MEDIA RELEASE



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**DALLAS CHILDREN’S THEATER OFFERS THE COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR DISCUSSING RACE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

(DALLAS, TX) – Dallas Children’s Theater (DCT) and partners have moved into the next phase of DCT’s Social Justice initiative. On Thursday March 11, young people from 15 community groups were brought together to watch DCT-produced short plays about race and to share their experiences and thoughts on how to eradicate the societal challenges associated with racism. Hosted by actress and advocate Denise Lee and Pastor Rev. Payton Parker of the First United Methodist Church of Lancaster, the virtual event served as a kickoff to DCT’s ongoing commitment to using its resources to spark important conversations. DCT will continue to offer the videos free as well as facilitators and other resources at no cost.

In THE WATER GUN SONG (recommended for ages 6 and up), a mother tries to find the words to explain to her child why a water gun isn’t simply a toy.

NOTHING RHYMES WITH JUNETEENTH (recommended for ages 9 and up) finds a parent and child trying to complete a rap for a school project that helps people understand the true meaning of the holiday celebration.

#MATTER (recommended for ages 14 and up) features two former high school friends debating matters of life and race.

All of the short plays remain available for viewing online at [dct.org/socialjustice/digital](https://dct.org/socialjustice/digital/).

Written by playwright, poet, director, educator and organizer Idris Goodwin as his personal contribution to the Black Lives Matter movement, these plays were provided to youth theaters with an eye toward offering thought-provoking ways to open up the dialogue about race among young people and those who love them. According to Goodwin, “Through the stories of others, we reflect on our own. Since racism lives at the intersection of misinformation, ego, and unchecked power, the arts must counteract by cultivating personal reflection, learning, conversation and compassion.”

Dallas Children’s Theater is excited to use the power of theater to move these needed conversations forward. Small and large group sessions can be offered via churches, schools, corporations and youth-oriented organizations.

Dallas Children’s Theater is interested in supporting anyone desiring to host an event themselves. Trained facilitators and talking prompts are available at no cost upon request by emailing family@dct.org.

This initiative is made possible with funding support from the Melinda and Jim Johnson Family Charitable Fund, The MR & Evelyn Hudson Foundation, North Texas Cares and Deborah and Craig Sutton.

Interested in hosting an event?

1. Email family@dct.org. Please provide:
	1. the group name,
	2. your contact info
	3. an approx. # of participants
	4. the target date for your event.
2. Receive all project information and links including starter questions.
3. Need a facilitator? Just ask.

We are excited to work with area partners on these community conversations around the important subject of race and young people.

**About Playwright Idris Goodwin**

Across two decades Idris Goodwin has forged a multi-faceted career as an award-winning playwright, Break Beat poet, director, educator, and organizer. Idris is the newly appointed Director of The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College. A catalyst for culture, Goodwin uses his full creative powers to galvanize people to the community square. He is a creative voice for change, impassioned by art for social good. His critically acclaimed plays like *And In This Corner: Cassius Clay, How We Got On*, and *Hype Man: A Break Beat Play* are widely produced across the country at professional theatres, college campuses, and non-traditional spaces alike. He’s been honored to receive developmental support from institutions like The Kennedy Center, The Eugene O’Neill Conference, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Arena Stage, and The Playwrights’ Center. In addition to the recently released poetry collection *Can I Kick It?*, he’s had several publications from Haymarket Books including *Inauguration* co-written with Nico Wilkinson, *Human Highlight: Ode To Dominique Wilkins* co-written with Kevin Coval, and the play *This Is Modern Art* also co-written with Kevin Coval. He’s appeared on HBO *Def Poetry*, *Sesame Street*, NPR, BBC Radio, and the Discovery Channel. Passionate about cultivating new audiences in the arts, Goodwin served two seasons as Producing Artistic Director at StageOne Family Theatre in Louisville, Kentucky. He actively serves on both the advisory boards of Theatre for Young Audiences USA and Children’s Theatre Foundation Association.

**About Dallas Children’s Theater**

Dallas Children’s Theater features professional actors performing for an annual audience of 250,000 young people and their families through mainstage productions, a national touring company, and an arts-in-education program. As the only major organization in Dallas focusing solely on youth and family theater, DCT builds bridges of understanding between generations and cultures, instilling an early appreciation of literature, art, and the performing arts in tomorrow’s artists and patrons.

**2020-21 Season Sponsors are:** Texas Instruments, City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture, The Shubert Foundation, TACA, The William Randolph Hearst Foundation, Anonymous Family, The Carlson Foundation, March Family Foundation, and Hoblitzelle Foundation. **General Sponsors Include:**  The Rosewood Corporation, Lisa K Simmons, The Theodore and Beulah Beasley Foundation, Inc., Carl B. & Florence E. King Foundation, and Vibeke Jarnum & Niels Anderskouv. **Additional Support is Provided By:**  Capital for Kids, TXU Energy, Frost Bank, Texas Commission on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, The Hersh Foundation, Stephen M. Seay Foundation, Orien Levy Woolf & Dr. Jack Woolf Charitable Trust, The Eugene McDermott Foundation, Perot Foundation, Legacy Texas Bank, Which Wich, Maintenance Inc., and Green Mountain Energy, DCT's official renewable energy partner. **Sensory-Friendly Sponsors Include:** The Melinda & Jim Johnson Family Charitable Fund, Fichtenbaum Charitable Trust, and The Sapphire Foundation. In loving memory of Kory Ballard. **Building Fund Supported By:** The Carlson Foundation, The March Family Foundation, Laurie Sands Harrison, The Rosewood Corporation, Anonymous Family, Elizabeth & Bart Showalter, Karen & Ken Travis, The Hersh Foundation, and Everett & Becky Spaeth. **National Touring Sponsor and Brighter Days Sustainability Campaign:** Neiman Marcus.

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