MEDIA ALERT
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LOS ANGELES NEW PLAY PROJECT AWARDS
FOUR PRIZES IN THE 2024 COMPETITION
FOR THEIR 4th ANNUAL GRANT

Los Angeles, CA (Revised November 4, 2024) – Celebrating outstanding talent in the Los Angeles theater community, the Los Angeles New Play Project (LANPP) is thrilled to announce this year's grant recipients whose work pushes boundaries and engages audiences in profound conversations. This will be the fourth annual grant ceremony, which to date has supported thirteen new plays.

Cercle Hermaphroditos
written by Shualee Cook
produced by After Hours Theatre Company

Hide and Hide
written by Roger Q Mason
produced by Skylight Theatre

नेहा and Neel
written by Ankita Raturi
produced by Artists at Play

Righteous Among Us
written by Amy Tofte
produced by Little Fish Theatre

This year's recipients are **Shualee Cook** for *CERCLE HERMAPHRODITOS, to be produced by* After Hours Theatre Company (Graham Wetterhahn, Artistic Director); **Roger Q. Mason** for *HIDE AND HIDE* to be produced by Skylight Theatre Company (Producers Gary Grossman and Armando Huipe); **Ankita Raturi** for नेहा *& NEEL* to be produced by Artists at Play (Marie-Reine Velez - Producer); **Amy Tofte** for

RIGHTEOUS AMONG US to be produced by Little Fish Theatre (Suzanne Dean and Stephanie Coltrin, Co-Artistic Directors).

CERCLE HERMAPHRODITOS by Shualee Cook: Set in 1895, a trans man enters an famed underground social club for trans femmes, with the goal to find a wife in order to play the roles expected in public while pursuing the life they want in private. A wry and compelling love letter to the trans community based on true historical events (Scheduled for production in Spring 2025 at LGBT Center in Hollywood).

Shualee Cook has a wide range of work including full-length plays, musicals, plays with music, and opera.. Shualee is the recipient of 2023 Nancy Dean Lesbian Playwriting Award, the 2021 Chesly/Bumbalo Award, The 2020 RAC Artist Fellowship, and the 2019 Parity Commission. She has been a resident playwright in the Confluence Regional Writers Project, Stage Left Theatre, and Tesseract Theatre, a finalist for the O'Neill National Playwrights Conference and the Bay Area Playwrights Festival. Her work has been developed by About Face Theatre, Breaking the Binary Festival, The New Coordinates, Slightly Askew Theatre Ensemble, Mustard Seed Theatre, The Road Theatre, The Idle Muse Athena Festival, Campfire Theatre Festival, National Queer Theatre, and the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival, among others.

HIDE AND HIDE written by Roger Q. Mason*:* Along the Coast of California, two lost souls collide while chasing freedom and the right to be an American… a queer rent-boy on the run from Texas police meets Constanza, a Filipina immigrant with a visa about to expire. *Hide and Hide* is a Homeric Odyssey that disrupts and rebuilds the American Fantasy, an Ironic, funny and dystopian odyssey. (Scheduled for production in Spring, 2025).

Roger Q. Mason (they/them) is a writer who satirizes and revises history to disrupt the biases that separate rather than unite us. Their playwriting has appeared on Broadway; Off/Off-Off-Broadway; and regionally, garnered five Barrymore Award nominations in Philadelphia, a Jeff Award Recommendation in Chicago and the San Francisco Chronicle's prestigious Datebook Pick. Mason's *Lavender Men*, first produced by Playwrights' Arena & Skylight Theatre Company, was lauded by the Los Angeles Times as "evoking the mingled visions of Suzan-Lori Parks, Jeremy O. Harris and Michael R. Jackson." They received 2024's Playwrights' Center McKnight National Playwright Commission, the

inaugural Dramatists Guild Foundation Catalyst Grant Award, a Hermitage Residency, a Lucille Lortel commission, a Kilroys List nod, and the Chuck Rowland Pioneer Award.

नेहा & NEEL *written by* Ankita Raturi*:* Neha (नेहा) is a single woman raising a son, now 17, in America, who seldom speaks their native Hindi or caring about India's famed past. On a cross country college tour, both confront the differences between them and who they want each other to be. B, नेहा *and Neel* asks what is lost with every generation in America and is it ever too late to connect to one's roots (Scheduled for production at Latino Theatre Co. in downtown Los Angeles).

Ankita Raturi (she/her) writes hyper-theatrical works in Hindi/Urdu, English, and Bahasa Indonesia, about living between cultural identities and contending with the ongoing legacies of colonization. She grew up in capital cities, pediatric gastroenterology offices, and the bisexual closet. New play development: Theater Mu, New York Theatre Workshop, Roundabout, Ma-Yi Theater Company, South Coast Repertory, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Playwrights Realm, Berkshire Theatre Group, Cygnet Theatre, Artists at Play, The COOP, Atlantic Pacific Theatre, Theater Masters, Fresh Ground Pepper, Hypokrit Theatre Company, New York Shakespeare Exchange, Pete's Candy Store. She is 2022 Ollie Award Winner.

RIGHTEOUS AMONG US *written by* Amy Tofte*:* An African American researcher working at a civil rights museum collecting oral histories from ancestors who saved Jewish children during the Holocaust has to set straight a hero legend,coming to terms with the urgent need to follow the truth and her own need to find heroes among regular people. (Scheduled for production in Spring 2025 at Shakespeare by the Sea, in Redondo Beach).

Amy Tofte received a Nicholl Fellowship in screenwriting from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Her play *Righteous Among Us* (2020 Todd McNerney Award) had a staged reading at Urban Stages (off-Broadway) in 2023. She was recently a playwright with the Evolving Playwrights Group at Circle X Theatre (Los Angeles) where she completed a new play, *Rain Dog War,* about the climate crisis. Amy is currently developing her new play, *BloodSuckingLeech*, at Nashville Repertory Theatre as part of their Ingram New Works Project. Residences at the

Autry Museum of the American West, Brush Creek, Monson Arts, The Kennedy Center, Headlands Center for the Arts, and Yaddo with work produced and developed throughout the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, and twice at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

Los Angeles New Play Project supports new and original works presented on small stages within Los Angeles County. Each playwright receives a grant of $20,000. Each of the submitting producers will receive an additional $20,000 to help offset the cost of producing. But there are many steps in between that rely on the facilities and input of the various theatres within the LA theatre community. Clearly, it takes a village!

By helping to support new and original work with the financial grants, LANPP is hoping to help usher in quality new writing for the vibrant and evolving Los Angeles small and midsize theatre community, and to encourage the production of exciting, untried plays.

LANPP was founded in 2021 by director Paula Holt. For information regarding the Los Angeles New Play Project please consult the website: http://lanpp.org/