

Theatre Arts Media Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

POLAROID STORIES BRINGS US INTO THE MODERN-DAY UNDERWORLD

"STORY OF A GIRL WHO WALKED AWAY, AND NEVER LOOKED BACK...."

LONG BEACH, CA, November-December 2017 – Playwright **Naomi Iizuka** radically adapts and retells Ovid's ancient classic *Metamorphoses*, with homeless youth crafting stories both for their physical survival and for the transformation of their souls. In this contemporary collage of classical mythology and real-life stories of street kids, the play weaves a world where myth-making and storytelling are vital weapons for the characters to survive a system that erases and ignores them.

POLAROID STORIES mixes poetry and profanity – along with verbatim interviews Iizuka conducted with homeless youth and young sex workers – to tell a kaleidoscopic tale of young people living on the streets, fighting to escape the vice grip of poverty and addiction, and finding love and light within this darkness. **POLAROID STORIES** is a messy labyrinth of addiction, violence and the serpentine paths of the heart. Directed by **Eric Hoff** (who has directed in LA, New York, Chicago and most recently at the Humana Festival at Actors Theatre of Louisville), this production is a visceral and theatrical journey into the underbelly of street youth culture. Director **Eric Hoff** spoke about **POLAROID STORIES** in relation to his prior work on *What's the T?* a docudrama by homeless and under-resourced youth in Boystown, Chicago. Hoff said, "**POLAROID STORIES** feels like a world so close and real to what we created with *What's the T?* I channel the real-life stories of those young people every time I read Naomi's text, and try to imagine these folks - my friends - going through such difficult situations."

Naomi Iizuka received her BA in classical literature from Yale and her MFA in Playwriting from UC San Diego. Her plays include *36 Views*, *Anon(ymous)*, *Language of Angels*, *Aloha*, *Say the Pretty Girls*, *Tattoo Girl*, *Skin*, *At the Vanishing Point*, *Concerning Strange Devices From the Distant West*, *17 Reasons Why*, *Ghostwritten*, *Hamlet: Blood in the Brain* (a collaboration with CalShakes and Campo Santo + Intersection for the Arts), *3 Truths* (a collaboration with Cornerstone Theater Company), *War of the Worlds* (a collaboration with Anne Bogart and SITI Company), and *Good Kids* (the first play commissioned by the Big Ten Consortium's New Play Initiative.) Her plays have been produced by Berkeley Rep, the Goodman, the Guthrie, Cornerstone, Intiman, Children's Theater Company, the Kennedy Center, the Huntington Theater, Actors' Theatre of Louisville, GeVa, Portland Center Stage, the Public Theatre, Campo Santo + Intersection for the Arts, Dallas Theatre Center, the Brooklyn Academy of Music's "Next Wave Festival," and Soho Rep, among others.

Eric Hoff is a director, producer, writer and an Artistic Associate at About Face Theatre in Chicago. His New York directing credits include *Hit the Wall* (Off-Broadway, Barrow Street Theater), Lucas Hnath's *About a Woman Named Sarah* (59E59 Theaters) and *When We Met* (CAP21 Theatre Company). Chicago directing credits include *Hit the Wall* (The Inconvenience, Steppenwolf Garage), *The Walk Across America for Mother Earth* (Red Tape Theatre, with Bonnie Metzgar) and Shelley Duvall's *Women Under the Influence Theatre* (produced by Salonathon) at Steppenwolf's 1700 Theatre. He was a founding organizer, with co-creator Jesse Morgan Young, of *REVIVAL*, a performance art/night life/spectacle experience at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion and Bradley Center Masonic Temple. At Red Tape Theatre he directed *The Skriker* and *The Life and Death of Madam Barker*. He directed *What's the T?* at About Face and also produced *The Woyzeck Project*, a citywide festival sponsored by About Face and The Hypocrites.

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"I believe universities are the great untapped resource in American theatre... If we want to develop artist-driven work that's keyed into the artist's process, that's not a one-size-fits-all process, universities can be a big part in solving that puzzle."

-Naomi Iizuka

"The role of the artist is to make the revolution irresistible."

-Toni Cade Bambara

About California Repertory Company:

Now in its 29th Season, California Repertory Company (Cal Rep) is the producing arm of the Theatre Arts Department at CSULB. Over the past three decades, Cal Rep has a history of creating new work, devised theatre and adaptations of classics. As its name suggests, Cal Rep is centered on:

California: creating work for and by Californians – addressing issues that are urgent to our local and regional communities and producing work by Californian artists.

Repertory: developing new work, new voices and new repertoires of plays – especially work by underrepresented writers and artists.

Company: being a company of artists dedicated to art that asks questions, inspires action and promotes the next generation of theatre artists.

Calendar Listing for *POLAROID STORIES*

***POLAROID STORIES* by Naomi Iizuka**

Directed by Eric Hoff

CSULB Theatre Arts, 1250 Bellflower Blvd, Long Beach, CA, 90840

Performances:

Thursday, November 16 at 8:00 pm

Friday, November 17 at 8:00 pm (Opening Night)

Saturday, November 18 at 8:00 pm

Wednesday, November 29 at 8:00 pm

Thursday, November 30 at 7:00 pm

Friday, December 1 at 8:00 pm

Saturday, December 2 at 2:00pm & 8:00 pm

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Tickets and Information:

Tickets: <http://web.csulb.edu/colleges/cota/theatre/on-stage-now/index.html>

Prices: General Admission \$20

Students (w/ID)/ CSULB Faculty & Staff/\$15

Seniors (55+)/ Military: \$17

Groups: Groups of 10 or more start at \$13.50/ticket

Location: University Theatre at CSULB, 7th Street and East Campus Drive

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