



THEATER/ARTS/ENTERTAINMENT

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PLAYGROUND ANNOUNCES 2009 BENEFIT & AWARDS NIGHT WITH OCTAVIO SOLIS AND JASSON MINADAKIS

SAN FRANCISCO, (February 23, 2009) - **PlayGround**, the incubator for the next generation of Bay Area playwrights, announces its annual **Benefit & Awards Night** at American Conservatory Theater on **Monday, April 6th, 2009**, with special guests **Octavio Solis** and **Jasson Minadakis**. A tribute to the outstanding playwrights of PlayGround, the evening features an intimate discussion with Solis and Minadakis and the presentation of the 2009 Emerging Playwright Awards, June Anne Baker Prize, and PlayGround Fellowship. Attendees will also be treated to a reception, silent auction, and dinner.

Each year, PlayGround's Benefit & Awards Night recognizes and supports original voices in Bay Area theatre. Past recipients of the awards include playwrights Daniel Heath, Lauren Yee, Molly Rhodes, Geetha Reddy, Tom Swift, Trevor Allen, Aaron Loeb, Kenn Rabin, Maria Rokas, Evelyn Pine, Martha Soukup, and Kristina Goodnight.

Now in its 15th season, PlayGround has become a leader in developing remarkable new work for theater from Bay Area writers. PlayGround alumni have gone on to win both local and national honors for their short and full-length work, including recognition at the Humana Festival, Sundance Festival, Kennedy Center, and the Bay Area Playwrights Festival.

Event: 2009 Benefit & Awards Night with Octavio Solis and Jasson Minadakis
Date/Time: Monday, April 6, 2009; 5.30 - 9.30pm
Location: American Conservatory Theater, 415 Geary Street, San Francisco
Tickets: Individual (\$100/\$175) or table of 10 (\$1,000/\$1,750); call (415)704-3177 or visit www.playground-sf.org
Information: Jim Kleinmann, Artistic Director; 415.704.3177;
jim@playground-sf.org; www.playground-sf.org

ABOUT OCTAVIO SOLIS

Octavio Solis is a playwright and director living in San Francisco. His works *Man of the Flesh*, *Prospect*, *El Paso Blue*, *Santos & Santos*, *La Posada Mágica*, *El Otro*, *Dreamlandia*, *The 7 Visions of Encarnacion*, *Bethlehem*, and *Gibraltar* have been produced at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, New York Summer Play Festival, Dallas Theater Center, Magic Theatre, Intersection for the Arts, South Coast Repertory, San Diego Repertory Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theatre, ShadowLight, Venture Theatre, Latino Chicago Theater Company, La Compania de Albuquerque, Teatro Vista, El Teatro Campesino, Undermain Theatre, Thick Description, Su Teatro, Campo Santo and The Imua! Theatre Company. His collaborative works include *Burning Dreams*, co-written with Julie Hebert and Gina Leishman; *Shiner*, written with Erik Ehn; and

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Great Highway, written with Wendy Weiner. Solis is the recipient of the NEA 1995-97 Playwriting Fellowship, the Kennedy Center's Roger L. Stevens Award, the Will Glickman Playwright Award, a production grant from the Kennedy Center Fund for New American Plays, the 1998 TCG/NEA Theatre Artists in Residence Grant, the 1998 McKnight Fellowship grant from the Playwrights Center in Minneapolis, the 2003 National Latino Playwriting Award, and the 2000-2001 National Theatre Artists Residency Grant from TCG, and the Pew Charitable Trust for Gibraltar at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Octavio is a member of the Dramatists Guild and New Dramatists. He is currently working on commissions for Yale Repertory Theatre and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

ABOUT JASSON MINADAKIS

JASSON MINADAKIS is in his second season as Artistic Director of Marin Theatre Company. He came to MTC from Atlanta where he was the Artistic Director at Actor's Express Theatre Company from 2003-06. From 1994-2002, he was the Producing Artistic Director of Cincinnati Shakespeare Festival, which he co-founded as Fahrenheit Theatre Company. This season he will direct *Frankie & Johnny in the Clair De Lune* and the West Coast premieres of Conor McPherson's *The Seafarer* and Octavio Solis' *Lydia*. At MTC he has directed *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Said Saïd*, *Love Song* and *The Subject Tonight is Love*. Regional Credits include *The Pillowman*, *Bug*, *The Love Song of J. Robert Oppenheimer*, *Killer Joe*, *The Goat or Who is Sylvia?*, *Blue/Orange*, *Hamlet*, *Copenhagen*.

ABOUT PLAYGROUND:

The mission of PlayGround is to support the development of significant new local voices for the theatre. More than just a play development program, PlayGround focuses on the creation of a true theatre community by nurturing the collaborative process between first-time or early development playwrights, and established professional actors and directors. With a particular focus on the ten-minute form, PlayGround creates a microcosm of the greater theatre scene, allowing for experimentation and risk-taking as well as the honing of style and technique. More information at www.playground-sf.org.

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