



DALLAS
THEATER
CENTER

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**CLASSIC WESTERN *SHANE* GETS REIMAGINED TO REFLECT AMERICA'S DIVERSE FRONTIER
AS IT MAKES ITS TEXAS DEBUT FRIDAY, JAN. 31,
AT DALLAS THEATER CENTER'S KALITA HUMPHREYS THEATER**

Written by acclaimed Mexican-American playwright Karen Zacarias, Shane tells the story of a mysterious ex-gunslinger with a dangerous past who befriends a farming family in 1889 Wyoming; adapted drama aims to spotlight the rich culture and often forgotten history of the American West

DALLAS (Jan. 8, 2025) – During a time when cowboy culture is more than just a trend but a movement, one of the greatest classic Westerns of the last century – *Shane* – finds new life as it makes its Texas debut Jan. 31 at the Kalita Humphreys Theater (3636 Turtle Creek Blvd, Dallas, 75204). Presented by Dallas Theater Center, the western drama – which runs through Feb. 16 – tells the story of Shane, a mysterious ex-gunfighter with a dangerous past who finds kinship with a family and helps protect their farm in 1889 Wyoming.

Written by acclaimed Mexican American playwright Karen Zacarias – whose heritage played into her inspiration for the play – *Shane* is based on the 1949 novel by Jack Schaefer that was adapted for the screen in 1953. The play gets reimagined with a new perspective that stems from Zacarias' personal interpretation of the novel she first read as a young girl. Their story sheds light on the allure, mythos, and values of the Wild West – a chapter in history that still has many tales to tell.

"I read the book *Shane* when I was in elementary school; I 'd just moved here from Mexico," said Zacarias. "The story captured my imagination immediately. I identified with the characters and their search for a future home in this vast country. This adaptation of *Shane* is a testament to the historically real, complicated, and diverse nature of the American West – and the roots that we all share."

Recognizing that one of three cowboys who settled the American West were men and women of color – African American, Native American, or of Mexican descent – Zacarias brings an exciting new dimension to the story. She envisioned *Shane* as a descendant of enslaved people with the central characters, the Starrett family, as Latino.

Shane is directed by Blake Robison (Osborn Family Producing Artistic Director, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park), who has deep ties to the play. A long-time friend who has collaborated extensively with Zacarias, Robison not only urged her to write the play but he went on to direct the world debut.

"*Shane* celebrates and enriches the Western genre by bringing cultural authenticity to the story's characters," said Robison. "It's 1889 Wyoming, and it looks like the real West. Plus, it's got all the classic elements – a mysterious hero, a greedy villain, a bar brawl, a tense final shootout. This stage version of *Shane* makes the western relevant again."

The play's themes include explorations of masculinity, the struggle for power and wealth, the role of violence the service of justice and the cost to the person called upon to use violence for the greater good.

Set in 1889, *Shane*, an enigmatic stranger, rides into the heart of Wyoming's cattle country. He is instantly idolized by the young Bob Starrett, whose settler parents welcome him into their home and put him to work on their farm, where Shane discovers the family he never had. Meanwhile, hostility grows between the ruthless rancher Fletcher and the settlers starting their farms. When Fletcher plans to squeeze them out, Shane's dangerous ways resurface as he fights to save the Starretts from ruin.

The cast of *Shane* includes: Nathan M. Ramsey (Shane), Blake Hackler (Joe Starrett), Bob Hess (Luke Fletcher), Tiffany Solano (Marian Starrett), Esteban Vilchez (Older Bob/Bobby Starrett), Zachary J. Willis (Chris Johnson), Jim Jorgensen (Ernie Wright and Stark Wilson), Stephanie Lauren Delgado (Winona Stephens), John Plumpis (Jake Ledyard and Sam Grafton), Logan Rhys Hallwas (Ensemble) and Victor Marcinkiewicz (Ensemble).

Dallas Theater Center has presented several of Zacarias' plays in past years – *Native Garden* and *The Book Club Play* – receiving rave reviews from audiences who appreciate her ability to create compelling stories that feature nuanced, three-dimensional characters. The relationship with Zacarias reinforces Dallas Theater Center's artistic mission to bring original works to North Texas audiences.

"*Shane* is one of the greatest and most loved classic Westerns," said Kevin Moriarty, executive director of the Dallas Theater Center. "We are thrilled to bring it to life on stage in this Texas premiere and to welcome playwright Karen Zacarias back to Dallas Theater Center. Karen brings to each of her plays a wonderful theatricality, fast-paced storytelling, and complex characters. Audiences are going to love both the thrills and the emotional nuance of this production – brilliantly directed by Karen's long-time collaborator Blake Robison – that features members of DTC's Diane and Hal Brierley Resident Acting Company performing alongside a dynamic cast of actors from North Texas and across the country."

Recommended for ages 11 and up, *Shane* contains cowboys, gun violence, and saloon showdowns. The show is 90 minutes with no intermission. After each performance, the audience will be invited to participate in "Stay Late," a brief post-show conversation between the audience and actors from the production.

During its run, as part of its education and community outreach efforts, Dallas Theater Center will host more than 500 Dallas ISD students through its Project Discovery program, providing them with tickets, transportation, pre-show workshops and post-show talkbacks.

Additionally, on Feb. 1, DTC's "Saturday Session" will be co-taught by Zacarias and DTC's Interim Artistic Director, Jonathan Norton. Offered year-round on the first Saturday of every month from 10 a.m.-noon, "Saturday Sessions" are an opportunity for adults to participate in a two-hour Master Workshop focused on a different topic each month, taught by professional artists. Zacarias' workshop, titled "Art Imitates Life: Writing from Experiences," is available for purchase for \$25 on DTC's website.

Tickets for *Shane* start at \$40 and are on sale now. Free parking is available surrounding the Kalita Humphreys Theater. For details, showtimes and to purchase tickets, please go to dallastheatercenter.org.

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ABOUT DALLAS THEATER CENTER. *Dallas Theater Center was founded in 1959 as one of the first regional theaters in the United States, located at the legendary Frank Lloyd Wright's Kalita Humphreys Theater. Under the inaugural leadership of Paul Baker, Dallas Theater Center became one of the nation's leading producers of experimental interpretations of classics and world premieres. Over the years, our innovative, dynamic programming has made a significant mark on the Dallas community as well as the American theater at large. From classic scripts to new plays, from epic to intimate, we strive to continue our tradition of providing a next-level experience to theater lovers worldwide.*

MEDIA CONTACTS:
Becky Mayad
214-352-1881 work
214-697-7745 cell
becky@mayadpr.com

Taylor Mayad Powell
214-435-7756 cell
taylor@mayadpr.com