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Lifeline Theatre Resumes Halted 2020 Production of *Middle Passage*, Reopens April 25, 2022

Performances with Open Captioning on May 7 and May 27
Performance with Touch Tour and Audio Description on May 22

CHICAGO – **Lifeline Theatre** presents *Middle Passage* directed by Lifeline Artistic Director **Ilesa Duncan** April 25 – June 5 at Lifeline Theatre, 6912 N. Glenwood Ave. *Middle Passage*, co-adapted by **Duncan** and **David Barr III**, resumes its interrupted 2020 production based on **Dr. Charles Johnson's** epic tale. The play shares a tale of personal growth within a dark phase of American history. The press opening for *Middle Passage* is Sunday, Apr. 24 at 4 p.m. Opening night is Monday, Apr. 25 at 7:30 p.m. (Previews are Fridays, Apr. 15 and 22 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturdays, Apr. 16 and 23 at 8 p.m.; and Sunday, Apr. 17 at 4 p.m.). Regular performance times (April 28 – June 5) are Thursdays and Fridays at 7:30 p.m., Saturdays at 4 and 8 p.m., and Sundays at 4 p.m. Ticket prices are \$45 for regular single tickets, \$20 for active and retired military personnel (with ID), \$35 for seniors, \$20 for students (with ID), \$20 for rush tickets (available half hour before show time, subject to availability), and \$25 for previews. Group rate for 8 or more is available upon request. Tickets may be purchased at the Lifeline Theatre Box Office, 773.761.4477, or by visiting www.lifelinetheatre.com. The production runs approximately 2 hours with an intermission. The novel will be on sale in the lobby.

Accessible Performances: The Saturday, May 7, 4 p.m. performance and the Friday, May 27, 7:30 p.m. performances will feature open captioning for patrons who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. The Sunday, May 22, 4 p.m. performance will feature a pre-show touch tour of the set at 2:30 p.m. and live audio description for patrons who are blind or have low vision. For more information about Lifeline's accessibility services, please contact our Accessibility Coordinator Erika Rivard at 773.761.4477 x703 or at access@lifelinetheatre.com.

In *Middle Passage*, Rutherford Calhoun, a newly freed Illinois slave eking out a living in 1830 New Orleans, stows away aboard *The Republic*, an outbound rigger, to evade debtors enforcing marriage. But his clever escape backfires as the clipper turns out to be a slave ship bound for Africa. Calhoun must choose between a fanatical captain, a mutinous crew, and the Africans seeking escape. Building on a tradition of African American storytelling, this tale challenges perceptions of American identity using a Black aesthetic. We are at a critical historical moment in which issues such as racism, classism, poverty, and the meaning of freedom impact us all.

The complete cast and production team for *Middle Passage* includes:

CAST: Lifeline ensemble member **Patrick Blashill** (Captain Falcon/Ensemble) & **Christopher Vizurraga** (Peter Cringle/Ensemble); with guest artists **Shelby Lynn Bias** (Isadora Bailey/Ensemble), **Ajax Dontavius** (Rutherford Calhoun), **Linsey Falls** (Papa Zerinque/Fetcher/Ensemble), **Benjamin Jenkins** (Santos/Ensemble), **Monty Kane** (Jackson/Ngonyama/Ensemble), **Robert Koon** (Josiah Squibb/Ensemble), **MarieAnge Louis-Jean** (Baleka/Ensemble), **Kellen Robinson** (Tom/Ensemble), & **Gerrit Wilford** (McGaffin/Ensemble); with understudies **Andrew Bosworth**, **Bryan Carter**, **Sam Fain**, & **Mary Heyl**.

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Lifeline Theatre, 6912 N. Glenwood Ave. Chicago, IL 60626
773-761-4477, www.lifelinetheatre.com

PRODUCTION TEAM: Lifeline ensemble members **Alan Donahue** (Scenic & Properties Designer), **Ilesa Duncan** (Director/Co-adaptor), **Elise Kauzlaric** (Dialect Coach), **Maren Robinson** (Dramaturg); with guest artists **Amelia Abla** (Production Manager), **Noah Abrams** (Master Electrician), **Kyle Bajor** (Co-Lighting Designer), **David Barr III** (Co-adaptor), **Barry Bennett** (Sound Designer), **Connor Blackwood** (Assoc. Sound Designer), **Alex Gendal** (Projections Designer), **Galen Hughes** (Asst. Stage Manager), **Harrison Ornelas** (Technical Director), **R&D Choreography** (Violence Designers), **Nicole Clark Springer** (Choreographer/Movement Designer), **Mattie Switzer** (Stage Manager), **Scott Tobin** (Co-Lighting Designer), **Shawn Wallace** (Composer/Music Director), & **Anna Wooden** (Costume Designer).

Lifeline Theatre presents *Middle Passage* running April 15 – June 5 at Lifeline Theatre, 6912 N. Glenwood Ave. (free parking and shuttle). Press opening for *Middle Passage* is Sunday, Apr. 24 at 4 p.m. Opening night is Monday, Apr. 25 at 7:30 p.m. (Previews are Fridays, Apr. 15 and 22 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturdays, Apr. 16 and 23 at 8 p.m.; and Sunday, Apr. 17 at 4 p.m.). Regular performance times (April 28 – June 5) are Thursdays and Fridays at 7:30 p.m., Saturdays at 4 and 8 p.m., and Sundays at 4 p.m. Ticket prices are \$45 for regular single tickets, \$20 for active and retired military personnel (with ID), \$35 for seniors, \$20 for students (with ID), \$20 for rush tickets (available half hour before show time, subject to availability), and \$25 for previews. Group rate for 8 or more is available upon request. Tickets may be purchased at the Lifeline Theatre Box Office, 773.761.4477, or by visiting www.lifelinetheatre.com.

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Now in its 39th season, Lifeline Theatre continues to explore, interpret, and reimagine books and other literary works to create stories that move us beyond the margins of our own lives. Lifeline Theatre – Big Stories, Up Close.

Lifeline Theatre's programs are partially supported by The Bayless Family Foundation; Carol Oppenheim + Jerome Lamet Charitable Fund; Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation; a CityArts Grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events; Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation; FGMK LLC; Flex Print, Inc.; Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; Illinois Arts Council Agency; MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince; The Polk Bros. Foundation; Rogers Park Social; S&C Electric Company Fund; The Shubert Foundation; and the annual support of businesses and individuals.