

THE PUBLIC THEATER ANNOUNCES SELECTION OF 2014-15 EMERGING WRITERS GROUP TEN PLAYWRIGHTS CHOSEN FROM MORE THAN 475 APPLICANTS

The Time Warner Foundation is the Founding Sponsor of The Public Writers Initiative

January 21, 2014 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) announced the 10 new playwrights today for the **2014-15 Emerging Writers Group**. Now in its fifth cycle, the **Emerging Writers Group** is an ongoing initiative that targets playwrights at the earliest stages in their career, creating an artistic home, and offering support and resources for a diverse group of up-and-coming playwrights.

Selected from more than 475 applicants, the 2014-15 Emerging Writers are **Kevin Artigue, Damon Chua, Keli Goff, Ricardo Pérez González, Glenn Gordon, Elizabeth Irwin, Paola Lázaro-Muñoz, Patricia Ione Lloyd, Jiehae Park, and Sarah Sander**. Past EWG writers have included Raúl Castillo, Branden Jacob-Jenkins, Ethan Lipton, Mona Mansour, and Dominique Morisseau.

The **Emerging Writers Group** is a component of **The Public Writers Initiative**, a long-term program that provides key support and resources for writers at every stage of their careers. It creates a fertile community and fosters a web of supportive artistic relationships across generations. The **Time Warner Foundation** is the Founding Sponsor of **The Public Writers Initiative**.

Writers are selected bi-annually and receive a two-year fellowship at The Public which includes a stipend. Staged readings of works by Emerging Writers Group members are presented in the Spotlight Series at The Public. The playwrights also participate in a bi-weekly writers group led by The Public's literary department and master classes led by established playwrights. Additionally, they have a chance to observe rehearsals for productions at The Public, receive career development advice from mid-career and established writers, and receive artistic and professional support from the literary department and Public artistic staff. Members of the group also receive complimentary tickets to Public Theater shows, invited dress rehearsals, and other special events, as well as a supplemental stipend for tickets to productions at other theaters.

“Once again, we are delighted to welcome an extraordinary constellation of writers to The Public for our fifth class of the Emerging Writers Group. The writers are tackling the big issues of our time with great intelligence and humanity,” said **Public Theater Associate Artistic Director Mandy Hackett**. “It is a dynamic and diverse group and we look forward to launching the next round of EWG together. This program is only possible because of the Time Warner Foundation's deep commitment to providing opportunity to the next generation of playwrights. We are forever grateful to the Time Warner Foundation for their inspired leadership, support, and partnership in creating and sustaining this program.”

“The mission of the Time Warner Foundation is to seek innovative and powerful ways to discover, nurture and celebrate the next generation of storytellers,” said **Lisa Garcia Quiroz, President of the Time Warner Foundation**. “We are so proud of our partnership with The Public to create the Emerging Writers Group and welcome this exciting new class.”

About The Public Writers Initiative

In just six years, The Public’s **Emerging Writers Group** has nurtured numerous playwrights who have gone on to have their plays staged at The Public and elsewhere around the country. The Public’s recent production of *Detroit ’67*, written by Dominique Morisseau, marked the fifth work presented at The Public by a member of the Emerging Writers Group. The Obie Award-winning *No Place To Go*, written by Emerging Writers Group alum Ethan Lipton, was presented at Joe’s Pub at The Public in March 2012. Emerging Writers Group alum Mona Mansour’s *Urge For Going* was presented in The Public Lab in March 2011, as well as Branden Jacobs-Jenkins’ *Neighbors* in February 2010 and Raúl Castillo’s *Knives and Other Sharp Objects* in March 2009.

In addition to supporting up-and-coming playwrights in the **Emerging Writers Group, Mid-Career Writers** will continue to be supported via readings, workshops and commissions. Since the Time Warner Foundation began funding The Public Writers Initiative, The Public has produced 50-70 readings and workshops per season. Artistic development of this nature is at the core of The Public’s mission and is critical to helping the institution and writers develop new work for the theater.

Through the **Master Writer Chair** program, The Public provides an artistic home and support for established playwrights whose work has set the standard for the highest level of achievement in theater. Master Writers receive full artistic and administrative support, the chance to develop their work with the full resources of The Public Theater and participate in the artistic life of the theater. Inspired by the university model, the full-salaried position as a Visiting Arts Professor at NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts, Rita and Burton Goldberg Department of Dramatic Writing, affords writers the flexibility and freedom to pursue their artistic goals and endeavors. The current recipient of the Master Writer Chair is **Suzan-Lori Parks**.

BIOS OF 2014-15 EMERGING WRITERS GROUP:

KEVIN ARTIGUE is a recent graduate of the Iowa Playwrights Workshop. After graduating, he was awarded a Visiting Writer Fellowship at the University of Iowa. His plays have been performed and developed at theaters across the country including Theatre of NOTE (Los Angeles), Great Plains Theatre Conference, Yale Cabaret, Iowa New Play Festival, Golden Thread in San Francisco, and the Playwrights Center in Minneapolis, where he was a Core Apprentice. While in Iowa, he co-wrote and produced his first feature, *Holy Ghost People*, which premiered at the 2013 SXSW Film Festival and will have its theatrical release in February 2014.

DAMON CHUA is the recipient of an Ovation Award (Best World Premiere Play) for *Film Chinois*. His other produced works include *1969: A Fantastical Odyssey Through the American Mindscape*; *A Book By Its Cover*, and *The Ghost Building*. A Durfee Foundation grant recipient, Chua is also a poet and short story writer and his plays are currently published by Samuel French and Smith & Kraus. Chua previously served as Literary Manager of Company of Angels in Los Angeles and is a proud member of Ma-Yi Theater’s Writers Lab in New York.

KELI GOFF’s writing has appeared in *The Washington Post*, *The Huffington Post*, *The Houston Chronicle*, *Time*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Essence*, and the web editions of *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, *The Guardian* and *New York Magazine*. She is a columnist for *The Daily Beast* and special correspondent for *The Root*. Keli is the author of two books, the non-fiction *Party Crashing: How the Hip-Hop Generation Declared Political Independence* and the novel *The GQ Candidate*. She holds a B.A. from NYU and a Master’s degree in Strategic Communications from Columbia.

RICARDO PÉREZ GONZÁLEZ's first play, *In Fields Where They Lay*, was hailed by the *New York Times* as a "gripping" and "moving drama." The Sundance Institute selected González for their Inaugural Writer's Intensive, and his Alan Turing biopic, *The Tender Peel*, won an Alfred P. Sloan Grant. His writing credits include *Neon Baby* (book writer/co-lyricist, Pregones 2013); *Inside Out* (commissioned by Pregones to address anti-gay bullying); *Ashé* (UP Theater, 2013); and the transgender family drama, *La casa de Ocaso* (Asunción Playwriting Competition, 2010). He received an M.F.A. from NYU Tisch in 2012.

GLENN GORDON is an actor and playwright. A member of UNIVERSES, he performed in productions of *Ameriville* and was a contributor for *Party People*. As a playwright, Gordon has written *Re:Definition* and received a fellowship from the New Black Fest to write *Search For The Crystal Stairs*. Gordon is co-founder of the Continuum Project, Inc., which uses African Ancestry DNA testing and theatre to promote cultural identity and community healing. In 2010, after tracing his African Ancestry, Gordon was given the name NSangou Njikam by the Bamoun/Tikar people of Cameroon. He received a B.F.A. in acting from Howard University.

ELIZABETH IRWIN is a 2013-14 Playwrights Realm Writing Fellow where her play, *My Manana Comes*, will part of the 2014 Ink'd Reading Series. Her work has been developed by Soho Rep, the Puerto Rican Traveling Theater Playwrights Unit, and Dramatic Question Theatre Playwrights Collective. Her other plays include *Origin* (Estrogenius Festival at Manhattan Theater Source) and *Brooklyn Bets Alexi* (third place in the MetLife Nuestras Voces playwriting competition). Irwin is a graduate of Amherst and Harvard and works in both the Mexico and New York City school systems.

PAOLA LÁZARO-MUÑOZ holds a B.F.A. in Dramatic Writing from SUNY Purchase College and an M.F.A. in Playwriting from Columbia. Her plays include *Status Stated*, *Rich Port*, *El Tío Sam*, and *Contigo*. Lázaro-Muñoz is the recipient of the Arts Entertainment Scholarship Award (2010-2011) from the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts for the pilot episode of her TV show, "Trópico." She is an active member of The Actors Studio's Playwrights and Directors Workshop. Her short films include *Used*, *Así Se Dice Aquí*, *Speechless*, and the screenplay, *8:90 PM*.

PATRICIA IONE LLOYD was a resident playwright at the University of Mumbai, Brown University (through the Africana Studies Department/Rites and Reasons Theatre) and the International Theatre and Literacy Project in Tanzania. Her work has been developed by Red Bull Theatre, Dixon Place, Classical Theatre of Harlem, Luna Stage, Downtown Urban Theatre Festival, New York LGBTQ Center, Freedom Train Productions, Fire This Time Festival, Bleecker Street Theatre, and Rising Circle Theatre. Lloyd is the recipient of New Professional Theatre's Emerging Playwright Award for her play *Black Tale*, and the best play award from DUTF for her play *This Train is Bound for Glory*.

JIEHAE PARK is a writer and actor. She is the 2013-14 Princess Grace Award Fellow at New Dramatists, as well as a current Dramatists Guild Fellow and member of the Soho Rep Writer-Director Lab. Her play *Hannah and the Dread Gazebo* won the 2013 Leah Ryan Prize for Emerging Women Writers and was developed at the Bay Area Playwrights Festival and Ojai Playwrights Conference. She served two years as co-artistic director of title3, a Los Angeles company dedicated to new works by women. She is also a member of the Ma-Yi Writers Lab.

SARAH SANDER has seen her work developed and/or produced by Columbia University, DC Arts Center, Florida Studio Theatre, Hatchery Festival, Inkwell Theatre, Kennedy Center, Lark New Play Development Center, Page 73 Productions, Project Y, Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Festival, and University of Iowa. Sander is a New Georges Affiliated Artist, current Dramatist Guild Fellow, and alumni of Page 73 Production's writers group, Interstate 73. For the 2009-2010 season, she served as a National New Play Network Playwright in Residence at Florida Studio Theatre. She received her M.F.A. from the University of Iowa.

ABOUT THE PUBLIC THEATER AT ASTOR PLACE

Under the leadership of Artistic Director Oskar Eustis and Executive Director Patrick Willingham, The Public Theater is the only theater in New York that produces Shakespeare, the classics, musicals, and contemporary and experimental works in equal measure. The Public continues the work of its visionary founder, Joe Papp, by acting as an advocate for the theater as an essential cultural force, and leading and framing dialogue on some of the most important issues of our day. Creating theater for one of the largest and most diverse audience bases in New York City for nearly 60 years, today the Company engages audiences in a variety of venues—including its landmark downtown home at Astor Place, which houses five theaters and Joe’s Pub; the Delacorte Theater in Central Park, home to its beloved, free Shakespeare in the Park; and the Mobile Unit, which tours Shakespearean and other classic productions for underserved audiences throughout New York City’s five boroughs. The Public’s wide range of programming includes free Shakespeare in the Park, the bedrock of the Company’s dedication to making theater accessible to all, new and experimental stagings at The Public at Astor Place, and a range of artist and audience development initiatives including its Public Forum series, which brings together theater artists and professionals from a variety of disciplines for discussions that shed light on social issues explored in Public productions. The Public Theater is located on property owned by the City of New York and receives annual support from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; and in October 2012 the landmark building downtown at Astor Place was revitalized to physically manifest the Company’s core mission of sparking new dialogues and increasing accessibility for artists and audiences, by dramatically opening up the building to the street and community, and transforming the lobby into a public piazza for artists, students, and audiences. Key elements of the revitalization included infrastructure updates to the 158-year old building, including changes to the main entry, expanded lobby, additional restrooms, and the addition of a new lounge, The Library at The Public, designed by the Rockwell Group. The LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust provides leadership support for The Public Theater’s year-round activities. www.publictheater.org

#