

## **Playwrights' Center presents readings of Kira Obolensky's new play "Forget Me Not When Far Away"**

(Minneapolis, MN—November 21, 2014)—The Playwrights' Center kicks off its 2014-15 Ruth Easton New Play Series in December with Core Writer Kira Obolensky's new play "Forget Me Not When Far Away." There will be two readings of the play: Monday, December 8 and Tuesday, December 9 at 7 p.m. at the Playwrights' Center, 2301 E. Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis. The readings are free and open to the public.

The readings will be directed by Michelle Hensley and the cast includes Shá Cage\*, Nathan Keepers\*, Maggie Chestovich\*, Karen Wiese-Thompson, Annie Enneking\*, and Sarah Agnew\* (*\*Member of Actors' Equity Association*).

"Forget Me Not When Far Away" tells the story of John Ploughman, who returns from a long war to find his hometown very much changed. After ten years thriving without men, the town has little place for an aging Don Juan—much less one who has been counted on the list of the dead. In order to regain his place among the living and find his lost love, he is forced to confront both the mistakes of his past and the unromantic reality of his present. The play is a tragic comedy about shifting gender politics and the ways we learn to adapt.

This work was commissioned by Ten Thousand Things Theater, where Kira Obolensky is playwright-in-residence. It will premiere there in May 2015. Besides John Ploughman, the play has an all-female cast, and it explores changing gender roles and the long shadow of war in intricate and moving ways. Obolensky says, "I was really interested in gender—this idea that in war men can really be decimated from a town or village. And so I started thinking, 'Well gosh, that would be interesting if what this soldier comes home to is a world of only women.' I'm exploring how circumstance can force us to reinvent ourselves and how we act."

Playwrights' Center Producing Artistic Director Jeremy B. Cohen says, "Kira is a playwright whose work I've loved for nearly 20 years, and this play finds her still writing at the absolute top of her game. The character's desires will hit home for audiences of all types, which is one of the many things I love about this play."

Kira Obolensky is a Core Writer at the Playwrights' Center. Her work includes "Force/Matter" (with Shawn McConeloug), "The Oldest Story in the World" (Theatre Novi Most), "Cabinet of Wonder: an impossible history" (Open Eye, Gas and Electric Arts, Barrymore nomination for best new play), "Raskol" (Ten Thousand Things), and "Modern House" (finalist, Susan Smith Blackburne Prize). She is a Guggenheim Fellow and has received fellowships and grants from the Henson Foundation, NEA and

Irvine Foundations, Bush Foundation, McKnight Foundation, and Jerome Foundation. She is the author of three published books about architecture and design, and co-wrote the national bestseller "The Not So Big House." She teaches at Spalding University, Goddard College, and the University of Minnesota.

The Ruth Easton New Play Series provides Playwrights' Center Core Writers with 20 hours of workshop time to develop a new play in collaboration with top-notch actors and other theater artists. The workshops culminate in public readings, giving audience members a uniquely intimate and accessible way to experience the thrill of raw new work and be part of the creative process. This year the series expands from one reading of each play to two.

All events in the Ruth Easton New Play Series are free and open to the public. Reservations are recommended; reserve your spots at [pwcenter.org](http://pwcenter.org) or by contacting the Playwrights' Center at (612) 332-7481 or [info@pwcenter.org](mailto:info@pwcenter.org).

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# THE 2014-15 RUTH EASTON NEW PLAY SERIES

December 8 and 9 at 7 p.m. ....*Forget Me Not When Far Away* by Kira Obolensky  
January 12 and 13 at 7 p.m. ....*Dust* by Qui Nguyen  
February 2 and 3 at 7 p.m. ....*Marie and Rosetta* by George Brant  
March 2 and 3 at 7 p.m. ....*The REALNESS: the second break beat play* by Idris Goodwin  
April 6 and 7 at 7 p.m.....*Romeo & Naomi Ramirez* by Kathryn Walat

## **FORGET ME NOT WHEN FAR AWAY by Kira Obolensky**

John Ploughman returns from war to find his hometown very much changed. After ten years thriving without men, the town has little place for an aging Don Juan—much less one who has been counted on the list of the dead. In order to regain his place among the living and find his lost love, he is forced to confront both the mistakes of his past and the unromantic reality of his present. A tragic comedy about shifting gender politics and the ways we learn to adapt.

## **DUST by Qui Nguyen**

Sixteen-year-old Thuy dreams of joining her GI father's American family and escaping her life in post-war Vietnam. The problem is, most of her new family doesn't know she exists. Her arrival in their small Arkansas town causes a rift in the household and brings up years of buried secrets. Always in search of a place to belong, Thuy discovers that she isn't the only one searching.

## **MARIE AND ROSETTA by George Brant**

Bringing fierce guitar playing and swing to gospel music, Sister Rosetta Tharpe was a legend in her time and a huge influence on Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, and Ray Charles. *Marie and Rosetta* chronicles her first rehearsal with a young protégée, Marie Knight, as they prepare to embark on a tour that would establish them as one of the great duos in musical history.

## **THE REALNESS: THE SECOND BREAK BEAT PLAY by Idris Goodwin**

Thomas has escaped the 'burbs and come to the city to savor authentic hip hop culture. He falls madly in love with Prima, a super-dope MC, and he is willing to lie, cheat, and scheme to win her well-guarded heart. But is he after real love or fulfilling a middle class rap fantasy? A meditation on authenticity and class collision, *The REALNESS* follows a young man's journey for his heart and true identity.

## **ROMEO & NAOMI RAMIREZ by Kathryn Walat**

She's a rookie cop on her first undercover narcotics assignment. He's an Honors English student trying to live up to his Shakespearean name. And this is Florida, with some of the toughest drug laws in the nation. So is it a love story...or a tragedy? Whose version are you going to believe?