



# PLAYGROUND

19<sup>TH</sup> Annual  
**FESTIVAL OF  
NEW WORKS**

Thick House / San Francisco / May 7–June 14, 2015

## FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**W**ELCOME to the 19th PlayGround Festival of New Works, the Bay Area's largest showcase of local playwrights and new plays. From May 7 to June 14, we'll present more than a dozen short and full-length plays over forty-four performances and readings, including our evening of shorts, *Best of PlayGround 19* (May 7-24), the world premieres of Robin Lynn Rodriguez's *Hella Love Oakland* (May 11-June 13) and Garret Jon Groenvelde's *The Empty Nesters* (May 18-June 14), curtain raisers by top high school dramatists as part of our 7th annual Young Playwrights Project (May 14-17), and staged readings of new full-length works (May 16-17 and May 23-24). Over six weeks, the PlayGround Festival offers you a singular opportunity to sample the very best the Bay Area has to offer in new plays and new voices for the stage!

And, as impressive as the body of work you'll see tonight is all the work you won't see—all that we've done just since last year's festival. Last October, PlayGround selected thirty-six Bay Area writers to be part of the 2014-15 PlayGround Writers Pool. Over the next six months, these writers along with our twelve Resident Playwrights created nearly 200 original short plays, of which PlayGround developed just thirty-six (six of which were selected for this year's *Best of PlayGround*).

During that same period, PlayGround supported the development of more than a dozen new full-length plays by past and current festival playwrights: Patricia Cotter (winner, 2014 June Anne Baker Prize), Victoria Chong Der and William Bivins (2014 Fellowship recipients), Erin Marie Panttaja and Kirk Shimano (inaugural Planet Earth New Play Festival commission recipients), and the Resident Playwrights. And during this festival, you can witness the seeds of future productions as PlayGround presents public staged readings of four bold new plays in development by Panttaja, Katie May, Jonathan Spector and Ignacio Zulueta (for times and details, visit [playground-sf.org/festival/readings.shtml](http://playground-sf.org/festival/readings.shtml)).

From ten-minute plays to full-length commissions, and from staged readings to premiere co-productions, PlayGround is working harder than ever to provide one-of-a-kind opportunities for some of the Bay Area's leading emerging professional playwrights. But our work is incomplete without the final element that makes a play more than just words on a page—you, the audience! We're grateful for your participation and hope that, if you like what you see today, you'll share your experience at PlayGround with friends and family and help us continue to grow this unique community of theatre makers and theatre lovers. Together, we can ensure the future of the American Theatre... one playwright at a time!

—Jim Kleinmann

## WWW.PLAYGROUND-SF.ORG/FESTIVAL

### PLAY A PART!

It takes a lot of people to produce a successful PlayGround season and none more important than you, the members of our audience. Help ensure our continued success and get more involved, as a volunteer, donor or even Board Member. For more information, call (415) 992-6677.

**THANK YOU!** PlayGround gratefully acknowledges the invaluable support of those who donate their time in support of our efforts, including our Board of Directors, the volunteers of OneBrick, and lead volunteers Mike and Jeanne Grunwald.

### PlayGround

268 Bush Street #2912  
San Francisco, CA 94104

(415) 992-6677 (office)  
(415) 704-3177 (fax)

info@playground-sf.org  
www.playground-sf.org

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PLAYGROUND

James A. Kleinmann, Artistic Director

19TH ANNUAL

# PLAYGROUND FESTIVAL OF NEW WORKS

MAY 7 - 24, 2015

## BEST OF PLAYGROUND 19

*A program of short plays by six of the Bay Area's best emerging writers, the cream of the the crop selected from PlayGround's 2014-15 season, performed at Berkeley Repertory Theatre.*

MAY 11 - JUNE 13, 2015

## HELLA LOVE OAKLAND

by Robin Lynn Rodriguez

MAY 18 - JUNE 14, 2015

## THE EMPTY NESTERS

by Garret Jon Groenveld

MAY 16 - 24, 2015

## STAGED READINGS

*New full-length plays in development*

FTW by Jonathan Spector (May 16, noon; May 23, 4 pm)

Preapocalyptic by Erin Marie Panttaja (May 16, 3 pm; May 23, 1 pm)

Kano + Abe by Ignacio Zulueta (May 17, 11 am; May 24, 3 pm)

A History of Freaks by Katie May (May 17, 2 pm; May 24, noon)

The PlayGround Festival is made possible in part through the generous support of: Actors' Equity Foundation, Bernard Osher Foundation, Bill Graham Supporting Foundation of the Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund, Dramatists Guild Fund, East Bay Fund for Artists and the East Bay Community Foundation, The Fleishhacker Foundation, John H. Gilman, Grants for the Arts/SF Hotel Tax Fund, Lenore & Howard Klein Foundation, Zandra Faye LeDuff, Jill Matichak, Kenneth Rainin Foundation, Wells Fargo, and Zellerbach Family Foundation. Special thanks to the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Shubert Foundation.

WELLS  
FARGO

# PLAYGROUND

James A. Kleinmann, Artistic Director

## BEST OF PLAYGROUND 19

A FESTIVAL OF NEW WORKS BY NEW WRITERS

### READING BABAR IN 2070

by Rachel Bublitz  
directed by Rebecca Ennals

### SOMEONE

by Genne Murphy  
music & lyrics by George and Ira Gershwin  
directed by Jeffrey Lo

### FRANKENSTEIN'S GRANDMOTHER

by Steven Westdahl  
directed by Tracy Ward

— INTERMISSION —

### ART AND TECH

by Kirk Shimano  
directed by Jon Tracy

### PREAPOCALYPTICA

by Erin Marie Panttaja  
directed by Katja Rivera

### CRATCHIT

by Davern Wright  
directed by Jim Kleinmann

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Lighting Designer  
Colin Johnson

Sound Designer  
Josh Senick

Costume Designer  
Jocelyn Leiser Herndon

Casting Director  
Annie Stuart

Properties Artisan  
Amy Crumpacker

Production Manager  
Marcus Marotto

Stage Manager  
Bert van Aalsburg\*

Production Assistant  
Eli Marrs

Choreographer: *Someone*  
Rory Davis

# CAST

(in order of appearance)

## READING BABAR IN 2070

*Lucia* . . . . . Stephanie Prentice \*  
*Michael* . . . . . Michael Barrett Austin \*  
*Tina* . . . . . Millie DeBenedet

## SOMEONE

*Max* . . . . . Michael Phillis  
*Hannah* . . . . . Melissa Ortiz \*  
*Andy* . . . . . Michael Barrett Austin \*

## FRANKENSTEIN'S GRANDMOTHER

*Claire Clairmont* . . . . . Melissa Ortiz \*  
*Lord George Gordon Byron* . . . . . Michael Barrett Austin \*  
*Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin* . . . . Lindsey Marie Schmeltzer  
*Percy Bysshe Shelley* . . . . . Michael Phillis  
*John William Polidori* . . . . . Jomar Tagatac \*  
*Mary Wollstonecraft (Mother)* . . . . . Stephanie Prentice \*

## ART AND TECH

*Art* . . . . . Millie DeBenedet  
*Tech* . . . . . Lindsey Marie Schmeltzer

## PREAPOCALYPTICA

*Melissa* . . . . . Melissa Ortiz \*  
*Will* . . . . . Jomar Tagatac \*

## CRATCHIT

*Martha* . . . . . Lindsey Marie Schmeltzer  
*Belinda* . . . . . Melissa Ortiz \*  
*Bob* . . . . . Michael Barrett Austin \*  
*Emily* . . . . . Stephanie Prentice \*  
*Tim* . . . . . Millie DeBenedet  
*Scrooge* . . . . . Michael Phillis  
*The Ghost of Christmas Present* . . . . . Jomar Tagatac \*

*\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers.*

*This Theatre operates under an agreement with Actors' Equity Association,  
the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.*

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The following topics were the initial inspiration for this year's festival plays:

- Is Earth F\*\*ked? (October, 2014): *Reading Babar In 2070; Preapocalyptica*  
Nice Work If You Can Get It: An Evening Of Gershwin (November, 2014): *Someone*  
Ghost Of Christmas Present (December, 2014): *Cratchit*  
Twisted Love Stories (Bay Area Edition) (February, 2015): *Art and Tech*  
Herstory: The Greatest Stories Never Told (March, 2015 - WomenArts Night):  
*Frankenstein's Grandmother*



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- Robust on campus production opportunities
- Scholarships and playwriting prizes available

Award winning faculty includes: Michelle Carter, Roy Conboy, & Anne Galjour

Graduates include: Peter Nachtrieb, Ed Bullins, Brian Thorstenson, Prince Gomolvilas, Elizabeth Gjelton, Christopher Chen, Garret Jon Groenveld

# 2015 New Works Festival

Featuring staged readings of 5 new plays and musicals

**CONFEDERATES** by Suzanne Bradbeer

**MAN AND BEAST** by Lynn Rosen

**THE MAN IN THE CEILING** by Andrew Lippa & Jules Feiffer

**MARIE AND ROSETTA** by George Brant

**THE THERE THERE** by Jason Gray Platt

**August 8–16**

Lucie Stern Theatre, Palo Alto

650.463.1960

[boxoffice@theatreworks.org](mailto:boxoffice@theatreworks.org)

**TheatreWorks**  
SILICON VALLEY



HELLA LOVE PRODUCTIONS

in association with

PLAYGROUND

present

# HELLA LOVE OAKLAND

by Robin Lynn Rodriguez

directed by Rebecca Novick

## CAST

*Megan* . . . . . Lizzie Calogero \*

*Rae* . . . . . Safiya Fredericks \*

*Lisa* . . . . . Lisa Morse \*

The play will be performed without intermission.

Running time is approximately 90 minutes.

Lighting Designer  
Colin Johnson

Sound Designer  
Josh Senick

Costume Designer  
Jocelyn Leiser Herndon

Casting Consultant  
Annie Stuart

Properties Artisan  
Amy Crumpacker

Production Manager  
Marcus Marotto

Stage Manager  
Bert van Aalsburg\*

Production Assistant  
Eli Marrs

Choreographer  
Rami Margron

An Equity-approved project.  
\* Member, Actors' Equity Association.



This production is made possible in part through the generous support of: the PlayGround New Play Production Fund, East Bay Fund for Artists/East Bay Community Foundation, Zandra Faye LeDuff, Jill Matichak, the Zellerbach Family Foundation, and the many individual supporters of our Indiegogo challenge match campaign.

EMPTY NESTER PRODUCTIONS

in association with

PLAYGROUND

and

VIRAGO THEATRE COMPANY

present

# THE EMPTY NESTERS

by Garret Jon Groenveld

directed by Amy Glazer

## CAST

*Frances* . . . . . Pamela Gaye Walker \*

*Greg* . . . . . John Walker

The play will be performed without intermission.

Running time is approximately 70 minutes.

Lighting Designer  
Colin Johnson

Sound Designer  
Josh Senick

Costume Designer  
Jocelyn Leiser Herndon

Production Manager  
Marcus Marotto

Properties Artisan  
Amy Crumpacker

Production Assistant  
Eli Marrs

Stage Manager  
Gary Quinn

An Equity-approved project.  
\* Member, Actors' Equity Association.



This production is made possible in part through the generous support of: the PlayGround New Play Production Fund, Zandra Faye LeDuff, Jill Matchak, and the many generous supporters of the Empty Nesters Premiere Indiegogo crowd-funding campaign.



## WHO'S WHO

### PLAYWRIGHTS

**RACHEL BUBLITZ** (Best of PlayGround: *Reading Babar in 2070*) founded the Loud & Unlady-like reading festival and the 31 Plays in 31 Days Project. She is the proud recipient of PlayGround's June Anne Baker Prize this year. Rachel's full-length play, *Of Serpents & Sea Spray*, will premiere with Custom Made Theatre Company in January of 2016. Rachelbublitz.com

**GARRET JON GROENVELD** (*The Empty Nesters*) is a poet and playwright living in San Francisco. An original writer of PlayGround, his full-length plays include *The Absence of Birds*, *Missives*, *The Serving Class*, *The Empty Nesters* and *The Hummingbirds*. An inaugural writer in Residence at the Playwrights Foundation, his plays have appeared in the Bay Area Playwrights Festival (1999, 2004), The Global Age Project (2010, 2012), the TRU Festival (2006, 2014) and have been produced in San Francisco, New York, Amsterdam, Bucharest, Romania, Zaragoza, Spain, and Mexico City. *The Hummingbirds* won the Internationalists 2012 Global Playwriting Competition with presentations in 6 countries.

**KATIE MAY**'s (*A History of Freaks*) plays include *Abominable* (PlayGround commission; semi-finalist, O'Neill National Playwrights Conference), *Manic Pixie Dream Girl* (fringeNYC, A.C.T. Costume Shop, San Francisco) *Black Sheep Gospel* (Great Plains Theater Conference), and *A History of Freaks* (Finalist David Mark Cohen Award), among others. A film version of her short play *Rapunzel's Etymology of Zero* (Best of PlayGround Festival, 2011) is scheduled for release in spring, 2015. She's a recipient of grants from the Virginia Piper Writing Center, the Society for Women in Film, and a PlayGround Emerging Writers Award. Katie holds an MFA in Playwriting from Arizona State University.

**GENNE MURPHY**'s (Best of PlayGround: *Someone*) plays include *GIANTESS* (2015 PlayPenn), *Hope Street and Other Lonely Places* (2011 Eugene O'Neill finalist, 2012 Azuka Theatre production), and *Outside the Wire* (shortlist, 2013 BBC International Radio Play Competition). Genne is a member of Philadelphia Young Playwrights' Alumni Council and PlayGround. She begins studies at Yale School of Drama in the fall (MFA 2018).

**ERIN MARIE PANTTAJA** (*Preapocalyptic*—short version in Best of PlayGround; full-length as a staged reading) received a Planet Earth New Play Festival commission to develop a new full-length play based on the 10-minute *Preapocalyptic*. Her other plays have been produced at the Dublin Fringe Festival's Thread workshop, Mendocino College, and as part of *Twisted Christmas Live*. She has two degrees from MIT and three children, one of whom is two weeks older than this play.

**ROBIN LYNN RODRIGUEZ** (*Hella Love Oakland*), a PlayGround Resident Playwright, received the Emerging Playwright Award when *Hella Love Oakland* was presented at the 2012 Best of PlayGround Festival. She has also won PlayGround's June Anne Baker Award and her commissioned full-length of *Hella Love Oakland* received a staged reading at its 2013 Festival. Her full-length play *Hedge* was a finalist for the Bay Area Playwrights Festival in 2011 and received a staged reading at the PlayGround Festival in 2014. She recently began writing for the stage after being a theater teacher.

**KIRK SHIMANO** (Best of PlayGround: *Art and Tech*) is returning for his second Best of PlayGround festival. His first Best of PlayGround piece, *Miss Finknagle Succumbs to Chaos*, was adapted into a short film that has been screened in five countries. He'd like to thank PlayGround for the amazing opportunities they have provided, including a recent reading at the Planet Earth New Play Festival (in conjunction with Planet Earth Arts).

**JONATHAN SPECTOR** (*FTW*) is a playwright and director whose plays include *In From the Cold*, *Adult Swim*, *FTW*, and *Good, Better, Best, Bested*. His work has been developed and produced with PlayGround, Just Theater, Aurora Theater, Playwrights Foundation, and the Source Theatre Festival. He's a Resident Playwright at Playwrights Foundation, a winner of Theatre Bay Area's TITAN award, and Co-Artistic Director of Just Theater.

**STEVEN WESTDAHL** (Best of PlayGround: *Frankenstein's Grandmother*) graduated from Emory University (BAs in English and Theatre & Film), became a founding member of the SF Neo-Futurists (Best Theater, 2014, *SF Weekly*; Best of the Bay, 2014, *Bay Guardian*), and will direct *Zurich Plays*, a Dada history of the Dadaists, at the SF Fringe in 2015.

**DAVERN WRIGHT**'s (Best of PlayGround: *Cratchit*) works include *Would You Like the Can, Sir?* (PlayGround People's Choice Award) and *Something's Wrong with Peter* (2011 Santa Fe Film Festival). He performs this summer in Marin Shakespeare Company's *Cymbeline* and *Richard III*. He has a BA in Theatre from Williams College and an MFA in Film Production from USC, and currently teaches Film Editing at Academy of Art University.

**IGNACIO ZULUETA** (*Kano + Abe*) is a PlayGround Emerging Artist and Resident Playwright. His plays and radio plays have been featured in Ashland, New York, Kalamazoo, the Bay Area and KUSF and KPFA. *Kano + Abe* was commissioned and developed by PlayGround. He is the lead writer for the multi-acre site-specific event *Matthew Briar and The Age of Resurrection* at San Jose's History Park.

## ACTORS



**MICHAEL BARRETT AUSTIN\*** (Best of PlayGround: *Reading Babar in 2070; Someone; Frankenstein's Grandmother; Cratchit*) appeared most recently in *Nick and Nora* at 42nd Street Moon and Berkeley Rep's *Red Hot Patriot* with Kathleen Turner. Michael has worked with SF Playhouse, CenterRep, SF Shakespeare Festival, Aurora, TheatreWorks, CalShakes, and others, and is a member of Just Theater and PlayGround. [www.michaelbarrettaustin.com](http://www.michaelbarrettaustin.com)



**LIZZIE CALOGERO\*** (*Hella Love Oakland: Megan*) has performed at theatres around the Bay Area, with the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, San Jose Rep, Aurora Theatre, CenterREP, San Francisco Playhouse, Marin Theatre Company, and TheatreFIRST, among others. She is a proud member of Symmetry Theatre Company, dedicated to gender balance on the boards, and PlayGround.



**MILLIE DEBENEDET** (Best of PlayGround: *Reading Babar in 2070; Art and Tech; Cratchit*) is an actress and director here in the Bay Area. She received her BFA in Acting from DePaul University's Theatre School in Chicago, Illinois. She is one of the Creative Directors for San Francisco's premier sketch comedy troupe, Killing My Lobster. Other performance credits include Second City Detroit, and BATS Improv.



**SAFIYA FREDERICKS\*** (*Hella Love Oakland: Rae*), recently appeared in *Blackademics* at Crowded Fire, as the Witch in *Into the Woods* at SF Playhouse (BATCC Nominee) and *Once on this Island* at Theatreworks. In New York she worked with The Civilians' *In the Footprint* and *By Hands Unknown* at NY Fringe. Learn more at [safiyafredericks.com](http://safiyafredericks.com). GO BEARS!



**LISA MORSE\*** (*Hella Love Oakland: Lisa*) has been a proud company member of PlayGround for five years and has performed in two Best of PG Festivals as well as in the 2nd Annual PlayGround Film Festival. Regional credits: Marin Theatre Company, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Missouri Rep, The Kennedy Center, and Boston Playwrights Theatre. Off-Broadway credits: Lincoln Center, CSC, and P.S. 122.



**MELISSA ORTIZ\*** (Best of PlayGround: *Someone; Cratchit; Frankenstein's Grandmother; Preapocalyptica*) is so excited to be a part of this wonderful cast. She received her MFA in Acting from the National Theater Conservatory in Denver Colorado.

Favorite roles: Edward in *Cloud 9*, Echo in *Eleemosynary*, and Miss Julie in *Miss Julie*. She is a company member of ShotzSF. She would like to thank her family and her husband for all their love and support.



**MICHAEL PHILLIS** (Best of PlayGround: *Someone; Frankenstein's Grandmother; Cratchit*) is a writer, director, performer, and filmmaker. His original plays include *Dolls*, *Wish We Were Here*, *Bride of Death*, and *It's Christmas, Carole!* His first film *Mini Supreme* will premiere at the Frameline International LGBTQ Film Festival this summer. For more info, please visit [michaelphillis.com](http://michaelphillis.com).



**STEPHANIE PRENTICE\*** (Best of PlayGround: *Reading Babar in 2070; Frankenstein's Grandmother; Cratchit*) is a proud Equity member and Bay Area native. She performed in last season's PlayGround Festival in *Sleeping Cutie: A Fractured Fairytale Musical*. Coming up this summer for Stephanie is SF Playhouse's production of Stephen Sondheim's *Company*. She is also a member of the voice faculty at Santa Clara University.



**LINDSEY MARIE SCHMELZTER** (Best of PlayGround: *Frankenstein's Grandmother; Art and Tech; Cratchit*) is thrilled to be participating in her first Best of PlayGround Festival. Local credits: Aurora Theatre, Monday Night PlayGround, Impact Theatre. Regional credits: Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Texas Shakespeare Festival, Summer Repertory Theater. Next Up: Livermore Shakespeare Festival (*Marianne in Sense and Sensibility* and *Phoebe in As You Like It*).



**JOMAR TAGATAC\*** (Best of PlayGround: *Cratchit; Frankenstein's Grandmother; Preapocalyptica*) is excited to be part of this festival again. Recent credits include *Every Five Minutes* and *The Happy Ones* (Magic Theater); and *Rights of Passage* (New Conservatory Theater). He has performed with Magic Theatre, Marin Theater Company, Playwrights Foundation, Aurora's GAP, ACT, and Oregon Shakespeare Festival. He received his MFA from the ACT and is a Teaching Artist at The New Conservatory Theater Center.



**JOHN WALKER** (*The Empty Nesters*: Greg) has acted in 25 shows professionally with his wife, Pamela Gaye. Together they co-produced John Logan's *Hauptmann* at New York's Cherry Lane Theatre before he moved into feature films.

Prior to producing the Academy Award®-winning film *The Incredibles* for Pixar, Walker served as Associate Producer for Warner Bros.' *Osmosis Jones* and *The Iron Giant*. He is presently in post-production on Disney's *Tomorrowland*. A graduate of The University of Notre Dame, he studied theatre education at ACT in San Francisco. In Chicago he served as Managing Director of Tony Award winning Victory Gardens Theatre where he produced over 30 new plays.



**PAMELA GAYE WALKER\*** (*The Empty Nesters*: Frances) is a playwright, screenwriter, and director for theatre and film, and is the president of Ghost Ranch Productions. She has taught acting for 20 years, most recently at Pixar Studios. Off-

Broadway: *Hauptmann*. Regional: *Sea Marks*, Royal George, Chicago (Jefferson Award nomination); *Hannah Free*, Victory Gardens, Chicago (Actress of the Year); *After The Revolution* and *John Gabriel Borkman*, Aurora Theatre; *What We're Up Against*, Magic Theatre; *The Last Schwartz*, Zephyr Theatre, L.A.; *Alfred Steiglitz Loves O'Keefe*, FCT, L.A. (Best Actress & Best Production); *Brooklyn Boy*, Theatreworks. Film: *Woolly Boys*, *The Incredibles*, *Last Rites*. [www.pamelagayewalker.com](http://www.pamelagayewalker.com)

## DIRECTORS

**REBECCA J. ENNALS** (Best of PlayGround: *Reading Babar in 2070*) is the Artistic Director of the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival and a proud PG company member. She has directed numerous Monday Nights and Best of PG in 2013. Next up is *Romeo and Juliet* for Free Shakespeare in the Park—look for it in a park near you! Much love to Henry, her favorite production, and Ryan, her partner in love and life.

**JESSICA BURGESS GALLU** (*FTW*) is the founding Artistic Director of The Inkwell, Washington, DC's resource for new play development ([www.inkwelltheatre.org](http://www.inkwelltheatre.org)).

**AMY GLAZER** (*The Empty Nesters*) has directed numerous World, American and West Coast premieres. Recent productions include *Seminar* by Theresa Rebeck and *Becky Shaw*, *Tigers Be Still*, *Harper Regan*, *Animals Out of Paper*, *Shining City*, and *The Scene* at SF Playhouse. For Magic Theatre her work included Sam Shepard's *The God Of Hell*, Rebecca Gilman's *The Crowd You're In With*, *The Sweetest Swing in Baseball*, *Blue Surge*, and *The American in Me*, Steven Belber's *Drifting Elegant* and *Tape*, and Barry Gifford's

*Wyoming*. She has also directed plays for Marin Theatre Company, Eureka Theatre, TheatreWorks, SJ Stage Company, and at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland. Amy has directed film versions of works by Barry Gifford, Steven Belber, and Theresa Rebeck. She teaches theatre and film at San Jose State University.

**JIM KLEINMANN** (Best of PlayGround: *Cratchit; A History of Freaks*) co-founded PlayGround in 1994 and has served as Artistic Director since 1996. For PlayGround, he has provided artistic and administrative leadership for the past twenty-one seasons, developing PlayGround's unique array of new playwright and new play incubator programs, including Monday Night PlayGround, the Best of PlayGround Festival, the full-length play Commissioning Initiative, the New Play Production Fund, and most recently the PlayGround Film Festival. During his tenure, he has directed more than 100 short plays by some of the Bay Area's best new playwrights, including Lauren Yee, Geetha Reddy, Aaron Loeb, Trevor Allen, and Garret Jon Groenveld, among others, and has commissioned and developed over 50 full-length plays by these writers. For the 2014 PlayGround Festival, he directed and dramaturged Ruben Grijalva's new full-length play, *Value Over Replacement*. Kleinmann is a veteran arts administrator with more than twenty years of experience, including stints leading Traveling Jewish Theatre, Smuin Ballet and Berkeley Symphony. He is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.

**JEFFERY LO** (Best of PlayGround: *Someone*) is the recipient of the 2014 Leigh Weimers Emerging Artist Award, the 2012 Emerging Artist Laureate by Arts Council Silicon Valley, and TBA's TITAN Award. Directing credits include *Eurydice* at Palo Alto Players, and *Some Girl(s)* at Dragon Productions. Jeffrey has also worked with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, TheatreWorks, and San Jose Repertory. He is founding Artistic Director of The 06 Ensemble.

**REBECCA NOVICK** (*Hella Love Oakland*) is the associate artistic director at California Shakespeare Theater. She was the founder of Crowded Fire Theater Company and served as its artistic director for ten years. She has also worked with the Magic Theatre, the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, the Aurora Theatre, the EXIT Theatre, Shotgun Players, Berkeley Opera, and Woman's Will. Her directing was recognized with the SF Bay Guardian's Goldie Award for Outstanding Local Artists.

**KATJA RIVERA** (*Prepocalyptica*—short version in Best of PlayGround; full-length as a staged reading) is an actor/director who originally hails from Los Angeles. She is an artistic associate with Shotgun Players, and PlayGround, and is a proud member of AEA. She has directed in the Best Of PlayGround festival in 2013 and 2014, and you can catch her in *The Merritt Squad* on YouTube.

**JON TRACY** (Best of PlayGround: *Art and Tech*) works as a director, playwright, designer and educator. He is a Company Member of Shotgun Players and PlayGround; Adjunct Faculty with Chabot College and American Conservatory Theater; the Co-Artistic Director of ITI San Miguel de Allende; and a member of Theatre Bay Area's Gender Parity Commission, and of SDC, the union for stage directors and choreographers. He is the recipient of the Kennedy Center Meritorious Achievement Award, fifteen North Bay Arty Awards, a Sacramento Elly Award, a Bay Area Critics Circle Award, and a grant recipient from Theatre Bay Area and the National Endowment for the Arts. [www.jontracy.com](http://www.jontracy.com)

**TRACY WARD** (Best of PlayGround: *Frankenstein's Grandmother*) is an award-winning freelance director based in the San Francisco Bay Area, focusing on New Works for the American Theater. Upcoming productions: *Arctic Requiem* at Z Below in October. Recent productions include: *The Dragon Play* (2 top ten lists in the Bay Area) and *What Every Girl Should Know* at Impact Theatre. Theatre for Young Audiences: *Fancy Nancy* for BACT Spring-Summer 2015. National Tours of *The Magic School Bus Live: Climate Challenge*, and *Rock the Block: a Walk and Roll Musical*, currently touring the Bay Area. BACC Best Director Nomination for *Hunter Gatherers* by Peter Nachtrieb. Other productions include work at AlterTheatre, Shotgun Players/Encore Theater, ODC, and Z Space. She is a proud company member of PlayGround. [www.tracyward.org](http://www.tracyward.org)

#### DESIGNERS & CHOREOGRAPHERS

**AMY CRUMPACKER** (Properties Artisan), AEA and SAG/AFTRA member, and a San Francisco based theatre artist, acts, directs, writes and teaches. She has been seen on stages from Seattle to Los Angeles, is a voiceover artist, and is a properties designer for NCTC and SF Shakespeare Co. She is the artistic team leader for the 3rd Street Playhouse. [www.amyrumpacker.com](http://www.amyrumpacker.com)

**RORY DAVIS** (Choreographer, Best of PlayGround: *Someone*) is the resident choreographer for Peaches Christ Productions. He has staged productions with Pam Grier, Mink Stole and Jennifer Tilly. He just returned home to San Francisco after wrapping a national tour of *Return to Grey Gardens* starring Jinx Monsoon.

**JOCELYN LEISER HERNDON** (Costume Designer) returns for a second year of designing Best of PlayGround. Her 15-year Bay Area career has taken her to San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, The Aurora Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Marin Shakespeare Company, Pacific Repertory Theatre, Encore Theater, San Francisco Playhouse, Campo Santo, The Joe Goode Dance Group, Shotgun Players, Napa Valley Repertory Theatre, Shakespeare at Stinson, and Word For Word. Jocelyn holds an MFA in Costume Design from UCSD and

has taught costume and fashion design at the middle school, high school and college levels. Thanks to her husband Brian and daughter Gwen.

**COLIN JOHNSON** (Lighting Designer) lit his first show almost four years ago. He also does sound design, stage manages and wants to start acting again. Favorite designs include *Age of Reason*, Theatre Robillard; *Scamoramaland*, PUS; *Roadshow*, Theatre Rhino; and *Life X 3*, Off Broadway West for which he was nominated for 2014 TBA and BATCC awards. Much love to Shaina, Neel, Romany, Scott and Val and John Fisher for their support and confidence.

**RAMI MARGRON** (Choreographer, *Hella Love Oakland*) is an actor and dancer. Favorite choreography credits include *...And Jesus Moonwalks the Mississippi* (Cutting Ball), *Learn to Be Latina* (Impact), and *Hair* (The Willows). She is trained in roughly twenty styles of dance as well as circus and physical theater, and is a member of the Haitian dance company Rara Tou Limen.

**JOSH SENICK** (Sound Designer) is completing his fifth year designing for PlayGround. Originally from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Josh has a BA in Music and Theater from Case Western Reserve University and the Cleveland Institute of Music and an MFA in Sound Design from the California Institute of the Arts.

#### PRODUCTION & STAFF

**BERT VAN AALSBURG\*** (Stage Manager) has had a number of personal achievements as stage manager. Among them, the U.S. premieres of *Stones in His Pockets* at Magic Theatre and *Magical Mystery Mission Tour* for Culture Clash. Bert is also an award-winning scenic designer and an active member of Actors' Equity.

**CASS BRAYTON** (Publications Editor), is an original member of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, San Francisco's radical drag street theater troupe, a PlayGround Resident Playwright, and Editor of the annual anthologies of PlayGround's best plays. Great Beast in New Orleans recently staged *Subtle Whoring*, a compendium of six of his short plays. Two of his works, *The Boy Who Did Not Listen to His Mother and I'd Like to Buy a Vowel*, have been in Best of PlayGround festivals. *Bodhisattva* by Lagoon was published in *35 in 10: Thirty-Five Ten-Minute Plays*.

**MARCUS MAROTTO** (Production Manager) is pleased to join PlayGround for the third year as Production Manager for the PlayGround Festival. Marcus has worked throughout his life in theatre as a stage hand, carpenter, stage manager, and producer throughout the Bay, working at, among others, the Easily Distracted Theatre, Opera San Jose, and the San Francisco Lyric Opera.

**ELI MARRS** (Production Assistant) is a rapper, singer and music producer based out of the East Bay. He likes enthusiastically assisting with live theater productions, working on his new album, and crassly taking advantage of opportunities



to tell people to check him out on YouTube and Soundcloud.

**ANNIE STUART** (Associate Artistic Director) has served as casting director for PlayGround for the past fifteen seasons and in 2005 was named the company's first Associate Director. As a freelance casting director, her other credits include Marin Theatre Company, Center REP, the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, Los Angeles Shakespeare Festival, Brava! for Women In The Arts, Theatre Rhinoceros, and Z Space Studio. For the camera, she has cast *Falcon Crest*, *An Inconvenient Woman*, *Midnight Caller* and *The Two Mrs. Grenvilles*. Recently she has cast the short independent film *Value of Replacement* by Ruben Grijalva. She has taught at San Jose State University, USF, The Bennett Theatre Lab, Center REP, the College of Marin, Marin Theatre Company and for Theatre Bay Area.

**PLAYGROUND**, the Bay Area's leading playwright incubator, provides unique development opportunities for the Bay Area's best new playwrights, including the monthly Monday Night PlayGround staged reading series, PlayGround Festival of New Works, Best of PlayGround, full-length play commissions and support for the production of new plays by local playwrights through the New Play Production Fund and, PlayGround's newest initiative, the PlayGround Film Festival. To date, PlayGround has supported nearly 200 local playwrights in the development and staging of over 700 original short plays and 55 new full-length plays, including more than a dozen that have

since premiered in the Bay Area. PlayGround alumni have gone on to win local, national and international honors for their short and full-length work, including recognition at the O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, Humana Festival, Sundance Festival, Source Festival, Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Aurora Theatre's Global Age Project, Internationalists Playwriting Prize, and New York International Fringe Festival, among others. More information at <http://PlayGround-sf.org>.

**VIRAGO THEATRE COMPANY** (Co-Producer, *The Empty Nesters*) was founded in 2005 by five East Bay theater artists. Virago is dedicated to taking creative risks, cultivating and producing compelling new work and provocative interpretations of classic contemporary plays. We are guided by a collaborative process and committed to producing work by San Francisco Bay Area playwrights. Virago is a 501(c)(3) non-profit Theater Company performing primarily in the East Bay, but also in San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York. Our close collaboration with playwrights is the cornerstone of our work. Through our New Play series, Virago receives hundreds of scripts from playwrights nationwide. 3-4 plays are featured in our New Play Reading Series: all of these plays are considered for a full production as part of Virago's mainstage season. Through this process, Virago has produced many new plays, most recently William Bivins's *Ransom, Texas* in both San Francisco and New York (2014/15), and the smash San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York hit, *Arousal* by George Pfirrmann (2013/14).

## 2014-15 PlayGround Writers Pool and Resident Playwrights

Terry Anderson, Zara Benner, William Bivins+, Cass Brayton+, Erin Bregman+, Rachel Bublitz+, Madeleine Butler, Ron Campbell, Patricia Cotter+, Victoria Chong Der+, Dave Garrett+, Ruben Grijalva+, Garret Jon Groenveld+, Tanya Grove, Leah Halper, Karen Hartline, Colin Johnson, Melissa Keith, Sang S. Kim, Elliott Kopstein, Brady Lea+, Jon Wai-keung Lowe, Jonathan Luskin+, Karen Macklin+, Katie May+, Genne Murphy+, Naomi Newman, Meghan Kathleen O'Connor, Erin Marie Panttaja+, Madeline Puccioni, Takeo Rivera, Mandy Hodge Rizvi+, Robin Lynn Rodriguez+, Andrew Saito, Diane Sampson+, Amy Sass+, Kirk Shimano+, Cleavon Smith+, Martha Soukup+, Aimee Suzara, Steven Westdahl+, Arisa White+, Josh Williams, Davern Wright+, Zoe Young, Maury Zeff+, Lesli Zephyr, Ignacio Zulueta+  
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## 2014-15 PlayGround Company

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## JUNE ANNE BAKER PRIZE

*The June Anne Baker Prize was initiated by John H. Gilman in memory of his late wife. The Prize is awarded annually to a female playwright selected from among that year's Emerging Playwright Award winners, representing a gifted new comedic and/or political voice for the stage and includes a commission. The Prize provides a commissioning grant for a new full-length play and support for readings and workshop productions of the new work. This year's June Anne Baker Prize has been awarded to Rachel Bublitz, author of Reading Babar in 2070, featured in this year's festival.*

June Anne Baker (1946-2000) was born and raised in Mankato, Minnesota to a playful mother and a political father. She was a sensitive soul with a very big heart. June had a love affair with words and dreamed of being a writer. She received her undergraduate degree in Sociology from Arizona State University, a Masters in Regional and City Planning from the University of Oklahoma, and a law degree from Boalt Hall at UC Berkeley.

June moved to San Francisco in 1970 and had an active city planning career with the city of Concord and Marin County. June was an active feminist, and proud of it. She was a founding member of Bay Area Women Planners. June loved life, and politics, and fun. She was serious and reflective, and yet had an overabundance of youthful enthusiasm. As a good friend once said, "If you don't think feminists have a sense of humor, you never met June Baker."

June turned to writing in her 40s and found an inner life that she needed to explore. While contemplating and struggling with thoughts of how she might manifest her writer self, she was diagnosed with salivary gland cancer. Her struggle turned from expression to survival, yet she never lost her *joie de vivre*.

This award honors June's great love for humor and politics and her commitment to advancing opportunities for women. She would want this award to make easier the struggle and more manifest the works of the emerging playwrights who receive it.

This year represents the 14th annual June Anne Baker Prize. On behalf of the fourteen June Anne Baker Prize winners so recognized since 2002 and all of us at PlayGround, we offer our deepest thanks to John H. Gilman and the family and friends of June Anne Baker for making this annual prize possible and creating this lasting legacy!

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