

ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE

PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR MICHAEL DONALD EDWARDS • MANAGING DIRECTOR LINDA DIGABRIELE

*****For Immediate Release*****

March 23, 2016

ASOLO REP PRESENTS ITS SEVENTH ANNUAL UNPLUGGED NEW PLAY FESTIVAL

WHAT:

Showcasing the freshest talents writing for the theatre today, Asolo Rep's Unplugged New Play Festival presents three brand new plays in progress. Be among the first to hear these innovative plays and, after each reading, stay for an intimate conversation with the playwright and director. The festival begins Sunday, April 3 and continues each consecutive Sunday through April 17.

This season's plays:

hop tha A

Sunday, April 3 at 7pm

By: James Anthony Tyler

Directed by: Asolo Rep Directing Fellow Shaun Patrick Tubbs

Tyrone wants to talk. Niesha just wants to read her book. When these two near-strangers—coworkers at a New York nightclub—sit next to each other on the A Train in the early morning, neither knows where their interactions will lead. Though Niesha initially tries to politely extract herself from conversation with the effusive Tyrone, she finds herself drawn into discussions about family relationships, racial linguistics, and the politics of loneliness. As days and train stops pass them by, both Tyrone and Niesha are pulled into each other's lives beyond the confines of their train car.

#Bros

Sunday, April 10 at 7pm

By: Jake Jeppson

Directed by: Asolo Rep Education & Outreach Specialist Ria Cooper

A dark comedy about male privilege, hate, and the internet. The dudes at SensitiveBros.com create instant think pieces about masculinity in the contemporary world. But when one of their pieces triggers a violent act in the name of the Men's Rights Movement, this new breed of bro is forced to look at themselves and what they've built.

End of Shift

Sunday, April 17 at 7pm

By: Jenny Connell Davis

Directed by: Former Asolo Rep Artistic Apprentice and current Urbanite Theatre Artistic Fellow Daniel Kelly

-more-

Unplugged 2016
Page 2 of 3

It's the end of a long day washing dishes at the Spurwink Country Kitchen, and friends-for-life Jesse, Ben, and Max are on a mission to create a fitting memorial to their fallen hometown hero. But when the police chief's beautiful daughter shows up on their doorstep, everything the boys know about love, life and loyalty gets called into question.

WHEN:

Sunday, April 3 at 7pm: **hop tha A**

Sunday, April 10 at 7pm: **#Bros**

Sunday, April 17 at 7pm: **End of Shift**

WHERE:

Asolo Rep Rehearsal Hall
5555 N. Tamiami Trail
Sarasota, Florida 34243

HOW:

Tickets for each reading are \$7 and are available by visiting www.asolorep.org, calling 941.351.8000 or 800.361.8388 or by visiting Asolo Rep's Box Office, located in the lobby of the theatre at 5555 N. Tamiami Trail in Sarasota.

Unplugged is sponsored by the Herald-Tribune Media Group.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHTS

Jenny Connell Davis (Playwright, *End of Shift*) is thrilled to return to Unplugged and Asolo Rep, where she last developed *Goddess of Mercy*. Her plays include *End of Shift*, *Goddess of Mercy*, *The Dragon Play*, and *Scientific Method*. Her work has been produced or developed at Chance Theater, the Eugene O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, The Playwrights' Center, Icicle Creek Theater Festival, ACT Seattle, ATC Chicago, the Araca Group, Asolo Rep, New York Stage and Film, Ars Nova, The Gift Theatre and NAATCO. Her first screenplay, *Playing House*, was a finalist for the Nicholl Fellowship; her second, *Two Truths and a Lie*, was a semi-finalist. Her short with writer/director Soham Mehta, *Fatakra*, has screened worldwide and been recognized with more than a dozen audience awards and jury prizes. She currently has projects in development with Maven Pictures and Co-Opent Films. Jenny has an MFA from UT Austin, is a former member of Ars Nova's Play Group, and was the 2014-2015 Hot Seat Resident Playwright at Baltimore's Center Stage. She is a member of Chicago's Gift Theatre Company and a proud core member of the Playwrights Center.

Jake Jeppson (Playwright, *#Bros*) makes plays that celebrate theatricality and poke at contemporary American life. Recently, his play *#bros* was a finalist for the inaugural Relentless Award in honor of Philip Seymour Hoffman. The play is currently in development with London's Soho Theatre and the Marlowe in Canterbury. Jake's play *Turtle*, about Republican rhetoric and a lost sea turtle, continues to run in rep at Latvia's New Riga Theatre. In 2015, Jake collaborated on the Fringe First winning devised piece *Light Boxes* (Gridiron Theatre, Edinburgh). He is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama, where

he studied with Paula Vogel, Ken Prestininzi, and Sarah Ruhl and won the Cole Porter Prize. Jake was the associate producer at the Yale Cabaret, started the nationally-sourced apprentice program at the Orchard Project, and frequently teaches playwriting at the National Theatre Institute. He has written for NatGeo's *Night of Exploration* series. He loves his wife, his dog, and people watching. For more info on Jake and his plays: jakejeppson.com

James Anthony Tyler (Playwright, *hop tha A*) has a MFA in Film from Howard University and a MFA in Dramatic Writing from New York University where his concentration was Playwriting. He's won a Paul Robeson Award and John Golden Playwriting Award. His play *Some Old Black Man* had a reading at La MaMa last winter. His play *The Drop Off* was featured in The Classical Theatre of Harlem's Playwrights Playground and their Future Classics Series. His play *You're Sitting in the Dark* was a semi-finalist for the 2014 O'Neill Playwrights Conference. James is one of the first recipients of the 2015 First Round Fellowship presented by Open Bar Theatricals to expand *Dolphins and Sharks* from a ten-minute play to a full-length play. He's a member of Harlem's Emerging Black Playwrights Group and a 2014-2015 Dramatists Guild Fellow. He was a playwriting intern on Tracey Scott Wilson's newest play *Buzzer*, which was presented at The Public Theatre directed by Anne Kaufman. Recently he was awarded The Playwrights Center's Many Voices Fellowship, accepted to the 2016 Ars Nova Play Group and to The Juilliard School's Lila Acheson Wallace American Playwrights Program where he will train under the guidance of Tony Award winning playwrights Marsha Norman and Christopher Durang.

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MEDIA CONTACT

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