

GENTRAIN SOCIETY SPECIAL EVENT



"FATHER COMES HOME FROM THE WARS"

By Suzan-Lori Parks

Saturday, April 28, 2018

American Conservatory Theatre

San Francisco, California

Next Gentrain Society Regional Theater Trip

On Saturday, April 28, we will travel to San Francisco to see A.C.T.'s production of Suzan-Lori Parks's *Father Comes Home from the Wars*. Ms. Parks in 2002 was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for her *Topdog/Underdog*, and she was a finalist for the same prize in 2014 for this play. It is a trilogy which follows the journey of a black slave during the Civil War, seeking his liberty and his identity. The trilogy stands alone, but Ms. Parks intends it as the first installments in a series of plays that will together constitute a kind of epic. She has said that she thinks of the great saga of the war as an American story with sufficient scope and significance to stand alongside the great Greek wartime epics of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The *Odyssey* stands as a kind of template for the action in this play: there is a character named Homer, the central character is named Hero (whose wife's name is Penny, for Penelope), and there's even a dog named Odd-See for the weird way he moves his eyes. The dog is played by a human actor, and according to all accounts is one of the most gripping and entertaining of the cast members. The central situation is that Hero's master has demanded that Hero accompany him to the war, promising him his freedom if he survives. Hero knows that that would put him on the wrong side in the war, and he isn't sure that he can trust his master's promises anyway. The three parts include the departure for war, a confrontation in a forest with a Union prisoner, and a bitter-sweet return home. The play has garnered lavish praise in its East Coast and Los Angeles productions, and promises a powerful, moving—and frequently funny—afternoon of great theater. It also includes a good deal of music.

As usual, Dr. Grant L. Voth, former Gentrain Coordinator and Humanities instructor at M.P.C., will offer an introduction to the play on **Friday afternoon, April 27, from 1 to 3 p.m. in LF102**, designed to enhance understanding for, appreciation for, and enjoyment of the of the play.

The bus will leave the MPC Parking Lot B on Fishnet Road at 9:00 a.m. for arrival in San Francisco around noon. The play begins at 2:00 p.m. You will be dropped off near the theater where there are numerous restaurants for lunch prior to the play. The bus will meet us at the same drop off point after the play for our return to Monterey. We should arrive back at MPC between 7:00 and 7:30 p.m.

The cost is \$94 per person which includes play ticket, bus transportation, snacks on the bus, and the pre-theater lecture give by Grant Voth. All of our tickets for this play are on the main floor of the A.C.T. Theatre. **Please make your check payable to the "MPC Gentrain Society"** and mail to Wayne Cruzan, 75 Via Chualar, Monterey, CA 93940. **Also, please put your telephone number on your check.** Questions? Call Wayne at 375-2371