

New Harrison David Rivers play closes Playwrights' Center season April 9 and 10

MINNEAPOLIS (March 19, 2018) — The 2017-18 Ruth Easton New Play Series at the Playwrights' Center closes **April 9 and 10** with Core Writer **Harrison David Rivers'** new play **"the bandaged place."** The readings begin at 7 p.m. at the Playwrights' Center, located at 2301 E. Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis. They are free, but reservations are recommended and can be made at pwcenter.org.

Rivers is a St. Paul-based writer who moved to the Twin Cities in 2014 for a Many Voices Fellowship at the Playwrights' Center and decided to stay. He then received a prestigious McKnight Fellowship in Playwriting and is currently a Core Writer at the Playwrights' Center. Locally, his plays that are receiving (or have recently received) premieres include "A Crack in the Sky" (History Theatre), "Five Points" (Theater Latté Da) and "This Bitter Earth" (Penumbra Theatre). Twin Cities audiences won't want to miss this opportunity to be part of the evolution of his new play, "the bandaged place."

"the bandaged place" is a brutal and lyrical play about the things we hang on to and the price of moving forward. It is the story of Jonah, whose former lover resurfaces, reopening a painful wound. Jonah is forced to turn to his precocious daughter and his tough love grandmother for support.

Rivers will be collaborating with director **Saheem Ali**** and a cast including **Brandon Gill***, **Faye Price***, **Awazi Jaafaru**, **Bradley Hildebrandt** and **James Rodriguez*** (**Member of Actors' Equity Association; **Member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society*).

"the bandaged place' is the play I said I would never write," says playwright **Harrison David Rivers**. The play grew from his own experience with domestic violence, and he hopes that by sharing his story, he'll encourage others to do the same. "Discussions of domestic violence in America look mostly at the way men and women are treating each other, but same-sex couples are experiencing these very same traumas—and at statistically higher rates. For me, part of telling this story is to draw attention to the issue. To shed some light on a section of our population that is experiencing something that's very difficult. A population that might not be inclined to speak up for various reasons."

"Harrison is not afraid to look into the dark corners," says **Jeremy B. Cohen**, producing artistic director at the Playwrights' Center. "He's writing about the intersection of Blackness, queerness and domestic abuse. This is a story we don't see on stage very often, and one we need."

Harrison David Rivers is the winner of a GLAAD Media Award, a McKnight Fellowship in Playwriting, a Many Voices Fellowship, a Van Lier Fellowship, an Emerging Artist of Color Fellowship and the New York Stage & Film's Founders Award. He was the 2016 Playwright-in-Residence at the Williamstown Theatre Festival. His plays include "Sweet" (National Black Theatre), "And She Would Stand Like This" (The Movement Theatre Company), "Where Storms are Born" (Williamstown) and "When Last We

Flew” (Sundance). Harrison is an alumnus of the Emerging Writers’ Group at the Public Theater.
M.F.A.: Columbia University. harrisondavidrivers.com

The Ruth Easton New Play Series provides selected Playwrights’ Center Core Writers with 20 hours of workshop time to develop a new play with collaborators of their choice: top local and national actors, directors, designers and dramaturgs. Each play has two public readings, allowing the playwright to experiment and see the play on its feet in front of two different audiences. The Center brings in visiting artistic leaders to see the readings and connect with the playwrights, and more than half of the plays developed in the series over the past decade have gone on to production.

The 2017-18 Ruth Easton New Play Series previously featured “The Overcoat: A Low-Fi Musical” by Kira Obolensky, “How The Ghost Of You Clings, The Anna May Wong Story” by John Olive, “Three Quarter Inches of Sky” by Sherry Kramer and “Quiver” by Meg Miroshnik.

All events in the Ruth Easton New Play Series are free and open to the public. Reserve your spots at pwcenter.org or by contacting the Playwrights’ Center at (612) 332-7481 or info@pwcenter.org. Find accessibility information at pwcenter.org/accessibility.

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Photos of the playwright and previous Ruth Easton New Play Series readings are available at pwcenter.org/media-room or by contacting Jessica Franken at jessicaf@pwcenter.org

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHTS' CENTER

The Playwrights' Center champions playwrights and new plays to build upon a living theater that demands new and innovative works.

The Center serves playwrights by sustaining careers, developing new work, and connecting playwrights to theaters. Each year at the Center, fellows and Core Writers receive more than \$315,000 in direct support, 70+ new plays are workshopped, playwrights connect with 100 producing theaters through partnership programs, and 2,000 member playwrights from around the world find resources to achieve their artistic vision.

Since its founding in 1971, the Playwrights' Center has become one of the nation's most generous and well-respected theater organizations, helping launch the careers of numerous nationally recognized artists such as August Wilson, Lee Blessing, Suzan-Lori Parks, Jordan Harrison, Carlyle Brown, Craig Lucas, Jeffrey Hatcher, Melanie Marnich, and Kira Obolensky. Work developed through Center programs has been seen nationwide on such stages as Yale Rep, Woolly Mammoth, the Guthrie, Goodman, and many others.

Programs and services

The Core Writer program gives 25-30 of the most exciting playwrights from across the country the time and tools to develop new work for the stage. All Core Writers receive play development workshops at the Center, in collaboration with prominent directors, actors, dramaturgs, and designers. Selected work by Core Writers makes up the Center's formal season of public readings: the PlayLabs festival and the Ruth Easton New Play Series. Core Writers are also promoted by the Center and provided opportunities through an extensive network of colleges and universities, cultural institutions, and producing theaters.

Fellowships, made possible by the McKnight and Jerome foundations, provide more than \$315,000 each year for residencies, commissions, and development funds. Beyond the financial stipend, the value of fellowships is more than doubled with the year-long support the Playwrights' Center adds through workshops with professional collaborators and through the connections the Center makes between playwrights and producers of new work. This holistic and customized combination of financial support, access to talent, and professional connections is career-changing for most playwrights. Fellowship programs: Jerome Fellows, Many Voices Fellows, McKnight Fellows in Playwriting, McKnight National Residency and Commission, McKnight Theater Artist Fellows.

Membership is open to all and provides nearly 2,000 playwrights worldwide with tools, resources, and support. Benefits include a database of playwriting opportunities, online and in-person seminars and classes, access to readings with professional actors, dramaturgical services, and more. In addition, the Playwrights' Center's **New Plays on Campus** program serves dozens of colleges and universities nationwide, providing script-matching services, arranging playwright residencies, and offering immersive apprenticeships to student playwrights.

Local and national partnerships elevate the role of living playwrights. Through the Regulars partnership program, the Playwrights' Center partners with 100 theaters around the country to bring their artistic staff to the Center in order to spend time with playwrights and to co-develop new plays with a keen eye towards production. In fact, 60% of these plays have gone on to full production within two years (rather than the average seven-year timeframe for most plays to see production). Recent and upcoming productions resulting from Playwrights' Center co-development workshops include "The Great Leap" by Lauren Yee at Denver Center Theatre, "Dancing on the Edge" by Adam Kraar at Theatre Novi Most, "The Gentleman Caller" by Philip Dawkins at Raven Theater, "Duet" by Daniel Alexander Jones at Soho Rep, "Early Morning Song" by Rachel Jendrzejewski at Red Eye Theater, "Fickle: A Fancy French Farce" by Meg Miroshnik at Olney Theatre Center, and "The Happiest Place on Earth" by Philip Dawkins at Greenhouse Theater Center/Sideshow Theatre Company.