

MEDIA RELEASE

**Portland Center Stage Joins National Play Project PLAY AT HOME
and Commissions Four Portland Playwrights to Create Short Plays:
Sara Jean Accuardi, E. M. Lewis, Anya Pearson, Josie Seid**



May 22, 2020 — PORTLAND, OR. Portland Center Stage has joined the national theater project **Play at Home** and has commissioned four Portland playwrights to create short plays. The new script offerings are Sara Jean Accuardi's *Joy Frickin' Hates Her Dumb Stupid Room*, E. M. Lewis' *The Third Prisoner*, Anya Pearson's *Three Love Songs*, and Josie Seid's *Wing and a Prayer*.

Play at Home scripts are designed to be read — and performed — by the public from their own homes. The plays are ten minutes or shorter and available for free at playathome.org. The new plays commissioned by Portland Center Stage will be posted soon and also shared at pcs.org.

"It's a joy to lift up the voices of fantastic playwrights from across the country in conjunction with The Public Theatre and its collaborators," said Artistic Director Marissa Wolf. "I'm thrilled to have

these four gifted Portland writers bring powerful, lively, humor-filled short plays to life. We hope our community will join us by performing the plays at home and letting us know about it!"

People are encouraged to record their performances and share them with others. Those who upload their videos to YouTube and tag #PlayatHomePlays may even have their performances featured on the Play at Home website and shared by participating theaters.

ABOUT THE PLAYS



SARA JEAN ACCUARDI

Joy Frickin' Hates Her Dumb Stupid Room

A Trapped Little Play for Trapped Little Times

A girl is trapped inside a house, a hamster is trapped inside a cage, and the soul of a 15th-century Dutch painter is trapped inside a hamster.

Sara Jean Accuardi's writing has been produced and developed around the country, including with Theatre Vertigo, Seven Devils Playwrights Conference, and Victory Gardens. Her plays include *The Storyteller* (winner of the International Thomas Wolfe Playwriting Competition) and *The Delays* (Drammy Award for Outstanding Original Script). She is a proud member of LineStorm Playwrights. sarajeanaccuardi.com



E. M. LEWIS

The Third Prisoner

Prisoner #4588930 and Prisoner #8836729 have been locked away for a very long time. For what feels like forever. But when someone new is thrown into their cell, everything changes.

E. M. Lewis is an award-winning playwright and opera librettist. She received the Steinberg Award twice, the Primus Prize from the American Theater Critics Association, the Ted Schmitt Award from the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle, a Hodder Fellowship from Princeton University, a fellowship from the New Jersey State Arts Commission, the 2016 Oregon Literary Fellowship in Drama, and an Edgerton Award. emlewisplaywright.com



ANYA PEARSON

Three Love Songs

For those of us who have been taught to fear the silence, I offer you: a counter-attack. An ode, a dirge, a lament, an operatic examination of quarantine life.

Anya Pearson is an award-winning actress, playwright, poet, producer, and activist. She was the inaugural winner of the \$10,000 Voice is a Muscle Grant from the Corporeal Voices Foundation, for her choreopoem, *Made to Dance in Burning Buildings*. *Made to Dance in Burning Buildings* was showcased at Joe's Pub at The Public Theater and received its world premiere at Shaking the Tree. anyapearson.com



JOSIE SEID

Wing and a Prayer

Four modern women are planning to attend a socially conscious, feminist lecture. One of the women accidentally summons a wand-toting fairy godmother who is all set to beautify them for a ball! When she discovers she has wandered into a contemporary catastrophe, they must work together to make sure that the wish that summoned her is honored.

Josie Seid is the author of *Petite Dames*, which was nominated for the Kilroy List in 2015 and was recently workshopped at Lewis and Clark's Ray Warren Symposium on Race and Revolutionary Struggle. Other works include *Path of Glory*, *The Great God of the Dark Storm Cloud*, *Jordan's Wisdom*, *Overdue*, *Stand by Me*, and *This is Message Number 13*. Josie is a proud member of LineStorm Playwrights collective.

PLAY AT HOME

Play at Home was developed to inspire joy and connection during this period of social isolation. More than 100 playwrights have been commissioned nationwide, resulting in \$50,000 paid to playwrights during this difficult time when all theater productions have ceased. Play at Home was originally developed by The Public Theater, Baltimore Center Stage, Woolly Mammoth Theatre

Company, Long Wharf Theatre, and Repertory Theater of St Louis, and the project continues to grow as new theater companies join the effort.

Many nationally celebrated playwrights have been commissioned, including some who have recently been featured at Portland Center Stage, including Heather Raffo, whose powerful play *9 Parts of Desire* was on stage in March and had to be canceled, and Karen Zacarías, whose hilarious play *Native Gardens* was a hit last spring.

PORTLAND CENTER STAGE

Portland Center Stage is committed to identifying and interrupting instances of racism and all forms of oppression, through the principles of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA). Learn more at pcs.org/idea.

[Portland Center Stage](https://pcs.org) 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 is under the leadership of Artistic Director Marissa Wolf and Managing Director Cynthia Fuhrman. Around 160,000 visitors attend The Armory annually to enjoy a mix of classic, contemporary, and world premiere productions, along with a variety of high quality education and community programs. As part of its dedication to new play development, the company has produced 28 world premieres and presents an annual new works festival, JAW: A Playwrights Festival. Home to two theaters, The Armory (originally built in 1891) opened its doors in 2006 as the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, and the first performing arts venue in the country, to achieve a LEED Platinum rating.

Portland Center Stage is funded in part by Season Superstars Tim and Mary Boyle, Mary and Don Blair, and Lead Corporate Champion Umpqua Bank. Further support comes from Season Sponsors Advance Gender Equity in the Arts (AGE); the Regional Arts and Culture Council; and the Oregon Arts Commission, a state agency funded by the state of Oregon and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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