



**PLAYWRIGHTS FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES
LINEUP FOR 44th ANNUAL
BAY AREA PLAYWRIGHTS FESTIVAL
Live Streaming July 16-25, 2021**

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (17 May 2021) — **Playwrights Foundation**, the West Coast’s premier launchpad for plays and playwrights, has announced the lineup for the 44th annual **Bay Area Playwrights Festival (BAPF)**, scheduled to stream online. Selected from 755 applications, five bold plays written by five vibrant new voices will receive public readings and workshops in this year’s festival. The works include a wildly imaginative drama depicting a future where a human museum is curated by robots; a time-bending anime adventure investigating the lasting effects of the Japanese American Concentration Camps; a magical exploration of family, gentrification, and a spell gone wrong; a cross-dimensional fever dream about healing and the legacy of colonization; and a coming of age story about pop stardom, questionable 2003 fashion choices, and the pursuit of artistry on one’s own terms. The lauded, multi-award-winning playwrights represented this year include nomadic theatre/spoken word artist **Jaisey Bates**, playwright/games writer/scholar **Miyoko Conley**, writer, producer, performer, and educator **Kaela Mei-Shing Garvin**, prize-winning playwright **Sam Hamashima**, and New York-based writer and producer **Johnny G. Lloyd**. The acclaimed festival is scheduled to stream online, providing the opportunity for audiences around the globe to experience exhilarating new work by emerging theater artists. **Bay Area Playwrights Festival** runs **July 16-25, 2021**. Tickets to stream the readings, priced on a sliding scale, will be available June 15, 2021. For more information the public may visit playwrightsfoundation.org or call **415-626-2176**.

Playwrights Foundation produces the 44th annual **Bay Area Playwrights Festival** online for the second year in a row. Last year, audiences from all over the world tuned in from as far away as Hong Kong, Germany, Russia, Canada, and all across the United States, doubling ticket reservations and leading to a more than 450% increase of theatre professionals in attendance. Although this year’s readings will be online, watch parties will be encouraged across the country, and safe, in-person outdoor events in San Francisco will be curated around the Festival. In addition, Playwrights Foundation will be fostering a more dynamic artistic community by bringing out-of-town Festival playwrights to San Francisco for this event.

“We are excited to expand on the success of last year’s online festival and to continue to innovate in how we build community both online and safely in-person,” says Executive Artistic Director **Jessica Bird Beza**, “This dynamic cohort is telling stories of family, spirituality, self-discovery, healing, and legacy. We can’t wait to uplift them into the American Theatre canon on a national scale.”

Bay Area Playwrights Festival is one of the nation’s oldest and most successful new play development programs. Now led by Executive Artistic Director **Jessica Bird Beza**, it was established in 1976 by acclaimed director Robert Woodruff, the festival has built a stellar reputation for discovering original and distinctive new voices in the theater, investing in the development of their work, and launching storied careers. Among the first writers developed at the inaugural BAPF was the young Sam Shepard. Since then, more than 500 prize-winning, nationally significant playwrights have received their first professional experience at the BAPF. Among the American theater’s brightest voices who are alumni of the festival are Pulitzer Prize winners Sam Shepard, Nilo Cruz, Jackie Sibblies Drury, Paula Vogel, and Annie Baker; MacArthur Award winner Anna Deavere Smith; Tony Award winner David Henry Hwang; and acclaimed playwrights Lauren Gunderson, Rajiv Joseph, Katori Hall, Christopher Chen, Lauren Yee, and Marcus Gardley. The BAPF’s ongoing success in supporting exceptional, newly emerging writers and launching their groundbreaking new work is its enduring legacy.

In addition to the selected playwrights, Playwrights Foundation is announcing for the first time ten honorable mention plays from the Finalist list:

All My Mothers Dream in Spanish by **Alexandra Espinoza**

Rust by **Nancy García Loza**

Three Antarcicas by **Kristin Idaszak**

The Re-Education of Fernando Morales by **Justin P. Lopez**

Black Mexican by **Rachel Lynett**

The Pre-Med Math Club by **Megan Meinero**

Light Switch by **Dave Osmundsen**

the bottoming process by **Nicholas Pilapil**

Young Men & Recovery by **Brian Scanlan**

The Devils Between Us by **Sharifa Yasmin**

“These ten plays were championed by the Bay Area Literary Council as strong considerations with important stories and themes,” says Literary Manager **Heather Helinsky**. “At Playwrights Foundation we advocate a culture of abundance, and hope these excellent works will quickly find opportunities for further development and productions.”

The Festival lineup is as follows:

when we breathe

By Jaisey Bates

In the Navajo Nation two twins cross paths four days after their mother's tragic death. History haunts and borders blur as a recently deceased sheep – the last of the family's flock – seeks to keep them safe from the night's supernatural storms.

Jaisey Bates (they/she) creates nontraditional collaborative work centering Global Majority especially Indigenous perspectives with their multicultural nomadic theater company, The Peoplehood. While East Coast born and mostly grown, they are currently West Coast based in the traditional ancestral and unceded lands of the Tongva, Tatavian and Chumash (aka Los Angeles). Bates is a recipient of the Emerging American Playwright Prize (Marin Theatre Company) and a finalist (Princess Grace Award, O'Neill National Playwrights Conference and American Blues Theater Blue Ink Award), semifinalist (American Shakespeare Center New Contemporaries), and honorable mention (Kilroy's list). Recent virtual productions include collaborations with WP Theater, SameBoat (EarthQuake Festival), and Honor Roll in association with the African American Policy Forum, National Action Network and The Breath Project. Recent development opportunities include virtual workshops with Clamour Theatre Company, Cutting Ball Theater, and The Vagrancy's Writers Group and Blossoming Festival, and selection for Native Voices at the Autry's Festival of New Plays.

Human Museum

By Miyoko Conley

Set in a future where humans have gone extinct, *Human Museum* follows a group of robots on Earth that run a museum dedicated to organizing the physical and digital artifacts of human life. On the centenary of human extinction, an unexpected radio call upends everything the robots thought they knew about the last days of humanity.

Miyoko Conley (she/her) is an Asian American playwright, games writer, and scholar based in the San Francisco Bay Area. Her plays have been presented in the Bay Area and New York City, including at the University of California, Berkeley; University of California, Los Angeles; (2g) Second Generation; The Tank; The Wild Project; and New York University. Past works include *Starship Dance Party* (developed with the New Play Reading series at UC Berkeley); *End of the World Place* (2015 semi-finalist Bay Area Playwrights Festival); *Untitled Fantasy* (part of 2g's Jumpstart Commissions); and *Interchangeable Parts* (part of 2g's Free Range Commissions). As a games writer, she is a current mentee in the UK-based Talespinners Mentorship Programme. Conley holds a BFA from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and an MA from NYU's Gallatin School of Individualized Study. She is currently receiving a PhD in Performance Studies and New Media from the University of California, Berkeley.

Tiger Beat

By Kaela Mei-Shing Garvin

Tiger Beat follows the Girls Next Door, a pop girl group rising to fame in the early 2000's. The group's Asian American songwriter Tess finally gets a chance to sing lead, but the opportunity comes at what cost? This play with music is a coming of age story about pop stardom, 2003 fashion choices, and the pursuit of artistry on one's own terms.

Kaela Mei-Shing Garvin (they/she) is a writer, producer, performer, and educator. Originally from Mountain View, CA, with stints in Indiana and New York, Garvin is a founding member of Undiscovered Countries, a Brooklyn-based incubator of new interdisciplinary art. Garvin is a 2020 Bay Area Playwrights Festival finalist, a 2021 Seven Devils Conference and Keneda Playwriting Award finalist, and the recipient of six Kennedy Center awards, including the Mark Twain Comic Playwriting Award and Paul Stephen Lim Playwriting Awards. Their plays have been developed with The Alliance Theater, Montana Repertory Theater, and College of the Holy Cross, and have been produced in New York at venues including Dixon Place, the New Ohio, and Ars Nova. Their work examines the spaces where privilege and oppression overlap through humor, history, and pop culture. Garvin currently teaches playwriting at Cornish College of the Arts. They received their MFA from Indiana University and BFA from NYU.

Supposed Home

By Sam Hamashima

Shiyo left the Japanese American Concentration Camps a long time ago...or so she thought. Past and present become one landscape for this anime adventure as enemies are revealed, companions are found, trauma is unpacked, and what was only thought becomes (un)spoken word.

Sam Hamashima (them+) is an artist based in unceded Lenape Land known as New York City. Hamashima also holds space for the Tuscarora whose Lands, including North Carolina, nurtured them and their artistic voice. Hamashima's work ranges from script to visual poetry with an emphasis on empowerment, change, and healing. Their works include *American Spies and Other Homegrown Fables* (The Hub Theatre, Winner of the 2018 Kennedy Center Undergraduate Playwrights' Award, University of Michigan Hopwood Award in Drama) and *Supposed Home* (Seattle Public Theater, Finalist – Seven Devils Playwrights Conference). They are the second recipient of Seattle Public Theatre's Emerald Prize and are currently under commission from Lexington Children's Theatre.

The Problem with Magic, Is

By Johnny G. Lloyd

After the death of their mother, Jodie goes back home to help her brother, Clarence, run the family magic shop. As the pressure to keep the business alive grows, they find themselves dealing not only with loss and new responsibility but also the forces of gentrification – and – a snake deity conjured from a spell gone wrong.

Johnny G. Lloyd (he/him) is a New York-based writer and producer. Recent productions include *Or, An Astronaut Play* (Co-Production, InVersion Theatre & The Tank and *Round* (Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Short Play Festival). Other recent plays include *love is hard*

and absolutely (probably) worth it. His work has been seen and developed at Second Stage Theater, 59E59, Dixon Place, Judson Memorial Church, JAGFest (White River Junction, VT), TheatreLab (Boca Raton, FL), and more. As a writer, Lloyd has collaborated with companies such as Theater in Quarantine and Salon Séance. Lloyd is a member of the 2020-2021 Clubbed Thumb Early-Career Writers Group and was previously a member of the 2019-2020 Liberation Theatre Company’s Writing Residency. Lloyd was a semi-finalist for the 2018 Open-Application Commission at Clubbed Thumb and a finalist for the 2020 Columbia@Roundabout Reading Series. He is the Director of Artistic Development at The Tank and Producing Director for InVersion Theatre.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: **Playwrights Foundation**, the West Coast’s premier launchpad for plays and playwrights, has announced the lineup for the 44th annual **Bay Area Playwrights Festival (BAPF)**, scheduled to stream online. Selected from 755 applications, five bold plays written by five vibrant new voices will receive public readings and workshops in this year’s festival. The works include a wildly imaginative drama depicting a future where a human museum is curated by robots; a time-bending anime adventure investigating the lasting effects of the Japanese American Concentration Camps; a magical exploration of family, gentrification, and a spell gone wrong; a cross-dimensional fever dream about healing and the legacy of colonization; and a coming of age story about pop stardom, questionable 2003 fashion choices, and the pursuit of artistry on one’s own terms. The acclaimed festival is scheduled to stream online, providing the opportunity for audiences around the globe to experience exhilarating new work by emerging theater artists.

WHEN: Five play readings and special events: **Friday, July 16 – Sunday, July 18**
Five play readings and special events: **Friday, July 23 – Sunday, July 25**

WHERE: **Online.** Patrons who purchase tickets will be emailed links to stream the programs at home on their computer, SmartTV or other device.

TICKETS: Tickets (priced on a sliding scale) for the festival will be available June 15, 2021 at www.playwrightsfoundation.org.

PRESS: Contact Lauren Goldfarb, Carla Befera & Co.
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PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available here:
<http://www.cbpr.co/press/2021BAPF>