



INVISIBLE THEATRE PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GLORIA: A LIFE by Tony Nominated Emily Mann

HISTORY. HER STORY. OUR STORY.

Directed by Susan Claassen

February 17 – 28, 2021

PLEASE NOTE PERFORMANCE TIME CHANGE:

Evening performances at 7:00 pm

Matinees at 2:00 pm

Invisible Theatre

1400 N. First Ave, Tucson, AZ 85719

(January 27, 2021, Tucson, AZ); The Invisible Theatre presents the southwest premiere of **GLORIA: A LIFE** featuring Cynthia Jeffery as Gloria Steinem with an all-star ensemble: Gianbari “Debora” Deebom, Alida Holguín Gunn, Amalia Clarice Mora, Gretchen Wirges and To-Ree-Neer Wolf. This play brings us a richly detailed tapestry about one of the most remarkable women of our time. Five decades after Gloria Steinem began raising her voice for equality and championing those of others, her vision is as urgent as ever. Gloria’s life’s work and philosophy on the necessity of conversation as a catalyst for change offer us all a path forward in a way that only live theater can. This inspiring and powerful event is more than a play — *it’s a celebration of human connection.*

This play was written by Tony Award-nominee Emily Mann and premiered in 2018. It originally took us through the 2017 Women’s March. IT contacted Emily and she is collaborating with us to reflect the current times. This will be the first production of **GLORIA: A LIFE** since the glass ceiling was broken and a woman was elected Vice President.

Emily wrote this about the 2018 production; “We’re living through a very frightening time. And in times of what seems to be chaos we need each other more than ever. When we all come together, we realize we’re not crazy; the system is crazy and we’re not alone. As Gloria says, the people who want justice and equality for all are the majority. So there’s a sense of community that gets forged that helps people go on. And so many of the women of my generation would not have the lives we live today if it hadn’t been for her.”

**Made possible in part through the
generous support of Sandy Maxfield**

GLORIA: A LIFE by Emily Mann will play from February 17 – 28, 2021. The Invisible Theatre is located at 1400 N. First Avenue (at Drachman), Tucson, AZ 85719.

The single show ticket price is \$40.

We have instituted “Boutique Seating” and anticipate 22 fabulous people nightly. Reservations are required - all seats are reserved. There will be no sales at the Box Office. All audience members must wear masks for the duration of their time inside the theatre. All social distancing guidelines issued by the CDC and City of Tucson will be followed.

The running time is 95 minutes with no intermission.

GLORIA: A LIFE is appropriate for mature audiences (13 and up).

THE INVISIBLE THEATRE

The Invisible Theatre (IT) of Tucson, a 501(c)(3) organization, is dedicated to producing quality theatre and arts education experiences for all facets of the community in an intimate setting that showcases local professional talent and guest artists. IT takes its name from the invisible energy that flows between a performer and audience, creating the magic of theatre. Started in 1971 as an arena for local playwrights, the theatre has expanded its programs to include adaptations of classics and recent Off- Broadway plays and musicals, while continuing to encourage new playwrights through both full productions and staged readings.

Under the leadership of Managing Artistic Director Susan Claassen, Associate Artistic Director James Blair, and PR Director Cathy Johnson, IT is strongly committed to community service and outreach programs. The company's current season includes a six play Main Stage season, many special events, a world class cabaret series, organizational collaborations, educational tours, seminars that encourage community dialogue and Project Pastime – an educational theatre program for mentally challenged youth.

The Invisible Theatre, the recipient of the first Arizona Theatre Association Award for Best Producing Theatre Company, is a member of the Theatre Communications Group and has long enjoyed both local and national recognition for its strong leadership role in the arts community. Productions take place in an intimate 80-seat converted laundry building. IT celebrates its 50th season with an even greater commitment to professionalism, artistic excellence, accessibility, freedom of expression, diverse programming and creative challenge – thus making the Invisible Theatre a very visible force in Tucson's cultural community.

**“I’m a realist, but I’m also a dreamer.
And I am not just a dreamer, I’m a hopeaholic.”
-Gloria Steinem**

ABOUT THE PEOPLE

Cynthia Jeffery (*Gloria*) is very excited to be reunited with her IT family! She currently resides in Hilo, Hawaii but splits her time between Tucson and the islands. A graduate of ASU, Cynthia's experience has included owning and operating Wide-Eyed Theatre, an after school program for K-12, as well as co-producing videos on teen crime prevention with her husband, Tobin, and the Maui County Prosecutor's Office. She earned 4 Tiki Awards for Best Actress as Blanche in *A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE*, Lady Macbeth in *MACBETH*, Meg in *CRIMES OF THE HEART*, and Prudence in *BEYOND THERAPY*. She won LTW's Best Performance recognition as Amanda in *THE GLASS MENAGERIE* and Carmen Awards as Regina in *THE LITTLE FOXES* and Woman #1 in *THE BIG MEAL*. She received Mac nominations for such favorites as Big Mama in *CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF*, Hannah in IT's *THE BUSY WORLD IS HUSHED*, and Elizabeth in *RICHARD III*. Cynthia's film credits include such favorites as *The Lost River*, *The Greening of Eritrea*, *Spin*, and Animal Planet's *I Shouldn't be Alive*.

Gianbari "Debora" Deebom (*Ensemble*) has been involved in music, theater, and stage-management for over 10 years as an aspiring entertainer. A recent grad from Pima Community College, some of her credits include *SINGIN' IN THE RAIN* (Miss Dinsmore), *BASKERVILLE: A SHERLOCK HOLMES MYSTERY* (Mr. and Miss Stapleton), *MAMMA MIA!* (Rosie), *TARTUFFE* (Monsieur Loyal), and *THE MAGIC RAINFOREST: AN AMAZON JOURNEY* (Wakote and Turtle). She has worked professionally on *THE LITTLE FOXES* (Addie) at Winding Road Theater, *MOBY DICK* (Dagoo) at The Rouge, *VALERIE: A COSPLAY MONOLOGUE* (Valerie) with Something Something Theater, *ARISTOPHANES V. EURIPIDES: DAWN OF POETIC JUSTICE* (Myrrhine) with Connections Theatre, and recently *SWEENEY TODD* (Beggar Woman) with Arts Express.

Alida Holguín Gunn (*Ensemble*) recently directed *THE HALL OF FINAL RUIN* with Something Something Theatre and appeared in the TCG recognized, *THE MERMAID HOUR* with Borderlands Theater. She was Teatro Milagro's Associate Artistic Director of Touring and Education and Borderlands Theater's Education and Community Outreach Program's Director for over 7 seasons – conducting workshops/directing/devising and touring with her *Coyote y Culebra Youth Project*. Some of her Teatro Milagro credits include: director/dramaturge, *SUEÑOS DE FUTBOL*, *EL TESORO*, *EL NIÑO DIEGO*, and *LAS AVENTURAS DE DON QUIXOTE*. Other acting credits include: Borderland's *GROUNDLED* (won best show MAC Award, 2013); ATC's, *NATIVE GARDENS*; IT's *MIRACLE ON SOUTH DIVISION STREET*; WRE's *AUGUST OSAGE COUNTY*; Rouge Theaters' *IMMORTAL LONGINGS*; Beowulf Alley's, *FICTION* (nominated MAC award, best actress 06); Camilla's Theater (NY), *KILLER IN LOVE*; and her own one-woman show *VEIN*, NY.

Amalia Clarice Mora (*Ensemble*) is delighted to be making her IT debut. Amalia is a performing artist as well as music and dance scholar from Los Angeles. Prior to receiving her PhD in ethnomusicology from UCLA in 2016, she performed primarily as a vocalist in productions such as *FALSTAFF*, *CENDRILLON*, and *DIDO AND AENEAS* as well as in recitals in Spain, India, and the United States. Her Tucson productions include Carmelita in *THE HALL OF FINAL RUIN* and Eulalia in *A POISON SQUAD OF WHISPERING WOMEN*. Amalia's writing on the intersection of performance, race, and gender has appeared in both academic and literary publications, and she is excited that she can explore this relationship as an actor in *GLORIA: A LIFE*.

Gretchen Wirges (*Ensemble*) is thrilled to be making her IT debut in *Gloria: A Life!* Gretchen is an actor, director, and playwright and has been fortunate to grace the stages of many of the theatre companies in Tucson. Her most notable performances as an actor include *THE LITTLE PRINCE*, *EURDYDICE*, and *IT IS MAGIC*. As a director, *HERSHEL AND THE HANUKKAH GOBLINS*, *KITCHEN*, *SPACESHIP*, *CHINESE RESTAURANT* and *REASONS: THE HOUSE BURNED DOWN*. As a playwright: *MONA LISA ON THE LOOSE*, *DIRTY LAUNDRY*, *AT THE END OF THE DAY*, and *WAITING FOR DOGGO*. She is also an accomplished improviser. Gretchen has taught improv, travelled nationally to perform and coached/directed numerous troupes. As a proud feminist, Gretchen dedicates this performance to those women who have inspired her to keep on fighting.
“*I am deliberate and afraid of nothing*” – Audre Lorde.

To-Ree-Nee Wolf (*Ensemble*) is an internationally acclaimed award-winning artist, singer-songwriter and actor. She first graced IT’s stage in *BLACK BOY* and has been a treasured member ever since! She has also appeared in IT’s productions of *THE OLD SETTLER*, *HAVING OUR SAY: THE DELANY SISTERS FIRST HUNDRED YEARS*, *MY SUNDAY DINNER WITH NORMA*, her one woman *WALKING BETWEEN WORLDS*, *LET’S LIVE A LITTLE*, the award-winning *BLACK PEARL SINGS!* and recently in *20TH CENTURY BLUES*. To-Ree-Nee was the lead in the feature film *Unsound* by Darius Britt. She made her debut in *THE FISHER’S WIFE*, a multi-media production created by Flam Chen. To-Ree-Nee is also a member of “Stories That Soar”. This talented Renaissance woman has had a national career in the field of visual arts that spans over thirty years. During the course of her career, she has been commissioned for eleven mosaic projects and created twenty murals and art for residential clientele, private business and municipalities.

Susan Claassen (*Director*) continues her 46th anniversary with Invisible Theatre and has produced well over 450 productions and directed over 100 including the MAC (Best Comedy Director) award winning *DANCING LESSONS*. Some of her most memorable IT roles have been Olive in *OLIVE AND THE BITTER HERBS* (MAC Award Best Comedy Actor), Trudy and all in *THE SEARCH FOR SIGNS OF INTELLIGENT LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE* and most recently, Dr. Ruth in the award winning *BECOMING DR. RUTH*. Susan’s production of *A CONVERSATION WITH EDITH HEAD* (www.edithhead.biz) has had over 500 performances and has been touring nationally and internationally since 2002. She received a prestigious LA Stage Alliance Ovation Best Actress Nomination and BroadwayWorld LA nomination as Best Actress 2011, was the *Phoenix New Times* Best Actress 2012 and was recently nominated as Best Solo Performance by The San Francisco Bay Area Critics Association and Theatre Bay Area! Among many awards, Susan was a City of Hope Spirit of Life honoree and is featured in Arizona’s centennial legacy book, *Arizona’s 48 Most Intriguing Women*.

2021 GOLDIE KLEIN GUEST ARTIST AWARD



Tony nominated playwright, Emily Mann is the recipient of the 2021 Goldie Klein Guest Artist Award. This award was established in 1988 as a way to pay tribute to Goldie Klein, mother of IT's artistic director, Susan Claassen. Every year a guest artist at the Invisible Theatre is selected. The selection is based upon artistry, compassion and commitment to making the world a more loving and accepting place.

Past recipients have included such illustrious artists as Lynn Redgrave, Ann Hampton Callaway, Steve Ross, Rain Pryor, Norma Jean Darden, Amanda McBroom, Julie Budd, Lucie Arnaz, Sandy Hackett, Camerone Parker, and Kathleen Clark

Emily Mann (*Playwright*) is a Tony-nominated playwright and director and the Tony Award-winning Artistic Director of the McCarter Theatre Center, where she wrote 15 new plays/adaptations, directed over 50, and produced 180 productions. Broadway: EXECUTION OF JUSTICE, HAVING OUR SAY; ANNA IN THE TROPICS, AND A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE. Her plays: HAVING OUR SAY, EXECUTION OF JUSTICE; STILL LIFE; ANNULLA, AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY; GREENSBORO (A REQUIEM); MESHUGAH; MRS. PACKARD, and HOODWINKED (A PRIMER ON RADICAL ISLAMISM). And seven adaptations. Currently developing THE PIANIST for Broadway and the musical, PRAIRIE ROSE with Lucy Simon and Susan Birkenhead. Her play, GLORIA: A LIFE ran Off-Broadway and aired on PBS 'Great Performances. Awards include: Peabody, Hull Warriner, NAACP, 6 Obies, Guggenheim; Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle nominations; Helen Merrill Distinguished Playwrights' Award; Margo Jones Award; TCG Visionary Leadership Award; Lilly Award for Lifetime Achievement; inducted into The American Theater Hall of Fame.

Elaine J. McCarthy (*Original Projection Design*) in her thirty year career, has established herself as a ground-breaking, industry-building master of the art of projection design. Her background in photography, film and architecture has led to a global career in live performance including theatre, opera, concerts, dance, television, film and corporate. Highlights on Broadway include WICKED, MONTY PYTHON'S SPAMALOT, ASSASSINS, MAN OF LA MANCHA (2002 revival), INTO THE WOODS (2002 revival) and THURGOOD. Among McCarthy's extensive off-Broadway credits are FREQUENCY HOPPING (set and projections), DISTRACTED (set and projections), SPEAKING IN TONGUES, SUITCASE and THE STENDHAL SYNDROME. Over the past two decades she has collaborated on seven world premiere operas by renowned composers Tan Dun, Jake Heggie, Jennifer Higdon and Joby Talbot, including MOBY DICK, COLD MOUNTAIN, EVEREST and the upcoming, THE DIVING BELL AND THE BUTTERFLY.

FACTS ABOUT GLORIA: A LIFE

WHO:

Written by: Emily Mann
Director: Susan Claassen

CAST:

Cynthia Jeffery as Gloria Steinem
Ensemble: Gianbari "Debora" Deebom, Alida Holguin Gunn, Amalia Clarice Mora, Gretchen Wirges and To-Ree-Nee Wolf.

WHERE:

The Invisible Theatre
1400 N. First Avenue (at Drachman), Tucson, AZ. 85719

RUNNING TIME:

95 minutes with no intermission.

AGE RECOMMENDATION:

Mature ages 13 and up.

WHEN:

Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
Thursday, February 18, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
Friday, February 19, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, February 20, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
Sunday, February 21, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

Wednesday, February 24, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
Friday, February 26, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, February 27, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.
Sunday, February 28, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

PRODUCTION STAFF:

DIRECTOR: Susan Claassen
SET DESIGN: James Blair and Susan Claassen
LIGHT DESIGN: James Blair
SOUND DESIGN: Rob Boone, Susan Claassen and Cynthia "Cy" Barlow
PROP DESIGN: Heidi Peden
ORIGINAL PROJECTION DESIGN: Elaine J. McCarthy
IT PROJECTION DESIGN: Cynthia "Cy" Barlow
COSTUME DESIGN: Maryann Trombino
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER: Diana Knoepfle

TO PURCHASE TICKETS FOR GLORIA: A LIFE

Here is how it works!

Decide which performance you would like to attend and how many in your party.
All seats are reserved.

\$40 – single show ticket price

Call 520-882-9721 or email Katy@invisibletheatre.com
with your first and second choice.
We will then call you with your confirmed date.

or order 24/7 through ovationtix at www.invisibletheatre.com

Flex pass tickets are still available and offer LARGE
financial savings and priority seating!

Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express are accepted.

We know things can change in a heartbeat and we are monitoring the situation daily.
Safety is our number one priority.

ABOUT THIS PRESS RELEASE:

This mailing list is for members of the professional media and allied organizations who have requested e-mail press releases from The Invisible Theatre. If you no longer wish to receive e-mail press releases or if there is someone else with your organization that should be added to our list, contact cathy@invisibletheatre.com or phone Alayna at (520) 884-0672 with your request.

ONLINE MEDIA MATERIALS:

Production photos will be available February 2, 2021 at www.invisibletheatre.com (Press).
You may also send an email to cathy@invisibletheatre.com requesting photos be sent directly to you.

Stand Up!

Together We Make IT Happen!

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