BJ Jones
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Timothy J. Evans
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

presents

BY
DOMINIQUE MORISSEAU

DIRECTED BY
RON OJ PARSON

Scenic Design Scott Davis, USA
Costume Design Samantha C. Jones, USA
Lighting Design Keith Parham, USA
Sound Design & Original Music Ray Nardelli, USA
Casting Director Lynn Baber, CSA
Production Stage Manager Rita Vreeland, AEA

OPENING NIGHT: FEBRUARY 2, 2018
at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in Skokie

Skeleton Crew was developed at the Lark Play Development Center, New York City and the 2014 Sundance Institute Theatre Lab at the Sundance Resort

Winner of the 2014 Sky Cooper New American Play Prize at Marin Theatre Company, Mill Valley, CA, Artistic Director Jasson Minadakis; Managing Director, Michael Barker

World Premiere Presented By
Atlantic Theater Company
New York City, 2016

Skeleton Crew is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.
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NORTHLIGHT THEATRE IS SUPPORTED IN PART BY:
CAST & PRODUCTION

CAST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Jacqueline Williams* .......................................................... Faye
Bernard Gilbert* ............................................................... Dez
AnJi White* ................................................................. Shanita
Kelvin Roston Jr.* ......................................................... Reggie

Understudies: RjW Mays (Faye), Jazelle Morriss (Shanita), and Terence Sims (Dez/Reggie)

Understudies will not substitute for listed players unless a specific announcement is made at the time of the performance.

*Member of the Actors Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers.

Skeleton Crew will be performed with one 15 minute intermission.

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION STAFF

Understudy Casting ................................. Paskal Rudnicke Casting
Assistant Director ................................. Henri Watkins
Properties Master ................................. Jesse Gaffney
Production Assistant ............................. Katy Garcia
Production Dramaturg ............................. Kristen Osborn
Assistant Dramaturg .............................. Sophie Hamm

SPECIAL THANKS

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Several years ago Northlight introduced playwright Dominique Morisseau to Chicago with *Detroit ’67*, the first installment of her Detroit trilogy. *Paradise Blue* was produced at Timeline Theatre in 2017, and *Skeleton Crew* completes the trio. Her triptych spans decades of a sociopolitical evolution in her home city. With *Skeleton Crew*, a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize, Morisseau looks at life on the assembly line—which feels like a conveyor belt to oblivion. Set in 2008, the diminishing workers are in a race to stay ahead of the collapsing economy, fighting for their financial lives. While much of the country has their eyes set on Wall Street, more concerned with their portfolios than their neighbors, the working majority don’t own stock and struggle to pay the rent. Dominique re-focuses our gaze on the majority, whose hourly wage becomes more precious by the day.

I’ve stood on a factory floor as a member of the United Mine Workers, making varnish. It was another time. I witnessed the not-so-subtle class separation between management and the workers. The divisive techniques were weapons that destroyed friendships and crippled the community. But the union was strong, and we went on strike for better wages and better conditions in a factory which handled chemicals that would later be banned by the government. Today, unions (of which I belong to four) are being systematically eroded—unions that helped bring dignity and equality, build the middle class, and provide a voice for their members.

At the height of the recession, there was a 28% unemployment rate in Detroit, and that is only the measurable statistic. It does not represent the even larger number that had given up hope. Dominique’s shrewd eye and deft dialogue evoke bitter truths as we see the last auto stamping plant in Detroit grind to a halt; a metaphor for the economy in a state that is still struggling to make a comeback.

BJ Jones, Artistic Director
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From the Playwright

This is the hardest play I’ve ever written to date. That’s my small admission. When you care about representing a people so deeply and the work that they do, it can be a little overwhelming. I’m not an auto-worker. But I’m from Detroit. Almost everyone from Detroit has a relative or several who have worked in the auto industry. I’ve talked to many friends, acquaintances, experts, UAW activists, and I’ve listened to the different work that they do, plants they’ve worked at, years they’ve put in, etc. Many of these jobs have now been automated. Robots in place of humans. This play isn’t about the Big Three. It is about the small factories that made it possible for Big Three to exist.

I want to write this note because there are things these people shared with me that won’t be in the play. My play is fiction, but their world is real. They said many things that I want to share about the integrity of their work; about how the union has helped to build our rights not just as workers, but as American citizens. Some of those things will be in the play, but many will not. I want to give them voice here. One of my consultants said, “the important thing about the UAW that people need to understand is that at its core it isn’t just about the rights of auto workers, but about civil rights in general.” That won’t be expressed in this play. This play is about the people behind the unions. The people behind the company. The individuals. But I recognize that there is more to the auto world than I could ever capture. And so I write this note to salute the story beyond this play. The workers on all sides of the line that are trying to negotiate their survival and the revolutionary union movements that pushed the soul of justice into the labor force.

This play is in dedication to you. And specifically to the following:

My Auntie Francine, my grandfather Pike, my grandfather-in-law Willie Felder, my cousin (Uncle) Michael, my cousin Patti, my Uncle Sandy, my consultants David Livingston, Jerry King and Aisha McClain, and to the beautiful working class warriors that keep our nation literally and figuratively driving forward.

Dominique Morisseau
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DETROIT -- First it was the outsourcing of components, and then vehicle assembly. Then gasoline prices shot up, slashing demand for trucks and sport-utility vehicles. Now, just when things seemed as if they could not get any worse here, the credit crunch and the subsequent stock market meltdown have dealt powerful new blows to the nation’s already reeling car industry.

Nowhere is the pain more evident than in Michigan. Falling sales of vehicles and heavy equipment have sent ripples through the manufacturing food chain. The state’s unemployment rate is now 9 percent, the highest in the nation. One in 16 home mortgages is “seriously delinquent,” trailing only Florida and Nevada.

“It’s devastating,” said Gov. Jennifer Granholm (D), who added that Michigan has lost nearly 400,000 manufacturing jobs since 2000. “Companies . . . that are already slammed by globalization are being slammed by the credit crunch.”

GM’s market capitalization now stands at $2.69 billion. The day after the 1929 stock market crash, the company was worth seven times as much in inflation-adjusted dollars, according to market historian Bryan Taylor of Global Financial Data.

The current crisis is worsening a long-term trend for the U.S. auto industry. Over the past eight years, Michigan has lost 47 percent of its vehicle manufacturing jobs and 27 percent of other manufacturing jobs, according to a government analysis. Nationally, the losses have been about 21 percent in each category.
Not since 1993 had automakers sold fewer than 1 million cars in a single month. Yet with fear ruling the marketplace and banks reluctant to lend money even to borrowers with strong credit, analysts believe next year’s numbers are likely to be as bad.

That means lower revenue for automakers and less money to spend on needed innovation. It means fewer jobs beyond the factory gate. According to David E. Cole, a researcher in Ann Arbor, Mich., every auto plant job generates nine jobs among suppliers and the surrounding community -- four times the multiplier of a typical Wall Street slot.

Ford senior economist Emily Kolinski Morris, who likened an economy without credit to an engine without oil, said: “The dire warnings are not terribly overstated.”

U.S. auto companies and suppliers cut 18,000 jobs last month, with many of the losses coming in firms that produced components for trucks and sport-utility vehicles, whose allure plummeted as gas prices reached $4 a gallon.

The ripples are real. … In Port Huron, one hour north of Detroit, Blue Water Automotive Systems, a maker of molded plastic parts for car interiors, filed for bankruptcy protection in February. After a $16 million deal to sell the company fell apart in July, Blue Water shuttered all but one of its plants, selling the remaining one to an Iowa company.

About 1,000 employees lost their jobs, including Darren Reaume, who was laid off Sept. 25.

“I feel lost,” said Reaume, 25, who is making some new financial calculations.

“How long until my car’s repo’d? That’s the first thing on my mind. I’ve got two kids and a wife. I’ve got to keep the electricity on and the heat on and pay my rent,” he said.

His conclusion: “We can make it to the end of the year, juggling.”

In Ypsilanti, 30 minutes west of Detroit, the steady downsizing of a Ford supplier knocked a $700,000 hole in the city’s $14 million annual budget, part of a difficult stretch for a town that had 130 employees in 2000 and has 107 now.

“There isn’t really any way we can make that up, so we have to cut,” Mayor Paul Schreiber (D) said, explaining that the city of 22,000 closed its park and recreation department and now relies on volunteers.

Eleanor Walker runs a nonprofit organization in Ypsilanti called Hope America, which teaches financial literacy and works to prevent foreclosures. In her office are 50 open files belonging to Washtenaw County residents now in default. She estimates that 75 percent had auto industry connections.

“They were making $60,000 or $100,000. Now these people are making, like, $30,000 or less without health benefits and they can’t make it,” Weaver said. “The situation has just paralyzed them.”

Charla Messner’s case illustrates the double-whammy of the summer’s gas price spike and the current credit squeeze. She is 11 weeks into an “indefinite layoff” at a Ford truck plant that made powerful V-8 engines, precisely the kind of gas-thirsty equipment that many drivers have stopped buying.
When the troubles hit and production dropped, Messner downsized, giving up her Ford F-150 pickup truck for a Ford Focus and trading down to a smaller home. “Just reducing my standard of living,” she said.

Pleading hard knocks at a time when they are burning cash to design and build cars they hope Americans will buy, the Big Three automakers persuaded Congress to approve a $25 billion loan to retool aging factories. A new labor contract, largely dictated by the economic downturn, will reduce the manufacturers’ costs when it takes effect next year.

U.S. auto executives, burned before by economic troubles and undone by their own shortsightedness, are banking on the next generation of fuel-efficient cars. A billboard on Interstate 94 east of the Detroit airport advertises the Chevy Volt, a hybrid designed around a lithium-ion battery.

“Fully charged 2010,” the billboard says.

Michigan can only hope so.

“I think there’s a light at the end of the tunnel,” Annette Sykora, chairman of the National Automobile Dealers Association, told a gathering this week at the Detroit Athletic Club. “I just don’t know how long the tunnel is.”

Join us for these upcoming events:

**INSIDE LOOK: Skeleton Crew**
Tuesday, February 6 2:00-3:00pm
Evanston Public Library
1703 Orrington Avenue

Explore the context of the play through a discussion and a Q&A session with panelists related to the production.

FREE and open to the public.
Info at northlight.org/events

**COMMUNITY PANEL**
Saturday, February 10 3:00-4:30pm
Curt’s Cafe
2922 Central St., Evanston

Discuss the relevance of the plays themes to Chicago’s North Shore and what we can do to make a difference. With panelists from Youth Job Center, National Able Network, and Family Promise Chicago North Shore.
BERNARD GILBERT
(Dez) is honored to be making his Northlight debut. Chicago credits include Rooftop in Our Lady of 121st Street (Eclipse Theatre), Young Emile in Man In The Ring (Court), and a tour of Letters Home (Griffin). Bernard has performed as Fish at City Theatre in Pittsburgh and The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis in productions of The Royale. He has also appeared as Eddie Greene on this season of Chicago P.D. Bernard is a proud MFA graduate of The Theatre School at DePaul and Morehouse College. You’ll soon be able to catch him in The Goodman Theatre’s production of Father Comes Home From The Wars by Suzi Lori Parks. His deepest theatre experience was portraying Herald Loomis in Joe Turner’s Come and Gone while at DePaul, but he wouldn’t be where he is without the support of his loving mother Nina, father James, and siblings Brandon and Brittany. Everything he has he owes to the grace of God. Stay woke and take your time.

ANJI WHITE (Shanita) makes her Northlight debut. Chicago credits include Monticello (Aurora Works Theatre); Great & Terrible Wizard of Oz (House); The Last Wife, Sunset Baby (Timeline); The Project(s), Rent (ATC); Fabulation, or the Re-education of Undine (Pulse Theatre); Forgotten Future Remount (Collaboraction Theatre); Mud, River, Stone (Eclipse Theatre); Ithaka and Soul Samarai (Infusion Theatre). TV & Film credits: Chicago P.D., Empire, Home for the Weekend (Pilot), and Hope Springs Eternal. Represented by Paonessa Talent, AnJi has received 3 BTAA nominations, 1 Jeff nomination and received the BTAA for Best Actress for Timeline’s Sunset Baby. She first gives much praise and honor to her redeemer God Almighty. She extends gratitude to her Mom & Dad, family, Dominique Morisseau, Ron and the cast & crew of Skeleton Crew.

JACQUELINE WILLIAMS (Faye) returns to Northlight after reprising her role of Mae in Academy Award winner Tarell McCraney’s Head of Passes at Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles opposite Phylicia Rashad. Northlight appearances include The Christians, Airline Highway, and Po’ Boy Tango. Broadway: Young Man From Atlanta. Off Broadway: From The Mississippi Delta (Oprah Winfrey co-produced), Talented Tenth, Mill Fire. Select Chicago credits include The Christians, Airline Highway, Head of Passes, Brother/Sister Plays (Steppenwolf); Man in the Ring, Gem of

KELVIN ROSTON JR
(Reggie) is pleased to return to Northlight where he was last seen as Sly in Dominique Morisseau’s Detroit ’67. Kelvin most recently played Four-eyed Moe in Court’s Five Guys Named Moe. Chicago credits: Congo Square, Court, Paramount, Marriott, Goodman, ITC, Eta, Writers, Black Ensemble, Timeline, Northlight, and Steppenwolf. Regional: The Black Rep, Fulton, New Theatre Restaurant, MSMT, and Baltimore Center Stage. International: Orb, Festival Hall. TV: Chicago Med, Chicago PD, KFC, and Instant Care. Film: Get a Job, Princess Cyd, and Breathing Room. He is a four time Jeff Award nominee, Jeff winner (Best Ensemble, East Texas Hotlinks, Writers), three time BTA Award winner, and two time Black Excellence Award winner. He wrote and performed the play Twisted Melodies for which he won the Light in the Darkness Public Education Award from NAMI. Kelvin is an Artistic Associate of Congo Square, a proud member of AEA, and represented by Paonessa Talent.

NERO ROSTON JR
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the Ocean, Fences, Caroline, or Change (Court); The House That Will Not Stand, A Wonder In My Soul (Victory Gardens); Pullman Porter Blues, stop.reset, Camino Real, Trinity River Plays and many more (Goodman). She has worked extensively regionally including tours with Johannesbug’s Market Theatre and Crowns. TV/Film: Turks, recurring on Chicago Fire, P.D., and Med; Empire, Prison Break, Heartlock, The Break Up, The Lake House. Her many awards/nominations include Jeff, Helen Hayes, BTAA, American Arts Council, Lunt-Fontanne (Shakespeare) Fellow and Excellence in the Arts. Greatest blessing: daughter Kara.

RON OJ PARSON (Director) hails from Buffalo, New York and is a graduate of the The University of Michigan’s professional theatre program. He is a resident artist at Court Theatre and former co-founder and artistic director of The Onyx Theatre Ensemble. Chicago credits include Court, Timeline (Company Member), Victory Gardens, Northlight, Teatro Vista (Associate Artist), Goodman, Black Ensemble, ETA, Congo Square, Chicago Dramatists, Urban Theatre Company, Steppenwolf, Chicago Theatre Company, City Lit, and Windy City Playhouse. Regional credits include Virginia Stage Company, Portland Stage, Studio Theatre, Studio Arena Theatre, Roundabout, Mechanic Theatre, Center Stage Baltimore, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Milwaukee Rep, St. Louis Black Rep, Pittsburgh Public Theatre, Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre, Geva Theatre, Signature Theatre (New York), Alliance Theatre, South Coast Rep, Kansas City Rep, and Pasadena Playhouse. Ron has also directed at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival. Recent directing credits include Apt. 3A, East Texas Hot Links, Paradise Blue, Blues For An Alabama Sky, 5 Guys Named Moe, and Fences. Ron is a proud member of SAG-AFTRA, AEA, and SDC. www.ronojparson.com

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DOMINIQUE MORISSEAU (Playwright) is a Writer/Actress whose plays include: Pipeline (Lincoln Center Theatre), Skeleton Crew (Atlantic Theatre Co.), Paradise Blue (Signature Theatre), Detroit ’67 (Public Theater, Classical Theatre of Harlem), Sunset Baby (LAByrinth Theatre). She is also a Co-Producer on the Showtime show Shameless. She’s been awarded the Spirit of Detroit Award, Weissberger Award, PoNY Fellowship, Sky Cooper Award, Edward M. Kennedy Prize for Drama, Steinberg Playwright Award, Audelco Award and an OBIE.

SCOTT DAVIS (Scenic Design) Off-Broadway credits: Ride the Cyclone (MCC), Othello: The Remix (The Westside Theater). International credits: Shakespeare’s Globe, Unicorn Theater (London) The Market Theater (South Africa), The Neuss (Germany), Gdansk Shakespeare Theater (Poland), The Cultch (Vancouver), DUCTAC Theater (Dubai), Brice Mason Center (New Zealand), and The Edinburgh Festival (Scotland). Regional credits: Chicago Shakespeare, Steppenwolf, Court, Writers, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Asolo Repertory Theater, Signature Theater, Walnut Street Theater, Children’s Theater Company, Utah Shakespeare, Getty Villa Outdoor Theater, Delaware Theatre Company, Paramount, Victory Gardens, Drury Lane, Northlight, American Theater Company, Marriott, Griffin Theater, Windy City Playhouse, Steep Theater, Clarke Smith Performing Arts Center, Dallas Theatre Center, and Mercury Theater. Mr. Davis is a co-founder of the Chicago based design firm Aether and Nyx and serves as adjunct faculty at Columbia College having received his MFA from Northwestern University. www.scottadamdavis.com

SAMANTHA C JONES (Costume Design) is thrilled to make her Northlight debut with this timely production. A Chicago based designer, her work has been seen at Court, Lookingglass, Steppenwolf, Chicago Children’s Theatre, TimeLine, American Blues Theatre, Victory Gardens, Writers, Jackalope Theatre, Next, Congo Square Theatre and others. Regionally, she has worked with Triad Stage (Greensboro, NC), Arkansas Shakespeare Festival, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Peninsula Players (Door County, WI), and more. Recently, her work was seen in Court’s production of The Belle of Amherst and can be seen currently in TimeLine’s Boy. Upcoming productions include Victory Garden’s Breach and Court’s Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner.

KEITH PARHAM (Lighting Design) Northlight Theatre: Bad Dates, Gee’s Bend, Po Boy Tango, Awake and Sing! Broadway: Therese Raquin (Roundabout Theatre Company). Off-Broadway: Man from Nebraska (2econd Stage Theatre); The Purple Lights of Joppa Illinois, Between Riverside and Crazy (Atlantic Theater Company); The Model Apartment (Primary Stages); Tribes, Mistakes Were Made, and Red Light Winter (Barrow Street Theatre); Stop the Virgins (Karen O at St. Ann’s Warehouse/Sydney Opera House); Ivanov, Three Sisters (CSC); A Minister’s Wife (Lincoln Center Theatre); Adding Machine A Musical (Minetta Lane). International: Homebody/Kabul (National Theatre of Belgrade, Serbia). Awards: Obie, Lortel.

RAY NARDELLI (Sound Design) Previous Northlight credits include Shining Lives: A Musical, Gee’s Bend, At Wit’s End, The Last Five Years. Off Broadway credits include Lookingglass Alice at The New Victory Theatre. Regional theatres include Goodman, Steppenwolf, McCarter, Long Wharf, Milwaukee Rep, Court, Hartford Stage, Congo Square, The Alley, American Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare, Drury Lane, Lookingglass, Victory Gardens, Meadow Brooke, Northwestern, Notre Dame Summer Shakespeare, Shakespeare On The Green, Oak Park Festival, American Girl Theatre (New York, Chicago), Skylight Opera and Wright State University Theatre. He has recorded, mixed and produced cast albums for eight musicals and over 400 film, TV, DVD and computer
game credits worldwide. He has been nominated nine times for a Jeff Award and won four times. His memberships include USA #829, ASCAP and IATSE #2.

RITA VREELAND (Production Stage Manager) is proud to continue her 11th season at Northlight, where she has been fortunate to be the stage manager for 28 productions as well as two trips to Galway. Recent credits elsewhere in the Chicagoland area include productions at Theatre at the Center (Munster, IN), Victory Gardens, Route 66 Theatre Company, Goodman, and the annual Christmas Schooner at the Mercury Theater. She is the proud wife of actor Tom Hickey and mom to five-year-old Charlie, and has been a member of Actors’ Equity for over 15 years. Thank you for supporting live theatre!

BJ JONES (Artistic Director) is in his 20th season as Artistic Director of Northlight where he commissioned and directed the world premieres of Faceless, Charm, White Guy on the Bus, Stella & Lou, The Outgoing Tide (Jeff Nomination – Best Director), Better Late, and Rounding Third. Notably he has directed productions of Outside Mullingar, Grey Gardens, The Price (Jeff Nomination - Best Director), A Skull in Connemara, The Cripple of Inishmaan, and The Lieutenant of Inishmore. As a producer he has guided the world premieres of Shining Lives, The Last Five Years, The Gamester, and Studs Terkel’s ‘The Good War’. From Second City to Shakespeare, BJ has directed Pitmen Painters (Jeff Nomination – Best Director, TimeLine), A Number (Next), 100 Saints You Should Know (Steppenwolf), and The Dresser (Body Politic). Regional: Glengarry Glen Ross (Suzie Bass Nominee – Best Director, Atlanta’s Alliance Theatre), Enchanted April (Asolo Theatre), and productions at Cherry Lane Theatre NY, Galway Arts Festival, Baltimore Center Stage, and Utah Shakespeare Festival. As a performer, Mr. Jones is a two-time Joseph Jefferson Award winner and has appeared at Northlight, Goodman, Steppenwolf, Court, and other theatres throughout Chicago. Film/TV credits
include *The Fugitive*, *Body Double*, *Law and Order: Criminal Intent*, *Early Edition*, *Cupid*, and *Turks*, among others.

**TIMOTHY J. EVANS** (*Executive Director*) leads Northlight Theatre’s overall strategic, management and long-range initiatives. Prior to his arrival at Northlight, Tim spent over 20 years at Steppenwolf Theatre Company in management and producing positions. He created, curated and produced Steppenwolf’s acclaimed TRAFFIC Series including a partnership with Chicago Public Radio for subsequent broadcasts. Tim founded Steppenwolf Films, of which he is still a partner with Gary Sinise, Terry Kinney and Jeff Perry, to develop film and television projects. He has served on the Board of Trustees of the League of Chicago Theatres and on the theater selection panel for the Princess Grace Foundation Awards. He also serves on the USA selection committee for The Eisenhower Fellows, Philadelphia, PA. Previously, Tim served on the board of the Independent Film Project (IFP) and was a charter member of the Governor’s Task Force for Media Development.
BJ Jones  
Artistic Director

Timothy J. Evans  
Executive Director

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Jazmin Corona  
Charlotte Drover  
Matt Farabee  
Jewel Hale  
Jasmine Henri Jordan  
Kate Leslie  
Jenn Oswald  
Tuesdai B. Perry  
Will Quam  
Wilfredo Ramos Jr  
Christopher Salveter  
Vanessa Strahan  
Alejandro Tey  
Emily Wills

PRODUCTION  
Production Manager  
Scott Miller

Technical Director  
Daryl Pauley

Master Electrician/  
Light Board Operator  
Cory Drewry

Audio Visual Engineer/  
Sound Board Operator  
Jennifer Udoni-Sharp

Costume Supervisor/Wardrobe  
Robin Feltman

Floor Manager  
Victoria Fox

Scenic Charge  
Christine R.X. Bolles

Scenic Artist  
Eileen Rozycki

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In 2018, BJ Jones celebrates his 20th year as Artistic Director and Tim Evans celebrates his 10th as Executive Director. The Leadership Fund has been created to commemorate BJ and Tim’s service to Northlight. This fund will endow the artistic directorship, thus supporting work with emerging playwrights, dynamic and diverse artists, and all aspects of the creative process that ultimately result in the art on our stage.

Northlight has thrived under the direction of BJ and Tim and we will celebrate their combined achievements on April 12, 2018 at the Evanston Art Center. For more information or to attend, contact Sarah Mitchell: smitchell@northlight.org, 847.324.1616. To donate, visit northlight.org/leadershipfund.
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