



PRESS CONTACT: Natalie Genter-Gilmore

503.445.3765

natalieg@pcs.org

M E D I A R E L E A S E

JULY BRINGS AN EXPLOSION OF NEW PLAY ENERGY TO THE ARMORY

JAW: A Playwrights Festival, July 26 – 29, 2012.



May 3, 2012 – PORTLAND, OR. Portland Center Stage has selected six exciting new plays drawn from a national search, plus a special evening of commissioned micro-plays by Oregon playwrights, for the 2012 JAW: A Playwrights Festival. Welcome to one of the most exhilarating weeks in Oregon's summer! Under the leadership of Festival Director Rose Riordan, JAW will run July 26 - 29, 2012 at the Gerding Theater at the Armory, and, as always, is presented **free of charge and open to all.**

All JAW events will take place in the Main Stage of the Gerding Theater at the Armory. The complete schedule is as follows:

Thursday, July 26

8pm

Made In Oregon, JAW Kick-Off Event & Opening Party

The 14th Annual Just Add Water Made in Oregon 5-to-8 minute Play Festival

JAW has commissioned eight of Oregon's finest playwrights (Sara Jean Accuardi, William S Gregory, Brian Kettler, Debbie Lamedman, Rich Rubin, Ebbe Roe Smith, Nick Zagone, and Matthew B. Zrebski) to compose a short play on the theme "Just Add Water." Following the reading, will be a Kick-Off Party to provide the JAW Company and Portland a chance to celebrate and socialize.

Friday, July 27

4pm

Bo-Nita by Elizabeth Heffron

Thirteen year old Bo-Nita waits outside school for her ride. Seemingly to pass the time, she begins telling us about an experience she had which she believes was the only miracle she's ever seen: her ex-stepfather having a heart attack while trying to molest her. Bo-Nita's experiences as she navigates a decidedly sketchy family life—a belly-dancing grandmother, a mother who is less than discreet with her sex life, the predatory step-father—are alternately hilarious and heart-breaking, slapstick and searing. Under Heffron's skillful hand, *Bo-Nita* is given a genuine and devastatingly engaging voice in this play performed by a single actor.

8pm

Broken Stones by Fin Kennedy

In an anonymous suburban hotel, two men meet. One is a former US Marine, seeking to tell an extraordinary tale from the darkest days of the Iraq War: the looting of priceless relics from the Baghdad Museum. The other is his ghost writer, there to help him set his story down. But as they talk, memory becomes suffused with mythology, and reality with naked ambition. As the ground shifts beneath them and visions begin to fill the room, the soldier is forced to question who his ghost writer really is, and to whom he has sold his soul.

From 9/11, to Baghdad, to Hollywood, via the illicit trade in antiquities; *Broken Stones* takes an alleged conspiracy surrounding the oldest relics in the world, and weaves a tale that calls into question the very nature of reality itself. Inspired by real events after the fall of Baghdad in 2003, *Broken Stones* is a disturbing existential thriller about truth, myth, nationhood – and the responsibility of any writer to their subject.

Saturday, July 28

4pm

The Bachelors by Caroline V. McGraw

Inside a house, a house in a series on fraternity row, a house in which DVDs serve as coasters and drool stains the sofa, live three roommates far past their college days. A thousand girlfriends come and gone, a thousand parties attended, a thousand drinks downed—every night the same, until now. Tonight is pledge night on fraternity row, but it is not the blaring music that makes sleep impossible. Tonight, these bachelors will understand what their relationships have really gotten them.

8pm

San Diego by Adam Bock

Iris questions whether she can be a mother, particularly as her baby carriage keeps disappearing only to reappear like a fever dream. Harvey thinks Sad Mary has cursed him and goes on a quest to rid the curse. Brenda and Mark hastily get married and are forced to discover each other as they discover themselves. In *San Diego*, everyone is looking for something to save them, and fear is a force to be reckoned with. Ultimately, though, all must sit inside the fear...maybe even burn from it...and maybe even love from it. And in the end, if all goes well, there is bittersweet hope that we can all find peace with our flaws.

Sunday, July 29

4pm

The People's Republic of Portland by Lauren Weedman

Portland is gathering lots of attention lately – for our sustainability leadership; for our food scene; for being, well, weird. And now we've caught the attention of Lauren Weedman, actor/writer of last season's *BUST*. In the few months she spent here in the spring of 2011, Lauren's imagination was also captured by all things Portland, and so we've asked her to write a play. About Portland. How will this former Daily Show faux-spondent treat us? What does Portland look like through Weedman's unique lens? Are we brave enough to find out?

The People's Republic of Portland will receive its world premiere in our 2012-13 season.

8pm

The Few by Sam Hunter

Four years ago Bryan abandoned his labor of love, a newspaper for truckers. Now he's returned—with no word of where he's been—and things have changed. His former lover is filled with rage, his new coworker is filled with incessant adoration, and his paper is filled with personal ads. As he considers giving up for good, Bryan searches for what he couldn't find on the road: a way to keep faith in humanity.

Promising Playwright (short plays written by select high school writers) performances will take place before selected readings. **Devise and Conquer** site specific performances will take place in various locations of the Armory throughout the festival weekend.

ABOUT JAW. For 14 years JAW has created a space for playwrights to grow as writers and as professionals. Of the 44 plus plays that have received workshops at the festival, **more than 50% have received world premiere productions** at a regional theaters ranging from the NY Theater Workshop to Steppenwolf to Berkeley Rep to Portland's own Third Rail Rep. Twelve JAW plays have later received fully staged productions at Portland Center Stage giving Portland a strong national reputation for not only incubating new work, but helping to see that work to successful fruition.

JAW: A Playwright's Festival is made possible in part by funding from **The Boeing Company; The Kinsman Foundation** and **The National Endowment for the Arts.**

[PORTLAND CENTER STAGE](#) inspires our community by bringing stories to life in unexpected ways. Established in 1988 as a branch of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, PCS became an independent theater in 1994 and has been under the leadership of Artistic Director Chris Coleman since May 2000. The company presents a blend of classic, contemporary and original productions in a conscious effort to appeal to the eclectic palate of theatergoers in Portland. PCS also offers a variety of education and outreach programs for curious minds from six to 106, including the PCS GreenHouse, a school of theater.

THE GERDING THEATER AT THE ARMORY houses a 599-seat Main Stage and a 200-seat black box Studio. It was the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, and the first performing arts venue, to achieve a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum certification. The Gerding Theater at the Armory opened to the public on Oct. 1, 2006. The capital campaign to fund the renovation of this hub for community artistic activity continues.