

# GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

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### GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE ANNOUNCES WRITERS FOR 2024/2025 CYCLE OF “THE WRITERS’ ROOM”

#### Initiative Develops New Work by LA-Based Writers

LOS ANGELES (August 29, 2024) – Geffen Playhouse today announced its selection of LA-based writers to participate in the 2024/2025 cycle of The Writers’ Room, a forum for engagement and collaboration between Los Angeles playwrights. The participants are **Sunny Drake, Keiko Green, Andrew Zepeda Klein, maatin, Samah Meghjee** and **James Anthony Tyler**.

The Writers’ Room is a product of Geffen Playhouse’s commitment to supporting new plays and specifically to fostering bold, relevant work by the vibrant artistic community of Los Angeles. During this twelve-month residency, playwright members gather monthly to share their work and receive feedback from their peers in a forum facilitated by Geffen Playhouse Literary Manager & Dramaturg Olivia O’Connor. The 2024/2025 cycle of The Writers’ Room will begin September 2024.

At the conclusion of the residency, each playwright will have the opportunity to further develop their completed draft in a culminating reading produced by the Geffen.

Playwrights who have developed work as part of The Writers' Room include: Juan José Alfonso, Ashley August, Boni B. Alvarez, Vivian Barnes, Meghan Brown, Diana Burbano, Jennifer Chang, Angelica Chéri, Paris Crayton III, Inda Craig-Galván, Lisa Sanaye Dring, Weston Gaylord, Inara George, Dipika Guha, Christina Ham, Chloé Hung, Donald Jolly, Alexandra Kalinowski, Tova Katz, Katie Lindsay, Chelsea Marcantel, Ramiz Monsef, Paloma Nozicka, Matthew Paul Olmos, Brian Otaño, Nicholas Pilapil, Liza Powel O'Brien, Alexis Roblan, Matt Schatz, Michael Shayan, Ruby Rae Spiegel, T. Tara Turk-Haynes and Ali Viterbi.

The Writers’ Room is made possible through the generous support of the William Randolph Hearst Foundation.

#### **ABOUT THE WRITERS**

##### **Sunny Drake** (he/him)

Sunny Drake’s inventive and multi-award-winning theatre works have been presented in over 60 cities and translated into 6 languages. His wide range of audiences have spanned international arts festival goers, queers in underground warehouses, and seniors in regional theatres. In 2022, *Every Little Nookie* premiered at the Stratford Festival, Canada’s largest theatre. He won a national Canadian comedy award for the script. In 2024, Pacific Theatre (Vancouver) premiered his play *CHILD-ish*, where adults speak children’s exact words. Some of Canada’s most prominent theatres presented a previous digital

adaptation. In 2023, he launched a multi-award-winning podcast of audio dramas, *Climate Change & Other Small Talk*, on which he led 100 artists in 9 international cities. His comedy *Men Express Their Feelings* had 4 productions across Canada, described by the *Calgary Herald* as “an instant Canadian classic.” Prior to that, Sunny extensively toured his one-person shows. He has held fellowships with Yaddo, Ucross, Djerassi, The Arctic Circle onboard a tall ship, and many others. He is currently developing a new play on commission from the Lucille Lortel Theatre, one of New York’s premiere off-Broadway playhouses. Sunny is also a proud trans person. [www.sunnydrake.com](http://www.sunnydrake.com)

**Keiko Green** (she/her)

Keiko Green is a playwright, screenwriter, and performer based in North Hollywood. Plays include: *You Are Cordially Invited to the End of the World!* (South Coast Repertory, upcoming), *Exotic Deadly: Or the MSG Play* (The Old Globe; San Francisco Playhouse, upcoming), *Empty Ride* (TBA, upcoming), *The Bed Trick* (Seattle Shakespeare Company), *Gorgeous* (Raven Theatre, upcoming), *Hells Canyon* (Theater Mu), *Sharon* (Cygnet Theatre), *Hometown Boy* (Actor’s Express; Seattle Public Theater), and *Nadeshiko* (Sound Theatre Company). Her plays have been developed by the O’Neill National Playwrights Conference, The Old Globe, The Kennedy Center, the National New Play Network, The Playwrights Realm, Ensemble Studio Theatre, and Atlantic Theater Company. She currently holds commissions from Manhattan Theatre Club/Sloan Foundation and Seattle Children’s Theatre/Kennedy Center. Awards/Honors: The Kilroys Web, San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Award (Outstanding New Play), Gregory Award (Outstanding New Play). For TV, she wrote on Hulu’s upcoming *Interior Chinatown* and Apple TV+/A24’s *Margo’s Got Money Troubles*. As an actor, she has performed at theaters nationwide and originated the role of “Connie” in Lauren Yee’s *The Great Leap* at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts and Seattle Rep. Proud member of WGAW, Dramatists Guild, AEA, SAG-AFTRA. B.F.A.: NYU Drama–ETW; M.F.A.: UCSD Playwriting. [www.keikogreen.com](http://www.keikogreen.com)

**Andrew Zepeda Klein** (he/him)

Andrew Zepeda Klein is a writer based (and born) in Los Angeles. He holds a bachelor’s degree in Theatre from UCLA, has studied acting at the New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts, and film at the New York Film Academy. He recently studied Ancient History, Attic Greek, and Latin through UCLA’s Post-Baccalaureate in Classics. He was the 1994-95 Sherman Oaks YMCA Basketball MVP. Other notable credits include writing television for CBS, film for Universal, and comic books for DC. His plays have been produced at The Broadwater and for the Hollywood Fringe Festival. In New York, he has been an assistant director for productions at The Brick Theatre and Dixon Place. He has also been a cheesemonger and can tell you what to pair with that goat Gouda (fig jam).

**maatin** (he/him)

maatin is a writer, dramaturg, and producer from London, now based in Los Angeles. He focuses on Muslim storytelling, working across theatre, radio, television, and film. maatin trained at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (M.F.A. in Writing for Stage and Broadcast Media, 2018–2020). His debut play, *Duck*, premiered at the Arcola Theatre in London in 2023, and ran at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2024 as a recipient of the Pleasance’s Charlie Hartill Fund. His play *Friday at the Masjid* was a winner of the Royal Shakespeare Company’s 37 Plays, and longlisted for both The Bruntwood Prize for Playwriting and Soho Theatre’s Verity Bargate Award 2022. Theatre credits include: *Duck* (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2024; Arcola Theatre, 2023; Jermyn Street Theatre, 2022), *Meatballs* (Hampstead Theatre). Radio credits include: *Yusuf and the Whale* (BBC). Film credits include: *Sharia’s Law* (short, Apatan Productions).

**Samah Meghjee** (she/her)

Samah is a Muslim playwright and screenwriter residing in Los Angeles. Her work breaks the rules, aiming to illuminate and cherish the inner rebel inside us all. Samah’s play *Maybe You Could Love Me* is

an Honorable Mention for The Leah Prize and on the Top List on the Black List. Her original screenplay *Quran Camp* is a 1497 Features Lab Finalist and is on the MUBI/Wscripted Second Annual Cannes Screenplay List. Her short film *Therapist Speed Dating* premiered on Amazon Prime Video. Her children's one-act, *The Mysterious Mystery of the Lost Letters*, co-authored by her identical twin, was published by Brooklyn Publishers and has been performed at high schools all across the USA. Samah graduated with an M.F.A. in Writing for the Screen and Stage at Northwestern University and a B.A. from Emory University. In Samah's free time, she loves thrifting vintage pants, taking photos of her cats on film, and cooking for her loved ones. She formerly worked on ABC/Hulu's *Natalia* and A24/Apple TV+'s *Sunny*. She is represented by Daniel Leap at IAG and Brandy Rivers at Amplified.

**James Anthony Tyler** (he/him)

James Anthony Tyler is the recipient of the 3rd Annual Horton Foote Playwriting Award and an inaugural playwright to receive a commission from Audible. He was also recently The Playwrights' Center's McKnight Theater Artist Fellow and a playwright participant in the 2024 Durango PlayFest. His plays include *Into the Side of a Hill* (Flint Repertory Theatre), *Artney Jackson* (world premiere at Williamstown Theatre Festival, 2018 Edgerton Foundation New Play Award), *Some Old Black Man* (Berkshire Playwrights Lab at Saint James Place and 59E59 Theaters), and *Dolphins and Sharks* (LAByrnth Theater Company and Finborough Theatre in London). He has an M.F.A. in Film from Howard University and an M.F.A. in Dramatic Writing from New York University. He is also a graduate of The Juilliard School's Lila Acheson Wallace American Playwrights Program. He was the Staff Writer for the OWN Network show *Cherish the Day* and was most recently in the writers' room for a new Apple TV+ drama series starring an Academy Award-winning actress. Upcoming: *The Drop Off*, world premiere production at New Jersey Repertory Company in 2025.

**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 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/CEO Gil Cates, Jr., Artistic Director Tarell Alvin McCraney and Board Chair Adi Greenberg. 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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