NATAKI GARRETT
Leader | Artist | Changemaker | Innovator

“I’m here to continue to tell the stories of as many different kinds of people as possible, to provide my audience with the broadest experience possible of what the world is like, and to give them an opportunity to see and experience stories that help them grow and become better and more engaged with their own empathy and their ability to change the world. That’s what my mandate is.”

NATAKI GARRETT’S VISION

Nataki Garrett’s vision as Artistic Director of the OSF is to center artists as thought-leaders and change-makers who transform culture. By strategically directing holistic support and resources for artists, Garrett makes it possible for them to focus on sharing powerful narratives that impact the field and society. Garrett’s leadership has galvanized OSF to become a hub for multi-modal and mixed-discipline intersectionality at the forefront of innovation. Garrett’s vision for OSF’s expanded platform traverses live and digital spaces, and empowers artists to engage with audiences through transformative experiences with cultural justice and co-liberation at the core. Garrett envisions OSF as a year-round destination for artists and audiences, and a theater company that sustains diverse revenue sources, long-term financial stability, and a global reputation that calls to action seminal artists of our time and future generations of audiences.

FOCUS AREAS: Nataki Garrett supports:

- **ARTISTS** by strategically directing holistic support and resources for them, making it possible to focus on powerful narratives that impact the field and society;
- **CREATIVITY** by providing expanded platforms that traverse live and digital spaces and empower artists to engage with audiences through transformative experiences with cultural justice and co-liberation at the core;
- **INNOVATION** by galvanizing OSF to become a hub for multi-modal and mixed-discipline intersectionality at the forefront of innovation;
- **STABILITY** by positioning OSF as a year-round destination for artists and audiences.
BIO

Nataki Garrett is the Artistic Director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, one of the largest theater-producing organizations in the United States, and is widely recognized as an innovative and influential arts leader. She has led the 86-year-old OSF through one of the most cataclysmic periods in its history, raising $19 million while mobilizing federal support for the non-profit theater industry during the pandemic. At the start of her tenure, in 2019, she conceived an interactive and immersive digital platform, O!, which became all the more vital in live theater’s absence as a source of groundbreaking performance, art, and discussion. Garrett is the first woman to artistically lead a $44 million theater company and OSF’s first Black female in this role. She was selected for the prestigious 2022 United States Artist fellow. A champion for the arts, artists, and the industry, Garrett has testified before Congress on the need to support the creative economy. Born and raised in Oakland, stemming from a family of educators, artists and community organizers—she garnered a deep appreciation for theater and for telling the untold stories not typically seen on the main stage.

“We are reimagining the future of theatre. We are revitalizing the art form by centering artists and their work.”

PROOF POINTS: Programs and Strategy

Nataki’s vision informs her leadership style and the decisions she makes as Artistic Director. Despite facing multiple crises shortly after she joined the company—COVID-19 pandemic, Almeda wildfire, and a two-year closure—Nataki has already made significant changes that have brought this vision into clearer focus. They include:

- **Digital Platform:** Nataki successfully launched O! in 2020 to intersect theater with other forms of media. Now it has evolved into a marquee fourth stage, where new and innovative projects will play alongside some of OSF’s most beloved and well-known productions, while enabling a global audience to enjoy our work.

- **Leadership Structure:** Nataki has shifted the leadership structure from hierarchical to a shared-leadership model consisting of three associate artistic directors. Each of these roles oversee three major parts of OSF’s artistic endeavor: Innovation and Strategy; New Work; and Artistic Programming.

- **Sales:** Nataki inspired the shift in OSF’s sales model with simplified ticketing pricing, as well as membership and donor structure early in her tenure.

- **Budget:** Nataki is leading a more fiscally responsible charge within the organization to help ensure OSF can adjust to impacts on the industry, shifting from doing 11+ plays to a more workable model of 6-8 plays per year.

- **IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility)**
  Nataki is driving efforts to eliminate oppressive practices in OSF’s business model and creating a more equitable and inclusive environment for staff, artists and leadership.

- **Advocacy:** Nataki is leading advocacy efforts by starting the Professional Nonprofit Theater Coalition, an advocacy group for nonprofits and professional theaters across the US and territories in Congress. In addition, Nataki has addressed Congress twice as a representative of OSF to advocate for more support for the creative economy.