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* Member of Actors Equity Association

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PLAYGROUND was launched in 1994 by co-founders James Kleinmann, Bridhe Mullins and Denise Shama. In 1996, Kleinmann became PlayGround’s first Artistic Director. PlayGround is a leading incubator of Bay Area playwrights. The mission of PlayGround is to support the development of significant new local voices for the theatre. Over the past 24 years, PlayGround has supported more than 250 early career playwrights, developing and staging over 950 of their original short plays through its New Play Festival and Best of PlayGround Festival. PlayGround has also commissioned 80 new full-length plays by 49 of these writers through its Commissioning Initiative and has directly facilitated the premiere of 30 of those works through its Innovative New Play Production Fund and through intentional partnerships with other producers. Throughout the year on a monthly basis, PlayGround announces a topic and invites a preselected pool of writers to submit ten-minute scripts inspired by that topic and written in just four days. The best six scripts are staged on the third Monday of the month before a live audience. The 24th annual PlayGround Festival of New Works – showcasing the best new and full-length plays of the season – will take later this spring (details to be announced). For more information, visit http://playground-sf.org.

Planet Earth Arts is a fiscally-sponsored project of Earth Island Institute, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Planet Earth Arts and Planet Earth Arts New Play Festival are made possible by the generous support of Stanford University and the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation. Planet Earth Arts New Play Festival is between Planet Earth Arts, National Center for New Plays at Stanford, PlayGround and the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.

April 6, 2020

Planet Earth Arts Night

Topic: “Feeding 9 Billion” Presented in association with Planet Earth Arts
The PLAYWRIGHTS

UMA INCROCCI is a writer, actress, and second year member of PlayGround-LA. Writing credits include the rock musical Mother Eve’s Secret Garden of Sensual Sisterhood and the short play 28 Years Later, which was a finalist at the Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Festival in 2016. Her TV movie “Nature of Love” will air April 18th on the Hallmark Channel.

MELISSA KEITH is honored to return to the PlayGround Writers Pool and community for the 6th year. Number 6! Besides meeting deadlines at the last possible second, Melissa also acts and directs, and has enjoyed working with Bay Area companies such as SF Shakespeare Festival, NCTC, Killing My Lobster, Shotz, and Awesome Theatre.

MOLLY OLIS KROST is an emerging Filipina playwright. Molly’s plays have been read or performed at San Francisco Playhouse, 2 Space, PlayGround, Clutch Productions, MaArte Theatre Collective, SOMArts Cultural Center, and SFSU Fringe. Her writing has been published in [m]aganda magazine. She is a PlayGround Resident Playwright.

REBECCA SCHWEITZER is a theatre artist in the Bay Area. Known predominantly as an actress and voice over talent. She recently appeared at Marin Theatre Company in the world premiere of Love. Rebecca is in the process of writing a full-length play about San Francisco at the turn of the last century. She’s thrilled to be a part of this season’s writer’s pool.

ADDIE ULREY is a playwright and ensemble theatre maker trained at Oberlin College, the Moscow Art Theatre, and the Double Edge Theatre. She is a long-time collaborator at Ragged Wing Ensemble in Oakland, and a former fellow with both Cal Shakes and Emerging Arts Professionals SF/Bay Area.

LEELA VELAUTHAM is a graduate student at UC Berkeley, studying towards a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology. She won the 2011 University of Oxford’s New Writers Festival for her script and production of the play Schroedinger’s Hat. She enjoys negotiating cultural differences between her native U.K and the U.S.

2019-20 PlayGround Writers Company


The ACTORS & DIRECTORS

PlayGround brings together a company of leading local actors and directors, committed to the development of Bay Area playwrights and Bay Area theatre. We recognize the extremely challenging period Bay Area artists are facing right now and the significant loss of paid work due to the COVID-19 pandemic and shelter-in-place order and wish to thank the artists for coming together for tonight’s live stream performance and you, our audience, for providing us this opportunity to create paid opportunities for Bay Area artists. 100% of the artists involved in tonight’s performance have been paid for their participation. To support Performing Arts Workers Relief efforts, please consider making a contribution to your favorite local theatre or visit https://www.theatreybayarea.org/page/COVID19-relief-fund.

JIM KLEINMANN (Artistic Director/Co-Founder) has staged more than a hundred-fifty original short works and produced twenty-five consecutive seasons for PlayGround. Most recently, he directed Nic Sommerfeld’s Dear Santa for Best of PlayGround 23. He is a veterans administrator with more than 25 years of experience, serving as chief executive for some of the Bay Area’s leading performing arts organizations. He received his MFA from the Yale School of Drama. While an undergraduate at Brown University, he founded Brown’s first community improvisational theatre troupe, IMPROvidence.

ANNIE STUART (Associate Artistic Director) has served as casting director for PlayGround for the past twenty-one seasons. Associate Director since 2005, she was recently named the company’s first Associate Artistic Director. As a freelance casting director, her other credits include Marin Theatre Company, SF Playhouse, Center REP, the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Brava, and 2 Space Studio, among others. She has taught at San Jose State University, The Bennett Theatre Lab, Center REP, the College of Marin, Marin Theatre Company and for Theatre Bay Area.

PLANET EARTH ARTS (Producer), www.planeteartsharts.org, was founded in 2014 by its Artistic Director Michael Fried and Vinit Allen, an environmental activist, to inspire individuals to claim planetary sustainability and social justice as the most urgent issues of our time harnessing the universal language and transformational power of the arts and human creativity. Its purpose is to amplify the power of the collective voice of the global community of artists to help alter our trajectory away from the current dark vision of suffering and separation and put us on a path toward a civilization rooted in wonder, awe and inspired by the transcendent beauty of nature herself. Our Planet Earth Arts New Play Festival was originally launched in the San Francisco Bay Area in collaboration with PlayGround and has performed at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Stanford University and the University of California, Berkeley. The Bay Area Planet Earth Arts New Play Festival is a collaboration with the National Center for New Plays at Stanford, PlayGround and the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. Planet Earth Arts is made possible with the generous support of Stanford University, University of California, Berkeley, and the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation. Planet Earth Arts is sponsored by Earth Island Institute a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

SAG-AFTRA
PlayGround is a member of Theatre Bay Area and Theatre Communications Group, and an Associate Member of the National New Play Network (NNPN).