

## **“Dust” by Qui Nguyen coming up at Playwrights’ Center**

(Minneapolis, MN—December 22, 2014)—The Playwrights’ Center kicked off its 2014-15 Ruth Easton New Play series in December with two full-to-fire-code-capacity readings of Kira Obolensky’s new play “Forget Me Not When Far Away.” In January, Twin Cities theater fans have another opportunity for an exclusive experience with a new play in progress, when the series continues with Core Writer Qui Nguyen’s new play “Dust.”

“Dust” will have two public readings: Monday, January 12 and Tuesday, January 13 at 7 p.m. at the Playwrights’ Center, 2301 E. Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis. The readings are free but tickets go fast so claim yours at [pwcenter.org](http://pwcenter.org) before they are gone.

The readings will be directed by Ensemble Studio Theatre’s Lindsay Firman and the cast includes Nadia Gen\*, Jennifer Blagen\*, Gregory Northrop\*, Christian Boomgaarden, Nathan Barlow\*, and Joel Liestman\* (*\*Member of Actors’ Equity Association*).

In “Dust,” 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. The play explores broken dreams, Amer-Asian identity, and the yearning for new beginning.

Nguyen was inspired to write “Dust” when he read about the unique challenges faced by Vietnamese children of American soldiers. “I thought about them growing up in Vietnam and then later how they’d be taken in if/when they came to America,” says Nguyen. “You look ‘American,’ but you’re culturally Vietnamese. There was an immediate empathy since I felt very much the opposite of that growing up. Aesthetically I’m Vietnamese, but my personality—my insides—are very much shaped by the movies, video games, and pop-culture of my very All-American youth.”

Playwrights’ Center Producing Artistic Director Jeremy B. Cohen says, “I’ve been lucky enough to work with Qui for a few years now, and I’m continually impressed by how he takes risks with his work and makes them pay off. He has an aesthetic unlike anyone else in theater. People who saw our reading of Qui’s *War is F\*\*king Awesome* during the 2012-13 Ruth Easton New Play Series still talk to me about that night and what a good time they had. I’m excited to bring Qui back to the Center and share his work with audiences again.”

Qui Nguyen is a Core Writer at the Playwrights’ Center. He is the Co-Founder of the OBIE Award-winning Vampire Cowboys Theatre Company of NYC. His work, known for its innovative use of stage violence, puppetry, and multimedia has been called “Wildly Inventive”, “Infectious Fun”, and “Tour De

Force Theatre” by *The New York Times*, *Variety*, and *Time Out New York*. This past season, *The Chicago Tribune* praised Qui as a “refreshing, break-the-rules writer,” and *Time Out Chicago* named his play “She Kills Monsters” one of the 10 Best Plays of 2013. Nguyen’s other plays include “Soul Samurai,” “Alice in Slasherland,” “The Inexplicable Redemption of Agent G,” and the musicals “KrunK Fu Battle Battle,” “War is F\*\*king Awesome,” and “Samantha Rai and the Shoguns of Fear.”

The Ruth Easton New Play Series provides Playwrights’ Center Core Writers with 24 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?