

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**Native Voices at the Autry Presents the 18th Annual
Festival of New Plays**
Featuring Free Public Readings by Three Native American Playwrights
June 4 and 5, 2016
Autry Museum of the American West, Los Angeles
June 7–9, 2016
La Jolla Playhouse, La Jolla

Los Angeles, CA (April 18, 2016)— Native Voices at the Autry, America's leading Native American theatre company, presents its [18th Annual Festival of New Plays](#) at the Autry Museum of the American West and La Jolla Playhouse. The festival features staged readings of new and in-progress plays by Native writers followed by audience talkbacks in which each viewer becomes an important part of the collaborative process.

"This is the most exciting event in our development season," said **Jean Bruce Scott**, Native Voices Producing Executive Director. "The playwrights workshop their scripts with a dedicated cast while in residence at the Autry. They hear their plays read and discussed for three different audiences: the first

day for the full company (actors, directors, producers, dramaturges and designers), a week later for a public audience at the Autry, and two days after that for a public audience at the Tony Award-winning La Jolla Playhouse. The separate readings, meetings with designers, and daily workshops help the playwright to revise or rewrite as needed based on what they learn. Public readings are an invaluable tool, allowing the playwright to evaluate how the language, structure, story and themes are being heard. This is why the audience is so vital to the playwright's process and is such an important part of what we do at Native Voices."

A weeklong playwrights retreat that precedes Native Voices' highly respected festival brings together beginning, emerging, and established Native American playwrights to shape their plays with nationally recognized directors, dramaturges, and an acting company of exceptional Native American actors. Many works developed during this project have gone on to enjoy successful runs on Native Voices at the Autry's main stage and elsewhere, including *They Don't Talk Back* (2016), *Off the Rails* (2015), *The Bird House* (2012), and *The Frybread Queen* (2011).

The Festival of New Plays is free but reservations are recommended. For reservations and additional information, visit TheAutry.org/NativeVoices.

About the Featured Readings and Authors

***Bears and Black Sheep* by Jason Grasl (Blackfeet)**

A Blackfeet man faces his troubled relationship with his late father and his culture when he returns to his estranged family's remote mountain home.

Bears and Black Sheep is Grasl's third full-length play. His first, *The Blame of Love*, was produced by Clever Title Productions in L.A., and his second, *Emergency Management*, was developed through Native Voices at the Autry's First Look Series. As an actor, Grasl has performed with Native Voices for nearly a decade and is on the Native Voices Artists Ensemble Leadership Council. Stage credits include *Cherokee at Woolly Mammoth*, *The Blame of Love*, *Trophies*, *Sliver of a Full Moon*, and *Tony 'n Tina's Wedding*. Highly sought after as a collaborator in new play development, he has acted and directed new plays at Native Voices, The Public Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Arena Stage, Meadowbrook Theatre and the Purple Rose Theatre. He is a member of the Native American comedy troupe *The Mayflower Welcoming Committee*.

Readings:

Saturday, June 4, 1:00 p.m. at the Autry

Thursday, June 9, 7:00 p.m. at La Jolla Playhouse

***And So We Walked* by DeLanna Studi (Cherokee)**

Accompanied by her father, a Cherokee artist-activist retraces her ancestors' footsteps along the Trail of Tears. Additional project partners for *And So We Walked: An Artist's Journey along the Trail of Tears* include the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts.

Studi is known for her work as an actor in the films *Edge of America*, *The Only Good Indian*, and *Blessed*. Solo stage credits include *What's An Indian Woman To Do?* and *Kick* (over 400 performances), which both garnered rave reviews. She was in the national tour of *August Osage County* and performed Off-Broadway in the *New York Times* Critic's Pick *Informed Consent*, which described her performance as "moving gravity." Studi spent two seasons in the actors company of the acclaimed Oregon Shakespeare Festival and was a member of its Board of Directors responsible for choosing the following season's productions. Her first attempt at screenwriting earned her the Creative Spirit Award for Best Short. She has written blogs, essays, and countless oratories. She is the Chair of the President's National Task Force for American Indians of the Screen Actors Guild.

Readings:

Saturday, June 4, 4:00 p.m. at the Autry

Wednesday, June 8, 7:00 p.m. at La Jolla Playhouse

***Fairly Traceable* by Mary Kathryn Nagle (Cherokee)**

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, a young Ponca man pursues environmental law to expose the disastrous effects of man-made climate change.

Nagle is a Partner at Pipestem Law Firm P.C., as well as a nationally acclaimed playwright. She currently serves as the Executive Director for the Yale Indigenous Performing Arts Program. Nagle was born in Oklahoma City, OK, and is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation. She studied theater at Georgetown University and went on to study law at Tulane Law School, where she graduated summa cum laude and was the recipient of the Judge John Minor Wisdom Award. Her plays include *Manhatta*, *Sliver of a Full Moon*, *Katrina Stories*, *Welcome to Chalmette*, *Diamonds ... Are a Boy's Best Friend*, *Fairly Traceable*, *My Father's Bones* (co-authored with Suzan Shown Harjo), *To the 7th Degree*, *Miss Lead*, *In My Father's Eyes*, and *Waaxe's Law*. Her law review articles have been published in five different journals, including the *Tulane Law Review* and *Tulsa Law Review*.

Readings:

Sunday, June 5, 1:00 p.m. at the Autry

Tuesday, June 7, 7:00 p.m. at La Jolla Playhouse

Sponsors

Native Voices at the Autry is sponsored by San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, Department of Cultural Affairs (City of Los Angeles), Edison International, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, National Endowment for the Arts, The Nissan Foundation, Seven Post Private Investment Office, SoCal Gas, Sony Pictures, The Walt Disney Company, Wells Fargo, and Marti Wiedman and John Quick.

About Native Voices at the Autry

Native Voices at the Autry 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.

Founded in 1994 by Producing Artistic Director Randy Reinholz (Choctaw) and Producing Executive Director Jean Bruce Scott, Native Voices became the resident theatre company at the Autry Museum of the American West in 1999. The company provides a supportive, collaborative setting for Native theatre artists from across North America. In 2014 the company established the Native Voices Artists Ensemble to more fully take advantage of the extraordinary talents of its Native actors, writers, musicians, and directors. 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 at the Autry is a member of Actors' Equity Association, LA Stage Alliance, and the Dramatists Guild, and is a Constituent Theatre of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre. Visit 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 of Native American materials in the United States.

Hours

Museum and Autry Store:

Tuesday–Friday, 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Crossroads West Cafe:

Regular Hours

Tuesday–Friday, 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

About La Jolla Playhouse

The Tony Award-winning La Jolla Playhouse is internationally-renowned for creating some of the most exciting and adventurous work in American theatre, through its new play development initiatives, its innovative Without Walls series, artist residencies and commissions, including BD Wong, Daniel Beaty and Kirsten Greenidge. Currently led by Artistic Director Christopher Ashley and Managing Director Michael S. Rosenberg, the Playhouse was founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer, and reborn in 1983 under the artistic leadership of Des McAnuff, La Jolla Playhouse has had 25 productions transfer to Broadway, garnering 35 Tony Awards, among them *Jersey Boys*, *Memphis*, *The Who's Tommy*, *Big River*, as well as Billy Crystal's *700 Sundays* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *I Am My Own Wife*, both fostered as part of the Playhouse's Page To Stage Program. Visit

www.LaJollaPlayhouse.org.

EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE: CALENDAR LISTING

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

WHAT: Festival of New Plays

WHEN: June 4 and 5 at the Autry. June 7–9 at La Jolla Playhouse.

READINGS:

AT THE AUTRY

Bears and Black Sheep

Saturday, June 4, 1:00 p.m.

And So We Walked

Saturday, June 4, 4:00 p.m.

Fairly Traceable

Sunday, June 5, 1:00 p.m.

WHERE:

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

AT LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE

Fairly Traceable

Tuesday, June 7, 7:00 p.m.

And So We Walked

Wednesday, June 8, 7:00 p.m.

Bears and Black Sheep

Thursday, June 9, 7:00 p.m.

WHERE:

La Jolla Playhouse
2910 La Jolla Village Drive
La Jolla, CA 92037

TICKET PRICES:

Free / Reservations Recommended

INFORMATION:

TheAutry.org/NativeVoices