include: collaborative development, fluidity of time and place, and individual actors playing multiple roles.

Dael Orlandersmith used documentary theatre techniques to create *Until the Flood*. She interviewed St. Louis locals to gain her facts about the social unrest felt here and around the nation. However, during the play you will not hear the exact words of specific individuals, but rather composite figures that Orlandersmith created. She says these characters "Come out of my head I'm not free to tell this any way I want, but I am free to use the truth of imagination."



The events that happened in Ferguson were not the first of their kind, and unfortunately have not been the last. Race riots, protests and demonstrations have affected this nation throughout its entire existence. In order to better understand the events in Ferguson in 2014, it may be helpful to add context through an examination of the history of race relations in the United States and a brief look at other riots and protests that have shaped our nation, particularly three incidents mentioned specifically in *Until the Flood*: the race riots in Chicago and Indiana in the 1960s and the shooting of Trayvon Martin in 2012.

18th Century: Slavery was an established practice in the colonies, even before the United States declared its independence in 1776.

1781: The Articles of Confederation, the first document establishing the first U.S. government, are adopted. There is no mention of slavery.

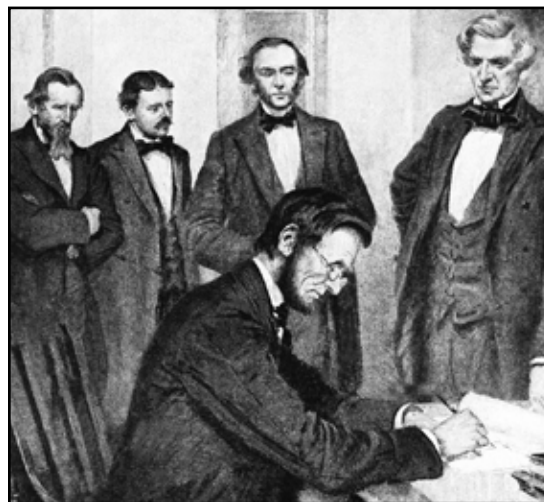
1788: The United States Constitution is ratified. Congress is banned from abolishing slavery until 1808 and free states are banned from establishing rules to protect runaway slaves. The three-fifths rule is also established, thereby each slave is only counted as three-fifths of a person in the population.

1820: The Missouri Compromise of 1820 permits slavery in Missouri, but prohibits slavery in parts of the Louisiana Purchase.

1857: The Supreme Court declares that African Americans are not citizens of the United States in the case *Dred Scott v. Sanford*.

1861: After several southern states secede, the Civil War begins.

1863: President Abraham Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing slaves in the Confederacy.



1865: The 13th Amendment passes, abolishing slavery.

1866: Under the Civil Rights Act of 1866, all people who live in the U.S. are guaranteed Equal Rights.

1870: African Americans are granted the right to vote with the 15th Amendment, which declares race or previous slavery cannot bar individuals from voting.

1875: Another Civil Rights Act is passed, guaranteeing equal access to public accommodations regardless of race.

1896: The Supreme Court rules that segregation is legal if "separate, but equal," in the case *Plessy v. Ferguson*.

1954: "Separate, but equal" is struck down when the Supreme Court ends public school segregation in the case *Brown v. Board of Education*.

1957: The Civil Rights Act of 1957 establishes the Civil Rights Commission, which provides equal protection to all people's right to vote.

March 1965: African Americans lead three marches from Selma, Alabama. The first march on March 7 results in Bloody Sunday, when a peaceful march is stopped by a police blockade at the Edmund Pettus

Bridge, where police attack the demonstrators with billy clubs, tear gas and bull whips. On March 9 Dr. Martin Luther King leads a group back to the bridge and prays. On March 21 through 25, demonstrators receive National Guard protection and march from Selma to Montgomery.

August 1965: The Voting Rights Act of 1965 enables more African Americans to vote with enforcement measures to protect voter rights.

April 4, 1968: Martin Luther King, Jr. is assassinated. His death sparks riots and demonstrations in over 100 cities around the country. One of the largest riots occurred on Chicago's West Side, where 162 buildings are burned to the ground, leaving 500 injured and nine dead.

April 11, 1968: Discrimination in housing based on race, religion, national origin and sex is outlawed with the Civil Rights Act of 1968.

July 1970: Riots occur in Michigan City, Indiana after a parking violation that results in three black men being subdued with mace and arrested. The two-day riots result in the destruction of several properties and nine injuries.

1988: The Civil Rights Restoration Act expands nondiscrimination laws to private groups who receive federal funds.

1992: After a high speed chase through Los Angeles, driver Rodney King is beaten by the police in March 1991. On April 29, 1992, a verdict of not guilty is reached in the case. This verdict sparks riots across the city, resulting in the deaths of 55 people.

2012: Fast forward several decades to February 2012. On February 26, 17-year-old Trayvon Martin is shot by a neighborhood watch captain, George Zimmerman. After calling 911 and reporting Martin as a suspicious person, Zimmerman is instructed to stay in his SUV and not approach Martin. However, minutes later Zimmerman shoots Martin under the claim of self-defense. On March 26, rallies in support of the Martin family are held in several cities around the country. On April 11, Zimmerman is charged with second-degree murder. After a trial in 2013, Zimmerman is found not guilty.

Since the deaths of Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown, many other men have died in altercations with police including Tamir Rice, Freddie Gray, Alton Sterling, Philando Castile, Terence Crutcher and Keith Lamont Scott. These deaths and other events have led to protests, both violent and nonviolent, across the country.



7



On August 9, 2014, Michael Brown, a recent high school graduate from Ferguson, was shot and killed by police officer Darren Wilson. Below is a timeline of the events leading up to and following the shooting.

11:54 AM: Michael Brown and a friend, Dorian Johnson, leave Ferguson Market and Liquor, where Michael Brown is shown stealing cigarillos on surveillance footage.

12:01 PM: Officer Darren Wilson arrives to find the two men walking down the middle of Canfield Drive. Through the open window of his police cruiser, Wilson tells the men to move to the sidewalk. Wilson also notices that Brown fits the description of the convenience store theft suspect.

12:02 PM: Officer Wilson calls dispatch about Brown and Johnson. He moves his car to block the two men and traffic.

Between 12:02 and 12:04, an altercation occurs between Officer Wilson and Brown. Officer Wilson fires two shots from inside his police cruiser. Brown then runs east down Canfield Drive pursued by Wilson. Brown stops and moves back towards Wilson. Officer Wilson fatally wounds Brown.

12:04 PM: Other officers arrive on Canfield Drive to find Michael Brown dead.

August 10, 2014: St. Louis County Police hold a press conference where they report that Brown was shot because he reached for an unnamed officer's gun. Demonstrators gather at a makeshift memorial near where Michael Brown was killed. Violence erupts that night with looting at businesses in Ferguson.

August 11, 2014: The Brown family holds their own press conference and demand justice for Michael. The FBI joins the investigation into Michael Brown's death. That night violence continues. Police respond with tear gas and rubber bullets.

August 12, 2014: President Obama addresses the shooting for the first time. Violence continues that night.

August 13, 2014: Protesters throw Molotov cocktails and police deploy armored vehicles as riots continue. Two reporters are also arrested that day.

August 14, 2014: The Missouri Highway Patrol takes control of law enforcement operations on the ground in Ferguson.

August 15, 2014: Ferguson Police Chief Thomas Jackson holds a press conference announcing Darren Wilson's name and releasing surveillance footage from Ferguson Market and Liquor.

August 16, 2014: Governor Nixon declares a state of emergency and imposes a curfew in Ferguson.

August 18, 2014: The National Guard is deployed to Ferguson as protests continue.

August 20, 2014: A grand jury convenes to determine whether or not Darren Wilson should be criminally charged in the death of Michael Brown. For the first time in ten days, no protests occur.

August 21, 2014: The National Guard withdraws from Ferguson.

August 25, 2014: A funeral is held for Michael Brown.

November 16, 2014: Protesters stage a "die in" to commemorate 100 days since Michael Brown's death.

November 17: Governor Nixon declares a state of emergency in anticipation of more unrest leading up to the grand jury decision.

November 25, 2014: The grand jury decides not to indict Darren Wilson. This announcement causes rioting across Ferguson. At least a dozen buildings and one vehicle are lit on fire. Tear gas and smoke are used by authorities to disperse rioters.

August 9, 2015: Demonstrators gather in Ferguson in honor of the one-year anniversary of Michael Brown's death.