

Portland Center Stage at

THE **ARMORY**

**PRESS CONTACT:**

**Claudie Fisher**

**503.445.3765**

**claudief@pcs.org**

## M E D I A   R E L E A S E

### **JAW: A PLAYWRIGHTS FESTIVAL | FULL SCHEDULE ANNOUNCED**

**Staged readings of four new scripts + Press Play events including a street dance battle and acrobatic clowning + Community Artist Labs + more**

**JULY 28-30 | FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**



**July 12, 2017 — PORTLAND, OR.** The 19<sup>th</sup> annual JAW: A Playwrights Festival is Portland's chance to preview spanking new scripts while they're still in development, enjoy a host of Press Play performances and dig deeper with Community Artist Labs presented by JAW featured artists. The JAW Big Weekend is July 28-30 in various locations at The Armory. JAW is always FREE and open

to the public. More information about JAW is available at [www.pcs.org/jaw](http://www.pcs.org/jaw).

This year's JAW staged readings include **Kate Attwell's *Testmatch***, examining women's sports, mangos, and the ever-present legacy of colonialism; ***Small Steps*** by **Briandaniel Oglesby**, a comedy traversing 50 million miles and a million years; **Mfoniso Udofia's *In Old Age***, part of a nine-play cycle about Nigerian American immigrants that explores the true nature of love and forgiveness; and ***Tiny Houses***, **Stefanie Zadavec's** comic riff on Pandora's Box that follows the ripple effect on several women who suddenly realize they can disrupt the status quo. Surrounding the staged readings, attendees can also enjoy **Press Play** events such as a site-specific dance performance and an indie gaming event. **Community Artist Labs** offer opportunities to build skills in adapting works of fiction, theatricalizing found text, and creating devised theater (attendance for labs is by lottery).

## 2017 JAW FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

### FRIDAY, JULY 28, 2017

All Day Press Play Event: ZoomUganda Display Studio Lobby

**8:00 p.m. JAW KICKOFF: Readings of Short Plays by JAW Promising Playwrights Ellyn Bye Studio**

### SATURDAY, JULY 29, 2017

All Day Press Play Event: ZoomUganda Display Studio Lobby

12:30 p.m. Community Artist Lab: New Worlds for Old Stories Admission by Lottery

3:00 p.m. Press Play Event: Street Dance Battle with Michael Galen Main Lobby

**4:00 p.m. STAGED READING: *TINY HOUSES* BY STEFANIE ZADRAVEC U.S. Bank Main Stage**

6:00 p.m. Press Play Event: PIGSquad Pop-up Gaming Main Lobby and Mezzanine

**8:00 p.m. STAGED READING: *TESTMATCH* BY KATE ATTWELL U.S. Bank Main Stage**

### SUNDAY, JULY 30, 2017

All Day Press Play Event: ZoomUganda Display Studio Lobby

12:00 p.m. Community Artist Lab: Theatricalizing Found Text Admission by Lottery

12:00 p.m. Community Artist Lab: Creating Devised Performance Admission by Lottery

3:20 p.m. Press Play Event: Rachel Slater and Sara Parker's Site-Specific Dance Main Lobby

**4:00 p.m. STAGED READING: *IN OLD AGE* BY MFONISO UDOFIA U.S. Bank Main Stage**

7:00 p.m. Press Play Event: A Little Bit Off's Clown Performance Main Lobby and Mezzanine

**8:00 p.m. STAGED READING: *SMALL STEPS* BY BRIANDANIEL OGLESBY U.S. Bank Main Stage**

## **2017 JAW STAGED READINGS**

Staged readings are free and open to the public. No reservations required. Seating is general admission. Post-show conversations with the playwrights are held after most readings. **Please Note: Staged readings are part of the play development process and do NOT represent completed scripts.**

### ***TINY HOUSES***

**BY STEFANIE ZADRAVEC**

**SATURDAY, JULY 29, 4:00 P.M.**

On July 17, 2014, Malaysian Flight MH-17 rained down upon a tiny, war-torn Eastern Ukraine village after being targeted by a surface-to-air missile launched by pro-Russian Separatists. Bodies and objects alike become fodder for those trying to escape the circumstances in which they were born. *Tiny Houses* is a comic riff on Pandora's Box that explores the ripple effect on several women who suddenly realize they can disrupt the status quo.

### ***TESTMATCH***

**BY KATE ATTWELL**

**SATURDAY, JULY 29, 8:00 P.M.**

Present day: A rained-out women's cricket match between India and England leaves tensions bare and, as the rainy day drones relentlessly on, no one can play nice anymore. Then: The British East India Company rules in 18<sup>th</sup> century West Bengal, as two members of the Royal Cricket Team, ardent players of the game, debate the rules of engagement, the problem of the women, the trouble with mosquitoes, all against the backdrop of a country that they are destroying through famine. And before that? ... *Testmatch* is a new play about women's sports, mangos, cricket, and the ever-present legacy of colonialism, written for an all-female cast.

### ***IN OLD AGE***

**BY MFONISO UDOFIA**

**SUNDAY, JULY 30, 4:00 P.M.**

Isolated within the walls of her derelict New England home and suffering the residual pain of years of abuse, an ancient woman, Abasiama Ufot, makes an unlikely spiritual connection with an elder stranger,

Azell Abernathy. Just as life takes a new turn, Abasiama and Azell learn the true nature of love and forgiveness.

### **SMALL STEPS**

**BY BRIANDANIEL OGLESBY**

**SUNDAY, JULY 30, 8:00 P.M.**

Finally fed up with the bot-and-disappointment-filled world of online gay dating, Skip Powers volunteers to go to Mars. And NASA says ... "you'll do." This is a comedy that traverses 50 million miles and a million years.

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## **JAW PRESS PLAY EVENTS**

Press Play events engage JAW audiences before and after staged readings.

### **ZOOMUGANDA DISPLAY**

**JULY 28-30, ALL DAY, STUDIO LOBBY**

ZoomUganda shares the journey of 12 girls given 12 cameras and 24 hours in which to tell their own stories through their own lenses. Directed by Portland-based Julie Resnick, ZoomUganda empowered its participants to stand in the centers of their world and share their perspectives. Sponsored by local nonprofit the Harambee Centre, which connects people in the US with the peoples and cultures of the African continent.

### **IN THE GROOVE: STREET DANCE BATTLE**

**WITH MICHAEL GALEN AND AN ALL STAR CREW**

**SATURDAY, JULY 29, 3:00 P.M., MAIN LOBBY**

A crowd-judged, 5v5, all-star street dance battle showcasing different styles of street and club dance. Michael 'MANTIS' Galen is a versatile freestyle dancer, teacher and choreographer who has trained, battled, performed and taught all over the West Coast and Brazil. Galen's specialties include B-boyin', House, Locking, Stepping, and Hip Hop party dancing.

## **PIGSQUAD POP-UP**

**SATURDAY, JULY 29, 6:00 P.M., MAIN LOBBY AND MEZZANINE**

Try out board games and computer games created by local designers. The Portland Indie Game Squad is dedicated to supporting the health and continued expansion of game developers and enthusiast communities in the Pacific Northwest and online.

## **RACHEL SLATER AND SARA PARKER**

**SITE-SPECIFIC DANCE PERFORMANCE**

**SUNDAY, JULY 30, 3:20 P.M., MAIN LOBBY**

Portland-based dancers Rachel Slater and Sara Parker have created a site-specific dance performance for The Armory's Main Lobby. Rachel Slater's credits include work with Tere Mathern, Franco Nieto, Tracey Durbin, Jim McGinn and Éowyn Emerald & Dancers. Sara Parker has recently performed with artists such as Tere Mathern, Netta Yerushalmy, Pamela Geber-Handman and Sharee Lane.

## **A LITTLE BIT OFF'S CLOWN PERFORMANCE**

**SUNDAY, JULY 30, 7:00 P.M., MAIN LOBBY AND MEZZANINE**

A Little Bit Off will bring their acrobatic clowning and physical comedy talents to JAW with a part-devised, part-improvised clown performance. Co-founded by Amica Hunter and David Cantor, A Little Bit Off began as a theatrical collaboration between two acrobatic clowns dedicated to bringing wonder and laughter to the audiences of the world.

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## **COMMUNITY ARTIST LABS**

Admission is free but attendance is limited and determined by random lottery. To enter the lottery email [clarah@pcs.org](mailto:clarah@pcs.org) by July 25 with a list of the lab(s) that are of interest.

**NEW WORLDS FOR OLD STORIES: AN INTRODUCTION TO ADAPTATION**

**WITH LITERARY MANAGER BENJAMIN FAINSTEIN**

**SATURDAY, JULY 29, 12:30 P.M. TO 3:00 P.M., ATTENDANCE BY LOTTERY**

This playful lab will steer participants through a crash course of adapting works of fiction for the stage. Through a series of creative activities, attendees will learn what questions to ask themselves when building fictional worlds and explore the delicate art of changing the shape of someone else's work with both enthusiasm and ethics. This lab welcomes imaginative writers of all experience levels.

**THEATRICALIZING FOUND TEXT: OR, ADAPTING A STORY THROUGH MOVEMENT**

**WITH JAW DIRECTOR MARGOT BORDELON**

**SUNDAY, JULY 30, 12:00 P.M. TO 3:00 P.M., ATTENDANCE BY LOTTERY**

In this lab, participants will read a short story and investigate how the piece might live theatrically. A series of small group physical exercises will explore — both literally and abstractly — the characters, relationships and environments in the story. Attendees will experiment with how much language is necessary to communicate the ideas of the piece and how much can be communicated through movement. Participants should come ready to move.

**CREATING DEVISED PERFORMANCE**

**WITH JAW PLAYWRIGHT KATIE ATTWELL**

**SUNDAY, JULY 30, 12:00 P.M. TO 3:00 P.M., ATTENDANCE BY LOTTERY**

This lab explores the collaborative theater making process: making work on your feet, together. Participants will look at ways to create theater that is built collaboratively, from practical work in the room and not necessarily from the page first. Participants will explore “sources” — Where can a piece of theater come from? Anywhere? Yes! — and how to turn those sources into something for the stage. Space, movement, objects, text, identity, speech, silence, and found materials will be considered as equal fodder for creating work. Come dressed comfortably and ready to move — at least a little.

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**JAW: A PLAYWRIGHTS FESTIVAL**

Since launching in 1999, JAW: A Playwrights Festival has created a space for playwrights to have complete creative control and the resources to work on whatever they want to develop in their scripts. Each year, playwrights are chosen from nearly 200 submissions nationwide to collaborate with directors, dramaturgs, actors and other theater professionals from across the United States. Of the 76 plays that have received workshops at the festival, 68% have gone on to receive world premiere productions at regional theaters, including New York Theater Workshop, Steppenwolf Theatre, Berkeley Repertory

Theatre and Portland's own Third Rail Repertory Theater. Thirteen JAW plays have received fully staged productions at Portland Center Stage at The Armory, giving Portland a strong national reputation for not only incubating new work, but helping to see that work to successful fruition.

### **JAW COMPANY**

Portland Center Stage at The Armory's Associate Artistic Director Rose Riordan is the JAW Festival Director. Joining her are JAW Festival Co-Producers Kelsey Tyler and Brandon Woolley; JAW Literary Manager Benjamin Fainstein; JAW Festival Company Manager Will Cotter; Education and Community Programs Associate Clara-Liis Hillier; Education and Community Programs Coordinator Eric Werner; and the hardworking staff and volunteers of Portland Center Stage at The Armory who bring their talents and energies to JAW each year.

**LOCATION:** All JAW events happen at [The Armory](#), 128 NW Eleventh Ave., Portland, Ore., 97209

**ACCESSIBILITY:** Portland Center Stage at The Armory is committed to making its performances and facilities accessible to all patrons. Learn more at <http://www.pcs.org/access/>.

**AGE RECOMMENDATION:** Most JAW events are recommended for high school age and up.

### **PORTLAND CENTER STAGE AT THE ARMORY**

[Portland Center Stage at The Armory](#) is the largest theater company in Portland and among the top 20 regional theaters in the country. Established in 1988 as a branch of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the company became independent in 1994 and has been under the leadership of Artistic Director Chris Coleman since 2000. Around 150,000 visitors attend The Armory annually to enjoy a mix of classical, contemporary and world premiere productions, along with a variety of high quality education and community programs. 11 productions are offered each season, in addition to roughly 400 community events created — in partnership with 170+ local organizations and individuals — to serve the diverse populations in the city. As part of its dedication to new play development, the company has produced 23 world premieres and presents an annual new works festival, JAW: A Playwrights Festival. Home to two theaters, The Armory was the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, and the first performing arts venue, to achieve a LEED Platinum rating.

[JAW: A Playwrights Festival](#) is supported in part by The Kinsman Foundation, Oregon Cultural Trust, National Endowment for the Arts, Don and Mary Blair, and Ronnie S. Lacroute. Additional support is provided by Regional Arts & Culture Council and Oregon Arts Commission. Portland Center Stage at The Armory's [2017-2018 season](#) is funded in part by Season Superstars Tim and Mary Boyle, and Lead Corporate Champion Umpqua Bank. Further support comes from Season Sponsors: Regional Arts and Culture Council, The Wallace Foundation and Oregon Arts Commission, a state agency funded by the state of Oregon and the National Endowment for the Arts. Mark Spencer Hotel is the official hotel partner. Portland Center Stage at The Armory was selected as a participant of the Wallace Foundation's [Building Audiences for Sustainability Initiative](#), a four-year effort with a nationwide cohort of 26 performing arts organizations.

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