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## UVA DRAMA TO PRESENT LYDIA R. DIAMOND'S STICK FLY

### Powerful Tale of Family, Race, And Privilege To Open February 28 at The Ruth Caplin Theatre

**CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA – February 15, 2019** –The UVA Department of Drama will present Lydia R. Diamond's *Stick Fly* as the next production in its 2018-19 Season. The powerful story of family, race, and privilege will open on February 28 at the Ruth Caplin Theatre.

When two African-American brothers bring their respective partners to their family's Martha's Vineyard home for the weekend, the affluent family and the newcomers soon clash in a variety of ways in this fascinating, and highly relatable look at the family ties that bind us, and push us apart. While Kent's fiancée Taylor struggles to fit in to the LeVay's upper-crust lifestyle, Kimber, a self-described WASP who works with inner-city school children, fits in more easily with the family. Joining these two couples are the demanding LeVay patriarch, Joe, and Cheryl, the daughter of the family's longtime housekeeper. As the two newcomers butt heads over issues of race and privilege, long-standing family tensions bubble under the surface and reach a boiling point when explosive secrets are revealed.

*Stick Fly*, directed by Jennifer L. Nelson, will be presented February 28-March 2 at 8pm; March 2 at 2pm, and March 5-7 at 8pm.

Tickets for *Stick Fly* are \$14 for adults, \$12 for seniors, UVA faculty and staff and alumni association members, and \$8 for students. Tickets are available online at [www.artsboxoffice.virginia.edu](http://www.artsboxoffice.virginia.edu), by calling 434-924-3376, or in-person from noon until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday at the UVA Arts Box Office, located in the lobby of the Drama building.

Nelson said she particularly appreciates the play's focus on a segment of African American society rarely reflected in the theatre world. "The past many years have been dominated by playwrights like August Wilson, whose work I love," she said, "but he and a number of playwrights often wrote about impoverished families, and their struggle to survive. You don't often see stories of middle class, or upper middle class, of highly educated people dealing with human, relatable issues. It allows us to see them in a different way."

The piece, she said, deals largely with the most relatable issue of all: family. "These people are not dealing specifically with issues of race or racism. They are dealing with survival issues, with relationship issues that are the most meaningful, like how do younger people deal with their parents as they get older, and the way younger people come to learn about their parents' life experiences and histories."

The hard truths and frayed family ties are exposed, in this case, by the light shed on them when “outsiders” are introduced into the picture. “It comes down to how does this family do when these new partners are introduced? How does that affect the home? How do they fit in and how does everyone get along together? In the end, race is not the primary issue here. It is about how these highly successful people, from different backgrounds and with different ways of behaving, address family issues when they come together. I think we find that these doctors and lawyers and writers, etcetera, are a lot like we are.”

The 2018-2019 UVA Drama season will continue with the Spring Dance Concert (March 28-30); *The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (April 18-27); and the Virginia Players Lab Series March 21.

Parking for UVA Drama performances is available at the Culbreth Road Parking Garage, conveniently located alongside the theaters.

To access photos of this production, visit <https://virginia.box.com/s/jsdljxbxx2smtkqox6jwwz6ljnrit5g0>

For more information on the 2018-2019 UVA Drama season, visit <http://drama.virginia.edu/current-season>.