

# ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

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**Media Contact: Nicole Lane**

**[nlane@artistsrep.org](mailto:nlane@artistsrep.org)**

**503.241.9807 x102; 360.601.4298 (cell)**

## ***Oregon Community Foundation Awards Artists Rep \$125,000 to Launch NEW PLAY DEVELOPMENT Program COMMISSIONING EIGHT PLAYS over TWO YEARS***

**Portland, Oregon | August 15, 2014.** Artists Rep is thrilled to receive an 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.

The two-year pilot program will commission eight new plays. Four of the eight commissions will go to writers of color, four will be women, 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. Artists Rep will immediately hire a Director of New Play Development, a professional dramaturge, to manage the program and work with staff to create a submission and selection process.

“We are thrilled to finally be able to devote substantial resources to new play development at Artists Rep,” Sarah Horton, Managing Director. “We hope to honor the Oregon Community Foundation’s visionary funding strategy with a body of bold new plays that will enrich the lives of audiences in Oregon and throughout the country for years to come.”

“This Creative Heights grant represents an incredible opportunity to launch a robust and vital program at Artists Rep that will build upon our 30+ year history of producing new plays,” Dámaso Rodriguez, Artistic Director. “We have always sought out plays that reflect the diversity of human experience, but this will be the first time we will deliberately and specifically commission, curate and develop work by women writers, writers of color and writers of work for young audiences. I’m so excited by the possibilities and the impact this commissioning initiative will have on our future.”

(more)

With this grant the public will have unique access to the process of new work development through an online video series and blog that will allow for audience engagement. Through the blog, the planning, play selection and play development process will be shared and an online video series will allow writers and the artistic teams to share their process and their challenges, engaging audiences in their work from the earliest stages shedding light on a little-known part of the theatre world.

Artists Rep has become a significant presence in American Regional Theatre with a legacy of world, national and regional premieres of provocative new work with the highest standards of stagecraft. Our commitment to local artists is embodied by our company of Resident Artists, 21 professionals of varied theatre disciplines who are a driving force behind Artists Rep's creative output and identity. This commissioning program will position Artists Rep as an engine for new play development in the region and beyond. With this New Play Development program, Artists Rep strives to empower and support Oregon-based playwrights while also creating a Portland home for writers from around the country to develop their work. Additionally, this program will make a meaningful impact on equity in the arts by mandating opportunities for women writers and writers of color, and cultivating the next generation of theatre-goers by creating work specifically for young people (13 and up).

**Information about the 2014/15 season here:** <http://www.artistsrep.org/learn-about-us/our-201415-season.aspx>

### **Artists Repertory Theatre**

Portland's premiere mid-size regional theatre company is led by Artistic Director Dámaso Rodriguez and Managing Director Sarah Horton. Founded in 1982, Artists Repertory Theatre is the longest-running professional theatre company in Portland. For the 2014/15 season Artists Rep will offer eight bold and entertaining plays written by internationally acclaimed playwrights, and guided by esteemed directors. Artists Rep productions will 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 2014/15 Artists Repertory Theatre season is presented by Ronni Lacroute/WillaKenzie Estate. Our season media sponsors are The Oregonian and KINK. Other season support comes from the Regional Arts Culture Council, The Oregon Community Foundation, the Collins Foundation, the Harold and Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation, Meyer Memorial Trust, The James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation, and Rafati's Catering.

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