



**PLAYWRIGHTS FOUNDATION RELEASES  
ON DEMAND READINGS & EVENTS FOR  
46th BAY AREA PLAYWRIGHTS FESTIVAL  
May 6 – 12, 2024**

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (May 1, 2024) — Playwrights Foundation, the West Coast's premier launchpad for new plays and playwrights, will be releasing on demand recordings of the **46th Bay Area Playwrights Festival (BAPF)** readings and select events following a highly successful festival which took place at the Magic Theatre in YPT from April 12–21st, 2024. Audiences from around the globe will have the opportunity to experience these staged readings and events from their homes. Readings will be free and available to watch starting **May 6th at 12:01 am PT through May 12th at 11:59 pm PT**. The on demand videos are live captures recorded during the second weekend of performances and will have closed captions available. To reserve a free ticket, visit [www.playwrightsfoundation.org](http://www.playwrightsfoundation.org).

These powerful new voices and stories, selected from over 600 applications for the 46th Bay Area Playwrights Festival, explore courageous acts of belonging and unearth hidden truths, illuminating what lies ahead. The events available for on demand viewing include: *Nan* by **Noa Gardner**— a gut-wrenching drama about a life-or-death decision that exposes a loud silence within three generations of Hawaiian women, directed by **Giovanna Sardelli**, with dramaturgy by **Jeannie Barroga**; *Water Spirits* by **Alicia Kester**, an interactive exploration of ancestry, memory, and the displacement of Black communities after a natural disaster, directed by **Elizabeth Carter** with dramaturgy by **Cat Brooks**; *Children of the Wise* by **Aidaa Peerzada**— a bilingual speculative history in which a young artist discovers the truth of her Grandfather's mysterious legacy in a colonized land, directed by **Nakissa Etemad** with dramaturgy by **Karina Gutiérrez**; *Fear & Wonder* by **Jason Tseng**— a forbidden love story that sparks at a Christian camp, where two boys of color find solace amidst a world threatening to tear them apart, directed by **AeJay Antonis Marquis Mitchell** with dramaturgy by **Ely Sonny Orquiza**; and the **2024-2025 Resident Playwright Mini Showcase**, featuring works by **Cat**

**Brooks, Ruben Grijalva, Sloka Krishnan, and Leigh M. Marshall.**

This year's festival marks the debut of Playwrights Foundation's new programming changes, including the implementation of an extended 12-month festival timeline, designed to give playwrights ample time to develop their plays prior to the public festival.

“We noticed this year that playwrights were able to take larger artistic risks than previous years, and at different parts of the process. Some completely changed their endings, structure, added or removed characters, and most playwrights continued making updates minutes before the house opened,” said Executive Artistic Director **Jessica Bird Beza**. “The collective experience of embracing joy, confronting loss, and sharing laughter while engaging with these powerful new plays in community was unforgettable.”

In addition to the on demand events, the **BAPF46 Honorable Mention PlaySlam**, a celebration of exceptional works by this year's honorable mention playwrights, will be taking place live over **Zoom on Tuesday, May 7, from 5–6 PM PT**. The lineup of playwrights reading short selections of their own work are: **Sean-Joseph Choo, Sara Guerrero, Molly Olis Krost, Minna Lee, Nick Malakhov, Hasti Jafari, and Phanésia Pharel**. Other honorable mention playwrights include **Lisa Sanaye Dring, Jahna Ferron-Smith, Melissa Leilani Larson, Jeffrey Lo, and Harrison David Rivers**.

Over 40+ artists were involved in bringing to life these new works during the 46th Bay Area Playwrights Festival, welcoming audiences that reached pre-pandemic levels. Each selected play received two distinct readings over consecutive weekends, giving playwrights a week to revise their plays and rehearse before the second reading. In addition to the aforementioned on demand events, ***The Great Privation: How to flip ten cents into a dollar* by Nia Akilah Robinson** (directed by **Evren Odcikin**, dramaturgy by **Arminda Thomas**) had an exclusive, invitation-only reading ahead of its world premiere at Theatre503 in London, which will run from May 14–June 1, 2024, and due to exclusivity rights will not be released on demand.

Beyond the readings, attendees enjoyed various events that took place throughout the festival, including parties and panels that discussed the playwriting processes. A celebration of life for playwright **Alicia Kester** took place after a reading of her play, *Water Spirits*. Kester was selected to be part of the BAPF cohort in the summer of 2023 and passed away that December, after living with and through cancer diagnosis and treatments.

The **Bay Area Playwrights Festival** is one of the oldest and most successful new play festivals for new works in their early stages. Established in 1976 by acclaimed director Robert Woodruff and now led by Executive Artistic Director **Jessica Bird Beza**, the festival has built a stellar reputation for uplifting 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. BAPF's ongoing success in supporting and amplifying exceptional, newly emerging writers and launching their ground-breaking new work is its enduring legacy.

## **ABOUT PLAYWRIGHTS FOUNDATION**

**Playwrights Foundation**, led by Executive Artistic Director **Jessica Bird Beza**, was founded in 1978 and is widely recognized as one of the top playwright service organizations and new play incubators in the U.S., dedicated to supporting and championing playwrights' artistic growth and careers while uplifting their voices on a national level. PF envisions a future where playwrights are radically centered as visionary leaders who transform the world through storytelling. Serving emerging and mid-career playwrights from the Bay Area and around the country, PF has identified over 500 exceptional writers early in their careers and given them space, time and professional artistic collaborators to explore new theatrical ideas free from the pressures of the marketplace for more than 45 years. Playwrights PF has worked with have won every award in the theater including the Pulitzer, the Tony, the Obie, the National Critics Circle Award, the Susan Smith Blackburn Award, and many more. On its 40th Anniversary, **Playwrights Foundation** was recognized with a Theatre Bay Area Legacy Award for its substantial impact on the field. PF has received two Glickman Awards for best new play to premiere in the Bay Area through its Producing Partnership Initiative. Among the many PF-developed works that have premiered across the country are Katori Hall's *The Mountaintop*, Rajiv Joseph's *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*, Jihae Park's *Hannah and the Dread Gazebo*, Lauren Gunderson's *The Revolutionists*, Lauren Yee's *King of the Yeas*, Madhuri Shekar's *House of Joy*, Mike Lew's *Teenage Dick*, and Mona Mansour's *We Swim, We Talk, We Go To War*, and many more.

**PRESS:** Abigail Pañares  
[abby@playwrightsfoundation.org](mailto:abby@playwrightsfoundation.org)

**PHOTOS:** Downloadable high-res photos are available here:  
<https://playwrightsfoundation.org/about/press-room/>

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