

Central Works

New Play Theater

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CENTRAL WORKS 2016 SEASON
Four Plays From The Utterly Ridiculous To The Horrific:
Families and Genius On The Edge - February - November 2016
Central Works Joins The National New Play Network
With The Rolling World Premiere Of "Into the Beautiful North"

Central Works 2016 Season (CW '16) celebrates a continuing commitment to new work drawing from history, literature and events in our contemporary world that affect life as we live it. The Central Works 25th Anniversary Season last year was a grand success, double digit increases in attendance, the highest grossing season, and the awarding this past fall of "Outstanding World Premiere" to Patricia Milton's *Enemies: Foreign and Domestic* by Theatre Bay Area (TBA) when judged against *all TBA Bay Area theater companies*. This season also marks CW's partnership with National New Play Network for the Rolling World Premiere of *Into the Beautiful North* by Karen Zacarias, the first playwright-in-residence at Washington, DC's Arena Stage.

The **Central Works 2016 Season** opens with the utterly ridiculous, deadly serious, Oedipal family drama *Totem and Taboo* by David Weisberg, (February 20 to March 20), developed in the Central Works Writers Workshop. In the spring Robert Louis Stevenson enters a fever dream, unleashing the deep unconscious recesses of his mind in *Robert Louis Stevenson: Jekyll and Hyde* by Gary Graves, (May 14 to June 12). In July, Patricia Milton, the winner of last season's "Outstanding World Premiere" award by TBA, premieres the "seriously" funny *Hearts of Palm* in which unrequited love meets unregulated capitalism. Also developed in Central Works Writer's Workshop (July 16 to August 14). Closing the season, *Into the Beautiful North*, a new play by Karen Zacarias (the first playwright-in-residence at the Arena Stage in Washington, DC), and based on the novel by Pulitzer Prize finalist Luis Alberto Urrea. *Into the Beautiful North* is inspired by the classic Hollywood western *The Magnificent Seven*. A National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere (October 15 to November 13).

The Plays:

Totem and Taboo by David Weisberg is inspired by Freud's famous book of the same title, *Totem and Taboo*. This grand epic concoction mixes together elements of farce, surrealism, theater of the absurd, family melodrama, and classic situation comedy. Ralph used to be a university professor. Now he's a pill-popping, stay-at-home "house husband," raising a 17-year-old son with his wife, Alice, a genetic biologist. When a drug-induced hallucination lands him in a real-life episode of *The Honeymooners*—with cannibalism—Ralph's world spins out of control. A hectic, wild, utterly ridiculous, deadly serious, Oedipal family drama. Directed by M. Graham Smith. **World Premiere #50: From the Central Works Writers Workshop. Feb 20 to March 20.**

Opening May 14th is ***Robert Louis Stevenson: Jekyll and Hyde* by Gary Graves**. On a stormy English seacoast, “Louis” wakes from a terrifying fever dream. Finally, the author of *Treasure Island* believes he has the idea for a new novel that will allow him to fully realize his literary ambitions. It has come to him from the deep unconscious recesses of his mind, fully formed, as a dark, awful dream. His wife, Fanny is horrified by the dark metaphor of the monstrous tale, and fearful of the scandalous revelations it contains about her husband. Louis is passionately committed to pursuing “the truth” in his writing, no matter what the consequences. All hangs in the balance if Louis gives himself over to Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. **World Premiere #51: A Central Works Method Play. May 14 to June 12.**

***Hearts of Palm* by Patricia Milton** is a ~~very serious~~, very funny new play from the writer of last season’s award-winning hit, *Enemies: Foreign and Domestic*. A small Southeast Asian island is ~~invaded~~ visited by a ~~gang of land grabbers~~ a team of corporate negotiators intent on expanding a palm oil plantation. When a company rep goes rogue and joins the local rebel resistance, Viola Wells takes charge as Lead Negotiator. While fending off the unwanted advances of a corporate teammate, “Vi” must come to terms with the true nature of her employer: multinational conglomerate, Empire Holdings, Ltd. Unrequited love meets unregulated capitalism in *Hearts of Palm*. **World Premiere #52: From the Central Works Writers Workshop. July 16 to Aug 14.**

The season closes with ***Into the Beautiful North* by Karen Zacarias**, the first playwright-in-residence at Washington, DC’s Arena Stage. Based on the novel by Pulitzer Prize finalist Luis Alberto Urrea, *Into the Beautiful North* is inspired by the classic Hollywood western, *The Magnificent Seven*. Young Nayeli leaves her home in a sleepy little seaside town in Sinaloa, Mexico, with her two best friends. They are determined to go north, on a bold quest, across the border, to bring back seven Magnificent Mexican Men to defend their town from drug dealers and corrupt policemen. The epic journey takes the small band of intrepid adventurers from Mexico, north to San Diego, and finally, of all places, to Kankakee, Illinois. A National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere in partnership with Milagro Theatre Portland (OR), San Diego Repertory Theatre (CA), and 16th Street Theater (IL). **World Premiere #53: A Rolling World Premiere in partnership with National New Play Network. Oct 15 to Nov 13.**

For over 25 years Central Works has filled a special niche for theater artists in the San Francisco Bay Area. Producing more new plays by local playwrights than any other company in the region. “The New Play Theater” utilizes three basic strategies: some are products of the Central Works Method, some are developed in the Central Works Writers Workshop, and some come to the company fully developed.

Central Works Method plays bring together writer, actors and director at the very outset of the playwriting process. In a supportive workshop environment, group research and collective brainstorming contribute to the entire development of the script.

The Central Works Writers Workshop is an ongoing commissioning program established in 2012. Twice a year, in 12-week sessions, 8 local playwrights are selected to develop projects through informal readings and carefully directed discussions. Patricia Milton’s *Enemies: Foreign and Domestic* was the fourth production at Central Works to emerge from this program, followed by two more this season.

For more information, visit our website: www.centralworks.org

2016 SEASON SCHEDULE

Totem and Taboo

A hectic, wild, utterly ridiculous, deadly serious, Oedipal family drama

Written by David Weisberg

A Central Works Writers Workshop Play

Directed by M. Graham Smith

Previews Feb 18 & 19

Feb 20–Mar 20

Robert Louis Stevenson: Jekyll and Hyde

A fever dream of a new play based on

Robert Louis Stevenson's classic tale of good and evil.

Written by Gary Graves

A Central Works Method Play

Directed by Jan Zvaifler

Previews May 12 & 13

May 14–Jun 12

Hearts of Palm

A very serious, very funny new play.

Unrequited love meets unregulated capitalism in Hearts of Palm.

Written by Patricia Milton

From the Central Works Writers Workshop

Directed by Gary Graves

Previews July 14 & 15

Jul 16–Aug 14

Into the Beautiful North in partnership with National New Play Network

Based on the novel by Pulitzer Prize finalist Luis Alberto Urrea,

and inspired by the classic Hollywood western *The Magnificent Seven*.

Written by Karen Zacarias

Rolling World Premiere with NNPN

Directed by Gary Graves

Previews Oct. 13 & 14

Oct 15–Nov 13

Performing at the Berkeley City Club 2315 Durant Avenue, Berkeley

Tickets: \$30 online at centralworks.org or \$30 – \$15 sliding scale at the door.

Previews and Thursdays are pay-what-you-can at the door.

For more information call 510.558.1381 or visit centralworks.org