



Fertile Ground Day 1: *Memory Water, Truth and Beauty* and *The Hillsboro Story*

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Fifty years after watching black mothers protest segregation outside of her classroom window, writer and director Susan Banyas returned to Hillsboro, Ohio to investigate her hometown's unexplored history as the site of the first test case of *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Armed with minimal props and fellow actresses Laverne Green, Paige Jones, and Jennifer Lanier, she reveals the memories unearthed from over fifty interviews with the town's locals. There are few props and the narration is straight-to-the-point, but this is a powerful play. All four female performers' acting is superb, with the enthusiasm and theatrical prowess of Lanier occasionally stealing the show. Gregg Bielemeier's choreography brings visual charm to the narrative, keeping the show's performers in constant motion, galloping comically across the stage one moment and swaying seductively the next (while talking civil rights court case- it's one of many poignant, yet hilarious, juxtapositions throughout the piece). Also notable is the show's well-orchestrated musical composition by David Ornette Cherry.