

Tuesday, April 21, 2015

For immediate release

For more information:

Kelsye Gould, 612.787.3622

gouldk@pillsburyhousetheatre.org



Hi-resolution photos are available on request.

Box Office: 612.825.0459 or pillsburyhousetheatre.org

Announcing the 2015 Naked Stages Fellows

Minneapolis, MN—Pillsbury House Theatre announced the 2015 *Naked Stages* artists today: **Marisa R. Carr**, **Junauda Petrus**, and **Eliza Rasheed**. Marisa R. Carr is a composer, playwright, and activist who was named “Best New Political Playwright” by *Lavender Magazine* earlier this year. She will create a performance piece inspired by her police officer father. Junauda Petrus is a dancer, writer, and aerial artist who will be installing ritualistic and artistic spaces around the building, *outside of the theatre*. Finally, Eliza Rasheed is an actor, dancer, playwright, and director who will use her lens as an Asian multiracial woman to guide her work.

The 2015 fellows were chosen by a panel of artists including *Naked Stages* Mentor Sharon Brigforth, *Naked Stages* Alum Mire Regulus, Center for Hmong Arts and Talent Artistic Director Fres Thao, and Pillsbury House Theatre staff Corrie Zoll.

A creative opportunity unlike any other in Minnesota, *Naked Stages* is a 7 month development program that provides time, financial support, and mentoring to three artists to develop their unique voices as performance artists and creators.

In 2014, *Naked Stages* implemented changes where only two of the three fellowships will be for performance work. This year, Carr and Rasheed will perform their work over the course of two weeks (December 10-19, 2015) while a Petrus will create an installation in the Pillsbury House + Theatre building that will be open to the public overlapping the December performances.

ABOUT THE 2015 PROJECTS

Marisa R. Carr’s *Cop’s Kid* deals with the criminal justice system—particularly law enforcement—while exploring both victimization and complicity. Carr will explore how the physical body can tell a story through multiple modalities to move beyond the traditional play.

Junauda Petrus’ installation performance will be inspired by the wildness of women in her life. The women ancestors of her family were the architects of her heart, laughter, and spiritual destiny. Petrus will create ritualistic and artistic spaces for people to dissolve and luxuriate.

Eliza Rasheed’s *Journey* will start from the beginning of her journey of self-questioning and discovery. The piece will include multiple languages, dance, physical theater, and storytelling to explore the

question of where is home when you are of two different countries, two different cultures, two different languages, and two different races.

MORE INFORMATION

Molly Van Avery continues in her third year as Director of *Naked Stages* (taking over from seminal artist Laurie Carlos). Sharon Bridgforth will continue to serve as a mentor to the artists throughout their fellowship period. Molly noted “The caliber of applications continues to strengthen each year, affirming the rich diversity of performance makers we have locally. Pillsbury House Theatre is proud to provide a much needed opportunity for artists to be supported by an arts institution that values original work. Through *Naked Stages*, we hold the container that allows artists to create innovative, provocative, and exciting performances that benefit them and audiences.”

In addition to regular feedback sessions and money to support project development, hiring other artists, and material requirements, the artists work with local creators like Hijack, *Late Nite Series* Artists and *Naked Stages* Alums Juma B Essie, Katie Vang, Moe Lionel, Gabrielle Civil, and Julia Babb. The fellows also participate in monthly meetings where they learn skills to help further develop their artistic careers including: new approaches to giving and receiving artistic feedback, developing and strengthening an audience base, communication skills with technical support staff, and the elements they need to develop an original work.

Naked Stages is made possible through major support from the Jerome Foundation. Pillsbury House Theatre is especially grateful for Cynthia Gehrig’s leadership as president of Jerome Foundation for the past 38 years. “She cared for and kept watch over this fellowship, ensuring it held artists’ interests at its core,” shares Van Avery. “We are appreciative for her suggestions and affirmations that allowed this program to thrive.”

All tickets are Pick Your Price, and will be available in August 2015. (Regular price = \$16. Anything over \$16 is considered a donation.) Carr and Rasheed’s productions will be performed back-to-back at 7:30 pm on Thursdays through Saturdays, December 11-19. Petrus’ installation dates are TBA.

BOX OFFICE AND MORE INFO: 612-825-0459 or www.pillsburyhousetheatre.org

ABOUT PILLSBURY HOUSE THEATRE

From the Mainstage series to Chicago Avenue Project and *Naked Stages* to the Power of Our Voices teen ensemble, **PILLSBURY HOUSE THEATRE** brings audiences closer—to the edge, to the actors, to affordable, adventurous theatre, to fellow audience members, and to a strong community. Now in its 24th season, Pillsbury House Theatre is proud to be a professional theatre unlike any other. In partnership with Pillsbury United Communities, one of the largest human services organizations in the state, Pillsbury House Theatre demonstrates that the highest quality art is an integral part of all healthy communities, winning awards for theatre across the metro while also inspiring choice, change, and connection through raw, intimate drama. pillsburyhousetheatre.org.

###