A Human Being Died That Night brings the chilling drama of a notorious, now paroled apartheid assassin Eugene de Kock to BAM’s stage.

The Fugard Theatre and Eric Abraham production examines the complex cycle of violence, remorse, and forgiveness.

“Raising complex, painful questions about responsibility and reconciliation, this 80-minute piece is unmissable,” — The Independent (UK)

★★★★ “An intimate and intense experience.” — Evening Standard (UK)

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A Human Being Died That Night
The Fugard Theatre and Eric Abraham
By Nicholas Wright, based on the book by Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela
Directed by Jonathan Munby

Design by Paul Wills
Lighting design by Tim Mitchell
Sound design by Chris Shutt

BAM Fisher (Fishman Space, 321 Ashland Pl)
May 29—June 21
May 29 & 30, Jun 2–5, 6, 9–12, 13, 16–19, and Jun 20 at 7:30pm
May 30, Jun 6, 13, and 20 at 2pm; May 31, Jun 7, 14, and 21 at 3pm
Tickets start at $30

April 21, 2015, Brooklyn, NY—In this taut 2013 theatrical adaptation of Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela’s award winning-book, the apartheid regime’s most notorious assassin and head of its death squad, Eugene de Kock (played by Matthew Marsh), sits opposite psychologist Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela (played Noma Dumezweni) in Pretoria Central Prison in 1997. Gobodo-Madikizela is a member of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission determined to understand his actions. She questions de Kock, who is sentenced to two life terms plus 212 years for crimes against humanity, murder, conspiracy to murder, attempted murder, assault, kidnapping, illegal possession of firearms, and fraud.

First mounted by Eric Abraham at the Hampstead Downstairs before going to Cape Town’s Fugard Theatre, A Human Being Died That Night looks at how one of the most reviled figures in apartheid history came to be, and how Gobodo-Madikizela is able to forgive him. In a riveting discussion that moves from dispassionate to deeply intimate, a remorseful de Kock and his interlocutor explore how a fundamentally moral person could become a mass murderer. The work is reminiscent of writer and philosopher Hannah Arendt’s endeavor to understand the nature of evil when she wrote about the Nazi holocaust architect Adolf Eichman’s 1962 trial in Israel.
Current events have added another layer to this complex examination of human behavior, as Eugene de Kock (famously nicknamed “Prime Evil” by the press) was paroled in January, 2015. His release has re-ignited debate of the play’s themes of remorse and forgiveness.

About the artists:
Fugard Theatre founder Eric Abraham is a film, television, and theater producer, best known for producing the Academy Award-winning foreign language films Ida (2015) and Kolya (1996). A South African-born former journalist and human rights activist banned and house-arrested by the apartheid government in 1976 and exiled for 15 years, he became a producer of BBC TV’s Panorama before going on to form his own production company, Portobello.

He went on to produce many acclaimed television dramas including John le Carré’s A Murder of Quality and the BBC TV crime series Dalziel & Pascoe. He produced Roald Dahl’s Danny the Champion of the World, Jan Svěrák’s Dark Blue World and Empties, Tim Roth’s The War Zone, Jez Butterworth’s Mojo and Birthday Girl, Jiri Menzel’s The Life and Extraordinary Adventures of Private Ivan Chonkin and Quiet Chaos starring Nanni Moretti, and Joshua Marston’s The Forgiveness of Blood, winner of a Silver Bear at the 2011 Berlin Film Festival.

With his wife, publisher and philanthropist Sigrid Rausing, Eric Abraham co-founded the Portobello Books publishing house in 2005, and later that year they acquired the highly regarded literary journal Granta and Granta Books.

As a theater producer, Abraham’s credits include Hugh Whitemore’s adaptation of Pirandello’s As you Desire Me, starring Bob Hoskins and Kristin Scott-Thomas; Christopher Hampton’s stage version of Sandor Marai’s Embers, which marked Jeremy Irons’ return to the stage after 20 years and was directed by the Tony award-winning Michael Blakemore; Polly Stenham’s multi-award winning That Face; and the acclaimed West End transfer of Bruce Norris’ Clybourne Park, winner of the Olivier Award for Best Play, 2011. He has commissioned new plays from, among others, Nicholas Wright, Hugh Whitemore, Frank McGuinness, and Rebecca Lenkiewicz.

In 2006 and 2010, he set up and worked with Isango Portobello, a collaboration with director Mark Dornford-May to produce theater and film productions with South African talent for South African and international audiences. Their first productions together were A Christmas Carol—Ikrismas Kherol and The Magic Flute—Impempe Yomlingo. They premiered in Cape Town at the Baxter Theatre and at the Young Vic in London to major acclaim, with The Magic Flute—Impempe Yomlingo transferring to the Duke of York’s Theatre for a successful West End run and winning the Olivier Award for Best Musical Revival (2008), before touring internationally. The company also presented an acclaimed revival of their production of The Mysteries—Yiimimangaliso in Cape Town in 2009, prior to a West End transfer. Other productions include Aesop’s Fables and The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists.

Director Jonathan Munby’s theater credits include Heinrich von Kleist’s The Prince of Homberg (Donmar Warehouse); Pedro de la Barca’s Life Is a Dream (Donmar Warehouse); Antony & Cleopatra and A Midsummer’s Night’s Dream (Shakespeare’s Globe); 24 Hour Plays (Old Vic); Henry V (Manchester); Nakamitsu (Gate); Journeys Among the Dead (Young Vic); Stephen Sondheim’s musical Company (at the Sheffield Crucible Theatre), Twelfth Night (ETT and Sheffield Theatres); and the five star reviewed Wendy and Peter Pan (Royal Shakespeare Company). His other international credits include Julius Caesar (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); and The Dog in the Manger (Shakespeare Theatre Company, Washington) for which he was nominated for the “Outstanding Director” Helen Hayes Award. His opera credits include Carmen (Opera Holland Park); Sweetness and Badness (WNO); and Don Giovanni (ETO). He is currently the Creative Associate of London’s English Touring Theatre.
Nicholas Wright was born in Cape Town and moved to London to study at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. He joined the Royal Court Theatre in 1965 as a casting director and in 1969 became the first director of the Theatre Upstairs, and from 1975–77 was co-artistic director of the Royal Court with Robert Kidd. Directing credits at the Royal Court included The Great Caper by Ken Campbell, Bird Child by David Lan and Owners by Caryl Churchill. He joined the National Theatre as a literary manager in 1984 and was an associate director until 1998. Wright’s plays include Treetops and One Fine Day (Riverside Studios), The Gorky Brigade (Royal Court), Crimes of Vautrin (Joint Stock), Custom of the Country and Desert Air (Royal Shakespeare Company), Cressida (Almeida Theatre at the Albery) and Mrs. Klein, Vincent in Brixton, and The Reporter (NT). His adaptations include John Gabriel Borkman, Three Sisters and His Dark Materials (NT) and Thérèse Raquin (Chichester Festival Theatre and NT).

Wright’s opera librettos include The Little Prince (Houston Grand Opera) and Man on the Moon (Channel 4). Television credits include Armistead Maupin’s More Tales of the City (Channel 4) and three episodes of The No.1 Ladies’ Detective Agency (HBO/BBC). Books include 99 Plays and Changing Stages (with Richard Eyre).

Noma Dumezweni (Dr. Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela) is an Olivier Award-winning actress who was born in Swaziland and grew up in the UK, attending Wolsey Theatre’s Youth Theatre group in Ipswich. Her rich history includes a lengthy tenure with the Royal Shakespeare Company which began with a role in their 1999 production of Macbeth. Her theater works include President of an Empty Room and The Hour We Knew Nothing of Each Other at the National Theatre; A Raisin in the Sun for the Young Vic at the Lyric Hammersmith (for which she won an Olivier Award for best performance in a supporting role); A Midsummer Night’s Dream, The Master and Margarita, Nathan the Wise, and The Coffee House at Chichester Festival Theatre; Six Characters in Search of an Author at the Gielgud; and The Bogus Woman at the Traverse and the Bush. Her performance in The Bogus Woman earned her a Fringe First Award and a Manchester Evening News Award. She has just finished a run at London’s Almeida Theatre working on Simon Stephens’ most recent piece Carmen Disruption.

She has also made numerous appearances in films and television, most recently appearing in Frankie as Angie Rascoe, a palliative care nurse, while other screen credits include Casualty, Doctor Who, Eastenders, New Tricks, Shameless, After Thomas, The Color of Magic, and Dirty Pretty Things.


Recent theater includes Proof (Menier Chocolate Factory); The Last of The Haussmans (National Theatre); His Greatness (Finborough Theatre); Bingo and A Prayer For My Daughter (The Young Vic); No Naughty Bits and Us and Them (Hampstead Theatre); Blood and Gifts and The Overwhelming (National Theatre); Now or Later (Royal Court); The Shawl (Arcola Theatre); This Isn’t Romance (Soho Theatre); Glengarry Glen Ross (West End); The Lightning Play, The Goat, and Conversations After a Burial (Almeida Theatre); The Exonerated (Riverside Studios); A Buyer’s Market (Bush Theatre); The Little Foxes (Donmar Warehouse); and Copenhagen (National Theatre & West End).

Dr. Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, is an author, a clinical psychologist and senior research professor at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein, South Africa. After serving on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of South Africa as coordinator of victims’ public testimonies, and as facilitator of encounters between family members of victims and perpetrators who appeared before the
TRC, Gobodo-Madikizela became involved in the study of the process of forgiveness to deepen understanding of its reparative elements in the aftermath of gross human rights violations and mass trauma.

Her current research applies the insights emerging from her study of forgiveness in victim-perpetrator encounters to explore the psychoanalytic dimensions of empathy in the context of perpetrators’ remorse and victims’ forgiveness. Her interests in relation to empathy focus on the feelings and the shifts that open up in dialogue processes between former enemies.

Her book on these topics, *A Human Being Died That Night: A South African Story of Forgiveness*, won the Alan Paton Award in South Africa and the Christopher Award in the United States. Gobodo-Madikizela is also coauthor of *Narrating Our Healing: Perspectives on Healing Trauma* and co-editor of *Memory, Narrative and Forgiveness: Perspectives on the Unfinished Journeys of the Past*. Among her honors are an honorary doctorate of law from Holy Cross College, in Worcester, MA in 2006, and the Eleanor Roosevelt Medal in 2007. In 2010, she received the Social Change Award from Rhodes University for her contributions toward “social transformation in South Africa.”

**Paul Wills** has designed numerous theater and opera productions including: *American Buffalo* (West End); *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (RSC); *Di and Viv and Rose* (West End); *Anna Christie, Making Noise Quietly, The Man Who Had All the Luck, and The Cut* (Donmar Warehouse); *Routes, and The Acid Test, Breathing Corpses* (Royal Court); *Howie The Rookie* (Dublin/London/BAM); *Our Few and Evil Days, and Drum Belly* (Abbey Dublin); *A Number, and Total Eclipse* (Menier Chocolate Factory); *Dr Faustus, Frontline, and The Lightning Child* (Shakespeare’s Globe); *Barnum* (UK Tour); *The Indian Wants The Bronx* (The Young Vic); *Once a Catholic* (Tricycle Theatre); *The Hypochondriac, A Steady Rain, and Home* (Theatre Royal Bath); *My Fair Lady, Afterplay, and Blue/Orange* (Sheffield Theatres); *Novecento* (Donmar Trafalgar); *Punk Rock, Blasted, Saved, Secret Theatre, and The Chair Plays* (Lyric Hammersmith); *Buried Child* (Leicester Curve); *The Changeling, and Mother Courage and her Children* (ETT); *Orpheus Descending*, 1984, *Macbeth, and See How They Run* (Manchester Royal Exchange); *CrestFall* (Theatre 503); *Ben Hur, and Little Voice* (Watermill); *Treasure Island, The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* (Rose Theatre Kingston); *Waiting for Godot*, *Yerma* (West Yorkshire Playhouse); *Serious Money Money* (Birmingham Rep); *Pornography* (Tricycle/Birmingham Rep/Traverse). Paul’s opera credits include: *Intermezzo* (Buxton Opera Festival); *Rusalka* (English Touring Opera); *Sweetness and Badness* (Welsh National Opera); and *The Magic Flute* (National Theatre of Palestine).

**Christopher Shutt** is a sound designer whose work includes Broadway’s *War Horse* (Tony Award, Drama Desk Award), *All My Sons, Moon for the Misbegotten, and Not About Nightingales* (Drama Desk Award). Off-Broadway credits include *Macbeth, Love and Information, Bull, Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui, Mnemonic* (Drama Desk Award), *A Disappearing Number, The Elephant Vanishes, The Noise of Time, Happy Days, and Humble Boy*. His recent other theater productions are *Man & Superman, James I & II, From Morning To Midnight, Strange Interlude, Timon of Athens, The Effect* (National Theatre, London); *Oppenheimer, Wendy & Peter Pan, The Tempest, The Comedy of Errors, Twelfth Night, King Lear, Much Ado About Nothing, King John, Romeo and Juliet* (RSC Stratford upon Avon); *Crave/ 4:48 Psychosis* (Sheffield Crucible); *Privacy* (Donmar, London); *Drum Belly* (Abbey, Dublin); *Ruined, Judgment Day* (Almeida, London); *Other Desert Cities, The Playboy of the Western World, All About My Mother* (Old Vic, London); *Kins, Aunt Dan and Lemon, Serious Money, Road* (Royal Court); *A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Far Away* (Bristol Old Vic); *The Bacchae, Little Otik* (National Theatre of Scotland); *Shoes* (Sadler’s Wells); *Good* (Royal Exchange Manchester); and *Riders to The Sea* (English National Opera).

**Tim Mitchell** is the associate lighting designer at Chichester Festival Theatre and an associate artist at the Royal Shakespeare Company. Credits include: *Yer Granny, A Doll’s House* (National Theatre Scotland); *The Rehearsal, Way Up Stream, Taken at Midnight, Guys and Dolls, Amadeus, Goodnight
Mister Tom (Chichester); Anything Goes, My Fair Lady (Sheffield); Death of A Salesman, The Witch of Edmonton, Henry IV I&II, Richard II, The Orphan of Zhao, City Madam, Cardenio, Morte D’Arthur, Twelfth Night, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Hamlet (RSC), The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui (West End/Chichester/Tour); Singin’ in the Rain (Chichester/West End); Yes, Prime Minister (Chichester/UK Tour/West End); Kiss Me, Kate (Chichester/Old Vic); Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead (West End/Chichester); The Winslow Boy (The Old Vic); Dangerous Corner (Bill Kenwright UK Tour); Pressure (Chichester/Lyceum Edinburgh); Of Mice and Men (West Yorkshire Playhouse); Gaslight (Salisbury); Robin Cousin’s ICE (UK Tour); Nut (Shed/NT); The Lion The Witch and The Wardrobe (Kensington Gardens); Crazy For You (Regent’s Park/West End); A Chorus of Disapproval; Dirty Dancing, The Turn of the Screw (Almeida); The History Boys (WYP/Tour); The Play What I Wrote, and Noises Off. Opera and Ballet credits Nabucco, The Fall of the House Usher (WNO); The Great Gatsby, Cinderella (Northern Ballet); Fidelio (ENO); La Bohème (WNO); and A Streetcar Named Desire (Scottish Ballet).

Athol Fugard is South Africa’s most significant and internationally acclaimed playwright. The Fugard Theatre, founded by Eric Abraham, is proud to bear his name and honors him by providing a crucible of creativity and beacon of humanity for all South Africans regardless of race, color, gender, or creed. The Fugard Theatre is proud to be located in Cape Town’s District 6 and honors the history and memory of a vibrant community which was so savagely uprooted during the apartheid era.

BAM Gathering: A Human Being Died That Night
With Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela
Led by Bryan Doerries
May 29, immediately following the performance (free for same-day ticket holders)

BAM Gathering: A Human Being Died That Night
Led by Bryan Doerries
June 9, June 13 (matinee)
Immediately following the performance (free for same-day ticket holders)

With BAM Gathering, Bryan Doerries, founder of Theater of War—a project that presents theatrical readings to spur audience dialogue and engagement—facilitates a discussion of this season’s presentation of A Human Being Died That Night. Together with a panel of community members and the audience, Doerries explores the play’s themes of power, otherness, violence, and forgiveness in apartheid-era South Africa—and their resonance closer to home.

For press information contact Sarah Garvey at sgarvey@BAM.org or 718.724.8025

Credits
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General Information
BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, BAM Rose Cinemas, and BAMcafé are located in the Peter Jay Sharp building at 30 Lafayette Avenue (between St Felix Street and Ashland Place) in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn. BAM Harvey Theater is located two blocks from the main building at 651 Fulton Street (between Ashland and Rockwell Places). Both locations house Greenlight Bookstore at BAM kiosks. BAM Fisher, located at 321 Ashland Place, is the newest addition to the BAM campus and houses the Judith and Alan Fishman Space and Rita K. Hillman Studio. BAM Rose Cinemas is Brooklyn’s only movie house dedicated to first-run independent and foreign film and repertory programming. BAMcafé, operated by Great Performances, offers a dinner menu prior to BAM Howard Gilman Opera House evening performances. BAMcafé also features an eclectic mix of live music for BAMcafé Live on Friday and Saturday nights with a bar menu available starting at 6pm.

Subway: 2, 3, 4, 5, Q, B to Atlantic Avenue – Barclays Center (2, 3, 4, 5 to Nevins St for Harvey Theater)
D, N, R to Pacific Street; G to Fulton Street; C to Lafayette Avenue
Train: Long Island Railroad to Atlantic Terminal – Barclays Center
Bus: B25, B26, B41, B45, B52, B63, B67 all stop within three blocks of BAM
Car: Commercial parking lots are located adjacent to BAM

For ticket information, call BAM Ticket Services at 718.636.4100, or visit BAM.org.