

# GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE SELECTS SIX PLAYWRIGHTS FOR THE 2019/2020 CYCLE OF “THE WRITERS’ ROOM”

#### The Initiative under Artistic Director Matt Shakman Develops New Work by Local Writers

LOS ANGELES (August 28, 2019) – Geffen Playhouse today announced its selection of six local writers to participate in the second cycle of The Writers’ Room, a forum for engagement and collaboration between Los Angeles playwrights. The participants for 2019/2020 are **Boni B. Alvarez, Chloé Hung, Inda Craig-Galván, Juan José Alfonso, Ramiz Monsef and Ruby Rae Spiegel.**

The program was founded last year by Artistic Director Matt Shakman, whose vision for Geffen Playhouse emphasizes world premiere productions and the development of bold, relevant work by the local artistic community. He is supported in realizing this vision by Geffen Playhouse Manager of New Play Development Rachel Wiegardt-Egel who will facilitate the one- year residency beginning in September of 2019.

In addition to the feedback of their fellow writers, members will receive dramaturgical support from the Geffen’s artistic staff and the opportunity to further develop their work with directors and actors, culminating in a reading series that may be open to the public.

The Writers’ Room is made possible through the generous support of Patricia Kiernan Applegate.

#### **ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHTS**

##### **Boni B. Alvarez**

Boni B. Alvarez is a Los Angeles-based playwright-actor. His plays include *America Adjacent, Bloodletting, Fixed, Nicky, Dallas Non-Stop, Dusty de los Santos, Ruby, Tragically Rotund, The Special Education of Miss Lorna Cambonga, Marabella, and Refuge for a Purple Heart.* His plays have been produced at Center Theatre Group/Kirk Douglas Theatre, Echo Theater Company, Coeurage Theatre Company, Skylight Theatre Company, and Playwrights’ Arena. His plays have been developed/given readings at Chalk Rep, Moving Arts, Artists At Play, The Vagrancy, Los Angeles Theatre Center, EST/LA, The Blank, Pork Filled Players (Seattle), Second Generation (2g, NYC), InterAct Theatre (Philadelphia), and Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Upcoming: world premiere of *Driven* at Theatre Rhinoceros in San Francisco. He is an Adjunct Lecturer at USC and a Resident Playwright of New Dramatists.

##### **Chloé Hung**

A Chinese-Canadian writer and director, Chloé Hung is a graduate of the M.F.A. in Dramatic Writing program at NYU Tisch. Chloé’s plays include *All Our Yesterdays* (Toronto Fringe, Next Stage Theatre Festival); *Issei, He Say* (world premiere at New Jersey Repertory Company); *Three Women of Swatow*

(upcoming world premiere at Tarragon Theatre in March 2020). She was awarded the RBC Emerging Playwrights Award. Her plays have been workshopped in Toronto, New York, Washington DC, Banff, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles. In the world of television, she has written for *Cherish the Day* and *Queen Sugar* (both created by Ava DuVernay, for OWN). Her short film *Signal* received funding and mentorship through the Women In Film production lab. She is developing a television pilot, *Banana Kids*, with Insurrection Media. She workshopped her screenplay, *A Glimpse of Sun*, with The Black List's screenwriting lab. When she's not writing, she's likely baking pies and cookies.

### **Inda Craig-Galván**

Inda Craig-Galván's plays include *Black Super Hero Magic Mama* (world premiere at Geffen Playhouse, Eugene O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, Kennedy Center Rosa Parks Playwriting Award, Kilroys List); *I Go Somewhere Else* (world premiere at Playwrights Area, L.A. Drama Critics Circle Awards & Stage Raw playwriting nominations); and *Welcome to Matteson!* (Ojai Playwrights Conference, Blue Ink Playwriting Award, The Old Globe/Powers New Voices Festival). She has also developed work with Oregon Shakespeare Festival Black Swan Lab, San Francisco Playhouse, Black and Latino Playwrights Conference, and others. M.F.A. in Theatre, University of Southern California. Television credits: *How to Get Away with Murder*, *The Rookie*.

### **Juan José Alfonso**

Juan Alfonso is late to the playwriting game. After 20 years as a media executive, he wrote his first play, *An Educated Guess*, based on his own experience as an immigrant to the United States. The play was developed at New York Theatre Workshop and Steppenwolf Theatre Company (produced by Definition Theatre Company), and has been shortlisted at regional theaters across the country for awards and production. In his day job, Juan is a television producer. He has worked on over 25 shows, including the Emmy-winning *American Crime* from Academy Award winner John Ridley and Marvel's *Agent Carter*; as well as documentaries like *The Clemente Effect* and *L'Arbitre*, winner of the United Nations prize at the New York Festivals in 2010. Juan began his career in advertising agencies in New York and San Francisco. He is an active member of Children's Bureau and Urban Compass, and an unpaid weekend chauffeur for his very active children.

### **Ramiz Monsef**

Ramiz is a co-author of the musical *The Unfortunates*, which was produced at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and ACT in San Francisco. He wrote that show's accompanying graphic novel as well. He also co-wrote *The Many Deaths of Nathan Stubblefield*, which had its premiere in the 2017 Humana Festival at Actors Theatre of Louisville. His newest play *3 Farids* was part of The Bushwick Starr reading series and was selected to be in the New Works Festival at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, as well as the DNA Series at La Jolla Playhouse, and at Playwrights Horizons. Ramiz is an actor as well, and has appeared in theaters across the country, including Actors Theatre of Louisville, Mark Taper Forum, Berkeley Rep, Yale Rep, ACT, Seattle Rep, seven seasons at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Geffen Playhouse, Kirk Douglas Theatre, Second Stage Theater, Culture Project, and New York Theatre Workshop. He has appeared on television in *Law & Order*, *Training Day*, *NCIS*, *SEAL Team*, *Modern Family*, *Kidding*, *Shameless*, *The Watchlist* on Comedy Central, and the upcoming film *Synchronic*.

### **Ruby Rae Spiegel**

Ruby Rae Spiegel's *Dry Land* premiered Off-Broadway in a sold-out, critically acclaimed run at Colt Coeur, following development in New York Stage and Film's Powerhouse Theater Readings Festival and the Ojai Playwrights Conference. A finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, the play has since gone on to be produced in over ten cities in the United States, London, Sydney, Abu Dhabi, South Korea, and more. Ruby's short play *Carrie & Francine* premiered in the Summer Shorts Festival at 59E59 when she

was only 18 years old. The play was produced alongside work by Neil LaBute, Christopher Durang and Alexander Dinclaris, receiving critical acclaim from *The New York Times*, *The New York Post*, and *Time Out New York*, and is now published in the anthology *Outstanding Short Plays Volume 3*. Ruby is a MacDowell Colony Fellow, was part of the Center Theater Group's 2018/19 writers' group, and recently attended Hedgebrook. Ruby has written for several television shows, including *The OA*, *Purity*, *Mindhunter*, *When They See Us*, and *A Teacher*.

### **ABOUT GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE**

Geffen Playhouse has been a hub of the Los Angeles theater scene since opening its doors in 1995. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its world-renowned mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and second productions, the not-for-profit organization continues to present a body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who made the initial donation to the theater, the company was founded by Gilbert Cates and is currently helmed by Executive Director Gil Cates, Jr., Artistic Director Matt Shakman and Board Chair Howard Tenenbaum. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains extensive education and community engagement programs, designed to involve underserved young people and the community at large in the arts.

[www.geffenplayhouse.org](http://www.geffenplayhouse.org)

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