



THEATRE/ARTS/ENTERTAINMENT
IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR

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PLAYGROUND CELEBRATES BAY AREA PLAYWRIGHTS
AT 13TH BEST OF PLAYGROUND FESTIVAL

MAY 7-31, 2009

AT THE THICK HOUSE IN SAN FRANCISCO

SAN FRANCISCO, (March 26, 2009) - **PlayGround**, San Francisco's incubator for the next generation of playwrights, caps off its 2008-09 season with **The Best of PlayGround 13: A Festival of New Writers & New Plays**. The festival presents seven 10-minute plays selected from the 36 works developed as part of the season's Monday Night PlayGround staged reading series at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Monday Night PlayGround has engaged and inspired a growing and enthusiastic audience with new plays inspired by a single topic each month, including "The Longest Night", "The Impossible Dream", and, as part of a unique annual collaboration with Berkeley's Mathematical Sciences Research Institute, "One-Sidedness". Tickets are available through the Thick House Box Office at 415-401-8081 or online at www.PlayGround-sf.org.

The seven plays to be presented at this year's festival are:

John Jacob O'Reilly Smitherton's Bid to Save the World by **Erin Bregman**, directed by Jim Kleinmann
Wednesday by **Daniel Heath**, directed by Barbara Oliver
All Thumbs by **Aaron Loeb**, directed by Tracy Ward
Seen by **Evelyn Jean Pine**, directed by Amy Mueller
Gymnopedie #1 by **Kenn Rabin**, directed by Molly Noble
Net by **Geetha Reddy**, directed by Mark Routhier
Truffaldino Says No by **Ken Slattery**, directed by Chris Smith

The 2009 Festival also features staged readings of five new full-length plays commissioned by PlayGround from writers **Brady Lea, Daniel Heath, Evelyn Jean Pine, Lauren Yee, and Trevor Allen**.

Event: The Best of PlayGround 13: *A Festival of New Writers & New Plays*
Date: Thursdays - Sundays, May 7 - 31st (*Friday, May 8th, press night*)
Time: Thurs. - Sat., 8pm; Sun., 7pm
Location: Thick House, 1695 18th Street, San Francisco
Tickets: **Best of PlayGround:** \$28-\$40 (general), discounts available for students, PlayGround subscribers and members, and groups of 10 or more. *Thursdays, May 7, May 14 and 21 are Pay-What-You-Can performances; Pay-What-You-Can tickets go on sale one hour before the performance, first-come first-served, subject to availability.*
Staged Readings: \$10 suggested donation at the door
For tickets call (415) 401-8081 or on-line at www.PlayGround-sf.org
Information: Jim Kleinmann, Artistic Director; 415.704.3177;

Performance Schedule

- **The Best of PlayGround 13** - All seven short plays are presented at each performance, **Thursdays through Saturdays at 8pm and Sundays at 7pm** (Sunday evening shows are followed by post-show discussion with festival playwrights)

- **Staged Readings:**

Monday, May 11, 7pm: *Mushroom Boy* by Brady Lea

Sunday, May 17, 2pm: *Accidents* by Daniel Heath

Monday, May 18, 7pm: *Terror, Astonishment, Love* by Evelyn Jean Pine

Sunday, May 24, 2pm: *Postgrad (or the Odyssey Years)* by Lauren Yee

Monday, May 25, 7pm: *Lolita Roadtrip* by Trevor Allen

PlayGround will celebrate this year's Festival playwrights at the annual **PlayGround Benefit & Awards Night** on **Monday, April 6th** at **A.C.T.**, with special guests **Octavio Solis** and **Jasson Minadakis**. The event features a talk with Solis and Minadakis, a silent auction, reception and dinner with the special guests and award winners. For more information on the PlayGround Benefit, visit <http://playground-sf.org/benefit.shtml>

YOUNG PLAYWRIGHTS PROJECT: SPOTLIGHT ON NEXT GENERATION

PlayGround spotlights the next generation of talent with the Young Playwrights Project. In March, PlayGround launched the project, and announced a contest to write a new 10-minute play inspired by the topic "Adaptation of a Fairy Tale." The competition is open to Bay Area high school students, who have until April 20th to submit a script. The best four plays will be selected to be read as special "curtain raisers" May 21 - 24 of the Best of PlayGround Festival.

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.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHTS:

Erin Bregman studied literature and playwriting at the College of Creative Studies at UCSB where she was a recipient of the Dilling Yang Fellowship in Dramatic Arts, and the Corwin Award. She received a Magic Theatre/Sloan Commission in 2006, and has had work performed or developed at the Playwrights Foundation, Just Theater, UCSB New Plays Festival, and UCSB Summer Theater Lab. Erin was selected as a BASH! writer (Bay Area SHorts) as part of the 2008 Bay Area Playwrights Festival. She was a finalist this year for the Princess Grace Awards, and a semifinalist for PlayLabs and the O'Neill Conference.

Daniel Heath is a three-time winner of the PlayGround Emerging Playwright Award (including for *Seagull* in 2007 and *Leo* in 2008) and a recipient of the PlayGround Fellowship full-length play commission for 2008-09. His short play *Twice As Bright* won PianoFight Production's Shortlived audience-juried short play contest in July of 2008. His short plays have been performed at other venues

throughout the Bay Area, and as far afield as Lake George, NY, as part of the Lake George Theater Lab.

Brady Lea is a playwright, performer and theatre arts educator. She is a four-time PlayGround Emerging Playwright Award winner and the recipient of the 2006 June Anne Baker Prize and a 2008 Alumni Commission. She is a graduate of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Clown College and performed for several years with the vaudeville trio The Kloons. Brady is currently a visiting artist in physical theatre and improvisation at San Francisco School of the Arts. She lives in Bernal Heights with her husband David.

Aaron Loeb has written for PlayGround for seven seasons. His work has appeared in six past Best of PlayGround festivals. His play, *First Person Shooter*, was co-produced by PlayGround at SF Playhouse in 2007. The production won the Bay Area Theater Critic Circle Award for Best New Play and was on the year's Top 10 lists from the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *Oakland Tribune*. It has gone on to be performed in Sacramento and San Jose. His next play, *Abraham Lincoln's Big, Gay Dance Party*, also commissioned by PlayGround, premiered at SF Playhouse in December, 2008 and also won a Bay Area Theater Critic Circle Award for Best New Play. Aaron is a member of the Dramatists Guild, Inc.

Evelyn Jean Pine is a recipient of a 2008 PlayGround Alumni Commission. Her plays have been produced around the country. Jon Tracy staged her 2007 June Anne Baker Award play, *The Secrets of the World*, as part of the 2008 Best of PlayGround Festival. She has won two past PlayGround Emerging Playwright Awards (2005 & 2007). Her short stories have appeared in *Seventeen*, *Sassy* and *Collage*. She teaches Performance Studies at San Francisco State University where she is also an MFA student in Creative Writing. She lives in San Francisco with her husband, Doug Peckler, and their eleven-year-old son, Gabe.

Kenn Rabin has written several full-length and numerous short plays, including *How to Chop Wood*, *Hotel Poststrasse*, and *When the Dead Weep*, as well as *Celadon Box #8*, *Hunters and Gatherers*, and *Reunion*, the latter three of which won PlayGround Emerging Playwrights Awards. Mr. Rabin received a PlayGround Fellowship, a Marin Arts Council Individual Grant, and Marin Theatre Company's first-ever commission for *Found Objects*. His documentary and feature credits include PBS' *Eyes on the Prize* and *Vietnam: A Television History*, Sean Penn's *The Indian Runner*, *George Clooney's Good Night*, and *Good Luck*, Steven Soderbergh's *The Good German*, and Gus Van Sant's *Milk*. He's a member of the Dramatists Guild.

Geetha Reddy is a five-time recipient of PlayGround's Emerging Playwright Award. In 2005 she was awarded PlayGround's June Anne Baker Prize. In 2006 and 2007, she was awarded PlayGround Alumni Commissions. Recently her plays were performed in the Santa Rosa Actor's Theatre Quickies festival, the Best of SF Fringe Show *Three Plays About Your Mother*, and on the Writer's Block, a KQED podcast. In 2007, her play *Me Given You* was included as part of the Playwrights Foundation In the Rough reading series. Her PlayGround commissioned play *Safe House* was selected for the 2008 Bay Area Playwrights Festival. Theatre Bay Area recently named her one of the Bay Area's top "Up & Coming Playwrights".

Ken Slattery is originally from Ireland, where he studied Drama & Theatre Studies at Trinity College Dublin. Ken wrote and directed two plays for the Dublin Theatre Fringe Festival in the late 90s. Since moving to the U.S., Ken wrote and produced his full-length play *American Irish* in 2005, and was a member of the PlayGround Writers Pool from 2004-06. He has recently written sketches for *Killing My Lobster*, and is a core member of Berkeley's Wilde Irish Theatre Troupe. Ken also writes user guides and Online Help.

Lauren D. Yee is a 2009 MacDowell Colony fellow, a 2008/09 Dramatists Guild fellow, and a member of the 2009 Public Theater Emerging Writers Group. She has been a finalist for the Princess Grace Award, the Jerome Fellowship (multi-year), the PONY Fellowship, the Djerassi Resident Artist Program, and the Heideman Award. Lauren has taught playwriting at the New York Mills Arts Center and Tao House. She is currently developing plays with Playwrights Foundation for the 2009 Bay Area Playwrights Festival and Exit Theatre. A recent Yale graduate, Lauren will begin pursuing her MFA in playwriting at UCSD this fall under Naomi Iizuka.

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