



# NEW WORKS FESTIVAL

YEAR



003

*McCLINTOCK THEATRE*

**FEATURING**

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***Pairi Daiza***

*By Nahal Navidar; Directed by Robert Egan*

***Henry and the Hippocampus***

*By Brian James Polak; Directed by Elina de Santos*

***The End Times***

*By Jesse Mu-En Shao; Directed by Nancy Keystone*

USC School  
of Dramatic Arts

## USC SCHOOL OF DRAMATIC ARTS

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**Courtesy Joint Appointments:** Thomas G. Cummings, Larry E. Greiner (Emeritus), Bruce Smith  
**Emeriti Faculty:** Don Llewellyn, Eve Roberts, Robert R. Scales, James Wilson

## MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN DRAMATIC WRITING

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The USC School of Dramatic Arts' Master of Fine Arts in Dramatic Writing (MFADW) is an intensive, intimate three-year program presented in association with the USC School of Cinematic Arts. A mentor-based, practicing literary arts program within an elite research university, the MFADW is designed to mine the literary potential of the artist in the hope of preparing the artist to engage meaningfully in global society and the profession. Underlying the program is the belief that literary art in the theatrical context is central to human existence, and aids in illuminating the human condition which is the source and the destination of all writing. The program aims to help the student utilize his or her innate artistry to build excellence.

The program is the only one of its kind located in a region where all spheres of arts and entertainment intersect — the City of Los Angeles, the preeminent site of opportunity for today's dramatic writer.

The USC MFADW approaches dramatic writing through its critical roots in playwriting and then investigates beyond this foundation into adaptation, screenwriting, television writing and other cutting-edge forms of dramatic writing. The program supports production opportunities as well as a four-phase New Works Festival that includes readings, workshops, concert presentations and professional transition.

New Works Festival Year Three is a summer event offering concert readings of graduating students' works utilizing professional directors, actors and dramaturgical responders.

Led by distinguished faculty who are working artists, the MFADW program also offers visiting artist master seminars, literary management internships, and professional programs with Center Theatre Group, which includes the Mark Taper Forum and the Ahmanson and Kirk Douglas Theatres; and The Pasadena Playhouse, State Theatre of California. Students also are exposed to a wide array of celebrated guest artists who have included Edward Albee, Tony Kushner, Amiri Baraka, David Henry Hwang and Paula Vogel; and a thesis that culminates in work that ably prepares the student for entry into the professional sphere. Graduate dramatic writing studies at the USC School of Dramatic Arts were established by Velina Hasu Houston in 1990.

# *Pairi Daiza*

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By Nahal Navidar  
Directed by Robert Egan

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

Zahra Zamai.....Shiva Rose  
Yashar Farhadi.....Adam El-Sharkawi  
Ali.....Assaf Cohen  
Masood.....Amin El Gamal

**TIME**  
1981

**PLACE**  
Abadan, Iran

There will be one 10-minute intermission.

## PLAYWRIGHT'S BIO

Nahal Navidar is an Iranian-born playwright raised in upstate New York. Her play *110 Flights* has been workshopped at the Kennedy Center Playwriting Intensive and produced at the University at Albany, Proctor's Theatre New Play Festival, and Voices of the Marianas (Saipan, MP). Navidar has worked internationally in the Micronesian Islands, where she founded Fabulous Invalid Theatre Company to engage the voices of the Pacific and East Asian Diaspora. Short plays include *'Flicted* (WAM Theatre, N.Y.), and *The Real Pain* (The Vagrancy). In 2015, Nahal will premiere her first opera, *Donia*, written in collaboration with music composer Julia Adolphe. This project will mark the teams first in their effort to empower female artists on the American stage. Nahal will continue her work internationally, utilizing theatre as a vehicle to raise social awareness and incite global change. Nahal thanks her family, professors, Schelly, and darling Fwizzy Fwiz.

## DIRECTOR'S BIO

Robert Egan is a director, producer and dramaturge. He was Producing Artistic Director of the Mark Taper Forum for 20 seasons and was the Founding/Producing Artistic Director of its New Work Festival for 15 seasons. He was the former Associate Artistic Director of Seattle Rep and, presently, is the Artistic Director/Producer of the Ojai Playwrights Conference and President of RHEgan Productions. Directing credits include productions at the Mark Taper Forum, Kirk Douglas Theatre, Dorothy Chander Pavilion, Playwrights Horizon, Seattle Rep, Actor's Gang, Berkeley Rep, La Jolla Playhouse and ACT Seattle. For television, he has directed episodes of *Frasier* and *Stark Raving Mad*, among others.

Stage Manager.....Alex Rehberger

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# Henry and the Hippocampus

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By Brian James Polak  
Directed by Elina de Santos

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

Maria.....Tessa Auberjonois  
Patryk.....Rob Nagle  
Henry.....Arye Gross

## TIME

Present

## PLACE

A small research facility at The University of New Hampshire in Durham, NH.

There will be one 10-minute intermission.

## PLAYWRIGHT'S BIO

Brian James Polak has short plays published in the 2010 and 2013 edition of Smith & Kraus's *Best 10-minute Plays*. He has a short story and a play published in Commonplace Books anthologies and embarrassing childhood poetry published in *Mortified: Love is a Battlefield*. His play *Henry and the Hippocampus* was awarded The Kennedy Center's Jean Kennedy Smith Award and was a recent O'Neill Playwrights Conference semi-finalist. His play *War Profits* was awarded The Kennedy Center's John Cauble Award for One-act Plays. He's been a Guest Playwright with the Association of Theatre in Higher Education as well as Loyola Marymount's Playwrights Center Stage. Brian is a member of the Dramatists Guild and The Playwrights Union. During the day, he works as the Marketing & Communications Manager for Boston Court Performing Arts Center in Pasadena. [BrianJamesPolak.com](http://BrianJamesPolak.com)

## DIRECTOR'S BIO

Elina de Santos, Co-Artistic Director, Rogue Machine Theatre – World premieres: *Dirty Filthy Love Story* (Rob Mersola), *Razorback* (John Pollono) and *Yard Sale Signs* (Jennie Webb); West Coast Premieres: *Bhutan* (Daisy Foote), *Vivien* (Rick Foster), *Stop Kiss* (Diana Son) and *Falling* (Deana Jent). WC Jewish Theatre: *New Jerusalem* (David Ives) & *Broken Glass* (Arthur Miller.) For The Pasadena Playhouse: West Coast premiere of Vincent in *Brixton* (Nicolas Wright). Odyssey: L.A. premiere of David Mamet's *Speed the Plow*, Clifford Odets' *Awake & Sing!*, and Arthur Miller's *All My Sons*. Pacific Resident Theatre: Odets' *Rocket to the Moon*, Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, Tennessee Williams' *Orpheus Descending* – LADCC Awards for performance, direction and production and L.A. premiere of Albee's *A Delicate Balance*. Ark Theatre: *A Doll's House* (Ibsen), LA Weekly Direction, Production and Ensemble nominees. Regional: *Orphans* (Lyle Kessler), ICT; *Romeo & Juliet: Circus Verona*, DWT, Ovation Nomination; *Awake & Sing!*, BTF & PPT. LADCC Career Achievement, Directing 2012.

Stage Manager.....Jennifer Caspellan

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# The End Times

By Jesse Mu-En Shao  
Directed by Nancy Keystone

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

Tim.....Wyatt Fenner  
Evan.....Christopher Rivas  
Seth.....Timothy Jo  
Jamie.....James Leo Ryan  
Ruthann.....Virginia Veale

## TIME

2007 - 2008

## PLACE

Pullman, Washington

There will be one 10-minute intermission.

## PLAYWRIGHT'S BIO

Jesse Mu-En Shao is a playwright from Bellevue, Washington. In 2010, he was a KCACTF Region VII finalist for his play, *Where You End... I Begin*, and in 2011, he was a semi-finalist for the John Cauble Short Play Award for his one act play, *Stories From Nanjing*. After receiving his BA in Theatre Arts from Washington State University, he went on to pursue his MFA in Dramatic Writing at the University of Southern California, where he recently completed his final year.

## DIRECTOR'S BIO

Nancy Keystone is a theatre director/playwright/designer and visual artist. She is a recipient of the 2014 Doris Duke Artist Award, was honored with the 2011 United States Artists Hoi Fellowship. She is the founder/artistic director of Critical Mass Performance Group, whose most recent multi-disciplinary work is her adaptation of *Alcestis*, which premiered at the Theatre @ Boston Court. The company's epic trilogy, *Apollo*, premiered at Kirk Douglas Theatre (2005), and Portland Center Stage (2009), and *The Akhmatova Project* premiered in 2000. The company is currently developing *Ameryka*, which explores democracy and freedom through the lens of the U.S. relationship with Poland. As a freelance artist, she has directed and designed productions at regional theatres around the country, as well as directing opera and film. She is on the visiting faculty at UCLA, is a frequent guest lecturer, and an instructor in arts-in-education programs nationwide. [www.nancykeystone.com](http://www.nancykeystone.com)

Stage Manager.....Kelly Merritt

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## PRODUCTION STAFF

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Producer.....Velina Hasu Houston

Festival Supervisor.....Molly McGraw

Casting Director.....Joanne DeNaut

Assistant Stage Managers.....Meredith O’Gwynn  
Liam Sterbinsky

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The USC School of Dramatic Arts would like to recognize the tremendous generosity of the following individuals and organizations whose cumulative giving has exceeded \$1 million. Their foresight and commitment have helped transform the School into a leader in dramatic arts education:

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We are grateful to those who have given wisdom, talent, time and financial resources to the benefit of the School. We would like to acknowledge the following members for their generous commitments of \$1,000 or more over the past year.

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# FRIENDS OF DRAMATIC ARTS

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We hope you will consider becoming a member. For more information about giving to the School of Dramatic Arts,  
please contact Sara Fousekis at 213-821-4047 or fousekis@usc.edu.

## PRODUCTION STAFF

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**Assistant Technical Directors:** Michael Etzrodt, Michael Wiskow  
**Theatre Manager:** CB Borger  
**Assistant Theatre Managers:** Fionnegan Justus Murphy, Christopher Paci  
**Costume Shop Manager:** Howard Schmitt  
**Costume Technicians:** Charlotte Stratton, JoEllen Skinner  
**Scenic Charge Artist:** Vika Teplinskaya  
**Properties Manager:** Hannah Burnham

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**Information Technology Director:** Prakash Shirke

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