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Four Generations of Women are Explored in an Extraordinary New Play at the Yonkers Public Library

Yonkers, N.Y. (March 13, 2019) – Studio Theater in Exile presents *AJUMA, A Journey U Make Alone*, a new and exciting play featuring an all-female cast at the Riverfront Library on Sat., April 6 and Sun., April 7, 2019 at 3 p.m. The performance is free and open to the public.

AJUMA is an original work written and performed by spoken word and visual artist Katori and will be directed by Mara Mills, artistic director and co-founder of Studio Theater in Exile. Based on generations of Katori's family, the performance captures the seminal moments of their lives. From a fiery great-grandmother to an unborn child, *AJUMA* takes the audience on a journey that explores the sensations and emotions of escape, abuse, love and legacy.

"We all have family stories and when we share them, we learn more about what is underneath our own life decisions. And when we hear them from others we reflect on the connections and uniqueness that is between us," said Mills. "Working with Katori and the ensemble to bring *AJUMA* to the stage has been an extraordinary experience. Katori's stories have sparked our own exploration. I think *AJUMA* is powerful theater which reaches out to the audience and draws them in."

The performance will be held in the Riverfront Art Gallery on the fourth floor of the library. Admission is free but tickets are limited and reservations are required. For more information and ticket reservations: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ajuma-at-yonkers-public-library-tickets-55115851997>

Studio Theater in Exile was co-founded by Mara Mills and Jeremy Gratt in 2005 after the closing of the Herbert Mark Newman Theater, Pleasantville. The Newman was known for producing original work. Mills and Gratt are carrying on that mission and expanding on it by making the works accessible to the community in public spaces. Studio Theater in Exile develops work with poets, writers, playwrights, theater, and visual artists, integrating art forms and social issue to produce theater that brings the art and community together. Studio Theater in Exile just received an "Opportunity to Grow" grant from the Alliance of Regional Theater/NYSCA for a portable lighting system to enhance their public work.

Katori is a spoken word and visual artist. Katori has performed her poetry throughout Westchester and met at HVMOCA, where they began to work together. Her work as a community artist, with artist Evan Bishop includes "Words of Wisdom" and "Yes, Yonkers", the first funded by Westchester Arts Council and the latter by a Yonkers grant. Her style is dramatic, humorous, playful, eccentric, and humane. *AJUMA* is her first full length play.

The cast also includes vocalists Vanessa Day and Aramide, dancers Gretchen Simmons, Azaili Wideman, and Sunny Vazquez.



The Riverfront Art Gallery is on the fourth floor of the Riverfront Library, located at One Larkin Center, and is accessible to people with disabilities. Parking is available at sidewalk meters and for a fee in the nearby Buena Vista and Warburton Parking Garages.

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About Yonkers Public Library

The Yonkers Public Library is the largest library in Westchester County and was established in 1893 to serve the citizens of the City of Yonkers. There are currently three branches; Riverfront Library, our main branch, in downtown Yonkers, the Grinton I. Will Branch on Central Avenue and the Crestwood Branch in the Crestwood section of the city. Our mission is to change lives every date. Our expert, trusted staff help all the people of Yonkers find the information they need, the programs they enjoy, and the reading they love. In 2018, the library had over 825,000 visitors, checked out 795,000 items, held 7,200 programs for adults, teens and youth and answered 364,479 reference questions.