

THEATREWORKS SILICON VALLEY STREAMS NEW WORKS FESTIVAL ONLINE April 23 – May 15, 2021

PALO ALTO, CA (24 March 2021) — TheatreWorks Silicon Valley will stream an advance look at tomorrow's hits in **New Works Festival Online**. Transforming the Tony Award-winning company's hit annual festival into a virtual experience, **New Works Festival Online** offers digital audiences an extraordinary opportunity to view new plays and selections from new musicals, and learn more about the development process in conversations with the playwrights. **New Works Festival Online** runs **April 23 – May 15, 2021** with performances streaming live. Streaming access is available at pay what you can pricing (\$10 minimum for a festival pass) at theatreworks.org.

“During this time of uncertainty for the arts, TheatreWorks has continued to foster innovative and boundary-breaking new plays and musicals,” said TheatreWorks Artistic Associate and Director of New Works **Giovanna Sardelli**. “We can’t wait to share these incredible artists and their projects. We’re thrilled to resume the New Works Festival once again, this time online!”

Among the musical highlights for the online festival: a sneak peek at the hit indie folk-rock musical *Lizard Boy*, being revisited with updated material before it launches TheatreWorks’ 51st season this fall, and an innovative, digital theatre/rap piece inspired by the themes from *The Merchant of Venice* by the acclaimed group Bay Area Theatre Cypher. Plays include two works which examine the impact and ramifications of the Muslim travel ban—one a comedy exploring friendship in the time of war and the other a drama celebrating the human spirit during crises that divide—as well as a semi-autobiographical dance theatre piece about memory, grief, forgiveness, and freedom.

New Works Festival Online begins Friday, April 23 with a **Kickoff Event**, celebrating TheatreWorks Silicon Valley’s current commissions and giving an advance peek at intriguing

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works in progress. Commissioned playwrights, composers, and theatre makers will speak about their projects and may present selections from their shows, including songs, monologues, or scenes. These artists include **Min Kahng** (*The Four Immigrants: An American Musical Manga*), **The Kilbanes** (*Weightless*), **Lynn Rosen** (*The Imperialists*), **Geetha Reddy** (*Safe House*), and **Mansa Ra** (*Too Heavy for Your Pocket*).

Information about additional on-demand events will be available at a later date—these events will include a conversation with *A Distinct Society* playwright **Kareem Fahmy** and *As Soon As Impossible* playwright **Betty Shamieh** discussing their plays about the Muslim ban, and a conversation with TheatreWorks Director of Community Partnerships and Casting Director **Jeffrey Lo** and *Lizard Boy* playwright/composer-lyricist/actor **Justin Huertas** about working as Filipino-American theatre artists.

The Festival lineup is as follows:

READINGS OF MUSICALS:

Selections From **CURRENCY**

Conceived by Dan Wolf

Developed with and directed by Sean San José

Performed and written by Dan Wolf, Phil Wong, DelinaDream, RyanNicole, Juan Amador

Composed by Keith Pinto

Saturday, April 24 at 2pm Pacific | 5pm Eastern

Presented by Playwrights Foundation in partnership with National Center for New Plays, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, and Bay Area Theatre Cypher

This presentation will include Parts 1 & 2 of a three-part series of long form theatrical music videos. Part 1 was created at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley in January 2021 and Part 2 during the Rough Reading process at Playwrights Foundation.

Currency smashes open *The Merchant of Venice* and places Shylock at the center of our world, not as a caricature but instead as a reflection of the immigrant, working class, citizens of our port cities. *Currency* visits the marketplaces of West Oakland, Hong Kong, Managua, Downtown LA, and Venice to connect those "othered" by society with the larger issues of place, race, privilege, ownership, violence, and revolution.

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Dan Wolf (Writer/Performer) is a hip-hop artist who works with rap, theatre, personal narrative, and history to give voice to the problematic world we live in. His multi-sensory work draws its power from years of experience working, teaching, and performing with the critically acclaimed hip-hop music and theatre collective Felonious. His projects have travelled all around the world from concert halls to museums to schools and memorial sites where he engages history and culture as a prompt to make vital music and theatre that can only live in this moment. He is a Resident Playwright at the Playwrights Foundation in San Francisco and is the co-founder of Bay Area Theatre Cypher, a collective of performers who live on the crossfader of hip hop, theatre, activism, and community.

RyanNicole (Writer/Performer) creates experiences that intersect art and activism, using her career in media to empower community. Ryan is featured on Alphabet Rockers' Grammy-nominated album *The Love*, TEDx San Francisco, ESPN's "NBA Christmas" with Daveed Diggs, and has performed for President Barack Obama. A California State Assembly-recognized artist, she is the Founder of The HAVEN Project, a cultural media housing justice initiative, and FITTRIP, a travel fitness and wellness guide. She was Executive Director of Youth Movement Records, where she supported the aspirations of thousands of young people seeking careers in the arts. Ryan has been a playwright-in-residence at New York's Public Theater through the BARS workshop, and has been selected to present original works for the National Performance Network & National American Musical Theater Festival.

Phil Wong (Writer/Performer) is a theatre artist, writer, and musician from Oakland, CA aka xučyun (unceded Chochenyo Ohlone land). Wong was seen in TheatreWorks' World Premiere of *Four Immigrants: An American Musical Manga* and in its *Oskar* school tours. He is a graduate of Oberlin College, a member of the first Bay Area #BARS Cohort, and received physical theatre training at the Accademia dell' Arte in Arezzo, Italy. Phil is also co-founder of Bay Area Theatre Cypher.

Sean San José (Developer/Director) is a writer, director, performer, and co-founder of Campo Santo, a new performances company for People of Color in San Francisco. Founded in 1996, Campo Santo is an award-winning group committed to developing new performance and to nurturing People of Color centered new audiences and has premiered nearly 100 new pieces.

DelinaDream (Writer/Performer) is a multi-hyphenate whose work has been commissioned/presented by Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, National Performance Network, CounterPulse Theater, The Black Choreographers Festival, LA Women's Theater Festival, Dance Brigade's D.I.R.T Festival, AfroSolo Festival and more. She toured the U.S. and Western Europe with The Living Word Project and Youth Speaks, and choreographed and danced for Nas & Damian Marley, Kanye West's Sunday Service at Coachella and Chance the Rapper on SNL among others. Delina recently transitioned into the TV/Film industry, supporting EP's with shows on HBO, Fox, Hulu, Disney/Freeform, ABC and NBC.

Juan Amador (Writer/Performer) is an actor, emcee, DJ, and member of Campo Santo. Amador has performed with leading regional theatres including Huntington Theatre Company, Hartford Stage, and Alley Theatre and his Bay Area theatre credits include performances at California

Shakespeare Festival, Magic Theatre, San Jose Stage, Campo Santo, Ubuntu Theater Project, Z Space, and Cutting Ball Theater.

Keith Pinto (Composer) is a multi-disciplinary artist from the Peninsula. As Ken Primo he has produced music for Bay Area Theatre Cypher's "Episode One: Community" and "8 Bars for the Reckoning" videos, as well as three "Just the Facts" videos inspired by 2020 California Ballot Measures for KQED's "Ballots and Brews." With Emcee Infinite (Carlos Aguirre) he produced "White Boy, Black Keys, Brown Rapper," a hip hop album sampled from the music of the rock duo The Black Keys, as well as the remix album "WhiteBlackBrown - the Remixes." He is co-founder of the award-winning hip hop band and theatre company, Felonious.

Ashley Smiley (Dramaturg/ Production Assistant) is a full spectrum creator with a focus on the living written word. Smiley finds her creative home with Campo Santo. Smiley is a 2020 YBCA100 Honoree and serves as the Theatre Manager for the Bayview Opera House. She is currently working on "Oh Really?!", a 12-week radio series with CCA Wattis that will also debut *The Dub Notes*. Smiley holds a B.A. in Performing Arts and Social Justice and an M.A. in Drama, and will begin her doctoral program at the Graduate Theological Union joining the Historic and Cultural Studies in Religion Program with a concentration in Art and Religion.

Bay Area Theatre Cypher, co-founded in 2019 by Dan Wolf and Phil Wong, is a creative hub for multi-hyphenate hip hop theatre artists that prioritizes equity, radical discussion, and social justice. The Cypher was created as a space for theatre makers to express their issues and frustrations plaguing the local and national theatre community (institutional racism, wage inequality, gender imbalance, unsafe spaces, etc.) through the lens of hip hop. It has since grown to be an artist-centric collective that creates rap videos, live performances, and full length theatrical projects (virtual and in-person).

Founded in 1976, **Playwrights Foundation** (PF) is today widely recognized as one of the top organizations in the United States dedicated to the creative development and career acceleration of contemporary playwrights. Its mission is to support and champion diverse contemporary playwrights in the creation of new works to sustain theatre as a vital, dynamic art form. To date, PF has served more than 500 exceptionally gifted emerging and mid-career writers as they reach for national prominence. Its programs include: the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Resident Playwrights Initiative, Producing Partners Initiative, and its mentorship program, which provides training and experience to young artists and arts administrators, and helps them advance their careers.

Selections From
LIZARD BOY

Book, Music, Lyrics by Justin Huertas

Directed by Brandon Ivie

Featuring Justin Huertas, Kirsten "Kiki" deLohr Helland, William A. Williams

Saturday, April 24 at 5pm Pacific | 8pm Eastern

Presentation followed by conversation with creative team

Equal parts comic book lore, coming-of-age love story and irrepressible tunes, audiences should expect the unexpected in this sensational new indie rock musical. The fast-moving plot recounts the mysterious event that changed Trevor's life forever, launching him into a life-long search for identity and acceptance. Is he a freak or a hero? Triple-threat artist Justin Huertas and his original cast take the stage for one fateful night of adventure, music, and love set on the streets of Seattle.

Justin Huertas (Playwright/Composer-Lyricist/Performer) is a Seattle-based award-winning playwright, composer-lyricist, actor, and musician. His original musical *Lizard Boy* world-premiered at Seattle Rep, toured to Diversionary Theatre, was presented at NAMT's Festival of New Musicals, and returns to the stage this fall at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley. Justin also wrote *The Last World Octopus Wrestling Champion* (co-composed with Steven Tran) for ArtsWest Playhouse & Gallery, and *Lydia & the Troll* (co-created by Ameenah Kaplan) for Seattle Rep. He is composer-lyricist for *Howl's Moving Castle* (Book-It Repertory Theatre) and *The Lamplighter* (co-written with Kirsten "Kiki" deLoehr Helland and Sara Porkalob). Justin is currently under commission at Seattle Rep, the 5th Avenue Theatre, ArtsWest Playhouse & Gallery, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Kirsten "Kiki" deLoehr Helland (Siren) is a Seattle-based award-winning performer. Helland's theatre credits include performances onstage at 5th Avenue Theatre, Village Theatre, ArtsWest, and Seattle Rep (in the World Premiere of *Lizard Boy*), and in the film *Laggies*. Helland is co-writer of *The Lamplighter* (with Justin Huertas and Sara Porkalob).

William A. Williams (Cary) is a California native musician/actor now based in New York City. He originated the role of Cary in *Lizard Boy* at Seattle Rep, for which he won a Gregory Award for best supporting actor. He has also acted in productions at Contemporary Classics, Village Theatre, and Seattle Shakespeare Company, played guitar for shows at ArtsWest and Balagan Theatre, and played bass guitar for The Iceman Lab at Target Margin Theater.

Brandon Ivie (Director) is currently the Associate Artistic Director at Village Theatre in Seattle. He directed the World Premieres of *Lizard Boy*, *The Noteworthy Life of Howard Barnes*, *Jasper in Deadland*, *String*, *The Yellow Wood*, and *The Hinterlands*. His Broadway credits include associate directing *A Christmas Story* and *First Date*, dramaturgy for *Catch Me If You Can*, and assisting the writers of *Next to Normal*. He has worked on productions at leading theatres across the country including The Public Theater/Joe's Pub, HERE Arts Center, Prospect Theatre Company, Paper Mill Playhouse, Signature Theatre, Barrington Stage Company, Goodspeed Musicals, Ford's Theatre, The Kennedy Center, Seattle Rep, Diversionary Theatre, and The 5th Avenue Theatre where he spent four seasons as Casting Director. Ivie is the Drama League Directing Fellow, holds the Charles Abbott Directing Fellowship, and participated in the LCT Directors Lab.

READINGS OF PLAYS:

AS SOON AS IMPOSSIBLE

By Betty Shamieh
Directed by Samer Al-Saber
Saturday, May 1 at 5pm Pacific | 8pm Eastern

A collaboration with Stanford University Department of Theater and Performance Studies and
Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity

Reading followed by talk with playwright Betty Shamieh

As Soon As Impossible is a comedy that explores the relationship between two older men, Ramsey and Arthur, an Arab-American and a WASP. Their annual summer fishing trip is interrupted by the unexpected appearance of Ramsey's granddaughter, Layla, who claims to be on the run. With Arthur's suspicions raised, Ramsey may get more than he bargained for when he begins to plan Arthur a surprise birthday party. A play about friendship in a time of war, ***As Soon As Impossible*** was originally commissioned and developed with the support of the Time Warner Commissioning Program.

Born and raised in the Bay Area, **Betty Shamieh** (Playwright) is an Arab-American playwright. Her productions include *The Black Eyed* (New York Theatre Workshop & The Magic Theatre), *Territories* (The Magic Theatre), *Fit for a Queen* (Classical Theatre of Harlem), and *Roar* (The New Group). A graduate of Harvard College and the Yale School of Drama, she was named a UNESCO Young Artist for Intercultural Dialogue and a Guggenheim Fellow in Creative Arts. She is a Mellon Foundation Playwright-in-Residence at the Classical Theatre of Harlem and a 2021 Denning Visiting Artist at Stanford University.

Samer Al-Saber (Director) is Assistant Professor of Theatre and Performance Studies at Stanford University, as well as a director, writer, and scholar. His expertise comprises solving casting dilemmas, project management, setting up collaborations, and advancing theoretical/critical concepts to address immediate problems in the entertainment fields. His written work has appeared in *Alt.Theatre*, *Performance Paradigm*, *Critical Survey*, *Theatre Survey*, and other academic and trade venues, including the anthology *Stories Under Occupation and Other Plays from Palestine*, co-edited with Gary English. As director, his work has been seen in the U.S., Canada, Europe, and the Middle East and includes the Middle Eastern premiere of Arthur Milner's *Facts* and an Arabic adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

A DISTINCT SOCIETY
By Kareem Fahmy
Directed by Giovanna Sardelli
Saturday, May 8 at 5pm Pacific | 8pm Eastern

Reading followed by talk with playwright Kareem Fahmy

A quiet library that straddles the border of the U.S. and Canada becomes an unlikely crucible for five people from around the world. When an Iranian family, whose members are separated from one another by the "Muslim ban," use the library as a meeting place, the head librarian, a U.S.

border patrol officer, and a local teenager have to choose between breaking the law and saving themselves.

Kareem Fahmy (Playwright) is a Canadian-born playwright and director of Egyptian descent. His plays, which include *American Fast*, *A Distinct Society*, *The Triumphant*, *Pareidolia*, *The In-Between*, and an adaptation of the acclaimed Egyptian novel *The Yacoubian Building*, have been developed at theatres nationwide. His fellowships/Residencies include Sundance Theatre Lab, TCG Rising Leader of Color, Oregon Shakespeare Festival (Phil Killian Directing Fellow), The O'Neill (National Directors Fellow), Second Stage (Van Lier Directing Fellow), Soho Rep (Writer/Director Lab), Lincoln Center (Directors Lab), New York Theater Workshop (Emerging Artist Fellow). Fahmy is the co-founder of the Middle Eastern American Writers Lab at The Lark and of Maia Directors, a consulting group for organizations and artists engaging with stories from the Middle East. Fahmy received an MFA in Directing from Columbia University.

Giovanna Sardelli (Director) is TheatreWorks' Artistic Associate and Director of New Works. Her many directing credits at TheatreWorks include the March 2020 Northern California Premiere of *They Promised Her the Moon*, as well as Pulitzer Prize finalist Rajiv Joseph's *Archduke* (2019), *FINKS* (2018), *The Velocity of Autumn* and *Crimes of the Heart* (2016), Joseph's *The Lake Effect* (2015), *Somewhere* by Matthew Lopez (2013), and the World Premiere of Joseph's *The North Pool* (2011). Sardelli is set to direct TheatreWorks' upcoming productions of *It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* and *Nan and the Lower Body* in the company's 51st season.

pas de deux (lost my shoe)

Written and performed by Lisa Ramirez

Directed by Jeffrey Lo

Video production by Steven Muterspaugh

Saturday, May 15 at 2pm Pacific | 5pm Eastern

Performance followed by talk with Lisa Ramirez

This semi-autobiographical dance theatre piece unpeels memory, grief, forgiveness, and freedom, revealing sibling bonds that are as layered, complex and true as all great loves. Freshly recovering from her own addiction, Lisa Ramirez lost her younger brother, a principal dancer with the Oakland ballet, to alcoholism. To confront and honor his death, she enrolled in a ballet class, attempting to learn the dances he had performed. Retracing his steps led her through the complicated terrain of their childhood, as she grappled with why she survived, and he didn't. The play was originally developed at the Cherry Lane Theatre's Mentor Project in New York.

Lisa Ramirez (Playwright/ Performer) recently finished a two-year collaboration of *More Than Grapes* with Jeffrey Lo and Carlos Aguirre, which received a World Premiere by TheatreFIRST directed by Sean San José. Her play *Exit the Cuckoo (nanny in motherland)* was directed by Colman Domingo and given its World Premiere at the Working Theater in NYC. Her dance theatre piece *Art of Memory* was commissioned by Company SoGoNo and presented at the 3-Legged Dog in New York. Ramirez's *To the Bone* was commissioned by Working Theater and

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given its World Premiere at the Cherry Lane Theatre, directed by Lisa Peterson. Her solo play *pas de deux (lost my shoe)* was part of Cherry Lane Theatre Mentor Project and her work *In the Mountains* was commissioned by The Workshop Theater. Oakland Theater Project commissioned and presented the World Premiere of Ramirez's *Down Here Below*, an adaptation of Maxim Gorky's *The Lower Depths*. Ramirez is currently working on an Oakland Theater Project commission of *sAiNt jOaN (burn/burn/burn)*, directed by Michael Moran.

Jeffrey Lo (Director) is a Filipino-American playwright and director who helmed TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's productions of *The Language Archive* and *The Santaland Diaries*. He is the recipient of the Leigh Weimers Emerging Artist Award, the Emerging Artist Laureate by Arts Council Silicon Valley and Theatre Bay Area Director's TITAN Award. His plays have been produced and workshopped at The BindleStiff Studio, City Lights Theater Company, and The Custom Made Theatre Company. His play *Writing Fragments Home* was a finalist for the Bay Area Playwright's Conference and a semi-finalist for the O'Neill Playwright's Conference. Recent directing credits include *Vietgone* at Capital Stage, *Peter and the Starcatcher* at Hillbarn Theatre, *The Crucible*, *Yellow Face*, and *Dead Man's Cell Phone* at Los Altos Stage Company, *Uncle Vanya* at the Pear Theatre (BATCC award for Best Production), *Eurydice* at Palo Alto Players (TBA Awards finalist for Best Direction) and *The Drunken City* at Renegade Theatre Experiment. Lo has also worked with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, San Jose Repertory Theatre, and is a company member of Ferocious Lotus Theatre Company and San Francisco Playground. In addition to his work in theatre he works as an educator and advocate for issues of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and has served as a grant panelist for the Zellerbach Family Foundation, Silicon Valley Creates and Theatre Bay Area. He is the Director of Community Partnerships and Casting Director at the Tony Award Winning TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, a graduate of the Multicultural Arts Leadership Institute and a proud alumnus of the UC Irvine Drama Department. Jeffrey is also a founding member of OUR DIGITAL STORIES. Lo is set to direct TheatreWorks' upcoming production of *Queen* in its 51st season.

Stephen Muterspaugh (Video Production) has appeared on the TheatreWorks stage in *Frost/Nixon*, *Cyrano*, and *The Country House* as well as in *Tiny Houses* in the 2017 New Works Festival. Regional credits include Southwest Shakespeare Co., Utah Shakespeare Festival, Creede Repertory Theatre, Pacific Conservatory Theatre, Powerhouse Theater, and Geva Theatre Center. He has appeared locally with Jewel Theatre Co., San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, California Conservatory Theatre, Livermore Shakespeare Festival, Second Wind Productions, and Marin Shakespeare Co. When not onstage, Mr. Muterspaugh serves as the Artistic Digital Production and Operations Manager/Company Manager at TheatreWorks.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

KICKOFF EVENT
Friday, April 23 at 6pm Pacific | 9pm Eastern

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TheatreWorks celebrates art coming soon to the stage with a presentation of upcoming commissions. Commissioned composers, playwrights, lyricists, and theatre makers will discuss their work and share selections, including songs, monologues, and scenes from their works-in-progress.

Featuring:

Min Kahng

The Kilbanes and Lynn Rosen

Geetha Reddy

Mansa Ra

Min Kahng is an award-winning Bay Area playwright and composer whose works include *The Four Immigrants: An American Musical Manga*, which debuted in TheatreWorks' 2016 New Works Festival and received a hit production at TheatreWorks in 2017 that won seven San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards, including "Entire Production – Bay Area." Kahng's other works include *The Song of the Nightingale*, *Inside Out & Back Again*, and *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon*. Kahng also wrote the NEA-funded project *Story Explorers*, an original musical for young audiences with autism. Kahng has participated in the Djerassi Resident Artists Program, Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor Summer Lab, and TheatreWorks' New Works Festival. He has been a Guest Artist at Harvard University, Stanford University, UC Berkeley, San Jose State University and The San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Kahng is a Resident Playwright at Playwrights Foundation, a member of Theatre for Young Audiences USA's Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Task Force, and a proud member of the Dramatists Guild.

The Kilbanes are a theatrical rock band led by married songwriting duo Kate Kilbane and Dan Moses. Their rock opera *Weightless*, part of the Public Theatre's Under the Radar Festival in January 2019, had its world premiere at Z Space in the spring of 2018 and received the highest rating from the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Their newest piece, *Eddie the Marvelous, Who Will Save the World*, was selected for the O'Neill National Music Conference for 2018. *Eddie* got its start at Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor and was further developed TheatreWorks' 2016 New Works Festival.

Lynn Rosen's 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. Her play *The Imperialists* received a reading at the 2019 TheatreWorks New Works Festival. Recent commissions include TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, EST/Sloan, Red Bull Theater. Rosen is a Resident Playwright at New Dramatists, has sold a pilot to Warner Brothers Horizon, and has developed a pilot with Milestone TV & Film.

Mansa Ra's play *Too Heavy for Your Pocket* received an extended Off-Broadway run presented by Roundabout Theatre Company and has been produced at theatres across the country. Ra is a recipient of the Laurents/Hatcher Foundation Award and 2016 Edgerton Foundation New Play Award, and was honored with the Fellowship of Southern Writers' 2017 Bryan Foundation Award for Drama. He is a part of the writing team for NBC's hit medical drama "New Amsterdam." Commissioned by The Old Globe Theatre, his play *Shutter Sisters* was seen in The Old Globe's Powers New Voices Festival. Ra's play ...*What The End Will Be* was commissioned by Roundabout Theatre Company.

The **New Works Festival Online** 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' 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 and Irene Sankoff, Marsha Norman, Paul Gordon, Rajiv Joseph, and Beth Henley.

Giovanna Sardelli's (TheatreWorks Artistic Associate and Director of New Works) many directing credits at TheatreWorks include the March 2020 Northern California Premiere of *They Promised Her the Moon*, as well as Pulitzer Prize finalist Rajiv Joseph's *Archduke* (2019), *FINKS* (2018), *The Velocity of Autumn* and *Crimes of the Heart* (2016), Joseph's *The Lake Effect* (2015), *Somewhere* by Matthew Lopez (2013), and the World Premiere of Joseph's *The North Pool* (2011). She is an award-winning director who has worked on numerous plays by Rajiv Joseph including the world premiere of *Archduke* (Mark Taper Forum) and *Guards at the Taj* (Geffen Playhouse; 2016 Ovation Award for Best Production of a Play) and the World Premiere of the Obie Award winning play *Describe The Night* (Alley Theatre, Atlantic Theater Company in NYC). She has directed world premieres of plays by Theresa Rebeck, Lynn Rosen, Joe Gilford, Jeff Augustine, Lauren Yee, Zayd Dohrn, Melissa Ross, Lila Rose Kaplan, Matthew Lopez, and Zoe Kazan among others. Sardelli is set to direct TheatreWorks' upcoming productions of *It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* and *Nan and the Lower Body* (seen in the 2019 New Works Festival) in its 51st season.

TheatreWorks Silicon Valley is the recipient of the 2019 Regional Theatre Tony Award. Led by Artistic Director **Tim Bond** and Executive Director **Phil Santora**, the Palo Alto-based theatre company serves more than 100,000 patrons per year and 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. The company's 51st season has been postponed in accordance with global efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus), with TheatreWorks currently scheduled to resume in-person performances in October 2021.

TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's New Works Festival Online is sponsored by The National Endowment for the Arts and J. Lohr Vineyards and Wines.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: **TheatreWorks Silicon Valley** will stream an advance look at tomorrow's hits in **New Works Festival Online**. Transforming the Tony Award-winning company's hit annual festival into a virtual experience, **New Works Festival Online** offers digital audiences an extraordinary opportunity to view new plays and selections from new musicals, and learn more about the development process in conversations with the playwrights.

This online festival will feature two musicals and three plays as well as special events. Musicals will include selections from *Lizard Boy* by Justin Huertas, offering a sneak peek at the hit indie folk-rock musical being revisited with updated material before it launches TheatreWorks' 51st season this fall, and *Currency* by Bay Area Theatre Cypher, smashing open *The Merchant of Venice* through a series of theatrical music videos showcasing theatre and rap. The plays include *As Soon As Impossible* by Betty Shamieh, *A Distinct Society* by Kareem Fahmy, and dance theatre piece *pas de deux (lost my shoe)* by Lisa Ramirez.

WHEN: **April 23 – May 15, 2021**

WHERE: **Online.** Patrons who purchase a pass to the event will be emailed links to stream the programs at home on their computer, SmartTV or other device.

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TICKETS: To purchase a festival pass (pay what you can pricing: \$10 minimum), granting streaming access to all of the festival's events, the public may visit **theatreworks.org**.

PRESS: Contact Lauren Goldfarb, Carla Befera & Co.
lauren@cb-pr.com

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