

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Christie Snyder, csnyder@ppt.org, 412.316.1600 x719

Contact (Pittsburgh): Saul Markowitz, saul@markowitzcommunications.com, 412.977.8517

Pittsburgh Public Theater to host live staged reading of new musical THE CARLISLE PROJECT

May 3, 2023 | Pittsburgh, PA – Pittsburgh Public Theater Playwrights-in-Residence Annalisa Dias and Ronee Penoi present their new musical *The Carlisle Project* in a live staged reading at the O'Reilly Theater on Wednesday, May 10, at 7:00 p.m. Tickets to this experience are free and open to the public, available to reserve at www.ppt.org/carlisle.

The Carlisle Project explores the legacy of forced assimilation at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, America's largest indigenous boarding school from 1879 through 1918. Bringing together ceremony, satire and song, *The Carlisle Project* grapples with the generational trauma of colonization, working to re-story the pasts of Indigenous people while also offering a perspective of an Indigenous future.

Thousands of students from more than 140 Indigenous tribes attended the Carlisle Industrial School in its nearly 40 years of operation, and hundreds of private and government-run boarding schools were modeled after Carlisle. The Carlisle Indian School was founded with the express purpose of forced assimilation and students' customs, culture, and heritage were stripped from them. Hundreds of children died while attending the school, and hundreds are still buried there today. The site today is home to the U.S. Army War College.

"The legacy of Carlisle Industrial School is one that deeply affects my family," co-writer Ronee Penoi said. "I see it as very personal work to bring this history, and the questions facing Native people today, to broader view."

The Carlisle Project marks the second year of The Public's modern Playwrights-in-Residence program, an initiative that began in the theater's inaugural season in 1974. The Public's inaugural modern playwright-in-residence Mark Clayton Southers' *The Coffin Maker* debuted in a workshop at The Public in 202. Southers' production will receive its [world premiere](#) at The Public to close the theater's 2023/2024 season.

"Bringing this project home to Pittsburgh is truly special," co-writer Annalisa Dias said. "As a kid, I participated in all of PPT's education programs, so to return to the O'Reilly as a professional artist is incredibly meaningful."

More information about the Carlisle Indian Industrial School can be found at www.carlisleindianschoolproject.com. Tickets to the live staged reading and subsequent of *The Carlisle Project* on Wednesday, May 10, at 7:00 p.m., are available at www.ppt.org/carlisle. The Public's Engagement Manager Jalina McClarin will moderate a discussion following the show with the creative team about the process of bringing this work to life.

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The Carlisle Project references death, violence, intergenerational Indigenous trauma, and genocide. This reading may not be appropriate for all audiences.

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ACCESSIBILITY

Pittsburgh Public Theater is dedicated to making its performances accessible to all audiences. It is proud to offer an American Sign Language Series, a Live Audio Description Series, assistive listening devices, I-Caption® services, and D-Scriptive® services at select performances. Tickets for these performances can be purchased online or by calling the Box Office at 412.316.1600. For more information on our accessibility offerings, please contact Director of Education and Engagement Parag S. Gohel at pgohel@ppt.org.

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Pittsburgh Public Theater strives to serve as a true public theater to the Pittsburgh region, producing more than 120 performances each season and welcoming more than 70,000 guests through the O'Reilly Theater's doors every year. The theater is renowned for its exceptional mix of programming, featuring international classics, fresh new works, and favorite musicals. Its commitment to education and engagement initiatives is a hallmark and includes the signature Shakespeare Monologue & Scene Contest and innovative community partnerships. The organization, under the leadership of Artistic Director Marya Sea Kaminski and Managing Director Shaunda McDill, celebrates its 49th season in 2023.