The parenting comedic drama "Cry It Out," which Hartford Stage has embraced as the second show of its 2019-20 season, has touched a nerve nationwide.

"This is something we have to talk about: how to support working parents in America," said the show’s director, Rachel Adlerman, when she brought the play to the attention of a triumvirate of artistic decision-makers at the theater.

It wasn’t hard to convince them. Hartford Stage artistic director Melia Bensussen, associate artistic director Elizabeth Williamson and outgoing artistic director Darko Tresnjak approved of Molly Smith Metzler’s play, which premiered in 2017 at the Actor’s Theatre of Louisville’s Humana Festival.

The play concerns what has become known as “the fourth trimester,” the first few months of a baby’s life when it is still adjusting to life outside the womb. Metzler’s script has been praised for giving a realistic voice to a fraught period of parenting that is too often relegated to wacky comedies about the chaos of sleepless couples changing diapers while trying to eat or work.

"Cry It Out" touches on the deeper issues of parenting, including the waves of disorienting emotions and unexpected responsibilities that new parents confront. Its characters—three women and a man—have very different backgrounds but bond over the truth about the black American experience. Here are 8 of them.

**By Christopher Arnott**

**Cry It Out** a comedic drama about ‘the fourth trimester’

**By Susan Dunne**

130 artworks at the Athenium tell the truth about the black American experience. Here are 8 of them.

**A frocosmologist**a new exhibit at Wadsworth Atheneum, features 130 artworks by African Americans who seek to present themselves, their world, and their history in their own way. Liberated from interpretations foisted upon them by non-blacks throughout the centuries. The exhibit, which fills galleries on the second and third floors of the Hartford museum, is a dazzling array of works created from 1885 to the present day. A few reflect the sense of anger and sorrow that one would expect considering African Americans’ history of oppression and exploitation, but most are celebratory, with artists glancing in their Blackness and their freedom to tell the truth as they see it.

The exhibit’s curator, Frank Mitchell, wants audiences to embrace the word afrocosmology as an orientation that embraces the African diaspora as a way of seeing and understanding. Mitchell is director of the Amistad Center for Art & Culture. Mitchell is defined another way by Berrisford Boothe, curator of the Petrucci Family Foundation Collection of African-American Art, which loaned the Athenium artworks for the show.

“‘We wanted to come up with a word to talk about a particular kind of modernism,” Boothe says. “How do we speak about ourselves when it’s only been 100 years or so that we’ve been allowed to?’”

Boothe even hesitates to label the work as African American art.

“You’ve never seen a box of gay crayons or black crayons or female crayons,” he says. “This is American art. All these stories by people who live, were born, were raised, died in America.”

Twenty-two of the artworks are a series of 1977 screenprints by Jacob Lawrence titled “The Legend of John Brown.” Brown was an abolitionist who led a raid on Harpers Ferry in 1859 that served to galvanize the American Civil War.

"Cry It Out" at Hartford Stage. BRAD HORRIGAN/HARTFORD COURANT
War and Civil Rights moving to people of collections of Italy, “to concede to Scott Duncan no oil,” “Reckoning with History” depicts naked people of all races as an exhibition of sublime vision.

The ritual of Sunday church reinforced the anti-racist narrative. It was also a refuge that allowed for contemplation. It also allowed leader to teach, like Martin Luther King. The sense of community among people of color allowed for spiritual leadership to have authority outside the church. The artwork hangs next to a 1864 Robert Thompson’s abstract expressionist-influenced landscape with the words “Abraham” and “Love Thy Neighbor.”

Thompson’s words suggest that the African-American culture is being reclaimed. “When you think of Africa, you don’t think of geography, but think of its people.”

“Spirit of the Cloth” by Edmonia Miller’s asymmetrical quilt made in 1003 and mixed-media patchwork of African cloth to make an abstract pattern. The nation’s history of African-Americanquilts is a reflection of Haitian historical tendency of “making the most with what you have.”

Carl Joe Williams’ 2016 linocut, “AfricanHeart,” is made of patches and strips African Americans used to make clothes.

“Baptist” and “Waiting.” Carl Joe Williams’ 2016 mini-series work showing a young man standing outside a church, sitting at a table, have someone in the audience, the church’s choir, we still have an all-night gathering at the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

“Namesake”

In Kerry James Marshall’s 1992-93 multimedia work showing a black man flies in the ocean between maps of Africa and the Middle Passage, the ocean, evoking the legacy of the Middle Passage, the ocean between maps of Africa and the Middle Passage, the ocean, evoking the legacy of the

“Baptist”

This old-time religion is good enough for me.”

When you talk about neighborhood of color, it’s all pajama’s, old dirty mattresses. On this old dirty mattress, he’s basically doing now-Colombia, will participate in an arts festival on Oct. 31, with Rachel Bailey and Shoshana Smith, moderated by Kimberly Denne.

“Band of Angels”

Bob Thompson’s 1960 oil on canvas “When We Were Young” is part of “Afrocosmologies: American Reflections.”

McGinley for blowing his whistle to disclose wrongdoing.

“Whistle blower” spiked in both popu-

“Whistleblower” has been used to describe anyone who alerts the public or those in authority to wrongdoing.

Whether you love whistleblowers or hate them, you’re probably asking the same question I am. Whatever happened to McGinley?

WORD WATCH

By Ron Kyver

The term had become so popular by the late 1970s that publications and politicians began dropping the “hyphen” and renders “whistleblower” to merge it into “whistle blower” like the imperial human it deforms, this term has become long difficult enough toward longevity and responsibility.

Its parents, “hear” and “whistle,” have been sounding the alarm since Shakespeare’s time. Lady Macbeth fretted that “these secrets...tittle-tattling before all our
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“Whistleblower” in America.” Like the imperial human it deforms, this term has become long difficult enough toward longevity and responsibility.

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