



PLAYWRIGHTS FOUNDATION RELEASES
THE JUSTICE IS JUST ASLEEP
BY RUBEN GRIJALVA ON-DEMAND APRIL 14–20, 2025

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (April 14, 2025) — Playwrights Foundation, the West Coast's premier launchpad for new plays and playwrights, will release the on-demand recording of the public reading of *The Justice is Just Asleep*, a new play by Resident Playwright **Ruben Grijalva**, commissioned by San Francisco Playhouse, from April 14–20, 2025. *The Justice is Just Asleep* follows two supreme court clerks, who find their Justice slumped over her desk just hours from a monumental 5-4 ruling. As protestors surround the courthouse, the clerks scheme, argue, and stall for time in the darkly comic, high-stakes political drama. The staged reading is directed by Susi Damilano, and performed by Gianna DiGregorio Rivera, Rolanda D. Bell, Jacob Henrie-Naffaa, Catherine Castellanos, and Victor Talmadge. Stage directions read by Marie-Claire Erdynast. Dramaturgy by Jeffrey Gan.

“Ruben deftly grapples with tough moral questions with sharp comedic skill,” says Executive Artistic Director **Jessica Bird Beza**, “*The Justice Is Just Asleep* cathartically tackles timely political questions around justice that I believe needs to be heard around the country, and we are excited to release it on-demand worldwide.”

Nearly 100 audience members gathered for the in-person reading, which took place at San Francisco Playhouse on March 24, 2025 after a week of dizzying headlines about the Supreme Court, its clashes with the current administration, and the safety of its Justices dominated the news. Audiences from around the globe will have the opportunity to experience the new play from their homes starting **Monday, April 14 at 9:00 am PT through Sunday, April 20th at 11:59pm PT**. Reservations to view the reading can be made through Sunday, April 20th at 8:00 pm PT. To reserve a free ticket, visit www.playwrightsfoundation.org.

“The question of this play is whether justice is a process or an outcome,” says playwright **Ruben Grijalva**. “I

think you can make an argument for both. In other words, is justice the institutions and the rules and procedures we set up to ensure fairness, or is it a fair outcome for people, that is from a moral sense, outside of the rules, fair? And when those two things come into conflict, how do we make those decisions?”

Ruben Grijalva is a San Francisco Bay Area playwright whose play *Shoot Me When...* was the winner of the 2022 Will Glickman Award for Best New Play in the Bay Area. Ruben is part of the 2024–25 Resident Playwright Cohort at Playwrights Foundation, which includes Cat Brooks, Sloka Krishnan, and Leigh M. Marshall. *The Justice is Just Asleep* is the official launch of the first **Resident Playwright Reading Series**, a new initiative to highlight the work of local Bay Area playwrights. Since its founding, Playwrights Foundation has supported 36 playwrights through its Resident Playwrights Program, many of whom now have robust careers in the theater throughout the country with some recognized among the most produced playwrights in the U.S. Many have won awards including the Guggenheim Fellowship, Steinberg Award, and Obie. Notable alumni include Lauren Gunderson, Christopher Chen, Jonathan Spector, Betty Shamieh, and Micheal Gene Sullivan, to name a few.

ABOUT *THE JUSTICE IS JUST ASLEEP*

When Janelle envisioned herself clerking on the United States Supreme Court, this is exactly what she pictured: a caffeine-fueled all night effort to win a narrow majority that might just save democracy itself. What she didn't picture was her Justice dropping dead in the hours between the conference vote and the public announcement in which that vote would acquire the force of law. With the fate of the American experiment hanging in the balance, Janelle and her fellow clerk grapple with a difficult question: where should they hide the body? *The Justice Is Just Asleep* is a humorous and horrifying examination of the contingent nature of our institutions. With dark humor reflective of our fraught political moment, *The Justice Is Just Asleep* probes the terrifying reality that our system is only as solid as the flawed people trying to make it work.

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 Yees*, 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.

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

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