



American Repertory Theater

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER ANNOUNCES EVENTS
ASSOCIATED WITH THE WORLD-PREMIERE PLAY
*DIARY OF A TAP DANCER***

**Written and Choreographed by Ayodele Casel and Directed by Torya Beard,
Performances Begin Tonight!**

Cambridge, MA – American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) at Harvard University, led by Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director Diane Paulus and Executive Director Kelvin Dinkins, Jr., announced today programming associated with its upcoming production of *Diary of a Tap Dancer* including film screenings, on-site engagement, and a post-show conversation with acclaimed dancer Dianne Walker.

- **Essential Question**

As we reflect on our past and look towards our future, whose shoulders are you standing on?

A.R.T. leads with inquiry and believes in asking questions in a spirit of brave curiosity in a never-ending journey of learning and growth. For each production, the creative team, company, and Engagement team develop an **Essential Question** to guide work in the rehearsal room, onstage, and for engaging with audiences.

- **Legacy Wall in the Loeb Drama Center West Lobby**

In *Diary of a Tap Dancer*, Ayodele Casel invites audiences to expand their understanding of tap to include the often-overlooked women who were instrumental to its history. Inspired by the production's Essential Question, the legendary women honored in the play and their stories will

be showcased in the Loeb Drama Center's West Lobby throughout the run. Audiences are invited to view the installation and learn more about some of the women whose shoulders Ayodele stands on.

- **Member Night**

Thursday, December 19, 6PM - 7PM | Ex Theater, Loeb Drama Center

Supporters of \$500+ are invited to an exclusive pre-show Q&A featuring A.R.T. Sound Manager Camilo Atehortua preceding the 7:30PM performance of ***Diary of a Tap Dancer***. Contact DonorEmails@amrep.org for more information—space is limited.

- **Post-Show Conversation: Legacy of Women in Tap**

Saturday December 21 after the 7:30PM show | Loeb Drama Center, 64 Brattle St., Cambridge

Join us for a post-show conversation with three generations of tap legends. Boston-based, internationally renowned “first lady of tap” (*Boston Herald*) Dianne Walker, choreographer and performer Ayodele Casel, and Casel’s collaborator and fellow *Diary of a Tap Dancer* performer Naomi Funaki will share their relationships with the art form, journeys as tap dancers, and the legacies they hope to carry forward with moderator and A.R.T. Advisor Priscilla H. Douglas. *Free with a ticket to any performance of Diary of a Tap Dancer.*

- **Friday Film Matinees at the Brattle Cinema**

Fridays, December 20 and 27 at 3:30PM | Brattle Theatre, 40 Brattle St., Cambridge

Join A.R.T. at the Brattle Theatre for two Friday Film Matinees featuring tap dance.

***Singin’ in the Rain* (1952) | Friday, December 20**

Gene Kelly, Donald O’Connor, and Debbie Reynolds star in one of the most joyous and entertaining movie musicals ever made!

***Tap* (1989) | Friday, December 27**

Max Washington has just been released from prison after serving time for burglary. He returns to his old hangout, a hoofer club. His old girlfriend, Amy, who still works at the club as a Tap instructor, is less than thrilled to see him. Her father, Little Mo, is happy to see him, because he has plans for a show involving Max. In addition, Max’s old partners in crime have another job for him. Starring Gregory Hines, Joe Morton, Sammy Davis Jr., Savion Glover, and Suzzanne Douglas.

The Friday Film Matinee is a new, ongoing program at the Brattle featuring special screenings of 35mm prints. Take an afternoon off to see 35mm prints and celebrate the magic of ‘reel film.

Visit BrattleFilm.org for more information and to purchase tickets.

- **Access Performances**
 - **ASL Interpreted***
Friday, December 20 at 7:30PM
 - **Audio Described***
Saturday, December 21 at 2PM
 - **Open Captioned***
Sunday, December 22 at 2PM
 - **Sensory Inclusive***
Sunday, December 22 at 2PM

* Book Access seats online, by contacting Access@amrep.org, or calling 617.547.8300

DIARY OF A TAP DANCER INFORMATION

Trailblazing tap dancer and choreographer Ayodele Casel and longtime collaborator director Torya Beard (*Chasing Magic*, *Funny Girl*) return to A.R.T. this holiday season to share the joyful, resilient, and liberating spirit of tap. The electric new play weaves together dance, narrative, and song to reveal the power of reclaiming language, culture, and one's own identity. This world-premiere production traces Ayodele's life from her roots in The Bronx and Puerto Rico, while celebrating the extraordinary and often-overlooked women tap dancers who paved the way.

Tickets from \$35 are available at AmericanRepertoryTheater.org/DiaryofaTapDancer. Discounts are available to students and ticket-buyers under age 25, Blue Star families, EBT cardholders, seniors, Harvard faculty and staff, and others. More information at AmericanRepertoryTheater.org/PlanYourVisit.

Production support of *Diary of a Tap Dancer* is provided by Leslie and Howard Appleby.

A.R.T.'s 2024/25 Season support is provided by **Harvard University, The Barr Foundation, The Bob and Alison Murchison New Work Development Fund, The Shubert Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Massachusetts Cultural Council, Barton & Guestier, and Meyer Sound.**

ABOUT AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER

The American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) at Harvard University is a leading force in the American theater, producing groundbreaking theatrical experiences that catalyze dialogue and transformation. Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director Diane Paulus began her tenure in 2008 and co-leads the theater in partnership with Executive Director Kelvin Dinkins, Jr., who began in June 2022.

A.R.T. is a Tony Award-winning creative hub, launching productions seen on Broadway, across the US, and around the world throughout its 45-year history. As the professional theater on campus, A.R.T. plays a central role at Harvard University, catalyzing discourse, interdisciplinary collaboration, and

creative exchange, and sharing University resources with the broader community. Driven by its value to lead with inquiry, A.R.T. builds community with audiences, artists, students, staff, and neighbors across Greater Boston, embracing theater's power to cultivate the full breadth and beauty of our shared humanity.

A.R.T. will relocate from Harvard Square to its new home in Boston, the David E. and Stacey L. Goel Center for Creativity & Performance in late 2026. Currently under construction, this new, inspiring center will include flexible adaptive spaces to rehearse, create, teach, and convene in community, fueling A.R.T.'s vision and creative work for years to come.

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