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ROUND HOUSE THEATRE
ANNOUNCES COMMISSIONED ARTISTS

**JAMES IJAMES, INDA CRAIG-GALVÁN, AND MARGOT
BORDELON & JIEHAE PARK**

THE ARTISTS JOIN RANKS OF PLAYWRIGHTS
ALREADY UNDER COMMISSION THROUGH

EQUAL PLAY COMMISSIONING PROGRAM

As part of Round House's ongoing commitment to
gender parity & racial diversity

Bethesda, Md. (March 21, 2023) – Round House Theatre announces that it has commissioned works by **James Ijames**, **Inda Craig-Galván**, and joint-commissioned **Margot Bordelon** and **Jiehae Park**. The acclaimed artists are commissioned through Round House's **Equal Play** program, as part of its ongoing commitment to gender parity and racial diversity. The recently commissioned playwrights join **Lauren Gunderson**, **Naomi Iizuka**, **Mfoniso Udofia**, and theatre collective **The TEAM**, who are already developing new plays for Round House, and **Mary**

Kathryn Nagle, whose play *On the Far End*, which opens later this month, will be the first Equal Play commission to be produced on Round House's mainstage.

Launched in 2017, **Equal Play** was created to commission and develop **30 new plays written exclusively by women playwrights and playwrights of color**, including **ten plays for Round House Theatre's Teen Performance Company**, in an effort to combat the pervasive inequality in American theatre while supporting plays that speak to the world's most pressing issues.

"Our goal is to find playwrights who—regardless of their level of experience and recognition—push the boundaries of theatricality and tell stories that demand conversation. All we ask is that they challenge themselves, us, and our audience," says **Artistic Director Ryan Rilette**.

"We don't go into these commissioning conversations with preconceived notions about what we want them to write or even what a commission should look like," says **Associate Artist for Literary and New Plays Naysan Mojgani**. "Instead, it's a collaborative process to figure out how we can provide the support and structure the playwright needs to write the play that excites them."

Mary Kathryn Nagle's *On the Far End* is the first play to be produced on Round House's mainstage season and is part of the 2023 National Capital New Play Festival. Commissioned in 2019, the play received a developmental reading as part of the 2022 Festival. "My commission with Round House has been an incredible experience. I am so thankful for the artistic community and home the Theatre has provided for me as I developed my new play," says **Nagle**. "From workshops to readings, and from drafts to the stage, I have been surrounded by incredible theatre artists who have breathed life into the story I want to tell."

The program also includes ten commissions of works specifically created for Round House's Teen Performance Company. The TPC has premiered works by **Diana Metzger** (*Beach Week*, 2017), **Megan McCafferty** (*Sloppy Firsts*, 2018), **Caleen Sinette Jennings** (*Hear Eye Stand*, 2019),

Stefani Kuo (*TikTok [a period piece]*, 2022), and **Dani Stoller** (*Girlhood*, 2023), with **Agyweiwaa Asante** commissioned for the TPC's 2024 production.

To learn more about Round House's Artistic Initiatives and Programs, visit RoundHouseTheatre.org/About/Programming/Artistic-Initiatives.

Playwrights Under Commission

To date, the following playwrights have received commissions under the Equal Play program:

- **Inda Craig Galván** (*The Great Jheri Curl Debate* and *Black Super Hero Magic Mama*)
- **Lauren Gunderson** (*The Catastrophist* [2021 Round House production] and *The Time Traveler's Wife*)
- **James Ijames** (*Fat Ham* and *Good Bones*)
- **Mary Kathryn Nagle** (*On the Far End* [2023 Round House National Capital New Play Festival production] and *Crossing Mnisose*)
- Joint Commission: **Jiehae Park** (*peerless* and *Hannah & The Dread Gazebo*) & **Margot Bordelon** (World Premiere directing credits include *On the Far End* [2023 Round House National Capital New Play Festival production], *peerless*, and *Do You Feel Anger?*)
- **The TEAM** (*Anything That Gives Off Light* and *RoosElvis*)
- **Mfoniso Udofia** (*Adia and Clora Snatch Joy* [2022 Round House Festival workshop] and *In Old Age*)
- **Naomi Iizuka** (*Freak* [2020 TPC play] and *What Happens Next*)

Teen Performance Company (TPC) playwright commissions include:

- **Diana Metzger** (*Beach Week*, 2017 TPC Play); other work includes screenwriting credits on *Faking It* and *Greek*
- **Megan McCafferty** (*Sloppy Firsts*, 2018 TPC Play); other work includes the bestselling *Jessica Darling* YA novel series
- **Caleen Sinette Jennings** (*Hear Eye Stand*, 2019 TPC Play); other plays include the *Queens Girl* trilogy

- **Stefani Kuo** (*TikTok [a period piece]*, 2022 TPC Play); other plays include *Architecture of Rain* and *Final Boarding Call*)
- **Dani Stoller** (*Girlhood*, 2023 TPC Play; other plays include *Easy Women Smoking Loose Cigarettes* and *The Joy That Carries You*)
- **Agyweiwaa Asante** (*The Chosen One Academy* [2024 TPC Play]; other plays include *Swirl* and *Promithes, Promithes*)

On the Far End TICKETS:

Tickets for the world premiere productions of *On the Far End* are on sale now and can be purchased by calling 240.644.1100, ordering online at RoundHouseTheatre.org, or visiting the box office. Full festival information, including the event schedule and additional programming, may be found at RoundHouseTheatre.org/Festival.

WHERE:

Round House Theatre, 4545 East-West Highway in Bethesda (one block from Wisconsin Ave. and Metro's Bethesda station). For directions, parking, and public transportation info, visit RoundHouseTheatre.org/Visit-Us/.

ROUND HOUSE THEATRE HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES

As of February 2023, Round House Theatre no longer requires that audience members wear masks for most performances in our theatre. However, masks are required for certain performances and for events in other Round House spaces, including our Event Room.

We continue to strongly recommend masks as the best way for individuals to protect themselves from COVID-19 and other seasonal viruses, and we ask our audience members to respect the choices of others.

ABOUT ROUND HOUSE THEATRE

Round House Theatre is one of the leading professional theatres in the Washington, DC area, producing a season of new plays, modern classics, and musicals for more than 40,000 patrons

each year at our theatre in Bethesda. Round House has been nominated for 213 Helen Hayes Awards and has won 37, including four Outstanding Resident Play Awards and the Charles MacArthur Award for Original New Play in 2016. Round House's lifelong learning and education programs serve more than 5,000 students each year at its Education Center in Silver Spring, in schools throughout Montgomery County, and at our Bethesda theatre. Cornerstone programs include Free Play, which provides free tickets for students ages 13-college, the Teen Performance Company, which culminates in the student-produced Sarah Metzger Memorial Play, Summer Camp for students in grades K-12, and a full slate of classes for adults and youth.

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