



UNM DEPARTMENT OF  
**THEATRE & DANCE**

MSC04 2570  
1 University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, NM 87131-0001  
Tel: (505) 277-4332  
fax: (505) 277-8921

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 18, 2010

MEDIA CONTACT  
Kathleen Clawson: (505) 238-6029, kclawson@unm.edu

**UNM's Department of Theatre and Dance  
Presents the *Words Afire New Play Festival Directed Readings*  
November 5-7, 2010  
Nationally Acclaimed Dramatic Writing Program  
Invites a First Look at New Plays**

**WHAT:** **Words Afire New Play Festival Directed Readings**, an exciting “first look” at new plays by Georgina Escobar, Riti Sachdeva, Nic Wehrwein and Law Chavez, in development for the next *Words Afire Festival*, with guest adjudicator Megan Monaghan.

**WHEN:** Friday through Sunday, November 5, 6, and 7, 2010, detailed schedule below.

**WHERE:** Experimental Theatre, UNM Main Campus

**HOW MUCH:** Free

**MORE INFO:** <http://theatre.unm.edu/waf>, call 277-4332

The University of New Mexico Department of Theatre and Dance announces the **Words Afire New Play Festival Directed Readings**, an exciting “first look” at plays in development for the next *Words Afire Festival* (scheduled for May 2011.) Presented will be three days of readings of new works selected for the *Words Afire Festival* where audiences will be able to catch a sneak peek into the development of individual plays and enjoy the thrill of seeing actors and directors breathe life into these plays for the first

time. Plays included in the series are *The Ruin*, by Georgina Escobar, *Where Things Make Sense* by Nic Wehrwein, *La Fea's FlamenChoreoMyth* by Riti Sachdeva, and *The Story of Caballos Muertos* by Law Chavez.

The *Words Afire Festival* is the centerpiece of UNM's award winning dramatic writing program. This festival allows the talented MFA playwrights in the program to collaborate with directors and actors to give life to their new works and bring these works from the page to the stage each spring. The **Words Afire New Play Festival Directed Readings** is an important part of a professional approach to the development process in playwriting, led by internationally known playwright, Elaine Avila, the Robert Hartung Endowed Chair of Dramatic Writing at UNM. For the first time this fall, she has invited a well-known guest adjudicator to attend the **Words Afire New Play Festival Directed Readings**. This guest adjudicator, Megan Monaghan, will provide professional feedback to each of the playwrights after the performances of their plays.

Megan Monaghan is a freelance dramaturg, director and teacher. She served as the Artistic Program Director of the Lark Play Development Center, overseeing all of the organization's artistic programming. Prior to that she was the Literary Manager of South Coast Repertory Theatre, where she spearheaded the theatre's new play commissioning and development work and served as co-director of the Pacific Playwrights Festival. She previously served as the Literary Director of the Alliance Theatre, the Director of Playwright Services at The Playwrights' Center, and the Director of New Play Development at Frontera @ Hyde Park Theatre. Her freelance work has included the O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, the New Harmony Project, Actors Express, Horizon Theatre and the Bay Area Playwrights Festival. She has served on panels for

the NEA, TCG and NAMT, and a guest teacher at NYU, the Iowa Writers' Workshop, the Yale School of Drama graduate programs, Brown University, UCSD, and the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival. In 2002 she received the Elliott Hayes Award in dramaturgy. Ms. Monaghan earned an MFA in directing from the University of Texas at Austin and a BA from Emory University.

Georgina H. Escobar's play, *The Ruin* captures two women, known as the jungle witches of Cantemploya, who live secluded from the world and the young Archeologists who discovers them and through them, discovers himself. *The Ruin* will be directed by Kevin Elder. In *Where Things Make Sense* by Nic Wehrwein, directed by Summer Olsson, Matt heads back to the old neighborhood to regroup after his life falls apart, but his plan is complicated by Elizabeth, the new neighbor, and the return of his ex, Emily. The working title of Riti Sachdeva's new play is *La Fea's FlamenChoreoMyth*. La Fea's dream leads her on a mystical mission of unearthing song, dance, and secrets only to find herself confronting an ancient gift and calling. It will be directed by Erin Phillips. Dodie Montgomery will direct *The Story of Caballos Muertos* by Law Chavez. Caballos Muertos is about two sisters that are unable to love each other because of unfounded jealousy and a fixation on the same man. It is a supernatural tale of untamed sibling rivalry and the dangers that accompany obsession.

Audience response and input is an important aspect of play development. The public is invited to attend all performances free of charge. Performances of all the plays in the **Words Afire New Play Festival Directed Readings** will be held in the Experimental Theatre on UNM's main campus. More information is available at <http://theatre.unm.edu/waf> or by calling 277-4332.

**WORDS AFIRE NEW PLAY FESTIVAL**  
**DIRECTED READINGS SCHEDULE**  
UNM Experimental Theatre, November 5,6, and 7, 2010  
**FREE**

*The Ruin* by Georgina H. Escobar, Directed by Kevin Elder  
Friday, November 5, 6pm

*Where Things Make Sense* by Nic Wehrwein, Directed by Summer Olsson  
Saturday, November 6, 3pm

*La Fea's FlamenChoreoMyth* by Riti Sachdeva, Directed by Erin Phillips  
Saturday, November 6, 6pm

*The Story of Caballos Muertos* by Law Chavez, Directed by Dodie Montgomery  
Sunday, November 7, 12pm

###