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## AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER ANNOUNCES CASTING FOR MFONISO UDOFIA'S ACHINGLY POIGNANT DRAMA, *HER PORTMANTEAU*

A.C.T.'s Strand Theater  
February 15–March 31, 2019

SAN FRANCISCO (December 20, 2018)—**American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon** announced today casting for *Her Portmanteau*, **Mfoniso Udofia's** taut and achingly poignant drama exploring the multigenerational bonds of a Nigerian family living in the United States. Traveling from Lagos to visit her mother Abasiama and American-born sister Adiaha for the first time in two decades, thirtysomething Iniabasi arrives to a snowy landscape and even chillier truths inside a small Manhattan apartment. As Nigerian traditions clash with American realities, the family is forced to confront its literal and emotional baggage and its painful legacies across language, continents, and cultures. Pulsing with humor and heartache, this tender and hopeful window into an evolving family is “a reminder that most Americans share a common origin story” (*The New York Times*). *Her Portmanteau* performs at A.C.T.'s Strand Theater (1127 Market St., San Francisco) from **February 15, 2019 through March 31, 2019. Press nights for *Her Portmanteau* will be held on Thursday, February 28 and Friday, March 1, 2019.** Single tickets for *Her Portmanteau* (\$15–\$110) are available at the A.C.T. Box Office at 415.749.2228 or online at [www.act-sf.org](http://www.act-sf.org). *Ticket prices are subject to change without notice.*

San Francisco's **Magic Theatre** will present Udofia's *In Old Age* concurrently with A.C.T.'s production of *Her Portmanteau* from **March 27, 2019 through April 21, 2019**. Through an exclusive package deal, patrons can purchase tickets for A.C.T.'s production of *Her Portmanteau* and Magic Theatre's production of *In Old Age*, which can be seen in any order, for \$40 each—a savings of up to 45% off their individual ticket price. This package deal is available now by calling the A.C.T. Box Office at 415.749.2228 or online at [www.ufotplays-sf.com](http://www.ufotplays-sf.com). Package holders receive free ticket exchanges, priority invitations to special events, and exclusive content on this Bay Area theatrical event.

“I am thrilled to welcome Mfoniso back to A.C.T. with this deep mother-daughter/sister-sister story,” said **Mackinnon**. “Equally exciting, Bay Area audiences can truly immerse themselves into this Nigerian American family saga, seeing how lives move forward, by ‘binge watching’ both *Her Portmanteau* at A.C.T.’s Strand Theater and *In Old Age* at the Magic Theatre.”

“I am overjoyed that Pam programed my show and am excited to return to A.C.T. as a playwright,” adds **Udofia**. “It’s been quite an artistic journey and it is not lost on me that, in a way, I am coming full circle. What a time. What a joy. I count myself blessed.”

A graduate of A.C.T.’s M.F.A. Program, playwright Mfoniso Udofia is a first-generation Nigerian American storyteller and educator. The Ufot Family Cycle, a series of nine plays exploring the history of Nigerian immigration in America through the eyes of one family, began through Udofia’s residencies at National Black Theatre’s I Am Soul program and The Playwrights Realm’s Page One program. In January 2016, The Playwrights Realm produced the world premiere of *Sojourners*, the Ufot Family origin story. In spring 2016, Magic Theatre produced *Sojourners* in repertory with the world premiere of the third installation in the Ufot Family Cycle, *runboyrun*. In spring 2017, New York Theatre Workshop produced a new production of *Sojourners* in repertory with the world premiere of *Her Portmanteau*, to universal critical acclaim. A.C.T. has commissioned Udofia to write the eighth installment of the cycle.

Under the direction of **Victor Malana Maog**—named one of *American Theatre* magazine’s “People to Watch”—*Her Portmanteau* features (in alphabetical order): **Aneisa J. Hicks** as Adiaha Ufot, **Kimberly Scott** as Abasiama Ufot, and **Eunice Woods** as Iniabasi Ekpeyong.

The creative team for *Her Portmanteau* includes **David Israel Reynoso** (Scenic Designer), **Sarita Fellows** (Costume Designer), **Yael Lubetzky** (Lighting Designer), and **Jake Rodriguez** (Sound Designer).

In connection with *Her Portmanteau*, A.C.T. will offer numerous **InterACT events**—many of which are presented free of charge—that will give patrons opportunities to get closer to the action while having an entire night out at the theater. Visit [act-sf.org/interact](http://act-sf.org/interact) to learn more about subscribing to these events throughout the season:

- **Bike to the Theater Night:**  
*Wednesday, February 20, 6:30 p.m.*  
Providing a greener alternative to theater transportation, A.C.T. and the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition offer free valet bike parking, as well as a special discount on tickets, for these select performances.
- **Prologue:**  
*Tuesday, February 26, 5:30 p.m.*  
Before the curtain goes up, get a sneak peek at the artistic process at this fascinating preshow discussion with the director and artistic staff.

- **Audience Exchanges:**  
*Tuesday, March 5, 7 p.m. | Sunday, March 10, 2 p.m. | Wednesday, March 13, 2 p.m.*  
After the show, stick around for a lively Q&A session with the actors and artists who create the work onstage.
- **OUT with A.C.T.:**  
*Wednesday, March 6, following the 7:30 p.m. performance*  
The best LGBT night in town! Mingle with the cast and enjoy free drinks and treats at this popular after-party.
- **Wente Vineyards Wine Series:**  
*Tuesday, March 12, 6:30 p.m.*  
Before the show, raise a glass at this wine-tasting event featuring the Bay Area's hottest local winery.
- **PlayTime:**  
*Saturday, March 16, 12:30 p.m.*  
Before this matinee performance, get hands-on with the artists who make it happen at this interactive theater workshop.
- **Theater on the Couch:**  
*Friday, March 22, following the 7:30 p.m. performance*  
This exciting postshow discussion series addresses audience questions and explores the minds, motives, and behavior of the characters.

A.C.T.'s production of *Her Portmanteau* is made possible by producers **Dianne Hoge; Donald J. and Toni Ratner Miller; Robina Riccitiello; and Anne and Michelle Shonk.**

A.C.T. would like to acknowledge its 2018–19 Season Presenters: **Jerome L. and Thao N. Dodson; Priscilla and Keith Geeslin; James C. Hormel and Michael P. Nguyen-Hormel; Fred M. Levin and Nancy Livingston, The Shenson Foundation; Toni Rembe and Arthur Rock; Robina Riccitiello; Mary and Steven Swig; Jeff and Laurie Ubben; and Kay Yun and Andre Neumann-Loreck.**

A.C.T. would also like to acknowledge its 2018–19 Company Sponsors: **Lesley Ann Clement and Karl Lukaszewicz; Ray and Dagmar Dolby Family Fund; Frannie Fleishhacker; Kevin and Celeste Ford; Mr. and Mrs. Gordon P. Getty; Kirke and Nancy Sawyer Hasson; Jeri Lynn and Jeffrey W. Johnson; Mr. and Mrs. Robert McGrath; Burt and Deedee McMurtry; David and Carla Riemer; Patti and Rusty Rueff; Aaron Vermut and Adriana López Vermut; Jack and Susy Wadsworth; and Barry Williams and Lalita Tademy.**

Additional support provided by **The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation; PG&E; The Shubert Foundation; The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust; San Francisco Grants for the Arts; Wells Fargo; and Hilton Union Square and Parc 55 San Francisco, A.C.T.'s Official Hotel Partner.**

Up next, A.C.T. will present Lauren Yee's exploration of cultural identity, global politics, and basketball, *The Great Leap* (March 6–31, 2019), featuring Tony Award winner BD Wong, followed by Kate Hamill's rollicking new stage

adaptation of William Thackeray's classic novel, ***Vanity Fair*** (April 17–May 12, 2019). Closing out the 2018–19 season, A.C.T. will present Eugène Ionesco's "seminal absurdist satire" (*Los Angeles Times*) ***Rhinoceros*** (May 29–June 23, 2019), translated by Derek Prouse and directed by two-time Tony Award winner Frank Galati.

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## FACT SHEET FOR *HER PORTMANTEAU*

### **WHAT:**

Traveling from Lagos to visit her mother Abasiama and American-born sister Adiaha for the first time in two decades, thirtysomething Iniabasi arrives to a snowy landscape and even chillier truths inside a small Manhattan apartment. As Nigerian traditions clash with American realities, the family is forced to confront its literal and emotional baggage and its painful legacies across language, continents, and cultures. Pulsing with humor and heartache, this tender and hopeful window into an evolving family is “a reminder that most Americans share a common origin story” (*The New York Times*). Magic Theatre will present Udofia’s *In Old Age* concurrently with A.C.T.’s production of *Her Portmanteau*.

### **WHO:**

Written by **Mfoniso Udofia**

Directed by **Victor Malana Maog**

### **CAST:**

**Aneisa J. Hicks** as Adiaha Ufot, **Kimberly Scott** as Abasiama Ufot, and **Eunice Woods** as Iniabasi Ekpeyong

### **CREATIVE TEAM:**

**David Israel Reynoso** (Scenic Designer), **Sarita Fellows** (Costume Designer), **Yael Lubetzky** (Lighting Designer), **Jake Rodriguez** (Sound Designer)

### **WHERE:**

**A.C.T.’s Strand Theater (1127 Market St., San Francisco)**

### **WHEN:**

**February 15–March 31, 2019**

Press Nights: Thursday, February 28 and Friday, March 1, 2019

### **PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE:**

Tuesdays–Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.

Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2 p.m.

Sundays at 2 p.m.

### **InterACT Events**

Bike to the Theater Night: **Wednesday, February 20, 6:30 p.m.**

Prologue: **Tuesday, February 26, 5:30 p.m.**

Audience Exchanges: **Tuesday, March 5, 7 p.m.** | **Sunday, March 10, 2 p.m.** | **Wednesday, March 13, 2 p.m.**

OUT with A.C.T.: **Wednesday, March 6, following the 7:30 p.m. performance**

Wine Series: **Tuesday, March 12, 6:30 p.m.**

Playtime: **Saturday, March 16, 12:30 p.m.**

Theater on the Couch: **Friday, March 22, following the 7:30 p.m. performance**

### **TICKETS & INFORMATION:**

\$15–\$110 (*Ticket prices are subject to change without notice*)

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