

ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

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Artists Rep offers public vote to award new **Oregon Play Prize**

Written by an Oregonian. Chosen by Oregonians.
Part of Table|Room|Stage New Play Development Program

PORTLAND, OREGON – July 20, 2016. Artists Repertory Theatre launches the final phase of awarding the [Oregon Play Prize](#) today by inviting the public to choose the winning script by open vote. From 131 plays submitted since November, the public will choose which of three finalists to they want to see Artists Rep develop and produce. The voting poll, descriptions and samples of the finalist plays are posted on the [Oregon Play Prize webpage](#). The plays will be voted on by merit of the script and voter interest alone; to this end the playwrights' names are not included. Voting begins immediately and will end on September 15. The Oregon Play Prize winner will be announced on September 21, 2016.

The Oregon Play Prize is a \$10,000 commission for a new play by an Oregonian. The play will be provided with development support and will receive a full production by Artists Rep. The timeline to production will depend on the readiness of the project.

Plays were submitted to Artists Rep between November 1, 2015 and January 31, 2016. All the plays considered for the prize were written by residents of Oregon, with a few exceptions made for non-resident writers with strong ties to Oregon. The scripts were submitted at varying stages of completion, from a well-developed idea to a completed draft, and the play could not have received a prior production.

FINALIST PLAYS

Good Citizen – an exploration of Oregon's role in the Japanese internment camps during World War II and one man's fight to be recognized.

The full description and a five-page writing sample is on the finalist and voting webpage [here](#).

Signs – A surrealistic comedy about love, purpose, and the little things that seem to matter so much to us.

The full description and a five-page writing sample is on the finalist and voting webpage [here](#).

The Snowmaker – a psychological thriller in which a girl meets her estranged father and must figure out who – or what – he is running from.

The full description and a five-page writing sample is on the finalist and voting webpage [here](#).

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THE SELECTION PROCESS

Artists Rep received 131 proposals for consideration. A team of 24 readers, comprised of Artists Rep staff and volunteers from the community, evaluated the plays and advanced 33 of them to a second round. Between April 1 and June 30, these 33 plays were read and scored by the team of readers. Each play was read by at least four readers and evaluated on the basis of originality, dramatic action, language, characters, theatricality and appropriateness for Artists Rep. Submissions were provided to the readers using a blinded format with the playwrights' names removed from all submitted documents so that the reading committee did not know who wrote the plays they read. For complete submission guidelines, click [here](#).

ABOUT TABLE|ROOM|STAGE

In August 2014, Artists Rep was the recipient of a \$125,000 Oregon Community Foundation "Creative Heights" grant to establish a robust new play development program that will create opportunities for local and national playwrights, ensure that underrepresented voices are heard on stage and establish Artists Rep and Portland as an engine for new play development, nationally.

Artists Rep's [T|R|S program](#) will commission a total of eight plays by 2017 – at least four of the eight commissions will go to writers of color, at least four will go to women, one play will be written for young adults and one will be the Oregon Play Prize, awarded to an Oregon writer.

Artists Rep has extended four of the eight play commissions to Yussef El Guindi, Linda Alper, Larissa FastHorse and Andrea Stolowitz.

T|R|S program initiatives include eight playwright commissions, the Oregon Play Prize and a new public theatre investigation program, *Fresh Eyes*. A remarkable intention of T|R|S is to provide the public greater and unique access to the process of new work development through [blogs](#) and online videos that allow for audience engagement. Through these strategies audiences can learn about this little-known part of the theatre world by witnessing the process of play planning, selection and development, as well as learning from writers and artistic teams about their processes and their challenges in developing new work. Leading these wide-ranging programs with the support of the OCF grant is Director of New Play Development & Dramaturgy [Luan Schooler](#).

ABOUT ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

[Artists Rep](#) has become a significant presence in American Regional Theatre with a legacy of world, national and regional premieres of provocative new work with the highest standards of stagecraft. Our commitment to local artists is embodied by our company of Resident Artists, 24 professionals of varied theatre disciplines who are a driving force behind Artists Rep's creative output and identity. This commissioning program will position Artists Rep as an engine for new play development in the region and beyond. With this New Play Development program, Artists Rep strives to empower and support Oregon-based playwrights while also creating a Portland home for writers from around the country to develop their work. Additionally, this program will make a meaningful impact on equity in the arts by mandating opportunities for women writers and writers of color, and cultivating the next generation of theatre-goers by creating work specifically for young people (13 and up).

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Portland's premiere mid-size regional theatre company is led by Artistic Director Dámaso Rodriguez and Managing Director Sarah Horton. Founded in 1982, Artists Repertory Theatre is the longest-running professional theatre company in Portland. Artist Rep became the 72nd member of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) in May 2016 and is an Associate Member of the National New Play Network (NNPN).

[Artists Rep's 2016/17 season](#) offers a stylistically diverse season of seven imaginative and entertaining plays that grapple with family and the pursuit of happiness. The season features one World Premiere commissioned by Artists Rep's new play development program [Table|Room|Stage](#), along with five Northwest Premieres (including a musical) by some of the best emerging contemporary playwrights in the country, and one re-imagined classic featuring an all-female cast. The 2016/17 selections emphasize the aesthetic and scope of work Artists Rep has been committed to producing for almost 35 years as Portland's premiere mid-size regional theatre.

Artists Rep productions feature the work of a core group of 24 multidisciplinary theatre professionals. Hailing from around the country, our [Resident Artists](#) are nationally renowned and award-winning actors, directors, writers, designers and educators who have chosen to make Portland and Artists Rep their artistic home. Working together and independently, they create inventive and theatrically rich experiences for our audiences while playing a major role in defining Portland's cultural landscape.

Artists Rep is also home to the [ArtsHub](#), serving as a community arts center, where our performance venues and lobbies buzz with creative energy and Portland's arts-loving audiences can gather. We offer a home within our facility to a diverse range of artists and arts organizations. They can thrive here with access to affordable administrative, performance and rehearsal space, as well as a myriad of support services. Over the last year, hundreds of performances, events and happenings by Portlanders found a place in our building.

Artists Repertory Theatre's mission is to produce intimate, provocative theatre and provide a home for artists of varied backgrounds to take creative risks. We are committed to world-class acting, directing, design and stagecraft that support new playwriting and aspire to embody great literature, moving audiences to truly feel — to *experience* — storytelling in a way that only the best live theatre can.

The 2016/17 Artists Repertory Theatre season is presented by Ronni Lacroute/WillaKenzie Estate and David and Christine Vernier. Other season support comes from the Regional Arts Culture Council, Oregon Community Foundation, Collins Foundation, Meyer Memorial Trust, James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation and Work for Art.



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