



MEDIA CONTACT: CAROLINE ANDERSON  
415.704.3177  
[CAROLINE@PLAYGROUND-SF.ORG](mailto:CAROLINE@PLAYGROUND-SF.ORG)

## PLAYGROUND ANNOUNCES NEW PLAY PRODUCTION FUND WINNERS

### SHOTGUN PLAYERS, SF PLAYHOUSE & IMPACT THEATRE TO SHARE \$25,000 IN SUPPORT OF PREMIERES BY PLAYWRIGHTS KEN SLATTERY, KENN RABIN & LAUREN YEE

SAN FRANCISCO, (January 11, 2011) – And the envelope please.... PlayGround announced today the recipients of the second round of its New Play Production Fund, launched last year to support Bay Area production of new plays by local playwrights: **Shotgun Players, SF Playhouse and Impact Theatre** will share in \$25,000 to support world premiere productions of new works by local playwrights **Ken Slattery, Kenn Rabin** and **Lauren Yee**. Shotgun Players will receive \$15,000 to support the world premiere production of **Ken Slattery's *Truffaldino Says No*** for the Berkeley company's 2012 summer slot. SF Playhouse will receive \$5,000 to support the world premiere of **Kenn Rabin's *Reunion***, to be presented in October in the Playhouse's Sandbox Series. Impact Theatre will receive \$5,000 to support the premiere of **Lauren Yee's *Crevice*** at La Val's in November.

Slattery's *Truffaldino Says No* was originally commissioned and developed by PlayGround last season as part of the 2010 Best of PlayGround Festival. Truffaldino, son of Arlecchino, in love with Isabella but rejected by her, leaves the "old world" and his responsibilities in the commedia dell'arte community behind, and travels to the "new" world. He discovers the new world is not so far removed from the old world. He soon carries some important responsibilities in the new world, and falls in love with Debbie, remarkably identical to Isabella. Meanwhile, the "old world" discovers it needs him. Truffaldino must make a choice: stay in the new world and accept his responsibilities there, or come back to his responsibilities and life in the old world. Ken studied Drama & Theatre Studies at Trinity College Dublin and is a member of the sketch comedy troupe Killing My Lobster. Shotgun Players Artistic Director Patrick Dooley shared on learning of the award: "We're grateful for the support of the

-MORE-

MEDIA CONTACT: CAROLINE ANDERSON, MARKETING MANAGER  
PLAYGROUND, 268 BUSH ST. #2912, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94104-3503  
PHONE 415.704.3177 FAX 415.704.3177 EMAIL: [CAROLINE@PLAYGROUND-SF.ORG](mailto:CAROLINE@PLAYGROUND-SF.ORG)

New Play Production Fund and this opportunity to shine a light on an exciting new Bay Area voice.”

Kenn Rabin was the recipient of a 2004 PlayGround Fellowship, for which he wrote his full-length commission, *Reunion*, based on the short play of the same name premiered in the 2004 Best of PlayGround Festival. Two women from the same high school reunite 15 years after graduation, only to discover they both have the same secret history: both had been seduced and sexually abused by the high school’s music teacher. The teacher, meanwhile, has been undergoing a therapeutic program in prison, meant to “reform” his sexual urges. When he’s released, one of the women confronts him. Kenn has written several full-length and numerous short plays, including three Best of PlayGround Festival winners. His documentary and feature credits include PBS’ *Eyes on the Prize* and the upcoming *The Storm that Swept Mexico*, Sean Penn’s *The Indian Runner*, George Clooney’s *Good Night, and Good Luck*, Steven Soderbergh’s *The Good German*, and Gus Van Sant’s *Milk*. Of Kenn’s selection, SF Playhouse Artistic Director said: “We’re always searching for playwrights who have something big to say about how we function as a society and Kenn certainly does. Our ongoing partnership with PlayGround has been invaluable in helping us to identify and support such important new writers.”

Lauren Yee was winner of the 2008 June Anne Baker Prize, for which she was commissioned to write *Crevice*. Unemployed, overambitious, and verging on thirty, siblings Liz and Rob vow to build themselves brighter futures. But when a sudden change to the landscape promises to provide the direction they need to finally grow up, will they take the leap towards the happily ever after? A comedic exploration of the quarterlife crisis in the 21st century. Lauren’s short play, *Giving Up the Ghost*, was featured in the 2008 Best of PlayGround Festival and served as inspiration for the full-length, *Crevice*. She was the recipient of the 2008-09 Dramatists Guild Fellowship and a 2009 MacDowell Colony residency, and was also a finalist for the Princess Grace Award, the Jerome Fellowship, the Djerassi Resident Artists Program, and the Humana Festival’s Heideman Award. On news of the award, Impact Theater Artistic Director Melissa Hillman said: “We’re thrilled to be staging Lauren’s work again and grateful for the support of the New Play Production Fund. Lauren is a local playwright whose work we’ve followed and believed in for years. After staging her wonderful *Ching Chong Chinaman*, we couldn’t wait to work with her on another project.”

Since 1994, PlayGround has been a leading incubator for some of the Bay Area’s most promising new playwrights, developing more than 550 original short plays by 160+ Bay Area emerging playwrights. In the past eight years, PlayGround *itself* has emerged, as one of the leading commissioners of new full-length works by Bay Area writers. Twenty-eight full length plays have been developed to date and seven new works are currently under commission for presentation in the 15<sup>th</sup> annual Best of

PlayGround Festival, taking place at Thick House, May 5-29, 2011, including works by Trevor Allen, Cass Brayton, Erin Bregman, Geetha Reddy, Diane Sampson, Tom Swift, and Malachy Walsh.

Several plays developed with direct PlayGround support have gone on to have successful productions at theatres throughout the Bay Area and around the country, including, most recently, Aaron Loeb's *Abraham Lincoln's Big Gay Dance Party* which received its off-Broadway debut in 2010 and won "Outstanding Performance" at the 2009 New York International Fringe Festival, following its 2008 SF Playhouse premiere. Loeb is a two-time winner of the Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award for "Best Original Script" (both for PlayGround commissions). Other PlayGround commissioned works that have premiered in the Bay Area in just the past five years include: Daniel Heath's *Seven Days* and Geetha Reddy's *Safe House*, both premiered at SF Playhouse; Garret Jon Groenveld's *Missives* at Theatre Rhinoceros (which also received its New York debut in a PlayGround co-production in 2008 at 59E59 Theaters); Trevor Allen's *Tenders in the Fog* at San Jose Stage; Aaron Loeb's *First Person Shooter* at SF Playhouse (in a PlayGround co-production); and Martha Soukup's *Manumission* at Exit Theatre. Later this season, PlayGround will co-produce the premiere of Trevor Allen's *Lolita Roadtrip* with San Jose Stage Company and Erin Bregman's *Nightmare Play* with Just Theater, both New Play Production Fund recipients. PlayGround writers and commissioned works have also been featured in some of the Bay Area's top new play programs, including the Playwrights Foundation's Bay Area Playwrights Festival and Aurora Theatre Company's Global Age Project.

Shotgun Players exists to create fearless, provocative, relevant theatre. Founding Artistic Director Patrick Dooley started the company in 1992 with four eager actors and a bucket of paint. Now approaching our nineteenth year, nothing pleases us more than to tackle projects other companies believe would be too expensive, too unwieldy or just plain impossible. For our first thirteen years we performed in 44 different spaces; then in 2004 we found a permanent home at The Ashby Stage in South Berkeley. Rather than becoming complacent, we have a passionate hunger for bigger challenges. Audiences have come to expect astonishing theatre from Shotgun Players.

Since 1996 Impact Theatre has spoken to theatre-goers and enthusiasts of all ages who want to see something fresh and bold on stage. The company's primary mission is to directly contribute to the future of American theatre through focusing on new plays by emerging playwrights. Impact has produced 18 full-length world premieres, including 12 by local playwrights, as well as dozens of world-premiere ten-minute plays by burgeoning writers nationwide. Impact shows compel, provoke, and inspire, at prices everyone can afford. Impact was named "Best Small Theatre Company" by the East Bay Express and regularly appears in year-end top-ten lists.

Founded by Susi Damilano and Bill English in 2003, the SF Playhouse is Union Square's intimate, professional theatre. Using Equity actors and world class design, the SF Playhouse, about which the *San Francisco Chronicle* raved, "San Francisco's newest theatre isn't just another tiny stage carved out of a storefront . . . it's an enticing introduction to a new company," has become an intimate theatre alternative to the traditional Union Square theatre fare, garnering 20 Bay Area Theatre Critic nominations in its first year. Providing a creative home and inspiring environment where actors, directors, writers, designers, and theatre lovers converge, SF Playhouse, hailed as a "small delicacy" by *SF Weekly* and "eclectic" by the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, strives to create works that celebrate the human spirit.

PlayGround will open the third round of the New Play Production Fund in June 2011 with an anticipated deadline of December 1, 2011. All PlayGround commissioned works not yet having received a world premiere are eligible, including the seven commissions currently under development.

For more information, visit <http://playground-sf.org>.

--30--

**MEDIA CONTACT:** CAROLINE ANDERSON, MARKETING MANAGER  
PLAYGROUND, 268 BUSH ST. #2912, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94104-3503  
**PHONE** 415.704.3177 **FAX** 415.704.3177 **EMAIL:** CAROLINE@PLAYGROUND-SF.ORG