

San Francisco Playhouse Announces Fall Zoomlet Series

SAN FRANCISCO (October 2021) — San Francisco Playhouse (Artistic Director **Bill English**; Producing Director **Susi Damilano**) announced the lineup of their Fall Zoomlet Series, comprised of four live play readings. The events will be streamed free of charge on the company's website. The Zoomlets will take place on four consecutive Monday evenings, each starting at 7:00 P.M. PST: October 4, October 11, October 18, and October 25, 2021.

San Francisco Playhouse's **Zoomlet** program, designed to provide audiences with an inside look at the "table read" process with professional actors and directors, will continue with readings of **Blue** by Caridad Svich, **Homeward** by Drew Woodson, **Esmeralda** by Demitra Olague, and a scene from **The Seagull** by Anton Chekhov. All Zoomlets will be streamed live on Monday evenings.

"Not only were last year's Zoomlets a huge hit with audiences, but they also introduced us to many new playwrights, directors, and artists," said Marie-Claire Erdynast, Associate Artistic Director and curator of the Zoomlet series. "Jeffery Lo, director of the Zoomlet *River's Message* by Conrad A. Panganiban, returned to direct *Hold These Truths*, our first show for live audiences this summer. And we are delighted to have commissioned full-length scripts of two of our favorite Zoomlets last season, *Cashed Out* by Claude Jackson Jr. and *Funeral Attire* by Lee Cataluna. We're excited to be continuing this digital programming even as audiences come back indoors."

UPCOMING ZOOMLETS:

BLUE

Monday, October 4, 2021 at 7:00 P.M. PST

By Caridad Svich

Directed by Marie-Claire Erdynast

A swimmer's poetic meditation on their life, past, present, and future as they swim across the Channel. The swimmer reflects on how they continue to feel alive in the wake of generations of pain, wildfires, and a mini stroke.

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HOMEWARD

Monday, October 11, 2021 at 7:00 P.M. PST

By Drew Woodson

Directed by Tara Moses

Meeting in secret at night at Steward Indian Boarding School in 1935, Thomas and William, two Shoshone teenage boys gather to whisper their secret longings for a better life.

ESMERALDA

Monday, October 18, 2021 at 7:00 P.M. PST

By Demitra Olague

Directed by Catherine Castellanos

As she gets ready for her brother's wedding, Esmeralda lures Gabriel into her room. Her words are a masterful dance ensnaring Gabriel. But what is she planning?

THE SEAGULL

Monday, October 25, 2021 at 7:00 P.M. PST

By Anton Chekhov

Translation by Paul Schmidt

Directed by Carey Perloff

A scene from the 1895 Russian Classic, Konstantin Gavrilovich Treplev has attempted suicide by shooting himself in the head, yet he fails to kill himself instead leaving behind a nasty wound. Konstantin asks his mother Irina Nikolayevna Arkadina to change his bandage in an attempt to heal the wound in their relationship.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHTS

Caridad Svich received a 2012 OBIE for Lifetime Achievement. Her work as a playwright, translator, lyricist, and essayist has been seen in print, live and digital stages at diverse venues across the US and abroad. Key plays in her extensive repertoire include *12 Ophelias*, *Iphigenia Crash Land Falls...*, *Red Bike* and *The House of the Spirits* (based on Isabel Allende's novel). Theatrical digital world premieres in 2021 have included *The Book of Magdalene* and *Theatre: a love story*. *Memories of Overdevelopment* was developed at The Goodman Theatre's Future Labs Reading Series this summer. As a screenwriter, her first feature film (as co-screenwriter, based on her play) *Fugitive Dreams* has been seen at the Fantasia, Austin, Tallinn Black Nights, Manchester (UK) and Maryland Film Festivals. Among her recognitions are an American Theatre Critics Association Primus Prize, the Edgerton Foundation New

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Play Award, and National Latino Playwriting Award (which she has received twice). She has edited several books on theatre. She most recently authored a book about *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (Routledge). Her second feature film *Abilene* (as screenwriter) is currently in post-production.

Drew Woodson is a graduate from the University of California Berkeley with a degree in Theater and Performing Arts. Drew is a member of the Te-Moak Band of Western peoples in Nevada but grew up in Northern California on Pomo territory. An actor and playwright, Drew has been acting in the Bay Area on and off campus for the past six years. Drew currently lives in New York City where he is continuing to pursue a career in the arts as a Native actor and playwright, hoping to be part of the positive change in Native representation for future generations. His Grandmother, Clara Woodson, whom this play *Homeward* is dedicated to, was one of the many Native children in Nevada and beyond who were forced into oppressive boarding schools such as Stewart.

Demitra Olague is an artist born in Mexico and currently living in the United states. She is an avid fan of transferring the thoughts in her brain onto paper, often creating stories from personal experiences, most which are still being processed, and her contradicting emotions.

Anton Chekhov, (born January 29, 1860, died July 14/15, 1904), Russian playwright and master of the modern short story. He was a literary artist of laconic precision who probed below the surface of life, laying bare the secret motives of his characters. Chekhov's best plays and short stories lack complex plots and neat solutions. Concentrating on apparent trivialities, they create a special kind of atmosphere, sometimes termed haunting or lyrical. Chekhov described the Russian life of his time using a deceptively simple technique devoid of obtrusive literary devices, and he is regarded as the outstanding representative of the late 19th-century Russian realist school. (Courtesy of Ronald Francis Hingley, <https://www.britannica.com/>.)

ABOUT THE ZOOMLETS

San Francisco Playhouse's Zoomlets are director-driven readings of short plays featuring professional actors, designed to simulate a "table read" environment. Each Monday at 7:00 PM, online audiences can watch as the director outlines their vision for the play, and actors dig into a script and their characters for the first time. Following a first read-through, the director and actors discuss their artistic choices, give notes, and then re-examine key scenes. Zoomlets run approximately one hour. Tickets and more information at <https://www.sfplayhouse.org/sfph/upcoming-free-livestreams/>.

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Past Zoomlets included works by Ruben Grijalva, Patricia Cotter, Jeff Locker, Genevieve Jessee, Theresa Rebeck, Dominique Morisseau, and Suzanne Bradbeer. Select previously-broadcast Zoomlets are now available for on-demand streaming on the San Francisco Playhouse website at <https://www.sfplayhouse.org/sfph/past-livestreams/>.

ABOUT SAN FRANCISCO PLAYHOUSE'S NEW WORKS PROGRAM

The **New Works Program** at San Francisco Playhouse, now in its 12th year, includes a **Play Reading Series**, the **Sandbox Series** of world premieres, and the **5-year Commission Program** dedicated to the creation of 20 new plays. Due to Covid 19-related limitations during the 2021/22 Season, the Play Reading Series and Sandbox Series have been temporarily adapted into live streaming Zoomlets. The Playhouse's commitment to new works has been honored by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, The Edgerton Foundation, The Biller Foundation, The Zellerbach Foundation, The Hewlet and Gerbode Foundations and the American Theatre Wing. The program has achieved significant critical and commercial milestones: two Will Glickman Awards; the *Sandbox Series* smash hit *Ideation*, which recently completed a successful Off-Broadway engagement in New York City; and George Brant's *Grounded*, which went on to international acclaim after its Sandbox premiere.

ABOUT SAN FRANCISCO PLAYHOUSE

Founded by Bill English and Susi Damilano in 2003, **San Francisco Playhouse** has been described by the New York Times as "a company that stages some of the most consistently high-quality work around" and deemed "ever adventurous" by the Bay Area News Group. Located in the heart of the Union Square Theater District, **San Francisco Playhouse** is the city's premier Off-Broadway company, an intimate alternative to the larger more traditional Union Square theater fare. San Francisco Playhouse provides audiences the opportunity to experience professional theater with top-notch actors and world-class design in a setting where they are close to the action. The company has received multiple awards for overall productions, acting, and design, including the SF Weekly Best Theatre Award and the Bay Guardian's Best Off-Broadway Theatre Award, as well as three consecutive Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards for Best Entire Production in the Bay Area (2016-2018). KQED/NPR recently described the company: "San Francisco Playhouse is one of the few theaters in the Bay Area that has a mission that actually shows up on stage. Artistic director Bill English's commitment to empathy as a guiding philosophical and aesthetic force is admirable and by living that mission, fascinating things happen onstage." **San Francisco Playhouse** is committed to providing a creative home and inspiring environment where actors, directors, writers, designers, and theater lovers converge to create and experience dramatic works that celebrate the human spirit.