

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 27, 2012

CONTACT: Rebecca Curtiss, rcurtiss@huntingtontheatre.bu.edu / 617 273 1537

PHOTOS: huntingtontheatre.org/summerworkshopplaywrights (see instructions at the bottom of this release)

HUNTINGTON THEATRE COMPANY'S INAUGURAL SUMMER WORKSHOP INCLUDES NEW WORK BY HUNTINGTON PLAYWRITING FELLOWS JOHN OLUWOLE ADEKOJE, PATRICK GABRIDGE, MARTHA JANE KAUFMAN, AND MELINDA LOPEZ

(BOSTON) – The Huntington Theatre Company announces the inaugural Summer Workshop, a two-week new work retreat for selected members of the Huntington's Playwriting Fellows program. The artist-driven workshop will occur July 10 – 22, and will culminate in public readings of the four plays in development:

- ***Jagun Fly* by John Oluwole ADEkoje**, directed by Nigel Smith
Public reading: Sunday, July 22 at 5pm; Calderwood Pavilion at the BCA
RSVP at huntingtontheatre.org/JagunReading
- ***Flight* by Patrick Gabridge**, directed by Jessica Bauman
Public reading: Saturday, July 21 at 5pm; Calderwood Pavilion at the BCA
RSVP at huntingtontheatre.org/FlightReading
- ***Untitled Play about Dead Bodies* by Martha Jane Kaufman**, directed by Kara-Lynn Vaeni
Public reading: Sunday, July 22 at 3pm; Calderwood Pavilion at the BCA
RSVP at huntingtontheatre.org/DeadReading
- ***Becoming Cuba* by Melinda Lopez** (*Sonia Flew*), directed by M. Bevin O'Gara
Public reading: Saturday, July 21 at 7:30pm; Calderwood Pavilion at the BCA
RSVP at huntingtontheatre.org/CubaReading

**Readings are open to the public, but not open to reviewing members of the press.

“We are continuously looking for ways to make our new work initiatives work better for the writers and for the local theatre ecology,” says Huntington Artistic Director Peter DuBois. “In think-tank conversations with our Huntington Playwriting Fellows, they told us that they wanted more opportunities to work in three dimensions. I can't wait to revisit these four plays at the end of the process to see how they've grown.”

The Summer Workshop is modeled after the Sundance Theatre Lab and is an extension of the Huntington's Playwriting Fellows program and Breaking Ground Reading Series. Huntington Director of New Work Lisa Timmel and Huntington dramaturg Charles Haugland will support the writers during the intensive, artist-driven development process. The festival is produced by Huntington Associate Producer M. Bevin O'Gara.

The Summer Workshop is funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

ABOUT THE PLAYS AND PLAYWRIGHTS

JAGUN FLY

by John Oluwole ADEkoje

Directed by Niegel Smith

One African-American family's experience collides Yoruba traditions with contemporary urban experience. Playwright John Oluwole ADEkoje connects the break-up of the African diaspora to inner-city America through ritual and language.

John Oluwole ADEkoje's short play *Cry Baby Jones* was part of *Grimm* (Company One) and was nominated for an Independent Reviewers of New England (IRNE) Award for Best New Play. He was also nominated for two IRNEs for his play *Love Jones*. ADEkoje is a National Award winner of the Kennedy Center ACTF — Lorraine Hansberry Playwriting award for his play *Street Hawker*, as well as the winner of the National Triennial New Play Competition. He was recently commissioned to write a new play by the Boston Black Theater Collective. He is a recipient of the Brother Thomas Fellowship for this documentary film *Street Soldiers* for which he won the Emerging Filmmakers Award by the Roxbury International Film Festival. *Street Soldiers* has been shown at the Pan African Film Festival at Cannes, France and the World Film Festival in Montreal, Canada. He is currently editing his feature film *Knockaround Kids*. ADEkoje is a proud recipient of the Surdna Arts Teachers Fellowship. He is currently a Playwright in Residence at Company One and UMass Boston and a faculty member in the theatre department at Boston Arts Academy where he teaches playwriting, filmmaking, and directing.

FLIGHT

by Patrick Gabridge

Directed by Jessica Bauman

Sarah escapes from her life by spending most of her time at the airport, pretending to be someone else but never going anywhere. After a janitor, Carlos, attempts to befriend her, she discovers she isn't nearly as invisible as she'd hoped. *Flight* gives us a drama about people lost in a place that's not really anywhere, trying to salvage lives torn apart by loss.

Patrick Gabridge's full-length plays include *Fire on Earth*, *Constant State of Panic*, *Blinders*, and *Reading the Mind of God*, and have been staged by theatres across the country. He began writing and producing audio plays in 1993 with the No Name Radio Players and Chameleon Stage, and his work has been broadcast by NPR, Shoestring Radio Theatre, and Icebox Radio Theatre. He apparently has a strange fondness for bricks and unreasonable fury towards bad shoppers. Gabridge is a member of the Dramatists Guild and serves on the board of StageSource. In his spare time, he likes to farm.

UNTITLED PLAY ABOUT DEAD BODIES

by Martha Jane Kaufman

Directed by Kara-Lynn Vaeni

Lila and Ella met washing dead bodies at a Brooklyn chevra kadisha, a traditional Jewish burial society. When Lila suddenly cuts off their affair on the same day Ella receives an ominous note in the mail, Ella seeks out Brooklyn's only Jewish private eye, Sassy Feigenbaum. Martha Jane Kaufman's new play is about dead bodies and ex-girlfriends.

Martha Jane Kaufman is a playwright, dancer, and teacher. She has received awards and commissions from the Huntington, the Program for Women in Theater, the Playwrights' Foundation, the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts, and Young Playwrights Inc. Originally from Portland, OR, Martha attended Wesleyan University and is currently studying playwriting at Yale School of Drama. Her work has been translated into Russian and performed in Moscow. Kaufman was awarded the Jane Chambers Prize for Feminist Theater in 2010 for her play *A Live Dress*.

BECOMING CUBA

by Melinda Lopez

Directed by M. Bevin O'Gara

On the eve of the Spanish-American war, widowed Adela runs a pharmacy, indifferent to the mounting conflict around her. But when the rebellion comes home to Havana, Adela, a loyal Spaniard, is forced to choose between country and family. By turns funny and impassioned, *Becoming Cuba* asks if freedom is something we all want.

Melinda Lopez is a playwright and actress. Her plays include *Sonia Flew* (Elliot Norton Best New Play, IRNE Best New Play, inaugural play of the Huntington's Calderwood Pavilion at the BCA), *God Smells Like a Roast Pig* (Elliot Norton Best Solo Performance), *Midnight Sandwich/Medianoche* (Coconut Grove Playhouse), *Alexandros* (Laguna Playhouse), *Gary* (Steppenwolf First Look, Boston Playwrights Theatre), *Caroline in Jersey* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), and *Orchids to Octopi* (Central Square Theatre). She has served as a panel member for the NEA, and has enjoyed residencies with Sundance, the Lark, New York Theatre Workshop and Harvard University. She teaches theatre and performance at Wellesley College, and playwriting at Boston University.

ABOUT THE HUNTINGTON PLAYWRITING FELLOWS PROGRAM

The **Huntington Playwriting Fellows (HPF)** program creates relationships between a local community of writers and a nationally prominent producing theatre, forges those bonds through authentic conversation and artistic collaboration, and encourages dialogue between local artists.

Since 2003, the HPF program has invited writers to participate in two-year residencies, during which playwrights receive a modest honorarium, join in a biweekly writers' collective with artistic staff, attend Huntington productions and events, and are eligible for readings and support through the Breaking Ground reading series.

The primary focus of the program is creating relationships with writers at all stages of their careers, from emerging talent to established professionals. The program provides a framework for an in-depth, two-year artistic conversation and a long-term professional relationship. Recently, the Huntington began convening Fellows, past and present, at an annual meeting to solicit ideas on how to improve and expand the program, and the Summer Workshop launches in July 2012.

In 2009, the Huntington instituted an open application process with submissions solicited each spring from any writer primarily based within commuting distance of Boston. The theatre selects two to three writers whose terms overlap with adjacent cohorts.

Huntington productions of plays by Fellows include *The Luck of the Irish* by Kirsten Greenidge, *Before I Leave You* by Rosanna Yamagiwa Alfaro, *Stick Fly* by Lydia R. Diamond, *The Atheist* and *Brendan* by Ronan Noone, *Sonia Flew* by Melinda Lopez, *The Cry of the Reed* by Sinan Ünel, *Shakespeare's Actresses in America* by Rebecca Maggor, and *Psyched* and the upcoming "*M*" by Ryan Landry.

ABOUT THE HUNTINGTON

Since its founding in 1982, the Huntington Theatre Company has developed into Boston's leading theatre company. Bringing together superb local and national talent, the Huntington produces a mix of groundbreaking new works and classics made current. Led by Artistic Director Peter DuBois and Managing Director Michael Maso, the Huntington creates award-winning productions, runs nationally renowned programs in education and new play development, and serves the local theatre community through its operation of the Calderwood Pavilion at the BCA. The Huntington is in residence at Boston University. For more information, visit huntingtontheatre.org.

#

MEDIA NOTES

For interviews and more information, contact Communications Manager Rebecca Curtiss at rcurtiss@huntingtontheatre.bu.edu or 617 273 1537.