



UNM DEPARTMENT OF
THEATRE & DANCE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**UNM's Department of Theatre and Dance
Announces the
New American Plays Initiative**

**Award Winning Dramatic Writing Program
Partners with The Drama League of New York
and the National Hispanic Cultural Center for
The 9th Annual Words Afire Festival of New Plays
April 24-May 3, 2009**

WHAT: Words Afire Festival of New Plays, world premieres of brave new works directed by innovative young directors from the Drama League of New York.

WHEN: Friday, April 24 through Sunday, May 3, 2009

WHERE: Rodey Theatre and the Experimental Theatre, UNM's Main Campus; Wells Fargo Auditorium, The National Hispanic Cultural Center, 1701 4th Street SW; detailed schedule below.

HOW MUCH: Rodey Theatre, \$15 General, \$10 Seniors, \$8 Students; Cabaret, Experimental Theatre, \$10 general, \$8 Seniors, \$7 Students; Directed Readings, \$5 General; Screenplays, Free.

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

TICKETS: UNM Ticket Offices, Call 925-5858 or 1-877-664-8661, or online at www.unmtickets.com

The University of New Mexico Department of Theatre and Dance's award winning Dramatic Writing Program is pleased to announce the debut of the New American Plays Initiative, a partnership with the prestigious Drama League of New York City. Three innovative young Drama League directors shape the premieres and readings of our new plays during the **9th Annual Words Afire Festival**, April 24 through May 3, 2009, in Rodey Theatre and The Experimental Theatre on UNM's Main Campus, and the Wells Fargo Auditorium at the National Hispanic Cultural Center.

The Words Afire Festival is the centerpiece of UNM's nationally acclaimed dramatic writing program. This year's festival presents three fully-staged productions—bold, brave works exploring family and legacy: The Big Come by Mars Mráz, Living Purgatory by Patricia Crespín, and Deception Pass by Kamarie Chapman. All three playwrights are MFA students in UNM's Dramatic Writing program, and all have received national and international recognition for their work. The festival also includes readings of funny, hot new plays by Erin Phillip, Aaron Frale, and Beth Iha as well as screenplay readings and a late night undergraduate cabaret!

The **2009 Words Afire Festival** marks the start of a new direction for the festival and the UNM Dramatic Writing Program. For the first time in the history of the festival, UNM will collaborate with the Drama League, an association of emerging professional directors from New York City. This collaboration will not only provide the MFA student writers with professional connections and experiences, but the association between the two programs will bring increased professional awareness to the UNM Department of Theatre and Dance. The guest directors, Michael Goldfried, Lauren Keating, and Kerry Whigham are all part of the Directors Project of the Drama League of New York. Now in

its twenty-fifth year, The Directors Project has advanced the careers of over 220 talented young directors and has become the preeminent development program for new directors - - providing talented young artists with experiences in the professional theatrical world.

The UNM Department of Theatre and Dance also welcomes the National Hispanic Cultural Center as a proud partner in the presentation of the Words Afire Festival. The NHCC is hosting ***On Screen***, an evening of readings of scripts from UNM screenwriting classes in the beautiful Wells Fargo Auditorium. The National Hispanic Cultural Center is located at the Intersection of 4th Street SW and Avenida César Chávez (Bridge Blvd.)

The talented undergraduates of the dramatic writing program will be showcased in two late night performances of 10 minute plays, acted and directed by The Blackout Theatre Company. The Blackout Theatre Company is known for its use of physicality and a dedication to staging new works. They will perform six ten-minute plays, separated by physical interludes, in cabaret style: Looking for Nihil by Theodore Jackson, The Burglar by Shannon Flynn, Eti by Barney Lopez, The Great Cactus Battle by Simon Blair, Child's Play by James Blessing, and Good-bye by Danaë Lopez.

The **2009 Words Afire Festival** marks an incredibly exciting time for the Department of Theatre and Dance. For a full performance schedule, a complete synopsis of each show, biographies of the festivals' artists or more detailed information, check <http://theatre.unm.edu/waf>. **Please note that all the plays are appropriate for adult audiences only, due to content and language.** Ticket prices are: Rodey Theatre, \$15 General, \$10 Seniors, \$8 Students; Cabaret, Experimental Theatre: \$10 general, \$8

Seniors, \$7 Students; Directed Readings: \$5 General. The Screenplay readings at the National Hispanic Cultural Center are free. Tickets are available at the UNM Ticket Offices located at the UNM Bookstore, Central and Cornell, or the Arena (The Pit), University and Avenida Caesar Chavez, by calling (505) 925-5858. Tickets may also be purchased online at www.unmtickets.com. Words Afire, we're going national, don't miss it!

THE 2009 WORDS AFIRE FESTIVAL PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

The Big Come by Mars Mráz, directed by Lauren Keating

Rodey Theatre

Friday, April 24, 8:00pm

Saturday, April 25, 1:00pm

Saturday, May 2, 8:00pm

Sunday, May 3, 2:00pm

Living Purgatory by Patricia Crespín, directed by Michael Goldfried

Rodey Theatre

Saturday, April 25, 4:30pm

Sunday, April 26, 6:00pm

Friday, May 1, 8:00pm

Saturday, May 2, 1:00pm

**Deception Pass: An American Dream by Kamarie Chapman,
directed by Kerry Whigham**

Rodey Theatre

Saturday, April 25, 8:00pm

Sunday, April 26, 2:00pm

Saturday, May 2, 4:30pm

Sunday, May 3, 6:00pm

Directed Readings: Experimental Theatre

With the Tears of Men Who Know

by Beth Iha, directed by Michael Goldfried

Saturday, April 25, 1:00pm

Sunday, April 26, 11:00am

Profiles by Aaron Frale, directed by Kerry Whigham

Saturday, April 25, 4:30pm

Sunday, April 26, 6:00pm

The Promised Land by Erin Phillips, directed by Lauren Keating

Saturday, April 25, 8:00pm

Sunday, April 26, 2:00pm

Late Night Cabaret of 10 Minute Plays

Featuring the Blackout Theatre Company

Saturday, April 25, 10:30pm

Saturday, May 2, 10:30pm

ON SCREEN

Thursday, April 30, 7pm, Wells Fargo Auditorium, National Hispanic Cultural Center, 1701 4th Street SW

NOTE: Due to content and language, these plays are recommended for adult audiences only.

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