

ALLEY THEATRE

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Playwrights, Artists and Directors Arrive for Alley All New Festival

Playwrights join festival participants including Alley Resident Company Members, Ellen McLaughlin, Richard Kind and Bob Balaban for first annual festival

HOUSTON, TX— The Alley Theatre's Alley All New Festival, January 28 - February 7, features six playwrights and more than 25 actors from around the country who will be presenting new work through a series of readings and workshop performances. Rehearsals have begun at the newly renovated Alley Theatre and the performances will be open to audiences to view the development process beginning January 28th. Reservations are open and all presentations are free.

Also participating in the festival are Artistic Directors from theatres in Chicago and New York, in addition to the Alley's Gregory Boyd.

"This wonderful group will light up the building in a way that it hasn't been before. I look forward to welcoming these fantastic teams of playwrights, directors and actors to the theatre to celebrate new work," said Boyd.

The Alley All New Festival focuses on the creative process instead of the final product allowing audiences to view plays in their developmental stage rather than in their final form. Playwrights will have the opportunity to work with a director and actors to develop the play, while also offering audiences a first look at the work and an insight into the playwriting process.

Zak Berkman is the author of the political drama, **The Harassment of Iris Malloy**. The cast features Alley Company Members Elizabeth Bunch and Melissa Pritchett. Alley veterans Nick Farco and Mark Shanahan will join the cast, directed by Alley Resident Assistant Director Brandon Weinbrenner.

Boo Killebrew's Southern Gothic tale, **Miller, Mississippi**, includes Company members Jay Sullivan and Emily Trask and Alley veteran Dylan Godwin. Additional cast members include Anne Quakenbush and Benja Kay Thomas. Lee Sunday Evans will direct.

The cast of Karen Hartman's **Roz and Ray** includes actors Ellen McLaughlin (the original Angel, among other roles, in *Angels in America*) and Leo Marks (*Masters of Sex*). Chay Yew, Artistic Director of Victory Gardens in Chicago, will direct.

Songs From Mrs. Mannerly, with music by Michael Moricz, lyrics by Jack Murphy, based on the play by Jeffrey Hatcher, is a reading of select songs from a musical in progress inspired by the play *Mrs. Mannerly*. Alley veteran Josie de Guzman joins the cast as Mrs. Mannerly, a role she previously played in the original version, produced by the Alley in 2010. Additional cast members include Richard Kind (*Gotham, Inside Out*), Mark Ivy, and Julie Crohn. Boyd will direct the reading.

NSangou Njikam, playwright for **Syncing Ink**, will lead the cast of his Hip Hop theatre piece. The cast also includes Kamal Angelo Bolden, McKenzie Frye, Carson Higgins, Kevin Mambo and Kara Young. The piece is directed by Niegel Smith, Artistic Director of New York's Flea Theatre.

Lawrence Wright's **Cleo**, presents the story of the scandalous romance between Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. The piece includes Alley Resident Company members portraying some of Hollywood's most famous personalities; Jeffrey Bean (Joe Mankiewicz), Elizabeth Bunch (Elizabeth Taylor), Emily Trask, and Todd Waite (Rex Harrison). Mark Shanahan, Adam Gibbs and Michael Brusasco (Richard Burton), round out the cast. Acclaimed director and actor Bob Balaban will direct the reading.

A full list of festival casting is below:

Roz and Ray by Karen Hartman

Directed by Chay Yew

Leo Marks

Ellen McLaughlin

Workshop Performances: January 28, 30, 31; February 6, 7

Miller, Mississippi by Boo Killebrew

Directed by Lee Sunday Evans

Dylan Godwin

Anne Quackenbush

Jay Sullivan

Emily Trask

Benja Kay Thomas

Workshop Performances: January 29, 30, 31; February 4, 6

The Harassment of Iris Malloy by Zak Berkman

Directed by Brandon Weinbrenner

Elizabeth Bunch

Nick Farco

Melissa Pritchett

Mark Shanahan

Reading: February 7

Syncing Ink by NSangou Njikam

Directed by Niegel Smith

NSangou Njikam

Kamal Angelo Bolden

McKenzie Frye

Carson Higgins

Kevin Mambo

Kara Young

Workshop Performances: January 30; February 4, 5, 7

Songs from Mrs. Mannerly, a Musical in Progress

Music by Michael Moricz, lyrics by Jack Murphy

Based on the play by Jeffrey Hatcher

Directed by Gregory Boyd

Josie de Guzman

Richard Kind

Julia Krohn

Mark Ivy

Readings: February 5, 7

Cleo by Lawrence Wright

Directed by Bob Balaban

Jeffrey Bean

Elizabeth Bunch

Michael Brusasco

Adam Gibbs

Mark Shanahan

Emily Trask

Todd Waite

Reading: February 6

View full play descriptions and performance calendar

RESERVATIONS:

Alley All New Festival presentations, workshop performances and readings are free and open to the public. Advance reservations are required and are available now online at alleytheatre.org/allnew, by phone at 713-220-5700 or in person at the Alley Theatre Box Office, 615 Texas Avenue.

INDUSTRY WEEKEND PACKAGES

A Weekend Package, including reserved seating, exclusive artist access and meals between performances is available for \$115, February 5-7.

Reserve Industry Weekend Packages

Reserved package prices reflect the cost of the meals.

ABOUT THE ALLEY THEATRE

The Alley Theatre, one of America's leading not-for-profit theatres, is a nationally recognized performing arts company lead by Artistic Director Gregory Boyd and Managing Director Dean R. Gladden. Home to a Resident Company of actors, the Alley creates a wide-ranging repertoire and innovative productions of classics, neglected modern plays, and premieres. Alley All New, the initiative to commission and develop new work year round, features the Alley All New Festival each season presenting workshops and readings of new plays and musicals in process. Additionally the Alley serves 65,000 students annually with award-winning education and community programs including in-school arts integration residencies, school tours and student matinees. A recipient of the Special Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre, the Alley has brought productions to Broadway, 40 American cities including New York's Lincoln Center and internationally to London, Berlin, Paris, and St. Petersburg throughout its 69 year history.

The Alley Theatre began a \$46.5 million building renovation in 2014-2015 season, the first major improvements since the building opened in 1968. With over 500 events in 2015-2016, the Alley will offer more performances than all other arts organizations in the Houston Theater District combined.

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