



**THEATREWORKS SILICON VALLEY GATHERS  
PLAYWRIGHTS AND COMPOSERS FOR  
18TH ANNUAL NEW WORKS FESTIVAL**

**August 9 – 18, 2019**

Lucie Stern Theatre, Palo Alto

PALO ALTO, CA (20 June 2019) — Lovers of new theatre will gather this August for an advance look at tomorrow’s hits at **TheatreWorks Silicon Valley’s 2019 New Works Festival** at Palo Alto’s Lucie Stern Theatre. This unique festival offers audiences an extraordinary opportunity to experience new plays and musicals in their early stages of development, and hear about the creative process in a “Meet the Artists” panel discussion. With multiple performances of each work, playwrights and composers are able to revise and refine their shows during the festival, allowing audiences to view the exciting evolution of brand new pieces of theatre. The popular festival runs **August 9 – 18, 2019** at the **Lucie Stern Theatre**, 1305 Middlefield Rd., Palo Alto. Festival passes (\$65 general/\$49 season subscribers) and single event tickets (\$20) can be purchased online at **theatreworks.org** or by calling **(650) 463-1960**.

Among the musical highlights for 2019: a new musical based on a short story by Willa Cather by the creators of *Tuck Everlasting* and a haunting new musical exploring racial tensions in the past and present. Plays include a touching drama about family, a madcap farce about a tea shop, and a frank and feminist play about a doctor who revolutionized women’s healthcare. Other events at the 18th Annual New Works Festival include a special keynote address to kick off the Festival, the opportunity to hear first-hand about the creative process in a “Meet the Artists” panel discussion, and a presentation by the playwrights of tomorrow (winners of 1440 Countdown, TheatreWorks Education Department’s 24-hour playwriting festival for high school students).

The Festival lineup is as follows:

**READINGS OF MUSICALS:**

**A Heartland Romance  
REVIVAL  
Music and Book by Chris Miller  
Book and Lyrics by Nathan Tysen  
Based on the short story *Eric Hermansson's Soul* by Willa Cather  
Co-commission with Playwrights Horizons, New York  
Directed by Kent Nicholson  
Musical direction by William Liberatore  
8/10 @ 8pm • 8/14 @ 8pm • 8/17 @ 12pm**

The authors of Broadway's *Tuck Everlasting* spin a romantic musical drama across the vast prairies of 19<sup>th</sup> century Nebraska. This sweet, longing tale of a New England socialite drawn to a rough-hewn Norwegian fiddler is told with wry humor, and sung to an engaging, western-tinged score.

*Revival* was commissioned by Playwrights Horizons, New York, New York and TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, California with funds provided by The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust.

**Chris Miller** (Music & Book) is the composer of Broadway's *Tuck Everlasting*. Miller's Off-Broadway credits include *The Burnt Part Boys* and *Fugitive Songs*. His TV credits include songs for "Sesame Street," "Elmo's World," & "The Electric Company."

**Nathan Tysen** (Book and Lyrics) is the lyricist for Broadway's *Tuck Everlasting* and co-lyricist for Broadway's *Amélie*. His Off-Broadway credits include *The Burnt Part Boys*, *Fugitive Songs*, and *Stars of David*. His work has been seen across the country at regional theatres including *Paradise Square* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, *Stillwater* at Kansas City Repertory Theatre with his band Joe's Pet Project, and *The Mysteries of Harris Burdick* at Barrington Stage Company. TV credits include "Sesame Street," "Elmo's World," and "The Electric Company."

**Kent Nicholson** (Director) returns to TheatreWorks Silicon Valley where he acted as Director of New Works. His TheatreWorks direction credits include *Grey Gardens* (2008), *Ambition Facing West* (2007), *Vincent in Brixton* (2005), *All My Sons* (2004), *Cubamor* (2013 New Works Festival), *How to Write a New Book for the Bible* (2010 New Works Festival), and *Ernest Shackleton Loves Me* (2009 New Works Festival). He has directed in New York at The Sheen Center, Prospect Theater Company, NYMF, and Rattlestick Playwrights Theater. Regional credits include Berkeley Rep, Seattle Rep, Village Theater, TUTS, South Coast Rep, The Old Globe, and CATF. He is currently the Associate Producer for Musical Theater at Playwrights Horizons.

**William Liberatore** (Musical Director) is TheatreWorks's Resident Musical Director and has conducted more than 40 shows, including *Tuck Everlasting*, *Fun Home*, *The Prince of Egypt*,

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*Rags, The Life of the Party, Sweeney Todd, Once on This Island (TBA Award), Crowns, Ragtime, and Pacific Overtures.*

**A Haunting New Musical**  
**IRON JOHN, AN AMERICAN GHOST STORY**  
**Book and Lyrics by Rebecca Hart**  
**Book and Music by Jacinth Greywoode**  
**Directed by Ken Savage**  
**Musical direction by Sarah Hirsch**  
**8/11 @ 7pm • 8/15 @ 8pm • 8/18 @ 7pm**

Small town America, 1915—an Irish housemaid falls for an African-American blacksmith. A century later a rebellious white debutante befriends a mixed-race neighbor. Will the outcome be the same? Weaving past and present, this poignant new musical explores a haunting legacy of racism buried but not forgotten.

**Rebecca Hart** (Book & Lyrics) recently played Jessie in the Public National Mobile Unit tour of *Sweat* and released her album “The Magician’s Daughter” at the Rockwood Music Hall.

**Jacinth Greywoode** (Book & Music) is a Brooklyn-based composer of classical and theater music. Recent work includes *Master*, a short-form opera in collaboration with Deepali Gupta and America Opera Projects; *G’day, Ivan*, a musical farce based on the short stories of Nikolai Gogol; and an upcoming opera commission by Cerise Jacobs/White Snake Projects.

**Ken Savage** (Director) is a San Francisco theatre director and Associate Producer at American Conservatory Theater. In development: *Red Waters* (EDM musical about pirate queen Ching Shih), *Co-Founders* (Oakland hip hop tech musical), and *Gravity: A New(tonian) Musical* (2017 O’Neill Finalist, 2016 TheatreWorks New Works Festival).

**Sarah Hirsch’s** (Musical Director) credits include *The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Santa Clara University), *West Side Story* (McCallum Fine Arts Academy), *Company* (Nittany Theatre at the Barn), *Parade* (FUSE Productions), and *See What I Wanna See* (Yale Cabaret).

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**READINGS OF PLAYS:**

**A Journey Across Generations**  
**FATHER/DAUGHTER**  
**By Kait Kerrigan**  
**Directed by Jessica Bird Beza**  
**8/16 @ 8pm • 8/18 @ 3pm**

In this funny, warm-hearted, and wonderfully human play about lovers, fathers, daughters, and the fragile bonds between them, two actors play very different generations in the same family. They chart the ups and downs of relationships found, lost, and everlasting.

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**Kait Kerrigan** (Playwright) is an award-winning bookwriter, lyricist, and playwright. Off-Broadway: *The Mad Ones*, *Henry and Mudge*. Other musicals and plays *The Bad Years*, *Republic*, *Irena*, *Rosie Revere*, *Engineer & Friends*, *EarthRise*, *Disaster Relief*, *Imaginary Love*, and *Transit*. Her work has been developed by La Jolla, Kennedy Center, Goodspeed, and others.

**Jessica Bird Beza** (Director) was Associate Director on the Tony Award-winning Broadway musical *Come From Away*. She has directed or assisted at La Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe, ACT, Ford's Theatre, Seattle Rep, Playwrights Foundation, San Diego Rep, Moving Arts, New Village Arts and others.

**A British Breakfast Farce**  
**THE IMPERIALISTS**  
**By Lynn Rosen**  
**Directed by Christian Parker**  
**8/13 @ 8pm • 8/17 @ 4pm**

A British teashop in Brooklyn? Where better to brew this broad, madcap farce about a daughter desperate to rescue her addled Dad from his colonial memories. With a *Noises Off* flair, this door-slamming romp sets old-school against new-wave in a hilarious quest for royalty and relevance.

**Lynn Rosen's** (Playwright) plays have been produced by: TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, SF Playhouse, New Georges, Rivendell Theatre, Women's Project, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Baltimore Centerstage, Studio Theatre, Working Theater, ATL, among others. Current commissions include TheatreWorks Silicon Valley (*Gurley!*), EST/Sloan, Red Bull Theater.

**Christian Parker** (Director) is a director, dramaturg, and professor at the Columbia University School of the Arts Theatre program. He was Associate Artistic Director of the Atlantic Theater Company for 14 years and has directed plays by Tina Howe, Ken Weitzman, Leslie Ayzavian, Rolin Jones, David Auburn, Jeff Whitty, Cusi Cram, and others. Most recently he staged David Hare's *Skylight* for Gulfshore Playhouse.

**Uncharted Territory**  
**NAN, AND THE LOWER BODY (the pap smear play)**  
**By Jessica Dickey**  
**Directed by Giovanna Sardelli**  
**8/11 @ 3pm • 8/17 @ 8pm**

In the mid-60s, Dr. George Papanicolaou invented the Pap smear, saving many lives but creating moral dilemmas in the process. In this frank and feminist play, good-humored Dr. Pap has great mysteries to unravel and a bright assistant with dark secrets to hide.

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*Nan, and The Lower Body (The Pap Smear Play)* was originally commissioned by the Manhattan Theatre Club, Lynne Meadow, Artistic Director, Barry Grove, Executive Producer with funds provided by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

**Jessie Dickey's** (Playwright) most recent plays are *The Convent* (premiered Off-Broadway with Rattlestick and Rising Phoenix) and *The Rembrandt* (sold-out run at Steppenwolf starring John Mahoney). Other plays Off-Broadway in New York and around the country: *The Amish Project*, *Charles Ives Take Me Home*, and *Row After Row*. #

**Giovanna Sardelli** (Director) recently directed Rajiv Joseph's *Archduke* for TheatreWorks as well as the World Premiere at the Mark Taper Forum, and the Regional Premiere of *They Promised Her the Moon* (New Works Festival 2018) for The Old Globe which will be seen at TheatreWorks later this season. She'll be directing the World Premieres of Heidi Armbruster's *Mrs. Christie* for Dorset Theatre Festival this August and Catya McMullen's *Georgia Merching is Dead* for Ensemble Studio Theatre in the Fall.

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### SPECIAL EVENTS:

**Keynote Address**  
**STORYTELLING: THE AGONY AND THE ECSTASY**  
**By Amy Ayoub**  
**8/9 @ 8pm**

Celebrating the power of a story to change a conversation, change laws, and change lives, TheatreWorks presents Amy Ayoub as its 2019 New Works Festival Keynote Speaker. A political powerhouse with a dark secret, she risked everything when she chose to tell her personal survivor story in the hopes of saving other women.

**Amy Ayoub** (Keynote Speaker) is a lifelong Las Vegan who combined her passion for public speaking and helping others to found *The Zen Speaker*, a public speaking coaching company. Amy helps clients on their journey to share their stories, find peace behind the podium, and move audiences to action. Amy has been appointed by various Nevada Governors and Senators to four state and federal commissions. She was the first female appointed to the Athletic Commission, better known as the boxing commission. In February 2013, she testified before the Nevada State Assembly and Senate Judiciary Committees, using her personally inspiring survivor story in support of Assembly Bill 67, which increased penalties for those convicted of sex trafficking. Her life story is one of resilience, inspiration and accomplishment and has prompted Culture Dog Films to create a recently-released documentary, "The Zen Speaker: Breaking the Silence," resonating with anyone interested in turning their personal adversity into personal triumph.

**MEET THE ARTISTS**  
**8/18 @ 12pm**

The Festival's featured playwrights and composers share their anecdotes and insights into creating brave new works for American theatre. Audiences are invited to bring questions and

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become a part of the conversation with writers who are shaping the theatre. This event will include a special presentation by the playwrights of tomorrow, the winners of 1440 Countdown, TheatreWorks Education Department's 24-hour playwriting festival for high school students.

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The **2019 New Works Festival** is presented by TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's **New Works Initiative**. The program seeks out new material and serves as a collaborative matchmaker for writers and composers. The Festival has launched many new works onto TheatreWorks's main stage and to national productions, including Broadway's Tony Award-winning Best Musical *Memphis*. The Festival has given playgoers their first looks at new works by such luminaries as Stephen Schwartz, Andrew Lippa, Joe DiPietro, David Hein & Irene Sankoff, Marsha Norman, Paul Gordon, Rajiv Joseph, and Beth Henley.

TheatreWorks's Director of New Works **Giovanna Sardelli** has directed and developed plays throughout the country. Among Sardelli's directing credits at TheatreWorks are the 2019 production of Rajiv Joseph's *Archduke*, 2018 production of *FINKS*, the 2016 productions of *The Velocity of Autumn* and *Crimes of the Heart*, the 2015 production of Rajiv Joseph's *The Lake Effect*, the 2013 production of *Somewhere* by Matthew Lopez, and the 2011 World Premiere of Joseph's *The North Pool*. Besides her well-received productions with TheatreWorks, Sardelli also directed the 2018 Obie Award-winning production of Rajiv Joseph's *Describe the Night*, the World Premiere of Theresa Rebeck's *Dead Accounts*, and Rajiv Joseph's first professional production, *Huck & Holden*, as well the World Premieres for his *Archduke*, *All This Intimacy*, *The Leopard and the Fox*, *The North Pool*, and *Animals Out of Paper* for which she was awarded the Joe A. Callaway Award for Best Direction. She has worked Off-Broadway at many theatres and has directed numerous productions for Dorset Theatre Festival, where she is Resident Director, as well as Actors' Theatre of Louisville, The Old Globe, Hartford Stage, and others. Sardelli has also developed plays at centers around the country including the Sundance Theatre Lab, The O'Neill Theater Center, Playwrights' Center, New York Stage & Film, and Ensemble Studio Theatre. Sardelli's upcoming directing projects include the World Premiere of Heidi Armbruster's *Mrs. Christie* at Dorset Theatre Festival and the World Premiere of Catya McMullen's *Georgia Merching is Dead* at Ensemble Studio Theater. Sardelli directed the highly-acclaimed Regional Premiere of Laurel Ollstein's *They Promised Her the Moon* at the

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Old Globe Theatre and will return to direct the play's Northern California Premiere at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley in March 2020.

Celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season, **TheatreWorks Silicon Valley** is the recipient of the 2019 Regional Theatre Tony Award. With over 100,000 patrons per year, the Palo Alto-based theatre company has captured a national reputation for artistic innovation and integrity, often presenting Bay Area theatregoers with their first look at acclaimed musicals, comedies, and dramas, directed by award-winning local and guest directors, and performed by professional actors cast locally and from across the country. TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's New Works Festival is sponsored by the National Alliance for Musical Theatre and Steinberg Charitable Trust.

### FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

**WHAT:** Hundreds of lovers of new theatre will gather this August for an advance look at tomorrow's hits at **TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's 2019 New Works Festival**. This unique festival offers audiences an extraordinary opportunity to experience new plays and musicals in their early stages of development and hear about the creative process in a "Meet the Artists" panel discussion. This festival will feature two musicals and three plays as well as special events. Musicals will include *Revival*, an adaptation of Willa Cather's short story *Eric Hermannson's Soul* by the creators of *Tuck Everlasting*, Chris Miller (music & book) and Nathan Tysen (lyrics & book), and *Iron John, An American Ghost Story* by Jacinth Laurel Greywoode (music & book) and Rebecca Hart (lyrics & book). The plays include *Nan and the Lower Body (the pap smear play)* by Jessica Dickey, *The Imperialists* by Lynn Rosen, and *Father/Daughter* by Kait Kerrigan.

**WHEN:** **August 9 – 18, 2019**

**WHERE:** **TheatreWorks at Lucie Stern Theatre**, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto

**TICKETS:** For Festival Passes (\$65 general/\$49 for season subscribers) and single event tickets (\$20), the public may call **(650) 463-1960** or visit **theatreworks.org**.

**PRESS:** Contact Lauren Goldfarb, Carla Befera & Co.  
650.327.1200 | [lauren@cb-pr.com](mailto:lauren@cb-pr.com)

**PHOTOS:** Downloadable high-res photos are available here:  
<http://www.cbpr.co/press/newworks2019>