

Baldwin New Play Festival to Showcase Talent of MFA Playwriting Program Students



Each spring, the resources and creative energies of the UC San Diego theatre and dance department focus on producing plays written by students in the MFA Playwriting Program for the Baldwin New Play Festival.

This year has been no different and the result is [BNPF 2012](#), featuring four world premiere productions April 18 through 28 in the UC San Diego/La Jolla Playhouse Theatre District.

Written, directed, acted, stage-managed and designed by the university's nationally-acclaimed MFA companies, BNPF 2012 plays explore the trials and tribulations of newly minted college graduates; the pains of fatherhood; the search for the truth about the past (while a serial killer is on the loose!); and the danger of dreams and desire in war-torn Haiti.

The featured 2012 plays include:

- "Hookman" by Lauren Yee, directed by Larissa Lury
- "The Santa Barbarians" by Sharif Abu-Hamdeh, directed by Joshua Kahan Brody

- “Gas House Baby” by David Myers, directed by Anthony Luciano
- “Cry Old Kingdom” by Jeff Augustin, directed by Kate Jopson

BNPF 2012 will also feature a staged reading of “Gossamer” by Cerstin Johnson, winner of the sixth annual Dr. Floyd Gaffney National Playwriting Competition on the African-American Experience. This competition was open to all enrolled undergraduate students throughout the country. The Gaffney Prize awards \$1,000 to the winning author along with travel and lodging to participate in the play’s staged reading as part of the Baldwin New Play Festival at UC San Diego.

The plays presented by the BNPF represent some of the most original and ground-breaking new voices in American theatre. Many UC San Diego playwrights have had their work produced and commissioned around the country. New plays showcased at BNPF in recent years have had major productions and readings in New York City, San Francisco, Boston, Atlanta, Minneapolis, Chicago, Washington D.C, and the O’Neill Playwrights Conference in Waterford, Conn..

The Baldwin New Play Festival is the culmination of new play development work that began in September with readings of the first drafts of the plays that are premiered in April. In early December, each play had a weeklong workshop. UC San Diego’s MFA actors, directors, stage managers and designers who make up the companies for each production also participate in the readings and workshops.

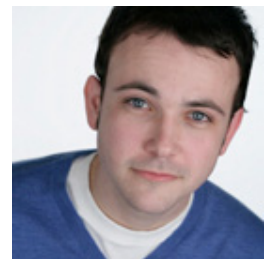


Lauren Yee

Playwright Lauren Yee, MFA ’12, said: “The festival is a great opportunity for writers to see their work through from beginning to end,” said Playwright Lauren Yee, MFA ’12. “I’ve gotten to work with directors, actors and designers more closely than I ever have in my career – and probably more intimately than I ever will.”

BNPF is performed in three theatres over two weeks in late April, including the gala Guest Weekend, a three-day event attended by a dozen theatre professionals from across the United States including artistic directors, literary managers, agents, and playwrights. Most guests participate in small seminars as well as seeing all productions.

Playwright David Myers, MFA ’12, who, like Yee, is set to graduate this year and has participated in the festival before said the Baldwin New Play Festival was a major part of his decision to attend UC San Diego. “My understanding is that there is nothing like it anywhere else in the country,” he said. “Artistically, I have learned an incredible amount from having the chance to see my ideas fully staged by the multi-talented community at UCSD. Professionally, I am graduating have made one-on-one contact with over 30 professionals across the country.... and every single one of them has seen my work.”



David Myers

The 2012 Baldwin New Play Festival is made possible by Ken and Ginger Baldwin, whose generous support helped to establish the festival in 1999 and sustain it for more than a decade. Today, the festival is one of Southern California's premiere showcases of emerging theatre talent. Yet, additional private support from our friends is critical to ensure that the Baldwin New Play Festival continues as a tradition for our campus and our community. To learn how you can make a difference, visit <http://theatre.ucsd.edu/giveNow.html>.

For more about the festival and the individual plays:
<http://theatre.ucsd.edu/season/Baldwin/index.html>.

Keep up with campus news by subscribing to *This Week @ UC San Diego*