

Playwrights' Center welcomes new Core Writers

MINNEAPOLIS (May 23, 2018) — The Core Writer program at the Playwrights' Center gives 25-30 of the most exciting playwrights from across the country the time and tools to develop new work for the stage. The Center is announcing new Core Writers **Darren Canady, Erin Courtney, Marisela Treviño Orta, Stacey Rose, Ariel Stess and Ray Yamanouchi**. In addition, the Playwrights' Center is pleased to welcome three new student playwrights to its Core Apprentice program for 2018-19: **Lily Padilla, Drew Paryzer and Lauren Wimmer**.

"The Playwrights' Center cares as much about developing the artist behind the script as it does any single text," says incoming Core Writer **Darren Canady**. "It understands that challenging, vital theater comes from artists who have been given a place to freely and dangerously explore, sharpen, go back and try again."

Incoming Core Writer **Erin Courtney** adds, "Ever since I first began writing plays, I heard about the great work and collaborators that come through the Playwrights' Center. I am so excited to have this opportunity in which to build innovative work, take risks and to share the results with new audiences."

"The incredible writers in this new cohort join a group of visionary playwrights creating work at the Playwrights' Center," says **Jeremy B. Cohen**, the Center's producing artistic director. "They are at the heart of the changing voice and face of American theater. We are excited to support these dynamic writers and their work so that their plays can reach audiences across the country."

NEW CORE WRITERS

Darren Canady, Erin Courtney, Marisela Treviño Orta, Stacey Rose, Ariel Stess, Ray Yamanouchi

The Core Writer Program at the Playwrights' Center provides play development workshops and professional support over a three-year term. Work by Core Writers composes the Center's public season (the PlayLabs new play festival in October and the Ruth Easton New Play Series December through April). Playwrights who have benefited from the Core Writer program include Christina Anderson, Trista Baldwin, Lee Blessing, George Brant, Carlyle Brown, Connie Congdon, Marcus Gardley, Jeffrey Hatcher, Sherry Kramer, Carson Kreitzer, Martyna Majok, Melanie Marnich, Winter Miller, Greg Moss, Qui Nguyen, Kira Obolensky and Alice Tuan.

Joining the 20 continuing Core Writers are these six playwrights, whose Core Writer terms will run through June 2021:

- **Darren Canady** (Lawrence, Kan.), whose plays include "False Creeds" and "Brothers of the Dust" and who teaches playwriting at the University of Kansas
- **Erin Courtney** (Brooklyn, N.Y.), whose plays include "I Will Be Gone" (Humana Festival, 2015) and the Obie award-winning "A Map of Virtue" (produced by 13P)

- **Marisela Treviño Orta** (Iowa City, Iowa), who is graduating this month from the Iowa Playwrights Workshop and whose plays include “Braided Sorrow” and “American Triage”
- **Stacey Rose** (St. Paul, Minn.), a 2017-18 Many Voices Fellow at the Playwrights’ Center and 2018 Sundance Theatre Lab Fellow whose plays include “The Danger: A Homage To Strange Fruit”
- **Ariel Stess** (Charlottesville, Va.) whose plays include “The World My Mama Raised” (Clubbed Thumb), “Heartbreak” (The Bushwick Starr/New Georges) and “I’m Pretty Fucked Up” (Clubbed Thumb)
- **Ray Yamanouchi** (Queens, N.Y.), whose play “Tha Chink-Mart” will be part of the 2018 PlayPenn Conference, and who also authored “Impact” and “The American Tradition”

2018-19 CORE APPRENTICES

Lily Padilla, Drew Paryzer, Lauren Wimmer

The Core Apprentice program at the Playwrights’ Center pairs student playwrights or recent graduates with professional mentors and offers full play development workshops at the Center. Past recipients include George Brant, Ike Holter, Hansol Jung, Kimber Lee, Andrew Saito, Jen Silverman, Lauren Yee and Martín Zimmerman. The 2018-19 Core Apprentices are **Lily Padilla** (University of California San Diego), **Drew Paryzer** (The University of Texas at Austin) and **Lauren Wimmer** (Carnegie Mellon University).

Core Writers and Core Apprentices are selected by diverse national panels of artists and theater leaders.

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BIOS

Photos of the artists are available at pwcenter.org/media-room.

2018-21 CORE WRITERS

Darren Canady's work has been seen at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, American Conservatory Theater, Aurora Theatre, Horizon Theatre, Edinburgh Festival Fringe, the Fremont Centre Theatre, Congo Square Theatre, the BE Company, American Blues Theater, KC Rep, and London's Old Vic Theatre. Darren is an alum of Carnegie Mellon University, New York University, and the Juilliard School. He is a former member of Primary Stages' Dorothy Strelsin New Writers Group, the T.S. Eliot US/UK Exchange, and the America-In-Play theater collective. He currently teaches playwriting at the University of Kansas.

Erin Courtney's Obie award winning play "A Map of Virtue," produced by 13P and directed by Ken Rus Schmoll, was described by *The New York Times* as "one of the most terrifying plays of the past decade." Her play "I Will Be Gone," directed by Kip Fagan, premiered at Actors Theatre of Louisville's Humana Festival of New American Plays. Her other plays "Alice the Magnet" and "Demon Baby" were produced by Clubbed Thumb. MFA, Brooklyn College. BA, Brown University. She is a member of New Dramatists, a MacDowell Colony fellow, and a Guggenheim Fellow.

Marisela Treviño Orta is a graduate of the Iowa Playwrights Workshop. She was awarded the 2006 Chicano/Latino Literary Prize in Drama, the 2009 Pen Center USA Literary Award in Drama, the 2013 National Latino Playwriting Award, and is a 2019 Keneda Finalist. She has developed plays at the Playwrights Foundation, Marin Theatre Company, and at the National New Play Network's MFA Playwriting Week at The Kennedy Center. Marisela's produced plays include "The River Bride," "Heart Shaped Nebula," "Ghost Limb," "Braided Sorrow," and "Woman on Fire." Her plays have been produced by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Arizona Theatre Company, Halcyon Theatre, Shotgun Players, and Brava Theater.

Stacey Rose hails from Elizabeth, NJ and Charlotte, NC respectively. She holds an MFA in Dramatic Writing from NYU. Her work has been presented at: The Fire This Time Festival, The Brooklyn Generator, The Bushwick Starr Reading Series, Mosaic Theater, The Amoralists Theatre Company, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, The National Black Theatre ("The Ballad O' Nigg-O-Lee") and Pillsbury House Theatre ("Sven, Ole & The Armageddon Myth"). She was a semi-finalist at the 2018 Premiere Stages Play Festival ("As Is"). She was a 2015-16 Dramatists Guild Fellow, a 2017-18 Playwrights' Center Many Voices Fellow, and a 2018 Sundance Theatre Lab Fellow. staceytherose.com

Ariel Stess's plays include "The World My Mama Raised" (Off-off Broadway with Clubbed Thumb); "Heartbreak" (Off-off Broadway at The Bushwick Starr, co-produced by New Georges); "I'm Pretty Fucked Up" (Off-off Broadway with Clubbed Thumb); "Tranquil;" "KARA, EMMA, BARBARA, and MIRANDA;" "I WILL BUY EVERYTHING;" and "The Only Girl in the Hot Tub." Residencies: 2016 Yaddo Writer's Residency, 2016 SPACE on Ryder Farm with Playwrights Horizons, 2014 Mabou Mines/Suite Resident Artist Program, and 2013-14 New Georges Audrey Residency. She is a New Georges

Affiliated Artist. She holds a BA from Bard College and an MFA in Playwriting from Brooklyn College.
arielstess.com

Ray Yamanouchi was born in Queens, raised on Long Island, and received a BA in film and theater from Hunter College in Manhattan. His plays include “Tha Chink-Mart” (PlayPenn 2018), “Impact” (Semi-finalist, National Playwrights Conference 2017), and “The American Tradition” (New Light New Voices Award 2018). He has developed work with WT Theatre, Mission to (dit)Mars, The Blank Theatre, Rising Circle Theater Collective, and Ars Nova. You can find him online @NotoriousYAMs, or as the host of “RE:,” a NYC theater talk show (www.retheatre.nyc).

2018-19 CORE APPRENTICES

Lily Padilla just finished her MFA in Playwriting from UC San Diego, under the mentorship of Naomi Iizuka. Her plays explore sex, intersectional communities and what it means to heal in a violent world. Selected works include “How to Defend Yourself,” “(w)holeness” (Finalist for the Latinx Theatre Commons’ 2018 Carnival) and “And Then You Wait” (La Jolla Playhouse WOW Festival). Padilla is an EmergeNYC fellow with the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics. She co-founded American Nightcap at INTAR, a late-night play series which gathered artists from diverse NYC theater communities. BFA NYU, Playwrights Horizons and Experimental Theatre Wing. www.lilypadilla.com

Drew Paryzer’s work has been seen or developed at the Roundabout Theatre, The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and Fusebox Festival. Plays include “Loverboy” (UT New Theatre 2018), “Al-Halqa (is that how it’s pronounced),” and “Alter” (National New Play Network MFA Playwrights’ Conference). Devised work includes “FinalCon” (Austin Critics’ Table Award nomination) and “Intro to Being Here,” for which he co-created the companion video game. Current projects include “Muzzle Tough,” a “playable play” using audience-interactive VR to help tell the coming-of-age story of a grandchild of Holocaust survivors. BA: Sarah Lawrence College, where he was a recipient of the Lipkin Prize. MFA: The University of Texas at Austin.

Lauren Wimmer’s plays have been developed or produced by Cave Theatre Co., Sewanee Writers’ Conference, Theater for the New City, Swarm Artist Residency, Campfire Theatre Festival, Ars Nova’s ANT Fest, The Annoyance, Theater Masters’ National MFA Playwrights Festival, and Mildred’s Umbrella Theatre Company. She is a graduate of The Second City’s Conservatory & Writing Programs and the Sitka Fellows Program. Lauren earned her BA in Theatre from Sarah Lawrence College and her MFA in Dramatic Writing from Carnegie Mellon University where she was the recipient of the Jean & Samuel Elgart ACS Legacy Fellowship and the Mary Marlin Fisher Playwriting Award.

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.