

**La Jolla Playhouse Names National Disability Theatre (NDT)  
Co-Executive Directors Talleri A. McRae and Mickey Rowe as  
2019/2020 Artists-in-Residence**

***PLAYHOUSE WILL PARTNER WITH NDT TO DEVELOP 2020 POP TOUR,  
TO BE WRITTEN BY COMMISSIONED ARTISTS  
A.A. BRENNER AND NDT ADVISORY COMPANY MEMBER GREGG MOZGALA***

***RESIDENCY ALSO INCLUDES CO-COMMISSION WITH GOODMAN THEATRE OF NEW WORK  
BY RENOWNED PLAYWRIGHT CHRISTOPHER SHINN***

La Jolla, CA – La Jolla Playhouse announced today the appointment of **National Disability Theatre (NDT) Co-Executive Directors Talleri A. McRae and Mickey Rowe** as the Playhouse's 2019/2020 Artists-in-Residence.

As part of their residency, NDT and the Playhouse will collaborate on creating the 2020 **Performance Outreach Program (POP) Tour** for young audiences, to be written by National Disability Theatre's Advisory Company Member and Lucille Lortel Award winner **Gregg Mozgala** (*Cost of Living*) and **A.A. Brenner**, and directed by **McRae**.

Funding for the POP Tour collaboration with NDT is made possible in part by a grant from **The James Irvine Foundation**.

The Playhouse will also partner with Goodman Theatre to co-commission renowned playwright and Pulitzer Prize finalist **Christopher Shinn** (*Dying City*) for a new work to be developed with NDT.

"One of the most important tenets of our mission is to serve as a supportive, ongoing home for artists – paradigm-shifting artists who help us explore new places and perspectives. It gives me tremendous pleasure to welcome Talleri McRae and Mickey Rowe as our Artists-in-Residence this season, giving them and NDT the freedom to focus on their evolving body of work, as well as partner on developing next year's POP Tour," said **Playhouse Artistic Director Christopher Ashley**.

"A company producing large-scale professional work created by people with disabilities will show the world that our differences really are our strengths. We will impact industries beyond our own, demonstrating that people with disabilities can efficiently and productively undertake professional work at the highest level and that accessibility is not only right—it's also good business," **Rowe** remarked. "We want to flip the script and eliminate the single story of people with disabilities, showing that we are neither inspirational nor charity cases, just powerful and ferocious professionals."

Added **McRae**, "Access and innovation go hand in hand. Including people of all abilities is a wildly creative act."

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La Jolla Playhouse is one of the few theatres in the country that annually commissions world-class artists to create a bold new play for young audiences for its acclaimed **POP Tour**. Launched in 1987, the POP Tour travels throughout the county, touring schools, libraries and community centers, reaching 20,000 students each year. Prior to a performance, a Playhouse teaching artist visits each school to engage students in an interactive workshop to explore issues and themes at the core of the play. The Playhouse also provides schools with a standards-based guide that enables educators to integrate the play into their existing curriculum.

The Playhouse's artist residency program gives artists time, space and resources to develop their projects while becoming fully immersed in all aspects of the institution, from the stage to the boardroom to the classroom. Previous appointees include Tony Award-winning actor and writer **BD Wong** (Playhouse's *Herringbone*, *The Orphan of Zhao*, playwright/ director for POP Tour production of *Alice Chan*), acclaimed scenic designer and UC San Diego graduate and current faculty member **Robert Brill** (Playhouse's *SUMMER: The Donna Summer Musical*, *The Wiz*, among many others); MacArthur "Genius" Grant recipient **Basil Twist** (Playhouse's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, WOW Festival productions of *Seafoam Sleepwalk* and *Faetopia*); and married playwrights **Mike Lew** (Playhouse's *Tiger Style!*) and **Rehana Lew Mirza** (Playhouse's DNA New Works Series reading of *Child of Colonialism*).

**A.A. Brenner** is a playwright, dramaturg and native New Yorker. Their plays have been produced by Shakespeare Theatre Company's Fellows Consortium, Three Muses Theatre Company, Young Playwrights Inc., The Schwartz Center for the Performing Arts, Columbia University, and The Hangar Theatre Lab Company, among others, and they're a winner of the 2012 Young Playwrights Inc. National Playwriting Competition. Brenner's writing blends naturalistic dialogue with heightened verse and magical realism to explore queer, Jewish and disability themes, challenging both societal power structures and theatrical form, and they are a current MFA Playwriting candidate at the Columbia University School of the Arts.

**Gregg Mozgala's** recent credits include *Teenage Dick* at The Public Theater (Drama League Award nomination for Distinguished Performance) and New York Theatre Workshop's revival of *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire*. He received a Lucille Lortel Award (Best Featured Actor) for his work in Martyna Majok's Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Cost of Living* at Manhattan Theatre Club. Mozgala is the subject of the documentary, *Enter the Faun*, which aired on the award-winning PBS series, *America Reframed*. He is the Director of Inclusion at Queens Theatre and the Founding Artistic Director of [The Apothetae](#); a theatre company dedicated to producing works that explore and illuminate the "Disabled Experience," as well as a member of NDT's Advisory Company.

**Christopher Shinn** is the author of *Dying City* (Pulitzer Prize finalist), *Where Do We Live* (Obie in Playwriting), *Now or Later* (Evening Standard Theatre Award for Best Play shortlist) and *Four*, among other plays. His most recent play, *Against*, had its world premiere at the Almeida Theatre in 2017, starring Ben Whishaw. His plays have also been premiered by the Royal Court Theatre, Lincoln Center Theater, Donmar Warehouse, Goodman Theatre, Manhattan Theatre Club, Roundabout Theatre Company, Playwrights Horizons, Vineyard Theatre, South Coast Repertory, Soho Theatre and Hartford Stage. His work is published in the US by TCG and in the UK by Methuen. A Guggenheim Fellow, he teaches playwriting at the New School. On *Now*: a revival of *Dying City*, which premiered at the Royal Court in 2006, and had its US premiere at Lincoln Center Theater in 2007, at Second Stage. Upcoming: an adaptation of *Judgment Day*, by Ödön von Horváth, for Park Avenue Armory.

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**National Disability Theatre** is a professional theatre company employing only professionals with disabilities to create fully accessible, world-class theatre and storytelling; changing social policy and the nation's narrative about what people with disabilities can do; and providing a guiding model in audience accessibility for the arts and culture sector. Their goals are to show that a large professional theatre company can be run entirely by people with disabilities; radically transform theatrical practices by telling stories through a lens of disability culture; lead the nation in inclusion, representation, and access with support from the top leaders in disability and entertainment; and powerfully spark greater inclusion for people with disabilities in other economic sectors.

**Goodman Theatre**, "Chicago's flagship resident stage" (*Chicago Tribune*), is a premier not-for-profit theater distinguished by the quality and scope of its artistic programming and civic engagement. Led by Artistic Director Robert Falls and Executive Director Roche Schulfer, the theater's artistic priorities include new play development (more than 150 world or American premieres), large scale musical theater works and reimagined classics. In addition, the Goodman is the first theater in the world to produce all 10 plays in August Wilson's "American Century Cycle." Key to the theater's success are its distinguished members of the Artistic Collective: Brian Dennehy, Rebecca Gilman, Henry Godinez, Dael Orlandersmith, Steve Scott, Chuck Smith, Regina Taylor, Henry Wishcamper and Mary Zimmerman. Awards for artistic excellence include two Pulitzer Prizes, 22 Tony Awards and more than 160 Joseph Jefferson Awards. [GoodmanTheatre.org](http://GoodmanTheatre.org)

**La Jolla Playhouse** is a place where artists and audiences come together to create what's new and next in the American theatre, from Tony Award-winning productions, to imaginative programs for young audiences, to interactive experiences outside our theatre walls. Currently led by 2017 Tony Award-winning Artistic Director Christopher Ashley and Managing Director Debby Buchholz, the Playhouse was founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer. Playhouse artists and audiences have taken part in the development of new plays and musicals, including mounting 101 world premieres, commissioning 52 new works, and sending 32 productions to Broadway, among them the currently-running hit musical *Come From Away* – garnering a total of 38 Tony Awards, including the 1993 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. For more information, visit [LaJollaPlayhouse.org](http://LaJollaPlayhouse.org).

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