

ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

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Director of New Play Development & Dramaturgy at Artists Rep Announced: Luan Schooler *Naming Marks Start of Expanded Focus on Play Development Funded by Oregon Community Foundation's Creative Heights Award*

PORTLAND, OREGON – April 7, 2015. Artists Repertory Theatre announces the launch of its ambitious New Play Development Program by naming Luan Schooler Director of New Play Development & Dramaturgy. Schooler will begin the post April 13, 2015. At the end of 2014, Artists Rep conducted a national search to find the right match for this position and the aesthetic of the theatre.

In August 2014, Artists Rep was the recipient of a \$125,000 Oregon Community Foundation "Creative Heights" grant to establish a robust New Play Development program that will create opportunities for local and national playwrights, ensure that underrepresented voices are heard on stage and establish Artists Rep and Portland as an engine for new play development, nationally.

Following a national search that resulted in nearly 100 applicants, the Portland-based Schooler was chosen to lead the bold two-year pilot program that will commission eight new plays. Four of the eight commissions will go to writers of color, four will be women, and one play will be written for young adults. One writer from Oregon will be awarded a special commission – The Oregon Play Prize – and a commitment to a full production of their play's World Premiere in an Artists Rep season. More information [here](#).

Schooler has an illustrious history as a dramaturg with theatre companies such as new play powerhouse Berkeley Rep, Juneau Alaska's Perseverance Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival and locally, Boom Arts. She has worked extensively with a range of stylistically diverse writers in the process of developing new work and guiding new plays toward production. Schooler's experience also includes managing commissioning programs, writing for literary, development and marketing departments, as well as developing audience enrichment and community outreach programs.

"I have spent the past several months talking to playwrights, directors, and dramaturgs in Portland and around the country as a way of identifying the unique mix of qualities and experiences this

position will require to support the process of developing new plays and in order to build a sustainable program,” said Dámaso Rodríguez, Artistic Director at Artists Repertory Theatre. “I couldn’t be more confident that we have made the perfect choice in Luan Schooler. She possesses the background, talent and experience we were hoping to find, as well as being very familiar with our work at Artists Rep and the Portland theatre community.”

“I am elated to be working again with playwrights to create new works that move, enrich and galvanize audiences,” said Schooler, “I am quite taken with Artists Rep's commitment to nurture talented, diverse American writers through this new play development initiative. Their pledge to cultivate the wild panoply of talented, urgent, passionate artists who are writing today’s American stories is important, and I'm deeply honored to be a part of this vital work.”

LUAN SCHOOLER BIO

Luan Schooler joins Artists Rep as Director of New Play Development with extensive background as dramaturg, literary manager, writer, and actor, along with administrative experience in marketing and development. Schooler honed her skills as a company member of Perseverance Theatre in Alaska, working with then-artistic director Molly Smith on new plays and devised works with wide ranging artists including Paula Vogel, John Murrell, John Luther Adams and Darrah Cloud. She also conducted annual company audition tours to towns and remote villages throughout Alaska (where she enjoyed one of the most thrilling theatre experiences ever, a production of *The Unsinkable Molly Brown* by the community theatre in Nome). After leaving Alaska, Schooler became the Literary Manager/Dramaturg for Berkeley Rep. During seven years there, she worked with many luminary writers, including David Edgar, Naomi Iizuka, Salman Rushdie, Dominique Serrand, Rinde Eckert, Lillian Groag, Bridget Carpenter, Adam Rapp, and Robert Fagles, and astute directors Tony Taccone, Mark Wing-Davey, Stephen Wadsworth, and Lisa Peterson, among others. She has also worked on several devised pieces at Denver Center with artistic team Pavel Dobrusky and Per-Olav Sørensen, and worked as dramaturg at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, California Shakespeare Festival, A Traveling Jewish Theatre, And Shaking the Tree Theatre. Schooler took a several year hiatus from theatre to explore the dramaturgy of artisanal cheese, opening a small cheese shop, Foster & Dobbs, in Portland with her husband. Delicious though that experience was, the hunger for stories of greater complexity and variety prevailed and she returned to Alaska in 2011 to adapt her brother's memoir *The Blue Bear* with Leon Ingulsrud (co-founder and co-artistic director, SITI Company) for Perseverance Theatre. She is currently working with Ingulsrud and filmmaker Andrew McLean on a new project for Perseverance about polar explorer Roald Amundsen.

Artists Repertory Theatre

Portland’s premier mid-size regional theatre company is led by Artistic Director Dámaso Rodríguez and Managing Director Sarah Horton. Founded in 1982, Artists Repertory Theatre is the longest-running professional theatre company in Portland. Artists Rep offers eight bold and entertaining plays written by internationally acclaimed playwrights, and guided by esteemed directors. Artists Rep productions feature the work of a core group of accomplished Resident Artists, each with a shared history and a shorthand for collaboration, working alongside guest artists from Portland and beyond.

Artists Rep’s mission is to engage diverse audiences in fresh, thought-provoking and intimate theatre. We are committed to world-class acting, directing, design and stagecraft that support new playwriting and aspire to embody great literature, moving audiences to truly feel — to *experience* — storytelling in a way that only the best live theatre can.

The 2015/16 Artists Repertory Theatre season is presented by Ronni Lacroute/WillaKenzie Estate. Other season support comes from the Regional Arts and Culture Council, The Oregon Community Foundation, Meyer Memorial Trust, the Collins Foundation and The James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation.

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