

**NATIVE  
VOICES  
AT THE AUTRY**

**Media Contact:**

Keisha Raines

323.495.4370

[communications@theautry.org](mailto:communications@theautry.org)



**Native Voices at the Autry Presents the World Premiere of**  
***Lying with Badgers***  
**A New Play by Jason Grasl**

**Performances: February 28–March 15, 2020**

**Previews: February 26–27**

**At the Autry Museum of the American West in Griffith Park**

Los Angeles, CA (February 20, 2020)—The only Equity theatre company dedicated exclusively to developing and producing new work by Native American artists, Native Voices presents the world premiere of *Lying with Badgers* by **Jason Grasl** (Blackfeet).

In this new comedy, a magically charged world is ignited by wise-cracking spirit animals brought to life by puppets as estranged brothers of the Blackfeet Nation are pitted against one another in a fierce debate over the personal and economic issues Native people face today on their sovereign land. While exploiting mineral rights could provide economic relief for the tribe, it could also destroy sacred land. Traditions are challenged, allegiances are tested, and long-buried secrets are forced into light in this dark comedy.

"Perhaps the most surprising thing about *Lying with Badgers* is how the production is both moving and humorous," said **Randy Reinholz** (Choctaw), Director and Producing Artistic Director. "The animals, all

enacted by puppets, are voices of the spirit world, guiding the lead character to the vital discoveries he needs to navigate the land of Badger-Two Medicine. The animals lead the Blackfeet characters to love, understanding, balance, and acceptance."

This year's production follows Native Voices' appointment of DeLanna Studi (Cherokee) as the new Co-Artistic Director of Native Voices. Studi's hiring furthers the theatre company's commitment to developing the next generation of Indigenous writers, directors, producers, and performers. Studi will be joining Producing Artistic Director Reinholz as he transitions—along with co-founder and Producing Executive Director, **Jean Bruce Scott**—into emeritus roles with Native Voices.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### **OPENING NIGHT | Friday, February 28 | 8:00 p.m.**

A reception with the cast and crew follows the **Opening Night** performance.

### **CONVERSATION WITH THE PLAYWRIGHT | Saturday, February 29, 2:00 p.m., Friday, March 6, 11:00 a.m., and Friday, March 13, 11:00 a.m.**

Playwright **Jason Grasl** (Blackfeet) will discuss the genesis of *Lying with Badgers* and his process for writing and developing plays.

### **STUDENT MATINEES | Friday, March 6, and Friday, March 13 | 11:00 a.m.**

High school teachers and college professors: Contact **Janet Jung** at [schooltours@theautry.org](mailto:schooltours@theautry.org) to learn how you and your students can attend these performances during the school day at a special rate.

## TICKETS

Tickets for *Lying with Badgers* are \$10 for Autry members; \$25 for nonmembers; and \$15 for students, seniors (60+), and military. Preview tickets are free for Autry Members; \$15 for nonmembers; and \$10 for students, seniors (60+), and military. Student matinee prices are \$2 per student. Performances take place at the Wells Fargo Theater, located at the Autry Museum of the American West, 4700 Western Heritage Way, Los Angeles, CA 90027. For reservations and additional information, please visit [TheAutry.org/NativeVoices](https://TheAutry.org/NativeVoices).

## LEAD CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

**Randy Reinholz (Choctaw)/ DIRECTOR AND PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR** is the co-founder of Native Voices at the Autry. An award-winning producer, director, actor, activist, and playwright, he has produced more than 30 scripts and directed over 75 plays in the United States, Australia, England, and Canada. *Off the Rails*, his bawdy and irreverent adaptation of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, had its world premiere and a sold-out run at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. He is a tenured professor at San Diego State University, where he served as Head of Acting (1997–2007), Director of the School of Theatre, Television, and Film (2007–2012), and director of Community Engagement and Innovation for the College of Professional Studies and Fine Arts (2012–2015). Reinholz has been honored with the Ellen Stewart Award for Career Achievement in Professional Theatre, the Playwrights Arena's Lee Melville Award, the L.A. Drama Critics Circle's Gordon Davidson Award, SDSU's 2019 Outstanding Faculty Award,

and the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission and City of Los Angeles Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Los Angeles Community.

**Jason Grasl (Blackfeet)/ PLAYWRIGHT** is an actor, playwright, and director and has been working with Native Voices for more than a decade. His first play, *The Blame of Love*, received a full-production in 2008, and his second play, *Emergency Management*, was developed with Native Voices as part of their 2012 First Look Series. In 2016, Grasl began development with *Lying with Badgers* in the Native Voices Playwrights Retreat and Festival of New Plays. It went on to receive further workshops at La Jolla Playhouse, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and San Diego State University. As an actor, he was most recently seen on the Native Voices stage in *Fairly Traceable*. Other theatre credits include *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* at Garry Marshall; *Cherokee* at Woolly Mammoth; *The Blame of Love*; *Trophies*; *Sliver of a Full Moon* (touring); *Urban Rez* (assistant director); and *Tony n' Tina's Wedding*. Film credits include *White Fang*, *Cassidy Red*, *The Seminarian*, and narration of the award-winning short film *Telling People You're Native American When You're Not Native Is a Lot Like Telling a Bear You're a Bear When You're Not a Bear*. TV/New media credits include *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*, *9-1-1*, *White Collar*, *Hot in Cleveland*, and *A Jew in Choctaw Country*.

**Stephanie Childers CRYSTAL FARLING** is honored to be a part of this production with Native Voices (and to be directed by Randy Reinholz, whom she has known since her Illinois State days). Theater credits include productions with Steppenwolf (including London/Broadway), the Goodman, A Red Orchid Theater, Roadworks, Famous Door, and the Matrix Theater. Television credits include *Grey's Anatomy*, *Bones*, *NCIS*, *Documentary Now*, *Private Practice*, *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip*, *Numbers*, *ER*, *Three Rivers*, *Less than Perfect*, and *The Closer*. Childers lives in L.A. and spends a lot of time with her husband, Matt, riding around in their food truck.

**Rainbow Dickerson (Rappahannock, Thai) / MAGGIE STRANGLE WOLF, DOG** recently wrapped the Canadian feature *Beans*, directed by Tracey Deer, which will be released in 2020. Theatre credits include Oregon Shakespeare Festival, American Repertory Theatre, Mixed Blood Theatre, Florida Studio Theatre, *August: Osage County* on Broadway, and more. Television credits include *Gone*, *Chicago Fire*, and *Banshee*, among others. Managed by Liberman Zerman, Los Angeles.

**Rainy Fields (Muskogee [Creek]/Cherokee) / BADGER 2, UNDERSTUDY** is the co-creator and co-host of the *Hollywood Ndnz Podcast*, with more than 40 episodes produced. She enjoys taking classes at UCB and performing musical improv. Her voice can be heard on the audiobook *Heart Berries* by Terese Marie Mailhot.

**Duane Minard (Yurok/Paiute) / FATHER, BEAR** originated from the Paiute Reservation in Bishop and is an enrolled member of the Yurok Tribe. He was seen in the miniseries *The Men Who Built America: Frontiersmen*. Some of his theatre credits include *Stories From the Indian Boarding School*, *Ramona*, *They Don't Talk Back*, *Off the Rails*, and *The Bad Seed*. He is also a playwright, a Native dance choreographer, and a Native drummer and dancer.

**Enrico Nassi (Otoe-Missouria, Cherokee) / ASHER POTTS** is making his Native Voices at the Autry debut. He was recently in *Diana*, Ensemble (La Jolla Playhouse). Regional credits include Billy in *The Real Thing* (Studio Theatre); Ned in *Exorcism* (Arena Stage); Young Danielle in *1938: Inventing the Enemy* (Theater J & SMATCH-Teatro Essere). Off-Broadway he appeared as Man in *Machinalia* (JACK.BROOKLYN). He has an MFA from UC San Diego.

**Dana Pacheco / TARA TORRES** is from Lakewood, California, and graduated from San Diego State University. She was in the award-winning indie film *Rag Doll* and recently shot a horror short and an action/drama feature destined for film festivals. Her comedy YouTube channel, *Awkward Kids*, has more than 8 million views and 57K+ subscribers. She has performed, written, directed, and produced comedy music videos, sketches, commercials, podcasts, and live shows. Pacheco is also a voiceover artist and loves singing punk rock songs at karaoke.

**Glenn Stanton (Cherokee) / RUSSELL SPOTTER** is a graduate of Ohio Northern University where he received his BFA in musical theatre, while also playing linebacker for the football team. He has worked with such theatres as the Goodman, Chicago Shakespeare, Utah Shakespeare, Getty Villa, and many others. Some of his TV credits include *9-1-1*, *The Son* (AMC), *Chicago Fire*, *Rosewood*, *Days of Our Lives*, and you can catch him on the upcoming second season of *Roswell*. Stanton is also a writer and producer here in Los Angeles.

**Robert Vestal (Cherokee descent) / BADGER 1, FOX** returns once again to the Native Voices stage. You may have seen him here previously in a full production of *Jump Kiss* (2002), *The Buz'Gem Blues* (2003), *Kino and Teresa* (2005), *The Berlin Blues* (2007), *Super Indian* (2007), *Teaching Disco Square Dancing to Our Elders* (2008), *Off the Rails* (2014), or one of several staged readings. Originally from Chicago, Vestal is a 25-year veteran of the stage and occasionally works in film and TV. He writes and directs, and because no one will hire him, produces. Enjoy the show!

**Faith James / PUPPET DESIGNER** is currently completing her MFA degree in costume design and technology in the School of Theatre, TV, and Film at San Diego State University. She has studied and practiced costume design and tech in Trinidad and Tobago where she specialized in wire artistry yearly for Trinidad and Tobago's Carnival. Her costume artistry experiences range from working on small experimental new plays to big-budget main stage productions such as *James and the Giant Peach*, where she focused on puppet build. Her latest project has been costume designing for Leonard Bernstein's *Mass*, directed by Stephen Brobeck and conducted by Michael Gerdes, and production of the opera *Orfeo* directed by Alan E. Hicks.

#### **Native Voices Is Sponsored by**

ACTORS' EQUITY FOUNDATION • DAVID CARTWRIGHT • DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS, CITY OF LOS ANGELES • EDISON INTERNATIONAL • JOYCE AND DAVID EVANS • LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE • NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS • THE NISSAN

FOUNDATION • PETER GLENVILLE FOUNDATION • JEAN BRUCE SCOTT AND RANDY REINHOLZ • SAN MANUEL BAND OF MISSION INDIANS • SEELEY W. MUDD FOUNDATION • SHUBERT FOUNDATION, INC. • SONY PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT • SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY • U.S. BANK • THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY

### **About Native Voices at the Autry**

Founded in 1994 by Producing Artistic Director **Randy Reinholz** (Choctaw) and Producing Executive Director **Jean Bruce Scott**, Native Voices at the Autry became the resident theatre company at the Autry Museum of the American West in 1999. It is the only Equity theatre company devoted exclusively to developing and producing new works for the stage by Native American, Alaska Native, and First Nations playwrights. The company provides a supportive, collaborative setting for Native theatre artists from across North America and is committed to putting Native narratives at the center of the American story in order to facilitate a more inclusive dialogue on what it means to be American. In 2014 the company established the Native Voices Artists Ensemble to more fully support the extraordinary talents of its Native actors, writers, musicians, directors, designers, and producers. The Ensemble is devoted to developing new work in a collaborative process as well as supporting Native Voices' ongoing focus on the work of individual playwrights. Native Voices was the resident theatre company at the Tony Award-winning La Jolla Playhouse 2016-2018; is a member of Actors' Equity Association, LA Stage Alliance, and the Dramatists Guild; an associate member of the National New Play Network; and a Constituent Theatre of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre. Visit [TheAutry.org/NativeVoices](http://TheAutry.org/NativeVoices) for more information.

### **About the Autry Museum of the American West**

The Autry is a museum dedicated to exploring and sharing the stories, experiences, and perceptions of the diverse peoples of the American West, connecting the past to the present to inspire our shared future. The museum presents a wide range of exhibitions and public programs—including lectures, film, theatre, festivals, family events, and music—and performs scholarship, research, and educational outreach. The Autry's collection of more than 500,000 pieces of art and artifacts includes the Southwest Museum of the American Indian Collection, one of the largest and most significant collections of Native American materials in the United States.

### **EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE: CALENDAR LISTING**

**WHO:** Native Voices at the Autry, America's leading Native American theatre company

**WHAT:** *Lying with Badgers* by Jason Grasl (Blackfeet)

**WHEN:**

**PREVIEWS**

Wednesday, February 26, 8:00 p.m.

Thursday, February 27, 8:00 p.m.

**PERFORMANCES**

Friday, February 28, 8:00 p.m.\*

Saturday, February 29, 2:00 p.m.\*\*

Sunday, March 1, 2:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 5, 8:00 p.m.

Friday, March 6, 11:00 a.m.\*\*/\*\*

Friday, March 6, 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 7, 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 8, 2:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 12, 8:00 p.m.

Friday, March 13, 11:00 a.m.\*\*/\*\*

Friday, March 13, 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 14, 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 15, 2:00 p.m.

**\*OPENING NIGHT**

A reception with the cast and crew follows the Opening Night performance.

**\*\*CONVERSATION WITH THE PLAYWRIGHT**

Following the matinee performance, playwright Jason Grasl (Blackfeet) will discuss the genesis of *Lying with Badgers* and his process for writing and developing plays.

**\*\*\*STUDENT MATINEES**

**WHERE:**

Wells Fargo Theater  
Autry Museum of the American West  
4700 Western Heritage Way  
Los Angeles, CA 90027-1462

**TICKET PRICES:**

\$25 General Admission

\$15 Students/Seniors (60+)/Military

\$10 Autry Members

***Previews:***

\$15 General Admission

\$10 Students/Seniors (60+)/Military  
Free for Autry Members

**Student Matinee Prices: \$2/person**

**MUSEUM ADMISSION:**

*Lying with Badgers* tickets include museum admission to the Autry during the month of March. Present your Eventbrite ticket for complimentary admission. Offer valid March 1-31, 2020, for general museum admission only (no special events) during regular museum hours.

**DINING**

The Autry's Crossroads West Cafe will offer a limited menu before and after matinee performances, and from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. prior to evening performances. Beer, wine, and light dinner fare will be available for purchase.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION:**

Phone: 323.495.4354

Online: [TheAutry.org/NativeVoices](https://TheAutry.org/NativeVoices)